



BAJA EXPEDITIONS®

THE WORLD'S LEADER IN ECO-ADVENTURES TO BAJA

JOIN THE BIRDS AND WHALES ON THE BAJA MIGRATION MARCH 22ND - 30TH 2012



YOUR GUIDE,
RANULFO MAYORAL

What to Expect:

March 22nd - 30th 2012

- ◆ Bird watchers, culture lovers, and whale aficionados, will delight in this cosmopolitan, coast-to-coast adventure featuring unique birds, historic missions and friendly gray whales surfacing close-by.
- ◆ Trip begins with a private charter plane ride from the near San Diego and finishes in the quaint town of Loreto with a commercial flight (not included). Explore the Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve by visiting Santa Rosalia, Mulege, San Ignacio, and the San Ignacio Lagoon.
- ◆ 9 Days / 8 nights. 4 nights in Cabanas at the lagoon, 2 nights in San Ignacio Springs, and 2 nights in Loreto's Damiana Inn.
- ◆ Ranulfo Mayoral will lead the group sharing his passion and knowledge of the species of the biosphere reserve.

TRIP PRICE - \$2295 PP/DBL OCC.

TRIP NOT TO EXCEED 12 GUESTS



BAJA EXPEDITIONS®

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for immediate assistance or billing info
Kelly@bajaex.com - 858 581 3320.



Photo: John Symons
Mangrove Warbler - Female
Dendroica petatchia bryanti



Photo: John Symons / Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
Nyctanassa violacea



Photo: John Symons
Osprey, *Pandion haliaetus*



Photo: John Symons,
Brown Pelican

DESCRIPTION

Join us on a trans-peninsular exploration of Baja, where the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Cortez surround miles of untouched wilderness and provide crucial habitats for hundreds of species of birds and one-third of the world's marine mammal species. Come eye-to-eye with the world's most curious whale from our skiffs in the protected waters of the San Ignacio Lagoon. The gray whales travel 5,000 miles to reach this shallow lagoon each winter to mate and calve. Over 225 species of birds have been identified in the lagoon area alone! Ranulfo Mayoral, the 'bird man' and your guide, has created quite an impressive Common Bird Checklist available to trip participants. His favorites are: Blue-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Cape-Pygmy Owl, the Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Orange-crowned and Mangrove Warblers; Verdins, Green herons, Phainopeplas, Vermillion Fly-catchers; Ashy, Black, Least, and Leach's Storm-Petrels; Caspian, Royal, Elegant, and Forster's Terns; Peregrine Falcons, and Gila Woodpeckers! Cross through the Vizcaíno Desert where Crested Caracaras, Red-tailed and Harris's Hawks fill the skies from the palm-lined oasis town of San Ignacio. Visit the coastal and riparian environments of Loreto, home to the Blue-footed Boobies, Cactus Wrens, and the endemic Xantus Hummingbird and Grey Trasher.

*please see following page for scientific and common Spanish names.

BAJA PENINSULA BIRD WATCHING

HIGHLIGHTS

LA LAGUNA SAN IGNACIO

The lagoon forms part of the Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve and has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1993. No where else on earth can you reach your hand out to caress a friendly whale or see such intimate interactions. Enter mangroves where birds flit by, singing to call your attention, and visit the nesting grounds of gulls and cormorants.



Photo: John Symons
Double-Crested Cormorant - *Phalacrocorax auritus*

SAN IGNACIO AND SANTA ROSALIA



Just minutes from the palm-lined oasis, visit the surreal *zocolo*, city square of the quiet town and wander inside the Misión San Ignacio Loyola and the Cave Painting Museum. Then, in Santa Rosalía, visit the 'Church by Eiffel', and tour the surprising architecture.



LORETO -

Stroll the picturesque *malecón* (boardwalk) and visit the Our Lady of Loreto Church. Trip includes a day trip up the *arroyo* (canyon) to the San Francisco Javier Mission Church. The Loreto Marine National Park provides a safe haven for many marine birds visible from the *malecón*.



BIRD CHECKLIST

- AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER - *OSTRERO AMERICANO* - *Haematopus palliatus*
- OSPREY - *GAVILAN PESCADOR* - *Pandion haliaetus*
- BLUE & BROWN-FOOTED BOOBIES - *BOBO PATIAZUL* & *VIENTRE-BLANCO* - *Sula nebouxii* & *leucogaster*
- AMERICAN KESTREL - *CERNICALO CHITERO* - *Falco sparverius*
- COMMON & PACIFIC LOONS - *GAVIA GRANDE* & *PACIFICA* - *Gavia immer* & *pacifica*
- HORNED & EARED GREBES - *ZAMBULLIDOR AURITO* & *MEDLANO* - *Podiceps auritus* & *nigricollis*
- REDDISH, SNOWY, GREAT & CATTLE EGRETS - *GARZA ROJISA, NIVEA, GRANDE,* & *GANADERA* - *Egretta refescens, thula, Ardea alba* & *Bubulcus ibis*
- BRANT GOOSE - *GANSO DE COLAR* - *Branta bernicla*
- SURF SCOTER - *PATO NEGRON NUQUIBLANCO* - *Melanitta perspicillata*
- BROWN & AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN - *PELICANO MORENO* & *BLANCO* - *Pelecanus occidentalis* & *erythrorhynchos*
- GREAT & LITTLE BLUE, TRICOLOR, GREEN, BLACK & YELLOW-CROWNED HERONS - *GARZON CENIZO, GARCETA AZUL, TRICOLOR, GARZA-NOCTURNA CORONINEGRA & CORONICLARA* *Ardea Herodias* & *Egretta caerulea, Egretta tricolor, Butorides virescens, Nycticorax nycticorax* & *violacea*
- MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD - *TIJERETA* - *Frigata magnificens*
- CACTUS WREN - *MATRACA GRANDE* - *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*
- GILA WOODPECKER - *CARPINTERO DEL DESIERTO* - *Melanerpes uropygialis*
- PYRRHULOXIA - *CARDONAL TORITO/SERANO* - *Cardinalis sinuatus*
- CASPIAN, ROYAL, ELEGANT, & FORSTER'S TERNS - *GOLONDRINA MARINA GRANDE PIQUIRROJA, GRANDE PIQUINARANJA, ELEGANTE,* & *FORSTERI* - *Sterna caspia, maxima, elegans,* & *forsteri*
- BLACKBELLIED & SNOWY PLOVERS - *CHORLO AXILNEGRO* & *CHORLITO NIVEO* - *Pluvialis squatarola* & *Charadrius alexandrinus*
- BLUE-GRAY, CALIFORNIA, & BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHERS - *PERLITA PIIS, CALIFORNIA,* & *DESERTICA* - *Poliophtila caerulea, californica,* & *melanura*
- SAGE, GREY, & LE CONTE'S THRASHER - *MIMIDO PINTO, CUITLACOCH PENINSULAR* & *PALIDO* - *Oreoscoptes montanus* & *Toxostoma cinereum* & *lecontei*
- HOODED & SCOTT'S ORIOLE - *BOLSERO CUCULADO* & *PARISINO* - *Icterus cucullatus* & *parisorum*

BAJA PENINSULA BIRD WATCHING

ARRIVAL SAN IGNACIO LAGOON ~ BIRD WATCHING SAN IGNACIO LAGOON

PACKING LIST

Please also see complete list in Core Packet

- Layered clothing - From warm jacket, long pants and socks, to T-shirts and shorts
- Windbreaker or rain coat
- Day pack and small dry bag for personal items
- Walking shoes and sandals
- Polarized sunglasses, wide-brimmed hat, and sunscreen
- Camera and charger/batteries
- Reusable water bottle
- Travel alarm clock
- Personal effects. (shampoo, soap, and towels are provided)
- Binoculars
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Insect repellent (just in case)

Don't forget to complete your Personal Information Form online at:

<https://www.bajaex.com/pif.aspx>

DAY 1 ~ MARCH 22nd ~ SAN IGNACIO LAGOON

Our catered camp is situated at the water's edge. Your accommodations are in our roomy *cabañas* - cabins with hardwood floors, raised from the sand, placed strategically for an ocean view and complete with traditional mattresses, nice pillows, cotton sheets, towels, and cozy comforters. Wake each morning to the sound of the seagulls and head into the common area *palapa* for hot coffee and tea. As your days progress, we will ensure that you have everything you need to be comfortable, intrigued and amazed by the lagoon and its inhabitants.



After orientation and lunch, the group will board one of two large skiffs to begin our birding mission by heading over to the mangroves on the west side of the lagoon. Ranulfo will surprise and delight you with his cultural and natural history knowledge, and his innate ability to find and identify a diverse array of pelagic, shore, resident, and migratory birds.

About three hours later, upon return to camp, you can take a warm water shower or relax before our daily happy hour, which begins before sunset each day. Both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages are served, along with tantalizing appetizers. If you like, you can pull up a camp chair and watch the sun sink below the horizon and listen to the whales spouting in the lagoon. Dinner is buffet-style, and often includes



Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve

- ◆ Mexico's largest protected area—25,468 square km.
- ◆ Over 500,000 migratory birds winter in Coastal Pacific Baja.
- ◆ Nesting birds include: Osprey, Brown Pelican, Reddish Egret, Snowy Plover, Peregrine Falcon, terns, gulls, cormorants, and oystercatchers.
- ◆ 1/3 of the 450 species of plants are found in shrub-like forms.
- ◆ This is the most remote, least populated area in the country—less than one person per 2 square km!



Photo: Jose Sanchez, Osprey

BAJA PENINSULA BIRD WATCHING

pescado (fish), *carne* (meat) or *pollo* (chicken) along with home-made tortillas, vegetables, rice and dessert (a vegetarian option is always available). Each night one of our experienced guides will present a natural history talk to help you learn more about the Baja Peninsula, its local people and the wildlife of the lagoon. Be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to star-gaze while you are here.

The schedule is flexible and is based on the weather conditions, tides, and desires of the group. Some areas you will visit are the Cardon and Coyote estuaries, east and west mangroves of the lagoon, Ana and Pelican Islands, and conservative explorations of nesting areas. You will be traveling primarily by boat to the various mangroves and islands in the area. (L/D)



Photo: Jose Sanchez
Gray whale spy-hop
Eschrichtius robustus

USEFUL SPANISH

Gray whale - *Ballena Gris*
Baby whale - *Cria or ballenato*
Spout - *Soplo*
Fin - *Aleta*
Female - *Hembra*
Male - *Macho*
Look! - *Mira!*
Breaching! - *Brincando!*
Spyhop - *Sacando la cabeza*

DAYS IN CAMP ~ MARCH 23, 24, 25th ~ SAN IGNACIO LAGOON

For our early birds, the day starts with a cold breakfast of cereals, yogurt, fruit, and coffee/tea at 6:30am, followed by a Mexican-influenced hot breakfast beginning around 7am (break of dawn birding adventures can definitely be arranged!).

The morning brings you face to face with friendly gray whales. A 15-minute skiff ride brings the group into the whale-viewing area of the lagoon, where you can observe the gray whales spy hopping, breaching, and nurturing their young. Each skiff is accompanied by an experienced guide and skiff driver, who can point out the many whale behaviors you will see. After approximately 90 minutes of whale watching, return to camp for lunch.

Based on the group's desires more time can be allocated for whale watching or bird watching excursions, we can even combine the two in one boat trip!

Each day you will explore the Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve by land and sea, searching for exquisite samples of migratory and resident species of birds and other animals. Plan to wake up early and have your camera batteries charged, you are in for a birding extravaganza! During your stay you will have the opportunity to paddle a kayak through the mangrove estuary, walk along the shore in search of whale bones and scallop shells, peruse our eclectic camp library, get to know both the crew and the other guests over delicious happy hour events, and most importantly, become intimately entwined with a surreal part of the world with its hospitable and diverse inhabitants.

On your last night, enjoy a traditional Mexican-inspired meal complete with music and maybe even dancing! (B/L/D daily)

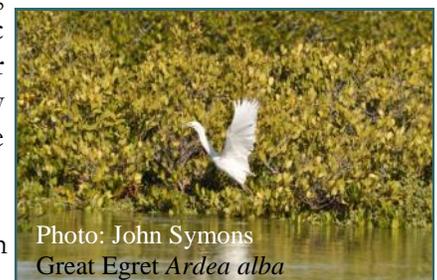


Photo: John Symons
Great Egret *Ardea alba*

BAJA PENINSULA BIRD WATCHING

DAYS 5 & 6 ~ MARCH 26-27th ~ SAN IGNACIO

After breakfast, head out for one last bird watching excursion. After a delicious lunch, pack-up and say your last good-byes to San Ignacio Lagoon. Head just about 1.5 hours to the town of San Ignacio and finish the day in the oasis of Ignacio Springs on the shores of the spring-fed San Ignacio River where Terry and Gary will fill your bellies with good food and your hearts with their hospitality. There are trails to hike, birds to spot, fish to catch, kayaks to paddle and Mongolian style yurts to sleep in! (B/L/D)

Take advantage of the serene morning to scope riparian birds from nearby hiking trails as a group or on your own. Hearty Canadian-style breakfast will be served before you head into town to visit the Mission and Cave Paintings Museum. Juanita at the Casa Leree has an impressive collection of memorabilia from San Ignacean families, and many interesting historical facts as well. Lunch will be in town, please budget \$10 per person. The afternoon is open to several activities, there are kayaks available and lovely patios to relax upon. Enjoy one more delicious dinner at Ignacio Springs before heading to Loreto the following morning. (B/D)



Photo: John Symons, Reddish Egret

ARRIVAL TO LORETO, BCS

DAY 7 ~ MARCH 28th ~ TO LORETO

Check out of Ignacio Springs after breakfast, ready for an excursion south along the famous Baja Hwy 1 through Santa Rosalia and Mulege. In Santa Rosalia, marvel at the French-inspired architecture spurred by mining interests of the 1880's. Mulege is located on a natural canyon facing the Sea of Cortez. You will have lunch at a tasty restaurant near the entrance.

You will delight in the difference between the Pacific and Sea of Cortez sides of the peninsula. Loreto is situated on a perfect bay with desert islands to enhance the gorgeous sunsets. Deborah of the Damiana Inn will be our hostess for the next two nights. Several good restaurants can be found along the *malecón* and on the square. Overnight in Damiana Inn. Lunch and dinner are not included today, please budget \$20-\$40. (B)

DAY 8 - MARCH 29th ~ LORETO

After breakfast you will load up in the comfortable van and visit the San Javier Mission, a famous, Spanish-inspired mission about 1.5 hours west. Stop by the most conveniently placed rock paintings in Baja and consider the antiquity of the perished tribes of Baja. Lunch is available in San Javier before returning to Loreto for a final night in the Damiana Inn. Meals are not included, budget about \$40-45 for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

USEFUL SPANISH

Bird Watching - *Avistamiento de Aves*

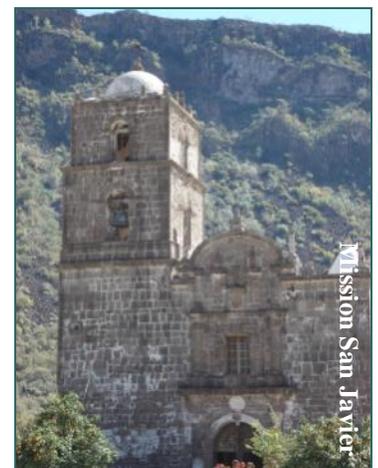
Mangrove - *Mangle*

Heron - *Garza*

Egret - *Garzita*

Seagull - *Gaviota*

Female - *Hembra*



Mission San Javier

Photo: John Symons, Brown Pelican



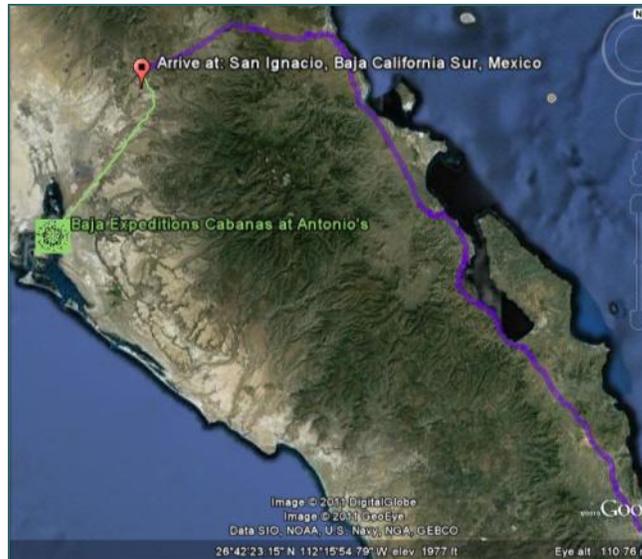
BAJA PENINSULA BIRD WATCHING

LAST DAY ~ MARCH 30th DEPARTURES FROM LORETO ~ *QUE LE VAYA BIEN!*

After checking out of the Damiana Inn, say goodbye to Baja and your fellow travelers! Conveniently fly out of the Loreto International Airport. No meals
Baja Overview.

Entire Trip Route

San Ignacio and the Lagoon



TRAVEL

Alaska/Horizon airline has non-stop flights from Los Angeles (LAX) to Loreto (LTO) every day except Monday Wednesday, and Sunday. They are the only international carrier into Loreto at this time. Visit www.alaskaair.com and try searching one-way flights into Loreto. Sites like Orbitz, Kayak, and Hotwire usually have very good deals for short domestic flights, try a search into LAX, then match a Alaska flight down to Loreto, then search for your return out of San Diego or LA to your home town.

If you would rather have another handle your flights, please call Robert Sullens at Kahala Travel, he is a master - 800 852 8338 / 619 282 8300.

If you end up with an extra day in LA, consider visiting the Aquarium at Long beach, or even a trip out to Catalina Island. If you would like to spend some extra time in Loreto, we can help you with nautical or terrestrial day trip options and can reserve additional nights in the hotel of your choice. If you need to get from San Diego to LA, don't forget about the Pacific Surfliner, the AMTRAK train. It will take only about 2.5 hours and only costs about \$40/ticket.



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