

Sweden's Upland Birds

Naturetrek Tour Report

27 May – 3 June 2014



Great Grey Owl



Great Snipe



Ruff



Bluethroat

Report compiled by Kerrie Porteous
Cover images courtesy of Gordon Small



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Introduction

Our tour started in the Black River Valley area around Västerås, and gradually we made our way through central Sweden, and northwards into the southern region of Lapland. We saw seven species of owl, including the mighty Great Grey Owl, Hawk Owl and the tiny Pygmy Owl, and in the woodlands we had wonderful views of Black Woodpecker. High on a cliff next to a huge waterfall we watched a pair of Gyr Falcons on their nest, taking it in turn to take flight and entertain us soaring overhead. Our own winter wading birds from here in the UK were resplendent in their breeding plumage on the alpine tundra... at last, we could see clearly why Ruff are so named! With all the additional ducks, warblers, water birds and raptors, every day was completely different and full to the brim of birds, sunshine, the occasional Moose, an awful lot of cinnamon buns and all round excellent company.

Day 1

Tuesday 27th May

Our flight into Västerås, a town 80 minutes west of Stockholm, landed a little late at around 9pm (unfortunately no Ryanair jingle for us this evening!). Our tour leader, Daniel Green, was ready and waiting to whisk us away as soon as we arrived, for what better way to start a week in Sweden than watching a Great Grey Owl hunting in a meadow, less than an hour after arriving in the country? And that is exactly what we did. Suitcases were abandoned in the road as excited members of the group grabbed their binoculars and cameras, and we watched this marvellous bird until we felt that we really couldn't keep our hostess for the night, Wilma, waiting any longer. On our journey to our first guesthouse the front van saw their first Moose of the holiday (a mother and calf), whilst the second van had a Tawny Owl flying overhead.

Wilma had an excellent dinner ready for us when we arrived at the lovely Salbohedgården at close to 11pm, so we gobbled that down, some celebrated a successful first evening with a glass of wine, and we headed off to bed ready to start afresh in the morning.

Day 2

Wednesday 28th May

17 - 20°C, bright and sunny!

This morning we enjoyed watching the bird feeders over breakfast, with the likes of Great Spotted Woodpecker, Greenfinch, Tree Sparrow, and Nuthatch stopping in to entertain us. We were packed up and away in our minibuses soon after, and our first stop of the day was a nearby Eagle Owl nest site...which also happened to be a quarry! A brief game of “spot the owl” followed, and soon we caught sight of three of the chicks on a dusty, metal nest, and soon located the fourth, which had apparently gone for a jaunt down the stairs. Daniel thinks that the good folk working at the quarry return the chicks to their nest if they jump out and get stuck, so it was good to know that they were being given the best start in life!

We began our journey northwards (not going too far to begin with), and stopped in a pocket of forest where Red-Breasted Flycatcher had recently been spotted. It was hard not to get distracted by all the beautiful Fieldfare and Redwings, so common along the road and in the front gardens around us! We ventured into the forest, surrounded by sounds of Siskin, Willow Warbler and Blackcap, and after a little while, we heard the Red-Breasted Flycatcher not too far away from us. We started scanning with renewed vigour, and soon enough, there it was! A great start to the day's proceedings.



Ural Owl chick, by Gordon Small



Ural Owl, by Gordon Small

Just before lunch we stopped at another pocket of deciduous woodland and met our superb guide for the next hour, Stefan (I will distinguish him from our own Stefan by calling him “Swedish Stefan”). Swedish Stefan has been working for years to have this area of forest promoted to protected status, and his enthusiasm was infectious. He led us in through the trees, to a known Ural Owl nest site. We naturally started by looking at the hole, but it was Daniel that called “it's behind you”! We turned to see a rather adorable and already very superior looking Ural Owl chick, watching us from its lofty perch. Before long we also spotted one of the parents and watched it move through the surrounding trees. Daniel was a little concerned that the mother might attack an unassuming Naturetrekker's head if we got too close to the chick, but fortunately we all survived the experience with our hair and hats intact.



Black-headed Woodpecker, by Gordon Small

We had a lunch of Wilma's homemade soup just outside the forest, the group delighted in the furry stools Daniel provided for a lunchtime leg-rest, and we soon got underway again. Our next stop was just a bit further down the road, where Swedish Stefan had told us about a Black Woodpecker nest site. We had a look but didn't spot the hole, and a few members of the group narrowly avoided heart attacks as Daniel shouted "QUICK LOOK NOW". We turned to see a family of Wild Boar running across the road! Next, we came across what looked like a likely Hawk Owl nest site. We sent the intrepid Stefan in to tickle the tree, but in fact it was another Ural Owl that we spotted, just beyond the tree in question. The owl was quite superbly camouflaged in the trees and pretty hard to see, but Sheila was very much in tune with this owl, and eventually got the rest of the group on it too. It was really quite satisfying to have found our "own" Ural Owl!

Next, it was back to the Black Woodpecker site, after a quick phone call and better directions this time. Sure enough, we found the hole and there was a little black head, beak and telling red stripe popping up. The parents were clearly not home, and so we began the waiting game, the theory being that they must be out hunting and surely had to come back before too long. We enjoyed views of Bullfinch and listened to Chiffchaffs (much less common here than back home!), but after a while stomachs were beginning to rumble. We sent Daniel back to the van for cinnamon buns and strawberries – delicious – and no sooner had we finished eating them than the Black Woodpecker finally appeared! He or she flew backwards and forward several times, climbed up the bare trees nearby, and really rewarded us for our wait with some quite excellent views and photography opportunities.

As time was beginning to get on we continued on to our next hotel, half an hour's drive further north. We arrived at the beautiful Green Hotel in Tällberg, with its stunning views over Lake Siljan, at around 7pm. We met later for dinner, checklist and pudding, and retired to bed. Those who could keep their eyes open enjoyed a wonderful sunset over the lake, at what must have been 11pm or even later!



View over Lake Siljan from the Green Hotel, by Kerrie Porteous

Day 3

Thursday 29th May

20°C, warm and sunny though a little cooler first thing

We began our day with a comprehensive Swedish breakfast before setting off from our hotel at 8.00am. Our first stop was a boardwalk in a pocket of forest, where we enjoyed a cup of tea or coffee and a leg stretch. Small-white faced dragonflies were darting around, and as some of the group ventured along the boardwalk, a Wryneck was calling. Keith called to it with his phone and soon it flew overhead. Treecreeper, Yellow Hammer and Tree Pipits

were all nearby too, and as the group reunited around the coffee, we had a second view of the Wryneck and a lovely Siskin.

Next up was Fulufjället National Park, and a walk up to Njupesjär, the highest waterfall in Sweden (93 metres high). There was still snow on the ground close to the waterfall itself, but getting that close to it wasn't our aim anyway. Rather, this is a known site for nesting Gyr Falcons, and it was them that we were so hoping to see! We slowly meandered our way through the forests and alongside the river up to a view point, where we could see a nest and just the top of a Gyr Falcon head through our scopes, in the cliffs alongside the waterfall. This was an excellent start, and we watched the nest for some time, trying to work out who exactly was in there. We had our first really good views of Brambling too at this point. We continued on, and as we descended the steps much closer to the waterfall the male suddenly appeared, and the female flew from the nest. For the next half hour (or possibly longer, it's hard to know!) we watched them soar through the sky, occasionally returning to the nest and taking flight again. It really was incredible to watch, and a real tour highlight for many in the group. It was hard to tear ourselves away, but eventually we had to, and slowly descended back to the vehicles. Stefan did his best to find some sort of creature, or tracks thereof, in the snow fields, but alas it wasn't to be. We celebrated our Gyr Falcon success with an excellent and very Swedish lunch of smoked trout, cream and crackers, before carrying on with our journey north.



Looking for Gyr Falcon at Njupesjär waterfall

Along the way, we stopped for our first Capercaillie at the side of the road – a female – and past a party of Whooper Swans. We then stopped at a couple of good lakes to see what we could find there – the first gave us Raven, another brief Black Woodpecker, Crane, Tufted Duck and Teal. We could hear the Bramblings in the trees around us, and the call of Wood Sandpiper. The second lake (and a welcome cup of tea / coffee) gave us Velvet Scoter to add to our list, plus Greenshank, Arctic Tern and our first good Moose, nicely spotted by Jane across the lake. Goosander flew through overhead, and we continued on with our journey.

We arrived at our base for the next three nights in the far south of Swedish Lapland at around 7pm, and met for dinner not too much later, as we were off out again this evening. Though not before some members of the group had managed to eat two entire meals of “Beef Roast Lamb” and potato gratin (hey, it's hard work this birding lark).

We set off out again at about 9.45pm, our destination being a nearby Great Snipe lek site. We walked up the stretch of board walk, stopping to have a look at some Black Grouse along the way, before crossing the tundra – we were grateful for our wellies! – and settled down on the furry stools to watch the Great Snipe. What a fantastic experience – it's hard to know how many Great Snipe there were, but certainly, plenty! We could hear their strange clicking sounds – a bit like a Geiger counter – and whistling noises, and watched as the birds began to display – stretching their necks and flicking their wings and tails. Two Short-eared Owls also appeared for us, and we enjoyed watching them for a time too. We suddenly realised it was 11.30pm, though of course still quite light! Thinking we probably ought to get a bit of sleep (and suddenly feeling tired) we headed back, reaching our beds close to midnight.



Top left: Watching the Great Snipe Lek, by Kerrie Porteous. Top right: Great Snipe, by Gordon Small
Bottom: Leaving the lek site at 11.30pm, by Kerrie Porteous

Day 4

Friday 30th May

Up to 18°C, but really quite windy so feeling much colder!

Although we'd had a late night, we had plenty we wanted to do today so we set off at 8.30am for the higher tundra. Lynda had the first spot of the day calling a Willow Grouse from the rear van (since we braked first, we definitely saw it before the front van...). Next was a Wood Sandpiper in song flight. Stopping on the road towards the plateau, we met a helpful chap called Jani, who showed us some more Willow Grouse, along with some Golden Plover and nice close views of Brambling. Continuing on our journey, we passed our first Reindeer of the trip (the first of many, it would turn out!) and parked up next to the sole building on the high plateau at Flatruet, which provided a bit of shelter from the wind, which was pretty strong today! From here we could see a Crane on a nest, and could hear Redshank calling. Jim was the first to call Long-tailed Skuas, and fortunately for us these beautiful birds flew in close by. Next we found Ruff, and Lapland Buntings (albeit quite distant views) flitting between grassy tussocks. Quickly we added Snipe, Meadow Pipit, Swallow and Common Gull to today's list.

Daniel thought it best to move a bit further down in the valley for the rest of the day, and save a longer walk across the tundra for tomorrow in the hope that the wind would die down a little overnight. En-route we stopped to photograph some Reindeer (I think we were all beginning to fall for these endearing, snooty looking animals), and spotted Ringed Plover and our first Golden Eagle soaring overhead.



Slavonian Grebes, by Gordon Small

We stopped for lunch by a beautiful lake in the valley, where we watched a pair of Slavonian Grebes on a nest, taking it in turns to sit on the eggs and nest build. More Slavonian Grebes were elsewhere on the lake, along with a pair of Tufted Ducks, lots of very noisy Black-headed Gulls, a pair of divers (a bit too distant to conclusively identify), and Common Sandpiper which flew past us. Slightly further along were Common Scoter, and we had super views of a Cuckoo. Our next stop down the road added Yellow Wagtail and Whinchat – both a lovely male and a lovely female – and we could hear Lesser Whitethroat. We once again sent Stefan in to scratch another likely looking Hawk Owl tree – again, no joy. However, spirits remained high as next we spotted our first Siberian Jay of the tour – congratulations go to Jim for spotting it from the vehicle!

Our last site of the day was a river delta where we unloaded the coffee and strawberries again, and set up the scopes. Here we had excellent views of Ruff and Red-throated Diver, Wood Sandpiper, Curlew and Greenshank. And, there began the Great Osprey Relay. Keith and Adrian were the chief followers of the incredibly distant bird, with Jane and Ros, and sometimes Mick, dipping into the viewing. Some helpful commentary followed: “it’s just above the horizon, dipping into a light green area, now it’s against some trees, now it’s against the cloud, coming into the green again, yes it’s still a very long way away, might be coming closer, it’s against the sky, coming into the green area...”. There was some considerable excitement when a couple of others managed to pick it up before very quickly losing it again...eventually Adrian’s eyes hurt too much to carry on (the things we do for birding!) and Keith became the final Osprey follower, before he too called it a day. On that, we set off back to base, stopping on the way for a Rough-legged Buzzard which we spotted overhead. Passing over the tundra we could see some other binocular-ed folk looking at something presumably interesting, so we ventured over to where it turned out they were watching a rather splendid Red-necked Phalarope, battling against the waves on a little pocket of water. A very nice final bird of the day, and we made it back to our hotel at around 7.15pm, ready to wash, eat, and retire to bed a little earlier tonight!



Red-necked Phalarope, by Gordon Small

Day 5

Saturday 31st May

Around 15°C, but felt much colder again in the wind!

We set off this morning at 8am and the first stop was by the lake in Funäsdalen, where we began the day with Goosander, Wigeon, Garden Warblers, Sand Martins, House Martins, Swifts, Goldeneye and Velvet Scoter. We then set off for higher ground again, stopping a number of times for a Sparrowhawk overhead, then to photograph a lovely Sami hut and some equally lovely Reindeer, then for a Golden Eagle. Bramblings were wheezing away nearby, and we saw a (confused!) Woodcock treating us to a display flight. At each of these stops we were also on the hunt for Bluethroat, and on our fourth stop (all of these being in fairly quick succession), we had success! We played the call for the Bluethroat and it sang back, before treating us to excellent views, perching in the trees all around us, flying over the road and then back to us for another close-up.

Next we returned to Flatruet where we had been the day before, first having a quick tea break in the sunny, sheltered spot behind the lone hut, where through the scopes we could see Temminck's Stint, Crane and Wood Sandpiper. It was still pretty windy, but we didn't let it stop us and we set off for a longer walk across the tundra. We started with much better views of Lapland Bunting than the previous day, and then went on to enjoy excellent views of displaying Ruffs. Whimbrel, Crane, Long-tailed Skuas and a Long-tailed Duck flyover followed, before we circled back and stopped to enjoy 3 Red-necked Phalarope on one of the pools in the tundra.



Lapland Bunting, by Gordon Small



Enjoying a moment with the Red-necked Phalarope!

We popped back to these pools again after lunch so that Linda and Stefan could catch up with the Red-necked Phalarope, and the photographers could get some good snaps. Next we tried stopping right on the very top of the plateau in the hope of finding Dotterel. We walked for half an hour or so, but really there was very little life to report up here!

On our way back down off the mountain we stopped again to get a good look at the Sami huts we'd been driving past, and then for a Willow Grouse, and then for a remarkably close Golden Eagle overhead. We stopped at the supermarket in Funäsdalen to buy some

doughnuts (for us) and some sausage (for the Siberian Jays...). Not too far from our hotel there is a good site for the Siberian Jays, so we stopped here, helped ourselves to coffee and doughnuts, whilst Daniel wielded chunks of sausage and stuck them onto one of the trees. It didn't seem very likely to those of us watching that a Siberian Jay would appear, as if by magic, hop around the tree, and help itself to a bit of sausage. But of course, Daniel knew exactly what he was doing, and of course, that is exactly what happened.



Left: Group watching for Siberian Jay, by Kerrie Porteous. Right: Siberian Jay, by Gordon Small

We returned to our hotel just before 7, enjoyed another excellent meal (restricting ourselves to just one main course each this evening), and then set off at about quarter past 9 for our evening adventure. Daniel had wind of a Tengmalm's Owl nest site, so this is where we headed for. Just a few hundred metres down the road we found not one, not two, but TREE moose – a great start! After a drive of about half an hour we started looking for the nesting hole, and it didn't take too long to locate it. We sneaked up onto the bank opposite and waited quietly, looking and listening for signs of chicks or hunting parents. Even if the chicks had recently fledged, they should still be nearby. Sadly, there wasn't a peep from the hole, nor from the surrounding forest. Eventually we had to conclude that either the chicks were long gone – or had been predated. Sheila and Linda conducted some crime scene investigation at the base of the tree, and returned to the vehicles with what were most certainly fluffy Tengmalm Owl chick feathers. It seems that this nest had been the site of a most unhappy event in recent days, and we'd arrived just a little too late. Very sad news indeed.

Day 6

Sunday 1st June

Sunny again and the wind had dropped! Between 18 - 22°C

It was time to embark on our journey back down south, and early sightings on the lakes by the road included Goldeneye, Tufted Ducks and Goosander. Our first stop of the day was for coffee (of course), and to try for Siberian Tit. We walked through a beautiful stretch of forest, finding Willow Tit, Willow Warbler, hearing Lesser Whitethroat, Pied Flycatcher, Common Sandpiper and enjoying an excellent photography session with a very smart male Brambling. We had a super male Redpoll, and then Cuckoo – heard and then seen flying over – and singing Greenshank. Sadly, in amongst all this, we weren't able to locate a Siberian Tit, but it had been a lovely little walk regardless. Daniel told us that there are all sorts of stories about Cuckoos in Sweden – and that if you hear them before breakfast you can go mad, the cure for which is a vodka. We'd all had our breakfast by this point, unfortunately, so there was no need to test this out. Some of the ladies hung back to use the forest's facilities, and reported back with a Redstart, female Cuckoo to join our male, and a possible Osprey.

We stopped by a couple of lakes for a leg stretch – the latter with Tufted Ducks, Velvet Scoter, Brambling and Cranes, before the longer drive to Nipfjället where we would stop for lunch and our afternoon walk. A herd of Reindeer with their little velvety antlers joined us on the road for the end of the drive, clip clopping along in front



Our accompanying Reindeer!

of the vehicles, looking snooty as ever. As the road had been damaged by the recent thaw we abandoned the vehicles and completed the last kilometre or so of the journey on foot. The views walking over the high ground were stunning, and though once again our quest for Dotterel wasn't going brilliantly, the landscapes were making it up for it. As the group reassembled Stefan reported back that he'd flushed a Rock Ptarmigan walking over a patch of remaining snow. He led the way the 15 minutes or so back, and sure enough, we found a female looking distinctly like a rock – I guess it's in the name. We all had a good look through the scopes before sneaking a bit closer for even better views.

Still no Dotterel at this point...so we began walking back down to the road towards the vehicles. Just as a certain Naturetrek co-leader loudly declared that she didn't think there were any Dotterel here, two plover-like birds with a distinctly bright chestnut-y belly flew right overhead...yes, that would be the Dotterel then! As only a few of the group had seen them, and even they had been hoping to get a much better view, we spent quite some time after that trying to relocate the pair. They'd landed a long way away though, and despite repeatedly finding the (still very lovely) Golden Plover, it wasn't to be, and eventually we had to call it a day and move onto our next hotel in Älvdalen.



Viewing the Rock Ptarmigan

Day 7

Monday 2nd June

Warm and sunny again, 20 - 24°C.

Those who went for a little pre-breakfast walk reported back that there were House Sparrows to add to our list by Gita's Salon! We were packed up and on the road again bright and early, with our first stop being about 45 minutes' drive away. This was a beautiful spot with decking overlooking a lake and wetland, and no sooner had we got out of the vehicles than we heard the distinctive clicking of a Quail, followed by a fleeting glimpse! Those who preserved with the Quail later spotted it flying – what a treat indeed! On the lake we were very excited to see a Broad-billed Sandpiper, along with many Lapwing, Canada Goose, Mute Swan, some lovely male Teal, Common Terns and surprisingly our first Herring Gulls of the trip!

Next up, we collected a local chap from the side of the road (this was, you understand, pre-arranged) who showed us the way to a possible site for Hawk Owl. It's fair to say we wouldn't have found this ourselves, as the roads turned again and again into the forest, and then we set out on foot even further. We located the tree where we knew they had been nesting, and it wasn't long before we heard and quickly sighted a female Hawk Owl, perched on a bare tree above us, calling loudly to her chicks (who were presumably nearby in the forest). It was another stunning view, and we watched her for a little while, sometimes moving from tree top to tree top, before we decided we would leave her (and her nearby chicks) in peace.



Hawk Owl, by Gordon Small

After a celebratory lunch on the furry seats, we continued our journey back as far as Tällberg. Here we stopped for some delicious waffles with cream and cloudberry jam, found a hedgehog under a bush and enjoyed a quick spot of shopping.

Our next stop was an innocuous piece of road where Daniel thought we had a great chance of Ortolan Bunting. The man delivered once again – within moments of our arrival a lovely male Ortolan Bunting perched up on the nearby fence, and flitted between here and some bushes further back, sometimes joined by a couple of Whinchats, and once, a Red-backed Shrike. We could hear Whitethroat and Yellow Hammers around us, and as we set off for our next hotel, stopped for excellent, close up views of two (separate) male Marsh Harriers.



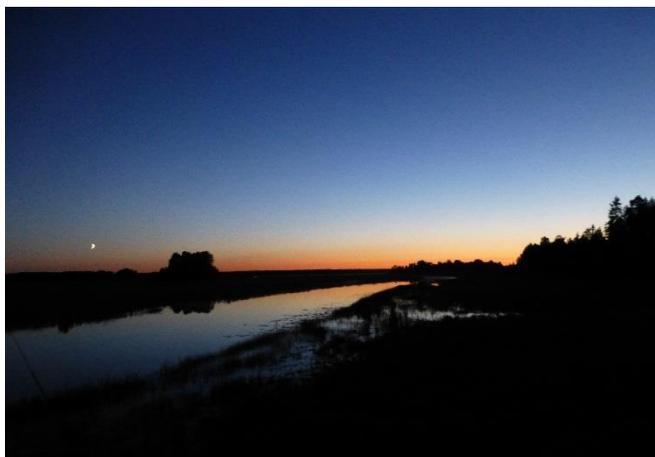
Tällberg waffle stop!

This evening we were back at our first hotel, Salbohedgården, and the wonderful Wilma was once again on hand to feed and entertain us. No one wanted to waste our final evening in Sweden, so we set off out after dinner into the beautiful Black River Valley. First we went to look for Pygmy Owl, with great success – some of Daniel's local friends were already out watching it, so they had given us a heads up and we knew where to go. After we'd had our fill of Pygmy, we decided to go down the road again and try for Great Grey Owl a second time. It would have been wonderful to see these beautiful bird one more



Ortolan Bunting, by Gordon Small

time before returning home, but sadly it wasn't to be. The owl had been seen a couple of times earlier in the evening, but it seems that we missed it this time. It was beginning to get dark (ish!), and the time had come to return to our guesthouse. On our return journey, Daniel pulled over at the side of the road, and, as the clock approached midnight, we watched in silence as the deep red rays of sunlight finally sank behind the tranquil black river, while Spotted Crake called and a Bittern boomed around us.



Left: Pygmy Owl, by Gordon Small. Right: Midnight in the Black River Valley, by Kerrie Porteous

Day 8

Tuesday 3rd June

Bright and sunny to begin (around 20°C), cloud moved in with rain PM

We enjoyed breakfast and the activity at the bird feeders once again this morning, with more Tree Sparrows, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Siskins, Bullfinches and Nuthatches all putting in an appearance. Daniel then set about taking us to some of his favourite spot in the area. The first was just down the road, and we could very clearly hear a Grasshopper Warbler, which, after a bit of trying, we did manage to locate. The main reason though for visiting this particular spot was the Thrush Nightingale, which we could certainly all hear, but catching sight of it was much trickier! Most of us did (more or less) catch a glimpse of it in the end, but it did its best to taunt us. Meanwhile, we heard a Common Rosefinch, which we then saw well as it flew, bright red, over our heads. It kept us entertained for some time, moving between the trees and sometimes into the hedgerow right in front of us. Swifts were flying overhead, a Common Whitethroat popped by, as did a Green Woodpecker (very pleasing for Stefan who doesn't get them back home in Ireland!) and a female Marsh Harrier, and we could hear Yellow Hammers, Skylarks and Cranes around us.

Next we moved to a nearby lake, where it was time for the inevitable tea-and-cinnamon-bun stop. Here we watched Black Terns, Snipe, Great Crested Grebes, Greylag Geese, ANOTHER Green Woodpecker for Stefan, and Marsh Harrier. We initially thought the highlight was watching an Osprey hunt and catch a fish, but this was soon trumped by a White-tailed Eagle, which we also saw hunt, catch a fish, and then retire to the reed beds to devour its dinner. Jim pointed out Goldfinches – new for our



Common Rosefinch, by Gordon Small

trip list! – and plenty of ducks were around too, mostly Gadwall and Shoveler. Starlings and House Martins swooped around us, and there were clearly Swifts nesting in a nearby barn.

We were gradually making our way towards the airport, and our next site was almost on top of the runway. Here we were on the hunt for Great Reed Warbler – Daniel of course knew exactly where to find it, and as we walked along a boardwalk surrounded by reeds, its song got louder and louder. It took a bit of locating in the binoculars, but it did pop up a few times to afford us a few nice glimpses! Next we tried for Penduline Tit, and although we located the nest, no bird was to be seen going in or out.

We had to bid farewell to Daniel at lunchtime as he set off northwards once again, and so Janne, a great mammal enthusiast, stepped in to keep us company for the last couple of hours and get us back to the airport. Just as we had all our lunch laid out our good fortune with the weather finally ran out, and the skies opened. We were quite British / Irish about it, and continued on with the wet picnic whilst Janne told us about the different mammals we had been surrounded by over the last week, pointing out a huge beaver lodge across the water.

As the rain looked like it might be set in for the afternoon (and really, we'd had such glorious weather all week, we couldn't complain!), we retired to a café down the road for the last hour or so where we had a final cup of tea and finished off our checklist before making our way to Västerås airport in good time for the flight home.

What a fantastic week it had been – so many wonderful birds, fantastic weather, great walks, food, Moose and Reindeer, brilliant company... mine and Daniel's thanks go to all of you for making it so enjoyable, and a big extra thank you to Gordon for sharing his wonderful photos for this report. I do very much hope to travel with you again one day in the not too distant future!

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Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	May / June							
			27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
1	Hazel Grouse	<i>Tetrastes bonasia</i>		✓						
2	Western Capercaillie	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>			✓		2			
3	Black Grouse	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>			3		1	1		
4	Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta</i>						2		
5	Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>				4	6			
6	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>							✓	
7	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	✓							✓
8	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>							✓	✓
9	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>			✓				✓	
10	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
11	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>								✓
12	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓
13	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>								✓
15	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>			✓	✓			✓	✓
16	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>				2				
18	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>			✓		✓	✓		
19	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>			✓	1				
20	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>					2			
21	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>				4				
24	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>			1					
25	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>								✓
26	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>								✓
27	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>							✓	✓
28	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>				8				✓
29	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>							H	
30	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>								✓
31	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>								✓
32	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>				2		1		✓
33	European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>		1						
34	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>								✓
35	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	1						2	2
36	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>				1	1			
37	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
38	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>				1				
39	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>			2	1	1			
40	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
41	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>				1				
42	Gyrfalcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>			2 +c					
43	Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>							H	
44	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>								✓
45	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>		6	1	4	✓	✓	✓	✓
46	Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
47	European Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>				✓	✓	15		

	Common name	Scientific name	May / June							
			27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
48	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				✓	2			
49	Eurasian Dotterel	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i>						2		
50	Eurasian Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	✓		✓		✓		✓	
51	Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>			10+					
52	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
53	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>			✓	H	✓			
54	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>				✓	✓		✓	
55	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>				✓	✓			
56	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
57	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>								2
58	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
59	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
60	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>					1			
61	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>					1			
62	Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>							1	
63	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>			✓	✓	✓			
64	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>				✓	4			
65	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
67	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>							✓	
68	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>							✓	
69	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
70	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>								✓
71	Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>				3+2	2			
72	Common (Feral) Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>			✓			✓		✓
73	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>								✓
74	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
75	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>							✓	
76	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	H		✓	✓	✓	✓	H	
77	Eurasian Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>		4						
78	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>		1						
79	Ural Owl	<i>Strix uralensis</i>		3+1						
80	Great Grey Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	1							
81	Northern Hawk-Owl	<i>Surnia ulula</i>							1	
82	Eurasian Pygmy Owl	<i>Glaucidium passerinum</i>							1	
83	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>			2					
84	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
85	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>			1					
86	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>		✓						
87	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>		✓					✓	✓
88	Black Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>		3	1			1		
89	European Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>								2
90	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>							1	
91	Siberian Jay	<i>Perisoreus infaustus</i>				2	1			
92	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		2				1		
93	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
94	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
95	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
96	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			2		✓	✓	✓	✓
97	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>		✓						✓
98	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>						✓		

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			27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
99	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>					1			
100	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
101	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
102	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		✓						
103	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>				✓	50			
104	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
105	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
106	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>		10						
107	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	H
108	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓			✓			
109	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>		✓						
110	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>								✓
111	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>		H						✓
112	Common Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>								✓
113	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>		✓						
114	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>		✓			✓			H
115	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>				H		H		
116	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>							✓	✓
117	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>		✓						
118	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		✓	H					
119	Eurasian Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>		✓	✓					✓
120	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>		✓						
121	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
122	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>						1		
123	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓				✓		✓
124	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
125	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		
126	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
127	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>		✓				✓		
128	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>		✓						✓
129	Bluethroat	<i>Luscinia svecica</i>			H	H	✓			
130	Thrush Nightingale	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>								✓
131	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>				H				
132	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>			✓	✓		2	H	
133	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
134	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
135	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>		✓						✓
136	European Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
137	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>		✓						
138	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓					✓	
139	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>		✓						✓
140	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		✓				H		
141	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergii</i>				✓	✓	✓		
142	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
143	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
144	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		H
145	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
146	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
147	European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>		✓	✓			✓		✓
148	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Carduelis spinus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
149	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>								✓

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			27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	
150	Common Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>			✓				1		
151	Common Rosefinch	<i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>									✓
152	Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>		✓							
153	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>		✓							✓
154	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		✓						✓	H
155	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>								✓	
156	Common Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>						3			✓
157	Lapland Longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>				2	2				

Mammals:

Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*)Moose (European Elk) (*Alces alces*)Stoat (*Mustela ermine*)(Semi-domesticated) Reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*)Mountain Hare (*Lepus timidus*)Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*)European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)Pine Marten (*Martes martes*)Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)House Mouse (*Mus musculus*)Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)Common Shrew (*Sorex araneus*)

Naturetrek group on the Lapland tundra, by Kerrie Porteous