

August Shorebirding – Coastal South Carolina
August 26-29, 2021

Day 1 (Thursday, August 26)

Arrive at hotel in Beaufort, SC, on your own. There is the possibility of late afternoon birding. We'll then meet for dinner and discuss plans for the next few days.

Day 2 (Friday, August 27)

After breakfast we will travel to Harbor Island (219), a private community that provides access to groups. We will search the intertidal flats, tidal creeks, and beachfront for shorebirds. Up to eighteen species of shorebirds can be seen here, more if we are lucky! Specialties here are migrating Red Knot and wintering Piping Plovers. After that we will travel back to Beaufort and make our way out to Hilton Head to Fish Haul Beach Park (220). Expect the same species here, and other possibilities include Reddish Egret. Both places should also provide us with views of most of the local gulls, terns, and wading birds. Painted Buntings will be at each of the places we visit daily. We'll most likely eat lunch (picnic) at one of these two places, depending on our time of departure from Harbor Island. Depending on how much daylight is left, we will do some birding at Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge (250). Return to hotel and dinner.

Day 3 (Saturday, August 28)

Depart hotel for Bailey Road Tidal Impoundments (156) on our way north toward the Charleston area. These tidal impoundments sometimes hold good numbers of shorebirds including Stilt Sandpipers and Black-necked Stilts. From Bailey Road we will go to either Nemours Plantation (169, private), Donnelley WMA (262), or Bear Island WMA (286). I will check access and impoundment conditions to determine which place(s) we will visit. Picnic lunch will be at one of these areas. Over 20 species of shorebirds can be observed from a combination of these three places, and specialties such as Ruff, Wilson's Phalarope, and American Golden Plover have been observed here in August. Depending on time and productivity of these areas, we may have time to visit a shorebird hotspot in the Charleston area. Depart to hotel in the Charleston area, dinner. At each of these places, wading birds, marsh birds, and are abundant.

Day 4 (Sunday, August 29)

After breakfast we will depart for Santee Coastal Reserve WMA (271). There are thousands of acres of managed wetlands here, and the manager has specifically dedicated a portion of these to managing shorebirds. Over 31 species of shorebirds have occurred here, but not all in August. Other specialties here are Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, and other mature pine forest birds. Marsh and wading birds abound. There have been Ruff, Hudsonian Godwit, and Wilson's Phalarope here, and more recently a Little Stint was found on the area during the winter on one of the inaccessible islands, but one never knows what we will find! If we have time, this area also includes a TNC inholding, Washo Reserve, and is a freshwater area where Wood Storks nest in the spring and can always be good for freshwater species in the area. We will conclude around noon and lunch is on your own, or there are a few quaint lowcountry restaurants in McClellanville, SC, a short drive away.

-This itinerary may change due to weather, birds, tides, and access to certain restricted areas! We will be flexible!

-Be prepared for biting insects, pack plenty of water and sunscreen!