

ISLAND HOPPING AROUND THE HEBRIDES



"This holiday includes some of Scotland's most magnificent scenery, from soaring mountains, spectacular hidden lochs, to deserted beaches. Choosing our 'favourite place' is sure to be a challenge!"
Sally Nowell

Dates Wed 16 - Sat 26 Jun 2027

Price £4,695

Deposit £900 Single Supp £760

Leaders Sally Nowell & Craig Round

Walking Coastal walks on uneven terrain of up to two miles. Walking boots recommended, with trainers suitable on some occasions. Collapsible or telescopic walking poles could be useful

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

Insects Biting insects can sometimes be a problem, so bring repellent just in case

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 11

Accom Double, twin, single rooms all ensuite

Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

Golden Eagle	Arctic Skua
White-tailed Eagle	Great Skua
Hen Harrier	Manx Shearwater
Common Dolphin	Storm Petrel
Minke Whale	Cuckoo
Short-eared Owl	Merlin
Great Northern Diver	Peregrine
Red-throated Diver	Arctic Tern
Black-throated Diver	Greenshank
Eider	Grey Plover
Whimbrel	Corn Bunting
Red-necked Phalarope	Twite
Little Tern	Otter
Black Guillemot	Grey Seal
Puffin	Basking Shark

Andrew Dodd: Short-eared Owl

Sally Nowell: Beautiful South Uist Beach, Canna, Sea Thrift, Mallaig Harbour,

Jane Hope: Red-necked Phalaropes

John & Louise Sykes: Shags

Weaving our way slowly by land and sea, our holiday will take us to the Inner and Outer Hebrides, an incredible and diverse wildlife-filled journey.

- Take a private charter to the bird-filled seacliffs of remote Canna
- Visit Rum, where the reintroduction of White-tailed Eagle began over 50 years ago!
- Spend time on unspoilt and deserted white sand beaches with shallow crystal clear waters
- Great chances of cetaceans including Minke Whale and possible Basking Shark
- Huge flotillas of Manx Shearwaters
- Puffins galore on and around the beautiful Shiant Islands
- Unique machair habitat in bloom

1 Our holiday begins with a meal together in Inverness and a run through the trip itinerary.

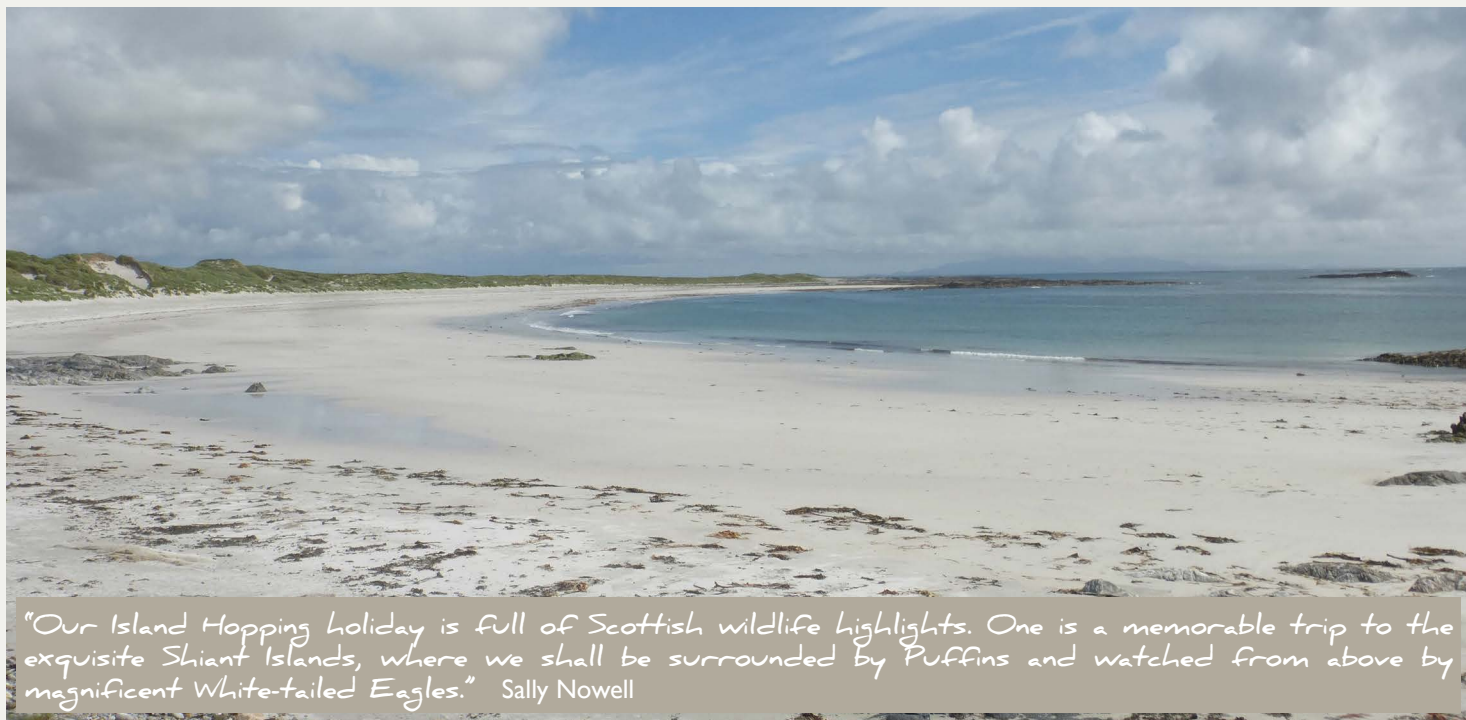
2 We'll visit Loch Ruthven just when the young Slavonian Grebes should be exploring this beautiful and tranquil loch. It's a real day of lochs; on our journey west we shall stop at sea lochs, watching out for White-tailed Eagles, and the classically beautiful Loch Morar, the deepest loch in Scotland. We arrive in the delightful fishing port of Mallaig, where we shall spend the next three nights.

3-4 We'll spend these days aboard our comfortable private charter. Weather permitting, we shall explore two of the most beautiful islands of the Inner Hebrides, Rum and Canna. There is always a sense of anticipation as we gather on deck for some sea-watching - auks, Gannets, skuas, shearwaters and divers are likely, plus a chance of Storm Petrel.

Both islands have some wonderful seabird colonies and there should be plenty of young around. Off the sea-cliffs of Rum we shall look for nesting White-tailed Eagles, whose chicks will be well developed by now. On the water we'll look for large flocks of Manx Shearwater; an incredible 70,000 of them nest on Rum! We'll walk on Rum in search of Otters and wildflowers. Next day heading further out to the isolated island of Canna. Time on the water offers us great chances of Common and Bottlenose Dolphin, as well as Minke Whale and who knows, we might strike lucky and catch up with our local pod of Orca.

Basking Shark are also around, so it will be all eyes on the water and fingers crossed for a flat calm day. On Canna we'll take a short walk listening out for the local Corncrakes, though by now their calls are dimmed as the breeding season is over. Around Canna we visit





the huge sea stacks, often covered in noisy Kittiwakes and float amongst the confiding Puffins, Razorbills and Gulliemots.

5-7 We leave Mallaig and take a three hour ferry to Lochboisdale on South Uist. Our ferry journeys are further opportunities to look out for wildlife or simply relax, before we arrive on the Outer Hebrides.

We'll start in South Uist, with shallow lochs, rocky headlands, dunes and our first machair. Machair is a Gaelic word meaning fertile, low-lying grassy plain and refers to a unique habitat that is one of the rarest in Europe. July is peak time for many of the species, so we can hope for swathes of colourful flora including the endemic Hebridean Orchid. The wealth of flowers may attract Moss Carder and Great Yellow Bumble Bee.

The Uists are wonderful for raptors and the chance of eagles is ever present, with Short-eared Owls and Hen Harriers often seen quartering the peatlands often seen as we drive.

The beaches and shallow bays of the west coast are fished by Common, Arctic and Little Terns, Great Northern Divers and a very healthy Otter population. Red-necked Phalaropes breed here and we shall take time to find these beautiful birds in their breeding habitat.

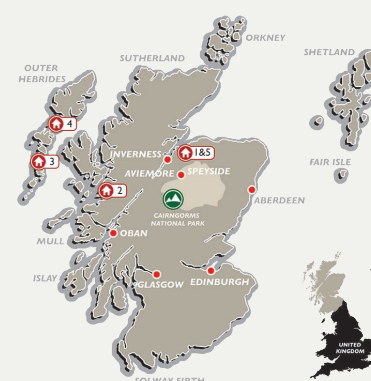
8-10 Today we make our way north to Harris, via Berneray, stopping enroute at the RSPB Reserve at Balranald. This is a stunning location with areas of dunes and machair where Arctic and Little Terns nest on sandy fields and we have a chance of finding Twite, Corn Bunting and wild Rock Doves.

Another ferry journey takes us across to Harris, with its rugged and forbidding mountains. Time permitting we'll visit Rodel and its beautiful 15th century church, built for the chiefs of Clan Macleod, before settling in to our hotel for the next two nights.

From here we shall enjoy an exclusive boat trip to the Shiant Isles, eight miles off Harris in the middle of the Minch. This truly spectacular experience will be an adventure to remember! The islands support over 100,000 pairs of seabirds, including 10% of all the UK's Puffins! We shall work hard to get good views of the seabirds and may see Manx Shearwaters, Common and Grey Seals and perhaps Common Dolphins. There is a healthy population of White-tailed Eagle here, so once again we have great chances to enjoy these magnificent raptors in their element. We shall get stunningly close to rafts of Puffins and other auks, allowing fantastic photography opportunities.

Harris is conjoined to Lewis, but the habitat is very different, with wide expanses of peat moor, wild coastlines and incredible bare-rock scenery. Towards Stornoway on Lewis we shall visit one of the world's great beaches at Luskentyre, which is simply stunning and a superb location for Golden Eagles; Harris has the densest population of these birds in the UK. If time allows we shall to stop at the world famous Standing Stones of Callanish, before heading to the late ferry from Stornoway across the fertile waters of The Minch to Ullapool, providing more chances of Minke Whale, Basking Shark and seabirds. From Ullapool we head back to Inverness for our evening meal.

After breakfast we say our farewells.



Outline Itinerary

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| Day 1 | Meet in Inverness for overnight stay
1 night at Premier Inn |
| Day 2 | Travel south west to Mallaig
3 nights West Highland Hotel, Mallaig |
| Days 3-4 | Visit Rum and Canna |
| Days 5-7 | Ferry crossing from Mallaig to Lochboisdale,
3 nights Borrodale Hotel, South Uist |
| Days 8-9 | Ferry to Leverburgh. Birding and wildlife exploration around Harris and visit the Shiant Islands
2 nights Hotel Hebrides, Harris |
| Day 10 | Ferry crossing from Stornoway to Ullapool then journey back to Inverness.
1 night at Premier Inn |
| Day 11 | After breakfast we say our farewells |

