



Veracruz is home to the world's largest raptor migration, where it is possible to see more than 500,000 hawks fly overhead in a single day!

They can get

four million raptors in the fall alone. The state of Veracruz contains a wide variety of habitats, such as high elevation pine-oak forests, cloud forest, deserts, coastal beaches and lagoons. More than 700 bird species have been recorded in Veracruz, making it one of the most diverse birding states in Mexico. Veracruz is also rich in history with pyramids and ancient ruins dating back to 800 A.D. Join us as we venture into the heart of Veracruz to explore its wildlife, culture, and history!

This trip is co-sponsored by **Audubon South Carolina** and the **Monarch Teacher Network** of EIRC (a New Jersey public agency located near Philadelphia). More about EIRC at www.eirc.org or Audubon South Carolina at www.sc.audubon.org. Your guides will be Jeff Mollenhauer (Audubon South Carolina's Director of Bird Conservation) and Marcos Garcia, a local guide steeped in the archaeology, culture and traditions of Mexico. *10% of the proceeds from this trip will be used to support habitat conservation and research for neotropical migratory birds in Central & South America.*

Trip Information, cost and applications:

MonarchTeacherNetwork.org

phone: 856-582-7000 X110

e-mail: bhayes@eirc.org

Trip Itinerary:

- Day 1: Arrive at Mexico City. Transfer from the International Airport to our hotel. We will have our group orientation at dinner at the hotel that evening.
- Day 2: Travel by first class motor coach into the state of *Veracruz*. En route to Cardel, we will explore Los Humeros, a unique desert habitat with Joshua trees, Agave, and cactus. Lunch is in the town of Perote where we experience our first taste of local Mexican culture. We continue on to Cardel and our hotel.
- Day 3: Early morning outing to Rio Escondido, the "Hidden River" where we will search for birds in the flat, open country surrounding the river canyon. Return to hotel in late morning for hawk-watching from the hotel rooftop in Cardel. It is not uncommon to see more than 100,000 hawks (mainly Broad-winged Hawks, Swainson's Hawks, and Turkey Vultures). During the evening we will drive to a bat cave, where we hope to see thousands of Davy's Naked-Back Bats as they exit the cave at dusk! Return to hotel in Cardel.



Trip Itinerary—Continued:

- Day 4: We will spend the morning at Rancho El Mirador, a shade-grown coffee plantation near Huatusco then drive to our hotel in Costa Esmeralda. En route to the hotel we will stop at Quiahuiztlan, the site of an ancient Totanac Indian burial tomb with a breath-taking view of the ocean. While we learn about the indigenous Totonac culture, we will have another opportunity to look for migrating hawks.
- Day 5: Morning tour of El Tajin (Place of Thunder), a World Heritage archeological site with impressive Pre-Colombian pyramids, one of the largest Mesoamerican cities of its time. While at El Tajin we hope to view the indigenous ritual of the "Papantla Flyers", as they fly 13 times around a 100-foot tall pole, hanging from long ropes attached to the pole. During the afternoon we will visit a local "bilingual" (Totanaca and Spanish) school in Papantla. The town of Papantla is famous for its authentic vanilla. Return to hotel in Costa Esmeralda.

Trip Itinerary—Continued:

- Day 6: During the morning we will visit La Mancha Bioreserve, which contains a wide variety of habitats including lowland forest, freshwater lagoons, mangrove forest, and coastal dunes. At La Mancha we hope to find some of resident raptor species of Veracruz. For the afternoon we investigate the Museum of Anthropology in Xalapa.
- Day 7: Begin the coach trip back to Mexico City. If weather permits, we will take a short hike through a cloud forest or pine-oak forest in the mountains otherwise we explore Mexico City. Stay at hotel in Mexico City.
- Day 8: Breakfast at the hotel, then transfer to the airport and return home.

Find out more at our website:

www.MonarchTeacherNetwork.org

Click on Veracruz—River of Raptors trip





All Photos courtesy of Jeff Mollenhauer

What past participants are saying:

- *A once-in-a-lifetime experience that will not be forgotten.*
- *Reinforced and validated my respect for life.*
- *The trip leaders superbly coordinated the entire expedition: their knowledge and passion are beyond anything I could imagine.*
- *One of the most unique natural wonders of the world!*
- *I never imagined I could see so many hawks in one place.*
- *I will never forget this experience. Never!!!!*

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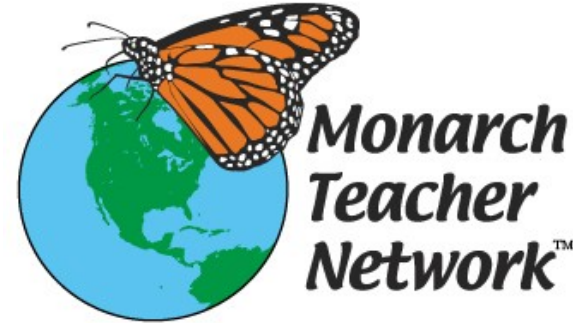
Audubon South Carolina, the state arm of the National Audubon Society, is composed of 4000 statewide members, six local chapters, eleven staff members and five centers and sanctuaries, all actively engaged in protecting birds, other wildlife and their habitats. Audubon South Carolina is managed and administered from its headquarters located near Harleyville, SC at its Audubon Center at Francis Beidler Forest.

For more information contact Jeff Mollenhauer at 843-462-2150 or jmollenhauer@audubon.org.



What is....

Monarch Teacher Network?



It is a growing network of people from all professions, businesses, and backgrounds: Americans, Canadians, Mexicans.... educators, retirees, naturalists, gardeners... all motivated by the thrill of discovery and a passion for learning. Everyone is welcome to travel with *Monarch Teacher Network* and experience a personal journey of discovery into a world they've always known ... but never really knew.

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Witness the Spectacular River of Raptors



Travel to Mexico with South Carolina Audubon and Monarch Teacher Network.

Experience the River of Raptors and immerse yourself in the indigenous cultures of Mexico.