

# Vintage Arizona: A Mix of Nature, History & Fun

## From Tucson to Portal, Bisbee & Tombstone, "the Town Too Tough to Die"

October 20-27, 2012



Fall is a stunning time to visit Arizona's beautiful Chiricahua and Huachuca Mountains. Enjoy warm days as maples turn red, cottonwoods yellow and sycamores burnt sienna. This is home terrain for Naturalist Journeys, LLC and we're looking forward to sharing some of our favorite places! For this NEW trip, we've selected a blend of Southwestern sites and stories in a mix of biology, history, geology, archeology, and anthropology.

We start at the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum in Tucson and then travel south on to historic missions, beautiful scenery and the "sky islands". One day we will visit Kartchner Caverns State Park, where spectacular underground formations are something to behold. We explore Bisbee, a colorful, historic mining town and hang out in Tombstone, "The Town Too Tough to Die." On one of our days, we

explore Chiricahua National Monument, a wonderland of rock. And, throughout our travels, we enjoy delicious catered meals and dine at our favorite local restaurants.

Let us introduce you to this area, rich in fascinating stories of old, where Mexican plants and animals meet species of Rocky Mountains, and desert species mingle with those of the Great Plains. Our rambles and explorations are of moderate pace with plenty of time to interpret geology and natural history, to tell stories, and to spot some of the region's intriguing birds. Linger over grand scenery, re-live the past, and stretch the magic of Fall with its fine decoration of color.

Your guides are Peg Abbott, owner of Naturalist Journeys, LLC and Wynne Brown, Portal-based author of *More Than Petticoats: Remarkable Arizona Women* and *The Falcon Guide to Trail Riding Arizona*.



### ITINERARY

*Southeastern Arizona, where the Old West Still Reigns...*

#### **Sat., Oct. 20 Tucson / Arizona Sonora Desert Museum / San Xavier del Bac Mission / Amado**

Plan to arrive in Tucson, today, no later than 2 PM. Some of the tour participants will be coming from our UTAH ARIZONA SAMPLER journey that immediately precedes this journey. We join forces at the famed Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. This is a "living" museum, an arboretum and collection of native fauna that provides a wonderful introduction and overview of Southern Arizona's biodiversity.

Those continuing from the previous tour will arrive in time for lunch where they can choose from a quick sandwich or salad in the patio café, or a more extensive meal in the excellent Ironwood Restaurant. They will have plenty of time here to wander and



explore. Those arriving today will have about an hour and a half to look around. If you arrive early to Tucson and want to taxi (Arizona Shuttle) out to the museum we can also meet you there.



While at the museum, plan on doing some walking; November temperatures are just perfect for that. Exhibits of the Sonora Desert Museum meticulously recreate native habitats, providing wonderful, close-up views of many desert animals that are normally hard to spot. A visit to the hummingbird gallery, with several species flying around, and some possibly nesting, is memorable. The museum grounds display the habitats we encounter in the week ahead as we explore Arizona's "Sky Islands" mountain ranges, so it's a great way to introduce part two of our journey!

From there we stop by the Mission San Xavier del Bac in time to photograph this lovely church in the soft late afternoon light. It is sometimes known as the White Dove of the Desert and was founded in 1692 by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, a Jesuit missionary and

explorer, famous for his work with native peoples, and for proving that Baja California was not an island.

We then head southward to Amado, located between the Santa Rita and Atascosa mountains. Here, desert scrub and grasslands are home to typical southwestern species such as Gila Woodpeckers, Pyrrhuloxias, Verdins, Roadrunners, and Cactus Wrens. Tonight we stay at a delightful hotel where settle in, enjoy a welcome dinner, and an overview of the week ahead. *Accommodations in Amado Territory Inn, Amado (D)*



### **Sun., Oct. 21 Tumacacori / Tubac / Patagonia / Hereford**

As we drive through the Santa Cruz River Valley, our first stop will be at Tumacacori National Historical Park. There we'll visit the impressive Mission, another church founded by Father Kino the year before he reached San Xavier del Bac.



We'll also have a chance to amble on the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic trail along the Santa Cruz River, lined with magnificent Fremont Cottonwoods, Gooding's Willows, Velvet Mesquites, and Mexican Elders. This riparian habitat is home to Vermilion Flycatchers, Canyon Towhees and many more species. After lunch and an opportunity to visit some of Tubac's galleries and shops, we head on to Patagonia, where we'll visit some local feeders and stop by

Patagonia Lake.

Continuing on to Sierra Vista, we arrive at Casa de San Pedro - a delightful B&B on the west bank of the San Pedro River. Casa de San Pedro is a nationally acclaimed inn, described as "90 miles from Tucson and inches from heaven." Guests have labeled it the most upscale bed and breakfast in Southeast Arizona. We find it the ideal location for our group, with meeting space, incredible

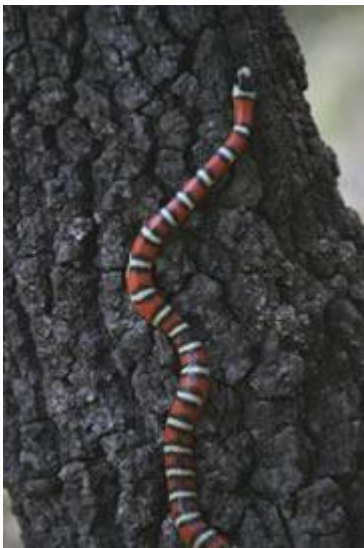


hospitality, active bird feeders, a pond, and the San Pedro River right outside our door. From the Casa, we can explore cottonwoods that fringe the river perhaps flaunting a little fall color, as well as surrounding grasslands and tall peaks of the nearby Huachuca Mountains, a Mecca for hummingbird enthusiasts. You'll soon find out why so many guests return here again and again. ([www.bedandbirds.com](http://www.bedandbirds.com))

*Accommodations at Casa de San Pedro, Hereford (B,L,D)*

### **Mon., Oct. 22 Ramsey Canyon / Fort Huachuca Historical Museum / Kartchner Caverns**

We check the Casa's "backyard" of riparian cottonwoods and mesquite grassland for species such as Scaled Quail, Lucy's Warblers and Abert's Towhees, have breakfast, and then head off to the Nature Conservancy Preserve at Ramsey Canyon—one of the first well-known birding sites in SE Arizona. Here, Ramsey Creek descends through oak woodlands, its banks lined with massive sculptured trunks of Arizona Sycamores. We hope to see Wild Turkeys, Painted Redstarts, Black-throated Gray warblers, and a variety of colorful hummingbirds at close range. Walk the trails, browse the bookstore and gift shop, or park yourself under a tall, bending sycamore to wait for the birds to come to you!



In midday, we visit Fort Huachuca for some military history. Constructed in 1877, the fort was one of a chain established to guard southern Arizona against the Chiricahua Apaches, led by Geronimo. The fort was also the headquarters of the famed 10th Cavalry, the "Buffalo Soldiers," one of the Army's elite black cavalry corps. Today the fort is still an active Army post specializing in Military Intelligence training. It covers more than 70,000 acres, 110 of which are the "Old Post Area." As time and interest dictate, we may visit the fort's historic district that contains many notable buildings. Among these are the Pershing House, an adobe structure built in 1884 and traditionally the Post Commander's quarters; the "Old Post" Barracks, built c. 1882-1883; Leonard Wood Hall, a large two-storied building used as the hospital; and the Fort Huachuca Historical Museum, an adobe and stone building originally used as the post chapel.

In late afternoon, we'll shift our attention to geological history and see what happens when water meets limestone over a period of 330 million years as we head underground to tour a living cave at Kartchner Caverns. This is a relatively new park, with fabulous formations, state of the art interpretation - and an inspiring story of a secret well-kept.

This evening's dinner at the Casa de San Pedro will include a tasting of Arizona's wines.

*Accommodations at Casa de San Pedro, Hereford (B,L,D)*

### **Tues., Oct. 23 San Pedro House / Tombstone / Whitewater Draw**

After an early breakfast, we will drive north to the San Pedro House where we can walk along the San Pedro River to a lovely pond. Birds of interest here include Black Phoebes, Abert's Towhees and rarely, a Green Kingfisher.

Then it's on to the Old Wild West to Tombstone, "The Town Too Tough to Die," home of the OK Corral, Doc Holliday, and Wyatt Earp. After a chance to explore the town and lunch at Big Nose Kate's Saloon (Kate was Doc Holliday's girlfriend and owner of the bar and brothel), we drive to the Whitewater Draw Wildlife Area. Some of the wintering Sand hill Cranes should have arrived (numbering some 35,000 birds at the peak of winter!), and we look for them en route. Depending on water levels, Whitewater may be one of the only local sites hosting shorebirds and with luck we see the area's resident Great-Horned Owl. The entire valley is a major wintering group for raptors and some of the northern species, like Ferruginous Hawks, may be



here already. On some trips we see four species of falcons: Prairie, Peregrine, Merlin and American Kestrel. In recent years, acrobatic White-tailed Kites have increased in number. The surrounding shrubby flats are home to Bendire's Thrashers, Black-throated Sparrows, Cactus Wrens, Scaled and Gambel's Quail, Roadrunners, and Pyrrhuloxias. We watch as well for Lark, Brewer's and Vesper sparrows.



At day's end, we return to the delightful Casa for dinner.  
*Accommodations at Casa de San Pedro, Hereford (B,L,D)*



### **Wed., Oct. 24 Historic Bisbee / Leslie Canyon / Rucker Canyon / Rodeo / Portal**

After enjoying our last Casa breakfast, we pack up our things and move on to the historic and picturesque mining town of Bisbee where copper ruled for many years. For those willing, the Queen Mine Tour allows participants to don lantern, helmet, and slicker to ride the train deep into the tunnels and (briefly!) experience the mining life. Others can visit the numerous shops and galleries. We also visit the Smithsonian affiliated mining museum in the old part of town. From here a number of lunch places are centrally located;

choose from salads, sandwiches, Mexican food or some pretty incredible hamburgers...



After lunch, we head toward the Chiricahua Mountains, a "sky island" where the Rocky and Sierra Madre mountains, and the Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts all meet—an intersection that results in remarkable biodiversity. Along the way, we pass by Leslie Canyon National Wildlife Refuge, a 2,765-acre area established to protect the endangered Yaqui Chub and Yaqui Topminnow, both native fishes of Arizona.

From there, we'll proceed east to Rucker Canyon and pause to stroll around Old Camp Rucker, rich with history of Apaches, heliographs, and early settlers,

including ranch woman and writer Mary Kidder Rak. This area is a U.S. Forest Service Passport In Time project, and volunteers have restored the structures and added interpretive signs. Guide Wynne Brown shares first hand some of the stories in her popular book on the region's history.

On our way to this evening's lodging, we cross a sliver of New Mexico and stop in the tiny town of Rodeo at the Chiricahua Art Gallery and Chiricahua Desert Museum. Then, back to Arizona and on to Portal's lovely Cave Creek Ranch, where we'll be the next three nights.

*Accommodations at Cave Creek Ranch, Portal (B, D)*



### **Thurs., Oct. 25 Portal / South Fork / Paradise**

Situated adjacent to the small village of Portal, population 300, Cave Creek presents a magical realm of massive, colorful cliffs that rise over 1,000 feet. Its vegetation is rich and diverse – here yuccas mix with pine. Thick stands of maple decorate the stream while shrubs turn colors of the rainbow. Hummingbirds linger, some for the winter, and we may find late season flowers, the raccoon-like Coatimundis, or a herd of curious Javelinas.



This morning we take a scenic ramble up South Fork, one of the Chiricahuas' most spectacular canyons. You may want to linger along the creek reveling in the maples' fall colors while others ascend the trail to reach outstanding vistas, including some affected by the 2011 Horseshoe II fire.

After a picnic lunch and a break back at our lodging, we move on to Paradise, a former mining town, for a touch of history and a chance to visit very active, local bird feeders. We drive to Portal for some free time enjoying highlights of the lodge and Portal – scenic vistas, bird feeding stations and a one-lane street walk to our colorful Post Office. If some of you would like to take a horseback ride in our beautiful region, we can arrange that with a local operator (additional cost) as an alternate activity this afternoon.

After dinner at the Portal Café, we return to Cave Creek Ranch where our casitas stand among the shadows cast by the imposing, colorful rhyolite cliffs.

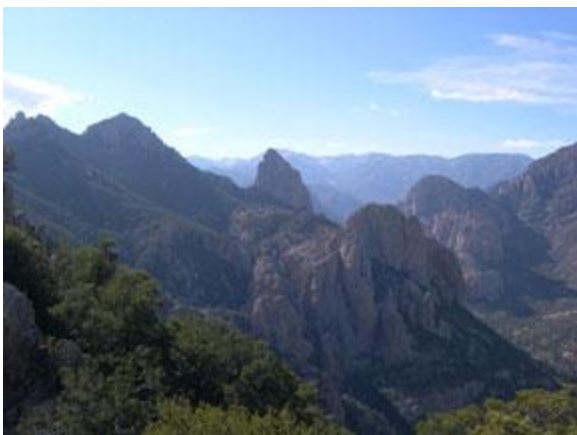
*Accommodations at Cave Creek Ranch, Portal (B,L,D)*

**Fri., Oct. 26 Chiricahua National Monument / Fort Bowie**

Today we discover a wonderland of rock at Chiricahua National Monument. We reach the high country by crossing the spine of the range on a winding road with spectacular views amid patches of fir, spruce and Ponderosa Pine. This is the realm of the Mexican Chickadee, Yellow-eyed Junco, and other bird specialties. Listen for raucous Steller's Jays and look for sign of Black Bears.



On the other side of the mountain, we enter the Monument's rugged terrain, where the Apache leaders Cochise and Geronimo took their last stand until the late 1800s, when cattle ranching became a way of life. Today we gawk at huge pillars of rock in the realm of Rock and Canyon Wrens, a jagged rock landscape that was born of explosive volcanic activity. After a short interpretive walk at the Monument, we continue on to Fort Bowie National Historic Site, another chance to walk through history, remembering the Battle of Apache Pass, where we learn how the dreams and desires of Apaches and white settlers could only collide.



We return to Portal through the Sulphur Springs Valley, watched, appropriately enough, by a rock formation known as Cochise Head. Our farewell dinner will be catered at Cave Creek Ranch and a chance to review all we've seen and relished during this Vintage Arizona trip!

*Accommodations at Cave Creek Ranch, Portal (B,L,D)*

**Sat., Oct. 27 Willcox / Amerind Foundation / Tucson**

This morning's last birding opportunity is en route back to Tucson, at the town of Willcox's Twin Lakes Golf Course Ponds, where we might see Canvasbacks, Ring-necked Ducks, Lesser



Scaups, Common Mergansers, and possibly Black-crowned Night-Herons. We make a short visit to see the Amerind Foundation, an anthropological and archaeological museum and research center dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of Native American cultures and their histories. Nestled among scenic boulders, it's a great place to pause as last stop before bidding farewell at Tucson or Phoenix airports. (B)



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*Your guides for the journey will be Peg Abbott and Wynne Brown.*

### **COST OF THE JOURNEY**

Cost of the journey is \$2390.00, based on double occupancy, from Tucson, AZ. This cost includes accommodations for 7 nights, meals as specified in the itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner), professional guide services, other park and program entrance fees and miscellaneous program expenses. single supplement as available is \$525.00.

Cost does not include: round-trip airfare to and from Tucson, items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone, drinks from the bar; or gratuities for luggage handling or personal services. With fewer than 6 participants, a small-group surcharge (typically \$100-200 per participant) may apply, or we may request that you pick up the cost of a few additional dinners in lieu of that surcharge.

*Group size: This is a sampler trip. Maximum 12, minimum 4 participants.*

### **TRAVEL INFORMATION**

The airport for this tour is Tucson (TUS). Plan to arrive by 2:00 PM on Oct. 20 and plan to depart after 1:00 PM on Oct. 27 or from 3:00 PM onwards from Phoenix (PHX). We offer Phoenix as a courtesy for our participants combining this tour with Utah Arizona Sampler.

*Naturalist Journeys, LLC is an equal opportunity service provider and committed to the goal of ensuring equal opportunity for all in employment and program delivery.*

#### **Photo Credits:**

*Roadrunner, Mexican Jay, Spiney-tailed Lizard and Tumacacori Mission, Greg Smith; Chiricahua National Monument (CNM), Gambel's Quail and scenic with saguaros, Lynn Feryus; all other images by Peg Abbott.*