

BIRD TREKS

DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA & the MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST First Stop for *Migrants* Crossing the Gulf of Mexico, *Rarities* & many birds with a *Southern Drawl!*

Dates Sunday, 3 April through Saturday, 9 April 2011: 7 days and 6 nights

Please consider combining this tour with the **Southwest Louisiana Tour** that immediately follows. You will receive a **\$200 discount** if you register for both tours.

WHY THIS TRIP? You'll stay in the same **BEACH HOUSE** every night of the tour. The house has shared accommodations, giving us a friendly, family atmosphere, and helping to keep the cost as low as possible. **Home cooking** will help get us off to a good start each day.

HOTSPOTS We'll bird **Dauphin Island**, with its famous **Shell Mound** and **Goat Tree** migrant traps. This area of the Gulf Coast is where migrants get their first view of land after crossing the Gulf of Mexico. It is a great staging area for the travel-weary migrants. Birding each day in the same locations is likely to provide an entirely different assortment of birds. **Bon Secour**, the **Sandhill Crane Refuge**, and the **National Seashore** will provide a diverse group of shorebirds, rails, and waders.

Some of the birds that may show us a little Southern Hospitality include . . .

American White Pelican
Magnificent Frigatebird
Red-necked Grebe
Least Bittern
Tricolored Heron
Swallow-tailed Kite
Mississippi Kite
Black Tern
Sandwich Tern
Gull-billed Tern
Sora
Black Rail (difficult)
Yellow Rail (also difficult)
Black-necked Stilt
Hudsonian Godwit
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Swainson's Thrush

Philadelphia Vireo
White-eyed Vireo
Prothonotary Warbler
Worm-eating Warbler
Swainson's Warbler
Cape May Warbler
Northern Parula
Cerulean Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Kentucky Warbler
Hooded Warbler
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Baltimore Oriole
Orchard Oriole
Blue Grosbeak
Painted Bunting



You will see **Tricolored Heron**
in full breeding plumage.

[Day-by-day itinerary begins on page 2]

- - Sandy Roe

DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA

3 - 9 April 2011

DAY

AGENDA

- 1 Meet at the Mobile, Alabama Airport by about 12:00 noon. We will bird our way to **Dauphin Island**, where we spend every night in the same comfortable, spacious, beach house.
- 2 We'll start every day with a home cooked breakfast prepared for us in our beach house. Birding today will consist of the Dauphin Island hot spots - - Shell Mound, Goat Tree, and the Airport Wetlands. Target birds include **Northern Parula**, **Prothonotary**, and **Worm-eating Warblers**, along with **Sora**, **Hudsonian Godwit**, and a chance for **Black Rail**. Perhaps we'll get lucky again with a **Common Ground-Dove**, as we did last year.
- 3 After checking Shell Mound and Goat Tree for new arrivals, we will board the ferry to Fort Morgan, on the east side of Mobile Bay. We will check out the Banding Station and Bon Secour Refuge. A recent tour group had the honor of banding and releasing a **Swainson's Warbler!** Supper will be at Lambert's, Home of the Throated Rolls.
- 4 We'll check those great spots again, then head for the Mississippi Sandhill Crane Refuge and the National Seashore. These locations may provide us with target birds such as **Sandhill Crane**, **American Oystercatcher**, **American Avocet**, **Stilt Sandpiper**, **Northern Gannet**, and the very elusive **Yellow Rail**.
- 5 After breakfast and checking the local migrant traps, we will drive back into Mississippi. The target sites today will be Ocean Springs Cemetery, the Least Tern Project, and a drive along the white beach, all of the time looking for **terns**, **shorebirds**, and perhaps **marine mammals**. The diminutive **Least Terns** are always a big hit. Supper will be at a seafood restaurant along the beach.
- 6 Today's birding will be a loop around Mobile Bay with an eye to the water for **Reddish Egret** and other aquatic species, and to the sky for two kinds of **Kites**, **Swallow-tailed** and **Mississippi**.
- 7 Enjoy a great breakfast, check the hot spots, and head toward the airport. This is our last day, so we will try to find any birds that had escaped our ever-probing eyes. The tour will end at the Mobile Airport, and a fine tour it will be!



The will be **Piping Plovers** on the beach.
- - Tom Amico

[Important details on page 3]

Click on the following link for a **map of the tour route:**

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=117812928873209532533.0004633b7ed84c88dba06&ll=30.350954,-87.975082&spn=0.434329,0.881653&z=11>

Leader Bird Treks fourth annual birding tour to the **Gulf Coast of Alabama and Mississippi** will be led by **Dan Watkins**, who has birded this area many times. Dan is an experienced birder and trip leader, and his wife Jane makes a wonderful breakfast.

Price \$2095 per person. Register for this tour and the Southwest Louisiana Tour that immediately follows, and receive a **\$200 discount**.

Includes Expert guide service, entrance fees, all ground transportation within Alabama and Mississippi, **ALL meals**, and lodging for six nights. **ALL tips** are also included in the tour fee, except for anything that you may wish to give to your tour leader(s).

Does not include cost of airfare to and from Mobile, Alabama. Bird Treks will, upon request, help you obtain the least expensive air transportation. Also not included are the cost of alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature.

Deposit A \$500 deposit will assure your space on the tour. The balance is due 3 February 2011. We can take a limited number of people, so please register early.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive BIRD TREKS travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 25 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her at Bailey Travel at **1-800-224-5399**, or e-mail her at lori@baileytravel.com. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.



Refund & Cancellation Policy With written notice more than 60 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$75 service fee. With 30-60 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you can provide a replacement. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a tour. Contact Access America at **1-800-284-8300** and mention **BIRD TREKS (ACCAM # F021096)**. You can apply by phone or via the Internet at www.accessamerica.com.

Dan Watkins is your Gulf Coast tour leader.

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