

fieldguides®

Birding Tours

Greetings from Field Guides!



We're off to a very birdy 2018—may the same be true for you! We've been busy as raiding army ants since the New Year, with tours to South America—Colombia, Ecuador (Sacha and Jewels), Guyana, and Chile—to Costa Rica, to South Texas, to Thailand and Japan, to East Africa, and to Antarctica. Five continents in January alone and too many birds to count.

We've heard from Jay VanderGaast on our *Thailand* tour that the birding there has been amazing. "A highlight this morning," he writes, "was watching three Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoos parading around in front of our hide." Jay also sent photos of some of the other stunning birds the group is seeing—including some from our great driver, Jiang, of the ground-cuckoo. We'll have a short report in our next newsletter.

Field Guides has been offering Thailand tours for years, but we haven't offered an *Antarctica* tour for some time—until this year, that is. In late January, just before our tour began, we had this interesting tidbit from Bret Whitney. "Tom Johnson and I are gearing up to lead our 2018 Antarctica adventure, which will run over the exact same dates as the tour I led there in 1989 (January 31-February 21)! A lot has changed in our world in these nearly 30 years, and it's with a little trepidation that I look forward to comparing the two voyages." We look forward to a full report with images and videos from the tour. And in case Antarctica is on your wish list, we're headed back in 2019!

Another January tour that just wrapped up is our two-parted *Costa Rica: Birding the Edges* with the dynamic duo of Tom Johnson and Cory Gregory. Tom and Cory sent pictures as well,

and these include a displaying Sunbittern (above)—about as fancy as you can get, a distinctive Barred Hawk, Scaly-breasted Wren, a scarce Keel-billed Motmot, an endemic Mangrove Hummingbird, and much more. It's a great line-up.

There's been keen interest in our new tours for this year—indeed, at this writing, on 10 new 2018 tours we have just one space open on Israel (Mar), one on Portugal Birds & Wine II (Apr), and one on Florida (Apr). And we have lots of new destinations for 2019, including a New Mexico tour with Doug and Cory, *Birds of Britain* with Megan and Willy (both based in Britain now), an Idaho adventure with Eric and Mitch, Phil Gregory's *Japan in Spring* (a seasonal shift from our popular winter tour), and more. We'll have full details in our next newsletter, but for a preview, visit the NEW TOURS section on our web page.

At Field Guides, we believe that your experience from start to finish, as it's managed by our outstanding guides and efficient and friendly office staff, is what sets us apart. We strive to do everything we can to make sure that time spent with us is time well spent. Inside, you'll find some brief comments, yours and ours, on eight more of our guides since the last issue as well as news from recent tours. We look forward to seeing you in the field soon!

A Sunbittern in all its glory in Costa Rica and a Coppersmith Barbet in Thailand. At left, upclose with a King Penguin in Antarctica. (Photos by participant Reg David and guide Tom Johnson)

OUR GUIDES

IN YOUR WORDS AND OURS

"**Mitch Lysinger** is my favorite guide—he genuinely cares for the people in his groups. He wants them to see the birds and diligently works to get everyone on a particular bird. His ability to hear bird song/chip notes (!) and then pull in and/or locate a bird for the group is outstanding. And his sense of humor is simply wonderful! He makes everyone happy to be there. I look forward to traveling with Mitch again (can't wait!)." That pretty much says it all. We can only add that everyone of us at Field Guides would agree with these sentiments, and we can't wait either till we see Mitch again, which in the next year could be in various parts of Ecuador (his new Orange-throated Tanager tour, either Sacha or Shiripuno lodges, San Isidro, and the Jewels tour in early 2019) or Florida (where he grew up) with Doug Gochfeld! (Mitch in Ecuador listening for Red-faced Parrot)



Richard Webster is the kind of birder who loves birding in his own backyard—though admittedly his backyard is at the mouth of Cave Creek Canyon in the Chiricahua Mountains, one of the hottest birding spots in the US—as much as in remote regions of the Colombian Andes or the Himalayas of Bhutan. He loves seeing birds and is generous about showing them to others—and about sharing his vast knowledge with others. "Richard is sooooo knowledgeable," one past participant wrote. "He is a great combination of serious and fun and makes the participants feel they are valued," says another. Those of us who have traveled with him over the years will miss him when he retires later this spring. In the meantime, you can catch him in Colombia or in Bhutan...and probably in his backyard. (Richard shown here with partner Rose Ann Rowlett)



"The best feature of the trip was our leader, **Terry Stevenson!** He is a great birder and teacher, and helps all members of the group get on the birds. Most of all, he is so enjoyable to be around. He is an amazingly adventurous person and has more funny stories to keep you laughing when driving long distances or at the dining table." This is high praise coming from any tour participant, but coming from someone on an East Africa safari—perhaps the most outstanding region in the world for birds and wildlife and on everyone's wish list—makes it even more remarkable—though not so unusual. People frequently comment that they "can't imagine a better person to see Africa with than Terry." He makes a trip unforgettable. 2018 will see Terry in several parts of Africa—Namibia and Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and South Africa—as well as Hungary and Romania. (Terry and his group in Namibia)

We're not overstating it to say that **Dan Lane** knows a whole lot about the birds of Peru. Indeed, he is one of the authors of the definitive guide to Peru's birds, he's spent years birding the country, and he even discovered a new species there, the Scarlet-banded Barbet (see below). Participants on his tours never fail to remark on his knowledge about the birds and environment and that "he is truly amazing at locating birds by sight and song!" But what does go unremarked is that Dan's an accomplished bird artist with contributions to a number of field guides, including the *Birds of Peru*, and of course to the Field Guides t-shirts, of which there are more coming soon. All of which gives him a most interesting perspective on birds in the field. In 2018 you'll find Dan in Peru (Central Peruvian Endemics, Peru's Magnetic North, Mountains of Manu, Northern Peru), Bolivia, Oaxaca, Louisiana, Hawaii, and New Zealand. (Dan birding in Colorado)



A New Species for Peru.....

A little more than twenty years ago, Dan Lane discovered a bird species in Peru that was new to science, the Scarlet-banded Barbet, and while in Peru as part of the anniversary of that discovery, Dan and Jesse Fagan played a part in the description of another new species. This one was found by a birder named Josh Beck, who had come to the area to see Dan's barbet. While looking for the barbet, he heard a call he didn't recognize, tracked it down, and found an antbird that wasn't in the book.

Then, as Dan describes it, "Josh decided he had to head back to a larger town to request help in sorting the bird out, and what a happy coincidence that Jesse and I and two other birding friends, LSU grad student Andre Moncrieff and long-time Peruvian friend Fernando Angulo, happened to show up at that moment! The antbird has now been described to science, and Josh named the species for the venerable ecologist and conservationist Edward O. Wilson (who studies ants, primarily): *Myrmoderus eowilsoni*, the **Cordillera Azul Antbird**."



It has been pointed out by many of you that for a tour to be successful, the guide needs people skills as well as birding skills—and we certainly agree—but what are these people skills? Well, a few would include some of those used by tour participants to describe **Eric Hynes**, namely: “Eric is a fantastic birder, of course, but he is also exceptional at making sure each participant sees each bird.” Some of Eric’s other people skills as described by participants on his tours would include such things as communicating clearly to the group, remembering snacks and rest stops—skills honed, no doubt, in his raising two young daughters—as well as flexibility and a sense of humor. Eric will be on tour this year in Jamaica, Colorado, and Maine, and he plans to offer a new Idaho Snake River trip and a fall Maine tour in 2019. (Eric with Cory Gregory and their Maine tour group)



If you’ve traveled with **John Coons**—the “Kingfisher” as he’s known—you’ll have discovered that he possesses a vast store of bird lore—it must be part of his DNA by now. But you’ll have also noticed how naturally he manages to pass along what he knows, or as one of his tour participants put it, “...his easy way of making every day interesting and informative.” Add to this his well-honed birding skills, his sense of fun, and the fact that his mother raised a son with good manners, and it’s no surprise to hear tour participants rave about him. Kingfisher will start off the year looking for owls in Alberta before heading to Panama (where he’s well known—see below), the Texas Coast, and Arizona. He’ll spend late June cruising the Norwegian Arctic, and then it’s on to Brazil, Australia, and Guyana. (Kingfisher in Arizona)

“Without a second thought and as often as possible.” That’s how a participant on one of **Dave Stejkal’s** recent tours replied when asked if he would travel with Dave again. He added that “Dave is a truly excellent guide. Given that birding tours are often like summer camp for adults, he is an outstanding camp counselor.” Which we take to mean, in terms of birding tours, that not only is Dave able to “locate and call out birds high

in the forest canopy or in otherwise difficult to see places” and then show them to his group, but that he is equally capable when it comes to handling the logistics and social interactions of touring. He’s good-natured and positive, with a subtle sense of humor that makes traveling with him a lot of fun. You’ll find Dave in Borneo, Arizona, Central Peru, Brazil, Argentina, and Vietnam. (Dave in Arizona)



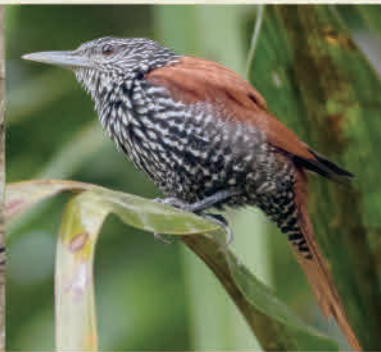
It comes as no surprise to those who know **Bret Whitney** by reputation that he is recognized as one of the world’s leading authorities on Neotropical birds; what sometimes does surprise them is what a superb guide he is, or, as one participant described him, “able to pick up on every vocalization and target efforts at precisely the right place...able to predict how best to see the birds, how they will react, so that we had the best chance of getting each one.” There’s also his rich knowledge, both of the history of Brazilian birding and of modern bird science, which he shares completely and unselfishly. “I was simply awestruck by him and by the birds he summoned!!!” someone on a recent tour wrote. Oh, and did we also mention that he’s a great storyteller? You’ll find Bret this year mostly on Brazil’s rivers—the Roosevelt, the Tapajos, and the Negro—before he heads to the Atlantic Forest for his two-part Spectacular Southeast Brazil tour. (Bret birding near Brazil’s Rio Roosevelt)

..and a New Bird for Panama

Over New Year’s, John Coons was once again at the helm for our Panama’s Canopy Camp tour, a trip to the lowlands of Panama’s Darien province accommodated in safari-style comfort at the Canopy Camp. While birding on the first morning of the tour, the group spotted a puffbird that didn’t look quite right for any species that occurs in Panama. When it turned around and showed a distinct breast band, John realized it had to be a **Russet-throated Puffbird**—a bird not previously found in Panama and known only as far north as Colombia—a species John had seen many times in Venezuela. The puffbird had wandered over the border to make a surprise appearance for the Kingfisher, our group, and Canopy guide Eliecer Rodriguez, for whom it was a lifer. The word went out immediately, and it was seen by a handful of Panamanian birders over the next few days.



There's nothing like a river trip, especially when it's to Amazonian Brazil, and we have two of them pictured on this page. To begin, **Brazil's Remote Rio Tapajos** with Bret Whitney. The Tapajos is a major south-bank tributary of the Amazon which, in this aerial view, looks like paradise. A few of the local inhabitants include some as yet undescribed species and these three more familiar Neotropical sights, from left—a Sunbittern balancing on a limb; a surprisingly cooperative Pheasant Cuckoo; and lots of manakins, including this pretty Flame-crowned. (Photos by participant Larry Peavler and guide Bret Whitney)



Our second Brazil river trip was an exploration of the area between two great rivers, **Birding the Madeira-Tapajos Interfluvium** with Bret and Tom Johnson. Extended views of a pair of Cryptic Forest-Falcons (one at far left) duetting was a memorable experience for the group, as was encountering a major army ant swarm with attendant Harlequin Antbirds and Pale-faced Bare-eyes. "We stood and watched in silence for over an hour," Tom reports, "as the antbirds hopped up on vertical stems and intently stared downward at the forest floor, hoping to snag arthropods flushed by the stampede of army ants." A few of the other sights enjoyed shown here: Zimmer's Woodcreeper, at left; Point-tailed Palmcreeper; and a fittingly named Paradise Jacamar. (Photos by guide Tom Johnson)



Dave Stejskal joined Marcelo Padua this year for the second running of **Brazil's Mouth of the Amazon: Mexiana Island, the lower Xingu & Carajas**. Marcelo grew up in Belem, where the tour begins, so as one participant put it, he knows the area well and is related to or knows everyone he meets. Seeing this male Black-bellied Gnatcatcher, second from left, was one of the highlights of the tour, as was seeing this perched endemic Golden Parakeet, to its right. The distinctive White-crested Guan, far right, is one of the many local specialties found with relative ease at Carajas. The Waved Woodpecker, far left, was a nice sight, though not as exciting as finding an endemic Kaempfer's Woodpecker at Carajas. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)

We have three Middle America tours here—we'll begin with **Mexico: Oaxaca** with Dan Lane and Doug Gochfeld. Oaxaca is famous for many things, its food, its ruins, and its birds—indeed Oaxaca is the home to many of Mexico's endemic species, including the three shown here. Gray-breasted Woodpecker, at left, foraging on a cactus; Golden Vireo, a bird that is often difficult to find but this year was seen on the hotel grounds; and Bridled Sparrow, a strikingly patterned sparrow that's fairly easy to see—what more can you ask? A visit to the ruin sites of Monte Alban (an amazing aerial view of the site shown here), Yagul, and Mitla is an added bonus to the birding. (Photos by guide Doug Gochfeld)



We visit three Mayan ruin sites on our **Mexico: Yucatan & Cozumel** tours (recently guided by Chris Benesh and Cory Gregory) and see some wonderful birds. Finding ourselves in the midst of a hundred-plus American Flamingos, above, on the Ria Celestun (a ria is an estuary) was, as you might guess, one of the highlights of the tour. Gray-throated Chat, a Yucatan specialty and very pretty bird that is high on everyone's wish list, was seen well. We had scope views of this mostly nocturnal Boat-billed Heron in the mangroves along a road near Celestun. (Photos by guides Chris Benesh & Cory Gregory)

The photos here from Chris Benesh's **Panama's Canopy Lodge: El Valle de Anton** tour over New Year's should make your heart beat faster. The full-bodied Orange-bellied Trogon, near right, has a limited range—parts of Panama and Costa Rica—and the Lodge is one of the best places to see it. Golden-collared Manakin, top middle, is a beaut; Tody Motmot, the smallest motmot, often perches a few feet off the ground and it's not always easy to see it this well. Spectacled Owl is a great looking tropical owl, and it's especially nice to see it on a day roost. (Photos by participants Andrew & Rebecca Steinmann)



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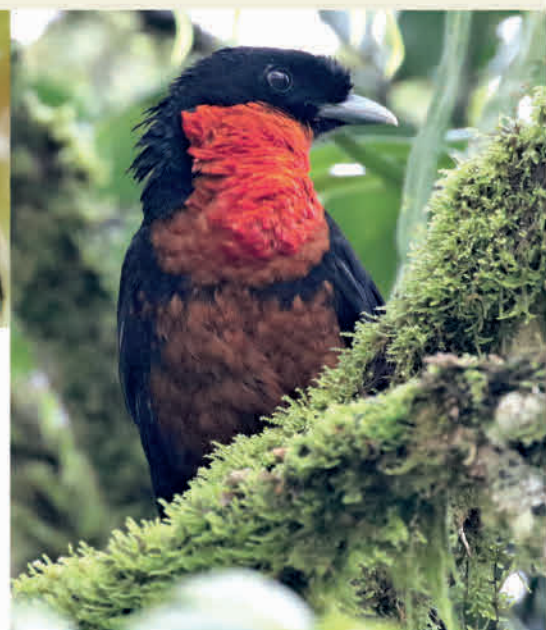
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Terry Stevenson guided two **Namibia & Botswana** tours this fall, and Pel's Fishing Owl (far right; shown here holding a fish in its talons) in the Okavango was a highlight for both tours, as were the Black Rhinos, even seen mating by those who stayed up late. The Rosy-faced Lovebirds (left) are a pretty regional endemic, and it's always a pleasure to see so many; and a Short-toed Rock-Thrush whose short toes are unfortunately hidden from us. (Photos by participant Barbara Williams and guide Terry Stevenson)



Multicolored Tanagers can be tough to see well in canopy flocks—hard to imagine seeing this one at left—but Richard Webster's **Colombia: Cali Escape** tour was fortunate to have a family group coming to the feeders at one of the lodges. This short tour is loaded with hummingbirds, 45 species this year (check Richard's triplist for some stunning photos), and Rainbow-bearded Thornbill is one of the flashiest when seen head on, and is certainly in the running for best name. Red-ruffed Fruitcrow was on the tour's yardlist, just outside the rooms at one of the lodges. Jesse Fagan will take the tour over from Richard, who is retiring this spring. (Photos by participant Steve Parrish and guide Richard Webster)



Our **Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil** tour with Marcelo Padua is a short but rich immersion in the avifauna of the Atlantic Forest. A taste of the richness is shown here, beginning with the handsome Magpie Tanager, top left, just one of the many dramatic tanagers we'll see, also including the endemic Gilt-edged Tanagers to the right. Three-toed Jacamar, bottom left, is another Atlantic Forest specialist that is simply great to see. Maroon-bellied Parakeet is a common sight at the feeders—but what a sight! (Photos by participants Daphne Gemmill & Ben Oko)





According to Marcelo Padua, mammals stole the show on his **Safari Brazil: The Pantanal & More** tour this year. "We got great looks at Jaguars, Ocelots, a Jaguarundi (above), Giant Otters, and a Maned Wolf with two cubs." Wow. At right, Red-legged Seriema, a grassland bird that is perhaps most easily seen at Emas National Park, sometimes referred to as "South America's Serengeti," and above, a pair of Hyacinth Macaws, the world's largest parrots, seen in the Pantanal. At left, Marcelo takes stock from atop a termite mound; Giant Anteaters (one more mammal!) feed on the termites inside. (Photos by participants Merrill Lester and Doug Overacker)



Jabirus are huge!—as this photo from Jesse Fagan's recent **Colombia: Llanos & More** tour of one standing next to a Brahman calf testifies. The Jabiru is found in large numbers in the Llanos, where the group had spectacular looks. The Sharp-tailed Ibis, above, were numerous and among five species of ibis seen on the tour. Pale-headed Jacamar, top right, is a Llanos specialty. Double-striped Thick-Knee occurs in open areas and feeds primarily at night. If our photo were larger, you would be able to note the bird's very large eyes, which perhaps help it find the invertebrates it feeds on. (Photos by participant Tom Hammond and guide Jesse Fagan)

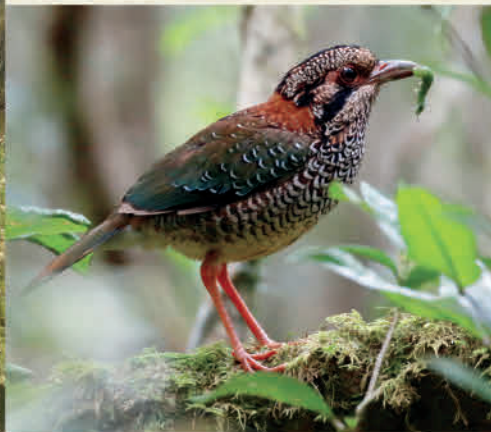


Black-crowned Barwing is a recently described endemic seen this year on Dave Stejskal's **Vietnam** tour—that's Dave and a tour participant looking out for the critically endangered Delacour's Langur at Van Long Reserve. At right, a Golden-fronted Leafbird about to devour a berry and a great pose for an Oriental Pied-Hornbill. (Photos by participant Greg Griffith)



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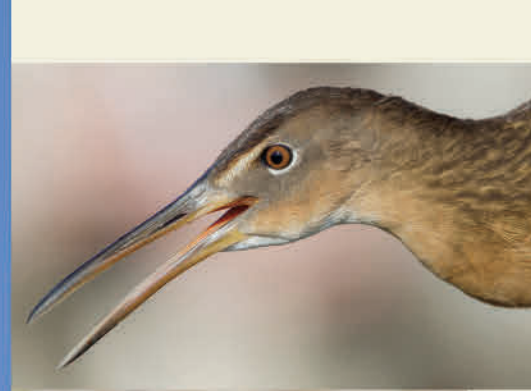
Glorious **Madagascar** with Phil Gregory and Doug Gochfeld started off with a bang—Madagascar Snipe (after some snipe-hunting, as can be seen in the group photo to the left), then coursed through countless couas, ground-rollers (like this Scaly about to deliver a fat morsel to its single chick), vangas, asities, and spectacular lemurs—like this Verreaux's Sifaka, a dancing primate directing the visiting primates—to wind up with memories of a troop of legendary Indris, singing their haunting, evocative songs at first light, magically topping off a splendid tour. (Photos by participant Randy Beaton and guide Doug Gochfeld)



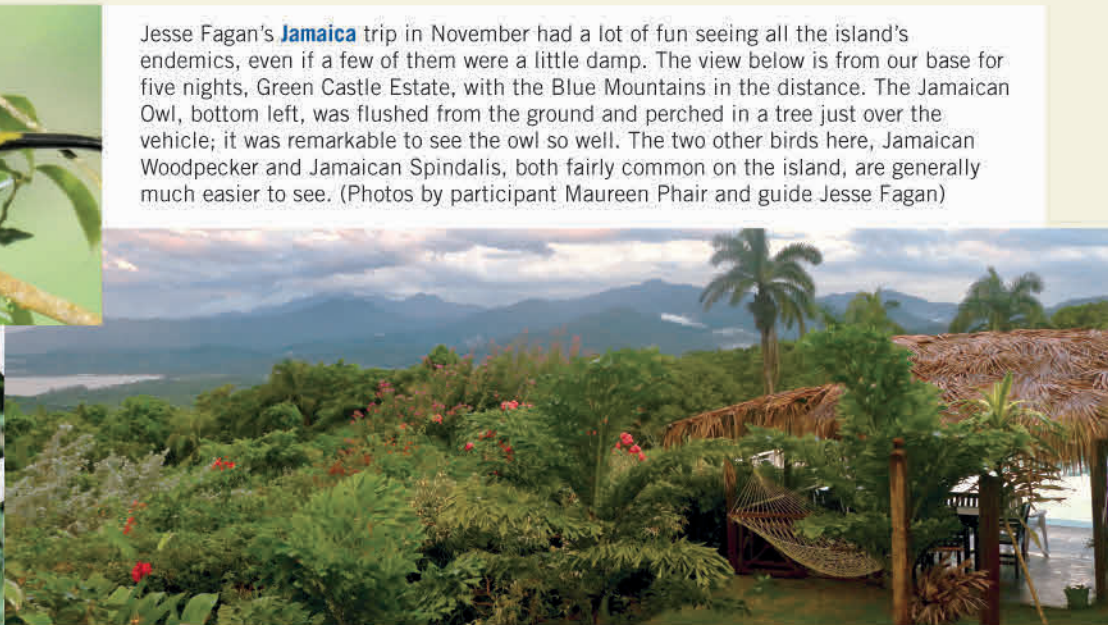
"Macaw Lick Extraordinaire," the subtitle of our **Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata** with Dave Stejskal, emphasizes the remarkable mineral licks, such as this extensive ccollpa on the banks of the Rio Tambopata, that constitute a critical factor in the dietary requirements of parrots, attracting six species of macaws as well as many other psittacids (as shown at left). This spectacular feature is complemented by dense pockets of bamboo sprinkled through Peru's southeastern lowlands—home of the tiny White-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher (above, left), one of the biggest prizes of the tour—and by terra firma forests, home of the resplendent Pavonine Quetzal, usually the hardest of the quetzals to see. (Photos by guide Dave Stejskal)



This year our **New Guinea & Australia** tour, an enticing sample of both notably bio-rich countries, was such a draw that we added a second departure. And though replicating every species on both tours makes for a heavy load on the guide, Jay VanderGaast (seen here on the left) pulled off the impossible task handsomely. Both groups were awestruck by this magnificent displaying Blue Bird-of-paradise, as well as many other BOPs! And Yellow-billed Kingfisher (above), the mighty mite among the numerous species of forest and aquatic kingfishers we saw—including, at least for one group, Buff-breasted Paradise, Papuan Dwarf, and Hook-billed!—was enjoyed by both groups. As was this Noisy Pitta (above, right), member of a family whose representatives seldom pose before even quiet groups, like both of ours! Did we mention both species of mimicking lyrebirds?—"for both!" (Photos by participants Eve Wee & John Rounds and guide Jay VanderGaast)



These three magnificent birds in flight are from Dan Lane and Cory Gregory's two **Louisiana: Yellow Rails & Crawfish Tails** tours this past fall. From left, Crested Caracara, a bird of prey that usually feeds on carrion and sometimes hunts on foot; an eye-popping Roseate Spoonbill; and the eponymous bird of the trip, a Yellow Rail that looks like it's just been flushed by the rice combines. And that big head, certainly a rail's—a King Rail, seen in the hand at a banding station and one of the many tour highlights. Virginias, Soras, and a Clapper for one group were also seen, as well as a number of sparrows including Bachman's, LeConte's, and Nelson's. (Photos by guide Cory Gregory)



Jesse Fagan's **Jamaica** trip in November had a lot of fun seeing all the island's endemics, even if a few of them were a little damp. The view below is from our base for five nights, Green Castle Estate, with the Blue Mountains in the distance. The Jamaican Owl, bottom left, was flushed from the ground and perched in a tree just over the vehicle; it was remarkable to see the owl so well. The two other birds here, Jamaican Woodpecker and Jamaican Spindalis, both fairly common on the island, are generally much easier to see. (Photos by participant Maureen Phair and guide Jesse Fagan)



Cone-billed Tanager, pictured at left from our **Jaguar Spotting: Pantanal & Garden of the Amazon** tour with Marcelo Padua and Marcelo Barreiros, is a very rare bird, restricted to a few areas in Central Brazil and only recently rediscovered. Chestnut-eared Aracari is not a rare bird, but it can be a very attractive one. When a tour is named "Jaguar Spotting," you'd better hope you see a Jaguar, and according to our Marcelos, there were memorable sightings on this year's tour, and excellent ones if this picture is to be believed. (Photos by guide Marcelo Barreiros)



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Surveying southern and southwestern Down Under on our **Australia Part One** tour always generates accolades galore, from cockatoos to Superb Lyrebird, from emu-wrens to whipbirds, heathwrens, and firetails, along with all those honeyeaters in the land "where song began." Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, overhead against a deep blue sky, vied with a settled male Gang-gang Cockatoo for highlights among the parrots, whereas a responsive Chestnut Quail-thrush contended for most accommodating as it walked around the group, then sat up and sang! But the continent of marsupials is notable for more than its avian fare. Yet arguably, the prize highlight was non-avian and non-mammalian—an awesome, rarely encountered Perentie (far left), the largest Australian monitor lizard and one of the largest extant lizards on Earth. (Photos by guides Chris Benesh & Jesse Fagan)



The opportunity to see hundreds of Ross's Gulls in fall migration is the *raison d'être* of our **Alaska Fall Goldmine: Rarities on the Pribilofs & Ross's Gulls in Barrow** tour, this year guided by Tom Johnson, and participants weren't disappointed; they were able to watch hundreds of the gorgeous gulls—one seen at far left—migrating close to shore. The Northern Fur Seal is known to have very high hair density, something it clearly needs in the cold climate it inhabits; Spruce Grouse was spotted around Anchorage when the group did a little pre-Barrow birding; and here's our happy group celebrating a Short-tailed Albatross sighting on St. Paul Island, a site added to the tour this year for the possibility it offers of Asian vagrants. (Photos by participant Lyle Hamilton and guide Tom Johnson)



It's impossible to do justice to our **Chile** tour with Willy Perez and Megan Crewe in so few photos; you leave out so much—the breathtaking scenery, the charming cities and towns. But we do have that iconic bird of Andean South America, the Andean Condor, at right, landing on a rocky ridge. The condors are fairly common in Patagonia's Torres del Paine National Park, considered one of the most beautiful parks in South America. Tawny-throated Dotterel, below right, is a special bird of the Patagonian steppe, and the Green-backed Firecrown, left of the dotterel, while relatively common in the forest of the Central Zone, is quite a pleasure to see. And last, but certainly not least, an endemic Moustached Turca, a big tapaculo with the feet to match. (Photos by participant Bill Byers and guide Willy Perez)





For most first-timers, the premier bird of our **Australia Part Two** tour is the legendary Southern Cassowary, which we often see at Phil and Sue Gregory's Cassowary House. This year, as we waited over tea and jam, a male appeared out of nowhere with three chicks in tow, giving us exhilarating looks like the one captured here. But throughout the remainder of northern and northeastern Down Under there are a panoply of remarkable endemics, from parrots and pigeons to kingfishers and bowerbirds to further excite us. Even so, on the island continent it's honeyeaters that make the world go round! This Macleay's Honeyeater, the one with the bare skin around its eye, is a restricted-range member of a numerous family some 40 species of which we see! To the right, a beautiful Superb Fruit-Dove carries nesting material which he'll never deliver, fixed as he is in this lovely photo. (Photos by participant Linda Rudolph and guide Tom Johnson)



Upcoming TOURS

Below you'll find a partial listing of our tours from May to mid-September. For numerous additional destinations in this period, visit our website.

MAY

Classical Greece—May 5-19, 2018 with Megan Edwards Crewe & local guide. Fine southeast European birding—at the peak of migration—with archaeological and cultural stops.

Spring in Cape May—May 13-19, 2018 with Tom Johnson & Doug Gochfeld. Spring migration at one of the country's famed birding hotspots.

Arizona: Birding the Border—May 19-28, 2018 with Dave Stejskal. One of the most exciting destinations in North America with a backdrop of spectacular mountain scenery.

Uganda: Shoebill, Rift Endemics & Gorillas—May 19-June 8, 2018 with Jesse Fagan. The rare Shoebill and a wealth of other birds and many Central African specialties combined with opportunities to trek for Chimps and Mountain Gorillas.

Pennsylvania's Warblers & More: From Cerulean Warbler to Henslow's Sparrow—May 22-27, 2018 with Tom Johnson. A new tour at the peak of eastern spring birding, focusing on a delightful array of warblers as well as other songbirds.

Maine in Spring: Northeast Breeding Specialties—May 26-June 3, 2018 with Eric Hynes & Cory Gregory. A late-spring tour for warblers, boreal specialties, puffins, "lobstah," and more.

Mongolia: The Gobi Desert, Steppe & Taiga—May 31-June 17, 2018 with Phil Gregory & local guide. A tour to an exciting birding destination in the heart of Asia, with lots of specialties and some fantastic landscapes.

JUNE

Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru—June 15-24, 2018 with Jesse Fagan. Southern Peru's east-slope, temperate birding at its best featuring several endemics and scenic Andean puna; also Machu Picchu and great subtropical birding on and near lovely hotel grounds.

Rainforest & Savanna: Alta Floresta & the Northern Pantanal, Brazil—June 22-July 7, 2018 with Marcelo Padua. Pristine rainforest on the beautiful Rio Cristalino combined with the wilds of the Pantanal in search of Hyacinth Macaw, Harpy Eagle, Jabiru, Jaguar, and a large piece of the meaning of life.

Peru's Magnetic North: Spatuletails, Owllet Lodge & More—June 23-July 5, 2018 with Dan Lane & Jesse Fagan. A 12-day taste of northern Peru's east-slope Andes, including five nights at Owllet Lodge.

Amazonian Ecuador: Sacha Lodge—June 29-July 8, 2018 with Mitch Lysinger & local guide. One-site tour to one of the most comfortable lodges in western Amazonia with some of the birdiest canopy platforms anywhere.

JULY

Newfoundland & Nova Scotia—July 1-11, 2018 with Chris Benesh & Cory Gregory. Boreal specialties, seabird colonies, and numerous breeding landbirds in the beautiful Canadian Maritimes.

Galapagos: An Intimate Look at Darwin's Islands—July 7-17, 2018 with Willy Perez & local guide. A must for any naturalist and birder; small-group, broad coverage of the islands with plenty of time for the birds, exploring, and photography.

Jaguar Spotting: Pantanal & Garden of the Amazon I & II—July 9-20, 2018 with Marcelo Padua & John Coons or July 21-August 1, 2018 with Jesse Fagan. This short but action-packed Brazil tour features the Pantanal at its best, a nice taste of southern Amazonian birds, and excellent chances of seeing a Jaguar.

Arizona's Second Spring I & II—July 14-23, 2018 with Chris Benesh or August 4-13, 2018 with John Coons. An ideal time for visiting one of the best birding regions in North America: great for local specialties and Mexican vagrants.

Cloudforests of Ecuador: All the Best of the Wild Northwest—July 16-26, 2018 with Willy Perez. We'll be based at just two great lodges on Ecuador's west slope to experience a diversity of great birds and have the chance for a highlight mammal, Spectacled Bear.

Mountains of Manu, Peru—July 29-August 7, 2018 with Dan Lane. Our in-depth transect of the higher-elevation half of the Manu Biosphere Reserve.

AUGUST

Brazil's Mouth of the Amazon: Mexiana Island, the Lower Xingu & Carajas—August 2-17, 2018 with Marcelo Padua & Jay VanderGaast. Two-week tour through diverse habitats around the mouth of the mighty Rio Amazonas as we seek most of the endemics of lower Amazonia.

Brazil's Remote Rio Tapajos—August 4-15, 2018 with Bret Whitney. Nine days of explorations on the upper reaches of a major tributary of the Amazon based on a luxurious floating hotel.

Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata: Macaw Lick Extraordinaire—August 6-16, 2018 with Jesse Fagan & local guide. Three-site tour to one of the most species-rich rainforest on Earth. Largest known macaw lick, canopy walkway and towers, eagles, and monkeys.

SEPTEMBER

Rio Negro Paradise: Manaus, Brazil—September 1-15, 2018 with Bret Whitney. Bird the rainforests and rivers of the mighty Amazon and Negro in an unforgettable mix of forest hikes and live-aboard luxury.

France: Camargue & Pyrenees—September 5-15, 2018 with Jay VanderGaast. Two of Europe's finest birding destinations combined in this wonderful eleven-day tour, with varied highlights and some great French food.

Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierra I & II—September 6-15, 2018 with Chris Benesh or September 11-20, 2018 with Tom Johnson. A diverse mix of West Coast specialties, montane species, and pelagics in rugged and scenic sites.

Bolivia's Avian Riches—September 7-23, 2018 ("Bountiful Beni: Bazillions of Birds" Extension) with Dan Lane. The special bird life of the Bolivian Andes; wonderful mountain scenery.

Ethiopia: Endemic Birds & Ethiopian Wolf—September 7-27, 2018 (Lalibela Extension) with Terry Stevenson & local guide. A remarkable journey through a remarkable land, from Rift Valley lakes to the Bale Mountains and south for Prince Ruspoli's Turaco and the strange Stresemann's Bush-Crow.

Oregon: From the Coast to the Cascades—September 8-18, 2018 with Cory Gregory. A new itinerary for specialties of the Pacific Northwest as we explore the beautiful coast and Cascade Mountains.

Morocco—September 10-25, 2018 (Canary Islands Extension) with Jesse Fagan. Endemic, rare, and specialty birds from coastal wetlands and towering cliffs to the Atlas Mountains and the northwest corner of the Sahara.

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Thanks to all of you who traveled with us in 2017!

