

CANNA AND CORNCRAKES



"Well this holiday is just packed full of Scottish highlights, from the remote island of Canna to the bustling fishing town of Mallaig, from the ancient Celtic rainforest to silver sands, turquoise seas and rocky shorelines, from magnificent mountains to wide open seascapes, all offering up some of Scotland's most thrilling wildlife" Sally Nowell

Dates Mon 27 - Wed 5 June 2024

Price £3,795

Deposit £650 Single Supp £600

Leaders Sally Nowell and Ailie Brown

Weather Though usually quite dry, these islands can experience all the seasons during one trip and can be windy (5°-20°C)

Walking Coastal walks on uneven terrain of up to three miles - walking boots recommended, but trainers or even sandals suitable on some occasions. Collapsible/telescopic walking poles could be useful

Boat Trips Be prepared for all weathers on our boat trips. Waterproof clothes including gloves are recommended. As a precaution, you may wish to bring seasickness medication with you. Toilet onboard

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10

Insects Biting insects can be a problem at this time of year in certain conditions, so come prepared with insect repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

White-tailed Eagle	Wood Warbler
Golden Eagle	Redstart
Hen Harrier	Cuckoo
Short-eared Owl	Whinchat
Great Northern Diver	Otter
Red-throated Diver	Red Deer
Slavonian Grebe	Minke Whale
Black Guillemot	
Puffin	
Manx Shearwater	
Gannet	
Great Skua	
Arctic Skua	

This is a great springtime holiday, which takes us to some of Scotland's best wildlife-watching locations, at one of the best times of year.

- We shall spend time along Britain's best Otter-spotting coastlines
- Visit some of the richest areas for eagles in the country
- Spend a night on Iona listening and looking for Corncrake
- Visit the remote island of Canna for seabird colonies
- Explore hidden areas of Scotland only accessible by sea
- Visit the Celtic rainforest looking for Wood Warblers and Redstart
- Stay in comfortable hotels with great food and local produce

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

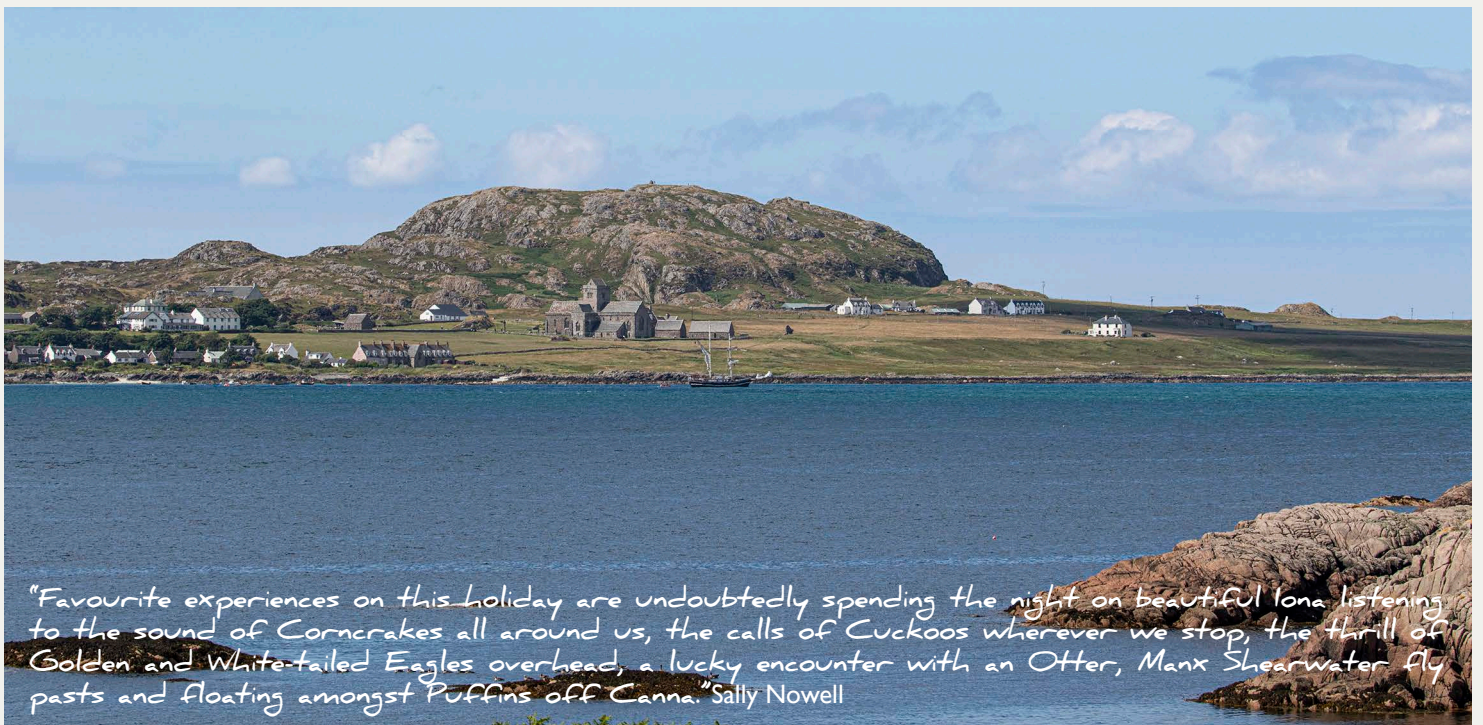
2-4 After breakfast we shall make our way to Oban where we catch the ferry to the beautiful wildlife-rich island of Mull, looking out for cetaceans as we cross. Over the next two days we shall spend time in the wild mountainous areas specifically looking for Golden and White-tailed Eagles, but of course hoping for Short-eared Owls and Hen Harrier that frequent the area. If we are lucky we might catch a glimpse of a Merlin flashing across the sky.

We shall drive through some magnificent scenery lit up at this time of year with the fresh greens in the woodlands and on the hillsides.

The rocky shores of the island are home to a variety of waders and we shall be bumping into Common Sandpiper, Redshank, Lapwing, Curlew and Ringed Plover all at the height of their breeding season. We shall also be looking for Red-throated and Great Northern Divers that frequent the calmer bays and sea lochs. Out to sea we can expect feeding Gannets and Kittiwakes. As we creep along the narrow roads beside the sea lochs our eyes will be on the look out for Otters. Mull has to be the best place in the UK to watch these wonderful mammals.

5 Today is a time for a bit of relaxation. We shall be leaving our base on Mull and making our way to Iona, where we spend most of the day exploring the island on foot, in the hope of seeing and hearing the elusive Corncrake. With a bit of





"Favourite experiences on this holiday are undoubtedly spending the night on beautiful Iona listening to the sound of Corncrakes all around us, the calls of Cuckoos wherever we stop, the thrill of Golden and White-tailed Eagles overhead, a lucky encounter with an Otter, Manx Shearwater fly pasts and floating amongst Puffins off Canna." Sally Nowell

free time you may wish to visit the Abbey or simply visit one of the beautiful beaches on the island, home to Turnstones, Ringed Plover and it's often a good place to see Eider Duck. Tonight we have a special treat and will be staying on Iona to really soak up the atmosphere of this tranquil and special place. At night the sound of the Corncrake echos around this stunning island, an experience not to be missed, so an evening walk is a must.

6 We shall depart our hotel and make our way back across Mull and on to the mainland, but as is so often the case, our travel days involve lots of wildlife watching too. We cross the remote wilderness of the Morvern Peninsula and then return to the coastline once again watching for Otters and other sealife. Today we shall visit remnants of the spectacular Celtic rainforest. Ancient Oak trees that drip with mosses and lichens are a sight in themselves, but here we shall be in search of our colourful spring songsters, Redstart and Wood Warbler. A stunning drive takes us north to the Sound of Arisaig and finally we arrive at our hotel in the delightful fishing town of Mallaig, which shall be our base for the next three nights.

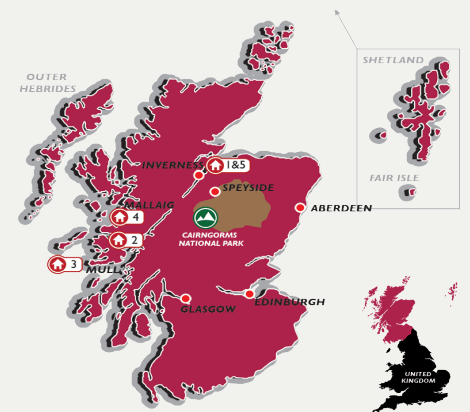
7-8 Today we shall be going out to the fantastic island of Canna. This will be a fabulous trip to the remote soaring seacliffs, which at this time will be covered in noisy seabirds. 20,000 birds are known to breed here. We expect to see Puffin, Razorbill, Guillemot and Shags on the cliffs and should catch sight of Arctic and Great Skua. On the water there is always a chance of Manx

Shearwater or a Storm Petrel. Our comfortable private charter is the Orca III. We shall be looked after by her experienced crew as we head out on our seaward adventure. They know this area well and may find other interesting coves to explore enroute. It's always good to be on the look out for cetaceans; Bottlenose Dolphin, Harbour Porpoise and Risso's Dolphin are present year round and if we are lucky Minke Whales and Orca can also be seen.

Today we shall again spend time onboard Orca III. Days on the boat give us a great opportunity to get to inaccessible areas and to see some breathtaking views of Scotland, as well as increasing our chances of seeing cetaceans. We may cruise around Eigg, Rum and Skye, or visit some of the sheltered inland sealochs, looking for local wildlife such as White-tailed and Golden Eagle. From the sea we have access to areas that are more remote and seldom visited and can get spectacular and unexpected views of the local wildlife.

9 We shall leave the west coast today and make our way back to Inverness where our adventure sadly ends. Despite the fact that this is a travelling day there is more spectacular wildlife watching to be had along our route. We go back up the Caledonian Canal and then take a quieter route stopping at RSPB Loch Ruthven looking for magnificent Slavonian Grebe. Arriving in Inverness, if time allows, we shall take a walk along the canal looking for Kingfisher before our final meal together.

10 After breakfast we shall say our goodbyes and depart Inverness.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Meet up in Inverness for overnight stay. - 1 night Premier Inn
- Days 2-4** Journey through stunning scenery, before catching the ferry to Mull 3 nights at Isle of Mull Hotel
- Day 5** Short ferry over to Iona to explore the island 1 night St Columba Hotel, Iona
- Day 6** Ferry back to the mainland following the coastline to the beautiful Ardnamurchan Peninsula, wildlife watching enroute 3 nights West Highland Hotel, Mallaig
- Days 7-8** Boat trips out to the fantastic island of Canna, plus Eigg, Rum, Skye and more
- Day 9** Travel back to Inverness birding enroute 1 night Premier Inn
- Day 10** Depart after breakfast

Steve Batt: Corncrake
 Jane Hope: Iona, Otter
 Sally Nowell: Redstart, Oak Woodlands
 Rob Martin: White-tailed Eagle

