

• Sonora Birding Tour

February 21 - 26, 2010

Explore northern Mexico's rich natural resources viewing tropical deciduous forests, natural habitat, and an abundance in bird watching opportunities. We'll step back 100 years to the Colonial town of Alamos, Sonora. Alamos is situated at the southernmost limits of the Sonoran Desert and the northern reaches of the Tropics. This region is truly a bird enthusiasts paradise.

We will also spend a day on the shore of the Sea of Cortez, which offers a spectacular show of wintering sea and shore birds. In addition, we will learn about the dedicated efforts to preserve the Sinaloa thorn forest, one of the most botanically rich and most highly endangered habitats in the world. This trip into northern Mexico will impress you with amazing diversity and cultural riches, all within a day's drive of the U.S. border!

While this is certainly a tour with a bird watching emphasis, we will take time to explore the history of the area along the way. From visiting old mining towns, touring the historic district of Alamos, and visiting beautifully restored haciendas, you will gain insight into indigenous Mayo Indian culture.

Escorted by cultural expert and birder Greg Scott and assisted by local Alamos bird guides.

DAY 1 TUCSON TO GUAYMAS

Departure from Rio Rico at 8:00 am. On our way we'll visit Magdalena-burial place of Father Francisco Kino, Jesuit missionary who explored the region in the name of Spain. We finish the day with an amazing sunset sipping margaritas on the Sea of Cortes and watching Blue Footed Boobies, and Brown Pelicans feeding in the Bay of Bacochibampo. *Includes, Lunch, Margarita Reception and Dinner.*

DAY 2 GUAYMAS TO ALAMOS

This morning we visit the Institute of Monterrey and the cultured pearl farm operation for a very interesting lecture on the history of cultured pearls. We then continue south to Obregon for lunch. We then ascend into the Sierra Madre, stepping back 100 years to the Colonial town of Alamos. After a brief orientation we'll take a hike into the Sierra for late afternoon birding. *Includes Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 3 ALAMOS

Today we will take the morning to explore the Mentidero Arroyo and more local tropical deciduous habitat. The Mentidero is a tributary of the Cuchujaqui River, a beautiful tropical river drainage only a short distance from Alamos. We will spend the entire morning walking in both the Mentidero and along the Cuchujaqui, enjoying the birds as well as the plants and other wildlife. Lunch will be back in Alamos, then some relaxing siesta time. In the afternoon, we'll bird close to town. *Includes, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 4 ALAMOS

After breakfast, we'll take a short drive out to the Aduana Arroyo for birding and end the morning with a tour of the town of La Aduana. Lunch and siesta back in Alamos. Late this afternoon we'll make the short drive to Navojoa. Our hotel is situated near the Rio Mayo and home to Black Bellied Whistling Ducks. *Includes, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 5 ESTERO YAVAROS

This morning after an early breakfast we travel to the coast through fertile farm lands. In the fishing village of Yavaros we'll board Mexican fishing boats or "pangas" to explore the mangroves and estuary. The sheer numbers and variety of birds will amaze you. We always expect close encounters with dolphins, feeding in the rich currents as we return to port. We finish the afternoon with an amazing seafood lunch under a "palapa"-grass hut, on the white sand of the Sea of Cortes. Return afterwards via Etchojoa, where we'll visit the most extensive private collection of Mayo and Yaqui folk art in the world. Return to our hotel for our farewell dinner. *Includes, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

DAY 6 NAVOJOA TO TUCSON

This morning after breakfast we bid farewell to southern Sonora. We retrace our route through Obregon & Hermosillo. We lunch in Santa Ana and cross the border in Nogales. ETA Rio Rico is 5:00 pm. *Includes, Breakfast and Lunch.*

Welcome Home!

TOUR RATE: Includes luxury motorcoach transportation, step on guide, local birding guides, all meals and excursions as listed above. Enhancements are available during free time allotted and are at your expense.

DEPARTURE INFO: Exact pickup and drop off location, to be determined

PRE-TRIP DOCUMENTS: The confirmation of pick-up times and locations, pertinent trip information, participating hotel numbers and the final itinerary are sent approximately three weeks prior to departure date..

PASSENGERS ARE RESPONSIBLE: A valid passport is necessary to travel into Mexico.

TRAVEL POLICIES: South of the Border Tours, LLC is responsible to the participants for supplying services and accommodations offered to the participants as stated herein. South of the Border Tours, LLC shall not be responsible for any injuries, damages or losses (including death, personal injury and property loss) caused to any traveler in connection with terrorist activities, social or labor unrest, theft, vandalism, mechanical or construction failures or difficulties, diseases, local laws, climatic conditions, abnormal conditions, or developments, or any other action, omissions or conditions outside South of the Border Tours' control. South of the Border Tours, LLC reserves the right to change tour components, substitute hotels or alter the itinerary (either before departure or en route), and to make any other changes deemed necessary to carry out and maintain the quality of the tour in good faith to the participants. **TOUR ITINERARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.** South of the Border Tours, LLC also reserves the right to cancel the tour prior to departure to for any reason, including insufficient participation. South of the Border Tours, LLC liability is limited to refunding of monies received by client. The refund of all payments received shall release South of the Border Tours, LLC from any further obligation or liability. South of the Border Tours, LLC reserves the right to remove a tour member if that member's conduct becomes injurious to the pleasure and welfare of other tour members. If a participant is removed from a tour because of misbehavior, the participant must return home at his/her own expense and no refund is made for unused services.

MEXICO TRAVEL: This tour is set up as an adventure for you to enjoy Mexico. Clients will be best served if this tour is viewed as an adventure and understand that traveling in Mexico brings certain logistical considerations that are different from traveling in the U.S. Those who have experienced Mexico's colorful culture, rich history, wonderful cuisine and warm hospitality, understand that is part of the charm of Mexico. Street noise is always possible and earplugs may be useful to those intolerant to noise.

SECURITY IN MEXICO: You may have heard of reports of violence in Mexico. The facts are that vast majority of violence has happened in three regions, Juarez, Central Mexico and Tijuana. The violence is occurring between federal forces with the narco-trafficante and between the rival narcos to control territory and influence.

WEATHER: Sonora temperatures in late February can be chilly to very cold. There are no heaters in nearly all hotels in Sonora. Rooms in Alamos are equipped with fireplaces. In addition all hotels will provide extra blankets for those who need them. Warm sleeping attire is also helpful.

CANCELLATION POLICY: All deposits are refundable less a \$100 per person handling fee, with written notice of cancellation received at least 45 days prior to departure. Cancellations received within 44-30 days prior to departure will result in forfeiture of 50% of the trip cost per person. Cancellation received within 30 days prior to departure results in NO REFUND. ***These cancellation policies are strictly enforced; we strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to safeguard yourself in a medical situation before or during a tour.***

ACCESS AMERICA INSURANCE: If you so choose to purchase travel insurance. Your insurance premium covers; trip cancellation and interruption, travel delay, medical expense, Emergency Medical Transportation and other useful benefits. Please request enrollment form for all coverage benefits. Travel insurance is a contract between you and the travel insurance vendor. The policy is very useful should you have a medical condition that may require you to cancel the tour or should you require emergency medical evacuation. You are not required to use Access America. Any travel insurance company can be used to protect you in case of emergency. An Access America Travel Insurance policy will be sent only upon request.

Mail Registration & deposit to: **South of the Border Tours 7937 E. Coronado Rd. Tucson, AZ 85750**
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Name _____ Roommate _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

Tour Rate: \$800. Single supplement \$250. \$250 per person deposit due to reserve your seat. Balance due 45 prior to departure.
Send in this registration with deposit check Call with questions 520-760-4000 or email to Southofthebordertours@msn.com