

*Patagonia:
Birds and Mammals*

September 30 – October 10, 2026



*Small Groups!
Great Leaders!
Amazing Adventures!*

Spring Summer 2026

EcoTravel News

Overnight Natural History Tours and Day Trips



A Farewell from Andy's Perch



As I step into retirement from my role as Director of Connecticut Audubon Society's EcoTravel program, I do so with a full heart and deep gratitude. It's been a true privilege to serve in this role, and I'm profoundly thankful for the people, places, and purpose that have defined this journey.

EcoTravel has been far more than a job. It has been a dream career. Spending a lifetime helping people connect with nature, learn about the world, and understand the importance of conservation is something few are lucky enough to do. I've never taken that opportunity for granted. Each trip, each conversation, and each shared moment in the field reinforced how powerful travel can be when it is rooted in curiosity, respect, and stewardship.

Over the years, I've had the extraordinary privilege of working alongside truly remarkable people. The EcoTravel staff and volunteers, past and present, have inspired me daily with their professionalism, creativity, resilience, and unwavering commitment to our mission. Alongside dedicated colleagues throughout The Connecticut Audubon Society, from science and conservation to education, development, and administration, we shared a deep sense of purpose that shaped EcoTravel into something far greater than any one person's effort. Watching the program grow from a modest, one-person operation into a vibrant department with three full-time staff members and a devoted team of volunteers has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. Together, we've proved that travel, when guided by care and responsibility, can change the way people see the world, sparking understanding, empathy, and a lasting commitment to conservation. I'm profoundly grateful for what we've built together and deeply proud of the legacy I leave behind.

None of this would have been possible without the unwavering support of our travelers, donors, and volunteers. Your enthusiasm, loyalty, curiosity, and generosity sustained EcoTravel through good times and challenging ones alike. You trusted us with your time, your resources, and your sense of adventure; in return, you helped ensure that EcoTravel could continue to grow and make a positive impact. The sense of community that developed around this program is something I will always cherish.

EcoTravel also gave me the opportunity to visit and share some of the most extraordinary places on Earth with our members: wild landscapes, extraordinary birds, vibrant ecosystems, and human communities whose stories deepened our understanding of nature and our place within it. Experiencing these places alongside travelers who were eager to learn, ask questions, and engage meaningfully was endlessly inspiring. These journeys were not about checking destinations off a list, but about building a global awareness, fostering respect, and creating lifelong advocates for conservation.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to Connecticut Audubon's Board of Directors for their steadfast support, thoughtful guidance, and invaluable insight over the years. Your confidence in EcoTravel and your willingness to champion its vision helped shape the program into what it is today. I'm deeply grateful for your leadership and for the trust you placed in me and the team.

While I'm retiring from my day-to-day role, I'm pleased and honored to remain connected to the program as Director Emeritus. I look forward to supporting EcoTravel in this new capacity and cheering on the talented team that will guide the program into its next chapter.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey: staff, colleagues, the board, travelers, donors, volunteers, partners, and especially Marilou and Sam, my ever-supporting wife and son. It's truly been the honor of a lifetime to lead EcoTravel, and I leave the directorship knowing the program is strong, vibrant, and on a steady path for continued success.

With deep appreciation and warmest regards, cheers!

Andrew "Andy" Griswold
Director Emeritus of EcoTravel



The Connecticut Audubon Society EcoTravel

For Reservations and Detailed Itineraries: (860) 767-0660

International Overnights

Costa Rica: Agami Herons and Tapirs

June 28 – July 2, 2026 Five Days! **Wait List!**

Agami Herons are an elusive and shy, yet incredibly beautiful, heron species found from the Amazon basin north to the Yucatan. Previously, the chance to get good looks at this species required luck or long journeys out of the way to one of the few known rookeries. However, a recent discovery in Costa Rica of a new rookery, with over 500 nests, offers a previously unheard-of opportunity to see these spectacular birds up close! This trip is perfect for those with limited time who want to see what birding the tropics is all about. Some time will be spent enjoying not only these stunning herons, but searching for unique hummingbirds, including Snowcap, and searching for Baird's Tapir in the evenings.

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and local **Jehudy Carballo**.

Nonmembers: \$3,698. **Members: \$2,698.**

Romania: Transylvania and the Danube

August 20 – September 2, 2026 14 Days!

Eastern Europe is an often-overlooked birding destination that holds not only incredible birds, but spectacular scenery and ancient history as well. On this adventure, we'll explore Transylvania, famous for Vlad the Impaler and ancient old-growth forests, and the Danube Delta, considered the best-preserved delta in Europe. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991, the delta is home to over 300 species of birds, many of which congregate in large numbers during the fall migration. We'll aim to observe this migration and explore the under-birded region that is Eastern Europe.

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: €4,798. **Members: €3,798.**

Patagonia: Birds and Mammals

September 30 – October 10, 2026 11 Days!

At the southern tip of South America, Patagonia is a vast region of wild, untamed landscapes. From the dramatic fjords and glaciers to the towering peaks of Torres del Paine National Park, this remote area is known for its windswept plains, rugged mountains, and cold, clear rivers. The varied landscapes host a rich array of wildlife found nowhere else in the world. In the southern forests and wetlands rare creatures like pudú, the world's smallest deer, can be found. Meanwhile, the rugged expanses of Patagonia are home to a large population of puma. Marine life also thrives along Chile's extensive coastline, including whales, sea lions, and penguins. Join us as we search for the wide variety of fauna, from King Penguin to Chilean Flamingo to Puma.

Leaders: **Sarah Heminway** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$9,998. **Members: \$9,498.**

Brazil's Atlantic Forest

October 17 – 28, 2026 12 Days!

From the mountains to the lowland forests near the coast, this adventure offers colorful birds, endemic rarities, and breathtaking landscapes in a major biodiversity hotspot. During our first forays, we might see some colorful jewels such as Green-headed, Gilt-edged, and Burnished-buff tanagers. A few hours away is one of the most successful forest restoration initiatives in Latin America. Here, more than 22,000 acres of natural habitat are protected, including lowland forest, highland forest, riverine forest, and wetland, with an altitudinal range that varies from near sea level to over 6,500 feet. We'll also make a side trip to see Golden Lion Tamarins and have two nights in Rio to visit the famous sights and experience the local culture.

Leaders: **Rob Taylor** and local **Johny DeCarli**.

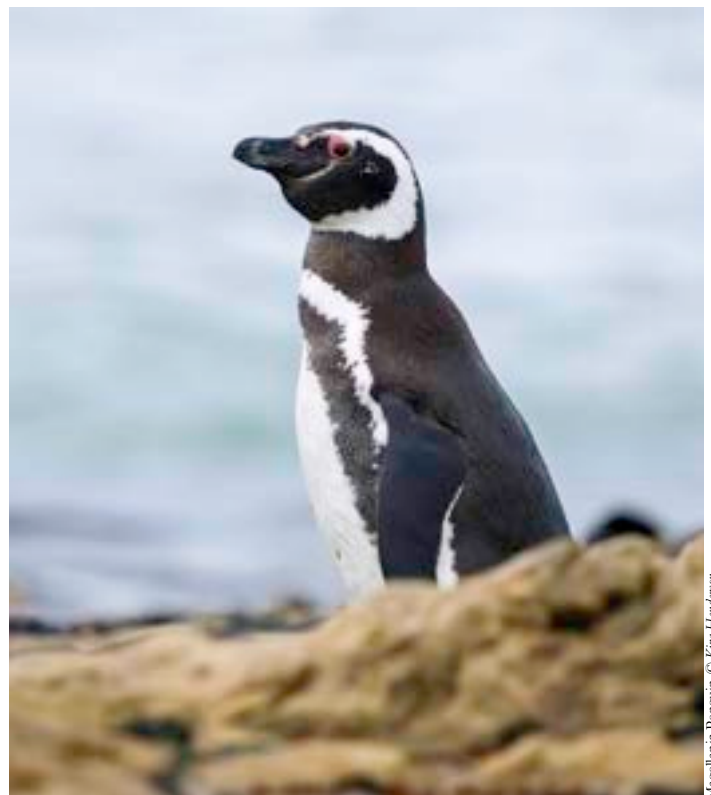
Nonmembers: \$6,998. **Members: \$6,398.**



Agami Heron © Diego Quezada



Pygmy Cormorant © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Magellanic Penguin © Kim Henderson

Colombia: Central Andes and Santa Marta

January 16 – 27, 2027 12 Days!

In recent years, Colombia has quickly risen through the ranks as one of the most highly sought-after birding destinations. With over 1,900 species of birds, it's the most diverse country on the planet! From the towering Andes to legendary Santa Marta, this new adventure is a great introduction to South American birding. Among the Andes, we'll visit multiple elevations, including feeding stations for normally shy antpittas, and have the chance of spotting nearly 60 different species of hummingbirds. A visit to Santa Marta, a small mountain range on the Caribbean coast, will bring with it a host of new species. This isolated range is home to over 20 species found nowhere else in the world, including some that are still being discovered!

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$7,498. **Members: \$6,998.**

Tanzania Safari

January 21 – February 5, 2027 15 Days!

This is Africa as you've always imagined it: the magic of a Serengeti sunset, the teeming wildlife of Ngorongoro Crater, and some of the most wonderful birdlife you'll ever see. A safari to Tanzania is a special adventure into the premier wildlife-viewing country of Africa, with national parks and reserves unsurpassed anywhere in the world. We'll see all of the major plains animals: lions, hippos, zebras, giraffes, impalas, gazelles, and other herbivores, baboons and monkeys, and herds of elephant and buffalo. You'll stay in outstanding lodges, and a side trip to Oldupai Gorge will take you to the cradle of mankind.

Leaders: **Miley Bull, Rob Taylor**, and local guides.

Nonmembers: \$9,998. **Members: \$9,698.**

Panama's Famous Canopy Family

February 19 – March 1, 2027 11 Days!

Few names are as synonymous with birding in Panama as the Canopy Family. Since 1999, with the conversion of an old American radar tower into a birding lodge and observation deck, birders have flocked to Panama for the unique experience. On this journey, we'll spend time at both Canopy Tower and Canopy Lodge, searching for wildlife from the banks of the Panama Canal to the mountain valleys, witness their world-famous feeders in person, and enjoy the comfort of this iconic birding destination. This trip is not to be missed!

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$6,998. **Members: \$6,598.**

Casual Costa Rica

March 3 – 11, 2027 Nine Days!

With over 900 species in a country the size of West Virginia, many struggle with where to start exploring when visiting Costa Rica. This trip is the perfect introduction to tropical birding, at a slow pace and with a casual setting. Focusing on birding at elevation to avoid excessive heat, we'll explore the region in search of many iconic species, including Snowcap, Resplendent Quetzal, and Sunbittern. With luck, we'll find some range-restricted species as well. This is a great trip for those interested in birding the tropics, but are worried about long drives.

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and local **Jehudy Carballo**.

Nonmembers: \$5,998. **Members: \$5,498.**

Peru: Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley

April 9 – 21, 2027 13 Days!

Follow the footsteps of the Incas and explorer Hiram Bingham with Lucretia Bingham, a Connecticut native, an outstanding travel writer, and granddaughter of Hiram. Centered around an incredible experience through the Sacred Valley of the Incas and Machu Picchu, we'll also have the opportunity to sail across Lake Titicaca, travel by train to the famous city of Cusco, and visit one of the world's deepest canyons and search for Andean Condor, the largest land bird in the Americas. With hikes to ruins and the chance to relax in some of the finest hot springs imaginable, this tour uses great lodging for a one-of-a-kind, memorable adventure.

Leaders: **Lucretia Bingham** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$8,898. **Members: \$8,398.**



African Elephant © Valérie Gilbert

Amazing Amazon Cruises



Year-round Departures Seven Days!

Our most popular cruise explores some of the most untouched rainforest in all of Amazonia. On an eight-cabin expedition vessel, travelers venture far up some of the least inhabited in the Amazon Basin for a full seven days and explore areas rarely visited, seeking out the mysterious life in the heart of the Amazon. This is the most thorough, detailed, and sophisticated trip offered in the entire Amazon and comes with rave reviews from past participants. Guides are accomplished local naturalists. This is easy for seniors and families! Starts at \$3,800 per person. Extensions available. Call or email us for more information and a detailed itinerary.



White-necked Jacobin © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon

Tuscany: Birds, Wine, and Culture

May 4 – 15, 2027 12 Days!

Explore the stunning landscapes and historical locations that have stood the tests of time as we explore the famous Tuscany region. Discover dense forests, gaze over vast meadows, and relax in the presence of waterfalls and icy lakes as we visit national parks and UNESCO biodiversity hotspots. While exploring the many unique Mediterranean habitats, keep an eye out for the diverse wildlife, flora, and of course, birds! Time will be spent both enjoying nature and exploring the local towns with their extensive history, some even dating back to the Etruscans. As usual we get off the beaten track at every opportunity. Be ready to go birding in the region's unspoiled countryside and take time to sample Tuscany's rich culinary and wine heritage!

Leaders: **Rob Taylor** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: €7,198. **Members: €6,798.**

Finland's Boreal Breeders

May 14 – 21, 2027 Eight Days!

Finland's boreal forests are famous for their incredible owl diversity during breeding season. Great Gray, Ural, Boreal, Eurasian Pygmy, Short-eared, Northern Hawk, and Long-eared owls are all possible, even though numbers fluctuate year by year. This adventure is dedicated to searching not only for all the owls, but other northern specialties including Western Capercaillie and Siberian Tit. With luck, we'll hopefully also locate a Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker, another highly sought after species of northern Europe. The cool weather is a great way to ease into the summer season! This trip has the option to be combined with *Norway: Birding the Arctic Circle* for an in-depth Scandinavian experience.

Leaders: **TBD** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: €3,798. **Members: €3,398.**

Kazakhstan: Steppes and Peaks

May 16 – 31, 2027 16 Days!

The largest landlocked country in the world, Kazakhstan is often overlooked by birders. With a vast length equal to the size of Western Europe, the Kazakh Steppe region is the world's largest steppe habitat, covered in grasslands and sandy regions. On this adventure we'll journey across the steppe into the mountains, exploring the incredible habitat that has largely avoided human interference. Some of the main targets include the critically endangered Sociable Lapwing, White-winged and Black larks, and Demoiselle Crane. Join us on our inaugural trip to this incredible destination and have an intimate encounter with Central Asia and its incredible, rarely seen, wildlife.

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$4,998. **Members: \$4,598.**

Norway: Birding the Arctic Circle

May 19 – 27, 2027 Nine Days!

The Arctic Circle is a bucket-list location for many travelers, where the Sun never sets. We'll journey north from Finland into Norway, across expansive taiga to coastal fjords. The species that breed at this latitude are familiar to some, especially the wide variety of shorebirds. Jaegers patrol the open skies, while Lapland Longspurs sing from the tussocks. In the trees, Siberian Tits and Siberian Jays inquisitively keep an eye on visitors. We'll also take a boat ride to one of the incredible alcid colonies on the northern rocky islands, with thousands of Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, murre, and more. With the midnight sun, the light will be spectacular for photography! This trip has the option to be combined with *Finland: Boreal Breeders* for an in-depth Scandinavian experience.

Leaders: **TBD** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: €4,298. **Members: €3,898.**

Southern Spain: Solar Eclipse

July 28 – August 5, 2027 Nine Days!

Dominated by a Mediterranean climate, Andalusia is the most biodiverse region in Spain and helps to make Spain the most biodiverse country in all of Europe. In 2027, a total solar eclipse will pass directly over the region, creating a spectacular backdrop. While the eclipse will be the main



Machu Picchu © Paula Nordin



Great Gray Owl © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Lapland Longspur © Tyler Frazier

focus of the trip, we'll visit surrounding parks in search of Iberian Lynx, Greater Flamingos, and more. We'll also experience the culture and historical significance of the region, visiting wineries, Bronze Age burial sites, and Roman ruins. In the evenings, you'll have time to explore historic downtowns. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that you don't want to miss!

Leaders: **Matt Bell** and a local guide.

Nonmembers: €4,998. **Members: €4,498.**

Domestic Overnights

Texas: Coast, Valley, and Hills

April 21 – May 1, 2026 11 Days!

Join EcoTravel for a grand adventure in "The #1 Bird State." Three-quarters of all birds occurring in the continental United States have been recorded in Texas! On this ten-day trip, you can see over 250 species, including Green Kingfisher, Plain Chachalaca, Great Kiskadee, Green Jay, Tropical Parula, Golden-cheeked Warbler, and more. The scenery is fabulous, featuring vast open spaces unlike anything in the East. Visit famed High Island, Bolivar Flats, Aransas, King Ranch, Sabal Palm, Santa Ana, and the Edwards Plateau.

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$4,598. **Members: \$4,098.**

Magee Marsh: Warbler Capital of the World

May 10 – 16, 2026 Seven Days! **Wait List!**

Magee Marsh, Ohio, is known as "The Warbler Capital of the World" for good reason. Each spring, over 30 species of warblers stop in the trees along the boardwalk, resting before making their final push over Lake Erie to their breeding grounds. Join us as we search for warblers and other migrants, along with breeding specialties, at the eastern extent of their range. You never know what may show up! We'll also adventure into Michigan to visit the jack pine forests where Kirtland's Warblers breed, one of the rarest warblers in the United States, while also looking for Evening Grosbeaks and more.

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$3,198. **Members: \$2,798.**

New York's Adirondacks

May 28 – 31, 2026 Four Days! **One Spot Left!**

The Adirondacks, spanning over six million acres, are a haven for outdoor enthusiasts with their rugged peaks, serene lakes, and diverse wildlife. This region offers a wide range of activities, including hiking and climbing on numerous trails, kayaking and fishing on pristine waterways, and exploring varied ecosystems that support a rich array of wildlife. Established as a park in 1892, the Adirondacks focus on conservation and provide insights into their history through rustic villages and the Adirondack Museum.

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$1,898. **Members: \$1,398.**

Connecticut Lakes

June 1 – 5, 2026 Five Days!

In northern New Hampshire, the four Connecticut Lakes serve as the headwaters of the Connecticut River, set in a unique boreal forest habitat. This region is known for its fishing, hunting, and as a haven for birds, where visitors can observe breeding migrants and resident species like the Canada Jay and Boreal Chickadee. The lodge by First Connecticut Lake offers stunning views and is often filled with the calls of Common Loons, while nearby roads are full of breeding warblers and other migrants. Who knows, we may even stumble upon a Spruce Grouse!

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$1,798. **Members: \$1,498.**

Alaska: Specialties of the Far North

June 6 – 17, 2026 11 Days! **Sold Out!**

Alaska has drawn birders from across the world for many years. Many species that are primarily found in Europe and Asia have ranges that

Holland America Cruises



Year-round Departures

We're proud travel agents for Holland America, a premier cruise line. Famous for their tours of Alaska, Holland America offers trips of differing lengths across the globe, from the Antarctic waters to Alaska's fjords and everything in between. If you're looking for a winter escape, consider island hopping through the Caribbean. Or, take a hybrid cruise and train ride through interior Alaska, visiting Denali National Park and more. Give us a call for more information, or if you'd like to book one of Holland America's incredible adventures!



barely extend into the western part of Alaska, making it a prime location to see many birds found nowhere else in the United States. We'll target the specialty species found in Nome, Seward, and Utqiagvik (formerly known as Barrow, the northernmost city in the United States). This time of year in Alaska is not only fantastic for the breeding migrants; it's prime time for vagrants to show up! In addition to our targets, you never know what unexpected bird may appear, making it that much more exciting. Leaders: **Matt Bell** and **Eric Ripma**. Fee: **\$9,499**.

Vermont: Birds and Beers

June 24 – 27, 2026 Four Days!

Burlington, Vermont, is a well-known haven of craft beer, home to well-respected breweries, including Fiddlehead and Zero Gravity. On this new and unique trip, join us as we explore the forests and mountains of Vermont for summer breeding birds, before embarking on tours of the local breweries in the afternoon. Evenings, enjoy free time to explore Burlington and the incredible food it offers. This trip is great for birders of all skill levels, and of course, beer lovers!

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$2,398. **Members: \$1,898.**

Maine's Whales and Puffins

July 16 – 20, 2026 Five Days!

Maine is one of the most beautiful states on the East Coast. With its rocky shores, dense forests, and access to the ocean, it gives nature lovers a wide range of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. This trip allows participants to experience much of what Maine offers, with a puffin cruise, whale watch, forest walks, ocean strolls, and amazing views. Explore the beauty of Mount Desert Island and Acadia National Park, one of the most picturesque parks, and home to Cadillac Mountain, where sunrise and sunset are unequalled. Revel in the scenic beauty of historic towns and hidden coves and experience the relaxation of Downeast Maine.

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$2,498. **Members: \$2,198.**

Arizona's Desert Bloom

July 25 – August 2, 2026 Nine Days! Wait List!

Late July in southeastern Arizona is a season of transformation. The summer monsoons breathe new life into the desert, turning arid landscapes into lush oases teeming with wildlife. It's prime time for hummingbird enthusiasts with up to 15 dazzling species spotted, including the striking Blue-throated Mountain-gem and Violet-crowned Hummingbird. The "Sky Islands", isolated mountain ranges around Tucson, are home to species found nowhere else in the United States, including Mexican Chickadee, Red-faced Warbler, and Yellow-eyed Junco. Explore a mosaic of habitats, from cactus-dotted foothills to cool, pine-shaded canyons. This vibrant region's biodiversity and stunning vistas draw birders from around the globe!

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$4,298. **Members: \$3,698.**

Monhegan Island: Migration Hotspot

September 15 – 18, 2026 Four Days!

Escape to the timeless charm of Monhegan Island for an unforgettable birding experience during the height of fall migration. Experience a peaceful, unhurried exploration of this legendary island off the coast of Maine. A magnet for migrating birds, the island is a critical stopover for songbirds, many of them offering thrilling, eye-level views as they refuel among the island's thickets and clearings. With no cars or paved roads to disturb the peace, our days are spent wandering scenic trails, scanning treetops and coastal perches for avian visitors that arrived overnight. The island's raw natural beauty, dramatic cliffs, and quiet woodlands create the perfect backdrop for both birding and quiet reflection. Nature is in full glory here. We'll stay in a charming island inn known for its comfort and warm hospitality. This beloved trip fills quickly year after year!

Leaders: **Jim Sherwonit** and **Andy Griswold**.

Nonmembers: \$1,798. **Members: \$1,598.**



Blackburnian Warbler © Tyler Ecker



Five-striped Sparrow © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



Northern Parula © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon

Block Island: Weekend Escape

September 25 – 27, 2026 Three Days!

Explore Block Island in the fall, after summer tourists have left, and enjoy its unique architecture, wildflowers, and natural beauty. This popular birding trip highlights the island's status as a prime location for migrating birds, located along the East Coast flyway. In the early mornings, songbirds fly back to the mainland to continue their journey south, flying low overhead as they reorient themselves. Named after Dutch trader Adriaen Block, the island serves as a resting spot for hundreds of thousands of migratory birds. Join us for a memorable weekend of birdwatching on this beautiful island!

Leaders: **Andy Griswold** and **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$898. **Members: \$698.**

Cape May Migration

October 15 – 18, 2026 Four Days!

Cape May one of the premier birding destination in the United States, attracting southbound migrants like warblers, hawks, and a variety of seabirds. The area features a charming town with Victorian architecture and modern accommodations. Our visit is timed to visit during the peak of migration, and if the winds are right, tens of thousands of birds are possible in a given day. Rarities, including Swainson's Hawk, Golden Eagle, and American Goshawk, have been recorded on past trips. We'll visit all the official migration count sites, each with a chance to find something rare and exciting! Every day offers unique experiences during fall migration.

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$1,698. **Members: \$1,398.**

Martha's Vineyard

November 5 – 8, 2026 Four Days!

Located off the coast of Massachusetts, Martha's Vineyard offers an unspoiled charm, best exemplified by its many scenic beaches, varying from protected, shallow, clear-water stretches on the northern and eastern sides to expanses of rumbling surf along the south side. The coastal sand plain ecosystem found on Martha's Vineyard and the surrounding islands is one of the most beautiful and threatened natural systems in the world, with only one percent of its original global acreage remaining. Found in only a few other locations in the northeastern United States, the sand plains include rare natural communities such as coastal grasslands and heathlands. Travelers will enjoy some great birds and come to understand how the geological forces that created the island determined its subsequent history.

Leader: **TBD**.

Nonmembers: \$1,998. **Members: \$1,698.**

Cape Ann: Boston's North Shore

January 7 – 10, 2027 Four Days!

Just north of Boston, this area plays host to many species of migratory birds that are not commonly seen in Connecticut. Considered by many to be one of the top birding spots in North America, the North Shore, with its spectacular coastline, is keeper of such well-known names as Newburyport, Gloucester, Marblehead, Plum Island, and Cape Ann. Travelers will explore the rich coastline to enjoy marine mammals, winter sea ducks, pelagic birds, and the unexpected. We'll look for Dovekie, Thick-billed Murre, King Eider, and more.

Leader: **TBD**.

Nonmembers: \$1,798. **Members: \$1,498.**

Winter Owl Blitz: Sax-Zim Bog

January 31 – February 5, 2027 Six Days!

For many people, the first images that come to mind when thinking of **Minnesota** winters are of cold, snow, ice, and frozen lakes. To birders, those images exist only as a glittering backdrop for Great Gray and Northern Hawk owls hunting from spruce-top perches; Ruffed Grouse stripping the buds from birches by morning's glowing light; flocks of colorful Pine and Evening grosbeaks filling-up at bird feeders; frenzied redpolls darting about an alder thicket; and tamarack bogs occupied by industrious Black-backed and American Three-toed woodpeckers.

Eagle / Osprey Boats



Bald Eagle © Corey Leamy

May 16 and May 23 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

We're once again offering boat cruises to search for Bald Eagle, Osprey, and other bird species migrating and nesting along the Connecticut River. Bald Eagles can be found along the lower river valley. Osprey are abundant in this area and offer great views, especially as they tend to their nests. Staff are on board the vessel to share information about the Connecticut River, the birdlife, and natural history. The boat has an enclosed cabin, restrooms, and three decks for optimal viewing. Enjoy the beauty of the Connecticut River in spring! *Tours are approximately four hours in length and depart from the Essex Steam Train & River Boat in Essex. Appropriate for children eight years old and over.*

Fee: **\$55** for Members and Nonmembers.

Reserve online or call (860) 767-0660.



Long-eared Owl © Matthew Bell/CI Audubon

Venture into the North, searching for the rare and breathtaking species that call the boreal forests home. The birds may be different each year, but the camaraderie remains the same!

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$2,998. **Members: \$2,698.**

Puerto Rico: Island Endemics

February 7 – 13, 2027 Seven Days!

Many North American nesting birds spend the winter in tropical regions in the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico. Although the island measures only 35 miles north to south and 100 miles east to west—about two-thirds the size of Connecticut—over 350 species have been recorded there. It also features 17 endemic species (more than the entire Lower 48!) along with twenty-five species endemic to the West Indies. Enjoy a winter getaway to warm tropical breezes among great bird species, including Elf-in-woods Warbler, Puerto Rican Tody, and the critically endangered Puerto Rican Parrot.

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$3,998. **Members: \$3,698.**

Dauphin Island, Alabama

April 11 – 17, 2027 Seven Days!

To the east of world-famous High Island, Texas, lies little-known **Dauphin Island**, just south of Mobile, Alabama. Often overlooked by birders, it's one of the first stretches of land that neotropical migrants see as they make their way across the Gulf of Mexico. Dauphin Island is where birds congregate to rest and refuel after the exhausting flight, sometimes through inclement weather. It's not uncommon to have over 100 species in just a single day! Time will be spent searching not only for migrant songbirds, but also for resident southern specialties, shorebirds getting ready to leave their wintering grounds, and more. This adventure is centered around one hotel and is a perfect way to welcome migration.

Leader: **TBD.**

Nonmembers: \$3,498. **Members: \$2,998.**

Florida's Everglades and Keys

April 23 – May 2, 2027 10 Days!

One of the most popular birding destinations in the United States, southern Florida is home to a wide variety of wildlife found nowhere else in the country. This adventure, timed with the height of spring migration, will visit well-known destinations including Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, Big Cypress National Preserve, and Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. This trip is as much about the unique habitats as it is about the birds! Join us in welcoming spring migration, and search for specialty species including Snail Kite, Brown Noddy, Florida Scrub-Jay, and many more.

Leader: **Matt Bell.**

Nonmembers: \$4,998. **Members: \$4,698.**

Day Trips

Early Spring Migrants

Thursday, April 30 6 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Late April is the beginning of the intense migration period when birds head north to summer haunts. With favorable weather and winds, some species get a head start, and we plan to greet them! Visit places known for their great diversity of migrants to see them in nuptial plumage and listen to their spring songs before the leaves make them more difficult to spot.

Leader: **Jim Sherwonit.**

Nonmembers: \$90. **Members \$75.**

Annual Lyme Loop

Thursday, May 7 6 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Travel through Lyme and Nehantic State Forest in search of neotropical migrants. The habitats of the state forest include wetlands, streams, and ponds, all excellent places for the morning chorus of neotropical migrants. While the main focus will be on warblers and learning their

Tree Swallow Cruises



Tree Swallows © Lindsay Vigne

Sunday, August 30	4:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, September 5	4:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Sunday, September 13	3:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 20	3:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Witness one of the most spectacular avian events when thousands of Tree Swallows congregate on the lower Connecticut River at sunset to settle in on a giant communal roost during their fall migration. Birds come from miles away, creating a ballet of synchronized flight before settling down for the night. Renowned ornithologist and artist Roger Tory Peterson wrote that “the tornadoes of Tree Swallows eclipsed any other avian spectacle I have ever seen.” Join Connecticut Audubon naturalists and journey from **Essex**, by train and then by boat to see the awe-inspiring display. Enjoy picturesque scenery from the 70-foot Mississippi-style river boat's three decks. Snacks, a full bar, and restrooms are available on board. If you take only one trip this fall, make sure it's this one! *Tours are approximately three and a half hours in length and vary in departure time from 3:30 – 5 pm, depending on the date chosen (the later in the month, the earlier the departure time). Tours depart from the Essex Steam Train & River Boat in Essex. Appropriate for children eight years and over.* Fee: **\$55** for Members and Nonmembers. Reserve online or call (860) 767-0660.



Tree Swallows © Lindsay Vigne

songs, vireos, thrushes, and other breeders can be present. Target species include Hooded, Worm-eating, and Cerulean warblers.

Leader: **Andy Griswold**.

Nonmembers: \$90. **Members: \$75.**

Wood-Warblers of Cockaponset

Thursday, May 14 6 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Cockaponset State Forest, named after a Native American chief buried in the Ponset section of Haddam, is the second largest forest in the state forest system, encompassing over 16,000 acres. It offers a great habitat for migrating songbirds and provides for a busy morning of warblers, vireos, thrushes, and more. The focus will be on species setting up breeding territories, and other species continuing their journey northward to boreal breeding grounds.

Leader: **Andy Griswold**.

Nonmembers: \$90. **Members: \$75.**

Fisher's Island: Spring Migration

Sunday, May 17 6 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Spring is an excellent time of year to witness migrants arriving on this secluded **New York** island. Lying at the eastern entrance of Long Island Sound, Fishers Island is a connecting link between Rhode Island and Long Island that offers stopping places for a variety of songbirds on their journey north towards boreal breeding grounds. *Times may change depending on the spring ferry schedule.*

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$130. **Members: \$115.**

Connecticut Audubon's Croft Preserve

Saturday, May 23 6 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Located in **Goshen**, our Croft Preserve is within one of the largest contiguous forest blocks in the state. The fantastic mix of habitats found throughout the preserve are the historic home of uncommon and rare breeding species, including Ruffed Grouse and American Goshawk. Since the property is managed primarily for wildlife, the terrain is steep and challenging to navigate. The property also is home to moose, porcupines, and more.

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Nonmembers: \$100. **Members: \$85.**

Summer Whale Watch

Saturday, August 8 5 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Head to **Plymouth, Massachusetts**, to catch a Whale Watch, looking for humpback, fin, and minke whales. There's also the chance of seeing various other sea animals, including basking sharks and Atlantic white-sided dolphins. We'll be looking for some of the pelagic bird species, including Great and Sooty shearwaters, and Wilson's Storm-Petrel. A few Cory's and Manx shearwaters are also possible, as well as jaegers, Northern Gannets, and various terns. *Times may change based on the boat schedule. Includes transportation and boat tickets.*

Leader: **Matt Bell**.

Fee: \$170. **Members: \$155.**

Long Island Shorebirds

Saturday, September 12 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Each fall, shorebirds flock to Long Island on their journey south. Large flocks gather both at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge and Jones Beach State Park, depending on the water levels. Jamaica Bay, located within Brooklyn and Queens, is one of the most important urban wildlife refuges, hosting a variety of habitats, including salt marsh, several fresh and brackish pools, and an open expanse of bay and islands. Jones Beach is home to staging areas for hundreds of American Oystercatchers, ducks, and more! Join us as we enjoy the signs of fall.

Leader: **TBD**.

Fee: \$110. **Members: \$95.**



Blue-gray Gnatcatcher © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon



White-rumped Sandpiper © Matthew Bell/CT Audubon

Annual Lighthouse Cruise



Race Rock Light © Karen Gallo

Saturday, October 10 3:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Board the *Cecelia Ann*, a 143-foot catamaran, in **New London** for a tour of the Sound's eastern lighthouses, including lights at Old Saybrook, Little Gull Island, Race Rock, Plum Island, and the famous Bug Light near Greenport, New York. The vessel has two comfortably appointed interior passenger areas in addition to a full outdoor sundeck. Interior areas include panoramic windows to enhance viewing. The vessel has lots of space and cruises very smoothly on its double hull. The addition of a computer-controlled ride control system enhances passenger comfort. Included in the celebration are light hors d'oeuvres, interesting narration, and a cash bar.

Fee: **\$75** for Members and Nonmembers.

Reserve online or call (860) 767-0660.

Thank you, Andy, for 30 years of incredible adventures!



PO Box 903, Essex, CT 06426

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Featured Cover Trip



Patagonia: Birds and Mammals

September 30 – October 10, 2026 11 Days!

At the southern tip of South America, Patagonia is a vast region of wild, untamed landscapes. From the dramatic fjords and glaciers to the towering peaks of Torres del Paine National Park, this remote area is known for its windswept plains, rugged mountains, and cold, clear rivers. The varied landscapes host a rich array of wildlife found nowhere else in the world. In the southern forests and wetlands rare creatures like pudú, the world's smallest deer, can be found. Meanwhile, the rugged expanses of Patagonia are home to a large population of puma. Marine life also thrives along Chile's extensive coastline, including whales, sea lions, and penguins. Join us as we search for the wide variety of fauna, from King Penguin to Chilean Flamingo to Puma.

Leaders: Sarah Heminway and a local guide.

Nonmembers: \$9,998. Members: \$9,498.

For More Information: (860) 767-0660

Coming Soon

Guatemala: Birds and Mayan Ruins
March 2027

Montana: Big Sky Country
July 2027

Uganda: Gorillas and Chimpanzees
July 10 – 22, 2027 13 Days!

Croatia: Biking and Sailing
September/October 2027

Brazil's Pantanal: Jaguars and Birds
October 2027 12 Days!

Southeast Australia: Coast to Outback
November 14 – 26, 2027 13 Days!

Tasmania: Endemics and Pelagics
November 24 – December 4, 2027 11 Days!

Japan in Winter
January 2028