

THE SHETLAND ISLES



"Shetland is a trip I look forward to every year and these wonderful isles have some of the rarest and finest wildlife spectacles to be found anywhere in Britain. Our two-centre holiday allows us to take in all that these magical islands have to offer - stunning wildlife, incredible scenery and fascinating history." Craig Round

Dates Sat 27 Jun - Sat 4 Jul 2026

Price £2,845

Deposit £565 Single Supp £350

Leaders Craig Round and Simon Eaves

Flights Loganair, scheduled
Outbound: Midday, Aberdeen-Sumburgh
Inbound: Afternoon, Sumburgh-Aberdeen

Weather During a typical week we expect mixed sun and showers, with temperatures in the range 10-20°C

Walking Walking is generally very relaxed and easy, but on at least two of the days we may take walks of up to 3-4 miles on rough grassland and small coastal paths

Meals All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 8

Insects Biting insects should not be a problem, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single ensuite rooms

Group 12

Jane Hope: Hermaness with Puffin
Robin Martin: Storm Petrel, Snipe
Gill Haveron: Broch of Mousa
Andrew Hoyne: Puffins
Craig Round: Red-necked Phalarope, Otter

Just some of what we hope to see:

Red-necked Phalarope	Dunlin
Whimbrel	Golden Plover
Storm Petrel	Twite
Red-throated Diver	Rock Dove
Great Northern Diver	Raven
Long-tailed Duck	Twite
Whooper Swan	Otter
Great Skua	Minke Whale
Arctic Skua	White-beaked Dolphin
Gannet	White-sided Dolphin
Puffin	Orca
Black Guillemot	Harbour Porpoise
Common Tern	Harbour Seal
Arctic Tern	Grey Seal

Just 6° south of the Arctic Circle - far northern isles and world-class wildlife, huge seabird colonies and delightful Red-necked Phalaropes, at the Simmer Dim.

- Islands at the 'Simmer Dim' when the sun barely sets
- Easy flight to Shetland rather than the 14-hour ferry
- Mousa's Storm Petrels, Fetlar's Red-necked Phalaropes
- The spectacular seabird cities of Noss, Hermaness and Sumburgh
- Otters and offshore whales and dolphins
- Regular rarities and summering scarce breeders
- Closer to Norway than to mainland Scotland

I Flying from Aberdeen, we arrive in Shetland and drive north over Mainland to our delightful hotel in Busta Voe.

2-4 On our visit to Shetland's most northerly island Unst, we'll walk out across the wild moorland to the dramatic cliffs of Hermaness, where the skies are full of soaring Great Skuas. Breeding Snipe, Golden Plover, Dunlin and Meadow Pipit call overhead. Unst also supports breeding Wheatear, Twite and Whimbrel.

Walking on, we reach the vast cliffs and gannetry at Saito. The sight that greets you really does take your breath away! There is an epic soundscape from thousands of birds on the ledges. Blizzards of Gannets ride the updrafts and countless more swirl in vast flocks below. Fulmars and Great Skuas glide past and Puffins emerge from their burrows. We look out to the remote Muckle Flugga

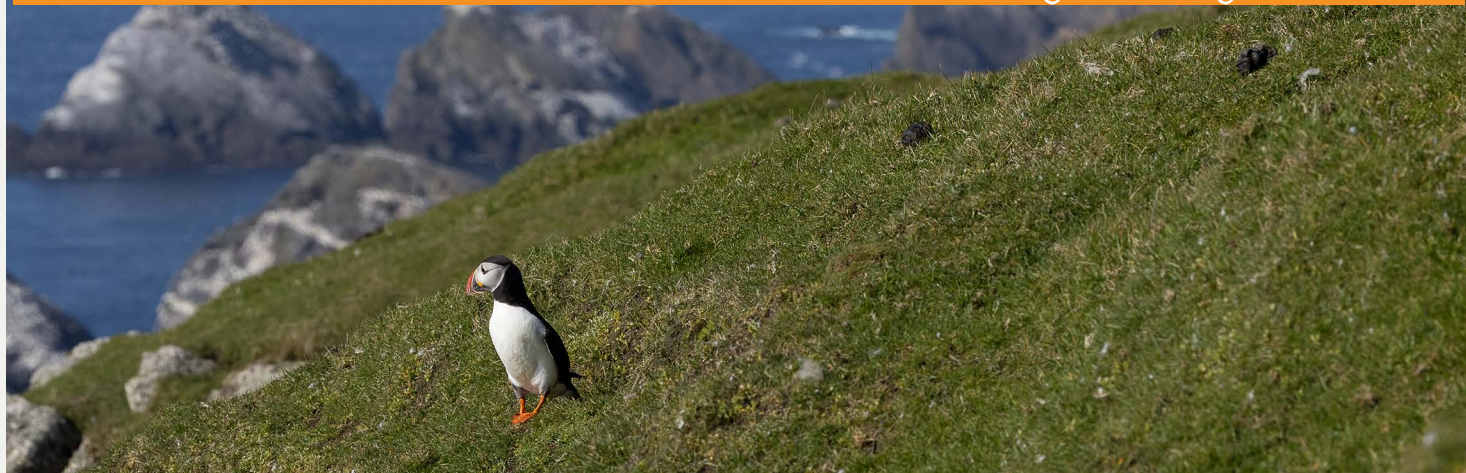
lighthouse and the small rocky island of Out Stack, after which there is no more Britain!

On our regular short ferry crossings between islands, Gannets can be seen diving for fish and the small harbours are a favourite haunt of Otters. Arctic Skuas harry passing Arctic Terns returning with food, as lines of Puffins, Guillemots and Razorbills stream through the narrow sounds on feeding flights between the islands. We shall be alert to the sight of any fins breaking the surface, betraying a Harbour Porpoise or maybe even Orcas!

Another inter-island boat journey takes us to Fetlar, so named from the Viking for 'fat or fertile land' and the fourth largest island in the Shetland Isles. The meadows and verges are a blaze of wildflowers and colour at this time of year and the island is a stronghold for stunning and rare Red-necked Phalaropes. Fetlar is also a great place



"Last year we had incredible views of Red-necked Phalaropes, including watching a flock rise up from their breeding marsh to mob a passing Hooded Crow in mid air! We had great views of a dog Otter feeding just offshore below us and enjoyed visits to the huge seabird cliffs of Hermaness and Sumburgh Head, but as always the boat trip to the vast seabird cliffs of Noss was simply mind blowing! Our visit wouldn't be complete without a trip out in the simmer-dim twilight to wonderful Mousa and last year was as magical as ever - swirling Storm Petrels around an incredible 2,000 year old Broch, so close we could even hear and feel the rush of air through their wings!" Craig Round



to see and hear the weird wailing courtship cries of Red-throated Divers, which at this time of year may have young.

Arctic Skua, Golden Plover, Dunlin, Ringed Plover and Whimbrel can also be seen in the fields and on the tundra-like heath of Fetlar and their 'rippling' calls can be heard across the island, whilst the flower rich meadows support Lapwing, Oystercatcher, Curlew, Snipe and Redshank in good numbers.

A trip highlight for many is our dusk visit to the wonderful island of Mousa. Once inside the tower of the incredible 2,000-year-old Iron Age Broch, we are enveloped in silence, until the rhythmic 'churring' of Storm Petrels amongst the stones starts to bring these ancient walls alive, a moment of pure 'Shetland magic'! It is a real privilege to watch these tiny ocean-going seabirds flying in low over the sea, to return to their nest sites in the walls of the Broch.

North Shetland is one of the UK's premier locations for spotting elusive Otters. Along the shores we also see Red-breasted Merganser, Black Guillemot and Eider (or Dunter) and further inland, coastal species nest everywhere, including Arctic Skuas (Skootie Alan) and Fulmar (Maalies). We shall really be learning our Shetland bird names!

5-7 Leaving the north and its many islands and skerries behind us, we venture south to our hotel at the southern end of Shetland, next to the ancient settlement site of Jarlshof. Here, there are layers of human history dating

from the Bronze Age through to the Iron Age and even into the Viking period and the fascinating Iron Age site of Old Scatness is only a short stroll around the the coast from here.

Great Northern Diver and Long-tailed Duck all over-summer here, along with pairs of Whooper Swans that now breed. We'll also see Arctic Terns, Arctic and Great Skuas, Rock Dove, Twite, Raven and perhaps Peregrine.

Also close by are the superb seabird cliffs of Sumburgh Head, alive with breeding seabirds at this time of year. The views across South Mainland can be superb, with even Fair Isle visible on a clear day some 25 miles away! The wonderful Stevenson lighthouse can be a great place to look for passing cetaceans and we have previously seen White-beaked and White-sided Dolphins, Humpback and Minke Whales and even Orcas!

The island of Noss is one of the finest seabird islands in Europe. On our boat trip around the island, we'll cruise right under the sheer seabird cliffs of the Noup, towering 590ft above us. It's a truly awesome sight and sound! These are the largest cliffs on Shetland's east coast and home to almost 9,000 pairs of Gannet alone! The great seabird city also holds Guillemot, Razorbill, Kittiwake, Fulmar, Shag and also the delightful Black Guillemot.

8 We may have some time to birdwatch on the final morning, before our flight back to Aberdeen.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly into Sumburgh and travel north to our north Mainland base at Busta Voe 4 nights Busta House Hotel
- Days 2-4** Exploration of Unst, including the wild cliffs of Hermaness and the small island of Fetlar, as well as north Mainland and a night visit to Mousa
- Day 5** Travel south to our base on the south Mainland 3 nights Sumburgh Hotel
- Days 6-7** Birdwatching and wildlife exploration of south Mainland, including a visit to Noss, Sumburgh Head and the Viking settlement of Jarlshof
- Day 8** Depending on our flight time, we may be able to spend the morning bird and wildlife watching, before catching our flight back to Aberdeen

