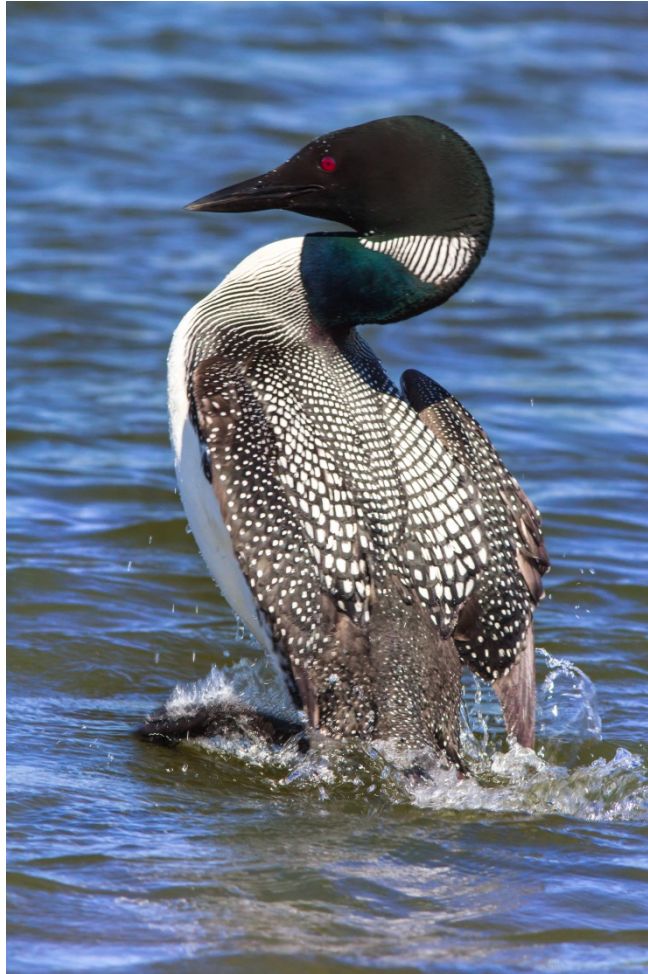


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# **Iceland Trip Report**

May 27 to June 5, 2015 (10 days)



**Trip report compiled by Tour Leader Gaukur Hjartarson**

### Tour Summary

*May 27:* The tour leader picked up all five participants at Keflavík International Airport at noon. The tour started with a known rarity at Keflavík, namely an adult drake **White-winged Scoter**, on the way from the pick-up site to a nearby restaurant for lunch. After lunch we scanned the Garðskagi peninsula near the international airport at Keflavík. We picked up many of the common local birds, including several **Manx Shearwaters** and a **Purple Sandpiper**. Luckily we also discovered two vagrants near Garður and had good views of a beautiful male **Lapland Longspur** and a **Canada Goose**. We then continued birding along the road to our first accommodation at Borgarnes. At Akranes we managed to see a vagrant **Common Swift** that had been seen there for some days. After finishing dinner at our hotel we made an evening tour to search for **Eurasian Woodcocks**. On the way to the site we saw a distant adult **White-tailed Eagle** and some **Common Shelducks**. We then managed to find a single Woodcock at an expected site despite some extremely cold weather. On the first day we saw a total of 45 species of birds.



*Photo 1. White-winged Scoter, Keflavik. Photo: Marilyn Browne.*

*May 28:* On the second day we left Borgarnes and drove to the Snæfellsnes peninsula. The day started very well with good views of an immature **White-tailed Eagle** near the road at Mýrar. It was very windy on the southern coast of Snæfellsnes, but we still managed to add some new species to our trip list. Scarcest of those was a single male **Northern Shoveler**. We visited a small birdcliff on the way where we managed to find at least three **Thick-billed Murres** among the much more common **Razorbills** and **Common Murres**. The second night was spent at the town of Grundarfjörður. The second day of the trip yielded 52 species of birds.



*Photo 2. Thick-billed Murre and Common Murre at Svörtuloft on Snæfellsnes, May 28. Photo: Merilyn Browne.*

*May 29:* On the third day of the trip we went on a boat trip from Stykkishólmur. From the boat we managed to see two adult **White-tailed Eagles** at close range, a few close **European Shags** at the nest and many other birds. On our drive to the next accommodation we managed to get good views of two pairs of adult **White-tailed Eagles**. During a short and pleasant evening trip from our hotel near Hvammstangi we managed to find our first **Short-eared Owl**. One participant was lucky enough to see an **Arctic Fox** from the hotel late in the evening. This third day of the trip yielded 46 species of birds.



*Photo 3. European Shag on nest. Breiðafjörður, May 29. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.*

*May 30:* The first part of the fourth day was largely spent travelling from the north-west to the north-east of the country. On the way we picked up some new species to our trip list, including many **Pink-footed Geese** and a few **Common Mergansers**. At the town of Blönduós we saw a **Minke Whale** from the shore. We then went on a whale-watching trip from Húsavík. **Atlantic Puffins** were seen in their thousands from the boat near Lundey island before we started a thorough, but unsuccessful, search for a Blue Whale that had been seen earlier in the day. We then saw three very close

**Humpback Whales** before we returned to the harbour. During an evening tour near our hotel in Aðaldalur we found an adult **Gyr Falcon** at close range and then two adults with three chicks close to the main road. We also picked up our first **Barrow's Goldeneyes** of the trip and our second **Short-eared Owl** and managed to find 59 species in the day.



*Photo 4. Gyr Falcon, Aðaldalur. Photo: Merilyn Browne.*

*May 31:* The fifth day included a drive from our hotel in Aðaldalur to the northernmost town of Iceland, in the far north-east, named Raufarhöfn. We stopped at excellent birding sites on the Tjörnes peninsula, the plains in Kelduhverfi where we saw two **Little Gulls** among many other birds, and then we moved on to the beautiful gorge of Ásbyrgi, which gave us good views of **Barrow's Goldeneye** and the first **Eurasian Wren**. We then visited several places on the bird-rich Melrakkaslétta peninsula. This area is generally very rewarding in terms of birds and we managed to find 63 species on the way despite unusually cold weather. Included in the list of birds were six quite close migrating **Red Phalaropes**, three vagrant **Barn Swallows** and a noisy **Eurasian Curlew**. An adult **Grey Seal** was seen in Öxarfjörður and a **Humpback Whale** was seen from the cliffs of Tjörnes peninsula. After dinner we went on an evening trip to the northernmost point of mainland Iceland named Hraunhafnartangi.





*Photo 5. Participants at the northernmost sign on mainland Iceland, May 31. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.*

*June 1:* The sixth day included a drive from Raufarhöfn to the excellent bird cliffs at Skoruvíkurbjarg on Langanes peninsula. There we got good views of a nice colony of **Northern Gannets** as well as many **Thick-billed Murres**, **Common Murres** and **Razorbills**. On our way back to our hotel in Aðaldalur we picked up a few more species and the day list ended on 60 species.



*Photo 6. Northern Gannet at Langanes, June 1. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.*

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*June 2:* The seventh day included a tour around the well-known bird paradise of Lake Mývatn. Not surprisingly we managed excellent views of **Barrow's Goldeneye** and **Harlequin Duck**. We also saw no fewer than four **Northern Shovelers**, which represents a decent proportion of the Icelandic breeding population. The bird of the day, however, was an adult drake **Surf Scoter**, far away from its natural home. We also saw some of the magical geology of this area, including the original natural baths of Grjótagjá, the mud geysers at Hverarönd and the most powerful waterfall in Europe, Dettifoss. The day yielded 41 species of birds.



*Photo 7. Barrow's Goldeneye, Mývatn, June 2. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.*

*June 3:* During a morning drive in the surroundings of the hotel in Aðaldalur we added two species to our trip list. Two adult **Long-tailed Jaegers** flew close to the car at an easy speed to allow excellent views and the only **Merlin** of the trip was seen briefly flying just in front of the car. After lunch at hotel, Gaukur left the group and Illugi Jónsson joined as driver to take the group to their accommodation near Borgarnes. A few species were added to the day list and a total of 44 species were seen in the day.



*Photo 8. Long-tailed Jaeger, June 3, Gaukur Hjartarson.*

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*June 4:* The group travelled from Borgarnes and visited some of Iceland's most famous historical sites and natural wonders, including the site of the ancient parliament at Þingvellir, the vast Gullfoss waterfall and the world famous geyser at Geysir. In the afternoon the group was met by guide Edward Rickson near Selfoss and initially had additional help from local birdwatcher Örn Óskarsson. On private land near Selfoss the group managed to get excellent views of several **Red Crossbills** at a feeding station but the search for Goldcrest drew a blank. This usually common species appears to have suffered greatly during this year's very harsh winter. The group then travelled down to the coast, adding **Feral Pigeon** to the trip list at Eyrarbakki. On the beach at Eyrarbakki there was a large flock of Greenland-bound **Sanderling** and **Common Ringed Plover** but the highlight was a 2cy **Sabine's Gull** feeding close to shore with a couple of **Black-legged Kittiwakes**. Dinner at Hótel Holt in Reykjavík. The day list ended on 38 species.



*Photo 9. Gullfoss, June 4: Photo: Marilyn Browne.*

*June 5:* A drive from Reykjavík to Garðskagi peninsula. Two new species were added to the trip list, a drake **Common Pochard** at Garður and an adult **Snow Goose** north of Sandgerði. Both these species are vagrants. Other birds seen include some **Manx Shearwaters** at Garðskagi.



*Photo 10. Manx Shearwaters at Garðskagi, June 5. Photo: Marilyn Browne.*

In 10 days the group managed to find 90 species of birds and five species of mammals.

Good luck with birds, spectacular scenery, good roads, comfortable accommodation, excellent food and a dedicated small group of participants made this a very successful trip to Iceland. The group experienced one of the coldest springs ever recorded in Iceland, but this did not affect the birdwatching too much. It was cold and windy much of the time and at one time we even had some snow on the road.



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## Annotated List of Birds recorded

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows the IOC List. Approximate site of observation frequently given as SW for south-western part of the country, W for the western part, NE for the north-eastern part etc.

**Total species recorded: 90** (including one only heard and another one only seen by the guide)

## DUCKS, GEESE, SWANS - Anatidae

### **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Greylag Geese are very common in Iceland and were seen all days in good numbers.

### **Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Pink-footed Geese were seen every day in the north from May 30 through June 3.

### **Snow Goose** *Chen caerulescens*

A single vagrant Snow Goose was seen at a small lake just north of Sandgerði (SW) on June 5.



Photo 11. Snow Goose, Sandgerði, June 5. Photo: Merilyn Browne.

### **Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Brent Geese were seen widely in the west from May 27 through May 29 in good numbers.

### **Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

A single vagrant Canada Goose was seen at Garður (SW) on May 27.

### **Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Two Barnacle Geese were seen at Kelduhverfi (NE) and one at Melrakkaslétta (NE) on May 31.

### **Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Whooper Swans are very common and easy to see and they were seen in good numbers every day of the trip.

### **Common Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Common Shelducks were seen in good numbers, but in bad light at Borgarfjörður (W) on May 27. Six were seen better on Melrakkaslétta (NE) on May 31.

### **Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

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Gadwalls were seen in some numbers every day we had in the north-east, mostly at Lake Mývatn and at Aðaldalur (NE).

**Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Eurasian Wigeons were seen in good numbers on most days of the trip and they are very common in the NE.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Mallard are widespread in Iceland and were seen all days in small numbers.

**Northern Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

A drake Northern Shoveler was seen at Snæfellsnes (W) on May 28 and another drake was seen on Langanes (NE) on June 1. Finally three drakes and a female were seen at Lake Mývatn (NE) on June 2.

**Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A few Northern Pintails were seen most days in the west and north, in total an estimated 15 birds.

**Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca*

Small numbers of Eurasian Teals were seen most days, in total a few dozen birds.

**Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

A vagrant drake Common Pochard was at Garður (SW) on June 5.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Tufted Duck is the common *Aythya* in Iceland. They were seen every day and often in good numbers.

**Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Greater Scaups are much less common than Tufted Ducks. We managed to see them on six out of ten days, mostly in small numbers, even though quite many were seen in the Mývatn (NE) area.

**Common Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

Common Eiders are very common on the coast and at breeding grounds close to the sea. They were seen in good numbers every day, except for the one day spent inland at Lake Mývatn.

**Harlequin Duck** *Histrionicus histrionicus*

Harlequin Ducks were seen on seven of the ten days, mostly in small numbers, but several dozen were seen on the Laxá river near Mývatn (NE) on June 1 and June 2 and a nice flock of 12 birds was at Blönduós (NW) on May 30. Seen at particularly close range on the Laxá river near Mývatn.



*Photo 12. Drake Harlequin Duck at Laxá river, June 2. Photo: Merilyn Browne.*

**White-winged Scoter** *Melanitta deglandi*

An adult drake of this rare vagrant was seen at Keflavík (SW) at the very beginning of the trip.

**Surf Scoter** *Melanitta perspicillata*

An adult drake of this uncommon vagrant was discovered chasing Common Scoters at Lake Mývatn (NE) on June 2.



*Photo 13. Drake Surf Scoter chasing a Common Scoter. Mývatn, June 2. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.*

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Six birds were seen at Húsavík (NE) harbour in May 30, five at Öxarfjörður (NE) on May 31, three at Aðaldalur (NE) on June 1 and 15-20 at Lake Mývatn (NE) on June 2.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Long-tailed Ducks were seen in small numbers every day in the north-east, both at sea and on lakes and ponds.



Photo 14. Long-tailed Ducks. Bárðardalur, June 3. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.

### **Barrow's Goldeneye** *Bucephala islandica*

Barrow's Goldeneyes were seen every day in the north-east, mostly at Lake Mývatn and at Aðaldalur, and close views were often obtained.

### **Common Merganser** *Mergus merganser*

Common Mergansers were seen at Langidalur near Blönduós (NW) and Norðurárdalur at Skagafjörður (N) both on May 30 and June 3.

### **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Red-breasted Mergansers were seen all days of the trip, even though in small numbers every day.

## **PHEASANTS & ALLIES - Phasianidae**

### **Rock Ptarmigan** *Lagopus muta*

Rock Ptarmigans were seen all days in the north-east, in total some tens of birds.

## **LOONS - Gaviidae**

### **Red-throated Loon** *Gavia stellata*

Several Red-throated Loons were seen most days.



Photo 15. Red-throated Loon, Grundarfjörður, May 28. Photo: Gaukur Hjartarson.



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### **Great Northern Loon** *Gavia immer*

Even though obviously scarcer than Red-throated Loons, Great Northern Loons were seen on most days.

### **GREBES - Podicipedidae**

#### **Horned Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Horned Grebes were seen most days, in small numbers except at Mývatn (NE) and Víkingavatn (NE) where they are abundant.

### **PETRELS & SHEARWATERS - Procellariidae**

#### **Northern Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Being one of the most numerous bird of Iceland, it was easy to find in good numbers almost everywhere along the coast.

#### **Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A few were seen both on the first and the final days of the trip from Garðskagi (SW) peninsula.

### **GANNETS & BOOBIES - Sulidae**

#### **Northern Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

A few were seen most days at the coast. A small but attractive colony was visited at Langanes (NE) where approximately 100 birds were seen.

### **CORMORANTS & SHAGS - Phalacrocoracidae**

#### **European Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

A flock of about ten was seen at Grundarfjörður (W) on May 28. Many were seen at Stykkishólmur (W) and surroundings, some on nests.

#### **Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Reasonable numbers were seen during the first few days along the west coast. They are scarcer in the north, but some were seen most days when driving along the coast.

### **KITES, HAWKS & EAGLES - Accipitridae**

#### **White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

In total eight White-tailed Eagles were seen. The first was an adult near Borgarnes (SW), the second an immature bird at Mýrar west of Borgarnes and then six adults in the vicinity of Stykkishólmur (W) at Snæfellsnes.



Photo 16. Adult White-tailed Eagle, Breiðafförður, May 29. Photo: Marilyn Browne.

### OYSTERCATCHERS - Haematopodidae

#### **Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Oystercatchers are common along the coast and were seen on most days in good numbers.

### PLOVERS - Charadriidae

#### **European Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

European Golden Plovers are very common breeders in Iceland and were seen in some numbers every day of trip.

#### **Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Common Ringed Plovers are common breeding birds in Iceland and some were seen every day of the trip.

### SANDPIPERS & SNIPES - Scolopacidae

#### **Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Roding males Eurasian Woodcocks were seen twice during half an hour of waiting at a known breeding site in the west at around 11 PM. Probably the same bird was involved in both observations.

#### **Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Common Snipes are very common in almost everywhere in Iceland and were seen most days.

#### **Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Black-tailed Godwits are rather common breeders in Iceland and were seen every day.



Photo 17. Black-tailed Godwit. Photo: Marilyn Browne.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Whimbrels are common breeders in Iceland and were seen every day.

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Eurasian Curlews might nest in Iceland regularly, even though their nesting grounds are not currently known. A single bird was heard calling at a former breeding site at Melrakkaslétta (NE) in the evening of May 31.

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Common Redshanks are common breeders in Iceland and were seen every day.

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Ruddy Turnstones do not breed in Iceland but are common on migration route towards more northerly breeding grounds in May and early June. Ruddy Turnstones were seen most days along the coastline and sometimes in good numbers.

**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Red Knots do not breed in Iceland but are common on migration route towards more northerly breeding grounds in May and early June. Red Knots were seen most days along the coastline and sometimes in good numbers.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Sanderlings do not breed in Iceland but are common on migration route towards more northerly breeding grounds in late May and early June. Sanderlings were seen most days along the coastline and sometimes in good numbers.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Purple Sandpipers were seen seven days of the trip, but always in small numbers.



Photo 18. Purple Sandpiper. Melrakkaslétta, May 31. Photo: Merilyn Browne.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Dunlins are common breeding birds in Iceland and many birds also visit on migration route towards more northerly breeding grounds in May and early June. Dunlins were seen most days along the coastline and sometimes in good numbers.

**Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

Red-necked Phalaropes are common breeding birds in Iceland and were seen on most days of the trip, with good numbers at Lake Mývatn (NE).

**Red Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

The group saw six beautifully plumaged Red Phalaropes at good range on migration on Melrakkaslétta on May 31.



Photo 19. Red Phalarope, Melrakkaslétta, May 31. Photo: Merilyn Browne.

### GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS - Laridae

**Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

Black-legged Kittiwakes are very numerous breeders in Iceland and were seen most days of the trip.



### **Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*

Sabine's Gulls are rather scarce vagrants in Iceland. A 2cy bird was discovered at Eyrarbakki on June 4. It was seen at a distance of about 100 m.



Photo 20. Sabine's Gull, Þorlákshöfn, June 4. Photo: Marilyn Browne.

### **Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Black-headed Gulls are common breeders in Iceland and were seen every day of the trip.

### **Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Little Gulls are basically vagrants in Iceland, even though in recent years it has bred. An adult and a 2cy bird were seen at same site in the NE on May 31.

### **Mew Gull** *Larus canus*

Mew Gulls are rather uncommon breeders in Iceland. They were only seen in the north from May 30 through June 3 and always in small numbers.

### **Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Even though Great Black-backed Gulls are declining in numbers in Iceland, they are still common and rather easy to find. Seen on every day of the trip.

### **Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

Glaucous Gulls are rather common breeding birds in the west and were seen in good numbers on Snæfellsnes. They were also seen in small numbers elsewhere on most days. One hybrid Glaucous Gull x Herring Gull, often called **Viking Gull**, was observed at Húsavík on May 30.

### **Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

Iceland Gulls are mostly winter visitors in Iceland, but immature birds linger well into June in some numbers. Several Iceland Gulls were seen most days of the trip, often giving good comparison with its larger lookalike, Glaucous Gull.

### **European Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus*

European Herring Gulls are the common large gulls in northern and eastern Iceland. Herring Gulls were seen on most days of the trip.

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### **Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

Lesser Black-backed Gulls are common breeders in Iceland, particularly in the SW. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen every day of the trip.

### **Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

Arctic Terns are one of those common breeding birds in Iceland that are hard to miss. They were seen in good numbers every day of the trip.

### **SKUAS - Stercorariidae**

#### **Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Great Skuas were only seen in the NE, at Kelduhverfi and Tjörnes, on May 31 and June 1, three birds on each day. Most birds gave good views.

#### **Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Parasitic Jaegers were seen on most days of the trip, but always in small numbers. Both dark birds and pale birds were seen.

#### **Long-tailed Jaeger** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Two Long-tailed Jaegers were seen in the NE on June 3.

### **AUKS - Alcidae**

#### **Thick-billed Murre** *Uria lomvia*

Three Thick-billed Murres were seen at Snæfellsnes (W) on May 28 and several dozen on Langanes (NE) on June 1.

#### **Common Murre** *Uria aalge*

Common Murres were seen four days of the ten, at Garðskagi (SW) on May 27, Snæfellsnes (W) on 28 and 29, from the whale-watching boat at Skjálíandi on May 30 and then in good numbers at the guillemot cliffs of Langanes (NE) on June 1.

#### **Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Razorbills were seen five days of the ten, mostly at same locations as the Common Murres.

#### **Black Guillemot** *Cepphus grylle*

Black Guillemots were seen in four out of ten days. Close to 20 birds were seen near Stykkishólmur on May 29, but fewer birds were seen in the north.

#### **Atlantic Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Atlantic Puffins were seen four out of ten days. Most days only in small numbers, but huge numbers were seen near Lundey (NE) island at Skjálíandi bay from the whale-watching boat on May 30.

### **PIGEONS, DOVES - Columbidae**

#### **Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

Feral Pigeons were seen in Eyrarbakki (S) and Reykjavík (SW) on June 4.

### **OWLS - Strigidae**

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### **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Short-eared Owls were seen twice, one at Gauksmýri (NW) on May 29 and one in Aðaldalur (NE) on May 30.

### **SWIFTS - Apodidae**

#### **Common Swift** *Apus apus*

A single vagrant Common Swift was seen at Akranes (SW) on May 27.

### **CARACARAS, FALCONS - Falconidae**

#### **Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

We had only one brief observation of a Merlin at Bárðardalur (NE) on June 3.

#### **Gyr Falcon** *Falco rusticolus*

We had several encounters with Gyrfalcons in the NE on May 30 and June 4 & 5 including pairs with chicks. Up to 10 different individuals were seen.

### **CROWS, JAYS - Corvidae**

#### **Northern Raven** *Corvus corax*

Ravens were seen every day of the trip in small numbers.

### **SWALLOWS, MARTINS - Hirundinidae**

#### **Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Barn Swallows were seen at two locations, Kópasker (NE) and Leirhöfn on Melrakkaslétta (NE), on May 31, including three individuals.

### **GOLDCRESTS, KINGLETS - Regulidae**

#### **Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

The guide saw one Goldcrest at Stykkishólmur (W) on May 29, but all attempts to show it to the group failed. So did further attempts for this species later in the trip. Goldcrests were unusually scarce this spring in Iceland, probably due to the harsh winter.

### **WRENS - Troglodytidae**

#### **Eurasian Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Only two Wrens were seen, one at Ásbyrgi in Kelduhverfi (NE) May 31 and one at Höfði by Lake Mývatn (NE) on June 2. Some more were heard at these same locations.

### **STARLINGS, RHABDORNIS - Sturnidae**

#### **Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common Starling were seen all days in the W, but were not seen in the NE.

### **THRUSHES - Turdidae**

#### **Common Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Even though Common Blackbirds are becoming quite common in Iceland, especially in the SW, they were only seen at one location near Reykjavík (SW) on May 27 and only two individuals.

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### **Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Redwing is the common thrush of Iceland and they were seen every day of the trip.

### **CHATS, OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS - Muscicapidae**

### **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Northern Wheatears were seen five days of the trip and only in small numbers.

### **WAGTAILS, PIPITS - Motacillidae**

### **White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

White Wagtails are widespread and common birds in Iceland. They were seen every day of the trip except the last day.

### **Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Meadow Pipit is the only pipit known to breed regularly in Iceland and it is very common. Meadow Pipits were seen every day of the trip.

### **FINCHES, EUPHONIAS - Fringillidae**

### **Common Redpoll** *Acanthis flammea*

Common Redpolls proved to be surprisingly scarce in the trip. Three were seen at a feeder at Húsavík (NE) on May 31 and some more in the south on June 4.

### **Red Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Red Crossbills were seen at Selfoss (S) on June 4. Red Crossbills are scarce as nesting birds in Iceland.

### **LONGSPURS, SNOW BUNTINGS - Calcariidae**

### **Lapland Longspur** *Calcarius lapponicus*

A beautiful looking male was seen at Garður (SW) on May 27, later that day photographed by a local photographer.



Photo 21. Lapland Longspur, Garður, May 27. Photo: Guðmundur Hjörtur.

### **Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Snow Buntings were seen in small numbers in the NE on May 31, June 1 & June 2 with the best views at Langanes peninsula.



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## Annotated List of Mammals Recorded

### WOLVES, COYOTE, FOXES, JACKALS - Canidae

#### **Arctic Fox** *Alopex lagopus*

One of the group saw one in the evening from the hotel at Gauksmýri (NW) on May 29.

### SEALS - Phocidae

#### **Grey Seal** *Halichoerus grypus*

Single Grey Seals were seen at Stykkishólmur (W) on May 29 and Öxarfjörður (NE) on May 31.

#### **Harbour Seal** *Phoca vitulina*

Harbour Seals were seen at Blönduós (NW) on May 30 and two at Melrakkaslétta (NE) on May 31.

### RORQUALS - Balaenopteridae

#### **Common Minke Whale** *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*

One Minke Whale was seen at sea off Blönduós (NW) on May 30.

#### **Humpback Whale** *Megaptera novaeangliae*

Three Humpback Whales were seen up close on the whale-watching trip at Skjálfandi (NE) bay on May 30. A single animal was seen from shore at Öxarfjörður (NE) on May 31.