



Mass Audubon & Rockjumper Japan: Dancing Cranes & Winter Birding

February 14th to March 3rd, 2018 (18 days)
with Mass Audubon's David Larson



Honshu crane congregation by David Shackelford

The island chain making up the country of Japan is undoubtedly a must-visit destination for the keen birder, and this exploration takes in the very best of what Japan has to offer.

Stretching for over 3,000 kilometres (1,860 miles), ‘The Land of the Rising Sun’ is host to a variety of habitats, and we will begin our tour by venturing inland from Tokyo to the forests around Karuizawa. Here we will try and locate the beautiful, endemic Copper Pheasant and Japanese Green Woodpecker, before heading further west to Nagano and its famous ‘Snow Monkeys’.

On the northerly island of Hokkaido, with its fields of snow, frozen lakes and rugged seacoasts, we will look for the impressive Blakiston’s Fish Owl, magnificent Steller’s Sea Eagle and elegant Red-crowned (Japanese) Crane. In addition, the coasts here are home to numerous species of sea ducks, loons and alcids, and we will also keep an eye out for some wintering passerines, including the beautiful Asian Rosy Finch.

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The island of Kyushu will be our next destination, since it plays host to one of the greatest avian spectacles on earth, with thousands of White-naped and Hooded cranes spending the winter here, occasionally joined by small numbers of Sandhill and Common cranes. On the eastern side of the island we will also attempt to locate Grey Bunting, Baikal Teal, and the endangered Japanese Murrelet. We invite you to join us for what should be a fantastic exploration of this Asian winter wonderland!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...

THE ITINERARY:

Day 1 –Feb 14	Arrival in Tokyo and transfer to our hotel
Day 2 – Feb 15	Transfer to Karuizawa and afternoon birding
Day 3– Feb 16	Karuizawa
Day 4– Feb 17	AM: Karuizawa area, then transfer to Nagano. PM: Snow Monkeys
Day 5– Feb 18	Nagano to Kaga
Day 6– Feb 19	Kaga
Day 7– Feb 20	Flight from Kaga to Kushiro, Hokkaido and transfer to Tsurui
Day 8– Feb 21	Tsurui to Rausu
Day 9– Feb 22	Rausu and surrounds
Day 10– Feb 23	Rausu to Lake Furen. Pelagic Trip
Day 11– Feb 24	Lake Furen, Nemuro and surrounds
Day 12– Feb 25	Nemuro to Kushiro, fly to Fukuoka and drive to Arasaki
Day 13 & 14– Feb 26 - 27	Arasaki & surrounds
Day 15– Feb 28	Arasaki to Miike
Day 16 - Mar 1	Hyuga Day Trip & Pelagic
Day 17 – Mar 2	Morning around Miike. Evening flight to Tokyo
Day 18 – Mar 3	Final departure from Tokyo

Mass Audubon Birding Guide



David Larson is the Director of Mass Audubon's Birder's Certificate Program, a college-level ornithology course, and teaches a bird ecology course for naturalist guides in Belize. He is the Science and Education Coordinator for Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport, where he designs and leads educational programs and field trips. He holds a PhD in zoology from the University of Minnesota and has served on the faculty of Boston University. He is the President of the Nuttall Ornithological Club and is an editor and columnist for *Bird Observer*. He has birded and led expeditions throughout North America, Hawaii, Svalbard, England, the Caribbean, Central America (including Costa Rica), Ecuador, Brazil, Botswana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Japan.

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Day 1, 14th February: Arrival in Tokyo and transfer to our hotel. After arriving in Tokyo, we will transfer directly to our hotel for an overnight stay. The group will get together this evening to go over the plans for the following day.

Day 2, 15th February: Transfer to Karuizawa and afternoon birding. This morning we will board

our vehicles and begin the drive to Karuizawa, situated in the forested highlands of central Honshu. After arrival, we will have some time to settle into our comfortable Japanese style hotel. Thereafter, we will begin our explorations of the prime birding area located just a few hundred meters from the hotel! Our main target here will be Copper Pheasant, a stunning bird endemic to Japan that only occurs on the main island of Honshu. The area around Karuizawa supports a rather healthy population of the species, yet due to its furtive habits we may have to work hard and be patient to see this special endemic!

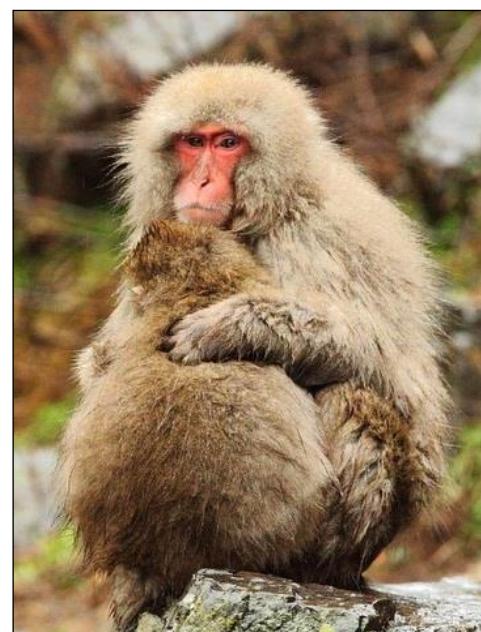


Copper Pheasant (female) by Glen Valentine

In the late evening, we will return to our hotel which also offers some easy, relaxing

birding around its bird feeders.

Day 3, 16th February: Karuizawa. We have a full day to explore the forests and streams around Karuizawa. This area also supports a wealth of other interesting and sought-after species, partly due to the fact that the local residents have attempted to maintain an environment attractive to birds, as well as introducing building restrictions to maximise their available habitat. While walking in the area we should see fair numbers of Varied, Long-tailed and Coal tits, Brown-eared Bulbuls and Japanese Pygmy Woodpeckers, and we stand an excellent chance of finding Japanese Green Woodpeckers, Japanese Wagtails, Eurasian Wrens, and attractive Dusky Thrushes. If we are lucky, we may also find some of the area's scarcer and more unpredictable species such as Japanese Accentor, Japanese and Bohemian waxwings, White's Thrush, and even Long-tailed Rosefinch. We also have a chance of finding the reticent Japanese Serow (an endemic bovid) here.



Japanese Macaques
by David Hoddinott

Day 4, 17th February: Karuizawa to Nagano. We have another morning in the Karuizawa area to look for any species that we may have missed, before heading further west towards Nagano. The area is most well-known for the resident population of Japanese Macaque, also known endearingly as 'Snow Monkeys'. Watching groups of these monkeys playing in the snow, squabbling over food scraps or even bathing in their own 'hot-tub', will undoubtedly be one of the

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highlights of the tour! In the surrounding coniferous forests, we are likely to encounter a few of the more common forest birds such as Eurasian Treecreepers, Goldcrests, Coal and Japanese tits, and Eurasian Jays. After enjoying the Snow Monkey spectacle, we will head to our nearby hotel in the late afternoon for an overnight stay.

Day 5, 18th February: Nagano to Kaga. After a final morning in Nagano, we will head for the Komatsu region on the western (Sea of Japan) coast of Honshu for a two-night stay. Today is mostly a travel day but, if time allows, we will do some initial exploration in the Kaga area. This could include a visit to a large lake near the town of Kanazawa that harbours an impressive array of waterfowl during the winter months and we are likely to encounter Smews and Falcated Ducks. If we are fortunate, perhaps a couple of Baikal Teal will be amongst the masses of other more common and widespread species. The lake edge may reveal Bull-headed Shrikes and Japanese Green Pheasants. In the late afternoon we will arrive at our accommodation in the Kaga area.

Day 6, 19th February: Kaga. The area around Kaga, in particular the Katano Kamo-ike Wetland Reserve, hosts staggering numbers of waterfowl in winter. We will work patiently through the vast flocks and are likely to be rewarded with good, scope views of Baikal Teal, sometimes in their hundreds! Taiga and Tundra Bean geese are also usually present, along with a few Falcated and Mandarin ducks and Smews. The majority of the waterfowl will however consist of Eastern Spot-billed and Tufted ducks, Northern Shovelers, Eurasian Wigeons, and Mallards. Venturing out towards the fields close to the Komatsu Airport usually produces large numbers of Tundra Swans, mostly comprising the *bewickii* subspecies (Bewick's Swan) but occasionally supporting a few of the *columbianus* subspecies (Whistling Swan).

Small to large flocks of White-fronted Geese are also usually present and vigilant searching may even turn up a vagrant Lesser White-fronted Goose. Eastern Marsh and Hen harriers are sometimes seen quartering low over the grasslands. The stubble fields are also usually home to a flock or two of Grey-headed Lapwings and there is even a slim chance of flushing a Japanese Quail here in the agricultural lands.

We will also take some time to visit the coast itself, where we hope to find Pacific Reef Herons, Black-tailed and Vega gulls, Japanese Cormorants, one or two species of loons/divers, and Blue Rock Thrushes.



Falcated Duck by G. Valentine



Taiga Bean Goose by Glen Valentine

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Day 7, 20th February: Flight from Kaga to Kushiro, Hokkaido and transfer to Tsurui. After some final time in the Kaga area we will transfer to the airport to connect with a domestic flight to Kushiro on

Japan's northern island of Hokkaido. Upon arrival we will drive to the town of Tsurui where we will overnight. We are likely to arrive in the late afternoon.



Red-crowned Crane by David Hoddinott

Day 8, 21st February: Tsurui to Rausu. This morning we will embark on the short drive to the nearby crane center, where we will marvel at the sight of about a hundred Red-crowned (Japanese) Cranes as they feed and dance around in the snow covered fields. These handsome and iconic birds are widely distributed throughout the island in summer, but in winter they congregate at a few sites in the marshlands just north of Kushiro. As we watch this spectacle, it will become extremely clear why we ventured to this remote and chilly corner of Japan!

After enjoying the cranes, we will make our way north towards the east coast and the town of Rausu, opportunistically birding along the way in appropriate habitats.

This area of eastern Hokkaido is home to a few pairs of the very impressive Blakiston's Fish Owl, and we have an excellent chance of seeing this spectacular bird during our stay in the area. Staring into the giant eyes of this nocturnal beauty must rank as one of the world's great birding experiences!

Day 9, 22nd February: Rausu and surrounds.

We have the entire day to explore the surroundings of Rausu, which will likely include sifting through mixed forest flocks for species such as Hazel Grouse, Black Woodpecker, Common Redpoll, Red Crossbill, Brambling and Eurasian Bullfinch. A scan out to sea should be productive, with this area being especially good for waterfowl and loons. Here we may find Red-throated, Black-throated, and Pacific loons, Long-tailed and Harlequin ducks, Common Goldeneyes, Common and Red-breasted mergansers, White-winged and Black scoters, and Ancient Murrelets. Small, icy streams may yield the captivating Brown Dipper, while a scan of the surrounding forested hillsides could produce Sika Deer. Tonight we will have a second opportunity to look for the regal Blakiston's Fish Owl.



Blakiston's Fish Owl by Glen Valentine



Steller's Sea Eagle by Adam Riley

Day 10, 23rd February: Rausu to Lake Furen. Driving from our hotel in Rausu, we will follow the coast south towards the frozen Lake Furen. On our way we are likely to see Large-billed Crows, Glaucous and Glaucous-winged gulls, and large numbers of Whooper Swans. In this area we may also find White-tailed and magnificent Steller's sea-eagles. These birds can usually be seen in good numbers and are often seen flapping heavily as they move from one feeding area to another. In the afternoon we will settle into our accommodation and some birding nearby may yield Marsh and Willow tits, as well as the local subspecies of Eurasian Nuthatch.

Day 11, 24th February: Lake Furen, Nemuro and surrounds. This morning we will depart on a pelagic, where we could expect some of the best sea-watching of the tour. Large numbers of sea-ducks, including Long-tailed and Harlequin ducks, Common Goldeneyes, and White-winged and Black scoters will compete for our attention with Red-throated Loons, Red-necked Grebes, and Greater Scaup. We also stand a chance of finding the scarce and localized Red-faced Cormorants among the more common Pelagic Cormorants. Other specialties that we will look out for include Spectacled Guillemot, Thick-billed and Common murres, Crested and Least auklets, and Long-billed and Ancient murrelets. Mammals are tough to find here, although we stand a chance of seeing Sika Deer, Harbor Seal, and even Sea Otter.

The remainder of the day will be spent exploring the woodlands in the area in search of the rare Ural Owl, elusive Hazel Grouse, and Black Woodpecker among the more common and widespread species like Red Crossbill, Eurasian Treecreeper, Goldcrest, Common Redpoll, and Eurasian Nuthatch. If we are extremely lucky we may also find Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Bohemian and Japanese waxwings, and even Pallas's Rosefinches, but any of these species would be a coup! Although these species regularly occur on Hokkaido, their numbers vary considerably from year to year and we will be very fortunate to locate any of these scarce passerines. In the late afternoon we will head back to our accommodation for a second night's stay.

Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker
by Rich Lindie

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Day 12, 25th February: Nemuro to Kushiro, fly to Fukuoka and drive to Arasaki. This morning we begin our journey back to Kushiro from where we board our domestic flight to Fukuoka, a large city situated on the northern coast of the island of Kyushu. We may have time to stop in again at the Nemuro Peninsula to search for any species we may have missed the day before and we may also take some time out to bird around Cape Kiritappu in search of the scarce Asian Rosy Finch.

Thereafter, we continue on with a drive to Arasaki, stopping along the way at a large area of sandbanks and mudflats in an attempt to locate the scarce Saundier's Gull, a small flock of which can usually be found here. In fact, many species of gull occur in the area and we could well see Black-headed, Black-tailed, Vega, Mew, Lesser Black-backed (this race sometimes split as Heuglin's), Slaty-backed and, with luck, Caspian gulls (this race sometimes split as Mongolian). Historically, this has been a reliable site in Japan to see Pallas's Gull and, provided the tide is right, we have an outside chance of seeing this impressive species.



Saunders's Gull by Glen Valentine

Days 13 & 14, 26th & 27th February: Arasaki and surrounds. We have two full days to explore the area around Arasaki. Our main focus here will be the fallow fields and rice paddies where thousands of Hooded and White-naped cranes congregate and feed. During good years, it is not unusual to count over



Hooded and White-naped Cranes by David Hoddinott

10,000 Hooded and 3000 White-naped cranes here, and they are sometimes joined by the odd Sandhill, Common, and Demoiselle cranes. This undoubtedly makes for one of the most spectacular avian gatherings on earth! Although Arasaki is understandably most famous for this spectacle, the diversity of

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habitats in the area also makes it one of the richest places for winter birding in Japan. The reedbeds fringing the rivers often harbour Chinese Penduline Tits, while Japanese Quail can sometimes be found amongst the rice fields. The rivers themselves hold Crested Kingfishers and the highly desirable Long-billed Plovers, and in the more wooded areas we should find fair numbers of Dusky and Pale thrushes. Some of the other noteworthy species we may encounter here include Green Sandpiper, Buff-bellied



Long-billed Plover by Rich Lindie

Pipit, Japanese White-eye, Bull-headed Shrike, Daurian Jackdaw, Rook, White-cheeked Starling, and Meadow, Chestnut-eared, Rustic, and Common Reed Buntings. A little inland from Arasaki, areas of small-scale cultivation and woodland hold Olive-backed Pipits and Japanese Bush Warblers, while we will also look for Pelagic and Japanese cormorants on the rocky coastline. Other species we should encounter during our explorations of the area include Red-breasted Merganser, Eastern Cattle Egret, Eastern Buzzard, House Swift, Eurasian Skylark, Asian House Martin, and Grey Wagtail. With luck, we could even come across one of the region's more secretive species, such as Brown-cheeked Rail or Ruddy-breasted Crake.

At a nearby wooded lake we will look for Mandarin Ducks, White-bellied Green Pigeons, scarce and secretive Grey and Black-faced buntings, while surrounding paddies could produce Eastern Marsh and Hen harriers, Red-throated Pipits, and Russet Sparrows.

Day 15, 28th February: Arasaki to Lake Mi-ike. After a final morning in Arasaki, we will drive east into the highlands of Kyushu to Lake Mi-ike. En route we may visit the Sendai River where previous trips have found the very rare and irregular Scaly-sided Merganser. The river also often harbours Mandarin Ducks, Crested Kingfishers and Brown Dippers, while the adjacent forest-edge sometimes turns up White-bellied Green Pigeons and Brown-headed Thrushes. We can expect to arrive at Lake Mi-ike in the mid to late afternoon with a few hours to do some initial explorations and birding in the tall woodland that surrounds the lake. Here we may find Varied, Japanese and Long-tailed tits, Daurian Redstarts and the striking Yellow-throated Buntings before heading down to our wonderful accommodation near the lake.



Japanese Murrelet by Glen Valentine

Day 16, 1st March: Day trip to Hyuga. This morning, we embark on a day trip to Hyuga, a coastal town situated on the north-east coast. Our prime reason for this journey is to search for the localised, endemic Japanese Murrelet. At Hyuga Harbour we board a boat that will take us around the harbour and the bay in search of the murrelet and our chances of seeing this Japanese specialty is

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excellent. Other species that we are likely to see during this outing include Black-tailed, Vega, and Mew gulls and Great and Japanese cormorants. If we do not find the murrelet on the boat trip, we will scan out to sea from a nearby headland where previous trips have produced scope views of this sought-after species from the shore. We will also keep a lookout for the scarce Japanese Pigeon that is sometimes present in the forest that lines the trail to the viewpoint.

Depending on how much time we still have available, we might also visit an estuary in the Miyazaki area. Here we may encounter several species of wader on the mudflats that could include Lesser Sand Plover, and Black-faced and Eurasian spoonbills. In the late afternoon, we will then make our way back to our accommodation near Lake Mi-ike for our final night's stay on Kyushu.

Day 17, 2nd March: Lake Mi-ike area and flight to Tokyo. This morning we will have time for some final birding around Lake Mi-ike to search for any species we may not have encountered there on our

first afternoon in the area or may simply wish to enjoy seeing again including Ryūkyū Minivet (here near the northern limit of its range), White-backed Woodpecker, Japanese Grosbeak, Yellow-throated and Grey buntings, Eurasian Nuthatch, White's Thrush, Red-flanked Bluetail, Olive-backed Pipit, Daurian Redstart, Forest Wagtail, and the introduced, but highly attractive, Red-billed Leiothrix.



Daurian Redstart by Markus Lilje

We then transfer to Miyazaki where we will catch our flights to Tokyo. That evening we will enjoy our final, celebratory dinner together.

Day 18: Final departure from Tokyo. All good things must come to an end unfortunately, and this morning our grand tour of Japan will conclude after breakfast, with transfers to both Haneda and Narita International Airports as required.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

Tour Price: US\$7900 per person, double occupancy. Single supplement, US\$1600 (*only 2 single rooms available*). Minimum number of travelers for this pricing: 8. Maximum group size is 14. (*If the minimum group size is not met, there may be a small surcharge added.*)

This includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 18 for those on the main tour;
- All lodgings and ground transportation during the tour;
- All national park and other reserve entrance fees; and
- All guiding services (including local guides and tour leaders).
- Group transfer from airport to hotel on Day 1
- Services of Mass Audubon naturalist leader, David Larson
- Services of local guides, trackers, camp staff
- Extensive trip preparation notes and bird checklist
- All tips and gratuities (*with minimum of 8 travelers*)

The tour fee does not include:

- **ANY** flights;
- Any beverages including bottled water;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls; and
- Laundry and other items of a personal nature.
- Passport and visa fees;
- Travel insurance

Single Supplement:

The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you request single accommodation. If you choose to share, we will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found. However, if we cannot provide you with a rooming partner, the single supplement will become applicable.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- a) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.
- b) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates and unforeseen increases in tour related costs and the price may be adjusted.
- c) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader/s at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

Tipping:

Tipping is NOT customary in Japan. Mass Audubon leader does not expect tips and the tips for the Rockjumper guide will be covered by Mass Audubon.

What you need to know about this tour:

- Much of our time is spent in vehicles, as we do have to cover long distances in order to get to the best birding areas. The more luggage you pack the less room there is in the vehicle, so it is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+18lb) for hand luggage.
- In some areas it can get **very** cold, especially on Hokkaido. Days are fairly short at this time of the year and some of the birds also occur in low densities. You should therefore expect some full day's birding without mid-day breaks in order to maximize our chances of finding all of the countries' special species.

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- Accommodations vary somewhat in Japan, from excellent in the main centres such as Tokyo to fairly basic on Hokkaido. We will do our utmost to make your stay as comfortable as possible, but at times we may experience maintenance problems that are beyond our control. In the remote areas we generally opt for the best available accommodation; however, this is sometimes below the standard of what you may have come to expect. Please note that some accommodations during the tour have shared and/or basic washroom facilities.
- This tour does not require a high level of fitness, but participants should be in good general health as much of the birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time. Should you have any physical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include ANY airfares. The main tour will begin with an introductory dinner in Tokyo on day 1 so please arrive in advance of **17:00**. The tour will conclude after breakfast on day 18 at our Tokyo hotel, where transfers to both Haneda and Narita can be arranged. **If arriving or departing from Tokyo's Narita Airport there is a shuttle bus that can be used to transfer between airports, the cost of this is around \$30.**

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact Mass Audubon Travel Director, 800-289-9504.

FLIGHTS:

Haneda Airport, Tokyo (IATA: HND) handles most of Japan's domestic flights and premier international business flight routes. Narita International Airport, Tokyo (IATA: NRT) handles most of Japan's leisure international flights. Both are well serviced by most of the world's major airlines. We have the capacity to advise you on the best route according to your preferences, but your local travel agent will best be able to book these flights for you. We can, however, book your domestic flight from Naha to Tokyo at the end of the Ryukyu Islands Extension. **IMPORTANT: please DO NOT book your international flights until you have consulted the Mass Audubon travel office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

TERMS & CONDITIONS

HOW TO BOOK: Please fill out the reservation form attached and send (via email or mail) to Mass Audubon – Travel, 208 South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773 with your deposit of \$1000 per person.

RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS: Early applications are strongly encouraged. Trip rosters usually must be finalized 4 months before departure! All applications must be accompanied by a completed reservation form and a \$1000-per-person deposit. Deposits can be by check or credit card (Visa or MasterCard). We reserve the right to decline your application. In the case of questionable health, we reserve the right to require a physician's certification to affirm you are capable of the activities.

Final payment is due 95 days before the departure date. You will receive a final invoice. Final payment must be by check or money order, ONLY.

RATES: All tour prices are based on double occupancy. If you would like us to find you a roommate, we will do our best, but cannot guarantee a share. If we cannot find a share, you will need to pay the single supplement. Rates are based on the minimum number of travelers listed. All forms and fares are accurate at the time of publication (June 2017) but are subject to change at any time prior to departure. It is our policy to only pass on the actual amount of any increases in airfares or land costs such as those increases due to the devaluation of the dollar. Rarely, a price increase may be called for if the group falls below the minimum, as listed in the itinerary.

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FLIGHTS: You, the traveler, are responsible for booking and paying for your own international flights.

Once you reserve your space, we will provide you with suggested flights and tell you which flights our leaders will take. You may book flights directly with the airline or with a travel agent. Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable, therefore you should not book your flight arrangements until you have checked with us to be sure the tour has the minimum number of participants for the trip to go. We ask that you provide us with your flight details so we can be sure to meet you at the airport upon your arrival.

PHOTOS: Mass Audubon reserves the right to make use of any photograph taken on the tour. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

TRIP INSURANCE: We strongly recommend that you purchase trip insurance within 2 weeks of your deposit. A brochure and application for optional trip cancellation, illness, and baggage insurance will be sent to you once you receive your confirmation letter, but you can purchase insurance from any company. We suggest you review and compare policies on www.insuremytrip.com to find one that best suits your needs. Please check with your own health insurance to see if you will be covered for medical expenses overseas. (Note: Medicare will not cover you outside the U.S., nor will most Medicare supplements.)

CANCELLATION Policy: If you need to change your booking, you must inform us immediately in writing. All cancellations must be done in writing and are effective upon receipt in the Massachusetts Audubon Travel office:

- Cancellations received up to 121 days will be refunded deposit less a \$300- per-person fee.
- Cancellations received between 120 and 91 days prior to departure will forfeit all deposits.
- There are no refunds for cancellations after 90 days or less from departure.

We must adhere to these policies but know that sometimes emergencies can happen and travelers have to cancel their trip. Therefore we strongly urge all travelers to purchase trip cancellation insurance. You will be sent information from Mass Audubon Tours upon receipt of your deposit or you can review policies here:

www.insuremytrip.com

Your Responsibility: Although every precaution is taken to safeguard you and your belongings, group travel trips by their nature involve a certain amount of risk. Trip participants should understand that the domestic and international trips sponsored/operated by Massachusetts Audubon Society (Mass Audubon Tours) - hereafter collectively "M.A.S." - involve known and unknown risks. M.A.S. assumes no responsibility for injuries, death, financial losses or damage to clients' property caused by or occurring during participation in any of the travel trips sponsored/operated by M.A.S. Trip participants must assume responsibility for having sufficient skill and fitness to participate in the trips and activities offered or sponsored by M.A.S. Trip participants must also certify that they have no medical, mental or physical conditions which could interfere with their abilities to participate in the activities and/or trips they are participating in and they must assume and bear the cost of all risks that may be created, directly or indirectly, by any such condition. It is the responsibility of trip participants to have in place adequate insurance to cover any injury, damage or emergency transportation costs related to their travel and/or participation in trip activities and/or to bear the costs of such injury, damage or emergency transportation costs. Because of the risks associated with the travel trips sponsored by M.A.S. we urge all trip participants to supplement their own insurance with travel or vacation or emergency response types of insurance. M.A.S. requires that all trip participants acknowledge and assume these risks by reading and signing an M.A.S. Release and Waiver and Assumption of Risk contract prior to departure.

CONDITIONS OF TRAVEL: Travelers will be provided with an itinerary and trip preparation information. It is expected that travelers will read this information prior to trip departure. Travelers will be responsible for completing an application reservation form, including the personal information and a release of liability. Travelers will be expected to abide by the terms set forth in the invoice. During the tour, travelers are asked to respect and follow the directions of their guide and leader.

Reservation Application

Passenger 1 Name as shown on passport: _____

Nickname for Name tag: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Passenger 2 Name as shown on passport: _____

Nickname for Name tag: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone # Preferred: _____

Email address: _____

Room Preferences:

I request single accommodations where available and will pay the single supplement.

I would like to be assigned a roommate. If one is not available, I will pay the single supplement.

Personal Information:

I/We are non-smokers. (If you are a smoker(s), please check here and note that smoking is limited to outdoors in non-group spaces)

Is there anything Mass Audubon should know about your health that might impact your ability to participate comfortably on this trips? Please describe: _____

Deposit:

Please find my enclosed **check** deposit of \$1000 per person: Checks should be made payable to *Massachusetts Audubon Society* OR Please **charge** my credit card:

VISA MC Card # _____ Exp. _____ CVV# _____

Signature

Massachusetts Audubon Society, Inc.
RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Name: _____

I would like to participate in the birding and nature tour named above (the "Tour") organized by Massachusetts Audubon Society, Inc. ("Mass Audubon"). I am aware that participation in a Mass Audubon tour involves risk, including, but not limited to, the hazards of living in and traveling over unpredictable terrain often in remote areas without adequate medical facilities, exposure to disease and infection, being subject to the forces of nature, and travel by airplane and motor vehicle. In addition, I understand and acknowledge that, if I participate in the Tour, one or more of the risks described above or set forth below could result in or cause bodily injury or death to me or damage to personal property of mine: physical exertion; travel by foot, plane, train, auto, vans, bus, boat or other conveyance; consumption of food and beverages; civil unrest, terrorism, banditry, or criminal activity; high altitude; inadequate medical facilities or service.

I acknowledge that I have received and read carefully information describing the Tour, including, but not limited to, the Terms and Conditions and the paragraph in the Terms and Conditions entitled "Your Responsibility."

I acknowledge that the enjoyment and excitement of touring is derived, at least in part, from the inherent risks incurred by travel and activity beyond the accepted safety and routine of life at home or work, and that part of the reason I have decided to participate in the Tour is to experience this enjoyment and excitement. I further acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to discuss with my medical provider the medical risks involved in the Tour. I have also had the opportunity to research the Tour and to understand fully the risks involved.

Therefore, notwithstanding the risks of participating in the Tour set forth and as described above, and in consideration of Mass Audubon permitting me to participate in the Tour:

(1) I AGREE TO ASSUME AND ACCEPT ALL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOUR; AND
 (2) I HEREBY RELEASE AND FOREVER DISCHARGE AND COVENANT AND AGREE NOT TO SUE, AND AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS, MASS AUDUBON AND ITS DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AND AGENTS (COLLECTIVELY, THE "RELEASEES"), AND EACH OF THE RELEASEES, FROM AND AGAINST AND IN REGARD TO ANY AND ALL CLAIMS, DEMANDS, ACTIONS, SUITS, LOSSES, COSTS, DAMAGES, AND EXPENSES (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ATTORNEYS' FEES), AND ANY AND ALL LIABILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF EVERY KIND AND DESCRIPTION, WHICH I SHALL OR MAY HAVE AGAINST THE RELEASEES OR ANY ONE OR MORE OF THEM ARISING OUT OF, OR IN CONNECTION WITH, MY PARTICIPATION IN THE TOUR.

I agree that this Release and Assumption of Risk shall be (a) binding upon me and my heirs, executors, legal representatives, successors, and assigns, and (b) deemed a contract made under seal under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and shall be governed by, and construed and enforced in accordance with, the internal laws of said Commonwealth without regard to its principles of conflict of laws.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ, UNDERSTAND, AND VOLUNTARILY SIGN THIS RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name (s) (Please Print) _____