

WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



ICELAND GRÍMSEY ISLAND

PUFFINS IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

HIGHLIGHTS

- Puffins and other birds
- Peak time for birds in Iceland
- Fabulous spring flowers
- Vibrant village life
- One base for five days
- Grímsey Island
- Hrísey Island
- Midnight sun
- Dramatic light
- Flight across Iceland
- Flight from Grímsey

INTRODUCTION

Who doesn't love Puffins? Grímsey is a remote island in the Greenland Sea sitting on the Arctic Circle and is home one of Iceland's biggest Puffin colonies with around half of the world's population breeding in Iceland. Estimated at 2–3 million breeding pairs it's the most common bird in the country. Every year millions of seabirds come to Grímsey to nest. Indeed, in addition to the lovely Icelandic landscape, Grímsey's main attraction is the birds and especially the North Atlantic Puffin. Having photographed throughout Iceland for many years we are certain that Grímsey is the best place in Iceland to photograph these incredibly colourful characters.

In addition to Puffins there are many other species of bird nesting on Grímsey. It's an excellent place to photograph Razorbills. Common Murre are plentiful on the cliffs, as are Northern Fulmars, Black-legged Kittiwakes, Golden Plovers and Ringed Plovers. Common Snipe breed around the guesthouse and Arctic Terns are our neighbours too. Red-necked Phalaropes are a special treat for most bird photographers, they are very approachable and prolific on Grímsey where they can be generally spotted in a state of perpetual mating frenzy on the village 'pond'.

This is a wonderful opportunity to relax for several nights in just one comfortable base with most locations within gentle walking distance. There will be fine opportunities



to work on your creative bird images with the added bonus of dramatic midsummer light. Re-visiting the different bird colonies will give participants a unique opportunity of refining and working on both creative and technical skills. Our photographic tutors will always be on hand to work with you at whatever level you prefer, from beginner to professional. This is a unique and relaxed opportunity for all who love to spend time in the remote and unspoilt areas of Iceland photographing birds.

GUIDES & TUTORS

The 2026 departure will be led by Geraldine Westrupp and Martin Sammlen. All images in this gallery were taken by them on either Grímsey or Hrísey Island. Geraldine and Martin lived in Iceland for a long time and they have intimate knowledge of all things Icelandic. They will safely guide you to the different locations and work with you photographing birds creatively. Their knowledge and understanding of both Icelandic birds and landscapes is extensive and it gives them great joy to share this knowledge with our guests.

DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive Reykjavík

Transfer from the international airport to our group hotel in the city. Both the transfer and hotel will be included in the price of the holiday. Dinner will be your own shout, there are plenty of restaurants close to the hotel which is in the city centre.

Hotel

Day 2: Akureyri & Hrísey

In the morning after breakfast there will be a single group transfer to Reykjavik's domestic airport for a morning flight to Akureyri. The guides will meet you at Akureyri airport. We will drive for around 45 mins to Dalvík for lunch and to check into our hotel close to the Grímsey ferry terminal. If the weather is suitable we will take the late afternoon ferry to the island of Hrísey which takes just 15 mins. Around forty bird species nest in Hrísey, some can only be counted in a few pairs while others are in thousands. The main reason for this unusually large concentration of birds is that all hunting and gathering of eggs is banned plus there are no predators



such as foxes, minks, mice or rats. The Ptarmigan is a protected species on Hrísey, although it is hunted elsewhere in Iceland. Waders have breeding colonies and a large number of Black Guillemot nest and fish in the harbour. Weather permitting we will enjoy photographing in the evening light and enjoy a meal in the local bar before returning on the last ferry.

Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 3: Ferry to Grímsey

This morning after breakfast we take the 09:00 ferry (3 hrs) to Grímsey Island where we'll be staying for 5 nights. The ferry journey is a fine opportunity to see some stunning vistas of North Iceland. On past sailings we have seen whales en route. Our accommodation is a guesthouse close to the sea cliffs and is only a short walk from the village. This will be our home for the next 5 nights. We have the whole house for ourselves which means that everyone can have their own room or people travelling together can share one of the larger rooms. There are shared facilities in the guesthouse, one bath-



room on the lower floor and one on the upper floor of the house. This is a clean and comfortable guesthouse in a fabulous location, a great base for our workshop. After settling in we will begin our exploration of this serene island which is basically just one giant bird colony.

Guesthouse (B,L,D)

Days 3–8: Grímsey Island

Grímsey is the northernmost inhabited Icelandic territory, just 5 square kilometres with around sixty residents and it is located on the Arctic Circle. The north Atlantic current brings some warmth from the Gulf of Mexico, promoting a surprisingly mild climate. Most of the time we will be walking to our locations although we will have a vehicle coming on the ferry with us. This will allow some of the further away places to be visited more easily. The

islanders live in a small village by the harbour, a vibrant community with many children. The chorus of seabirds, never stops during the 24 hour long day, there is no night in Grimsey during the summer, not until late July when twilight begins to descend around midnight. The birds nest in the high cliffs that surround the whole island, except by the harbour.

The landscape of the island is green and grazed by sheep. There are also a small number of goats who live a fairly wild life. Tracks and paths criss cross the island and the cliff tops will be festooned with spring/summer flowers during our visit. There is a fine orange lighthouse at the island's southernmost point and many beautiful basalt columns formations along the south-west shore of the island. The place where the Arctic circle crosses

Grímsey is marked by a striking globe designed by the artists Kristinn E. Hrafnsson in collaboration with Studio Granda. The sheer cliffs that surround Grímsey are an incredible spectacle and it is here where we will spend much of our time. We will be able to get very close to all of the bird species in some very out there locations.

Guesthouse (B,L,D)

Day 8: Homeward flights

This morning after breakfast participants will fly directly on the 08:25 flight from Grímsey to Akureyri where it will be possible to catch a connecting flight to Reykjavík. The tiny Grímsey airport is right next to the guesthouse although there are very few flights. By using flights rather than ferries/driving we save hours on the long journey



back to Reykjavík. There are limited international flights direct to Akureyri so it is worth checking this option too.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- * 7 nights accommodation
- * All meals except Day 1
- * Flight Reykjavík-Akureyri Day 2
- * Flight Grimsey-Akureyri Day 8
- * Flybus transfer on Day 1
- * Ferries to Grímsey & Hrísey islands
- * Transfers from Akureyri Airport Day 2

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- * International flights
- * Travel insurance
- * Drinks and snacks between meals
- * Soft- & alcoholic drinks
- * Flybus transfer day 8
- * Anything not listed as included

JOINING ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The Flybus from Iceland's International Airport is included in the price of this holiday and it is the most convenient way to get to Reykjavík. The journey takes about forty five minutes. The coach takes you to the BSÍ central bus station. There you will be directed to a smaller bus that will take you to our first night hotel. The flight to Akureyri on Day 2 is included in the price of the holiday. There will be a single included transfer from the first night hotel to the airport. Please double check with the office for the time of this flight, but it will probably be the 11:05 am from Reykjavík's domestic airport. The flight to Akureyri takes around 45 minutes and your guides will be there to meet you. Return Flybus tickets to Reykjavík's international airport are not included allowing flexibility after the tour finishes in Akureyri on Day 8. It is important that you let the office know the times of your international flights to Iceland well in advance of your arrival in Iceland. Please contact the office for advice if there is anything that you do not understand.



ACCOMMODATION

In Reykjavik and Dalvík we stay in Hotels with private facilities. On Grímsey we stay in a guesthouse with private rooms and shared facilities.

FOOD

All meals are included in the price. The most common Icelandic dishes are fish and lamb and we can of course cater for a wide variety of culinary tastes as long as this is mentioned on the booking form. On Grímsey our host will cook our meals at the guesthouse and we will generally have a packed lunch or eat in the harbour cafe.

ALCOHOL

This is rather expensive in Iceland. It is worth considering bringing a bottle of your favourite 'tipple' to Grímsey! All the restaurants that we eat in serve alcohol.

SPENDING MONEY

Icelandic Krona can be easily obtained at the airport ATM machine; these are plentiful throughout Iceland but

not on Grímsey. There will be opportunities to buy presents and souvenirs on Grímsey. Credit cards are accepted in all places for even very cheap purchases.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Please ensure that you have adequate Travel Insurance that includes repatriation in case of accident. Please make sure your equipment is insured too. Iceland is not in the EU, so please check with your insurance company that their cover extends to non-EU countries.

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of the Schengen countries, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia and most South American countries do not need a visa to travel to Iceland.

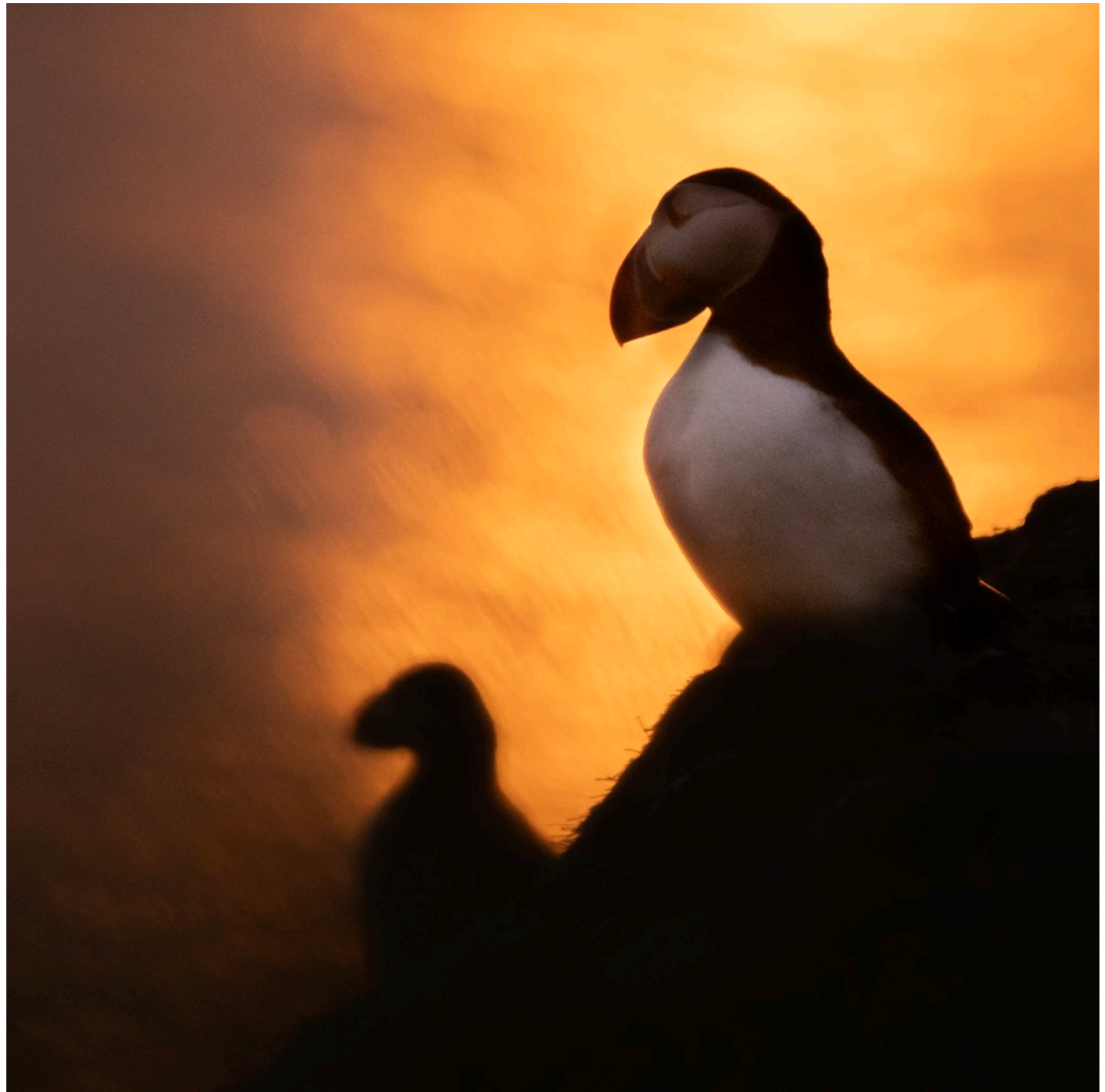
All other citizens need to check with either the [Icelandic Directorate of Immigration](#) or their local authorities.

LANGUAGE

Icelanders speak Icelandic. They also tend to speak rather good English.

CLIMATE

Iceland's climate is tempered by the Gulf Stream. Summers are mild and winters rather cold, the weather is very changeable at all times of the year, there may be rain, sunshine, drizzle and snow all in the same day. As far as we can make a guess, expect weather that is probably similar to April/May in the UK. Most importantly for us, the lack of pollution means that the clarity of the light is often exceptional with phenomenal 'big skies'





and really atmospheric cloud patterns.

CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS

The best solution to temperature control is to have a number of layers available from lightweight thermal underwear through mid-layer insulation to a windproof jacket. For the lower body choose a pair of trousers that you can move in easily rather than jeans as the latter take a very long time to dry should we be caught in a shower and provide little protection against wind-chill when wet. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at anytime before the trip.

SUGGESTED CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT

- Warm trousers (not jeans)
- Long sleeved thermal tops and leggings
- Long sleeved shirt/tee-shirt
- Light fleece/wool jumper
- Warm fleece type jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers

- Warm socks
- Lightweight walking boots/shoes
- Wellington boots
- Light warm hat
- Gloves
- Casual clothes for hotel wear
- Sun cream, sunglasses & sun hat
- Small basic first aid to include plasters, blister repair e.g. Compede, needle/cotton & any personal medicines
- Small penknife

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT AND INFORMATION

- Specially designed camera bags or rucksacks like F-Stop, Lowepro and Peak design.
- A camera with interchangeable lenses such as a digital SLR or a mirrorless system camera.
- A set of lenses to cover the whole range from wide-angle to telephoto, for example...
For full-frame cameras: 24–105mm standard zoom and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom. For crop format



cameras: 17–50mm standard zoom and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom.

- As long a telephoto lens as you own and are comfortable to carry in the field. Tele zooms of 80–400mm or 150–600mm are a good choice. If you own a fixed telephoto lens in the range of 400 to 600 mm, bring it.
- Spare camera
- Tripod – only required if you use a gimbal/very heavy lens. Most bird photography is best done handheld allowing you to move around and adjust position easily.
- Filters – neutral density, graduated filters and polarisers can be useful for the occasional landscape image.
- Lens cloth
- Sensor cleaning device (optional)
- Lightweight ‘trekking’ absorbent towel for drying cameras and equipment
- Rain cover for camera and camera bag
- Sufficient memory cards for the whole holiday as it may not be possible to buy more during the trip.

- A laptop/tablet with the image editing applications of your choice, essential for checking and presenting images during the trip and for one-on-one sessions with the tutor. All of the places we stay in have Wi-Fi.
- Backup storage device (optional)
- Spare batteries and chargers
- All the electrical sockets are [European three-pin](#), so you might need a travel plug adapter.

KNOW YOUR CAMERA

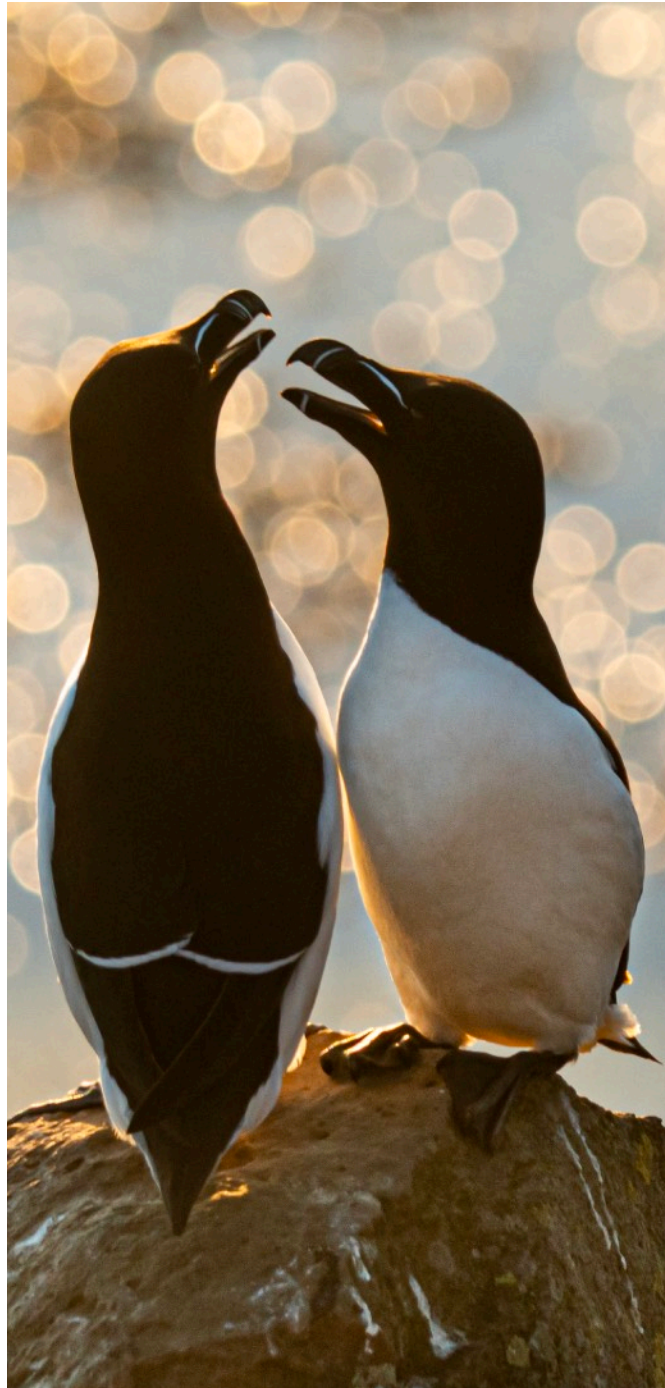
It's important that you are familiar with the basic operation of your camera such as setting exposure/AF modes, aperture, shutter speed, ISO etc. Nowadays there is a huge variety of cameras and systems and while we will always do our best to help, it's impossible to know every model.

PARTNERS

Although this is primarily a photography holiday, non-photographer partners will be very welcome as there are many options and interesting possibilities in addition to taking photographs.

MORE QUESTIONS?

While we hope that this information has answered most of your questions about the holiday, we know it will not give you all the information you need. If you have any more questions, please get in touch. Talking to us on the phone (we will always call you back) can often be a quick way of sorting out individual questions. It also helps us to get to know each other before the holiday.



BOOKING THIS HOLIDAY

Fill in the [online booking form](#), or give us a call on +44 (0)1270 440222.

LINKS

View [images and information for this tour](#) on the website.

Read about [our approach to teaching photography](#)