

## Birds of Anza Borrego

### Information

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Date/ Time: Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Zoom Lecture  
Saturday, March 18, 7:30 am - 5 pm  
Sunday, March 19, 7:30 am - 12 pm

Meet at: [Borrego Desert Nature Center](#) (click on link for a map of the meeting site)  
652 Palm Canyon Dr, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Instructor: Kurt Leuschner, M.S., Wildlife Ecology, Professor of Natural Resources at College of the Desert in Palm Desert, CA

### 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.**

### Itinerary

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Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 pm – Zoom Meeting

- Welcome, introduction and discussion on bird identification, classification, local families, migration, conservation
- Slide show and preview of weekend activities

Saturday, March 18, 7:30 am – 5 pm

We will meet at the Anza Borrego Natural History Museum, 652 Palm Canyon Dr, Borrego Springs

On Saturday we will drive approximately 75 miles on a loop around and through the Park in search of birds in a variety of habitats, from desert scrub to montane forest. We might even see a Bald Eagle!

Sunday, March 19, 7:30 am – 12:00 pm

We will meet at the Anza Borrego Natural History Museum, 652 Palm Canyon Dr, Borrego Springs

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.

## What to Bring to the Course

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### **Required Class Materials**

- Binoculars

### **Optional Class Materials**

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

### **The 10 Essentials: Every day in the Desert**

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Closed toe hiking shoes
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

## Fitness Requirements

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Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

## Hike Level

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Easy to Moderate

## College Credit

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If taking this course for 1.5 unit of Biology (X404.9) credit through the University of California Riverside Extension, (70%) attendance/participation, (30%) field notes, quiz and species profile will determine your grade.

## Guidelines

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- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.

## Instructor Biography

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**Kurt Leuschner**, M.S., Wildlife Ecology, 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.

## Suggested Reading (not required)

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- National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America by Jon L. Dunn
- 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
- The Birder's Handbook: A Field Guide to the Natural History of N.A Birds by Paul Ehrlich

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\* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant's needs; however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.