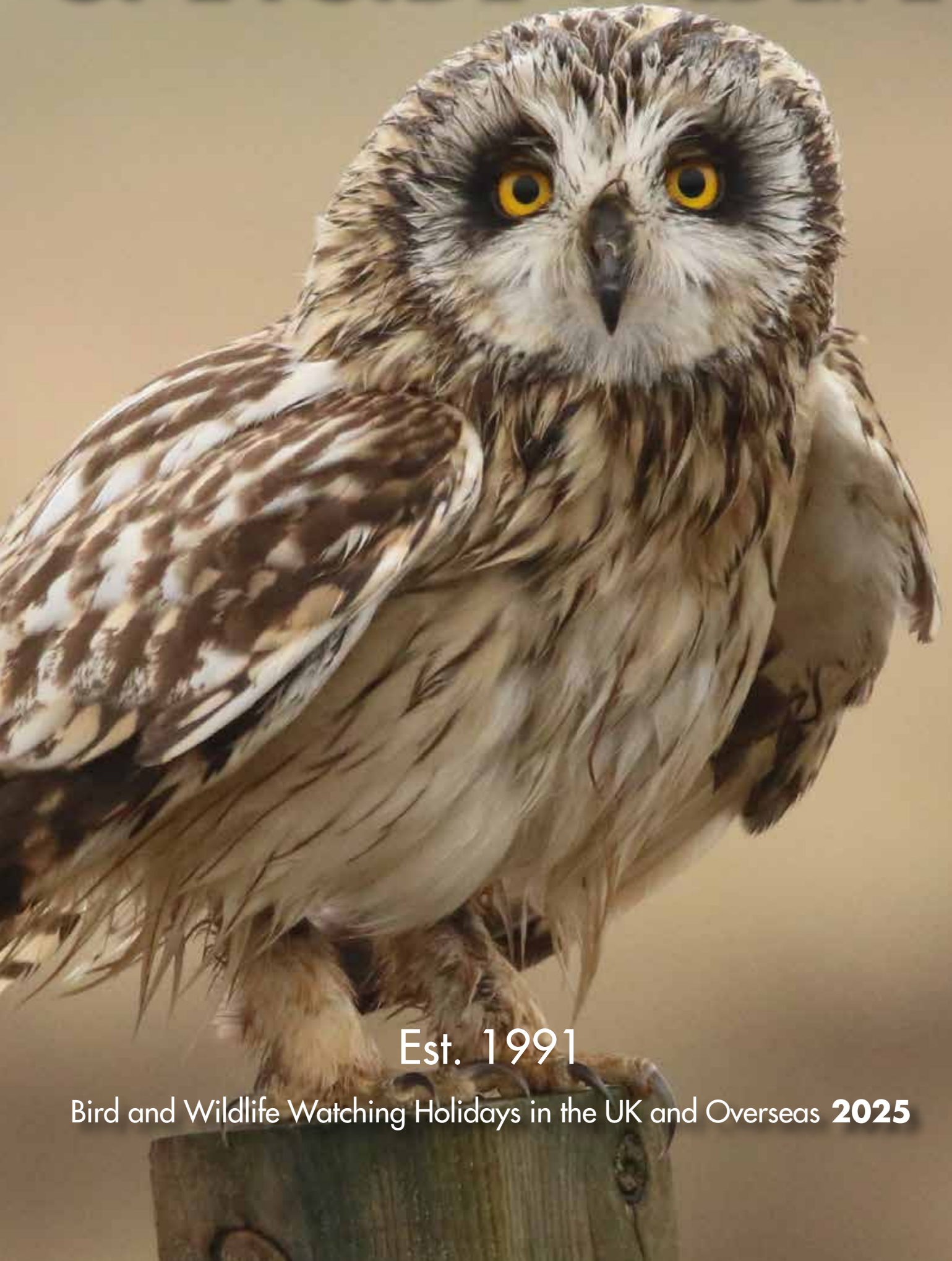


SPEYSIDE WILDLIFE



Est. 1991

Bird and Wildlife Watching Holidays in the UK and Overseas **2025**



2025 holiday schedule

This is our 2025 schedule at a glance. Details of each holiday or experience follow in full, just start turning the pages to find the destination that suits you. In addition, all holidays are on our website, where you'll also find photographs and feedback from guests who have been with us on previous trips. A "Holiday Highlights" trip report can be downloaded from each holiday details web page. To ask about any of these, or for any other queries, don't hesitate to email us on enquiries@speysidewildlife.co.uk or phone us on +44 (0) 1479 812498.



Orca, British Columbia, Elaine George

Scotland

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England and Wales

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The Americas

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Europe

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4-6 Mar	The Netherlands	pg 24
17-24 May	The Pyrenees, Spain	pg 38
24 Aug-2 Sep	Cantabria, Spain	pg 58
22-29 Sep	Northern Greece	pg 68
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Oceania

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Other wildlife watching experiences

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WHAT MAKES A SPEYSIDE WILDLIFE HOLIDAY

When we started in 1991, running trips and holidays in Speyside in the Scottish Highlands, designated as the Cairngorms National Park in 2003, in recognition of how special this area is, we never dreamed that we would now be running holidays around the world from the Arctic to the Antarctic. Our ethos however remains the same, to deliver fun-filled holidays, packed with wildlife and our destinations have always been determined by this and by where you want to go next.

We pride ourselves on our high level of personal attention and won't race around in pursuit of big lists. We keep to small group sizes (normally 12), so whether you are a beginner or more experienced, young or old, we are happy to take the time, so you can enjoy the wildlife to the full. Our guides are experienced and their enthusiasm infectious, always ensuring that you see the wildlife and always happy to explain what you are looking at, whilst our dedicated office team makes sure everything runs smoothly from the beginning to the end of your holiday.

"Why would we choose anyone else! Speyside Wildlife tours are pitched perfectly for us in terms of level of comfort and level of birding. Your record has been consistently outstanding, so you are always our first choice for nature travel." Alison Cawley and John Scotford



Guests during 'Canna and Corncrakes', Ailie Brown

Fully Inclusive

Our holidays are just that - holidays. We'll fit in as many exciting and interesting activities as we can, but still give you completely relaxed enjoyment. You'll find little if any extra spending money is needed, as our holidays are all-inclusive - the price you see is the final price you pay and covers accommodation, meals, transport, boat and ferry costs and flights, as detailed with each destination.

Not included are travel insurance, visas, personal telephone calls, drinks etc. at the accommodation and items of a personal nature.

Typical Days Out

We generally breakfast about 8am to make the most of the morning's bird and wildlife activity, but often arrange optional pre-breakfast excursions. In tropical areas we'll start earlier to avoid the midday heat, but don't be frightened to lie-in - it is your holiday after all! We eat out during the day or take a picnic lunch in the field and, at the end of the day, return to freshen up before dinner, where we all eat together.

"We choose Speyside Wildlife because of the quality of the leaders and the level of care on holidays, plus the level of service offered by the office team. Thought is given to the itinerary, with good accommodation and we have the knowledge that everything possible will be done to take care of the group." Brenda and Peter Wilson

OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE PROMISE:

To share outstanding fun-filled wildlife experiences, where you are always treated as an individual, not one of a crowd.

Relaxing afterwards, we'll run through the day's wildlife sightings and highlights, or perhaps arrange an optional dusk excursion.

We try and fit in as much gentle walking as we can during our days out. There may be more rigorous walks occasionally, but wherever possible we shall offer a less strenuous option. You'll require a moderate degree of fitness, but no more than average.

People find our holidays fun and informal, with guests, including both beginners and those more expert, adding to their experience. On each trip, we get a real mixture of singles and couples, spanning a range of age and ability. Our easy-going guides will make sure that your holiday is fun to be on.

Where We Stay

Wildlife watching often takes place in beautiful remote regions with beautiful remote accommodation to match. These places are often unique. We try and find the most friendly, rural, good quality, family-run accommodation with ensuite facilities. We blaze a trail by finding some terrific hotels away from the run of the mill tourist fare, places of character that others don't use. For us, great food and comfortable accommodation, with wildlife watching near at hand, are all vital ingredients for a successful holiday.

"Good knowledgeable guides who care about the guests and try to ensure you see everything, plus the organisation as a whole is very good."

Val Lambert

"The guides were great as usual; very knowledgeable and great fun. We were kept fully informed about everything."

Marilyn Davidson

Easy To Get To

If you're holidaying with us in the Cairngorms, Inverness airport is only a 1hr 30min flight from London and we can arrange an airport pick-up for you for a small charge. If you prefer to travel by train, we can collect you free of charge from Aviemore train station at 4:30pm, 6:30pm or 7:30pm and of course we'll return you to the station on departure.

All our holidays around Scotland start in the Cairngorms, Inverness, Aberdeen, Oban or Glasgow and we'll give you details of the meeting points for each. Again, if you prefer to travel by train, they all have stations and there are flights to Inverness, Aberdeen and Glasgow.

If you're joining us on an overseas holiday, a map of the airport or train station, together with a meeting point and time, will be sent to you prior to the start of the holiday.

Photography

Our holidays are aimed at providing a great wildlife watching experience. While they are not designed as photography holidays, many guests do take the opportunity to capture wonderful photographs to add to their enjoyment (and often the enjoyment of other guests). Most of the pictures in this brochure have been taken by guests or guides and we are pleased to be able to use these to illustrate "what you see is what you get" - our guides really do have the knack of finding birds and animals.



Grizzly Bear, British Columbia, Elaine George



Collared Aracari, Costa Rica, Michael Plumb



Jane Atkins, Amazon River, Cock-of-the-Rock

HOW TO BOOK

Bookings can be made via our website where you can check availability, book and pay online. Please contact our team if you require a manual booking form. Full terms and conditions are also available online, along with details of each holiday.

Please feel free to call or email us and we'll be happy to advise you of the spaces remaining on your chosen holiday. We can also send you a "Holiday Highlights" trip report. These are also available on the website.

Whether booking online or sending in a booking form, payments for holidays can be made by all of the major credit and debit cards shown below via PayPal or by bank transfer or cheque.

Phone	+44 (0) 1479 812498
Email	enquiries@speysidewildlife.co.uk
Web	www.speysidewildlife.co.uk
Post	Wester Camerorie Ballieward Grantown on Spey Cairngorms National Park PH26 3PR Scotland



MEET OUR GUIDES

"Roy was brilliant as always - professional, patient and friendly. Always making sure everyone had a chance to see everything, but enabling people to opt out when they needed a break"

Costa Rica 2023, Elaine and Colin George



Roy Atkins

We've known Roy for over 25 years. He's a great all-round naturalist and years' of experience in the world of teaching have made him a great people person. Our guests travel with him again and again to far-flung places such as Costa Rica, Tanzania, the Pantanal and British Columbia. His sense of fun and knowledge of birds, plants and animals make him a very popular leader.

Darren Rees

Darren is a great birder and quite simply fun to be with. He has led countless groups for us in Arizona, Texas, California, South Africa and Namibia. This year he will be taking guests to Colorado, Finland and Norway, Namibia and Spitsbergen. He is also a talented artist: 'Bird Impressions' is his acclaimed collection of bird paintings and his latest book 'Ice Bound' follows his exploits in Antarctica'.



"Darren was superb as usual - always kept us informed of daily plans and activities. He has a great knowledge of the area and hotspots to potentially spot target species."

Yellowstone Spring 2023, Jayne Behenna

"Simon was the only guide and was enthusiastic and informative. He went to great lengths to ensure that we all got good views of the birds, mammals and plants."

Outer Hebrides 2023, Susan Bradbury



Simon Eaves

Simon is one of Speyside's keenest birdwatchers. He knows as much as anyone about the wildlife of the Scottish Highlands and has a real interest in scarce birds, mammals and identification challenges - with him as your guide you'll learn a huge amount about Speyside. That doesn't stop him taking guests further afield for us however; to places such as Tarifa/Doñana and the Isles of Scilly.

Craig Round

Craig loves Speyside and the Scottish Islands and has led tours in Scotland for 25 years, taking our guests regularly to Mull, Shetland, Fair Isle and the Outer Hebrides. He has a great combination of field naturalist skills, outgoing personality and incredibly sharp eyes; along with an astonishing knowledge of birds, mammals and insects.



"The guiding was excellent. Craig took us to fantastic places to see a variety of birds and was very knowledgeable. He was also good fun to be with."

Outer Hebrides 2023, Margaret Glasgow

"Duncan was brilliant. Very well informed, on the ball, patient at all times and tried to make sure everyone saw everything."

Sue and Mike Jenkins 2019



Duncan Macdonald

With 20 years' experience leading wildlife watching groups in the Highlands. He has a background in environmental education and conservation, which gives him great guiding skills, as well as knowledge of a wide range of birds, mammals, butterflies and bugs! Duncan is one of our trainers for our wildlife identification courses along with Roy.

Jonathan Willet

Jonathan has been working as a wildlife guide for 25 years and has always worked up in the Highlands and Islands. He loves the opportunity to share the majesty of the wonderful wildlife we have with our guests and of course the stories that go along with! He is an all-round naturalist but specialises in dragonflies and can usually fit them into a conversation somewhere.



"Excellent training particularly the fact that the learning was delivered in a way that made it fun as well as really informative."

12-Month Wildlife ID Course 2023,
Peter Casebow

"Julian was amazing - excellent knowledge and experience of the region and species. We were briefed the evening before where we were going and what we might see."
Andujar Lynx 2023, Yvonne Hamblin



Julian Sykes

A native Yorkshireman, Julian now divides his time between there and Spain, so is the perfect guide to take you on our Andujar, Extremadura and Pyrenees holidays. Not that this stops him from leading tours to British Columbia, NE India and Wrangel Island. He has a lifelong interest in wildlife and his friendly outgoing nature makes him a very popular guide and ideal member of the team.

Sally Nowell

Sally has travelled extensively to pursue her interest in wildlife watching, particularly birds, and has been based in Speyside for the last 23 years, so has an excellent knowledge of Highland wildlife. Sally is a keen walker and loves to try and get off the beaten track to discover the hidden corners of the Highlands. She co-leads a number of our Scottish holidays.



"Real pleasure to travel with Sally again. She is great company, an excellent wildlife spotter and never stops working for the group."
Canna and Corncrakes 2023, Lynne and John Tidmarsh

"We did a Cairngorms Guided Day Out with Ailie and she was great. All the while she dropped interesting little bits of naturalist knowledge which we then remembered for the other days."
Trip Advisor Review, Sept 2023



Ailie Brown

Ailie studied Zoology at Aberdeen University before interning at Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve as a Grazing warden. Ailie has a great interest in bird watching and identifying wildflowers and butterflies too! Ailie leads on the administration of our Guided Days Out as well as guiding our local guests in the Cairngorms during their days out.

David Hull

David has a background in education and his roles as a wildlife guide and conservationist benefit from his enthusiasm for teaching and lifelong learning. He enjoys sharing his knowledge of Scottish plants, birds, mammals and butterflies during our Day Guides and he also guides our Evening Mammal Watching and Badger Photography experiences.



"A big 'thank you' for my very memorable day out on the Cairngorms. I really appreciate the huge effort you went to, to ensure that we had a successful day."
Tracy Solman, 2023

"Harris was a brilliant guide pointing out not only information about the Badgers and Pine Martens but also information about plants and the night sky on our way to our car!"
Trip Advisor Review, Sept 2023



Harris Brooker

Harris is a well-rounded naturalist with a wide interest in nature and a particular passion for wildlife, botany and astronomy. He is our Evening Mammal Hide guide, based near Aviemore and you will also find him supporting our Wildlife Identification Courses and Guided Day Out.

Jane Atkins

Jane started her time with us as a guest, often joining her husband Roy on trips he was leading. Over the years, she has guided holidays within the UK and also to British Columbia, Spain and Cyprus. Now she has retired from her job with the Environment Agency she has time to lead more trips in the future - such as Corsica and Oland.



"Jane was an excellent guide. She was flexible enough to take into account the weather (where possible) and recent sightings."
Cyprus 2023, Joyce and Tony Sawford



Apollo Butterfly, Mongolia, Christopher Hutchinson



Sunrise, Amazon River, Kirsten Osa



Stonechat, Isles of Scilly, Pam Mundy

MEET OUR OTHER "EXPERTS"

Our guides are the expert birders and naturalists who lead the tours, but behind them stands the invisible group of other "experts", who are just as essential in making sure that every holiday runs smoothly and guests have a great time. They include the people who plan, research and organise the individual holidays; who arrange the logistics, provide the information, deal with queries and keep the show on the road.

"This is my sixth trip with you and I return because I know I will reliably have the type of holiday I like best, as a nature-loving traveller."
Andrew Dodd 2019



Sally Dowden

Sally owns Speyside Wildlife and is still very much hands on in the organisation. Responsible for the smooth running and complex logistics of the business, she recently instigated a wildlife identification course, designed to fill the lack of 'on the ground' identification skills in the Cairngorms, which is run by two of our wildlife tour guides.

Lisa Gunn

Lisa has been with us for nearly 20 years and is responsible for all the accounting and systems management. Along with the daily accounting processes, company pensions, wages, budgets, contribution schedules and VAT, she organises the logistics of both our wildlife watching hides, all of which help to keep her busier than ever!



"We are so looking forward to tomorrow evening and would like to say a big thank you for your help. It has put our mind at ease. Wonderful!"
Lesley Smith 2021

"I also wanted to express my sincere 'thank you' to you for organising the Rio Extension...The hotel was lovely and I had a great view of Copacabana Beach."
Jayne Behenna, 2024



Tania Pedersen

Tania deals with all aspects of administration to ensure you have all the information you need for your holiday. She also organises all our overseas trips, dealing with the complex logistics of the long-haul destinations, while still finding time to manage the European destinations.

Susanne McCafferty

Susanne has been with us for over seventeen years. Born and bred in Speyside, she deals with all aspects of a selection of our Scottish and UK holidays to ensure your holiday runs as smoothly as possible. Destinations include Orkney, the Outer Hebrides, the Isles of Scilly, Northumberland and Mull.



"Susanne's kind, faithful and efficient communication has been a blessing, without her I rather doubt my dreams of participation in this lovely experience could've come to fruition!" Mollie Dodd 2017

"I just wanted to email to say thank you so much for all your help, kindness, and support with the filming last week and over the last few months in the build-up." Hello Halo TV, 2021



Cath Wright

Cath leads on our marketing, deals with our design work and website and organises our presentations to bird clubs and exhibitions at birding fairs, plus our own events up and down the country. Her background in hospitality and marketing, means she is best placed to organise your tailor-made itineraries for individuals and larger groups too.



Guests, Canna and Corncrakes, Sally Nowell

EVENING MAMMAL WATCHING



"Our nocturnal wildlife never ceases to amaze our visitors. With Badger, Pine Marten, Red and Roe Deer, Wood Mice, Bank Vole and Scottish Wildcat all possible. We have a complete repertoire of the nocturnal wildlife in the Highlands."
Harris Brooker

Cost £30.00 per adult, if booked online (£35.00 if booked manually via our office)
£15.00 per child 8-14yrs, if booked online (£20.00 if booked manually via our office)

Not suitable for children under 8yrs

Exclusive Use £275.00 per evening, if booked online (£325.00 if booked manually via our office)

Opening Times Nightly from Easter to October on an exclusive basis or as part of a group.
From November to Easter on a request basis only for exclusive use or parties of 2 people or more. Pre-booking is essential. Start times vary with the seasons. In summer we don't start until 9:00pm, in winter we meet around 6:00pm

Group Size Maximum 12 people in the hide

Insects Biting midges possible during summer

Walking There is a short walk, less than 5 minutes on a wide track from the meeting point to the hide

Access The hide is accessible to wheelchairs, and has lowered sections of windows for viewing. Please get in touch if you would like more information about access to the hide.

Clothing Warm, non-rusting, subdued outdoor clothing and walking boots or shoes. Advice on the "how to do it" of wildlife watching is provided on booking

Location The hide is a short journey from Aviemore. A meeting point map and meeting times are provided on booking.

Toilets Please be aware there are no toilet facilities whilst in the hide so apologies, no comfort breaks during the evening.

Photos The viewing windows do not open, so there are only some incidental photographic opportunities.

Terry Lee: Pine Marten, **Jane Hope:** Badger

Come and enjoy our comfortable hide on the edge of the Caledonian Pine Forest in the Cairngorms for Badger and Pine Marten plus Roe Deer, Red Deer and more.

- Comfortable hide in the Cairngorms National Park, with easy access
- We regularly see Badgers at close quarters
- Pine Marten and Scottish Wildcat also visit
- The animals come right up to the windows
- You'll be accompanied throughout by our friendly, expert guide
- Hire exclusively and have the hide to yourselves
- Badger photography hide also available for exclusive hire

For a memorable wildlife encounter, spend an evening with our knowledgeable guide and watch the nocturnal creatures that visit our warm and comfortable, baited hide in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. Your guide will meet you just before dusk, at our location just outside Aviemore and walk with you down the wide track to the hide.

Once there, they'll explain the habits and life cycles of the Badgers and Pine Martens that are the most frequently anticipated night-time visitors, while you relax and await their appearance. Whilst the animals are free and untamed and appear when they wish, understanding their nocturnal habits every night has ensured reliable sightings. Every evening provides a new experience and exciting close encounters with our precious native mammal species. Roe Deer and Red Deer may be seen whilst it's still light, but the visits by Badgers and Pine Martens will usually only occur at dusk.

The hide has been designed to give the maximum viewing area possible for all guests, without fear of disturbance to the nocturnal visitors and we have outside spotlights, allowing the animals to be seen clearly from the large picture windows without interference on the darker evenings. There is a lower section of window for wheelchair users and those needing to be seated lower down rather

than on the bar stools. Our infra-red cameras give advance notice of whatever animals are moving about in the forest around us and our microphone will pick up their sounds as they feed. The animals will come to the viewing area at different times in an evening, but we expect that to occur within the 2-3 hours you will be in the hide.

The viewing windows do not open, so there are only some incidental photographic opportunities. Please note that flash photography is not permitted at any time and please turn any camera functions to mute so that electronic noises do not disturb the animals. We have a photographic hide on site for 1-2 people, which can be booked on an exclusive basis for Badger Photography and the main wildlife viewing hide can also be booked on an exclusive basis if you wish to bring your own group for the evening.



SUMMER BADGER PHOTOGRAPHY HIDE



"Sitting in the peace of a summer's evening, sunlight coming through the trees, with a family of badgers only a few feet away, snuffling and grunting as they search for food, is a real delight."

Cost	£175
Exclusive Use	Only one booking per night, ideally for one person, but can accommodate two.
What to Expect	Your booking confirmation will give extra handy hints about the evening so that you can maximise the enjoyment from your visit.
Times	Nightly during the summer months, to start approximately one hour before dusk. The animals are around for a maximum of three hours. The actual meeting time will be given on confirmation of booking.
Location	A meeting point map and timings are provided on confirmation of booking.
Toilets	Please be aware there are no toilet facilities whilst in the hide so apologies, no comfort breaks during the evening.
Transport	The hide is a short journey from Aviemore. Your meeting point map, provided on confirmation of your booking, will give taxis the precise location.
Access	There is a short walk, less than 5 minutes on a wide track and then a downhill path, from the meeting point to the hide. Please remember to bring a torch, as the walk back to your car may be in the dark.
Clothing	Warm, non-rustling, subdued outdoor clothing and walking shoes are preferable. Advice on the "how to do it" for this hide's location, is provided on confirmation of booking.
Insects	Can occur during the summer months, but not a problem when in the hide.

Jane Hope: Badgers

Our hide is dedicated to photographing badgers under natural conditions. During the summer months the nights are short, enabling you to photograph animals in daylight.

- Ideal for single photographer use, although hide can accommodate two people
- Photos are all in natural daylight in the summer months
- Hide is halfway down a woodland hill, so many shots potentially at eye-level
- Also potential for backlit pictures from the end of the hide facing the sunset
- Scrim netting is provided with slits for lenses
- Shelf and screw fitting for tripod head incorporated
- Our guide will meet you and walk you to the hide location

Our Badger photography hide is located a short distance from Aviemore in the Cairngorms National Park within a peaceful woodland setting. This allows you to photograph and watch these timid creatures from a respectful distance, as they forage the woodland floor and interact with each other in the early evening light.

The hide is bookable on an exclusive basis for an evening. No artificial light is provided, so higher ISOs are needed because of the woodland shade. The consequence of this will depend on the camera being used, but some examples of pictures taken are shown in the website gallery, with the lens/speed/aperture details given on a selection. Flash cannot be used under any circumstances. Tripods can be used, but they are not ideal. We advise the use of beanbags, or you can transfer your tripod head to a screw provided in the shelf.



Scrim netting is provided with slits for lenses. You will be very close to the badgers, so it is essential to be very quiet, although there is carpet on the floor to deaden sound. It is also important to wear non-rustling clothing. A fleece is ideal and much better than a waterproof jacket. The usual advice applies about wearing hats and gloves to make you less visible; even with scrim net. If a low sun is shining directly into the hide, any movement will be noticeable to the Badgers.

Our guide will meet you at the appointed time and walk you to the hide and ensure you are settled, before leaving you for the evening.



WILDLIFE IDENTIFICATION COURSES



"The diversity of environments we visited on the bird watching day meant that we got to see a wide range of habitats and species. Great to be able to put some of the techniques learned in the classroom day into practice."

George Blacksell

Wildlife Identification Qualification 2023

"It's always a special bonus on the course to be able to enjoy the classroom location - a truly wonderful place especially when the sun shines. There are plenty of birds to see and hear. It will remain one of the highlights of the whole event for me - a privilege to spend time there and it enhances the course experience."

Elaine George

Wildlife Identification Qualification 2023

"All staff are incredibly enthusiastic and it helps to learn something when people are passionate about it."

Rosemarie Patterson, Raptors MC 2023

"Duncan and Simon were professional and helped folk with different levels of knowledge and experience. Nothing was too much trouble."

Alistair Bertram, Waders MC 2023

Images: Jane Hope



If you've always wanted to know what the bird calls are that you hear whilst out walking, or to feel confident that you can tell the difference between a buzzard and an eagle as you scan the hills, then our Wildlife Identification courses are for you.

We teach you the 'how to do it' of wildlife identification, to work things out for yourself, either by sight or sound, whilst you're out and about.

You may wish to join for personal career development, at the start of your career as a wildlife tour guide or just for your own enjoyment and complete beginners are welcome. Our year round schedule includes:

12-Month Wildlife Identification Qualification

Who is it for?

- Anyone who wants to start the process towards becoming a wildlife guide.
- Anyone who wishes to improve their skills and knowledge, of bird and mammal identification.
- People who would like to work in the natural environment where identification skills would help.
- People who want to know what they are seeing and hearing when they are out and about.

What does it cover?

- Learn to recognize birds by sight and sound - focusing on the birds we may see and hear in the Cairngorms National Park (but useful anywhere in the UK).
- How to recognise the trickier to identify mammal species.
- We teach the 'how to do it' of wildlife identification, so you can work things out for yourself when you're out spotting wildlife.

The course structure:

- 12 months - covering all seasons, plumage, migration, songs and calls.
- We get together on five weekends - each with a day in the 'classroom' and a day putting what we learned into practice in the field.
- The course is accredited by LANTRA so

you will receive a certificate for successfully completing the course assessment.

- We focus on the trickier groups everyone struggles with - waders, warblers, raptors and plenty of other identification challenges.

2-Day Masterclasses

Which groups of birds?

- Raptors - all the UK's raptors including eagles, buzzards, harriers, hawks, falcons, osprey, Red Kite and owls.
- Waders - all the UK's waders, from Curlew down to Little Stint.
- Wildfowl and Waterbirds - swans, geese and ducks, plus grebes, cormorant and shag, divers and auks.
- Bird songs and calls - we focus on the most likely songs you will hear; plus give hints and tips on how to learn bird songs and calls.

What is covered?

- Compare and contrast the various members of groups to help you identify them for yourself with useful tips and hints.
- We focus on the species found around the Cairngorms National Park but also mention other species around the UK.
- Plumage and other useful features such as behaviour, size and shape, how they fly, calls, habitat, what time of year to see them and direct comparisons of trickier to tell apart species and groups.

The course structure:

- We spend one day in the 'classroom' and one in the field putting what we learned into practice..

All our courses are based within the Cairngorms National Park, in a forest setting near Aviemore.

Further details can be found online at www.wildlifeidcourses.co.uk

DAY TRIPS IN THE CAIRNGORMS



"Your day can be completely tailored to the species and areas you hope to see. Or let us decide and we'll take you to the special nooks and crannies that we know, for the best the Cairngorms has to offer. This is a great way to get to know the area and discover what makes Speyside so special!"
Ailie Brown

Dates	To suit you, subject to guide availability and preferred itinerary. Our website will show which days are available
Guides	We have local guides who know the wildlife of the Cairngorms and around Scotland, so can tailor the day to highlight your interests
Cost	£250 standard day if booked online (£300 if booked manually via our office) £325 extended day if booked online (£375 if booked manually via our office)
Included	Wildlife guide on an exclusive basis for you and up to 6 guests. Transport for the day in comfortable 8-seater minibus or car
Packages	Tailor-made packages, including meals, accommodation etc. can be arranged to suit your budget - just ask and we'll be delighted to put a quote together for you
Insects	Midges and ticks in the spring/summer
Weather	Weather varies from cold to warm and sunny (-5°-25°C), with less rainfall than much of Scotland but snow possible in the mountains
Walking	Most walks will be on wide sandy tracks, except in the Cairngorm Mountains, where terrain is more steep and uneven, so walking boots are essential. Your guide will discuss walking options with you beforehand

Just some of what you could see:	
Red-throated Diver	Golden Plover
Black-throated Diver	Dipper
Slavonian Grebe	Ring Ouzel
Golden Eagle	Cuckoo
White-tailed Eagle	Crested Tit
Osprey	Scottish Crossbill
Merlin	Snow Bunting
Peregrine	Red Squirrel
Hen Harrier	Mountain Hare
Ptarmigan	Otter
Black Grouse	Red Deer
Red Grouse	Roe Deer
Dotterel	Bottlenose Dolphin

Simon Eaves: Crossbill, **Colin Scott:** Ptarmigan
Jane Hope: Crested Tit, Lochindorb
Duncan Macdonald: Redshank

The Cairngorms National Park is home to some of our most iconic species of wildlife. Our expert guides know the area intimately and can help you find the species you'd most like to see.

- Our expert guides have a wealth of knowledge about the wildlife of Scotland
- Book your own private guide and comfortable minibus for up to seven guests
- Target the species you want to see in the Cairngorms National Park and wider area
- Collection from your local accommodation or meeting place of your choice
- Combine this with an evening wildlife watching for Badger and Pine Marten
- Ideal for families, small groups, couples or individuals
- Perfect gift for birthdays, anniversaries, retirement etc.

The Cairngorms National Park is home to some of our most iconic but elusive species of wildlife. Finding them in this vast and spectacular landscape can be a real challenge, especially if you have limited time or are unfamiliar with the area. Our expert local guides know the area intimately, so can take you to the best locations to help you find the species you'd most like to see. Your guide will use their experience and field skills, including listening to bird calls and recognising animal tracks and signs, to help you find and identify species. They can tell you about behaviour and general biology of the species that you find in the Highlands.

We can provide an itinerary that matches your specific wildlife wishes. Alternatively, if you'd just like to see a diverse range of Highland species, then leave that to us. On the day, we'll judge the weather and decide where the wildlife can be found. In our comfortable 8-seater minibuses, we'll take you through different habitats to find the best wildlife. The day can include as much, or as little walking as you'd like.

Two or three days before your day out, your guide will contact you to discuss what you'd like to see and any specific requests that you may have. They'll also agree a start time with you and the best place to meet. This may be from your accommodation in the Grantown-Aviemore-Kingussie area, but it

may be elsewhere, depending on the itinerary you decide upon. Standard days out last around eight hours (normally 9am-5pm) and Extended Days around 10 hours.

To help you choose the best day, we've given you our suggested itineraries, showing the different habitats you could visit and some of the species that can be found there. These are our favourites, but if you'd like to do something different, or do a combination of different itineraries, then please email us or discuss it with your guide when they get in touch with you.

If you're staying outwith the Spey Valley, we can organise an exclusive day out, subject to mileage and guide availability and give you a specific price.



"Each season has something special to offer. We may come across Black Grouse during a spring morning, or search for Dotterel on the mountain tops during the summer months. During autumn we watch roaring rutting Stags in Highland Glens and winter is a great season to see foraging Crested Tits in our Pine Forests." Ailie Brown



Our Cairngorms National Park - If you've never been before and you want to see what makes this place special, from the landscape, to the wildlife, then just leave it to us. We know all the nooks and crannies in the Cairngorms and the best time of year to visit them. We'll make sure we target the Scottish specialities and leave more than enough room to drink in the scenery and marvel at the landscape. Golden Eagles in the glens, Red Deer on the hills, Ptarmigan on the mountains and Crested Tits in the forests; we can decide what's best for you.

Pine Forest - Visit the ancient Caledonian Pine Forest for Crested Tit, Scottish Crossbill and maybe even the chance of the elusive Capercaillie. Mammals may include Red Squirrel and Roe Deer. This itinerary involves a degree of walking on good tracks and trails through the forest. Wildlife can be found year round, but the best seasons can be autumn, winter and spring.

Woodland Walks - Local woods provide tranquil locations to look and listen for Wood Warbler, Pied Flycatcher and other woodland birds in the spring. Ospreys are regularly seen throughout the spring/summer. This itinerary does require a reasonable degree of fitness. The best time to visit for migrant birds is from late April through to August.

Highland Glen - Visit a spectacular local glen for Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Peregrine, Merlin, Ring Ouzel, Red Deer, Mountain Hare and Red Kite. We drive through spectacular scenery into the heart of the mountains and then take a low level walk further into the glen on good gravel

tracks. A broad range of wildlife, including the eagles, can be found all year. The Red Deer rut takes place from late September through October.

Cairngorm Mountains - To search for Ptarmigan, Snow Bunting, Dotterel and Ring Ouzel we have to walk into the Corries. The walk is on paths, but does require suitable clothing and walking shoes or boots, as the terrain is uneven. Wildlife can be seen on the higher tops year-round. Ptarmigan, Snow Bunting and Mountain Hare are present all year; Ring Ouzels arrive from mid-March onwards and Dotterel are present from May until early August.

Moorland and Moray Firth - Early morning in the spring is the time to see Black Grouse in the foothills on the vast open moorlands. We scan windswept lochs for divers, Merlin, Peregrine, Red Kite and Red Grouse, before heading to the Moray coast for Osprey (during the summer), seaduck (winter), waders and terns. Dependent on tide times, there's a chance of Bottlenose Dolphin. Divers can be found on freshwater lochs during the breeding season from April through to the end of September, when they relocate to the coast and winter on the sea. The winter months on the Moray coast can be excellent for seaduck.

The Black Isle - Just north of Inverness lies the Black Isle, almost surrounded by water and visited by large numbers of waders, ducks and geese as autumn approaches and through the winter. Peregrine Falcons may dash through sending birds skyward - all viewable from a large comfortable hide. Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, divers and grebes

spend the winter here and in autumn passing skuas and auks add to the excitement as we visit one of the best vantage points for Bottlenose Dolphins in the UK.

All Abilities Cairngorms National Park - This tailored day will ensure where possible, that everyone in your group can experience the scenery and wildlife that our National Park has to offer. We shall visit places that require little walking or are suitable for wheelchair access to help you experience wildlife in comfort. It may mean some of the day involves more travelling by vehicle than other itineraries, but some short walks or lookout hides will be utilised and the guide will structure the day to best suit your needs. The wildlife you experience may include Dippers, Red Squirrel, raptor species such as Red Kite and eagles, grouse and Roe and Red Deer.

Capercaillie Policy

Capercaillie can be found in the forests of the Cairngorms National Park, but they are, for whatever reason, a declining species that are easily disturbed. We minimise any disturbance at crucial times to help protect the birds, by adhering to the following policies:

We won't take guests into the Pine Forest before 9.00am during the lekking period (1 March - 31 May).

When going into Capercaillie habitat, we always stay on marked tracks and paths and never go looking off these.

When there is an alpha male (also known as a 'rogue' bird) in the area we won't go to see this bird. They are part of the lek, so we would be 'knowingly' disturbing them.

We suggest looking for Capercaillie through the autumn and winter months, when the birds can be easier to find. We won't be disturbing them then and young birds will have fledged and dispersed into the forests.



BESPOKE TRIPS TO SUIT YOU



"Many thanks for arranging everything for us. The accommodation was absolutely great and our guided day with Kate and Hollie was brilliant. Our evening visit to the Mammal Hide was brilliant too – all so impressive and our guide Eve, was a mine of information. Again our thanks and we look forward to more holidays with Speyside."
Mary and David Penton,
Cairngorms bespoke holiday, 2021

Dates	<p>To suit you, subject to guide availability. We can advise on the best times of year to go to specific destinations, what can be seen at different times of year and where in the world is best for the wildlife you want to see</p> <p>All our holiday itineraries within the UK and overseas can be organised for private groups, with optional extensions and different levels of accommodation and meals available for most destinations</p>
Guides	<p>We have a pool of guides, each with specific knowledge and interests, covering birds, mammals, cetaceans, plants and insects, who have guided around Scotland and Overseas</p>
Cost	<p>All tailor-made tours are individually priced according to the number of guests and your specific requirements</p>
Included	<p>Your package can include any of the following: flights; ferries; trains; guides; accommodation; transport; meals; and any activities or entrance fees.</p> <p>We make all the arrangements, so you are left just to enjoy yourselves</p>
Info	<p>All necessary information regarding travel, walking, weather, insects, meals, clothing and accommodation will be provided in advance of the holiday, together with an appropriate species list, notebooks and pens</p>

Duncan Macdonald: Guests in Extremadura
Perry Fairman: Arriving on Handa
Simon Eaves: Slavonian Grebe
Jane Hope: Road over the Cairngorms, Red Squirrel, Crested Tit
Colin Scott: Ptarmigan

For bird clubs, tour operators, or just good friends!
Take the hassle out of your group trip and let us arrange all the details, in Scotland or Overseas, any time of the year.

- Design your own holiday the way you want it - anywhere you want it!
- Guiding, accommodation, meals, transport etc. can all be taken care of
- Birds, mammals, plants and insects can all be included
- Our guides have a wealth of knowledge in Scotland and around the world
- A range of accommodation to suit the size of your group
- Combine wildlife watching with culture and heritage
- Take the hassle out of the organisation and let us arrange it for you

Bird Clubs, groups of families or friends, school parties and tour operators come to us to organise private tours for them. Sometimes it's a specific itinerary based on what they'd like to see, sometimes they rely on us to design a tour. Either way, they want us to take the hassle out of organising their holiday, so they can concentrate on enjoying the wildlife. We know the best places to go and wonderful places to stay, that are perfectly placed to enjoy the scenery and wildlife - and they know they will be well looked after by our excellent guides.

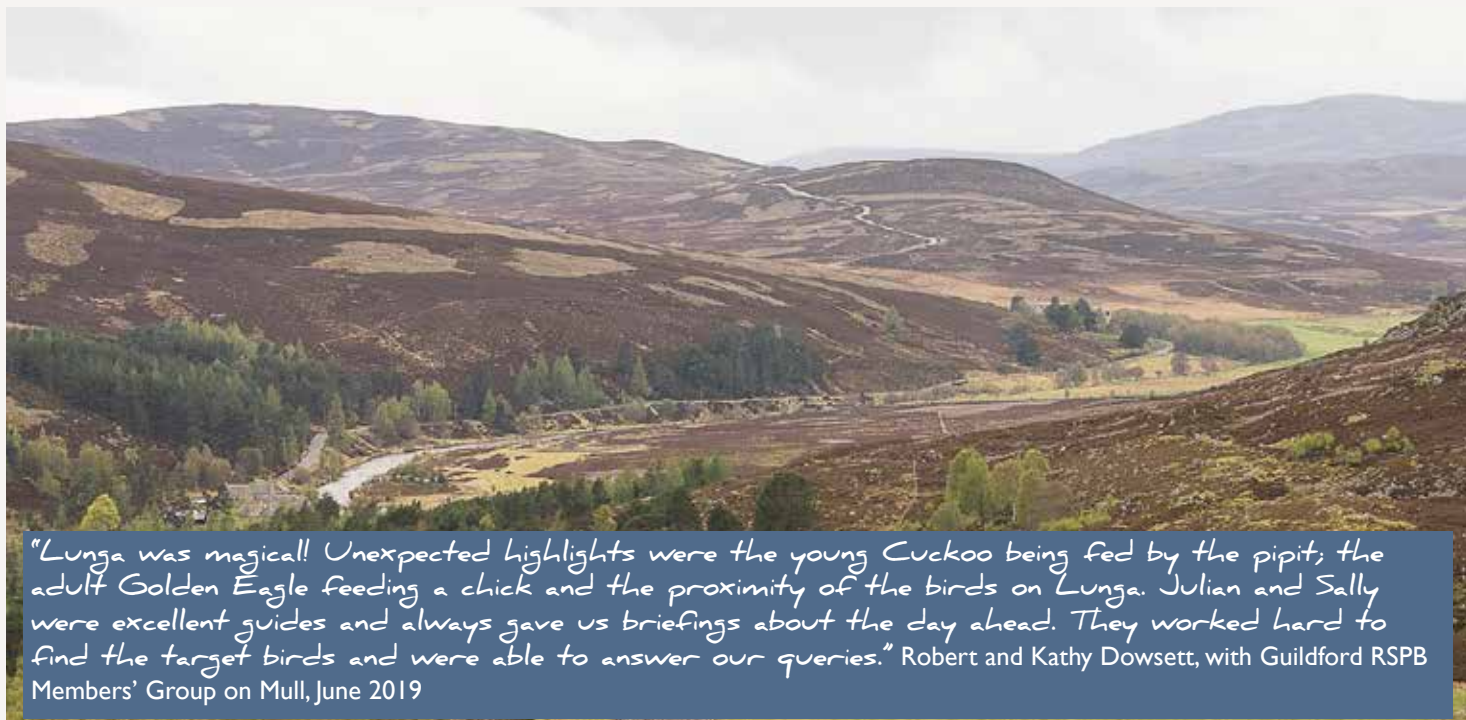
Within Scotland, enjoy the spectacular mountains, moorlands and pine forests of the Cairngorms National Park, looking for all the grouse species, plus Dotterel, Ptarmigan, Scottish Crossbill and Crested Tit, together with mammals such as Red and Roe Deer, Red Squirrel and Pine Marten; experience the majesty of the seacliffs on Shetland for auks,

Puffins and Gannets, combined with cetacean watching from land and sea and the night-time experience of Storm Petrels churring on Mousa; walk through the Machair of the Outer Hebrides, alive with the sounds of breeding waders and the distinctive call of the Corncrake, then sea-watch for Long-tailed and Pomarine Skuas on their spring passage.

Sample the delights of intimate seabird encounters on the islands off Mull, whilst looking for Golden and White-tailed Eagles, the latter at their highest breeding density in Europe, or combine island birdwatching for residents and migrants on the Orkney Isles, with the astounding prehistoric archaeology that the archipelago has in spades.

Why not combine some fantastic birding in Speyside with all the special birds and other wildlife this area has to offer with a few days on Mull, the





"Lunga was magical! Unexpected highlights were the young Cuckoo being fed by the pipit; the adult Golden Eagle feeding a chick and the proximity of the birds on Lunga. Julian and Sally were excellent guides and always gave us briefings about the day ahead. They worked hard to find the target birds and were able to answer our queries." Robert and Kathy Dowsett, with Guildford RSPB Members' Group on Mull, June 2019

Outer Hebrides or another part of the Highlands such as Sutherland - you might use our website with the selection of Scottish holidays listed there for inspiration!

Further afield, we can easily organise trips to Europe. Spain has so many possibilities; experience the hospitality of our long-standing beautiful hotel base in Extremadura, knowing that you'll be looking for all five Spanish eagle species, Great and Little Bustards, Roller, Hoopoe, Black-winged Kite and Eagle Owl; watch Lammergeiers and Griffon Vultures high over the Pyrenees with Wallcreeper, Citril Finch and Alpine Accentor in stunning scenery, or perhaps visit the Cota Doñana, or go in search of rare Iberian Lynx.

Other parts of Europe are equally enticing. You could chill out on a floating hotel in the Danube Delta, whilst searching for rare reedbed birds skulking in the shallows; or head to Hungary for superb birding with Imperial Eagle, Saker and tens of thousands of Common Cranes - or visit photographic hides to see birds such as Bee-eater; Roller; Hoopoe, Hawfinch and fabulous Red-footed Falcon, up close and personal! If you like islands, a visit to Corsica for endemic Corsican Nuthatch and Corsican Finch could be for you; or Cyprus for exciting east Mediterranean migration, or even Oland off the east coast of Sweden, with massive numbers of geese, cranes and raptors heading south in autumn might suit.

Why not go for something more exotic? Marvel at the majesty of Yellowstone National Park, home

to Gray Wolf, Bison, Black and Grizzly Bears and a host of birds - all of which could be new to you. Arizona, Texas, California and Vancouver Island where bears, Orcas and Humpback are amongst the spectacular scenery and are all possible, as well as India, South America and other destinations.

Let us know where you want to go and how many of you are travelling together; when you want to go; what type of accommodation you'd like; what other activities you'd like to include in your holiday experience and we'll do the rest. Or if you want to make it even easier, just ask us for our recommendations, based on our years' of experience and we'll put together the ideal holiday for you.

Our professional guides will take you through beautiful landscapes to show you the finest wildlife. We can find appropriate accommodation close to good birdwatching experiences. Wherever it is, our guides will seek out the wildlife you want to see and take you around in comfortable minibuses or cars as appropriate.

We don't race around after big lists, preferring to enjoy the wildlife that we find, so ensuring your holiday is filled with 'magic moments' to bring home with you. We know that the quality of the accommodation and food and the chance to relax at the end of the day and relive the wonderful wildlife moments from the day, are just as important to you as the wildlife you'll see. The possibilities are endless; exciting birdwatching experiences await.

"The structure and pace of the holiday were perfect for me. I have never been on a birding holiday before and I don't think I could manage anything too intense. This holiday was a really good balance." Penny Blake



"There were many highlights on the holiday. I had never seen a Golden Eagle and we were lucky enough to watch a Golden Eagle feeding its chick. We also saw them soaring overhead. The White-tailed Eagles were magnificent, flying over the landscape with such ease. The visit to Lunga was my real highlight as the Puffins stole my heart. To be able to sit with them and watch them going about their daily lives was such a privilege." Rob Cooke, with Guildford RSPB Members' Group on Mull, June 2019



LYNX AND LAMMERGEIER



"With so many of these tours now under my belt, returning to the Sierra de Andujar is like coming home. It is not only the incredible and varied wildlife, but also the people, who welcome us back to 'their land' to see the iconic Iberian Lynx." Julian Sykes

Dates Sun 19 - Sun 26 Jan 2025
Price £2,635
Deposit £525 Single Supp £150

Leader Julian Sykes

Flights EasyJet and Vueling, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Malaga
Inbound: Afternoon, Malaga-Gatwick

Weather Probably a mixture of sun and showers (0°-15°C), warmer in lowland areas but can be very cold in the mountains whilst looking for wildlife.
We could also encounter snow

Walking There will be some short walks up to 3km on good tracks and paths, which could be slightly more difficult in the mountains

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

Insects Biting insects may occasionally be present, so bring repellent

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 7

Just some of what we hope to see:

Iberian Lynx	Spanish Imperial Eagle
Otter	Golden Eagle
Wild Boar	Common Crane
Mouflon	Stone Curlew
Spanish Ibex	Little Owl
Red Squirrel	Great Bustard
Iberian Hare	Pin-tailed Sandgrouse
Greater Mouse-eared Bat	Black-bellied Sandgrouse
Marbled Duck	Iberian Green Woodpecker
White-headed Duck	Black Wheatear
Black-necked Grebe	Iberian Magpie
Greater Flamingo	Hawfinch
Lammergeier	Rock Bunting
Black Vulture	

The continued expansion of the Iberian Lynx population has been a massive conservation success story, along with Andalusia's growing population of Lammergeier – we aim to see both!

- Perfectly placed accommodation with beautiful grounds
- Spanish Imperial Eagle, Golden Eagle, Black Vulture
- The dramatic mountains of the Sierra de Cazorla
- Iberian Magpie, Hawfinch, Hoopoe, Firecrest
- Otter, Mouflon, bats, Boar and Iberian Hare
- Beautiful scenery with remnants of true Mediterranean Forest
- Bustards and sandgrouse on the steppes of Castilla La Mancha

After our morning flight to Malaga, we drive north to the Laguna de Fuente de Piedra, where we shall spend some time looking at this saline lake Reserve. Greater Flamingos feed in the shallow waters and occasionally, the rare Lesser Flamingo can be found. Other species that could be seen here include Avocet, Shelduck, Common Crane and Marsh Harrier.

We shall also visit a small freshwater lagoon where we hope to see the rare Marbled and White-headed Ducks, Black-necked Grebe and Great White Egret. Nearby we shall look for Stone Curlew in the ploughed fields, along with our first Crested Larks, Spotless Starlings and possibly Bluethroat.

Moving north towards Córdoba we should see our first White Storks and Red Kites, with a brief view of the famous mosque La Mesquita as we pass the city.



We continue driving to our charming hotel on the edge of the Sierra de Andujar Natural Park, where our rooms overlook fantastic gardens, with a small onsite bird hide. Birds around the hotel include Azure-winged Magpie, Crested Tit and sometimes Hawfinch. This afternoon, if time allows, we might make our first visit to one of the viewing areas in the hope of getting a glimpse of our first Iberian Lynx.

2-7 Most of our days will be spent in the Sierra de Andujar, a contrasting region with some of the best representations of Mediterranean Forest still surviving in Europe. It forms part of the Sierra Morena Mountains and has a landscape of hills and mountains formed from granite, quartz and slate, which is bordered by the Jandula and Yeguas rivers. This Natural Park is home to the elusive and endangered Iberian Lynx, of which over 1600 reside in the wild around Spain and now Portugal.



"We have had snow on the mountain tops in this beautiful region of Andalucia, but generally it's the very welcome winter sunshine that we enjoy, as we did on our last visit. Southern Spain is always a wonderful wildlife destination and in January there will be a profusion of mammals, birds and butterflies to make the days bright." Julian Sykes



We shall spend early mornings and late afternoons searching for this secretive animal from strategic points around the Park, with lots more to attract our attention. There are plenty of other mammals, with herds of Red and Fallow Deer; the distinctive Mouflon, Wild Boar and bats at their roost.

We shall also hope to see Iberian Magpies, Firecrests, Short-toed Treecreepers, Nuthatches and Crested Tits amongst the scattered Holm and Cork Oaks, with Iberian Green Woodpeckers revealing themselves with their raucous call. We should find pairs of Little Owl on this beautiful granite landscape across the valleys and hills.

This Natural Park is also home to the magnificent Spanish Imperial Eagle and many other sought after birds of prey, including Golden Eagle, Black Vulture and possibly Goshawk. The tranquil Rio Jandula is punctuated by a series of reservoirs, with their dramatic dam walls, which attract Blue Rock Thrush, Rock Bunting, Black Redstart, Crag Martin and Red-billed Chough. The river is home to Kingfisher, Grey Wagtail and Grey Heron, with always the possibility of Otters playing and fishing in this quiet spiritual location.

We also plan to have a couple of days away from Lynx-watching with a focus on a completely different target species – the magnificent Lammergeier, plus steppe species.

To the east is the wonderful Sierra de Cazorla, with its extensive coniferous forest and limestone massifs. Lammergeier can be found drifting along these incredible mountain ridges, along with the much commoner Griffon Vulture. This place is home to

a good population of Spanish Ibex, Red Squirrel and Red Fox, all of which can be difficult in Andujar.

To the north of the Reserve is the region of Castilla La Mancha and its extensive and productive agricultural lands. This area is home to steppe species such as bustards, sandgrouse, larks and raptors - we shall enjoy a day driving these tracks hoping to find these unique birds.

8 After breakfast we'll sadly load the minibus and make our way back towards the Mediterranean Sea where we shall stop along the Malaga coastline.

With sufficient time, we should see both Mediterranean and Western Yellow-legged Gulls, Gannet and possibly Common Scoter offshore, with a chance of a Booted Eagle over the nearby natural area, given over to wildlife. In good time we now head to the airport and our flight home.



Outline Itinerary

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Day 1 | Fly from Gatwick to Malaga and transfer to our base on the edge of the Sierra de Andujar Natural Park, stopping enroute at Laguna de Fuente de Piedra
7 nights at La Caracola Hotel Rural |
| Days 2-7 | Birdwatching and wildlife exploration, mostly in the Sierra de Andujar, with days out in the Sierra de Cazorla for Lammergeier and Castilla La Mancha for steppe species |
| Day 8 | Transfer to Malaga for our flight back to the UK, with maybe time at the Rio Guadalhorce river mouth |

Julian Sykes: Iberian Lynx, Sierra de Cazorla, Firecrest, Iberian Ibex, Great Bustards
Stephen Kourik: Iberian Magpie
Stephen Batt: Lammergeier



NORFOLK IN WINTER



"Every time I go to Norfolk I am amazed at just how many birds there are! Big flocks of geese, ducks everywhere, amazing numbers of Marsh Harriers, waders and so much more. It feels alive with birds and it is a pleasure to see large flocks of Lapwings, Golden Plover or even Linnets ... even without the scarcer species Norfolk is a joy to birdwatch." Roy Atkins

Dates Sat 8 - Sat 15 Feb 2025
Price £2,395
Deposit £450 Single Supp £150

Leaders Roy and Jane Atkins
Weather Norfolk in winter can be unpredictable. It might be lovely with plenty of sunshine - but can also be very cold indeed, if there is a northerly wind! There is always a chance of rain so bring waterproofs and warm clothes just in case. Likely temperatures 0° - 12°C
Walking Short walks on easy terrain. Walking boots or strong shoes are recommended however, as some paths may be uneven or muddy
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8
Photos There can be some good incidental photographic opportunities
Insects Biting insects will not be a problem
Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Common Crane	Barn Owl
Merlin	Little Owl
Taiga Bean Goose	Red-throated Diver
White-fronted Goose	Slavonian Grebe
Whooper Swans	Long-tailed Duck
Bewick's Swans	Velvet Scoter
Egyptian Goose	Shorelark
Brent Geese	Cetti's Warbler
Bittern	Bearded Tit
Avocet	Brambling
Spotted Redshank	Hawfinch
Black-tailed Godwit	Water Pipit
Hen Harrier	Snow Bunting
Marsh Harrier	Rarities
Peregrine	Chinese Water Deer

Norfolk has exceptional birding at any time of year – but winter can be especially good with thousands of geese plus swans, waders, raptors, local specialities and the chance of something rare as well!

- Famous sites such as Titchwell, Cley, Holkham and Welney make for a fabulous week
- Large flocks of geese with chance of scarcer species amongst them
- Resident Barn Owl, Common Cranes, Hawfinch and chance of Bearded Tit and Bittern
- Staying at delightful Briarfields Hotel - a warm welcome with great food close to Titchwell
- Fingers crossed for scarce birds - Shorelark, Bean Goose, Water Pipit and Snow Bunting
- Feeding time at Welney - ducks, geese and swans with chance of Bewick's Swan
- Marsh Harriers galore and chance of Hen Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Peregrine and Merlin

Dinner together on Saturday evening starts the holiday followed by a chat about the coming week.

2-7 Norfolk is rightly acclaimed as one of the best birding areas in the United Kingdom, with fabulous birding all year round. In winter it is simply fantastic, with exciting goose flocks, waders, raptors and specialities such as Common Cranes, Hawfinch, Chinese Water Deer, Shorelark, Egyptian Goose and with luck birds such as Bittern and Bearded Tit.

Most of the north Norfolk coast is either Reserves or great habitat for birds, with Titchwell and Cley two of the best-known sites. Their shallow lagoons host a nice mix of waders and wildfowl, while the surrounding reedbeds hold Bittern, Bearded Tit and Cetti's Warbler - though they can prove



remarkably hard to see! Marsh Harriers winter in good numbers and raptors such as Hen Harrier, Peregrine, Merlin and Short-eared Owl are also possible, while ghost-like Barn Owls are resident and can sometimes be seen from the hotel! Sites may attract wintering Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Snipe and Avocet, with a chance of Jack Snipe or Water Pipit in the margins, or Water Rail lurking in the ditches. Brent Geese can be a lovely feature of these Reserves and we'll hope for a wintering Black Brant or even a Red-breasted Goose amongst them.

The beach at Titchwell may have a small flock of Snow Buntings and if not, Holkham Beach may prove more reliable, with the chance of Shorelark here too. We'll scan the sea for Red-throated Divers, Red-breasted Merganser and



"Last year we did amazingly well with close views of Shorelark, Hawfinch, Water Pipit, Bewick's Swan and Smew, as well as rarities such as Red-breasted Goose and Pallid Harrier. We saw Common Cranes, incredible numbers of Marsh Harriers plus Hen Harrier, Bearded Tit, Barn Owl and over a hundred White-fronted Geese. I am not promising all these again, but it shows just what a week in Norfolk at this time of year can produce - fantastic!" Roy Atkins



scoters, with slimmer chances of Slavonian Grebe, Long-tailed Duck or Eider. Nearby, Holkham may have enormous flocks of Pink-footed Geese and perhaps a few White-fronted Geese as well and we'll watch out for Great White and Cattle Egrets and Grey Partridge - a scarce bird these days!

On one day we shall head south east to Buckenham Marshes where strange looking Chinese Water Deer can be seen, the males with tusks that look out of place on a delicate deer. We may visit Strumpshaw Fen if Bearded Tit or Bittern have been showing recently and check birding information to find out where Common Cranes have been seen, though their whereabouts can prove unpredictable. Even if we fail to see them in the fields, we may see them coming to roost, with up to 40 or so Marsh Harriers and perhaps other raptors such as Hen Harrier or Merlin and Red Deer and Muntjac come out to feed as the light fades.

The woodlands and scattered trees of Lynford Arboretum are famous for their resident Hawfinches and we'll try not to become too distracted by the Nuthatch, Marsh Tit, Bramblings and Yellowhammers that may be around the feeding area. Firecrest are here, but are very elusive as are Common Crossbill, but Treecreeper, Long-tailed Tit, winter thrushes and Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers are possible.

Welney WWT Reserve with its heated hide can be wonderful on a cold winter's day. Masses of Wigeon, Teal, Shoveler and Pintail winter, along

with up to a thousand Pochard! Thousands of Whooper Swans feed out on the fields, with much smaller numbers of Bewick's Swans, which we shall try and find - if not, there are often a few Whoopers on the Reserve. Feeding time is a lot of fun with Pochard and other ducks scrambling for the seed, along with small numbers of swans. Black-tailed Godwit can be numerous, while other likely waders include Ruff, Dunlin, Avocet and flocks of Golden Plover. Cattle Egret and Great White Egret are now regular here.

Masses of waders can be on The Wash at Snettisham with Knot, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and other waders providing quite a show as the tide comes in. We are not here for the big spring tides, but even if the tides are lower, the number and variety of waders make for a fabulous visit - and on the gravel pits there may be Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, grebes and waders.

Depending on recent sightings, there are so many other sites we could visit. In February, Glaucous or Iceland Gulls are possible, there may be rare geese such as Red-breasted or Snow Goose, or perhaps a Great Northern Diver or Rough-legged Buzzard. An exceptionally rare Pallid Harrier has spent the last two winters here, so who knows what may turn up. Keep your fingers crossed for something exciting!

8 After breakfast on Saturday morning we say our farewells.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Arrive for a 7 night stay at Briarfields Hotel, Titchwell
- Days 2-7 Wildlife and birdwatching exploration of the Norfolk coast, Welney, the Broads and other sites
- Day 8 Depart after breakfast

James Stevens: Shorelark
David & Franky Perry: Snettisham Mixed Flock, Brent Geese
Mike Hems: Little Egret
Michael Pearcey: Marsh Harrier, Knot
Roy Atkins: Snipe



GUJARAT



"Gujarat is starting to gain in popularity as a premier wildlife destination and our holiday will confirm this. It is the only place on earth where you find the rare Asiatic Lion, along with a host of other incredible mammals and birds! This is India with a difference." Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 8 - Sun 23 Feb 2025
Price £6,395
Deposit £1,950 Single Supp £600

Leaders Julian Sykes plus local guides
Flights Virgin, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Mumbai
Inbound: Morning, Delhi-Heathrow
Internal flights, local airlines:
Mumbai-Ahmedabad-Delhi
Weather It's the dry season and generally warm in this desert environment, but can be humid in areas. Can be cold on the safaris, especially early mornings in the mountain forests, hot on the coast and Thar desert (10°-30°C)
Walking Mostly easy slow strolls on tracks and paths, although there could be longer walks on the beach over some soft sand
Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 16
Health Anti-malarial medication recommended. Please consult your doctor
Insects There will be biting insects in some areas visited (especially on the coast), so insect repellent is essential
Accom Twin and single rooms / individual chalets and tented cottages, all ensuite
Visa/Fees Indian Tourist Visa to be obtained online before travel, estimated additional cost £50. There are charges to use cameras and video cameras in the Parks/Sanctuaries, payable locally per visit. Please note this could total 17,000 Rupee (approx £160)
Group 11

Just some of what we hope to see:

Asiatic Lion	Crab Plover
Leopard	Demoiselle Crane
Striped Hyena	MacQueen's Bustard
Indian Wolf	Sykes's Nightjar
Blackbuck	Marshall's Iora
Jungle Cat	Grey Hypocorolius

A wildlife adventure awaits in this corner of NW India
– Velavadar, Great Rann of Kutch and Gir Forest National Parks, where we hope to find endangered Asiatic Lion, plus much more!

- Asiatic Lions at the famous Gir National Park
- Leopard, Striped Hyena and Indian Wolf all possible
- Watch unlikely looking Crab Plovers on the Indian Ocean coastline
- Sykes's Nightjar, warbler and lark
- Full day at the superb Little Rann of Kutch National Park
- 100's of beautiful Demoiselle Cranes
- Good chance of the endangered Asiatic Wild Ass and the gorgeous Blackbuck

1-3 After an overnight flight to Mumbai, we take a short flight to Ahmedabad. We'll start to see our first commoner sub-continent species enroute to the lodge, where we stay in comfortable cottages adjacent to the National Park. If we have time we shall take a walk around the grounds looking for Ashy-crowned Sparrow-lark, Rufous-tailed Lark and Isabelline Shrike. The next day we have two safaris at the Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary, a beautiful Reserve dominated by savannah grassland. Blackbuck is one of the most attractive antelopes in the world and this is also one of the best places in India for Striped Hyena and Wolf. One of the speciality birds here is Stoliczka's Bushchat, plus Lesser Florican, but this is very difficult at this time of year. This site is renowned for the largest harrier roost in the world, with an estimated 1000+ birds, mainly Montagu's Harriers, but also Western Marsh and Pallid.



4-6 After a morning safari at Velavadar, we drive to the famous Gir National Park, with 1400kms of unspoilt rugged hill country, dry deciduous forests, acacia scrub and grassland, fed by rivers and reservoirs, supporting the last remaining Asiatic Lions in the world. Once we arrive at our hotel, the rest of the day will be spent relaxing or going for a walk around the grounds. The next two full days will be dominated by jeep safaris around this fantastic National Park, where our focus will be on the small number of Asiatic Lions that reside here. There is also a healthy population of Leopard, along with chances of Jungle Cat and Indian Porcupine. As we explore the Park from our jeeps, we may see an interesting selection of birds, such as Rock Bush-quail, Painted Sandgrouse, Crested Hawk-eagle, White-bellied Minivet, Mottled Wood-owl and both Jungle and Rufous-fronted Prinias, amongst others.





"It is very memorable to be on the edge of the incredible Indian Ocean watching Pallas's Gulls and Lesser Crested Terns pass by. However, it's the waders that create the focus – separating the incredibly similar Greater and Lesser Sandpipers, Terek Sandpipers, possibly Great Knot and the beautiful, enigmatic Crab Plover – it doesn't get much more mouth-watering." Julian Sykes

7-8 After breakfast we set off on a long drive to Jamnagar with birdwatching opportunities along the route. We'll have a full day birding around Narara - a good place to look for Crab Plover and other coastal waders, including Great Knot, Terek Sandpiper and both Greater and Lesser Sandpipers. Khijadiya has saltwater mangroves one side of the road and freshwater marsh on the other, surrounded by arid scrublands - this area abounds with bird life.

9-11 After an early breakfast, we shall embark on another long transfer to Nakhatrana with more wildlife opportunities enroute. If time permits, we'll visit the Fotmahadev area, where potential target species include a mouth-watering array of local specialities such as White-naped Tit, Marshall's Iora, Grey-necked Bunting and Painted Sandgrouse to name a few. The next day we'll depart early, with packed breakfast and lunch, for the Fulay area, to see some rare species of birds, including fabulously named Grey Hypocolius. We should also see a nice mix of raptors including harriers, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Long-legged Buzzard and Booted Eagle, plus many more birds around Chhari Dhandh wetland. This whole area can be quite productive, as we search for Rufous-fronted Prinia, Asian Desert Warbler, Grey-necked Bunting and Painted Sandgrouse.

One day we shall drive to the Naliya grasslands and Lala Bustard Sanctuary. Sadly, it has become increasingly difficult to see Great Indian Bustard in Gujarat, but this area offers by far the best chance. Naliya grasslands hold many other typical species,

including Bimaculated Lark, Long-legged Buzzard and Fan-tailed Warbler; as well as Indian Gazelle. Depending on previous sightings we might visit Modhva beach, which is close by, to look for Crab Plover, Great Thick-knee and for the laridophiles there will be plenty of gulls, with a chance of the mighty Pallas's Gull.

12-14 We head for the famous Little Rann of Kutch, staying in another lovely lodge on the edge of this wonderful desert Reserve. In the morning we'll drive to the Wild Ass Sanctuary located within Little Rann of Kutch, an amazingly stark and barren landscape, but home to a fantastic variety of birds and the gorgeous Asiatic Wild Ass! At the edge of this unique habitat are areas of coarse grass, rocky and thorn scrub, bushes and some cultivated areas where we shall look for Eastern Imperial Eagle, MacQueen's Bustard, Cream-coloured and Indian Coursers, Hoopoe Lark, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse and Red-tailed Wheatear. There are some fine wetlands, that are usually teeming with many ibis, storks, ducks and waders. At night we'll drive slowly along the dirt tracks in search of the scarce Sykes's Nightjar.

15-16 We leave for Ahmedabad and our flight back to Delhi, with possibly more birding opportunities along the way. We have an overnight stay at a Delhi airport hotel and the following morning we fly back to London..



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-3** Overnight flight to Mumbai, then on to Ahmedabad and Blackbuck Sanctuary. Full day at Velavadar
2 nights The Blackbuck Trails
- Days 4-6** Transfer to Gir National Park for birdwatching and wildlife exploration by jeep - 3 nights Gir Birding Lodge
- Days 7-8** Long drive to Jamnagar. Full day birding around Narara and Khijadiya
2 nights The Fern Residency
- Days 9-11** Transfer to Nakhatrana. Exploration of Fulay area, Naliya grasslands and Gulf of Kutch coast, plus visit to Lala Bustard Sanctuary
3 nights Infinity Rann of Kutch
- Days 12-14** Transfer to Little Rann of Kutch with visits to the Wild Ass Sanctuary and desert jeep safaris
3 nights Rann Riders Resort
- Days 15-16** Fly from Ahmedabad to Delhi. We overnight in a Delhi airport hotel, then fly to London on Day 16

John Sykes: Asiatic Lion, Peahens, Crab Plover
Julian Sykes: Sykes's Nightjar, Blackbuck, Asiatic Wild Ass



COSTA RICA



"I love this place!! I have led over 20 trips to Costa Rica and can't wait to get back there again - the wildlife is fabulous, lovely lodges, good food and everything is just so easy. It is a joy birding with such an abundance of birds and other wildlife in such easy surroundings." Roy Atkins

Dates Sat 22 Feb - Sun 9 Mar 2025
Price £7,795
Deposit £1,550 Single Supp £950

Leaders Roy Atkins and Paco Madrigal
Flights British Airways scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-San José
Inbound: Overnight, San José-Gatwick
Possible transit stop out and back
Weather It's the dry season, but there could be occasional showers (or prolonged downpours) in humid rainforests. Can be cool in the mountains and cloud forest, hot on the coast (12°-35°C)
Walking Generally easy level paths, up to two miles at a slow pace. There may be occasional uphill sections and some steps. Although distances are short you will be standing and scanning for periods of time
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 15
Delicious local food at hotels and restaurants, some buffets, some menus. Rice and beans (the national dish) available everywhere, but not compulsory
Cool drinks and tropical fruit provided
Insects On occasion biting insects can be a nuisance - bring repellent
Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Great Tinamou	Long-tailed
Great Curassow	Silky-Flycatcher
Sungrebe	Great Potoo
Swallow-tailed Kite	Snowy Cotinga
Scarlet Macaw	Hummingbirds galore
Spectacled Owl	White-nosed Coati
Resplendent Quetzal	Three species of Monkey
Keel-billed Toucan	Two species of Sloth

Approachable Central America, Costa Rica is a very friendly bite-size chunk of exotic rainforest adventure.....without the rough edges!

- Friendly, safe country with 5% of the earth's entire species
- Around 400 bird species likely and a huge variety of other wildlife to see
- Resplendent Quetzal, Sungrebe, hummingbirds, toucans and macaws
- Sloths, howler monkeys, reptiles, amphibians and Arenal Volcano
- Idyllic lodges and hotels you won't want to leave
- The very best guides who'll make it extra-special
- Itinerary perfected by years of experience - from the high cloud forest to Tortuguero!

Arriving in the afternoon we'll overnight near San José.

2-3 After some exciting pre-breakfast birding in the hotel gardens, we journey to Tortuguero NP by boat. Our lodge has beautiful gardens with trogons, toucans and oropendolas and the sea just yards away. We travel in covered boats to explore the labyrinth of waterways in this atmospheric Reserve, a wonderfully relaxing way to see the birds and mammals. The forests are teeming with wildlife including Sungrebe, Greenand-Rufous and American Pygmy Kingfishers, Green Ibis and enormous Blue Morpho butterflies. We may see all three species of monkeys and both sloth species! Mixed flocks of toucans call noisily, parrots screech overhead and we've seen fabulous raptors here, such as Swallow-tailed and Grey-headed Kites.

4-6 The forested grounds of Selva Verde Lodge in the Caribbean lowland rainforest of Sarapiquí, host skulking forest-dwellers such as wrens, jacamars, ant-tanagers, woodcreepers and Antbirds. Nearby La Selva Biological Station is a must-visit site, where lowland tropical forest, swamp pasture, rivers and creeks support an outstanding abundance of wildlife. More than 420 bird species have been recorded here, 500 butterflies, 55 snakes and 120 species of mammals! This is where your Tinamou dreams may come true, since three species are here and we hope for trogons, caciques, Rufous and Broad-billed Motmots, Snowy Cotinga and impressive Great Green Macaw. We may find peccaries, agoutis, sloths and monkeys too!

7-8 Arenal is one of Costa Rica's active volcanoes and though it has gone rather



"Sitting on our own little boat slowly going down the channels of Tortuguero is such a wonderful experience. Monkeys and parrots in the trees above our heads, a Sungrebe picking insects from overhanging leaves, beautiful herons and egrets along the banks and the flash of kingfishers zipping past, from tiny American Pygmy to enormous Ringed Kingfishers, all make for a visit never to be forgotten - and that is only one of the places we visit!" Roy Atkins



quiet lately, views from our accommodation are still very impressive. Trails through the surrounding forests host Crimson-collared Tanager; Long-billed Gnatwren, Spotted Antbird, White Hawk, Great Curassow and three species of toucan. Feeders here attract colourful tanagers, woodpeckers, honeycreepers and oropendolas, plus remarkably tame White-nosed Coatis, a delightful relation of the Raccoon, with a tail like a lemur! This is a fabulous place for hummingbirds, with seven species or more likely,

9 Dry tropical forests of the Guanacaste area hold special species such as Mantled Howler Monkey, Turquoise-browed Motmot, White-throated Magpie-Jay, plus orioles found nowhere else in Costa Rica. Our lodge overlooks the Gulf of Nicoya with Black-headed Trogon, Yellow-naped Parrot and a good chance of Pacific Screech Owl near our rustic cabins. Nearby salt pans can be alive with shorebirds, including North American species such as Wilson's Plover, Willet, Stilt Sandpiper and with luck, Long-billed Curlew. Sometimes Black Skimmers are here amongst the terns and we may look for local specialities such as White-lored Gnatcatcher or Banded Wren.

10-11 We'll visit some salt pans with a host of waders, before travelling down to Tarcoles on the Pacific coast. Carara Biological Reserve, where humid tropical forest meets drier lowlands, has broad, bird-rich forest trails that are captivating at dawn, with antbirds, parrots, pigeons, warblers and four species of trogon. We'll search for Royal Flycatcher, Orange-collared and Long-tailed Manakins, while vivid Scarlet Macaws fly over our hotel and the grounds hold orioles, tanagers,



antshrikes, woodcreepers, buntings, seedeaters and toucans, perhaps including Fiery-billed Aracari.

Our boat trip on the Tarcoles River is a relaxed way to watch enormous numbers of herons, egrets, frigatebirds, pelicans and shorebirds, including Roseate Spoonbill, Boat-billed Heron and kingfishers, with American Crocodiles basking on the shore. We'll look for mangrove specialities such as 'Mangrove' Black Hawk, Mangrove Warbler and Mangrove Vireo in the mangroves..... well obviously!

12-13 We head into misty cloudforest with new birds everywhere! Slaty Flowerpiercer, Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher, Yellow-thighed Finch, Spangle-cheeked Tanager, Flame-throated Warbler and Fiery-throated Hummingbird to name but a few. The river near the hotel has Torrent Tyrannulet, the feeders attract Flame-colored Tanager and Acorn Woodpeckers and hummingbirds here include Volcano, Scintillant Stripe-tailed and Fiery-throated. This is also where we hope to find one of the most exciting birds of the trip - the Resplendent Quetzal - an absolutely stunning bird and often voted in the top ten most beautiful birds in the world!

14 After more birding around the trails and feeders plus the excellent entrance road, we may head up to search for Volcano Junco in the high Paramo, before heading back to our hotel near San Jose.

15-16 We may have time for morning birding before we head to the airport and our flight back home, arriving in London on Day 16.



Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Fly to San José 1 night Hotel Bougainvillea, Heredia
Days 2-3	Transfer to Tortuguero National Park 2 nights Laguna Lodge
Days 4-6	Transfer to Sarapiquí 3 nights Selva Verde Lodge
Days 7-8	Transfer to Arenal 2 nights Arenal Observatory Lodge
Day 9	Transfer to Guanacaste, birding at Solimar 1 night La Ensenada Lodge
Days 10-11	Transfer to Carara National Park area 2 nights Hotel Villa Lapas, Tarcoles
Days 12-13	Birdwatching and wildlife at Finca Mirador de Quetzals 2 nights Savegre Hotel
Day 14	Easy day travelling back to San José 1 night Hotel Bougainvillea, Heredia
Days 15-16	Transfer to the airport for our flight arriving in the UK on the morning of Day 16

Roy Atkins: Resplendent Quetzal, Tortuguero, Sungrebe, White-throated Mountaingem, Arenal Volcano, Two-toed Sloth

THE NETHERLANDS



"We watched spellbound as wave after wave of yapping Barnacle Geese passed overhead to settle on shallow mud in front of us. We even returned in the early morning to see the reverse, as they flew inland to forage."

Darren Rees

Dates Tue 4 - Sun 9 Mar 2025
Price £2,565
Deposit £515 Single Supp £355

Leaders Darren Rees and Simon Eaves

Flights KLM, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Amsterdam
Inbound: Afternoon, Amsterdam-Heathrow
Regional departures should be available, please contact us

Train travel for London-Amsterdam return may be possible. If this of interest please get in touch

Weather Think of winter in East Anglia: a mix of sun and showers, with a cool wind and an outside possibility of snow (0°-10°C)

Walking Up to 2 miles on easy, occasionally muddy terrain. Waterproof walking boots are recommended

Meals All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 6

Insects Biting insects will not be a problem

Accom Twin double and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Dark-bellied Brent Goose	White-tailed Eagle
Barnacle Goose	Rough-legged Buzzard
White-fronted Goose	Goshawk
Lesser White-fronted Goose	Purple Sandpiper
Tundra Bean Goose	Long-eared Owl
Snow Goose	Black Woodpecker
Red-breasted Goose	Short-toed Treecreeper
Red-crested Pochard	Willow Tit
Smew	Great Grey Shrike
	Hawfinch
	Snow Bunting

Truly spectacular flocks of geese and ducks, with special species such as Black Woodpecker, Rough-legged Buzzard, White-tailed Eagle, Goshawk and Smew.

- Bewildering Barnacle bonanza and many more geese spectaculars!
- Snow, Red-breasted and Lesser White-fronted Geese
- Goshawk, Rough-legged Buzzard and White-tailed Eagle
- Ducks abound, including smart Smew
- Resident Black Woodpecker, Willow Tit and Hawfinch
- Delightful Friesland village base
- With luck, Long-eared Owls at their daytime roosts

We meet at Heathrow for our flight to Amsterdam. On arrival at Schiphol Airport, we meet up with anyone who has travelled by train or other UK airports. We then drive north of Amsterdam where the roadside canals are busy with countless ducks and coots - we may even see our first delightful Smew! Crossing the huge inland sea, the IJsselmeer, we reach the province of Friesland and our base in Makkum.

2-5 The Netherlands plays host to a staggering number of wildfowl each winter and we are based in Friesland, at the centre of the birding action. The low-lying landscape is criss-crossed by channels and canals dotted with Wigeon and Teal and the fields can be busy with Lapwing, Golden Plover and Curlew. The church spires from the many pretty villages break

the skyline. Around Workum and Anjum are impressive numbers of geese, tens of thousands, mostly barking Barnacles that are a vibrant monochrome vision, covering the fields in a moving mass of heads and necks. Sizeable groups of Dark-bellied Brent Geese and White-fronted Geese offer noisy alternatives and we'll have fun looking for scarcer species such as Red-breasted, Cackling or Snow Geese.

Nearby is the newly designated Lauwersmeer National Park with its series of large reedbeds and lakes. We'll be alert for Peregrine and Marsh and Hen Harriers spooking the groups of duck that will include Pintail, Shoveler, Gadwall, Wigeon and Teal. At adjacent Lauwersoog and Holwerd Eiders and Red-breasted Mergansers float in the harbours adding to the duck species count and we





"It's always fun tracking down birds that we can't find at home in Britain and for many, Black Woodpeckers are the bird to see. When they do turn up they announce themselves with a clarion call, bounding through the tall trees to land high on upright trunks." Darren Rees

may find Iceland or Glaucous Gull. We are on the edge of the Wadden Sea here, a vast continuous expanse of wet mud between the Dutch mainland and the outer barrier islands. Huge numbers of Curlew, Oystercatcher, Godwit, Redshank, Dunlin and Knot are scattered across the tidal flats and the supporting cast should include Avocet and Spotted Redshank. A walk along the seawall might also yield Snow Bunting, Shorelark and Twite that frequent the grassy saltings. We'll check local Long-eared Owl roost sites too!

Flevoland is Holland's newest province, a land reclaimed from the inland sea in the 1950s and 60s, with ordered fields hemmed by canals and neat regimented woods. Bewick's and Whooper Swans dot the polders and the larger channels and lakes will be stuffed with huge numbers of dabbling ducks. We'll sift through the abundant Coot, Tufted Duck and Pochard looking for more unusual Ferruginous Duck and Red-crested Pochard. Prize for best looking duck might go the immaculate drake Smew in its neat pied plumage.

In local woods there may be Short-toed Treecreeper, Willow Tit, Hawfinch and perhaps a scarce Great Grey Shrike might be found in a clearing (we've seen them most years). We'll end one day at one of the more mature forest sites where resident Black Woodpeckers might make an appearance as they return to roost holes.

A highlight of our trip will be visiting the marshland and meadows of Oostvaardersplassen, dubbed 'the Serengeti behind the dunes'. Thousands of animals

are on show, with sizeable herds of Red Deer, Konik horses and Heck cattle, the latter species helping manage the landscape. These grazers share the meadows with Greylag, White-fronted and Barnacle Geese, Wigeon, Teal, Lapwing and Golden Plover. Lakes hold Goosander, Slavonian Grebe and Shoveler and reedbeds hide Bittern and Bearded Tit. Oostvaardersplassen is also a favourite hunting ground for raptors and we'll search the many Common Buzzards looking for scarcer Rough-legged Buzzards. Goshawk, Hen Harrier and lumbering White-tailed Eagle are also present. Safe to say it's teeming with life – it's no wonder this Reserve is now designated a Dutch National Park.

Yet of all the winter wonders on offer in the Netherlands, perhaps the geese will steal 'the magic moment' as we marvel at the evening gatherings of Barnacles in Friesland - tens of thousands of geese move to their roost on the shallow banks at Gaast. The sight and sound makes for one of the most memorable experiences in the natural world.

6 Birding through North Holland, enroute to Amsterdam, the many White-fronted Geese flocks hide a small population of Lesser White-fronted Geese. Time to check out those eye rings before flying home!



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly from Heathrow or a regional airport to Amsterdam, train is also an option. Transfer to our hotel in Makkum, birdwatching enroute 5 nights Strandhotel Vigilante
- Days 2-5** Birdwatching and wildlife exploration in the Friesland and Flevoland provinces, including visits to Lauwersmeer National Park and Oostvaardersplassen Nature Reserve
- Day 6** A morning birdwatching, then transfer to Amsterdam for our flight home

Roy Atkins: Barnacle Geese, Rough-legged Buzzard, Smew, White-fronted Geese
Eva-Maria Kintzel: Oostvaardersplassen
Frank Vassen: Black Woodpecker
Jane Hope: White-tailed Eagle





"I had always wanted to experience Bhutan and when I got this very special opportunity it delivered in 'space loads'. From the minute we got off the plane in Paro the magic moments just kept coming and coming – I cannot wait to return!" Julian Sykes

Dates Fri 4 - Tue 22 Apr 2025

Price £8,495

Deposit £1,695 **Single Supp** £500

Leaders Julian Sykes plus local guide

Flights British Airways or Virgin, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Delhi
Inbound: Morning, Delhi-Heathrow
Local airline, Delhi-Paro-Delhi

Weather Generally dry but be prepared for some rain. Can be warm during the day but cold initially in the mornings/evenings and at altitude (0-30°C)

Walking Reasonable level of fitness is required. Most of the walks are comfortable and the majority of birding is done roadside. The walk to Tiger's Nest Monastery is on an uneven forest trail with a big ascent. All walking is at a relaxed pace, as at altitude. Average altitude is 2,400m, some mountain passes at 4,000m

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 19. Most breakfasts and all lunches are hot picnic style, taken in the field

Insects May encounter mosquitoes, bring repellent

Accom Twin and single rooms. All hotels are clean and comfortable, although basic compared to UK standards. Most rooms are ensuite, some with private facilities

Visa E-visa required for India, additional £60. We shall arrange your Bhutan visa

Group 11

Just some of what we hope to see:

White-bellied Heron	Golden-breasted Fulvetta
Pallas's Fish Eagle	Yellow-throated Fulvetta
Himalayan Monal	Himalayan Cutia
Satyr Tragopan	Bhutan Laughingthrush
Ibisbill	Red-faced Liocichla
Snow Pigeon	Fire-tailed Sunbird
Tawny Fish Owl	Himalayan White-browed
Ward's Trogon	Rosefinch
Rufous-necked Hornbill	Himalayan Yellow-throated
Greater Yellownape	Marten
Beautiful Nuthatch	Golden Langur

Secluded Bhutan, high in the Eastern Himalayas is teeming with wildlife. This culturally rich and friendly country will astound us with its diversity of species.

- Spectacular Himalayan mountain scenery, pristine forests and wonderful hospitality
- Dzongs of praise including a visit to the spectacular Punakha Dzong
- Montane specialties - Blood Pheasant, Satyr Tragopan and Himalayan Monal
- Chances of Golden Langur, Bhutan Giant Flying Squirrel and the Holy Grail – Red Panda
- Fabulous scenic walk to the world-famous Tiger's Nest Monastery
- Retina-burning species - Beautiful Nuthatch, Fire-tailed Myzornis and sunbirds
- The best time for seeing the gorgeous Rhododendron bloom

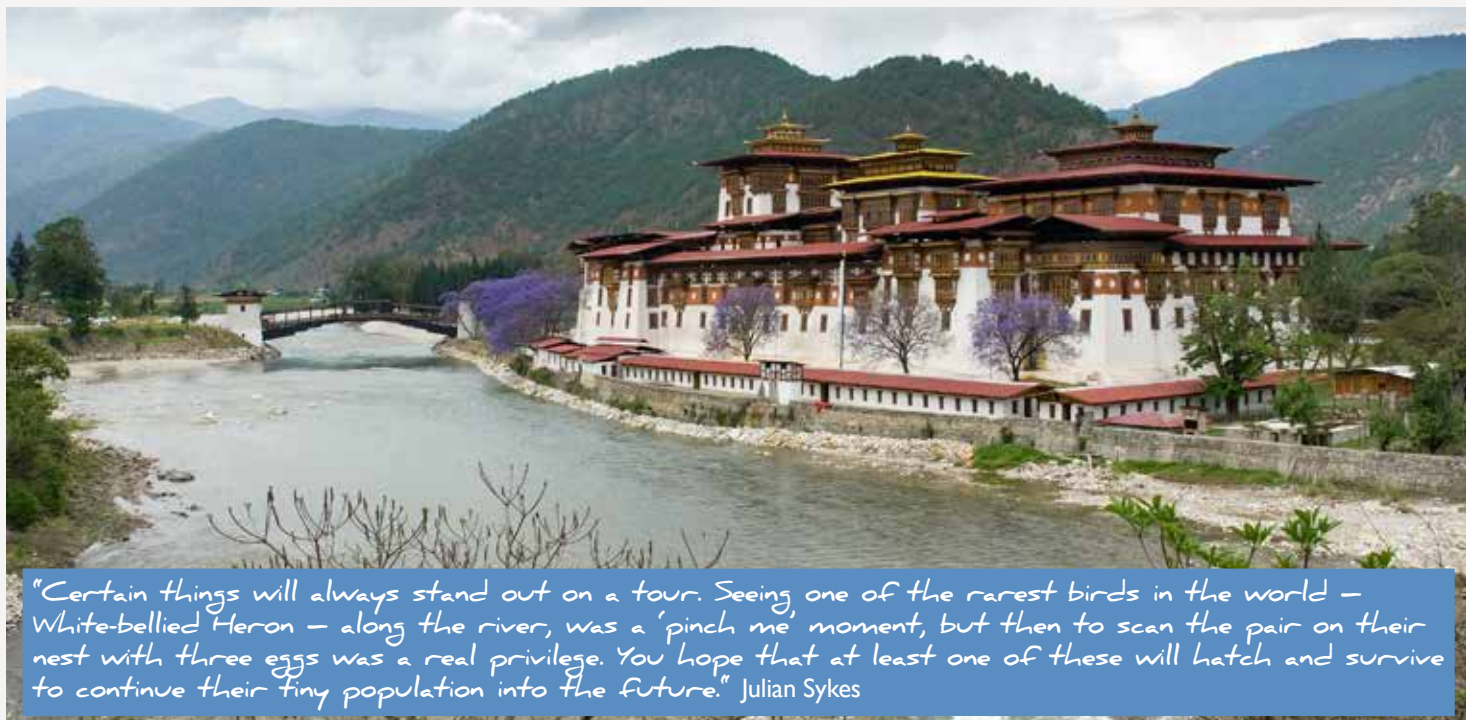
1-2 Overnight flight from Heathrow to Delhi, with a full day to recover.

3-5 Early flight to Paro, marvelling at the Himalayan mountains enroute. We look for Ibisbill along the Pa Chhu River and possibly Wallcreeper, Black-tailed Crake, Ruddy Shelduck and Plumbeous and Hodgson's Redstarts. After lunch, drive to Kuensel Phodrang NP to see the huge Buddha Dordenma statue, which is surrounded by forests and offers a stunning view of the Thimphu Valley. We start early to see dawn breaking over the Dochu La Pass, which is adorned with prayer flags and offers panoramic views of the Bhutanese Himalayas. This is our best opportunity to find the rare and elusive Red Panda, amidst the mixed evergreen and broad-leaved forest. We shall encounter a diverse range of birds such as Hill Partridge, Rufous-bellied Woodpecker, Large Hawk

Cuckoo, Chestnut-headed Tesia, Pygmy Cupwing and Rufous-bellied Niltava. We continue on to Punakha, visiting the town's majestic Dzong, which is regarded as one of the most beautiful in Bhutan. The next day we start with a scenic journey through beautiful Rhododendron forests towards Lawa La pass, where we hope to find Ward's Trogon, Himalayan Cutia and Spotted Elachura. We continue to the picturesque Phobjikha Valley, renowned for its Black-necked Cranes.

6-7 The next two days are spent heading east towards Yongkola, first making our way back over the Lawa La to another breathtaking pass - Pele La. This is where we hope to find targets such as Satyr Tragopan and Fire-tailed Myzornis. The journey continues through more breathtaking landscapes, ascending to the Yotong Pass as we end our day in Bumthang. Another travelling day





"Certain things will always stand out on a tour. Seeing one of the rarest birds in the world – White-bellied Heron – along the river, was a 'pinch me' moment, but then to scan the pair on their nest with three eggs was a real privilege. You hope that at least one of these will hatch and survive to continue their tiny population into the future." Julian Sykes

with stunning scenery takes us to the Selthang Pass. Weather permitting, this can afford views of the highest unclimbed mountain in the world – Gangkhar Puensum at 7,315m! We continue to Ura where Himalayan Monal are possible, before ascending to Thrumshing La (3,780m) for Blood Pheasant. At the Sengor Valley we look for White-browed Shortwing, before we make our way to Yongkola, with one last target stop for Gould's Shortwing.

8-9 We have two full days to explore Thrumshing La NP. The warm broad-leaved forests are home to some of Bhutan's most sought after birds such as Beautiful Nuthatch, Ward's Trogon, Blue-naped Pitta and Rufous-necked Hornbill. Ancient trees are festooned with orchids, adding a riot of colour and the list of birds here is fabulous with many beautiful woodpeckers, grosbeaks, redstarts fantails, minivets, barbets, babblers, flycatchers, yuhinas and warblers too numerous to list!

10-11 We start around Yongkola and after breakfast, we head towards Bumthang, making several stops enroute looking for Slender-billed Scimitar-babbler, Great Parrotbill and Golden-breasted Fulvetta, before reaching our accommodation in Bumthang. An early start takes us to Tharpaling Monastery for mind-blowing views of Himalayan Monal, along with Snow Pigeon and Large-eared Pika. Following a delightful picnic breakfast by the monastery, we shall continue our journey to Trongsa, making additional stops to maximise our birding opportunities.

12-14 Starting from 2,170m we descend to 600m at Tingtibi, with magnificent views of the Himalayan landscape. Whenever time permits we have stops enroute for Spotted Forktail, Asian Barred Owlet, Scaly-breasted Cupwing and Bay Woodpecker. The next day we explore the Royal Manas NP, where our target is the incredibly rare White-bellied Heron. Other specialties here are Tawny Fish Owl, White-hooded Babbler, Pale-billed Parrotbill, Pale-headed Woodpecker and the fabulous Golden Langur; one of Bhutan's rarest primates. The next day we leave Tingtibi heading towards Tama, stopping at a sheer cliff face for the rare Yellow-rumped Honeyguide. We stop in the Surey Valley for Rufous-bellied Eagle, Maroon Oriole, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Coral-billed Scimitar Babbler and Greater Yellow-nape, before our arrival in Gelephu.

15-16 We start along the Sarpang road where we should find Nepal Fulvetta, White-crested Laughingthrush, Whiskered Yuhina, Long-tailed Broadbill, Red-headed Trogon, Red-billed Leiothrix and possibly another rare species - Collared Treepie. The next morning we go to the Sunkosh Valley for another try for White-bellied Heron, along with Rufous Woodpecker, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Slaty-backed Forktail and Great Barbet, before continuing our journey to Paro.

17-19 On our final full day in Bhutan, we walk to one of the most spectacular monasteries in the world - Tiger's Nest. Words cannot express how incredible this place is! The next morning we say farewell to Bhutan, returning to Delhi for a night and then our flight back to London.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-2** Overnight flight Heathrow to Delhi
1 night Lemon Tree Hotel Delhi Airport
- Day 3** Fly Delhi to Paro and drive to Thimphu
1 night Hotel Park (2,300m)
- Day 4** Dochu La and Lampelri Park, to Punakha
1 night Spirit of Village Lodge (1,242m)
- Day 5** Drive along Khelekha, Nobding and Lawa La pass (3,350m), to Phobjikha
1 night Phobjikha Resort (3,000m)
- Day 6** Visit Pele La pass (3350m), to Bumthang
1 night Ugyenling Hotel (2,800m)
- Days 7-9** Bumthang to Yongkola. Visit Thrumshing La Pass and Thrumshing La NP
3 nights Trogon Villa (1,800m)
- Day 10** Yongkola to Bumthang
1 night Ugyenling Hotel (2,800m)
- Day 11** Visit Tharpaling Monastery, to Trongsa
1 night Tendrel Resort (2,170m)
- Days 12-13** Trongsa to Tingtibi, visit Royal Manas NP
2 nights Hotel Twang (600m)
- Day 14** Tingtibi to Gelephu
1 night Kuku Grand (221m)
- Day 15** Gelephu to Tsirang
1 night Damphu Resort (1,437m)
- Days 16-17** Damphu to Paro, full day hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery
2 nights Hotel Olathang (2,200m)
- Days 18-19** Fly Paro to Delhi, overnight in Delhi, then arrive in UK on Day 19
1 night Lemon Tree Hotel Delhi Airport

Chubzang Tangbi: Rufous-necked Hornbill, Punakha Dzong
Julian Sykes: Beautiful Nuthatch, Ibisbill, Blood Pheasant
Maggie Tester: Himalayan Monal



SPEYSIDE AND MULL AT EASTER



"What an Easter treat this is going to be! Two of the best wildlife watching areas in Scotland rolled into one fabulous holiday."
Sally Nowell

Dates Wed 16 - Sat 26 Apr 2025

Price £3,550

Deposit £700 **Single Supp** £750

Leaders Sally Nowell and Ailie Brown

Weather Varies from cold to warm and sunny, with windy weather regular on the isles (0°-15°C)

Walking Most walks are 1-2 miles on wide sandy tracks, although there is the possibility of a forest walk of up to 4 miles. Coastal walks on uneven terrain of 2-3 miles. Walking boots recommended and collapsible/telescopic walking poles could be useful

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

Insects Biting insects are unlikely to be a problem, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite or private facilities

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Great Northern Diver	Short-eared Owl
Black-throated Diver	Ptarmigan
Red-throated Diver	Snow Bunting
White-tailed Eagle	Whooper Swan
Golden Eagle	Slavonian Grebe
Crested Tit	Black Guillemot
crossbill	Glaucous Gull
Black Grouse	Ring Ouzel
Hen Harrier	Otter
Merlin	Pine Marten

Jane Hope: White-tailed Eagle, Eilean Musdile

Rob Martin: Crested Tit

Steve Cullum: Black Grouse

Roy Atkins: crossbill

Maggie Bucknell: Otter

David and Franky Perry: Short-eared Owl

The best of Speyside's birds and mammals, plus the magic of the Isle of Mull, perhaps the best place in the UK to see Otter and White-tailed and Golden Eagle.

- Prime time in the UK's White-tailed and Golden Eagle hotspots
- Visit the Caledonian Pine Forest looking for Red Squirrel, Crested Tit and crossbill
- Early morning visit to witness the spectacle of Black Grouse
- Explore some of the wildlife hotspots in the Cairngorms National Park
- Visit to Mull in search of the enchanting Eurasian Otter
- Short-eared Owl, Hen Harrier and potential for three diver species in breeding plumage!
- A trip to the beautiful island of Iona

Dinner together on Wednesday evening begins this holiday at our base in the Cairngorms, at a delightful country house hotel, where we'll discuss the itinerary for the days ahead.

2-4 We'll visit the ancient pines of Abernethy Forest, a remnant of the 'Great Wood of Caledon', in search of dainty Crested Tits and parties of crossbill.

We'll also make a special effort to see Black Grouse as they 'bubble and coo' at dawn - a fabulous spectacle. Red Squirrels are abundant in the forest and our summer visitors will be starting to arrive, with Redstart, Tree Pipit and Willow Warblers all in full voice. At dusk we'll pay a visit to our mammal hide hoping for close views of Pine Marten and Badger.



Ospreys have just returned and are settling in at local eyries. Sand Martins, Swallows and House Martins sweep low over the lochs after arriving back from Africa. The River Spey holds Dipper and Grey Wagtail and maybe an early returning Common Sandpiper, while Curlew, Redshank, Lapwing, Oystercatcher and Snipe are calling and 'drumming' in display over marshes, where odd lingering Whooper Swans gleam white amongst the flooded watery landscape.

Rare and exquisitely plumed Slavonian Grebes and beautiful Red-throated and Black-throated Divers in immaculate summer plumage, are beginning their return to remote breeding lochs.

On the wild moors of Dava and the Monadhliaths, newly arrived Wheatears add a flash of colour to the moorland, along with the cackling of Red





"This is such a great time of year to be wildlife watching in the Highlands. Everything is coming to life, summer visitors are returning, resident birds are in breeding mode and there are no midges!!!" Sally Nowell

Grouse and the mournful piping of Golden Plover. We shall scour the moorlands and hillsides in search of Mountain Hare, as their coats change from pure white to their mottled spring colouring, allowing them to hide more easily from hunting raptors including both Golden and White-tailed Eagles

In the Cairngorm foothills we shall be hoping to catch the sight and sound of the beautiful Ring Ouzel. If weather allows we may be able to walk into some of the lower boulder fields in search of Ptarmigan. Along the River Spey we enjoy views of Dipper; Grey Wagtails and stunning courting Goldeneye.

5-9 Leaving the Cairngorms, we'll drive down the shores of Loch Laggan, past Ben Nevis, just outside Fort William and continue down the coast to Oban, before catching an afternoon ferry to the Isle of Mull, often getting some good bird and cetacean views enroute. We'll be able to immerse ourselves in Mull's wildlife immediately when we arrive, as our hotel is on the shoreline of the Sound of Mull.

From our base, we'll explore the rocky coastline, moors and dramatic mountainous glens looking for Eider; Merlin, Raven, Twite, Great Northern Diver; Red-breasted Merganser; Rock Dove, Hooded Crow, Common Crossbill and Black Guillemot, with the chance of rarer seabirds and white-winged gulls such as Glaucous and Iceland. Common and Grey Seals will be hauled out on numerous skerries.

Early spring is a great time to watch eagles soaring and displaying over their territories, Mull is without doubt one of 'the' best places to see both species of eagle in Britain. Coniferous woodland holds Siskin and sometimes Common Crossbill. Along the rugged shorelines we shall be constantly looking for views of Otters, such engaging animals, as easy to see here as anywhere in Scotland. Although the island is rightly famous for its eagles, we shall be looking for other upland raptors as well. Hen Harrier, Merlin and Short-eared Owl frequent the moors, hillsides and estuaries. Peregrines patrol the sea cliffs around Gribun, while family parties of Raven fill the air with their croaking calls.

We'll take the short passenger ferry to the beautiful white sandy beaches of Iona. A chance to relax and soak up the atmosphere of this tranquil island. A visit to the abbey is possible, or a walk to a beach to look for charming Ringed Plover; Eider; Turnstone and Sanderling.

10-11 Leaving Mull, we'll catch a morning ferry across to the Morvern Peninsula and take a spectacular drive back to Speyside, with plenty of time to birdwatch as we go. We have another opportunity to look for Otter, with chances of Harbour Porpoise, divers and eagles as well. We arrive back in the Cairngorms in time for dinner.

On the last morning we'll breakfast together before saying our farewells.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive in the Cairngorms, 4 nights
Tigh na Sgiath Country House Hotel
- Days 2-4** Explore the Cairngorms National Park including Abernethy Forest, the River Spey and the mountains and moors
- Day 5** Leisurely drive down Loch Laggan, past Ben Nevis, before taking ferry to Mull
- Days 6-9** Birdwatching and wildlife exploration of Mull, including a trip to Iona, the Gribun Cliffs, Loch na Keal and Loch Scridain
5 nights Isle of Mull Hotel
- Days 10-11** Catch a different ferry and travel back to the Cairngorms for 1 night
Tigh na Sgiath Country House Hotel



ALDERNEY MIGRATION



"Travelling to the Channel Islands for the first time this year and enthralled by their beauty and diversity, I was keen to return. I then met John, who described how he set up the Bird Observatory and what could be encountered during spring and autumn migration and I was hooked!" Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 26 Apr - Sat 3 May 2025

Price £3,380

Deposit £650 Single Supp £700

Leader Julian Sykes

Flights Aurigny, scheduled (via Guernsey)
Outbound: Morning, Birmingham-Alderney
Inbound: Morning, Alderney-Birmingham
Alternative UK Airports available

Weather At this time of year the weather is usually very mild. Expect temperatures in the range of 13°C- 20°C, but we need to be prepared for cooler weather when out at sea, with the potential for the odd shower

Walking There may be some walking on rocky terrain and some walks on narrow paths along cliff tops, but we'll take these at a leisurely pace. Walks will not exceed 3 miles

Boat Trip Weather permitting we shall be taking a half day boat trip around the island

Meals All included from dinner 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 rooms all ensuite

Group 7

Just some of what we hope to see:

Osprey	Northern Wheatear
Western Marsh Harrier	Zitting Cisticola
Peregrine Falcon	Dartford Warbler
Water Rail	Cetti's Warbler
Bar-tailed Godwit	Firecrest
Sandwich Tern	Pied Flycatcher
Puffin	Blonde Hedgehog
Barn Owl	Bottlenose Dolphin
Tree Pipit	Atlantic Grey Seal
Yellow Wagtail	Glanville Fritillary
Whinchat	Poplar Hawkmoth
Common Redstart	Yellow Horned Poppy

Alderney is the northern most of the Channel Islands and closest to the European mainland being on the main migration route of birds heading to their breeding grounds.

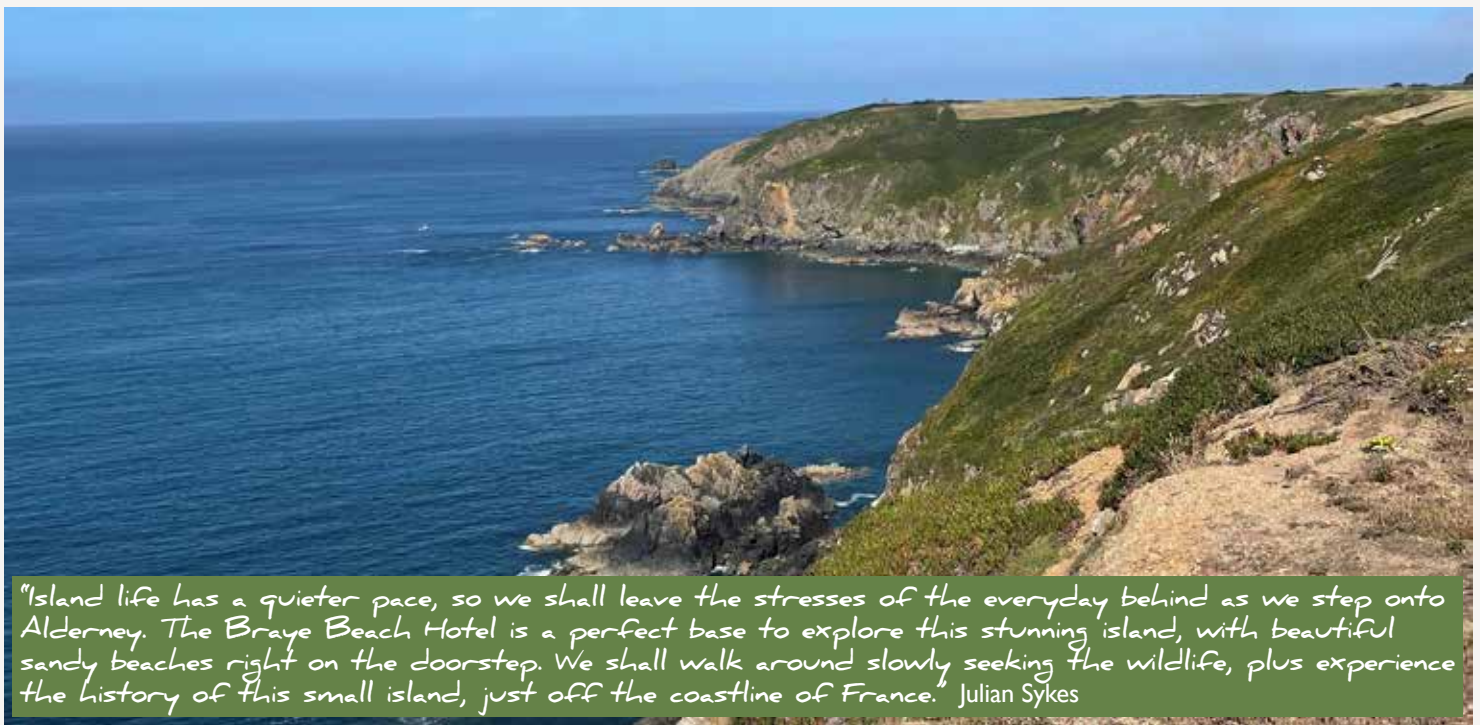
- Great numbers of migrants making landfall
- A relaxed wildlife-filled holiday
- Fantastic moth-trapping session
- A night tour for 'Blonde Hedgehog'
- Private ringing demo at the Observatory
- A diverse array of local flora and fauna
- Boat ride to see breeding seabirds and seals

From the UK mainland we shall fly to Guernsey Airport, where we rendezvous before we take a late afternoon flight to the small island of Alderney. After picking up the minibus we head to the fabulous beach hotel, by far the best on the island and in an exquisite location. At just over five square miles, it is possible to walk around Alderney in a day, but we shall not be attempting this! However, we shall be making short daily walks in various areas, where we shall enjoy the island's rich tapestry of habitats, which are deserving of much more time. In spring, given favourable weather, migrant birds will be seen, along with mammals, butterflies, moths and a great diversity of flora, which all enrich the island's natural history.

2-7 We should soon adapt to the easy-going pace of life here, as each day

there will be short walks in the morning and afternoon, with minibus transfers to our proposed location. One day we shall stroll through the Giffoine, the largest area of heathland on Alderney, which lies at the western end of the island. It is one of the best places for the resident Dartford Warbler, along with Stonechat, Linnet, Greater Whitethroat and usually Peregrine and Raven. Like so many headlands in the world, it is also a good place for migrant birds, making landfall at this time of year on their way north. Northern Wheatears, Whinchats, Common and possibly Black Redstarts and various types of pipit and warbler, could be 'feeding up' before they continue their northward journey. On a good day we could see some butterflies on the wing, with an outside chance of Glanville Fritillary, a species now extremely rare in mainland Britain but fairly common here!





"Island life has a quieter pace, so we shall leave the stresses of the everyday behind as we step onto Alderney. The Braye Beach Hotel is a perfect base to explore this stunning island, with beautiful sandy beaches right on the doorstep. We shall walk around slowly seeking the wildlife, plus experience the history of this small island, just off the coastline of France." Julian Sykes

Another good area is Longis Common, which is a habitat of scrub and open ground also favoured by migrants and where several rare species have been found in previous years. Some time will be spent at Mannez Ponds with its new bird hide, enabling us to get good views of this reed-fringed lagoon, hopefully seeing Zitting Cisticola along with Reed and Sedge Warblers, some waterfowl, Little Grebes, Coot and perhaps a Water Rail.

The wetlands here are also perfect for dragonflies: all resident species on the island can be found here, including Red-veined Darter.

Near the ponds, Longis Bay makes the perfect spot for a break, as we look out for waders along the tideline, plus gulls and terns offshore. Here we can also take some time to explore 'The Nunnery', originally a Roman coastal fort of the 3rd-4th Century AD and one of the most historic buildings on the Channel Islands.

We shall also visit the Observatory building, situated on the south cliffs, close to Essex Castle. The Bird Observatory, since opening in 2016, has proved a great success, providing invaluable information on the routes taken by migrant birds travelling between Europe and Africa. Here we shall be treated to a couple of bird-ringing demonstrations, sure to be one of the highlights of the tour. The Observatory is also set amongst prime Dartford Warbler territory, from which we shall have commanding views across to the nearby French coast.

We shall also be introduced to 'Moth Trapping', by one of the Observatory staff, where this addictive pastime could produce some spectacular moths, including the Cream-spot Tiger and Small Elephant Hawk-moth.

Mammals are scarce on Alderney, but it is famed for its 'Blonde' Hedgehogs, which are essentially leucistic forms of the European Hedgehog, which are quite abundant here. On one evening we shall go out with a local expert in search of this thriving population, making for one of the 'magic moments' of the week.

Although weather dependent, we shall take a boat trip to the off-shore islands to look for seabirds and other marine-life. Burhou Island protects the Alderney coastline and islets support many seabirds, as we head to the Bird Sanctuary. This supports the largest population of Puffins to be found in the English Channel, plus the only colony of Storm Petrels, along with Razorbills and Guillemots, which breed on islets around the western end of Alderney. There are two breeding colonies of Gannets of about 8000 pairs on the islands of Les Etacs and Ortac. Shags, Fulmars and sometimes Kittiwakes are also seen, along with the resident pair of Peregrines, which will be patrolling this seabird spectacle. Atlantic Grey Seals and Bottlenose Dolphins are possible too.

8 After an early breakfast we leave Alderney for the short flight back to Guernsey and then our flight back to mainland UK.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Flight from the UK mainland to Guernsey followed by a short hop flight to Alderney. Collect our rental vehicle and head to the wonderful Braye Beach Hotel, which overlooks a beautiful golden sand beach for the next 7 nights
- Days 2-7** Helped by the staff of Alderney's newly formed Bird Observatory who will share their knowledge of the local wildlife and some history, we shall enjoy a week of discovering this beautiful island and its avifauna. Highlights will be bird ringing sessions at the Observatory, moth-trapping, a look for the remarkable Blonde Hedgehog in the evening and a fantastic boat trip to the seabird colonies that inhabit the outer islands here.
- Day 8** After breakfast we take an early flight back to Guernsey, then our respective flights back to the UK mainland

John Horton: Blonde Hedgehog
Julian Sykes: Alderney
Steve Down: Dartford Warbler, Seabird Colony
Steve Batt: Glanville Fritillary, Puffin



THE OUTER HEBRIDES



"The Outer Hebrides, timeless and simply stunning islands on Britain's wild Atlantic edge. They always reveal something new every time, with incredible wildlife, scenery and a rich human history. They are unique, a place to get away from it all, where time seems to stand still and wildlife thrives."
Craig Round

Dates Fri 2 - Sat 10 May 2025
Price £2,595
Deposit £500 Single Supp £500

Leaders Craig Round and Sally Nowell

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

Walking Coastal walks on uneven terrain of up to 2 miles. Walking boots recommended with trainers suitable on some occasions. Collapsible/telescopic walking poles could be useful for this trip

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9

Insects Biting insects are unlikely to be a problem, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite. The last single room is small therefore no supplement will be charged

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Corncrake	Little Tern
Golden Eagle	Black Guillemot
Hen Harrier	Rock Dove
Merlin	Eider
Short-eared Owl	Arctic Skua
White-tailed Eagle	Great Skua
Peregrine	Pomarine Skua
Long-tailed Duck	Long-tailed Skua
Great Northern Diver	Manx Shearwater
Red-throated Diver	Red-necked Phalarope
Great Northern Diver	Greylag Goose
Whooper Swan	Greenshank
Whimbrel	Golden Plover
Purple Sandpiper	Otter
Arctic Tern	Grey Seal

Steve Batt: Corncrake

Jane Hope: Flock of Turnstone and Sanderling, Hen Harrier, Little Tern

Christine Maughan: Redshank

Roy Atkins: Red-necked Phalarope

Mark Phillips: Short-eared Owl

Corncrakes rasp from fields and Snipe drum overhead, in a watery landscape that the modern world has passed by, on these timeless low-lying islands at Britain's Atlantic edge.

- Successful Corncrake watching every time, on over 45 trips!
- Nesting waders in farmland that's vanished elsewhere
- Mile after mile of unspoilt white beaches and azure seas
- Wonderful for raptors, rare skuas and Short-eared Owl
- Summer plumage Great Northern and other divers
- White-tailed Eagle, Dotterel, Pomarine Skua and Otter
- With our own two expert guides to the Western Isles

1-2 We overnight on Friday in Inverness, to give us an early start for our journey down through the Great Glen and across the Isle of Skye to Uig, before catching a ferry to Lochmaddy on North Uist.

The crossing gives us a chance to do some sea-watching, with a great diversity of seabirds to be seen as we make our way across the Minch, including Arctic Tern, Puffin, Guillemot, Razorbill, Kittiwake, Gannet, Great and Arctic Skuas, Manx Shearwaters and various cetaceans, even before we reach the islands! Arriving on North Uist the bustle of modern life seems far away.

3-7 The Uists are one of the last strongholds for one of Britain's rarest breeding birds, the Corncrake and newly arrived

territorial males can be seen before the vegetation grows tall, as they give their incredible rasping calls from open cover. Here too Twite feed, Skylark sing and Corn Bunting still give their jangling songs from rusty fences.

Cultivated 'machair' at Stilligarry and Rubha Ardvue, sown with oats and potatoes, is alive with waders in the spring, all vigorously displaying, including numerous Lapwing, Oystercatcher, Redshank, Ringed Plover and Dunlin. Beautiful freshwater lochs stud the landscape. All have beds of sedge and flowering bogbean and Flag Iris alive with nesting Shoveler, Tufted Duck, Wigeon, Curlew and Redshank. A few elusive Red-necked Phalaropes arrive in mid-May and birding is always full of surprises - perhaps a summering Whooper Swan, or displaying Ruff or Wood Sandpiper.





"Our visit is perfectly timed to witness spring bird migration at its peak, and the beaches can be alive with thousands of Arctic-bound waders in summer plumage. Newly arrived Corncrakes can be easier to see, as the vegetation is often lower. Last year we had wonderful views as a male Corncrake crept stealthily out of a nettle patch, before calling and then crossing the road!" Craig Round

Around the beautiful, unspoilt shell sand beaches and tidal bays, Common, Arctic and Little Tern can be seen. They also hold large numbers of passage waders bound for the Arctic. Most are in stunning summer plumage at this time of year and include Whimbrel, Dunlin, Sanderling and Purple Sandpiper; whilst closer scrutiny may reveal a hidden gem such as Curlew Sandpiper or Little Stint!

On rocky headlands there are Black Guillemot, Shag and Rock Dove, with Red-breasted Merganser, Eider, Long-tailed Duck and Great Northern Diver offshore - the latter in breeding plumage. There's a healthy Otter population and we regularly see them, plus Grey and Common Seals and dolphin species.

Optional early morning sea-watching from Aird an Runair is renowned, but dependent on weather; for the passage of rare Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas, plus Manx Shearwater, Gannet and Arctic and Great Skua. We have also recorded other unusual migrants including Snowy Owl, Great White Egret, Glaucous and Iceland Gull, Woodchat Shrike, Garganey, Golden Oriole, Subalpine Warbler, Grey-headed Wagtail, Hoopoe and Dotterel - the latter almost annually.

Eastward, the land sweeps up from sea level to moors, peaty pools and soaring mountains. Red-throated Divers give their mournful wail and truly wild Greylag Geese nest at Loch Druidibeg, joined by Common Sandpipers and Greenshank.

The islanders stack peats to dry, where Dunlin and Golden Plover display alongside Red Grouse and Wheatear. Golden Eagle, Buzzard, Peregrine and Raven soar together over the dramatic hills. Hen Harrier, Merlin and Short-eared Owl commonly hunt the wild moors and we have a very good chance of seeing that most magnificent of predators, White-tailed Eagle.

8-9 Our last morning gives us a chance to once more experience the sights and sounds of the 'machair' and wonderful coastline, before catching a midday ferry back to Skye and making our way back to Inverness for our final overnight stay.

On Saturday morning, after breakfast, we say our goodbyes.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Meet in Inverness for overnight stay
1 night at Premier Inn
- Day 2 Travel down the Great Glen and across Skye before catching ferry to Lochmaddy and making the short journey to our hotel
6 nights at Orasay Inn
- Days 3-7 Birdwatching and wildlife exploration around North and South Uist and Benbecula
- Day 8 After morning birdwatching, we catch a ferry from Lochmaddy to Uig, journey back across Skye and make our way back to Inverness
1 night at Premier Inn
- Day 9 After breakfast we say our goodbyes





"Spectacular scenery, wonderful accommodation and some of the best bits of the Cairngorms, we have a whole week to explore and enjoy what the Highlands has to offer."
Ailie Brown

Dates	Sat 3 - Sat 10 May 2025
Price	£2,445
Deposit	£450 Single Supp £300
Leaders	Ailie Brown and one from our team
Weather	Varies from cold to warm and sunny (8°-15°C), with less rainfall than much of Scotland but snow possible in the mountains
Walking	Most walks are 1-2 miles on wide sandy tracks, although there is the possibility of a forest walk of up to 5 miles Our Cairngorm walk is more steep and uneven, but low-level unguided alternatives are available. Walking boots will be needed and walking poles may be helpful
Meals	All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8
Insects	Not a problem at this time of year
Accom	Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite or with private facilities
Group	12
Just some of what we hope to see:	
Golden Eagle	Golden Plover
White-tailed Eagle	Rock Dove
Osprey	Crested Tit
Red Kite	Redstart
Peregrine	Dipper
Great Northern Diver	Ring Ouzel
Black-throated Diver	Raven
Red-throated Diver	crossbill
Slavonian Grebe	Pine Marten
Velvet Scoter	Mountain Hare
Long-tailed Duck	Otter
Black Grouse	Red Deer
Ptarmigan	European Beaver
Red Grouse	Red Squirrel
Black Guillemot	Bottlenose Dolphin
Purple Sandpiper	

Twenty four of the best birds, seven of the best mammals - all in one action-packed week - around the mountains and forests of Speyside, plus the West Coast of Scotland.

- Kick off your year's wildlife quest in style with the Highland specialities
- See 7 - and more - of the most sought-after Scottish mammals
- Dusk visits to our hide for Pine Marten and Badger
- 24 premier birds including Golden Eagle, Crested Tit, crossbills and Black Grouse
- West Coast day for White-tailed Eagle, Black Guillemot, Otter and much more
- On the Moray Firth and Black Isle coast - divers, seaduck, terns and dolphins
- Visit locally to see European Beaver at dusk

Our action-packed week starts with dinner together on Saturday evening, followed by a chat about the coming week.

2-7 From our base in Dulnain Bridge, near Grantown-on-Spey there is plenty to see close to home and we may start with a walk down the river or visit the beautiful pine forest nearby. Here, amongst the ancient pines, we shall search out delightful Crested Tit and parties of crossbill - which we'll need to check carefully, as Common, Scottish and Parrot Crossbills have nested in the area in recent years - though identification can be a serious challenge.

Redstarts, Tree Pipits, Siskins and countless Willow Warblers are singing in the forest clearings and Cuckoos call from the wooded slopes. Red Squirrels scamper through the branches and we'll

visit our own baited hide for fabulous close-up views of Badgers and hopefully Pine Martens too. An early start one morning takes us to see Black Grouse as they strut, bubble and flutter at each other. It is a wonderful sight to see this behaviour.

Nearby lochans hold beautiful Slavonian Grebes, with golden plumes in their breeding finery. This is a great time of year to see displaying Golden Eagle or Osprey, the latter just returning to nests and in recent years sightings of White-tailed Eagles have increased locally.

The Black Isle and Moray Coast have a few of the Long-tailed Duck, Scaup and perhaps Common and Velvet Scoters that winter here amongst the Eiders, while Purple Sandpiper may be on rockier coasts. We'll visit Udale Bay, where passage waders may include Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit and



"An early morning venture to look for Black Grouse, an evening in our hide hoping for Pine Marten, woodland walks searching for crossbills and Crested Tits, scanning the coasts for Otters and dolphins; every part of this holiday gives us the possibility of seeing some of our most iconic Scottish species." Ailie Brown



more. Flocks of wintering geese may include Pink-footed, still lingering before they head north and there may be hundreds of Wigeon with Teal and other duck, including a few Pintail. Flocks of Golden Plover feed in nearby fields and we'll look out for farmland birds such as Tree Sparrow and Yellowhammer:

We'll make a special effort to see the resident group of Bottlenose Dolphins at a headland on the Black Isle, where they can often come remarkably close to shore, as they hunt fish moving in on the rising tide - with luck perhaps we'll see some acrobatics!

One evening we have the exciting chance to see Scotland's newest mammal - European Beaver. Introduced locally they are doing well and are showing regularly at certain sites. We shall learn how they are affecting the landscape and hopefully get to see one or two as they come out to feed at dusk. Using a bat detector we shall see what species are flitting around the trees - Pipistrelle is most likely but other species such as Daubenton's are possible too.

We have places to search for camouflaged Mountain Hare, as Red Deer watch us from the skyline - and we shall keep an eye on the sky for hunting Golden Eagle, Red Kite or Peregrine. Raven pass overhead and Dipper breed in the fast flowing rivers, Wheatear have arrived on the slopes and we hope for Hen Harrier or Red Grouse displaying.

Weather permitting we'll venture into the Cairngorms, or alternatively use lower-level paths to search for Ptarmigan and other wildlife that can be seen on the mountain slopes, with chances of newly arrived Ring Ouzel near the base station.

We'll have a wonderful day amidst the dramatic mountain peaks and shores of the West Coast. As we drive west, the scenery becomes more and more impressive and the beach at Mellon Udrigle is beautiful and so peaceful. It is a great chance to see Great Northern, Red-throated and Black-throated Divers in breeding plumage just offshore, before they move to their nesting sites.

Wild Rock Doves nest on the cliffs and we'll look out for Ravens, Hooded Crow, Twite and Black Guillemot, plus Common Seals loafing on the rocks. Along the seaweed strewn shoreline we'll search for Otters, as they hunt for butterfish and crabs, while another big target here is the resident White-tailed Eagles - huge and impressive as they soar over Scottish Islands. With so much to see - it'll be a busy week!

8 We say our farewells after breakfast.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive in Dulnain Bridge in time for an evening meal and a chat about what we shall do for the coming week. 7 nights at Tigh na Sgiath Hotel, Dulnain Bridge
- Days 2-7** Wildlife and birdwatching exploration including Abernethy Forest, Dava Moor, the Cairngorms, the Moray Firth and West Coast
- Day 8** After breakfast we say our farewells

Simon Eaves: Slavonian Grebe, crossbill
Jane Hope: Cairngorms in Spring, Black Grouse, Pine Marten
Rob Martin: Crested Tit
James Glover: Bottlenose Dolphin



NEW ENGLAND



"New England is a special place for me, but then I lived there for two years, so I'm a bit biased! I fell in love with the oh so beautiful American Warblers and in May the place can be hopping with a riot of colour. I can't wait to be back!"
Darren Rees

Dates	Sat 3 - Wed 14 May 2025
Price	£4,950
Deposit	£990 Single Supp £1,000
Leaders	Darren Rees and Barry Van Dusen
Flights	American Airlines, scheduled Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Boston Inbound: Overnight, Boston-Heathrow
Weather	Variable with showers possible. Warm, up to 25°C inland. Cooler on boat trips
Walking	Easy strolls on well maintained trails. Some beach and shore walks including one from boat (expect to get feet wet!)
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 1 to dinner on Day 11
Insects	May be encountered in woods, so bring repellent
Accom	Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group	12
Just some of what we hope to see:	
Humpback Whale	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Fin Whale	Cardinal
Beaver	Scarlet Tanager
Bald Eagle	Indigo Bunting
Piping Plover	Baltimore Oriole
Black Skimmer	Bobolink
Great Horned Owl	Cerulean Warbler
Screech Owl	Magnolia Warbler
Mark Denman: Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler	
Darren Rees: Humpback Whale	
Simon Eaves: Black and White Warbler, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs	
Mary Braddock: Bald Eagle	

Birds, Beavers, backwoods and big things at sea – all with legendary American hospitality! The very best combination of migrant birds and whales on USA's eastern seaboard.

- Endless New England forests with majestic Bald Eagles
- Unspoilt beaches, marshes and thickets of Cape Cod
- Colourful birds and dazzling migrant warblers
- A double dose of spectacular whale watching
- Evening Beavers and night time owls
- Marvellous historic old clapperboard guest houses
- Shorebirds, herons, hummingbirds and orioles

Arriving at Boston's Logan Airport we'll meet our co-leader and great friend Barry Van Dusen. Barry is not only one of America's top bird artists, he's a font of knowledge regarding New England natural history – the perfect co-guide for our tour! We travel two and a half hours south to our base on Cape Cod, where we shall be greeted by an array of new birds including Blue Jay, Northern Flicker and glowing Cardinals.

2-3 Cape Cod's marshes and tidal flats are busy with migrating shorebirds – Semi-palmated and Least Sandpipers, Short-billed Dowitchers, Black-bellied Plover, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Marbled Godwit and American Oystercatcher. At Wellfleet and Nauset Marsh, wading birds include Great Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Little Blue Heron, Great and Snowy Egrets



and with luck, bizarre Black Skimmers. Nearby thickets hold Carolina Wren, Tufted Titmouse, Downy Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch and Black-capped Chickadee. At the Beech Forest at Provincetown we'll catch our first migrant warblers – Yellow, Black-throated Blue or maybe Magnolia?

A trip highlight will be our first whale watching trip from Provincetown to Stellwagen Bank, where 35 tons of Humpback or a 60ft Fin Whale may rise from the deep. Seabirds might include Great Shearwater, Wilson's Petrel and Bonaparte's Gull – it could be a tough act to follow!

4 After a morning birding we shall leave Cape Cod heading west to mid-Massachusetts, our base for two nights. Late afternoon, we'll visit Wachusett Meadows, Barry's home patch, where





"A morning watching dazzling tanagers, warblers and orioles and an afternoon spellbound at the sight of mighty Humpbacks – the perfect day awaits in New England." Darren Rees

we'll find Eastern Bluebird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and bizarrely plumed Bobolink. Watching the Beavers whilst American Woodcock and Nighthawks are in the sky has always been a special occasion!

5 A day west in the forest wilderness and lakes of the Quabbin is memorable. Bald Eagles are present, along with Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks and we usually see Wild Turkeys along the rough tracks. Warblers include fiery Blackburnian and smart Cerulean, plus Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Eastern Wood Peewee and Red-breasted Nuthatch.

6-10 We head for the North Shore and historic Newburyport, our final base for five nights. The mudflats of the Merrimack River at nearby Joppa Flats will be alive with thousands of Least and Semi-palmated Sandpipers, along with Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Brant and hundreds of Long-tailed Duck. Osprey, Northern Harrier and Peregrine hunt overhead too.

At Plum Island migrating Tree Swallows add to the seasonal feel and Purple Martins zip around the nesting boxes. Boardwalks through beach plum and bayberry bushes might reveal parties of vivid colourful warblers. Eastern Kingbird and Cedar Waxwing perch in the pitch pine barrens, Brown Thrasher skulk in the undergrowth, whilst Northern Waterthrush bob around damp hollows. Open meadows may hold Upland Sandpiper and Eastern Meadowlark, whilst Savannah and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows are pushed out of the undergrowth at high tide. Roadside pools

are dotted with White-rumped Sandpipers, Great Egrets and Short-billed Dowitcher, with Blue-winged Teal and many other ducks in the freshwater kettle ponds. There are so many birds here we'll have to visit twice!

Another tour highlight is our visit to the unlikely sounding Mount Auburn cemetery in Boston – one of the best migrant traps in the northeast. We'll search for brilliantly coloured warblers amongst the historic parkland, with its sumptuous ornamental blossoming trees. Yellow-rumped, Black-and-white, Black-throated Green, Canada, Parula, Chestnut-sided and many more are possible! In the supporting cast may be Green Heron, Great Crested Flycatcher and Scarlet Tanager.

Marblehead Neck and Cape Ann are headlands ringed by rocky shores, where we may see birds as diverse as American Kestrel, Surf Scoter, Common Loon, Spotted Sandpiper and perhaps a lingering Harlequin. The pockets of woodland hold migrants such as Red-eyed and Solitary Vireo, Nashville and Prairie Warbler, American Redstart and Baltimore Oriole. We shall have a second whale watching trip from nearby Gloucester, hoping for more encounters with Humpback and Fin Whales. Breaching, spy-hopping, fin-slapping, and bubble-netting - no two boat trips are the same and we just can't get enough of them!

11-12 After the better part of a day's birding, we return to the airport for our flight home, arriving on Day 12.



Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Fly London to Boston. Transfer to Brewster, Cape Cod 3 nights Old Manse Inn
Day 2	Birding tidal flats at Wellfleet and Nauset Reserves
Day 3	Migrant birds at Provincetown and first whalewatch boat trip to Stellwagon Bank
Day 4	Birding and travel day to Gardner 2 nights Colonial Hotel
Day 5	Eagles and forest birds at the Quabbin reservoir
Day 6	Birding Great Meadows, Concord and travel to Newburyport 5 nights Essex Street Inn
Day 7	Full day birdwatching at Plum Island for migrants and shorebirds
Day 8	Colour migration spectacle at Mount Auburn Cemetery
Day 9	Cape Ann for migrants and second whalewatch from Gloucester
Day 10	Second visit to Plum Island
Days 11-12	Morning birdwatch at Marblehead Neck. To Boston for overnight flight, arriving UK Day 12



PYRENEES



"If you like raptors then this is the trip for you, with incredible views of Lammergeier in the past, plus astonishing numbers of Griffon Vultures. Red and Black Kites are everywhere, Honey Buzzards may be passing through in numbers and up to four species of eagle are possible! Keep your eyes on the skies!"
Julian Sykes

Dates	Sat 17 - Sat 24 May 2025
Price	£2,645
Deposit	£525 Single Supp £200
Leaders	Julian Sykes and Simon Eaves
Flights	EasyJet, scheduled, Speedy Boarding and extra legroom included Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Barcelona Inbound: Afternoon, Barcelona-Gatwick
Weather	Probably a mixture of sun and showers (10°-25°C), warmer in lowland area and can be cool in the mountains
Walking	There'll be some short easy walks on level paths, with one mountain walk climbing gradually over 1½ miles, including some stony terrain A reasonable level of fitness is required
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 8 Simple traditional Pyrenean fare
Insects	Biting insects are not usually a problem apart from our optional night drive, so please bring repellent
Accom	Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group	12

Just some of what we hope to see:	
Lammergeier	Rufous-tailed
Short-toed Eagle	Rock Thrush
Golden Eagle	Penduline Tit
Honey Buzzard	Red-backed Shrike
Scops Owl	Rock Sparrow
Golden Oriole	Wallcreeper
Black Woodpecker	Alpine Accentor
Tawny Pipit	Alpine Chough
Calandra Lark	Citril Finch
Black Wheatear	Ortolan Bunting
Western Orphean	Rock Bunting
Warbler	Alpine Marmot
Subalpine Warbler	Southern Chamois

We are very proud of our Spanish Pyrenees holiday, having run this successful tour to this wonderful corner of Iberia for many years.

- Stunning hotel in the heart of the Hecho Valley
- Lammergeier patrol the ridges, possibly Wallcreeper on nearby cliffs
- Stunning scenery around every corner
- Mountain day with Alpine Marmot, Alpine Chough and Citril Finch
- Lowland day with possibly Black Wheatear, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush and more
- Incredible raptors all day, plus night drive for owls and nightjar
- Mammals, butterflies and wonderful alpine flowers too

Touching down at Barcelona, we can hardly wait to get to our hotel amidst meadows, forest and 2,000 metre mountain peaks dotted with snow. If time allows we shall stop enroute at a fabulous wetland Reserve, where we should encounter our first Bee-eaters, Nightingale and possibly Penduline Tits. Eventually we arrive at our stunning hotel high in the Hecho Valley, where it's possible to see Lammergeier from the garden, along with Firecrest, Garden Warbler and Crested Tit!

2-7 At the first opportunity we head to a walkers' refuge in the mountains, where we hope to find Citril Finches picking seeds off the teasels. We then take a walk through the stunning beech forest to a sheer cliff face, looking for our Holy Grail, the elusive crimson-winged jewel - Wallcreeper! Lunch will be taken looking out over some of the most stunning views in the

region, along with a chance of finding a Golden Eagle, or even Southern Chamois grazing on the distant crags.

It's a short drive to the Upper Hecho, where the remains of winter snows decorate the higher valley alpine meadows. Here, swirls of tumbling Alpine and Red-billed Chough can be seen and we're always watching out for Lammergeier, Griffon Vultures and Short-toed Eagle. Small herds of Southern Chamois graze high up on the herb rich slopes, where Trumpet Gentian, Elder-flowered Orchid and Pyrenean Snowbell bloom. The limestone outcrops are home to Alpine Marmots, giving their shrill whistles and looking like shaggy carpets!

Driving to high alpine passes, the snowline is our quest and in such places, around the fabulous stunted krummholtz forest, there'll be Crossbill



"Birding in the Pyrenees is always stunning - the locations for birds such as Wallcreeper, Citril Finch, Alpine Accentor and Alpine Chough are breath-taking, with snow-capped peaks and impressive vistas all around. Add to that delightful alpine flowers and butterflies and the occasional Alpine Marmot or Chamois and you won't know whether to look up at the skies, out to the mountains, or down by your feet!!" Julian Sykes



and Ring Ouzel. It is higher still where we shall be seeking out specialised birds such as Alpine Accentor and Citril Finch, as we wander through delightful alpine meadows of flowers - all a short walk from the road.

We'll show you vivid lowland colours too, where Bee-eater, Hoopoe and Golden Oriole add vibrant tones to the poplars and cornfields of the River Aragon and staple birds include Cirl Bunting, Spotless Starling, Crested Lark and Serin. Red and Black Kite are constantly in the skies - they become so familiar that you begin to hardly notice them, but look out for the occasional Booted Eagle amongst them.

Some of the farmland meadows and arid escarpments have Rock Sparrow, Tawny Pipit and Woodchat Shrike, whilst in lush areas Nightingale sing from damp scrub and Cetti's Warbler can be heard too. With Black-veined White and Scarce Swallowtail amongst the masses of butterflies on the wing, it's a little overwhelming after the sparse alpine meadows!

Griffon Vultures sail around San Juan de la Peña cliffs - sometimes so close that we can hear the wind whistling through their enormous flight feathers. Here, ancient monasteries peer out from the pines, where Short-toed Treecreeper, Crested Tit and Firecrest forage, with always the chance of a clarion-calling Black Woodpecker. In these beautiful mixed forests we'll search for these dramatic birds and Honey Buzzard may be on the wing. Common Crossbill can be found and Western Bonelli's Warbler sing.

We're close here to Riglos, a tiny white village at the foot of towering puddingstone pillars of rock, where Blue Rock Thrush and Egyptian and Griffon Vultures nest amidst the rock climbers. We shall visit empty villages, where the surrounding scrubland holds Subalpine, Dartford and Melodious Warblers. Nightingale song fills the air, plus Western Orphean Warbler, Rock Thrush and Ortolan Bunting are all possible.

More warblers can be found at the impressive Castillo de Loarre, birthplace of Catherine of Aragon, with Western Subalpine, Melodious, Sardinian and even Spectacled all possible in the scrub that covers the rock on which the castle sits. Add to this an optional night drive to see Scop's Owl, European Nightjar and a good chance of hearing Midwife Toad and Soprano's Pipistrelle from the roadside and even the journey back to the hotel could produce a mammal or two.

8 We make the journey back to Barcelona and, depending on flight times, we may fit in some birding enroute.



Outline Itinerary

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Day 1 | Fly to Barcelona, 3½-hour transfer to our charming hotel in the Hecho Valley
7 nights at Hotel Uson |
| Days 2-7 | Birdwatching and wildlife exploration of the mountains and woodlands of the local area, plus scrub of San Juan de la Peña and Riglos

Optional night drive for Scop's Owl and European Nightjar |
| Day 8 | Transfer to Barcelona for our flight to the UK |

Tim Drew: Wallcreeper
Julian Sykes: Landscape, Alpine Accentor
James Shooter: Citril Finch, Hotel Uson
Roy Atkins: Trumpet Gentian, Alpine Marmot



CANNA AND CORNCRAKES



"Every time I think about this holiday it brings a smile to my face, it's just packed with gorgeous Scottish wildlife and scenery."
Sally Nowell

Dates Mon 26 - Wed 4 June 2025

Price £3,950

Deposit £700 **Single Supp** £600

Leaders Sally Nowell and Ailie Brown

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

Walking Coastal walks on uneven terrain of up to three miles - walking boots recommended, but trainers or even sandals suitable on some occasions. Collapsible/telescopic walking poles could be useful

Boat Trips Be prepared for all weathers on our boat trips. Waterproof clothes including gloves are recommended. As a precaution, you may wish to bring seasickness medication with you. Toilet onboard

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10

Insects Biting insects can be a problem at this time of year in certain conditions, so come prepared with insect repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

White-tailed Eagle	Wood Warbler
Golden Eagle	Redstart
Hen Harrier	Cuckoo
Short-eared Owl	Whinchat
Great Northern Diver	Otter
Red-throated Diver	Red Deer
Slavonian Grebe	Minke Whale
Black Guillemot	
Puffin	
Manx Shearwater	
Gannet	
Great Skua	
Arctic Skua	

This is a great springtime holiday, which takes us to some of Scotland's best wildlife-watching locations, at one of the best times of year.

- We shall spend time along Britain's best Otter-spotting coastlines
- Visit some of the richest areas for eagles in the country
- Spend 2 nights on Iona listening and looking for Corncrake
- Visit the remote island of Canna for seabird colonies
- Explore hidden areas of Scotland only accessible by sea
- Visit the Celtic rainforest looking for Wood Warbler and Redstart
- Stay in comfortable hotels with great food and local produce

After your journey to Inverness we shall meet at our hotel to hear about the week ahead and enjoy our first meal together.

2-3 After breakfast we shall make our way to Oban where we catch the ferry to the beautiful wildlife-rich island of Mull, looking out for cetaceans as we cross. Over the next two days we shall spend time in the wild mountainous areas specifically looking for Golden and White-tailed Eagles, but of course hoping for Short-eared Owl and Hen Harrier that frequent the area. If we are lucky we might catch a glimpse of a Merlin flashing across the sky.

We shall drive through some magnificent scenery lit up at this time of year with the fresh greens in the woodlands and on the hillsides.



The rocky shores of the island are home to a variety of waders and we shall be bumping into Common Sandpiper, Redshank, Lapwing, Curlew and Ringed Plover; all at the height of their breeding season. We shall also be looking for Red-throated and Great Northern Divers that frequent the calmer bays and sea lochs. Out to sea we can expect feeding Gannets and Kittiwakes. As we creep along the narrow roads beside the sea lochs our eyes will be on the look out for Otters. Mull has to be the best place in the UK to watch these wonderful mammals.

We make our way across Mull to catch the ferry to Iona. For the next 2 nights we have a special treat and will be staying on Iona to really soak up the atmosphere of this tranquil and special place.

4-5 Today is a time for a bit of relaxation. We spend most of the day exploring





"We've certainly included a wide variety of landscape and wildlife in this trip, but there is still time for a bit of relaxation too, whilst wandering around Iona and on our wonderful boat trip to Canna." Sally Nowell

Iona on foot, in the hope of seeing and hearing the elusive Corncrake. With a bit of free time you may wish to visit the Abbey, or simply visit one of the beautiful beaches on the island, home to Turnstone, Ringed Plover and it's often a good place to see Eider. At night the sound of the Corncrake echos around this stunning island, an experience not to be missed, so evening walks are a must.

6 We shall depart our hotel and make our way back across Mull and on to the mainland, but as is so often the case, our travel days involve lots of wildlife watching too. We cross the remote wilderness of the Morvern Peninsula and then return to the coastline once again watching for Otters and other sealife. Today we shall visit remnants of the spectacular Celtic rainforest. Ancient Oak trees that drip with mosses and lichens are a sight in themselves, but here we shall be in search of our colourful spring songsters, Redstart and Wood Warbler. A stunning drive takes us north to the Sound of Arisaig and finally we arrive at our hotel in the stunning hamlet of Lochailort, which will be our base for the next three nights.

7-8 Today we shall be going out to the fantastic island of Canna. This will be a fabulous trip to the remote soaring seacliffs, which at this time will be covered in noisy seabirds. 20,000 birds are known to breed here. We expect to see Puffin, Razorbill, Guillemot and Shag on the cliffs and should catch sight of Arctic and Great Skua. On the water there is always a chance of Manx Shearwater or a Storm Petrel. Our comfortable private charter

is the Orca III. We shall be looked after by her experienced crew as we head out on our seaward adventure. They know this area well and may find other interesting coves to explore enroute. It's always good to be on the look out for cetaceans; Bottlenose Dolphin, Harbour Porpoise and Risso's Dolphin are present year round and if we are lucky Minke Whales and Orca can also be seen.

Today we shall again spend time onboard Orca III. Days on the boat give us a great opportunity to get to inaccessible areas and to see some breathtaking views of Scotland, as well as increasing our chances of seeing cetaceans. We may cruise around Eigg, Rum and Skye, or visit some of the sheltered inland sealochs, looking for local wildlife such as White-tailed and Golden Eagle. From the sea we have access to areas that are more remote and seldom visited and can get spectacular and unexpected views of the local wildlife.

9 We shall leave the west coast today and make our way back to Inverness where our adventure sadly ends. Despite the fact that this is a travelling day there is more spectacular wildlife watching to be had along our route. We go back up the Caledonian Canal and then take a quieter route stopping at RSPB Loch Ruthven looking for magnificent Slavonian Grebe. Arriving in Inverness, if time allows, we shall take a walk along the canal looking for Kingfisher before our final meal together.

10 After breakfast we shall say our goodbyes and depart Inverness.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Meet up in Inverness for overnight stay. - 1 night Premier Inn
- Days 2-3** Journey through stunning scenery, before catching the ferry to Mull
2 nights at Isle of Mull Hotel
- Days 4-5** Short ferry over to Iona to explore the island
2 nights St Columba Hotel, Iona
- Day 6** Ferry back to the mainland following the coastline to the beautiful Ardnamurchan Peninsula, wildlife watching enroute
3 nights Lochailort Inn, Lochailort
- Days 7-8** Boat trips out to the fantastic island of Canna, plus Eigg, Rum, Skye and more
- Day 9** Travel back to Inverness birding enroute
1 night Premier Inn
- Day 10** Depart after breakfast

Craig Round: Corncrake
John and Maggie Tester: Iona
Steve Batt: Hen Harrier
Sally Nowell: Oak Woodlands, Redstart
Kate Mennie: Otter



YELLOWSTONE SPRING



"The landscapes of Yellowstone and Grand Teton NPs are just beautiful. The towering Teton mountains, endless forests, rocky canyons and sage brush all play host to a wealth of wildlife. Bears with cubs are just out of hibernation, wolves are denning and Moose and Elk have small calves." Darren Rees

Dates Sat 31 May - Sat 14 June 2025

Price £7,385

Deposit £1,475 Single Supp £2,050

Leaders Darren Rees and Julian Sykes

Flights United Airlines, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Jackson Hole (via US stop)
Inbound: Overnight, Jackson Hole-Heathrow (via US stop)

Weather It can be cool (even cold), but daytime temperatures rise to warm and sunny (0°-15°C), with a chance of showers, cold snaps and some snow

Walking There'll be some short, easy walks on wide paths with optional easy walks off tracks in the forest. Note that Yellowstone National Park is at high altitude. Most of the National Park is above 7,500 ft / 2,275 m and the Beartooth Highway ascends to nearly 11,000 ft / 3,353 m, where we shall take a very short walk

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 14

Insects Biting insects may occasionally be a nuisance, so bring repellent

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Gray Wolf	Bald Eagle
Black Bear	Sandhill Crane
Grizzly Bear	Harlequin Duck
Moose	Trumpeter Swan
Pronghorn	Mountain Bluebird
Bison	Great Horned Owl
Beaver	Gray Jay
Elk	Clark's Nutcracker
Coyote	Western Tanager
Yellow-bellied Marmot	American Dipper

Spring in the world's first and most famous National Park. A beautiful wilderness, with birds, flowers and fabulous mammals – the best place for big game in the Americas!

- Wolf, Bison, Moose, plus Grizzly and Black Bear
- Eagles, cranes, bluebirds and colourful migrants
- Cute critters! Chipmunks, Ground Squirrels, Pika and Beaver
- Exceptional photo opportunities for wildlife and landscapes
- Geo-thermal wonders, with erupting geysers and bubbling mud pools
- Comfortable hotels and food, with friendly hospitality
- Our years' of experience really make the difference

1-3 Arriving at night we transfer to our hotel in Jackson Hole. We begin our tour exploring the breath-taking Grand Teton NP, a land of towering peaks, pine forests, sagebrush plain, jewel-like lakes and the meandering Snake River. Birds will include Mountain Chickadee, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Mountain Bluebird and Broad-tailed Hummingbird and at nearby Flat Creek we'll see Trumpeter Swan, Cinnamon Teal and smart Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

The historic Mormon Row barns set amongst the sprawling Antelope Flats, will have you reaching for your camera and we'll probably see our first Bison, Pronghorn and irresistible Least Chipmunks and Uinta Ground Squirrels. The National Elk Refuge holds Sandhill Crane, Rock Wren, Horned Lark and perhaps our first Coyote. We'll stop at

famous Oxbow Bend beneath lofty Mount Moran looking for River Otters, Moose, Osprey and soaring Bald Eagles and we'll return for an evening along the river looking for crepuscular Beavers. Watching these animals swimming back and forth, tending to their dams and lodges is a tour highlight!

4-6 We travel north along scenic Jackson Lake exploring the wild north section of Grand Teton Park. We'll see White Pelicans, Common Loons and may encounter our first bear! We stay overnight at Flagg Ranch.

Continuing north, steadily climbing through endless lodgepole pine forests, we reach the world's first and most famous National Park - Yellowstone. At Old Faithful and Norris Basins we are at the centre of the geo-thermal wonders of the Park - an incredible 70% of the world's geysers are here and we'll explore the



"The re-establishment of wolf into the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem has been one of the greatest ecological projects of modern times. The influence on the landscape of these top predators is quite extraordinary and is still being monitored. The entire landscape has benefitted from the return of these dynamic predators and we have had some amazing encounters with them over the years. They will be high on our wish list!" Darren Rees



bewildering collection of bubbling mud pools, erupting steam jets and multi-coloured pools. Predictable geysers include Castle, Daisy, Riverside, Grand as well as Old Faithful, so expect a fun time geyser-gazing!

From West Yellowstone we'll explore the wildlife rich south section of the National Park. We'll visit the famous Hayden Valley, where the wide open spaces are dotted with herds of Bison and American Elk and we've often seen charismatic Gray Wolf and Grizzly Bear. Flying raptors include Northern Harrier and Red-tailed and Swainson's Hawk and along the nearby Yellowstone River are splendid Harlequin Ducks and American Dippers. We'll also spend time at Pelican Creek and Fishing Bridge in search of River Otter, Beaver and Belted Kingfisher.

7-9 Travelling north we drive through the most spectacular country, stopping at Canyon where the river cuts a deep gorge, appropriately named the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone - a stunning landscape of colourful eroded pillars and huge spectacular waterfalls. Climbing over Dunraven Pass and Mt Washburn we'll be on the lookout for endearing Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel, Yellow-bellied Marmot and American Pika, before dropping into the open country of North Yellowstone, a wildlife haven.

From our base at Cooke City we'll need some early morning excursions to the famous Lamar Valley if we want to see magnificent Gray Wolves. Re-introduced in 1995, these superb animals are an integral part of the restored ecosystem and we've had some amazing encounters: packs travelling the valley floor;



chasing Elk and Bison; defending carcasses from Grizzlies. What might we see in America's Serengeti?

On the spectacular Beartooth Highway, listed as one of the most beautiful roads in America, we'll look for specialties of the high country such as Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Golden Eagle and Black Rosy Finch.

10-11 We move to Gardiner at the northwest gate of Yellowstone, where Elk graze the lower elevations and the friendly ground squirrels will be on the lookout for the local Prairie Falcons. Nearby, at Mammoth, are the beautiful volcanic travertine terraces and an early morning visit is perfect for photos and birds such as Townsend's Solitaire, Hammond's Flycatcher and Western Tanager. Around the Blacktail Deer Plateau we'll look for Williamson's Sapsucker, Three-toed Woodpecker and MacGillivray's Warbler, along with Gray and Steller's Jay.

12-13 Travelling south our route takes in the impressive Yellowstone Lake at 7,700 feet. The lake hosts Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead and Common Loon, as well as River Otter. Reluctantly we leave Yellowstone, crossing the Continental Divide for an overnight at Flagg Ranch.

Our last full day takes us back through Grand Teton NP. We're sure to stop at Jenny Lake and Signal Mountain for a last look at the stunning mountain scenery, before checking in at Jackson Hole for our last night.

14-15 Leaving Jackson Hole, we fly home, arriving in the UK on Day 15.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly to Jackson Hole, via US stop, arriving in the evening - 3 nights 49er Inn
- Days 2-3** Two days exploring Grand Teton National Park
- Day 4** North via Jackson Lake
1 night Headwater Lodge at Flagg Ranch
- Days 5-6** Old Faithful and Norris geo-thermals, then exploration of south Yellowstone
2 nights Kelly Inn West Yellowstone
- Day 7** Transfer day via the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone and Dunraven Pass
3 nights Alpine Motel, Cooke City
- Days 8-9** Two days to explore north-east section of Yellowstone, including Lamar Valley and Beartooth Highway
- Days 10-11** Drive through the northern section of the Park and Blacktail Plateau. Visit Mammoth travertine terraces
2 nights Big Rock Inn, Gardiner
- Day 12** Drive south through Yellowstone
1 night Headwater Lodge at Flagg Ranch
- Day 13** South to Signal Mountain and Jenny Lake before last night in Jackson Hole
1 night 49er Inn
- Days 14-15** Overnight flight back to the UK, via US stop, arriving on Day 15

Franky and David Perry: Black Bear
Ian Tulloch: Mormon Row, Coyote
Stephen Rowland: Moose
Simon Eaves: Mountain Bluebird
Stephen Batt: Grand Prismatic Pool

KOMODO DRAGONS



"I am thrilled to have the chance to visit this amazing area, the world's largest archipelago, as we cruise amongst the islands and coral reefs; and hope you can join me on this wonderful adventure, to see Asiatic seabirds, rare cetaceans and dragons. From Bali to Komodo NP and beyond!!" Roy Atkins

Dates Fri 20 Jun - Wed 2 Jul 2025

Price £7,795

Deposit £1,550 Single Supp £50
(for single at hotel only)

Leaders Roy Atkins and Chas Anderson

Flights Singapore Airlines, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Denpasar
Inbound: Overnight, Denpasar-Heathrow
(outbound and inbound via Singapore)

Weather Tropical climate, usually calm and sunny but wind and showers also possible.
Daytime temperatures 29-33°C,
evening 25-27°C, the sea breeze keeps it feeling cooler, hot when no breeze.
Pleasant sea temperatures for snorkelling

Walking Some short walks during island visits, inflatable tenders used to get ashore

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to dinner on Day 12

Insects Biting insects can occasionally be a nuisance, insect repellent is essential

Accom Mercure Bali Sanur Resort - double, twin and single rooms, all ensuite.
MV *Mermaid* - double/twin standard cabin, double/twin superior cabin (supplement applicable), double no window cabin (reduction applicable).
All cabins ensuite and air-conditioned

Group 13

Just some of what we hope to see:

Komodo Dragon	Bottlenose Dolphin
Manta Ray	Fraser's Dolphin
Melon-headed Whale	Rough-toothed Dolphin
Sperm Whale	Whale Shark
Dwarf Sperm Whale	Yellow-crested
Pilot Whale	Cockatoo
Spinner Dolphin	Red-footed Booby
Spotted Dolphin	Brown Booby
Risso's Dolphin	White-tailed Tropicbird
Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin	Streaked Shearwater
	Lesser Frigatebird

Join us for an exceptional Indonesian cruise with an astonishing diversity of whales and dolphins, seabirds, snorkelling with amazing marine life and of course Komodo Dragons!

- The largest lizard in the world - the infamous Komodo Dragon!
- Visit the islands of Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa and on to Komodo National Park
- Melon-headed, Sperm, Dwarf Sperm and False Killer Whales
- Spinner, Spotted, Fraser's, Rough-toothed and Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins
- A variety of frigatebirds and boobies amongst many possible seabirds
- Orange-footed Scrubfowl, White-bellied Sea-eagle, Helmeted Friarbird, Brahminy Kite
- Fabulous snorkelling, chance of turtles, octopus, Whale Shark and Manta Rays

1-2 After our overnight flight we transfer to our hotel, with a chance to relax and perhaps enjoy some birding in the grounds.

3-4 At the bustling port of Benoa we board our exclusively chartered 28m liveaboard safari vessel, M.V. *Mermaid*. We cruise out into the Lombok Strait (which forms part of the famous Wallace Line, dividing the faunas of Asia and Australasia) looking out for cetaceans, including Sperm Whales, Melon-headed Whales and Fraser's Dolphins, plus flying fish and seabirds. Our exact itinerary will stay flexible and depends on species that we encounter.

There will be opportunities for snorkelling on the coral reefs and for an island visit. Our first snorkel may be at Angel Reef, a shallow coral outcrop, packed with dense coral growths and crowded with colourful reef fishes. We continue eastward, off the north coast of Sumbawa, in search of more cetaceans, including Spinner, Spotted and

Bottlenose Dolphins and a chance of Whale Shark. Among the seabirds, Brown Boobies give way to Red-footed Boobies as we travel further east.

5-8 Cruising through the night will bring us to the edge of Komodo National Park at dawn, which will give us plenty of time for an island visit and snorkel, perhaps at Gililawa Darat, home to Ospreys and White-bellied Sea Eagles, before continuing on to Rinca Island. This is one of the two big islands (the other being Komodo itself) which are home to the emblematic Komodo Dragon. Landing on Rinca Island, we shall be met by Rangers from the Island Station, who will accompany us throughout our walk either around the ranger station area, or further afield depending on restrictions. We hope to find Komodo Dragons here, as well as Orange-footed Scrubfowls, a species of Megapode.

Our next day within the National Park gives us another opportunity to cruise for seabirds and



"This will be a thrilling yet relaxing trip, being looked after by the friendly crew of our 28m vessel M.V. Mermaid, as we cruise through the Indonesian Archipelago, including the famous Komodo National Park, home to the largest lizard in the world - the iconic Komodo Dragon! Seabirds can include Christmas Island Frigatebirds, White-tailed Tropicbirds, Wedge-tailed and Streaked Shearwaters, Swinhoe's and Wilson's Storm-petrels." Roy Atkins



cetaceans and to walk on Komodo Island itself, for close encounters with more Komodo Dragons. On this walk, land birds that we haven't yet encountered could include Helmeted Friarbird, Yellow-crested Cockatoo and Blue-tailed Bee-eater. We can also snorkel nearby, where the coral reefs are home to Octopus, Hawksbill Turtles and Blue-spotted Rays.

Back on Mermaid we'll cruise into the Linta Strait, between Rinca and Komodo, where family groups of Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins reside. Birds here can include good numbers of boobies and frigatebirds, plus Great Crested, Lesser Crested, Bridled, Black-naped and Common Terns. At the very southern tip of Komodo Island we have the chance to snorkel with Manta Rays.

After this we may continue south, out into deeper waters of the Indian Ocean, on the lookout for more cetaceans, before heading back to Rinca Island for more encounters with Komodo Dragons, as they patrol the beach at Horseshoe Bay.

9-11 When we finally leave Komodo National Park we shall pass Sangeang, a large volcanic island, offering more wonderful snorkelling. Among the cetaceans to encounter are Spinner, Spotted, Rough-toothed and Fraser's Dolphins, plus Melon-headed Whales. Brown Boobies become commoner as we head further west and other seabirds could include Wilson's Storm-petrels, Bridled Terns, Arctic Skuas, Pomarine Skuas, Great Crested Terns and Frigatebirds.

One of our last nights could be spent at Satonda. This classic cone-shaped volcanic island has a central crater lake. After anchoring we head

ashore for a walk to the lake. Among the birds here can be Little Grebe, Wallacean Drongo, Collared Kingfisher, Brown-capped Woodpecker and Sooty-headed Bulbul, as well as Bronze Skinks and Macaques. Fruit Bats roost here, often in their thousands, commuting nightly to Sumbawa, right over our anchorage. Satonda is also a wonderful snorkelling site and we shall enjoy one or two more coral reef snorkels as we press further westward. All the time we shall be looking out for whales, dolphins and seabirds.

At the very end of our cruise we again sail along the Wallace Line back to Bali. During our final evening on board, we shall enjoy a chance to relive our exciting encounters during a farewell dinner. Our exact docking time at Benoa port will depend on tides, but may happen during the night.

12-13 After our final breakfast onboard and farewells to the Mermaid crew, we shall transfer to the airport in good time for our evening flight back to the UK.

Superior cabin supplement: £800 per person
No window cabin reduction: £400 per person

Outline Itinerary

Days 1-2 After an overnight flight to Denpasar, we stay in a nearby hotel
 1 night at Mercure Bali Sanur Resort

Days 3-11 In Benoa, Bali we board our comfortable boat, for nine nights.

We slowly work our way eastwards, cruising out into the Lombok Strait, looking out for whales and dolphins, flying fish and seabirds, heading towards Komodo National Park.

There will be opportunities for snorkelling on the coral reefs and for island visits.

We plan to have three full days within the Komodo National Park. There should be time to visit both Komodo and Rinca Islands to see the impressive Komodo Dragons and other wildlife.

We shall snorkel on some of the superb coral reefs and hope to encounter Manta Rays.

We then travel on back along the coast of Sumbawa, with plenty more time for whale and dolphin watching and snorkelling, arriving back in Bali during our last night aboard.

Days 12-13 We disembark at Benoa port and transfer to the international airport, ready for our overnight flight back to the UK

Chas Anderson: Komodo Dragon, Manta Ray, Melon-headed Whales, landscape, Red-footed Booby, Spotted Dolphins, Short-tailed Shearwater



CHANNEL ISLANDS DISCOVERY



"I feel relaxed just thinking about this holiday. A beautiful location with some fabulous wildlife and a little bit of history thrown in, what could be better."
Sally Nowell

Dates	Fri 27 June - Sat 5 July 2025
Price	£3,795
Deposit	£700 Single Supp £520
Leader	Sally Nowell
Weather	At this time of year the weather is usually very mild. Expect temperatures in the range of 13°C-20°C, but we need to be prepared for cooler weather when out at sea with the potential for the odd shower
Walking	There may be some walking on rocky terrain and some walks on narrow paths along cliff tops, but we'll take these at a leisurely pace. Walks will not exceed 3 miles
Boat Trips	We shall be taking 3 boat trips on small ferries
Meals	All included from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 9
Insects	Biting insects should not be a problem, but you may wish to bring repellent
Accom	Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group	6

Just some of what we hope to see:

Puffin	Bottlenose Dolphin
Gannet	Yellow Horned Poppy
Dartford Warbler	Sea Holly
Zitting Cisticola	Alderney Sea Lavender
Short-toed Treecreeper	Common Dolphin
Bearded Tit	Peregrine Falcon
Cirl Bunting	Razorbill
'Blonde' Hedgehog	Green Hairstreak
Glanville Fritillary	Silver-studded Blue
Privet Hawk Moth	Strawberry Sea Anemone
Manx Shearwater	Snakelocks Sea Anemone
Balearic Shearwater	
Mediterranean Gull	
Marsh Harrier	
Barn Owl	
Firecrest	

The Channel Islands have a surprising amount of wonderful fauna and flora tucked away amongst some of Britain's most beautiful coastal scenery.

- Visit four of the Channel Islands - Sark, Alderney, Herm and Guernsey
- A relaxed wildlife-filled 'summer holiday'
- Discover why moth trapping is so addictive!
- A new destination to discover and explore
- Lose yourself in an afternoon of 'rock pooling'
- A mix of flora and fauna
- Boat trip to spectacular offshore seabird colonies

I We meet in Poole and catch our ferry to Guernsey and settle in to our comfortable hotel. We may have time to explore the local area on foot before our first evening on the Channel Islands.

2-5 After a leisurely breakfast we shall start to explore. Guernsey has a number of interesting birding locations, so we shall take short drives around the island and wander along the cliff top paths and beautiful sandy beaches, for the sight of seabirds along the way. There are several small hides, but most of our birding will be along the cliff paths and from our vehicle.

We shall be looking for local flora too and hopefully enjoying some warm sea breezes as we relax into the Channel Islands' pace of life. For a touch of nostalgia we shall do some 'rock pooling'. The marine life around Guernsey is amazing and you will be entranced by the variety of life we find in the tidal pools; anything

from five different species of crab to the incredible Snakelocks and Strawberry Anemone.

One day we shall take a short ferry ride to Sark looking out for cetaceans enroute. Sark is a beautiful unspoilt island where vehicles are not permitted. We shall be picked up here by our horsedrawn carriage which will take us on an island tour. We'll stretch our legs on the coastal paths and take time to soak up the special tranquil atmosphere here.

In the small community we may stop for afternoon tea and visit some of the village shops which help support the local community. Sark takes us back in time to an era when farming was done on a very small scale; a reflection of this is the plethora of wildflowers and therefore of insect life. In particular, on Sark we hope to catch up with a number of butterfly species, including Silver-studded Blue and Green Hairstreak.





"This holiday is a chance to discover just what the Channel Islands have to offer. With four very different islands in our itinerary, we hope to 'wow' you with the undiscovered side of these beautiful isles." Sally Nowell

Today will be taken at a leisurely pace to explore this tranquil island and enjoy its beautiful coastline

6 Another short ferry ride takes us to the tiny island of Herm. Herm is less than a square mile of glorious natural beauty; you will feel as if we have transported you to the Caribbean! We can walk around this island paradise in a couple of hours, but we shall find plenty of places to linger. From the white shell beaches and turquoise waters we shall wander along the easy paths looking for wildflowers, butterflies and day-flying moths.

Herm has its own colony of Puffins who often drift close to shore. On the nearby island of Jethou, Manx Shearwaters nest, so we shall also be hoping to see these masters of the sky shearing over the waves. As we walk we'll be keeping an eye out to sea for a glimpse of local cetaceans; Common, Bottlenose and Risso's Dolphin can all be seen from here. For some this is the perfect place to take a dip in the safe bays around the island.

After our day on Herm we return to Guernsey where we take the short flight to Alderney, our base for the next three nights.

7-8 On Alderney we shall be joined by local naturalist John Horton who will wow us with his knowledge, not only of the local wildlife, but also about the fascinating local history.

In the evening we shall go looking for the bizarre Blonde Hedgehog and hope to see resident Barn Owl. We shall also be introduced to 'Moth Trapping'. For those who haven't been involved in this before beware, it is quite addictive and

we hope to find some of the spectacular moths to be found in this part of the world, including the Cream-spot Tiger and Small Elephant Hawk-moth.

During the day we shall take walks around the island to some of the unspoilt beaches. Our local guide will be keen to share his knowledge of past events and how they have impacted on Alderney and the Channel Islands, as well as helping us search out the natural treasures that abound. There is some fabulous fauna and flora to be found here; particularly we shall be seeking out the handsome Dartford Warbler and Glanville Fritillary butterfly.

A highlight of our holiday will surely be our boat trip out on the turquoise waters around Alderney. This unspoilt area is great for marine life, but also an excellent feeding area for seabirds and seals. Our boat trip will get us up close and personal with the resident seabirds including Puffin, Shag, Guillemot, Gannet and Razorbill and with luck we might spot resident Bottlenose Dolphins and Grey Seals.

9 After breakfast we leave Alderney for the short flight back to Guernsey and then our return ferry back to Poole.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Travel by ferry from Poole. Arrive at our comfortable hotel in Guernsey
5 nights The Imperial Hotel, Guernsey
Flights from UK to Guernsey can be arranged as an alternative to the ferry.
- Days 2-5** Exploration of Guernsey's cliff top paths and beautiful beaches, with a spot of rock pooling. Visit the island of Sark. Take in the sights by horse drawn carriage and enjoy leisurely walks
- Day 6** Visit the tiny Caribbean-like island of Herm for flora and fauna and its own colony of Puffins. In the evening we shall take the short flight to Alderney, our base for the next 3 nights
3 nights Braye Hotel, Alderney
- Days 7-8** Joined by local naturalist John Horton who will share his knowledge of the local wildlife and history, then look for Blonde Hedgehog in the evening. Also a fantastic boat trip around the shores of Alderney.
- Day 9** Ferry back to Poole from Guernsey

Simon Eaves: Dartford Warbler
Steve Down: Guernsey Coast, Seabird Colony, Yellow Horned Poppy
John Horton: Blonde Hedgehog, Glanville Fritillary



THE SHETLAND ISLES



"Shetland in the summer is a magical place, with some of the rarest and finest wildlife spectacles in Britain. This holiday will take us from the far south of the islands at Sumburgh Head right up to the far north of Unst. Wonderful wildlife-rich islands and stunning scenery, a trip not to be missed!" Craig Round

Dates Sat 28 Jun - Sat 5 Jul 2025

Price £2,795

Deposit £550 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: Red-necked Phalarope, Noss
Robin Martin: Storm Petrel, Great Skua
Gill Haveron: Broch of Mousa
Simon Eaves: Puffins
Craig Round: 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 across the moorland to the wild and dramatic cliffs of Hermaness, where the skies are full of soaring and displaying Great Skuas (in Shetland called Bonxies, meaning 'dumpy bird'). Breeding Snipe, Dunlin and Meadow Pipit display overhead and the plaintive call of Golden Plover can be heard. Unst also supports Wheatear, Twite and Whimbrel.

As we reach the vast seabird cliffs and gannetry at Saito, the sight that greets you really does take your breath away! A blizzard of Gannets ride the updrafts and swirl in vast flocks below you, as Fulmars and Great Skuas glide past. Puffins emerge from their burrows and scurry around

our feet, as we look out to the remote Muckle Flugga lighthouse and the small rocky island of 'Oootsta' or Out Stack – after which there is no more Britain!

On our regular short ferry crossings between islands, Gannets can be seen diving for fish in synchronised teams and the small harbours are a favourite haunt of Otters. Marauding Arctic Skuas harry passing Arctic Terns, as 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 close inshore, 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. It is a stronghold for stunning and rare Red-necked





"We'll take a boat trip at night to the island of Mousa and its incredible 2,000 year old Broch, to watch Storm Petrels arrive from the sea, to their nests in the walls of the ancient Broch. It's a magical experience and always a highlight of any trip to Shetland. We'll also get to take a boat charter out to Noss, to experience Shetland's towering cliffs up close and to be surrounded by an incredible blizzard of thousands of breeding seabirds." Craig Round

Phalaropes, as they delicately spin on small lochans, picking tiny insects from the waterside stones. Fetlar is also a great place 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, or 'peerie whap' in Shetland meaning small Curlew, can also be seen on the tundra-like heath of Fetlar and their 'rippling' calls can be heard across the island, whilst the colourful flower-filled meadows support Lapwing, Oystercatcher, Curlew, Snipe and Redshank.

A trip highlight for many is our dusk visit to the island of Mousa. Once inside the tower of the 2,000-year-old Iron Age Broch, we are enveloped in silence, until the rhythmic 'churring' of Storm Petrels amongst the stones brings these ancient walls alive, a moment of real 'Shetland magic'! It's 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 and as the last fiery glow of the 'simmer dim' lights up the horizon, they swirl like bats around our heads in ever greater numbers, before fluttering in to land.

North Shetland, renowned for Otters, is one of the UK's premier locations for this elusive mammal and we have been lucky with fine views. Along the shores we see Red-breasted Merganser 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, close to the dramatic Viking settlement of Jarlshoff and Iron Age settlement of Old Scatness and only a short stroll away from the coast.

Great Northern Diver and Long-tailed Duck all over-summer here, along with a few 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, which can also be a great place to look for passing cetaceans and over the years we've seen White-beaked and White-sided Dolphins and watched Humpback, Minke Whale and predatory 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, dwarfing our boat and towering some 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 we'll see the delightful Black Guillemot (Tystie).

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 Jarlshoff
- 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



THE FARNE ISLANDS



"The sheer numbers of nesting Puffins, Guillemots, Razorbills, Kittiwakes and Shags is simply astonishing, with every ledge and crevice being taken by one of these gorgeous seabirds. We slowly cruise around the islands seeing this wonderful spectacle, along with 'hauled out' Grey Seals. These cities and rookeries are such an incredible experience, one we tend to take for granted in Northumberland - unsurprising as the Farnes and Coquet Island have it by the bucket load!" Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 12 - Sat 19 Jul 2025
Price £2,745
Deposit £500 Single Supp £420

Leaders Julian Sykes and Ailie Brown

Weather Variable, with a good chance of sunshine, (10°-20°C) but on the boat trips waterproofs, warm clothing and walking boots are needed

Walking Walks of up to two miles, mainly on level tracks around Reserves

Boat Trips Our trip to the Farne Islands lasts 4.5 hrs, The trip to Coquet Island lasts 2 hrs & North Sea RHIB tour lasts 4 hrs. This trip can be over choppy seas

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Could be a problem, especially on the inland day, you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

Common Scoter	Little Tern
Manx Shearwater	auks
Spoonbill	Rock Pipit
Osprey	Dipper
Red Kite	Willow Tit
Goshawk	Common Crossbill
Avocet	Bottlenose Dolphin
Spotted Redshank	Grey Seal
Black-tailed Godwit	Dark Green Fritillary
Great Skua	Lindisfarne Helliborine
Little Gull	Pyramidal Orchid
Arctic Tern	
Roseate Tern	

Fabulous summer birdwatching, as we explore the coastlines, forests and moorlands of this corner of historic Northumberland, based around the famous Farne Islands.

- Boat tours around the Inner and Outer Farne Islands, experiencing a seabird spectacle
- The famous Kielder Forest for Red Squirrel, Osprey and Common Crossbill
- A day on Holy Island for birds, butterflies and botany
- Beautiful coastline with long sandy beaches, jagged rocks and migrant waders
- Superb RHIB tour into the North Sea for seabirds and cetaceans
- A trip out to Coquet Island to see breeding Roseate Terns and Grey Seals
- Staying in a wonderful hotel in the shadow of the iconic Bamburgh Castle

We are based in the beautiful, coastal town of Bamburgh, in the shadow of its famous historic castle, perfectly placed to explore the wonderful scenery and fantastic wildlife of this fabulous north east county. This quaint hotel is noted for its excellent local and wholesome cuisine, with portions to satisfy the keenest of appetites. If time allows we might get a chance to venture out locally for a short time at Monks House Pool or Stag Rocks, to kickstart our daily checklist.

2-7 This is a full and diverse week, where a certain amount of flexibility is required, due to the uncertainty of the weather and wildlife on offer, with a possibility of scarce and rare migrants. Our lovely hotel is within easy reach of the North Sea and an easy walk along the many coastal paths can produce Northern Wheatear, Linnet, singing Reed Bunting and possibly Yellow Wagtail. Offshore we shall find Eider, or the local 'Cuddy Ducks' (after

St Cuthbert's) loafing around the bays, along with Red-breasted Merganser, Cormorant, Guillemot and possibly Common Scoter. South of Bamburgh is Newton by the Sea, where a stop overlooking the North Sea can produce a Little Tern fishing in the beautiful bay, along with more potential seaduck. There are a couple of excellent pools here that are always worthy of investigation, as migrant waders tend to make a stop here on their journey south.

Our longest drive is further south to an area close to Newcastle Airport, where we search for two key species – Red Kite and Willow Tit. We shall spend the day around here visiting some productive local Reserves, which will also produce some of the commoner species found in the county.

Thousands of seabirds breed in Northumberland and we'll enjoy special boat trips to see them astonishingly close up. A trip around the Farne



"The crossing starts well, with a fairly close flyby Gannet, followed by our first auks flying low past the boat. There's a commotion and our attention is quickly diverted to a small pod of Bottlenose Dolphins playing and leaping out of the water. I cannot help pinching myself, all this in the opening 20 minutes of the tour! Then it's our first Puffins, lots swimming right next to the boat. As we get closer to the sea cliffs there are literally 1000's of birds. The sight, sound and smell are an arrest to the senses - flippin heck it's good!" Julian Sykes



Islands needs no introduction and will be one of the highlights of the week. Our boat-based tours here includes trips around both the Inner and Outer Farne Islands, where we shall see birds at incredibly close range - expect Kittiwakes, Guillemots, Razorbills, Puffins, Shags and Eider within feet of you - a photographer's dream!

Arctic, Sandwich and Common Terns all nest here, along with inquisitive Grey Seals, which lift their heads out of the water as we pass. A second boat trip takes us around RSPB Coquet Island where 90% of the UK's Roseate Terns breed. It's a great opportunity to see this scarce breeding species fishing and loafing around on the rocks adjacent to their nesting boxes.

The target of our third boat trip is to glimpse one of the small groups of White-beaked Dolphins in these waters. This little known cetacean spends its summer along the Northumberland coastline, feeding in the fish-rich waters and trying to avoid their larger cousins who they see as a threat. This 10m RHIB tour takes us out into deeper water and as a consequence we have a chance to see Gannets fishing, Great Skua and possibly Manx Shearwater.

One day (or at least part of it!) we shall be crossing the causeway over to Holy Island, which is tide dependant. This is primarily for one of the rarest plants in the UK - Lindisfarne Hellaborine, which is endemic to this beautiful island. The unique sandy soil is also home to other species such as Marsh Hellaborine, Northern Marsh and Common Spotted Orchids with a chance of Coralroot too.

The rest of our time will be spent wandering around the island looking for scarce butterflies and birds in this special place.

Our coastal hopscotch day is punctuated with visits to the pools and wetlands just inland from Druridge Bay. Reed and Sedge Warblers sing from the extensive phragmites bed, along with the more difficult Grasshopper Warbler. We hope to encounter the UK's most northerly breeding Avocets at one of the Reserves, along with Common Snipe, Redshank, Dunlin and Green Sandpiper. There are usually a few surprises, with Little Gull, Mediterranean Gull or Spoonbill being distinct possibilities.

One day we drive inland to the mighty Kielder Water - a huge reservoir that's surrounded by coniferous forest. Due to the construction of platforms, it offers the chance of finding the nest of an Osprey and if our luck is in, one fishing in the lake itself. A stop enroute could also produce Grey Wagtail on the river and we shall also be keeping an eye out for game birds on the drive across the moorland. Typical pine forest species all breed in Kielder and we shall look for Common Crossbill and Red Squirrel in this vast forest - there's always a chance of finding a Goshawk here too.

8 After our last 'full English' breakfast we say our fond farewells and conclude this 'canny' visit to the north east.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** We meet at Newcastle train station or The Victoria Hotel, Bamburgh for a 7 night stay
- Days 2-7** Exploration of the coast, forest and moorland, including three boat trips around The Farne Islands and Lindisfarne, the Farnes Deeps and Coquet Island
- Day 8** We say our farewells and depart after breakfast

Lesley Gadsden: Puffins
Tim Drew: Inner Farnes
Mark Denman: Kittewake and Sandwich Tern
James Glover: Roseate Tern, Snipe
Simon Eaves: Guillemot
Chrissie Nicholson: Common Seal





"St Kilda is a truly magical place with a fascinating history, which is why it's one of only 35 World Heritage Sites. It really gets under your skin"
Sally Nowell

Dates	Sat 12 - Tue 22 Jul 2025
Price	£4,725
Deposit	£900 Single Supp £0
Leader	Sally Nowell
Walking	On land, easy walks of 2-5 miles. Walking boots essential. On board, trainers, waterproof sandals or deck shoes are ideal
Weather	From flat calm, hot & sunny, to choppy, wet & windy (12°-20°C)
Onboard	Be prepared for all weathers .Waterproof clothes including gloves are recommended. As a precaution, you may wish to bring seasickness medication with you.
Insects	Biting insects may be encountered on some islands, please bring repellent
Meals	All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 11 Good quality, freshly prepared food, great home baking ... and plenty of it!
Accom	Elizabeth G – 2 Double and 2 Twin ensuite cabins
Group	8

Just some of what we hope to see:

Golden Eagle	Eider
White-tailed Eagle	Rock Dove
Great Northern Diver	Raven
Arctic Tern	Hooded Crow
Little Tern	Short-eared Owl
Great Skua	St Kilda Wren
Arctic Skua	Hen Harrier
Manx Shearwater	Peregrine
Storm Petrel	Greenshank
Leach's Petrel	Twite
Black Guillemot	Minke Whale
Puffin	Harbour Porpoise
Gannet	Common Dolphin
Guillemot	(Risso's Dolphin)
Razorbill	(Basking Shark)
Kittiwake	Common Seal
Fulmar	Grey Seal
Shag	Otter

As the most remote part of the UK, St Kilda holds a certain magic and mystery. We'll explore this archipelago, plus some of the hidden treasures and wildlife of the islands of the Hebrides.

- A memorable journey through the Hebrides aiming for St Kilda
- Visit the remote UNESCO Reserve and World Heritage Site of St Kilda
- Expect encounters with whales, dolphins and Otters enroute
- Golden and White-tailed Eagles and seabirds including Puffins, skuas and petrels
- Land on deserted beaches and remote islands
- Enjoy delicious food, a friendly crew and 'go-where-we-want'
- Spend a week onboard the comfortable Elizabeth G!

We meet in Oban where our boat and crew will be waiting for us. We are sure to be buzzing with excitement about the week ahead and will be keen to get our feet on the deck of the Elizabeth G.

The first sight of our home for the next few days is sure to be a thrill, as we settle into our surroundings which will become very familiar as the week progresses. After a safety briefing and introduction to the crew and Elizabeth G we'll set sail. Elizabeth G is a converted 23m ice-class boat, with spacious, comfortable guest cabins, a huge deck-level saloon and wonderful wildlife watching decks - she's perfect for our exploration. She is large enough to navigate these waters yet small enough to glide unnoticed into the remotest lochs. Once or twice a day we'll land on islands, using our zodiac and spend nights moored in sheltered sea lochs, enjoying first class dinners.



As we cruise out of Oban harbour we shall be looking for Black Guillemot and with luck Otter; which can be seen here along the shore. Initially we'll cruise up the Sound of Mull. This area can be excellent for dolphin spotting so on deck we'll be looking out for Common and Bottlenose Dolphin along with Harbour Porpoise. This is also a great area for White-tailed Eagles, who will be on the hunt as they will be busy feeding young. We'll find a sheltered anchorage to overnight and enjoy our first meal onboard.

2-10 Our weather-dependent itinerary is at the discretion of our experienced skipper. Beyond the Ardnamurchan peninsula we shall traverse seas that host dolphins and whales, to reach the stunning Inner Hebridean island of Canna. As we approach we shall start to see evidence of the fantastic birdlife that this island hosts during the breeding season. Birds will be out on the water feeding but the cliffs will also be full of auks,





"St Kilda is our ultimate destination on this trip, but we also sail around the Inner and Outer Hebrides, exploring hidden coves and remote islands, from the comfort of our fabulous boat. It's going to be a real adventure." Sally Nowell

Kittiwakes and Puffins. Our eyes will be on the skies too, as both Golden and White-tailed Eagles are present in this area. As we cruise the shorelines, we shall be looking for Otters and Eider and with luck we should see Red-throated Divers offshore.

We hope to see swathes of Manx Shearwaters and hopefully the tiny Storm Petrel dancing on the water surface. Great Skuas may accompany our journey to the Outer Hebrides, where sparkling sea and sand appear to merge. The islands are home to some wonderful wildlife and as we explore parts of Harris and North and South Uist, we shall be listening for the sound of Corncrake calling from the iris beds. Around the rugged coasts we'll look for cliff nesting raptors such as Peregrine Falcon and White-tailed Eagle. There is always the chance of Short-eared Owls and Hen Harrier where the land lies low. Arctic and Little Terns may fly close to the boat and fish delicately in the shallows around the sandy bays. On shore the wildflowers of the Hebrides, known as Machair, should be in full bloom and are always a feast for the eyes. We might feel we are in a tropical paradise as the beaches we can access with our boat are as pristine and picture perfect as you can imagine. Bays of turquoise waters and white shell sand will take our breath away.

When the sea conditions allow, we'll cross the open water between North Uist and St Kilda, spending as much time there as possible. The crossing to St Kilda takes about eight hours and is rarely calm, so we have to choose our time carefully. One hundred miles west of mainland Scotland, St Kilda is a wild and spectacular place, a UNESCO Reserve and World Heritage Site, it is home to over one million seabirds. The cacophony of

bird sound on the cliffs of Hirta, the largest of the islands, is amazing and at Conachair are the highest seacliffs in Britain at over 430 metres tall!

We'll anchor in Village Bay where the village ruins call to mind voices of this vanished community and now play host to St Kilda races of Wren and Field Mouse. This is the only place we can land in the St Kilda archipelago; here we will really feel the impact of the history of the islands.

Soay is circled by steep cliffs and gives its name to its dark coated, wild Sheep. Cloud swirls around Boreray, a mass of impregnable jagged black volcanic rocks and just offshore the monolithic pillars of Stac Armin and Stac Lee tower above us. Here Gannets fall from the sky and plunge into the fish-rich waters. We are truly at 'the Islands on the edge of the World'. On St Kilda is the UK's largest Storm Petrel colony and there is also a small population of breeding Leach's Petrel.

Our time will pass all too quickly and we'll have to make the return crossing to North Uist, through the Sound of Harris and perhaps along the coast of Coll, Tiree or Skye, depending on what time we have remaining.

Eventually we return to Oban, where the bustle of modern life is a world away from the natural wonders that we'll have left behind. After breakfast we shall say our farewells after what will have undoubtedly been a trip of a lifetime.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive in Oban and board our home for the coming days. Cruise up the Sound of Mull and anchor for the night 10 nights on Elizabeth G
- Days 2-10** Birdwatching and wildlife exploration around the Hebridean Islands and when weather permits, cross the exposed open water between North Uist and St Kilda
- Day 11** After breakfast we say our farewells

Hebrides Cruises: Elizabeth G, Gannets
Jane Hope: Manx Shearwater,
 Great Northern Diver, Great Skua,
Stef Lauer: St Kilda Village
Rob Martin: White-tailed Eagle





"Come see the A to Z of African wildlife, from rare Aardwolf to playful Zebra, throwing in some of the more unusual mammals and endemic bird species such as Bat-eared Fox, Heaviside's Dolphin, Damara Hornbill and Dune Lark."
Darren Rees

Dates	Thu 31 Jul - Fri 15 Aug 2025
Price	£7,095
Deposit	£1,400 Single Supp £450
Leaders	Darren Rees and Dalton Gibbs
Flights	Ethiopian Airlines scheduled Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Windhoek Inbound: Overnight, Windhoek-Heathrow (outbound and inbound via Addis Ababa)
Weather	Sunny and mild with the evenings cool - occasionally cold at night Rain is rare during this period (0°-22°C)
Walking	There will be regular short easy walks, occasionally on sand dunes and sometimes over rocks
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 15
Health	There is a low risk of malaria in the areas we visit but please take advice from your local travel clinic/doctor about malaria prophylaxis
Insects	Mosquitoes and biting insects will be rare, but you may still wish to bring repellent
Accom	Lodges, guest houses and chalets, all ensuite. Any named accommodation may be subject to change
Group	12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Lion	Kori Bustard
Cheetah	Lappet-faced Vulture
African Elephant	Verreaux's Eagle
Black Rhino	Secretary Bird
Giraffe	Damara Hornbill
Meerkat	Violet Wood Hoopoe
Heaviside's Dolphin	Crimson-breasted Shrike
Ostrich	Rockrunner

Christine Maughan: Oryx, Secretary Bird,
Mountain Zebra,
Sarah Sharland: African Elephants
Tony Hayward: Lion
Callen Cohen: Black-backed Jackal

One of the best safari experiences, with incredible wildlife and stunning desert scenery. Red dunes, Skeleton Coast and famous Etosha NP, plus Oryx, Elephants, Rhinos and Lions.

- Red dunes of the Namib Desert
- Big game at Etosha National Park
- Floodlit water-holes for Black Rhino and more
- Rich birdlife from Ostrich to Scarlet-chested Sunbird
- Many endemics such as Damara Hornbill, Dune Lark and Herero Chat
- Fur Seal colony and dolphins along Skeleton Coast
- Great, comfortable lodges

1-2 After an overnight flight from London, via Addis Ababa, we arrive in Windhoek. On arrival, we meet our experienced guide Dalton Gibbs and transfer to our hotel to freshen up and relax, before birding for the rest of the day.

3-4 We travel south to the stunning Namib-Naukluft National Park, one of the world's most photographed desert areas, with red dunes towering 300m into the air – the perfect backdrop to striking Southern Oryx.

From the Weltevrede Guest Farm we can explore the dunes and gravel plains that support Ostriches, Mountain Zebra and Springbok, as well as a world of tiny mammals, reptiles and insects. Birds include colourful Bokmakierie, elegant Ruppell's Korhaan, huge Lappet-faced Vulture and the elusive Dune Lark.



5-6 The road west leads us to Walvis Bay, taking us from mountains and dunes to rolling grass-covered hills, with scattered acacia and we're birding all the way, with species such as Black-chested Snake-eagle, Double-banded Courser and Pale Chanting Goshawk (last time we compared the Meerkats!).

Next, a tour highlight is our boat cruise from Walvis Bay, with the opportunity to see Cape Fur Seals, plus Heaviside's and Bottlenose Dolphins. At one of Africa's most important saltwater lagoons, expect White Pelicans, Greater and Lesser Flamingos, Kittlitz's Plover, an abundance of gulls, terns and migrant waders, plus endemic Cape and Crowned Cormorants. Inland, beyond Swakopmund, is the bewildering moon-like landscape of Welwitchia, home to primitive desert conifers, as well as Stark's Lark, Tractrac Chat and Ludwig's Bustard.



"So many highlights: Oryx and Ostriches amongst the splendour of the red dunes of the Namib; tens of thousands of Flamingos and Fur Seals along the Skeleton Coast; Rhinos and Hyenas emerging from the darkness and high-spirited groups of Elephants enjoying the water and mud at Etosha's famed waterholes." Darren Rees



7 Leaving Walvis Bay, our route takes us to Cape Cross on the Skeleton Coast - a sliver of desert, renowned for winds, shifting sandbanks and rusting wrecks. It's also home to Namibia's largest Cape Fur Seal colony with 100,000 animals - attracting sharks offshore and scavenging Black-backed Jackals. Inland we head for Brandberg, Namibia's highest mountain (home to Rock Hyrax, Verreaux's Eagles and Klipspringer) before our overnight stop at Uis.

8 From Uis we cross the Ugab River that dissects an amazing, unpopulated desert wilderness, home to Violet Wood-Hoopoe, Damara Hornbill, Bare-cheeked Babbler, Hartlaub's Spurfowl and desert-dwelling Elephants! We'll arrive at Kamanjab in time to prepare for our night drive: nocturnal prizes may be Bat-eared Fox, Aardwolf, Aardvark or Brown Hyena.

9-12 Etosha National Park is the jewel of Namibia and rivals any destination in Africa. From three bases we can explore the huge Etosha Pan, with its plentiful herds of Burchell's Zebra, Blue Wildebeest, Southern Oryx and, with luck, Lion and Cheetah. During the dry season water-holes, like the one at Okaukuejo, are magnets for wildlife with Elephant, Giraffe, Kudu and Springbok visiting throughout the day.

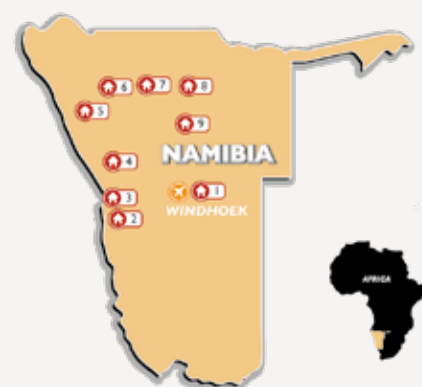
The rich birdlife includes African Hoopoe, Grey Go-away-bird, Bateleur and Martial Eagle and Namaqua and Burchell's Sandgrouse. However, it's after dusk at the floodlit waterholes that the excitement is greatest: Double-banded Sandgrouse

come to drink, followed by ghostly Elephant and perhaps shy Black Rhino or elusive Leopard. At central and eastern locations, there are Spotted Hyena, endemic Black-faced Impala and shy Damara Dik-dik. The more verdant grasslands have larger birds, such as Blue Crane, Kori Bustard, Red-crested Korhaan, Secretary Bird and a fine array of raptors. Again, after 'sundowners', exciting evenings can be spent at the waterhole!

13-14 We travel to Waterberg Plateau Park, where 120m high, sheer orange sandstone cliffs rise above the acacia savanna. There's a high diversity of birdlife in the broad-leafed woodlands, thornbush and rocky screes: African Paradise Flycatcher, Monteiro's Hornbill, Rockrunner, Ruppell's Parrot and endemic Hartlaub's Spurfowl occur. Here we shall search for endearing Dwarf Mongoose, cackling Violet Wood-Hoopoe and Rosy-faced Lovebirds breeding in the cliff faces. In previous visits we've also seen cliff-dwelling Verreaux's Eagles.

Our extended stay here allows us one last game drive around the plateau - there's more Mountain Zebra, hopefully large Eland (the biggest of the antelope species), but perhaps the most prized animal will be the White Rhinos that find sanctuary here. It could be a grand ending to the tour.

15-16 After an optional early morning bird walk, we breakfast, then return to Windhoek for our flight home, arriving in London on Day 16.



Outline Itinerary

Days 1-2	Overnight flight from London to Windhoek (via one stop) 1 night Arebbusch Lodge
Days 3-4	Drive south to Namib-Naukluft National Park, birding enroute. Following day explore red dune field at Sossusvlei and desert birding 2 nights Weltevrede Guest Farm
Days 5-6	Drive to Walvis Bay birding enroute. Following day boat trip (am) and explore Swapokmund/Welwitchia area (pm) 2 nights Iris Boutique Hotel
Day 7	Cape Cross and Skeleton Coast. Drive to Brandberg then onto Uis 1 night White Lady Guest House
Day 8	Drive to Kamanjab and private game conservation area, includes night drive 1 night Kaoko Bush Lodge
Day 9	Etosha National Park (west) Wildlife viewing from Okaukuejo 1 night Okaukuejo Rest Camp
Days 10-11	Etosha National Park (central) Wildlife viewing from Halali 2 nights Halali Restcamp
Day 12	Etosha National Park (east) Wildlife viewing in eastern area 1 night local lodge - tbc
Days 13-14	Travel to Waterberg birding enroute, followed by final game drive next day 2 nights Waterberg Restcamp
Days 15-16	Return to Windhoek for flight home, via one stop, arriving UK on Day 16



THE BRAZILIAN PANTANAL



"It amazes me how totally disinterested a Jaguar is in the boats on the river - they seem to barely notice we exist as we watch them relax or hunt. So much so - we've seen them catch and drag big Caiman up the river bank in their incredibly strong jaws - they are powerful cats and truly magnificent!" Roy Atkins

Dates Sun 3 - Mon 18 August 2025

Price £8,475

Deposit £1,695 **Single Supp** £850

Leaders Roy Atkins and local guides

Flights Latam, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Sao Paulo
Inbound: Overnight, Sao Paulo-Heathrow
Internal, local airlines: Sao Paulo -Cuiabá-Foz do Iguaçu-Sao Paulo

Weather In the Pantanal it is the dry season, but there could be showers. Temperatures could be around 25°C but are not entirely predictable and can sometimes be chilly in the early morning and very hot at midday (12°C at night to max of 34°C during day). Iguazú is in an area of rainforest, so showers can be expected, with temps around 17°C, (12°C at night to max 26°C during the day) but again unpredictable

Walking Pantanal walks will be on easy forest trails with some birding and evening drives from open vehicle and Jaguar watching from boat trips on the river. In Iguazú, the walkways at the waterfalls are wide and elevated, built on metal grid plates with solid handrails and some steps. We shall also be on wide forest trails that, depending on rains, might be muddy

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 15

Insects There will be biting insects in some of the areas visited, so repellent is essential

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Jaguar	Red-legged Seriema
Giant Otter	Toco Toucan
Brazilian Tapir	Plush-crested Jay
Giant Anteater	Sungrebe
Hyacinth Macaw	Greater Rhea
Jabiru	Black-collared Hawk

Good chance of Jaguar in this famous seasonal wetland, plus Giant Otters, Brazilian Tapir and with luck, Giant Anteaters too - and Hyacinth Macaw - the biggest parrot in the world!

- Jaguars! Your best chance of seeing this stunningly beautiful big cat
- The incomparable Iguazú Falls with fabulous views - we spend two days here
- Around 300 species of birds likely, plus many mammals
- Watch Great Dusky Swifts as they come to roost behind a curtain of water
- Hyacinth Macaws - the biggest and perhaps most beautiful parrot in the world
- Brazilian Tapir, Giant Otter, Capybara and with luck - Giant Anteater
- Toco Toucan, Red-legged Seriema, Jabiru, Southern Screamer and lots more

1-2 After an overnight flight we arrive at Sao Paulo early in the morning. We then take an onward flight to Cuiabá, arriving in time for lunch. Well fed, we drive to our delightful lodge in the Chapada dos Guimaraes, looking out for parrots, macaws and toucans along the way. We should have time to sample the excellent birding around the lodge before sunset.

3-4 The dry savannah, with gnarled trees of the Chapada dos Guimaraes National Park, provides a complete contrast to the coming Pantanal - and a completely different selection of birds. Amongst many species special to this area we hope to find Peach-fronted Parakeet, Red-shouldered Macaw, Curl-crested Jay, Cliff Flycatcher, Guira Cuckoo, Black-faced Saltator, Shrike-like Tanager and with luck Horned Sunbeam! Red-legged Seriema, South America's answer

to the Secretary Bird, is possible here, as are gorgeous Campo Flickers, various macaws and there is always the chance of an Armadillo!

5-7 After more birding in the Chapada, we drive towards the famous Pantanal - a vast area of seasonal wetland covering roughly 142,500 sq. kilometres - bigger than England!! As the flood waters dry up, the huge flocks of birds are concentrated around the remaining water and we'll pause to enjoy spectacular mixed flocks of herons, egrets and ibis, plus Roseate Spoonbill, Maguari and Wood Storks, Rufescent Tiger Herons, Limpkin and enormous Jabiru. Snail Kites, Savannah Hawks and Black-collared Hawks are common and we'll look out for Whistling and Capped Herons and Sunbittern. Large-billed Terns and Black Skimmer fish in the channels, White-headed Marsh-Tyrants perch on





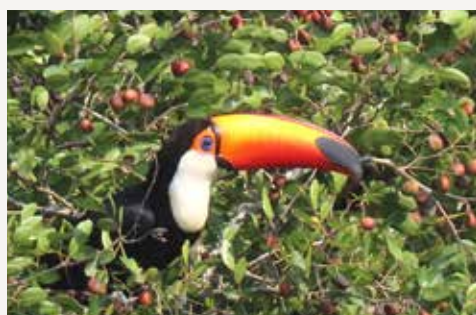
"This is such a varied holiday with so much to see and, while the Pantanal is the main focus, the Cerrado is also fascinating and finishing at Iguazu Falls adds another layer to an exceptional trip. The wildlife is wonderful everywhere, but there are spectacles on this trip you will remember for ever as well!" Roy Atkins

wires, rare Marsh Deer are possible and there'll be astonishing numbers of Yacare Cayman.

This whole area is worth exploring, with an impressive bird list including Nanday Parakeets, Chestnut-eared Araçari, Golden-collared Macaw, Bare-faced Curassow and stately Greater Rheas among many others. Drier areas covered in termite mounds provide our best chance for Giant Anteater and we hope to see Brazilian Tapir and other mammals such as Crab-eating Fox or Collared Peccary.

8-10 We move on to the end of the road and Porto Jofre, where raucous Hyacinth Macaws feed around our lodge, but our big target here is that most mythical and enigmatic of cats - the Jaguar! During the dry season, this beautiful cat can frequently be found along the scrubby river banks and it will be with baited breath and crossed fingers that we take four boat trips along the Cuiabá River, where chances are high, especially now that the boats are all in radio contact. Keep your cameras at hand, as even if no Jaguars appear, there is plenty of other wildlife to keep us happy - Giant Otters, Capybara and plenty of birds including Sungrebe, Pied and Collared Plovers, Great Black Hawk, White Woodpecker, Orange-backed Troupial, Vermillion Flycatcher and enormous Southern Screamer! At dusk, spectacular Lesser Bulldog Bats and Band-tailed Nighthawks skim the water.

11 We bid farewell to the Pantanal and drive back to Cuiabá, birding enroute.



12-14 Our very early flight takes us to Foz do Iguaçu, where we start our time around Iguazú waterfall on the Brazilian side, with spectacular views of the falls from the trails and from our lunchtime restaurant - last time we had delightful '88' butterflies amongst others landing on the hand rails.

Iguazú Falls are 1.7 miles long and considered by many the most spectacular collection of waterfalls in the world!! Numerous islands divide them between 150 and 300 separate waterfalls depending on the flow - with half the river's flow falling into a single long, narrow chasm called the Devil's Throat. We'll cross onto the Argentinian side where this spectacle can be enjoyed from different walkways reached by road and a narrow-gauge railway and, over the next two days, have plenty of time to take it all in. Plush-crested Jay are tame here and we may see Southern Coati and Tufted Capuchin Monkeys. At sunset, we hope to witness Great Dusky Swifts dive through the foaming water to roost behind the falls - an incredible sight. We'll also enjoy myriad colourful birds in Iguazú's rainforests - trogons, manakins, noisy flocks of parrots and parakeets, antwrens, antshrikes, toucans, woodpeckers and tanagers just for starters! A fabulous hummingbird garden nearby is also a must, where feeders attract Black Jacobin, Gilded Sapphire, Purple-crowned Woodnymph, Versicolored Emerald and Planalto Hermit, amongst others.

15-16 We take a flight to Sao Paulo to connect with the flight back to London, arriving in the afternoon of Day 16.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-4** Overnight flight to Sao Paulo, then onward flight to Cuiabá and transfer to Chapada dos Guimarães
3 nights Pousada do Parque
- Days 5-7** Transfer to Transpantaneira.
Two full days wildlife watching in this excellent area - great birding plus perhaps Tapir and Giant Anteater
3 nights Pousa Alegre
- Days 8-10** Transfer to Porto Jofre.
Boat trips on the river in search of the big cat, Giant Otter and birds
3 nights Hotel Porto Jofre
- Day 11** Transfer to Cuiabá
1 night Hotel Taina
- Days 12-14** Morning flight to Foz do Iguaçu.
Visit Iguazú Falls. Two full days in the area with superb birding
3 nights La Reserva Virgin Lodge
- Days 15-16** Flight to Sao Paulo then flight back to UK, arriving Day 16

Emma Pearcey: Jaguar
Roy Atkins: Giant Otter, Tapir
Christine Maughan: Iguazú Falls, Hyacinth Macaws
Nigel Matthews: Toco Toucan

CANTABRIA AND ASTURIAS



"The Cordillera mountain range is not only home to the stunning Picos de Europa NP, but also many other Natural Parks and Reserves, which are not as well-known. All of these areas are just as stunning, with a fabulous diversity of wildlife. I cannot wait to return for all the incredible mammals, birds, butterflies, reptiles and amphibians." Julian Sykes

Dates Sun 24 - Tues 2 Sep 2025

Price £4,365

Deposit £870 Single Supp £300

Leader Julian Sykes

Flights Vueling, scheduled,
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Bilbao
Inbound: Evening, Bilbao-Gatwick

Weather Probably a mixture of sun and showers (15°-30°C), warmer in lowland areas and on coast, but will be cooler in the mountains and on the boat trip

Walking There will be some short easy walks on level paths, but some of the watchpoints can involve steep walks up uneven tracks through vegetation

Health A decent level of fitness is recommended

Meals All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 10

Insects Biting insects are not usually a problem but repellent may be useful

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 7

Just some of what we hope to see:

Cantabrian Brown Bear	Short-toed Eagle
Iberian Wolf	Long-tailed Skua
European Wildcat	Sabine's Gull
Wild Boar	Black Tern
Southern Chamois	Black Woodpecker
Snow Vole	Snowfinch
Spoonbill	Alpine Chough
European Storm Petrel	Rufous-tailed
Great Shearwater	Rock Thrush
Cory's Shearwater	Iberian Chiffchaff
Lammergeier	Red-backed Shrike
Egyptian Vulture	Wallcreeper
Honey Buzzard	Alpine Accentor
Golden Eagle	

Julian Sykes: Cantabrian Brown Bear, Chamois, Iberian Wolf, Sabine's Gull

Carolyn Hill: Collado de Llega

Simon Eaves: Wallcreeper

Gaye Henson: European Wildcat

A wonderful opportunity to combine the fantastic wildlife and scenery of the Cantabrian Mountains and the coastline of the Asturias Costa Verde.

- Rare mammals of Europe - Iberian Wolf and Cantabrian Brown Bear
- Good chance of European Wildcat in the meadows
- High mountains for Wallcreeper, Alpine Chough and Alpine Accentor
- Breathtaking scenery in the Cantabrian Mountains
- Full day at sea from Gijon chumming for seabirds
- Spanish Ibex, Southern Chamois, Snow Vole, Red Deer
- Lots of seabirds – petrels, shearwaters, skuas, terns, gulls

Fly to Bilbao and drive straight along the coast, stopping off at the excellent Santana Marshes briefly to kick off the tour checklist with Cattle and Little Egrets, Spoonbill, Curlew, Western Yellow-legged Gull, Dunlin and Ringed Plovers. With a bit of luck, we might even find Whimbrel, Ruff and Little Stint, making their way back south for winter.

We continue to our accommodation in Cremenos, close to the Picos de Europa National Park. Late afternoon, we shall make our first local excursion looking for either Iberian Wolf or European Wildcat, which in reality takes a lot of patience and luck. However, we shall be in the best position to encounter one of these elusive mammals, due to our local guide's local knowledge, which is invaluable.



2-4 The next three days will be spent primarily searching for the Iberian Wolves at dawn and dusk, as this is the time when they are most active during daylight hours. The Sierra de Riano forms part of the Cordillera Cantábrica, which holds most of Spain's 3,000+ wolves, a marked and welcome increase since the estimated lows of the 1970's.

During our time watching and waiting we should also see other mammals including Fox, Wild Boar and Red and Roe Deer, some of the wolves known prey.

Off-road vehicles will be used to access the remote areas and local knowledge of their dens will be invaluable. Although seeing these beautiful canines will be our main priority, we shall also utilise the main daylight hours for other wildlife excursions, looking for Southern Chamois, Spanish



"To see a wolf anywhere in the world is a very special experience, but to see one in your own backyard of Southern Europe, where their density is relatively small, is truly memorable. These (still) highly persecuted and hunted carnivores are so wary of humans, that our quest to see some is difficult. However, with the best local knowledge of packs, we have a great chance as the alpha female raises her young cubs. Some physical exercise is required to reach these places, but it's worth every bit of effort." Julian Sykes



Ibex and rare Broom Hare, found only in these mountains.

One day we shall drive back into the Picos de Europa National Park, where we shall take the 600m cable car ascent up to Fuente De, looking for scarce montane breeding wildlife such as Wallcreeper, Snowfinch, Alpine Accentor and Snow Vole. If we are really lucky a Lammergeier might be seen amongst the much commoner Griffon Vultures.

5-7 After another morning visit to one of the watchpoints for either wolf or wildcat, we shall return to the accommodation, collect our luggage and head off west along the edge of the mountains.

Enroute we stop for lunch and a welcome rest in the heat of the day. We shall then continue the drive to Pola de Somiedo, where we shall spend the next three nights at a fabulous rural hotel, in the heart of the Cantabrian Brown Bear country.

The next two full days we shall drive and walk through this incredibly scenic mountain range in search of Cantabrian Bears, which is a sub-species of the much wider-spread Brown Bear, that occurs in the northern hemisphere. Unfortunately, through hunting and habitat destruction, they were reduced to very low numbers in Spain, but are now making a fantastic recovery. These mountains are a stronghold for the species and we have a good chance of spotting one on these vegetated scree slopes feeding on Hazel and Buckthorn. These

fabulous karst limestone mountains are also home to Southern Chamois and Red and Roe Deer, which we should find as we scan for bears. This is a very special place with wonderful natural beauty, plus some fantastic birds such as Golden Eagle, Honey Buzzard, Red-backed Shrike and Rufous-tailed Rock-thrush.

8-9 After a final look for Cantabrian Brown Bear, we leave the mountains and drive north back to the 'Costa Verde', where we shall make our way to our charming, rural hotel. We are only a few miles from Gijon where we spend our final full day in NW Spain, on a boat in the North Atlantic. Specialist charters have been sailing into these waters for several years now, with excellent results for attracting seabirds. This pelagic will offer fantastic photographic opportunities, with shearwaters, petrels, skuas and other seabirds feeding at the back of the boat – making for a day to remember and a fantastic finale to the holiday.

10 Depending on the time of the return flight, we may have a chance for a stop at one of the coastal wetland sites enroute to Bilbao Airport. A great way to end the holiday.



Outline Itinerary

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Day 1 | Fly from Gatwick to Bilbao and transfer to our hotel in Cremenos
4 nights Hotel Huelde |
| Days 2-4 | Three full days in the Cantabrian Mountains searching for Iberian Wolf and European Wildcat |
| Day 5 | Transfer to Pola de Somiedo
3 nights Hotel Castillo de Alba |
| Days 6-7 | Two full days searching for Cantabrian Brown Bear near Villablino |
| Day 8 | Transfer to our hotel near Gijon
2 nights Rural Casona de Cefontes |
| Day 9 | Full day pelagic trip on board our boat from Gijon |
| Day 10 | Transfer to Bilbao for our evening flight home, stopping enroute if time allows |



NOVA SCOTIA



"I can think of no better mix for the perfect day watching wildlife - a morning with the bright gem-like warblers and migrant vireos, flycatchers and hawks, followed by an afternoon in the company of truly awesome Humpbacks in the Bay of Fundy. Simply the best."
Darren Rees

Dates Sat 23 - Sun 31 Aug 2025
Price £4,595
Deposit £900 Single Supp £485

Leaders Darren Rees and Simon Eaves
Flights Air Canada, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Halifax
Inbound: Overnight, Halifax-Heathrow
Possible transit stop for inbound
Weather Warm and sunny with a chance of showers
Cooler on boats
May experience coastal fog (15°-25°C)
Walking 1-2 miles on easy tracks
Light footwear recommended
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 8
Insects A few biting insects may be encountered, so bring repellent
Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

Humpback Whale	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Northern Right Whale	Boreal Chickadee
Fin Whale	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Minke Whale	Cedar Waxwing
White-sided Dolphin	Red-eyed Vireo
Great Shearwater	Northern Parula
Sooty Shearwater	Black-throated Green Warbler
Wilson's Storm Petrel	Black-and-white Warbler
Bald Eagle	Blackburnian Warbler
Hooded Merganser	American Redstart
Killdeer	Ovenbird
Semi-palmated Sandpiper	Common Yellowthroat
Least Sandpiper	Northern Waterthrush
Short-billed Dowitcher	Eastern Chipmunk
Red-necked Phalarope	Beaver
Grey Phalarope	
Belted Kingfisher	

Get close-up with Humpback Whales, plus a chance of rare Northern Right Whales. Great migrant birds, with flocks of shearwaters, petrels and phalaropes.

- Big whales close-up from short, sheltered boat trips
- Humpback, Fin and (rare) Northern Right Whales
- Fantastic migrant warblers, flycatchers and raptors
- Flocks of shearwaters, phalaropes and petrels
- Wild boreal forests running down to beautiful rocky shores
- Canada's Eastern Maritimes, only six hours away
- Small group, at a quiet shoreline lodge, on magical Brier Island

Arriving in Halifax mid-afternoon, we drive two-and-a-half hours south and west to delightful Digby, for an early evening meal overlooking the water. Afterwards we take two short ferry rides to arrive at our base for the week, the charming Brier Island.

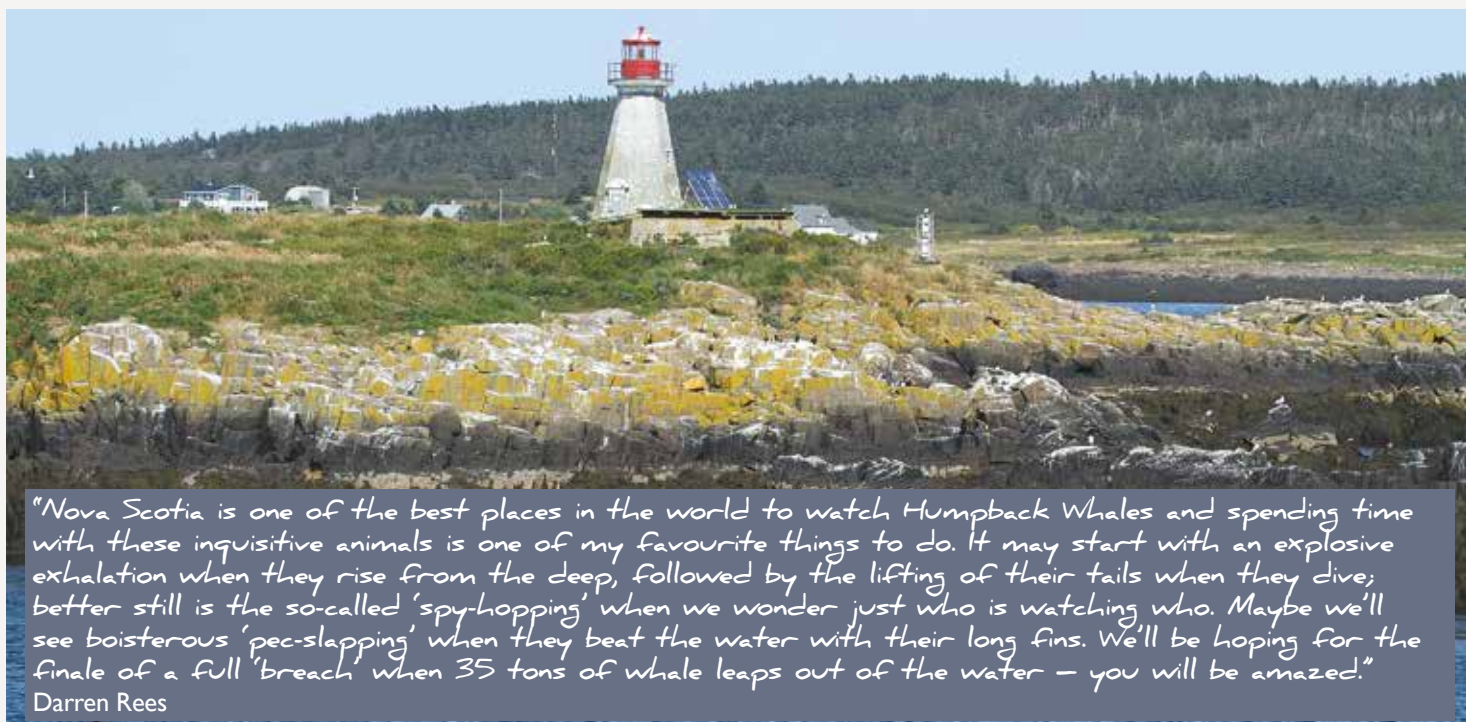
2-7 The small islands that poke from the mainland into the rich Bay of Fundy are truly magical and captivating. Beautiful spruce forests roll down to a rocky shore, marked with quiet bays and sleepy fishing ports. A delightful landscape of painted clapperboard houses; bright, bold lighthouses; wooden jetties with stacks of drying lobster pots and foghorns. These sheltered waters see the rise and fall of the greatest tides on earth. Plankton, fish and sand lance in abundance, bring whales close to the shore – we've even seen them from the lodge!



We'll take three boat trips from Brier Island to see these magnificent mammals. The sea is likely to be calm, though boat trips are always weather dependent and we'll get close to big numbers of seabirds along with the great whales.

Humpback Whales are the star performers and the population in the Bay of Fundy and Gulf of Maine is well studied - they regularly raise their tail flukes when they dive and the black-and-white patterns on the underside are particular to each individual, just like a fingerprint. They are curious animals and often approach the boat 'spy-hopping' when we wonder who is watching who. They also often pound the surface with their huge white pectoral fins (pec-slapping) or, if we are fortunate, launch their 35 tons clear of the water in a spectacular 'breach'.





"Nova Scotia is one of the best places in the world to watch Humpback Whales and spending time with these inquisitive animals is one of my favourite things to do. It may start with an explosive exhalation when they rise from the deep, followed by the lifting of their tails when they dive; better still is the so-called 'spy-hopping' when we wonder just who is watching who. Maybe we'll see boisterous 'pec-slapping' when they beat the water with their long fins. We'll be hoping for the finale of a full 'breach' when 35 tons of whale leaps out of the water – you will be amazed."

Darren Rees

Minke Whales, up to 30-foot long, are generally the most fleet and unobtrusive, but Fin Whales – at 70-foot the second longest whale – are sleek, with a tall blow and a back that seems to roll on forever. Sometimes acrobatic White-sided Dolphins come around the boat, but it will be enigmatic Northern Right Whales that we'll celebrate most over – rare and elusive, they visit the Bay of Fundy each year in dwindling numbers. These are listed as critically endangered whales, with only around 300 individuals remaining in the world – fingers crossed.

Ocean-going seabirds will also be a big feature and we can expect close views of large numbers of Great Shearwaters (with smaller numbers of Sooty and Manx). Wilson's Petrels patter their feet over the surface and big flocks of Red-necked and Grey Phalaropes pick delicately on mats of weed.

On Brier Island, we'll see some great bird migration. It's a bottleneck for dazzling migrating warbler flocks that may hold Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Magnolia, Canada, Parula, Chestnut-sided and more – we'll join our friends at the nearby banding (ringing) station and see some in the hand. There may be a variety of those confusing American flycatchers, plus Purple Finch and Eastern Kingbird. At Pond Cove, the stunted spruce forest sweeps out around the bay, where Common Eider and Black Guillemot loaf, whilst mighty Bald Eagle sweep low overhead. Least Sandpipers and Semi-palmated Plovers scurry along the seaweed and on marshy pools we may find Short-billed Dowitcher and White-rumped Sandpiper. Migrant Monarch butterflies drift by, Great Blue Heron stand in the shallows and American Goldfinch twitter in the trees.

The southern end of Long Island has weed-strewn bays that hold Solitary, Spotted and Semi-palmated Sandpipers and both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. Birds may accompany us on our walk along the Balancing Rock Trail to the misty coast and mobile flocks of warblers may include Northern Parula, American Redstart and Black-and-white, plus Black-capped Chickadee and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Elsewhere, in the lichen encrusted tamarack and spruce forests, we may see some of the specialties such as Boreal Chickadees and Gray Jays, with Palm Warbler and Hermit Thrush in the supporting cast.

Locally we can explore for more landbirds on Digby Neck. Each day we'll take the quiet roads and little ferries that link the islands. There can be a steady movement of southward bound raptors: Turkey Vulture teeter on raised wings, Osprey flap by and small spirals of hawks include Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned, with Goshawk, Merlin and American Kestrel amongst them. Belted Kingfisher, Spotted Sandpiper and Hooded Merganser are on local ponds, whilst Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Blue Jays and Dark-eyed Junco inhabit nearby gardens. There are also Eastern Chipmunk and we've enjoyed views of lodge-building Beavers.

8-9 We leave Brier, via Annapolis Royal Marsh, which always turns up a new selection of birds: there's bright red Cardinals, beautiful Cedar Waxwing and ducks including Blue-winged Teal, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy, Ring-necked, and Wood. Finally, we arrive in Halifax for our evening flight, arriving back in the morning of Day 9.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly London to Halifax arriving mid-afternoon. Drive 2.5 hours to Digby for early evening meal
Final 1.5 hour transfer to our base at Brier Island
7 nights Brier Island Lodge
- Day 2** First boat trip out from Brier Island
- Day 3** Exploration of Brier Island including Northlight and Pond Cove areas
- Days 4-7** Flexible four days with further birding walks; second boat trip in Bay of Fundy; one day exploration of Long Island (Boar's Light and Balancing Rock); third boat trip (half day) from Brier Island
- Days 8-9** Transfer day with birding stop at Annapolis Royal Marsh, arriving Halifax late afternoon for evening flight, arriving UK morning of Day 9

Frances and David Perry: Humpback Whale
Roy Cowley: Bald Eagle, Mega Nova boat, Fin Whale, Greater Shearwater, Peter's Island Lighthouse,



AN ORKNEY ODYSSEY



"Orkney has a wealth of wildlife to look for as well as beautiful landscapes and seascapes to explore. Our trip takes place as the bird migration through these magical islands really starts to gather pace. We'll visit the wildlife and bird-rich islands of Westray, Hoy and Egilsay, as well as exploring many spots on Mainland and South Ronaldsay."

Craig Round

Dates Sat 30 Aug - Mon 9 Sept 2025
Price £3,095
Deposit £600 Single Supp £400

Leaders Craig Round and Ailie Brown

Weather The weather can vary enormously. During a typical week in this season we would expect mixed sun and showers with temperatures of 10-20°C. It may be cooler round the coast and though we could see unbroken sunshine and settled weather, Orkney can also be wet and windy. Bring layers and water proofs and sunscreen too!

Walking Walking will generally be very relaxed and easy. Walking boots essential

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10

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

Accom Double, twin and single ensuite rooms

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Hen Harrier	Bar-tailed Godwit
White-tailed Eagle	Ruff
Short-eared Owl	Gannet
Merlin	Rock Dove
Great Skua	Twite
Arctic Skua	common and maybe
Manx Shearwater	rarer autumn migrants
Sooty Shearwater	Otters
Red-throated Diver	dolphins
Black Guillemot	Minke Whale
Eider	Harbour Porpoise
Golden Plover	seals
Sanderling	
Black-tailed Godwit	

We have extended our classic Orkney trip, with the extra days and extra islands of Hoy and Westray, adding to the wonderful selection of birding and archaeological sites we'll visit.

- Skara Brae, Ring of Brodgar, Maes Howe
- The Island of Hoy - plus Scapa Flow Museum
- Visit to Westray where Gannets may still be present on spectacular Noup Head
- Broch of Gurness - Iron Age broch village
- Autumn migration - perhaps a Wryneck, Red-backed Shrike or something rarer!
- Short-eared Owl, Hen Harrier, Red-throated Divers and skuas - and maybe Otters
- The Loons RSPB Reserve, Yesnaby Cliffs and, if time permits, the Brough of Birsay

1 We meet in Inverness in time for dinner in our overnight hotel, giving us time to chat about the coming exciting trip.

2 From Inverness, we follow the coast road north to our ferry from Scrabster to Orkney. We'll look out for Sandwich and Arctic Terns fishing offshore, plus colourful Eiders and with luck Long-tailed Ducks or scoters. We may be lucky enough to see Red Kite circling above the rich farmland of Easter Ross.

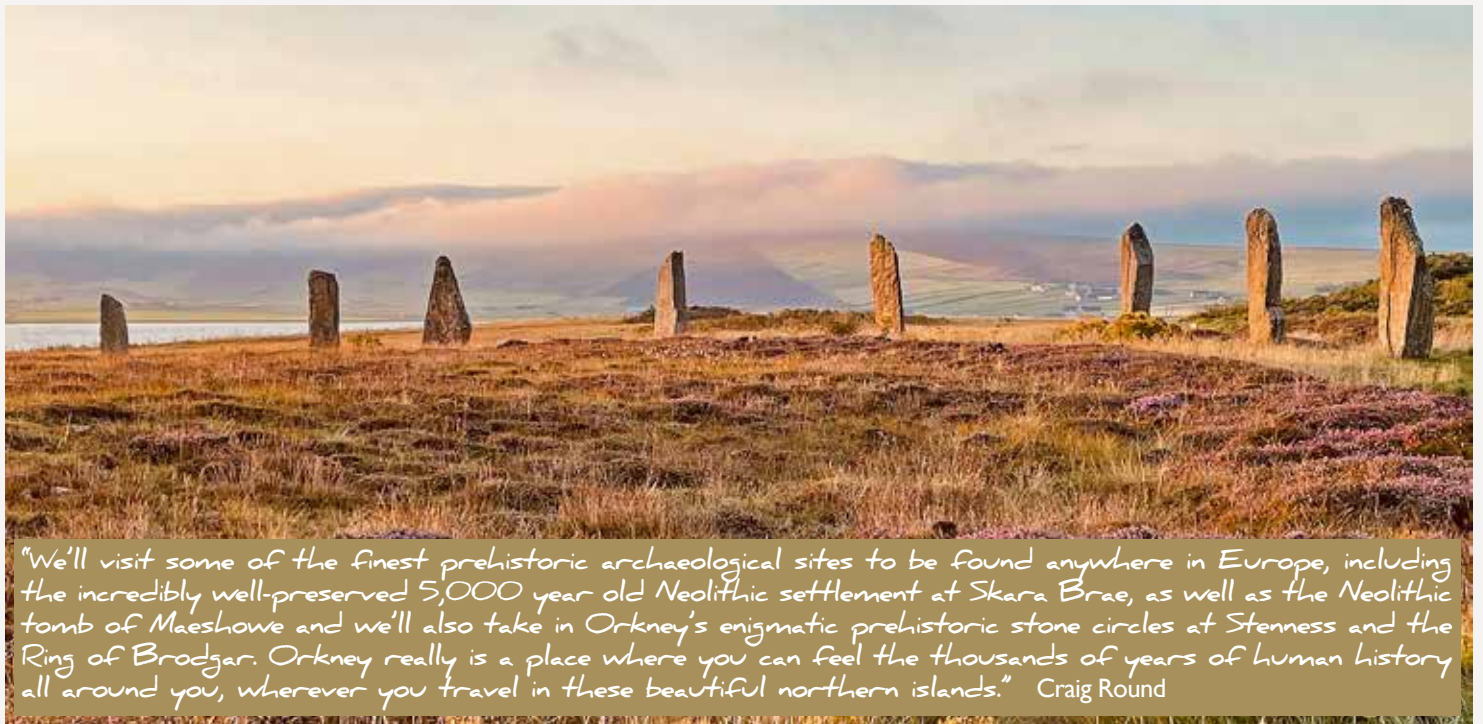
The crossing, on a large modern, fully equipped ferry, takes us across The Pentland Firth, famous for its tidal race and its wildlife and we'll look out for cetaceans, Storm Petrel, Manx Shearwater, skuas and dolphins with Sooty Shearwater and Grey Phalarope possible at this time of year.

The ferry passes the impressive cliffs of Hoy and we shall get a view of the Old Man. We land at the picturesque harbour of Stromness, where the great author George Mackay-Brown lived.

3-8 The landscape of Orkney has broad coastal vistas, interspersed with ancient archaeological wonders set amidst the genteel farmland, which characterises inland Orkney. The pastures are home to Brown Hare, Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl, which quarter the moors and meadows looking for Orkney Vole. Autumn migration is just beginning, so there's a good chance of migrants, especially waders and seabirds, but anything is possible!

Any visit to Orkney would not be complete without including the many astonishing archaeological





treasures the islands are so famous for: Several are exceptional, including Maes Howe - a Neolithic chambered cairn and passage grave built around 2800BC and still in excellent condition. Perhaps the most famous is Skara Brae - Europe's most complete Neolithic village, consisting of eight clustered houses, occupied around 3180 to 2500BC.

We shall also visit the Ring of Brodgar, Stones of Stenness and the lesser known Broch of Gurness, an Iron Age broch village situated in the north of mainland Orkney. The farmland around these sites is ideal hunting ground for Hen Harrier, Merlin and Short-eared Owl and the Loch of Stenness is often home to Otters and Red-throated Divers.

We may go sightseeing in the UK's most northerly city - Kirkwall and its smaller neighbour Stromness and visit the museum and Cathedral with time to wander round the shops. For whisky aficionados there is the chance to take a tour round the northern island's only distillery.

On another day we shall take the ferry over to the island of Westray, where we'll spend time enjoying lovely scenery and search for migrants. At the northern tip is Noup Head, which in summer has a spectacular Gannet colony on the impressive cliffs and there are likely to still be some birds here, though perhaps not in the big numbers of summer.

There is a half hour ferry crossing to Hoy, Orkney's most 'mountainous' island, and we shall cross with the minibus - with eyes to the skies for the

possibility of Great Skua, or gigantic White-tailed Eagle which now breeds on Hoy.

The newly refurbished Scapa Flow Museum, dedicated to the history of Scapa Flow during the two world wars, is worth visiting and we'll make the half mile walk out to the Dwarfie Stone, a megalithic chambered tomb carved from a titanic block of old red sandstone.

Time permitting, there is plenty more to show you - and we hope to include the impressive Yesnaby Cliffs, The Loons RSPB Reserve, where birding can be excellent, the last unrestored 'firehouse' in northern Europe at Kirkbister Museum and head out over the causeway to the Brough of Birsay - a fascinating island, with so much to see, with both wildlife and archaeology.

9 As our time on the islands comes to an end, we scan for birds and dolphins once again as we take the ferry back to Scrabster, then drive to Inverness for an evening meal together at the Premier Inn.

10 After breakfast we say our farewells.



Outline Itinerary

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Day 1 | Gather in Inverness for dinner
1 night at Premier Inn |
| Day 2 | Travel from Inverness to Scrabster through Easter Ross, taking the ferry to Orkney we then settle in to our hotel at Harray
7 nights at Merkister Hotel |
| Days 3-8 | Exploration of the islands of this exciting archipelago - including mainland Orkney, Hoy and Westray for excellent birding and visits to a wide selection of archaeological sites |
| Day 9 | Ferry back to Scrabster across the Pentland Firth, then drive back to Inverness
1 night at Premier Inn |
| Day 10 | After breakfast we say farewell |

Jane Hope: Short-eared Owl
Steve Batt: Ring of Brodgar
Bill Kunze: Arctic Skua
Duncan Macdonald: Italian Chapel
Tim Drew: Old Man of Hoy, Skara Brae



CORNWALL



"This holiday just keeps getting better year on year, as the now annual visit by 'large' shearwaters into these food-rich waters, produce some mouth-watering views of numerous birds that were once mythical a few years ago - it is definitely one of the magic moments of this fabulous week."
Julian Sykes

Dates Fri 5 - Fri 12 Sep 2025
Price £2,925
Deposit £575 Single Supp £0

Leaders Julian Sykes and Sally Nowell

Weather September in Cornwall can vary enormously, from warm sunny days to wet and windy, with the latter sometimes being the more preferable! Temperatures should remain good, with a range from 15-25°C

Walking Mostly easy walking on level ground up to two miles, but there is potential for some inclines/declines in the valleys - all on good roads, paths or tracks

Boat Trip Full day trip, with time on land. Large boat with cafe and toilets

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Biting insects are unlikely to be a problem but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Cory's Shearwater	Great Skua
Sooty Shearwater	Mediterranean Gull
Balearic Shearwater	Sandwich Tern
European Storm Petrel	Firecrest
Cattle Egret	Wryneck
Osprey	Melodious Warbler
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Pied Flycatcher
Pectoral Sandpiper	Red-backed Shrike
Curlew Sandpiper	Red-billed Chough
Little Stint	Harbour Porpoise
Spotted Redshank	Common Dolphin
Arctic Skua	Bluefin Tuna

Seabirds passing iconic rocky headlands, waders feeding in estuaries and reservoirs, migrants making landfall in beautiful, wooded valleys and cetaceans offshore, says it all.

- Pendeen and Porthgarra for seabird passage
- Red-billed Choughs on the Lizard and headlands
- Day trip to the Isles of Scilly
- Waders at Hayle, Stithians and Marazion
- Visit the iconic Land's End and its valleys
- Chance of scarce migrants making landfall
- Fabulous Penzance hotel with sea views

We arrive at our comfortable, family-run hotel overlooking the beautiful Penzance Bay, only minutes from the train station. If timings and the weather are favourable, we shall make a short late afternoon walk to a nearby public park, with well-maintained gardens. This is home to the unusual Un-armed Stick Insect, plus some birdlife, with Firecrest a possibility along with the commoner UK species.

Our hotel overlooks Mounts Bay and from our rooms it is possible to see Turnstone, Ringed Plover and Oystercatcher. We'll always keep an eye out in the bay, as we should also see our first Gannets, gulls and auks.

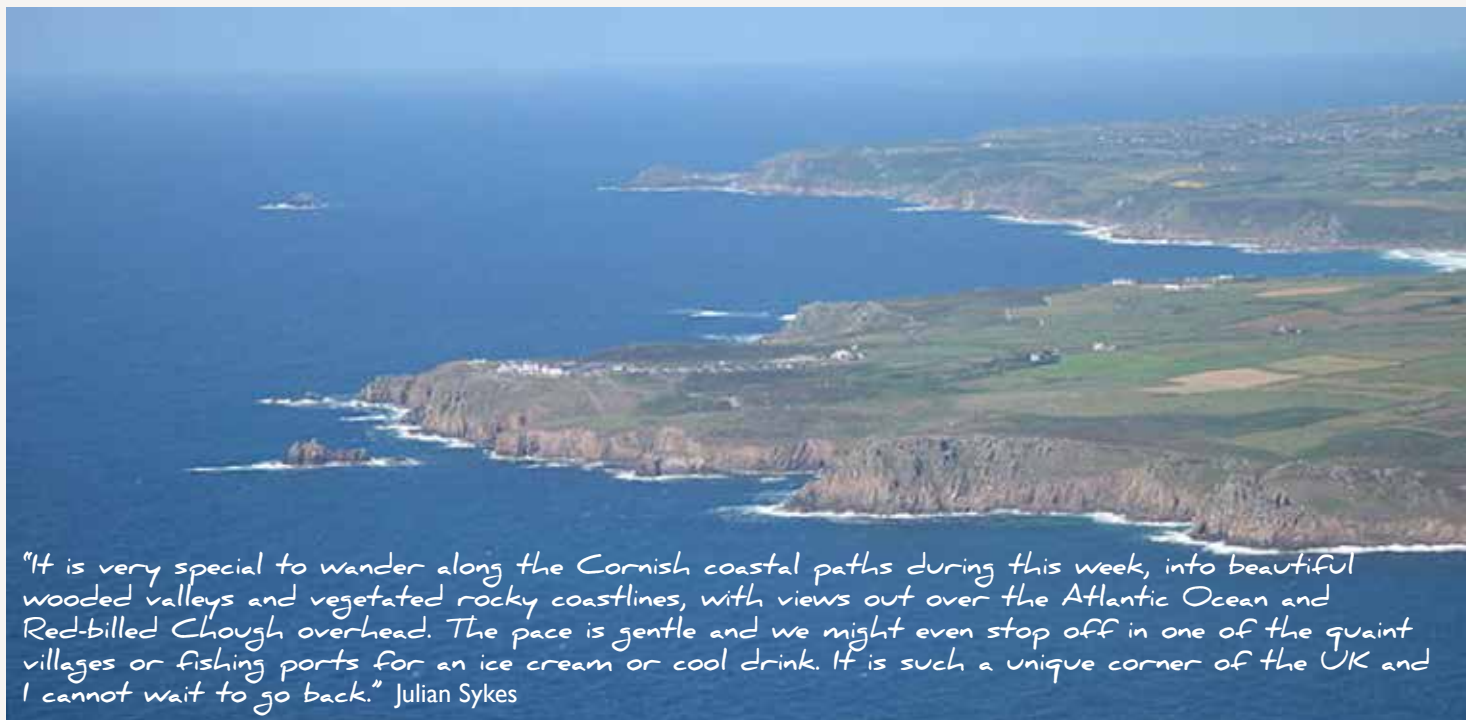
2-7 Penzance is a fabulous place to be based for this Cornish adventure, with a road network in all directions. We shall be keeping an eye on the weather and the local

information services to ensure we make the most of the week, but we shall also visit most of the iconic sites.

Pendeen, Porthgarra and the Island at St Ives, are a few of the famous seawatching points in southwest Cornwall and we aim to make a few visits. In the right conditions, passage Manx Shearwaters are joined by their rarer cousins – Balearic, Sooty and possibly Cory's Shearwaters. Arctic and Great Skuas can be seen chasing Kittiwakes and terns, plus there is the chance of Pomerine Skua, Sabine's Gull, European Storm Petrel and Grey Phalarope, if we are lucky.

September is also synonymous with wader passage in the UK and we shall visit the coastal sites of Hayle Estuary and Marazion Beach, along with the inland reservoirs of Drift and Stithians, to try and find a good mix.





"It is very special to wander along the Cornish coastal paths during this week, into beautiful wooded valleys and vegetated rocky coastlines, with views out over the Atlantic Ocean and Red-billed Chough overhead. The pace is gentle and we might even stop off in one of the quaint villages or fishing ports for an ice cream or cool drink. It is such a unique corner of the UK and I cannot wait to go back." Julian Sykes

Along with the expected commoner species we also hope to see Wood and Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Spotted Redshank and Whimbrel, with the outside possibility of Jack Snipe and Pectoral Sandpiper. It will be great fun looking through the flocks of birds, honing our identification skills in a 'wader masterclass'.

This holiday though is not just about sea and shorebirds, as it is also getting to peak migration time for land birds too and time will be spent wandering the tracks and paths around the headland. Either side of the famous Land's End are gorgeous, vegetated valleys leading down to the sea, with the most notable being Nanquidno and Kenidjack, amongst several more.

These can be migrant traps for passerines making landfall, or feeding up to continue south towards Africa. Annually something 'mega' turns up, but we at least hope to find a Wryneck, Black Redstart or Melodious Warbler amongst the commoner pipits, warblers, flycatchers, wheatears and wagtails.

For one full day, we shall take to the sea for an exciting day tour to St. Mary's, Isles of Scilly. This could certainly prove to be one of the highlights of the week, as we hope for not only seabirds on the Scillonian crossing but also cetaceans such as Harbour Porpoise and Common Dolphin. We should also encounter lots of gulls, terns, Gannets and auks, but hopefully some shearwaters and petrels giving us a completely different perspective, as they fly past the boat. We have a few hours on the Scillies largest island – St Mary's and our choice

of destination will depend on what species have been seen during the last few days.

A day will be spent driving to The Lizard Peninsula to see the famous 'Cornish Choughs', which returned as a breeding species to the county in 2002 after a 50 year absence. Lizard Point is the most southerly part of the UK and as a consequence can also attract its fair share of migrant birds on their passage south. From the village we shall head slowly out to the famous Lizard Point, looking out for wildlife and maybe sampling the local ice cream. Once there, hopefully the Red-billed Choughs will be amongst the other corvids and we get to see them wheeling around making their distinctive calls.

Although there is going to be a focus on all things wildlife, we shall also endeavour to call in on some of Cornwall's premier tourist sites such as Land's End, Sennen Cove and the Minack Theatre. We shall have a wonderful week in this equally wonderful southwest corner of Britain.

8 After breakfast and one last look out into Penzance Bay we shall leave this lovely welcoming hotel and say our farewells to each other, before heading home.



Outline Itinerary

Day 1 Meet at our Penzance hotel where we shall spend the next week 7 nights at the Queens Hotel

Days 2-7 Explore the sites of SW Cornwall. Some mornings and evenings spent watching for passage seabirds, with the rest of the time visiting iconic birdwatching sites. One day we'll take a sea crossing for cetaceans and possibly Bluefin Tuna

Day 8 After breakfast we say our farewells

Liz Ackroyd: Red-billed Chough, Cattle Egret
Tom Corser: Land's End
Stella Bignold: Bar-tailed Godwit
Julian Sykes: Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Simon Eaves: Common Dolphin
Catriona Urquhart: The Lizard



BRITISH COLUMBIA



"Vancouver Island has the fabulous mix of superb landscapes and spectacular wildlife. Forest-clad mountains tumble into the ocean and there's a myriad of channels, inlets and fjords to explore, searching for Orcas, Humpbacks, Gray Whales, Sea Otters, bears and more – do join us!"
Darren Rees

Dates Thu 4 - Thu 18 Sept 2025
Price £7,250
Deposit £1,450 Single Supp £1,200

Leaders Darren Rees and Roy Atkins

Flights British Airways, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Vancouver
Inbound: Overnight, Vancouver-Gatwick

Weather Variable across the island, with wetter conditions in the west, drier on the east coast. Expect some rain (we sometimes have rain for a whole day or more) and fog is possible in the west, but generally warm and sunny with mild conditions, 14°-22°C

Walking There'll be some short easy walks on wide tracks in the forest, in some places with lots of steps. Nothing steep or strenuous, but a reasonable degree of fitness is required

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 14

Insects Biting insects are generally not a problem on Vancouver Island, but repellent is a good idea just in case

Boat trips Boats vary from larger boats with indoor seating areas that can hold over 40 people, to smaller uncovered boats with no facilities. All boats are excellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 10

Just some of what we hope to see:

Grizzly Bear	Sea Otter
Black Bear	Bald Eagle
Orca	Black Oystercatcher
Humpback Whale	Black Turnstone
Gray Whale	Rhinoceros Auklet
Pacific White-sided Dolphin	Marbled Murrelet

Vancouver Island on Canada's wild west coast – witness a seasonal wildlife spectacle with bears, birds, whales and more, in the most spectacular of landscapes.

- Boat trips in search of Orcas, Humpbacks and Gray Whales
- Grizzly Bears hunting salmon on spawning grounds
- Dall's Porpoise, Steller's Sea Lions plus Pacific White-sided Dolphin
- Black Bear, Beaver, Sea Otter and chance of Raccoon
- Harlequin Duck, Bald Eagle, Canada Jay
- Beautiful Pacific Rim Rainforest and famous Long Beach
- Stunning scenery of lakes, fjords and forests, amidst towering mountains

1-2 Arriving in Vancouver we drive forty minutes to our hotel in Delta. The following day we enjoy a visit to bird-rich Reifel Bird Sanctuary, where Sandhill Crane, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Red-winged Blackbird and Northern Harrier occur. We sift through dowitchers, yellowlegs and our first American sandpipers – a great place to start the bird list. We'll also walk along Boundary Bay, looking for more shorebirds, ducks and checking those confusing American sparrows - this may prove to be the most bird-rich day of the trip.

3-6 We board the ferry to Nanaimo, checking the jetties for Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants, Black Turnstone and Black Oystercatcher. We'll watch for wildlife on the crossing (we often see whales) then have a long drive north to our sea front lodge overlooking Johnstone Strait. The place is a haven for wildlife

and we've watched Black Bears turning rocks on the shore and glimpsed Raccoon and American Mink. We can relax and wander the grounds watching Belted Kingfisher, Steller's Jays, White-crowned and Fox Sparrows, Hairy Woodpecker and more.

From our base we have two boat rides into one of the richest marine ecosystems in the world. A maze of islands and channels is the bewildering backdrop to a marine variety show like no other – the surface can be covered with seabirds - Common and Pigeon Guillemots, Rhinoceros Auklets, Sooty Shearwaters and dainty Red-necked Phalaropes, testament to the richness of the water. Bigger things will be chasing the fish... this is our best chance for Orcas and we hope to encounter resident groups at close quarters. Even larger are the Humpback Whales that sieve their bounty from the sea, showing their patterned tails when



"Highlights from previous trips include Orcas spy-hopping and surfing the wake of our boat, breaching and pec-slapping Humpbacks, playful White-side Dolphins and bear families gorging themselves on salmon – it will be a joy to return and add more amazing wildlife encounters!" Darren Rees



they dive. Smaller marine mammals include Dall's Porpoise, Sea Otters, Steller's Sea Lions and busy Pacific White-sided Dolphins. With so much on offer we'll enjoy a double-dose of wildlife-watching on the water.

On land we'll birdwatch at a nearby estuary, where Bald Eagles are in tree-tops; Red-necked Grebes, Common Loons, Harlequin Ducks and Surf and White-winged Scoter in the water; shorebirds and Savannah Sparrows along the beach. We'll visit Telegraph Cove, a picturesque harbour with shops and a superb marine wildlife museum and have an evening looking for shy Canadian Beavers on a nearby pond – always a delight to see.

7-9 After breakfast we head for Campbell River - another great area for birding, with shorebirds, grebes, divers, maybe Pacific Merlin and Bonaparte's Gull too. We'll visit the sub-alpine forest of Mount Washington in search of friendly Gray Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Varied Thrush and Red-breasted Sapsucker. If it's sunny we may be lucky and see the rare, endemic Vancouver Island Marmot catching some rays before hibernating for winter.

Our main focus will be our quest for Grizzly Bears - each autumn they gather at rivers where salmon are spawning, to gorge on the season's bounty. We'll have a full-day heading across by boat to a picturesque inlet, where First Nation guides will take us to purpose-built viewing platforms. We hope for great close-up views of the bears walking the banks or fishing mid-stream – a joy to experience.



10-12 Our long and spectacular drive to Tofino on the west coast is broken at Cathedral Grove to enjoy the astonishing Douglas Firs – some of the tallest trees on the planet. We'll visit beautiful Pacific Rim National Park, a magical landscape of lush temperate rainforest and open beaches. Pacific Wren, Steller's Jay and Chestnut-backed Chickadees are amongst the few forest birds - beaches hold flocks of Sanderling and Least and Western Sandpipers and offshore are Red-necked Grebes, Surf Scoter, Pacific Loons and Marbled Murrelet.

We have two more exciting boat trips from Tofino. We'll head into scenic Clayoquot Sound, another mix of islands and rocky outcrops with a spectacular mountain backdrop. We'll search for enigmatic Gray Whales plus huge Steller's Sea Lions. The following day we'll search the sheltered inlets for rafts of Sea Otters, hoping for close up views of these sociable, endearing animals. We'll scan the shores of remote, uninhabited islands looking for beach-combing Black Bears and there's great birding too: Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, Heermann's Gull, Rhinoceros Auklet, Pigeon Guillemots, Black Oystercatcher, Surfbird and maybe Wandering Tattler.

13-15 Returning to Vancouver we'll visit Stamp River to watch salmon migrate upstream and leap the falls – we may see American Dipper or a last bear? Our last night will be in Delta and on the following day we may have time for a last visit to Boundary Bay, before our flight home, arriving London Day 15.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-2** Fly to Vancouver. Full day birding local area and George C. Reifel Bird Sanctuary
2 nights Tsawwassen Inn
- Days 3-6** Ferry to Vancouver Island, then drive towards Port McNeill and our hotel overlooking Johnstone Strait. Two boat trips to look for Orca and Humpback Whales
4 nights Hidden Cove Lodge
- Days 7-9** Drive to Campbell River. A full-day boat trip to Grizzly Bear fishing grounds and birding Mt Washington
3 nights Anchor Inn
- Days 10-12** Transfer to Tofino on the west coast, with two boat trips and walks in the Pacific Rim Rainforest
3 nights Tofino Resort
- Day 13** Return to Vancouver
1 night Tsawwassen Inn
- Days 14-15** Birding Boundary Bay before flight back to London in afternoon, arriving in London on Day 15

Darren Rees: Grizzly Bear
Elaine George: Orcas
Stephen Batt: Humpback Whale
Julian Sykes: Steller's Sea Lions, Steller's Jay
Christine Maughan: Sea Otters

NORTHERN GREECE



"What a glorious thought at the end of our summer, to head to northern Greece for some autumn warmth and some tip top birding!"
Sally Nowell

Dates Mon 22 - Mon 29 Sep 2025

Price £3,685

Deposit £735 Single Supp £250

Leaders Sally Nowell and Ecotours guide

Flights British Airways, scheduled
Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Thessaloniki
Inbound: Afternoon Thessaloniki-Heathrow

Weather Temperatures should be pleasant during the day, but cooler at night. Rain or strong winds can occur, 10-25°C

Walking Will be easy to moderate, with some hillside walking on stony trails

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 Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Lesser White-fronted Goose	Little Owl
Rock Partridge	Black Woodpecker
Dalmation Pelican	Middle Spotted Woodpecker
Bittern	Black-eared Wheatear
Purple Heron	Blue Rock Thrush
Black Stork	Eastern Subalpine Warbler
Greater Flamingo	Sombre Tit
Lesser Spotted Snake Eagle	Penduline Tit
Short-toed Eagle	Western Rock Nuthatch
Red-footed Falcon	Red-backed Shrike
Stone Curlew	Woodchat Shrike
Wood Sandpiper	Spotted Nutcracker
Caspian Tern	Hawfinch
White-winged Tern	Cirl Bunting
Eagle Owl	Rock Bunting

A single base and relaxed holiday around Lake Kerkini, home to Dalmatian and White Pelicans and a wide variety of waterbirds including migrating waterfowl, raptors and songbirds.

- Thousands of birds!!!!
- Explore Kerkini Lake, a designated Ramsar site, one of the finest wetlands in Europe
- Single centre relaxed late summer holiday in an excellent family run guesthouse
- Spend time in unspoilt and varied habitat
- Peak migration time for raptors, songbirds and wildfowl
- Boat trip on Lake Kerkini
- Delicious food and local wines

After landing at Thessaloniki Airport we meet our other guide and transfer to Lake Kerkini, located some 60 miles north.

Our base throughout the week is the comfortable Limneo Guesthouse located on the east side of the lake. Within a few hundred metres we find ourselves on the eastern shore of Lake Kerkini. The guesthouse offers delicious local food and wine.

2-7 We shall make day trips from our base each day, either to the lake or to the nearby mountains and the Axios river delta on the coast.

Lake Kerkini is renowned as one of the finest wetland sites in Europe. It attracts tens of thousands of wetland birds throughout the year. In late September, along with a great variety of resident species around the lake, migration is in

full swing with many ducks, shorebirds, raptors and passerines present around the lake. Up to a 1,000 Dalmatian Pelicans winter here and White Pelicans should still be around in good numbers. Lesser White-fronted Geese usually arrive on the lake at the end of September, to spend the autumn and winter months here.

There is much to see and do in this picturesque corner of Greece and we shall divide our time between the various habitats and what's about locally at the time.

The lakeshore is a good spot for herons and egrets, Water Rail and Little Crake. Cetti's Warblers are common and Reed Warblers can still be seen. More open areas are good places to look for Red-backed Shrike and Cirl and Corn Buntings.

We shall enjoy a boat trip along the northern shore of the lake, where the major heronries and



"As if visiting one of the best wetlands in Europe wasn't enough, we can also look forward to being there at peak migration time and to some excellent food and hospitality too!" Sally Nowell



a large colony of cormorants are located. The place is teeming with birds: Purple, Grey, Squacco and Black-crowned Night Herons, Eurasian Spoonbill, Black Stork and Great and Little Egrets feed in the shallow water.

Hundreds of Great Crested Grebes frequent the fish-rich waters of the lake. Migrating terns pause to feed in good numbers and we are likely to see Whiskered and White-winged Black Tern and Caspian and Common Tern could be among them.

The riverine forest is a haven for woodpeckers! Old poplars, willows and ash trees provide great habitat for seven woodpecker species. We shall be looking especially for Grey-headed and Middle Spotted Woodpecker, but Black and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers are found here too.

After our 'woodpecker walk' we shall make our way to a reedbed area and grazed grassland, where migrating Red-footed Falcons like to stop on their way south. The reeds can hold Little Bittern and Penduline Tit.

On another day we shall explore the Kroutsia Mountains. Hawfinch is common here and others to watch for include Woodchat Shrike and Eastern Black-eared Wheatear. These mountains hold good numbers of raptors. Black Kite and White-tailed, Lesser Spotted and Booted Eagles all occur here.

In the foothills of the Belles Mountains Long-tailed Tits and the scarce Sombre Tit forage in the bushes. Hoopoes can be around and migrating warblers

and flycatchers favour more secluded spots.

We shall explore the grazed slopes and disused quarry area northeast of the lake. This bird-rich habitat of scattered bushes and small trees can hold Eastern Subalpine and Sardinian Warblers.

Driving higher into the Belles Mountains we reach an area that has Black Woodpecker, Spotted Nutcracker and Crested Tit in the pinewoods, with Rock Bunting on the more open alpine slopes. The shy and ever-elusive Rock Partridge is also possible here, if we are lucky! We'll also look for Western Rock Nuthatch that breeds on the limestone cliffs. The rock is also used by raptors from the lowlands seeking thermals upon which to soar into the hills. Short-toed Snake Eagle and Long-legged Buzzard are regular visitors.

One day we shall make an early start for a day trip to the coast, approximately a 90 minute journey from Kerkini. On the shores of the Aegean Sea, the Axios River Delta is home to a range of coastal wetland species.

We may find a good range of migrating waders, gulls and terns here, including Stone-curlew, Wood Sandpiper, Temminck's Stint, Spotted Redshank, Mediterranean and Slender-billed Gulls and Gull-billed and Little Terns. Greater Flamingos often linger throughout the autumn here.

8 After breakfast we travel back to Thessaloniki for our flight back to the UK.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Flight from London to Thessaloniki. Transfer to our base for the week
7 nights Limneo Guesthouse
- Days 2-7** From our base we explore Lake Kerkini, Axios Delta and the surrounding foothills and mountain areas, including a boat trip on the lake
- Day 8** Return flight from Thessaloniki to London

Ecotours Wildlife Holidays: Dalmation Pelicans, Black-crowned Night Heron, Stone-curlew, Short-toed Snake Eagle, Spotted Nutcracker, Kerkini Lake
Duncan Macdonald: Blue Rock Thrush





"Lynx is notoriously difficult to see, being quiet, nocturnal and unassuming. Last time we put in many hours, as the local guide checked fields with thermal imaging binoculars. We saw lots of other wildlife as we searched, then suddenly there it was - we saw one! It felt well worth the effort!" Roy Atkins

Dates	Sun 28 Sep - Sun 5 Oct 2025
Price	£3,575
Deposit	£715 Single Supp £200
Leaders	Roy Atkins and local guide
Flights	Scandinavian Airlines, scheduled Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Tallinn Inbound: Afternoon, Tallinn-Heathrow (Outbound and inbound via Stockholm)
Weather	Should still be warm, 15-25°C, but nights can be cooler, even dropping to 0°C. We are outdoors in the evenings and driving with open windows, so warm clothing required. Weather can be changeable, it may be sunny but can be rainy and windy
Walking	Maximum 1-2km on easy terrain, with possibility of a longer optional 5km trail. The bear hide involves a 1.5km walk
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 8. Breakfasts mostly at the hotels. Each day we'll have a warm meal in our hotel or a restaurant (which may be lunch or dinner depending on our schedule) and a second meal as a picnic
Insects	Mosquitoes can be a nuisance in the forest and there may also be midges and deer flies - so a good insect repellent is essential
Accom	Twin and single rooms all ensuite, apart from the night in the bear hide
Hide	The group shares a hide, which has chairs, bunk beds, sleeping bags/pillows and a compost toilet. Please note that we shall need to sit in silence and keep still for long periods
Group	6
NaTourEst: Eurasian Lynx Janne Pölluas: Common Cranes Andrew Dodd: Brown Bear, Raccoon Dog Toter Alter Mann: Nutcracker Roy Atkins: Pygmy Owl	

A chance to see the elusive Eurasian Lynx, plus Brown Bear, Elk and Raccoon Dog. Thousands of migrant birds - geese, waders, raptors, passerines and Common Cranes.

- Good chance of Eurasian Lynx - locating them with thermal imaging binoculars
- Night in Brown Bear hide with chance of other species such as Raccoon Dog
- Autumn migration with lots of Common Cranes passing through
- Good chance to hear wolves howling and with luck we might even see them
- Chance of other mammals - Elk (Moose), deer, Red Fox and maybe Wild Boar
- Short tour of Tallinn on our final morning – depending on flight times
- Ural and Pygmy Owls, Hazel Grouse, White-backed and Three-toed Woodpeckers

1-3 Arriving in Tallinn we travel to Lahemaa, the largest and oldest National Park in Estonia, offering landscapes of coast, smaller meadows and fields, alternating with old-growth forest. September marks the time when many mammals become more visible again, after the warm summer months.

Estonia has a healthy population of 550-600 Lynx and the chance to see one during the tour is good. Seeing Eurasian Lynx is the biggest aim of this holiday - but finding them involves a lot of driving, with the local guide scanning with thermal imaging binoculars. We'll drive smaller roads checking roadside meadows and fields where the mammals like to hunt - but be aware we may have to go out every night, as this is your best chance of seeing one. We shall ensure we have enough down-time during the day.



As we search there will be plenty of other wildlife to entertain us. There are large numbers of Roe Deer and Brown Hare to be seen and we are very likely to see Raccoon Dogs, foxes, Mountain Hare and perhaps Badgers and Wild Boar. Elk is another target species of the trip and we may see birds such as Woodcock and owls including Long-eared, Ural and Pygmy Owl.

During our mornings we shall visit the coast and forest in search of birds, although if we have been late the night before, we won't leave until after 10am and there will be time in the afternoon to catch up on sleep. We may focus on forest birds such as Hazel Grouse, Nutcracker and woodpeckers or head to the coast.

On the coast there'll be migrating water birds with large flocks of duck, including Wigeon, Teal



"The night in the bear hide was very special and atmospheric - and we were really lucky to see a mother bear with cubs in broad daylight, making for some great photo opportunities. There were also Raccoon Dogs and birds. The hide was comfortable but basic, but was still a highlight for many of the guests, because of all the things we saw." Roy Atkins



and Pintail, Goldeneye and perhaps Greater Scaup. Velvet and Common Scoters with a few Long-tailed Duck maybe passing the headlands with Red- and Black-throated Divers. Waders may include species such as Golden Plover, Ruff, Greenshank and Spotted Redshank and the first flocks of White-fronted, Bean and Barnacle Geese should be arriving. White-tailed Eagle are common plus the chance of Peregrine and Marsh and Hen Harriers. In the afternoons we'll take the opportunity to catch up on some rest, before our evening excursions in search of that elusive cat!

4 The Alutaguse area has large tracts of forest and raised bog - the core area in Estonia for Brown Bears. In September bears are feeding up, making them easier to see and we shall spend the night in a spacious hide with bunk beds, sleeping bags, pillows and a compost toilet.

Bait is put out to attract the bears and we hope for very good views from the hide, while sensitive microphones make it possible to hear what is going on too. Birdfeeders attract Marsh, Willow and Crested Tit, plus the continental race of Nuthatch. Raccoon Dogs may also come to the bait as well, or even a fox.

5-7 Matsalu National Park is a huge river delta area with fields, reedbeds, bays and a coast with small islands. Considered one of the most important bird migration areas in Europe, millions of migrating birds pass through.



If we have had success with the mammals, we'll have more time for morning birding. Some mornings it can be impressive, with thousands of passerines on the move, including many we don't think of as migrants in the UK. This all depends on the weather and the most intense activity sometimes takes place just after sunset. The huge fields of Matsalu are perfect for cranes and geese and the marshes are good for waders, which we can see from the famous birdwatching tower:

Western Estonia is good for mammals too, with good populations of Elk. We shall continue the search for Lynx here, but one quiet evening we shall drive to a wolf-pack territory, with the aim of hearing them howling. They will often respond to a howl so we may try that! They are vocal on calm nights and there is something very special about hearing them, even if you don't get to see them - and we would need enormous luck to see them!

We also intend to drive to Cape Põõsaspea, one of the top migration hotspots in northern Europe. On good days, thousands of migrating duck, scoters, geese and other birds pass this spot.

8 Depending on flight times, we hope to have the chance of a look around the beautiful city of Tallinn, before heading to the airport for our flight home.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-3** Fly to Tallinn, via Stockholm. Explore Lahemaa NP and the local area in search of Lynx and other wildlife
3 nights Sagadi Manor Hotel
- Day 4** Travel to Alutaguse area - the centre for Brown Bears in Estonia and a night in a basic but comfortable hide
1 night Brown Bear watching hide
- Days 5-7** Explore the Matsalu area, with lots of migrating birds and more mammals
3 nights Altmõisa Guest House
- Day 8** A morning walk around Tallinn, time permitting, before our flight back to the UK, via Stockholm

Just some of what we hope to see:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Eurasian Lynx | White-backed Woodpecker |
| Brown Bear | Bean Goose |
| Grey Wolf (hear) | Hazel Grouse |
| Elk | White-tailed Eagle |
| Raccoon Dog | Common Crane |
| Wild Boar | Nutcracker |
| Ural Owl | Great Grey Shrike |
| Pygmy Owl | Crested Tit |
| Woodcock | Willow Tit |
| Black Woodpecker | A great variety of migrants |
| Grey-headed Woodpecker | |

ALLADALE WILDERNESS RESERVE



"Alladale Wilderness Reserve is one of those places that gets under your skin. It has a certain magic and despite the fact we visit lots of other beautiful places on this holiday, Alladale is nearly always everyone's favourite place of the trip." Sally Nowell

Dates Sun 12 - Sun 19 Oct 2025
Price £3,695
Deposit £735 Single Supp £300

Leaders Sally Nowell and an Alladale Ranger

Weather During a typical week in autumn we would expect to experience mixed sun and showers, with temperatures in the range 5-25°C. It can be wet and windy or we can be lucky and have lovely warm weather, warm layers including an effective waterproof jacket and trousers are advised. Hats and gloves are also recommended

Walking We shall take regular but short walks, generally on easy tracks over even ground, but occasionally on rougher paths of between 1-5 miles. Walking boots are strongly recommended. Bring walking poles if you think these would be helpful

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Unlikely to be a problem at this time of year but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 9

Just some of what we hope to see:

White-tailed Eagle	Black Guillemot
Golden Eagle	Gannet
Hen Harrier	Great Skua
Peregrine	Snow Bunting
Black-throated Diver	Pomarine Skua
Red-throated Diver	Arctic Skua
Slavonian Grebe	Bottlenose Dolphin
Whooper Swan	Grey Seal
Long-tailed Duck	Otter
Common Scoter	Red Deer
Scaup	Red Squirrel

This is a privileged experience you will never forget. An autumn spectacular in the remote Northern Highlands, to immerse ourselves in the some of the best wildlife Scotland has to offer.

- Stay in the midst of the Red Deer rut
- Based in Alladale Wilderness Reserve
- Luxurious accommodation at remote Alladale Lodge
- Visit the Moray, Cromarty and Dornoch Firths
- Great opportunities for Golden and White-tailed Eagles
- Experience true wilderness, with no sound or light pollution
- Visit the fascinating Scottish Wildcat Project

1 After your journey to Inverness we shall meet at our hotel to talk about the week ahead and enjoy our first meal together.

2 After breakfast we make our way to a local Reserve along the banks of the Moray Firth, looking for Kingfisher; Water Rail, resident waders and seaduck. We shall also be looking out for Otter and Bottlenose Dolphin. Depending on the tide times we shall move on to Chanonry Point, surely one of the best places in the UK to see dolphins feeding. Here we have the largest Bottlenose Dolphins in the world; they frequently come in close to shore as the tide rises, to catch salmon as they move up the Firth.

We shall have lunch enroute and then in late afternoon will start to make our way to the fabulous Alladale Lodge, where we shall be spending our next five nights.

We arrive at Alladale in time to acquaint ourselves with our accommodation and settle in, before enjoying a meal in our splendid dining room. Depending on the weather, we shall sit outside one night around the open fire, listening to the bellow of the Red Deer stags and enjoying the otherwise silent night. On clear nights we should have spectacular skies with no light pollution for miles.

3 This is a real escape into the depths of the remoter part of the Scottish Highlands and the hills in autumn can look quite magical.

On our first morning after breakfast, we shall be taken by the Alladale team out by Land Rover onto the Reserve. We shall hear about the innovative approach to land management and restoration taking place on this spectacular piece of land. Once a hunting Estate, now this 100 square kilometre Wilderness Reserve is ours to explore.



"Autumn is such a fabulous time to be wildlife watching in the Scottish Highlands. Our highlights on this holiday over the last few years have been witnessing the Red Deer rut, Golden and White-tailed Eagles, stumbling across a family of otters, the arrival of winter thrushes, the huge wader and wildfowl flocks, Dippers and glorious Whooper Swans." Sally Nowell



We shall lunch out on the Estate and have a chance to hear about the Scottish Wildcat Project, run by the Royal Zoological Society but supported by Alladale. This captive breeding programme to establish a viable population of Scottish Wildcat, includes two male and two female cats and with luck, some kittens may be around at this time of year as well.

Depending on the weather, we shall sit outside one night around the open fire, hoping to hear the bellow of the Red Deer stags and enjoying the otherwise silent night.

Along with hundreds of deer, also resident in beautiful Glen Mor are Golden Eagle and White-tailed Eagles are regular visitors.

4-6 Over the next days we shall be visiting some of the best local birding hotspots. In October we stand good chances of some excellent seawatching, with possible Manx and Sooty Shearwater, Pomarine Skua, Red and Black-throated Diver and Slavonian Grebe. In the shelter of the firths wintering ducks may have arrived, such as Long-tailed Duck and Common Scoter.

Geese will also be arriving from further north, so we'll hope for large numbers of Pink-footed and Greylag Geese and with luck even rarities such as Snow Goose can turn up. Whooper Swans will be arriving, as well as other winter visitors such as Brambling, Redwing and Fieldfare.

We shall visit Udale Bay and Loch Fleet, where large numbers of Eider gather; also Tarbet Ness

and some of the small coastal towns along the wild Sutherland coasts. Often at this time of year Snow Bunting can be found along the shores and we may stand chances of early Glaucous and Iceland Gull amongst the mixed gull flocks.

Over on the west coast a spectacular drive will take us into Otter and White-tailed Eagle territory. Eyes will be on the skies and water's edge as we head towards Ullapool and Gruinard Bay. Great Northern Divers and Black Guillemot in their beautiful winter plumage can be present here.

We shall also spend more time on the Reserve, this time on foot, again looking and listening for Red Deer in combat on the high-sided valleys, where we might see Black Grouse. Red Deer can be remarkably trusting at Alladale and they too come around the building. Red Squirrels frequent the feeders outside the Lodge, giving some great photo opportunities. If time allows we may visit the delightful town of Dornoch and its ancient Cathedral.

7 Sadly we'll be leaving Alladale this morning, after breakfast. We'll visit the famous Glenmorangie Distillery and then continue our birding, with some fabulous stops. We'll be looking for our winter wildfowl and visiting waders, hoping for large numbers of Wigeon and Pintail, along with Whooper Swans and Golden Plover. We shall be reluctant to leave 'the field' today but we'll finally return to our hotel in North Kessock, in time for dinner.

8 After breakfast we shall say our goodbyes and depart.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Meet at our hotel in time for dinner
1 night North Kessock Hotel
- Day 2** Visit local Inverness Reserve and on to the Black Isle, before heading to Alladale
5 nights Alladale Lodge, Sutherland
- Day 3** Spend time exploring Alladale Reserve by Land Rover
- Days 4-6** Explore the Sutherland and north west coast wildlife watching
- Day 7** Leave Alladale travelling to Inverness, via Glenmorangie Distillery
1 night North Kessock Hotel
- Day 8** We say our farewells

Roy Atkins: Dipper **Jane Hope:** White-tailed Eagle
Mary Braddock: Red Squirrel
Robert Less: Wildcat
Sally Nowell: Alladale Lodge, Drawing Room
Pauline Greenhalgh: Red Deer



EAST YORKSHIRE



"This is a wonderful opportunity to visit many of Yorkshire's premier East coast birdwatching sites, which boast all types of prime habitat, from coastal cliffs and dunes to estuaries and wetlands. These places can be amazing in the right conditions and we have the knowledge and experience to tailor this week to ensure the best experience possible."
Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 4 - Sat 11 Oct 2025
Price £2,565
Deposit £500 Single Supp £475

Leaders Julian Sykes and Ailie Brown

Weather Can be extremely variable at this time of year, so come prepared for everything from rain and wind, to calm autumnal sunshine!

Walking Mostly easy walking on level paths up to 3 miles, with perhaps a little more if rarities require it!

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Unlikely to be a problem at this time of year, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
A transfer to the hotel can be arranged from York train station

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Brambling	Water Rail
Winter thrushes	Red-throated Diver
Redstart	Pink-footed Goose
Bearded Tit	Velvet Scoter
Marsh Harrier	Scarce migrants such as..
Sooty Shearwater	Yellow-browed Warbler
Pomarine Skua	Red-Backed Shrike
Little Gull	Ring Ouzel
Jack Snipe	Rose-coloured Starling
Spotted Redshank	Firecrest
Black Redstart	Wryneck
Barn Owl	Lapland Bunting
Little Owl	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Short-eared Owl	
Woodcock	

An excellent chance to visit birding hotspots and witness the autumn migration. Thousands of birds on the move - from waders and warblers, to pipits, thrushes and seabirds - and rarities too!

- Visit Yorkshire's autumn migration hotspots - Spurn, Flamborough and Filey
- Visit key Yorkshire birding sites such as Blacktoft Sands and Bampton Cliffs
- Yellow-browed Warbler, Red-Backed Shrike, Red-Breasted Flycatcher and Wryneck
- Visit Wildlife Artist Robert Fuller's gallery in the stunning Yorkshire Wolds
- See ringing first hand at a Spurn Bird Observatory demonstration
- Take a 4x4 trip to the end of famous Spurn Point
- Great accommodation and Yorkshire hospitality with birding on the doorstep!

We meet up at our hotel in time for dinner and a chance to discuss the coming week. Our 'well-placed' accommodation means that most of the sites we shall visit are an hour or less away.

2-7 The Yorkshire coast at this time of year is a thrilling place!! Thousands of birds are on the move and to witness this mass migration as birds head south along the coast is a wonderful experience. We have timed this trip to enjoy migration in action, with common migrants still passing through in good numbers, but also the chance of something a bit rarer - or with luck - very rare indeed!!

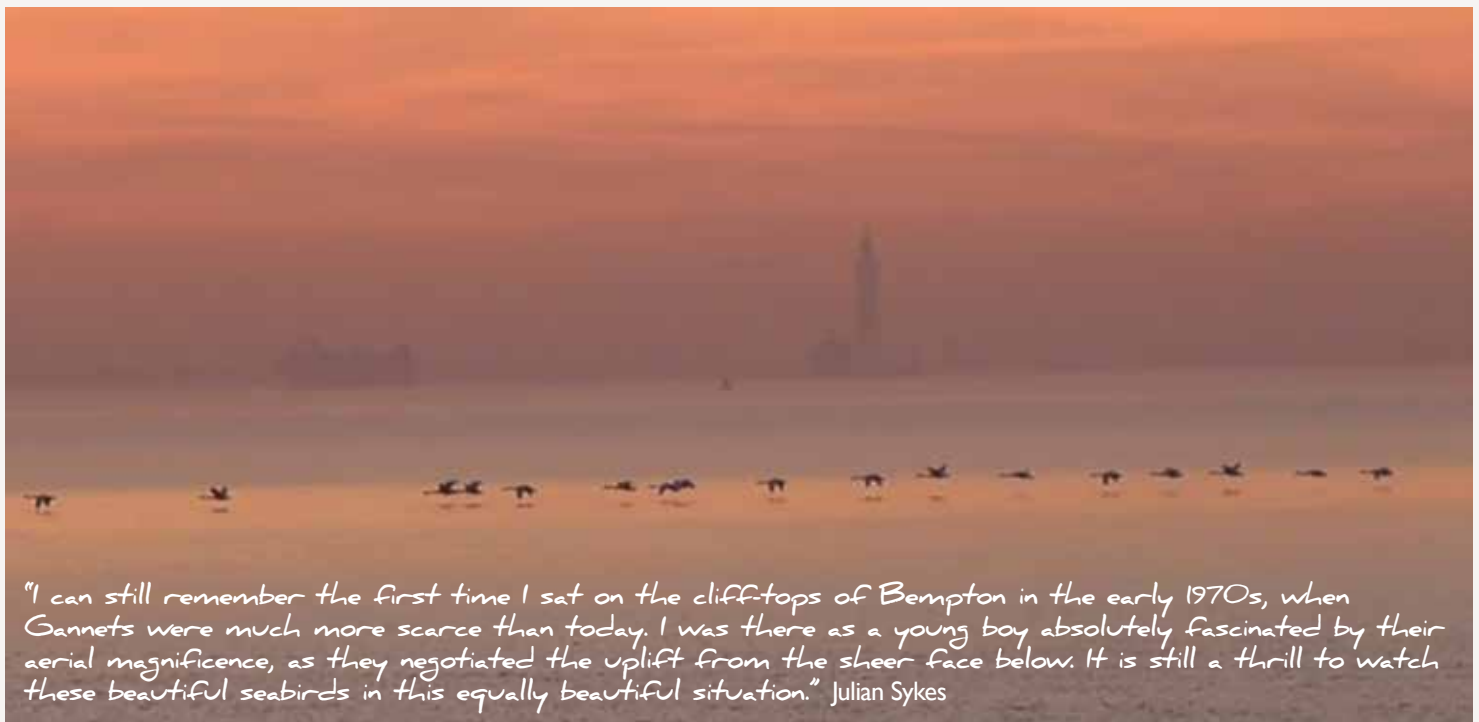
East Yorkshire has become renowned as the place to witness autumn migration and has several sites from which to experience this massive annual movement of birds. Spurn Point is perhaps the most famous - its unusual shape acting as a funnel,



which concentrates birds as they move towards the point. Whilst this can be weather dependent, the birding here can be astonishing, with large numbers of common migrants such as pipits, thrushes, finches, Robins and Goldcrests and often plenty of scarcer species too, with double figure numbers of Yellow-browed Warblers and the chance of species such as Richard's Pipit, Firecrest, Wryneck, Shorelark, Lapland Bunting and more. What is more, we shall get an insight into how research on migration is carried out and see birds in the hand, with a ringing demonstration at Spurn Bird Observatory.

We shall also cast our eyes seawards as, at this time of year, Filey Brigg and Flamborough Head provide excellent seawatching opportunities. We'll look out for Manx and Sooty Shearwaters, Arctic, Long-tailed and Pomarine Skuas, divers and flocks of seaduck and geese. Like Spurn, these





"I can still remember the first time I sat on the cliff-tops of Bempton in the early 1970s, when Gannets were much more scarce than today. I was there as a young boy absolutely fascinated by their aerial magnificence, as they negotiated the uplift from the sheer face below. It is still a thrill to watch these beautiful seabirds in this equally beautiful situation." Julian Sykes

sites can also be the first landfall for high numbers of birds, with thrushes and Bramblings coming in off the sea and all three sites have had more than their fair share of national rarities.

Each day we shall be keeping an eye on 'what's about' and will be in touch with local birders, so plans may alter rapidly if something very special is found. Anything can turn up, but some years are incredible, such as 2016 when Siberian Accentor, White's Thrush, Eastern Crowned Warbler, Isabelline Wheatear and Black-browed Albatross were exceptional finds. We can't promise the same rarities necessarily, but we can promise an exciting time searching for the unexpected, with the opportunity to polish our skills when it comes to our less familiar warblers, whilst looking out for gems including Pallas's and Dusky Warbler.

Yorkshire has some fabulous Reserves and habitats, wetlands, cliffs, forest, coast and estuarine marsh. We'll visit Blacktoft Sands, where the wetlands and reedbeds are superb at this time of year. Wader passage will include common species such as Dunlin, but should also include Spotted Redshank, Greenshank, Black-tailed Godwit and Ruff. Marsh Harriers hunt over the reeds, where 'pinging' flocks of Bearded Tits can be seen and if we are very lucky, perhaps a Water Rail or Bittern will appear.

At Bempton Cliffs, the huge seabird colonies will have departed, but some of the thousands of Gannets that nest here will still be present at this time of year. This spectacular place can also

provide the chance to see migration and amongst the common migrants, we'll be on the lookout for shrikes, flycatchers, or scarcer warblers. We shall also introduce you to some newer and less well known, but equally impressive, birding hot spots on our daily outings.

East Yorkshire is a varied county, with rich agricultural land providing ideal feeding grounds for large numbers of Lapwing and Golden Plover. The subtly rolling hills of the Yorkshire Wolds, providing habitat for Barn Owls, Skylarks, Red Kite and Brown Hare, feature in a lot of David Hockney's recent work.

We plan to visit Robert Fuller's wildlife art gallery and get a 'behind the scenes' tour of some of the ingenious ways he spies on his local wildlife. His paintings sell all over the world and his trademark, highly-detailed images, have been adopted by the RSPB and the National Trust.

8 After breakfast on our final day we say our farewells. You may wish to extend your holiday by spending time in one of Yorkshire's historic towns or explore further up Yorkshire's east coast, to places such as Whitby and Robin Hood's Bay.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Meet at our hotel in time for our evening meal
7 nights at Tickton Grange, Beverley
- Days 2-7** Exploration of the migration hotspots of Spurn Point, Flamborough Head, Filey Brigg and Bempton Cliffs. We'll also seawatch from headlands and visit Blacktoft Sands for wetland and reedbed birds, plus visit the Yorkshire Wolds and the Robert Fuller Art Gallery
- Day 8** After breakfast we say our farewells

David Constantine: Yellow-browed Warbler
Frank Moffat: East Yorkshire
Simon Eaves: Jack Snipe
Ian Smith: Lapland Bunting
Julian Sykes: Bearded Tit
Mark Denman: Red-backed Shrike
Roy Atkins: Spotted Redshank



ISLES OF SCILLY



"Every day spent on the islands is wonderfully unpredictable. With many birds still on their autumn migration, you never know what the highlights of each day might be."
Simon Eaves

Dates Sat 4 - Sat 11 Oct 2025
Price £2,795
Deposit £500 Single Supp £400

Leaders Simon Eaves and Craig Round

Ferry Penzance to St Mary's

Weather The weather can vary enormously in the autumn. The Isles of Scilly can be wet and windy, however we may also expect some warm weather as well! During a typical week in this season we would expect to experience mixed sun and showers, with temperatures in the range 10-25°C

Walking We shall be on foot most of the day making medium length walks between stops on easy paths and roads over even ground, but on occasion we may walk on slightly rough coastal paths. We shall cover an overall distance of about 3 to 4 miles during the day. Walking boots are recommended on wet days, with trainers being fine when the weather is dry. Don't bring wellingtons - it's unlikely to be muddy and in most places they are unsuitable. Collapsible telescopic/walking poles could be useful for this trip

Boat Trips We shall take short boat trips to the smaller islands from St Mary's

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

Insects Biting insects are unlikely to be a problem, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Manx Shearwater	Firecrest
Balearic Shearwater	Wryneck
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Rose-coloured Starling
Jack Snipe	Common Rosefinch
Short-toed Lark	Lapland Bunting
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Plus rarities!!
Yellow-browed Warbler	

Famous for scarce birds, we return to this scattering of tranquil islands on the south west limit of Britain, at the best time of year for the greatest variety of migrants to turn up!

- Scarce bird migrants from all points of the compass
- Walking quiet lanes amidst sub-tropical plants
- Dazzling seascapes and a patchwork of little fields
- Following up all the latest news each day
- Inter-island boat trips
- All from a small hotel on the main island of St Mary's
- Excellent local knowledge from our guides

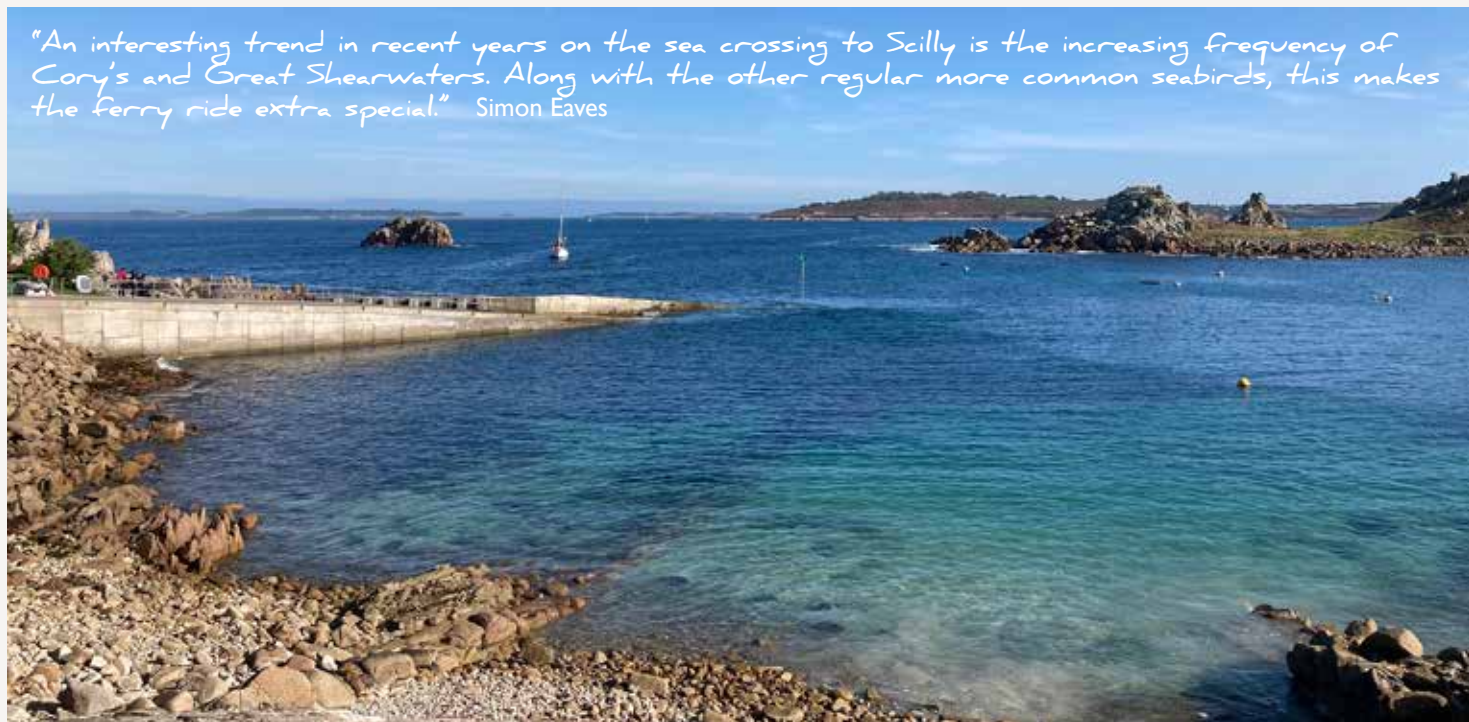
We meet together in Penzance at the harbour before taking the ferry out to Scilly. Birds and wildlife will be apparent from the moment we leave the bay, with several species of seabird on the 28 mile crossing to the islands. Gannets and Fulmars cruise the open waters, along with a really good chance of seeing the rare Balearic Shearwater, which move into these British waters in late summer. Common Dolphins are increasingly common here and we hope to have some good sightings from the ship. Landing on St Mary's we can walk the short distance to our island hotel. The rest of the first day we are likely to explore the main island of St Mary's, with its diverse habitats of woodland, farmland and coastal trails.

2-7 The islands have recorded over 400 species during their birding history, having a reputation as being a must visit place for all British birders. Autumn migration will be in full swing

as we arrive, with the last of the common species passing through such as Redstarts, Chiffchaffs, Wheatears, with swallows and martins still occurring at this time of year. Along with these common migrants and depending on the preceding weather and wind directions, we can hope for rarities. If transatlantic low pressure sweeps in we may see something arrive from America, whilst easterly winds may produce birds from Europe such as Wryneck and Bluethroat. In the right conditions, eastern rarities from even further afield in Asia such as Yellow-browed Warbler and Dusky Warbler can appear. It's impossible to give a firm itinerary - let's just say that our guides will take you to where the best birds are! Migrants can turn up anywhere; on the south pointing Peninnis Head, on grassy airfields, golf courses, sheltered coves and the shelter belts which protect the bulb fields - and indeed on any of the islands. Any boat trips we need



"An interesting trend in recent years on the sea crossing to Scilly is the increasing frequency of Cory's and Great Shearwaters. Along with the other regular more common seabirds, this makes the ferry ride extra special." Simon Eaves



to make are included in the holiday. This is prime time for scarce birds such as Short-toed Lark, Wryneck and Red-backed Shrike, but expect the unexpected, as Scilly is famed for attracting vagrant waders, ducks, warblers, pipits and even birds of prey from all corners of the compass, which rarely occur elsewhere in the UK. Anything can turn up - birds we have seen include Wryneck, Red-eyed Vireo, Red-backed Shrike, Short-toed Lark, Red-throated Pipit (among other things.)

During our trip we shall alternate between exploring the main island of St Mary's, with days out to visit two or three of the other inhabited islands using the colourful little inter-island boats. Even St Mary's is only 2.5 by 1.75 miles, so exploring on foot is easy, wandering between the different habitats of tiny bulb fields sheltered by tall pittasporum hedges, maritime heath and boggy moorland, with muddy freshwater pools, rocky headlands and sandy coves that pepper the coastline. The unique mild maritime climate has created a fascinating landscape, with special plants adapted to this environment

The Scillies are made up of around 150 islands with just five of the largest islands being inhabited. All of these five offshore islands are distinctly different in character and habitat. We shall almost certainly visit Tresco, the second largest, which is famed for its exotic Abbey Gardens created in 1834 around the remains of the 12th century St Nicholas Priory. Its sweeping sandy beaches and rocky tidal bays attract waders, gulls and terns and the dense vegetation and wooded areas provide shelter and feeding for common migrants and rarities

alike, as they pause to refuel on their long journeys. The Great Pool almost divides the whole island, offering the chance of some wildfowl, with regular rarities such as Ring-necked Duck and Spotted Crake turning up in some years. St Agnes, the most south-westerly of the inhabited islands, is in the prime position for first landfall of any transatlantic migrants, so it is another island we are likely to visit. It has a rugged southern coastline and more sheltered bays in the north. Its narrow winding lanes and tiny fields give it a totally different feel to the other islands and with Wingletang Down - an area of open scrub and gorse which stretches down to the Atlantic coast, it's an island of contrasts in a tiny area.

Rare birds can turn up on any of the other islands, with visiting birders searching all over. We shall try to see as many as we can, so depending on where the birds are found, we may visit St Martin's, a long thin island with beautiful white sandy beaches, downland and a small farming community. Alternatively, we may visit Bryher, which shelters Tresco from the Atlantic and is home to Hell Bay, where there is nothing between us and the eastern seaboard of America!

8 We can spend the morning birding, then after lunch we board our ferry for the sea crossing back to Penzance, with a chance of more seabirds and cetaceans on the way.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Ferry from Penzance to St Mary's and transfer to hotel.
7 nights at St Mary's Hall Hotel
- Days 2-7** Normally 3 days spent exploring the different parts of St Mary's, the main island and 3 day trips to other islands, usually Tresco, St Agnes and Bryher, but the occurrence of unusual birds will determine the exact itinerary
- Day 8** Return ferry to Penzance

Simon Eaves: Wryneck, St Agnes, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Common Rosefinch, Red-eyed Vireo
Steve Osborne: Jack Snipe, Red-backed Shrike



FORTH 'N' FIFE



"Having lived in Kinross and been an active member of the Fife Bird Club, I know all too well how fantastic the Kingdom of Fife can be. With plenty of coastline, wetlands, forest and rolling agricultural land, there is something different to be seen and found on any given day in this historic Scottish Kingdom." Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 11 - Sat 18 Oct 2025
Price £2,295
Deposit £450 Single Supp £400

Leader Julian Sykes

Weather Can be extremely variable at this time of year, so come prepared for everything from cold, rain and wind to calm autumnal sunshine!

Walking Mostly easy walking on level paths up to 2 miles, or perhaps a little more if rarities require it! We may be on our feet for a lot of the day even if not walking far

Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8

Insects Unlikely to be a problem at this time of year, but you may wish to bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single ensuite rooms

Group 7

Just some of what we hope to see:

Red-throated Diver	Spotted Redshank
Great Northern Diver	Black-tailed Godwit
Slavonian Grebe	Whimbrel
Red-necked Grebe	Great Skua
Manx Shearwater	Arctic Skua
Whooper Swan	Mediterranean Gull
Taiga Bean Goose	Little Gull
Brent Goose	Short-eared Owl
Velvet Scoter	Yellow-browed Warbler
Surf Scoter	Barred Warbler
Long-tailed Duck	Firecrest
White-tailed Eagle	Twite
Golden Eagle	Corn Bunting
Marsh Harrier	Snow Bunting
Red Kite	Lapland Bunting
Peregrine	European Beaver
Red Grouse	Red Squirrel
Black Grouse	
Purple Sandpiper	
Greenshank	

Fife, Lothian and Perthshire can be incredibly rewarding, as a constant stream of winter migrants arrive from the north, along with a chance of something special amongst them.

- Cross the mighty Forth Road Bridge to Musselburgh Lagoons
- Big flocks of scoter offshore plus divers, grebes and skuas
- Looking for European Beaver at the Loch of the Lowes Reserve
- Good chance of the rare wintering Taiga Bean Geese
- Possibilities of Yellow-browed Warbler, Lapland Bunting and Ring Ouzel
- Black Grouse, Golden Eagle, Peregrine in the Perthshire mountains
- Visit the famous Kelpies and St Andrews' coastline

We meet in Edinburgh and head to our comfortable accommodation in Kinross, situated on the edge of Loch Leven, which hosts 15,000+ roosting Pink-footed Geese during winter. It is wonderful to wake up and see and hear them each day flying out to feed in the nearby agricultural fields.

2-7 Like the rest of the British east coast at this time of year, this is a thrilling and unpredictable experience, which can be very weather and wind dependent!! Thousands of birds are on the move and to witness this mass migration as birds head south along the coast is a wonderful sight.

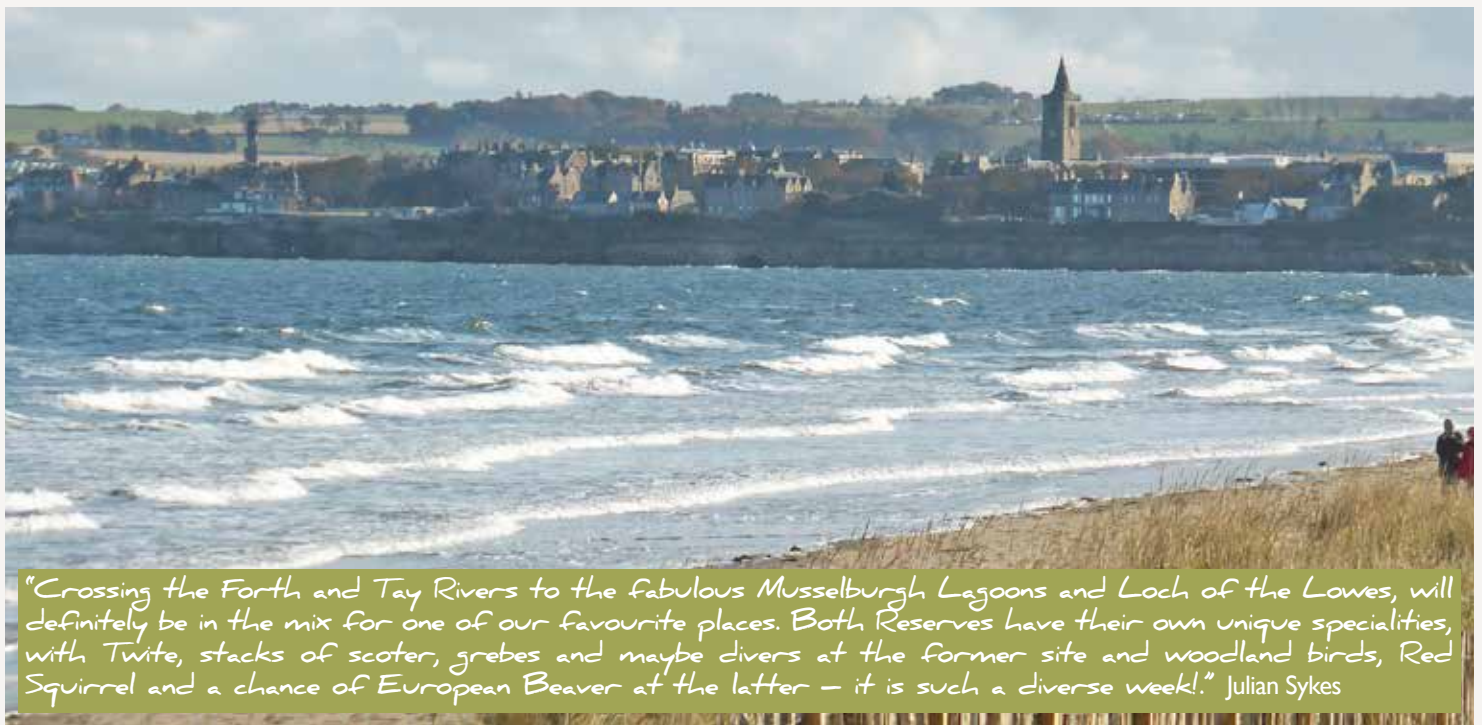
We have timed this trip to enjoy visible migration in action, with the commoner wintering species still migrating in good numbers, along with the

chance of something a bit rarer making landfall. Pipits, thrushes and finches are sometimes joined by scarcer birds, with a good possibility of Yellow-browed and Barred Warblers, along with Brambling, Firecrest and Snow and Lapland Buntings. We could literally see (and hear) birds dropping out of the sky, making landfall on Scotland's east coast.

We shall cast our eyes seawards from the comfort of a hide at Fife Ness and nearby car park, as both provide excellent opportunities to view passage seabirds; looking out for auks, skuas, duck, geese and even passerines.

There will be passage gulls and terns, with a few Little Gulls amongst the 100's of Kittiwakes moving south. Red-throated Divers should also be making their way along the North Sea coast, sometimes





"Crossing the Forth and Tay Rivers to the fabulous Musselburgh Lagoons and Loch of the Lowes, will definitely be in the mix for one of our favourite places. Both Reserves have their own unique specialities, with Twite, stacks of scoter, grebes and maybe divers at the former site and woodland birds, Red Squirrel and a chance of European Beaver at the latter – it is such a diverse week!" Julian Sykes

in good numbers, with a possibility of a Great Northern Diver as well.

The historic home of golf - St Andrews, needs no introduction and can be very productive, as a walk along the rocky shoreline could produce Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone and Rock Pipits. Nearby is the Eden Estuary and at the large comfortable hide it is possible to see groups of regular wintering waders, along with the possibility of a Curlew Sandpiper or Little Stint.

We cross the Forth Road Bridge to East Lothian, where we visit the wonderful Musselburgh Lagoons, which can be excellent at this time of year. Waders will include Bar-tailed Godwit, Dunlin, Redshank and Curlew, but there's always a chance of a Jack Snipe or Spotted Redshank. From the seawall we shall search through the Velvet Scoter, hoping to find a Surf Scoter that winter here annually, along with Slavonian Grebe and possibly Red-necked Grebe.

One day will be spent searching the Carron Valley for the wintering flock of Taiga Bean Geese, which is not always easy and local information is always useful. This will be combined with possibly visits to high tide roosts at Kinneil and Skinflats, where it's possible to see 100's of waders such as Black-tailed Godwit, Common Redshank, Golden Plover and Dunlin.

In 2018 we were lucky enough to find a drake Ferruginous Duck at this latter site, so you never know your luck.

No trip to this part of the Central Belt would be complete without calling in on one of Scotland's newest landmarks - The Kelpies, which could actually be one of the unexpected highlights of this tour.

In contrast, one day we'll cross the Tay River over to Perthshire, where we shall spend some time between Dunkeld and Crieff looking for raptors. With a bit of good luck and decent weather conditions, we have a possibility of finding Golden Eagle, Red Kite and Peregrine, which would be fantastic! We shall also be on the lookout for both Black and Red Grouse, Grey Partridge and Dipper, which also reside in this area

Late afternoon we shall move on to the Loch of the Lowes SWT Reserve, where we'll stay until dusk, in the hope of seeing one of the European Beavers that grace this wonderful site, along with possibly Red Squirrel.

8 After our last wonderful breakfast we shall say our "goodbyes" and head home, or back to Edinburgh. Hopefully we shall get one final fly past from the overwintering Pink-feet.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Meet in Edinburgh and transfer to our hotel
7 nights at Kirklands Hotel, Kinross
- Days 2-7** From our base in Kinross we shall cover the migration hotspot of Fife Ness, the historic town of St Andrews and the adjacent Eden Estuary. We'll explore the Perthshire mountains for raptors and grouse, plus an evening visit for European Beaver. We shall cross the Forth River to Musselburgh Lagoons and Dalgety Bay
- Day 8** Travel back to Edinburgh

Morag Rea: Pink-footed Geese
Sue Ripley: St Andrews
Ian Tulloch: Brambling
Mike Hems: European Beaver
Julian Sykes: Black-tailed Godwit
Mark Denman: Long-tailed Duck
Ian Smith: Lapland Bunting



SOLWAY FIRTH



"This holiday is just stacked with stunning birds and gives us opportunities to see some of them very close up indeed!"
Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 1 Nov - Sat 8 Nov 2025
Price £2,215
Deposit £400 Single Supp £200

Leaders Julian Sykes and Ailie Brown
Weather The weather can vary enormously at this time of year. Typically we can expect a mixture of sunshine and showers with temperatures in the range 0-15°C. Some sites are exposed, so wind will be a factor
Walking We shall walk on a variety of wide and narrow paths, generally in good condition. Some walking will be on boardwalk and some will be on rough coastline. Walking boots are recommended
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8
Insects Not a problem
Accom A comfortable former Coaching Inn offering double, twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Red-throated Diver | Short-eared Owl |
| Slavonian Grebe | Pintail |
| Black Guillemot | Scaup |
| Hen Harrier | Long-tailed Duck |
| Red Kite | Barn Owl |
| Golden Plover | Willow Tit |
| Turnstone | Crossbill |
| Purple Sandpiper | Black-tailed Godwit |
| Pale-bellied Brent Goose | Roe Deer |
| Barnacle Goose | Red Squirrel |
| Pink-footed Goose | |
| Whooper Swan | |
| White-fronted Goose | |
| Goosander | |
| Peregrine | |
| Merlin | |

A bird-rich winter retreat, with thousands of geese, swans, raptors and waders, plus a fabulous Red Kite feeding station in this beautiful, historic, but often ignored part of Scotland

- Six species of goose, including Greenland White-fronted Goose
- Great close up views of Whooper Swans being fed
- Chance of Golden Eagle, Merlin, Hen Harrier and Goshawk
- Impressive flocks of Barnacle and Pink-footed Geese on coastal marshes
- Red Kite feeding station giving spectacular views
- Diversity of waders, gulls, ducks, divers, auks, grebes and more at Loch Ryan
- Visit a wide variety of beautiful habitats from woodlands to mountains, saltmarsh to rivers

We meet at our hotel in Castle Douglas, with time before dinner to chat about the week ahead.

2-7 The Solway now hosts approximately 40,000 wintering Barnacle Geese - the entire Svalbard population!! This astonishing number is all the more remarkable when you realise numbers crashed to just 400 in the 1940s, before WWT bought land at Caerlaverock, instigating the start of their recovery. We hope to see several thousand on our visit to this iconic Reserve, alongside other species such as Greylag, Pink-footed and perhaps even rarities such as Snow Goose, that have occurred here.

The trumpeting of Whooper Swans is a constant soundtrack, but becomes especially loud just before feeding time and as they fly in to the feeding



pool. In the hides we'll get good views of duck such as Pintail, Gadwall, Wigeon, Teal and maybe even Green-winged Teal. Waders in the pools and surrounding fields include Golden Plover, Lapwing, Oystercatcher and Black-tailed Godwit and distant flocks of Knot and Dunlin on the coast, where Peregrine, Hen Harrier or Merlin may fly through.

Along the coast, the RSPB Reserve at Mersehead is another fabulous spot for wintering wildfowl, with flocks of Wigeon, Teal, Shoveler, Shelduck and Pintail and more flocks of Barnacle and Pink-footed Geese. Perhaps we'll find one of the small number of leucistic Barnacle Geese here - almost white, but with faint markings just visible. There is a good chance that Hen Harrier or Short-eared Owl are using the area to winter. Nearby coastal areas such as Southernness Point and Carsthorpe Bay, can be a good sites to see wintering waders, with flocks





"A late Autumn visit to the Solway coast is a real treat. We often find we have the place to ourselves to enjoy some really wonderful wildlife." Julian Sykes

of Oystercatchers, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwits and Grey Plover; while rocky areas host Turnstone and a few Purple Sandpiper. This is a good place to look for Scaup and there may be flocks of Pintail offshore and perhaps a few Common Scoter. We also drop in to see Sweetheart Abbey.

We'll visit Loch Ken and RSPB Ken Dee Marshes, to search for the small number of Greenland White-fronted Geese that winter here. This is one of the few places where Willow Tit are still doing well, perhaps coming to the feeders, while Red Kites soar overhead. Nearby is a Red Kite feeding station and we'll time our visit to see these mesmerizing birds swooping down for tit-bits of meat and eating on the wing, almost within touching distance.

Peregrines now nest on the church tower in Castle Douglas and stay on territory all winter. On the neighbouring Nature Reserve is a wonderful location to look for wintering Pink-footed, Greylag and Greenland White-fronted Geese. There should be a variety of duck, including Pintail and Wigeon, while Hen Harrier regularly quarter the ground in search of prey.

Travelling further afield, the sheltered waters of Loch Ryan may be teeming with birds. Waders include Dunlin, Redshank, Ringed Plover and Turnstone, alongside feeding Light-bellied Brent Geese. This is one of the best sites for Scaup and we'll check through them for Eider, Red-breasted Merganser and Common Scoter. Red-throated Diver and Slavonian and Great Crested Grebes

winter here, plus Black Guillemot and small numbers of Long-tailed Duck. Black-necked Grebe used to winter and occasionally still appear. If we have time, we may visit Corsewall Point, where Gannets are often close to shore. We may also visit West Freugh for more chances of Greenland White-fronted Geese and the possibility of Hen Harrier or Barn Owl coming to roost, if we time it right.

The interior of Dumfries and Galloway has rivers and lochs and expanses of rolling, rugged hills, woodlands, forests and moorland. We shall visit sites with high hills where, if luck is with us, we may see Golden Eagle soaring and there should be Ravens galore and perhaps Peregrine or Merlin. The extensive forestry has Common Crossbill, Siskin and Redpoll. The oak woodlands are home to nuthatch and treecreeper and in the beech trees we'll seek out Brambling. An exciting feature at this time of year is the arrival of Redwings and Fieldfares, so we'll be hoping to enjoy the spectacle of them feasting on the autumn berries and who knows, we might strike it lucky and bump into Waxwings! Buzzards are a common sight and we shall keep a sharp eye out for soaring Goshawk, while marvelling at the drama of this beautiful, historical landscape.

8 After breakfast we'll say our farewells before setting off on our journeys home.



Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive in Castle Douglas in time for our evening meal, followed by a chat about our plans for the coming week. 7 nights Kings Arms Hotel, Castle Douglas
- Days 2-7** Wildlife and birdwatching exploration including Caerlaverock WWT Reserve, Ken-Dee Marshes RSPB Reserve, Cairnmore of Fleet NNR and Red Kite feeding station
- Day 8** After breakfast we shall say our farewells

Jane Hope: Red Kites
Morag Rea: Barnacle Geese
Craig Round: Whooper Swans
Kate Mennie: Golden Plover, Merlin
Chrissie Nicholson: Pale-bellied Brent Geese, Pink-footed Geese



SE AUSTRALIA AND TASMANIA



"I have led trips with Mark in New Zealand and can't wait to work with him again, as he is great fun and has an exceptional depth of knowledge - not just on the birds and mammals but flowers and other wildlife too!" Roy Atkins

Dates	Sat 1 - Wed 19 Nov 2025
Price	£8,695
Deposit	£1,735 Single Supp £850
Leaders	Roy Atkins and Mark Hanger
Flights	Airline tbc, scheduled Outbound: Overnight, London-Melbourne Inbound: Overnight, Melbourne-London (outbound and inbound via one stop) Internal: Melbourne-Hobart-Melbourne
Weather	Should be pleasantly warm/hot, but expect some colder and windy weather in the mountains. Rain possible at all times, 5-23 °C
Walking	Mostly on good paths with some uphill walks on steeper tracks and uneven ground in the Cradle Mountain area
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 2 to lunch on Day 18
Insects	Some areas have mosquitoes, ticks and leeches, insect repellent is essential
Accom	Twin and single rooms all ensuite, apart from Mountain Vallery Resort where singles are not available and cabins and facilities are shared
Visa	ETA for Australia to be applied for before travel, additional cost about £20
Group	12
Just some of what we hope to see:	
Koala	Hooded Plover
Platypus	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Tasmanian Devil	Hoary-headed Grebe
Echidna	Yellow-tailed Black
Wombat	Cockatoo
Kangaroos	Great variety of parrots
Wallabies	Tawny Frogmouth
Quolls	Laughing Kookaburra
Emu	Flame Robin
Albatrosses	Superb Fairy Wren
Little Penguin	Scarlet Robin
Cape Barren Goose	Forty-spotted Pardalote
Australian Avocet	

Koala, Platypus, Echidna, Kangaroos, Wallabies, Tasmanian Devil, Quolls, Wombat, Flying Foxes and a fantastic range of superb birds on our Australia adventure.

- Platypus - with a good chance to get photos in daylight
- Echidna, Wombat, Tasmanian Devil and cuddly-looking Koalas
- Fabulous range of different parrots and parakeets
- Pelagic boat trip for albatrosses, shearwaters, prions and petrels
- Beautiful Tasmanian wilderness from sandy beaches to mountains
- Several species of Kangaroo, Wallaby and Pademelons
- See thousands of Short-tailed Shearwaters returning to their burrows

1-4 After an overnight flight, we stay one night in Melbourne before heading west. After learning about the Koala research being done in the Youyang Ranges, we'll go in search of the cuddly-looking animal itself, perhaps spotting Tawny Frogmouth, Musk and Purple-crowned Lorikeets, Galah, Long-billed Corella and White-winged Chough as we search. We'll also visit a large colony of Grey-headed Flying Foxes and find plenty more birds in the trees and gardens here.

Next day we'll explore the Serendip Sanctuary west of Melbourne, where Grey Kangaroo, Swamp Wallaby, Emu and a wonderful array of water birds are possible, such as Yellow-billed and Royal Spoonbills, Magpie Geese, White-faced and Pacific Herons, Black-headed Plover and Australian and Straw-necked Ibis, while overhead Whistling Kites, Black Kites and Little Eagle survey the scene.



5-6 We fly to Hobart in Tasmania and head to Gould's Lagoon. Freckled Ducks, Pacific Black Duck, Australian Wood Duck and Hardhead are here, with Tasmanian Native Hen and Australian Swamphens around the lagoon and with luck Latham's Snipe is possible. Flowering gum trees attract Musk Lorikeets, Noisy Miner, Little Wattlebird and Eastern Rosella and we'll look for Hoary-headed Grebe, before taking the ferry to Bruny Island - where we may find Possums, Pademelons and Quolls at dusk.

Inala is a 1,000 hectare 'Land for Wildlife' property on South Bruny, home to all of the Tasmanian endemic species. Tasmanian Pademelons emerge each evening and a pale form of Bennett's Wallaby, while birdlife includes endemic Green Rosella, Forty Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Strong-billed Honeyeater, Yellow Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Dusky Robin, Eastern Spinebill, Flame



"We have the chance to see so many of the iconic Australian mammals on this tour such as Koala, Platypus, Wombat and Tasmanian Devil.... I've not seen many of these on previous trips and I don't know why, but I have always wanted to see an Echidna." Roy Atkins



Robin, Superb Fairy Wrens and endangered Swift Parrot. Inala also has a custom-built raptor hide, with high quality glass, providing opportunities to photograph Wedge-tailed Eagle, White-bellied Sea Eagle and Brown Goshawk as they feed.

7-8 We head north-east to visit the fascinating Tasmanian Unzoo project, then the following day comes our seabird extravaganza! Our chartered vessel will take us out in search of mighty albatrosses, shearwaters, prions and petrels - with chances of fur seals and perhaps whales too!

9-10 At Mount Field National Park we explore the forests in search of Grey Shrike Thrush, Olive Whistler, Flame Robin and Black Currawongs. The rivers and tarns are home to Platypus and Eastern Quoll are around our lodge. Exploring the lake and montane banksia woodland, we hope for Tasmanian Scrub-wren, Yellow Wattlebird and Pink Robin, before we continue to MacQuarrie Harbour, home to elusive Ground Parrots.

11-12 We cruise around this beautiful harbour and into the Gordon River World Heritage Area, with good opportunities for Rough-faced Shag, Osprey and Tiger Snake. Mid-afternoon we'll drive on to Cradle Valley and Cradle Mountain National Park, where we have good chances for Echidna along the road verge and later go in search of Common Wombats, Pademelons, Bennett's Wallabies and Spotted-tailed Quolls. Common Wombats are regularly seen within walking distance of the hotel and a breeding centre for Tasmanian Devils and Spotted-tailed and Eastern

Quolls will provide a close-up introduction to these fascinating species. Yellow-tailed Cockatoos and Currawong, Scrub Tits and Tasmanian Scrub-wren are species of the varied habitats here.

13 After more explorations we travel north to the coast, where we'll marvel and 'duck' as 13,000 Short-tailed Shearwaters return to their burrows around our feet. Southern Brown Bandicoots occur here and the Stanley 'nightlife' consists of Little Penguins walking down the main street and Tasmanian Pademelons sitting at the crossroads!

14-17 Red-capped Dotterel and Hooded Plover occur along the north coast, before we head inland to a remote setting unsurpassed for nocturnal viewing of Tasmanian Devils and Spotted-tailed Quolls. We'll have time to relax here in these peaceful surroundings before heading out at dusk. After two days we descend to the Tasmanian Arboretum, where creeks and ponds are amongst the most reliable to view Platypus - even in daylight.

We may visit the Arboretum again this morning before moving on to Narawntapu National Park. Here, abundant marsupial wildlife includes Forrester's Kangaroo on the 'marsupial lawns' surrounding the lagoon. A newly created walkway near Launceston will provide a variety of waterfowl, estuarine and scrub birds, including Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal and Australian Pelican, with the chance of Australian Peregrine overhead.

18-19 We fly back to Melbourne, for our overnight flight to London.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-2** Overnight flight from London to Melbourne, then transfer to our hotel
1 night Rydges, Melbourne
- Days 3-4** Head west in search of Koalas and great birding, then return to Melbourne
1 night Shannon Motor Inn, Geelong
1 night Rydges, Melbourne
- Days 5-6** Fly to Hobart, then on to Bruny Island
2 nights Bruny Lodge
- Days 7-8** Visit Unzoo project, plus boat trip
1 night Tasman Peninsula, hotel tbc
1 night Old Woolstore, Hobart
- Days 9-10** Explore Mount Field and St Clair NPs
1 night St Clair Lodge
1 night Village Inn, Strahan
- Days 11-12** Explore Cradle Mountain area
2 nights Cradle Mountain Hotel
- Day 13** Travel north to the coast
1 night Seaview Motel, Stanley
- Days 14-15** Travel along northcoast then inland to remote area for Tasmanian Devil
2 nights Mountain Valley Resort
- Days 16-17** Visit Tasmanian Arboretum
1 night Gateway Inn, Devonport
1 night Grand Chancellor, Launceston
- Days 18-19** Fly Hobart to Melbourne, then onward flight to UK, arriving Day 19

JJ Harrison: Tasmanian Devil
Mark Hanger: Yellow-billed Spoonbill and Magpie Geese, Echidna, Australian Avocets, Landscape
Charles J Sharp: Duck-billed Platypus



VIETNAM



"Vietnam is a charming country full of delightful people, fascinating culture and it's stacked full of excellent and varied wildlife watching."
Sally Nowell

Dates Fri 7 - Sat 22 Nov 2025
Price £6,665
Deposit £1,330 **Single Supp** £500

Leaders Sally Nowell and local guide
Flights Airline tbc, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Ho Chi Minh
Inbound: Overnight, Hanoi-Heathrow
(possible transit stop out and back)
Local airline: Da Lat-Da Nang,
via Ho Chi Minh

Weather Hot and humid in the south, temperatures around 27-33°C. Much cooler in central area, around 15-20°C, some rain likely. The north should be very pleasant, dry and cool, with clear skies and temperatures 20-25°C

Walking Can be up to 5-7 km, sometimes less on forest trails and roads in NPs, on mostly flat terrain, with some steeper walks in the mountains. Some forest trails may be muddy

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to dinner on Day 15

Insects May be some mosquitoes and perhaps a few leeches on forest trails after rain, so insect repellent essential

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

Just some of what we hope to see:

Delacour's Langur	Yellow-crowned Green
Red-shanked Douc	Magpie
Langur	Germain's Peacock-
Buff-cheeked Gibbon	pheasant
Bar-bellied Pitta	Green Peafowl
Blue-rumped Pitta	Siamese Fireback
Blue Pitta	Sooty Babbler
Silver-breasted Broadbill	Black-headed Parrotbill
Black-and-red Broadbill	Orange-breasted
Orange-breasted	Trogon
Trogon	Lowe's Green-pigeon
Great Hornbill	Pied Falconet
Wreathed Hornbill	

Vietnam offers 16 endemic species and subspecies groups found nowhere else in the world. Its range of birds and mammals is sure to thrill us on every day of our trip.

- Discover the amazing wildlife of Vietnam
- Visit some of Vietnam's best National Parks
- See some of the most beautiful and endangered primates in the world
- See an array of spectacular and varied birdlife
- Enjoy the warmth and hospitality of the Vietnamese people
- Journey through the Vietnamese countryside
- Enjoy the expertise of a local guide who will seek out some fabulous wildlife for us

1-2 We take an overnight flight from London to Ho Chi Minh City in the south of Vietnam. Here we meet our local guide and travel to Cat Tien National Park 150km to the north. Cat Tien is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and at 719sq km its one of the largest in Vietnam.

3-5 We spend three full days birding in this amazing wet tropical forest, along excellent trails. Cat Tien National Park contains the largest remaining area of lowland tropical forest in southern Vietnam, with an incredible diversity of birds and mammals. With 348 bird species and 103 mammals, we shall have a busy few days trying to catch up with endangered birds, including Germain's Peacock-pheasant and Green Peafowl, along with other bird highlights which include 17 species of Woodpecker, Blue-rumped and Bar-bellied Pittas, Dusky, Black-and-red and



Banded Broadbills, Orange-breasted Trogon and Great, Oriental Pied and Wreathed Hornbills. The mammal list includes Leopard Cat, Lesser Mousedeer, Gaur and three beautiful primates, Black-shanked Douc Langur, Silvered Langur and Buff-cheeked Gibbon.

6-9 After some early morning birding we leave Cat Tien and head to the cooler climes of the Da Lat Plateau. In the afternoon we start exploring some of the exciting birding sites around the town of Da Lat, situated in the centre of the plateau at 1,500m. The area is famed for its waterfalls, pine forests and cooler temperatures.

We spend three full days birding around Da Lat, including visits to the shores of Ho Tuyen Lam and the montane evergreen and coniferous forests. The Da Lat Plateau is one of the endemic





"I started planning this trip for myself and now I can't wait to share it with Speyside Wildlife guests. We are going to be totally blown away by the spectacular wildlife of Vietnam." Sally Nowell

hotspots of southeast Asia and is home to unique species and subspecies including Annam Minivet, Black-crowned Fulvetta, Collared Laughingthrush, Langbian and Annam Sunbirds and Vietnamese Greenfinch. Other stunning birds we hope to encounter include Red-vented, Necklaced and Annam Barbets, Lowe's Green-pigeon, Rusty-naped and Blue Pittas and Yellow-crowned Green Magpie.

10 We leave Da Lat on a morning flight to Da Nang, via Ho Chi Minh City.

On arrival in Da Nang in the north of Vietnam, we transfer to Son Tra Nature Reserve, where we look for one of Asia's most beautiful primates, the Red-shanked Douc Langur.

Son Tra is a tree-covered mountainous area close to the sea, where once again we shall experience some cooler temperatures. The area is known for its natural beauty and wealth of diversity, but with the number of primates living here, it is often referred to as 'Monkey Mountain'.

11-12 We leave Da Nang and drive north to Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, an area of meandering rivers, huge caves and hillsides covered in lush forest.

We enjoy some afternoon birding and then the following day we enjoy a full day around the wonderful limestone karst landscape of Phong Nha, where birds to look for include range-restricted limestone specialists such as Sooty Babbler and Limestone Leaf-warbler, as well as two endangered

primates, the Ha Tinh Langur and Red-shanked Douc Langur.

13-14 Today, after breakfast we travel north through a tranquil rural landscape and finally pass rice terraces and the traditional stilt houses of the Muong Hill tribe, to arrive in Cuc Phuong National Park, the oldest National Park in Vietnam. There may be some time for afternoon birding on arrival. Once again we are in a rich ecosystem with an incredible mix of plant species, 122 reptiles and amphibians, 135 mammals and 336 bird species.

We then enjoy a full day of birding at Cuc Phuong where specialities include the elusive Red-collared Woodpecker, Pied Falconet, Bar-bellied, Eared and Blue-rumped Pittas, Silver-breasted Broadbill, Ratchet-tailed Treepie and White-winged Magpie.

15-16 Today we leave Cuc Phuong National Park and travel to Hanoi, stopping enroute at Van Long Nature Reserve to take a sampan through flooded rice fields to the dramatic limestone cliffs that are home to a critically endangered endemic primate, Delacour's Langur. Bird species found here include White-browed Crane, Greyish Limestone-babbler and wintering waterfowl.

We continue on to Hanoi and transfer to the airport in good time for our overnight flight back to the UK.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-2** Overnight flight to Ho Chi Minh City, transfer to Cat Tien National Park
4 nights Cat Tien HQ Guest House
- Days 3-5** Three full days exploring the tropical forest areas of Cat Tien NP
- Days 6-9** Transfer to Da Lat plateau, an endemic hotspot, with visits to surrounding areas
4 nights Dreams Hotel
- Day 10** Fly to Da Nang, via Ho Chi Minh City, travel to Son Tra Nature Reserve
1 night Pacific Hotel
- Days 11-12** Transfer to Phong Nha-Ke Bang NP, with a visit to the limestone karst landscape of Phong Nha
2 nights Saigon-Phong Nha Hotel
- Days 13-14** Transfer to Cuc Phuong NP, the oldest NP in Vietnam
2 nights Cuc Phuong HQ Guest House
- Days 15-16** Travel to Hanoi airport for overnight flight back to London

Vietnam Birding: Red-shanked Douc Langur, Forest landscape, Indochinese Green Magpie, Langbian Sunbird, Vietnamese Greenfinch, Black-and-red Broadbill



OUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please take a few minutes to read the following, that often gets overlooked. We pride ourselves on safeguarding not only you on your holidays, but also your payments made to us. In return, we have to comply with certain legal requirements, that means we need some information from you. All this is designed to take the worry and hassle out of your holidays with us.

1. A reservation is made once a booking form, together with deposit, has been received from you and confirmed in writing by us or; when booking through our website, you receive your booking confirmation by email. Provisional reservations may be made by telephone or email, as long as a completed booking form follows within 10 days. For reservations within 10 weeks prior to the commencement of the holiday a completed booking form and full payment must follow within 48 hours of a provisional booking.

2. The balance must be paid not less than 10 weeks prior to the commencement of the holiday. For some holidays the balance due date may be more than 10 weeks before commencement, if we are obliged to confirm final details prior to that point with our agents. The date the balance is payable will be advised by Speyside Wildlife when we confirm your booking. Unless notice of cancellation is received from you prior to the balance payment date, balance monies will remain due and payable.

3. If you book a place in a twin ensuite we shall endeavour to find you a fellow guest to take the other place. If we fail to do so, we shall contact you before the balance is due on the holiday, to let you know how much the single supplement would be to have the room to yourself and keep the booking. If you don't want to pay the supplement, you may cancel your booking and your deposit will be returned.

4. No increase will be made to the prices in respect of these holidays. The price you see is the maximum price you will pay. Speyside Wildlife holidays are fully inclusive of meals, accommodation, transport and entrance fees as detailed. Not included are travel insurance and items of a personal nature. Where guests incur expenditure for telephone calls, drinks etc, this bill must be settled by you, prior to departure. Last minute discounts may be available through the office. Any change in price in respect of these will be detailed on an individual basis, prior to your booking being made.

5. If you cancel a booking the deposit is non-refundable. If you cancel any holiday after the balance due date, all balance monies will be forfeit. Once balance monies have been paid, rather than cancelling, you are at liberty to transfer your booking to another person, provided sufficient notice is given to us and it is possible for us to make the substitution. In this event any transfer costs arising must be borne by you. In addition, you are at liberty to transfer an existing booking to another holiday within the same year; any time up to four weeks prior to the balance monies being due on your existing booking. Again any transfer costs must be borne by you. An administration charge of £50 will be levied on each and any transfer.

6. Speyside Wildlife will do everything possible to ensure that your holiday runs as described. In the unlikely event this is not possible we shall advise you at the earliest opportunity of any significant alterations. Any alterations so made will be of a similar quality to those described. We shall take responsibility should the services detailed in the holiday descriptions not be of a suitable standard. We shall also take responsibility for any acts or omissions by ourselves which result in any loss or injury to you. We cannot however take responsibility for any loss or injury resulting from any act or omission by persons over whom we have no control. No responsibility can be held by Speyside Wildlife for any holiday altered or cancelled due to reasons beyond our control, under circumstances which could not be avoided and where alternative arrangements cannot be made. We do, however, reserve the right to cancel any holiday up to 10 weeks prior to departure, should insufficient reservations have been made. In this instance all monies paid will be refunded in full.

7. In the event of Speyside Wildlife cancelling your holiday prior to commencement all monies will be returned promptly to you in full. If however, in the unlikely event that your holiday is curtailed once it has started, due to circumstances completely beyond our control, we shall return you to the UK and cover any expenses incurred in making that return, but we cannot be responsible for any additional expenses incurred by you, nor are we responsible for the return of any monies for the period of curtailment and so are unable to make any refunds, or pay any compensation for that period. Please therefore ensure you have adequate travel insurance in place to cover any such eventuality.

Speyside Wildlife cannot be responsible for any loss or damage to personal items, or for personal accident or injury. Guests are therefore strongly recommended to take out personal insurance against cancellation charges and other losses or injury. To this end, we have arranged suitable cover. If you wish this to apply, please contact Arthur J Gallagher of Fort William on 01397 705 858. Clients booked on flight-based holidays must have sufficient personal cover prior to travel. If you do not wish to use our insurer, then a copy of the policy you take out must be provided to us.

8. If you have a complaint, would you please notify us as soon as possible in order that the matter can be dealt with promptly.

9. Speyside Wildlife complies with GDPR May 2018. All personal details on our mailing list are held securely on computer. These are automatically deleted after 3 years if no booking is made. Guest information is kept on the following basis: Standing data such as address/email/passport details/dietary/health/annual insurance information etc. will be held on an ongoing basis, unless you ask us to delete any or all of this. Transitory information, such as holiday emergency contacts/single trip insurance details etc. will be deleted once your holiday/experience has finished. No information will be passed to a third party, except our Ground Agents (as applicable). If you object to your details being stored, please inform us and we shall remove them.

10. All clients booked on a non-UK holiday must be in possession of a valid passport. Full details of requirements for a specific holiday will be sent when we confirm your booking.

11. Speyside Wildlife complies with the requirements set out in Statutory Instrument 2018 No 634 'The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018'. All non-ATOL holiday deposit and balance payments made, are secured by way of a Trust Account administered by Masson Cairns & Co, 36 High Street, Grantown-on-Spey, Cairngorms National Park, PH26 3EQ.

12. Speyside Wildlife also holds an ATOL (Air Travel Organisers Licence) No 4259, issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in the name of Suzanne Dowden trading as Speyside Wildlife. All our flight-inclusive holidays are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. If flight timings are not yet confirmable with the airline, the flights section will state TBC. For more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.atol.org.uk/ATOLcertificate. (Civil Aviation Authority ATOL Standard Term 1.1).



Lesley Gadsden, Puffins, The Farnes

A photograph of a red squirrel sitting on a thick, moss-covered tree branch. The squirrel is facing right, looking up. The background shows a clear blue sky and the dense green needles of a pine tree. The tree trunk is covered in rough, reddish-brown bark with patches of green moss.

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY ATOL STANDARD TERMS

When you buy an ATOL protected flight or flight inclusive holiday from us you will receive an ATOL Certificate. This lists what is financially protected, where you can get information on what this means for you and who to contact if things go wrong. (Civil Aviation Authority ATOL Standard Term 1.5)

We, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL Certificate, will provide you with the services listed on the ATOL Certificate (or a suitable alternative). In some cases, where neither we nor the supplier are able to do so for reasons of insolvency, an alternative ATOL holder may provide you with the services you have bought, or a suitable alternative (at no extra cost to you). You agree to accept that in those circumstances the alternative ATOL holder will perform those obligations and you agree to pay any money outstanding to be paid by you under your contract to that alternative ATOL holder. However you also agree that in some cases it will not be possible to appoint an alternative ATOL holder, in which case you will be entitled to make a claim under the ATOL scheme (or your credit card issuer where applicable). (Civil Aviation Authority ATOL Standard Term 1.7A)

If we, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL certificate, are unable to provide the services listed (or a suitable alternative, through an alternative ATOL holder or otherwise) for reasons of insolvency, the Trustees of the Air Travel Trust may make a payment to (or confer a benefit on) you under the ATOL scheme. You agree that in return for such a payment or benefit, you assign absolutely to those Trustees any claims which you have or may have arising out of or relating to the non-provision of the services, including any claims against us (CAA), the travel agent (tour operator), or your credit card issuer where applicable. You also agree that any such claims may be re-assigned to another body, if that other body has paid sums you have claimed under the ATOL scheme. (Civil Aviation Authority Standard Term 1.7B)



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Front Cover - Andrew Dodd: Short-eared Owl
Inside Covers - Heather James: Alladale Landscape
Jane Hope: Red Squirrel
Back cover - Steve Batt: Puffin, Small Copper
Emma Pearcey: Bobolink
Christopher Hutchinson: Black Kite
Sally Nowell: Scottish Wildcat

