



2026

EcoTravel

Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips

Block Island Weekend Escape September 25 – 27, 2026



Rhode Island September 2026 3 Days

Overview

Explore the wilds of Block Island after the summer tourists have left the beaches and town and only the hardy locals remain. Often a magnet for wayward birds, Block Island will also delight you with its island architecture, wild flowers, and natural beauty. Expert leader Andy Griswold looks forward to sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for this special place. Our most popular offering, this trip has successfully run consecutively for countless years!

One of the most remarkable birding areas in North America, Block Island is also one of the most unusual and beautiful rural communities left in the nation. The island is located along the major East Coast flyway, about 12 miles south of the southern New England shore. It is named after Dutch trader Adriaen Block, who is also credited with being the first European to enter Long Island Sound and the Connecticut River in 1614.

In the fall Block Island becomes the resting place for hundreds of thousands of migrating birds as it offers a final resting spot before a long distance flight over water. Nearly every species found in eastern North America has been seen on Block Island. Mostly treeless, the island offers high visibility, a true delight for birders.

As many as 180 or more species have been recorded on Block Island when the all-important weather conditions are just right. On a good fall morning, the north end bayberry shrubs can be dripping with warblers, tanagers, wrens, thrushes, and flycatchers, all in the same bush! At times it's impossible to get the group away from the parking area with all the birds coming and going. Even under the poorest conditions it's unusual for a birding group to log fewer than 100 species over a weekend, an impressive feat for such a small and isolated locale!

Join us for a fall weekend excursion as we explore beautiful Block Island!



Itinerary

Although there is a designated itinerary for the trip, the order of activities will vary depending on the weather and group interest.

Day 1

D

Although our trip officially begins when we reach the ferry dock at Old Harbor, the crossing from Point Judith can reward observant birders with occasional sightings of Great and Cory's shearwaters, Northern Gannet, Common and Red-throated loons, as well as Common Eider, scoters, and mergansers.

This afternoon and evening are spent settling into our hotel, making a trip to the northern end of the island, having dinner, and enjoying an evening introductory briefing on Block Island and its birds.

Night: Water Street Inn.

Day 2

BL

The morning begins with an early breakfast followed by a birding trip to the north end, where we'll explore Sachem Pond and the scrubby woods walking trails, looking for overnight drop-ins such as Cape May and Black-throated Blue warblers, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and assorted vireos and other songbirds. The north end usually produces our best looks at low-flying Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, and other raptors.

A weather-dependent stop at the Nature Conservancy's bird banding station gives us a wonderful opportunity to see some of these migrants up close as well as to absorb some interesting facts and historical information from one of the oldest bird banding stations in the country.

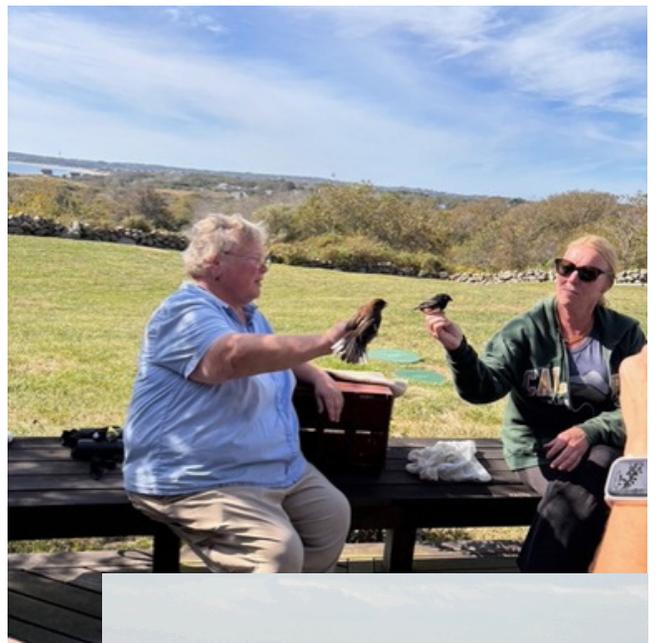
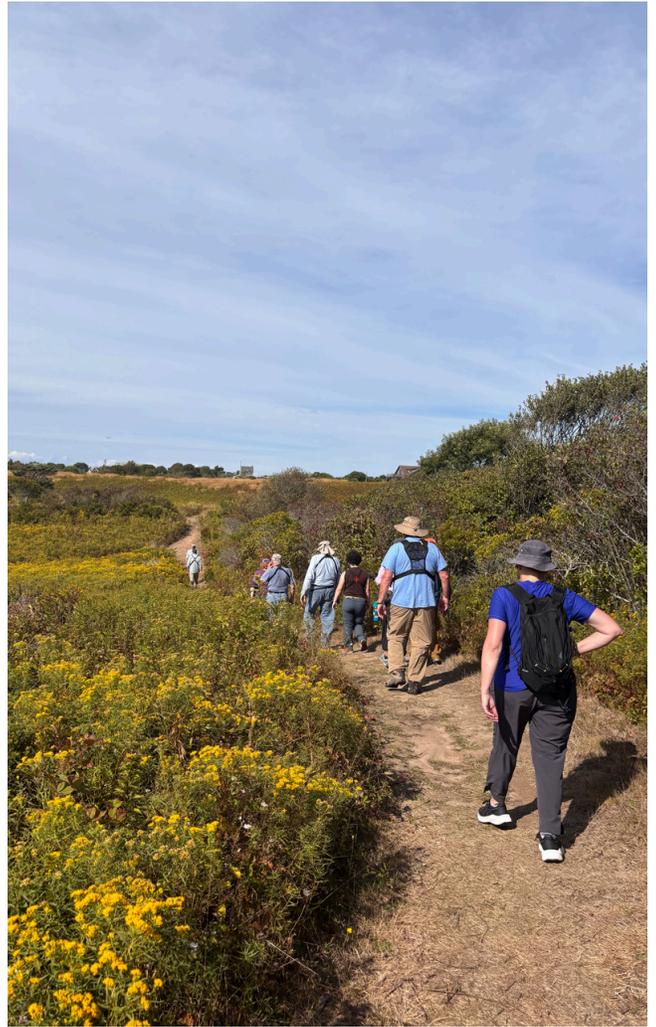
After lunch we'll head to the south end of the island, with stops along the way to check for birds in New Harbor. At the south end we'll walk the Nature Conservancy properties, seeking to fill any gaps in our raptor list as well as searching for assorted songbirds and waterfowl. On a clear day, we can see all the way to Montauk Point, Long Island! Along the way, glacial sinks may give up Solitary Sandpiper and multiple duck species. The grassy flats of the island's airport can sometimes produce shorebirds, especially in inclement weather. Our plan is to get back to the hotel for cocktail hour and dinner.

Night: Water Street Inn.

Day 3

BL

This morning is the time to cover any areas we may have skimmed over on Saturday as well as to revisit the hot spots. We will also look for any rarities reported by other birding groups before boarding the ferry for our trip home in the late afternoon. You'll have some time before boarding the ferry to visit the shops in Old Harbor for a T-shirt, Block Island souvenir, or ice cream cone. Enjoy sunset over Block Island Sound!



General Information

Tour Cost: \$898.

Members: \$698.

The above cost is based upon a minimum number of nine paying participants traveling together. If there are fewer participants, there will be a small group supplement. Per person Tour Cost is based on two people sharing a room.

Single Room Supplement: \$150.

All rates are calculated at the time of publication and are subject to change due to conditions out of our control (i.e. hotel rates). All passengers will be notified if changes in pricing occur.

Tour Includes:

Land Transportation, including ferry tickets.

Accommodations are based on double occupancy, one or two beds. Meals are included as outlined in the itinerary section (B=Breakfast/L=Lunch/D=Dinner). Additional charges for meals may apply if needs are out of the standard offerings. Entrance fees to national parks and sightseeing as specified in the itinerary.

Not Included:

Taxes; costs of obtaining passports and visas; airfare; baggage fees; personal expenses such as room service, beverages, laundry, gratuities for the local guide and housekeeping; personal communications; airport taxes; tax increases or new taxes charged for services that were not taxed at the time the booking was made; excess mileage carried out at the request of the passenger; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; personal insurance coverage (strongly recommended); and transfers to and from your home airport.

Tour Leaders

Andrew Griswold, Director of EcoTravel for Connecticut Audubon Society, graduated as an honor student in biology from Hartwick College, where he worked at their biological research station in the Bahamas studying avian ecology. He's



the original concept creator and scientific consultant for a cable television series on bird watching called *All Bird TV* that aired on Discovery's Animal Planet. Andy's the original concept creator of the award-winning Connecticut River Eagle Festival (at the time the largest birding festival in the Americas). He leads trips to Canada, Texas, South Florida, Nova Scotia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, and many other unique destinations. Andy is a former licensed USCG 100-Ton Master boat captain and lives in Essex, Connecticut, with his wife and son. He's known for his attentiveness to travelers' needs, fine birding skills, and infectious sense of humor.

Matt Bell is a graduate of the Ohio State University with BS degrees in both earth sciences and evolution/ecology. He started birding in May 2013 and became more seriously involved after a trip to Costa Rica. Since then, he helped revive



The Ornithology Club at Ohio State and assisted as a volunteer guide for The Biggest Week in American Birding and the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival. He absolutely loves participating in citizen science, tour guiding, chasing rare birds in his free time, and meeting fellow birders from around the globe. Most of all, Matt enjoys sharing his passion for birds and conservation with others and never shies away at taking the time to help beginners start their explorations of the avian world. Matt is the EcoTravel travel specialist and leads day trips and overnight tours.



General Terms & Conditions

Reservations

Early reservations with deposit are essential to guarantee your booking. A **\$500 deposit**, per person, applicable to final payment, is required to reserve space on this trip. Reservations made within 120 days of departure require full payment along with the formal Registration Forms. Final payment for programs is due 120 days prior to departure. Payments can be made by personal check, money order, certified check, or a cashier's check.

Rates and Fares

Prices are accurate as available at the time of publication. Prices do not include airfare unless otherwise stated. The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS) reserves the right to alter quoted prices to reflect changes in airline fares, land service, or currency exchange rates. In the event that the number of participants is below the minimum required for the quoted price, a small group surcharge may be added.

Cancellation and Insurance

At the time the EcoTravel Office receives written notice that you must cancel your trip, the following cancellation fees will apply: Prior to 120 days from departure, your payments will be refunded minus **\$250 per person**. At 120 days and less, no refund is granted. NOTE: In addition to cancellation fees, airline tickets and deposits required to guarantee hotel rooms may be nonrefundable. The purchase of a general travel insurance plan covering baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation is highly recommended. Give us a call and we can put you in touch with those providers. CAS reserve the right, if registration is insufficient or other reasons out of our control, to cancel, postpone, or offer the trip with a small group supplement. In the event that CAS cancels or postpones, those with reservations will be notified as soon as possible and a credit of payments will be held on file. The Connecticut Audubon Society is not responsible for the refund or credit of additional expenses incurred in preparation for a trip. Any "delay" or "postponing" of departure by tour participants is considered a cancellation and cancellation parameters will be apply relative to the 120-day window. There are no exceptions.

Responsibility

Payment of deposit represents and acceptance of the following terms and conditions by the purchaser: The Connecticut Audubon Society, its affiliates, and all cooperating airlines and agencies act only in the capacity of agents in all matters of transportation and tour operations, and their liability is limited to the terms of the airline tickets and land accommodation contracts. They are not responsible for any delays, inconveniences, accidents, expense, or mishap of any kind whatsoever resulting entirely or in part from the negligence of others or from causes beyond their control. They can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, riot, war, pandemic, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses must be borne by the passengers, as the tour rate provides for arrangements only as describe in the tour brochure. The right is reserved to change tour leaders, substitute hotels, of similar category, and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by unforeseen circumstances. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. No refund can be made for unused hotel rooms, meals, and sightseeing tours unless arrangements are made at time of booking. The right is reserved to decline any person as a tour member for any reason which affects the operation of the tour or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of the other tour members. Any refund of the recoverable land tour services in the limit of The Connecticut Audubon Society and its affiliates' liability.

To make a Reservation:

Send the above stated deposit to hold your reservation. Nonmembers, please add \$45 (single) or \$58 (family) for your annual membership and to take advantage of the member discount.

Send your name(s), address, phone number, email address, name of the trip, your deposit, and membership fee (if applicable) to:

The Connecticut Audubon Society EcoTravel

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