

Southern Sweden: Falsterbo & Ottenby
Aug 27 – Sept 6, 2022

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1, Sat, Aug 27: Arrival into Copenhagen

Group to rendezvous and evening dinner at hotel. ***Night in hotel near Copenhagen Kastrup Airport (TBD)***

Day 2, Sun, Aug 28: Transit to Falsterbo

After a leisurely breakfast we load up the mini-bus and head east across the Øresund Bridge to Sweden and the city of Malmö. Finished in 2000, the bridge is approximately 5 miles long and is an impressive feat of engineering because it supports two railway tracks beneath a four-lane roadway! After ticket checks and a quick stop in the city, we head south and should arrive on the Falsterbo peninsula by lunchtime. We will head straight to accommodation for check-in and bag drop.

Depending on the afternoon conditions, we plan to check out Ljunggen Heath Reserve (Skanörs Ljung Naturreservat) and Ängsnäset, a rich coastal lagoon productive for raptors and shorebirds. Species encountered here on past trips include Eurasian curlew, plus Wood, Curlew, Common and Green Sandpipers, Little and Temminck's Stints, Greenshank, Spotted Redshank, Ruff, Common Snipe and Northern Lapwing. The reedbeds here should be full of roosting pipits, wagtails and swallows also, and there's always a chance of Spotted Crake, Water Rail and Hobby here. For the more energetic, there will be several chances to watch this area at sunset after dinner, as birding at dusk can be quite productive.

Night at the Palm Tree Hotel in Trelleborg

Day 3-5, Mon, Aug 29 – Wed, Aug 31: Falsterbo

Flexibility will be the key to success during the three full days on the peninsula. As the larger raptor movements depend on weather conditions, we'll observe several sites daily, but concentrate on the main viewing areas on Ljunggen Heath (Skanörs Ljung Naturreservat) on days with expected thermals and a south-westerly airflow that produce both lift and a headwind for the birds to ride. Raptors will be moving, and we'll view a great selection of species, but it's these exact conditions that can produce thousands of birds.

One of the key reasons for coming early in the season is for a good chance of observing honey buzzard passage. These unique and beautiful birds are heading for tropical Africa, so they leave early before insect life disappears from the chilly north. On the move also are Hen, Marsh, and Montagu's Harriers, Eurasian Sparrowhawk & Kestrel, Osprey, Red Kite, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, and Hobby. Falsterbo also acts as a kind of spotting filter for rare Asian vagrants which have strayed into Scandinavia, and then get pulled south with everything else and include Pallid Harrier, Red-footed Falcon and Steppe Eagle.

There is also the infamous Nabben, an area that lies towards the tip and has a great view looking back across the straits. It's worth a look here in any conditions, but is where you need to be for raptors during periods of south-westerly airflow when birds are pushed directly overhead. Ducks, geese, divers, skuas and grebes are moving along the coast at this time too, so we'll also keep an eye on the huge bird rich lagoon at Måkläppen. This area is good for gulls, terns, shorebirds and wildfowl, and can easily be birded from the sea defenses. Even the short grass of the nearby golf course is a productive place to see

migrants such as Northern Wheatear, wagtails and pipits. There's also good bird habitat with decently sized trees in the observatory garden which attracts warblers, crests, and tits.

The wetland habitats (saline lagoons, with reedbeds) at Ängsnäset and Skanörs Revlar are good sites for migrant shorebirds and species such as Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Wood Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint are frequent. As it's autumn there's always a possibility of spotting the rarer Broad-billed Sandpiper, Kentish Plover or Temminck's Stint also. ***Nights at the Palm Tree Hotel in Trelleborg***

Day 6, Thu, Sept 1: Transit to Ottenby

We'll leave Falserbo for Ottenby early, as we plan to search for Black Woodpecker and Nutcracker en route. The island of Öland is 6-7 hours away, and we should arrive at our final destination for dinner. If time permits, we can birdwatch as we drive down the peninsula before dark. Both the lighthouse and ancient landscape will draw us in immediately - it's very atmospheric! Welcome to Ottenby! ***Night at the Hotell Magasin in Morbylanga***

Days 7-9, Fri, Sept 2 – Sun, Sept 4: Ottenby

For the next three days, the beautiful village of Morbylanga will be our base to explore the nearby Ottenby World Heritage Site. This island peninsula is an exciting birding location full of passage shorebirds, wildfowl and passerines, and we will encounter many species along the hiking trails that cover endless coastal meadows and rich forests. The area also supports a unique ecosystem that's found nowhere else in the country due to the underlying terraced limestone. Since the Iron Age, man's modifications of this area using grazing animals has helped create a varied landscape and rich diversity. Some 4500 acres of the coastal fringes were designated a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance back in 1974, as the surrounding waters provide important feeding resources for shorebirds and wildfowl.

This internationally important site is administered by Naturum Ottenby who does an excellent job with visitor management and interpretation. There's some great vantage points around the reserve that have hides, so if the weather gets a bit rough, there's always somewhere cozy to seek shelter. The administrative hub is down by the lighthouse and is the location for a museum, exhibition space, restaurant and bookshop. The exhibition is highly recommended, with interactive exhibits and a great kids bird art area. Bird news is also quickly disseminated around the peninsula from here if something interesting is found.

The Lange Jan lighthouse at the point is also the location of the world famous Ottenby Bird Observatory, which has been carrying out field research into bird migration since 1946. With some 20,000 birds being banded each year, the work of the observatory is fascinating and we'll take several chances to check out some of their important daily duties. It's a great place to hang out sometimes if you're looking for some relatively easy birding, as many birds are funneled towards this sheltered garden location on the point. ***Night at the Hotell Magasin in Morbylanga.***

Day 10, Mon, Sept 5: Transit to Copenhagen Kastrup Airport

After breakfast we'll head back to Copenhagen airport, but we'll plan to check out some birding sites en route if time permits! We will have a final dinner at the hotel and get a good rest before departures the following morning. ***Night in hotel near Copenhagen Kastrup Airport (TBD)***

Day 11, Tue, Sept 6: Departure

After breakfast we head to the airport for our return flights home.

Itinerary subject to change due to the weather, local information, and the whims of the leader!