

Musk Ox, Arctic Fox & Spectacular Sea Eagles

Dovrefjell & Flatanger, Norway

September 9th to September 16th 2016



With amazing photography of iconic species in stunning surroundings this Norwegian wildlife photography tour is going to be very special.



Day 1. Friday September 9th 2016.

We will arrive at Trondheim airport where we will be met by our guide Ole Martin Dahle, and we will be driven to the stunning wilderness that is Dovrefjell National Park.

We will spend 3 nights in very comfortable lodge accommodation.

Days 2 & 3. Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th September 2016

During the weekend we will concentrate our photographic efforts on two of the most iconic Scandinavian wildlife species in their natural environment – the Musk Ox and the Arctic Fox.

Dovre fjell-Sunndalsfjella National Park – to give the area its full name - is the only place in Norway, and one of the few places in the world, where you can see the impressive Musk Ox, or “Moskus” as they are known in Norwegian.

There is a growing population of these amazing prehistoric mammals in the Dovre Mountains, and the area has long been held as a premier musk ox photography site world-wide.

The Bulls can weigh in at between 400 and 500 kilos and have a turn of speed in excess of 60kph, yet strangely enough are more closely related to sheep and goats than they are oxen; that's some sheep!

Early to mid September should see Dovrefjell displaying a riot of autumnal colours as nature prepares itself for the onset of the highland winter. Our trip is also timed to coincide with the latter half of the Musk Ox Rut, so we could be in for some really fabulous backlit shots as the bulls do battle with each other over mating rights.

Arctic foxes abound in Dovrefjell and even though they look so very different without their winter coats they still remain full of natural curiosity; it has been known for some of them to virtually take food from your hand even though they are wild animals; though it's not a good idea to try this – they bite.

And let's not overlook the prospects for spectacular landscape photography – the topography of the area coupled with the naturally 'expansive skies', time of year and nature of the light will yield some superb potential for landscape photography.

We will travel to various locations in the national park by vehicle, but some walking over both flat and sloping terrain and rough ground will be required.

Day 4. Monday 12th September 2016.

After an early breakfast on Monday morning we will begin the journey northwards to the small coastal village of Lauvsnes in the Flatanger municipality of the spectacular Nord Trondelag region of Norway.

On this journey we may well have the opportunity to photograph Pink Footed Geese or perhaps Eider duck.

Lauvsnes is a very special little place – for two reasons.

Firstly, my friend Paal Aakervik owns the Zanzibar Inn there, and makes the best Beef Snadder, the finest evening meal anyone could wish for!

Secondly, and more importantly, Lauvsnes is where my dear friend Ole lives. Over the years Ole has built up a staggering knowledge and rapport with the Eagle population, and over the course of the following 3 days it is us who are going to reap the benefits.

When we arrive in Lauvsnes Ole will drop us at the “Eagle House” which is to be our accommodation for the rest of the tour.

The house has two well-appointed bathrooms on the ground floor, and two double and two single bedrooms upstairs. An open plan kitchen-dinning area and lounge complete the ground floor of our accommodation.



After settling into our accommodation we will have our evening meal at the local restaurant, The Zanzibar Inn.

Days 5, 6 & 7. Tuesday 13th to Thursday 15th September 2016.

Over these 3 days we will have two boat photography sessions per day – early morning and evening.

Morning sessions begin in early morning light and we will head out into the fjords looking for eagles. In reality it doesn't take long to find one; in fact the eagles usually find us!

For those who have no prior experience of how this all works I'll explain briefly. On the boat is a bucket of fresh, but very dead fish, usually Coalfish weighing around a kilo each. Once an eagle shows on the scene, Ole positions the boat for the best photography relative to wind & light direction, then throws a fish out for the eagle. The eagle will swoop down to the water and snatch the fish from the surface.



Ole talks – a lot! But there are a few key phrases he comes out with which, when you hear any of them they demand your fullest attention and concentration.

“Eagle is coming”, “fish is out”, “here we go..” and “Rock 'n Roll..” The first two are fairly self-explanatory, the third basically means that the eagle is “on finals” for the bait fish, and the latter means “sit down because I’m about to make this boat go very fast”.

During these boat sessions you need to be aware of the fact that the action can begin suddenly and without much warning, and will be fast and furious; it’s a work-out for both photographer and your cameras autofocus system.

In between eagles there are other species that we can photograph; “Charlie and Co” the ubiquitous bunch of Herring Gulls that follow us, Tern, Arctic Skua and perhaps Black Guillemot.



Charlie likes his early morning Java..

The morning sessions will end between 10 and 11am and we will return to the house for breakfast, a rest, and to download our images, clear camera storage media and charge camera batteries.

We will have an early evening meal around 3.30pm and then the evening boat sessions will begin. We travel along a different part of the coastline on an evening session, and weather permitting, these evening sessions provide a very dramatic and atmospheric light for your images.

The sessions will end around 9pm depending upon the weather and light conditions.

Day 8. Friday 16th September 2016.

Sadly, and all too soon, this is the day we leave Norway. Ole will pick us up after breakfast and drive us back to Trondheim airport.

Recommended Photographic Equipment.

The most versatile lens I have found for this tour is the Canon 200-400 f4 L IS USM, which in all practical terms offers 200mm f4 to 560mm f5.6 on a full-frame body such as the 1Dx. At 560mm it makes the ideal lens for the majority of photography in Dovrefjell, and between 560mm and 300mm it is perfect for Arctic Fox.

Nikon users will find the Nikon 200-400 f4 the most versatile option, though it's performance with a 1.4x teleconverter (to match the Canon) is slightly dubious.

A 500mm f4 prime from either manufacturer would make another ideal Dovrefjell lens, supplemented by perhaps a 70-200mm f2.8

A 200-400 f4 makes for the ideal eagle flight photography lens, giving you both compositional options and the ability to take a slightly wider angle on eagles approaching in a head-on manner.

A 500mm f4 prime lens is very usable for eagle flight shots, but you have to take into account the much tighter framing – looking through my own image data most shots of this type are at focal lengths between 250mm and 350mm.

A 300mm f2.8 with and without teleconverters might be considered as another option if you wish to travel light and keep airport baggage charges to a minimum, though it is not something I personally would like to rely upon.

Obviously, a wide-angle lens will be needed for landscape shots, together with a small ball-head, tripod and cable release, and you may wish to bring a gimbal head for using your large telephoto lenses in conjunction with your tripod.

Please note: ALL eagle photography from the boat will be HAND HELD – you cannot be effective at this style of work even with a monopod let alone a tripod.

Camera body best options – Canon 1Dx, 5DMk3 or later, Nikon D4 or D4S, D800/800E/D810.

Minimum 1 spare camera battery.

Minimum 2x 32Gb camera storage

Card Reader

Laptop+PSU/Charger and external hard drives for storage and backup.

For any more information or help with equipment requirements please contact me directly.

FOOD.

ALL meals are included in the price. Our evening meals will be taken at The Zanzibar Restaurant in Lauvsnes, and in the facilities at Dovrefjell. Food supplies for breakfast and packed lunches while at Dovrefjell will be provided, and while in Lauvsnes will be chosen by us at the very well appointed Spar shop. The cost of this is also included in the price; as are non-alcoholic beverages.

If you are, like me, a lover of “builders tea” you do need to take a good supply of tea bags with you – Norwegian ideas about the tea we Brits like is somewhat misguided. Their grasp of coffee however is excellent!

Stainless steel flasks are available for all clients to use every day for drinks in the boat etc.

COSTS: AIR FARE (Clients responsibility).

Wildlife in Pixels is not a travel agency and we do not book or take money for flights – you are responsible for your own travel arrangements both to and from your chosen UK departure point and Trondheim Vaernes airport (International code TRD).

You are also responsible for your own travel insurance.

The cost of travel between Trondheim Vaernes and Lauvsnes together with all other travel within Norway, guide and hide fees and food (less alcohol & sundries) ARE included in the price.

COSTS: WORKSHOP FEE.

The fee for the tour is *29,500 NKR per person including all internal transport in Norway, food, accommodation, boat, hide and admission fees. This fee needs to be paid in Norwegian currency as set out below.

It DOES NOT cover charges for sundry items such as alcohol, tobacco etc. flight costs, airport taxes & charges or travel insurance, equipment or personal insurances.

DEPOSITS & BALANCE:

NB: Fees need to be paid in Norwegian Kroner cash only.

A non-refundable deposit of 10,000NKR cash is needed to secure a place on this workshop.

The remaining balance of 19,500NKR cash must be paid no later than 60 days before departure (Monday 11th July 2016).

Wildlife in Pixels will issue a receipt for your deposit, and a further one on balance payment. Wildlife in Pixels MUST be notified of cancellations BEFORE Monday 11th July 2016.

In the event of a client having paid in full and needing to cancel in under 60 days a). the initial deposit remains non-refundable, and b) the balance remains non-refundable unless the client manages to sell the place on (to a third party). Wildlife in Pixels MAY HAVE a list of "reserve customers" whom the client might perhaps negotiate with; but undertake NO responsibility to find or supply the client with means to recoup any monies paid.

If Wildlife in Pixels need to cancel the tour for any reason, a full refund of the cash NKR amount paid by you will be made, however Wildlife in Pixels will accept no further liability.

Wildlife in Pixels reserve the right to change the itinerary or any part thereof, due to circumstances beyond its control. Any significant changes will be notified in a timely manner, and any alterations made will be of an equal quality to those described.

* This is the total fee payable to Wildlife in Pixels and can only be paid in CASH Norwegian Kroner. No other currency, money orders, cheques or credit cards will be accepted in either part or full payment.

Sterling Price: At the time of publication the sterling price of this tour was **£2498** based on an exchange rate of 11.81NKR.

For overseas clients Wildlife in Pixels CAN except fees in STERLING via Western Union ONLY, but these will be subject to a handling charge; the size of which is dependant upon the Sterling/NKR exchange rate at the time – please ask for details.

All enquiries about this tour can be emailed to tuition@wildlifeinpixels.net