



## “In search of Spoon-billed Sandpipers”

19th June – 4th July 2013

### SYSTEMATIC LIST

The taxonomy and English names used in this checklist generally follow *The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World* by James Clements with revisions made where an alternative name/taxonomy is considered more appropriate.

This systematic list was compiled by Chris Collins (based on the figures agreed at the nightly logs) and includes all species recorded from arriving in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 19 June and departing the ship in Anadyr on 4 July.

Accurately counting seabirds at sea is extremely difficult (eg as one can never be sure which birds are following or revisiting the ship), so the system outlined below was adopted, with this also used for the more numerous landbirds:

1-10 = actual number seen

11-100 = A

101-1,000 = B

1,001-10,000 = C

10,001-100,000 = D

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### BIRDS

**Tundra Bean Goose**                      *Anser serrirostris*

This species was seen on three of the last four full days of the expedition (30 June, 1 July and 3 July), although only in relatively small numbers, ie low A or single figure count.

**Greater White-fronted Goose**                      *Anser albifrons*

Seen on the same dates as the previous species, although in larger numbers with B logged on a couple of occasions.

**Emperor Goose**                      *Chen canagica*

This northern speciality was recorded on the last full three days of the voyage with the first birds recorded at Meinypil'gyno (1 July: A) and the last at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July: A).

**Brent Goose**                      *Branta bernicla*

A was logged at Meinyopil'gyno (1 July) with the only records being at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July: 6).

Although the birds in this part of NE Russia are considered to be of the race *nigricans*, ie the same as the North American 'Black Brant', some of the birds looked closer to Dark-belled Brent Goose.

**Whooper Swan**                      *Cygnus cygnus*

A lone bird was seen at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon on 3 July with another six the following morning at Anadyr when the ship was at anchor.

**Falcated Duck**                      *Anas falcata*

A pair were seen on a roadside pool whilst returning to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June with the only record being a lone bird at one of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper search sites on 30 June.

**Eurasian Wigeon**                      *Anas penelope*

Seen on four dates with the highest count being on 30 June at one of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper search sites where B was logged.

**American Wigeon**                      *Anas americana*

The only record was a lone bird on 30 June at one of the search sites.

**Eurasian Teal**                      *Anas crecca*

Seen in small numbers on five dates with the first sighting being two birds at the Zhupanova River, Kamchatka (22 June). The last sightings were at the final search site on 30 June where five individuals were recorded.

**Mallard**                      *Anas platyrhynchos*

Only seen on three dates with the first sightings being on the pre-voyage extension (20 June: 3) and the highest count at the Zhupanova River, Kamchatka (22 June) where a low A was logged.

**Northern Shoveler**                      *Anas clypeata*

Four birds were at the Zhupanova River (22 June) with the only other records being five individuals at the final search site (30 June).

**Northern Pintail**                      *Anas acuta*

Recorded on seven days with the highest count being at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon on 3 July where a low B was logged.

**Tufted Duck**                      *Aythya fuligula*

This species was only at the final search site on 30 June where three birds were seen.

**Greater Scaup**                      *Aythya marila*

Birds were recorded on ten dates with the highest counts being on two of the search days (29-30 June) when a low B was logged.

**Steller's Eider**                      *Polysticta stelleri*

The shoreline of Verkhoturova Island is usually a reasonably reliable place for this species but on this visit, no birds could be found (26 June). Fortunately a fine male was found the following day at Tintikun Lagoon.

**King Eider**                      *Somateria spectabilis*

This species is generally only found in very small numbers on this itinerary and this proved to be the case in 2013 with a lone bird at Pika River (2 July) and two the following day at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon.

**Common Eider**                      *Somateria mollissima*

A common species with birds recorded on nine dates with B logged on five occasions. The subspecies which is found in this part of Russia is *v-nigra*, which unlike the birds in Northern Europe has bright orange feet and bills.

**Harlequin Duck**                      *Histrionicus histrionicus*

This fabulous duck was seen on all full days of the voyage (ie 22 June-3 July) with A logged on six occasions and B on two dates. On all other occasions, there was just a single figure count.

**White-winged Scoter**                      *Melanitta (fusca) stejnegeri*

Seen on eight dates with the first records being not far from Karaginsky Island (25 June) where B was logged. This species was then seen on a daily basis between Tintikun Lagoon and Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (27 June - 3 July) with A or B was logged on most days.

There is an increasing debate as to the species limits within the Velvet/White-winged/Stejneger's Scoter complex and if the birds in Eastern Russia are treated as different from Europe and North America, those seen on the trip would be Stejneger's Scoters.

**Black Scoter**                      *Melanitta americana*

Another duck which was recorded on a reasonably regular basis during the second half of the voyage with sightings on five dates. The highest counts were on the first day of searches when a low C was logged.

Like the previous species, there has been a debate as to whether there are one or two species within this complex, although it is now widely accepted that the birds in North America and Eastern Russia are specifically distinct from those in Europe.

**Long-tailed Duck**                      *Clangula hyemalis*

This widespread species was first recorded on Karaginsky Island (25 June) and was then noted on five subsequent dates. The highest counts were at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July) where B was logged.

**Common Goldeneye**                      *Bucephala clangula*

Only seen on two dates with two birds on the pre-voyage extension (21 June) and A logged at our first search site (28 June).

**Goosander**                      *Mergus merganser*

This species was recorded on a daily basis between 25-30 June (Karaginsky Island – search day 3) with A noted on all occasions. The only other record was two birds on the pre-voyage excursion (21 June).

**Red-breasted Merganser**                      *Mergus serrator*

Seen in low to moderate numbers (either a single figure count or A) on a regular basis with sightings on ten days.

**Willow Ptarmigan**                      *Lagopus lagopus*

A single bird was seen on 28 June at the first search site.

**Rock Ptarmigan**                      *Lagopus muta*

A lone bird was found at Peschanaya Bay on Medney Island on 24 June.

**Red-throated Diver**                      *Gavia stellata*

Seen on six widely spaced dates during the trip with A logged on three dates and single figure counts on all other occasions.

**Black-throated Diver**                      *Gavia arctica*

Three birds were seen at the first search area on 28 June.

**Pacific Diver**                      *Gavia pacifica*

This species was seen on a daily basis from 30 June-3 July (ie last four full days of the voyage). The highest count was on the day when cruising from “Gyr Bay” to the final search site when A was logged.

**White-billed Diver**                      *Gavia adamsii*

A total of fifteen individuals were seen during the expedition with birds recorded on a daily basis on each of the last four full days of the expedition (ie 30 June-3 July).

**Red-necked Grebe**                      *Podiceps grisegena*

Birds were seen on four dates during the voyage, although there was only one occasion when more than a lone individual was recorded, with this being at the final search site (30 June) where a low A was logged.

**Laysan Albatross**                      *Phoebastria immutabilis*

This species was seen on the first four days of the voyage with A logged on the first three dates, ie Kamchatka coastline/Zhupanova River to Bering Island (22 June), offshore from Bering Island (23 June) and around Medney Island (24 June). The other sightings were lone individuals whilst cruising towards Karaginsky Island (25 June) and whilst cruising across Oluytorskiy Bay after visiting Tintikun Lagoon (27 June).

**Short-tailed Albatross**                      *Phoebastria albatrus*

An immature was seen well, but briefly, when it flew within 50m of the bows a few miles offshore from the south-east tip of Medney Island on the morning of 24 June.

Rather frustratingly, the bird appeared at 05:25am (and when there was thick fog) and as a result, only a small percentage of the group saw it.

**Northern Fulmar**                      *Fulmarus glacialis*

A common bird throughout the voyage, which was logged on an almost daily basis with sightings on twelve dates. The highest counts were around the Commander Islands (23-24 June) when D was logged on both dates.

Almost all the birds seen during the first half of the voyage were “Blue Fulmars”, although midway through the trip, there was a fairly abrupt change and by the end of the expedition, these were almost entirely replaced by pale birds.

**Mottled Petrel**                      *Pterodroma inexpectata*

This long distance migrant is not recorded annually on this itinerary with the only realistic chance of seeing it being on the deep water crossing between the Zhupanova River and the Commander Islands. On this occasion, we were fortunate enough to record three individuals (22 June: 1; 23 June: 2).

**Short-tailed Shearwater**                      *Puffinus tenuirostris*

Recorded on nine dates with the highest count being on the approach to Karaginsky Island when D was logged. On the majority of other occasions, the counts were A or B.

This species moults in vast numbers in the Sea of Okhotsk and in late May and early June, most of the birds are very tatty, however, the vast majority seen on this expedition were reasonably pristine as they had completed their moult.

Separating this species from Sooty Shearwater requires a decent view or photo and several birds which could have ‘Sooties’ were also seen but the views were not good enough to be confirmed.

**Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel**                      *Oceanodroma furcata*

Generally this species is only found during the first half of the voyage and there were indeed sightings on five of the first six days of the trip, however, somewhat unexpectedly the highest numbers were on 30 June whilst cruising from ‘Gyr Bay’ to the final search site when it was estimated that there were at least 5,000 birds. Interestingly, many of these were in wing moult, so it may be that they were at a good feeding area rather than being local breeders.

**Leach's Storm-Petrel**                      *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

The only sightings were near Bering Island (23 June) when three birds were seen.

**Red-faced Cormorant**                      *Phalacrocorax urile*

A fairly range-restricted species which was only found in the early stages of the voyage with A recorded on both days in the Commander Islands (23-24 June).

**Pelagic Cormorant**                      *Phalacrocorax pelagicus*

A comparatively numerous and widespread species with birds logged on every day of the voyage. A was recorded on seven occasions, B on five dates, with the smallest number being on the final full day (3 July: Keyngypilgyn Lagoon) when only two individuals were recorded.

**Osprey**                    *Pandion haliaetus*

The only record was during the pre-voyage excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 21 June when a single bird was seen.

**White-tailed Eagle**                    *Haliaeetus albicilla*

A total of nine birds were recorded between 27-29 June (Tintikun Lagoon - second search day).

**Steller's Sea-Eagle**                    *Haliaeetus pelagicus*

One of the undoubted avian highlights of the expedition and seen on four dates. The first sightings were at the Zhupanova River, Kamchatka (22 June) where everyone got some nice views during the zodiac cruise, with a minimum of fourteen individuals being seen including adult birds at an occupied nest.

Three birds were then recorded at Tintikun Lagoon (27 June) with five birds over the next couple of days during the Spoon-billed Sandpiper searches.

**Rough-legged Buzzard**                    *Buteo lagopus*

The only sightings of this species were around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (19-20 June) when a minimum of five birds were logged.

**Hobby**                    *Falco subbuteo*

A lone bird was seen during the birding excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 21 June.

**Gyr Falcon**                    *Falco rusticolus*

Another of the undoubted highlights of the expedition was visiting a nest of this much wanted species which contained four 'ready to go' white morph youngsters, with one of the adult birds seen sitting on nearby cliffs (30 June). Another white bird was seen three days later at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon where somewhat unexpectedly it was chased off by a Mountain Hare !!!

**Peregrine Falcon**                    *Falco peregrinus*

A total of three birds of this widespread species were seen across two dates.

**Sandhill Crane**                    *Grus canadensis*

This species was recorded on three dates between 28 June-3 July, with at least fifty individuals being seen. The highest count was on the final search day (30 June) when approximately forty birds were logged.

**Grey Plover**                    *Pluvialis squatarola*

The only sightings were of five birds at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July).

**Pacific Golden Plover**                    *Pluvialis fulva*

Single individuals were logged on the first search day (28 June) and at Meinypil'gyno (1 July).

**Mongolian Plover (Lesser Sandplover)*****Charadrius mongolus***

This species was first noted at Nikol'skoye on Bering Island (23 June) where four birds were seen, with another individual a couple of days later on Karaginsky Island. It was then logged on each of the three search days (28-30 June) with A recorded on a couple of dates.

**Common Ringed Plover*****Charadrius hiaticula***

Seen on five dates in the latter stages of the voyage.

**Common Sandpiper*****Actitis hypoleucos***

A total of four birds were seen on two of the search days (29-30 June) with the only other record being a lone bird on 26 June (Verkhoturova Island/Cape Conspicuous).

**Common Greenshank*****Tringa nebularia***

Five birds were seen at the Zhupanova River (22 June) with the only other sighting being a single bird at Meinypil'gyno on 1 July.

**Wood Sandpiper*****Tringa glareola***

Recorded on four dates but only ever in low single figures with the highest count being on the first search day where three were seen.

**Far Eastern Curlew*****Numenius madagascariensis***

Four birds were seen on the Zhupanova River zodiac cruise (22 June).

**Red Knot*****Calidris canutus***

A low A was logged on 3 July at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon.

**Red-necked Stint*****Calidris ruficollis***

Seen on five dates between 27 June-3 July with single figure counts on two dates and A logged on three occasions. The highest number was at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon where the number of birds was approaching one hundred individuals.

**Temminck's Stint*****Calidris temminckii***

This species was recorded on three dates between 28 June-3 July although all counts were in single figures. Two birds were seen at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July) where a nest was located.

**Long-toed Stint*****Calidris subminuta***

This species almost certainly breeds on the small marsh at the mouth of the Zhupanova River and three birds were seen there on 22 June. There were then single figure counts on each of the search days (28-30 June) with a total of twelve individuals being logged.

**Rock Sandpiper*****Calidris ptilocnemis***

One of the speciality waders of the voyage, with two birds seen on the foreshore in front of Nikol'skoye, Bering Island (23 June).

**Dunlin*****Calidris alpina***

Seen on three dates with A logged on each occasion.

**Spoon-billed Sandpiper**                      *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*

The group divided into two at Meinypil'gyno (1 July) and we visited two territories of this critically endangered species thus allowing everyone the opportunity of seeing birds at their monitored nests.

For many of the group, this was undoubtedly the major highlight of the expedition and a privilege that few birders (except those who have previously travelled this itinerary) have been fortunate enough to experience.

**Common Snipe**                              *Gallinago gallinago*

Seen on a total of six dates (including on a daily basis during the pre-voyage excursions) although all counts were in low single figures.

**Red-necked Phalarope**                      *Phalaropus lobatus*

A low A was logged on the pools on Karaginsky Island (25 June). Birds were also seen on three of the last four days of the expedition although only in relatively low numbers with the day counts being either a low A or single figures.

**Grey [Red] Phalarope**                      *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Recorded on five dates during the expedition with a total of twelve birds being seen. Like the Red-necked Phalaropes, almost all the birds were in summer plumage and the North American name, Red Phalarope, certainly seemed more appropriate.

**Black-legged Kittiwake**                      *Rissa tridactyla*

One of the few species to be recorded on every day of the voyage (and also one of the most numerous) with B or C logged on eleven occasions.

**Red-legged Kittiwake**                      *Rissa brevirostris*

This North Pacific endemic was seen on the first three full days of the voyage with the highest numbers (a low B) being recorded on 24 June around Medney Island and the afternoon ship cruise back to Bering Island. The only other sightings were on the sea journey from the Zhupanova River to Bering Island (22 June) when three further birds were noted.

**Sabine's Gull**                              *Xema sabini*

Two of these gorgeous Arctic breeders were seen, with one not far from the Zhupanova River (22 June) and the other in Oluytorskiy Bay (27 June).

**Black-headed Gull**                              *Larus ridibundus*

Seen on six dates (including the pre-voyage extension), with the highest count being B during the zodiac cruise up the Zhupanova River, Kamchatka Peninsula on 22 June.

**Kamchatka Gull (Common/Mew Gull)**      *Larus (canus) kamtschatschensis*

This putative split does seem different from Common/Mew Gull and, for example, has an apricot-coloured bill and brighter legs than the birds in Europe. It was seen on four days with A logged on three occasions. The first birds were seen at the Zhupanova River (22 June) with the last being a day south of Meinypil'gyno on the final search day (30 June).

**Vega Gull**                      *Larus vegae*

This species was only recorded during the latter stages of the expedition but was then seen on the four final full dates, with the highest counts being at Meinypil'gyno (1 July) where it was common with A logged.

**Slaty-backed Gull**                      *Larus schistisagus*

By far the commonest gull species on the expedition and recorded on every day of the voyage plus on the pre-voyage extension. Although there were two dates when only lone individuals were noted (when visiting the Commander Islands), on all other days it was seen in good numbers with the highest count being on 26 June (Verkhoturova Island and Goven Peninsula) when a low C was logged.

**Glaucous-winged Gull**                      *Larus glaucescens*

This species is generally most numerous in the early stages of the voyage and was recorded on a daily basis for the first five days aboard the *Spirit of Enderby* with the highest counts being around the Commander Islands where several hundred were logged each day (23-24 June). Four birds were also seen during the latter part of the trip with three on the final search day (30 June) and a lone individual on 2 July.

**Glaucous Gull**                      *Larus hyperboreus*

This species was fairly common around Meinypil'gyno with A logged on both dates (1-2 July). Smaller numbers were also seen on two other days, although all of these sightings were during the more northerly part of the expedition.

**Aleutian Tern**                      *Sterna aleutica*

A lone and somewhat distant bird was seen at the Zhupanova River during the zodiac cruise on 22 June. As not all of the group saw this individual, it seemed likely that we might not all see this speciality, however, another singleton was found at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July) and was well seen by all.

**Common Tern**                      *Sterna hirundo*

The birds in this part of Russia are of the black-billed subspecies *longipennis* and were seen on seven widely spaced dates with A or B logged on five occasions.

**Arctic Tern**                      *Sterna paradisaea*

This species was seen on three days with the highest count being at Keyngypilgyn Lagoon (3 July) where a low B was logged. The only other sightings were of single birds.

**Pomarine Skua**                      *Stercorarius pomarinus*

An excellent showing by this species, with records on eight dates and A logged on two occasions. Many birds had their summer tail 'spoons' and several individuals were seemingly curious and came over to investigate the ship giving everyone some excellent opportunities to enjoy and photograph this species at extremely close range.

**Arctic Skua**                      *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Arctic Skuas were seen on seven widely spaced days, although there was only one occasion when the count was higher than single figures.

**Long-tailed Skua**                      *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Seen on a reasonably regular basis during the trip with sightings on six dates, although like the Arctic Skua most day count maxima were in single figures.

Like both the other Skua species which were recorded on the expedition, many of the birds still had their tail plumes and when they flew close to the ship, this gave everyone some great photographic opportunities.

**Common Guillemot**                      *Uria aalge*

Seen on a daily basis throughout the voyage with A logged on six dates, B on four occasions and C on two days. The highest numbers were around the Commander Islands where thousands of birds breed.

**Brunnich's Guillemot**                      *Uria lomvia*

This species is usually recorded on a marginally more regular basis than Common Guillemot, although on this occasion there were three days with no records. There were, however, two dates when C was logged.

**Black Guillemot**                      *Cephus grylle*

The southern extreme of the range of this species only just coincides with the end of this voyage and as a result, the only record was a lone individual on 3 July.

**Pigeon Guillemot**                      *Cephus columba*

This species was seen on an almost daily basis on the voyage, although it was encountered on a far less frequent basis than Common and Brunnich's Guillemots with single figure counts on six dates.

**Spectacled Guillemot**                      *Cephus carbo*

A lone bird seen by some on 22 June was, unfortunately, the only record of the expedition.

**Kittlitz's Murrelet**                      *Brachyramphus brevirostris*

For the last few years, Kittlitz's Murrelet has been categorised as 'critically endangered' by Birdlife International due to "an extremely rapid population decline". Recent studies have, however, indicated that the population may not have fallen as fast as previously thought, so there are indications that its status may soon be downgraded.

This species was recorded on each of the last five full days of the expedition (29 June-3 July), with a total of at least 130 individuals seen. The highest numbers were whilst travelling from "Gyr Bay" to the final search site (30 June) when at least sixty birds were seen.

Interestingly the numbers seen on this expedition have increased markedly over the years with 21 individuals in 2011, 57 in 2012 and 130+ this year.

**Ancient Murrelet**                      *Synthliboramphus antiquus*

Eight birds were seen in Avacha Bay shortly after departing Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (21 June). There were then no further sightings until the latter stages of the expedition with 5 birds on 30 June (final search day) and two on 2 July (cruising north from Meinypil'gyno).

**Parakeet Auklet**                      *Aethia psittacula*

Seen on seven dates during the expedition, although most counts were in low single figures. The highest numbers were whilst zodiac cruising off Verkhoturova Island on 26 June when a high B was logged.

**Least Auklet**                      *Aethia pusilla*

This species is generally only seen in small numbers on this itinerary and a total of eight birds were seen with two individuals photographed on 22 June (approaching Zhupanova River), the same number four days later off Verkhoturova Island, with the final sighting (4 birds) on 30 June near to the final search site.

**Whiskered Auklet**                      *Aethia pygmaea*

The most reliable area for looking for this species on this expedition is the sea crossing between Medney and Bering Islands and a low B was logged there on 24 June. The only other sighting was a couple of days later (offshore from Verkhoturova Island) where a lone bird was photographed.

**Crested Auklet**                      *Aethia cristatella*

This species was logged on seven dates during the voyage with sightings across the entire expedition. The highest numbers were recorded near Verkhoturova Island (26 June) and between Meinypil'gyno and Pika River (2 July) when C was logged.

**Horned Puffin**                      *Fratercula corniculata*

This species was seen on an almost daily basis on the voyage (11 dates) with A or B logged on six occasions. The highest counts were around Medney Island (24 June) and between Meinypil'gyno and Pika River (2 July) where B was recorded.

**Tufted Puffin**                      *Fratercula cirrhata*

Undoubtedly one of the 'classic' alcids of the Russian Far East and seen on every day of the voyage except one (1 July: Meinypil'gyno). Although A was the typical count (7 days), B was recorded on 3 dates, with the highest count being C which was logged around Bering Island (23 June).

**Common (Eurasian) Cuckoo**                      *Cuculus canorus*

This widespread species was only recorded during the pre-voyage excursions around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, although birds were more often heard than seen.

**Oriental Cuckoo**                      *Cuculus optatus*

Although this species looks very similar to Common Cuckoo, the song is very different and birds were heard on both 20 and 21 June during the pre-voyage extension. The only other record was also only heard, during the final search day (30 June).

**Pacific (Fork-tailed) Swift**                      *Apus pacificus*

A lone bird was seen on 30 June.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**                      *Dendrocopos minor*

The only record of the expedition was a single bird on 20 June during the pre-voyage excursion.

**Greater Spotted Woodpecker**                      *Dendrocopos major*

Another species which was only recorded on the pre-voyage excursion with a single sighting on 20 June.

**Three-toed Woodpecker**                      *Picoides tridactylus*

One of the undoubted highlights of the pre-voyage extension was the fantastic views of two of these fine woodpeckers on 20 June.

**Brown Shrike**                      *Lanius cristatus*

A single bird was found on the final search day (30 June).

**Magpie**                      *Pica pica*

Two birds were seen on the pre-voyage extension (20 June), with three a couple of days later at the Zhupanova River (22 June).

It is worth noting that some studies have suggested the Magpies in Eastern Russia should be split in which case the likely name is Kamchatka Magpie.

**Carrion Crow**                      *Corvus corone*

This species was only recorded on the pre-voyage extension (20-21 June) and at the Zhupanova River (22 June) with A logged on each day.

**Common Raven**                      *Corvus corax*

Seen on a total of ten dates with single figure counts on eight occasions and A logged on 30 June and 1 July (last search day and Meinypil'gyno).

**Sky Lark**                      *Alauda arvensis*

This species was recorded on four dates with the highest count being on the first day of searches (28 June), when a high A was logged.

**Sand Martin**                      *Riparia riparia*

With the exception of two birds on the pre-voyage extension (20 June), the only records were on 28 June (search day 1: A) and 30 June (search day 3: 2).

**Barn Swallow**                      *Hirundo rustica*

The only records were of single birds on 23 June (Nikol'skoye, Commander Islands) and 30 June (search day 3).

**House Martin**                      *Delichon urbicum*

Seen on each day of the searches (28-30 June) with single figure counts on two days and A on the final date.

**Willow Tit**                      *Poecile montanus*

A total of four birds were seen on the pre-voyage excursions (20-21 June) and at the Zhupanova River (22 June).

**Long-tailed Tit**                      *Aegithalos caudatus*

A single bird was seen on 21 June during the pre-voyage excursion.

**Eurasian Nuthatch**                      *Sitta europaea*

Two birds were seen on 20 June during the pre-voyage excursion.

It is worth noting that some authorities (including the IOC) now split the nuthatches in NE Russia as Siberian Nuthatch *Sitta arctica* and the birds are certainly 'colder' in colour and do seem to have a different call.

**Kamchatka Leaf-warbler/Arctic Warbler**                      *Phylloscopus examinandus/borealis*

A recent paper in the British Ornithologists' Union's journal *Ibis* proposed splitting Arctic Warbler into three species and if these recommendations are followed, two 'species' were recorded on the expedition, with the birds on the pre-voyage excursions (20-21 June) and those heard at the Zhupanova River (22 June) being Kamchatka Leaf-warblers.

Further north, Kamchatka Leaf-warblers are replaced by Arctic Warblers with a single bird at Tintikun Lagoon (27 June) and four on the last search day (30 June).

**Dusky Warbler**                      *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

Recorded on a daily basis between 25-30 June inclusive (Karaginsky Island – search day 3) although on all occasions the daily maxima was in low single figures.

This species was also heard, but not seen, at the Zhupanova River (22 June).

**Lanceolated Warbler**                      *Locustella lanceolata*

A single singing bird was well seen near the hotel in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 21 June.

**Middendorff's Warbler**                      *Locustella ochotensis*

This species was recorded on each day of the pre-voyage extension (19-21 June) with at least one displaying bird near the hotel in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. Birds were also seen on two dates during the early stages of the voyage with the higher count being two birds on 26 June.

**Asian Brown Flycatcher**                      *Muscicapa dauurica*

A lone bird was seen on the pre-voyage extension on 20 June.

**Rufous-tailed Robin**                      *Luscinia sibilans*

Although this species was heard on the pre-voyage birding excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (20-21 June), it proved difficult to see despite considerable efforts, although a few were fortunate enough to get reasonable looks.

**Siberian Rubythroat**                      *Luscinia calliope*

This speciality was seen on nine dates during the pre-voyage extension and on the voyage, although the daily maximum count was only four individuals.

**Bluethroat**                      *Luscinia svecica*

A total of fourteen birds were recorded across five dates between 25-30 June (Karaginsky Island – search day 3).

**Northern Wheatear**                      *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The only record of this species was a lone bird at Meinypil'gyno on 1 July.

**Pacific Wren**                      *Troglodytes pacificus*

Several birds were seen during the landing at Peschanaya Bay on Medney Island (24 June). The wrens in North America have recently been split into two species with those on the western seaboard now called Pacific Wrens. This 'new' species is also present on the Aleutian Islands and it is generally considered that the birds on the Commander Islands are the same. There are also suggestions that some of the populations in Eastern Asia could potentially also be this taxa, although very little has been published on this topic.

**Eye-browed Thrush**                      *Turdus obscurus*

This species was only seen during the full day excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June with a low A logged.

**Dusky Thrush**                      *Turdus eunomus*

A total of eighteen individuals of this handsome *Turdus* were found with records on a daily basis from 26-30 June.

**Siberian Accentor**                      *Prunella montanella*

This eastern speciality can usually be found at Tintikun Lagoon and five were seen there on 27 June.

**Eastern Yellow Wagtail**                      *Motacilla [flava] tshutschensis*

The taxonomy of the Yellow Wagtail complex remains controversial, although many authorities now split it into two, with the birds in this part of Eastern Russia being part of the Eastern Yellow Wagtail grouping, *Motacilla tshutschensis*.

Birds were seen on eleven dates during the pre-cruise extension and voyage with single figure counts on seven dates and A on all other occasions.

**Grey Wagtail**                      *Motacilla cinerea*

This widespread species was only seen on two dates with two birds on the excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June and a lone bird at Tintikun Lagoon on 27 June.

**White Wagtail**                      *Motacilla alba*

White Wagtails were seen on almost every day of the expedition with *lugens* generally being recorded during the first half of the trip and *ocularis* subsequently.

Like the Yellow Wagtails, the taxonomy of the 'black-and-white' wagtails which occur in this part of Eastern Asia is still debated with "Black-backed Wagtail" treated as a full species by some, *Motacilla lugens*, but lumped as a subspecies of the more widely distributed White Wagtail *Motacilla alba* by others.

**Olive-backed Pipit**                      *Anthus hodgsoni*

Only recorded during the pre-voyage excursions around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (19-21 June) with a total of six birds logged.

**Pechora Pipit**                      *Anthus gustavi*

There were daily records of this East Asian speciality on the first four full days of the voyage (low A or single figure counts).

**Red-throated Pipit**                      *Anthus cerinus*

By far the commonest of the four pipit species seen on the trip, with daily observations between Karaginsky Island (25 June) and Meinypil'gyno (1 July). The numbers noted were either a single figure count or A.

**Buff-bellied Pipit**                      *Anthus rubescens*

Somewhat unexpectedly, the only record of this species was on 27 June during the shore landing at Tintikun Lagoon.

**Lapland Bunting**                      *Calcarius lapponicus*

A reasonably common species in the Commander Islands archipelago and on Karaginsky Island (23-25 June). The only other sightings were two birds on 28 June during the sandpiper search and a lone bird at Keyngypilgyn (3 July).

**Snow Bunting**                      *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Small numbers were recorded in the Commander Islands with a single individual on Bering Island on 23 June and a low A logged the following day on Medney Island. There was then a gap in sightings until 28-29 June, with a total of nine birds recorded across these two dates (first and second search days).

**Little Bunting**                      *Emberiza pusilla*

This species was seen on a daily basis during the three days of searches (28-30 June) although it was only on the latter date that more than a single bird was recorded.

**Rustic Bunting**                      *Emberiza rustica*

At least three birds were seen on 20 June during the pre-voyage excursion with the only other record being a bird heard at the Zhupanova River (22 June).

**Yellow-breasted Bunting**                      *Emberiza aureola*

A single individual was seen during the zodiac cruise on Zhupanova River (22 June).

**Grey Bunting**                      *Emberiza variabilis*

At least five individuals were found during the pre-voyage excursions around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (20-21 June).

**Pallas' Reed Bunting**                      *Emberiza pallasi*

Two birds were seen on Karaginsky Island (25 June) with others heard on two of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper search days (29-30 June).

**Reed Bunting**                      *Emberiza schoeniclus*

A total of five birds were seen, with one on the pre-voyage excursion (20 June) and four at the Zhupanova River (22 June).

**Brambling**                              *Fringilla montifringilla*

This species was only recorded on two dates with single birds at Cape Conspicuous on the Goven Peninsula (26 June) and on the third day of searches (30 June).

**Grey-crowned Rosy Finch**                      *Leucosticte tephrocotis*

One of the speciality land birds in the Commander Islands with at least ten birds observed on Medney Island on 24 June with one the previous day on Bering Island.

**Asian Rosy Finch**                              *Leucosticte arctoa*

Somewhat unexpectedly there were daily sightings of this species between 28-30 June during the three days of searching for new Spoon-billed Sandpiper sites, with a total of eight individuals being recorded.

**Common Rosefinch**                              *Carpodacus erthrinus*

Seen on a daily basis around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy (20-22 June) and also recorded daily between 26-30 June. Most counts were in low single figures although a low A was logged at Tintikun Lagoon (27 June) and on the full day excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June.

**Oriental Greenfinch**                              *Carduelis sinica*

Recorded in small numbers on all three dates during the pre-voyage excursions around Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy and then on a daily basis between 25-29 June, although all counts were in single figures.

**Common Redpoll**                              *Acanthis flammea*

This species was seen on a regular basis from 25-30 June with A logged on most dates.

**Arctic Redpoll**                              *Acanthis hornemanni*

This species was seen in small numbers on an almost daily basis during the latter stages of the trip.

**Eurasian Siskin**                              *Spinus spinus*

The only sighting of the expedition was three birds at Tintikun Lagoon (27 June).

**Eurasian Bullfinch**                              *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A single male was seen on the excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June.

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow**                              *Passer montanus*

This widespread species was only seen at Nikol'skoye on Bering Island (23 June) and during the excursion from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy on 20 June.

## MAMMALS

### **Arctic Ground-squirrel**

### ***Spermophilus parryii***

This species was seen on six dates between 26 June-3 July (Verkhoturova Island/Cape Conspicuous – Keyngypilgyn) with A logged on three occasions and low single figure counts on the other days.

### **Tundra Vole**

### ***Microtus oeconomus***

Single individuals were seen at Tintikun Lagoon (27 June) and the following day on the first search.

### **Mountain Hare**

### ***Lepus timidus***

Lone individuals were seen on the first and second search days (28-29 June) with a low A then logged on 3 July at Keyngypilgyn. It was at this final location that many of the group witnessed the bizarre spectacle of a hare chasing off and attempting to box a white Gyrfalcon !!

### **Northern Pika**

### ***Ochotona hyperborea***

A low A of this somewhat 'hamster-like' herbivore was logged on 30 June (final search day).

### **Red Fox**

### ***Vulpus vulpus***

A total of ten animals were seen across four dates with the highest count being on Verkhoturova Island (26 June) where up to seven different individuals, including a vixen with cubs, were found.

### **Arctic [Blue] Fox**

### ***Alopex lagopus***

Three Arctic Foxes were seen in the Commander Islands with one on Bering Island (23 June) and two the following day on Medney Island.

The animals on Medney Island are an endemic subspecies, *Alopex lagopus semenovi*, which became highly endangered in the early 1990s, with the population falling to less than 100 individuals as a result of an introduced mite which caused mange. In 1994 a programme of inoculating cubs was introduced and since then the population has increased considerably.

### **Brown Bear**

### ***Ursus arctos***

The expedition was highly successful for bear sightings with a minimum of seventy nine individuals seen and almost daily sightings between 26 June (Verkhoturova Island/Cape Conspicuous) and 3 July (Keyngypilgyn).

There were three days when there were double-figure counts (26 June: 17; 28 June: 30; and 30 June: 22), however, the most memorable sighting was at Cape Conspicuous where we had some spectacularly close looks at a female with her large cubs from the zodiacs.

### **Sea Otter**

### ***Enhydra lutris***

Sea Otters were only seen around the Commander Islands with a low B logged at Bering Island (23 June) with five individuals seen the following day offshore from Medney Island.

**Walrus**                      *Odobenus rosmarus*

Several hundred Walruses were seen on an incredible zodiac cruise at Pika Bay (2 July). There were some phenomenal views of the animals swimming close to the zodiacs, with this being one of the major highlights of the entire expedition for some participants.

The following day five Walruses were seen at sea as we cruised towards Anadyr, with the only other sighting being a lone individual on 1 July near Meinypil'gyno.

**Ribbon Seal**                      *Phoca fasciata*

A lone individual was seen at sea on 30 June.

**Common [Harbour] Seal**                      *Phoca vitulina*

Common Seals were only seen around the Commander Islands (23-24 June) with A logged on both days.

**Largha [Spotted] Seal**                      *Phoca larga*

The commonest seal with sightings on nine days. A or B was logged on eight occasions with the highest numbers being on the final search day (30 June) and at the river mouth at Meinypil'gyno (1 July).

**Steller's [Northern] Sea-lion**                      *Eumetopias jubatus*

Good numbers were seen at the haul-out at North-West Cape on Bering Island (23 June) where A was recorded, with the only other sightings being a lone animal the day before and four individuals three days later at Verkhoturova Island.

**Northern Fur Seal**                      *Callorhinus ursinus*

This species was recorded on both days in the Commander Islands with B logged at the haul-out at North-West Cape on Bering Island (23 June) but just five animals were seen the following day off Medney Island.

**Orca [Killer whale]**                      *Orcinus orca*

Several animals were seen close to Karaginsky Island (25 June) with the only other sightings being two days later at sea in Oluytorskiy Bay where 10+ were logged.

**Harbour Porpoise**                      *Phocoena phocoena*

Another species which was first recorded near Karaginsky Island (25 June) with three individuals seen. The only other sightings were in the latter stages of the expedition with two on the final search day (30 June) and three between Meinypil'gyno and Pika River (2 July).

**Dall's Porpoise**                      *Phocoenoides dalli*

This handsome species was seen on five days during the first half of the expedition (22-27 June). On three occasions, there was only a single figure count, with A logged on the other dates.

**Beluga**                      *Delphinapterus leucas*

Belugas were first seen just offshore from the final search site on 30 June with at least twenty animals logged. The only other sightings were at the river mouth at Meinypil'gyno

on 30 June where a further four animals were recorded and at Anadyr where the species is reasonably numerous in the Anadyr River (4 July).

**Sperm Whale**                      *Physeter macrocephalus*

A total of six Sperm Whales were recorded with the first individuals being offshore from Bering Island on 24 June. The following day, there were three further sightings as the ship approached Karaginsky Island.

**Fin Whale**                      *Balaenoptera physalus*

At least seven of these huge whales were seen as the ship sailed towards Karaginsky Island on 25 June, with the only other record being a lone individual on 30 June (final search day).

**Northern Minke Whale**                      *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*

Seen on four dates with a total of twenty animals recorded. The highest count was during the transfer from 'Gyr Bay' to the final search site on 30 June when at least thirteen whales were seen, with all sightings being between 23-25 June, when there were low single figure counts each day.

**Humpback Whale**                      *Megaptera novaengliae*

This species is usually the commonest of the large whales during the early stages of this expedition and it was recorded on a daily basis between 23-27 June with the highest count being around Bering Island (23 June) when A was logged. On all other dates, the day count was in single figures.

**Grey Whale**                      *Eschrichtius robustus*

Generally Grey Whales are most numerous in the latter stages of the voyage and this was certainly the case in 2013 with over 100 individuals recorded between 30 June-2 July (final search day – Keyngypilgyn). The only sighting outside this period was a lone animal on the first search day (28 June).