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FINLAND

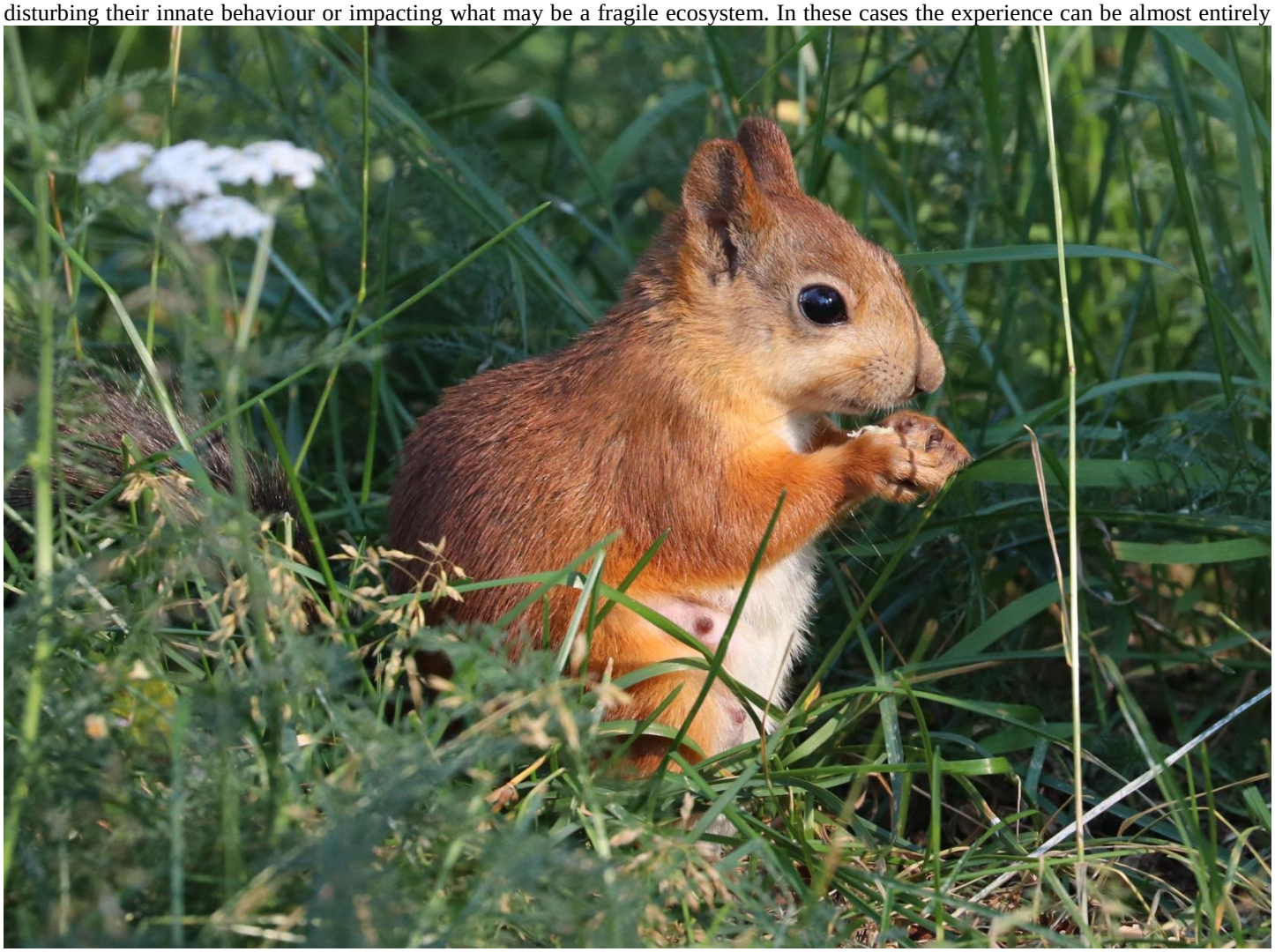
Date - July 2018

Duration - 12 Days

Destinations
Utsjoki - Kuhmo - Viiksimo - Kiviklahti - Patvinsuo National Park - Linnansaari National Park - Lake Saimaa - Lahti - Helsinki

Trip Overview

In many ways this trip report can be read in conjunction with my previous Norway report, as they were essentially the same tour and I only decided to split them because the experiences could not have been more dissimilar. Although both expeditions featured outstanding journeys through some of the most inspired scenery imaginable, in Norway we were exploring vast tracts of wilderness and we travelled directly from these huge open spaces to nine nights in largely confined and sweltering hides with a vastly reduced field of vision. I have used a lot of hides at various destinations across the world and indeed in Norway we often made use of the innovative Biotope bird hides and wind shelters to unobtrusively scan the landscape. We were not particularly successful, but hides in general can be extremely productive and I would certainly recommend their use in areas where the wildlife occurs naturally and is not being attracted by artificial means. It is this artificial element that I have an issue with, as there are three main types of hide and whilst two are relatively harmless, the ones that involve baiting animals with food, particularly large predators, are too invasive as far as I am concerned and can cause serious problems. The first of the two harmless varieties simply involve well positioned and often well concealed or remote viewing hides, where you know that animals already occur and are able to observe whatever arrives without disturbing their innate behaviour or impacting what may be a fragile ecosystem. In these cases the experience can be almost entirely



natural and although I have to admit that I have never overly taken to hides and much prefer the freedom to explore an area on foot or in a vehicle, there are times when the use of a hide is more appropriate for perhaps a more vulnerable species or at a particularly sensitive environment. In these circumstances the wildlife should barely be aware of your presence, if at all, and should certainly not be adversely affected by it, which has to be the priority of all wildlife viewing and all wildlife based tourism. This also applies to the second way in which hides are often utilised, which does involve an element of baiting, but with scent as opposed to food. I again have no real issue with this practice, as it is far less damaging from an ecological perspective than feeding animals and scientists and researchers are now regularly using scent baiting as an alternative to the traumatic drugging and collaring of terrified creatures, which I believe in almost all cases is too invasive to be justified. It is almost equally difficult to justify the third type of hide experience, where wild animals are fed purely to enable paying guests to see and photograph them with a minimum of effort. In some cases these creatures are admittedly difficult to observe in authentically wild conditions, as with the wolverine, but more usually, as per the situation with brown bears and wolves, hides are used because visitors want guaranteed sightings with no element of chance and professional photographers need to take extremely close images that they can pass off and sell as genuinely wild. I am not talking about the comparatively innocuous practice of feeding small mammals in the way that birds have always been fed, either in people's own gardens or at lodges where the resident wildlife is fed largely for the benefit of the guests. I do not personally think that it does a massive amount of harm if an opossum steals the occasional piece of fruit from a feeder or if a squirrel comes to feast on the same seeds that have been left out for the local birdlife. I understand that some people reading this may consider that view slightly hypocritical and that the size of the animal should not determine whether it can be fed or not. Similarly, many believe that we should have no interaction at all with wildlife and that all wild creatures should be left to live and die without any human involvement. Whilst I would myself wholeheartedly subscribe to that same utopian principle in some imagined ideal universe, the reality is that in a world of widespread pollution, habitat destruction and climate change, it is no longer possible for us to have absolutely no impact on the lives of the animals that it is our responsibility to share this extraordinary planet with. As such, I do not mind if we offer a few opportunist mammals an irregular helping hand, but of course I still recognise that there are better ways to assist animals than feeding

them, just not shooting them is a fairly sound start, and even small creatures should not be fed so excessively that they become entirely dependent on the artificial food source, which I believe is becoming a significant issue in Finland. Obviously wild animals should never be fed by hand, as it is imperative that they do not automatically associate people with food and this is particularly important in terms of carnivores, as humans and carnivores rarely combine well and you can be fairly certain that when an issue occurs between the two, regardless of how stupid or irresponsible someone has been, the predator will generally bear the ultimate responsibility for any human transgression. This was my starting point really in terms of the Finland section of the tour, as I have never believed that it is acceptable to feed large carnivores and have essentially avoided the lodges and operators involved in what I have always considered to be at best, an ethically dubious form of wildlife tourism. However, at least a reasonable number of wildlife enthusiasts clearly disagree, as the hides in Finland are increasing in popularity and the cost to use them is rising accordingly. Visitors are certainly prepared to spend a great deal of money to view mainly brown bears, wolves and wolverines and at certain times of the year the most popular destinations are fully booked. The commercially astute professional photographers aside, who clearly know what they are doing, in truth, many of these visitors are novices and this is often their first wildlife encounter of this kind. As such, they have no real way of recognising an authentic experience or whether they are viewing these apex predators in entirely natural conditions and are usually just thrilled to be watching animals they could never have imagined seeing in the wild. I was exactly the same when I was younger and who in their right mind would not be excited at the prospect of watching wolves and bears just a few metres away. Even now it sounds exhilarating and over the years I have lost count of how many friends and potential guests have asked me why I do not offer trips to the hides in Finland, which are all marketed as adventurous ‘wild’ experiences. This was actually the main purpose of my visit, as I knew that I would be in Norway during the summer of 2018 and that I was consequently just one long drive away from being able to assess just how natural and ethical these encounters really are. I thought that if I did not take the opportunity now, I probably never would and therefore booked stays of five, three and two nights at three of the most popular lodges, just to ensure that my judgement would not be based on one terrible stay or disreputable company. I have not been able to spend as much time as I would have liked in Europe in recent years, but I do love travelling in the wild regions of this great continent and Finland has always been a superb destination, regardless of the relatively recent popularity of these viewing hides. The trip started in more or less identical fashion to the entire Norway tour, with a fabulous drive from Finnmark into Lapland in northern Finland and then south to the Kainuu region on the border with Russia, where we would spend exactly a week at two different lodges. Perhaps surprisingly given the ground covered and time spent searching well beyond our extended vigils in each hide, we were not to see a single moose in Finland and our last encounter was with a mother and two extremely young calves just before we crossed the border on that first morning. There was barely a sign to even indicate that we had entered Finland, but the landscape did change appreciably

over the course of that initial journey, as the tundra and fjords gradually gave way to the forest and lakes that we would become so familiar with over the next few days. There are a vast number of lakes in Finland and whilst we would eventually take advantage of the refreshing crystal clear waters of plenty after sweltering overnight stints in the hides, we regrettably had no time to do so on a journey that was as breathtaking as any I have ever known. We did stop to admire a few red squirrels and mountain hares, as well as several spectacular panoramas that were simply too exceptional to ignore, and in any other circumstances I would have taken the opportunity to explore the enticing forests that we had to heartbreakingly keep driving past. As it was, we were due to go straight from what turned out to be a twelve-hour drive into our first hide, so basically from the epic expanse of the Norwegian Arctic to a tiny and suffocatingly hot wooden box that frankly would not have been out of place in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. I half expected Alec Guinness to wander along whistling 'Colonel Bogey' and if that is exaggerating the situation somewhat, July was excruciatingly hot and the hides are sealed and insulated to ensure that the animals beyond cannot hear or smell the occupants. The only ventilation involves the small openings used for photographic purposes, but these are blocked with canvas until in use and of course you cannot poke your head through and risk disturbing every living creature within a three-mile radius, including your no doubt irate fellow

tourists in the neighbouring hides. Consequently, we were dripping with sweat within a few minutes of entering what was one of the smallest hides I have ever used, there was basically just sufficient room for us to sit together, and over nine of the next ten nights, we would spend approximately 150 hours in these conditions. Some hides were bigger and more comfortable than others, a couple even had ventilation and relaxing beds, and we took one night off in all, partly for a much needed break and also to visit a beaver lodge at the edge of one of the lakes we would swim in each morning, having escaped the confines of our nocturnal sauna. I have no intention of describing nine nights in hides in this format, or indeed in any other for that matter, as each followed more or less the same pattern and generally involved a combination of bears and wolverines, depending on the area and the type of hide selected. The conditions were also not that important to me, for although they were fairly tough at times and some of the hides are certainly less hospitable than needs to be the case, my only real concerns were whether the human interaction was adversely impacting the resident wildlife and if these were genuinely wild experiences that I could recommend to future guests. The first issue I have grave concerns regarding and the second I can answer in a heartbeat, as these are wild animals that you are watching, but the experience is about as far removed from a natural one as I can possibly imagine. To many engaged in wildlife tourism, the expression 'wild' is a subjective one that can be moved and redefined to more or less suit any conceivable situation involving animals and to some potential guests the distinction is only relevant in terms of the life lists that they choose to maintain. As bird watching has been for probably more than a century, so mammal watching is now becoming extremely popular and many of these mammal enthusiasts like to record their encounters in the same way that birders are famous for the lists that often dictate their travels and occasionally their entire lives. In some cases, although

certainly not in all by any means, the number of mammals that can be added to a life list is more relevant than either the quality of a sighting or the individual species involved and I am often asked whether a particular animal or encounter can be classified as truly wild. I generally respond that it is up to each individual to decide and that if an encounter feels natural to the person involved, then this is really all that matters. I believe that you can instinctively tell if something feels real or not, but if that intuitive concept is not helpful to everyone, I have three rudimentary guidelines that I use to assess whether an animal is living an authentically wild existence. They are all fairly basic criteria that in a world absent the unchecked advance of burgeoning human populations, would never even need to be considered. Firstly, I try to ascertain whether an animal is being fed and by fed I do not mean creeping into a

human environment and supplementing their diet with a little thievery, which is very much a matter of us simply coexisting in these imperfect times. I am more concerned with whether the creatures in question can survive without being fed, as any animals that rely on food provided by people, as per domestic livestock, can never be considered wild in my opinion. My second gauge is whether animals are breeding naturally and by naturally I mean in the old fashioned sense of seeking a mate through instinctive behaviour, often involving combat and usually a great deal of danger, stress and hardship. I am obviously not including artificial breeding programmes as natural behaviour, where the best genetic matches are chosen by scientists and supposedly compatible animals are placed together in fenced enclosures until they either breed or kill each other. Again, animals that do not at least have the opportunity to look to breed cannot be truly wild and my final criteria is similarly fundamental, as I believe that only creatures that can be predated upon or killed by rival species are intrinsically wild. A good example would apply to say a herd of endangered beisa oryx. If you put a fence around one of their massive reserves in Kenya, they would remain wild as far as I am concerned, as lions and other predators would still be able to feast upon them. However, if you then went a step further and removed all of the predators from that reserve, they would no longer be living a natural existence, despite the fact that they were still feeding and breeding naturally as per my first two criteria. In some ways this is the most controversial aspect of my philosophy, as it cannot apply evenly to all species, certainly not to the dominant apex predators, and in many ecosystems large carnivores have been eradicated and the predation of numerous species really only applies at a newborn and juvenile level, when all animals are at their most vulnerable. Nevertheless, an animal's behaviour changes when it is so well protected that nothing can hunt it at any age, excluding man of course, and it is difficult to argue that in these wholly contrived conditions a creature can be considered to be living a natural life. As with my example regarding the oryx, and although I hate fences and man's innate instinct to put a fence around everything he owns to the exclusion of all others, I am not that concerned about fences in this context and do not automatically believe that if an animal is living in a fenced enclosure, it cannot be thought of as wild. Much would depend on the size of the enclosure and whilst I maintain that I do not generally agree with fencing a reserve unless there is absolutely no alternative, if you were to put a fence around a huge national park, as has occurred in various countries, the animals within remain wild in my view. I appreciate that this personal ethos may be slightly simplistic and cannot take into account a number of factors regarding diverse species and contrasting regions, but basically if I can provide the correct response to each of these conditions, then, for all intents and purposes, the animal is wild and I do not care a great deal about the endemicity issues that perpetually cloud the judgement of so many academics. In this day and age, when literally billions of creatures have been erroneously introduced to ecosystems in which they patently do not belong, often with disastrous consequences, where an animal naturally occurs is often a moot point and open to interpretation in a huge number of cases. I do not accept that whether an animal is endemic or not has any relevance to whether it is leading a wild existence and you need to perhaps

ask if a red fox is any less wild in the Australian outback than it is in a Romanian forest, simply because it was introduced to the former by bloodthirsty British colonists and has wreaked havoc on the local fauna ever since? Of course not is the entirely evident answer and whilst there are undoubtedly significant issues involving this almost incalculable movement of wildlife, the true wildness of the creatures involved is not one of them. The question of exactly how wild certain animals are is particularly pertinent among visitors to Finland, as wolves and brown bears are relatively easy to see at a number of destinations without baiting, but wolverines are incredibly difficult to observe and encountering one is always a matter of extraordinarily good fortune. Staking out a carcass can be productive in rare cases, but there are never any guarantees with these elusive mustelids and I can entirely understand why people are so desperate to add the ones in Finland to their lists. As I have been lucky enough to see them elsewhere, this is not a massive concern to me and I would always advise that people make the effort and travel further afield to at least try to search for them in more

sympathetic surroundings. That said, if you have tried many times before or if these hides are perhaps your only option, then at least I can offer the small consolation of confirming that all of the species watched here are wild in any reasonable sense of the word, as they would absolutely survive without the food they are receiving and are clearly wild in every other respect. There, however, the good news ends, as the animals may be wild, but the experience is anything but and I can barely think of a more disheartening way in which to see such a thrilling creature for the very first time. If that sounds overstated, particularly from someone who has been fortunate enough to see all of these iconic carnivores previously, I can only add that I have been searching for an Eurasian lynx more or less my entire adult life and after our first couple of nights in Finland I was basically praying that I did not glimpse my first in these manufactured conditions. To be fair, I cannot pretend that I did not enjoy seeing the wildlife at all, as it is always a privilege to spend time with such magnificent predators, but the level of feeding here surprised even me and these animals are not being attracted by a few scraps for them to investigate as they pass through the landscape, they are being fed significant quantities in order to keep them occupied in front of a wall of cameras. In some cases entire adult pigs were dragged across the already scarred and pitted terrain by quad bikes to the feeding areas and deeper in the forest, chunks of salmon were skewered on nails high in trees to make the wolverines climb for the benefit of the photographers, in much the same way that zookeepers conceal food around an enclosure as part of an enrichment programme to keep their captive animals occupied. It was actually difficult to escape that unfortunate comparison throughout our visit and the entire experience is so unnatural and so contrary to everything that I aspire to in terms of wilderness and wildlife adventures, that I have to admit I left with no better understanding of why people appear so captivated by such a soulless practice, let alone why they ever return. If you are happy to watch animals being fed in this way, then you may as well be at a zoo and having walked with genuinely wild bears and wolves, I would urge potential visitors to look further afield if possible and to consider

an authentically wild option. There is nothing quite like standing within a few metres of a 900lb grizzly bear and I would swap any number of contrived experiences at hides in any country for just one visit to Alaska or British Columbia during the salmon run, when bears congregate in often large numbers and it is possible to witness the most spectacular natural behaviour at extremely close quarters. Mothers interact with their young cubs and with many of the big males that may harm them and whilst squabbles frequently erupt, they are usually just brief and noisy affairs, as the bears are otherwise engaged at this time of year, gorging themselves on the floundering salmon ready for hibernation. Alternatively, if you have set your heart on seeing a wolverine and believe that Finland will provide your only realistic opportunity, then perhaps book a hide for just one or two nights and spend the rest of your visit exploring the many remote and pristine wild areas that this superb wildlife destination still has to offer. There are practical as well as ethical concerns involved in the practice of baiting animals at hides and whilst I am not opposed to them in terms of wanting a complete ban, feeding large carnivores remains an anathema to me and there is little doubt that the wolverines and bears in these areas are associating people with food and are in some cases waiting as the trucks pull up with the latest carcass. They are clearly moving into an area based on the time of day and probably engine noise and although James and I were extremely happy to encounter two different wolverines away from the feeding areas on hikes, there was no point us fooling ourselves regarding the true nature of these sightings. These wolverines were in the general vicinity in the hope of a free meal and we probably only saw them because they now connect humans with food and were actively checking in case we might have food. There are multiple, complex ecological issues associated with the feeding of wildlife, not least the fact that animals can become dependent on the food provided and neglect to teach their young how to hunt or forage with the inevitable tragic consequences. You change an animal's behaviour when you feed it and several studies have confirmed that infant mortality increases exponentially within fed populations. One long term analysis involving bottlenose dolphins in Western Australia revealed that first-year mortality rates more than doubled when female dolphins were provided with food and that in many cases these mothers were simply neglecting to protect their calves as they waited by the shore to be fed, which was resulting in far greater predation on the abandoned and helpless young. To those that argue that almost every wildlife activity leads to an element of habituation, whilst there is some truth in this, there is actually a vast difference between animals habituated to the general presence of people and those that actively approach us for food, particularly regarding powerful carnivores that could just as easily actively approach us as food. A fed animal is a dead animal in many cases anywhere in the world and on this trip I noticed that several of the bears had wounds from where they are living and feeding in such close proximity. So regularly are animals being seen together, that the latest trend is to try and photograph both bears and wolves in the same shot. Although this does happen in the wild and I have watched these species tussle over a carcass, it is not a common occurrence and when one photographer proudly displayed his picture of these two age old rivals side by side, I flippantly suggested that next time he should wait for a wolverine to show up and complete the set. Unfortunately the irony flew straight over his head and his eyes lit up at the very prospect. Photographers are a large part of the problem in Finland, as they are prepared to pay a great deal of money to get the shots that they need and this is certainly increasing the demand for these hides and thereby the pressure on the resident wildlife. Although some of the lodge owners are clearly more ethical than others, there is unquestionably a great deal of greed involved in this industry and at a couple of sites there were so many hides that it was a bit like watching animals from a housing estate, with dozens of

cameramen sticking huge lenses out of their living room windows. That said, and for all the undoubted disruption and environmental concerns, I would much rather that money was being generated as a result of wildlife tourism than hunting, which is why I cannot bring myself to entirely oppose what is happening here or to unequivocally denounce it. I cannot criticise the fact that people want to fly thousands of miles simply to gaze at and photograph beautiful creatures rather than shoot them and I would accept imperfect versions of almost all wildlife related activities if that meant that wildlife tourism finally replaced hunting and habitat destruction both financially and in people's consciousness. Sadly, although these premier tourist attractions are making a few individuals a great deal of money, they are not actually protecting the local wildlife, as hunting remains prevalent in Finland and during the first few days of our stay, we learned that twenty brown bears would be killed in that area throughout the pending hunting season. At least some of the bears that we were watching and that people would admire in various wildlife publications across the world, would never make it to

hibernation and in some cases we were actually observing their last few days. I obviously do not need to convey just how difficult that was to stomach and the fact that thousands of likeminded people are paying small fortunes to show their appreciation of both these unsuspecting animals and the country in general, makes absolutely no difference to the selfish backward individuals who enjoy killing them. As is regrettably the case elsewhere, there is a real hardcore hunting mentality in Finland and I remember years ago that the Finnish Hunters Association proposed that in order to protect the forest reindeer subspecies that their members and forebears had basically hunted to the brink of extinction, they should be granted more licences to kill wolves, bears and lynx. They insisted that these large carnivores were to blame for the demise of the reindeer and that only by exterminating more of them, could the poor defenceless reindeer be saved. It stuck in my mind as one of the most abject and cynical deceptions I had ever encountered and during 2017 their members killed over 700 of these apex predators, at least in terms of the officially reported and recorded figures. As appalling as that number rightly sounds, it almost pales into insignificance when you learn that the 306,000 registered hunters in Finland slaughtered approximately 1.4 million animals between them during 2017, including hundreds of thousands of birds and a barely comprehensible 150,000 raccoon dogs. The death toll makes truly reprehensible reading and incorporates more than 50,000 red foxes, more or less the same number of mink, 130,000 mountain and European hares, 210,000 wood pigeons, 180,000 mallard ducks and just under 100,000 moose and white-tailed deer. All killed by less than 6% of the population in a country almost identical in size to Norway, the first of our summer European destinations, and only slightly smaller than Poland, where we were due to travel next. We began each of our vigils with the mantra 'and now our watch begins', which is a slight variation on part of the oath taken by members of the Night's Watch in the fantasy novels 'A Song of Ice and Fire' by George R.R. Martin. There are meant to be seven

novels in all, but we have been waiting almost eight years since the fifth work in the series, 'A Dance with Dragons', was published in 2011 and most readers have given up asking or even guessing when 'The Winds of Winter' is likely to be released. Perhaps by way of compensation, for a while I did watch the HBO adaption 'Game of Thrones', which started fantastically well and has a really talented cast. However, the quality of the writing has deteriorated decidedly over the eight seasons and the plot has deviated in such significant and nuanced areas, it now bears little resemblance to the source material. Wolves, or actually direwolves to be precise, play a significant part in the story and James and I were both slightly disappointed that our nine nights on watch ultimately produced just one

lupine encounter, albeit of up to four members of the same pack. One of these emerged from the morning mist exactly like Jon Snow's direwolf Ghost, but we were not destined to see any more until we moved on to Poland a few weeks later and had the type of thrilling wild encounter that you simply cannot imagine if you have only ever seen wolves in these contrived conditions. As we journeyed further south from lodge to lodge, so the nights grew longer and darker and we began to take it in turns to try to grab some sleep, just so that we were able to spend our days exploring the surrounding countryside. We were always at our happiest beyond the stifling hides, where we had the freedom to roam the shaded forest and to plunge into the revitalising waters of yet another sparkling lake. Our long and thoroughly picturesque hikes were usually further adorned by a few typically elegant red squirrels, one of which even managed to trap itself in a bird hide, and on one drive between lodges, a least weasel darted across the road in front of our vehicle, fortunately in far more of a hurry than I was. White-tailed sea eagles and golden eagles were both observed from the hides and our one night off produced a pair of American beavers swimming in and out of their lodge, with James very kindly taking over the rowing duties to enable me to scan and photograph. Having been eliminated from the country in the 19th century, Eurasian beavers were reintroduced from Norway prior to the Second World War, when several American beavers were also released. Whilst the Eurasian beavers did survive and can still be found elsewhere in Finland, the American version positively thrived and in the regions we visited you will only encounter the adaptable invasive species. There are also two types of reindeer in Northern Europe, the mountain reindeer, Rangifer tarandus tarandus, found in fragmented populations in southern Norway and the forest reindeer, Rangifer tarandus fennicus, that survives in low numbers in parts of Finland and Russia. The owner of one of the lodges took us out looking for the forest variety and we were delighted to find a single male, which we watched for about an hour and were able to get fairly close to. As the trip had been arranged primarily to assess the various viewing hides recommended to me, I had only been able to include one additional location, Lake Saimaa, the largest lake in Finland and the second largest in Europe outside of Russia. Only Vanern in Sweden is bigger and it was certainly appropriate that a lake would be our final major destination, as we passed literally hundreds during the course of our journey from north to south and there are thought to be almost 188,000 lakes throughout Finland, depending of course on your exact definition of a lake. I chose Saimma not because it is the biggest or the most famous, but because it is home to the Saimaa ringed seal subspecies, one of the rarest seals on the planet. There are currently estimated to be less than 400 of these freshwater seals remaining and, as the name perhaps suggests, they occur only in Lake Saimaa. In order to try and see one we had to drive straight from our final night in a hide to a private morning boat ride in the Linnansaari National Park region, where the seals are usually fairly easy to observe, although not always out of the water. We were not particularly fortunate, as we only managed to find one seal after several hours of searching and that individual animal was swimming at distance and only remained visible for a few seconds. I was advised that May to early June is the best time of year to spot the seals relaxing out of the water and, as is so often the case with nature, a poor season for one animal is a great time for something else and we were thrilled to see healthy numbers of osprey, including several chicks on nests. Watching these magnificent raptors hunting for themselves and returning to feed their young, really only confirmed what I had been feeling throughout the entire tour, that there is a reason that only genuinely wild encounters are truly exhilarating and that it is not sufficient just to keep a species alive, we have to keep them free as well. We cannot lose sight of this or what is happening at the hides in Finland will be repeated all over the world and eventually we will forget what it means to be free, both for ourselves and for the creatures that we are charged to protect, not to feed.

No.	Species	Scientific Name	Notes
1	Grey Wolf	Canis lupus	Four members of the same pack, individually and in pairs during one session at the first hide.
2	Brown Bear	Ursus arctos	Numerous sightings at all three hides, but no natural encounters.
3	Wolverine	Gulo gulo	Around 25 sightings of at least twelve different animals at hides and two individuals in the vicinity of our final lodge.
4	Least Weasel	Mustela nivalis	An individual running across the road on the drive to our second lodge.
5	Moose	Alces alces	A mother and two calves just before we crossed the border into Finland on our first morning.
6	Reindeer	Rangifer tarandus	Extended views of one wild male around 40 kilometres from our first lodge.
7	Mountain Hare	Lepus timidus	Three observed on the initial drive south and one on the transfer to our third lodge.
8	American Beaver	Castor canadensis	Two swimming in and out of their lodge at our first destination.
9	Eurasian Red Squirrel	Sciurus vulgaris	Regularly observed at every destination.
10	Ringed Seal	Pusa hispida	One at distance in Lake Saimaa.


Nordkapp
Varangerhalvoya
Vadso
Stabbursdalen
Ovre Pasvik
Tromso
Lofoten Islands
Lemmenjoki
Pallas-
Yllastunturi
Urho
Kekkonen
Abisko
Padjelanta
Stora Sjofallet
Sarek
Saltfjellet-
Svartisen
Muddus
Norwegian
Sea
Rovaniemi
Oulanka
Norway
Oulu
Kuhmo
Russia
Finland
Sweden
Trondheim
Patvinsuo
Dovrefjell
Linnansaari
Jostedalsbreen
Tampere
Fulufjallet
Bergen
Lahti
Turku
Hardangervidda
Oslo
Helsinki
Uppsala
Vasteras
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