

Wild Sweden: Realm of the Wolf

Naturetrek Tour Report

4th – 8th August 2025



Eurasian Beaver



A boating adventure



Moose



Capercaillie

Tour report by Patricia Pycraft
Photos by Christopher Roawland, and Rob and Patricia Pycraft



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Tour participants: Simon Green (leader) with seven Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Monday 4th August

We were met at the airport by our leader, Simon, and he drove the group along a scenic route to Fläcksjön Lake, where we had lunch. This turned out to be a picnic of filled rolls and very delicious traditional Swedish sponge cake topped with icing. It was an amazing place to spot bird life, and we observed an Osprey with a fish in its talons, a pair of Common Cranes and Great Egrets; some of us glimpsed a White-tailed Eagle. In addition to birds, the area was full of butterflies and dragonflies. We also also an opportunity to explore a nearby traditional Swedish village and to investigate a Viking runestone. The adventures started with a mishap with the minibus (it failed to start), but fortunately Simon's neighbour came to our rescue, and we arrived safely at Färna Manor. On the way, there we saw a buck and doe Roe Deer.

Once at Färna Manor we were allocated our rooms in one of the many buildings dotted around the main house. The group met for a dinner of beef and other traditional Swedish foods. Over an excellent three-course dinner, the group discussed their expectations for the week.

After dinner, we headed out for the first of the planned safaris. We climbed into the minibus and headed off to prime locations for animal sightings. During the evening, we had an excellent view of a Red Deer, a female Moose, Brown Hare, and a Red Fox which caused a number of Lapwings to fly into the air. There were plenty of birds to be seen, including lots of Nightjars by the road, which Simon said was unusual.

Day 2

Tuesday 5th August

After breakfast we headed out for the morning's canoe trip. At the location, we were each given rucksacks which we filled with our lunch. Then, after receiving tips and safety pointers, two people were assigned to each canoe, and we took to the waters. Although the day was sunny, the tail end of a storm was passing through, and the lake was very choppy. One of the boats was blown off course and needed to be rescued by Simon, although no-one was in any real danger at any point! We decided it would be best to canoe down a stream. Here, the water was much calmer, and it was lovely seeing the trees draped over the water's edge. As we paddled, some of the group spotted a Kingfisher, and at lunchtime, which included some very tasty lentil soup and carrot bread, we were treated to a lovely spectacle of a Grey Wagtail hopping from one lily pad to another.

After the canoeing, we returned to the hotel for some much-needed rest, before heading out on the Moose safari. We spotted signs of broken branches, which was a good indicator of the presence of Moose, as well as their droppings and a rutting pit. Afterwards, we drove to the location for the evening's trip, where Simon showed us how to light a fire (the Viking way). He then cooked the group a very tasty dinner of carrot, potato and peas on a skillet, accompanied by a special berry BBQ sauce and a fried egg. Water was collected from the nearby lake and boiled to make tea and coffee, which was drunk with cake.

After dinner, we headed back out into the minibus to look for the Moose. The weather was wet, which meant they would be sheltering in the forest. However, in the latter part of the evening we had a very good sighting of a female Moose and calf. As we started to head back to Färna, we had an unobstructed view of two Wild Boar standing in a field; they did not seem at all fazed by our presence.

Day 3

Wednesday 6th August

The first part of the morning was an opportunity to visit the spa, but some of the group explored the village of Färna Manor, which housed a shop selling souvenirs and clothes. At the lake, there was a jetty for wild swimming, as well as a group of Greylag Geese.

It was a lovely sunny day, and we had another picnic lunch on the lawn of the Manor with our guide, after which we had *fika* (coffee and cake).

The afternoon's trip was a nature walk which we began by taking a short stroll down a newly-created path by a stream, to look for freshwater pearl mussels. Along the trail, we spotted empty shells, which indicated other animals had sourced mussels from the water. Further along the stream, and with the help of an underwater telescope, we could see a group of mussels nestled on a rock.

We then headed out to a very pretty lake; the whole area was filled with pine trees which reflected in the water. As we walked, we could see a Black-throated Diver taking to the lake multiple times in its search of fish, which was amazing. On the way back to that evening's camp, we had a remarkable sighting of two Capercaillies wandering around close to the road.

The location for the evening's camp and Beaver safari was a former train station, situated next to a lake. Dinner was again typical Swedish fare, with coffee and cake for afters. With the help of 'Custard', a toy beaver, Simon explained the various physical attributes of the species. Armed with blankets, the group headed out in an electric boat to look for them. As the sun set, there were many splendid sightings, even including a kit. The water was very still, and the group experienced a very tranquil evening. As darkness fell, we returned to the hotel, and along the way spotted a one-year-old Moose in a field.

Day 4

Thursday 7th August

In the morning there was free time, although this was largely spent packing for the overnight Wolf camping trip, and checking out of the rooms. A superb lunch was eaten at the hotel, after which *fika* was taken with our guide. It was then time for the main event: the Wolf safari.

We drove off to a known Wolf territory, and began by watching footage taken from a hidden camera, which showed clear pictures of Wolves. Then, in single file and keeping very quiet, we walked along a track to a known Wolf meeting place. We saw obvious signs of Wolves in the form of droppings, some very fresh, and paw prints. Further on, we saw a discarded rubber (electrical) cable which had been played with and chewed on by the cubs.

It was then time to head to the camp for our night in the woods. After selecting a tipi tent and arranging our bedding, we settled around the campfire for dinner. The camp was next to a lake, and it was very peaceful sitting around the fire eating a tasty stew for dinner. While boiling water for tea and coffee, Simon started to tell us about the Wolves' habitat and behaviour.

Armed with copious amounts of mosquito spray, a foldaway stool, and ponchos to ward off the rain (and mosquitos), we headed back out to a spot in the heart of a Wolf territory. Our chosen location was on a ridge,

from which we had very clear views of the surrounding areas: it was an excellent place to spot animals. We kept quiet to avoid being detected by the Wolves, and sitting there in the peace with nature all around us created a very atmospheric setting. This was enhanced when Moose could be head in the distance, along with the faint sound of a Wolf howling (this happened on three occasions). Simon explained that with the use of night vision binoculars he had seen Wolves cross the road we had driven down earlier. Once darkness had settled, we drove to this spot, where Simon then howled to the wolves, in order to get a recording, but unfortunately there wasn't a response. We tried a further few times, including driving down a road deep into the territory of a neighbouring pack, where the faint sound of Wolves howling could be made out. We arrived back late at the camp, worn out by our adventures.

Day 5

Friday 8th August

As we had had a late night the previous day, breakfast was taken at a leisurely pace, with some members of the group trying out their own fire-making skills to boil water for tea and coffee. Everyone ate a welcome breakfast of overnight oats and berries before heading back to the hotel, where we had access to much-needed showers. Just before lunch, Simon gave us an opportunity to buy a Wolf or Beaver T-shirt, which many of us did. We then had our final lunch, during which we discussed the week and our various highlights.

We concluded that the week had been a brilliant adventure. It was agreed that the food had been absolutely wonderful, and that the preparation and organisation of the trip had been first class. After lunch we were driven back to the airport.

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Species lists

Mammals

I=Introduced	
Common name	Scientific name
European Hare - I	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
Mountain Hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i>
Eurasian Beaver	<i>Castor fiber</i>
Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
European Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>
Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Grey Wolf (heard)	<i>Canis lupus</i>

Birds

I=Introduced	
Common name	Scientific name
Canada Goose - I	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
Western Capercaillie	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>
European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Eurasian Goshawk	<i>Astur gentilis</i>
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>
Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>