

# UTAH

CANYON COUNTRY: GEOLOGY, BIRDS, AND ECOLOGY



April 2 - 9, 2023



*Wild* **LATITUDES**  
WORLDWIDE NATURE TOURS



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## CANYON COUNTRY: GEOLOGY, BIRDS, AND ECOLOGY

Greetings, fellow nature lover!

We invite you to join us for an exploration of Utah's beautiful Canyon Country! The southeast part of the state—part of the Colorado Plateau—is a geological wonderland. The layers of red rock here have been carved into a wild assortment of amazing landscapes.

On this tour, we'll visit three national parks: **Arches, Canyonlands, and Capitol Reef.**

You'll learn how the awe-inspiring canyons, cliffs, arches, and sandstone towers of this region formed over millions of years. Each day, we'll take short walks and easy hikes to see geological formations up close.

Besides geology, we'll focus on looking for birds, other wildlife, and interesting plants. Over all, we'll have an enriching experience learning about the ecological connections of this special place. From the biggest mountains, to the birds and lizards, down to the microorganisms living in the soil—we're fascinated by the entire sweep of nature in Utah, and we'd love to explore it all with you.

Your guides on this adventure are **Ivan Phillipsen** and **David Jaffe**. Both are avid birders and well-rounded naturalists. Read more about them near the back of this PDF. You'll also find information about the pace and style of our tours here. We hope the itinerary sounds exciting to you, and that you'll join us in Utah in 2023!

We're opening this tour exclusively to members of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, so if you're interested, **please contact the GGAS Travel Desk at [travelprogram@goldengateaudubon.org](mailto:travelprogram@goldengateaudubon.org)**



**Steve Robertson and Ivan Phillipsen**  
Co-owners and Lead Guides at Wild Latitudes

### TRIP DETAILS

**Start Date:** Apr 2, 2023

**Duration of Tour:** 8 days

**Number of participants:** Max of 12

**Price of Tour:** \$2,895 per person

**Deposit:** \$1,450

**Single Supplement:** \$900

**Trip Leaders:** Ivan Phillipsen, David Jaffe

#### Included:

- Double-occupancy lodging
- Ground transportation
- Breakfasts and lunches
- Excursions and park fees
- Guiding services

#### Not Included:

- Airfare at trip beginning/end
- Dinners
- Optional Activities
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal items
- Optional gratuities for guides



## ITINERARY

*Tentative and subject to change depending on weather, road, or other conditions.*

### Day 1 - Apr 2 - Arrive in Salt Lake City

Welcome to Utah! The tour begins with your arrival at Salt Lake City International Airport. You'll be met by your guides, **Ivan Phillipsen** and **David Jaffe**. We'll get checked in at our lodging, then if time allows, we'll head out for some easy birding in the area. We'll have a brief orientation presentation and then enjoy our first dinner together.

Lodging: Hyatt Place Salt Lake City

### Day 2 - Apr 3 - Birding and Exploring on the Road to Moab

As we head south from Salt Lake City, we will make a stop at **Antelope Islands State Park**. This large tract of open land on the shores of the **Great Salt Lake** is home to large numbers of birds and some other interesting wildlife. For example, there are pronghorn, bighorn sheep, and a herd of about 600 **American Bison** roaming free in the park. Bird species we may see here this morning include many waterfowl species, **Eared Grebe**,

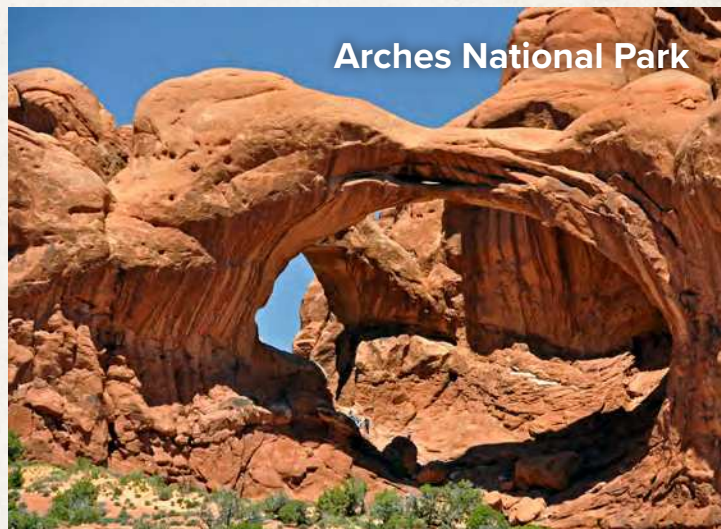


**Sandhill Crane**, migrating shorebirds, **Swainson's Hawk**, **Prairie Falcon**, and **Sage Thrasher**.

We'll make several other stops at interesting places on the way south and east to **Moab**. Possibilities include **Black Dragon Canyon**, **Green River State Park**, and the **Copper Ridge Dinosaur Trail**.

After getting settled into our lodging in Moab, we may have some time to visit **Matheson Wetlands**, a birding hotspot in town. In the evening, we'll enjoy some beverages as we sit down to fill in our bird and wildlife lists for the first time. Then it's off to a hearty dinner!

Lodging: [Wingate by Wyndham](#)



Arches National Park

## Day 3 - Apr 4 - Arches National Park

We'll get an early start today, in an effort to be among the first people entering **Arches National Park**. We plan to be in the park around sunrise, to enjoy the morning light on the gorgeous scenery. Iconic arches we expect to see today include **Delicate Arch**,



Arches National Park



**Landscape Arch**, and **Double Arch**. Some of these will require short hikes to see. Where possible and applicable, we'll offer two hiking options: one easy and one moderate (a bit longer and/or steeper).

The better part of the day will be spent enjoying Arches National Park, learning about its amazing landscape. We'll sit down to refuel on sack lunches in the park. After our walks and other explorations, we'll take the short drive back into Moab. Having had a little rest at the lodge, we'll meet up to go through our bird and wildlife lists, and then head to dinner in town.

Lodging: [Wingate by Wyndham](#)



**Rimrock Milkvetch**

## Juniper Titmouse



## Day 4 - Apr 5 - Canyonlands National Park

**Canyonlands National Park** is divided into 3 districts. Today, we'll drive south from Moab to visit the **Needles District** of the park. This area gets its name from the endless ranks of multicolored rock spires. They're an impressive sight!

We'll take a hike (approx 3 miles) through the otherworldly sandstone landscape. The terrain is not very steep, in general, but it's rocky in many places and uneven. You'll learn about the geologic processes that created the unique "needle" formations. As always, we'll be on the lookout for interesting birds, reptiles, insects, and plants. We may see **Black-throated Sparrow**, **Mountain Bluebird**, **Lark Sparrow**, and **Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay**, among other species.

While in the park, we'll also get an up-close





Capitol Reef National Park

look at the fascinating Native American **petroglyphs** of “Newspaper Rock.”

Time allowing, we'll do some birding along some quiet country roads outside of the national park, to the east. In this flat landscape of shrubsteppe and agriculture, we may see raptors like **Golden Eagle** and **Prairie Falcon**. Other interesting possibilities include **Burrowing Owl**, **Dusky flycatcher**, **Loggerhead Shrike**, and **Sagebrush Sparrow**.

We'll have a hearty dinner at a nearby restaurant before heading back to Moab.

Lodging: [Wingate by Wyndham](#)



Canyon Wren

## Day 5 - Apr 6 - Island in the Sky and Goblin Valley

We check out of our lodge this morning and head to another district with Canyonlands National Park: the **Island in the Sky**. From several points in the park we should have great views over the surrounding country. Birds we hope to encounter here include **White-throated Swift**, **Juniper Titmouse**, and **Pinyon Jay**. And we'll see if we can spot some Hopi & Cliff chipmunks or White-tailed Antelope Squirrels.

Then our journey takes us west towards **Capitol Reef National Park**. On the way, we'll make a stop to investigate the bizarre



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Juniper Hairstreak butterfly



Canyonlands National Park

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geologic formations of **Goblin Valley State Park**.

We'll get settled at our hotel near the national park, then enjoy dinner.

Lodging: Broken Spur Inn

## Day 6 - Apr 7 - Capitol Reef National Park

Today is all about exploring Capitol Reef National Park. This park is more “off the beaten path” than the more popular Utah parks. Its outstanding feature is the incredible Waterpocket Fold: a great fold in the Earth's bedrock that extends north-south for nearly 100 miles.

We'll drive through the park and take some short walks and hikes to check out the cliffs and canyons. Once again, we'll have lunch in the field, making this an all-day adventure. Besides the landscape itself, interesting plants like **Kingcup Cactus** and **Utah Beardtongue** might catch our attention. We should also find a handful of charismatic birds like **Clark's Nutcracker** and **Rock Wren**. We'll also keep an eye out for **Bighorn Sheep** and **Yellow-bellied Marmots** up among the rocks.

If the night sky is clear, we hope to offer an optional **star-gazing outing** after dinner.

Lodging: Broken Spur Inn



Bighorn Sheep



Side-blotched Lizard



Mountain Bluebird



## Day 7 - Apr 8 - Road to Salt Lake City

We leave Capitol Reef and make the return journey to Salt Lake City today. We'll break up the 3.5 hour drive with several stops to stretch our legs and do some light birding and botanizing.

You'll have the evening in Salt Lake City to explore on your own. Time allowing, we may have another opportunity for a birding outing this afternoon.

We'll finish up our bird and wildlife lists for the trip and then enjoy our final dinner together for this trip. Cheers!

Lodging: Hyatt Place Salt Lake City

## Day 8 - Apr 9 - Departures

Today we say our goodbyes and part company.  
*Until next time!*

## Our Commitment to Conservation

On every Wild Latitudes tour, we aim to make a positive conservation impact wherever we travel. We enlist the services of local guides and, when possible, stay in environmentally-sensitive, locally-owned lodges. Through our partnership with the Rainforest Trust, a portion of all international tour fees goes to purchasing rainforest acreage, for its protection in perpetuity. On every trip, we also make a contribution to a local conservation effort that works to protect a native species or ecosystem.



Kingcup Cactus



## YOUR GUIDES

### IVAN PHILLIPSEN

Ivan is a dedicated naturalist with a background in scientific research. He holds a M.S. in Biology from Cal State San Bernardino and a Ph.D. in Zoology from Oregon State University. As Co-owner of Wild Latitudes, Ivan has been able to apply his knowledge in crafting and leading ecotours around the world.

Natural history is Ivan's true passion and what he is most excited to share with tour participants. Although he is fascinated by just about every aspect of nature, Ivan is particularly fond of birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, plants, and geology. Everything is interconnected in nature and he does his best to take a holistic approach when teaching about the natural world.



### DAVID JAFFE

David Jaffe has been guiding and teaching since 1991. His childhood interest in nature eventually led him to Evergreen State College, WA where he earned a B.S. in Environmental Studies and Geology. After 13 years of 'life-experience' he returned to graduate school, earning a M.S. in Applied Ecology with The Field Naturalist Program from the University of Vermont.

David has trekked through the Himalaya in Nepal, looked into the eyes of masked boobies in the Galápagos, sought nudibranchs on the Great Barrier Reef, and walked the Ghats along the Ganges River in India. He has led backcountry trips in Denali National Park, learned from students in Kentucky, and gained great insights while hitchhiking home from work in Yosemite National Park. He has experience as a naturalist in many of the lower 48 states and Baja California. David worked as a divemaster in Australia, Costa Rica, and India. He assisted with the establishment of a marine protected area off the coast of Madagascar and researched and formally studied birds in Canada and South America. His understanding and love of the natural world continues to grow along with his excitement about sharing his knowledge with others.





# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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## THE PACE AND STYLE OF OUR TOURS

The primary goal of our trips is to experience and learn about the natural world, especially the region's birds and other wildlife, and of course, to have fun! As birding is often a primary focus of our tours, and birds are active in the morning, we will sometimes have early morning outings before breakfast. That said, our style of birding may not be ideal for hard-core "listers." We prefer to spend time observing the species we encounter, and learn a bit about their natural history, rather than rushing through the field to add the maximum number of species to our bird list. We also make diversions for interesting, non-avian wildlife, plants, geological wonders, and cultural activities. The pace of most of our trips is moderate, and we encourage anyone in good health to attend and enjoy the experience. Please contact us if you need specific information on the types of physical activities on a tour and their physical requirements.

We strive to immerse participants in the local culture and to that end, wherever possible, we stay in locally owned and operated hotels that are designed and run in an environmentally sustainable way. Though some accommodations may be more basic than others, all are safe, clean and comfortable. We also utilize the services of local guides, visit local markets, and other culturally significant sites.

## TOUR DATE AND TRIP LEADER CHANGES

Leaders and schedules are determined up to a year in advance of our tours. In the event that we have a change in a tour's dates or leaders, we reserve the right to do so, and will strive to inform participants as early in the process as possible. Additional leaders may be added to tours according to the group size, and will be specified in the tour itinerary. We also reserve the right to cancel any trip for which there are insufficient reservations.

## HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE TOUR

When you're ready to sign up for the tour, please let us know by doing one of the following:

- Send us an email at [info@wildlatitudes.com](mailto:info@wildlatitudes.com)
- Call us at 503-714-3504

Then we'll send you the link to our online registration form. You can choose to pay your deposit by credit card or check. See 'Deposit Policy' below.

## DEPOSIT POLICY

A deposit is due at the time of registration. ***A deposit is the only thing that guarantees your place on the trip.*** Registration with a credit card can be done with our online form or by calling: 503-714-3504. *Note:* there is an additional 3.0% fee for credit card payments. This is only what we are charged by the credit card company.

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# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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Checks are happily accepted and should be made out to *Wild Latitudes LLC*. Include the tour name on the memo line of the check and send to:

Wild Latitudes, PO Box 25115, Portland, OR 97298.

## **PAYMENT POLICY**

Full payment is required **90 days** prior to the tour departure date for international tours or any tour involving flights; and **30 days** prior to the tour departure date for local (i.e. in the Portland, Oregon area), van-based tours.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

In the event a participant needs to cancel a reservation for any tour, the following policies will apply:

- **90 days** or more prior to tour departure date, the deposit will be refunded, minus an administrative fee of \$100.
- **Less than 90 days but more than 60 days** prior to tour departure date, all payments refunded, minus 50% of deposit.
- **Less than 60 days** prior to tour departure date, no refunds will be given.

**We *strongly* recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself from unforeseen circumstances.**

If for any reason Wild Latitudes cancels a tour prior to the start of the tour, full refunds—minus the cost of any internal/in-country airline tickets purchased and/or any non-refundable deposits or expenses already made by Wild Latitudes—will be given to all participants. In the event that the tour is canceled while underway due to unforeseeable events such as but not limited to natural disaster, military activities, social uprising, or other extremely dangerous conditions not within the control of Wild Latitudes, no refund will be issued.

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