



SPRING IN THE WASHINGTON CASCADES

A RELAXED & EASY TOUR

JUNE 1-7, 2026

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Leavenworth, Washington is an ideal venue for a late spring nature tour. The picturesque town sits at the foot of Icicle Canyon on the east side of the Cascade Range, with a terrific view of Alp-like Mt. Stuart. Our lodging is tucked right alongside the Wenatchee River, where you can sit and watch families of Yellow-bellied Marmots and such birds as Pygmy Nuthatch and Violet-green Swallow. Morning walks before breakfast through the wooded neighborhood of the inn often turn up White-headed Woodpeckers, as well as California Quail, Black-headed Grosbeak and other birds. Our lodging is just a few minutes from Icicle Creek and other mountain streams, where American Dippers and Harlequin Ducks rest on boulders amid the rushing water. In late spring, wildflowers carpet the forest floor and canyon roadsides.



The tour begins in Seattle, and we have a full day in an ideal season to bird across the Cascade Mountains. Before we leave the western lowlands, we'll bird Seward Park, a large park right on Lake Washington for Western Flycatcher, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and a

few others. Next, we will head slightly inland to search for Red-breasted Sapsucker and a few other localized species. With four nights in Leavenworth, we'll explore a variety of sites within reasonable driving distance, including beautiful Icicle Canyon. On one day we'll explore the full length of a canyon in the nearby Entiat Mountains. Beginning at the rocky cut of the Columbia River, our drive passes through towering rimrock cliffs and sagebrush, and then higher into ponderosa pine stands, mixed conifers, and right up into aspen-rimmed beaver bogs. Bird possibilities are as diverse as the habitats. Brilliant Lazuli Buntings, noisy Yellow-breasted Chats, and tiny Calliope Hummingbirds are regular sights along the canyon road. We'll watch for such birds as Say's Phoebe, Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, and Cassin's Finch, among many others. We will also explore the back roads of the Wenatchee Mountains where Red-naped Sapsuckers and Williamson's Sapsuckers, Northern Pygmy-Owls and Hermit Thrushes nest at higher elevations. Near Snoqualmie and Stevens passes in the Cascades Mountains, we'll search out lovely Varied Thrushes and Townsend's Warblers, as well as the tiny Pacific Wren and sweet-singing Fox Sparrows.

Another day takes us a bit farther afield into sage-steppe habitat, home to nesting Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Sagebrush Sparrows, Sage Thrashers, Brewer's Sparrows, and lovely Western Meadowlarks. Irrigated fields often host nesting Wilson's Snipe and Long-billed Curlews.

During the course of the tour, we may see eight or nine woodpecker species (including three sapsuckers) and nine flycatchers. But one cannot hope to see all the birds of a state as large and varied as Washington during a tour of this length. Nevertheless, this tour incorporates some of the richest spring birding possibilities in the Northwest and the opportunity to spend most nights at one lodging while exploring diverse areas within a reasonable driving distance. Most of the birding will take place east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains.

This tour is one in our series of Relaxed & Easy (R&E) tours. These tours are appropriate for participants who want a slower paced tour, with somewhat fewer hours in the field and light physical activity. They are ideal for people who prefer a somewhat later start in the morning (typically 7:00 a.m.), a break after lunch and a shorter afternoon outing. They involve only short walks, usually not more than a half mile and avoid difficult terrain.

June 1, Day 1: Arrival in Seattle. Participants should make arrangements to arrive in Seattle (airport code SEA) today and transfer to the *Seattle Airport Marriott*. The hotel provides shuttle service from SeaTac Airport. We will meet in the hotel lobby at **6:30 p.m.** for an informal orientation and get-acquainted dinner.

NIGHT: Seattle Airport Marriott, Seattle

June 2, Day 2: Seattle to Leavenworth, with Birding on Both Sides of the Cascade Mountains. Most of the birding during the tour will take place east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains. As we depart the Seattle area, we'll take just a bit of time to sample the bird life of the west slope of the Cascades, before continuing to Snoqualmie Pass at just over 3000 feet. Birds on the west slope and in the vicinity of the pass may include Red-breasted Sapsucker, Varied Thrush, Pacific Wren, Western Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray Warbler and others. The Cascade Range has a profound effect on the climate west and east of the crest. At Snoqualmie Pass we begin to leave western Washington's moister habitats behind, passing into the overall drier, but highly varied, terrain of eastern Washington.

As we descend the east slope, American Dippers nest along sparkling streams, and we will be in good areas for MacGillivray's, Townsend's, "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped, and Yellow warblers, as well as Vaux's Swift, Osprey, Hammond's Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, and many other species of birds. Where the mountain firs begin to give way to ponderosa pines, we'll be on the lookout for Evening Grosbeak, Cassin's Vireo, Chipping Sparrow, Western Wood-Pewee, and Cassin's Finch. And as the pines meet rolling grasslands, we are in the realm of Mountain and Western bluebirds, Wilson's Snipe, California Quail, Vesper Sparrow, Western and Eastern kingbirds, Bullock's Oriole, and Black-billed Magpie among others. We plan to arrive in Leavenworth by late afternoon.

NIGHT: Bavarian Lodge, Leavenworth

June 3-5, Days 3-5: Birding Nearby Areas with Leavenworth as our Base. With three full days in Leavenworth, we will have the freedom to explore an amazing variety of habitats within moderate driving distance. Within a few minutes of the inn, a walk among the pines or along a creek may well turn up nesting White-headed Woodpeckers, Calliope Hummingbird, Nashville Warbler, Vaux's Swift, Evening Grosbeak, and Pygmy Nuthatch, among others. We'll take a drive into the lower reaches of the majestic Stuart Range along the fast-flowing Icicle Creek. In addition to dippers, Harlequin Ducks, and Common Mergansers, Icicle canyon offers a fascinating mix of east-of-the-Cascades birds with typically west-side birds like Chestnut-backed Chickadee. Townsend's Warblers, Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Cassin's Vireos, and swifts are just a sample of the birds that can be seen in the canyon.

On another day we'll venture north of Wenatchee into the Entiat Mountains where a remarkable array of birdlife awaits. Beginning at the rocky cut of the Columbia River, our drive passes through towering rimrock cliffs, sagebrush, and hayfields, then higher into ponderosa pine stands, mixed conifers, and aspen-rimmed beaver bogs. Bird possibilities are as diverse as the habitats. Chukar are possible in the rocky outcroppings anywhere in the canyon. Brilliant Lazuli Buntings, noisy Yellow-breasted Chats and MacGillivray's Warblers, tiny Calliope Hummingbirds, Red-naped Sapsucker, Northern Pygmy-Owl, as well as Say's Phoebe, Dusky Flycatcher, Veery, Cassin's Vireo, Cassin's Finch, Red Crossbill, Western Tanager, Bullock's Oriole, Rock and Canyon wrens, and lots of other birds are found here. The tiny, diurnal Northern Pygmy-Owl is a reasonable possibility, as are Golden Eagles, and, some years, Lewis's Woodpeckers and highly mobile flocks of Clark's Nutcrackers forage in the pines.

A visit to the 3000 ft. realms of the Wenatchee Mountains often turns up Williamson's Sapsucker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Evening Grosbeak, Lincoln's Sparrow, and many other birds including Hammond's and Dusky flycatchers, Purple and Cassin's finches and, with a bit of luck, a Northern Pygmy-Owl. On another outing we'll visit Stevens Pass, an hour west of Leavenworth, where habitats (in normal snow years) at 4000 ft. are apt for Canada Jay, Varied Thrush, "Slate-colored" Fox Sparrow, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Townsend's Warbler, and other higher elevation specialties.

A bit farther afield, in sage-steppe habitat, we'll go in search of nesting Mountain and Western bluebirds, Sagebrush Sparrows, Sage Thrashers, Brewer's Sparrows, Horned Larks, and sweet-singing Western Meadowlarks. Enroute we will drive farmlands that are home to nesting Wilson's Snipe and Long-billed Curlews.

NIGHT: Bavarian Lodge, Leavenworth

June 6 Day 6: Leavenworth to Seattle. After a final breakfast in Leavenworth, we'll begin birding our way back to Seattle, arriving by late afternoon. Back in Seattle, we'll have a farewell dinner and final checklist session.

NIGHT: Seattle Airport Marriott, Seattle

June 7, Day 7: Departure for Home. Tour participants may depart at any time today.

ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

RELAXED AND EASY (R&E) TOUR INFORMATION: Relaxed & Easy (R&E) tours are similar to “regular” VENT tours, but set to a slower pace, with somewhat fewer hours in the field and lighter physical activity. They are ideal for participants who prefer a somewhat later start in the morning, a little lengthier afternoon break, and a shorter afternoon outing. Walking is limited to short walks of usually not more than a half mile, avoiding difficult terrain. A typical day will begin with breakfast around 6:30-7:00 a.m., followed by birding until about noon. We will attempt to have lunch every day between 12:00 and 1:00 p.m., followed by an afternoon break (when possible). We will resume birding for a couple of hours in the mid-afternoon. On most days we will attempt to provide 45 minutes to an hour for personal time before dinner. We will have dinner between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. Strenuous physical activity will be avoided, and all walking will be limited to well-marked roads and trails, excluding uneven or rough terrain.

Relaxed & Easy (R&E) refers only to the slower pace of a tour, not to a participant’s birding skills or ability. Accordingly, birders of all levels of ability are welcome, as they are on typical VENT tours; R&E tours should not be mistaken as tours for beginning birders. All birders are welcome regardless of skill level, as they are on regular VENT tours.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 12 participants.

TOUR LEADER: Kevin Burke (a second leader will be added if tour size warrants)



Kevin Burke is originally from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He grew up running around in the woods and trails of Shenandoah National Park. His family spent many summers camping and hiking in the park. One of Kevin’s favorite activities was jumping in the river and turning over every rock to see what was underneath. This eventually earned him the nickname “Hellgrammite Kid.” This early exposure to the natural world has vaulted into a lifelong obsession with the outdoors. Kevin was introduced to birding while spending summers in Rhode Island at his grandmother’s house. She would point out all the feeder birds and help him identify them. These early encounters helped foster a love for birds. An early Ornithology class at Hocking College in Ohio rekindled his love for birds. He has been birding

every day since. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Ecotourism and Conservation Ecology from the University of Idaho. Kevin has been involved with leading bird trips in some capacity for almost 20 years. He has led birding trips all throughout the United States, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. His birding journeys have also taken him to some spectacular locations such as Portugal, Colombia, The Bahamas, and Canada. This is truly a lifelong obsession. He currently resides with his family in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Kevin’s wife and two kids also enjoy birding. They have fun kayaking, hiking, and camping in the mountains that surround their home. One of their favorite activities is jumping on the paddle board and kayaks and leisurely floating the French Broad River near their house.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: The fee for the tour is **\$4,235** per person in double occupancy from Seattle. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 6, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city. The fee also excludes alcoholic beverages, laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of **\$950** will be added to your tour fee.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The deposit for this tour is **\$500** per person. We accept MasterCard and Visa. If you choose not to register online, you may pay your deposit by credit card, check, money order, or bank transfer. If not paying online, or by card, your tour space will be held for 10 days pending receipt of your deposit.

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 (January 2, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

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	Your deposit(s) minus \$250*
179 to 151 days before departure date	No refund of the deposits, but any payments on the balance 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.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: 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 comprehensive **Ripcord** plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; 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: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > 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, second deposit, 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 costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

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.

About Medjet's MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: 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: Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING/WEATHER: June weather in Washington is typically mild, with temperatures ranging from the 50's to the low 80's. Because we will occasionally be birding at higher elevations, expect possible cooler conditions (down to 40°) at a few spots, such as morning in the mountains. At least some precipitation is likely during the course of the tour. We want you to be comfortable, so ***please be prepared for varying conditions***. Please bring enough different clothing layers to meet the potential range of conditions. This is especially important if you chill easily or aren't accustomed to birding in cool weather.

The following should cover all likely conditions:

- Lightweight field clothing (e.g. cotton shirts and pants/jeans) and a light jacket close at hand will suffice for warm days.
- In case of cooler weather conditions, bring additional warm layers such as a fleece jacket or warm sweater, perhaps a turtleneck and a pair of gloves and warm cap.
- For wind and moisture, a good windproof/water-resistant outer shell, such as Gore-Tex will be essential.
- You may need rain/wind pants for a cooler few hours in the mountains.
- Casual dress for dining is fine throughout the tour.
- There will be little opportunity to shop for additional clothing.

The Bavarian Lodge does not have a guest laundry nor laundry service.

FOOTWEAR AND HIKING: A pair of lightweight hiking shoes or boots will be the ideal footwear for most outings, although supportive athletic shoes would suffice. There is no need to bring rubber boots. A few walks, mostly level, will be less than a mile. No strenuous hiking.

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, extra digital storage media or film, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medication 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.

OTHER NEEDS: Please bring a small daypack and a water bottle that can be refilled for hiking and other outings during the trip. We also hope to cut down on buying lots of small bottled waters by refilling your personal containers. For sunny conditions, sunscreen and a protective hat are recommended. Occasional mosquitoes and wood ticks are a possibility, so a small quantity of insect repellent may come in handy. There are no chiggers in the northwest. You should also bring an alarm clock. There may be some good photo opportunities, so keep your camera handy each day.

HEALTH & SAFETY

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 for avoiding COVID-19.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun’s ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

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.

[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 it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must 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.

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 refer to the [CDC website](#), and Canadian citizens should check the website of the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

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.

FIELD GUIDES:

Birds

Bannick, Paul. *The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters with North America's Most Iconic Birds*. Seattle, Mountaineer Books, 2008.

National Geographic Society. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. Sixth Edition. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2011.

Sibley, David Allen. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Second Edition. New York: Knopf, 2014.

Zimmer, Kevin J. *Birding in the American West: A Handbook*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell U. Press, 2000.

Other Natural History

Alden, Peter, Amy Gregoret, Richard Keen, Daniel Mathews, Eric A. Oches, Dennis Paulson, Robert Sundstrom, and Wendy B. Zomlefer. ***The National Audubon Society Field Guide to the Pacific Northwest***. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998.

Eder, Tamara. ***Mammals of Washington and Oregon***. Renton, WA: Lone Pine Press, 2002.

Lyons, C.P. ***Wildflowers of Washington***. Renton, WA: Lone Pine Press, 1997.

St. John, Alan. ***Reptiles of the Northwest***. Renton, WA: Lone Pine Press: 2002.

Taylor, Ronald J. ***Sagebrush Country: A Wildflower Sanctuary***. Mountain Press, 1992.

Turner, Mark and Phyllis Gustafson. ***Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest***. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 2006.

Turner, Mark and Ellen Kuhlmann. ***Trees and Shrubs of the Pacific Northwest***. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 2014.

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY APPS & ONLINE RESOURCES:

eBird: Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files! **Highly recommended.**

MERLIN BIRD ID: Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate bird watchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions regarding his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app, followed by the appropriate regional "pack."

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on October 6, 2025 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and

VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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