



WILDERNESS BIRDING ADVENTURES

# BHUTAN'S BIRDS, CULTURE, & NATURAL HISTORY

Main Tour:

November 7 – 25, 2012 - 19 days - \$6,350 from Bangkok

High in the mysterious and majestic eastern Himalayas, nestled between Tibet and India, lies the small Kingdom of Bhutan, increasingly renowned as one of the Earth's last precious unspoiled spots. In this magical place, an intact Buddhist culture is integrated into every aspect of daily life, and spectacular mountain scenery provides a backdrop to pristine forests and picturesque valleys. The breathtaking landscape is dotted with fluttering prayer flags, colorful farmhouses amidst terraced fields, and impressive monasteries clinging to impossible cliffs.

Until recently, Bhutan's remoteness, steep terrain, and carefully managed tourism have ensured that its incredible beauty and fascinating people remained a quiet secret known only to a few. Bhutan was closed to outsiders until 1960; its first roads were built in 1969; and no tourists were permitted until 1974. Even today, one is more likely to encounter red-robed monks than a group of foreigners.

This shining cultural gem is also a bird-watcher's paradise. Its wide altitudinal range -- from sub-tropical lowlands to arctic-like mountain peaks -- provide an array of climatic conditions and habitats, from tropical jungles to temperate forests and tundra that support over 600 bird species. They include some of the most exotic and rare species in the eastern Himalayas. Ten species of birds that are in danger of extinction are found in Bhutan, including the Black-necked Crane, which traditionally winters in the valleys of Phobjikha and Bomdeling. The diversity of bird life in Bhutan is accentuated by the migrations of hundreds of species between breeding grounds across a vast expanse of central Asia and wintering areas on the subcontinent of India.

Over 70 percent of the country is forested, and unlike other Himalayan countries, most of Bhutan's original forest remains intact. The Buddhist philosophy of respect for all living things, and a progressive government approach to development in which the preservation of the environment and the promotion of Bhutan's unique culture and traditions are key elements, have maintained a healthy environment where wildlife flourishes. As a result, Bhutan lies in an area designated as one of the world's ten biodiversity hotspots.

In addition to having an astonishing diversity of birdlife in a country no larger than Switzerland, Bhutan is home to at least 165 species of mammals, including Golden Langur, Leopard, Rhinoceros and Elephant in the lowlands; Red Panda, Himalayan Black Bear and Musk Deer in the middle-elevation forests; and Snow Leopard and Takin on alpine meadows. Tigers might be found anywhere from the bases of the foothills to above tree line. The diversity of Bhutan's flora is no less impressive. More than 600 orchid species (including at least 50 that are endemic), 46 species of rhododendrons (4 endemic), and more than 300 species of medicinal plants are found within its borders.

During our expedition we will see a wide variety of bird life and scenic wonders. Our walks and drives will take us through virgin forests, across high open pastures, and to Bhutan's most extensive high-elevation wetland, as well as to mountain

villages and monasteries. In addition to the Black-necked Cranes we may see the extremely rare White-bellied (Imperial) Heron and Pallas' Fish Eagle. Some of the water and forest birds that we will encounter are Ibisbills, Brown and White-throated Dippers, Wagtails, and an assortment of woodpeckers, redstarts, tits, ducks, kingfishers and several species of thrushes. With a little effort, we should have no trouble recording more than 200 bird species.

Throughout the trip we will see and occasionally stop to visit the impressive goembas (monasteries), dzongs (the monastery/fortresses that serve as Bhutan's administrative and religious centers), lhakhangs (temples), and chortens (stupas) that are important features of Bhutan's religion and culture, both past and present. We will have opportunities to examine and collect traditional Bhutanese arts and crafts, which represent an exciting and vital aspect of Bhutan's living heritage, and which reflect Bhutan's spiritual and intellectual life. Surrounding us at every turn will be examples of Bhutan's distinctive architecture with its traditional shapes, colorful patterns, outrageous "motifs," and an unmatched combination of engineering skill and aesthetic beauty.

We will venture into southern territory we've first explored in 2011. Traveling an east-west road just recently opened to tourists will allow us to drive in a loop instead of backtracking on our southern forays as we discover the natural and cultural wonders of this unique area.

A checklist of possible birds during the trip is attached at the end of the itinerary.



Capped Langur Lisa Moorehead



Blue-throated Barbet Sonam Dorji

## -ITINERARY-

Day 1: Wednesday, 7th November 2011

*Arrival in Paro, Bhutan & drive to Thimphu*

Our Druk Air flight leaves Bangkok early, around 7 AM. The flight may make a brief stop en route in Dacca, Bodhgaya or Kolkatta. We'll arrive in Paro, Bhutan mid- to late morning.

Walking to the terminal, you will immediately be struck by the transparent purity of the air. After Immigration and Customs formalities, we'll be welcomed by our local host and guide and drive the 2 hours to Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. Leaving the airport we will see our trip's first birds: Grey-backed Shrikes, White-wagtails, Hodgson's Redstarts, to name a few. A little further into our drive we will stop along the Paro Chhu (River). Some of the birds we will likely encounter are: Ibisbills, Ruddy Shelducks and River Lapwing.

In Thimphu, we will visit the bank to convert currency and the adjacent Post Office to stock up on Bhutan's stamps, which include some gorgeous bird and mammal editions. Later in the afternoon we may visit the weaving workshop and/or handmade paper factory. If time permits we can stroll around Thimphu to get a feel of the urban life in Bhutan.

Overnight Thimphu in hotel (2320m/7,656 ft).

Day 2: Thursday, 8th November

Thimphu area

We depart early by bus on a side road into the mountains north of Thimphu to a village below Cheri and Tango Monasteries. There we will bird around the village and eat a picnic breakfast. After breakfast, we will hike up the mountain to Cheri or Tango Monastery. The monasteries are perched upon steep slopes with beautiful views and forest birding.

In the afternoon, we will have time in Thimphu to visit sites of interest such as the Takin Zoo, the Textile Museum, National Institute of Traditional Medicine or handicrafts shops.

Overnight Thimphu in hotel (2320m/7,656 ft).

Day 3: Friday, 9th November

Thimphu to Punakha

This morning we will pack up and head northeast. Our first stop will be at the Dochu La pass (3140 m/ 10,362 ft). Dochu La is one of the most spectacular spots in Bhutan with its 108 chortens beautifully laid out across the mountain-top, prayer flags fluttering from the towering pine trees, and the vast Himalaya in the distance.



Suspension footbridge across Po Chhu  
Lisa Moorehead

We continue driving east and down in elevation to the town of Wangdue Phodrang (also called Wangdi) on the banks of the Punak Tsang Chhu, then from Wangdi we turn north and drive a short distance to the town of Punakha. Our goal is to arrive early enough to visit the majestic Punakha Dzong and also spend some time birding the river's edge where the globally-endangered White-bellied Heron is sometimes seen. Another rare and impressive bird that we will watch for in this area is the Palla's Fish Eagle. We will drive up the Po Chhu and look for the heron before walking a couple of miles back across the long suspension footbridge and down footpaths to the Dzong. The Dzong, undoubtedly the most beautiful in all of Bhutan and rich with history, sits at the confluence of the Mo Chhu and Po Chhu and is the winter home of the central monastic body. From the Dzong, we will drive north a bit through beautiful farms along the Mo Chhu to our camp along the river's edge in Jigme Dorji National Park.

Overnight in camp, near Punakha (1250 m/4,125 ft)

Day 4: Saturday, 10th November

Punakha to Phobjikha



Black-necked Cranes Bruce Easter

Today we'll bird around camp along the beautiful Mo Chhu in the steep, deep mixed hardwood forest. In the afternoon, we'll pack up and drive south. Just outside of Wangdi, we'll make some birding stops along the river near Chuzomsa. From this lush habitat at about 4,000 ft., we continue east climbing almost to Pele La Pass, but we turn south on a side road just before the pass to enter the Phobjikha valley. Passing Yaks grazing on dwarf bamboo, we descend into this beautiful wide, glacial valley which is the winter home of the Black-necked Cranes (*Grus nigricollis*). Phobjikha (9,600 ft) is a designated conservation area which lies adjacent to Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park (formerly called Black Mountain National Park). Because of the presence of the large flock of Black-necked Cranes that winters in the valley -- about 260 of them -- Phobjikha is one of the most important wildlife preserves in Bhutan. The first cranes arrive from Tibet in late October, and by early November their numbers will have increased to between 100 and 150. We'll take a 3-mile hike from the village, through farms and undisturbed forest to a site overlooking the glacial valley. Near dusk, we will sit quietly along the forest edge watching these majestic cranes spiral down into the valley's wetland to roost for the night, a thrill of a lifetime. Hen Harriers, snow pigeons and short-eared owls may also be seen. We'll continue our hike across the valley where we'll meet our bus for a ride to our accommodations.

Overnight in an inn at Phobjikha (2909 m/9,600 ft)

Today is the Black-necked Crane Festival, starting around 9:30 AM. Those who wish to get up early to bird at Pele La pass will depart in the dark for the 30 minute drive to the pass. Pele La's old backroad, contouring along the steep slopes through towering fir trees with panoramic views of the Himalaya, is a great place to look for Himalayan Monal and other high elevation species. The early birders will return to the festival to celebrate with villagers the arrival of the cranes.



Black-necked Crane festivities

Lisa Moorehead

The festival takes place in the village's Gangtey Goemba (monastery) which has been undergoing reconstruction for the past few years. We have enjoyed watching the craftspersons carving the wooden beams and the young nuns from Bumthang tamping mud into the rammed earth walls while chanting Buddhist songs. This year we will see how their work has progressed.

After enjoying a few hours of dancing, we'll leave this beautiful valley, return to the main road, continue east over Pele La pass (11,286 ft) and drop into central Bhutan and the Black Mountains. During most of today's drive we'll have inspiring cross-valley views of the trackless old-growth forests on the steep north-facing slopes of the Black Mountains. The Bhutanese film "Travelers' and Magicians" was shot along this road. We'll drive through the very picturesque village of Rukubji, built on the head of a snake-shaped ridge carpeted in bright-yellow-blooming mustard. We will also pass through the village of Chendebji which has a beautiful Nepalese-style chorten next to the river.

Continuing east to Trongsa, we'll contour across the slopes of the steep side valleys. Nearly an hour before we reach Trongsa on the winding road, we'll have our first glimpses of the Trongsa Dzong across the breathtaking depths of the Mangde Chhu gorge. Built atop the crest of a narrow ridge, it is, without doubt, the most spectacularly sited dzong in all of Bhutan. It's perched so far above the river that the clouds frequently float below it. One of the better birds we'll hope to see en route is the crested Mountain Hawk Eagle. We may also encounter Snow Pigeons, Great Parrotbill, Spotted Laughingthrushes, etc.

When we arrive in the town of Trongsa in the afternoon, we will visit the Trongsa Dzong, its towering walls perched on the steep slopes at the edge of town above the Mangde Chhu gorge. Trongsa lies in the middle of Bhutan, and in times past, all east-to-west traffic passed through the dzong. Because the tolls he could collect were a substantial steady income, the Trongsa Penlop (governor), who commanded the dzong and administered the surrounding district, was always a force to be reckoned with. The oldest part of the dzong was built in 1541. The dzong was much damaged by an earthquake in 1897, and much of what we see today dates to the rebuilding undertaken by Jigme Namgyal, the then Trongsa Penlop, and the father of Ugyen Wangchuck, who was elected the first king of Bhutan in 1907. Because the Trongsa Dzong was built on a very narrow ridge, its courtyards are much less spacious than those of the other dzongs we'll visit, and one is more conscious of the buildings' thick and battered walls, and their sculptural forms. It is every bit as impressive from inside as from outside. This is the royal family's ancestral home and tradition still dictates that the crown prince serve as Trongsa Penlop before being crowned.



Lisa Moorehead

From the dzong, if time permits, we will walk out the gate and down an ancient trail to the river below. This 2 hour hike takes us across the Mangde Chhu on a traditional cantilevered footbridge and up to the highway on the other side along the trail all foot and horse travelers used traditionally. The bus will meet us on the other side, and we will drive to our lovely hotel on the outskirts of Trongsa. Those who do not wish to make the hike can be dropped off at the hotel.

Overnight in hotel, Trongsa (2180m/7,194 ft)

Day 6: Monday, 12th November

Trongsa to Gayzamchu camp

We will head east today to the Bumthang Valley, the cultural heartland of Bhutan. From Trongsa, the road climbs through many switchbacks, then it passes through a misty forest of Silver Firs and bamboo on the way to Yotong La (11,234 ft). We may see some Blood Pheasants along the road. Soon after the pass, the forest changes to the Blue Pines characteristic of Bumthang. After about 30 minutes of driving through the pine forest, we will arrive at Gyetsa, at the upper end of



the Chhume Valley-- the first of Bumthang's four major valleys. Gyetsa is the winter home of several Black-necked Cranes, but because they tend to arrive later than Phobjikha's cranes, we may not find them in residence. After driving the length of the Chhume valley, we'll stop at Zungney to watch local women weaving yathra -- Bumthang's famous hand-spun, hand-woven, and boldly patterned woolens -- and do a little shopping.

After continuing on through the town of Chamkar, we enter the beautiful alpine valley of Ura. We may encounter Monal Pheasants along the road. Around Ura, White-browed and Beautiful Rosefinches are quite common. Ura is the headquarters of the Thrimingla National Park. It was in this park that a Royal Bengal Tiger was photographed at over 13,000 feet, which is the world record for the highest altitude where the Bengal Tiger was confirmed.

After Ura, we will be driving through Blue Pine forests with many rhododendron species, as well as spruce, hemlock, fir and juniper forests. We will camp at a rural spot called Gayzamchu for the nearby river. Here we have a chance to look for White-throated Dipper, a high elevation specialty we found for the first time here in 2007, as well as Wood Snipe and the White-throated Redstart.

Overnight in tented camp, Gayzamchu (3515m/11,600 ft)

Day 7: Tuesday, 13th November

Gayzamchu-Yongkhola

We may take an early morning walk from camp to look for pheasants along the road. After breakfast, we will drive east. As we near the crest of Thrimingla Pass, 12,000 feet, we will stop and walk through an in-situ rhododendron park, which has over 20 species of rhododendron. There is a high possibility of seeing several flocks of Blood Pheasants and several species of tits and rosefinches. From the pass, the road descends very quickly and hence we will experience tremendous diversity within a matter of a few hours drive. In fact, we will be descending nearly 7,000 feet from the pass to our camp at Yongkhola. One of the spectacular birds that we will seek along this drive is the Satyr Trogon.

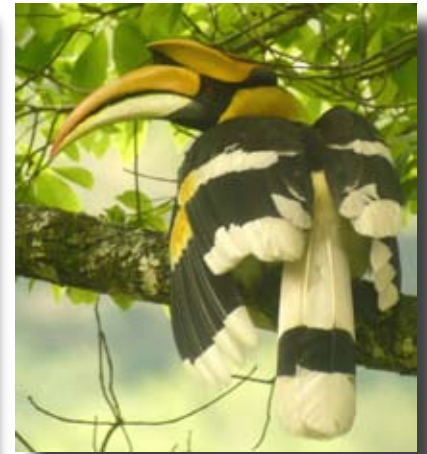


Verditer Flycatcher Sonam Dorji



Raptor!

Bob Dittrick



Great Hornbill

Sonam Dorji

Overnight in tented camp at Yongkhola (about 1818m/6,000 ft)

Day 8: Wednesday, 14th November

Yongkhola

Yongkhola is considered by many birders to be one of the top birding areas in Asia. The huge altitudinal differences within short distances and its corresponding vegetation types has made this area a "bird-watcher's paradise". Some of the globally threatened birds such as the Ward's Trogon, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Satyr Trogon, Rufous-headed Parrot-bills, Wren-billed Wren Babblers, Scimitar Babblers and Cutias (to name a few) are frequently sighted here. Other exotic species such as Monal Pheasants and Blood Pheasants can be seen feeding along the highway.

We will spend a full day birding in this area. We will also do some driving to prime areas for walking and birding. Those who don't wish to bird all day can hike along the road or relax in camp for part of the day.

Overnight in tented camp at Yongkhola (about 1818m/6,000 ft)

Day 9: Thursday, 15th November

Yongkhola-Chamkar

Our camp at Yongkhola is our farthest east destination. Today we leave our lovely camp to return west on the main road, over Thriming La Pass, through Ura, and into the lovely town of Chamkar. We stay in a delightful family-run guesthouse

with woodstoves in the rooms for heat. The Bumthang area is renowned for its locally produced foods - delicious cheeses, apple juice and brandy, buckwheat pancakes - which we will enjoy while here.

Overnight in guesthouse, Chamkar (2580 m/8,514 ft)

Day 10: Friday, 16th November

*Chamkar-Khosola*

We depart Chamkar to continue traveling west back through the Bumthang region, over Yotong La pass and down to Trongsa in the Black Mountains, birding along the way. We will turn south at Trongsa and descend in elevation along the Mangde Chhu Valley, stopping to look for Golden Langurs and to bird along the way. We have a chance of seeing Great Hornbills and White-bellied Herons along the river. The high canopy becomes more lush and subtropical as we descend in elevation to our Khosola camp.

Overnight in tented camp, Khosola (about 1050 m/3,500 ft)

Day 11: Saturday, 17th November

*Khosola to Tingtibi*

This morning we arise and drive to the Beautiful Nuthatch habitat. After birding this location thoroughly, we will continue south another hour or two to Tingtibi. The habitat all along this road south from Trongsa is thick, highly-diverse, lower-elevation mixed forests and is excellent for birding. In addition to stopping often for birds, we will also be searching for the very rare and endemic Golden Langur, a beautiful primate found only in Bhutan and a small part of India. We will probably see several forktails and Grey Treepies; Yellow-rumped Honeyguide, Pallas' Fish Eagle and Black Eagle will be reasonable possibilities. We'll stop for a bit in the friendly town of Zhemgang. We shall be camping south of Zhemgang near the village of Tingtibi for two nights.

Overnight in tented camp, Tingtibi (600 m/2,000 ft).



Jomolhari from below Cheli La Bob Dittrick



Oriental White-eye Bob Dittrick



Archers razz the other team Lisa Moorehead

Day 12: Sunday, 18th November

*Tingtibi*

Our time here promises to be relaxing. During our two days here, we will hike and bird the area as much as people wish to. The low elevation habitat will offer many species of birds we cannot see anywhere else on our tour. In addition to various Minivets, Tesias, Warblers, Speckled Piculet, Verditer Flycatcher, White-browed Scimitar Babbler, Silver-eared Mesia, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo (among others), we will constantly scan for the globally threatened Rufous-necked Hornbill, which resides here along with the Great Hornbill. The hornbills' honking resonates through the canopy.

Overnight in tented camp, Tingtibi.

Day 13: Monday, 19th November

*Tingtibi-Gelephu*

Today we break camp to drive even farther south to the town of Gelephu on the border with India's Manas region. The population of Gelephu is about 9,000. This area has not been open to tourism until 2010. We will be in the foothills of the Himalaya, with the plains of India extending south from here. Because this area is fairly new to us, our day will be one of discovery as we descend through changing habitat and culture into the Sarpang District.

Overnight in hotel in Gelephu (est. 200 m/650 ft)

Day 14: Tuesday, 20th November

Gelephu

During our layover day here at Gelephu, we hope to visit Bhutan's Royal Manas National Park, less than 10 km to the east, if it is open to tourists by November 2012. Royal Manas adjoins Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park to the north and India's Manas National Park and Manas Tiger Reserve to the south, forming a 5000-sq-km protected area that runs from the plains to the Himalayan peaks. Royal Manas has been protected as a wildlife sanctuary since 1966 and was upgraded to a national park in 1988. It is the home of Rhinos, Buffalos, Tigers, Leopards, Gaurs, Bears, Elephants and several species of deer. It is also home to several rare species, including the Golden Langur, the Capped Langur and the Hispid Hare. The 362 species of birds in the park include four varieties of hornbills. Here at the farthest south and lowest elevation halt of the trip, we will undoubtedly see species of birds and mammals not previously encountered.

Overnight in hotel in Gelephu (est. 200 m/650 ft)

Day 15: Wednesday, 21st November

Gelephu to Tsirang

From Gelephu we drive west along the border with India, turning northwest at the border town of Sarpang, winding up in elevation into the mountains but still on gently sloping terrain. The habitat will be about half agricultural (rice, millet, maize, mandarins, cardamom and vegetables) and the remainder is pine and broadleaf forest. The travel today should allow plenty of time for walking and birding as we explore this new (to us) area. We are now on the road that heads north to Wangdi.

Overnight in hotel or tented camp in Tsirang (est. 1000 m/3,280 ft)

Day 16: Thursday, 22nd November

Tsirang to Wangduephodrang

As we head north today from Tsirang, we follow one of Bhutan's four major river systems, the Punak Tsang Chhu (or Sankosh). This drainage originates high in the Bhutan Himalaya as the Po and Mo chhu, which we visited and camped along on Day 3 at Punakha. We have a fairly long drive today but will stop to bird and walk along the way. Our destination is the town of Wangdi.

Overnight in hotel in Wangduephodrang (1240 m/4,092 ft)

Day 17: Friday, 23rd November

Wangduephodrang-Paro

We arise early today to drive from Wangdi, over Dochu La Pass, through Thimphu and on to Paro. We will drive straight to the trailhead for the afternoon's hike up to the Taktsang, the famous Tiger's Nest monastery. Tiger's Nest is Bhutan's most famous monument, and one of the most venerated pilgrimage sites in the Himalayan world. It is perched on the side of a cliff 900m/2,950 ft above the floor of the Paro valley. The steep hike climbs to a tea house just across a cleft in the cliff from the Tiger's Nest. We will continue on from the teahouse, down and up about 4,000 steps past a waterfall and into the monastery. Taktsang, which means "Tiger's Lair", is so called because Guru Rinpoche, who introduced Buddhism to Bhutan, is said to have arrived at the site (where he meditated in a cave for three months) in a miraculous manner-- flying on the back of a tigress. In 1998, a fire of unknown origin destroyed the main structure of Taktsang, but it has since been rebuilt, with traditional materials and techniques, to its previous splendor.

Overnight Paro in hotel (2280m/7,524 ft)

Day 18: Saturday, 24th November

Paro

Today, if the road is open, we shall drive to Chelila pass (3,810m/12,573 ft), the highest road point in Bhutan. We should leave the hotel by at least 4:30 AM so as to arrive at the pass around 6 AM. We hope to see Monal and Blood Pheasants along the road. Seeing the sunrise and the awe-inspiring mountain views is a sight to behold.

After a picnic breakfast at the pass, we shall hike along the ridge through prayer flags and alpine vegetation of dwarf rhododendrons, juniper, gentians and edelweiss. We shall have inspiring views of the sacred mountain Jhomolhari towards northern end of the Paro valley. On the western side of the pass we will also see Mt. Kanchenjunga, the third highest peak in the world, in the distance. If all members are keen hikers we may consider hiking all the way to the highest point of



Tiger's Nest

Bruce Easter

the pass (about 14,500 ft) and down towards the Keila Gumpa nunnery through a magical rhododendron forest. This hike should take a little over 4 hours. In addition to the pheasants, we will most likely see White-throated Redstarts, White-winged and Collared Grosbeaks, Altai and Alpine Accentors and perhaps even the majestic Lammergeier. Alternatively, we can hike down the road, birding, and return to our hotel with a little time to rest before we head off to the family farm of our local host to experience life in rural Bhutan during our farewell party.

Overnight Paro in hotel.

Day 19: Sunday, 25th November

Paro-Bangkok

Today we must arise early, say goodbye to our guides, and board our Druk Air flight. We depart Paro mid-morning and arrive in Bangkok mid-afternoon. The plane will probably make a stop en route.

### To Sign Up:

- Contact us to make sure we have space
- A deposit of \$1,000 per person will reserve your space.

### Considerations:

- **This itinerary will very likely shift** a bit as we continue to adjust it with our guides. It could also change during the trip, given how group preferences and other conditions play out.
- **Trip prices include an estimated \$880 airfare between Bangkok, Thailand and Paro, Bhutan.** If the price changes, we will adjust the trip price accordingly. If the flight schedule allows and you wish to arrive from India or Bangladesh, we can also adjust the price accordingly.
- **The trip price includes:** guides, flights between Bhutan and Bangkok, all in-country expenses (ground transportation, meals, lodging, entrance fees to museums, etc., daily tariff, visa fee, departure tax and tourism tax.)
- **Not included:** your airfare from the U.S. to Bangkok, personal expenditures in Bhutan (e.g., shopping, laundry, internet use, alcoholic beverages, gratuities to our Bhutanese guides), and Bangkok expenses.
- **We offer this trip at our cost.** No discounts offered by WBA can be applied to this trip.
- **This trip definitely has a birding-focus but is not only about birding.** We will visit dzongs (secular and religious regional headquarters), the Tiger's Nest monastery, museums, Thimphu city cultural sites, markets and spend an evening with our guide's family in their traditional farmhouse in Paro. Much of the rest of our activity will have a birding focus, which often results in delightful impromptu encounters with the local residents. In 2007, we offered a birding-focused and "birding lite" tour. Ultimately, both tours turned out to be very similar. When the "lite" birders became weary of birding, they simply went walking and we picked them up down the road or trail. They enjoyed the balance of outdoor activity with cultural activity. We recommend that you have an interest in birding, but it's not necessary to be a serious birder to enjoy the trip. If you'd like to consult any of our "lite" or "serious" birders from previous tours to get their perspective on the experience, let us know and we can refer you to them.
- **We will be camping as well as staying in guesthouses, hotels and resorts.** In November in the Himalayas, the skies are clear most of the time and temperatures may drop below freezing at night at higher elevations. Camping may be a bit chilly. For that matter, the hotels can be quite chilly too, lacking central heat.
- **This is a road-based tour.** We will be guided by Bhutanese guides. The road system is the only way to travel through Bhutan, other than trekking (which greatly restricts the amount of country, habitats and species that we could see). The roads are narrow and curvy as they traverse the steep countryside.
- **November isn't the very best time for the largest possible number of bird species; nevertheless, there are advantages to going at this time of year:** It's the dry season; the weather tends to be clear with incredible views of the Himalaya; Black-necked Cranes are present; and tourists mostly are not. We will see well over 200 species of birds. Bird lists from our previous November trips are available upon request.
- **We need a minimum of 7 participants signed up by April 1** to be able to run this trip. We can continue to take sign-ups after April 1, but would need to cancel the trip if we don't have the minimum by April 1.
- **We plan to limit the group size to 12** (including WBA guide[s]).

WILDERNESS BIRDING ADVENTURES  
5515 Wild Mountain Road - Eagle River, AK 99577  
(907) 694-7442 - info@wildernessbirding.com - www.wildernessbirding.com

# CHECKLIST OF POSSIBLE BIRDS FOR THE TRIP

based on cumulative list of species seen on WBA trips

1. Bar-headed Goose
2. Ruddy Shelduck
3. Gadwall
4. Eurasian Wigeon
5. Mallard
6. Indian Spot-billed Duck
7. Northern Pintail
8. Green-winged Teal
9. Ferruginous Pochard
10. Common Merganser
11. Tibetan Partridge
12. Hill Partridge
13. Blood Pheasant
14. Satyr Tragopan
15. Himalayan Monal
16. Red Junglefowl
17. Kalij Pheasant
18. Great Cormorant
19. Little Cormorant
20. White-bellied Heron
21. Black Stork
22. Pallas's Fish-Eagle
23. Lammergeier
24. Himalayan Griffon
25. Crested Serpent-Eagle
26. Northern Harrier
27. Besra
28. Eurasian Sparrowhawk
29. Northern Goshawk
30. Eurasian Buzzard
31. Long-legged Buzzard
32. Upland Buzzard
33. Black Eagle
34. Greater Spotted Eagle
35. Steppe Eagle
36. Golden Eagle
37. Bonelli's Eagle
38. Booted Eagle
39. Rufous-bellied Eagle
40. Mountain Hawk-Eagle
41. Collared Falconet
42. Eurasian Kestrel
43. Amur Falcon
44. Peregrine Falcon
45. Black-tailed Crake
46. Ruddy-breasted Crake
47. Eurasian Coot
48. Common Crane
49. Black-necked Crane
50. Northern Lapwing
51. River Lapwing
52. Ibisbill
53. Common Sandpiper
54. Green Sandpiper
55. Pintail Snipe
56. Great Black-headed Gull
57. Rock Pigeon
58. Snow Pigeon
59. Speckled Wood-Pigeon
60. Adamawa Turtle-Dove
61. Oriental Turtle-Dove
62. Spotted Dove
63. Barred Cuckoo-Dove
64. Pin-tailed Pigeon
65. Wedge-tailed Pigeon
66. Mountain Imperial-Pigeon
67. Green-billed Malkoha
68. Collared Scops-Owl
69. Oriental Scops-Owl
70. Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl
71. Tawny Fish-Owl
72. Collared Owlet
73. Asian Barred Owlet
74. Tawny Owl
75. Short-eared Owl
76. Gray Nightjar
77. Large-tailed Nightjar
78. Himalayan Swiftlet
79. Red-headed Trogon
80. Ward's Trogon
81. Common Kingfisher
82. White-throated Kingfisher
83. Crested Kingfisher
84. Blue-bearded Bee-eater
85. Eurasian Hoopoe
86. Great Hornbill
87. Rufous-necked Hornbill
88. Wreathed Hornbill
89. Great Barbet
90. Golden-throated Barbet
91. Blue-throated Barbet
92. Yellow-rumped Honeyguide
93. Eurasian Wryneck
94. Speckled Piculet
95. White-browed Piculet
96. Gray-headed Woodpecker
97. Gray-capped Woodpecker
98. Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker
99. Rufous-bellied Woodpecker
100. Crimson-breasted Woodpecker
101. Darjeeling Woodpecker
102. Lesser Yellownape
103. Greater Yellownape
104. Gray-faced Woodpecker
105. Bay Woodpecker
106. Brown Shrike
107. Long-tailed Shrike
108. Gray-backed Shrike
109. Black-winged Cuckoo-shrike
110. Long-tailed Minivet
111. Short-billed Minivet
112. Scarlet Minivet
113. Gray-chinned Minivet
114. Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike
115. Orange-bellied Leafbird
116. Common Iora
117. Eurasian Jay
118. Gold-billed Magpie
119. Green Magpie
120. Gray Treepie
121. Collared Treepie
122. Eurasian Magpie
123. Black-billed Magpie
124. Eurasian Nutcracker
125. Red-billed Chough
126. Yellow-billed Chough
127. House Crow
128. Long-billed Crow
129. Large-billed Crow
130. Oriental Skylark
131. Eurasian Crag-Martin
132. Nepal Martin
133. Coal Tit
134. Rufous-vented Tit
135. Gray-crested Tit
136. Green-backed Tit
137. Yellow-cheeked Tit
138. Yellow-browed Tit
139. Sultan Tit
140. Black-throated Tit
141. Black-browed Tit
142. Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch
143. White-tailed Nuthatch
144. Beautiful Nuthatch
145. Wallcreeper
146. Eurasian Treecreeper
147. Rusty-flanked Treecreeper
148. Brown-throated Treecreeper
149. Winter Wren
150. White-throated Dipper
151. Brown Dipper
152. Striated Bulbul
153. Black-crested Bulbul
154. Red-vented Bulbul
155. White-cheeked Bulbul
156. White-throated Bulbul
157. Mountain Bulbul
158. Ashy Bulbul
159. Black Bulbul
160. Goldcrest
161. Striated Prinia
162. Hill Prinia
163. Plain Prinia
164. Yellowish-bellied Bush-Warbler
165. Gray-sided Bush-Warbler
166. Mountain Tailorbird
167. Common Tailorbird
168. Tickell's Leaf-Warbler

169. Buff-barred Warbler  
170. Ashy-throated Warbler  
171. Lemon-rumped Warbler  
172. Yellow-browed Warbler  
173. Blyth's Leaf-Warbler  
174. Yellow-vented Warbler  
175. Golden-spectacled Warbler  
176. Whistler's Warbler  
177. Gray-hooded Warbler  
178. White-spectacled Warbler  
179. Gray-cheeked Warbler  
180. Chestnut-crowned Warbler  
181. Rufous-faced Warbler  
182. Yellow-bellied Warbler  
183. Black-faced Warbler  
184. Broad-billed Warbler  
185. Dark-sided Flycatcher  
186. Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher  
187. Little Pied Flycatcher  
188. Sapphire Flycatcher  
189. Verditer Flycatcher  
190. Large Niltava  
191. Small Niltava  
192. Rufous-bellied Niltava  
193. Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher  
194. Red-flanked Bluetail  
195. Golden Bush-Robin  
196. White-browed Bush-Robin  
197. Oriental Magpie-Robin  
198. Blue-capped Redstart  
199. Black Redstart  
200. Hodgson's Redstart  
201. White-throated Redstart  
202. Daurian Redstart  
203. Blue-fronted Redstart  
204. White-capped Redstart  
205. Plumbeous Redstart  
206. Grandala  
207. Little Forktail  
208. Black-backed Forktail  
209. Slaty-backed Forktail  
210. Spotted Forktail  
211. Siberian Stonechat  
212. Gray Bushchat  
213. Chestnut-bellied Rock-Thrush  
214. Blue Rock-Thrush  
215. Blue Whistling-Thrush  
216. Plain-backed Thrush  
217. Scaly Thrush  
218. Long-billed Thrush  
219. White-collared Blackbird  
220. Gray-winged Blackbird  
221. Dark-throated Thrush  
222. Yellow-bellied Fantail  
223. White-throated Fantail  
224. White-throated Laughingthrush  
225. White-crested Laughingthrush  
226. Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush  
227. Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush  
228. Striated Laughingthrush  
229. Rufous-necked Laughingthrush  
230. Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush  
231. Spotted Laughingthrush  
232. Gray-sided Laughingthrush  
233. Bhutan Laughingthrush  
234. Scaly Laughingthrush  
235. Blue-winged Laughingthrush  
236. Black-faced Laughingthrush  
237. Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush  
238. Red-faced Liocichla  
239. Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler  
240. White-browed Scimitar-Babbler  
241. Streak-breasted Scimitar-Babbler  
242. Coral-billed Scimitar-Babbler  
243. Slender-billed Scimitar-Babbler  
244. Scaly-breasted Wren-Babbler  
245. Spotted Wren-Babbler  
246. Rufous-capped Babbler  
247. Golden Babbler  
248. Gray-throated Babbler  
249. Silver-eared Mesia  
250. Red-billed Leiothrix  
251. Cutia  
252. White-browed Shrike-Babbler  
253. Green Shrike-Babbler  
254. Black-eared Shrike-Babbler  
255. White-hooded Babbler  
256. Rusty-fronted Barwing  
257. Hoary-throated Barwing  
258. Blue-winged Minla  
259. Chestnut-tailed Minla  
260. Red-tailed Minla  
261. Golden-breasted Fulvetta  
262. Yellow-throated Fulvetta  
263. Rufous-winged Fulvetta  
264. White-browed Fulvetta  
265. Nepal Fulvetta  
266. Rufous Sibia  
267. Striated Yuhina  
268. White-naped Yuhina  
269. Whiskered Yuhina  
270. Stripe-throated Yuhina  
271. Rufous-vented Yuhina  
272. Black-chinned Yuhina  
273. White-bellied Yuhina  
274. Fire-tailed Myzornis  
275. Oriental White-eye  
276. Great Parrotbill  
277. Brown Parrotbill  
278. Gray-headed Parrotbill  
279. Fulvous Parrotbill  
280. Black-throated Parrotbill  
281. Lesser Rufous-headed Parrotbill  
282. Rufous-headed Parrotbill  
283. Gould's Sunbird  
284. Green-tailed Sunbird  
285. Black-throated Sunbird  
286. Eastern Crimson Sunbird  
287. Fire-tailed Sunbird  
288. Streaked Spiderhunter  
289. Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker  
290. Plain Flowerpecker  
291. Fire-breasted Flowerpecker  
292. Asian Fairy-bluebird  
293. Large Woodshrike  
294. Black Drongo  
295. Ashy Drongo  
296. Bronzed Drongo  
297. Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo  
298. Spangled Drongo  
299. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo  
300. Jungle Myna  
301. Common Myna  
302. Alpine Accentor  
303. Himalayan Accentor  
304. Robin Accentor  
305. Rufous-breasted Accentor  
306. Maroon-backed Accentor  
307. Gray Wagtail  
308. White Wagtail  
309. White-browed Wagtail  
310. Richard's Pipit  
311. Olive-backed Pipit  
312. Little Bunting  
313. Plain Mountain-Finch  
314. Dark-breasted Rosefinch  
315. Beautiful Rosefinch  
316. Pink-browed Rosefinch  
317. Dark-rumped Rosefinch  
318. White-browed Rosefinch  
319. Red Crossbill  
320. Yellow-breasted Greenfinch  
321. Tibetan Serin  
322. Brown Bullfinch  
323. Red-headed Bullfinch  
324. Collared Grosbeak  
325. Spot-winged Grosbeak  
326. White-winged Grosbeak  
327. Gold-naped Finch  
328. Scarlet Finch  
329. Russet Sparrow  
330. Eurasian Tree Sparrow  
331. White-rumped Munia  
332. Nutmeg Mannikin