



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Scandinavia

Denmark, Norway & Sweden

27th May to 8th June 2011 (13 days)



This tour will take us to several beautiful areas of Scandinavia in search of some really fantastic birds. After a brief but full day in Copenhagen, where we will visit some well known tourist attractions, we will drive to Sweden to begin our birding adventure in earnest. Starting in the lowlands, we will search for species characteristic of this region such as Common Crane, White-tailed Eagle, Western Osprey, Eurasian Bittern, Red Kite and Black-tailed Godwit. From there we travel to the Island of Öland in the Baltic Sea. This is a migrant hotspot where thousands of birds stop-over to feed and rest. Here we will be kept busy with various ducks and waders, including Common Eider and Velvet Scoter, Corn Crake, stunning breeding plumaged Red-necked Phalarope and Ruff, as well as Bluethroat, European Green Woodpecker, Eurasian Golden Oriole, and Red-breasted and European Pied Flycatcher. We then visit Sweden's vast forest and mountain areas looking for special birds that include Great Grey, Ural, Eurasian Eagle and Eurasian Pygmy Owl, Hazel and Black Grouse, Western Capercaillie, Golden Eagle, Rock Ptarmigan, Black and Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker, and the scarce Grey-headed Chickadee (Siberian Tit). Our accommodations are very comfortable throughout and we can expect long summer days surrounded by spectacular landscapes and birds!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...

DETAILS

Tour Dates	Scandinavia: 27th May to 8th June 2011 (13 days)
Tour Price	US\$4,975.00 per person sharing (see below)
Tour Size	Max 12 participants and 2 Rockjumper leaders

THE ITINERARY

27th May	Arrive in Copenhagen
28th May	Copenhagen to Scania
29th May	Scania to Öland
30th May	Öland area
31st May	Öland area
1st June	Öland to Sättra Brunn via Kalmar and Stockholm
2nd June	Svartådalen area
3rd June	Svartådalen to Funäsdalen, Fulufjället National Park
4th & 5th June	Funäsdalen and Fulufjället National Park
6th June	Funäsdalen to Älvdalen
7th June	Älvdalen to Sättra Brunn and Svartådalen (Black River Valley)
8th June	Sättra Brunn to Stockholm and departure

THE TOUR IN DETAIL...

Day 1, 27th May: Arrival in Copenhagen. After arriving in Copenhagen, you will be met by your Rockjumper Birding Guide. We will then drive to the famous Kronborg Castle in Elsinore. Here we



will have lunch in a small restaurant inside Kronborgs walls. This castle, known worldwide from Shakespeare's Hamlet, lies beautifully at the seaward approach to The Sound, Øresund, and is one of the most important Renaissance castles of Northern Europe. Birds we can expect to see today include Common Buzzard, Common Kestrel, Common Blackbird, Song Thrush, European Herring, Great Black-backed and Black-headed Gull, Eurasian Magpie, Western Jackdaw, Hooded Crow, Rook, Eurasian Jay, Great and Eurasian Blue Tit, Common Starling, and European Greenfinch.

From Elsinore we will drive along the beautiful Øresund towards the Little Mermaid. The famous statue is named after the fairy tale "The Little Mermaid" written by the world famous Danish



poet Hans Christian Andersen, and is situated on a rock in Copenhagen harbour. In the evening we will have dinner in Tivoli in the heart of Copenhagen.

Day 2, 28th May: Copenhagen to Scania. We will depart early this morning and cross the 16 km combined tunnel-bridge link to Scania, the Southern part of Sweden. Here we will commence our birding at Lake Kranke. The lake is surrounded by a huge reedbed that can be viewed from two lookout towers. Possible birds here include Water Rail, Eurasian Bittern, Western Marsh Harrier, Black Tern, Little Gull, Thrush Nightingale, Eurasian Hobby, Eurasian Penduline Tit, Bearded Reedling (Tit), Eurasian Reed, Sedge and Marsh Warbler, Tree Pipit, Barn Swallow, Sand and Common House Martin, Long-tailed Tit, Common Reed Bunting and Whinchat. We will then continue to the small reserve, Vombs Ängar, where we can search for Common Crane, Barnacle Goose, Eurasian Curlew and Western Yellow Wagtail.

At Lake Sövde we will be looking for the impressive White-tailed Eagle that breeds here. These large birds are often seen perched in bare trees or else scavenging fish on the shoreline. Red Kite is a common resident and we will see this elegant raptor patrolling the air. At our lunch stop at a cosy inn we will keep an eye out for Willow Tit, which often visit the garden. After lunch we will drive to a valley that holds a breeding pair of Golden Eagle. The eagles can often be seen gliding high over the valley or the surrounding mountain tops. Other birds likely to be seen here include the majestic Black and Great Spotted Woodpecker, Common Buzzard, Northern Raven, Whinchat, Coal Tit, Eurasian Siskin, Common Redpoll, Common Chaffinch and Hawfinch.



We will overnight in a nice Bed and Breakfast.

Day 3, 29th May: Scania to Öland. In the early morning we will drive the short way to Ravlunda Skjutfält, a military training area, which is open to the public on most weekends. This area holds the last stronghold for Tawny Pipit in Sweden, and we should see several of them displaying over the grasslands here. Eurasian Golden Oriole is often heard at this time of year singing from the treetops. With patience we will see these attractive yellow and black birds flying through the trees. Other birds



we will be on the lookout for this morning includes Little Ringed Plover, Black, European Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker, Eurasian Wryneck, Woodlark, Red-backed Shrike, Northern Wheatear, Garden Warbler and Mistle Thrush. In particular, we will search for the scarce breeding migrants in this area such as Montagu's Harrier, Barred Warbler and the stunning Common Firecrest.

We will return to our accommodations for breakfast and then continue to Degesberga, a deep, long ravine surrounded by Beech forest, where White-throated Dipper and Grey Wagtail breed along the river. Near Åhus we will bird a lagoon with reedbelts from the tower where we will scan for holarctic waders such as Broad-billed Sandpiper and Little Stint. Other birds here may include the majestic Mute Swan, Common Shelduck, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Common Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Sandwich and Little Tern, White Wagtail, Eurasian Reed and Sedge Warbler and Common Reed Bunting. The last stop in Scania will be at



Håslövs Ängar, a marsh area near the huge Lake Hammersjön. Here several breeding pairs of Black-tailed Godwit occur, as well as Common Redshank, Northern Lapwing and possibly Ruff. In the small lakes we will look for Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Black and Common Tern, and the stunning Eurasian Penduline Tit.

Later we will drive to Öland, an island on the Swedish east coast in the Baltic Sea. Here we will be based for two nights at a charming and comfortable family-run guesthouse that was formerly a traditional Öland farmhouse, built in the classic island style. Wholesome home-cooking will be provided!

Day 4, 30th May: Öland area. Öland has a rich blend of natural, cultural and historical attractions: The Great Alvar Plain, divided by dry stone walls and pasturelands; linear villages fashioned way back in the Middle Ages; the many ancient Iron Age, Stone Age and medieval remains; plus an exceptional flora and rich birdlife have all earned southern Öland its World Heritage status. Today we will visit the famous Ottenby Bird Observatory and Nature Reserve, established in 1946. Here, tired spring migrants rest and feed in the bushy gardens around the old stone lighthouse or in the adjacent meadows after their 300-kilometre northbound journey across the Baltic Sea. Late May and early June are the best time for migrants from Eastern Europe and we will be on the lookout for Red-footed Falcon, European Bee-eater, European Turtle Dove, Red-rumped Swallow, Greenish Warbler and Rosy Starling, being amongst the more regular visitors at this time of year.



To the north-east of the observatory lies the wet meadowland of Schäferiängarna. This area has benefitted from centuries of hay-making and grazing by cattle, resulting in a region that holds both a very rich birdlife and also flora. Common, Spotted and Green-winged Orchid, along with different grasses and sedges are present, making the meadows very colourful. They are also a suitable place for breeding waders such as, Common Ringed Plover, Pied Avocet, Ruff, Ruddy Turnstone, Eurasian Curlew and Dunlin. This time of the year is perfect for migrants like Red Knot, Curlew Sandpiper and Bar-tailed Godwit all in their stunning red summer plumage.

Inland and to the north-west of these meadows lies Ottenbylund, the largest continuous deciduous woodland area on Southern Öland. Here, birch and oak trees dominate and host rare breeding species such as Eurasian Wryneck, Thrush Nightingale, Icterine and Barred Warbler, and Spotted and Collared Flycatcher, all of whose songs will fill the wood at the time of our visit. This area also holds a wealth of commoner summer visitors such as Common Redstart, Eurasian Blackcap, Common Chiffchaff, Willow, Wood and Garden Warbler. Interestingly, the forest here is inhabited by 200 or so descendants of the Fallow Deer that Sweden's King John III introduced to the region in 1569. At that time, large areas consisted of open meadow but, in 1694, King Karl XI fenced all the domestic grazing animals out of the forest to protect its young oak trees, with the result that, today, the adult oaks are over 300 years old. Breeding birds of this area include Common Snipe, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Common Ringed Plover, Northern Lapwing, Ruddy Turnstone, Common Redshank, Little Tern and Northern Wheatear.



Ottenby also hosts the remains of an early Stone Age dwelling place, and the general area is rich in stone walls and house foundations stemming way back from the Iron Age. Långe Jan Lighthouse (the tallest in Sweden) was built here in 1784 using stone from the nearby St. John's chapel, whilst at nearby Kyrkhamn there are the remains of a Middle Age fishing village.

Day 5, 31st May: Öland area. In the morning we will return to Ottenby to look for any newly arrived migrants in the Lighthouse garden. If we are lucky, thousands of Brant Goose will pass this point on their way to their breeding grounds in Siberia. Later we will focus on the most striking characteristic of Öland, the Great Alvar Plain. An alvar occurs on hard limestone bedrock and is a flat, treeless area where bare rock breaks through thin soil. The Great Alvar Plain is the largest grazed alvar in the world (being 37 kilometres long by 15 kilometres wide), an extensive limestone plateau strewn with windswept junipers and granite 'erratics' deposited in this limestone land during the last ice age, eleven thousand years ago. This plateau has been grazed continuously from the Neolithic period until relatively recently; and, in early summer, this wild area is literally carpeted by Elder-flowered and Early Purple Orchids; truly a sight to behold! Raptors are often in view here and may include Common and European Honey Buzzard, Northern Goshawk, Montagu's Harrier, Common Kestrel and Eurasian Hobby. Along the rocky coastline are several good birding spots and here we will search for Common Eider, Velvet and Common Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Lesser and Greater Black-backed Gull, Pied Avocet, Grey (Black-bellied) Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope and Meadow Pipit. Finally, after what promises to be a long and productive birding day, we will check in to our comfortable hotel near Borgholm.

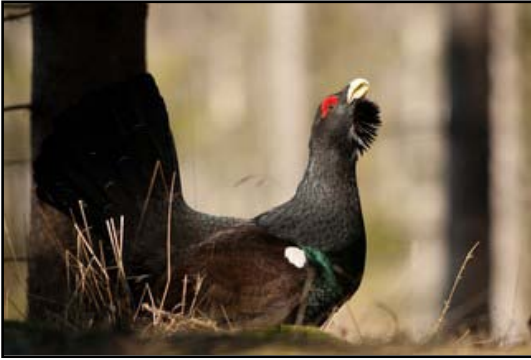
Day 6, 1st June: Öland to Sättra Brunn via Kalmar and Stockholm.

In the early morning we will drive north to Horns Kungsgård where we will walk to Lake Hornsjön. Along the trail we will again see several impressive orchids; the beautiful, white Narrow-leaved Helleborine being one of them. In the forest here we have a good chance of finding breeding Eurasian Golden Oriole, Common Rosefinch and Collared Flycatcher. The lake itself can produce species like Common Merganser, Great Crested and Horned Grebe, Western Osprey, Caspian and Common Tern and Common Goldeneye. Then we will visit one of the beautiful localities in the Northern part of the island where we can pick up species for our ever growing list. Our final stop in Öland will be Haltorps Hage, a really nice wood where we will see the queen of all Europe's orchids, the Lady Slipper Orchid. Thereafter we will leave Öland and drive to Kalmar Castle. Here the unity of Scandinavia was founded in the 12th century by signing a Union Treaty that made the Danish queen, Magrethe I, the reigning Queen of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

In the afternoon we will catch a flight to Stockholm and then continue to the small village of Sättra Brunn where we will settle into our base. This is a most interesting establishment; an old and historic spa hotel that was recently rescued from obscurity by a consortium of philanthropic and entrepreneurial businessmen. The hotel consists of over a hundred red-painted wooden cottages and houses, and is set in a large park where mature trees attract a wealth of woodland birds. It also has a renowned spa facility with hot pools both inside and outside. Possible birds here include Spotted and European Pied Flycatcher, European Robin, European Green and Black Woodpecker, Icterine, Garden and Wood Warbler, and Ortolan Bunting.



Later in the evening, either before or after dinner at the hotel's excellent restaurant, we will head back out into the field in search of Great Grey Owl and Eurasian Pygmy Owl, Eurasian Woodcock and European Nightjar.



Day 7, 2nd June: Svartådalen area. Situated in the lowlands, Svartådalen is an attractive farming area with bright, red-painted wooden farmhouses surrounded by lush Oak and Conifer forests, lakes and meadows. We will head out into the surrounding countryside early this morning in search of the region's seven species of woodpecker. Eurasian Wryneck is likely to be heard and seen, as are Eurasian Three-toed, Grey-headed, European Green, Lesser and Great Spotted and Black Woodpecker. We will explore this quiet and generally under-exploited landscape via

small, winding roads and also on foot before enjoying a typical Swedish picnic lunch. Other species we should record here include Black-throated Loon, Common Crane, Common Swift, Common and Lesser Whitethroat, Meadow Pipit, Dunnock, Winter Wren and Red-backed Shrike. After lunch we will drive northwards through the farmland valleys of Dalarna watching out for Common Wood Pigeon, Stock Dove, Eurasian Skylark and Yellowhammer. Black Grouse occur throughout this region and we will scan the fields carefully for this species. The area is also culturally rich and is endowed with traditional architecture, craft industries and folklore. We will overnight in Tällberg by Lake Siljan.

Day 8, 3rd June: Svartådalen to Funäsdalen via Fulufjället National Park. After breakfast we will drive to Fulufjället National Park. Here we will enjoy a 'boardwalk' around the park's forest where we will look for the much sought after Western Capercaillie, the largest of the grouse family. Other special bird species here include Siberian Jay, Grey-headed Chickadee, European Crested Tit and Red Crossbill. Below an impressive waterfall we stand good chances of seeing White-throated Dipper when we stop here for a while to admire the scenery. We will also visit the newly-established visitor's centre, where avian visitors include the stunning summer-plumaged Brambling, and we'll enjoy a cup of coffee before driving to a nesting area for the localised and scarce Grey-headed Chickadee, where we will have our picnic lunch. As we drive through the lower valleys, birding stops could reveal Hooded Grebe, Red-throated and Black-throated Loon, Velvet and Common Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, and Wood, Common and Green Sandpiper breeding on the small lakes and pools by the roadside. Here we are also likely to encounter our first Reindeer, though a great many more will be seen in the mountains. After lunch we will then drive on to Funäsdalen and check into our accommodation, where Bluethroat often sing just outside the hotel rooms. We will spend three nights here, exploring the surrounding area.

Day 9, 4th June: Funäsdalen and Fulufjället National Park.

After breakfast this morning we will climb above the birch forest to the open tundra and enjoy a day walking on Flatruet. This is a high mountain plateau with an interesting high alpine flora and fauna. Here, confiding Willow Grouse, Rock Ptarmigan, Ruff, Temminck's Stint and Lapland Longspur, all resplendent in full breeding attire, are amongst the many breeding species. Above, Golden Eagle, Rough-legged Buzzard, Hen Harrier and Merlin patrol the skies; and where the mountains rise dramatically to form steep cliffs, we will



look out for the majestic Gyrfalcon, a scarce breeder in this area. Both Short-eared and Northern Hawk Owl can also be found here during good Lemming years. Mammals that we may see include Red Fox, European Badger, Hedgehog and Reindeer, which are particularly common. Finally, at night (although darkness never descends on these latitudes at this season!), we will enjoy one of Scandinavia's finest shows at a lek of the Great Snipe. Here, on an alpine meadow at the foot of a great mountain, they perform their peculiar song and dance display, seemingly unaware of our human presence.

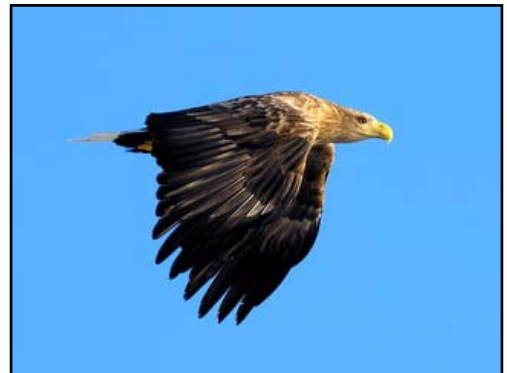


Day 10, 5th June: Funäsdalen and Fulufjället National Park.

As the weather in the mountains can be unpredictable, today will either offer a further chance to get to any regions we may not yet have been able to reach, or else will allow additional time to view the areas beautiful birds and scenery. After all, breeding plumaged Red-necked Phalarope, Eurasian Dotterel, Long-tailed Jaeger, Bluethroat, and Lapland Longspur, for example, are not species of which we will easily tire! We spend our third and final night in Funäsdalen tonight.

Day 11, 6th June: Funäsdalen to Älvdalen. After breakfast we may offer an optional early morning excursion if we need more time to track down Grey-headed Chickadee in the ancient mountainside forests around Nipfjället. We will spend most of today exploring the taiga forest at the foot of the mountains, searching for exciting species that may include Hazel Grouse, Northern Hawk-Owl, Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker, Siberian Jay, Parrot Crossbill and another chance for Western Capercaillie. We may also cross the border into Norway to enhance our chances of a Gyrfalcon (so bring your passports!). In the afternoon we will explore Nipfjället, a barren mountainous area, looking for Rock Ptarmigan, Ring Ouzel and Snow Bunting. We will then descend to our hotel in Älvdalen for dinner and the night.

Day 12, 7th June: Älvdalen to Svartådalen and Sättra Brunn (Black River Valley). After breakfast we may offer an optional early morning excursion if we need more time to track down Grey-headed Chickadee in the ancient mountainside forests around Nipfjället. We will then embark on the long drive southwards, which we'll take quite slowly as we stop to look for species such as Peregrine Falcon, Eurasian Eagle-Owl and Blyth's Reed Warbler *en route*. We will also search for any of the lowland species that we may have missed during the first part of our tour. As we head back into Dalarna, we will then stop at one of Sweden's most scenic spots, Tällberg, with fine views over the large Lake Siljan. We should arrive back in the Black River Valley during the late afternoon, and may have time for a little birding by the wetlands of Lake Fläcksjön, where we will once again be amongst breeding Common Crane, White-tailed Eagle, Western Osprey, various waders and Black Tern. We will then settle back into our hotel in Sättra Brunn and enjoy our final dinner. After this, we may also offer a late night return to the Black River Valley in search of elusive marshland species such as Spotted Crake and a last look for owls.



Day 13, 8th June: Svartådalen to Stockholm and departure. After breakfast, we will drive to Stockholm and make our way to Arlanda airport to catch our flights back home.



GROUP SIZE:

This tour will be limited to 12 participants and 2 Rockjumper leaders.

GRADING:

As well as gentle walks through the woods and pastures of the lowlands, this holiday also includes both full-day and half-day walks in the mountains, so an enjoyment of walking and a reasonable level of fitness are required. All walks, however, are optional.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The fee for the **Scandinavia** tour, based on per person in double occupancy, is **US\$ 4,975.00** starting in Copenhagen and ending in Stockholm. The single supplement for this tour is **US\$ 790.00**. If RBT cannot provide you with a rooming partner although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

This includes:

- All meals from lunch on day 1 of the tour to breakfast on day 13;
- A soft drink at each meal;
- All lodgings as per the itinerary;
- Ground transportation;
- Domestic Flight (Kalmar – Stockholm);
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services; and
- Tips for local guides and services.

The tour fee does not include:

- International Airfare;
- Visa fees;
- Arrival and departure taxes;
- Any alcoholic drinks;
- Telephone calls; and
- Laundry and other items of a personal nature.

IMPORTANT: Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration (a minimum of 8 paying participants) a small party supplement will have to be charged. Furthermore, these costs are subject to major foreign exchange fluctuations and unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result. We may be forced to change or alter the itinerary at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

Tipping:

As noted in our itineraries, tipping (drivers, hotel staff, porters and restaurants) is included on all Rockjumper tours. However, if you feel that your Rockjumper leader/s and/or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them. However, we emphasize that such tips should be at your own discretion and based solely on the level of your service satisfaction.



ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include any international airfares. The tour will depart from Copenhagen in the afternoon on day 1. Further meeting details in this regard will be forwarded to you in due course. The tour will conclude in Stockholm on the morning of day 13. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Copenhagen Airport is the main port of entry for international flights in Denmark while Arlander in Stockholm is the main port of departure for flights in Sweden; both are well serviced by several of the world's major airlines. We have the capacity to advise you on the best route according to your preferences, but your local travel agent will best be able to book these flights for you. If you would like further assistance kindly contact the Rockjumper office, we have a full-time in-house travel consultant that will happily help you plan your route. **However, please DO NOT book your international flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

Photo Credits: Bluethroat (Glyn Sellors), Common Crane, Red Kite (Erik Mølgaard), Black Woodpecker (Erik Mølgaard), Ruff (Marianne Mølgaard), Barred Warbler (Erik Mølgaard), Great Grey Owl (David Kutilek), Western Capercaillie (Erik Mølgaard), Great Snipe, Rock Ptarmigan (Glyn Sellors) and White-tailed Eagle (John Larsen).

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