



Scheduled Tours

Munnar/Eravikulam NP and Thattakad Birds

When

Jan 20th to 26th 2009 (Munnar and Thattekad) - Itinerary I

Jan 20th to 23rd 2009 (Munnar only) - Itinerary II

Jan 23rd to 26th 2009 (Thattekad only) - Itinerary III

Cost (per person)

Itinerary I (Munnar & Thattekad) - INR 36,450 (USD 760)

Itinerary II (Munnar Only) - INR 25,000 (USD 520)

Itinerary III (Thattekad Only) - INR 20,000 (USD 420)

**Please see terms and conditions (pg. 5) relating to tour costs. Departures from Cochin, Kerala. We can arrange your travel connections to and from Cochin.*

Highlights

A birding exploration of among the richest habitats and locations for avifauna in south India. This trip is ideal for those wanting to enjoy the best of south Indian birds within a limited time frame. Over 15 of the Western Ghats's endemic birds can be seen on this tour and the bird list includes over 300 species of birds recorded from the tour locations.

Munnar is a small hill station town (1500m) nestled among tea plantations and wet montane forests (sholas) in Cardamom hills of the Western Ghats. The shola forests surrounding Munnar and the montane forest-grassland ecosystem of the nearby higher reaches are excellent locations to encounter several of south India's high altitude endemic birds. Some of the Western Ghats endemics you are likely to encounter in these locations include the white-bellied shortwing, painted bushquail, black and orange, white-bellied and Nilgiri flycatchers, grey-breasted laughing thrush, white-cheeked barbet, broad-tailed grassbird, Malabar whistling thrush and Nilgiri wood pigeon. Several birds of prey are recorded from here, including the majestic black and Bonelli's eagle which are commonly sighted here.

The Salim Ali (Thattekad) Bird Sanctuary is located on the banks of the Periyar River on the foothills of the Western Ghats of Kerala. The Riverine and lowland evergreen forests of the sanctuary contain an amazing density of birds and offer excellent photographic opportunities of several Western Ghats endemic species among an impressive bird-list of over 250 species. The world famous ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali, suggested that Thattakad contains among the highest species density of birds in India outside of northeast India. Some of the Western Ghats endemics found here include the grey-headed bulbul, Nilgiri wood-pigeon, rufous babbler, Malabar grey hornbill, white-bellied treepie and Malabar whistling thrush. Sightings of black baza, crested goshawk, Malabar trogon and the often highly approachable Ceylon frogmouth are not uncommon.

Ficus Wildlife & Natural History Tours



19 Maharani Chinnamba Road
Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018. India
e-mail: contact@ficuswildlife.net
www.ficuswildlife.net

Other wildlife include potential sightings of Nilgiri tahr, a Western Ghats endemic mountain goat in the shola-grasslands around Munnar. The landscape also contains the pack-hunting Indian wild dogs, sambar deer, leopards and Indian elephants among a host of smaller mammals. Elephants are also regularly seen around the Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, along with several other mammals including top predators such as Indian wild dogs and leopards. The wet, humid habitats of both locations also contain an exciting diversity of reptiles and amphibians.

The group will be led by reknowned bird naturalist K. V. Eldhose, who has captivated ornithological groups from around the world with his intimate knowledge of the region's avifauna.

Itineraries

Itinerary - I (Munnar and Thattekad)

Day 1: Depart Cochin mid-morning and proceed to Munnar by road. Arrive Mid-afternoon. Evening birding in the shola patches around Munnar town.

Day 2: Morning and evening birding in the shola-grasslands around Munnar town. Look for high-altitude specialities such as broad-tailed graassbird, Nilgiri pipit and painted bushquail as well as large eagles.

Day 3: Morning birding in shola patches around Munnar town. Proceed to Bodi ghat after lunch to look especially for yellow-throated, grey-headed and ruby-throated bulbuls as well as several birds associated with drier habitats on steep hill-slopes.

Day 4: Depart Munnar in the morning and arrive Thattekad in the early afternoon. Birding on the way. Evening Birding in Thattekad (Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary). Look for local specialities in the diverse habitats, including lowland evergreen, riverine, moist deciduous and plantation forests, of the location.

Day 5: Morning and evening birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening)

Day 6: Morning and evening birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening)

Day 7: Morning birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening). Leave around noon and arrive in Cochin early in the evening.

Ficus Wildlife & Natural History Tours



19 Maharani Chinnamba Road
Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018. India
e-mail: contact@ficuswildlife.net
www.ficuswildlife.net

Itinerary - II (Munnar)

Day 1: Depart Cochin mid-morning and proceed to Munnar by road. Arrive Mid-afternoon. Evening birding in the shola patches around Munnar town.

Day 2: Morning and evening birding in the shola-grasslands around Munnar town. Look for high-altitude specialities such as broad-tailed graassbird, Nilgiri pipit and painted bushquail as well as large eagles.

Day 3: Morning birding in shola patches around Munnar town. Proceed to Bodimet after lunch to look especially for yellow-throated, grey-headed and ruby-throated bulbuls as well as several birds associated with drier habitats on steep hill-slopes.

Day 4: Depart Munnar after breakfast and arrive in Cochin in the early afternoon.

Itinerary - III (Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Thattekad)

Day 1: Depart Cochin after leisurely breakfast. Arrive in Thattekad around noon. Evening Birding in Thattekad (Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary). Look for local specialities in the diverse habitats, including lowland evergreen, riverine, moist deciduous and plantation forests, of the location.

Day 2: Morning and evening birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening)

Day 3: Morning and evening birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening)

Day 4: Morning birding in Thattekad (similar to day 4 evening). Leave around noon and arrive in Cochin early in the evening.



19 Maharani Chinnamba Road
Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018. India
e-mail: contact@ficuswildlife.net
www.ficuswildlife.net

FYI and Guidelines

1. Thattekad is a well known among seasoned bird-watchers and ornithologists and Munnar is a popular summer destination for tourists from throughout India. Additionally, the state of Kerala is reputed to be tourist friendly. As a result tourist infrastructure and facilities in our tour locations are generally above average and sometimes very good.
2. Accommodation will be comfortable in both locations. Food will be a mixture of local (Kerala), Indian and continental dishes. We can cater to special tastes if you let us know in advance.
3. The weather in the Munnar area will be cool and sunny during the day and chilly and clear at night with maximum temperatures around 20 Celsius and minimum sometimes in single digits (Celsius). Winds can also be quite strong in the higher altitudes adding to the chill factor. Please bring some warm clothing as appropriate. Winter rains associated with the winter monsoons are a rarity, but a raincoat is always handy while spending time outdoors.
4. The weather at Thattekad will be warm, humid and clear during the day. Nights will be cooler, and temperatures may possibly dip to the mid-teens (Celsius). You might appreciate light woolens or a light jacket at night. Winter rains associated with the winter monsoons are a rarity, but a raincoat is always handy while spending time outdoors.
5. Please bring your binoculars (at least 8x magnification, ideally 10x). Many canopy dwelling and smaller birds can only be properly appreciated with a good pair of binoculars or a spotting scope.
6. Most birding will be on foot and sometimes in mountainous terrain. We recommend you wear comfortable walking/trekking shoes while birding.
7. A hat and sunblock are highly recommended and sunglasses will be useful.
8. Please bring essential medication with you, since the local outlets will not always carry what you are looking for.



19 Maharani Chinnamba Road
Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018. India
e-mail: contact@ficuswildlife.net
www.ficuswildlife.net

Terms and Conditions

1. Tour costs are based on twin sharing basis ex-Cochin and is all inclusive (transport, accommodation, food, personnel and all taxes and fees). Personnel includes an expert birding guide, a tour leader and resource persons from the local community. Alcoholic beverages, porter charges, laundry and ala carte snacks are extra. Please check with us on specific items to make sure if it is included in the published tour costs.
2. The last date to sign up for the tour is Dec 20th 2008. Bookings are confirmed only upon full payment of the tour cost by the last date.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the tour at anytime due to unforeseen circumstances. We will refund the entire booking amount under these circumstances.
4.
 - a. We accept demand drafts in Indian Rupees and online credit card payments in US Dollars through Paypal.
 - b. We accept personal cheques in Indian Rupees, but your reservations will be confirmed only after your cheque is cleared by the bank.
 - c. Indian customers can also use a credit card to pay online through Paypal, but please be aware that you will be charged an additional currency conversion fee for the same.
 - d. Demand drafts/cheques are payable to "Ficus Wildlife and Natural History Tours" located in Chennai.
5. In case you want to cancel your booking:
 - a. A 100% refund before 20th Dec 2008
 - b. 30% of the tour cost after 20th Dec 2008

Disclaimer

Participants should be aware of unlikely, but potential risks involved during wildlife tours and general travel. This may include, among other things, injuries or fatalities associated with general travel, snake bites, field activities and encounters with wildlife. We require that all tour participants sign this disclaimer that acknowledges the risks associated during our conducted tours and relieves us of any liabilities arising out of the same. This also acknowledges that you have read and abide by the terms and conditions mentioned in the document.

Name of participant:

Signature and Date: