

Classic Alaska: Anchorage, Nome, & Seward Species List | June 3 – 12, 2025 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guides Dan Donaldson & Greg Butcher. Our clients included Barbara and Will, Barbara C., Carol, Cheryl, Cindy and John, Ellen, Geri, Mary, and Shirley.

Many of us had been dreaming of Alaska in June for many years, and here we were. We started in Anchorage, visiting Potter Marsh and Westchester Lagoon. Then we drove to Eagle River Nature Center, where we communed with a placid cow moose. We flew to Nome for four days and nights. We enjoyed the three major roads that lead out of Nome and encountered many of the specialty birds we were seeking, including Willow Ptarmigan, American and Pacific Golden-Plovers, Bar-tailed Godwit, Bristle-thighed Curlew, three species of jaegers, the newly split Vega Gull, Arctic Warbler, Bluethroat, and Eastern Yellow Wagtail, plus a couple of welcome rarities, Emperor Goose and Red-necked Stint. We flew back to Anchorage to drive to Seward for the Kenai Fjords boat trip. We saw 10 of the 10 possible alcids (murre, murrelets, auklets, and puffins), plus sea otters, humpback whales, and orcas. In addition to abundant wildlife, we reveled in the exotic Alaska scenery. I think many of us will be back!

BIRDS (124):

The eBird link below details the 124 species of birds our group observed during the tour. If you're new to eBird, be sure to click "Show All Details" on the right side of the list to expand the report and reveal where and when each of the birds were seen and how many.

[Classic Alaska: Anchorage, Nome, & Seward | June 3-12, 2025 | eBird Trip Report](#)

Following is a list of the mammals we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

MAMMALS: — (15)

Harbor Seal *Phoca vitulina* — I think of Harbor Seals hanging out near humans in "harbors", right? So, it was a big surprise to see so many hauled out on icebergs near Northwestern Glacier.

Steller Sea Lion *Eumetopias jubatus* — We think of whales as "big animals", but the male Steller Sea Lions can weigh up to 2,000 pounds. We encountered a large group of males and females hauled out on the rocks during the Kenai Fjords boat trip.

Sea Otter *Enhydra lutris* — We saw several sea otters from the Kenai Fjords boat, then again from the Sea Life Museum deck.

Short-tailed Weasel or American Ermine *Mustela erminea* or *richardsonii* — We had a surprisingly close roadside look at a weasel on the Teller Road near Nome.

Moose *Alces alces* or *americanus* — At Potter Marsh, we saw glimpses of a moose, but the next day at Eagle River Nature Center, we enjoyed a leisurely interaction with a cow peacefully grazing up to her belly in the marsh. Equally unforgettable were the cow and two calves in Turnagain Arm as we were driving from Anchorage to Seward.

Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus* — On the Kenai Fjords boat trip, we think mostly about encountering marine mammals, but one of the highlights of this trip was seeing five Mountain Goats together on a hillside above the boat.

Muskox *Ovibos moschatus* — Who would have predicted that we would have better views of Muskox than any other mammal? We saw them every day in Nome, both close-up and far away, young and old. They looked pretty disheveled while molting into their summer pelage.

Dall Sheep *Ovis dalli* — We had a “was that a sheep or a goat?” moment early in the trip, but on the drive back from Seward to Anchorage near the end, we had a close encounter of the sheep kind on a rocky cliff just above the road with a sheep that was completely unconcerned with our presence.

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* — The Kenai Fjord communication network was working well during our trip as we picked up news of two different Humpback Whales that we were able to follow during our boat trip.

Killer Whale or Orca *Orcinus orca* — I was very impressed with our boat captain’s ability to stay with the group of four Orcas for as long as he did. They spent as much time underwater as they did above, but every time they surfaced we still had good views.

Snowshoe Hare *Lepus americanus* — We saw our first Snowshoe Hare in Anchorage, then several near Nome. They were at least mostly in summer pelage.

American Beaver *Castor canadensis* — We saw Beavers multiple times, plus dams and lodges. Beavers are often called “nature’s engineers” because their dams create wetlands that create habitat for many other species, including many of our target birds.

Tundra Vole *Microtus oeconomus* — Voles and lemmings are difficult to differentiate, but this is most likely the species we saw on Council Road near Nome.

Common Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus* — We saw muskrats in the wetlands at Palmer Hay Flats, north of Eagle River. I’m always surprised that it’s not easy to be sure I’m looking at a Beaver or a Muskrat, even though the tails and the size are so different.

Arctic Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus or Urocitellus parryi* — We saw several Arctic Ground Squirrels near Nome.