

# Venture to Georgia's Golden Isles

## October 18-21, 2024

### Itinerary

#### Day 1 (Friday, October 18) – Travel to St. Simon's

You may either meet us in Asheville to drive down to Georgia or meet directly at our hotel on St Simon's Island, which will be our base for the next 3 nights. Those of us driving down from Asheville will make a few stops along the way. Orangeburg Sod Farm is right off the interstate and is a great spot for **Horned Lark**. **Common Ground Dove** can also be found here, and if there's been any recent rain, shorebirds could be present. After dinner, we will go over the plans for the weekend as we explore the coastal woodlands, marshes and beaches for the birdlife of Georgia's Golden Isles. *Night on St Simon's*

#### Day 2 (Saturday, October 19) – Jekyll Island

Our first day, naturally, will be spent exploring Jekyll Island. With brackish marshes, beaches and groves of Live Oaks there is plenty of excellent habitat on Jekyll Island to keep us busy for the day. Southbound migration is well underway and should the weather cooperate the coastal vegetation should be alive with birds, such as **American Redstart**, **Black-and-white and Magnolia Warblers**, **Red-eyed Vireo**, **Scarlet Tanager** and various sparrows and buntings should be in the coastal brush. We will also spend some time exploring the Marshes of Glynn (as immortalized by Sidney Lanier). These vast wetlands will be full of herons and egrets and we should be able to find some of the **Roseate Spoonbills** that recently began to move into this area. *Night on St Simon's*

#### Day 3 (Sunday, October 20) – Altamaha WMA & Brunswick

About an hour north of Jekyll lie the vast freshwater marshes of the Altamaha Wildlife Management Area. We may be a little early for the vast flocks of ducks that come down for the winter, but we should see the highly migratory **Blue-winged Teal**, **Wood Duck** and **Purple Gallinule**. **Anhinga** will be drying their wings on nearby trees and flocks of southbound swallows (**Northern Rough-winged**, **Barn**, **Tree** and **Cliff**) will be feeding over the wetlands and bulking up before they continue on south. We will spend the morning at the Altamaha before returning towards the coast; stopping to look for shorebirds in the tidal channels around Brunswick. The Georgia coast is famous for local seafood and we will stop at a local restaurant to enjoy the "catch of the day" before returning to our hotel. *Night on St Simon's*

#### Day 4 (Monday, October 21) – Golden Isles

Along the coast north of Jekyll are the barrier islands of St Simons, Sea and Little St Simons. We will spend the morning exploring the accessible bits of these islands for typical coastal species as **American Oystercatcher**, **Black Skimmer** and **Brown Pelican**. Terns and gulls feed in the rich coastal waters while wintering shorebirds such as **Willet**, **Sanderling** and **Ruddy Turnstone** feed along the sandy shoreline. After lunch we will head back to Asheville, making a stop or two for some birding and to stretch our legs. Savannah NWR in SC or Harris Neck NWR are both worth the stop!

Itinerary subject to change depending on the birds, weather and whims of the leader!