

## ESTONIA

'There is always a slight bit of apprehension with a new tour (Will it be good? Will everyone enjoy it?) but on arriving at our first hotel, hearing there were six White-tailed Eagles visible as Goosanders flew past those thoughts were soon dispelled!

The success of this trip was all down to the expertise of Antero Topp, a Finnish birder who has spent months and months birding Estonia. Antero's knowledge of the birds and road systems of Estonia was truly superb.

This trip combined a real mix of northern/eastern European quality with impressive quantity. The quality came in the form of 2 Lesser White-fronted Geese, 1 Red-breasted Goose, Red-necked and Slavonian Grebes, Great Egret, 2 Capercaillie, displaying Black Grouse, Hazel Grouse, lekking Great Snipe, Marsh Sandpiper, Black, Grey-headed and White-backed Woodpeckers, Eurasian Wryneck, Lesser spotted Eagle, Montagu's Harriers, European Honey-Buzzard, Northern Goshawk, Bohemian Waxwing, Citrine Wagtail, Bearded Tit, Icterine, Great Reed and Savi's Warblers and superb nest building Penduline Tits.

Quantity was provided by the wildfowl and shorebirds with tens of thousands of Barnacle and Greater White-fronted Geese, many Whooper and Bewick's Swans, Tundra Bean Geese, Long-tailed Ducks and both Common and Velvet Scoters. Double figures of White-tailed Eagles ensured they made it into the 'quantity' section as did Western Marsh Harriers. The numbers of shorebirds was staggering with hundreds of Ruff, many in breeding plumage (from black to cream, from ginger to white) and fighting as well! Spotted Redshanks also made 3 figures, and there can be few smarter birds in breeding plumage. Flocks of Wood Sandpipers were also scattered all over the wetlands. Most days we saw Common Cranes, and there can be few better experiences than being stood deep in a forest and hearing that magical 'bugle' call. White Storks were nesting in many villages and small groups of Smew were recorded on the open water, total bliss!

The weedy fields held singing Whinchats and the woodlands Common Crossbills, Eurasian Siskins, Crested Tits and Wood Warblers among many Willow Warblers and Common Chiffchaffs.

Elsewhere we also saw smaller numbers of European Hobby, Hen Harrier, Green Sandpiper, Garganey, Black Tern, Little Gulls which added a great supporting cast to an already brilliant selection of birds. There were some birds that avoided being seen but few will forget the 'kwak'ing Little Crake or the 'booming' Great Bitterns which made the whole reedbed reverberate!

Mammals didn't go unnoticed either and we had a brief encounter with an Elk as well as Arctic Hare, Raccoon Dog and Red Fox. There were some great butterflies as well, especially a pair of Camberwell Beautys and reptiles got in on the act with Grass Snake and Adder (the latter trying to hide under our vehicle!)

Our hotels were comfortable, and situated in the most amazing locations, with good, plentiful food, what more could we ask for?' *James Lidster*

### **BIRD LIST:**

Column A = Number of tours on which this species has been recorded.

Column B = Number of days this species was seen on the last tour.

Column C = Maximum daily count for this species on the last tour.

H= Heard only.

**ESTONIA: Bird List...2**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	
1 Red-throated Diver	2	7	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
1 Black-throated Diver	2	1	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
1 Diver sp	1	60	<i>Gavia sp</i>
1 Great Crested Grebe	6	50	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
1 Red-necked Grebe	3	2	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>
1 Slavonian Grebe	1	2	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>
1 Great Cormorant	5	300	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis</i>
1 Bittern	3	3	H <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
1 Great White Egret	1	1	<i>Egretta alba</i>
1 Grey Heron	7	20	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
1 Black Stork	1	1	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
1 White Stork	7	20	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
1 Mute Swan	7	200	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
1 Bewick's Swan	4	50	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>
1 Whooper Swan	5	20	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>
1 'Tundra' Bean Goose	6	200	<i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>
1 White-fronted Goose	7	30000	<i>Anser albifrons</i>
1 Lesser White-fronted Goose	1	2	<i>Anser erythropus</i>
1 Greylag Goose	4	20	<i>Anser anser</i>
1 Barnacle Goose	6	50000	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>
1 Red-breasted Goose	1	1	<i>Branta ruficollis</i>
1 Common Shelduck	4	3	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
1 Eurasian Wigeon	6	25	<i>Anas penelope</i>
1 Gadwall	6	5	<i>Anas strepera</i>
1 Common Teal	5	100	<i>Anas crecca</i>
1 Mallard	7	30	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
1 Pintail	5	4	<i>Anas acuta</i>
1 Garganey	3	6	<i>Anas querquedula</i>
1 Northern Shoveler	6	20	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
1 Common Pochard	4	20	<i>Aythya ferina</i>
1 Tufted Duck	6	1000	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
1 Scaup	1	30	<i>Aythya marila</i>
1 Common Eider	2	50	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>
1 Long-tailed Duck	3	1000	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>
1 Common Scoter	2	100	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>
1 Velvet Scoter	2	50	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>
1 Common Goldeneye	6	200	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>
1 Smew	2	15	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>
1 Red-breasted Merganser	3	12	<i>Mergus serrator</i>
1 Goosander	5	20	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
1 Honey-buzzard	1	1	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
1 White-tailed Eagle	6	20	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
1 Marsh Harrier	7	8	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
1 Hen Harrier	1	1	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
1 Montagu's Harrier	2	3	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
1 Goshawk	1	1	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
1 Eurasian Sparrowhawk	4	4	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>

### ESTONIA: Bird List...3

1	Common Buzzard	5	10		<i>Buteo buteo</i>
1	Lesser Spotted Eagle	3	2		<i>Aquila pomarina</i>
1	Kestrel	1	1		<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
1	Merlin	1	1		<i>Falco columbarius</i>
1	Hobby	3	8		<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
1	Hazel Grouse	1	3		<i>Bonasa bonasia</i>
1	Black Grouse	1	1		<i>Tetrao tetrix</i>
1	Capercaillie	2	1		<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>
1	Water Rail	1	1	H	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>
1	Little Crake	1	1	H	<i>Porzana parva</i>
1	Moorhen	1	1		<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
1	Common Coot	5	500		<i>Fulica atra</i>
1	Common Crane	6	50		<i>Grus grus</i>
1	Oystercatcher	4	4		<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
1	Avocet	1	1		<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
1	Little Ringed Plover	3	2		<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
1	Ringed Plover	3	2		<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
1	European Golden Plover	4	200		<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
1	Northern Lapwing	7	50		<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
1	Temminck's Stint	2	2		<i>Calidris temminckii</i>
1	Dunlin	2	2		<i>Calidris alpina</i>
1	Ruff	6	700		<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
1	Common Snipe	3	2		<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
1	Great Snipe	1	7		<i>Gallinago media</i>
1	Woodcock	2	2		<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>
1	Black-tailed Godwit	2	2		<i>Limosa limosa</i>
1	Bar-tailed Godwit	1	6		<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
1	Whimbrel	2	13		<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
1	Eurasian Curlew	6	4		<i>Numenius arquata</i>
1	Spotted Redshank	5	200		<i>Tringa erythropus</i>
1	Common Redshank	4	6		<i>Tringa totanus</i>
1	Marsh Sandpiper	1	2		<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
1	Greenshank	6	10		<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
1	Green Sandpiper	4	2		<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
1	Wood Sandpiper	3	200		<i>Tringa glareola</i>
1	Common Sandpiper	4	1		<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
1	Arctic Skua	1	1		<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>
1	Little Gull	5	50		<i>Larus minutus</i>
1	Black-headed Gull	7	100		<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>
1	Common Gull	7	100		<i>Larus canus</i>
1	Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	1		<i>Larus fuscus</i>
1	Herring Gull	7	100		<i>Larus argentatus</i>
1	Great Black-backed Gull	4	20		<i>Larus marinus</i>
1	Sandwich Tern	1	2		<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
1	Common Tern	5	6		<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
1	Arctic Tern	3	4		<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>
1	Little Tern	3	4		<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
1	Black Tern	1	4		<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
1	Stock Dove	4	2		<i>Columba oenas</i>

## ESTONIA: Bird List...4

1	Wood Pigeon	6	6		<i>Columba palumbus</i>
1	Common Cuckoo	5	2	H	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
1	Ural Owl	1	1		<i>Strix uralensis</i>
1	European Nightjar	1	1		<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>
1	Wryneck	3	2	(H)	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>
1	Grey-headed Woodpecker	2	3		<i>Picus canus</i>
1	Black Woodpecker	2	1		<i>Dryocopus martius</i>
1	White-backed Woodpecker	2	2		<i>Dendrocopos leucotos</i>
1	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	1		<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>
1	Wood Lark	2	2		<i>Lullula arborea</i>
1	Skylark	7	40		<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
1	Sand Martin	1	1		<i>Riparia riparia</i>
1	Barn Swallow	7	100		<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
1	House Martin	6	20		<i>Delichon urbica</i>
1	Tree Pipit	5	6		<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
1	Meadow Pipit	5	2		<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
1	Yellow Wagtail	6	6		<i>Motacilla flava</i>
1	Citrine Wagtail	2	2		<i>Motacilla citreola</i>
1	White Wagtail	7	25		<i>Motacilla alba</i>
1	Bohemian Waxwing	1	1		<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>
1	Wren	1	1	H	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
1	Dunnock	2	1		<i>Prunella modularis</i>
1	Robin	3	2		<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
1	Thrush Nightingale	2	1	H	<i>Luscinia luscinia</i>
1	Whinchat	7	6		<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
1	Northern Wheatear	5	6		<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
1	Blackbird	4	5	H	<i>Turdus merula</i>
1	Fieldfare	3	1		<i>Turdus pilaris</i>
1	Song Thrush	4	6	H	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
1	Redwing	2	1	H	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
1	Mistle Thrush	3	2		<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
1	Savi's Warbler	2	2		<i>Locustella luscinioides</i>
1	Sedge Warbler	3	1	H	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
1	Reed Warbler	1	1	H	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
1	Great Reed Warbler	2	1	H	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
1	Icterine Warbler	1	1		<i>Hippolais icterina</i>
1	Lesser Whitethroat	4	1		<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
1	Common Whitethroat	4	5		<i>Sylvia communis</i>
1	Blackcap	4	1	H	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
1	Wood Warbler	3	5	H	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
1	Common Chiffchaff	6	2		<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
1	Willow Warbler	7	2		<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
1	Goldcrest	2	1	H	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
1	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	1		<i>Ficedula parva</i>
1	Pied Flycatcher	1	1		<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>
1	Bearded Tit	2	5		<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>
1	Willow Tit	4	4		<i>Parus montanus</i>
1	Crested Tit	2	1	H	<i>Parus cristatus</i>
1	Blue Tit	5	2		<i>Parus caeruleus</i>

**ESTONIA: Bird List...5**

1	Great Tit	7	2		<i>Parus major</i>
1	European Nuthatch	3	2		<i>Sitta europaea</i>
1	Eurasian Treecreeper	1	1		<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
1	Penduline Tit	2	2		<i>Remiz pendulinus</i>
1	Eurasian Jay	3	2		<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
1	Magpie	7	10		<i>Pica pica</i>
1	Eurasian Jackdaw	6	20		<i>Corvus monedula</i>
1	Rook	6	10		<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
1	Hooded Crow	7	20		<i>Corvus corone cornix</i>
1	Common Raven	5	50		<i>Corvus corax</i>
1	European Serin	1	1		<i>Serinus serinus</i>
1	Greenfinch	6	6		<i>Carduelis chloris</i>
1	Goldfinch	5	2		<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
1	Siskin	7	100		<i>Carduelis spinus</i>
1	Linnet	4	4		<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>
1	Common Redpoll	2	4		<i>Carduelis flammea</i>
1	Common Crossbill	6	60	H	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
1	Common Bullfinch	1	2		<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
1	Hawfinch	1	1	H	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
1	Yellowhammer	6	6		<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
1	Reed Bunting	6	10		<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>