

2009 Pelagic Trips



The ABA Pelagic Directory lists known opportunities for offshore birding in the ABA Area. The listings begin in Nova Scotia, continuing clockwise to Alaska. Trip operators have provided details about birds, marine mammals, fishes, and turtles to be expected or looked for on each trip under the heading “Comments”. If you know of other offshore birding opportunities that you would like to appear in future directories, please notify the editor of *Winging It* by sending information to winging@aba.org. Corrections and any new additions to the pelagic directory for 2009, along with current information, will be posted to the ABA website www.aba.org/wingingit/v21n1p16.pdf. The information included here is current as of January 2009. Schedules and pricing can change. Please, ALWAYS check with trip operators for current schedules and fares before finalizing your travel plans.

Ferry crossings, only two mentioned here, are another potential source for viewing pelagic species. Check ferry schedules to ensure that you will be crossing the best pelagic waters at the right time of day in order that good onboard viewing is provided. In a few cases (e.g., the remote Alaskan waters), ferry service provides the only way for independent birders to get into pelagic waters.

Additionally, coastal birding festivals sometimes include a pelagic trip(s). (The ABA’s searchable online directory of bird festivals is: www.aba.org/festivals). Many pelagic trips are organized on relatively short notice by individuals, museums, bird clubs, or ornithological societies. The Internet is the quickest way to find out about unlisted opportunities. Sport-fishing boats, while not often the best pelagic option, may be the only way to get to some offshore locations. Good ocean fishing and good seabirding often go hand in hand.

With the rapidly fluctuating costs of fuel, some pelagic operators may request a fuel surcharge. Seabirding is one of the last frontiers in birding where finding the uncommon is often the rule. Photographers with fast, vibration reduction lenses are documenting rarities and difficult to identify species in the ABA Area. See you offshore.

2009 ABA DIRECTORY OF PELAGIC BIRDING TRIPS IN NORTH AMERICA

1 • Bird Islands, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

Departure Point: Mountain Vista Seaside Cottages, Big Bras d’Or, 20 minutes from North Sydney’s Ferry to Newfoundland, 15 minutes from the Cabot Trail at St. Ann’s, Nova Scotia.

Destination: Bird Islands seabird colony, about 5 miles offshore.

Trip Length: 2-1/2 hours.

Trip organizer: Bird Island Tours, 1672 Old Route 5, Big Bras d’Or, Cape Breton, NS B1X 1B1, (800) 661-6680, (902) 674-2384, fax (902) 674-2742; www.birdisland.net/boat.html; puffin@birdisland.net.

Dates of 2009 trips: Daily, sea permitting. May 15–Sept. 30.

Cost: inquire. They also have cottages for rent.

Comments: *May–Aug.:* Nesting Great Cormorant; Black-legged Kittiwake; Razorbill; Black Guillemot; Atlantic Puffin. *Possible:* Northern Gannet; Osprey; Bald Eagle; Purple Sandpiper (through early June); Arctic Tern. *Marine mammals:* Gray Seal (June 1–Sept. 15). Travel to Nova Scotia’s largest seabird colony providing good photographic opportunities from the boat, including close to shore, but passengers do not land because of island’s protected status. Trip includes a fully narrated tour.

2 • Lower Bay of Fundy, Nova Scotia

Departure Point: Westport, Brier Island, NS.

Destination: Lower Bay of Fundy; offshore ledges.

Trip length: 3–5 hours.

Trip organizer: Penny Graham Mariner Cruises Whale Watch and Seabird Cruises, Westport, Brier Island, NS BOV 1H0; (800) 239-2189 or (902) 839-2346; info@novascotiawhalewatching.ca; www.novascotiawhalewatching.ca.

Dates of 2009 trips: Daily (June–October).

Cost: CDN\$48, CDN\$40 for seniors and students, less for children. Group discounts available.

New for 2009: Bay of Fundy Inn available for birders (same contact information).

Comments: Northern Fulmar (June and Sept.–Oct.); Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters (Cory’s possible); Wilson’s and Leach’s Storm-Petrels; Northern Gannet; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes; Atlantic Puffin; Razorbill; murre spp.; Black Guillemot; South Polar and Great Skuas; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Black-legged Kittiwake. (Sept.–Oct.) *Marine mammals:* Humpback, Fin, Minke, Sei, Pilot, and Northern Right Whales; Harbor Porpoise; Atlantic White-sided Dolphin; Harbor and Gray Seals. *Possible, but rare:* Orca; Sperm, Blue, and Beluga Whales.

Most trips combine whale- and seabird-watching; dedicated pelagic bird trips are available by request. Experienced naturalists give birders special attention, especially when looking for specific species. Time of year and weather conditions are major factors in the quality of each trip. Brier Island is situated along the Atlantic Flyway and offers good birding, especially during the spring and fall. All trips are narrated by a local naturalist.

3 • Brier Island, Nova Scotia

Departure Point: Westport, Brier Island, NS.

Destination: Offshore ledges.

Trip Length: Whale-watching cruises are 3–5 hours. Multiple departure times. Charter and pelagic bird cruises available upon request.

Trip Organizers: Brier Island Whale and Seabird Cruises, Ltd., Westport, Nova Scotia BOV 1H0, (800) 656-3660; toll-free in US and Canada; (902) 839-2995, fax (902) 839-2075; www.brierislandwhalewatch.com; whales@brierislandwhalewatch.com.

Schedule: mid-May–mid-Oct., weather permitting.

Cost: 2009 prices not currently available, but special rates available for groups.

Comments: Mostly advertised for whale-watching but Northern Fulmar (June–late Oct.); Greater, Sooty, and Manx (uncommon) Shearwaters, seen most trips from early Aug.–Oct. Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Northern Gannet; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes (best seen in tremendous flocks in Aug.); Pomarine and Parasitic (rare) Jaegers; skuas rare (but Great Skua regular in Oct.); Black-legged Kittiwake (Sept.–Oct.); murre and Razorbill (June and Sept.–Oct.); Black Guillemot; Atlantic Puffin (June and Aug.–Oct.); Dovekie. *Marine mammals:* Humpback, Fin, Minke, and endangered Northern Right Whales; Atlantic White-sided Dolphin; Harbor Porpoise. *Less common:* Pilot and Sei Whales; White-beaked Dolphin; *Possible:* Beluga and Sperm Whales.

Most trips are combined whale-watching and birding trips, except for specially requested pelagic birding trips. A portion of your fee supports seabird and cetacean monitoring activities by Brier Island Whale and Seabird Cruises. Accommodations are available on Brier Island.

4 • Outer Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick

Departure point: North Head Fishermen's Wharf, Grand Manan Island, NB.

Destination: The nutrient-rich tide rips and feeding areas of the outer Bay of Fundy.

Trip length: 4–5 hours.

Trip organizer: Whales-n-Sails Adventures, PO Box 1301, Grand Manan, NB E5G 4M9; toll-free phone (888) 994-4044; web site www.whales-n-sails.com info@whales-n-sails.com.

Date of 2009 trips: June–September.

Cost: \$65 CDN/person for a 4–5 hour tour. Charters and special birding trips available late May to Sept 30.

Comments: The *MSV Elsie Menota* is a 60-foot sailing vessel for up to 46 passengers. Every trip is lead by Marine Biologist Laurie Murison, a leading authority on the Bay of Fundy since 1982, and photographer/naturalist Allan McDonald. Primarily a whale-watching trip with a special sensitivity to those interested in birds.

Expectations: **Abundant:** Greater Shearwater; Wilson's Storm-Petrel; Red-necked Phalarope. **Regular:** Sooty Shearwater; Red Phalarope; Northern Gannet; Atlantic Puffin; Razorbill; Common Murre; Black Guillemot; Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Arctic Terns. **Also possible:** Manx Shearwater; Northern Fulmar; Leach's Storm-Petrel; Thick-billed Murre; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers. **Rare:** Dovekie; Great Skua. **Very Rare:** Band-rumped Storm-Petrel; Magnificent Frigatebird. **Other species:** Common Eider; Great and Double-crested Cormorants; Bald Eagle. **Marine mammals and fishes:** **Common:** Northern Right Whale; Fin and Humpback Whales; seals, and Harbor Porpoise. **Occasional:** Basking Shark; Ocean Sunfish; Sei Whale; White-sided Dolphin.

5 • Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick

Departure point: North Head, Grand Manan Island (near the ferry landing), NB.

Destination: Mouth of the Bay of Fundy.

Trip length: Spring birding trips 6–7 hours; Summer whale-watching trips, 4–5 hours.

Trip organizer: Whales-n-Sails Adventures, PO Box 1301, North Head, Grand Manan Island, NB Canada E5G 4M9; (888) 994-4044; www.4whales.com; info@whales-n-sails.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Birding trips to Murre Ledges and/or circumnavigation of Grand Manan Island (last week of May–June 20); one trip per week on the 1st good weather day of each week. Thursday mornings in July; a trip to the uninhabited "Dark Side" of Grand Manan focusing on birds, geology, and natural history of the area.

WHALE-WATCHING TRIPS: (June 21st–September 20th).

Cost: CDN: Birding Trips - \$85; Dark-Side trips - \$60; Whale-watching trips - \$65.

Comments: View whales and birds from the uncluttered deck of a 60-foot sailing yacht. Birds recorded on these trips include Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters; Northern Fulmar; Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Northern Gannet; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes; Atlantic Puffin; Razorbill; Common and Thick-billed Murre; Black Guillemot; Dovekie; Great Skua (rare); Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Arctic Terns; Common Eider; Great and Double-crested Cormorants. *Marine mammals:* Northern Right (common), Fin (common), Humpback, Minke, and Sei Whales; Harbor Porpoise; Atlantic White-sided Dolphin. *Fishes:* Basking Shark, Ocean Sunfish, and Bluefin Tuna. The whale-watching tour has special sensitivity to those interested in the many birds that feed in the same areas frequented by the whales in the Bay of Fundy. Special charters are available. Visitors to Grand Manan should set some time aside for land-birding, especially in spring and fall. All tours are lead by Marine Biologist Laurie Murison, a leading authority on the Bay of Fundy since 1982, and by photographer/naturalist Allan McDonald.

6 • Machias Seal Island, Maine

Departure point: Boating facility at Jonesport, ME.

Destination: Machias Seal Island, an Atlantic Puffin and Arctic Tern colony.

Trip length: 4–5 hours; maximum 2-hour stay on island, weather permitting.

Trip organizer: Puffin Tours of Machias Seal Island. Capt. Steve Brown with Whitney L. Norton, Atlantic, Pacific and Bering Sea, 118 Main Street Box 330, Jonesport, ME 04649; (207) 497-5933 or (207) 497-2560; puffins@machiassealiland.com; www.machiassealiland.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: 1st week of June–mid-Aug.

Cost: \$100.

Comments: Common and Arctic Terns; Razorbill and Atlantic Puffin. A few Common Murres are regularly seen on or near the island. *En route or near the island:* Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters; Wilson's Storm-Petrel; Northern Gannet; Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Black-legged Kittiwake. *Near Jonesport Harbor:* Common Loon; Great Cormorant; Common Eider; Black Guillemot. The Nortons' boat, which can carry up to 30 people, makes frequent runs during the June, July, and August breeding season. Expert on board will help with bird identifications. *Marine mammals:* Minke Whale; Harbor and Gray Seals (often seen on the crossing). Reservations are advised. The Norton family moved to Downeast Maine in 1760. Their primary goal is 100% safety; they landed more than 40,000 passengers without accident. The *Chief* is constructed of fire-proof composite, with Loran, radar, GPS, color scope, automatic pilot, and marine radio. Lodging is now available.

7 • Bar Harbor, Maine

Departure point: Bar Harbor, ME.

Destination: Mt. Desert Rock, Grand Manan Banks.

Trip length: 8 hours.

Trip organizer: Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Road, Falmouth, ME 04105; (207) 781-2330, ext 215; fax (207) 781-0974. www.maineaudubon.org

Date of 2009 trip: Saturday, October 3.

Cost: 2009 prices not yet set (\$110/member; \$135/nonmember in 2008); reservations required.

Comments: Northern Fulmar; Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters; Leach's Storm-Petrel; Northern Gannet; Great Cormorant (rare); Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; jaegers possible; Black Guillemot; Atlantic

Puffin; Razorbill; Arctic and Common Terns. Great Skua possible. Chum onboard. *Marine mammals: Possible:* Fin, Humpback, and Minke Whales; Atlantic White-sided Dolphin; Harbor Porpoise; Harbor Seal. *Fishes:* Basking Shark. *The Friendship V* (used for the 2006 ABA Bangor Convention) is a 111-foot catamaran, ensuring a smooth and stable ride. With a maximum speed of 35 knots, this boat covers much territory in a short time. **All adults required to show photo I.D.**

8 • Bar Harbor, Maine

Departure point: Bar Harbor, ME.

Destination: Mt. Desert Rock, Grand Manan Banks.

Trip length: 3 1/2–4 hours (both A.M. and P.M. trips, call for times).

Trip organizer: Bar Harbor Whale Watch Company, 1 West Street, Bar Harbor, ME. 04609; (207) 288-2386; 1- (888) WHALES-4; www.barharborwhales.com.

Dates of 2009 trip: Whales and Puffins - 23 May–39 Aug.

Cost: 2009 prices not yet set, in 2008 (\$53 for 15 year-olds and up), \$21 for ages 6-14, \$8 for under age 6); reservations highly recommended as this is very popular tourist trip.

Comments: This is a half day version of the Audubon trip without chum and concentrating mainly on seeing whales but it is still a good trip, especially when there is little fog. They used to guarantee you would see an Atlantic Puffin. *Birds:* Northern Fulmar; Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters; Leach's Storm-Petrel; Northern Gannet; Great Cormorant (rare); Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; jaegers possible; Black Guillemot; Atlantic Puffin; Razorbill; Arctic and Common Terns. *Marine mammals: Possible:* Fin, Humpback, and Minke Whales; Atlantic White-sided Dolphin; Harbor Porpoise; Harbor Seal. *Fishes:* Basking Shark. *The Friendship V* is a 111-foot catamaran, covering much territory in a short time. This is mostly a whale-watching cruise with some time spent near Little Egg Rock for nesting seabirds and terns. Pelagic species are often seen with the whales. A.M. trip is best for birders. **All adults are required to show photo I.D.**

9 • Coastal Maine

Departure point: Rockport, ME.

Destination: Coastal Maine, Nova Scotia, and northern New England; contact tour operator for more information.

Trip length: Multi-day.

Trip organizer: Rockport Schooner Cruises, PO Box 987, Rockport, ME 04856; (866) 732-2473 or (207) SEA-BIRD; info@wanderbirdcruises.com; www.wanderbirdcruises.com.

Date of 2009 trip: June 1–6 for multi-day pelagic with photographic opportunities.

Cost: \$1,500 per person.

Comments: Also offer expeditions to Newfoundland and Labrador with claim for excellent pelagic birding opportunities. Trips are aboard the motorsailer, *Wanderbird*. For more specific birding possibilities contact tour operators.

10 • Matinicus Rock, Maine

Departure point: New Harbor, Maine.

Destination: Matinicus Rock.

Trip Length: 7 hours.

Trip Organizer: Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Road, Falmouth, ME 04105; (207) 781-2330, ext 215; fax (207) 781-0974; www.maineaudubon.org.

Date of 2009 trip: Friday, June 5.

Cost: 2009 prices not yet set (\$50/member, \$60/nonmember in 2008);

reservations required.

Comments: Matinicus Rock is one of Maine's most important seabird nesting colonies. Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Common Murres, Black Guillemots, Arctic and Common Terns, and Laughing Gulls all gather to nest. A Red-billed Tropicbird spent the last two summers here. Nesting Roseate Terns at Eastern Egg Rock. Wilson's Storm Petrels, Northern Gannets, Common Murres, phalaropes, Greater and Sooty Shearwaters, Black-legged Kittiwakes, and jaegers.

11 • Hydrographer, Veatch's, Atlantis Canyons, Massachusetts

Departure point: Helen H Dock, 136 Pleasant St., Hyannis, MA.

Destination: Hydrographer, Veatch's and Atlantis Canyons (90 miles east of Nantucket, MA).

Trip organizer: Ida Giriunas for the Brookline Bird Club of Massachusetts, (781) 929-8772; email: ida8@verizon.net; http://massbird.org/bbc.

Dates of 2009 trips: Overnight August 22–23, 2009. Trip length: 42 hours.

Cost: Undetermined for this August trip.

Dates of the shorter trips: June 27 and July 18. Trip length: 18 hours.

Costs: \$150.00 which will be adjusted for inflation or extra fuel expenses.

Comments: Leaders: Rick Heil, Steve Mirick, Jeremiah Trimble, and Marshall Iliff. The *Helen H* is a chartered, comfortable, fast, 100-foot boat with padded bunks with an enthusiastic and experienced captain and crew.

Expected: Cory's, Greater, Sooty, Manx, and Audubon's Shearwaters. Leach's Storm-Petrel and all three jaegers. *Rare birds seen:* Macronesian Shearwater (2007); White-faced Storm-Petrel (2006); Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (2004, 2008); both skuas (2004); Bridled Tern (2006 & 2007, 2008).

Marine mammals & fishes: Fin, Humpback, Minke, Long-finned Pilot, Beaked and Sperm Whales. Grampus, Saddle-back, and Bottlenose Dolphins. Basking, Blue, Mako, and Hammerhead Sharks; Tuna. *Reptiles:* Loggerhead Turtle. The New England Seabird web site, www.NESeabirds.com, should be also checked for other summer pelagic trips.

12 • Nantucket Shoals, Massachusetts

Departure point: Helen H Dock, 136 Pleasant St., Hyannis, MA.

Destination: Northern Nantucket Shoals and waters 20 miles east of Nantucket.

Trip organizer: Ida Giriunas (781) 929-8772; e-mail: ida8@verizon.net for the Brookline Bird Club of Massachusetts, http://massbird.org/bbc.

Date: November 14, 2009.

Cost: \$110.00 (will be adjusted for inflation or increase fuel expenses).

Trip length: 8 hours (7 A.M.–3 P.M.).

Comments: We hope to see Common and Red-throated Loons, Northern Fulmar, Cory's, Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant and a possible skua, Common Eider, Pomerine Jaegers, Black-legged Kittiwake, Glaucous, Iceland, and Bonaparte's Gulls, and Red Phalarope. *Possible:* Black-headed and Little Gulls. *Possible:* alcids including Dovekie, Common and Thick-billed Murres, Razorbill (expected), Black Guillemot (expected), and Atlantic Puffin. *Marine mammals:* Humpback, Fin, and Minke Whales.

13 • Stellwagen Bank/Offshore Massachusetts

Departure point: Any of several Massachusetts ports are possible; schedule not available at press time.

Destination: Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge, depending upon recent reports.

Trip Length: about 4 hours.

Trip Organizer: Various whale-watch operators. A good source of information for regional pelagic birding is the New England Seabirds web site, www.NESeabirds.com. Various bird clubs sponsor pelagic trips. Trips are periodically announced on this site.

Dates of 2009 trips: TBA.

Cost: 2009 prices not currently available; some operators previously offered discounts for birders and senior citizens.

Comments: Boats visit the Stellwagen Bank every day from early April until late October. Trips look primarily for Humpback, Minke, and Fin Whales, but naturalists and captains are generally responsive to birders' interests. Depending on date, Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Greater, Cory's, and Manx Shearwaters; Wilson's and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers are likely. See "Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary" by Emmalee Tarry in the January 2001 issue of *Winging It* for an overview of seabirding in Massachusetts waters.

There are daily whale-watching trips in the eastern Massachusetts area from May to October. Trips leave from Newburyport (Newburyport Whale Watch, (978) 465-9885; Gloucester (Yankee Fleet, (800) 942-5464, and Cape Ann Whale Watch, (800) 877-5110); Boston (New England Aquarium, (617) 973-5281); Plymouth (Captain John Boats, (508) 746-2643); Barnstable (Hyannis Whale Watcher, (508) 362-6088; and Provincetown (Dolphin Fleet, (800) 826-9300. The target for all trips is primarily whales, but birds often concentrate in the same areas; some naturalists are capable birders. Whale-watching and birding have been very good since 1996 due to a dramatic increase of the food fish on Stellwagen Bank. All trips are appropriate for children and non-birding relatives; some can accommodate wheelchairs. Contact specific boat operators.

The New England Seabird web site, www.NESeabirds.com, should be checked for summer pelagic trips.

14 • Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

Departure Point: Newburyport, Massachusetts.

Destinations: Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, Jeffrey's Ledge, Gulf of Maine.

Trip Length: 5 hours (10 A.M.–3 P.M. weekdays, 8:30 A.M.–1:30 P.M. weekends).

Trip Organizer: Massachusetts Audubon Society, Joppa Flats Education Center, P.O. Box 1558, Newburyport, MA 01950, (978) 462-9998; www.massaudubon.org/joppaflats **Dates of 2009 Trips:** Birding and Whale Trips: July 6, July 26, August 10, August 22, and September 8; led by Dr. David Larson and Bill Gette.

Cost: Please call (978) 462-9998 for details.

Comments: Bird Species: Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters; Wilson's Storm-Petrel; Common, Roseate, Forster's, and Least Terns; Northern Gannet; Red-necked Phalarope; Parasitic Jaeger. *Marine mammals:* Humpback, Fin, and Minke Whales; Harbor Porpoise; White-sided Dolphin.

15 • Great South Channel, New York

Departure Point: Viking Dock at Montauk Harbor, Montauk, NY.

Destination: Great South Channel, east of Nantucket Island.

Trip length: 51 hours.

Trip organizer: Dr. Arthur H. Kopelman, Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island, Inc. (CRESLI); www.cresli.org; with Dr. Angus Wilson.

Dates of 2009 trips: Leaving Montauk at 7:00 P.M. on Sunday 8/9 returning 10:30 P.M. Tuesday, August 11. Also, 8-hour whale and pelagic bird trips from Montauk, weekly on Wednesdays, leaving the dock at 9

A.M., returning 4 P.M.

Cost: \$325 per person (adult); \$162.50 (12 and under); (under 6 years – no charge but not recommended for children under the age of 6. Cost of weekly Wednesday trips to be announced.

Comments: Reservations are required and must be made on the CRESLI website at www.cresli.org/cresli/reservations/offshore_res.html. *Expected: Marine mammals:* Humpback, Fin, Minke, Northern Right, Sperm and Pilot Whales; Common, Bottlenose, Atlantic White-sided, and Risso's Dolphins. *Reptiles:* Leatherback, Green, and Loggerhead Turtles. *Fishes:* Basking, Great White, Hammerhead, and Blue Sharks; Bluefin, Yellowfin, and Bigeye Tuna; White Marlin; Ocean Sunfish. *Invertebrates:* Portuguese Man-of-War. *Birds:* Cory's, Greater, Sooty, Manx, and Audubon's Shearwaters; Wilson's, Leach's, and White-faced Storm-Petrels (possible); Northern Fulmar; Northern Gannet; Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; South Polar Skua; Great Black-backed, Herring, and Bonaparte's Gulls.

The 140-foot *Viking Starship* sleeps up to 65 in navy-style bunks. Excellent food available at reasonable prices; passengers may bring their own food, as well. Trips led by seasoned marine mammal biologist and professor. Volunteers from CRESLI will assist with spotting, identification, and data collection. Consult website for departure and arrival times and for date changes; www.cresli.org.

16 • Belmar, New Jersey

Destination: Winter: New Jersey and New York pelagic waters, as far as the Hudson Canyon.

Trip Length: 12 or 14 hours, depending upon trip.

Trip Organizer: See Life Paulagics, PO Box 161, Green Lane, PA 18054 (215) 234-6805; www.paulagics.com; info@paulagics.com.

Dates of 2009 Trips: Sun., Feb. 7, 12-hour, Sun., Aug. 9, 14-hour.

Cost: 12-hour \$155, 14-hour \$185.

Comments: Trips are aboard the 80-foot *Suzie Girl*, a fast boat with a comfortable cabin, full walk-around and birdable upper deck. All trips have enough friendly and experienced leaders for the group.

February possibilities: Northern Fulmar; Northern Gannet; Razorbill; Common and Thick-billed Murre; Dovekie; Atlantic Puffin; Red Phalarope; Pomarine Jaeger; Glaucous, Iceland, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls; Black-legged Kittiwake. We find Dovekie on virtually every February trip, often in the hundreds or even thousands.

August possibilities: Cory's, Greater, Manx, and Audubon's Shearwaters; White-faced, Wilson's, and Leach's Storm-Petrel; Red-necked Phalarope; South Polar Skua; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Common, Arctic, Black, and Bridled Terns. We find White-faced Storm-Petrel on roughly one third of our Mid-Atlantic trips at this time of year.

17 • Lewes, Delaware

Destination: Delaware and Maryland pelagic waters, as far as the Baltimore and Wilmington Canyons.

Trip Length: 12-, 14-, or 22-hours, depending upon trip.

Trip Organizer: See Life Paulagics, PO Box 161, Green Lane, PA 18054; (215) 234-6805; www.paulagics.com; info@paulagics.com.

Dates of 2009 Trips: Sat., Feb. 7, 12-hour; Sun., Aug. 16, 14-hour; Thu.–Fri., Aug. 20–21, 22-hour (Delaware waters); Sun.–Mon., Aug. 23–24, 22-hour (Maryland waters)

Cost: \$150 for 12-hour trip, \$175 for 14-hour trip, \$TBD for 22-hour trip.

Comments: Trips are aboard the comfortable 85-foot *Thelma Dale IV*, a nice boat with a comfortable cabin, full walk-around, and birdable upper deck. All trips have enough friendly and experienced leaders for the group.

February possibilities: Northern Fulmar; Northern Gannet; Razorbill;

Common and Thick-billed Murres; Dovekie; Atlantic Puffin; Red Phalarope; Pomarine Jaeger; Glaucous, Iceland, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls; Black-legged Kittiwake. We find Dovekie on virtually every February trip, often in the hundreds or even thousands.

August possibilities: Cory's, Greater, Manx, and Audubon's Shearwaters; White-faced, Wilson's, and Leach's Storm-Petrel; Red-necked Phalarope; South Polar Skua; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Common, Arctic, Black, and Bridled Terns. We find White-faced Storm-Petrel on roughly one third of our Mid-Atlantic trips at this time of year. Leach's Storm-Petrel has been found on several overnights. The 2008 overnights found two White-faced Storm-Petrels, the 2007 overnights found a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, and the 2006 overnights found two White-faced Storm-Petrels and a Sabine's Gull.

18 • North Carolina's Outer Banks

Departure Point: Manteo, North Carolina.

Destination: The Gulf Stream off North Carolina's Outer Banks.

Trip Length: 11–12 hours.

Trip Organizers: Captain Foreman (reservations, (252) 473-5577) and Mary Gustafson (birding info, live4birds@aol.com).

Dates of 2009 Trips: Sat., May 30, Sun., May 31, Mon, Jun. 1, Sat. Aug. 15, Sun. Aug 16, Mon Aug 17.

Cost: \$130.

Comments: Trips are aboard the legendary *Country Girl*, an extremely fast and comfortable boat. The captain is highly experienced and the boat uniquely suited to chasing down fast-flying rarities (if sea conditions permit). Manteo's proximity to great land-birding locations like Alligator River NWR (Swainson's Warbler) and Palmetto Peartree Preserve (Red-cockaded Woodpecker), as well as many other sites and activities, make it a perfect place for an extended trip. All boat trips have enough friendly and experienced leaders for the group. Note that we expect to troll some lures along the way. Fishing is not a focus of this trip, but we will put out a few lines. IF FISHING ON A PELAGIC BOTHERS YOU, PLEASE CONSIDER THIS TRIP CAREFULLY. **Possibilities:** Herald/Trindade, Fea's, Bermuda, and Black-capped Petrels; Cory's, Greater, Sooty, Manx, and Audubon's Shearwaters; Wilson's, Leach's, and Band-rumped Storm-Petrels; White-tailed and Red-billed Tropicbirds; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers, and Roseate, Common, Arctic, Bridled, and Sooty Terns. **Rarities:** North America's first accepted Black-bellied Storm-Petrel, North America's second accepted Bulwer's Petrel, multiple European Storm-Petrels, multiple Bermuda Petrels, many Fea's and Herald/Trindade Petrels, and both White-tailed and Red-billed Tropicbirds.

19 • North Carolina: Petrels & the Deep Blue Sea

Departure point: Wilmington, NC

Destination: The Gulf Stream and Outer Banks

Trip Length: 10 days

Trip Organizer: Field Guides, Inc., (800) 728-4953, fieldguides@fieldguides.com

9433 Bee Cave Rd., Bldg. 1, Suite 150, Austin, TX 78733

Date of 2009 trip: May 16-25, 2009 with George Armistead & second guide

Cost: \$3175 from Wilmington. Limited to 14 participants.

Comments: Three pelagic trips out into the Gulf Stream offer Carolina birding at its finest and the best variety of seabirds the East Coast offers, among them Audubon's Shearwater, Black-capped Petrel, and probably Band-rumped Storm-Petrel or Bridled Tern. May is equally famous for migrant birds bound for the northern latitudes—Long-tailed Jaeger, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Manx and Greater Shearwaters, and

South Polar Skua—and nearly every May trip has a surprise, with Bermuda, Fea's, and Herald Petrels and White-tailed and Red-billed Tropicbirds possible. Other sea life abounds and the very unpredictability of these trips makes each day exciting, with whales, sea turtles, sharks, and other sea creatures often punctuating the day's birding. By alternating days between land and sea we'll have time to study the birds and creatures we've seen offshore through a series of instructive lectures and also to study some shorebirds and songbirds on land.

20 • Outer Banks, North Carolina

Departure Point: Hatteras Landing Marina, Hatteras, NC, and Broad Creek Fishing Center, Wanchese, NC. **Destination:** Most trips visit the Gulf Stream and/or edge of Continental Shelf and slope 20-50 miles offshore. Winter Trips focus on cooler nearshore waters and sometimes the Gulf Stream edge.

Trip Length: 10-12 hours.

Trip Organizer: Brian Patteson, PO Box 772, Hatteras, NC 27943; (252) 986-1363; brian@patteson.com; www.seabirding.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Depart from Hatteras unless otherwise specified; weather dates in parentheses: Jan. 17(18); Feb 7(8); Feb 14(15); Feb 15(16); Feb. 21(22); Feb. 28(March 1). May 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, June 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 27, 28; July 11, 12, 25, 26; Aug. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 29, 30; *White-faced Storm-Petrel* set from Wanchese; Aug 21, 22, 23.

Cost: Most trips are \$155/person in 2009. We will operate some of the trips with as few as 10 participants at the standard rate if necessary. Discounts are available for multiple trips and for groups of eight or more passengers booking together. Whole boat charters on the *Stormy Petrel II* in Hatteras start at \$1550/day for the first ten passengers.

Comments: *Jan. and Feb.:* Winter trips here have yielded an interesting mix of cold-water and warm-water seabirds; most have found Great Skua with plentiful gulls and gannets. Manx Shearwater and Red Phalarope are more likely here in winter than farther north. There are also good chances for Northern Fulmar, Black-legged Kittiwake, Atlantic Puffin, Dovekie, and Razorbill, plus thousands of near-shore seabirds, often including Little Gull.

The birds are often much closer to shore here than off most mid-Atlantic ports, so that we have seen skuas within sight of land, and on one February trip we photographed a Yellow-nosed Albatross three miles from the beach. *May–Nov.:* **Likely:** Black-capped Petrel; Cory's, Greater (sometimes doesn't arrive until June), Sooty (Spring-only), and Audubon's Shearwaters; Wilson's, Leach's (May–July best), and Band-rumped (May–mid-Aug. best) Storm-Petrels; Red-necked Phalarope (mostly late May and Aug.–Sept.); Pomarine Jaeger; and Bridled and Sooty Terns (Aug.–Sept. best). **Possible:** Trindade Petrel (We saw at least 16 in 2007, six of these in one day); Fea's Petrel (we saw 8 in 2007; most likely from mid May–mid-July). Also White-faced Storm-Petrel (very rare July–Sept., mostly off Oregon Inlet), White-tailed Tropicbird, Red-billed Tropicbird, Masked Booby (July–Sept.), Parasitic and Long-tailed Jaegers, South Polar Skua, Sabine's Gull (mostly Sept.), and Arctic Tern (spring-only). **Very, very rare, but possible:** Bermuda Petrel (we've seen 26 here since 1993 from May to late- Sept.), Bulwer's Petrel (two records here since 1992), Cape Verde Shearwater (first documented North American sighting off Hatteras in August 2004), European Storm-Petrel (12 seen since 2003, all mid-May to early-June), Black-bellied Storm-Petrel (May 2004, June 2007, July 2006), Swinhoe's Storm-Petrel (June 2008 and Aug. 1998), Brown Booby; Brown Noddy.

Marine mammals: *Feb.:* Bottlenose Dolphin, Spotted Dolphin, Common Dolphin and Harbor Porpoise have been seen offshore on past winter trips; good chance for Humpback Whale close to shore, and two Feb. sightings of Northern Right Whale, so far. Loggerhead Sea Turtles can be numerous, and Ocean Sunfish and Basking Sharks are sometimes seen. *May–Sept.:* Bottlenose and Spotted Dolphins, Short-finned

Pilot and Cuvier's Beaked Whales are the most likely cetaceans. Sperm Whales have been seen on a number of recent trips, particularly in May. Cetacean rarities have included Gervais' and Blainville's Beaked Whales, Dwarf Sperm Whale, False Killer Whale, Rough-toothed and Clymene Dolphins. *Reptiles:* Loggerhead and Leatherback Turtles are occasionally seen. *Fishes:* A variety of big game fish, including Yellowfin Tuna, Wahoo, Dolphin (Mahi Mahi), Blue and White Marlins, and Sailfish, might also be encountered. Sampling the Sargasso weed reveals a variety of interesting, but smaller sea life. Photographic opportunities are sometimes abundant on these trips, and we do our best to get close to the wildlife. Chumming can be particularly effective on breezy days. Hatteras is the closest port to the Gulf Stream in NC, and the Gulf Stream off North Carolina is probably the best place in the western North Atlantic to see a variety of pelagic seabirds throughout the year. Most trips to the Gulf Stream expect to see Black-capped Petrel. Our White-faced Storm-Petrel trips operate from Oregon Inlet and explore cooler waters, where Black-capped Petrel is scarce or absent. We run most trips on our own vessel, the 61' *Stormy Petrel II*. She has a large fiberglass hull, high railings all around, and a true walk-around layout with a bow pulpit. There is a tremendous amount of deck space as we limit trips to 26 passengers or less, depending on the season. Restrooms are at deck level and feature household toilets. The *Stormy Petrel II* is a very comfortable and capable boat in the Gulf Stream seas. Our experience in operating and leading pelagic trips in these waters is unrivaled. Most trips have three to five friendly, knowledgeable leaders aboard. Our leaders include Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, Steve Howell, Chris Sloan, Ned Brinkley, Todd McGrath, George Armistead, Bob Fogg, Jamie Cameron, Richard Crossley, David Shoch, and other skilled seabirders. We use walkie-talkies for a fast relay of sightings on the PA system. Please write or call for a free brochure, or visit our web site for more information, including results of over 400 trips since 1992.

21 • Miami Beach, Florida

Departure point: Miami Beach Marina, 300 Alton Road, Dock A, Miami Beach, FL; www.fishingmiami.com.

Destination: Biscayne National Park, Gulf Stream waters off Miami.

Trip length: 8 hours (7 A.M.–3 P.M.).

Trip Organizer: Tropical Audubon Society, 5530 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143; (305) 667-7337, www.tropicalaudubon.org; fieldtrips@tropicalaudubon.org.

Date of 2009 trip: May 30.

Cost: \$160 per person.

Comments: Our vessel is the *Another Reward*, the flagship of Reward Fishing Fleet. This spacious 70-foot party boat is US Coast Guard licensed for over 100 passengers on ocean routes. Amenities include a large air-conditioned salon, clean ladies and men's restrooms, an upper viewing deck and full walk-around capabilities on both decks. Leaders for this trip will be Roberto Torres, Larry Manfredi, Paul Bithorn and Raul Urgelles. From Miami Beach, we'll first visit Fowey Light in Biscayne National Park, a reliable location for Brown Booby. We'll then head to the edge of the Gulf Stream, only a few miles offshore, to search for weed lines and associated pelagic birds. Likely species include Cory's, Greater and Audubon's Shearwater, Wilson's and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Northern Gannet, Magnificent Frigatebird, Bridled and Sooty Tern and Brown Noddy. Possible species include Black-capped Petrel, Sooty and Manx Shearwater, Leach's Storm-Petrel, White-tailed and Red-billed Tropicbird (seen off Miami during late spring in both 2006 and 2008), Red-necked and Red Phalaropes, Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers, Sabine's Gull and Arctic Tern.

22 • Dry Tortugas, Florida

Departure point: Key West, FL (Oceanside Marina).

Destination: Dry Tortugas.

Trip Length: 4 days.

Trip Organizer: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT), 2525 Wallingwood Drive, Suite 1003, Austin, TX 78746, www.ventbird.com, info@ventbird.com, (800) 328-8368 or (512) 328-5221.

Date of 2009 trip: April 30–May 3.

Cost: \$1295 per person from Key West. Limited to 11 participants.

Comments: Accommodations aboard the Coast Guard-inspected, air-conditioned, 60-foot *Playmate*, which comfortably sleeps up to 11 participants in semi-private cabins, with two bathrooms with showers, a sun deck, a shaded back deck, and a seawater desalination system. Our focus will be on seabirds, migrating landbirds, and historic Fort Jefferson. Our leader will be Brennan Mulrooney. *Expected:* Breeding tropical seabirds, including Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy, Magnificent Frigatebird, and Masked Booby are the main attractions, though rare visitors such as Brown Booby (quite regular) and Black Noddy are also possible. There is always a fine assortment of migrant passerines at this season; unusual weather may result in great fallouts. Our return to Key West should produce Audubon's Shearwater and Bridled, Roseate, and Sandwich Terns. VENT also offers a pre-pelagic tour to South Florida, April 21–May 1.

23 • Dry Tortugas, Florida

Departure point: Key West, FL.

Destination: Dry Tortugas.

Trip length: 4 days.

Trip organizer: Larry Manfredi, PO Box 343002, Homestead, FL 33034; (305) 247-3960; birderlm@bellsouth.net; birderlm@bellsouth.net; www.southfloridabirding.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Apr. 7–10, 10–13, 14–17, 17–20, 21–24, 24–27, 27–30. Call or visit website for extra dates. Associated land tours available.

Cost: Visit website for costs. Prices include all meals, drinks, and accommodations from Key West.

Comments: Spring trips to Dry Tortugas during peak of spring migration. Audubon's Shearwater; Band-rumped Storm-Petrel; Roseate, Sooty, and Bridled Terns; with luck, the elegant White-tailed Tropicbird; Brown and Black Noddies, Brown and Masked Boobies. Also, an exciting mix of migrant landbirds. Limit of 11 participants on 60-foot, air-conditioned, Coast Guard-inspected yacht, ensures comfort and privacy on these trips. Post-tour birding trips available.

24 • Dry Tortugas, Florida

Departure Point: Oceanside Marina, Stock Island, FL.

Destination: Dry Tortugas; weather permitting into the Gulf Stream.

Trip Length: 3 days and 3 nights aboard the *Tiburon*.

Trip Organizer: Adrian Binns, Wildside Birding Tours, 539 Prince Frederick St., King of Prussia PA 19406; (888) 875-9453; binns@wildsidetoursinc.com, www.wildsidenaturetours.com.

Dates of 2009 Trips: April 21–24; April 29–May 2 (South Florida tour April 24–May 3);

Cost: approx \$1250 from Key West; includes all meals.

Comments: Our 16th year leading trips to the Dry Tortugas. Two trips at the height of spring migration should produce good numbers of migrant passerines as well as the possibility of a Caribbean stray (Yellow-faced Grassquit and Bananaquit in 2002; Red-legged Honeycreeper in 2003; Bahama Mockingbird in 2007). Breeding seabirds: Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy, Magnificent Frigatebird and Masked Booby. Regular: Brown Booby. *Possible:* Black Noddy. *Likely* in Gulf Stream: Audubon Shearwater; Bridled Tern; Pomarine Jaeger. White-tailed Tropicbird (seen in 2004) would be the icing on the cake! The Apr 29–May 2 dates can be combined with a 6-day South Florida trip seeking all the land specialties. Trips are aboard the 13-passenger, air-conditioned, 63-

foot *Tiburón*, with 2 bunk beds per room; the most comfortable birding boat that visits the Dry Tortugas; outstanding food. Snorkeling is available. Limited to 13 participants.

25 • Texas Gulf of Mexico

Departure Point: South Padre Island, Texas

Destinations: Gulf of Mexico

Trip Length: 12 hours

Trip Organizer: South Padre Island World Birding Center; reservations; (956) 761-3000; information rgvbirds@hotmail.com and <http://texaspelagics.com/>

Dates of 2009 Trips: July 25, August 29, September 19.

Cost: To be determined.

Comments: The *Osprey* and *Osprey II* are both comfortable boats with a walk-around bow, ample seating on the outside and in the air conditioned cabin. Friendly, experienced leaders. *Birds:* Uncommon to regular species include Cory's and Audubon's Shearwaters; Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (summer); Magnificent Frigatebird, Masked Booby; Bridled and Sooty Tern; Pomarine Jaeger. *Accidental and rare species:* Yellow-nosed Albatross, Greater, Sooty, and Manx Shearwaters, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Red-billed Tropicbird; Brown Booby; Long-tailed Jaeger, Brown Noddy.

26 • Los Coronados Islands, Mexico from San Diego, California

Departure point: Point Loma Sportfishing, 1403 Scott Street, San Diego, CA 92106. Phone: (619) 223-1627.

Destination: This 9-hour pelagic takes us to the bird-rich 9-mile bank, then south to the Los Coronados Islands in Mexico to observe the Brown Booby and Brown Pelican nesting colonies along with Black Oystercatchers and perhaps an American Oystercatcher. We'll look for Blue-footed Booby and Masked Booby, both of which were seen sporadically on the islands in 2008.

Trip length: 9 hours.

Trip Organizer: San Diego Audubon's S.D. Bird Festival and Buena Vista Audubon. Coordinator: Terry Hunefeld (760) 908-3453 www.SocalBirding.com.

Dates of 2009 Trips: March 5, 7, 8; San Diego Audubon's **San Diego Bird Festival** featuring David Sibley. April 18, May 15, Oct 3, Nov 14 Buena Vista Audubon Society

Cost: \$65-\$90 (see website) www.SocalBirding.com.

Comments: The *Grande* is a big, comfortable 85-foot live-aboard. Breakfast, burgers, sandwiches and beverages are available for purchase. Trip is limited to 55 participants and 5 leaders. Expectations for each season: See www.SocalBirding.com for detailed species lists including status and distribution for seabirds in the SoCal bight and trip logs of our 2008 pelagics from SoCal. These trips will be led by Guy McCaskie, Paul Lehman, Todd McGrath, Jon Feenstra, Matthew Sadowski, Dave Povey, Dave Pereksta and Terry Hunefeld. Our focus is seabirds and marine mammals. *Seen on these trips in 2008:* Fin, Minke, Blue, Gray, and Humpback Whales, Risso's, Pacific White-sided, Common, and Bottlenose Dolphins, California Sea Lion, Harbor and Elephant Seals.

March: Brown Booby; Xantus's Murrelet; Black Oystercatcher; Northern Fulmar; Black-vented and Sooty Shearwater; Pomarine Jaeger; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. *Possible species:* Short-tailed and Manx Shearwaters; Blue-footed and Masked Boobies. Ancient Murrelet; Northern Fulmar; Black, Ashy, Leach's, and Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels. Black-legged Kittiwake; Arctic Tern; Parasitic Jaeger; Pigeon Guillemot; Red-necked Phalarope.

April/May: Brown Booby; Xantus's Murrelet; Black Oystercatcher;

Pink-footed, Sooty and Black-vented Shearwaters. Leach's and Black Storm-Petrels; Pomarine Jaeger; Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets; Red-necked Phalarope. *Possible Species:* Flesh-footed Shearwater; Blue-footed and Masked Boobies; Northern Fulmar; Ashy and Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels; Parasitic Jaeger; Red Phalarope; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot.

October/November: Brown Booby; Black Oystercatcher; Pink-footed, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters; Leach's and Black Storm-Petrels; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Arctic Tern; Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes. *Possible species* (all seen in 2008): Flesh-footed Shearwater; Blue-footed and Masked Boobies; Northern Fulmar; Xantus's (both subspecies) and Craveri's Murrelets; Least, Ashy, and Wilson's Storm-Petrels; Sabine's Gull.

27 • 2-Day, 2-Night Pelagic Trip to Southern California Deep Water

Departure point: Point Loma Sportfishing, 1403 Scott Street, San Diego, CA 92106. Phone: (619) 223-1627.

Destination: These 2-full-day, 2-night pelagic trips take us out to deep waters more than 120 miles offshore San Diego. We depart early Saturday and spend the day birding and motoring out over seamounts, ridges and dome, exploring birdy life-zones. We go to bed Saturday night and awake at dawn Sunday to spend an entire day hunting albatross, shearwater, rare pterodroma and tropicbirds in deep water along the edge of the Continental Shelf.

Trip length: 2-full-day, 2-nights

Trip Organizer: Buena Vista Audubon Society. Coordinator: Terry Hunefeld (760) 908-3453, www.SocalBirding.com

Dates of 2009 Expeditions: May 9-11, 2009, November 7-9, 2009

Cost: \$225 (see www.SocalBirding.com).

Comments: *Grande* is a stable, comfortable 85-foot live-aboard with open bunk-house style individual berths, 2 bathrooms, and a roomy salon-lounge area. Meals, sandwiches and beverages are available on board for purchase. Overnight trips are limited to 38 participants and 5 leaders. SoCalBirding was born in 2008 and was greeted with enthusiasm by the pelagic birding community. Our trips depart early Saturday morning, explore the "birdy" Nine-mile bank and other underwater features while motoring west, enjoy dinner at sunset about 80 miles offshore, go to sleep, and wake up Sunday morning 120 miles offshore at the shelf edge in the land of the pterodroma. We'll spend all day Sunday - from dawn to sunset - in the albatross/pterodroma/tropicbird zone, have dinner, celebrate our sightings, go to sleep and wake up Monday morning at 5 A.M. back in San Diego.

Expectations for each season: See www.SocalBirding.com for detailed species lists including status and distribution for seabirds in the SoCal bight.

May: Red-billed Tropicbird; Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses; Flesh-footed, Pink-footed, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters; Ashy, Leach's, and Black Storm-Petrels; South Polar Skua; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Common Murre; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes. *Target species:* Short-tailed Albatross; Cook's and Murphy's Petrel.

November: Red-billed Tropicbird; Laysan Albatross; Pink-footed, Buller's, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters; Least, Leach's, Black, and Ashy Storm-Petrels; South Polar Skua; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Xantus's Murrelet; Arctic Tern; Sabine's Gull; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes. *Target species:* Short-tailed Albatross; Red-tailed Tropicbird; Stejneger's, Cook's, and Bulwer's Petrels; Craveri's Murrelet.

28 • Southwest ABA AREA Deep Water Expedition

Departure point: Fisherman's Landing, 2838 Garrison St., San Diego, CA 92106. (619) 221-8500.

Destination: *SEARCHER* covers the southwestern corner of the ABA from the Mexican border, north to the Channel Islands, then west more than 100 miles offshore to travel south over the Continental Shelf visiting underwater seamounts, ridges and domes where nutrient-rich upwellings create life-zones attracting albatross, tropicbirds and rare pterodroma petrels.

Trip length: 5 days

Trip Organizer: Searcher Natural History Tours, Coordinator/Owner: Celia Condit (619) 226-2403. <http://www.bajawhale.com/> and *click* "birding trips"; 2838 Garrison Street, San Diego, CA 92106.

Dates of 2009 Expeditions: April 30–May 4; September 7–11

Cost: \$1015 includes all meals and beverages (and birds).

Comments: *Searcher* is a spacious and luxurious 95-foot live-aboard with birding observation decks on the stern, upper deck and the bow. Trips are limited to 28 passengers and five leaders to ensure plenty of room. Guests enjoy 4 clean bathrooms, 2 hot showers and 14 air-conditioned cabins. Delicious meals, snacks and beverages are included. Trips are led by Todd McGrath, Paul Lehman, Paul Guris, Dave Pereksta, Jon Feenstra, and Terry Hunefeld.

The primary focus of Searcher Expeditions is to ensure everyone aboard sees all the regional bird specialties. A special effort is made to find rare species on every trip, and we always encounter and take time to study marine mammals. The luxury of 5 days at sea in deep water allows us to enjoy natural wonders few people ever experience.

Every trip has had a rarity that is a lifer for 95% aboard. Seen in the past 5 years from *SEARCHER*: Hawaiian, Cook's, Murphy's, and Bulwer's Petrels; Laysan Albatross; Manx and Flesh-footed Shearwaters; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets; both Red-billed and Red-tailed Tropicbirds. Visit the website for bird lists of every trip since we began in 2003. <http://www.bajawhale.com/> (click birding trips)

SEARCHER has encountered an impressive array of marine life: Orca (Killer Whale), Mako and Blue Sharks; Mola Mola; Blue, Fin, Humpback, Sei, Sperm, Baird's Beaked, Minke, and Gray Whales; Pacific White-sided, Northern Right-whale, and Risso's Dolphins; Elephant Seal; Northern Fur and Guadalupe Fur Seals.

Expectations: See www.SocalBirding.com for detailed species lists of *SEARCHER* Trips including Status and Distribution Tables for seabirds in the SoCal bight and detailed trip reports and photos of all SoCal trips in 2008.

April/May Expedition: Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses; Cook's Petrel; Red-billed Tropicbird; Pink-footed, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters, Leach's, Black, and Ashy Storm-Petrels; South Polar Skua; Pomarine Jaeger; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Common Murre; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes. *Target species:* Short-tailed Albatross; Flesh-footed and Manx Shearwaters; Murphy's, Bulwer's, and Hawaiian Petrels; Arctic Tern; Sabine's Gull; Long-tailed Jaeger.

September Expedition: Cook's Petrel; Red-billed Tropicbird; Black-footed Albatross; Flesh-footed, Pink-footed, Buller's, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters; Leach's, Least, Black, and Ashy Storm-Petrels; South Polar Skua; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Xantus's Murrelet; Arctic Tern; Sabine's Gull; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes. *Target species:* Short-tailed Albatross; Streaked Shearwater; Murphy's, Hawaiian, and Bulwer's Petrels; Red-tailed Tropicbird; Craveri's Murrelet.

29 • Palos Verdes Escarpment and Redondo Canyon, California

Departure Point: Ports of Call, San Pedro.

Destination: Palos Verdes Escarpment and Redondo Canyon.

Trip Length: Depart 7:30 A.M.–8 hours.

Trip Organizer: Los Angeles Audubon Society, P.O. Box 931057,

Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057, (323) 876-0202 (Mon.-Thurs., 9:30–4:00), fldtrip@laudubon.org peltrip@laudubon.org. Please call (323) 874-1318, #4 for last minute recorded changes.

Date of 2009 trip: February 28, 2000.

Cost: \$70.

Comments: This 8-hour trip departs from Ports of Call in San Pedro on the *M/V Pacific Adventure*. *Expected:* Northern Fulmar, Short-tailed, Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters (possible); rocky shorebirds; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. *Occasional:* Ancient Murrelet. *Rare:* Manx Shearwater. Gray Whales and several species of dolphins are often seen. There is a full galley on board. Please restrict carry-ons due to very limited cabin space.

30 • Santa Cruz Island and Pelagic

Departure Point: Island Packers' Oxnard dock in the Channel Islands Harbor, CA.

Destination: Prisoner's Cove for Island Scrub-Jay and then to pelagic waters returning via Anacapa Island.

Trip Length: Departs 8:00 A.M. – 8 hours.

Trip Organizer: Los Angeles Audubon Society, P.O. Box 931057, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057, (323) 876-0202 (Mon.-Thurs., 9:30–4:00), fldtrip@laudubon.org; peltrip@laudubon.org. Please call (323) 874-1318, #4 for last minute recorded changes.

Date of 2009 trip: Saturday, June 6, 2009.

Cost: \$95.

Comments: This trip departs on the *M/V Vanguard*. We will land at Prisoner's Cove where the endemic Island Scrub-Jay is easily seen. Then, we will cruise out to sea for pelagic birding, returning by Anacapa Island. *Birds seen on prior trips:* Northern Fulmar; Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters; rocky shorebirds; South Polar Skua; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's Murrelet. *Uncommon:* Flesh-footed Shearwater; American Oystercatcher; and Tufted Puffin. A Brown Booby has been seen on Anacapa Island. A box lunch and breakfast can be ordered at the dockside deli, Latitude 34 (805) 815-4131.

31 • San Juan Seamount, California

Departure Point: Departs 7 A.M. from Santa Barbara Harbor.

Destination: A deep water trip toward the San Juan Seamount.

Trip Length: 13 hours.

Trip Organizer: Los Angeles Audubon Society, P.O. Box 931057, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057, (323) 876-0202 (Mon.-Thurs., 9:30–4:00), fldtrip@laudubon.org; peltrip@laudubon.org. Please call (323) 874-1318, #4 for last minute recorded changes.

Date of 2009 trip: Saturday, April 25, 2009.

Cost: \$195.

Comments: This trip departs from the Santa Barbara Harbor on the fast catamaran *Condor Express* returning by approximately 8:00 P.M. We will cruise along the deepwater shelf by the San Juan Seamount. *Birds previously seen:* Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters; Ashy and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. *Uncommon species:* Laysan Albatross; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Red-billed Tropicbird and Tufted Puffin. *Rare:* Murphy's Petrel. There is a complete galley that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

32 • San Juan Seamount and Santa Rosa Ridge

Departure Point: Sea landing dock in the Santa Barbara Harbor.

Destination: A deep water trip to the San Juan Seamount and

Santa Rosa Ridge.

Trip Length: Departs 7:00 A.M. – about 13 hours in length.

Trip Organizer: Los Angeles Audubon Society, P.O. Box 931057, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057, (323) 876-0202 (Mon.-Thurs., 9:30–4:00), fldtrip@laaudubon.org peltrip@laaudubon.org. Please call (323) 874-1318, #4 for last minute recorded changes.

Date of 2009 trip: Saturday, July 25, 2009.

Cost: \$195.

Comments: This trip departs from Santa Barbara Harbor on the catamaran *Condor Express*. We will cruise along the deep water shelf by the San Juan Seamount. **Expected:** Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Pink-footed and Sooty Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Pomarine Jaeger; Black, Ashy, and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Pigeon Guillemot; Common Murre; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. At this time of year both Cook's Petrel and Red-billed Tropicbirds have been seen in the area. **Mega-rarities:** Hawaiian/Galapagos and Stejneger's Petrels and Wedge-rumped Storm-Petrel. There is a complete galley on board that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

33 • Northern Channel Islands National Monument

Departure Point: Santa Barbara Harbor.

Destination: Around the Northern Channel Islands for rare shearwaters.

Trip Length: Departs 7:30 A.M. – 8 hours.

Trip Organizer: Los Angeles Audubon Society, P.O. Box 931057, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057, (323) 876-0202 (Mon.-Thurs., 9:30–4:00), fldtrip@laaudubon.org peltrip@laaudubon.org. Please call (323) 874-1318, #4 for last minute recorded changes.

Date of 2009 trip: Saturday, September 26, 2009.

Cost: To be determined.

Comments: This trip departs from the Santa Barbara Harbor on the catamaran *Condor Express*. **Expected:** Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed and Black-vented Shearwaters; Black, Ashy, and Leach's Storm-Petrels; cormorants (3); rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine, and Parasitic Jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Royal, Common, and Arctic Terns. **Uncommon species or rarities:** Buller's Shearwater, Least Storm-Petrel; Red-billed Tropicbird; South Polar Skua, Long-tailed Jaeger; and Craveri's Murrelet. Whales and dolphins can be seen this time of year. There is a complete galley that serves breakfast and lunch.

34 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure Point: Monterey Whale Watch Center, Monterey, CA.

Destination: Monterey Bay Submarine Canyon; Albacore Grounds.

Trip length: 8–12 hours.

Trip organizer: Monterey Seabirds, www.montereyseabirds.com; www.montereyseabirds.com/; www.montereybaywhalewatch.com; (831) 375-4658.

Date of 2009 trips: Please visit the website for the 2009 schedule.

Cost: Please visit the website for the 2009 costs.

Comments: Trips aboard the 55-foot *Pt. Sur Clipper*, used only for natural history trips. Skipper Richard Ternullo has more than 30 years experience at seabirding and whale-watching excursions. All trips have experienced leaders and a marine naturalist onboard; leaders include Don Roberson, Steve Bailey, Dan Singer, Roger Wolfe, Todd Easterla, and Tim Amaral. Group size is limited to ensure a quality experience for all on board. See website for previous trip reports.

Expectations: *Winter/Spring:* Black-footed Albatross; Short-tailed Shearwater; Red Phalarope; Ancient Murrelet; Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets; Northern Fulmar; Black-legged Kittiwake. **Possibilities:** Laysan and Short-tailed (seen on April 2007 trip) Albatrosses; Manx Shearwa-

ter, Yellow-billed Loon. **Summer:** Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot; Long-tailed, Parasitic, and Pomarine Jaegers; Tufted Puffin; Wandering Tattler; Surf-bird (along jetty outside harbor). **Late Summer/Fall:** Northern Fulmar; Buller's Shearwater, Ashy, Black, and Least Storm-Petrels; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets. **Possibilities:** Streaked (2 seen in Oct. 2007) and Manx Shearwaters; Red-billed Tropicbird. **Marine mammals:** Pacific White-sided, Northern Right Whale, Risso's, and Bottlenose Dolphins; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises; Orca; Gray (winter), Humpback, Blue, Minke, and Fin Whales. Baird's Beaked Whale has been seen twice in 2007; Sei Whale (rare) was seen once in 2007; California Sea Lion; Harbor, Northern Elephant, and Northern Fur Seals; Sea Otter.

35 • Offshore Monterey Bay, California

Departure Point: Monterey Whale Watch Center, Monterey, CA.

Destination: We will be seeking areas with abrupt water temperature changes, increasing our chances of finding offshore migrants and murrelets, 30–50 miles offshore.

Trip length: 12-hour trip.

Trip organizer: Monterey Seabirds, www.montereyseabirds.com; www.montereyseabirds.com/; www.montereybaywhalewatch.com; (831) 375-4658.

Date of 2009 trips: Please visit the website for the 2009 schedule.

Cost: Please visit the website for the 2009 costs.

Comments: Trips aboard the 55-foot *Pt. Sur Clipper*, used only for natural history trips. (Please see previous for comments on skipper, leaders, and group size.) See website for previous trip reports. Black-footed, Laysan and Short-tailed Albatrosses, Manx, Sooty, Flesh-footed and Pink-footed Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot; Long-tailed, Parasitic, and Pomarine Jaegers; Tufted Puffin; Wandering Tattler; Surf-bird on the jetty on the way out; **Late Summer/Fall:** Northern Fulmar; Buller's Shearwater; Ashy, Black, and Least Storm-Petrels; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets. **Possibilities:** Streaked (2 in Oct. 2007) and Manx Shearwaters; Red-billed Tropicbird; **Marine mammals:** Pacific White-sided, Northern Right Whale, Risso's, and Bottlenose Dolphins; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises; Orca; Gray (winter), Humpback, Blue, Minke, and Fin Whales. Baird's Beaked Whale has been seen twice in 2007; Sei Whale (rare) was seen once in 2007; California Sea Lion; Harbor, Northern Elephant, and Northern Fur Seals; Sea Otter.

36 • Santa Cruz, California

Departure Point: F Dock, Santa Cruz Harbor.

Destination: Ascension Canyons and the 500 fathom line.

Trip length: 8 hours; 6 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Aug. 31; Sep. 11, 25; Oct. 9.

Cost: \$148 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Past pelagic trips from Santa Cruz on the north side of Monterey Bay have included a wealth of seabirds, similar to what is found on Monterey trips, with the addition of Marbled Murrelets (not usually found on the Monterey side of the bay).

Following the 500 fathom line has been very productive for the entire regular fall seabirds. We will head to Ascension Canyon and other canyons. In recent years, this has been one of the favored places for the large rafts of storm-petrel flocks, including: Ashy, Black, Fork-tailed, Wilson's, and Least. Santa Cruz is easy to reach from the San Francisco Bay area. See trip reports for 2008 trips. These trips are easily reached from both San Francisco and San Jose.

37 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure point: Chris's Fishing Shop, Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, CA.

Destination: Monterey Bay, mainly covering the Monterey Submarine Canyon and the Soquel Canyon Branch; areas north of Pt. Pinos, about 12–20 miles offshore.

Trip length: 7–8 hours; 2–6 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831)637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: May 10; Jul 31; Aug. 7, 21, 28; Sep. 10, 13, 24; Oct. 3, 13, 25; Nov. 28.

Cost: \$138 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Classic Monterey seabird trip. *Autumn (Aug.–Oct.):* Great-winged Petrel (very rare, 2nd Northern Hemisphere record 18 Oct. 1998); Black-footed, Laysan (rare in fall), and Short-tailed (rare, one on 7 Aug. 1999 and one on 12 Aug. 2005) Albatrosses; Pink-footed, Flesh-footed, Buller's, Sooty, Black-vented, Streaked (rare, ninth North American record found 6 Oct. 2001 and several recent records), Wedge-tailed (rare, third North American record 10–21 Oct. 1998, and fourth North American record 27 Sept. 1999); Manx (first records from our trips in 1993; dates range from July 25–Oct. 25), and Greater (very rare; found 1–2 Oct. 1994, 8 Oct. 2001, and 29 Nov. 2008) Shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Ashy, Black, Least, Leach's (rare-2008) and Wedge-rumped (rare) Storm-Petrels; Red-billed Tropicbird (rare); Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; South Polar Skua; Heermann's and Sabine's Gulls; Elegant, Common, and Arctic Terns; Common and Thick-billed (rare) Murres; Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Tufted and Horned (rare in Aug.; five records in 1999) Puffins. *Winter (Nov.–Mar.):* Red-throated, Pacific, Common, and Yellow-billed (rare) Loons; six species of grebes; Black-footed and Laysan (rare) Albatrosses; Northern Fulmar; Flesh-footed, Sooty, Short-tailed, Pink-footed, Black-vented, Manx (rare), Pink-footed, and Greater (very rare; found 15 Jan. 2001) Shearwaters; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel (rare); Red Phalarope; Pomarine Jaeger; South Polar Skua (rare); nine species of gulls and Black-legged Kittiwake; hundreds of alcids. Masked/Nazca Booby rare (recorded 13 Feb. 1999). *Spring (Apr.–July):* Black-footed, Laysan (rare), and Short-tailed (very rare) Albatrosses; Bulwer's Petrel (very rare, first North American record 26 July 1998); Pink-footed, Flesh-footed (rare), Manx (rare), and Sooty Shearwaters; Black, Ashy, Fork-tailed, and Leach's (rare) Storm-Petrels; Red-billed Tropicbird (rare); Tufted and Horned (rare) Puffins. *Marine mammals:* found at all times of year; fall is best for abundance and variety. Blue, Fin, Sei (rare), Humpback, Minke, and Pacific Right (very rare) Whales; Cuvier's and Baird's Beaked Whales; Orcas; Pacific White-sided, Risso's, Northern Right Whale, and Common Dolphins; Harbor and Dall's Porpoises have been seen on fall trips. Gray Whales are recorded on all January trips. California and Steller (rare) Sea Lions; Northern Elephant Seal, Northern Fur Seal, Harbor Seal, Sea Otter also possible.

Operating since 1976, we use party boats with skippers who always have many years of experience with nature trips. Vessels are USCG-certified and have PA systems. Our web site will be helpful in planning your trip. Please see past trip reports on the web site. Only one fall trip has been canceled due to weather. We use chum on all trips. Many of our leaders have more than 30 years of worldwide ocean experience, some with the equivalent of several years at sea. Our leaders include Matt Brady, Ted Chandik, Luke Cole, Don Doolittle, Jon Dunn, Jim Danzenbaker, Mike Danzenbaker, Rob Fowler, Jennifer Green, Alan Hopkins, Steve Howell, Lisa Hug, Alvaro Jaramillo, Oscar Johnson, Clay Kempf, Kirsten Lindquist, Gerry McChesney, Peter Pyle, Mike Rogers, John Sorenson, John Sterling, Brian Sullivan, Scott Terrill, Linda Terrill, Ryan Terrill, David Vander Pluym, Sophie Webb, and Denise Wight.

NOTE: This schedule was produced on 1 December 2009; fees, especially possible fuel surcharges, were unknown at this time. A complete calendar of listings may be helpful in planning your trip. Please see www.shearwaterjourneys.com for the most current and complete list of trips before planning your visit. Numerous trip reports from past trips, along with photographs are on the site. Advance motel reservations are essential in fall season. Please see our web site for package deals with local motels.

38 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure point: Chris's Fishing Shop, Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, CA
Destination: Monterey Seavalley and areas south of Pt. Pinos, 15–25 miles offshore.

Trip length: 7–8 hours; 2–6 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Aug. 28; Sept. 9, 27; Oct. 11.

Cost: \$138 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Greater chance for Black-footed Albatross, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Red-billed Tropicbird (rare), Long-tailed Jaeger, Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets, Cuvier's and Baird's Beaked Whales, Fin Whale. All of the expected fall seabirds (*see Offshore Monterey*), including the following, are expected: Northern Fulmar; Pink-footed, Buller's, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters; Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets. No storm-petrel flocks are expected, although individuals are usually seen. *Marine mammals* - same as on Monterey Bay trips. This trip can be combined with other Monterey or Santa Cruz trips for maximum coverage of Monterey Bay and adjacent waters.

39 • Offshore Monterey, California

Departure point: Chris's Fishing Shop, Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, CA
Destination: Albacore fishing grounds, Sur Canyon, or Ascension Canyon; about 30–50 miles offshore.

Trip length: 12 hours; 3–5 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Sept. 12; Oct. 10.

Cost: \$185 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Results of 16 Sept. 1995 trip: Pacific Loon (1); Pink-footed (43), Flesh-footed (4), Buller's (34), Sooty (2,500) Shearwaters; Ashy (5), Black (1), Least (1) Storm-Petrels; Red-tailed Tropicbird (1); Red-necked (30) and Red (3) Phalaropes; Pomarine (53), Parasitic (16) and Long-tailed (14) Jaegers; jaeger spp. (23); South Polar Skua (18); Sabine's Gull (19); Arctic (93) and Common (3) Terns; Common Murre (114); Xantus's (2) and Craveri's (3) Murrelets; Cassin's (19) and Rhinoceros (50) Auklets; *Marine mammals:* Northern Fur Seal (2); Blue (2), Baird's Beaked (27) Whales; Orca (4); Risso's (250), Common (10), Northern Right Whale (20), and Pacific White-sided (269) Dolphins; Dall's Porpoise (14). *Also seen on previous trips:* Black-footed and Laysan (rare) Albatrosses; Northern Fulmar; Leach's and Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels; Red-billed Tropicbird (rare). Certain seabirds are associated with albacore, which is considered the "Cadillac" of tunas by fishermen: Buller's Shearwater; Arctic Tern; Sabine's Gull; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets. Some years, albacore are found close to shore, but in 2002 and in 2007 they were primarily 50, or more, miles offshore. We still do the albacore trips, and they have continued to produce the target species. For the past several years, these trips have produced a string of rarities, including: Streaked (on three different trips), Greater, and Manx Shearwaters, and Brown Booby. This remains the single best trip for

Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets and Blue Whales (the only central California trip to find Craveri's Murrelet in 2000 and 2001 was this trip). This is also an excellent trip for jaegers, with more than 200 sometimes recorded. These trips have sold out months in advance every year.

40 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure point: Chris's Fishing Shop, Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, CA.

Destination: Monterey Bay and Ascension Canyon: a trip that includes the areas northwest of Monterey Bay, 15–25 miles offshore.

Trip length: About 9 hours; 2–6 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trip: Oct. 4.

Cost: \$167 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Past trips have recorded Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's, Black-vented, Flesh-footed, and Manx Shearwaters; Black, Ashy, Fork-tailed, and Wilson's Storm-Petrels; Red-necked and Red Phalaropes; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Elegant and Arctic Terns; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Tufted Puffin. *Marine mammals:* Blue, Fin, Humpback, Minke, and Baird's Beaked Whales have been recorded. This longer trip is a good choice for birders who have only one day to do a pelagic trip. In addition to visiting the area south of Pt. Pinos, we head north to areas where flocks of storm-petrels are more likely. The trip is an hour-and-a-half longer than our classic Monterey Bay trip in order to allow us to cover these two areas.

41 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure point: Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey, CA.

Destination: Offshore Monterey about 5–10 miles.

Trip length: 4 hours.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2010 trip: Jan. 31.

Cost: \$50.

Comments: This is a short trip to see winter seabirds and Gray Whales. It is perfect for people who don't want to spend longer hours on a boat, or for the visiting seabirder. Past trips have found Common, Pacific, Red-throated, and Yellow-billed (rare) Loons; Red-necked Grebe; Black-footed and Laysan (rare, but a high count for Monterey of 16 was seen on Jan. 14, 1996, trip) Albatrosses; Sooty, Short-tailed, Black-vented, Manx (rare), Pink-footed, Flesh-footed, and Greater (rare, one found on 15 Jan. 2001 trip) Shearwaters; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Pomarine Jaeger; Red Phalarope; Black-legged Kittiwake and other gulls; Common Murre; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Tufted Puffin; Harlequin Duck. *Marine mammals:* Gray Whale; Risso's, Pacific White-sided, Northern Right Whale, and Common Dolphins; Dall's Porpoise; Sea Otter; California Sea Lion.

42 • Emeryville, California

Departure point: Emeryville, CA.

Destination: Farallon seabird colony and the edge of the Continental Shelf (seas permitting), 26–35 miles offshore. 2–3 leaders per trip.

Trip length: 8 hours.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527;

www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trip: Aug. 2.

Cost: \$145 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Results of 23 Aug. 1998 trip: Northern Fulmar (3); Sooty (25,000), Pink-footed (550), and Buller's (2) Shearwaters; Black Storm-Petrel (3); Pomarine (1), Parasitic (2), and Long-tailed (1) Jaegers; South Polar Skua (1); Sabine's Gull (32); Arctic (16) and Common (10) Terns; Common Murre (450); Pigeon Guillemot (8); Rhinoceros (1) and Cassin's (3) Auklets; Tufted Puffin (17); Red-necked Phalarope (13); Blue (2) and Humpback (13) Whales; and Harbor Porpoise (4). Various loons, grebes, and cormorants, and other gulls and terns, are also possible on this trip. *Marine mammals:* Gray Whale; Dall's Porpoise; California and Steller Sea Lions; Harbor and Elephant Seals. *Fish:* Blue and Great White Sharks. *Additional species recorded in 1999:* Least Storm-Petrel, Black-vented Shearwater. In 2007 we found a Leatherback Turtle, and in 2005 Orcas killing a Northern Elephant Seal. Most recent years have recorded Black-footed Albatross. This is the single best trip for a chance to see the Tufted Puffin, which nests on the islands. We have a 100% success rate of finding the puffins. Most of the truly pelagic species (albatross and shearwaters) are not likely, unless the weather permits the boat to go beyond the islands to the edge of the shelf. Landing is not permitted on the islands. Chumming and using the PA are not allowed within three miles of the islands, in order to protect nesting seabirds. This trip always sells out months in advance.

43 • Bodega Bay, California

Departure point: Port O'Bodega, Bodega Bay, CA.

Destination: Bodega Canyon, Cordell Bank, and beyond to the 1700 or 2000-fathom line. 25–45 miles offshore.

Trip length: 8–13 hours. 4–11 leaders per trip.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Aug. 12; Sept. 16, 18; Oct. 16.

Cost: \$188 per person. Possible fuel surcharge.

Comments: Results of 1 Nov. 1992 trip: Red-necked Grebe (2); Black-footed (20) and Laysan Albatrosses (3); Northern Fulmar (60); Cook's Petrel (1; rare), Pink-footed (60), Flesh-footed (4), Buller's (50), Sooty (35), and Short-tailed (8) Shearwaters; Black (1), Ashy (5) Storm-Petrels; Red Phalarope (15); Pomarine (55), Parasitic (2), and Long-tailed (1) Jaegers; South Polar Skua (3); Bonaparte's (8) and Sabine's (3) Gulls; Black-legged Kittiwake (1); Common Murre (12); Pigeon Guillemot (1); Xantus's (3), Craveri's (1), and Ancient (2) Murrelets; Cassin's (400) and Rhinoceros (150) Auklets; Blue Whale (3); Dall's Porpoise (5). *Other possibilities:* Short-tailed Albatross (very rare); Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Leach's, and Least (rare) Storm-Petrels; Marbled Murrelet; Tufted and Horned (rare) Puffin. Aug. and Sept. *Marine mammals:* trips have never missed Blue Whales. Minke, Fin, and Sei (rare - 25 Oct. 1997), and Sperm Whales; Orcas; and Risso's, Northern Right Whale, Common, and Pacific White-sided Dolphins; Harbor and Dall's Porpoises have also been recorded. Refer to January 1995 issue of *Winging It* for details. This is a great area for rare birds. Streaked Shearwater was found here in Sept. 2002 and Sept. 2004. The best season for Southern Hemisphere rarities is June–Aug. Murphy's Petrel was found on the 11 May 2001 trip. Two different "Shy" (Salvin's) Albatrosses were found in this region on 19 July and 10 Sept. 2000, by our leaders. Short-tailed Albatross (rare, 28 Aug. and 6 Oct. 1998, and 26 Oct. 1999) and Light-mantled Sooty Albatross (on the "hypothetical origin" of the ABA Checklist) have also been found here. The 24 Aug. 1996 trip found a Great-winged Petrel (first Northern Hemisphere record) and a Hawaiian/Galapagos Petrel (third North American record); another "dark-rumped" petrel was found in Sept. 2004, and a Parkinson's Petrel was found in October 2004. The 24 June 1995 trip found a Crested Auklet. The region's first Long-billed Murrelet

was found by our leaders on 10 Sept. 2000. Recent September trips have also recorded Wedge-tailed Shearwater (2007) and Cook's Petrel (2005). Nearly all trips sell out well in advance. Since 2000, each trip has been accompanied by 6–10 leaders. These trips can be weathered out at any time of year, but if the boat makes it out, we almost always produce a top-quality seabird list. If planning to take this trip, you may want to back it up with a trip from Monterey to ensure that you get offshore. These trips can be combined with Fort Bragg trips and a day of birding on land, in between for a quality experience.

44 • Fort Bragg, California

Departure point: Fort Bragg, CA.

Destination: Noyo Canyon, Vizcaino Knoll, 20–30+ miles offshore.

Trip length: 8–12 hours.

Trip organizer: Debra Love Shearwater, Shearwater Journeys, PO Box 190, Hollister, CA 95024; (831) 637-8527; www.shearwaterjourneys.com; debi@shearwaterjourneys.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Aug. 14, 16; Sep. 20; Oct. 18.

Cost: \$188 per person.

Comments: This was a new trip for Shearwater Journeys in 1999. This area has emerged as the premier place in North America for seabird mega-rarities. August trips have been especially productive of mega-rarities. “White-capped” Shy Albatross in 1999, an individual of the “dark-rumped” Hawaiian/Galapagos Petrel complex and a Markham's Storm-Petrel in 2000, another “dark-rumped” petrel in 2001, and stunning views of a Streaked Shearwater in 2002. August 8, 2008 found a record 3 Hawaiian Petrels in one day, along with Xantus's Murrelets. August trips from this location and from Bodega Bay appear to offer the best chance for finding “dark-rumped” petrels. Indeed, our August 2006 trip was able to follow a Hawaiian Petrel for a record 17 minutes. Our 11 May 2003 trip found two Murphy's Petrels. This appears that it might be a congregation area for albatrosses in the spring. The May 2000 trip recorded 480 Black-footed and 15 Laysan Albatrosses. Murphy's Petrels have been recorded in May, only eight miles offshore, in this area. In August 2004, a bird that may have been a Brown Skua was found. Short-tailed Albatross seems like a possibility in these waters. We will be focusing on the complete variety of avifauna, in addition to searching for rarities. Past trips have also found Yellow-billed (17 Aug. 17 2002), Common, Red-throated, and Pacific Loons; Western and Eared Grebes; Black-footed and Laysan Albatrosses; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Short-tailed, Flesh-footed, Buller's, and Manx Shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Ashy, and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Red and Red-necked Phalaropes; South Polar Skua; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Black-legged Kittiwake; Arctic and Common Terns; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Marbled and Xantus's Murrelets; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Tufted Puffin. *Marine mammals:* have included Blue, Minke, and Baird's Beaked Whales; Northern Right Whale, Pacific White-sided, and Risso's Dolphins; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises. These trips can be combined with Bodega Bay departures with a day of birding on land in between.

45 • Monterey Bay, California

Departure Point: Monterey Whale Watch Center, Monterey, CA.

Destination: Monterey Bay Submarine Canyon; Albacore Grounds.

Trip length: 8–12 hours.

Trip organizer: Monterey Seabirds, www.montereyseabirds.com; www.montereyseabirds.com/; www.montereybaywhalewatch.com; (831) 375-4658.

Date of 2009 trips: Please visit the website for the 2009 schedule.

Cost: Please visit the website for the 2009 costs.

Comments: Trips aboard the 55-foot *Pt. Sur Clipper*, used only for

natural history trips. Skipper Richard Ternullo has more than 30 years experience at seabirding and whale-watching excursions. All trips have experienced leaders and a marine naturalist onboard; leaders include Don Roberson, Steve Bailey, Dan Singer, Roger Wolfe, Todd Easterla, and Tim Amaral. Group size is limited to ensure a quality experience for all on board. See website for previous trip reports.

Expectations: Winter/Spring: Black-footed Albatross; Short-tailed Shearwater; Red Phalarope; Ancient Murrelet; Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets; Northern Fulmar; Black-legged Kittiwake. *Possibilities:* Laysan and Short-tailed (seen on April 2007 trip) Albatrosses; Manx Shearwater, Yellow-billed Loon. *Summer:* Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot; Long-tailed, Parasitic, and Pomarine Jaegers; Tufted Puffin; Wandering Tattler; Surf-bird (along jetty outside harbor). *Late Summer/Fall:* Northern Fulmar; Buller's Shearwater, Ashy, Black, and Least Storm-Petrels; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets. *Possibilities:* Streaked (2 seen in Oct. 2007) and Manx Shearwaters; Red-billed Tropicbird. *Marine mammals:* Pacific White-sided, Northern Right Whale, Risso's, and Bottlenose Dolphins; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises; Orca; Gray (winter), Humpback, Blue, Minke, and Fin Whales. Baird's Beaked Whale has been seen twice in 2007; Sei Whale (rare) was seen once in 2007; California Sea Lion; Harbor, Northern Elephant, and Northern Fur Seals; Sea Otter.

46 • Offshore Monterey Bay, California

Departure Point: Monterey Whale Watch Center, Monterey, CA.

Destination: We will be seeking areas with abrupt water temperature changes, increasing our chances of finding offshore migrants and murrelets, 30–50 miles offshore.

Trip length: 12-hour trip.

Trip organizer: Monterey Seabirds, www.montereyseabirds.com; www.montereyseabirds.com/; www.montereybaywhalewatch.com; (831)375-4658.

Date of 2009 trips: Please visit the website for the 2009 schedule.

Cost: Please visit the website for the 2009 costs.

Comments: Trips aboard the 55-foot *Pt. Sur Clipper*, used only for natural history trips. (Please see previous for comments on skipper, leaders, and group size.) See website for previous trip reports. Black-footed, Laysan and Short-tailed Albatrosses, Manx, Sooty, Flesh-footed and Pink-footed Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern; Pigeon Guillemot; Long-tailed, Parasitic, and Pomarine Jaegers; Tufted Puffin; Wandering Tattler; Surf-bird on the jetty on the way out; *Late Summer/Fall:* Northern Fulmar; Buller's Shearwater; Ashy, Black, and Least Storm-Petrels; Xantus's and Craveri's Murrelets. *Possibilities:* Streaked (2 in Oct. 2007) and Manx Shearwaters; Red-billed Tropicbird; *Marine mammals:* Pacific White-sided, Northern Right Whale, Risso's, and Bottlenose Dolphins; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises; Orca; Gray (winter), Humpback, Blue, Minke, and Fin Whales. Baird's Beaked Whale has been seen twice in 2007; Sei Whale (rare) was seen once in 2007; California Sea Lion; Harbor, Northern Elephant, and Northern Fur Seals; Sea Otter.

47 • Slice of California: Seabirds to Sierras

Departure Point: San Francisco, CA.

Destination: Monterey Bay, Central Valley, Sierras, and Mono Lake.

Trip Length: 10 days.

Trip Organizer: Field Guides, Inc., (800) 728-4953, fieldguides@fieldguides.com 9433 Bee Cave Rd., Bldg. 1, Suite 150, Austin, TX 78733.

Date of 2009 trip: September 12–21, 2009 with Alvaro Jaramillo.

Cost: TBA. Limited to 8 participants.

Comments: A highlight of any California birding trip is a pelagic excursion. The deep-water canyon in Monterey Bay tends to concentrate birds like no other site on the coast. We'll venture out from the south

end of the bay and go where the birds and whales are. We'll likely get at least twenty miles out, depending on sea conditions, and we expect numbers of Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters, as well as some Buller's and maybe even the uncommon Flesh-footed. We could encounter storm-petrels, with Ashy and Black being the most common, and with some luck we hope to see at least one Black-footed Albatross. Resident Common Murres will be around as well as Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets. The marine mammal show can be fantastic, with Humpback and Blue Whales. But as is always the case on a pelagic trip, we may run into something very surprising. It promises to be good fun!

48 • Perpetua Bank – Albatross Hotspot

Departure Point: Newport, Oregon.

Destination: Perpetua Bank, 32 nautical miles offshore.

Trip length: 11 hours.

Trip organizer: The Bird Guide, Inc., 123 NW Bailey Avenue, Hillsboro, OR 97124; <http://thebirdguide.com/pelagics>; greg@thebirdguide.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Feb. 21, Apr. 18, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 3.

Cost: \$160, early signup and group discounts.

Comments: Perpetua Bank has been consistently outstanding for seabirds, especially albatrosses; Black-footed, Laysan, Short-tailed, Shy (Oct. 1996, Oct. 2001), and Wandering (Sept. 2008). We frequently encounter fishing vessels with thousands of seabirds in tow. Large 50-55 foot charter boats; 20-30 passengers plus 3-6 expert guides. *Year-round:* Black-footed Albatross; Common Murre; Marbled Murrelet; Rhinoceros Auklet. *Apr.–Oct.:* Pink-footed, Sooty Shearwaters, and Manx Shearwaters (rare); Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Pigeon Guillemot; Tufted Puffin. *Apr.–May/July–Oct.:* Red and Red-necked Phalaropes; Pomarine, Parasitic, and Long-tailed Jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Common and Arctic Terns. *Aug.–Oct.:* Flesh-footed and Buller's Shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Xantus's Murrelet (rare). *Oct.–Apr.:* Laysan and Short-tailed (rare) Albatrosses; Short-tailed Shearwater; Black-legged Kittiwake; Ancient Murrelet. *July–Mar.:* Northern Fulmar; Cassin's Auklet. *Other marine species:* *Regular:* Gray Whale; Dall's and Harbor Porpoises; Pacific White-sided Dolphin; California and Steller Sea Lions; Harbor Seal; Ocean Sunfish; Blue Shark. *Less common:* Orca, Minke, and Humpback Whales; Risso's and Northern Right Whale Dolphins; Elephant and Northern Fur Seals. *Rare marine species:* Thresher Shark, Sperm, Fin, Sei, and Blue Whales.

Check web page for additional trips, up-to-date schedule, sign-up, participant trip information, photos, monthly abundance checklists, and sightings archive.

49 • Oregon Shorebird Festival Pelagic Trip

Departure point: Charleston, Oregon.

Destination: up to 12 miles offshore.

Trip length: about 5 hours.

Trip organizer: The Bird Guide, Inc., 123 NW Bailey Avenue, Hillsboro, OR 97124; <http://thebirdguide.com/pelagics>; greg@thebirdguide.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Aug. 29 & 30 (proposed Shorebird Festival Date). **Cost:** \$70 (estimate).

Comments: This beginner's trip is organized for the Oregon Shorebird Festival and open to all. You do not have to attend the festival in order to sign up for this trip, but we recommend it! *Expected:* Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty Shearwater and Pink-footed Shearwaters; Brown Pelican; Red-necked Phalarope; Pomarine Jaeger; Heermann's Gull; Common Murre; Cassin's Auklet; Rhinoceros Auklet. *Marine mammals:* Dall's Porpoise was seen riding our bow wave. Expert guides point out the birds and explain identification and natural history. Large boat will carry up to 40 passengers. Check web page for additional trips, up-to-date schedule, sign-up,

participant trip information, photos, monthly abundance checklists, and sightings archive. See 2007 photo trip report: <http://thebirdguide.com/pelagics/archive/09012007.htm>.

50 • Offshore Washington, Gray's Canyon & Outer Slope

Departure point: Westport, Washington.

Destination: Continental Shelf and oceanic waters, 40-60 miles offshore.

Trip length: 8–10 hours.

Trip organizer: P.O. Box 665, Westport, Washington 98595; pmand001@comcast.net; www.westportseabirds.com; (360) 268-9141.

Dates of 2009 trips: Grays Canyon Trips: April 25, Aug 15, 22, 29; Sept. 19, 20, 27. Outer Slope Trips: July 12, 25, August 2, 9.

Cost: Grays Canyon, \$125; Outer Slope: \$135.

Comments: Grays Canyon – 40 miles offshore; Outer Slope – 50 miles offshore; *All seasons:* Laysan (rare) and Black-footed Albatrosses; Northern Fulmar; Sooty Shearwater; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; cormorants (3); Western and Glaucous-winged Gulls; Black-legged Kittiwake; Common Murre; Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets; Tufted Puffin. *Apr.:* Murphy's Petrel (rare). *May–Oct.:* Pink-footed and Flesh-footed (variable) Shearwaters; Brown Pelican; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers. *Sept.–Oct.:* Buller's Shearwater. *May, July–Sept.:* Leach's Storm-Petrel; Red-necked Phalarope; Arctic Tern. *July–Oct.:* South Polar Skua; Heermann's and California Gulls; Xantus's Murrelet (rare). *May, July–Oct.:* Sabine's Gull. *Oct.–Apr.:* Pacific Loon; Mottled Petrel; Short-tailed Shearwater; Parakeet Auklet. *Marine mammals:* Gray Whale (spring); Harbor and Dall's Porpoises; Grampus; Pacific White-sided and Northern Right Whale Dolphins; *Occasional:* Sperm or Humpback Whales; Northern Fur and Elephant Seals. *Fishes:* Ocean Sunfish. *Reptiles:* Leatherback Turtle.

51 • Homer, Alaska

Departure point: Small-boat harbor, Ramp Three, Homer, AK.

Destination: Upper Kachemak Bay, including Glacier Spit, Mud Bay, and Gull Island seabird rookery (more than 17,000 nesting birds of up to eight species).

Trip length: about 3 hours; shorter or longer trips can be arranged, depending on your specific interests.

Trip organizer: Bay Excursions: Captain Karl Stoltzfus, PO Box 3312, Homer, AK 99603; (907) 235-7525; www.bayexcursions.com.

Dates of 2009 trips: Individualized tours from April to October; usually depart 10 A.M., but other times may be arranged. Advance booking highly recommended.

Cost: Prices vary depending on duration of trip; standard three-hour trip is \$70/person.

Comments: Led by lifelong Alaskan, Karl Stoltzfus, at Bay Excursions: bay@xyz.net; aboard the 18-passenger *Torega*; website www.homer-alaskabirding.com includes complete species list and additional information. *Expected in season:* Kittlitz's and Marbled Murrelets; Aleutian and Arctic Terns; Black-legged Kittiwake; Red-faced and Pelagic Cormorants; Pigeon Guillemot; Horned and Tufted Puffins; Common Murre; Common Loon; all three scoters; Harlequin Duck. *Possible:* Glaucous and Herring Gulls; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers (during May and Aug. migration); many species of shorebirds in breeding plumage (May); Common Eider; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Red-necked Phalarope. *Occasional:* King and Steller's Eiders (winter residents); Long-tailed Jaeger; Bonaparte's and Sabine's Gulls; Yellow-billed, Pacific, and Red-throated Loons. *Marine mammals:* Sea Otter, Steller Sea Lion, Humpback Whale, Orca, Harbor Seal, Dall and Harbor Porpoises.

52 • Ferry from Juneau to Yakutat to Kodiak, Alaska

Route: Juneau to Kodiak, Alaska, with stops at Yakutat and Whittier.

Trip length: 49-63 hours with one 4-hour layover, but see schedule.

Ferry Company: Alaska Marine Highway System, PO Box 25535, Juneau, AK 99802, (800) 642-0066; www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/index.html.

2009 Schedule: Once or twice a month from May through November.

Cost: Website has a schedule and fare information, including online route and schedule search.

Comments: The *M/V Kennicott* is 382 feet long and very stable, even in rough seas. A scope is often usable on the bow deck. From the “Gulf of Alaska” chapter by Steven Zimmerman in the revised 2008 ABA birdfinding guide, *A Birder’s Guide to Alaska* by George West, the following birds have been reported from the *M/V Kennicott*, species usually difficult in other Alaskan waters: Short-tailed Albatross, Manx, Flesh-footed, Buller’s, and Pink-footed Shearwaters, Brandt’s Cormorant. *Common:* Surf and White-winged Scoters, Black-footed Albatross, Northern Fulmar, Sooty Shearwater, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants, Bonaparte’s, Mew, Herring, and Glaucous-winged Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, Arctic Tern, Pomarine Jaeger, Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Marbled Murrelet, and Tufted Puffin. *Uncommon:* Pacific and Common Loons, Laysan Albatross, Short-tailed Shearwater, Leach’s Storm-Petrel, Red-necked Phalarope, Sabine’s Gull, Aleutian Tern, Parasitic and Long-tailed Jaegers, Ancient Murrelet, Cassin’s and Rhinoceros Auklets, and Horned Puffin.

The best seabirding is usually from Cape Spencer to Yakutat when the ship is in deepest waters. Yakutat to Kayak Island is best for viewing albatrosses. 4–5 hours after leaving Yakutat, the ship passes the birdy Pamplona Spur area where a Short-tailed Albatross has been recorded. From Whittier to Kodiak the seabirding is best during the first day in late afternoon when the vessel reenters the Gulf of Alaska.

53 • Ferry from Homer to Dutch Harbor, Alaska

Route: Homer to Dutch Harbor, Alaska, with stops at Kodiak

and Cold Bay.

Trip length: about 3 days, one-way.

Ferry Company: Alaska Marine Highway System, PO Box 25535, Juneau, AK 99802, (800) 642-0066; www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/index.html.

2009 Schedule: Variable year-round schedule; inquire for specific departure times.

Cost: Website has a schedule and fare information, including online route and schedule search.

Comments: Laysan Albatross, Sooty and Short-tailed Shearwaters; Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel; Pelagic Cormorant; Glaucous-winged Gull; Black-legged Kittiwake; Arctic and Aleutian Terns; Common Murre; Ancient Murrelet; Cassin’s and **Whiskered Auklets**; Tufted and Horned Puffins. *Possibilities:* Black-footed Albatross; Leach’s Storm-Petrel; Red Phalarope; Pomarine Jaeger; Kittlitz’s Murrelet. *Rare:* Pink-footed and Flesh-footed Shearwaters. *Extremely Rare:* Short-tailed Albatross.

The best area for most bird species is between Cold Bay and Dutch Harbor. June and July are best months for viewing hundred of thousands of seabirds. Study the ferry schedule carefully before planning and making your trip reservations to ensure the ship is traveling through the Baby Islands in as much daylight as possible. **Warning, in recent years the AMHS ferry, *Tustumena*, has been scheduled to pass through this area in darkness. Enquire before making this reservation.** Air service is available between Anchorage and Dutch Harbor and between Anchorage and Cold Bay. For helpful information on birding via the Alaska State Ferry system, see “Birding from the Alaska State Ferry, Homer to Dutch Harbor, Alaska” in the January 1998 *Winging It* and more recently the chapter in the updated ABA birdfinding guide, *A Birder’s Guide to Alaska* by George West, available from ABA Sales. There is a chapter titled “Ferry to Kodiak and Dutch Harbor”, a chapter “Whiskered Auklets from Dutch Harbor”, and a chapter “Gulf of Alaska by Ferry and Cruise Ship.”

California Gulch - Arizona

MELODY KEHL

When people ask about my favorite place to bird I have never had any answer. After all, my playground is southern Arizona. However, as I ponder and play, one place keeps coming to mind. . . California Gulch in the Pajarito Mountains along the border of Mexico.

California Gulch is among the wild places not soon to be civilized. It is rare to see anyone there except perhaps another birder as deranged as me. Bird species most birders are looking for are Five-striped Sparrow, Montezuma Quail, (a mythical bird) and Buff-collared Nightjar. But, most birders come away with much more. The beauty of the area, the remoteness, the wildness and the stars are what this place is made of. I understand the magic the miners of the area feel. Until you visit you cannot fathom the spectacular views after a summer rain. Ocotillo bursts into leaf, mimosa showers pink fairy dusters, coral bean shows its beautiful red flowers with cottonwood-like leaves, while stinging nettle shouts with its polka-dot leaves. Birds are singing, getting ready to nest during this time of abundant food and water, some for the first time and some for their second spring. Both Five-striped Sparrow and Montezuma Quail are among the species nesting during the monsoon season, when tropical moisture drifts north from Mexico.

Just getting to California Gulch is an adventure in itself. The roads

are not maintained, to say the least, and yet I keep coming back in the hopes of the rare species and the magic of wildness which reminds me of earlier, more simple times. While rocking in the heat and the car, affectionately called The Prairie Schooner, you receive a massage and a sauna, in addition to a great adventure.

A few cautions are needed should you decide to enjoy this area without a guide. This area is a high drug trafficking area as well as a spot where illegal immigrants cross into the US, moving north. Watch the weather, particularly to the north. This is not a place you want to be during a heavy thunderstorm. It is a gulch in every sense of the word, with many drainages flowing into the area.

Melody Kehl has been bird guide, chief cook, and bottle-washer for Melody’s Birding Adventures since 1991.

Five-striped Sparrow sings from an ocotillo. August ’06.
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