



GROUSE LEK TREK

April 21 – 29, 2026

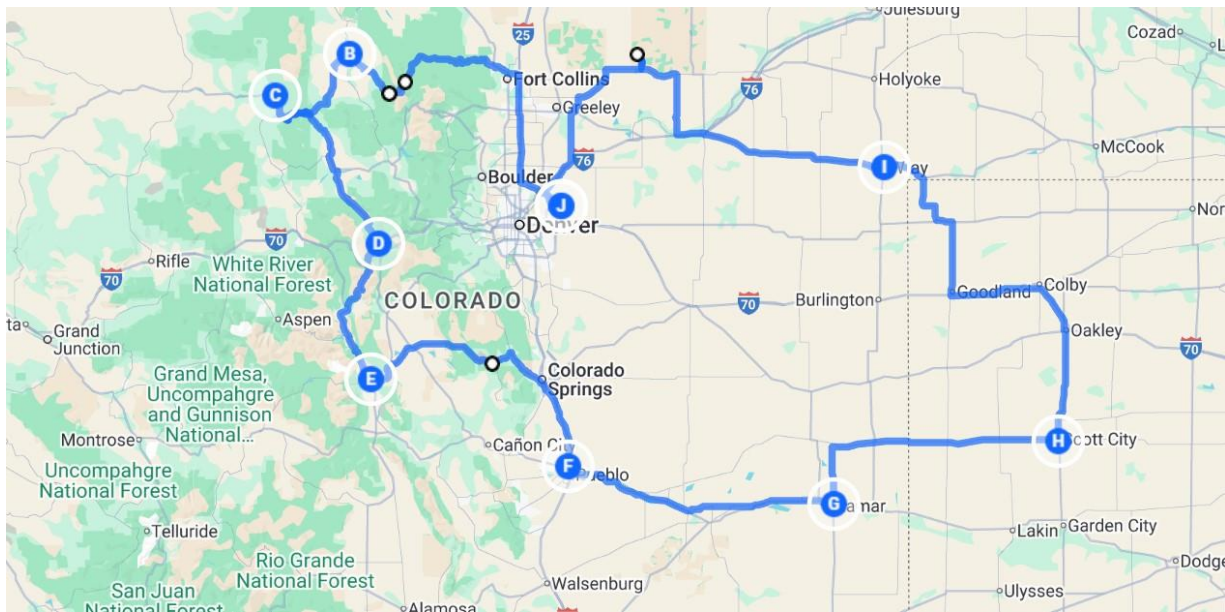


Set out to find 6 species of grouse found in Colorado on this adventure-packed trip of a lifetime!

Itinerary in Brief

Bold font indicates mornings we will rise before dawn to observe birds on mating leks

Day	Activities	Food	Lodging
1	Arrival in Denver, CO Transfer to Poudre River Canyon Transfer to Walden	D	Antlers Inn
2	Greater Sage-Grouse Lek Walden Reservoir Rabbit Ears Pass Transfer to Steamboat Springs	BD	Nordic Lodge
3	Sharp-tailed Grouse Lek Feeders in Silverthorne Transfer to Dillon, CO	BLD	Comfort Inn Summit County
4	Loveland Pass for White-tailed Ptarmigan Feeders in Silverthorne Antero Reservoir Buena Vista	BLD	Surf Hotel
5	Birding around Buena Vista Arkansas River Birding Pueblo West	BLD	Hampton Inn and Suites, Pueblo North
6	Pueblo Reservoir Lake Cheraw John Martin Reservoir Lamar	BLD	Days Inn by Wyndham, Lamar
7	North Gateway Park Lamar Community College Syracuse Sand Dunes Scott City, KS	BLD	El Quartejejo Inn and Suites
8	Lesser Prairie Chicken Lek Prairie Birding Transfer to Wray, Co	BLD	Doc's Bed and Breakfast
9	Greater Prairie Chicken Lek Pawnee National Grassland Transfer to Denver International Airport Departure	BLD	



Proposed 9-day itinerary for the 2026 Lek Trek



Your guides, Ryan Dibala and David Rupp, will greet you at the airport in Denver, Colorado

Itinerary

Day 1: Home | Denver, CO | Poudre River Canyon | State Forest State Park | Walden

- Arrival at Denver International Airport
- Watson Lake

Targets

- Cackling Goose
- Golden Eagle
- Redhead
- Canvasback
- Common Merganser
- Say's Phoebe

- Poudre River Canyon

Targets

- Northern Pygmy Owl
- American Dipper
- Mountain Bluebird



Golden Eagle

- State Forest State Park

Targets

- Cassin's Finch
- Pine Siskin
- Pine Grosbeak
- Red Crossbill
- Steller's Jay
- Clark's Nutcracker



Northern Pygmy Owls breed in the Cache de la Poudre River Canyon

- Walden Reservoir

Targets

- American White Pelican
- California Gull
- American Avocet
- Yellow-headed Blackbird
- Cinnamon Teal
- Wilson's Phalarope
- Rough-legged Hawk
- Golden Eagle
- Prairie Falcon



Dusky Grouse will be possible in and around Steamboat Springs and Silverthorne

- Dinner at River Run Restaurant



The Arapahoe National Wildlife Refuge protects over 24,000 acres in the middle of North Park

Lodging: [Antlers Inn](#)

Meals included: Welcome Dinner and Trip Orientation



The American Three-toed Woodpecker can be found foraging in stands of beetle-infested trees near Rabbit Ears Pass

Day 2: Walden | Arapahoe National Wildlife Refuge | Rabbit Ears Pass | Steamboat Springs

- 5 am wake up: **Greater Sage-Grouse** lek (25 minutes; 17.6 miles)
- Box-lunch breakfast
- Return to River Run Café for breakfast



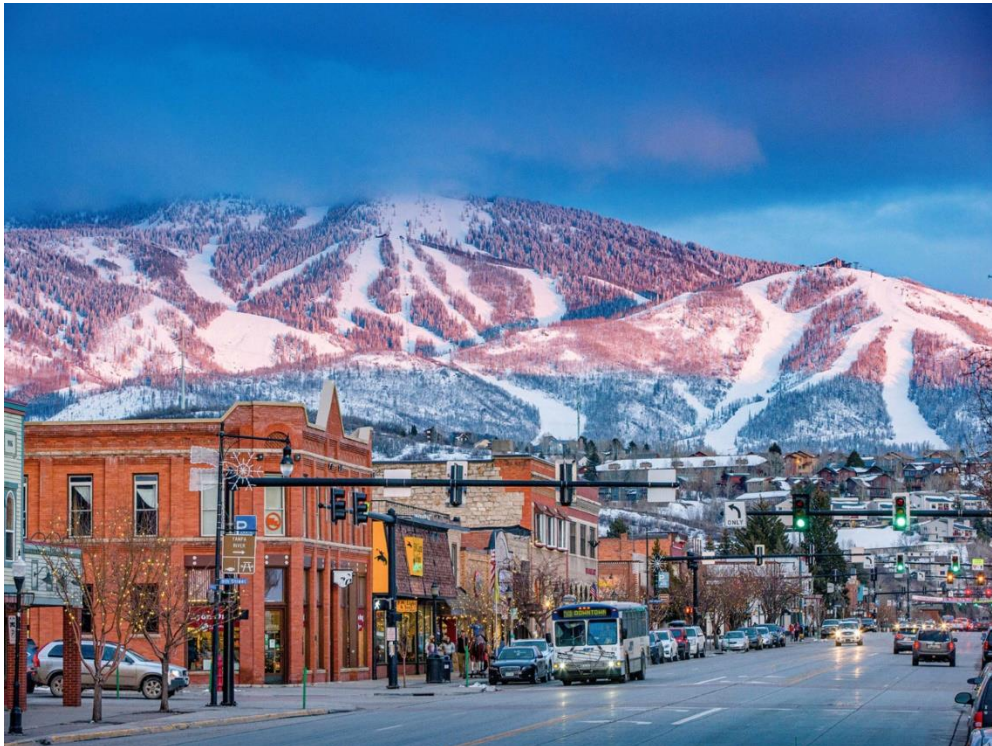
The Greater Sage-Grouse displays regularly south of Walden during the month of April

- Rabbit Ears Pass
 - Targets**
 - **American Three-toed Woodpecker**
 - **Canada Jay**
 - **Steller's Jay**
 - **Mountain Chickadee**
 - **Brown Creeper**
 - **Pine Siskin**
- Ferndale Picnic Area
 - Targets**
 - **American Three-toed Woodpecker**
 - **Red-naped Sapsucker**
 - **Williamson's Sapsucker**

- Transfer to Steamboat Springs (28 minutes; 22 miles)
- Free time in Steamboat Springs
 - Individual Lunch
 - Optional activities
 - Shopping
 - Hot Springs - Old Town Hot Springs (no reservations required) or Strawberry Park Hot Springs (reservations and public transportation required)
 - Grab a hot drink at the Steamboat Ski Lodge while watching skiers and snowboarders come down the slopes
- Group Dinner
- Optional nocturnal birding for **Boreal Owl** and **Northern Saw-whet Owl**

Lodging: [The Nordic Lodge of Steamboat](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner



Enjoy an optional free afternoon in Steamboat Springs where you can go shopping, soak in a hot spring, or have a hot drink while watching skiers and snowboarders cruise down the slopes

Day 3: Steamboat Springs, CO | Rt 9 birding | Feeders near Silverthorne | Dillon, CO

- 5 am start: **Sharp-tailed Grouse** lek (40 minutes; 22.6 miles)
- Box breakfast
- Search for **Dusky Grouse**



Sharp-tailed Grouse can be found displaying in the agricultural fields northwest of Steamboat

- Birding around Steamboat Springs

Targets

- **Sharp-tailed Grouse**
- **Dusky Grouse**
- **Sandhill Crane**
- **Brewer's Blackbird**
- **Yellow-headed Blackbird**
- **Vesper Sparrow**
- **Wilson's Snipe**
- **Evening Grosbeak**



Pine Grosbeak



Williamson's Sapsucker

- Birding along Route 9

- Targets**

- **American Three-toed Woodpecker**
 - **Canada Jay**
 - **Steller's Jay**
 - **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**
 - **Mountain Chickadee**
 - **Brown Creeper**
 - **Barrow's Goldeneye**

- Feeders in and around Silverthorne

- Targets**

- **Brown-capped Rosy-Finch**
 - **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch**
 - **Black Rosy-Finch**
 - **Pine Grosbeak**

- Transfer to Dillon, CO

- Group Dinner

Lodging: [Comfort Suites](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



The Brown-capped Rosy-Finch is one of three species of Rosy-Finch that we can find frequenting feeders near Silverthorne.

Day 4: Dillon | Loveland Pass | Hoosier Pass | Antero Reservoir | Buena Vista

- 7 am breakfast at hotel
- Loveland Pass to search for **White-tailed Ptarmigan** (21 minutes; 16.3 miles)

Targets

- **White-tailed Ptarmigan**
- **Brown-capped Rosy-Finch**
- **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch**
- **Black rosy-Finch**
- **Pine Grosbeak**
- **Clark's Nutcracker**
- **Canada Jay**
- **Barrow's Goldeneye**



White-tailed Ptarmigan in its winter plumage at Loveland Pass

- Birding along Hoosier Pass, with additional Ptarmigan search if necessary
- Antero Reservoir

Targets

- **Wilson's Phalarope**
- **Western Sandpiper**
- **California Gull**
- **Franklin's Gull**

- Buena Vista

Targets

- **Pinyon Jay**
- **Juniper Titmouse**
- **Lewis's Woodpecker**

- Group Dinner

Lodging: [Surf Hotel](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Birding Man Wildlife Tours | www.gobirdingman.com | +1 860-455-3224 | info@gobirdingman.com

Day 5: Buena Vista | Tunnel Drive | Brush Hollow Reservoir | Pueblo West | Pueblo

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tunnel Drive

Targets

- Rufous-crowned Sparrow
- Canyon Towhee
- Western Bluebird
- White-throated Swift
- Violet-green Swallow
- Black Phoebe

- Brush Hollow Reservoir

Targets

- Western Grebe
- Canyon Towhee
- Pinyon Jay
- Bewick's Wren
- Rock Wren

- Pueblo West

Targets

- Scaled Quail
- Curve-billed Thrasher

- Group Dinner

Lodging: [Hampton Inn and Suites, Pueblo North](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Scaled Quail are a fairly common site in the neighborhood of Pueblo West

Day 6: Pueblo | Cheraw Lake | John Martin Reservoir | Lamar

- 7 am breakfast
- Pueblo City Park
 - Targets**
 - **Wood Duck**
 - **White-winged Dove**
- Cheraw Lake
 - Targets**
 - **Snow Goose**
 - **Black-necked Stilt**
 - **Snowy Plover**
 - **Baird's Sandpiper**
 - **Semi-palmated Sandpiper**
 - **Eared Grebe**
 - **Chihuahuan Raven**
- John Martin Reservoir
 - Targets**
 - **Wilson's Phalarope**
 - **Willet**
 - **Horned Grebe**
 - **Bank Swallow**
 - **Cliff Swallow**
 - **Lark Sparrow**
 - **Savannah Sparrow**
- Transfer to Lamar
- Dinner

Lodging: [Days Inn by Wyndham Lamar](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Lamar | North Gateway | Lamar Community College | Syracuse Sand Dunes | Scott City, KS

- 7 am breakfast
- North Gateway Park
 - Targets**
 - **Black Tern**
 - **Least Sandpiper**
 - **Greater Roadrunner**
 - **Northern Mockingbird**
 - **Brown Thrasher**
- Lamar Community College
 - Targets**
 - **White-winged Dove**
 - **Orange-crowned Warbler**
 - **Northern Cardinal**
 - **Lincoln's Sparrow**
 - **Wilson's Warbler**
 - **Great Crested Flycatcher**
- Syracuse Sand Dunes
 - Targets**
 - **Red-bellied Woodpecker**
 - **Red-headed Woodpecker**
 - **Harris's Sparrow**
 - **Eastern Phoebe**
 - **Orange-crowned Warbler**
- Transfer to Scott City, Kansas
- Dinner

Lodging: [Best Western El-Quartelejo Inn and Suites](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



The Plains of western Kansas are strikingly beautiful



Lesser Prairie Chickens are listed as “Threatened” in Colorado and the viewing of leks is now prohibited in the state. Therefore, we will travel to Oakley, Kansas, where populations – although still designated as threatened - are more stable and controlled lek viewing is still permitted

Day 8: Scott City, KS | Bonny Reservoir/South Republican Reservoir | Wray, CO

- 5 am wake up: **Lesser Prairie Chicken** lek (20 minutes; 12 miles)
- Return to hotel for breakfast
- Transfer to Bonny Reservoir/South Republican Reservoir

Targets

- **Ferruginous Hawk**
- **Grasshopper Sparrow**
- **Ring-necked Pheasant**
- **Northern Bobwhite**
- Transfer to Wray, CO
- Meet Bob Bledsoe, owner of Bledsoe Cattle Company
- Group Dinner

Lodging: [Doc's Bed and Breakfast](#)

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Mating Burrowing Owls near Wray, Colorado

Day 9: Wray | Pawnee National Grasslands | Jackson Lake State Park | Denver

- 5 am wake up: **Greater Prairie Chicken** lek (20 minutes; 12 miles)
- Return to Doc's for breakfast
- Birding the eastern prairies

Targets

- **Northern Bobwhite**
- **Ring-necked Pheasant**
- **Greater White-fronted Goose**
- **Upland Sandpiper**
- **Long-billed Curlew**

- Transfer to Pawnee National Grasslands (1 hour, 33 minutes; 99.2 miles)

Targets

- **Thick-billed Longspur**
- **Chestnut-collared Longspur**
- **Mountain Plover**
- **Brewer's Sparrow**
- **Lark Bunting**
- **Burrowing Owl**
- **Loggerhead Shrike**
- **Northern Bobwhite**



The Chestnut-collared Longspur is an iconic species of mixed-grass prairie and is one of the fastest declining birds in North America. We will look for them, along with Thick-billed Longspur, at strategic stops across the prairie



Trip co-leader Ryan Dibala and wife Angie meeting with ranch owner Bob Bledsoe in Wray, CO



Photographing Greater Prairie Chickens (left). A male Greater Prairie Chicken raises his philoplumes in preparation for a dispute with a nearby male (right). Indigenous Plains tribes like the Shoshone and Pawnee were said to have modeled their dances after the mating display of the Prairie Chickens

- Jackson Lake State Park (if waterfowl is still needed)
- Transfer to Denver
- Final Group Dinner
- Transfer to airport
- Flight home



Birding Man Wildlife Tours guide Ryan Dibala with a group of guests near the Continental Divide

Value

\$3,240 double occupancy

\$3,840 single occupancy

Includes:

- ✓ Drivers and guides throughout the trip
- ✓ Ground transportation
- ✓ All hotels
- ✓ Meals listed on itinerary (note that 1 lunch in Steamboat Springs will be independent)
- ✓ All fees and permits
- ✓ Water and snacks throughout the trip
- ✓ General Liability insurance and auto insurance
- ✓ 24-hour assistance in case of emergency

Does not include:

- × Flight
- × Medical insurance
- × Travel insurance
- × Evacuation costs
- × Alcoholic beverages
- × Personal expenses
- × Activities and food not included on the itinerary
- × Optional tips
- × Laundry and other items of personal nature

Please note that this itinerary cannot be 100% guaranteed, as it is only a rough guide and can be changed due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.



What You Need to Know

Tour Pace:

This tour is designed for intermediate birders and photographers. We consider the difficulty level to be moderate, with most of the birding being close to roadsides and trails with slight uphill and downhill. Expect early morning starts and long drives, but we will make sure the trip is broken up with plenty of out-of-vehicle time. Rest and relaxation time will be built in throughout the tour, including free time in Steamboat Springs.

Transportation:

You will be traveling in a 12- or 14- passenger van with windows. The maximum group size will be 8 participants and 2 guides. There will be sufficient room for personal baggage.

Lodging:

You will be staying at a combination of 2- and 3-star hotels and lodges throughout the tour. Each accommodation has been diligently vetted for quality and assurance. Please see websites at hyperlinks above.

Altitude:

Denver is located at 5,280 ft above sea level. Highest elevations will be reached at Loveland Pass (11,991 ft above sea level) on Day 2. Please consult with your doctor if you have medical conditions that may be exacerbated at high elevations. You may experience some minor irritations such as a slight headache and mild dizziness, but symptoms should disappear as we descend to lower elevations. You may consider taking Diamox (Acetazolamide) and/or Acetaminophen before traveling to higher elevations, but please consult your doctor. Eat a lighter meal before heading to a higher altitude, stay well-hydrated, and try to avoid caffeine and alcohol.

Laundry:

Laundry services are available at all hotels on this trip, however, please note that laundry fees are not included in the tour pricing.

Travel Insurance:

We do not provide travel (or medical) insurance. We strongly advise that you purchase a travel insurance package. Please read our **cancellation policy** below.



Arrival and Departure Information:

Please book a flight that **arrives** at Denver International Airport **between 10 am and 3 pm** on Tuesday, April 21st, 2026. Guides will meet the group at Denver Airport at the earliest available time (after all participants have arrived) to start the trip promptly. For departure, please book a flight that **departs** from Denver International Airport **after 9 pm on Wednesday**, April 29th, 2026. We will have a full final day together, so getting to the airport before 7 pm will not be an option. Please note, **lodging is not provided on the night of April 29th, 2026.**

READY TO BOOK THIS TOUR?

Registration and Payment Information:

Registration and all payments, including initial deposit, should be made through our trip portal on [We Travel](#). We do accept credit cards for an additional 2.9% fee, but you may also pay by bank transfer or check. We request a \$1,000 initial deposit upon registration. **Full payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure.**

CANCELLATIONS: If we cancel a tour due to low attendance, severe weather, COVID-19, or other unforeseen event, participants may either move their payments to another trip of their choice or receive a full refund. If you cancel your spot on a tour more than 90 days from departure, you will be eligible for a full refund. If cancelled within 90 days of departure, no refund will be given UNLESS we are able to fill your spot(s) with another participant(s). In that situation, \$250 will be withheld for administrative purposes, but the remainder of your payment will be refunded. We highly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or a family member prior to or during a trip.