

## Iceland – July 2020

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*Main targets for this Iceland trip were Arctic Fox, which was relatively easy to find in Hornstrandir, and a handful of bird species that are rather difficult to encounter (in breeding plumage) elsewhere in Europe. Avian highlights included Brünnich's Guillemot, Barrow's Goldeneye, Red Phalarope, Great Northern Diver, Pink-footed Goose, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Horned Grebe, Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit and Merlin. A Gyr Falcon that had just caught a Puffin on a bird cliff was a great bonus sighting. Other rewarding mammal sightings were Humpback Whale and (well) American Mink. Frustrating was dipping on White-beaked Dolphin (trips cancelled because of bad weather).*



Arctic Fox

### Itinerary

- July 7 Arrival Iceland – Gardur/Gardur Lighthouse
- July 8 Long drive to Ísafjörður area
- July 9 Boat to Hornstrandir – Camp at Hornstrandir
- July 10 Hornstrandir – late afternoon boat back to Ísafjörður – overnight Sudavík
- July 11 Long drive from Sudavík to Daeli – evening visit Vatnsnes Peninsula
- July 12 Drive to Myvatn via Blonðuos, Akureyri and Husavík – Whale watching in husavík
- July 13 All day in Myvatn area
- July 14 Daytrip to Borgarfjörður Eystri
- July 15 Daytrip to Kopasker area and Ásbyrgi/Raudholar/Dettifoss
- July 16 Drive from Myvatn to Snaefallsness (Hellissandur)
- July 17 Full day Snaefallsness
- July 18 Day visit Flatey Island and afternoon/evening Svörtuloft area – overnight Borgarnes
- July 19 Drive back to Keflavik International Airport/Gardur area via Krisuvik and Reykjanesfólkvangur

## Weather

When we arrived, weather was great by Icelandic standards – sunny, light cloud and obviously positively balmy at 14-15 °C for the average Icelandic person since we encountered a disturbing number of people in t-shirts/shorts and bathing suits. This lasted two days and then Icelandic weather lived up to its reputation: we had rather unpredictable weather until the very last day. Daytime temperatures typically ranged between 8 and 12 °C. Especially during the second half of the trip, we had quite a lot of rain and showers, and our stay in the Snaefalssness area was somewhat spoiled by a proper storm that lasted 2.5 days (and thus all whalewatching tours being cancelled).

## Timing

This trip was not “timed” at all, but kind of presented itself as a last-minute option within the travel limitations set by Covid-19. As a result, pre-trip preparation was rather minimal and we basically made the route up as we went. It would probably have been better to go in from mid-May to June when both the whalewatching and birding tends to be more productive, but work restrictions prevented that. Mid-July was just ok to see most birds in breeding plumage, but most of the male ducks had or were starting to leave the breeding grounds. Harlequin Ducks and Barrow’s Goldeneyes were already starting to moult. Great time though to photograph females with juveniles and birds nesting on cliffs. Despite Covid-19 it was remarkably busy throughout the country at the usual tourist hotspots, although locals complained that business had been down significantly, so maybe not a bad year to visit Iceland in July. We avoided the so-called golden triangle in the southwest where the bulk of the tourists go.



*Fulmars*



## Areas Visited

### Gardur area

This unassuming looking area was surprisingly productive with 35-40 species in maybe 4-5 hours of birding in total. We drove on quiet tracks around the village, took some walks around the hotel and posted for an hour or so at the lighthouse. Highlights included Ptarmigan, Manx Shearwater, Fulmar, Gannet, and Purple Sandpiper. Razorbills, Guillemots and Puffins can be seen and identified with a scope (and to some extent binoculars) but views are typically rather distant. There are also large Arctic Tern and gull colonies in the area. A lot of the commoner birds (waders, terns, etc.) are fairly easy to approach and photograph. We stayed at the Lighthouse Inn in Gardur, which was friendly, cozy rooms and good birding around the accommodation. We rented an SUV at the airport from Lotus Car rental, which were fine.

### Ísafjörður and Önundarfjörður

Because the hotels in Ísafjörður were pretty much fully booked we stayed at Holt Inn in Önundarfjörður about 20-25 minutes south of Ísafjörður on our first night in the area (overpriced, smallish room, but otherwise fine, nice location and friendly owners). Decent birding in the Önundarfjörður area including Red-necked Phalarope, Whimbrel, Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit, and Glaucous Gull. The small village of Flateyri used to have a pretty decent restaurant but much to our dismay it had recently closed and the only alternative was a bowl of fish soup in a small lunchroom, which luckily was still open in the early evening. When we returned from Hornstrandir, we ate in Edinborg Bistro in Ísafjörður town (simple but tasty food) but we had to stay in Sudavik guesthouse, which was ok but again overpriced and the “self check-in” was messy and rather unprofessional.



*Razorbills (Hornstrandir) and Gannets*

### Hornstrandir and Westfjords

The Westfjords and Hornstrandir used to be wild and remote country until about twenty years ago but it was evident that the entire area (just like much of Iceland) had been experiencing a tourism boom in recent years. This makes travelling and logistics a lot easier, but having Hornstrandir to yourself in summer is largely a thing of the past. Nevertheless, we went to there because it is the best place to see Arctic Fox and it is the only part of the country where they are not hunted. And the scenery is stunning. Good birding too. In hindsight we should probably have stayed longer in this area. After seeing the fox in Hornstrandir, we did not visit Latrabjarg (which is another good site for the fox and has spectacular bird cliffs) but we probably should have.

For the Hornstrandir visit, we contacted Borea Adventures; very professional and well-organised. We opted for convenience and also hired a guide, which was not really necessary, but our guide was excellent. She

was first a kayaker and hiker, but she had good allround knowledge of the wildlife and flora in the area (and Iceland in general). Borea have their own camp in Hornstrandir, which was very luxurious and pleasant (pretty much glamping). And our guide prepared excellent food. Despite all the hiking, don't expect to lose weight; they had so much nice food it was difficult to resist.

We first visited the bird colonies at Hjornbjarg. A June visit would be better for higher occupancy at the nesting sites but there still were impressive numbers of seabirds nesting. Activity was non-stop. It is a good place to see and photograph both Common and Brünnich's Guillemot, Fulmar and Black-legged Kittiwake on the cliffs. Razorbill and Puffin were present as well but only a few were seen on the cliffs. You will see dozens of both species though flying back and forth to the cliffs (in the unlikely event you have not yet seen hundreds on the boat ride in). Only a few Gannets were seen.

Southwest of Hjornbjarg is a large bowl-like area which is a flat floodplain that is partly sandy and partly marshy. The campsite is at the northwestern sandy end (right at the bay). The entire floodplain area, the bird cliff area and the connecting area are all good for Arctic Fox. During our visit the beach and directly adjacent areas were particularly good for the fox. In the late evening I explored the northeastern end of the floodplain area and the bay end where I could follow the antics of a fox hunting off and on for about 1.5 hours from about 22-23.30 hours. This animal was quite shy and I had to hide in the vegetation to let him/her come closer (see photos of the fox with prey on the beach at the end of the report). During our stay there was another relatively tame fox that would sometimes come down to the actual campsite (in our case at 9 am in the morning).



On our way out of Hornstrandir (south) we also saw an Arctic Fox from a viewpoint along the trail in the marshes down at the southern end of the floodplain (more or less here in a 500 metre circle: 66°24'35.20"N, 22°29'16.84"W). The hike out across the pass to one of the southern fjord arms of the peninsula had great



views but was rather birdless. But at the other end we did encounter an American Mink along the shore. The boat ride back was rather tedious but just before we entered the fjord in which Ísafjörður is located we encountered at least two Minke Whales but they were rather shy and the boat did not stop or slow down for them because we were way behind schedule.



*Hornstrandir*

### **Daeli area / Vatnsnes Peninsula**

Daeli was a stopover on our way too Husavik/Myvatn from the Westfjords. We stayed in Daeli Guesthouse (Ferðapjónustan Daeli). Accommodation was a little non-descript but otherwise fine and very friendly owners. Good breakfast. Quiet area. We made an evening outing to Vatnsnes Peninsula, which is usually good for both seal species (true on our visit). Arctic Fox is supposed to occur (at least 20-30 years ago it did, we did not see any). Birding was not that exciting, all in all a slightly disappointing area but weather was not great either when we visited (strong wind and frequent showers).



*Seals playing (Vatnsnes peninsula)*

## Husavik

A nice enough but touristy town. We only went there for one whale-watching trip, which was good fun, but unfortunately “only” Humpback Whales showed up. Good activity of the whales though. We took a RIB trip with Gentle Giants, which were good.



*Humpback Whale*

## Myvatn

An interesting but very touristy area. We mainly went to Myvatn for several key birds (Barrow’s Goldeneye, Gyr Falcon and Harlequin Duck) and some lightweight hiking and tourist stuff (geysirs, Dimmuborgir, Krafla, area, etc.). Initially we wanted to spend 2-3 days in the direct Myvatn area, but the weather was again pretty unstable, or maybe more accurately “typical”. We had heavy cloud and frequent showers and rain during most of our stay, which was a little annoying. It was also very windy on two days. In the end we stayed four nights but used the area as a base to explore the wider area (see below) and just drove to the closest area with the least worst weather forecast. This worked quite well and Myvatn is actually located quite strategically to visit a number key birding and tourist sites in the north(east) and it is only 45-60 minutes from Husavik.



*Red-necked Phalarope*



*Redshank*

Birding in the Myvatn area was not as spectacular as I had expected, but still good. Mid-July is also a little late in the season. Male Harlequin Ducks appeared to have left the area; we did not encounter any. We only



saw a few females with ducklings. Barrow's Goldeneye males were already starting to moult. I spoke to two rangers and asked for information on Gyrfalcon; they indicated that it had been rather difficult to find them this year at their regular haunts in the Dimmuborgir area – they appeared to be breeding elsewhere. They recommended the western side of Myvatn to look for this species, but we did not see them there.

In Myvatn we first stayed at the Laxa Hotel, which was great and had excellent food (the starter and dessert were heavenly, main course was good). We then stayed at Dimmuborgir guesthouse, which birders seem to use quite often. We stayed in the smaller rooms, which were extremely cramped and poor value imho. The shower didn't work one evening. Not exactly friendly or welcoming either when we were there. It was clean though and the guest kitchen was spotless and well-equipped. Personally, I thought the hotels/guesthouses at the southern end of Myvatn are in a nicer and quieter location, and have quicker access to several good birding sites.

### **Borgarfjörður Eystri**

This is often advertised as the best place to see and photograph puffins in Iceland. I was a little skeptical at first but it is probably true for mainland Iceland. The puffin-watching place is very accessible and the puffin watching is indeed amazing (birds are 1-2 metres away from you). Being in the northeast, I hoped and kind of expected that it would be relatively quiet, but this was naïve: lots of screaming excited kids and parents that got quickly bored after the first Instagram post (or was it the other way around). Nevertheless, good fun. Apart from the puffins there are typically only kittiwakes and fulmars at the puffin site. But the birding around the town was ok (mainly waders, ducks, and gulls though).

We visited the area as a day trip from Myvatn. The ring road from Myvatn to the Borgarfjörður Eystri area cuts through the scenically interesting "interior" with its dry black-lava desert landscapes. This route was the best place to encounter Pink-footed Goose, but was otherwise fairly birdless. If you descend from the highland plateau into the east, you enter unexciting cattle country. Only the area around Borgarfjörður Eystri and the large floodplain north of Egilsstaðir were interesting from a birding/wildlife perspective. We did not encounter Reindeer but also did not look for them.



*Atlantic Puffin (left) and "Spectacled" and Brunnich's Guillemot (right)*

### **Melrakkasletta / Kopasker area**

We visited this peninsula to escape more bad weather in Myvatn and on the way you pass several famous waterfalls (including Dettifoss), the Raudholar/Hljoðaklettur area and Asbyrgi canyon, which are worth a stop. The Melrakkasletta peninsula is said to be a good place for Arctic Fox (Melrak is the Iceland name for the fox) but we did not encounter them although we visited at the worst hours of the day. It is the only place in Iceland that features proper tundra and it indeed has a slightly different feel. Birding was pretty good. We visited some bird cliffs at the northern end of the peninsula that provided great views of both guillemots, razorbills, puffins. On the tundra there were several large Arctic Tern colonies, and lots of the

commoner waders. Highlights in the area included a Gyr Falcon that had just caught a puffin and two Short-eared Owls hunting over meadows.

### **Snaefallsness area**

An interesting area but on our arrival day and our full day here (July 15-16) there was a full-blast storm and we avoided cliff edges at the western tip and along the northern coast because there was a real risk of being blown off. Even the car struggled a bit at two very exposed areas. At the southern end things were more manageable and we spent most of our time there. Most interesting from a wildlife perspective were the Arnarstapi area and Londrangar Cliffs (seabirds, cetaceans in good weather), Ytri Tunga (seals, waders), and the lakes between Budhir and Ytri Tunga (wetland species). The black church at Budhir is worth a stop as well.

On the last day in the area the storm had died down enough to allow a visit to the spectacular bird cliffs at Svörtuloft Lighthouse, which provides great opportunities for seabird photography (and cetacean watching in better weather but Öndverdarnes should be even better for that). The cliffs are especially good for Razorbills, guillemots, and the usual kittiwakes and fulmars. Puffins are relatively scarce, but you should see a handful. The actual nature reserve at the western tip of the peninsula look interesting (and should be good for Arctic Fox in decent weather), but it was just too stormy and rainy to explore this area properly. The Rif-Olafsvik area was also quite productive especially for ducks, waders and gulls. Arctic Skuas also seemed to like this area.

We stayed in Hellissandur in the functional but otherwise fine Hotel Hellissandur. Due to Covid-19 measures there was no staff and you had to do a “self check-in” but getting into the hotel was a bit of a challenge. You had to call some phone number to get an entrance code but if the staff (sounded like it might have been one person) couldn’t handle the number of phone calls, you would get an answering machine with a message in Icelandic. Great! After several tries, we finally got through on the phone and managed to get into the hotel. A slightly more informative note at the hotel entrance to explain this would have been nice. Otherwise, no complaints and one of the more affordable accommodation options in the area. Hellissandur features one of the best restaurants in the country, Viðvík Restaurant, and the food was indeed amazing. Excellent wine too. Recommended!



*Londrangar Cliffs / Hornstrandir / Budhir*

### **Flatey Island**

A visit to this island was not planned but since the weather was still rather stormy in the Snaefellsness area and all whale watching trips remained cancelled, we decided this was the best of all lesser options with the bonus option of possibly ticking Red Phalarope in its attractive breeding plumage. We took the morning ferry and had to return with the early afternoon ferry (less frequent schedule this year because of Covid-19). I can’t remember exactly but this gave us something like 3.5 hours on the island, which was just enough to tick the key species but a little tight in hindsight to fully enjoy the island. Nevertheless, given the weather this turned out to be an enjoyable outing.

Birds on the island are generally pretty relaxed and opportunities for bird photography are excellent. Dunlin, Common Redshank, Common Snipe, Red-necked phalarope and Arctic tern were all very common. We found Black Guillemots breeding/sheltering in the rocks near the harbour. We saw Snow Buntings in the rocky areas directly near the harbour and in the puffin areas. Puffins are usually on the rocks in this area



(65°22'40.26"N, 22°54'33.72"W), but the wind was very strong on the northern side of the island during our visit which made photography challenging. The Red Phalaropes were not at one of their usual haunts (the marshy sweet water areas in the west of the island, look for example at 65°22'24.39"N, 22°55'34.24"W) but eventually I found a pair in a large group of Red-necked Phalaropes right in front of the main houses and hotel on the island. Both ferry trips were remarkably eventless: puffins, fulmars, the occasional auk species and some gulls were the only species seen. According to a local, the ferry trips almost never produce sightings of cetaceans.



*Both phalarope species*

### **Reykjanesfólkvangur**

To our surprise it was remarkably busy here. There is not much to see here except for some moderately interesting geyser activity. We visited this area to kill some time before going back to the airport. Only common birds. Not worth a visit imho.

### **Krisuvík Bird Cliffs**

The cliffs are impressive but viewing of the nesting seabirds is really poor. The only birds that you can see relatively nearby are kittiwakes, fulmars and a few guillemots and shags. For razorbills, puffins, etc. you need a scope and even then views tend to be distant. I also spent an hour scanning the sea with my scope (calm and sunny weather) because dolphins and rarely other cetaceans can be seen from here. No such luck. If you plan to visit Snaefellsness, Hornstrandir or Latrabjarg, I wouldn't bother visiting these cliffs. The entrance road needs to be driven with care. Lots of pointy stones, a puncture is not unlikely.

On our way back south we stayed in Bogarnes in Hotel B59 (great rooms and good food) and the Airport hotel in Keflavík (convenient but rather expensive; food was ok, but not exactly something to look out for).



*Gannets*





*American Mink*



*Young Arctic Fox*

## **Mammal List**

European Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* – a few in the Reykjavik area

Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* – at least two near Ísafjörður, seen from the ferry from Hornstrandir back to Ísafjörður

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* – at least 6 different animals on the whale watching trip near Husavik

Arctic Fox *Vulpes lagopus* – four adults and six puppies in Hornstrandir

American Mink *Mustela vison* – one in the Westfjords in the Hornstrandir area

Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* – (at least) one at on the Vatnsnes Peninsula, Snaefellsness, and several along Route 61 in the Westfjords

Common Seal *Phoca vitulina* – seen on Vatnsnes Peninsula, Ytri Tunga (Snaefellsness) and along Route 61 in the Westfjords



*Humpback Whale*





*Atlantic Puffin, Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, and Black-legged Kittiwake*

## Bird List

Graylag Goose *Anser anser* – common along the coast and in wetland areas

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* – 50+ between Myvatn and Egilsstadir along the ring road, a group of eight near Miklibaer

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* – common, especially along the coast and in wetland areas

Gadwall *Mareca strepera* – only seen in Myvatn

Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope* – fairly common, many at Myvatn and sometimes large congregations in coastal areas, also seen near Gardur and the Langavatn area in Snaefallsness

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* – locally common, but usually only about 2-8, among other places seen in Myvatn, Gardur, Langavatn area and Blonðuos area

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* – four seen once in Myvatn

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca* – probably under-recorded but birds tended to keep to vegetation (probably in heavy moult). No males in breeding plumage seen.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* – locally (very) common, seen among other places in Myvatn, Vikingavatn, Langavatn area in Snaefallsness, and Ísafjörður area

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* – locally common, seen among other places in Myvatn, Vikingavatn, Borgarfjörður Eystri area and Snaefallsness area

Common Eider *Somateria mollissima* – common, males already in large moulting groups along the coast, some males still in full breeding plumage

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus* – only a few seen in Myvatn (all female/eclipse plumage), a group of at least 100 in Hornstrandir (mainly males, most still in breeding plumage). Three males and one female in Borgarfjörður Eystri.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra* – two female-type birds in Myvatn

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* – common in Myvatn

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* – a female in Asbyrgi

Barrow's Goldeneye *Bucephala islandica* – fairly common in Myvatn, most males still in breeding plumage

Common Merganser *Mergus merganser* – a male in the Hornstrandir

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* – common along the 61 in the northwest, Hornstrandir and coastal areas in the north, also at Borgarfjörður Eystri and Snaefallsness

Rock Ptarmigan *Lagopus muta* – only seen in the Gardur area where surprisingly common and fairly confiding

Horned a.k.a. Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* – not as common as expected but frequently seen in the north. Most easily seen in the north (i.e., east of Blonðuos), Myvatn, Borgarfjörður Eystri area (esp. near Husey) and Egilsstadir area, and Vikingavatn.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* – urban areas

Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* – locally common, easiest to see along the coast (including Gardur, Snaefallsness, Borgarfjörður Eystri, Hornstrandir, Melrakkasletta, Vatnsnes peninsula, etc.)

European Golden-Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* – locally common to common, seen on most days but usually <10 daily (easiest at Gardur, Myvatn, Westfjords and Snaefallsness)

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* – (locally) common in most areas visited, also in central Island in desert areas

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* – common in most areas visited, seen on most days but usually <20 daily

Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica* – usually seen in low numbers (2-5) in appropriate meadow habitat. Larger congregations (15-20) on meadows where the grass had just been mowed. Seen

throughout the country including Myvatn, Snaefallsness, Holt/Flateyri area, Lon, and the Borgarfjörður Eystri area

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* – seen at Gardur, Ytri Tunga, and Hornstrandir among other places

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* – locally common, among other areas seen at Flatey Island, Myvatn, a few at Gardur, Ytri Tunga, Rif, Langavatn area in Snaefallsness

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* – inconspicuous, seen at Ytri Tunga, Kopasker area and Gardur

Eurasian Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* – surprise sighting in a wooded area near Varmahlid

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* – amazingly common, typically seen or heard in double digits on most days. Quite tame on Flatey. Many at Myvatn.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* – locally common, good numbers at Hornstrandir, Holt Hotel/Flateyri area, Rif (Snaefallsness), Flatey Island, Kopasker area, and Myvatn

Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* – at least one male and female (and possibly two juveniles) on Flatey Island. Definitely not easy to see at this time of year.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* – common to very common, seen daily

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* – one at Gardur, three at Vikingavatn

Arctic Skua aka Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus* – commoner than expected, seen on most days.

Snaefallsness appeared particularly good for this species, but also Gardur and in the Borgarfjörður Eystri area near Korekstadhir



Arctic Skua



Atlantic Puffin

Common Murre aka Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* – seen at Hornstrandir, Krisuvik, Snaefallsness (Svörtúloft, Hellnar, Londrangar), Gardur, Raudinupur; Svörtúloft was the best place to get close views of the bridled form of this species.

Thick-billed Murre aka Brünnich's Guillemot *Uria lomvia* – seen at Hornstrandir, Krisuvik, Snaefallsness (Svörtúloft, Hellnar, Londrangar) and Raudinupur. At Gardur Lighthouse it is possible to see them as well but I was not able to identify any positively.



Razorbill



Black Guillemot



Razorbill *Alca torda* – Hornstrandir area: many at sea and in flight, four seen on the cliffs; Svörtúloft: common both on the cliffs and at sea, Krisuvikbjarg: telescope needed for cliff birds, moderate numbers at sea, regularly seen passing in flight at Gardur Lighthouse

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* – first seen along the Route 61 in the fjords in the northwest, easy to see at Flatey, also seen at Vatnsnes Peninsula and in the Kopasker area

Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica* – Hornstrandir area: many at sea and in flight from the cliffs, just one seen fairly distantly nesting on the cliffs; Svörtúloft: common at sea and on the cliff but only a dozen nearby on the cliffs, Krisuvikbjarg: telescope needed for cliff birds, moderate number at sea, thousands at very close range in Borgarfjörður Eystri, several dozen at Raudinupur, good numbers at Skeidsöxl

Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* – common at practically every cliff area along the coast, also common at coastal lakes and wetlands

Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* – common, seen daily

Mew Gull *Larus canus* – very scarce, a few seen in the east near Egilsstaðir and small numbers in Myvatn

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* – only seen in the Gardur/Keflavik airport area and near Reykjavik

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides* – very scarce at this time of year, a few seen between Helissandur and Gardurfjörður

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* – common, seen daily

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* – common on Snaefallsness, fairly common in Hornstrandir and Isafjörður area, regular sightings in the north (Akureyri/Blonðuos/Husavik area), a few in the Gardur area

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* – common, seen daily

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* – common to abundant, seen daily

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* – seen on most days, most common in the Kopasker area, near Husey/Korekstadhir in the east, Myvatn and Vikingavatn, and the Langavatn area in Snaefallsness

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer* – locally fairly common, first seen along Route 61, a handful in the Myvatn area, a few in the Snaefallsness area, 3+ in the Kopasker area, one near Egilsstaðir



Great Northern Diver



Red-throated Diver

Northern Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* – common to abundant along the coast, also at Asbyrgi

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* – several dozen at Gardur Lighthouse, they pass fairly close and can be seen well with a scope. Decent record shots with a telelens are possible.

Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* – seen at Gardur Lighthouse, Hornstrandir (a few), Krisuvik, Snaefallsness, north of Kopasker and one on the whalewatching tour in Husavik

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* – scattered sightings along the west and north coast including Vatnsnes, Hornstrandir, and Borgarnes area

European Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* – scattered sightings along the west and north coast (including Flatey, Snaefallsness, Hornstrandir)

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* – two near Kopasker, one near Eriksstaðir

Merlin *Falco columbarius* – best view of a male near Hljóðaklettur, single birds in flight near Reykjavik and Borgarnes

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus* – one at Raudinupur, not seen at Myvatn!

Common Raven *Corvus corax* – fairly common to common, seen daily

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* – several at Reykjanesfolkvangur (northwest corner)

Eurasian Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* – one at Höfði in Myvatn, one at Asbyrgi, heard in the Reykjanes Folkvangur area

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* – mainly the southwest and Snaefallsness where common

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* – common to abundant, seen daily, typically in double digits

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* – common in most areas visited

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* – common, seen daily, typically in double digits

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* – common to abundant, seen daily, typically in double digits

Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea* – several at Reykjanesfolkvangur (northwest corner)

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* – about 4-5 in Hornstrandir in the cliff area, 10+ on Flatey Island, also in the Svörtuloft area, and one male and a few females at Krafla



*Snow Bunting*



*Common Snipe*



*Harlequin Duck*

