

Golden Gate Bird Alliance presents

## Transylvania Adventure

### Day 1 (May 9)

#### Arrival in Miklosvár

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

Enjoy dinner after your drive from the airport.

### Day 2 (May 10)

#### Homorod Lakes and Miklósvár Owls

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

Homorod Lakes – Miklósvár Owls	10:15 hrs	
EARLY Breakfast	7:00	8:00
Miklósvár - Homorod Lakes	8:00	10:00
Homorod lakes walk	10:00	13:00
Packed Lunch	13:00	14:00
Homorod lakes – travel back to Miklósvár	15:00	17:00
REFRESHING Program	17:00	18:00
Early Dinner	18:00	19:00
Miklósvár - Owls	19:00	

After having breakfast at Count Kalnoky's Estate, we'll visit a fishpond lake system, Homorod Lakes, which used to be a natural marshland, 60 kms north of our guesthouses. In the period of first half of May this area is famous for **Red-footed Falcon** spring migration, with sometimes numbers above hundreds of birds. It's also a place **Citrine Wagtail** and **Red-throated Pipit** are regularly seen. A large variety of waders, ducks and herons are present at these fishponds each spring. Birds that might be observed here include all three species of marsh terns, the **Whiskered-, Black- and White-winged Tern**; **Ferruginous Duck**; **Bee Eater**; **Bittern** and **Little Bitterns**; **Broad-billed Sandpiper** and **Lesser Spotted Eagle**.

After eating our packed lunches we'll return to the guesthouse where we'll enjoy an early refreshing program, followed by dinner. After dinner we'll have an owl walk where we'll hope to hear and see **Tawny Owl**, **Ural Owl**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Scops Owl**, **Little Owl**, **Nightjar**, and **Wood Lark**.

### Day 3 (May 11)

#### Zarnesti Gorge

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

Zarnesti Gorge	11:15 hrs	
EARLY Breakfast	7:00	7:45
Miklósvár - Zernesti	7:45	9:45
Zernesti Gorge walk	9:45	12:45
Gorge - Magura Watchpoint	12:45	13:00
Packed Lunch with bird observation	13:00	14:30
Magura Watchpoint - Miklósvár	14:30	16:30
REFRESHING Program	16:30	18:00
Bear-watching evening with packed dinner	18:00	21:00

Today we'll have a quick breakfast and leave for Zernyest at 07:45. Zernyest Gorge is located in the Piatra Craiului Mountains, which are part of the Southern Carpathian mountain range. The drive will take 2 hours (75 km), and between 09:45 and 12:45 we will bird in the Gorge of Zernyest. This is a good area for observing the **Alpine Swift**, **Crag Martin**, **Rock Bunting** and the **Wallcreeper**.

After the walk we will go in a nearby watchpoint, where we will have our packed lunch. Birds which may be seen here include the **Short-toed Eagle**, **Honey Buzzard**, **Black Stork**, **Peregrine**, and **Golden Oriole**.

We'll return to the Miklósvár Guesthouses by 16:30. A part of the group, who will visit the bear-watching spot, will have a two-hour break before leaving to the hide at 18:00. They will return to the Guesthouse by 21:00. The other half will have a birdwatching afternoon between 16:30 and 18:00 in the nearby meadows and forests, followed by dinner at 20:00.

### Day 4 (May 12)

#### Carpathian Delta Day

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

Zarnesti Gorge - Carpathian Delta Day	11:15 hrs	
EARLY Breakfast	7:00	8:00
Miklosvar – Dumbravita	8:00	9:00
Dumbravita Forest walk	9:00	10:30
Dumbravita Lakes walk	10:30	13:00
Packed Lunch with observations	13:00	14:00
Dumbravita Lakes walk	14:00	15:00
travel back to Miklosvar	15:00	16:00
REFRESHING Program	16:00	18:00

Bear-watching evening with packed dinner	18:00	21:00
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After breakfast we'll leave for Dumravita Fishponds, also called The Delta of the Carpathians, which is one of the best birding sites for waterfowl and waders in Transylvania. At the ponds we'll see a mixture of habitats, including fishponds, meadows and oak forests, where we might expect **Middle Spotted**, **Little Spotted** and **Green Woodpecker**; **Treecreeper**; **Golden Oriole**; **Collared Flycatchers** and many others. In the ponds we're likely to spot not only a large variety of herons, ducks, and waders (**Ferruginous Duck** and **Pygmy Cormorant** are highlights of the area), but also raptors, including **White-tailed Eagle** and **Lesser Spotted Eagle**. During our walk around the fishpond system we'll enjoy our packed lunches.

We'll return to the guesthouse by 16:30, where the other half of the group will have a two-hour break before visiting the bear-watching spot. The others will bird in the nearby meadows and forests before dinner.

## Day 5 (May 13)

### Mikósvár Surroundings – The Horse and Cart Day

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

Miklósvár Surroundings – The Horse and Cart Day	11:15 hrs	
Breakfast	7:00	8:00
Miklósvár – surroundings	8:30	11:00
Miklósvár Forest walk	11:00	13:00
Packed Lunch with observations	13:00	14:00
Miklósvár – surroundings,	14:00	16:00
REFRESHING Program	16:00	18:00
Roundtable discussions, presentations about Romanian Bird conservation. The Milvus Story	18:00	20:00
Dinner	20:00	

Today we'll spend some time traveling locally by horse and cart day; it's a trip in which you'll learn deep knowledge about bird population dynamics related to the surrounding habitats, changes in the landscape, land-use techniques, etc.

We'll visit the nearby marshlands with several stops and walks in the meadows and forests of the area, completing a circle rather than coming back the same way. Species to see include the **Ural Owl**, **Treecreeper**, **Collared**, **Red-breasted** and **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Green**, **Grey-headed** and **Black Woodpecker**, **Wryneck**, **Honey Buzzard**, **Lesser Spotted Eagle** and **Black Stork**. We will have our packed lunch in nice surroundings, then continue our journey and arrive back at the guesthouse. Before dinner, there will be an optional round table, where information about Romanian birds, their conservation, and Milvus Group achievements will be presented.

**Day 6 (May 14)**  
**Bucegi Mountains**

*Accommodation: Count Kalnoky's Estate*

<b>Bucegi Mountains Day</b>	<b>11 hrs</b>	
Quick Breakfast	6:30	7:30
travel to Sinaia	7:30	10:00
mixed forest walk	10:00	11:30
cable car from 1400 to 2000 m	11:30	12:00
Walk in the alpine meadow of the Bucegi Mountains	12:00	13:00
Packed Lunch	13:00	13:30
Walk in the alpine meadow of the Bucegi Mountains	13:30	15:00
cable car back to Sinaia	15:00	15:30
travel back to Miklósvár	15:30	18:00
REFRESHING Program	18:00	20:00
Dinner	20:00	

Since we have a long drive, we'll have an early start today on our way to Sinaia, which is known as Romania's most important holiday camp; it's situated in the Bugegi Mountains, part of the Southern Carpathians. Our first stop will be at a beautiful mixed forest where we'll walk for a kilometer on the King's Path. Here we'll have a chance to see **Red-breasted, Collared, Pied and Spotted Flycatcher; Serin; Common and Black Redstart; Treecreeper; White-backed, Grey-headed and Black Woodpeckers.**

A cable car will take us from Sinaia up to 2000-meter altitude, where we will walk in a beautiful alpine meadow to find high mountain species, such as **Horned Lark, Water Pipit, Alpine Accentor, Nutcracker, Ring Ouzel, Common and Alpine Swifts.** We will have our packed lunch during our stay in the alpine meadows.

The cable car will take us back to town, where the minibus will pick us up and bring us back to the guesthouse where we'll enjoy dinner.

**Day 7 (May 15)**  
**Miklósvár Meadows - Zalănpatak Meadows, Zalănpatak Owls**  
*Accommodation: The King's Retreat, Zalănpatak*

<b>Miklósvár Meadows - Zalănpatak Meadows, Zalănpatak Owls</b>	<b>16:45 hrs</b>	
Miklósvár - Meadows	7:00	9:00
LATE Breakfast	9:00	9:30
Miklósvár Pasturests and Forest	9:30	12:00

Lunch at Miklósvár Guesthouses	12:00	13:00
packing and traveling to Zalánpatak Guesthouses	13:00	14:30
Zalánpatak Meadows walk	14:30	16:30
Early Dinner	17:00	19:00
Zalánpatak- Owls	19:00	

We will start the day with a pre-breakfast early morning walk among the Olt river, in a mosaic of wet meadows, bush lines, pastures and extensive agricultural fields. Here we can see/hear **Corncrake, Lesser Grey Shrike, Greater Grey Shrike, Red-backed Shrike, Golden Oriole, Green Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Scops Owl, and Wrynecks**. We will have a late breakfast at 9:00, then we will pack our luggage and leave to our next accommodation, The King's Retreat in Zalánpatak.

Travel will take us one hour. After arriving, we will have a walk in the nearby meadows, where it's possible to spot **White-backed Woodpecker, Honey Buzzard, Goshawk, Sparrowhawk, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Woodlark, Golden Oriole, Hoopoe, Wryneck**. After our walk, we'll return for dinner and after dinner we'll look for owls. During this walk we might hear or see **Tawny Owl, Ural Owl, Long-eared Owl, Scops Owl, Little Owl, Nightjar, and Woodlark**.

## Day 8 (May 16)

### Vargyas Gorge - Zalánpatak Owls

*Accommodation: The King's Retreat, Zalánpatak*

<b>Vargyas Gorge Day</b>	<b>10:15 hrs</b>	
EARLY Breakfast	7:00	8:00
Zalánpatak – Vargyas Gorge	8:00	11:00
Vargyas Gorge walk	11:00	13:00
Packed Lunch	13:00	14:00
Vargyas Gorge walk	14:00	15:00
travel back to Zalánpatak	15:00	17:00
REFRESHING Program	17:00	19:00
Dinner	19:00	

Today's one-way walk in the Vargyas Limestone Gorge will begin at the upper entrance of the gorge and proceed downstream where we'll meet the van at the end of the walk. During our walk along the rocky trail we'll cross bridges over the river. We'll enjoy our packed lunches during the walk. At each end of the walk we'll pass through grasslands, pastures and meadows; in the gorge itself we'll see limestone cliffs and beech forest. Expected species are **Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Dipper, Collared and Red-breasted Flycatchers, Green, Grey-headed, Black, and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers**.

The bus will pick up at 15:00 at the end of the gorge, and the drive back to Zalánpatak will take two hours. Dinner and our final group meeting will be at 19:00.

**Day 9 (May 17)**

**Departure**

Transfer to airport after breakfast

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