

# ESTONIA

## Birds and Mammals

18-25 March 2023



Capercaillie (Ewan Davies)

**Leaders:** Richard Webb and Tarvo Valker

**Participants:** Ewan Davies, Quentin Given, Derek Langslow, Brian Martin, Lorna Reith, Peter Waldron

## Introduction

This, the second Wildwings' (in conjunction with Limosa) Mammal and Birds tour to Estonia was the first for several years and our first in March, concentrating on Lahemaa National Park to the east of Tallinn for Eurasian Lynx and other mammals and birds, and Saaremaa Island 90 minutes south-west of Tallinn, primarily to look for Steller's Eider.

It was also the first trip where we have primarily looked for mammals at night using a thermal imager rather than a spotlight. Night drives in Lahemaa generally lasted until 1130-12 with one drive carrying on until 1 am.

The weather was much milder than expected with a significant thaw starting in the days prior to our arrival. However, the weather was a rather mixed bag with mist and rain particularly on Saaremaa Island which hampered our searches for some species.

Despite the vagaries of the weather, we ended up with 15 species of mammal plus a possible Pine Marten, 101 species of bird seen and a further four heard, two species of butterfly and a newt. Highlights included:

- Three Eurasian Lynx crossing the road on the drive from the airport before we even reached our hotel.
- Fantastic views of a Eurasian Polecat running along a ditch for almost a minute.
- An obliging Capercaillie near our hotel in Lahemaa.
- Fantastic views of five Ural Owls, and a Eurasian Pygmy Owl in Lahemaa.
- At least 12 Steller's Eiders on Saaremaa Island and large numbers of Long-tailed Ducks.
- The Northern Lights outside our hotel on Saaremaa Island.

I would like to thank the six clients for their great company on the trip, Brian, Peter and Ewan for the photos in the report, Tarvo for his expert local guiding throughout and Martin for his persistence with the thermal imager over three nights in Lahemaa NP and Ewan for helping with thermal imaging in Lahemaa NP and Viidumae Nature Reserve.

**Richard Webb – 7 April 2023**

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## DAY-TO-DAY SUMMARIES

### 18<sup>th</sup> March

Most of the group assembled at Gatwick prior to our late afternoon Air Baltic flight to Tallinn where we met with our Estonian guide Tarvo, and the remaining members of the group who had travelled overland via The Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

We loaded the vehicle and headed east towards Lahemaa National Park. Unbelievably four kilometres before even reaching our hotel, Sagadi Mo'i's, distant eyeshine in the road turned into two **Eurasian Lynx** which quickly disappeared off to the left of the road as we approached. Slowly moving forward, we were delighted to see not two but three Lynx cross back over the road in front of the car although sadly some of the group were not able to access their binoculars quickly enough to fully appreciate the sighting. A slightly bittersweet moment for the leaders.

Nevertheless, we continued to our hotel, Sagadi Manor, pleased by our Lynx encounter eventually arriving around 1 am.

### 19<sup>th</sup> March

After a lie in and breakfast at 8am, a mid-morning walk around the hotel garden produced a few woodland birds including **Middle-spotted Woodpecker** and the European form of **Nuthatch** which was very different from the form familiar to us in Britain.

Heading out into the park our drive and a number of short walks produced our first **Whooper Swans, White-tailed Eagles, Common Cranes, Crossbills**, a lovely **Willow Tit, Great Grey Shrike** and **Red Fox**.



**Whooper Swans (Brian Martin)**

Lunch at a fish restaurant in Viinistu introduced us to our first of several different soups and desserts with the added bonus of an **American Mink** (depending on your view of American Mink) from the lunch table! The harbour and bay also produced our first **Grey Seal, Long-tailed Ducks, Goldeneye** and **Goosander**

Driving back towards the hotel for a pre-thermalling rest produced our first rather grey-looking **Red Squirrel** dashing across road, our only **Merlin** of the trip, and just before arriving back at the hotel an amazingly obliging male **Capercaillie** on the roof of a barn near the hotel. The bird had apparently been visiting the grounds of the hotel on a regular basis over the previous couple of months.

After a rest we met our local Lynx tracker, Martin, for a briefing on Lynx in Estonia prior to dinner. After dinner, we headed out for six hours and before dark encountered our only **Black Grouse** of the trip, two males and two females.

The evening thermalling/spotlighting session covered a large area, as far west as Loksa and Viinistu but was fairly slow although it did produce a partially obscured **Hazelhen**, several **Roe Deer**, three **Red Fox**, both **Eurasian Brown** and **Mountain Hares** and both **Long-eared** and a fabulous **Ural Owl** in the last few kilometres before the hotel. Some distant thermally imaged **Raccoon Dogs** earlier on the drive were sadly beyond the range of the spotlights. We arrived back at the hotel shortly after midnight.



## 20<sup>th</sup> March

After breakfast a combination of drives and walks in forest and fields, produced nice views of a male, **Crossbill**, two **Common Cranes**, calling **Black Woodpecker**, good views of **Crested Tits** and a nice flock of nine **Snow Buntings** but no Eurasian Three-toed Woodpecker despite a short stomp in rather deeper snow than expected. The male **Capercaillie** was showing again in a garden near the lodge and after lunch a **Middle-spotted Woodpecker** showed well near the hotel.

The night drive was slightly dampened by at times heavy rain but four superb **Ural Owls**, four **Elk (Moose)**, some nice white **Mountain Hares** and **Roe Deer** were all seen but any Raccoon Dogs remained outside spotlight range. A stop on a bridge produced a couple of **American Mink** but sadly a **Eurasian Beaver** was only seen by Martin, Ewan and Brian. Bizarrely, the highlight for Martin and Tarvo appeared to be a cockerel and several hens roosting in the forest. They had clearly had too many long nights..... We arrived back at the hotel around midnight.



Ural Owl (Ewan Davies and Peter Waldron)

## 21<sup>st</sup> March

A similar morning to the 20<sup>th</sup> with the highlights being a relatively close **Red Fox**, a very obliging **Nutcracker**, a flyover **Black Woodpecker**, a female **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** but annoyingly only for three of the group, northern **Bullfinches**, some nice white-headed **Long-tailed Tits** and back near the hotel four nice **White-tailed**

**Eagles.** A visit to a nearby Vihula Manor failed to produce the hoped-for White-backed Woodpecker but the first **Kingfisher** of the trip was a welcome addition to the trip list. After a pleasant lunch in Rakvere, we headed back to the hotel for a pre-spotlighting rest.



Spotted Nutcracker (Ewan Davies) / White-tailed Eagle (Peter Waldron)



The evening drive was a game of two halves. An obliging **Eurasian Pygmy Owl**, a pre-dusk white **Mountain Hare**, **Elk (Moose)**, **Roe Deer**, **Red Fox** and a **Long-eared Owl** were the highlights of the first session which

concluded around 10:40. Three of the group retired for the night while the others warmed up with a hot drink before another session up to around 1 am. This ironically proved highly productive with a large **Wild Boar** and a **Red Fox** near the hotel, two **Raccoon Dogs** which crossed the track but annoyingly stopped to look at us at the edge of the spotlight range but best of all a stunning **Eurasian Polecat** which we followed as it worked its way along a ditch for almost a minute, before it appeared to disappear into a hole. A great end to our final night in Lahemaa.



**Mountain Hare (Peter Waldron)**

## 22<sup>nd</sup> March

After recovering two trail cameras which Peter had set in the forest, we set off on an uneventful morning drive to Saaremaa Island. Later that day, we were to discover that one of the cameras had been visited by a **Raccoon Dog!**



**Raccoon Dog (Peter Waldron – camera trap)**

A stop to look for Dippers was unsuccessful due to the high river levels after the rapid thaw of the previous week.



The ferry crossing produced **Goosander**, **Goldeneye**, large numbers of **Long-tailed Duck** and a solitary **Common Scoter** while **White-tailed Eagle** and several **Common Cranes** on route to our first harbour stop at Veere Harbour where seven **Steller's Eider**, six drakes and a duck, entertained us along with another White-tailed Eagle and good numbers of Long-tailed Ducks. Sadly, two stops for wintering Hawk Owls proved fruitless in increasingly misty conditions and we headed to our hotel for the next two nights, Loona Manor.



**Long-tailed Duck (Brian Martin)**

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### 23<sup>rd</sup> March

A frustrating day with sea mist curtailing activities at several sites including the main Steller's Eider site, and heavy rain preventing any spotlighting. A male **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** was seen briefly on a pre-breakfast trip to fields near Kihelkonna but the hoped-for Hawk Owl seemed to have gone. Twelve **Steller's Eiders** were seen at Veere Harbour along with our only **Common Eider** of the trip, 32 **Smew** near Toomalouka and three **Red Deer** near Loona with a number of species being added to the trip list in the morning but attempts to find the two Hawk Owls were again unsuccessful and they appeared to have moved on following the change to milder conditions.

During the afternoon, we visited nearby Viidumae Nature Reserve and were rewarded with a **Red Squirrel** and two more **Red Deer** although the hoped-for Eurasian Pygmy Owl eluded us. As the afternoon and evening became increasingly misty, we returned to the hotel. Rather annoyingly, it started raining heavily just prior to dinner and the planned after dinner spotlighting had to be cancelled because of the torrential rain.

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### 24<sup>th</sup> March

An early 5 am start for a final attempt to find Raccoon Dog was rewarded with a show of the Northern Lights outside the hotel. Spotlighting produced two **Red Foxes**, five **Red Deer**, **Mountain Hare**, an **Elk (Moose)** and several **Roe Deer** in Viidumae Nature Reserve along with three **Woodcock** flushed from the track but a possible Pine Marten got away without a positive identification.



**Northern Lights (Peter Waldron)**

After breakfast, our only **Barnacle Geese** of the trip, a group of eight, were found with a mixed flock of **Greylag** and **Greater White-fronted Geese** not far from our hotel, as we headed out for another Hawk Owl attempt at a third site near Kuressaare but we sadly dipped again, although we did find another **Great Grey Shrike**. A visit to a tower at a nearby lake (Suurlhat), added a few new birds for the trip including **Bearded Tit** and a booming **Bittern** along with the first butterflies of the trip, five **Brimstone** and a **Small Tortoiseshell**, while a nearby bay at Kuressaare lossipark produced a couple more trip ticks including three **Great Egrets**, although two close drake **Smews** were rather more appreciated.



**Smew (Ewan Davies)**

After a pleasant lunch in Kuressaare and a short excursion to a meteorite crater at Kaali we headed back to the ferry back to the mainland. The crossing back to the mainland produced two **Velvet** and c.20 **Common Scoters** plus a large raft of c.700 **Long-tailed Ducks**.





**Kaali Crater (Peter Waldron)**

Unfortunately, an afternoon visit to Tuhi Bog back on the mainland had to be rapidly curtailed due to heavy rain and we hot-footed it back to Tallinn for our final night at the Go Hotel Shnelli but not before we had found a rather desolate looking **Smooth Newt** in the middle of the track.

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### **25<sup>th</sup> March**

Another day and sadly more rain and wind greeted us, but we set out for a final morning in the field.

After the disappointing sight of a dead **Raccoon Dog** on the motorway south-west of Tallinn, we started the day scanning a distant flock of **Greater White-fronted Geese** with at least three **Tundra Bean Geese** about 40 minute-drive from Tallinn before heading on to a couple of woodland stops in the strong winds. At the second woodland stop at Padise, a distant flock attracted our attention and a short drive and a much closer inspection revealed a large flock of over 300 **Tundra Beans** with one **Taiga Bean**, several **Greater White-fronted Geese** and good numbers of **Whooper Swans**.

Heading back towards Tallinn, a **White Stork** on a nest was a welcome trip tick and a flock of around 50 **Grey Herons** was seen in flight. Our final stop at a fast-flowing river and waterfall at Keila-Joa produced nice views of two black-bellied **Dippers** and three **Goosander**. We headed back to the hotel in Tallinn and a **Northern Goshawk** over Tallinn as we approached the hotel was a nice bonus.



**White Stork (Ewan Davies)**

We returned to the hotel to finish packing before heading out for lunch where we said goodbye to Quentin and Lorna who were returning home by land and sea and drove back to the airport for the flight home ironically just as the sun came out.

The flight home was uneventful, and we arrived back at Gatwick on schedule around 5 pm.

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**CHECKLISTS**

MAMMALS	SCIENTIFIC NAME	
<b>Eurasian Lynx</b>	<i>Lynx lynx</i>	An amazing sighting of three animals, apparently an adult with two large young, crossing the road in Lahemaa NP shortly after midnight on our drive from the airport to our first hotel.
<b>Red Fox</b>	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	A total of eleven were seen, four on the 19th, one on the 20th, three on 21st, one on the 23rd and two on 24th with daytime views of three, two at reasonably close range.

<b>Raccoon Dog</b>	<i>Nyctereutes procyonoides</i>	A frustrating trip for this species. Our tracker, Martin, picked up several in the thermal imager but beyond the range of the spotlight. Two seen after midnight in Lahemaa NP on our third night drive were just identifiable in the spotlight after they had crossed the road, but the views were rather frustrating. A camera trap image captured by one of Peter's camera traps rubbed salt in the wounds while a dead animal on the motorway south-west of Tallinn on the final morning was sad to see.
<b>Grey Seal</b>	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	One at Viinistu on 19th, two in Veere Harbour on 23rd and three from the Saremaa Ferry on 24th.
<b>European Pine Marten</b>	<i>Martes martes</i>	A possible seen by Richard in the spotlight in Viidmae Nature Reserve prior to dawn on 24th.
<b>American Mink</b>	<i>Mustela vison</i>	One in the harbour at Viinistu on 19th as we ate lunch in a quayside restaurant and two spotlighted in a river during our night drive on 20th.
<b>Eurasian (Western) Polecat</b>	<i>Mustela putorius</i>	Superb views of an animal moving rapidly along a stream for almost a minute, not far from Sagadi Manor in the early hours of 22nd, before it disappeared down a hole.
<b>Badger</b>	<i>Meles meles</i>	One dashed across the road in front of the car on the night drive on 20th, another was seen by the tracker the following night.
<b>Wild Boar</b>	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	A single large boar not far from Sagadi Manor just before midnight on 21st.
<b>Elk (Moose)</b>	<i>Alces alces</i>	Four on the night drive on 20th but all but one were largely obscured in deep cover, one was seen in the same place the following day. Another pre-dawn on the drive in Viidumae Nature Reserve but again well hidden in cover.
<b>European Roe Deer</b>	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	Seen daily in good numbers, mostly females but a couple of nice bucks and at least a couple of young animals.
<b>Red Deer</b>	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>	Three near Loona on 23rd with two in Viidumae Nature Reserve the same day. Five in Viidumae prior to dawn on 24th.
<b>Eurasian Red Squirrel</b>	<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	One near Viinusta on 19th, one north of Sagadi Manor on 20th and another in Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd. All were in rather dull winter coats.



<b>European Hare</b>	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	One seen well in Lahemaa NP but definitely under-recorded as large numbers of hares seen in the thermal imager/spotlight were not specifically identified to species. Those that were identified were almost all Mountain Hares.
<b>Mountain Hare</b>	<i>Lepus timidus</i>	Identified in small numbers, up to 4, on all three night drives in Lahemaa NP including several individuals in white winter coats, one of which obligingly posed for us prior to dark on the third night. As mentioned under the previous species many hares went unidentified to species.
<b>European Beaver</b>	<i>Castor fiber</i>	One seen frustratingly briefly in the spotlight by Martin, Ewan and Brian off of a bridge on the night drive on 20th.
<b>BIRDS</b>	<b>SCIENTIFIC NAME</b>	
<b>Great Crested Grebe</b>	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	Six at Kuressaare lossipark on 24th.
<b>Great Cormorant</b>	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Seen in small numbers on days 1,4, 5 and 6.
<b>Bittern</b>	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	One booming in a reedbed at Suurlhat near Kuressaare on 24th.
<b>Great Egret</b>	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Three at Kuressaare lossipark on 24th.
<b>Grey Heron</b>	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Seen in small numbers on 4 days with a flock of 50 to the south-west of Tallinn on 25th.
<b>White Stork</b>	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	One on a roadside nest about 30 minutes south-west of Tallinn on 25th.
<b>Mute Swan</b>	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Widespread in small numbers and particularly common along the causeway between Muhu and Saremaa Island on 22nd and 24th.
<b>Whooper Swan</b>	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Seen daily with counts of up to 28 in Lahemaa NP and over 100 south-west of Tallinn.
<b>Canada Goose</b>	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Two flying over Veere Harbour on the 22nd.
<b>Barnacle Goose</b>	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Eight near Loona on the 22nd.
<b>Greylag Goose</b>	<i>Anser anser</i>	Widespread and common.
<b>Taiga Bean Goose</b>	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	One in a flock of Tundra Beans at Padise on 25th.
<b>Tundra Bean Goose</b>	<i>Anser serrirostris</i>	Small flocks seen in flight on at least 3 days. At least three birds in a flock of c.200 Greater White-fronted Geese at a roadside stop south-west of Tallinn and a large flock of over 300 birds at Padise until they were flushed by a fighter jet!

<b>Greater White-fronted Goose</b>	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Up to 30 daily on Sareemaa Island, a flock of 200 at a roadside stop south-west of Tallinn and a handful in the large flock of Tundra Bean Geese at Padise on 25th.
<b>Common Shelduck</b>	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	Two at Toomalouka.
<b>Gadwall</b>	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	Seen in small numbers on Sareemaa Island on 23rd.
<b>Mallard</b>	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Widespread.
<b>Eurasian Teal</b>	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Seen in small numbers on Sareemaa Island on 23rd.
<b>Common Pochard</b>	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Small numbers at Suurlhat on 24th.
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Seen in small numbers at four locations on Sareemaa Island on 23rd and 24th.
<b>Greater Scaup</b>	<i>Aythya marila</i>	c.12 at Toomalouka on 23rd with a solitary drake at another site.
<b>Steller's Eider</b>	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	A single male at Veere Harbour on 23rd.
<b>Common Eider</b>	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Seven (six drakes) in Veere Harbour on 22nd and a more distant flock of 12 the following day.
<b>Velvet Scoter</b>	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	Two from the Sareemaa Island ferry on 24th.
<b>Common Scoter</b>	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	Singles at Viinuta on 19th and from the Sareemaa Island ferry on 22nd with c.20 from the ferry on 24th.
<b>Long-tailed Duck</b>	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	50+ at Viinistu on 19th and good numbers at a number of sites on Sareemaa Island including an impressive flock of c.700 from the ferry on 24th as it approached Virtsu Harbour.
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Up to five at several sites on 5 days.
<b>Smew</b>	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	Great views of 32 at Toomalouka when the mist cleared on 23rd and similar views of two drakes at Kuressaare lossipark on 24th.
<b>Common Merganser</b>	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	Widespread in small numbers on five days. Large numbers at Virtsu Harbour on 22nd.
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	Seen at Toomalouka on 23rd and Kuressaare lossipark on 24th.
<b>White-tailed Eagle</b>	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	Up to six on six of the seven days including a nice group of four by our hotel at Sagadi Manor on the 21st.
<b>Common Buzzard</b>	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Widespread.
<b>Eurasian Sparrowhawk</b>	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	One south of Lumanda on 22nd.
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	One seen briefly by Tarvo in Lahemaa NP on 22nd and another over Tallinn while returning to the hotel on 25th.
<b>Merlin</b>	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	One in Lahemaa NP on 19th.
<b>Hazel Grouse</b>	<i>Tetrastes bonasia</i>	One seen poorly in the spotlight in the night drive in Lahemaa on 19th.

<b>Western Capercaillie</b>	<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>	A superbly confiding male on the roof of a barn near Sagadi Manor on 19th and in a tree in a nearby garden the following day.
<b>Black Grouse</b>	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>	Four including two males roosting shortly before dark in Lahemaa NP on 19th.
<b>Grey Partridge</b>	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	One in Lahemaa NP on 19th.
<b>Eurasian Coot</b>	<i>Fulica atra</i>	Only seen on Sareemaa Island where small numbers at Veere Harbour, Toomalouka, Suurlhat and Kuressaare lossipark.
<b>Common Crane</b>	<i>Grus grus</i>	Seen on most days in good numbers with up to 14 in a day including two resident in fields by our hotel at Loona Manor.
<b>Eurasian Oystercatcher</b>	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	2-4 at Toomalouka and Kuressaare lossipark.
<b>Northern Lapwing</b>	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Widespread.
<b>Eurasian Woodcock</b>	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	One seen well in the spotlight on the first night drive and three flushed from the road pre-dawn in Viidumae Nature Reserve.
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Seen in small numbers on five days.
<b>Common Gull</b>	<i>Larus canus</i>	Widespread and common.
<b>Great Black-backed Gull</b>	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Seen daily on Sareemaa Island.
<b>European Herring Gull</b>	<i>Larus argentatus omissus</i>	Seen daily on Sareemaa Island and also south-west of Tallinn on the 25th.
<b>Feral Rock Dove</b>	<i>Columba livia</i>	Widespread.
<b>Stock Dove</b>	<i>Columba oenas</i>	Seen in small numbers on five days.
<b>Common Wood Pigeon</b>	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Seen in small numbers on five days.
<b>Tawny Owl</b>	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Heard by Quentin at Sagadi Manor.
<b>Ural Owl</b>	<i>Strix uralensis</i>	One seen very well on the first night drive close to Sagadi Manor and four seen very well on the night drive on 20th.
<b>Eurasian Pygmy Owl</b>	<i>Glaucidium passerinum</i>	One seen at the top of a tall conifer in Lahemaa NP on 21st.
<b>Long-eared Owl</b>	<i>Asio otus</i>	One on the way back to Sagadi Manor on the 19th and one near Viinistu on 21st, both presumably recent arrivals back on their breeding grounds.
<b>Kingfisher</b>	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	One at Vihula Manor on 21st.
<b>Black Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dryocopus martius</i>	Heard on three days, twice in Lahemaa NP and once at Viidumae Nature Reserve on Sareemaa Island. Seen twice in flight in Lahemaa NP on 21st.
<b>Middle Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocoptes medius</i>	Up to two seen in the grounds of Sagadi Manor on 19th, 20th and 21st and heard elsewhere in Lahemaa NP as well.
<b>Lesser Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dryobates minor</i>	A female briefly in Lahemaa NP on 21st and another near Kihelkonna on Se



<b>Great Spotted Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Widespread and common.
<b>White-backed Woodpecker</b>	<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>	Heard by Tarvo at Sagadi Manor but elusive at other normal stakeouts.
<b>Eurasian Skylark</b>	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Seen daily often in large flocks, the birds having just arrived back on the breeding grounds.
<b>Woodlark</b>	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Heard on three days in Lahemaa NP and on Saaremaa Island. The first returning migrants.
<b>Meadow Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	The first returning migrants were at Toomalouka on 24th with more at Padise on 25th.
<b>White Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	The first returning migrants were seen on Saaremaa Island on 23rd with more on 24th.
<b>Eurasian Wren</b>	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Heard at Sagadi Manor, Loona Manor and Viidumae Nature Reserve.
<b>White-throated Dipper</b>	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Two of the continental black-bellied form seen well at Keila-Joa on the 25th.
<b>European Robin</b>	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	The first returning migrants were seen at Toomalouka and Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd.
<b>Mistle Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Seen daily in small numbers.
<b>Redwing</b>	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Two at Loona Manor on the 24th.
<b>Common Blackbird</b>	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Widespread.
<b>Fieldfare</b>	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	One with Starlings near Lumanda on the 22nd and also seen in Viidumae Nature Reserve on 24th.
<b>Goldcrest</b>	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Seen on heard daily in Lahemaa NP and at Viiduame Nature Reseve.
<b>Coal Tit</b>	<i>Parus ater</i>	Seen in Lahemaa NP on 20th and in Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd.
<b>Crested Tit</b>	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>	Up to three seen daily in Lahemaa NP.
<b>Marsh Tit</b>	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	Up to two seen daily in Lahemaa NP.
<b>Willow Tit</b>	<i>Poecile montanus</i>	Seen well in Lahemaa NP on 19th and heard on 20th and 21st. Heard in Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd.
<b>Eurasian Blue Tit</b>	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Seen on five days in small numbers.
<b>Great Tit</b>	<i>Parus major</i>	Seen daily in small numbers.
<b>Long-tailed Tit</b>	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	White-headed continental birds seen in Lahemaa NP on 21st and in Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd.
<b>Bearded Tit</b>	<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	At least two seen and several others heard at Suurlhat on 24th.
<b>Eurasian Nuthatch</b>	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Seen or heard in Lahemaa NP on 19th, 20th and 21st, the continental birds looking very different to those in the UK.

<b>Eurasian Treecreeper</b>	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Seen in Lahemaa NP on 19th, 20th and 21st.
<b>Great Grey Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	Two near Viinistu on 19th and one in Lahemaa NP on 20th, one near Kihelkonna on 23rd and 24th with another near Suurlhat on 24th.
<b>Eurasian Magpie</b>	<i>Pica pica</i>	Widespread.
<b>Eurasian Jay</b>	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Seen daily in Lahemaa NP and in Viidumae Nature Reserve.
<b>Spotted Nutcracker</b>	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>	One seen well in Lahemaa on 21st and another near Koruse on Sareemaa Island on 23rd.
<b>Western Jackdaw</b>	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	Widespread and common.
<b>Rook</b>	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Seen in large numbers on four days.
<b>Hooded Crow</b>	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Widespread and common.
<b>Northern Raven</b>	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Widespread.
<b>Common Starling</b>	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Seen in small numbers on five days.
<b>Eurasian Tree Sparrow</b>	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Common around Sagadi Manor and also seen at Kaali on the 24th.
<b>House Sparrow</b>	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Heard in Lahemaa NP on 19th and seen at Virtsu Harbour on 22nd.
<b>Common Chaffinch</b>	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Seen at Loona Manor and Viidumae Nature Reserve on 23rd, around Kuressaare on 24th and Padise on 25th.
<b>Hawfinch</b>	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Heard in Lahemaa NP on 19th, 2-3 in flight near Lumanda on 23rd.
<b>Eurasian Bullfinch</b>	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Seen daily with 12+ in one tree on 22nd, the northern form being very attractive and distinctive from the form found in the UK.
<b>European Greenfinch</b>	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Widespread.
<b>Common Linnet</b>	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Seen in Lahemaa NP on 20th and on Saaremaa Island on 24th.
<b>Red Crossbill</b>	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Up to four each day in Lahemaa NP.
<b>European Goldfinch</b>	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Small numbers on four days with a flock of 30+ on 25th.
<b>Eurasian Siskin</b>	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	Small flocks seen on four days.
<b>Snow Bunting</b>	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Nine in Lahemaa NP on 20th.
<b>Yellowhammer</b>	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Small numbers seen on five days.
<b>Common Reed Bunting</b>	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Seen at Suurlhat on 24th.
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>		
<b>Smooth Newt</b>	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	One at Tuhu Bog on 25th.
<b>Brimstone</b>	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	Five near Suurlhat on 24th.
<b>Small Tortoiseshell</b>	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	One near Suurlhat on the 24th.