

# 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of Western Field Ornithologists

Albuquerque, NM • August 21 to 27, 2019

## Conference Schedule

### Wednesday, August 21

3:00—6:00 PM Registration begins in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque

### Thursday, August 22

4:30—7:00 AM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque

4:30—7:00 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available

4:30—7:00 AM Lunches (PRE-ORDERED Pick up and place in ice chests for your field trip)

### THURSDAY FIELD TRIPS

ALL TRANSPORTATION BY VAN; Full Day Field Trips return by 5 PM

Half Day Field Trips return at 11 AM to 1 PM

5:15 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:15 AM prompt departure.

- 1THU Bitter Lake NWR
- 2THU Las Vegas NWR
- 3THU Pecos Canyon

5:30 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:30 AM prompt departure.

- 4THU Water Canyon and Magdalena Mountains
- 5THU Pajarito Ski Area
- 6THU Jemez Mountains

5:45 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:00 AM prompt departure.

- 7THU Sandia Mountains
- 8THU Sevilleta NWR
- 9THU Quarai Ruins and Manzano Mountains
- 10THU Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

8:00 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for an 8:00 AM prompt departure.

- 11THU Natural History Museum--Behind the Scenes--**HALF DAY**

8:45 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for an 8:45 AM prompt departure.

- 12THU Albuquerque BioPark Zoo--Behind the Scenes--**HALF DAY**

11 AM—4:00 PM WFO Board Meeting in the Nevada Room

4:30—5:30 PM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque

5:00—8:00 PM A Welcome Reception and tour of the University of New Mexico's Museum of Southwestern Biology is open to all conference registrants. The Museum tour precedes the reception and will give WFO members a chance to learn about the vertebrate collections and current museum research. Following the tour, the Reception takes place in the University of New Mexico Student Union Building.

The reception is a short walk from the museum. Shuttle vans will pick everyone up at the hotel's Arizona Room for the brief ride to the University.

### **Friday, August 23**

- 5:30—7:30 AM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque
- 5:30—7:30 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available
- 11:00 AM—12:00 PM Box lunches (PRE-ORDERED) available [Note: On Friday and Saturday, lunches are available in the Promenade upon your return from the field trip.]

### **FRIDAY FIELD TRIPS**

ALL TRANSPORTATION BY VAN; Field Trips return by 11 AM

6:00 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:00 AM prompt departure.

- 1FRI Travertine Falls
- 2FRI Embudo Canyon
- 3FRI Embudito Canyon
- 4FRI Three Gun Canyon

6:15 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:15 AM prompt departure.

- 5FRI Otero Canyon
- 6FRI Valle de Oro NWR
- 7FRI Tramway Wetlands and adjacent bosque
- 8FRI Rio Grande Nature Center

6:30 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:30 AM prompt departure.

- 9FRI San Antonito Open Space
- 10FRI Feeder Watching at the Ligon's
- 11FRI Petroglyph National Monument
- 12FRI Sandia Mountains

### **FRIDAY WORKSHOPS**

All workshops are in the Crown Plaza New Mexico Ballroom except "Preparation of Bird Specimens"

- 7:15—10:30 AM FRI-WS1 Bird Preparation Workshop: "Preparation of Bird Specimens" with Andy Johnson and Phil Unitt at University of New Mexico Museum. Meet at the appropriate sign in the Arizona Room for **carpooling** at 7:15 AM
- 8:00—11:00 AM FRI-WS2 Sounds Workshop: "Identifying Birds by their Sounds" with Nathan Pieplow in the New Mexico Ballroom
- 8:00—11:00 AM FRI-WS3 Data Mining Workshop with Ed Pandolfino in the New Mexico Ballroom
- 8:00—11:00 AM FRI-WS4 Warbler ID **Workshop on Friday and Field Trip on Saturday**: "The Warbler Guide: The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy" with Tom Stephenson in the New Mexico Ballroom

- 8:00—11:00 AM FRI-WS5 Warbler ID **Workshop Only**: “The Warbler Guide” The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy” with Tom Stephenson in the New Mexico Ballroom
- 11:00 AM—12 PM Lunch break
- 11:00 AM—12 PM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque
- 12:15—3:45 PM Plenary & Science Sessions in the New Mexico Ballroom
- 4:00—5:30 PM Bird Sound Identification: Team Challenge—Nathan Pieplow in the New Mexico Ballroom
- 5:30—6:30 PM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque
- 6:30—10:00 PM 13FRI Special Field Trip--Owling in the Sandia Mountains with Wezil Walraven**
- 6:30 PM Dinner Break No evening activities planned
- 7:00—8:00 PM Scholarship Recipients and Alumni Reception in the covered Patio outside the Cantina. Sorry parents, this is a special reception for the youth only. However, you may want to meet with other parents in the Cantina. It’s a chance to share stories about the birder in your house.

### **Saturday, August 24**

- 5:30—7:30 AM Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque
- 5:30—7:30 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available
- 11:00 AM—12:00 PM Lunches (PRE-ORDERED) available [Note: On Friday and Saturday, lunches are available in the Promenade upon your return from the field trip.]

### **SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS**

MOST TRANSPORTATION BY VAN; Field Trips return by 11 AM

SOME CARPOOLS

- 5:30 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:30 AM prompt departure.
- **11SAT Bird Banding Rio Grande Nature Center—CARPOOL**
- 6:00 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:00 AM prompt departure.
- 1SAT Travertine Falls
  - 2SAT Embudo Canyon
  - 3SAT Embudito Canyon
  - 4SAT Three Gun Canyon
- 6:15 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:15 AM prompt departure;
- 5SAT Otero Canyon
  - 6SAT Valle de Oro NWR
  - 7SAT Tramway Wetlands and adjacent bosque
  - 8SAT Rio Grande Nature Center
- 6:30 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:30 AM prompt departure.

- 9SAT San Antonito Open Space
- 10SAT Feeder Watching at the Ligon's
- 12SAT Sandia Mountains
- 13SAT Sandia Mountains & Warblers with Tom Stephenson [Field Trip portion of Workshop]--  
**CARPOOL**
- 14SAT Student Programs Field Trip --**CARPOOL**

### SATURDAY WORKSHOPS

All workshops are in the Crowne Plaza New Mexico Ballroom

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 8:00—11:00 AM  | Advanced Bird Sounds Workshop: “ <i>Beyond Beginning Ear Birding</i> ” with Nathan Pieplow in the New Mexico Ballroom          |
| 8:00—11:00 AM  | Illustrating Birds Workshop: “ <i>Illustrating Birds From Field to Studio</i> ” with Bryce Robinson in the New Mexico Ballroom |
| 8:00—11:00 AM  | Birding Best Practices in the Digital Age Workshop with Ted Floyd in the New Mexico Ballroom                                   |
| 11:00 AM—12 PM | Lunch break  |
| 11:00 PM—12 PM | Registration is open   |
| 12:15—3:45 PM  | Plenary & Science Sessions in New Mexico Ballroom  |
| 4:00—5:30 PM   | Bird Photo ID: Expert Panel with Ed Harper in the New Mexico Ballroom  |
| 5:30 PM        | Begin browsing and bidding the Silent Auction items in the Garden Room   |
| 6:30—9:30 PM   | Banquet and Cash Bar, Annual Meeting and Election, Silent Auction and Keynote Address in the Southwest Ballroom.               |

### **Keynote**

“Hidden Forces that Make Bird Species and Set Their Geographical Ranges”

Christopher Witt, PhD

### Sunday August 25

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 4:30—6:30 AM | Registration is open in the Promenade at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Albuquerque |
| 4:30—6:30 AM | Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available                              |
| 4:30—6:30 AM | Lunches (PRE-ORDERED) Pick up and place in ice chest for your field trip.    |

### SUNDAY FIELD TRIPS

MOST TRANSPORTATION BY VAN; Except for Black Range, Field Trips return by 5 PM

SOME CARPOOLS

5:00 AM After check out and Grab and Go Breakfast pick up, assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a departure as soon as luggage is packed.

- **13SUN Three-Day New Mexico Post Conference Field Trip**

5:15 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:15 AM prompt departure.

- 1SUN Black Range
- 2SUN Las Vegas NWR
- 3SUN Pecos Canyon

5:30 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:30 AM prompt departure.

- 4SUN Water Canyon, Magdalena Mountains
- 5SUN Pajarito Ski Area
- 6SUN Jemez Mountains
- 11SUN Bird Banding Rio Grande Nature Center—**HALF DAY—CARPOOL**

5:45 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 5:45 AM prompt departure.

- 7SUN Sandia Mountains
- 8SUN Sevilleta NWR
- 9SUN Quarai Ruins and Manzano Mountains
- 10SUN Bosque del Apache NWR

6:00 AM Assemble in the Arizona Room at the appropriate sign for a 6:00 AM prompt departure.

- 12SUN Rio Grande Nature Center—**HALF DAY—CARPOOL**

## THURSDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, August 22

**Note: All Field Trips are full day and return by 5 pm**

**Two Half-Day Field Trips return by arrangement**

**All trips by Van leaving from the Arizona Room at Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque**

Difficulty levels:

Easy—flat ground some walking

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes

### **List and descriptions of Field Trips for WFO Albuquerque August 2019**

Climate Considerations: Although we don't brag about it like some other cities in the mountain west, Albuquerque is a mile above sea level. This means that the most oxygen you will experience on this trip is 83 percent of what you would experience at sea level. In mixed conifer forest at around 8,000 feet (Steller's Jay habitat), the partial pressure of oxygen drops to 75 percent of that at sea level. The air is thin and rather dry, and this will affect your ability to do strenuous exercise, affect your rate of evaporative water loss, and increase your susceptibility to sunburn. Wherever you go, be sure to take (and drink!) plenty of water, wear a hat and use sun screen.

Respect the weather: Temperatures can be hot during the day, but cool off beautifully at night. One pair of long pants and a light jacket might be welcome additions after sundown in Albuquerque. It can get cold in the mountains during the day, and rain is often a possibility, especially in the afternoons. A light rain jacket can keep you warm on cold mornings and keep the rain off in case you get caught in a thunderstorm. Monsoon season will be upon us and that can cause spectacular afternoon thunderstorms which can cause flash flooding in canyons *even if it is not raining on you.*

Logistics Considerations: New Mexico is a large state. Albuquerque is a bit north and west of the middle. New Mexico has a diverse avifauna, but to get to habitats where we might find a good percentage of these species requires some protracted driving times. We have provided mileages and driving times to our destinations. Please pay attention to them as you register for field trips so that you are not disappointed by the amount of time you spend in a van compared to your time spent birding. Hiking is generally necessary in the mountains to find birds. There are essentially no drive-up Dusky Grouse, Canada Jay, or American Three-toed Woodpecker sites in New Mexico in August. Most roads lead to the base of a mountain that must then be climbed.

Having said all this, come to Albuquerque and enjoy. Not only are the birds beautiful but the people are friendly and the scenery gorgeous.

**1THU Bitter Lake NWR**      **-FULL-**      Volunteer Leaders: Nathan Pieplow, Ethan Gyllenhaal

This long full day trip will focus on finding migrant shorebirds and waders at one of the best places in the state to do so. Bitter Lake NWR is located on the southeastern plains of New Mexico along the Pecos River outside of Roswell. There will be lots of driving time on this trip but the rewards are worth it! Targets will include: Snowy Plover, Least Tern, Upland Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, migrant shorebirds, waders, and waterfowl. Land bird targets will include Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Black-throated Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, and Scaled Quail. There will be long stops at various units across the refuge to scope mudflats and marshes. Recent fall vagrants here have included waders such as Tricolored Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Reddish Egret, and Roseate Spoonbill. We will be able to stop at a vagrant trap (Mesa Rest Area) on the way down to Bitter Lake NWR to stretch our legs and look for migrant land birds. A scope will be essential for this trip.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 202 miles

Time (one way): ~ 3hr 10 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

**2THU Las Vegas NWR**      **--FULL--**      Volunteer Leader: Will Jaremko-Wright

This full day trip will head to the fringe of the northeast plains of New Mexico. Las Vegas NWR has several small lakes which can host fair numbers of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl along with expanses of quality grassland. A diversity of species will be found on this trip; migrant shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and migrant passerines (especially sparrows). Trip targets will be Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Burrowing Owl, Black Tern, Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Scaled Quail, and Black-billed Magpie. The varied habitats at Las Vegas should produce a large number of species on this trip! There are large observation platforms to scope lakes and short trails to look for resident and migratory land birds.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 115 miles

Time (one way): ~ 1hr 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

**3THU Pecos Canyon****--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Dave Mehlman

The Sangre de Cristo Mountains east of Santa Fe are the southern extent of the Rocky Mountains and the headwaters of the Pecos River. The highlands hold Dusky Grouse, and boreal species such as Canada Jay, American Three-toed Woodpecker, White-crowned Sparrow, and Pine Grosbeak. Most of these species are not accessible without a considerable hike to spruce-fir forest and tree line, but if the 14 mile road to Elk Mountain from Terrero is maintained well enough, a van can make it up this road to try for these species. The decision to ascend Elk Mountain would have to be made two weeks before the meeting, and rain could cause us to cancel that attempt even the day of the trip.

Nonetheless, the lower reaches of the canyon are accessible by paved road and host a lush mixture of riparian thickets and mixed conifer and aspen forests that can hold considerable bird diversity. This will be a drive from the town of Pecos up the canyon of the Pecos River to the Jack's Creek trailhead with stops along the way to look for birds. Some of the birds we hope to find here are American Dipper, Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsucker, Lincoln's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red Crossbill, Clark's Nutcracker, Steller's Jay, Black-billed Magpie, Cassin's Finch, Hermit and Swainson's Thrush. Terrero Store has hummingbird feeders and it will be worthwhile to stop for a look. This field trip is a drive with various stops for short hikes.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 110 miles

Time (one way): ~ 2 hrs 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Hiking miles (total): less than 5 miles

Elevation gain: under 300 ft per hike

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

**4THU Water Canyon, Magdalena Mountains** **--FULL--** Volunteer Leader: Deven Kammerichs-Berke

The Magdalenas are the reliable northern extent of the range of three "Madrean" bird species in New Mexico: Olive Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, and Hutton's Vireo. Montezuma Quail also occur here. The plant communities also become more diverse, with Arizona walnut and Arizona alder making an appearance in the canyon bottoms, and a larger proportion of the junipers are Alligator Junipers in the pinyon-juniper woodlands. Pinyon-juniper hillsides with extensive ponderosa pines and some Douglas-fir are in the mesic areas of the canyon. A diverse mix of habitats in close proximity makes for excellent birding. Bird species that tend to be found here are Hepatic Tanager, Virginia's, Grace's, and Black-throated Gray Warblers, Zone-tailed Hawk, Northern Pygmy Owl, Acorn Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, Juniper Titmouse, Pygmy Nuthatch, White breasted Nuthatch, Bewick's Wren, Hermit Thrush, Steller's and Woodhouse's Scrub Jays, Clark's Nutcracker, and Band-tailed Pigeon. Migrants in this canyon can be spectacular. Hermit Warbler is a possibility.

Drive and various stops for short hikes

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 4:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 100 miles

Time (one way): ~ 2 hrs

Restroom facilities: Yes

Hiking miles (total): less than 5 miles

Elevation gain: under 300 ft per hike

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **5THU Pajarito Ski Area (Los Alamos)**

Volunteer Leader: Andy Johnson

After a drive, this trip will begin at the Pajarito Ski Area parking lot. We will hike the numerous trails in the area and cover lots of ground climbing in elevation to nearly 10,000 ft. During the hike, we will search for typical montane species of mixed conifer such as Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, Evening Grosbeak, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Clark's Nutcracker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Williamson's Sapsucker. A majority of the time, we will stay in mixed conifer forest but will venture into vast aspen stands and open meadows. All during the hike, we will look for Northern Goshawk and Dusky Grouse.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 4:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~100 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr 45 minutes

Restrooms: No

Difficulty level: Moderate to Difficult due to elevation

### **6THU Jemez Mountains**     **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Nick Pederson

There are six super volcanoes on dry land in the world and three of them are in the United States. Yellowstone is one and Long Valley in the Mammoth Mountain area in California is another. New Mexico is lucky enough to have one as well. The 13 mile wide Valles Caldera, is a dramatic, grassy bowl set in the Jemez Mountains near Los Alamos. Although the last eruption was a long time ago, hot springs and fumaroles are still in the region. The Valles Caldera is now one of the country's newest National Preserves (part of the National Park system). We will investigate the coniferous forests adjacent to the Caldera, but more importantly, we will inspect the grasslands within the crater itself. Our target species include one of the highest elevation breeding subspecies of Eastern Meadowlark, Northern Goshawk, American Dipper, Clark's Nutcracker, Red-breasted, White-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches, Mountain Bluebird and other high elevation species. After our time exploring the Caldera, we will return along the same route to search for American Three-toed Woodpecker and a rare possibility of a Dusky Grouse. If we have enough time (depending on earlier sightings, we may opt for a drive along the road into Bandelier National Monument for Grace's Warbler and other ponderosa pine specialties, or for a quick stop in Los Alamos for migrants at a known migrant trap.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 5:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~130 miles

Time (one way): ~3 hours with stops

Restroom facilities: Yes (gas stations and USFS facilities)

Difficulty level: Moderate due to elevation

### **7THU Sandia Mountains**

Volunteer Leader: Wezil Walraven

This trip departs at 5:45 AM from the hotel for a 1 hour van ride to the Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area (Elevation 6800). This picnic area has a maintained trail at a slight incline which we will walk up slowly.

The habitat in this part of the Sandias is Wavy Leaf Oak, ponderosa pine and then, Quaking Aspen up higher. We should get views of Western Tanagers. Black headed Grosbeak, Band tailed Pigeons, Northern Pygmy-Owl and a few species of warblers including the possibility of a Townsend's in migration. We should also get a look at Red breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush and Steller's Jay. After we spend about 2 hours here, we will drive over to the Doc Long Picnic Area of the Sandia Mountains (elevation 7360 ft) which is a short 10 minute drive up the mountain. The trail at Doc Long Picnic Area is dirt and gravel and fairly easy to walk with a slight incline. We will slowly walk up this trail in search of Juniper Titmouse, Mountain Chickadee, MacGillivray's and Virginia's Warblers, Bewick's and House Wrens, Plumbeous Vireo, Black headed Grosbeak, Broad tailed and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Western Tanager, Chipping Sparrow and again, possibly Northern Pygmy-Owl and more. We will find shaded picnic tables for a lunch stop before we head way up the mountain to Sandia Crest. Along the road to the crest Rocky Mountain Mule Deer are often seen alongside the road. The trails are maintained and have some rocky outcroppings. We will meander along the trail looking for Clark's Nutcracker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Crossbills, Gray headed Junco and more. We will stop at the overlook in search of soaring hawks and raptors, along with a view of Albuquerque. A Peregrine Falcon has been spotted here in the past.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~35miles

Time (one way): ~50 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate due to elevation

### **8THU Sevilleta NWR**

**--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Kathy Granillo

At 229,673 acres – more than 358 square miles – Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge is the eighth largest refuge in the 48 contiguous states. Located at the junction of 4 biomes (shortgrass prairie, Chihuahuan desert, Colorado Plateau shrub-steppe and pinyon juniper woodland) and bisected by the Rio Grande. It is one of the most diverse places in the state. Most of the refuge is not accessible to the general public so this trip will provide a rare opportunity to experience this incredible landscape. The grasslands, desert and woodlands will provide a diversity of bird possibilities. Gray Vireos, a southwestern endemic often difficult to find in much of their range, are common on the refuge in the juniper savannah and linger well into October. Several pairs of Golden Eagles breed on the refuge and several other raptor species are possible. Fall migration will be starting to ramp up and if the planets align just right, there could be large numbers of shrikes and wrens passing through the landscape. Several sparrow species are possible, and another southwestern endemic subspecies of Eastern Meadowlark (Lillian's Meadowlark). Short hikes are a likely possibility to try and find birds away from the roads.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~55miles

Time (one way): ~55 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes, at the Visitor's Center

Difficulty level: Moderate

### **9THU Quarai Ruins and Manzano Mountains**

Volunteer Leader: Dave Krueper

This will be a combination birding and cultural exploration of the Estancia Valley on the east side of the Manzano Mountains, southeast of Albuquerque. Our first stop will be at the Manzano Ponds to catch early morning migrant activity around the wetland. After a brief time there, we then continue south on to the Quarai unit, one of three historical sites within the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. The Quarai unit is the smallest of the three units at approximately 90 acres. Pueblo artifacts at the site suggest that prior to Spanish contact, Quarai was, in its prime, a very large pueblo. This fact is mainly due to the presence of a year round water source flowing from springs along Zapato Creek. This thriving city is what Don Juan de Oñate found when he arrived at Quarai in 1598. Like the other Missions of Salinas Pueblo, a combination of disease, drought, famine, and Apache raids led to the abandonment of Quarai in 1678. We will spend time viewing and photographing the beautiful ruins, as well as birding the riparian area adjacent to the ruins. The associated pinyon-juniper habitat should hold migrants plus resident Juniper Titmouse, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, several wren species, and Canyon Towhee. We will then go north and west into the Manzano Mountains for montane birding through the burn matrix of the Trigo Fire.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~75 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes (Quarai) afternoon will seek facilities nearby

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **10THU Bosque del Apache NWR    --FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Ryan Terrill

Translated as "Apache Forest," this is one of the premier wildlife viewing destinations in the western US. While particularly known for its huge numbers of Sandhill Cranes, white geese and waterfowl during the winter months, migration can be highly rewarding as well. The refuge was established in 1939 to provide a critical stopover for migrating waterfowl, and consists of 57,331 acres of riparian habitat, farmland and Chihuahuan desert-scrub, and is critical during migration as birds follow the Rio Grande corridor to and from breeding and wintering grounds. The refuge proper has recorded over 365 species of birds, including two North American firsts; Sungrebe and Rufous-necked Wood-Rail. We will spend our time touring the refuge roads (both north and south loops), as well as at the feeders at the refuge headquarters. We hope to find some lingering breeders such as Bell's Vireo, Vermilion Flycatcher, Bullock's Oriole, Lucy's Warbler, and Blue Grosbeak as well as other Southwest specialties such as Verdin, Black-throated Sparrow, Canyon Towhee and Pyrrhuloxia.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~95 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

### **11THU New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science Behind-the-Scenes Tour of Geoscience Collection and Fossil Preparation Lab**

Volunteer Leader: Nicole Ridgewood

New Mexico is rich in fossils. Visit the NM Museum of Natural History and Science and take a tour behind the scenes to learn about how paleontologists find fossils and bring them back to the museum. See how rock is carefully removed, revealing the fossils within. Learn about the fossil animals of New Mexico and how our specimens are used for research. Learn about some of the ways

paleontologists form hypotheses about what happened in ancient times. Linger afterwards to visit the public displays. Your admission ticket is included in the cost of the field trip.

Departure Time: 8:00 AM

Return Time: 11 AM

Cost: \$40

Miles (one way): 1.9 miles

Time (one way): 5 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

Museum rules for visit: Rules for behind the scenes tour:

- 1 No food or drink. Adults may bring water bottles with lids.
2. Space will be provided to store backpacks during the tour
3. Wear close-toed and close-heeled shoes
4. Do not touch specimens unless invited by a museum staff member

### **12THU Albuquerque BioPark Zoo—Behind the Scenes**

Volunteer Leader: TBA

Located next to the Rio Grande in Albuquerque, the 64-acre Zoo has been offering guests close encounters with exotic and native animals since 1927. Join Zoo bird staff on a behind-the-scenes tour of the bird facilities. The Albuquerque BioPark Zoo houses a variety of bird species from Asia, Africa and now has a newly-opened penguin exhibit. It is also one of the captive rearing locations for Socorro Dove. Tour duration: 1 - 1.5 hours. After the tour, wander the public displays at the zoo until noon or by arrangement. Your admission ticket is included in the cost of the field trip.

Departure Time: 8:45 AM

Return Time: 12 PM

Cost: \$40

Miles (one way): ~ 4 miles

Time (one way): ~ 13 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

## **FRIDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Friday, August 23**

**Note: All Field Trips are half day and return by 11am**

**Most trips by Van leaving from the Arizona Room at the Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque**

Difficulty levels:

Easy—flat ground some walking.

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

### **1FRI Travertine Falls**

**--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Dave Mehlman

This is a short hike (1.3 mile round trip). Half mile out-and-back hike in to a waterfall (trickle, really) along a canyon bottom in low elevation pinyon-juniper woodland with ponderosa pine and Gambel oak. Hike can be extended slightly beyond the waterfall if time and ambition of the group allow. This trail is well-used and varies from wide and flat to areas of exposed bedrock. Middle elevation during migration can make for great birding. Migrants should be passing through, and summer residents

could still be lingering. Possibilities here include: Black-chinned and Broad-tailed hummingbirds, Plumbeous and Warbling Vireos, Steller's and Woodhouse's Scrub Jays, Mountain Chickadee and Juniper Titmouse, Townsend's Solitaire, Spotted Towhee, Virginia's, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's and Wilson's Warblers, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak. This is a drive to a short hike.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 16 miles

Time (one way): 25 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 1.3 miles

Elevation Gain: 250 ft

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **2FRI Embudo Canyon**

**--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Kim Score

Embudo Canyon is an area of foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume in the bottoms of the washes, plus chamisa, cholla, saltbush, grading into juniper at higher elevations on the canyon walls. This has not been grazed in decades, so it is among the best scrub habitat accessible near Albuquerque. The trail is good and the terrain is easy. This desert scrub can be great birding: Both Scaled and Gambel's Quail occur in the foothills. Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers are here, as are Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. The canyon can host migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. Scanning overhead can produce raptors including Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Swainson's and Cooper's Hawks.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~14 miles

Time (one way): ~25 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 2 miles

Elevation Gain: 350 ft

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **3FRI Embudito Canyon**

Volunteer Leader: Bryan Calk

Similar to Embudo Canyon, Embudito Canyon is an area of foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume in the bottoms of the washes. Chamisa, cholla, saltbrush dominate until you get to the higher elevations of the canyon where juniper takes over. Because this area has not been grazed for many years, it is among some of the best scrub habitat accessible near Albuquerque. Trails are rather wide and gravelly at the start but become narrow farther on and have a steep scramble over slick bedrock towards the end of the walk. It is easy on the flats, moderate on the bedrock, which starts after one half mile. We probably not make it beyond that for a morning trip. This desert scrub can be great birding: Both Scaled and Gambel's Quail occur in the foothills. Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers are here, as are Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. In the canyon, we might see migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. We'll keep scanning overhead for Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Swainson's and Cooper's Hawks.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 12 miles  
Time (one way): 20 minutes  
Hiking Miles (total): 1.5 miles  
Elevation Gain: 250 ft  
Restroom facilities: No  
Difficulty level: East to Moderate

**4FRI Three Gun Canyon**     **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Ryan Terrill

This trail provides access to the southernmost end of the Sandia Mountains. The hiking trail here is a slow, gradual climb from foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume and cholla cactus in the bottoms of the washes to conifer forest at higher elevations. The main trails are rather wide and gravelly throughout. This desert scrub can be great birding. At the lower elevations, we will look for Scaled Quail, Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers, Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. Higher elevations may produce Hairy Woodpecker, Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsucker, Virginia's and Black-throated Gray Warblers. The canyon may produce migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. Also, keep an eye out for raptors.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 12 miles  
Time (one way): 16 minutes  
Restroom facilities: No  
Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

**5FRI Otero Canyon**     **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Ashli Gorbet

This trip will start at the Otero Canyon trailhead in the Manzanita Mountains. It is considered pinyon-juniper woodland birding at its finest. We'll be looking for Juniper Titmouse, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Spotted Towhee, Pinyon Jay, Gray Flycatcher, Hepatic Tanager and whatever migrants are around. The hike will be a relaxed pace on an easy grade at mid elevation (about 6,500-7,000 ft). Additionally, this area may produce numerous raptors that are migrating along the spine of the Manzanita Mountains including Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, and Cooper's Hawk.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 20 miles  
Time (one way): 30 minutes  
Hiking Miles (total): 2-3 miles  
Restroom facilities: No  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**6FRI Valle de Oro NWR**     **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Michael Hilchey

This is New Mexico's newest and first urban wildlife refuge in the southwestern United States. August at Valle de Oro should have many flooded agricultural fields and smaller ponds (weather and crop irrigation dependent) that may attract numerous migrant shorebirds and waders. Long-billed Curlews can be numerous if the conditions are right. There is a chance for Upland and Solitary Sandpipers. We will also pick through the many migrants and especially sparrows such as Lark, Chipping, Brewer's, Savannah, Vesper, and Lark Bunting. Maybe a Mississippi Kite will fly by. Certainly, we'll see a Swainson's Hawk. After thoroughly scanning the fields, we will bird the adjacent bosque along the Rio

Grande for more local breeders, migrants, and lucky-to-see birds such as the pair of Common Black-Hawks that nest in the area. Lucy's Warbler's will have likely departed but we will try to find a lingerer. We should expect Summer Tanager, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks, Bewick's Wren, Lazuli Bunting, and Eastern Bluebird.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 15 miles

Time (one way): 25 minutes

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **7FRI Tramway Wetlands and adjacent bosque**

Volunteer Leader: Matt Baumann

This trip will start at one of Albuquerque's best shorebird birding spots. It is not a pristine wetland but instead an outflow for Albuquerque's storm water runoff which has fluctuating water levels, especially during the monsoon season, but can be ideal for ducks, shorebirds and waders. Expected species are Wilson's Phalarope, Baird's, Western, Least, Pectoral, Solitary, and Spotted Sandpipers, Wilson's Snipe, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Recent rarities here in August have included Short-billed Dowitcher and Semipalmated Sandpiper. If Mexican Duck hybrids are your thing, this is the trip for you. The waterfowl here will provide close study. Bank Swallows will be flying with Barn, Cliff and Violet-green Swallows. The overgrown weedy vegetation surrounding the wetland will produce migrants to find as well. Ospreys have recently begun to nest here and should have young out this time of year.

Mississippi Kites also breed locally and if we are lucky, we will see them. With the remaining time on this trip, we will head to the Alameda Open Space bosque to walk the low flow channels to check for local breeders and migrants. We can expect White-breasted Nuthatch, Summer Tanager, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli and Indigo Buntings and Greater Roadrunner.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 8 miles

Time (one way): 20 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes at Alameda Open Space

Difficulty level: Easy

### **8FRI Rio Grande Nature Center**

**--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Deven Kammerichs-Berke

The Rio Grande is the fifth longest river in North America, and the 20th longest in the world. Rising as a clear, snow-fed mountain stream more than 12,000 feet (3,700 meters) above sea level in the Rocky Mountains of southern Colorado, the Rio Grande descends across steppes and deserts, watering rich agricultural regions as it flows on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. The total length of the river is about 1,900 miles (3,060 km). Even though dammed and channelized for much of its length, extensive stands of native cottonwood and willow riparian habitat exist, providing critical year-round habitat for breeders, migrants and resident bird species. The Rio Grande Nature Center provides a wonderful example of the representative bird species found in the riparian habitats from Sandoval County south to Socorro County. There are several trails within the Center, and several large ponds which will allow us to seek out Southwestern specialties such as Blue Grosbeak, Bell's Vireo, Gambel's Quail, and even a possible Common Black Hawk. The RGNC also shelters resident Black-capped Chickadee, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds, Summer and Western Tanagers, Wood Duck, several species of swallows including Bank, Yellow-breasted Chat, and possibly early fall migrants.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 5 miles  
Time (one way): 15 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Easy

**9FRI San Antonito Open Space**

Volunteer Leader: TBA

The 168-acre property in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains was purchased by the City of Albuquerque in 1968 and is one of the earliest pieces of property to be set aside by the City for the enjoyment of nature within this diverse mountain habitat. Elevations at this property range from 6,760' to 7,200'. Pinyon-juniper forests dominate this gently rolling site. Well over 130 species of birds have been seen in this area over the years, and we hope to add one or two more! We will explore a small but very productive riparian area with perennial water near the parking area, and then walk on well-maintained trails into pinyon-juniper habitat to seek Juniper Titmouse, Black-headed Grosbeak, Wild Turkey, Band-tailed Pigeon, Virginia's Warbler and other early migrants.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 20 miles  
Time (one way): 30 minutes  
Restroom facilities: No, except for a quick stop at convenience store on the way and return  
Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

**10FRI Feeder Watching at the Ligon's**

Volunteer Leader: Kristen Oliver

The home of retired University of New Mexico Biology faculty David and Sandra Ligon is a beautiful oasis on the east side of the Sandias. Permanent water on the property and extensive gardening and landscaping makes this a naturally birdy spot. Although we are a bit late for the peak of hummingbird season, the patio hummingbird feeders will allow close inspection of up to four species of hummingbird (Calliope, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous), and the seed feeders and lush yard vegetation attract migrants and resident birds this time of year.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 18 miles  
Time (one way): 30 minutes  
Restroom facilities: No  
Difficulty level: Easy

**11FRI Petroglyphs National Monument**

Volunteer Leader: Oona Takano

This chain of fissure volcanoes hosts one of North America's largest petroglyph sites and is on Albuquerque's West Side. This impressive monument has a large trail system to walk and explore the cultural areas spread out across the site. Birding here can be quite productive as well. Habitat here consists of large volcanic rock outcroppings, four-winged saltbush, sagebrush, numerous grasses, and cholla cactus. Expected species in this area are Rock and Canyon Wrens, Black-throated Sparrow, Crissal Thrasher, and Chihuahuan Raven. Prairie Falcon is always a possibility. This area is very exposed and may get hot early in the morning. Bring plenty of water, sunscreen, and appropriate clothing.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35  
Miles (one way): 8 miles  
Time (one way): 15 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **12FRI Sandia Mountains**

Volunteer Leader: TBA

This trip departs at 6:30 AM from the hotel for a 1-hour van ride to the Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area (6800 ft) and Doc Long Picnic Area (7360 ft). These picnic areas have maintained trails at a slight incline which we will walk up slowly. The habitat in this part of the Sandias is Wavy Leaf Oak, Ponderosa Pine and then Quaking Aspen up higher. We should get views Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeak, Band tailed Pigeons, Juniper Titmouse, Broad-tailed and Black-chinned Hummingbird, Pygmy Nuthatch, and the possibility of a Northern Pygmy-Owl. This trip will also focus on the montane warblers of this area which should include: Grace's, MacGillivray's, Audubon's, Virginia's, Orange-crowned, Black-throated Gray, and Townsend's. We can hope for a rarity such as a Hermit Warbler as well. There is a restroom at each of the picnic areas.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:30 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~26 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

### **13FRI Owling Trip--Friday Evening**    **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Wezil Walraven

The Sandia Mountains are one of the best places in all of the United States to see Flammulated Owl. A special Friday evening trip will be led by Wezil Walraven to popular owling spots in the Sandia Mountains to look for this bird. In fact, Great Horned Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl and Flammulated Owls are all possible.

**Departure Time: 6:30 PM**

**Return Time: 10:00 PM**

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~25 to 35 miles with several stops

Time (one way): ~1 hr

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

## **FRIDAY WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Friday, August 23**

**All workshops are in the Crowne Plaza New Mexico Ballroom except "Preparation of Bird Specimens"**

**FRI-WS1 Specimens Workshop: "Preparation of Bird Specimens"--CARPOOL**

**Workshop Leaders:** Phil Unitt and Andy Johnson

**Time:** 7:15AM–11:00AM

**Where:** Arizona Room for carpooling to the University of New Mexico Museum 7:15 A.M.

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop description:** Specimens are as fundamental to ornithology today as they have been for the past two centuries. This process is where science meets art, and preparing bird skins is a skill that must be handed down from one generation to the next, as from master to apprentice. In this workshop experienced WFO members and students will demonstrate some diverse ways in which research specimens of birds are prepared. We'll talk about the kinds of information recorded during preparation and the ways in which specimens are used for research once prepared and integrated into museum collections. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about bird external and internal anatomy. We'll show how we learn about molt, fat deposition (migration), gonadal development (breeding phenology), parasites, and diet during the process of specimen preparation. With multiple preparators demonstrating, participants can see the different approaches to preparing a specimen, different problems that certain taxonomic groups present, and different preparation types. If you are experienced in skinning birds and would like to work on one with us, notify Andy Johnson (ajohnson@unm.edu) a week prior to the event so that we have adequate tools and specimens ready – even experienced preparators learn from each other. The workshop will take place at the Museum of Southwestern Biology, about 3 miles from the New Mexico Ballroom at the Crowne Plaza. All participants must either carpool from the hotel at 7:15 AM or meet outside the museum at 7:30 AM.

**Leaders' Bios:** **Phil Unitt** has served as editor of *Western Birds* since 1986 and as collection manager then curator of the Department of Birds and Mammals of the San Diego Natural History Museum since 1988. He is the author of the *San Diego County Bird Atlas* (2004) and co-author of *Birds of the Salton Sea* (2003), publications in which specimen and observational data are integrated. He has prepared more than 4000 bird specimens, from Calliope Hummingbirds to Common Loons and Canada Geese.

**Andrew Johnson:** Andrew Johnson has been the Bird Collection Manager at the Museum of Southwestern Biology, University of New Mexico since 2003. He has prepared thousands of bird specimens and teaches a course in how to prepare bird specimens at University of New Mexico.

### **FRI-WS2 Sound Workshop: "A Shared Vocabulary for Bird Sounds"**

**Workshop Leader:** Nathan Pieplow

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop Description:** In this workshop, you will work on advanced listening skills, paying attention to the fine details of a sound. Just as beginning birders learn the different parts of the bird and how to distinguish colors like "buff" and "rufous," you will learn the different parts of a sound and how to distinguish tone qualities like "burry" and "polyphonic." In the process, you will learn a common vocabulary for describing bird sounds. You will also study how to visualize sounds and read spectrograms. No matter what your level of experience, this workshop will help you listen to sounds more analytically, describe them more accurately, and use them more effectively in identifying birds.

**Leader's Bio:** Nathan Pieplow is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*, published in two volumes (Eastern and Western North America). He has been fascinated by birds since his childhood in South Dakota, and has intensively studied bird sounds since 2003. He is the founder of the bird sound blog *Earbirding.com*, one of the authors of the *Colorado Birding Trail*, and the former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. Nathan teaches writing and rhetoric at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

### **FRI-WS3 Data Mining: Finding Bird Information on the Internet**

**Workshop Leader:** Ed Pandolfino

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop Description:** Thanks to the Internet, staggering amounts of data are readily available to anyone with a computer. Buried in these mountains of raw data are gems of important information on bird distribution, population trends, responses to climate and habitat changes, etc. However, these data sources are woefully under-utilized. This provides an ideal opportunity for anyone with an interest in ornithology to make some important discoveries. Ed will show you how to access and use data from Christmas Bird Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys, eBird, Bird Banding Lab, National Weather Service, and more. Bring your wireless-capable laptop (with Excel software or an equivalent) if you have one and you'll see how easy it is to download and work with data from these sources.

**Leader's Bio: Ed Pandolfino:** Ed is past president of Western Field Ornithologists and co-author of *Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status, and Distribution* (U.C. Press 2013). He is also an ex-biochemist, ex-business executive, and ex-rock and roll drummer and has published dozens of papers on bird status and distribution, most of which used 'mined' data.

**FRI-WS4 13SAT Warbler Workshop and Field Trip: "Warbler Identification Made Easy"** [This is a workshop and field trip. When you sign up for FRI-WS4, you'll also be signed up for Saturday field trip.] --FULL--

**Workshop and Field Trip Leader:** Tom Stephenson

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$65 for Friday workshop PLUS Saturday field trip.

OR

**FRI-WS5 Warbler Workshop: "Warbler Identification Made Easy"** [This is a workshop only.]

\$TBD for workshop only.

**Workshop Leader:** Tom Stephenson

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30 for Friday workshop only

**Workshop:** Our warblers are some of the most beautiful birds of the world. But their beautiful colors often blind birders to many of their most important ID points. This problem is compounded by the often brief and obstructed views we have in the field. This talk discusses many of these very important but often overlooked ID points such as overall contrast, subtle facial features, color impressions, feather edging, rump contrast, and foraging style, location, and behavior. And fortunately, viewing a warbler from below can reveal some of the most important ID points for many species. Learn how many tail and undertail covert patterns are, in fact, diagnostic alone or when combined with one other ID point. Individual species, especially the most challenging to identify, will also be discussed with outlines of the important ID points, comparisons with similar species, and illustrations of how even partial views can be used to identify many of even the most challenging warbler species.

**Leader's Bio: Tom Stephenson** has been birding since he was a kid under the tutelage of Dr. Arthur Allen of Cornell University. Tom's articles and photographs are in museums and in many publications including *Birding*, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, *Handbook of the*

*Mammals of the World, Birds of Madagascar, and Guide to the Birds of SE Brazil.* Tom has lectured and guided many groups across the US as well as in Asia, where he trained guides for the government of Bhutan. He has donated numerous recordings of Eastern Himalayan rarities and other Asian species to Cornell's Macaulay Library of Natural sounds. He was on Zeiss's digiscoping team for the World Series of Birding and in 2011 his and Scott's team won the World Series Cape Island Cup. In 2014 Tom and Scott set the US record for a Photo Big Day, taking pictures of 208 species in one 24-hour period.

His latest book, *The Warbler Guide*, is published by Princeton University Press and recently won the National Outdoor Book Award. The Warbler Guide App, for iOS and Android, includes 3D rotating models and won the 2015 Design Award for AAUP Book, Jacket and Journal Show. His app, BirdGenie, is a "shazam" for bird song that helps bird enthusiasts identify over 150 common vocalizations in the eastern and western US by recording them on their smart phone. BirdGenie won the prestigious PROSE award from the American Association of Publishers. Tom is also working on new book and app projects for Princeton University Press on identifying and learning all North American bird songs as well as a Field Guide to the Birds of North America.

## **SATURDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

**Saturday, August 23**

**Note: All Field Trips are half day and return by 11am**

**All trips by Van leaving from the Arizona Room at the Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque**

Difficulty levels:

Easy—flat ground some walking.

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes

### **1SAT Travertine Falls**

Volunteer Leader: Kristen Oliver

This is a short hike (1.3 mile round trip). Half mile out-and-back hike in to a waterfall (trickle, really) along a canyon bottom in low elevation pinyon-juniper woodland with ponderosa pine and Gambel's oak. Hike can be extended slightly beyond the waterfall if time and ambition of the group allow. Trail is well-used and varies from wide and flat to areas of exposed bedrock. Middle elevation during migration can make for great birding: Migrants should be passing through, and summer residents could still be lingering. Possibilities here include: Black-chinned and Broad-tailed hummingbirds, Plumbeous and Warbling Vireos, Steller's and Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Mountain Chickadee and Juniper Titmouse, Townsend's Solitaire, Spotted Towhee, Virginia's, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's and Wilson's Warblers, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak. This is a drive to a short hike.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 16 miles

Time (one way): 25 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 1.3 miles

Elevation Gain: 250 ft

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **2SAT Embudo Canyon**

Volunteer Leader: Deven Kammerichs-Berke

Embudo Canyon is an area of foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume in the bottoms of the

washes, plus chamisa, cholla, saltbush, grading into juniper at higher elevations on the canyon walls. This has not been grazed in decades, so it is among the best scrub habitat accessible near Albuquerque. The trail is good and the terrain is easy. This desert scrub can be great birding: Both Scaled and Gambel's Quail occur in the foothills. Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers are here, as are Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. The canyon can host migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. Scanning overhead can produce raptors including Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Swainson's and Cooper's Hawks.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~14 miles

Time (one way): ~25 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 2 miles

Elevation Gain: 350 ft

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **3SAT Embudito Canyon**

Volunteer Leader: Michael Hilchey

Similar to Embudo Canyon, Embudito Canyon is an area of foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume in the bottoms of the washes. Chamisa, cholla, saltbrush dominate until you get to the higher elevations of the canyon where juniper takes over. Because this area has not been grazed for many years, it is among some of the best scrub habitat accessible near Albuquerque. Trails are rather wide and gravelly at the start but become narrow farther on and have a steep scramble over slick bedrock towards the end of the walk. It is easy on the flats, moderate on the bedrock, which starts after one half mile. We probably not make it beyond that for a morning trip. This desert scrub can be great birding: Both Scaled and Gambel's Quail occur in the foothills. Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers are here, as are Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. In the canyon, we might see migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. We'll keep scanning overhead for Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Swainson's and Cooper's Hawks.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 12 miles

Time (one way): 20 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 1.5 miles

Elevation Gain: 250 ft

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: East to Moderate

### **4SAT Three Gun Canyon**

Volunteer Leader: Oona Takano

This trail provides access to the southernmost end of the Sandia Mountains. The hiking trail here is a slow, gradual climb from Foothill scrub habitat dominated by Apache Plume and cholla cactus in the bottoms of the washes to conifer forest at higher elevations. The main trails are rather wide and gravelly throughout. This desert scrub can be great birding. At the lower elevations, we will look for Scaled Quail, Curve-billed and Crissal Thrashers, Black-throated, Black-chinned and Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon and Spotted Towhees, Cactus, Rock, Canyon, and Bewick's Wrens, and Greater Roadrunners. Higher elevations may produce Hairy Woodpecker, Red-naped and Williamson's

Sapsucker, Virginia's and Black-throated Gray Warblers. The canyon can host migrant warblers, vireos, tanagers, etc. Scanning overhead can produce raptors including Golden Eagles, Peregrines, Swainson's and Cooper's Hawks.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 12 miles

Time (one way): 16 minutes

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **5SAT Otero Canyon**

Volunteer Leader: Ashli Gorbet

This trip will start at the Otero Canyon trailhead in the Manzanita Mountains and is considered pinyon-juniper woodland birding at its finest. We'll be looking for Juniper Titmouse, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Spotted Towhee, Pinyon Jay, Gray Flycatcher, Plumbeous Vireo, Hepatic Tanager and whatever migrants are around. The hike will be a relaxed pace on an easy grade at mid elevation (about 6,500-7,000 ft). Additionally, this area may produce numerous raptors that are migrating along the spine of the Manzanita Mountains including Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, and Cooper's Hawk.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 20 miles

Time (one way): 30 minutes

Hiking Miles (total): 2-3 miles

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Moderate

### **6SAT Valle de Oro NWR**      **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Kim Score

This is New Mexico's newest and first urban wildlife refuge in the southwestern United States. August at Valle de Oro should have many flooded agricultural fields and smaller ponds (weather and crop irrigation dependent) that may attract numerous migrant shorebirds and waders. Long-billed Curlews can be numerous if the conditions are right. There is a chance for Upland and Solitary Sandpipers. We will also pick through the many migrants and especially sparrows such as Lark, Chipping, Brewer's, Savannah, Vesper, and Lark Bunting. Maybe a Mississippi Kite will come by. Certainly, we'll see a Swainson's Hawk. After thoroughly scanning the fields, we will bird the adjacent bosque along the Rio Grande for more local breeders, migrants, and lucky-to-see birds such as the pair of Common Black-Hawks that nest in the area. Lucy's Warbler's will have likely departed but we will try to find a lingerer. We should expect Summer Tanager, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks, Bewick's Wren, Lazuli Bunting, and Eastern Bluebird.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 15 miles

Time (one way): 25 minutes

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **7SAT Tramway Wetlands and adjacent bosque**      **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Matt Baumann

This trip will start at one of Albuquerque's best shorebird birding spots. It is not a pristine wetland but instead an outflow for Albuquerque's storm water runoff which has fluctuating water levels, especially during the monsoon season, but can be ideal for ducks, shorebirds and waders. Expected species are Wilson's Phalarope, Baird's, Western, Least, Pectoral, Solitary, and Spotted Sandpipers, Wilson's Snipe, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Recent rarities here in August have included Short-billed Dowitcher and Semipalmated Sandpiper. If Mexican Duck hybrids are your thing, this is the trip for you. The waterfowl here will provide close study. Bank Swallows will be flying with Barn, Cliff and Violet-green Swallows. The overgrown weedy vegetation surrounding the wetland will produce migrants to find as well. Ospreys have recently begun to nest here and should have young out this time of year. Mississippi Kites also breed locally and if we are lucky, we will see them. With the remaining time on this trip, we will head to the Alameda Open Space bosque to walk the low flow channels to check for local breeders and migrants. We can expect White-breasted Nuthatch, Summer Tanager, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli and Indigo Buntings and Greater Roadrunner.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 8 miles

Time (one way): 20 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes at Alameda Open Space

Difficulty level: Easy

### **8SAT Rio Grande Nature Center      -Canceled-**

The Rio Grande is the fifth longest river in North America, and the 20th longest in the world. Rising as a clear, snow-fed mountain stream more than 12,000 feet (3,700 meters) above sea level in the Rocky Mountains of southern Colorado, the Rio Grande descends across steppes and deserts, watering rich agricultural regions as it flows on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. The total length of the river is about 1,900 miles (3,060 km). Even though dammed and channelized for much of its length, extensive stands of native cottonwood and willow riparian habitat exist, providing critical year-round habitat for breeders, migrants and resident bird species. The Rio Grande Nature Center provides a wonderful example of the representative bird species found in the riparian habitats from Sandoval County south to Socorro County. There are several trails within the Center, and several large ponds which will allow us to seek out Southwestern specialties such as Blue Grosbeak, Bell's Vireo, Gambel's Quail, and even a possible Common Black Hawk. The RGNC also shelters resident Black-capped Chickadee, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds, Summer and Western Tanagers, Wood Duck, several species of swallows including Bank, Yellow-breasted Chat, and possibly early fall migrants.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 5 miles

Time (one way): 15 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

### **9SAT San Antonito Open Space      -Canceled-**

The 168-acre property in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains was purchased by the City of Albuquerque in 1968 and is one of the earliest pieces of property to be set aside by the City for the enjoyment of nature within this diverse mountain habitat. Elevations at this property range from 6,760' to 7,200'. Pinyon-juniper forests dominate this gently rolling site. Well over 130 species of birds

have been seen in this area over the years, and we hope to add one or two more! We will explore a small but very productive riparian area with perennial water near the parking area, and then walk on well-maintained trails into pinyon-juniper habitat to seek Juniper Titmouse, Black-headed Grosbeak, Wild Turkey, Band-tailed Pigeon, Virginia's Warbler and other early migrants.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 20 miles

Time (one way): 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: No, but quick stop at convenience store on the way and return

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **10SAT Feeder Watching at Lignon's**

Volunteer Leader: Andy Johnson

The home of retired University of New Mexico Biology faculty David and Sandra Ligon is a beautiful oasis on the east side of the Sandias. Permanent water on the property and extensive gardening and landscaping makes this a naturally birdy spot. Although we are a bit late for the peak of hummingbird season, the patio hummingbird feeders will allow close inspection of up to four species of hummingbird (Calliope, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous), and the seed feeders and lush yard vegetation attract migrants and resident birds this time of year.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 18 miles

Time (one way): 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

### **11SAT Bird Banding at Nature Center – CARPOOL** Volunteer Leaders: Steve and Nancy Cox

The Rio Grande Bird Research crew lead by Steve and Nancy Cox will open their long term banding operation to field trip participants on this half day trip. Late August should see an influx in local breeding species and migrants through the Rio Grande Bosque corridor. Participants will get close looks at the birds as they are being banded and will be able to birdwatch with the crew on net rounds. The banding crew will provide tutorials on how the birds being banded are aged and sexed.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM (Steve will leave entrance gate open from 5:45-6AM. Participants should park in parking lot.)

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 4 miles

Time (one way): 15 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes, at the visitor's center

Difficulty level: Easy

### **12SAT Sandia Mountains** **-FULL-**

Volunteer Leader: Bryan Calk

This trip is an hour (25.7 miles, one way) van ride to the Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area (6800 ft) and Doc Long Picnic Area (7360 ft). These picnic areas have maintained trails at a slight incline which we will walk up slowly. The habitat in this part of the Sandias is Wavy Leaf Oak, ponderosa pine and then Quaking Aspen up higher. We should get views of Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeak, Band-tailed Pigeons, Juniper Titmouse, Broad-tailed and Black-chinned Hummingbird, Pygmy Nuthatch, and possibly a Northern Pygmy-Owl. This trip will also focus on the montane warblers of this area which

should include: Grace's, MacGillivray's, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's), Virginia's, Orange-crowned, Black-throated Gray, and Townsend's. We can hope for a rarity such as a Hermit Warbler as well. There is a clean restroom at each of the picnic areas for our use.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~26 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

**13SAT Warbler ID Field Trip accompanying the Workshop—CARPOOL --FULL--** Volunteer Leaders:  
Tom Stephenson and Wezil Walraven

After a day attending Tom Stephenson's Workshop, this will be an opportunity to put his techniques into practice. It takes about an hour to get to the lower reaches of the Sandia Mountains where more than one species of warblers can be found in August. Two picnic areas close to each other will provide multiple opportunities for viewing. There are maintained trails with only a slight incline and walking should be easy as you use Tom's techniques. The habitat in this part of the Sandias is Wavy Leaf oak, ponderosa pine and in the higher areas, Quaking Aspen. This trip will focus on the montane warblers of the area which should include: Grace's, MacGillivray's, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's), Virginia's, Orange-crowned, Black-throated Gray, and Townsend's. We can hope for a rarity such as a Hermit Warbler as well. There is a clean restroom at each of the picnic areas for our use.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$0

Miles (one way): ~26 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

**14SAT Student Programs Field Trip: Tingley Beach – Bosque Ponds Birding & Witt Lab--CARPOOL**  
Leaders: Homer Hansen & Guests

The field trip destination will be Tingley Beach – Bosque Ponds to spend the first half of the morning birding. Two ponds in the bosque hold many ducks, such as Wood Ducks and migrant teal species, and afford opportunities to study Mallard/Mexican Duck plumages. The bosque trails around the ponds are excellent for Summer Tanager, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Grosbeak, Greater Roadrunner, and Black-headed Grosbeak, as well as the migratory species Lazuli Bunting, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Green Heron. After birding around the ponds and bosque, we will depart for Witt Lab to meet with graduate researchers. The researchers will share details about their projects. Witt Lab is working on projects about the phylogeny and phylogeography of Andean birds, the co-evolution of birds and malarial parasites, and high-altitude adaptations in hummingbirds. These research topics are well represented in the museum and many examples will be on display during our visit.

**Tingley Beach – Bosque Ponds** is an approximately 20 minute drive from the New Mexico Ballroom at Crowne Plaza. This field trip is planned specifically for the student scholarship recipients, other youths and students in attendance at the conference, and parents (as needed for drivers). The field trip will depart from the New Mexico Ballroom at Crowne Plaza. Young field ornithologists should plan to carpool with parents or trip leaders.

**Witt Lab:** The University of New Mexico Division of Birds maintains a research collection of over 40,000 birds, with global coverage. The museum focuses on the study of the biology and evolution of birds. The long term goal for Witt Lab is to build a data-rich specimen collection to facilitate studies of avian biodiversity across time and space. The lab's science is repeatable, extendable, and open. This is achieved by archiving research materials in public museum collections with online specimen data and reciprocal links to online data archives and peer-reviewed publications.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$0

Miles (one way): ~15 miles

Time (one way): ~25 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

## **SATURDAY WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS**

**Saturday, August 24**

**All workshops are in the New Mexico Ballroom at the Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque**

### **SAT-WS1 Workshop: "Beyond Beginning Ear Birding"**

**Workshop Leader:** Nathan Pieplow

**Time:** 8:00—11:00 AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop Description:** This workshop assumes you already have basic skills in bird sound identification, and want to reach the next level. We will take the techniques and terms taught in "A Shared Vocabulary for Bird Sounds" and apply them to common problems of audio identification in the western United States. You will learn key comparison species, key audio groups, and tricks for demystifying difficult challenges such as female hummingbirds – techniques to help you move to the intermediate and advanced stages of birding by ear in the West.

**Leader's Bio:** **Nathan Pieplow** is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to "Bird Sounds of Eastern North America"* and the forthcoming *Peterson Field Guide to "Bird Sounds of Western North America."* He has been fascinated by birds since his childhood in South Dakota and has intensively studied bird sounds since 2003. He is the founder of the bird sound blog Earbirding.com, one of the authors of the Colorado Birding Trail, and the former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. Nathan teaches writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

### **SAT-WS2 Workshop: "Illustrating Birds – From the Field to the Studio"**

**Workshop Leader:** Bryce W. Robinson

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop Description:** "It is no coincidence that many talented birders and ornithologists also hold a desire to illustrate bird life. In fact, many bird experts such as David Sibley and Kenn Kauffmann, actively work to communicate their knowledge and passion through their illustrations. Bird illustration is a fundamental tool for bird study, since its process breaks down the basics of identification in an intimate manner. To create a recognizable image that resembles reality, one must master shape,

proportion, components and structure, posture, and plumage. Through such intimate study, one becomes familiar with not only important identification characteristics, but the general character of each species as well, ultimately enhancing skills in field identification and enriching one's experience with birdlife.

In this workshop, we will learn how to develop skills in bird illustration so that you too can create captivating and informative representations of birds, no matter your drawing abilities. We will learn the proper approach to illustration, including which aspects to prioritize in order to create the best representation of your subject. We will then put this approach into practice as we work from photographs to 'build a bird'. We will separate each step, take it slow, and ultimately each participant will not only come away with a refined representation of a bird, but a better understanding of the birds character that will enhance your skills as you enter the field to join the afternoon or Sunday field trips.

**Leader's Bio: Bryce W. Robinson** is an ornithologist and illustrator. He has illustrated birds since he began birding as a child in Ithaca, New York. He has since studied birds across North and Central America, from illustrating McKay's Buntings on their breeding grounds on St. Matthew Island, Gyrfalcon at their nests in the Arctic Tundra, to Orange-breasted Falcons atop high cliffs in the Belizean forest. He is the author of many scientific publications, some of which feature his illustrations. He lives in Boise, Idaho, where he manages Ornithologi: A Studio for Bird Study. To see his work, visit [www.ornithologi.com](http://www.ornithologi.com)

### **SAT-WS3 Workshop: Birding "Best Practices" in the Digital Age**

**Workshop Leader:** Ted Floyd

**Time:** 8:00AM–11:00AM

**Where:** New Mexico Ballroom

**Cost:** \$30

**Workshop description:** Every year, it seems, WFO offers a workshop on digital resources for birders and field ornithologists. Doesn't this ever get old? Answer: No—because the technology is advancing at a blistering rate. What we learned last year is outdated, and what we learned the year before is positively obsolete. In this workshop, we'll look at recent improvements and upgrades to Xeno-Canto, iNaturalist, eBird, and more; we'll also look at recent advances in digital photography, audio recording, and online social media. The workshop will blend a bit of classroom discussion with the experience of creating multimedia field notebooks while actually birding.

**Leader's Bio: Ted Floyd** Ted Floyd is Editor of *Birding*, published by the American Birding Association, and the author of various bird books, including *How to Know the Birds* (National Geographic, 2019). Introduced to WFO by Mike San Miguel nearly 20 years ago, Ted has been an enthusiastic WFO'er ever since, especially dedicated to conferences, *Western Birds*, and outreach to young field ornithologists.

## **SUNDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Sunday, August 25th**

**Note: Most Field Trips are full day and return by 5 PM; Half-day Field Trips return at 11 AM—1 PM**

**Some Carpools**

## All trips by Van leaving from the Arizona Room of the Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque

Difficulty levels:

Easy—flat ground some walking.

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

### **1SUN Black Range**    **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Matt Baumann

The Black Range is on the eastern edge of New Mexico's expansive Gila Wilderness. We will drive to the starting point of this trip above 8,000 ft in mixed conifer at Emory Pass where we will look for Red-faced, Virginia's, and Townsend's Warblers, Painted Redstart, Pinyon Jay, Zone-tailed Hawk, and other local breeders and migrants. Red-backed Juncos, as subspecies of Dark-eyed Juncos, breed locally and should provide side by side comparison with Gray-headed Juncos. There should be numerous Broad-tailed Hummingbirds and Calliope is a possibility. After birding the pass, we will descend in elevation to search other habitats for Hutton's Vireo, Williamson's Sapsucker, Hepatic Tanager, Olive and Grace's Warblers. Downy Woodpeckers breed locally in the mixed conifers. Stops at some of the lower, more arid conifer forests will produce Acorn Woodpeckers, Pygmy Nuthatch, Plumbeous Vireo, and Black-throated Gray Warbler. Northern Pygmy-Owl is possible along this entire route. This field trip is far from Albuquerque and will be three hours (one way) in a van to Emory Pass. On the way home, we will plan to stretch and have dinner at Socorro Springs Brewery in Socorro. After we have sufficiently refueled, we will hit the road and return to Albuquerque around 7-8 PM.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 7 to 8 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~190 miles

Time (one way): ~ 3 hr. Stop for dinner in Socorro on the way home

Hiking Miles (total): Under 2 miles

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

### **2SUN Las Vegas NWR**

Volunteer Leader: Dave Mehlman

This full day trip will head to the fringe of the northeast plains of New Mexico. Las Vegas NWR has several small lakes which can host fair numbers of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl along with expanses of quality grassland. A diversity of species will be found on this trip; migrant shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and migrant passerines (especially sparrows). Trip targets could have Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Burrowing Owl, Black Tern, Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Clay-colored Sparrow, Scaled Quail, and Black-billed Magpie. The varied habitats at Las Vegas NWR should produce a large number of species on this trip! There are large observation platforms to scope lakes and short trails to look for resident and migratory land birds.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 115 miles

Time (one way): ~ 1.5 hrs

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

### **3SUN Pecos Canyon (and possible Elk Mountain highlands)**

Volunteer Leader: Andy Johnson

The Sangre de Cristo Mountains east of Santa Fe are the southern extent of the Rocky Mountains and the headwaters of the Pecos River. The highlands hold Dusky Grouse, and boreal species such as Canada Jay, American Three-toed Woodpecker, White-crowned Sparrow, and Pine Grosbeak. Most of these species are not accessible without a considerable hike to spruce-fir forest and tree line, but if the 14 mile road to Elk Mountain from Terrero is maintained well enough, a van can make it up this road to try for these species. The decision to ascend Elk Mountain would have to be made two weeks before the meeting, and rain could cause us to cancel that attempt even the day of the trip.

Nonetheless, the lower reaches of the canyon are accessible by paved road and host a lush mixture of riparian thickets, mixed conifer and aspen forests that can hold considerable bird diversity. This will be a drive from the town of Pecos up the canyon of the Pecos River to the Jack's Creek trailhead with stops along the way to look for birds. American Dipper, Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers, Lincoln's and Song Sparrows, Red Crossbill, Clark's Nutcracker, Steller's Jay, Black-billed Magpie, Cassin's Finch, Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes. Terrero Store has hummingbird feeders and will be worthwhile to stop for a look.

Departure Time: 5:15 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 110 miles

Time (one way): ~ 2 hrs 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Hiking miles (total): less than 5 miles

Elevation gain: under 300 ft per hike

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

Drive with various stops for short hikes

**4SUN Water Canyon, Magdalena Mountains** --FULL--Volunteer Leaders: Tom Stephenson, Wezil Walraven

The Magdalenas are the reliable northern extent of the range of three 'Madrean' bird species in New Mexico: Olive Warbler, Red-faced Warbler, and Hutton's Vireo. Montezuma Quail also occur here. The plant communities also become more diverse, with Arizona walnut and Arizona alder making an appearance in the canyon bottoms, and a larger proportion of the junipers are Alligator Junipers in the pinyon-juniper woodlands. Pinyon-Juniper hillsides with extensive ponderosa pines and some Douglas-fir are in the mesic areas of the canyon. A diverse mix of habitats in close proximity makes for excellent birding. Bird species that tend to be found here are Hepatic Tanager, Virginia's, Grace's, and Black-throated Gray Warblers, Zone-tailed Hawk, Northern Pygmy Owl, Acorn Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, Juniper Titmouse, Pygmy Nuthatch, White breasted Nuthatch, Bewick's Wren, Hermit Thrush, Steller's and Woodhouse's Scrub Jays, Clark's Nutcracker, and Band-tailed Pigeon. Migrants in this canyon can be spectacular. Hermit Warbler is a possibility.

Drive and various stops for short hikes

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 100 miles

Time (one way): ~ 2 hrs

Restroom facilities: Yes

Hiking miles (total): less than 5 miles

Elevation gain: under 300 ft per hike

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **5SUN Pajarito Ski Area (Los Alamos)**

Volunteer Leader: Bryan Calk

After a drive, this trip will begin at the Pajarito Ski Area parking lot. We will hike the numerous trails in the area and cover lots of ground climbing in elevation to nearly 10,000 ft. During the hike, we will search for typical montane species of mixed conifer such as Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, Evening Grosbeak, American Three-toed Woodpecker, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Clark's Nutcracker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Williamson's Sapsucker. A majority of the time, we will stay in mixed conifer forest but will venture into vast aspen stands and open meadows. All during the hike, we will look for Northern Goshawk and Dusky Grouse.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 4:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~ 100 miles

Time (one way): ~ 1 hr 45 minutes

Restrooms: No

Difficulty level: Moderate to Difficult due to elevation

### **6SUN Jemez Mountains**      **--FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Nick Pederson

There are six super volcanoes on dry land in the world and three of them are in the United States. Yellowstone is one and Long Valley in the Mammoth Mountain area in California is another. New Mexico is lucky enough to have one as well. The 13 mile wide Valles Caldera, is a dramatic, grassy bowl set in the Jemez Mountains near Los Alamos. Although the last eruption was a long time ago, hot springs and fumaroles are still in the region. The Valles Caldera is now one of the country's newest National Preserves (part of the National Park system). We will investigate the coniferous forests adjacent to the Caldera, but more importantly, we will inspect the grasslands within the crater itself. Our target species include one of the highest elevation breeding subspecies of Eastern Meadowlark (Lillian's Meadowlark), Northern Goshawk, American Dipper, Clark's Nutcracker, Red-breasted, White-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatches, Mountain Bluebird and other high elevation species. After our time exploring the Caldera, we will return along the same route to search for American Three-toed Woodpecker and a rare possibility of a Dusky Grouse. If we have enough time (depending on earlier sightings, we may opt for a drive along the road into Bandelier National Monument for Grace's Warbler and other ponderosa pine specialties, or for a quick stop in Los Alamos for migrants at a known migrant trap.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 5:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~130 miles

Time (one way): ~3 hours with stops

Restroom facilities: Yes (gas stations and USFS facilities)

Difficulty level: Moderate due to elevation

### **7SUN Sandia Mountains**

Volunteer Leaders: Raymond VanBuskirk

This trip departs at 5:45AM from the hotel for a 1 hour van ride to the Sulphur Canyon Picnic Area (Elevation 6800). This picnic area has a maintained trail at a slight incline which we will walk up slowly. The habitat in this part of the Sandias is Wavy Leaf oak, ponderosa pine and then Quaking aspen up higher. We should get views of Western Tanagers, Black headed Grosbeak, Band tailed Pigeons, Northern Pygmy-Owl and a few species of warblers including the possibility of a Townsend's in migration. We should also get a look at Red breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush and Steller's Jay. After we spend about 2 hours here, we will drive over to the Doc Long Picnic Area of the Sandia Mountains

(elevation 7360) which is a short 10 minute drive up the mountain. The trail at Doc Long Picnic Area is dirt and gravel and fairly easy to walk with a slight incline. We will slowly walk up this trail in search of Juniper Titmouse, Mountain Chickadee, MacGillivray's and Virginia's Warblers, Bewick's Wren, House Wren, Plumbeous Vireo, Black headed Grosbeak, Broad tailed and Black chinned Hummingbirds, Western Tanager, Chipping Sparrow and again, possibly Northern Pygmy-Owl and more. We will find a shaded picnic table for a lunch stop before we head way up the mountain to Sandia Crest. Along the road to the crest Rocky Mountain Mule Deer are often seen alongside the road. The trails are maintained and have some rocky outcroppings. We will meander along the trail looking for Clark's Nutcracker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Crossbills, Gray headed Junco and more. We will stop at the overlook in search of soaring hawks and raptors, along with a view of Albuquerque. A Peregrine Falcon has been spotted here in the past.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:00 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~35miles

Time (one way): ~50 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate due to elevation

### **8SUN Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge --FULL--**

Volunteer Leader: Kathy Granillo

At 229,673 acres – more than 358 square miles – Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge is the 8th largest refuge in the 48 contiguous states. Located at the junction of 4 biomes (shortgrass prairie, Chihuahuan desert, Colorado Plateau shrub-steppe and pinyon juniper woodland) and bisected by the Rio Grande, it is one of the most diverse places in the state. Most of the refuge is not accessible to the general public so this trip will provide a rare opportunity to experience this incredible landscape. The grasslands, desert and woodlands will provide a diversity of bird possibilities. Gray Vireos, a southwestern endemic often difficult to find in much of their range, are common on the refuge in the juniper savannah and linger well into October. Several pairs of Golden Eagles breed on the refuge and several other raptor species are possible. Fall migration will be starting to ramp up and if the planets align just right, there could be large numbers of shrikes and wrens passing through the landscape. Several sparrow species are possible, and another southwestern endemic, Lillian's Meadowlark. Short hikes are a likely possibility to try and find birds away from the roads.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~55 miles

Time (one way): ~55 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes, at the Visitor's Center

Difficulty level: Moderate due to elevation

### **9SUN Quarai Ruins and Manzano Mountains**

Volunteer Leader: Michael Hilchey

This will be a combination birding and cultural exploration of the Estancia Valley on the east side of the Manzano Mountains, southeast of Albuquerque. Our first stop will be at the Manzano Ponds to catch early morning migrant activity around the wetland. After a brief time there, we then continue south on to the Quarai unit, one of three historical sites within the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument. The Quarai unit is the smallest of the three units at approximately 90 acres. Pueblo artifacts at the site suggest that in its prime and prior to Spanish contact, Quarai was a very large pueblo. This fact is mainly due to the presence of a year round water source flowing from springs along Zapato Creek. This thriving city is what Don Juan de Oñate found when he arrived at Quarai in

1598. Like the other Missions of Salinas Pueblo, a combination of disease, drought, famine, and Apache raids led to the abandonment of Quarai in 1678. We will spend time viewing and photographing the beautiful ruins, as well as birding the riparian area adjacent to the ruins. The associated pinyon-juniper habitat should hold migrants plus resident Juniper Titmouse, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, several wren species, and Canyon Towhee. We will then go north and west into the Manzano Mountains for montane birding through the burn matrix of the Trigo Fire.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~75 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes (Quarai) afternoon will seek facilities nearby

Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

### **10SUN Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge**

Volunteer Leader: Kristen Oliver

Translated as "Apache Forest," this is one of the premier wildlife viewing destinations in the western US. While particularly known for its huge numbers of Sandhill Cranes, white geese and waterfowl during the winter months, migration can be highly rewarding as well. The refuge was established in 1939 to provide a critical stopover for migrating waterfowl, and consists of 57,331 acres of riparian habitat, farmland and Chihuahuan desert-scrub, and is critical during migration as birds follow the Rio Grande corridor to and from breeding and wintering grounds. The refuge proper has recorded over 365 species of birds, including two North American firsts; Songrebe and Rufous-necked Wood-Rail. We will spend our time touring the refuge roads (both north and south loops), as well as at the feeders at the refuge headquarters. We hope to find some lingering breeders such as Bell's Vireo, Vermilion Flycatcher, Bullock's Oriole, Lucy's Warbler, and Blue Grosbeak as well as other Southwest specialties such as Verdin, Black-throated Sparrow, Canyon Towhee and Pyrrhuloxia.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: \$50

Miles (one way): ~95 miles

Time (one way): ~1 hr 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

### **11SUN Bird Banding at Rio Grande Nature Center –HALF DAY--CARPOOL**

Volunteer Leaders: Steve

and Nancy Cox

The Rio Grande Bird Research crew lead by Steve and Nancy Cox will open their long term banding operation to field trip participants on this half day trip. Late August should see an influx in local breeding species and migrants through the Rio Grande Bosque corridor. Participants will get close looks at the birds as they are being banded and will be able to birdwatch with the crew on net rounds. The banding crew will provide tutorials on how the birds being banded are aged and sexed.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM (Steve will leave entrance gate open from 5:45-6AM. Participants should park in parking lot.)

Return Time: 11:00 AM—1 PM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): 4 miles

Time (one way): 15 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes, at the visitor's center

Difficulty level: Easy

### **12SUN Rio Grande Nature Center—HALF DAY--CARPOOL -Canceled-**

The Rio Grande is the fifth longest river in North America, and the 20th longest in the world. Rising as a clear, snow-fed mountain stream more than 12,000 feet (3,700 meters) above sea level in the Rocky Mountains of southern Colorado, the Rio Grande descends across steppes and deserts, watering rich agricultural regions as it flows on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. The total length of the river is about 1,900 miles (3,060 km). Even though it is dammed and channelized for much of its length, extensive stands of native cottonwood and willow riparian habitat exist, providing critical year-round habitat for breeders, migrants and resident bird species. The Rio Grande Nature Center provides a wonderful example of the representative bird species found in the riparian habitats from Sandoval County south to Socorro County. There are several trails within the Center, and several large ponds which will allow us to seek out Southwestern specialties such as Blue Grosbeak, Bell's Vireo, Gambel's Quail, and even a possible Common Black Hawk. The RGNC also shelters resident Black-capped Chickadee (and potential for Mountain-Black-capped Hybrids), Black-chinned Hummingbird, Wood Duck, several species of swallows, Yellow-breasted Chat, and possibly early fall migrants.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM

Return Time: 11 AM—1 PM

Cost: \$35

Miles (one way): ~ 5 Miles

Time (one way): ~ 15 minutes

Walking distance to hike Rio on Bosque Trail

Elevation Gain: Flat

Restroom facilities: Yes, at Visitor's Center

Difficulty level: Easy

## **New Mexico Three-day Post Conference Tour**

Leaders: Dave Krueper and Jon Dunn

Sunday through Tuesday, August 25 to 27

### **25 August (Sunday)**

After check-out and pick up of pre-ordered Grab and Go breakfasts, we will assemble at 5:00 am in the Arizona Room and then to the vans to organize seating and luggage for our first day of the tour. It will be a 4 to 5-hour drive to Carlsbad, with some stops for birding as we go. There will be the opportunity to enjoy the scenic shortgrass prairies of eastern New Mexico along the way. Late morning visiting Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge near Roswell should be pleasant. We hope to view large numbers of south-bound migrant waterfowl and shorebirds as well as lingering summer breeders and residents such as Scaled Quail, Northern Bobwhite, Greater Roadrunner, Snowy Plover, and possibly a late interior Least Tern. This is the prime season for wandering colonial waterbirds such as Roseate Spoonbill, Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, and Reddish Egret; all very rare in the interior Southwest. Warning, the mosquitoes will probably be out in force so be prepared with repellent and patience. After our visit to Bitter Lake NWR, we will have a late lunch in Roswell.

Back on the road, this field trip continues south to Carlsbad where, we may be able to get down to Carlsbad Caverns National Park to view the bat exodus and possibly Cave Swallows and Black-chinned Sparrows which breed there (leader discretion). The caverns proper do not provide a great deal of habitat for migrants, but our goal is to scour the hillsides for what residents may be around. Maybe there will be Cactus Wren and the *celsum* subspecies of Curve-billed Thrasher. Then, it is a short drive

back to Carlsbad, where we will check in to our hotel and have a group dinner in town. Night in Carlsbad.

### **26 August (Monday)**

After breakfast and checkout, we are off to Rattlesnake Springs and Washington Ranch to the south of Carlsbad for riparian and Chihuahuan Desert birding in one of the most productive desert vagrant traps in New Mexico. One could spend all day here exploring the cottonwood and willow gallery forest in search of early migrants; Gray Hawks, Vermilion Flycatcher, late Lucy's Warbler, Bell's Vireo and Painted and Varied Buntings, plus many more. This patch has hosted one of the two New Mexico records of Piratic Flycatcher in the past, and so who knows what we might find. After a quick lunch in Carlsbad, we are off again toward Cloudcroft in the Sacramento Mountains to the north and east. There will be several stops along the way, but we will also want to spend time in the higher elevations of the Sacramento Mountains searching for Evening Grosbeak, Warbling Vireo and possibly Red-faced Warbler. Toward sunset, we will descend from the high elevations down to Alamogordo ("fat cottonwood" in Spanish) with views of White Sands National Monument toward the west. After checking in to the hotel, we will then have dinner nearby. Night in Alamogordo.

### **27 August (Tuesday)**

After breakfast, it is off to saline ponds to the west of Holloman to look for migrant shorebirds and any remaining Interior Snowy Plovers (breeders at this location). Skirting the White Sands Missile Range to the west, we'll drive southwest toward Las Cruces and then north to Percha Dam State Park for other riparian specialists and migrants; Great Kiskadee, Common Black Hawk, Prairie Warbler and Carolina Wren have been found here in the recent past. If we have time, we might target Elephant Butte Lake (Sabine's Gull is nearly annual here in the fall) or Bosque del Apache NWR on the return to Albuquerque (leader discretion depending on recent sightings). That evening, we will have a farewell dinner and checklist session to close out the trip. Some folks may be able to fly out in the evening if flights are available.

Return Time: 5-6 PM

Room for 16 participants in two vans

Cost: \$350

Restroom facilities: yes

Difficulty level: Easy but with great variety of elevation and with potentially temperatures in the 90's at lower elevations.

**WFO Field Trip includes vans, gas, insurance for vans and field trip leaders. Field trip participants are responsible for food, hotel accommodation, and preferred snacks. Water will be available to refill participants' water bottles. After signing up for this field trip, you will receive an email with phone numbers for hotel rooms along the way and at the airport if you are staying the last night in Albuquerque.**