

AUTUMN GRAND MANAN

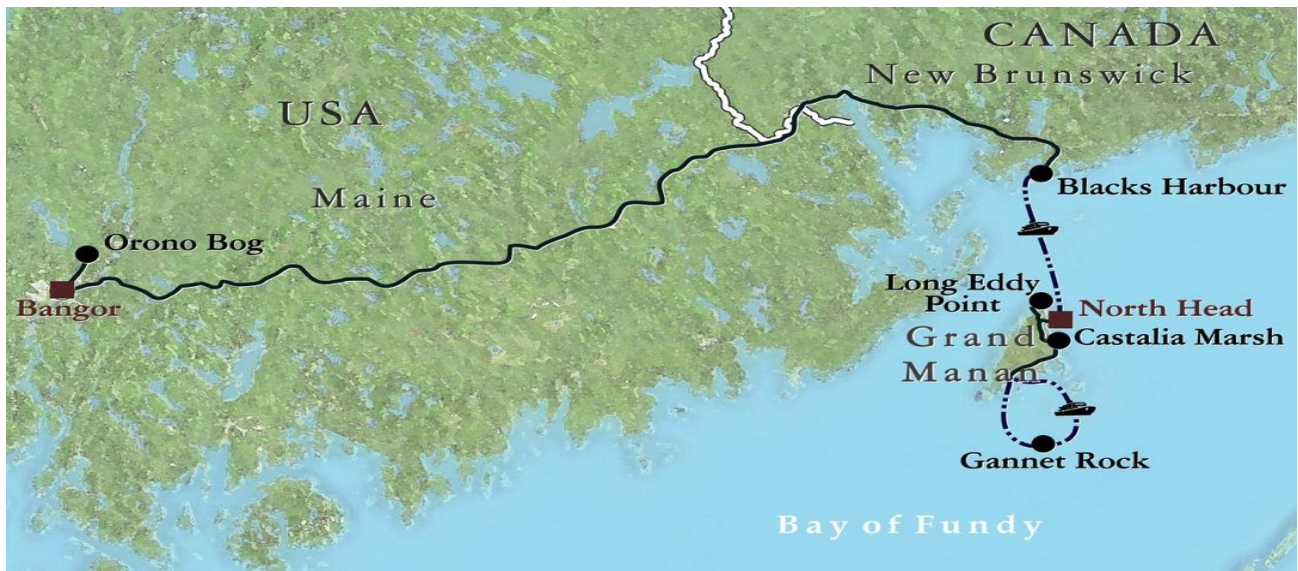
BIRDS AND WHALES

SEPTEMBER 4-10, 2023

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Located in the Bay of Fundy, off the coast of Maine and New Brunswick, the picturesque island of Grand Manan makes an ideal base for experiencing the phenomenon of fall migration along the northeast coast. Migrant land birds pouring through the spruce woods include warblers (roughly 20 species are possible), flycatchers, vireos, sparrows, and finches. Various shorebirds visit the marshes, and the nearshore waters are filled with eiders, cormorants, and gulls.

The thing that makes this area stand out from other migration hot spots, though, is the ready availability of exciting pelagic birding and whale watching. Nearby submarine canyons promote cold-water upwellings that attract numbers of marine birds and mammals every fall. Accordingly, we will take a full day boat trip to search for such birds as Razorbill; Atlantic Puffin; Manx (uncommon), Sooty, and Great shearwaters; Leach's (uncommon) and Wilson's storm-petrels; Northern Gannet; jaegers; Red-necked and Red phalarope; Black-legged Kittiwake; and Arctic Tern. Although both are rare, we have had recent successes in finding skuas on this tour with both South Polar and Great at least possible. Tossing out chum often brings hundreds of gulls and shearwaters within feet of our boat.



Whale watching is superb here as well, with Humpback, Minke, and Fin whales all seen regularly. There is even the possibility of seeing the critically endangered North Atlantic Right Whale as well. Only about 430 of these animals are believed to exist and the majority of them come to this region in late summer and fall. While seeing them is far from guaranteed, our chances are at least reasonable. Our overall success rate is around 30-40% in recent years.

The weather in late August, early September is often the best of the entire year on Grand Manan, with fair, sunny days and calm seas being the norm. Biting insects are few, and the island is uncrowded. Our stay will be all the more pleasant due to the charm and atmosphere of the Marathon Inn, a grand old country inn with good home-cooking and fine birding right on the grounds.

September 4, Day 1: Arrival in Bangor. Tour members should arrive in Bangor, Maine today. We will meet in the hotel lobby at 6:00 p.m. for a get-acquainted session and to discuss plans for tomorrow, before heading out to dinner.

NIGHT: Bangor Aviator Hotel, Bangor

September 5, Day 2: Bangor to Grand Manan. Today we will drive to Black's Harbour, New Brunswick, to catch our ferry for the ninety-minute ride to Grand Manan. Before arriving at Black's Harbour we will likely spend a little time exploring the Orono Bog area north of Bangor in search of migrants. A wide variety of warblers are possible here and this area is particularly good for the locally uncommon Palm Warbler. Alternatively, we may just head eastward toward the border, birding en route. (this has been our recent strategy with increased scrutiny at the border due to COVID restrictions) The ferry crossing frequently produces at least a few pelagic birds including small flocks of phalaropes, or lone jaegers, gannets, and shearwaters.



Southwest Head, Grand Manan, New Brunswick ©Barry Zimmer

We will arrive at the Marathon Inn in time for dinner.

NIGHT: Marathon Inn, North Head, Grand Manan Island

September 6-8, Days 3-5: Grand Manan and Pelagic Trip. These three days will be spent exploring the Bay of Fundy and the island of Grand Manan. Our exact schedule will remain flexible, allowing us to take best advantage of the tides and weather. One full day will be devoted to a boat trip into the Bay of Fundy in search of pelagic birds and marine mammals. Grand Manan is situated in close proximity to a number of prominent submarine canyons and shelves.



Great Shearwater © Barry Zimmer

As the currents meet these underwater barriers, great upwellings are created which propel the colder, nutrient-rich bottom waters to the surface. This, in turn, concentrates plankton, fish, and ultimately, large numbers of pelagic birds and whales.

We will journey by boat to some of the choicest areas, including the Old Proprietor Shoal, Gannet Rock, the Prong, Clark Ground, Murre Ledges and the Bulkhead Rip. Hordes of shearwaters (mostly Great, with small numbers of Sooty, and the occasional Manx) can be sighted here at times with a jaeger in pursuit.

Also found are lesser numbers of Atlantic Puffins, Common Murres (scarce), Razorbills, and Northern Gannets, all of which have left their breeding islands and are now concentrating over a few productive feeding areas. Wilson's and Leach's (very uncommon) storm-petrels and migrant flocks of phalarope (both Red and Red-necked) are also likely. There is always the outside chance of a real rarity such as Great Skua or South Polar Skua, both of which are seen at least occasionally in these waters.

We're also likely to see whales, including Fin, Humpback, and Minke. If any are present in the area, we will make a special effort to locate the very rare North Atlantic Right Whale whose world population is estimated at just over 400 animals. Some years, forty to fifty of these magnificent creatures are concentrated in this portion of the Bay of Fundy affording us a unique chance to observe them. Their presence in this portion of the Bay of Fundy has declined greatly in recent years, however, reducing our chances of success.

Not all our time will be spent at sea, for there is plenty to do on Grand Manan itself. The spruce forests here should harbor numbers of migrant passerines, particularly warblers. At favored spots, such as Long Eddy Point, it's not uncommon to encounter flocks containing Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, both kinglets, a couple of vireos, a few flycatchers, and a half dozen or more species of warblers. If we are lucky enough to be visiting



Boreal Chickadee, ©Barry Zimmer

during a good finch year, we may find small flocks of White-winged Crossbills (most years none may be present at all). We will spend a good deal of time sifting through flocks that we encounter. In 2017 we had an impressive 23 species of warbler's total! Additionally, a special effort will be made to locate the elusive and locally, very uncommon Boreal Chickadee. We have had about a 50% rate in locating this low-density species on the island in recent years.

Castalia Marsh is a staging area for migrant shorebirds, offering good species diversity and numbers of individuals. Among others, past trips have produced Black-bellied Plover; American Golden-Plover; Ruddy Turnstone; Whimbrel; Red Knot; and White-rumped, Pectoral, Least, and Semipalmated sandpipers. Even the rare Baird's

Sandpiper is a possibility her. In addition, we're usually able to locate a couple of Nelson's Sparrows lurking along the muddy shore lines at this season. Almost anything is possible!

The scenic coastline can be productive for such species as loons, scoters, Great Cormorants, Common Eiders, and Black Guillemots, not to mention the gorgeous maritime scenery and the spectacle of some of the world's highest tides. Raptors should also be in evidence, including Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Merlin. It's rare to find a single spot that has so many attractions for the visiting birder. That this abundance is found amidst such a charming and attractive setting makes Grand Manan the kind of place that one longs to visit repeatedly.

NIGHTS: Marathon Inn, North Head, Grand Manan Island

September 9, Day 6: Grand Manan to Bangor. Should time allow, we may make a last check of some of our favorite spots before boarding a late morning ferry back to Black's Harbour. Our birding stops on the return to Bangor will depend largely on what we have or have not seen, but will likely include Moosehorn Refuge, and selected spruce forests. We'll arrive in Bangor in time for a farewell dinner.

NIGHT: Bangor Aviator Hotel, Bangor

September 10, Day 7: Departure for Home. Participants may make plans to depart at any time today.

Special Note: On some tours and in certain areas (such as Bangor), the larger 15-passenger vans are not available. Every effort will be made to secure the larger vehicle for this tour. However, when smaller vans are reserved, participants will not always have a window seat (three people to a bench seat) and you will be asked to rotate daily.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 12 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: Barry Zimmer and 2nd Leader TBA



Barry Zimmer has been birding since the age of eight. His main areas of expertise lie in North and Central America, but his travels have taken him throughout much of the world, including such exotic locales as Japan, Russia, Madagascar, Africa, and New Zealand. Barry is a longtime member of the New Mexico Bird Records Committee, and served on the Texas Bird Records Committee for 12 years. He has coauthored three books: *Birds of the Trans-Pecos*, *A Birder's Guide to the Rio Grande Valley*, and *Birds and Birdfinding in the El Paso Area*. Barry has a keen interest in nature photography, having captured over 1,600 species of birds on film. His other interests include sports (a diehard Red Sox fan), cooking, and movies. He received his degree in psychology at the University of Texas in El Paso. Barry resides in El Paso with his wife, Yvonne, and their daughter, Alexandra.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is **\$3895** per person in double occupancy from Bangor, Maine. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 6, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, pelagic trip as stated in the itinerary, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Bangor and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$395**.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$500** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at <https://ventbird.com>) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days (Tour 1, April 1, 2022 / Tour 2, April 8, 2022) prior to the tour departure date.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES (CANADA): In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

Cancellation by Participant:

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$250** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For participants' protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

If participant cancels:

180 days or more before departure date

179 to 151 days before departure date

150 days or less before departure date

Participant's refund will be:

Participant's deposit minus \$250*

No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour fee will be refunded

No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Cancellation by VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A "**Force Majeure**" event means any act beyond VENT's control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend their **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation and rescue services** from your point of injury or illness to your **hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for **trip cancellation/interruption**, primary medical expense coverage, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as security evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or other security events, **waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion**, and a “**Cancel for Any Reason**” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: <https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 14 days of making your tour deposit. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 14 days in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. The primary medical expense benefit is available to U.S. residents only. For this reason, non-U.S. residents will pay an adjusted premium when purchasing a comprehensive policy, which includes all of the other benefits available to U.S. residents. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

Concerns about COVID-19 may present uncertainty for those holding travel insurance policies or who are considering future travel and purchasing such insurance. Redpoint features a **Coronavirus FAQ page** on its website that addresses questions and concerns regarding its travel insurance and the impact of COVID-19. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of topics such as policy coverage and limitations, policy modifications, cancellation, refunds, and more.

Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link: https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/

Additionally, some countries maintain COVID-19 entry requirements, including mandates to purchase travel insurance covering medical expenses due to COVID-19 illness and in case of quarantine. Ripcord’s comprehensive travel insurance plans are designed to satisfy the various country-specific travel insurance entry requirements. Those who purchase a Ripcord policy will receive a “letter of confirmation” that affirms that the policy satisfies such requirements.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your

air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Marathon Inn is a charming country inn however it is not a luxury hotel. The room sizes vary, as do the number and sizes of the beds in each room and the bathroom set-ups (some rooms have showers, while others have baths). In 2019, air conditioning was added to some rooms, while others still do not have this. Also, rooms vary from ground level (very limited number) to third floor, and the hotel does not have an elevator. Help with baggage is readily available however. Both the Marathon Inn and the Bangor Aviator Hotel have Wi-Fi available.

BAGGAGE: We ask that you limit your baggage to one medium or large suitcase and a carry-on.

CLIMATE & CLOTHING: Generally, the temperatures on land should be mild to warm (mid-60's to low-80's as highs, and low to mid 50's as lows; we have recorded temperatures as low as the mid 40's and as high as the low 90's) at this time of year, and light field clothing (i.e. cotton pants and shirts) will be adequate. You should also have a windbreaker or light jacket. Conditions at sea could be much colder. Be sure to bring a warm sweater and heavier jacket, thermal underwear, rain gear, gloves and a warm hat for the boat trips and for unexpectedly cool days on land. Be sure as well to bring a comfortable pair of boots or sturdy walking shoes. Also bring a hat for protection from the sun.

DOCUMENTS: Canadian and United States citizens **ARE REQUIRED** to have a passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure for international crossings between the United States and Canada. Non-Canadian and United States citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

Canadian Customs: Firearms and pepper spray are not allowed into Canada. Please do not have either with you. Very small quantities of alcohol and tobacco products are allowed, but having them generally leads to greater scrutiny and higher level of inspection at our border crossing. We would strongly discourage anyone from bringing either of these items with them into Canada.

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

A good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19. Please visit the **Coronavirus Travel Update** page of our website <https://ventbird.com/covid-19> for our official statement regarding COVID-19 and the operation of our tours. Please visit the CDC website for the most up to date information about COVID-19 and associated guidance for proper health and hygiene: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

INSECT PROTECTION: Insects and mosquitoes (a few are likely) are usually not much of a problem in the fall; repellent is optional.

MISC ITEMS: *An alarm clock of some sort is necessary.* Your tour leaders will have a spotting scope. If you have one and would like to bring it, please do. If you are prone to seasickness, check with your doctor about the proper medication to bring.

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

Field Guides: Birds

Dunn, Jon. *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, Seventh edition. Washington, D. C.: National Geographic Society, 2017.

Field Guides: Other

Bowers & Kaufman. *Mammals of North America*. Hillstar Editions L.C. 2004.

Brock, Jim P. & Kaufman, Kenn. *Butterflies of North America*. Hillstar Editions L.C. 2003.

Harrison, Peter. *Seabirds: An Identification Guide*. Houghton Mifflin. Boston. 1983.

Leatherwood, Stephen and Reeves, Randall. *The Sierra Club Handbook of Whales and Dolphins*. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1983.

Newcomb, Lawrence. *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*. This guide uses an easy two-part key system

O'Brien, Michael, Richard Crossley and Kevin Karlson. *The Shorebird Guide*. Houghton Mifflin. Boston. 2006

Peterson, Roger Tory and Margaret McKenny. *A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and Northcentral North America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, “VENT”) act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on October 2, 2022 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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