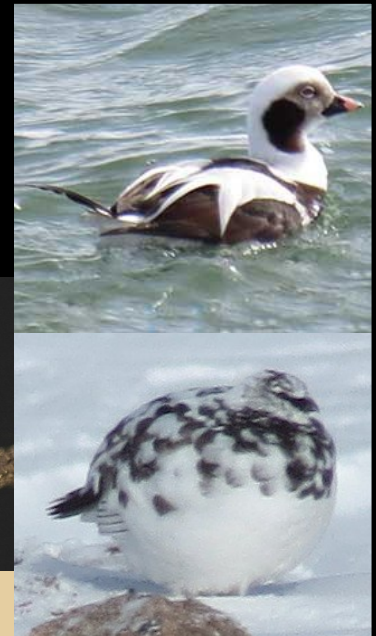


SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS, CROMARY & DORNOCH FIRTHS

Birds & Mammals

"In Comfort & Style" Mar 31– Apr 5



Birding Areas & Highlights

The Highlands. Black & Red Grouse, Golden Eagle, Snow Bunting & Ptarmigan on the high mountain tops, Osprey, Goldeneye & Slavonian Grebes, Black-throated & Red-throated Divers over the lochs, with Scottish Crossbill & Crested Tit in the Caledonian Forest. Plus Dipper, Siskin & Redpoll, Ring Ouzel & Northern Wheatear. Also fabulous white Mountain Hares, Red Squirrel, Red & Roe Deer, and if lucky, both the elusive Pine Martin & Badger.

Exploring the Spey Valley and Cairngorms National Park inc. Abernethy Forest, Loch Garten, Aviemore & the Cairngorms Funicular Railway to the top of Cairn Gorm. Also the Insh Marshes RSPB Reserve & Lochindorb.

The Cromarty & Dornoch Firths.

Both the Cromarty Firth & Dornoch Firths offer excellent late Winter/Early Spring birding, especially for waterfowl. Flocks of Pink-footed Geese still occur, whilst the Loch Fleet NNR hosts flocks of wintering sea-duck offshore, including rafts of Eider Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Common & Velvet Scoter, along with divers, grebes & Red-breasted Mergansers, whilst Purple Sandpiper, Turnstone & Dunlin frequent the rocky foreshores.

Accommodation & Itinerary

Depart Inverness after b/fast and drive via Loch Ruthven to the beautiful Findhorn Valley for 5 night stay based at the highly personable, family-owned *Tigh-na-Sgiath* Country House Hotel near Grantown-on-Spey. Originally owned by the Lipton Tea family, the Hotel offers just 8 bedrooms individual in character, together with a delightful dinner menu making extensive & creative use of local & organic produce.

The day to day itinerary will depend on the prevailing weather conditions, but adequate time will be spent in not only the magnificent Highland forest, mountains, moors & lochs, but also the dramatic coastal firths, lagoons & mudflats. Early evening return to Inverness.



Cost: £1955 (s/s = £155)

Deposit: £200

B/L due: Jan 31st

Included in the cost: 5 nts. dinner, bed & b/fast at *Tigh-na-Sgiath*, Cairn Gorm Funicular, entrance to the private Pine Martin hide, full transportation and full guidance throughout the Tour.

Not included in the cost: Lunches, drinks, travel insurance, gratuities & items of a personal nature.

(NB: Cost based on 8 guests min.)