Spring in the Outer Hebrides: Corncrakes, Eagles and Migrants 24-30 May 2027



Corncrake by Kit Day

As a birder, there is so much excitement to be had in the Outer Hebrides in spring. Whether listening to Corncrakes in the flowering pasture fields or scanning flocks of waders gathered on the machair, our aim is for you to fully experience the magic of this special place, taking in its unique landscapes and their wonderful birdlife.

Our targets on this tour include Corncrake, Golden and White-tailed Eagles, Hen Harrier, Red-necked Phalarope, Red-throated Diver and a host of other interesting breeding and migratory species. If the weather is right, we will seawatch for northbound Long-tailed and Pomarine Skuas on their way to their Arctic breeding grounds. The coastal bays, beaches and lochs are filled with arriving and passing migrants at this time of year, making for a thrilling, bird-rich tour that will leave you with unforgettable

memories of these spectacular islands.

Itinerary

Join us for an unforgettable spring birding adventure across North Uist, South Uist and Benbecula, exploring flower-rich machair, freshwater lochs, moorland and rugged coastline. We'll search for elusive Corncrakes, Red-necked Phalaropes and a variety of breeding and migrant birds, while keeping watch for Hen Harriers, Golden and White-tailed Eagles. The beaches and coastal bays can be particularly exciting at this time of year, as northbound waders pass through on their way to Arctic breeding grounds. With the opportunity for seawatching and a flexible approach shaped by weather and local conditions, each day promises the chance of something special.

Accommodation will be at the comfortable 2* Lochmaddy Hotel for 6 nights.

Day 1: Departure from Uig, Isle of Skye to the Outer Hebrides
Today we will meet at the ferry port at Uig on the Isle of Skye to begin our voyage to the Outer Hebrides. We shall confirm the exact time as soon as the ferry timetable is released in early 2027. It will be possible to pick up guests at Fort William railway station. Otherwise, we will meet at the port before making the crossing to the Outer Hebrides. This is a great opportunity to meet your fellow birders and our guides, and to prepare for the exciting days ahead in one of Britain's most legendary birding locations.

Days 2-6: Outer Hebrides birding
We will explore the spectacular islands of North Uist, South Uist and Benbecula, where flower-rich machair, freshwater lochs, moorland and rugged coastline support some wonderful birdlife. The islands offer excellent opportunities to see species such as Black-throated and Red-throated Divers, Corncrake and Twite.

Breeding waders are prominent across the islands. We expect to encounter European Golden and Ringed Plovers, Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Curlew, Common Redshank, Greenshank, Ruff and may more, while the beaches can hold impressive numbers of northbound Arctic-breeding shorebirds, with the chance of rarer species such as Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and the odd North American vagrant. We will make a special effort to catch up with the islands' breeding Red-necked Phalaropes.

Birds of prey should feature prominently during the week, with Hen Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon all possible, as well as Golden and White-tailed Eagles.

With a direct link to the BirdGuides Sightings team, we'll be in prime position to respond quickly to any breaking rarity news.

Day 7: Departure returning to Uig Ferry Terminal
We will say a reluctant goodbye to the Outer Hebrides and board the ferry back to Uig. The crossing gives us the chance to see seabirds and cetaceans. We will return south via Fort William to allow for drop-offs at the railway station to those who will be travelling by train. We shall again confirm the exact departure time as soon as the ferry timetable has been released.

Pricing

Our Outer Hebrides birding tour offers exceptional value, with the price covering comfortable accommodation, ground transportation, entrance fees to all scheduled sites and reserves, and the expertise of an experienced birding guide.

Priced at £2,499 per person, a single supplement is an additional £250.

A non-refundable deposit of 20% of the total trip price, per person, is required to secure the booking. The final balance is due 60 days before the tour start date.

Included in the price:

- Accommodation throughout the tour at the Lochmaddy Hotel
- All evening meals from Day 1 to Day 6, and also breakfast from Day 2, through to Day 7
- Ground transportation during the tour (minibus)
- Return ferry from Uig to Outer Hebrides
- Services of an experienced birding guide
- Entrance fees to all scheduled sites and reserves

Not included:

- International flights to and from the UK;
- Visa fees, if applicable;
- Travel insurance;
- Beverages and lunch;
- Optional activities not specified in the itinerary.

Trip Information

Tour leader

This tour is run exclusively for BirdGuides Travel by WildSpace. Your tour leader will be John Hague.

Group size

Eight, plus tour leader.

Minimum participants

This tour requires a minimum of five confirmed participants. If we do not have the minimum required number of participants, we reserve the right to cancel this tour. We will notify you not less than 30 days before the start of the tour should this be necessary.

Recommended items

- Binoculars;
- Telescope. Your guide will have a scope that will be shared with the group;
- Camera and waterproof camera cover;
- Water bottle and fridge bag for lunches on the go;
- Walking poles;
- Comfortable walking shoes;
- Clothing to suit the weather including a hat and sun protection, as well as water/windproof coat in case of rain and chilly sea breezes.
- Mosquito repellent or netting.

Is this tour for me?

- Due to the rugged terrain, this tour is unsuitable for people with reduced mobility;

- We will be walking on average 2-3 miles per day with plenty of breaks;
- Boats are accessible;
- The hotel is adaptable and ground floor rooms can be requested;
- The hotel can adapt to dietary requirements however cannot guarantee the absence of any allergens due to them being prepared in a kitchen containing allergens;
- BirdGuides Travel tours are unsuitable for persons under the age of 16 years old. Please talk to us before booking your trip should you require further information.

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