

Breeding Birds of the Mono Basin



Brewer's Sparrow

Sandra Noll

June 3, 2023 • Nora Livingston

\$145 per person / \$130 for Mono Lake Committee members
enrollment limited to 8 participants

Late spring and early summer are the best times to find breeding birds in the Mono Basin—they are singing from the tops of trees and shrubs to declare their territory to rivals and protect their mates. This one-day seminar will visit birding hotspots in the Mono Basin to learn about the many breeding birds that raise their families here. We will learn to identify these breeders and observe their behaviors as they gather food for their young or gather material to build nests. We will delve into their migration patterns and conservation status, as well as any natural history tidbits that come up. This seminar will involve easy hiking at elevations ranging from 6,400 to 9,600 feet above sea level. We will hike 1–2 miles over the course of the day, mostly on level terrain.

Nora Livingston is the Mono Lake Committee's Lead Naturalist Guide. She has spent over a decade birding the basin and is an expert on Mono Basin birding locations. Before moving to Lee Vining permanently, she bounced around California for eight years as a field biologist, studying birds on the Channel Islands, the Farallon Islands, and in the Eastern Sierra.

ITINERARY

Saturday, June 3 at 7:30am: Meet at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore in Lee Vining. After brief introductions, we will carpool to the first of several Mono Basin birding

hotspots. Possible locations include Lee Vining Canyon, County Park, DeChambeau Ponds and Ranch, South Tufa, and a few lesser-known patches. The day's itinerary may vary with bird activity, weather, or the instructor's whims. This class will end around 3:30pm.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: EASY

This seminar's activity level: *easy*. We will be walking about two miles total for the day, over several stops, at "birding pace," which is slow. We will stick to established roads and trails. Birding includes time standing still in the field, some of which may be in the sun without much shade.

WEATHER & ALTITUDE

Temperatures in summer will be hot during the day and drop to chilly at night, with possible windy conditions and afternoon thunderstorms. Average temperatures in June in Lee Vining are 76°F (max) and 47°F (min).

This seminar will take place at elevations ranging from about 6,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level. It is a good idea to acclimate at the elevation of Lee Vining for at least 24 hours prior to the start of the seminar. Those with a history of heart, ear, or respiratory problems should consult their doctors before attending. Anyone restricted to lower elevations should not enroll.

Remember to bring (and drink!) lots of water because your body loses more water at the higher altitudes of the Mono Basin. Begin drinking extra water as you drive to higher elevation in order to prevent dehydration and headaches. Also, the sun is intense 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. 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) of your choice (optional)
- notebook and pen/pencil
- sturdy footwear
- appropriate field clothing: hat, sunglasses, warm layers, rain gear
- day pack including **plenty of water**, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc.
- packed lunch and snacks



Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars

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