

ITINERARY  
**PUERTO RICO**

*Tour I: February 19-25, 2022*  
*Tour II: February 26-March 4, 2022*



*The Puerto Rican Bullfinch is a widespread endemic that occurs in many of the forested areas that we will visit.  
Photograph by participant Bill Williams.*

*We include here information for those interested in the 2022 Field Guides Puerto Rico 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 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 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

Puerto Rico, easternmost and smallest of the Greater Antilles, is an exciting birding destination that harbors seventeen species of birds found nowhere else. Additionally, this US-associated Commonwealth features fine facilities and a good road system, making birding in Puerto Rico—from montane rainforests and elfin woods to mangrove swamps and dry coastal scrub—a comfortable and rewarding experience. We'll begin in the north and west of the island during our relocation from San Juan toward the Southwest, stopping at selected sites like Cambalache State Forest and Rio Abajo State Forest for native landbirds, at cliffs and promontories for seabirds, and at wetlands for waterbirds. Along this route, we're likely to see over half of the island's endemic species right off the bat, including Puerto Rican Flycatcher, Adelaide's Warbler, Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo, and Puerto Rican Bullfinch. If conditions and access circumstances allow, we will look for the very rare Puerto Rican Parrot at Rio Abajo – a successful, ongoing reintroduction effort has resulted in the species nesting in the wild there.

In a charming, relaxed southwestern corner of the island, we'll be based out of the seaside town of La Parguera where we can also see the Yellow-shouldered Blackbird and Puerto Rican Nightjar within just a few minutes of our hotel. A visit to Guánica State Forest might produce nice looks at Puerto Rican Emerald, Caribbean Elaenia, Puerto Rican Tody, and Mangrove Cuckoo. The highlands of Maricao State Forest host the recently (1972) described Elfin-woods Warbler, as well as many other specialties: Antillean Euphonia, Puerto Rican Tanager, Green Mango, Puerto Rican Oriole, Puerto Rican Vireo, the scarce Lesser Antillean Pewee, and the *venator* subspecies of Sharp-shinned Hawk. Outings to Cabo Rojo and Laguna Cartagena will help round out our experiences with Caribbean waterbirds and wintering shorebirds – birds like White-tailed Tropicbird, Masked Duck, and West Indian Whistling-Duck are among the birds we'll search for.

For the last stage of the tour, we will relocate to Casa Cubuy, an eco-lodge in Puerto Rico's eastern mountains on the edge of El Yunque National Forest, the only tropical rainforest in the US National Forest system. From here, we'll make a day trip to Humacao and Fajardo to search for Green-throated Carib and Antillean Crested Hummingbird, in addition to whatever other species we haven't yet found. Note – the Antillean Crested Hummingbird has become quite rare after Hurricane Maria, perhaps due to the storm's impact on flowering plants at the eastern end of Puerto Rico.

This tour's objective will be to visit the island's habitats and endemic bird species at a pace suited to almost any birder, whether beginning or advanced. Because many of Puerto Rico's endemic birds are local in their distribution, we will set our priorities according to the habitat and location of the day. In general we will try to see as great a variety of birds and wildlife as time permits, though we generally do not seek out localized "exotic" species, such as Old World finches and parrots that now breed in the wild in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rican birding is a delight, an easy introduction to the Greater Antillean avifauna—and a must for anyone who loves island birding anywhere.



*The diminutive Puerto Rican Tody is always a favorite! These cute little endemics are one of four tody species, all of which are found only in the Caribbean. Photograph by guide Tom Johnson.*

**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:** Moderate amounts of walking (1-2 miles in morning, 1-2 miles in afternoon at most), mostly on roads or wide dirt trails. A few walks require going up and down a moderate grade for a short distance, with uneven terrain in a few spots.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We will likely stand for long periods to observe birds. A stool could be useful for those who prefer to take breaks while searching for birds.
- **PACE:** Early starts (5:30-6:30 a.m. breakfasts) followed by birding until lunch. On some days, there is a break after lunch and optional afternoon birding. There will be at least one nighttime excursion to look for owls and nightjars, but this will be in the early evening (or possibly early morning).
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures range from the low 60s in the early morning to the mid-90s F later in the day. Rain is a possibility, and the climate is humid.
- **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:** Whenever possible, we use modern, indoor restrooms, but on occasion, participants must be prepared to make a comfort stop in nature.
- **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 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

**Guánica Forest Reserve:** Puerto Rico's growing human population has cleared most of the subtropical dry coastal forest in Puerto Rico for farming and other interests. One of the last remaining patches of this threatened habitat is protected in this reserve, which is listed as a World Biosphere Reserve. It is home to many of Puerto Rico's endemic bird species, the most elusive of which is the rare and local Puerto Rican Nightjar.

**Cambalache State Forest:** A morning visit to this state forest could result in seeing over half of Puerto Rico's endemic bird species, including Puerto Rican Screech-Owl, Puerto Rican Oriole, Puerto Rican Flycatcher, Adelaide's Warbler, Puerto Rican Vireo, and more. This is a particularly good site for seeing Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo. Regional specialities like Key West Quail-Dove can also be found in the area.



**Rio Abajo State Forest:** This reserve, south of Arecibo, offers us a chance of finding the Puerto Rican Parrot, one of the Caribbean's rarest birds and an ongoing conservation success story. Depending on access circumstances (**access is currently restricted as of Spring 2020 following Hurricane Maria**), we might be able to walk in an area of the forest surrounding the core of the parrot's reintroduction, where released birds have been breeding successfully in the wild for several years now. Our 2014-17 tours met with success in finding parrots in this area, though we were unable to visit in Spring 2019 because of a forest closure. We will also look for Puerto Rican Screech-Owls, Puerto Rican Vireo, Ruddy Quail-Dove, and other specialty birds while exploring Rio Abajo.

**Maricao Forest Reserve and highlands:** The cool mountains of western Puerto Rico host several range-restricted endemic species, including Elfin-woods Warbler (a relatively "new" species described in 1972). This forest reserve boasts some of the best wet mountain forest and cloudforest habitat in Puerto Rico. Maricao has a good set of trails for seeking out the Elfin-woods Warbler, as well as Puerto Rican Screech-Owl, Green Mango, Puerto Rican Spindalis, Puerto Rican Tanager (now in its own family, Nesospingidae), and the endemic lizard-cuckoo, tody, and vireo. It also gives us our best chance to catch up to the rare endemic subspecies of Sharp-shinned Hawk.



*The Puerto Rican Spindalis is one of 17 endemics we'll seek on the island. Until recently, this colorful bird was considered as a subspecies of the "Stripe-headed Tanager", but this, and three other spindalises, have been given full-species status.  
Photograph by guide Doug Gochfeld.*

**El Yunque National Forest:** One of the largest remaining tracts of native forest in Puerto Rico, this area in the northeast of the island is home to some of the island's least-known landbirds such as the Puerto Rican Screech-Owl and a breeding population of Black Swift (rarely seen on our tours, but always possible – look up!). A fine system of roads and trails bisects the forest and gives access to both tall, wet Caribbean rainforest on the lower slopes of this mountainous region and to the restricted elfin forest of the higher ridges. Though many of the big hardwoods of the forest were taken down by Hurricane Maria in 2017, the forest is recovering. Rain is abundant in this part of the island, and we'll be flexible in our plans to take into account the weather conditions. Most of our access will be on the southern side of El Yunque from Casa Cubuy.

**The Southwestern Coast—**The southwestern corner of Puerto Rico is now mostly pasture and farmland, with the immediate coastal area dominated by extensive mangrove wetlands. The latter habitat is threatened with development and is a stronghold of the endangered Yellow-shouldered Blackbird, imperiled in recent decades by Shiny Cowbird brood parasitism. We will organize outings to a few of the nearby refuges like Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge and Laguna Cartagena Wildlife Refuge. These sites host numerous wading birds, waterfowl, shorebirds and some introduced species such as Venezuelan Troupial. Specialty waterbirds of the area include Masked Duck and West Indian Whistling-Duck.

**Humacao wetlands**—This small refuge has a nice variety of habitats, including freshwater, brackish, and saltwater ponds and lagoons. Though known for some years as a good site for the shy, endangered West Indian Whistling-Duck and the Caribbean Coot, the refuge's diked impoundments are variable in their quality from week to week, and we have seen the whistling-ducks here only rarely. We'll stop by and see what birds are around, which should include wintering waterfowl, warblers, and Green-throated Carib, localized on the island.

## Itinerary for Puerto Rico



*As its name suggests, the Puerto Rican Lizard-Cuckoo does prey on lizards, as well as many other small animals.  
Photograph by guide Eric Hynes.*

**Day 1, Sat, 19 Feb. or 26 Feb. Arrival at San Juan's International Airport.** Upon arrival, please take a taxi to the **Courtyard by Marriott** (about \$15 with tip). We will meet in front of the hotel desk in the lobby at 5:00 p.m. to go to dinner and discuss the plans for the next day. For those interested in sightseeing and shopping in Old San Juan, we recommend arriving a day or more ahead of the group and perhaps taking accommodations in Old San Juan. Night in San Juan.

**Day 2, Sun, 20 Feb. or 27 Feb. San Juan to La Parguera.** We'll make an early morning's drive out to a birding site, either Cambalache State Forest or Rio Abajo State Forest, where we'll enjoy our first studies of Puerto Rico's endemic avifauna. Critically Endangered Puerto Rican Parrots persist in the vicinity of Rio Abajo State Forest, and we plan to visit there, in hopes that the forest managers have opened access to areas where the parrots often feed. A picnic breakfast will allow us to be in the field early. We'll also visit some freshwater wetlands near Hatillo. Our afternoon will be spent commuting across the western end of the island. We hope to take in one or more ocean overlooks for seabirds (terns, Magnificent Frigatebird, maybe a Brown Booby, and White-tailed Tropicbirds). The day ends in the southwest corner of the island where the endangered Yellow-shouldered Blackbird can sometimes be found right on the grounds of our hotel. Night in La Parguera at Parador Villa Parguera.

**Day 3, Mon, 21 Feb. or 28 Feb. Laguna Cartagena and dry forest.** After breakfast at the hotel, we'll target numerous wetland species at Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuge and the nearby rice country, including rarely seen waterfowl such as Masked Duck and West Indian Whistling-Duck. The walk into the wetland overlook might yield Mangrove Cuckoo, the endemic Adelaide's Warbler, and migrant wood warblers. Smooth-billed Ani, Yellow-faced Grassquit, and introduced species like waxbills and munias often crowd the entrance road.

After lunch, you might wish to take a free afternoon around La Parguera, though we will offer an optional birding outing around town where we might find Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds. After an early dinner at the hotel, we will head to



the dry forest of nearby hills to look for the range-restricted Puerto Rican Nightjar. Night in La Parguera at Parador Villa Parguera.

**Day 4, Tue, 22 Feb. or 1 Mar. Maricao Forest Reserve and Susúa Forest Reserve.** We will rise early and drive up to the cool, wet slopes at Maricao State Forest. Here we will look for the endemic and isolated Elfin-woods Warbler and other endemic birds like Puerto Rican Tanager, Puerto Rican Oriole, and the endemic subspecies of Sharp-shinned Hawk. Our search might also yield Puerto Rican Screech-Owl, Green Mango, Puerto Rican Vireo, Antillean Euphonia, Loggerhead Kingbird, Lesser Antillean “Puerto Rican” Pewee, and maybe a migrant warbler or two as well. In the afternoon, we will undertake a vigil in the shade at Susúa Forest Reserve. Patience may be rewarded at this site with looks at Ruddy and Key West quail-doves in the late afternoon as they forage along the edge of the picnic area. Night in La Parguera at Parador Villa Parguera.

**Day 5, Wed, 23 Feb. or 2 Mar. Cabo Rojo to El Yunque.** We’ll concentrate on shorebirds and seabirds at the Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge this morning, our last in the southwest corner of the island. The mudflats at Cabo Rojo should be covered with hundreds of Stilt Sandpipers and Semipalmated Sandpipers. We will pick through the Black-necked Stilts, Wilson’s Plovers, and a mix of peeps for more unusual species. White-tailed Tropicbirds and Brown Boobies can sometimes be found at close range along the cliffs near the lighthouse. Our afternoon drive to El Yunque in the northeast might be punctuated by a detour for the range-restricted Plain Pigeon or whatever other species we have yet to find. Night in El Yunque National Forest at the Casa Cubuy Eco-lodge.

**Day 6, Thu, 24 Feb. or 3 Mar. Humacao Wetlands and Fajardo.** The Humacao Nature reserve can be teeming with waterbirds. We will be scanning for grebes, ducks, coots, and herons. When we turn our attention from the water to the forest, we’ll hunt for Green-throated Carib and Puerto Rican Flycatcher. From Humacao, we’ll head north to Fajardo for some coastal birding; scanning the ocean is likely to produce Brown Booby, several terns, and Magnificent Frigatebird. The flowering trees and shrubs at our lunch spot could draw the diminutive Antillean Crested Hummingbird or Green-throated Carib, though hummingbirds have become less common at the eastern end of the island following Hurricane Maria in 2017. We will work our way back up to Casa Cubuy for an afternoon walk in El Yunque. Night in El Yunque National Forest at the Casa Cubuy Eco-lodge.

**Day 7, Fri, 25 Feb. or 4 Mar. Departures.** After a good breakfast, we’ll make the drive trip to the San Juan International Airport and our flights home. **Make sure to plan your flights for *after 12 noon!***

## About Your Guides

### Tour I:

**Tom Johnson** grew up surrounded by birds in central Pennsylvania. Fascinated by science and the outdoors, and encouraged by his mom and dad, Tom developed an obsession with birds at an early age. He banded migrant landbirds and owls, conducted point counts for the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas, and set off on many road trips to learn about North American birds.

Tom was fortunate to complete his undergraduate studies at Cornell University within the inspiring orbit of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Following university, Tom surveyed desert birds in Arizona and California and studied seabirds from NOAA ships between Nova Scotia and the Bahamas. He is an eBird reviewer, a regional editor for North American Birds, a regular contributor to *Birding*, and a member of the ABA Checklist Committee.

Now living in Cape May, New Jersey, Tom devotes his energy to recording bird sounds, photographing flying birds, searching for vagrants and puzzling hybrids, night birding, and reading as much as he can. He’s an inveterate road tripper and frequently looks for excuses to travel long distances in pursuit of birds and mammals. You might also find him on a boat looking for tubenoses and other seabirds just about anywhere.

Tom loves helping others pursue their passion for birding and the outdoors and has felt lucky to lead tours for Field Guides around the world since 2014. Though he focuses on the Neotropics and North America, Tom has a diverse schedule that includes Antarctica, India, Australia, and more.

*“Tom Johnson [is] everything you would ever want in a birding guide. I have never known anyone who can get the target bird in the scope and ready for viewing faster... He hears the bird, scopes it, and we see it!” G. T., Spring in Cape May*

**Tour II:**

**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 complete tour schedules for Tom and Eric; just click on their photos.

## Financial Information

**FEE: \$2975 from San Juan**

**DEPOSIT:** \$300 per person

**FINAL PAYMENT DUE:** October 22, 2021 (Tour I); October 29, 2021 (Tour II)

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

**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 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!

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

**AIR ARRANGEMENTS:** Please arrive in San Juan on Tour I: February 19; Tour II: February 26, in time for dinner at 5:00pm. You can depart after 12pm on Tour 1: February 25<sup>th</sup>; Tour II: March 4. Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour

manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees. **Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.**

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

**TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS:** The **tour fee** is \$2975 for one person in double occupancy\* from San Juan. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 6, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 7, 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 Puerto Rico, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, phone calls, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$525. 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 (November 1, 2021), we are reviewing these CDC recommendations carefully and often and will let you know if that changes.

**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 \$300** 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 October 22, 2021 (Tour I); October 29, 2021 (Tour II)**. **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: FOR 2021 & 2022 TOURS:** 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 and non-transferable. **FOR 2023 TOURS & BEYOND:** Note that beginning in 2023, the 50% refund period will become 179 to 90 days before departure, with no refund thereafter.

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. 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.

5/18/20 TBJ

9/21, 11/21peg