



*Great Grey Owl, 'Bird of the trip', near Tornio (Hannu Jännes).*

# FINLAND & ARCTIC NORWAY

**23 MAY – 5 JUNE 2022**

**LEADER: HANNU JÄNNES**

This year's Birdquest tour to Finland and Norway was again a great success. Not only did we find the great majority of target birds, but we were able to see them against the stunning backdrop of the "Land of the midnight sun" with its seemingly endless boreal forests, countless lakes, wet bogs, mighty rivers, partly snow-covered fells and the rugged coast of the Arctic Ocean teeming with birdlife. As always owls were high on everyone's wish list, and again we succeeded in obtaining really good sightings of all the target species with an impressive pair of Great Grey Owl's at the nest (and the male of the pair even in the hand!), a splendid Ural Owl, a close encounter with the diminutive Eurasian Pygmy Owl, a cute Boreal (Tengmalm's) Owl at the nest, and a northern Hawk Owl glaring at us in typical fashion. In addition, we had an encounter with roosting Tawny Owl (a lifer to one of the participants) in the south and good Short-eared Owl action in the north. The grouses proved co-operative too and we had great views of Western Capercaillie, displaying Black Grouse,



*We had brilliant views of the normally very secretive Corncrake near Helsinki (Hannu Jännes).*

unusually confiding Hazel Grouse and several Willow and Rock Ptarmigans. Other species worth a mention were a splendid “singing” Corncrake showing very well indeed, great views of adult summer Yellow-billed and Common Loons in Norway, White-backed, Black, Grey-headed and Three-toed Woodpeckers and Wryneck, King Eiders, a Gyrfalcon, stunning Eurasian Dotterels, Broad-billed Sandpiper and Jack Snipe in song flight, the elusive Pine Grosbeak, a family party of Parrot Crossbills, a singing adult male Red-flanked Bluetail, Siberian Jay, Spotted Nutcracker, Grey-headed Chickadee (aka Siberian Tit), and Little, Rustic, Lapland, Ortolan and Snow Buntings. In addition, there was a memorable visit to the bird island of Hornöya in Norway, which, with its myriads of breeding seabirds, is a remarkable experience.

The tour began at Helsinki-Vantaa airport around mid-day from where we took a 10-minute drive to a city park, where I had found a Corncrake the day before. This recent arrival reacted well to our lure and showed amazingly well in the atypically open habitat. Satisfied with our 25-minutes with the bird we headed for quick lunch, before visiting another city park on eastern side of Helsinki, where we admired a super cute Tawny Owl (a lifer for Bob) and also enjoyed good views of Icterine Warbler and Thrush Nightingale. We then headed 100kms north to the Lahti area, where we checked-in to our accommodation with it's great view over a big lake and the surrounding forests.

Early the next morning we visited a Ural Owl territory, where we had good views of the female of the breeding pair. What a beautiful bird it was! Back at the hotel we had a nice breakfast before heading off for another target bird, White-backed Woodpecker. When we arrived at the nest hole I had located a few days earlier there was no-one home as the chick had already left the nest. Luckily, after a search, we heard a woodpecker call and soon managed to locate a very young White-backed Woodpecker being visited by its parent. White-backed Woodpecker is a rare bird in Finland with currently maybe 120-180 breeding pairs annually. This is an increase since the late 1980's, when the population size was estimated to be only 20-30 pairs. The increase is due to measures to protect suitable habitats, but also to irruptive birds from Russia, which boost the Finnish



*Female Pygmy Owl near Hauho (Hannu Jännes).*

population from time to time. It is a species, which breeds very early in the year, and we often miss it entirely on this tour. Later we visited another woodpecker site, where luck was with us, and we connected with both Grey-headed and Black Woodpeckers, which were breeding on the same clearing. Then we hit the road again and drove 70 kms west to Hauho, where we saw a female Pygmy Owl that stared at us with fierce eyes from the hole in its nest box. Birding around the environs of our accommodation produced good views of a Wryneck and we also watched a pair of Western Jackdaws and Black Woodpeckers having a dispute about the ownership of a nest hole.

The next day saw us at an army training ground where we soon located our main target for the morning, a group of lekking Black Grouse. Another good find was a singing Wood Lark, which eventually showed very well. Not really a rarity in the southern half of Finland, but rarely seen on this tour because we just don't have enough time to visit suitable habitat. It was also great to connect with a pair of showy Crested Tits. After a good breakfast and more Wryneck, Black Woodpecker and Common Rosefinch action around our accommodation, we commenced the long journey north to Oulu. A birding break at a good patch of forest near Jyväskylä yielded a confiding female Three-toed Woodpecker drumming by its nest hole, and a detour before reaching our hotel in Oulu produced good views of a singing male Ortolan Bunting, a bird in serious decline in Finland.

Next morning a visit to Liminka Bay area, in clear but very cold and windy weather, gave us several wetland species including Black-tailed Godwit, which breeds here, summer plumaged Grey Plovers, very distant Broad-billed Sandpipers, a couple of White-tailed Eagles and good numbers of commoner species of ducks, waders and gulls. We then headed 130 kms north to meet with a local guide Matti, who had some important target species lined up for us. The very first bird we were shown was a cute female Boreal (Tengmalm's) Owl peeking out of its nest box in our guide's garden. Next on the agenda was a visit to an artificial nest platform, of which there are many in these forests, occupied by a pair of Great Grey Owls and their two chicks. While we were admiring the female sitting on the nest, our guide managed to get close to the male, which was distracted by our presence, and trapped it with a loop of string attached to a long pole! This was a totally unexpected show for us, and everyone was totally flabbergasted when Matti brought the male owl for us to admire. What a magnificent beast it was! After the bird was ringed and measured, it was released.



*Close-up of a male Great Grey Owl (Hannu Jännes).*

back to its family. It should be mentioned that our guide is a very experienced bird ringer, with over 500 ringed Great Grey Owls under his belt, and he definitely knows what he is doing. He has dedicated all his free time to monitor and protect the birds of prey in his area, which is around 200 km<sup>2</sup>. Last target species of the day was an adult Hawk Owl that was guarding its territory and gave great views. After the action-packed afternoon with three species of owl it was time to head for Kuusamo for three-night's stay.



*Boreal (aka Tengmalm's) Owl at nest (Hannu Jännes).*

On the first morning in Kuusamo the conditions turned cold and rainy, and our early morning game bird drive was pretty hard work, but we did manage to see male and female Capercaillie plus 20 or so Black Grouse. Later in the morning, while checking an area for Rustic Bunting, we heard a singing Red-flanked Bluetail, which eventually showed very well. The site chosen by this adult male, in flat country with just a handful of taller spruces only 15 meters from the main highway, was quite different from the vast spruce covered mountain slopes usually preferred by the species. Other birds we managed to dig out during the day included a male Rustic Bunting, Taiga Bean Geese, Smew, Red-necked Grebes, Black-throated Loon, Northern Pintail, Velvet Scoter and couple of Willow Tits. Due to poor weather conditions, we called it a day rather early in the afternoon, and the rest of the day was dedicated to rest & relaxation.

The rain continued unabated the next morning, and we had to cancel our pre-breakfast outing. Luckily the weather improved during the breakfast, and we headed for a Hazel Grouse, which we found easily, and then a Grey-headed Chickadee (a.k.a. Siberian Tit) before heading for the famous Oulanka National Park for the rest of the day. In Oulanka the most memorable moments included a family party of Parrot Crossbills (always a good find on this tour) and lunch of tasty salmon soup. On the way back we stopped at the edge of a small bog, where a singing Little Bunting was showing very well.

Our last morning in Kuusamo was dedicated to finding the much-needed Siberian Jay, which we eventually found and then enjoyed a brilliant "Sibe Jay experience" with birds coming for food we put out for them just few meters from us. Later, on the way to Ivalo for a two-night stay, we stopped at Kemijärvi, where we managed to see the long staying Spotted Nutcracker. Later in the afternoon, close to Ivalo, we enjoyed a flock of three Bohemian Waxwings by the main road, but the search for the Eurasian Dotterel on a mountain top had to be abandoned due to gale force wind and heavy rain.



*We had brilliant views of a confiding Hawk Owl near Tornio (Hannu Jännes).*



*Long-tailed Jaeger (or Skua) in the Ivalo-Inari area (Hannu Jännes).*

Our full day in the Ivalo-Inari area, in beautiful sunny weather, began with a visit to a marshy area and bog near Karigasniemi, where we had a great collection of birds including three displaying Broad-billed Sandpipers, great views of Long-tailed Jaeger (or skua), Temminck's Stints, Red-necked Phalaropes, Common Ringed Plovers, stunning Lapland Longspurs (or Buntings) in song flight, many European Golden Plovers, displaying Common Snipes, a pair of Bar-tailed Godwits and Wood Sandpipers song flighting. After the morning in 'wader country' we hurried to Kaamanen and the café Neljän Tuulen Tupa, where we enjoyed a very tasty lunch (salmon soup and some amazing crepes for dessert) and many brilliant birds visiting the feeders just outside the windows of the café. Amongst the colourful Bramblings, in their splendid summer plumage, Greenfinches and Common Redpolls were four different Pine Grosbeaks (including an adult male) plus a Grey-headed Chickadee (a.k.a. Siberian Tit). A visit to another wetland complex later in the afternoon gave us a chance to admire Ruffs lekking right next to the road, and we also saw a singing Bluethroat. After dinner we visited another wetland complex near Ivalo, where a displaying Jack Snipe was added to the long list of waders seen during the day.

Next morning, on the way to Norway, we had a detour via some lakes and pools where we were entertained by a stunning male Smew, Spotted Redshank, Bohemian Waxwing and Capercaillie, and later a stop at a bog gave us a chance to admire a male Willow Ptarmigan. A picnic lunch was enjoyed by the mighty Teno river, and then we followed the shore of the Varanger fjord all the way up to Vardö, our base for the next three nights. Obviously, we had many stops en route including the idyllic Nesseby church, Ekkerøy peninsula with its sandy beaches and many Purple Sandpipers, a mixed flock of geese including Pink-footed, Greater White-fronted, Greylag, Barnacle and Tundra Bean Geese, good numbers of White-tailed Eagles and Rough-legged Buzzards and a Short-eared Owl.

Our first, cold and foggy, morning in Vardö started with a visit to a stake-out for Twite, which we saw well after a search. During a good breakfast with pickled herring, waffles and all, the weather cleared up and we spent the rest of the morning on the famous bird island of Hornøy, where we had excellent views, and some great



*Atlantic Puffin on the famous bird island of Hornøya (Hannu Jännes).*

photo opportunities, of the breeding seabirds including Thick-billed and Common Murres, Razorbill, Atlantic Puffin, Eurasian Shag and Black-legged Kittiwake. Other interesting birds here included a first summer male King Eider and a few more Twites. The star bird of the afternoon was a Gyr Falcon sitting on the top of a cliff, but we also saw Little Stint, Horned (or Shore) Lark and Red-throated Pipits.



*Horned (or Shore) Lark near Vardø (Hannu Jännes).*



*Eurasian Dotterel en route to Båtsfjord (Hannu Jännes).*

Next day was dedicated to an excursion to the remote village of Hamningberg, which has an “end of the world” feel. The weather was brilliant with almost no wind and plenty of sunshine. The calm sea gave us a good opportunity to scan for anything interesting and it didn’t take us too long to find both the Yellow-billed Loon (White-billed Diver) and Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), both in full breeding plumage. Supporting cast of interesting birds included two male Ring Ouzels, a beautiful male Arctic Redpoll, Horned Lark and three Curlew Sandpipers. In the late evening we still had energy for an excursion to enjoy some birding under the midnight sun.

As the weather, with rain and strong wind, was far from ideal on our last morning in Vardö, we left early for Båtsfjord on the other side of the Varanger Peninsula. On the way we had couple of birding stops, which produced a first-summer Glaucous Gull, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon. Once we got to the high, partly snow-covered fells of the central peninsula, we took a mountain walk, which eventually rewarded us with a brilliant pair of Eurasian Dotterel. Later on, another snow-covered road-side slope gave us a pair of Snow Buntings and a male Rock Ptarmigan, both new birds for the list.

On our last morning in Norway our birding efforts were somewhat hampered by heavy fog, but we still managed to find four Greater Scaups, several Willow and Rock Ptarmigans and good numbers of Long-tailed and Parasitic Jaegers. Later in the day, on the way back to Ivalo, we found White-throated Dipper, a new bird for us, in a roadside stream, and a stop at the famous café gave us extra time with the marvellous Pine Grosbeaks. Before reaching our hotel in Ivalo, we made a detour to a lake, where a male Surf Scoter was hanging out with a flock of around 50 Common Scoters. This North American sea duck, recorded a few times per year in Finland, was a write-in and a new species for the leader’s Finnish list!

On our final morning in Ivalo, it was time to thank everybody for their good company during our adventure in the ‘Land of the Midnight Sun’ before heading for the airport and the flight back to Helsinki to connect with international departures.



*Female Three-toed Woodpecker at nest (Ian Gasper).*

**'BIRDS OF THE TRIP' WINNERS:**

1st: Great Grey Owl

2nd: Corncrake

3rd: Willow Grouse

4th: Siberian Jay & Three-toed Woodpecker



*Red-necked Phalarope (Hannu Jännes).*



The team at the Arctic circle (Hannu Jännes).

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Total of bird species recorded: 198

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows Gill, F., Donsker D. & Rasmussen, P. (Eds). **2022. IOC World Bird List (v 12.1)**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. The species names and taxonomy used in the mammal list follow the mammal list on the iGoTerra website ([www.igoterra.com](http://www.igoterra.com)). All our checklists are powered by our partner iGoTerra (<http://www.igoterra.com>) who provide web and mobile applications for bird and wildlife enthusiasts and businesses.

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

**Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*** Around 25 in the south and two in Norway.

**Greylag Goose *Anser anser*** Small numbers at Liminka Bay and at Varangerfjord.

**Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*** One in Oulu and small numbers in Kuusamo.

**Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*** Five in Norway.

**Tundra Bean Goose *Anser rossicus*** Two in Norway.

**Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*** Three in Norway.

**Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*** Two near Oulu.

**Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*** Common and widespread.

**Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*** One in Norway.

**Garganey Spatula *querquedula*** Two at Liminka Bay.

**Northern Shoveler Spatula *clypeata*** A few noted.

**Gadwall *Mareca strepera*** Two near Oulu.

**Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*** Fairly common and widespread.



Male Long-tailed Duck (Hannu Jännes).

- Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* Fairly common and widespread.
- Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* Small numbers in the north.
- Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca* Widespread, mostly in small numbers.
- Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*
- Greater Scaup** *Aythya marila* A total of six in Norway.
- King Eider** ♦ *Somateria spectabilis* A total of nine in Norway.
- Common Eider** *Somateria mollissima* Common in Norway.
- Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca* Small numbers in Kuusamo and in Norway.
- Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra* Noted in northern Finland and in Norway.
- Surf Scoter** *Melanitta perspicillata* One adult male with Common Scoters near Ivalo.
- Long-tailed Duck (Oldsquaw)** *Clangula hyemalis* Hundreds in Norway.
- Common Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula* Rather common and widespread.
- Smew** ♦ *Mergellus albellus* Small numbers in northern Finland.
- Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*
- Common Merganser (Goosander)** *Mergus merganser*
- Hazel Grouse** ♦ *Tetrastes bonasia* One male in Kuusamo.
- Rock Ptarmigan** *Lagopus muta* A total of five in Norway.
- Willow Ptarmigan (W Grouse)** *Lagopus lagopus* A total of seven in the north.
- Western Capercaillie** *Tetrao urogallus* A male and five females were seen.
- Black Grouse** ♦ *Lyrurus tetrix* Twenty near Lahti and in Kuusamo plus a singleton near Ivalo.
- Common Swift** *Apus apus*
- Common Cuckoo (Eurasian C)** *Cuculus canorus* A total of eight in Finland.
- Rock Dove (introduced) (Feral Pigeon)** *Columba livia*
- Common Wood Pigeon** *Columba palumbus*
- Corncrake** ♦ *Crex crex* Great views of one near the airport on our first day.
- Eurasian Coot (Common C)** *Fulica atra* One in the Lahti area.
- Common Crane** *Grus grus* Small numbers noted in Finland.
- Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena* Small numbers at Kuusamo.
- Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus* Small numbers in the south.
- Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* Common in Norway.
- Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*
- European Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria* Small numbers in northern Finland and Norway.
- Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* Two at Liminka Bay, a rare bird on this itinerary.
- Common Ringed Plover (Great R P)** *Charadrius hiaticula* Common in the north.



*Broad-billed Sandpiper in display flight (Hannu Jännes).*

- Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius* Two in the south.
- Eurasian Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus* A pair showed well in the fells in Norway.
- Eurasian Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* Small numbers in the north.
- Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*
- Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Fairly common on the Varanger coast. Two in Finland.
- Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa* Ten at Liminka Bay near Oulu.
- Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* Small numbers seen in Norway.
- Ruff** *Calidris pugnax* Fairly common in the north with good action at leks.
- Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus* Three at Liminka Bay and three display flying in northern Finland.
- Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* Small numbers in northern Finland and Norway.
- Sanderling** *Calidris alba* A total of 10 in Norway.
- Dunlin** *Calidris alpina* Small numbers in the north.
- Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima* Up to 100 birds a day in coastal northern Norway.
- Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* Two in northern Norway.
- Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* Three near Vardö, first record on this tour.
- Eurasian Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola* Small numbers were seen.
- Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus* One displaying bird was seen near Ivalo.
- Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* Widespread.
- Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* Small numbers in northern Finland and Norway.
- Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* Widespread in small numbers.
- Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* A handful of birds in the south.
- Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus* Small numbers in Norway.
- Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* Widespread and common in the north.
- Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* Only one individual in the north.
- Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* Ten or so were noted.
- Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* Very abundant in Norway.
- Black-headed Gull (Common B-h G)** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* Widespread.
- Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Noted on four days in Finland with good close-up views.
- Common Gull** *Larus canus*
- Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*
- Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus* One first-summer bird in Norway.
- European Herring Gull** ♦ *Larus argentatus*



*Two lekking Ruffs. This is one odd bird! (Hannu Jännes).*



Another image of the Atlantic Puffin (Hannu Jännes).

- Lesser Black-backed Gull (Baltic G)** *Larus fuscus* A few birds in the south of Finland.
- Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*
- Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*
- Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua)** *Stercorarius parasiticus* Common in Norway.
- Long-tailed Jaeger (L-t Skua)** *Stercorarius longicaudus* Rather good year with a total of 26 in the north.
- Thick-billed Murre (Brünnich's Guillemot)** ◇ *Uria lomvia* Small numbers at the Hornøya seabird colony.
- Common Murre (C Guillemot)** *Uria aalge* Very abundant in Norway.
- Razorbill** ◇ *Alca torda* Abundant in Norway.
- Black Guillemot** ◇ *Cephus grille* Small numbers in Norway.
- Atlantic Puffin** ◇ *Fratercula arctica* Rather common at Varanger including great views on Hornøya island.
- Red-throated Loon (R-t Diver)** *Gavia stellata* Fairly common in Norway.
- Black-throated Loon (B-t Diver)** *Gavia arctica* Scattered records of small numbers.
- Common Loon (Great Northern Diver)** *Gavia immer* One adult in full summer plumage in Norway.
- Yellow-billed Loon (White-b D)** ◇ *Gavia adamsii* One adult in full summer plumage in Norway.
- Northern Gannet** *Morus bassanus* Small numbers in Norway.
- Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo* One in Finland and small numbers in Norway.
- European Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* Common in Norway.
- Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* (H) A total of four were heard in the south of Finland.
- Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* One at Nesseby church in Norway was a surprise.
- European Honey Buzzard** *Pernis apivorus* Singleton in the Lahti area.
- Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus* Two in Finland.
- Northern Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis* One in the south of Finland on our first day.
- Western Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* One in Finland.
- White-tailed Eagle** *Haliaeetus albicilla* Common in coastal Norway. Also noted in Finland.
- Rough-legged Buzzard (R-l Hawk)** *Buteo lagopus* Fairly common in Norway.
- Boreal Owl (Tengmalm's O)** ◇ *Aegolius funereus* Great views of a female near Tornio.
- Northern Hawk Owl** ◇ *Surnia ulula* Great views of an adult near Tornio.



*Black Woodpecker at our accommodation near Lahti (Hannu Jännes).*

- Eurasian Pygmy Owl** *◇* ***Glaucidium passerinum*** We had a great encounter with this cute little owl near Hauho.
- Short-eared Owl** ***Asio flammeus*** One in Norway.
- Tawny Owl** ***Strix aluco*** One in the Helsinki area on our first day.
- Ural Owl** ***Strix uralensis*** Great views of an adult female at nest near Lahti.
- Great Grey Owl** *◇* ***Strix nebulosa*** Totally amazing experience of a pair at nest in the Tornio area.
- Eurasian Wryneck** ***Jynx torquilla*** Two vocal and showy males around our accommodation near Lahti.
- Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker** ***Picoides tridactylus*** A superb female near Jyväskylä.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker** ***Dendrocopos major*** Fairly common in the south.
- White-backed Woodpecker** ***Dendrocopos leucotos*** An adult with a recently fledged juvenile in Lahti.
- Black Woodpecker** ***Dryocopus martius*** A handful of sightings with great views.
- Grey-headed Woodpecker** ***Picus canus*** Good views of one near Lahti.
- Common Kestrel** ***Falco tinnunculus*** A handful noted.
- Merlin** ***Falco columbarius*** Two, one in Finland and one in Norway.
- Gyr Falcon** *◇* ***Falco rusticolus*** One in Norway.
- Peregrine (P Falcon)** ***Falco peregrinus*** One seen and another heard at a territory in Norway.
- Siberian Jay** *◇* ***Perisoreus infaustus*** Two, with excellent views, in Kuusamo.
- Eurasian Magpie** ***Pica pica***
- Spotted Nutcracker** ***Nucifraga caryocatactes*** Great views of one in Kemijärvi. A rare bird on this itinerary.
- Western Jackdaw (Eurasian J)** ***Coloeus monedula***
- Rook** ***Corvus frugilegus*** Noted in the Oulu region.
- Hooded Crow** ***Corvus cornix***
- Northern Raven (Common R)** ***Corvus corax***
- Bohemian Waxwing** *◇* ***Bombycilla garrulus*** Small numbers in the north.
- European Crested Tit** ***Lophophanes cristatus*** Two, with excellent views, in the Lahti area.
- Willow Tit** ***Poecile montanus*** Noted in Kuusamo.
- Grey-headed Chickadee (Siberian Tit)** *◇* ***Poecile cinctus*** One in Kuusamo and another one at the feeder in Kaamanen.
- Eurasian Blue Tit** ***Cyanistes caeruleus*** Common in Finland, especially in the south of the country.



Spotted Nutcracker at Kemijärvi (Hannu Jännes).

**Great Tit *Parus major***

**Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*** Two near Lahti.

**Horned Lark (Shore L) *Eremophila alpestris*** Small numbers in Norway.

**Sand Martin (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia*** Small numbers noted.

**Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*** Widespread.

**Common House Martin (Northern H M) *Delichon urbicum*** Small numbers recorded.

**Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*** Small numbers in the south.

**Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*** Common and widespread throughout.

**Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*** A few noted.

**Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*** Four near Lahti.

**Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*** A few in the south with good views.

**Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* (H)** A few in the south.

**Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*** One seen and few more heard in the south.

**Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*** A few in the south.

**Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*** Handful of birds in the south.

**Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*** Handful of birds in Finland.

**Eurasian Wren (Winter W) *Troglodytes troglodytes*** A few in the south and one was heard in Norway.

**Eurasian Treecreeper (Common T) *Certhia familiaris*** Two in the south.

**Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris***

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*** Small numbers noted.

**Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*** Small numbers in the south and in Kuusamo.

**Redwing *Turdus iliacus*** Common and widespread.

**Common Blackbird (Eurasian B) *Turdus merula*** Common in the south of Finland.

**Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*** Very common and widespread.

**Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*** Two singing males at Varanger.

**Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*** A handful of birds.

**European Robin *Erithacus rubecula***

**Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*** Great views in the north.

**Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*** One was seen and few others were heard in the south.

**Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*** One adult male was seen well and another one was heard in Kuusamo.

**European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*** Widespread in small numbers.

**Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*** Widespread in small numbers.

**Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*** A few were noted.

**Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*** Rather common in the north.



Adult male Pine Grosbeak at the famous feeder in Kaamanen (Ian Gasper)

- White-throated Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus* One in northern Finland.
- Eurasian Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus* Small numbers noted in the south.
- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* Widespread in Finland and Norway.
- Dunnock (Hedge Accentor)** *Prunella modularis* A handful of birds noted in the south.
- Western Yellow Wagtail (Grey-headed W)** *Motacilla [flava] thunbergi* Small numbers recorded.
- White Wagtail** *Motacilla [alba] alba* Common and widespread.
- Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis* Common in the north.
- Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis* Fairly common in the south.
- Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* Small numbers in Norway.
- European Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus* Small numbers in Norway.
- Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs* Common from Helsinki to Kuusamo in Finland.
- Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* Fairly common from Kuusamo all the way to Norway.
- Pine Grosbeak** ♦ *Pinicola enucleator* Four at the famous feeder at Kaamanen.
- Eurasian Bullfinch (Common B)** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* A few were noted.
- Common Rosefinch (Scarlet R)** *Carpodacus erythrinus* Ten or so in the south of Finland.
- European Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*
- Twite** *Linaria flavirostris* Six in total in Norway.
- Common Linnet** *Linaria cannabis* One in the south.
- Common Redpoll** *Acanthis flammea* Rather common in the north this year.
- Arctic Redpoll** ♦ *Acanthis [hornemanni] exilipes* One nice male in Norway and another one in Kaamanen.
- Parrot Crossbill** ♦ *Loxia pytyopsittacus* A family party of four in Kuusamo was a good find.
- Red Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra* Decent numbers in Finland, especially around Kuusamo.
- European Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis* Rather common in the south.
- Eurasian Siskin** *Spinus spinus* Fairly common in the south and in Kuusamo.
- Lapland Longspur (L Bunting)** *Calcarius lapponicus* Great views in the north.
- Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis* A pair in Norway.
- Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella* Widespread in small numbers in Finland.
- Ortolan Bunting** *Emberiza hortulana* One singing male in the Oulu area.



Lapland Longspur (aka Lapland Bunting) in song flight (Hannu Jännes).

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* Great views of a singing male in Kuusamo.

**Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* Good views of a male in Kuusamo.

**Common Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus* Widespread.

## MAMMALS

Total of mammal species recorded: 10

**Red Fox** *Vulpes vulpes* One in Kuusamo.

**Grey Seal** *Halichoerus grypus* A few in Norway.

**Elk (Moose)** *Alces alces* Two sightings in Finland.

**European Roe Deer** *Capreolus capreolus* Four in the south.

**White-tailed Deer** *Odocoileus virginianus* Three in the south.

**Reindeer (Caribou)** *Rangifer tarandus* Far too common in the north.

**European Hare (Brown H)** *Lepus europaeus* A few in the south.

**Mountain Hare (Arctic H)** *Lepus timidus* Fairly common in the north, noted almost daily.

**Eurasian Red Squirrel (Red S)** *Sciurus vulgaris* A few were noted.

**Muskrat** *Ondatra zibethicus* A few in the Kuusamo area.