

KCA Southeast Arizona General Trip Information

There are many questions to be answered about taking an extensive trip as we will be doing. Below is an attempt to anticipate and address some of them here. The following information is offered to give a general impression for what is to be expected for the Southeast Arizona (SEAZ) trip. If you require any clarification or wish for more detailed information, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Mayer at (630) 209 6019. Please keep in mind that we are a group of friends from KCA doing a trip together to see some pretty neat birds and we are not part of a professionally guided, for profit tour.

Expenses: Expenses are separated into two categories: self-paid and shared. Self-paid will include air fare, meals, any travel insurance you may wish to purchase, drinks other than water in the van, cab or limo fares, personal items and expenses, etc., etc.. These are not included in the \$970 that goes toward shared expenses. Shared expenses are all those things which have been included in the cost of the trip on the registration form. Your total cost will be the sum of the self-paid and shared expenses. Shared expenses will include but not be limited to costs for hotels, guide fees, rental of a 15 passenger van, gas, donations and admission fees to parks and the Arizona-Sonoran Museum, leader's air fare and hotel expense, miscellaneous odds and ends such as a Styrofoam cooler, water, etc., and a contingency fund for unexpected needs. (I think we're well enough planned out that we won't need this but it will be there just in case.) The trip will have a minimum of six and a maximum of eight participants plus the leader. The costs have been calculated based on eight participants and may fluctuate depending upon how many attend. When we return, any remaining unspent funds will be redistributed to the participants. If the refund comes to \$10 or less per person, it will simply be donated to Kane County Audubon.

Registration, Deposits, Cancellations, and Payments: This is our first time in KCA doing a trip of this magnitude so we're lacking in experience with regard to organizing. We have "borrowed" ideas, formats, and procedures from tour groups to put together our process. The registration seems pretty straight forward and the indemnity clause appears standard with all the other organizations offering tours. Once you have decided you want to go, contact Paul Mayer by email (mayersbirds@comcast.net), or phone (630) 209 6019 and declare your intention. You will be added to a list. We will need a **minimum** of six and a **maximum** of eight participants. If less than six sign up by October 15, 2011, the trip will be canceled. If more than eight want to sign up, a waiting list will be maintained and if any dropouts occur that slot will be filled based on their place on the list. Deposits secure your place on the trip.

A deposit of \$200 must accompany your registration and must be received within 10 days of declaring your intent to go on the trip. If the deposit is not received within the 10 day period, your name will be moved to the bottom of the trip list and the open slot will be made available to the next person in line. Payment in full [120 days prior to departure (Jan.6, 2012)] is set to insure that if any cancellations occur inside the time limits for our hired guide we will be adequately covered. Final payments not received by January 6, 2012 will result in loss of the deposit as well as your place on the trip. Cancellations made more than 120 days before departure will forfeit the deposit. Cancellations made between 60 and 120 days before departure will forfeit 50% of the trip price. There is no refund for trips canceled less than 60 days before departure. (Please note

that if someone must cancel and we can get a replacement and that the cancelation does not incur extra expenses we will do everything possible to provide a partial or full refund)

Air Travel: We want to arrive in Tucson by noon on Sunday. Southwest Airline, United, and American all offer flights that will have you there by that time. Several months before the trip we'll watch the air fares and schedules and we can try to get as many of us on the same flight(s) as possible. Direct flights are best as this minimizes the chances of lost luggage. However, just in case, be sure to pack essentials and medications in a carry-on. We can also work on car pooling to get to the airport.

Climate, Environment and Terrain: Southeast Arizona in May is almost as good as it gets. Evening, nighttime and early morning temperatures are historically in the 50's with possible lows dipping into the 40's. Daytime temperatures average in the high seventies to mid-eighties. Rain is uncommon (20% chance or less) but you should always be prepared. You may wish to check the 10 day weather forecast when packing. It would also be worth considering dressing in light layers and bringing a knapsack along to enable you to shed clothing as the day goes on. Since we will be in high desert country the humidity tends to be low most of the time. That means you'll stay cooler through evaporation so be sure to stay hydrated all during the day. Insects have never been a problem and I wouldn't anticipate any changes this year. As far as walking is concerned we will encounter a variety of terrains. Many of the trails and roads are smooth and should present few problems. There will be a few places where hiking will not only be uphill (and downhill coming back) but may require some slight amount of climbing over rocks or boulders. It is recommended that for these days you have a comfortable pair of hiking boots with good ankle support. We don't want to have to drag anyone off a mountain because of a sprained foot.

Health and Well Being: Hiking at higher elevations (we may be as high as 9000 ft. at times) could pose a problem if you suffer from or are prone to pulmonary or cardiac problems. Be sure to let us know if that's the case. Also be sure to carry with you a list of medications you may be taking or would require in an emergency and have it readily available. The major concerns are sun exposure and dehydration. Be sure to bring sun screen (SPF 30) and we'll be sure to have plenty of water available. Our pace for the walks will be moderate (like a KCA ramble only longer). Most of the walks should be no more than two or three miles in length. We will not be doing anything too exerting during the hottest parts of the day to avoid over-fatigue and heat stroke.

Accommodations: We will be out for seven nights and be staying at moderately priced hotels (mostly Comfort Inns or Suites). Costing has been based upon double occupancy. Anyone wishing a room of their own will pay a single supplement of \$382 which is half of the full room price for the seven nights. Everyone can pick their own roommates. If you have no preferences we will pick one for you. Then there's the conundrum of "I want to share to save money but nobody is available" or "I'm one left over". To cover this contingency (once all the doubles have been assigned) all rooms will be paid by the leader and will be paid out of the shared expense pool so we'll be able to equalize the costs out and keep them as low as possible for everyone.

Area Information: After everyone is registered and sometime in November, each participant will be sent additional information about the area and the birds we will be searching for. A study suggestion will be made so you can prepare to "call them out"!