

# Bhutan

## Bird Watching Tour

07 Nights 08 Days



# 01

## ARRIVAL at PARO

Your flight to Paro will be either from (*BAGDOGRA, BANGKOK, DELHI, DHAKA, GAYA, GUWAHATI, KATHMANDU, MUMBAI, KOLKATA, SINGAPORE*) or depending on one's international flight Druk Air flies from these destinations. The most spectacular mountain flights you will ever experience in a life time. When you are about to land Paro you will see the spectacular beauty of our country. In clear weather, views of the world's highest peaks, including Chhomolhari (mountain Goddess) and other magnificent Himalayan snow peaks to the beautiful Paro valley as you land. **Our** representatives will escort you at the airport and after completion of airport formalities and drive you through beautiful Paro Valley to the Hotel. After Lunch at the Hotel. Discuss the Tour Programme with the Tour Guide and afternoon visit the Paro Valley which is relatively dry. Blue pines grow on the slopes, but most of the valley floor is cultivated with rice paddies, which are utilized for wheat during winter time. Many finches feed on wheat grains. The main attraction is the Pachu riverbed north of the town. You will spot some Ibis bills, Common Kingfisher, Crested Kingfisher and some accentors among the rocks and bushes. Then visit the forests near the ruins of Drukgyal Dzong. Overnight hotel in Paro.

# 02

## PARO - THIMPHU

After breakfast hike to Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery, which is Bhutan's most famous monastery. Guru Rinpoche is said to have flown on the back of a tigress from Singye Dzong in Lhuntse to meditate in a cave where Taktsang Monastery now stands. It is perched on the edge of a steep cliff, about 900 meters above Paro Valley. The trail is along the pine forests and you will come across some birds on the way to the monastery. The hike to reach the viewpoint to the monastery makes for a nice half-day excursion. In the afternoon you will drive to Thimphu. In the evening you can explore Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, and absorb the lifestyle of the people. You can also visit some interesting handicraft shops. Overnight: Hotel in Thimphu.



# 03

## THIMPHU - SIGHT SEEING

Very few birds are seen in Thimphu, and the interesting birding sites are found around Begana and Cheri villages. You will walk up to Tango Monastery (2700 meters). The vegetation around here includes upper and lower temperate broadleaf evergreen; coniferous forests, riversides, subalpine and shrubberies. Spotted Laughingthrush could be seen here mainly in spring. Tango is good for general birding, and Mountain Eagles and Snow Pigeons are common here. Several wall creepers will be seen enroute between Begana and Thimphu. Evening will be spent in visiting the Babesa Sewerage Pond. Since the construction of the sewerage pond, the site has become the sanctuary for the birds. You will see some species of ducks feeding in the pond.

Overnight: Hotel in Thimphu.

# 04

## THIMPHU - PUNAKHA

After breakfast you will drive to Punakha, with a stop en route for tea at Dochu La (3,100 meters), where on a clear day you can get spectacular views of the Himalayas. From the Docula pass walk along the traditional route down to the Laborer's camp. You might spot Rufous bellied Bush-Robin, Golden-naped Finch, Hoary Barwing, and Edwards Rosefinch. Continue driving to Punakha, the former capital of Bhutan, and visit Punakha Dzong, which is noteworthy both for being one of the most beautiful dzongs in Bhutan and built in 1637.

Overnight at hotel in Punakha.



## 05

## PUNAKHA - BIRDING/EXCURSION

Full day birding in Punakha region. The best area for birding is between 1300 and 1600 meters along the Mochu River in Jigme Dorji Wangchuk Wildlife Sanctuary. The forest is relatively undisturbed, but people collect firewood and cattle's can be seen along the road. Further downstream it is possible to view the rocky riverbeds from a hanging bridge, in order to check for the near extinct White-bellied Heron. A few common birds, which will be seen between the riversides and farmlands from Lobesa to Tashithang includes White-tailed Eagle, Crested Serpent-Eagle, Golden Eagle, Mountain Eagle, Striated Laughingthrush, Golden Bush-Robin, and Tibet Serin. Overnight hotel in Punakha.

## 06

## PUNAKHA - GANGTEY

Continuing east, past the smaller Wangdi Dzong, we'll make a series of brief stops to scan the braided river channel. In the past we've seen Pallas's Gull and Pallas's Fishing Eagle here and have added a number of other species to the Bhutanese list. We'll also check forest edges and explore some of the small patches of cultivation. We'll enter productive forest near the end of our journey, where we'll stop to look for species such as Blood Pheasant, Satyr Tragopan, and the majestic Himalayan Monal. Spotted Laughingthrush, Yellowish-bellied Bush-Warbler, Rusty-flanked Treecreeper, White-browed Bush Robin, and White-winged Grosbeak also occur here. Night in Gangtey, Phobjika Valley.





07

## GANGTEY – PARO

Early morning see the Black Necked Cranes and also the trail and the roosting areas. Also visit the RSPN (Royal Society of Protection of Nature) Education Center. In the afternoon you will drive back to Paro across Dochu La pass. You will stop in Thimphu for shopping if you want. Then, you will drive to Paro. On arrival check into the hotel. Evening stroll freely in the town. You can also visit the farm house to absorb the lifestyle of rural people. If you wish you can also have traditional Bhutanese dinner. Overnight stay at Paro.

08

## DEPARTURE

Early morning drive to Paro International Airport and representative from SMITE and Bhutanese company will accompany you to bid farewell as you embark on your onward journey to back home.