

July 2011. Bears, Birds & Belugas.

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July was an excellent month, an extended trip taking me across North America from the tundra of northern Canada to the arid canyons of Colorado, the stars including six magnificent Polar Bears, nine Black Bears and five Grizzly Bears, plus a dizzying selection of other mammals and birds. Before that however, for the first week of July, Lithuania turned out to be a damp squid, a case of rain stops play, near constant showers, downpours and virtually everything else putting a near total block on butterflies and almost everything else.

1-6 July. Rain Stops Play. Day one of the month was nice - nice butterflies in the garden to kick things off - a Black Hairstreak sunning itself on a flower head in the garden, followed shortly after by a Large Tortoiseshell which flew in across the garden and went straight in through the kitchen door! Caught him and took him out - a most pleasing record of a species I by no means am sure to see in any given year. Also White Admiral, Comma and Small Tortoiseshell in the garden. Days two to six were dire, near continuous rain, mostly heavy. Yuk indeed, not a butterfly or bird of note to report, a second Marsh Frog in the garden pool quite befitting of the weather, Wrynecks calling in the garden and that was just about it! 7-31 July. Canada and Wyoming/Colorado. A journey of mammoth proportions - a 12,000 km drive, beginning with a voyage north to the end of roads in northern Manitoba, collecting en route several Black Bears. From there on, nothing but boreal forests, Arctic tundra and a slow trundling train, the only land link to my primary destination - the remote outpost of Churchill on Hudson Bay. A bleak landscape of awe and beauty, where the sea remains frozen into mid-summer, this was the realm of the Ice Bear. I lucky enough to find six Polar Bears. After this success in Manitoba, leg two took me far to west of North America, Yellowstone in Wyoming and thereafter Colorado, the spoils on this part of the trip including yet more Black Bears and, all importantly, Grizzly Bear. For full details of this trip, [READ HERE](#).