

Birding Mono Basin Hotspots



Female Black-headed Grosbeak

Nora Livingston

May 25–26, 2024 • Nora Livingston

\$195 per person / \$180 for Mono Lake Committee members
enrollment limited to 8 participants

Mono Basin creeks and canyons are hidden jewels for breeding and migrating songbirds in a region where high desert habitat dominates. This two-day birding seminar will explore lush riparian areas that are hotspots for bird activity. Expect to see warblers, sapsuckers, pewees, buntings, sparrows, towhees, vireos, and if we're lucky, an American Dipper or Townsend's Solitaire.

Nora Livingston is the Mono Lake Committee's Lead Naturalist Guide. She has spent sixteen years 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, May 25 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. Itinerary may vary with bird activity, weather, or the instructor's whims. This day will end around 12:30pm.

Sunday, May 26 at 7:30am: Meet at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore in Lee Vining. We will continue to explore more Mono Basin birding hotspots until 11:30am.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: ADAPTIVE

This seminar's activity level and terrain will be dependent on the experience and comfort level of participants and the instructor will adapt the route and/or locations based on the group's needs. We will be visiting high elevation areas as well as dry, arid areas. Please reach out to fieldseminars@monolake.org if you have questions or to share accessibility needs.

WEATHER & ALTITUDE

Weather conditions can include everything from warm days to rainstorms to late spring snow showers. Relatively warm and sunny days are most likely, but prepare for cold, wet weather with layered clothing and a waterproof jacket. Average temperatures in May in Lee Vining are 67°F (max) and 40°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.

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