

Aigas Field Centre

Outline Itinerary



Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Highlands. This itinerary outlines your week at Aigas Field Centre. Days and timings may change depending on weather and tides, groups, but we will keep you abreast of any updates.

Saturday - Arrival

Arrival at the House of Aigas, in time for afternoon tea. The rest of the afternoon will be spent familiarising yourselves with the grounds, and settling into your accommodation before dinner in the main house.

Sunday - Aigas & Glen Strathfarrar

We will spend the morning walking around the Aigas estate with a ranger, learning about the reintroduction of the European beaver, the history of the estate, its wildlife and to familiarise everybody with the loch, grounds, wildlife hides and nature trails.

After a buffet lunch in the main hall of the House of Aigas, we'll head to nearby Glen Strathfarrar, a remnant of Scotland's ancient Caledonian pine forest, to look for golden eagle, dipper, crossbills, red deer and British primitive goats.

Monday – Culloden, Clava and Cawdor

Today we will explore the rich history of the Scottish Highlands, visiting the Neolithic Clava Cairns, an ancient burial site, and then the Culloden Battlefield, where in 1746 Jacobite forces met bitter defeat in a bloody battle lasting under 45 minutes - the last battle to be fought on British soil. After this we head to Cawdor Castle and gardens, seat of the Earls of Cawdor, near Nairn.

Tuesday – Glen Affric

Often hailed as Scotland's most beautiful glens, Affric boasts some of the country's most intact remnants of ancient Caledonian pine forest. The scenery is breathtaking, and we will be looking for dippers and divers on the loch, and crested tits and crossbill in the pinewood. There will be an opportunity to walk to Coire Loch, an 6km walk over steep heathery paths to a beautiful secluded lochan, nestled between ancient granny Scots pines.

Wednesday – West Coast

Our longest day of the week, today we head west to the mountainous and dramatic shores of the west coast of the Highlands of Scotland. Here we hope to observe the world's fourth largest eagle and Britain's rarest breeding raptor; the white-tailed sea eagle. During the day we may see red and black-throated divers, gannet, black guillemot, twite, a variety of waders and, if we're very lucky, otters exploiting the vast shoreline, as well as spectacular scenery, beaches, sea lochs and mountains.

Thursday – Otters, Aigas & River Beaully

An early start... departing from Aigas at 5.30am we will head to the shores of the Beaully Firth to try and spot otters. After breakfast back at Aigas, there will be the opportunity to spend some free time at Aigas to recover from the early start.

Later in the day, we'll head upstream to explore the meandering River Beaully. This wonderful walk through deciduous woodland, carpeted with wildflowers, follows the riverbank. We will see a very active sand martin colony and potential for osprey fishing on the river.

Friday - The Black Isle

The Black Isle is a diverse mix of pebble shores and cliffs, agricultural land intermixed with areas of native woodland, and forestry and old hedgerows, where we will look for common and rare species of plants; this is a nature lovers paradise. We will visit coastal mud flats where we hope to see the many wading birds, as well as ospreys fishing on the water.

Stopping in the historical village of Cromarty, there will be an opportunity to board a 9.5m RIB to venture out of the Cromarty Firth and into the Moray Firth in search of bottlenose dolphins, harbour porpoise, minke whale and seabirds.

Saturday - Depart after breakfast

