



**DESERT INSTITUTE**  
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL  
PARK ASSOCIATION

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## BIRDS OF ANZA-BORREGO

FIELD CLASS / FALL 2023

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This two-day weekend field class explores the oases in and around the Anza-Borrego Desert, which is home to a surprisingly wide variety of bird species. This habitat also provides the perfect resting place for migrants such as warblers, flycatchers, grosbeaks, sparrows, hawks and other tired travelers on their way south for the winter. After a zoom lecture on Tuesday night, the class spends Saturday and Sunday in the field, studying both migrant and resident bird species. Participants will learn about: conservation, ecology, natural history and special adaptations to the harsh desert environment. Participants will need to make their own weekend accommodations; meals and lodging are not included.

### MEETING LOCATION

Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, 652 Palm Canyon Dr, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

### DATE and TIME

Saturday, October 14th, 7:30a to 5p  
Sunday, October 15th, 7:30a to noon

### ACTIVITY LEVEL: EASY

Walking over mostly flat but possibly uneven terrain for no more than two miles each day, and standing for long periods of time. Rocky, sandy stretches are possible, with some gentle up and downhill sections. Please contact us if you have questions about accommodations or your ability to participate.

### EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

None

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- First aid and emergency supplies for the group

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Meals
- Lodging
- Transportation
- Admission fee to park in Anza-Borrego State Park (currently \$10/vehicle)

## GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology

Kurt Leuschner is a Professor of Natural Resources at College of the Desert. Leuschner's specialties include ornithology, entomology, and desert ecology. He has led hundreds of field trips both locally and as far afield as Africa. He teaches natural history courses for the Desert Institute, UCR Extension, the Desert Studies Center at Zzyzx, the Living Desert, California State Parks, and many other conservation organizations.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

### **Day 1:** Tuesday, Oct 10

We'll meet at 7p over zoom for an introduction to bird identification, classification, local families, migration, conservation. We'll discuss the upcoming weekend's activities and answer any questions you might have.

### **Day 2:** Saturday, Oct 14

We will meet at 7:30a at the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association and drive approximately 75 miles in a loop around and through the State Park in search of birds in a variety of habitats, from desert scrub to montane forest. We might even see a Bald Eagle! We'll have a lunch stop around noon and class will end by 5p.

### **Day 3:** Sunday, Oct 15

We'll meet at the same time, same place as Saturday. We will bird in the vicinity of Borrego Springs, checking out a number of local birding sites including a sandy, creosote scrub ecosystem with a chance to see LeConte's Thrasher and Swainson's Hawks. Class will finish by noon.

## SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

This activity involves car caravanning from site to site. Participants are responsible for providing their own transportation for the entire weekend. Please book accommodations ahead of time, as there are limited options in the vicinity of Anza-Borrego State Park. Participants are responsible for their own meals for the

duration of this course. **All participants must complete the [health questionnaire and liability waiver](#) ahead of the program start date.**

## WHAT TO BRING

### The essentials for all field courses

- Water, between 3 and 4 liters per person for a full day outing
- Food and snacks, easily packed and eaten in the field, for the duration of your course
- Close-toed, sturdy athletic shoes or hiking boots; no sandals, not even hiking sandals!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen; light-colored long-sleeved shirts are recommended and very effective on hot days
- Warm layers for cooler mornings/evenings (it can be surprisingly cold!)
- Backpack to carry food, water, and any personal items you need for the day
- Notebook and pencil are always good to have

### Required

- Binoculars

### Recommended

- Bird guide, *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America* by Jon Dunn
- or a bird app for your phone (Merlin)

### Additional reading materials

- A Field Guide to Warblers of North America, Jon Dunn & Kimball Garrett
- Introduction to California Birdlife, Jules Evens & Ian Tait, UC Press
- Sibley's Birding Basics, David Sibley

# FAQ

## WHO DO I CONTACT IF I AM RUNNING LATE?

Please call our main line: 760-819-4714 and if no one answers, please call the Desert Institute coordinator, Benny Lopez: 949-241-9693.

For classes meeting in the park, please take into consideration the time it will take to go through the entrance gate—on weekends after 9am, you may wait up to 45 minutes! (15-20 minutes is typical.) For afternoon activities, you will also want to allot time to park, as parking lots tend to be congested between 10am and 4p in the busy season. **There is no cell service in the park**, so please plan accordingly!

## WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL?

Desert Institute will provide a full refund if we are notified 14 days in advance. If we are notified less than 14 days in advance, we are unable to process refunds for any reason. (But we would like you to notify us if you are unable to attend.)

## DOES DESERT INSTITUTE CANCEL ACTIVITIES FOR WEATHER OR LOW ENROLLMENT?

Desert Institute runs classes rain or shine, with the exception of astrophotography classes, which require mostly clear skies in order to be successful. If we do not meet our minimum of 4 registered participants for any given activity, we will cancel the activity with 48+ hours notice. We recommend that you purchase travel insurance, as we are unable to reimburse for expenses you incur due to a canceled class, such as airfare and hotel.

## ARE THERE ANY THINGS I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE?

All participants must return the completed [health questionnaire and signed waiver](#) before the day of their activity. **Failure to do so will cancel your registration.** If your course enters Joshua Tree National Park, you must **download or print your park pass** ahead of the class, or you will pay the entrance fee at the gate, which is currently \$35 per vehicle.

## CAN I BRING MY KIDS? MY SPOUSE? PETS?

Only registered participants may attend Desert Institute activities unless noted in the activity description. If this is a kid-friendly activity, please make sure your child(ren) meets the age requirements. As much as we love our pets, we don't allow them in the field with any of our activities.