

Thailand Itinerary

[Link: Thailand](#)

Tour Overview

Thailand is a fascinating and bird-rich Asian country. Diverse habitats and a marvellous and extensive park and sanctuary system result in a large number of resident species, and there will be many Palearctic migrants present when we visit for our Thailand birding tour.

Our Thailand birding tour samples habitats from marshy plains, mangroves and salt pans around Bangkok to coastlines supporting the endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper, the extensive lowland forests at Kaeng Krachan National Park where we will access very productive blinds, the beautiful forests at Khao Yai, and montane forests in the northwest near Chiang Mai to Thailand's highest mountain at Doi Inthanon.

A splendid tour led by our guide and local guides who know the area well.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival



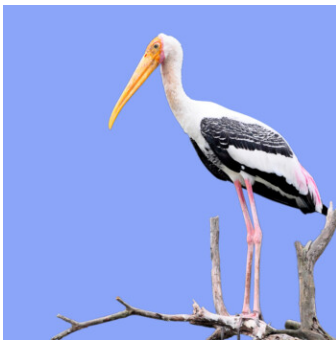
Our Thailand birding tour starts with arrival in Bangkok with a welcome dinner. Night in Bangkok.

Day 2: Mahachai Mangrove Forest and Phetchaburi



We depart after an early breakfast for the 40 minute drive to Wat Chalerm Phrakiet temple and Public Park. Here, we are introduced to common open country birds such as Spotted Owlet, Coppersmith Barbet, Oriental Magpie Robin, Green Bee-eater, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Pied Starling, Common Iora, Common Tailorbird, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Asian Common Koel, Greater Coucal, Openbill Stork and the flashy Indian Roller. Afterwards we go to Wat Chong Lom temple for Edible-nest Swiftlet and then drive to Mahachai Mangrove Forest, looking in particular for Oriental White-eye, Mangrove Whistler, Black-winged Stilt, Brown-throated and Olive-backed Sunbirds, Racket-tailed Treepie, Blue-throated Barbet, Yellow-bellied Prinia and Golden-bellied Gerygone. Next is the Bang Jak rice field where bird diversity is high - Purple Swamphen, Bronze-winged Jacana, Yellow Bittern, Spot-billed Pelican, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, White-browed Crake, Asian Golden Weaver, Streaked Weaver, Red Avadavat, Long-tailed Shrike, Plain-backed Sparrow, Grey-breasted Prinia, Chestnut-tailed Starling, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Pied Kingfisher, Scaly-breasted Munia and more. Night in Phetchaburi Province.

Day 3: Laem Phak Bia and transfer to Kaeng Krachan



We spend the morning birding in the Laem Phak Bia area looking in particular for the rare, endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Nordmann's Greenshank, and several other shorebirds such as Asian Dowitcher, Terek and Broad-billed Sandpipers, Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits, and Malaysian and White-faced Plovers, Painted Stork, Little Egret, and Black-capped, White-throated, Common and Pied Kingfishers, and host of other waders and wetland species. After this we bird at the nearby Royal Project - this project conducts research on polluted water caused by major cities. Here there are fish ponds, salt pans and a wooden walkway through mangrove forest. As we drive to Khao Kakrao we'll check out freshwater marshes for Black-faced Spoonbill, Black-headed Ibis, Painted Stork, Milky Stork, herons, rails and whatever else we can find. Landbirds could include Long-tailed Shrike, Siberian Stonechat, Plain Prinia and Black Drongo. If time we visit Bang Taboon Mangrove forest for look for Mangrove Whistler. On our way to Kaeng Krachan National Park, we stop at open areas to look for Gray-breasted Prinia, Eurasian Thick-knee, Eurasian Hoopoe and Chestnut-capped Babbler. We arrive at Kaeng Krachan perhaps in time for a productive session of birding at a blind set-up especially for bird photography. At dusk we look for Indian Nightjar. Night in accommodations just outside the park entrance.

Days 4 - 6: Kaeng Krachan



We spend three productive days birding Kaeng Krachan. With an area of about 3000 km² Kaeng Krachan National Park is Thailand's largest national park, covering nearly half of the province. It protects mostly rainforests in the mountains along the boundary with Myanmar, but also the Kaeng Krachan reservoir is part of the park. The only significant river of the province is the Phetchaburi River. A number of exciting species inhabit the lush forests - these include Grey Peacock-Pheasant, Kalij Pheasant, Blue Pitta and Orange-headed Thrush. Roadside birding here is very productive with many species from a wide range of bird families. In Dry Forest we look for Black-naped Oriole, Blue-winged and, Golden-fronted Leafbirds, Greater Yellow-nape, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Black-and-red Broadbill, and Crested Serpent Eagle, along with Red-bearded and Blue-bearded Bee-eaters, and Banded and Silver-breasted Broadbills. Higher elevation birding at Pha Nuan Thung could produce Long-tailed Broadbill, Pintailed Parrotfinch, Great and Wreathed Hornbills, Flavescent Bulbul, White-browed Shrike-Babbler, Great Barbet, Streaked Spiderhunter, Red-headed Trogon, Mountain Imperial Pigeon, Dark-sided Flycatcher, and mammals such as White-handed Gibbon and Dusky Leaf Langur. A daytime roost of the rare White-fronted Scops Owl will be a bonus. Other notables include Ratchet-tailed Treepie and Swinhoe's Minivet. In addition, the blinds at Uncle Sin's and nearby Ban Song Nok are excellent for bird photography and obtaining close views of otherwise shy forest species and we aim to spend time taking advantage of this unique opportunity. Possibilities abound: Bar-backed and Scaly-breasted Partridges, Red Junglefowl, Crested Goshawk, Red-legged Crane, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Eared Pitta, Emerald Dove, White-browed and Large Scimitar-Babblers, Black-crested, Black-headed and Stripe-throated Bulbuls, Racket-tailed Treepie, Green Magpie, Lesser and Greater Necklaced Laughingthrushes, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, Siberian Blue Robin, White-rumped Shama, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, and mammals such as Greater Mouse Deer. Nights in accommodations just outside the park entrance.

Day 7: Transfer to Khao Yai National Park



We spend the early morning around Ban Song Nok, followed by a 4-hour drive to Pak Chong Agriculture area looking for Yellow-eyed Babbler, Yellow-capped Babbler, Green Bee-eater and more. After this we drive another hour to our hotel outside the main gate of Khao Yai National Park. Night near Khao Yai.

Days 8 and 9: Khao Yai National Park



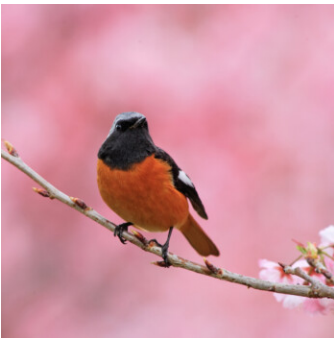
We spend two days birding in Khao Yai National Park. Birds are abundant here! We visit various locations in the park: Heaw Narok Waterfall for Banded Kingfisher, Pied Hornbill, Black-crested Bulbul, and Abbot's Babbler; the Zone Thanarat Bungalow habitat of scrub, grassy, forest edge for Hill Myna, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Red-wattled Lapwing, Red Junglefowl, and Ashy Wood Swallow; Khao Khiew road for Blue Pitta, Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogon, Silver Pheasant, Siamese Fireback, Greater Flameback, Thick-billed Pigeon, Long-tailed Broadbill, and Blue-breasted Bee-eater; Pha Diew Dai view point of evergreen forest and hill forest for Red-headed Trogon, Black-throated Laughingthrush, Puff-throated Babbler, Black Eagle, Great and Wreathed Hornbills; Pha Kaw Mai Campsite for Siberian Blue Robin and 4 species of Flowerpeckers - Yellow-vented, Plain, Scarlet-backed, and Buff-breasted; and Wang Jumpee, Buong Pai & Dong Tiew trails for Eared Pitta, White-crowned Forktail and Slaty-backed Forktail. Mammals include Sambar Deer, Barking Deer, White-handed Gibbon, Wild Dog, Black Giant Squirrel, and Variable Squirrel. The evening could produce Northern Brown Boobook, Brown Fish Owl, Wild Elephant, and civets. Nights just outside Khao Yai National Park.

Day 10: Transfer to Chang Rai



After breakfast we transfer to Bangkok and then take an afternoon flight to Chiang Rai. In the afternoon we drive west (about 2.5 hours) to Doi Ang Khang for an afternoon of exploratory birding, stopping at a couple of spots along the way. Night in accommodations near Doi Ang Khan.

Days 11 and 12: Doi Ang Khang



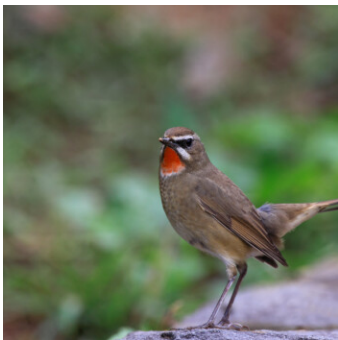
We spend two days birding at Doi Ang Khang. There are several special birds in this area, notably Giant Nuthatch, White-browed Laughingthrush, Spectacled Barwing, Brown-breasted Bulbul and Spot-breasted Parrotbill amongst many others. Also, our chances of seeing many wintering thrushes and warblers will be good. The area around Ban Luang is almost completely deforested, with remaining cover on rocky ridges, and this attracts Goshawk, Hen Harrier, Daurian Redstart, Buff-throated Warbler and Little Bunting. If time permits we can look for the scarce Hodgson's Frogmouth after dusk. Nights in accommodations near Doi Ang Khan.

Day 13: Transfer to Doi Inthanon NP



Today we drive south to Doi Inthanon NP where we spend three nights. Doi Inthanon is Thailand's highest mountain, 8,400 feet above sea level, a distinctly cool change from the hot and humid lowlands. This is an excellent site for mountain birds and can be good for wintering warblers and thrushes. Dark-sided Thrush and Green Cochoa will be two stars we'll be looking for, but there are many more special birds here. The lower part of the park has dry forest with a different set of birds, including Black-headed Woodpecker and Black-backed Forktail. Possibilities seem endless - Rufouse-bellied Niltava, Small Niltava, White-gorgeted Flycatcher, White-browed Scimitar-Babbler, Yellow-checked Tit, Dark-backed Sibia, Asian Emerald Cuckoo, Chestnut-tailed Minla, Grey-cheeked Fulvetta, Grey-headed Flycatcher, White-browed Piculet, White-throated Fantail, Silver-eared Mesia, Spectacled Barwing, Grey-chinned and Scarlet Minivet, Flavescent Bulbul, Mountain Bulbul, and at the summit Green-tailed Sunbird, Gould's Sunbird, Rufous-throated Partridge, Grey Bushchat, Chestnut-capped Babbler, Chestnut-tailed Minla, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Rufous-winged Fulvetta, Lesser Shortwing, White-browed Shortwing, Verditer Flycatcher, Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush, Ashy-throated Warbler and more. Night in Doi Inthanon National Park.

Days 14 and 15: Doi Inthanon NP



This part of northern Thailand is a very bird-rich area; dry dipterocarp forests on lower mountain slopes merge into pine stands and deforested areas which support wintering Grey Bushchats, Siberian Rubythroats, Buff-throated, Radde's and Yellow-streaked Warblers, and Chestnut Buntings. Higher elevation evergreen forest contain patches of rhododendrons around ponds, where Red-flanked Bluetails, White-tailed and Ashy-throated Leaf-Warblers, and Scarlet Rosefinches occur. Night birding here can be good with Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl, Brown Hawk Owl and Asian-barred Owlet seen in the vicinity. Nights in Doi Inthanon National Park.

Day 16: Return to Bangkok

We spend the morning birding Doi Inthanon before catching a flight back to Bangkok from Chiang Mai. Night in Bangkok near the airport.

Day 17: Departure

Our Thailand birding tour ends today, you can transfer to the airport for departure flights at any time.

What to Expect

Overview

The Thailand tour is a fast paced birding tour. You can expect some pretty early mornings and long days in the field. While the birding experience is incredible, it's important to note that long days in the field mixed with the heat may be physically demanding for some.

Food

You can expect some early morning excursions, before returning to the hotel for breakfast, or occasionally having breakfast in the field. We take most lunches in the field as picnic style, to maximize our time in the field, or at a restaurant en route to a birding spot or a different town. 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

We generally stay in 3-star hotels or lodges, in locations that are close to where we want to go birding. Due to the remote nature of some of the locations we visit, accommodation options are limited and may be more basic than other areas.

Walking

The walking on this tour is mostly moderate, walking up to 2-3 km (1-2 miles). We will mostly be on roadsides and tracks, occasionally on narrow forest trails, with some shorter walks on uneven rocky trails. Trails may be muddy, depending on the rainfall. There are a couple of harder walks, such as at Doi Ang Khang and at Doi Inthanon. The elevation is 2300m at Doi Inthanon and there is a long set of stairs down to the board walk. There is also a short, but very steep trail to a feeding area.

Driving

Most days have a small to moderate amount of driving. We will make frequent rest stops along the way.

Climate

The climate in Thailand is tropical and humid. Expect hot, humid and sunny weather at low altitudes, with possible showers in the afternoon. We recommend bringing a light rain-jacket or poncho, although we try to avoid birding in any rain worse than a light drizzle. When we visit Thailand's highest mountain, Doi Inthanon, 2,560m (8,400 ft) above sea level, the temperature could be as cool as 0 - 5°C (32 - 41° F), so bring a warm layer. Mosquitoes, ticks and sandflies can occasionally be a problem, so bring mosquito repellent and mosquito-proof clothing.

Boat trips

We take a 1.5- 2 hour boat trip at Laen Pak Bia in a small boat, similar to a canoe, to check out the Sandspits. The water is calm, and there is no toilet on board.

What's Included

Tour Price Includes

- All accommodation (Good to moderate high-quality hotels and lodges)
- All meals and soft drinks
- Internal flights included
- Ground transportation
- Eagle-Eye Tours guide + a local guide with 4 - 10 participants
- All park, conservation and entrance fees
- Gratuities

Tour Price Does Not Include

- Flights to and from Bangkok
- Travel Insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Items of a personal nature

