Birdwatching
in Northeast Iceland
Gentle Giants
Husavik

**Gentle Giants** is a family-run Whale Watching Company which also offers birdwatching tours. We are located in Husavik and offer two main birdwatching tours. To Flatey Island (4-5 hrs) and to Lundeys Island (appr. 1 hr). We can also arrange tailor-made tours upon request. On our tours 30-40 different species have been seen during the breeding season. We offer guided excursions through the beautiful nature of Flatey Island where one can watch Arctic Terns and Puffins up close amongst other birds.

Hotel Raudaskrida
Adaldalur

**Hotel Raudaskrida** is a family-run three-star Country Hotel and is one of only two in Iceland that has been recognized as eco-friendly by the Nordic Swan Association. We offer spacious rooms with private facilities and various leisure activities, such as birdwatching, hiking, mountain biking, etc. On our land, approximately 40-50 different bird species have been seen. We are located on road 85, about 45 minutes from Akureyri and 20 minutes from Husavik.

Bjorg
Kinn

**Bjorg** is a traditional Icelandic farm with cows and sheep, but also with Eider. The farm is located near the sea at Skjalfandi Bay. At Bjorg you can watch seabirds around the cliffs and we also offer guided tours for our Eiders. In the Bjorg area around 50-60 bird species have been seen.

Sigurgeir’s Bird Museum
Myvatnssveit

**Sigurgeir’s Bird Museum** is located at the farm Ytri-Neslond next to Lake Myvatn. It is a family-run museum with approximately 180 different species of birds on display. We also have three bird hides available and offer traditional Icelandic refreshments. The Lake Myvatn area has the largest number of breeding ducks in the world. The Barrow’s Goldeneye (Bucephala islandica) has its only breeding habitat in Europe in Northeast Iceland, mostly by Lake Myvatn.

Arctic Nature Experience
Reykjahverfi

At **Arctic Nature Experience** we offer a wide variety of tours for guided birdwatching in Northeast Iceland. On our day tours one can expect to see up to 60 different species and on our longer tours, along the Birding Trail, up to 80 species can be expected.
At our three star eco-friendly Country Hotel we offer spacious rooms with private facilities. Our hotel rooms are also equipped with coffee/tea maker, satellite TV, radio/alarm clock and a hair dryer. Phone and internet access is also available upon request. We also have available a family room and a cottage. At Guesthouse Raudaskrida we offer rooms with shared bathroom and lounge with satellite TV. Our restaurant offers buffet breakfast and a la carte dinner, with emphasis on traditional Icelandic dishes like arctic char and lamb. We also have a fully licenced bar.

For leisure we have a birdwatching hide on our property and we have some beautiful hiking/biking trails, with information about the nature and Saga’s mapped out for our guests who can make use of the hotels bikes free of charge. At the end of the day it’s also very nice to relax in our on-site hot tubs.

We are located close to the following main nature attractions in Northeast Iceland; (times shown are by car)

- Godafoss waterfall: 20 minutes
- Lake Myvatn and Dimmuborgir lava field: 35 minutes
- Asbyrgi Canyon: 60 minutes
- Dettifoss waterfall: 90 minutes
- Husavik (Whale Watching Center): 20 minutes
- Akureyri: 45 minutes
- Farm Bjorg: 15 minutes

Hotel Rauðaskrida
Adaldal
641 Husavik
Iceland
Tel: +354 464 3504
Fax: +354 464 3644
Email: hotel@hotelraudaskrida.is
Website: www.hotelraudaskrida.is
The family run Whale Watching Company, Gentle Giants, has been operating since 2001. Our family has more than 150 years of history in the Skjalfandi Bay. Our fleet consists of 5 boats, two of which are traditional oak vessels. We offer a wide variety of tours both for whalewatching and birdwatching. We also offer guided excursions through the beautiful nature of Flatey Island where over 30 different species breed including the Red Phalarope for the last three summers. Our Puffins Exclusive tour, is a trip to Lundey Island (Puffin Island) where, during the breeding season, over 300,000 Puffins can be found. On one of our tours, you can also become a "member of the crew" and experience a Pro Fishing day. We also have available a combined tour of whalewatching and horse riding.

On all of our tours we provide our passengers with protective clothing and life vests, free of charge. We also offer our passengers complimentary hot chocolate and Icelandic kleina (a twisted donut) to keep them warm and nourished.

Our whalewatching season is from April 15th until October 15th and our birdwatching season is from May 15th until August 20th. We can also arrange tailor made tours if requested. In the last few years the main whales to be seen at Skjalfandi Bay have been blue whale, humpback whale, fin whale and mink whale as well as white-beaked dolphin and harbour porpoise. Other species that have been seen are for instance orca, sei whale and northern bottlenose whale.
Sigurgeir’s Bird Museum was opened at its current location, by Lake Myvatn, in 2008. The collection is the work of the late Sigurgeir Stefansson, who was an enthusiastic birder and nature lover. His dream was to open a bird museum for birdwatchers but also for educational purposes. Sigurgeir died at the age of 37 in a tragic accident at Lake Myvatn, but his family turned his dream into reality 9 years later.

The museum houses around 180 different specimens and covers all Icelandic breeding species apart from the rare Red Phalarope. We offer traditional refreshment, like hot-spring baked rye bread with smoked trout and flat bread with smoked lamb, at our restaurant. Once a day at 14:00 birders meet at the museum to share their experiences of the day. In our area 57 different breeding species have been seen and the Lake Myvatn area has the highest number of different species of ducks in the world.

On one of the small islands at the lake we have a camera which can be viewed on a monitor from within the museum. To name some of the ongoing research activities in which we participate, every Monday is a counting day for Whooping Swans in the area and we also monitor the egg laying of species like the Horned Grebe etc. At the museum we also have multimedia information about the birds and birdwatching.

Our summer season opening times are:
- May 15th – May 31st: Daily 11.00 - 19.00
- June 1st - August 10th: Daily 10.00 - 19.00
- August 11th - August 31st: Daily 11.00 - 19.00

For winter season opening times, see our website.

Sigurgeir’s Bird Museum
Ytri-Neslondum
660 Myvatn
Iceland
Tel: + 354 464 4477
Email: fuglasafn@fuglasafn.is
Website: www.fuglasafn.is
Facebook: www.facebook.com/fuglasafn
Arctic Nature Experience is a state licenced coach and travel operator which offers comprehensive services and advice to groups of all sizes. The company specialises in sightseeing tours and excursions throughout the entire country.

At Arctic Nature Experience we offer a wide variety of tours for birdwatching in Northeast Iceland. We have 5 different types of guided daytours upon request. Lasting from 6 to 12 hrs our daytours are divided by areas.

- **Myvatn**
- **From Valley to Shore**
- **Tjornes – Kelduhverfi**
- **Melrakkasletta**
- **Langanes**

In June we have scheduled daily tours
Myvatn – a paradise for birdwatchers.
Departing form Sigurgeir’s Bird Museum, bookings can be made there, as late as the night before.

One can expect to see up to 60 different species of birds on these trips. We also offer longer trips, along the Birding Trail of Northeast Iceland, the Birding Capital of Iceland that last for 3, 5 or 8 days. On such tours up to 80 different species can be seen. Beside birdwatching tours we offer both scheduled day tours and multi-day tours for major nature scenery in Northeast Iceland including bus sightseeing tours and/or hiking tours.

Our vehicle fleet, that includes super-jeeps, is designed to cope with most demands in terms of group size, road and weather conditions and highway or mountain road travel through the interior of the country. Our services are available throughout the year, but tours in winter occasionally require last minute changes due to variable weather and road conditions.
**Bjorg** is a traditional Icelandic farm, located by the sea at Skjalfandi Bay. The landscape is spectacular with 5km of vertical cliffs, up to appr. 250m high, extending towards the sea on one hand where, during wintertime, a very famous ice-climbing routes are located. On the other hand is the glacial-river Skjalfandafljot which has it’s origin in Vatnajokull Glacier.

At Bjorg, the speciality with regards to birding is the Eider nesting, on which we offer guided tours by a local, who is familiar with all bird species in Iceland. There are approximately 300 nesting Eiders on a small island on river Skjalfandafljot and occasionally one can see King Eider. Also on our property Northern Fulmar breeding pairs are encountered and in some places one can get very close to the birds.

High numbers of Kittiwake also nests in the cliffs closer to the sea and the Arctic Tern is common on the banks of river Skjalfandafljot. In our area 50-60 different bird species have been seen. We have a conservation program ongoing to recover the wetland and increase habitancy of ducks and waders.

We are part of the **Icelandic Farm Holidays** and offer rooms with shared bathrooms and serve breakfast and other meals.
We would like to thank North East Iceland Nature Center for their help on the birding list, Johann Oli Hilmarsson, chairman of Fuglavernd, BirdLife Iceland for consulting and pictures and Julian Mark Williams for proofreading. December 2011.