

New Mexico: Bosque del Apache, Las Vegas & Sandia Mountains

February 7-13, 2022

Because of the uncertainties of travel during the winter, please plan to arrive on arrive in Albuquerque by the evening of February 6. We will be staying at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites at the Albuquerque Airport. Please let us know if you need us to make reservations for you. Dinner and accommodation will be on your own that night.

Day 1 (Monday, Feb 7)

After breakfast we will drive bird our way south to the small town of Socorro, just north of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. Just before dusk, we will drive to the refuge to witness the spectacular "fly in" of thousands of Sandhill Cranes and Snow Geese. *Night in Socorro*

Day 2 (Tuesday, Feb 8)

This morning we will have an early breakfast and return to Bosque for the "fly out" of the cranes and geese as they scatter out to their feeding grounds. Then we will drive the loop road at Bosque, which will take us through some of the varied habitats of the refuge. An afternoon hike takes us to Water Canyon at an elevation of 7000'. Here we stand a good chance of finding Pygmy Nuthatch, Steller's and Pinyon Jay, Bushtit, and Mountain Bluebird. *Night in Socorro*

Day 3 (Wednesday, Feb 9)

After an early breakfast, we'll head south to Elephant Butte Lake State Park. Neotropical Cormorants and a variety of ducks are here in good numbers and there is always the possibility of finding a late American White Pelican or an unusual over wintering gull. In the afternoon, we plan to head to Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge is an ornithological "gem" because of its location between the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and eastern prairies. *Night in Las Vegas, NM*

Day 4 (Thursday, Feb 10)

The whole day will be spent exploring Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge. Here we should get waterfowl, such as Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser; raptors, such as Ferruginous Hawk; and wintering sparrows, including American Tree. There is always the outside possibility of finding a roosting Long-eared Owl. *Night in Las Vegas*

Day 5 (Friday, Feb 11)

If the weather permits, we will return to Albuquerque through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, birding along the way and stopping in Old Santa Fe for lunch. Then on to Albuquerque, where we may have time to visit local birding areas, such as Petroglyphs National Monument and riparian areas along the Rio Grande River. *Night in Albuquerque*

Day 6 (Saturday, Feb 12)

This morning we head high into the Sandia Mountains on our quest for Rosy-finches. The road to the Sandia Crest is kept open all winter, rising to an elevation of 10,000 feet. Several bird feeders are kept well stocked and we should be able to see the Rosy-finches as they come to feed. This is sub-alpine spruce-fir habitat and other species that are possible are Evening Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch, Pine Siskin, and perhaps, Clark's Nutcracker. *Night in Albuquerque*

Day 7 (Sunday, Feb 13)

Depending on what times our flights leave, we may be able to do some more birding in the area.

Due to weather and other conditions, this itinerary is subject to change.