

This is a tour specifically designed to sight all the endemics of the Western Ghats as well as most of the South Indian endemics. The tour is 15 days of intense birding. The tour covers the Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary at Thattekkad, Periyar, Munnar, Top Slip, Ooty, Masinagudi, Ranganthittu & Kokre Bellur. Best time to visit would be September to April.



Malabar Parakeet (Satyan Mepayur)

Departure Dates:

- 13 Nov 2011 (ex-Bangalore)
- 05 December 2011 (ex-Kochi)
- 16 Jan 2012 (ex-Kochi)

Tour Price: US\$ 1900 per person

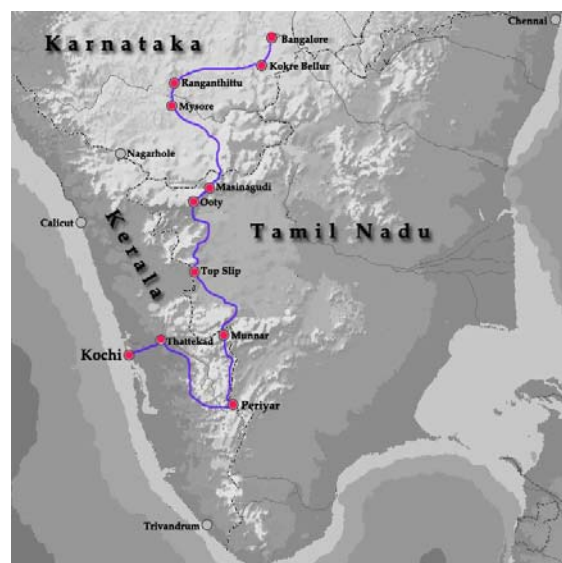
This tour can also be arranged as a private tour to suit your requirements.

Itinerary

Day 1, 2, 3 - Thattekkad. Thattekkad is a lowland forest with several types of ecosystems - riverine, grasslands, evergreen, scrub, dry deciduous, lowland forest, enabling it to be one of the best birding destinations in India. This is also home to most of the endemics of the Western Ghats. One should sight the Whitebellied Treepie, Rufous Babbler, Crimsonbacked Sunbird, White Bellied Blue Flycatcher, Wayanad Laughing Thrush, Malabar Parakeet, Malabar

Grey Hornbill besides owls like the Mottled Wood Owl, Oriental Bay Owl, Oriental scopes owl, Brown Fish Owl, Oriental Scopes Owl and Spotbellied Eagle Owl. You should also be able to sight the Red Spurfowl, Grey Jungle Fowl, Indian Pitta, Black-throated Munia and the Grey headed fishing eagle.

Day 4 & 5 - Periyar. Periyar Tiger Reserve is one of the finest wildlife & birding destinations in South India. With over 320 bird species identified and a leading habitat for the Bengal Tiger, this sanctuary is an ideal destination of the tour. Periyar National Park contains a variety of habitats from grassland and dry deciduous forest to evergreen forest and riverside scrub. As a result of its wide range of habitats Periyar boasts an impressive list of resident species including about half the peninsular endemics and near-endemics. We will spend the day searching here for some very special species including the very secretive and wary Wynaad Laughingthrush. Other birds to look out for include White-rumped and Brown-backed Needletails, Oriental Honey-Buzzard, Black Eagle, the striking Black Baza, Pompadour Green and Mountain Imperial Pigeon, the migratory Chestnut-winged Cuckoo, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Gray-breasted Prinia, Thick-billed Warbler, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, and the Asian Fairy Bluebird among other more widespread species. We may also sight the Woolly-necked Stork, Besra, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Jungle Owlet, Whiterumped Spinetail, Blacknaped Monarch and the Little Spiderhunter.



Day 6 & 7 - Munnar. We will leave for Munnar via the Ghats to Khambam where we should sight the Large Grey Babbler, Common

Babbler, Jungle Bush Quail and the Grey Fancolin. We will proceed to Bodi Ghats en-route Munnar and stop over for sighting the rare Yellow Throated Bulbul, Indian Robin, Sirkeer Malkoha, Short Toed Snake Eagle, Bluefaced Malkoha and the Black eagle. We will reach Munnar by evening. The next day we will go birding in the sholas (high altitude montane forests) and grasslands for the Nilgiri Pipit, Painted Bush Quail, Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Black & Orange Flycatcher, Nilgiri Flycatcher, Whitebellied Shortwing, Broadtailed Grassbird, Grasshopper Warbler.

Day 8 & 9 -Top Slip. We will take the 2 hour drive across the Tamil Nadu border to the Indira Gandhi national park - a place known for its great swathes of forests and wildlife - birds, butterflies, elephants, sloth bears, leopards, gaurs (Indian Bison), dholes (wild dogs), king cobra and the lion-tailed macaques in their natural habitat - all within an area known as Top Slip. Your trackers during the safaris will be from the indigenous tribes. We will go on birding walks as well as go on a wildlife safari through the forest trails. Target species include Malabar Parakeet, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Great Indian Hornbill, Sri Lanka Frogmouth, Waynad Laughing Thrush, Nilgiri Laughing Thrush and Grey-breasted Laughing Thrush, besides Nilgiri Woodpigeon, Nilgiri Flycatcher, Black & Orange Flycatcher, Grey-headed Bulbul, Yellow-throated Bulbul and the White-bellied Treepie.

Day 10 - Ooty. We will take the long drive to reach Ooty by afternoon. Ooty - is a hill station, at about 2,200m in the Nilgiri Hills. The Cairnhill Reserved Forest, 3km from town on the Avalanche road will be our main destination, where the endemic Nilgiri Laughing Thrush, White-bellied Shortwing, and Black-and-rufous, Rusty-tailed and Nilgiri Flycatchers all occur.

Day 11 & 12 - Masinagudi/ Mudumalai. After a full day of birding at Ooty looking for the Nilgiri Laughing Thrush, we will make our way through the Sirgur Ghats to Masinagudi. Mudumalai at the foot of the of the Nilgiris hills, is one the many reserves located within the forest belt between the Western Ghats and the Nilgiri Mountains. The terrain being varied with hills, valleys, ravines, watercourses and swamps, moist deciduous forests, dry deciduous forests and scrub forests is ideal birding country. Should see Jerdon's Bushlark, Sirkeer Malkoha, Indian Blue Robin, Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch,

White-bellied Minivet, Yellowbilled Babbler, White-bellied Woodpecker, Large Cuckooshrike, Banded-bay Cuckoo, Thickbilled Warbler and Painted Bush Quail.

Day 13 - Mysore / Ranganthittu. We will proceed towards Mysore & visit the famous heronry on an islands on the Cauvery River at the Ranganthittu Wildlife sanctuary. Rowing boat cruise enables view of Eurasian spoonbill, Black-crowned night heron, three species of Cormorant, River Tern and Thick Knee, and many others. Marsh crocodiles will also be seen. Also visit the remote village Kokre Bellur for the Nesting Painted Storks and Spot-billed Pelicans followed by birding at a nearby reservoir.

Day 14 - Bangalore/ Kochi. Depart for Bangalore by afternoon & also visit the remote village Kokre Bellur for the Nesting Painted Storks and Spot-billed Pelicans. By evening, drive to Bangalore for an overnight stay . (Also option of flight to Kochi and overnight stay)

Day 15 - Depart for home.

Price: US \$ 1900 per person (ex flights), based on 2 people travelling.

Inclusions: Price includes accommodation in hotels/ resorts/ luxury camp, most meals, (14 breakfast, 10 lunches and dinners), transportation in a/c car, drivers' allowances, birding guide fees, entrance fees, bottled water in the field. This trip can also be tailor-made.

Exclusions: Flights, Tips, expenses of a personal nature, beverages & liquor

Departures: This trip can be tailor-made to suit your interests of time and budget requirements

Extension Trip to Andaman Islands

The Andaman and Nicobar islands hold a total of 20 endemics. But since five occur only on the Nicobars (currently off-limits to foreigners), only 15 can be sighted. The notable areas are Mount Harriet, Sippi Ghat, Chidia Tapu, Farar Ganj & Havelock.

Day 1: Arrive Port Blair by the early morning flight. Meet & assist at the airport. We will bird around Mount Harriet National Park, a tropical moist evergreen forest. Should sight

Andaman Woodpecker, Andaman Wood Pigeon, Andaman Cuckoo Dove, Andaman Crane, Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker, Dollarbird, Collared Kingfisher, Brown Coucal, Alexandrine Parakeet, Red-breasted Parakeet, Red-breasted Parakeet, Pintail Snipe, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Andaman Treepie, Black-naped Oriole, Andaman Drongo, Orange-headed Thrush, Olive backed Sunbird, White-headed Starling. O/N at resort

Day 2: Very early morning drive towards Sippighat, located to the South of Port Blair. The area is a marshy wetland and good for sightings of water birds & waders. Should sight the Andaman Scops Owl, Andaman Hawk Owl, Sunda Teal, Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker, Blue-eared Kingfisher, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Collared Kingfisher, White-throated Kingfisher, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Brown Coucal, Red-breasted Parakeet, Oriental Scops Owl, Brown Hawk Owl, Edible nest Swiftlet, Common Snipe, Black-naped Tern, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Black-naped Oriole, Andaman Drongo, Orange-headed Thrush, Olive backed Sunbird. Thereafter proceed back to Mount Harriet to pick up those missed earlier. Return by evening.

Day 3: Very early morning trip to Chidiya Tapu, a patch of moist evergreen forest located to the South of Port Blair and excellent for birding. The track for birding starts 4 km before Chidiya Tapu and 2 km along the seashore forest. Should sight the Andaman Woodpecker, Andaman Crane, Andaman Treepie, Andaman Serpent Eagle, Black-naped Oriole, Andaman Drongo, Olive backed Sunbird, White-headed Starling, Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker, Stork-billed Kingfisher, White-throated Kingfisher, Collared Kingfisher, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Brown Coucal, Alexandrine Parakeet, Red-breasted Parakeet, Red-breasted Parakeet.

Day 4: Birding at Farar Ganj & in the afternoon visit areas for endemics missed out during earlier trips.

Day 5: Flight back to mainland. Tour ends.

Price: US \$ 1090 per person (ex flights), on Twin share, based on 2 people travelling. (There would be a surcharge from 20 December to 10 January)