



For anyone who loves Alcids (and who doesn't?), a trip to Alaska is a must. This fantastic Tufted Puffin was one of 13 species seen on the tour! (Photo by guide George Armistead)

This tour saw us surveying a healthy chunk of the country's largest state. We went from a remote island outpost to the crown jewel of the national park system, to an isolated gold rush town, to an intensely scenic peninsula, to the country's northernmost point. We were a little breathless by the end of it, but that was mostly due to the spectacular wildlife we were fortunate enough to see.

We left Anchorage for St. Paul Island at an ungodly hour to arrive amid some ungodly cold. Thankfully some good birding and a fish plant provided us ample refuge! We quickly tallied the keynote species of this remote archipelago, the Red-legged Kittiwake, and then racked up a hefty haul of alcids, with Ancient Murrelet, and Crested and Least auklets headlining. Once back in Anchorage we hit the road and headed for Denali National Park. The weather started out nice enough, and we enjoyed a gorgeous set of birds along the Denali Highway including Upland Sandpiper, Arctic Warbler, Bohemian Waxwing, Gray-cheeked Thrush and many more. Our trip into the park was not as aesthetically pleasing. We encountered rain and some muddy windows, but we still had lovely views of Grizzly Bears, Dall's Sheep, Caribou, Willow Ptarmigan, and Moose. When we headed back to Anchorage we bid adieu to several friends in our party, while welcoming in some new faces. For one brief dinner we were all assembled together, which was a festive occasion.

Then, it was off to Nome. We were due for some sunshine and we got it in Nome. Our first day we headed out the Teller Road tallying both golden-plovers, Eastern Yellow Wagtail, Rock Ptarmigan, and encountered our first (though NOT our last) Muskox. The following day we headed out the beautiful Kougarak Road to endeavor a successful hike for one of America's hardest endemics, the Bristle-thighed Curlew. Prior to that we had an appointment to keep with a Eurasian species that barely spills across the Bering Sea and into Alaska: the Bluethroat. After considerable effort, and some teamwork, we managed simply stunning sightings of this magical bird. On Safety Lagoon we encountered difficulties with the Arctic Loon, but still enjoyed great views of Black Turnstone, Aleutian Tern, and we got a new van!

Once again it was back to Anchorage, and from there we headed down to Seward to hit Kenai Fjords National Park. The boat trip simply couldn't have been better. We saw big glaciers calving, and Black Bears, Mountain Goats, Dall's Porpoises, Sea Otters, Humpback Whales, and oh yeah, some birds too. Ten species of alcids (!) were tallied that day including the sought-after Kittlitz's Murrelet. Finally we shoved off for the desolate north slope, with a visit to Barrow. It was thrilling to be in the Arctic Circle at 71 degrees north on the solstice with 24 hours of daylight, but it was even more thrilling to see all 4 eiders, several Snowy Owls, several nice Yellow-billed Loons, and a big white bear.

Many thanks to all of you for making this trip both possible and so much fun to guide. Megan and I hope to see you all out birding again soon. Very best,

--George

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/aka12bLIST.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*) – Common around Barrow.

BRANT (BLACK) (*Branta bernicla nigricans*) – One at St. Paul and many at Nome.

CAACKLING GOOSE (*Branta hutchinsii*) – Apparently most (all?) of the white-cheeked geese one sees around Nome are this species (*B. h. taverneri*).

CANADA GOOSE (*Branta canadensis*) – Common around Anchorage.

TRUMPETER SWAN (*Cygnus buccinator*) – Several nice encounters along the Denali Highway.

TUNDRA SWAN (WHISTLING) (*Cygnus columbianus columbianus*) – Dozen along Safety Lagoon at Nome and a few in Barrow as well.

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*)

EURASIAN WIGEON (*Anas penelope*) – One on St. Paul was a nice find.

AMERICAN WIGEON (*Anas americana*)

MALLARD (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*)

NORTHERN PINTAIL (*Anas acuta*) – Our most regularly tallied dabbling on the trip, we saw this species nearly every day.

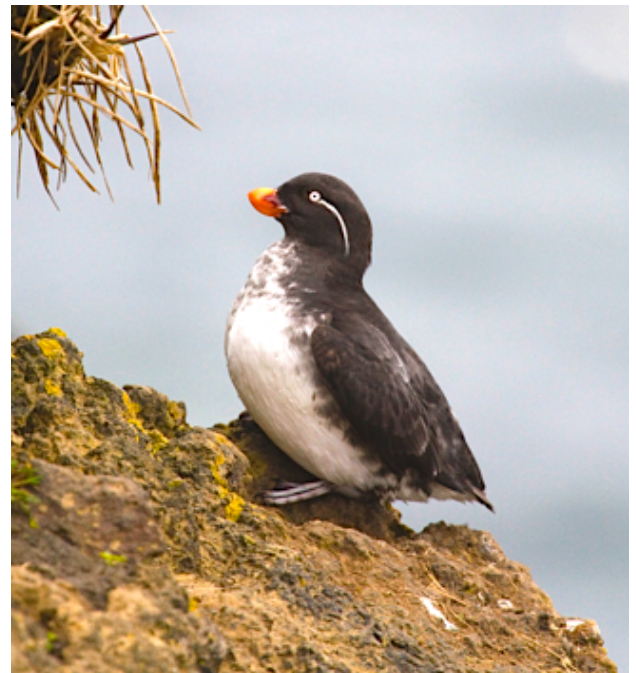
GREEN-WINGED TEAL (EURASIAN) (*Anas crecca nimia*) – Common on St. Paul Island, where we had occasions to compare them with the taxon below.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – A few on St. Paul Island and also seen at a variety of other locations.

REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*) – A nice little band of these birds was spotted by Megan among the scaup on Safety Lagoon at Nome.

RING-NECKED DUCK (*Aythya collaris*) – One drive-by in Potter Marsh and one or two elsewhere.

GREATER SCAUP (*Aythya marila*)



Another of the baker's dozen of Alcids, a Parakeet Auklet poses on a sheer cliff face overlooking the frigid Bering Sea. (Photo by tour participant Linda Rudolph)

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*)

STELLER'S EIDER (*Polysticta stelleri*) – Great studies of this unique seaduck at Barrow.

SPECTACLED EIDER (*Somateria fischeri*) – Always a major target bird for us in Barrow, we were fortunate to spot one bird distantly, as it up-ended while feeding in a small sliver of water out on the tundra. We hiked out to it (some of us sharing foot gear to accomplish the task) getting great views. Later we enjoyed nice views of some fly-by flocks in route to a rare 4-eider day!

KING EIDER (*Somateria spectabilis*) – This is one spiffy looking duck and we enjoyed lovely views at Barrow, but also saw some at St. Paul and a few in Nome as well.

COMMON EIDER (PACIFIC) (*Somateria mollissima v-nigra*) – Some folks think this form of Common Eider may warrant a split from the others. It is quite different in size and structure. The New Englanders among us spotted the different GISS (general impression, size and shape) immediately.

HARLEQUIN DUCK (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) – Great views of dozens at St. Paul. Why so many spend the summer on the island while none breed there remains a curious thing.

SURF SCOTER (*Melanitta perspicillata*)

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER (NORTH AMERICAN)

(*Melanitta fusca deglandi*)

BLACK SCOTER (*Melanitta americana*)

LONG-TAILED DUCK (*Clangula hyemalis*) – Another frequently encountered waterfowl.

BUFFLEHEAD (*Bucephala albeola*)

COMMON GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala clangula*)

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala islandica*)

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*)

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

SPRUCE GROUSE (*Falcapennis canadensis*) – WOW! These birds were thin on the ground this year, with few other birding groups finding them this June. We were really lucky to find a hen with chicks on our drive back to Anchorage from Seward.

WILLOW PTARMIGAN (*Lagopus lagopus*) – A bagel! The state bird and one we were exceptionally pleased to see at a couple of spots, and maybe even more pleased to hear while in Denali.

ROCK PTARMIGAN (*Lagopus muta*) – We were nearly kicking these birds out of our path this year. Sometimes they can be really hard to find, but this year we had great encounters, beginning with Robyn's finding of a male.

Gaviidae (Loons)

RED-THROATED LOON (*Gavia stellata*) – Lovely views, especially in Nome.

PACIFIC LOON (*Gavia pacifica*) – A breeding plumage Pacific Loon must surely be one of North America's finest birds. We saw quite a few in Nome and elsewhere.

COMMON LOON (*Gavia immer*)

YELLOW-BILLED LOON (*Gavia adamsii*) – Most surprising was finding a 1st-summer bird in Aialik Bay, but then to have several beautiful encounters while in Barrow was a rare treat. That is one big loon; the biggest in fact.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

RED-NECKED GREBE (*Podiceps grisegena*) – Gorgeous studies around Anchorage and a few on St. Paul as well.

Procellariidae (Shearwaters and Petrels)

NORTHERN FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialis*) – A favorite bird of some folks on the trip, we enjoyed wonderful studies of both dark and light morph birds on the cliff and flying over the sea at St. Paul.

PROVIDENCE PETREL (*Pterodroma solandri*) – Without a doubt the most shocking thing we saw on the trip was a dark petrel in the genus *Pterodroma* careening around over the pack ice at Barrow. I tried for a while to make it into a fulmar or a shearwater, but after just a little study it became clear that this bird was a *Pterodroma*. The only species of dark *Pterodroma* even remotely likely to occur at this latitude is Providence Petrel (a.k.a. Solander's Petrel).

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)



*A superb flight view of a light-morph Northern Fulmar; it's no wonder this beauty was a favorite of several folks on the tour.
(Photo by guide George Armistead)*

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Common around Seward.

RED-FACED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax urile*) – Splendid studies at St. Paul and we also saw a few on the Kenai Fjords boat trip.

PELAGIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*) – Common around Kenai, but we also had a few on St. Paul.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*) – Linda spotted this bird one morning at Westchester Lagoon. This is a tough species to register on the Alaska tour and indeed it was a state bird for both Megan and George.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – A great state for this species, we saw lots, especially around Seward.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*)

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK (*Accipiter striatus*)

NORTHERN GOSHAWK (*Accipiter gentilis*) – Megan spotted one flying away from our bus in Denali.

RED-TAILED HAWK (HARLAN'S) (*Buteo jamaicensis harlani*) – Multiple good studies this year, which was nice as they can be sparse at times.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK (*Buteo lagopus*) – A couple at Nome.

GOLDEN EAGLE (*Aquila chrysaetos*) – One seen fleetingly along the Denali Highway.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*)

GYRFALCON (*Falco rusticolus*) – The pair along the Kougarak kept us wonderfully entertained as they wheeled around their eyrie. Seeing a youngster poke his head up was neat too.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – One along the Denali Highway looked like it had been shot out of a canon it was moving so fast. It made one poor Bonaparte's Gull very unhappy.

Gruidae (Cranes)

SANDHILL CRANE (*Grus canadensis*)

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) – A most handsome shorebird, and we had several nice encounters, which pleased Kathleen in particular.

PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis fulva*) – A couple of nice studies at Nome.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

BLACK OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus bachmani*) – A pair at the mouth of Resurrection Bay were on a nest.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*)

GRAY-TAILED TATTLER (*Tringa brevipes*) – In the process of nearly falling asleep Barb spotted what would turn out to be our best Siberian vagrant. The bird was huddling in the lee of the ice right on the shore at the base of Point Barrow.

WANDERING TATTLER (*Tringa incana*) – One on St. Paul and another at Nome.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

UPLAND SANDPIPER (*Bartramia longicauda*)

WHIMBREL (AMERICAN) (*Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*)



Easily the most attractive of North America's cormorants, the lovely Red-faced Cormorant also has the most restricted range on the continent, occurring regularly only in Alaska. (Photo by tour participant Linda Rudolph)

BRISTLE-THIGHED CURLEW (*Numenius tahitiensis*) – Beautiful blue skies can often spell trouble for finding this bird as they often seem more active when there is cloud cover. He had halcyon blue skies on the day of our hike, but managed to find the bird quickly and get good views to boot. For many this was a favorite bird.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – Over 90 were counted one day at Westchester Lagoon.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – Gorgeous studies of a pair at the Nome River.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*)

BLACK TURNSTONE (*Arenaria melanocephala*)

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – A common breeding bird in Nome and Barrow, we heard them doing their flying saucer call often.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*)

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – A few on St. Paul.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – Several around Barrow.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*) – Nice to see them on the breeding grounds at Barrow.

ROCK SANDPIPER (*Calidris ptilocnemis*) – All over St. Paul.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*)

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*)

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*)

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – For all of us, but especially for Bob and Barb, this and the Reds were a real treat.

RED PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) – We enjoyed watching one male spinning endlessly in a little puddle at Barrow. A common bird at Barrow.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa tridactyla*)

RED-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (*Rissa brevirostris*) – Yes! Always a must-see bird at St. Paul Island.

SABINE'S GULL (*Xema sabini*) – Great views both in Nome, where Don spotted our first ones, and then again later at Barrow.

BONAPARTE'S GULL (*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*)

FRANKLIN'S GULL (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) – John R. deftly spotted this bird at Westchester Lagoon; a vagrant bird that unbeknownst to us had been present for a couple days.

MEW GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus canus brachyrhynchus*)

HERRING GULL (VEGA) (*Larus argentatus vegae*) – Several folks saw one fly by the airport in Nome.

SLATY-BACKED GULL (*Larus schistisagus*) – One in Nome was a treat and another in Barrow was a bit more of a surprise.

GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL (*Larus glaucescens*)

GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*)

ALEUTIAN TERN (*Onychoprion aleuticus*) – Wonderful studies of this tern which is in the same genus as the Bridled and Sooty terns. Their wintering grounds (or seas) remain little known for the most part.

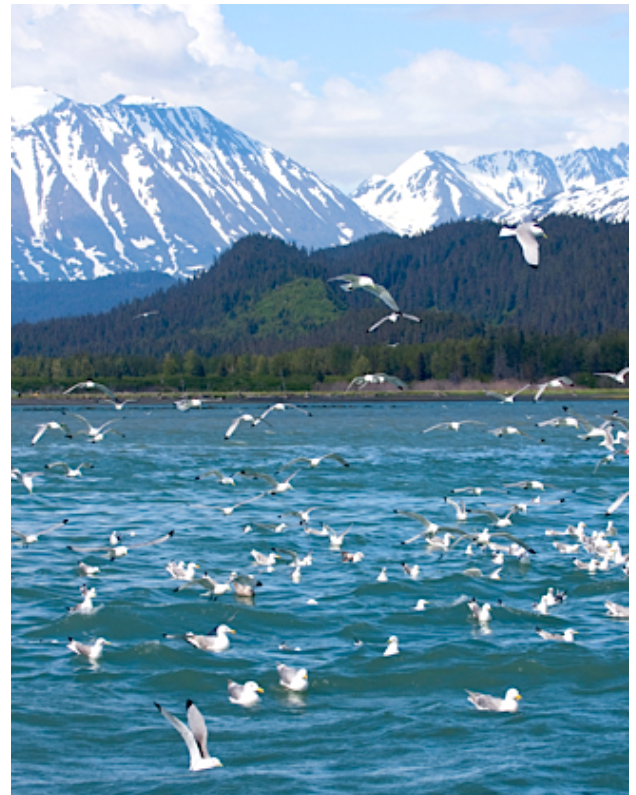
ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna paradisaea*)

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

POMARINE JAEGER (*Stercorarius pomarinus*)

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

LONG-TAILED JAEGER (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) – Seeing a pair go after a Raven just after seeing our bluthroat was just one of the riveting sightings of this fantastic bird.



Gulls may not be everyone's cup of tea, but they certainly are a lot more enticing when viewed against such a stunning backdrop! (Photo by guide George Armistead)

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, and Puffins)

COMMON MURRE (*Uria aalge*)

THICK-BILLED MURRE (*Uria lomvia*)

BLACK GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus grylle*) – Jared and Kathleen were especially pleased to these birds at Point Barrow.

PIGEON GUILLEMOT (*Cepphus columba*)

MARbled MURRELET (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)

KITTLITZ'S MURRELET (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*) – Nice views of a pair in direct comparison with three Marbled Murrelets was just fantastic.

ANCIENT MURRELET (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) – Good sightings in St. Paul and at sea around Kenai Fjords.

PARAKEET AUKLET (*Aethia psittacula*)

LEAST AUKLET (*Aethia pusilla*) – Voted among the favorite birds of the tour for several among us, the fussy yet confiding nature of these tiny alcids make them irresistibly attractive.

CRESTED AUKLET (*Aethia cristatella*) – More in evidence around St. Paul than in other years, we saw many this year.

RHINOCEROS AUKLET (*Cerorhinca monocerata*) – Great views of one in Aialik Bay.

HORNED PUFFIN (*Fratercula corniculata*)

TUFTED PUFFIN (*Fratercula cirrhata*)

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Nice job Don!

Strigidae (Owls)

SNOWY OWL (*Bubo scandiacus*) – For Bob R. this bird was a quest bird and so it was great to see several immaculate white birds.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*)

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (*Picoides dorsalis*) – Just a few of us were lucky enough to see the male beside the Parks Highway.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (*Contopus cooperi*)

ALDER FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax alnorum*)

Laniidae (Shrikes)

NORTHERN SHRIKE (*Lanius excubitor*) – A sighting along the Kougarak Road was most satisfying.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

GRAY JAY (*Perisoreus canadensis*)

STELLER'S JAY (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) – One next to the mountain goats was a surprise.

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE (*Pica hudsonia*) – Holstein Pheasant!

NORTHWESTERN CROW (*Corvus caurinus*)

COMMON RAVEN (*Corvus corax*)

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*)

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*)



The Least Auklet may be the tiniest of the Alcids, but it was a huge favorite on this trip! (Photo by guide George Armistead)

Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE (*Poecile atricapillus*)

CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE (*Poecile rufescens*)

BOREAL CHICKADEE (*Poecile hudsonicus*)

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH (*Sitta canadensis*)

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

PACIFIC WREN (ALASKAN ISLANDS) (*Troglodytes pacificus alascensis*) – Keep your eyes on this one. The Bering Sea population may get split somewhere down the road, and we saw one on St. Paul Island.

Cinclidae (Dippers)

AMERICAN DIPPER (*Cinclus mexicanus*)

Regulidae (Kinglets)

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*)

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

ARCTIC WARBLER (*Phylloscopus borealis*) – Seen well in the Denali area and in Nome.

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica*) – Wow! This one took some team work but boy did it work out well in the end. Voted the most popular bird of the trip, we enjoyed gorgeous studies of a couple males at one site.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) – Great views in Nome along the Pilgrim Hot Springs Road.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*)

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*)

HERMIT THRUSH (*Catharus guttatus*)

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*)

VARIED THRUSH (*Ixoreus naevius*) – The one feeding in the grass behind our lunch restaurant on our drive to Denali was super.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla tschutschensis*) – A snappy looking bird we saw well at Nome.

AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*)

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

BOHEMIAN WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrulus*) – Great studies along the Denali Highway and a favorite for Earl.

Calcariidae (Longspurs and Snow Buntings)

LAPLAND LONGSPUR (*Calcarius lapponicus*) – A.k.a. the "Glider" on St. Paul, it was nice to see such an emblematic bird for the region in such abundance.

SNOW BUNTING (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*)

YELLOW WARBLER (*Dendroica petechia*)

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Dendroica coronata*)

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER (*Dendroica townsendi*)



The handsome Northern Wheatear is one of a handful of primarily Old World birds (along with Bluethroat, Arctic Warbler, Eastern Yellow Wagtail) that spill across the Bering Sea and breed in Alaska, making them among the most sought-after targets in the state. (Photo by guide George Armistead)

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Dendroica striata*)
NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*)
WILSON'S WARBLER (*Wilsonia pusilla*)

Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW (*Spizella arborea*)
SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)
FOX SPARROW (SOOTY) (*Passerella iliaca sinuosa*) – I prefer to call this one the Footy Sox Sparrow. We saw them well outside of Seward.
FOX SPARROW (RED) (*Passerella iliaca zaboria*) – Lots around Nome and on the Denali Highway.
SONG SPARROW (*Melospiza melodia*)
LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*)
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (GAMBEL'S) (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*)
GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) – Splendid views on part 2 at Nome.
DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED) (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*)

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RUSTY BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus carolinus*) – Seen only fleetingly, including a fly over in Barrow seen a couple times there.

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*) – I only saw the bird poorly and though I actually thought it looked like a grackle, that was just seemed too unlikely, and so forced to put a name to it I called it a Rusty Blackbird (which itself would be unusual). The day we left Barrow a friend of mine saw this bird again very well and confirmed as Robyn and Don suspected that this was a Common Grackle. You just never know what will turn up at Barrow!

Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH (PRIBILOF IS.) (*Leucosticte tephrocotis umbrina*) – Lots abound on St. Paul. Sort of the local equivalent of the House Sparrow for there. Nice birds to have as yard birds.
PINE GROSBEAK (*Pinicola enucleator*) – Wonderful studies in the Sitka Spruce forest outside Seward.
WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL (*Loxia leucoptera*) [*]
COMMON REDPOLL (*Acanthis flammea*) – A nest at Barrow was fun to observe.
HOARY REDPOLL (*Acanthis hornemanni*) – Several seen well at Nome and in Barrow.
PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*)

MAMMALS

ARCTIC GROUND SQUIRREL (*Spermophilus parryii*) – Relatively few seen around this year. It was weird to see more bears over the course of this trip than ground squirrels.
RED SQUIRREL (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
TUNDRA RED-BACKED VOLE (*Clethrionomys rutilus*) – A favorite for Megan. (There's just no accounting for taste).
MUSKRAT (*Ondatra zibethica*) – One at Westchester Lagoon was some fine eye candy.
DALL'S PORPOISE (*Phocoenoides dalli*) – I believe this is the fastest cetacean in the world. We had a nice pod riding our bow on the Kenai Fjords.
HUMPBACK WHALE (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) – Simply stupendous was seeing a group of 6 or more lund-feeding. Our captain Dan dropped a microphone over board so that we could listen to their calls, and it was incredible to hear them funneling the fish using sound waves, and then burst into view as they caught their prey. This was an experience none of us shall ever forget and for Megan and Pat I think it was almost a spiritual event. Truly an awesome thing to bear witness to.
ARCTIC FOX (*Alopex lagopus*) – All over St. Paul.



Varied Thrushes are most often seen singing from atop a tall spruce; this one decided to act more like a robin, giving us great views as it hopped around in the grass! (Photo by guide George Armistead)

BLACK BEAR (*Ursus americanus*) – At least 3 seen on our Kenai boat trip.

BROWN (INCL. GRIZZLY) BEAR (*Ursus arctos*) – I think we saw about 7 in Denali National Park. Later Robyn spotted a couple going to/from Seward, including one that nearly resulted in a 5 car pile-up!

POLAR BEAR (*Ursus maritimus*) – Don and Robyn called the guide's room at the hotel in Barrow to inform us there was a bear outside the window on the pack ice. It took us a little while but eventually everyone was able to see the majestic animal as it strode around searching for seal. What a great way to start that day.

SEA OTTER (*Enhydra lutris*)

STELLER'S SEA LION (*Eumetopias jubatus*)

NORTHERN FUR SEAL (*Callorhinus ursinus*)

HARBOR SEAL (*Phoca vitulina*)

SPOTTED SEAL (*Phoca largha*)

MOOSE (*Alces alces*) – Many sightings, but that one headed into the tunnel under the train tracks had us thinking....

CARIBOU (*Rangifer caribou*)

MOUNTAIN GOAT (*Oreamnos americanus*) – Seeing a female with a kid was excellent.

MUSKOX (*Ovibos moschatus*) – We didn't just see muskox, we had a muskox event! I will leave it at that...

DALL'S SHEEP (*Ovis dalli*)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 175 bird taxa and 20 mammal taxa