



Alaska - Nome & Denali: Alaska Gold Rush 2021

June 7th - 17th, 2021 (11 days)



Bristle-thighed Curlew by Stephan Lorenz

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: Stephan Lorenz



Harlequin Ducks by Stephan Lorenz

Tour Summary

During this memorable and successful tour, we visited two of the most diverse birding locations in Alaska: the subarctic tundra and wetlands of Nome and the vast boreal forests and alpine tundra of the Denali area. We enjoyed a great variety of birding highlights in Nome, including an incredible 17 Emperor Geese flying past us, scarce Eurasian Wigeon, beautiful King Eider, range-restricted Arctic Loon, memorable Bristle-thighed Curlew, rare Slaty-backed Gull, unexpected Kittlitz's Murrelet, and a nesting pair of Gyrfalcons. On the vast tundra of Nome, we saw Arctic Warblers, Bluethroat, Northern Wheatear, and Eastern Yellow and White Wagtails. In the Anchorage and Denali areas, we added a wonderful pair of Northern Hawk-Owls, American Three-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers, wandering Bohemian Waxwings, and White-winged Crossbills. The long journey to the eastern end of the Denali Highway paid off when we had wonderful views of at least two breeding plumaged Smith's Longspurs. Mammals revealed themselves also in great numbers including multiple Brown Bears, Red Fox, Moose, Reindeer, Muskox, and Thinhorn Sheep. Of course, we can't forget the unparalleled views we had of North America's highest mountain with Denali showing clearly under blue skies.



Aleutian Tern by Stephan Lorenz

Tour in Detail

We met for dinner in Anchorage where we discussed plans and birds for the coming days. The following morning, we flew to Nome and arrived without delay. The city of Nome offers comfortable accommodations, good meal options, and best of all, more than 200 miles of accessible roads that cover a variety of habitats ranging from subarctic tundra, arid tundra, wetlands, shorelines, lagoons, and even a slice of boreal forest, making the Seward Peninsula one of the most diverse birding areas in all of Alaska. After getting situated at the hotel and loading our two vehicles, we drove east in the direction of the always productive Nome River Mouth and Safety Sound beyond. Less than a mile out of town, the plethora of birds was immediately apparent and we made our first stop at the wetlands near the historic Swan Dredge. The open ponds and bogs here held our first American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Western Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Glaucous Gull, and a pair of nesting Red-throated Loons, while a Least Sandpiper was less expected. The adjacent tundra had singing Lapland Longspur, American Tree Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow, but best of all was an Eastern Yellow Wagtail that returned several times to feed along the edge of the pond and this normally flighty species stayed around long enough for excellent scope views. We continued along Council Road and a side trip to the outflow of Hastings Creek netted us close views of a Bar-tailed Godwit. The

Nome River Mouth and Safety Sound areas netted us an impressive collection of new species, including Brant, Greater Scaup, Red-breasted Merganser, Sandhill Crane, Pacific Golden-Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Whimbrel, Wilson's Snipe, Red Phalarope, Black-legged Kittiwake, Mew Gull, Herring Gull (Vega), and Parasitic Jaeger. We also witnessed incredible numbers of Long-tailed Jaegers with nearly 80 individuals sailing across the tundra at once. We watched an active nesting colony of Aleutian Terns and were able to compare them directly to the abundant Arctic Terns. The tundra and willow thickets held Tree Swallow, Gray-cheeked Thrush, American Robin, Hoary Redpoll, Fox, Golden-crowned and Savannah Sparrows, and Orange-crowned Warbler.



Willow Ptarmigan by Stephan Lorenz

The first full day in Nome, we headed out along the legendary Kougurok Road, aiming towards Mile 72 where a nesting area of the scarce Bristle-thighed Curlew is accessible. We stopped a few miles out of town and found a responsive Arctic Warbler at a reliable spot. The same location also offered excellent views of Northern Waterthrush, Yellow and Blackpoll Warblers. We drove along the edge of the Nome River Valley and saw Tundra Swans and Cackling Geese in the wetlands below and a singing Varied Thrush in a dense willow thicket upslope. As we continued into the beautiful wilderness and tundra, we saw stunning Harlequin Ducks along the rushing streams and added Wilson's Warbler. A stop near Salmon Lake revealed a singing Bluethroat and while the bird sang strongly it stayed mainly hidden in the rainy conditions but offered everyone at least some views. We found the Rusty Blackbird on territory along the Pilgrim River and then carried on to Mile 72. Another wetland complex held Greater White-fronted Goose and Red-necked Grebe. We enjoyed a field lunch and then headed up the hill along the well-formed trail. The top flattened out and we wandered widely looking for the curlew.

We saw good numbers of Whimbrel and also breeding plumaged American Golden-Plover, but it soon became apparent that the curlew would not be easy to find this time. Some of us stayed at a central location while others continued searching far and wide. Eventually, we found a single bird that flew right above while calling loudly and then incredibly landed right in front of the rest of the group. The curlew flew back and forth a few times before we were all able to slowly walk closer to it for great scope views and photo opportunities, well worth the four-hour effort. We walked back down to the vehicles where we were all able to celebrate a successful curlew hike. Some of the additions during the long drive back to Nome included Northern Shrike, Wandering Tattler, and Golden Eagle.



Arctic Warbler by Stephan Lorenz

The second full day in Nome started with an exciting sighting of a Brown Bear just a few miles out of town. The Council Road proved very productive, especially along Safety Lagoon and the nearby shoreline. At Hastings Creek Overlook we saw all three scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Thick-billed Murre, and Pacific Loon while a longer stop at Cape Nome added Common Eider, a scarce Black Guillemot, and distant murrelets (which two days later were closer and identified as Kittlitz's), Horned Puffin, Common Loon, and good flight views of a Yellow-billed Loon. We explored the wetlands along the lagoon and made many stops along the coastline to scope the bay and our efforts rewarded us with good views of Snow Geese and brief King Eiders. The Safety Sound bridge area was particularly busy with birds as the tide was rushing out and on the sandy spit, we spotted Surf-bird and a locally rare Rock Sandpiper while a Sabine's Gull fed among the throngs of kittiwakes and terns. Walking out towards the beach and shoreline got us very close to many Sabine's Gulls and we found a Black Turnstone next to two Ruddy Turnstones. Along the eastern end of Safety Sound, we scanned through waterfowl and loons, picking out a single Canvasback, but the absolute highlight was a flock of nearly twenty Emperor Geese that offered wonderful flight views, an unusually high number. Moments later, we

found a pair of Arctic Loons that showed very well in the scope for minutes on end. A Merlin shot past along the edge of the water, adding the first falcon species to our list. We continued all the way to the Solomon River for a special falcon and after much scanning found a pair of Gyrfalcons perched atop a distant rock outcrop. The pair took to the air and offered closer flight views. We turned back towards Nome and found a very photogenic Willow Ptarmigan along the road. Back in Nome, we enjoyed dinner, celebrating all the amazing sightings for the day. Some of us returned to the Nome River Mouth after dinner and enjoyed further views of many excellent species.



American Dipper by Stephan Lorenz

For the final full day in Nome, we explored the Teller Road, and soon after leaving Nome, we stopped at the Penny River where a pair of American Dippers showed well. We drove slowly through suitable habitat and soon heard the distinctive jumbled song of a Bluethroat. Here, we all enjoyed much better views of the Bluethroat, including scope views, but photography still proved challenging. Before exploring the rocky tundra uphill from the Teller Road, we set out along the side road leading to Woolley Lagoon where we quickly located Black-bellied Plovers in breeding plumage and had good scope studies of a Rough-legged Hawk. We followed another side road to bird a section of drier and rockier tundra where the targets came incredibly quickly. First, a male Rock Ptarmigan flew in and we were able to track it down for close views and photos. Nearby, a pair of Red Knots foraged in the sparse vegetation and we then found Pacific Golden-Plover, American Pipit, Horned Lark, Snow Bunting, and Northern Wheatear in quick succession. After such incredible success, we began the long drive towards the community of Teller at the end of the road. During the journey, we found more Harlequin Ducks, added another Rough-legged Hawk, watched a close Arctic Warbler, and noted yet another Northern Shrike. Once we reached the far-flung village of Teller, we stopped in the school area and within minutes found one of the main targets here, a pair of White Wagtails. We then spent a very

productive hour birding the end of the spit, watching numerous seabirds flying back and forth between the lagoon and the Bering Sea, including Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Horned and Tufted Puffins, and Pelagic Cormorant. A Pacific Loon swimming close to shore was fun to photograph, but the most exciting find was an adult Slaty-backed Gull among the throng of large gulls. At one point we had Glaucous, Glaucous-winged, Herring (Vega) Gulls, and the Slaty-backed Gull all lined up for fantastic comparisons. The 70-mile drive home yielded another Golden Eagle and no less than 3 Brown Bear with one showing close to the road.



Slaty-backed Gull by Stephan Lorenz

For the final morning in Nome, we returned to the cape area for seawatching and witnessed a good movement of waterfowl and loons, but the best find was the Kittlitz's Murrelet which had moved closer for identifiable views. Our flight to Anchorage left on time and we arrived at the hotel for dinner. After reenergizing with a good night's rest in Anchorage, we started the second leg of the tour after a delicious breakfast. We started birding on the outskirts of Anchorage at Hillside Park where a short hike took us to an active American Three-toed Woodpecker nest. We waited a few minutes and then saw the male visit twice delivering food to fairly large nestlings. Other species we saw well during our walk included Canada Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, "Red" Fox Sparrow, "Slate-colored" Dark-eyed Junco, and "Myrtle" Yellow-rumped Warbler. A short stop at Westchester Lagoon proved productive and highlights included locally scarce Redheads, great comparison studies between Lesser and Greater Scaup, scores of Red-necked Grebe, roosting Hudsonian Godwits, and even a very rare Bar-tailed

Godwit among them. Arctic Terns and Black-billed Magpie were particularly photogenic. After lunch on the road, we stopped at the classic Sockeye Burn to seek another rare, boreal woodpecker, the Black-backed and despite woodpecker numbers declining in the area during the past years, we managed to find a male Black-backed Woodpecker quickly. The bird flew in close and even drummed on one of the burnt tree stumps, the scope views, and photo opportunities were fantastic. Nearby, we had great views of calling Alder Flycatchers before we moved on and continued the drive towards the Denali area, noting the only Red-tailed Hawk of the tour along the way. As we reached the first viewpoint, we could see nearly all of Denali, a massive mountain and North America's highest with its 20,310-foot peak clearly visible. We stopped at Byers Lake to walk a short loop and added Trumpeter Swan, Black-capped Chickadee, and White-crowned Sparrow. We reached our accommodations in the Denali area and settled into our comfortable rooms right by the river with the sonorous sounds of singing Varied Thrushes drifting through the forest.



Black-backed Woodpecker by Stephan Lorenz

We spent the first full day in the area in Denali National Park, taking the early morning shuttle all the way to the Eielson Visitor Center more than sixty miles along the park road. We noted several interesting birds, including Willow Ptarmigan, Golden Eagle, Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Canada Jay, Common Redpoll, and White-winged Crossbill. The Denali National Park is of course most famous for its vast tundra and astounding mountains plus the dense populations of large mammals. We had close encounters with several Brown “Grizzly” Bears (from the bus of course), including one hunting Moose, herds of Reindeer (called Caribou in Alaska), a Red Fox on the road, and Thinhorn Sheep on the mountain slopes. Once we reached the Eielson Visitor Center, Denali was clearly visible underneath a blue sky without a single cloud obscuring the view, something that happens less than twenty percent of the time. We enjoyed lunch here, seeing yet another bear on the slope above

us. Once we returned, we took a well-deserved rest after the long and successful journey into the park and then enjoyed a delicious dinner at a nearby restaurant with a backdrop of rugged mountains and endless boreal forests.



Denali by Stephan Lorenz

For our second full day in the area, we tackled the first half of the Denali Highway, a wonderful 130-mile stretch of byway that winds its way through stretches of wilderness that harbor boreal forests, glacial lakes and wetlands, upland tundra, and rocky ridges. Our first stop at a set of lakes proved productive and we scoped several interesting species of waterfowl including Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, and Barrow's Goldeneye. The nearby boreal forest held stunning Common Redpoll, a handful of Bohemian Waxwings in flight, and perched White-winged Crossbills. Further along the road, Blackpoll Warblers and Northern Waterthrushes were pleasantly common and the sound of Varied Thrushes was plentiful. As we drove further east, we stopped for great photo opportunities of Trumpeter Swans, and plenty of thrushes, sparrows, and warblers. We had lunch at a wonderful overlook where a close pair of Horned Grebes kept the photographers busy and a distinctive call got us onto an Olive-sided Flycatcher that offered scope views atop a distant spruce. At one of the larger wetland complexes, we saw a pair of Tundra Swans, much rarer here than Trumpeter Swans, and a pair of Spotted Sandpipers came in close. Raptors also showed well with nesting Bald Eagle and a fast-flying Merlin. We retraced our route and celebrated the fantastic sightings of the day over another tasty dinner. Another excursion to the start of the highway resulted in better views of many species, but we were still missing the hoped-for Northern Hawk-Owl.



Brown Bear by Stephan Lorenz

This was our final full day of the tour and after an early breakfast we set out to cover nearly the entire length of the Denali Highway. It was a long journey, nearly twelve hours in total, but our efforts were well rewarded. As soon as we turned off the main highway we found a mobile family of Northern Shrikes with busy parents feeding at least three fledglings. We tried again at some of the same spots from the previous day, and after extensive scanning, finally spotted a distant Northern Hawk Owl and after working our way closer we were able to enjoy a vocal pair with many excellent scope views. We then headed east, having to tackle quite a distance to reach the Tangle Lakes region. Along the way, we spotted a locally uncommon Common Goldeneye and even an American Porcupine by the road. Taking a short break to stretch our legs resulted in even better views of an Arctic Warbler. Once we reached the right spot around lunchtime, we hiked out onto the tundra, treading carefully through the boggy areas and around scrubby spots. At the right location, it took less than five minutes to find the first Smith's Longspur, a stunning species in full breeding plumage. Overall, we observed two males and were able to follow one for excellent photo opportunities.

Before journeying back to Anchorage and the finish of the tour, some of us detoured to Fairbanks where a few saw a Boreal Owl briefly in flight near a nesting area. Short breaks during the drive back to Anchorage added even better views of Varied Thrush and added Hairy Woodpecker to the trip list. We reached Anchorage in the early evening and celebrated an incredibly successful tour over dinner.



Alder Flycatcher by Stephan Lorenz



Musk Ox by Stephan Lorenz

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1. Brant Goose (*Branta bernicla*) - numerous on Safety Sound in Nome (Brant in Clements)
2. Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) - the common goose in the Anchorage area
3. Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*) - the common white-cheeked goose in Nome
4. Emperor Goose (*Anser canagicus*) - we lucked into a flock of seventeen that flew past us for great views as we stood on the edge of Safety Lagoon in Nome, a species that has been difficult to find in recent years
5. Snow Goose (*Anser caerulescens*) - a few seen around the Safety Lagoon area in Nome
6. Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*) - seen in small numbers along the Kougarok Road in Nome
7. Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) - seen well in the Denali area
8. Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) - dozens seen on Safety Lagoon in Nome, the numbers of Tundra Swans there was truly impressive
9. Northern Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*) - seen at Westchester Lagoon and in the Denali area
10. Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*) - a male was seen well at the Nome River mouth
11. American Wigeon (*Mareca americana*) - common and seen in Nome, Westchester Lagoon, and Denali area
12. Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) - fairly common in the Nome and Denali areas
13. Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) - common and widespread in Nome
14. Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*) - widespread and in low numbers throughout
15. Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) - only two seen along the Denali Highway
16. Redhead (*Aythya americana*) - an uncommon species in Alaska, but we saw a small flock at Westchester Lagoon

17. Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*) - a single seen at the far end of Safety Sound in Nome
18. Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*) - abundant in Nome, Anchorage area, and Denali area
19. Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) - small numbers present in Nome, Westchester Lagoon, and Denali area
20. King Eider (*Somateria spectabilis*) - good scope views offshore in Nome
21. Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) - common in Nome
22. Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) - many great views in Nome along rivers and particularly close studies at Cape Nome
23. Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*) - small numbers noted offshore in Nome
24. White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta deglandi*) - large numbers noted offshore in the Nome area and seen in ponds off Denali Highway
25. Black Scoter (*Melanitta americana*) - several flocks noted offshore in Nome
26. Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*) - this beautiful duck was abundant in the Nome area
27. Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) - small numbers were seen in the Denali area
28. Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) - a single female bird noted along the Denali Highway
29. Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) - seen in small numbers along the Denali Highway
30. Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*) - fairly common in lagoons and rivers in Nome
31. Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) - widespread in Nome and seen in the Denali area
32. Rock Ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta*) - a male was seen well along the Teller Road in Nome

33. Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*) - common along the roads in Nome and one seen in Denali National Park
34. Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*) - abundant in Nome where we saw many on ponds and the bay with pairs vocalizing frequently
35. Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) - common in Nome
36. Arctic Loon (*Gavia arctica*) - we had great views of a pair along the far end of Safety Lagoon where we scoped a pair at close range
37. Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) - scoped off the cape in Nome and a single seen at Tangle Lakes along the Denali Highway
38. Yellow-billed (*Gavia adamsii*) - a single breeding plumaged bird seen in flight off the cape in Nome
39. Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*) - a single seen in Nome and several at Westchester Lagoon, of course, they are always present on Lake Hood behind the Anchorage hotel
40. Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*) - up to two seen in Nome and along the Denali Highway, also present on the lake at Tonglen Lake Lodge
41. Pelagic Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*) - seen frequently off the cape in Nome and many seen off the Teller Spit
42. Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) - this impressive raptor was seen several times in Nome and also in Denali National Park
43. Northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) - a few sightings along the inland tundra in Nome and again in the Denali area
44. Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - a few sightings along the Denali Highway, including a bird on an active nest
45. Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) - a single bird seen briefly while traveling along the Parks Highway
46. Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo lagopus*) - scattered sightings in Nome

47. Sandhill Crane (*Antigone canadensis*) - small flocks noted around the Nome area, especially near the Nome River and Safety Lagoon
48. Pacific Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) - small numbers seen on the lower-lying tundra of Nome with the best views along the Teller Road
49. American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*) - fantastic views of a male in full breeding regalia on the drier tundra of the Bristle-thighed Curlew spot along Kougarok Road
50. Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) - our familiar Black-bellied Plover (in Clements) was seen exceptionally well along the road to Woolley Lagoon, quite a spectacular sight in full breeding plumage of inky black and silvers on the dun-colored tundra
51. Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) - widespread in Nome and Denali areas
52. Bristle-thighed Curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis*) - one of the top birds of the tour and it is a rite of passage for any North American birder to hike up the curlew hill off Kougarok Road, our persistence and patience was rewarded with great views of a calling bird in flight that eventually settled onto the tundra for lengthy scopes studies
53. Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) - fairly common in Nome
54. Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) - excellent views in the Nome area and a single bird at Westchester Lagoon was out of range
55. Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) - nearly two dozen roosting at Westchester Lagoon during our high tide visit
56. Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) - a few seen in the Nome area
57. Black Turnstone (*Arenaria melanocephala*) - fantastic views in the Nome area where we saw singles foraging along the tide line and the birds offered great photo opportunities
58. Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) - we found a territorial pair along Teller Road
59. Surfbird (*Calidris virgata*) - good views along the shoreline in Nome
60. Rock Sandpiper (*Calidris ptilocnemis*) - a single scoped well at the Safety Sound bridge in Nome, not an easy bird to find

61. Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) - singles seen in various locations in Nome
62. Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*) - abundant nesting species in Nome
63. Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*) - widespread and common in Nome
64. Wilson's Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) - we saw displaying birds in Nome frequently
65. Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) - common in the Nome area and also seen along the Denali Highway
66. Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) - small flocks were feeding along the shoreline in Nome
67. Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*) - a responsive pair seen along the Denali Highway
68. Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*) - a single noted along the Denali Highway
69. Wandering Tattler (*Tringa incana*) - seen along fast-flowing streams in the Nome area
70. Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*) - noted at Westchester Lagoon and along the Denali Highway
71. Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) - seen at Westchester Lagoon and Denali Highway
72. Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) - common in the Nome area especially off the cape, Safety Sound Bridge, and the Nome River Mouth
73. Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) - great views of this elegant gull in Nome where several were foraging right off the beach
74. Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) - common throughout
75. Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*) - a handful seen in the Nome area, the majority of large gulls in the Anchorage area now appear to be hybrid Glaucous-winged x Herring, also known as Cook Inlet Gull
76. Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) - the common large gull in Nome

77. Vega Gull (*Larus vegae*) - this Eurasian subspecies (in Clements) of Herring Gull or full species (IOC) was frequently seen in Nome
78. Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*) - great views of an adult at the end of the Teller Spit in Nome
79. Aleutian Tern (*Onychoprion aleuticus*) - many seen well near their nesting colonies, especially at the Nome River Mouth
80. Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) - common in Nome, Anchorage area, and less numerous in the Denali area
81. Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) - seen briefly in Nome
82. Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) - a few seen in Nome
83. Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) - astounding numbers in the Nome area with a single flock coming in off the bay numbering around sixty birds
84. Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*) - distant birds offshore in Nome
85. Common Murre (*Uria aalge*) - good views offshore in Nome
86. Pigeon Guillemot (*Cephus columba*) - many seen in Nome especially at the end of the Teller Spit
87. Black Guillemot (*Cephus grylle*) - a winter plumaged bird seen well close to Cape Nome
88. Kittlitz's Murrelet (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*) - one of the surprises in Nome, but we saw up to five birds off the cape, during the second sighting they were close enough to be safely identified
89. Parakeet Auklet (*Aethia psittacula*) - seen distantly in flight off Cape Nome
90. Horned Puffin (*Fratercula corniculata*) - good views off the Teller Spit in Nome
91. Tufted Puffin (*Fratercula cirrhata*) - best views were had off the Teller Spit in Nome

92. Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) - not on the official Alaska state list but seen in the Anchorage area and a flock in Nome
93. Northern Hawk-Owl (*Surnia ulula*) - it took patience and effort this year, but we finally found a pair along the Denali Highway and both birds gave exceptionally close views
94. Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) - a bird seen well in flight in Denali National Park
95. Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) - it was a long detour to Fairbanks in rainy conditions, but some in the group at least saw one in flight near an active nesting area
96. American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*) - a male seen well at an active nest at Hillside Park in Anchorage
97. Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) - a single male seen at a traditional spot at the Sockeye burn
98. Hairy Woodpecker (*Leuconotopicus villosus*) - seen at a picnic area along the Parks Highway between Denali and Anchorage
99. Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) - scattered sightings in Nome and the Denali Highway areas
100. Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) - a pair seen distantly perched on rocks near a nesting site and then slightly closer views in flight
101. Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) - brief views along Council Road in Nome
102. Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*) - heard and seen well along the Denali Highway
103. Western Wood-Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*) - heard only at the Sockeye burn
104. Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*) - great views at the Sockeye burn
105. Northern Shrike (*Lanius borealis*) - two seen in the Nome area and a family group with recently fledged young seen along the Denali Highway
106. Gray "Canada" Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) - seen in the Anchorage area, Denali National Park, and around the lovely Tonglen Lake Lodge (renamed Canada Jay)

107. Black-billed Magpie (*Pica hudsonia*) - common in the Anchorage and Denali areas
108. Northern Raven (*Corvus corax*) - widespread and common
109. Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*) - seen along the Denali Highway and Parks Highway
110. Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*) - seen in the Anchorage area
111. Boreal Chickadee (*Poecile hudsonicus*) - good views at Hillside Park in Anchorage
112. Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*) - seen on the higher tundra along Teller Road in Nome
113. Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) - small numbers seen in Nome and Denali Highway (Bank Swallow in Clements)
114. Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) - fairly common and widespread in Nome and a few noted in the Denali area
115. American Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) - seen near bridges in Nome and along the Denali Highway
116. Arctic Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealis*) - fantastic views in Nome at the first stop along Kougarak Road and several great views along the Denali Highway
117. Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*) - great views at Hillside Park in Anchorage
118. Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) - recorded in small numbers in the Anchorage and Denali areas
119. Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) - seen in Anchorage where the species seems to be increasing
120. Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) - glimpsed in Nome and then many views in the Anchorage and Denali areas, including a bird foraging in the open at a picnic site along the Parks Highway
121. Grey-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*) - very common in the Nome area with many good views

122. Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) - common in the Anchorage and Denali areas
123. Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) - heard only in Nome
124. American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) - widespread and abundant
125. Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica*) - we had repeated views of displaying birds along Kougarak Road and Teller Road in Nome
126. Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) - excellent views of a displaying bird along the Teller Road in Nome
127. American Dipper (*Cinclus mexicanus*) - a pair seen along a stream along the Teller Road in Nome
128. Eastern Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla tschutschensis*) - good views of several in Nome, always a flighty species so watching one foraging on the edge of the pond at Swanberg Dredge was excellent
129. White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*) - great views of a pair in the community of Teller in Nome
130. Buff-bellied Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*) - seen on the tundra along the Teller Road in Nome, American Pipit in Clements
131. Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*) - seen in the Nome area and Denali area
132. Arctic Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni*) - common throughout the Nome area
133. White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*) - many excellent views along the Denali Highway, in Denali National Park, and at the Tonglen Lake Lodge
134. Lapland Longspur (*Calcarius lapponicus*) - common in Nome
135. Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*) - it was a long drive to get to the Tangle Lakes area of the Denali Highway, but once we walked out onto the tundra we were rewarded with excellent views of two males of this beautifully marked longspur
136. Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) - seen well by all along the Teller Road in Nome

137. Red Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*) - common in Nome and the Denali area
138. Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolnii*) - seen along the Denali Highway
139. White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) - common and widespread
140. Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) - common in Nome and also noted in the Denali area
141. Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) - seen in the Anchorage and Denali areas
142. Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) - common on grassy tundra in Nome and along Denali Highway
143. American Tree Sparrow (*Spizelloides arborea*) - especially common in the Nome area
144. Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*) - a single bird seen well along the Kougarak Road
145. Northern Waterthrush (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) - common throughout with its distinctive, loud song heard frequently in boggy areas
146. Orange-crowned Warbler (*Leiothlypis celata*) - common and widespread
147. American Yellow Warbler (*Setophaga aestiva*) - widespread and fairly common throughout
148. Blackpoll Warbler (*Setophaga striata*) - seen well in Nome and along the Denali Highway
149. Myrtle Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*) - recorded in the Anchorage area and Denali Highway
150. Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) - heard only in the Fairbanks area
151. Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*) - fairly common and widespread

Mammal List:

1. Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*)
2. American Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)
3. Arctic Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus parryii*)

4. Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
5. Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)
6. Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*)
7. Spotted Seal (*Phoca largha*)
8. Moose (*Alces americanus*)
9. Reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*)
10. Muskox (*Ovibos moschatus*)
11. Thinhorn Sheep (*Ovis dalli*)



Blackpoll Warbler by Stephan Lorenz



Northern Wheatear by Stephan Lorenz