



CAPE COD & RHODE ISLAND

October 4 - 10, 2026



Humpback Whale and Great Shearwater, Stellwagen Bank, MA © Kevin Burke

New England in the fall is a magical place. Birds and marine mammals abound in the cool coastal waters and estuaries. Massachusetts and Rhode Island have done a good job protecting a fair portion of this critical habitat.

Cape Cod seems empty this time of year compared to the bustling summer vacation hub that it becomes every year. We will explore some of these diverse coastal enclaves, such as Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, Fort Hill, Cape Cod National Seashore and Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. The latter is accessed by boat on a whale watching vessel out of Provincetown. Marconi Station was the first place where a transatlantic wireless telegraph station was built and is now a historical monument and a good place for lingering passerines. The famous Bird Watcher's General Store is in Orleans. We will stop here to check out all the latest birding gear and gifts. There will also be ample seafood dinners to enjoy.

Rhode Island is a beautiful and diverse state. The coastal refuges are migrant traps this time of year, with Harlequin Duck, Great Cormorant, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Lapland Longspur all possible.

Sachuest Point National Wildlife refuge is one of the best birding spots in Rhode Island. We will take the time to enjoy the refuge, which is typically packed with ducks, sparrows, and lingering warblers. No trip to Rhode Island is complete without a visit to Newport to visit the opulent mansions on the water. There is truly no other place like it. We will also have the unique experience of visiting one of New England's largest cranberry bogs. This working family farm should be in the middle of harvest, and we will get to observe how the operation works. It is also a good place to look for ducks and anything else that may show up in the flooded fields.

This promises to be a very easy-paced and enjoyable tour. We will have great birds, seafood, and culture as we make our way through beautiful southern New England.

October 4, Day 1: Arrival and welcome dinner

We will meet at the Crowne Plaza Providence-Warwick (Airport code PVD), Warwick at 6:00 p.m. for a trip introduction and orientation followed by a nice dinner.

NIGHT: Crowne Plaza Providence-Warick (Airport), Warick



American Redstart © Barry Zimmer

October 5, Day 2: Driving to Cape Cod, Scusset Beach, Cape Cod Canal, Fort Hill

Today we will travel from Warwick, Rhode Island to Eastham, Massachusetts. En route we will make several stops at key points of interest, starting with a drive to Scusset Beach State Reservation. Scusset Beach is at the mouth of the Cape Cod Canal where it meets Cape Cod Bay. Here, we can walk along the Jetty and take in the salt air. The beach and jetty will yield our first glimpses of Common Eider, several gull species, Savannah Sparrow, and potentially Harlequin Duck. The park has a scenic paved hike and bike path that parallels the canal. The trees along the canal path can be good for lingering migrants such as Blue-headed Vireo and Blackpoll Warbler. Next, we will next drive onto Cape Cod via the Sagamore Bridge, a bridge named for the Algonquin word for leader, or chief. We will aim for Fort Hill, a unit of the Cape Cod National Seashore. This fertile field and the surrounding Red Maple swamp and saltmarsh make for awesome birding. The diversity of habitat in such a small area has made Fort Hill a must stop for birding on Cape Cod. We will be looking for migrants such as American Redstart, Blackpoll Warbler, Nashville Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat on the edge of the field and in the swamp. The salt marsh holds American Black Duck, Great and Snowy egrets, and Seaside Sparrow. We will spend as much time here as needed and then head to our hotel in Eastham for the evening.

NIGHT: Four Points by Sheraton, Eastham



Coast Guard Beach Lighthouse from Fort Hill, Cape Cod © Kevin Burke

October 6, Day 3: Marconi Station, Race Point and Provincetown whale watch

A short drive from our hotel is the Marconi Station site within the Cape Cod National Seashore. This area was made famous by Guglielmo Marconi, who was the first person to transmit wireless radio signals across the Atlantic Ocean. This site is not only historic, but can be very good for birds too. The high dunes give a great vantage point into the ocean where we could see Pacific, Red-throated, and Common loons, as well as all three Scoter species. We will then head up to the furthest reach of Cape Cod. A quick stop at Race Point Beach, also a part of Cape Cod National Seashore, will give us our first looks at the underwater marine reserve known as Stellwagen Bank. Here, the deep water of the Atlantic Ocean is very close to shore, so it creates an upwelling of current against the nearshore shelf. These currents bring in tremendous amounts of food and nutrients for seabirds and cetaceans, sometimes even visible from shore! We will take a whale watching boat out of Provincetown to look for pelagic birds and whales. Please be prepared to do a lot of sea watching this day. Birds we hope to see today include Harlequin Duck, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Manx and Corey's shearwater, Great Cormorant, Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers, Black-legged Kittiwake, and Razorbill. Whales we hope to see include Humpback, Minke, Fin, and, potentially, North Atlantic Right Whale, although the latter species is quite rare now. This will be an action-packed day, so plan on being out for most of the day. Plan on a great seafood dinner too!

NIGHT: Four Points by Sheraton, Eastham

October 7, Day 4 Wellfleet Bay Audubon Sanctuary, Gooseberry Island, and Newport, Rhode Island

We will spend most of the morning at Wellfleet Bay Audubon Sanctuary. This sanctuary is run by Massachusetts Audubon and has extensive marsh and woodland habitats. Wild Turkey occurs sparingly on the Cape, and this location is the only place where we might have a chance for it. Lingered shorebirds such as Whimbrel and Black-bellied Plover are possible. We will make a quick stop at the acclaimed Birdwatcher's General Store in Orleans. After lunch we will travel back to the

“mainland” and our last stop in Massachusetts, Gooseberry Island. This small island sticks out into Buzzards Bay on the South coast of Massachusetts and can be a good place for attracting migrant birds in need of rest. We hope to find Brant, Harlequin Duck, Common Eider, Great Cormorant, Palm Warbler, and maybe even Clay-colored Sparrow. Having spent a couple great days in Massachusetts, we will make our way to Rhode Island to spend the rest of our time in the country's smallest state. Our nightly destination is the beautiful city of Newport. This coastal town is home to the famous Millionaires Row. Huge mansions and dramatic coastlines await.

NIGHT: The Newport Harbor Hotel and Marina, Newport



Harlequin Duck, Sachuest Point NWR, Rhode Island Kevin Burke

October 8, Day 5: Sachuest Point, Newport, Brenton Point, Beavertail State Park

Our first stop will be at Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge is an important wintering spot on the Southern Rhode Island Coast. The rocky shore, extensive saltmarsh, and beach provide great wintering habitat for a multitude of birds. We will walk the gentle three-mile trail around the refuge and likely see Harlequin Ducks Ruddy Turnstone, Northern Harrier, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon. Gulls and passerines are also very likely. The refuge also boasts great views of the Rhode Island coastline. A visit to Brenton Point State Park will wind us past the opulent mansions of

Newport. We will take a little time to wander through the streets and take in the rich history of the city.

The rugged coastline of Brenton Point boasts a monument to celebrate the pioneering Portuguese sailors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A selection of birds we hope to see today are Harlequin Duck, Common Eider, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Cormorant, American Kestrel, American Pipit, Lapland Longspur, and many others. This evening, we will make an optional post-dinner visit to Beavertail State Park. This peninsula park has abundant conifer trees, including Atlantic White Cedar. These coastal cedars are a great place to look for migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls.

NIGHT: The Newport Harbor Hotel and Marina, Newport

October 9, Day 6: Cranberry Bog, Marsh Point, Conimicut Point Park

This morning, we will have a truly unique experience. We will visit a working Cranberry farm. New England is known for its Cranberry production, but mostly in Massachusetts. A 100-acre Cranberry farm in Western Rhode Island will open up its dikes and levees for us to observe their annual harvest. We will have a tour of the farm and find out all about how the berries are harvested. The flooded fields should hold a good number of waterfowl and other goodies. It should be a fun and educational morning of



Saltmarsh Sparrow, Marsh Point, RI © Kevin Burke

Agritourism. In the afternoon we will make our way towards Providence. We will stop off at Marsh Point, a small salt marsh patch, in Warick which can be quite good for Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sparrows. If we have time, we will check Conimicut Point Park to see if there are any Brant in the area, or we could chase any rarity that may have been discovered. We will have a nice farewell dinner and reminisce about all the good times had on this tour.

NIGHT: Crowne Plaza Providence-Warick (Airport), Warick

October 10, Day 7: Departure

You can plan to depart at any time today from T.F. Green International Airport. The hotel has an airport shuttle for your convenience.

ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 12 participants.

TOUR LEADER(S): Kevin Burke and an additional VENT leader to be announced.



Kevin Burke is originally from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He grew up running around in the woods and trails of Shenandoah National Park. His family spent many summers camping and hiking in the park. One of Kevin’s favorite activities was jumping in the river and turning over every rock to see what was underneath. This eventually earned him the nickname “Hellgrammite Kid.” This early exposure to the natural world has vaulted into a lifelong obsession with the outdoors. Kevin was introduced to birding while spending summers in Rhode Island at his grandmother’s house. She would point out all the feeder birds and help him identify them. These early encounters helped foster a love for birds. An early Ornithology class at Hocking College in Ohio rekindled his love for birds. He has been birding every day since. He went on to get a Bachelor of Science in Ecotourism and Conservation Ecology from the University of Idaho. Kevin has been involved with leading bird trips in some capacity for almost 20 years. He has led birding trips all throughout the United States, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. His birding journeys have also taken him to some spectacular locations such as Portugal, Colombia, The Bahamas, and Canada. This is truly a lifelong obsession. He currently resides with his family in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Kevin’s wife and two kids also enjoy birding. They have fun kayaking, hiking, and camping in the mountains that surround their home. One of their favorite activities is jumping on the paddle board and kayaks and leisurely floating the French Broad River near their house.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: \$4,260 per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 7, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of **\$562** will be added to your tour fee.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The deposit for this tour is **\$500** per person. We accept MasterCard and Visa.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (June 6, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES (CANADA): Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed on to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a

membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The "pay as you go" approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to "pay as you go," you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and

conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About Medjet's MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per-person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is

subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

CLIMATE & WEATHER: Cape Cod and Rhode Island in October can produce a mix of weather. Cape Cod's average temperatures at this time of year are a high of 61 and a low of 48. With that in mind, the mornings can be cool. Wind off the ocean can reduce temperatures significantly. There is always a chance of rain on this trip. Cape Cod receives around eight days of rain in the month of October. Rhode Island has very similar weather. The days should be in the low 60s and evening/early mornings in the mid-40s.

CLOTHING: New England in the fall can have variable weather. Mornings and evenings will most likely be chilly. We are taking a boat trip off of Provincetown, MA. Anytime we go offshore the weather tends to be cooler than on land. Clothing that insulates and dries quickly is highly recommended. You know if you run hot or cold. The following are recommendations only; you are more than welcome to bring more clothing to ensure your comfort.

The following items are recommended:

- **Pants:** A few pairs of pants are essential. Many people prefer lightweight pants made of nylon or other material, but denim, though not as comfortable, is certainly acceptable. Try not to bring cotton pants for our days in the field. Cotton pants for dinner are fine.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of midweight, yet durable materials with multiple pockets

and ventilated seams are popular. Look for pants and shirts made from wool, polyester, or nylon

- **Shirts:** Consider bringing several long-sleeved and short-sleeved t-shirts. A few button-up outer shirts will be essential to have to wear over your t-shirts. These styles include flannel shirts or wool shirts.
- **Hat:** A hat for protection from the sun is essential. A wide-brimmed hat is best, but participants should bring a baseball cap at the very least. Also include a winter type hat of your choosing. A wool or synthetic “beanie” is highly recommended.
- **Sweaters and Coats:** Chilly and mild weather is anticipated on this trip, You should come prepared for cool mornings and mild afternoons. Please bring a fleece or down insulating jacket Even if we do not encounter rain, a waterproof jacket will shut out the wind when we are out on the boat.
- **Casual:** We emphasize dress will be casual throughout, yet some people may prefer casual attire for some of the evenings. We will be dining at some nice restaurants in the evenings, and while there is no dress code some may want to dress a little nicer. It is definitely not required, and depends on personal taste.

FOOTWEAR: There will be a fair amount of walking on this tour. A comfortable hiking shoe is recommended. Most of our walking will be on wide trails, but the ground surfaces may be gravelly, rocky, uneven, and sandy. A light hiking boot or trail shoe will be the ideal footwear when in the field. Athletic shoes will suffice as well, and are especially appropriate for other occasions, such as around the hotels. No strenuous hiking is planned, but we will take one hike of around three miles. Wool or synthetic socks of medium weight are also recommended over cotton socks.

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry service is not available at the Sheraton Four Points on Cape Cod. It is available at the Newport Harbor Hotel in Newport.

CONDITIONS: On this trip we will have early to mid-morning departures, typically leaving the hotel for the field around 7:30 a.m. The days will end in the late afternoon with at least an hour break before dinner each day. The days will consist of short to medium hikes, with the longest being around three miles. All of the hikes are on flat ground with only slight inclines or declines. Some of the trail

conditions will include rocky, gravel, sandy, and paved paths. We will travel between hotels a few times on this trip, but destinations are not too far apart. The longest drive without stopping will be around 1.5 hours. We will have a chance for ample restroom breaks throughout each day.

We will enjoy some nice meals on this trip. The New England coast has wonderful seafood to enjoy, although choices for every preference and diet will be available at every meal. Your tour leader(s) will have snacks in the van and they will be available at any point throughout the day. We will take a snack break at mid-morning every day. Dinners will be around 6:00 p.m. every night depending on availability of reservations.

The accommodations will be very nice throughout or stays. There will be some brief opportunities for shopping.

EQUIPMENT:

One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Cape Cod and Rhode Island.

- Daypack or belt pack – Handy for carrying extra clothing layers, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment
- Notebooks and pens
- Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection
- Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions
- Personal toiletries
- Collapsible walking stick – A highly recommended item for those who have trouble walking
- Tissue packs
- A bottle for carrying water in the field is a good idea, though we will always have bottled water and other drinks available
- An alarm clock (if not using this feature on your mobile phone) will be helpful.

BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES:

Binoculars: We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes: Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

INTERNET ACCESS: Wireless internet access is available at all hotels

TIME ZONE: In mid-October, the northeastern USA operates on Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun's ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

INSECT REPELLENTS: There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- **DEET:** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- **Picaridin:** A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- **Herbal insect repellents:** Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- **Permanone® (Permethrin):** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

- **Insect Shield® apparel:** Clothing pre-treated with Permethrin is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Birds: Any of the following resources is an excellent and suitable option for bird identification on this trip.

Dunn, Jon L. and Jonathan Alderfer, eds. ***National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America***. 7th edition. National Geographic Society: 2017.

Sibley, David Allen. ***The Sibley Guide to Birds***. 2nd edition. Knopf: 2014.

Sibley, David Allen. ***The Sibley Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America***. 2nd edition. Knopf: 2016.

Mammals

Kays, Roland W. and Don E. Wilson. ***Mammals of North America***. 2nd edition. Princeton University Press: 2009.

Shirihai, Hadoram and Brett Jarrett. ***Whales, Dolphins and Other Marine Mammals of the World***. Princeton Field Guides. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, 2006.

Butterflies

Brock, Jim P. & Kaufman, Kenn. ***Butterflies of North America***. Mariner Books. 2nd edition. 2006.

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY APPS & ONLINE RESOURCES:

eBird: Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files! **Highly recommended.**

MERLIN BIRD ID: Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate bird watchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions regarding his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app, followed by the appropriate regional "pack."

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason

whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on January 31, 2025 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

CCRI:20261004

Rev: 01/12/24 – BL

SB – 05/22/26