



Earthbound Expeditions

# Bird Watching Tour In Bhutan

10 days, from US\$3,987 per person

Duration

**10 days**

Group size

**12 People**

Country

**Bhutan**

Behold the splendid experience of voyaging through the unexplored mountain kingdom of Bhutan savoring the serene beauty and wisdom of viewing the most beautiful creatures on the planet, Birds.

## Day by day

### Day 1

#### Arrive Paro

Fly to Paro Airport from Kathmandu, on a clear day the panoramic views of the Himalayas are sensational including the Everest, but particularly exciting is the approach through the Bhutanese foothills and the landing, including a few steep turns to land at the tiny airstrip of Paro International Airport. Upon arrival and completing your immigration formalities, you will meet your guide at the exit gate. We begin our tour from Paro in western Bhutan. We explore the valley, which is a delight to see as it is filled with cultural and historical monuments. Our particular interest will be to spot Ibis bill, which inhabits sandbanks of the rivers and the Black-tailed Crake. Other birds to look for include Brown Dipper, Plumbeous and White-capped Water-Redstarts, Siberian Stonechat, Grey Bushchat, Blue Whistling Thrush, Himalayan Wagtail, River Lapwing, Oriental Turtle Dove, Eurasian Hoopoe, Himalayan Black Bulbul, Grey-backed Shrike, Red-billed Chough, Large-billed Crow, Green-backed Tit, Russet Sparrow, Green Sandpiper, Rosy Pipit, Rufous-breasted Accentor, Black-throated Thrush and Hodgson's Redstart.

Altitude: 2,200 m   On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs   Night: Hotel, Paro   Meals: Dinner

### Day 2

#### Paro – Chelela – Thimphu

Today we start early to the scenic Chelela mountain pass (3,780 m). This place is excellent to spot Himalayan Monal, considered to be among world's 10 most beautiful birds. We will also search the area for Blood Pheasant and Kalij Pheasant. Other species found include: Long-tailed Thrush, White-collared Blackbird, Mrs Gould's Sunbird, Olive-backed Pipit, the huge Collared Grosbeak, White-winged Grosbeak, Himalayan White-browed and Dark-rumped Rosefinches, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Grey Nightjar, Yellow-billed Blue Magpie, Spotted (or Eurasian) Nutcracker, Long-tailed Minivet, Coal, Grey-crested and Rufous-fronted Tits, Black-faced Laughingthrush, White-browed Fulvetta, Rufous-vented Yuhina, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, Buff-barred Warbler, Himalayan Red-flanked Bluetail (split from Northern), Blue-fronted Redstart. Later in the evening, we will drive to Bhutan's capital, Thimphu (2,350m).

Altitude: 2,320 m   On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs   Night: Hotel, Thimphu   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### Day 3

#### Thimphu – Dochula – Punakha

Morning, drive to Punakha, the road climbs a series of zigzags over the Dochula Pass (3050 meters) with its (weather permitting) spectacular views of the snowcapped Eastern Himalayas. Dochula (3,050m) is the most scenic mountain pass in Bhutan, surrounded by forests of hemlock, fir, rhododendron and evergreen oak. With the mighty peaks of the eastern Himalayas as the backdrop, we begin to look for White-throated, Striated and Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrushes, Darjeeling Woodpecker, Rufous Sibia, Hoary-throated Barwing, Stripe-throated Yuhina, Rufous-winged Fulvettas, Lemon-rumped and Ashy-throated Warblers, Whistler's Warbler, Yellow-browed Tit, Rusty-flanked Treecreeper, Green-tailed Sunbird, Common Crossbill, Dark-breasted Rosefinch and Red-headed Bullfinch. We may even spot the beautiful Fire-tailed Myzornis here. Towards the evening we descend to Punakha (1,350m)

Altitude: 1,200 m   On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs   Night: Hotel, Punakha   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 4

### Punakha

This sub-tropical valley has its crown jewel, the splendid Punakha Dzong, the ancient capital flanked by male and female rivers, Pho Chhu and Mo Chhu. We hike up the Mo Chhu, and along a wide stretch of forests along the riverbank and its tributaries, we look for Crested Kingfisher, Great Cormorant, and Slaty-backed Forktail. In particular we will be keen to see, among numerous other species, Yellow-vented Warbler, Spotted Wren-Babbler and, if lucky be on our side, the extremely rare White-bellied Heron, and Pallas's Fish Eagle. Other species found in this area include Grey-headed Woodpecker, Greater and Lesser Yellownapes, Maroon Oriole, Ashy and Hair-crested Drongos, Common Myna, Grey Treepie, Black-winged Cuckoo-Shrike, Mountain Bulbul, Ultramarine, Verditer and Grey-headed Flycatchers, Small Niltava, Slaty-bellied Tesia, Blyth's Leaf, Green-crowned and Grey-hooded Warblers, Black-throated Tit, Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Crested Serpent Eagle, Spotted Dove, Himalayan Cuckoo, Himalayan Swiftlet, House Swift, White-throated Kingfisher, Great and Golden-throated Barbets, and Black-throated Sunbird. We will also look for babblers including Rufous-capped Babbler, Rufous-chinned Laughingthrush, Red-tailed and Blue-winged Minlas, Whiskered Yuhina and Nepal Fulvetta.

Altitude: 1,200 m   On foot: Easy walking, 3–4 hrs   Night: Hotel, Punakha   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 5

### Punakha – Phobjikha

Today, we head into the interior, from Wangdue all the way to Phobjikha valley, winter home for the Black Neck Cranes. The route is thickly forested and we will be birding along this way amongst ever-changing vegetation from the sub-tropics to the temperate to the alpine. We will look out for the elusive Yellow-rumped Honeyguide among hives of Rock Bees. Other birds usually found in this stretch include Grey-sided Bush Warbler, Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon, Fork-tailed Swift, Chestnut-bellied and Blue-capped Rock Thrushes, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Fire-tailed Sunbird Himalayan Griffon, Lammergeier, Indian Blue Robin, and Hume's Bush Warbler.

Altitude: 2,900 m   On foot: None, 3–4 hr drive   Night: Hotel, Phobjikha   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 6

### Phobjikha – Bumthang

Morning drive to Bumthang, along what is locally termed as "lateral highway," crossing two mountain passes, Pele La (3,300m) and Yotong La (3,400m) We will try to spot Himalayan Wood Owl, the rare Wood Snipe, and high altitude species such as Alpine Accentor, White-browed Bush Robin, Great and Brown Parrotbills, and Fulvous Parrotbill. Other new birds along this stretch may include Rufous-bellied Woodpecker, Spotted Forktail, and Speckled Woodpigeon. We finally reach the wide pine-forested Bumthang valley, considered one of the most beautiful in Bhutan.

Altitude: 2,600 m   On foot: None, 5–6 hr drive   Night: Hotel, Bumthang   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 7

### Bumthang

Day halt at Bumthang, you can either do some birding at Chumey Valley or do some cultural sightseeing visiting Dzong, Jambay Lhakhang and Kurjey Lhakhang.

Altitude: 2,600 m   On foot: Easy walking, 2–3 hrs   Night: Hotel, Bumthang   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 8

### Bumthang – Punakha

Drive back over the Yotola Pass and Pelela Pass, the drive may take about 7–8 hours.

Altitude: 1,200 m   On foot: None, 7–8 hr drive   Night: Hotel, Punakha   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 9

### Punakha – Paro

Drive to Paro over the Dochula Pass may take about 5 hours. Upon arrival at Paro, you can have the rest of the afternoon exploring the town of Paro or you can visit the Paro Dzong and Tag Dzong (National Museum)

Altitude: 2,200 m   On foot: None, 5 hr drive   Night: Hotel, Paro   Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### Day 10

### Departure

Drive to Paro International Airport to catch your flight.

Altitude: 2,200 m   On foot: None, departure day   Night: No overnight   Meals: Breakfast

## What's included

- All accommodations included within Bhutan.
- Full broad meals included.
- Private transfers.
- Professional English Speaking Tour Guides.
- All airports pick up and transfers.
- Travel permits.
- Bhutan visa fees.
- Major monuments' entrance fee in Bhutan.

## Not included

- Airfare.
- Personal travel insurance.
- All personal items.
- A few lunches and dinners are not included.
- Tips for guides and drivers.
- Mountain and road rescue.
- Other emergency evacuations will be charged if necessary.
- Expenses incurred as a result of illness, landslides, political disturbances, re-routing, flight cancellations and any other unforeseen situations and events which is not under our control.
- Any kind of Table drinks, telephone bills, laundry, postage etc.