

OREGON: the Grand Tour!

Birding the Natural Splendor of Oregon

May 10-17, 2019

A birding tour organized by Seven Ponds Nature Center

Oregon is a state of great scenic beauty and geographic diversity – including rocky coastlines, coastal estuaries, lush old-growth forests, the rugged, snow-covered peaks of the Cascade Mountains, sagebrush, grasslands, and juniper of the east, and the expansive dry lakebed of the Alvord desert. On this tour we will explore the bird life of each of these diverse habitats as we take a grand tour of Oregon!



Join us for a small group spring trip to Oregon, widely renowned for its natural beauty. Our itinerary will take us through a wide range of habitats, each holding its own unique birds awaiting our discovery. Oregon claims the sixth largest bird list among all U.S. states (only California, Texas, Arizona, Florida, and New Mexico have bigger lists), and our tour will coincide with the peak of the spring migration, providing us with a chance of seeing around 200 species of the birds Oregon has to offer. To experience spring migration west coast style, come along on what is sure to be a most memorable birding tour!

TOUR ITINERARY

Our daily activities will be flexible based on species we've seen to date and recent bird reports, but the following daily outline provides a preliminary plan of how we will spend our days. Our plans are subject to change based on rare bird sightings, weather conditions, and road closures. Note: the birds listed are not intended to be an exhaustive list – just a sampling of what may be found at each location.

DAY 1 – Friday, May 10 Portland to Coast We'll depart Portland by 9:00 am. Our first stop will be at the Audubon Society sanctuary, where we'll stop to look at birds visiting the feeders. We'll continue to bird the coast and visit various sites for water birds around Tillamook and Netarts bays, and search for seabirds from Cape Meares and Barview Jetty. The diversity of birdlife today will include cormorants, oystercatchers, guillemots and many shorebirds. In mid-afternoon we'll drive south to our lodging near Lincoln City. Dinner tonight and tomorrow night will be at an excellent nearby cafe. Night along the Oregon coast.



DAY 2 – Saturday, May 11 Oregon's Coast After a continental breakfast, we'll depart early for coniferous forest birdwatching. Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Hermit, Wilson's and Black-throated warblers, and Varied Thrush are fairly common here. After lunch we'll drive south to Yaquina Bay, birding the coastline and estuaries en route. In the evening we'll visit The Nature Conservancy's spectacular Cascade Head Preserve. The unique grassy headland supports native prairie, two endangered plants and an endangered butterfly. Night along the Oregon coast.

DAY 3 – Sunday, May 12 Coast to Cascade Mountains

This morning we'll leave for the Cascade Mountains, stopping en route at Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge in the Willamette Valley, and in the Cascade Mountains to look for the American Dipper. From the Cascade Crest eastward habitats are drier. This afternoon we will search out the avian specialties of aspen groves and the ponderosa pine zone. Red Crossbill, White-headed Woodpecker, Pinyon Jay, Mountain and Western bluebirds, Townsend's Solitaire, Black-headed Grosbeak and three nuthatch species are regulars. We'll spend two nights in beautiful cabins beside Lake Creek in the Metolius River area with views of the Cascade Mountains.

DAY 4 – Monday, May 13 The Cascades and Sisters

area We'll need a full day to take several short walks in the idyllic open forests of Ponderosa Pines. Beside rivers and lakes are Cassin's Finch, Calliope Hummingbird, MacGillivray's and Townsend's warblers, and Barrow's Goldeneye. In old burns we'll search for American Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. Northern Pygmy-Owl is frequently found in the area. Night in our Lake Creek cabins.



DAY 5 – Tuesday, May 14 Cascades to Malheur Refuge After early morning birdwatching we'll leave the forested mountains and head east into sagebrush and juniper steppe. Sage Thrasher, Brewer's Sparrow, Rock and Canyon wrens, Prairie Falcon, Golden Eagle, and Swainson's and Ferruginous hawks are typical of this country. By dinnertime we arrive in the heart of the extensive Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Birding is excellent throughout the refuge. Night (next three nights) at the Drovers Inn near Malheur NWR.



DAY 6 – Wednesday, May 15 Malheur National Wildlife Refuge The Malheur National Wildlife Refuge is one of the largest refuges in the western United States and one of the finest birding locations in the country. A variety of wetland and meadow habitats support American White Pelican, Wilson's Phalarope, curlew, avocet, stilt, ibis, egret, bittern, crane, waterfowl, Trumpeter Swan, Black and Forster's Terns and many raptors. This morning we'll visit the wooded oasis around the Malheur

NWR Headquarters. This migrant stopover is the best land bird site in Oregon. Hordes of western migrants and occasional eastern species drop in to this lush patch of cover. Afterward we'll head south along the Blitzen River, searching marshes and ponds for rails, bittern and waterfowl.

DAY 7 – Thursday, May 17 Alvord Desert

This morning we'll be up early for birdwatching at nearby P-Ranch. After breakfast we'll drive to the Alvord Desert on the east side of 9700 foot Steens Mountain. In addition to passing through varied desert habitats, we will stop at lush oases where migrant and vagrant birds congregate. For lunch we'll stop at Fields Oasis (pop. 23), an historic stagecoach stop, where a tame family of Great Horned Owls usually resides, along with Bullock's Orioles and Western Kingbirds in massive birdy willows.

DAY 8 – Friday, May 18 Malheur, Mt. Hood, Portland

This final day we'll work our way back to Portland, investigating en route White-throated Swift habitat at spectacular Crooked and Deschutes River Canyons and the historic Timberline Lodge on Mt. Hood, where Gray Jays, Clark's Nutcrackers, and sometimes Gray-crowned Rosy-finches may be found. The trip ends in Portland around 7:30 pm, where we will have dinner then deliver you to your hotel or the airport.



TOUR LEADERS

Mark Smith has been leading birding and nature tours in Oregon and beyond for over 25 years. Mark emphasizes ecology, conservation, cultural and historical highlights, flora, photography, and enjoying birds! He has guided travelers to Central and South America, Asia, Africa, Madagascar, Australia, and Europe. Mark has led tours for The Nature Conservancy, Portland Audubon, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and Elderhostel. He is co-author of *Birds of Oregon* and has conducted research for The National Science Foundation, Oregon DFW, The Nature Conservancy, and the National Marine Fisheries Service in Alaska.

Daryl Bernard is a long-time birder and amateur naturalist who loves being outdoors and embraces every opportunity to share nature with others. He enjoys organizing trips and tours, and strives to ensure that every participant has a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Previous birding tours organized and led by Daryl include trips to Colorado, Texas, California, and New Mexico, in addition to many local birding trips in Michigan. Daryl is the Executive Director at Seven Ponds Nature Center in southeast Michigan.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging for this tour will be in three different locations:

- Days 1-2 – beachside hotel near Portland
- Days 3-4 – forest cabins in the Metoulis River area
- Days 5-6-7 – Drovers Inn near Malheur NWR area

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

We will travel in a single 15-passenger van. Keeping the group together in one van allows everybody to get on the same birds while on the road, and develops group camaraderie. Since we will be packing up a few times throughout the tour, we ask that you travel as lightly as is practical. This will help maximize space in the van.

FEE and REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Tour Fee: \$2150 per person in double occupancy from Portland, Oregon
- Single Supplement: \$350 (subject to availability)
- Deposit: \$500 (due within three weeks of registration)
- Final Payment Due: April 1, 2019
- Small group size is limited to **9 individuals** and early registration is encouraged

WHAT THE TOUR FEE INCLUDES:

- full guide service – Mark will be with us every step of the way
- hotel accommodations for seven nights
- all meals from lunch on Day 1 to dinner on Day 8 of the tour
- ground transportation in a single, 15-passenger van
- all park entrance fees
- pre-trip information and a post-trip mailing with a list of all species observed by the group
- eBird checklist sharing (for those using eBird)

WHAT THE TOUR FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- your airfare to/from Portland, Oregon
- lodging in Portland the **night before Day 1** and the **evening of Day 8** (if you choose to stay)
- snacks and additional drinks
- alcoholic beverages
- laundry
- other items of a personal nature
- gratuity for local birding guide services (optional)

TELEPHONE/ON-SITE REGISTRATION WILL OPEN AS FOLLOWS:
SEVEN PONDS MEMBERS – MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.
GENERAL PUBLIC – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Registered participants will be mailed a registration form to return with their tour deposit.

To register for this tour, please call SEVEN PONDS NATURE CENTER at (810) 796-3200 or visit the nature center in person. These field tours often fill quickly.

For more information, contact Daryl Bernard at (810) 796-3200 or (989) 513-5195 (cell) or via e-mail at dbernard@sevenponds.org.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF:

Suzette Van Meter – *Black Oystercatcher and Bullock's Oriole*
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife – *White-headed Woodpecker*
Seven Ponds archives – *American Avocets*
Jacqui Robinson – *Varied Thrush*
Shannon Phifer – *Prairie Falcon & Pigeon Guillemot*