

# ALLADALE WILDERNESS RESERVE



*"On our Alladale holiday we have access to some fabulous and very varied habitats, to watch wildlife at a time when our winter visitors, including huge numbers of waders and wildfowl, are returning."*  
Sally Nowell

Dates Sat 5 - Sat 12 Oct 2024  
Price £3,425  
Deposit £685 Single Supp £275

Leader Sally Nowell and an Alladale Ranger

Weather During a typical week in autumn we would expect to experience mixed sun and showers, with temperatures in the range 5-25°C. It can be wet and windy or we can be lucky and have lovely warm weather, warm layers including an effective waterproof jacket and trousers are advised. Hats and gloves are also recommended

Walking We shall take regular but short walks, generally on easy tracks over even ground, but occasionally on rougher paths of between 1-5 miles. Walking boots are strongly recommended. Bring walking poles if you think these would be helpful

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Unlikely to be a problem at this time of year

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 9

## Just some of what we hope to see:

White-tailed Eagle	Black Guillemot
Golden Eagle	Gannet
Hen Harrier	Great Skua
Peregrine	Snow Bunting
Black-throated Diver	Pomarine Skua
Red-throated Diver	Arctic Skua
Slavonian Grebe	Bottlenose Dolphin
Whooper Swan	Grey Seal
Long-tailed Duck	Otter
Common Scoter	Red Deer
Scaup	Red Squirrel

This is a privileged experience you will never forget. An autumn spectacular in the remote Northern Highlands, to immerse ourselves in the some of the best wildlife Scotland has to offer.

- Stay in the midst of the Red Deer rut
- Based in Alladale Wilderness Reserve
- Luxurious accommodation at remote Alladale Lodge
- Visit the Moray, Cromarty and Dornoch Firths
- Great opportunities for Golden and White-tailed Eagles
- Experience true wilderness, with no sound or light pollution
- Visit the fascinating Scottish Wildcat Project

1 After your journey to Inverness we shall meet at our hotel to talk about the week ahead and enjoy our first meal together.

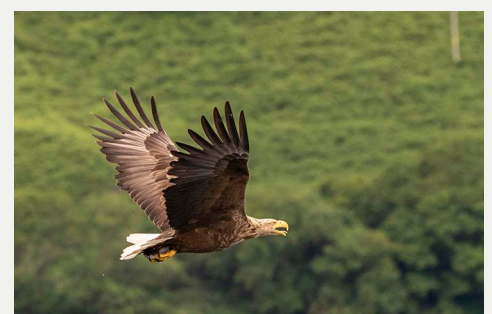
2 After breakfast we make our way to a local Reserve along the banks of the Moray Firth, looking for Kingfisher; Water Rail, resident waders and seabirds. We shall also be looking out for Otter and Bottlenose Dolphin. Depending on the tide times we shall move on to Chanony Point, surely one of the best places in the UK to see dolphins feeding. Here we have the largest Bottlenose Dolphins in the world; they frequently come in close to shore as the tide rises, to catch salmon as they move up the Firth.

We shall have lunch enroute and then in late afternoon will start to make our way to the fabulous Alladale Lodge, where we shall be spending our next five nights.

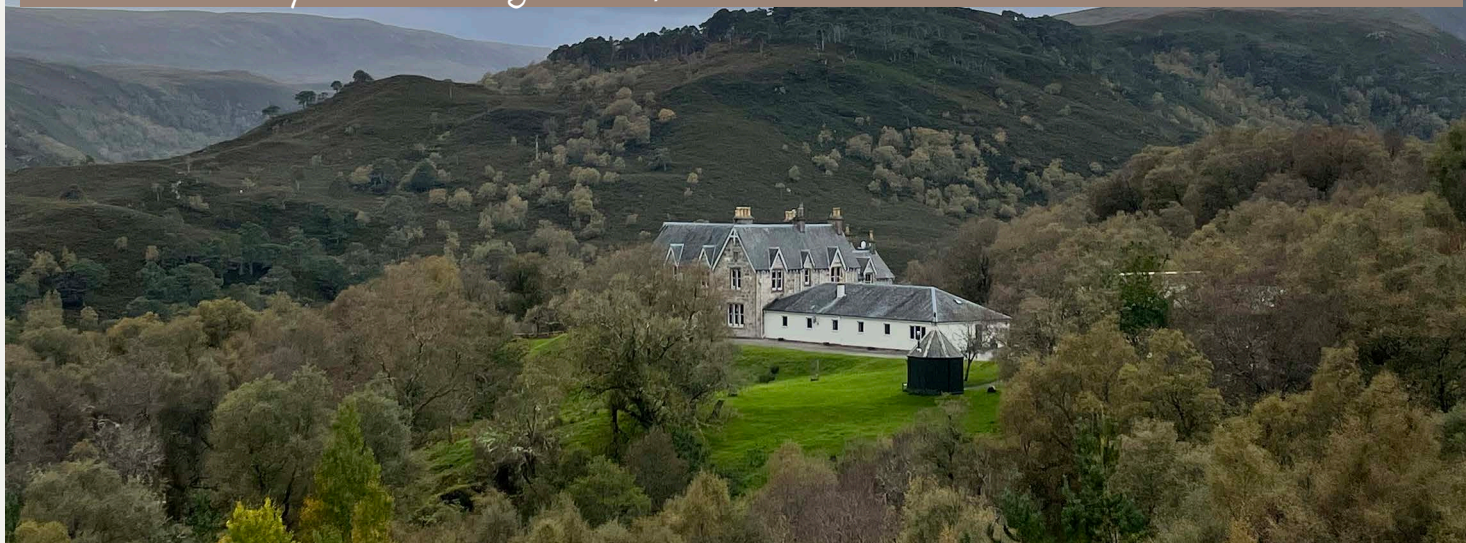
We arrive at Alladale in time to acquaint ourselves with our accommodation and settle in, before enjoying a meal in our splendid dining room. Depending on the weather; we shall sit outside one night around the open fire, listening to the bellow of the Red Deer stags and enjoying the otherwise silent night. On clear nights we should have spectacular skies with no light pollution for miles.

3 This is a real escape into the depths of the remoter part of the Scottish Highlands and the hills in autumn can look quite magical.

On our first morning after breakfast, we shall be taken by the Alladale team out by Land Rover onto the Reserve. We shall hear about the innovative approach to land management and restoration taking place on this spectacular piece of land. Once a hunting Estate, now this 100 square kilometre Wilderness Reserve is ours to explore.



"Alladale Lodge is an idyllic setting for our holiday in the far north of Scotland. Not only do we enjoy this beautiful Estate - famous for its Rewilding initiatives - in all its autumn glory, we also have the chance to witness the evocative Red Deer Rut. In addition, the mountains, moorland, lochs, estuaries and sandy beaches all hold their own delights, from eagles to Otters, Dippers to divers. I can't wait to return; we always find something new!" Sally Nowell



We shall lunch out on the Estate and have a chance to hear about the Scottish Wildcat Project, run by the Royal Zoological Society but supported by Alladale. This captive breeding programme to establish a viable population of Scottish Wildcat, includes two male and two female cats and with luck, some kittens may be around at this time of year as well.

Depending on the weather, we shall sit outside one night around the open fire, hoping to hear the bellow of the Red Deer stags and enjoying the otherwise silent night.

Along with hundreds of deer, also resident in beautiful Glen Mor are Golden Eagle and White-tailed Eagles are regular visitors.

**4-6** Over the next days we shall be visiting some of the best local birding hotspots. In October we stand good chances of some excellent seawatching, with possible Manx and Sooty Shearwater, Pomarine Skua, Red and Black-throated Diver and Slavonian Grebe. In the shelter of the firths wintering ducks may have arrived, such as Long-tailed Duck and Common Scoter.

Geese will also be arriving from further north, so we'll hope for large numbers of Pink-footed and Greylag Geese and with luck even rarities such as Snow Goose can turn up. Whooper Swans will be arriving, as well as other winter visitors such as Brambling, Redwing and Fieldfare.

We shall visit Udale Bay and Loch Fleet, where large numbers of Eider gather; also Tarbet Ness

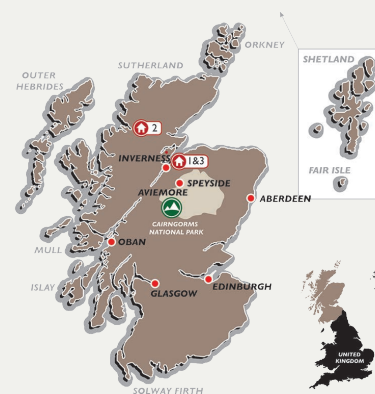
and some of the small coastal towns along the wild Sutherland coasts. Often at this time of year Snow Bunting can be found along the shores and we may stand chances of early Glaucous and Iceland Gull amongst the mixed gull flocks.

Over on the west coast a spectacular drive will take us into Otter and White-tailed Eagle territory. Eyes will be on the skies and water's edge as we head towards Ullapool and Gruinard Bay. Great Northern Divers and Black Guillemot in their beautiful winter plumage can be present here.

We shall also spend more time on the Reserve, this time on foot, again looking and listening for Red Deer in combat on the high-sided valleys, where we might see Black Grouse. Red Deer can be remarkably trusting at Alladale and they too come around the building. Red Squirrels frequent the feeders outside the Lodge, giving some great photo opportunities. If time allows we may visit the delightful town of Dornoch and its ancient Cathedral.

**7** Sadly we'll be leaving Alladale this morning, after breakfast. We'll visit the famous Glenmorangie Distillery and then continue our birding, with some fabulous stops. We'll be looking for our winter wildfowl and visiting waders, hoping for large numbers of Wigeon and Pintail, along with Whooper Swans and Golden Plover. We shall be reluctant to leave 'the field' today but we'll finally return to our hotel in North Kessock, in time for dinner.

**8** After breakfast we shall say our goodbyes and depart.



### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Meet at our hotel in time for dinner  
1 night North Kessock Hotel
- Day 2 Visit local Inverness Reserve and on to the Black Isle, before heading to Alladale  
5 nights Alladale Lodge, Sutherland
- Day 3 Spend time exploring Alladale Reserve by Land Rover
- Days 4-6 Explore the Sutherland and north west coast wildlife watching
- Day 7 Leave Alladale travelling to Inverness, via Glenmorangie Distillery  
1 night North Kessock Hotel
- Day 8 We say our farewells

**Roy Atkins:** Dipper **Jane Hope:** White-tailed Eagle  
**Mary Braddock:** Red Squirrel  
**Pete Helme:** Wildcat  
**Sally Nowell:** Alladale Lodge, Drawing Room  
**Pauline Greenhalgh:** Red Deer

