

Birding Ecotours



USA: OREGON – KLAMATH BASIN AND THE
COAST

03 – 12 OCTOBER 2025



*The delightful **Grey-crowned Rosy Finch** will be one of our many songbird targets on our Oregon birding tour.*

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Our Oregon birding tour begins on the coast at Tillamook Bay, one of the prime birding areas in the entire Pacific Northwest. Tillamook and nearby Bayocean Spit will yield an incredible variety of seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and related species.

A full-day pelagic trip with Tim Shelmerdine and Oregon Pelagic Tours will take us into the Pacific in search of tubenoses: **Black-footed Albatross**, **Pink-footed Shearwater**, **Fork-tailed Storm Petrel**, and many others. This trip has produced some incredible rarities including **Short-tailed** and **Laysan Albatrosses** that we found on a previous Oregon birdwatching tour.

After another day of coastal birding, we move inland to Crater Lake, the Klamath Basin, Tule Lake (in northern California), and a total change of pace. Now we'll be looking at dozens of **Bald Eagles**, thousands of ducks and geese, and large flocks of **Sandhill Cranes**. There should be **Ferruginous Hawks** and hopefully a **Short-eared Owl**. **Great Grey Owl** is resident here, and we will make every effort to find one, as we have in the past.



The majestic Great Grey Owl is resident in the Klamath Basin.

A few of the more intriguing songbirds we will seek on this Oregon bird watching tour include **Grey-crowned Rosy Finch**, **Golden-crowned Sparrow**, **Wrentit**, **Townsend's Solitaire**, **Tricolored Blackbird**, and **American Dipper**. Woodpeckers include **American Three-toed**, **Black-backed**, **Lewis's**, and **White-headed**. Our final stops are Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge and Sauvie Island near Portland. These are excellent songbird areas and great spots for scoping more waterfowl, raptors, and **Sandhill Cranes**.

Itinerary (10 days/9 nights)

Day 1. Tillamook Bay and Bayocean Spit

We plan to arrive at Portland International Airport by early afternoon. Participants often prefer to arrive in Portland a day early, just in case of a flight delay. We'll work our way toward the coast with our first planned stop being Tillamook Bay and Bayocean Spit; one of the prime birding areas in the Pacific Northwest. We should be able to find a nice assortment of Pacific seabirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl, and then head south.

Overnight: Lincoln City

Day 2. Birding the West Coast

Most of our day will be devoted to searching for coastal species, many of which will be different from those that we'll see on tomorrow's pelagic trip. Siletz Bay should yield some of our expected loons and cormorants. Linger on shorebirds congregate at Drift Creek, a great location to search for **Baird's Sandpiper** and **Marbled Godwit**.

A flock of **Pectoral Sandpipers** could yield a big bonus, or perhaps the rare **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**. Boiler Bay is good for **Black Oystercatcher**, **Marbled Murrelet**, **Common Murre**, and any number of pelagic species. We will make several stops around Yaquina Bay in Newport to look for **Harlequin Duck**, 'jetty' shorebirds, **Western Grebe**, and flocks of scoters and other sea ducks. We'll also search for the elusive **Wrentit**. This area yielded a lingering **Palm Warbler** on a previous Oregon birding tour.

Overnight: Lincoln City



*Perhaps the world's prettiest duck, **Harlequin Duck** can be seen around Newport.*

Day 3. Pacific pelagic from Lincoln city

The entire day will be spent at sea with Tim Shelmerdine and Oregon Pelagic Tours. Our offshore destination is Perpetua Bank. Tim says: “We have refined our route and timing to detect the most species and highest number of birds, including albatrosses and rarities.

Albatrosses will include **Black-footed**, and possibly **Laysan** and others. We encounter commercial fishing boats frequently that attract hundreds, and even thousands of seabirds, which we leisurely scrutinize at point blank range! Marine animals, including whales, dolphins, seals, sharks, and other fish are often spotted. Our expert seabird guides help you spot and identify all the birds and marine life that we encounter.

Your fantastic Oregon bird watching pelagic trip starts in Yaquina Bay with abundant waterbirds and the chance for rocky-type shorebirds on the jetties. Then, on our large, comfortable charter vessel, we will move along the shore briefly, viewing **Marbled Murrelets**, **Pigeon Guillemots**, and other near shore specials, including **Gray Whales**. Soon we’ll be heading offshore, while your guides point out pelagic birds flying by or sitting on the water ahead.



*The distinctive **Black-footed Albatross** will be one of our major targets on our pelagic trip.*

Our first chum stop is normally on the shelf break, 27 miles (43 kilometers) off Newport. After we’re satisfied here, we’ll head south 15 miles (24 kilometers) to the seaward slope of the Perpetua Bank sea mount. At this outstanding underwater feature, we’ll again use chum to attract albatrosses and other seabirds right up to the boat for you to observe and photograph! What a day! We will return to a good dinner and a restful night.

NOTE: We may have to adjust our Oregon birding tour schedule slightly to accommodate any change in the pelagic trip schedule.

Overnight: Lincoln City

Day 4. Seal Rock State Park and Fern Ridge Lake

Our morning starts along the coast, returning to some intriguing areas visited previously on the trip and stopping at a few new ones. Seal Rock State Park is our most reliable location to look for **Surfbird** and **Wandering Tattler**, plus sea ducks and gulls, and pods (herds) of **Harbor Seals** and sea lions.

Then we turn inland toward Eugene and spend the afternoon at Fern Ridge Lake. Raptors may include **Cooper's Hawk**, **Rough-legged Buzzard**, and **White-tailed Kite**, with the chance of a **Short-eared Owl** quartering over the grasslands. We'll look for shorebirds, rails, and bitterns in nearby marshlands and mudflats, and check the hedgerows for **Golden-crowned Sparrows** and perhaps an **Orange-crowned Warbler** and **Bewick's Wren**.

Overnight: Eugene

Day 5. Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park

Our first stop today is majestic Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park. This will give us our best opportunity for high elevation species such as **Canada Jay**, **Clark's Nutcracker**, and **Grey-crowned Rosy Finch**. A past birding tour to Oregon yielded **Say's Phoebe**, **Prairie Falcon**, and a flock of **Evening Grosbeaks**.



The super cute Canada Jay!

Lodgepole and pine-hemlock forests contain **Sooty Grouse**, **Black-backed** and **American Three-toed Woodpeckers**, **Steller's Jay**, **Mountain Chickadee**, and **Townsend's Solitaire**. Extensive Ponderosa Pine stands to the south are home to **White-headed Woodpecker**,

Williamson's Sapsucker, Pygmy Nuthatch, and Red Crossbill. Today's birding may not be easy, but the birds that we find will be very rewarding.

Overnight: Klamath Falls

Day 6. Upper Klamath Lake and Fort Klamath

Today we explore Upper Klamath Lake and Fort Klamath, with their forests, fields, and beautiful streams. This is one of the best areas in North America to see large numbers of waterfowl and raptors; nearly 350 species of birds have been identified here.

The weather can be expected to be beautiful, with 300 days of sunshine annually. We will make a special effort for the magnificent **Great Grey Owl**: there are several especially good areas near Fort Klamath for this majestic species. We heard one and then had close looks at a second one on a previous Oregon birding tour. You can expect **Mountain Bluebird, White-headed Woodpecker, California Quail, and Ruffed Grouse.**

Overnight: Klamath Falls



The stunning White-headed Woodpecker!

Day 7. Tule Lake and Lower Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuges

Today we make the short drive south to Tule Lake and Lower Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuges in northern California. There are so many varied habitats that the birding opportunities are almost endless. You will probably see larger numbers of waterfowl today than you have ever seen in your life!

New species that we may find include **Black-crowned Night Heron**, **Tricolored Blackbird**, **Western Meadowlark**, **Clark's Grebe**, **Ferruginous Hawk**, and **Sandhill Crane**. We may find **Canyon Wren** and **Rock Wren** on the same rocky cliff, with **Townsend's Solitaire**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, and **Yellow-headed Blackbird** nearby.

Overnight: Klamath Falls

Day 8. Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

We'll have part of the day for more exploration in this incredible area, looking for any species that may have eluded us during the past few days, perhaps **Lesser Goldfinch** or a difficult woodpecker. Then it will be time to drive north to Portland with stops at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge along the way. Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge is always on the agenda for **Acorn Woodpecker**, **Cinnamon Teal**, and **Greater White-fronted Goose**.

Overnight: Portland



Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge is a normally reliable spot for Acorn Woodpecker.

Day 9. Sauvie Island

Sauvie Island in the Columbia River is just a short drive from Portland. Past highlights here have included hundreds of **Sandhill Cranes**, thousands of waterfowl (of many species), a wonderful variety of songbirds, and often **Merlin** and **Rough-legged Buzzard**. We'll have the entire day to explore Sauvie and several additional areas along the Columbia River.

Overnight: Portland

Day 10. Heading home

We'll shuttle to the Portland International Airport for our flights home after an enjoyable nine days of bird watching in Oregon.

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.

Duration:	10 days
Limit:	4 – 8
Dates:	03 – 12 October 2025
Start:	Portland, Oregon
End:	Portland, Oregon
Prices:	US\$5,150 per person sharing, assuming 4-8 participants (2025)
Single Supplements:	US\$1,020 (2025)

Price includes:

Meals
 Accommodation
 Guiding fees
 Entrance fees
 Boat rides
 All transport while on tour
 Tolls

Price excludes:

All domestic and international flights

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts

Alcoholic drinks

Personal insurance

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))