

NEW



ESTONIA

Autumn Migration

October 5-12



The Habitat & Birds

The most northerly of the Baltic States, Estonia has gained an enviable reputation as one of Europe's most dramatic migration "Hotspots", with millions of birds passing along the Baltic Sea coast every Autumn.

Matsalu Bay National Park is one of the most important wetlands in Europe, with the **Puise Peninsula** and its "Towers" affording excellent viewing over the Bay for Barnacle & Tundra Bean Geese, Bewick's & Whooper Swans, Cranes & White-tailed Eagle, along with large numbers of passerines including Chaffinch & Brambling. To the north-east lies **Cape Poosaspea**, the best place in Europe to watch migrant waterfowl, especially Long-tailed Duck, Common & Velvet Scoter, Scaup, Eider & divers. Also looking out for Elk in the wet meadows at dawn & dusk.

Kihnu Island can be excellent for migrant raptors especially Sparrowhawk, Goshawk & possibly Rough-legged Buzzard, along with thrushes & finches, whilst visiting **Kabli Ringing Station** to witness migrant birds "in the hand".

The inland forests of **Sooma National Park** & **Jarvelja Forest** hold Capercaillie & Hazel Grouse, White-backed & Three-toed Woodpeckers, Pygmy Owl, Nutcracker, Great Grey Shrike, Crossbill, "white-headed" Long-tailed Tit, Crested & Willow Tits. Overlooking the freshwater lake of Peipsi Jarv towards the Russian border is **Mehikoorma**, another migration "Hotspot" for diurnal passerines, near-passerine, raptors & rarities.

The Itinerary & Accommodation

Late morning flight from Gatwick to Tallinn, then driving to Haapsalu in western Estonia for 3-nt. stay at the *Promenaadi Hotel* overlooking Haapsalu Bay.

Moving south with ferry crossing to Kihnu Island in the Gulf of Riga before returning to the Mainland and driving south to Parnu, staying at the coastal *Rannohotel* for a further 2 nights.

Then driving to eastern Estonia for final 2-nt stay at the converted *Vodka Factory hotel* in Mooste near the Tallinn/Russian border.

Finally driving back to Tallinn (with short Tour of the City if time allows), before return afternoon flight back to Gatwick.

Cost: £1995 (£195 s/s)

Deposit: £200

B/L due: Aug. 5

Included in the cost: 7 nts. accommodation & b/fast as described above, all evening meals, full transportation & full local birding guidance throughout.

Not included in the cost: Return flights London to Tallinn (approx. £165), lunches, drinks, gratuities & items of a personal nature.

(NB: Cost based on 7 pax min, with £1 = € 1.08)

