

Trip Report

Central Sweden – August 2020

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Day 1: Stockholm & Örebro

Upon arrival, a stroll through the Stockholm city centre did not yield many birds, but for us, the common **Hooded Crow** was still special on day 1 in Sweden. Other than these, **Herring**, **Lesser Black-backed** and **Black-headed Gulls** were present, and **White Wagtails** were active around the Royal Palace. After a few hours of sightseeing, we took the train to Örebro, some 200 km west of Stockholm. From the train, which runs south of Lake Mälaren, we spotted our first two **Cranes** of the trip – birds from our Swedish wishlist! – as well as **Marsh Harrier**, **Raven**, **Hare** and **Roe Deer**. In Örebro, the lake surrounding the castle in the city centre (Örebro Slottet) yielded two noisy **Grey Wagtails** in the evening light.

Day 2: Bergslagsleden from Annaboda to Amboberget

We headed to Annaboda by bus in the morning, where we started our hiking trip along the Bergslags Trail (Bergslagsleden). Over the course of 5.5 days, we hiked stages 9 till 3 of the trail – heading north from our starting point in Annaboda. The first day we hiked stage 9 and much of stage 8, setting up camp in the woods near Amboberget, a bit south of Ramshyttan. During the whole trip, some bird species were ubiquitous. These include the very common **Siskins**, the noisy yet elusive **Common Crossbills**, **Wrens**, **Robins**, **Goldcrest**, **Wood Pigeons**, **Tree Pipits**, **Song Thrush**, **Blackcap** and **Greater Spotted Woodpecker**. We were happy to spot the **Scandinavian Nuthatch** (*Sitta europaea europaea*), with white underparts unlike *S. europaea caesia* which we know back south. A **Ringed Plover** on migration was resting on a muddy island in Lake Annabosjöarna, and five **Teals** were flying around Lake Göljan further north along the trail. **Honey Buzzards** were migrating on this sunny day, we managed to spot five lone migrants that morning. Setting up camp we were welcomed by the first of many **Black Woodpeckers** we would encounter on the trip. At dusk, two **Eurasian Pygmy Owls** were calling nearby.

Day 3: Bergslagsleden from Amboberget to Uvberget

Hiking the rest of stage 8 and much of stage 7 today, we stopped for birding and swimming at Lake Damasjön, near Gamla Pershyttan. We encountered our first **Arctic Loon** there, as well as our first **Firecrest** in the birches near shore. **Bramblings** were present too. **Ravens** were calling and flying over regularly during the day. Some **Willow Warblers** were calling along the track. **Black Woodpecker** and **Eurasian Pygmy Owl** provided the soundtrack in the evening.

Day 4: Bergslagsleden from Uvberget to Sodra Brunnsjön

In Digerberget, two groups of five **Honey Buzzards** each, flew over, a **Sparrowhawk** was seen, and at one point, a 'kettle' of five **Honey Buzzards**, two **Buzzards** and two **Ravens** formed in the thermals. In Hammarby, we spotted the trip's only **Yellowhammer** and a **Pied Flycatcher**. Järlean river yielded a female **Goldeneye** and **Grey Wagtails**. We were amazed by good views of **Camberwell Beauties** and **Silver-washed Fritillaries** in an overgrown orchard. Further along the track, a family of two adult and one juvenile **Cranes** flew right over our heads, and we spotted quite some thrushes on that stage of the hike: the ubiquitous **Song Thrush** and **Blackbirds**, but also **Fieldfare**, **Redwing** and **Mistle Thrush**. Mixed flocks of tits in the woods also yielded a group of white-headed *caudatus* **Long-tailed Tits**. **Nuthatch**, **Eurasian Treecreepers** and **Tree Pipits** were often part of these mixed tit flocks (containing **Coal**, **Great**, **Blue**, **Crested** and **Willow Tits**). **Alcon Blue** was a lifer for us, a heathland habitat specialist which is rare in the Low Countries. A **Hobby** was catching dragonflies in the midday sun along Lake Stora Galsjön. The area of Lake Sodra Brunnsjön yielded a lone **Whooper Swan**, later joined by a

loudly trumpeting second individual. **Grey Wagtails** and **Ravens** were also present. At night, the now familiar sounds of **Black Woodpecker**, **Arctic Loon** and **Eurasian Pygmy Owl** were all around us.



Lake Sodra Brunnsjön

Day 5: Bergslagsleden from Sodra Brunnsjön to Grännsjön

During a break at Uskavi, we again spotted **Arctic Loons**, as well as lots of **White Wagtails** and **Tree Pipits**. A **Goldfinch** was singing high up a birch tree, and the largest flock of **Siskins** of the trip (30+) flew over. Further down the track, Grännsjön was a particularly scenic lake. **Arctic Loons** were calling, **Black Woodpecker** and **Eurasian Pygmy Owl** were present too. Despite having seen tracks of **Moose** nearby, we did not manage to see any. A **Roe Deer** was barking in the distance at dusk.



Lake Gränsjönn

Day 6: Bergslagsleden from Grännsjön to Stora Myggsjön

Early in the morning, we spotted the second (only!) **Red Squirrel** of the trip. The area between Grännsjön and the small settlement of Nyberget proved to be rewarding in terms of birds. Old forest remnants looked promising, and yielded one of the best species of the trip: a **Grey-headed Woodpecker** gave great views along the track. A **Cuckoo** flew by and **Crested and Coal Tits, Crossbills, Bullfinch, Black** and **Greater Spotted Woodpeckers** were present in the woods. Two **Red Deer** crossed the trail. A large mixed flock of **Chaffinch** and **Brambling** was foraging in the trees near Nyberget. On Lake Dammsjön in Nyberget, we got great views of a group of 8 **Arctic Loons**. A Hobby was hunting **Barn Swallows** and **House Martins** over the lake. The western end of Lake Dammsjön yielded an adult **White-tailed Eagle**. Hiking stage 3, we added an extra loop to take in the Kindla Nature Reserve, a mossy old forest with lots of grouse tracks, yet not live sightings. A lone male **Goldeneye** was present on the lake west of Röberget. In the lake at Rasbacktjärn, two **Grass Snakes** were swimming. In late afternoon, the rain set in. Two **Arctic Loons** were present on Lake Stora Myggsjön.

Day 7: Bergslagsleden from Stora Myggsjön to Stjärnfors, and then on to Kopparberg a Stockholm

Not a lot of birds in the morning drizzle. At Stjärnfors, **Grey Wagtails** were present, and we heard a last **Black Woodpecker** on the outskirts of Kopparberg. From the train between Västerås and Stockholm, we spotted a large group of 150+ **Cranes** in agricultural fields, as well as three **Roe Deer**. In central Stockholm, we saw the trip's last **Grey Wagtails**.

Birdlist of the entire trip (65 species):

1. Grey Heron
2. Barn Swallow
3. Ringed Plover
4. Hooded Crow
5. Pied Flycatcher
6. Tree Pipit
7. Hobby
8. Goldeneye
9. Marsh Harrier
10. Buzzard
11. Canada Goose
12. Eurasian Pygmy Owl
13. Magpie
14. Willow Warbler
15. Eurasian Jay
16. Yellowhammer
17. Goldcrest
18. Bullfinch
19. Grey-headed Woodpecker
20. Greater Spotted Woodpecker
21. Grey Wagtail
22. Mistle Thrush
23. Woodpigeon
24. House Martin
25. House Sparrow
26. Jackdaw
27. Brambling

28. Lesser black-backed
Gull
29. Common Cuckoo
30. Black-headed Gull
31. Redwing
32. Crane
33. Fieldfare
34. Red Crossbill
35. Crested Tit
36. Willow Tit
37. Blackbird
38. Arctic Loon
39. Blue Tit
40. Goldfinch
41. Common Raven
42. Eurasian Robin
43. Siskin
44. Sparrowhawk
45. Rock pigeon
46. Mew Gull
47. Eurasian Treecreeper
48. Northern Wheatear
49. Kestrel
50. Chaffinch
51. Firecrest
52. Honey Buzzard
53. Mallard
54. Whooper Swan
55. Wren
56. Teal
57. Long-tailed tit (ssp.
caudatus)
58. White Wagtail
59. Song Thrush
60. White-tailed Eagle
61. Herring Gull
62. Coal Tit
63. Black Woodpecker
64. Blackcap
65. Scandinavian
Nuthatch (ssp.
Europaea)