

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS



"This holiday takes us through and to some of Scotland's most remote and beautiful landscapes, looking for and enjoying its flora and fauna on our way."
Sally Nowell

Dates Tue 1 - Tue 8 June 2027
Price £3,110
Deposit £600 Single Supp £915

Leader Sally Nowell
Weather Mixture of sun and showers (10°-25°C). Bring layers including waterproofs. You may want to bring sunscreen and hats
Walking Most walks are 1-3 miles on wide, sandy tracks. Walking boots recommended, with trainers suitable on some occasions. Collapsible/telescopic walking poles could be useful
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8
Insects Biting insects may be encountered, so bring repellent
Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group 6

Just some of what we hope to see:

Great Northern Diver	Fulmar
Red-throated Diver	Arctic Skua
Black-throated Diver	Great Skua
Common Scoter	Black Guillemot
Whooper Swan	Greenshank
Cuckoo	Curlew
Whinchat	Twite
Redstart	Northern Wheatear
Sandwich Tern	Tree Pipit
Arctic Tern	Goldeneye
Golden Eagle	Eider
White-tailed Eagle	Sanderling
Osprey	Dipper
Merlin	Harbour Porpoise
Peregrine	Scottish Primrose
Puffin	
Razorbill	

This is such a glorious time to be in the Scottish Highlands, looking out for the best of Highland birds and discovering unique flora.

- Fabulous long summer days
- An opportunity to explore the flora of the Northern Highlands
- A relaxing two-centre holiday
- Visit Cape Wrath, most north-westerly point in mainland UK
- Visit Castle of Mey
- Enjoy eagles and divers during a Highland Summer
- Visit to RSPB Forsinard and Dunnet Head

1 We arrive at our hotel in Inverness and meet for dinner, where we shall discuss the week ahead.

2 After breakfast we set off north! Our stunning journey will take us over the Moray, Cromarty and Dornoch Firths. We shall stop at Loch Fleet enroute to see if we can catch sight of a fishing Osprey. Here, loafing Common and Grey Seals lie in the shallows. Greenshank breed in this area and some of our breeding waders may already have returned to the coast. There is a local nesting Osprey close by and White-tailed Eagles also nest in the area, so you never know our luck! Onward and northward we go, with a lunch stop and a leg stretch along the magnificent golden sand of Brora. This stunning stretch of road should be aglow with the bright yellow of the gorse and if the sun is shining wafts of the coconut scent of the

flowers should drift in the windows. As we push further north we stop at RSPB Forsinard, where we have an opportunity to admire and soak up the unique atmosphere of the Flow country. Here, breeding Greenshank and Golden Plover might put in an appearance. We shall walk out to a lookout tower in the middle of the peat bog and find out a little of the importance of this fragile and precious habitat.

We continue our journey, passing beside lochs and below soaring mountain sides and eventually arrive at our fabulous hotel, where we check in and prepare for our first evening meal in this delightful coastal retreat.

3-6 The next four days will be spent exploring this glorious part of Scotland. We are based at a small hotel on the far north coast. From





here we expect to get some fabulous coastal views and can enjoy gentle wanders down to the sea in the evening, where we can listen for the haunting call of Red-throated Divers in the bay.

We shall spend a day travelling to Cape Wrath. Cape Wrath Lighthouse is located at the most north westerly tip of mainland Britain. The Cape is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), as well as a Special Protection Area for birds.

We shall also visit the stunning Balnakeil Beach, a great place to watch for Gannets, Sandwich Terns and summering Great Northern Divers. Arctic and Great Skua are both possible in this northern corner of the UK. In the opposite direction we shall make our way to RSPB Dunnet Head, a beautiful seabird colony, including good numbers of Puffin. It looks towards Orkney, but it's the flora here that might be particularly interesting. Spring Squill and the tiny but stunningly beautiful Scottish Primrose will be the jewels in the crown we shall be looking for.

We shall also visit the castle and grounds of the historic Castle Of Mey, former home of the Queen Mother! Along the coast there are some beautiful and remote white sand beaches and headlands worthy of exploring. Gannets dive offshore, while Kittiwakes, auks and Fulmars are constantly streaming by. This is a premier sight to scan for dolphins, or even whales, if it is calm.

In some of the small woodland areas Redstart may be present and we shall be listening out for Tree Pipit. We may encounter Twite, Northern Wheatear

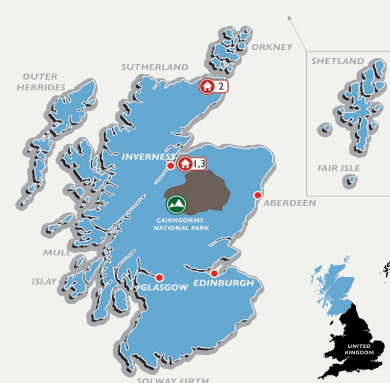
and Whinchat and we shall hopefully find plenty of Cuckoos as we go.

On one day we shall leave the coast and head inland along one of the remote glens, where we shall look for Golden and White-tailed Eagle, Hen Harrier and Merlin. The inland lochs are great places to look for breeding Red-throated and Black-throated Diver and we may come across breeding Common Scoter:

7 We begin our southward journey today, leaving the remote hills of the North Highlands, but this is a super special travel day, as we take some of the more minor roads past remote lochs, where we hope to see Red and Black-throated Diver and keep our eyes to the sky for eagles. Today we travel through some truly beautiful scenery. There are some interesting historic sights enroute and we are going to be passing through the Northwest Highlands Geopark, so as we travel we may have the opportunity to spot some of the interesting geology in this area. We can linger to enjoy the unique fauna and flora of these remote glens and if we are lucky we might come across some of the few pairs of Whooper Swan that breed in the far north.

We continue on to our Inverness hotel, where we can reflect on our week exploring the Northern Highlands together:

8 Today we say our farewells, before making our southward journeys home..



Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Arrive in Inverness 1 night North Kessock Hotel, Inverness
Days 2-6	Travel to and explore the wonderful flora and fauna of the Northern Scottish Highlands, including a trip to Cape Wrath 5 nights Bettyhill Hotel, by Thurso
Day 7	Travel slowly back to Inverness enjoying the scenery and wildlife as we go 1 night North Kessock Hotel, Inverness
Day 8	We say our farewells

Rob Martin: Puffin
Sally Nowell: Flow Country, Cape Wrath
Colin Scott: Great Skua
Jane Hope: Great Northern Diver
Roy Atkins: Scottish Primrose
Perri Strawn: Beach

