

Winged Migration on the Coast of Maine

August 27th – September 1st

Clearwater Audubon's 2nd trip with Maine Birding Guide Seth Benz
Director of the Schoodic Institute Bird Ecology Lab



Winged Migration: On this tour we will spend each night in the cozy accommodations at Schoodic Institute surrounded by the mainland portion of Acadia National Park (See map below for location). We will take day trips and will venture offshore for pelagic birds and whales, and search the coastline for a great variety of foraging songbirds. Nearby intertidal areas flood with migrating shorebirds while wood edges are peppered with restless flocks of southbound warblers. The location is ideal for exploring nearby blueberry barrens and hotspots on the preserved lands of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Frenchman Bay Conservancy, and the mainland portion of the Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

Day 1: Begins on the Schoodic Institute campus at 3pm. After checking in, the afternoon will be spent exploring a section of Acadia National Park. Dinner is at 6pm in Schooner Commons. Following dinner, we will have an evening presentation to get acquainted with the history and ecology of the region.

Day 2: Whale and Pelagic Excursion - Takes us offshore into the Gulf of Maine where whales, mako sharks, ocean sunfish, dolphins, and pelagic birds congregate. A pelagic trip is always a thrill.

Day 3 and 4: Will be spent birding the area east of Acadia National Park which is the quintessential "Down East" Maine experience. Small fishing villages dot the coastline. While Acadia's shoreline is rockbound, mudflats become more prevalent above the park, and shorebirds become abundant. This is the time of year when they are migrating through Maine, often in big numbers.

Day 4: We'll continue to explore all of the secret spots, and may make it a longer day to travel to the Cobscook Bay area near Lubec or take a boat out on Head Harbor Passage which lies between the U.S. and Canada – with a tide so strong that the world's second largest whirlpool, "The Old Sow," swirls in the middle. So much sea life congregates in this channel that minke whales are usually sighted from land. The channel fills with Bonaparte's Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Common Eiders, Black Guillemots, and Razorbills, feeding off mackerel and herring.

Day 5: Is leader's choice, giving us a good portion of the day to make up for any bad weather or missed opportunities. We'll carry packed lunches to enjoy somewhere afield before wrapping up. The official tour ends at 2 pm but we/CAS birders will remain on campus and will visit additional nature preserves and have dinner on campus.



Day 6: We'll have breakfast and head to the Bangor Airport.

Our Guide: Seth Benz has served as Assistant to the Curator at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and as director of Hog Island Audubon Camp, and he is the current director of Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park's Bird Ecology Program. In his current role, Seth coordinates citizen scientists' efforts to monitor bird migrations, pelagic seabird concentrations, and biodiversity and phenology observations in the Acadia Region. Benz was recently elected to a three-year term on the Maine Bird Records Committee. Seth and wife Sue reside in Belfast, Maine with their Australian Shepherd rescue pooch Beazie.



Participants should bring binoculars, and a camera (optional) can be fun as all tours are scenic. Spotting scopes are useful but optional, and your guide will provide one for group use, as well as guidebooks. None of the tours require strenuous hiking. Birding will be slow moving and on level ground. There may be some spots that are muddy, uneven, and slippery, but large boots are unnecessary. Boat tours can be cold and

windy. Bring appropriate clothing. August tends to be warm, sunny, and dry, but conditions in the northern Maine woods are changeable. Dawn temperatures may start in the mid 50's and reach the mid 70's by afternoon.

Important details: This will be a 6-day, 5-night trip August 27th – September 1st, 2021 with birding each day. The cost will be \$1,700.00 which includes 5 nights at Schoodic Institute (**All lodging provides a fully equipped kitchen, combined living/dining area with DirecTV and WiFi. Towels and linens are provided.**), meals from dinner on 27th thru breakfast on the 1st (14 meals), professional bird guides, transportation by two full size car rentals, and whale and pelagic excursion.

The cost does not include airfare (We'll fly in/out of Bangor). You must arrive no later than 1:30pm please on the 27th, in order to travel with our CAS group in the rental cars. If you run late, you'll need to provide your own transportation to the institute (1.5 hours east of Bangor.) Deposit of \$800 is due by May 10th with the balance due by July 1st Please make checks payable to CAS or Pay Pal via the CAS website (**Please notify me before using PayPal**) A full meal plan of breakfast, lunch, dinner, along with morning and afternoon breaks are provided on days 1 (dinner), 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The final day wraps up with breakfast. One dinner will be a traditional **Maine lobster dinner!**

Roommate

Lodging assignments are based on guests sleeping in a private bedroom in a shared apartment, with a shared bathroom. All lodging provides a fully equipped kitchen, combined living/dining area with DirecTV and WiFi. Towels and linens are provided.

Upgrades to a room with private bath may be available for a limited time with an additional fee (\$400 – 5 nights). Fortunately, due to the schedule of the tour and the time spent in the field, **shared bathrooms** are seldom a concern for most people.

Accommodations at SERC are in shared, multi-bedroom cottages, with kitchen and ample living space.

Tour guide is Seth Benz, Director of the **Schoodic Institute Bird Ecology Lab.**

Tour is limited to 8 participants.

If interested please contact Dale Goebel at 727-510-1462 or sheirah11@verizon.net You may send a check made payable to Clearwater Audubon Society (CAS) to Dale Goebel at 1617 Hamilton Ct., Dunedin, 34698 or use our CAS PayPal account at www.clearwateraudubonsociety.com on the Field Trip page. Let's go Birding!

