



# The Sky Island News

Vol. 1 No.1

March 2010

Welcome to the Inaugural issue of The Sky Island News, the newsletter of Sky Island Tours! The Sky Island News will feature news, photos, upcoming events, commentary, and articles that I hope that you will find interesting. You can always contact me ([jeff@SkyIslandTours.com](mailto:jeff@SkyIslandTours.com)) if you have questions, comments, or suggestions for future articles. Please read on and enjoy!

--Jeff

## March Tours

**Sweetwater Wetlands.** Mar. 26. 8-11AM. Sweetwater Wetlands is an urban bird oasis located at I-10 and Prince Rd. This site offers an excellent opportunity to observe Harris' Hawks, as well as many songbirds, rails, and ducks. Join us for great birding at a truly outstanding location! Please RSVP to [jeff@skyislandtours.com](mailto:jeff@skyislandtours.com). Cost is \$10.

## March Classes

Detailed descriptions are on my Website (<http://SkyIslandTours.Com>)

**Hummingbirds Part 2: In-Depth.** Mar 22. 7-9pm. Northwest Arts Center (7770 N. Shannon Rd.). Call Pima County Department of Natural Resources to register (877-6000). YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER for this class.

**Hummingbirds: Flying Jewels.** Mar 23. 10-12. Las Campanas. Las Campanas (565 W. Bell Tower Dr. Call 648-7669 to register.



**Brush-footed Butterflies and Skippers.** Mar 24. 10-12. Atria Valley Manor (5549 E. Lee St.). Call 322-5627 or go to [oasisnet.org](http://oasisnet.org) to register.

**Brush-footed Butterflies and Skippers.** Mar 31. 10-12. Tucson Junior League (2099 E. River Rd.). Call 322-5627 or go to [oasisnet.org](http://oasisnet.org) to register.

**A Taste of the Tropics.** Apr 6. 10-12. Las Campanas (565 W. Bell Tower Dr. Call 648-7669 to register.

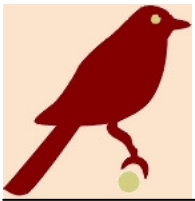
**Butterflies and Moths.** Apr 6. 6-8PM. Tucson Botanical Gardens (2150 N. Alvernon Way). Call 326-9686 X19 to register.

**Marvelous Moths.** Apr 7. 10-12. Tucson Junior League (2099 E. River Rd.) Call 322-5627 or go to [oasisnet.org](http://oasisnet.org) to register.

## **Sky Island Tours is on Facebook and I need "fans"!**

I have joined the social networking mainstream by adding a Sky Island Tours page on Facebook! The address is <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tucson-AZ/Sky-Island-Tours/110934757893>. The best part is that you do not need to be a Facebook member to access the site!

I urge you to become a fan of Sky Island Tours. I want the Sky Island Tours Facebook page to be interactive. Post photographs and sightings, ask questions, answer questions that others may post, comment on classes, whatever you like. See you on Facebook!



## Butterfly Season is Warming Up!

For butterflies, and many other insects, March is a transition month. Temperatures can often reach the 80s in the desert valleys. However, the threat of frost remains a possibility this month. Among the butterflies to keep an eye out for include Sara and Desert Orangetips, Pearly Marble, Echo Azure, Arizona Powdered-Skipper, and Funereal Duskywing, among others.

If you would like to schedule a butterfly tour, drop me an email ([jeff@skyislandtours.com](mailto:jeff@skyislandtours.com)).



## You know Spring is coming when...

March signals the approach of warmer temperatures and the fading of winter. This winter has been an exceptional for the amount of precipitation we have received in southern Arizona. In fact, it's the fourth wettest winter on record! Soon we will be drying out and warming up.

Yesterday, I saw my first Round-tailed Ground Squirrel of the year, scrounging for leftover seed under the bird feeders in my yard. These rodents typically do not enter a deep sleep as some of its cousins do. Instead, Round-tailed Ground Squirrels become torpid for the winter, with intermittent periods of activity.





Many of our summer breeding birds are starting to arrive as well. Turkey Vultures, Cliff Swallows, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets, and other birds arrive in March. Also, many resident birds are in full song now- Curve-billed Thrashers, Cactus Wrens, Mourning Doves, and Black-throated Sparrows lead the chorus. In my neighborhood, I have a Ladder-backed Woodpecker that is drumming like crazy on a telephone pole just down the street.

Another sign of spring is the increase in activity of insects and arachnids. More insects can be seen flying now than there were a few weeks ago- honey bees, butterflies, moths, and others have taken to the skies.

For those of you who are in southern Arizona only during the winter, it will soon be time to head north. For those of us who are here year-round, it is almost time to ditch the sweaters in favor of shorts, sandals, and sunscreen.

## Schedule a Tour or Program!

I offer classes and tours for several local organizations. However, I also lead private tours. Whether you are interested in birds, butterflies, dragonflies, or nature in general, I would be happy to take you on a tour! I also can give presentations to your church, community, gardening, or social clubs! Contact me at [jeff@skyislandtours.com](mailto:jeff@skyislandtours.com) or call (520)-488-8551 for details.