

Altai Ring of Protected Areas



Altai Biosphere Nature Reserve, Katunsky Nature Reserve, Uch-Enmek Ethnic and Nature Park, Sailugemsky National Park, Museum-Reserve "Pazyryk mounds"

Republic of Altai
August – October

In this journey you will:

- see famous sights – like Lake Teletskoye – and little-known pristine hard-to-reach nooks of the Altai;
- earn much about the specialists of the Protected Areas, their hard work and zapovednik way of living;
- experience the "deep" Altai, almost inaccessible to the mass tourist: waterfalls of Teletskoye, tributaries of the river Katun, lakes with emerald water, amazing stone "mushrooms", caves of Denisovans, the famous Pazyryk burial mounds, fantastic petroglyphs and breath-taking beauty of the mountains, forests and meadows. You will also get to know better the culture of the Altaians, visit the museum of the Roerich family, and spend some nights at ranger stations.



Baikal Autumn

Baikalsky Biosphere Nature Reserve, Kabansky habitat, Tunkinsky National Park, Baikal bird ringing station

Republic of Buryatia, Irkutsk Oblast

September – October

What are the first things you imagine when you hear the word Baikal?

Are these hills pink from blooming rhododendrons? Or mirror-like expanse of transparent water through which pebbles are seen at the bottom? Or the gold-colored larches? Or, maybe, the famous Baikal omul and cedars? Or you may possibly imagine Buddhist flagged stupas and ornate temples?

During the tour, you will find out a lot about Protected Areas of the southwestern part of Baikal, local flora and fauna, and the deepest and the cleanest lake – the largest storage of water reserves with almost a quarter of all fresh water on Earth. During the tour, you will immerse into the culture of the Old Believers, who have kept their traditions unchanged for the last 300–400 years. You will also experience the basics of shamanism and Buddhism, the cultures that have coexisted side by side in this region for several centuries.

Autumn at the Ladoga

Nizhne-Svirsky Nature Reserve

Leningrad Oblast

Second half of August – October



Despite the relative proximity to large metropolitan areas – Moscow and St. Petersburg – the territory of the Nature Reserve is hard-to-reach and rarely visited by eco-tourists. It's a mix of the forestland and the wetland with pine woods and spruce forests, raised bogs and windfalls, sandy beaches on the shores of Lake Ladoga and bays of the river Svir.

On the routs of the Nature Reserve you may find traces of almost the entire set of typical taiga animal species: a lynx and a bear, of a wolf and a fox, hazel grouses and capercaillies.

In the Nature Reserve, there is one of the largest stations in Russia for ringing migratory birds – Ladozhskaya – starting its work in 1968. The tour to the Nature Reserve will let you know the main types of taiga. You will make an excursion to the raised bogs, studying the life of beavers, walk to the coast of Ladoga, where many semi aquatic birds and waterfowl are living. And may be you will literally catch and ring birds at the Ladozhskaya ornithological station.



Protected Areas Embassy Foundation was established in 2018 by the team of Zapovedniks Centre to build public support for protected areas.

KEY GOALS OF THE FOUNDATION

The Protected Areas Embassy Foundation seeks to organize public support for protected areas in order to preserve the natural and cultural heritage. The Foundation promotes the values and achievements of Russian protected areas at the international level. The most important tasks of the Foundation are to raise public awareness of the role of protected areas in education and ecological tourism, as well as to form a sense of responsibility among children, youth and adult citizens.



MAIN FIELDS OF ACTIVITY:

Environmental education, ecotourism development, support for conservation professionals and local communities around protected areas, conservation volunteering, building of a public support for protected areas, creation of eco-trails, nature centers and other interpretive infrastructure.

You may support nature conservation by going on a tour to a protected area. Part of the funds from tours is donated to support the programs of the Protected Areas Embassy Foundation.

FEDERAL LEVEL PROTECTED AREAS

108

NATURE RESERVES

65

NATIONAL PARKS

62

HABITATS

Network of Nature Reserves: saving nature, uniting nations!

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WINTER

Hallow shores of the White Sea



❄️ **Onezhskoye Pomorye National Park**

📍 **Arkhangelsk Oblast**

🕒 **End of February – March**

Imagine the taiga intertwining with the tundra in fancy forms. Imagine the snow and ice patterns resembling the wreathen human destinies. Imagine you can stop the rush of day and immerse in amazing wildlife and in the coast-dwellers' way of living. There is a place for it in Russia: Onezhskoye Pomorye.

We invite you to a motor sledge trip around the Onega Peninsula.

Within 4 days you will:

- visit the age-old villages with enigmatic names – Luda, Yarenga, Lopshen'ga, Letn'aya Zolotitsa, Pushlakhta;
 - feel the attractive indigenous atmosphere of the Russian coast-dwellers – Pomors – lifestyle;
 - taste the traditional Pomors' cuisine;
 - get to know the history of the first wooden airport in Russia and its museum in Lopshenga;
 - visit two of the main amenities of the White Sea – the famous Chesmen lighthouse and one of the oldest wooden lighthouses on the entire Arctic coast – Letne-Orlovsky.
- And for the most brave of you – the Northern Polar lights as a reward! Come and see the stark beauty of the Russian North!



South Urals. Winter, good bye!

❄️ **Bashkiria National Park, Shulgan-Tash Nature Reserve, Bashkir Nature Reserve**

📍 **Republic of Bashkortostan**

🕒 **February – March**

During the eco-tour to the Ural Mountains you will see the slopes and peaks covered with dense woodland and sharp-pointed rocks, buttes, stone pillars and sheer walls rising from beneath of its darkness. You will enjoy the piedmont woodland steppes of the Western Urals, the chalk mountains and famous Inzérskiye Zubchátki ridge, that resemble a tremendous petrified dragon.

The Ural Mountains are adored because of caves. Among them, the world-famous Kapova Cave with its Paleolithic rock paintings and the Askinsky Ice Cave with its 15-meter ice column and unusual acoustics. The local population of marals – Altai red deers – adorn the mountains of the Southern Ural Mountains.

In February, there is a possibility for you to participate in folk festivals such as Maslenitsa and say good bye to the winter in the Russian manner.

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Christmas in Kenozerye

❄️ **Kenozersky National Park**

📍 **Arkhangelsk Oblast**

🕒 **January – March**

In the Northern Arkhangelsk region of Russia there is an amazing land called Kenozerye. This realm of snowy winter is the best destination for a long journey and the right place to enjoy vast space and silence. There you may find mysterious forests, listen to fairytales, fables and lores and told in cozy Russian village houses – izbas, – and feel the warm of firewood crackling in the traditional stove. Kenozerye is an amazing commonwealth of man and nature, where the monuments of Russian wooden architecture are perfectly inscribed in the beauty of the northern landscapes. There you will see steeple wooden churches and chapels, and amazing authentic museums. The handiwork of local craftsmen – blacksmiths, birch bark craftsmen, potters and seamstresses – will amaze you with their originality. In Kenozerye you will feel that Christmas is an amazing time when a spark of hope lights the hearts and everyone immerse in the miracle and the fairy magic.

SPRING

Kingdom of flowers and birds

🌿 **Chiórniye Zémli nature reserve**

📍 **Republic of Kalmykia**

🕒 **April (tulips) - May (poppies)**



Endless carpet of colorful tulips in April and blooming poppies in May – this is what you will experience in Chiorniye Zemli Nature Reserve in spring. You can also see a huge number of waterfowl and semi aquatic birds on Lake Manych-Gudilo. These are wetlands of international importance as one of the most precious habitats for waterfowl.

This is a mass nesting place for the rarest semi aquatic birds, such as great white and Dalmatian pelicans and spoonbills. You will observe them through a field glass or binoculars, and with some luck – snap their photos.

Here you can see one more miracle of nature – rare saiga antelope that feels like the landowner around. You will learn how hoopoes hoot, how steppe ground squirrels behave, but you may also decide on going camel riding! And for sure you would like to taste unforgettable Kalmyk cuisine.

Spring in the swamps

🌿 **Polistovsky Nature Reserve**

📍 **Pskov Oblast**

🕒 **April – May**



We invite you to a Nature Reserve that saves the largest in Europe swamp system. Vast moss moors are interspersed with hummock ridges, small and larger lakes, and innumerable afforested islands. Many species of birds and animals find shelter there.

You will immerse into the world of rare wading birds and meet curlews, whimbrels, a rare forest subspecies of the ptarmigan, Ural owls, boreal owls, cranes, golden plovers, grouses and capercaillies. There is cloud of waterfowl on the lakes, including black-throated divers, nesting whooper swans a number of duck species and gulls.

You will also get to know the main types of raised bog plants and sense the role bogs play in nature and in human life. You will definitely see how the main marsh bry – cranberries – grows and find out why it is called "springberry" in common speech (spoiler follows: in spring these are the best vitamins for the whole wildlife of the swamps).

You will visit the museum of izba – the Russian village house – and try to bake traditional pies in the Russian oven under the guidance of local cooks.

Preserving Caucasus

🌿 **Alanya National Park, North Ossetian Nature Reserve, Dagestan Nature Reserve, Samursky National Park**

📍 **Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, Republic of Dagestan**

🕒 **May – June**



The Caucasus is full of fantastic landscapes: mountains with snowy peaks, foothills, valleys, waterfalls, canyons, liana forests, steppes and even dunes! But there you may also see the wildlife: Caucasian turs and restored population of Caucasian wisents, griffon vultures, bearded vultures, peregrine falcons and many other species of rare birds of prey. There are many endemic plant species too. Furthermore, you will see the habitat of the rarest Persian leopard – a female named Volna (Wave, in Russia) – and watch the films and photos from camera traps.

You will get acquainted in person with the giant plane-tree – the oldest in Eurasia. Scientists estimate that it is about 800 years old.

In the Caucasus, there are monuments of traditional nature exploitation – ancient stone walls, fragments of centuries-old buildings, pagan sanctuaries, and ancient cities of the Caspian coast. But the Caucasus is also known after hospitality and delicious national cuisine you will be able to experience during the tour.

SUMMER

Birds and lotuses of the Caspian Sea

🌿 **Astrakhan Biosphere Nature Reserve**

📍 **Astrakhan Oblast**

🕒 **August**

We invite you to admire the beauty of blooming lotus plains and get to know the regional legends of this beautiful flower!

In Astrakhan Biosphere Nature Reserve you will observe the turbulent life of the Caspian lowland and delta of the Volga – the longest river in Europe. Majestic white-tailed eagles, royal white swans, hovering herons, amusing pelicans and solemn glossy ibises are among innumerable semi aquatic birds living there. Hiking routes and boating in the Volga delta will let you delight the fragile beauty of pristine nature in the vast expanses of this picture-perfect part of the world.

You will take a closer look at one of the oldest Nature Reserves in Russia, learn about the most extensive scientific research that has been going on for several decades on its territory: the behavior of the Caspian Sea, the formation of landscapes, the diversity of its plant and animal species are being studied here a long while.



The kingdom of whales, fur seals and birds

🌿 **Commander Biosphere Nature Reserve**

📍 **Kamchatka Krai, Commander Islands**

🕒 **June – August**

This marine Nature Reserve, where you will be met with great hospitality by the local specialists, covers a territory bigger than Belgium. This is the only place in Russia where whale watching can be practiced all year round. Here you will see rare, even endemic, species of animals and plants.

During the trip you will:

- most likely see fin, minke, humpback, killer whales, white-winged porpoises, less often – cachalot, blue or bowhead whales; visit a fur seal rookery and salmon spawning grounds;
- make sea excursions to rocky islands and see nesting sites of different species of birds;
- see haul-out sites of kalans and anthura – a rare subspecies of seals;
- visit the grave of the famous traveler Vitus Bering and see the monument to Wilhelm Steller, a great botanist, zoologist, physician and explorer;
- admire the gem-coloured beach of Buyan Bay consisting of pellets of agate, jasper, chalcedony and opal.

Eco-tour through Khakassia

🌿 **Khakass Biosphere Nature Reserve, Shushensky Bor National Park, Ergaki Natural Park, Museum-Reserves Salbyksky Kurgan, Kazanovka, Khurtuyakh-Tas, Maloarbatskaya Pisanitsa**

📍 **Republic of Khakassia**

🕒 **June – September**

In Khakassia, you will admire the main landscapes of the Western Sayan Mountains. The route takes you through steppe, wooded steppe, mountain taiga and alpine meadows.

You will discover the life and culture of the Siberian peoples, see the world-famous archaeological sites of the Valley of the Kings – contemporaries of the Egyptian pyramids. Rock paintings of different periods will lead you down the ages and through the history of different ethnic groups of local steppe.



The throat overtone chanting of the Khakass and the music of original national instruments will fit into the natural landscapes.

Clouds of birds and a mass of flowering plants, multi-colored steppes, majestic cedars, cheerful larch groves, and lakes with the purest water – all this is Khakassia.