



Bhutan: Birding the Kingdom in the Clouds

November 2-21, 2026

\$10,500 from Bangkok, Thailand

\$525 single supplement

NOTE: This is a provisional itinerary based based on our previous tours. There may be some slight changes in the timing of the various stops and the towns used for overnights, but the route, birding areas, and objectives will remain the same. A finalized itinerary will be available in spring of 2026.

High in the majestic eastern Himalayas and nestled between Tibet and India, sits the small Kingdom of Bhutan, renowned as one of the planet's precious, unspoiled spots. In this mountain country, an intact Buddhist culture is integrated into every aspect of daily life set amid spectacular mountain scenery, pristine forests, and picturesque valleys. The breathtaking landscape is dotted with fluttering prayer flags, colorful farmhouses, terraced fields, and impressive monasteries clinging to impossible cliffs.

This shining cultural gem is a birder's paradise. Over 60 percent of the country is forested, and unlike other Himalayan countries, much of Bhutan's original forest remains intact. As a result, Bhutan lies in an area designated as one of the world's ten biodiversity hotspots. Its wide altitudinal range—from sub-tropical lowlands to alpine peaks—provides an array of climatic conditions and habitats, from sub-tropical jungles to temperate forests and tundra that support now over 700 bird species. The diversity of bird life in Bhutan is further augmented by numerous migrating species that pass through Bhutan on their travels north and south. For these reasons, Bhutan's bird list includes some of the rarest and most sought after species in the eastern Himalayas. Thirty-four species of birds classed as threatened or near threatened are found in Bhutan, including the high elevation Black-necked Crane and the critically endangered White-bellied Heron. Because of Bhutan's progressive forest conservation practices many of these species still thrive in Bhutan and can be found easier here than elsewhere in their range.

In addition to having an astonishing diversity of bird life in a country no larger than Switzerland, Bhutan is home to at least 165 species of mammals, including golden langur, leopard, rhinoceros and Asian 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. Although very rarely seen, tigers might be found anywhere from the base 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 (four endemic), and more than 300 species of medicinal plants are found within its borders.

During our expedition we will see a wide variety of birds, wildlife, and scenic wonders. Our walks and drives will take us through virgin forests, across high open pastures, to Bhutan's most extensive high-elevation wetland, as well as to mountain villages and monasteries. Throughout the tour we'll occasionally stop to visit the impressive monasteries, dzongs (the monastery/fortresses that serve as Bhutan's administrative and religious centers), temples, and stupas that are important features of Bhutan's religion and culture, both past and present.

ITINERARY

Day 1, November 2: Arrival in Bangkok and pre-trip meeting

We'll hold a pre-trip meeting in the lobby of our hotel in Bangkok, Thailand today to make sure everyone made it this far, answer last minute questions, and plan our departure for the airport the next morning.

Meeting and dinner: 6 PM in the lobby of the hotel

The hotel is about 10 minutes by taxi from the Suvarnabhumi International Airport. We'll send details of getting to the hotel from the airport in a subsequent email.

Overnight in Bangkok at a hotel near the airport.

Day 2, November 3: Arrival in Paro and drive to Thimphu.

Our flight to Paro to Bangkok departs at 7:30 AM with a scheduled arrival in Paro, Bhutan at 11:00 AM. This will require an early shuttle to the airport, however, with the time change most of our bodies will be wide awake at this hour. The flight makes a stop en route (Bagdogra, India) during which we'll stay on the plane. Upon arrival in Paro, Bhutan 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 drive Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. The drive time is just over one hour, but we'll make a few birding stops en route. Leaving the airport we will see our trip's first birds: Gray-backed Shrike, White Wagtail, and Hodgson's Redstart. A little further into our drive we will stop along the Paro Chhu (River). Some

of the birds we hope to encounter here include Ibisbill, Wallcreeper, Brown Dipper, Ruddy Shelduck, and River Lapwing.

Overnight at a Thimphu hotel (2,320 m/7,656 ft).

Day 3, November 4: Thimphu to Dochula

On our first full day in Bhutan, we'll ease into the tour by exploring the birding and sights in and around Thimphu. We'll bird local riparian areas, and the forested slopes above the city. We may also bird the forested grounds of a nearby monastery. In the afternoon we'll make the 45 minute drive to Dochula Pass for stunning views of the Himalayas. On a clear day, the panoramic view of the Himalayas, including Gangkar Puensum (7,541 m/24,734 ft), the world's highest unclimbed peak, is breathtaking. Dochu La is a spectacular setting with 108 chortens beautifully laid out across the mountaintop, prayer flags fluttering from the towering pine trees, and the high Himalayas in the distance. The lovely Fire-tailed Myzornis is a distinct possibility, as is Red-headed Bullfinch and an assortment of tit and rosetfinch possibilities. We'll bird forests around Dochula and catch sunset from the pass. Tonight's hotel is perched adjacent to Dochula itself and is only a few minutes away.

Overnight at Dochula Resort (3,100 m/10,171 ft).

Day 4, November 5: Dochula to Tsirang

After sunrise at Dochula and birding around the pass, we begin our travels toward the lowlands of southern Bhutan, beginning our grand loop through the country. A short distance from Dochula, we'll make a morning stop at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Lamperi. This important site forms a biological corridor between Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park. It's a very pleasant and productive place to pass a few morning hours birding.

From the Botanical gardens, we'll 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'll drive south, following the river, and crossing through farmlands, hydropower construction sites and sparse forests of chir pine. From Wangdi on, there are few planned birding stops and most of the afternoon will be spent driving. However, we'll be on the look out for Pallas's Fish Eagle and Great Hornbill along our drive. About mid way through today's drive we enter the Tsirang region. The Tsirang region is where north literally meets the south. The people from southern Bhutan are mostly of Nepalese origins and at Tsirang the culture is a mixture of the two ethnic groups. We'll also have our

first chance to see some of the birds of southern Bhutan. We'll continue to the town of Tsirang where we'll spend the night. Today's drive is one of the longer drives of the trip, but it travels on some of the better roads in the country.

Overnight at a Tsirang area hotel (elevation 1,437m/4,715ft)

Day 5, November 6: Tsirang to Gelephu

We'll make an early drive from our hotel to the cool broadleaf forests around a low pass at Darachu before descending to the warm tropical region of Gelephu. We'll spend time birding around Darachu, where the lush forest may hold the much sought after Beautiful Nuthatch. Other possibilities here include Rufous-necked Hornbill, Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush, Lesser and Greater Racket-tailed Drongos, and Lesser and Greater Yellownape, and Long-billed Wren Babbler. We'll leave the forests of Darachu early enough to have some time in the afternoon to bird the plains of Sarpang and some areas around the border town of Gelephu. From Sarpang to Gelephu, we'll drive through the flattest region of Bhutan. The 20-mile stretch of road will provide us with an opportunity to add birds typical of the Indian Plains to our list, including, Black-headed and Maroon Orioles, Indochinese Roller, Jungle Babbler, Hill and Jungle Mynas, four species of parrot, Indian Pond-Heron, Wreathed and Oriental Pied Hornbill, Red Junglefowl, Indian Peafowl, and Greater Flameback. Gelephu is the main town in the district of Sarpang and one of the three main entry points into Bhutan from India.

Overnight at a Gelephu Hotel (230 m/770 ft)

Day 6, November 7: Gelephu to Tingtibi

After spending the early morning birding the borderland plains around Gelephu, including a dawn trip to the incredibly productive Gelephu Sewage lagoons, we say goodbye to the southern lowlands and ascend towards the District of Zhemgang. The drive through the broadleaf forest is not only beautiful but is rich with bird life. We will be driving mostly up hill with occasional birding stops and the last two hour drive is downhill until we arrive in Tingtibi at 540 m/1780 ft. Today's birding may offer us views of Great Hornbill, Black Eagle, Mountain Hawk-Eagle, and Rufous-bellied Eagle. We'll spend two nights in Tingtibi at a simple hotel. This takes the place of what formerly were two nights camping on other itineraries.

Overnight at a Tingtibi area Hotel (540 m/1,780 ft)

Day 7, November 8: Birding around Tingtibi

Today we bird the rich forests and riparian zones of the Tingtibi area. Here we have a chance to find White-breasted, Pale-billed and Black-throated Parrotbill, Collared Falconet, White-hooded Babbler, Red-faced Liocichla, Blue-winged Laughingthrush, Common Green Magpie, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Nepal Fulvetta, and Himalayan Cutia. In addition to the bird life, we will be in the range of the Golden Langur, a beautiful and rare near-endemic primate of Bhutan.

Overnight at a Tingtibi Hotel (540 m/1,780 ft)

Day 8, November 9: Tingtibi to Panbang

We'll spend the first hours of the morning birding the forests and bamboo along the route to Panbang. The bamboo along here holds two very special birds, White-hooded Babbler and Pale-billed Parrotbill (Lesser Rufous-headed), among many other species. Our drive today takes us down the valley of the Mangde Chhu. Here we'll have another chance for White-bellied Heron, one of the world's rarest birds. After leaving the Tingtibi region our itinerary diverges from most past tours as we embark for only the third time on the newly constructed road from Tingtibi to Yongkhola, through Manas National Park. In 2018, we were only the second birding group to explore this newly opened route and we were amazed by what we found. Since then, our local guides have made several forays to this route and made some great discoveries.

Overnight at Panbang area hotel (~400 m/ 1,312 ft)

Day 9, November 10: Manas National Park, then to Nganlam

This morning we'll bird the Panbang area, especially a section of primary forest just out of town on the way to Nganlam. This area may hold specialties like Green Cochoa, Eye-browed Wren-Babbler, and Gray Peacock Pheasant. An array of mammals that call Manas home are possible from the road and we'll hope to glimpse a few as we bird the forested roadside.

We'll spend the afternoon driving the forested road to the town of Panbang, making birding stops along the way to search for low elevations species like Rufous-backed and Long-tailed Sibia, Collared Treepie, and Green Cochoa. In 2022, we found the very rare Rufous-vented Laughingthrush on this route and we'll be looking for it again this year!

Overnight at Nganglam hotel (145 m/475 ft)

Day 10, November 11: Nganglam to Yongkhola

We'll spend the early morning birding the forests around Nganglam before continuing our journey east and north to Yongkhola. Today's drive is along the impressive Gyelposhing-Nganglam Highway—one of the most spectacular and vertiginous drives in the country. The completion of this long-awaited road in 2018 is what has allowed our itinerary to loop through the rich forests of southern Bhutan. Possibilities today, especially near the picturesque village of Limethang include Crested and Little Bunting, Tawny Fish Owl, and another chance for Pallas's Fish Eagle. A reservoir at Gyelposhing may hold waterbirds such as Red-crested Pochard, Ferruginous Duck, Great Crested Grebe, and Eurasian Coot.

The Yongkhola area is often touted as one of the richest birding sites in all of Asia. We'll spend four nights here to take full advantage of the large altitudinal range, diverse habitats, and beautiful and comfortable lodge. Yongkhola is a tiny rural community which formerly had no modern tourist hotel. Several years ago, our host, Hishey Tsering, built the comfortable Trogon Villa Lodge. This is an excellent base from which to explore all that Yongkhola has to offer!

Overnight at Trogon Villa, Yongkhola (1,700 m/5,576 ft)

Day 11-13, November 12-14: Yongkhola Region

The specialties at Yongkhola are almost too numerous to mention. The intact forests are home to many species of Laughingthrush, including Rufous-chinned, Gray-sided, Scaly, and Blue-winged. Large mixed flocks of wintering passerines are possible throughout, and here we have several spots to try for key species like Beautiful Nuthatch, Ward's Trogon, Coral-billed Scimitar-Babbler, and Hodgson's Frogmouth.

With four nights planned at Trogon Villa, we'll be able to return to the lodge most days for an afternoon rest, before heading out in the late afternoon and evening.

Overnight at Trogon Villa, Yongkhola (1,700 m/5,576 ft)

Day 14, November 15: Yongkhola to Bumthang

Today's drive is often hailed as one of the most spectacular in the world. It will take us through magnificent forests, prayer flags waving in the breeze, countless waterfalls, and villages that seem to be frozen in time. Within a matter of hours after leaving Yongkhola we will have ascended over 5,000 feet of elevation. Eastern Bhutan is more remote than the western regions and many of the villages we pass through appear as if they've remained unchanged for centuries. Near Thrumsing La pass (3,700 m/12,435 ft), the possibilities of birds in this area include the gorgeous Fire-tailed Sunbird, Blood Pheasant, Himalayan Monal, Satyr Tragopan, Red-headed Bullfinch, Collared and White-winged Grosbeak, and Rusty-flanked and Eurasian Treecreeper.

Overnight at hotel in Chumay Valley, Bumthang (2,575 m/8,448 ft)

Day 15, November 16: Bumthang to Nobding (near Phobjikha Valley)

We'll leave our hotel before dawn to drive to a monastery perched at about 12,000 feet with the hope of seeing the majestic Himalayan Monal. Other high elevation species possible this morning are Dark-rumped, Himalayan White-browed, and Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch, White-collared Grosbeak, Snow Pigeon, and both Red-throated and Black-throated Thrush. We'll have breakfast at the monastery to enjoy the sunrise and birds at this beautiful site.

After our morning foray, we'll begin the long drive to Pele la pass. After about half an hour on this road we come to a viewpoint offering excellent views of the Trongsa valley with its massive Dzong across the depths of the Mangde Chhu gorge. After another hour we will be driving parallel to the eastern slope of the Black Mountains, with wonderful views of the trackless old-growth forests.

Our drive ends near the turnoff to Phobjikha Valley, the wintering location for the majority of Bhutan's Black-necked Cranes. Phobjikha is a designated conservation area which lies adjacent to Jigme Singye Wangchuck 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.

While today's drive is long, we'll make a few stops to stretch our legs and hopefully add a few species to our trip. The mountain and forest scenery along the way is simply stunning.

Overnight at a hotel in Nobding or Phobjikha Valley (2,606 m/8,550 ft)

Day 16, November 17: Phobjikha Valley and Pele La Pass

Today we will rise early to bird at Pele La pass (11,286 ft), departing in the dark for the short 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. We'll spend much of the morning birding around the Pele La and enjoying the incredible scenery and great birding. Be on the lookout for the Great and Brown Parrotbill, Himalayan Monal, Collared Grosbeak, and Darjeeling Woodpeckers. It is also home to the world's highest elevation population of Bengal tigers.

In the afternoon, we'll head to Phobjikha valley for a late afternoon walk into the valley of the wintering Black-necked Cranes. This is a picturesque walk through farms and undisturbed forest to a site overlooking the glacial valley where cranes return each evening to roost. Near dusk, we'll sit quietly along the forest edge watching these majestic cranes spiral down into the valley's wetland to roost for the night.

Overnight at a hotel in Nobding or Phobjikha Valley (2,606 m/8,550 ft)

Day 17, November 18: Nobding to Punakha

Our drive today is relatively short. From Nobding we head west, descending until the bridge below the Wangdue Dzong to arrive at the point where we turned south on Day 4. We'll spend some time birding the river edge for waterfowl, gulls, and shorebirds before making the short drive to Punakha.

In the afternoon, we'll make a visit to the beautiful Punakha Dzong. Originally known as Pungthang Dechhen Phodrang, (The Palace of Great Bliss) Punakha Dzong was built in 1637 by the Great Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal, the Unifier of Bhutan. The Dzong has been destroyed several times by floods, fire and earthquake, but it has always been rebuilt to its original grandeur, and the latest renovation was completed in 2004. The wood and metallic works are superb, not to mention the fantastic sculptures. After a tour of the dzong, we'll walk along the Po Chhu to Bhutan's longest suspension footbridge (the world's second longest) and walk across the bridge. Bar-headed Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, and Crested Kingfisher are possible along the river.

If we haven't yet found White-bellied Heron, after crossing the bridge, we'll drive along the Po Chhu up to Tsekha village for another look. Another spectacular and globally threatened species that is occasionally sighted along this river is Pallas's Fish Eagle.

Overnight at a Punakha hotel (1,235m/4,052 ft)

Day 18, November 19: Punakha to Paro, with an afternoon excursion to Chele La

After breakfast in Punakha, we'll drive on to Paro. This afternoon, we may have the option of making the drive up to Chele La pass (3,810 m/12,573 ft), the highest road point in Bhutan. This would offer more incredible views of the Himalayas including Mount Jomolhari. On the western side of the pass as we gaze into the valley of Haa we'll also see Mt. Kanchenjunga, the third highest peak in the world, in the distance. The birds in the pass area include White-throated Redstart, White-winged and Collared Grosbeaks, Altai and Alpine Accentors and perhaps even the majestic Lammergeier, if we are very lucky.

Overnight at a Paro hotel (2,300 m/7,544ft)

Day 19, November 20: Hike to Tiger's Nest Monastery and our Farewell Party

After breakfast at our hotel, we'll make the short drive to the trail head for our 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 Himalayas. It is perched on the side of a cliff 900 m/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 in a miraculous manner—flying on the back of a tigress. In 1998, a fire destroyed the main structure of Taktsang, but it has since been rebuilt, with traditional materials and techniques, to its previous splendor. Birding along the trail is often slower than at other sites, but we should encounter species such as Black-faced Laughingthrush, Chestnut-tailed Minla, and Yellow-billed Blue Magpie. The only Black Redstart we've recorded on this itinerary was along this hike.

After this morning's outing, we'll return to our hotel with a little time to rest before our farewell dinner this evening.

Overnight at at Paro hotel (2,300 m/7,544ft)

Day 20, November 21, Departure

Today we'll fly back to Bangkok, time TBA.

The tour ends this evening upon arrival back in Bangkok. Accommodations in Bangkok this evening are not included in the tour cost.

TOUR DETAILS

LEADERS: Aaron Lang and Sonam Dorji

GROUP SIZE: limited to 11 participants

THE TOUR INCLUDES: Guides, flights between Bhutan and Bangkok, all in-Bhutan expenses (ground transportation, meals, lodging, entrance fees to museums, daily tariff, visa fee, departure tax and tourism tax.) Lodging and dinner in Bangkok on November 4 are also included in the tour price.

The tour price includes the flight between Bangkok, Thailand and Paro, Bhutan. If the flight schedule allows and you wish to arrive from India or Bangladesh, let us know and we will adjust the price accordingly.

NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE: Airfare to and from your home and Bangkok, personal expenditures in Bhutan (e.g., shopping, laundry, internet use, alcoholic beverages, gratuities to our Bhutanese guides), transit from the Bangkok airport to the hotel, and personal Bangkok apart from those specifically listed above. No discounts offered by WBA can be applied to this trip.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE: A deposit of \$1,000 is required upon registration. The remaining balance is due 90 days prior to the tour, August 2, 2026

CANCELLATION POLICY: If you need to cancel before July 2, 2026 (120 days prior to the tour) your deposit and any payments will be refunded minus a \$100 cancellation fee. If you cancel between July 2 and August 2, 2026 all but your deposit will be refunded. For cancellations on or after August 2, 2026 no refund is available.

TRIP CANCELLATION/TRAVEL INSURANCE: We strongly recommend trip insurance. Trip cancellation insurance covers you if you have to cancel. Travel insurance provides coverages for medical, theft, etc. during your travels. To shop for either, check out www.insuremytrip.com.

TOUR PACE AND STYLE: While this trip is certainly a birding tour, it would be a shame to visit such a fascinating country without taking in some of its rich culture and heritage. During the tour we may 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 strong birding focus, which often results in delightful impromptu encounters with the local residents. We recommend that you have an interest in birding, but it's not necessary to be a serious birder to enjoy the trip.

Most mornings we'll begin before dawn, with an early coffee/tea in our hotel or camp, pre-dawn departure, and breakfast in the field. It is not uncommon to be in the field at 5 AM or earlier. Most lunches are served in the field by our road crew and dinner is served at our accommodations (either hotel or camp). We will occasionally go out after dinner if there are decent owling opportunities nearby. When we spend more than one night at a location, it is often possible to take a mid-day rest before heading out for afternoon birding. This may not be possible on travel days, although naps on the bus are possible on most travel days. This is a road-based tour. While we attempt to balance the time on the road with time out in the field birding, several of our days require very long drives. 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. Because the forests of Bhutan are intact, many of them in pristine condition, the roadsides offer fantastic birding and in many areas are the only paths through the dense forest.

ACCOMMODATIONS: We will mainly stay in comfortable hotels and resorts. The recent construction of hotels and lodges through the more rural areas on the itinerary has made it possible to now run this 20-day trip without camping. However, expect that some of the accommodations in these rural towns will be more basic than the hotels we use in cities and larger towns. In November in the Himalayas, the skies are clear most of the time and temperatures may drop below freezing at night at higher elevations. Some of the hotels at these elevations can be a bit chilly at night as most lack central heat.

REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure date is required for United States citizens to enter Bhutan. For your Bhutan visa you'll need to send to WBA a full-color scan of the pages of your passport containing the passport details, photo and signature. Our Bhutan visas are arranged by our Bhutanese guides and your WBA guide will have them. A visa is not necessary for Thailand for stays of less than 30 days.

VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH: Vaccination against Covid-19 is required for travel to Bhutan. Please make sure you bring your CDC issued vaccination card with you. It's also a good idea to keep a digital copy with your phone. No other vaccinations are required for travel in Bhutan; however, cholera and yellow fever inoculations are required if you arrive within five days of departing from an infected area. The southern portions of our route (primarily the border zone between Gelephu and Nganglam) is considered an endemic zone for malaria and you might consider consulting your physician regarding anti-malarial prophylactics. As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against hepatitis types A and B. We recommend participants contact their doctor for advice prior to departure. All participants should bring a good quantity of all their prescription and over the counter drugs and medical supplies, as these will be very difficult to obtain in Bhutan.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636). You can check the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/travel.

FOOD: Breakfasts may include eggs, toast, oatmeal or muesli, juice, and fruit. Lunches and dinners are similar to each other: several cooked dishes typically including rice, potatoes in a sauce, chiles and cheese (the national dish), stewed meats with sauces, and/or cooked greens. Even when we are picnicking out in the country, we usually have hot, cooked lunches. Desserts are occasional. When we get up early to bird before breakfast, we usually will have coffee/tea and crackers before heading out, and full breakfast after our early morning birding. If you have dietary restrictions, please let us know on the guest information form and our guides will try to accommodate you. This form can be filled out on-line at www.wildernessbirding.com/guest

SPENDING MONEY: You will need cash for gifts/souvenirs, alcoholic beverages, hotel laundry, internet use, and an optional tip for our Bhutanese guides. If you go out on the town on your own, you're responsible for meals, etc. Souvenirs in Bhutan, including jewelry, beautiful textiles, carvings, handmade paper products, etc. and tend to be on the expensive side.

CURRENCY: Upon arrival in Bhutan you can exchange currency at the airport in Paro. We can also exchange at the bank in Thimphu. ATMs are very hard to come by in Bhutan so make sure to have enough cash on hand. If necessary we may be able to make a stop at a bank later in the trip as well. Very few of the shops we'll visit accept credit cards.

TIPPING: Although tipping is officially discouraged in Bhutan, it is unofficially expected. Near the end of our tours we commonly pool funds for a modest tip to our local guides, driver and road crew. We can pay this in US cash or Bhutanese currency or a combination. If you are interested in contributing to a tip at the end of our trip, we suggest having \$150-\$250 for this purpose in either US dollars or Bhutanese currency. You are also welcome to tip independently rather than as part of the group, or not at all, as you wish.

SMOKING: Smoking is banned in public places and tobacco sales are illegal throughout the country.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Bird Books

Grimmett, R., Inskipp, C. and T. Inskipp. Birds of the India: Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Second Edition. Princeton University Press. Now that Birds of Bhutan is out of print and difficult to find, this is the best book for the trip.

Inskipp, C., T. Inskipp and R. Grimmett. Birds of Bhutan. A&C Black, 2004. This book was condensed from the larger Birds of India book. While the text lacks some detail, its small size makes it a great book to carry in the field if you can find it.

Rasmussen, P. C. & J. C. Anderton. 2012. Birds of South Asia. The Ripley Guide. Vols. 1 and 2. Smithsonian Institution and Lynx Edicions. Washington D.C. and Barcelona. A more detailed, up-to-date and comprehensive work on the birds of the region. It's also bulky to travel with, but we'll have a copy along with us.

General Travel Guides

Mayhew, B., Brown, L. and Mahapatra, A. 2014. Bhutan. Lonely Planet Publications. Singapore.

Pommaret, F. 2009. Bhutan: Himalayan Mountain Kingdom. Airphoto International Ltd. London.

Both of these are good overall guides with quite a bit of travel and cultural information.

Additional Reading

Zeppa, J. 2000. Beyond the Sky and the Earth: Journey into Bhutan. Riverhead Trail Publishers. A memoir of a 25 year old Canadian woman's experience as a teacher in eastern Bhutan.

Crossett, B. 1996. So Close to Heaven: The Vanishing Buddhist Kingdoms of the Himalayas. Vintage Publishers. A considerably more journalistic perspective on Bhutan's culture, politics and economy.

Film:

Travellers and Magicians: Bhutan's first feature film.

The Other Final: One of the best small films we've ever seen, but it has not been distributed in the US. Here's a choppy clip from it: <http://www.ceebanff.ca/portfoliodetail/tv/115>

EQUIPMENT: Because of the wide elevation range, the weather and temperatures on the trip can vary considerably. To help prepare, once you've registered we'll send you a detailed clothing and equipment list.

IN BANGKOK: After making your travel arrangements to Bangkok, let us know when you'll arrive in Bangkok so we can book your room hotel room for the night of November 4th. If you're arriving earlier than the 4th we can also help book your accommodations prior to the 4th.

THAILAND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: You do not need a visa to visit Thailand if you are staying for less than 30 days.

THAI CURRENCY: You can exchange major world currencies for Thai bhat at the Airport in Bangkok.

REGISTERING FOR THIS TOUR: You may register for this tour and make your deposit at www.wildernessbirding.com/guest

You may also pay your deposit with a check. Checks can be mailed to:

Wilderness Birding Adventures
40208 Alpenglow Circle
Homer, AK 99603

We hope you'll be able to join us for this remarkable birding adventure!

Photos and past bird lists can be found at our website: www.wildernessbirding.com

For more information or clarification of any details please drop us a line at:
info@wildernessbirding.com