

Oregon's Cascade Mountains: Great Birds & Lodges With Naturalist Journeys

July 9 – 18, 2023

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Tour Summary

10-Day / 9-Night Oregon Birding & Nature Tour
with Steve Shunk

\$4690 DBL / \$5890 SGL, from Bend, departing
Portland

Arrival Airport is Redmond/Bend Municipal
(RDM), Departure Airport is Portland
International (PDX)

We are excited to offer this brand NEW! Oregon birding and nature tour featuring three of Oregon's most spectacular lodges, all perched along the crest of the stunning Cascade Mountains: Crater Lake, Suttle Lake, and Timberline Lodges. These three quintessential accommodations offer that special historic blend of rustic-luxury so famous for the American West, and they let us explore some of the very best mountain birding in style. Join us to soak in some lush mountain splendor—from wildflowers to woodpeckers, each field day unfolds with wonder. And we couldn't have a better guide for the region than 24-year local resident, Steve Shunk, author of the Peterson Reference *Guide to Woodpeckers of North America*.

Our Oregon birding tour begins when we meet you at the Redmond/Bend Airport, after which we whisk you southward to Crater Lake National Park. We stay three nights in this extraordinary setting, with two full days

Tour Highlights

- Delight in historic and nature-style luxurious accommodations at three of Oregon's most scenic lodges along the crest of the Oregon Cascades
- Search for elusive montane species such as American Three-toed Woodpecker and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch.
- Find a profusion of stunning mountain wildflowers, from the lowland forest to the alpine zone
- Experience Oregon's impressive conifer diversity, with 13 possible species, from ponderosa pine to Engelmann spruce and Pacific yew
- Learn fascinating bird behavior such as the feeding strategies of crossbills and the caching behavior of Clark's Nutcracker
- Set your pace on several short easy hikes, with more active options for the adventurous, explore peaks, creeks, springs, and lakes
- Bird in diverse habitats among the densest woodpecker diversity in North America, with the guy who literally wrote the book as your guide

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to explore this absolute gem of the National Parks system. Tranquility abounds.

Our next stop takes us to Suttle Lake, exquisitely carved by glaciers. The lodge here is intimate and nestled in the wooded realm of Deschutes National Forest. From here we explore the heart of what our guide Steve calls Woodpecker Wonderland, including the scenic Metolius River basin.

And finally we explore the south flank of Mt. Hood, Oregon's highest peak, where we stay at the historic Timberline Lodge, another stunning location framed by snow-capped peaks and vistas extending for miles. We enjoy two full days exploring around Mt. Hood.

Itinerary

Sun., July 9 Redmond Arrival & Drive to Crater Lake

Please plan to arrive at the Redmond/Bend Municipal Airport (RDM), servicing Deschutes County, by 2:00 PM. We have a 2.5-hour drive to Crater Lake, but we are sure to make time to stretch our legs as we make a couple of birding stops along the way. We then settle into our accommodations before rendezvousing for dinner and some evening birding along the spectacular rim of Crater Lake. The color of the water and its expanse is most impressive!

The historic Crater Lake Lodge in Rim Village perfectly overlooks the great Crater Lake and impressive surrounding cliffs; this is the closest lodging available to the lake. The lodge offers rustic comfort with modern touches amidst a feel of a bygone era. Sit by the great stone fireplace in the timber-lined living room, enjoy a hot cup of coffee as the sun rises, or simply enjoy the outside deck in rocking chairs with a cocktail in hand while taking in the sweeping views of the lake.

Accommodations at the Crater Lake Lodge (D)

Mon. July 10 & Tues., July 11

Two Full Days Birding Crater Lake National Park

We spend the first two full days of our journey exploring Crater Lake, with its many trails and scenic vistas, carpets of wildflowers, and plenty of mountain birding. One of our optional hikes takes us 2.2 miles to the highest peak in the park, Mt. Scott, to look for Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch. Another hike down the crater wall gets us to the boat dock for a tour of the lake itself, offering water-level views of Wizard Island and the Phantom Ship rock formation. We explore the park's habitat diversity, visiting springs and creeks and old-growth forest.



Many birds in the park are easy to find and watch, including Clark's Nutcracker in the parking lots and Canada Jay in the surrounding forest. We search for American Dipper in the streams, and Peregrine Falcon nesting on the steep cliffs. Common Merganser breed along the lakeshore. Just a few of the breeding songbirds include Pine Siskin, Hermit Warbler, Mountain Chickadee, and Evening Grosbeak. We could see up to six woodpecker species, including our first chance for American Three-toed Woodpecker.

Accommodations at the Crater Lake Lodge (B,L,D)

Wed., July 12 Crater Lake to Suttle Lake

We say goodbye to Crater Lake today to explore the upper Deschutes River Basin, ending the drive in the lovely woods surrounding Suttle Lake, near the head of the Metolius River.

Along the way, we first detour a bit to bird at Crescent Creek; we look for some excellent mixed aspen-coniferous habitats and enjoy a great chance for all three sapsucker species. We also stop atop Lava Butte for a great view of the surrounding volcanic landscape.

After lunch in central Oregon's trendy town of Bend, we head on to Suttle Lake, leaving plenty of time at the lodge to relax or independently explore the lakeshore and surrounding old-growth forest on arrival.

The Suttle Lake Lodge is a delightfully intimate lodge nestled in the Deschutes National Forest on the pristine waters of Suttle Lake. The year-round resort blends rustic and contemporary with fun décor and a cozy, inviting environment. Dining is fun and fabulous at the lodge's Boathouse restaurant or communal lodge table. Grab a cocktail at the lodge bar, affectionately nicknamed "Skip," relax by the fireplace, or soak in the marvelous lake views on the deck.

Accommodations at the Suttle Lake Lodge (B,L,D)

Thurs. July 13 & Fri., July 14 Two Days in Woodpecker Wonderland

Based at Suttle Lake, we explore the most productive habitats of the Metolius River and Whychus Creek basins. We search for all 11 local woodpecker species and several other specialty birds. Any of the small lakes could show us Barrow's Goldeneye and their all-too-cute developing young. We should see four different jay species, plus MacGillivray's Warbler, Cassin's Vireo, and up to five different Empidonax flycatchers.

We visit the region's most spectacular habitats, with ample gawking time at Wizard Falls and the head of Jack Creek. Santiam Pass offers easy hiking trails and a good chance for American Three-toed Woodpecker. Trout Creek Swamp hosts nesting Lincoln's Sparrow, Pacific Wren, and Townsend's Warbler.



Our lunches let you sample a bit of local life and the art scene in the tourist town of Sisters and the forest village of Camp Sherman. This region also offers our best chance for good looks at the iconic White-headed Woodpecker.

Accommodations at the Suttle Lake Lodge (B,L,D)

Sat., July 15 Suttle Lake to Mt. Hood's Timberline Lodge

Today we venture from the central Oregon Cascades to Oregon's highest peak: Mt. Hood, at 11,250 feet elevation. We detour first for the scenery and birding at Smith Rocks State Park on the Crooked River gorge. This canyon hosts nesting White-throated Swift, Violet-green Swallow, and Golden Eagle. We should also find Rock Wren, Bushtit, and Bullock's Oriole.

After checking in at Timberline Lodge, we enjoy some downtime to relax and admire the unparalleled view of the Mt. Hood summit. Dining here is a real art, and a lovely way to end the day.

The Timberline Lodge is a renowned historic lodge serving visitors of Mt. Hood for nearly a century. Built and furnished during the Great Depression, the lodge-style rooms are well-appointed with original handcrafted furniture, art, and textiles. Throughout the lodge, guests can admire the great wood carvings, stonemasonry, and handwoven draperies from the era. This National Historic Landmark sits comfortably at 5,900 feet and offers sweeping views, cozy accommodations, fabulous dining options, and a captivating history.

Accommodations at Timberline Lodge (B,L,D)

Sun., July 16 & Mon., July 17 Birding in the Shadow of Mt. Hood

Our last two full days offer us excellent birding around the southern flank of Mt. Hood. We visit Trillium Lake, a great spot for Vaux's Swift and Chestnut-backed Chickadee. Birding at Timberline Lodge might produce Williamson's Sapsucker, Mountain Chickadee, or even Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch. We also offer the option of riding the ski lift to 7,000 feet followed by a hike back down to the lodge, giving us an even greater chance to see the resident Rosy-Finches.

If there has been a recent fire in the region, we head there to look for Black-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers. Western Tanager and Mountain Bluebird glow like holiday ornaments against a blackened forest. Clear Lake likely has Spotted Sandpiper along the shoreline, with Barrow's Goldeneye broods on the

lake. The old-growth temperate rainforest is our backdrop throughout our stay here.

Tonight we enjoy a celebratory dinner to recap and share our favorite memories from a grand trip.

Accommodations at Timberline Lodge (B,L,D)

Tues., July 18 Departures

After breakfast and some casual birding around the lodge, we head down the eastern flank of Mt. Hood. We enjoy an early brunch in Hood River, followed by the one-hour drive through the Columbia Gorge to the Portland Airport. Of course, we make the obligatory stop at the spectacular Multnomah Falls before we say our goodbyes. We plan to arrive at the airport by noon for flights out after 2:00 PM. (B)



Cost of the Journey

Plan Ahead!

Protect yourself with Allianz Travel Insurance. Please note, starting in January 2017, Naturalist Journeys pays 100% of your flight carbon offset.

Travel Information

Please plan to arrive at Redmond/Bend Municipal Airport (RDM) by 2:00 PM on July 9. Please book departure flights from Portland International (PDX) from 2:00 PM onward on July 18.

Cost of the Journey

Cost of the journey is **\$4690 DBL / \$5890 SGL**, per person, based on double occupancy, from Bend, departing Portland.

Cost includes nine nights' accommodations; all meals as stated in the itinerary; group airport transfers; ground transportation; professional guide services; park, preserve, and other activity fees; and miscellaneous program expenses.

Tour price does not include: roundtrip airfare to Bend and from Portland, Oregon, or items of a personal nature such as laundry, portorage, telephone charges, or alcoholic beverages.

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