

Alaska  
8-28 June 2024  
(mainland only part, 8-22 June)

Birds, Bears and Big Things in the Water - Wildlife Notes from the Last Frontier

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**Guests:** Lynne & Larry Moore, Claudia & Bill Draper, Patty Hoyt, Jean Brown, Joyce Hoy

**Day 1: Getting There**

With a mixed nationality group our routes to Alaska are varied, with some arriving from San Francisco and others flying via Seattle. Some flights are on time, others delayed, yet, by hook or by crook we all manage to arrive, late and weary, at our hotel in Anchorage. We are reminded of how far north we are when we note that it's still light as we check in around midnight!

**Day 2: Anchorage Introductions**

It's customary to explore the immediate environs before breakfast, which is no chore for those with body clocks attuned to British time. The hotel is sited on the bank of a Lake Hood which is obviously big enough for landing a float plane as there are many moored up around the perimeter – a reminder that it's a common mode of transport in Alaska and we won't argue with the claim that it's the busiest floatplane base in the world.

There are lots of duck in the middle of the water and we start going through them: most are Lesser Scaups with a few larger Canvasbacks and an American Wigeon. Tree Swallows are flying around and we see our first Black-billed Magpie, White-crowned Sparrow and American Robin – so a good start. Back at the hotel it's time for introductions as all our fellow guests assemble for breakfast.

After picking up the rental van and packed lunches we head off for some easy birding in the Anchorage area. On the south perimeter of the city is Potter Marsh, a wetland Reserve with a series of boardwalks and a stunning backdrop of the Chugach Mountains, still marked with strands of winter snow. From the first platform we see several Arctic Terns and Short-billed Gulls flying around, a nice Lincoln's Sparrow singing from a stump and a drake Green-winged Teal in a channel. We note Wilson's Snipe, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Alder Flycatcher and get better looks at a perched Tree Swallow with its iridescent blue plumage catching the light.

A Bald Eagle flies low overhead and with the backdrop of the mountains it's a scene that is quintessential Alaska. Soon, a second eagle passes over and from the next viewpoint we can see the pair's nest site – in the scope we can see three young

birds – fabulous looks! Then, a Sharp-shinned Hawk flies over attracting the attention of the many Tree Swallows.

Further south the road hugs the shore of Turnagain Arm, a narrow, fjord-like inlet surrounded on both sides by steep rugged slopes dotted with snow. We stop at the temptingly-named Beluga Point but our scopes are not trained on the sea looking for whales, but to the steep slope behind that has several Dall's Sheep moving through the short vegetation and rocks. A little further along we find a picnic site with some shelter from the stiff wind.

After eats, we start retracing our steps, stopping at two places to view Potter Marsh from the main road. We get good looks at several Red-necked Grebes that are nesting nearby – as are a pair of Trumpeter Swans. We see our first distant Sandhill Crane and get brief glimpses of Red-necked Phalaropes that soon disappear in the many pools hidden from view. Another Bald Eagle flies through, putting up all the gulls.

After some hot drinks at the Chickadee Coffee House, we have a session at Westchester Lagoon. The wind has abated and it's a comfortable temperature and many locals are strolling, jogging, cycling and walking dogs. We walk to where we can view over to a small island and get close views of Redhead, Lesser Scaup and nesting Red-necked Grebes. The island is a protected and popular nesting site and we see both Arctic Terns and Short-billed Gulls with chicks. A few Bonaparte's Gulls join the other gulls flying around and perching on rooftops.

Walking around the perimeter of the lagoon we can look down to a marshy pool to the right - there are Gadwall, American Wigeon and Mallard with chicks. A little further around David finds our first Moose, a gangly young bull with small antlers in velvet. There's also a stunning pair of Common Loons (Great Northern Divers) – contenders for birds of the day with their immaculate pied dress. Crossing under the railway, the path hugs the coast and at the first place to scan over the marsh and mud we can see a close family of Sandhill Cranes with their young, or 'colts'. Beyond are Shoveler on the mud flats to add to the species list. Behind in the trees are Black-capped Chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatch. There's a calling Orange-crowned Warbler and White-crowned Sparrows before we wander back – a great first day to get the Alaska list up and running.

### **Day 3: Venturing North**

The early birds catch some new species on Lake Hood with Greater Scaup alongside the more plentiful Lesser Scaup; Redheads amongst the Canvasbacks; Bufflehead with a group of Barrow's Goldeneyes; Horned Grebes, Common Loon and a Rusty Blackbird.

Everyone else is up for our pre-breakfast session at 7am and we drive the fifteen or so minutes to Kincaid Park. It's a large municipal park within the city limits of Anchorage that is full of biking and cross-country skiing paths amongst the boreal forest. It also doubles up as a centre for other outdoor pursuits having a series

of soccer pitches and small grandstands. We park and walk around some of the pitches and are surprised to find two bull Moose grazing on the edge of one. They seem oblivious to the many aircraft that are taking off from the nearby airport. Keeping our distance, we walk around a trail finding two more!

The trail then takes a left turn and drops deep into a more heavily forested area and armed with some information that Larry and Bill has gleaned from other birders, we approach a utility pole that has a nice hole close to its top. We get into position and play the waiting game.

We don't need to wait too long before a woodpecker flies in and lands near the entrance. It has a yellow cap and barred sides – a Three-toed Woodpecker! Other species on the walk include Swainson's Thrush and thousands of mosquitos.

After breakfast we get the van packed and get set for the drive north, not forgetting to pick up the sandwiches before we leave Anchorage.

It's a long drive but truly spectacular. At South Denali Viewpoint we have our lunches with a dramatic view to the mighty Alaska Range. Unfortunately, the cloud is surrounding the highest peaks around Mount McKinley, but the panorama is arresting nevertheless. A second viewpoint overlooks the Chulitna River with its braided course of sand and shingle bars – one has a tiny tent with someone sat outside – what a spot to camp.

We take a couple of more stops to savour the views at Broad Pass before descending into Cantwell and beyond to Creekside Cabins and Lodge, our base for the next three nights.

#### **Day 4: Denali National Park**

A small wander before breakfast around the grounds of the cabins at Creekside yields a few birds including some new species. We see our first Canada Jays and Boreal Chickadees, as well as several Dark-eyed Juncos. A Swainson's Thrush is singing from the top of a spruce and we get a tempting glimpse of a Three-toed Woodpecker that flies through the trees.

We meet up for breakfast then leave shortly after 9am, driving north to the Denali National Park, one of the largest reserves in the US National Park collection – over twice the size of Yellowstone! To manage numbers of vehicles along the one long and winding road that serves the Park, the authorities operate a bus service that takes visitors deep into the Denali wilderness. We are booked on a 10am departure and check in the bus depot to get our tickets. We are soon introduced to our guide and driver who is called Darrin! Well fancy that!

We slowly drive west gazing through the windows at the boreal spruce forest and listening to Darrin's lively commentary until we reach Savage River. David spots our first Willow Ptarmigan and Darrin finds one closer to the edge of the gravel road. A little further on we see a delightful mother moose and calf.

Passing through Igloo Forest Darrin stops to scan a steep rugged slope, where he's seen bears before. Bingo! They are still there – our first Grizzly Bears – a mum and two cubs on a hill. We are allowed to get the scope on them, enjoying their blonde coats, but sadly they soon disappear into the dense dwarf birch that cloaks the lower slopes.

Soon afterwards there is a large bear much closer to the road foraging within the scrubby birches. We watch and after a short while it reveals itself – another really blonde looking animal – fantastic!

The road continues to climb to the summit of Sable Pass where we pause again to scan the dynamic wrap-around panorama. David sees something on the long white bank of snow. It's a fabulous Long-tailed Jaeger (Skua) on the ice and it's caught a small rodent – we even manage looks through the scope at this specialist tundra breeder.

Next up are our first small groups of Caribou that stand out in the green dwarf birch. There's also a Raven family on a nest under the bridge that crosses a small creek – the young are quite large with formed flight feathers and will soon be on their way, but for now they stand cheek to cheek on the platform of sticks.

Our turnaround is at mile 43 where a bridge crosses a narrow ravine. In previous years the road would continue to the Eilson Visitor Center and beyond to Wonder Lake, but a recent landslide has washed the road away and now only construction vehicles can go further. It's scheduled to open in 2027!

As we start the return journey, we decide to take a walk along a stretch of the road leading up to Sable Pass - it's great to stretch our legs and explore the area more fully. There's lots of botanising adding some flowering plants of the tundra like Mountain Avens, Arctic Lupine, Bogbean, Lousewort and Boreal Jacob's Ladder to name just a few.

We can also stop and listen to a variety of smaller birds singing. Savannah Sparrow and Tree Sparrow show well and we are getting familiar with the commonplace White-crowned Sparrow. Jean spots a beautiful black-capped Wilson's Warbler though the Orange-crowned Warblers offer only glimpses. From the taller willow scrub comes the song of Gray-cheeked Thrushes but none show themselves.

Scanning the ridges we see three large birds flying along. We realise what we are seeing when we recognise a Raven mobbing two far larger birds – Golden Eagles! We follow them and soon the male eagle starts its fabulous plunge-diving display.

While we are all looking one way, Patty is looking to the rugged slopes behind us and she finds two Dall's Sheep – the left-hand animal is a fine ram sporting its large round horns. Larry finds two sleek Long-tailed Jaegers and we enjoy looking at these walking along the tundra.

After a few spots of rain, we flag down a bus that is returning to the National Park entrance. We join another group of visitors and settle in for the return route. At one point David yells 'STOP!' It's a beautiful Red Fox vixen foraging in the low vegetation, rooting around for prey. Also seen are two more Moose and all the while the landscape is totally awesome.

Our evening meal is at Karsten's at Healy where the food and atmosphere is great – there's also a singing duo too!

## **Day 5: A Denali Encore**

A few people missed out on the Boreal Chickadees the day before, so we meet up for a pre-breakfast wander around the cabins. Once again, we are successful getting close looks at some confiding birds and we note one is carrying food indicating that it is nesting nearby. A nice start to the day.

Breakfast is a more relaxed affair with our waitress Mia who wants to be a wildlife guide! It seems everyone that works in Denali is drawn here by the lure of the great wilderness.

After eats we drive north once again to experience the National Park but by now the rain has started. We book in for our 10am bus departure and we are in familiar hands as Darrin is our driver again.

Sadly, with the low cloud and persistent light rain the visibility is not as before so we are confined to scanning the near landscape as we drive along – consequently, the sightings are fewer. Then, a Swiss woman asks 'What's that horse over there?' It's a big Moose running across the hillside! Next up, Darrin briefly spots the rear end of a bear disappearing into the willows, never to be seen again.

More Caribou are laid up in the dwarf birch, their large antlers poking above the green. After the turn around at mile 43 we split into two groups. Some are keen for a walk in the rain and some prefer the shelter of the bus and a promise to visit the Husky Dog display back at the Park entrance.

For the walkers it is a little tough and cold, but it proves a rewarding amble around the eastern slope of Sable Pass. There's a wonderful adult Golden Eagle soaring low in a ravine and it is reluctant to fly in the rain, choosing to perch in the open on a crag – it looks great in the scope. There are a few birds singing, despite the drizzle – the now familiar White-crowned Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow and we get looks at another Wilson's Warbler.

There's a large bank of snow on the hillside and we notice a boulder that wasn't there before. It looks like it has a leg... through the scope all is revealed: it's a Grizzly Bear walking across the snow, standing out like a sore thumb. As soon as it walks off the snow and into the bushes it vanishes. We wait for it to reappear and track its progress along the base of the snow strand. It has a distinct hump on its shoulder and a blonde coat – a fine-looking animal even if it is a bit distant.

We carry on walking towards the Sable Pass summit and find two Long-tailed Jaegers, the same pair that was present yesterday. We enjoy nice looks at the birds, especially one that bathes in a freshwater pool close to us, then starts hovering in search of its rodent prey – wonderful.

A Whimbrel is also calling but we never do find it. On the bus back we get a close look at some Dall's Sheep and a brief Moose by the side of the road. We reunite with the rest of the group at the Visitor Centre and learn what was going on with the dog display.

## **Day 6: Exploring the Denali Highway Wilderness**

We can't resist an early morning sortie to the National Park for one last time. We drive to Savage River, the furthest point we can reach with our own vehicle. Here we can explore the braided river and steep rocky slopes that look ideal for Arctic critters.

Bingo! After only a few minutes Patty finds us a Collared Pika in the boulder field! It goes about its business, chewing fresh green grass as it pokes up again and again to check us out. An adorable wee beastie looking like a cross between a guinea pig and a short-eared rabbit.

Further along the trail we see a smart adult Northern Shrike and it shows off some unusual behaviour, vibrating its wings as if its begging for food like a young bird. Perhaps its asking to be fed by a mate in some pair-bonding ritual? We find new plants too with cushions of Moss Campion and Arctic Shooting Star. Other species seen include Fox Sparrow, Orange-crowned Warbler and Tree Sparrow before we head back to Creekside for breakfast.

After another great breakfast we pack our bags and load the van heading for pastures new. We get some fuel at Cantwell then start the long cross-country road that connects west-east to Paxson – the famed Denali Highway – the original route to Denali.

The paved surface soon switches to a gravel road after about two miles and we enter a large tract of spruce forest. We've been told that a Northern Hawk Owl has been seen here just days ago so it might be worth a dedicated search. We stop at a few places enjoying the Cliff Swallows that are nesting under a bridge, and Lynne finds us a smart male Northern Harrier. There's no sign of an owl – fingers crossed for later in the week.

After several miles we reach the first sizeable pool on the right of the road. We park and get the scopes out to see two White-winged Scoter pairs along with several Lesser Scaup. Larry finds a Red-necked Phalarope working the edge of the water – our first of what will prove to be many on the trip.

Lunch is on the boulders alongside the rushing Susitna River that is full with snow melt. A little further we can view the valley floor from above and we scan the series

of pools in the flood plain. There are distant Trumpeter Swans, distant Buffleheads and another Northern Harrier. At another bridge over a small creek we stop and look around, checking the water for Dippers but only finding a Green-winged Teal that is acting like a Torrent Duck. Then a Moose crosses the road behind us and we can see the full length of its legs before it vanishes into the forest. Larry finds a Blackpoll Warbler too.

At one point the road follows the course of a raised winding ridge – a glacial deposit from the retreating ice – a so-called 'esker'. It's a great viewpoint opportunity and we stop and scan the landscape that seems to go on forever. We see Bohemian Waxwings flying around and they land on the slope close to us, picking at tiny berries in the carpet of tundra – what a delight. Then Bill spots another Moose!

We've still several miles to go so we push on east to the Maclaren River, adding stops for a Black Scoter pair and a closer Bufflehead pair. We stop at the Waterfowl Lakes when there are a sizeable number of ducks on the water to the right. There are lots of Pintail, Mallard, White-winged, Black and Surf Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers and our first Long-tailed Ducks (males sporting both winter and summer plumage). We are now within striking distance of the lodge so vow to return.

We finally check in at the remote Maclaren Lodge, a collection of small cabins clustered around a main wooden building and each cabin has a balcony over-looking a small lake. All around are the wide-open spaces of the dwarf birch tundra, rimmed by wild barren mountains – a stunning, if remote location. When we are introduced to our housekeeper Remi we are reminded just how remote we are... it's an eight hour round trip to Fairbanks for fresh vegetables!

After a filling evening meal some of us wander around the lodge, climbing the short distance to a raised hillock for another wrap-around view. We can't help notice there are huge footprints in the sandy track, testament to a Grizzly Bear that passed by just a few days ago....it raises the pulse a little as we pass through the taller bushes! Species seen include Gray-cheeked Thrush, Arctic Terns, Beaver and a Moose with two calves. What a place!

## **Day 7: Further Adventures in the Tundra**

Our pre-breakfast outing is the short drive to Maclaren Summit, stopping for the tremendous view as the road climbs. At the top we are surrounded by rocks and snow with a view north to the Alaska Range, looking over a series of pools, the largest of which are still frozen. We scan the upper slopes behind us looking for Rock Ptarmigan – we are unsuccessful with that species, yet we do find a beautiful Hudsonian Whimbrel.

Below we can see a Red-throated Loon (Diver) in the nearest ice-free pool. The sound-scape is the now familiar song from White-crowned and American Tree Sparrows. There is also a trill-like call from Arctic Warblers and we lure some close

by for some great views. Time to return for breakfast, but not before we witness the female Moose with calves crossing the shallow pool behind the cabins.

After a round of coffee, oatmeal, pancakes, eggs, reindeer sausage and the like, we set off for another exploration of the tundra. We are not far from crossing the Maclaren River when Jean spots a huge bird to our right. We get out to witness a fantastic interaction between a young Golden Eagle and a male Northern Harrier – wonderful looks!

Driving east we stop at a couple of places to scan the wonderful vistas and roadside pools. At one pool we get nice looks at Red-necked Phalaropes working along the water's edge, noting the many females and just one male – most of the males must be on nest duty.

Our late morning walk is from one of the high passes where we can work our way up a slope to some barren tundra beyond the dwarf birch. This involves some walking across small strands of snow, but with care we manage to pick up the path that rises to the ridge. The show of flowers is particularly beautiful and there is much botanising for Arctic Azaleas, Alaskan Spirea, Naked-stemmed Wallflower, Louseworts and more.

Most of us climb higher looking for some specialist tundra residents and soon we find a smart American Golden Plover with a striking black belly and black face rimmed with white and a spangled golden cloak – superb! Higher still, we get wonderful looks at a Long-tailed Jaeger that flies around showing its rakish profile and wispy long tail – what a bird! Near the summit we see two beautifully marked Horned Larks – more birds of the wild and lonely spaces. Working our way back down we find a displaying Lapland Longspur (or Bunting) – it's fair to say that there are not many birds on show but when we find some, they are real treasures - special birds for a special place.

Onto Tangle River where we settle for a late lunch, then afterwards we explore the bubbling river looking for some more special birds. We soon find them – nine male Harlequins no less! At the bridge there are another two Harlequins – a male and female on a rock – and we get some great looks at two American Dippers. Larry goes one better and finds a nest under the bridge. Working our way back to the lodge, Jean finds another Long-tailed Jaeger hovering over a stony ridge.

After dinner we want to enjoy the fine summer evening and make the most of the near 24 hour daylight. The local Beavers put on a show in the pool at the cabins, then we drive west to the waterfowl lakes. David spots a Porcupine that quickly disappears into the bushes, though some folk do get some looks at these endearing animals. Another male Harrier drifts by over a hill too.

At the first major pool we set up scopes for a scan through the many ducks dotting the water. There are Pintails, Scaup, Shoveler, and a Trumpeter Swan on a large nest. On a closer mud bar there are a group of shorebirds to identify. We see



a Long-billed Dowitcher (with a limp), some Semi-palmated Plovers, Least Sandpipers, and Lesser Yellowlegs – nice additions to the species list.

At the last large pool to the left we get the scopes out for a scan around with the sun behind us. We enjoy looks at Black Scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, Scaup, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Raven and a parting Muskrat. We start the journey back getting some nice looks at a fine Common Loon pair – a fitting end to a golden Arctic evening.

## **Day 8: A Day to Remember**

It's another fine morning around Maclaren Lodge – we take a final look at the birds around the cabins, checking out the Cliff Swallows, Tundra Swans and Gray-cheeked Thrushes. We meet at breakfast and celebrate Larry's birthday – what a place to enjoy your special day. Let's hope there are some treats in store.

We say our goodbyes to the staff at Maclaren and start the journey east along the Denali Highway. The sun is shining and the visibility to the distant mountain ranges is perfect – the wilderness is wrapping around us and we feel humbled by the extent of it all.

We stop at a third spot along Maclaren summit, scanning the rocks for ptarmigan but only manage a glimpse of another ground squirrel scuttling around. A fine female Northern Harrier is gliding over the ridge and we note it's moulting the inner primaries so it cuts an intriguing silhouette.

We continue along the highway (avoiding the potholes) to beyond where we explored yesterday. As we climb one stretch, we notice an animal running along the road – it's a River Otter and it's far from a river! It soon bounds into the dwarf birches and disappears.

Further along there is a carpark and raised viewpoint that forces us to stop and take in our surroundings. The view to the north encompasses some lofty white peaks of the Alaska Range, then a buffer zone of dramatic lower peaks that look over a distant lake. A Bald Eagle enters the stage from the left and soars across the most dynamic of vistas – I swear I can hear the strains of the star-spangled banner.

Onto to Paxson and a detour north along the shoreline of Summit Lake to Rainbow Ridge – a jagged series of mountains with heavy scree or talus slopes that have coloured the mountain reds and browns. Back at Summit Lake we take lunch at the shore noting lots of Scaup in the water. There's also three Long-tailed Duck as well as Raven and Gray-cheeked Thrush.

To Glen Allen with the mighty snow-capped Wrangell Mountains beckoning us south. We stop at a couple of roadside pools hoping to see some divers as we've seen them here before. We have no luck on that front, but do see smart Barrow's Goldeneye, Bonapartes Gulls, Lesser Yellowlegs and a Horned Grebe pair, the male bringing in food to the incubating female.

We stop at Glenallen for fuel and air then head west on the road to Anchorage. We stop at a mile marker in the expanse of spruce and look for some of the forest's elusive residents. Hawk Owls have been seen here recently and we all get out of the van to scan the thousands of treetops. We are in luck! Soon the star of the show flies in, to a tall sparse spruce on the right of the road – the bird of our dreams and a perfect birthday present for Larry. A second bird flies across and they start calling to each other, one replacing the other on its perch. What a show!

Elated we push on for the last leg of our journey to Sheep Mountain, checking in at 7pm for dinner at 7.30pm. It's been another full day on the road yet still we can't resist a late walk around to see if there are any more owls about (we've seen Boreal Owl here before). Sadly, it's a no-show for anymore owls but we are more than contented with our sightings for the day.

## Day 9: To Homer

After another great breakfast, at Sheep Mountain Lodge, we set off on the most scenic of routes to Homer. Our long travel day is not without highlights and after only a few miles we pull over to view the Matanuska Glacier as it ploughs its way through the mountains, petering out in a series of moraines that has littered the valley floor with debris.

At Anchorage we pick up some lunches at Fred Meyers and then head south along Turnagain Arm to find a picnic spot. Bill has other ideas when he shouts "Beluga!" Close to the shore there are white things breaking the surface of the water. We park and watch as they make their way along the shore with the rushing tide. What a special thing to see – we learn that the population of Belugas in Cook Inlet is distinct from others, spending their complete year and lives in this, albeit huge, restricted bay.

Lunch is at Birdy Point, then it's along the water to Turnagain Pass for some gentle botanising enroute. Chocolate Iris for anyone? Continuing our journey, we cross through a great swathe of boreal forest along the Sterling Highway, marked by lots of dead trees from the recent forest fires. Larry's keen eyes spot something moving between the tree stumps – Black Bears! Two are foraging amongst the charred and fallen timbers – we park and get some great looks.

Onto to the last section of the journey with dynamic views over Cook Inlet to the volcanoes of Mount Redoubt and Mount Iliamna – just breath-taking. There are also Moose crossing the road, some Sandhill Cranes flying over and lots more Bald Eagles soaring. Finally, we descend into Homer, stopping to admire its position at the head of Kachemak Bay, with the spit of land that shelters its harbour reaching across to the Kenai peninsula.

After checking in at the Ocean Shores Lodge we have a fab meal at the nearby Kannery restaurant, watching the eagles pass by the window. Afterwards, we can't resist a late evening look at shingle spit with its long beach on the outer side and

protected mud flats and marsh on the inner side. There are lots of Black-legged Kittiwakes, Semi-palmated Plovers, and Glaucous-winged Gulls.

## Day 10: Boating For Bears

After breakfast at the River Café we drive back to the harbour at the end of Homer Spit, where we've an appointment with the crew of the Joker. Youthful Captain Jim and naturalist Sam will be our guides for our journey across Cook Inlet to the Lake Clark National Park at Chinitna Bay, where we will hopefully see some of the many Alaskan Brown Bears that feed along the shore. We walk down to the jetty, getting great looks at a large Sea Otter that is snoozing below us – it looks like a big lump of rag carpet floating in the water – that's a good start!

After a safety briefing, we journey out to the open waters of Kachemak Bay catching some nice looks at some more Sea Otters that are loafing around in communal groups or 'rafts'. Crossing the Cook Inlet the journey is bouncy but fun and we note some seabirds along the way, though it's tricky to view with binoculars – we list Marbled Murrelet, Rhinoceros Auklet, Sooty and Short-tailed Shearwaters.

It's over two hours before we reach the sheltered waters of Chinitna Bay where we prepare to disembark on the beach. By now the sun has started to burn off the low cloud and mist and we can admire the panorama of unspoilt wilderness that surrounds us. Sam goes through the safety protocol that we must adhere to as we are in bear country and there's an air of expectation.

There's a real frisson of energy and excitement as we take just a short walk from where we land, our eyes looking everywhere around as we approach a viewing area in the trees. Before us is a large meadow of sedge and grass and there are large brown lumps grazing in the open – mighty Alaskan Brown Bears!

We count eight bears from our first platform, some in mother and cub pairings, some are singles. All are in peak condition with thick pale brown coats and they look huge – much bigger than the Grizzly Bears we've seen at Denali. We take it in turns to watch through the scope where we can scrutinise their form – the rich dense fur, the big hump on their back, their thick powerful limbs - we are glad that they are a comfortable distance away! We watch for fifteen to twenty minutes then Sam suggests we go to a second viewing area where he thinks we'll get closer looks.

We retrace our steps to the beach where Jim has brought the boat to the beach. The second platform is further along the coast and in a more open position and we can scan to the far left to where the creek empties into the bay. From where we stand, we can count another twelve bears! The two nearest are another mum and yearling cub and they start to amble through the taller grasses in the dunes, heading for the beach. They pause and start rearing up, standing above the grasses for a better view.

The third platform is back along the shore and in the trees and as we walk through a stand of spruces Sam points to a metal portacabin that had been used

by researchers. There are scratch marks at the door where a bear has visited – ooh err.

We continue to the platform where we watch another four bears grazing in the lush sedges. A Golden Eagle is soaring over the opposite ridge and even does some plunge-diving display to complete the portrait of a true wilderness.

All good things must come to an end and we board the Joker after our great bear extravaganza. Yet the good things keep coming as we pay a visit to Gull Island at the mouth of Chinitna Bay. There are some nice Surf Scoters close to the boat, then as we near the island we see the beach is littered with lots of Harbor Seals. There's a Black Oystercatcher on rocks, White-winged Scoter in the water and we get fabulous looks at both Tufted and Horned Puffins. A young Bald Eagle is being harassed by a Glaucous-winged Gull too.

The journey back to Homer is another fun bouncy affair with passing looks at the same species we saw on the outward route. Knowing our interest in birds Captain Jim takes us to another Gull Island, in Kachemak Bay, to check the seabirds there. As we approach, we can see a huge raft of Common Murres by the thousands, arranged in a line that snakes across the water. There are lots of noisy, nesting Kittiwakes too and we get looks at both Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorant side-by-side for text book comparison. There are more handsome Tufted Puffins too. It's a wonderful way to end a remarkable day at sea and on land, in one of the most remote regions of Alaska. Top marks to Jim and Sam!

## Day 11: To Seward

We arrange a pre-breakfast look around some of the different habitats that Homer has to offer. Close to the Alaska Wildlife Refuge Headquarters is a trail that weaves through trees and out to the marsh that surrounds Beluga Slough. We hear birds singing when we get out of the van and note Orange-crowned Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow and Hermit Thrush, though only the sparrow reveals itself.

Walking out to the marsh we can go through all the ducks that are in the water: Mallard, Pintail, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal and Shoveler are there. A Sandhill Crane pair is tending to a single rufous-coloured chick too. Swallows are on the wires and we can compare Violet-green, Bank and Tree side-by-side. Three pairs of Bald Eagles are visible all the while we complete our circuit, the last section yielding Alder Flycatcher, Yellow-rumped and Orange-crowned Warblers.

Onto the Calvin and Coyle Nature Trail, a path that explores some of the extensive spruce forest around Homer. No sooner have we parked the van and Larry finds a new bird straight away – a tiny Brown Creeper works its way up a tree next to the path. Later, in one of the clearings, we see Townsend's Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Harrier and Hermit Thrush and get a tantalising glimpse of a Goshawk.

After another fab breakfast at the River Café, we leave Homer (Doh!) and start heading north. Our first stop is at Anchor Point which has wonderful views across the Cook Inlet to the snowy volcanic peaks of Iliamna and Redoubt. The beach has big groups of Glaucous-winged Gulls loafing at the water's edge and we note much larger birds to the right. Bald Eagles are perched on the ground and one person is getting very close to them as she walks her dog. The eagles must be used to people here – it seems they are enjoying the discarded fish from the fishermen, as we see more eagles picking at carcasses. A dozen or so put on a fine show for us as they fly around with the most scenic of backdrops. We also get a display from the local boatmen in how to get a boat out of the water and into a trailer in record time!

A short distance further north we take a cultural stop at the Russian Orthodox Church at Ninilchik, a reminder of the long history of settlement in Alaska. It's a pretty white wooden clad building with a commanding view over Cook Inlet from its cliff top situation. Around is a cemetery filled with wooden crosses and abundant with flowers and we overhear Russian language from some of the visitors that are walking around looking at the graves.

Our last stop of the morning is at the mouth of the Kasilof River. There are only a few birds on show, on the distant mud bank exposed at low tide – some geese and ducks. There were some Hudsonian Godwits here only the day before but try as we might we can't make anything of the three distant wader blobs in the heat haze.

Lunch is at the Subway at Soldotna, then its onwards to Tern Lake. It's a useful roadside stop and we can watch a Common Loon parent giving a ride to its fluffy young chick. Arctic Terns, Tree Swallows, Trumpeter Swans and Short-billed Gulls complete the list of birds. At Primrose Campground we have our final stop of the day before checking in at the Edgewater Inn at Seward. A few guests squeeze in some retail therapy before we meet for dinner at the Gold Rush Bistro across the road.

## **Day 12: Cruising the Kenai Fjords**

Jean is the sole birder investigating the streets of Seward before breakfast and she returns with her booty of photos of Song Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler and Varied Thrush (a new species for the trip!)

After breakfast we prepare for another boat trip and drive the short distance to the harbour. There we are introduced to Captain Tanya and her first mate Lacey - they will be in charge of our exploration of the fabulous coastline of the Kenai Fjords National Park and there is great expectation as we leave port.

The weather is perfect for the day ahead and moving through the calm waters of Resurrection Bay we can see anything that breaks up the water surface. As well as the Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants, Glaucous-winged Gulls and Kittiwakes and ubiquitous Bald Eagles, there are things floating in the water ahead - more adorable Sea Otters are dotted around and they are very photogenic!

Moving further out we start seeing some Common Murres before we set a course for the narrow channels around Fox Island. Along the shore is a Black Oystercatcher and as we round the more precipitous cliffs of the south and west of the island, we see large groups of gulls and a few boats ahead. Then, the gulls suddenly rise as one, in a clamour of white wings. From beneath the water leviathans burst the surface with mouths agape - Humpback Whales are 'bubble-netting'. What a truly special sight!

In a frenzy of activity, it is difficult to know how many whales are co-operatively feeding but as they gather for another dive, we can see the tail flukes rise one-by-one before they disappear beneath the waves. One, two, three.... a fourth... a fifth... maybe six animals.

We wait for the cues from the gulls and this time they are moving towards the boat, looking down there is unbridled excitement as the bubbles that are rising are right next to the boat. Then WHOOSH! Giant pointed upper mandibles appear, the lower mandibles billowing with pleated grooves as they gulp their way through the bait fish. Holy Humpbacks Batman! AMAZING!

Again and again, we witness the same routine, though not as close, as the whales seem to be using the steep underwater sides of the island as an aid in corralling the fish. Against the light, their blows mark their presence working along the shore. A special experience for sure.

Elated, we move on travelling south to the Chiswell Islands, all the while admiring the truly stunning landscape of peaks, glaciers and headlands that are unfolding. As we near the islands we notice more and more seabirds milling around. Tufted and Horned Puffins are in the water and we can see many more on the green slopes. Some of the Pelagic Cormorants seem larger with red faces – that will be Red-faced Cormorants! Then Lacey spots some much smaller birds and Tanya expertly moves the boat near to the shore where we can watch diminutive Parakeet Auklets land on the rocks. It's a special moment being in the water with so many seabirds around us – another highlight of the trip.

We have now rounded the islands and are moving into one of the famed fjords towards Holgate Glacier. Something catches the eye in the water to the left... animals are bursting to the surface with energetic splashes. The so-called 'roosters tails' from boisterous Dall's Porpoises and they are interested in the boat.

They bound over at great speed and soon are swimming alongside and bow-wave riding! Lacey says it's safe to lie on the prow and Jean is the first to shimmy up the ramp between the catamaran's two bows. There is much whooping and hollering as we enjoy the most wonderful aquatic display from the fastest of all cetaceans. Their black-and-white markings shine from beneath the water as they twist this way and that. There are smiles all around, none bigger than Jean's whose face is sprinkled with spray from her time on the bow. What an experience!

And the boat trip keeps giving. After our time with the porpoises, we move to the head of the fjord and the ice wall of the Holgate Glacier. The water is filled with small chunks of ice and the temperatures drop as we approach the snout of the glacier. Close up, we can see the rugged nature of the ice, dirtied by debris plucked from the rocks as the glacier moves from the mountains to the sea. There's a rumbling noise as some of the front edge, fragmented as the glacier ends its journey, calves into the sea. It's an incredible sight.

Lacey scoops out some chunks from the water and there is much posing for photos with the ice that must be thousands of years old. There are lots of cormorants in the water and several Harbour Seals hauled out on the ice – a reminder of how productive an environment it is as minerals are deposited in the water and the food cycle is kick started. Good for fish and those that eat fish!

After about twenty or so minutes in front of the glacier it is time to start the journey back. Tanya still has new things to show us and we get some great looks at a group of Rhinoceros Auklets in the bay. Nearer Seward we pass under a steep verdant slope and Lacey finds us two Mountain Goats – an unexpected additional species to the boat trip. Finally, we return to the dock at 3.30pm – what a wonderful excursion afloat.

From the harbour, it's a quick drive to the hotel to load our bags before the three-hour drive north to Anchorage. We arrive at 7pm and have a lovely meal at the Lakefront Hotel – our final meal together.

### **Day 13: Anchorage Once More**

The group bound for the Pribilof Islands have an early start with a short transfer at 7am for the airport, where their adventure continues.

For Joyce and Darren, it's a more sedate look around Anchorage for our last day in Alaska. We start after breakfast with a visit to Little Campbell Lake in Kincaid Park. There's a delightful Moose and calf pairing, though no sign of the Pacific Loons that we are searching for (just Red-necked Grebes).

We spend some time looking for Belugas along Turnagain Arm but fail to spot any, though it is fun showing the Dall's Sheep to other visitors parked up.

At Potter Marsh there are the now familiar Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Red-necked Grebes and Tree Swallows. The young eagles are now twelve days older than when we last visited and are stretching their wings. The adults keep watch from the taller trees on the skyline.

Our late lunch is at Westchester Lagoon and again we notice the progress of the Arctic Tern and Short-billed Gull chicks. There are plenty of grebes and ducks though no sign of the Common Loons. After returning the van, we take a final walk along the shore of Lake Hood which is now busy with landings and take-offs from float planes. It doesn't bother the birds much and we get great looks at Horned

Grebes, Scaup, five Red-necked Phalaropes and a superb Common Loon. A fitting bird to end our Alaskan adventure.

### **To St Paul Island**

Our flight to Saint Paul is smooth and after a refuelling stop in Bethel we arrive, even a bit before the scheduled arrival time.

At the airport we are met by the guides from TDX Corporation. They give us an orientation regarding meals and rooms, but most importantly the nature and birding excursions that will be occupying most of our visit. Our lodging is at the “new” King Eider Hotel, modern, but pleasant enough rooms in a large building adjacent to the airport.

We enjoy a warm lunch and a rest before we meet our guide, Mariah, for the afternoon excursion. Only a short distance from the hotel our group are thrilled to see a Common Pochard. This Eurasian duck is some distance away, but still it can be separated from a Redhead, the similar American species.

From Tonki Point there are great eye-level views of Red-legged Kittiwake, a bird that is only found in the Bering Sea. More widespread, but still stunning are a group of Sabine’s Gulls flying about. We enjoy good views of the more common Long-tailed Ducks and Rock Sandpipers before heading back for dinner.

On our post dinner excursion, we drive around the harbour. The group enjoy good views of Red-faced Cormorants and Horned Puffin. Around the breakwater many Harlequin Ducks sit on the rocks, in fact there are over 130, a very impressive number. Even more stunning are a couple of male King Eiders.

Possibly the star attraction are four Ancient Murrelet that swim in very close to us. The photographers among us are especially happy to capture these seabirds that normally can be quite elusive.

We retire after a long, satisfying day.

### **Day 14: St Paul Island**

The morning’s highlight are the special alcids, almost restricted to the Bering Sea. At Reef cliffs we have fantastic views of Crested, Parakeet and Least Auklets. There is some debate regarding which were the cutest, but we have many photographs to sort that out.

From a nearby platform we enjoy great views of hundreds of Northern Fur Seals on a beach. The behaviours of the large males known as “beachmasters” are wonderful to watch.

The Pacific Wren here is an endemic subspecies and one serenades us from nearby boulders. Next, at Rockwall we are treated to more seabirds including close Horned Puffins and cartwheeling Northern Fulmars.



After lunch our guide, Luis, shows us a large quarry exposing dramatic volcanic rocks. Researchers have been banding the Gray-crowned Rosy Finches here and documenting unique behaviours.

While we are photographing some tiny, but stunning Forget Me Nots we hear on the radio that a rare bird, the Far Eastern Curlew has been discovered on Maruni Point. Needless to say, we speed up to that end of the island and rush down to the rocky beach where the other group luckily are still watching the curlew. We all enjoy scope views of the bird feeding and in flight. Inexplicably, several of these Asian birds have been seen in western Alaska this year.

After dinner we check out the harbour again. We have become a bit spoilt. Although there are Harlequin Ducks and King Eiders there, not much else captivates us.

#### Day 15: St Paul Island

This morning there is light rain, but we are out visiting a boulder beach. The highlight here are several dozen Least Auklets that land close to us. The group are thrilled to get great photographs of this species, the smallest of all alcids.

We visit Rockwall again to enjoy more views of Horned Puffins, kittiwakes, Thick-billed Murres and fulmars. Yet another radio call has us quickly driving to the southwest end of the island to capture views of a Yellow-billed Loon

After lunch our guide David takes us down to the rocky tidepools at Southwestern Point. The pristine waters here show us anemones, sea stars and nudibranchs. This special view of the intertidal life here is a bonus we did not expect.

Not far from the hotel we walk along the edge of a marshy lake and are thrilled to flush up both a Wood Sandpiper and Common Snipe, species hardly ever seen in North America.

After dinner the remaining clouds have cleared giving us wonderful views of a volcanic cone where we have very close of views of Snow Bunting and some uncommon *Saxifrage* plants.

Although it is late, there is a message about another rare species, a Siberian Rubythroat. The head guide, Sulli, has seen it and now almost all the birders on the island gather near the northwestern tip of the island to capture a view of this rare Asiatic passerine. We organise everyone into a walking sweep and some people see the bird flush out of the grass. That is the last we see of that elusive bird, but it is still special to be out in such a wonderful site in the late evening sunshine.

#### Day 16: St Paul Island

This morning, we go back to the cliffs at Reef and enjoy learning about the history of the island at the museum. After taking a look at the harbour we return to the

hotel where we hear the bad news, our flight is cancelled. Clearly it isn't the weather, as it is a beautiful day. We are told it is some sort of crew problem.

After lunch we go back up to Hutch Hill, the "Rubythroat" site, but do not find the bird. After this we enjoy the beautiful late afternoon blue sky at the High Bluffs. Many kittiwakes fly about while we also enjoy a number of striking wildflowers.

After dinner we see the Wood Sandpiper again and learn about the Fur Seals at Zapadini Point.

#### **Day 17: St Paul Island**

This morning we drive up to one of the higher points on the island where several Rock Sandpipers display in front of us. Tower Lake is a dramatic feature in this volcanic landscape.

Our expedition to town includes an exploration of the store. The produce, clothing and other items the local Aleut community can obtain here make for a fascinating cultural stop.

Today's flight too is cancelled.

In the afternoon we visit Tomki Beach where we enjoy numerous Red-legged Kittiwakes swirling in the air in front of us and landing close by.

After dinner some of us go back to the High Bluffs while others enjoy more tide pooling

#### **Day 18: St Paul Island**

By now the wind and rain had increased and today's flight is cancelled. Most of us rest and catch up on projects this morning.

In the afternoon we have special permission to visit the Russian Orthodox church here. Almost everyone who lives on the island is Aleut, however their ancestors were forced to move here by the Russians to harvest the seals. Now the whole community follows the Russian Orthodox faith. We are all interested in the icons, carvings and stories of local holidays and customs.

Although it was raining and the wind is blowing hard we visit the seal colony and also enjoy views of several Arctic Fox. The fascinating behaviours of both of these mammals add another aspect to the fascinating natural history of this island.

Before dinner David gives a presentation on the Interior and Coastal areas of Alaska. We make it a partylike atmosphere with guacamole, chips (crisps) and wine.

#### **Day 19: St Paul Island**

Today's flight is cancelled due to high winds.

In the afternoon we brave the elements at Reef and do a bit of a sea watch. Several Northern Fulmar wheel in the high winds while one observer sees a Storm Petrel.

At the quarry we enjoy more views of the Rosy Finches and Snow Buntings. Of course, the geology of this collapsed lava tube is very special as well.

The reindeer herd is much easier to observe from the shelter of the van. The size of these animals varies quite a bit from the large males to small calves.

In the late afternoon we make one last visit to the store getting chips, guacamole and other treats. They enliven what we hope will be our last supper.

## **Day 20: St Paul to Anchorage!**

After hearing about various scenarios, the wonderful news is that there will be room for all of us on today's flight. Now all we need is for a break in the weather.

The weather has moderated a bit and we take one last look at the puffins and other seabirds at Reef, foxes and eiders in the harbour.

There is more good news that the plane has left Bethel and is on the way to St. Paul. After lunch it is time to say farewell to our four guides and this iconic place that we got to experience for a much longer visit than planned.

By 2:30pm we're all on the plane and departing. After a few hours it is almost overwhelming to be back at the Anchorage airport in strangely warm sixty degree weather.

At the Coast Inn we enjoy a farewell dinner before Jean, Patty and David leave for their homeward flights. We all know that we are fortunate to have experienced such unique places as St Paul and the Pribilof Islands.

## BIRDS

Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	
Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	
Yellow-billed Loon	<i>Gavia adamsii</i>	Pribilofs
Horned grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	
Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Pribilofs
Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>	
Red-faced Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax urile</i>	
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	
Trumpeter Swan	<i>Cygnus buccinator</i>	
Tundra swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	
Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	
American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>	
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Pribilofs
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	
Pochard	<i>Aythya farina</i>	Pribilofs
Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	
Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	Pribilofs
Surf scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	
Black scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	
White-winged Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	
Barrow's Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala islandica</i>	
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	
Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	
Sandhill Crane	<i>Grus canadensis</i>	
American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	
Semi-palmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	
Black Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>	
Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	
Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Pribilofs
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	
Far Eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascarensis</i>	Pribilofs
Hudsonian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	
Hudsonian Godwit	<i>Limosa haemastica</i>	
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	
Rock Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ptilocnemis</i>	Pribilofs

Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	
Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	
Wilson's Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Pribilofs
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	
Red Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	
Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	
Long-tailed Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	
Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
Red-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa brevirostris</i>	Pribilofs
Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Larus Philadelphia</i>	
Short-billed Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	
Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	
Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	Pribilofs
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	
Common Murre	<i>Uria aalge</i>	
Thick-billed Murre	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Pribilofs
Pigeon Guillemot	<i>Cephus columba</i>	
Marbled Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>	
Ancient Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus antiquus</i>	Pribilofs
Crested Auklet	<i>Aethia cristatella</i>	Pribilofs
Least Auklet	<i>Aethia pusilla</i>	Pribilofs
Parakeet Auklet	<i>Aethia psittacula</i>	
Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>	
Tufted Puffin	<i>Fratercula cirrhata</i>	
Horned Puffin	<i>Fratercula corniculata</i>	
Hawk Owl	<i>Surnia ulula</i>	
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle alcyon</i>	
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	
Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>	
Alder Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	
Northern Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	
Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	
Gray Jay	<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>	
Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica hudsonia</i>	
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	
Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	
Bank Swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Parus atricapillus</i>	
Boreal Chickadee	<i>Poecile hudsonica</i>	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	
Pacific Wren	<i>Troglodytes pacificus</i>	Pribilofs
American Dipper	<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>	
Varied Thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>	
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	<i>Catharus minimus</i>	
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	
Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>	
Bohemian Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	
Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Oreothlypis celata</i>	

Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	
Townsend's Warbler	<i>Setophaga townsendi</i>	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	
Blackpoll Warbler	<i>Dendroica striata</i>	
Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	
American Tree Sparrow	<i>Spizella arborea</i>	
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	
Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>	
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	
Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolni</i>	
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	
Golden-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>	
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	
Lapland Longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	
Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	
Gray-crowned Rosyfinch	<i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i>	Pribilofs
Pine Siskin	<i>Carduelis pinus</i>	
Common Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>	

## MAMMALS

Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>	
Arctic Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus parryi</i>	
Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	
Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	
Collared Pika	<i>Ochotona collaris</i>	
Arctic Fox	<i>Alopex lagopus</i>	Pribilofs
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes fulva</i>	
Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>	
Grizzly Bear	<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	
Alaskan Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos gyas</i>	
River Otter	<i>Lutra canadensis</i>	
Sea Otter	<i>Enhydra lutris</i>	
Northern Fur Seal	<i>Callorhinus ursinus</i>	Pribilofs
Steller's Sea-lion	<i>Eumetopias jubatus</i>	
Harbor Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>	
Caribou	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	
Mountain Goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>	
Dall's Sheep	<i>Ovis dalli</i>	
Beluga	<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>	
Dall's Porpoise	<i>Phocoenoides dalli</i>	
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	