

Itinerary - Birding in the midnight sun, Varanger



Varanger and Pasvik. June - July

Day 1:

The guide and driver will meet you at the Kirkenes airport. You will travel for one hour, into the Pasvik valley, for the two first nights.

After settled in the hotel, you will go for a drive to the huge marshland Skrøytnes. Here you will visit a bird tower, looking over the border river to Russia. This will give you opportunities to see several taiga specialities like Northern hawk Owl, Smew, Taiga Bean Goose, Whooper Swans as well as Little Gull, Common Crane, Short-eared Owl, Whinchat and Yellow Wagtail.

Day 2:

The whole day will be spend in the southern part of the valley, around Nyrud and in the Pasvik Valley National park.

Some of the birds that can be observed: Capercaillie, Black Grouse, Spotted Redshank, Pine Grosbeak, Northern Bullfinch, Siberian Tit, Willow Tit, Siberian Jay, Waxwing, Arctic Warbler, Arctic Redpoll, Little Bunting. There is also good chances to see Moose, Bisam Rat and with some luck the Brown Bear.

The early mornings and the evening are the best time so we will go out again after dinner for some hours.

Day 3:

You will travel up the Pasvik valley and continue west towards the Varanger Peninsula and the high-alpine mountains of Båtsfjord. This drive is the will be the longest transport leg on the tour, about four hours. We do several stops along the way, at Varangerbotn Nature reserve in the inner part of the Varangerfjord and at Høyholmen Naturereserve at the Tana river delta as well as in the in the Mountains.

You will spend the next two night at a hotel in either Båtsfjord or Kongsfjord.

Birds we will look for: Black- throated Diver, Velvet Scoter, Common Scoter, Temminck`s Stint, Bar- tailed Godwit, Arctic Skua, Long-tailed Skua, Rough- legged Buzzard

Day 4:

We use most of the day in the Båtsfjord - and Kongsfjord mountains. This is alpine to high alpine areas close to the Varanger peninsula National Park. Here will look for the high alpine species.

In the afternoon, we will drive along the coast, to the little fishing village of Berlevåg. The harbour area is a very good place for gulls and sea- ducks. It is a good sea watching points at the Kjølnes lighthouse, where we will use some time if the wind condition is good.

Birds we will look for: Gannet, Fulmar, King Eider, Greater Scaup, Gyr Falcon Glaucous Gull, Rock Ptarmigan, Dotterel, European Golden Plover, Ring Ouzl, Shore Lark, Snow Bunting and Lapland Bunting.

There is also good chances to see sea mammals like Utter, Harbour Porpoise, Mink Whale, Grey Seal and Harbour Seal. It is also possible to see, White -beaked Dolphin, Humpback Whale, Killer Whale and Beluga.

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Day 5:

We drive back over the mountains, towards the Varangerfjord for the last three nights. It is a little less than four hours driving.

Along the Varangerfjord we will stop at several place such as the Nesseby Nature reserve and Vadsøya Nature reserve.

Birds we will look for: White-tailed Eagle, Black Guillemot, Red-necked Phalarope, Ruff, Red-throated Pipit, Bluethroat and Arctic redpoll.

Day 6:

We will go to the birds cliff at Hornøya Nature reserve. It is just a short boat trip from the harbour in Vardø. Here you will walk thru the sea bird colony and you get the birds within a few meters range!

The birds you will see there is: Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Common Guillemot, Brünnick`s Guillemot, Shag and Kittiwake. Here we can also see Great Skua, Barnacle Goose, Greylag Goose, Rock Pipit and Twite.

Day 7:

You will drive to the old fishing village Hamningberg. This is a beautiful journey along the spectacular Persfjorden and thru the river delta at Sandfjord.

We will look for White-billed Diver, Great Northern Diver, Red- throated Diver, Willow Grouse, King Eider, Steller`s Eider, Velvet Scoter and Long-tailed Duck as well as the huge flocks of moulting Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser.

Day 8:

We will drive towards the airport at Kirkenes. We go direct after breakfast 07:30. It is a three and a half hours drive.