

ITINERARY  
***Maine: Birding Downeast***  
*May 27 - June 4, 2017*



*The Spruce Grouse breeds in boreal forests across North America. Although not rare, they tend to be difficult to locate; we will make a special effort to find these interesting birds. Photo by guide Eric Hynes.*

*We include here information for those interested in the 2017 Field Guides Maine: Birding Downeast 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:*

- 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 reference list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for, and keeping track of, the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, an annotated list of birds seen on the tour

**T**his exciting new tour hits one of the most scenic states on the Atlantic Coast at the beginning of nesting season. We will seek a rich diversity of birds on their breeding grounds with emphasis on the regional specialties—from beak to claw (lobsters and fantastic seafood, anyone?).

Our first birding destination will be famous Scarborough Marsh, the largest saltmarsh on the coast of Maine. It is not unusual to see Saltmarsh Sparrows and Nelson's Sparrows singing side-by-side here while "Eastern" Willets display overhead. A few miles inland, the Kennebunk Plains blueberry barren supports grassland birds such as Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow.

In late May, lingering migrant shorebirds forage along Maine's 228 miles of spectacular coastline. The coast stretches out to nearly 3500 miles of tidal shoreline, the most on the eastern seaboard. Rocky peninsulas, islands, rivers, and creeks draw a host of terns, herons, ducks, and Alcids. Most notable among our coastal targets are Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Common Murre, Black Guillemot, Arctic Tern, Roseate Tern, Piping Plover, Common Eider, and Great

Cormorant. We'll have legendary Acadia National Park as backdrop to some of our landbirding, and a nature cruise to Petit Manan Island on one of the world's best boats for pelagic birding will have puffins and terns swirling around us.

Venturing inland to Rangeley, we'll explore boreal forest loaded with singing warblers, thrushes, vireos, and northern finches. Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, and Moose will be foremost on our minds as we bird this region. Our tour route sneaks across the border to New Hampshire at the end for a run at Bicknell's Thrush on the slopes of Mount Washington from the Auto Road. We'll return to Portland (perhaps one last lobster roll?), where the trip concludes.

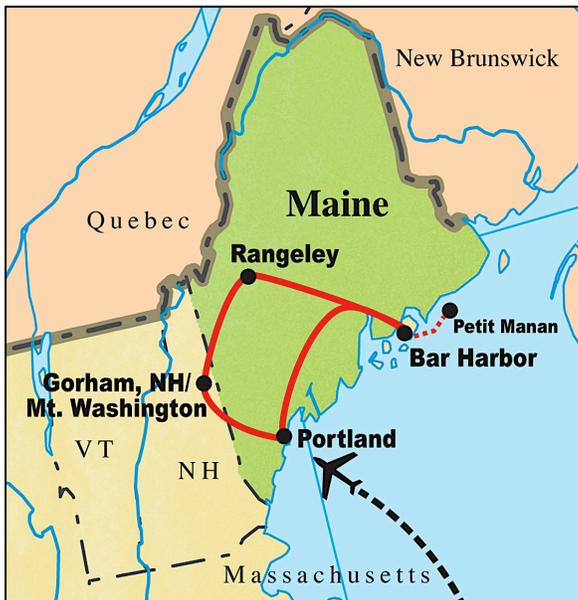
**About the Physical Requirements & Pace:** Our goal is to enjoy ourselves while seeing as many birds in Maine as possible. Notice—we lead with *enjoy*. Much of our birding will be observing from a stationary position or making short walks. However, these walks may indeed add up to several miles per day, but the footing should be relatively flat and consistent. Most of the walking will be on road edges or well-maintained trails.

The possibility that we get lured off-trail into the woods by an uncooperative bird is real, so a sturdy pair of water-resistant walking/hiking shoes is definitely advised. We will certainly be overlooking marshes but not entering them. Knee-high rubber boots are not necessary. Walking through dew-covered grass or dodging mud puddles is more realistic. Wear what works best for you. Eric will be in a pair of low hikers most of the time.

Maine sits as far east as you can get, so sunrise will be very early. On a couple days we will be pursuing nocturnal or crepuscular species. Maine also looms large as New England states go, so we will have some ground to cover. Expect early starts and a few days with lengthy drives. To offset this, we will make frequent stops for birds and incorporate some down time in the afternoon when possible. We will have two nights at the same hotel for most legs of this adventure.

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with one of the guides.

## About the Birding Areas



**Southern Coastal**—Sites in this area we might visit are: Portland city parks, Scarborough Marsh, Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, Biddeford Pool, Goose Rocks, Kennebunk Plains, and the Sanford Sewerage District. We will be birding marshes, river mouths, rocky shores, tidal lagoons, beaches, and scanning the open ocean. Focus in this region will be on ducks, loons, gannets, cormorants, herons, shorebirds, terns, gulls, and a select group of passerines. Specific targets include Common Eider, Glossy Ibis, Piping Plover, Willet, Roseate Tern, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Grasshopper Sparrow, Nelson's Sparrow, and Saltmarsh Sparrow.

**Mount Desert Island**—Sites in this area include Acadia National Park and Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge (Petit Manan Division). Our primary purpose is to get out on the water for seabirds. We will be in Bar Harbor for two nights to insure a departure on the spectacular boat that will take us to Petit Manan Island. En route, we will be scanning for storm-petrels and shearwaters. The island is a significant seabird nesting colony; as we motor around it, we should be surrounded by Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Common Murres, Black Guillemots, and Arctic Terns. Birding sites on terra firma will be a mix

of northern hardwoods and conifers loaded with warblers and flycatchers.

**Rangeley**—This region is high enough and far enough north to get into some nice boreal habitat. We will troll logging roads and back woods for northern forest specialties. Dawn chorus in this complex is truly special, and we will run into plenty of warblers, vireos, and thrushes while searching for the four unreliable boreal obligates: Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, and Gray Jay. Irrupective finches like White-winged Crossbill and Evening Grosbeak might spice up our outings. Wetlands in this area host thunder-pumping American Bittern and winnowing Wilson's Snipe. The driver will be particularly on the lookout for moose, as they like the road edges.

**White Mountains and Valleys**—Sites we will likely visit include Mount Washington Auto Road, Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge, Grafton Notch State Park, and Brownfield Bog. A special chartered tour in the evening before the auto road opens to the public will get us up to alpine habitat for the first time. Targeted species are Bicknell's Thrush, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Blackpoll Warbler, and Philadelphia Vireo.

## Itinerary for Maine: Birding Downeast



Piping Plover will be one of our objectives along the Maine coast.  
Photo by guide Eric Hynes.

**Day 1, Sat, 27 May. Arrival in Portland.** Please plan to arrive in time to meet in the lobby of our hotel at **4:30 p.m.** for introductions and a quick overview of the tour. We'll then head to a beautiful spot on the coast for dinner. While waiting for our lobster rolls (or whatever catches your eye on the menu), we can scope the ocean for Common Eiders, Black Guillemots, scoters, Northern Gannets, gulls, and shorebirds on the rocks. Our nightcap this first evening will be American Woodcock displaying at dusk. Night in Portland.

**Day 2, Sun, 28 May. Southern Coastal Birding.** This morning begins not far from our hotel at Scarborough Marsh—Maine's largest saltmarsh. Both Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sparrows, as well as "Eastern" Willets, breed in the extensive cordgrass, while shorebirds, herons, and egrets stalk in the pannes and pools. At the mouth of the Scarborough River at Pine Point we will scan for

Least and Roseate terns and lingering loons and shorebirds. From Scarborough we'll leapfrog our way down the coast. Stops in Biddeford Pool and Goose Rocks should gain us Piping Plover, lingering seaducks, and more shorebirds. We will be back to the hotel for an early dinner since tomorrow we'll have a predawn departure. Night in Portland.

**Day 3, Mon, 29 May. Kennebunk Plains to Bar Harbor.** You'll hate hearing your alarm go off but love it when you are hearing the dawn chorus at Kennebunk Plains. We will arrive early enough to hear Eastern Whip-poor-wills and American Woodcocks give way to Upland Sandpipers, Grasshopper Sparrows, Eastern Meadowlarks, and Prairie Warblers. After the morning outing, we will drive to Mount Desert Island with stops for birding along the way to break up the drive. Night in Bar Harbor.

**Day 4, Tue, 30 May. Bar Harbor Pelagic.** Since the half-day boat trip for whales and seabirds does not depart until late morning, we will have plenty of time to hit a few spots in picturesque Acadia National Park. Our boat trip will include circumnavigating Petit Manan Island, which hosts a breeding colony full of Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Common Murres, and Arctic Terns. In passage, we will keep a sharp eye out for Great Cormorants, Northern Gannets, Red-necked Phalaropes, and more. Night in Bar Harbor.

**Day 5, Wed, 31 May. Bar Harbor to Rangeley.** If we get weathered out on Day 4, we'll take Day 5 to get out on the water, and then make a beeline to Rangeley. Hopefully the weather cooperates and we can explore more of Acadia National Park before leisurely making our way to the northern forest. A stop at Messalonskee Lake along the way should gain us localized species such as Pied-billed Grebe, Purple Martin, Black Tern, Bank Swallow, and possibly Sandhill Crane. Night in Rangeley.

**Day 6, Thu, 1 June. Rangeley.** We'll spend today in the boreal forest heading west along Route 16 and making side trips down various logging roads. If you are itching for some warblers, this is the area. The rare sweep of the four boreal obligates (Spruce Grouse, Gray Jay, Black-backed Woodpecker, and Boreal Chickadee) is unlikely but that is what we will be aiming for. Other tasty treats to look forward to will be Bay-breasted and Blackburnian warblers, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and Moose! We will return to Rangeley for a siesta. After dinner, an optional night outing for owls and marsh

birds will tempt you. The evening adventure might produce Moose, calling Common Loon, Northern Saw-whet Owl, displaying American Woodcock, winnowing Wilson's Snipe, and thunder-pumping American Bittern. Night in Rangeley.

**Day 7, Fri, 2 June. Rangeley to Mt. Washington.** Today will be another full day in the north woods. We'll be looking to fill in any gaps in the checklist from the day before in some of the most beautiful places in the Northeast. We will pass through Grafton Notch State Park to hopefully pick up Philadelphia Vireo on our way to Gorham, New Hampshire. A special evening charter up the Auto Road on Mount Washington will quickly get us to tree line where we have a chance to encounter the crepuscular, range-restricted Bicknell's Thrush. Night in Gorham, NH.

**Day 8, Sat, 3 June. Gorham, NH; return to Portland.** If we dipped on Bicknell's Thrush the night before, we will enjoy a tram ride up at a nearby ski resort to take another crack at it. This habitat will be thick with Blackpoll Warblers and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is a possibility. On our way back to the coast, we will visit Brownfield Bog in Maine for new species like Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Willow Flycatcher, and possibly Black-billed Cuckoo. Our final dinner together will be a special evening at one of Eric's favorite restaurants. Night in Portland.

**Day 9, Sun, 4 June. Coastal clean up; Departures for home.** We will head out to nearby coastal sites to clean up any targets we missed. The sharp-tailed sparrows are late migrants and may not be around during our first attempt at the beginning of the tour. We will return to the hotel in time for a late check out. Everyone departs on their own from Portland. Please do not book your flights before 2 p.m.

## About Your Guide

**Eric Hynes** has been fascinated by birds and passionate about birding since he first heard the ghostly wailing of a Common Loon at summer camp in Maine more than 30 years ago. Upon completion of his B.S. at the University of Vermont, where he studied environmental studies and wildlife biology, Eric began a serious endeavor as a bird hobo that lasted more than a decade. His travels ranged across the U.S. with a number of trips to Central America as well. During this quest, Eric did everything from monitoring breeding raptors in the Snake River Canyon, to guiding for two summers in Alaska on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs, to ground squirrel rustling in Montana, to owl banding and hawk counting in Pennsylvania.

Getting married to Christine helped settle Eric into a fulltime position at Maine Audubon but not until after a birding trip to Panama cleverly disguised as their honeymoon. As the staff naturalist and adult education coordinator, Eric taught numerous bird identification workshops and led field trips locally and abroad for Maine Audubon. His positive energy and infectious enthusiasm for all things wild has drawn many a convert to birding and conservation. Eric served several terms on the Maine Bird Records Committee.

Eric and his family recently relocated to Telluride, Colorado where he focuses on tracking down Gunnison Sage-Grouse and rosy-finches as a scout in-residence for the Colorado Grouse tour.

*"An added bonus of the tour was traveling with **Eric Hynes**, who was patient, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and kind, and whose insights into animal and bird behavior made me want to learn more." P.G., Colorado Grouse*

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

A **second guide** will be added as tour size warrants.

## Financial Information

**FEE: \$2975 from Portland**

**DEPOSIT: \$300**

**FINAL PAYMENT DUE: January 27, 2017**

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$525**

**LIMIT: 14**

## Other Things You Need to Know

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

**AIR ARRANGEMENTS:** This tour requires flights in and out of Portland, Maine. 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 \$2975 for one person in double occupancy from Portland. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 8, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 9, all ground transportation, boat trips, 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 Portland, 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 \$525. 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 \$300** 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 January 27, 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 (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 in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

**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, 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](http://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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