

Yellowbilled Tours (YBT) 2012 Nome Alaska Birding field trips
Beginning June 8th thru June 25th
Group size 5 max field trip

Nome is a frontier town in a world where few such curiosities remain. Accessible only by boat and airplane, bordered on the West and South by the Bering Sea, and the North and East by miles of trackless wilderness, Nome is a fascinating and challenging destination. During June and July, the Midnight Sun is at its brightest, the tundra is in full bloom, and the birds and mammals are breeding.

Our tour will cover the prime birding areas along the seacoast and the beautifully blooming alpine tundra and Spruce Forest surrounding Nome. Most of the birds are in their resplendent breeding plumages--rarely if ever seen in the "lower 48". We'll make an extra effort to locate some of the accidental Asian species such as The Blue Throat, The Wagtails, Arctic Warbler, Gray-tailed Tattler (seen on a 2006 YBT trip) that regularly occur at Nome.

I have been to Nome three times specifically for birding over the seven years. I have lead small groups twice – small groups birding and wild life watching is the best method for a relaxed experience. I was part of a large (nine individuals Nome tours) which was a high speed wham bang tour, no rest was allowed, no in town Nome experience was offered (see day three).

I use a Four Door Ford High Clearance vehicle allowing each birder their own door for speedy and comfortable exiting and entering. This vehicle allows a comfort level on the rough roads that you can't get from the corporate tour which use uncomfortable 12 passenger vans.

The small group of 4 max people will provide you with a very personalized birding experience. Our lodging is modern motel /apartments with kitchen and private baths. The weather will be mild for Nome --ranging from 46 to 66 degrees -- but will require layering of clothing for maximum comfort. Each morning after breakfast we'll pick up our own individual lunches. Dinners will be a hot meal of choice. No meals are included – daily meals are of your choice.

Day 1: You arrive about 8:30PM in Nome. I pick you up at the Nome Airport. We'll get settled in your room, then go to dinner as a group. After dinner we'll begin birding along the Bering Sea, Nome Harbor, Nome Sewage Ponds, and the Nome River outlet. We can expect to see Red and Red-necked Phalaropes' up to three species of Sparrows, four species of Gulls, Parasitic Jaegers, Aleutian Terns possible Bar-tailed Godwit and both Pacific and American Plover all in breeding Plumage.

Day 2: Safety Lagoon and Council Road : We'll spend the morning hours carefully searching the shorelines, lagoons and ponds along the Lagoon near the inlet from the Bering Sea for rarities such as Arctic and Yellowbilled Loon, Red-necked Stint, Slaty-back Gull & possible Black-legged Kittiwake, Spectacled Eider well as the many resident shorebirds. On the road to Council we search for both species of Redpolls, Yellow Wag-tail, Longspur's, Gray-cheeked Thrush, I have had White Wagtail, White winged Crossbill on the road to council in the past.

Council Road: We'll drive 75 miles on dirt roads to Council, a small fishing village in the interior. This area represents the only Boreal forest on the Seward Peninsula and should yield Varied Thrush, Boreal Chickadee, Three-toed Woodpecker, Northern Hawk Owl and other Spruce Forest /alpine species. In 2011 we found a Male singing Harris Sparrow in Council.

Day 3: Teller Road: We begin with local birding in just a few miles drive we may be able to find both the Arctic Warbler and Dusky Warbler. Then our real day begins by slowly driving Teller Road north seeking Golden Eagles, Northern Shrike and warblers, possible Rusty

Blackbird, stopping at Wooley Lagoon to observe a native whale-hunting outpost on the Bering Sea, while observing scores of nesting Black-bellied, Pacific and American Golden-Plovers as well as Semipalmated Plover and Whimbrels. We should get good looks at Northern Wheatears, Yellow Wagtail and Snow Bunting in this area as well.

At the end of the road, we'll find the village of Teller itself, an Inuit village that sits out on a spit in the bay. Here we'll rest, have lunch, visit the local store to see if there is carved Ivory figures for sell. We walk around the village while looking sparrows, swallows, Snow Bunting, Longspur maybe Snowy Owl at the airport. On the Teller Spit we'll have a chance for Pigeon Guillemots, Common & Thick Billed Murres, Red-throated Loon, Red-necked Grebe are found here. We should see Spotted Seals close to the shore.

Day 4: Taylor Road: We drive the 85 mile length of Kougarak road into the high tundra and mountains of Seward Peninsula in search of nesting Bristle-thighed Curlew, Wanderling Tattler, several nesting plumage sandpiper species i.e. Black and Ruddy Turnstones, SemiPalmed Plovers, Red-Fox Sparrow, Northern Shrike, potential for Bluethroat and Gyrfalcon, Blackpoll Warbler and Northern Waterthrush among others. We'll watch (carefully) for Grizzly Bear, Muskox and Moose.

Day 5: The morning you'll prepare yourself for the morning return flights home from Nome. I will

* Other mammals we may see here and in other location on our trip include: Reindeer, Arctic Wolf, Arctic Fox, Muskox, Wolverine, Short-tailed Weasel, Gray and Humpback Whales, Spotted Seal, Harbor Porpoise, Walrus (immature) and others.

Contact Rich Cimino at 925-353-0266 to reserve a space on one of four (4) field trips which are scheduled: As follows June 8th, 12th, 16th and the 21st - space is limited to four birders per field trip – YBT Rich Cimino is your field Guide and supplies the auto transportation, fuel and lodging. Airfare and meals are not included.

No fragrances (fragrances may attract bears), this trip does can't support handicap persons' needs.

Email Yellowbilledtours@gmail.co for more specifics on logistics, meals and lodging.

Cost and Cancellation

A \$500.00 deposit is required upon registration. The balance is due of \$1900.00 within four weeks before the start of your field trip. If a participant cancels after the balance is paid every effort will be made to find a suitable replacement. In the case there will be a \$50 administrative fee with the balance refunded. If a replacement cannot be found the trip deposit will be forfeited + a \$50.00 administrative fee, the balance of your trip fee will be refunded. Last minute trip cancellation by tour leader would only occur in the event of extreme, an earthquake tsunami or some unforeseen emergency. In this case your refund will be 100%.