



AVIAN JEWELS OF ARIZONA HUMMINGBIRDS, TROGONS, WARBLERS & MORE

JULY 14-22, 2025

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Chiricahua Mountains, Arizona © Barry Zimmer

In the birding world, Southeast Arizona and hummingbirds are nearly synonymous! An incredible fifteen species are possible in late summer in this small corner of the state and many of them can be found nowhere else in the United States. Often a row of feeders are buzzing with so many individuals that it is hard to decide where to look first. For eastern birders accustomed to one species of hummingbird it can be a mind-boggling experience, and even most western states are home to only two or three varieties. In Southeast Arizona, however, due to a proximity to both the northern end of the Sierra Madre Occidental and the southern end of the Rocky Mountain chain, there is a diversity of hummingbirds unmatched anywhere else in the country.

At least eight hummingbird species found here are regular breeders: Black-chinned, Costa's, Broad-tailed, Anna's, Broad-billed, Violet-crowned, Blue-throated Mountain-Gem, and Rivoli's (formerly Magnificent). Three others occur, mainly as late summer/early fall migrants: Rufous, Allen's (rare), and Calliope. The remaining four – Lucifer, Berylline, White-eared, and Plain-capped Starthroat – occur as post-breeding vagrants from Mexico. Of these four, all but the starthroat and Berylline

typically occur on an annual basis, and late July/early August is the prime time to search for these rarities. Arizona is truly a mecca for first-hand study of hummingbird identification, ecology, range, and other related topics.

In addition to the hummingbirds, there are other rich birding rewards to be found on this tour. We will spend time searching for most of the specialty birds of southeastern Arizona including Elegant Trogon; Whiskered Screech-Owl; Arizona Woodpecker; Gilded Flicker (declining); Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet; Greater Pewee; Buff-breasted, Dusky-capped, and Sulphur-bellied flycatchers; Tropical and Thick-billed kingbirds; Mexican Chickadee; Bridled Titmouse; Olive and Red-faced warblers; Painted Redstart; Rufous-winged, Botteri's and Five-striped sparrows; Yellow-eyed Junco; Varied Bunting; and many more. We will be working our way through the best of Southeast Arizona's birding hotspots, and, although we won't have time to search out all of the regional specialties (as on our Spring Grand Arizona tour), we invariably find a high proportion of them. North American rarities are a good possibility too, and examples from recent tours include Tufted Flycatcher (2017), Flame-colored Tanager (2004, 2006-2009), Rufous-capped Warbler (2006), Slate-throated Redstart (2013), Aztec Thrush (2006), Sinaloa Wren (2009), Black-capped Gnatcatcher (2004-2007, 2009, 2013-2015, 2018, 2019), Rose-throated Becard (2005, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024), and Short-tailed Hawk (2002-2004, 2009, 2021) – all very rare birds.



Other Southwestern species that we have a chance to encounter include Zone-tailed and Gray hawks; Montezuma and Scaled quail; Common Ground-Dove; Greater Roadrunner; Lesser Nighthawk; White-throated Swift; Gila and Ladder-backed woodpeckers; Western Flycatcher; Vermilion Flycatcher; Ash-throated and Brown-crested flycatchers; Cassin's and Western kingbirds; Bell's, Plumbeous and Hutton's vireos; Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay; Mexican Jay; Chihuahuan Raven; Juniper Titmouse; Verdin; Pygmy Nuthatch; Cactus, Rock and Canyon wrens; Black-tailed Gnatcatcher; Bendire's and Crissal thrashers; Phainopepla; Lucy's, Black-throated Gray, and Grace's warblers; Western and Hepatic tanagers; Canyon and Abert's towhees; Cassin's, Rufous-

crowned, Black-chinned, and Black-throated sparrows; Pyrrhuloxia; Bronzed Cowbird; Hooded and Scott's orioles; and Lesser Goldfinch.

July 14, Day 1: Arrival in Tucson. Participants should plan to arrive in Tucson (airport code TUS) before 3:00 p.m. today and transfer to our hotel where a room will be reserved in your name. We will meet in the hotel lobby at 3:30 p.m. for a quick, get-acquainted session followed by some brief afternoon birding. A visit to the nearby Sweetwater wetlands should provide a nice introduction to many of the common birds of the area. Possibilities here include Gambel's Quail, Gila Woodpecker, the localized Tropical Kingbird, Verdin, Abert's Towhee, and the southwestern race of Song Sparrow. We may go from birding directly to dinner.

NIGHT: Hampton Inn Tucson Airport, Tucson

July 15, Day 2: Madera Canyon. We depart Tucson this morning heading toward the Santa Rita Mountains. We'll make a stop or two along the way in the lower-elevation grasslands and scrub, including some good habitat for Botteri's, Cassin's, and Rufous-winged sparrows; Varied Bunting; Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet; Ash-throated Flycatcher; Bell's Vireo; Blue Grosbeak; and others. Eventually we'll reach the famous Madera Canyon. Feeders hanging outside the Santa Rita Lodge and other canyon lodges often bustle with bird activity; Broad-billed, Black-chinned, and the incredible Rivoli's hummingbirds are common breeding species in the canyon, while migrant Rufous, Anna's, and Broad-tailed hummingbirds are possible as well.



Broad-billed Hummingbird © Barry Zimmer

In addition to hummingbirds, we should find a variety of other species in the vicinity of the feeders. Regular visitors include Acorn Woodpecker, Mexican Jay, Bridled Titmouse, and Black-headed Grosbeak, while Brown-crested and Sulphur-bellied flycatchers nest in the adjacent sycamores and oak-juniper woods. As the day progresses we will explore other parts of Madera Canyon and adjacent habitats. Depending on the day's events, we may bird higher in the canyon, return to the scrub and grasslands, or even strike out after some nearby rarity

if one is reported. Some of the many exciting bird possibilities include Elegant Trogon, Arizona Woodpecker, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Painted Redstart, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Hepatic Tanager.

We may have an optional owling excursion this evening to search for both Whiskered and Western screech-owls and possibly Common Poorwill.



Western Screech-Owl © Barry Zimmer

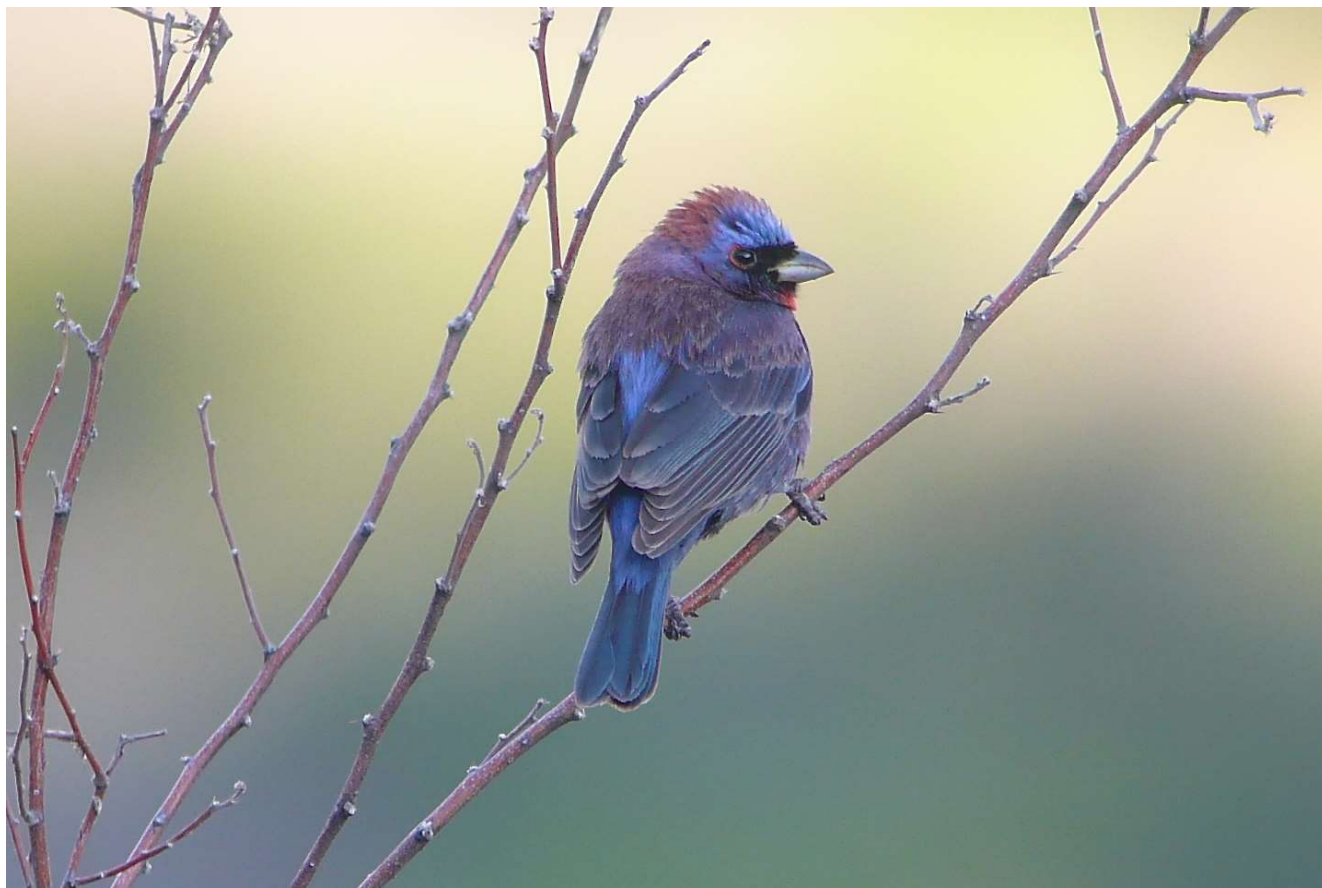
NIGHT: Hampton Inn Tucson Airport, Tucson

July 16, Day 3: Madera Canyon to Nogales. This morning we will likely revisit portions of the Santa Rita Mountains. Florida or Montosa canyon would be likely options. Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Rock and Canyon wrens, Lucy's Warbler, and fabulously plum-colored Varied Buntings might be found in these areas. If any Five-striped Sparrows are being seen in nearby Box Canyon, that would be our likely option. A cruise through Green Valley could produce the highly localized and declining Gilded Flicker. After lunch we will work our way southward to the Nogales/ Patagonia area. Riparian habitats in this region harbor the likes of Gray and Zone-tailed hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Violet-crowned Hummingbird, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Thick-billed Kingbird, and Summer Tanager, among others. Two small ponds near Rio Rico could produce Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, the localized Tropical Kingbird, stunning Vermilion Flycatchers, and Phainopeplas. Even the rare Rose-throated Becard has been seen in some years recently.

NIGHT: Best Western Sonora Inn & Suites, Nogales

July 17, Day 4: California Gulch; Sonoita Grasslands; Drive to Sierra Vista. Following a 5:00 a.m. breakfast we will venture west of Nogales through the Pajarito Mountains to remote California Gulch. This is currently the most reliable place to find Five-striped Sparrow in the United States. Mid-summer is prime time to locate this highly sought species, as their breeding is often timed to coincide with the arrival of the monsoon rains. En route to the gulch, we will carefully scan the roadsides for the nearly mythical Montezuma Quail. Golden Eagle

(uncommon), Greater Roadrunner, Costa's Hummingbird, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Rock and Canyon wrens, Varied Bunting, and Scott's Oriole are among the other possibilities. After lunch in Nogales, we may revisit the Patagonia area if we are missing any of the specialties there. At any rate, by midafternoon, we will be heading eastward through the Sonoita grasslands en route to Sierra Vista. Horned Lark, Chihuahuan Meadowlark and Grasshopper Sparrow might be encountered along the way. After checking into our hotel, we will likely make a late evening visit to Ash Canyon in search of the highly localized Lucifer Hummingbird.



Varied Bunting © Barry Zimmer

NIGHT: Hampton Inn, Sierra Vista

July 18, Day 5: Huachuca Mountains and Canyons. We have two nights in Sierra Vista to do justice to the many potential birding spots in the Huachuca Mountains and canyons. Today offers a number of options, including visiting Carr Canyon, (the most likely choice), Miller Canyon, Hunter Canyon or Ramsey Canyon. Carr Canyon offers the best location for Buff-breasted Flycatcher. Other good possibilities include Zone-tailed Hawk, Arizona Woodpecker, Greater Pewee, Brown Creeper, Virginia's (scarce), Black-throated Gray, and Grace's warblers, Painted Redstart and Yellow-eyed Junco among others. Miller Canyon often has the best hummingbird show on our entire route, and an afternoon visit to the feeders there is a near certainty. Rivoli's, Broad-billed, Black-chinned, Anna's and Broad-tailed are expected. The rare White-eared Hummingbird has been sighted here almost annually for the past several years. Migrant Rufous and Calliope are also possible. Whichever option we choose, this is certain to be a birdy day. If we still need either species, we will likely do some evening owling to look for Western and Whiskered screech-owls, as well as Common Poorwill.



Elegant Trogon © Barry Zimmer

NIGHT: Hampton Inn, Sierra Vista

July 19, Day 6: Sierra Vista to Chiricahua Mountains. We will likely spend the morning visiting one of the canyons in the Huachucas looking for any species we may have missed. Miller Canyon may be our destination. A steep hike further up the canyon (above the hummingbird feeders) sometimes yields the highly sought Spotted Owl or possibly Greater Pewee or the incomparable Red-faced Warbler. By midday we will leave the Huachucas and head for the majestic Chiricahua Mountains. Our route will take us through the Sulphur Springs Valley where such species as Scaled Quail, Swainson's Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Chihuahuan Raven, and Bendire's Thrasher might be found. When we arrive at our lodging for the next two nights in Portal, we are again in the midst of some of the best hummingbird watching Arizona has to offer. Time permitting, we may visit some local feeders before dinner, where the increasingly localized Blue-throated Mountain-Gem can often be found.

NIGHT: Portal Peak Lodge, Portal

July 20-21, Days 7-8: Portal and the Chiricahua Mountains; Return to Tucson. We will have the better part of two days to enjoy this incredible area. Unmatched in birds and scenery, Cave Creek Canyon will provide a fitting conclusion to our tour. Cave Creek is home to many highly-sought species, including the incomparable Elegant Trogon, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Hutton's and Plumbeous vireos, and Painted Redstart. The juniper habitat at mid-elevation hosts Black-chinned (very uncommon & declining here) and Lark sparrows, Rock Wren, Juniper Titmouse, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay (recently split off from the Western Scrub-Jay complex), and other species. Returning to higher elevations, it is here in the Chiricahuas that we will have our first and only chance to see Mexican Chickadee. Other high elevation species like Greater Pewee as well as Olive, Grace's, and Red-faced warblers are possible here as well. Evening owling options could produce a Common Poorwill, Mexican Whip-poor-will, Barn Owl or some interesting mammals or reptiles.

By mid-day on Day 8, we will head toward Tucson, stopping en route at Willcox to check for migrant shorebirds (possibilities include American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Baird's Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, and more). A pond in the middle of the desert is a magnet for migrant birds and there's no telling what rarity might drop in. At tonight's farewell dinner, we will recap a superb week of birding amid Arizona's natural wonders.

NIGHTS: Portal Peak Lodge, Portal (July 21)
Hampton Inn Tucson Airport, Tucson (July 22)

July 22, Day 9: Departure for Home. Tour participants may plan to depart for home at any time today.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 10 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: Barry Zimmer and Brian Gibbons



Barry Zimmer has been birding since the age of eight. His main areas of expertise lie in North and Central America, but his travels have taken him throughout much of the world, including such exotic locales as Japan, Russia, Madagascar, Africa, and New Zealand. Barry is a longtime member of the New Mexico Bird Records Committee, and served on the Texas Bird Records Committee for 12 years. He has coauthored three books: *Birds of the Trans-Pecos*, *A Birder's Guide to the Rio Grande Valley*, and *Birds and Birdfinding in the El Paso Area*. Barry has a keen interest in nature photography, having captured over 1,600 species of birds on film. His other interests include sports (a diehard Red Sox fan), cooking, and movies. He received his degree in psychology at the University of Texas in El Paso. Barry resides in El Paso with his wife, Yvonne, and their daughter, Alexandra.



Brian Gibbons grew up in suburban Dallas where he began exploring the wild world in local creeks and parks. Chasing butterflies and any animal that was unfortunate enough to cross paths with the Gibbons boys occupied his childhood. A wooden bird feeder kit sparked a flame that was stoked by a gift of the *Golden Guide* and family camping trips to Texas state parks. Thirty years ago Brian attended two VENT camps for young birders. Birds are now his primary interest, but all things wild continue to captivate him. After college, Brian undertook a variety of field biology research jobs that have taken him to the Caribbean, the Bering Sea, and the land of the midnight sun, arctic Alaska. He enjoys working with kids, hoping to spark environmental awareness through birds. For many years Brian's field research has involved bird banding. His most amazing recoveries were a female Wilson's Warbler that had been banded in Alaska and was captured by Brian in Colorado, and a Sooty Tern that perished after a hurricane on the Texas coast; it had plied the Gulf of Mexico and the oceans of the world for 24 years. Brian's recreational bird-seeking has taken him to Machu Picchu in Peru, the Great Wall in China, the plains of East Africa, and the Himalayas in Nepal. Brian leads birding trips in the United States, Central America, the Caribbean, South Africa, and Europe. As well as being a fanatical birder, he loves capturing birds with photography. He lives in Tucson, Arizona with his wife, Lacreia Johnson, and their son, Grayson.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is **\$4,395** per person in double occupancy from Tucson, Arizona. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Tucson and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$695**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$500** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at <https://ventbird.com>) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days (February 14, 2025) prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

Cancellation by Participant:

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$250** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For participants' protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

| <u>If participant cancels:</u> | <u>Participant's refund will be:</u> |
|--|--|
| 180 days or more before departure date | Participant's deposit minus \$250* |
| 179 to 151 days before departure date | No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour fee will be refunded |
| 150 days or less before departure date | No refund available |

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Cancellation by VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A "**Force Majeure**" event means any act beyond VENT's control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: <https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip cost in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

In line with the decision made by the federal government (including the CDC), Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a **Coronavirus FAQ** page on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link: https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per-person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could

occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: You should limit your luggage to one medium-sized soft-sided bag and one carry-on bag per person. Please avoid large, hard suitcases if possible, as van space is limited.

CLIMATE: Summer is the "monsoon" season in Southeastern Arizona. Frequent afternoon and evening thundershowers considerably ameliorate the desert heat and bring about a resurgence of intense biological activity. This is the famous "second spring" in Arizona when many birds are in full song and breeding activity is visible at every hand. The tour begins and ends at relatively low elevations in Tucson (just over 2,000'), but most of the trip is spent in the mountain canyons at medium elevations (5,000'-8,300'). Expect daytime temperatures in the high 90s to low 100s in Tucson and in the low to mid 80s in the mountains. We will get an early start as a rule (breakfast will be around 6:00 a.m. most mornings, but will be at 5:00 a.m. on our morning in Nogales), and when possible, take a break in the heat of the afternoon. If the monsoon is late in developing, it can be very dry, so skin lotion and lip balm are very useful. We will be spending a lot of time above 5,000' in elevation, getting as high as 8,300'. If storms hit at these high elevations, it will cool off dramatically and may get down into the 60s or lower (our 2021 tour had high temperatures in the upper 50's one day at Rustler Park!).

CLOTHING: The temperate climate of Arizona's mountains promises warm days and cool nights. Lightweight clothing, hat, and sunscreen are recommended for mid-day, but long-sleeved shirts and possibly even sweaters are appropriate for mountain evenings. Shorts will be okay for some outings, but long pants might be better for most birding. Light hiking boots are highly recommended, and one should be prepared for rain showers with a raincoat or travel umbrella. Informal dress is the rule throughout.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good condition, along with a belt pack or day pack (for carrying books, sunscreen, camera, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag. Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

Everyone should bring an alarm clock as certain accommodations on this tour do not have wake-up service. We also recommend a small water bottle for carrying water in the field. A small flashlight or headlamp will be useful for optional night outings.

CELL PHONE SERVICE & INTERNET: Cell phone service and internet are generally available throughout the tour; however, most cell providers do not have service in the Portal area. As of this time, only Verizon customers have service at this location. Wi-Fi is available in the Portal Peak Lodge. **Also please note that cell phones with reception in the Portal area are generally picking up service from a tower in New Mexico and thus will change over to Mountain Daylight Saving Time (Arizona does not go on to Daylight Saving Time).**

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19.

Insect Repellents – There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin) is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.
- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers’ Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

BIRD FIELD GUIDES:

Dunn, Jon L. & Jonathan Alderfer (Editors). *National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. 7th edition, 2017.

Howell, Steve N.G. *Hummingbirds of North America: The Photographic Guide*. New York: Natural World/Academic Press, 2002. The best single guide to North American hummingbirds.

Kaufman, Kenn. *Advanced Birding*. Peterson Field Guide Series. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

Kaufman, Kenn. *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005. The best available *photographic* field guide to the birds of North America.

Sibley, David Allen. *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western North America*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2nd edition, 2016. This is a slimmed down version of The Sibley Guide to Birds.

Williamson, Sheri L. *A Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America*. Peterson Field Guide Series. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002. Another excellent resource for hummer ID.

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