

## Bergslagen Wildlife Safari

Wolves, Beavers & Moose

5 days/4 nights - July to September



*Discover the pristine boreal forest and lakes of Bergslagen, where you will find the very best of Sweden's wildlife. Accompanied by an experienced wildlife guide, you will explore a wilderness that is home to wolves, bears, beavers, wild boar, pine marten, hare, fox and, of course, the majestic moose, Sweden's national animal! Lynx are also sometimes seen here (though sightings are very rare!), while ornithological highlights include grey heron, owl, common tern, kingfisher, osprey and black-throated diver.*

*This is a small group guided tour accommodating a maximum of 5 guests. It is suitable for couples, single travellers and families with children aged 15 or over.*

### **Day 1 Arrive Stockholm; driven transfer to Farna (D)**

Rendezvous with your guide on arrival in Stockholm Arlanda airport (meeting time to be advised). After a brief introduction, you set off for the village of Farna, in the wilds of Bergslagen, a drive of approx. 2 hours from Stockholm. On arrival, check in at Farna Manor for 3 nights.

Farna Manor is a delightful spa hotel situated in the village of the same name, where it occupies a lovely setting between two lakes - Lillsjön and Norrsjön. Located a short distance from the wildlife-rich forests of Skinnskatteberg, it is a wonderful retreat in which to relax after long days

spent wildlife tracking! The hotel has 60 spacious rooms, a spa, indoor and outdoor swimming pool, and sauna.



Dinner and overnight at Farna Manor.

## Day 2 Introduction to the taiga; Moose safari (B, L, D)

After a hearty breakfast, set off with your expert guide to explore the forest and learn about its many inhabitants.

This morning's wildlife experience will serve as an introduction to the taiga ecosystem, as your guide explains its defining characteristics. This is a region of thick coniferous forests, but one which supports very few plants. Instead, the forest floor is blanketed with lichens, mosses and fungi. The plant and animal species that survive in the region are specially adapted to the cold subarctic conditions, and your guide will explain more of the delicate balance that sustains this ancient ecosystem as you make your first journey into the forest. They will also show you how to track wildlife, including species such as moose, lynx and wolves, as you look for hoof prints in the soil, bite marks and droppings. You may not encounter any large mammals on this morning's forest tour, but you can certainly hope to see your first tracks!



After a morning of exploration, lunch will be enjoyed at a cafe in the forest, after which there will be time to relax at the Manor or by the lake, or perhaps to take a canoe out on the water.

Early this evening, you will set off again with your guide in search of moose, travelling on foot and by vehicle.



The moose is the largest and heaviest of the deer family, standing at over 2 metres when fully grown. These shy, gentle herbivores are solitary creatures, unlike other deer species who form herds. The ancient forests of Bergslagen provide great browsing for moose, whose diet consists of leaves and small branches of trees. In the summer months, they also enjoy pond weed and pond lilies, and can often be found in ponds with only their heads above the water – they are surprisingly agile swimmers! In the long, cold winters, their thick coats provide wonderful insulation, allowing them to survive in exceptionally cold conditions.

Later this evening, your guide will choose a scenic spot and light a campfire. Supper will be served around the fire as you recount the day's sightings. Later, return to the Manor for overnight.

### Day 3 Lake and Beavers (B, L, D)

A leisurely breakfast this morning, giving you time to recover your energy after yesterday's forest tours. Late morning, your guide will take you canoeing on the lake.

Canoeing around the lake and its islands is a great way to observe water birds, including species such as black-throated diver, grey heron, common crane, and osprey. The canoeing is intended to be a relaxed experience, and you will not cover a great distance. Afterwards, lunch will be served outdoors on the lakeshore.

There will be time to relax at the Manor following lunch, and perhaps enjoy the wood-fired sauna or a short walk in the surrounding forest which, between July and September, is bursting with berries just ripe for picking!



Early evening, your guide will take you to Norrsjön Lake, where you'll enjoy a campfire dinner on a small island in the lake, before embarking on a boat safari in search of beavers.



Using small boats with quiet electric motors, you will glide over the lake and the river that feeds it as the sun begins to set. You may see the beavers on the shore or swimming close to the boats while there is still light.

As darkness falls, you'll use headlamps to observe these fascinating semi-aquatic animals as they are busy eating and building dams to form small ponds – their preferred habitat! The walls of beaver dams can be as high as 2 metres and are built using trees, which the beaver fells with their teeth, and then waterproof with mud.

Beavers are highly sociable animals and live in colonies of around eight, with a dominant female. Their diet consists of trees (which they can digest), roots, leaves, bark and aquatic plants. They have a tremendous impact on ecosystems, helping to

maintain wetland systems and providing an environment for birds, fish and amphibians. Once hunted almost to extinction, beavers have in recent decades made a comeback and are no longer on the endangered species list.

Following the beaver safari, you'll be returned to Farna Manor for overnight.

#### **Day 4 In search of Wolves (B, L, D)**

This morning is at leisure. Enjoy breakfast at the Manor, with the rest of the morning free to explore the grounds or relax by the lake.

Late this afternoon, after lunch at the manor, you'll embark on your first journey into wolf territory! Before you head out, your guide will explain more about wolves and how they live. Ask as many questions as you wish – this fascinating excursion is likely to be the highlight of your trip.



You'll be camping in the woods tonight, and en route to your camp, you'll look for paw prints, droppings, dead prey, and other clues that indicate that the wolf pack is around. On arrival at the

wild camping site, you'll pitch up the tents, with everyone helping. Once camp is prepared, there will be time to relax and enjoy a hot supper served around the campfire. During the course of the evening, one of Sweden's foremost wolf experts will join you and talk about his work with wolves and provide more insight into their behaviour.

As darkness approaches, you leave camp and travel on foot, moving closer to the wolves. Depending on their location within the forest, you may walk for up to an hour on rough terrain. Once you've located the wolves, your guide will ensure that you stay a respectful distance to avoid disturbing the pack. The aim is to reach a comfortable distance from which to sit and listen, hoping to hear their famous, spine-tingling howl! Hearing wolves howl from within the dark of the forest is a totally exhilarating experience.

After midnight, return to camp for a well-deserved rest.

### Day 5 Return Stockholm; international departure (B, L)

If time allows, enjoy a short morning walk before packing up your tent and returning to the Manor for brunch. Around midday, you will be transferred to the station for your train to Stockholm Arlanda Airport, arriving approx. 5pm.

### Stockholm City Extension (Optional)

*We can arrange a short stay in Stockholm at the start or end of your wildlife tour. Stockholm is a beautiful and historic city overlooking the Baltic Sea. The city is spread over 14 islands with more than 50 bridges connecting the larger islands. An amazing two-thirds of the city is made up of wooded areas and waterways! The city's old town is a labyrinth of medieval lanes and alleyways, home to the 13<sup>th</sup> century Storkyrkan Cathedral and the Royal Palace, or Kungliga slottet. Ferries and sightseeing boats take passengers around the archipelago – which is made up of 24,000 islands. There is plenty to see and do in Stockholm, exploring the historic centre, museums and islands. There is also a great choice of restaurants, many of which are modestly priced.*

#### Price Guide:

Ground cost: £1,440 per person sharing  
Single supplement: £90

#### 2022 departure dates

04, 11, 18, 25 July  
01, 08, 15, 22, 29 August  
05 September

*This itinerary can also be arranged on a private basis. Please contact us for details.*

#### Includes:

- 4 nights' Accommodation on full-board basis
- Excursions as outlined in itinerary with expert wildlife guide
- Transfers by bus and/or train

#### Excludes:

- International flights - British Airways direct flight to Arlanda Airport from £140pp including taxes
- Drinks with meals
- Travel insurance

**Photographer credits:** Jan Nordström, Jörgen Pettersson, Marie Mattsson and Simon Green