

Scottish Highlands and Islands Species List | June 5 – 17, 2026 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by guide Kent Skaggs with local guides Mark Warren and Aidan Branch. Our guests included Caroline, Cheryl, Dana & Coleman, Delhi, Emily, Janet & Dave, Jessie, Kathy, Laura, Luawanna and Pat.

Nature lovers from Arizona, California, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina, Oregon and Virginia traveled to Inverness where we started our exploration of the Highlands of Scotland by visiting the Culloden Battlefield, the Culloden Woods and Clava Cairns before settling into our accommodations for a week at the Mountview Hotel at Nethy Bridge. Other areas visited in the Highlands included the Abernethy Forest, the Cairngorm Mountains and the scenic Moray coastline. Then we traveled to the west coast and the Isle of Mull for three nights where we visited the colorful town of Tobermory and the Isles of Staffa, Lunga and Iona, before concluding the tour with a stop at the Urquhart Castle along the shore of Loch Ness.

BIRDS - 128 species were recorded of which one was heard only and two were introduced. Details are included below.

The eBird link below details the 128 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.

[Scottish Highlands and Islands | June 5-17, 2026 | eBird Trip Report](#)

The following is a list of the birds, mammals and insects we were fortunate to observe during the trip.

Family or Species Common Name Scientific Name

(#) - Indicates number of days encountered during the tour

DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS: Anatidae (13):

Graylag Goose *Anser anser* — (6) Fairly common, seen pretty much anytime we were near water.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* — (1) A single bird was seen at the River Spey estuary.

Canada Goose (1) *Branta canadensis* — (4) This familiar species was only seen in western Scotland, primarily along the coast.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* — (2) Seen at the River Spey estuary, in ag fields north of Forres and on Loch Spynie.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* — (3) Seen at the River Spey estuary, near the Dervaig reedbeds and from the boat between Lunga and Ulva.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* — (10) Common and widespread.

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca* — (1) A female with seven young were seen at Avie Lochan.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* — (1) Two were seen at Avie Lochan.

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* — (5) Seen along the Moray coast near Macduff, the Aros estuary on Mull, Ulva, Staffa and on Loch Linnhe near Sallachan.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* — (1) One seen at Spey Bay.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* — (4) Singles seen at Loch Garten, Spey Bay and Craigellachie National Nature Reserve (NNR) and three seen at Avie Lochan.

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* — (3) Two dozen were seen at the River Deveron estuary near Macduff, a female with four young on the River Livet, two near Fort William and a single at Spey Bay.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* — (2) Three were seen on Loch Linnhe near Sallachan and a single bird was seen on a stream while en route to Mull.

PHEASANTS, PARTRIDGES, AND ALLIES: Phasianidae (5):

Red Grouse *Lagopus scotica* — (1) Two were seen on the moor near Lochindorb.

Rock Ptarmigan *Lagopus muta* — (1) A pair were seen above the Ptarmigan Restaurant from a trail on the way up to the top of Cairn Gorm.

Black Grouse *Lyrurus tetrix* — (1) A group of six males were seen displaying near Bridge of Brown and another seven males were seen displaying at Sliabhchladh.

Ring-necked Pheasant (I) *Phasianus colchicus* — (7) Seen and heard at Clava Cairns, the ag fields near Forres and Alves and the Nethy Bridge Country Club.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* — (2) A single bird was seen in the Findhorn valley and two were seen together in the ag fields near Alves.

PIGEONS AND DOVES: Columbidae (3):

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* — (8) The feral type was seen in the highlands and on Iona, with wild type birds seen on Mull and from the boat between Lunga and Ulva.

Common Wood-Pigeon *Columba palumbus* — (8) Common and widespread with the largest numbers seen in the Findhorn Valley.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* — (5) One seen and heard in Cullen with others being seen en route.

CUCKOOS: Cuculidae (1):

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* — (4) Sightings occurred while we were en route with birds in flight. Also heard well on a few occasions.

SWIFTS: Apodidae (1):

Common Swift *Apus apus* — (6) Seen in small numbers at several locations with a high count of 12 at Loch Morlich.

RAILS, COOTS, AND ALLIES: Rallidae (2):

Corn Crane *Crex crex* — (2) One was briefly seen by Kent and Aidan on Lunga, while it was clearly heard by others. While on Iona, a conservative count of 10 were clearly heard, but none were seen.

Eurasian Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* — (3) Seen at the River Spey estuary, Avie Lochan and Loch Spynie.

OYSTERCATCHERS: Haematopodidae (1):

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* — (11) Common and widespread.

LAPWINGS AND PLOVERS: Charadriidae (3):

European Golden-Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* — (1) A pair with at least one young was seen on the moor near Lochindorb.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* — (1) Three were seen along the coast at Burghead.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* — (5) Seen in several locations with a high count of eight in the Findhorn Valley.

SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES: Scolopacidae (6):

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* — (7) Seen in multiple locations.

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* — (1) At least four were seen in flight at the Nethy Bridge Country Club.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* — (3) Single birds were seen from the Tomintoul Bird Hide, in flight on Staffa and in display flight near the Kinloch Bridge on Mull.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* — (8) Common and widespread.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* — (3) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, at Lochindorb and near Dervaig.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* — (2) Seen on Mull and near Fort William.

SKUAS AND JAEGER: Stercorariidae (2):

Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus* — (2) One was seen during the boat tour to Troup Head and at least two were seen at Lunga.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* — (2) Two were seen during the boat tour to Troup Head, two on Staffa and Lunga and two more on the return trip back to the Ulva ferry terminal.

AUKS, MURRES, AND PUFFINS: Alcidae (4):

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica* — (2) Seen at or near nesting colonies at Troup Head, Staffa and Lunga, the latter having the largest numbers.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* — (3) Small numbers seen during the boat tour to Troup Head, on the water approaching Staffa, on Staffa and on the water after leaving Lunga.

Razorbill *Alca torda* — (2) Seen at or near nesting colonies at Troup Head and Lunga.

Common Murre *Uria aalge* — (4) Seen at or near nesting colonies at Troup Head and Lunga, with thousands present on Harp Rock on Lunga.

GULLS AND TERNS: Laridae (8):

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* — (3) Seen at or near nesting colonies at Troup Head and Lunga, with the former having the largest numbers.

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* — (8) Seen at multiple locations inland in the highlands as well as along the coast near Macduff.

Common Gull *Larus canus* — (8) Common and widespread with largest numbers at a nesting colony near Lochindorb.

European Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* — (8) Common and widespread.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* — (6) Common along the coasts with a high count of 22 at Lossiemouth.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* — (5) Seen in small numbers at multiple locations.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* — (1) A small nesting colony was observed on a small rock on Loch Linnhe near Sallachan.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* — (5) Seen at multiple locations.

GREBES: Podicipedidae (2):

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* — (4) Seen at Avie Lochan, Loch Spynie and Craigellachie NNR.

Horned Grebe *Podiceps auritus* — (1) Seen near Avielochan.

LOONS: Gaviidae (3)

Red-throated Loon *Gavia stellata* — (1) Two were seen at Spey Bay.

Arctic Loon *Gavia arctica* — (1) Two were seen at Lochindorb.

Common Loon *Gavia immer* — (1) One was seen on Loch Scridain.

NORTHERN STORM-PETRELS: Hydrobatidae (1):

European Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* — (1) HO, an unknown number were heard calling from their burrows on

Lunga.

PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS: Procellariidae (1):

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* — (3) Seen at or near nesting colonies at Troup Head and Lunga.

BOOBIES AND GANNETS: Sulidae (1):

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* — (4) Seen at multiple locations along the coast with the highlight being the colony at Troup Head.

CORMORANTS: Phalacrocoracidae (2):

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* — (5) Seen at multiple locations along the coast.

European Shag *Gulosus aristotelis* — (6) Seen at multiple locations along the coast.

HERONS AND EGRETS: Ardeidae (1):

Gray Heron *Ardea cinerea* — (9) Seen at multiple locations, including young in a nest at Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

OSPREY: Pandionidae (1):

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* — (4) Seen at Loch Garten, Spey Bay and Loch Spynie.

HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES: Accipitridae (6):

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* — (3) One seen in flight at Lochindorb, the Glen Livet Estate and on Ulva.

Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* — (1) One was seen briefly at Culloden Woods.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* — (1) Seen during the boat tour to Staffa and Lunga.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* — (7) Single birds were seen at the Culloden Battlefield, Clava Cairns, Nethy Bridge, Findhorn Valley, Cairngorms National Park (NP) near Carrbridge and at Lochindorb.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* — (3) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, near Fort William, on Mull and Ulva.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* — (10) Common and widespread.

WOODPECKERS: Picidae (1):

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* — (5) Seen at Culloden Woods, Nethy Bridge, Flowerfield Meadow and Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve, with the best views coming at feeders at the latter.

FALCONS AND CARACARAS: Falconidae (2):

Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* — (4) Seen at Culloden Battlefield, Findhorn Valley and Cairngorms NP near Carrbridge.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* — (1) One was seen briefly in flight on Iona.

CROWS AND JAYS: Corvidae (7):

Eurasian Jay *Garrulus glandarius* — (4) One was seen at Culloden Woods and multiple times while en route.

Eurasian Magpie *Pica pica* — (3) Seen at Spey Bay and in the ag fields near Forres and Alves.

Eurasian Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* — (9) Common and widespread and easily seen at Mountview.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* — (8) Common and widespread and easily seen at Mountview.

Carriion Crow *Corvus corone* — (7) Common and widespread.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix* — (4) Seen at multiple locations in the west, primarily on Mull.

Common Raven *Corvus corax* — (3) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, on Mull and Lunga.

TITS AND CHICKADEES: Paridae (4):

Coal Tit *Periparus ater* — (5) Seen at Culloden Woods, Clava Cairns and multiple locations in Cairngorms NP.

Crested Tit *Lophophanes cristatus* — (1) Seen at the Loch Garten RSPB Reserve.

Eurasian Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* — (4) Seen at Culloden Woods, Clava Cairns, Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve and Craigellachie NNR.

Great Tit *Parus major* — (4) Seen at Culloden Woods, Clava Cairns, Avie Lochen and Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

LARKS: Alaudidae (1):

Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis* — (4) High count of nine seen at Culloden Battlefield, with other sightings at Sliabhchlachd, the ag fields near Forres and Alves and on Mull near the Kinloch Bridge.

REED WARBLERS: Acrocephalidae (1):

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* — (2) One was heard near the Hidden College of Scaln and one was seen on Iona.

SWALLOWS AND MARTINS: Hirundinidae (3):

Bank Swallow *Riparia riparia* — (7) Fairly common, seen at multiple locations.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* — (11) Common and widespread.

Western House-Martin *Delichon urbicum* — (9) Fairly common, seen at multiple locations in the Highlands.

LEAF WARBLERS: Phylloscopidae (3):

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* — (1) One heard and seen at Craigellachie NNR.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* — (9) Common and widespread, with a high count of five at Craigellachie NNR.

Common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* — (4) Heard at Culloden Battlefield, Culloden Woods and Urquhart Castle and seen at Clava Cairns and Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

SYLVIID WARBLERS: Sylviidae (2):

Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* — (3) Seen at Culloden Woods, Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve and Craigellachie NNR.

Greater Whitethroat *Curruca communis* — (3) Seen from a trail along the River Spey and a couple of locations on Mull.

KINGLETS: Regulidae (1):

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* — (1) One seen in Culloden Woods.

TREECREEPERS: Certhiidae (1):

Eurasian Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* — (2) Seen at Culloden Woods, Clava Cairns and Loch Garten RSPB Reserve.

WRENS: Troglodytidae (1):

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* — (8) Fairly common, seen and heard at multiple locations.

DIPPERS: Cinclidae (1):

White-throated Dipper *Cinclus cinclus* — (4) Seen at Nethy Bridge, Carrbridge, the Well of Lecht and the River Luineag bridge next to Loch Morlich.

STARLINGS AND MYNAS: Sturnidae (1):

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* — (7) Fairly common, seen at multiple locations.

THRUSHES: Turdidae (4):

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* — (5) Seen at Culloden Battlefield, the Findhorn Valley, Avie Lochan and Lochindorb.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* — (5) Seen and heard at multiple locations.

Eurasian Blackbird *Turdus merula* — (11) Fairly common, seen at multiple locations primarily in the Highlands.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* — (1) Two were seen from the Ptarmigan Restaurant on Cairn Gorm and a pair with three fledglings were seen while hiking to the Lecht Mine.

OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS AND CHATS: Muscicapidae (8):

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* — (3) Two were seen together at Loch Garten RSPB Reserve and single birds were seen near the Dell of Abernethy Cottages, the Glenlivet Estate and Craigellachie NNR.

European Robin *Erithacus rubecula* — (9) Fairly common, seen at multiple locations.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva* — (1) A male had been reported on territory in the Culloden Woods and we were fortunate enough to see this bird that is typically found on mainland Europe.

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* — (1) Four were seen near or at nest boxes at Craigellachie NNR.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* — (1) Two males were seen at Loch Garten RSPB Reserve.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* — (1) A pair was seen feeding three fledglings near Dervaig on the Isle of Mull.

European Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola* — (3) Seen at multiple locations with a high count of six near the Bridge of Brown.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* — (4) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, above the Ptarmigan Restaurant on Cairn Gorm, on Mull and Iona.

ACCENTORS: Prunellidae (1):

Dunnock *Prunella modularis* — (4) Seen at the Culloden Battlefield, Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve, the Well of Lecht and the Urquhart Castle.

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: Passeridae (2):

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* — (11) Common around human habitation.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* — (3) Seen at Mountview, Spey Bay and Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

WAGTAILS AND PIPITS: Motacillidae (5):

Gray Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* — (3) Seen at Carrbridge, the Glenlivet Estate and along Loch Ness.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* — (11) Common and widespread.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* — (10) Common and widespread.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* — (2) Seen on the Glenlivet Estate and at Craigellachie NNR.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* — (3) Seen at Macduff, Burghead and Craigellachie NNR.

FINCHES AND EUPHONIAS: Fringillidae (8):

Common Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* — (9) Common and widespread in the Highlands.

European Greenfinch *Chloris chloris* — (3) Seen at Mountview and on Iona.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris* — (1) Seen on Staffa.

Eurasian Linnet *Linaria cannabina* — (4) Seen at Culloden Battlefield, the Glenlivet Estate and on Iona.

Redpoll *Acanthis flammea* — (1) Seen at Culloden Battlefield.

Red Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* — (1) One was seen and heard at Loch Morlich, which Mark recorded and confirmed as a Red Crossbill. Other crossbills were seen but unable to get audio recordings.

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* — (5) Seen at Nethy Bridge, Spey Bay and Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

Eurasian Siskin *Spinus spinus* — (6) Seen and heard at multiple locations.

LONGSPURS AND SNOW BUNTING: Calcariidae (1):

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* — (1) One was heard and then seen sitting on the roof of the Ptarmigan Restaurant, with another (possibly the same bird) seen from the trail above the restaurant.

OLD WORLD BUNTINGS: Emberizidae(3):

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* — (1) Seen and heard near Spey Bay.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* — (2) Seen near Spey Bay, the ag fields near Forres and Alves and along the entry road to Loch Spynie RSPB Reserve.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* — (2) One seen near Spey Bay and another seen near the Kinloch Bridge on Mull.

MAMMALS: (13)

Eurasian Red Squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris* — (2) Seen in Culloden Woods, Clava Cairns and at the Mountview Hotel.

Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* — (1) One was seen in the stream along the path to the Lecht Mine.

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* — (8) Fairly common, seen mostly en route in ag fields.

Brown Hare *Lepus europaeus* — (7) Fairly common, seen mostly en route in ag fields.

(Western) Roe Deer *Capreolus capreoleus* — (5) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, Sliabhchlachd, Cairngorms NP, ag fields near Alves and on the Glenlivet Estate.

Red Deer *Cervus elaphus* — (7) Seen in the Findhorn Valley, near Bridge of Brown, on the Glenlivet Estate, en route to Mull and on Mull.

Reindeer *Rangifer tarandus* — (1) Several were seen on a distant slope in the Cairngorm Mountains near Aviemore.

Fallow Deer *Dama dama* — (1) A few of this introduced species were seen while en route on Mull.

Wild (Feral) Goat *Capra aegagrus hircus* — (1) Several were seen next to the road while en route on Mull.

Common Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* — (2) Seen near the mouth of the River Spey and near the Isle of Staffa.

Eurasian River Otter *Lutra lutra* — (1) Three were seen from the Fishnish Nature Hide.

Harbor Seal *Phoca vitulina* — (4) Seen at multiple locations on Mull, with several hauled out onto a small island on Loch Linnhe.

Gray Seal *Halichoerus grypus* — (2) Seen during the boat tour to Troup Head and on the tour to Staffa and Lunga.

BUTTERFLIES/MOTHS/DAMSELFLIES:

Painted Lady

Small Blue Butterfly

Marsh Fritillary

Brown Rustic

Common Heath

Garden Carpet

Red-necked Footman

Tawny-barred Angle

Blue-tailed Damselfly

Common Blue Damselfly

Large Red Damselfly

OTHER:

Blaeberry Bee

European Black Slug