

Ultimate British Columbia: Boreal Extension Itinerary

[Link: Ultimate British Columbia: Boreal Extension](#)

Tour Overview

This short extension to northeastern BC completes the Ultimate British Columbia birding tour! A flight from Vancouver takes us across the Rocky Mountains and the Continental Divide to a region of the province that shares more birds with areas to the east than the rest of the province.

Here we walk the mixed boreal forests for a number of warblers, including Ovenbird, Magnolia Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, and more. We also hope to find American Three-toed or Black-backed Woodpecker in the coniferous forests. Upland Sandpiper will also be a target in some of the open areas.

If road and snow conditions allow we will venture to Pink Mountain, an isolated mountain range north of Fort St. John. Here we have the best chance to find Rock Ptarmigan in BC and will look for other tundra species such as Horned Lark and American Pipit. The views across the boreal forest below are also spectacular!

Join us on this exciting tour to another part of this very diverse province!

Itinerary

Day 1: Travel to Fort St. John



Our Ultimate British Columbia: Boreal Extension birding tour begins in Vancouver on the final morning of our Coast & Grasslands tour. We begin with a short flight in the morning to Fort St. John. We will gather our vehicles and begin our exploration the pleasant countryside, forests and wetlands of the Peace River valley. Night in Fort St. John.

Days 2 - 3: Peace River area



On our first morning we begin in earnest to track down boreal songbirds in the mixed woodlands near Fort St. John. The songs of “eastern” birds like Blue-headed Vireo, Black-throated Green and Cape May Warbler seem out of place here, yet they are three of many “Peace River specialties” that cross over from the boreal forest only in this part of the province. This part of the tour will focus on seeing as many of these species as possible and if the timing is right we’ll catch the shorebird migration in prime season, with eastern species like White-rumped Sandpiper a possibility. Beatton Provincial Park with its numerous boreal species will offer an exciting morning of birding. Blue Jays, Common Grackles, Broad-winged Hawks and other raucous birds welcome us in the mixed woods. In aspen stands we’ll be on the lookout for Connecticut Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The resonant song of Ovenbird will ring out, with more cryptic notes from other species like Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart and Tennessee Warbler providing a backdrop. Scoping out Charlie Lake for scoters, loons, grebes and other migrating waterfowl will round out a diverse morning of birding. To the south of Fort St. John we visit a site where Ruby-throated Hummingbird can be found. Nearby slopes conceal singing Canada Warbler and with some perseverance we admire these gorgeous birds. A hidden wetland be home to a pair of Hooded Mergansers. In grasslands and riparian areas further south toward Dawson Creek we will be on the lookout for Upland Sandpiper, LeConte’s Sparrow and Philadelphia Vireo among other species that have their stronghold in this part of the province. Mountain conditions have a chance to influence our schedule but if there is a low snowpack we may try to access a higher elevation site that offers exciting possibilities, with the main targets being Rock Ptarmigan and Stone’s Sheep. Other species include Fox Sparrow, American Pipit, Horned Lark, Willow Ptarmigan, Townsend’s Solitaire, Golden-crowned Sparrow, and with much luck Bohemian Waxwing, Gray-cheeked Thrush, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Smith’s Longspur, Brewer’s “Timberline” Sparrow and Bay-breasted Warbler. Up in the north other wildlife abounds and we might see mammals such as moose, black bear, groundhog, and the prairie subspecies of white-tailed deer. Nights in Fort St. John.

Day 4: Departure

Our short extension to the boreal forests of British Columbia concludes today after 3 very enjoyable days of birding. You can depart anytime. There are regular flights to Calgary and Vancouver connecting to destinations further afield.

What to Expect

You can expect early mornings on the two mornings of this tour to get our best birding in. Walking conditions are easy to moderate; most birding is done from roads and well-marked trails. The walking on Pink Mountain will be more rough, but the pace will be easy. Around noon time we stop for a picnic lunch. The weather in this part of British Columbia can be highly variable, from cool and rainy/snowy to sunny and warm. Insect repellent is recommended. In the evening, we usually

arrange to go to a local restaurant. During this time we discuss the day's activities and review the list of birds seen and heard.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- 3 nights accommodation
- All breakfast and lunches
- Internal flight from Vancouver to Fort St. John
- Ground transportation in minivans or SUVs
- 1 guide with 4 - 5 participants, 2 guides in 2 vehicles with 6 - 10 participants
- All park, conservation and entrance fees

Tour Price Does Not Include

- Flights to Vancouver and home from Fort St. John
 - Evening meals
 - Travel Insurance
 - Items of a personal nature
 - Taxes (5% GST)
-