

Birding the Migration: Mono Basin & Bridgeport Valley



Dave Shuford • September 15–16, 2012

\$150 per person / \$135 for Mono Lake Committee members
enrollment limited to 15 participants

Welcome to our field seminar on the fall migration of birds in the Mono Lake region. Beginners as well as experts will enjoy this intimate introduction to the varied birdlife found in a wide variety of habitats from the shimmering shores of Mono Lake to the lofty Sierra peaks. Although numbers of insectivorous migrants have declined by mid-September, wintering passerines and waterbirds are increasing. We will learn to identify about 100 species by plumage and calls, and probe the secrets of their natural history. This seminar will include informal discussions on migration strategies, behavior, and ecology that complement our field observations.

This seminar will involve easy hiking at elevations ranging from 6,000 to 9,600 feet above sea level. We will hike 1–2 miles a day, mostly on level terrain. The first stop Saturday morning is at Bridgeport Lake Reservoir, a mecca for migrant and late-breeding waterbirds. For those who prefer to meet the seminar at this location (arriving Saturday morning from points north), please contact Elin Ljung (elin@monolake.org) at (760) 647-6595 to obtain directions.

Dave Shuford is an expert birder, avid naturalist and teacher, and a full-time ornithologist. Dave's bird research has included over 16 years studying the ecology of Mono Lake's California gull colony and five years compiling an atlas of breeding birds in the Glass Mountain area.

ITINERARY

Meet at **7:00am, Saturday, September 15** at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore in Lee Vining. After brief introductions, we will travel to Bridgeport Lake Reservoir where we can expect to see riparian landbirds and a wide variety of ducks, grebes, shorebirds, gulls, terns, and other waterbirds. At Bridgeport Reservoir we will split into two groups—one group will bird by boat with Dave in order to get better access to birds (boat rental provided by Paradise Shores RV Park & Marina), while the other group will bird on shore with the Committee's Education Director Bartshe Miller. After two hours the groups will switch. Please note that at Bridgeport we will be out in the open in the sun. Around noon we will break for a picnic lunch (please bring your own) at a fishing access spot along the shoreline. In the afternoon, we will bird meadows (for raptors), riparian, Jeffrey pine, and sagebrush habitats. The class usually breaks for the day at about 5:00pm.

On **Sunday, September 16 we will meet at 7:00am** at a site near the north end of Mono Lake designated by the instructor the previous day. We will explore a wide variety of habitats around Mono Lake or in nearby Sierra canyons. Sites visited often include Mono County Park, DeChambeau and County Ponds, Lundy Canyon, and Jordan Creek. Itinerary may vary with bird activity, weather, or the instructor's whims. The class usually ends about 3:00pm on Sunday; participants may leave at varying times depending on travel plans.

Altitude and Dehydration Cautions: Remember to bring (and drink!) lots of water because your body loses more water at the higher altitudes of the Mono Basin. Experts recommend that you begin drinking extra water as you drive to higher elevation in order to prevent dehydration and headaches. Also, the sun is rather fierce at high elevations, capable of burning even on cool and cloudy days, so be sure to protect yourself thoroughly using sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat.

MEALS

Please bring a bag/picnic lunch for both days. Also, please bring snacks in case we run behind time for lunch because of good birding.

TO BRING

- binoculars and/or spotting scope
- field guide(s)
- day pack including plenty of water, sun protection, jacket
- picnic lunch for both days



Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars

P.O. Box 29 • Lee Vining, CA 93541 • (760) 647-6595 • www.monolake.org