

**WELCOME:** We are delighted that you have enrolled in the American Birding Association's, Institute for Field Ornithology, Winter Sparrows of the Southwest Workshop. We look forward to sharing an exciting and informative week of learning and birding with you. Some details you may be wondering about are covered in the following information.

**WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION:** Southeastern Arizona is home to many resident species of breeding sparrows and a favored location for migrants to overwinter. We will visit semi-desert grasslands and riparian woodlands to observe the behavior and habitat selection of over 20 species of sparrows, towhees, and longspurs. Daily outings will be followed by classroom presentations on identification, vocalizations, ecology, natural history, and conservation. Potential highlights include Cassin's, Rufous-winged, Black-chinned, and Baird's Sparrows and Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs. Other birds of interest that may be seen include Ferruginous Hawk, Scaled Quail, Bendire's Thrasher, and Mountain Plover.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Homer M. Hansen is the author of the G.I.S.S. Series bird identification guides and has been bird watching in the southwest since 1995. Homer is a native of Willcox, Arizona, and is chairman of the annual Wings Over Willcox Birding & Nature Festival. He feels fortunate to have grown up surrounded by Sandhill Cranes in winter and Cassin's Sparrows in summer. Homer has given numerous workshops and tours on raptors, sparrows, flycatchers, warblers, bird vocalizations, and other aspects of bird ecology over the years and is a regular presenter and trip leader for Arizona birding festivals. He is also the course instructor for the Tucson Audubon Society's Moving to Mastery birding workshops.

**LOCATION:** Sierra Vista is situated in the heart of southeastern Arizona, one of the finest birding locations in the U.S. Southeastern Arizona is part of the Sky Islands, a region known for its rich diversity of bird species and habitats. Sierra Vista is located at the base of the Huachuca Mountains and is near several riparian corridors, grassland plains, and agricultural communities. Winter is an excellent time to observe many species of sparrow and longspur migrants that overwinter in this region in addition to the local resident breeders.

**WHAT TO EXPECT:** The workshop provides all ground transportation, lodging, and meals beginning and ending in Tucson. The workshop has both field trips and classroom sessions. The classroom sessions are comprehensive, and although handouts will be provided, notetaking may be beneficial. Wintertime in southeastern Arizona typically is very comfortable. During the winter months, the daytime temperatures may range from 50° to 70°F, with night temperatures often falling to near freezing or below. The days are typically sunny, but may be overcast, and wind or rain is possible if a front moves through. The workshop is limited to 6 participants with a minimum of 4 participants required.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** This workshop will require walking between two to four miles a day. We will walk up to two miles at a time, at a slow pace. Most of the walking will be done on level surfaces with little elevation gain, but some of the walking will be in grassland habitat and as the terrain may uneven, be sure to bring appropriate footwear with good traction. Gaiters or similar means for keeping grass and weed seeds out of pants, socks, and shoes are highly recommended.

#### **WHAT TO BRING:**

- Field gear (binoculars, camera, scope and tripod, etc.)
- Hat and sunscreen
- Container for water/drinks
- Layered clothing for cool mornings and moderate to warm days
- Comfortable and sturdy footwear for the field trips
- Gaiters for walking through grass/weeds
- Three-ring binder or clipboard
- Writing utensils and notebook
- Backpack or other carrying case



**RECOMMENDED READING:** The following books are recommended with suggested readings. All reading materials are optional and are not required. The books are available from Buteo Books in partnership with ABA Sales.

- James Rising and David Beadle. *Sparrows of the United States and Canada: The Photographic Guide*. Academic Press, 2002. Suggested reading: Pages 1-9.
- Kenn Kaufman. *Field Guide to Advanced Birding*. Houghton Mifflin, 2011. Suggested reading: Pages 419-440.
- Homer Hansen. *G.I.S.S. Series - Sparrows of Arizona*. Aplomado Environmental, 2009. Suggested reading: Relative bill length and bill shape.



**TRAVEL INFORMATION:** Travel arrangements to and from Tucson International Airport (TUS) are your responsibility. Please plan your travel so that you will arrive at the Double Tree Suites in time for dinner and introductions at 6:00 PM on Thursday, December 5, 2013. The Double Tree Suites provides complimentary transportation to and from the airport. The shuttle runs 24-hours a day, call the hotel at (520) 225-0800 when you arrive in Tucson, and they will come pick you up at the baggage claim area. There is NOT a courtesy phone available.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** All lodging is provided for the workshop. Lodging for arrival and departure will be at the Double Tree Suites in Tucson, Arizona. The remainder of the nights will be at Battiste Bed, Breakfast & Birds and/or Gasthaus Mountain View. Rooms are assigned based on occupancy. A supplement of \$320 is required for single occupancy. If you prefer to share but do not have a roommate and a roommate cannot be assigned, the single occupancy supplement will apply.

Double Tree Suites Tucson Airport  
7051 South Tucson Boulevard  
Tucson, AZ 85706  
520-225-0800

Battiste Bed, Breakfast & Birds  
4700 Robert Smith Lane  
Hereford, AZ 8561  
520-803-6908

Gasthaus Mountain View  
5444 Santa Claus Avenue  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85650  
520-378-2554

[www.placesdoubletree.com/tucson-airport](http://www.placesdoubletree.com/tucson-airport)

[www.battistebedandbirds.com](http://www.battistebedandbirds.com)

[www.gasthausmountainview.com](http://www.gasthausmountainview.com)

**TRANSPORTATION:** The Double Tree Suites will provide transportation from the Tucson International Airport (TUS) to the hotel and from the hotel back to the airport. During the workshop, transportation will be provided in one multi-passenger vehicle. Luggage will be transported in a separate vehicle to and from the hotel and Bed & Breakfast lodgings. All transportation will be provided between Bed & Breakfast lodgings as needed.

**MEALS:** All meals are provided for during the workshop from dinner on December 5 through breakfast on December 10. Meals include a full breakfast, a sack lunch, and dinner at a designated restaurant. The TYPICAL meal selections are as follows:

- Breakfasts typically include scrambled eggs, sausage or ham, hot and cold cereals, bagels or toast, fresh fruits, yogurt, coffee, tea, milk, and juice.
- Lunches are self-prepared after eating breakfast. Lunch makings provided typically include bread, a selection of meats, peanut butter, and other spreads, chips, fresh fruits, vegetables, and other sides.
- Dinners are at a designated restaurant and typically include a selection of 3 or 4 entrées (beef, chicken, pork, fish, and/or vegetarian) with a side dish, salad, and non-alcoholic drinks. A single desert selection may be available for the entire group.

**SMOKING POLICY:** Most of our workshop attendees prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking during group activities. Smoking is NOT permitted at the Bed & Breakfast lodgings.



**REGISTRATION & CANCELLATIONS:** Cost of the workshop is \$1,395 per person (a supplement of \$320 is required for single occupancy), please call (800) 850-2473 to register. A full refund will be given for cancellations more than 90 days before the workshop. Cancellations less than 90 days before the workshop will forfeit 20% of the workshop fee unless the space is filled by another participant. All cancellations require a \$50 processing fee. With regard to cancellation of the workshop, the ABA is not responsible for any travel ticket fees or reimbursements due to workshop cancellation under any circumstance.

#### **SCHEDULE:**

##### ***December 5 (Thursday) - Arrival & Introductions***

Prior to 6:00 pm Arrive and check-in at lodgings near Tucson International Airport (TUS).  
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm Meet other workshop participants and instructor in lobby. Dinner at lodgings.  
7:00 pm - 7:30 pm Introductions and brief overview of IFO.  
7:30 pm and after Remainder of evening free.

##### ***December 6 (Friday) - Travel, Field Trip & Classroom Session***

6:00 am - 7:00 am Breakfast and then load luggage to depart for Sierra Vista.  
7:00 am - 2:30 pm Depart for Sierra Vista with stops at Sweetwater Wetlands and Catalina State Park en route.  
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm Arrive at Sierra Vista lodgings, unload luggage, and settle in.  
3:00 pm - 5:45 pm Classroom session on identification of sparrows, towhees, and longspurs presenting behavior, structure, and plumage at the genus and species level, with details for notable sub-species.  
6:00 pm and after Dinner with remainder of evening free.

##### ***December 7 (Saturday) - Field Trip & Classroom Session***

6:00 am - 7:00 am Breakfast.  
7:00 am - 2:30 pm Field trip with stops in the Huachuca Mountains and San Pedro River National Conservation Area.  
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm Return to lodgings and refresh.  
3:00 pm - 5:45 pm Classroom session on vocalizations with an introduction to significant components of sparrow songs and how to recognize them. The session includes numerous auditory examples and comparisons.  
6:00 pm and after Dinner with remainder of evening free.

##### ***December 8 (Sunday) - Field Trip & Classroom Session***

5:00 am - 6:00 am Breakfast.  
6:00 am - 3:00 pm Field trip with stops in BLM Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, Patagonia, and grasslands of the San Rafael Valley.  
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm Return to lodgings and refresh.  
3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Classroom session on natural history of Emberizids and Calcariids, including molt, migration, and historical and modern day habitat uses and important conservation considerations for grassland species.  
6:00 pm and after Dinner with remainder of evening free.

##### ***December 9 (Monday) - Field Trip & Travel***

5:30 am - 6:30 am Breakfast and then load luggage.  
6:30 am - 3:30 pm Field trip in the Sulphur Springs Valley with stops at Whitewater Draw and the Dragoon Mountains.  
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm Return to lodgings near Tucson International Airport (TUS).  
6:00 pm and after Dinner at lodgings. Conclusion of Winter Sparrows of the Southwest IFO workshop.

##### ***December 10 (Tuesday) - Departure***

11:00 am Checkout time for Tucson lodgings.