

# NEW YORK: WILD GOOSE CHASE

## FEBRUARY 19-24, 2019

*In recent years both Pink-footed and Barnacle Geese have been fairly regular winter visitors to the northeastern United States. The exact location of wintering birds changes year-to-year, but generally both have been present somewhere from Massachusetts south to New Jersey. Pink-footed has been the more reliable of the two species and has generally stayed in one location longer, but Barnacle has also become an expected winter vagrant. This short tour will focus primarily on finding these two species of geese, but there are also many other interesting birds available in late winter in the areas we will conduct our search. Besides the geese, other interesting possibilities include Black-headed Gull, Little Gull, Snowy Owl, King and Common eider, Harlequin Duck, Purple Sandpiper, Great Cormorant, Cackling Goose, Iceland and Glaucous gulls and Razorbill. Some years other alcids can be seen from shore and Snow Bunting and Lapland Longspur are almost always present. Eastern Long Island often has interesting rarities during the winter and we will plan to visit Montauk to see what is around. Two years ago a Corn Crake spent several days in this area! Because the exact location of the geese is an unknown, we will begin the tour in Newark, where there is a major airport and plenty of lodging options. This will allow us to move north or south as need to be to follow recent goose or other rarity reports. As the dates of the tour grow closer the itinerary may be fine tuned to account for recent reports, but for planning purposes, we will use Newark as our starting and ending point.*

**Day 1, February 19, Arrival in Newark:** The tour begins today with participants flying in to Newark International airport (airport code EWR). We will be based at a hotel near the airport that has a free shuttle. If everyone arrives by early afternoon, we may do some initial birding nearby. Night in Newark.

**Days 2-5, February 20-23:** We will have 4 full days to bird the region and our schedule will be flexible depending upon where the most recent reports of the best birds have been. We will try to remain at a single hotel, or at least not move too much, but depending upon where the geese and other rare or desirable birds have been recently reported, changing hotels more than once may be necessary. Some of the places that we hope to include in the itinerary are Montauk on the eastern end of Long Island, Sandy Hook in New Jersey and possibly Brigantine NWR. If time allows and there is sufficient interest we may even spend some time in Manhattan sightseeing and birding in Central Park, although weather, traffic and the whereabouts of the birds will ultimately dictate all of our movements and venues. Nights will be flexible.

**Day 6, February 24, Flights home:** The tour ends this morning with flights home from Newark International airport (airport code EWR).

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 7 participants.

**TOUR COST:** The cost of the tour will be \$1750 per person from Newark. A single supplement of \$400 will be charged to those choosing a single room, or anyone who wants a roommate and for whom we are unable to provide one. The price includes 5 nights of lodging, meals beginning with dinner on Day 1 and ending with breakfast on Day 6, all ground transportation during the tour, guide service and park entrance fees. It does not include alcoholic beverages, tips or round trip airfare between your home and Newark.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** In order to reserve a space on the tour, a completed and signed registration form is required along with a \$500 deposit. Registration forms are available on the website [www.otusasiotours.com](http://www.otusasiotours.com)

Deposits should be mailed to:

Otus asio Tours at 900 Hillsborough Road Chapel Hill NC 27516.

**DEPOSIT & REGISTRATION:** A deposit of \$250 and a completed and signed registration form is required in order to reserve a space on the tour. Registrations forms are available on the website ([www.otusasiotours.com](http://www.otusasiotours.com))

**PACE:** This tour will not be overly strenuous. Most of the birding will involved fairly short walks on leaves ground or scanning open water from a stationary point. We will also do some birding from the vehicle although the urban nature of this tour limits those opportunities a great deal. Because daylight hours are relatively short we will typically not have long days in the field.

**CLIMATE:** The weather in the northeastern U.S. in February is generally quite cold and if it is windy it will feel much colder. Highs could range from the teens into the 30's. Snow is also frequent at this season. On the other hand, late winter thaws are also not unusual and should a warm spell occur during he tour it could get into the 40's.

**FOOD:** Breakfast will be continental style at the hotels. Lunches and dinners will be at restaurants and will be casual.

**INFORMATION:** For further information on the tour contact Jan Hansen at 919-259-9423 or at [otusasiotours@gmail.com](mailto:otusasiotours@gmail.com)

Details are also available at [www.otusasiotours.com](http://www.otusasiotours.com)

