

NOVEMBER 2018

fieldguides

Birding Tours

Blue-crowned Parakeets in Bolivia by guide Micah Riegner

Looking Forward

Our 2019 catalog, featuring a lovely Montezuma Quail on the cover and a fully illustrated and annotated listing of our many tours, mailed in September, and we're looking forward with high expectations to these 2019 trips. Among the more than 150 departures are many old favorites we've operated and improved upon over the years, and some new itineraries our guides have been dreaming up. Just in the first half, we'll have Doug Gochfeld and Cory Gregory showing off some fabulous wintering bird spectacles on *New Mexico: Birding the Land of Enchantment*; then in May we'll have a fresh *Birds of Britain* (with a Scotland extension) with the dynamic duo of Megan Edwards Crewe and Willy Perez, *Japan in Spring* with Phil Gregory for a new seasonal twist on these isles, and *Brazil—Minas Gerais & Tocantins: Blue-eyed Ground-Dove & Beyond* for many rarely seen endemics with Bret Whitney and Marcelo Barreiros. Among our many choices for the full year, there's surely something to fulfill your birding dreams.

As we write this, we're in the midst of a three-month run of 40 fall tours, and we've been getting great reports. Among these, we hear guide Cory Gregory brought Oregon back into our schedule with two fun trips; Dan Lane and Micah Riegner and their Bolivia support crew wowed the crowd with great birds, eye-popping and unexpected landscapes, and superb support logistics; Jesse Fagan and Godfried Schreur inaugurated a *Canary Islands* extension to our *Morocco* tour that was, by all accounts, a lot of fun; our two *Rio Negro Paradise* tours were, as ever, a great combo of rich birding and live-aboard riverboat delight; and Terry Stevenson and Joe Grosel just completed a fabulous excursion through *South Africa*.

Speaking of Terry and Joe, Field Guides co-founder Rose Ann Rowlett, who hopped on a plane on short notice after we had a last-minute cancellation on Terry and Joe's tour, made the most of the opportunity. Our "Grebe" took a few minutes on the last morning of the trip to do a delightful interview with Terry and Joe. The result is a fun conversation talking with both of these great guides, and if you don't already know Joe, it's a chance to meet him! Check out the video at fieldguides.com/video1 or from fieldguides.com/joe-grosel.



Guianan Toucanet in Brazil
by participant Myles McNally



Kori Bustard by guide Terry Stevenson

On the next pages you'll find lots of *Fresh From The Field* images from recent tours, of course, but also some guide updates we think you'll enjoy. We're excited about goings-on with two guides who'll be lifers for many of you: Marcelo Barreiros and Micah Riegner. Marcelo's already got a baker's dozen Field Guides tours under his belt, and he fledges fully in 2019—there's just one spot still open on his February *Nowhere but Northeast Brazil!* tour and he's also heading to Guyana in late March, these two trips among the 150-day, 9-tour schedule he has on tap. Micah comes online full-time June 1 with 8 tours through December and will be working with John Coons, Tom Johnson, Cory Gregory, Bret Whitney, and Jesse Fagan on 2019 trips. Both Marcelo and Micah are aces, but we're most delighted that they're developing in the tradition of Field Guides, with all that implies about orchestrating a great tour experience. Read more about them on pp. 2-3— and meet them in the field in 2019!

In the coming months you'll be hearing more about some additions to our Tour Manager staff. Additionally, we're working hard behind the scenes to improve your online experience in numerous ways, from aesthetics to functionality, but also in what we consider most important—our service to you. More to come! We'll be back next with our February newsletter, and be sure to see (or sign up for) our monthly emailings. All of us at Field Guides look forward to birding with you somewhere, some time, in 2019!

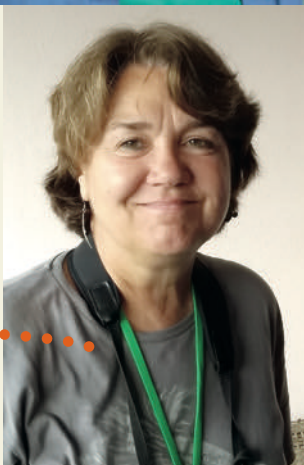
OUR GUIDES

IN YOUR WORDS AND OURS

Since **Chris Benesh** joined Field Guides, he's led hundreds of tours, but he still finds the same joy in seeing birds and exploring the natural world as he did in those early days—and he's learned a lot since! Participants on his tours often remark on the depth of his knowledge of birds—not to mention flycatchers—and his easy way of sharing it on tours. And that knowledge extends to other aspects of the natural world, as well—scorpions are a recent interest, and he regaled us at the business meeting with scorpion lore! He's a man of many talents, or, as a recent participant put it, "Chris remains the gold standard by which guides are measured. He has the triple threat of taking care of logistics with ease, of having a great sense of humor, and most importantly, of knowing where to find the birds. Can't wait for my next trip!" And next year, possibilities include trips in North America, with tours to Alaska, Texas, Hawaii, Newfoundland & Nova Scotia, California, and Arizona; in Jamaica and Mexico; and in Spain and Australia.



Since **Doug Gochfeld** came to work at Field Guides 3 years ago, we have heard so many good things about him. But the comments of a recent participant on one of Doug's tours really stood out. He said, "Bird guiding is a tough job, and I just can't say enough about how well Doug does it." He then went on to list a few of the qualities that go into successful guiding, including excellent birding, people, and communication skills. Doug is certainly in possession of all of these, and he's also just a very nice guy to spend time with. He's perceptive, witty, and unflappable. And yes, bird guiding is a tough job, but it's certainly worth it when we hear, as we did from this same participant that by the end of the tour, "My life's horizons were expanded!" Doug's 2019 calendar will see him doing three cruises—to Antarctica, New Zealand's Subantarctic Islands, and Spitsbergen—several North America tours, and Oaxaca, Australia, and Israel.



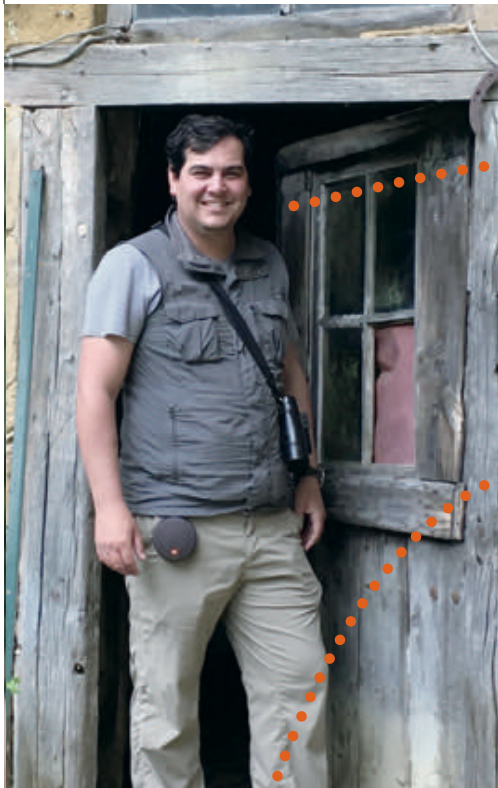
When asked what was the best feature of their tour, most participants on **Megan Edwards Crewe's** tours—no matter if to France or Borneo—invariably say that Megan was what they liked best about their trip. "The fallouts were exciting," a recent participant wrote, but Megan's "patience and consistent good temperament" made the tour a delight. "Megan gave excellent descriptions of the various species and the differences between them," another noted. She is knowledgeable about the birds, a good teacher, and makes sure everyone feels a part of the group. But she is also, according to what we hear and what we experience, excellent company and tells a great story—which makes a long drive pass in a jiffy. For the coming year, Megan's schedule includes Costa Rica, Guyana, Borneo, Bhutan, Britain, and three trips to France.



"The best thing about this trip was our guide, **Jesse Fagan**. He not only is an excellent birder and sees the birds before they know they've been seen, but his patience seemed limitless, his sense of humor infectious, and he artfully shepherded us from place to place in a timely, unrushed fashion. You have a treasure in Jesse." And we couldn't be happier to have that treasure as a colleague—a great guide is critical to a great tour. And while it's true that he has a soft spot for canasteros, seeing them with Jesse can be illuminating and a lot of fun. In 2016, Jesse published the *Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Northern Central America* and is now working on a few other projects. For 2019, he'll be guiding tours to Colombia (three) and Peru; Guatemala, Panama (two), and the Lesser Antilles; Morocco and South Africa; and the Bahamas.

Marcelo Barreiros is a young Brazilian birder and researcher who worked for several years on the conservation of Harpy Eagles and other large forest raptors in both the Amazon and the Atlantic Forest regions of Brazil. Since 2016, when the guiding bug bit him, Marcelo has been co-leading tours with some of our senior guides. Comments from those tours—from both guides and participants—have consistently noted his excellent birding skills and his helpfulness in pointing out birds to others. But there's something else as well, something that makes him a good traveling companion as well as a good guide—"his distinct charm, good nature, and wit," as one participant described it; or, from another, "Marcelo projects a warm and humble confidence as well as a great sense of humor..." We know you'll enjoy seeing birds with him. For 2019, Marcelo is scheduled for a number of trips in Brazil with the occasional foray to Guyana, Trinidad, and elsewhere.





When **Marcelo Padua** joined Field Guides, we knew that he's an excellent birder who cares that people on his tours see well the birds he is finding. "Marcelo Padua has a wealth of knowledge regarding the birds and mammals of the Pantanal and Alta Floresta. He is very interested in everyone viewing the birds and goes the extra mile to make certain everyone does," was a recent report. We knew that he had extensive knowledge of Brazilian history and culture. We knew that it was fun spending time with him. We even knew that he could cook, but no one expected him to know as much about wine as he does, and he's put that knowledge to good use on our popular *Birds & Wine* tours. So along with trips to various parts of Brazil, you'll find three tours on his schedule for next year (Chile & Argentina, France, and Portugal) that include wine with all the great birds.

We're used to hearing great things about **Willy Perez**. We've had participants on his tours tell us that he is outstanding in identifying birds and bird calls; that he's enthusiastic, which makes seeing birds with him so much fun; that he is well organized and keeps his groups on track. Some go so far as to say that they would go anywhere with him—"If Willy were doing a tour to Buffalo, I'd be there"—or that one of his tours was the best they've ever had—"I will happily remember this tour as the high point of my birding pastime." So it was a pleasure for those of us in FG who had not yet met Willy to finally have the opportunity to do so at our August business meeting. And we were not disappointed. He was everything we'd come to expect and it was so much fun to get to know him. Willy's upcoming 2019 schedule includes several Ecuador tours—Sacha, Southwestern, Jewels, Galapagos, Cloudforests, and Wildsumaco—as well as Chile and a tour on his new home turf, *Birds of Britain*.



Cory Gregory started "birding" at the age of three, memorizing bird flash cards that a friend had given him. After college he spent several years studying the real thing—shorebirds in the Midwest and Alaska. He joined Field Guides in 2016, and since then he's covered a lot of ground, guiding tours around the world. Based on the response of participants on his tours, he's doing a great job. "Cory's a great leader. He makes every effort to see that everyone has a good look at the birds. He's also fun and likeable." Another recent participant wrote of Cory: "He is an amazing bird-finder. He also knows a LOT about birds and shared his knowledge of habitats, history, nesting, populations, and behavior. It was a real bonus to be able to grill him with questions." And, pretty important to some of us, "His restaurant choices were delightful!" In 2018 he designed a new Oregon tour and has a new Michigan tour in the works for 2020. His 2019 schedule includes North America (New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Alaska, and Cape May), Oaxaca, Jamaica, Colombia, and Australia.

For the past five years we've had the good fortune to be working with **Tom Johnson**, and the more we see of him, the better we like him. From what we read in his tour evaluations, you feel much the same. "Without doubt, the best feature of the tour was Tom Johnson. His skills as a birder and leader were unmatched in my experience. He made sure everyone saw every bird, kept us moving and meeting our goals, and managed seamlessly the logistics of the tour. He deserves the highest marks as tour leader," was a recent comment. Add to this that he has a delightful, understated sense of humor and a tremendous *savoir faire*, and you have a top-drawer guide. Tom's 2019 Field Guides schedule includes a number of North American tours as well as trips to Middle America (Costa Rica and Puerto Rico), South America (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Trinidad), and Antarctica (*Emperor Penguins in the Weddell Sea*).

Most of you have not yet crossed paths with **Micah Riegner**, but that youthful look conceals a lot of experience! Micah's been working with us on various tours in the States and Brazil the past two years—areas he knows very well. (Not to mention that he's been hard at work developing the *Central Mexico & Baja: Birds, Butterflies & Whales* tour with Jesse for 2020.) Coming from parents who brought him along on college field courses to the tropics, and then continuing himself to Amazonia to be a lodge guide, to field-assist on expeditions, and most recently to pursue his own Master's thesis research on woodcreepers, he has accumulated a lot of experience way beyond his years. So we'll take his birding experience and top-notch skills as a given. But what we like even more are client comments such as this from a tour he co-led: "Micah second-chaired the tour with grace and humor and consistently demonstrated a quiet competence. He added a lot to the overall experience and spotted a ton of birds!" Micah hits the ground running full-time beginning in June 2019...have a look at his schedule from Arizona and California to Brazil and Panama—and he's already got a couple of unadvertised private tours!





Three summer Peru trips are featured on this page, beginning with Jesse Fagan's June **Machu Picchu & Abra Malaga, Peru** tour. The combination of beautiful birds and the ruins of Machu Picchu on this tour is hard to beat, and the views are incredible, as you may surmise from this group photo—that's Jesse in back and local guide Lucretia at left. The many birds seen included the fairly common Streaked Xenops, top left, shown here picking at some moss; the hard-to-believe-it's-real Andean Cock-of-the-rock, one of the group favorites, in part because it was seen so well; and the endemic Cuzco Brushfinch, a great find that Jesse hadn't seen on the tour for several years. (Photos by participant Dixie Sommers)



Farther north, the birds and scenery on Dan Lane and Jesse Fagan's **Peru's Magnetic North** tour were incredible as well, with the likes of Marvelous Spatuletail and Long-whiskered Owllet enjoyed on the tour. Pictured here, from top left, Golden-tailed Sapphire, one of four-dozen hummers; a female Ochre-fronted Antpitta, which the group saw gleaning insects from two feet away, and which—like the Rusty-tinged Antpitta at far right—is a Peruvian endemic. The rare Cinnamon Screech-Owl, named for Roger Tory Peterson, posed nicely as well. And that's Jesse enjoying the view—and looking for birds—at Huembo. (Photos by guide Dan Lane and participants Fred Dalbey & Linda Rudolph)



Moving to the southeastern lowlands, **Peruvian Rainforests of the Tambopata** visits three rainforest lodges along the Tambopata River. This year's tour, according to Jesse Fagan (who gets around in Peru), was favored with both wonderful birds and a wonderful group, pictured here with Jesse, who rather stands out. Those wonderful birds included a tree of Red-and-green Macaws, among many other parrot and macaw species; a close look at a Rufous-capped Nunlet; a roosting Ladder-tailed Nightjar and Rufous-headed Woodpecker, a rare bamboo specialist; and smack-dab in the center, the King of the Canopy, a Harpy Eagle. (Photos by guide Jesse Fagan and participant Margaret Kelch)

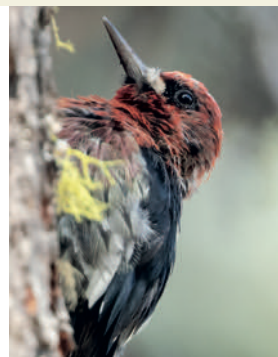




Micah Riegner joined Tom Johnson this spring to co-lead the **Pennsylvania's Warblers & More** tour, where they enjoyed over two-dozen colorful warbler species, this Golden-winged at top left among them. Needless to say, being eye-to-eye with singing male Golden-wings was one of the trip highlights. A scope view of this Henslow's Sparrow was another. Upland Sandpipers are rare breeders in Pennsylvania, but the tour was lucky to see a pair of these beautiful shorebirds. (Photos by guide Micah Riegner and participant Elisa Taylor-Godwin)



The diversity of woodpeckers was one of the highlights of Cory Gregory's new **Oregon: From the Coast to the Cascades** tour in late August. The tour recorded nine species of them, including Black-backed and this Red-breasted Sapsucker, an inhabitant of the coniferous forests of the northern Pacific Coast. Other memorable sights included a pair of Prairie Falcons soaring overhead against a blue blue sky; a very accommodating Great Horned Owl; three species of chickadees including the Mountain; and the state's picturesque coastlines for which it is so famous—Seal Rock State Wayside shown here. (Photos by guide Cory Gregory and participant Shirley Ng)



Tom Johnson and Doug Gochfeld report they experienced some phenomenal migration this May on their **Spring in Cape May** tour. There were warblers aplenty, of course, including the gorgeous Blackburnian at top right and the Hooded below left; both Scarlet and Summer (top left) tanagers made appearances, and a pair of obliging Clapper Rails in the saltmarsh that vocalized and cavorted and even posed in the open. (Photos by guide Doug Gochfeld)



Chris Benesh and Cory Gregory's early July visit to **Newfoundland & Nova Scotia** produced a splendid variety of birds—a few of them shown here. Seabirds included puffins, fulmars, murre, Razorbills, and side-by-side Common and Arctic Terns—an Arctic at top left. Below the tern, a Black-backed Woodpecker, an uncommon northern woodpecker that was a favorite for many in the group. At bottom, a nice Bay-breasted Warbler among almost twenty other warbler species, and a dustbathing Ruffed Grouse. (Photos by guides Cory Gregory & Chris Benesh)



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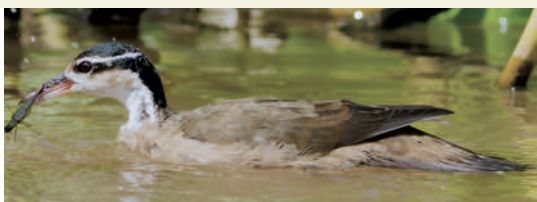
fresh from the field

On this page we show three of our summer Brazil tours; we begin with Marcelo Padua's recent **Jaguar Spotting**, a trip that divides its time between the open area of the Pantanal and a more forested area to the north. Above, a beautiful Pantanal sunset and a feeding Buff-necked Ibis. At left, Great Rufous Woodcreeper, a giant woodcreeper with, as you can see, a very stout bill. A Great Black Hawk seems to have scored a catch; at right, splendid Yellow-collared Macaws in flight overhead. As for the Jaguars? The tour spotted some beauts, and you can look below for a photo. (Photos by participant Gregg Recer)

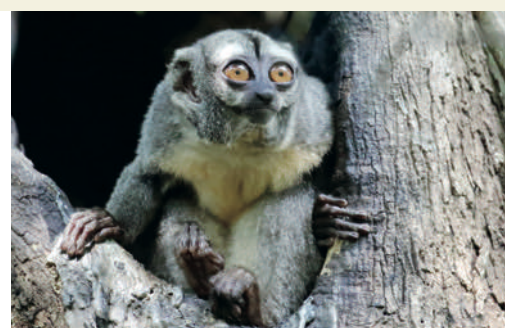


The two Marcelos (Padua and Barreiros) teamed up for our June **Alta Floresta & the Pantanal, Brazil** tour, which visits

three different biomes in this very diverse country. Some good birds showed up at the towers at the Cristalino Lodge, including a pair of White-browed Hawks—one calling at left. This Sungrebe provided one of the tour highlights, as the group had such great looks at the bird foraging—apparently successfully—on the Cuiabá River. And a Jaguar—what more need be said except that the tour saw four different individuals and watched this pair for about an hour! (Photos by guide Marcelo Barreiros)



It's easy to see from these photos why we call this Brazil river trip **Rio Negro Paradise!** There were two tours this year, both with the great team of Bret Whitney and Marcelo Barreiros. The stunning Green Aracari at left is just one of a number of flashy toucans possible on the tour; Dotted Tanager, below it, is another knockout. Chestnut-belted Gnatcatcher, here showing a bit of the white tuft that it will flare on occasion, is a great bird to see this well. At right, Three-striped Night Monkey and Parker's Spinetail, a whitewater island specialist. (Photos by participant Myles McNally)





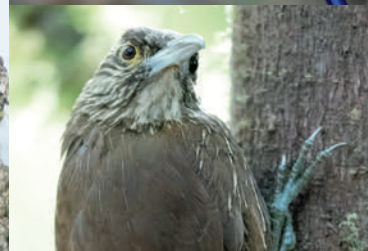
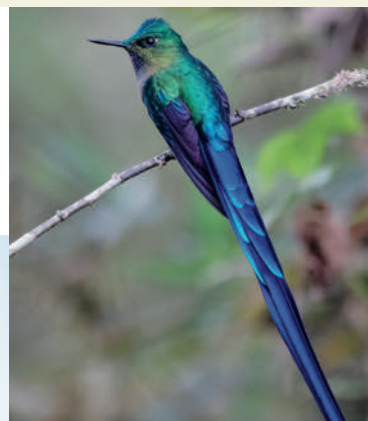
Cruising the River of Doubt with Bret Whitney on his recent **Brazil's Rio Roosevelt** tour was a great way to get around in the tropics, and with a stop at a salt-lick along the river the group was able to see—along with twenty-two other species of parrots and macaws on the tour—the giant Kaway's Parrot, described to science only in 1989. They also had the good fortune to see Chico's Tyrannulet, to the right of the parrot, a bird Bret discovered in 2009 and described to science in 2013. The pretty—and rare—Humaita Antbird, a split from Spot-winged, was seen beautifully as well. (Photos by participants Sharon Rannels, Steve Rannels & Jonathan Newman)



Willy Perez notes in his tour report that for many, **Galapagos** is the trip of a lifetime—and, with its many endemics and often tame wildlife, it is a unique place to visit. A few of those endemics include the Galapagos Flycatcher at far left, found on all of the main islands. Waved Albatross is not an endemic but nests on Española Island, where the group saw them in full display, incubating eggs, and as you can see from the photo, with chicks. Flightless Cormorant is no beauty, but it is rare and found on only two islands. And here, part of our group is joined by a friendly marine iguana. (Photos by participants Jude Harackiewicz & Bruce Cressman)



Willy followed his Galapagos tour with **Cloudforests of Ecuador: All the Best of the Wild Northwest**. One of the tour's many highlights included seeing Long-wattled Umbrellabird in full display—you'll see it pictured in our catalog. The Rufous-breasted Anthrush bottom left provided the group with excellent views, as did the spectacular Long-tailed Sylph at far right. Among other birds seen well were the Strong-billed Woodcreeper and Crimson-mantled Woodpecker. The Spectacled Bear is the only bear species native to South America and often very difficult to see—but not this year when the group had satisfying looks at a mother bear with her cub. (Photos by participant Justin Khalifa)



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fresh from the field



Our **Norwegian Arctic: Spitsbergen & the Svalbard Archipelago** tour spends a little over a week aboard the *M/V Plancius* (top) birding and mammaling with John Coons in the High Arctic. Polar Bears, Ivory Gulls, and great tusked Walrus are part of the iconic scene. A visit to a Dovekie colony—one at left—allows us to see crowds of the birds among the rocks and flying just overhead. Arctic Terns are plentiful and handsome in their breeding plumage. (Photos by guide John Coons and participant Bob Leppard)

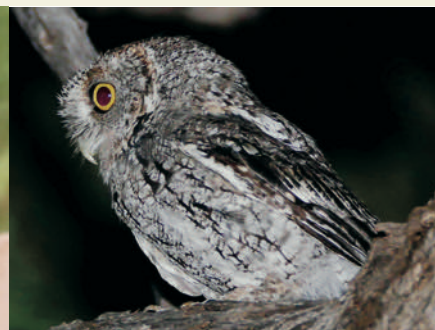


Seeing Greater Flamingos dotting the lakes across the Camargue is a feature of our

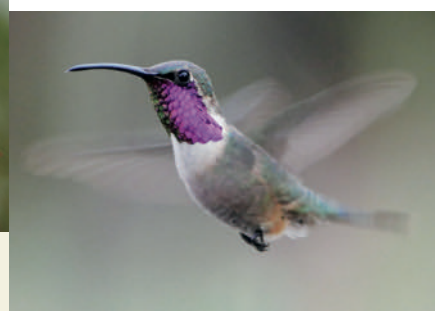
France: Camargue & Pyrenees tours (two trips this year, Megan Edwards Crewe with Ned Brinkley and Jay VanderGaast with Marcelo Padua)—the youngsters, like the one here, are gray rather than pink. A Lammergeier close enough overhead to see its beard and a Mediterranean Gull also in flight are to the right. At top, Marcelo (left) and Jay (at the other end) and their group birding at Port de Boucharo for the likes of Wallcreeper and Citril Finch. (Photos by guide Ned Brinkley and participant Linda Nuttall)



Megan Edwards Crewe and Marcelo Padua initiated our **France's Loire Valley** tour this June, a happy combination of birds, wine, and splendid French chateaux. Above, Megan and Marcelo and part of the group visit an ancient windmill. The graceful Chateau de Chenonceau, one of those visited, is built across the Cher River. Close views of Black-headed Gulls at their nesting colonies revealed that their heads are actually brown and not black. White Wagtails were seen almost every day of the tour. (Photos by guide Megan Edwards Crewe and participant Donna Bray)



We move from European birding to southeastern Arizona, where our summer **Arizona's Second Spring** tours with Chris Benesh (first tour) and John Coons (second tour) enjoyed the respite of Arizona's August rains—and some great Arizona birds. To wit, Greater Roadrunner, a bird comedian everyone enjoys seeing; Whiskered Screech-Owl; a stunning Lucifer Hummingbird in Ash Canyon; and the sometimes difficult-to-see Rufous-capped Warbler singing in Miller Canyon. (Photos by participants David & Judy Smith and Henry Trombley)



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Flanked by guides Jay VanderGaast and Doug Gochfeld, our **Papua New Guinea** tour group catches their collective breath after ascending Rondon Ridge. During their tour of this most paradisiacal land, they caught breathtaking looks at some real dazzlers like this Golden Monarch and the beautiful Crested Berrypecker (above), as well as at some truly remarkable avian wonders, like this Feline Owlet-Nightjar, casting an eye back at the photographer as it sat calmly overhead for the group, and this fine Brown Sicklebill, one of 20 staggering species of birds-of-paradise seen on the tour and here downing fruit at the feeder at Kumul. (Photos by guide Doug Gochfeld)



Demoiselle Cranes, perhaps the most delicate of a majestic family, graced Phil Gregory's **Mongolia** tour on six days. The uncommon Saxaul Sparrow, described by John Gould and named for the saxaul shrub it favors, is one of the largest in the genus *Passer*. Sitting tightly on its nest with chicks, the Saker Falcon is deemed Threatened, in part because the species is in great demand for falconry, for which a single bird may fetch thousands of dollars in parts of the Persian Gulf Region. At right, Anja Ger Camp, one of the tourist camps where we stayed. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory and participants Don Burlett & Laszlo Czinege)



One of the highlights of our inaugural **Northeast India** tour with Phil Gregory was the Great Indian Rhinoceros, a magnificent, if bizarre, beast apparently faring well in Kaziranga National Park, where they are protected—and where we all got to bird from elephant-back, another highlight and a first for most! The other Endangered behemoth to astonish us was the dangerous Indian Elephant. Of course, there were plenty of birds to thrill as well, including the lovely Red-breasted Parakeet, the diminutive, montane Green-backed Tit (below), and a stately Black-necked Stork, a few of which we saw at Kaziranga. (Photos by guide Phil Gregory)

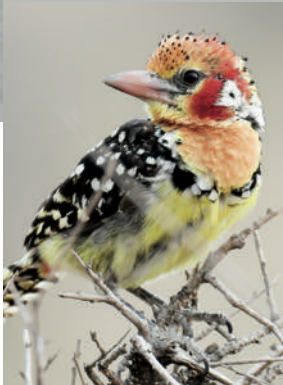


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fresh
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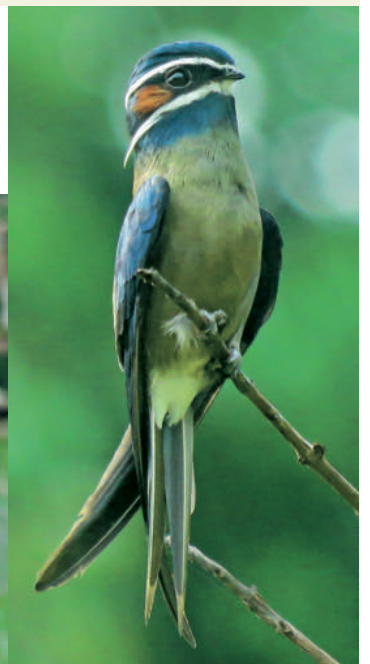


The first run of Terry Stevenson's new **Wild Kenya: A Tented Camp Safari** was—well, a wild success, with some 380 bird species and almost 50 large mammals species. A family herd of African Elephants crossing the river in Samburiland is a classic icon of wild Kenya. The large-footed African Fish-Eagle, here sailing over a wetland at Lake Baringo, is one of 24 species of raptors we saw on the tour. We managed to find two of these strikingly beautiful Red-and-yellow Barbets at Samburu. This Senegal Thick-knee obliged us as we boated on Lake Baringo. (Photos by guide Terry Stevenson and participant Joshua Horner)

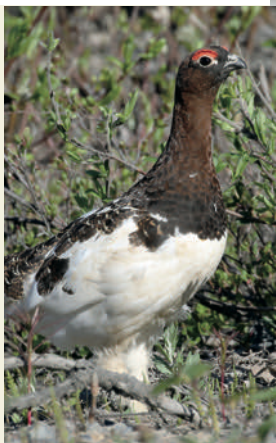


Our **Kenya Safari Spectacular** participants, with guide Terry Stevenson on the left of the group, agreed that these small Sokoke Scops-Owls, endearing and Endangered, were probably the birds of the trip, especially since the previous night's rain had threatened to result in our not locating them! The lovely Rosy-patched Bushshrike is a long-tailed bird of dry brushland; portrayed here is one of four we found at Samburu. This tricky photo of a Western Meadowlark looks a lot like that of a Yellow-throated Longclaw—or is it the other way around? (Photos by guide Terry Stevenson and participant George Sims)

Part of our very happy **Borneo** group, smiles silently testifying to their conviviality, were also pleased daily, as were the entire group, with crippling looks at a slew of Malaysian birds. For as guide Megan Edwards Crewe commented, "The island of Borneo is a magical place." And shown here, a sample of Borneo's magic, including (from left to right): a colorful Blue-eared Barbet at its nest hole, the big Black-and-red Broadbill flashing its red lower back and rump, and the pert, yet elegant Whiskered Treeswift. (Photos by participants Merrill Lester & Gloria Linder)



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A rare, long-legged Long-toed Stint (in flight) was just one of the many rarities making **Part I** one of the most vagrant-rich tours we've enjoyed to **Alaska**. But putting aside thrilling vagrants like White-tailed Eagle, Gray-streaked Flycatcher, Terek and Common sandpipers, Eyebrowed Thrush, Olive-backed Pipit, Brambling, Common Greenshank, and Common Snipe—all of which we encountered this year, some in good numbers—regularly occurring treats abound as well in always-exciting Alaska, breeders like this alert Willow Ptarmigan, this accommodating Crested Auklet, and these book-ended Red-faced Cormorants. (Photos by guides Doug Gochfeld, Chris Benesh & Cory Gregory)



As if one megastint weren't enough, one of our **Alaska Part II** groups amplified the megas by adding a beautifully plumaged Little Stint, another peep rarity in a megavagrant year. Yet the predictable wonders of Alaska are not lost on our group as they survey Coffee Dome for Long-tailed Jaegers looping around in front of a breathtaking landscape. As unforgettable was this settled Sabine's Gull, one of a number foraging around in the surf, apparently indifferent to our group's presence. Just outside Nome, this handsome Bluethroat performs his parachuting aerial display. (Photos by guides Chris Benesh & Doug Gochfeld)



A selection of early 2019 tours with space available

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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Can't Get Away for Long?

In 2019, Field Guides has 40 departures of 9 days or fewer, including these tours in the first half of the year

South Texas Rarities, Jan 12-18 with Chris Benesh

Spring in South Texas, Mar 9-17 with Chris Benesh

New Mexico, Jan 26-Feb 1 with Doug Gochfeld & Cory Gregory

Colombia: Santa Marta Escape, Feb 18-26 with Cory Gregory

Bahamas: Endemics & Kirtland Warbler, Mar 23-27 with Jesse Fagan

Belize: Tropical Birding Short & Sweet, Mar 23-30 with Dave Stejskal

Arizona Nightbirds, May 2-16 & May 9-13 with Dave Stejskal or Cory Gregory

Point Pelee Migration Spectacle, May 11-18 with Jay VanderGaast

Spring in Cape May, May 12-18 with Tom Johnson

Pennsylvania's Warblers & More, May 21-26 with Tom Johnson



Seriously fun birding!



Participants Jose Padilla-Lopez and Kurt Schwarz and guides Cory Gregory and Doug Gochfeld sent us these tour images: A Montezuma Quail from Arizona; a Lesser Violetear seen in Colombia's Santa Martas; a Texas White-tailed Hawk; Black-throated Blue Warbler from spring migration tours; and a group in Pennsylvania.