



BIRDING TOUR CANADA: THE ROCKIES

25 MAY – 30 MAY 2020



*The beautiful **Barrow's Goldeneye** will be searched for near Calgary.*

Discover the spectacular Waterton Lakes National Park with us! Regarded as one of North America's most captivating mountain parks, in 1995 Waterton Lakes National Park was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Perfectly nestled between the picturesque Alberta Prairies and the grand Rocky Mountains, the park is home to a large number of dazzling, colorful streams, incredible mountain views, immense waterfalls, and crystal-clear lakes.

Due to its rare location, Waterton is one of the most ecologically diverse areas in the Rocky Mountains region. Our visit will coincide with the breeding season, and our morning birding will therefore be absolutely amazing!

During the day we will traverse the mountains and foothills of Waterton and Kananaskis Country park system. Every now and then we will pause to explore the magnificent prairie sloughs and the culturally rich UNESCO World Heritage Centre Heads-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump!

Mammals we will see along the way will include **Bighorn Sheep**, **Wapiti** (Elk), and quite possibly **Grizzly Bear**.

This trip can be combined with an Alberta birds and dinosaurs tour - please ask us for information.

Itinerary (6 days/5 nights)

Day 1 - Begin in Calgary

Flights can arrive in Calgary at any time during the day. If you happen to arrive early, the city and its surrounds offer some magnificent birding. An example is the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary (located along the lovely Bow River), where you can tick some great river and foothill species. If you have time, it is also worth visiting the Glenbow and Military Museums within the city. In the evening we will meet at our hotel in Calgary to discuss our exciting forthcoming tour. Overnight: Calgary.

Day 2 - Western Foothills of Calgary and the beautiful Kananaskis Valley

The famed beauty of the Kananaskis Valley can be found on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains. As we travel through this charming valley, be sure to admire its immense wetlands and vast lakes.

With its spruce, lodgepole pine, aspen and willow trees, the area boasts a diverse habitat at a low elevation. This supports a wide variety of bird species that we will observe throughout the day as we stop at sites in the foothills west of Calgary and places such as the Peter Lougheed Provincial Park.

Examples of special birds we hope to see include **Barrow's Goldeneye**, **Mountain** and **Boreal Chickadees**, **LeConte's** and **Nelson's Sparrows**, and **Townsend's Warbler**.

Overnight: High River.

Day 3 - Birding at Frank Lake en Route to Waterton Lakes National Park

We spend the morning birding the Frank Lake wetlands, an area which is home to several prairie waterbirds such as **Black-necked** and **Western Grebes**, **Cinnamon Teal**, and **Canvasback**. Of course, there will also be plenty of time to spot the unique **White-faced Ibis**!

Next, on our way to the national park we head south to Waterton, where we will spend our next two nights.

Overnight: Waterton



*Western and **Black-necked Grebes** can both be seen on this tour.*

Day 4 - The breathtaking Waterton Lakes National Park

Waterton Lakes National Park is home to a vast array of spectacular mammals and birds, some of which are rather difficult to find elsewhere in Alberta.

We will spend our time here exploring the trails and roads in depth and (weather permitting) may take a few short walks to find special birds like **Black-headed Grosbeak**, **Cassin's Finch**, **Townsend Solitaire**, and **Western Tanager**. **Rufous Hummingbird** and **Calliope Hummingbird** visit the feeders dotted around town, and mammals (such as bears and elk) can be easily found by car.

Overnight: Waterton.

Day 5 - Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, en route to Calgary

Shortly after breakfast we will leave Waterton Lakes National Park and drive northwards to the famous Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.

Not only is this mouthful a UNESCO World Heritage Site, but it is also located in a very beautiful area of the foothills and affords us the opportunity of spotting Sprague's Pipit.

Once we have had a walk around the visitor's center and have explored this important Canadian landmark, we can head to Buffalo Jump, where we can keep our eyes and ears open for the **Sprague's Pipit**.

The drive continues back to Calgary, where, if time allows, we can clean up any birds we might have missed on the first day.

Overnight: Calgary

Day 6 - Departure

Sadly, our Canadian Rockies adventure has ended, but we hope to leave you with memories to last a lifetime and a swollen bird list!

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.

Duration:	6 days
Limit:	4 – 12 (This is an exception to our usual policy.)
Date:	25 May – 30 May 2020
Start:	Calgary
End:	Calgary
Price:	US\$1395 per person sharing Plus 5% GST for Canadians, 2.5% GST for non-Canadians
Single Supplement:	US\$290

Price includes:

Good accommodations
Breakfasts and lunches
Ground transportation (15-passenger van)
Guide (1 guide for 4 – 8 participants, 2 guides for 9 – 12 participants)
All park, conservation, and entrance fees
Gratuities

Price excludes:

Flights to and from Calgary
Visas
Travel insurance
Dinners (This is an exception to our usual policy.)
All items of a personal nature