

Alaska Cruise: Aleutian Islands, Dutch Harbor & Kodiak | Species List June 26 – July 6 2026 with Naturalist Journeys



Compiled by Wes Larson

Participants: Giny and Bud, Mike and Ray, Linda and Mark, Larry and Dawn, Molly and Luke, Nancy and Robert, Carol and Husam, Barb and Sue

Summary: We had an incredible time looking for wildlife on the Safari Explorer, on skiffs, on foot or by kayak. While this area of Alaska does not have a ton of species diversity, the sheer amount of bird life is almost overwhelming. We constantly had views of incredible birds like Horned and Tufted puffins, Black-legged Kittiwakes and Bald Eagles. In fact, we saw bald eagles every single day of the trip, and often many of them at very close range. You never know what surprises the ocean might bring as far as bird life and we had some nice ones including Rhinoceros Auklet, Laysan Albatross, and even a very brief sighting of a Whiskered Auklet. We had a lot of pairs of keen eyes and ears on this trip, so although it we didn't do many long sessions of dedicated birding, we were almost constantly seeing birds while on the excursions and from the main boat itself.

The true stars of this trip were the mammals. On our first morning we witnessed a pod of Orcas harassing two Humpback whales, and we would see both species several other times throughout the trip. Harbor Seals, Sea Otters, Stellar Sea Lions, Harbor Porpoise, Pacific White-sided Dolphin and other marine mammals were seen throughout the trip as well, but our best luck was with one of the more famous animals in Alaska, the coastal Brown Bear. We saw Brown Bears in many different locations throughout the Alaska Peninsula, including lots of females with cubs. It really blew our expectations away to see so many bears in such a vast wilderness, and some of our group even had a brief sighting of a wolverine! Wolverine are one of the rarest and most difficult to see mammals in the country, so it was a true treat to see one from the skiff. It was an incredible trip with unforgettable wildlife experiences

BIRDS (54):

This species report Ebird link below details the 54 species of birds our group observed during the entirety of the trip. If you're new to Ebird, be sure to click on "Show All Details" on the right side of the list as this will expand the report to show you where and when all of the birds were seen.

[Alaska Cruise to the Aleutian Islands eBird Species List](#)

MAMMALS (16):

Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*—It seemed like around every corner on the Alaska Peninsula we were seeing Brown Bears. These coastal bears are some of the largest of the species and often are much calmer and less aggressive than their inland counterparts

Black Bear *Ursus americanus*—We had one brief sighting of a Black Bear as it walked a beach

Harbor Seal *Phoca vitulina*—These curious seals were a constant fixture on the trip and seemed to be watching us in every bay that we visited

Steller's Sea Lion *Eumetopias jubatus*—The largest of the sea lions, these huge pinnipeds definitely make their presence known whenever they are nearby

American Mink *Neovison vison*—Some of our group saw this fast-moving member of the weasel family while we were in Katmai

Northern Sea Otter *Enhydra lutris*—We had great views of Sea Otters almost every day, including lots of females with dependent young. These otters often are floating on their backs in an effort to keep their sensitive hands and flippers out of the cold

North American River Otter *Lutra canadensis*—Some of our group saw River Otters in one of the deltas on the Alaska Peninsula

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*—One of the most iconic whales in the world, we got to see many of these gentle giants including an incredible interaction with orca and some great displays of lunge-feeding

Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*—The largest members of the dolphin family and probably THE apex predator on earth, we were lucky to see Killer Whales a few times including a group that was pestering two Humpback Whales

Harbor Porpoise *Phocoena Phocoena*—A small and shy porpoise. We briefly saw one while we approached the shore in a large bay

Dall's Porpoise *Phocoenoides dalli*—These beautiful porpoises look like mini Orcas and can often be seen bow-riding on larger boats

Pacific White-sided Dolphin *Aethalodelphis obliquidens*—While relatively common further south along the Pacific Seaboard, these playful dolphins were a rare sighting this far north

Arctic Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus parryii*—A large ground squirrel seen in Dutch Harbor

Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*—We had a quick sighting of a female with a kid next to Holgate Glacier

Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*—Red Fox are plentiful in this part of the world and we were lucky to see several of the melanistic cross fox versions throughout the trip

Wolverine *Gulo gulo*—While watching a Brown Bear in Bear Bay, a Wolverine was spotted in the same clearing before it disappeared into the alders about 15 seconds later. An incredibly rare and lucky sighting