

Imagine one million hawks passing in one week...



**Hawk Mountain and Pronatura-Veracruz
Invite You to Join the
*2015 River of Raptors
Hawk-Watching Excursion*
September 29th to October 7th
*With optional 3-night extension to Catemaco - the
northernmost rain forest in the Americas,
October 7th to 10th***

**Cost: \$2800 plus airfare for nine-day trip
Non-member price \$2900 (3-night extension \$850)**

**Leaders: Laurie Goodrich, HMS Senior Biologist
and Eduardo Martinez, Pronatura Biologist**



***Join us for the hawk-watching experience of a lifetime! We plan to visit at the
peak of the migration, when daily counts may number 200,000 raptors
including Broad-winged and Swainson's Hawks.***

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**Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, PA, and Pronatura-Veracruz, MX,
Invite You to Join them for the 2015 *River of Raptors*
Hawk-Watching Trip “of a lifetime”, September 29th to October 7th**

(Optional trip extension to explore southern Veracruz for the northernmost rain forest in the Americas, October 7th to 10th)

Each fall season an average of *four and a half million hawks* of 30 species are recorded from two count sites in central Veracruz, Mexico, including greater than two million Broad-winged Hawks. They squeeze into a 15-mile-wide bottleneck between the mountains and the Gulf of Mexico – along with mind-boggling numbers of other migrants: Wood Storks, Anhingas, White Pelicans, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, etc. Counts in recent years have confirmed that Veracruz is host to the most concentrated raptor migration in the world and receives over 90% of the population of Swainson’s and Broad-winged hawks, and Mississippi Kites.

From Hawk Mountain’s Senior Biologist Laurie Goodrich’s journal:

The hawks swirl off of the hills in the mid-morning heat rising into small streams then merging into rivers, spiraling overhead. On every horizon kettles are forming, merging together into rivers of raptors. There are birds everywhere with layers of kettles swirling in different directions overhead--Turkey Vultures and Swainson’s below and Broadwings above--an incredible sight! Everyone is in awe. Excitement is tangible.”

Hawk Mountain helped initiate the *Veracruz River of Raptors* Project in 1991 in collaboration with HawkWatch International and Mexican conservationists. Through their efforts, the site has grown into a world-renown monitoring, education, and conservation initiative. The work has been led by Pronatura-Veracruz for more than 20 years and in 2006 they opened the first-ever bird observatory-nature center in eastern Mexico.



Participant numbers are limited to ensure a quality experience for everyone. Participants will observe the world-renowned raptor and wading bird migration, view Mexican specialties and wintering birds, and have special introductions to

Pronatura's on-the ground conservation efforts in central Veracruz.



In addition to hawk-watching, the Hawk Mountain tour group will explore local habitats for some of the many species of birds to be found in central Veracruz. Several raptor species such as Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Laughing and Aplomado Falcons (see left), and Snail Kite will be seen as well as other spectacular birds, such as Double-striped Thick-Knee, Vermillion Flycatcher, Blue-crowned Motmot, Squirrel Cuckoo, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, and possibly Blue Mockingbird. The butterflies in Veracruz are as exciting as the birds. Leaders will have bird and

butterfly guides along for all the forays.

An optional extension will visit the Catemaco area in southern Veracruz, including the northernmost rain forest in the Americas. Birds to be found there include White Hawk, Black Hawk-Eagle, Ornate Hawk-Eagle, Grey-headed Kite, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, Red-lore and White-fronted Parrot, Black-and-White Owl, Long-tailed Hermit, Violet Sabrewing, Violaceous and Collared Trogon, Keel-billed Toucan, Collared Aracari, and other forest birds. Another 45 new species will be expected in this extension.

VRR Trip Dates: September 29 to October 7, 2015

Costs: \$2800 (\$2900 nonmember price) includes:

- ① All ground transportation and an experienced driver
- ① Expert local and bilingual guide
- ① Expert North American guide
- ① All admission fees
- ① All meals in Mexico (wine/beer are extra)
- ① Lodging in comfortable rooms, double occupancy
- ① Instruction in hawk identification
- ① Special introduction to raptor conservation programs in Mexico
- ① Snacks and water daily
- ① A contribution to Pronatura Veracruz's raptor conservation program
- ① Supplement for a single room is \$400 extra
- ① Tips to guide and driver extra

Catemaco Extension October 7th to 10th

Costs: \$850 double occupancy, \$100 single supplement

Note: Airfare is not included. The round-trip airfare to Veracruz will vary with city of origin but is estimated at \$600-800 per person. People are strongly urged to work

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with the HMS travel agent, Sandy Green of *Uniglobe Berkleigh Travel*, to get the best rate and for coordinating group arrival in Houston (call **Sandy at (610) 683-8880**). From Houston we will fly together direct into Veracruz so we can arrive together. Contact Laurie before making any reservations.

Deposits/Payment: Trip is commonly limited to 12 adult participants on a first-come, first serve basis. If less than eight participants sign-up, we may merge our trip with another or cancel. To hold a slot on the trip register through Hawk Mountain or call/email trip coordinator Laurie Goodrich at 570-943-3411 x 106 (goodrich@hawkmtn.org) and submit a \$500 deposit by **June 1, 2015**. Balance of payment is due **August 15, 2015**. The refund policy is attached.



Trip Philosophy:

The *Veracruz Hawk-Watching Excursion* is designed for the hawk-watcher/conservationist/bird-watcher. We have designed the trip to provide maximum opportunities to view the spectacle of the migration, to benefit local raptor conservation efforts and to gain an appreciation for the culture of central Mexico away from the tourist destinations. We will stay in the local community to ensure our dollars support the local people and allow the participants to experience Mexican culture first-hand. Flexibility and good humor are required to make the tour a successful adventure for each participant.

It is important to recognize that Mexican small town hotels and restaurants may not all be on par with U.S. AAA standards. However, they hold a unique charm and atmosphere that you will find enchanting. We will ensure that tour participants are given clean, safe rooms with fans or air-conditioning and treated to excellent, healthy local fare. Facilities are informal and friendly. Previous tour groups have said they enjoyed being away from the normal tourist routine and long to return.

The trip schedule is very full, but participants are encouraged to take a morning or afternoon off from the group and rest or relax on their own to make the trip at your own pace. Cardel and Jalapa are safe and accessible for exploration.

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Tour Leaders:

Laurie Goodrich, Ph.D., Senior Biologist at Hawk Mountain, is one of the co-founders of the Veracruz River of Raptors project and a project scientific advisor. She has led trips to the region since 1994 and never tires of watching the migration. She received her Master's in Ecology from Rutgers University and Ph.D. from Penn State University. She oversees the hawk migration counts and conducts research on raptor migration.



In Veracruz, the group will be joined by a bilingual ornithologist, **Eduardo Martinez**, long-time coordinator of the River of Raptors hawk count and banding efforts. Eduardo has extensive birding and guiding experience and happily shares his abundant natural and cultural knowledge with our tours. Trip logistics will be coordinated by Pronatura Veracruz and their staff in cooperation with Laurie

Goodrich, River of Raptors co-founder.

Because of Hawk Mountain's close relationship with Pronatura, other Pronatura staff may join the group periodically as well.

VERACRUZ TRIP 2015 ITINERARY

The Itinerary may be re-arranged depending on weather and hawk-watching and birding opportunities. However most of the sites listed below will be visited by the group. The schedule is very full, but participants are encouraged to take a morning or afternoon off from the group to recharge and rest.

September 29th— Travel Day/Veracruz overnight

Fly to Veracruz City via Houston. Meet guides and group in Houston and arrive at Veracruz City Airport to travel by van to Veracruz City for an overnight along the Gulf of Mexico.



September 30th, Hotel Bienvenidos, Cardel

Early morning bird walk followed by sumptuous breakfast. Look for Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, gulls, terns, seabirds, and songbirds along the beach and in hotel gardens. Travel to Cardel and arrive at Hotel Bienvenidos, check-in and visit rooftop hawkwatch for afternoon flights. Late afternoon visit to Zempoala ruins, a pre-Columbian settlement of the Totanac culture. Dinner in local restaurant and possible evening program on *Rio de Rapaces* project including an introduction to the migrating raptors.

October 1st, Hotel Bienvenidos, Cardel

Early morning birding visit to Playa Juan Angel to look for Aplomado Falcons, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and assorted wading and shore birds. Hawk watch on roof for most of the day or rest and explore Cardel. Visit Hernan Cortez's house and the first church in the Americas in late afternoon. Evening boat ride on La Antigua river to spot kingfishers, shorebirds, terns, pelicans, followed by dinner in La Antigua open air restaurant.



October 2nd, Hotel in Xalapa

Early morning visit to La Mancha Biological Field Station on the Gulf to look for Laughing Falcons, Sandwich Terns, Common Black Hawk, songbirds and butterflies. Back to the hotel by late morning to pack and have lunch. An afternoon of hawk-watching at Chichicaxtle, then head to Xalapa for evening. Dinner at comfortable restaurant. Xalapa is a cooler, higher elevation site and will provide exposure to some of the diversity of birdlife of inland Veracruz as well as the Veracruz local culture. You may need light jacket in evening.

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October 3rd, Hotel in Xalapa

Early morning bird walk in Macuiltepetl Ecological Park, a preserved forest located on an ancient extinct volcano in center city. We will seek out the many resident species that may be found here including the Blue Mockingbird and Blue-crowned Motmot, and Green Jays. A brunch in town and travel to world-renown *Museo de Antropologia* to view the excellent Olmec exhibits. Late afternoon visit to Xico to view historic waterfalls and see resident swifts and possibly Bat Falcon and parrots. Dinner at a local restaurant before returning to Xalapa hotel for evening.

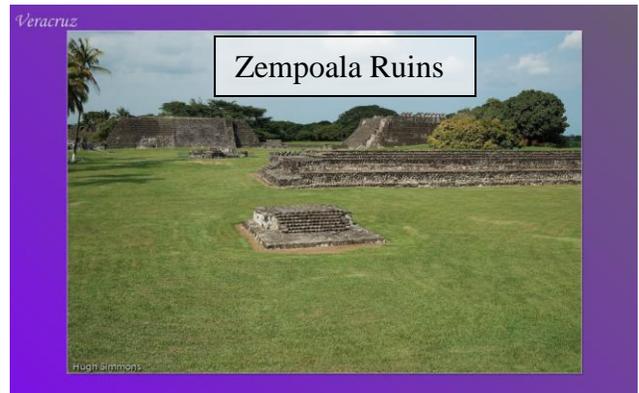


October 4th, Hotel Bienvenidos, Cardel

An early breakfast and morning birding trip to high elevation pine-woodland forest above Xalapa to look for Red Warbler, Russet Nightingale Thrush, White-eared Hummingbird and other mountain birds. A box lunch on the bus and travel to east to Chichicaxtle to enjoy a late afternoon of hawk-watching and visit with Pronatura staff to learn about conservation efforts on behalf of migrating birds. Check into Hotel Bienvenidos and enjoy a relaxed evening dinner at a local restaurant.

October 5th, Hotel Bienvenidos, Cardel

Early morning birding at El Mirador, a shade coffee plantation with a mature forest. Many forest specialties like Ivory-billed Woodcreeper, Tropical Parula, Gartered Trogon and more are possible; a special lunch will be served on site. Return for afternoon of hawk-watching at Chichicaxtle or Cardel and dinner at a local restaurant.



October 6th, Fly Home or begin trip extension.

An early morning departure to the airport, find continental breakfast at airport. Bid *hasta luego* to new and old friends alike! Catemaco extension begins with bus ride

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south to Lake Catemaco and Los Tuxtlas forest.



Optional Catemaco Extension
October 7th to 10th

Enjoy the southern Veracruz forests and wetlands and their abundant birdlife...

October 7th, La Finca, Catemaco. After breakfast and goodbyes to friends heading home, we travel south to have lunch in Tlacotalpan, a World Heritage town along the Papaloapan river and do as much birding along the road as we can. Arrive at Catemaco for late day birding at hotel grounds and dinner.

October 8th, La Finca, Catemaco. Visit to tropical lowland forest at the UNAM biological field station to look for forest species including White Hawk and species of woodcreepers, toucans, parrots, trogons, and hummingbirds. Lunch then trip on Lagoon Sontecomapan to look for Gray-necked Wood Rail, Violet Sabrewing, Pygmy Kingfisher, Bare-throated Tiger Heron and other wetland species.

October 9th, Hotel Colonial, Veracruz. Ruiz Cortinez and bird in the cloud forest and highlands northeast of Catemaco. Wintering migrants as well as resident birds such as Tuxtla Quail Dove and Long-tailed Sabrewing as well as orioles, honeycreepers, woodpeckers, and woodcreepers. Head north back to Veracruz for dinner on Veracruz city central square.

October 10th. Head out to airport early. Say goodbye to new friends! Leave from airport on early morning flight and savor all the special moments of the trip.



Collared Arasari

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Veracruz Fall Migration Annual Averages

Turkey Vulture	1,749,646
Osprey	2,616
Bald Eagle	1
Swallow-tailed Kite	247
Mississippi Kite	161,122
Hook-billed Kite	151
White-tailed Kite	2
Northern Harrier	433
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3,492
Cooper's Hawk	2,150
Northern Goshawk	1
Zone-tailed Hawk	156
Red-shouldered Hawk	11
Red-tailed Hawk	196
Roadside Hawk	1
Broad-winged Hawk	1,700,415
Swainson's Hawk	733,529
Harris Hawk	5
Common Black Hawk	5
Gray Hawk	606
White-tailed Hawk	2
American Kestrel	6,443
Merlin	144
Peregrine Falcon	648
Ferruginous Hawk	2
Golden Eagle	1
TOTAL RAPTORS	4,504,302



Laughing Falcon
by Julio Gallardo

Other migrants enjoyed included White Pelicans, Wood Storks, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, White-winged Doves, White-faced Ibis, Anhingas, etc.



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**2015 Hawk Mountain Veracruz
Hawk-Watching Excursion
Reservation Form**

Yes! Sign me up for a place on the 2015 excursion to view the River of Raptors in Veracruz, Mexico. Enclosed is my \$500 deposit for trip due by June 1, 2015 with final payments by August 1, 2015. I have signed and attached the participant release form and I enclose it herein.

Name _____
(write full name found on passport, and nickname if you use one.)

Address _____

Phone Number _____ **E-mail**
address _____

Deposits can be made with check (to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary) or credit card:

Visa or Master Card number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____. **Exp.**
Date _____

Signature _____

Send Reservation Form and payment to:

**L. Goodrich, Trip Coordinator
Veracruz Hawk-Watching Excursion
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association
410 Summer Valley Road
Orwigsburg, PA 17961**

Questions may be directed to Laurie Goodrich at: 570-943-3411 x 106, or at goodrich@hawkmtn.org or David Barber, 570-943-3411 x105.

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Veracruz Trip Cancellation Policy

Refund of deposit and payment, less a \$50 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 60 days before departure. If cancellation is made between 45 to 60 days before departure a \$100 handling fee is not refundable, but other payments will be returned, less any inseparable costs, such as reservation fees paid for transportation and leader expenses. All efforts will be made to fill the place and refund costs other than the \$100. After 45 days before the trip, cancellation charge will be 25% of tour price and may be as much as 100%, depending on the separable costs (such as individual rooms, per-person charges and fees) that can be recovered. Persons for whom cancellations may be possible, are urged to purchase trip insurance. Information on trip insurance can be obtained from the travel agent or from your own insurance agent. Also, check on coverage for items you will carry.

Responsibility:

For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura, A.C., its agents, trip leaders, employees, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release Agreement attached. Pronatura, A.C., Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motor coach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles, or for any reasons whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour.

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura, A.C., accept no responsibility for losses, or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, war, quarantine, or other causes. The Tour participants shall bear all such losses and expenses. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura, A.C., reserve the right to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura A.C. reserve the right to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking the tour. If you have questions regarding the physical requirements, contact the Laurie Goodrich at Hawk Mountain. Weather will be hot and muggy. Each participant is responsible for bringing the appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in post-reservation materials. The receipt of your tour deposit shall be deemed to be your consent to the above conditions. Each tour participant also shall sign and deliver the release and indemnity agreement at the time of registration.

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Hawk Mountain 2015 Veracruz Hawk-Watching Excursion Participant Release and Indemnity Agreement

I am willingly participating in a birding tour in the state of Veracruz, Mexico between September 27th and October 8th, and I acknowledge that there are inherent dangers and risks that may occur with this expedition, known or unknown, relating but not limited to: travel in remote areas by means of aircraft, boat, automobile and other conveyances, without the means of rapid evacuation or medical facilities; nature walks or hikes, swimming, use of camera and birding equipment, accidents and/or illness, and acts of nature, man, or God.

I recognize and agree that I am taking part in this trip at my own risk. I acknowledge that Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura make no warranty or representation, express or implied, regarding the conditions that may be encountered during the trip, and/or the safety of any means of transportation during the trip, and that Hawk Mountain and Pronatura will have no liability for any defect in or dangerous conditions pertaining thereto.

I further certify that I am in good health and able to and have taken any precautions recommended by my physician or trip leaders.

In consideration of the right to participate in this expedition, I hereby release Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and Pronatura A.C. and their agents, their trip leaders, associates, related parties, directors, and staff, from all responsibilities for damages, injuries, losses, or delays due to any reason whatsoever and hereby assume all risks and dangers in connection with this trip.

I have read the itinerary and related information pertaining to this trip and I am aware of the terms and conditions of the trip involving refunds and cancellations, responsibility and liability.

Signature

Date

Printed Name in Full: _____

Signature

Date

Printed Name in Full: _____

(If a couple is registering, please have both sign the document)