

New Hampshire's Mt. Washington

With Naturalist Journeys & Caligo Ventures



June 5 – 10, 2021

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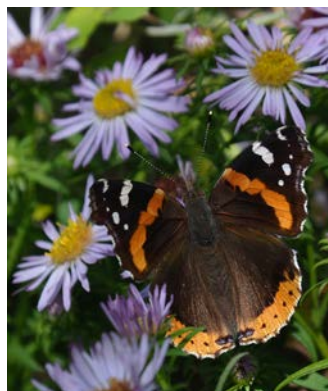
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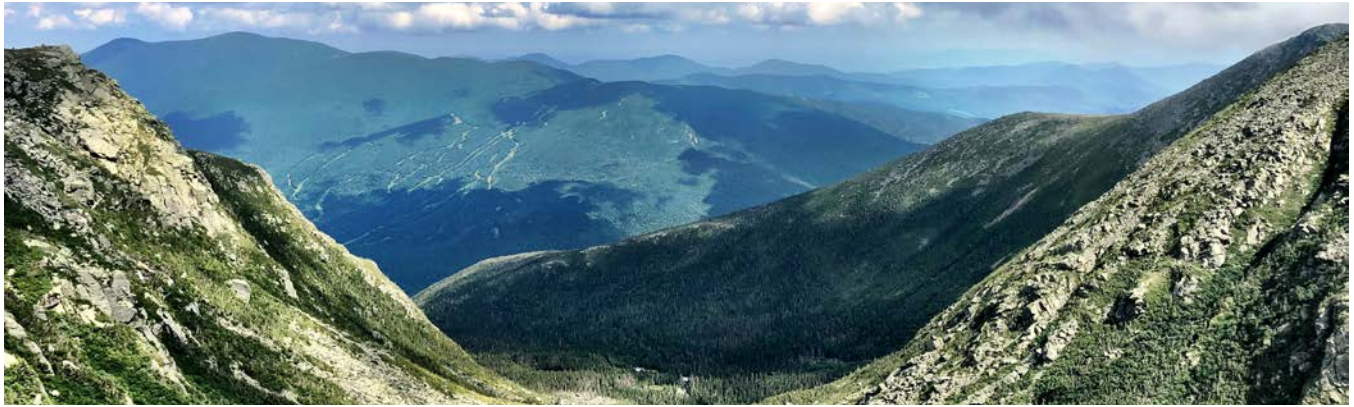
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Naturalist Journeys, LLC



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Warblers & Bicknell's Thrush

Naturalist Journeys is excited to offer this brand NEW! short tour to the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Please join us for a fun start to summer with guide, Steve Shunk. The primary goal of this New Hampshire nature tour is to get good looks at one of the most range-restricted songbirds in North America: the Bicknell's Thrush. In our Naturalist Journeys style we've chosen some wonderful lodgings to base from—this new tour is a treat!

Explore the higher elevations of the White Mountains, including the impressive top of Mt. Washington as we look for breeding Bicknell's Thrush as well as tree-line-hugging plants, American Pipit, the rare White Mountain Arctic Butterfly, and White Mountain Fritillary.

In addition to the tree-line realm, spend time in lush spruce-fir forests and northern hardwood mixed conifer forests, habitats dotted with lakes and rivers. With luck we watch Peregrine Falcon hunt from a dramatic cliff where they are known to nest. Enjoy walking trails and keep an eye open for wild sarsaparilla, starflower, and blue-bead lily on the forest floor.

This is a one-stop, unpack, and relax trip based out of the luxurious Glen House Hotel, where we booked view rooms with balconies—a real treat!

Tour Highlights

- Search for montane species, with some effort—the reward of seeing Bicknell's Thrush
- Enjoy the scenic and historic drive up Mt. Washington, home to the highest wind speed on Earth
- Witness mountain wildflowers and endless views of the White Mountains
- Cover a broad diversity of habitats, from rocky seashore to the alpine zone
- Take short walks for specialty boreal birds like Boreal Chickadee and White-throated Sparrow
- Take a morning to bird in coastal Maine looking for Common Eider, Piping Plover, Roseate Tern, and great comparisons of Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sparrows
- Relax on a short, gentle tour with a small group

Tour Summary

6-Day / 5-Night New Hampshire Nature Tour w/ Steve Shunk

\$2390, from Portland, Maine

Airport is Portland International Jetport (PWM)

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Itinerary



Sat., June 5 Arrival in Portland, Maine

Welcome to Maine! Please plan to arrive no later than 5:00 PM today at the Portland, Maine, International Jetport (PWM). We gather as a group for greetings, dinner, and orientation in downtown Portland. This lively, small town of just 66,000 is situated right on the water and is perfect to explore for a few days at your leisure before or after the tour—lighthouses, lobster, and pleasant summer weather make Portland a fun getaway.

The Inn at St. John offers cab reimbursement from the airport.
Accommodations at the Inn at St. John or similar (D)

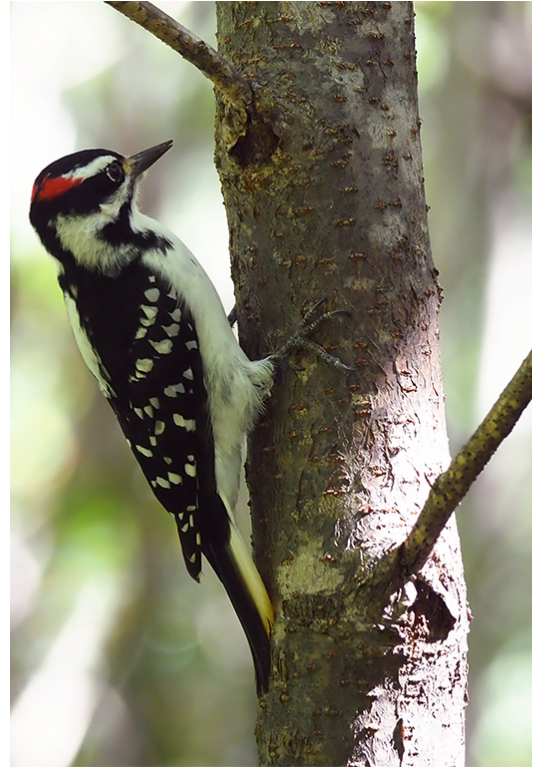
Sun., June 6 Maine Coast to Mt. Washington

And off we go ... after breakfast we spend our first morning birding a couple of coastal hotspots in southern Maine, including Scarborough Marsh, a 3000 acre estuary, where we look for waterfowl, egrets, herons, rails, and perhaps even Glossy Ibis, as well as a number of grassland songbirds like Bobolink, that are uncommon in other parts of the state. We also plan to stop at Crescent Beach State Park, a mile-long stretch of sand backed by beach grass laden dunes.

After lunch in Portland, we enjoy the scenic two-hour drive to the Glen House Hotel at the base of New Hampshire's stunning Mt. Washington. We spend the remainder of the afternoon birding the forested areas around the hotel before tucking into a delicious dinner.

The Glen House Hotel has a long history, starting in the 1850s when it was converted from an old farmhouse into the original hotel. After multiple rebuilds, the Glen House we see today is the fifth iteration of the hotel,

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and it's a luxury we greatly look forward to on this trip. The hotel features views of Mt. Washington, gorgeous natural light through floor to ceiling windows in the bar and dining area, and lovely, quiet grounds. We booked view rooms with balconies—nice!

Accommodations at Glen House Hotel (B,L,D)

Mon., June 7 Mt. Washington, New Hampshire

Today we plan to summit! We spend our day working our way up to the top of Mt. Washington, where we explore the history of the mountain and bird the alpine zone, weather permitting (it can be really windy at the top!). The White Mountains of New Hampshire include the great Mt. Washington at 6288 feet. As we work our way up, we explore and bird amongst red spruce, balsam fir, and paper and yellow birches. The view along the drive up and at the top is stunning; we take time to simply appreciate the stretching mountain views of peaks below.

We take a picnic lunch on the mountain and then spend the afternoon descending the auto road, where we have our first chance for Boreal Chickadee, Bicknell's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, and other boreal specialties. The Bicknell's Thrush has an extremely limited summer range, from upstate New York to Nova Scotia and Quebec, where this elusive bird nests in small, undersized conifers near the very tops of mountains, maritime forests and logging land ... the common denominator is dense balsam fir-spruce forest. Unlike its very close relative, the Gray-cheeked Thrush that winters in South America, the Bicknell's Thrush winters in the West Indies.

Accommodations at Glen House Hotel (B,L,D)

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Tue., June 8 White Mountains, New Hampshire

After breakfast today we take an early morning to drive up the mountain again, going more direct this time for the chance of hearing the thrushes sing. Our aim is to have additional chances for finding Bicknell's Thrush and other boreal species we may have missed yesterday afternoon. Bicknell's Thrush is incredibly rare for a number of reasons, including a difference in forestry and logging management between the US and Canada, and greatly because of intense deforestation in Hispaniola and the West Indies where this species winters.



After lunch at the hotel, we bird local montane hotspots such as Pinkham Notch and Wildcat Mountain. Among other northeastern breeding species, we hope see our first of up to 20 different warblers.

Explore among spruce and fir trees, as well as hardwoods like American beech, sugar maple, and yellow birch, and conifer trees such as eastern hemlock, white pine, and balsam fir. In the understory are striped maple, witch hazel and hobblebush shrubs.

We enjoy dinner and go over our bird list tonight before turning in for the night.

Accommodations at Glen House Hotel (B,L,D)

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Wed., June 9 White Mountains, New Hampshire

Assuming that we have had success with our mountain quests, our last full day takes us to lower elevations and a broader diversity of forest and riparian habitats. In addition to an abundance of warblers, we search for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, Swamp Sparrow, and Scarlet Tanager.

After lunch in the Ellis River Valley, known for its picturesque meandering river, we continue birding these lower mountain habitats at some productive hotspots. Wildflowers should be prime and we enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Tonight we enjoy a celebratory dinner, reminiscing on our favorite moments of the trip.
Accommodations at Glen House Hotel (B,L,D)

Thurs., June 10 Return to Portland | Departures

We say goodbye to our wonderful hosts at the Glen House Hotel after breakfast. We then find our way back to Portland and return to the airport in time for flights scheduled for noon or later. (B)



Guide Steve Shunk

Steve Shunk started birding in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1989, and he moved to central Oregon's 'Woodpecker Wonderland' in 1997, where 11 woodpecker species breed annually. This phenomenon led to a 20-year obsession studying this charismatic family of birds. Steve founded the region's woodpecker festival in 2008, and his Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America was published in 2016. He has fed leeches (his own blood) in Malaysian Borneo, and he has watched Spotless Starlings swarming around the Greek ruins of Sicily. Steve's Alaska adventures have taken him from Ketchikan to Barrow and St. Paul Island. One of his favorite

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destinations takes him to see 'eastern' warblers breeding across the boreal forest of Alberta, but recent adventures have led him to favor the cushion plants and condors of the Peruvian high Andes. Steve speaks at bird festivals across North America, and he returns annually to speak and guide at the Vallarta Bird Festival in far-western Jalisco, Mexico. Steve joined Naturalist Journeys earlier this year, and we are excited to have him on the schedule for 2021 and beyond.

Steve's work as a field biologist has taken him from the Coast Range of Oregon to California's Sierra Nevada. Most recently, he conducted point-count and woodpecker surveys for a study in the Central Oregon Cascades. Steve co-founded the East Cascades Bird Conservancy (now East Cascades Audubon), and served as its first president. He also co-founded the Oregon Birding Trails Program and coordinated its flagship project, the Oregon Cascades Birding Trail. When Steve is not traveling the world for tours and lectures, he can be found writing, skiing, hiking, and watching woodpeckers at home in lovely Sisters, Oregon.

Cost of the Journey

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Offset your carbon footprint on one of the many online programs available.

Travel Information

Airport is Portland International Jetport (PWM). Plan to arrive no later than 5:00 PM on June 5; please plan on taking a cab from the airport to the hotel. Departures from Portland can be planned from 12:00 PM onward on June 10.

Group Size

This is a birding and wildlife trip, limited to 10 participants and guide Steve Shunk.

Cost of the Journey

Cost of the Journey is **\$2390 DBL / \$2785 SGL** based on double occupancy from Portland, Maine. The tour price includes, 5 nights' accommodation, ground transportation in SUV or other large vehicle, professional guide services, park and other entrance fees, and miscellaneous program expenses.

The tour price does not include round-trip airfare to and from Portland, personal expenses such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar, and gratuities for luggage handling or other services. Guide gratuities are at your discretion.

Photo Credits

Bicknell's Thrush, [Alan Schmierer via Flickr](#); Mt. Washington, courtesy UnSplash; Red Admiral Butterfly, Steve Shunk (SS); Winter Wren, SS; Boreal Chickadee, SS; White Mountains, courtesy UnSplash; Glossy Ibis, [Alan Schmierer via Flickr](#); Bobolink, Steve Wolfe; Black-throated Blue Warbler, SS; Portland Lighthouse, courtesy UnSplash; Glen House at Night and Guest Room Photo, courtesy theglenhouse.com; Downy Woodpecker, SS; Road to Mt. Washington, courtesy theglenhouse.com; Philadelphia Vireo, SS; White-throated Sparrow, SS; Bicknell's Thrush, [Alan Schmierer via Flickr](#); White Mountains, courtesy UnSplash.

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