

CAMBODIA

FEBRUARY 1-13, 2006*

© 2005

*Dates differ from those in our 2006 Tour Directory

After years of war and turmoil, Cambodia has again become a safe and friendly country to visit. Peace has well and truly settled on this wonderful country and it is now one of the most exciting new birding destinations in Asia. The expansive forests and untouched wetlands of this small country harbor some of the rarest species and races of birds and mammals in Asia. The Cambodian people are indeed custodians of a very special natural heritage. In recent years a number of hugely exciting discoveries have been made including a population of the near mythical Giant Ibis, a new species – the Mekong Wagtail and a breeding population of the rapidly declining eastern race of Sarus Crane. Other highly threatened species have been found in the northern plains of Cambodia. A breeding population of White-shouldered Ibis has been found in the northern province of Preah Vihear along with White-winged Duck, Green Peafowl, White-rumped Falcon and White-rumped and Slender-billed vultures. On the wetlands around Tonle Sap the biggest breeding colonies of waterbirds in Southeast Asia represent one of the finest birding spectacles of Asia. Healthy populations of Greater Adjutant (which is declining alarmingly elsewhere), the still relatively common Lesser Adjutant, Milky Stork, Spot-billed Pelican and many others can be observed nesting at Preak Toal on the amazing Tonle Sap Lake, fed by the monsoonal back up from the Mekong River. The most extensive grasslands remaining in Southeast Asia are where we will look for some more scarce beauties, in particular the splendid Bengal Florican, as well the scarce Manchurian Reed Warbler. This is surely a dream list of birds!

This tour offers a unique opportunity to see some of the world's rarest birds. Our accommodation is mostly of a high standard, in fact many of our lovely hotels are a highlight of the tour, but our short expedition to a northern village will involve some reasonably rough roads (although these are being continually upgraded) and two nights of fairly basic accommodation. That said, there is no doubt this is a wonderful experience!

As if the birds of Cambodia are not exciting enough, we also have the opportunity to visit some of the greatest surviving architectural monuments of Asia – the temples of the ancient city of Angkor. They represent the heart and soul of Cambodia, harking back to an era of unrivalled influence over the entire region. The Khmer Empire once ruled over south China, Vietnam, Thailand, Burma and Malaysia. Built at the height of the Khmer civilisation from the 8th to the 12th Century the Angkor complex was erected during a time of extraordinary artistry.

This tour can be taken by itself or in combination with Thailand Highlights (February 12-28, 2006).

February 1-2, Days 1-2: Travel to Bangkok, Thailand. Participants are encouraged to take Thai Airways Flight 775 which is scheduled to depart Los Angeles at 12:05 p.m. on February 1 and arrive in Bangkok at 10:55 p.m. on February 2 (subject to change). Upon arrival and after clearing customs and immigration, you will be met by

a representative of our ground-agent and escorted to the attractive Amari Airport Hotel. Those not on this flight may simply proceed from customs to the hotel where a room will be reserved in your name.

Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting should consider arriving in Los Angeles on January 31 or Bangkok on February 1 and spending the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

NIGHT: Amari Airport Hotel, Bangkok (February 2)

February 3, Day 3: Birding at Khok Kam; Afternoon Flight to Siem Reap, Cambodia. This morning we will drive west and south along the Gulf of Siam to the extensive mud flats and salt pans, which line this part of Thailand's coast. Large numbers of shorebirds congregate here in addition to a few coastal specialties. Species we may encounter include: Brahminy Kite; possibly Slaty-breasted Rail; Pacific Golden Plover; Greater and Lesser sand plovers; Marsh, Green, Wood and Common sandpipers; Rufous-necked and Temminck's stints; Brown-headed Gull; Gull-billed and Whiskered terns; House Swift; Collared Kingfisher; Red-whiskered Bulbul; Common Tailorbird; Plain Prinia; Flyeater; Long-tailed Shrike; and Brown-throated Sunbird. In addition we may find one of nature's most extraordinary members, the Spoon-billed Sandpipers. In recent years this blue-ribbon bird has been found fairly regularly wintering here in addition to such other shorebird gems as Nordmann's Greenshank, Asian Dowitcher, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Long-toed Stint and Great Knot.

In the afternoon we will return to the airport in time for the 2:50 p.m. departure of Bangkok Airways Flight 938 which is scheduled to arrive in Siem Reap at 4:00 p.m. Located just north of mighty Tonle Sap Lake, this charming town is characterised by colonial French architecture and shady boulevards lining the Siem Reap River. Our very attractive hotel is located in a quiet street near the centre of Siem Reap.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Hotel, Siem Reap

February 4, Day 4: Morning and Afternoon at Angkor Wat, Preah Khan and Angkor Thom. We start our tour of Cambodia with a visit to the magnificent, ancient complex of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom and other nearby temples, just a short drive from our hotel. In particular Ta Prohm is a wonderful experience as it has been left to the elements with strangler fig roots snaking around the crumbling walls and ancient statues of the temple.

Angkor is one of the great archaeological sites of Southeast Asia and this monument is a magnificent reminder of an empire that shaped the entire region. The Khmer Empire, which ruled over most of Burma, Laos, central Vietnam and the Malay Peninsula, flourished for three centuries from 800 to 1100 AD. The forests surrounding Angkor were declared a national park in 1925 and there are many very large trees and some great birds. In fact, the birding in the beautiful forests of Angkor is a great adjunct to this experience with large congregations of Red-breasted and Alexandrine parakeets, super views of Black Baza, numerous Asian Barred Owlets, and Hill Mynas. In the drier forests we may find Greater Flameback, Black-hooded Orioles and Hainan Blue Flycatchers. Lesser Adjutants can often be seen flying overhead. This whole area is simply alive with birds and history.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Hotel, Siem Reap

February 5, Day 5: Morning at Ang Trapeang Thmor Wildlife Reserve; Afternoon at West Baray. This morning we drive westwards toward the Thai border to visit the very interesting Ang Trapeang Thmor reserve. This old reservoir and surrounding forest harbours a very rare population of the Southeast Asian race of Sarus Crane. At times this magnificent bird can be seen in large flocks of up to 100 birds! In addition we should encounter big gatherings of Comb Ducks, Lesser Whistling Ducks, Painted Storks, and Pheasant-tailed and Bronze-winged jacanas. In the dry forests bordering this lush reservoir we may find one of Asia's rarest mammals, the gorgeous Eld's Deer. As we return to Siem Reap, we will stop at the ancient reservoir of West Baray. Around the baray it is possible to see Grey-headed Lapwing, Cotton Pygmy-goose, and Stork-billed Kingfisher. You may wish to sample delightful offerings such as deep fried giant water bug, a very popular local delicacy!

NIGHT: Angkor Village Hotel, Siem Reap

February 6, Day 6: Drive to Koh Ker, Then to Tmatboey. Today we depart early for our journey to the north, arguably the most exciting part of our tour! We will arrive at the remote outlying temple of Koh Ker in time to enjoy an early breakfast followed by some very exciting birding in the forest surrounding this spectacular temple. The centre-piece of the temple is a pyramid-like structure rising 40 metres out of the forest. The view from the top shows the extent of forest cover here is still very extensive. The area is peppered with the remains of temples and monuments from the halcyon days of the 10th Century. Here the dry dipterocarp forest supports a very healthy population of woodpeckers, in particular the gargantuan Great Slaty Woodpecker and the rather scarce and attractive Black-headed Woodpecker. These forests are home to some of the healthiest populations in Asia of birds such as Rufous-winged Buzzard and Blossom-headed Parakeets. After lunch, we continue northwards to the remote village of Tmatboey, where we will spend the next two days searching for the critically endangered Giant Ibis. To add to the excitement there is a very good chance of finding very rare White-shouldered Ibis or Pale-capped Pigeon.

The villagers here work in conjunction with conservation organisations to preserve these fabulous birds and our presence here is not only very welcome, it is very beneficial to the community. Our visit will contribute directly to the construction of wells in the village, which help to improve the quality of life in this remote place. We will be staying in a village house – very simple but comfortable and clean with mosquito nets. Bathing and toilet facilities, while private, are basic.

NIGHT: Tmatboey local house

February 7, Day 7: Tmatboey. In the cool of the early morning we venture out of the village into the neighbouring forest. Our plan is to walk to nearby *trapeangs*, or permanent waterholes, where the ibises tend to gather during the dry season. As we walk, we will keep an eye out for Yellow-legged and Orange-breasted green pigeons, Shikra, Woolly-necked Stork, Burmese Shrike, Black-hooded Oriole, Small Minivet and White-shouldered Starling. Chinese Francolins are common and often flush up noisily. At the permanent watercourses there is often feverish activity and we may find the very impressive Brown Fish Owl, Oriental Cuckoo, Radde's Warbler, White-crested Laughingthrush, and Tickell's Blue Flycatcher. If we are lucky we may find Small Buttonquail as we walk through the low grass.

After resting during the heat of midday, we will bird in nearby forest and rice fields in hopes of finding another great rarity, the White-shouldered Ibis. In these slightly more open areas Rufous-winged Buzzard is surprisingly common and large flocks of parakeets fly overhead. As we rest at a *trapeang* Green Bee-eaters, Eurasian Hoopoes, Green-billed Malkohas, and Rufous Treepies will delight us as they come in for their evening drink.

NIGHT: Tmatboey local house

February 8, Day 8: Morning in Tmatboey; Afternoon Drive Back to Siem Reap. After another morning birding in these wonderful forests we will drive slowly back to Siem Reap, this time with a stop for birding and a break at Beng Melea temple, another temple where nature has run riot! This spectacular temple dedicated to the Hindu god, Vishnu, dates from the 12th Century, when Suryavarman II set out to conquer Vietnam, Thailand, Burma and Malaysia. The temple is similar in design to Angkor Wat, except it is built on a single level. The complex is surrounded by a huge, now dried out moat. An ancient Angkorian road leads from Angkor Thom to Beng Melea with at least ten ruined bridges still lying abandoned in the forest.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Hotel, Siem Reap

February 9, Day 9: Preak Toal on Tonle Sap Lake. Located to the west of Siem Reap, Tonle Sap Lake is one of the great geographic features of Asia. This huge lake, fed by the mighty Mekong River, and the flooded forests of Prek Toal on its northern shores host the largest breeding colonies of large waterbirds in Southeast Asia. After driving to the lakeside village of Chong Kneas we board our motor boat to cross the lake. Surrounded by small fishing boats, we cross the huge lake as the sun rises. At the floating village we transfer to small rowing boats before

entering the narrow watercourses and making our way to the colonies of Lesser Adjutants, Painted Storks and Spot-billed Pelicans. As we view this amazing scene, we will search for the rarer Greater Adjutant and the very rare Milky Stork. This is indeed one of the great spectacles of Asia!

NIGHT: Angkor Village Hotel, Siem Reap

February 10, Day 10: Morning at Kompong Thom; Afternoon Drive to Kompong Cham. This morning we will take our leave of the delightful town of Siem Reap and head southwards to Kompong Cham. En route we will visit grassland areas scattered with villages, near the town of Kompong Thom, where the rare Bengal Florican can be seen. This species is declining rapidly due to continuing loss of its grassland habitat. The charismatic bird is otherwise found only in India and our presence here in these rural villages, as with Giant Ibis in Tmatboey, will greatly assist its conservation.

NIGHT: Mekong Hotel, Kompong Cham

February 11, Day 11: Drive to Kratie. We drive north along the Mekong, the longest river in Southeast Asia, to the riverside town of Kratie today. As we travel upriver we should encounter Small Pratincoles, River Lapwing, River Tern, Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, Stork-billed Kingfisher, the beautiful Wire-tailed Swallow and White Wagtail. The impressive Grey-headed Fish Eagle is not uncommon here.

NIGHT: Mekong Dolphin Resort, Kratie

February 12, Day 12: Kratie; Drive to Phnom Penh; Fly to Bangkok. This morning we will travel upriver of Kratie where our main target will be the recently discovered Cambodian endemic Mekong Wagtail. This highly localised and delightful species, which was first described in 2001, can be seen alongside the very rare Irrawaddy Dolphin, which we will hope to see as we travel on the Mekong by boat.

After a leisurely lunch we will drive south to Phnom Penh in time for the 3:50 p.m. departure of Bangkok Airways Flight 925 which is scheduled to arrive in Bangkok at 4:50 p.m. (subject to change). This evening we will have a final dinner to celebrate our experience and wish a fond farewell to each other and the marvelous country of Cambodia.

NIGHT: Amari Airport Hotel, Bangkok

February 13, Day 13: Departure for Home or Begin Thailand Highlights Tour. Participants not continuing on our Thailand Highlights Tour (February 12-28, 2006) can depart Bangkok any time today.

Participants continuing on Thailand Highlights have the day at leisure in Bangkok before meeting your leaders and fellow participants in the evening.

TOUR LEADERS: Susan Myers and David Bishop

Susan Myers has been studying the fauna of Australia and Asia for over 20 years. After her university studies in Biological Sciences, she moved to Japan where she lived for four years, learning the language and studying the natural history and culture. Once a qualified nursing practitioner, Susan has also worked as a scuba dive instructor on Australia's Great Barrier Reef in Queensland, showing international visitors this marine marvel. Her passion and enthusiasm for all aspects of natural history, especially birds, began in early childhood. She has published papers on ornithology and general ecology in a variety of scientific journals. Susan has traveled extensively through most of southern and eastern Asia and led tour groups to many destinations in this region. Her deep affection and appreciation of Asia and its wildlife, her special language skills, and her understanding of the different cultures of this region ensure an extra dimension to your tour. Susan's involvement in nature tourism now exceeds 15 years.

David Bishop loves his vocation and cannot imagine anything better than exploring wild and beautiful places in Asia in the company of friends and clients. David has spent much of the past 30 years studying the birds and natural history of the Oriental region, in addition to New Guinea and the Southwest Pacific. Once a police officer amid the streets of London's West End, David has emerged as an acknowledged authority on the birds of these exotic regions. His enthusiasm for these places and their birds is contagious. This, along with his skills in locating wildlife, sharing what he sees with others, and conversing with local people in their native language, ensures you the very finest quality tour. David has undertaken a number of expeditions to survey the birds and other wildlife of previously unexplored regions throughout New Guinea (largely together with Jared Diamond) and the Oriental Region. This has resulted in a number of exciting discoveries and rediscoveries including the incomparable Wallace's Standardwing, a bizarre bird-of-paradise. Some of the results of this work, together with observations gained during the VENT tours he leads, has been published in the scientific and semi-popular literature to which David is a regular contributor. In July 1997, David, together with Brian Coates, published *A Guide to the Birds of Wallacea (Sulawesi, the Moluccas, and Lesser Sundas)*, and David is currently working on other book projects. David lives with his wife and daughter (his son currently resides in England) in the attractive university town of Armidale, NSW, Australia.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 12 participants.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for this tour is **\$3895** per person in double occupancy from Bangkok. This includes all meals beginning with breakfast on Day 3 to dinner on Day 12, lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. The tour fee does not include flights from your home to Bangkok and return, the commercial flights from Bangkok to Siem Reap and from Phnom Penh to Bangkok (see **AIR INFORMATION** below), airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$470**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you. Please note that this fee does not cover nor guarantee single accommodations at Tmatboey (Days 6 and 7). However, your preference will be noted and accommodated, if possible, at no additional cost.

Participants combining this tour with Thailand Highlights (February 12-28, 2006) will receive a combined tour discount of **\$100**.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the VENT registration form and return it with a deposit of \$500 per person (check or money order in US dollars.) If registering by phone, the deposit must be received within 10 days or the space will be released. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 120 days or more before departure date, the deposit less \$75 per person is refundable. If cancellation is made fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions, as well as any transfers from one tour to another. ***We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself.***

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$75.
Fewer than 120 days before departure date	No refund available.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

There are two internal commercial flights on this tour, from Bangkok to Siem Reap and from Phnom Penh to Bangkok on Bangkok Airways. We will be happy to obtain these tickets for you. Simply contact the VENT office with your credit card information and we will issue the tickets using the best price available at the time. Please contact us as soon as possible as prices will inevitably rise as the departure date approaches.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

CLIMATE: Most of our time will be spent in dry tropical lowland forest and wetlands. Cambodia is generally hot and dry at this time of year and the forests do not offer a great deal of shade. Night time temperatures can be hot in the north but generally cool enough for a light jacket. It is unlikely that we will encounter any rain.

CLOTHING: Please remember that dark-browns, dark-blues and dark-greens are less likely to startle birds and mammals. PLEASE, no bright colors or loud, crackling plastics. Bring light-weight and predominantly cotton field clothing: a warm sweater, a hat with a good brim to keep the sun off while you are seated in a canoe, a waterproof poncho, jacket or the like, a small collapsible umbrella and comfortable boots with rugged soles. You should also have relatively thick socks to cushion your feet during long walks. It is ideal that you buy them calf-length so that you can tuck the bottoms of your trousers into them as protection against scratches and "bugs." A dressier outfit such as a sport coat, dress or pant suit may be more presentable at the Siem Reap and Bangkok hotels.

CURRENCY: Riel (r). The Riel is accepted in remote areas but the de facto and preferred currency is the US dollar. Change is often given in Riel. Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express are accepted at the larger hotels.

DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure is required for United States citizens to enter Cambodia. A one month tourist visa is obtained very quickly upon arrival. The cost is \$US20 and a passport photo is required (subject to change without notice). Non U.S. citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars (in your hand-luggage) that are in good repair along with a belt or day pack (good for carrying books, sunscreen, extra film, etc.). Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. Other items to bring should include a flashlight, water bottle or small canteen, alarm clock, sunglasses and suntan lotion. It is wise to carry several copies of a list of your expensive equipment for customs inspectors. This list should include a description of the object, including the serial number if possible, the place of purchase and the price. Visitors to Cambodia are rarely challenged about such equipment unless there appears to be an inordinate amount of it.

HEALTH: Tap water should be avoided. In smaller towns and rural areas, assume the water is unsafe and stick with bottled or boiled drinks. Your tour leader will have a supply of iodine tablets for water purification, although bottled spring water is widely available. Sanitation throughout Cambodia is relatively very good compared to most tropical areas of the world. Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating and make sure meat is cooked thoroughly. Be sure to bring all necessary prescription drugs, as well as aspirin, antacids, and a supply of antihistamines should you develop a cold.

No vaccinations are required; however, cholera, typhoid and tetanus should be current. Gamma globulin may be taken to prevent hepatitis. Malaria is present, including the chloroquine-resistant strain. There are several options for malaria prophylaxis including Mefloquine (Lariam), Malarone, and Doxycycline. These medications are available by prescription only. Please consult your physician or local travel clinic for recommendations. You may contact the **Centers for Disease Control** in Atlanta (**CDC**) which operates a 24-hour automated travelers' health hotline at 877-FYI-TRIP. You may also visit the traveler's health section of their website, www.cdc.gov.

Insects such as mosquitoes and sand-flies can be a problem although scarce in the dry season. This is best dealt with by wearing long-sleeved shirts of sufficient thickness and density of weave that the "bugs" cannot bite through, and long trousers tucked into long socks. We also recommend *CUTTER'S LOTION* in the squeeze bottle or pump-style *OFF*.

LUGGAGE: One or two small duffel bags can be extremely useful for short trips, and can be packed within your luggage when not in use. As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars (always), a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications, and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Electricity - 220 volts, 50 cycles

Language – Khmer (Cambodian), English, some older people speak French.

Time - 12 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time

SUGGESTED READING: Our website at www.ventbird.com offers an online store that carries a wide variety of items for birding and nature lovers including over 6,000 books. A portion of the sales from our store benefits the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You might also want to visit such other online stores as www.amazon.com, and for those out-of-print and hard-to-find titles, www.abebooks.com or www.buteobooks.com, which specializes in ornithology books.

Caulfield, C. *In the Rainforest*. London: Heinemann, 1984. An exceptionally accurate and insightful account of whom is doing what to our rainforests -- and the repercussions.

Hudson, C. *The Killing Fields*. A very moving account of the distressing events of the war. Also an excellent film.

Keown, D. *Buddhism – a very short introduction*. OUP: Oxford, 2000.

McNeely, J. and P. S. Wachtel. *Soul of the Tiger*, 1988. An exceptional book, quite unlike anything else written.

Put together by two international conservationists who know the people and nature of the Orient as well as any.

Parr, J. W. K. *Large Mammals of Thailand*. Sarakadee Press, Thailand. 2003.

Ray, N. *Cambodia*. Lonely Planet: Melbourne, 2002.

Richards, P.W. *The Tropical Rain Forest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Robson, Craig. *A Guide to the birds of Southeast Asia*. Princeton University Press, 2000. **This is THE book to use on tour in Cambodia.**

Rooney, D. *Angkor – An Introduction to the Temples*. Passport Books. 1997.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurants, porters, drivers, and local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are not expected and are entirely optional.

RESPONSIBILITY: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this

is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on July 29, 2005 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.