

# WILDLIFE TRAVEL



more than just a wildlife holiday: discover a new world

## Spring 2019 Newsletter

Welcome to our spring newsletter. Inside, you will find an up-to-date **holiday calendar**, including some additional trips organised since our programme was published back in the autumn, including a **summer holiday in Norfolk**, featuring a boat trip out to the seal and tern colonies on Blakeney Point, and a repeat of our popular **Christmas break in Morocco** to enjoy some winter sun.

We also have information about **this year's Travellers' Day**, to be held in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust at two of their coastal reserves near Colchester.

We enjoyed last year's Travellers' Days, with 50 of you joining us around the country, listening to booming Bitterns on the Somerset Levels, hunting Bee Wolf on the Suffolk coast, enjoying flowering Bladderwort on the Lancashire Mosses and learning about the history of Spurn Point in Yorkshire.

## 2018: a busy 30th birthday

2018 was our busiest year so far, with 230 travellers joining us on 23 different trips: a wonderful way of celebrating our 30th birthday.

Since that very first visit to the orchids of Crete in spring 1988, we have now visited 49 countries around the world, travelling with more than 1100 Wildlife Travellers on 433 separate holidays. Those are some pretty large numbers. The biggest number of them all, and the one we are most proud of, is the amount of money we have raised over that time for nature conservation. **Since 1988, we have donated more than £220,000 to the Wildlife Trusts**, as well as contributing **more than £37,000** to the conservation work of the World Land Trust by 'carbon balancing' all of our flights. Not bad, even if we do say so ourselves...

Through this newsletter, some of our **leaders recount their wildlife highlights** of our big birthday year, from the quiet lanes of Devon at dusk to the welcoming committee of fur seals on remote Robinson Crusoe Island off the Chilean coast.

We are sure that 2019 holds even more wonderful wildlife in store: **we look forward to sharing it with you!**



*Erica patersonii*, South Africa



New Caledonian Whistler

*"My Wildlife Travels in 2018 spanned three continents. I enjoyed the clean mountain air and **flower-filled meadows** of the Carpathians, took in the **spectacle of autumn bird migration** on the Bulgarian coast, and visited Colombia, ahead of our inaugural trip this autumn, before ending the year in our home away from home in Morocco.*

*I've been fortunate to experience many **wonderful wildlife sights and sounds** over the past year. High on the list has to be the wailing of hundreds of Juan Fernández Fur Seals heralding our arrival on Robinson Crusoe island, coming face to face with a goggle-eyed chameleon in a twilight Andalucían sand dune, and a mass of colourful flowers on Boxing Day in the High Atlas."* **Laurie Jackson, Wildlife Travel leader**



# Holidays 2019 and beyond

- mainly wild flowers
- mixed natural history
- easy birding/wildlife

## LESVOS: spring on an Aegean island

- 4th-11th May 2019. Leaders: Philip Precey & Nicole Clough

We will explore the lovely, unspoilt island of Lesvos, one of the largest in the Aegean. The perfect introduction to the birds and spring flowers of the eastern Mediterranean.

**£1655 per person, full board, single room supplement £145**

## LAKE KERKINI AND MACEDONIA: Balkan birds and spring wildlife

- 22nd-29th May 2019. Leaders: Mike Symes & local guides

An interesting week enjoying the breeding birds, butterflies, wild flowers and abundant wildlife in this fascinating, little-known and relatively unspoilt corner of the Balkans.

**£1675 per person, full board, single room supplement £110**

## ESTONIA: spring wildlife and orchids of the Baltic

- 26th May-2nd June 2019. Leaders: Charlie Rugeroni & local guides

A spring visit to the meadows and bogs of Estonia where the variety of orchids will include spectacular displays of Lady's Slipper, while the forests resound with singing birds.

**£1725 per person, full board, single room supplement £140**

## TRANSYLVANIA: meadows, mountains and bears

- 3rd-10th June 2019. Leaders: Laurie Jackson & local guides

A week exploring traditional hay meadows, ancient wood-pastures, alpine meadows, and dense forest of Transylvania and the Carpathian mountains. Wild flowers, fortified Saxon churches, mountain birds and Brown Bears will all be in our sights.

**£1695 per person, full board, single room supplement £150**

## THE BURREN: wild flowers and ancient sites

- 6th-13th June 2019. Leader: Kieron Huston & Liz Askins

Dramatic scenery and fascinating history combine in this corner of western Ireland, with wonderful wild flowers, ancient monuments, superb coast and friendly local hospitality.

**£1235 per person, half board, single supplement £80**

## VERCORS: wild flowers of the pre-Alps (by Eurostar/TGV)

- 12th-19th June 2019. Leaders: Charlie Rugeroni & second leader tbc

With its combination of landscape, marvellous diversity of wild flowers and remarkably unspoilt character, the southern Vercors is a wonderful setting for our week in France.

**£1795 per person, full board, single room supplement £110**

## NORTH MACEDONIA: Balkan butterflies and mountain wildlife

- 23rd-30th June 2019. Leaders: Philip Precey & Martin Hrouzek

Our second visit of the year to the unspoilt countryside of Macedonia in the company of popular guide and butterfly expert Martin Hrouzek, this time heading higher into the mountains in search of the diversity of butterflies and interesting plant life.

**£1685 per person, full board, single room supplement £110**

## BULGARIA: natural history of the mountainous southwest

- 28th June-5th July 2019. Leaders: Laurie Jackson & local guides

Exploring the mountains of the western Rhodopes, Rila and Pirin in southwest Bulgaria, home to endemic plants, abundant butterflies and peaceful monasteries.

**£1595 per person, full board, single room supplement £100**

## ANDALUCIA: easy birding, Coto Doñana and Tarifa

- 10th-17th September 2019. Leaders: Mike Symes & local guide

With raptors and storks overhead, the wetlands and bushes alive with birds, autumn migration across the Straits of Gibraltar to Africa is a real 'must see' experiences

**£price to be confirmed, full board**

## THE PANTANAL, BRAZIL: jaguars, macaws and wetland wildlife

- 14th-30th September 2019. Leaders: Mike Russell & Xavier Muñoz

We return to Brazil and the world's largest wetland, with our attention focussed on some spectacular mammals, notably Jaguar, Giant Otter, Giant Anteater and Lowland Tapir, as well as the abundant birdlife of the area, including Toco Toucan and Hyacinth Macaw.

**£6595 per person, full board, single room supplement £395**



*Anemone pavonina*, Lesvos



Southern White Admiral, Macedonia



*Lilium janckae*, Bulgaria



Toco Toucan, Pantanal

## CHILE: Central Chile and the Atacama Desert

### ● 24th Sept-11th Oct 2019. Leaders: Philip Precey & Claudio Vidal

Exploring the botany of the Atacama Desert and 'Mediterranean' zone, from the coast to Andean valleys, with fascinating plants, endemic birds and plenty of other wildlife. We will also visit the Paranal astronomical observatory and some of Chile's premier vineyards.

**£6595 per person, full board, single room supplement £750**

## ESTONIA: mammals, birds and autumn migration

### ● 29th Sept-6th Oct 2019. Leaders: Laurie Jackson & local guide

Migration will be at its peak, with Common Cranes and geese gathering on the marshes in large numbers. We will also have the chance to see Brown Bear, Ringed Seal and Elk.

**£1795 per person, full board, single room supplement £175**

## HUNGARY: autumn wildlife and relaxed birding

### ● October 2019 (dates tbc). Leaders: Philip Precey & Martin Hrouzek

A week spent enjoying the south-bound bird migration and searching out resident birdlife, including Great Bustard, woodpeckers and owls, and enjoying the other local wildlife.

**£price to be confirmed, full board**

## COLOMBIA: endemic wildlife, mountains and Caribbean coast

### ● 14th-30th November 2019. Leaders: Laurie Jackson & local guide

With an opportunity to visit the Andes and Santa Marta Mountains, along with the beautiful Caribbean coast, this holiday provides a fantastic introduction to Colombia's diverse landscapes, abundant wildlife and extremely rich biodiversity.

**£4965 per person, full board, single room supplement £350**

## MADEIRA: Macaronesian natural history and gardens

### ● November 2019 (dates tbc). Leaders: Charlie Rugeroni & local guide

We return to explore this subtropical island, enjoying its lush gardens, wild landscapes, local culture and some pleasant winter weather.

**£price to be confirmed, full board**

## MOROCCO: natural history at Christmas

### ● 21st-28th December 2019. Leaders: Laurie Jackson & Philip Precey

For the third year in a row, we will be spending Christmas at the wonderful Atlas Kasbah, from where we explore the coast and countryside, and enjoy a Berber family celebration.

**£1785 per person, full board, single room supplement £185**

## ETHIOPIA: Endemic wildlife of "the Roof of Africa"

### ● 1st-13th February 2020. Leaders: Philip Precey & local guide

Our tour will take us from the extensive highlands, the largest mountain block in Africa and home to endemic wildlife including Ethiopian Wolf, Gelada Baboon and 30 bird species, to the arid savannas and rich forests, taking in unrivalled scenery and fascinating culture.

**£price to be confirmed, full board**

February 2020

● Bulgaria - winter birding on the Black Sea coast

March 2020

● Guyana & Suriname - rainforest, savannah & coast

April 2020

● Galapagos - cruising in Darwin's footsteps

May/June 2020

● Armenia - wild flowers and wildlife of the Caucasus

Summer 2020

● Scottish Highlands - natural history with James Lowen

June/July 2020

● Russian Far East - cruising Siberia's forgotten coast

August 2020

● South Africa - wild flowers of the Cape

December 2020

● Falklands, South Georgia and Antarctica - cruise



Rhodophiala advena, Chile



Blue-winged Mtn Tanager, Colombia



Gelada Baboon, Ethiopia



"2018 was my 11th year of leading with Wildlife Travel, as well as being the company's 30th birthday year, and I enjoyed some **superb wildlife experiences** over the year.

I was lucky enough to travel to some real **dream destinations**, from New Caledonia in the sun-washed South Pacific, with its endemic Araucaria conifers and the flightless Kagu, to the chilly shores of the Russian Far East, home to orchids and rhododendrons, Brown Bears and Sea Otters, Tufted Puffins and the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

But for me, the **wildlife highlight of the year** was a chilly night in the Moroccan desert, when I spent five wonderful minutes watching a Fennec Fox hunting beneath a star-filled sky, a real childhood dream come true."

**Philip Precey, Wildlife Travel leader**

# Wildlife Travelling closer to home

## TRAVELLERS' DAY 2019: Essex Coast, Saturday 15th June

This year, we are joining forces with **Essex Wildlife Trust**, who are celebrating their 60th birthday. We will be exploring the coastal marshes of Abbots Hall Farm and nearby Fingringhoe Wick in the company of **expert local guides** who will help us to track down singing Nightingales, rare bumblebees and plenty of other summer wildlife, whilst learning about the coastal realignment work the Trust is carrying out.

We are looking forward to meeting up with past travellers and Wildlife Travel leaders, as well as giving the opportunity for those who have yet to travel with us to **come and have a taster** of what a Wildlife Travel holiday might be like, and to see some great wildlife along the way. There may even be cake!

Places are limited, at a cost of **£30 per person**, including a buffet lunch. If you have never travelled with us before, and travel with us for the first time after joining us on the Travellers' Day, you will receive a £30 discount from any new booking. **Let us know if you would like to join us**, and we will send the full details.

## UK HOLIDAYS: places still available

### ISLES OF SCILLY: spring flowers and natural history

● 6th-13th May 2019. Leaders: Rosemary Parslow & Liz Askins

A return to these iconic islands, in the company of local expert Rosemary Parslow to enjoy the best of the spring: there can be no better introduction to the islands' natural history.

**£1165 per person, B&B, single room supplement £290 (ask us for options)**

### NORFOLK: early summer natural history

● 3rd-7th June 2019. Leaders: Phil Saunders & 2nd leader tbc

Enjoying some of the summer highlights of Norfolk: Swallowtails and booming Bitterns, rare flowers and Stone Curlews, and a boat trip to the seal and tern colonies on Blakeney Point.

**£985 per person, Full Board, single room supplement £130**

### DEVON: rare mammals and summer wildlife

● 17th-21st July 2019. Leaders: Mike Symes & 2nd leader tbc

A short break in the beautiful Devon countryside, in the company of local experts, with the chance of seeing beavers and otters, Hazel Dormouse and Greater Horseshoe Bat.

**£645 per person, B&B, single room supplement £100**

### ISLES OF SCILLY: autumn natural history and migration

● 21st-28th September 2019. Leaders: Rosemary Parslow & Mike Symes

September in Scilly is a colourful time, with purple heather and yellow gorse, while migration should be in full swing: who knows what waifs and strays may turn up.

**£1165 per person, B&B, single room supplement £290 (ask us for options)**



Swallowtail



Marsh Helleborine



*"Since first leading with Wildlife Travel last summer, I've enjoyed a variety of UK wildlife spectacles. I've been party to the bellicose bullying of the Grey Seals on a Norfolk beach, I've watched Beavers doing their thing in the Devon countryside, and I've been astounded by the cloud-like swirling of the UK's largest winter crow roost in the Norfolk Broads. But my wildlife highlight of 2018 was witnessing the exit of several hundred Greater Horseshoe Bats from their maternity roost alongside a picturesque Devon river. Standing quietly at dusk as these large bats fly around you is a pretty special experience, only furthered by their crazy, Clanger-like calls resonating from our bat detectors. Add in the loud chirruping of Great Green Bush Crickets in the nearby hedges and you have an amazing auditory experience that's hard to beat."* Phil Saunders, Wildlife Travel leader

[www.wildlife-travel.co.uk](http://www.wildlife-travel.co.uk)

01954 713575

[wildlifetravel@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:wildlifetravel@wildlifebcn.org)

The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6DH



WildlifeTravel.UK



@travel\_wildlife



@wildlifetraveller



All our profits are donated to the Wildlife Trusts

Directors: Christine Donnelly, Brian Eversham, Philip Precey, Mike Russell, Dr Tim Upson  
Wildlife Travel Ltd. Reg. No 2237697 Contact us for Wildlife Trusts' charity numbers