

## Press Release

# KAUFMAN

Guía de campo  
a las aves de  
norteamérica

La guía más  
práctica para  
identificar aves



## Guía de campo Kaufman a las aves de norteamérica and Kaufman Guide to Birds of North America

by Kenn Kaufman

- [About the Book](#)
- [About the Author](#)
- [A Conversation with Kenn Kaufman](#)
- [Bird Voices — In Spanish and English](#)
- [Tour Schedule](#)

"If you are going to buy only one guide to the birds of our continent, then this is the book."  
— Mark Wilson, *Boston Globe*, on the *Kaufman Guide to Birds of North America*

### About the Book

---

In 1934 Houghton Mifflin published Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds*, revolutionizing the way people think about and watch birds. In 2000 Houghton Mifflin published the *Kaufman Guide to Birds of North America*. Critically acclaimed for its innovative design, the book introduced a new generation to birding. In 2005 Kenn Kaufman will expand the birding audience even further — to America's 28 million Spanish speakers. This year, Houghton Mifflin will publish his *Guía de campo Kaufman a las aves de norteamérica*, the first-ever Spanish field guide to North American birds.

Widely recognized as one of the world's top authorities on birds, Kenn Kaufman is a man with a mission. It is his sincere desire to attract more people to birding. "I'm a firm believer in the idea that we'll have more support for bird conservation if we have more people interested in nature," Kaufman explains about the impetus to create the Spanish version of his popular guide. "The Latino population is such a large, growing, and dynamic part of the American citizenry, and we should involve and include this population in nature study and conservation. Though many Latinos are bilingual, it seemed logical to me that we should produce a bird guide in a language this community is most comfortable with — Spanish." The guide was translated into Spanish by Patricia Manzano Fischer and has new bird-voice descriptions written by Héctor Gómez de Silva.

Houghton Mifflin will also publish an updated version of the *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of*

*North America*, the easiest guide for fast identification.

The book includes the American Ornithologists' Union's official name changes for birds as well as dozens of updated range maps. Also new is additional information to help beginning bird watchers get started, an expanded section on bird conservation, and a stunning new jacket design.

Five years ago, Kaufman's *Birds of North America* was the first nature guide in the world to be illustrated with digitally enhanced photographs. Kaufman continues to use this revolutionary technique, which combines the immediacy of photography with the accuracy of painting. In his artwork, distinguishing field marks are clear and a number of birds can be shown together on one page. The technique is especially helpful for beginners, who are thrilled at the ease with which they can identify birds in their own backyards.

The book unites simplicity and artistry to great effect. Similar birds are grouped together, with field marks highlighted for easy comparison. For instance, birds that are often seen swimming together are illustrated together, even if they are not related. Common birds are shown in more detail than rarer species, and the most widespread or typically seen birds are always illustrated first. Color-keyed tabs make finding the desired selection a snap, and the maps, descriptions, and illustrative material are all on two-page spreads, making the book very easy to use. The description of each bird, covering distinctive habits and habitats and summarizing its field marks and songs, is rendered in Kaufman's celebrated prose — a blend of scientific insight and poetic elegance.

Together, the *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America* and the *Guía de campo Kaufman a las aves de norteamérica* will inspire birders and others who care about the natural world to support bird conservation. Bird watching can thrive only as long as we have birds to watch, and Kaufman hopes that as more people become aware of birds and their beauty, they will also care about preserving the environment.

## About the Author

---

**Kenn Kaufman** is a legend among birders and has perhaps done more than any other single human being to promote the appreciation of birds. A birder and naturalist since childhood, he left home at the age of sixteen to begin an 80,000-mile cross-country journey aimed at breaking the record for most avian species sightings in a single year. Those travels were just the beginning; since that time he has led nature tours on all seven continents. A longtime friend and disciple of the late eminent birder Roger Tory Peterson, Kaufman is a field editor for *Audubon* magazine and a regular contributor to every major birding magazine. He is the youngest person ever to receive the highest honor of the American Birding Association, and he has been voted to elective membership in the prestigious American Ornithologists' Union. His books include *Lives of North American Birds*, *Kingbird Highway*, *The Peterson Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, and his own Kaufman Field Guide series (on North American birds, butterflies, and mammals).

## **A Conversation with Kenn Kaufman**

---

**Your *Guía de campo Kaufman a las aves de norteamérica* is the FIRST EVER Spanish-language field guide to North American birds. What was the impetus to create the book?**

I'm a firm believer in the idea that we'll have more support for wildlife conservation if we have more people interested in nature. The Latino population is such a large, growing, and dynamic part of the U.S. citizenry that it's obviously in our best interests to get them involved in nature study and conservation. Naturally, a high percentage of Latino Americans are totally bilingual and could easily use an English-language bird guide if they chose. However, I was struck by the figures from the 2000 U.S. Census showing that over 28 million people in this country speak Spanish at home. It seemed logical to produce a bird guide in the language they'd be most comfortable with.

**Were others involved in getting the book off the ground?**

I got advice from a lot of people in the bird conservation movement in the United States, Mexico, and the Caribbean while I was planning the book and trying to find the best translator.

The translation was done by Patricia Manzano Fischer, who lives in Toluca, Mexico. She's trained in ornithology, and she's the program director for a Mexican conservation group called Agrupación Dodo. The Dodo is a well-known extinct bird, and the group is dedicated to preventing any further bird extinctions.

One of the trickiest parts of the translation was dealing with the voices of birds, since the descriptive terms are so subtle; on this we got help from Héctor Gómez de Silva, a well-known Mexican ornithologist, who wrote new voice descriptions in Spanish for most of the birds.

**Have any groups or organizations expressed excitement about the new book?**

The response has been really gratifying. Speaking before a conservation summit in Wisconsin, I mentioned that the book was on the way, and the whole room broke into spontaneous applause. Speaking before the Florida statewide Audubon conference, I mentioned the book in passing, and again the applause was immediate. When the founder of the biggest birdwatching festival in Texas heard about the book, he called me to say that he wanted to buy a case of the books to give away. Throughout the community of people who care about nature education and conservation, the response has been extremely enthusiastic.

**You've been called the "heir to Roger Tory Peterson." How do you think you are continuing his legacy?**

To my mind, Peterson was one of the towering figures of the twentieth century, and he had a phenomenal impact on nature study and conservation all over the world. His talents were remarkably varied, but probably he was most gifted at public education. He had a genius for taking complicated information about birds and nature and boiling it down to the essentials, presenting it in a crystal clear way so that anyone could quickly learn to recognize and

appreciate birds or other aspects of nature.

Peterson was my hero and role model from the time I was a little kid, and later I was lucky enough to know him and to work with him on several projects. I'd like to think that the Kaufman Field Guides carry on his work in a way. Recently, bird books have been shifting toward a more technical stance, trying to impress the serious or "hard-core" birders, but the people who really need field guides are the newcomers. My books aim to make identification totally accessible to everyone. And I feel that we can greatly expand the definition of "everyone" by bringing out the bird guide in Spanish, making bird identification easy for a huge new community.

### **There are many other field guides out on the market — why do you think the Kaufman Field Guide series has been so successful?**

Many recent bird guides have fallen into one of two camps. Either they've tried to simplify by leaving out some birds altogether, which is bad news if you're looking at one of the omitted species, or they've tried too hard to impress the expert birders. With my series, I try to strike the right balance for the vast majority of users. The books cover every species and variation that one can expect to see. And for each of them, the focus is this: What do people need to know if they are seeing this bird—or butterfly or mamma—for the very first time? What are the essentials, the basics, that are left out of some other books? My intention was to create the perfect guides for people who want to learn.

### **Many know you as a tireless promoter for bird conservation. How do you think the *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America* and the *Guía de campo Kaufman a las aves de norteamérica* can help with your mission?**

People will work to protect only the things they actually care about. If you want people to protect bird populations, there's no point in trying to tell them that it's their duty or their legal obligation, and it's not very effective to threaten them with talk of collapsing ecosystems. Too much of environmental education starts off with scare tactics or with talk of something remote, like the rainforest. If you can get people to connect with nature on a personal level, by learning the names of the birds in their own neighborhood, and get them interested enough to develop an emotional attachment, then they are far more likely to work for the conservation of those bird populations. Every step in conservation is important, but my work is on the first step, getting people to notice nature and to care about it. My field guides are complete enough for experts, but what really sets them apart is the attention to making things clear for beginners — I want to encourage participants right at the outset.

## **Bird Voices — In Spanish and English**

---

"One of the trickiest parts of the translation was dealing with the voices of birds, since the descriptive terms are so subtle; on this we got help from Héctor Gómez de Silva, a well-known Mexican ornithologist, who wrote new voice descriptions in Spanish for most of the birds." — Kenn Kaufman

Barred Owl

Baritone hoots, series of 8-9: <i>Who cooks for you, who cooks for you-allll, last note drawn out.</i>	8-9, barítones: <i>Hu's, el último más prolongado</i>
---	--

Sora

Clear whistle, rising at the end: <i>Surrrr-eeeeee</i> Sharp keek and sharp descending whinny: <i>keeheheheheheheeh</i>	Musical: <i>Wiyít</i> Un relincho musical muy característico: <i>kik</i>
---	--

Red-billed Pigeon

Deep cooing with staccato pattern: <i>Woooo, up-chuck-a-pup</i>	Lento, grave: <i>Hup, hup, hupúúú</i>
---	--

Black-capped Chickadee

Clear whistle, first note higher: <i>Fee bee or fee bee-ee</i>	Silbido puro, la primera nota más aguda: <i>Fi bi o fi bi-bi</i>
---	--

Common Raven

Deep echoing croak; other notes including screams, whistles, gurgles	Muy grave y ronco; también otros sonidos incluyendo silbidos melidosos, gritos, gargareos: <i>O, o, o o a, a, a</i>
--	---

Hermit Thrush

Slow clear note followed by fast soft warble; repeated on different pitch	Muchas repeticiones a diferentes tonos de una nota seguida de un rápido gorjeo quedito de notas "puras" con resonancia: <i>fiii</i>
---	---

### Lesser Goldfinch

Fast, musical twittering, includes brief imitations of other birds

Gorjeo rápido, incluye breves imitaciones de otros aves

### Virginia's Warbler

Simple series of notes, on one pitch or rising toward end

Melodioso: *chi-chi-chi-chi-chí-chi*  
a veces terminado por una ascendente: *llllllllllll*

### Sprague's Pipit

Series of thin descending notes, repeated over and over in flight

Serie descendente de notas repetida una and otra vez desde el aire:  
*Tsúhi-tsuhi-tsuhi-tsuhi-tsío*

## 2005 Tour Schedule

---

### **Saturday, May 14**

International Migratory Bird Day, Black Swamp Bird Observatory  
Oak Harbor, OH

### **Monday, May 16-Tuesday, May 18**

Lecture Series  
Toronto, Ontario

### **Saturday, May 21-Sunday, May 22**

Keynote Address, Meadowlark Festival  
Okanagan Valley, British Columbia

### **Tuesday, May 24**

Lecture, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society  
Cupertino, CA

### **Wednesday, May 25**

Lecture, California Academy of Sciences  
San Francisco, CA

### **Saturday, June 4**

Lecture, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
Austin, TX

**Sunday, June 26-Saturday, July 2**

Audubon Camp  
Hog Island, ME

**Tuesday, August 2-Sunday, August 7**

Lecture, Lepidopterists' Society/Southeast Arizona Butterfly Association Meeting  
Sierra Vista, AZ

**Saturday, September 10**

Keynote Address, Arizona Statewide Audubon Society Meeting  
Tucson, AZ

**Friday, September 23-Sunday, September 25**

Lecture and Nature Walks, Harvard Museum of Natural History  
Cambridge, MA