

# Wise Birding Holidays

Bird and mammal watching tours



## ESTONIA: Eurasian Lynx Quest 2

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**4 Wise Birding clients**

**Leaders:** Tarvo Valker and Martin Piispea

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRIP

**Eurasian Lynx:** Two individuals seen on two consecutive night drives. A big male and a smaller female or young animal. Views ranging from 200 to just 50 metres!

**See thermal Video [HERE](#)** from Wise Birding leader Martin

**Eurasian Elk (Moose):** Seen well on one night drive.

**Raccoon Dog & Red Fox:** Several observed during the trip on most nights.

**Pine Marten:** One sighting during a night drive.

**Eurasian Beaver:** Observed swimming on one evening.



Martin Piispea

**One of the two Eurasian Lynx seen very well by the whole group**

## SUMMARY

*This short wildlife viewing trip to Estonia was primarily focused on securing a good sighting of the highly elusive Eurasian Lynx. A total of five nights were spent in eastern Estonia focusing the search area within the Lahemaa National Park.*

*Two Wise Birding leaders led this successful tour, Tarvo Valker and Martin Piispea.*

*Tarvo has organised many successful Lynx tours over the years and has observed Lynx on numerous occasions in Estonia. He is also one of Estonia's leading ornithologists so provided some great birding opportunities outside of the key Lynx search times. Martin's knowledge of the target area and his knowledge on the Lynx population in the search area is first class.*

***A total of 9 mammal species (including 2 Lynx) and 69 bird species were recorded.***

## LYNX SIGHTINGS

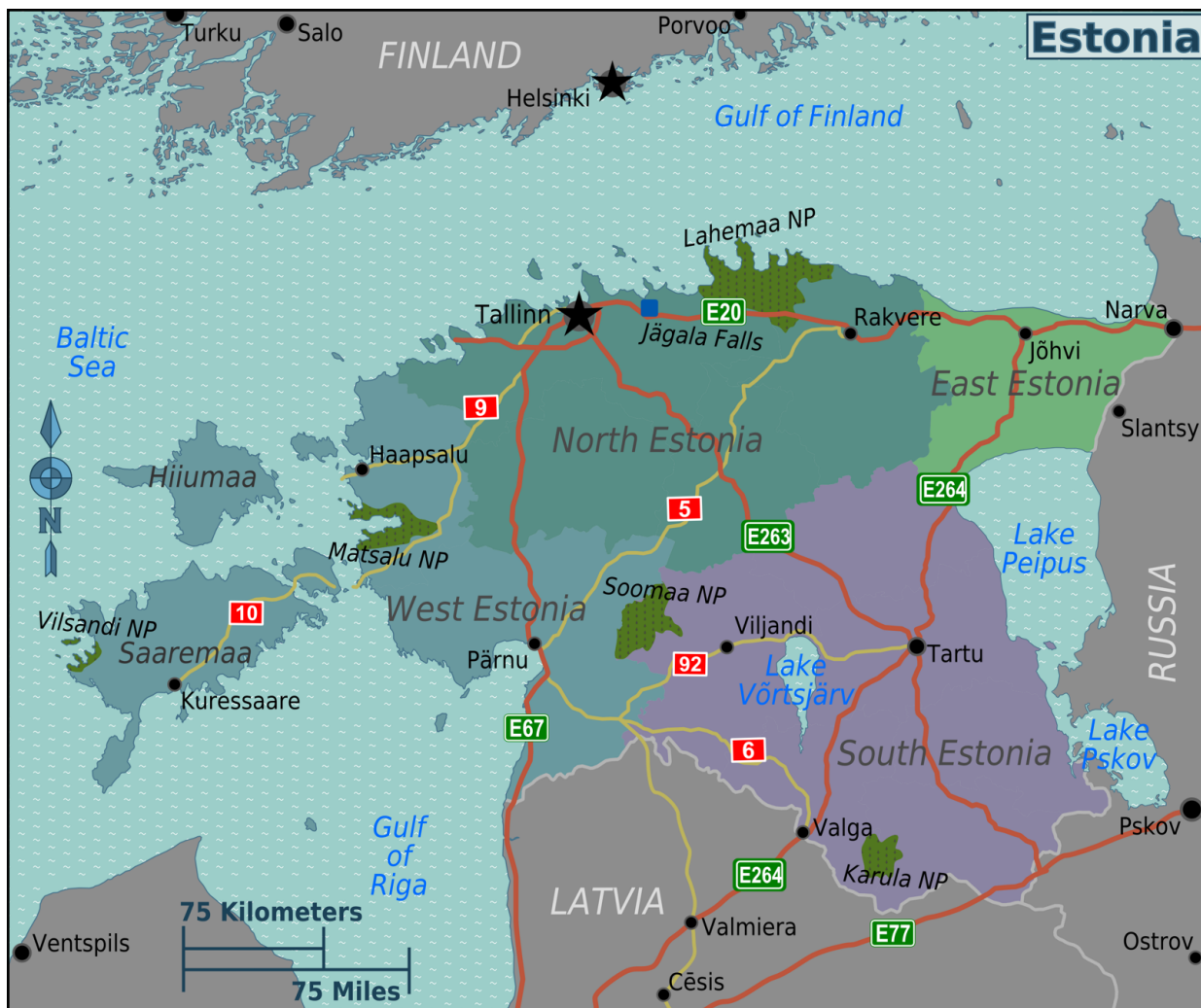
**9th Nov:** Some good views in the spotlight from about 200 meters distance. First seen in a field and then slowly walking the forest edge. Thought to be a large male.

**10th Nov:** Absolutely amazing prolonged sighting of the second Lynx. Thought to be a female or possibly young animal due to size. First seen walking in a field in spotlight at distance, then appearing on the track in our van lights less than 100 metres from us. Finally laying under a tree not more than 50 meters. Absolutely amazing!



**Eurasian Lynx: Screen grab from MP's thermal video taken during the tour**





**Map showing Lahemaa N.P. in relation to Tallinn and the other N.P.s of Estonia**



**Typical habitat that was searched both day and night for Lynx**

## Wise Birding Lynx tour 2

### Species List 7 - 12 Nov 2022

The following mammal checklist mostly follows the IUCN framework (Red List) but also the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) [www.gbif.org](http://www.gbif.org) and Handbook of The Mammals of the World. The bird checklist follows the nomenclature and classification from Gill F, D Donsker & P Rasmussen (Eds). 2022. IOC World Bird List (v12.2).

The IOC World Bird List complements three other primary world bird lists that differ slightly in their primary goals and taxonomic philosophy, i.e. The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World, The Howard & Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World, 4th Edition, and HBW Alive/Bird Life International.

### Total number of mammals recorded: 9 species

#### Eurasian Lynx

*Lynx lynx*

#### Two individual animals seen well over two nights.

Good views in the spotlight from about 200 meters distance on 9th November.

First seen in a field and then slowly walking the forest edge for around 30 minutes in total.

Amazing prolonged sighting of the second Lynx on 10th November for around 20 minutes in total.

First seen walking in spotlight from distance, then appearing on the track in our van lights less than 100 metres from us. Finally laying under a tree not more than 50 metres. Absolutely amazing!

#### Raccoon Dog

*Nyctereutes procyonoides*

Brief views on a number of night drives.

#### Red Fox

*Vulpes vulpes*

Commonly seen throughout the tour.

#### European Pine Marten

*Martes martes*

One sighting only.

#### Elk / Moose

*Alces alces*

Seen well on one night session.

#### European Roe Deer

*Capreolus capreolus*

Daily sightings.

#### European Hare

*Lepus europaeus*

Commonly seen throughout the tour.

#### Mountain Hare

*Lepus timidus*

Seen most nights and some already completely white in colour.

#### Eurasian Beaver

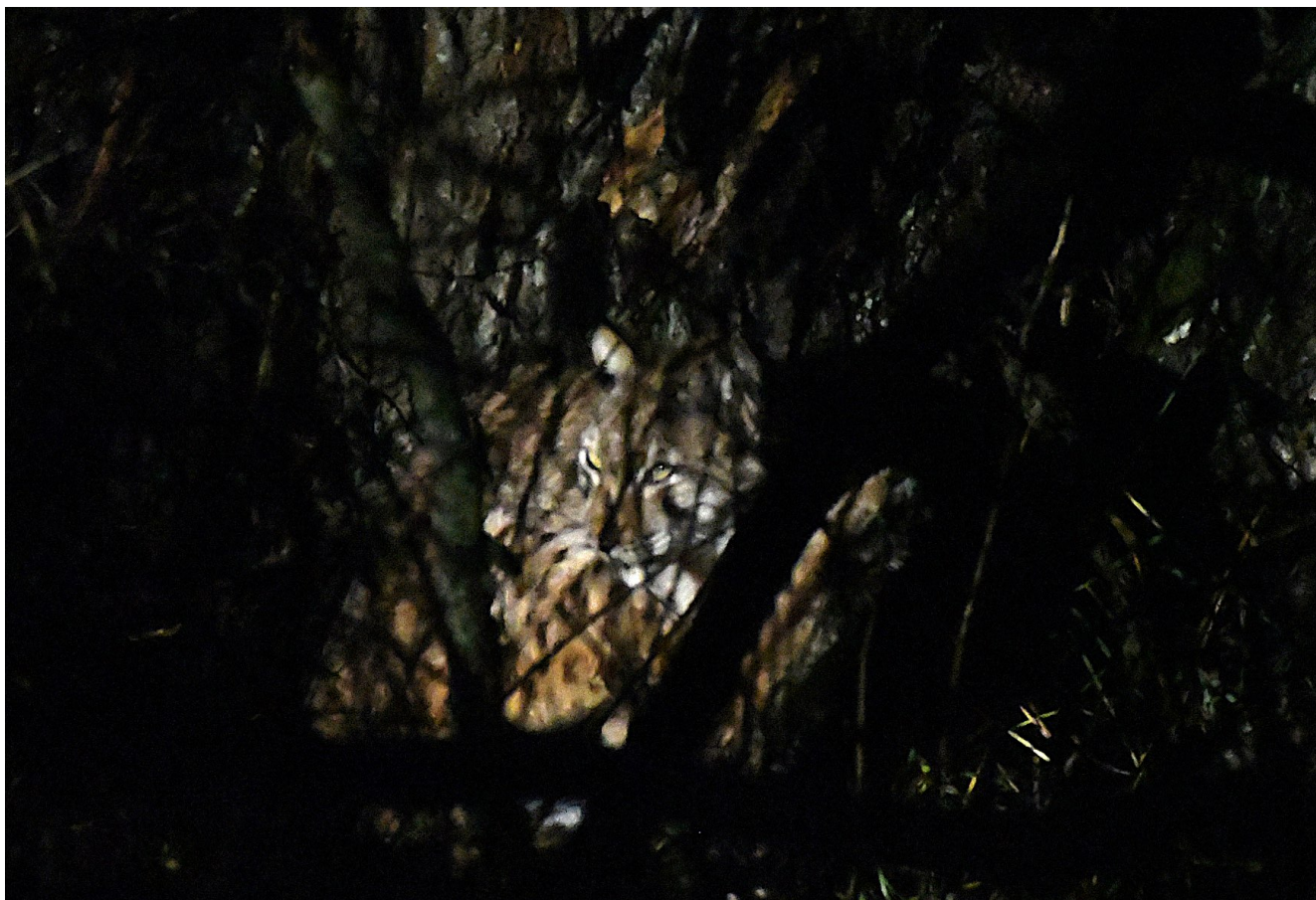
*Castor fiber*

Seen swimming for short period on one evening.

Eurasian Lynx by Tarvo Valker







**Eurasian Lynx by Tarvo Valker**





## Total number of birds recorded: 69 species

**Barnacle Goose**

*Branta leucopsis*

**Mute Swan**

*Cygnus olor*

**Whooper Swan**

*Cygnus cygnus*

**Eurasian Wigeon**

*Mareca penelope*

**Mallard**

*Anas platyrhynchos*

**Eurasian Teal**

*Anas crecca*

**Tufted Duck**

*Aythya fuligula*

**Greater Scaup**

*Aythya marila*

**Common Scoter**

*Melanitta nigra*

**Long-tailed Duck**

*Clangula hyemalis*

**Common Goldeneye**

*Bucephala clangula*

**Smew**

*Mergellus albellus*

**Goosander / Common Merganser**

*Mergus merganser*

**Red-breasted Merganser**

*Mergus serrator*

**Hazel Grouse**

*Tetrastes bonasia*

Several individuals found throughout the trip, both in the day and during spotlight sessions.

**Black Grouse**

*Lyrurus tetrix*

Good views of a single male perched on a telegraph pole on 7.11 plus one hen in the field during a spotlight session.

**Stock Dove**

*Columba oenas*

One late bird near Sagadi manor on 9.11

**Feral Pigeon**

*Columba livia*

**Great Crested Grebe**

*Podiceps cristatus*

**Eurasian Woodcock**

*Scolopax rusticola*

Surprisingly numerous on night drives with over half a dozen birds seen almost each night.

Great views of some birds in the spotlight.

**Black-headed Gull**

*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

**Common Gull**

*Larus cans*

**Great Black-backed Gull**

*Larus marinus*

**European Herring Gull**

*Larus argentatus*

**Great Cormorant**

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

**Grey Heron**

*Ardea cinerea*

**Eurasian Sparrowhawk**

*Accipiter nisus*

**Northern Goshawk**

*Accipiter gentilis*

One bird in Tallinn on the last day.

**White-tailed Eagle**

*Haliaeetus albicilla*

Seen on most days. Very good views of several individuals of different age groups.

**Eurasian Buzzard**

*Buteo buteo*

Surprisingly scarce, seen only on day 5.

**Eurasian Pygmy Owl**

*Glaucidium passerinum*

Daytime views on 10.11



**Short-eared Owl**

Brief views in flight.

**Tawny Owl**

Heard only next to our accommodation.

**Ural Owl**

Seen on most nights and good views.

**Middle Spotted Woodpecker**

Single bird near our hotel, seen by two of the group.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

One heard only on 7.11 and then good views on 10.11

**Great Spotted Woodpecker****White-backed Woodpecker**

Seen only by one participant.

**Grey-headed Woodpecker**

Three birds in total. Seen on days 3,4 and 6.

**Merlin**

One male close to our accommodation in flight and perched on the wire on 7.11

**Great Grey Shrike**

At least 5 birds seen on the trip.

**Eurasian Jay****Eurasian Magpie****Western Jackdaw****Rook****Hooded Crow****Northern Raven****Coal Tit****Crested Tit****Marsh Tit****Willow Tit****Eurasian Blue Tit****Great Tit****Long-tailed Tit****Goldcrest****Eurasian Nuthatch****Eurasian Treecreeper****Common Starling****Song Thrush**

One late migrant seen in spotlight(!)

**Common Blackbird****Fieldfare****White-throated Dipper**

Seen on the river on the last day.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow**

Impressive flock near the farmhouse with 150+ birds on 9.11

**House Sparrow*****Asio flammeus******Strix aluco******Strix uralensis******Dendrocoptes medius******Dryobates minor******Dendrocopos major******Dendrocopos leucotos******Picus canus******Falco columbarius******Lanius excubitor******Garrulus glandarius******Pica pica******Coloeus monedula******Corvus frugilegus******Corvus cornix******Corvus corax******Periparus ater******Lophophanes cristatus******Poecile palustris******Poecile montanus******Cyanistes caeruleus******Parus major******Aegithalos caudatus******Regulus regulus******Sitta europaea******Certhia familiaris******Sturnus vulgaris******Turdus philomelos******Turdus merula******Turdus pilaris******Cinclus cinclus******Passer montanus******Passer domesticus***

**Common Chaffinch**

**Brambling**

Single bird feeding near the farm on 9.11

**European Greenfinch**

**European Goldfinch**

**Yellowhammer**

***Fringilla coelebs***

***Fringilla montifringilla***

***Chloris chloris***

***Carduelis carduelis***

***Emberiza citrinella***

**Conservation Donation – Following this tour to Estonia, £100 was transferred to the Wise Birding Holiday's central conservation fund.**

For the last few years Wise Birding Holidays has been supporting a number of small conservation projects. However, we now believe that to try and make a bigger difference to conservation it seems best to pool the donations from most of our tours into one central fund. Once a target amount has been reached this money will be used to support one single project in the hope of achieving more for species conservation. Currently this amounts to over £9,000. Some tours will continue to donate money to help some of the smaller projects that we feel will still benefit from smaller donations. Please visit [www.wisebirding.co.uk](http://www.wisebirding.co.uk) to find out more about the projects we support.



## Wise Birding Holidays Ltd

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