

# BIRD TREKS

## **ATTU, ALASKA - - Spring Migration**

***May 10-24 and May 24-June 7, 2012***

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**ATTU.** A legendary place that needs little introduction to birders. Closer to Russia than to mainland Alaska and located in the Eastern Hemisphere, it's been the site of many first North American records. This island had been seldom visited by birders since the last Attour trip in 2000, but in 2010 we conducted the first spring birding tour in 10 years, and we are pleased to offer two tours in 2012.

We will travel to the island onboard the [M/V Pukuk](#), a 72-foot boat custom built for Alaska charter cruises, giving us ample opportunity for pelagic birding. We should see almost all of Alaska's alcid species including **Whiskered Auklet**. **Short-tailed Albatross**, **Red-legged Kittiwake**, and **Mottled Petrel** are possible. All were seen on our 2010 tour.

Please see the [trip report](#) and [photos](#) from our 2010 expedition. Highlights from 2010 included **Solitary Snipe (a first or second North American record)**, **Red-flanked Bluetail**, and **Hawfinch**, among others.

Birding on Attu isn't just for experts with extensive experience in Alaska, and this trip is particularly good for those who have not yet seen Whiskered Auklet. The probability of seeing this auklet is quite high, so this adventure will likely save you the cost of making a separate trip just to search for Whiskered Auklet. On our 2010 trip, we saw Red-legged Kittiwake and all the alcid species found on the Pribilofs.

The following is a **PARTIAL OVERVIEW OF THE TOUR**. Please [e-mail](#) for more information. This itinerary may be altered due to weather or other circumstances.

**Day 1:** Depart Adak after transporting participants from the airport to the boat. Begin sailing to Attu once everyone is aboard (estimated 7-8 PM).

**Day 2:** In transit to Attu/pelagic birding. Weather permitting, we will be at Kiska Island's Sirius Point, the site of a huge **Least and Crested Auklet** colony, at dusk. This is the time that nearly a million birds return to the site.

**Day 3:** In transit to Attu/pelagic birding. Early in the day, we'll be near Buldir, the most species-diverse seabird breeding site in the Northern Hemisphere. Along with many alcids, we found **Red-legged Kittiwakes** and **Fork-tailed** and **Leach's Storm-Petrels** in these waters in 2010. Later, we'll stop at Ingenstrem Rocks, a hotspot for **Short-tailed Albatross** and other seabirds. Arrival at Attu's Massacre Bay in the evening.

**Day 4-12:** Birding on Attu during the day and overnight on the boat. Breakfast and supper will be on board the boat and box lunches on the island. We will use a skiff to travel between the boat and land. At the end of Day 12, we depart Attu.

**Day 13:** In transit to Adak/pelagic birding.

**Day 14:** In transit to Adak/pelagic birding.

**Day 15:** In the morning, we'll pass through Little Tanaga Strait, a site where **Whiskered Auklets** are often seen in the thousands. Arrive at Adak early afternoon.

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**TOUR FEE: \$7650 plus fuel surcharge.** The surcharge is dependent on the price of fuel and the number of participants. Expect a surcharge of about \$800 to \$900.

The tour fee includes roundtrip travel between Adak and Attu, all meals from supper on the first day to lunch on the tour's final day, and guide services. **It does not include transportation to and from Adak** before and after the tour, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, or any items of a personal nature.

## Contact us for information about group discounts.

**LEADERS:** John Puschock, owner of Zugunruhe Birding Tours, and a second leader will be your leaders on the May 10-24 tour. John led the 2010 tour to Attu, plus numerous tours to Adak in the central Aleutians. Leaders for the May 24-June 7 will be determined later.

**GROUP SIZE:** Each tour is limited to 10 participants.

**PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS/WEATHER:** Attu is infamous for its weather, and birding on the island is physically demanding. Participants must be prepared to hike and bike up to 20 miles per day over rough terrain in rain, high winds, and cold temperatures. We recommend reading the book "Attu: Birding on the Edge" for an idea of what to expect. As we will be traveling by boat, participants should be prepared to encounter rough seas. They will need to climb a 10 to 15-foot ladder to board and disembark the M/V Pukuk in Adak, and a short series of steps to go between the M/V Pukuk and the inflatable boat used to land on Attu.

**REGISTRATION, PAYMENT, and CANCELLATION POLICY:** Full payment is required at the time of registration. Full payment includes the tour fee plus the estimated fuel surcharge. The actual fuel surcharge will be calculated after the boat returns to Homer, at which time an additional payment may be required or a refund will be issued. Signed registration and release forms are also required at the time of registration. Please [e-mail](#) to obtain forms.

No refunds will be made unless another participant is available to take your place and submits payment or if we cancel the tour due to under subscription. If you cancel, priority for the open space will be given to those on the wait list, if there is one. Even if there is a wait list, keep in mind that we may not be able to find a replacement for you, particularly if your cancellation occurs close to the departure date.

We regret having to institute these payment and cancellation policies, but they are required due to the need to provide a commitment to both the boat owner and other tour participants far in advance of the departure date.

**TRIP and MEDICAL INSURANCE:** Particularly due to the restrictive cancellation policy, we **STRONGLY recommend** that you purchase trip insurance to protect yourself in case you need to cancel, luggage is lost, stolen, or damaged, a medical emergency occurs, or other unforeseen circumstances occur. Note that many insurance policies require that you purchase it at the time you make the initial deposit for the tour. Terms and coverage differ among policies. When purchasing trip insurance, please read and understand what is and is not covered by your policy.

We also **STRONGLY recommend** that you check that your medical insurance covers **medical evacuations**, and if it does not, please consider purchasing medical evacuation insurance. Medical care will be extremely limited or non-existent during this tour. A medical emergency will require an evacuation flight, which costs tens of thousands of dollars.

Again, **this is a partial overview of the tour.** Please [e-mail](#) for more information and to obtain registration forms.