

Trip Code : **KBG 02**

## Western Ghats Endemic Birding Tour



### At a Glance

The Western Ghats of Southwestern India, locally as the Sahyadri Hills, are formed by the Malabar Plains and the chain of mountains running parallel to India's western coast, about 30 to 50 kilometers inland. The Western Ghats intercepts the Southwestern Monsoon winds. The Western slopes of the mountains experience heavy annual rainfall (with 80 percent of it falling during the southwest monsoon from June to September), while the Eastern slopes are drier; rainfall also decreases from South to North. Dozens of rivers originate in these mountains, including the peninsula's three major eastward-flowing rivers. The wide variation of rainfall patterns in the Western Ghats, coupled with the region's complex geography, produces a great variety of vegetation types. These include scrub forests in the low-lying rain shadow areas and the plains, deciduous and tropical rainforests up to about 1,500 meters, and a unique mosaic of cloud forests and rolling grasslands above 1,500 meters. It is no wonder then that the changing eco-tones and the vast variety of eco-systems are home to numerous endemic species of birds, mammals & vegetation.

This 8 day journey is an intense birding trip with little time for sightseeing. The tour covers the lowland forests at Thattekkad, the famed Periyar Tiger Reserve, the *shola*-grasslands of Munnar & Ooty and the dry deciduous forests at Mudumalai.

### Prices

2 to 3 persons travelling: USD 1360 per person

4 to 8 persons travelling: USD 1230 per person

Single Room Supplement: USD 270

Includes accommodation for 7 nights with most meals, all surface transportation, driver's allowances, parking fees & toll, birding guide, bottled water, birding walks, safaris and entrance fees to parks & sanctuaries and all taxes.

**Climate:** June to September are the monsoon months. Rains may occasionally extend to October and early November. The temperatures in the plains are likely to be high during March to May.

**Best Time:** October to April

**Departures:** Any day of the week. Please check the website for any fixed departure dates.

### Kalypso Adventures

G 340, Panampilly Nagar, Kochi - 682036, Kerala-India

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### **Detailed Itinerary**

#### **Day 1, 2 , 3 - Thattekkad**

Thattekkad is a lowland forest with several types of eco-systems - riverine, grasslands, evergreen, scrub, dry deciduous, lowland forest, enabling it to be one of the best birding destinations in India. This is also home to most of the endemics of the Western Ghats. One should sight the Whitebellied Treepie, Rufous Babbler, Crimsonbacked Sunbird, White Bellied Blue Flycatcher, Wayanad Laughing Thrush, Malabar Parakeet, Malabar Grey Hornbill besides owls like the Mottled Wood Owl, Oriental Bay Owl, Oriental scopes owl, Brown Fish Owl, Oriental Scopes Owl and Spotbellied Eagle Owl. You should also be able to sight the Red Spurfowl, Grey Jungle Fowl, Indian Pitta, Black-throated Munia and the Grey headed fishing eagle.

**Accommodation: Hornbill Camp (B, L, D)**

#### **Day 4 - Periyar**

Periyar Tiger Reserve is one of the finest wildlife & birding destinations in South India. With over 320 bird species identified and a leading habitat for the Bengal Tiger, this sanctuary is an ideal destination of the tour. Periyar National Park contains a variety of habitats from grassland and dry deciduous forest to evergreen forest and riverside scrub. As a result of its wide range of habitats Periyar boasts an impressive list of resident species including about half the peninsular endemics and near-endemics. We will spend the day searching here for some very special species including the very secretive and wary Wynaad Laughingthrush. Other birds to look out for include White-rumped and Brown-backed Needletails, Oriental Honey-Buzzard, Black Eagle, the striking Black Baza, Pompadour Green and Mountain Imperial Pigeon, the migratory Chestnut-winged Cuckoo, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Gray-breasted Prinia, Thick-billed Warbler, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, and the Asian Fairy Bluebird among other more widespread species. We may also sight the Woolly-necked Stork, Besra, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Jungle Owlet, White-rumped Spinetail, Black-naped Monarch and the Little Spiderhunter.

**Accommodation: Wilderrest Resort (B)**

#### **Day 5, 6 - Munnar.**

We will leave for Munnar via the Ghats to Khambam where we should sight the Large Grey Babbler, Common Babbler, Jungle Bush Quail and the Grey Francolin. We will proceed to Bodi Ghats en-route Munnar and stop over for sighting the rare Yellow Throated Bulbul, Indian Robin, Sirkeer Malkoha, Short Toed Snake Eagle, Bluefaced Malkoha and the Black eagle. We will reach Munnar by evening. The next day we will go birding in the *sholas* (high altitude montane forests) and grasslands for the Nilgiri Pipit, Painted Bush Quail, Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Black & Orange Flycatcher, Nilgiri Flycatcher, Whitebellied Shortwing, Broadtailed Grassbird, Grasshopper Warbler.

**Accommodation: Olive Brook Resort (B, L, D)**

#### **Day 7 - Ooty.**

We will start early in the morning birding at Chinnar (dry scrub forest) looking for White-bellied Drongo, Blue faced Malkoha, White-naped woodpecker, Blue-beared bee-eater, Sirkeer Malkoha, Jungle Bush Quail and the Yellow-legged Button quail. From here taking the long drive, we will reach Ooty by evening. Ooty - a hill station, at about 2,200m in the Nilgiri Hills - is where we will look for the endemic Nilgiri Laughing Thrush, White-bellied Shortwing, and Black-and-rufous, Rusty-tailed and Nilgiri Flycatchers.

**Accommodation: Kluney Manor (B, L, D)**

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### Day 8 - Mudumalai - Kochi.

After birding at Ooty, we will make our way to Mudumalai located at the foot of the of the Nilgiri hills. The terrain is varied with hills, valleys, ravines, watercourses and swamps, moist deciduous forests, dry deciduous forests and scrub forests and hence is ideal birding country. Should see Jerdon's Bushlark, Sirkeer Malkoha, Indian Blue Robin, Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch, White-bellied Minivet, Yellow-billed Babbler, White-bellied Woodpecker, Large Cuckooshrike, Banded-bay Cuckoo, Thick-billed Warbler, Malabar Lark and Painted Bush Quail. Drive to Kochi by late evening. Tour ends.

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

**How to book:** The booking of this itinerary is with Kalypso Adventures (Pvt) Limited. Please contact Thomas Zacharias of Kalypso Adventures ([info@kalypsoadventures.com](mailto:info@kalypsoadventures.com)) / or call +91 9447031032, to post a request for the tour.

### GENERAL INFO

A detailed Trip Information sheet will be sent to you on booking the tour. A few salient points are given below:

#### VISA

**ALL VISITORS TO INDIA MUST OBTAIN A VISA BEFORE DEPARTURE**

#### GUIDE

Your birding guide will be with you throughout the tour. He would be responsible for birding as well as sorting all your logistics during the tour.

#### ACCOMMODATION

All accommodation on the tour has been carefully chosen for their cleanliness, cuisine, 'birding-friendly' and nearness to birding areas. Most meals are included in the price.

#### MEDICAL INFORMATION UPDATE

Information given above are liable to change from time to time and one should contact the Indian missions of the respective country or the government tourist offices for more information. The area of your birding trip is Malaria-free.

#### TRANSFERS

All transfers including airport transfers in chauffeur-driven a/c SUVs & the driver's allowances are included.

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