

# SPEYSIDE WILDLIFE

Bird and Wildlife Watching Holidays in the UK and Overseas **2026**

Est. 1991







# 2026 holiday schedule

This is our 2026 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](mailto:enquiries@speysidewildlife.co.uk) or phone us on +44 (0) 1479 812498.



Grizzly Bear, British Columbia, Elaine George

## Scotland

1-8 Apr	Highland Easter	pg 22
25 Apr-2 May	Speyside 24/7	pg 24
1-9 May	The Outer Hebrides	pg 26
19-26 Jun	The Northern Highlands	pg 36
27 Jun-4 Jul	Shetland	pg 38
15-25 Jul	Hebridean Island Hopping	pg 44
29 Aug-7 Sep	An Orkney Odyssey	pg 50
12-19 Sep	Fair Isle	pg 54

## England

7-14 Feb	North Norfolk	pg 18
4-11 Jul	Yorkshire in Summer	pg 40
11-18 Jul	The Farne Islands	pg 42
9-16 Oct	Isles of Scilly	pg 56

## Other UK wildlife watching experiences

All year	Evening Mammal Watching Hide	pg 9
Summer months	Badger Photography Hide	pg 10
All year	Wildlife Identification Courses	pg 11
All year	Day Trips in the Cairngorms	pg 12
All year	Tailormade Tours to Suit You	pg 14

## Africa

1-13 Aug	Aardvarks in South Africa	pg 46
22 Oct-6 Nov	Guyana	pg 58

## Asia

30 May-14 Jun	Mongolia	pg 32
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## The Americas

6-20 Sep	British Columbia, Canada	pg 52
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## Europe

18-25 Jan	Andujar Lynx, Spain	pg 16
21-27 Feb	Hungary in Winter	pg 20
16-23 May	The Pyrenees, Spain	pg 28
24-31 May	Olandin Spring, Sweden	pg 30
2-11 Jun	Finland, Birds and Mammals	pg 34
9-16 Aug	Spanish Eclipse	pg 48



# 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.

*"I like the whole experience you provide - the booking process; the admin and wonderful, friendly office support; the good selection of trips on offer; the excellence of all the guides; the fact that everything is included in the price; the overall pace of the trips and the attention to detail and lots more!"* Joan Hunter



Speyside and Mull Easter, 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.

*"Always reliable, communication is excellent. The destinations are always interesting and the holidays well planned, with plenty of variety. The professionalism and knowledge of the guides is exemplary. The administration and support staff are always friendly, helpful and knowledgeable."* Elaine and Colin George

## 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.

*"I trust Speyside Wildlife to run a good trip and to deal with any hiccups that may arise."* Jeanette Seaman

*"We love that it is a 'small' company, they keep the size of the group small and are very environmentally intuitive."*

Andy and Kari Warren



White-tailed Eagles, Fiona Lindop

## 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.



Hyacinth Macaw, Brazilian Pantanal, Jean Brown

## 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	<a href="mailto:enquiries@speysidewildlife.co.uk">enquiries@speysidewildlife.co.uk</a>
Web	<a href="http://www.speysidewildlife.co.uk">www.speysidewildlife.co.uk</a>
Post	Wester Camerorie Ballieward Grantown on Spey Cairngorms National Park PH26 3PR Scotland



# MEET OUR GUIDES

*"Very good. Roy was his usual enthusiastic self and very willing to share his scope and ensure we saw the bird(s) during our days out."*

Norfolk 2025, Linda Fitch



## 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'.



*"The information provided was very useful. We had additional needs and Darren was brilliant with providing extra information for us over email and over the phone."*

Yellowstone Spring 2025, Sian Piper

*Ever calm, brilliant at hearing and especially finding things on the scope. So courteous and attention to detail and well being of group was never too much trouble."*

Spanish Pyrenees 2025, Chris Dring



## 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.



*"Craig's knowledge of the island and his enthusiasm for Mousa and Noss was infectious and both guides made the holiday fun and made us feel safe in their expertise and organisation."*

Shetland 2025, Eliane and Colin George

*"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



*"Once again bird knowledge of calls and his ability to find the birds was exceptional. The knowledge and enthusiasm to inform on history and culture was also exceptional."*

Bhutan 2025, Hazel and Andrew Fardell



## 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.



*"Sally was first class, all activities and plans were explained and we were all consulted when needed."*

The Channel Islands 2025,  
Gill and John Haveron

*"Ailie was very good. She kept us well informed about where we were going each day and what we might see, plus what to take with us. She was an excellent driver."*

Speyside 24/7 2025, Margaret Glasgow



## 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.



*"David was exceptional- He was very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the wildlife and plants."*

Guided Day Out 2025,  
Caryn and Doug Woodburn

*"Harris our guide, was quite knowledgeable and we got answers to all our questions about birds, mammals, plants, insects. He kept us informed about the plans."*

Guide Day Out 2025, Santanu Du



## 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.



Sunset on the Outer Hebrides, John Tidmarsh



# 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](http://www.wildlifeidcourses.co.uk)

# DAY TRIPS IN THE CAIRNGORMS



*"Whether you have a specific list of species you hope to see, or would just like to see a variety of wildlife and scenery, our guides know all the hidden gems and the best spots that make the Cairngorms National Park 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
<b>Just some of what you could see:</b>	
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
<b>Simon Eaves:</b> Crossbill, <b>Colin Scott:</b> Ptarmigan <b>Jane Hope:</b> Slavonian Grebe, <b>Kate Mennie:</b> guests walking, <b>Duncan Macdonald:</b> 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.





*"The Cairngorms and surrounding area is bursting with wildlife throughout the year. Spring brings the woodlands to life, with birdsong from Pied Flycatchers to Crested Tits. In summer we search for special species such as Dotterel and Ptarmigan on the tops of the mountains; with autumn we enjoy young Golden Eagles on the wing in Highland glens and winter takes us to the coast to enjoy thousands of Pink-footed Geese arriving on our shores." 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 specialties 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,

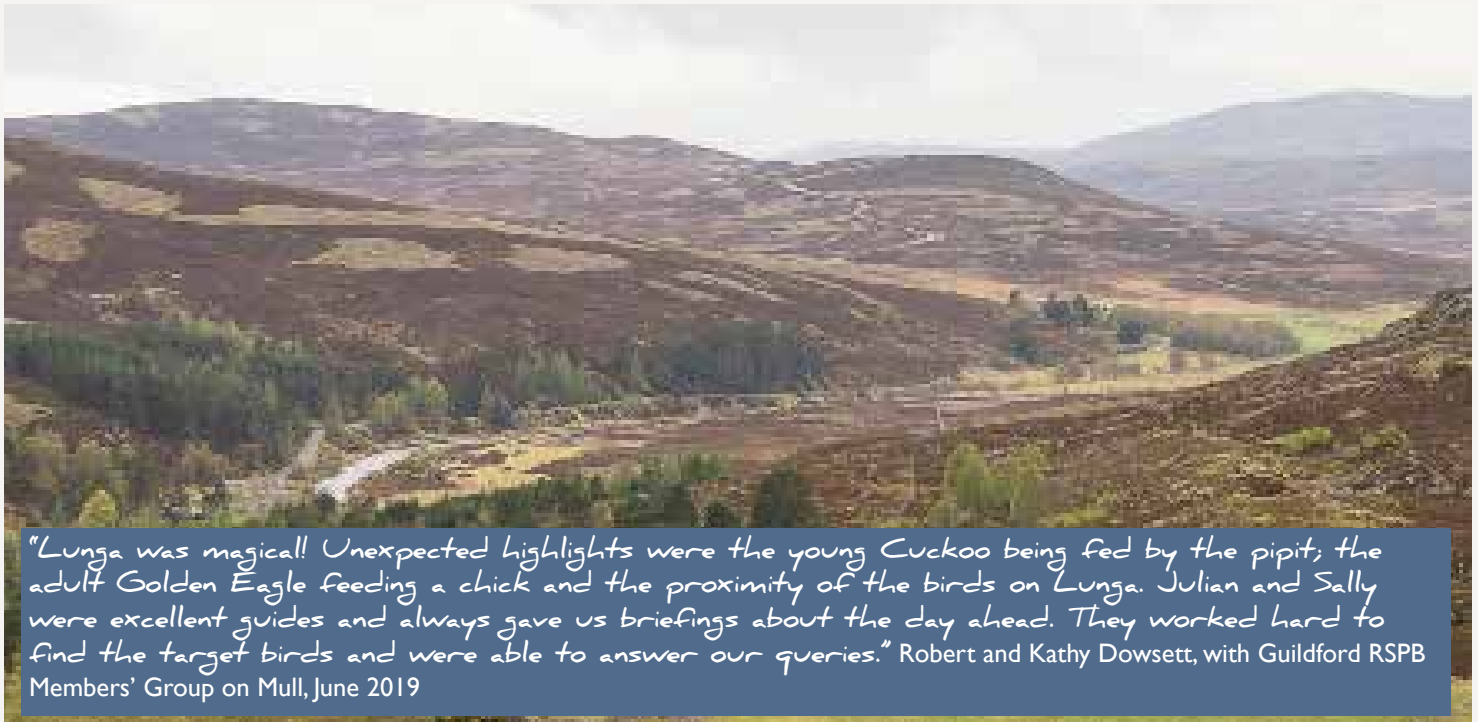
Puffins and Gannets, combined with cetacean watching from land and sea and the night-time experience of Storm Petrels churring on Mousa; walk through the Machair of the Outer Hebrides, alive with the sounds of breeding waders and the distinctive call of the Corncrake, then sea-watch for Long-tailed and 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 18 - Sun 25 Jan 2026
Price	£2,735
Deposit	£545    Single Supp   £150
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Leader	Julian Sykes
Flights	EasyJet or 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
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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

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Day 1</b>    | 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<br>7 nights at La Caracola Hotel Rural |
| <b>Days 2-7</b> | 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                     |
| <b>Day 8</b>    | 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



*"There are just so many birds in Norfolk in winter - both in numbers and variety! I love how we can go from watching scarce birds such as Shorelark, Common Cranes and Hawfinch, to seeing thousands of geese or big flocks of Golden Plover, or the masses of waders at Snettisham. There is never a dull moment."*  
Roy Atkins

Dates	Sat 7 - Sat 14 Feb 2026
Price	£2,395
Deposit	£450    Single Supp £160
Leader	Roy 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	6
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





"I have built in time so we can include the unexpected into the trip and so far that has really paid off. Every year there seems to be something exciting or unexpected. We've seen Red-breasted Goose, Pallid Harrier, Greater Short-toed Lark, Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, Red-necked Grebe, Smew and more - who knows what there'll be next time!" 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 towards the Broads, where we'll look for Common Cranes. A slow drive through an area they often frequent may turn up trumps and nearby is a spot where Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl can also be seen. We may visit Hickling Broad, where elusive Bittern and Bearded Tit occur; though we would need much luck to see them. The raptor roost here is remarkable, with up to 40 or more Marsh Harriers and other species such as Hen Harrier or Merlin are possible. The Common Cranes also roost here if we are happy to stay late.

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  
**Michael Pearcey:** Marsh Harrier  
**Roy Atkins:** Chinese Water Deer, Common Cranes, Hawfinch and Bramblings



# HUNGARY IN WINTER



*"Here's a trip to lift your spirits in the winter months, glorious birding in the wide open spaces of Hungary's National Parks, just a few hours from home."*  
Sally Nowell

Dates	Sat 21 - Fri 27 Feb 2026
Price	£3,585
Deposit	£715    Single Supp £250
Leaders	Sally Nowell and Ecotours guide
Flights	British Airways, scheduled Outbound: Morning, Heathrow - Budapest Inbound: Afternoon, Budapest - Heathrow
Weather	Likely to be dry but cold and we may encounter snow, 0°-10°C
Walking	We'll take short walks to explore each location, generally on easy terrain, but at this time of year we need to be prepared for mud or slippery conditions and possible snow
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 7
Insects	Unlikely to be a problem at this time of year
Accom	Twin and single rooms all ensuite
Group	12

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Great Bustard	Saker Falcon
Ural Owl	Peregrine Falcon
Long-eared Owl	Wallcreeper
Greater White-fronted Goose	Alpine Accentor
Lesser White-fronted Goose	Hawfinch
Red-breasted Goose	Black Woodpecker
Red-crested Pochard	Grey-headed Woodpecker
Snaw	Syrian Woodpecker
Ferruginous Duck	Middle-spotted Woodpecker
White-tailed Eagle	Lesser-spotted Woodpecker
Eastern Imperial Eagle	Woodpecker
Greater Spotted Eagle	Great Grey Shrike
Hen Harrier	Bearded Tit
Rough-legged Buzzard	Penduline Tit
Snow Bunting	Rock Bunting
Brambling	Common Crane

This two-centre holiday takes us to some splendid birding areas - including the famous Hortobagy National Park - a World Heritage Site and International Dark Sky Park.

- Visit three of Hungary's most wildlife rich National Parks
- Raptor spotting, including Saker Falcon, Eastern Imperial and Greater Spotted Eagle
- Huge goose flocks, which may include the stunning Red-breasted Goose
- A short flight from home but in very different and exciting birding habitat
- Visit the world-famous steppe grasslands of Hortobagy
- Witness the amazing communal Long-eared Owl roosts
- Enjoy Hungarian hospitality and savour the local wines

We meet at Heathrow airport and take a 2.5 hour flight to Budapest. We are joined there by our local guide and head south to Kiskunsag National Park on the floodplain of the River Danube.

This is the best area in Hungary for Great Bustards and we shall look for these magnificent birds in the rape fields bordering the protected areas of the Park. This area holds the greatest number of Great Bustards in Hungary, over 700 birds. There will also be many raptors around. We have good chances to see Eastern Imperial and White-tailed Eagle, Hen Harrier and Rough-legged Buzzard. We then continue on to our hotel in the heart of the famous Hortobagy National Park.

2-3 Hungary is a land-locked country with a wide network of fishponds. Hortobagy National Park has a 2,000 hectare system of old fishponds which provide an excellent habitat for high numbers of resident and

migratory birds, it also has the largest semi-natural grassland in Europe. With 800km<sup>2</sup> it is Hungary's largest protected area.

We shall explore the steppe grasslands of the Hortobagy Pusztas, an area of vast horizons and endless vistas and we shall also visit the many fishponds, which provide opportunities for thousands of geese, mainly Greater White-fronted and Greylag Geese coming to roost and drink. We shall scour the goose flocks in search of the rare Lesser White-fronted and Red-breasted Geese.

In winter, White-tailed Eagle numbers are high and they and Saker Falcon hunt the flocks of ducks and geese. We shall listen out for the tell-tale call of Bearded Tit amongst the reeds. It's always a thrill to see these beautiful birds which will hopefully offer us some photo opportunities.

Amongst the reeds there's also the chance of Penduline Tit and the ponds are frequented by







*"Hungary seems very modest about its birding, but there are some great species to be had here, especially in winter! Huge goose flocks and mass roosts of Long-eared Owls - I just can't wait to witness these amazing wildlife spectacles." Sally Nowell*

Pygmy Cormorant, herons and egrets. Small flocks of Common Cranes can be found throughout the winter if the weather is not too cold.

A highlight of our trip will be our visit to some sizeable roosts of Long-eared Owls, a fantastic attraction in the winter. These birds gather in large numbers and with leaves off the trees, we can expect to approach them during the day. Seeing so many close together is a truly spectacular experience. Usually an elusive species, Long-eared Owls en masse gives us the chance to admire the detail of their cryptic plumage. If we are really lucky, we may find a roosting Short-eared Owl amongst the flock.

There will be good numbers of Eastern Imperial Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard and Western Marsh and Hen Harrier. Long-legged Buzzard is also possible and we shall look for wintering Greater Spotted Eagle. Great Grey Shrike, Crested Lark, Fieldfare, Corn Bunting and Tree Sparrow are fairly common and with luck we may find Snow Bunting. Syrian Woodpecker is found in orchards and gardens inside villages and we are sure to catch up with one during our stay.

**4-6** We leave the Hortobagy area and drive north to reach the Bükk National Park. This diverse mountain area borders the Carpathian range and is full of hidden valleys and high peaks up to 1,000m. With endless forest, the Bükk Hills is a perfect area for birding, where ancient beech and oak woodlands are home to owls and woodpeckers, including Ural Owl and Black, White-backed, Grey-headed, Lesser-spotted

and Middle-spotted Woodpecker, plus the elusive White-backed Woodpecker. We'll stroll through picturesque valleys and visit an abandoned quarry to look for woodland birds including Hawfinch. Syrian Woodpecker is found in nearby villages.

Ural Owls inhabit the most remote and undisturbed forests. One evening we may stay out until dark, waiting for one of these secretive birds to appear at the edge of the forest. We shall also have a chance to see Marsh and Willow Tit and the beautiful white-headed race of Long-tailed Tit.

A huge former quarry is a regular wintering site for Wallcreeper. We shall look for this beautiful but elusive bird, carefully checking the huge limestone walls. Alpine Accentors are also found high on the rock faces and Peregrine often visit the quarry.

To top off our time here, we shall visit a local wine cellar, where we'll be treated to an extra special meal and wine tasting by a professional wine connoisseur.

**7** We shall have a final morning of birding around our hotel, before we drive back to Budapest for our flight home.



### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly to Budapest then head to our accommodation near Hortobagy NP  
3 nights St Hubert Lodge
- Days 2-3** Birding in the Hortobagy National Park area
- Day 4-6** Transfer to Bükk Hills  
3 nights Nomad Hotel
- Day 7** We travel back to Budapest.  
Depending on flight times we may include some birding enroute to the airport, before our flight to London

**Ecotours Wildlife Holidays:** Saker Falcon, Greenland White-fronted Geese, Wine Cellar, Lesser White-fronted Goose  
**James Stevens:** Snow Bunting  
**Stephen Batt:** Grey-headed Woodpecker  
**Marion Schneider and Christoph Aistleitner:** Landscape



# A HIGHLAND EASTER



*"This is such an exciting time of year in the Scottish Highlands. We are just beginning to feel a bit of spring sunshine and our summer visitors such as the Ospreys are returning. It's a time of anticipation as we feel the seasons changing."*  
Sally Nowell

Dates Wed 1 - Wed 8 Apr 2026  
Price £2,590  
Deposit £500 Single Supp £400

Leaders Sally Nowell and Ailie Brown  
Weather The weather will be mixed (0-20°C). Expect sun and showers and cold gusty wind on exposed headlands  
Walking Varied, from wide forest tracks, to beaches and rocky shorelines. Walking boots are recommended  
Meals All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8  
Insects Not anticipated this early in the season, but on warm days midges might just pay us a visit  
Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite  
Pickups Transfers from Inverness train station can be arranged departing 5pm returning back to Inverness for 9am  
Group 12

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Long-tailed Duck	Otter
Velvet Scoter	Dipper
Whooper Swan	Goldeneye
Red-throated Diver	Eider
Black-throated Diver	Goosander
Great Northern Diver	Bottlenose Dolphin
Slavonian Grebe	Curlew
Golden Eagle	Golden Plover
White-tailed Eagle	Sand Martin
Peregrine	Scaup
Osprey	Gannet
Bar-tailed Godwit	Red Deer
Greenshank	Red Squirrel
Knot	Mountain Hare
Purple Sandpiper	
Crested Tit	

A fabulous time of year to be in the Scottish Highlands when breeding birds are returning and wintering birds are still present, an array of fabulous Scottish wildlife awaits.

- Visit some spectacular Highland wildlife watching locations
- An excellent raptor list including Osprey and Golden and White-tailed Eagle
- Visit beautiful coasts, rivers, moors and mountains
- Spend time in the Highlands as they 'spring' into life
- A relaxed wildlife holiday with only one early morning and no late nights!
- Birding highlights include Black Grouse, Slavonian Grebe and all three diver species
- Fabulous seafront accommodation

We meet at our hotel in time for dinner and a chat about the coming days. We'll keep the itinerary flexible throughout the week to maximise our birdwatching opportunities in varied habitats.

**2-7** Each day out will take us in a different direction to a different Highland location, chosen to make sure we see the best of Scottish wildlife in the early spring.

We'll explore the rolling farmland, harbours and inlets of the Moray Firth. Seaduck can still be seen, we'll be looking for Long-tailed Duck and hoping for Velvet and maybe even Surf Scoter. At this time of year flocks of Pink-footed Geese overhead mark the turning of the seasons as they head north.



Under bright, wide skies we'll visit the shallow estuaries and beaches along the Cromarty Firth that provide excellent habitat for wildfowl and waders. The mudflats are often strewn with Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit, Knot, Wigeon and Pintail. We shall also search out Purple Sandpipers and busy Sanderling as they shuffle along the strandline on the beaches.

The food-rich waters are important for seals and Otter and there's an excellent chance of Bottlenose Dolphins (the largest in size in Europe!) close inshore, as they hunt for salmon on the turn of the tide. Venturing along the north banks of the Moray Firth, we'll spend time on the beautiful and slightly milder Black Isle, including the picturesque village of Cromarty. This area has one of the driest climates in Scotland. The rolling farmland is interspersed with







*"There may still be snow on the hills, but the wildlife doesn't care. Our local birdlife returns here to make the most of the long summer days, so they are busy getting ready for the breeding season. Eagles will be on their nest sites, divers and Slavonian Grebes will be pairing up with their old or new mates, Goldeneye will be displaying and Crested Tits will be feeding up ready for the demands of their breeding season. It's all systems go!" Sally Nowell*

plantation and scrub. We'll visit the vast, internationally important inlet that is Udale Bay, where waders and seaduck abound.

In sheltered woodland the sound of Chiffchaff fills the air as they announce their return to their Highland breeding territories. Black-throated Divers are back on the lochs after spending their winter at sea and they will be in their superb breeding plumage. We'll listen out for the call of Red-throated Divers particularly, when we visit the glorious west coast where we might manage all three diver species.

Slavonian Grebes are back in their summer plumes and on display in RSPB's Loch Ruthven Reserve. We often get stunning close views of these rare grebes who love this loch, along with the local Ospreys who often fish here.

We shall visit magnificent Glen Affric, taking us back in time to when the Highlands were covered in huge Caledonian Pines. We shall marvel at the expanse of forest here and with luck, may spot the local Ospreys just returning to their breeding sites too. In the Caledonian Pines we shall listen out for passing and feeding crossbills and groups of mixed tits moving through the canopy and of course hope for sight of Crested Tits.

Along the glens we look out for Greenshank, again just setting up territories and overhead we'll be on the lookout for hunting Golden Eagle. Mountain Hare will be hanging on to their white coats for fear that April showers turn to snow on the high ground, so they can maintain their cunning camouflage, making them ever difficult to

spot by hunting eagles and hopeful birdwatchers!

Otter is always a challenge, but we shall be visiting several good sites to try and see these delightful mammals, but it will be all eyes on the lookout. They are shy and incredibly well camouflaged, but always worth the effort, an Otter never fails to thrill.

A spectacular day will be spent driving over to the north west coast of Scotland. We'll try and ensure we have the best day of weather, as the scenery is stunning on this drive. With frequent stops to look for eagles, divers and Otters as well as to drink in the surroundings this is sure to be a memorable day. On the west coast the chances of White-tailed Eagle are good and the views here can be excellent. The beaches are stunning and if we are lucky we might get a close view of Red-throated Divers who like to feed in the sheltered bays.

We shall also head to the Cairngorms National Park via some less familiar stretches of the River Findhorn. We shall venture down to Insh Marshes, which should be busy with wader activity at this time of year, with Curlew, Oystercatcher, Lapwing and Redshank all well into their breeding season. Insh Marshes holds large numbers of Whooper Swans over the winter and some may still be present. A late afternoon visit may, with luck, turn up a Hen Harrier on its way to roost.

We'll also stop off at the River Spey to look for Dipper, Grey Wagtail and Goldeneye who are busy pairing up.

8 After breakfast on our last day we shall say our goodbyes.



## Outline Itinerary

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Day 1    | Arrive in Nairn, 7 nights<br>Golf View Hotel, Nairn  |
| Days 2-7 | An exploration of the Moray Firth, its harbours, estuaries and beaches, Glen Affric, the beautiful west coast, the Cairngorms National Park and local lochs, moors and glens |
| Day 8    | Depart after breakfast   |

**Andrew Hoyne:** Black-throated Diver  
**Sally Nowell:** Glen Affric, Mountain Hare  
**Jane Hope:** Crested Tit, Goldeneye, Slavonian Grebe  
**Colin Scott:** Osprey





*"This spring time holiday has wildlife bursting from every corner of the Cairngorms National Park; from eagles in the mountains and Black Grouse on the moors, to crossbills in the pine forests; finishing each day with the most beautiful, relaxing accommodation."*  
Ailie Brown

Dates	Sat 25 April - Sat 2 May 2026
Price	£2,750
Deposit	£550    Single Supp £370
Leader	Ailie Brown
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	6
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





*"Our central location enables us to explore the coast with ease, in search of dolphins, Otters and divers. A drive to the West Coast with the hope of White-tailed Eagles and stunning scenery, to an evening walk for Beaver, this Highlands holiday sees some of the best places in Scotland." 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

**Bob Longhorn:** Crested Tit  
**Jane Hope:** Lochindorb, Black Grouse  
**Steve Batt:** Red Squirrel  
**Andrew Seal:** Osprey  
**Michael Pearcey:** crossbill  
**Tom Cadwallender:** Pine Marten



# THE OUTER HEBRIDES



"These islands have always held a very special appeal to me, a unique and timeless place away from today's hustle and bustle, where you really can get away from it all. Wonderful habitat full of fantastic birds and wildlife and stunningly beautiful scenery at every turn, on Britain's wild Atlantic edge." Craig Round

Dates Fri 1 - Sat 9 May 2026

Price £2,695

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

Richard Stacey: Corncrake

Alison Cawley: Clachan Sands

Richard Gordon: Red-necked Phalarope, Hen Harrier

Jane Hope: Short-eared Owl, Little Tern

David King: Redshank

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.





"Last year we had brilliant views of Short-eared Owls, along with sky-dancing Hen Harriers and eagles galore! The White-tailed Eagle encounters were simply awesome, including four soaring overhead! Landscapes full of passage waders in stunning summer plumage, the flock of 120 Whimbrel dropping in to bathe right next to us was astonishing and a stunning male Ruff on the tideline will live long in the memory. Add in fabulous views of Otters, good views of Corncrakes, including four birds all craking like mad, daily Cuckoo sightings and Short-eared Owl and White-tailed Eagle seen from our hotel's dining room! I can't wait to go back!" 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 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 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 Premier Inn
- Day 9 After breakfast we say our goodbyes



# PYRENEES



"This week is not only about the stunning high Pyrenees, but also many other areas - from sub-alpine pasture, to the badlands and lowland agricultural fields, which are not as well known. All these areas are just as wonderful in their own way, with a fabulous diversity of wildlife. I cannot wait to return!"  
Julian Sykes

Dates	Sat 16 - Sat 23 May 2026
Price	£2,755
Deposit	£550    Single Supp £200
Leaders	Julian Sykes and Simon Eaves
Flights	EasyJet, scheduled, Speedy Boarding 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 stoney 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 Rock
Short-toed Eagle	Thrush
Golden Eagle	Penduline Tit
Honey Buzzard	Red-backed Shrike
European Scops Owl	Rock Sparrow
Golden Oriole	Alpine Chough
European Bee-eater	Citril Finch
Black Woodpecker	Rock Bunting
Tawny Pipit	Alpine Marmot
Water Pipit	Southern Chamois
Calandra Lark	Southern Green Lizard
Black-eared Wheatear	Pyrenean Brook
Western Orphean	Salamander
Warbler	Lots of butterflies
Subalpine Warbler	and orchids

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 with great cuisine in the heart of the Hecho Valley
- Lammergeier patrol the ridges, along with Honey Buzzard and eagles
- Stunning scenery around every corner
- High mountain day with Alpine Marmot, Alpine Chough and Citril Finch
- Lowland day with wheatears, larks, buntings and more
- Incredible raptors every day, plus night excursion for owls and nightjar
- Reptiles, amphibians, butterflies and wonderful orchids too

Touching down at Barcelona, we can hardly wait to get to our hotel amidst meadows, forest and 2,000m mountain peaks dotted with snow. If time allows, we shall stop enroute at a fabulous wetland, where we should encounter our first Bee-eater, Nightingale and perhaps Penduline Tit. After a long but stunning journey we arrive at our fabulous hotel high in the Hecho Valley, where it's possible to see Lammergeier from the garden, along with Firecrest, Short-toed Treecreeper and Crested Tit!

2-7 One of our favourite days involves a 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 Vulture 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! This is also the place for the endemic Pyrenean Brook Salamander which reside in the glacial pools, rounding off an incredibly diverse outing.

Driving to high alpine passes, the snow-line is our quest and, in such places, around the fabulous stunted krummholz forest, there should be Common Crossbill and Ring Ouzel still singing from the treetops. 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.





"Our hotel isn't just a wonderful building with comfortable rooms, fabulous local cuisine and lovely hosts, it is also surrounded by jaw-dropping scenery and has its own incredible wildlife, either in the grounds or very nearby. I cannot think of anywhere better to start and end our day!" Julian Sykes



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 Orphea Warbler, Rock Thrush and Ortolan Bunting are all possible.

One day we shall head to a 'refugio' high above our hotel, where we hope to find Citril Finches picking seeds off the teasels or grit off the road. We then take a good walk through the beech and pine forest to a sheer cliff face, looking for the Holy Grail of this area - Wallcreeper! This 'crimson winged' beauty has proven difficult in recent years, but it will be a great experience. 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 possibly Southern Chamois grazing on the distant crags. This grassy plateau is also a good place to find Green Lizard, which look resplendent at this time of year.

Add to all this an optional night drive to try and see European Eagle and Scops Owls, plus European Nightjar. We shall listen out for the 'peeping' of Midwife Toad and watch for Soprano's Pipistrelle from the roadside as night falls - even the journey back to the hotel could produce a Roe Deer or Red Fox.

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

**Stephen Batt:** Lammergeier

**Julian Sykes:** Landscape, Green Lizard

**James Shooter:** Citril Finch, Hotel Uson

**Roy Atkins:** Trumpet Gentian, Alpine Marmot



# ÖLAND IN SPRING



"It will be great to catch-up with some of the breeding birds that we don't get to see in autumn - species such as Collared and Red-breasted Flycatcher, Thrush Nightingale, Marsh, Icterine and Barred Warbler, Montagu's Harrier and Red-necked Grebe - and of course there is always the chance of rare migrants!" Roy Atkins

Dates Sun 24 - Sun 31 May 2026

Price £3,070

Deposit £610 Single Supp £320

Leaders Roy Atkins and Jane Atkins

Flights Scandinavian Airlines, scheduled  
Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Kalmar  
Inbound: Afternoon, Kalmar-Heathrow  
(Outbound and Inbound via Stockholm)

Weather Weather can be variable and unpredictable, with temperatures between 10°-20°C. It can be windy and cloudy; rain is also possible, so bring layers and waterproofs

Walking Up to 2-3 miles on easy tracks, which may be muddy after rain

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

Insects There may be a few mosquitoes in sheltered woodlands and marshes, so bring repellent

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Collared Flycatcher	Woodcock
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Caspian Tern
Thrush Nightingale	Little Tern
Barred Warbler	Little Gull
Icterine Warbler	Garganey
Marsh Warbler	White-tailed Eagle
Wood Warbler	Montagu's Harrier
Red-backed Shrike	Nightjar
Tree Pipit	Military Orchid
Red-necked Grebe	Burnt-tip Orchid
Common Crane	Fly Orchid
Avocet	Elder-flowered Orchid
Black-tailed Godwit	Pasque Flower
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Spring Adonis
Temminck's Stint	Öland Rockrose

A relaxed holiday on this delightful island in Sweden, with spring migration and exciting breeding birds such as Collared Flycatcher and Montagu's Harrier - plus carpets of flowers.

- Ottenby Bird Observatory during spring migration - who knows what might turn up!
- Beautiful display of Alvar spring flowers, including island endemics such as Öland Rockrose
- Collared and Red-breasted Flycatcher, Thrush Nightingale, Icterine and Barred Warbler
- A host of orchids - including Green-winged, Burnt-tip, Fly and Military
- Chance to see a ringing demonstration and stunning lighthouse-top views
- Relaxed pace birding and botany, with most sites close at hand and lots to see!
- Susanne and Stephan provide a friendly welcome and amazing food at our great inn

After our flight to Kalmar, via Stockholm, we then drive the short distance over the bridge to Öland and onward to our delightful inn at Gammalsby, where Swifts race around overhead and Susanne and Stephan provide a warm welcome. Stephan is a mine of information about the island and its history, while Susanne's food is simply delicious - they are the perfect hosts!

**2-7** Wooden windmills and burial mounds dot the charming open landscape of this remarkably flat island. We stay just a short distance from the famous Ottenby Bird Observatory, set in meadows, scrub and heathland, surrounded by low boulder beaches and coastal bays. This whole area makes for excellent birding, with geese and waders on the shore, migrants in the bushes and some exciting nesting birds nearby. The extensive oak and birch woodlands here are just beautiful



in spring, with the oak leaves a pale green and the trees alive with birds at this time. Common nesting species such as Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Treecreeper and Nuthatch of the rather paler Scandinavian race, make for a great background, but are joined by much scarcer species such as Collared and Red-breasted Flycatcher, Icterine and Wood Warbler, with a slimmer chance of Common Rosefinch, while Golden Oriole nest in small numbers but are almost impossible to see.

Migrants add excitement to the trip, with the possibility of some great birds including Garganey, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Temminck's Stint, Little Gull, Caspian Tern, Red-backed Shrike and perhaps a Bluethroat or Wryneck - or something much rarer! Some of the passage waders are likely to be in their beautiful breeding plumage - let's hope for







*"There is so much to see here in spring that is not there in the autumn - especially the great mix of orchids that are likely from tiny Burnt-tip to flamboyant Military Orchids and unusual looking Fly Orchids." Roy Atkins*

Grey Plover, Spotted Redshank or Knot at their best! Late May and early June can be the best time for rarities, with species such as Greenish Warbler, Red-footed Falcon and Marsh Sandpiper turning up surprisingly regularly. The Observatory staff regularly check the mist-nets and Heligoland traps and we'll make a visit to watch ringing in action and learn about the research and results of many years of work here, one of the oldest bird ringing stations in the world. Common birds can look so beautiful when seen at such close quarters.

One striking feature of Öland is the Stora Alvaret - a bedrock of limestone that breaks the surface over an area some 40km long and 10km wide in the southern centre of the island. On our autumn trip there is little to be seen here, but in spring we expect fabulous flowers including several species of orchid. Siberian, Arctic and Southern European flowers mingle here with sheets of Meadow Saxifrage, Sticky Catchfly, yellow patches of Öland Rockrose and purple Wild Chives.

We'll look for delicate Birdseye Primrose, the last of the Pasque Flowers, Maiden Pink and pale-yellow Field Loco-weed, tiny Rue-leaved Saxifrage and endemic Öland Wormwood. Plus there will be orchids! Early Purple and Green-winged Orchids can be in huge numbers, with occasional Early Marsh Orchid amongst them. Fingers crossed that Elder-flowered Orchid is still in good flower and we'll search out the pretty yellow form amongst the more numerous purple ones. Delightful Burnt-tip Orchids are scattered here and there, but the star of the show must surely be

the amazing Military Orchids - so very rare in the UK yet surprisingly abundant here.

We'll visit a couple of interesting ancient fortress remains at Isentorp and Gråborg - interesting in their own right, but also with excellent orchid sites where we have chances of Fly Orchid and Sword-leaved Helleborine, plus interesting plants such as Angular Solomon's Seal. Beautiful woodlands nearby hold Lily-of-the-Valley, Solomon's Seal and Herb Paris, however Lady's Slipper Orchid may be difficult as, in many years, it does not produce flowers at the only easily visitable site. We'll also visit a Reserve to see the unusual and rather spectacular Spring Adonis also known as Yellow Pheasant's Eye - with large yellow flowers and feathery foliage.

Returning to birds - elegant Montagu's Harrier may be a fabulous feature of the holiday, as they nest close to our hotel and one evening we shall try for Nightjar with chances of roding Woodcock and a sound track of Thrush Nightingale - a tricky bird to see but we will try. Avocet and Black-tailed Godwit breed here, as do Little Terns, Marsh and Barred Warblers and Red-necked Grebe in their stunning breeding plumage. Common Cranes may be passing through and we'll watch out for resident White-tailed Eagles.

8 After birding in the morning we catch an afternoon flight home, via Stockholm.



### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Fly to Kalmar via Stockholm and transfer to Gammalsby 7 nights Gammalsbygarden Inn
- Days 2-7 Birdwatching, botany and wildlife exploration including visit to the Ottenby Bird Observatory.
- Day 8 Transfer to Kalmar for our flight back to the UK, via Stockholm

**Roy Atkins:** Collared Flycatcher, Stora Alvaret, Burnt-tip Orchid, Montagu's Harrier, Common Rosefinch, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Military Orchid,







*"Mongolia is simply breathtaking. Visiting it is both a chance and an experience of a lifetime, one you will never forget!"*  
Sally Nowell

**Dates** Sat 30 May - Sun 14 Jun 2026

**Price** £9,695

**Deposit** £1,935 **Single Supp** £865

**Leaders** Sally Nowell and Ecotours guide

**Flights** Airline tbc, scheduled  
Outbound: Afternoon, Heathrow-Ulaanbaatar  
Inbound: Morning, Ulaanbaatar-Heathrow  
(outbound and inbound via a transit stop, outbound requires overnight hotel stay)  
Internal: Ulaanbaatar-Khovd-Ulaanbaatar

**Weather** Generally warm or hot during the day, but it can be chilly at night and in the early mornings. Cold weather can be expected at higher altitudes and rain is possible any time. Day temperatures 15-25°C, while night-time temperatures in the mountains can drop significantly

**Walking** From short easy walks to more moderate in the mountains. While looking for Snow Leopard there may be long periods of waiting and scanning. We shall try to limit the walking by using 4x4s to get as close as possible. Depending on the terrain (often rough) however, medium distance walking on uneven, rocky terrain may be encountered

**Meals** All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 16

**Insects** Mosquitoes can be a nuisance, so bring repellent

**Accom** Twin and single rooms/gers(yurts)/chalets. Ensuite at hotels, Terelj Lodge gers and Steppe Nomads chalets, shared facilities at Snow Leopard and Hustai camps

**Group** 12

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Snow Leopard	Lammergeier
Mongolian Gazelle	Siberian Ruby-throat
Saiga Antelope	Black-billed
Tolai Hare	Capercaillie
Corsac Fox	Henderson's Ground Jay
Pallas' Sandgrouse	Long-tailed Rosefinch
Altai Snowcock	Azure Tit
Güldenstädt's Redstart	White-naped Crane
Amur Falcon	Demoiselle Crane
Steppe Eagle	

An array of sumptuous wildlife in a spectacular country full of surprises and experiences you will never forget, but the sight of a Snow Leopard is surely one of those 'stand out' moments.

- Chance to see Snow Leopard without lengthy high altitude trekking
- A holiday that takes you in search of the incredible Black-billed Capercaillie
- Experience some of Mongolia's unique culture
- Overnights in traditional comfortable Mongolian gers
- Visit National Parks in spring, when the place is alive with birds
- Track down mammals you are unlikely to see anywhere else in the world
- A fabulous list of stunning birds including four crane species

**1-4** We take a flight to our transit city stop, where we stay for one night. We then take an overnight flight to Ulaanbaatar, where we land on Day 3. We immediately make our way to beautiful Terelj National Park, with its Taiga forest-covered slopes, rivers and streams and spectacular granite rock formations. Eastern Buzzard is usually seen patrolling the mountains and Lammergeier is also here. Rocky outcrops are home to Rock Thrush and Godlewski's Bunting. There are many woodland birds found in the coniferous forests, including Siberian Rubythroat, Red-flanked Bluetail, Daurian Redstart, Taiga and Dark-sided Flycatcher, Red-throated Thrush, Dusky, Hume's and Two-barred Warbler, Nutcracker and Black Woodpecker.

Black-billed Capercaillie is a secretive and rare bird that can be seen in Terelj in the spring. It requires an early morning start and hike, but the views of these magnificent birds are worth all the effort.



**5-7** After breakfast we drive towards Gun Galuut Nature Reserve. On the way we shall stop at the impressive statue of Genghis Khan. Our ger camp is situated in a beautiful river valley surrounded by steppes and rocky hills, with some varied and exciting wetlands. We'll scan the rocky outcrops in the mornings and late afternoons looking for Pallas' Cat and Argalis. Other mammals in the area include Corsac Fox, Daurian Pika, Mongolian Gerbil and the nocturnal Siberian Jerboa.

The lakes around our camp have many surprises, including Baikal Teal, Falcated Duck, Grey-headed Lapwing and Grey-tailed Tattler. Other shorebirds include Long-toed and Red-necked Stints. White-naped Cranes nest in the marshes and we should find them in family groups along with other crane species, including Common and the daintier Demoiselles. We may see Bar-headed and Swan Goose, Garganey and "Siberian" White-winged (Stejneger's) Scoter.





*"Mongolia is far more than a spectacular wildlife destination, its wide open plains, its endless mountain ranges and its warm and welcoming people make it something very very special indeed!"*  
Sally Nowell



As we drive across the shortgrass steppe we shall be on the lookout for Pere David's Snowfinch. Migratory songbirds include a variety of warblers; Pallas's, Grasshopper, Two-barred, Greenish, Dusky and Thick-billed, as well as Olive-backed Pipit.

Leaving Gun Galuut we drive back to Ulaanbaatar. After checking in to our hotel we go birding beside the Tuul River in search of Azure-winged Magpie, Azure Tit, Long-tailed Rosefinch, White-capped Penduline Tit and Amur Falcon.

**8-13** Today we fly to Khovd then drive to our remote camp operated by a local wildlife protection community. The camp is in the foothills of the Jargalant Mountains. We shall be remote here so facilities are shared and basic, but our local team is keen to provide everything we need, with shower and toilet yurts for men and women and a generator providing hot water.

For the next five days our target is the elusive Snow Leopard! Many observation points can be reached by 4x4 vehicle, or a short walk on almost flat terrain. With our local guides we'll scan areas where animals regularly hunt. We may need patience, but the slow pace allows time to admire the breathtaking scenery, the alpine flora, soaring raptors, Siberian Marmots, Siberian Ibex on the cliffs and we'll look for White-winged Snowfinch, Altai Snowcocks, Saker Falcon, Lammergeier and the stunning G黦ldenstädt's Redstarts.

At night we'll take torches to search for Jerboas. We shall also visit a huge lake and wetland area looking for Dalmatian Pelican, Whiskered and



Gull-billed Terns, Red-crested Pochard and Citrine Wagtail. Enroute we'll also be looking out for the endangered Saiga Antelope. The almost endemic Henderson's Ground Jay will be one of our main targets in the semi-desert area around camp, that is also home to Pallas's Sandgrouse and elegant Goitered Gazelle.

On one evening we hope to organise a short performance of traditional music - a chance to appreciate the region's ancient and rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

**14-15** We leave our camp and drive back to Khovd, to take our return flight to Ulaanbaatar and transfer to Hustai National Park.

The National Park is home to the successfully reintroduced Przewalski's Horse. Short walks along the rolling hills will bring us Mongolian Gazelle, Long-tailed Souslik and Tarbagab Marmot, Pied Wheatear, Meadow Bunting and Lesser Whitethroat. The elm trees along the valleys hold a small population of the elegant Amur Falcon, while Lesser Kestrels hunt on the hillsides and Golden Eagles patrol the skies, but the Przewalski's Horses will definitely steal the show! We then return for our final night in Ulaanbaatar.

**16** We depart Ulaanbaatar on our flight back to the UK, via a transit stop.



### Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-4** Fly to our transit stop for an overnight stay. Then an overnight flight to Ulaanbaatar and on to Terelj NP  
1 night transit stop hotel, tbc  
2 nights Terelj Lodge Ger Camp
- Days 5-6** Drive to our ger camp at Gun Galuut, where we stay in chalets  
2 nights Steppe Nomads Camp
- Day 7** Drive back to Ulaanbaatar  
1 night Mongolica Hotel
- Days 8-13** Fly to Khovd and transfer to remote ger camp for Snow Leopard, Saiga, Ibex and birds  
6 nights Snow Leopard Ger Camp
- Day 14** Fly back to Ulaanbaatar, from Khovd  
Transfer to Hustai NP  
1 night Hustai Ger Camp
- Day 15** Drive back to Ulaanbaatar  
1 night Mongolica Hotel
- Day 16** Fly back to the UK, via a transit stop

**Ecotours Wildlife Holidays:** Snow Leopard, Black-billed Capercaillie  
**Attila Steiner:** Przewalski's Horses  
**Sally Nowell:** Ger(yurt), Group  
**Chris Hutchinson:** Demoiselle Cranes



"I have visited the hides where we'll be mammal watching before and they are fabulous. Seeing Brown Bears up close is amazing, but I have to say it was the Wolverines that stole the show last time – they are so characterful and fun to watch – you'll love them!" Roy Atkins

**Dates** Tue 2 - Thu 11 Jun 2026  
**Price** £6,965  
**Deposit** £1,390 Single Supp £500

**Leaders** Roy Atkins and local guide  
**Flights** Finnair, scheduled  
 Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Oulu  
 Inbound: Evening, Oulu-Heathrow  
 (outbound and inbound via Helsinki)  
**Weather** Long daylight hours and like spring in Scotland we shall have sunshine with cloud and rain possible. Temperatures cool 15-20°C during the day and cold at night 5-10°C  
**Walking** Mostly on easy trails and quite level, but with some steeper uphill walks. Walks up to two miles  
**Meals** All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 10  
**Insects** Although this varies from year to year – there could be mosquitoes, so bring repellent  
**Accom** Twin and single rooms, all ensuite, apart from the one night in the bear hide and the two nights in the Wolverine hide. Possibly one non-ensuite single at Boreal  
**Hide** The group shares hides, which have chairs, bunk beds, sleeping bags/pillows and a compost toilet. We shall need to sit quietly and still throughout  
**Group** 8

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Brown Bear	Rough-legged Buzzard
Wolverine	Terek Sandpiper
Great Grey Owl	Broad-billed Sandpiper
Ural Owl	Red-flanked Bluetail
Hawk Owl	Rustic Bunting
Tengmalm's Owl	Little Bunting
Pygmy Owl	Waxwing
Black Woodpecker	Siberian Jay
Three-toed Woodpecker	Siberian Tit
Hazel Grouse	Pine Grosbeak
Snaw	Blyth's Reed Warbler
Pallid Harrier	Common Rosefinch
Montagu's Harrier	Thrush Nightingale

A ten-day break including a week in search of Finland's best birds and a finale staying overnight in baited hides to see Brown Bears and wonderful Wolverines.

- Owls! Great Grey, Ural, Pygmy, Hawk and Tengmalm's Owl all possible
- Red-flanked Bluetail, Siberian Tit, Rustic and Little Buntings
- Bears!! Overnight in a baited hide for close up Brown Bears
- Eastern species including Pallid Harrier, Terek Sandpiper and Blyth's Reed Warbler
- Wolverines!!! Two nights in a baited hide just to make sure
- Black and Three-toed Woodpecker, Hazel Grouse, Siberian Jay
- Wonderful wetlands, forests, taiga and boglands, with flowers and other wildlife

May and June are busy months for Finnish birds, with numerous migrants returning to their breeding grounds in the forests, fields and wetlands. We cover the areas of Oulu and the vast taiga forests of Kuusamo, before heading to visit hides where Brown Bears and Wolverines await us.

**1-3** Here be owls! Oulu area has an exceptional variety of owls and we shall spend time searching out impressively large Great Grey and Ural Owl, rare Tengmalm's and tiny Pygmy Owl. The forests also hold other specialities including Three-toed and Black Woodpecker, Crested Tit, Black Grouse, Capercaillie and Hazel Grouse - so fingers crossed as this is never an easy habitat.

The coastal areas and wetlands of Oulu attract numerous birds to rest on their migration. We'll visit Liminganlahti - a large internationally important Wetland Reserve with a multitude of shorebirds and ducks. Whooper Swans and Common Cranes



spend their summers here and other breeding species include Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Shoveler and Garganey. Among the numerous migrants that rest here we should see Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Spotted Redshank and Ruff in stunning breeding plumage, while Broad-billed Sandpiper are also here in small numbers.

White-tailed Eagles and Marsh Harriers patrol the shores and meadows, while rare Pallid and Montagu's Harrier are also possible. Terek Sandpiper is a rare breeding bird here, with only a few breeding pairs, but we shall make an effort to try and see them.

Songbirds include beautiful Common Rosefinch and Red-backed Shrike and some "night singers" are also found - we may hear and hopefully see Thrush Nightingale, Blyth's Reed Warbler and perhaps even Corncrake.





*"There are so many amazing birds in Finland – it really is an exceptional place, with prize birds from the north and east - some of which, such as Red-flanked Bluetail, Terek Sandpiper, Siberian Tit, Tengmalm's Owl and others, are almost mythical in status!" Roy Atkins*



**4-6** On our drive to Kuusamo we have chances to see the delightful Little Gull and the stunning Smew, before arriving at our next destination.

An enviable number of eastern and northern species breed here and we shall look for Siberian Tit, Siberian Jay and Black and Three-toed Woodpecker in the extensive taiga forests.

Red-flanked Bluetail occurs at the extreme western edge of its range and although the terrain is mostly easy to walk in, it may involve one or two steep uphill climbs for this stunning little bird.

The vast forests are excellent grouse habitat and we'll make an early morning grouse drive in search of Willow and Black Grouse, Capercaillie and elusive Hazel Grouse. We shall look for the eastern specialties too. Rustic and Little Bunting breed here and the nearby lakes and bogs are home to Red-necked Grebe, Goldeneye, Smew, Wood Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank and Jack Snipe.

Other species may include Brambling and Common Rosefinch in breeding plumage, Bullfinch, Redpoll and Waxwing and we shall cross our fingers for chances of Pine Grosbeak. Golden Eagle and Rough-legged Buzzard breed here and are well worth scanning for as they soar the skies.

In most years, Hawk Owl and Tengmalm's Owl also breed in Kuusamo area. Time allowing, a visit to Oulanka National Park might be possible, where beautiful Calypso Orchids may be in flower.

**7-9** After so much focus on birds we now start to think about mammals. For

the final three nights we intend to swap daytime birding for night-time mammal watching! For our bear-watching we shall be based at the Boreal Centre. The area has good numbers of Brown Bears and there are very comfortable hides from which to see them, which we shall enter around 4pm. Bait is placed in front of the hides to attract the bears up close and we hope to enjoy fabulous photo opportunities. The hides have comfortable chairs, a dry toilet and bunk beds, glass in the windows and holes for camera lenses. We shall spend the night in the hide before leaving first thing next morning and returning to the centre for breakfast. There will be some downtime during the day to catch up on sleep.

On our final two nights we shall visit the famous Wolverine hides at Lieska, checking into a hotel before meeting up early afternoon to head out to the hides. Possibly split between two hides, with a guide in each, we shall again spend the nights in the hides, before returning the next morning to the hotel for breakfast, rest and lunch. This really is a wonderful opportunity to see one of Europe's most difficult and elusive mammals up close and personal.

**10** After breakfast and a chance to freshen up we shall drive to the airport for our flights home.



### Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-3** Arrive in Oulu, via Helsinki, then birdwatching in this beautiful area  
3 nights Finlandia Hotel Airport Oulu
- Days 4-6** Drive to Kuusamo for more birding in the forest and taiga  
3 nights Club Kuusamon Tropiikki
- Day 7** Drive to Viiksimo - overnight in Brown Bear hide (freshen up next morning at Boreal Wildlife Centre, where group have their own rooms)
- Days 8-9** Drive to Lieska - 2 nights in Wolverine hide (freshen up each morning at Hotel Puustelli, where group have their own rooms)
- Day 10** We drive to Oulu airport for our flight back to the UK, via Helsinki

**Finnature:** Wolverine

**Roy Atkins:** Taiga landscape, Hide

**Harri Taavetti:** Great Grey Owl, Hazel Grouse, Three-toed Woodpecker, Siberian Jay



# NORTHERN HIGHLANDS



*"I'm so excited to be doing this holiday, it's such a remote part of Scotland and it's really quite magical. Just the journey to the far north is stunning, so we shall take our time to relax and enjoy the scenery and the wildlife we encounter as we go."*  
Sally Nowell

Dates    Fri 19 - Fri 26 June 2026  
Price    £2,995  
Deposit £550    Single Supp £635

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

## Just some of what we hope to see:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





"16 years ago I was given a book 'Wildflowers of the Northern Highlands of Scotland' with a forward by the then Prince Charles, hailing the area as having "a magnificent range of natural assets, many of which are under appreciated". Ever since then I've been keen to return to the area in summer, to explore some of the flora-rich areas described in the book." Sally Nowell



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### Outline Itinerary

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

**Rob Martin:** Puffin  
**Perri Strawn:** Balnakeil Bay  
**Bill Kunze:** Durness  
**Roy Atkins:** Scottish Primrose  
**Colin Scott:** Great Skua  
**Christine Maughan:** White-tailed Eagle



# THE SHETLAND ISLES



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

Dates Sat 27 Jun - Sat 4 Jul 2026

Price £2,845

Deposit £565 Single Supp £350

Leaders Craig Round and Simon Eaves

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

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

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

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

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

Accom Double, twin and single ensuite rooms

Group 12

**Jane Hope:** Hermaness with Puffin

**Robin Martin:** Storm Petrel, Snipe

**Gill Haveron:** Broch of Mousa

**Andrew Hoyne:** Puffins

**Craig Round:** Red-necked Phalarope, Otter

Just some of what we hope to see:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly into Sumburgh and travel north to our north Mainland base at Busta Voe 4 nights Busta House Hotel
- Days 2-4** Exploration of Unst, including the wild cliffs of Hermaness and the small island of Fetlar, as well as north Mainland and a night visit to Mousa
- Day 5** Travel south to our base on the south Mainland 3 nights Sumburgh Hotel
- Days 6-7** Birdwatching and wildlife exploration of south Mainland, including a visit to Noss, Sumburgh Head and the Viking settlement of 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



# YORKSHIRE IN SUMMER



*"Our Yorkshire summer holiday is all about the simple pleasure of venturing into some of the county's most beautiful countryside, finding quiet locations and seeking out special flora and fauna. I'd come on this holiday even if I wasn't guiding it!"*  
Sally Nowell

Dates Sat 4 - Sat 11 Jul 2026  
Price £2,700  
Deposit £450 Single Supp £650

Leader Sally Nowell

Weather The weather can be changeable, but in the main the temperature should not be below 15 °C and it can be warm or even hot.

Please be prepared, however, for wet and windy weather as well

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 Could be a problem on occasion at this time of year

Accom Double, twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 6

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Gannet	Golden Plover
Fulmar	Lapwing
Puffin	Red Grouse
Guillemot	Yellowhammer
Razorbill	Skylark
Red Kite	Corn Bunting
Honey Buzzard	Tree Sparrow
Peregrine Falcon	Bearded Tit
Hobby	Cetti's Warbler
Turtle Dove	Water Rail
Avocet	Bittern
Barn Owl	Spoonbill
Tawny Owl	Nightjar
Little Owl	
Curlew	

Many folk don't quite know what wildlife diversity Yorkshire has to offer, so we'll take you into its hidden forests, along the magnificent coastline and into the heart of the Yorkshire Wolds.

- Just being in Yorkshire!
- Varied habitats, coast, grassland, reedbeds, forest and moorland
- Comfortable accommodation and great food
- Possibility of Honey Buzzard, Turtle Dove, Bittern, Bearded Tit, Nightjar
- Visit Bempton RSPB seabird cliffs at the peak of activity
- Experience wildlife through the eyes of artist Robert Fuller
- A relaxed holiday exploring the Yorkshire Nature Triangle

We arrive at our hotel in the delightful market town of Beverley for the next three nights, having met at York Station.

Yorkshire is fast becoming one of the best wildlife watching destinations in the country, with the focus on a 'Nature Triangle', which offers some of the best of British wildlife, in particular birding.

We shall be exploring a wide variety of habitats in the week ahead, some superb woodlands and the beautiful North Yorkshire Moors and wetlands with extensive reedbeds, along coastal cliffs and estuaries.

**2-3** The Wolds are an exceptionally beautiful area and home to soaring Red Kites, Peregrine, Corn Bunting and other grassland birds. Barn Owls frequent some of these valleys too, so as we enjoy the gentle rolling landscape captured in David Hockney's paintings of this area, we shall be scanning the hillsides and hedgerows



for these silent and efficient hunters. Along the quiet country lanes and disused railway tracks now reclaimed by nature, we shall be looking out for farmland bird species and butterflies such as the stunning Marbled White, flitting amongst the native plants typical of chalky soils, including numerous orchid species.

From our base here we shall visit RSPB Blacktoft Sands Reserve, a premier wetland with lagoons where Avocet nest on the islands and we'll look out for waders such as the stunning Spotted Redshank. Here there are vast reedbeds with large numbers of breeding Marsh Harriers, so we hope to get some great views of these fabulous birds. Bittern also breed here, so with luck we may spot one amongst the reeds or even get a 'fly past'. We make a special effort to see the elusive Bearded Tit and may glimpse Water Rail along the reed edges. This area is also a favoured hunting ground for Barn Owl.







North Cave Wetlands is just one of over 100 Reserves managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and continues to be developed out of a sand and gravel quarry. With some fantastic and innovative hides, it now hosts a large population of delightful breeding Avocets, but it also provides some varied habitats for warblers, ducks and grassland species. With luck we might catch sight of a Hobby feeding on the plentiful dragonfly population, or Water Vole feeding quietly in the waterways.

We shall explore the town of Beverley and its magnificent Minster, an amazing feat of construction dating back to 1250 AD.

**4-7** We transfer to our comfortable hotel overlooking the magnificent sweep of Filey Bay and Brigg in time for dinner:

Enroute we'll visit Robert Fuller's famous art gallery and fantastic wildlife garden. Robert appears on various TV programmes and happily shares his boundless enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment to his local area, its birds and mammals, some of whom we may well get to observe.

From our base in Filey this is a great time of year to visit the soaring cliffs of the East Yorkshire coast and a highlight of this holiday is undoubtedly our visit to Bempton. We'll view it from the clifftops, host to Europe's largest mainland population of Gannets, which can number over 20,000 in spring and summer; so be prepared to be amazed when we get eyeball to eyeball views of Gannets hanging in the wind!

As well as Gannets we expect to see significant numbers of Razorbills, Guillemots, Fulmar, Kittiwake

and Puffin and in the scrub and grasslands Whitethroats and Tree Sparrows are often also present. Other coastal sites we may visit include Flamborough Head and Hornsea Mere.

If weather permits we may take a boat trip out from Bridlington to view Bempton cliffs from below.

We shall also explore the glorious tapestry landscape of the North Yorkshire Moors. In this moorland landscape we shall be looking for Red Grouse, Golden Plover, Curlew and Lapwing.

In the vast forests we shall look for Honey Buzzard and Turtle Dove, all tricky species to catch up with, but in scenery such as this the hunt can be part of the pleasure. We shall also be making an evening visit to forested areas looking and listening for Nightjar.

**8** After breakfast we shall transfer back to York station where we say our farewells.



## Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Arrive at York Station. For those arriving by car, vehicles can be left at the long stay car park for the week. Transfer to Beverley  
3 nights Beverley Arms Hotel
- Days 2-3** Visit Blacktoft Sands and North Cave Wetlands, as well as the Yorkshire Wolds and the historic town of Beverley.
- Days 4-7** Transfer to our coastal location hotel. Explore East Yorkshire area. Visit Bempton Cliffs, Flamborough Head and the North Yorkshire Moors, plus Dalby and Cropton Forest.  
4 nights at White Lodge Hotel, Filey
- Day 8** After breakfast we travel back to York station where we say our farewells.
- Make your way home, or if you wish, extend your holiday with a weekend in this beautiful city

Chris Piper: Gannets, Whitethroat, Marsh Harrier  
Sally Nowell: Bempton Cliffs, Puffin  
John Robinson: Marbled White



# THE FARNE ISLANDS



"Northumberland is arguably my favourite English county after my native home of Yorkshire. It has it all - a beautiful, unspoilt coastline, historic towns and villages, rugged upland moors and forest. However, it's the three boat trips that make this special, looking for cetaceans and iconic seabirds - just a fabulous combination!" Julian Sykes

Dates Sat 11 - Sat 18 Jul 2026  
Price £2,660  
Deposit £500 Single Supp £400

Leader Julian Sykes

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 We have two tours on and around the Farne Islands, one landing on Inner Farne lasting 2.5 hours and one heading to Lindisfarne lasting around 4.5 hours. There is also another trip to Coquet Island which lasts 1 hour

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 6

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Common Scoter	Barn Owl
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
Little Gull	Lindisfarne Helliborine
Arctic Tern	Pyramidal Orchid
Roseate Tern	
Little Tern	
Puffins - 1000's of them!	

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
- Good chance of cetaceans as we cruise the North Sea
- A short trip 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 Stage 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





*"Our crossing from Seahouses starts well, with a fairly close fly-by Gannet, followed by Guillemot and Razorbill on the water. Then our first Puffins, some swimming around in the water right next to the boat. As we get closer to the sea cliffs, there are literally tens of 1000's of birds. The sight, sound, and smell is a marvellous arrest to the senses."* 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.

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 towards the mighty Kielder Water - the UK's largest reservoir that's surrounded by coniferous forest. On the way we pass through some wonderful countryside overlooked by the iconic Cheviots. We shall make stops in Redesdale to look at the wildlife and visit the interesting Winter's Gibbet before moving on to the Kielder area. 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 Inner Farnes, Lindisfarne and Coquet Island
- Day 8 We say our farewells and depart after breakfast

**James Glover:** Puffins, Arctic Tern  
**Sally Nowell:** Farne Islands, Coquet Island  
**Mary Anketell:** Bamburgh Castle, Kittiwake  
**Julian Sykes:** Grey Seal



# ISLAND HOPPING AROUND THE HEBRIDES



"I love being around the Scottish coast and this holiday gives us plenty of time to explore our coasts from the land and sea. Taking us from island to island, this is a real exploration of some of Scotland's most beautiful and wildlife-rich locations."

Sally Nowell

Dates	Wed 15 - Sat 25 Jul 2026
Price	£4,415
Deposit	£850    Single Supp   £735
Leaders	Sally Nowell & Craig Round
Walking	Coastal walks on uneven terrain of up to two miles. Walking boots recommended, with trainers suitable on some occasions. Collapsible or telescopic walking poles could be useful
Weather	Though usually quite dry, these islands can experience all the seasons during one trip and can be windy (5°-20°C)
Insects	Biting insects can sometimes be a problem, so bring repellent just in case
Meals	All included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 11
Accom	Double, twin, single rooms all ensuite
Group	10

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Golden Eagle	Arctic Skua
White-tailed Eagle	Great Skua
Hen Harrier	Manx Shearwater
Common Dolphin	Storm Petrel
Minke Whale	Cuckoo
Short-eared Owl	Merlin
Great Northern Diver	Peregrine
Red-throated Diver	Arctic Tern
Black-throated Diver	Greenshank
Eider	Grey Plover
Whimbrel	Corn Bunting
Red-necked Phalarope	Twite
Little Tern	Otter
Black Guillemot	Grey Seal
Puffin	Basking Shark

Craig Round: Short-eared Owl  
Sally Nowell: Beautiful South Uist Beach, Machair, Mallaig Harbour, Sea Thrift  
Simon Eaves: Common Dolphin  
Rob Martin: Puffin

Weaving our way slowly by land and sea, our holiday will take us to the Inner and Outer Hebrides, an incredible and diverse wildlife-filled journey.

- Take a private charter to the bird-filled seacliffs of remote Canna
- Visit Rum, where the reintroduction of White-tailed Eagle began over 50 years ago!
- Spend time on unspoilt and deserted white sand beaches with shallow crystal clear waters
- Great chances of cetaceans including Minke Whale and possible Basking Shark
- Huge flotillas of Manx Shearwaters
- Puffins galore on and around the beautiful Shiant Islands
- Unique machair habitat in bloom

1 Our holiday begins with a meal together in Inverness and a run through the trip itinerary.

2 We'll visit Loch Ruthven just when the young Slavonian Grebes should be exploring this beautiful and tranquil loch. It's a real day of lochs; on our journey west we shall stop at sea lochs, watching out for White-tailed Eagles, and the classically beautiful Loch Morar, the deepest loch in Scotland. We arrive in the delightful fishing port of Mallaig, where we shall spend the next three nights.

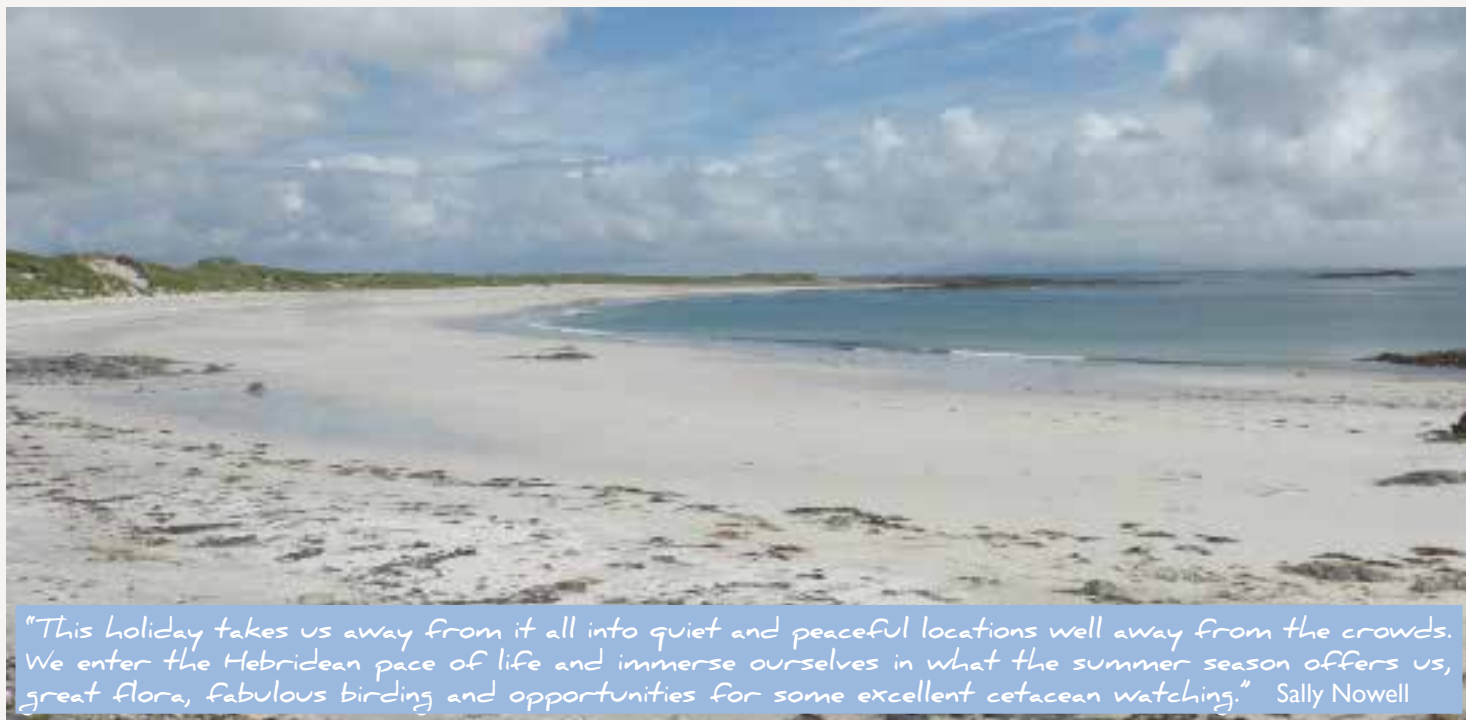
3-4 We'll spend these days aboard our comfortable private charter. Weather permitting, we shall explore two of the most beautiful islands of the Inner Hebrides, Rum and Canna. There is always a sense of anticipation as we gather on deck for some sea-watching - auks, Gannets, skuas, shearwaters and divers are likely, plus a chance of Storm Petrel.

Both islands have some wonderful seabird colonies and there should be plenty of young around. Off the sea-cliffs of Rum we shall look for nesting White-tailed Eagles, whose chicks will be well developed by now. On the water we'll look for large flocks of Manx Shearwater; an incredible 70,000 of them nest on Rum! We'll walk on Rum in search of Otters and wildflowers. Next day heading further out to the isolated island of Canna. Time on the water offers us great chances of Common and Bottlenose Dolphin, as well as Minke Whale and who knows, we might strike lucky and catch up with our local pod of Orca.

Basking Shark are also around, so it will be all eyes on the water and fingers crossed for a flat calm day. On Canna we'll take a short walk listening out for the local Corncrakes, though by now their calls are dimmed as the breeding season is over. Around Canna we visit







*"This holiday takes us away from it all into quiet and peaceful locations well away from the crowds. We enter the Hebridean pace of life and immerse ourselves in what the summer season offers us, great flora, fabulous birding and opportunities for some excellent cetacean watching." Sally Nowell*

the huge sea stacks, often covered in noisy Kittiwakes and float amongst the confiding Puffins, Razorbills and Gulliemots.

**5-7** We leave Mallaig and take a three hour ferry to Lochboisdale on South Uist. Our ferry journeys are further opportunities to look out for wildlife or simply relax, before we arrive on the Outer Hebrides.

We'll start in South Uist, with shallow lochs, rocky headlands, dunes and our first machair. Machair is a Gaelic word meaning fertile, low-lying grassy plain and refers to a unique habitat that is one of the rarest in Europe. July is peak time for many of the species, so we can hope for swathes of colourful flora including the endemic Hebridean Orchid. The wealth of flowers may attract Moss Carder and Great Yellow Bumble Bee.

The Uists are wonderful for raptors and the chance of eagles is ever present, with Short-eared Owls and Hen Harriers often seen quartering the peatlands often seen as we drive.

The beaches and shallow bays of the west coast are fished by Common, Arctic and Little Terns, Great Northern Divers and a very healthy Otter population. Red-necked Phalaropes breed here and we shall take time to find these beautiful birds in their breeding habitat.

**8-10** Today we make our way north to Harris, via Berneray, stopping enroute at the RSPB Reserve at Balranald. This is a stunning location with areas of dunes and machair where Arctic and Little Terns nest on sandy fields and we have a chance of finding Twite, Corn Bunting and wild Rock Doves.

Another ferry journey takes us across to Harris, with its rugged and forbidding mountains. Time permitting we'll visit Rodel and its beautiful 15th century church, built for the chiefs of Clan Macleod, before settling in to our hotel for the next two nights.

From here we shall enjoy an exclusive boat trip to the Shiant Isles, eight miles off Harris in the middle of the Minch. This truly spectacular experience will be an adventure to remember! The islands support over 100,000 pairs of seabirds, including 10% of all the UK's Puffins! We shall work hard to get good views of the seabirds and may see Manx Shearwaters, Common and Grey Seals and perhaps Common Dolphins. There is a healthy population of White-tailed Eagle here, so once again we have great chances to enjoy these magnificent raptors in their element. We shall get stunningly close to rafts of Puffins and other auks, allowing fantastic photography opportunities.

Harris is conjoined to Lewis, but the habitat is very different, with wide expanses of peat moor; wild coastlines and incredible bare-rock scenery. Towards Stornoway on Lewis we shall visit one of the world's great beaches at Luskentyre, which is simply stunning and a superb location for Golden Eagles; Harris has the densest population of these birds in the UK. If time allows we shall to stop at the world famous Standing Stones of Callanish, before heading to the late ferry from Stornoway across the fertile waters of The Minch to Ullapool, providing more chances of Minke Whale, Basking Shark and seabirds. From Ullapool we head back to Inverness for our evening meal.

After breakfast we say our farewells.



### Outline Itinerary

Day 1	Meet in Inverness for overnight stay 1 night at Premier Inn
Day 2	Travel south west to Mallaig 3 nights West Highland Hotel, Mallaig
Days 3-4	Visit Rum and Canna
Days 5-7	Ferry crossing from Mallaig to Lochboisdale, 3 nights Borrodale Hotel, South Uist
Days 8-9	Ferry to Leverburgh. Birding and wildlife exploration around Harris and visit the Shiant Islands 2 nights Hotel Hebrides, Harris
Day 10	Ferry crossing from Stornoway to Ullapool then journey back to Inverness. 1 night at Premier Inn
Day 11	After breakfast we say our farewells



# AARDVARKS IN AFRICA



"As a child I received a present called 'Alvin the Aardvark', a plastic toy with a tube and bulb which could propel its velcro-tipped tongue out to pick up felt ants!! I have wanted to see an Aardvark ever since, so feel very excited that perhaps this is my chance! The other animals might be interesting too - lol." Roy Atkins

Dates Sat 1 - Thu 13 Aug 2026

Price £7,195

Deposit £1,750 Single Supp £450

Leaders Roy Atkins and Birding Africa guide

Flights British Airways, scheduled  
Outbound: Overnight Heathrow-Johannesburg  
Inbound: Overnight, Johannesburg-Heathrow  
Internal, local airline: Johannesburg-Bloemfontein, Upington-Johannesburg

Weather It's winter in South Africa and the nights can be really chilly, sometimes even dropping below freezing. However, the days are typically sunny and warm and can even reach 20°C

Walking Most of the trip is from the vehicles and there is limited walking, although there are short walks in some areas that can be over rocky terrain, such as at Augrabies Falls National Park

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

Insects As it is mid-winter and the nights are cool, we don't expect any mosquitos or biting insects, but you may still wish to bring repellent

Accom Twin and single rooms all ensuite

Group 12

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Aardvark	Karoo Korhaan
Aardwolf	Blue Korhaan
Cheetah	Northern Black Korhaan
Lion	Pygmy Falcon
Bat-eared Fox	African Paradise Flycatcher
South African Porcupine	Burchell's Sandgrouse
African Wildcat	Red-necked Falcon
Black-footed Cat (hard)	Lanner Falcon
Mountain Zebra	Verreaux's Eagle-Owl
Brown Hyena (hard)	Kori Bustard
Striped Polecat	Sociable Weaver
Meerkat	Ludwig's Bustard
Verreaux's Eagle	Ostrich
Blue Crane	Acacia Pied Barbet
Common Ostrich	
Double-banded Courser	

South African adventure with fabulous birding and iconic mammals such as Lion and Cheetah, also focusing on unusual species such as Aardvark, Aardwolf, African Wildcat, Porcupine and Bat-eared Fox

- Aardvark, Aardwolf, African Wildcat, South African Porcupine and maybe Brown Hyena
- Visit the Karoo Desert, Kalahari Desert and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park
- Bat-eared Fox, Striped Polecat, South African Hedgehog and Meerkat!
- Big cats may include Cheetah and Caracal, as well as black-maned Lions
- Visit Augrabies Falls Park with rocky scenery and beautiful waterfalls
- Fabulous bird list including a variety of bustards and stunning Verreaux's Eagle
- A South African adventure with a difference - including some desert specialities

**1-2** We fly overnight to Johannesburg then on Day 2 take our onward flight to Bloemfontein, before travelling to our lodge in the Karoo. The Karoo is a beautiful area of semi-desert with fascinating flora and fauna and many special species. While on this trip we hope to see some of the mammals and birds you might expect on a typical African wildlife holiday, but we are also aiming to find a few of the more unusual species that rarely get a mention.

**3-4** Exploring the Karoo habitat, a great variety of special birds of this area are possible, including highlights such as Karoo, Blue and Northern Black Korhaans, Ludwig's Bustard, Spotted Thick-knee, as well as stunningly beautiful Blue Cranes - surely one of the most elegant birds in Africa! Amongst a variety of raptors, perhaps the highlight may be impressive Verreaux's Eagle



and we also hope for a variety of larks and pipits, Rufous-eared Warbler, Cape Penduline Tit, Karoo Prinia and more.

There will of course be mammals and some of the more unusual are best seen on the night drives that make this place particularly special. It is here we shall have our first chances to look for that fascinating animal the Aardvark. This enigmatic creature is more active at night and we'll focus on trying to see them here, as they search for ants and termites using their powerful claws to dig them out. There are plenty of other interesting animals too. South African Porcupine is very likely here and we'll be watching out for African Wildcat, South African Hedgehog, South African Springhare, Striped Polecat and Bat-eared Fox amongst many others. As many of these shy mammals can be difficult to find, we have included plenty of night drives in







*"Some of us have been privileged to see many of the iconic African mammals before, so the real excitement of this trip may be seeing more unusual species such as Caracal, Aardwolf, Bat-eared Fox and Striped Polecat, but I've still to see Cheetah, so fingers crossed there are new species for everyone! With plenty of night drives planned – who knows!" Roy Atkins*

open vehicles in this trip to improve our chances. None of them are guaranteed, but this trip offers among the best chances to see them.

**5-6** Moving on to Marrick Game Reserve we shall explore this fabulous area of unspoilt savannah thornveld, with more wildlife and further chances to see some of those species already mentioned, including Aardvark and with luck, species such as Black-footed Cat. This small spotted cat famously has the most astonishing success rate in hunting and though elusive, we shall try to see them here. We may see a variety of antelopes, including some that are bred for conservation, such as Roan and Sable Antelopes (but some also for 'responsible hunting', a way of raising money to help with conservation and running the Reserve). Birds may include Common Ostrich, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Marico Sunbird, Common Scimitarbill and Black-faced Waxbill amongst many others.

As well as desert there are also wetlands where we may see African Fish Eagle, a variety of ducks, Spur-winged Goose and plovers such as Crowned Lapwing and Kittlitz's Plover. The Reserve is excellent for larks, warblers, various chats, Secretary Bird and delightful Double-banded Courser.

**7-8** The famous waterfall at Augrabies National Park is spectacular, with a 56m drop into an 18km gorge, amongst stunning rocky scenery scattered with Quiver Trees home to the colourful Broadley's Flat Lizard. The rocks hold Klipspringer, Rock Hyrax and we hope to

see Giraffes and, with a lot of luck, maybe even the scarce Mountain Zebra. Birds are varied and include Pale-winged Starlings among the giant boulders, Acacia Pied Barbet, Dusky Sunbird, Lanner Falcon, with more chances of Verreaux's Eagle hunting those hyraxes. The beautiful rocky scenery here is a real highlight too!

**9-11** Our final destination is Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, where red sand dunes in the inhospitable desert form a magnificent backdrop for wildlife viewing. Animal numbers are lower than in more classic safari destinations, but the open terrain makes for very good viewing. Predators are the Park's biggest attraction and may include Leopard, Cheetah, Spotted and Brown Hyena (with luck) and smaller species such as Bat-eared Fox and Cape Fox - and delightful Meerkats!

Lions are numerous and males are known for their spectacular black manes. Amongst the birds here we hope to see raptors such as Bateleur, Black-breasted Snake Eagle, Pygmy Falcon and Pale-chanting Goshawk, plus Verreaux's Eagle Owl, Kori Bustard (the largest flying bird in the world), Secretary Bird and Burchell's Sandgrouse, plus smaller species such as Ashy Tit, Violet-eared Waxbill, Fairy Flycatcher, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and many more.

**12-13** We drive to Upington, from where we fly to Johannesburg for our onward flight back to the UK, arriving on Day 13.



#### Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-4** Overnight flight from London to Johannesburg. Then onward flight to Bloemfontein and transfer to Khoisan Karoo Conservancy  
3 nights New Holme Nature Lodge
- Days 5-6** Drive to Marrick Game Reserve to explore the transition to the Kalahari  
2 nights Marrick Safari Lodge
- Days 7-8** Visit Augrabies National Park  
2 nights Augrabies Falls Rest Camp
- Days 9-11** Visit Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park  
3 nights Twee Riverien Rest Camp
- Days 12-13** Drive to Upington for flight to Johannesburg for onward flight home, arriving in the UK on Day 13

**Tertius A Gous:** Aardvark, Gemsbok, Meerkats, Blue Korhaan, Aardwolf  
**Callan Cohen:** Cheetah, Caracal



# SPAIN ECLIPSE



*"The thought of standing with the jagged mountains of the Picos de Europa N.P. in the background, as we hopefully watch a complete Solar Eclipse build up to its peak, is a thrilling image indeed! It will be fascinating to see whether the surrounding wildlife react to this unexpected darkness!"*  
Julian Sykes

Dates	Sun 9 - Sun 16 Aug 2026
Price	£2,995
Deposit	£595    Single Supp £300
Leaders	Julian Sykes and Simon Eaves
Ferry	Brittany Ferries, Outbound: Portsmouth-Bilbao, departs late Day 1, arrives morning Day 3 Inbound: Bilbao-Portsmouth, departs afternoon Day 7, arrives evening Day 8
Weather	Likely to be warm to hot, with temps ranging from 18°-30°C, though more pleasant in the mountains. Thunderstorms are a possibility
Walking	Mostly easy on level ground, but some steeper walks of up to two miles on more stony terrain in the mountains
Meals	All included from breakfast on Day 2 to lunch on Day 8
Insects	Mosquitos can be a nuisance in a few places so bring repellent
Accom	Twin and single rooms/cabins all ensuite
Group	12

### Just some of what we hope to see:

Snowfinch	Red-backed Shrike
Wallcreeper	Iberian Grey Shrike
Alpine Accentor	Water Pipit
Alpine Chough	Cory's Shearwater
Golden Eagle	Balearic Shearwater
Short-toed Eagle	Sooty Shearwater
Goshawk	Snow Vole
Honey Buzzard	Southern Chamois
Griffon Vulture	Fin Whale
Egyptian Vulture	Sperm Whale
Rock Bunting	Cuvier's Beaked Whale
Crag Martin	Long-finned Pilot Whale
Middle Spotted	Common Dolphin
Woodpecker	Striped Dolphin
Black Woodpecker	Bottlenose Dolphin
Short-toed Treecreeper	butterflies, dragonflies,
Firecrest	reptiles, amphibians and
Western Bonelli's	more!
Warbler	

## Exciting chance to witness a total solar eclipse, plus a great range of birds, mammals and butterflies in the stunning Picos de Europa - plus whales, dolphins, seabirds and no flights!

- Fingers crossed for clear skies to witness the incredible Solar Eclipse
- Fantastic diversity of wildlife from the sea to the high mountains
- Overseas trip with no flights!
- Great time of year for cetaceans and seabirds on the crossing
- Alpine Accentor, Snow Finch, Wallcreeper, Alpine Chough
- Stunning butterflies in the meadows and dragonflies in the streams
- Raptors patrolling the mountains with vultures and eagles galore

**1-2** We meet in the evening in Portsmouth for our ferry across the Bay of Biscay to Bilbao. The sea floor of the Bay of Biscay has steep drop-offs, where upwellings attract whales, dolphins and seabirds, so we'll make sure we are out on deck at the best times, with good chances of Fin Whale – the second largest mammal in the world - plus scarcer species such as Sperm and Sei Whale have been encountered.

Common and Striped Dolphins can be in large pods and birds could include Cory's, Manx and Balearic Shearwaters, along with Gannets, skuas and if we are lucky, a European Storm Petrel or Sabine's Gull. Cetaceans are most likely in the evening as we pass over the shelf, so during quieter periods you can relax with a coffee from the restaurant or chill out in one of the lounges.



**3** Arriving in Bilbao we head towards our lovely hotel in the heart of the wonderful Picos de Europa, Spain's first ever National Park. As we head away from Bilbao we shall stop for some birding enroute at the Santana Marshes, where we might find Spoonbills and a few waders. We shall reach our hotel and after settling in, we may take a short walk with chances of Red-backed Shrike, Black Kite, Griffon Vulture and Short-toed Eagle, plus a few butterflies in the late afternoon sunshine.

**4-6** Day 4 is Solar Eclipse Day!!! With the eclipse not until the evening, we'll have plenty of time to enjoy our day wildlife watching. We shall either have an early evening meal, or perhaps take food with us to a good vantage point, so we can watch the spectacle from the start. With fingers and toes crossed for clear skies we'll provide suitable glasses for watching the show.







*"We may need to make an extra effort to be out early and back late to make the best of the wildlife in the cooler parts of the day - but there is always so much to see, be it on land or on the water as we cross the Bay of Biscay. The combination of terrific montane wildlife, along with seabirds and cetaceans, will make this 'eclipse' holiday an incredible experience - plus there are no flights." Julian Sykes*

We hope to witness the 'diamond ring' effect and maybe solar flares around the edge of the sun's disc during totality, which lasts around two minutes.

Our other two days will be spent visiting some of the best sites in and around the National Park. Not far from our base we shall visit woodlands of Pyrenean Oak, Beech and Chestnut, where Middle Spotted and Black Woodpeckers, Honey Buzzard, Short-toed Treecreeper, Wryneck, Firecrest and Western Bonelli's Warbler are all possible. Red-backed Shrikes and Sardinian Warblers are likely in the hedgerows and butterflies such as Provencal and Silver-washed Fritillary, Sooty Copper, Cleopatra and Marbled and Grizzled Skippers occur.

A big highlight will be the day at Fuente De, with great views from the cable car ride to the top of the mountain, some 800m higher. Walking in incredible scenery we'll search for those sought after montane species, Alpine Accentor, Snowfinch and Wallcreeper, on the high rock faces and scree slopes, along with Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Water Pipit and Alpine Chough. The local form of Pyrenean Chamois, known as Rebeco, graze the alpine meadows, Snow Voles scurry amongst boulder scree and glacial pools may hold Alpine Newt – a speciality of this area. Butterflies at this altitude include the endemic Gavarnie Blue, one of the scarcer species we are likely to find. Piedmont Ringlet, Berger's Clouded Yellow and Chalkhill Blue are likely, though surprisingly common is the incredibly adaptable Small Tortoiseshell!



On one day we'll head up to the village of Bejes within the beautiful Hermida Gorge, where Chalkhill Blue, Rock Grayling, Large Wall, Blue-spot Hairstreak and Pearly Heath are all possible amongst the flowers. Egyptian Vultures, Golden, Short-toed and Booted Eagles and Alpine Swifts pass overhead, while on the slopes we may find Alpine and Red-billed Chough, Black Redstarts, Crag Martins and Cirl and Rock Buntings. We may even head to San Glorio Pass, known for Apollo butterfly that may be on the wing.

Mid-August is also a very good time for European Wildcat and you never know our luck in finding one hunting for mice and voles in the freshly cut meadows.

**7-8** Our ferry from Bilbao leaves around lunch time and we'll pass over deep trenches about an hour offshore, some over 3000 metres deep! It is here that we stand our best chance of one of the rare and poorly understood beaked whales. Cuvier's Beaked and Northern Bottlenose Whales can be encountered here, as well as more Striped and Common Dolphins. We'll relax on deck scanning for cetaceans, shearwaters and other seabirds, hoping to reach the drop-off area before it is dark - or at least a beautiful sunset!

By early morning we'll be rounding the tip of France and moving into the English Channel. If the sea is calm we'll be on the lookout for Basking Shark, Minke Whale, Bottlenose Dolphin and Harbour Porpoise, while seabirds may include Great Skuas, Fulmars and Gannets. We arrive back in Portsmouth around 17:30.



#### Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-2** Ferry leaves Portsmouth around 22:00. Wildlife watching in Bay of Biscay from the ferry - 2 nights onboard ferry
- Day 3** Arrive Bilbao and drive to hotel in Picos de Europa - 4 nights Hotel del Oso
- Days 4-6** Solar Eclipse on Day 4. Explore the mountains and valleys of Picos de Europa, including a cable car ride
- Day 7** Board our ferry in Bilbao. Rest of day looking for cetaceans and seabirds in Bay of Biscay - 1 night onboard ferry
- Day 8** Arrive in Portsmouth around 17:30

**Julian Sykes:** Solar Eclipse, Chamois  
**Susan Ripley:** Picos de Europa  
**Stephen Batt:** Alpine Accentor  
**Mary and David Braddock:** Sooty Shearwater  
**Simon Eaves:** Common Dolphin  
**Tim Drew:** Wallcreeper



# 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 29 Aug - Mon 7 Sept 2026  
Price £3,425  
Deposit £650 Single Supp £400

Leader Craig Round

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 6

## 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.



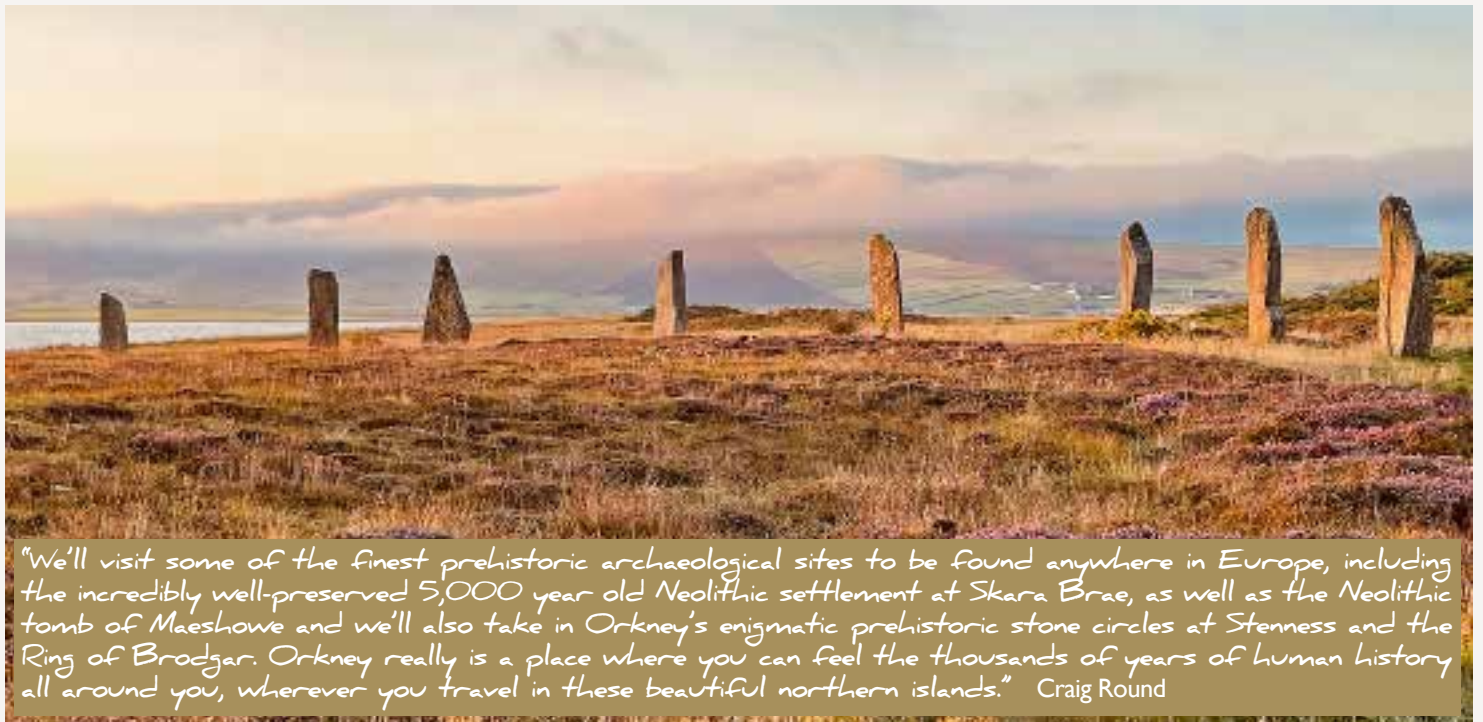
The ferry passes the impressive cliffs of Hoy and we shall get a view of the Old Man. We land at the picturesque harbour of Stromness, where the great author George Mackay-Brown lived.

**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







*"We'll visit some of the finest prehistoric archaeological sites to be found anywhere in Europe, including the incredibly well-preserved 5,000 year old Neolithic settlement at Skara Brae, as well as the Neolithic tomb of Maeshowe and we'll also take in Orkney's enigmatic prehistoric stone circles at Stenness and the Ring of Brodgar. Orkney really is a place where you can feel the thousands of years of human history all around you, wherever you travel in these beautiful northern islands." Craig Round*

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<br>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<br>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<br>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



# BRITISH COLUMBIA



"I feel very lucky to be returning again in 2026, on this extraordinary tour to Vancouver Island. This is arguably my favourite wildlife holiday of my 20+ years of guiding - 'ticking all the boxes', with each day producing some fabulous wildlife, stunning scenery, along with several awesome excursions on the water!" Julian Sykes

Dates	Sun 6 - Sun 20 Sept 2026
Price	£7,250
Deposit	£1,450    Single Supp    £1,200
Leaders	Darren Rees and Julian Sykes
Flights	British Airways, scheduled Outbound: Morning, Heathrow-Vancouver Inbound: Overnight, Vancouver-Heathrow
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





*"Who could resist the potential for seeing Black Bears searching for food along the tideline from a gorgeous verandah, at a stunning rural lodge, or the chance of a breaching Humpback Whale amongst innumerable seabirds, or a pod of resident Orca moving in unison through the steely-grey Pacific Ocean. Be mesmerised as we pass through New World fjords, where salmon head to their spawning grounds, running the gauntlet of Grizzly Bears looking for an easy meal – just superb. This is just a taster, being there is so much better!" Julian Sykes*



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

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

# FAIR ISLE



"Approaching the immense west cliffs on Fair Isle always takes your breath away. Seeing migrant chats, warblers and flycatchers dwarfed by the huge cliffs, is one of the unique sights of this magic isle at migration time!"  
Craig Round

Dates	Sat 12 - Sat 19 Sep 2026
Price	£2,995
Deposit	£500    Single Supp £280
Leaders	Craig Round and Simon Eaves
Flights	Loganair, scheduled Outbound: Morning Aberdeen-Sumburgh Inbound: Afternoon Sumburgh-Aberdeen
Weather	Cool to warm, with changeable weather, expect sun and squally showers, may be windy (8°-15°C)
Ferries	We shall travel from Shetland to Fair Isle by a small ferry with the potential for rough seas. Please be prepared for this
Walking	Walking is generally very relaxed and easy, with walks of up to 3-4 miles on roads and rough grassland
Meals	All included from lunch on Day 1 to lunch on Day 8
Insects	Biting insects will not be a problem
Accom	Comfortable twin and twins as singles ensuite accommodation.
Group	10
Just some of what we hope to see:	
Sooty Shearwater	Ortolan Bunting
Storm Petrel	Mealy Redpoll
Wryneck	Lapland Bunting
Citrine Wagtail	Snow Bunting
Richard's Pipit	Short-eared Owl
Olive-backed Pipit	Long-eared Owl
Bluethroat	Merlin
Yellow-browed Warbler	Spotted Flycatcher
Barred Warbler	Pied Flycatcher
Lanceolated Warbler	Redstart
Red-backed Shrike	Ring Ouzel
Great Grey Shrike	Jack Snipe

A special welcome to the migration stepping stone, with plenty of common migrants and a good chance of something really rare turning up - an addictive island!

- A dot in the seas between Orkney and Shetland
- Plenty of pleasant walks amidst cliffs and crofting land
- The last of the season's lingering seabirds and skuas
- Famous for bird migration and rarities in easterly winds
- Traditional knitwear, local music, crafts and boat building
- All based at the comfortable Bird Observatory
- Fantastic scenery and possibly the Northern Lights

| We fly into Sumburgh on Shetland and take the ferry, the 'Good Shepherd' across to Fair Isle, or 'Fridarey' as it was known in old Norse, meaning 'the peaceful isle'.

Leaving Shetland behind, we pass under the imposing cliffs of Sumburgh Head, before heading out to sea towards Fair Isle some 25 miles to the south, with the possibility of seabirds such as Great and Arctic Skuas, Sooty Shearwater, Fulmar, Gannet, Puffin and Storm Petrels jinking low over the waves, plus cetaceans such as Minke Whale, Harbour Porpoise or White-beaked Dolphin. As the isle comes into view, we pass close to the North Lighthouse perched on top of the cliffs, arriving into the shelter of the harbour at North Haven, then make our way up to the Observatory, where we become part of the wider island community for the week.



2-7 The Observatory enjoys stunning coastal views across to the seabird cliffs of Sheep Rock and the headland of Bunes, with the beaches of the North and South Havens only a short walk away. Here, flocks of passage waders such as Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin and Turnstone can be seen feeding, whilst the Observatory gardens, vegetable patches and plantation will often hold migrant warblers, pipits, chats and flycatchers. This allows you to birdwatch from the comfort of the Observatory's lounge, dining room or even your bedroom! Their minibus will take us to the far reaches of the island, but we'll also enjoy plenty of walking, so be able to explore every nook and cranny, from seabird cliff, to cultivated garden and crofting land.

At dawn we can accompany one of the wardens checking the Heligoland traps, such as the famous





*"Always one of the highlights of my birding year, Fair Isle is one of 'the' best places to witness bird migration at first hand. It can be a magnet for birds from all points of the compass at migration time and every day as you set out from the Observatory, there's always a sense of excitement, as you never really know what incredible birds might turn up! As well as the avian riches, it's a place where you really can leave the hustle and bustle of modern life behind, a unique island, rich in history, with stunning coastal scenery and simply fantastic wildlife!" Craig Round*



Gully and Double-dyke, to discover which migrants may have arrived and we'll be closely involved with the study and ringing of any birds back at base, allowing us the privilege of seeing these incredible migrants up-close in the hand - and be sure not to miss any rarities caught.

Fair Isle is one of 'the' best places to experience the thrill of bird migration and if the winds are right, we'll explore the gardens and crofts in the gentler south of the island, as well as the wild and dramatic west cliffs, with their numerous sea stacks and the moorland and hill ground in the north. On the sheer cliffs of the north and west, migrants can be found seeking the smallest patches of shelter, such as the stands of Angelica.

The meadows and fields can hold feeding waders, including Black-tailed Godwit, Ringed Plover, Dunlin, Lapwing, Golden Plover and Ruff and with migration reaching its peak, in the right weather, the island can be alive with common migrants around every corner; birds dotting the top of every dry-stone wall and fence line! Regular migrants include Tree Pipit, Redstart, Spotted and Pied Flycatcher, Whinchat, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, Blackcap, Sedge and Reed Warbler and numerous Willow Warbler and Northern Wheatears, plus hoped for rarities such as Bluethroat, Pallid Harrier, Red-backed Shrike, Wryneck, Common Rosefinch, Oortolan and Lapland Bunting and Citrine Wagtail and warblers such as Marsh, Arctic, Greenish, Booted, Subalpine, Icterine, Savi's and Barred.

With the island's grapevine, news of rarities will reach us anywhere - the Observatory minibus fly's a red flag to let everyone on the island know of a mega-rarity! Or we might just find that Arctic Warbler, Greenish Warbler or Citrine Wagtail ourselves! We are at the mercy of the winds, but in quieter periods, we shall soak up the atmosphere and enjoy the fascinating history, geology and culture of this wonderful island. The rocky coast around the South Harbour and Lighthouse often holds passage waders including Purple Sandpiper, Knot, Turnstone, Sanderling, Redshank, Dunlin and Curlew, whilst Rock Piptits, Northern Wheatears, White Wagtails and Fair Isle race Wrens can be found foraging amongst the seaweed on the beaches, with small flocks of Eider and Black Guillemots just offshore.

We'll also check some of the island's freshwater pools, marshes and wetlands, where scarcer waders can sometimes be found, such as Little Stint, Wood Sandpiper, Green Sandpiper, Pectoral and Buff-breasted Sandpiper; along with flocks of newly arrived Wigeon and Teal and both Common and Jack Snipe. Some lingering Gannets and Fulmars may still be on ledges on the towering sandstone cliffs in the north, while breeding Great Skuas and maybe late breeding Arctic Skuas are still present on their territories on the higher moorland.

8 We return by ferry to Sumburgh for our flight back to Aberdeen.



### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1 Fly Aberdeen to Shetland then take the 'Good Shepherd' ferry across to Fair Isle passing Sumburgh Head enroute
- Days 2-7 Birdwatching and wildlife exploration of the island from our base at the comfortable Fair Isle Bird Observatory
- Day 8 Return back to mainland Shetland for our flight back to Aberdeen from Sumburgh

**Craig Round:** Juvenile Barred Warbler, Bluethroat, Thrush Nightingale  
**Cath Wright:** Fair Isle  
**David Constantine:** Jack Snipe  
**Mary Braddock:** Spotted Flycatcher  
**Simon Eaves:** Pied Flycatcher



# 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.

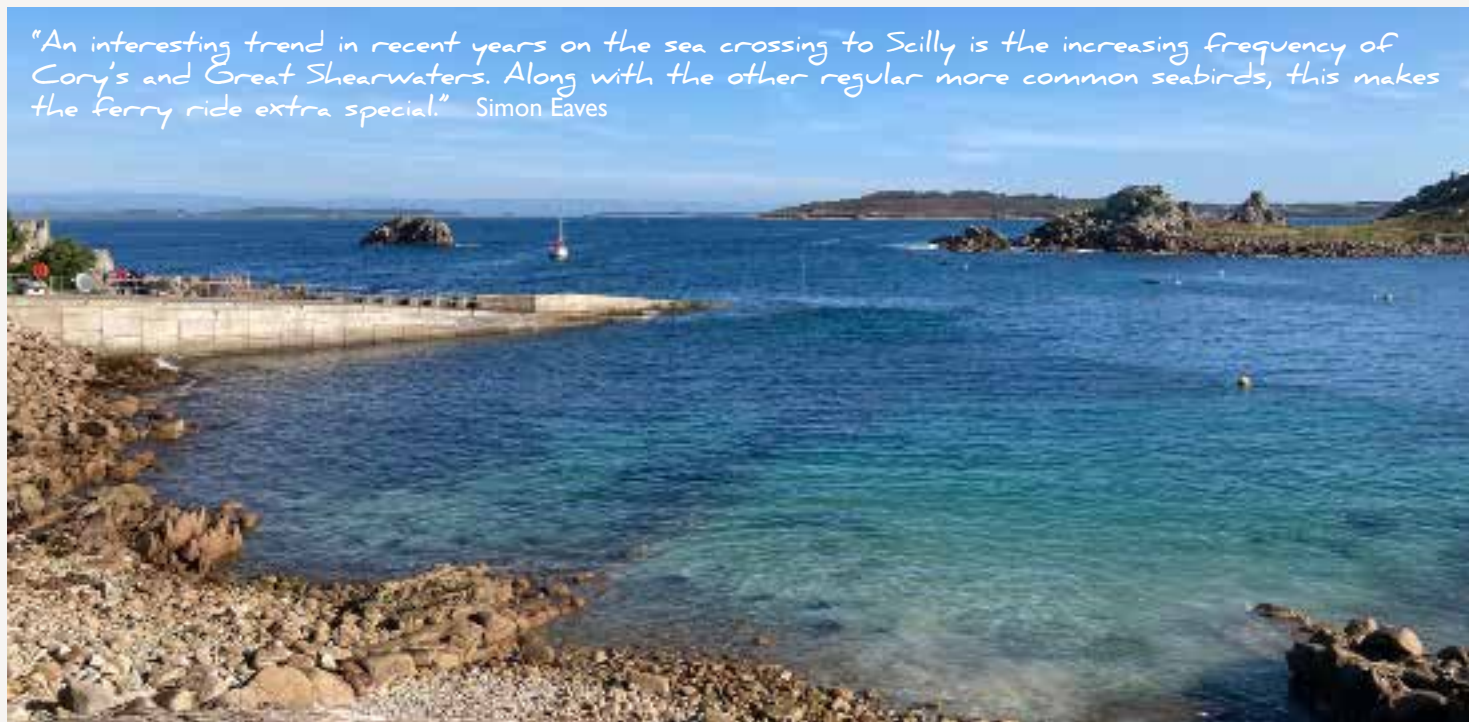
**2-7** The islands have recorded over 400 species during their birding history, having a reputation as being a must visit place for all British birders. Autumn migration will be in full swing

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





"I can't wait to return to magical Guyana – virgin rainforest that stretches forever and friendly, community-owned English-speaking lodges, to help us explore this wonderland." Darren Rees

**Dates** Thu 22 Oct - Fri 6 Nov 2026

**Price** £9,995

**Deposit** £2,500    **Single Supp** £700

**Leaders** Darren Rees and local guides throughout

**Flights** British Airways, scheduled  
Outbound: Morning, Gatwick-Georgetown  
Inbound: Overnight, Georgetown-Gatwick (1hr stopover St Lucia out and back)  
Internal, local airline: Georgetown-Kaieteur Falls-Fair View, Lethem-Georgetown

**Weather** Tropical, so very warm with temps around 30°C and high humidity. We visit before the rainy season, but there may still be showers

**Walking** Well maintained forest paths. Some inclines for both Canopy Walkway and Turtle Mountain trails

**Agility** A reasonable level of agility will be required, as guests will be travelling in game vehicles, boats and small charter planes

**Meals** All included from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 15

**Insects** May be a nuisance, particularly in the evenings, so bring repellent

**Accom** Twin and single rooms/cabins all ensuite, some accommodations are more rustic, but with excellent locations

**Group** 10

## Just some of what we hope to see:

Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock	Sun Parakeet
Guianan Red Cotinga	Blood-coloured Woodpecker
Guianan Puffbird	Crimson Fruitcrow
Black Curassow	Hoary-throated Spinetail
Scarlet Ibis	Black Caiman
Zigzag Heron	Giant River Otter
Jabiru	Giant Anteater
Orange-breasted Falcon	Capybara
Harpy Eagle	Red Howler Monkey
Hoatzin	Golden Frog

Staggering untouched rainforest, wetlands and savannah, with Amazonian wildlife and endemics from the Guianan Shield – English speaking Guyana is South America's hidden gem.

- Boat trips for Hoatzin, Caiman, kingfishers, Scarlet Ibises and more
- Untouched rain forest wilderness, home to rare Harpy Eagle and Jaguar
- Land of Giants! Giant River Otter, Giant Anteater, the biggest rodent and spider
- Fabulous Iwokrama Canopy Walkway for toucans, macaws, cotingas and more
- Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock and lots of endemics
- Kaieteur Falls – highest single-drop waterfall in the world
- Beautiful community-owned English-speaking lodges

**1-4** Fly to Guyana and transfer to the historic Cara Lodge in Georgetown. Next day fly over miles of unbroken rainforest, landing at Kaieteur Falls, the world's highest free-falling waterfall. This is a special landscape for birds such as Red-legged Honeycreeper, Cliff Flycatcher and Orange-breasted Falcon. Our guesthouse is next to the falls and in the evening we'll watch hundreds of White-tipped Swifts dive into the torrent to roost behind the water.

We'll rise early next day for beautiful Cock-of-the-Rock and the unique Golden Frog, which spends its life in the giant Tank Bromeliads. Later we fly to Fair View and the vast Iwokrama Rainforest, at the heart of one of the last untouched tropical forests - The Guiana Shield. Exploring trails around our lodge, birds include Capuchin Bird, Chestnut-rumped Woodcreeper;



Spotted Puffbird, Spot-tailed Antwren, Guianan Toucanet, Guianan Red Cotinga and Strong-billed Woodcreeper:

The following day, our excursion is to Turtle Mountain - a trail winds to its summit at 935ft for breathtaking views over the forest canopy. Here are Green Aracari, White Bellbird, or a fly-by of one of five types of eagles – plus it's a great location for Red Howler monkeys. After dark we'll cruise the river, searching for caiman (4 species) and birds such as Spectacled Owl, Long-tailed Potoo, Zigzag Heron or Blackish Nightjar.

**5-6** Leaving the river lodge, we drive the highway that is one of the best places to see the elusive Jaguar. There'll be myriad bird species of the forest edge, as well as mammals including Agouti and Tapir. Environs at our next lodge hold a "must see" bird, the Crimson Fruitcrow. Black Curassows regularly stroll by and the gardens attract over ten species of hummingbirds.





*"A dazzling array of toucans, macaws, cotingas and tanagers, with the added extra of elusive anteaters, Giant River Otter, Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock and endemics. Bring it on!" Darren Rees*



Using the Iwokrama Canopy Walkway, 30m above the ground, early morning we may see Rufous-throated Sapphire, Green Aracari, Pygmy Antwren and Guianan Streaked-Antwren, with cotingas, macaws or toucans as well. White-winged Potoo emerge after dark – and six cat species are found nearby!

**7-8** After breakfast we transfer to the heart of the Pakaraima Mountains. Species here include Red-legged Tinamou, Painted Parakeet, Dusky Parrot, Lilac-tailed Parrotlet, Rufous-throated Sapphire, Guianan Puffbird, Northern Slaty-antshrike and Finsch's Euphonia. The Harpy Eagle, known as the 'flying wolf', is found near Surama – fingers crossed for a view of this amazing bird of prey.

**9-11** Leaving early, we'll drive to Ginép Landing for a bird-filled boat journey to our next lodge: Karanambu. A former cattle ranch, it was home to Diane McTurk, conservationist and world-renowned expert on giant otters.

Early morning we'll explore the grasslands, home to Giant Anteaters. With luck we'll find one of these 6' long animals excavating from a termite mound – we've seen mothers carrying offspring on their backs.

We'll explore the maze of lagoons along the Rupununi River for Giant River Otters, scanning exposed riverbanks for Capybara and Black Caiman. Quiet backwaters are also home to Agami Heron and the legendary Arapaima, the largest scaled freshwater fish. As dusk falls, an evening walk offers seven species of nightjar and Double-striped Thick-knees.



**12-13** We depart early for Karasabai, in search of the rare Sun Parakeet, another Guianan Shield Endemic. Along the way we'll look for Pinnated Bittern, Jabiru, Maguari Stork, Aplomado Falcon, Great Black-hawk and Black-crested Antshrike. After lunch we'll look for Orange-backed Troupial, Plumbeous Seedeater, Rufous-browed Peppershrike and Yellow-breasted Flycatcher, before reaching Manari Ranch.

From Manari we'll explore the Ireng River, home for two more endemics – Hoary-throated Spinetail and Rio Branco Antbird and we are sure to encounter other species such as Capped Heron, Muscovy Duck and Pale-legged Hornero. After lunch at Lethem we'll board our flight to Georgetown, returning to Cara Lodge.

**14-16** Early next morning, we head to the Mahaica River, a rich wetland with flocks of egrets, herons, ibis and Guyana's national bird, the Hoatzin. The river offers a rare chance to see the range-restricted Blood-colored Woodpecker.

Back in Georgetown, we'll take an afternoon cruise along the Demerara River and as the sun sets, we'll enjoy flocks of brilliant Scarlet Ibis, Snail Kites, herons and egrets, as they fly across the sky and settle into the mangroves.

We'll enjoy our last morning at the Botanical Gardens for Gray Hawk, Pearl Kite, Carib Grackle, macaws and parrots. We may see Yellow-chinned Spinetail, Silver-beaked Tanager and Golden-spangled Piculet. After lunch we'll transfer to the airport, arriving back in the UK on Day 16.



#### Outline Itinerary

- Day 1** Fly London Gatwick to Georgetown  
1 night Cara Lodge
- Day 2** Fly Georgetown to Kaieteur Falls  
1 night Kaieteur Guesthouse
- Days 3-4** Early morning birding (Cock-of-the Rock), then fly to Fair View. Wildlife watching in the Iwokrama rainforest  
2 nights Iwokrama River Lodge
- Days 5-6** Wildlife watching enroute. Atta canopy walkway and environs  
2 nights Atta Rainforest Lodge
- Days 7-8** Wildlife watching enroute to Surama and surrounding areas  
2 nights Surama Eco-lodge
- Days 9-11** Transfer and exploration of wildlife at Karanambu (excursions by boat and land) - 3 nights Karanambu Lodge
- Day 12** Wildlife watching enroute  
1 night Manari Ranch
- Days 13-14** Early morning birding then fly from Lethem to Georgetown. Birding Mahaica wetland and an evening cruise  
2 nights Cara Lodge
- Days 15-16** Morning birdwatch at Botanic Gardens then fly Georgetown to London, arriving Day 16

**Darren Rees:** Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, Kaieteur Falls, Black Currawong, Giant River Otter, Jabiru  
**Roy Atkins:** Hoatzin

# 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 in Ardrossan on 01294 274 629 (direct dial for Angela Marriott 01294 242 747). 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 and must cover the full cost of the holiday.

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/ATOL\\_certificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOL_certificate). (Civil Aviation Authority ATOL Standard Term 1.1).



Hen Robinson, Toucan, The Brazilian Pantanal



A sunset scene with a bird's nest on a tree branch. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with scattered clouds. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a tree branch with a bird's nest is visible. The nest contains two small, dark birds. The overall mood is serene and natural.

## 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 - Luis Segura: Harpy Eagle  
Inside Covers - Chris Barker: Sunrise in Oland  
Andi Probert: Jabiru sunset, Brazilian Pantanal  
Back cover - Steve Emperor Moth, Gannet in flight  
Jane Atkins: Cock of the Rock  
Karen Warren: Green Honeycreeper