

NEIL ZIMMERMAN



What got you into birding?

I was always interested in the outdoors. It was a trip to Florida at the Audubon Corkscrew Swamp in 1974 that got me hooked on birds.

What can people expect from a bird outing with you?

A laid back pace, informative and like-minded people.

What values do you lead with?

I want people to find birding exciting and learn the connections that birds have with the environment. In others words, to be an environmentalist as well as a birder.

How did you acquire your knowledge? Are you self-taught, trained in a school, had a mentor?

I have had several extraordinary teachers along the way. I was in the first Master Birder Class which taught me about WA birds, locations and birders. I still do a lot of reading and learning on my own.

What is your personal approach/mindset toward birding?

I want people to walk away feeling excited and inquisitive about birds and nature. I want them to see the connection between birds and the environment.

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Where do you personally see the intersectionality of birding and creating safe spaces for folks who have often been left out of the conversation before?

I think many birders are accepting of people. I want everyone to feel comfortable in a group of people with common interests. Birds really do connect people.

Do you have an area of expertise or focus that you prefer?

I like beginning birders. They are usually easy to please. They get joy out of common birds. They still have the joy of discovery. Birds are still more than a checkmark.

What was the best advice you got when starting out as a birder?

Spend a lot of time in the field and get a guide book to devour.

What is your favorite ecosystem to bird in?

I love the Sonoran Desert of SE Arizona.

Dare I ask, what your favorite bird is?!

Favorite bird is for now is the Golden Eagle. I Saw two a couple of weeks ago.

