

ITINERARY

Mid-Atlantic Migration Magic

October 1 – 10, 2021



*Falcons such as this male American Kestrel are fairly common in migration along the Atlantic coast of the US.
Photograph by guide Tom Johnson.*

We include here information for those interested in the 2021 Field Guides Mid-Atlantic Migration Magic 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:

- 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, a list of birds seen on the tour

The phenomenon of a migratory flyway like the East Coast during fall is a spectacle not to be missed! Early October is near, or at the peak, for a host of different bird families, from shorebirds, seabirds and sparrows, to waterfowl, warblers and raptors. In particular, Accipiters and Falcons are pouring down the coast. We will be sure to position ourselves at geographic funneling points for numerous observations of these challenging groups. A patient and educational approach will be taken to develop identification skills and absorb the wonder of it all. This tour visits some of the most famous birding sites on the East Coast such as Eastern Shore of Virginia, Chincoteague, Bombay Hook and Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuges, Kiptopeke State Park, and Hawk Mountain Sanctuary.

Peninsulas, like the Delmarva, concentrate migrants in impressive numbers, especially with the passage of a cold front. Contiguous mountain ridges generate favorable migration conditions as well. After time spent along the coast in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, the tour will wrap up with several days along the Kittatinny Ridge in Pennsylvania for a comparative study. On days with less favorable winds, we will turn our attention to the plethora of coastal marshes,

estuaries, beaches, and thickets to round out our list. When our eyes aren't trained on raptors overhead, we will study the numerous ducks, terns, shorebirds, and gulls, as well as dozens of warblers, sparrows and other songbirds.

This tour spends several days at each of the areas to maximize the potential for a peak flight. Raptors in flight, shorebirds on a mudflat, and warblers in non-breeding plumage can be tricky to ID, but with lots of different looks and careful tutelage, you will return home with increased confidence and a tremendous sense of awe.



In addition to observing the raptor migration, we'll have a chance to brush up on our fall warbler ID skills. This American Redstart was seen on a previous Field Guides tour to the area. Photograph by participant Peter Hart.

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (if you are getting a two-dose vaccine, this means you must receive your second dose two weeks prior to departure). 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 are requiring all of our staff guides to be vaccinated.** Note too that many travel destinations are, or soon will be, requiring proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time.

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:** There will be moderate amounts of walking but mostly on flat ground (up to 3 miles per day). Although most of it will be on paved or gravel roads, we will be on some trails and boardwalks but they're well-maintained and will have no significant obstacles. The exception to this will be when we reach the Kittatinny Ridge toward the end of the tour. The trail up to North Lookout at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile and sections are quite rocky. The lookout itself is a boulder outcropping. Please note that we will probably walk a short distance on sandy beaches as well.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** The rocky trail at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary is described above. Keep in mind that we may stand or sit for long periods of time while we study migration at various lookouts. Participants must be comfortable and capable on their feet.

- **PACE:** The days will be relatively long, but fairly relaxed. Participants can expect early mornings (6:30-7:00 a.m. departures, with field breakfasts); both morning and afternoon birding sessions, with occasional afternoon breaks. Please note, however, that we cannot guarantee afternoon breaks every day.
- **WEATHER:** Early October on the East Coast can be quite pleasant but highly variable. Temperatures may rise into the 80s F, but hopefully we see the passage of a cold front, which is followed by cold, northwest winds. Rain showers and windy conditions are possible.
- **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:** We will plan to make regular stops at indoor, modern facilities. If bush stops are needed between these breaks, participants must be comfortable and prepared to use nature.
- **OPTING OUT:** As this tour stays multiple nights at each of the hotels, participants may be able to opt out of a day or half-day, if they desire, and depending on the itinerary for that 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 the guide.



*We'll get practice in distinguishing between Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks. (This is an immature Cooper's.)
Photograph by participant Peter Hart..*

About the Birding Areas

Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge ...location, location, location. The Delmarva Peninsula separates Chesapeake Bay from the Atlantic Ocean and creates one of the greatest migration funnels on the continent. Over 400 species have been recorded in Northampton County and many of them show up in fall migration at Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge. The peak flights that occur here, when the weather conditions are just right (passage of a cold front), can pile up thrushes, flycatchers, warblers and more by the thousands. Songbirds in the fields and forests, raptors overhead and shorebirds along the coast; you never know what might be around the corner at this exciting migration hotspot. Some of the iconic coastal species we will observe include: Brown Pelican, White Ibis, American Oystercatcher, Black Skimmer, Seaside and Saltmarsh sparrows.



Kiptopeke State Park sits on the Chesapeake Bay side of the Delmarva Peninsula tip, across from the Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, and enjoys the same funneling effect for migrants. There is a long-running raptor migration count at this site and we will definitely dedicate some time to the passage of Falcons and Accipiters approaching the lengthy open water crossing at the mouth of the bay. We will be studying Sharp-shinned versus Cooper's hawks and Merlin versus Peregrine Falcon here, as well as searching for warblers, flycatchers, vireos and more.

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is probably most famous for the ponies on Assateague Island but this barrier beach and adjacent saltmarshes and lagoons attract hundreds and thousands of migrants during fall migration. We will enjoy dozens of shorebird species, like Marbled Godwit and Stilt Sandpiper, while taking the time to differentiate the dowitchers, peeps, and yellowlegs. Flocks of Tree Swallows will swirl all around us as Monarch butterflies float by.

Delaware coastal refuges: Delaware has the lowest mean elevation of any state and is the second smallest state by area, and yet it boasts a plethora of coastal state

parcs and national wildlife refuges where over 400 species have been seen. Famous birding hotspots such as Bombay Hook and Prime Hook national wildlife refuges, Cape Henlopen and Delaware state parks will definitely be stops on our route. These sandy beaches, coastal dunes, salt and freshwater marshes, ponds, fields and forests will undoubtedly provide many memorable sightings for us. The resident Clapper Rails, Brown-headed Nuthatches, and Boat-tailed Grackles will be joined by tens of thousands of migrants and newly arriving wintering species.

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary should be on every birders' bucket list. It was founded in 1934 as the world's first sanctuary for birds of prey, is the longest running migration count on the planet, and a world leader in raptor research and education. Located along the spine of the Kittatinny Ridge in east-central Pennsylvania, it is a truly special place to observe migration as raptors and other birds soar past riding the deflected winds. This will be our best chance at catching late, uncommon migrants, such as Golden Eagle and Northern Goshawk.

Itinerary for Mid-Atlantic Migration Magic

Day 1, Fri, 1 Oct. Arrival in Norfolk, VA. We will meet curbside at the northeast end of the arrivals terminal of Norfolk International Airport (ORF) at **4 p.m.**, which will be to your right as you emerge from baggage claim. If you plan to drive to meet the group, please meet your guides by **10:00 a.m.** at the Hampton Inn & Suites Washington-Dulles International Airport (22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166). We strongly recommend you add an extra night for 30 Sep. in order to meet the guide(s) the following morning. If you stay at this hotel, you may add parking for up to 14 days when booking your room. The drive to meet the group will take about 3-4 hours and will not include any birding.

After hitting a nearby hotspot to get the checklist off to a strong start, we will head over and under Chesapeake Bay via the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. This remarkable structure is recognized as one of the greatest engineering marvels on the planet and will transport us approximately 20 miles across to Virginia's Eastern Shore. After settling into our hotel in Cape Charles, we will enjoy dinner and perhaps some evening birding. Night in Cape Charles.

Day 2, Sat, 2 Oct. Birding the tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. As the movement of most migrants is strongly influenced by weather conditions (fingers crossed for a cold front!), our exact itinerary will remain flexible so that we can adapt to the conditions of the moment. Different areas will be more or less productive for birding depending on such things as tide, wind direction, and precipitation. You can count on spending time on the hawk watching platform at Kiptopeke State Park, walking the trails at Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, and checking various places along the shore - perhaps more than once. Night in Cape Charles.



*We'll have a chance to practice our shorebird ID when we encounter mixed flocks such as this on the coast.
Photograph by guide Cory Gregory.*

Day 3, Sun, 3 Oct. Cape Charles to Chincoteague. After a morning birding in Cape Charles, we'll check out and make our way up the eastern shore to Chincoteague, likely with birding stops along the way. In the afternoon, we will make our first visit to Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. Night in Chincoteague.

Day 4, Mon, 4 Oct. Chincoteague. Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge provides a number of interesting places to bird, including the Wildlife Loop, which can only be accessed after 3 p.m. Time allowing, we will visit sites outside the refuge as well. Night in Chincoteague.

Day 5, Tue, 5 Oct. Chincoteague to Lewes, DE. On this day we will say goodbye to Virginia, cross a narrow swath of Maryland and begin to explore the generous birding locales along the coast of Delaware. Indian River Inlet and Cape Henlopen State Park will offer ample locations to observe migrants concentrated along the shore. Night in Lewes, DE.

Day 6, Wed, 6 Oct. Delaware Bay. The western shore of Delaware Bay draws hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, shorebirds, waders and songbirds. The sheer volume of birds can be staggering and awe-inspiring. Night in Lewes, DE.

Day 7, Thu, 7 Oct. Delaware to Pennsylvania. We will see if we can find a few more coastal species in the morning, then turn our attention to a different migration strategy and head inland in the afternoon. Night near Harrisburg, PA.

Day 8, Fri, 8 Oct. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. This historic site will be educational and exciting. Our raptor study along the coast will be challenged with this new perspective. Night near Harrisburg, PA.

Day 9, Sat, 9 Oct. Waggoner's Gap. This site is less famous than Hawk Mountain but because it sits farther down the "pipeline," sometimes produces even bigger numbers than Hawk Mountain.

Day 10, Sun, 10 Oct. Departure from Harrisburg. The tour concludes this day. Flights home from Harrisburg (MDT) can be booked at your convenience. The hotel offers a complimentary airport shuttle from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.. Reservations are required, so please schedule your departure with the front desk ahead of time. Taxi fare is estimated at \$35/one way should you opt to not use the shuttle. *If you drove to meet the group, you will continue on with the guides to return to the Hampton Inn & Suites Washington-Dulles International Airport (22700 Holiday Park Drive, Sterling, VA 20166). This will be about a 2 hour drive and will not include any birding.*

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 now reside in Telluride, Colorado where he focuses on tracking down Gunnison Sage Grouse and rosy-finches as a scout in-residence for the Colorado Grouse tour.

*“Eric Hynes -- great energy, excellent people skills, fantastic birder, fine communicator and always educating, knows how to make it fun.”
S. R., Maine*

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

A second guide will be added as tour size warrants.

Financial Information

FEE: \$3725 from Norfolk (Please note that this tour begins in Norfolk, VA and ends in Harrisburg, PA)

DEPOSIT: \$375 per person

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: July 3, 2021

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional*): \$700

LIMIT: 14

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 Christine Boilard. Christine will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact her!

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Participants who are flying into the Norfolk airport (ORF) should plan to meet outside at the curb at the northeast end of the arrivals terminal (to your right after the baggage claim) at **4 p.m.** on the first day of the tour. **If you are planning to fly into Norfolk, we must have your arrival flight information.** We will depart from the Harrisburg (MDT) airport and flights can be booked for any time on the last day of the tour.

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 \$3725 for one person in double occupancy* from Norfolk. 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 the tour, 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 \$700. 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 (July 23, 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 \$375** 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 July 3, 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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