



Black Grouse

Spring birds

Destination: Kuusamo, Finland

Focus: Bird photography

Grading: short day walks 100 - 200m, for all ages

Group size: 4 – 6 photographers

Time: 23 – 28 April 2019

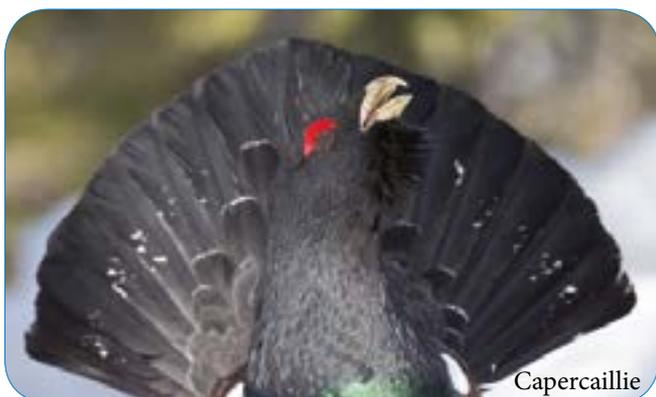
Price: 2495 € per person, single supplement 375 €

Spring time in Kuusamo is a jewel in Finnish wildlife photography

Winter has yielded to the power of the sun, and the main cores of migratory birds are arriving to their breeding areas. Seventeen hours of daylight, an one hour's twilight in half a meter of snow still in the forest and the ice-covered lakes create excellent conditions for a keen bird photographer!

Capercaillie cock is the largest European grouse. This three foot tall majestic bird's primitive courting sounds guarantee an unforgettable experience. The cocks settle out their superiority in ardent courting games on their lekking ground - and we are the front seat spectators. By the end of April, before the "hen week", the alpha cock has prevailed and will mate with all the hens of the area. The lek is usually visited by three to five cocks in the early morning, with the dominating alpha cock often only thirty feet from the hides. Our hides are specially designed for professional bird photographers and they are located on good lekking sites visited by the birds for decades.

Powder snow showers in the air as the boistering Black Grouse cocks measure their strength against each other, with no mercy given or asked for. The backlit lekking cocks against a dark forest background give opportunities for unique shots from the hides, which also allow low angle photography at almost ground level. In the morning, the lekking site is visited by 10-12 cocks and some female birds, with the closest running between the hides as the older cocks chase the younger ones off the centre of the lekking area.



Capercaillie

Highlights

Black Grouse and Capercaillie leks; Osprey fishing at a fish pond; tens of Whooper Swans strengthening their pair bonds; Common Cranes feeding on ice; occasional White-tailed Eagle visits; summer-plumaged Brambling and other seedeaters at bird feeders in snowy conditions

For more information:

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Black Grouse

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Day 1 Arrival to Kuusamo

Once arrived to Kuusamo, we unpack and have lunch before heading straight out for a Whooper Swan and Common Crane photography session (or Owls if available). After beautiful evening lights, we return to accommodation for dinner and a short briefing for the program for the following days.

Day 2

Early morning at 3.00, we start our 30 minutes drive to the Black Grouse lek site to catch up the first rays of natural light. After Black Grouse lek is over, we return to the accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 and 9.00. There might be chances to photograph other Grouse species on the roadsides on the way back.

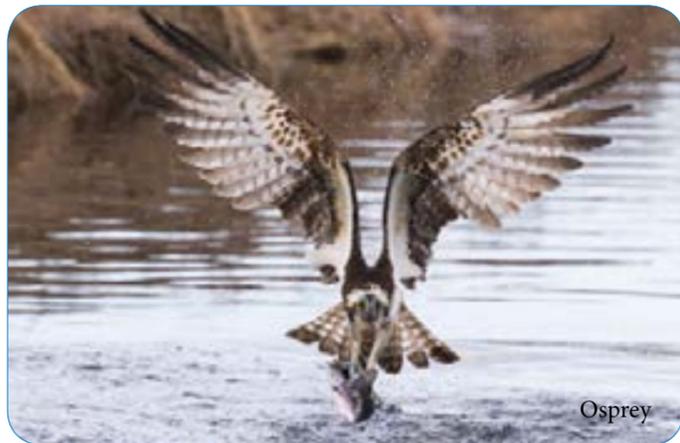
You have the possibility to have independent photography time near the accommodation during the afternoon break from 10.00 - 17.00. Dinner at 17.00 and after dinner drive to Capercaillie hides. Entry to the hides is in the evening before Capercaillie lek starting at dawn, meaning the night is spent at the hides.

Day 3

Before dawn, we are ready in our hides for the Capercaillie lek. When the lek is over between 9.00 - 10.00, we return for breakfast in our accommodation. A few hours break gives you again the possibility to have independent photography time near the accommodation from 10.00 - 15.00. Dinner at 15.00 and drive to the Osprey hides, where we photograph diving and fishing Ospreys for 4 - 5 hours. On the way back, there might be chances for Capercaillie or Black Grouse on the roadsides (or Owls if available).



Capercaillie



Osprey



Whooper Swans



Dipper

Day 4

This morning we sleep a little longer. After 7.00 breakfast, a morning photography session with White-throated Dippers along a flowing river. After the Dipper session, we return to the accommodation for lunch. In the early afternoon, we stay 2-3 hours at passerine hides. Dinner at 17.00 and after that, once again back to the Whooper Swans, Common Cranes, White-tailed Eagles and waterfowl from the shore hides by a lake.

Day 5

Early morning at 3.00, we drive to the Black Grouse lek site to catch up the early morning action. When the Black Grouse lek is over, we return to the accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 - 9.00. There might be possibilities for other Grouse species on the roadsides on the way back. Independent photography time near the accommodation during the afternoon break from 10.00 to 17.00. We head back to the fish ponds in the evening for another Osprey photography session (or Owls if available).

Day 6 Departure from Kuusamo

Last morning, we start once again early at 3.00 and drive to the Black Grouse lek site. After lek is over we return to our accommodation for breakfast between 8.00 - 9.00. Grouse species by the road back is again a photography possibility. After breakfast, it is time for the check-out and the departure.

For more pictures: [Finnature's Flickr Gallery](#)

Price includes: Finnature guiding throughout the journey. Use of professional photography hides. All meals and accommodation. All land transportation from Kuusamo airport. For extra price transportation from Oulu (bigger airport) if needed.

Accommodation: Oivanki Lomakartano's log villa for 5 nights; please notice that 1 night will be spent in Capercaillie hide

Food: Local restaurants and picnic lunches

Leader: Finnature guide



Possible extensions: Brown Bear, Wolverine and Wolf photography in Kuhmo

Booking: www.shop.finnature.com

Recommended flights: We recommend to arrive to and depart from Kuusamo around midday.

Please notice: The itinerary might change due to weather conditions or bird situation. Unfortunately we cannot guarantee any of the species, but our expert Finnature guides do their utmost to ensure the best possible photography opportunities during the tour.

Official Package travel trader (Organiser) and Travel agent
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