

ITINERARY
ARIZONA'S SECOND SPRING

Tour I: July 21-30, 2024

Tour II: July 27-August 5, 2024



The Five-striped Sparrow is a Mexican species that just enters the US in far southern Arizona. These attractive but secretive birds breed during the summer rainy season, and we'll make an effort to find them while we are in the area.

Photograph by participant Paul Beerman.

We include here information for those interested in the 2024 Field Guides Arizona's Second Spring 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

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- 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 (may be downloaded from our web site)
- 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 Field Guides checklist for preparing for 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

Arizona's Southeast is a land of contrasts where forested, block-fault mountains rise above the Sonoran Desert plains. Wild canyons ring the mountain ranges carrying cool streams to the dry expanses below. This remarkable geographic diversity is reflected in the region's tremendous variety of plants and animals, especially birds. Indeed, Southeast Arizona has a greater variety of breeding birds than does any other area of comparable size in the US. And many of the birds of Southeast Arizona occur only here within the US, their ranges barely extending north from Mexico.

Our ten-day tour is designed to give us an excellent chance of seeing virtually all of Southeast Arizona's breeding birds. Among the specialties we seek are Zone-tailed and Gray hawks, ten or more species of hummingbirds including

Violet-crowned and White-eared, Arizona Woodpecker, Rose-throated Becard (rare), Thick-billed and Tropical kingbirds, Sulphur-bellied, Dusky-capped, and Buff-breasted flycatchers, Greater Pewee, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Mexican Chickadee, Bendire's Thrasher, Red-faced Warbler, Painted Redstart, Abert's Towhee, Rufous-winged, Five-striped, and Botteri's sparrows, Yellow-eyed Junco, and the beautiful Elegant Trogon.

Late July through August is an ideal time to visit Southeast Arizona. In a typical year, the late-summer prevailing winds bring moisture from the west coast of Mexico. Clouds begin to build in mid-morning and cooling, isolated afternoon rains refresh the desert and mountains. It is not uncommon to watch a rain shower pass a few hundred yards away without feeling a drop of rain. These rains can turn the desert and grasslands into a backdrop for carpets of wildflowers. The summer rain is also the onset of breeding for some of the local bird specialties. Montezuma Quail and Botteri's and Cassin's sparrows are at the peak of their singing and easier to locate. This time of year has also proved to be better than the spring for the appearance of Mexican vagrants as these post-breeding wanderers move north.

Although many of the nightbirds have completed their nesting by early August and are less likely to be vocalizing (hence, less likely to be seen), we will still make an effort to locate as many as possible. Southeast Arizona boasts no fewer than eleven species of breeding owls, including Whiskered and Western screech-owls, Flammulated Owl (very difficult in August), Northern (Mountain) Pygmy-Owl, Elf Owl (the world's smallest owl), Burrowing Owl, and the magnificent Spotted Owl. The Mexican Whip-poor-will is also a possibility. Nocturnal outings can also be productive for seeing mammals. A few of the species we could encounter (day or night) are Collared Peccary, White-tailed Deer, Black Bear, Western Spotted, Hooded, Striped, and Western Hognose skunks, Ringtail, White-nosed Coati, Bobcat, and even Mountain Lion.

Our route forms a loop beginning and ending in Tucson with stops in Willcox, the Chiricahua, Huachuca, and Santa Rita mountains, the Patagonia/Sonoita Creek area, Nogales, the Pajarito and Atascosa mountains, and California Gulch. Scenery is spectacular, one-night stands are few, and the itinerary is arranged so as to maximize our chances for the local specialties as well as any vagrants that might appear.



The spectacular Broad-billed Hummingbird is just one of a dozen or more hummingbird species we might find on this tour. Photograph by participant Bill Thompson.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS:** This tour involves a fair amount of walking. You should be able to hike at least 2-3 miles in a day. We will take at least one fairly long trail (about a mile one way) which has steep sections; the elevation gain is 500-600 feet. Other trails may be uneven and rocky. If you use a walking stick, be sure to bring it! Arizona is dry, so be sure to have water with you. We may also spend time standing and waiting for birds to come in, so be prepared to be on your feet quite a bit.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** You will need to be able to climb in and out of a 15-passenger van numerous times per day.
- **PACE:** Days start early to take advantage of cooler temperatures and early bird activity. Sunrise occurs at about 5:30 a.m. On non-travel days, we will try for a break in the afternoon. Some nights, we will make optional night-birding forays.
- **ELEVATION:** Elevations will vary. In the mountains, we'll be walking along roads or trails at 6000-8000 ft., and we will reach a high elevation of 8500 ft in the Chiricahuas.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures will range from about 45 F in the early morning hours to mid-90's F, depending on altitude and weather. The morning temperatures rise quickly with the sun. We may encounter some rain, but sun exposure and heat will be more likely. Be sure to have sunscreen and/or long sleeves, and a hat.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion. Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Bathroom stops at indoor restrooms will be made whenever possible though we will be away from facilities for extended periods on a couple of days; comfort stops in nature are the only alternative.
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

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



Tucson Area—We'll start our birding in the Tucson Mountains west of the city. This area is a good place to learn to identify some of the characteristic desert plants. Numerous species typical of the Lower Sonoran Desert can also be found in the area, including Gila Woodpecker, Gilded Flicker, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Verdin, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, and Pyrrhuloxia. We may encounter Lesser Nighthawks around dusk.

Huachuca Mountains—From our headquarters in Sierra Vista we will have a couple of days to explore the Huachuca Mountains. The majestic Huachucas remain one of the wildest ranges in Southeast Arizona. Many of the sharp ridges and rugged canyons are reached only by arduous treks. A few of the finest canyons in the Huachucas, however, are easily accessible and both Miller Canyon and Ramsey Canyon are well known spots for hummingbird viewing. Rivoli's (Magnificent), Blue-throated Mountain-gem, Broad-tailed, Rufous, Anna's, and Black-chinned are regulars at this time of year, and there is a chance for a migrant Calliope, Allen's, or Violet-crowned as well. Even Berylline and White-eared hummingbirds (both having stayed to nest in the past!) have visited the feeders here. Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Scott's Oriole also frequent the canyons around the feeders. Miller Canyon, site of the Beatty's Guest Ranch, has quickly become the finest hummingbird site in the area, and we will likely spend time here investigating the feeders. Nearby Ash Canyon Bird Sanctuary has become a dependable site in Arizona to see the scarce Lucifer Hummingbird, and we will pay a visit there as well.

Venturing deeper into the mountains, we'll bird the mixed pine/oak and Douglas Fir forests of Carr Canyon and/or Garden Canyon in search of Zone-tailed Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Golden Eagle, Arizona Woodpecker, Greater Pewee, the very local Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Virginia's and Black-throated Gray warblers, Spotted Towhee, and Red Crossbill. During our visit here, we will offer an optional hike up either Miller or Scheelite canyon, depending on the latest information on Spotted Owl. Although the trail is narrow and rather steep in places, each canyon is beautiful, and the birding can be rewarding. With careful searching, at least one Spotted Owl can usually be located at its daytime roost for close, leisurely views. Northern (Mountain) Pygmy-Owl, Canyon Wren, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Painted Redstart, and Red-faced Warbler can also be found along the walk.



We'll visit a canyon in the Huachuca Mountains to search for Spotted Owl. Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.

Chiricahua Mountains—The Chiricahuas possess a peculiar quality, a spirit if you will, that cannot be grasped, but which pervades the place and infects all who love wild places. The massive, lichen-encrusted, red-rock walls of Cave Creek Canyon, last stronghold of the Chiricahua Apaches; the warm, dry smell of pine/oak woodland; a Ringtail in the beam of the spotlight; a Slevin's Bunch-grass Lizard in a high-elevation meadow; a fidgety Northern Pygmy-Owl, discovered by a mob of small birds; a male Elegant Trogon hover-gleaning Madrone berries in the still of mid-morning... these are some of the things that make the Chiricahua Mountains such a special place.

Our days in the Chiricahuas will be full ones as we explore the complete transect of habitats from low desert washes to cool spruce/fir forest at nearly 9000 feet. Foremost among the many species of birds on which we'll focus is the

handsome Elegant Trogon. Other birds we'll seek in the Chiricahuas include Wild Turkey, Blue-throated Mountain-gem, Rivoli's (Magnificent), and Broad-tailed hummingbirds, Arizona Woodpecker, Greater Pewee, Ash-throated, Dusky-capped, and Sulphur-bellied flycatchers, Mexican Jay, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, Mexican Chickadee, Bridled and Juniper titmice, Bushtit, Pygmy Nuthatch, Western Bluebird, Hutton's and Plumbeous vireos, Painted Redstart, Virginia's, Grace's, Red-faced, migrating Hermit and Townsend's, and Olive warblers, Hepatic Tanager, Scott's and Hooded orioles, Black-headed and Evening grosbeaks, and Yellow-eyed Junco.

The high desert on the eastern flank of the mountains will give us a chance to seek the uncommon Bendire's and Crissal thrashers. Scaled Quail, Prairie Falcon, Golden Eagle, and Lark Bunting are possible as the desert scrub gives way to open grassland dotted with mounds created by the excavations of the nocturnal Bannertail Kangaroo Rats. Their burrows are sometimes home to Burrowing Owls as well, and we will watch for them and for soaring Swainson's Hawks as the mountains loom before us.

The devastating Horseshoe II fire in 2011 seriously impacted the high elevation habitats in the Chiricahuas, but our most recent visits indicate that there's still plenty of accessible habitat remaining in this expansive range, along with plenty of the specialty birds that we will seek. Luckily, beautiful Cave Creek Canyon, including the productive South Fork area, was only minimally impacted.

Patagonia/Sonoita Creek and Vicinity—Sonoita Creek is a permanent (albeit intermittent) stream lined with towering Fremont Cottonwoods and Arizona Sycamores. Zone-tailed Hawk, Greater Roadrunner, Thick-billed and Cassin's kingbirds, three species of *Myiarchus* (Ash-throated, Brown-crested, and Dusky-capped) flycatchers, Vermilion Flycatcher, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Phainopepla, Bell's Vireo, Hooded Oriole, Lucy's Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and many other species breed here. And Sonoita Creek is a good place to find Gray Hawk, pairs of which proclaim their territories with wild cries as they climb above the canyon on morning thermals.

In the nearby Nogales area we'll search a few water areas in the desert for Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Tropical Kingbird, Varied Bunting, migrants, and Mexican vagrants. A few other canyons in the area may yield a number of species typical of the oak-grassland hills of the area, including Rock Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Rufous-crowned and Lark sparrows, and Lesser Goldfinch.



The unusual Phainopepla is the only silky-flycatcher that ventures into the US. We'll watch for them in the Patagonia/ Sonoita Creek area. Photograph by guide Cory Gregory.

Atascosa and Pajarito mountains—Located west of Nogales, the Atascosa and Pajarito mountains are best known to birders because of scarce and local Five-striped Sparrows in California Gulch, but they also are one of the best places to find Montezuma Quail. The grassy, scrub-oak hillsides near Peña Blanca Lake are the favored habitat of Montezuma Quail, and we'll make a careful search for them very early en route to California Gulch. Eastern Bluebird occurs in small

numbers in these oaks as well. California Gulch is a sparsely vegetated, steep-walled canyon with well-developed riparian habitat along the creek. It is prime habitat for the Five-striped Sparrow, a Mexican species that breeds within the US in but a handful of canyons in this part of Southeast Arizona. In past years we've had excellent views of the Five-striped Sparrow within a quarter-mile walk along the ravine here. This is also a prime place to see the multi-hued Varied Bunting and a variety of other species including Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Bell's Vireo, and Yellow-breasted Chat.



As we look for rarities, we'll enjoy many of the desert's more common species, such as the sprightly Black-tailed Gnatcatcher. Photograph by guide Chris Benesh.

Itinerary for Arizona's Second Spring

Day 1, Sun. Arrival in Tucson. Please plan to arrive in Tucson **no later than 2:00 p.m.** Please call the motel, located just two minutes away from the airport, for complimentary transportation. We'll meet in the lobby of the motel at 2:30 p.m. to start our birding.

Where we go this afternoon depends largely on what's been around, but we'll likely visit a favored wetland area in Tucson before heading to the saguaro forests west of the city. This afternoon we could see the likes of Harris's Hawk, Gambel's Quail, Gilded Flicker, Cactus Wren, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Verdin, Rufous-winged Sparrow, and many other species characteristic of the Sonoran Desert. We'll catch an early dinner so that we can get out and search for Lesser Nighthawks at dusk before returning to the hotel. Night in Tucson.

Day 2, Mon. To the Chiricahua Mountains. We'll pack our bags and start our way eastwards towards the Chiricahuas. En route, we'll stop at hotspots like St. David and the ponds near the town of Willcox looking for such migrants as Eared Grebe, Cinnamon Teal, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Long-billed Curlew, Baird's Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Snowy Plover, and Black Tern. As we approach the Chiricahuas, our base for the next three nights, we'll drive over the mountains passing through beautiful, mature streamside vegetation, oak woodland, and mixed conifer forests. Towering above the endearing village of Portal are prominent red-rock mountains that capture the warmth of the setting sun and make this one of the most scenic spots in this range, a range that is overloaded with great scenery. Night in Portal.

Days 3-4, Tue-Wed. The Chiricahua Mountains and vicinity. Our two full days here will give us the opportunity to visit several areas in the Chiricahuas, from the shady trails along the South Fork of Cave Creek Canyon to pinyon and juniper scrub near Portal, to sparse Chihuahuan Desert flats east of the mountains on the New Mexico border, to cool spruce/fir forests at Rustler and Barfoot parks. Temperatures may be cool in the morning hours, but they will quickly increase as the sun rises. We'll probably find ourselves doing some owling after dinner both nights, either close at hand in the Portal area, or farther afield, weather permitting. Nights in Portal.

Day 5, Thu. To Sierra Vista. After packing our bags, we'll pass through the mountains once more and, with the Chiricahuas in our rear-view mirror, we will make our way downhill towards Sierra Vista which sits at the base of the Huachuca Mountains. We plan to bird that area in the afternoon, perhaps checking some higher elevation spots in the Huachuca Mountains or visiting some hummingbird feeders known for their rarities. Night in Sierra Vista.

Day 6, Fri. The Huachuca Mountains. We will spend the entire morning birding these mountains in a series of canyons on Fort Huachuca: Huachuca, Garden, and Scheelite canyons. The bird possibilities this morning are numerous, but Spotted Owl, Elegant Trogon, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, and Greater Pewee stand apart from the rest. We will head back to Sierra Vista for lunch. In the afternoon we'll likely visit another set of hummingbird feeders as well as check some other high elevation areas. *Remember to bring your photo ID with you this morning as we will need to show it at the Fort Huachuca gate.* Night in Sierra Vista.

Day 7, Sat. Huachuca; to Patagonia/Sonoita Creek/Nogales area. Our morning birding will depend on what we might still need to see in the area. We'll have a chance to search for migrants, return to the mountains, or look for some riparian species near the San Pedro River near Sierra Vista. Later in the morning we'll head to Patagonia for some afternoon birding in the Sonoita Creek area. Night in Nogales.

Day 8, Sun. Patagonia/Nogales and vicinity. We will bird this morning at various sites in the Patagonia-Nogales corridor. After a midday break, we'll head back out where we'll check several riparian oases. Night in Nogales.

Day 9, Mon. Nogales to Tucson. Our last day of birding will depend on which species we have yet to see. We might visit sites to search for Black-capped Gnatcatcher or head directly to Madera Canyon, the best-known birding area in the Santa Rita Mountains. Madera Canyon has a long history of attracting a number of rarities, so you never know what's going to show up! We'll bird the mountains here and the surrounding grasslands before heading north to Tucson. There may be time to check some treatment ponds before arriving at our motel. Night in Tucson.

Day 10, Tue. Departure for home. You may sleep in this morning if you wish. Please take the motel courtesy van to the airport at your convenience.



One of the most wanted birds for many visitors to Arizona is the cryptic Montezuma Quail. We'll spend time in the Chiricahuas and near California Gulch, where we'll watch for these lovely small quail. Photograph by guide Cory Gregory..

About Your Guide

Chris Benesh grew up studying natural history in California, where he was inspired by his father to take up birding as a teenager. After earning a degree in zoology from UC Santa Barbara in 1987, Chris moved to Austin to join the Field Guides staff. Since then, his life has undergone a wonderful transformation. The intervening years at Field Guides have taken him to many corners of the world and across both the Arctic and Antarctic circles!

Chris takes an interest in nearly anything that flies, and you might catch him sneaking a peek at a passing aircraft or stopping to examine a butterfly or odonate. You might also notice him getting especially excited at the sighting of a rare or wonderful mammal (heck, he can get excited about a squirrel).

Chris's passion for education has led to his serving on the Arizona Bird Committee, leading the occasional workshop, presenting at birding conventions, and—we must add—thoroughly explaining in admirable detail the nuances of flycatchers to tour participants and colleagues alike. These days, most of his “down time” is spent at home in Tucson watching his two wonderful kids, Sean and Linnea, grow.

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for the guide's complete tour schedule; just click on a photo.

*“I would travel with **Chris Benesh** anywhere, any time. He is calm, pleasant, and good-humored. He is not only brilliant at spotting and finding birds, but equally brilliant at ensuring that every member of the group gets a great look at the bird.”
B.M., Arizona's Second Spring*

Cory Gregory started learning birds on flashcards at the age of three, but it wasn't until the ripe age of ten that things started to get more serious. Since then, he has traveled to Central and South America, Australia, and all 50 states to try to get his fill of birding (and it hasn't worked yet!).

Cory earned a B.S. in zoology in Michigan, where he also worked for Whitefish Point Bird Observatory for several seasons. He then ventured to Iowa State University, where he earned a M.S. studying Long-billed Curlews in Nebraska. As an avid shorebird ecologist, he has handled more than 2000 shorebirds of more than 30 species.

After finishing school, Cory worked for several organizations as a shorebird ecologist and guided on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs of Alaska for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. It was on St. Paul that his dream of stumbling on a first North American record was finally fulfilled. Cory is currently based out of Missouri where, when not on tour, he pursues his interest in birds, butterflies, and dragonflies with abandon.

Cory has guided Field Guides groups to Arizona, Cape May, Colorado, Maine, Oregon, Texas, Newfoundland, Costa Rica, Oaxaca, Colombia, Peru, France, and Australia and has a busy and wide-ranging schedule of tours.

*“**Cory Gregory's** birding skills are exceptional. His sight and hearing seem super-human, and his knowledge of the birds' plumage, songs, and behavior is top-notch. He is excellent at finding the birds and getting the trip participants 'on' them. He was also a master at the organization and conduct of the trip. It was a pleasure birding with Cory because he is funny, caring, genuine, smart, and helpful. Cory is one of the best.” C. G., Australia*

Financial Information

FEE: \$4150 from Tucson

DEPOSIT: \$400 per person

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: January 23, 2024 (Tour I); January 29, 2024 (Tour II)

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$650 [singles are limited at Portal Peak Lodge (Days 2-4)]

LIMIT: 7

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Caroline Lewis. Caroline 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: Please plan to arrive in Tucson by 2:00 p.m. on Day 1, July 21 (Tour I) or July 27 (Tour II). Participants may depart Tucson at any time on Day 10, July 30 (Tour I) or August 5 (Tour II). 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 \$4150 for one person in double occupancy from Tucson. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 9, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 10, 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 Tucson, airport taxes, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$650. Please note singles are limited at Portal Peak Lodge (Days 2-4). 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 LIMITS: Our limits are firm, however, on occasion, we will send a guide in training along on a tour. In these cases, one seat in the van or bus will be taken by the guide in training. Our guides will have a rotation system within the vehicle so that clients share the inconvenience equally. We hope this minor inconvenience will be more than offset by the advantages of having another guide along.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please contact us at fieldguides.com/contact-us/. Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of \$400** per person, or see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by January 23, 2024 (Tour I); January 29, 2024 (Tour II)**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 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 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation 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 that 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 airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. 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, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs outside of our cancellation policy as published in the itinerary (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 information from us 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, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

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 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. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible 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.

NCP 7/2020

TBJ 9/22; peg1/23; 1/24