Southern Ohio Neotropical Wonders

May 2-5, 2024

Cost
6 participants max
Price $725 Double occupancy $975 single

Event overview
This trip is an excellent way to see many specialty birds that call southern Ohio home for the breeding season. Southeast Ohio sits at the edge of Appalachia and is teeming with biodiversity. It also holds a close place to my heart since I went to school here. Since 2015, I have spent time each spring coming to this part of the state and I see something new every year. Come birding in one of the most amazing places in Ohio.

Day 1  Travel Day
For those living in Ohio, you are welcome to carpool down and stay in a hotel this night in Columbus or meet up day “2” of trip and caravan with group. Participants flying in should fly into Columbus this day and prepare to stay in a hotel around the airport this night. Your other choice is to meet us early morning day 2 with a rental car. Once we are in Shawnee we will all be in the same vehicle. Please consider what option is best for you.

Day 2  Clear Creek Metro Park and Chuck’s trip
We will head slightly south from Columbus to Clear Creek Metro Park. This is a fantastic place for migrants and is a location that holds a lot of our first encounters with southern breeding warblers such as Yellow-throated Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush and more. After birding in CCMP, we will break for a lunch then make our way 2 hours south to check into our next location, Shawnee State Forest and Lodge. The accommodations we have chosen to stay in are nice cabins (water and electricity) within the state forest. After getting checked in and settled we will do some birding around the lodge and eat dinner before heading out to look for Chuck-will’s-widow, Eastern Whip-poor-will, American Woodcock and with some luck, owls.

Day 3  Birding Shawnee SF
This will be an early morning, as we will want to start at daybreak for our best chances at the dawn chorus that wakes up this amazing forest in spring. Warblers, vireos and my favorite singer, the Wood Thrush, will serenade us. We have a chance to encounter over 30 species of warbler here but our main targets will be Cerulean, Kentucky, Worm-eating and Hooded Warblers. Broad-winged Hawks can be seen sailing over the canopy as well as a lot more birds that call this forest home. Aside from the birds, Shawnee is packed with rich biodiversity like spring wildflowers (we will be looking for Pink Lady-slippers), mammals (Black Bears and Bobcats), reptiles, amphibians and butterflies. The butterflies here on a sunny day can remind someone of the tropics. Swallowtails flittering by while huge amounts puddle and gather minerals right off the road. We will eat lunch in the field this day and stop birding around dinnertime. Those feeling up to it can always join me in an evening walk. “Breakfast and lunch provided this day”

Day 4  Morning birding/head home
Half day birding possibly looking for grassland species such as Henslow’s Sparrow, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Blue Grosbeak. For those who may have flown in, try to book a flight as late as possible.

Target species
Last year on this trip 2022, we encountered 87 species of birds – mostly breeders and residents. 19 species of warbler were encountered, lower than usual but this was due to an overall odd Spring Migration. We still landed all of our Southern Ohio Targets with a few bonus birds as well.

For additional questions, please contact your guide
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