

SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS & ST. KILDA

Wildlife Adventure

Day 1 ~ Travel to The Hebrides

We meet in Inverness and drive to Ullapool, where we catch the morning ferry across to the Isle of Lewis, the largest island in the Outer Hebrides. The ferry journey takes us through well-known seabird and cetacean feeding areas – so we will hope for some sightings before we even arrive on the islands! As we drive south to our hotel on Harris, we'll take a small detour to the wonderful standing stone circle at Callanish. (D)



Day 2 ~ Voyage to St Kilda*

Over 40 miles offshore, visiting the amazing double World Heritage Site of St Kilda requires a boat crossing of 3 hours each way. It is a challenging but

rewarding day. The crossing provides a great opportunity to see marine life. As we approach the islands we see, hear and smell the vast seabird colonies! We'll have a few hours on land to explore. With some of the highest sea cliffs in Britain, and globally important colonies of gannets, fulmars and puffins, this is a spectacular place to see. Together with the thought-provoking story of the islanders who

lived here, this is one of the most amazing places you can ever visit. (B, L)

***Please note that the journey to St Kilda strongly depends on decent sea conditions. If it is not possible to visit on Day 2 your guide will try to reschedule for a different day during the trip. If weather prevents this altogether then a wildlife cruise in Loch Roag will be arranged instead.**



Day 3 ~ Wildlife of Harris

The Isle of Harris gives an immense sense of history, and vast expanses of moorland hold nationally important breeding populations of Greenshank and Dunlin, while otters, golden eagles and sea eagles hunt here regularly. They are also home to herds of red deer, which can be seen grazing on the hillsides. We'll spend a day exploring this beautiful island, enjoying some short coastal or glen hikes along the way. (B, L)



Day 4 ~ To North Uist



places to stretch our legs before enjoying a warm welcome at our hotel. (B, L)

We spend the morning on Harris before taking the early afternoon ferry to North Uist. The islands of the southern Outer Hebrides are beckoning. Once we land at Berneray, we have a wonderful journey to our next hotel, which is tucked away in a tranquil spot in the south of the island. North Uist is a place of remote and windswept beauty. We are in good otter and diver territory, with plenty of

Day 5 ~ In Search of Raptors and Wildflowers

Today we will explore on foot as we wander along the coast taking in the beautiful colours of the machair. We will take the opportunity to scan the hills for some of the local golden and sea eagles - soaring with a wingspan well over two metres. Other daytime hunters include the ghostly hen harrier and furious looking short eared owl, either of which could turn up almost anywhere during our time on the Uists. (B)



Day 6 ~ Balranald Reserve

Today we'll go in search of the elusive Corncrake at Balranald RSPB Reserve - a mix of fertile machair meadows and ancient farmland. These rare habitats also provide vital homes for many rare species, such as the great yellow bumblebee, corn bunting, golden ringed dragonfly and many scarce wildflowers (not to mention photogenic highland cows!). The heather moors of North Uist and Benbecula offer more good raptor hunting habitats and we will spend time in the search of more birds of prey, returning summer migrants such as wheatear and stonechat and perhaps red deer. (B, L, D)

Day 7 ~ Return to Inverness

We begin our journey back to Inverness today, but there are still opportunities for some wonderful scenery and excellent wildlife sightings. We depart by ferry across the Minch again, this time on the late morning ferry heading for the Isle of Skye. From here, we journey through Skye, across the bridge to the mainland and then back along the shores of Loch Ness to Inverness, arriving by around 5.30pm. (B, L)

END OF TRIP

(Code: B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner)

