



TOUR INFORMATION FOR OREGON in late summer

These notes are designed to help you prepare for your tour. Please read carefully.

ENTERING THE UNITED STATES: United Kingdom citizens need to have a passport that has a minimum validity of 6 months remaining after the tour has finished. This is an immigration requirement for many countries, including the USA. All nationalities require a machine-readable passport if travelling to the USA under the visa waiver programme (see below).

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has made changes to the immigration requirements. Travellers seeking to travel under the Visa Waiver Program must pre-apply for authorisation using the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (**ESTA**). **ESTA** must be completed online via their website.

Having an **ESTA** is a mandatory requirement and applications should be made online at least 72 hours before departure via their website <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> as although the majority of responses are immediate, it can take 72 hours for approval in some cases. There is a small fee to pay as a processing charge followed by a small fee when authorisation has been granted.

For further information, or if you don't have access to the internet, please contact the Embassy of the United States in London on 020 3608 6998.

Citizens of other countries should contact their nearest US Embassy for entry requirements.

Once you've applied for your ESTA please remember to print it out and take a copy of that document onto the aircraft with you.

All visitors to the USA's first port-of-entry have their index fingerprints taken by an electronic scanner at Passport Control. You will also have your photograph taken at the same time. Although the process itself only takes a few minutes the queue can be quite long if several flights arrive at the same time!

You will then need to reclaim your checked-in luggage, go through security, then hand your luggage back to the airline staff who will be waiting nearby to give assistance. Once your luggage is back with the airline please proceed to the departure gate for your onward flight.

It is always a good idea to take a photocopy of your passport with you when travelling abroad. They can prove invaluable in helping you get a replacement if your original is lost or stolen. Obviously you should keep the photocopy in a separate bag to the originals.

INTRODUCTORY MEETING: There will be an introductory meeting in the hotel lobby at 18.00 on Day 1 of the tour. This informal meeting gives the leader the chance to expect on the trip - pace of the tour, daily routine, the next day's schedule, etc., and the participants to introduce themselves to one another. After the meeting, we will have dinner.

We encourage you to arrange your flights so that you can be present at the introductory meeting. If you elect to arrive late in the evening of Day 1, please be aware that the birding day will start early on Day 2 and you may only get a few hours' sleep. If you can't arrive before early evening, you may want to consider arriving a day early.

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(Newport Post-Tour Pelagic) This post-tour extension begins on the final morning of the main tour at our Portland hotel, and start the three-hour drive to Newport birding enroute.

TIME DIFFERENCE: Oregon is 8 hours behind British Summer Time.

CURRENCY: The currency of the United States of America is the dollar (USD). Dollars can be obtained from your local bank and from exchange facilities at the airport. As the tour price includes all travel, hotel and main meal costs, you only need bring enough dollars to cover gifts, snacks, or other purchases of a purely nature.

CLIMATE: Oregon in summer typically has a beautiful, moderate and dry climate, but weather can vary greatly. Since we'll be ranging from sea level on the humid coast to more than 7000 feet in the very dry rain shadow of the Cascades, expect a wide range in temperatures. Though rain is unlikely, one should be prepared for the unexpected. It could be cool, foggy and breezy on the outer coast, hot in the inland valleys, and with cool nights east of the mountains. We may experience temperatures ranging from 32° to 100° F on this tour, with averages ranging 50° to 80°F.

The Pelagic: Even on a warm, sunny day, the air moving across the cold Pacific Ocean can be surprisingly brisk. Given the chance for spray, you should be prepared with waterproof shoes (rubber boots with good traction are ideal) as well as a hat (one that won't blow away), gloves, and wind/waterproof rain coat and trousers.

ALTITUDE: Some of our birding is at elevations of around 7000 feet (one day up to 9000 feet), and while we do not schedule anything even faintly strenuous at these altitudes, anyone with a history of cardiovascular or respiratory problems should be aware of the altitudinal stress.

PACE OF THE TOUR AND DAILY ROUTINE: There are no particularly long or strenuous walks or hikes on this tour; the longest may two miles round-trip. Most walking is done on roads and trails, although there will be some over uneven ground and possibly in marshy/dewy grass. Most mornings will start around 06:00 but there may be a few earlier starts. On many days we'll schedule free time in the early afternoon; we rest when the birds do. On a few evenings we'll plan on looking for owls where a small torch or headlamp will be handy.

HEALTH: **It is essential that you contact your own doctor to obtain the latest information on the regions you are visiting.** Please contact your doctor well in advance of your tour's departure as some medication must be initiated weeks before the period of possible exposure.

It is recommended that you are up-to-date on routine vaccinations.

Oregon presents no real hazards to the visiting birdwatcher but certain factors must be considered.

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Sun: High-altitude sun can be intense; a broad-brimmed hat, proper clothing and a strong sun block lotion are essential.

Sea Sickness: Those participating in the post-tour pelagic should be prepared at a minimum for big swells.

Miscellaneous: We actively look for reptiles but rattlesnakes are seldom seen. Insects are rarely bothersome, and this tour takes place after the mosquito-season. We recommend sturdy boots of at least ankle height as a safeguard against twisted ankles when walking over uneven terrain. A walking stick is recommended for anyone with balance problems or weak knees. Finally, participants should bring an adequate supply of any personal medication as they may be difficult to obtain during the tour.

For further information on health advice refer to the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad website www.masta-travel-health.com

ACCOMMODATION: We stay at standard hotels throughout. Two of the hotels have indoor swimming pools.

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry facilities are available at most of our hotels on this tour.

ELECTRICITY: 110/120V AC 60Hz. An international travel plug is useful and can be bought in most airport departure lounges. You may find the following website helpful: <http://www.power-plugs-sockets.com>.

FOOD: Food will be North American standard with a chance of good seafood along the coast. More basic fare is the rule in rural eastern Oregon, while western Oregon has some very good restaurants.

Sunbird tours are all-inclusive and no refunds can be issued for any tour meals participants choose to miss. While we will try to do all we can to accommodate the requirements of all participants, please note that we cannot guarantee all causes of food allergies can be avoided at every destination. Many restaurants offer set menus and are unable to accommodate all special requests within a group. Thus, participants with significant food allergies or special dietary needs should bring appropriate foods with them for those times when their needs can, regrettably, not be accommodated. Our tours are carefully scheduled to ensure the best possible birding experience and although the leaders will do all they can to make sure the group eats at a reasonable time, sometimes early or late lunches and/or evening meals cannot be avoided. Any participants who need to eat at specific times may need to take supplemental food with them.

DRINKS: Bottled water, a soft drink or a beer (or wine if appropriate) are provided at meals, as is coffee or tea. In addition, we keep a supply of bottled water on the tour vehicles. Bottled or filtered water may also be provided in some rooms where we stay.

INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE ACCESS: All our hotels have good Wi-Fi connections.

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FIELD CLOTHING: Dress is informal throughout the tour. The following items are basic:

Sun hat / warm cap	T-shirts
Sturdy hiking shoes (preferably waterproof)	Shorts
Long-sleeved cotton or microfibre shirts	Wind-proof jacket
Cotton or microfibre trousers	Medium-weight jacket

For the pelagic:

Heavy-weight sweater / down vest	Warm shirt
Water-proof jacket and trousers	Warm underwear/Long Johns
Rubber boots with good traction	Gloves

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

Notebook and pencil	Alarm clock
Small rucksack/Day pack	Sunglasses
Torch/Headlamp and spare batteries	Water bottle
Hiking stick	Small hand towel
Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)	Sea sickness medication
Insect repellent	Personal medication
Sunscreen and lip balm (especially for the pelagic)	

Optional: Telescope & tripod (recommended if you have them), camera, film or memory cards, spare binoculars and spare spectacles (in case of loss or damage), field guide, swimwear.

Note: The most effective insect repellents are those containing at least 35% of the active ingredient diethyltoluamide (DEET). The higher the percentage, the greater the effectiveness. However, care must be taken to avoid getting the repellent on to optical equipment as it dissolves rubber and plastic and can damage coated lenses. A reasonably effective alternative, which isn't corrosive, is Mosi-guard, produced by MASTA, and we recommend this. It is available in most high street chemist (including those at the airport). Camping supply stores sell a product containing permethrin 0.5%, which must be applied directly to clothing in advance of wearing and allowed to dry. This non-staining, odourless chemical is non-toxic to humans and protective on clothing through several launderings. Please make sure you never to spray insect repellent inside the vehicle or when you are standing close to other participants – it may drift on to their optical equipment.

LEADER'S EQUIPMENT: The leader will have a telescope, a spotlight, a first aid kit, maps, the more important field guides and references, electronic playback equipment, and a laser pointer.

LUGGAGE: Our Final Information document, which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure, will give details about baggage weight and size restrictions imposed by the airline used for this tour.

If possible, please pack soft luggage, as soft luggage is more easily packed into the vehicles. Please note that on many tours there are no porters to carry your luggage so please ensure that **no bag is so heavy that you are unable to lift and carry it yourself.**

As a general rule, in addition to using your luggage labels, it is a good idea to fix identification to the *inside* of each piece of luggage.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: Scenery and memory shots will be plentiful and simple to obtain but birds are difficult to photograph. Please bring all your film or memory cards with you as it may be difficult to find precisely what you need on short notice. Digiscoping is perfectly compatible with the tour, though it is recommended you bring your own telescope as the leader's telescope is not available for this activity. Camera equipment should be packed in moisture- and dust-proof bags, as a precaution. (This is especially important if you are taking the pelagic tour.)

There will be plenty of opportunities to take photos of birds, mammals and scenery and our leaders will do all they can to accommodate anyone wishing to take photographs. However, if you are a serious photographer please bear in mind that this is first and foremost a birdwatching tour. Please do not allow your photographic desires to conflict with other participants' birdwatching activities.

TRANSPORT: With the exception of our pelagic trip (see below) we will be traveling by 12 or 15 seater minibus, depending on the group size. Participants should be able to ride in any seat in tour vehicles.

Our boat will be either 50 or 55 feet long, with a capacity of at least 30 passengers; our group will be a minority among those aboard as the pelagic trip is open to the public. There will be at least one toilet, and we'll take our own food and drink.

SMOKING: Smoking is not allowed in the vehicles or when the group is gathered for meals, checklists etc. If you are sharing a room with a non-smoker, please do not smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, we ask that you do so well away and downwind from the group if possible.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel insurance is essential and we insist that you take out suitable cover as soon as your tour is booked. If you are bringing expensive optical equipment or other valuable items, please make sure they are also adequately insured on your home contents policy, as most travel insurance policies do not cover very expensive individual items. You may wish to consult your insurance broker regarding coverage. Please also ensure that your policy covers you in the event of a medical emergency, cancellation of a trip or severe delays. Medical costs abroad can often be extremely expensive. Please note that Sunbird is not liable for any medical or repatriation costs resulting from injury or illness during a tour or for covering any costs resulting from a flight delay such as extra hotel accommodation.

If you wish, insurance can be arranged by Helen Fisher, Bullerwell Independent Insurance Brokers, 13 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY. Tel: 01234-866964. Please contact Helen for a quote and she will send the schedule directly to you.

TIPPING: All tour-based tips are included in the tour price. These include tips to local guides, deck hands, and waiters/waitresses when we have group meals together in restaurants. You only need to pay tips for personal services such as room service or drinks from the bar.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Field Guides:

Kaufman, Kenn. 2001. *Birds of North America*. Houghton Mifflin, Boston. Illustrated with digitally-enhanced photographs.

Dunn, Jon L. and Jonathan Alderfer. 2017. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. 7th Edition. National Geographic Society, Washington, DC. One of the top two field guides for North America, more portable than the full Sibley guide. **Recommended.**

National Geographic Society. 2008. *Field Guide to the Birds of Western North America*. National Geographic Society, Washington DC. Slightly outdated, but also a little smaller than the one for the entire continent.

Peterson, Roger Tory. 2010. *A Field Guide to Western Birds*. Fourth Edition. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

Sibley, David Allen. 2014. *The Sibley Guide to Birds, Second Edition*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. **Highly recommended.**

Sibley, David Allen. 2016. *Sibley Birds West: Field Guide to Birds of Western North America*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. A regional guide containing the same concise and accurate illustrations and information as in the more comprehensive guide though smaller and much easier to carry. **Highly recommended.**

General References: The leader will have an extensive library of general natural history books including:

Brock, Jim P., and Kenn Kaufman. 2003. *Butterflies of North America*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston.

Eaton, Eric, and Kenn Kaufman, 2007. *Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston.

Herlyn, Hendrik G. and Alan L Contreras. 2009. *Handbook of Oregon Birds: A Field Companion to Birds of Oregon*. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis. Recommended as a reference on status and distribution.

Mansfield, Donald H. 2000. *Flora of Steens Mountain*. Oregon State University Press.

Miller, Marli B. 2014. *Roadside Geology of Oregon, Second Edition*. Mountain Press Publishing Company.

Pojar, Jim, and Andy MacKinnon. 2004. *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast*. Lone Pine.

Reid, Fiona. 2006. *Peterson Field Guide to Mammals of North America: Fourth Edition*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston.

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OBTAINING BOOKS: Most of the field guides and the major ornithological references in print are available by mail order from booksellers specialising in natural history titles.

Natural History Book Service Ltd
Tel: 01803 865913
www.nhbs.co.uk

Subbuteo Books
Tel: 0870 010 9700
www.wildlifebooks.com

WildSounds
Tel: 01263 741100
www.wildsounds.co.uk

MAPS: Maps of the region may be available from:

The Map Shop
Tel: 01684 593146
www.themapshop.co.uk

Stanfords
Tel: 020 7836 1321
www.stanfords.co.uk

FINAL INFORMATION: Final information with instructions for meeting the group, hotel addresses etc. and your air tickets will be sent to you about three weeks before the start of the tour. Other news will be communicated as necessary. If you have any questions, please contact us.