

DAY TRIPS IN THE CAIRNGORMS



"Day guiding is a great way to show off the spectacular Cairngorms National Park and its wildlife. Whether you are looking for something specific, or a broad introduction to the area, we use our local knowledge to help you find the species you are looking for."
Sally Nowell

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	£125 half day if booked online (£175 if booked manually via our office) £195 standard day if booked online (£250 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	Biting midges occur in 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 Cairngorms, where terrain is more steep and uneven, so walking boots are essential. Your guide will discuss walking options with you beforehand

Just some of what you could see:

Red-throated Diver	Dipper
Black-throated Diver	Ring Ouzel
Slavonian Grebe	Crested Tit
Golden Eagle	Scottish Crossbill
White-tailed Eagle	Snow Bunting
Osprey	Red Squirrel
Merlin	Mountain Hare
Peregrine	Pine Marten
Ptarmigan	Badger
Black Grouse	Otter
Red Grouse	Red Deer
Capercaillie	Roe Deer
Dotterel	Bottlenose Dolphin

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



"A day with one of our guides makes a great gift for anyone with an interest in Scottish wildlife. I've taken people out for a special birthday gift, a retirement present or simply as a family treat. We try and cater for everyone's needs, whatever age or level of interest." Sally Nowell



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

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

Woodland Walks - Local woods provide tranquil locations to look and listen for Wood Warbler, Pied Flycatcher and other woodland birds in the spring. Peregrine breed on crags and 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. We'll combine this habitat with other lowland woods throughout the Strath.

Highland Glen - Visit a spectacular local glen



for Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Peregrine, Merlin, Ring Ouzel, Red Deer, Mountain Hare and Wild Goats. 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 - Early morning in the spring is the time to see Black Grouse in the foothills of the Cairngorms, but 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.

River Spey Walk - During spring or early summer the famous 'River Spey' will be teeming with birdlife; Dipper, Goosander, Grey Wagtail, Goldeneye, Common Sandpiper and feeding Swifts, Swallows and martins, with a chance of Otter. In summer the riverbanks can be good for butterflies, including Dark Green Fritillary. In winter, the river provides a calm and tranquil place for Red-breasted Merganser, Goldeneye and other resident birds.

Moorland and Moray Firth - Explore vast open moorlands and 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. We can also include a visit to nearby woodlands for crossbills and Crested Tits, plus dragonflies and butterflies in the summer.

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 to look specifically for Capercaillie 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.