



Spring birds

Destination: Kuusamo, Finland

Focus: Bird photography

Grading: Short day walks 100 - 200m, for all ages

Group size: 4 – 6 photographers

Time: 22 – 27 April 2020

Price: 2495 € per person, single supplement 375 €

Spring time in Kuusamo is a gem in Finnish wildlife photography

Powder snow showers in the air as the boistering Black Grouse cocks measure their strength against each other, with no mercy given or asked for. The backlit lekking cocks against a dark forest background give opportunities for unique shots from the hides, which also allow low angle photography at almost ground level. In the morning, the lekking site is visited by 10-12 cocks and some females, with the closest running between the hides as the older cocks chase the younger ones off the centre of the lekking area.

Elsewhere, the primitive courting sounds and behavior of the majestic Capercaillie cock, the largest of all grouse, guarantee an unforgettable experience. The cocks settle out their superiority in ardent courting games on their lekking ground - and we are the front seat spectators. By the end of April, before the "hen week", the alpha cock has prevailed and will mate with all the hens of the area. The lek is usually visited by three to five cocks during early morning, with the dominating alpha cock often only 10 meters from the hides. Our hides are specially designed for professional bird photographers and they are located on good lekking sites visited by the birds for decades.

This tour takes place when winter has yielded to the power of the sun. Seventeen hours of daylight with an hour's twilight, combined with snowy conditions still in forests and ice-covered lakes.. In addition to spectacular grouse action, this tour with other bird highlights and fine spring conditions creates an excellent framework for a keen bird photographer!



Capercaillie

Highlights

Black Grouse and Capercaillie leks; Osprey fishing at a fish pond; tens of Whooper Swans strengthening their pair bonds; Common Cranes feeding on ice; occasional White-tailed Eagle visits; summer-plumaged Brambling and other seedeaters at bird feeders in snowy conditions

For more information:

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Common Crane

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival at Kuusamo

Once arrived at Kuusamo, we unpack and have lunch before heading straight out for Whooper Swan and Common Crane photography session (or Owls if available). After beautiful evening lights, we return to accommodation for dinner and a short briefing for the program for the following days.

Day 2

Early morning at 3.00, we start our day by driving to Black Grouse lek site to catch up the first rays of natural light. After the Black Grouse lek is over, we return to accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 - 9.00. There might be chances to photograph other Grouse species on the roadsides on the way back.

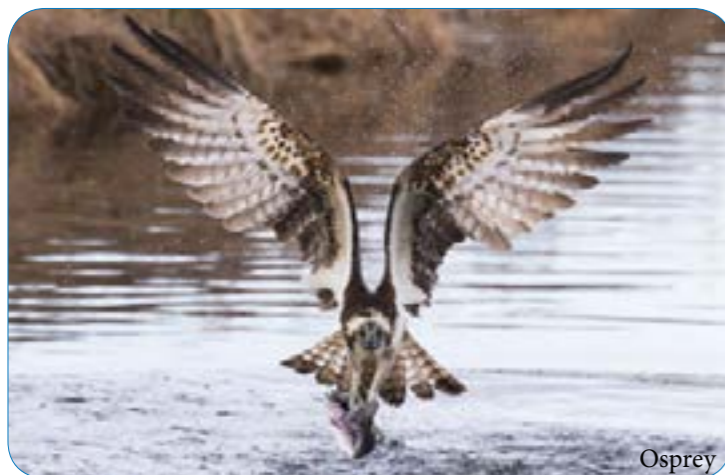
You have the possibility for independent photography near the accommodation during the afternoon break from 10.00 - 17.00. Dinner at 17.00 and after dinner drive to Capercaillie hides. Entry to the hides is in the evening before Capercaillie lek starting at dawn, meaning the night is spent in the hides.

Day 3

Before dawn, we are ready in our hides for the Capercaillie lek. When the lek is over between 9.00 - 10.00, we return to our accommodation for breakfast. A few hours break gives you again the possibility for independent photography near the accommodation from 10.00 - 15.00. Dinner at 15.00 and drive to Osprey hides, where we photograph diving and fishing Ospreys for 4 - 5 hours. On the way back, there might be chances for Capercaillie or Black Grouse on the roadsides (or Owls if available).



Capercaillie



Osprey



Whooper Swans

Day 4

This morning we sleep a little longer. After 7.00 breakfast, a morning photography session with White-throated Dippers along a flowing river. After the Dipper session, we return to our accommodation for lunch. In the early afternoon, we stay 2 - 3 hours at passerine hides. Dinner at 17.00 and after that, once again back to the Whooper Swans, Common Cranes, White-tailed Eagles and waterfowl from the shore hides by a lake.

Day 5

Early morning at 3.00, we drive to the Black Grouse lek site to catch up the early morning action. When the Black Grouse lek is over, we return to accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 - 9.00. There might be possibilities for other Grouse species on the roadsides on the way back. Independent photography time near the accommodation during the afternoon break from 10.00 - 17.00. We head back to the fish ponds in the evening for another Osprey photography session (or Owls if available).

Day 6 Departure from Kuusamo

Last morning, we start once again early at 3.00 and drive to the Black Grouse lek site. After the lek is over we return to our accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 - 9.00. Grouse species by the road is again a photography possibility. After breakfast, it is time for the check-out and departure.

For more pictures: [Finnature's Flickr Gallery](#)

Price includes: Finnature guiding throughout the journey. Use of professional photography hides. All meals and accommodation. All land transportation from Kuusamo airport. For extra price transportation from Oulu (bigger airport) if needed.

Accommodation: [Oivangin Lomakartano's](#) log villa for 5 nights; please notice that 1 night will be spent in Capercaillie hide

Food: Local restaurants and picnic lunches

Leader: Finnature guide

Possible extensions: Brown Bear, Wolverine and Wolf photography in Kuhmo

Booking: shop.finnature.com

Recommended flights: We recommend to arrive to and depart from Kuusamo around midday.



Dipper



Black Grouse



Great Grey Owl

Please notice: The itinerary might change due to weather conditions or bird situation. Unfortunately we cannot guarantee any of the species, but our expert Finnature guides do their utmost to ensure the best possible photography opportunities during the tour.

Official Package travel trader (Organiser) and Travel agent
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