

NEPAL

March 27-April 11, 2021

16 Days / 15 Nights

\$5485

Single Supplement \$950

Can be combined with our India tour, scheduled for Mar. 14 – 26.



**MORE species than Bhutan at a much lower cost!
Himalayan vistas, Hindu temples, incredible birding,
the experience of a lifetime!**

Lifted straight from the pages of a Rudyard Kipling book, the steamy jungles of southern Nepal are home to some of the best wildlife watching in Asia, if not the world. Within the Terai plains, visitors can seek out tigers, elephants, monkeys, rhinos, bears, deer, crocodiles, leopards, river dolphins and a staggering 886 species of birds. (Trent Holden, Lonely Planet Writer)

The diverse range of ecosystems in Nepal, from lowland subtropical forests to the high-altitude environment of Himalayas, shelters nearly 900 species of birds, more than in any other region of comparable size in Asia. Nepal is not only known for its marvelous scenery and cultural contrasts, but also as a paradise for birders from around the world. We've included the best birding sites in our 16-day tour, and our per-day price is lower than any other US tour company. Join us for this amazing tour!

Detailed Itinerary

Day 0 or 00, March 25 or March 26: Depart the US for Kathmandu in order to arrive on March 27.

For participants coming from the India tour, you will fly from Delhi to Kathmandu today and have the remainder of the day at your leisure. Accommodation and meals for March 26 are not included in this tour. We will arrange for you to stay at the Village Park Resort and include the cost on your final invoice; meals for this day, other than breakfast in New Delhi, are on your own.

Day 1, March 27: Arrive in Kathmandu. Transfer to the lovely Village Park Resort. Depending on your arrival time, you may use the remainder of the day to bird on the grounds of the resort on your own or you may choose to take the time to recover from your long flights and simply rest in preparation for the tour. Without even trying, you might notice the first of many Black Kites you will see during this trip as they soar over the grounds. You'll hear warblers singing and you might come across Oriental Turtle Doves as you walk along the path between buildings. If you decide to bird on the grounds, you'll find many common species right outside your door!

Village Park Resort (D) <https://ktmgh.com/park-village-resort/>

Day 2, March 28: Today will be spent birding Shivapuri National Park which lies a few kilometers north of Kathmandu. The park has a good population of Spiny Babbler and Hoary-throated Barwing. On the way to the park, we have a good chance of spotting one or two of the elusive Spotted Forktails as they make their way along the stream that parallels the road. Multiple species of Barbets are possible (Great, Golden-throated, Blue-throated) and we can expect to find stunning White-capped Water Redstarts. An assortment of Bulbuls, Fantails, Redstarts, Minivets, Flycatchers, Mynas, and Wagtails are among the many species we hope to see while exploring Shivapuri.

Village Park Resort (BLD)

<https://ktmgh.com/park-village-resort/>



Spotted Forktail

Day 3, March 29: We will spend the early morning hours with a last bit of birding either on the grounds of Village Park Resort or on the outskirts of Shivapuri NP. After breakfast, we will depart for an afternoon of sightseeing in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal and gateway to the Himalayas. Here we will become acquainted with the culture of Nepal with visits to Boudhanath, Patan Durbar Square and Pashupatinath Temple, all iconic UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We will enjoy a typical Nepali meal in the city as part of our tour. Later in the afternoon we will drive to Godavari Resort, just a short distance southeast of the capital city.

Godavari Resort (BLD) <http://www.godavarivillageresort.com/>

Day 4, March 30: Phulchowki Hill is considered by many to be Nepal's chief birding hotspot, and we will spend the next two days exploring this area. Today we will concentrate on birding Lower Phulchowki, where many of the 288 species recorded in the area occur. Keep your eyes open for Maroon Oriole, White-bellied Drongo, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Red-rumped Swallow, Green-backed Tit, Gray-hooded Warbler, White-browed Fulvetta, White-crested Laughingthrush, Verditer Flycatcher, Blue Whistling-Thrush, Golden Bush-Robin, Blue-fronted Redstart, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, among many other species.

Godavari Resort (BLD) <http://www.godavarivillageresort.com/>

Day 5, March 31: We will continue birding Phulchowki Hill, this time focusing on the upper portions. Traveling in jeeps, we will make our way to the top of Phulchowki Hill and then work our way down, birding as we go. At times, you will find it difficult to tear your attention away from the magnificent views of the Himalayas to focus on the many species of birds we will see as we move toward our resort. Many raptors are possible, including Steppe Eagle and Black Mountain-Hawk. Several Laughingthrushes might be encountered, including Streaked, White-throated, and Chestnut-crowned. Eurasian Jay and multiple woodpecker species are also possibilities. Kashmir Nuthatch occurs in this area, as does Mrs. Gould's Sunbird, one of the loveliest of its family. Stripe-throated and Rufous-vented Yuhinas are seen in flocks, and the Rufous Sibia is common. Other species we might encounter include Red-flanked Bluetail, Blue-capped Redstart, Dark-breasted Rosefinch, and many more.

Godavari Resort (BLD)

<http://www.godavarivillageresort.com/>



Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush

Day 6, April 1: This morning we will enjoy just a bit of birding before breakfast, after which we will depart Godavari to drive to the Kathmandu Airport for our flight to Nepalgunj. Once we clear the airport, we will drive to Bardia National Park, just an hour away. Bardia NP is one of Nepal's best kept secrets. Located in the Terai region, it is Nepal's largest national park and wilderness area, protecting 968 sq. km of sal forest, grassland, savannah, and riverine forest. It's not overrun by tourists and there are excellent



Gharial

opportunities to spot endangered species of wildlife, including Gharial, Mugger Crocodile, Leopard, Swamp Deer, and Gray Langur Monkeys. We will work with a local guide to search for the "Big Three" of Bardia - Asian Elephant, Greater One-horned Rhinoceros, and (if we are very lucky) Bengal Tiger. The tiger population in Bardia has been slowly increasing and now stands at around 60 animals. More than 250 species of birds, including the endangered Bengal Florican, have been recorded in Bardia NP. Other birds of note include the Great Hornbill, Painted Stork, Thick-billed Green-Pigeon, Red Junglefowl, Indian Courser, Comb Duck, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Black Francolin, Himalayan Goldenback, Crested Bunting, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, and Blue-bearded Bee-eater, to name but a few.

Racy Shade (BLD) <https://www.racyshade.com/>

Days 7 - 8, April 2 - 3: We will have two full days to explore Bardia National Park.

Racy Shade (BLD) <https://www.racyshade.com/>

Day 9, April 4: We will leave Racy Shade early this morning to drive to the Nepalgunj Airport for our flight to Kathmandu (9:25 AM), where we will connect to a flight to Chitwan (11:50 AM). We will enjoy lunch at our lodge upon arrival and then have the afternoon to explore the lodge grounds and the town.

Machan Wildlife Resort <https://www.machanwildliferesort.com/>

Day 10, April 5: We will begin our morning with an elephant safari. Our group will travel separately from other "touristy" groups, going into the jungle on the backs of elephants accompanied by a birding guide. Birdlife is rich in this area, and we will take every opportunity to stop and observe the avian life from our pachyderm perches. Following our safari, we will go to the river where the elephants are bathed each day. You may take photos, feed the elephants, or even ride an elephant into the water to help bathe the friendly, well-trained beast. After lunch and a midday rest, we will take an afternoon birding walk in another part of the forest. A few of the many species we are likely to encounter are Greater Flameback, Woolly-necked Stork, Greater and Lesser Coucals, White-throated Kingfisher, Indian Roller, Himalayan Flameback, and Greater Yellownap, to name but a few.



Machan Wildlife Resort <https://www.machanwildliferesort.com/>



Day 11, April 6: Today we will take an all-day Jeep safari to explore further into the Chitwan forest. By venturing deeper into the jungle, we will have opportunity to observe new species of birds, and will also put ourselves into position to perhaps spot some of Nepal's more elusive wildlife, such as tiger (although this is not likely, it is possible).

Machan Wildlife Resort <https://www.machanwildliferesort.com/>

Day 12, April 7: After some early morning birding and breakfast, we will begin our drive to Koshi Tappu, the smallest and easternmost wildlife preserve in Nepal. This is primarily a travel day with a drive of approximately 7 hours and a stop for lunch along the way. At Koshi Tappu Wildlife Center, where we will stay in comfortable safari tents with shared bathrooms, we will have some free time to explore the area before dinner.

Koshi Tappu (BLD) <http://www.kositappu.com/>

Days 13 - 14, April 8 - 9: We will enjoy two full days of birding Koshi Tappu. Lying northeast of the confluence of Sapta Koshi and Trijuga Rivers, Koshi Tappu boasts 485 bird species, including 20 globally threatened species. Swamp Francolin, Baer's Pochard, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Striated Marsh Warbler, Black-bellied Tern, Pied and Marsh Harriers, Great and Little Cormorants, and many other birds associated with water might be seen on the day we have scheduled to go out in rafts on the gentle-flowing river. Other raptors that might be encountered include Brown Fish-Owl, Imperial Eagle, and Greater Spotted Eagle. Asian Openbill, Black Stork, and Lesser Adjutant are found, along with Indian Coursers, Oriental Skylarks, and Sand Larks can be expected in the sandy areas near the rivers. Woodpeckers of the area include Greater and Black-rumped Flamebacks, Speckled Piculet, and Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker. Five species of Drongo can be found here: Black, Ashy, White-bellied, Spangled (Hair-crested), and Greater Racket-tailed. Jungle Babblers are common, as are Red-throated Flycatchers and Common Stonechats.



Black-rumped Flameback

Koshi Tappu (BLD) <http://www.koshitappu.com/>

Day 15, April 10: We will depart Koshi Tappu today, transferring by van to Baranagar and then taking a flight to Kathmandu. After some shopping at the Thamel Bazaar, we will check in at the Hotel Aloft, located near the Kathmandu Airport, where we will enjoy a farewell dinner in the evening.

Hotel Aloft (BLD) <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/ktmal-aloft-kathmandu-thamel/?scid=bb1a189a-fec3-4d19-a255-54ba596febe2>

Day 16, April 11: Departure back to US. Today you will be transported to the international airport for your flight home. If your flight is later in the day, we can ask for a late check-out (until 2:00 PM) or, for late evening flights, you can arrange for an extra day at the hotel (at cost). Those who have extremely late flights (i.e. 11:00 PM) might want to depart on the 10th.

The price INCLUDES:

- ~ Lodging
- ~ All meals - Dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 16
- ~ All entry fees to reserves in itinerary
- ~ Expert local birding guides (We will have a different local guide at each location)
- ~ Private air-conditioned ground transportation
- ~ Internal airfare (Kathmandu – Nepalgunj – Kathmandu – Chitwan and Baranagar - Kathmandu)
- ~ All airport transfers
- ~ Private jeep and elephant safaris in Chitwan
- ~ Services of two Cheepers! tour leaders (Jim and Cindy Beckman)
- ~ Pre-trip gift box, including customized checklist
- ~ Post-trip photo collection and electronic copy of final checklist
- ~ Gratuities for miscellaneous services such as drivers, boatmen, etc.

The price does NOT include:

- ~ International airfare
- ~ Visa (\$25, purchased at entry)
- ~ Domestic Departure taxes (approx. \$2 per internal flight)
- ~ Gratuities for birding guides and staff at hotels and lodges (all tips are optional)
- ~ Items of a personal nature such as extra drinks, snacks, alcoholic beverages, laundry, souvenirs, etc.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Deposit of \$900 required with registration with *balance is due on or before November 27, 2020.*

Checks should be made payable to *Cheepers! Birding on a Budget* and mailed with the registration form to:

Cheepers! Birding on a Budget

Post Office Box 385

Spring Valley, OH 45370

Cancellation policy:

Cancellation must be made in writing (email or snail mail)

More than 6 months prior to departure – full refund of deposit

Between 4 and 6 months prior to departure – 50% refund of deposit

Less than 4 months prior to departure – No refund of deposit

If cancellation occurs after full payment is made, a refund will be given only if the vacant spot is filled.

Trip insurance is recommended.

You can compare prices and coverage offered by various trip insurance companies at these websites:

http://www.quotewright.com/?sub_id=6056

www.insuremytrip.com

Cheepers! Birding on a Budget LLC reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary if the need should arise due to unforeseeable circumstances such as weather, landslides, and other natural phenomena, as well as suggestions by local guides in order to take advantage of an unusual birding opportunity. Lodging is subject to change based on availability.

