

Cambodia & South Vietnam Itinerary

[Link: Cambodia & South Vietnam](#)

Tour Overview

Vietnam has a rich and diverse birdlife incorporating avifaunas of the Himalayas, Malaysia and China, with 850 species of birds and more endemics than any other country in south-east Asia.

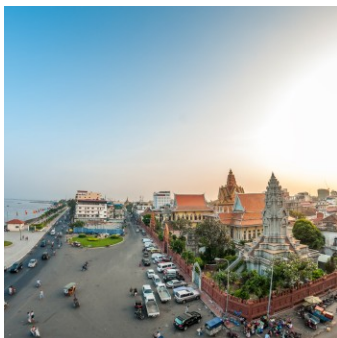
Habitats range from the enormous deltas, to fine beaches, extensive paddy-fields, lowland and highland lush rainforests, and rhododendron-covered peaks rising to over 3000 metres. Our tour covers south of this fascinating country, taking in the superb National Parks of Cat Tien and its lowland forests and wetlands, as well as Di Linh and the still extensive forests of the Da Lat plateau at 2000 metres on the Southern Annam Highlands where

This time of year finds the country at its best, the climate mostly cool, dry and enjoyable, winter birds still present and resident ones gearing up for breeding.

Cambodia is covered with deciduous dipterocarp forests that once were more widespread across much of Indochina and Thailand; currently, the Northern and Eastern Plains of Cambodia form the largest remaining contiguous block of this unique and critically important habitat. Visiting several sites in Cambodia, we have several chances to see White-shouldered and Giant Ibis, as well as Bengal Florican, Painted Stork, Greater Adjutant, Mekong Wagtail and critically endangered Irriwaddy Dolphin, plus the astonishing temples and ruins of Angkor Wat! Our Cambodia and South Vietnam birding tour is an amazing adventure!

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Phnom Penh, Cambodia



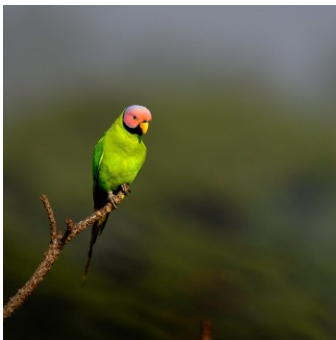
Our tour begins in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. Overnight in Phnom Penh.

Day 2: Kratie



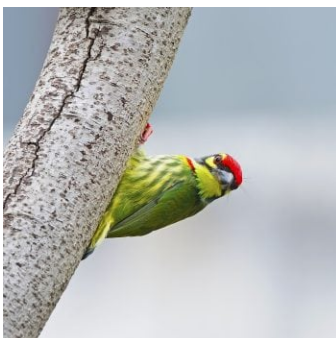
In the morning we bird around Phnom Penh and then transfer to Kratie. Here we will hop into boats to explore the Mekong River north of Kratie scanning the banks of small vegetated islands for the recently described and near-threatened Mekong Wagtail. Another possible highlight of this cruise is seeing the critically endangered Irrawaddy Dolphin, which are resident in small numbers here (2018 census found 92 dolphins, the highest number in 20 years). Other birds we hope to find include the increasingly rare Grey-throated Sand Martin, Small Pratincole and Pied Kingfisher. Overnight at Mekong River hotel or similar.

Days 3 & 4: Kratie to Tmatbouy



After some morning birding around Kratie we will leave and go to Tmatbouy. Trapeangs are small waterholes scattered throughout the forest and are the best spots to find the near-mythical Giant Ibis and White-shouldered Ibis. As we jump from one trapeang to another looking for ibis, we will find other species along the way including Black-headed Woodpecker, the enormous Great Slaty Woodpecker, the striking White-bellied Woodpecker, Velvet fronted Nuthatch, Burmese Nuthatch, Burmese Shrike, Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon, Brown Prinia, Blossom-headed and Red-breasted Parakeets, Indochinese Cuckooshrike, Indochinese Bushlark, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Black-hooded Oriole and White-rumped Falcon. Night-birding is also often productive, and the local guides should know where several roosts are with Spotted and Brown Wood-Owls, Collared and Oriental Scops-Owls, Brown Fish-Owl and Spotted Owlet all possible along with Savannah and Large-tailed Nightjars. Overnight at Tmatboey.

Day 5: Tmatbouy - Florican grassland - Siem Reap



This part of northern Cambodia harbors a rich ecosystem of open woodlands, seasonally-wet grasslands, deciduous dipterocarp forest and scattered wetlands – some of best remaining examples in Southeast Asia. Overnight at Mekong Palace hotel.

Day 6: Siem Reap, Ang Trapeang Thmor



We will spend a full day exploring Ang Trapeang Thmor, a nature reserve that is a patchwork of grasslands, dry forest and rice fields. The reserve is an important wintering site for the endangered eastern population of Sarus Crane. The wide-open spaces are also good for raptors such as Greater Spotted Eagle, rarely Imperial Eagle, Black Baza, and harriers while owls such as Spotted Owlet, Barn Owl and Spotted Wood-owl roost in the scattered copses. We will also visit the nearby Trapeang Thma Lake, a reservoir that can have a staggering number of birds depending on water levels – species here include Lesser Whistling-duck, rafts of Cotton Pygmy-Goose and Garganey, Spot-billed Pelican, Painted Stork, various shorebirds and occasionally Black-necked Stork. Overnight at Mekong Palace hotel.

Day 7: Siem Reap, Angkor Wat



Today we will visit Angkor Wat, one of the most important archaeological sites in Southeast Asia, and together with neighboring temples form the remains of different capitals of the Khmer Empire, from the 9th to the 15th century. As we revel in the historical grandeur of these UNESCO World Heritage sites, we will also look for birds – moats and forest patches within the temple walls can hold special birds such as Oriental Darter, Alexandrine Parakeet, White-throated Rock-thrush, Forest Wagtail, and much more. Later we take flight to Ho Chi Minh city. Overnight in HCM city.

Day 8: Mekong tour then drive to Da Lat



We will visit the Mekong Delta or the coastal suburb of Can Gio to look for shorebirds that might include Spoon-billed Sandpiper, “White-faced” Plover and Nordmann’s Greenshank. We will then make the long drive to Da Lat. Overnight Da Lat.

Days 9-11: Da Lat



Da Lat sits on a plateau at 1,475 m (4,921 ft) and is known as the “City of Eternal Spring” for its comfortable temperate climate. The region’s landscape is picturesque - dotted with lakes and surrounded by woodland full of native pines. The distinct weather and habitats make the Da Lat Plateau a biodiversity hotspot, recognized by Birdlife International as an Endemic Bird Area (EBA) - one of five in Vietnam. Five species - Black-crowned Fulvetta, Collared Laughingthrush, Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, Grey-crowned Crocias and Vietnamese Greenfinch are only found here. During our stay, we will explore the forested slopes of the highest peak in the region Mount Langbian at 2,169 m (7,116 ft), birding the trails for the spectacular and endangered Collared Laughingthrush. Other birds we will look for include Yellow-billed Nuthatch, the near-endemic Vietnamese Cutia, White-browed (Da Lat) Shrike-babbler, Black-crowned Fulvetta and Green-backed (Langbian) Tit. The handsome and elusive Green Cochoa is also found here and should be vocal this time of year, and we should encounter a good number of wintering species. Another important site we will visit is the Tung Na Valley, famous for the rediscovery of the Grey-crowned Crocias in the 1990’s and still regularly found here. Other important targets include Black-hooded Laughingthrush, Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, White-cheeked Laughingthrush, Black-headed (White-spectacled) Sibia, Vietnamese Greenfinch, and Indochinese Green Magpie. Later, we’ll visit Tuyen Lam lake, an area where the greenfinch is again possible, and where we can find several bulbuls, Slender-billed Orioles, Red (Annam) Crossbill, and Black-throated (Langbian) Sunbird. At the popular Datanla Waterfall, we will look for Annam Barbet, Gould’s Sunbird and Vietnamese Cutia while we enjoy the beautiful series of waterfalls. And finally, we will explore the Da Lat Flower Garden, a large landscaped park that holds various shorebirds, waders and kingfishers. Overnight at the luxury resort Hoang Anh - Dat Xanh for a 3-night stay.

Day 12: Da lat to Di Linh



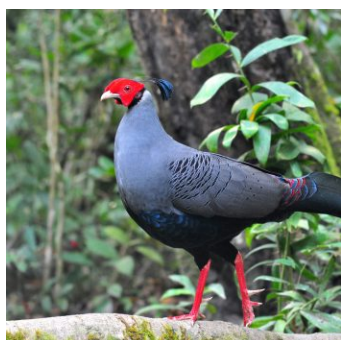
We depart Da Lat in the afternoon and take a relatively short drive to Di Linh. Certain species can be easier to find at the Nui San Pass than in Da Lat - exciting possibilities include Blue Pitta, Rusty-naped Pitta, Spotted Forktail, White-cheeked Laughingthrush, Black-hooded Laughingthrush, Orange-breasted Laughingthrush, Vietnamese Cutia and the near-threatened and near-endemic Black-headed Parrotbill. Overnight in Di Linh.

Day 13: Di Linh to Cat Tien



We will revisit Nui San Pass in the early morning hours, looking for the aforementioned species, and giving Green Cochoa another shot. We then continue on to Cat Tien National Park for a 4-night stay. Overnight at superb Cat Tien National Park.

Days 14 & 15: Cat Tien National Park



Cat Tien National Park contains the largest remaining tract of lowland tropical forest in southern Vietnam – a mosaic of primary and secondary forest, seasonal wetlands and large swaths of grassland and bamboo. Cat Tien is one of Vietnam’s premier birding sites and exploring the jeep tracks and forest trails here should give us a good chance of finding our key targets: Germain’s Peacock-pheasant, Siamese Fireback, Green Peafowl, Bar-bellied Pitta, Blue-rumped Pitta, and Gray-faced Tit-babbler. Many lowland birds with a wider distribution in Southeast Asia also occur here including various broadbills, woodpeckers, barbets, hornbills. Overnight Cat Tien Park.

Day 16: Transfer to Ho Chi Minh City

We will spend the morning birding around Cat Tien National Park. In the afternoon, we will transfer to Ho Chi Minh City, after making birding stops along the way. Overnight in Ho Chi Minh city.

Day 17: Departure, Ho Chi Minh city

Our Cambodia & South Vietnam birding tour ends today. You can depart anytime today.

What to Expect

Overview

The Cambodia & South Vietnam tour is a fast paced birding tour. You can expect some pretty early mornings and long days in the field. Our time at Angkor Wat will be focused on birding. If Angkor Wat is a highlight for you, consider arriving a day or two early to explore it’s vast scale and rich history further at your own pace.

Food

We like to go birding before breakfast, since it is best to begin birding at daybreak, and come back to eat breakfast. We take most lunches at the hotel or a cafe, but will sometimes have a picnic style, to maximize our time in the field. Dinner is usually at the lodge or a nearby restaurant. Each evening

after dinner we compile the day's checklist, review the day's activities, birds, mammals and other observations, and plan the next day's activities.

Accommodation

Accommodation ranges from basic hotels to comfortable lodges. All accommodations have private bathrooms with hot water.

Walking

The walking on this tour is mostly easy, with one moderately difficult walk up the trail on Mt Langbian, which becomes quite steep, however we take it very slowly with frequent stops.

Driving

Most days have a small to moderate amount of driving, apart from when we transfer from one accommodation to the next, which could be up to 4 hours.

Climate

We will encounter a range of climatic conditions during our tour. In Vietnam, the lowlands will be mostly hot, dry and sunny, and certainly humid, with showers in the afternoon. At higher altitudes in the south, conditions range from warm to cool. Overcast weather is not infrequent and it may rain. Cambodia is generally hot and humid with high temperatures approaching 32° C (90° F) and woodlands are generally open to the sun.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- One internal flight included
- Accommodation excellent to moderate, comfortable and adequate hotels and lodges
- 6 to 12 participants with an Eagle-Eye Tours leader and a local guide throughout
- All meals and soft drinks

Tour Price Does Not Include

- Flights to and from start/end
 - Travel Insurance
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Items of a personal nature
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