

So THIS is what it feels like to enjoy summer in Washington State well an entire month anyway. I have been home since the beginning of August. With the Go-Go pace of the first seven months, and a full schedule the final quarter of the year, I had promised Susan that our activities at home would experience no intervention from the birds and it has been wonderful; lovely weather, plenty of chores around the house, and a handful of grandpa days when two-year old Elizabeth and her parents came to town.

#### A SEEMING SHIFT IN OUR BUSINESS PLAN

We soon begin our nineteenth year of full-time guide work, with the bulk of those years having specialized in Mexico. It took a number of years to strike the proper balance between Open Birding Tours [nearly always in Mexico] and Heritage-Style Birding Tours [usually in a country other than Mexico]. All the while we continued to gain increasingly high marks for our work in Mexico, so that by the year 2000 an annual pattern had developed seven or eight Mexico routes in the Open Birding Tour format, and two or so far-flung Heritage-Style Birding Tours.

Now, however, looking back at the past few years, and forward into the upcoming ones, it appears that Custom Birding Tours are more and more the norm for our work. I have six custom tours for 2010, another six on the calendar for 2011, and three now booked for 2012.

In addition I have increased my commitment to offering more unusual tours in Mexico for instance this February will be our ninth consecutive year guiding into the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve. During that month I will lead birders into the reserve for the 11TH and 12TH time since 2001 -- only the park rangers, arrieros, and cooks have hiked the reserve trails more times during this period of time. I can proudly say that no other touring company is makes as serious a commitment to eco-tourism in the biosphere, or to the birders that seek to enjoy its magnificence.

The June 2010 Deep Water Pelagic off Northern Baja, and the March 2011 eight-day voyage to the Socorro and Clarion Islands are the result of this same energy a response to the desires of birders, and a continued personal dream for sustainable eco-tourism [as opposed to margarita-beer-sunshine tourism] in Mexico.

I understand that even though the Custom Birding Tour format works well for Legacy Tours, as well as for clients that already know us -- it is more problematic for individuals who simply want to sign-up for a meaningful birding trip at a time that is convenient for their personal/family/work calendar. So we will continue to offer, but on a less frequent basis, our trademark Open Birding Tours to the Eight Major Endemic Bird Regions of Mexico - <http://www.legacy-tours.com/MexicoTours/default.htm>

Besides I have grown accustomed to seeing most of Mexico's birds on an annual basis, and to introducing folks to the better birding routes within the country. For instance, during the past 15 years, while in the

mountains of the Sierra Madre del Sur of Guerrero, I have stood next to 134 birders while they saw their lifer Short-crested Coquette. There are not another 100 people in the world that have seen that bird apart from Legacy Tours. So, yes, we will continue to offer Open Birding Tours for those with an interest in birding endemic-rich Mexico.

MEXICO DEEP-WATER PELAGIC JUNE 4th 8th, 2010 This trip, the details of which I shared with you in the June Newsletter, filled during the summer. We are excited for the possibilities that may await us off the Mexican coast.

HERITAGE-STYLE BIRDING TOUR TO TAIWAN OCT 22nd NOV 5th, 2010 Fifteen island endemics, plus Black-faced Spoonbill, and many cultural & historical treasures - Fifteen days/nights begins/ends in Taipei. This trip is filled now, however I am thinking about offering a second trip that would begin on Nov 7th and end the 22nd - please let me know if you would like an information packet about Taiwan mailed to you.

#### CURRENT SCHEDULE

I leave late next week for a one-week sailing along the Mexican Western Riviera on the Norwegian Star Cruise-Liner. Twenty of us will enjoy pelagic birding from the vessel and day-trips to bird watch in Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, and Puerto Vallarta.

Home just a short period following the cruise, then off to ARGENTINA. Fifteen of us will rock-n-roll our way through Patagonia, the Ibera Marshes, Iguazu, and Tucuman for three weeks. If my heart were not already given to Mexico than it could be easily captured by Argentina. If natural history is your passion I encourage you to prioritize this destination as it has great mammals, exotic birds, and a seeming infinite variety of textures to the landscape.

Back home for Thanksgiving, and then off to prowl the Mexican Border just the reverse of a trip to South Texas or southeastern Arizona - the same energy but a different spin we hope for Common Grackle, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Winter Wren, or Blue Jay. Seeing Crane Hawk, Blue Mockingbird, Yellow Grosbeak, or Blue Bunting would be wasted on us.

#### TOUCH BASE IF YOU LIKE

I apologize for not having any available spaces for immediate and near-term tours about which to inquire. However if you have a desire to contact us for any reason please do so within the next week, as once the traveling begins in earnest then long pauses between communications becomes the norm.

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