

Finland

Owls, Taiga & South

Mon 21st – Tue 29th May 2018



Trip photos (clockwise from top left): Tengmalm's Owl • Black Woodpecker • Eurasian Pygmy Owl • Northern Hawk Owl. © tour leader David Fairhurst/Limosa Holidays

**Report compiled by:
David Fairhurst**

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Tour Leaders: Ari Latja, Marcus, Heikki Eriksson and David Fairhurst
with Martin Binning, Mike Creighton & Jan Schubert, Paul Day, Nicola Hunt, Geoff Phillipson, David Smith and Jenni Tubbs

Monday 21 May

After an 'interesting' travel day we arrived in the evening at Oulunsalo.

Tuesday 22 May

Before breakfast, most of the group enjoyed an hour at the viewpoint on the shore next to the hotel, from which we acquainted ourselves with many species we would become familiar with during our time in Finland. Arctic and Common Terns were offshore, along with good numbers of Whooper Swans, while on the mud were 16 Temminck's Stints. The scrub and trees around the hotel held Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, singing Redwings and Bramblings, Fieldfares feeding chicks, displaying Tree Pipits and two first-summer Common Rosefinches. After breakfast we headed into the forests and our first stop was at Valkiaisjarvi. The lake here held a stunning summer-plumaged Black-throated Diver, while Siskin, Cuckoo, Greenshank and a smart male Redstart were all noted. Nearby, our first owl was seen, a brilliant Pygmy Owl. It perched in a birch tree right by the vehicles and gave wonderful views - at one point it even started calling! Next stop was at Oulu golf course and an outrageous Black Woodpecker. The bird was nesting in an Aspen alongside the golf clubhouse so it was possible to sit on the terrace with a coffee and a doughnut and the woodpecker was at eye-level just 25m away!

The great birds continued and at Juurussuo we watched a fantastic Hawk Owl. The male was perched in a dead spruce right above our heads and it was great to watch him as he preened, stretched and, like the Pygmy Owl, even called several times. As we were about to leave, he bobbed his head several times and then swooped down just inches from us and landed on the ground about 10m away and was trying to catch a mouse! We lunched in the visitor centre at Liminka Bay before spending a while scanning the mud and marshes from the superb tower. Here we noted good numbers of Ruff (including many lekking!), *limosa* Black-tailed Godwits, Garganey, Pintail, Grey-headed Wagtail and at least four White-tailed Eagles. The afternoon was spent birding the fields and forests west of Liminka and the highlight was yet another owl, this time a cracking Tengmalm's Owl at a box.

Wednesday 23 May

A much cooler day than yesterday, but still cloudless. The morning was spent exploring the forests around Vartti. Birds noted here included Wood Warblers, a smart male Red-backed Shrike, Wryneck and Common Rosefinch. A nice group of at least four Bohemian Waxwings was found feeding on Lingon berries on the forest floor. The highlight, though, was a super pair of Ural Owls. The female was in a box and was peering out and the male was discovered perched in a nearby spruce with a large rodent in his beak!

After an excellent lunch we headed to the coast and to two great stops at Varessaikka and Saari. Saari was a bit of a birdfest as it was full of waders, wildfowl, terns and wagtails. In the evening after a great meal, we headed west to Kiiminki and to a Great Grey Owl nest. The female was sat on the nest and several roding Woodcock were seen.

Thursday 24 May

Yesterday's cool northwesterly wind had gone and we were blessed with crystal clear skies. After breakfast we packed the minibuses for the journey east to Kuusamo. On the way, we stopped at a snow dump and quickly located the rare, breeding, Terek Sandpipers. Briefly seen on the ground at the snow dump, they flew across the road to a small, muddy pool and, alongside Little Ringed Plover and Temminck's Stint, the pair showed very well. Just outside Oulu we stopped at the bird pond and had wonderful close views of a breeding pair of Horned Grebes.

After a couple of hours' drive, we arrived at the picturesque Syote National Park; here, a gentle stroll through the lichen-covered spruces produced a few singing male Common Redstarts and cracking Bramblings. Three Hazel Grouse gave us the run-around but eventually we all managed some sort of views. Back at the minibuses, a wing-clapping, displaying Honey Buzzard was a lovely bonus. Just outside Kuusamo, we stopped at the pool by the old rubbish dump and birds noted here included good numbers of Goldeneye and Wood Sandpipers.

Friday 25 May

The stunning warm weather continued and after an early-ish breakfast we headed south of Kuusamo to Iivaara. A female Capercaillie performed well on the track as we drove through the forest. We enjoyed a walk across the bog and then up the hill. Several Red-flanked Bluetails were heard singing and a first-summer male and a female on the path in front of us were both seen briefly. On top of the hill we located a stunning adult male Red-flanked Bluetail and we spent quite a while watching him singing from the pine-tops. The view from the top was amazing with forest and lakes stretching away from us in all directions. As we descended the hill, a group of 17 Parrot Crossbills was found in a large spruce and it was great to watch them feeding.

We lunched in a beautiful spot in the middle of the forest. The small restaurant here has several bird-feeders and it didn't take long for a superb Siberian Jay to appear. Also visiting the feeders were gorgeous Northern Bullfinches and Bramblings. The lunch of reindeer stew and homemade berry tart was almost as good as the birds! At Oivanki we spent a while scanning

the wetland from the tower and nearby one of the many nestboxes was in use by a pair of Siberian Tits. Our last hour of the day was spent at Kuusamojarvi, a large lake where Red-necked Grebes were spotted on their nests. Other species seen included several male Garganey, Wigeon, Shoveler and Black-throated Divers, while a Baltic Gull flew over.

Saturday 26 May

An early start this morning, with our first stop just outside Kuusamo at Anninniemi. Here a male Willow Grouse eventually settled on top of a pine tree and gave us great views, but several Rustic Buntings on the other hand did not. We drove the track toward Iivaara again and found two male Capercaillies, one of which showed very well on the roadside. We returned to the hotel for breakfast and a little snooze.

The rest of the day was spent exploring the forest and lakes to the north east of Kuusamo. The large lake at Vuotunki was very rewarding and birds seen here included a group of Smew, Wood Sandpipers and a small flock of Taiga Bean Geese. Very close to the Russian border in a stunted birch and willow bog we found a smart singing Little Bunting. After dinner (tea) we drove to a Black Grouse lek and were rewarded with six males strutting about and showing off their superb plumage.

Sunday 27 May

Before breakfast we visited a small area of forest (again) for Three-toed Woodpeckers and once again drew a blank – a poor year for this species it seems. Returning to the hotel we packed the minibuses before heading back west and Oulu. We bid our farewells to Ari and Marcus and took an afternoon, trouble-free flight to Helsinki. Here we were met by Heikki who would guide us for our short time around Helsinki.

After an excellent buffet meal we headed out to the reserve at Suomanoja. The reedy pool held Pochard, Horned Grebes and many broods of Goldeneye ducklings. The scrub and woodland habitat here held some wonderful songsters, such as Thrush Nightingales, Common Rosefinch and both Marsh and Icterine Warblers.

Monday 28 May

After breakfast our first stop was close by the hotel, the Nuuskio National Park. It didn't take Heikki long to find a super male Grey-headed Woodpecker, before we enjoyed a wander through the forest. A singing male Red-breasted Flycatcher was eventually located and gave great views, although it was a first-summer male so wasn't sporting a red breast! As we watched the flycatcher, two Greenish Warblers sang in the tops of the large Aspens over our heads.

Next stop was the excellent tower at Laajalahti. A Great Reed Warbler sang from the reeds alongside the tower and showed well. On the dry mud, a nice group of impressive Caspian Terns roosted with the gulls, while waders included yet more Temminck's Stints and displaying Little Ringed Plovers. Most of the afternoon was spent at Iso-huopalahti. The scrubby woodland here held Thrush Nightingales, Red-backed Shrike, Common Rosefinches and Blyth's Reed Warblers. The highlight though was the muddy bay where large numbers of birds were present, including three Broad-billed Sandpipers and 10 Red-necked Phalaropes.

Tuesday 29 May

Our last day and still the stunning weather continued. After breakfast and loading the minibuses we headed to the reserve at Viikki. *En route* we had a short stop in yet more, scrubby habitat and a wonderful singing Blyth's Reed Warbler performed well. Once at the reserve we were surrounded by singing red Common Rosefinches, Marsh and Sedge Warblers and yet more Thrush Nightingales. From one of the towers we spotted several Temminck's Stints, Whinchat, Little Ringed Plovers and a Common Crane. Back at the vehicles, one last surprise was a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. All too soon it was time to have lunch and then head to the airport and our journey back to London.

My thanks go to Ari, Marcus and Heikki; their knowledge and expertise was incredible and many thanks to the tour participants for their good company, excellent banter and sense of humour.

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED
(156 species)

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Two groups (6 and 3) flew north over us around Oulu, then small numbers recorded at various sites around Helsinki

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Seen around Oulu on three dates and then again on one date in Helsinki

Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

One flew over the Great Grey Owl site on 22nd and 26 were on the lake at Vuotunki on 26th

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Singles noted on four dates

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Widespread and seen daily

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Seen on two dates near the coast and most often at the airport hotel

Garganey *Spatula querquedula*

Two pairs around Oulu on 22nd and then two males at Kuusamo on 25th

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata*

Seen almost daily in low numbers

Gadwall *Mareca strepera*

Small numbers recorded on five dates

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*

Seen every day in low numbers

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Seen almost daily in low numbers

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Single males recorded on three dates

Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*

Small numbers seen daily

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Up to 10 at Suomanoja on 27th

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Widespread, common and seen daily in good numbers

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Four pairs on a large lake just outside Kuusamo on 26th

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Widespread and seen daily with many chicks at Suomanoja

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

A single drake over the airport hotel on 24th, a pair on a roadside river on 26th and two drakes and four ducks at Vuotunki on the same date.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Ones and twos noted around Oulu on three dates

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Seen on three dates around Oulu

Hazel Grouse *Tetrastes bonasia*

Three heard and three brief sightings of birds at Syote National Park, along with Three-toed Woodpecker this was the species that gave us the biggest run-around!

Western Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus*

Three females recorded on 25th (including a bird with a nest alongside the footpath at Iivaara) and two males on the track to Iivaara on 26th

Black Grouse *Lyrurus tetrix*

Six superb males lekking on the evening of the 26th

Willow Ptarmigan *Lagopus lagopus lagopus*

A difficult species as they really love bogs. One wonderful male gave superb views on top of a pine tree just outside Kuusamo early morning on 26th. After leaving the tree he decided to have a dustbath on the roadside! The birds in Finland are of the nominate form which retains white wings throughout the year.

Common Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Heard on two dates, at the hotel at Oulunsalo

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Heard calling just outside the Nuuksio NP on 28th

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Scattered pairs seen at a number of spots from the coast to inland lakes.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Several breeding pairs noted at various lakes around Kuusamo, stunning birds!

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Recorded on three dates

Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

A pair with a nest on the 'bird' pond just outside Oulu on 24th and 3 at Suomanoja on 27th

Eurasian Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

One was heard booming from the shore just behind the airport hotel at Oulu

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Recorded at several sites around Helsinki

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Recorded in small numbers on three dates

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

A single over the bog at Iivaara on 25th

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

A superb bird was watched displaying over Syöte National Park on 24th

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Singles were recorded on just two dates

Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One (probably an adult male) was circling over the forest at Iivaara on 25th

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Small numbers recorded on five dates

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Two males seen over farmland on 22nd

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Seen in small numbers around Oulu on 22nd and 23rd with the most being four together at Liminka Bay and then two immatures near the Russian border on 26th

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Small numbers recorded at Suomanoja

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Small numbers recorded around Helsinki

Common Crane *Grus grus*

Small numbers recorded on all but one day

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Ones and twos recorded on three dates

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Recorded around Oulu and Helsinki in small numbers

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Recorded on three dates, with by far the biggest count being over 40 at Laajalahti; these were of the tundra subspecies

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Small numbers noted on four dates

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Our only sighting was of a pair with a nest in a newly sown arable field on 22nd

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Common and widespread; seen daily

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Small numbers seen on the coast at Oulunsalo and Liminka

Ruff *Calidris pugnax*

Noted on four dates; many hundreds at Liminka Bay included some fantastic lekking - one of the highlights of the trip!

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus*

Three seen at Iso-huopalahti on 28th

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Surprisingly common this year with small groups of birds noted on five dates at a variety of sites, the largest flock seen was 22 on the shore at the airport hotel on 22nd

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Heard and seen roding at a variety of sites from Oulu to Kuusamo to Helsinki

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Seen daily

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

A pair seen very well at the snow-dump near Oulu on 24th

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One of the highlights of the trip was a group of ten birds together at Iso-huopalahti sharing the muddy lagoon with the flock of three Broad-billed Sandpipers

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Noted on six dates, but not large numbers

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Singles seen displaying on three dates

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Noted on just two dates

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Recorded on five dates and in good numbers, watched singing and displaying - wonderful!

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Seen on six dates

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Abundant, widespread and recorded daily.

Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Up to 40 recorded on three dates, some gave great views along the shoreline of the lake just next to the hotel in Kuusamo

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Common and seen daily

European Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Noted on five dates

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

None seen on the ground but ones and twos seen flying over several lakes and forest clearing around the Kuusamo region on two dates and a single distantly in Helsinki on 28th

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Seven roosting with gulls at Laajalahti on 28th and a single at Viikki on 29th

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Noted daily in all regions we visited but less numerous than Arctic Tern.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A widespread tern, recorded daily on many lakes throughout the regions we visited.

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*

One or two seen in urban areas on two dates.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Small numbers noted at Viikki on 29th

Common Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Seen daily

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Heard and seen daily

Ural Owl *Strix uralensis*

A stunning male in forests near Siikajoki on 23rd, with his partner in a nestbox nearby. A single was also seen briefly earlier the same day as it flew through the forest in front of the first mini-bus.

Great Grey Owl *Strix nebulosa*

A female incubating in a man-made nest in the middle of nowhere in the forest near Kiiminki.

Northern Hawk Owl *Surnia ulula*

The bird of the trip for most of us, a superb male performed wonderfully at Juurussuo on 22nd

Eurasian Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium passerinum*

A male just outside Oulu performed well on 22nd

Tengmalm's Owl *Aegolius funereus*

One peered out of a box at us west of Liminka on 22nd

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Singles recorded on two dates

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Good numbers seen almost daily

Eurasian Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

One seen well in forests near Siikajoki on 23rd

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*

A single flew over the car park at Viikki on 29th, the last bird was saw before heading to the airport!

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Seen or heard on five dates

Black Woodpecker *Dryocopus martius*

A stunning male at a nest hole at Oulu golf club gave outrageous views. Another bird was seen briefly near Helsinki on 28th

Grey-headed Woodpecker *Picus canus*

A male in Nuuksio NP on 28th

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Seen on just three dates

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Cracking males gave super views on two dates

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

A single seen briefly in clear-fell near Bear-lake on 24th

Siberian Jay *Perisoreus infaustus*

One gave us a fantastic show during our lunch stop in the forest near Iivaara on 25th

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Small numbers noted on four dates

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica*

Widespread, common and recorded daily

Western Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula*

Common in the Oulu and Helsinki regions. Not recorded further east

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Common in the Oulu and Helsinki regions. Not recorded further east

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

Widespread, common and recorded daily

Northern Raven *Corvus corax*

Small numbers recorded on five dates. By far the largest numbers were up to 25 near the Russian border, almost certainly attracted to the food put out at the nearby bear-watching site

Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

At least four gave great views feeding on Lingonberries on the forest floor on 23rd and two seen briefly at a lunch-stop in the middle of nowhere on 26th

Willow Tit *Poecile montana borealis*

Two birds heard singing from the livaara road on 26th

Siberian Tit *Poecile cincta*

A pair at a nest box just outside Kuusamo on 26th

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Ones and twos daily in the Oulu region. Also a few in the Kuusamo region

Great Tit *Parus major*

Widespread in small numbers and noted daily

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Recorded on four dates in small numbers

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Recorded almost daily.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common and widespread and recorded daily.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Recorded on just two dates

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Common, widespread and seen or heard daily – it was nice to see and hear so many

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles heard on just three dates

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Males seen and heard singing on two dates, cracking looking birds!

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Two singing high in large Aspens in Nuuksio National Park on 28th

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

A single male singing and showing well at Laajalahti on 28th

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Recorded daily

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Several heard and seen well around Helsinki

Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Several heard singing at several sites around Helsinki on two dates

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Singles heard and seen briefly at Suomanoja and Viikki

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Small numbers heard and seen well at a variety of sites around Helsinki on the three dates we were there – sounds like a squeaky toy!

Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Noted on the three days we were around Helsinki

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Small numbers heard singing on four dates

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Heard and seen well on four dates

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Noted on the three days we were around Helsinki

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Singles recorded on just three dates

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Recorded on just two dates

Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A single near Oulu on 22nd was our only sighting in the north. Common around Helsinki

Common Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Recorded almost daily

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

The most numerous and widespread thrush, a familiar bird of gardens and seen in good numbers daily

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Widespread and recorded daily, but less numerous than Fieldfare – its song varied at times

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

A few around Helsinki on 28th was the only date we saw any

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Ones or twos at scattered spots on three dates

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Ones and twos noted daily

Eurasian Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

A reclusive bird of deep evergreen forest, with birds heard mostly but seen also few times, recorded on five dates

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*

Recorded in good numbers around Helsinki, like Blyth's-reed Warblers it was great to be able to hear so many singing.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

Three males (including a stunning blue-male) and a female at Iivaara on 25th, it was worth the walk up the hill!

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Seen or heard daily, with great views of nesting birds

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Seen and heard in song in small numbers most days

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Single males on just two dates

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Recorded on three dates in small numbers

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Surprisingly scarce in the north with our first sightings in Kuusamo, much commoner around Helsinki

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Recorded on just three dates

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Elusive and scarce; seen and heard on four dates

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Grey-headed form *thunbergii* recorded on four dates with by far the largest number (approx 20) at Saari. A single male

Blue-headed *flava* showed well in the reeds at Laajalahti

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Common, widespread and recorded daily.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Recorded in small numbers on just four dates

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Common in open forest and clear fell, the singing male at the airport hotel was excellent value as he would parachute down right next to us!

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common, widespread and recorded daily

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Males look stunning at this time of the year, so it was nice to get good looks at a few. Also great to hear so many singing within the forest. Noted on five dates

Eurasian Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Few 'Northern' Bullfinches were seen or heard on five dates. Several giving the trumpeting call.

Common Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Noted on six dates, plenty of stunning red males seen!

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris*

Recorded on four dates

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

Recorded on five dates

Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pytyopsittacus*

Seventeen gave great views from a large spruce on the way down the hill at Iivaara – like baubles on a Christmas tree!

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Recorded on six dates with small groups and pairs flying over, seemingly a good year for them

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Recorded in Helsinki on 28th

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus*

The most numerous finch, seen or heard daily, with lots in song

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Heard and seen on four dates

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*

A smart male sang from a birch and willow bog just near the Russian border on 26th

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

A male briefly in the boggy habitat at Iivaara on 25th and two brief fly-over birds near Kuusamo on 26th

Common Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Seen or heard daily

MAMMALS**Eurasian Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris***

Just one seen, in Kuusamo.

Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*

This introduced North American rodent was seen on lakes near Kuusamo and in Helsinki

Brown Hare *Lepus europaeus*

Noted around Oulu and Helsinki

Mountain Hare *Lepus timidus*

Very common in the Kuusamo region. All were in moult from white winter to grey summer coats and so stood out in the fields and roads – some were whiter than others

Reindeer *Rangifer tarandus*

Numerous in the Kuusamo region. Many sported ear tags and GPS neck collars. Quite a few youngsters too.

Western Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus*

Just one seen, in Helsinki

BUTTERFLIES

Small White *Pieris rapae*

Green-veined White *Pieris napi*

Orange Tip *Anthocaris cardamines*

Green Hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*

Peacock *Aglais io*

DRAGONFLIES

Azure Bluet *Coenagrion puella*

Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*

Downy Emerald *Cordulia aenea*

Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*

Small Whiteface *Leucorrhinia dubia*

Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*