

# Autumn in the Cairngorms

Naturetrek Tour Report

26th Sept – 2nd October 2021

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Coal Tit



Red Squirrel



Pine Marten



Below Cairn Gorm

Report compiled by Jessica Turner  
Images courtesy of Christine Holt



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Tour participants: Jessica Turner and David Tattersfield (Leaders) with 10 Naturetrek clients

## Summary

The Cairngorm mountains and surrounding areas hold a number of special mammal and bird species, including Red Squirrel, Pine Marten, Crested Tit and Red and Black Grouse, all of which were enjoyed by group members, during our exploration of forest and moorland. Our visits to the coast on the Black Isle and the Moray Firth also gave great spectacles, especially of the Pink-footed Geese. Good company and warm Scottish hospitality contributed to a great week.

## Day 1

**Sunday 26th September**

### Travel; Insh Marshes

It was a very warm, sunny but windy day when Jessica collected three of the group from Inverness Airport at midday and two from the railway station at 12.30pm. We left the town and headed south down the A9, seeing a Common Buzzard and marvelling at the magnificent views of the mountains that unfolded before us. We turned off at Kingussie, where we stopped for a comfort break and decided to have our lunch at the picnic tables there. There were lots of families on bicycles completing a 'bikeathon' event.

We then drove the short distance past the remains of the 18th-century Ruthven Barracks and on to Insh Marshes RSPB where we met the other guests on this holiday. From the well-named Lookout hide we saw two Roe Deer, Mallard, Teal and Grey Heron, while the highlight was a ring-tail Hen Harrier which was seen briefly. A Coal Tit was busy on the feeders, and Blue Tit, Great Tit and Chaffinch put in an appearance. The other two hides gave different perspectives, and we added Raven and a skein of Greylag Geese that appeared to be heading for Loch Insh. As we walked, we saw a Robin, while Great Spotted Woodpecker and Goldcrest were heard. There were several different fungi growing under the Silver Birch, including Brown Birch Bolete, Fly Agaric and Pestle Puffball. Buff-tailed Bumblebees were enjoying the flowers of Devil's-bit Scabious, and a Black Darter dragonfly was seen.

As we drove up to Nethy Bridge, those in the minibus saw a group of Red Deer and a Red Squirrel ran across the road. After a light shower, the colours in the evening sunshine were beautiful. We soon arrived at the Nethybridge Hotel, our base for the week. After time to settle in, we met in the lounge, where we were joined by David, our second leader, whose flight had been slightly later. After discussing sightings and plans, we moved to the dining room for an excellent meal, after which we were ready for our beds.

## Day 2

**Monday 27th September**

### The Black Isle

The forecast rain appeared overnight, and we woke to a 'dreich' morning of steady rain, but with the promise of a better afternoon. There was no point in rushing so, after a delicious breakfast, we left at 9.30am to head northwards towards the coasts of the Black Isle. We drove steadily, enjoying the woods and villages we passed through. Once over the North Kessock bridge over the Moray Firth, we turned east through Munlochy. We stopped overlooking Munlochy Bay, where a convenient shelter meant most of us could watch from the dry,

although the rain was lighter than earlier. A flock of Pink-footed Geese were in a stubble field, while down on the mud of the bay we could see Curlews, Oystercatcher and plenty of Common Gulls. Moving on, a Buzzard was sitting in a ploughed field. We stopped in the coastal village of Avoch to use the facilities and scan the shore. Here were Cormorant and Shag side by side, allowing comparison, as well as Grey Heron, Herring, Great Black-backed and more Common Gulls. A Black-throated Diver was feeding just offshore, and a Slavonian Grebe was spotted. Further out were groups of Razorbills and juvenile Gannets flew by.

We had a brief stop for picnic supplies in Fortrose, where House Sparrows kept us company, before driving down to Chanonry Point, which extends into the Moray Firth and is a good spot from which to see Bottlenose Dolphins. An active collection of diving juvenile Gannets and gulls gave us hope that dolphins might appear but, sadly, none were seen, although the back of a rolling Harbour Seal got the pulses racing for a while! A Harbour Seal just offshore watched us watching plenty of Razorbills and some Guillemots, a handsome Red-breasted Merganser close by, and Turnstones living up to their name on the shingle beach. We had our lunch in the warmth of the minibuses, as the drop of temperature from the previous day was dramatic (about 10°C), watching blue sky appearing from the west. A Sandwich Tern flew past, and a couple of Swallows were feeding in the shelter of the jetty.

In vastly improved weather, we drove over to the Cromarty Firth on the north side of the Black Isle, noting more Swallows and stopping at Udale RSPB, where there was another welcome hide. The rising tide was pushing the birds towards us, and we marvelled at the sheer number and diversity of ducks and waders. Black-tailed Godwits with a group of Dunlin were resting close by, flocks of Redshank were active, as well as Curlew, Wigeon, Teal, Shelduck, Mallard, good numbers of Pink-footed Geese and some Canada Geese. However, our attention was initially drawn by a fine Osprey perched on a large rubber tyre and, in the other direction, a female Peregrine Falcon perched on a rock, both seen well through the telescopes. The highlight of this time though, was when 1000+ Pink-footed Geese appeared from the east in noisy skeins and landed just in front of us, whiffing down on to the declining area of mud – a real spectacle and soundscape! A Whooper Swan also flew in.

Eventually we moved on a short way, passing through Jemimaville and stopping at another small car park. From here we could see good numbers of Slavonian Grebes, the sun catching their white underparts, distant Eider, again the drakes glowing in the sun, more Mergansers, Mute Swans, Greylag Geese and very impressive flocks of Greater Scaup. As we moved on to get better shots of the Scaup, a shower on the far side of the firth produced a brilliant rainbow over the lines of drilling rigs 'stacked' in the firth, awaiting decommissioning. We drove along the coast to the village of Cromarty before we turned for home. The Buzzard (the same bird?) was still sitting in a field, while a Roe Deer, lit by the evening sun, was spotted on the woodland edge near Nethy Bridge.

We arrived back at 6pm, with time to relax before meeting to discuss the day and enjoy another delicious meal. We agreed that it had been an excellent first full day in the field.

## Day 3

**Tuesday 28th September**

### Strathdearn

We woke to a very different morning, of bright sun. Our destination today was Strathdearn, the remote and beautiful valley of the upper reaches of the River Findhorn, one of the longest rivers in Scotland, which rises in

the heart of the Monadhliath mountains. On the way we saw several Roe Deer and stopped to photograph the historic bridge over the river at Carrbridge, which dates from 1717. It looked beautiful in the morning sun, with the peaty waters of the river below. We took the A9 over Slochd before dropping down to Tomatain at the beginning of the valley, where we stopped to buy picnic makings. A Red Squirrel was seen in the trees by the car park, and Coal Tit and Mistle Thrush showed well.

Moving on, we started on the narrow road up the glen, initially past trees and buildings, with Red Admiral butterflies on a Buddleia in a cottage garden. As the valley opened out before us, we scanned the hills for large birds of prey, and a call came from the back of the minibus that there were two birds to the right, one much larger than the other: the smaller one was a Buzzard, the larger a Golden Eagle. We stopped and looked, but inevitably, another vehicle came up behind and although a layby was close, by the time we reached it, the eagle had disappeared from view. Despite careful scanning, it did not reappear, although we saw more Buzzards and Red Kites, a flock of Mallard and a single Goosander in flight. The wind was now strong, blowing down the glen, and a Common Hawker dragonfly was almost blown into us.

We drove further up, enjoying the dramatic scenery and the light on the hills. Having met a group of birders who had just seen a White-tailed Eagle, we stopped to scan again, but unsuccessfully, as the bird had disappeared. We started looking at the plants, noting the abundant and varying forms of Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), some very prostrate, others with trunks. We also compared Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) with Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), both of which still had a few flowers. Meadow Pipits were flying about.

We stopped at the top car park, near Coignafeam Old Lodge, where the public road ends and from where we walked further up the valley. A Meadow Pipit sat on a wire, showing well. The weather had become showery, but the rain was light and soon blew through. Everything seemed very quiet, apart from Meadow Pipits and a few Chaffinches in the Hoary Birches (*Betula pubescens*). We noted the orange fruiting stalks of Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), the yellow-green rosettes of the insectivorous Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), Yarrow and its larger-flowered relative Sneezewort (*Achillea millefolium* and *A. ptarmica*), and Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), among the plants of this nutrient-poor, acidic soil. Scanning a ravine with a scope revealed four large Red Deer stags all resting together. This was quite surprising for this time of year when the rut should be starting, as they were obviously mature, with eight-point antlers each.

We ate our picnics back at the car park, before starting to drive back down the valley. We took the small road towards Farr, up onto the moor, where the wind was even stronger. Here we noted some more of the moorland plants, including Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and the primitive Stag's-horn Clubmoss (*Lycopodium clavatum*), and enjoyed another beautiful rainbow. A stop in the relative shelter of the lower valley gave us more Buzzards and Red Kites, a Sparrowhawk, a brief view of Goshawk and some photogenic Red-legged Partridge. A European Hare was seen on the hillside and Siskins were heard in the trees.

After a break for coffee, we then took a minor road along the next stretch of the Findhorn. Here were vast numbers of Pheasant and Red-legged Partridge, obviously bred for shooting, and lots of Rabbits, as well. Four Goosanders were swimming rapidly down the river. Eventually we turned for home, enjoying evening light.

## Day 4

## Wednesday 29th September

### Loch Garten, Loch an Eilein, Cairngorm

This morning was sunny but cold, with frost on the ground. After our 7.30am breakfast, those who needed supplies visited the village shop, and we were ready to leave by 8.45am. We drove the short distance through the Abernethy Forest to Loch Garten (the minibus thermometer showing the air temperature to be 1.5°C - 2°C) and stopped in the main car park. Chaffinches and Coal Tits were visiting the feeders and Great Spotted Woodpecker was in a tree behind. The Coal Tits here are very confiding, and we enjoyed them coming to our hands to feed on seed Jessica had provided. Treecreeper also showed well, and Wren was seen briefly. As we watched the feeders again, a Crested Tit made a couple of visits, giving good views. We then parked in the smaller car park a little further on to walk the Two Lochs Trail which goes along the shore of Loch Garten to Loch Mallachie, through old Scots Pine plantation. On Loch Garten we saw a flock of Goldeneyes, all female and juveniles: they breed here, and we could see their nest boxes on Loch Mallachie. A skein of Greylag Geese flew overhead noisily. We noted the flora, including Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) with some berries, Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Common Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) in flower and many mosses, plus the range of Fungi, including the striking Yellow Stagshorn, white Angel Wings and Giant Funnel.

We stopped for coffee in Boat of Garten before driving on to Loch an Eilein for our picnic. Those sitting at a picnic bench near the wooded stream were delighted when a Red Squirrel came down for a drink. Sadly, those sitting elsewhere missed this treat. Several feeders near the car park entrance were attracting a variety of tits, although not Crested while we were watching, plus Nuthatch, while Mallard and Pheasant were trying to share in the bounty. The loch was very quiet, although a couple of Goldfinches flew over.

We then drove up to Cairngorm upper car park, at about 640 metres above sea level. It was decidedly chilly here, with a brisk wind, but we enjoyed scanning the range of mountains. Three Ravens flew over, a couple of Pied Wagtails were around the car park and a Kestrel was spotted. A little further down we noted the Reindeer herd, peacefully grazing and resting. We visited Aviemore to top up with fuel, before a final visit to Loch Garten on the way home, but only the Chaffinches were having a late feed.

## Day 5

## Thursday 30th September

### Anagach Woods; Lochindorb; Findhorn Bay; Spey Bay

As forecast, this morning brought rain, but it quickly passed through and had stopped when we set off after breakfast, at 8.30am. We drove up to Grantown, passing several Roe Deer en route. Our first stop was in Anagach Woods, where we found a set of feeders, with very active Coal Tits. A Red Squirrel was seen in the top of a small Scots Pine, and we were able to watch it feeding on the cones. After a while it came down to the nut feeder, where we had excellent views as it fed for some time. Another two Squirrels were seen chasing each other nearby, and one of these then came and chased the first Squirrel round and round the tree, eventually driving it off and coming in its turn to the feeder. We were all delighted to have such good views of these charismatic animals and very many photos were taken! Eventually, we decided to move on to our next destination, with Patricia returning to Nethy Bridge to spend the day painting and walking locally.

The rest of us drove north over Dava Moor, taking the narrow road down to Lochindorb. It was very windy here, but we enjoyed a walk by the loch side, noting Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) and Common Wintergreen (*Pyrola minor*), Common Buzzard and a distant Kestrel. We were hoping for Red Grouse, and David found some droppings as evidence of their presence. The insectivorous Common Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*) was found in a Sphagnum bog. When we returned to the minibuses, Brenda reported seeing five Red Grouse on the slope opposite. We started scanning and one bird was picked up in the scope, in almost full view; we were able to watch it feeding on the heather shoots.

We then drove further north, via a comfort and shopping stop in Forres, to the coast at Findhorn Bay, the other end of the river from Strathdearn. By now it was late morning, about an hour before low tide, but most of the water had drained from the bay, and the birds were very distant. We walked out across the saltmarsh turf in the rather cold wind, seeing large numbers of geese on the far side, but with the light against us and the distance, it was hard to pick up much. A flock of Golden Plover was new for the list. We then drove up to the sand dunes, where we parked and scanned the estuary and the sea. Large numbers of Harbour Seals were hauled out on the sand, juvenile Gannets were diving and resting on the sea, while Sandwich Terns were fishing along the shore and a flock were also resting. Numerous auks, mainly Razorbills, showed well in the bright sun, a small group of Common Scoter flew by and a dark-phase Arctic Skua resting on the sea was a nice surprise, confirming its identity when it harassed a gull. It was quite sheltered here and some of the group had their picnic on the beach. We next moved on to the south side of the bay, enjoying the spectacle of several thousand Pink-footed Geese rising up from a stubble field, disturbed by a farm vehicle. The light was better from the shore here, and we could see Pale-bellied Brent Geese as well as the Pink-feet.

Our final destination of the afternoon was the mouth of the River Spey. We drove east through Elgin and turned up the east side of the river to Spey Bay. It was more exposed here and the sea was rougher. There were large numbers of Gulls, especially Herring, but also Common, Black-headed, Great Black-backed and Lesser Black-backed, resting on the sand, as were a group of Goosanders. Four Whooper Swans were with Mute Swans close by, and scanning revealed a Red-throated Diver. Small birds on the shore included a group of Twite. Sadly, we ran out of time and had to head back to the hotel for dinner.

## Day 6

Friday 1st October

Tulloch Moor; Abernethy Forest; Loch Garten; Inshriach

For our final full day, most of the group were up before dawn, leaving the hotel at 6.30am. We drove for about 15 minutes, seeing a couple of Red Deer hinds. As we parked, we could hear Robin, Wren, Chaffinch and Meadow Pipit waking up, and it was getting lighter. It was very cloudy and rather misty, due to the overnight rain and low temperatures. We walked for about a mile to reach our destination, from where we could look over an area of tussocky grass about 250 metres away. This is a known autumn lek for Black Grouse. Unfortunately, the light was poor, and the mist was hanging in the basin, but it gradually lifted to reveal a single head of a bird and then another, fully visible but hunkered down and not moving. After a few minutes it began to rain and the birds flew, revealing a third bird as they disappeared behind a hill. It was very atmospheric hearing Red Deer roaring in the rut, but the rain made us decide that we, as well as the birds would be on our way, so we headed back for a warming breakfast.

We gathered again at 10am to walk up the River Nethy from the hotel. One Dipper was glimpsed very briefly as it flew downstream, but we didn't see it again. However, two of the group on their own today, had excellent views a bit later. The rest of us had some nice views of Siskins in the top of an Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) tree in the morning sun. We walked back through the forest, but there was little bird activity among the plantation Scots Pines (*Pinus sylvestris*), other than a few Coal Tits and Chaffinches.

We moved on to Loch Garten for our picnic, where the feeders were buzzing, mainly with Coal Tits but also other tits and Chaffinches, while a flock of Long-tailed Tits showed well overhead. No Crested Tits visited while we were there, and a visit to the forest near Boat of Garten also failed to provide any further sightings. In view of our early dinner and evening to come, we then returned to the hotel.

We left again at 5.50pm to drive to Inshriach, on the site of the old Alpine Nursery. Speyside Wildlife run a wildlife hide here, particularly to allow views of Pine Marten. We met Eve, our guide, who explained about the set up and what we might hope to see. Peanuts and peanut butter (homemade so sugar- and salt-free) were scattered and smeared on various logs and tree trunks, with peanuts and sultanas on two raised wooden tables connected by thin branches. We were in the old café building with large windows and outside lighting. Almost immediately a couple of Wood Mice appeared, to take advantage of the riches. At about 7.15pm a Badger joined the scene, soon followed by another, until seven were feasting, some going straight for the peanut butter, others foraging for nuts. Eve explained the biology and family structure of these animals and helped us to recognise the individuals, boars and sows: the whole clan was present. We watched them feeding and later two of the young boars fighting together. They had all moved on after about an hour and we continued to watch and wait. At about 8.45pm, just as we were wondering if we would see anything more, a young female Pine Marten appeared, recognisable by the single brown spot in the middle of her yellowish throat. She relished the food, giving fantastic views. She started to run along the connecting branch to the other feeding station but appeared to wobble, staring at the ground, maybe because was a bit frightened by her shadow. Anyway, she then retreated, leaving us delighted with our views and many photos. As we were leaving, she reappeared briefly. It was a fantastic end to the day! On the way home a Barn Owl was seen on a post by the road.

## Day 7

Saturday 2nd October

### Uath Lochans; Insh Marshes; departure

Our final day had arrived. After our 7.30am breakfast, those of the group with long drives set off south. The rest of us left at 9am to visit the Uath Lochans in Glen Feshie. We passed a Buzzard en route before we took the narrow road up the glen. We parked and started the walk round the collection of four lochans, with tit parties and Chaffinches high in the Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Spruce (*Picea abies*) and Larch (*Larix decidua*) trees. We searched hard for Scottish Crossbill but, despite hearing a call which could well have been one, we failed to locate any birds to confirm it. This species would have to wait for another occasion. Among the now-familiar understorey of Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and Male-fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*), we noted a patch of Oak Fern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*), with much smaller, triangular fronds. The path led across a broadwalk between the lochans, and we were surprised to see White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*) still in flower. A solitary Mallard was the only waterbird. Unsure of the time needed for the whole loop, we decided to retrace our steps, to allow time to visit Insh Marshes again. A Grey Wagtail in the car park was the only one of the trip.



The marshes were very quiet, but we could see a Roe Deer with two fawns, a flock of Greylag Geese by the river, Mallard and a couple of Teal. A large flock of Starlings flew across, and there were a couple of distant Buzzards. We said goodbye to the other drivers and the rest of us had our picnic before heading back to the hotel to collect our bags. We said goodbye to David, and Jessica drove the remaining four to their hotel near Inverness Cathedral and our final guest to the airport, via stubble fields full of Pink-footed Geese. We all agreed that it had been an excellent week, in good company and with some great sightings and photo opportunities.

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## Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only; LO Leader Only)

	Common name	Scientific name	September - October						
			26	27	28	29	30	1	2
1	(Pale-bellied) Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>					✓		
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>		✓					
3	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	H	✓
4	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>		✓			✓		✓
5	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		✓			✓		
6	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>		✓			✓		
7	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		✓					
8	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>		✓			✓		
9	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
10	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	✓	✓					✓
11	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>		✓					
12	Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>		✓			✓		
13	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>					✓		
14	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>				✓			
15	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>			✓		✓		
16	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>		✓					

	Common name	Scientific name	September - October						
			26	27	28	29	30	1	2
17	Red Grouse	<i>Lagopus lagopus scotica</i>					✓		
18	Black Grouse	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>						✓	
19	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>			✓				D
21	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>							
22	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
23	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
25	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>		✓					
26	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>		✓			✓		
27	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>		✓					
28	European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>					✓		
29	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>		✓			✓		
30	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		✓					
31	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		✓					
32	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>		✓			✓		
33	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		✓			✓		
34	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		✓			✓		
35	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>		✓			✓		✓
36	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>		✓					
37	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>		✓			✓		✓
38	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>					✓		
39	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>		✓			✓		
40	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>					✓		
41	Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>		✓					
42	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>		✓			✓		
43	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>					✓		
44	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>		✓					
45	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>		✓			✓		
46	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		✓			✓		
47	European Shag	<i>Gulosus aristotelis</i>		✓			✓		
48	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
49	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		✓					
50	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>			✓				
51	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			✓	✓	✓		
52	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>			✓				
53	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	✓						
54	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>			✓				
55	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
56	Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>						✓	
57	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>					LO H		
58	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	H			✓	H	H	
59	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			✓	✓	✓		
60	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		✓					
61	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>			✓		✓		

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			26	27	28	29	30	1	2
62	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
63	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
64	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
65	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>		✓			✓		
66	Hybrid Crow	<i>Corvus corone x cornix</i>					✓		
67	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓			✓		✓	
68	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
69	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>				✓			
70	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	✓		H	✓	✓	✓	✓
71	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
72	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		✓	✓				
73	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>						✓	✓
74	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	✓			✓			
75	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓
76	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>				✓			
77	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>				✓		✓	✓
78	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓
79	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
80	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>			✓				
81	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
82	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>					✓		
83	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>						✓	
84	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
85	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>							✓
86	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	
87	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
88	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
89	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>					✓		
90	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>				✓		✓	
91	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>					✓		
92	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>			H			✓	
93	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>							
94	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>							
Our tour checklist follows the names and taxonomy (including species order) of the International Ornithological Congress list of the birds of the world (version 11.2, July 2021) which seems destined to become the global standard in future.									

### Mammals (✓ = recorded but not counted; S = signs; D = dead)

	Scientific name	Common name	September - October						
			26	27	28	29	30	1	2
1	European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>		D	✓				
2	European (Brown) Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>			✓				
3	Mountain Hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i>			S				
4	Wood Mouse	<i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i>						✓	

	Scientific name	Common name	September - October						
			26	27	28	29	30	1	2
5	Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		
6	European Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>			S	S			
7	Harbour (Common) Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>		✓			✓		
8	Pine Marten	<i>Martes martes</i>						✓	
9	European Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>						✓	D
10	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
11	Reindeer (feral)	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>				✓			
12	Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓

## Invertebrates

1	Common Hawker	<i>Aeshna juncea</i>
2	Hawker sp.	
3	Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>
4	Black Darter	<i>Sympetrum danae</i>
5	Whirligig Beetle	<i>Gyrinus</i> sp.
6	Common Mosquito	cf. <i>Aedes punctor</i>
7	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
8	Fox Moth	<i>Macrothylacia rubi</i>
9	Red Wood Ant	<i>Formica rufa</i>
10	Buff-tailed Bumblebee	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>
11	Black Slug	<i>Arion ater</i> agg.

## Plants

Group/Species	English Name (if any)	Location
<b>PTERIDOPHYTES</b>		
<b>Lycopodiaceae</b>	<b>Clubmoss Family</b>	
<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>	Stag's-horn Clubmoss	Farr Rd, Strathdearn
<b>Leptosporangiate Ferns</b>	<b>True Ferns</b>	
<b>Blechnaceae</b>	<b>Hard-fern Family</b>	
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard-fern	Loch Garten
<b>Cystopteridaceae</b>	<b>Bladder-fern Family</b>	
<i>Gymnocarpium dryopteris</i>	Oak Fern	Uath Lochans
<b>Dennstaedtiaceae</b>	<b>Bracken Family</b>	
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	Widespread
<b>Dryopteridaceae</b>	<b>Buckler-fern Family</b>	
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male-fern	Uath Lochans
<b>Polypodiaceae</b>	<b>Polypody Family</b>	
<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	Common Polypody	Loch Garten
<b>GYMNOSPERMS</b>		
<b>Cupressaceae</b>	<b>Juniper Family</b>	
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Common Juniper	Strathdearn
<b>Pinaceae</b>	<b>Pine Family</b>	
<i>Larix decidua</i>	European Larch	Common
<i>Picea abies</i>	Norway Spruce	Common
<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	Sitka Spruce	Common
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots Pine	Common
<b>CONIFERS</b>		

Group/Species	English Name (if any)	Location
<b>ANGIOSPERMS</b>	<b>FLOWERING PLANTS</b>	
<b>Pre-Dicots</b>	<b>Primitive Dicotyledons</b>	
<b>Nymphaeaceae</b>	<b>Water-lily Family</b>	
<i>Nymphaea alba</i>	White Water-lily	Uath Lochans
<b>Dicots</b>	<b>Dicotyledons</b>	
<b>Adoxaceae</b>	<b>Moschatel Family</b>	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	Nethy Bridge
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder Rose	Insh Marshes
<b>Apiaceae</b>	<b>Carrot Family</b>	
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Wild Angelica	Nethy Bridge
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed	Verges
<i>Myrrhis odorata</i>	Sweet Cicely	Nethy Bridge
<b>Asteraceae</b>	<b>Daisy Family</b>	
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	Strathdearn
<i>Achillea ptarmica</i>	Sneezewort	Strathdearn
<i>Aster sp.</i>	Michaelmas-daisy	Black Isle
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	Scattered
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	Insh Marshes
<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	Common Ragwort	Scattered
<i>Scorzoneroidea autumnalis</i>	Autumn Hawkbit	Insh Marshes
<i>Tripleurospermum maritimum</i>	Sea Mayweed	Avoch, Black Isle
<i>Tripolium pannonicum</i>	Sea Aster	Findhorn Bay (over)
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Colt's-foot	Cairngorm car park
<b>Betulaceae</b>	<b>Birch Family</b>	
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	Nethy Bridge
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	Some plantations
<i>Betula pubescens</i> subsp. <i>tortuosa</i>	Downy Birch	Widespread
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	Strathdearn
<b>Campanulaceae</b>	<b>Bellflower Family</b>	
<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Harebell	Insh Marshes
<b>Caryophyllaceae</b>	<b>Pink Family</b>	
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion	Findhorn Bay
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	White Campion	Findhorn Bay
<b>Dipsacaceae</b>	<b>Teasel Family</b>	
<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	Devil's-bit Scabious	Insh Marshes
<b>Droseraceae</b>	<b>Sundew Family</b>	
<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>	Common Sundew	Lochindorb
<b>Ericaceae</b>	<b>Heather Family</b>	
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry	Lochindorb
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather or Ling	Moorland
<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>	Crowberry	Farr Rd, Strathdearn
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	Bell Heather	Moorland
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	Cross-leaved Heath	Strathdearn
<i>Pyrola minor</i>	Common Wintergreen	Lochindorb (leaves)
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry	Loch Garten
<i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i>	Cowberry	Loch Garten
<b>Fabaceae</b>	<b>Pea Family</b>	
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Broom	Insh Marshes
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoil	Insh Marshes
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	Scattered
<b>Fagaceae</b>	<b>Beech Family</b>	
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech Family	Strathdearn
<b>Lentibulariaceae</b>	<b>Bladderwort Family</b>	
<i>Pinguicula vulgaris</i>	Common Butterwort	Strathdearn

Group/Species	English Name (if any)	Location
<b>Menyanthaceae</b>	<b>Bogbean Family</b>	
<i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>	Bogbean	Uath Lochans
<b>Myricaceae</b>	<b>Bog-myrtle Family</b>	
<i>Myrica gale</i>	Bog-myrtle	Loch Garten
<b>Onagraceae</b>	<b>Willowherb Family</b>	
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb	Roadsides
<b>Oxalidaceae</b>	<b>Wood-sorrel Family</b>	
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	Wood-sorrel	Insh Marshes (leaves)
<b>Plumbaginaceae</b>	<b>Thrift Family</b>	
<i>Armeria maritima</i>	Thrift	Findhorn Bay
<b>Primulaceae</b>	<b>Primrose Family</b>	
<i>Lysimachia (Trientalis) europaea</i>	Chickweed Wintergreen	Nethy Bridge
<b>Ranunculaceae</b>	<b>Buttercup Family</b>	
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Marsh-marigold	Strathdearn (leaves)
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup	Strathdearn
<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>	Lesser Spearwort	Strathdearn
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	Strathdearn
<b>Rosaceae</b>	<b>Rose Family</b>	
<i>Alchemilla sp.</i>	A Lady's-mantle	Carrbridge (prob naturalised)
<i>Comarum palustre</i>	Marsh Cinquefoil	Uath Lochans (leaves)
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	Roadsides
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Tormentil	Strathdearn
<i>Prunus padus</i>	Bird Cherry	Nethy Bridge
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	Widespread
<b>Violaceae</b>	<b>Violet Family</b>	
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog Violet	Insh Marshes (leaves)
<b>Monocots</b>	<b>Monocotyledons</b>	
<b>Cyperaceae</b>	<b>Sedge Family</b>	
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	Common Cotton-grass	Strathdearn
<b>Nartheciaceae</b>	<b>Bog Asphodel Family</b>	
<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>	Bog Asphodel	Strathdearn

## Fungi

<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>	Brown Birch Bolete	Insh Marshes
<i>Leccinum holopus</i>	Ghost Bolete	Insh Marshes
<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Fly Agaric	Insh Marshes
<i>Lycoperdon excipuliforme</i>	Pestle Puffball	Insh Marshes
<i>Gyroporus cyanescens</i>	Cornflower Bolete	Insh Marshes
<i>Piptoporus betulinus</i>	Birch Polypore	Insh Marshes
<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>	Hoof Fungus	Insh Marshes
<i>Calocera viscosa</i>	Yellow Stagshorn	Loch Garten
<i>Gymnopilus sp.</i>	A Rustgill	Loch Garten
<i>Suillus luteus</i>	Slippery Jack	Loch Garten
<i>Pleurocybella porrigens</i>	Angel's Wings	Loch Garten
<i>Trichoglossum hirsutum</i>	Hairy Earthtongue	Loch Garten
<i>Cantharellus cibarius</i>	Chantarelle	Tulloch Moor



Black-tailed Godwits and Dunlin, Udale Bay