



WILDLIFE & NATURAL HISTORY TOURS

Email: contact@ficuswildlife.net

Web: www.ficuswildlife.net

Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR) - Kuduraivetti **2 nights**

Please see <http://travel.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?262065> to read an article, based on an identical guided tour we conducted for Outlook Traveller Magazine to KMTR in Sep 2009

Summary

KMTR is located among the southern most ranges (Ashambu Hills) of the Western Ghats and as such, it is the southern most range of some of India's megafauna, including the tiger and elephant. However, KMTR is better appreciated for its biodiversity rich, contiguous tracts of old-growth wet-evergreen forests and stunning, often mystical, mountain scenery. The park contains many biotic treasures including an amazing diversity of flora, herpetofauna, small vertebrates and invertebrates which are often unique to the Western Ghats. KMTR is also a well known centre for plant endemism. Bird diversity, including ecoregion endemics, is excellent, as is typical for other Western Ghats locations with similar habitat diversity. Notably, the rare oriental bay owl, known from very sporadic records from northeast India and the Western Ghats, was recently photographed in the reserve.

We enter the reserve virtually in the plains and drive up the mountains through deciduous forests, tea plantations and excellent rainforest, enroute Kudiravetti, our final location, on an open grassland with panoramic views of the surrounding mountainscape. The rainforest at Kakachi (1200m) is classically old-growth, dominated by tall, buttressed trees. Notably, the lion-tailed macaque can be found here and the rainforest abounds with a great diversity of flora and fauna - including rarities such as the brown palm civet and brown mongoose. Late evening in the rainforest here has good potential for flying squirrels, pit-vipers, amphibians and invertebrates. Birdlife can be excellent in the landscape, including for sightings of magnificent black eagles, rare mountain imperial pigeons and endemics such as the Malabar whistling thrush. In Upper Kodayar we enter a wildlife rich area of grasslands and evergreen forest, where large mammals such as elephants and gaur are regularly sighted. We also have a good chance of seeing the Nilgiri Tahr here - a mountain goat endemic to the upper reaches of the Western Ghats. Upper Kodayar has a population of broad-tailed grassbird and potential for white-bellied shortwing - both species endemic to the Western Ghats.

The tour will be led by an experienced naturalist and the team will be ably guided and supported by the 'Kaani's', an indigenous forest hunter-gatherer tribe who have an intimate knowledge of the reserve's biodiversity and natural locations. An element of ecotourism is built into this tour - by employing the services of the local tribals as support staff we will contribute to their economic well being, consequently reducing their dependence on forest re-



Email: contact@ficuswildlife.net

Web: www.ficuswildlife.net

sources for sustenance and providing an economic incentive to conserve the local biodiversity.

Dates

Please email us: contact@ficuswildlife.net for latest schedule

Please note that we can customise schedule for independent travel

Costs

From INR 10500/person, ex- Chennai

Itinerary Outline

- Day 1: Chennai - Tirunelveli overnight train
- Day 2: AM drive to Kuduraivetti and PM trek in rainforest
- Day 3: AM trek in rainforest and PM drive/trek into grasslands habitats of the upper hills
- Day 4: AM trek in rainforest and PM transfer to Tirunelveli for overnight train
- Day 5: AM arrival in Chennai

Facilities

Accommodation: Simple forest rest houses with basic facilities, with erratic electricity supply

Food: Simple local vegetarian

Transport: Train transfers in upper class A/C coaches. Road transfers in Chevrolet Tavera or similar.

Difficulty: Moderate for walks in mountainous uneven terrain



Email: contact@ficuswildlife.net

Web: www.ficuswildlife.net

FYI and Guidelines

1. Accommodation will be basic, with minimal furnishing and other creature comforts. The rest-house does have electricity though. Although we will be staying in forest department tourist rest houses, we recommend that you pack as though you were out camping, i.e. include your sleeping bags, towels etc into your backpack.
2. Food will be simple and largely locally available vegetarian fare.
3. Weather: Updates based on dates of travel
4. Please bring your binoculars ... while much of the biodiversity in the park can be enjoyed without a pair of binoculars, they would certainly come in handy for closer observations of fauna that do not allow close approach.
5. A considerable amount of walking around will be involved during this tour. Some of the terrain will be mountainous and uneven. It is essential that you wear a very comfortable pair of trekking shoes and full pants during our forays into the wild. We expect that all tour participants are in good physical condition. Please be advised that we could be up to 3hrs away from the nearest medical facility.
6. A hat and sunblock are highly recommended. We also suggest that you carry insect repellents and anti-allergy creams/medication. Please bring essential medication with you.

Terms and Conditions

1. Tour costs are based on twin/triple sharing basis ex-Chennai and is all inclusive (transport, accommodation, food, personnel and all taxes and fees). Personnel includes one tour guide/naturalist and resource persons from the local community. Please check with us on specific items to make sure if it is included in the published tour costs.
2. Maximum group size on this tour is 4.
3. Bookings are confirmed only upon full payment of the tour cost and at least 30 days in advance from the proposed departure date
4. Our preferred mode of payment is through electronic transfers into our bank account. Relevant details will be provided to you once you are ready to make the payment. Alternatively we accept demand drafts/cheques in the currency of your choice.
5. If you are paying in foreign currency, we might have apply a currency surcharge on the published rates, if the INR appreciates against your currency at the time of payment.
6. In the unlikely event in which we are forced to cancel the tour we will refund you the entire booking amount. In case we are unable to conduct the tour due to circumstances beyond our control (for e.g. forces of nature, political conditions), we will make every effort to refund as much of the booking amount as possible.
7. In case you to cancel your booking more than one month in advance from the tour date, we will refund *at least* 50% of the tour cost (assuming tour costs are fully paid). The precise



Email: contact@ficuswildlife.net

Web: www.ficuswildlife.net

refund beyond this will be dependent on the refund policies of our travel partners that we use on tour. In case you cancel your booking less than 1 month from the start of the tour, we will refund 10% of your booking amount

Disclaimer and Emergency Contact

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:

Age:

Emergency contact person:

Relationship:

Tel no:

Email:

Signature and Date: