

GENERAL INFO ARCTIC BIRDS



BEFORE THE EXPEDITION

Thank you for travelling with us to Varanger and the Arctic birds. In this PDF we will give you some information that can be handy before your travel with us.

Insurance

We recommend you to have a valid insurance covering medical conditions (illness, accidents, death). We also strongly recommend that you have cancellation insurance.

Health and vaccination

If you have had any major surgeries in the last two years or chronic illnesses that will affect your comfort on the expedition, we should be made aware of it.

Passport and Visa

Your passport should be valid at least 6 months following your travel dates. Make sure you renew your passport if you need to.

Tourist Visa

Most visitors to Norway do not need a tourist Visa. However, this does not apply for all countries. Let us know if you are not sure whether you need a VISA, or not. You can see more info about Visa at: <https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/visit-and-holiday/>

Currency

The currency in Norway is the Norwegian Kroner (NOK). 1000 NOK is equal to around USD \$130. Credit cards (VISA, MasterCard and AmEx) will be accepted in most stores in Norway, but it's always good to bring some cash.

Climate

Winter in the arctic is renowned for being extremely unpredictable, conditions changes in minutes and this can result in very dramatic and photographic opportunities. The coastal climate up north east is often cold and snowy with northern wind. But expect everything. Average temperature in Vardø in March is -3,5 °C

Flights to/from arctic Norway

You will fly into the main airport in Norway, Oslo Airport Gardermoen (OSL), from there on you have to have a connecting flight to Vardø airport (VAW)

Checked luggage

Allowed weight of checked baggage is usually 2 x 20kg or 2 x 23kg. Make sure you don't have too much overweight. We recommend taking most of your photo equipment in your hand luggage (although it gets a bit heavy).

Hand luggage

The maximum measures of the bag is 55 x 25 x 35 cm. The weight on hand luggage is 10 kg on most international flights and 8 kg on domestic flights. Bring a photo vest in emergency, if you need to reduce the weight of your photo gear.

Lost luggage

Lost or delayed luggage is out of our control. Please pack a small bag with all your essentials, including medicine, and bring it in your carry-on luggage. The most important photographic equipment should also be carry-on luggage. See the checklist below for packing details.

Transport during the expedition

We will arrange transport from the airport in Vardø (VAW) and during our whole stay.

Accommodation at Oslo Airport Gardermoen (OSL)

The best choice if you arrive the day before, or need a night after the expedition is the Radisson Blu Airport Hotel, Oslo Gardermoen



TOUR INFORMATION ARCTIC BIRDS



Meals

All meals is included. Breakfast and dinner will be served. Lunch will be packed and brought with us.

Medical

The guides have completed course in first aid medical treatment. If a serious situation occurs, we will contact the medical emergency team and we are close to a doctor and ambulance

Cell phone signal and Wi-Fi

There is Wi-Fi at the accomodation site and mostly 4g cell phone signal in the area we are working in.

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

During the time you'll be visiting Arctic Norway you can expect changing weather conditions, and it is also cold to stand outside for ours shooting. Below you will find some instructions on how to dress in polar climates, as well as an equipment checklist.

A FEW WORDS ON HOW TO DRESS IN THE NORWEGIAN ARCTIC

The most important is to dress in layers, which allows for perspiration, insulation and protection from the cold temperature and wind. With the layering method you can easily adjust your clothing regarding to weather and temperature change.

The inner layer

Clothing next to your skin must get rid of perspiration from your body to keep you dry and warm. This layer should be close to your body and should be quite tight. Good materials for this first layer are wool or synthetic materials. Cotton should never be worn close to the body, or preferably not at all.

The middle layer (or layers)

This layer provides insulation and retains body heat without restricting movement. Suitable materials for this layer are polar fleece or wool. This way you control your body temperature, and on a cold day we recommend two or more middle layers. It is better to wear several thin layers than one thick layer. On cold days you may need extra insulation.

The outer layer

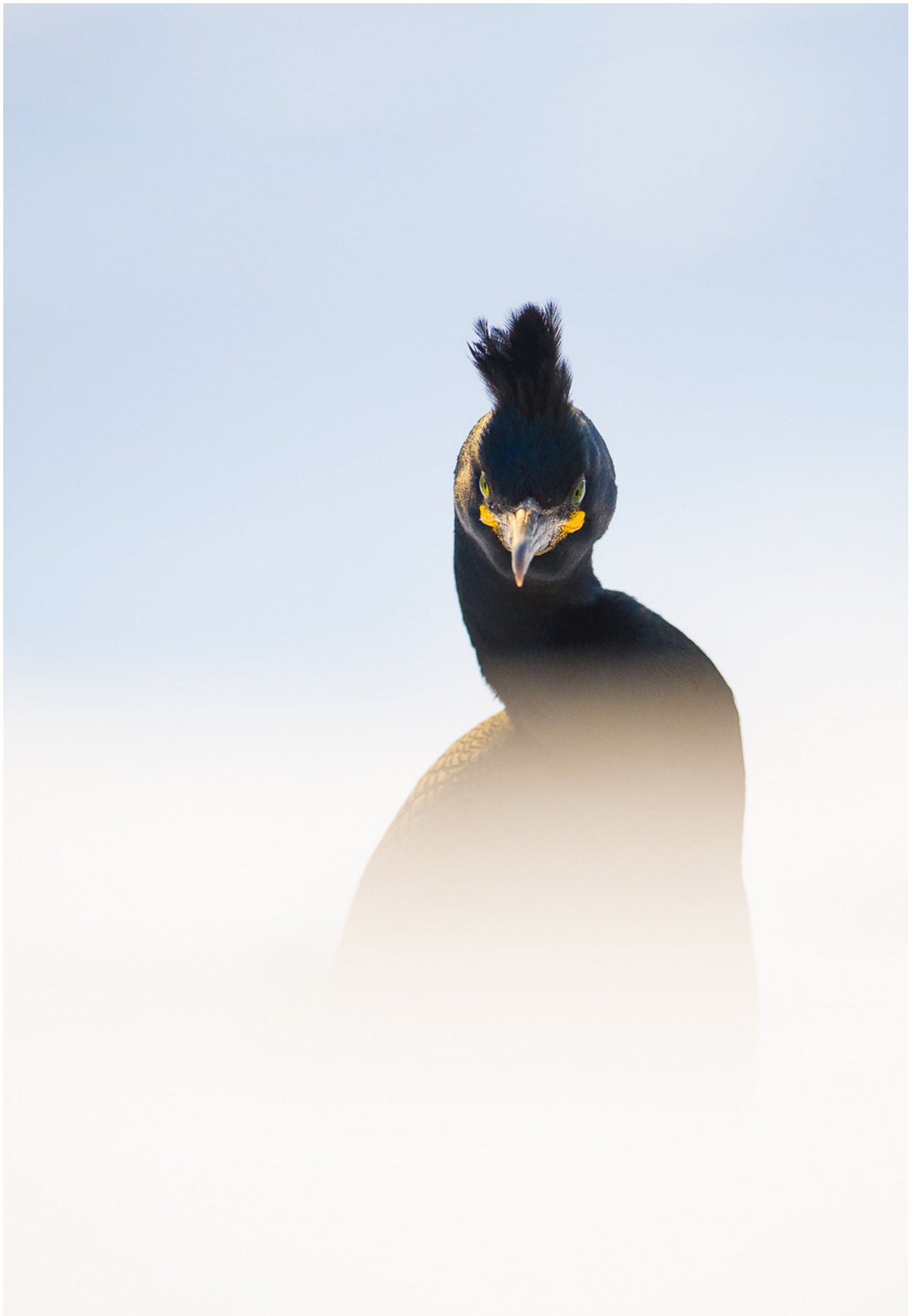
The main function of this layer is to offer protection against the wind and water, but also to let out excess body heat. Therefore it is good to have a breathable material here such as Gore-Tex. Impregnated cotton materials are not recommended.

The top

80% of your body heat is lost through your head. Your head is like the body's funnel, and you should always wear a hat. The same principle applies here – preferable materials are synthetic fibre or wool. It should also be wind proof. A scarf/balaclava can be a good accesorie.

Hands and feet

These parts of your body are extra sensitive. It is important to keep hands and feet dry and warm! The same layering method applies here. Use inner gloves made of synthetic fibre, silk or wool and cover with a wind/waterproof mitten. Mittens are much warmer than gloves! Please remember to bring an extra pair of mittens. You should wear inner socks of synthetic fibre and cover with layers of wool or synthetic socks. When it comes to shoes you should wear something that can handle cold weather for long time. Let us know if you want some tips about shoes. Optional can rubber boots or even waders be handy to bring. We will be shooting at beaches and all the way down to the shoreline and your photo opportunities will be limited if you dont have waterproof footwear



Frequently asked questions

What should I bring?

We are in the high arctic so expect all kind of weather. Be well prepared and follow our guidelines about how to dress.

Will I experience snow or ice?

The winter months (November - March) are known to generate a great amount of snowfall! But its nature so we cannot guarantee this.

Will I see and photograph the Northern lights during the winter?

We will do our outmost to make that happen. We can never predict the weather or the acitivity of this amazing phenomen, but we will chase it for what its worth, and our guides are the best for finding the best spots for you during the tour! If that means late nights and early mornings, so be it!

Do we have a planned itineray?

We don` t operate with a fixed itnereary. We know in which area we have to be to sleep and eat. But we plan our activites around the weather, and the light. The Varanger area is packed with extreme photo locations, so the weather and conditions will decide where we will go.

What level of photograpgy is required?

All of WildPhoto Norways tours are open to beginners as well as professionals. As long as you have a passion for photography and nature. Please note that on this trip you can expect to be going outside every day and night to shoot. It is of course not mandatory.

ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is the main activity on this photo expedition. The level of interest, skills and equipment will differ from person to person, but the following may help you to prepare for your upcoming photo tour.

EQUIPMENT

- Camera: Whatever camera you use, be sure to check that it is working properly before you leave home, and perform sensor cleaning (by yourself or an expert). We recommend to bring 2 cameras so you have one back-up if something happens with your primary camera. It's also handy to have one camera with a telephoto lens and another with a wide-angle lens.
- Camera features: The most important is that it has good low-light capabilities (High-ISO). ISO 1600 (or more) will in many situations be your desired ISO setting.
- Lenses: We recommend to bring a good and fast tele lens 300mm +, a normal lens (24-70) and a telezoom 70-200. extender is also good to have but the birds are cooperative and not so shy
- For Northern lights we recommend a lens with wide opening, at least a wide angle with f/2.8 or wider
- Batteries: Bring spare batteries. When out in the field the whole day it can be a long way home if you run out of battery
- Memory cards: The general rule is to bring more memory cards than you expect to need. We recommend at least 500 GB in CF or SD cards.
- Weather: Your equipment should be "weatherproof", or you should bring rain cover for your equipment.
- Tripods: A good built tripod is not a must, but it is always handy when we are shooting from land
- Photo bag: Make sure you bring a photo bag which you can carry around, preferably with a rain cover.
- A laptop/macbook for backup
- We also highly recommend you to bring external hard drives for back up!

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

When travelling with WildPhoto Norway you visit places that is remote and fragile. This also means that we have a responsibility to ensure that the natural environments we visit are not disturbed by our presence. By sharing our environmental concerns as we explore the wonders of nature, we look forward to guiding our guests towards becoming ambassadors for these remote corners of the world. The following guidelines must be followed by all participants.

RESPECTING WILDLIFE AND NATURE

The main focus on this WildPhoto Norway expedition is photographing landscape.

- Watch your step. Exercise extreme care when you are close to the ocean or open water. It is very cold and possible dangerous if it is large waves
- Approach carefully and please remember that you are not alone
- Monitor your surroundings and be sensitive to any disruption you may be causing. If the wildlife shows signs of distress or avoidance, move away carefully.
- When out photographing, stay with the group and/or one of the guides. For your safety, never wander off on your own. Listen to the expedition leader and guides. Do not hesitate to ask your leaders and guides if you are not sure about something.

WILDERNESS ETIQUETTE

- Do not litter! Respect the wilderness, its wildlife and the enjoyment of future visitors. Return all litter to the ship for proper disposal. This includes litter of all types, such as wrappers, plastic bags, food waste and tissues. Leave no evidence of your visit.
- Keep noise level to a minimum.

HAVE A NICE EXPEDITION!

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