



Michigan's Upper Peninsula

Photography in a Winter Wonderland

Tour Leader: Brian Zwiebel

February 21 - 27

Northern Michigan is home to a number of unique and fascinating species, many of which can be quite tame. Participants will be led to historically reliable locations to photograph Snowy and possibly other owls. We will also photograph feeder birds common to the Northern Boreal Forest (but decidedly rare elsewhere) at private residences where we will have control over lighting, background and perches.

General Overview

The leader will work extremely hard to get you into the right position to make the best images possible. Some of the species we encounter will be quite tame while others may require some extra work. We will photograph a combination of wild and somewhat habituated subjects and work in the best light of the day to take your images to the next level. Prior to the trip you will learn how to best dress for sometimes extreme cold weather. During the workshop you will learn how to use the light and wind angles to your advantage for large flying birds as well as the perching feeder birds. Participants will learn techniques to successfully capture action images of birds in flight.

Species diversity is low, but quality is high! Likely species on the Northern Michigan Winter workshop include Snowy Owl, Pine Grosbeak, Evening Grosbeak, Black-capped Chickadee, Common Redpoll, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Common Raven, and Bald Eagle. Additional species we may encounter include Northern Hawk-Owl, Canada Jay, Spruce, Sharp-tailed and Ruffed Grouse, Glaucous Gull, Boreal Chickadee, Hoary Redpoll, Pine Siskin, Northern Shrike, Rough-legged Hawk, Snow Bunting and more.

Do communicate any specific techniques you would like to learn. No species can be guaranteed but we will do our best to locate the target species through local contacts and private landowners who have granted access to their lands. Every effort will be made to ensure each participant comes away with many memorable images.

Equipment

Bring your longest telephoto lens and matching teleconverters for this workshop. A 400mm lens will be enough length for the feeder opportunities (especially if you are using one of the crop sensor camera bodies). A 500mm or greater will offer additional options for frame filling images on some of the other subjects but a hand-held 400mm lens may be just the ticket for some of the in-flight shooting. Do bring your tripod. Hand holding is a viable option with the fast shutter speeds available with today's strong performing high ISO cameras but holding the lens constantly will lead to cold hands. A shorter lens may come in handy for beautiful scenic images of snow-covered terrain, frozen waterfalls and the Marquette waterfront, but we will be (mostly) focusing on birds.

Environment

Participants should be ready for temperatures that are quite cold. Morning lows can be well below 0° F and daytime highs will likely not get above freezing. Full gear recommendations will be provided prior to the tour. Layers should definitely be part of your clothing plan.

Physical Activity

This is a not an overly strenuous workshop. Dealing with cold weather will be the greatest challenge and though deep snow may be encountered, it can mostly be avoided. Most photography will be done from roadsides and plowed drive ways.

Daily Schedule

Breakfast options are limited near our shooting locations. A breakfast sandwich, donut and cup of coffee will have to hold us over for most mornings. Nights are long in the north this time of year and the light stays good almost all day. Snacks and water in the vehicle will keep us going throughout the day so we can take full advantage of the daylight. Fortunately, we have some very good restaurant options for a leisurely dinner. We will discuss the day's activities and communicate the plan for the following morning. The daily plan of what and where to photograph will be made based on wind, light and snow conditions. A general plan will be communicated the night before, but the leader reserves the right to change things up as things develop throughout the day. Clear conditions at night could also result in an opportunity to do a bit of night sky photography.

Likely Species on this trip (species in **BOLD** are most frequently photographed on the trip):



Ruffed Grouse
Sharp-tailed Grouse
Spruce Grouse
Herring Gull
Glaucous Gull
Iceland Gull
Bald Eagle
Rough-legged Hawk
Snowy Owl
Northern Hawk-Owl
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
Blue Jay
Canada Jay
Common Raven
American Crow
Northern Shrike
Red-breasted Nuthatch
White-breasted Nuthatch
Evening Grosbeak
Pine Grosbeak
Bohemian Waxwing
Red Crossbill
White-winged Crossbill
Black-capped Chickadee
Boreal Chickadee
Common Redpoll
Hoary Redpoll
Pine Siskin
Snow Bunting

Trip Details:

Cost:

Price per person (double occupancy), from Detroit, Michigan: \$2,599

Single Supplement: \$350

Minimum Participants: 3

Maximum Participants: 5

Price Includes:

Expert Guide

Ground Transportation in Michigan

All Lodging

All Meals

Park Entrance Fees

Price Does Not Include:

Airfare to and from Detroit, Michigan

Airport Taxes

Passport and Visa Fees (if applicable)

Alcoholic Beverages

Personal Items

Travel Insurance

Tips

Deposit:

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to hold your spot on this tour. The remaining balance is due no later than 3 months prior to the scheduled start date of the tour (November 25, 2024).

If you have an questions about this tour or would like to sign up for it, please contact us at info@sabrewingnaturetours.com, by phone at 317-324-8505, or register through our website at sabrewingnaturetours.com.

Responsibility/Disclaimer Statement:

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