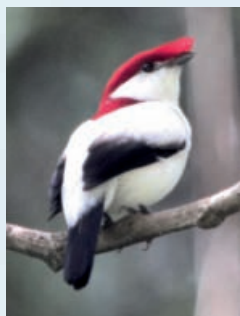


Nowhere But Northeast Brazil

Bret Whitney



Araripe Manakin by participant Kathy Brown

The Field Guides 2015 Northeast Brazil tour went like a dream, barely a wrinkle along our three-plus weeks of birding travels. We like it like that! Sure, there were a few rough moments along the way.... wait a minute, nooo, there actually weren't any hardships to speak of! Well, maybe that time we stopped for Magnum bars and they were out. That was pretty bad, I guess. And now that I think about it, where the heck were the Masked Ducks? Light rains meant

few ponds available for them, but all we really wanted was ONE—not too much to ask (usually)! This was the driest, or second-driest, tour we've ever done. Fortunately, December/early January rains had been good, so the land was generally green and birds singing, but we had hardly a drop of rain through the entire tour and extension.

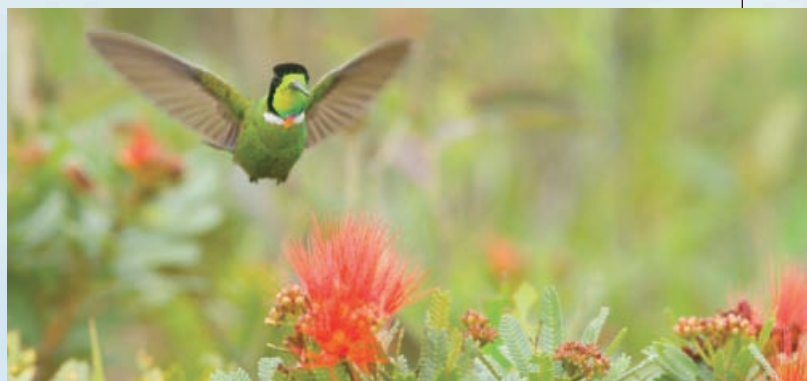
If there were anything "major" to complain about, it would have to be that people have done such a thorough job of destroying native habitats that we had to drive further between remnant forests and desert scrub just to have a chance of seeing all of the many rare birds endemic to Northeast Brazil. To be sure, habitat loss cost us the Pinto's Spinetail this year, but darned few other birds escaped our binoculars, and our group was an especially fun and congenial one.

Among so many highlights, mention of just a few must include the Lear's Macaws that showed up at exactly the right moment for us to see them really well. Araripe Manakins, on the other hand, seemed eager to please, with handsome adult males posing for scope views and photos several times. And how about that Broad-tipped Hermit that came out of the dense brush to meet us face-to-face, then perched to eye us some more?—that bird provided surely the most amazing hummingbird performance of the 28 species we saw this year. That said, the glowing male Ruby-topaz Hummingbird on the Southern Bahia Extension was a mighty close second, but the hermit is endemic to the Northeast and much more difficult to see really well. Finding four, perhaps even five, Alagoas Antwrens was

wonderful and bittersweet at the same time, as recent intensive search of all remaining habitat patches had documented only these few birds at Murici Reserve remaining alive, the very last members of their species. That morning at Murici produced another of our most exciting finds, as we enjoyed lengthy (in time and distance!) scope views of an adult White-collared Kite, one of the world's rarest raptors.

Classic Northeast Brazil endemics on the main tour route, such as Great Xenops, Red-shouldered Spinetail, Pectoral Antwren, Caatinga Antwren, Buff-breasted Tody-Tyrant, White-naped Jay, Seven-colored Tanager, Red-cowled Cardinal, and White-throated Seedeater were, as always, seen beautifully. We also thoroughly enjoyed several species that are often somewhat harder to find or see well, such as Pygmy Nightjar, Least Nighthawk, Golden-tailed Parrotlet and Gray-breasted Parakeet (pairs of both species perched low and close!), Scalloped Antbird, Orange-bellied Antwren, Willis's Antbird, Fringe-backed Fire-eye, Alagoas Tyrannulet, Ash-throated Casiornis, Black-headed Berryeater, Scarlet-throated Tanager, Copper Seedeater, and the rare Forbes's Blackbird.

Continued on page 2



Hooded Visorbearer by guide Marcelo Padua
At top, Indigo (Lear's) Macaws by participant Markus Lagerqvist

Nowhere But Northeast Brazil

Continued from page 1



With inspiring landscape and backdrops all around us, fabulous birds like Sincora Antwren, Diamantina Tapaculo, Collared Crescentchest, Rufous-sided Pymgy-Tyrant, Gray-backed Tachuri, the stunning Hooded Visorbearer, the rare and local Brown Violetear (endemic form *greenewalti*), and Sao Francisco Sparrow all showed perfectly, one by one. Special accolades go to the roster of piculets on this trip, which typically racks up more of these tiny woodpeckers than any other tour! We saw, in order of appearance, Golden-spangled (endemic subspecies *pernambucensis*, proposed for recognition at the species level), Tawny, Ochraceous, Spotted, and Golden-spangled (nominat subspecies *exilis*, another endemic population proposed for recognition at the species level).

We wrapped up the main tour with a festive swing through old Salvador, one of the oldest cities in the Americas, and capital of Brazil for more than 200 years. For the first time we offered the southern Bahia section as a separate extension to the main, more northerly route, which allows for greater flexibility for participants. The extension is distinctly tempered with the Atlantic Forest realm

Sincora Antwren by participant Kathy Brown. At top, the rugged capstones of the Chapada Diamantina by guide Bret Whitney.

we bird on our *Spectacular Southeast Brazil* tours. Most folks did take the extension, and it proved to be super-productive. White-winged Potoo, Hook-billed Hermit, Slender Antbird, Rio de Janeiro Antbird, Narrow-billed Antwren, Bahia Antwren,

Band-tailed Antwren, Striated Softtail, Bahia Spinetail, Eastern Striped Manakin, Bahia Tyrannulet, and Pink-legged Graveteiro all did their things for us, and we heartily applauded each fabulous performance. All of these are species we do not typically see on any other tour, and we added to these an impressive haul of classic Southeast endemics.

Finally, a mega-highlight on the extension was having a Giant Snipe come in close to us, giving us perfect views for several minutes as it walked along, stopping to probe in the wet meadow grass, or preen, even singing in the spotlight! It was among the top vote-getters for best bird of the whole tour—check out the video online!

Dates for our 2016 tour are January 8-26 (Southern Bahia Extension, January 25-31) with Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas.

Upcoming Tours

We have a great selection of January through March tours ranging in length from 6 to 22 days, many of them to warm, southern, and very birdy climes. Here are a few of the nearly 40 possibilities.

Panama's Canopy Tower offers the pleasures of rich Neotropical birding while staying at a single lodge under the leadership of John Coons, a guide who has done more tours to the Canopy Tower than even he—renowned for his ability to remember everything—can recall. Dates are February 7-13 with a Canopy Lodge Extension from February 3.

The Field Guides **Cambodia** tour consistently gets high marks for its combination of some of the world's rarest birds with the temples of Angkor, all under the expert guidance of Phil Gregory. Phil designed the tour and has led it since he and his wife, Sue, visited Cambodia in 2008. Dates are February 20-March 4.

Oaxaca—In addition to seeing many wonderful birds, we'll have the opportunity to visit ruins of the late Zapotec culture at Monte Alban. We'll sample the great cuisine of the area, and learn about the ancient weaving techniques, all while based in the beautiful colonial city of Oaxaca. Dates are February 13-20 with Pepe Rojas & Tom Johnson.

Colombia: The Cauca Valley, Western & Central Andes—We'll be birding in the country with the world's longest bird list in a part of that country notably rich in endemics—and notably scenic as well. Limited to just six participants, the tour will be guided by Richard Webster, who designed the tour ten years ago and has been fine tuning it ever since. Dates are February 5-20.

Field Guides Updates

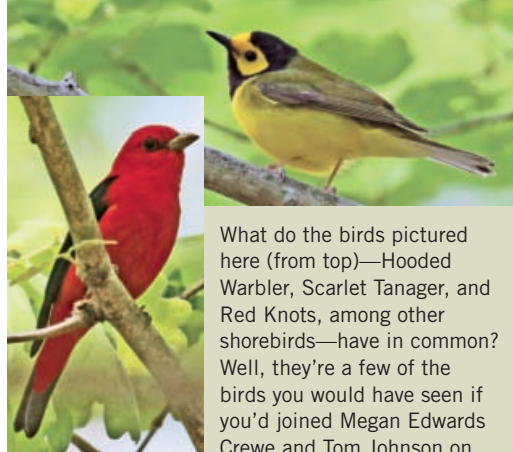
Those of you who know and love guide Willy Perez—and those of you who would like to meet him—might be interested to hear that he has added a **Southwestern Ecuador Specialties: Jocotoco Foundation Reserves** tour to his schedule. Dates are June 21-July 5 and it may be combined with Willy's Galapagos tour.

We enjoyed an article that Joyce Miller, a participant on the **Northern Arizona: Canyons & Condors** tour with John Coons, wrote about her experience on the tour this year. You might like to take a look at — <http://glensfallschronicle.com/her-quest-to-see-california-condors-in-the-grand-canyon/>

FRESH FROM THE FIELD

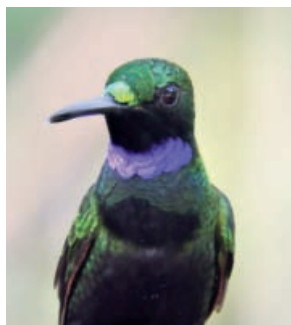


Our **Brazil Nutshell** tour visits three prime birding locales—Intervalles State Park, Iguazu Falls, and the Pantanal—with birds such as the three pictured here: Black-fronted Piping-Guan (left), an endangered endemic seen this year at both Intervalles and Iguazu; the striking Yellow-fronted Woodpecker (top right), another endemic species seen at Intervalles; and the more widespread Nanday Parakeet, fairly common in the Pantanal where our group had it this year. The beautiful forest at Intervalles shown above harbors a large number of Atlantic Forest endemics and is a great place to bird. (Photos by participant Ed LeGrand)



What do the birds pictured here (from top)—Hooded Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Red Knots, among other shorebirds—have in common? Well, they're a few of the birds you would have seen if you'd joined Megan Edwards Crewe and Tom Johnson on

our **Spring in Cape May** tour this year. And some of the others? How about 24 species of warblers, shorebirds in the thousands, and a few rarities like White-faced Ibis, a bright white immature Iceland Gull, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and a singing male Painted Bunting. But don't worry, you'll have another chance next spring. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson and participant Bill Fraser)



That bird at right is the Powerful Woodpecker, the same that graced the Field Guides catalog cover a few years ago, and just one of the sightings on Willy Perez's **Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge** tour this spring. Other notables included the Black-throated Brilliant at top left, one of the many hummers at the lodge feeders; the tiny Ochre-breasted Antpitta, top right; and the female Fiery-throated Fruiteater on her nest with a chick. The male, the one with the fiery throat, was also seen though not photographed. (Photos by guide Willy Perez and participant Mary Lou Barritt)



The photo at bottom might give a hint of where we are—on the spring **Spain: La Mancha, Coto Donana & Extremadura** tour, of course, where our group didn't waste its time tilting at windmills, but was out spotting great birds like the Bluethroat below, the Eurasian Griffon at right, and the striking Green Woodpecker. (Photos by guide Chris Benesh and participant Linda Rudolph)



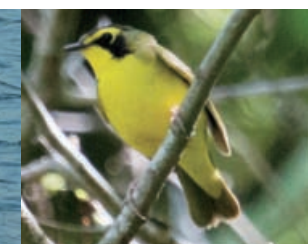
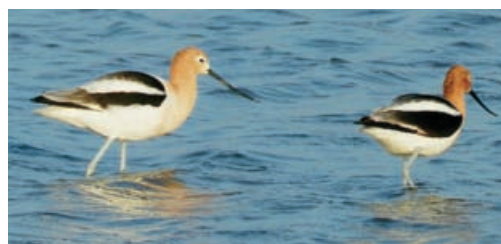
FRESH FROM THE FIELD



John Coons loves the High Arctic, so he's in his element on the **Spitsbergen & Svalbard Archipelago** cruise with its Polar Bears, Walrus, Ivory Gulls, and nesting seabirds. Oh yes, and glaciers—the Norwegian Arctic still has some stunners. The Dovekies at top right are among the smallest seabirds, and it's a thrill to see them in their nesting colonies. Large mammals like this Polar Bear are much in evidence and always exciting to see, though this year it was a Blue Whale, the largest mammal ever known, that provided the drama, as a mother and calf came close to the ship, surfacing two or three times before diving deep. (Photos by guide John Coons and participant Warren Cairo)

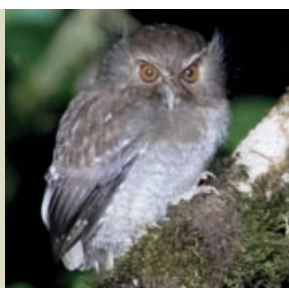


Terry Stevenson is used to Lions and Tigers, but bears—oh no, unless he's guiding his new **Hungary & Romania** tour where Terry and his group were able to watch bears, including this mother and her two cubs, from a blind. The Eurasian Marsh-Harrier, top left, was a regular throughout the tour, and the gorgeous Bearded Reedling to the right of the harrier was seen many times as well. The gate is one of the many traditional gates throughout the region made by the Szekler people. (Photos by participants David Woods & Daphne Gemmill)



Both of our **Texas Coast Migration Spectacle** tours this spring were filled with great birds, with new arrivals coming every day, including the Kentucky Warbler above. The Big Thicket yielded its specialties, visits to a nesting rookery provided close views of vibrant Roseate Spoonbills (left) courting and nest-building, and the Bolivar flats and rice fields were loaded with bitterns, egrets, rails, American Avocets, and shorebirds. How could you ask for more? (Photos by participants Jody Gillespie & Fitz Fitzpatrick)

Until a few years ago, the Long-whiskered Owlet (right) was considered to be almost mythical; it had not been seen outside a mist-net until 2007. But for the last several years we've featured its photo from both our **Peru's Magnetic North** (highlights shown here) and *Northern Peru* tours, and we're delighted to see it again, joined by two birds that might be as cute as the owlet, a little Rufous-crested Coquette and a Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher—a bird guide Dan Lane, who has been to the area many, many times, had only seen once before the tour! (Photos by participants Ben Loehnen & Tim Skillin)



The Crested Satinbird, at right, was a lovely sight on our recent **Papua New Guinea** tour. Once lumped with the birds-of-paradise, the three species of satinbirds are now placed in a family of their own. The Regent Whistler, above the satinbird, is another stunner, while the female Brown Sicklebill—a legitimate bird-of-paradise—is the plainest of the birds pictured here. (Photos by participant Greg Griffith)

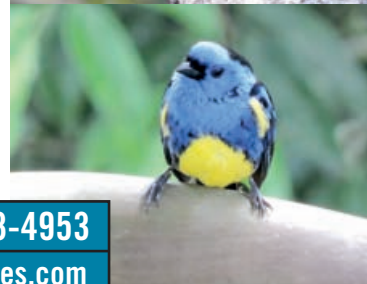
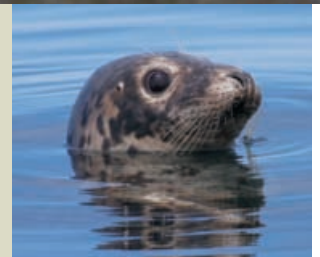




Imagine finding yourself in the midst of scenes like this. That's what participants on our **Montana: Yellowstone to Glacier** tour are expected to endure, day after day. In addition to the scenery, there are lots of big mammals, like this bull American Bison, a species sadly diminished elsewhere but still in evidence in the wild in Montana, and raptors galore, including this young Swainson's Hawk. And don't forget, you're traveling with Terry McEneaney, who probably knows where to find a Guinness in the state of Montana. (Photos by guide Terry McEneaney)



From our **Newfoundland & Nova Scotia** tour, a fine portrait of a Razorbill, above, with a Common Murre behind it. A Northern Gannet looks rather grand in flight with its more than six feet of wingspan. A trip highlight is seeing thousands of these birds on their nesting ledges at Cape St. Mary's. Along with the many seabirds, we'll see a number of sea mammals, like this Gray Seal poking its head out of the water for a look around. (Photos by participant Doug Clarke)



Seeing one Crested Owl is pretty neat, but a pair of them? It was, according to guide Willy Perez, thrilling for him and for his participants on the **Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge** tour. The other three birds pictured here—Black-bellied Cuckoo (from top), Purple-throated Fruitcrow, and Turquoise Tanager—were seen well from the Sacha towers. According to Willy, the fruitcrow stole the show with its fantastic display, flaring and ruffling its purple throat feathers to transform itself from drab to stunning. (Photos by guide Willy Perez and participant Dixie Sommers)

A week birding **Puerto Rico** is an excellent way to experience the island as well as to see all of its endemics, among them the Elfin-woods Warbler at right, a species not described until 1978. Others pictured here include the pretty Antillean Crested Hummingbird (at top; a regional specialty); Antillean Euphonia (above left), another regional specialty and a favorite of the tour; and Yellow-shouldered Blackbird, one of the rarer island endemics. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson)



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FRESH FROM THE FIELD



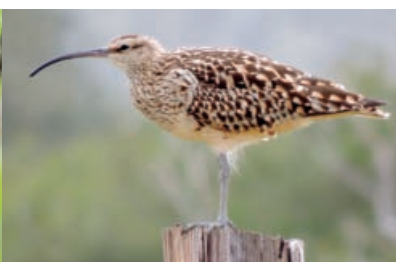
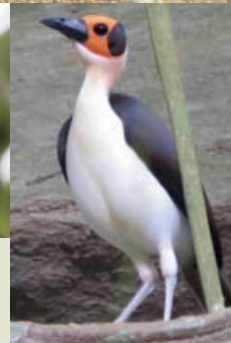
East Africa is a part of the world many of us dream of visiting, and Kenya is the embodiment of that dream with its vast savannas and grand vistas—the Masai Mara shown here from a recent **Kenya** tour; in the Mara you might come across herds of ungulates, elephants or giraffes, or this regal Lion. And lest we forget the birds—impossible to do—a dreamworthy Gray Crowned-Crane. (Photos by participant Steve Madison)



Eric Hynes tells us that a female American Woodcock caused a stir on his recent **Maine** tour when she marched her brood past our group; this juvenile (bottom left) managed to wander away from his mom. The handsome Black-throated Blue Warbler was one of nearly two-dozen warbler species on the tour. Studying White-rumped Sandpipers at water's edge was one of the shorebird highlights. At top is one of them in fine breeding plumage with a Least Sandpiper in the background for comparison. (Photos by guide Eric Hynes)



A flock of Lavender Waxbills, a native Central African finch from our **Ghana** tour, parades across the page above, and joining the waxbills on the tour program, a Red-headed Malimbe, showing us his fine red head. A strong cast of characters, though the star of the show, pictured at far right, was without a doubt the Picathartes, or White-necked Rockfowl. According to guide Phil Gregory, after he and our group had waited for 90 minutes for the bird to present itself, it hopped up and posed for several minutes in great light. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory and participants David & Judy Smith)



Our **Hawaii** tour participants with guides Dan Lane and Megan Edwards Crewe are enjoying the many sights that the islands have to offer, among them this liiwi, left above, one of the most striking of Hawaii's endemics and one with a name it's possible to pronounce. The Bristle-thighed Curlew—note the bristles on its thighs—is easier to see in Hawaii than in Alaska, plus you don't have to worry about Grizzlies! (Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe)



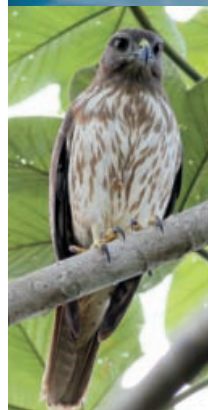
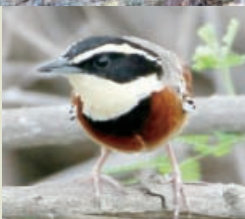
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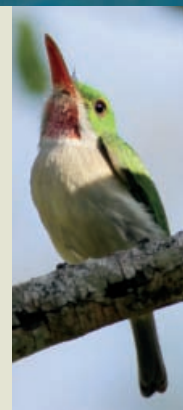
The enchanting **Galapagos** islands have so much to offer, both on sea and land. At left, Willy Perez's recent tour group searches for seabirds, perhaps a Red-footed Booby, like the one below shown on land, this one a brown morph. A rather crabby looking Galapagos Short-eared Owl (digesting a storm-petrel meal) and two of a group of thirty colorful American Flamingos complete the tableau. (Photos by guide Willy Perez)



It's hard to decide where to begin: with the Jocotoco Antpitta above left, a striking antpitta undescribed until the late 90's, or the Long-wattled Umbrellabird above right, its wattle elongated here in display mode—both fabulous birds from our **Southwestern Ecuador Specialties** tour. Nor would we want to give short shrift to the little Elegant Crescentchest, one of the fifty or so endemics of the Tumbesian Endemic region, an area of Ecuador we visit on the tour. (Photos by participant John Drummond)



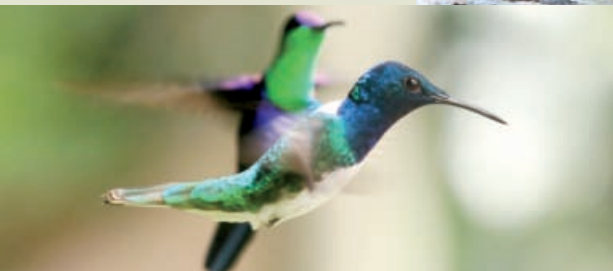
The Ridgway's Hawk, left, one Hispaniola's rarest birds, was a great sighting on our **Dominican Republic** tour, but the White-tailed Tropicbird, above, was voted the bird of the trip, in part because it was seen so well displaying just below where the group was standing. The little Broad-billed Tody is one of two todies, both endemic, on the island. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson and participant Jason Leifester)



When you see a Resplendent Quetzal (far right), you know you're in the cloudforests of Middle America, the only place the quetzal occurs—this male seen on our **Costa Rica** tour taking his turn incubating eggs. At right, a Bare-throated Tiger-Heron stalking prey and below a White-necked Jacobin with a Crowned Woodnymph behind, part of the nonstop action at the feeders at Rancho Naturalista. (Photos by participant Henry Schaefer)



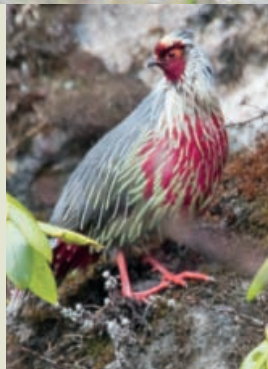
On a tour replete with remarkable birds, this spotless white, winter-plumaged White-tailed Ptarmigan (right above) was perhaps the most remarkable for one of our **Colorado Grouse** tour groups. Not far behind, this Greater Sage-Grouse (above) among fifty individuals displaying within meters of our vehicles. At right, a Black Rosy-Finch joins two Brown-capped Rosy-Finches on a feeder. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson)



FRESH FROM THE FIELD



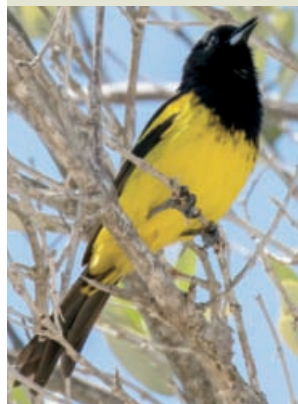
Richard Webster's **Bhutan** tour is a visit to an other-worldly place, as you can see above, and the birds are a bit other-worldly as well. The Rufous-necked Hornbill, unmistakable above right, is one of the specialties of the tour, which the group watched at length as it plucked and ate fruit. The Blood Pheasant at right is one of two pheasants on the tour and the prettier. Gould's Sunbird was seen repeatedly at the upper elevations. (Photos by guide Richard Webster and participant Diane Drobka)



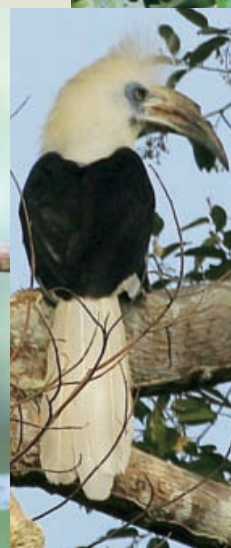
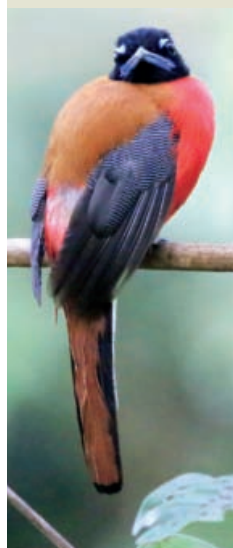
This spring was a fruitful time to be in West Texas and the Texas Hill Country thanks to better than average winter rains, much appreciated by our **Texas's Big Bend & Hill Country** tour. The Black-capped Vireo, below right, is, along with Golden-cheeked Warbler, one of the more sought-after species, and one we saw very well. In the US, the Gray Hawk is found only in the Southwest, and Big Bend is a great place to see it. The Hooded Oriole has been declining in Texas in recent decades but seems to be making a comeback. That's good news if only because it's such a pleasure to see this vibrant oriole. (Photos by participant Brooke Miller)



Jesse Fagan's **Bahamas: Endemics & Kirtland's Warbler** tour is an island-hopping adventure with excellent birding and good food. Among the highlights this year: the Kirtland's Warbler, above left, here on its wintering grounds; the Bahamian form of Cuban Parrot, above right; Bahama Oriole, below left, a recent split from Greater Antillean Oriole; and Great Lizard-Cuckoo, a group favorite, or, as Jesse says, "the coolest thing since sliced bread." (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan and participant Doug Hanna)



He's long-nosed and pot-bellied and spends most of his time watching over his harem—the lot of a Proboscis Monkey, this one from our **Borneo** tour where a healthy population still survives. The three bird species below also seen on our summer tour include, from left, Scarlet-rumped Trogon, White-crowned Hornbill, normally the scarcest of the hornbills, and Black-and-yellow Broadbill. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



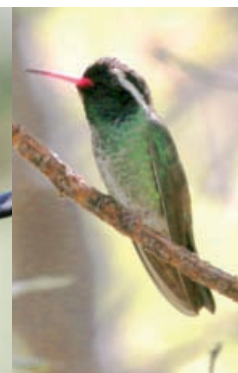
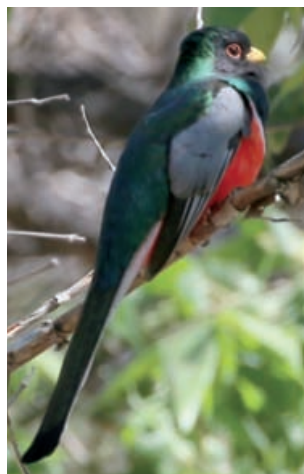


Part of our **Alaska** tour group above—guide Pepe Rojas behind the binoculars—is looking for some of the great birds to be seen on the Pribilofs (see page 10 for Megan's full report) where our tour spends two-and-a-half days enjoying the seabird spectacles and the island specialties—including the Rock Sandpiper at near left—before heading to Denali National Park. The Pacific Loon, top left, and the Townsend's Warbler were both seen on the second part of the tour, which visits Nome, Seward, and Barrow. (Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe and participant Linda Rudolph)

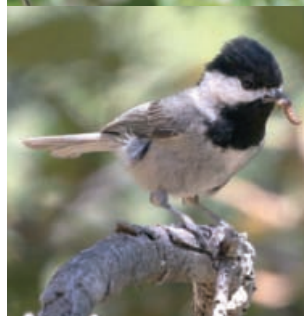


There is no better way to see a condor than with the Grand Canyon as a backdrop, and you can pretty much count on the canyon—but John Coons must have breathed a sigh of relief when the

marquee bird sailed into view on each of his recent **Northern Arizona's Canyons & Condor** tours; this particular condor put on a great show, as you can see! In addition, there were other species characteristic of the area, like this



The birds here are a sampling of the specialties and highlights from guide Dave Stejskal's spring **Arizona: Birding the Border** tour: the prized—for good reason—Elegant Trogon, top left, in the Chiricahuas; Five-striped Sparrow, above center, essentially a Mexican endemic that gave the group what Dave described as some of the best looks he'd ever had; White-eared Hummingbird, another Mexican species in the US; and a little Mexican Chickadee carrying food to its nest. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



The Burrowing Owl, below left, was not the rarest owl on our spring **Arizona Nightbirds & More** tours, but he earns his spot here with the fiercest stare. The quite lovely Gambel's Quail is a characteristic desert species seen well on both tours. The Painted Redstart at near right is, well, artful. And the tree that the Acorn Woodpecker is working is as eye-catching as the bird itself; according to Dave it feeds the whole family! (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



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Birding Wild and Beautiful Alaska

Megan Edwards Crewe

Our Alaska tour is offered in two parts, which may be taken separately or combined for complete coverage of the state. The following is Megan's report from Part I—the Pribilofs and Denali—of her 2015 tour. Part II includes Nome, Seward, and Barrow. For complete details visit the Alaska page on our web site where you may view full tour reports.

The vast northern state of Alaska offers a fantastic wilderness backdrop against which to enjoy its special birds and mammals. Scenery stretches to the horizon, you can go days without seeing a passing plane, and the silence (except for the sounds of the wind and the sea and the wild creatures) on some of the roadsides and hilltops is truly amazing. On this first part of our grand tour, we visited the tiny ocean island of Saint Paul and the wild interior area around Denali National Park, moving from the rolling, grassy hills and rocky oceanside cliffs of the former to the endless spruce forests and soaring, snow-covered mountains of the latter. We got lucky with flights AND weather this year, getting everywhere we were supposed to go (more or less on time) and dodging most of the raindrops—though not, as it turned out, the snowflakes!

As usual, we had plenty of highlights. Tops of the rarities department had to be our first day on Saint Paul; in less than 24 hours, we had a flyover Tundra Bean-Goose (which made several passes), a young Black-headed Gull lurking among a bathing flock of Red-legged and Black-legged kittiwakes, a point-blank Common Sandpiper scuttling around on a muddy stream bank, and a spectacular male Siberian Rubythroat bouncing through the grass around a pile of old boards! We also spent some very satisfying time

with the “regulars” there, enjoying the hustle and bustle of the seabird breeding cliffs, where Common and Thick-billed murres stood side by side (allowing nice comparison), Least and Parakeet auklets squabbled over real estate, Northern Fulmars nuzzled each other with their distinctive tube-nosed bills, Crested Auklets waved their curlicue head feathers at each other, Red-faced Cormorants flashed their eponymous red faces, and Tufted and Horned puffins snoozed on rocky ledges looking pretty adorable.

The shift to the northern forests and tundra around Anchorage and Denali brought new treats—chief among them, some truly awe-inspiring scenery! A pair of Boreal Chickadees grumbled as they flicked through nearby spruces. A male Varied Thrush serenaded from an open branch. A hungry group of White-winged Crossbills swarmed through nearby treetops, prying open innumerable spruce cones. An elegant Gyrfalcon posed atop a lichen-encrusted ridge. A pair of Long-tailed Jaegers ghosted through a snowstorm. A Willow Ptarmigan crept, crouching, across the road in front of our bus. A Northern Hawk Owl preened on a treetop. A Grizzly snuffled his way along the edge of the park road, resulting in an adrenalin surge or two for your guides. And on our wonderful last morning along the Denali-Paxson Highway, there were birds singing and flying and feeding everywhere—and The Mountain made a bit of an appearance!

2016 tours are scheduled for

*May 26-June 3 (Part I) and June 2-12 (Part II)
with Chris Benesh & Pepe Rojas*

*June 2-10 (Part I) and June 9-19 (Part II)
with Dave Stejskal & Tom Johnson*

“I loved my trip. It was my first to the US so nearly every bird was new to me. The guides and other participants ensured that I saw over 125 lifers. The mood of the trip was genial, organized, fun, and informative. It was a superb birding, travel, and vacation experience. I hope to travel with Field Guides again.” W.C., Alaska

Two of our super Alaska guides, Pepe Rojas and Megan Edwards Crewe; a Crested Auklet on the Pribilofs; the gorgeous scenery along the Denali Highway. Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe and participant Linda Rudolph.



UPCOMING TOURS

For details, please call our office or check our web site.

January 2016

Oman & the UAE: Birding Arabia—January 7-23, 2016 with Phil Gregory & local guide. Some of the best Arabian Peninsula birding in two friendly and scenic countries; many regional endemics and specialty birds, including a chance for the Hypocolius.

Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge I & II—January 8-17, 2016 with Willy Perez and February 12-21, 2016 with Dan Lane. One-site tour to one of the most comfortable lodges in western Amazonia with some of the birdiest canopy platforms anywhere.

Nowhere but Northeast Brazil!—January 8-26, 2016 (Southern Bahia Extension) with Bret Whitney & Pepe Rojas. From beautiful beaches to barren badlands, our tour is a quest for specialties of the endangered caatinga, chapada, and Atlantic Forest habitats. The Southern Bahia Extension offers an opportunity to see many additional endemic birds, some of which are not seen on our *Spectacular Southeast Brazil* tours.

Costa Rica: Birding the Edges Parts I & II—January 9-18, 2016 & January 17-26, 2016 with Jay VanderGaast & Tom Johnson. A two-parted tour to this bird-rich country exploring sites and birds not covered on our March or holiday tours.

Colombia: Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta—January 9-25, 2016 with Jesse Fagan. Energetic, endemic-oriented (30+) tour connecting reserves up the Magdalena Valley from Bogota to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

South Texas Rarities I & II—January 16-22, 2016 and January 23-29, 2016 with Chris Benesh. Escape the winter birding doldrums on our week-long tour to the bird-rich Rio Grande Valley, with specialties from kiskadees and Green Jays to Hook-billed Kites and Altamira Orioles. And the winter potential for Mexican vagrants is terrific!

Jewels of Ecuador: Hummers, Tanagers & Antpittas—January 16-February 2, 2016 with Willy Perez. Survey tour of Andean Ecuador; diverse avifauna dominated by colorful hummers and tanagers and more subtle and haunting antpittas.

East Africa Highlights: Kenya & Tanzania—January 16-February 5, 2016 with Terry Stevenson. Combines the richest birding and mammal spots in Kenya and northern Tanzania: Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater, Great Rift Valley, Kakamega Forest, and more. An impressive diversity of habitats, many with spectacular scenery.

Thailand—January 16-February 6, 2016 (Peninsular Thailand & Nicobar Pigeon Extension) with Dave Stejskal & local guide. A wide variety of forest birds in the friendly heart of Southeast Asia (and fabulous Thai food).

Guyana: Wilderness Paradise—January 30-February 10, 2016 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. Survey tour of the country's vast untrammeled rainforest, with an emphasis on Guianan shield specialties and side trips to coastal and savanna regions and spectacular Kaieteur Falls.

February 2016

Winter Japan: Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles—February 5-20, 2016 with Phil Gregory. Japan's winter spectacles, including the fabulous cranes and Steller's Sea-Eagle.

Colombia: The Cauca Valley, Western & Central Andes—February 5-20, 2016 with Richard Webster. Endemic-oriented tour connecting reserves up the Cauca Valley from Medellin to Cali.

Panama's Canopy Tower I & II—February 7-13, 2016 (Canopy Lodge Extension) with John Coons & local guide and February 22-28, 2016 (Canopy Lodge Extension) with Chris Benesh & local guide. A towering introduction to Neotropical birds based entirely at a unique lodge; quick access to famous Pipeline Road.

Guatemala: Shade-grown Birding—February 10-19, 2016 (Temples of Tikal Extension) with Jesse Fagan. Resplendent Quetzal, a host of hummingbirds, and Azure-rumped Tanager set against a dramatic volcanic landscape and colorful Mayan culture.

Trinidad & Tobago—February 12-21, 2016 with Eric Hynes & local guide. Wonderful introductory tour to South America's bird riches, including bellbirds, toucans, manakins, and motmots.

Best of the Pacific Northwest: Skagit Valley & Puget Sound, Washington—February 13-18, 2016 with Terry McEneaney. An incredible winter birding and wildlife tour to a surprisingly mild maritime climate with breathtaking mountain backdrops and beautiful seascapes peppered with islands.

Mexico: Oaxaca—February 13-20, 2016 with Pepe Rojas & Tom Johnson. Superb birding with two dozen Mexican endemics and fascinating ruins while based in lovely Oaxaca City.

Cambodia—February 20-March 4, 2016 with Phil Gregory & local guide. A "last chance" destination for some of the large, rare Asian waterbirds now extinct in neighboring countries, plus additional regional specialties and world-famous Angkor Wat.

Namibia & Botswana—February 23-March 13, 2016 with Terry Stevenson. Southwestern Africa's bird specialties, striking scenery, wilderness, and the famed game of Etosha and the Okavango Delta.

Ecuador: Rainforest & Andes—February 28-March 13, 2016 with Willy Perez. Highlights of the best of Ecuador's rainforest birding at Sacha Lodge combined with two exciting destinations in the Andes, the Mindo/Tandayapa area and San Isidro.

March 2016

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape—March 5-14, 2016 with Richard Webster & local guide. An easier subset of "Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta," reached by a direct flight from Miami, and with a couple more days for a more leisurely approach.

Brazil Nutshell: Intervalles, Iguazu Falls & the Pantanal—March 5-19, 2016 with Marcelo Padua & Megan Edwards Crewe. This medium-length tour hits three of Brazil's premier birding venues, staying several nights at each to ensure an unhurried pace as we rack up some 400 species of birds.

Southwestern Ecuador Specialties: Jocotoco Foundation Reserves I & II—March 5-19, 2016 with Mitch Lysinger and June 21-July 5, 2016 with Willy Perez. Focuses on the many specialties of the southwest, in particular the very local endemics of the humid foothills and mountains, and on Tumbesian specialties.

Costa Rica—March 5-20, 2016 with Jay VanderGaast & local guide. Resplendent Quetzals, Three-wattled Bellbirds, Scarlet Macaws in a beautiful country with easy travel.

Jamaica—March 7-13, 2016 with Eric Hynes. A quick adventure in search of Jamaica's 27 endemics and numerous regional specialties at Green Castle Estate.

Panama's Canopy Tower & Lodge—March 7-14, 2016 with John Coons & local guide. This tour combines the best of both worlds into a great week: The Canopy Tower and Pipeline Road with the Canopy Lodge and the montane forest of El Valle de Anton.

Dominican Republic—March 12-19, 2016 with Tom Johnson & local guide. Short tour for many specialties and endemics including the unusual Palmchat.

Spring in South Texas—March 12-20, 2016 with Chris Benesh. Magnificent Whooping Cranes, lots of South Texas specialties, and spring hawk migration on this exciting tour.

Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge—March 13-23, 2016 with Willy Perez. Exploring the riches of the eastern Andean foothills of northern Ecuador for numerous specialties at Wildsumaco Lodge.

Borneo I & II—March 15-April 1, 2016 with Dave Stejskal & local guide and June 2-19, 2016 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. Three prime areas in some of Earth's richest forests while based in comfort right in the wild.

Puerto Rico—March 19-25, 2016 with Tom Johnson & Pepe Rojas. A week of respite to a very birdy and beautiful Caribbean island, a mix of North American and local culture and cuisine; 17 endemic birds and a number of other Caribbean specialties.

Rarely Visited Belize: Punta Gorda—March 19-27, 2016 with Peter Burke. Off the beaten path in Belize; a wonderful tropical birding experience, including some regional specialties.

NEW/Western Panama: Chiriqui & Bocas del Toro—March 20-29, 2016 with Jesse Fagan. A new tour to two new Panamanian destinations located in the Chiriqui highlands and Caribbean lowlands at Bocas del Toro.

Hawaii—March 31-April 9, 2016 with Dan Lane & Megan Edwards Crewe. Three of the major islands—Oahu, Kauai, and Hawaii—giving us a chance to sample a great portion of the Hawaiian endemic birds and the seabird specialties.

Holiday Tours

Holiday Costa Rica: Rancho Naturalista I & II—December 19-27, 2015 with Dave Stejskal & local guide and December 27, 2015-January 4, 2016 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. One-site holiday tour based at the comfortable Rancho Naturalista Lodge, with excursions to other habitats on Costa Rica's bird-rich Caribbean slope.

Iquitos, Peru: Canopy Walkways & Ancient Forests—December 19-30, 2015 with Pepe Rojas & Dan Lane. Two-week immersion in one of the most species-rich regions of Amazonia, including the white-sand forests near Iquitos.

Panama's Canopy Camp: Lowland Darien—December 26, 2015-January 3, 2016 with John Rowlett & local guide. Tour to a remote part of Panama with many specialties seen nowhere else in Central America.

Arizona Winter Specialties—December 27, 2015-January 2, 2016 with Chris Benesh. Exceptional winter birding on a short tour with numerous specialties and potential rarities.

Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton—December 27, 2015-January 3, 2016 with John Coons & local guide. A superb introduction to Neotropical birds or a complement to your broader Middle American birding, all based at a charming lodge.

Trinidad & Tobago—December 27, 2015-January 5, 2016 with Tom Johnson & local guide. Wonderful introductory tour to South America's bird riches, including bellbirds, toucans, manakins, and motmots.

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape—December 29, 2015-January 6, 2016 with Richard Webster & local guide. An easier subset of "Bogota, the Magdalena Valley & Santa Marta," reached by a direct flight from Miami, and with a couple more days for a more leisurely approach.

Ecuador's Wildsumaco Lodge—December 29, 2015-January 8, 2016 with Willy Perez & local guide. Exploring the riches of the eastern Andean foothills of northern Ecuador for numerous specialties at Wildsumaco Lodge.

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BIRDING TOURS WORLDWIDE

FIELD GUIDES INCORPORATED

9433 Bee Cave Road / Building 1, Suite 150 / Austin, TX 78733
800-728-4953 / 512-263-7295 / fax: 512-263-0117
fieldguides@fieldguides.com / www.fieldguides.com

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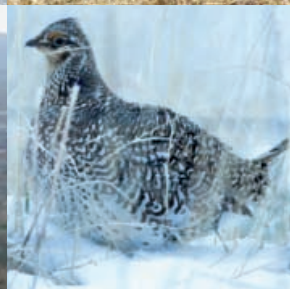
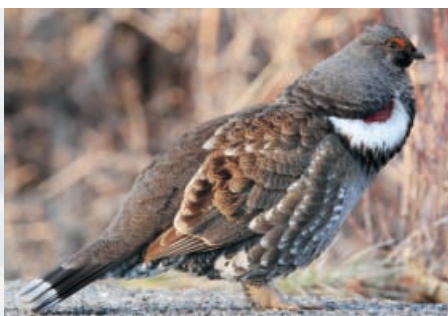
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