

Highland Wildlife



Your Detailed Itinerary

Highland
Wildlife

Day 1

Just south of Fort William on the A82, take the Corran Ferry across Loch Linnhe for Ardgour, taking the A861 to reach Loch Sunart via Strontian. Around Loch Sunart are natural oakwoods, with a wide range of birdlife. Visit [Ardnamurchan](#) point, Scotland's most westerly landmark, the lighthouse here offers a spectacular vantage point for bird and whale watching.

Day 2

Circle north through Moidart (A861) to join "The Road to the Isles" for the ferry port of Mallaig.

The Mallaig-Armadale ferry link takes you to Skye – an excellent wildlife destination with a range of options from otter watching at [Kylterhea](#), to taking a wildlife or whale-watching cruise.

Day 3

On returning to the mainland via the Skye Bridge, go north, round Loch Carron, taking A896 for Shieldaig and the Torridons, noting en route Rassal Ashwood, the most northerly of its kind in Britain.

By exploring the Torridon Hills, there are excellent opportunities to view red deer, with golden eagle also likely. Go east through Glen Torridon to reach the Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve, with a nature trail by Loch Maree (A832).

Day 4

Continue north beyond [Gairloch](#), enjoying Loch Ewe (otters here) and coastal views. Look for birds of prey, e.g. merlin, from the road on the way to the [Corrieshalloch Gorge](#) – there is good variety of woodland, with interesting plants.

Take the A835 for Ullapool. North again, explore the Inverpolly National Nature Reserve with golden eagle, red deer and, perhaps, wild cat. There

are many species of moorland birds to be found here.

Day 5

Continue north, taking the road (signposted) for [Handa Island](#). This nature reserve is noted for its seabird colonies, and nesting skuas and divers.

The A838 reaches the north coast at the Kyle of Durness. Minibus trips go west to the lighthouse at Cape Wrath. Walk from Balnakeil Bay to see puffins at Faraid Head.

Day 6

Inland lies the Flow Country – a unique habitat of peaty moorland interlaced with small lochans, habitat for short-eared owl and hen harrier. Sample it from the A897 at [Forsinard](#).

Day 7

Reaching the coast road, A9 southbound, there is also plenty of

nature interest on the east coast. You might see osprey fishing on Loch Fleet near Golspie, also noted for its sea-duck, and there are numerous places to observe wading birds and ducks, for example on the salt-flats and beaches around Dornoch.

Days 8 & 9

Continuing down the A9, look for red kite on the Black Isle. Visit Chanonry Point, where you can spot dolphins from the beach – pop in to the Dolphin and Seal Centre at North Kessock first for the latest information on sightings and advice on the best time to visit the Point. Continue beyond Inverness, southwards, to reach the valley of the Spey and the Cairngorms National Park, Scotland's largest. It includes the most extensive area of high ground in Britain, much of it only accessible on foot or ski. As well as sub-Arctic landscapes, it has a variety of woodland habitats, most notably pinewoods and extensive heather moorland. Bird species range from the high-level ptarmigan on the tops to smaller species such as crested tit and Scottish crossbill. The

Cairngorms National Park hosts a wealth of wildlife attractions, including the [Loch Garten Osprey Centre](#), [Rothiemurchus Estate](#), the [Highland Wildlife Park](#), [Kingussie](#) and the [Cairngorm Mountain Railway](#); spend the last two days of your tour exploring at your leisure.

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Additional photography: Laurie Campbell & RSPB



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The Highland landscape, wild and unspoilt, provides a range of habitats for wildlife, from the rich seas supporting whales and dolphins, to the high crag and moors, the territory of golden eagles. Though the chance of a casual sighting of seal or otter, red deer or red squirrel, eagle or hen harrier – or any of the other Highland specialities – is quite high anyway, this itinerary takes you to some of the very finest wildlife sites in Scotland, many of them nature reserves.



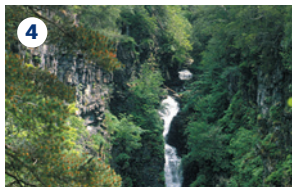
1 ARDNAMURCHAN LIGHTHOUSE VISITOR CENTRE – A lighthouse set among spectacular scenery on mainland Britain's most westerly point, enjoy spectacular views of the Hebrides and small isles or join in the centre's whale watch.



2 KYLERHEA OTTER HAVEN
Viewing hide overlooks the Kylerhea Narrows, between Skye and the mainland. Ideal otter habitat with resident wild otters.



3 GAIRLOCH MARINE LIFE CENTRE & 'SAIL GAIRLOCH' CRUISES – Wildlife cruises where you may see Minke whales, dolphins, porpoise and seals. Wildlife visitor centre.



4 CORRIESHALLOCH GORGE
Spectacular gorge, originally created by glacial meltwater, with the magnificent Falls of Measach at the end. Viewing platform and suspension bridge.



5 HANDA ISLAND – Offshore island with sea cliffs. One of the largest seabird colonies in north west Europe. Ferry (from Tarbet) runs April.



RSPB FORSINARD RESERVE
Discover the birds and the plants of the Flow Country. Wildlife displays and guided walks. Visitor centre.



7 LOCH GARTEN OSPREY CENTRE
Close-up views in summer of nesting ospreys via tv link. Discover the other birds of the native pinewoods.



8 ROTHIEMURCHUS ESTATE – Guided walks, safari tours plus many other outdoor activities.



HIGHLAND WILDLIFE PARK, KINGUSSIE – Discover Scottish wildlife past and present and explore themed habitats on foot. The centre's main reserve hosts wolves, wildcat, bison, beaver, lynx, capercaillie and more.



CAIRNGORM MOUNTAIN RAILWAY
Year round mountain railway, 150m below the summit of Cairngorm mountain. UK's highest and fastest. Shop, restaurant and mountain exhibits.