



### Itinerary

- Day 1:** Riga – Birding at Matsalu NP. Night at Matsalu.
- Day 2:** Birding at Matsalu and Hiiuma. Overnight at Hiiuma.
- Day 3:** Birding at Hiiuma. Night transfer to Kökar.
- Day 4:** Birding at Kökar. Night transfer to Söderarm.
- Day 5:** Birding Stockholm archipelago. Night at Landsort.
- Day 6:** Birding at Landsort. Night at Gotska Sandön
- Day 7:** Birding at Gotska Sandön. Night at Fårö.
- Day 8:** Birding at Fårö. Night at Gotland.
- Day 9:** Birding at Hoburgen, Gotland. Night transfer to Ventspils.
- Day 10:** Morning birding in Ventspils. Bus trip to Riga from Ventspils.



**Price:** Approx. 35 000 SEK.  
**Season:** May and June  
**Group size:** 6–10 guests

### THE SHIP PALSA

**Length:** 20 m, width 5,5 m, sea-gauge 2,4 m  
**Speed:** 8 knots  
**Main engine:** 400 hp Iveco diesel  
**Safety:** 50 p liferaft  
**Electronic equipment:** GPS, VHF, DCS, satellite telephone

**The Baltic Wings project** has developed the central Baltic area as a nature and birdwatching destination through infrastructure investments, capacity building in co-operation with local entrepreneurs as well as other stakeholders, marketing and information. Read more at [www.balticwings.org](http://www.balticwings.org).



# Baltic Sea Birding Grand Boat Tour

Starts and ends in Riga



COVER: BAR-TAILED GODWITS AND BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER. PHOTO: NICLAS AHLBERG/N



### The tour in summary

Our adventure begins in Riga and we navigate our ship north towards the large wetland area Matsalu National Park in Estonia. Every spring, over 2 million migratory birds pass Matsalu! We then continue to the island Hiiuma where we will visit the big lake at Orjaku with thousands of foraging and resting birds. Our journey continues northwest across the Baltic Sea to Kõkar, a fantastic group of islands located far from mainland Finland. After a day in Kõkar with many opportunities for varied bird watching, we go on to the northern part of the Stockholm archipelago and continue south between islands, rocks and islets. The Stockholm archipelago has more than 30 000 islands! After a few stops on islands in the archipelago, we reach Landsort, the southernmost island of the Stockholm archipelago, where we get to learn how to ring birds and why at the ringing station. It is always interesting to study the birds so closely.

We leave Landsort and head south east out towards Gotska Sandön, an island that is extra exciting during migration. A full day is spent birdwatching in Gotska Sandön, which is also a national park in the center of the Baltic Sea. We continue south and reach Gotland, the largest island in the Baltic Sea. and the best area to find golden eagles. Over 50 pairs breed on the island. We start in the north, on Fårö, where we get to see a beautiful harsh and dry limestone landscape with alvar and rauks. We continue to southern Gotland for birding and visit the ringing station at the southern tip of the island at Hoburgen.

We leave Gotland and Sweden and navigate our ship back to Latvia during the evening and night (about 10 hours crossing). Some nights the ship will take us to the next island under a starry sky, sometimes with exciting bird sounds out in the dark – a magical and unique experience. Throughout the trip you will be amazed at the spectacular sunrise and sunset over the sea. And the many hours of daylight in the Baltic. We end our round trip in Ventspils. From there, buses will take us to Riga.

PHOTO: PATRIK OLOFSSON/BIRDLIFE SWENGE



*Caspian Tern*

### Route planning

Our route is planned for us to meet and follow the migratory birds, and the islands we visit are strategically selected to optimise the chance to see many birds. The route may change slightly and the visit to one of the islands may be cancelled or replaced with another island in case of bad weather conditions.

### We visit interesting bird areas

We are in the middle of the bird migration, some birds are already in place and offer us beautiful singing and interesting courtship and many Arctic birds pass on their way to northern latitudes. We have selected excellent birding sites along the route to optimize our chances to see a lot of birds, but the whole tour in the Baltic Sea – also on board – is like one big bird site! Most places we visit have bird towers or platforms. On some islands we have local bird guides to take part of the latest news on the bird front. Keep in mind that the weather can affect our possibilities to see some of the species, but hopefully we will get to see over 150 species.

**Do you want to bring someone who is not as interested in birds as you? This trip will surely be an adventure for anyone who enjoys being out in beautiful and peaceful nature.**

### Some of the birds we hope to see

Barnacle Goose, Brant Goose, White-fronted Goose, Whooper Swan, Eider, Velvet Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Red-throated Loon, Black-throated Loon, Lesser Spotted and Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Oystercatcher, Grey Plover, Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Baltic Lesser Black-backed Gull, Caspian Tern, Arctic Tern, Arctic Skua, Common Murre, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Eagle-Owl, Barred Warbler, Thrush Nightingale, Rock Pipit, Golden Oriole, Red-breasted and Collared Flycatcher, Lesser Whitethroat, Icterine Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Blyths Reed Warbler.

### Lodging and transport

We are using the comfortable Latvian ship Palsa for the transports between the countries and birding sites. The ship is also our accommodation throughout the trip. Palsa has five double cabins. The facilities are shared. All nights are spent on board. The ship is certified for Baltic Sea travel and has all the security and electronic navigation equipment needed. We will have breakfast on board, lunch and dinner will usually be served on the islands we visit. On the islands we move on foot, by bike or electric bike or possibly by smaller bus. The trip ends in Ventspils, where you can take the commuter bus to Riga.

### Included in the trip price

10 days birding package, boat trip, all meals, tour leader and bird guide during the tour (Swedish and English speaking), transport during the trip, various fees, guides at ringing station, bike rental, species list. The price of the trip does not include alcoholic beverages.

### Contact, registration, more information:

Fågelguidning AB, [gb@fagelguidning.se](mailto:gb@fagelguidning.se)

[www.fagelguidning.se](http://www.fagelguidning.se).

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