

**Birds, Mammals and Flowers of the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan**  
**Tour 24-02 of the Golden Gate Bird Alliance**  
**with Langur Eco Travels**

**TOUR AT A GLANCE**

**Tour Date:** 02 May – 20 May 2024

**Tour Duration:** 19 Days

**Expected Birds Species:** 350-400

**Expected Mammal Species:** 10-15

**Altitude:** 150m/492ft – 3,822m/12,539ft

**Photographic Opportunity:** Excellent

**Local Guides:** Sonam Tshering or Chubzang Tangbi

**Other staff:** 4 camping staff to prepare picnic breakfast/lunch and set up camps.

**TOUR COST**

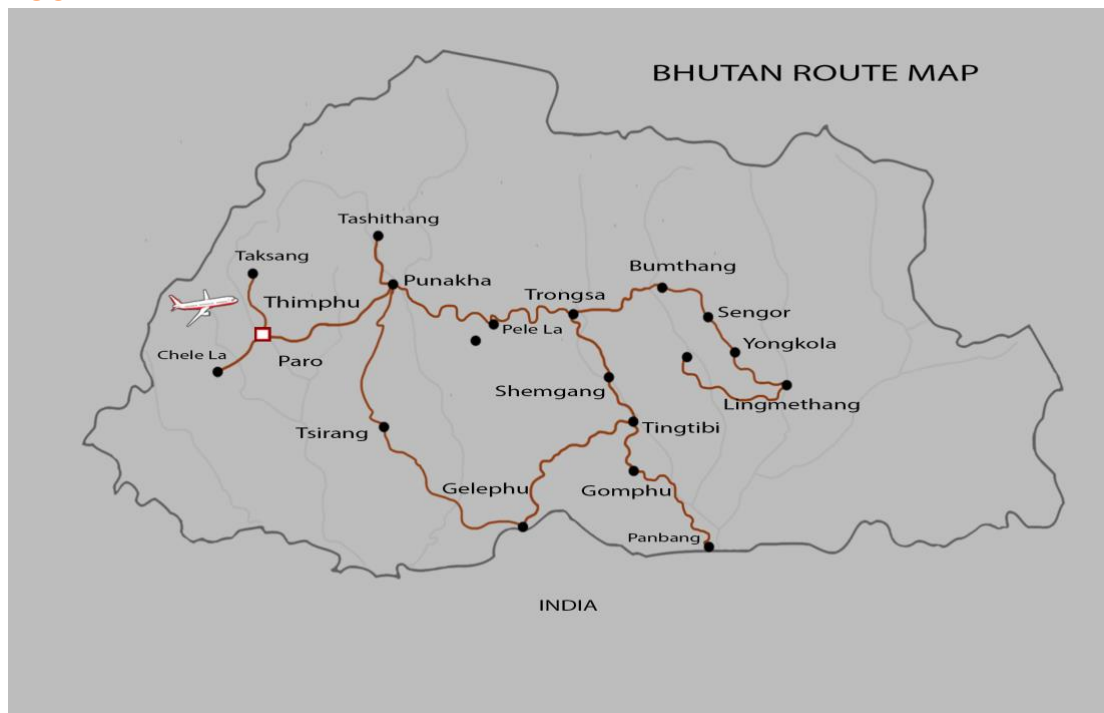
**COST FOR 5 - 8 GUESTS**

- Total Tour cost (including Bhutan visa fee): US\$ 6,425 per person (**twin occupancy**) including flights as below
- Total Tour cost (including Bhutan visa fee): US\$ 6,875 per person (**single occupancy**) including flights as below

**FLIGHTS**

- Druk Air/Bhutan Airlines – Bangkok – Paro – Bangkok
- 2-May-24, Flight KB127: Depart Bangkok at 07:30 AM, arrive in Paro at 10:50 AM.
- 20-May-24, Flight KB130: Depart Paro at 11:50 AM, arrive in Bangkok at 05:50 PM.

**ROUTE MAP**



## BRIEF ITINERARY

**Day 01:** Flight from Bangkok to Paro and continue to Thimphu (55kms).

**Day 02:** Thimphu to Punakha, over Dochu La (78kms).

**Day 03:** Birding in Jigme Dorji NP and visit Punakha Dzong.

**Day 04:** Punakha to Trongsa over Pele La pass (125kms).

**Day 05:** Trongsa to Bumthang over Yotong La (69kms).

**Day 06:** Bumthang to Sengor over Thrumshing La (130kms).

**Day 07:** Sengor to Yongkola (40kms). Birding in Thrumshing la NP

**Day 08:** Birding in Thrumshing La NP

**Day 09:** Yongkola to Chumey over Thrumshing La (150kms).

**Day 10:** Chumey to Trongsa via Tharpaling monastery (90kms).

**Day 11:** Trongsa to Tingtibi via Wangduegang by pass (120kms)

**Day 12:** Explore the Royal Manas Park

**Day 13:** Tingtibi to Gelephu, birding en-route (140kms).

**Day 14:** Birding in the tropical forests of Gelephu.

**Day 15:** Gelephu to Tsihang, birding the areas of Darachhu valley, (140kms).

**Day 16:** Tsihang to Wangdue, birding the areas of Sunkosh valley, (140kms).

**Day 17:** Wangdue to Paro, (125kms).

**Day 18:** Visit Tigers Nest monastery (5 hrs walk).


**Day 19:** Flight from Paro to Bangkok.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

**Day 1: Flight KB127 depart Bangkok at 07:30 and arrive Paro at 10:50 (to be arranged by Langur Eco Travels).**

**In Paro bird along Paro River and continue to Thimphu.**

This morning we take the Druk Air/Bhutan Airlines flight to Paro, Bhutan where we should have good views of the Himalayas, including many of the highest mountains in the world. After clearing customs and immigration, you will be met by your Bhutanese hosts and from there we will drive along the Pa Chhu, where camouflaged amongst the glacial stones, Himalayan riverine species such as the **Ibisbill** can be seen as it dips in the snowmelt, searching for food. In this area we should also find **Pied Wagtail, Blue Whistling Thrush, the Plumbeous and White-capped water redstarts, Oriental Turtle Dove, Common Hoopoe, Crested Goshawk, Eurasian Kestrel, Brown Dipper, White-collared Blackbird, Long-tailed and Gray-backed shrikes, Black-faced and Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrushes, Brown Parrotbill, Chestnut-tailed Minla, Common Kestrel, Eurasian Tree and Russet Sparrows.**

From here we will continue to Thimphu for the overnight. 

**NIGHT: Hotel Tara Phendeyling or similar, Thimphu, (2,300m).**

**Day 2: Thimphu to Punakha over Dochu La at 3,116m.**

Today we must leave very early in order to see the Himalayas as dawn breaks over Dochu La Pass (3,116m). This is an awe-inspiring sight, the road is festooned with prayer flags and 108 chortens, celebrating the safe return of the fourth king from a threatened invasion. At the pass we will have breakfast and you can spend time looking at the Bhutanese Himalayas from this vantage point.

In Bhutan's high elevation and the mixed evergreen and broad-leaved forests, there is an incredible wide range of birds, mammals, and flowering plants. Here it's possible to see species such as **Fire-tailed Myzornis**, **Mrs. Gould's** and **Green-tailed Sunbirds**, **Lemon-rumped Warbler**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker** and **Green Shrike Babbler** around the beautiful blossoms of the rhododendron bushes, **Olive-backed Pipit**, **Gold-billed Magpie**, **Plain-backed Thrush** and the **Hill Partridge**, and, as we descend from the pass, we may encounter **Eurasian Treecreeper** and **Golden Bush-Robin**. We'll continue down through the sub-tropical forests around Punakha where there are cactus, poinsettia and banana plants, then down to the green terraced fields of Punakha. In the late afternoon we will bird in relatively open habitat that is home to the **Crested Kingfisher** and the rare **White-bellied Heron** (the world's second largest and the least known). We'll also hope to see **Pallas's Fish Eagle** and many migrant water birds.

**NIGHT: Spirit of Village or similar, Punakha, (1,300m).**

### **Day 03: Birding in Punakha, visit Punakha Dzong and drive along Pho Chhu valley for the rare and critically endangered White-bellied Heron.**

We will rise early in order to get to the pristine forested areas of Jigme Dorji National Park at an elevation of 1,400m. Jigme Dorji National Park is one of the best birding areas in Punakha and as such we will look for species such as **Ashy Pigeon** (rare), **White-throated Needletail**, **Asian Palm Swift**, **Chestnut-winged Cuckoo**, **Barred Cuckoo Dove**, **Mountain Hawk Eagle**, **Besra**, **Collared Owlet**, **Red-headed Trogon**, **Speckled Piculet**, **Greater Yellow-naped Woodpecker**, **Golden-throated Barbet**, **Grey-chinned Minivet**, **Erpornis**, **Black Drongo**, **Fire-breasted Flowerpecker**, **Slaty-bellied Tesia**, **Elachura**, **Nepal Fulvetta**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Sand Martin**, **White-throated Laughingthrush**, **Scaly-breasted Munia**, **Red-billed Leiothrix**, **Paddyfield Pipit**, **Small Niltava** and **Ultramarine Flycatcher**.

When the heat of the day increases, birding lessens so we will drop down to Punakha and visit the magnificent Punakha dzong where we will get a glimpse of Bhutanese religion and culture. The dzong's position at the confluence of the Mo Chhu and Pho Chhu is quite spectacular.

After visiting the dzong we will drive along the Pho Chhu valley of Punakha looking for the critically endangered White-bellied Heron. Birding along the Pho Chhu valley of Punakha will offer us the opportunity to see some of Bhutan's migrant water bird species such as **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, **Common Tern**, **Great Cormorant**, **Common and Green sandpipers**, **Pallas's Gull**, **River Tern**, **Osprey**, **Goosander**, **Common Shelduck**, **Red-crested Pochard**, **Common Pochard** (Vulnerable), **Ferruginous Duck** (Near-threatened), **Garganey**, **Northern Shoveler**, **Falcated Duck**, **Indian Spot-billed Duck**, **Mallard**, **Northern Pintail**, **Common Teal**, **Eurasian Curlew**, **Temminck's Stint**, **Common Greenshank**, **White-bellied Heron** (Critically endangered), **Grey Heron**, **Pallas's Fish Eagle** (Endangered), **Red-wattled Lapwing**, **Common Kingfisher** and **White-browed Wagtail**.

**NIGHT: Spirit of Village or similar, Punakha, (1,300m).**

#### **Day 04: Bird watching in Nobding and Pele La (3,390m) before continuing to Trongsa.**

Birding in Nobding Valley we will look for one of the top five birds of Bhutan the **Ward's Trogon** (Near-threatened and rare), as well as some of the regularly seen species such as **Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon, Fork-tailed Swift, Asian Emerald Cuckoo, Indian Cuckoo, Black Eagle, Shikra, Upland Buzzard, Yellow-rumped Honeyguide** (Near-threatened), **Lesser Yellow-naped Woodpecker, Crested Kingfisher, Blue-throated Barbet, Short-billed Minivet, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher, Grey-hooded Leaf Warbler, Ferruginous Flycatcher and Verditer Flycatcher.** From Nobding we will climb up through mixed forests ablaze with flowering rhododendrons and magnolias to the pass at Pele La (3,390m). Here prayer flags flutter in the breeze and on clear days the views across to snow topped Jhomolhari (7,314m), marking the border between central and western Bhutan, are quite breath-taking.

Continuing our journey we descend through more beautiful rhododendron forests and thickets of dwarf bamboo. The east side of Pele La has some special birds, in particular the **Solitary Snipe**. Regularly seen birds include **Oriental Sky Lark, Eurasian Hobby, Black-eared Shrike-babbler, Dark-rumped Rosefinch, White-winged Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, White-browed Shortwing, Grey-crested Tit, Fire-capped Tit, Nepal House Martin, Ashy-throated Warbler, Whiskered Yuhina, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, Long-tailed Thrush and Long-billed Thrush.** In Trongsa we will settle in to our hotel from where there are magnificent views of Trongsa Dzong, an imposing structure, situated on a spur above the Mangde Chhu Gorge.

**Night: Tendrel Hotel or Yangkhil Resort, Trongsa (2000m).**

#### **Day 05: Birding in Trongsa and Bumthang valleys, 72kms.**

This morning we will make our way through cascading waterfalls and magnificent rhododendron and magnolia forests up to Yotong La at 3,425m. Our crew will be waiting with hot breakfast setup on the roadside, so that we can bird and breakfast at the same time! Some of the birds that are regularly seen on this route include **Steppe Eagle** (Endangered), **Long-legged Buzzard, Green Shrike-babbler, Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker** (rare and a summer visitor), **Dark-breasted Rosefinch, Yellow-browed Tit, Russet Bush Warbler, Indian Blue Robin, Scaly-breasted Cupwing, Large-billed Leaf Warbler, Hume's Bush Warbler, Bhutan Laughingthrush and Hoary-throated Barwing.** From Yotong La we will descend down to the wide valley of Gyeltsa before gradually making our way to Bumthang Valley for the overnight.

**NIGHT: Kailas guesthouse or similar, Bumthang, (2,700m).**

#### **Day 06: Bird watching in Ura, Thrumshing La and Sengor valley, 200kms.**

This drive is considered to be one of the most spectacular in the Himalayas. From Selthang La (Pass) 3,600m, with clement weather, there are spectacular views of the magnificent Gangkar Puensum at 7,315m the world's highest unclimbed peak. All around are stunning landscapes of the High Himalayas, auspiciously placed prayer flags, typical Bhutanese villages and a spectacular landscape —truly a magical land! We will stop and walk through the tranquil valley of Ura, the highest of the four valleys of Bumthang. Lying in the shadow of Thrumshing La (3,780m), Ura is quite a prosperous village. Birds we should see on this section are **Satyr Tragopan** (Near-threatened and one of the top five birds of Bhutan), **Common Cuckoo, Eurasian Woodcock, Himalayan Vulture** (Near-threatened), **Golden Eagle, Short-eared Owl**

(Rare and accidental), **Fire-tailed Sunbird, Altai Accentor, Pink-browed Rosefinch, Blanford's Rosefinch, Brown Bullfinch, Plain Mountain Finch, Little Bunting, Rufous-vented Tit, Spotted Bush Warbler (rare), White-throated Redstart, Black-faced Laughingthrush, Bar-throated Siva, Goldcrest, Hodgson's Treecreeper, Tickell's Thrush, Eye-browed Thrush, Chestnut Thrush, Dusky Thrush (Rare and accidental), Kessler's Thrush and Black-throated Thrush.** Leaving Ura we climb through forests of larch, silver fir, spruce and towering hemlocks, until we reach Thrumshing La (3,780m), along this magnificent stretch of road we look for **Blood Pheasants**, feeding by the road side, and where once more we have breath-taking views of the Eastern Himalayas. From Thrumshing La we can also see the beautiful village of Sengor at 3,000m where we will stay for the overnight.

**NIGHTS: Guesthouse or Farm House, Sengor, (3,000m).**

#### **Day 07: Sengor to Yongkola (40kms).**

We will bird in the high elevation coniferous forests before descending to the lower cool broadleaved forests around Namling and Yongkola. Species we may encounter between Sengor and Yongkola include **Black-headed Shrike-babbler (rare), Bar-winged Wren Babbler, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Mountain Bulbul, Greenish Leaf Warbler, Chestnut-headed Tesia, Golden-breasted Fulvetta, Great Parrotbill, Fulvous Parrotbill, Bar-winged Wren Babbler (a rare high altitude bamboo specialist) and Slender-billed Scimitar Babbler (another bamboo dweller).**

**NIGHTS: Trogon Villa or similar, Yongkola, (1,800m).**

#### **Day 08: Bird watching in Yongkola and Namling valleys. Thrumshing La National Park.**

One of the top ten birding hot-spots in all of Asia. A full day birding in the upper and lower Yongkola region. In this breath-taking landscape we will bird using a paved yet rarely used road that should provide us with the ultimate beneficiary birding opportunities. Here in this beautiful park we can look for some of Bhutan's special birds, many of which are difficult to find elsewhere: **Bay Woodpecker, Crimson-browed Finch, Grey-cheeked Leaf Warbler, Broad-billed Warbler, Black-throated Parrotbill, Rufous-throated Wren Babbler (Near-threatened), Golden Babbler, Himalayan Cutia, Yellow-throated Fulvetta, Scaly Laughingthrush, Golden Bush Robin, Rufous-breasted Bush Robin, White-gorgeted Flycatcher, Gould's Shortwing (rare), Pygmy Blue Flycatcher, Scaly Thrush, Lesser Cuckoo, Mountain Scops Owl, Grey-headed Bullfinch, Yellow-cheeked Tit, Grey-bellied Tesia, Black-faced Warbler, Long-billed Wren Babbler, Wedge-billed Babbler, Grey-sided Laughingthrush, Rusty-fronted Barwing, Blue-winged Minla, Lesser Shortwing, Pale Blue Flycatcher, Blue-fronted Robin (rare), Black-winged Kite, Booted Eagle, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Hodgson's Frogmouth (rare) and perhaps the Purple Cochoa (rare and elusive).**

**NIGHTS: Trogon Villa or similar, Yongkola, (1,800m).**

#### **Day 09: Yongkola to Chumey (150kms, 5hrs).**

We'll spend the first part of the morning birding the areas of Yongkola. After breakfast we'll continue to Chumey making further stops at Namling, Sengor and Thrumshing La for birds, flowers and vista. Birds we will look for include **Rusty-fronted Barwing, Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, Northern Goshawk, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Grey-chinned Minivet, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Hodgson's Redstart, Rusty-flanked Treecreeper, Grey-**

bellied Tesia, Grey-sided Bush Warbler, Rufous-capped and Golden Babblers, Black-faced and Large-billed Leaf Warblers, Black-faced Laughingthrush, Whiskered and Stripe-throated Yuhinas, Red-tailed Minla, Bar-throated Siva, Spot-winged Grosbeak, Mrs Gould's Sunbird, Rufous-winged Fulvetta, Green Shrike Babbler.  
**Mammals:** Hoary-bellied Squirrel, Himalayan Five-striped Squirrel and Red Panda (rare).  
**Night:** Guesthouse or farmhouse at Chumey (2600m).

#### **Day 10: Chumey to Trongsa via Tharpaling monastery, (90kms, 3 hrs).**

We will rise early and drive to Tharpaling Monastery to see the beautifully coloured **Himalayan Monal**. Tharpaling Monastery also offers us the best chance to see some of the uncommon high altitude bird species, including **Snow Pigeon, Eurasian Magpie** (endemic to Bumthang valley), **Himalayan Beautiful Rosefinch, Rufous-vented Yuhina, Snowy-browed Flycatcher and Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush**. After breakfast we will continue to Trongsa, stopping along for birds and flowers. In Trongsa we will visit the Watch Tower of Trongsa now converted into a National Museum.

Birds on today's journey should include **Satyr Tragopan** (rare), **Goldcrest, Dark-breasted Rosefinch, Godlewski Bunting, White-bellied Redstart** (rare), **Rufous-breasted Accentor, White-winged Grosbeak, Red-headed Bullfinch, Snow Pigeon, Speckled Wood Pigeon, Himalayan Wood Owl** (rare), **Brown Parrotbill, Fire-tailed Myzornis, Rufous-vented Yuhina, Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush, Brownish-flanked Bush Warbler, Common Hawk Cuckoo and Yellow-billed Blue Magpie**.

**Expected Mammals:** Assemese Macaque and Muntjac.

**Night:** Tendrel Hotel or Yangkhil Resort, Trongsa (2000m).

#### **Day 11: Birding in Trongsa, Tingtibi and Shemgang valleys, 140kms.**

The famous Shemgang road is considered to be one of the best birding roads in the world. Today we will cover a vast range of altitude from 2,300 to 700m at Tingtibi. Along today's drive we will look for some of Bhutan's special avian species. The bird-watching stops include Chunjepang, Langthel, Koshala and Wangduegang forests. Birds we expect to see on the way to Tingtibi are **Grey-bellied Cuckoo, Oriental Honey Buzzard, Northern Goshawk, Striated Prinia, Striated Bulbul, Spotted Forktail, Little Forktail, Himalayan Thrush, Spot-bellied Eagle Owl, Rufous-necked Hornbill** (Vulnerable), **Spot-winged Starling, Rufous Woodpecker, Oriental Hobby, Common Rosefinch, Crested Bunting, White-spectacled Leaf Warbler, Himalayan Bulbul, Grey-headed Parrotbill, White-crested Laughingthrush, White-capped Water Redstart and Blue Rock Thrush**.  
**NIGHT:** Hotel Twang or Eco Camp, Tingtibi (1,800m).

#### **Day 12: Birding in Tingtibi and Shemgang, one of the best birding areas in Bhutan.**

Today we will spend the day birding the quiet road between Tingtibi and Shemgang. It is one of the best birding areas in Bhutan where we can see some of Bhutan's rare and special birds such as **Rufous-bellied Eagle, Red-faced Liocichla, Eye-browed Wren Babbler** (rare), **Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, Blue-naped Pitta, Alpine Swift, Bonelli's Eagle, Black-throated Hill Prinia, Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Striated Yuhina, Rufous-necked Laughing-thrush, Common Green Magpie, Drongo Cuckoo, Jungle Owlet, Great Hornbill** (Near-threatened), **Grey-capped**

**Pygmy Woodpecker, Large Woodshrike, Bronzed Drongo, Large Niltava, Sultan Tit, White-throated Bulbul, Yellow-browed Warbler and Pale-chinned Flycatcher.** Shemgang and Tingtibi also offer us the best opportunity to see one of the rare primates Bhutan has to offer, the **Golden Langur**, which can be seen foraging by the roadside as we drive.

We will explore the rich bamboo forest of Tingtibi and Gomphu looking for some of the highly prized species. The very rarely visited Royal Manas National Park is one of the richest biodiversity areas in Bhutan where we can see an amazing variety of rare and special birds. Some of the target birds for the day include **Pin-tailed Green Pigeon, Plaintive Cuckoo, Savanna Nightjar, White-browed Piculet** (seen only in a few sites in Bhutan), **Pale-headed Woodpecker** (rare and a pure bamboo specialist), **White-throated Kingfisher, Barred Buttonquail, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo, Streaked Spiderhunter, Crimson Sunbird, White-rumped Munia, Forest Wagtail, Rufescent Prinia, Plain Martin, Black-crested Bulbul, Yellow-vented Leaf Warbler, Rufous-faced Warbler, Yellow-bellied Warbler, Pale-billed Parrotbill** (rare and a resident species), **White-browed Scimitar Babbler, White-hooded Babbler** (rare and local bamboo specialist) and **Asian Brown Flycatcher**. On past trips **Rufous-necked Hornbills** have occasionally flown over our hotel and once, five perched on a tree giving us stunning views of this magnificent bird.

**NIGHT: Hotel Twang or Eco Camp, Tingtibi (1,800m).**

#### **Day 13: Tingtibi to Gelephu over Tama La at 1,661m, 125kms.**

This morning we will rise early and bird around our hotel in Tingtibi before making our way up to Tama La at 1661m. From the pass we descend down through mix temperate forests to the little village of Surey. It's also along this drive that we stop at a sheer cliff face near Tama La to look for the rare **Yellow-rumped Honeyguide**.

It's also along here that we will look for the rare **Rusty-bellied Shortwing** (Near-threatened and first recorded here for Bhutan), **Red Collared Dove, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Large-tailed Nightjar, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Rufous-backed Sibia** (rare), **Greater Coucal, Common Koel, Common Green Magpie, Banded Bay Cuckoo, Black-crowned Night Heron, Indian Pond Heron and Little Egret**.

**NIGHT: Lhaazaay Suites or similar, Gelephu, (250m).**

#### **Day 14: Exploring the tropical forests of Gelephu including a visit to the sewerage treatment plant of Gelephu.**

Today we will explore the rich tropical forest of Gelephu looking for special birds such as **Indian Peafowl, Glossy Ibis, Lesser Whistling Duck, Little Grebe** (Rare and accidental), **Black-winged Stilt, Laughing Dove, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Green Imperial Pigeon, White-breasted Waterhen, Striated Heron, Cattle Egret, Intermediate Egret, Pied Avocet, Spotted Owlet, Greater Flame-backed Woodpecker, Little Cormorant, Slaty-breasted Rail, Brahminy Kite, Wreathed and Oriental Pied Hornbills, Blue-eared Barbet, Common Iora, Rufous Treepie** (rare), **Black-naped Monarch, Yellow-vented Flowerpecker, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Jungle Babbler, Asian Pied Starling, Bank Myna, Hill Myna, Taiga Flycatcher and Pied Bush Chat**.

**NIGHT: Lhaazaay Suites or similar, Gelephu, (250m).**

**Day 15: Gelephu to Tsirang birding the areas of Sarpang, Dara Chhu and Tsirang valley (140kms).**

We will spend most of the morning birding along the Sarpang road. Species we may encounter include **Coppersmith Barbet, Green Bee-eater, Rose-ringed Parakeet** (introduced), **Black-hooded Oriole, Plain Flowerpecker, Plain Prinia, Pale Martin, Smoky Warbler, Pale-footed Bush Warbler, Greater Necklaced Laughingthrush, Indian Roller, Brown Shrike, and Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker**. After breakfast we will continue to bird along the subtropical forests above Sarpang, having lunch at a beautiful location at Dara Chhu. Here we can look for species such as **Rufous-necked Hornbill, Beautiful Nuthatch, Long-tailed Broadbill, and Brown Wood Owl**.

**NIGHT: Damphu Resort or similar, Tsirang (1600m).**

**Day 16: Tsirang to Punakha, Birding along Sunkosh, Kami Chhu and Puna Tshang Chhu valley (140kms).**

This morning we will bird our way down to Sunkosh valley, looking for one of the rarest birds in the world, the Critically endangered **White-bellied Heron**. Other regular birds include **Greater Flameback, Blue-throated Barbet, Rufous Woodpecker, Great Hornbill, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch, and Slaty-backed Forktail**.

**NIGHT: Spirit of Village or similar, Punakha (1300m).**

**Day 17. Punakha to Paro, 130km. Birding along Dochu La (3,150m) road.**

This morning we leave the terraced fields and sub-tropical forests around Punakha and travel to Royal Botanical Park at Lampelri, which forms one of the critical biological corridors connecting the Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and the Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Park. It has cool broad leaf forests, mixed conifer forests, fir and sub-alpine forests and a temperate rain forest with hundred of species of flora and fauna. Here we will look for **Chestnut crowned Warbler, Dark-rumped and Dark-breasted Rosefinches**. With a bit of luck, we may also encounter rare species of mammals that the park supports, **Musk Deer, Tiger, Leopard, Red Panda** and the **Leopard Cat**. Returning to our vehicles we will continue to Dochu La, an awe-inspiring sight with the road festooned with prayer flags and 108 chortens.<sup>[1]</sup> From here on a clear day, there are magnificent panoramic views of the high Himalayas, including Masagang 7,158m, Tsendagang 6,960m, Terigang 7,060m, Jejegangphug 7,158m, Kangphugang 7,170m, Zongphugang 7,060m and Gangkar Puensum—the highest peak in Bhutan at 7,497m. From the pass we drive down to Thimphu where we will stop by a marshy land near Babesa looking for **Black-tailed Crane**.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Night: Hotel Olathang or similar, Paro, (2300m).**

**Day 18. Hike up to the Tiger's Nest Monastery (approx 5 hr walk). Birding en-route.**

Today you will have a fabulous last day in Bhutan with a great mix of birding and some of the Paro Valley's cultural treasures. The cultural highlight will be the walk up to the famous Tiger's Nest, Taksang Monastery. The monastery is perched some 600m up on a cliff overlooking the valley and was said to be where the legendary Indian saint, Guru Padma Sambhava, flew from East Bhutan on the back of a tiger to defeat demons who were opposing the spread of Buddhism in Bhutan. It is a steep uphill walk through woods, of about 1½-2hrs, to reach a tea house (an ascent of



340m). After a welcome refreshment at the tea house, one of the principle viewpoints of the monastery you will climb the further half hour's ascent, which brings you to another viewpoint directly across from the monastery. The final section of the walk takes you from this viewpoint steeply down 100m into the gorge that separates you from the monastery and then climbs back up again to reach the monastery. You will then descend back to the valley floor by your outward route back to where your vehicle will be waiting. The full walk to the monastery and back involves approximately 740m of ascent. Along this hike we will look for **Green-backed, Coal and Grey-crested Tits, White-tailed Nuthatch, Yellow-billed Blue Magpie, Spotted Nutcracker, Black-faced, Chestnut-crowned, White-throated and Spotted Laughingthrushes**. Up at the monastery by the rocky ledges we will scan for flocks of **Snow Pigeon** and **Alpine Accentor** while the waterfall next to the monastery often gives us the opportunity to see **Little Forktail, White-capped and Plumbeous Water Redstarts**.

**Night: Hotel Olathang or similar, Paro, (2300m).**

**Day 19. Flight KB130 depart Paro at 11:50 and arrive Bangkok at 15:50 for your onward connection.**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Included in Bhutan Land Cost**

- Visa and all taxes
- Licensed tour guide who is an excellent birder
- All activities as mentioned in the itinerary
- All accommodation based on sharing a twin room
- All meals
- Tea/coffee and snacks
- Bottled water throughout the trip
- Ground transportation
- All entrance fees for museums and parks

#### **Not Included in Bhutan Land Cost**

- Return flights from Bangkok - Paro
- International flights
- Travel insurance (essential)
- Laundry, phone calls and alcoholic drinks
- Personal expenses
- Charges incurred as a result of circumstances beyond the control of Langur Eco Travels
- Tips

#### **Trip grade: Gentle hikes**

You should prepare for certain travel factors in Bhutan. A few of the most important are elevation, windy mountain roads and uneven trek paths. Average elevation on this trip is 2,400m. Pass crossings may be up to 4,000m.

### Insurance

We **strongly advise** that your travel insurance policies include medical assistance and (helicopter) evacuation—we believe that it is ‘better to be safe than sorry!’ Should you decline to do so, we must state that **we will in no way accept responsibility for expenses incurred** should you require medical attention/evacuation while on holiday with us.

### Accommodation

It is our policy to use the best available accommodation in each location. All hotels and lodges we use are government approved and registered with the Tourism Council of Bhutan.

### Temperature

Average Temperature in Fahrenheit Degrees		
May		
Place	High	Low
Gelephu	82	68
Tsirang	70	57
Yongkola/Mongar	71	53
Sengor	54	38
Bumthang/Chumey	55	39
Trongsa	61	44
Tingtibi	66	52
Phobjikha	54	40
Punakha	68	53
Thimphu/Paro	55	38

## WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU

### Clothing

This trip departs in April, which is generally a dry and cool time of the year but you may encounter light rain or damp conditions. Evenings may be cool and you will certainly have many early morning starts so will need some warm layers. The key to

being comfortable is to adopt a system of several layers rather than one item of bulky warm clothing. Sun hats are an essential item, with a wide brim and something to protect your neck. Temperatures can drop very quickly in the evening and early morning and at altitude and you may again need to put on a number of layers.

### Clothing Checklist

Walking boots	For hiking
Comfortable shoes	For camp
Waterproof jacket	Best made with breathable, waterproof fabric
Waterproof over-trousers	Best made with breathable, waterproof fabric
Lightweight down jacket or down vest	For colder evenings/mornings or in case of a cold snap
Trekking trousers	Two pairs, plus trousers to change into in the evening
T-shirts/ undershirts	
Long sleeved shirts	To prevent sunburn on your arms and keep airborne biting insects at bay
Thermal underwear	You may like to take to change into this in the evening or have it to sleep in.
Micro fleece	
Warm Jacket	
Thicker socks	
Thin socks	
Woolly hat or gloves	For cold weather
Sun hat	With adequate protection for your neck
Smart/casual clothes	For air travel, in cities and for evenings in hotels

### Equipment and Accessories

Small day pack	
Sunglasses and retainers	If you wear glasses, bring a spare pair
Headlamp or flashlight	Bring spare batteries
Anti bacterial hand gel	Very useful for washing hands when no water available

### Electricity

The standard voltage in Bhutan is 220-240 volts. Most American appliances (except hairdryers) now have built-in converters, so you only need to worry about bringing adapters. You will often find two pin sockets in bathrooms (type C). In most other

rooms sockets are generally the round-three pin variety (type D). To be safe, take a universal travel adaptor, and if that still does not fit ask at hotel reception.

### **Baggage and Hand luggage**

Bhutan Airlines/Druk Airlines Baggage allowances are one cabin bag (max weight 10kg) and one checked bag (max 30kg).

- Small heavy articles can be carried in your day pack, which can go on as hand baggage. Note that most airlines only allow one item of hand luggage.
- Any excess baggage fees will have to be paid for by you.<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- Electrical equipment and batteries should be packed in your cabin luggage.<sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>