

# Sweden's Upland Birds

Naturetrek Tour Report

30 May - 6 June 2013



Bluethroat by John Van de Graaff



Black Woodpecker by Peter Spillett



Slavonian Grebe by Michael Tonge and Linda Baker



Hawk Owl by John Van de Graaff

Report compiled by Ed Drewitt

Images courtesy of Peter Spillett, Michael Tonge, Linda Baker and John Van de Graaff



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

Tour Leader:	Daniel Green Ed Drewitt	Local Ornithologist Naturetrek Naturalist
Participants:	David Todd Dave Rhodes Sarah Gee Mike Gee Dave Pierce Brendan Ryan Kevin Heede Andrew Rann Peter Spillett Michael Tonge Linda Baker Mike Keighley Marylee Bomboy John Van de Graaff	

## Introduction

Sweden is a country of contrasts with the lush, verdant grasslands and countryside in the south changing to a mountainous, cooler landscape further north. During this eight-day tour we started off from the area around Västerås and gradually made our way into central Sweden, and the southern region of Lapland. Nine species of owl were seen well, from Hawk Owl to Great Grey Owl. The alpine tundra was home to many of our familiar winter wading birds such as Ruff and Golden Plover, which were now in their breeding plumages and nesting. Wood Sandpipers and Red-necked Phalaropes also showed well. The weather couldn't have been more perfect for sitting on the top of a mountain watching lekking Great Snipe, while nearby three Black Grouse were also lekking. Ducks usually associated with rough seas and seen through scopes miles out to sea were frequenting small pools and lakes – these included Long-tailed Duck, Common and Velvet Scoters. Meanwhile, Long-tailed Skuas which had just made their journeys north past the UK were settling on the tundra – we saw up to 18 feeding together one day. In the woodlands woodpeckers were the stars of the show and we saw Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Black Woodpecker and Three-toed Woodpecker. And on the lakes, summer-plumaged Slavonian Grebes and Little Gulls were feeding with metres of us, while nesting Whooper Swan and Common Cranes were also seen. With all the additional warblers, Cuckoos, Thrush Nightingales, water birds and raptors, every day was completely different and provided rewarding and exciting surprises.

## Day 1

Thursday 30th May

21°C, bright and sunny

After a smooth flight to Västerås, a town 80 minutes west of Stockholm, we met with our guide Daniel Green and after a short welcome were off to our first destination, Björnön or Bear Island.

We stopped for lunch with Downy Emerald dragonflies chasing insects overhead and a few Orange Tip butterflies meandering through the longer herbs close to the ground. Willow Warblers were singing everywhere and a short walk into the woods revealed a foraging Nuthatch, followed by an active nest with chicks inside. We could see the mud entrance and hear the chicks as the adult brought food in. The adults are much paler and whiter breasted than the race we find in the UK. Shortly after a dinky Lesser Spotted Woodpecker showed well on the thin outer branches of some trees while a Spotted Flycatcher was calling nearby. A Dor Beetle was scrambling across the path, and Ed showed everyone its shiny, iridescent purple underparts. Great Tits were often nearby in the trees and on our walk back we caught up with an elusive Icterine Warbler with its 'squeaky' song. Nearby a Garden Warbler sang along with a Blackcap. A Fieldfare was resting in a dead Larch tree and a moment later was joined by a Spotted Flycatcher. Greenfinches were common and often singing from a tree, while a few Tree Sparrows were around a nearby centre building. A Bittern boomed from the nearby reedbeds.

We moved a little down the road and went for a short walk down to some more reedbeds hearing Sedge Warbler and Great Reed Warbler. We saw Reed Bunting (male), Red-backed Shrike and a first-summer male Scarlet Rosefinch who was also singing throughout. In the distance a Buzzard soared, a Kestrel hovered, a male Marsh Harrier quartered the reeds, and a small group of Fallow Deer grazed in front. Black-headed Gulls were calling from afar, and the odd Common Tern, Common Gull and Herring Gull flew overhead. Close by, a beautiful Ruby Whiteface dragonfly stopped on a stump to show off its red-wine hues. Back near the cars we stopped to listen to a stunning Thrush Nightingale and also had good views of a Comma butterfly and Four-spotted Darter dragonflies. As we headed back we stopped by a bridge where tens of House Martins feeding over the water and returning to their nests under the bridge. The odd Swallow was flying around too while a Coot and a Great Crested Grebe were spotted on the water. A Thrush Nightingale sang in the nearby trees.

After an hour transfer through sunny countryside we spent the evening settling in to our beautiful B&B accommodation in Salbohed. The owners Johan and Wilma actively encourage the local birds to feeders and put up lots of bird boxes. Everyone watched the bird feeders as Great Spotted Woodpeckers came to feed on the apples, and Greenfinches, Chaffinches and a few Tree Sparrows fed on seeds on the grounds.

After a delicious dinner, we set off for the evening to look for owls. We stopped on the outskirts of the village of Fläckebo to listen to a Thrush Nightingale, and a Marsh Warbler which was singing almost as soon as the nightingale stopped. A beautiful male Yellowhammer was also singing along with a Willow Warbler. The Marsh Warbler flew out across the fields and flew back again giving some a better view before it disappeared down again. Three Teal flew past while a Snipe was drumming over the trees.

As we headed to the other side of Fläckebo we stopped to listen for Pygmy Owls. No luck but instead heard a few Cuckoos, Blackbird, and a strange goose-like sound which turned out to be a Whooper Swan in flight – it was looking pinkish in the evening light. One or two Woodcock were also roding overhead. As we headed on we passed Lapwings, Canada and Greylag Geese, and stopped to see a few Common Cranes before they flew. We stopped to take photos of a beautiful sunset while a Song Thrush was singing away behind us. Further along the road we stopped to watch a young-looking Elk who was keeping still and hoping we hadn't spotted him or her. A few Mountain Hares were also seen fleeing the road, along with a couple more Elk.

As the temperature began to drop down to 9°C and the light faded a little, we continued to search for owls. After searching some good habitat for owls, we stopped at a site near Skultuna where Mike glimpsed a Great Grey Owl. After some scanning, its grey shadow could be observed on a wire behind a set of trees. As we crept through the adjacent field we ended up with superb views of the owl perched with its back to us but occasionally looking towards us. It flew along the trees and was hidden again. As we crept back along the field we found it again and managed to get very close – often it was looking away or preening, oblivious of our presence. After prolonged views it dropped down to catch something and flew off. Meanwhile, others in the group had been watching a tiny Pygmy Owl which was calling from a tree above. In silhouette its dinky body could just be made out. A few Cuckoos could be heard and a couple of Woodcock were roding nearby. Robins were singing quietly. As we headed back along the track to the vehicles we found probably the same Great Grey Owl perched on an electricity wire giving lovely views before it flew away silently. In the meantime, a medium-sized bat was feeding overhead.

Before we went back to sleep we checked out a few sites good for Nightjar. The first was silent but at our final stop we were in luck and it wasn't long before we had super views of a male flying in front of us, occasionally perching on more distant trees. It was a perfect still night and as the temperature dropped down to 3°C we could still hear a Wood Lark singing in the background. Heading back for some well-earned sleep we passed a Brown Hare, four Red Deer and a few Tawny Owls.

## Day 2

Friday 31st May

24°C, very warm and sunny, cloudy skies at times

We began our day with a wholesome continental breakfast Swedish style before meeting at 7.30am to explore the grounds of the hotel to see a Tawny Owl. An adult was poking its head out of a box and inside were some young. The adult bird flew out of the box and across the road into trees. Meanwhile Crested Tits, at least two, were busy feeding up in the trees - a good bird to find for this time of the year. A female Pied Flycatcher was also seen. Meanwhile at the feeding station, at least four Great Spotted Woodpeckers were feeding and chasing each other off, while first thing Mike had seen a Hawfinch. At breakfast we enjoyed some Siskins, a pair of Bullfinches, and a Marsh Tit alongside the Tree Sparrows and other finches. A Yellowhammer also came down before we left, and a Brown Hare was pacing along the drive.

On our way to our first destination we stopped at Fläckebo again (our site for Thrush Nightingale last night). After hearing a Grasshopper Warbler as we drove past...we reversed back to listen and see this secretive bird. Willow Warblers were singing all around, and a Whitethroat was also proclaiming its territory along with a Garden Warbler. The Thrush Nightingale and Marsh Warbler were both present, and the former was also seen briefly – its rustic tail diagnostic. A few of the group saw a Pine Marten as it scurried across the road and back again before disappearing, while others watched two Whinchats.

On the other side of the village we stopped to look out across the Black River Valley. A Great Crested Grebe was on her nest, and nearby a pair of Mute Swans was resting. Black-headed Gulls, Common Gulls, and a Herring Gull were nesting on rocks, while Common Terns and at least five Black Terns were feeding over the water. A few male Shoveler and Teal flew around, while a male Goldeneye and a Whooper Swan dropped in.

In the adjacent fields a few Lapwings were flying around, and a lone Common Crane was feeding a few fields back. A Snipe was watched flying above the wet meadow.

We continued on to the Färne Ekopark where we spent the rest of the morning and early afternoon with our guide Michael, an expert at finding woodpeckers. Looking across an area of plantation which had been blown down by a freak wind storm, a Tree Pipit was displaying, while a Redstart and a Spotted Flycatcher perched on tall dead trees. A Cuckoo called in the background. We entered into the forest – the ground was soft and spongy, covered in lichens, mosses and large boulders moved here by bygone glaciers. A common white flowering plant growing on the pine needle-rich forest floor was Chickweed Wintergreen. Michael showed us the different feeding techniques used by the woodpeckers and how they use the different trees at different stages of their death as they are strangled by the onslaught of wood-boring beetles. The Three-toed Woodpecker targets dying trees, and pecks lightly at the bark, whereas the Great Spotted whole-heartedly takes off the bark to reveal the inner tree. We watched a nest hole of a Three-toed Woodpecker – the birds had been visiting every 30 minutes or so. The female appeared out of her nest hole and perched in several different trees, showing off her white back and pied plumage. After a few minutes she popped back inside. Meanwhile, Goldcrests sang in the trees, and a few Treecreepers were seen. Chaffinches, Song Thrushes and a Mistle Thrush sang in the background. As we went back for a coffee break some of the group spotted a Hobby and a Peregrine overhead. Speckled Wood and Green Hairstreak butterflies were also flying and sunning themselves.

As we moved on to our next site some spotted a Swallowtail butterfly feeding on a Dandelion, while everyone saw a tatty looking Camberwell Beauty butterfly, which had overwintered here since last summer. Up to ten were seen by the end of the day. This one even landed on Andrew's hat. A Black Woodpecker was heard calling in the woods, while a tiny Pygmy Owl came out and landed in the tops of a few spruce trees where they can cling on to the smaller branches and needles. The owl flew into a tree right above us, giving brilliant views as it looked around and down at us. After a while it lifted one leg into its chest feathers before turning around. It looked like a miniature Little Owl, but with finer white spots and very yellow toes. Mike and Sarah found a young Common Toad which would have left the lake as a baby toad last year. And a Northern Chequered Skipper was feeding on buttercups and others flowers.

After a well-earned lunch consisting of a delicious pasta dish and rolls, we made our way to a known Black Woodpecker site. No woodpeckers appeared but we did see an Osprey calling overhead, a Stock Dove, and a freshly emerged Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly. A few Pied Flycatchers and Cuckoos were also singing. In beautiful sunshine we made our way back to our B&B to collect our luggage. Before we left Ed found a fledging White Wagtail which had only just left its nest. After showing most of the group it was put back safely ready to be fed by its parents.

We set off for our later afternoon engagement – a chance to see baby Ural Owls being ringed. Once we had linked up with the ringers (and passed an Elk close to the road), we followed them to some nest sites where nest boxes had been put up since the 1980s. 600 baby Ural Owls have since been ringed. Armed with a hard hat and visor, ear protectors and thick gloves, the ringer climbed a ladder to remove the chicks for ringing. Meanwhile, another ringer was nearby with a soft piece of foam on a pole to protect the ringer from an attacking parent. On the first nest the female was close by in a tree, beak clicking to warn us she was watching and ready to make a move.

The two chicks, around three weeks old, were quickly removed and put together on the ground. Mike and Ed are both bird ringers in the UK and were kindly allowed to ring a chick each. The rings are made of aluminium and are very easy to close. The ringing allows the researchers to find out more about who the owls are, who they pair with, and where they move to during their lifetimes. We all walked away to leave the family alone, now with some extra bling on their legs to help contribute to science. The odd Cuckoo and Yellowhammer could be heard singing in the background. We moved on to a second nest box site close to a track. We could hear the nesting female beak clicking nearby. Two chicks were quickly removed and ringed while the mum was poised in a nearby tree. The chicks were put back in the box, and although their mum attacked the ringer, a hasty retreat meant they could all be left alone in the wilderness without further disturbance.

After such an incredible experience, we made our way to a quiet site by a pond and trees to have some coffee, tea and cake – Fieldfares were nearby including one in a song flight display. The meadow was full of purple flowers of the Mountain Cranesbill while Aspen Trees were dotted throughout.

We then spent a few hours driving north to the Green Hotel – positioned by a huge crater lake, scored out by a meteor millions of years ago. We met for dinner at 9.15pm, and against such a superb sunset backdrop enjoyed some Swedish Arctic Char, new potatoes and asparagus. After going through our checklist for the past two days, we heard of tomorrow's plan and made our way to bed.

At an undisclosed site we also visited a nesting Great Grey Owl earlier in the day – we had remarkable views of a female on her nest, a tall tree stump, and covering a few chicks. She was largely unbothered by us, usually looking in the other direction and only occasionally looking straight at us. We were able to appreciate her cryptic plumage in broad daylight.

## Day 3

**Saturday 1st June**

Up to 16°C, more like 11/12°C in the afternoon. Bright and sunny, showers and heavy rain, calm and cool later

Leaving our splendid hotel and a magnificent view across Lake Siljan, we were bemused by a robotic lawn mower which had spent the night automatically moving in lines and circles across the lawn of the hotel!

We travelled north-west along the edge of the lake and beyond where Fieldfares frequented gardens and open green spaces. Along the way at least three Black-throated Divers were spotted, and at our coffee stop a pair of cranes, a nesting Whooper Swan, and Tufted Ducks were seen, while Wigeon were heard in the background. A Tree Pipit was singing from the trees and hundreds of Small Whiteface dragonflies were flying around.

At 11.30am we arrived at the Fulufjället National Park – established in 2002, the area consists of 385 square kilometres of outstanding mountain scenery. Walking up towards Njupesjär, the highest waterfall in Sweden (93 metres high), we passed a still pool where a Greenshank was calling loudly and in the pine trees the odd Brambling sang and Willow Tit foraged. At our viewpoint across the valley towards the waterfall we watched as Ravens came to and fro to a nest. Groups of Common Gulls frequently passed over, and while most missed it, Dave P had seen a Gyr Falcon very briefly. Despite prolonged scanning during our lunch, and moving to higher vantage points, we were unable to relocate it.

A pair of Kestrels wheeled in the air close to the Ravens, while Willow Warblers serenaded around us. We walked along a board walk towards the waterfall where a large block of ice remained un-melted. A Dipper flashed past briefly. We took some group photos, and some quickly pulled out the rain macs as a shower passed over. Meanwhile, the nest of the Raven was located and an adult seen feeding the young. Walking back to the park's centre it was sunny and warm, and Redstarts sang from the coniferous woodland along with the odd Brambling. Daniel prepared smoked trout, and everyone was able to savour the fish on crisp-bread with soft cheese and a horseradish paste. Despite putting out some titbits for the Siberian Jays, none obliged.

We began our 90 mile journey north – to begin with it was torrential rain but that cleared as we headed further north. We stopped briefly for a Great Grey Shrike which Daniel had spotted but it had gone by the time we had got out. Meanwhile, Fieldfares were all around along with some Chaffinches. We stopped for a while at a few pools for a coffee break and were soon viewing a pair of Velvet Scoters – the male with a bright yellow bill and white eye patch. A female Goldeneye was nearby and two Greenshanks flew overhead. A Goldcrest sang near the car and everyone had close views of a splendid summer-plumaged male Brambling with a jet-black head.

We headed on, stopping briefly at another lake to view five more Velvet Scoters. Three were together and the male kept chasing one of the females away before all three took to the air. A few Wigeon were also present. Our next short stop further along the road revealed a calling Snipe, a Yellow Wagtail and brief views of a Black-throated Diver on a pool before it took flight and circled round before flying across the road. Quite a contrast to seeing them on the open sea!

We headed up to higher ground and made our way to Funäsdalen where in the winter the town and area are busy as a ski resort. Today the area was lush green and the only snow was on the mountains which border Norway and could be seen from the hotel and our rooms. A Ring Ouzel was heard as we headed for our rooms. After a fish dinner we set off at 9.45pm to visit some nearby moorland. The weather was perfect, cool but not cold, still and great visibility. It was still very light and as soon as we arrived a female Black Grouse, followed by a few males flew past. A male then sat on a boulder before flying. As we started our walk we realised there was a Black Grouse lek close by, and four males were sizing each other up and making their bubbling call. As we paused for a moment, Dave P spotted a quartering Short-eared Owl while a Woodcock began roding. Venturing across the moorland, small piles of dry, fibrous pellets were clues to the diet of the grouse – their droppings were very distinctive.

Our quarry species was Great Snipe – and it wasn't long before we were in the right area. Light whistling sounds followed by rapid clicks (rather like castanets) began to fill the air, and as we edged round to position ourselves on a hill, we looked down into a Great Snipe lek where individuals were coming together to display. Over the course of a few hours we watched and listened as the lek increased in intensity and more birds joined in the frenetic activity. As the birds became more visible we could see them stretching out their heads and necks and opening their bills, and as they called (and snapped their beak quickly to make the clicking sound) they flicked open their wings and tail which flashed white. Birds would suddenly appear, and then slip away like miniature rabbits darting for cover. When we did get good views, the birds were often in pairs and sometimes took off in twos and threes and circled round or landed on the periphery of the lek. In flight, the white tail and paler trailing edge to the wings were visible, while on the ground their fine speckled chest was easy to make out.

According to Daniel this was one of the best events he has seen here, and those in the group who had seen Great Snipe leks in other countries agreed this was by far the best experience both in terms of weather and how well the birds were showing. As the strange whistles and clicks intensified, the bubbling and hissing calls of the male Black Grouse nearby also travelled across the landscape. At least two or three Cuckoos were calling, while some heard the calls of Willow Grouse, and one was seen in flight, flickering its bright white wings as it dashed past.

As we edged back to the vehicles close to midnight, the light was hanging in the sky. Nearby a Short-eared Owl was flying, while a Bluethroat was singing in the trees. After a while, we finally saw the bird as a silhouette in song flight. It was mimicking the calls of a Nuthatch and other birds. As we drove back we were able to reflect - the evening had been a fine feast of birds from the Black Grouse to the Great Snipe, and other birds associated with this pristine habitat.

## Day 4

Sunday 2nd June

11-12°C. Cloudy with sunny spells. Heavy showers

After a late night we met for breakfast at 8am, and left at 9am for the higher ground, in fact the highway at the highest altitude (975m) in Sweden. We stopped by the lake in Funäsdalen where we found a pair of Velvet Scoters, a Black-throated Diver, a Wigeon, Mallards, a Goosander, and a distant Red-throated Diver. Behind us a Chiffchiff sang, along with a Greenfinch and Siskin.

Moving on we made our way to the high alpine plateau, stopping at a few locations to find Golden Plovers, an Osprey, Willow Grouse, a Common Crane, drumming Snipe, Greenshanks, and the odd Arctic Tern. We even passed a Sand Martin colony using a huge mound of grey sandy soil to make their tunnel nest cavities in. As we got close to our destination we stopped to enjoy over 50 Reindeer – there was a mixture of adults with their antlers in velvet, young animals, and calves which looked very young and were still chocolate brown in colour. While not truly wild, the Reindeer are herded by local people and we could see that the animals had been tagged and/or had bells around their necks, rather like sheep or cattle. This site was also excellent for Cuckoos and three males appeared in response to the call of a female played by Daniel. They were being mobbed by Meadow Pipits, and showed well in front of us, landing occasionally with their wings drooped down. It was brilliant to hear and see so many Cuckoos in southern Lapland. A Wheatear was also spotted along with a Wood Sandpiper and a Rough-legged Buzzard which was flying away.

At our destination on the high plateau we looked out across the snow-covered mountains and stopped to see what was around us. We were very fortunate today – there was no wind whipping across the high land. It wasn't long before David T found a male Ptarmigan, quickly followed by a cryptic female. Over the next 20 minutes or so the male edged out into the open and we watched him on the road, and flying around us with fast whirring white wings and throaty call. Meanwhile, a pair of Swallows flew around the lonely building we were stood by, no doubt nesting inside. As we began to walk across the boggy, mossy and lichen-rich landscape, the song of a Lapland Bunting was pointed out and gradually we got better and better views of a male overhead in flight display before landing. In flight, his long wings and Skylark-size were easy giveaways, and his black mask could be made out. At one point two were in the sky together. On the ground, the male's full beauty could be appreciated.

A distant Long-tailed Skua was spotted sitting in a rock, and around us a female Ruff was flying along with the odd calling Redshank and singing Wood Sandpiper. It wasn't long though before the rain clouds rolled in and we stood for 15 minutes at least in pouring rain, some better provisioned against the rain than others! The odd Teal or Tufted Duck was spotted during this time, and as the rain slowly eased off we were able to continue exploring this remarkable habitat. As you look closer on a micro-level you can see many tiny plants, lichens, and other signs of life such as Reindeer and Arctic Fox droppings. As we edged back towards the road we listened out for Bluethroat. And it wasn't long before a stunning male was singing from a tree, and another was skulking in the bushes. The bird's brownish plumage contrasted with his metallic blue throat feathers with an orange spot in the middle, bordered by a dark blue/black band and in turn bordered by a band of orange-brown.

We stopped for a delicious salad lunch which was very tasty and included everything from olives to pasta, chicken (or alternative) to croutons, tomatoes and a delicious Swedish-style chili dressing. A little dried off by now, we ventured back to out to see the Bluethroat, and he didn't disappoint. The song was incredible – a mix of different sounds, but perhaps the most unusual one sounded like a tin can being crumpled, or someone 'twanging' a guitar while holding the strings firm so they can hardly vibrate and move. Meanwhile, three Long-tailed Skuas had been spotted sitting on rocks at a far distance. A Yellow Wagtail flew overhead, and a Willow Warbler sang from a copse of very small willows. Ravens were numerous and often flew past, and Dave P saw a very distant Golden Eagle.

We drove further down the road and it wasn't long before we stopped and found a phalarope on a pool. We got out and realised there were three so we ventured over to them. We crept up to the water's edge and for over half an hour had views of three, then four, Red-necked Phalaropes coming within a few metres as they hurriedly fed on the mosquitoes flying low over the water's surface. They made little squeaky sounds, and sometimes made a call a little similar to a Coot. Male and female phalaropes were present and it was an ideal chance to see subtle differences in size and plumage, the female being more elaborately coloured in role reversal behaviour where she leaves the male to incubate the eggs and rear the chicks.

In a larger lake behind us a pair of Long-tailed Ducks were resting and then chasing each other round in circles, diving as they did so. A third bird joined them and when they flew off another two appeared from the island vegetation. Meanwhile, Common Gulls were flying or resting around the pool, and nearby up to seven male Ruff in their splendid breeding plumage were seen together. Some were very dark brown, almost black, others a lighter ginger-brown hue, while one was cream-coloured with darker stripes. We watched them lekking, standing looking away from each other and raising their ruffs so every contour of the beautiful adornments could be appreciated. They occasionally flew off and dispersed, but inevitably returned to try again. As we were watching this spectacle, a stunning Long-tailed Skua flew towards us allowing for some brilliant photo opportunities as it passed by.

All around us we could hear the display calls of Redshanks, Wood Sandpipers and Whimbrel. Golden Plovers were in flight display, flying with exaggerated wing beats and calling – they sounded like they were saying, 'guess who, guess who'. Two cranes were also stood on some higher ground in the distance. As we ventured back we realised two of the Long-tailed Ducks were on the phalarope pool, so we stayed here for short while to get better views and watched as the male and female dived for food. The male had a white and chocolate brown head and breast, and a distinctive white streak just behind the eye. The Red-necked Phalaropes continued to feed and were joined by more – there were now six, including one which came close to shore and preened.

Finishing on a fine note in warm sunshine we made our way back to the vehicles and headed back. The second van stopped to see a Ringed Plover a few metres away from the road, and at our next stop one or two others were also seen. Heading down the valley back to our accommodation we stopped a few times to view a few species including a pale-headed Rough-legged Buzzard found by Mike, two male Willow Grouse (one showing really well before flying off and being joined with the other), a few Common Sandpipers, and a singing Redwing by a river bridge. By now the rain was beginning to come in and when we arrived at our hotel it was pouring with rain. We met for dinner at 7pm and enjoyed a delicious dish made with reindeer meat (or salmon as an alternative) before going through our checklist and retiring for the day.

## Day 5

Monday 3rd June

Down to 2-3°C on the plateau, and up to 12°C on lower ground. Bright, cloudy with cold winds on plateau

After an early night we left the hotel at 8am and headed up to the plateau to look for Dotterel, passing some Reindeer on the way. While there were no Dotterel to be seen, we did find two very obliging Long-tailed Skuas which were feeding within ten metres or so of us. It was fascinating watching them foraging like a Blackbird or Golden Plover, walking forward and dipping their head down to feed before walking on again. Their dark heads looked perfect against the creamy body and dark chocolate-coloured wings. After spending twenty minutes or so watching them in bitter cold winds we sheltered back in the vehicles and headed down the valley to the lower ground and delta, passing a female Brambling feeding by the roadside, and a hunting Short-eared Owl on the way.

We stopped at an old farm house and field where we found Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Pied Flycatcher feeding in an area where some trees and grasses had been burnt in a fire. A 2<sup>nd</sup> year male Pied Flycatcher sang nearby, and a full adult came close before we left. A pair of Common Cranes were feeding in the field-cum-garden, but soon took off. Fieldfares were also present, and many caught a glimpse of a Short-eared or Long-eared Owl dashing past some trees out of sight.

We continued on past a huge lake (Storjö) and stopped to see a male Common Scoter, followed by a flock of 20 feeding together further back, and all diving simultaneously. In the sunshine the males' yellow bills were clearly visible. At our next stop we were looking out across the delta of the lake and had good views of the pools and wider expanse of water. Summer-plumaged adult Little Gulls were dashing around amongst the Arctic Terns, Black-headed and Common Gulls, and nearby a Common Crane was tending to a chocolate brown chick at its nest. Meanwhile, a Red-throated Diver was sat on a small mound and tufts of grass and was no doubt sitting on some eggs. A little later its mate flew in to join it. Further back we watched as three cranes were wading through the water almost submerged – the water was up to their necks! They appeared to be fighting, and one bird was tackling the other by getting on top of it. It didn't appear to be mating, but territorial behaviour. Redshanks were common and filling the air with their song, and so too were Curlew, at least four, while the odd Whimbrel also made an appearance. Male Ruffs in their full splendour were frequent by the shallow pools in front of us. An Osprey flew in towards the back of the lake, and was seen to visit a nest at the top of a pine where its mate was sitting – his or her head could just be made out. A Whinchat was also spotted by a few. A distant raptor, probably an eagle was also seen but not identified.

After a brilliant session here, we moved on to a small pristine pool joined to the lake down in the village. Sitting amongst the lush grasses and other vegetation we were able to watch a colony of over 20 pairs of Black-headed Gulls squabbling away, while up to 10 Little Gulls flew around the pool in circles and tight twists, picking food off the water's surface. Their dark underwings, and silver grey upperwings bordered with white were clearly visible.

In amongst the vegetation and near the gull colony were at least two Slavonian Grebe nests, with their partners feeding on the pool itself. And on the far side near the pool, but in a shallow part of the main lake sat another grebe on eggs only a few metres from the edge. We had incredible views of this species in full summer plumage, and the pair by the path were so obliging we even watched them change incubation duty just 6 metres away! A nearby birch tree was home to Fieldfares and we could see the nest made out of grasses in the fork of the tree. Further out on the lake we spotted a lovely Black-throated Diver. Bog Bean graced the edge of the pool, and Sarah found an unusual plant, *Primula stricta*, nearby.

After having a delicious lunch of beef salad (creamy potatoes and rocket), and watching Little Gulls, Slavonian Grebes and the diver, we walked around the peninsula catching up with a female Whinchat, another grebe and a distant Black-throated Diver. A Fieldfare flew in to a copse with a beak full of food for chicks, and Daniel heard an Icterine Warbler sing. We wandered back to the cars mid-afternoon where an Arctic Tern had joined in with the action at the pool, and we headed off towards the plateau. On our way up distant rain was producing a beautiful rainbow across the landscape. Up towards the top we had nice views of Golden Plovers in breeding plumage. We then bumped into no fewer than 16 Long-tailed Skuas feeding with a small flock of Common Gulls. The first vehicle was with them first and the second soon caught up after stopping to see a Golden Plover in more detail. Just like the pair in the morning, the skuas and the gulls were busy picking and feeding on the open ground. Over the next 30 minutes or so we watched the birds feeding before taking flight and moving further along or round back to where they were previously, before feeding again and pacing the ground like gulls on a playing field during the winter. What a contrast to living life at sea. They looked incredibly graceful and long-winged (and tailed) in flight. It seemed unusual to see them in such numbers now, and perhaps they had just arrived. Huge numbers had been seen passing the North Sea off the UK coastline just a few weeks ago.

We headed down the plateau, stopping to see some more Reindeer, and pausing to take photos of the landscapes and views. Back in town we walked through some lichen-clad spruce trees and soft boggy ground (rather like walking on a mattress) to find Siberian Jays. As we neared the end of our walk, Daniel cut up some sausage and placed it in a tree. It wasn't long before such a jay was sitting in the afternoon sunshine looking at us and the meat. It turned its back to us showing off its bright orange tail. The jay came down to the meat a few times, each time dashing off with the food to hide or eat it.

Back at the hotel we enjoyed a salmon dish for dinner. Some of the group then popped down the road to look for a particular owl. On the way we passed a large Elk feeding on a salt lick. We parked up in a local's garden, an artist, who owned a lovely wild lawn and woodland. A Mountain Hare slipped away, revealing its bright white snow shoes (feet) as it disappeared. We were looking for Tengmalm's Owl – after a little bark scratching on a few trees with nest boxes fitted, we finally struck gold. Suddenly a female owl poked her head out and looked out – there was hardly any room for her head to squeeze out. Like many owls, she had a surprised look on her face, a result of the large eyes and white brow.

She looked down towards Daniel before lowering herself back down into the box. She looked out again and then bedded back down. We left the owl to some peace and headed back, passing a roding Woodcock on the way.

## Day 6

Tuesday 4th June

Cold, 3°C – 7°C Overcast and drizzly

Setting off at 8am we popped in to the Tengmalm's Owl, but with no appearance we continued on to our first stop at the Rogen Nature Reserve to look for Siberian Tit. We passed a Red Fox, Fieldfares and Mistle Thrushes on the way. While the tits remained elusive we did find a Willow Tit, and Redstart, Brambling, and Willow Warbler were singing nearby. A pair of Red-breasted Mergansers was on a pool, the male already changing into his eclipse or moulting plumage. There were signs of Elk and Red Fox, and near the car park fresh evidence of Beaver was also easy to see with various trees felled during the past few days. Two separate Ospreys were seen in flight.

Heading on towards the mountains we happened upon a large chicken-sized female Capercaillie feeding by the roadside with a rusty-orange neck and breast, barred tail and cryptic plumage. She was devouring the leaves of Bilberry and gradually made her way into the open forest.

We stopped for lunch near the mountain plateau – again a delicious salad of smoked salmon, salad, potatoes and dressings. A small group of Reindeer fed nearby. We then drove a short distance to the alpine plateau of Nipfjället where we walked in a line looking for Dotterel. A small number (up to seven) Golden Plovers in breeding plumage were nearby or flying past. Below our feet was a myriad of tiny alpine/heathland flowers and multi-coloured lichens, including some which were almost luminous yellow! It wasn't long before Dave's arms went up and a Dotterel had been found. We made our way over and had lovely views of a female with a distinctive white eye stripe and orange-brown breast, bordered brown. After a short while she flew off. We continued to walk across the plateau to look at the view across this part of Sweden from high altitude before passing an array of rocks and stones piled creatively to form an artistic feature on the mountain top. We also added our own rocks to make a contribution.

We continued on back to try to see Gyr Falcons at Njupeskår Waterfall without any positive sightings. However, Mary-Lee found another Siberian Jay and Willow Warblers continued to sing despite the drizzle. The Ravens were still back and fourth feeding young. We headed south for an hour and a half to our hotel in Älvdalen, passing an Elk and two pairs of Common Cranes on the way, while Fieldfares were often seen in gardens. Despite the rain outside, we had a well earned dinner and got an early night.

## Day 7

Wednesday 5th June

12°C, bright and sunny on the lowland, 3°C and cold wind on the plateau

As we left our hotel as it was brightening up and the sun was shining. We stopped briefly to look at some of Sweden's oldest log cabins in Älvdalen where naturalist Carl Linneaus stopped during his travels in the late 1730s. In the nearby churchyard a Redstart was singing. Our first wildlife stop was by the lakeside of Lake Orsajön, a beautiful wetland habitat with watery meadows and small islands with nesting Black-headed Gulls.

There were lots of Lapwings, and we found some young chicks. Whitethroats were singing around us and a Whinchat was also singing but hiding in a nearby tree. A male Teal dropped in while a few male Wigeon were resting near the reeds. A pair of Red-breasted Mergansers were dabbling and dipping their heads underwater to feed. A Little Ringed Plover, Common Sandpipers (2), Wood Sandpiper, and Redshank were making an appearance along the lake edge, while Curlew called and flew over the fields behind us. One or two Yellow Wagtails flew overhead. Swallows and Swifts swooped above us, and in the nearby meadows a Meadow Pipit, a rare breeding species around this lake, was sitting on a branch while a female Reed Bunting was not so far away. A Magpie flew in to feed its chicks nearby which suddenly were begging loudly. We moved up the road a little to hear at least two Common Rosefinches, and had lovely views of a first-year male in a tree. A few Yellowhammers were singing in the vicinity with at least one seen. A nearby bush was also busy with a Spotted Flycatcher and a Whitethroat, while a Great Tit was mimicking a Chaffinch.

At our next undisclosed site we had a surprise. Under the pretence of going to see Black Woodpecker, we were delighted to suddenly to see a long-tailed Hawk Owl take off from a tree. Very few have been nesting in Sweden in the past year or two, and we had the privilege of visiting this territory to see a pair. We quickly found the male and watch him perched in a tree, his long tail cocked occasionally like a Wren. The nest was in an old Black Woodpecker hole, and a little later the female Hawk Owl appeared on a tree calling and flaring her plumage. Suddenly the male appeared and landed next to her with a dead vole. Quickly the two exchanged the vole, and the female flew off with the prey in the direction of the nest. The male then spent some time perched in a tree. Later, the female appeared again calling, and right of cue the male suddenly disappeared, no doubt off to hunt for another vole.

Meanwhile, Willow Warblers were singing around us along with the odd Tree Pipit, Bullfinch and Blackcap. A number of Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterflies were gracing the habitat, while a Green Hairstreak butterfly was sunning itself on the track. Cuckoo could be heard in the background, along with a singing Mistle Thrush and calling Greenshank. A pair of Kestrels circled in the sunshine. On the side of the track Sarah had spotted some Common Sundews looking ready to catch a fly or ant, while the star-shaped Butterwort was in flower with single shoots upwards revealing a purple flower. We lunched watching the male Hawk Owl perched in a tree before the female came in to send him on his hunting patrol.

We spent the next few hours travelling south through beautiful countryside and past stunning lakes, stopping at a service station in hot sunshine for some snacks. Swifts were overhead feeding on insects driven upwards as farmers cut their hay grass, while Jackdaws filled up their crops on insects found in the fields themselves. Our next stop was Dala Airfield. At the start of the airfield in public land and amongst the landing light strips was an area of grasses and small shrubs where an array of birdlife was living. Whinchats were the most common with at least three pairs singing and feeding on insects. A Red-backed Shrike was perched on the fence close to a pair. Our target bird was Ortolan Bunting and it wasn't long before we had both a male Ortolan and a Yellowhammer perched on the fence singing together. A little later we watched a pair of Ortolans, and one appeared to have food for chicks (and was calling to them). A male Marsh Harrier passed by, as did a Common Buzzard. Whitethroats and Willow Warblers were in the nearby shrubs, and two or three Skylarks were singing overhead or nearby. A Curlew could be heard 'bubbling' away. Leaving this productive site, a local birder took us down the road to listen for Quail and Corncrake – no luck with either, but we did see a few Hobbies, Kestrel and a Buzzard.

We spent the next hour travelling back to our original B&B in Salbohed passing some Roe Deer, a pair of Grey Herons, Goosanders and a few Marsh Harriers on the way. As we arrived back, the Great Spotted Woodpeckers were still feeding on the apple containers as they had been a week ago! We said farewell to Daniel who had been our main tour leader for the week but had to leave us on our final evening.

After dinner and doing our checklist with Ed, we met with our local guide Niclas who was going to be with us for the evening and the next day. Some of the group went out after to go spotting Eagle Owls in a nearby quarry. A Woodcock passed over the road on the way. It wasn't long before we were watching a young, three-week old Eagle Owl lying at its nest on a rather sandy and dusty quarry building. It looked very big and sleepy (or like a dead cat as Dave described it!). We waited an hour or so in case the parents were around but couldn't see them. A Cuckoo was calling on the other side of the quarry, and a few more Woodcock, including two together, were roding overhead. Song Thrushes and Blackbirds sang in the surrounding trees.

We dropped a few people off at the accommodation and popped down the road to listen for some more birds. We stopped near Fläckerbo where three Thrush Nightingales were singing, and across a field we could hear both Grasshopper Warbler and River Warbler together. A Bittern was also 'booming'. We continued down the road to the lake where three Grasshopper Warblers were singing close to each other in the meadows. Another Thrush Nightingale was also singing. Further along the road we stopped to hear a Water Rail calling alongside a female Mallard, while Black-headed Gulls flew around catching insects in the dusky light. A few small waders were also seen. Back at our accommodation those that had stayed behind saw a few Tawny Owlets on the ground before they scurried up the tree to safety. An adult, their parent, was also seen.

## Day 8

Thursday 6th June

Glorious sunny day, up to 26°C

After breakfast we had a little time to look for Black Woodpecker around the grounds of our accommodation. Before we had met at 8am to pack the cars Niclas had found one – we made our way up to the top of the site where the bird was on a tree. It was calling before making its way to the ground where it was pecking away. It then flew to a tree where it proceeded to drum. We watched the woodpecker as it moved to a few more trees before flying towards the back of the woodland, still calling. We then popped across the woodland where a pair of Great Spotted Woodpeckers was feeding young – they could be heard begging away. One of the parents had a large moth caterpillar in its beak. After all the woodpecker excitement we met back at the main building to pack the cars and watch the birds on the bird feeders for one last time. A Red Squirrel ran across the track at one point while Nuthatch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Siskin and Tree Sparrows came to the feeders.

All packed, we left to stop in the Black River Valley and look across the lake near Fläckerbo. This was a gem of a site and in glorious hot sunshine we spent an hour or so seeing lots of birds. A single Whooper Swan was across the lake, while a pair with cygnets was hiding in the reeds closer by. A Buzzard was hovering and Greylag Geese came in to land with some Canada Geese. Swifts were screaming past and flying up to the wooden homes, making good use of the nooks and crannies in the eaves. Incubating adults could also be heard screaming from inside. Meanwhile, Swallows and House Martins were also busy feeding on insects. A stunning male Common Rosefinch was singing in an Ash tree – unlike the previous males, this one was a full adult coated in a warm, rose-red hue across its back and head.

A Whitethroat was also singing and a male Whinchat was feeding in the tall grasses. We had some close Marsh Harriers flying past including an adult female and a second-year male. Meanwhile, a Bittern occasionally 'boomed' in the background. Across the reeds in the shallow waters a flock of over 20 Black Terns were flying around and darting down to pick at any food, while the odd Coot was on the water itself. A few Gadwall also flew in. In the heat a few raptors were picked up including a couple of Ospreys feeding over the water, and two White-tailed Eagles. The first eagle came in from some distance away and landed in a tree. The other appeared and flew over the water before also landing in a tree and opening its wings slightly as it perched. A few Hobbies dashed passed separately, one doing all sorts of fast dives in pursuit of dragonflies. In the background Cuckoo, Skylark, Icterine Warbler, and Goldfinch were singing. A Spotted Flycatcher was chasing a male Pied Flycatcher around in circles. On the ground Sarah found at least 15 species of plant, and a fresh Small Copper butterfly was resting on the ground. Before we left Peter also saw a small flock of Goldfinches, while a male Linnet sang in a tree in front of us.

It was hard to break away, but we headed for another lake, Fröui Sjön. After stopping in a nearby town to post some postcards for Pete, we stopped near the lake to listen for Wryneck. They weren't responding, but two Yellowhammers were singing against each other instead! From here we had lovely views across the lake spotting a few male Shoveler, Mallards, Coot, Canada Geese, Greylag Geese, three Common Cranes, Black-headed Gulls, and a Whooper Swan. We made our way down to some woodland which led to a view across the lake at a lower level. As we entered the woods, a few Blackcaps were singing. A real treat was in store – in an old crow's nest sat a Long-eared Owl. We could just see its eyes and raised 'ear' feathers. After a short while we could see one and then at least two chicks, only a few weeks old. Their white fluffy feathers were moving slightly and their dark cheek feathers were already beginning to grow through.

We had lunch looking out across the lake, enjoying a pasta salad, fresh bread and delicious Swedish pastries. A stunning adult Red-necked Grebe was fishing on the right of the lake, while lots of Goldeneyes were resting or feeding across the whole stretch of water. Four Barnacle Geese, a rarity here, flew past and landed. A single Moorhen was spotted along with a male Pintail. A male Marsh Harrier flew in to some reeds nearby with some nest material, a reed stem or branch in his talons. A Pied Flycatcher was singing in the woods.

As we finished our lunch it was time to leave and make our short drive to the airport. We sorted out our luggage before saying farewell to Niclas – he had picked up an Icterine Warbler singing nearby! Most of us boarded the flight back south, passing over some stunning forest and lake scenery of southern Sweden while Marylee and John were staying one more night in Stockholm before their flight the following day back to the States. In the UK it was also a sunny day, and many of us took the same train back into London before dispersing back to our respective homes...

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## Species List

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

	Common name	Scientific name	May/June							
			30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Western Capercaillie	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>						1		
2	Black Grouse	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>				5				
3	Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta</i>				2				
4	Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>			1	4	1			
5	Barnacle Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>								4
6	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	✓	✓						✓
7	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	✓	✓	2				4	✓
8	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>		2					1	
9	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	1	1	4		1			4
10	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>		1						2
11	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>			2	4	1		2	
12	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	3	✓	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>		2						2+
14	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>					1			1
15	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	3	1		6	✓		1	
16	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>		1	6+	6	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>			7	2		9		
18	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>					21	5		
19	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>				5				
20	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>		1	2	1	✓	5		✓
21	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>			1	3		1	2	
22	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>						2	2	
23	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>				1	2			
24	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>			4	1	2	2	2	
25	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>								1
26	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	1	2			1			4+
27	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>					6+			2+
28	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	h						3 H	1 H
29	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	4						2	
30	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		1		1	2	2		2
31	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>								2
32	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1	2					3	4+
33	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>			1					
34	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	2	1					2	3+
35	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>				2				
36	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>				1				
37	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	1		1		1	1	3	
38	Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	1	2					2	2
39	Gyrfalcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>				1				
40	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>		1						
41	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>							h	
42	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>								1
43	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	✓	✓						✓
44	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	3	3	6	3	6+	4		3
45	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	✓	✓	✓	2	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	May/June							
			30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
46	European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>				10	4+	7		
47	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				2				
48	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>							1	
49	Eurasian Dotterel	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i>						1		
50	Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	6	1	2	1	1		4	
51	Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>			25					
52	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	2	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	1
53	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>			3	✓	1			
54	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>			1		6		3	
55	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>				✓	✓		1	
56	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			6	6	2	2	2	
57	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1	1						
58	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>				6	2		1	
59	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		2		2	✓	1	2	
60	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>				h	1			
61	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>				9	5			
62	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>				6				
63	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
64	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>					20+			
65	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	✓	✓				✓		
67	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	2+	✓					2	
68	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>			2	2	10			
69	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>		5						20+
70	Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>				4	18			
71	Common (Feral) Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	
72	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>		1						
73	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
74	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		2						
75	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	6H	1+6 H	3+ 6H	5 H	1	h	1	2H
76	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>							1	
77	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	2	1					3	
78	Ural Owl	<i>Strix uralensis</i>		6						
79	Great Grey Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	1	1						
80	Northern Hawk-Owl	<i>Surnia ulula</i>							2	
81	Eurasian Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium passerinum</i>	1	1						
82	Boreal Owl (Tengmalm's)	<i>Aegolius funereus</i>					1			
83	Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>								3
84	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>			1		1			
85	European Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	1							
86	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓	✓		2		✓	✓
87	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	1							
88	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	4	4				1	3+	3+
89	Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>		1						
90	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		h						1+
91	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	1	1					1	
92	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>			1					

	Common name	Scientific name	May/June							
			30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
93	Siberian Jay	<i>Perisoreus infaustus</i>					1	1		
94	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		1					1	
95	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
96	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
97	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
98	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			2	5	1	1	1	
99	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		1						
100	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>			2			1		
101	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>							h	
102	European Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>		2						
103	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	1	✓	✓	✓
104	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
105	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	h							
106	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	1	1					3+	2+
107	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				✓	✓			
108	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
109	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
110	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
111	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	1			h				
112	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	1	h						
113	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	h							
114	Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>	1	h						
115	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	h							
116	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	2				h			h
117	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>		h	1				4 H	
118	River Warbler	<i>Locustella fluviatilis</i>							1 H	
119	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	✓	1					h	h
120	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	2	h		1				
121	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>		h						
122	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		h			h		3+	2+
123	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		h	h			h		
124	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		h						
125	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	2	2						2
126	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		2						
127	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	h
128	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>			h					
129	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	2	✓	✓			✓	3+	
130	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
131	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>		1		1	h	1		
132	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	✓	✓	✓				2+	
133	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		h	1			2+	1	
134	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2+	h	✓					
135	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>			1	2				
136	Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>	1+4 H	1					1+4 H	
137	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		1	2	h	1	h		
138	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>		2			2		6	2
139	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>				4				

	Common name	Scientific name	May/June							
			30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
140	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	2	1		1	1	1	1	1
141	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	1	1	1	1	4	1		3+
142	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>			1					
143	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>							3+	1
144	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
145	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>				1				
146	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergii</i>			1	1	1		2	
147	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		2						
148	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	3	✓	✓	✓	✓
149	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		1	2				h	1
150	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
151	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>			2		2	h		
152	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	✓	✓	✓	h	1		4+	h
153	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	2+	6+	✓		h	h	✓	✓
154	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	1	1						6+
155	Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>								1
156	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	1						1+2 H	1
157	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		✓						
158	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		2				1	4	
159	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>		1						
160	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	✓	✓					2+	2 H
161	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>							2	
162	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	1	1		h			h	
163	Lapland Longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>				2				

## Mammals

1	Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	3+	2						
2	Mountain Hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i>	2		1		1			
3	Pine Marten	<i>Martes martes</i>		1						
4	Fallow Deer	<i>Dama dama</i>	7						1	
5	Roe Deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	2+						4	2
6	Red Deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	4							
7	Eurasian Elk	<i>Alces alces</i>	3	1			1	1		
8	Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	
9	Red Squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>		2	1					1
10	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>			1			1		

## Reptile

1	Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>		1						
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## Amphibian

1	Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>				1			1	
2	Common Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>		2	1					

## Butterflies

1	Common Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		1						
2	Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>		10						

	Common name	Scientific name	May/June							
			30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Comma	<i>Polygona c-album</i>	1	1						
4	Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		✓						
5	Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	2+				1			
6	Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		✓						
7	Green-veined White	<i>Artogeia napi</i>		✓						✓
8	Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>	✓	✓						✓
9	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>								1
10	Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>		1					6+	
11	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	1	1						
12	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		2						
13	Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		✓					1	

### Dragonflies

1	Ruby Whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia rubicunda</i>	1							
2	Small Whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i>	✓	✓			✓			
3	Downy Emerald	<i>Cordulia aenea</i>	✓	✓						
4	Four-spotted Chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	✓							
5	Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>								1

### Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!



Ural Owl by Michael Tonge and Linda Baker



2013 Naturetrek Group Photo by Peter Spillett