



# ALASKA

*May 25th to June 12th, 2026*

Report and photographs:

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# Introduction

Alaska have long been a dream destination, an immense wilderness of glaciers, tundra, boreal forests, and remote islands, inhabited by some of the most sought-after birds and mammals in the world. In May and June 2026, I finally had the opportunity to make that journey. The primary purpose of the trip was simple, to experience as much of Alaska's wildlife as possible and to learn about its species and ecosystems. Many of the target species had been on my wish list for years, including Bristle-thighed Curlew, Spectacled Eider, Kittlitz's Murrelet, White-tailed Ptarmigan, and Red-legged Kittiwake. At the same time, the journey also served a professional purpose. I wanted to gain first-hand experience of Alaska's birding locations, logistics, and seasonal conditions with the long-term goal of arranging future wildlife and photography tours to this location. This report is both a personal travel diary and a practical reference for future visits. Hopefully it may also provide useful information to others who are considering a similar trip. If you would like to follow me on a future trip or have any questions about this trip, feel free to contact me on [martin@tierra-nova.com](mailto:martin@tierra-nova.com)

## Top five birds:

1. Spectacled eider
2. Red-legged kittiwake
3. Red-necked stint
4. Crested auklet
5. Aleutian tern

## Top five mammals:

1. Grizzly bear
2. Muskoxen
3. American porcupine
4. Dall sheep (Thinhorn Sheep)
5. Polar bear



*Red-necked stint photographed on St. Paul Island.*

## Overall recommendations

**Safety** - Anchorage felt noticeably rough. There are many homeless people, and petty crime appears to be relatively common. On two out of four visits to gas stations in Anchorage, I witnessed crimes. On one occasion, two homeless men entered a store and appeared to be trying to steal items. They left when the police were called. On another occasion, a man attempted to steal fuel. For this reason, I would strongly recommend always locking your car when stopping in Anchorage, even if you only leave it unattended for a few moments. In contrast, the inland areas, Nome, and Barrow all felt very safe.

**Bears** - During the trip, I observed five Black Bears, four Grizzly Bears, and five Polar Bears. When walking in forests around Anchorage and in the Alaskan interior, it is advisable to carry bear spray and remain alert. I borrowed bear spray from a local friend, but it can also be rented or purchased in Anchorage. The Grizzly Bears around Nome generally appeared shy of both people and vehicles, but caution is still advisable, particularly in areas with dense vegetation where visibility is limited. Polar Bears can occasionally occur close to Barrow and even inside the town. During my stay, I observed five individuals. A few days before my arrival, a bear had reportedly been seen in downtown Barrow. When birding around Barrow, it is important to remain aware of your surroundings, scan the area regularly, and stay close to your vehicle.

**Timing of the trip** - In a normal year, the timing of this trip would have been close to ideal. However, spring arrived unusually late in Barrow during 2026, and in hindsight it would have been beneficial to visit Barrow approximately one week later. The timing for St. Paul Island, Nome, and the Alaskan interior was excellent.

**Roads and Fuel** - Road conditions throughout the Alaskan interior were generally very good, with well-maintained paved highways. Although distances between fuel stations can be considerable, I never came close to running out of fuel. As a general rule, I would recommend refuelling once the tank reaches approximately half full, particularly in remote areas. The roads around Nome are mostly gravel but were generally in good condition during my visit. Roads around Barrow were significantly rougher and often affected by frost heave and potholes, but they remained fully drivable with a 4x4 vehicle.

## **Itinerary Overview**

- Day 1 – Travel from Sweden to Alaska (May 25)
- Day 2 – Anchorage and Arctic Valley (May 26)
- Day 3 – Knik River and Hatcher Pass (May 27)
- Day 4 – St. Paul Island (May 28)
- Day 5 – St. Paul Island (May 29)
- Day 6 – St. Paul Island (May 30)
- Day 7 – Departure from St. Paul Island (May 31)
- Day 8 – Tok and the Interior (June 1)
- Day 9 – Richardson Highway and Hatcher Pass (June 2)
- Day 10 – Kenai Fjords National Park (June 3)
- Day 11 – Seward to Nome (June 4)
- Day 12 – Nome and Safety Lagoon (June 5)
- Day 13 – Bristle-thighed Curlew Day (June 6)
- Day 14 – Nome to Barrow (June 7)
- Day 15 – Seawatching in Barrow (June 8)
- Day 16 – Spectacled Eiders and Snowy Owl (June 9)
- Day 17 – Final Day in Barrow (June 10)
- Day 18 – Journey from Alaska to Sweden (June 11)
- Day 19 – Arrival to Sweden (June 12)

# Day by day program

## Day 1 – May 25 - Journey to Alaska

The trip began in Nynäshamn, Sweden. An morning train took me to Arlanda Airport, from where I travelled via Reykjavik and Seattle to Anchorage. The flight from Iceland crossed southern Greenland and the Canadian Arctic, offering spectacular views of glaciers, ice caps, and remote wilderness. The connection in Seattle proved more stressful than expected, as long immigration queues nearly caused me to miss my onward flight. Fortunately, I reached the gate just in time and arrived in Anchorage at around 10:30 p.m. The excitement of arriving in Alaska was quickly tempered by disappointing news. My flight to St. Paul Island the following day had been cancelled due to fuel-related issues at St. Paul Airport. With no possibility of resolving the situation that evening, I checked into the Americas Best Value Inn near the airport and prepared to rethink my plans for the next few days.



*View of the mountains of Southern Greenland.*

## Day 2 – May 26 - Anchorage

Before the airline office opened, I spent the early morning birding around Lake Spenard, which is within walking distance of the hotel. On the way there, I noticed several Black-billed Magpies. They are almost identical to our Eurasian Magpies but have a strikingly different call. In Alaska, they also appear to be more associated with forest habitats than in Europe. In the trees surrounding the lake, I heard my first American Robins and Dark-eyed Juncos of the trip. Above the water, Tree Swallows and Violet-green Swallows were common, together with a few Bank Swallows and Barn Swallows of the American subspecies, which have rusty underparts rather than the white bellies typical of European birds. The lake itself held large numbers of Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, American Wigeon, Horned Grebe, White-winged Scoter, and Pacific Loon. Back at the hotel, I finally managed to get hold of Aleutian Airways by phone. They were able to rebook me on a flight two days later, leaving me with some unexpected time around Anchorage. I immediately returned to the airport, secured one of the last available rental cars, and headed to Westchester Lagoon, a pleasant wetland area in the suburbs of Anchorage that is well known for birds. Along the boardwalk, I saw a Steller's Jay and heard my first Black-capped Chickadee. The lagoon held many of the same species I had seen earlier at Lake Spenard, but I also recorded my first Bonaparte's Gulls of the trip. The riverbed on the far side of the railway can be productive for shorebirds during high tide. Unfortunately, the tide was low during my visit, but I still managed to see Sandhill Cranes, Semipalmated Plovers, and two Hudsonian Godwits. I also found a hybrid American × Eurasian Wigeon. After a quick lunch, I met up with local birder Eric Youngblood and together we explored Arctic Valley, about 40 minutes from downtown Anchorage. The main target was White-tailed Ptarmigan, which had recently been reported in the area. On the drive up, we saw our first Canada Jays and heard both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. An American Porcupine slowly crossed the gravel road, a mammal I had wanted to see for a long time. Above the treeline, we found several Golden-crowned Sparrows, a Northern Wheatear, and numerous Arctic Ground Squirrels. The White-tailed Ptarmigan remained elusive, however. In the evening, I was invited to Eric and his wife's home for dinner. After an enjoyable evening together, I headed to bed early, looking forward to another day of birding in Alaska.



*American porcupine on the way down from Arctic valley.*

### Day 3 – May 27 - Searching for grouses

The day began early with another visit to Arctic Valley in search of Spruce Grouse, but despite excellent habitat the species remained out of reach. On the drive further inland, I managed to see two Black Bears along a railway track before they disappeared into the bushes. I then explored the Knik River area, where a beautiful wetland held large numbers of waterfowl, Sandhill Cranes, Moose, and my first Buffleheads and Common Loons of the trip. On the steep mountainsides, I scoped several Thinorn Sheep, a species that had been on my wish list for a long time. I also searched for Ruffed Grouse, which had recently been reported in the area, but without success. From there, I continued to Hatcher Pass. On the drive up the winding mountain road, I saw a Hairy Woodpecker flying across the road and an American Dipper perched on a rock beneath a bridge. Snow still covered much of the higher ground, preventing extensive exploration, but the mountains produced Willow Ptarmigan, Rock Ptarmigan, Golden Eagle, and, to my delight, two Grey-crowned Rosy-Finches high on the mountainside. On the drive back to Anchorage, I spotted two American Goshawks from the highway, which turned out to be my only observation of the species during the entire trip. Back at Eric and Kirsty's house, we met up with a local bird ringer. He monitors Northern Saw-whet Owls in the area, and together we went to check one of Eric's nest boxes not far from the house. When Andrew inserted a small camera into the box to see if there was anyone home, a Northern Saw-whet Owl unexpectedly flew out and briefly perched on a nearby branch, allowing excellent views. An evening walk through the forest produced Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Hermit Thrushes. Walking through these Alaskan forests is a remarkable experience. Everywhere you look there are signs of wildlife, claw marks from bears on tree trunks and countless twigs clipped by Snowshoe Hares.



*View of at unknown lake close to Butte.*



*Northern Saw-whet owl outside of Anchorage.*



*Hoary Marmot in Hatchers Pass.*

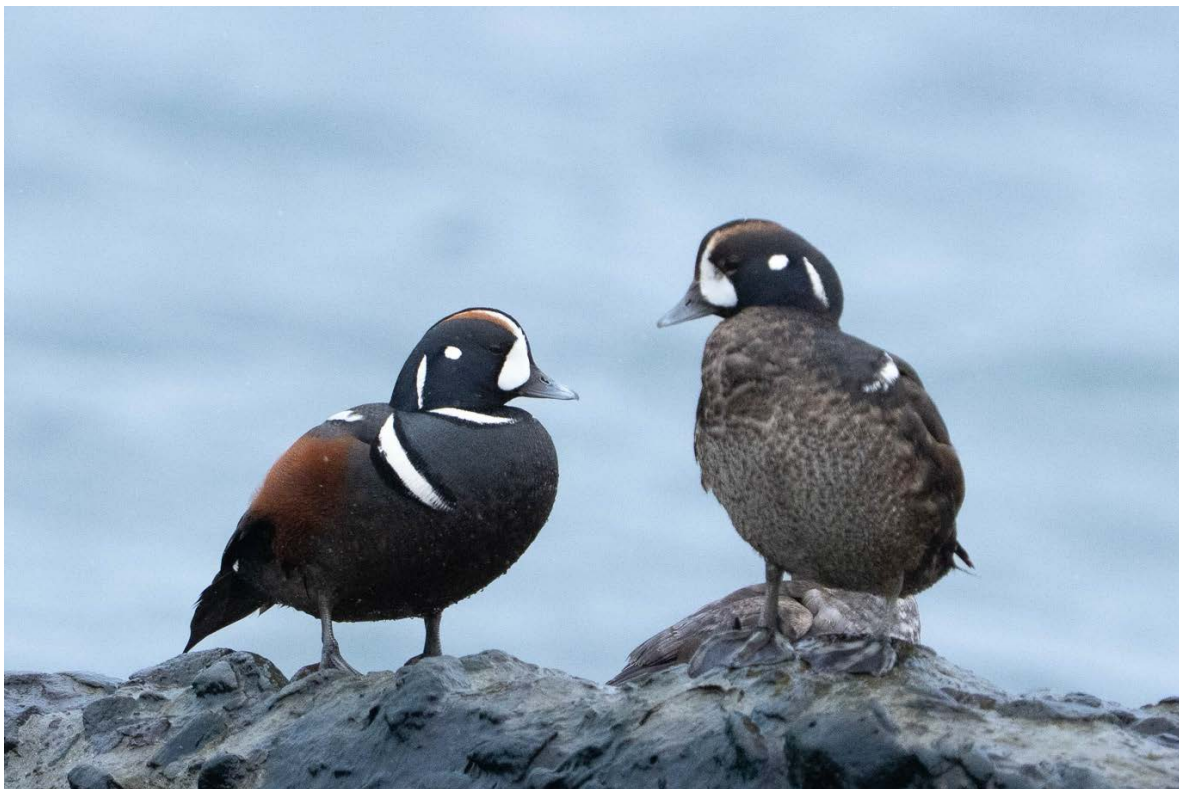


*Barrow's golden eye, Kincaid Park.*

#### **Day 4, May 28th – Anchorage -> St Paul Island**

Once again, it was an early morning. This time I started at Kincaid Park, where I hoped to find a Spruce Grouse that had recently been reported from the area. I parked the car and walked toward the site. Along the way, I found my first Downy Woodpecker of the trip, which would surprisingly turn out to be the only one I saw during the entire journey. I also recorded Lincoln's Sparrow, together with the common forest species that had become familiar over the previous days. Upon reaching the spruce forest, I encountered a Moose cow with a newborn calf at close range. Not wanting to disturb them, I slowly backed away and left them in peace. Unfortunately, no Spruce Grouse appeared, and I returned to the car. Before heading to the airport, I made a brief stop at Lake Spenard. Although no new species were added to the trip list, there was still an enjoyable variety of waterbirds present. I arrived at the airport at around 11:00 a.m., and at approximately 1:00 p.m. my flight finally departed for St. Paul Island. The journey took about two and a half hours, and we landed without any problems. The weather was favourable, with low cloud cover but almost no wind. Excited to finally be on St. Paul Island, I quickly dropped off my luggage at the hotel, which is located in the same building as the airport terminal. Just outside the airport, Grey-crowned Rosefinches of the distinctive local subspecies were everywhere. These birds appeared noticeably different from the Grey-crowned Rosefinches I had seen in the mountains north of Anchorage. They were larger, bulkier, and showed a different head pattern. Recent DNA studies suggest that this isolated island population, which occurs year-round on only a handful of islands in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands, may be distinct enough to warrant recognition as a separate species. Rock Sandpipers of the unique island subspecies *C. p. couesi* were also displaying throughout the grasslands surrounding the airport. In many ways they reminded me of Purple Sandpipers from the European Arctic, although they are larger and show distinctive dark markings on the belly. Shortly afterwards, a local bird guide named William (Sulli) drove me to the island's famous seabird cliffs and dropped me off there. What followed was one of the most extraordinary birdwatching afternoons I have ever experienced. At the cliffs, I was immediately surrounded by thousands of seabirds. Among the first species I identified were Horned Puffin, Tufted

Puffin, Least Auklet, Crested Auklet, and Parakeet Auklet. Above me flew thousands of Black-legged Kittiwakes together with several Red-legged Kittiwakes. At first glance, Red-legged Kittiwakes appear rather similar to Black-legged Kittiwakes. However, apart from their bright red legs, they have noticeably larger eyes, broader and more squared heads, and darker upperwings. With a little practice, they become surprisingly easy to identify, even at considerable distances. Swimming in the waters below the cliffs were Ancient Murrelets, another dream species that I had hoped to see for many years. Red-faced Cormorants flew past, while large rafts of Harlequin Ducks gathered along the rocky shoreline. The shoreline itself was occupied by hundreds of Northern Fur Seals establishing territories, while several stunning blue-morph Arctic Foxes roamed the grasslands above the cliffs. These foxes belong to the Pribilof subspecies of Arctic Fox, most of which are of the blue morph. After several hours at the seabird colonies, I left the cliffs and began walking toward the sheltered inland lagoons. The first marsh produced a remarkable surprise: a Wood Sandpiper, an exceptionally rare vagrant in North America and, according to local birders, the first record in the United States for eight years. Northern Pintails were common, and together with Rock Sandpipers, Red-necked Phalaropes were among the most abundant shorebirds on the island. At the larger lagoons, I encountered thousands of shorebirds. The dominant species was Rock Sandpiper, which breeds on the island, but there were also large numbers of Dunlin and Western Sandpiper migrating north toward their Arctic breeding grounds. To my delight, I also found three Red-necked Stints, two beautifully coloured adults with striking red throats and one juvenile bird. Another unexpected highlight was a stunning Siberian Sand Plover. I remained at the lagoons photographing shorebirds until around midnight before beginning the long walk back to the hotel. By the time I returned, I was completely mesmerized by the beauty of the island and the incredible abundance of birdlife.



*Harlequin ducks on St Paul Island.*



*Harlequin ducks on St. Paul Island.*



*Red-legged kittiwake on St. Paul Island.*



*Crested Auklets on St. Paul Island.*

### **Day 5, May 29th – St Paul Island**

Since I had returned to the hotel after midnight the previous evening, I decided to allow myself a small lie-in and did not get up until 7:00 a.m. I then headed straight back towards the seabird cliffs. The walk took roughly an hour and a half. The route passed through the island's open, treeless landscape. Rock Sandpipers and Grey-crowned Rosefinches seemed to be everywhere. Passing one of the lagoons, I found both a Wandering Tattler and a Common Sandpiper, the latter being another rare Eurasian migrant. At the famous "Lobster trap" area, I found a Hawfinch, yet another exceptionally rare Eurasian vagrant on the island. I continued to the cliffs and spent some time once again enjoying the incredible seabird colonies. Although I had seen the species the day before, the spectacle was no less impressive. Afterwards, I searched the surrounding area for shorebirds and also enjoyed excellent views of a Pacific Wren of the *alascensis* group, which are endemic to the Aleutian Islands. Later in the day, I decided to search for a breeding colony of Red-legged Kittiwakes. Up until then, I had only seen the species flying past the cliffs. Unfortunately, I failed to locate the colony and eventually returned to the lagoons. There, I noticed an unfamiliar shorebird feeding at some distance. At first, I struggled to identify it. However, once I got the bird into my scope, I could see fine barring on the underparts and a distinct pale supercilium. Moving closer and obtaining a few photographs, it became clear that the bird was a Grey-tailed Tattler. This was an extraordinary find, the first record in North America north of Hawaii this year, and news of the bird quickly spread among local birders, many of whom came to see it. The Red-necked Stints were still present, as was the Siberian Sand Plover, allowing for further excellent observations and photographs. I eventually returned to the hotel at around 7:00 p.m., had dinner in my room, and went straight to bed after another remarkable day of birding on St. Paul Island.



*Arctic Fox (Blue Fox) on St Paul Island.*



*Arctic Fox (Blue Fox) on St Paul Island.*



*Gray-headed rosefinch on St Paul Island.*



*Rock Sandpiper on St Paul Island.*



*Red-necked stint on St Paul Island.*

### **Day 6, May 30<sup>th</sup> - St Paul Island**

Today I set out on the long walk to the breeding colony of Red-legged Kittiwakes. A cold northerly wind, temperatures below freezing, and occasional snowfall made the walk challenging but also fascinating as I crossed the island's open, wintry landscape. The journey took roughly two and a half hours, and I walked as quickly as I could along the long, winding road that crossed the island. Along the way, I checked the few trees and bushes on the island for rarities. About two-thirds of the way there, I found a male Brambling sitting in a bush together with two Grey-crowned RoseFinches. Seeing this familiar Eurasian species so far from home was an unexpected and enjoyable surprise. In a marshy area, I saw my first Pectoral Sandpiper of the trip, as well as a pair of Eurasian Wigeons. When I finally reached the seabird cliffs, I was rewarded with magnificent views of the island's nesting seabirds. Thousands of birds crowded the cliffs, and for the first time I was able to observe breeding Red-legged Kittiwakes at close range. Watching this range-restricted Bering Sea specialty on its nesting ledges was one of the highlights of the trip. During the late afternoon, I shifted my focus from seabirds to searching for rarities around the island. While exploring the wetlands, I flushed a Common Snipe and later both heard and saw a Common Greenshank, another rare Eurasian visitor. Later, I met a group of birders who had just found a Falcated Duck. Unfortunately, the bird flew off almost immediately after being discovered. I spent the rest of the evening searching for the duck together with several local birders, hoping it would reappear, but without success. We did, however, enjoy excellent views of Long-billed Dowitchers and a Cackling Goose of the Aleutian breeding subspecies *leucopareia*, distinguished by its prominent white neck collar. Several Harbour Seals were also observed offshore. Eventually, I made my way back to the hotel, arriving sometime between 11:00 p.m. and midnight after another long but rewarding day in the field.



*Brambling on St Paul Island*



*Road on St Paul Island.*



*Photography and lunch spot behind colony of Red-legged kittiwakes.*



*Thick-billed murre on St Paul Island.*



*Parakeet auklet on St Paul Island.*



*Red-legged kittiwake on St. Paul Island.*



*Red-legged kittiwake on St. Paul Island.*



*Harlequin ducks on St Paul Island.*



*Crested auklets on St Paul Island.*



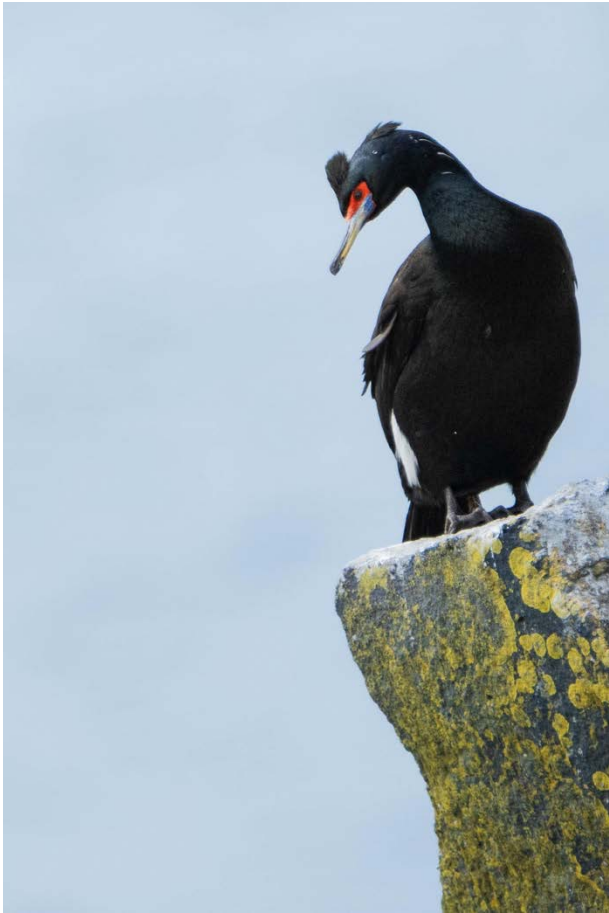
*Horned Puffin on St Paul Island.*



*Tufted Puffin on St Paul Island.*



*Least auklets on St Paul Island.*



*Red-faced cormorant and views of St Paul Island.*



*Falcated Duck at St. Paul Island.*



*Grey-tailed tattler at St. Paul Island.*

## Day 7, May 31st - St. Paul Island - Anchorage

This was my final day on St. Paul Island. Since my flight was scheduled to depart at 5:00 p.m., I only had the morning and half afternoon available for birding, so I got up early and headed back towards the seabird cliffs one last time. On the way there, I made another attempt to find the Falcated Duck. This time I was successful. A beautiful male Falcated Duck was feeding in one of the wetlands, allowing for excellent views. Eventually, the bird flew a short distance, giving me the opportunity to take some very satisfying flight photographs. Apart from the duck, I spent the morning enjoying the island's familiar birds and scenery. Although I did not find any new species, it was a wonderful way to spend my last few hours on St. Paul Island. The flight departed approximately two hours later than scheduled, and I arrived back in Anchorage at around 9:30 p.m. After collecting my rental car, I was back on the road by 10:30 p.m., immediately heading inland towards the next stage of the trip. It was a beautiful evening, and there was something special about driving alone along empty roads through Alaska's vast forests and mountains. As darkness never fully arrived, the landscape seemed endless, and the excitement of adventure and the search for new birds was stronger than ever.



*View during roadside stop and a few hours' sleep.*

## Day 8, June 1st. - Delta Junction

I drove for most of the night. At least seven Moose were standing close to the road, constantly reminding me to keep my eyes peeled and reduce my speed. An Eastern Little Brown Myotis (bat) flew across the bright night sky, but apart from that there was little other wildlife activity. Fatigue eventually caught up with me, and I stopped to sleep in the car for a couple of hours between 1:00 and 3:00 a.m. before continuing my journey. Outside, Wilson's Snipes were displaying in the twilight, producing their distinctive winnowing calls similar to Boreal Owl. It was a beautiful Arctic night, calm and full of bird sounds. At 3:00 a.m., I resumed driving, and around 4:00 a.m. I stopped to stretch my legs. The moment I stepped out of the car, I flushed my first Spruce Grouse of the trip. A second stop shortly afterwards produced a stunning Varied Thrush singing from the top of a spruce tree. Although Varied Thrushes are fairly common in this region, it is unusual to see one sitting so openly while singing. During the morning, I also found my first Rusty Blackbirds and observed two additional Spruce Grouse flying between the trees, both seen at a distance through my scope. I also stopped at a half-frozen lake where I saw my first Canvasbacks. Mammals added to the trip list included a Reindeer standing beside the road and a Coyote that ran across it. Coyotes in Alaska are apparently much larger than those found further south, which explains why I initially thought it might be a Gray Wolf. The main target for the morning was Black-backed Woodpecker. A pair had recently been reported nesting in a burned forest area on a hillside near Tok. Leaving the main road, I drove up a rather rough dirt track through the forest. Along the way, I stopped to speak with a man working in the area, and while we were talking another Spruce Grouse flew up from the forest nearby. As I continued searching the burned woodland, I found a pair of American Three-toed Woodpeckers and eventually located their nest cavity. I spent several hours exploring the area and eventually reached the site where the Black-backed Woodpeckers had supposedly nested. To my surprise and disappointment, however, the cavity was now occupied by a Northern Flicker. By 11:00 a.m., temperatures had risen considerably and bird activity had slowed down. I therefore decided to give up the search for the woodpeckers and head down into the valley toward Tok, where I enjoyed lunch at a classic American diner. After lunch, I continued to Yarger Lake, close to the Canadian border, in search of Redhead. Although I failed to find the target species, the lake was beautiful and held large numbers of waterfowl. A Red-winged Blackbird was a new addition to the trip list, while large numbers of Buffleheads, Ring-necked Ducks, American Wigeons, and Common Loons occupied the lake. Lesser Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpipers were displaying along the shoreline. In the evening, I drove back through Tok and continued onward toward Delta Junction. The final birds of the day were a female Northern Harrier and, shortly afterwards, a beautiful adult male hunting low over the surrounding fields. I arrived at Delta Junction around 11:00 p.m. and parked the car for the night.



*View from roadside en route to Tok.*



*American three-toed woodpecker close to Delta Junction*

## Day 9, June 2nd - Delta Junction to Seaward

This morning, I woke up at 4:00 a.m. in the car and immediately set off. It did not take long before I found an Upland Sandpiper standing in a field a few hundred metres away. The bird looked beautiful in the soft morning light and provided an excellent start to the day. Less than five minutes later, I found a displaying Sharp-tailed Grouse. The bird was standing on top of a small rise in an agricultural field, performing its characteristic display with short jumps into the air. This was a behaviour I had always wanted to witness, and it was a fantastic observation in the clear morning air. The next objective was another attempt to find Ruffed Grouse. Throughout the morning, I visited several locations where the species had recently been reported. However, Ruffed Grouse proved to be a difficult target, and after several hours of searching I eventually gave up and began heading south along the Richardson Highway on my way back towards Anchorage. The drive was spectacular. Clear blue skies and snow-covered mountains surrounded the highway, making it one of the most scenic stretches of road I ever experienced. About an hour later, I noticed a grouse standing in the middle of the road some distance ahead. As I approached, I realised that it was a Ruffed Grouse. I quickly pulled over, stepped out of the car, and was able to enjoy excellent views as the bird slowly walked into the forest. After searching for the species all morning, finding one by chance on the road felt almost unreal. Later, I stopped at a remote gas station in the middle of nowhere. Unsure of how far it would be to the next fuel stop, I decided to fill up. Two men were working there. One of them had a large revolver strapped to his chest, while an M14 automatic rifle with a loaded magazine casually rested on a table nearby. When I asked about it, he explained that they were planning to go bear hunting later that day. It was one of those moments that reminded me I was far from home. I made several stops along the highway and managed to see the only Boreal Chickadee of the trip, as well as an Olive-sided Flycatcher perched on the top of a spruce tree. Since the journey south was progressing well, I decided to give White-tailed Ptarmigan one final attempt. I once again drove up to Hatcher Pass, arriving at around 7:00 p.m. Conditions were cloudy and windy, but much of the snow had melted since my previous visit, allowing access to higher elevations. I immediately began climbing the mountainside. The ascent took approximately an hour. After using playback, I heard a White-tailed Ptarmigan calling in the distance. Encouraged, I continued climbing and eventually used playback again. To my delight, the bird responded and walked all the way towards me, eventually approaching to within a metre. Seeing a White-tailed Ptarmigan at such close range was one of the highlights of the trip and an unforgettable moment. After spending some time enjoying the bird, I returned to the car. On the way down, I saw several Hoary Marmots and Collared Pikas, the latter being a new mammal species for me. From Hatcher Pass, I drove back through Anchorage and continued south towards Seward. Just beyond Anchorage, I made a brief stop at Beluga Point, a famous scenic viewpoint where both tourists and locals gather to admire the landscape and, with some luck, spot Beluga Whales in the fjord below. While the belugas remained elusive, I quickly located my target species on the cliffs above the road: Rocky Mountain Goats grazing together with several other Thinhorn sheep. It was a fitting final wildlife observation for the day. I continued driving until fatigue finally caught up with me. Late that night, I pulled into a roadside rest area and slept for a few hours in the car.



*Sharp-tailed grouse displaying at Delta Junction.*



*Ruffed grouse along Richardson Highway.*



*White-tailed ptarmigan high up in Hatchers Pass.*



*White-tailed ptarmigan high up in Hatchers Pass.*



*Lake view on the way to Seaward.*

### **Day 10, June 3rd - Seaward**

I woke up at 5:30 a.m. in the car and drove the final hour and a half to Seaward, arriving at around 7:00 a.m. After parking the car, I boarded a boat with Kenai Fjords Tours at 8:00 a.m. The weather could hardly have been better. The sky was completely clear, temperatures were pleasant, and there was virtually no wind. Standing at the bow of the boat, I enjoyed every minute as we headed out into the fjords. The trip began with excellent views of a female Humpback Whale accompanied by her calf. Further offshore, I recorded my first Rhinoceros Auklets, Marbled Murrelets, Pelagic Cormorants, and a small pod of Dall's Porpoises. As we approached Aialik Glacier, I eventually found the main target species of the day: Kittlitz's Murrelet. This elusive seabird had been high on my wish list, and during the excursion I managed to see approximately 20–30 individuals, many of them exceptionally well. Along the glacier front, numerous Harbour Seals were resting on floating ice and in the calm waters surrounding the glacier. The scenery was spectacular, with towering ice cliffs and snow-covered mountains providing a dramatic backdrop. On the return journey, we passed a large seabird colony dominated by Black-legged Kittiwakes, together with smaller numbers of Horned Puffins and Tufted Puffins. Back in Seaward Harbour at around 2:30 p.m., I continued birding by driving to Lowell Point. Bird activity was still good, and I enjoyed several Townsend's Warblers singing in the forest, together with Varied Thrushes, Rufous Hummingbirds, and Hermit Thrushes. Along the shoreline, groups of Harlequin Ducks and Barrow's Goldeneyes were present, while Sea Otters floated in the sheltered bays. At a local restaurant, I also saw several American Crows, which looked surprisingly small compared to the Ravens that had become so familiar during the trip. As evening approached, I checked into a campsite and once again spent the night sleeping in the car.



*Humpback whale, Seaward.*



*Harbour seal, Seaward.*



*Mountains outside of Seaward.*



*Kittlitz's Murrelet during the pelagic tour.*



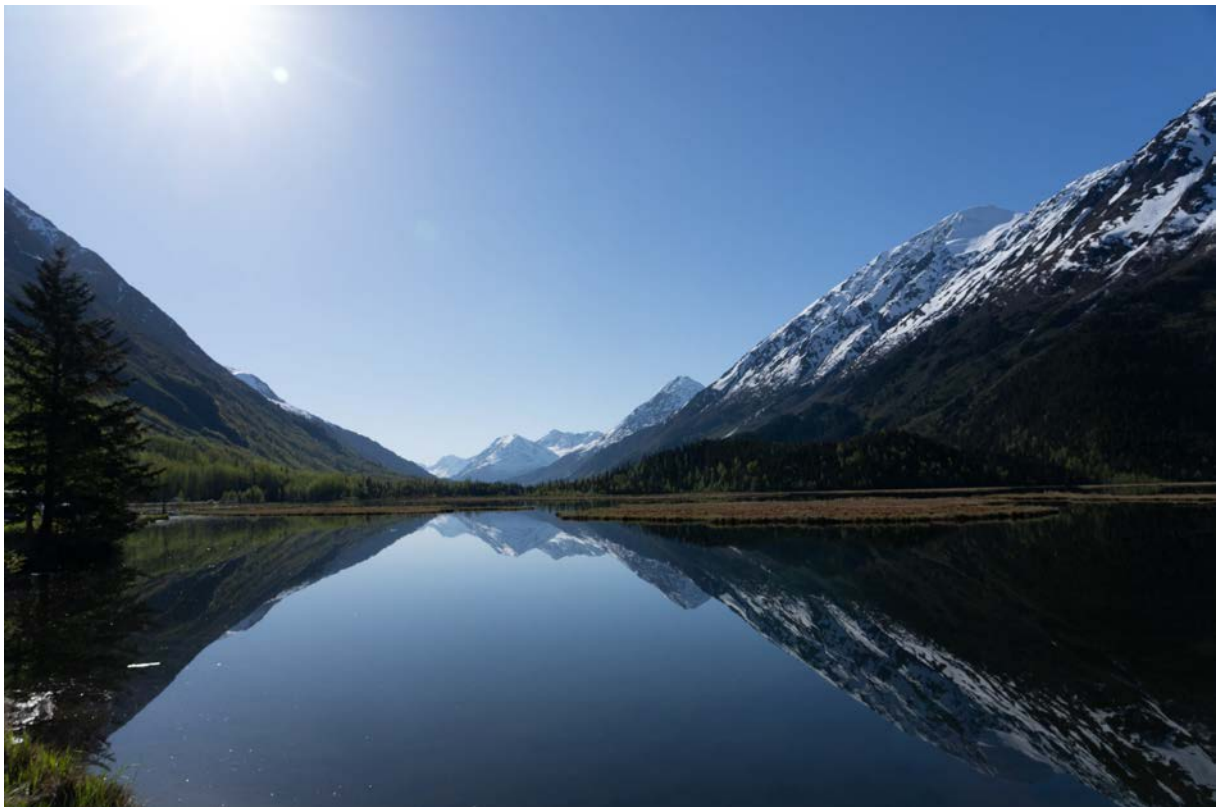
*Temperate rainforest close to Seaward.*



*View from Lowell Point.*

## Day 11, June 4<sup>th</sup> – Seaward to Nome

I woke up at 6:00 a.m. and spent the morning birding around Seward. Several new species were added to the trip list, including Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Brown Creeper, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Afterwards, I slowly began the drive back toward Anchorage. Along the way, I stopped at Tern Lake, where I found a Tufted Duck, an American Beaver, and a nice selection of more common waterbirds, including Common Loon. While talking to some other birders, I learned that a Redhead had recently been reported not far from Anchorage along the highway. Since I still had not seen this species, I decided to try to see the bird. Fortunately, the bird was still present, and I eventually found my lifer Redhead in one of the marshes. A short walk through a nearby wetland also produced a good variety of passerines, including the only Blackpoll Warbler of the trip, several Lincoln's Sparrows, and a Varied Thrush. On the far side of the marsh, I was also fortunate enough to see a female Black Bear accompanied by three cubs. I arrived back in Anchorage at around 11:00 a.m., returned the rental car, and checked in for my flight to Nome. The flight departed on schedule, and I landed in Nome at approximately 4:00 p.m. After arriving, I took a shuttle to the Aurora Inn, where I picked up a rental car. I then drove to my Airbnb, dropped off my luggage, greeted the wonderful family hosting me, and headed straight back out birding. The evening birding around Nome was absolutely fantastic. I drove along the Council Road and spent time at Safety Sound. My main target species for the evening was Emperor Goose. Although I failed to find any Emperor Geese, there was no shortage of other highlights. More than one hundred Sabine's Gulls were feeding over the lagoon, providing spectacular views. Red Phalaropes were common, and many of the characteristic birds of western Alaska were present throughout the area. Another major highlight was seeing my first Muskoxen of the trip. I eventually returned to the Airbnb at around midnight after an excellent first evening in Nome.



*View of Tern Lake on the way from Seaward to Anchorage where tufted duck was found.*



*Yellow-rumped warbler at Lowell Point.*



*Townsend's Warblers at Lowell Point*



*View of Safety Sound, Nome.*



*Red phalarope in Safety Sound, Nome.*

## Day 12, June 5<sup>th</sup> - Nome

I woke up to a beautiful early morning and headed straight back to Safety Sound. On the way there, I once again encountered Muskoxen, this time a family group with calves. Watching these impressive Arctic mammals at close range was one of the highlights of entire trip. A quick stop at Cape Nome produced a nice Stejneger's Scoter among the local White-winged Scoters. Nearby, I also found several Black Turnstones feeding along the shoreline. Continuing along the road, I eventually located two Emperor Geese, one of my main target species for the Nome area. Seeing these beautiful geese was particularly satisfying after having searched unsuccessfully for them the previous evening. Further along the coast, I enjoyed excellent views of Aleutian Terns, one of Alaska's most elegant and sought-after seabirds. I also found my first Eastern Yellow Wagtails of the trip, together with literally thousands of Western Sandpipers and Semipalmated Sandpipers feeding across the mudflats and wetlands. Later in the day, I returned to Safety Sound. The evening birding proved highly productive, with Red-necked Stints among the shorebirds and continued excellent views of Aleutian Terns. The combination of Arctic scenery, vast numbers of shorebirds, Muskoxen, Emperor Geese, and Aleutian Terns made for another memorable day in the Nome area.



*Long-tailed skuas in Safety Sound, Nome*



*Muskoxen, Nome*



*Semipalmated sandpiper, Nome*



*Aleutian tern over breeding colony, Nome.*



*Aleutian tern, Nome.*

## Day 13, June 6th - Nome

This was one of the most anticipated days of the entire trip, as my main goal was to see Bristle-thighed Curlew. I set my alarm for 2:00 a.m., and by 2:20 a.m. I was already driving towards the famous Coffee Dome area. At the beginning of the journey it was still fairly dark, but by around 3:30 a.m. there was enough light to clearly see the surrounding landscape, which reminded me very much of the mountain tundra of northern Sweden. One major difference, however, was the sense of wilderness. Along the entire drive I passed only a handful of houses, while vast expanses of untouched tundra stretched out in every direction. Numerous Muskoxen were seen along the roadside, and I also enjoyed excellent views of at least two hunting Short-eared Owls in the early morning light. As the night slowly turned into morning, the tundra came alive with birdsong. Arctic Warblers sang from the willow thickets, while White-crowned Sparrows and Fox Sparrows were common throughout the area. Hundreds of Snowshoe Hares were also sitting along the roadside. I have rarely seen a mammal so abundant. Whether this reflected a particularly good year for hares or low predator pressure, I do not know, but their numbers were remarkable. I also encountered two much larger Alaskan Hares during the drive. When I arrived at Coffee Dome, the weather was far from ideal. Low cloud, mist, and light rain covered the tundra. I parked the car and walked for about twenty minutes up the gentle slope. Through the fog, I could hear both Greater White-fronted Geese and Cackling Geese. Then, suddenly, I heard the distinctive whistle of a Bristle-thighed Curlew somewhere nearby. Encouraged, I continued into the mist. Before long, I saw a curlew fly past in the distance. Although I was pleased to have located the bird, the observation was brief and made in poor conditions. I therefore sat down and waited. About fifteen minutes later, I heard the whistle again. This time the bird flew back and landed approximately forty metres away, providing excellent views. For several minutes I watched one of the species I had most wanted to see in Alaska before it finally flew off again. It was one of the most satisfying moments of the entire trip. Afterwards, I slowly birded my way back towards Nome. Along the route I found several Arctic Warblers, Grey-cheeked Thrushes, the only American Tree Sparrow of the trip, and two Yellow-billed Loons on Solomon Lake. Back in Nome, I headed directly to Teller Road in search of shorebirds breeding in the uplands. Although I failed to find species such as Surf-bird or Rock Sandpiper, I enjoyed excellent views of both Pacific Golden Plover and American Golden Plover. The only Horned Lark of the trip was also recorded here. After returning briefly to the Airbnb for dinner I headed out once more, this time along the Council Road for one final evening of birding. My target was Gyrfalcon. Earlier in the day I had received information about a nest supposedly located beneath a bridge about an hour beyond Safety Sound. When I arrived, a local family was spending the evening nearby. I asked whether they had seen the falcons, and they told me that the nest actually belonged to Ravens. However, they also mentioned another Gyrfalcon nest about thirty minutes farther down the road. I followed their directions and eventually located the nest. Three chicks were visible, and an adult grey-morph Gyrfalcon was standing on the nest. The views were outstanding. Not wanting to disturb the birds unnecessarily, I watched them briefly before moving on. As I slowly drove back towards Safety Lagoon, the evening became one of the most memorable of the entire journey. Knowing the area was good for bears, I frequently stopped to scan the mountain slopes. Suddenly, I located a large female Grizzly Bear accompanied by no fewer than three cubs. The bears were approximately one and a half kilometres away, but the clear Arctic air and excellent light made for superb views through the scope. I remained there for almost half an hour simply enjoying the scene until the bears disappeared into the willows. It was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the entire trip. Later that evening, I returned to the bridge where the local family had told me Ravens were nesting. Curiosity got the better of me, and I decided to check it myself. To my surprise, it was not a Raven nest but another Gyrfalcon nest after all. Two adult birds were perched on a nearby cliff ledge, providing yet another excellent observation of this magnificent Arctic falcon. A Merlin perched in the top of a nearby birch tree added one final raptor to the day's list. After some final birding around Safety Lagoon, I eventually returned to the Airbnb at around midnight, after 22 hours nonstop birding. It had been an absolutely fantastic day and one of the finest birding days I have ever experienced.



*Dawn on the way to the Coffee Dome.*



*Bristle-thighed curlew on the Coffee Dome.*



*Bristle-thighed curlew on the Coffee Dome.*



*Pacific golden plover, Nome*



*Gyr falcon, grey morph in Nome.*



Grizzly bears. Female last and three cubs in front in Nome.



*Safety Sound filled with swans and geese.*



*Scenery in Nome*



*Black turnstone, Nome*

## Day 14, June 7<sup>th</sup> – Nome to Barrow

I woke up at 5:00 a.m. and spent the morning birding around the mouth of the Nome River. Conditions were excellent, and I enjoyed good views of Aleutian Terns as well as many of the characteristic shorebirds of the area. At 8:00 a.m., I returned the rental car, and at 8:15 a.m. I took the shuttle to the airport. My flight departed at 10:00 a.m. and took me back to Anchorage, where I had a two-hour layover before continuing north to Utqiagvik (Barrow). The flights went smoothly, and upon arrival in Barrow I quickly collected my rental car, drove to the Airbnb, dropped off my luggage, and headed straight out birding. Although I was excited to finally reach Alaska's Arctic coast, my first impression was one of disappointment. Spring was exceptionally late this year, and Barrow was still largely covered in snow and ice. The ponds that would normally hold Spectacled Eiders and Steller's Eiders at this time of year remained completely frozen, and no eiders could be found anywhere. The delayed spring did, however, create a unique birding opportunity. Because so much of the landscape remained snow-covered, shorebirds were concentrated along. The sight was unforgettable. Thousands of Western Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, and Red Phalaropes were feeding only metres from the road, providing outstanding views. Several Sabine's Gulls were also feeding conveniently close to the car, and I recorded my first Snow Geese of the trip. Although the conditions were not what I had hoped for, it was immediately clear that Barrow still had the potential to produce some exceptional birding over the coming days.



*Pin-tailed duck in Barrow.*

## Day 15, June 8th – Barrow

This was my first full day in Barrow and it was clear that I needed to go all in to get my target species, Spectacled eider. I woke up at 4:00 a.m. and began the day with some seawatching in the wintry Arctic landscape. Given the unusually late spring conditions, I felt that this was probably my best opportunity to find the Spectacled Eider. Flocks of King Eiders passed continuously along the coast, but most seabirds were flying too far offshore to allow reliable identification. I think they followed the edge of the pack ice far out in the west. A bonus observation came at around 4:30 a.m., when a Polar Bear walked across the sea ice not far from my observation point. Throughout the morning, Pomarine Skuas flew past together with many of the more common species of the region. During the afternoon, at around 3:00 p.m., the wind began to increase. As conditions changed, the number of migrating seabirds also picked up considerably, and the stronger winds pushed many birds closer to shore, bringing them within identification range. Thousands of Long-tailed Ducks streamed past the coast, accompanied by several hundred King Eiders. I also recorded approximately 50 migrating Pomarine Skuas, 10 Pacific Loons, and 25 Yellow-billed Loons. At one point, I observed three possible Spectacled Eiders. Unfortunately, the birds were simply too distant to allow a completely certain identification, and I was unable to confirm the species. By late afternoon, the weather began to deteriorate. Snow showers moved in, visibility decreased, and conditions steadily worsened. By around 8:00 p.m., strong south-easterly winds, snow, and fog had made birding largely unproductive, and I decided to call it a day. Although I had failed to secure a definite Spectacled Eider, the combination of a Polar Bear and the impressive Arctic bird migration made for another memorable day on Alaska's northern coast.



*Yellow-billed loon in Barrow.*

## Day 16, June 9<sup>th</sup> - Barrow

This morning, I once again woke up at 4:00 a.m. and headed to my seawatching point to continue scanning for eiders. Joining me this morning was a group of Swedish birders who had experienced some difficulties with their rental car and why I invited them to join me until they got their car. Conditions were poor at first. Strong south-easterly winds and persistent snowfall meant that migration was almost non-existent during the first hour of observation. However, as the morning progressed, the weather gradually improved and the first flocks began to appear offshore at around 6 am. Most of the migrating birds were King Eiders, accompanied by smaller numbers of Pacific Common Eiders. Among the King Eider flocks, I noticed several birds that looked promising for Spectacled Eider. Eventually, I managed to photograph one individual well enough to confirm the identification. By around 10:00 a.m., the weather had cleared completely, visibility was excellent, and the first definite flock of six Spectacled Eiders flew past. Although they remained fairly distant, there was no doubt about their identity. We also had several thousands King Eiders on migration north. Based on the day's observations, I estimated that roughly one Spectacled Eider passed for every 500 King Eiders. After several days of searching, finally securing this species was a major highlight of the trip. At long range, the characteristic facial pattern is often difficult to see. However, Spectacled Eiders still give a distinctly different impression from both King and Common Eiders. They appear slightly smaller than King Eiders, with a dark belly extending high up the body and a relatively pale, low-contrast head. At a distance, they almost resemble pale-headed scoters rather than typical eiders. Apart from the eiders, seawatching remained highly productive. Approximately 15 Yellow-billed Loons flew past during the day, together with an estimated 40 Pomarine Skuas. Another memorable observation came when we located a male Snowy Owl perched on a snow-covered ridge. The bird remained in view long enough to provide excellent observations in beautiful Arctic light. During the late afternoon, another period of snowfall moved through the area, reducing visibility once again. Conditions improved later in the evening, however, and we were rewarded with yet another Polar Bear sighting. This time, a female accompanied by two cubs was seen playing on the sea ice approximately one kilometre away. The eider migration continued well into the evening. Among the thousands of King Eiders passing the coast, we were once again able to pick out a small group of Spectacled Eiders. After several days of difficult weather and uncertain sightings, it felt extremely satisfying to finally connect with one of the species that had brought me all the way to Alaska's northernmost coast.



*King eiders and a my first ever spectacled eider (forth bird from the front) on migration north over the pack ice.*



*Spectacled eider, Barrow*



*Snowy owl outside of Barrow.*



*Sabines gull in Barrow.*

## Day 17, June 10<sup>th</sup> - Barrow

Another early morning. This time, migration conditions were noticeably better. Warmer air had arrived from the south, and the day started with a group of Spectacled Eiders flying past my seawatching point. Throughout the morning, I remained on the coast watching migration. In total, I recorded approximately ten Spectacled Eiders together with thousands of King Eiders, together with numerous Pomarine Skuas and Yellow-billed Loons. After checking out of the Airbnb at 11:00 a.m., I decided to spend my final hours in Barrow exploring the ponds and lagoons around town. The warmer weather had clearly arrived, and the snow and ice were melting rapidly. One of the first highlights was finding a Yellow-billed Loon resting in a meltwater lagoon. Seeing this magnificent species on the water rather than in flight was an unforgettable experience. A little later, I was rewarded with my best Spectacled Eider observation of the trip so far. Seven male Spectacled Eiders flew past at close range, no more than forty metres away, providing outstanding views through binoculars. With only a couple of hours remaining before my flight, I continued along Cakeeater Road, checking every newly opened pond and meltwater pool. King Eiders were everywhere, taking advantage of the fresh open water. At the final pool I checked, I found what would become one of the highlights of the entire trip. Among approximately twenty King Eiders was a pair of Spectacled Eiders! I immediately stopped the car and was able to obtain some excellent photographs, shaking by excitement. The setting could hardly have been more Arctic. The pair of Spectacled Eiders floated on a small patch of open water surrounded by snow and ice. Around them were King Eiders, Northern Pintails, Pomarine Skuas, Snow Geese, and Red Phalaropes. It was a spectacular scene and a perfect ending to my time in Barrow. Afterwards, I returned to the airport, refuelled the car, and returned it without any issues. My flight back to Anchorage departed on time, and after arriving I had dinner and took a short walk at Lake Spenard, where I enjoyed some final views of common Alaskan waterbirds, including a few Lesser Scaup. Later that evening, I returned to the hotel for my final night in Alaska. Looking back, it was difficult to believe how much I had experienced during the previous weeks. From the seabird cliffs of St. Paul Island to the Arctic coast of Barrow, the trip had exceeded every expectation.



*American golden plover in snowfall in Barrow.*



*King eiders in Barrow.*



*The much sought-after Spectacled eider in Barrow.*



*Spectacled eider, King eider and Brent Goose in Barrow.*



*Red phalaropes in Barrow.*

## Day 18-19, June 11-12<sup>th</sup> – Journey back to Sweden

The final day of the trip was devoted entirely to travelling home. In the morning, I took a shuttle from my hotel in Anchorage to the airport. From there, I flew from Anchorage to Seattle, continued onward to Reykjavik, Iceland, and finally returned to Stockholm, arriving around lunchtime the following day. The journey home was smooth, and all flights operated on schedule. Looking out of the aircraft window as Alaska disappeared beneath the clouds, it was hard not to reflect on what an extraordinary journey it had been. Over the course of eighteen days, I had travelled from the forests and mountains around Anchorage to the seabird cliffs of St. Paul Island, the fjords of Seward, the tundra of Nome, and finally the Arctic coast of Barrow. Temperatures had varied from 22 °C in Anchorage to – °6 in Barrows. Along the way, I had seen many of the species I had dreamed of for years, including Bristle-thighed Curlew, Spectacled Eider, Kittlitz’s Murrelet, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Red-legged Kittiwake, and Gyrfalcon. But also a rare combination of hummingbirds and high Arctic species. The trip had exceeded every expectation and left me with a strong feeling that I had only scratched the surface of what Alaska has to offer. I am certain that I will return.

## Summary

In total, I recorded 199 bird species and 29 mammal species during the trip. It was an incredibly intense journey, and I learned far more about Alaska’s wildlife and ecosystems than I could have hoped for before arriving. From the seabird cliffs of St. Paul Island and the fjords of Seward to the tundra of Nome and the Arctic coast of Barrow, every destination offered unique experiences and unforgettable wildlife encounters. The trip produced many of my most wanted species, including Bristle-thighed Curlew, Spectacled Eider, Kittlitz’s Murrelet, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Red-legged Kittiwake, and Gyrfalcon. Equally memorable were the mammal observations, particularly Polar Bear, Grizzly Bear, Muskoxen, Humpback Whale, and Sea Otter. Overall, I believe Alaska is one of the finest destinations in the world for wildlife watching, birding, and nature photography. The combination of vast wilderness, abundant wildlife, and excellent accessibility makes it a truly remarkable place to visit. I will definitely return to Alaska and will continue to look into leading groups here.

## Observed bird species

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Comment
1	Tundra Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	Common in both Nome and Barrow.
2	Trumpeter Swan	<i>Cygnus buccinator</i>	Common in the inland forest lakes north of Anchorage.
3	Brant Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	First flock seen on the pelagic trip out of Seward. Common in both Nome and Barrow.
4	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Common around Anchorage.
5	Cackling Goose	<i>Branta hutchinsii</i>	First seen on St. Paul Island (subspecies <i>B. h. leucopareia</i> ). Relatively common in Nome (subspecies <i>B. h. minima</i> ).
6	Emperor Goose	<i>Anser canagicus</i>	Two seen at Safety Lagoon in Nome.
7	Snow Goose	<i>Anser caerulescens</i>	Several seen in Barrow. One of them a blue morph.

8	Greater White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Sparse around marshes and freshwater lakes north of Anchorage. A few seen on St. Paul Island and common in both Nome and Barrow. All of these birds belong to the tundra subspecies <i>A. a. gambelli</i> and look very similar to the Greenland Greater White-fronted Goose.
9	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	Common in Nome and Barrow.
10	Steller's Eider	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	One female seen in Barrow.
11	Spectacled Eider	<i>Somateria fischeri</i>	Only seen in Barrow. Perhaps 20 seen on migration. Seven males flew past at close range and a male and female in a freshwater pond.
12	King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	One female seen on St. Paul Island. A few seen in Nome and thousands on migration in Barrow.
13	Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Common in Nome and Barrow. Pacific subspecies with bright orange bills.
14	Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	By far the most common duck along the rocky shores of St. Paul Island, where hundreds were rafting along the shorelines. Also seen in Seward and Nome.
15	Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta americana</i>	A few seen in Nome.
16	Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
17	White-winged Scoter	<i>Melanitta deglandi</i>	Several seen in Nome.
18	Stejneger's Scoter	<i>Melanitta stejnegeri</i>	One male at Cape Nome.
19	Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage. Surprisingly also seen on St. Paul Island.
20	Barrow's Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala islandica</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
21	Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
22	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	Relatively common in Nome.
23	Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	Relatively common in Nome.
24	Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	A few seen in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
25	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
26	Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	One male in a freshwater marsh between Seward and Anchorage.
27	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	

			One male in a freshwater marsh between Seward and Anchorage and one pair in Barrow.
28	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
29	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	Common pretty much anywhere throughout the trip.
30	Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
31	Falcated Duck	<i>Mareca falcata</i>	One adult male on St. Paul Island.
32	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	Relatively common in inland lakes north of Anchorage.
33	Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	One pair on St. Paul Island.
34	American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	Relatively common in all places.
35	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	A few seen around Anchorage.
36	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Relatively common in all places.
37	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Relatively common in all places.
38	Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	One male along the Richardson Highway south of Delta Junction.
39	Sharp-tailed Grouse	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus</i>	One displaying male on the open fields of Delta Junction.
40	White-tailed Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus leucura</i>	One male in a freshwater marsh between Seward and Anchorage and one pair in Barrow.
41	Rock Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus muta</i>	Common in the mountains around Anchorage and Barrow.
42	Willow Ptarmigan	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	Common in the mountains around Anchorage and in Nome.
43	Spruce Grouse	<i>Canachites canadensis</i>	Four seen in total. One flushed along the road, two seen with the scope flying between trees, and one flushed with a car along a dirt road south of Tok.
44	Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Common around Anchorage.
45	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	Common around Anchorage.
46	Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Common around Anchorage.
47	Sandhill Crane	<i>Antigone canadensis</i>	Common in the forests north of Anchorage and in Nome.
48	American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	Several seen in Nome and common in Barrow.
49	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	One seen on St. Paul Island, several seen in Nome, and a pair seen in Barrow.
50	Semipalmated Plover		

		<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	Seen at several sites throughout the trip.
51	Upland Sandpiper	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	One seen on an open field at Delta Junction.
52	Bristle-thighed Curlew	<i>Numenius tahitiensis</i>	One, possibly two, heard and seen at the famous Coffee Dome, Nome.
53	Hudsonian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>	A few seen in Nome.
54	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	A few seen in Nome.
55	Hudsonian Godwit	<i>Limosa haemastica</i>	Two seen at Westchester Lagoon and two seen at Safety Lagoon, Nome.
56	Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	Seen on St. Paul Island and in Barrow.
57	Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	Seen at Potter Marsh.
58	Wilson's Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	Common in the forests north of Anchorage and in Nome.
59	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	One flushed on St. Paul Island.
60	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	Common in the inland forest lakes north of Anchorage.
61	Red Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	Several seen on St. Paul Island, Nome, and common in Barrow.
62	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Common throughout the trip and, after Rock Sandpiper, the most common wader on St. Paul Island.
63	Wandering Tattler	<i>Tringa incana</i>	One seen on St. Paul Island and one seen in Seward.
64	Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Tringa brevipes</i>	One seen on St. Paul Island.
65	Lesser Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	Common in the inland.
66	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	One heard and seen on St. Paul Island.
67	Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	Fairly common in the inland.
68	Black Turnstone	<i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>	Several seen at Safety Lagoon, Nome.
69	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Several seen on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
70	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	One seen in Nome.
71	Red-necked Stint	<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	Three seen on St. Paul Island and at least two seen in Nome.
72	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Three seen in Barrow.

73	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Seen on St. Paul Island, common in Nome and Barrow.
74	Rock Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ptilocnemis</i>	Common on St. Paul Island.
75	Baird's Sandpiper	<i>Calidris bairdii</i>	One seen in Nome.
76	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	Seen on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
77	Semipalmated Sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>	Common in Nome and Barrow.
78	Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	Common on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
79	Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	Two seen on St. Paul Island.
80	Parasitic Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Several seen in Nome and common in Barrow.
81	Long-tailed Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	Common in Nome.
82	Pomarine Jaeger	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	One seen in Nome, common in Barrow both as a nesting bird and on migration.
83	Rhinoceros Auklet	<i>Cerorhinca monocerata</i>	Several seen on the pelagic trip from Seward.
84	Tufted Puffin	<i>Fratercula cirrhata</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island and on the pelagic trip from Seward.
85	Horned Puffin	<i>Fratercula corniculata</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island and on the pelagic trip from Seward.
86	Least Auklet	<i>Aethia pusilla</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island.
87	Crested Auklet	<i>Aethia cristatella</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island.
88	Parakeet Auklet	<i>Aethia psittacula</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island.
89	Ancient Murrelet	<i>Synthliboramphus antiquus</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island.
90	Marbled Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>	Seen well in Seward.
91	Kittlitz's Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus brevirostris</i>	About 20 seen along a glacier on the pelagic trip from Seward.
92	Pigeon Guillemot	<i>Cepphus columba</i>	Seen on the Seward pelagic trip.
93	Thick-billed Murre	<i>Uria lomvia</i>	Common on St. Paul Island. Some also seen in Barrow.
94	Common Murre	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Seen on the Seward pelagic trip.
95	Aleutian Tern	<i>Onychoprion aleuticus</i>	Seen well in Nome.
96	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Seen throughout the trip.
97	Red-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa brevirostris</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island.
98	Black-legged Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Common along coastlines throughout the trip.

99	Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	Seen well on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
100	Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>	Fairly common in the inland.
101	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Two seen in the inland.
102	Short-billed Gull	<i>Larus brachyrhynchus</i>	Common throughout the trip.
103	American Herring Gull	<i>Larus smithsonianus</i>	Common around Anchorage.
104	Vega Gull	<i>Larus vegae</i>	One 2cy bird at Safety Lagoon, Nome.
105	Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	Common in Nome and Barrow.
106	Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	Common in Seward and St. Paul Island.
107	Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Common in Nome and Barrow.
108	Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	Common in the inland.
109	Yellow-billed Loon	<i>Gavia adamsii</i>	Two seen in Solomon Lake, Nome. Seen in good numbers on migration in Barrow. One seen in a meltwater pool.
110	Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	Common in the inland, Nome, and Barrow.
111	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Seen at nesting sites on St. Paul Island.
112	Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>	Several seen on the pelagic trip from Seward.
113	Red-faced Cormorant	<i>Urile urile</i>	Common on St. Paul Island.
114	Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Urile pelagicus</i>	Several seen on St. Paul Island and on the pelagic trip from Seward.
115	Rufous Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>	Common in Seward.
116	Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	One seen well in and around a nest box just outside Anchorage.
117	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Several seen hunting in Nome.
118	Snowy Owl	<i>Bubo scandiacus</i>	One adult male in Barrow.
119	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Several seen in the inland.
120	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	One seen soaring among the mountains at Hatcher Pass.
121	Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	One flying across the highway in the inland.
122	American Goshawk	<i>Astur atricapillus</i>	Two seen soaring above the highway in the inland.
123	Northern Harrier	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	

			One male and one female seen close to Delta Junction.
124	Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Several seen in the inland.
125	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	Several seen in Nome.
126	Red-tailed buzzrd		Several seen in the inland.
127	Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	Several seen in the inland.
128	American Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides dorsalis</i>	Several seen in the inland.
129	Downy Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates pubescens</i>	One seen in Kincaid Park.
130	Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Leuconotopicus villosus</i>	Two seen in the inland.
131	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	One seen in the inland and one seen in Nome.
132	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	One seen at Safety Lagoon in Nome.
133	Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>	Four adults seen at nest sites in Nome.
134	Alder Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax alnorum</i>	Seen around Seward and in Kincaid Park.
135	Olive-sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	One seen in a tree top in the inland.
136	Northern Shrike	<i>Lanius borealis</i>	Two seen in Nome.
137	Canada Jay	<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>	Two families seen in the inland.
138	Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	Several seen in Anchorage and in Seward.
139	Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica hudsonia</i>	Common around Anchorage and in the inland.
140	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common throughout the trip.
141	American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	Common around Seward.
142	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	<i>Poecile rufescens</i>	Several heard and one seen in Seward.
143	Boreal Chickadee	<i>Poecile hudsonicus</i>	One seen along the Richardson Highway.
144	Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapilla</i>	Several seen around Anchorage and in the inland.
145	Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	One seen on a mountain slope in Nome.
146	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Several seen around Anchorage and in the inland.
147	Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Several seen around Anchorage and in the inland.
148	Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	Several seen around Anchorage and in the inland.
149	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	

			Several seen around Anchorage and in the inland.
150	American Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	Seen in the inland and Nome.
151	Arctic Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus borealis</i>	Several heard and one seen in Nome.
152	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Corthylio calendula</i>	Common around Anchorage and in the inland.
153	Golden-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	Common around Anchorage and in the inland.
154	Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	One seen in Seward.
155	Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	One seen in Seward.
156	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Common around Anchorage.
157	American Dipper	<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>	One seen along the road to Hatcher Pass.
158	Varied Thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>	Fairly common in the inland and seen well several times.
159	Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>	Common around Anchorage and in the inland.
160	Grey-cheeked Thrush	<i>Catharus minimus</i>	Common around Nome.
161	Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	Common around Anchorage, Seward, and in the inland.
162	American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	Common in the inland and Nome.
163	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	One seen in Arctic Valley.
164	Eastern Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla tschutschensis</i>	Several seen in Nome.
165	Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>	One seen in Barrow.
166	American Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	Several seen at Arctic Valley.
167	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	One male seen on St. Paul Island.
168	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	One seen on St. Paul Island.
169	Grey-crowned Rosefinch	<i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i>	Two seen in Hatcher Pass and common on St. Paul Island.
170	Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	Common in the inland and in Nome. Also noted in Barrow.
171	Two-barred Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	One flock in the inland and seen well in Seward.

172	Pine Siskin	<i>Spinus pinus</i>	Common in the inland.
173	Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Common on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
174	Lapland Longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	Common on St. Paul Island, Nome, and Barrow.
175	American Tree Sparrow	<i>Spizelloides arborea</i>	One heard singing and briefly seen on the way back from Coffee Dome, Nome.
176	Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	Common around Anchorage and in the inland.
177	Golden-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>	Common in the mountains. Several seen on St. Paul Island.
178	White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	Common in the inland, Nome, and Barrow.
179	Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	Common in the inland and Nome.
180	Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	One seen outside Seward.
181	Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>	Seen at several locations around Anchorage and in the inland.
182	Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Several seen at Yarger Lake.
183	Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	Several seen in the inland and in Nome.
184	Northern Waterthrush	<i>Parkesia noveboracensis</i>	Several seen in the inland and in Nome.
185	Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Leiothlypis celata</i>	Common in the inland and Nome.
186	Blackpoll Warbler	<i>Setophaga striata</i>	One female on a stop between Seward and Anchorage.
187	American Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga aestiva</i>	Common in the inland and Nome.
188	Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	Common in the inland.
189	Townsend's Warbler	<i>Setophaga townsendi</i>	Several seen around Seward.
190	Wilson's Warbler	<i>Cardellina pusilla</i>	Common throughout the trip.
191	European Golden plover	<i>Pluvialis apicaria</i>	One at Reykjavik Airport.

### Observed mammal species

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Comment
1	Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>	One seen crossing the road in the inland.
2	Arctic Fox	<i>Vulpes lagopus</i>	Common around St. Paul Island and several seen in Barrow.
3	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	One seen in Nome and one in Barrow.
4	American Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>	A total of five seen around Anchorage.
5	Brown Bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>	One mother with three cubs seen in Nome.
6	Polar Bear	<i>Ursus maritimus</i>	A total of five seen on the pack ice around Barrow.

7	Northern Fur Seal	<i>Callorhinus ursinus</i>	Common along the shoreline of St. Paul Island.
8	Steller Sea Lion	<i>Eumetopias jubatus</i>	Seen on the pelagic trip from Seward.
9	Bearded Seal	<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>	One seen in the water near Nome.
10	Harbor Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Seen around St. Paul Island and on the pelagic trip from Seward.
11	Sea Otter	<i>Enhydra lutris</i>	Several seen around Seward.
12	Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>	Several seen in the inland and around Nome.
13	Caribou	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	One seen along the road in the inland.
14	Rocky Mountain Goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>	Several seen on steep cliffs in the inland.
15	Muskox	<i>Ovibos moschatus</i>	Several groups seen around Nome.
16	Thinhorn Sheep	<i>Ovis dalli</i>	Seen on the slopes above Beluga Point.
17	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Several seen on the pelagic trip from Seward.
18	Dall's Porpoise	<i>Phocoenoides dalli</i>	One group seen on the pelagic trip from Seward.
19	Eastern Little Brown Myotis	<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	One seen along the road in the inland.
20	Snowshoe Hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>	Common in the inland and Nome.
21	Alaskan Hare	<i>Lepus othus</i>	Two seen on the drive to Coffee Dome, Nome.
22	Collared Pika	<i>Ochotona collaris</i>	Several seen at Hatcher Pass.
23	North American Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	Several seen well in Arctic Valley and the inland.
24	Hoary Marmot	<i>Marmota caligata</i>	Several seen at Hatcher Pass.
25	North American Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	Common in the inland.
26	Arctic Ground Squirrel	<i>Urocitellus parryii</i>	Several seen in the mountains in the inland.
27	North American Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>	One seen at Tern Lake on the drive from Seward.
28	Nearctic Brown Lemming	<i>Lemmus trimucronatus</i>	One seen in Barrow town.
29	Northern Red-backed vole	<i>Myodes rutilus</i>	One seen in Kincide Park.