

# Spring in Madera Canyon and the Chiricahua Mountains

**Tour Dates:** April 9 – 16, 2025

**Tour Cost:** TBD

**Single Supplement:** TBD

**Tour Capacity:** 7 People



This tour will explore the diverse ecosystems associated with the southwestern United States. If this is your first time birding the region, you will be delighted to observe “typical” desert species, including Greater Roadrunners, Montezuma Quail, Rivoli’s, Black-chinned, Broad-billed, and Anna’s Hummingbirds, Arizona Woodpeckers, Say’s Phoebes, Canyon Wrens, Canyon Towhees, Crissal Thrashers, Phainopeplas, and more!

If this is not your first trip to the southwestern U.S. in pursuit of birds, Madera Canyon is an ideal birding location to find obscure and rare species not easily detected, such as the Elegant Trogon, Elf Owl, Lewis’s

Woodpecker, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Olive Warbler, and Red-faced Warblers. Simply put, with approximately 100 miles of hiking trails traversing 10,000 ft of elevation and a recorded 250 bird species, Madera Canyon is a birding mecca. Our trip will focus on this unique ecosystem that stretches from desert grassland to sycamore and juniper forests.

For the first part of this tour, we will be staying in the heart of Madera Canyon at the Santa Rita Lodge. This lodge is renowned for its location and access to world-class birding. If you are not into birds, you will not like this lodge! Santa Rita Lodge is approximately 45-minutes from Tucson Airport and is off the beaten path, designed as a true “nature lodge”, replete with hummingbird feeders and easy access to hiking trails. It should be noted that, due to its remote location, internet is very sporadic and cell service is virtually non-existent at the lodge. Bring a good book and plan to be “off the grid” for a few days of birding bliss.





For the first days of our tour, we will focus on birds of the Madera Canyon. The trails in the canyon range from easy to difficult and we will plan on visiting easy to moderate trails during our stay. Walking will be slow (birding pace) and we will plan to cover 3-5 miles during morning walks (even less if birding is productive). Madera Canyon is an exceptional spot to find the elusive Elegant Trogon, as well as Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Painted Redstarts, and Chihuahuan Ravens.

Day trips will be planned to visit the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge where we will search for the endangered Masked Bobwhite, Rufous-winged Sparrows, Lucy's Warblers, Scaled Quail, Bendire's Thrasher, Bell's Vireo, and Abert's Towhee. We will also plan to visit Patagonia Lake State Park, where we will find a mixture of migratory waterfowl and passerine species along with the resident desert scrub bird communities.

We will cap off our tour with a day trip to the Chiricahua National Monument, a park that hosts the greatest density of Elegant Trogons in the United States. We will bird the many campgrounds and easy walking trails in the monument and then drive the 28-mile mountain highlands transect of the park, looking for extreme Mexican rarities such as Eared Quetzal and Mexican Chickadees. Mexican Chickadees are not found anywhere else in the United States and yet tend to be common in the higher elevations of the Chiricahuas, often nesting in early to mid-April. Other species we will target include Northern Goshawk, Grace's Warbler, Pygmy Nuthatch, Stellar's Jay, and Greater Pewee.



We will end our day trip to the Chiricahua National Monument by visiting the town of Portal. This town is wonderful for finding lower-elevation species and a number of homes in the town have bird feeders that attract numerous species. Portal has an absolutely massive species list, including Montezuma, Gambel's and Scaled Quail (which are common) and 11 species of hummingbird. We will spend the waning hours of the day birding the town and waiting for the breeding Elf Owls to wake and become active!

**Required Immunizations:** None

**Optional Immunizations:** None

**Other Notes:** A Visa is not required for this tour

## **EXAMPLE SPECIES LIST**

### **Waterfowl**

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

### **Grouse, Quail, and Allies**

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata*

Gambel's Quail *Callipepla gambelii*

Montezuma Quail *Cyrtonyx montezumae*

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo*

### **Pigeons and Doves**

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*

Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata*

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Inca Dove *Columbina inca*

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina*

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica*

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura*

### **Cuckoos**

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus*

Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*

### **Nightjars**

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles acutipennis*

Common Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*

Common Poorwill *Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*

Mexican Whip-poor-will *Antrostomus arizonae*

### **Swifts**

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi*

White-throated Swift *Aeronautes saxatalis*

### **Hummingbirds**

Rivoli's Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*

Plain-capped Starthroat *Heliomaster constantii*

Blue-throated Mountain-gem *Lampornis clemenciae*

Lucifer Hummingbird *Calothorax lucifer*

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri*

Anna's Hummingbird *Calypte anna*

Costa's Hummingbird *Calypte costae*

Calliope Hummingbird *Selasphorus calliope*  
Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus*  
Allen's Hummingbird *Selasphorus sasin*  
Broad-tailed Hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus*  
Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cyananthus latirostris*  
White-eared Hummingbird *Basilinna leucotis*  
Violet-crowned Hummingbird *Ramosomyia violiceps*  
Berylline Hummingbird *Saucerottia beryllina*

### **Cranes**

Sandhill Crane *Antigone canadensis*

### **Shorebirds**

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

### **Pelicans**

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

### **Hérons, Ibis, and Allies**

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

### **Vultures, Hawks, and Allies**

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura*

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius*

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*

American Goshawk *Accipiter atricapillus*

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus*

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus*

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus*

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus*

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*

### **Owls**

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Whiskered Screech-Owl *Megascops trichopsis*

Western Screech-Owl *Megascops kennicottii*

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus*

Northern Pygmy-Owl *Glaucidium gnoma*

Elf Owl *Micrathene whitneyi*

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

## **Trogon and Quetzals**

Elegant Trogon *Trogon elegans*

## **Kingfishers**

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon*

## **Woodpeckers**

Williamson's Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus thyroideus*

Red-naped Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus nuchalis*

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*

Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*

Gila Woodpecker *Melanerpes uropygialis*

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris*

Hairy Woodpecker *Dryobates villosus*

Arizona Woodpecker *Dryobates arizonae*

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus*

## **Falcons and Caracaras**

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius*

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*

## **Tyrant Flycatchers: Elaenias, Tyrannulets, and Allies**

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe*

## **Tyrant Flycatchers: Pewees, Kingbirds, and Allies**

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi*

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax*

Western Wood-Pewee *Contopus sordidulus*

Willow Flycatcher *Empidonax traillii*

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii*

Gray Flycatcher *Empidonax wrightii*

Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri*

Western Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis*

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe*

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya*

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus*

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer*

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens*

Great Crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus crinitus*

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus*

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher *Myiodynastes luteiventris*

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus*

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans*

Thick-billed Kingbird *Tyrannus crassirostris*

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus*

## **Vireos**

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus*  
Bell's Vireo *Vireo bellii*  
Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni*  
Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons*  
Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii*  
Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus*  
Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus*  
Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*  
Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis*

### **Shrikes**

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*

### **Jays, Magpies, Crows, and Ravens**

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*  
Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay *Aphelocoma woodhouseii*  
Mexican Jay *Aphelocoma wollweberi*  
Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus*  
Common Raven *Corvus corax*

### **Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice**

Bridled Titmouse *Baeolophus wollweberi*  
Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus ridgwayi*  
Penduline-Tits and Verdin  
Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps*

### **Larks**

Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

### **Martins and Swallows**

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia*  
Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor*  
Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina*  
Purple Martin *Progne subis*  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis*  
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*  
Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*

### **Long-tailed Tits and Bushtit**

Bushtit *Psaltriparus minimus*

### **Kinglets**

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Corthylio calendula*

### **Nuthatches**

White-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta carolinensis*  
Red-breasted Nuthatch *Sitta canadensis*

### **Treecreepers**

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*

### **Gnatcatchers**

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Polioptila caerulea*  
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher *Polioptila melanura*

### **Wrens**

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus*

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus*  
House Wren *Troglodytes aedon*  
Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii*  
Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*

### **Starlings and Mynas**

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

### **Catbirds, Mockingbirds, and Thrashers**

Blue Mockingbird *Melanotis caerulescens*  
Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis*  
Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre*  
Brown Thrasher *Toxostoma rufum*  
Crissal Thrasher *Toxostoma crissale*  
Sage Thrasher *Oreoscoptes montanus*  
Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos*

### **Thrushes**

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis*  
Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana*  
Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*  
Townsend's Solitaire *Myadestes townsendi*  
Varied Thrush *Ixoreus naevius*  
Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*  
Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*  
Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina*  
Aztec Thrush *Ridgwayia pinicola*  
American Robin *Turdus migratorius*  
Rufous-backed Robin *Turdus rufopalliatus*

### **Waxwings**

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum*

### **Silky-flycatchers**

Phainopepla *Phainopepla nitens*

### **Old World Sparrows**

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*  
Wagtails and Pipits  
American Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

### **Finches, Euphonias, and Allies**

Evening Grosbeak *Coccothraustes vespertinus*  
House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus*  
Purple Finch *Haemorhous purpureus*  
Cassin's Finch *Haemorhous cassinii*  
Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*  
Pine Siskin *Spinus pinus*  
Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria*  
Lawrence's Goldfinch *Spinus lawrencei*  
American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis*

### **New World Sparrows**

Rufous-winged Sparrow *Peucaea carpalis*

Botteri's Sparrow *Peucaea botterii*  
Cassin's Sparrow *Peucaea cassinii*  
Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*  
Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina*  
Clay-colored Sparrow *Spizella pallida*  
Black-chinned Sparrow *Spizella atrogularis*  
Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*  
Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata*  
Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus*  
Lark Bunting *Calamospiza melanocorys*  
Fox Sparrow *Passerella iliaca*  
Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis*  
Yellow-eyed Junco *Junco phaeonotus*  
White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*  
Golden-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia atricapilla*  
Harris's Sparrow *Zonotrichia querula*  
White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*  
Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus*  
Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis*  
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*  
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii*  
Swamp Sparrow *Melospiza georgiana*  
Canyon Towhee *Melozona fusca*  
Abert's Towhee *Melozona aberti*  
Canyon/Abert's Towhee *Melozona fusca/aberti*  
Rufous-crowned Sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps*  
Green-tailed Towhee *Pipilo chlorurus*  
Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus*  
**Yellow-breasted Chat**  
Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens*  
**Blackbirds**  
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*  
Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta*  
Chihuahuan Meadowlark *Sturnella lilianae*  
Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*  
Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus*  
Orchard/Hooded Oriole *Icterus spurius/cucullatus*  
Streak-backed Oriole *Icterus pustulatus*  
Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*  
Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum*  
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus*  
Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus*  
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater*  
Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus*  
Common Grackle *Quiscalus quiscula*  
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus*



## **Wood-Warblers**

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla*  
Northern Waterthrush *Parkesia noveboracensis*  
Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia*  
Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata*  
Lucy's Warbler *Leiothlypis luciae*  
Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla*  
Virginia's Warbler *Leiothlypis virginiae*  
MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei*  
Kentucky Warbler *Geothlypis formosa*  
Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas*  
American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla*  
Northern Parula *Setophaga americana*  
Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiayumi*  
Bay-breasted Warbler *Setophaga castanea*  
Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca*  
Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petechia*  
Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata*  
Yellow-throated Warbler *Setophaga dominica*  
Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae*  
Black-throated Gray Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens*  
Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*  
Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis*  
Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*  
Red-faced Warbler *Cardellina rubrifrons*  
Painted Redstart *Myioborus pictus*

## **Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Allies**

Hepatic Tanager *Piranga flava*  
Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra*  
Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana*  
Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis*  
Pyrrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus*  
Yellow Grosbeak *Pheucticus chrysopheplus*  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus*  
Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus*  
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*  
Lazuli Bunting *Passerina amoena*  
Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*  
Varied Bunting *Passerina versicolor*  
Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris*