



Alaska's spectacular scenery is reason enough to visit the state, never mind all the fantastic birds! (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

Alaska is big country. The views stretch endlessly from north to south, east to west, and the wildlife is on a grand scale. From the spinning seabird cliffs of St. Paul, porpoises bowriding in Resurrection, lynx melting into the understory at Denali, and jaegers prowling the tundra in Barrow, we did it all, and saw a great deal of what Alaska has to offer.

Our birding highlights were many, including walking across the tundra to enjoy scope views of a pair of Spectacled Eiders at Barrow, a rare White-tailed Eagle flyover on St. Paul, and who could forget the entire alcid show and seabird cliffs on St. Paul? Plus both golden-plovers on the tundra at Nome (where we birded until nearly 10 pm with the sun well above the horizon), the Bristle-thighed Curlew march up Coffee Dome, and the amazing Bluethroat singing along Kougarok Road outside of Nome.

Chris and I had a great time guiding you all. Thanks for sharing in all these wonderful experiences and being a great group, fun and energetic. We can't wait until the next big adventure.

--Jesse and Chris

For more information about this tour, including future departures, visit our website at www.fieldguides.com. And to see this same triplist online, go to <http://www.fieldguides.com/triplists/aka12aLIST.pdf> and you will find the list in its entirety.

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (*Anser albifrons*) – A few small groups around Barrow this year. Despite having orange-yellow bills, these birds were not from Greenland populations (also showing orange-yellow bills; subsp. *flavirostris*).

EMPEROR GOOSE (*Chen canagica*) – A few on St. Paul this year, but never very many and missed some years.

SNOW GOOSE (*Chen caerulescens*) – A few small groups seen around Barrow this year, but mainly in flight.

BRANT (BLACK) (*Branta bernicla nigricans*) – Good numbers on St. Paul this year, around Nome and Barrow. We saw the lighter bellied "American" Brant (subsp. *hrota*), which winters in the East.

CACKLING GOOSE (*Branta hutchinsii*) – This small-bodied, short-necked goose resembles a Canada Goose. In fact, a couple of smaller subspecies of Canada Goose approach Cackling size (or larger Cacklings approaching Canada) making identification difficult. We saw Cackling on St. Paul (subsp. *minimus*) with small white collars and dark chest/bellies.

"Tavener's" Cackling Goose (subsp. *taverneri*), seen around Nome, is larger bodied, but still showed a small, delicate bill.

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – Fairly common in Anchorage. Outside Anchorage we saw a few smaller bodied individuals that had us puzzling about subspecies and differences from Cackling Goose.

TRUMPETER SWAN (*Cygnus buccinator*) – Larger, and heavier billed than a Tundra Swan; this is the species whose bill is all black. We saw it a few different spots on the tour.

TUNDRA SWAN (WHISTLING) (*Cygnus columbianus columbianus*) – The bill shape is slightly different than Trumpeter, plus it shows just a bit of yellow on the maxilla. This yellow spot can be very difficult to see at a distance. Our first individuals were at Nome.

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Anas penelope*) – Wonderful studies of two pairs on St. Paul.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*) – Common throughout the tour.

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – Fairly common throughout the tour.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – Fairly common throughout the tour.

NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – The most common duck during the tour; encountered at nearly every spot and in good numbers. We understand now why they call it "Northern" Pintail.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (*Anas crecca*) – This subspecies was found on St. Paul along with a few intergrades.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – The subspecies found on the mainland.

CANVASBACK (*Aythya valisineria*) – A dozen or so were at Nome.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – Four on the drive to Denali NP.

GREATER SCAUP (*Aythya marila*) – Like Northern Pintail, this is one of the more common ducks (a diver) on this tour. Seen in most places in good numbers. This tour is a great place to learn the differences between Greater and Lesser Scaup.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – Comparison with Lesser were made in Anchorage at Westchester Lagoon (where both occur).

STELLER'S EIDER (*Polysticta stelleri*) – Great studies of several pairs during our time in Barrow.

SPECTACLED EIDER (*Somateria fischeri*) – One of the more important birds to try and see while at Barrow. We approached one pair pretty close, creeping along the tundra while trying to look inconspicuous in the flat landscape, and we were rewarded with "spec"tacular views. It was recently discovered that this species winters on open water in the Bering Sea, keeping the hole ice-free with their body heat and feeding on plankton, mollusks, crustaceans and other bits near the ice edge. Incredible.

KING EIDER (*Somateria spectabilis*) – This species was seen pretty well in larger flocks off St. Paul. There was also a pair or two at Barrow.

COMMON EIDER (PACIFIC) (*Somateria mollissima v-nigra*) – Large flocks were seen from offshore at Nome.



*Choosing the most beautiful of the 4 eider species is a difficult task, but at least this tour gave us first-hand experience with all 4 species, including these stunning Steller's Eiders at Barrow.
(Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)*

HARLEQUIN DUCK (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) – This species was quite common in the coastal waters on St. Paul (still on wintering grounds). On the mainland, where they breed along mountain streams, we saw them on their breeding habitat at Denali and Seward.

SURF SCOTER (*Melanitta perspicillata*) – A pair on a freshwater lake outside of Denali were our first. A few more in Nome. Most people are used to seeing these in coastal waters, but they breed on freshwater lakes in the interior of Alaska.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER (SIBERIAN) (*Melanitta fusca stejnegeri*) – Chris picked out this pair near the shoreline in coastal waters at Nome. This Siberian subspecies, "Stejnegers," is quite possibly a separate species having a different breeding ground, different calls, and plumage differences. We noticed the large knob of the male's bill, the darker flanks, and yellowish tip to the bill.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER (NORTH AMERICAN) (*Melanitta fusca deglandi*) – This subspecies was seen at Denali (along with Surf's), Nome, and again in Anchorage.

BLACK SCOTER (*Melanitta americana*) – Mainly at Nome where we saw several large rafts.

LONG-TAILED DUCK (*Clangula hyemalis*) – A striking duck, and thankfully seen repeatedly on this tour, including out at St. Paul.

BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*) – A few times on St. Paul and in Anchorage.

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala islandica*) – This species was seen on our trip to Denali, and a few were around the pond at the hotel in Anchorage.

COMMON MERGANSER (*Mergus merganser*) – Just one female in St. Paul Harbour.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*) – Along the rivers and streams outside of Nome.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

WILLOW PTARMIGAN (*Lagopus lagopus*) – Wonderful looks at different individuals starting in Denali, but again outside of Nome, where one flew over our vehicle! Bagel! Bagel! Bagel! Get this man some cream cheese!

ROCK PTARMIGAN (*Lagopus muta*) – It was worth getting stuck for a few minutes on our long drive outside of Nome. We found one cooperative Rock Ptarmigan that flew close to the vehicles. They were in their "dirty snow" winter garb.

Gaviidae (Loons)

RED-THROATED LOON (*Gavia stellata*) – So elegant a species. Wonderful studies were had at several sites, but our best (and closest) in Nome.

ARCTIC LOON (*Gavia arctica*) – In Nome, we had a pair just offshore for close studies. The white flanks were obvious as well as the darker nape in comparison with Pacific Loon.

PACIFIC LOON (*Gavia pacifica*) – The silver napes really stand out on this species. Our best studies were around Barrow.

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*) – Not super "common" on this tour. Singles on our drive to Denali and again outside of Seward on a nest.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON (*Gavia adamsii*) – We swept all the loons on this tour. A five-loon tour! As well, we had our most Yellow-billed Loons possibly on any tour done in the past. We had one on St. Paul, numerous around Nome, and another four or so in Barrow.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

HORNED GREBE (*Podiceps auritus*) – A few different places (and all in splendid breeding plumage), but our best was at a rest stop on our drive to Seward. Very close.

RED-NECKED GREBE (*Podiceps grisegena*) – A few different places as well, but our best were just a few feet away at Westchester Lagoon in Anchorage.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

NORTHERN FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialis*) – Flying around and breeding on the sea cliffs on St. Paul. Plumage was quite



Horned Puffins were common on the seabird cliffs at St. Paul, one of 10 species of Alcids seen on the island. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

variable from dark morphs, intermediates, and light morphs (which were the dominate morphs). However, the pale secondary/primary "window" was always visible.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Our only ones were on the Seward boatride.

RED-FACED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax urile*) – These were fairly common on St. Paul and a few were around on the Seward boatride. This is the one with the puffy white flanks.

PELAGIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*) – This species was found in the same spots as Red-faced. It was slightly more common in numbers at Seward.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – There was something about seeing this species perched on the cliffside in Seward...sure felt peaceful, and sure felt like Alaska!

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) – This rare Asian stray had been seen on St. Paul a few days before, but not since. While we watched non-native Caribou, it decided to fly right over our group. Incredible.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – We had a couple of Gray Ghosts (male harriers) on our Denali ride.

RED-TAILED HAWK (HARLAN'S) (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) – This is the dark subspecies of Red-tailed (split by some authorities) which we saw very well at our rest stop on the way to Seward.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK (*Buteo lagopus*) – A few were seen in the Nome area.

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – Not many on the tour. However, sharp-eyed Kim spotted our first while driving on the Denali Highway. We also had a pair on a nest outside of Nome, which was way cool.



Unusual among shorebirds, female phalaropes are more brightly-colored than the males; the brilliant colors of this Red Phalarope thus marks it as a breeding-plumaged female. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*) – Singles in a just a few spots. Mainly in Denali.

GYRFALCON (*Falco rusticolus*) – Two different nesting birds were seen outside of Nome at traditional eyries.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – Singles on two different days.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SANDHILL CRANE (*Grus canadensis*) – A few were around Nome.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Just one in the tundra outside of Nome. It was nice to see all the shorebirds in their breeding plumage.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) – We had nice comparisons of both golden-plovers while at Nome where both are a breeding species. In general, Pacific lower elevation and moist slopes with taller vegetation; American being found on the flatter, less vegetative tundra (also at Barrow).

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – This species is brighter above than American (larger white and gold spots), but shows more white below along the sides and flanks.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – A few on St. Paul and again at Denali and Anchorage doing their display flight, which involves a different call and a floppy flight.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

BLACK OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus bachmani*) – One on the Seward boat ride.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – We lucked out on this one. A tip to some birding friends on their flight back to Anchorage, they called and left us a message at the hotel. We went out the next morning and there it was! A rare Asian stray.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*) – Singles on different days. They already had their spots.

WANDERING TATTLER (*Tringa incana*) – Fairly common during our time on St. Paul.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*) – This species breeds along the Denali Highway. Odd to hear them calling from the tops of spruce trees.

WHIMBREL (AMERICAN) (*Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*) – Heard and seen at a distance while on Coffee Dome.

BRISTLE-THIGHED CURLEW (*Numenius tahitiensis*) – Great studies and looks at bird that was settled into the grass, but pretty close to our group. It later got up and walked around so we could at least try to see the bristled thighs! No luck.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – Wonderful flock at Westchester Lagoon on our last afternoon.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – Singles in Nome.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – One at Nome and another in Barrow.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Nice breeding plumaged individuals were around Barrow.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – This species was fairly common around Barrow. They breed on the open tundra and males chase females with one wing open, exposing the silver wing lining. Pretty cool stuff. They also do a fluttering display flight.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*) – Also fairly common around Nome and Barrow. There were some splendid breeding plumaged individuals at some freshwater pools outside of Barrow. We had close studies (and photos!).

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – Just a few around St. Paul.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – An uncommon breeder in the Barrow area where we had excellent, close studies. They sort of approach Semipalmated Sandpiper in plumage, but are larger, with longer wings, and larger spots on the scapulars.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*) – The Pectoral Sandpiper display in Barrow is something to behold. Males with puffed out chests, standing on little hills in the tundra, or making direct flights toward females.

ROCK SANDPIPER (*Calidris ptilocnemis*) – This is the most common shorebird on St. Paul (at least it seems that way).

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – Mainly around Barrow where they were looking sweet with their red backs and black bellies.

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – Three in breeding plumage were at the freshwater ponds outside of Barrow.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – Nice studies of the caurinus subspecies were made on our final afternoon in Anchorage.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – Wonderful, close studies on the tundra at Barrow.

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – Lots of snipe winnowing in the spruce forest around Denali and again in Nome.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – This species showed up on St. Paul for a first Bering Sea record. A three phalarope day. Quite possibly the first time that has ever been done.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – Seen at nearly every location on the tour.

RED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) – Singles on St. Paul, but more common in the tundra pools around Barrow.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa tridactyla*) – Very common at St. Paul (the dominate gull) and again some flocks around Barrow.

RED-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa brevirostris*) – Only on St. Paul. Great looks and comparisons with the previous species.

SABINE'S GULL (*Xema sabini*) – A few outside of Nome on the coastal highway. Most in adult breeding plumage.

BONAPARTE'S GULL (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*) – Distant, but adequate looks at several individuals sitting on the mud flats at Westchester Lagoon in Anchorage.

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) – A regular, but good Asian stray to find. We had one on the ice at St. Paul.

MEW GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus canus brachyrhynchus*) – A common gull around Denali, Anchorage, and in Nome.

HERRING GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) – Not many, but a few around Anchorage and one in Seward. In Anchorage, they seem to hybridize with Glaucous-winged Gull. Intergrades have darker eyes and less black in the primaries as adults.

THAYER'S GULL (*Larus thayeri*) – One on St. Paul was a good find; though not many people in the group seemed deeply interested. Ha ha ha...ahhhh, gulls. ;-)

SLATY-BACKED GULL (*Larus schistisagus*) – One adult was in Nome.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL (*Larus glaucescens*) – "Pure" birds were seen in a few places including St. Paul and

Seward, but lots of intergrades (X Herring) around Anchorage.

GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*) – Fairly common on St. Paul, but it was the most common by far around Barrow.

ALEUTIAN TERN (*Onychoprion aleuticus*) – Around Nome in a few different spots where it is fairly common, but outnumbered by Arctic Tern.

ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna paradisaea*) – The common medium-sized *Sterna* on this tour. In fact, the only one seen!

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

POMARINE JAEGER (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) – Great studies of several birds on/near nests (and in flight) around Barrow.

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) – We had migrants over St. Paul, but this species was also nesting in Nome and Barrow.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) – The Long-tailed Jaeger show in Nome was unforgettable. Amazing views. Such an elegant bird when seen on the tundra.

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, and Puffins)

COMMON MURRE (*Uria aalge*) – We saw 13 species of alcids on this tour. A pretty remarkable total. How many tours offer that many?! This species was seen in good numbers on St. Paul, and a few birds off the coast in Nome.

THICK-BILLED MURRE (*Uria lomvia*) – Large numbers nesting and rafting in the water at St. Paul.

BLACK GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus grylle*) – A good bird for St. Paul where we had singles or more each day. Not seen in Barrow.

PIGEON GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus columba*) – Good numbers on St. Paul and again in Seward.

MARbled MURRELET (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) – Good numbers on our boat ride out of Seward, including in the harbour near the hotel.

KITTLITZ'S MURRELET (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*) – This species was only found in the really cold waters near the glacier. However, we had a number of individuals. Great looks and photos. The frosty head and white outer tail feathers really stood out in comparison with Marbled.

ANCIENT MURRELET (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) – A few in the St. Paul Harbour, but better looks out of Seward.

PARAKEET AUKLET (*Aethia psittacula*) – St. Paul.

LEAST AUKLET (*Aethia pusilla*) – St. Paul, where they easily out-number any other alcid species.

CRESTED AUKLET (*Aethia cristatella*) – Good numbers on St. Paul.

RHINOCEROS AUKLET (*Cerorhinca monocerata*) – One on the Seward boat ride.

HORNED PUFFIN (*Fratercula corniculata*) – The flying footballs were fairly common on St. Paul and uncommon on our Seward boat ride.

TUFTED PUFFIN (*Fratercula cirrhata*) – Ditto above. Great, close photos and studies from the seabird cliffs at St. Paul.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Anchorage.

Strigidae (Owls)

SNOWY OWL (*Bubo scandiacus*) – Not a great lemming year, which meant the jaeger and owl numbers were lower than in other years. We had probably 10 or so individuals on our various drives through the tundra at Barrow. Most were away from the road.

SHORT-EARED OWL (*Asio flammeus*) – Great looks at several birds during our drives around Nome.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – One on our drive to Denali.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*) – One was seen well at Westchester Lagoon in Anchorage.



Tufted Puffins offered up wonderful close photo ops at the St. Paul seabird cliffs. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

HAIRY WOODPECKER (*Picoides villosus*) [*]

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

ALDER FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax alnorum*) – One seen well and close during our stop to view Mt. McKinley.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

NORTHERN SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*) – We searched up and down Kougarak Road, eventually finding a few individuals including one chasing a male harrier (but they weren't super common).

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY JAY (*Perisoreus canadensis*) – Only in Denali where fairly common.

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – Several small groups during our forest walk near Seward.

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE (*Pica hudsonia*) – Common on the mainland in most places.

NORTHWESTERN CROW (*Corvus caurinus*) – A few on the Seward portion of our trip.

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*) – Everywhere except St. Paul.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Around Anchorage and Seward, but possibly less common than Violet-green. One was on St. Paul.

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*) – Seen at several different sites including around the hotel in Anchorage.

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – In singles at several different sites, but one flying down the beach on St. Paul was a little unusual.

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Along the Denali Highway and again in Nome.

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*) – Our first was in Anchorage at Westchester and again outside Seward in the spruce forest. We swept the chickadees on this tour (at least the ones that were possible for us!). This species ranges all the way down the Pacific coast into California.

CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE (*Poecile rufescens*) – A pair were found in the spruce forest outside Seward.

BOREAL CHICKADEE (*Poecile hudsonicus*) – Fairly common at a few different sites on the tour. We had all three species outside of Seward.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*) – A pair were outside of Seward reacting nicely to our scold tape.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

PACIFIC WREN (ALASKAN ISLANDS) (*Troglodytes pacificus alascensis*) – Once lumped with Winter Wren in the east and even the Old World equivalent, Wren, this is now a separate species. The St. Paul Island birds, where we saw ours, is an interesting isolated taxon with a different call. Another split?

Cinclidae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*) – Seen nicely at its nest under the eaves of the salmon farm outside of Seward. It was also calling a few times. They were Red Salmon, btw.

Regulidae (Kinglets)

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus satrapa*) [*]

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – Common in the spruce forest around Nome and Sewad, at least by



The feathered feet and toes of ptarmigan (like this Willow Ptarmigan) gave rise to their generic name Lagopus, which means "hare foot." They are also a great adaptation to life in the cold and snow. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

voice.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

ARCTIC WARBLER (*Phylloscopus borealis*) – A number were outside of Nome, having arrived only the day before.

Allison finally got a good look, too. ;-)

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica*) – We worked on this one. The first individual we found wasn't very cooperative (though quite vocal!), but the second pair responded so so nicely. A flashy looking bird in an Old World family, Muscicapidae.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – A pair were at our dump-truck lunchspot near Coffee Dome. These were the only ones we saw.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) – Quite common in the spruce forest along the Denali Highway.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – On our day to Denali, but that was the only one. Its "wip" call was heard a few times.

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*) – These were fairly common around Seward. The three *Catharus* thrushes on this tour, though similar in appearance, sort out by habitat and voice. The calls of all three are especially different. This one makes a "chup" call.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – The song was heard outside our hotel in Anchorage among a few other sites.

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*) – We had this lovely species at a few different spots, our first on the drive to Denali.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Not common (thankfully?), and just around Anchorage.

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla tschutschensis*) –

Finally tracked down some cooperative individuals around Nome, then again (surprisingly) one was in Barrow.

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrulus*) – Nice looks at several small groups near Denali and again on the Denali Highway.

Calcariidae (Longspurs and Snow Buntings)

LAPLAND LONGSPUR (*Calcarius lapponicus*) – The common breeding passerine on St. Paul. It was also seen displaying on the tundra in Nome and Barrow.

SNOW BUNTING (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) – Common on St. Paul, seen again in Barrow where one was nesting under the footpath of our hotel.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Common by voice in the riparian areas along streams and in the marshy bogs.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*) – Also fairly common in taller riparian forest along rivers or streams. Our first was on the first day at Westchester Lagoon.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Not too common, but a few were around Nome.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – Super common in the spruce forest around Denali. The location of their high-pitched song can be difficult to pinpoint at times.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – Seen in Denali all three days and again in Seward. A common spruce forest breeder, these were "Myrtle" warblers which is the eastern most occurring subspecies.



Bohemian Waxwings are the default waxwing in most of Alaska, as Cedar Waxwings are pretty much restricted to the south coast. We saw several small groups around Denali. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Setophaga townsendi*) – Really nice looks in Seward singing from the tops of spruce trees.

WILSON'S WARBLER (*Cardellina pusilla*) – Fairly common, at least by voice, on the mainland. Seen a few times.

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW (*Spizella arborea*) – Nice looks on the Denali Highway and again in Nome.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – Most places except St. Paul and Barrow.

FOX SPARROW (SOOTY) (*Passerella iliaca sinuosa*) – This was the form/subspecies seen around Seward. It has more of a Catharus thrush like appearance. Songs between the two subspecies seen on this tour were remarkably different.

FOX SPARROW (RED) (*Passerella iliaca zaboria*) – This was the form seen on the Denali Highway. It is of the eastern "red" variety.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – One seen in Anchorage at Westchester Lagoon on Part I.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (GAMBEL'S) (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) – There are several different subspecies of White-crowned. The one seen throughout this trip have gray lores and yellow-orange bills.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) – Great looks in Nome. A flashy looking sparrow.

DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED) (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*) – Fairly common throughout the tour. A few were singing outside the hotel in Anchorage.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RUSTY BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus carolinus*) – Singles in Denali (where one responded quite nicely) and in Nome.

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH (PRIBILOF IS.) (*Leucosticte tephrocotis umbrina*) – One of the more common passerines on St. Paul.

PINE GROSBEAK (*Pinicola enucleator*) – A few around Seward. We had our first, a female, sitting atop a spruce tree during our rest stop.

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL (*Loxia leucoptera*) – A flock flew over us at the bus station in Denali. Unfortunately, our only ones.

COMMON REDPOLL (*Acanthis flammea*) – Common around Denali, but less common further north where Hoarys were around.

HOARY REDPOLL (*Acanthis hornemanni*) – The more common redpoll around Nome and Barrow. The white rumps really stood out in flight.

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) [*]



One of a handful of mainly Old World songbirds that breed in Alaska, the gorgeous Bluethroat is a highly sought-after target on this trip. (Photo by guide Jesse Fagan)

MAMMALS

SNOWSHOE HARE (*Lepus americanus*) – One on our drive along the Denali Highway. It was already starting to shed its winter coat.

ALASKAN HARE (*Lepus othus*)

HOARY MARMOT (*Marmota caligata*) – One was giving a long whistled bark from his/her rocky perch near the Polychrome Mountains in Denali NP.

ARCTIC GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus parryii*) – Pretty common in Denali NP.

RED SQUIRREL (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)

TUNDRA RED-BACKED VOLE (*Clethrionomys rutilus*)

BROWN LEMMING (*Lemmus sibiricus*) – A few of you tracked down the lemmings in town during our stay in Barrow.

NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE (*Erethizon dorsatum*) – One waddled off the road quickly during our drive along the Denali Highway.

ORCA (*Orcinus orca*) – We saw dorsal fins from the St. Paul cliffs, but much better looks were had of a small pod in Seward from the boat.

DALL'S PORPOISE (*Phocoenoides dalli*) – A beautiful species, and especially fun when they start to bowride.

GRAY WHALE (*Eschrichtius robustus*)

HUMPBACK WHALE (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – Nice humpback action was had during our Seward boatripe.

RED FOX (*Vulpes vulpes*)

ARCTIC FOX (*Alopex lagopus*) – I heard that this species on St. Paul never really gets pure white in the winter. Most were in a sooty black coat, but I imagine they put on a paler coat in the dead of winter?

GRAY WOLF (*Canis lupus*) – One sauntered down the road past our bus in Denali NP. I guess that's what you do when you are a wolf..you saunter.

BROWN (INCL. GRIZZLY) BEAR (*Ursus arctos*) – Nice looks at several distant grizzlies in Denali NP, and later one very close to the bus. A great grizzly show!

POLAR BEAR (*Ursus maritimus*) – Seen well by half the group at the bone yard, but later one was offshore in the pressure ridge (and not bad looks in the scope). All in all, a good Polar Bear show in Barrow.

SEA OTTER (*Enhydra lutris*) – Nice Sea Otters lazily floating in the water during the Seward boat ride.

CANADIAN LYNX (*Lynx canadensis*) – Highlight of the trip for many. A lynx walked across the road in front of our Denali bus. It later vanished into the spruce understory. Still, awesome to view this amazing, and mysterious creature.

STELLER'S SEA LION (*Eumetopias jubatus*) – Paler overall (more of a golden brown) than the next species. They both were seen on St. Paul, and Steller's again in Seward.

NORTHERN FUR SEAL (*Callorhinus ursinus*)

HARBOR SEAL (*Phoca vitulina*)

MOOSE (*Alces alces*) – Lots of moose around this year.

CARIBOU (*Rangifer caribou*)

MOUNTAIN GOAT (*Oreamnos americanus*) – Distant scope looks on a few mountain ridges near Seward, but closer from the boat (one with a kidd).

MUSKOX (*Ovibos moschatus*) – Prehistoric. Such a strange creature. A few were around the perimeter of Nome.

DALL'S SHEEP (*Ovis dalli*) – The northern equivalent of Big Horn Sheep. We had a number in Denali and again down around Seward.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 174 bird taxa and 27 mammal taxa