

2019 AZFO Flagstaff State Meeting—Half-Day Mini-Expeditions

We are pleased to offer the following “mini-expedition” field trips for the 2019 Flagstaff AZFO State Meeting! Please read all details. All trips and workshops require registration, which you can do while registering for the meeting. For those carpooling with others during the trip, it is expected that you chip in to help defray gas costs with the driver. Thanks and we hope you enjoy these exciting trips to under-birded parts of northern Arizona!

Friday, Sep. 20

[Inner Basin/Lockett Meadow](#)

Time: 6:00am-12:00pm

Leader: Trevor Hinckley

Spaces left: 10

This hiking expedition will explore the under-birded Inner Basin of the San Francisco Peaks around Lockett Meadow, one of the most scenic locations in Arizona! The trail and nearby areas include large stands of aspen and mixed conifer forest with open meadows. We will meet in Flagstaff at 6:00am for the 45-minute drive to Lockett Meadow. Total hiking distance will be about 1.8-2.5 miles one-way distance on moderate uphill terrain. Expected species include Williamson’s Sapsucker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Clark’s Nutcracker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, early fall migrant Cassin’s Finches, lingering Olive Warblers. While more uncommon, we have the chance at Dusky Grouse, Band-tailed Pigeon, and American Three-toed Woodpecker. This is one of the few locations in the state where White-crowned Sparrow has bred, so we could see lingering families of these from the summer, as well as migrant birds from farther north. Each person should carry their own water and snacks, wear sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and wear layers since it will likely be chilly first thing in the morning. Registered participants will be given details on meeting location.

[Page Springs to Sedona Wetlands](#)

Time: 8:00am-12:00pm

Leaders: Marceline Vandewater & Chip Engelmann

Spaces left: 15

This is an introduction to three Verde Valley locations involving easy walking and good bird diversity. First, checking out the grounds of the Page Springs Fish Hatchery and nearby Important Bird Area trails where we look for Common Black Hawk, Bridled Titmouse, and riparian migrants. Second, a short walk around the Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery across Oak Creek from the Page Springs Hatchery, where we look for early ducks and marsh birds. Third, exploring the Sedona Wetlands where we will check ponds for shorebirds, gulls, early ducks, possible gallinules and rails, and other migrants. Along the way, Marceline will also point out butterflies and dragonflies as we walk through the varied riparian and marsh habitats. Please bring your own snacks and water. Registered participants will be given details on meeting location.

[Upper Walnut Canyon](#)

Time: 8:00am-12:00pm

Leader: Eric Hough

Spaces left: 10

We will hike into the seldom-birded upper portion of Walnut Canyon via parts of the Sandy's Canyon and Arizona trails, and continue down the canyon past Fisher Point. Along the way we will look for migrant passerine flocks, including warblers, vireos, and flycatchers, working the conifers in the canyon and nearby ridges. Ponderosa pine forest species are to be expected, plus possibly some of pinyon-juniper woodlands. Hiking difficulty is moderate with some uneven ground, with mostly easy terrain in the canyon bottom, but a steeper short incline heading back up out of the canyon. Scenic views of incredible rock formations are present in the canyon, including petrified Permian sand dunes at Fisher Point. Please bring your own water (2-3 liters per person recommended), snacks, wear sturdy hiking boots, and layers. We will likely hike 4-5 miles round-trip. No restrooms available. Registered participants will be given details on meeting location.

[Lakes Mary, Marshall, Ashurst, and Mormon](#)

Time: 8:00am-1:00pm

Leader: Caleb Strand

Spaces left: 10

On this expedition we will be stopping and scanning at different vantage points at the large reservoirs and lakes just southeast of Flagstaff, scanning for early fall migrant waterfowl, lingering shorebirds, gulls, terns, and whatever other birds may be present on the lakes. This time of year is the window when jaegers and Sabine's Gulls can show up on reservoirs. We will also bird the surrounding grasslands, pinyon-juniper woodland, and ponderosa pine forest for passerines, including migrant warblers and sparrows.

[Little Elden Spring Rd. & Schultz Burn](#)

Time: 10:00am-2:00pm

Leader: Tom Linda

Spaces left: 10

We will meet in Flagstaff at 10:00am (registered participants will be given details on meeting location) and bird for 3-4 hours. We will search Little Elden Spring for migrating warblers and other passerines, scan the cliff faces and trees for raptors such as Northern Goshawk, Golden Eagle, falcons, and hawks. Our focus will be on woodpeckers at the upper end of the road in the 2010 Schultz Fire burn area, including American Three-toed, Downy, and Hairy Woodpeckers, sapsuckers, and flickers. Other ponderosa pine forest specialties are to be expected. Being late September, vagrants could be drawn in to the spring.

[Kachina Wetlands](#)

Time: 2:00-4:00pm

Leader: Tom Hedwall and Dr. Christina Vojta

Spaces left: 15

Kachina Wetlands just south of Flagstaff encompasses a variety of habitats including evaporation ponds of various depths, dry meadows, and the surrounding ponderosa pine forest. With 233 bird species recorded here, this wetlands complex is one of the top eBird hotspots in Coconino County. Late September is a particularly good time to see migrating

waterfowl and a wide variety of sparrows. Highlights from last fall included Lawrence's Goldfinch, Dickcissel, and Sabine's Gull. We will be joined by Dr. Christina Vojta, a retired wildlife ecologist and current steward of the wetlands for wildlife and environmental education. The dirt paths winding through the reservoir basins are wide and flat, making for easy walking for approximately 1.5 miles. Please note: there are no restroom facilities here. Registered participants will be given details on where to meet.

Sunday, Sep. 22

Most Confusing Raptors of Arizona Workshop

Time: 8:00-11:00 AM

Leader: Bill Clark

Spaces: 40

This year's keynote speaker, raptor researcher Bill Clark, will give a three-part classroom presentation covering the following raptor identification challenges that birders can encounter in Arizona: 1) Cooper's Hawks vs. Sharp-shinned Hawks; 2) expected buteos in flight and perched Zone-tailed and Common Black Hawks; and 3) distinguishing Harlan's Hawk from other Red-tailed Hawk forms. There will be ample time for answering questions and discussion of the topics. The location will be the Arizona Game & Fish Department's Flagstaff office; registered participants will be given address and parking details.

Williams Lakes and Bill Williams Mountain

Time: 6:00am-1:00pm

Leader: Troy Corman

Spaces left: 10

Infrequently visited, numerous small reservoirs and ephemeral lakes can be found in the Williams area. September is a wonderful time to visit these in search of waterfowl and migrating terns, early gulls (perfect time for rare Sabine's!), and shorebirds. The nearby open space and grasslands also likely attract numerous species of sparrows, swallows, and raptors. An even more infrequently visited area is the nearby Bill Williams Mountain, which rises to near 9,300 ft. On its cooler, north-facing slope, we may encounter higher elevation species such as American Three-toed Woodpecker, Red Crossbill, and possibly Clark's Nutcracker. We also hope to encounter mixed foraging flocks of resident passerines, which should include migrating warblers, flycatchers and other species. Expect easy to moderate walking for short distances. Please bring your own water and snacks, and wear sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and wear layers since it may be chilly first thing in the morning. Meeting location in Flagstaff will be given to registered participants.

I-40 Corridor—Vagrant Traps & Tanks

Time: 6:00am-1:00pm

Leader: Caleb Strand

Spaces left: 10

On this expedition we will be checking out various 'vagrant traps' across the otherwise desolate plains east of Flagstaff, along I-40. Shorebirds, gulls, terns, and early migrant waterfowl may be present at a few of the tanks and playas in the area, as well as passerines in surrounding shrubbery. We will also check out Raymond Ranch Wildlife Area and the famed Meteor Crater RV Park (permission pending), where several eastern vagrants have been found in recent years, including Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, Baltimore Oriole, Common Grackle, and Ovenbird. Meeting location in Flagstaff will be given to registered participants.

[I-40 Corridor—Winslow to Holbrook](#)

Time: 6:00am-1:00pm

Leader: Eric Hough

Spaces left: 10

Late September is a great time to look for wayward migrants, so we will explore the vagrant traps off of Interstate 40 between Winslow and Holbrook, as well as check for shorebirds, gulls, terns, and raptors. Over 195 species have been recorded at these locations and past rarities at this time of year have included Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Sabine's Gull, Orchard Oriole, and Dickcissel. If you're wanting to work on your Navajo County list, this is the trip for you! We will also have a chance at other local residents of the southern Colorado Plateau, including Scaled Quail and Crissal Thrasher. If time allows, we may have time to check out some ancient petroglyphs near Holbrook. We will meet by 6:30am to depart for the trip and will try to be back in Flagstaff by 1:00pm; driving time between Holbrook and Flagstaff is about 1.25 hours. Meeting location in Flagstaff will be given to registered participants. Hiking difficulty: easy to moderate. Please bring your own water and snacks. Restrooms will be available only at some locations during the trip.

[Garland Prairie](#)

Time: 7:00am-12:00pm

Leader: Tom Linda

Spaces left: 10

Raptors are always the focus at Garland Prairie between Flagstaff and Williams, and we will search for falcons, hawks, harriers, and eagles, as well as hoping for some early arrivals like Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawk. Sparrow diversity will be increasing and surprises could occur, such as Coconino County's first Cassin's Sparrow that was at this location. Early longspurs and pipits might also be present. We will also check out nearby Scholz Lake where we have a chance of finding migrant waterfowl and shorebirds, and even nearby Wild Turkeys. The scenery is spectacular and there is a lot of 'Americana' history to experience along the way. Meeting location in Flagstaff will be given to registered participants.

[Picture Canyon](#)

Time: 8:00-11:00am

Leader: Tom Hedwall

Spaces Left: 10

The Picture Canyon trail follows the Rio de Flag from a small pond along a marshy area, then past a beautiful waterfall, through a rocky canyon with ancient petroglyphs, and finally out to an open meadow surrounded by pine-oak forest. There have been 212 bird species reported here. Possible highlights include rails, a variety of woodpeckers such as Lewis's and Acorn, migrant warblers, Pinyon Jays, and perhaps a Northern Goshawk. Rarities such as American Dipper and Pacific Wren have shown up here. The trail through the canyon varies from flat and wide, to somewhat hilly and rocky with short steep sections. We may walk up to three miles round-trip. Registered participants will be given details on meeting location.