



Bhutan: Birding the Kingdom in the Clouds

November 2-21, 2026

\$10,500 from Bangkok, Thailand

\$525 single supplement

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 elevation 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 760 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. Many species of threatened or endangered species live along our tour route, including the high elevation Black-necked Crane, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Ward's Trogon, 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. On several occasions during the tour we'll stop to visit or admire 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: We'll meet at 6 PM in the lobby of the hotel, with dinner to follow in the adjacent resaraunt.

The hotel is only 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 the At Residence Inn, near the Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

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

Our flight to Paro departs Bangkok at 7:30 AM with a scheduled arrival in Paro, Bhutan at 11:00 AM. This will require an early shuttle to the airport, perhaps 4:30 AM. 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 hosts and drive to 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) where we hope to get

our first views of some truly Himalayan specialties, including Ibisbill, Wallcreeper, Brown Dipper, Ruddy Shelduck, and River Lapwing.

Overnight at Eutsholing Boutique Hotel, Thimphu (2,320 m/7,656 ft).

Day 3, November 4: Thimphu Valley Birding

Our time in Bhutan begins with two nights in Thimphu to acclimate to the time change and elevation. On our first full day in Bhutan, we'll ease into the itinerary by exploring the birding and sights in and around Thimphu Valley. The northern end of Thimphu Valley includes a portion of the Jigme Dorji National Park where we may encounter our first looks of Southern Nutcracker, Yellow-billed Blue-Magpie, Black-faced Laughingthrush, and Rufous Sibia. Goral and musk deer are also possible on these forested slopes. In the afternoon, we'll visit the Royal Takin Preserve just outside of Thimphu. A few Takin—Bhutan's national animal—are kept here as well as several Sambar and barking deer. The forested grounds are also a great place to find bird like Long-tailed Minivet, Eurasian Wren, and White-throated Laughingthrush.

Overnight at Eutsholing Boutique Hotel, Thimphu (2,320 m/7,656 ft).

Day 4, November 5: Thimphu to Nobding

Shortly after leaving Thimphu this morning, we'll reach the stunning Dochu La pass, the first of several high passes we'll visit in Bhutan. 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 pines, and the high Himalayas in the distance. The lovely Fire-tailed Myzornis is a distinct possibility here, as is Red-headed Bullfinch, and an assortment of tit and rosefinch possibilities. We'll bird the high elevation forest at Dochu La before descending into the subtropical broadleaf forests of the Punakha Valley. A short distance down slope from Dochu La, we'll make a morning stop at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Lampelri. This important site is forms a biological corridor between Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park. It's a 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. From Wangdi we'll continue

east to small village of Nobding, where we'll spend the night. Ward's Trogon is possible in the forests near Nobding.

Overnight at Hotel Khuenphen Norbuling, Nobding (2,606 m/8,550 ft)

Day 5, November 6: Nobding to Trongsa

Our drive today from Nobding to Trongsa marks the dramatic transition from western to central Bhutan, traversing high-mountain passes, alpine valleys, and deep subtropical gorges. We'll of course be birding our way along this scenic drive and should encounter a diverse list of birds across the varied habitats. Our time in the high country today could be especially productive for raptors, rosefinches, and tits. As we near Trongsa, the terrain shifts into an impressive, steep-sided valley draped in lush broad-leaved forests. About an hour before reaching the town, we'll get our first views of the massive, Trongsa Dzong, an important landmark in the history and lore of Bhutan.

Overnight at the Tendrel Resort, Trongsa (2,120 m/6,960 ft)

Day 6, November 7: Trongsa to Tingtibi

We leave beautiful Trongsa and drive south, following the mighty Mangde Chhu (Chhu means river in Dzongka). As we venture south, the road descends in elevation, the vegetation changes, and the forests take on a more tropical feel. The small village of Tingtibi is off the main route for most tourists, and we'll spend days here exploring the rich forests of the area. This is the beginning of our route through southern Bhutan. It is the most rural and rustic portion of our itinerary and an area most visitors to Bhutan never see. These lush forests near the border contain an astounding diversity of plants and animals. The bamboo forests near Tingtibi hold White-hooded Babbler, Pale-billed Parrotbill, and Pale-headed Woodpecker. The near-endemic Golden Langur can be found here. And the quiet rivers in this region provide probably our best chance to find a White-bellied Heron, one of the world's rarest birds. It's estimated that only 60 White-bellied Herons remain in the wild, most of these in Bhutan.

We'll spend two nights just outside of Tingtibi in a simple but comfortable ecolodge along the Mangde Chu River. This newly built ecolodge replaces what were formerly two nights camping on other itineraries.

Overnight at in Tingtibi at the Berti Eco Lodge (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 in Tingtibi at the Berti Eco Lodge (540 m/1,780 ft)

Day 8, November 9: Tingtibi to Panbang

Today we'll bird our way along the quiet, forested road connecting Tingtibi and Panbang. We'll have some time early in the morning to look for any Tingtibi targets we have missed, including another chance for the White-bellied Heron. Our drive today takes us further down the valley of the Mangde Chhu, continuing south to the small village of Panbang near the Indian border. This route, looping through southern Bhutan, only became a possibility for us in 2018 when a new road was completed, connecting Tingtibi and Yongkhola. New birding discoveries continue to be made in this exciting area.

Overnight at Orgyen Zillion Lodge, Panbang (~400 m/ 1,312 ft)

Day 9, November 10: Panbang to Nganglam

This morning we'll bird the Panbang area, especially a section of primary forest just out of town on the way to Nganglam. 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 got some of the first photographs taken of the species in Bhutan. We'll be looking for it again this year!

Overnight at Hotel Dungsam, Nganlam (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, and Great Crested Grebe.

The Yongkhola area is often touted as one of the richest birding sites in all of Asia. And we'll have the privilege to spend four nights here to take full advantage of the large elevational 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 Tshering, build 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, Himalayan Cutia, Black-headed Shrike 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. Our after-dinner owling opportunities may also be good for mammals like barking deer, sambar deer, wild boar, or Bhutan giant flying squirrel.

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

Day 14, November 15: Yongkhola to Chumey

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.

Our drive today concludes in Bumthang Valley, an important agricultural region in Bhutan, and home to some of the most beautiful traditional architecture in the country.

Overnight at at Yidga Guesthouse, Chumey, Bumthang (2,575 m/8,448 ft)

Day 15, November 16: Chumey to Phobjikha Valley

We'll leave our hotel before dawn to drive about an hour 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 Yotong La pass, offering excellent views of the Trongsa valley below. 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. You'll remember the portion of the drive from Trongsa to Pele La Pass from our east bound drive on Day 5. Just past Pele La, we turn south off of the main road and a short drive leads us down into 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 Namgayling Cottages, Phobjikha Valley (3,000 m/9,840 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, Darjeeling Woodpecker, and Gold-naped Finch. It is also home to the world's highest elevation population of Bengal tigers. On our last tour, we were humbled by the sight of fresh tiger tracks crossing our path.

We'll return to Phobjikha for lunch and a mid-day break. We'll take a late afternoon walk into the valley of the wintering Black-necked Cranes. This is a picturesque walk through farm country to a site overlooking the glacial valley where cranes return each evening to roost. Depending on conditions, we may stay until dusk, sitting 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 Phobjikha Valley (3,000 m/9,840 ft)

Day 17, November 18: Phobjikha to Punakha

Our drive today is relatively short, backtracking west to Wangdi, then heading a short distance north to the town of Punakha. 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 the Jungle Lodge, Punakha (1,235m/4,052 ft)

Day 18, November 19: Punakha to Paro

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.

Overnight at the Hotel Drukchen, Paro (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

Our flight back to Bangkok today departs Paro at 4:20 PM. This will allow a leisurely final morning in Bhutan. There may be an opportunity to visit a few shops in town for a parting souvenir.

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 2nd 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 expenses in 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, especially in the south, 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: Unless you are traveling directly from a Yellow Fever-risk country, there are no specific vaccination requirements for entry into Bhutan or Thailand. Cholera and yellow fever inoculations are required **ONLY** 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, chilies and cheese (Ema Datshi, 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 or at a bank near our hotel 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 outside of Thimphu and Paro will 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 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. It's available free on Youtube.

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 2nd. If you're arriving earlier than the 2nd and you'd like to stay at the same hotel, we can also help book your accommodations prior to the 2nd.

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:
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