

welcome to Birdwatching Breaks 2012



Group in Uganda at The Neck, Bwindi (Al McNee)

A warm welcome to our 2012 brochure of birdwatching holidays, this being our twenty-fifth year of operation.

In 2012, we have introduced new tours to interesting countries around the world, all of them having had an inspection trip either by us or our local tour operators.

In Asia, we have three new destinations including the winter hotspot of Poyang Hu and Yancheng in China for some of the world's rarest birds: Siberian Crane, Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Scaly-sided Merganser. Cambodia combined with southern Vietnam is another new tour in Asia. Cambodia has several interesting birds in the form of Giant and White-shouldered Ibis and the cultural splendours of Angkor Wat. A new tour has been designed visiting Bangkok and southern Thailand for Gurney's Pitta and a chance of wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers. In early June, we have a tour to Central Siberia concentrating on the area around Lake Baikal and the border with Mongolia. This gives you an opportunity to observe many species which are rare vagrants to Europe. Other tours in Asia include NE India and Sri Lanka, two destinations in which we have operated several tours. For those who wish to escape Christmas and New Year, we have put on a tour to Japan. The country continues to be a popular destination and we have modified the winter tour slightly to visit an area for Japanese Murrelet.

In Africa, we have a new tour to Angola which concentrates on the special birds and wildlife of this unique region. We also have departures to Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda and Senegal. These four destinations offer you an extremely wide range of African birds and mammals from the Sahel in Senegal to the beautiful scenery of Ethiopia.

Our New Zealand tour is taking place in January 2012 with the most comprehensive birding tour of the country available today. You have a good chance of seeing all the 'accessible' endemic birds as well as a huge range of seabirds. Further west and across the Tasman Sea, we have a classic Australian birding tour taking in the major hotspots of New South Wales and Queensland plus an optional extension to Tasmania.

In the Caribbean region, we have a tour of Cuba in the Western Caribbean. Cuba holds up to 24 endemic birds in simply breathtaking and beautiful surroundings. One of the most exciting is the South American country of Colombia which has more species of birds than any other. This is an exceptional birding destination which includes up to 45 endemic birds in a relatively compact area. In the Americas,

we have a tour to Grand Manan in Canada, an exceptional place to witness the southbound migration of birds and whales in stunning surroundings. Guatemala features again in December. Our Chile tour departs in January 2012, to a beautiful country with a wide range of habitats and birdlife.

Closer to home, we have departures to Belarus and France, the latter including the Camargue and Corsica. Belarus is extremely rich for breeding birds and spring migration and offers you a chance to observe Great Grey Owl, Aquatic Warbler and Azure Tit. Further east, I have reintroduced our tour to Georgia and Armenia which takes in the spectacular Caucasus Mountain range. The region has several interesting birds including Great Rosefinch and Gldenstdt's Redstarts. After many years, we have decided to revisit Israel with a spring tour in March. This should produce an avian spectacle of migrating birds.

2012 sees the eighth year of Black Isle Birding which covers all our holidays operating in Scotland. This sector has grown significantly over the last year and we are pleased to say that we have a growing reputation as one of Scotland's premier birding companies. Jo and I operate our popular "holiday at home" programme based at Cygnus House. Its location, overlooking the Cromarty Firth and set in two acres of wildlife habitat, makes it an ideal base for visiting northern Scotland.

I firmly believe we offer you the best birding packages in Scotland with the country's top birding guides along with a friendly and welcoming service with no hidden extras.

The team at Birdwatching Breaks looks forward to welcoming you on one of our tours.

Finally, my thanks go to Rosie Green for proof-reading our 2012 brochure and to Al Knight for the layout and design.

Birdwatching Breaks
Cygnus House,
Gordons Mill, Balblair,
Black Isle, Ross-shire IV7 8LQ
Scotland

FRONT COVER PHOTO:
Blue-naped Chlorophonia
Simon Papps

DESIGN BY:

al knight 
artworks
PRINTED BY:

 J. Thomson
Colour Printers