

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

SPEYSIDE SPRING BIRDS & MORE

2011

Leaders: Simon Eaves and Chrissie Nicholson

Day 1 Everyone arrives at Glen Feshie, home of our luxuriously converted Steading and our base for the next week. The setting is perfect, we are right below the flanks of the Cairngorms and stunning scenery is all around us. Those who arrive by car or early flights have time to walk our nature trail and watch the forest birds come into the feeders at our little bird hide. Seeing such varied delights as Redstart, Tree Pipit, Common Sandpiper and Buzzard to name but a few, even the Ospreys are busy around the artificial eyrie that we have created.

We all meet up throughout the afternoon, final guests are collected from Aviemore Station and before long we're all enjoying the first of our delicious dinners prepared by Sharon our chef. Conversation is soon flowing around our magnificent dining room table as we get to know one another and anticipate the birds to come. After dinner, Chrissie and Simon run through the plan for the week ahead. It doesn't get dark until pretty late so some enthusiasts head outside to see our local Woodcock and Tawny Owls.

We head for bed excited about the day to come with just the sound of the Oystercatchers to break the silence.

Day 2 After breakfast, we visit the local woodland around Uath Lochan where we have a leisurely stroll. We walk around the still blue lochans and among the tangled, gnarled old pines but unfortunately can't find any Crested Tits, although we do manage to get good views of a very obliging male Redstart singing from the top of a Pine tree, which gives us an opportunity to set up our telescopes so everyone gets a good view. We also enjoy watching a Great Spotted Woodpecker taking food back to its nest hole, and a Spotted Flycatcher living up to its name. There is a couple of Goldeneye on one of the lochans and a pair of Teal, we then hear a small party of Crossbills fly over calling. They are almost certainly Scottish Crossbill but they don't land which is a little frustrating.

Its spit spotting with rain but nevertheless we stop at our local Osprey eyrie. We break out the tea and coffee and with scopes set up watch the female on her nest. Her head is just poking up above the mass of twigs and we get super views. She's so intent and looks to be sitting quite high; we think she may possibly be brooding small chicks.

Refreshed from our tea break we drive a little way up the A9 to the upper reaches of the River Findhorn. It's still raining a little as we arrive but using the vans as a hide we drive slowly up the Strath stopping every now and then as various birds get called out. A party of Bullfinches, including a couple of dazzling males hold our attention for a good five minutes and eventually we find some Dippers on the river and pull over to enjoy them. We huddle under the raised tail doors of the vans with scopes set up on an adult Dipper feeding. As we move up further into the hills, steep crags begin to loom up all around us and we see our first Red Deer up on the ridges.

We continue on our way slowly up the Strath stopping to view a couple of Goosander on the river. We pass an anxious looking Redshank and there are Lapwing displaying over the grassland in the bottom of the valley. By a small plantation we park up, from here we have a good vantage point for viewing the hills all around us. On the other side of the road is an enormous Rabbit warren and there are three Buzzards hanging around, perching on the rocks and gliding slowly over the slope. The Rabbits are well aware of them and not straying far from their holes. Suddenly Chrissie spots a Buzzard on the ground and on closer inspection it is tucking into a rabbit, this one did not make it back to the warren. The sun is now coming out in small bursts through gaps in the clouds and it is wonderfully atmospheric as we sit enjoying our sandwiches and cake watching the Buzzards which have now been joined by a Kestrel.

We finish our lunch and are absorbed in conversation as we keep our eyes on the horizon. There are two herds of Red Deer high on the slopes and Simon picks out a distant group of half a dozen Mountain Goats, superb looking animals with incredibly shaggy coats, the male with enormous swept back horns, then suddenly there is a shout of "Golden Eagle!" There are a few moments of chaos as we all rush round grabbing scopes and trying to make sense of the directions but soon we are all on it, an immature bird with small patches of white in the wings gliding slowly along a distant ridge. It flushes a Red Grouse from the heather but doesn't seem interested in that and starts gaining height in large sweeping circles before disappearing over the ridge. Everyone is grinning from ear to ear!

We take a short walk across the valley floor, passing a flock of noisy Oystercatchers, lots of Meadow Pipits and Lapwings calling and flying overhead, and then we stop to scan the hillside ahead of us. Soon we find what we are looking for, a Mountain Hare feeding quietly in the heather. It still has a lot of white in the fur from the winter and looks quite odd being so patchy and with completely white ears. A second animal comes running across to join it and we watch them for a while through the scopes. A Peregrine appears briefly above the slope but most of us miss it as it zips over the horizon too quickly.

Back at the vans we head gradually homeward and along the river, spotting more Buzzards and a Sparrowhawk circling over the trees. We stop to scan the hill tops once more in hope of a better view of Golden Eagle but no luck, however, we get lovely views of a party of Redpoll in the Alders below us and suddenly a Cuckoo calls very loudly from somewhere nearby. Suddenly it appears flying through the trees below the road with several Meadow Pipits in hot pursuit. It lands on a wire, its tail waving up and down as it keeps its balance and again starts calling. It works its way along the road perching on the fence posts or the wires, constantly being harried by the Pipits before finally disappearing up a gully. It starts raining again as we get back in the vans and continue on our way pausing only for a Redstart on a fence beside the road.

We head for home and a very welcome dinner but the day is not over yet because this evening we are heading out in the vans for a visit to our mammal hide. A Wood Mouse is the first mammal to appear almost as soon as we arrive, its frantic dashes to grab the peanuts remind us that it's aware that a Pine Marten could arrive at any moment and is a very welcome addition whilst waiting for the main event.

The light begins to fade as we wait, then suddenly a Pine Marten emerges from the woods, it pauses briefly standing up on its back legs checking to see all is clear then it dashes in to feed! Another animal arrives and after some play fighting they both settle down to munch the bait we've put out. They're so close, just the other side of the glass, we almost feel that we could touch them! The excitement is almost palpable as we are glued to the scene and the Pine Martens perform beautifully, climbing up the tree branches we have placed in front of the windows to lick at the peanut butter smeared on top. Eventually they dash off carrying a fresh unbroken egg into the gully at the back and again we sit quietly, already delighted with what we have

seen. The silence in the hide is only disturbed by the cameras clicking all taking as many pictures as possible for the best shot, these Pine Martens must be the most photographed in Scotland. Fantastic!

We sit patiently watching and waiting, the Wood Mouse is still whizzing back and forth with peanuts, the Badgers do not make an appearance this time. Still we get the major species for the week and are all very happy with that. We head home, and to bed.

Day 3

After breakfast this time we head north, again making a quick stop at the local post office store for postcards and gifts on the way, then drive north through Inverness and cross over the Kessock Bridge for the rolling farmland and copses of the Black Isle.

Within minutes of arriving at a vantage point just off the main road our first Red Kite is found, wheeling over the nearby woodland. All around us raptors are popping up and in the air at one time there are amazingly, four Red Kites, Chrissie has heard one calling so we all start to scan the trees, looking for a bird sitting, and a guest then shouts, 'There it is', so we position the telescopes and watch whilst it still calls with its high pitched whistle. We enjoy coffee and our home baked shortbread yummy! A couple of Goldfinches fly over the group and a Reed Bunting perches briefly on a fence.

After our coffee with the Kites we head off to a highland glen. We drive slowly through the Birch woods stopping off first to listen to a singing Chiffchaff, then we see a couple of very obliging Treecreepers and a Wood Warbler giving its shivering song.

Some way up the scenic glen we park quite close to a Golden Eagle eyrie, its perfect weather with just a gentle breeze in absolutely brilliant sunshine. Simon walks a little way up the valley, with his radio just in case, we are thinking about lunch when he calls over the radio, 'Golden Eagle' flying in above the ridge, wow, telescopes quickly pick up the bird soaring right along the ridge past us and off into the distance, everyone gets great views. Thrilled, we start eating our lunch with eyes constantly scanning the skyline. Over the next hour a couple of Cuckoos, a Spotted Flycatcher and a really cracking male Stonechat. We are just packing away and another eagle is spotted down the valley, it looks like it's being mobbed and as we get the telescopes on the birds, we see that this Golden Eagle is being mobbed

by an Osprey, the eagle eventually gives the Osprey the brush off and heads over the ridge, we watch the Osprey disappear following the river course. Brilliant views!

We drive up to the car park at the far end, and see a couple of Hooded Crows and a pair of Common Sandpipers. We head for home slowly birding along the way back down the valley. Simon spots a pair of Goosanders on the fast flowing river and we see a couple more Red Kites as we cross the Black Isle again.

After dinner we round off the evening with a great slideshow about our local birds and mammals from acclaimed photographer Neil McKintyre. The slides are going to be a tough act to follow!

Day 4

It's a bit misty this morning, nevertheless, it's quite mild and calm and the mist just adds to the atmosphere at the slightly shocking early hour of 5.00am! The enthusiasts among us make a trip over to the Loch Garten Visitor's Centre with a mind on seeing the mighty 'Horse of the Woods' – the Capercaillie. This is a project that Speyside Wildlife helped to set up and now RSPB staff is manning the hide during the lekking period. They are operating several remote cameras aimed at a lek site and various parts of the surrounding woodland.

With a generally packed hide, we settle in on lookout for this elusive bird and with not too long to wait, Chrissie spots a male to the left of the hide, even if it is just the head and the visible white patch on the wing and although this bird proves to be elusive it is not long before another bird is spotted and everyone gets great views, the wardens at the centre confirm that there are two males out in front of the hide and we get our first view of a Capercaillie, it is a lifer for some guests.

It is still quite early as we leave the hide and before we head back for breakfast we make a stop on some moorland not far away where we hope to find lekking Black Grouse. Several of the birds are still actively displaying which is great, we can hear the strange bubbling and hissing noises they make in the still morning air, they appear to be all around us, it is strange but magical. We can see one bird displaying well behind some Birch bushes and we stay, eyes watching the area in case another appears. We stay watching for about 20 minutes before they fly off over the moorland leaving us enjoying the early morning birds including a calling Cuckoo, Meadow Pipits collecting food for hungry young and a pair of Whinchats.

We return for a hearty breakfast having more than achieved our aim. We are going to need an extra portion of porridge today as later this morning we are going in search of Ptarmigan and Dotterel up in the Cairngorms.

After a prep talk on walking conditions (distance and incline!), we organise ourselves into those going for the heights and those staying at lower levels. One or two guests decide to stay back and spend some more time around the Steading instead of doing the mountain walk. Another couple come along with the rest of the group but aim to take the mountain railway from where we start our walk with the chance of seeing Ptarmigan from the top station viewing balcony.

We all drive to the car park of the ski area and gaze up at the Arctic alpine plateau where our target birds are hiding. Even at this time of year there are still quite a few snow patches in the shady parts of the northern corries. Nearby are the buildings of the funicular railway which provides the easier route up the mountain in record time but sadly doesn't allow anyone to walk out and have access to the mountain and its birds, but for the couple who feel they can't make the walk, there is still a chance they may spot a Ptarmigan from the cafe balcony. Before we split up, we stop for a search up the mountain side for Ring Ouzel, which is very obliging and flies up onto the ski lift wire, giving excellent views for all. Wishing the couple good luck, the rest of us head off up the mountain path.

Fortunately, the weather is still calm and the morning mists have cleared now its late morning. The path is well maintained and we make good progress up the hill. The early part only produces the obligatory Meadow Pipits but as the path steepens we pause for a rest and a Red Grouse announces its presence with its loud repetitive call. We soon find its head peeping above the heather. The views as we climb are simply stunning, below us the extensive forests that surround Loch Morlich with the rolling hills of the Monadhliaths beyond, we can even see all the way to the Moray Coast from here.

Gradually, we leave the moorland behind and the path becomes steeper. Our expectations rise as we enter a rugged landscape of screes and cliffs where the last few patches of snow linger. Another well-deserved drink break proves to be very good sense as within minutes an obliging male and female Ptarmigan are spotted sitting just off the path, and wonderful views

are had by all, although they are close they are still hard to see. These true Arctic birds have lost much of their white winter feathering but still offer an incredible example of cryptic camouflage!

Dragging ourselves away from these magnificent birds we take on a sensible pace back up the slope until we reach a high level plateau overlooking the Larig Ghru and Lurcher's Crag – spectacular stuff! This altitude signals our first scan for Dotterel, it may take some time to find them but to our delight Chrissie soon spots one! We scope this bird as it runs among the tufts and rocks until all of us catch up with this enigmatic plover. What could be better than to tuck into our picnic in the company of such tremendous birds amidst the silent solitude of the mountains?

As we return to lower altitudes we see one more Ptarmigan in flight, stopping briefly to watch it disappear over the ridge. We take our time going down as it's less easy than going up, and we enjoy the weather and the views. Soon we are safely back at the car park where we enjoy the most rewarding cup of tea of the week with a warm sense of achievement looking back at the path we have just conquered. Meeting up with the couple who took the train to the top we share stories and are pleased to hear they managed to see a Ptarmigan in flight even though it was a little distant.

Before we leave and descend down to Loch Morlich, we stop by the roadside and view the domesticated Reindeer which at this time of year are without their antlers and are very obvious in their white pelts.

A quick stop amidst the pines below the mountains at Loch Morlich for a scan of the water produces a pair of Wigeon, a few Teal, a pair of Red-breasted Mergansers and several pairs of Goldeneye with Sand Martins and Swifts over the loch. After a while we spot a distant Red-throated Diver as well. The last bird of the day is a smart little Crested Tit that appears in the small trees right next to the van, it's stunningly close.

We make a visit to the Rothiemurchus Gift Shop to satisfy a burning desire for postcards and gifts. With postcards and ice-creams sorted we head back to the Steading everyone having had a good stretch of their legs. After an early start and lots of exercise we are all looking forward to another good meal and a rest.

Day 5

We are planning our activities around the weather and opt for an early start to head over to the west coast where the forecast looks good for today for

our weekly visit to Handa Island. When we leave the weather is pretty grey, with leaden skies and a hint of rain but as we go north and west it begins to clear – good planning!

En route we stop beside a large upland loch for a tea break and find a stunning pair of summer plumaged Black-throated Divers. The diver's beauty is in stark contrast to the surrounding moorland which looks rather bleak. One of the birds is sitting on a small island, could this be a successful breeding pair this year?

Soon after, we enter the dramatic scenery of Inverpolly NNR, where mountain peaks sweep up from sea level like huge stalagmites, what fantastic scenery. We drive on through Scourie and on to Tarbet for the ferry. The weather is brightening as our boatman comes in and whisks us on the 10-minute crossing to Handa Island. The sea between the island and the mainland is beautiful, flat, calm and clear. Common Terns fly alongside the boat as we leave the jetty, soon joined by our first Arctic Terns with their distinctive 'pick-pick-pick' calls. Shortly into the journey we see our first 'Tystie' or Black Guillemot – a stunning black and white adult sitting on the water. The skipper slows the engine and lets us drift quite close to the bird as it gently bobs and up and down on the water's surface. We head on towards the silver sand of the landing beach passing several Shags, more Arctic Terns and a couple more Black Guillemots.

After our Handa pep talk by the Wardens we head off across the island and immediately we are into the birds with Wheatear and Skylark by the ruins of the old crofts, Snipe displaying and a very brave Red Grouse by the boardwalk. Arctic Skuas wheel over our heads while a couple of 'Bonxies' or Great Skuas slowly patrol past us. The Arctic Skuas look menacing as they streak across the skies chasing each other and yelping. As we walk along the boardwalk we get brilliant views of both Skuas sitting feet from the path. A pair of brutish Great Skuas watch our every move as we walk past. They look quite fearless, not flinching a feather as we tiptoe through their territory.

Walking on across the moorland towards the seabird cliffs, the sky is full of Skuas and there is the sound of gulls in the background. On a nearby loch a Red-throated Diver is loafing amidst the bathing Skuas and we get our first smell of the cliffs – the wind is full of the wonderful aroma of guano. It's a strong smell, but quite sweet mixed in with the scent of Sea Thrift, which adorns on the cliff tops above the seabird colony. Suddenly the cliffs come into view and it's a stunning sight.

We stop for lunch right by the off shore Great Stack and enjoy the sights, sounds and smell of the active seabird city below us. There are thousands of Guillemots and Razorbills clinging to the cliff face and we pick out a few of the 'bridled' form of Guillemots amongst the throng. Puffins are busy digging out their burrows on the top – we see little clods of earth being kicked out before an adult suddenly springs out looking rather splendid. Below, the cliffs are noisy with fluttering white Kittiwake and stiff-winged Fulmar as they to and fro on the wind. A shower swings in off the sea but soon passes and behind it comes clear skies and brilliant sunshine. The air soon warms up and the wind is less biting as a Great Skua comes gliding past at eye level surveying the cliffs for an easy meal.

We can now see clear to Cape Wrath in the north and even out to Lewis on the Outer Hebrides as we begin to make our way back around the north and west sides of the island. To our right, gorgeous blue waves break over the foot of the cliffs. We stop at the lovely Sandy Bay by the rocks adorned with grey and yellow lichens in the hope of finding a late Great Northern Diver, but alas no joy. A handful of Eider, some Rock Pipits and a couple of Grey Seals entertain us and we find a small flock of waders including a few Dunlin, some Turnstone and a Sanderling before we make our way back to the beach for the ferry. It has turned into a lovely afternoon and we enjoy simply sitting on the beach watching beautiful golden sand and deep blue sea. Common and Arctic Terns glint in the sun as they dive for fish just offshore while we wait for the boatman to come and take us back across to the mainland. It's been an incredible day on Handa.

Back at the minibuses we have tea and spend a few minutes looking for Twite which we can hear calling from nearby fields. It isn't long before Simon picks up a small flock feeding in the field immediately behind the car park and everyone manages to get good views of this little Highland Linnnet-like bird.

We begin our journey home, stopping mid-way at a hotel where we have a welcome dinner before undertaking the final part of our journey back to the Steading.

Day 6

After a later leisurely breakfast, we jump into the minibuses for the drive north up to the Moray Coast. About halfway on our journey we arrive at the north end of Dava, a vast swathe of wild heather moor managed for Red Grouse and just as we pull in off the main road, we immediately spot one. Slowing down we can clearly see two adult birds with a group of small fluffy yellow balls with legs, oh sorry, they are the chicks. From the vans we watch this family group at close quarters without disturbing them. The adult birds

are still a little nervous at first, crouching low in the heather. Every now and then we can just make out a chick moving around. After a couple of minutes the birds relax and the family group starts moving slowly through the heather, giving brilliant views of both adults and the five young. As soon as we've had our fill, we begin scanning the rest of the moorland. Grouse pop up left, right and centre "there's one" – "here's another" – "and another". There must have been a big hatch as we find at least five family groups in a relatively small area by the road. All Grouse out, the group begin to look for Stonechats but can't find any although we do see even more Grouse as we drive over the moor towards Lochindorb.

Stopping for tea where we can view the ruined castle amidst the brooding waters, we get really bad views of Black-throated Diver! It's ignored completely when an Osprey appears over the loch, it's clearly looking for fish as it beats slowly up the loch, eyes firmly fixed on the water. It drifts right up to the shore where we are parked and into the sheltered bay where it spends about five minutes hovering and circling around in search of prey. Suddenly, from some height, it decides to take a huge dive. Excitement grips the group as it nears the water and as it hits the water, wow! Success, our hearts still in our mouths as the bird starts to rise from the water with a fish, and flies into the woodland nearby to feed, still in awe we are all thrilled with such fantastic views.

We cross the wild and open moors and drop down to the low-lying barley fields along the coast. We press on across the river and arrive at Spey Bay where immediately we get stuck into the birds.

It's a pretty spot here at the shingle banks where the Spey meets the sea and there are old upturned boats and historic ice-houses. The tide is already up and Eiders are sitting on the shingle banks of the river mouth while Common Terns are all over the place. There are good numbers of Goosander and a few Goldeneye then suddenly out to sea there is a group of Bottlenose Dolphins! We are incredibly lucky to see these here and we watch as at least seven fins regularly break the surface – a great view as they pass along the coast. We find a couple of Red-throated Divers and a single Red-breasted Merganser also appears and allows us to see the differences between it and the Goosander females. A stroll inland along the riverbank produces a Sedge Warbler singing nearby in the scrub and Yellowhammer giving its 'little-bit-of-bread-and-no-cheese' song.

While we lunch by the coast an Osprey drifts along the river to the sea and begins fishing at the mouth. All attention is now on the Osprey we get terrific views of it hovering right above us. The light is fantastic on the bird as it flaps around us before drifting upstream, then another hover before it crashes into the water with success. Really exciting stuff! But as it starts to climb, a pair of crows starts mobbing it and the fish suddenly drops to the ground. Oh no! But the crows are well impressed, we watch them picking at this fish whilst it still wriggles on the shore, amazingly still alive. What a picture, we found it fascinating to watch as the crows eventually devoured the fish, leaving the osprey to try again. As we climb into the vehicles, a couple of Linnets pop up in the bushes next to us – another new bird for the trip.

We have a little drive around the nearby minor roads on our way to the next stop and find three plump Corn Bunting, we get really cracking views of one male sat up on a wire singing his jangly song.

We arrive at a little fresh water loch and on the approach track Simon's vehicle picks up a Magpie along the wooded edge, a scarce bird in these parts. We walk down to a hide as it begins to rain. Packed into the hide, we watch a group of breeding Black-headed Gulls and Common Terns with their chicks. We watch as the adults bring in food for their offspring. The cacophony of gulls and terns calling is quite deafening at times.

Over the far side of the loch a family party of Mute Swans with five cygnets feed, along with Mallard, Tufted Duck, Moorhen and loads of Swifts and hirundines, there are plenty of things for us to watch whilst sheltering from the rain. One lucky guest get a very brief view of a Marsh Harrier flying beyond the tree line. We are hoping to see an Otter but it proves very elusive and we leave a wee bit disappointed.

We take the Forres to Cambridge road to look for Short-eared Owls as we cross the moors again on our way back, but the area is pretty bird free and we soon find ourselves back home.

Day 7

The weather is still a bit overcast so we decide to have another fairly local day in the Spey Valley exploring the diverse habitats of lochs, rivers, farmland and ancient woodland.

We head off for our first stop of the day where we check out some shallow roadside pools around the outskirts of one of the local villages and we are amazed to find a single Moorhen. At our second pool at first we can only

see one of the Slavonian Grebes that we know have bred here. The sight of Common Sandpiper chicks soon takes everyone's attention and hearts as these little balls of brown fluff run around the edge of the lochan. A pair of Wigeon feed on the far side of the pool and just as we are leaving, the second Slavonian Grebe appears and we watch both birds displaying. They swim into the far corner of the pool; we hope that this pair is successful this year because they are one of only a few pairs nesting in the Spey Valley.

We then head to the RSPB reserve of Abernethy. We enjoy a cuppa surrounded by the mature woodland not far from Loch Garten. After a short stroll down the track we watch a pair of Crested Tits feeding in the canopy, the behaviour of the adults is a joy to watch. This walk also allows us to get our most special scope views of a male Common Redstart singing at the top of a Pine.

With a need to get better views of Crossbills, we decide to head deeper into the old woods of Abernethy and shortly find ourselves walking through more ancient Caledonian Pines. A wander along a track produces several Crested Tits, the first teasing us with brief views and intermittent calls before coming out into the open and allowing satisfactory views. A flock of Crossbills fly by calling very excitedly, they land in low trees and then one by one proceed to come down to a drinking pool on the track no more than 15 metres from us! With potentially three different species of Crossbill here you need a good view to have a chance of identifying them and here we can assess bill size and body shape at leisure. We are confident that they are all Scottish Crossbills, in fact a family party of a very local pair which nested close by with their three juveniles and four hangers-on – a pair with two juveniles. More Crossbill flyovers on our way back to the van heralds more activity with many singing Tree Pipits, Common Redstarts and more Cresties.

For a change of scenery we move the vans down to the River Spey beside an old wooden bridge which is a great place for Dippers. We enjoy a hearty picnic and the time allows us leisurely views of Common Sandpipers and Grey Wagtails alongside the Dippers that are frantically gathering food to feed some large chicks in a nest under the bridge.

We drive north to the other side of Grantown-on-Spey in the hope that we might just pick up a Capercaillie on the woodland edge. We start up a broad track into some pinewoods and have a look for Caper. Chrissie and Simon lead us along as quietly as possible and we find signs of Caper activity, dust bath and droppings, but alas nothing to be seen. We are not too disheartened as we did see one earlier in the week, we walk back to vans.

Our last dinner together is great fun and afterwards we run through the best moments of the week. There is a clear winner of Bird of the Trip with those magical Golden Eagles stealing the show. Place of the Trip gets more of a spread of votes with Abernethy Forest and Spey Bay just pipped at the post by Handa Island, whilst our Magic Moment is a clear tie between the Dotterel in the mountains and the fantastic views of Capercaillie we had in the hide. With so many highlights and so many memories to take away the week has really flown by!!

Day 8

After a final breakfast together everyone says their farewells and leave the Steading reluctantly for their journeys home leaving beautiful Glen Feshie perhaps to visit again another year.

BIRDS

Red-throated Diver	Ringed Plover
Black-throated Diver	Dotterel
Great Northern Diver	Golden Plover
Little Grebe	Lapwing
Slavonian Grebe	Sanderling
Fulmar	Dunlin
Gannet	Snipe
Cormorant	Woodcock
Shag	Bar-tailed Godwit
Grey Heron	Whimbrel
Mute Swan	Curlew
Greylag Goose	Redshank
Shelduck	Greenshank
Wigeon	Common Sandpiper
Teal	Turnstone
Mallard	Black-headed Gull
Tufted Duck	Common Gull
Scaup	Lesser Black-backed Gull
Eider	Herring Gull
Goldeneye	Great Black-backed Gull
Red-breasted Merganser	Kittiwake
Goosander	Sandwich Tern
Red Kite	Common Tern
Sparrowhawk	Arctic Tern
Common Buzzard	Guillemot
Golden Eagle	Razorbill
Osprey	Black Guillemot
Kestrel	Rock Dove
Merlin	Woodpigeon
Peregrine	Collared Dove
Marsh Harrier	Cuckoo
Red Grouse	Tawny Owl
Ptarmigan	Swift
Black Grouse	Great Spotted Woodpecker
Capercaillie	Skylark
Red-legged Partridge	Sand Martin
Pheasant	Swallow
Moorhen	House Martin
Coot	Tree Pipit
Oystercatcher	Meadow Pipit

Rock Pipit
Grey Wagtail
Pied Wagtail
Dipper
Wren
Dunnock
Robin
Redstart
Whinchat
Stonechat
Wheatear
Ring Ouzel
Blackbird
Song Thrush
Mistle Thrush
Sedge Warbler
Blackcap
Chiffchaff
Wood Warbler
Goldcrest
Spotted Flycatcher
Crested Tit
Coal Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Treetreeper
Magpie
Jackdaw
Rook
Carrion Crow
Raven
Starling
House Sparrow
Chaffinch
Greenfinch
Goldfinch
Siskin
Linnet
Twite
Redpoll
Scottish Crossbill

Bullfinch
Yellowhammer
Reed Bunting
Corn Bunting

Total Birds: 125

MAMMALS

Red Squirrel
Stoat
Pine Marten
Otter
Badger
Field Vole
Wood Mouse
Red Squirrel
Red Deer
Roe Deer
Wild Goat
Grey Seal
Common Seal
Bottlenose Dolphin
Brown Hare
Mountain Hare
Rabbit

Total Species: 142