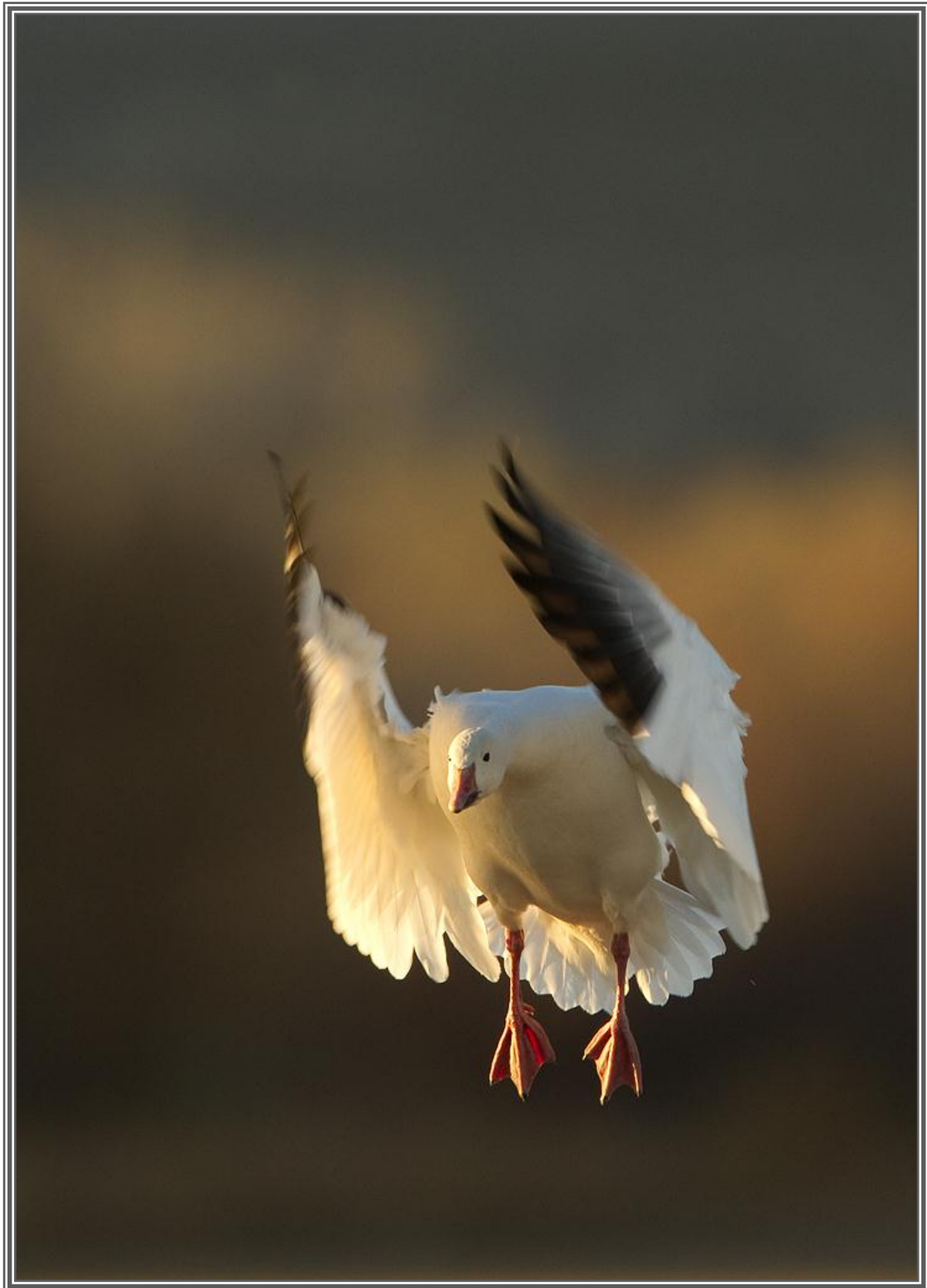




Beautiful Bosque – 1st to 9th December 2012



Itinerary

Tour Leaders: Danny Green and Edwin Kats

Day 1: On arrival at Albuquerque airport we will transfer to Socorro (approximately two hours) for overnight accommodation, dinner and planning the next few days' photography.

Day 2: The pattern for these five days will be broadly similar to ensure we maximise the potential of this justifiably famous location. We will be visiting Bosque del Apache reserve well in time for dawn to photograph the Snow Geese taking off in their thousands – very spectacular and colourful with scope for a variety of photographic interpretations. A short trip to the overnight roost of the Sandhill Cranes provides a similar take-off opportunity. After a well-earned American breakfast, the day will consist of resting for the midday as the light can be harsh in this desert environment and then we head back to the reserve in the early afternoon for excursions around the reserve in search of Roadrunners, Coyote, Kestrel, Deer and individual geese and Cranes before returning to the prime geese and crane locations for dusk shots as the birds leave their daytime feeding areas back to their favourite roosting area. The evenings give the opportunity for some photo critiquing, slideshows and general rest and recuperation.



Days 3/4: We will follow the same pattern on these days and work on images that we feel needs more attention. The spectacular blast off by the snow geese is one of nature's finest events but it can be tricky in capturing this spectacle in a still image so we will give it plenty of goes throughout our stay. We could even change tact on some mornings and just concentrate on the sandhill cranes as they get ready to leave their roost (hopefully with some evocative mist hanging around).



Day 5: Part way through the trip we will look to transfer for one night further south towards Las Cruces to allow an evening and a morning's landscape photography at the stunning White Sands National Monument Park. The light and therefore the photographic potential of this location are fabulous too and will add a nice mix to the images we achieve at Bosque del Apache.



Days 6/7: Back to Bosque for more photographic opportunities with the Snow Geese and Sandhill cranes. There will be plenty of opportunities to work on the images we have tried earlier on in the trip but try new techniques for some slightly different images. The pattern of these days will be the same as the first two, so an early start for the dawn blast off and then a well-earned breakfast with another trip out to the reserve in the early afternoon.



Day 8: With hopefully one last dawn photo session we'll return to Albuquerque for an overnight flight back to the UK arriving early on the following morning.



What to Bring

Our accommodation is clean and comfortable with all bedding and towels provided, so you simply need to bring yourself, any special dietary requirements you may have – please let us know if there's anything you can't/won't eat!!

Please note that whilst dry, it is very cold in New Mexico at this time of the year – and we will be out early before the sun rises each morning – warm clothing and footwear will be essential. There will be coffee making facilities at our accommodation so bring a flask to take with you each morning.

In terms of clothing you'll obviously need plenty of warm clothing. The vast majority of your time will involve standing outside and it can be below freezing especially first thing in the morning. You don't need serious arctic gear for this trip but the following are very much recommended - a good pair of strong walking boots which offer some protection against the cold ground, good warm overtrousers (lined ones are best as they'll keep you warmer especially with a normal pair of trousers and some thermal leggings underneath). For the top half it's very much a question of having several layers - like a thermal type vest, t-shirt, thin jumper, fleece and then a down padded coat to combat the cold air, with a spare jumper or two at hand as well dependent on how the day goes - you'll know your own cold thresholds but it really is a question of

build it up in layers. A good hat, some fingerless mittens and then some warm waterproof gloves to go over the top (the former so that when you come to photograph your fingers can still work the camera) should be ideal. Temperatures can range between minus -10 to 0.



Camera Equipment

In terms of camera kit you'll need a tripod, the longest lens you have (300mm or 500mm + convertor would be my recommendation/choice) and then some supplementary lenses for other opportunities such as a 24-70mm for landscapes, I would suggest a macro lens of some sort and then maybe an intermediate zoom (70-200 or 100-400) so that you don't miss anything in terms of opportunity. You'll get the chance to decide what you want/need each morning anyway so you won't be burdening yourself with it all of the time, you won't be walking at all on this trip because the birds feed by the side of the road and we just park the car and photograph from the road side.

If you don't have a 500mm lens it is worth exploring hiring one for the trip, it's not too expensive and the Canon 500mm or Nikon 200-400 with converter are approximately £45 per day plus a 20% discount if booked through Natures Images. Here is a link to the website: <http://www.theflashcentre.com/rental-department-faq-c414.html>



Bosque del Apache is one of the finest places in the world for wildlife photography and the sheer spectacle of the Snow Geese blasting off at dawn is one of the true natural wonders of the world. Add that with Sandhill cranes, Coyote, Wintering ducks, Mule Deer and Roadrunners you are certainly not short on potential subjects and images. This really is one of the best all round trips that we do and Bosque will stay in memory for a lifetime.

Danny



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