

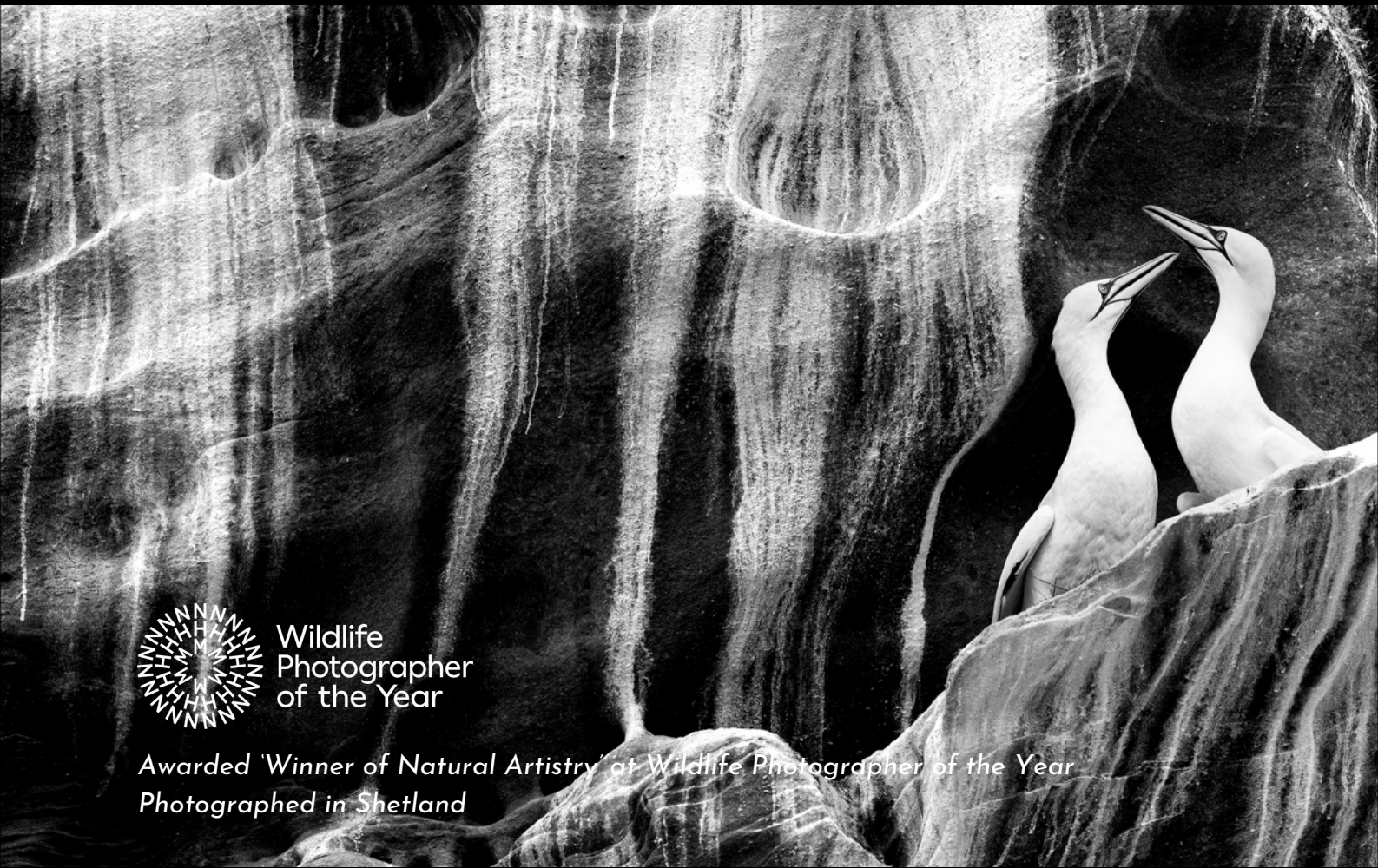
Rachel Bigsby

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY
SMALL GROUP WORKSHOPS

Shetland's Seabirds

with Rachel Bigsby & Shetland Nature

22nd July - 29th July 2024



Wildlife
Photographer
of the Year

Awarded 'Winner of Natural Artistry' at Wildlife Photographer of the Year
Photographed in Shetland

Shetland's Seabirds

with Rachel Bigsby & Shetland Nature

22nd July - 29th July 2024

Shetland

£2700 pp

To book, please email: info@shetlandnature.net

Venture to the Shetland Islands for a summer seabird workshop with multi-award winning wildlife photographer Rachel Bigsby, in collaboration with Shetland Nature, the islands' leading photo-tour specialists! During this photography focussed workshop, you will venture to the furthest corners of Shetland in discovery of the island's most mighty seabirds as well as Shetland's iconic otter and orca populations!

Leading you through the islands' are Rachel Bigsby and Brydon Thomason:



Rachel is Wildlife Photographer of the Year's current Winner of Natural Artistry and Bird Photographer of the Year's current portfolio winner. She is a passionate seabird photographer with a wealth of knowledge working with the target species you will be introduced to throughout this workshop. As a Nikon Creator and RSPB official photographer, Rachel can assure to deliver expert tuition, helping you to refine your skill set to achieve unforgettable imagery.



Brydon is the founder of Shetland Nature and a Shetland native. He has a lifetime of knowledge of the islands and their wildlife, and a genuine passion and enthusiasm to share that with others. He is a nature photographer, reputable ecologist and author of *Wild Shetland- Through The Seasons.* Whilst a renowned birder, Brydon is, best known for his work on Shetland's otters and has worked on over 15 high-profile television documentaries as a consultant and guide.

Together, Rachel and Brydon's joint expertise, skills, passion and knowledge are unmatched, enabling them to jointly deliver an unparalleled opportunity and insight for photographers seeking to capture the best of Shetland's summer wildlife.

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Tour Overview:

This exclusive photo-tour offers an unparalleled opportunity and insight for photographers seeking to capture the best of Shetland's summer wildlife. Designed by multi-award winning wildlife photographer, Rachel Bigsby, and Shetland naturalist and photographer, Brydon Thomason, this tour is inspired by a lifetime of knowledge and a joint passion for the Shetland islands and its wildlife.

Throughout this tour, we will be visiting the very best islands and corners of Shetland from land and sea in search of our target species, including the location from which Rachel captured her winning image in Wildlife Photographer of the Year's Natural Artistry category. We will also visit locations from which she also photographed her winning images in Bird Photographer of the Year! With these accolades in mind, it is Rachel's priority to assist you in capturing creative images from 'high key' to backlit, bokeh and natural artistry.

With a three-to-one guest/guide ratio, your guides are focused on offering a personalised experience with maximum time to refine photographic skills and learn new fieldcraft. Further adding to the exclusivity of this itinerary, we will be embarking on several private boat charters and staying in superbly situated accommodation.

The importance of fieldcraft and understanding of behaviour are fundamental to how we lead and work on each species. On each and every moment, Rachel and Brydon will pull on their field experience to ensure a vital responsibility. An intimate knowledge of each species, their routines and locations, even their body language is at the forefront of every shoot. It is with this level of knowledge that a balance is ensured between capturing outstanding images under ethical circumstances.

Day 1: Arrivals & Puffins at Sunset

After you arrive in Shetland via ferry or plane, we will meet at Sumburgh Hotel at 18:00hrs. Here, we will talk you through the week over dinner before we make the short trip to Sumburgh Head to photograph our first Puffins of the tour.

Expected species: Puffins, Guillemots, Fulmar, Kittiwake, Skua, Gannets

Keep a lookout for: Orca, Seals, Whales and Dolphins

Accommodation: *Sumburgh Hotel (Mainland)*



© Rachel Bigsby, as awarded 'Gold' in Bird Photographer of the Year



© Brydon Thomason

Day 2: Gannet Diving & Mousa Storm Petrel Experience

Your first full day on the tour will be an immersive seabird experience, beginning with Puffins, Guillemots, Kittiwakes and Fulmars at Sumburgh Head.

We will then make our way to Lerwick, where we will embark for our private boat charter to the seabird cliffs of Noss, where Rachel photographed her winning image in Wildlife Photographer of the Year! The cliffs will provide a wealth of photographic opportunities, but the headline of the charter is the extraordinary Gannet feeding frenzy, as thousands of birds swirl overhead and dive just meters from the boat after chummed fish.

Our day gets even better, as later that evening, we take a nighttime boat trip to the island of Mousa, inhabited by the UK's largest colony of Storm Petrels - a small and elusive seabird that feed far out to sea during the day, and only come ashore under the cover of darkness. Flash photography is prohibited, but the spectacle is not to be missed as we surround ourselves with thousands of fluttering birds and listen in the darkness to their eerie cacophony of calls - a truly unforgettable experience!

Expected species: Puffins, Guillemots, Fulmar, Kittiwake, Skua, Gannets, Razorbill, Shag

Keep a lookout for: Orca, Seals, Whales and Dolphins

Accommodation: *Sumburgh Hotel (Mainland)*

Day 3: Arctic Tern, Arctic Skua, Great Skua

Today, we head to the island of Fetlar. Here, we will spend time looking for Red-Necked Phalarope in the various pools and on the sea. We will then split the group and move to the beach; one group will photograph Arctic Terns and Arctic Skuas, whilst the other group photograph Great Skuas at their bathing site before we rotate.

This will also be the first day of optional Otter rotations for those that wish to photograph them. 2 - 3 people will join our specialist guide, looking for signs, learning fieldcraft and photographing the elusive animals.

Expected species: Arctic Tern, Arctic Skua, Great Skua, Otter, Red-Necked Phalarope

Keep a lookout for: Orca, Seals, Whales and Dolphins, Fulmar, Gannets, Shag

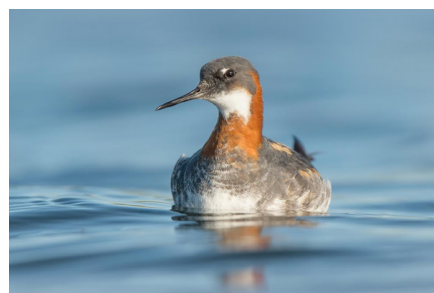
Accommodation: Gord (Fetlar)



© Rachel Bigsby



© Rachel Bigsby



© Brydon Thomason

Day 4: Hermaness National Nature Reserve

We now visit the world-renowned Hermaness National Nature Reserve on the island of Unst - the most northerly headland in the British Isles. The breathtaking sea cliffs are home to thousands of seabirds and are often described as the most spectacular seabird colony in the world!

A 35 minute walk from the car park follows a broad-walk across the reserve, providing a wide range of photographic opportunities with species such as Great Skua, Golden Plover, Skylark and Common Snipe. The broad-walk will lead us out onto the dramatic cliffs where our target species will be Gannets, Puffins, Fulmar and Great Skua.

**A private boat charter to the cliffs and Gannetries of Hermaness will be included should weather and sea state conditions allow.*

Expected species: Great Skua, Gannet, Puffin, Fulmar

Keep a lookout for: Golden Plover, Skylark, Common Snipe, Orca

Accommodation: Gord (Fetlar)

Hermaness National Nature Reserve



© Rachel Bigsby, as awarded 'Gold' in Bird Photographer of the Year



Day 5: Black Guillemot, Arctic Skua, Arctic Tern

Today we will be taking a gentle walk along a stretch of coastline on the island of Yell.

Here, we will photograph Black Guillemot and Arctic Terns and spend most of the morning. After this, we will visit a nearby beach where we expect to photograph Arctic Skuas and Arctic terns where we hope for the opportunity to witness and photograph the mind-blowing kleptoparasitic interaction between these species.

This will be our second day of optional Otter rotations for those that wish to photograph them. 2 - 3 people will join our specialist guide, looking for signs, learning fieldcraft and photographing the elusive animals.

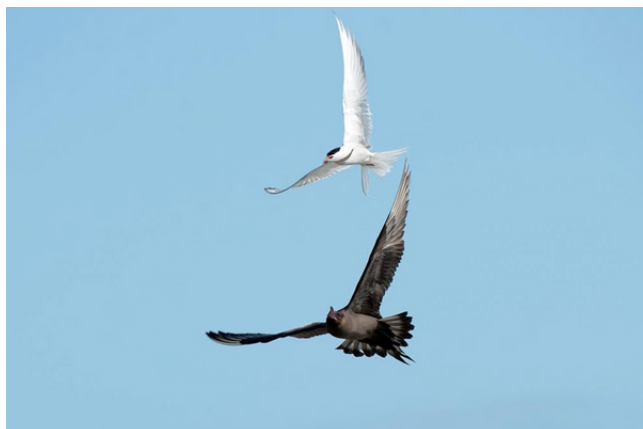
Expected species: Black Guillemot, Arctic Tern, Arctic Skua, Otter

Keep a lookout for: Dunlin, Ringed Plover, Oystercatchers, Shags, Orca

Accommodation: *St Magnus bay (mainland)*



© Brydon Thomason



© Brydon Thomason

Day 6: Noss National Nature Reserve

This morning, we will travel back to Lerwick where we will catch a ferry to Bressay from where we will be ferried across to iconic Noss National Nature Reserve.

We will spend a leisurely day exploring the spectacular seabird colony, concentrating on capturing the perfect photographs of Puffins and Gannets with a wide range of shooting opportunities for both species!

Expected species: Puffins, Gannets, Fulmar, Kittiwake, Great Skua

Keep a lookout for: Razorbill, Shag, Arctic Skua, Orca, Seals, Whales and Dolphins

Accommodation: *St Magnus bay (mainland)*

Day 7: Gannet Diving & Underneath Noss National Nature Reserve

Our day will begin with morning travel to Eshaness Cliffs, providing landscape photography opportunities as well as a wide variety of Seabirds, Lapwing, Redshank and Curlew.

We will then make our way back to Lerwick, where we will embark on our second private boat charter to the seabird cliffs of Noss, again where Rachel photographed her winning image in Wildlife Photographer of the Year! This time, you know what to expect and you may find the photographic opportunities to feel slightly easier. Once again, the headline of the charter is the extraordinary Gannet feeding frenzy, as thousands of birds swirl overhead and dive just meters from the boat after chummed fish.

If time allows, we will finish our day at Sumburgh Head for one final chance to photograph Puffins!

Expected species: Puffins, Guillemots, Fulmar, Kittiwake, Skua, Gannets, Razorbill, Shag

Keep a lookout for: Orca, Seals, Whales and Dolphins

Accommodation: Sumburgh Hotel (Mainland)

Day 8: Departures after breakfast



© Rachel Bigsby, as awarded 'Winner of Natural Artistry' at Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Workshop Information

Location: Shetland

Meeting Point: Sumburgh Hotel, Mainland Shetland. 18:00hrs.

Fitness Level 3: Leisurely but long walking with some steep uneven ground. Approximately 3 - 8 miles per day.

Important Notes:

This itinerary features multiple boat trips and is therefore not suitable for anyone prone to severe sea sickness.

This is a flexible itinerary due to the weather, nature and logistics of island life, therefore the order of our itinerary may differ to suit conditions.

Camera:

DSLR or Mirrorless camera (plus second camera body if you have one).

Batteries (and spares)

Memory cards (and spares)

Waterproof cover for camera and lenses

Lenses:

Focal lengths of 400, 500 and 600mm are recommended. Lenses such as 200-500mm or 100-400mm would be ideal. 70-200mm, 24-120mm, 24-70mm or similar can be used for environmental shots.

Clothing and Additional Equipment:

Please bring appropriate clothing for changeable weather conditions.

You must bring:

Windproof and waterproof jacket

Layers (i.e a mid layer / fleece then jacket)

Appropriate walking boots

Suncream, sunglasses, sunhat

Drinking water bottle

Binoculars (optional)

Gloves

Food:

Food and packed lunches will be provided. A variety of hot and cold food and drink is available to purchase additionally from some locations.

You are welcome to bring your own snacks to have throughout the day.