



A [Tropical Birding](#) set departure tour

Scotland and Ireland: Caledonian Highlands, The Hebrides and the Emerald Isle

Main Tour: 9th – 15th June 2019

Emerald Isle Extension: 15th – 19th June 2019

Tour Leader: Emma Juxon

All photographs in this report were taken by Emma Juxon, species depicted in photographs are named in **BOLD RED**



Introduction

If travelling to a place with an eclectic mix of wildlife, landscapes and culture is something you're interested in, then this is a tour for you. Scotland is the land of the last wilderness in the British Isles, with its rugged mountain ranges, glacial glens and majestic lochs, it's truly a sight to behold. Myth and legend lay around every corner, from heather strewn hillsides, ancient Caledonian pine forests to the dark depths of the lochs. We explore vast Highland National Parks, visit remote Gaelic-speaking communities on a white sand archipelago and journey through volcanic landscapes carved out during the last ice age. The Emerald Isle extension will show you the true meaning of its namesake as we are submerged in every shade of green imaginable and the beauty of its landscape and people alike will stay with you for a lifetime.

Our tour begins in Edinburgh, Scotland's capital city affectionately nicknamed Auld Reekie by its proud residents. I can't recommend enough taking the time to spend a few days pre-tour to explore the city itself. From here we headed north to the Scottish Highlands and the Cairngorms National Park. We discovered the famous Red Grouse, Scotland's subspecies of **Willow Ptarmigan**, **Rock Ptarmigan** and **Ring Ouzel** on the mountain tops, **Crested Tit** and **Crossbills** in the ancient forests and rare **Horned Grebe** on the lochs. It wasn't just the birds we were after though; **Red Deer** and **Eurasian Red Squirrel** are also some of Scotland's most iconic species and we saw plenty. The Outer Hebrides brought us highlights such as rasping **Corn Crake**, regal **Golden Eagle** and ghostly **Short-eared Owl** along with an insight into island life. We were treated to a menagerie of marine life during our ferry crossings, from **Common Minke Whale** and **Short-beaked Common Dolphin** to **Manx Shearwater** and **European Storm Petrel**, not to mention the breathtaking scenery as we sailed between the islands and the mainland. In the shadow of Ben Nevis, the UK's highest mountain, we had an unforgettable encounter with **European Pine Marten**. The Emerald Isle extension brought us its stunning coastal roads, incredible scenery and a remarkable evening at the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland. Across the border into the Republic of Ireland, we soaked up Dublin craic, found ancient monasteries and toured the Atlantic coast, from thousands of seabirds at the Cliffs of Moher to **White-throated Dipper** in the centre of Galway.

Our bird of the trip was **Short-eared Owl**, not just because it's a beautiful species but also due to the exceptional encounters we had with it. Other highlights included **Golden Eagle**, **White-throated Dipper** ([front cover](#)), **Hen Harrier** and the characterful **European Pine Marten**.

June 9 – Edinburgh to Grantown-on-Spey

Our tour started on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning in Edinburgh, Scotland's historical capital city. Once the participants had been collected from their centrally located hotels, we were on our way out of the city and heading north into wild Scotland. We had fantastic views of the Firth of Forth and its bridges as we took the relatively new Queensferry Crossing bridge. We were already picking up **Common Buzzard** soaring and **Eurasian Kestrel** hovering above the road, **Lesser Black-backed** and **Herring Gull**, **European Blackbird**, **Common Wood-Pigeon**, **Carrion Crow** and **Eurasian Magpie**. Finding ourselves in the heart of the Scottish countryside we were greeted by **Eurasian Oystercatcher** in what seemed like every field and on every stonewall, their distinctive shrills and pipping calls filling the air. Meandering streams made for perfect bathing spots for **Mew** and **Black-headed Gull**, whilst **Northern Lapwing** showed off their iridescent oil slick-esque color in the midmorning sun.



We had been surrounded by fantastic scenery all morning, but it became more and more dramatic as we neared our first destination of the day, the Glenshee Ski Centre. This is Scotland's largest ski resort, taking its name from the Gaelic 'Glen of the Fairies'; we weren't there for the fairies though or the skiing! The heather laden hillsides create great cover for one of Scotland's most iconic avian species, but within moments we were enjoying views of the Famous Grouse itself. The Scottish race of **Willow Ptarmigan** or Red Grouse as we like to call them, were incredibly well camouflaged but once everyone had got their eye

in, we were picking out the males' striking red eyebrows all around us. Taking a short walk up one of the tracks, it wasn't long before we found our first **Meadow Pipit**, **White Wagtail** and a **Roe Deer** buck on the other side of the glen. Then, something caught our eye as if flew uphill and over a ridge, **Ring Ouzel!** With the sighting of this stunning thrush being too fleeting for my liking, we headed further uphill to see if we could catch up with it and get some better views. We did indeed see it again, a pair in fact, as they flew from post to post up to the very top of the Munro. Scanning the hillsides, we were surrounded by not only Red Grouse but also a herd of grazing **Red Deer** stags; Red Grouse and Red Deer together, it doesn't more Scottish than that! With the weather closing in, we made our way back to the car and onward toward our lunch stop.



A couple of opportunistic stops along the road gave us our first **Eurasian Curlew**, **Rook**, **Ring-necked Pheasant** (an introduced species, but still a looker) and an all too quick glance at **Eurasian Bullfinch**. We arrived at Nethy Bridge, a quaint forest village in the Scottish Highlands, just in time for a great pub lunch. As we enjoyed our pub grub, we watched a torrential downpour that was now occurring outside and turning the beautiful scenery into a smudged pastel drawing. With the rain easing a little and the thought of one of our main targets just feet away, we grabbed our wet weather gear and headed for the bridge. The Cairngorms National Park is a popular wildlife watching area for not only wildlife lovers but wildlife filmmakers; so much so a popular seasonal BBC program has been filmed here over the past few seasons. As we neared the River Nethy it became clear that a

cameraman knew of my favourite spot to find our target; knelt waist deep in the middle of the river,

camera aimed at the bridge, he seemed less than impressed that a bunch of enthusiastic birders had just turned up and soon made his way out and on to dryland. Within minutes of him leaving, a flash of brown and white flew down river, **White-throated Dipper!!!** We soon forgot all about the rain and were enjoying absolutely incredible views as the aquatic passerines foraged along rocks and in the water collecting various invertebrates and small fish. It was fantastic to watch the pair take it in turns to return up river to their nest and return to forage and get such clear views of their three shades of brown and striking white breast. The trees overhanging the river also gave us great views of our first adult and fledgling **Eurasian Blue Tit** and **Common Chaffinch**.



A short drive took us to our hotel for the next two nights in the town of Grantown-on-Spey, we settled into our rooms and took a short break before heading out again. Our afternoon foray was to a beautiful nearby forest where we became acquainted with the various species found there. As we took the forest

trail through the huge Scots Pine and Bilberry, we came across **Willow Warbler**, **Chiffchaff**, **Eurasian Wren** singing at the top of their lungs, families of **Coal Tit** and **Eurasian Siskin** high in the canopy. **Great Spotted Woodpecker** gave us a runaround but we eventually got some great views and **Mistle Thrush** darted through the trees sounding like little toy guns. Above the trees, **Common Swift** could be seen soaring but it wasn't long before the rains returned. Making our way back to the van, the smell of the pine filled the air adding to the sensory experience. It had been a fantastic day of scenery, seasons and some incredible birds.

June 10 – Cairngorms National Park

Rising early today we headed deep into the Cairngorms National Park to our first destination of the day. We encountered some fantastic species along way, including **Graylag Goose**, **Northern Lapwing**, **Eurasian Jackdaw** and **European Hare** foraging in the fields. **Mistle Thrush** and **Eurasian Blackbird** sang from the trees as a doe **Roe Deer** walked her tiny twin fawns through the mist. As we drove through the Scots Pine, we came to a halt to enjoy a gorgeous **Eurasian Red Squirrel** and it made its way along an old stone wall; a beautiful specimen with a bright blonde tail and long ear tufts. Nearing the Cairngorm Mountain carpark, we made another stop to enjoy our second hare species of the day, **Mountain Hare**; with its



noticeably smaller features to help it survive the Cairngorm's arctic-like conditions. The weather was less than inviting when we reached the mountain carpark, completely surrounded by cloud we tucked into our delicious packed breakfast as we were reminded that every cloud has a silver lining. In this case it came in the form of **Ring Ouzel** and we were treated to amazing views!

The cloud had started to clear and we could at least see the ski centre now, so we made haste and headed up one of the trails in search of our main target. A small pine near the ski centre made for a perfect singing post for **Willow Warbler**, whereas the heather was alive with **Meadow Pipit** and **Willow Ptarmigan**. The cloud had returned and it wasn't long before we were completely surrounded again. Almost an hour into the hike, we heard it! I'm sure there are more eloquent ways to describe the sound, but to me it sounds just like The Predator and without having Arnie on tour with us it's a little disconcerting when in middle of a cloud on the side of a mountain! All joking aside though, we had found our target, **Rock Ptarmigan**! Laying eyes on the bird was another matter altogether, a grey bird on a grey rock on a grey mountainside in a grey cloud is no easy feat, especially when it's 30+ meters away. We waited for the weather conditions to ease so we could get on the bird but instead they worsened. With us not being able to see the path ahead of us now we decided it was best to leave the ptarmigan behind and safely make our way back to the ski centre, where we warmed up with a hot coffee. The cloud below the mountains had cleared and we could at least enjoy the beautiful scenery of Loch Morlich below.



Rock Ptarmigan in the mist, Cairngorms National Park

Next up, we made our way to Loch Insh. A recreational loch, but also home to a pair of nesting **Osprey**. One soared overhead as we enjoyed our first great views of **European Robin** with its fledglings. The small woodland near the lake was full of passerines, **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Coal** and **Eurasian Blue Tit**, **Eurasian Wren** and smart **Common Chaffinch**. On the shores of the loch we watched one of the Osprey on the nest but were soon distracted by a high-pitched cheeping sound coming from the reeds beside us. A teeny **Common Goldeneye** (next page) chick came swimming out of the reeds, seemingly lost it headed

straight toward a female with a dozen or so chicks. We all watched with delight as the family were reunited, then, to our horror, the female proceeded to attack the chick. Grabbing it by its minute wing and pulling it under, she appeared to be trying to drown it! The female pursued the chick, diving underwater and pulling it under from below like something from some sort of crazed-duck horror movie. I'm pretty sure that one of the participants, Julie, is scarred for life from this ordeal but it was incredible to watch and very interesting behavior. Hasten to say, the chick escaped back into the reeds. It's unclear whether it was being rejected due to it being sick or another bird's chick but here's hoping it managed to survive. We had built up quite the appetite after all that action and took lunch at a nice sunny spot overlooking the loch surrounded by **Common House Martin**.



After lunch we made our way to a small lake known as breeding site for one of the UK's rarest breeding birds, Slavonian Grebe, known outside of Europe as **Horned Grebe** (next page). These stunning grebes looked incredible as the sunlight hit their golden horns and ruby-red eyes, with two chicks laying on the back of one of the adults. The lake also produced, **Little Grebe**, **Gray Heron** and more **Common Goldeneye**. A **Common Cuckoo** flew by as **European Starling** mobbed it and a gorgeous **Eurasian Goldfinch** sat on a wire revealing it's striking colors. **European Rabbit** were also present and not shy at all! We then headed to another loch, Loch Vaa, where we enjoyed views of **Common Sandpiper**, **Tufted**

Duck, Eurasian Oystercatcher and **Song Thrush** on the edge of the marsh. Much to the delight of one of the participants, we also found a **Common Frog**.



It was time to head to another loch, this time the RSPB reserve of Loch Garten. This reserve is famous for its nesting Osprey which unfortunately, on their 60th anniversary, didn't turn up this year! It's not without some fantastic other species though and we were barely out of the van before we were picking them up. **Common Chaffinch** and fledglings fed on the ground and **Great Tit** perched on the fence near the entrance. As we took the path towards the visitor centre we enjoyed a family of **Coal Tit** and two **Eurasian Treecreeper**, fantastic! The visitor centre makes for some great views of species on feeders and allowed us to see **Eurasian Siskin** incredibly close, **Great, Coal** and **Eurasian Blue Tit**, **Common Chaffinch** (next page), **Common Wood Pigeon** and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**. We headed to the other side of the loch where we took a stroll through the woodland between Loch Garten and Loch Mallachie. A short distance down the track and I could hear the calls of one of our target birds, I looked up and there it was, **Crested Tit!** As it worked the pine needles looking for small invertebrates, everyone managed to enjoy views of this characterful little tit. Nearing the edge of Loch Garten, we were treated to views of stunning **Gray**



Wagtail with its bright yellow belly. We continued along the trail, taking in the sights, smells and sounds of the beautiful Scottish woodland. One of those sounds being **Common Redstart**, only showing itself briefly but calling constantly it continued to give us the run around. Scanning the other side of Loch Mallachie, we picked up **Green-winged Teal** and **Common Sandpiper**, but not the Green Sandpiper that I had hoped for; the UK's rarest breeding bird. It wasn't long before we were distracted by another **Crested Tit** and as everyone watched I heard crossbills. Then, suddenly a small flock came down and perched on the pines across from us. Notoriously difficult to identify in the field, but with their vocalizations matching those of the recorded excitement calls I had and their bills showing a good intermediate size between Red and Parrot Crossbill, we were happy that we had found the UK's only endemic, **Scottish Crossbill**! Fantastic!

After a long and bird-filled day we enjoyed a tasty pub dinner with local ales and Haggis, Neaps and Tatties, yum!

June 11 – Grantown-on-Spey to the Isle of Skye and North Uist

Today was essentially a travel day to take us from the Highlands to the Outer Hebrides; despite an early afternoon ferry schedule to stick to we still managed to fit in some great birding and sights along the way. Leaving Grantown-on-Spey early, we made our way to the incredibly scenic Findhorn Valley in search of Golden Eagle. It was a misty and drizzly morning but it all added to

the drama of the valley. **Red Deer** crossed the river below the single-track road, **Red-legged Partridge** showed off their plumage and **Eurasian Curlew** stood tall in the fields guarding their chicks. I had to partake in a little animal rescue and help a **Roe Deer** out who had got stuck in a fence, but it wasn't long before we reached the end of the valley road. As we tucked into our packed breakfast, we scanned for the eagles and looked to the skies in hope of a flyby. It was very wet and misty, but we were still joined by **Common Gull** and **Meadow Pipit** around the van as more **Red Deer** grazed on the hillsides. We had to make tracks with a hefty drive ahead of us and left the valley minus the eagles, but with great views of **Bank Swallow** nesting near the side of the road. Our route north would take us up to the city of Inverness, meaning the mouth of the River Ness, where we encountered **Dunnock** as we waited at some traffic lights. From here we



Eilean Donan Castle, Kyle of Lochalsh



drove along Loch Ness, keeping an eye out for Nessie, the beloved cryptozoological Loch Ness Monster. Sadly, we didn't have any sightings but made a stop to take in the beautiful views of the 13th century, Urquhart Castle. Further north, we made another picturesque stop at the arguably more stunning Eileen Donan Castle, another castle dating back to the 13th Century. We scanned for European Otter as we neared the Skye Bridge, but instead picked up **Grey Seal** and **Great Cormorant**. The Isle of Skye is a truly breathtaking place, there was no surprise to hear gasps and wows as we drove across its rugged landscape and through quaint little fishing villages. We arrived in Uig harbour with time to spare, which allowed everyone to stretch their legs and take a look at the local brewery shop and craft store.

Once aboard the ferry, we enjoyed a late lunch and headed up on deck for some

seabirding! It was a little wet and windy to say the least but my gosh do I love a bit of seabirding! We were picking up **Northern Gannet**, **Northern Fulmar**, **Black-legged Kittiwake** and **Arctic Tern** working the waves effortlessly. None more effortlessly than **European Storm-Petrel** that showed itself briefly before being hidden by the white horses. The real stars of the show though were the alcids, rafts of **Razorbill** and **Common Murre** peppered the surface and **Atlantic Puffin** were just about close enough to see their clown-like faces and colorful bills; much

to the delight of Janet! As we neared Lochmaddy, the harbour on North Uist, **Black Guillemot** and **Great Black-backed Gull** were present, along with **Herring Gull** and **European Shag**. Once alongside Lochmaddy, we headed straight to our hotel which was conveniently situated near the harbour. We checked in and had a short break before heading out to explore the amazing Outer Hebridean island of North Uist. As we drove past the various freshwater pools, **Tufted Duck**, **Mute Swan** and **Graylag Goose** with goslings were seen foraging. A stunning male **European Stonechat** sat smartly for us in his tuxedo as he hung on for dear life and Tom found us a fantastic **Common Buzzard** (previous page), as it hunted in the high winds. The wind had picked up enormously and was now blowing at a constant 40 mph, it was blowing an absolute hoolie, not ideal birding weather! Despite this, we hung on to our hats and headed for the RSPB reserve of Balranald. We weren't out of the van long before we heard the unmistakable call of our target, **Corn Crane**! With such high winds it was difficult to pinpoint exactly where the call was coming from, but we followed it back up the lane to the 'main road'. As we walked, **Eurasian Skylark** displayed overhead, as did **Common Snipe**; how they managed to carry out their aerial displays in such high winds is testament to their fitness and ability, those guys deserve a mate!



A North Uist bay

We found the field where the Corn Crane were calling from, there were at least four separate birds repeating their Latin name "*Crex crex*". The foliage was very long and constantly moving, making it incredibly difficult to get on a bird. After much scanning I finally saw one, but within the blink of an eye it was gone, back into the long grasses. The reserve is in the middle of a

working farm and as the farmer came by moving his cows he asked if I'd partake in a little herding, much to the amusement of the participants! Once I'd finished playing cowgirl, we continued our search so everyone could get a sighting but it wasn't to be, the wind was just too strong and they were laying very low. On our way back to the hotel, we had great views of



Common Redshank (previous page), **Common Raven**, **Hooded Crow** and a flyby **Common Loon** or **Great Northern Diver** if you're from this neck of the woods. Back at our lovely hotel, we enjoyed a delicious Scottish dinner and hit the hay ready for what tomorrow had in store.

June 12 – North Uist

We left the hotel early to head out for a little pre-breakfast birding and made our way back to the reserve in search of **Corn Crake**. The wind was still strong and this time there were no calls, we scanned the paddocks but unfortunately no **Corn Crake** showed themselves. We were met by more **Common Snipe**, **Common Redshank**, **Northern Lapwing** and **Eurasian Oystercatcher** as they displayed and called. It was still a worthwhile pre-breakfast trip; our drive had conjured up **Little Egret**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Whooper Swan** and an absolutely stonking **Red-throated Loon!** With these in the bag we headed back to the hotel for a lip-smacking Scottish breakfast.



With satisfied bellies and hungry eyes, we made our way to the north of the island. Harbour or **Common Seal** were hauled out on rocks in the middle of an inlet as **Common Shelduck** and their chicks worked the shorelines. We also came across good numbers of **Red-breasted Merganser**, gorgeous saw-billed ducks. **Common Buzzard** perched and **Eurasian Kestrel**

hovered, but one of the many highlights of the morning came in the form of **Short-eared Owl** and what a beauty it was. The owl was working the machair, hunting. We watched as it moved back and forth then it suddenly stopped midair, Wham! It emerged from the ground, **Field Vole** in talons and proceeded to fly towards us, crossing the road and landing on a post at the top of a ridge. What an incredible sighting of a stunning bird and a successful hunt! As we watched the owl through the 'scope a smart male **Northern Wheatear** popped into view too.



From here we made our way to Committee Road, the only road to cut through the centre of the island. On the way we passed stunning white sand beaches and traditional thatched cottages, as well as **Twite**, **Eurasian Linnet** and **European Goldfinch**. We hadn't got far along Committee Road before Jim had found us a male **Hen Harrier!** We were in absolute awe as it made its way closer to us across the peat moorland, but we were even more awestruck when a female appeared from the heather to join it! They tussled midair as if to lock talons and only then was it apparent that the male had brought her a food offering in the form of a **Wood Mouse**. She then

flew back down to the same area of heather in which she had emerged, assumingly to feed their chicks and with that the male disappeared across the moor. We couldn't believe our luck to



witness such an amazing pair of birds exchanging food, incredible! Further down the road, we came across a herd of **Highland Cattle** (previous page) and of course had to make a quick stop to get some photos of these iconic teddy bear-like 'coos'.

It was late morning by now so we decided to head back to Balranald and give the Corn Crane another go. As we drove slowly past the paddocks, we didn't hear a peep out of the crakes so we carried on down the track to a beautiful part of the coastline. The air was filled with displaying passerines, **Corn Bunting**, **Eurasian Skylark** and **Meadow Pipit** alike. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day now, but the wind, oh that wind just kept on blowing! As we took the coastal path we were pushed along by the gushes, which was actually quite pleasant! On the white sand beaches, we could see **Common Ringed Plover**, **Sanderling**, **Dunlin** and a couple of very quick **Little Stint**. This area is a breeding ground for **Arctic Tern** (next page) and they showed off their aerial abilities as they flew all around us. The Atlantic Ocean was riled up by the strong winds and





the sapphire waters looked incredible, crested with white and **Northern Gannet** wheeling above. It was getting close to lunch time so we started our walk back to the van, fighting against the wind.

We certainly earned our lunch, which was taken at a fantastic seafood restaurant overlooking a ruined 13th Century church and seminary, Teampull na Trionaid in Gaelic, meaning Trinity Church. After an incredible meal and much welcomed break from the winds, we were back in the van and heading south to new islands. First onto Grimsay, where we had some great views of **Common Eider** and a distant **Arctic Loon**. Next up was Benbecula, where we took the coastal road and headed for some wetlands. The winds were no better on Benbecula, in fact they were arguably worse, but most of us worked the water's edge in search of birds as others, sensibly, sheltered in the van. We picked up **Little Grebe**, **Eurasian Moorhen**, **Eurasian Coot**,

plenty of **Mute Swan** and **Graylag Goose** but also good numbers of **Northern Shoveler**, **Gadwall** and **Black-tailed Godwit** accompanied by a **Bar-tailed Godwit** on the shoreline. The sunshine had disappeared and been replaced by heavy rain so we made our way back to North Uist in time for another delicious dinner and couple of drinks in the bar to celebrate my birthday.

June 13 – North Uist to Barra

Our ferry wasn't departing until the evening so we had all day to explore the islands and make our way south. We started the day with yet another great breakfast, said our goodbyes to Lochmaddy and headed out on the north road again. We had an incredible SEVEN **Short-eared Owl** today; our first sighting was brilliant! We saw one owl ahead of us and pulled over straight away. It was flying overhead and we had amazing views, then it was joined by another! Two just there above us, showing beautifully, then just as with the previous day's Hen Harriers, they tussled in the air and one exchanged a Field Vole to the other! We were elated! Carrying on along the road, we came across a pair of **Common Cuckoo** perched on phones wires



displaying and calling to one another. A much more satisfying view than the flyby we had had in the Highlands. A small woodland made for a perfect hide for a **Red Deer** as a **Eurasian Wren** moused its way through the overhanging heather roots on a roadside bank.



Our second **Short-eared Owl** sighting of the day was an absolute corker and all thanks to Julie who spotted it sat on a roadside post! We were able to enjoy some fantastic views of it perched before it took off and started to work the grassland. They are a truly beautiful and ghostly species. We continued anti-clockwise around North Uist, picking up **Eurasian Curlew, Common Raven, Hooded Crow, Song Thrush, Eurasian Blackbird, Northern Wheatear, Twite** and **Eurasian Linnet**. It was the **European Greenfinch** feeding on the ground near a freshwater pool that got

us all excited though; a bright green bird with a hefty bill and yellow in the wing. The pool also had **Tufted Duck, Eurasian Wigeon** and **Whooper Swan** to boot. Arriving at the Balranald Reserve once more, we hoped for the Corn Crake but again, they weren't calling or showing. Instead we had a family of **Northern Lapwing** with their tiny fluffball chicks. **Barn** and **Bank Swallow** hunted insects over the pools as **Gray Heron** and **Red-breasted Merganser** fished in inlets and we were making our way off of North Uist for the last time.



Stunning white sand beaches of the Uists

It was early afternoon now and our breakfast had worn off so we headed for a restaurant on Benbecular. After some tasty food, we were back out on the road and on the lookout. First up, a **Peregrine Falcon** came storming past us and allowed for quick views. **Common Eider** and their chicks rode the surf and **Dunlin** worked the beaches but we were heading for Loch Mor in search of one of our targets. We scanned and searched for Red-necked Phalarope but sadly they weren't showing so we continued on our way to South Uist. Now, this is where we had our sighting of the day, possibly even the trip. As I navigated the single-track road a call from the back of van indicated that something was perched on a fence post out in a field to our left. I pulled over at the nearest passing place, raised my binoculars and **GOLDEN EAGLE!!!** It was INCREDIBLE! There it was just sat there on a post minding its own business, allowing us fantastic undisturbed views. Then suddenly, a **Short-eared Owl** (next page) came out of nowhere and started mobbing it! Now we can't say whether this guy was brave or stupid but my gosh did it make for an unbelievable spectacle. The Golden Eagle was mobbed by the owl so much that it left its post and flew across a pool on to a ridge to hide in the heather; the owl was having none of it and was in close pursuit clearly giving it a good whack on the head with its talons when it dive bombed it. A second Golden Eagle was also seen soaring behind all of this commotion and we had attracted few curious holiday makers who were delighted to see such remarkable species.



With drive-away views of the eagles, we continued on to a local reserve where we were fortunate enough to see yet another pair of **Hen Harrier** passing a Wood Mouse to one another. The foliage was full of **European Stonechat**, **Willow Warbler** and **Meadow Pipit**. We got out to stretch our legs when we reached the end of the track and walked a short way to overlook an inlet where there are a couple of fish farms. We were on the lookout for eagle but instead through the wind and rain had views of **Red-throated Loon** and a flying **Arctic Loon**. Time was getting on and we had reach Eriskay in time to catch the ferry. A few more stops for **Short-eared**

Owl, because who can resist looking at an owl, and we got to the port just as the ferry was docking, perfect.

The car ferry was taking us to Barra where we would spend the night. The short crossing wasn't without its birds and we had more great views of **Northern Gannet**, **Arctic Tern**, **Razorbill**, **Black Guillemot**, **Herring**, **Common**, **Lesser Black-backed** and **Great Black-backed Gull**. Soaring above one of the islets off Eriskay was a large eagle, it was sadly very distant but it looked good for **White-tailed Eagle**; I was determined to find another. As we neared the harbour of Ardmhor, the rocks made for great basking spots for **Great Cormorant**, **European Shag** and **Grey Seal** alike.



I love Barra, it's lush green with towering Monroes, long white sand beaches and rugged inlets, one of which made for a great sighting of a **Common Loon** as we made our way to our hotel. Our hotels were situated in the picturesque town of Castlebay, so called because, well, there's a castle in the bay. It makes for a beautiful spot to end our time on the islands. On this occasion the group was in two neighboring hotels. I went to meet PJ who was staying in my hotel and walk across to meet the others for dinner. He excitedly told me that he'd been taking a few photos and heard, **Corn Crane**! So, we quickly went to investigate and found them in a paddock behind the hotel! The grass was thigh high and we knew laying eyes on one would be difficult, we gave it a go before and after dinner but they remained as heard only for the participants!

June 14 – Barra to Fort William

We had to be at the dock early this morning in order to get in line for the ferry crossing to the mainland. PJ had been taunted by the **Corn Crane** calling all night, so we dropped the van off and took the short walk back up the hill to give it one last go. One was indeed calling, but still in the thigh-high grasses! The bird couldn't be tempted out of hiding but we did see a gorgeous **Sedge Warbler** to compensate. We headed back to the dock and boarded the ferry where we enjoyed a tasty breakfast onboard.



Castlebay, Barra

The weather conditions couldn't have been more perfect for our longest ferry transit of the tour; the sea state was almost mirror-like. Being an avid seabirder and marine mammal enthusiast this got me very excited, it was all hands on deck once breakfast had been wolfed down and boy did it pay off. We were picking up birds right off the bat, **Black Guillemot**, rafts of **Common Murre** and **Razorbill**, brilliant views of **Atlantic Puffin**, **Arctic Tern**, **Northern Gannet**, **Black-legged Kittiwake** and fantastic **Northern Fulmar**. The beautiful sea state meant that it wasn't long before we were picking up the cetaceans too, first up was **Harbour Porpoise**, at only 1.5 meters it's always exciting to spot these little guys. A pod of **Short-beaked Common Dolphin** was next up with calf in tow, shortly followed by MINKE MINKE MINKE!!! A **Common Minke Whale** (next page) surfaced showing beautifully for everyone on deck. Then more, I found myself shouting

Minke a lot; I get very passionate about cetaceans and making sure everyone gets on them! Throughout the whole ferry crossing we had an amazing 10 sightings of Common Minke Whale, the best sighting being when three came up together tussling and lunging. You could even see the white patches on their pectoral fins and their roqual pleats, it was just fantastic! We also encountered great numbers of **Manx Shearwater** and **European Storm Petrel**, as well as **Great Skua** and **Parasitic Jaeger**. As we turned between Mull and the mainland the wind started to pick up and brought with it some rain but we were still able to identify a couple of **White-tailed Eagle**, one over Mull and the other soaring above the Ardmurdoch peninsula. As we neared Oban, the sun was trying to come out again and we were met by **European Shag**, **Black-headed Mew**, **Herring** and **Lesser Black-backed Gull**.



The parking in Oban is tight to say the least, but it wasn't long before we had found a space and were off to get some lunch. Oban is renowned for its seafood; The Green Shack is one of the best places in town and we enjoyed a seafood feast as we looked out over the water. Now, you

can't come to Scotland and not sample some Scotch Whisky! We had a fantastic tour around the Oban Distillery; not only is this one of Scotland's oldest distilleries, dating back to 1794, it's tasty and their bottles are decorated with birds so I couldn't think of a better distillery for us to visit!



Eilean Musdile Lighthouse, Eilean Musdile

With the whisky tour over and souvenirs purchased we left Oban behind us and made our way through the beautiful landscape along Loch Linnhe towards Fort William. The scenery around Fort William is breathtaking and we were fully submerged in it as we drove through Glen Nevis, a truly awe-inspiring valley close to Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. We took a stroll along the babbling River Nevis in the late afternoon sun and were treated to displaying **Tree Pipit** as they paper-planned from their treetop perches. The time was getting on we had to make tracks to make sure we were at our guest house in time to meet a very special resident.

Arriving at our former hunting lodge guest house in the heart of Lochaber, we were welcomed by our wonderful host for the night, Jon. He informed us that the creature we had come to see had just been sat on the roof of his car! So, we quickly unpacked the van and settled into our rooms before setting up camp in their lovely sun lounge. Whilst we were in Fort William, we made a stop at a store to pick up some local dishes and tucked in as we watched the bird feeders in their beautiful garden. The feeders were busy with **Great, Coal** and **Eurasian Blue Tit, European Robin** and **Common Chaffinch**. A pair of **Great Spotted Woodpecker** came down to feed on the peanuts and an absolutely stunning **Eurasian Jay** popped along for good measure. It was the gorgeous **Eurasian Red Squirrel** that caught everyone's attention though. As we nibbled, chatted and laughed, it appeared, **European Pine Marten!!!** This was a female who had come to collect food to take to her kits that hadn't yet left their natal den yet and what a beauty she was.



Chocolate brown with an almost ochre bib and smart little pale-trimmed ears. Pine martens are arguably our most photogenic mustelids and boy did we get some fantastic photo opportunities. What a way to spend an evening; enigmatic wildlife, great food, even better company and a view over the Nevis Range, incredible.



June 15 – Fort William to Glasgow

After a great night's rest in our comfy guest house, we started our last morning of the main tour with a delicious breakfast, homemade jams and excellent views of **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Common House Martin** and that cute **Eurasian Red Squirrel** (previous page). We had to be in Glasgow for midday, so we said our goodbyes to our wonderful hosts, took one last look at the garden birds, heard **Eurasian Blackcap** and we were on our way. As we entered Fort William, we took a wee detour to take a look for the ever-elusive European Otter we had been trying to track down. It still eluded us but we had brilliant views of **Rock Pipit**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Willow Warbler**, **European Goldfinch** and a **Common Merganser**. Further down the road, a call from Jim brought us to a stop as he had seen a **White-tailed Eagle** flying across a loch! The eagle just kept on flying, but what a view the guys in the back of the van had!



The drive to Glasgow is one of the most scenic of the tour and my goodness was it breathtaking as we drove through the Glencoe Valley and alongside Loch Lomond. As we headed south, **Hooded Crow** were now replaced by **Carrion Crow** and the **Eurasian Magpie** had returned. We arrived at

Glasgow Airport for midday, sadly said our goodbyes to Janet and Tom who had opted to check out the sights of Glasgow for a few days and with that we were on our way to the Emerald Isle!

The Emerald Isle Extension

June 15 – Belfast to Giant’s Causeway

A quick hop and a jump across the water and we found ourselves in Belfast, Northern Ireland’s capital city. Once we had collected our hire car we headed out of Belfast and took the absolutely stunning Causeway Coastal Route as we headed north. This road is incredible, it hugs the rugged coastline through quaint little fishing villages, golden gorse-covered valleys and towering cliffs. According to a pamphlet one of the participants had picked up, it’s one of the Top 100 roads to drive in the world and couldn’t we just see why. The participants that had stayed on for the Emerald Isle extension were a family, so this was treated very much like a custom tour. Jim and PJ are pretty enthusiastic to say the least about the popular television series, Game of Thrones, much of which was filmed in Northern Ireland. So, of course we made a few stops along the way to check out some filming locations for the guys, which conjured up some fantastic species as well. The cliffs above the road were home to nesting **Northern Fulmar** and we watched as **Eurasian Jackdaw** taunted them. The sea state was mirror-like yet again and **Common Seal** popped their heads out of the mercury water, whilst **Sandwich Tern** dove for fish and **Northern Gannet** patrolled offshore. Another stop brought us a fleeting **Eurasian Bullfinch**, a pair of **Dunnock** and **Eurasian Linnet**, whereas all along the road we had our daily dose of **Eurasian Oystercatcher** and **White Wagtail**. A stop at the picturesque Carnlough Harbour gave us



Carnlough Harbour, County Antrim

fantastic views of **Rock Pipit**, **Common Eider**, more **Sandwich Tern** and of course quenched the thirst of our GoT fans. We took a typical Saturday night dinner in the coastal town of Ballycastle and had one of THE best fish supers, traditional fish and chips, we'd ever had. Delish! From here we made our way to our gorgeous hotel, a property dating back to 1836 overlooking the UNESCO World Heritage site, the Giant's Causeway.

It was a beautiful evening and we decided to make our way down to the Giant's Causeway in time for the sunset. It's incredibly difficult to put into words how magical it felt down there that evening; the light was stunning as it kissed the basalt stone structures turning everything a phenomenal tangerine-lavender, slate-blue clouds rose above the land behind and a rainbow formed over the causeway. I think we discovered the true meaning of the 'pot of gold at the end of the rainbow', as the sky opened and let out a monsoon-like down pour, the whole place turned into gold and silver, it was truly amazing. We ran to the car for cover but not without a little dancing in the warm rain as the sun set over the Atlantic Ocean. This was an unforgettable evening. Soaked through but completely elated we made our way back up to our hotel, seeing **Least Weasel** on the way, and settled down for the night.



Beautiful golden light over the Giant's Causeway, County Antrim



Sunset and a rain shower over the Giant's Causeway, County Antrim

June 16 – Giant's Causeway to Dublin

After such a wonderful experience at the Giant's Causeway the previous evening, we decided to opt for a leisurely breakfast instead of heading back down to take more photographs. After filling our bellies, it was time to leave the north coast behind us and we made our way inland to our first planned stop of the day. As we neared the Dark Hedges, it seemed we weren't the only ones who had come to visit this spellbinding tunnel of ancient beech trees. A popular visitor attraction, made even more so by becoming the setting of the Kings Road in GoT. The beech trees were planted to form a grand entrance for Gracehill House, built around 1775, with some of them as old as 350 years. It was a beautiful road to walk down, but with an influx of GoT fans arriving, we made haste and began our sojourn to Dublin, Éire.

Before we left Northern Ireland, we visited Lough Neagh, the largest lake by surface area in the British Isles. Here we found large numbers of **Common Tern**, **Great Crested Grebe** in all their breeding plumage glory, **Grey Heron**, **Eurasian Moorhen**, **Eurasian Coot** and a gorgeous **Irish Hare**. The RSPB reserve of Portmore Lough produced some crackers too, we found ourselves watching **Common Pochard**, **Common Shelduck**, **Black-tailed** and **Bar-tailed Godwit** and a stonking **Glossy Ibis**! The deciduous trees around the reserve also allowed for fantastic views of

Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Eurasian Blackcap, Eurasian Wren, Dunnock and Willow Warbler. A small wildflower meadow made for the long-awaited good views of **Eurasian Linnet** that Julie had been waiting for, along with a few cheeky **European Robin** and **Eurasian Blackbird**. After having our fill, we hit the road south and crossed the invisible border as we were Dublin bound.

We arrived in Ireland's lively capital city of Dublin late afternoon and took a short break in our central hotel. We would usually visit the Guinness Storehouse on this part of the tour, but with Jameson Whiskey being PJ's absolute favorite, we visited the distillery instead. As we took a taxi across town, we took in



The Dark Hedges, County Antrim

the sights of the city and had some awesome craic with our taxi driver; I wish we could have brought him along with us! The Jameson Whiskey tour was a well-oiled machine and a great time was had by all. We took a stroll across the river and made our way to the traditional Irish pubs. First up was the Brazen Head, Ireland's oldest pub dating back to 1198! It was bustling with locals; live music and the Guinness was flowing. Sadly, there was nowhere for us to sit to eat so we headed down to the Temple Bar area. Here we found a great pub with its own brewhouse,

live music and tasty food. We'd had a long day full of birds, every shade of green you could imagine and great craic!

June 17 – Wicklow Mountains National Park and East Coast Nature Reserve



*The Round Tower at Glendalough Monastic City, County
Wicklow*

We left the city behind us and made our way to the Wicklow Mountains National Park. The scenery was breathtaking and not unlike that of the Scottish Highlands. We made several stops for scenic photos as we made our way through the National Park, one of which at Sally Gap with its spectacular views. As expected, **Meadow Pipit** were all around and we enjoyed seeing a herd of **Fallow Deer** as they grazed amongst the heather. Further into the park, we stopped to take in a dramatic valley view with a farmhouse below us and a farmer working his sheepdog to round up his flock. Our main destination of the morning was to Glendalough to visit an early Christian monastic settlement. Founded by St. Kevin in the 6th Century, this place was rich in history and it was incredibly atmospheric as we wandered through the grounds. Often graveyards and old ruins

provide a great habitat for avian species and we weren't disappointed. There were **Eurasian**



Blackcap, European Robin, Eurasian Blackbird, Common Woodpigeon around the yew trees and ivy and **Common Swift, Barn Swallow** and **Common House Martin** soared overhead. It was the sweet little **Goldcrest**, the British Isles' smallest bird, who stole the show though.

We headed up to the village's namesake, Glendalough, a large lake along the valley. Taking a little stroll along the side of the lake and through the deciduous woodland there were fledglings everywhere. **Gray Wagtail** bobbed their tails along the shore, **Coal** and **Eurasian Blue Tit** foraged for invertebrates in the oak trees and **European Robin** serenaded us with its beautiful song. We also had great

views of one of my favorite birds of the region, **Long-tailed Tit!**

We headed eastwards, had a great pub lunch and later saw nesting **Great Crested Grebe** as we crossed a reservoir. We were making our way to the East Coast Nature Reserve, covering 92 hectares of coastal wetland it attracts some brilliant species. We weren't out of the car long before we were enjoying, **Eurasian Linnet, Song Thrush, European Goldfinch, European Stonechat** and **Eurasian Wren**. As we took a boardwalk path a female **Eurasian Bullfinch** darted

in to a gorse. As we waited for her to come out, **Sedge Warbler** called from deep within the rushes and a smart male **Reed Bunting** (next page) stood tall atop a willow as it sang. We carried



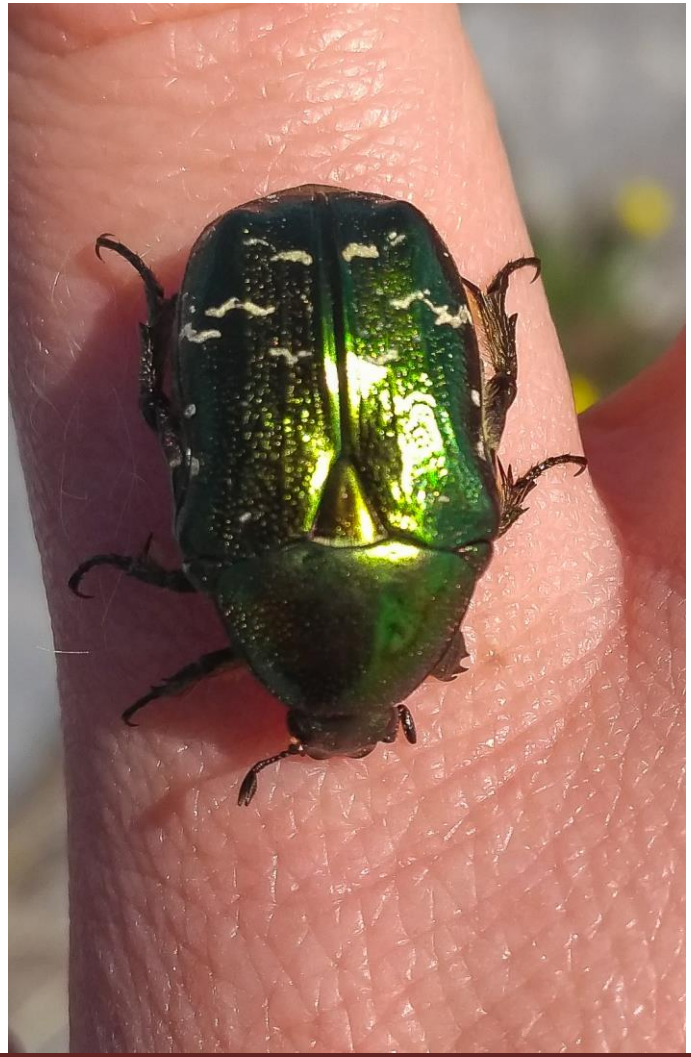
on around the reserve, past sheep-filled fields with foraging **Eurasian Magpie** and **Rook**, a **Whinchat** sat briefly for us on some brambles and **Great Black-backed Gull** reminded us how enormous they really are. A small woodland provided us with some much-welcomed shade from the afternoon sun. **Specked Wood** and **Green-veined White** butterflies elegantly moved through the trees and onomatopoeic **Chiffchaff** called. From here we drove down the track, crossed the railway line and we were on the beach. Again, the water was like a mill pool, **Northern Gannet** were way offshore, **Sandwich Tern** a little closer in

and **European Shag** flew up the coast. As I scanned the beautiful Irish Sea, I found what we were looking for, **Little Tern**! A few were a way off but it wasn't long before they came right into the beach and we had fantastic views of this petit tern. Much to our delight there were also good numbers of **Manx Shearwater** off the coast and it was great to catch up with them again.

It was time for us to head back up the coast towards Dublin, along the way we had amazing views of **Red Kite** and made a couple of stops picking up **Gray Heron, Little Egret, Common Shelduck, Black-headed, Herring** and **Lesser Black-backed Gull**. We enjoyed dinner at Europe's longest pub that evening, the Hole in the Wall, leant up against the walls of Phoenix Park, Dublin's beautiful city park and the American Ambassador's residence!

June 18 - Dublin to Lisdoonvarna

Today was the day we left the hustle and bustle of Dublin behind us and headed for the impressive Atlantic coast. You can't leave a capital city without having to sit in a little traffic though; what do birders do when they're stuck in traffic? They bird, of course! As we were waiting in line along the side of the River Liffey something caught my eye in the rushes, it was a **Eurasian Reed Warbler** in the middle of the city!!! We then had **Eurasian Moorhen, Mallard**, obviously, and Jim found us a **Brown Rat**! It made the line of traffic seem shorter and we were soon on our way west. As we made our way to our first stop of the day, the Burren National Park, we saw plenty of **Common Buzzard, Eurasian Siskin** and even a stunning rare **Wood Warbler**! The word Burren comes from the Irish word Boíreann meaning rocky place and it's easy to see how it got its name. There are vast expanses of limestone rock which were once the sediments of a tropical sea that covered Ireland 350 million years ago; today it makes for an incredible landscape peppered with beautiful wildflowers. We left the car behind and took a



stroll out across the exposed seabed. It appears barren but it's far from it, **Greater Whitethroat** sang from shrubs, **Northern Wheatear** stood proud atop the rocks as **Rock Pipit** foraged and **Common Sandpiper** bobbed on the shores of a small lake. Our most colorful find came in the form of a **European Rose Chaffer** ([previous page](#)), a large emerald green beetle that made a bee-line for PJ!

From Burren, we headed to the spa town of Lisdoonvarna, famous for its annual matchmaking festival, luckily this isn't until September so we were saved of any embarrassment! After a pub lunch we settled in to our gorgeous, quiet guesthouse and took a little break before heading back out. This afternoon we visited the Cliffs of Moher, an area of outstanding natural beauty that



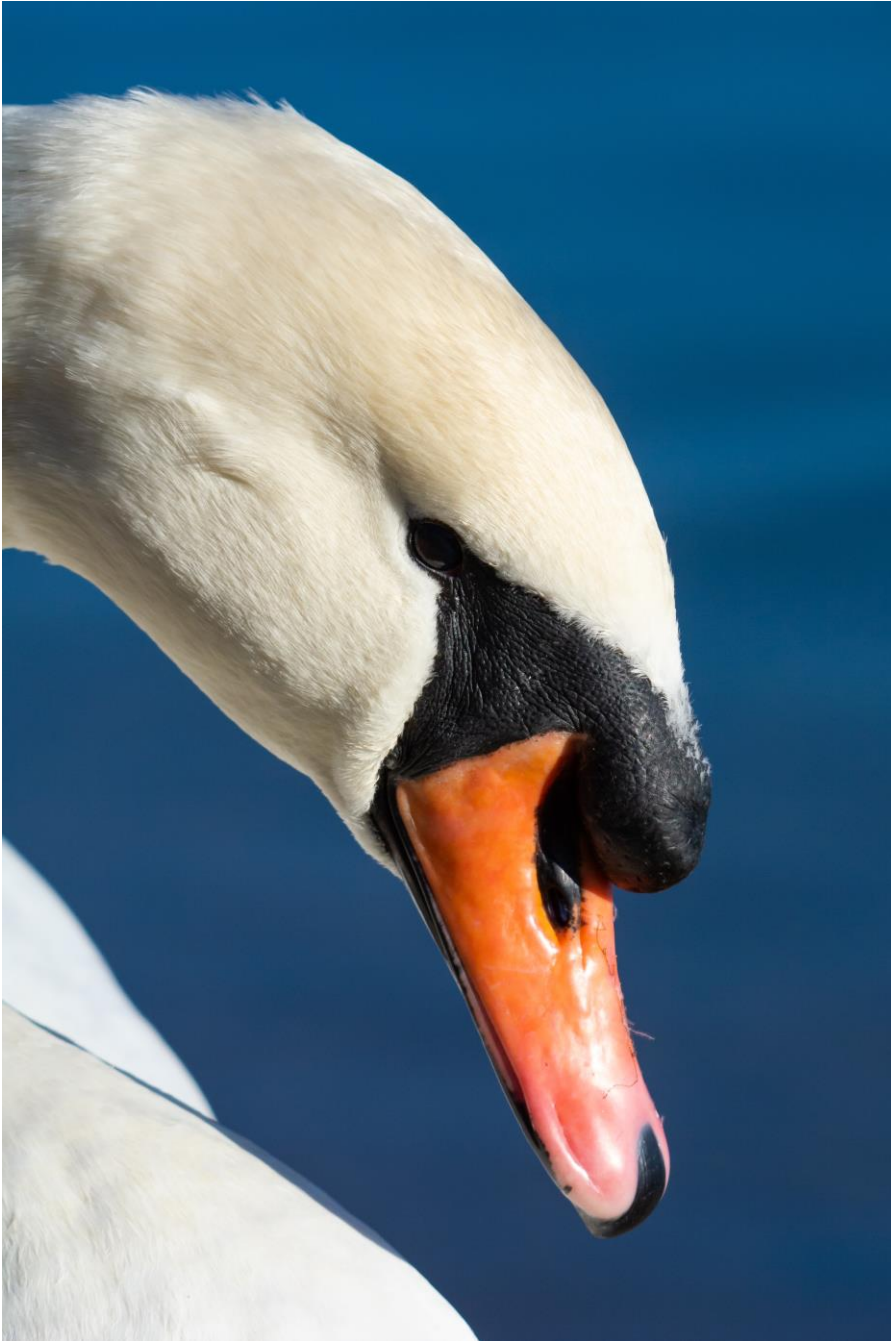
The Burren National Park, County Clare

forms part of the UNESCO Global Geopark along with the Burren. It seems we weren't the only people who wanted to soak up the wonderful views, there were a lot of tourists (some of them crazily close to the edge!), but we did seem to be the only ones who there for the birds. The cliffs are home to thousands of seabirds, **Common Murre**, **Razorbill**, **Atlantic Puffin**, **Black-legged Kittiwake** and **Northern Fulmar** were busy nesting and could be seen flying into their nest sites. There was one species in particular we were after though, the only corvid missing from our list, **Red-billed Chough**. After a walk along the clifftop path I heard one calling, then they appeared, one at first, then two, then four! We were delighted to see them so well, with that bright red



The Cliffs of Moher, County Clare

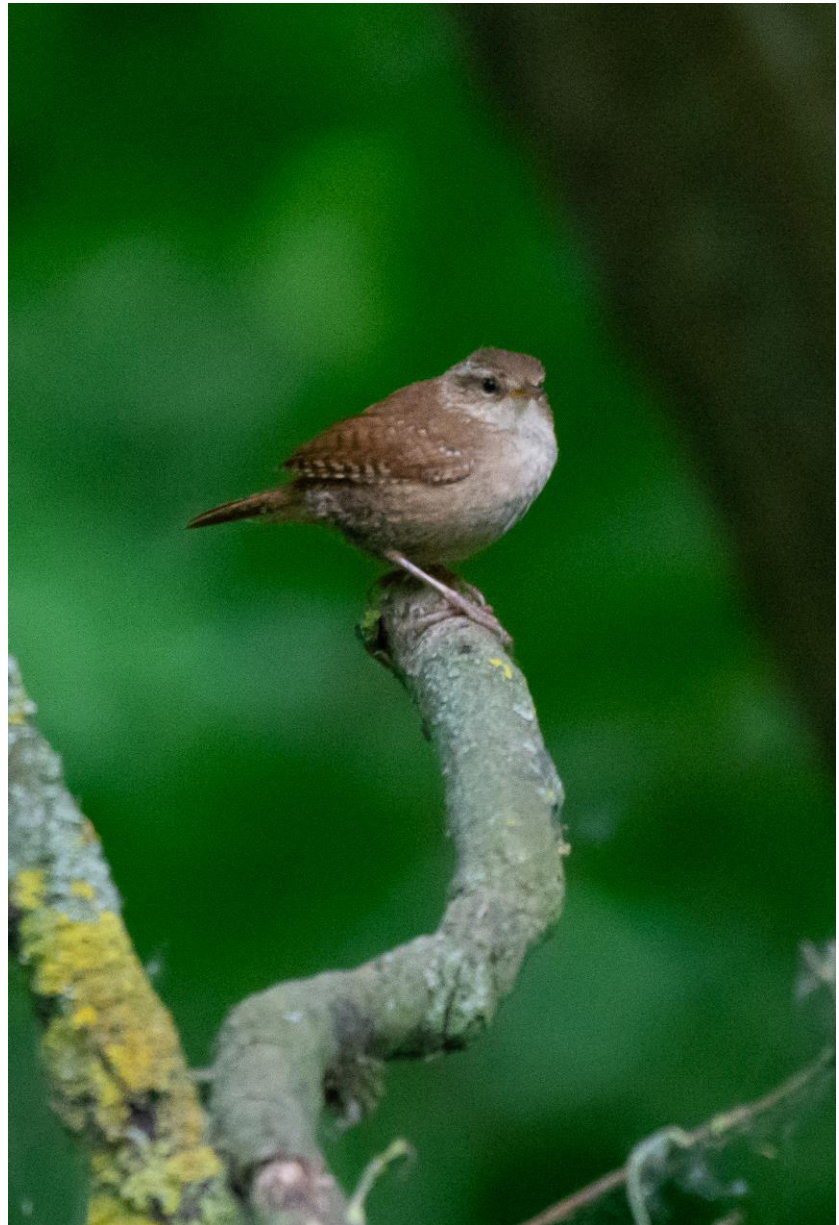
slender bill showing perfectly in the sunshine. After having our fill of the breathtaking cliffs and resident seabirds we made our way back to Lisdoonvarna where we took the short stroll to a local pub and enjoyed some cracking food and a pint of Guinness.



June 19 – Lisdoonvarna to Shannon

The last day of the tour had come around all too quickly, but with none of us leaving Ireland until the following day I decided to drive us up to Galway, a picturesque harbour city where the River Corrib meets the Atlantic Ocean. After a scrumptious breakfast we were treated to three **Common Cuckoo** flying around us as we packed up the car, along with our daily **Eurasian Collard Dove**. We were predominantly heading to Galway in search of European Otter, a species that had completely eluded us the whole trip. It seemed our luck wasn't to change. We walked along the River Corrib where otter is often seen, right in the middle of Galway, but sadly we didn't see any. Maybe there were too many fly fishermen in the river that day

or maybe they were just tucked up in their holt snoozing. We had a lovely walk along the river though and conjured up quite the list, **White** and **Gray Wagtail**, **Bank Swallow**, **Common House Martin**, **Eurasian Jackdaw**, **Hooded Crow**, **Gray Heron**, **Mute Swan** (previous page), **Eurasian Blue Tit** and a family of gorgeous **Long-tailed Tit** in the trees that eagle-eyed Jim found. We were all absolutely delighted to see **White-throated Dipper** again and watched a number of them down the river dipping and diving, it was fantastic! We checked out the harbour just in case there were any interesting gulls; instead we found **Great Cormorant**, **Sandwich Tern**, **Black-headed**, **Herring** and **Lesser Black-backed Gull**. We had a little time and it would have been a shame to be in Galway and not experience a little culture so we took a walk through the town. There was live music in the air with people playing in the beautifully decorated streets, it was quite a sight.



We began to make our way south towards Shannon where we would be spending the night, making a little detour to explore Dromore Wood Nature Reserve on the way. As we took the pathway toward the castle through the woodland, we came across **Eurasian Wren**, **Song Thrush**,

Eurasian Treecreeper, Spotted Flycatcher, Common Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Eurasian Blackbird and Eurasian Blue Tit. A lake adjacent to the trail produced more views of **Great Crested Grebe** and **Coal Tit** nested in the castle as **Goldcrest** flitted in the trees around it. It was a beautiful little place but the skies were turning grey and we decided to head back before we got too wet. Now, we had seen **Eurasian Bullfinch** a few times throughout the tour but were yet to get those really stunningly satisfying views that we had all wanted. So, when I flushed a family of them that were feeding at the roadside it seemed only right that they should be our last wanted bird of the trip. I pulled over straight away, some had perched on a telephone wire and the others in a hedgerow on the other side of a paddock. Whilst everyone got binocular views, I set up the 'scope so we could get 'that' view of the male in all his peachy glory. Just as we were Ooo'ing and Ahhh'ing, a man came out of his house to see what we were up to; setting up telescopes outside of people's houses is really not the done thing in Ireland! I told him that we were just looking at his Bullfinches to which he proclaimed that no one had ever said that to him before! Patrick, who turned out to be a local landscape artist, thought he had a Bullfinch nest in his garden which of course we went to check out! It turned out to be **Eurasian House Sparrow** nesting in the eaves of his house, I couldn't believe we had gone to look at house sparrow! Needless to say, we ended up inside his home studio admiring his paintings that he was getting ready for an exhibition! This was not part of the trip itinerary but it was certainly an unforgettable and completely random end to what had been a truly awesome tour.

We met for an obligatory pint of Guinness that evening at our airport hotel, reminisced about all the laughs and adventures we'd had and said our goodbyes as our Gaelic escapade came to an end.



The Burren National Park, County Clare

Bird List

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: *Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W. The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World. Cornell, 2007.* This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2018.

A total of 140 species of bird were seen over the ten-day tour, with one seen only by the Tour Leader (L). Column two depicts the species status with accordance to the IUCN Red List. NT – Near Threatened VU - Vulnerable

	Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl (Anatidae)		
1	Graylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	
3	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	
4	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	
5	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	
6	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	
7	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	
8	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	
9	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	
10	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	
11	VU Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	
12	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	
13	Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	
14	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	
15	Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	
16	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	
	Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies (Phasianidae)		
17	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Introduced
18	Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Introduced
19	Gray Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	
20	Willow Ptarmigan (Red Grouse)	<i>Lagopus lagopus scotica</i>	Endemic subspecies
21	Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta millaisi</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Grebes (Podicipedidae)		
22	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	
23	VU Horned (Slavonian) Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	
24	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	
	Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)		
25	Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	
26	Common Wood-Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
27	Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	

	Cuckoos (Cuculidae)		
28	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	
	Swifts (Apodidae)		
29	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	
	Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)		
30	Corn Crane	<i>Crex crex</i>	L
31	Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	
32	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	
	Oystercatchers (Haematopodidae)		
33	NT Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	
	Plovers and Lapwings (Charadriidae)		
34	European Golden-Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	
35	NT Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	
36	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	
	Sandpipers and Allies (Scolopacidae)		
37	NT Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	
38	NT Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	
39	VU Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	
40	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	
41	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	
42	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	
43	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	
44	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
45	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	
	Skuas and Jaegers (Stercorariidae)		
46	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	
47	Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua)	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	
	Auks, Murres, and Puffins (Alcidae)		
48	Common Murre (Guillemot)	<i>Uria aalge</i>	
49	NT Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	
50	Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	
51	VU Atlantic Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	
	Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)		
52	VU Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
53	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	
54	Mew (Common) Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	
55	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	
56	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	
57	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	
58	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	
59	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	
60	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	
61	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	
	Loons (Gaviidae)		
62	Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	
63	Arctic (Black-throated) Loon	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	
64	Common (Great Northern) Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	

	Northern Storm-Petrels (Hydrobatidae)		
65	European Storm-Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	
	Shearwaters and Petrels (Procellariidae)		
66	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	
67	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	
	Boobies and Gannets (Sulidae)		
68	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	
	Cormorants and Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)		
69	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	
70	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	
	Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns (Ardeidae)		
71	Gray Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	
72	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
	Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)		
73	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	
	Osprey (Pandionidae)		
74	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	
	Hawks, Eagles, and Kites (Accipitridae)		
75	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	
76	NT Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	
77	NT Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	
78	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	
79	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	
	Owls (Strigidae)		
80	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	
	Woodpeckers (Picidae)		
81	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	
	Falcons and Caracaras (Falconidae)		
82	Eurasian Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	
83	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	
	Crows, Jays, and Magpies (Corvidae)		
84	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	
85	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	
86	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax p. pyrrhocorax</i>	Endemic subspecies
87	Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	
88	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	
89	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	
90	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	
91	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	
	Larks (Alaudidae)		
92	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis scotica</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Swallows (Hirundinidae)		
93	Bank Swallow (Sand Martin)	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	
94	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
95	Common House-Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	
	Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice (Paridae)		

96	Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater britannicus/hibernicus</i>	Endemic subspecies
97	Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus scoticus</i>	Endemic subspecies
98	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus obscurus</i>	Endemic subspecies
99	Great Tit	<i>Parus major newtoni</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Long-tailed Tits (Aegithalidae)		
100	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Treecreepers (Certhiidae)		
101	Eurasian Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris britannica</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Wrens (Troglodytidae)		
102	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes t. troglodytes/hebridensis</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Dippers (Cinclidae)		
103	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus c. gularis/hibernicus</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Kinglets (Regulidae)		
104	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	
	Leaf Warblers (Phylloscopidae)		
105	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	
106	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	
107	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	
	Reed Warblers and Allies (Acrocephalidae)		
108	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	
109	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	
	Sylviid Warblers (Sylviidae)		
110	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	
111	Greater Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	
	Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)		
112	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	
113	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
114	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	
115	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	
116	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	
117	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
	Thrushes and Allies (Turdidae)		
118	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	
119	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	
120	Eurasian Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	
121	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	
	Starlings (Sturnidae)		
122	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	
	Accentors (Prunellidae)		
123	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis occidentalis/hebridium</i>	Endemic subspecies
	Wagtails and Pipits (Motacillidae)		
124	Gray Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	
125	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	
126	NT Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	

127	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	
128	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	
	Finches, Euphonias, and Allies (Fringillidae)		
129	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs gengleri</i>	Endemic subspecies
130	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula p. pileata</i>	Endemic subspecies
131	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	
132	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris brevirostris</i>	Endemic subspecies
133	Eurasian Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina autochthona</i>	Endemic subspecies
134	Scottish Crossbill	<i>Loxia scotica</i>	Endemic
135	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	
136	Eurasian Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	
	Old World Buntings (Emberizidae)		
137	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	
138	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	
	Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)		
139	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	
140	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	

MAMMAL LIST**Cricetidae (voles)**

1	Field vole	<i>Microtus agrestis</i>	
---	------------	--------------------------	--

Muridae (rats, mice and relatives)

2	Wood mouse	<i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i>	
3	Brown rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	Introduced
4	House mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>	

Sciuridae (squirrels)

5	Red squirrel	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	
6	Grey squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>	Introduced

Leporidae (hares and rabbits)

8a	Mountain hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i>	
8b	[Irish Hare]	<i>Lepus timidus hibernicus</i>	Endemic subspecies
9	European hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	
10	European rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Introduced

Phocidae (seals)

11	Grey seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	
12	Common seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	

Mustelidae (mustelids)

13	European Pine marten	<i>Martes martes</i>	
14	Least weasel	<i>Mustela nivalis</i>	

Cervidae (deer)

15	Red deer	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	
16	Roe deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	
	Fallow deer	<i>Dama dama</i>	Introduced

Balaenopteridae (baleen whales)

17	NT Common Minke whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	
----	-----------------------	-----------------------------------	--

18	VU	Phocoenidae (porpoises) Harbour porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>
20		Delphinidae (marine dolphins) Short-beaked common dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphinus</i>
AMPHIBIAN LIST			
1		Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
BEETLE LIST			
1		European Rose Chaffer	<i>Cettonia aurata</i>
BUTTERFLY LIST			
Pieridae (Whites & Yellows)			
1		Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>
2		Orange Tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Nymphalidae (Fritillaries, Nymphalids & Browns)			
3		Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
4		Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>