



OREGON COAST

WINTER WEEKEND

25–29 January 2017

\$1,855 single/\$1,635 double

We have been based in Oregon for almost years 20 now, and we have explored all corners of the state. One of the places to which we frequently return is the spectacular Oregon Coast, where the winter birding can truly outstanding. After successful trips to the north coast in 2013 and 2014, we are pleased to once again offer this extended weekend adventure.

In winter, sea ducks, loons, and alcids flock to the protected bays and the relatively calm waters inside the Columbia River, and a host of resident and wintering land-birds perfectly complement the abundant water birds. Combine outstanding birding with warm northwestern hospitality and some of North America's finest wines and freshest seafood, and you too will return to the amazing Oregon Coast.

*Your host and guide,
Stephen Shunk*

TRIP SUMMARY

From the mouth of the Columbia River southward along spectacular rocky bluffs and into rich tidal estuaries, the northern Oregon Coast offers some seriously productive winter birding. This weekend escape offers an outstanding introduction to winter birds of the Northwest. For starters, we will enjoy an abundance of sea ducks, with excellent chances to view Harlequin and Long-tailed ducks and all three scoter species. We could find up to 4 loon species, with Yellow-billed Loons annual in the region. Wintering “rockpipers” should include plenty of Surfbirds and Black Turnstones, and we could easily find a resident Black Oystercatcher or wintering Rock Sandpiper among them. In many years, the mouth of the Columbia is visited by a Snow Bunting or Snowy Owl!



The area's productive agricultural lands will host large collections of dabbling ducks, which always include a few Eurasian Wigeon; we will see 100s or even 1000s of Cackling Geese, with an excellent chance for a wintering Emperor Goose. Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon are conspicuous on the shores and fields of the region, and we should easily see all three western cormorants, as well as up to six different Alcids. Shorelines will be littered with Glaucous-winged and Mew gulls, with Glaucous and Thayer's gulls often mixed in. We could also see pulsating clouds of wintering Dunlin. And though raptors and waterbirds may appear dominant, we will also enjoy a number of special resident and wintering passerines, including the northernmost Wrentits in this species' narrow range.

We will begin and end our tour in Portland, Oregon, heading west from the airport toward the mouth of the Columbia River. Upon reaching the lower Columbia River estuary, we will arrive in Astoria, where we will spend all four nights of the trip, perfect situated to explore Oregon's northwest corner. Depending on local bird reports and our success at finding certain species, the weekend may also take us south into Tillamook County or northward across the Columbia River into Washington to explore Ilwaco and Cape Disappointment.

In addition to the birds mentioned above, we will also keep watch for the following winter and resident specialties of the region: “Black” Brant; Greater Scaup; Red-necked Grebe; Sandhill Crane; Rough-legged Hawk; Gyrfalcon; Ancient Murrelet; Marbled Murrelet; Surfbird; Black Turnstone; Red-breasted Sapsucker; Northern Shrike; Chestnut-backed Chickadee; Pacific Wren; American Dipper; Steller's Jay; “Sooty” Fox Sparrow; and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

TOUR ITINERARY & DAILY ACTIVITIES

Our tour itinerary will roughly follow the outline below, but each day's birding stops will be adjusted based on local bird reports and our success at finding certain species. All dinners and nights will be in Astoria.

Jan 25—Meet participants at Portland Airport (PDX) at noon. Two-hour drive to the coast, not including at least 2 birding stops en route.

Jan 26—Breakfast at the hotel, then drive to Ft. Stevens State Park and mouth of Columbia River; several birding stops here. Lunch in Seaside. Afternoon birding the boat basins and estuaries along Young's Bay.

Jan 27—Hotel breakfast, then birding shoreline and adjacent habitats in Seaside and Cannon Beach. Lunch in Cannon Beach. Afternoon birding up Saddle Mountain or into Tillamook County, depending on weather.

Jan 28—After breakfast, morning birding on the Washington side of the Columbia River, including Fort Columbia, Ilwaco, and Cape Disappointment. Lunch in Ilwaco. Afternoon birding back in Oregon, in wetland habitats upstream of Astoria.

Jan 29—Depart hotel after breakfast for leisurely drive back to Portland. Several possible birding stops along the way. Lunch in Portland and return to PDX by 2 p.m.

Note that while we will review our bird list each night, we are not big "listers," and our priorities will instead be to get excellent looks at desired species and to learn about their natural history and ecology in the local habitats. The region is also rife with cultural history (including stories of Lewis & Clark), and interpretive opportunities will be scattered throughout the trip.

This particular tour will appeal to birders with a wide range of skill and ability levels, including novice birders. As with any group birding experience, those birders with more advanced skills will likely see and identify more of the anticipated species, while less experienced birders can be guaranteed excellent looks at many potential "life-birds." Your lead guide, Stephen Shunk, is a patient, experienced educator, and he will work diligently to help each participant learn bird identification, as well as general natural and cultural history of the region.

This tour is for moderately active people in good health. Each day will involve plenty of light walking, although the weather may force us to do some birding from the vehicle. We will occasionally walk over rugged terrain, but individual walks will be short and at a "birdwatcher's pace," allowing each participant equal chance to view birds from all angles. We may walk a total of 2 to 3 miles each day, weather permitting.

The days are relatively short at this latitude, with about 9 hours of daylight from approximately 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We will typically eat breakfast at about 7:30 a.m. each morning, and we will often bird until sunset, though the pace of this tour will be fairly casual. Nearly all of our birding will be within a one-hour drive of Astoria, giving us plenty of time for a break before dinner and an evening review of our day.

You will have two guides on most days of the tour, and the group will travel in a large passenger van or a minivan, depending on the group size. We will take a maximum of six participants, allowing everyone to have their own window seat. We will repeatedly enter and exit the vehicle from an entrance that is high off the ground, although a step-stool will be provided if we use the large van. This is a non-smoking tour. We will stay in non-smoking hotels and eat in non-smoking restaurants.



CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

We are traveling and birding in winter on the Oregon Coast, so you should be prepared for cold, rainy weather. Average January highs in the region are in the upper 40s F, with average lows in the upper 30s F. Average precipitation is about 70%, with only an 8% chance of heavy rain. We may experience fog, rain, or even extended periods of sun, all on a single day. You should be prepared to be outside for short periods in cold, wet weather. You will want to dress in layers, with a waterproof outer layer and waterproof footwear. You may wish to bring rubber boots. We will have plenty of room for luggage, so do not compromise your ability to be comfortable in a wide variety of wintry conditions.

We recommend that you bring your own binoculars and field guide. If you wish to borrow a pair of binoculars for the trip, please let us know in advance. The birding on this trip lends itself well to spotting scope use, although we will have at least one spotting scope available for the group. We carry an extensive birding library for reference and learning. We encourage you to take photos as souvenirs, but this is not a photography tour. If you wish to focus on photographic opportunities, we ask that you remain sensitive to the group's needs and the tour schedule. Ensuring that everyone in the group gets their binoculars on a bird will take precedence over shooting photos, and it may not be practical to stop just for photographs. You should also be prepared to protect all your gear from the weather.



LODGING, MEALS & REFRESHMENTS

We will spend all four nights in the scenic Best Western hotel in Astoria, Oregon. The tour fees below include lodging for both single and double occupancy. If you are traveling with a birding partner and wish to share a room, we should be able to accommodate you. If we are unable to place you with a roommate, you will be responsible for the single tour rate.

Your tour fee includes all meals, snacks, and non-alcoholic beverages from dinner on the first evening through lunch on the last day. We will eat breakfast in the hotel each morning, which will offer a decent selection of hot and cold foods. Coffee and tea will be available for early risers in your rooms and the hotel lobby. Astoria also boasts several fun, delicious restaurants, featuring the best in Northwest wines, beers, and cuisine. We will eat lunches and dinners in restaurants that appeal to a wide variety of food preferences, but it may be difficult to accommodate the most restrictive diets. If you maintain such a diet, remember that appropriate foods may not be available at restaurants or even in local grocery stores. To prepare for these contingencies you may wish to bring some foods that will satisfy your personal preferences. In addition to main meals, we typically provide snack foods and beverages in the field.

The survey included in your registration materials asks for your dietary restrictions and preferences. While we cannot honor every food and drink request, the more detailed your response, the better we can serve you. If you do not provide us with any feedback, we will assume you will eat almost anything!



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Your trip fee includes transportation from Portland International Airport (PDX). If possible, please arrive at Portland Airport by noon on January 25 to allow ample time for a leisurely drive and some casual birding as we head to the coast. We will return to Portland by 2:00 p.m. on January 29 for 3 p.m. or later departures. If this schedule is difficult for you, let us know and we will do our best to help with your travel plans. If you need assistance with travel, we recommend DTR Travel, based in Colorado: www.dtrtravel.com.



Paradise Birding Tour Confirmation and Registration

Greetings! This form will confirm your registration on the following tour:

TITLE: _____ **DATE(S):** _____

Please complete and return to the address below, along with either your nonrefundable \$100 deposit or the complete tour fee. If you have already paid your deposit, your balance is due 90 days prior to the tour for domestic, 120 days for international tours. For your convenience, we happily accept VISA, Mastercard and American Express. Please also complete the Liability Waiver found on page two. THANK YOU!

Full Name: _____ Nickname (if any): _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Sex: _____ Birth date: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Paradise Birding T-shirt preference; please circle your size and color. We'll do our best to accommodate you!

Size: Small—Medium—Large—Extra Large—XX Large | **Color:** Unisex (Blue—Green) or Ladies (Lavender—Yellow)

Would you like to receive periodic emailed updates & birding tips from Paradise Birding? Yes No

Please tell us how you first heard about this Paradise Birding tour: _____

Roommate preference: *(If you will travel with a birding partner and wish to share a room, or if you are willing to share a room with another birder of the same sex, please indicate this here. If we are unable to match you with another birder, or where only single rooms are available, you will responsible for the single tour fee.)*

Dietary Preferences: *(Drink & food preferences. Please be specific. Our tours are often in remote regions without a wide variety of food choices, so we do our shopping for snacks and picnic lunches in advance. Also list any food allergies or dietary restrictions.)*

Medical Information: *(Please alert us to any medical or physical conditions that may affect you or your group's activities on an outdoor tour in remote locations; include any history of heart trouble, asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, as well as environmental and medication allergies. Please also include current prescription medications being taken. Use the back of this page or another sheet if necessary. NOTE: Anyone with an existing or potentially serious medical condition should consult a physician before participating in any outdoor or travel adventure.)*

Emergency Contact: *(Please include detailed contact information for the person or persons we should contact in case of an emergency.)*

Name(s) and relationship(s) to you: _____

Contact number(s): _____

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ or Check #: _____

Signature: _____ Charge/Check Amount: \$ _____

Paradise Birding LLC | Stephen Shunk, Owner & Lead Guide

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HIKING AND BIRD WATCHING PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT and RELEASE and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK

In consideration of the services of PARADISE BIRDING LLC, their officers, agents, employees, volunteers, advertisers, and stock holders, and all other persons or entities associated with this business (hereinafter collectively referred to as PARADISE BIRDING LLC) I agree as follows:

Although PARADISE BIRDING LLC has taken reasonable steps to provide you with appropriate equipment and skilled guides so you can enjoy an activity for which you may not be skilled, we wish to remind you this activity is not without risk. Certain risks cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of this activity. The same elements that contribute to the unique character of this activity can be causes of loss or damage to your equipment or accidental injury, illness, or in extreme cases, permanent trauma, paralysis, or death. We do not want to frighten you or reduce your enthusiasm for this activity, but we do think it is important for you to know in advance what to expect and that you be informed of the inherent risks. The following describes some, but not all, of those risks:

- 1.) Accidents can occur on land. You could slip or fall during a hike, causing damage to equipment, personal injury, or even death. You could also otherwise be injured while hiking or visiting other land-based phenomena.
- 2.) You could suffer injuries or trauma during the land and air transportation portions of the trip, in vehicles or aircraft.
- 3.) Exposure to the natural elements can be uncomfortable or harmful. You should be aware that this exposure could cause hypothermia, sunburn, illness from drinking water or food, and/or dehydration.
- 4.) You will be staying at accommodations not owned or operated by PARADISE BIRDING LLC. You could suffer injury, damage to equipment, trauma, or even death while staying at these places.
- 5.) Errors on the part of PARADISE BIRDING LLC and its employees, including insufficient instruction or assistance.

I am aware that this birding tour, including related transportation and activities, entails risks of injury or death to myself. I understand the description of these risks is not complete and that other unknown or unanticipated risks may result in injury or death. I agree to assume responsibility for the risks identified herein and other risks inherent to a birding trip. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary and I elect to participate in spite of the risks.

I certify that I am fully capable of participating in this activity. Therefore, I assume full responsibility for myself, including my minor children, for bodily injury, death, and loss of personal property and expenses thereof as a result of those inherent risks and dangers and of my negligence in participating in this activity.

I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect. In the event that I file a lawsuit against PARADISE BIRDING LLC, I agree to do so solely in the state of Oregon, and I further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state.

I have read, understood, and accepted the terms and conditions stated herein and acknowledge that this agreement shall be effective and binding upon myself, my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and estate for all members of my family including any minors accompanying me. I acknowledge I am not relying on any oral, written, or visual representations or statements made by PARADISE BIRDING LLC, including those made in its brochure and other promotional material, to induce me to go on the birding tour. I also acknowledge that in any and all promotional material the use of the word "safe," "safe as possible," or the like does not mean, imply or suggest that this trip is without risk. I have also read and agree to comply with the PARADISE BIRDING LLC cancellation policy.

Photographic Release: PARADISE BIRDING LLC reserves the right to take photographs or film records of any PARADISE BIRDING LLC tour, program, or activity, and each trip member hereby agrees that PARADISE BIRDING LLC may use such photographs or film records for promotional, commercial, or any other marketing purposes, including Internet use.

Name (please print): _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

If under 18, parent or guardian signature: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Cell/Primary Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____

Name of Trip: _____ Trip Date: _____

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