

ITINERARY

WINTER JAPAN

Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles

January 26 - February 10, 2018



A pair of Red-crowned Cranes dances in a snowy field. They are symbols of longevity in Japan, and have been featured in artwork for centuries. Hokkaido is the home of a resident population of Red-crowned Cranes; we will visit a sanctuary where we will have wonderful views of these graceful and majestic creatures. Photograph by participant John Hardister.

We include here information for those interested in the 2017 Field Guides Winter Japan tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

Those who register for the tour will be sent this additional material:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a reading list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

The islands of Japan lie at the eastern edge of Eurasia and cover a diverse range of habitats, from the sub-tropical Ryukyu Islands to the almost Siberian taiga-like wilds of Hokkaido. Japan is a surprisingly mountainous and wooded land, with beautiful varied coastlines and very heavily populated lowlands, where tiny rice fields dot the landscape amidst the

rural dwellings. Winter birding here is one of the great spectacles on earth, with three areas in particular being essential. These are the Hooded and White-naped Crane sanctuaries of Kyushu in the far south, the Red-crowned Crane reserve in southern Hokkaido, and the wintering grounds of the magnificent Steller's Sea-Eagles on the ice fields around Lake Furen in the far north. Add to this the wintering wildfowl, thrushes, finches, and alcid, the challenge of the large Asian gull complex, plus a useful sprinkling of endemics including the huge, marvellous, and rare Blakiston's Fish-Owl, and you have the makings of a truly memorable visit.

Japanese culture is also a feature of the trip, as some of our lodgings are in traditional Japanese guest-houses or minshuku, with sliding walls, tatami rush matting and futon bedding, whilst a couple of the hot spring hotels called onsen have wonderful deep hot-spring baths. The food is also very distinct, with a fantastic selection of sauces for the elaborate fish, rice, and vegetable dishes which make up the traditional cuisine.

About the Physical Requirements & Pace: The pace of the tour is moderate, with no unduly long or strenuous hikes. We may be walking in ankle-deep snow while at some sites in the Japanese Alps and Hokkaido, and there will be some walks in the snow and ice at Karuizawa (Japanese Alps), but again not for long distances (a couple of forest trails of about a mile and a half in length). Some track walking may be done around Izumi when we check the fields, but distances are short and the terrain is level. All other sites require relatively little walking and most birding is from the roadside. You should bring a walking stick if you are unsteady and it can be very slippery with lots of ice, especially in car parks.

The climate will vary but will generally be cold to extremely cold, with the possibility of rain in the south and snow in the north. On several nights owling will basically be from the lodges themselves, avoiding the bitter cold. The tour is ideal for photography and video, with beautiful scenery and light and large spectacular species at close range.

*This tour can be combined with **Cambodia: Angkor Temples & Vanishing Birds, February 10-24 2018.***

Itinerary for Winter Japan: Dancing Cranes & Spectacular Sea-Eagles



Days 1-2, Fri-Sat, 26-27 Jan. Departure from the US; arrival in Narita. There are direct flights from many US cities to Narita; our office will be happy to help you with the best schedule from your home city. From the US, you'll cross the international dateline, arriving the afternoon of Day 2 (Jan 27). If you arrive in time, the grounds of our hotel and the nearby creek channel (just across the main roads, about a mile, go to the Tobu Narita Hotel and turn right across the highway to walk downhill to the car parks and creek area) are worth a check for the somewhat tricky Brown-headed Thrush (this is the best place to find it), Bull-headed Shrike, Japanese Wagtail, Japanese White-eye, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. We'll gather for dinner in the lobby of our hotel at about 7pm. Night in Narita.

Day 3, Sun, 28 Jan. The Japanese Alps, with a short walk to the area around Narita Creek (after breakfast), then we'll begin the first leg of our tour with a 3-4 hour vehicle (Grand Cabin van) ride from Narita to our hotel near Karuizawa, a part of the Japanese Alps where we'll spend two nights. The snowy forests here offer our first real taste of birding in Japan. The feeders at a nearby hotel can be a major attraction as we go out in search of Japanese (Green) and Japanese Pygmy woodpeckers, Varied, Japanese (Great), Willow, Coal, and Long-tailed tits, Brown Dipper, Dusky Thrush, Japanese

Accentor, Eurasian Jay, Meadow, Yellow-throated, and Black-faced buntings, Asian Rosy-Finch, Long-tailed Rosefinch, Hawfinch, and the comical looking Japanese Grosbeak. We also have a slight chance for Japanese Waxwing (if it is an invasion year, none since 2003 so well overdue!), and the elusive Copper Pheasant. **Ice grippers and sticks are recommended here and all snowy areas.** Night at Karuizawa.



The Japanese Accentor can be difficult to find, but a recent Field Guides group had a very nice view of this one. Photograph by guide Phil Gregory.

Day 4, Mon, 29 Jan. Birding the Japanese Alps.

We'll have a full day to bird in Karuizawa and the surrounding areas. We'll begin with an early morning walk looking for Copper Pheasant, then visit a nearby river and water impoundment for Smew, Falcated Duck, Japanese Buzzard, perhaps Crested Kingfisher and Long-billed Plover, assorted buntings and with a chance of Green Pheasant as well. Night at Karuizawa.

Day 5, Tue, 30 Jan. Hot springs and Snow

Monkeys; to Kanazawa. This morning we'll have the opportunity to view the famous Snow Monkeys (Japanese Macaque), a terrestrial monkey endemic to Japan. In the mornings during the winter the monkeys descend from the forests where they spend the night to the warm waters of the onsens, or hot springs. The monkeys are remarkable for the amount of time they spend relaxing in these hot springs and we'll observe them as they laze about in the snow-surrounded pools. Once we have enjoyed the extraordinary spectacle of

the monkeys, and wondering how come they don't freeze to death when they emerge, we'll continue to Kanazawa which is about 3 hours drive, often through deep snow. It is just over a kilometre (half a mile +) to walk in to the springs, but they keep the pathway fairly clear from the surrounding deep snow. Ice grippers and sticks are recommended here

On our way if time permits we'll stop at Lake Kahokugata and the wetlands surrounding it. This is an important staging area and wintering grounds for waterfowl, and can also include Gray-headed Lapwing and raptors such as Eastern Marsh Harrier and Merlin. It has also been very good for Japanese Pheasant. Night in Kanazawa.

Day 6, Wed, 31 Jan. Kahokugata Wetlands and Kaga. We'll drive today to Kaga, stopping at the wetland reserve of Katano-Kamoike along our route. There should be hundreds of wintering ducks here including Falcated and Smew, as well as Taiga Bean Goose and a wintering flock of Baikal Teal for which the reserve is famous. Night in Kanazawa.

Day 7, Thu, 1 Feb. Kanazawa to Izumi. We may have time this morning for a little more birding in the Kaga area where we may see flocks of White-fronted Goose, but this depends on the flight times; we'll then transfer to the Komatsu Airport for our flight to Izumi. Night Izumi.

Days 8-9, Fri-Sat, 2-3 Feb. Arasaki. These two days should be some of the most memorable of the tour. Hooded and White-naped cranes winter here by the thousands, and Arasaki is a major refuge for both species. The crane flocks can number up to 17,000 birds, one of the largest assemblages of them on Earth. They give tremendous views as they come to feed on fish and grain put out early in the morning, before dispersing out to the fields for the day. Other species of cranes also turn up here, so both Common and Sandhill are a good bet, while Siberian White and Demoiselle are an outside possibility.

The fields hold flocks of wintering wildfowl, thrushes, buntings, and finches, with Chinese Penduline-Tit also a good possibility, as well as the scarce Long-billed Plover and endangered Black-faced Spoonbill. Woodland areas will give us a chance of Eurasian Sparrowhawk and Eastern (Japanese) form of Buzzard, usually now treated as a distinct species, along with Japanese Wagtail, Brown Dipper, and Crested Kingfisher.

We'll be staying in a hotel close to the Crane Centre. We'll visit sites that are wintering grounds for two major East Asian rarities, both critically endangered, Black-faced Spoonbill, which feeds along the tidal flats while Saunders's Gulls fly over searching for crabs. We will have a good chance of other birds as well, and a few of these include Eurasian White Spoonbill, Japanese Pheasant, Buff-bellied and Red-throated pipits, Siberian Meadow, Gray-headed (Chestnut-eared), and Rustic buntings, and Daurian Jackdaw, with a check for Japanese Murrelet along the coast to the south.

On one of our days here, depending on the tides, we'll visit the Minami River mouth at Yatsushiro for the wintering flocks of gulls which can include as many as nine species, among them Great Black-headed (Pallas's), Black-tailed, and the rare Saunders' plus various forms of large gulls in the Herring Gull complex, mostly Vega. Nights at a business hotel at Izumi (which has very compact rooms!)



Enormous numbers of Hooded and White-naped Cranes winter at Arasaki. Photograph by guide Phil Gregory.

Day 10, Sun, 4 Feb. Arasaki to Lake Miike. This morning we'll drive to Lake Miike where Mandarin Duck, Scaly Thrush, and Gray Bunting are possible in addition to the elusive Ryukyu Minivet and maybe White-backed Woodpecker. Night at Kagoshima.

Days 11-12, Mon-Tue, 5-6 Feb. Journey to Hokkaido; Rausu area. On the morning of Day 11, we'll fly from Kagoshima to Kushiro with a stop in Haneda. We'll visit take a quick look at the harbor in Kushiro if time permits in the late afternoon, or visit a Red-crowned Crane sanctuary at Tsurui.

We'll start Day 12 with an early visit to the famous riverine roost site at Otowa Bridge where the cranes emerge out of the morning mists; once we've seen the cranes to our satisfaction, we'll move northwards to Rausu and the Shiretoko Peninsula, checking a Ural Owl site en route and no doubt encountering the amazing Steller's Sea-Eagle. We stop in Teshikaga for lunch and do some birding by the local park, which is great for Whooper Swans and other wildfowl. Our main object, the huge, magnificent Blakiston's Fish-Owl—one of the largest owls in the world—is a regular visitor outside the small minshuku at Washi-no-Yado (where we will either stay or have arranged a visit), where the stream and surrounding ponds are kept free of ice and stocked with fish. There are good photo ops here, now from both bedrooms and dining room. Nights in Kushiro (Day 11) and at Rausu (Day 12).

Day 13, Wed, 7 Feb. Rausu area. We'll spend another day in this rich area. Depending on the weather and the state of the ice, we may make an early morning boat trip out to the edge of the pack ice for up-close and personal views of the marvelous Steller's Sea-Eagle, the largest of the family and a truly impressive creature—once seen never forgotten! We'll bird the harbors and bays for White-tailed Sea-Eagle, Whooper Swan, Harlequin Duck, and a variety of alcids before traveling south towards the wetlands of the Notsuke peninsula. Night at the wonderful hot-spring onsen of Yoroushi, where there is another chance of Blakiston's Fish-Owl (amazing here in both 2016 and 2017!) and some interesting feeder birds such as the white-headed *caudatus* race of Long-tailed Tit, a dark-eyed race (*brandtii*) of what is currently Eurasian Jay, a Eurasian Nuthatch race *asiatica* with white underparts, the very distinctive *japonicus* taxon of Great-spotted Woodpecker and sometimes Hawfinch, whilst in 2012, 2015 and 2017 we had a Solitary Snipe feeding in the stream right outside!

Day 14, Thu, 8 Feb. Travel to Lake Furen. Lake Furen is a well-known Japanese birding center in the heart of Steller's Sea-Eagle country. Here we'll find a very different, wild, and snow-covered landscape where we expect to see some of the most spectacular birds of the trip during our two-night stay. En route we will visit a famous site for wintering and absurdly tame Whooper Swans and Pintail. Passerines will be very scarce, but Great-spotted Woodpecker, Japanese Pygmy-Woodpecker, Marsh Tit, Eurasian Nuthatch, and Asian Rosy-Finch are likely. Night at a hotel in Nemuro or at Lake Furen Lodge.



While the tour name highlights eagles and cranes, we also see some wonderful owls in Japan. This gorgeous Ural Owl was found at its day-roost on a previous tour. Photograph by guide Phil Gregory.

Day 15, Fri, 9 Feb. Lake Furen area. Today will be very full and exciting, with trips to Cape Nosappu and Cape Kiritappu as well as local Furen sights such as sea-eagles gathered around fishing holes cut in the pack ice on the lake. Wildfowl and seabirds come into their own here, and we'll search some of the unfrozen harbors and bays for wintering Harlequin Duck, Common Goldeneye, Long-tailed Duck, Black and White-winged scoters, Whooper Swan, and loons. Sea-watching will give us practice with alcids, and we may hope for Common Murre, Spectacled Guillemot, and a chance of Least and Crested auklets or Pigeon Guillemot, all depending on the year's seabird distribution and the thickness of the ice. It is a good area, too, for northern gulls with Glaucous, Glaucous-winged, Slaty-backed, and Mew (Kamchatka) gulls to be expected. There is a possibility of a short (and close inshore) boat trip off Cape Nosappu, which could potentially be very rewarding for alcids, but we will have to assess the situation at the time. Return to Kushiro overnight.

Day 16, Sat, 10 Feb. Return to Narita; flights home. We'll transfer this morning to the Kushiro airport for a late-morning flight back to Haneda and then to Narita. Most flights to the US depart Narita after 4:00 p.m. You will arrive on the same day (February 10), after recovering that lost day by once again crossing the International Date Line—in the opposite direction.

About Your Guides

Phil Gregory was born in Southampton, UK, and became a birder as a youth when the steam engines were scrapped and birding offered a way to travel and look for wonderful things. The quest for birds has led to many forays in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, and the Pacific. He and his wife, Sue, worked as teachers for eight years in Nigeria and Zambia, where they raised their family and made serious inroads into the birds of Africa, before transferring to the Falkland Islands for a two-year stint. In 1991-97 they relocated to Papua New Guinea where the 400-plus endemics proved a great challenge, and since then they have lived in the Northern Territory and far north Queensland, Australia.

Phil's major interests are field identification, vocalizations, and the geographic distribution of birds. He is also a writer with assorted contributions to many reference books including doing some family accounts for the *Handbook of Birds of the World*. He is currently working on a *Birds-of-paradise and Bowerbirds* title in the Pica/Helm series, and a *Field Guide to the Birds of New Guinea* for Lynx Edicions. He has also published and now maintains three on-line checklists, one for the birds of Australia and its island territories, the others for the Solomon Islands and New Guinea and associated islands.

Phil and his wife run the well-known Cassowary House, a birding and nature lodge situated in a great birding spot in the rainforest at Kuranda, near Cairns in the far north of Queensland. This will be his fourteenth trip to Japan which remains one of his favorite tours.

Visit <http://fieldguides.com/guides> for Phil's complete tour schedule; just click on his photo.

Jun Matsui has had a lifetime interest in wildlife. He started guiding in 1993 when he worked as a volunteer ranger at the Hikarigoaka nature park in Tokyo. After working for the Japanese Environment Agency where he collected and managed data and at several reserves where he was involved in setting up environmental education projects and guiding, he decided in 1999 to move to Australia. He spent a year traveling around the country and volunteering at various birding hotspots (including Broome Bird Observatory), and then he settled in the tropical Far North Queensland town of Cairns and took a job as a specialist bird tour guide for inbound Japanese groups.

Jun is a keen photographer and has been involved in several bird publications. He is the author of the very popular Japanese language *A Photographic Guide to the Wildlife of the Cairns Region* and is currently working on a bird-finding guide to Far North Queensland. He joined Sicklebill Safaris in 2007 and has been working with them ever since, with Japan tours his specialty, of course.

Financial Information

FEE: \$7675 from Narita (does not include flights within Japan; see note below)

DEPOSIT: \$770 per person

INTERNAL FLIGHTS: \$800 USD (as of June 2017 subject to change)

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: September 28, 2017

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$460 (Singles are not available at Lake Furen and Washi-no-Yado.)

LIMIT: 7

A NOTE ON THE INTERNAL FLIGHTS: *We often try to include flights 'in-country' in the tour fee; however, in this case we have excluded them and included them instead as estimated costs for international flights. This allows participants to use a Japan Airlines airpass to purchase flights within Japan (only available with the purchase of an international ticket), which saves substantially over buying the tickets separately.*

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Mandy Mantzel. Mandy will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

ACCOMMODATIONS: Accommodations are generally good on this tour. Most hotels will be western-style, but a few will be Japanese-style with Japanese-style bathhouses (see cultural etiquette below). Futons make a great warm, firm base on which to sleep, and you simply pile quilts up on top to make a really comfortable nocturnal nest. Some places may get you to make up your own futon and quilts, and these are simply folded up and put away in a cupboard next day (as at Washi-no-Yado). Some shared rooms may be necessary in Hokkaido, sleeping on platforms or tatami rush matting floors. We try to ensure en suite where possible, and will have the hot spring onsen facilities at Karuizawa if sufficient en suites are not available.

CULTURAL ETIQUETTE: Some of the accommodations will have Japanese-style bathhouses; if you use the onsen (hot spring facilities), you need to shower beforehand just outside the hot spring baths, and stack your clothes in the lockers there. Footwear is removed before going into Japanese houses and non-western style hotels. There will be an array of slippers available to wear, but as our feet tend to be larger than the average in Japan, we advise packing a light pair of slippers of your own.

Toilets are usually western-style, and the Japanese lead the world in toilet technology with such things as in-built bidets, piped relaxing music, and warmed seats, which can be very handy when freezing in Hokkaido!

Bowing is a traditional way of greeting, and you may respond with a similar bow, but a smile and handshake will not cause offence. Bows are part of the service in many places. Blowing your nose in public is also taboo, and gauze masks are common in many places to avoid catching colds or infecting others.

DOCUMENTS: US citizens will need a current passport to enter Japan. If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Japanese consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The tour fee is \$7675 for one person in double occupancy from Narita. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 15, all meals from dinner on Day 2 through lunch on Day 16, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does not include your airfare to and from Tokyo or flights within Japan, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$460. (Singles are not available Washi-no-Yado and may not be at Lake Furen.) If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the Registration/Release and Indemnity form and return it with a **deposit of \$770** per person. If registering by phone, a deposit must be received within fourteen days, or the space will be released. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by September 28, 2017. We will bill you for the final payment at either 120 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.** Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 120 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 119 and 70 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour fees (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute another guide for the original one. Where this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members, and they will have the right to cancel their participation and receive a full refund.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer any refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 70 to 119 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive from us a brochure regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, 24-hour accident protection, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance when making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights), pre-existing conditions are covered. The CSA brochure includes a contact number; you may also purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at www.fieldguides.com/travelinsurance.htm and clicking the link to CSA. Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Field Guides Incorporated accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

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