



## Finland & Arctic Norway

May 18-June 3, 2024



A visit to Scandinavia may not be high on the bucket lists of many North American birders, but this new tour offering to Finland and the high Arctic regions of Norway may give many who have never previously considered such an adventure, reason to reconsider their upcoming travel priorities. The chance to see some of the Old World's most sought after avian species aside, the incredible landscapes we will pass through during this tour may be reason enough for you to consider adding these dates to your calendar. The tour will begin in the town of Oulu, situated in the vast taiga region of central Finland. To the uninitiated the extensive birch and pine forests in this part of the world may appear monotonous and uninspiring, but such an impression belies the richness of the flora and fauna that can be found there. Central Finland is especially rich in breeding owls and during our time there we will have the chance to see as many as 8 species including Great Gray, Northern Hawk, Boreal, Eurasian Pygmy, Ural and both Long-eared and Short-eared. However owls will not be the only draw. Several species of grouse dwell in these forests and if we are lucky we may see the spectacular courtship displays of Black Grouse and Western Capercaillie. Boreal woodpeckers will also be well represented here and will include Black, Eurasian Three-toed and White-backed. Finally, northern finches with a decidedly Old World flavor will be in abundance and will include among others, European Greenfinch, Eurasian Siskin, Common Rosefinch and Brambling. From Oulu we will travel east to Kuusamo for several nights where the birds will take on a Siberian flavor and will include species like



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Red-flanked Bluetail, Siberian Jay, Gray-headed Chickadee and Rustic Bunting. From Kuusamo we will drive north, crossing the Arctic Circle enroute, to Norway's Varanger Peninsula located on the rugged coast of the Barents Sea. The scenery here is absolutely spectacular studded with stunning sea cliffs, rocky fjords and a plethora of small offshore islands filled with innumerable breeding seabirds. The birding here is wonderful with White-tailed Eagles patrolling the coastal areas, breeding Bluethroats singing from willow thickets, Ruffs decked out in full breeding regalia displaying in roadside puddles and noisy Black-legged Kittiwakes sitting on their messy nests under the eaves of homes in every coastal Norwegian village. We will have nearly four full days to explore this high Arctic avian wonderland and on one of these days will take a short boat trip to a small island that is home to an excellent variety of nesting seabirds including Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Thick-billed Murre, Black Guillemot and European Shag. The birds here are often just an arm's length away from observers and the photo opportunities are endless and amazing. After four days of birding in this high Arctic environment, we will fly south to Helsinki, the capital of Finland, where we will spend the final few days of the tour. Located in far southern Finland, Helsinki will offer an entirely different set of birds than we will have encountered to this point. The climate here is more temperate and the habitats will include mixed deciduous forests, extensive marshes, agricultural fields and damp grasslands. Here we will have a chance to find birds more closely associated with Central Europe including Bearded Reedling, Gray-headed Woodpecker, Tawny Owl, Red-backed Shrike, Thrush Nightingale, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Broad-billed Sandpiper and River Warbler. Throughout the tour we will have access to the expert local knowledge of our Finnish co-leader and will stay in quaint and comfortable hotels close to the birding venues we will visit. Finally, though we will be birding in some of Europe's most remote wilderness areas, participants will be amazed by the quality of the roads and travel conditions, even well above the Arctic Circle. So in addition to an amazing list off birds, participants on this tour can expect to see some of northern Europe's most unspoiled and stunning scenery while traveling in a level of comfort not usually associated with the world's high Arctic regions. I hope you will consider joining us on this Scandinavian adventure.



**Temminck's Stint**



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## DAILY ITINERARY

### May 18-19, Days 1-2: Travel to Oulu, Finland

Participants should plan to arrive in Oulu, Finland (airport code OUL) by mid-afternoon on May 19. For people coming from the U.S., this will mean departing on May 18 as most flights to Helsinki depart from the east coast in the early evening and arrive in Helsinki the following morning. The airport in Oulu is serviced by Finnair which has several daily direct flights from Helsinki. Flights can also be booked to Oulu from the U.S. on American Airlines. Several other U.S. based carriers offer flights to Helsinki, so it is possible to opt for a flight to Helsinki on your preferred carrier and then fly to Oulu on Finnair. Oulu is a bustling city with a population of 250,000 and is situated on the shore of Kempeleenlahti Bay. The hotel itself offers excellent birding as it is located adjacent to a wetland reserve with a 3 kilometer nature trail winding through wet meadows and reedbeds with birds like Sedge Warbler, Water Rail and Great Bittern possible. In the hotel gardens one can expect to find nesting Redwing, European Pied Flycatcher and Eurasian Blackbird and on the inshore waters of the bay it is possible to a nice variety of waterfowl including Smew, Tufted Duck and Garganey. Once everyone has arrived at the hotel we will meet our local Finnish guide, have a brief orientation and an initial group dinner. For anyone choosing to arrive early, we will be happy to assist with any additional hotel nights and will provide transfers from the airport to the hotel. Night of May 19 in Oulu.





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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 20-21, Days 3-4: Birding in the Oulu area

We will have two full days to explore the taiga forests and coastal wetlands near Oulu. The area around Oulu is most famous for its nesting owls and with the help of local guides we will have a chance to visit several active nest sites. Though the species that can be easily seen varies from year to year, we stand excellent chances of getting great views of Great Gray Owl, Northern Hawk-Owl, Boreal Owl (known in Europe as Tengmalm's Owl), Eurasian Pygmy-Owl and Long-eared Owl. The abundance of nesting owls in central Finland in any given year is largely dependent upon the density of voles which are their primary food source, but even in down years, birders in the Oulu region can generally find 4-6 nesting owl species. The forests surrounding Oulu are also excellent for boreal dwelling passerine species like Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker, Black Woodpecker, Wood Warbler, Fieldfare, Crested Tit, Eurasian Bullfinch, Yellowhammer and Common Rosefinch. The Oulu area will also offer good chances to see displaying grouse with Black Grouse and Hazel Grouse the most likely possibilities. We will also make a concerted effort to find a displaying Western Capercaillie although this enormous grouse can be difficult by late May as they begin their courtship displays in late March and in some years are finished by mid-May. However with the help of our local contacts we stand a good chance of finding this spectacular grouse during our visit. But the birding around Oulu is not just limited to forests. A few miles south of the city there is a vast wetland reserve that is home to a plethora of breeding shorebirds, gulls, terns and raptors. We will spend at least half of one day at the Liminganlahti Reserve where breeding species include Whooper Swan, Common Crane, Great Bittern, Caspian Tern, Black-tailed Godwit, Eurasian Curlew, Common Greenshank, Common Sandpiper and Common Shelduck. This will also be our first chance to the extravagant breeding display of male Ruff decked out in various shades of orange, black and white. Though Ruff wander regularly to the New World, one has not really seen a Ruff until they have seen a fully adorned male displaying in all of his regal glory. Migrant shorebirds here might include Northern Lapwing, Spotted Redshank, Little-ringed Plover and possibly Broad-billed Sandpiper. The coastal meadows around Oulu are good for Western Yellow Wagtail, Yellowhammer and Reed Bunting and common raptors in the area include Eurasian Marsh Harrier, Osprey and European Honey-buzzard.



Another example of why Finnish never became the universal language!



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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 20-21, Days 3-4: Birding in the Oulu area (cont)

The rarest and most desired of all shorebirds in Scandinavia is the distinctive Terek Sandpiper. Each year there are usually a few breeding pairs in the Oulu area and if any have been reported we will definitely make a special effort to find them. Nights in Oulu.

### May 22, Day 5: Drive to Kuusamo

After a final morning of birding around Oulu, we will drive about 2.5 hours to Kuusamo, a small town near the Russian border that is a hotbed for winter sports in Finland. There will be ample birding opportunities along the way as the forests in this part of Finland are sprinkled with many small lakes and spruce bogs. These wetlands provide breeding habitat for species like Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe and Arctic Loon. Smaller numbers of Smew, one of the world's prettiest ducks, also breed in this part of Finland and we will make a every effort to get good looks at them. Finally, a few pairs of Little Gull, the world's smallest gull, breed near Kuusamo and if we are lucky we'll add these to our list as well. With all of these possibilities available it is unlikely that the drive will be dull. Night in Kuusamo.

### May 23-24, Days 6-7: Kuusamo area

Kuusamo is an exciting birding destination known for its natural beauty and an enviable number of avian species that we will not see elsewhere on the tour like Gray-headed Chickadee and Siberian Jay. This will also be our best chance to find Black and Eurasian Three-toed woodpeckers. The latter can be quite reclusive, but our local guides often know of a nest site which makes for a much easier encounter. Another specialty found in the Kuusamo area is





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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 23-24, Days 6-7: Kuusamo area (cont)

Red-flanked Bluetail, a small population of which breeds in the taiga near the Russian border. Most of the birding around Kuusamo is one relatively flat terrain, however searching for the Red-flanked Bluetail will involve a steeper uphill climb. Kuusamo's vast forests are also excellent grouse habitat and on one day we will take an early morning drive in search of Willow Ptarmigan, Black Grouse, Hazel Grouse and hopefully the more elusive Western Capercaillie. Birding visits to Russia are problematic these days due to the difficult political situation, so the Kuusamo area is really the only current venue where one can experience some of the avifauna of Siberia's boreal forests. Other eastern specialties we will search for here include Rustic and Little Bunting, Jack Snipe, Brambling, Common Rosefinch, Eurasian Bullfinch, Bohemian Waxwing and the delightful White-throated Dipper. Three species of crossbills are also possible including Parrot, Red and White-winged and other circumpolar species like Pine Grosbeak, Golden Eagle, Rough-legged Hawk and Common Redpoll will add a bit of a familiar flavor to our bird lists. Kuusamo sits at about the same latitude as Nome, Alaska, so in late May there will be nearly 24 hours of daylight guaranteeing that we will have plenty of time to search for the area's specialties. Nights in Kuusamo.

### May 25, Day 8: Kuusamo to Ivalo

After a final few hours of birding around Kuusamo, we will begin driving north to the small town of Ivalo located in the heart of Lapland. Enroute we will cross the Arctic Circle where we will stop at a small cafe for photos and a cup of hot chocolate. Continuing north, the landscapes will change as the coniferous forests gradually give way to deciduous woodlands pockmarked by peat bogs and comprised mostly of Mountain Birch. Though we will try and make a few birding stops

Red Crossbill



Short-eared Owl





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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 25, Day 8: Kuusamo to Ivalo (cont)

to break up the drive, this will be primarily a travel day as it is nearly 5 hours from Kuusamo to Ivalo. Night in Ivalo.

### May 26, Day 9: Ivalo to Batsfjord

After breakfast we continue driving towards the northernmost part of mainland Europe, exploring Lapland's forests and bogs along the way, with more chances to see birds like Siberian Jay and Gray-headed Chickadee. We will be certain to stop in Kaamanen at a small café that has very active bird feeders that attract a nice variety of finches including European Greenfinch, Eurasian Siskin, Pine Grosbeak and Brambling. Occasionally Siberian Jays also visit these feeders, but regardless of the cast of characters anyone with photographic inclinations will definitely be very happy with this stop. We'll break for lunch at a cafe on the Finnish-Norwegian border, and will then begin following the Teno River north deeper into Norway. The Teno is one of the world's richest salmon fisheries although salmon populations have declined in recent years and at times it has been necessary to close the entire river to sport fishing. We'll make a brief stop at the Teno's delta to see if there are any interesting shorebirds about and then will begin climbing into the highlands of the Varanger Peninsula. As we gain elevation the deciduous forests will gradually give way to stunted willows and treeless tundra. The makeup of birds will also change and breeding shorebirds will become more prominent. Colorful male Ruffs performing their courtship rituals will now become a frequent sight as will the fluttery display flight of Temminck's Stint. As we drive through rocky portions of the highlands we will have chances to see Rock Ptarmigan and Northern Wheatear and there is always the chance to see Long-tailed Jaegers

Willow Ptarmigan





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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 26, Day 9: Ivalo to Batsfjord (cont)

coursing over the tundra, Bluethroats singing from willow thickets and Whooper Swan in small lakes and ponds. In fact, a great variety of waterfowl nest in this part of Norway and along the way we can expect Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck and both Red-throated and Arctic loons. Eventually we will reach the quaint fishing village of Batsfjord where we will spend the evening. After checking in to our hotel and taking a rest we will have dinner, and afterward, if there is interest we can take a short walk around the hotel. Since there are nearly 20 hours of daylight in Batsfjord at this time of year, the clock is not a limiting factor in terms of birding and there is always more to see. Night in Batsfjord

### May 27, Day 10: Batsfjord to Vardo

This morning we will do a bit of birding in Batsfjord. Just a short walk from our hotel we can explore the rocky shoreline of an inlet where there is usually a nice selection of shorebirds including Common Redshank, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Ruddy Turnstone and European Golden-Plover. Batsfjord is a delightful village set amidst incredible Scandinavian scenery and a place one could happily spend several days, but unfortunately our visit will be short as we need to continue eastward to Vardo, the easternmost town in mainland Europe. Initially we will backtrack through a portion of the Varanger Peninsula highlands before turning east on the highway to Vardo which tightly hugs the coastline of the sea. This is an especially scenic portion of the tour and we will pass through many small fishing villages with fish drying racks laden with cod and haddock. Most villagers have grass roofed root cellars for winter food storage and the entire ambience of the area gives one the feel of traveling through a living history museum. Besides the cultural experience, the birding here will also be well worth the visit. As we travel along the coast we can expect to see birds like Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Phalarope, Whimbrel, Velvet and Common scoters, Common Merganser (known in the Old World as Goosander) and possibly Yellow-billed Loon. Common Eider will be very common along this route, but we will also keep a special eye out for rarer King and Steller's eiders. Both are present here in small numbers but can be very hard to pin down. Night in Vardo.



European Golden-Plover



Common Redshank



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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 28-29, Days 11-12: Vardo area

We'll have two full days to explore the rugged coastal areas around Vardo. The town itself is situated on a small island in the sea and is reached via an underground tunnel. One on day we will take a short boat trip to Hornoya Island where 80,000 seabirds come to breed in May and June. This is a phenomenal birding venue with thousands of Atlantic Puffin, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, European Shag and both Common and Thick-billed Murre often just an arm's length away. In addition to the seabirds we might find Rock Pipits working the rocky shores, White-tailed Eagles patrolling overhead and Red-necked Grebes cruising atop the nearshore waters. Though Alaska has some impressive seabirds colonies, the proximity of the birds to observers and the ease of reaching this island make this, at least in my opinion, the most impressive and memorable nesting seabird experience available anywhere. We will also make an excursion to Hamningberg which is often referred to as the very end of Europe. The drive there follows the rocky coastline and there are excellent vantage points for seawatching from the road. Here we might see both Yellow-billed and Common loons, Northern Gannet, Northern Fulmar and both Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers. This is also a great place to look for whales with both Orca and Humpback being possible. Our hotel in Vardo is right at the water's edge and from the dining area we can see Glaucous Gulls and Black-legged Kittiwakes foraging for food in the harbor and White Wagtails and Horned Larks on the lawn. Outside of town we can search the tundra for Twite, Hoary Redpoll and Barnacle and Pink-footed geese. In town, Black-legged Kittiwakes attach their messy nests to the sides of buildings and it is always a surprise for temperate visitors to see these normally pelagic birds breeding in a residential setting. Nights in Vardo.

### May 30, Day 13: Vardo to Ivalo

After breakfast and some more birding in the Vardo area, we start our journey south, crossing back into Finland and eventually back to Ivalo. We certainly will have time for some birding



Rock Pipit



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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### May 30, Day 13: Vardo to Ivalo (cont)

en route and will be sure to stop by Nesseby Church where we can have a picnic lunch while scanning the water for loons and scoters. If we have not yet found King or Steller's eiders this will be a final chance for these two uncommon sea ducks. Continuing south we will re-enter Finland, making a stop at the peak of Ailigas, which is a good site for Rock Ptarmigan, Eurasian Dotterel, Horned Lark and sometimes Red-throated Pipit. We will try and reach our hotel in Ivalo by late afternoon to give everyone time to relax and reorganize their things in preparation for our flight to Helsinki tomorrow. Night in Ivalo.

### May 31, Day 14: Flight from Ivalo to Helsinki

After a leisurely breakfast we will transfer to the airport in Ivalo for our flight to Helsinki, the tour's final venue. As of this writing the flight schedule is undetermined, but a mid-afternoon arrival in Helsinki is most likely. Our hotel is located in Espoo and from the grounds we can access a series of woodland and wetland trails and if time allows we will do some late afternoon birding. Night in Espoo.

### June 1-2, Days 15-16: Espoo & Helsinki area

The Helsinki area will be quite a contrast from the taiga forests of central Finland and the tundra and rocky coastal areas of Lapland we have experienced to date. This is a much more temperate area and the birds will be of a very different character than those farther north. Unlike most tours, when it can be difficult to find new species towards the end, these two days near Helsinki will offer chances for many new birds that are more closely associated with points farther south in Europe. The area offers a nice diversity of habitats including mudflats, reedbeds, deciduous forests, agricultural fields and damp grasslands. Hopefully some of the late arriving summer breeders will be on territory, but even if not there will be plenty of new species for us to enjoy. In wetland areas and reedbeds we can search for species like Great Reed Warbler, Bearded Reedling, Savi's Warbler, Common Reed and Sedge warblers and Reed Bunting etc. Expected waterfowl might include Common Pochard, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, and Common Goldeneye and shorebirds like Broad-billed Sandpiper, Little Ringed Plover, Green Sandpiper, Common Greenshank and Common Snipe should be present. Other common species will include Gray Heron, Caspian Tern, Barnacle Goose and both Great Crested and Horned grebes. In agricultural areas and brushy habitats we will search for Blyth's Reed and Marsh warblers and the loud ringing songs of Thrush Nightingale will be a frequent auditory backdrop to our wanderings. If we are lucky, a few late arriving River Warblers will be present and we can be sure we will hear the monotonous rattling song of Common Grasshopper Warbler. Other birds in these areas might include Greater Whitethroat, Whinchat, Red-backed Shrike, Ortolan Bunting and Yellowhammer. In fields and pastures we can see species like Eurasian Kestrels, Gray Partridge, Stock Dove, Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Curlew, Eurasian Linnet, European Goldfinch and Eurasian Tree Sparrow. Corncrake will surely also be present, but they are incredibly shy and secretive and seeing one is a difficult proposition, but we will do our best. Other exciting possibilities around



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## DAILY ITINERARY (CONT)

### June 1-2, Days 15-16: Espoo & Helsinki area

Helsinki will include Red-breasted Flycatcher, Hawfinch, Gray-headed Woodpecker, Great Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Eurasian Blue Tit, Greenish Warbler, Eurasian Treecreeper, Goldcrest, Spotted Flycatcher etc. With so many possibilities it will impossible to see everything, but we are certain to end our time here with a very impressive list. Nights in Espoo.

### June 3, Day 17 : Departure Flights Home

The tour will end today with a group transfer to the airport in Helsinki where participants will board flights for home.

## TOUR INFORMATION

### Tour Size

This tour will be limited to 10 participants with two leaders.

### Tour Cost

The cost for this tour will be \$8195 double occupancy from Oulu. There will be an \$800 single supplement charge for anyone wishing to room alone or for whom we cannot arrange a roommate. The price includes all lodging beginning with Day 2 in Oulu through Day 16 in Helsinki, guide service and ground transportation throughout, all boat trips and park entrance fees, meals beginning with dinner on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 17 and one way domestic airfare from Ivalo to Helsinki. It does not include international airfare, tips, alcoholic drinks, laundry or any items of a personal nature.

### Tour Registration

To register for this tour, please send a signed and completed registration form to Otus asio Tours at 900 Hillsborough Road in Chapel Hill NC 27516. The deposit for this tour is \$1000 per person. The deposit is payable by check; credit cards are not accepted. The balance of the tour fee is due 90 days prior to the tour departure date and final invoices will be sent in February 2024.

### Cancellations & Refunds

Cancellation penalties and refunds are based on the following schedule:

90 or more days before the tour departure date (February 18, 2024 or before): 50% of the deposit will be refunded

Less than 90 days before the departure date (February 19, 2024 or later) and after full payment has been received, refunds will be limited to that which can be recouped from vendors, airlines and booking agencies. This may be as little as 25% of the amount paid



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## TOUR INFORMATION (cont)

### Travel Insurance

Otus asio Tours strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance to protect you against illness, injury or any unexpected or unforeseen situation that would prevent you from participating in a tour for which you have made deposits or payments. Most policies require that purchase be made soon after your initial deposit. There are many reputable travel insurance vendors, but we recommend Ripcord which can be purchased through Redpoint Travel Protection.

### Climate

Early summertime in this region is temperate but very variable, especially since we will cover such a wide range of latitude, including north of the Arctic Circle (If you've birded the full extent of Alaska from Anchorage to Barrow, expect similarly varied conditions.). Hopefully much of the time will be clear and sunny with temperatures in the mid-60s to mid-70s. However, be prepared for clouds, wind, some rain and temperatures down to the low 40s (or lower with wind chill) in the far north with even the possibility of light snow.

### Transportation

Throughout the tour we will be traveling in two comfortable 8-seat minibuses and all participants will have a window seat throughout.

### Luggage

If possible, please try to limit your luggage to one soft-sided suitcase or duffel and one carry-on as space in the vehicles will be limited.

### Clothing

Lightweight, layered clothing is recommended to best ensure your comfort in the Arctic climate. Gore-Tex, fleeces, thermal underwear and windproof/waterproof outer clothing will also be important. Remember that dark and earth tone colors are less likely to startle birds and mammals and are the preferred colors for all birding. Please don't wear bright colors or loud, crackling plastics. Dress is casual throughout. Keep in mind that most hotels on this tour do not provide laundry service, so having undergarments that you can wash in your room and that will dry overnight will be very useful. You should also bring water-resistant hiking boots or hiking shoes with rugged soles—tennis shoes will NOT be sufficient for this trip. Rubber boots will also be useful and will allow full access to boggy or wet habitats. Since the weather in this part of world can be so variable, you should also bring wet weather gear. Again, if you have ever traveled to Alaska, the same kind of clothing that is useful there will be appropriate for a late spring tour in Finland and Norway.



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## Tour Information (CONT)

### Currency

Finland uses the Euro, while Norway's currency is the Norwegian Krone. Each has different values compared to the US dollar. Credit cards are widely accepted and ATMs will be readily available to obtain local currency throughout the tour.

### Entry Requirements

A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure is necessary for entering Finland and Norway. Visas are not required by either country.

### Pace

Though we will do a fair amount of walking, for the most part this is a relatively easy tour. In the Kuusamo area we may do one hike up a fairly steep incline to look for Red-flanked Bluetail, but most of the walking will be over flat terrain or along roads. The lengthy periods of daylight may mean that we will have some very early departures (5-6 AM) and on some days we may also go out for several hours after dinner, but when we do this we will be sure to take mid-afternoon breaks. Though the vehicles we use will be quite comfortable, there will be several long drives of 4-5 hours, but we will always make multiple stops for birding and photography to break these up. Generally speaking this is a tour that anyone in reasonably good physical condition should be able to manage with little problem.

### Insects

As with all northern latitudes in summer, mosquitoes can be numerous and problematic at times. Recent weather will have a great effect on emergence times, but generally we should expect a fair amount of mosquitoes especially in central and southern Finland. As such, insect repellent will be essential. A head-net can be useful if you are particularly bothered by mosquitoes and can be purchased locally if required.

### Health

There are no immunizations required for travel in Scandinavia and tap water is potable throughout. There is a generally high standard of hygiene in this part of the world and there should be no worries or fears of microbes that cause stomach or intestinal tract issues. Nevertheless it is always wise to carry your preferred medications for minor illnesses. Though specific immunizations are not required it is always a good idea for international travelers to be up to date on Tetanus/Hepatitis A vaccines.



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## Tour Information (CONT)

### Electricity

Outlets in Scandinavia are of the 2 round pin style (Type C) and voltage is 220. Voltage regulators are generally not necessary as almost all currently manufactured devices have internal converters. With a quick google search it is very easy to find appropriate plug adapters for this part of the world.

### Internet Access

Wifi will be available at all hotels throughout the tour and signals in most places will be excellent. While we are traveling there may be dead spots here and there, but generally connectivity will be very similar to what you experience here in the U.S.

### Field Guides

The recommended field guide for this tour is:

Svenson, Mullarney, Zetterstrom & Grant.

Collins Bird Guide: The Most Complete Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe. Second edition, 2009. This field guide has received excellent reviews for its detailed text and illustrations.

This guide is highly recommended and there are really no other suitable alternatives.

If you're technically inclined and prefer your Smartphone to a hard field guide, the Merlin app bird pack for Europe:Scandinavia will cover all expected species on this tour.

### Language

The official languages in the areas of the tour will be Finnish and Norwegian, but English is widely spoken everywhere.

### Time

Throughout the tour we will be either 6 or 7 hours ahead of EST.

### Information

For more information on this tour contact Jan Hansen at 919-259-9423 or at [otusasiotours@gmail.com](mailto:otusasiotours@gmail.com).