

ITINERARY

Maine in Fall: Seabirds & Coastal Migrants

September 9-18, 2021



Gulls are common along the sea-coast, and we'll have ample opportunity to practice our identification skills when we encounter groups such as this. With luck, we'll be able to pick out a Lesser Black-backed Gull (center-right, in the back) from among the more common species. Photograph by guide Eric Hynes.

We include here information for those interested in the 2021 Field Guides Maine in Fall: Seabirds & Coastal Migrants 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
- 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

This exciting tour hits one of the most scenic states on the Atlantic Coast near the height of fall migration for many shorebird, songbird and seabird species. We will seek a rich diversity of birds along the coast with emphasis on the regional specialties—from beak to claw (lobsters and fantastic seafood, anyone?).

As the Sanderling flies, there are just over 200 miles between the coast of New Brunswick and the coast of New Hampshire. However, the circuitous undulations of Maine's shoreline stretch out to over 3,500 miles! Rocky peninsulas, islands, rivers, and creeks draw a host of coastal migrants: sandpipers, plovers, dowitchers, yellowlegs, herons and more. The rich waters of the Gulf of Maine attract many pelagic seabirds such as alcids, phalaropes, loons, shearwaters, storm-petrels, jaegers and skuas (if we are lucky). Migrant songbirds like warblers, vireos, thrushes and sparrows pile up along the coast as well. Most notable among our coastal targets are Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Pomarine Jaeger, the rare Great Skua and Great Cormorant. Boreal habitat all the way Downeast gives us access to pursue specialties like Spruce Grouse and Black-backed Woodpecker.



We'll learn fall warbler basics, and be able to identify migrants such as this Cape May Warbler. Photograph by guide Eric Hynes.

Our birding adventure together starts off with several days along southern coast, based out of Portland. We will visit shorebirding hotspots like Biddeford Pool and Scarborough Marsh. Searching forest and field should turn up a nice diversity of migrant songbirds too. From Portland, we will make our way up to Bar Harbor for four nights. Bar Harbor will be our gateway to Acadia National Park, Downeast and the Gulf of Maine. A full day pelagic trip gets us into waters where Pomarine Jaegers should be present in good numbers and if we are lucky, their larger cousin, the Great Skua, might be encountered as well. We will explore as far east as you can get in the lower 48 (West Quoddy Head) before we make our way to enchanting Monhegan Island for several nights. This quaint fishing village and artist enclave sits ten miles off the mainland and also happens to be one of the best migration hotspots for songbirds in the Northeast. We will casually bird the small community and neighboring trails while taking life down a notch and disengaging from the rest of the world. Those fall warblers won't be so confusing by the time we take the ferry back to the mainland. After Monhegan, its back to Portland and departures for home.

NOTE: Since the virus is and will continue to be a significant global health issue for some time, **we require that each participant have completed a full COVID vaccination course** at least two weeks prior to travel. If you are getting a two-dose vaccine, this means you must receive your second dose two weeks prior to departure. As we get closer to the tour date, someone from our office will call to have you confirm your vaccination status. Having a vaccinated group will greatly diminish but not eliminate the possibility of the group and individual participants being adversely affected by COVID-19.

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 & WALKING:** Moderate amounts of walking on flat ground (up to three miles per day), some of it on paved roads, some on gravel or dirt roads, most on trails that have no significant obstacles except on Monhegan Island. The village roads on Monhegan Island have good footing but as you get onto undulating trails away from the village, expect to have rocks and exposed roots to step over. Walking into the woods or dewy grass in pursuit of a bird is possible (hiking books recommended). We will probably walk a short distance on open beach as well.

- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We may stand for long periods to observe flocks of birds. We cover some ground on this tour, and a few days will feature long periods of time in the vans, with roadside birding and much getting in and out of vans. We have two 1-hour ferry rides between Port Clyde, Monhegan Island, and Bar Harbor; the crossings can be choppy (motion sickness remedies recommended). Our full-day pelagic trip is on a large vessel that is relatively stable, but those susceptible to motion sickness may wish to take precautions.
- **PACE:** Early mornings (Departures about 7:00 a.m. most days); both morning and afternoon birding sessions, with occasional afternoon breaks.
- **WEATHER:** Early fall weather in Maine is usually mild but highly variable. Expect temperatures in the low 50s in the evening, with days ranging from the low 60s to mid-70s F. Rain showers and windy conditions are possible. Early mornings might be surprisingly cool and the conditions during the pelagic always feel harsher than when on land.
- **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 regularly; comfort stops in nature are also possible, should the need arise.
- **OPTING OUT:** As this short tour stays multiple nights at each of the hotels, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or half-day.

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, and Pine Point. 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, gulls, and a select group of passerines.

Acadia & Downeast —Sites in this area include Acadia National Park and Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge (Petit Manan Division), Schoodic Peninsula, Boot Head Preserve, Lubec Flats and West Quoddy Head. Our primary purpose is to get out on the water for seabirds. We will be in Bar Harbor for multiple nights to insure a departure on the spectacular boat that will take us out into the Gulf of Maine. The coastline Downeast is so beautiful in places, you might find yourself forgetting that you are supposed to be searching for birds! Boreal forest meets the coast all the way Downeast so specialty species like Spruce Grouse and Black-backed Woodpecker will be targeted as well.

Monhegan Island —Ten miles off the coast of Maine and barely a square mile in area, Monhegan Island is huge when it comes to birding hotspots in Maine. This remote refuge is the last bit of land a migrant songbird is going to see if it finds itself out over the ocean. If we

are lucky enough to be out there when a cold front blows through, the fallout on Monhegan can be amazing. The quaint little town has less than 100 year-round residents but it draws many artists, fisherman and tourists seasonally. The charming community is welcoming and much of the island is in conservation.



The American Black Duck is a breeding bird in Maine; we should be able to find these dabblers and other regional breeders on the tour. Photograph by guide Eric Hynes.

Itinerary for Maine in Fall: Seabirds & Coastal Migrants

Day 1, Thu, 9 Sep. 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, gulls, and shorebirds. Night in Portland.

Day 2, Fri, 10 Sep. Southern Coastal Birding. The route for this day will be determined by the tide. We'll be covering coastal sites from Kennebunkport to Scarborough Marsh—Maine's largest saltmarsh. We will scan for shorebirds, seabirds, waders and more at places like Fortunes Rocks, Biddeford Pool, Hills Beach and Pine Point. Night in Portland.

Day 3, Sat, 11 Sep. Portland to Bar Harbor. Depending on what we saw and what we missed the day before, we will scour the coast one more time before checking out of our hotel. After the morning outing, we will make our way up the coast to Bar Harbor to be in position for our pelagic outing the next day. Night in Bar Harbor.

Day 4, Sun, 12 Sep. Gulf of Maine Pelagic. Maine Audubon sponsors a chartered, full day pelagic trip covering an impressive chunk of the Gulf of Maine. The vessel is one of the most impressive pelagic platforms you will ever board. We expect to see multiple shearwater species, phalaropes, storm-petrels, alcids, Pomarine Jaegers, and a reasonable chance at seeing a Great Skua. Whales and other marine mammals are likely as well. Night in Bar Harbor.

Day 5, Mon, 13 Sep. Acadia National Park. Acadia is one of the most popular national parks in the NPS system for good reason. The rocky coast, mountains that meet the ocean, pristine lakes and majestic conifer forests are truly sublime. The birding can be quite good as well. We will explore several of Eric's favorite sites within the park. Night in Bar Harbor.

Day 6, Tue, 14 Sep. Downeast. We will bird our way along the coast until we run out of Maine (in Lubec) and back again. This day will cover quite a few miles but this region offers some gorgeous coastal scenery and quality boreal habitat that will definitely make it worth the driving time. We will make attempts to find specialty species like Spruce Grouse and Black-backed Woodpecker, as well as coastal sites for shorebirds, gulls and seals. Night in Bar Harbor.

Day 7, Wed, 15 Sep. Bar Harbor to Monhegan Island. We will say goodbye to the Downeast region and make our way to Port Clyde to catch a ferry out to Monhegan Island at 3 p.m. The ferry crossing takes about an hour. After checking into our charming island hotel, we will have time for an introductory walk around the village before dinner. Night on Monhegan Island.

Day 8, Thu, 16 Sep. Monhegan Island. We won't be going anywhere this day that our feet don't take us. At a relaxed pace, we will explore this enchanting island looking for migrants. Night on Monhegan Island.

Day 9, Fri, 17 Sep. Monhegan Island to Portland. Our last full day together will start with a final walk around Monhegan before catching the 12:30 p.m. ferry back to the mainland. The afternoon will be focused on getting back to Portland for farewell dinner. Night in Portland.

Day 10, Sat, 18 Sep. Departures. Our adventure has come to its conclusion. You may schedule your departure for any time.



We'll have a day and a half to enjoy birding the charming hotspot of Monhegan Island. Photograph by guide Eric Hynes.

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.

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

*"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*

Financial Information

FEE: \$3975 from Portland

DEPOSIT: \$400

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: May 12, 2021

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional*): \$900

LIMIT: 7

Special Note: Tour fees may be subject to change due to the global economic effects of COVID-19.

We have published the itinerary and price for this tour with the understanding that during these uncertain times we are likely to encounter unforeseen changes. Some of our tours may incur higher costs due to increases in currency exchange rate fluctuations or COVID-19 related fees imposed by countries and/or suppliers. Travel and hospitality companies all over the world have been adversely affected by the pandemic, and there is no guarantee that all of the lodging and transportation we have booked for this tour will still be available at the time of departure. We hope to maintain our services as indicated in our itinerary as well as our published tour fee. However, if changes are required we will make every effort to maintain the quality of the itinerary as it is published with the most appropriate substitutions available. Should any necessary changes or other unforeseen causes result in an increase in service rates to us, we reserve the right to pass on those increases in fees to the tour participant.

Other Things You Need to Know

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

ACCOMMODATIONS: September might just be the best time to be in Maine. Kids are back in school so the summer vacationers are thinning out, the heat is less intense but it's not cold yet, maple leaves are morphing into gorgeous shades of flame and scarlet...and the hotels know it. Seasonal rates at lodgings this time of year are at a premium but the cost is so worth it. We will be staying at the Merry Manor Inn-Best Western while in Portland. This a pretty standard large hotel facility. The hotels for the rest of our adventure however, are charming, distinctive, and come with spectacular views. While we are on Monhegan Island, we will be staying at the quaint Monhegan House. Patrons have found this historic guesthouse enchanting since 1870. It has undergone numerous renovations over the decades but manages to retain its inviting character. Their kitchen creates wonderful food. Please note the limitations of being on an island and the effort to preserve its historic ambience dictate that they still lack an elevator and only offer shared bathrooms. Learn more at: <http://monheganhouse.com/>. Our nights in Bar Harbor will be spent at the Atlantic Oceanside Inn. We have selected an isolated building at this magnificent complex. Your room will be comfortable, spacious and have a stunning view of famous Frenchman Bay. We know you will love it.

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 \$3975 for one person in double occupancy* from Portland. 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, 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 \$900. 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).

*If you have a trusted friend, relative, or significant other with whom you wish to share a room on tour, please let us know and your tour manager will make that assignment. However, due to recommendations from the CDC, Field Guides is not currently pairing roommates who do not know each other, and the single supplement will apply if you do not have a roommate. As of this writing (April 26, 2021), we are reviewing these CDC recommendations carefully and often and will let you know if that changes.

TOUR LIMITS: Our limits are firm and we don't exceed the limit by one to accommodate a couple when only one space remains open. However, on occasion, we will send along a guide in training 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 our office](#). 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 our Payment Options at <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/>. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by May 12, 2021**. **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.**

Please note that if you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will require **proof of travel insurance**. 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.

Field Guides reserves the right 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. If you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will **require proof of travel insurance**. 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 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 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 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. 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.

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