



RUSSIA'S RING OF FIRE

23rd MAY – 8th JUNE 2016

A [Tropical Birding](#) SET DEPARTURE tour



Whiskered Auklet has to be one of the finest looking birds in the world, seen in the hundreds of thousands at Yankicha

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*All photos in this report were taken by Lisle Gwynn. Species pictured are highlighted **RED**.*

INTRODUCTION

Russia is a land that is difficult to put into words. Almost every single stereotype you've ever heard about the place is true, and yet it is nothing like you may imagine. It blindsides you with constant surprises, and yet it is comfortingly homely, despite being undeniably unfamiliar. The people are incredibly friendly, more so than many other destinations around the globe, and even here in the far far *far* east where a culture of paranoia and suspicion is a way of life strangers are met not with caution and wariness as you might imagine, but with open arms, warm smiles and some of the most friendly greetings I have ever experienced.

Without Heritage Expeditions' '*Spirit of Enderby*', a 50 passenger, Russian-flagged, Russian-crewed and tastefully refitted expedition vessel, birding this part of the world would be, with no exaggeration, impossible. The vast majority of sites we visit in this itinerary, and indeed all of our Russian Far East itineraries, are inaccessible by land and it is only by combination of ship and Zodiac inflatable boat that we are able to explore in the way that we do. Of course, this has led to some wildly successful expeditions, and 2016 simply raised the bar once again. Even before we'd stepped foot on the ship we were blown away by Kamchatka with the mythical Black-billed Cappercaillie giving walk-away views, and a superb supporting cast of Siberian breeders like Eyebrowed Thrush, Siberian Rubythroat and Kamchatka Leaf Warbler. Things simply got even better as we got underway and by the time we were finished in the Commander Islands we'd encountered spectacular wildlife like Blue, Humpback, Fin, Gray and Sperm Whales, atypically showy Pechora Pipits, and the Palearctic's only breeding Gray-crowned Rosy Finches and Pacific Wrens, as well as an endemic subspecies of Arctic Fox that is likely to be split in the very near future. Back to the coast of Kamchatka and it was the bounty of Steller's Sea Eagles peering down at us from their nests that stole the show, but Aleutian Tern, Kamchatka Gull, Long-billed and Kittlitz's Murrelets and Long-toed Stint tried their hardest to out do the eagles.

The Kuril Islands are a wonder in their own right; long-disputed, under-explored and shrouded in mystery and legend. Oh, and the birding is *superb*. Days with 11+ species of alcid were common, including specialities like Spectacled Guillemot and the all-dark 'Kuril' Guillemot that will likely soon become a legitimate species. On land we found Japanese and Siberian Accentors, Siberian Rubythroats by the bucketload, Black-faced, Rustic and Japanese Grey Buntings, Pine Grosbeaks and Spotted Nutcrackers, Japanese and Rufous-tailed Robins, the hulking Crested Kingfisher, diminutive Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker, and even discovered a previously unknown population of Japanese Murrelet. Even more mega though was a group of 4 Stejneger's Beaked Whales off of Kunashir on our last evening, an animal only a handful of people have ever seen. Of course, our journey through the islands produced seabirds in numbers difficult to comprehend. An evening at Yankicha must rate among the top wildlife spectacles anywhere in the world. Bobbing silently in a volcano caldera as 5 MILLION Crested and Whiskered Auklets fly in to roost is indescribable.

With pre- and post-expedition options to explore Sakhalin and its endemic birds and Moscow, with amazing birding inbetween, this must rate as one of THE must-do ship trips anywhere in the world. Besides, how often do you get to bird in an abandoned top secret Soviet submarine base?

Day 1: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy area

Meeting bright and early at a central Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy hotel, it was with excited anticipation that 20 keen birders set out into the wilds of fabled Kamchatka this morning. All fresh off of flights from all corners of the globe, we aimed our sights high and set off into the nearby birch woods in search of a certain far east speciality, the near-mythical Black-billed Capercaillie. Arriving at our chosen site, one which has produced *the* bird in the past, we were initially met with no sign of our target, however our foray around the area produced some great distractions in the form of displaying **Olive-backed Pipits**, singing **Rustic Buntings**, superb views of a **Spotted Nutcracker** and several obliging **Eyebrowed Thrushes**. We also had our first views of the highly distinctive local form of Willow Tit which, as all the palearctic birders agreed, appears almost nothing like 'our' European Willow Tits. We thus dubbed it '**Kamchatka**' Willow Tit for the remainder of the day, which produced many good looks at this rather nice bird. Another local form seen was several '**Kamchatka**' **Magpies**, a rumoured split in the making. Of course, these birds weren't our key targets, but some ultra-fresh scat found on the track betrayed the presence of our quarry. A brief view of a **Taiga Flycatcher** aside, and some spectacular looks at a freshly dead almost white *albidus* **Northern Goshawk**, we decided to move on after several hours of trying without luck. Of course, as luck and fate would typically dictate, it was as we left the site that the first bus screeched to a halt and two female **Black-billed Capercaillie** burst from the undergrowth beside the road! The bus behind suffered a tense few seconds that felt like forever before every single member of our party was having good, wholly-tickable views of one of the iconic birds of the Russian Far East – success!



After a stop in town to stock up on supplies for what promises to be a superb and lengthy expedition, we made our way out to the Blue Lagoon, a natural hot spring site that just so happens to also be a great birding location. **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** along the way was welcome, but when we arrived it was an obliging and gorgeous **Rustic Bunting** as well as a pale **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** and two stunning, and I mean *stunning* **Red-necked Grebes** that took our fancy. A walk around the lake was well worthwhile and produced more **Eyebrowed Thrushes**, several **White Wagtails** of the forms *lugens* and *ocularis*, '**Grey-bellied**' **Bullfinch**, **Great Spotted Woodpecker** and the distinctive local race of Eurasian Nuthatch, again dubbed '**Kamchatka**' **Nuthatch** by the group, who agreed it was nothing like 'our' nuthatches. Very pallid with a stonking great bill and orange undertail coverts with white 'scalloping', this is a distinctive bird! Of course, continuing the theme of distinctive races, we also admired some rather dapper *longipennis* **Common Terns**, which may well have one of the best latin trinomials in the world of birding.

With time no longer on our side, many good birds under the belt, and jet lag setting in for everyone, it was time to call it a day. But not without one last stop. Pulling over on the roadside on the way back to town, and in the shadow of some of the most spectacular and typically conical snow-capped volcanoes on the planet, those of us from Europe enjoyed a taste of home with **Eurasian Skylark**, **Common Reed Bunting**, **Northern Pintail**, **Black-headed Gull** and **Carrion Crow**. A little different though were the rather nice **Slaty-backed Gulls** drifting to and from the lake we were 'scoping. With our first day a roaring success, most of the group returned to the hotel to sleep off the jet lag and dream of yet more birding in this little-appreciated and overlooked part of the globe.

Day 2: Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy area

Today once again dawned bright and not too hideously early, for the sun barely sets in this sub-Arctic realm. The group assembled at a central hotel and put luggage aside to be taken to the ship, ready for embarkation and the beginning of our expedition in earnest this afternoon.

Setting off from town into the surrounding birch woodlands we once again sought the much desired Black-billed Capercaillie as a local contact had given us details of a location where several males had been seen recently. Unfortunately we failed to locate any dapper males, but we did find more than a few birds of note. Just as yesterday, **Eyebrowed Thrush** and **Rustic Bunting** were the stalwarts of the day being seen regularly, whilst **Taiga Flycatcher** once again put in an appearance, this time long enough and in numbers enough to ensure that most people had good looks at this rather attractive little flycatcher. A couple of **Great-spotted Woodpeckers** were nice to see and familiar to those from Europe, whilst many displaying **Olive-backed Pipits** were gratefully received. Perhaps bird of the morning though went to a **Black Woodpecker** that unfortunately disappeared as rapidly as it arrived, leaving us a little shocked and frustrated.

Moving on, we made our way to the mouth-area of fabled Avacha Bay in search of more water-dependent species. We didn't fail to find something interesting, with **Slaty-backed** and **Glaucous-winged Gulls** in good numbers, **Pelagic** and **Red-faced Cormorants**, a few fly-by **Tufted Puffins** looking stunning, and quite spectacularly several *hundred* **Ancient Murrelet**! All to a backdrop of a giant statue of Lenin. Welcome to Russia. Further along the coast we found a secluded and sun-baked bay where more **Ancient Murrelet** gave good views, *longipennis* **Common Terns** gave a superb show and a couple of **Kamchatka Gulls** stole the show. This incredibly distinctive form of Mew or Common Gull is a near future split without doubt, looking extremely different to the other subspecies, and as such it was much desired by the group. The award for best looking bird was a difficult decision, though several **Red-necked Grebes** marginally lost out to a group of **Harlequin Ducks** that milled around the shore.



Further along toward the mouth of the huge natural harbor we made our way down to an area of water to find **Greater Scaup**, **Tufted Duck**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Eurasian Reed Bunting**, **Eastern Yellow Wagtail** and **Oriental Greenfinch** to name a few highlights, whilst on the mammal front we found concerningly-fresh **Kamchatka Bear** prints and an absolutely mind-blowingly tame **Red Fox**, complete with subarctic shaggy coat. Easily the best looking Red Fox I have ever seen, and incredible views to go with it.

After returning to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, we made our way finally to the wonderful **Spirit of Enderby**, our home for the next couple of weeks, and settled for crew and staff introductions, drinks and muffins at the bar, and eventually a sumptuous steak or salmon dinner cooked to perfection. This was topped off not only by home-made Apple crumble, but with a spectacular departure from Avacha Bay as we followed in the footsteps of Steller and Bering. This is the exact same place that their ill-fated expedition some near 300 years prior began, in which they would 'discover' America and countless new species to science. Our new species, to our lists rather than science, included **Pigeon Guillemot**, **Siberian (Stejneger's White-winged) Scoter**, **Common Guillemot**, and much better views of **Tufted Puffin**. With light fading, and an already behind schedule departure thanks to Russian bureaucracy it was time for bed for most on board, satisfied with the day's haul and excited for our first day of expeditioning tomorrow.



Day 3: En-route to the Commander Islands

Today was an exciting day for the wildlife lovers among us, as any day spent travelling into the great blue unknown is. The beauty of sea days is not only that they afford time to rest, settle into cabins and recover from jet lag, but they often offer some exciting bird and mammal encounters. This day was no different. The early risers arose around 4:30am and were on deck shortly after, being rewarded by the first two of several dozen majestic **Laysan Albatrosses** to be seen throughout the day, accompanied by **Red-faced Cormorants** and the first of several large flocks of **Crested Auklet**. The real highlight of the early morning session though came in the form of a particularly obliging **Sperm Whale** and a more fleeting **Fin Whale**. Throughout the remainder of the day we added several new species to our list, including the magnificent **Horned Puffin** and the small but bizarrely wonderful **Parakeet Auklet**, complete with clog-like bill.



Alongside us were hundreds of **Pacific Fulmar** throughout the day, as well as several dozen, perhaps even a hundred plus **Fork-tailed Storm Petrels** which at times gave very satisfying views of this North Pacific endemic. Remaining with smaller birds, one of today's avian highlights came in the form of several flocks of the particularly gaudy and sexy **Red Phalarope**. Though the Europeans call them 'Grey' phalarope, this is simply unacceptable once you've seen them in their spectacular breeding finery.



On the larger bird front we scored big with all three jaegers, **Arctic (Parasitic)**, **Pomarine** and several flocks of the truly elegant and much prized **Long-tailed**. However, despite all of this, great lectures from Chris and Katya, and a superb lamb dinner to boot, it was the mammals the stole the show today. Not only did we see our first **Northern Fur Seals** and some really fantastically obliging **Fin Whales**, but we hit the near-jackpot with FOUR **Blue Whales** including one individual that gave some absolutely tremendous flukes as it dove deep! Rare but possible on this trip, this was a major target to get and left all those who saw them awe-struck.

Day 4: Nikol'skoye, North-west Cape and Arij Karmen island

The day dawned early today. In fact, it dawned earlier than almost anywhere in the world, as overnight we had arrived off of Bering Island, the largest of the Commander Islands, which sit at the very western end of the Aleutian chain. Though the sun rose at around 4:45am, we were among the first to see in this glorious 29th of May.

The plan for today began at the settlement of Nikol'skoye, a border post for entering the Commander Islands. Despite being a necessary formality, there is plenty to do and see here, and several groups enjoyed different aspects of the visit. Those seeking a well-rounded experience spent time at an art gallery held by a local artist, others tasted warm local soup, some were welcomed into the homes of residents like old friends, and of course the birders went birding.



Scouring the shore, it didn't take long to find our first main target here: **Rock Sandpiper (previous page)**, as several birds were found feeding and resting along the shore – what a cracking looking bird! The show was almost stolen though by a particularly obliging **Mongolian Plover (below)** in its best breeding finery, surely among the best shorebirds in the world.



Of course, not to be outdone, the passerines fought back with dapper **Eurasian Tree Sparrows** and beautifully melodic **Lapland Buntings**, whilst offshore the mammals were well represented with **Pacific Sea Otter, Harbour Seal, Northern Fur Seal** and a huge surprise in the form of a thrashing and wallowing **Grey Whale!** This latter animal was a really unexpected highlight and was much appreciated by everyone. Moving on through the town we eventually left civilization and began to find more breeding waders, this time in the form of **Red-necked Stints, Dunlin** and yet more **Mongolian Plovers**. Our real target out here in the grasslands though was slightly drabber, though still very attractive. With a little enticing into the open we eventually all had absolutely superb walk-away views of the extremely skulky **Pechora Pipit (next page top)** before making our way back to town to admire several good taxidermy examples in the local museum. The stand out highlight here, however, was the full skeleton of a *Steller's Sea Cow*, a long extinct marine mammal 8 meters long that became extinct just 30 years after it was first discovered thanks to hunters.

After a superb chowder and salad lunch back on board the ship we made our way to North-west Cape where we took a walk as a group to a colony containing not only dozens of **Northern Fur Seal**, but also some absolutely colossal **Steller's Sea Lions**. Even from a fair distance these animals look seriously, disproportionately large. A bonus in the form of at least 4 **Arctic Foxes** was much appreciated, as was the **Siberian Rubythroat** seen by some. The bird highlight here though had to be the dozens of **Red-faced** and **Pelagic Cormorants** constantly making arms-length passes as we sat and admired



some distant **Harlequin** on the edge of the water.



Our final activity on this long but rewarding day was a zodiac cruise around Arij Karmen island. With the weather and sea having picked up a little, it was a little bumpy wet and windy reaching the island, but once there we enjoyed absolutely phenomenal views of the extremely local **Red-legged Kittiwake (next page)** as well as **Red-faced Cormorant**, **Common** and **Brunnich's Guillemots**, **Parakeet Auklet**, **Tufted Puffin**, **Steller's Sea Lion**, **Pacific Sea Otter** amongst others. Once the photographers had had their fill of kittiwakes we made our way back to the ship, where we ate a hearty dinner before reappearing on the bridge. Travelling into dusk, we passed along the edge of the continental shelf, meaning **Laysan Albatross** was common throughout, however the highlights were two fly-through **Horned Puffin**, a VERY large bull **Sperm Whale** that gave the most incredible fluke, and by some extreme luck 2 pods totaling 15 **Baird's Beaked Whales**!





Steller's Sea Lion is a formidable beast

Day 4: Peschanaya Bay, Medney Island, & cruising west

Today began, as per usual, with a briefing from Rodney about what to expect from our time ashore today. Once this was over though we were soon zipping toward the shore in the zodiacs, picking up wildlife along the way. **Harlequin** were gorgeous and abundant, **Pacific Eider** were evident in small flocks complete with dazzlingly burnt-orange bills looking very different to 'normal' Common Eider, **Harbour Seals** came to check us out and **Pigeon Guillemot** were everywhere you looked.



Landing ashore the group split into the birders, and everyone else. The birders headed to and fro along the shore in search of our targets, eventually finding and scoring stonking views of **Grey-crowned Rosy Finch**, the only place in the Palearctic that this species occurs, as well as several **Lapland Buntings** a **Taiga Flycatcher**, good views of **Horned Puffin** and several singing **Pacific Wrens**, again the only place in the Palearctic that this species occurs. Overhead **Northern Ravens** croaked whilst **Rock Ptarmigan** cackled across the valley and two rather nice **Red-necked Stints** (next page) held territory on a stream. Others had their boots nibbled by an endemic subspecies of **Arctic Fox**.



After we'd had our fill, we moved out onto the water for an extended Zodiac cruise in search of a couple more targets. First target was close range views of **Horned Puffin** which we succeeded in almost immediately, as well as eye-level views of **Brunnich's Guillemot**, **Pigeon Guillemot** and **Pacific Fulmar** right next to the Zodiac, whilst more **Harlequin** and **Pacific Eider** flew by in good photographic range. Of course, our targets here were mostly of the auk persuasion, and we soon found our first pair of **Parakeet Auklet** (next page top) that gave superb views, as well as a single **Whiskered Auklet** which showed off its dazzling adornments to a crowd of eager onlookers. Mammal highlight here, despite **Steller's Sea Lion** being present and impressive, was the large numbers of **Sea Otter** (next page bottom) complete with pups on their bellies – cute, amazing, and superb creatures.



An afternoon and evening at sea was a great opportunity to catch up on rest, socialize and watch from the bow or bridge. Many **Laysan Albatross** were seen, whilst on the other end of the size spectrum we had both **Common** and **Brunnich's Guillemots**, **Parakeet**, **Whiskered** and **Crested Auklets**, both **Red** and **Red-necked Phalaropes** in good numbers, and all three expected skuas for the region: **Pomarine**, **Arctic** and some fantastic **Long-tailed**. Bird and mammal of the afternoon though goes to several close and classic **Sperm Whale**, and a handful of the tricky **Least Auklet**.



Horned Puffin – one of nature's natural clowns

Day 5: Zhupanova River

Waking early, the lure of the deep blue was too much to resist and many of the birders and marine mammal enthusiasts were on deck or on the bridge at first light, or soon after. We were crossing the shelf this morning and heading toward the coast of Kamchatka once again, and looking at the bathymetry it promised some sightings of note; we were not disappointed. Almost immediately after rising an **Orca** passed down the side of the ship, likely a solitary young male – what a way to start the morning! Not long after, we had the first of five large whale sightings. It started with a **Sperm Whale**, quickly followed by another, then two **Humpback Whales** in quick succession, and finally two **Fin Whale**, however these were somewhat dwarfed, quite amazingly, by a superb show given by at least 6 **Dall's Porpoises** with their characteristic 'rooster tail' spray as they zipped back and forth toward the ship at incredible speed. Birds didn't go unnoticed of course, and an **Olive-backed Pipit** on the deck of the ship set things off quite nicely. Out on and above the waves we noted many hundreds of **Tufted Puffins**, a handful of **Horned Puffins**, as well as **Common**, **Pigeon** and **Brunnich's Guillemots**, **Red** and **Red-necked Phalaropes**, and **Crested Auklet**. Standout highlight here though were at least five **Long-billed Murrelet** seen as we approached the coast – a brilliant addition to our rapidly growing and towering Alcid list.

After lunch we took to the Zodiacs and entered the mouth of the Zhupanova River to undertake a several hour cruise of the river and its various braids. Inside the entrance we found some exposed mud banks that provided much entertainment in the form of many **Slaty-backed** and **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, and the fantastic dusky *longipennis* **Common Tern** which is wildly different to the Common Terns we are all used to. Here though we also found two of our main targets – a stonking adult **Kamchatka Gull** and at least 14 **Aleutian Terns (next page bottom)** – a species that all of us were extremely keen to see. We were fortunate enough to have the birds almost within arms-reach, and to hear their Spotted Redshank-esque call – quite educational and an experience never to be forgotten!



Zodiac cruising the Zhupanova River



Moving up the river we encountered many great birds, starting with a superb male **Smew**, at least 10 **Black Scoter** as well as many **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Common Teal**, 'Alaskan' and 'Kamchatka' **Eastern Yellow Wagtails**, **Rustic Bunting**, **Common Rosefinch**, **Oriental Greenfinch** and hundreds of **Red-throated Divers**, which in itself was quite impressive. The key bird here though, and a hell of an impressive one at that, was **Steller's Sea Eagle**, which appeared in the form of at least 7 birds including several on nests and one eating a huge Salmon on a mud bank. We had already seen 3 from the ship at a huge distance, but this was something different altogether – what magnificent, majestic beasts! We also found several new mammals here, with one group seeing a **Sable**, others seeing **Musk Rat**, and all of us had superb views of both **Harbour** and **Largha Seal** which was a new species for many.



The second key stop for our afternoon activities was a sopping wet flooded field behind a Salmon processing plant. We trudged through the wet field for an hour or so in the hope that we would find a key, special and scarce breeding wader. After not too long we had seen at least three different **Long-toed Stints**, looking truly dapper in their breeding finery. For those of us from Europe, this is a mega rarity in our home countries, and it held a special place in many hearts and will undoubtedly go down as a trip highlight. These birds are absolute masters of illusion; landing in one spot they will, without any sort of hint of movement, move dozens of meters and appear a long way from where you are *absolutely positive* they landed and remain – this gave us quite the giggle and it was a fun runaround for a while. The move back to the ship saw us find several more **Long-billed Murrelet** but there was little time after dinner to watch as the darkness descended.



Kamchatka Gull is surely a split in the making

Day 6: Bukhta Russkaya

We awoke to mist, drizzle and a bitter wind this morning, though the wind quickly stopped as we entered the beautiful fjord of Bukhta Russkaya. Our spirits were the opposite of the weather as we were warmed by views of a breaching **Humpback Whale**, lots of **Kuril** and **Pigeon Guillemots** several **Long-billed Murrelets** and even a good handful of our main target – **Kittlitz's Murrelet** – before the boat had even pulled to a halt.

Landing on the beach we went for a stomp through the snow which was amusingly deep in places, in search of avian delights, to explore the abandoned buildings and ship, and in the case of some to follow the extremely fresh trail of a **Kamchatka Brown Bear**. The birders found lots to look at, with highlights including singing **Siberian Rubythroat**, **Brown-headed** and **Eyebrowed Thrushes**, **Common Redpoll**, **Oriental Greenfinch**, **Brambling**, **Olive-backed Pipit** and a surprise **Japanese Grey Bunting** singing its heart out from atop a tree. Back at the shore and before boarding Zodiacs bound back to the ship, we managed views of both **Taiga** and **Dark-sided Flycatchers** as well as hearing, and very briefly seeing a **Rufous-tailed Robin**.



Once we'd had a short rest, and seen more **Kittlitz's Murrelets** and a **Kamchatka Brown Bear** it was time to board the Zodiacs once more. This time we were out in search of the resident pod of Orca that call this stretch of coast home. Unfortunately, the search was atypically unsuccessful, however it was punctuated with superb views and photographic opportunities for **Tufted** and **Horned Puffins**, **Pigeon** and **'Kuril' Guillemots**, **Steller's Sea Lions** and even **Peregrine**, **Osprey** and some absolutely majestic **Steller's Sea Eagles**.

Day 7: Atlasova and Onekotan Islands



For everybody onboard today was one of excitement, elation and a real feel of adventure. Waking off the shore of Atlasova island in the early morning we first of all made a pre-breakfast landing to grow our appetites for both adventure and delicious culinary delights. Arriving ashore, the group split with the Kayakers paddling along the coast, the briders walking, and everybody else spreading out to visit an old lighthouse, a World War II Japanese wreck sunk by US aircraft, and a barely touched island ripe for exploring.

Making our way through the coastal strip of the island, the birders were in search of migrants as the peak of the tallest volcano in the Kuril chain peeked out from behind the clouds periodically. Of course we weren't to be disappointed and found not only the jewel-like **Siberian Rubythroat** in good numbers, but also great birds like **Kamchatka Leaf Warbler (next page top)**, **Dark-sided Flycatcher** and the ordinarily skulky **Middendorf's Grasshopper Warbler** which actually gave quite fantastic views. The absolute highlight for many though came in the form of a vagrant **Red-billed Starling** which flew in and dropped close to the lake. Normally found in east and south China, this bird was a long way lost, some 3,600km outside of its normal range.



Paramushir island from Atlasova



With a cyclone moving in from the south, unfortunately our planned landing at Onkotan Island was met with buffering swell and strong gusting wind making landing impossible. After such a fantastic morning though there were no complaints, especially as the slower than normal transit was peppered with 25+ **Orca**, **Sperm Whale**, **Steller's Sea Lions**, dozens and dozens of **Fork-tailed Storm Petrels** and six **Leach's Storm Petrels**. Far and away the highlight of the afternoon though, and arguably the day and even trip thus-far for some was an absolutely fantastic subadult **Short-tailed Albatross** found in the mid-afternoon. Incredibly rare, all birders on board enjoyed great views of the bird as it drifted alongside the ship just 100 metres away! A really, truly special day once again.

Day 8: At sea off of Shishikotan

Today was a day for surrendering to the weather. On expeditions like this you have to roll with the punches to some degree, and on occasion the weather picks up to a point that prohibits landing on shore. Because of the cyclone that had marred our progress we were forced into the shelter of Shishikotan island before spending the day making our way southwards with limited progress.

Despite the hardship of the weather it was a day of incredible note. The cyclone appeared to have created a huge movement of seabirds, and the decision was taken to organize some chum to try and attract birds to the ship. Lisle cut, chopped and axed fish, and Chris distributed it freely into the ocean with screams of “come and get your lunch”, much to the delight of a vibrant throng of birds. Throughout the day we sifted through flocks of auklets numbering many many thousands of **Whiskered** and **Crested Auklets** and lesser numbers of **Rhinoceros Auklets**. The highlight though, and especially for the photographers, was the appearance of a juvenile **Short-tailed Albatross** in the wake of the ship which, after some tantalizingly frustrating minutes, made its way up the wake and circled the ship repeatedly, allowing some amazing photos to be taken. We hadn't expected such luck, as one never does with such a rare bird, but by the end of the day we had unbelievably totaled over TEN different **Short-tailed Albatrosses** of varying ages including at least two stunning golden-headed full adult birds. Add to this the dozens of close passing **Laysan Albatrosses** and a single obliging **Black-footed Albatross**, and we'd reached a three-albatross day – something that is rare in this part of the Pacific. It may be an understatement to say that the birders and photographers onboard were absolutely elated.





Day 9: Simushir & Yankicha

"This was one of the best days of my life" is a sentence I have heard, and said, more times than I can remember on this ship. Today really was fantastic.

Simushir is an incredible place, and our first stop for the day. With the weather still dying down an extended Zodiac cruise around the entrance to the massive flooded caldera of this volcano-turned-island was bumpy but refreshing, and we were soon steaming through the caldera itself and toward our destination – an ex-top secret Soviet submarine base.

Like something out of a James Bond film we approached the base on Zodiacs and spent the morning exploring this hidden treasure. Appearing as though the Soviets had moved out in a hurry there are countless amazing objects just laying where they were abandoned, making for quite the explorers haven. Whilst some explored the base, combed the shore or walked the surrounding hillsides, the birders ventured into the town to explore. Thankfully nature is retaking the base at a rapid rate and wildlife is everywhere you look. We encountered **Oriental Greenfinch**, **Black-faced** and **Japanese Grey Buntings**, **Spotted Nutcracker**, dozens of **Siberian Rubythroat** and a surprise **Long-toed Stint** before it was time to leave.

The wind had picked up a little but the swell had died down too, so returning to the ship was both comfortable and punctuated with excitement, mainly of a wildlife variety. First up was a **Fork-tailed Storm Petrel** wheeling around in the caldera, followed by two **Long-tailed Skua** approaching one of the Zodiacs, whilst the main excitement came from a pod of **Orca** which approached us closely before veering off – quite the experience! Soon it was time to push on toward Yankicha where the real spectacle was to begin.



On the transit to Yankicha we were once again treated to a seabird spectacle at sea as we passed by a **Russian trawler** hauling in its nets which had attracted tens of thousands of birds. The throng included **Pacific Fulmar** and **Black-legged Kittiwake** in its majority but scattered within were thousands of **Short-tailed Shearwaters** and dozens of **Laysan Albatrosses**, along with a single **Black-footed Albatross** and at least four **Short-tailed Albatrosses**.

Waiting until evening before we set off once again, we spent several hours watching various pods of **Orca** and tens of thousands of **Crested Auklets** flocking around the island. Moving in as the evening approached we entered the caldera to find what is surely one of the absolute top wildlife experiences in the world. Not only did we encounter several VERY approachable **Arctic Fox**, dozens of **Harlequin Duck** and a couple of superb **Peregrine** but we also made a landing and walked alongside a river of boiling water and marveled at Sulphur vents and hot thermal pools. The real event came shortly after though as dusk fell, when a steadily increasing influx of **Crested Auklets (next page top)** and the extremely handsome **Whiskered Auklet (next page bottom)** started to enter the caldera in their hundreds of thousands. We estimated at several million individual auklets around the island tonight with flocks of hundreds and thousands of auklets being extremely approachable making for absolutely incredible photo and viewing opportunities. Everybody was simply astonished.





Arctic Foxes abound on Yankicha and allow very close approach



Day 10: Chirpoy & Urup

Today was a complete Russian Far East and Ring of Fire experience – volcanic activity and stunning islands meet mind blowing wildlife. We spent this morning in the Zodiacs cruising the island of Chirpoy seeing lots of great wildlife including some absolutely incredible looks at **Ancient Murrelet** and **Rhinoceros Auklet**, unrivalled photo opportunities of **Brunnich's Guillemot** and superb encounters with both 'Kuril' and **Spectacled Guillemots (next page top)**, ensuring all the birders came back aboard more than satisfied. Of course it wasn't just the birds that entertained, this morning was dedicated to volcanic activity and features and it was with absolutely ecstatic joy that some of us encountered red, glowing molten **lava hitting the sea (next page bottom)** giving rise to incredible clouds of steam that could be seen for miles and miles.





Moving onwards to Urup Island we arriving in the early afternoon and spent the remainder of the day on the island exploring. **Stejneger's Scoter** on the way in were appreciated by many, whilst **Steller's Sea Lions** and **Sea Otters** entertained at the entrance. On land most split off and explored on their own, searching the abandoned buildings or making their way up the mountain or along the valley. The birders however made a concerted effort to find several important birds. The first, **Japanese Bush Warbler** can be very difficult to see, so it was with great surprise and excitement that one sat atop a tree singing its little heart out. Next up was a search for a robin, but not before seeing **Long-tailed Rosefinch**, **Oriental Turtle Dove**, **Oriental** and **Common Cuckoos**, and **Grey-bellied Bullfinch**. Unfortunately the **Japanese Robins** didn't play ball as well as the others and offered only brief glances. Birds that really performed though included EIGHT **White-tailed Eagles**, a **Steller's Sea Eagle** and a flock of 20+ **Narcissus Flycatchers** that foraged on the tideline.

Day 11: Iturup

This day of the Russia's Ring of Fire itinerary is something special and unique among the expedition. Arriving off of the active volcanic island of Iturup in the morning we were faced with giant, towering volcanoes lining the bay where we watched **Temminck's Cormorants** and a summer plumaged **White-billed Diver** before taking to the shore in our second homes – the Zodiacs. Arriving at the beach the birders managed to find **Stejneger's Stonechat**, **Little Ringed Plover**, **Eurasian Tree Sparrow**, **Oriental Greenfinch** and **Barn Swallow**.

Taking to our transport for the day, huge four-wheel drive trucks, we made our way into the highlands of the island where near-perfect cone shaped volcanoes towered over us still and we all marveled at the contrasting snow scattered scenery. Now in the Southern Kurils the landscape had transformed to a much more 'oriental' feel, as had the bird life. Our key targets for the day proved difficult as both were heavy skulkers, but eventually we had views of **Japanese Robin** and heard **Japanese Accentor** singing nearby, but no amount of coaxing could bring it out into view. Several fly-over **Grey-bellied Bullfinch**, **Hawfinch**, **Eurasian Siskin** and **Oriental Turtle Doves** were enjoyed, whilst dozens of displaying **Latham's Snipe** gave good views as they made bizarre, alien sounds across the landscape. **White-tailed Eagles** were seen regularly whilst **Eastern Buzzard**, **Black-eared Kite** and **Peregrine** also represented the bird of prey front. **Eurasian Nuthatch** was found and gave great views whilst over a river some **House Martin sp.** gave brief views, unlike the **Pacific Swifts** that showed off their white rumps.

After a soak in the volcanic hot springs at the far end of our journey we made our way back to shore, but not before stopping for photos at an absolutely magnificent vista. The sheer size of the volcanoes could finally be truly appreciated as it dwarfed our ship in the bay beside – the highlight of the day for some. Back at shore we boarded the Zodiacs as **Mongolian Plover**, **Ringed Plover**, **Little Ringed Plover**, **Grey-tailed Tattler** and **Red-necked Stint** were seen.

Back onboard the ship the evening was spent cruising around the tip of the island as we made our way south toward the island of Kunashir. This area proved particularly productive for cetaceans with 30+ **Orca**, **Dall's**

Porpoise and 2 **Sperm Whale** were seen with one Sperm Whale being particularly close and enjoyed by almost all passengers who made the short trip up from celebrating a great day in the bar. Of bird interest, a single **Spectacled Guillemot** and 8 **Rhinoceros Auklets** were seen.

Day 12: Kunashir

Our last day of expedition in the Russian Far East fell upon the large and positively subtropical island of Kunashir. Despite the snow-capped double-peaked volcano that is sometimes said to be the most beautiful in the world, this island has a feel much more similar to its neighbor, Japan. In fact, until 1946 it was considered Japanese territory and although it now officially belongs to Russia there is still much debate about the legitimacy of Russia's claim.

Landing on the beach we were met by three rangers, one buggy and one **Brown Bear**. Of course, the bear was at some distance so as to maintain a safe and respectful presence, but the views were simply fantastic and a much desired animal for many of the expeditioners. Moving off of the beach we split into three groups. Those that remained at the beach saw three more **Brown Bear**, three **Red Fox** and dozens upon dozens of **Harlequin**. Those who went for a more challenging hike were led by Rodney and Lisle along the shore, through the bamboo buffer and into the forest, along a river and then returned to the beach via a pair of Japanese graves. For one Japanese participant this was an undoubted highlight and it was enlightening for the entire group to have somebody with a Japanese perspective along, and who was able to translate the graves: "This is a grave for all our ancestors". Poignant. Wildlife seen along the route included highlights like **Brown Dipper**, **Bull-headed Shrike**, **Kamchatka Leaf Warbler**, **Eastern Crowned Warbler**, **Dusky Warbler**, **Latham's Snipe**, **Oriental** and **Eurasian Cuckoo** and an absolutely superb **Long-tailed Rosefinch**. Unfortunately we couldn't visit the **Blakiston's Fish Owl** nest box as it potentially still had chicks in – a tantalizing revelation.

Those led by Chris and Katya went on a more intense birding and less challenging walk, trailing through similar habitats to the hiking group but seeing a different set of birds which included rarities like **Crested Kingfisher**, **Japanese Pygmy Woodpecker** and **Narcissus Flycatcher**. Once everybody was back at the beach we scanned the pond-flat sea finding tens of **Pacific Diver**, one **White-billed Diver**, several flocks of **Black** and **Stejneger's Scoters** and several good looks at **Temminck's Cormorant**.

Back on board the ship for the final time after our very final landing we spent the remainder of the day enjoying a superb quiche lunch before undertaking formalities and attending a briefing about the next day's plans which included a wonderfully put together slideshow by Katya that included photos taken by all of the staff throughout the expedition. Many laughs were had and lots of marveling at some fantastic photos before we ascended to the bridge for one final vigil. This was a fantastic decision as throughout the afternoon we had absolutely mirror calm conditions – the perfect send off for those departing the vessel. **Harbour** and **Dall's Porpoises** were seen almost constantly, including the distinctive all-dark morph of **Dall's Porpoise**; three large **Fin Whale** were seen extremely well with lots of woops and hollers going up around the ship on

each surface. A couple of pods of **Orca** were enjoyed by all as tannoy announcements hallowed their appearance, whilst the absolute stand out highlight came in the form of a pod of three or four **Stejneger's Beaked Whales** – an incredibly rarely seen cetacean that was, believe it or not, a lifer for both of the guides on deck at the time, despite one of them having spent around 10 seasons in the Russian Far East – a remarkable sighting. The birds were not to be outdone by mammals, however, and three highlights in particular come to mind: firstly, the hundreds of **Rhinoceros Auklets** that surrounded us near constantly; secondly the thousands upon thousands of **Short-tailed Shearwaters** that paraded past us on their way north; and finally, a surprise in the form of several **Japanese Murrelets** – a fantastic addition to the list of many though its presence here was to be reasonably expected given its close proximity – the ultra calm conditions undoubtedly helped in this respect.

So, all that was left was to have a superb banquet dinner before attending the nightly 'Chris and Lisle Show', a.k.a. the species log held in the bar each evening. This brought the expedition to an apt close with the final numbers being tallied and chatter about highlights fading into the night on the bridge where the light dimmed and the volcanoes faded into the distance.

Post-expedition Sakhalin extension

With the expedition ending in the port of Korsakov on the southern end of Sakhalin island, and a full day between this and the next expedition, we were able to run a single day extension to target Sakhalin's endemics for passengers both departing from the Ring of Fire, and arriving for the Sea of Okhotsk expeditions.

First stop of the day was a very large gas plant. Not the most 'wild' looking places, however the birds make it worthwhile. The site was positively crawling with **Oriental Turtle Dove** and **Black-browed Reed Warbler** and **Latham's Snipe** gave fantastic perched views. **Stejneger's Stonechat** were common and the last, or first, time this famous name would be called by expeditioners on this expedition. Moving on to our second of three sites for the day we arrived to find **Rough-legged Buzzard** hovering overhead, **White-tailed Eagle** soaring along the coast, a haul out of a couple of dozen **Largha Seal**, and the reeling song of our next target. After some healthy persuasion we eventually had phenomenal views of **Sakhalin Grasshopper Warbler** which is infamous for being an absolute skulking nightmare, but atypically showed itself well on an exposed branch for long enough for everyone to get great views. Into the forest we found **Eastern Buzzard**, **Eurasian Sparrowhawk**, **Arctic Warbler** and with a little effort we achieved fantastic views of the quite unique and attractive looking **Sakhalin Leaf Warbler**.

Our final site for the day was the main park near our Sakhalin hotel. Though the town can hardly be called urban by normal standards, this extension of a wider oasis amongst the 'uban' landscape of Korsakov holds some very good birding. Alongside new additions like **Eastern Crowned Warbler**, **Japanese Tit**, **Asian Brown Flycatcher** and **Russet Sparrow**, most of the group ticked or caught up with **Narcissus Flycatcher** and

after some significant effort to make sure everybody had good views we all finally had great encounters with the rather nice **Rufous-tailed Robin**. This was the perfect ending to what had been a phenomenal expedition.

BIRD LIST

The taxonomy of the bird list follows: Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W. The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World. Cornell, 2007.
This list is up to date with the major changes published by Cornell up until August 2014.

Column 2 lists species' IUCN Red List status

HO in column 5 denotes species that were heard only

EO in column 5 denotes species that were seen only on the pre-tour extension

Numbers: 158 bird species seen and 22 mammal species recorded

ANSERIFORMES: Anatidae

1	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	
2	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	
3	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	
4	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	
5	Eurasian Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	
6	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	
7	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	
8	Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	
9	Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	
10	Stejneger's Scoter	<i>Melanitta deglandi stejnegeri</i>	
11	Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta americana</i>	Near-threatened
12	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Vulnerable
13	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	
14	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	
15	Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	
16	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	

GALLIFORMES: Phasianidae

17	Black-billed Capercaillie	<i>Tetrao urogalloides</i>	
18	Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	
19	Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta</i>	

GAVIIFORMES: Gaviidae

20	Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	
21	Arctic Loon	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	
22	Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	
23	Yellow-billed Loon	<i>Gavia adamsii</i>	Near-threatened

PODICIPEDIFORMES: Podicipedidae

24	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	
25	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	

PROCELLARIIFORMES: Diomedidae

26	Laysan Albatross	<i>Phoebastria immutabilis</i>	Near-threatened
27	Black-footed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria nigripes</i>	Near-threatened
28	Short-tailed Albatross	<i>Phoebastria albatrus</i>	Vulnerable

PROCELLARIIFORMES: Procellariidae

29	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	
30	Mottled Petrel	<i>Pterodroma inexpectata</i>	Near-threatened
31	Short-tailed Shearwater	<i>Ardenna tenuirostris</i>	

PROCELLARIIFORMES: Hydrobatidae

32	Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma furcata</i>	
33	Leach's Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	

SULIFORMES: Phalacrocoracidae

34	Japanese Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax capillatus</i>	
35	Red-faced Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax urile</i>	
36	Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>	

ACCIPITRIFORMES: Pandionidae

37	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	
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ACCIPITRIFORMES: Accipitridae

38	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	
39	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	
40	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	

41	Steller's Sea-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus pelagicus</i>	Breeding endemic Vulnerable
42	Rough-legged Hawk	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	

CHARADRIIFORMES: Charadriidae

43	Mongolian Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	
44	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	

CHARADRIIFORMES: Scolopacidae

45	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
46	Gray-tailed Tattler	<i>Tringa brevipes</i>	Breeding endemic Near-threatened
47	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	
48	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	
49	Far Eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	Vulnerable
50	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	
51	Long-toed Stint	<i>Calidris subminuta</i>	Breeding endemic
52	Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	
53	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	
54	Rock Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ptilocnemis</i>	
55	Latham's Snipe	<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	
56	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	
57	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	
58	Red Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	

CHARADRIIFORMES: Stercorariidae

59	Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	
60	Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	
61	Long-tailed Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	

CHARADRIIFORMES: Alcidae

62	Common Murre	<i>Uria aalge</i>	
63	Thick-billed Murre	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	
64	Pigeon Guillemot	<i>Cephus columba</i>	
65	Spectacled Guillemot	<i>Cephus carbo</i>	
66	Long-billed Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus perdix</i>	Near-threatened
67	Kittlitz's Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus brevirostris</i>	Near-threatened

68	Ancient Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus antiquus</i>	
69	Japanese Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus wumizusume</i>	Vulnerable
70	Parakeet Auklet	<i>Aethia psittacula</i>	
71	Least Auklet	<i>Aethia pusilla</i>	
72	Whiskered Auklet	<i>Aethia pygmaea</i>	
73	Crested Auklet	<i>Aethia cristatella</i>	
74	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>	
75	Horned Puffin	<i>Fratercula corniculata</i>	
76	Tufted Puffin	<i>Fratercula cirrhata</i>	

CHARADRIIFORMES: Laridae

77	Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
78	Red-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa brevirostris</i>	Vulnerable
79	Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	
80	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	
81	Black-tailed Gull	<i>Larus crassirostris</i>	
82	Kamchatka Gull	<i>Larus canus kamschatschensis</i>	
83	Vega Gull	<i>Larus vegae</i>	
84	Slaty-backed Gull	<i>Larus schistisagus</i>	
85	Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	
86	Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	
87	Aleutian Tern	<i>Onychoprion aleuticus</i>	
88	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	

COLUMBIFORMES: Columbidae

89	Oriental Turtle-Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>	
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CUCULIFORMES: Cuculidae

90	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	
91	Oriental Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus optatus</i>	

APODIFORMES: Apodidae

92	Pacific Swift	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	
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CORACIIFORMES: Alcedinidae

93	Crested Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle lugubris</i>	
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PICIFORMES: Picidae

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|----|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 94 | Pygmy Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos kizuki</i> |
| 95 | Great Spotted Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos major</i> |
| 96 | Black Woodpecker | <i>Dryocopus martius</i> |

FALCONIFORMES: Falconidae

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-------------------------|
| 97 | Peregrine Falcon | <i>Falco peregrinus</i> |
|----|------------------|-------------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Laniidae

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 98 | Bull-headed Shrike | <i>Lanius bucephalus</i> |
|----|--------------------|--------------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Corvidae

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 99 | Eurasian Magpie | <i>Pica pica</i> |
| 100 | Carrion Crow | <i>Corvus corone</i> |
| 101 | Large-billed Crow | <i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i> |
| 102 | Common Raven | <i>Corvus corax</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Alaudidae

- | | | |
|-----|----------|------------------------|
| 103 | Sky Lark | <i>Alauda arvensis</i> |
|-----|----------|------------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Hirundinidae

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 104 | Common House-Martin | <i>Delichon urbicum</i> |
| 105 | Asian House-Martin | <i>Delichon dasypus</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Paridae

- | | | |
|-----|--------------|-------------------------|
| 106 | Coal Tit | <i>Periparus ater</i> |
| 107 | Willow Tit | <i>Poecile montanus</i> |
| 108 | Japanese Tit | <i>Parus minor</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Aegithalidae

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 109 | Long-tailed Tit | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> |
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PASSERIFORMES: Sittidae

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|-----|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 110 | Eurasian Nuthatch | <i>Sitta europaea</i> |
|-----|-------------------|-----------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Troglodytidae

- 111 Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*
112 Pacific Wren *Troglodytes pacificus*

PASSERIFORMES: Cinclidae

- 113 Brown Dipper *Cinclus pallasii*

PASSERIFORMES: Cettiidae

- 114 Japanese Bush-Warbler *Horornis diphone*

PASSERIFORMES: Phylloscopidae

- 115 Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
116 Pallas's Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*
117 Kamchatka Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus examinandus*
118 Sakhalin Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus borealoides*
119 Eastern Crowned Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus coronatus*

PASSERIFORMES: Acrocephalidae

- 120 Black-browed Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*

PASSERIFORMES: Locustellidae

- 121 Sakhalin Grasshopper-Warbler *Locustella amnicola* Breeding endemic
122 Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler *Locustella ochotensis*

PASSERIFORMES: Muscicapidae

- 123 Dark-sided Flycatcher *Muscicapa sibirica*
124 Asian Brown Flycatcher *Muscicapa latirostris*
125 Gray-streaked Flycatcher *Muscicapa griseisticta*
126 Rufous-tailed Robin *Larvivora sibilans* Breeding endemic
127 Japanese Robin *Larvivora akahige*
128 Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
129 Siberian Rubythroat *Calliope calliope*
130 Narcissus Flycatcher *Ficedula narcissina*
131 Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla*
132 Stejneger's Stonechat *Saxicola maurus stejnegeri*

PASSERIFORMES: Turdidae

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 133 | Eyebrowed Thrush | <i>Turdus obscurus</i> |
| 134 | Brown-headed Thrush | <i>Turdus chrysolaus</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Sturnidae

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 135 | Red-billed Starling | <i>Spodiopsar sericeus</i> |
|-----|---------------------|----------------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Prunellidae

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|------------------------|
| 136 | Japanese Accentor | <i>Prunella rubida</i> |
|-----|-------------------|------------------------|

PASSERIFORMES: Motacillidae

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 137 | Eastern Yellow Wagtail | <i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i> |
| 138 | Gray Wagtail | <i>Motacilla cinerea</i> |
| 139 | White Wagtail | <i>Motacilla alba</i> |
| 140 | Olive-backed Pipit | <i>Anthus hodgsoni</i> |
| 141 | Pechora Pipit | <i>Anthus gustavi</i> |
| 142 | American Pipit | <i>Anthus rubescens</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Calcaridae

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|------------------------------|
| 143 | Lapland Longspur | <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i> |
| 144 | Snow Bunting | <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Emberizidae

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 145 | Rustic Bunting | <i>Emberiza rustica</i> |
| 146 | Black-faced Bunting | <i>Emberiza spodocephala</i> |
| 147 | Gray Bunting | <i>Emberiza variabilis</i> |
| 148 | Reed Bunting | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Fringillidae

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 149 | Brambling | <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i> |
| 150 | Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch | <i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i> |
| 151 | Pine Grosbeak | <i>Pinicola enucleator</i> |
| 152 | Eurasian Bullfinch | <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> |
| 153 | Common Rosefinch | <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i> |
| 154 | Oriental Greenfinch | <i>Chloris sinica</i> |
| 155 | Common Redpoll | <i>Acanthis flammea</i> |
| 156 | Hawfinch | <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> |

PASSERIFORMES: Passeridae

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 157 | Russet Sparrow | <i>Passer rutilans</i> |
| 158 | Eurasian Tree Sparrow | <i>Passer montanus</i> |

Mammals

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Arctic Ground Squirrel | <i>Citellus parryi</i> |
| 2 | Muskrat | <i>Ondatra zibethicus</i> |
| 3 | Arctic Fox | <i>Alopex lagopus</i> |
| 4 | Red Fox | <i>Vulpus vulpus</i> |
| 5 | Brown Bear | <i>Ursus arctos</i> |
| 6 | Sable | <i>Martes zibellina</i> |
| 7 | Sea Otter | <i>Enhydra lutris</i> |
| 8 | Harbour Seal | <i>Phoca vitulina</i> |
| 9 | Spotted (Largha) Seal | <i>Phoca larga</i> |
| 10 | Steller's Sea Lion | <i>Eumetopias jubatus</i> |
| 11 | Northern Fur Seal | <i>Callorhinus ursinus</i> |
| 12 | Orca | <i>Orcinus orca</i> |
| 13 | Harbour Porpoise | <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> |
| 14 | Dall's Porpoise | <i>Phocoenoides dalli</i> |
| 15 | Baird's Beaked Whale | <i>Berardius bairdii</i> |
| 16 | Stejneger's Beaked Whale | <i>Mesoplodon stejnegeri</i> |
| 17 | Sperm Whale | <i>Physeter macrocephalus</i> |
| 18 | Blue Whale | <i>Balaenoptera musculus</i> |
| 19 | Fin Whale | <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i> |
| 20 | Minke Whale | <i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i> |
| 21 | Humpback Whale | <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> |
| 22 | Gray Whale | <i>Eschrichtius robustus</i> |