

# Iceland

Land of Fire and Ice

*21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (8 days)*

## Trip Report



Horned Grebe pretending to hide behind vegetation

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Richard Thomas

## Tour Summary

*Iceland is a very special place: a dramatic blend of scenery, lava fields, geothermal areas, a spouting geyser, huge waterfalls and, of course, some outstanding birds. Among the latter, Iceland can lay claim to being among the best locations worldwide for those seeking the spectacular Gyr Falcon—and the tour was very successful in this quest with one bird seen well on our first day, while none of us will ever forget the breath-taking views of two Gyr Falcons talon grasping and swooping low over our heads as we stood, mesmerised, in our hotel car park at Myvatn. Iceland's airwaves are filled with the songs of displaying shorebirds and two very special species were seen during the tour: numerous Red-necked Phalaropes and we were very lucky to observe three Red/Grey Phalaropes spinning on a lake that left ourselves, if not the birds, quite dizzy with excitement. To add to the above, the country's lakes are home to a wide range of waterfowl including two that stand out—Harlequin Duck and Barrow's Goldeneye, both are simply gorgeous in their own special way. We were also fortunate to encounter several scarce or vagrant species during the tour, including the aforementioned Red/Grey Phalaropes, plus singles of White-winged Scoter, Garganey, Common Pochard, Eurasian Coot and a Lonesome Arctic Loon/Black-throated Diver. Finally, thanks to specialist local knowledge, we were treated to the sight of possibly Iceland's rarest breeding bird: a pair of Long-tailed Skuas/Jaegers. We considered ourselves very privileged indeed to watch these birds as they swooped low over our heads at their secret breeding grounds.*

## Tour in Detail

After picking up the tour group at the airport, we made the short trip to Keflavik harbour where, to our delight, the long-staying male White-winged Scoter was close inshore with a group of Common Eiders. This individual has spent much of the last five years in the area but ranges widely up and down the coasts of Southeast Iceland. As we drove north the weather closed in, and by the time we reached our next stop near Borgarnes the nesting White-tailed Eagles refused to put on a show and we left empty-handed to continue to Myrar. There we spent some time exploring the many tracks and lakes of the area, enjoying the numerous song-fighting waders—mainly Common Snipe and Black-tailed Godwits and enjoying our first looks at Red-necked Phalaropes. One notable stop (to admire a superb Common Loon/Great Northern Diver in its resplendent breeding plumage) produced, despite heavy winds and rain, an Icelandic double rarity hit: a male Common Pochard in with a group of Tufted Ducks and a Eurasian Coot that swam past. However, even this wasn't the pick of our Myrar experience—the cry of “Gyr Falcon!” rang out as one of these top predators flashed by with mobbing waders trailing in its wake. It disappeared over a hilltop and as we rounded the corner, there it was, perched on a rock allowing the whole group to enjoy superb views through the telescope. Pleased with our first day's birding we retired to our nearby hotel where the second of our day's Rock Ptarmigan greeted us upon arrival.

We had near perfect conditions the following day for our trip to Flatey Island. There we enjoyed close-up views of many Red-necked Phalaropes and Snow Buntings, as well as pale-bellied Brant/Brent Geese and Atlantic Puffins but, alas, no Red/Grey Phalaropes for which the island is renowned. In the afternoon we headed west along the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, enjoying many Glaucous Gulls en



**Gyr Falcon:** one of the trip highlights





**Harlequin Duck:** one of Iceland's iconic birds.

route, and, after a great deal of searching around Svörtuloft Lighthouse (enlivened by the sight of a distant Orca in the increasingly windy conditions), three Thick-billed Murres/Brünnich's Guillemots among the colony of Common Guillemots and Razorbills.

We awoke to find our first Harlequin Ducks of the trip on the river viewable from our comfortable lodge. During the journey to Lake Myvatn we stopped to admire small groups of Pink-footed Geese, waiting patiently for the interior to thaw so they could return to their breeding grounds. As we approached our destination a stop at the Laxa River led to more Harlequin Duck sightings alongside the other wildfowl species for which Iceland is famous—Barrow's Goldeneyes.

The following morning dawned bright but windy and we were met at the hotel by our local guide. Thanks to his specialist knowledge he took us to the secret area where Iceland's only known Long-tailed Jaegers/Skuas nest. The van screeched to a stop as two of these elegant seabirds were spied close to the road. We leapt out to enjoy both birds through the telescope before first one then the other flew low over our heads to land just out of sight nearby. A truly memorable experience. Afterwards we



**Long-tailed Jaeger:** one of Iceland's rarest breeding species



made the most of our local expertise and visited a lake where a lonesome Arctic Loon/Black-throated Diver had taken up summer residence for its fifth successive year. A successful visit to a Merlin nesting area followed and later, around the town of Husavik, we saw our first Common Blackbirds, Common Redpolls and Goldcrests of the trip while nearby a short sea watch soon produced our target species as two Great Skuas passed by offshore. A visit to a large Atlantic Puffin colony nearby was, as ever, a true delight. After a very successful day, we were just turning into the hotel carpark when the reason for a huge commotion among the shorebirds in the area quickly became apparent as a Gyr Falcon flashed by. A rapid exit from the van ensued and soon we were all enjoying spectacular views of the world's largest falcon as it scythed through the air, once passing overhead within a few feet of us. Even more excitement was to follow however as a second Gyr Falcon, likely its mate (it was considerably smaller and paler) appeared and the two of them called and grappled talons as they sped across the sky. A fantastic finale to a truly special day!



**Red Phalarope:** a scarce visitor to Iceland

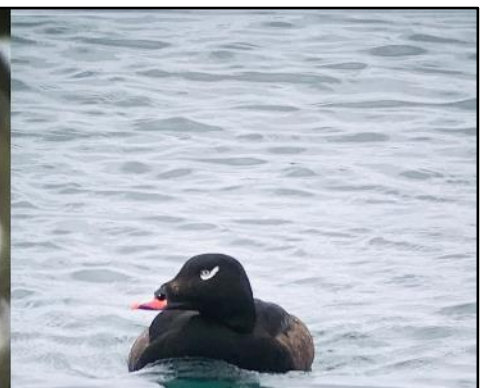
With a full day to explore the Myvatn area and a relatively calm, sunny day to boot, we were hopeful of finding a very special species that has taken up residence in the area in recent years. Frequent diligent scanning of the mountains to our east soon found gold: a magnificent White-tailed Eagle circling over the distant snowfields along with its attendant mobbing shorebirds. Later, no fewer than three of these magnificent raptors circled in the area, a superb sight against the breath-taking mountain scenery. Around Skútustaðir Lake a ludicrously tame pair of Horned/Slavonian Grebes literally floated about at our feet totally unconcerned by our presence. In the afternoon we headed out to enjoy some of the geothermal attractions of the area, notably the permanent shower—a source of great amusement—and later, following a visit to the awesome Dettifoss reputed to be the most powerful waterfall in Europe, we breathed in the smoking, sulphur-filled air around the hot springs of Hverir. Meanwhile, another Gyr Falcon did the honour of a quick fly by for some. A late evening drive produced our last target species for the area—Short-eared Owl. Two were found hunting with one putting on a magnificent display of wing-clapping.



**Atlantic Puffin:** a crowd pleaser



**Common Redpoll:** common in birch woodlands



A long-staying **White-winged**



Clockwise: **Gullfoss Waterfall**; **Barrow's Goldeneye**; **Strokkur Geyser**; **Tour group**

Rain accompanied us for almost the entire day during the drive back west to our hotel in Geysir. We broke the journey at Blönduós where a male Common Merganser/Goosander was found in the river mouth alongside several gull species including more Glaucous and Iceland Gulls. Between heavy rain showers at Daniëlslundur a Goldcrest revealed itself although we couldn't find any of the Red Crossbills the coniferous plantation is known to harbour.

Sightseeing was firmly on the agenda for our last full day in Iceland. After enjoying several eruptions from the Strokkur at Geysir (in case you were wondering, Geysir is the place the name for this natural phenomenon originated), we moved on to the Gullfoss Waterfall that perhaps has less volume of water than Dettifoss but is no less spectacular. After visiting some historical sites at Þingvellir and marvelling at the huge fault line where North America and Europe are literally tearing themselves apart, the lure of three Red/Grey Phalaropes just outside Reykjavik soon drew us west. After a short drive we arrived at the lake where the phalaropes had taken up temporary residence. To our delight all three were still present alongside their smaller, commoner, Red-necked cousins, spinning like tops on the choppy water. And the excitement didn't end there: a male Garganey had just been reported a short drive to the south and we arrived to find this very scarce visitor to Iceland still present on its chosen pond. After enjoying prolonged views, we headed to the nearby Garður Lighthouse where a spell of sea watching produced several close views of passing Manx Shearwaters and their larger seabird cousins, Northern Gannets.

Our last day in Iceland was a damp one, but undeterred by the weather we headed out to check a local migrant hotspot. Although there was no sign of the recently reported Little Gull, there was ample compensation in the form of a Barnacle Goose mixed in with a flock of Greylag Geese. A return to Bakkatjörn found the three Red/Grey Phalaropes still spinning crazily although the White-winged Scoter—doubtless the bird we had seen on day one—had narrowly given us the slip. All too soon it was time to say our goodbyes as we dropped those

staying on in Iceland off at their hotels while the remainder of the group headed to the airport, our minds filled with memories of some spectacular birds seen in breath-taking landscapes.

## Annotated List of species recorded

**Note:** Number in brackets ( ) indicate number of days on the tour the species was recorded.

List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

### Birds (81 in total: 81 seen)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill F, D Donsker & P Rasmussen (Eds). 2023. IOC World Bird List (v13.1). doi : 10.14344/IOC.ML.13.1.

**Status codes:** E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced. **IUCN codes:** CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, EW = Extinct in the Wild, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient

#### Ducks, Geese, Swans Anatidae

##### **Brant/Brent Goose (LC)**

*Branta bernicla*

(4) 300 Myrar 21.5, 10 Keflavik 21.5, 300 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 100 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5, 20 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5 and 10 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

Still some sizeable flocks in coastal locations.

##### **Barnacle Goose (LC)**

*Branta leucopsis*

(1) 1 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

A late straggler with Greylags.

##### **Greylag Goose (LC)**

*Anser anser*

Observed 8 days in total.

##### **Pink-footed Goose (LC)**

*Anser brachyrhynchus*

(3) 6 Blönduós 23.5, 30 Myvatn 23.5, 5 Myvatn 25.5 and 20 en route 26.5.

Small numbers of birds, waiting to head inland to breed.

##### **Whooper Swan (LC)**

*Cygnus cygnus*

Observed 8 days in total.

##### **Common Shelduck (LC)**

*Tadorna tadorna*

(2) 3 Myrar 21.5, 10 Borgarnes 21.5 and 1 en route 26.5.

##### **Garganey (LC)**

*Spatula querquedula*

(1) 1 Njardvik 27.5.

A fine drake successfully twitched.





**Northern Shoveler (LC)**

*Spatula clypeata*

(2) 1 Myvatn 23.5 and 2 Myvatn 24.5.

A scarce bird in Iceland.

**Gadwall**

*Mareca strepera strepera*

(6) Up to 6 Myvatn 23-26.5, 1 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 2 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

**Eurasian Wigeon (LC)**

*Mareca penelope*

(7) Seen most days including 4 Myrar 21.5, 10 Myvatn 23.5, Myvatn 26.5 and 1 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5.

**Mallard**

*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*

(8) Myvatn 25.5 and Myvatn 26.5.

**Northern Pintail (LC)**

*Anas acuta*

(1) 3 Myvatn 25.5.

Another Iceland scarcity.

**Eurasian Teal (LC)**

*Anas crecca*

(6) 4 Myrar 21.5, 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 1 Blönduós 23.5, Myvatn 25.5, 1 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 1 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

**Common Pochard (VU)**

*Aythya ferina*

(1) 1 Myrar 21.5.

An Icelandic rarity.

**Tufted Duck (LC)**

*Aythya fuligula*

(8) 30 Myrar 21.5, 10 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 2 Laxa River 23.5, 6 Myvatn 23.5, Myvatn 25.5 and Myvatn 26.5.

**Greater Scaup**

*Aythya marila marila*

(4) 2 Laxa River 23.5 and up to 20 Myvatn 23-26.5.

**Common Eider (NT)**

*Somateria mollissima*

(7) 30 Myrar 21.5, 10 Keflavik 21.5, 100 Blönduós 26.5, 30 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5 and 20 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5.

**Harlequin Duck (LC)**

*Histrionicus histrionicus*

(4) 6 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 4 Laxa River 23.5, 5 Húsavík 24.5 and 6 Laxa River 25.5.

Small numbers, particularly in the Myvatn area, although three from our hotel on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula

**White-winged Scoter (LC)**

*Melanitta deglandi*

(1) 1 Keflavik 21.5.

The long-staying drake showed close inshore.

**Common Scoter (LC)**

*Melanitta nigra*

(2) 6 Myvatn 24.5 and 20 Myvatn 25.5.

**Long-tailed Duck (VU)**

*Clangula hyemalis*

(3) 2 Akureyri-Leirur 23.5, 2 Laxa River 23.5, 2 Myvatn 24.5 and 10 Myvatn 25.5.

**Barrow's Goldeneye (LC)**

*Bucephala islandica*

(4) 8 Laxa River 23.5, 10 Laxa River 25.5, 10 Myvatn 25.5 and 1 Blönduós 26.5.

Unusually birds were mainly along river rather than on the main lake at Myvatn.

**Common Merganser/Goosander**

*Mergus merganser merganser*

(3) 1 en route 23.5, 1 Myvatn 25.5 and 1 Blönduós 26.5.

A scarce species in Iceland.

**Red-breasted Merganser (LC)**

*Mergus serrator*

(7) 2 Borgarnes 21.5, 2 Akureyri-Leirur 23.5, 1 Myvatn 23.5, Húsavík 24.5, 4 Myvatn 25.5, 6 Myvatn 26.5, 2 Blönduós 26.5, 4 Njardvik 27.5 and 3 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Pheasants & Allies Phasianidae**

**Rock Ptarmigan**

*Lagopus muta islandorum*

(6) 4 Myrar 21.5, 1 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 1 en route 23.5, 2 on 24.5, 2 Myvatn 25.5 and 2 Tingvalla (Thingvellir) 27.5.

**Pigeons, Doves Columbidae**

**Rock Dove**

*Columba livia domestica*

(2) 1 Keflavik 21.5 and 1 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

**Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae**

**Eurasian Coot (LC)**

*Fulica atra*

(1) 1 Myrar 21.5.

An Iceland rarity, sharing the same lake with the Common Pochard

**Grebes Podicipedidae**

**Horned/Slavonian Grebe**

*Podiceps auritus auritus*

(4) Up to 20 Myvatn 23-26.5.

One pair at point blank range at Myvatn was the highlight sighting.

**Oystercatchers Haematopodidae**



**Eurasian Oystercatcher**
*Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus*

(8) Widespread.

**Plovers Charadriidae**
**European Golden Plover (LC)**
*Pluvialis apricaria*

(8) Common.

**Common Ringed Plover (LC)**
*Charadrius hiaticula*

(8) 10 Myrar 21.5, 4 Borgarnes 21.5, 6 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 10 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 2 en route 23.5, 2 on 24.5, 2 Myvatn 25.5, 2 en route 26.5, 2 Njardvik 27.5 and 1 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Sandpipers, Snipes Scolopacidae**
**Eurasian Whimbrel (LC)**
*Numenius phaeopus*

(8) 1 en route 22.5 and observed en route 26-28.5.

**Black-tailed Godwit**
*Limosa limosa islandica*

(6) 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5 and en route 26.5. Fairly common.

**Ruddy Turnstone**
*Arenaria interpres interpres*

(6) 10 Myrar 21.5, 6 Keflavik 21.5, Húsavík 24.5, 1 Blönduós 26.5, 100 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5, Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5 and Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Red Knot**
*Calidris canutus islandica*

(6) Myrar 21.5, 100 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 200 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, Húsavík 24.5, 3 Blönduós 26.5, 30 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5 and 10 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5.

**Sanderling**
*Calidris alba alba*

(3) 1 Húsavík 24.5, 4 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5, 8 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5 and 4 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

Only small numbers, with several in full summer plumage.

**Dunlin**
*Calidris alpina schinzii*

(6) 2 Myrar 21.5, 10 Borgarnes 21.5, 1 Myvatn 23.5, 1 Myvatn 25.5, 2 Blönduós 26.5, 2 Njardvik 27.5 and 2 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Purple Sandpiper (LC)**
*Calidris maritima*

(2) 7 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5 and 2 Húsavík 24.5.

Some nice sightings of this rocky shore specialist.

**Common Snipe**
*Gallinago gallinago faeroeensis*

Observed 8 days in total.

**Red-necked Phalarope (LC)**
*Phalaropus lobatus*

(8) 10 Myrar 21.5, 10 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 30 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 20 Myvatn 23.5, 7 Ytri-Tunga, Tjörnes, Norðurland 24.5, 40 Myvatn 25.5, Myvatn 26.5, 12 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 10 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5.

Always delightful, this species was widespread in Iceland.

#### **Red/Grey Phalarope (LC)**

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

(2) 3 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 28.5.

3 successfully twitched near Reykjavik. Undoubtedly a trip highlight.

#### **Common Redshank**

*Tringa totanus robusta*

(8) Widespread.

### **Gulls, Terns, Skimmers *Laridae***

#### **Black-legged Kittiwake**

*Rissa tridactyla tridactyla*

(7) 20 Keflavik 21.5, 6 en route 23.5, 4 Húsavík 24.5, 10 Blönduós 26.5, Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5, Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5 and Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

#### **Black-headed Gull**

*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Observed 8 days in total.

#### **Common Gull**

*Larus canus canus*

(4) 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 1 Godafoss, Norðurland 23.5, 2 Húsavík 24.5 and 6 en route 26.5.

#### **Great Black-backed Gull (LC)**

*Larus marinus*

(8) 6 Myrar 21.5, 4 Keflavik 21.5, Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 1 Myvatn 23.5, 4 Húsavík 24.5, 1 Myvatn 25.5, 2 Blönduós 26.5, 10 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 10 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5.

#### **Glaucous Gull**

*Larus hyperboreus leuceteres*

(6) 3 Keflavik 21.5, 50 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 6 Húsavík 24.5, 2 Blönduós 26.5, 10 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 2 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

The majority of birds in the Snaefellsnes Peninsula area, but seen at several other coastal locations.

#### **Iceland Gull (LC)**

*Larus glaucooides*

(5) 2 Keflavik 21.5, 1 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 2 Húsavík 24.5, 4 Blönduós 26.5 and 2 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

Small numbers in coastal areas.

#### **European Herring Gull**

*Larus argentatus argenteus*

(5) 3 Keflavik 21.5, 6 Húsavík 24.5, 10 Blönduós 26.5, Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 30 Kasthusatjörn 28.5.

#### **Lesser Black-backed Gull**

*Larus fuscus graellsii*

(7) Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 1 en route 23.5, 3 Húsavík 24.5, 20 Blönduós 26.5, Bakkatjörn (pond only) 27.5 and 20 Bakkatjörn (pond only) 28.5.

**Arctic Tern (LC)**
*Sterna paradisaea*

Observed 8 days in total.

**Skuas Stercorariidae**
**Great Skua**
*Stercorarius skua*

(1) 3 Ytri-Tunga, Tjörnes, Norðurland 24.5.

Seen thanks to local knowledge: as elsewhere in its range, this species has undergone a dramatic recent decline owing to the ravages of avian influenza.

**Parasitic Jaeger/Skua (LC)**
*Stercorarius parasiticus*

(3) Myrar 21.5, 1 en route 23.5 and 10 Húsavík 24.5.

Widespread in small numbers.

**Long-tailed Jaeger/Skua**
*Stercorarius longicaudus pallescens*

(1) 2 on 24.5. Seen thanks to a local guide who took us to a secret location where 1–2 pairs breed annually in Iceland.

**Auks Alcidae**
**Thick-billed Murre/Brünnich's Guillemot**
*Uria lomvia lomvia*

(1) 3 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5.

Found after some searching although not seen by all participants given the difficult terrain.

**Common Murre/Common Guillemot**
*Uria aalge aalge*

(1) 200 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5.

Some of the bridled form seen on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula.

**Razorbill**
*Alca torda islandica*

(2) 50 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5 and 3 Húsavík 24.5.

Good opportunities for comparison with other auk species on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula.

**Black Guillemot (LC)**
*Cepphus grylle*

(5) 2 Keflavik 21.5, 40 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 4 Húsavík 24.5, 1 Blönduós 26.5 and 3 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

**Atlantic Puffin (VU)**
*Fratercula arctica*

(3) 1 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 100 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 300 Ytri-Tunga, Tjörnes, Norðurland 24.5 and 10 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

Always a delight to see.



### Loons *Gaviidae*

#### **Red-throated Loon/Diver (LC)**

*Gavia stellata*

(5) 10 Myrar 21.5, 1 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 2 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 2 Dettifos 25.5, 6 Blönduós 26.5 and 2 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

#### **Black-throated/Arctic Loon/Diver (LC)**

*Gavia arctica*

(1) 1 Húsavík 24.5.

The annual returning bird.

#### **Common Loon/Great Northern Diver (LC)**

*Gavia immer*

(6) 6 Myrar 21.5, 4 Keflavik 21.5, 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 4 Húsavík 24.5, 2 Myvatn 25.5, 6 Blönduós 26.5 and 1 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

### Petrels, Shearwaters, Diving Petrels *Procellariidae*

#### **Northern Fulmar (LC)**

*Fulmarus glacialis*

(6) Keflavik 21.5, Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 2 Akureyri-Leirur 23.5, 6 Húsavík 24.5, 5 Blönduós 26.5, 1 Tingvalla (Thingvellir) 27.5 and Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

### Gannets, Boobies *Sulidae*

#### **Northern Gannet (LC)**

*Morus bassanus*

(3) 6 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5, 10 Húsavík 24.5 and 10 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

Another species much reduced in numbers owing to avian influenza.

### Cormorants, Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

#### **Great Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*

(3) 1 Borgarnes 21.5, 2 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5 and 2 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

#### **European Shag**

*Gulosus aristotelis aristotelis*

(3) 3 Borgarnes 21.5, 10 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5 and 5 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5.

Much commoner than the preceding species.

### Kites, Hawks, Eagles *Accipitridae*

#### **White-tailed Eagle**

*Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla*

(1) 3 Myvatn 25.5.

A pair have taken up residence in the southeast corner of Myvatn in recent years

### Owls *Strigidae*

#### **Short-eared Owl**

*Asio flammeus flammeus*

Seen on a late evening drive, one bird in display flight

### Caracaras, Falcons *Falconidae*

#### **Merlin (LC)**

*Falco columbarius*

(1) 1 Húsavík 24.5.

Seen thanks to local knowledge close to its nest site.

#### **Gyr Falcon (LC)**

*Falco rusticolus*

(3) 1 Myrar 21.5, 2 Myvatn 24.5 and 1 Myvatn 25.5.

Fantastic views of one perched at Myrar, but even that was eclipsed by the two talon grasping and swooping over our heads by our hotel in Myvatn.

### Crows, Jays *Corvidae*

#### **Northern Raven**

*Corvus corax varius*

(8) Widespread.

### Goldcrests, Kinglets *Regulidae*

#### **Goldcrest**

*Regulus regulus regulus*

(3) 1 Húsavík 24.5, 2 Daníelslundur 26.5 and 1 Reykholt 27.5.

Surprisingly elusive in contrast to the usual inquisitive nature of this species.

### Wrens *Troglodytidae*

#### **Eurasian Wren**

*Troglodytes troglodytes islandicus*

(2) 1 Húsavík 24.5 and 2 Myvatn 25.5.

One singing bird seen particularly well at Myvatn.

### Starlings, Rhabdornises *Sturnidae*

#### **Common Starling**

*Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris*

(6) 2 Geysir 26.5.

### Thrushes *Turdidae*



**Redwing**

*Turdus iliacus coburni*

(8) Common.

**Common Blackbird**

*Turdus merula merula*

(3) 4 Húsavík 24.5, 1 Geysir 26.5 and 2 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Chats, Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae***

**Northern Wheatear**

*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

(6) 4 Myrar 21.5, 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 1 en route 23.5, 1 Blönduós 26.5, 2 Gardur--Lighthouse area 27.5 and 1 Kasthusatjorn 28.5.

**Wagtails, Pipits *Motacillidae***

**White Wagtail (LC)**

*Motacilla alba*

(5) 2 Snaefellsnes Peninsula 22.5, 1 Godafoss, Norðurland 23.5, 6 Myvatn 25.5, 1 en route 26.5 and 3 Tingvall (Thingvellir) 27.5.

**Meadow Pipit (LC)**

*Anthus pratensis*

Observed 8 days in total.

**Finches, Euphonias *Fringillidae***

**Common Redpoll (LC)**

*Acanthis flammea*

(4) 30 Húsavík 24.5, 10 Myvatn 25.5, 2 Geysir 26.5 and 10 Reykholt 27.5.

**Longspurs, Snow Buntings *Calcariidae***

**Snow Bunting**

*Plectrophenax nivalis insulae*

(2) 30 Flatey, Breiðafjörður 22.5 and 2 en route 23.5.

A highlight of our visit to Flatey Island.

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