

BIRD TREKS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA *SPECIALTY SPECIES*

Tuesday, 4 December through Wednesday, 12 December 2012: 9 days & 8 nights

We'll visit a great variety of habitats along the **Southern California Coast**, the **Laguna and Cuyamaca Mountains and foothills**, the **Anza-Borrego Desert**, and the famed **Salton Sea**.
The tour is designed to find as many **Southern California specialties** as possible.
It is also designed to be educational and lots of FUN!

Target species include . . .

Pacific Loon	Black Phoebe
Eared Grebe	Say's Phoebe
Western Grebe	Cactus Wren
Clark's Grebe	Rock Wren
Brown Pelican	Canyon Wren
Brandt's Cormorant	California Thrasher
Pelagic Cormorant	Crissal Thrasher
White-faced Ibis	Le Conte's Thrasher
Brant	Western Bluebird
White-tailed Kite	Wrentit
California Quail	California Gnatcatcher
Clapper Rail	Black-tailed Gnatcatcher
Marbled Godwit	Bushtit
Long-billed Curlew	Mountain Chickadee
Wandering Tattler	Oak Titmouse
Black Turnstone	Pygmy Nuthatch
Heermann's Gull	Verdin
California Gull	Loggerhead Shrike
Western Gull	Steller's Jay
Common Ground-Dove	Western Scrub-Jay
Inca Dove	Orange-crowned Warbler
Greater Roadrunner	Townsend's Warbler
Barn Owl	Spotted Towhee
Burrowing Owl	California Towhee
Long-eared Owl	Abert's Towhee
White-throated Swift	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Anna's Hummingbird	Brewer's Sparrow
Costa's Hummingbird	Black-throated Sparrow
Acorn Woodpecker	Sage Sparrow
Gila Woodpecker	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Purple Finch
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Lesser Goldfinch
Nuttall's Woodpecker	Lawrence's Goldfinch



Barn Owls
- - Jim & Deva Burns,
Natural Impacts

[More target species and Day 1, on page 2]

Species that are more difficult but quite possible include . . .

Mountain Quail
Pacific Golden-Plover
Surfbird
Ruddy Ground-Dove

Spotted Owl
Tropical Kingbird
Varied Thrush
Tricolored Blackbird

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

4 - 12 December 2012



Day Agenda

- 1 Arrive at Lindbergh Field (San Diego Airport) by late afternoon or early evening. We will bird some nearby areas such as the San Diego River Flood Control Channel, Famosa Slough, and Mission Bay, as time permits. Overnight in San Diego.

Pelagic Cormorant
- - John Puschock
- 2 We'll concentrate on the coastal areas around San Diego. Stops will include Tijuana Slough where one of our targets will be **Clapper Rail**, the estuary of the Tijuana River for '**Large-billed**' **Savannah Sparrow** and possibly **Pacific Golden-Plover**, and the south end of San Diego Bay where we might find a **Eurasian Wigeon** or **Reddish Egret**. Later in the day we'll continue north along the coast to La Jolla Cove for **Black Turnstone**, **Wandering Tattler**, and possibly **Surfbird**. If time permits, we'll proceed to Torrey Pines State Park and look for **California Gnatcatcher**. Our second night in San Diego.
- 3 Moving inland, we'll bird in the foothills, stopping at locations such as Lake Hodges and Mission Gorge. We should be seeing many of the 'California' birds by this point of the tour: **California Gnatcatcher**, **California Towhee**, **California Thrasher**, **California Quail**, and **California Gull**. The coastal form of the **Sage Sparrow** ('Bell's' Sparrow), **Wrentit**, **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, and **Oak Titmouse** are several other California specialties that will be targeted. Third and final night in San Diego.
- 4 Today we'll make the drive from San Diego to the Salton Sea. Along the way, we'll be passing over the mountains where we'll stop to bird the higher elevation chaparral habitat. **Fox Sparrow** and **Lawrence's Goldfinch** are likely additions to the trip list. We'll be certain to be at the world-famous Salton Sea for the spectacular sight as the sun sets behind the mountains. Overnight in Calipatria.

[Day 5 begins on page 3]

- 5 The Salton Sea and surrounding areas have incredible birding, and we'll take the entire day to explore all of the possibilities. Desert birding will be the focus early in the day. Many birds of the coast are locally replaced by their desert counterparts. Instead of California Quail, Nuttall's Woodpecker, California Gnatcatcher, and California Thrasher, our targets will be **Gambel's Quail**, **Ladder-backed Woodpecker**, **Black-tailed Gnatcatcher**, and **Crissal Thrasher**, among others. **Ruddy Ground-Dove** is a good possibility. We'll be looking for **longspurs**, **Mountain Plover**, **Long-billed Curlew**, and **Burrowing Owls** in the agricultural fields that surround the southern portion of the Salton Sea. Heading back to the Sea itself, shorebirds and other aquatic species will round out our list for the day. **Yellow-footed Gulls**, while common in the summer, are rare at this time of year, but we'll definitely be looking for this local species. Second night in Calipatria.

- 6 We'll spend much of the day in the Anza-Borrego Desert. We'll stop at Clark's Dry Lake to look for **Le Conte's Thrasher**, where we should also see **Black-throated** and **Brewer's Sparrows**. **Barn** and **Long-eared Owls** often roost at the Tamarisk Grove campground. **Costa's Hummingbird**, **Rock Wren**, and **Verdin** are just a few of the other species we should see. Our final night in Calipatria.

- 7 We'll drive west today and visit the higher elevation habitats of the Laguna and Cuyamaca mountains. In the mountaintop pine forests we'll see **Acorn Woodpeckers**, **Steller's Jays**, and **Pygmy Nuthatches**. We'll also return to some nice chaparral habitat. This is the home of **Mountain Quail**, a species that is often very difficult to see. Spending some extra time in this region will increase our chances of finding this elusive bird. Overnight back in San Diego.

- 8 This will be an 'open' day to look for anything that may have eluded us. We may want to have an early start in the chaparral to try for **Mountain Quail** or **Lawrence's Goldfinch**, or maybe we'll visit a rocky coastal area to look for **Surfbird** or **Black Oystercatcher**. There is always the chance for a hotline bird or two for us to pursue. Our final night of the tour in San Diego.

- 9 If time permits, we will do some morning birding before heading to the San Diego Airport to catch our departing flights, the end a wonderful long week of birding in **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**.

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SPECIAL NOTE If you are not a US citizen, please have appropriate identification and full documentation such as a passport or green card with you. We won't be traveling out of the country, but we may pass through US Border Patrol checkpoints on our way to and from the Salton Sea. Non-citizens may be asked to provide this documentation.

[Final important details are on page 4]

- Leader** **Jason Horn** or **Bob Schutsky** will be the leader of this tour. Either Jason or Bob do his best to help you find all of the specialty birds of Southern California.
- Price** \$2895 per person based upon double occupancy and a minimum of three participants. Single accommodations are available at an extra charge of \$495.
- Includes** Expert guide service, lodging for all eight nights, **ALL meals**, all ground transportation within California, and entrance fees. **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 the cost of alcoholic beverages or items of a personal nature. Also not included is the cost of airfare to San Diego.
- Deposit** A \$700 deposit will assure your reservation on the tour. The balance is due 4 October 2012.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive BIRD TREKS travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 26 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her through Bailey Travel at **1-800-224-5399**, or you can e-mail **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 and 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 provide a replacement for your spot on the tour. No partial refund can be given once the tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Contact **Allianz Global Assistance** (formerly Access America) and mention **BIRD TREKS ACCAM # F021096**. You can apply via the Internet at **www.allianztravelinsurance.com** or by phone at **1-800-284-8300**.



We'll look for the extremely handsome **Yellow-footed Gull** at the Salton Sea.

- - *John Puschock*

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