



**ASSAM, INDIA:
KAZIRANGA AND NAMERI NATIONAL PARKS**

15 – 22 APRIL 2019



Great Hornbill is one of our targets on this trip.

This extension to our **Birding Tour Bhutan: Spring in the Eastern Himalayas** will lead to the Indian state of Assam, home to two magnificent national parks for us to visit. In fact, the floodplains of the Brahmaputra River here are considered one of the most biologically diverse areas in all of India.

After our arrival in Guwahati, the largest city in Assam and situated on the bank of the Brahmaputra River, we will head through the Assamese plains, looking for some difficult yet highly-prized species in and around the wondrous Kaziranga National Park, such as **Bengal Florican, Greater Adjutant, Blue-naped Pitta, Indian Grassbird, and Swamp Francolin**. After three full days here we will continue our travels through the beautiful, undisturbed wilderness of the Himalayan foothills at Nameri National Park, where we will have two full days exploring. This area protects numerous species, and here we will look for special birds such as **White-winged Duck, Ibisbill, and Greater Adjutant**. Once we have finished here we will head back to Guwahati where this short, but exhilarating trip will conclude.

This extension will also offer fantastic opportunities of some of India's major mammals and reptiles such as **Indian Rhinoceros** (the only place in the world where this species can be seen reliably), **Asian Elephant, Barasingha** (Swamp Deer), **Gaur, Wild Water Buffalo, Indian Leopard** (subspecies), **Western Hoolock Gibbon, Ganges River Dolphin, and Gharial**, along with plenty of more common and widespread species. With luck we may even find **Bengal Tiger** or **Clouded Leopard**, either one sure to be yet another highlight.

Itinerary (8 days/7 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Guwahati and transfer to Kaziranga National Park

If you are coming from our Bhutan tour, you will arrive with us in Guwahati from Samdrup Jonjhar (in Bhutan), otherwise your tour begins in Guwahati. From here we will drive to Kaziranga National Park, our base for the next four nights.

Overnight: Kaziranga

Days 2 - 4. Kaziranga National Park

We will have three full days to explore this fascinating and exciting national park where we will take jeep safaris to travel around. Some very special birds are possible during our stay here, and key birds we will be looking for include **Bengal Florican, Greater Adjutant, Blue-naped Pitta, Indian Grassbird, Swamp Francolin, Spot-billed Pelican, and Pallas's Fish Eagle**. However, while looking for the above species (and the animals referenced below) there are plenty of other birds we will look out for as we make our way through various open grasslands and wetlands, such as **Black-necked, Painted, Woolly-necked, and Black Storks, Asian Openbill, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Gray-headed Lapwing, Alexandrine and Red-breasted Parakeets, Gray-headed Fish Eagle, Zitting Cisticola, Chestnut Munia, Red Avadavat, Bengal Bush Lark, Finn's, Baya, Streaked, and Black-breasted Weavers, and Spot-winged Starling**.

The more scrubby and wooded areas within and around the national park hold **Siberian Rubythroat, Common Green Magpie, Kalij Pheasant, Red Junglefowl, Common Emerald Dove, White-rumped Shama, Rufous, Grey-headed, and Fulvous-breasted Woodpeckers,**

Speckled Piculet, White-browed Scimitar Babbler, Greater Necklaced, Lesser Necklaced, and Rufous-necked Laughingthrushes, Maroon Oriole, Blue-eared and Great Barbets, Verditer Flycatcher, and Smoky Warbler.

A fine suite of mammals also occurs in Kaziranga National Park, and we will look for **Indian Rhinoceros, Asian Elephant, Gaur, Wild Water Buffalo, Barasingha** (Swamp Deer), **Sloth Bear**, and **Western Hoolock Gibbon**. With some luck we may also even come across the rare and secretive **Bengal Tiger, Indian Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Jungle Cat, Fishing Cat, or Leopard Cat** while here. Furthermore, the river here is home to the Critically Endangered (IUCN) **Gharial** and **Ganges River Dolphin**, two other highly-sought species in a long list of potential non-avian highlights. Our visit in and around this national park is sure to be a very interesting, bird-and- wildlife-packed time.

Overnight: Kaziranga (three nights)

Day 5. Kaziranga National Park to Nameri National Park

We will leave Kaziranga National Park area after a final early-morning bird-and-wildlife-watching session before commencing our journey to Nameri National Park, where we will be based for the next three nights. If we have time we will start birding here in the afternoon to make a start on some of the possible highlights of the area.

Overnight: Nameri.

Days 6 - 7. Nameri National Park

Nameri National Park is a gorgeous, undulating wilderness area in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas. A large proportion of the national park area is made up of swamp forest, interspersed with areas of open grassland, split up by many river tributaries. Nameri is one of the best places in the world to try and find the rare, highly-elusive, and Endangered (IUCN) **White-winged Duck**, and this will be one of the major objectives of our time here. There are, however, numerous other great species possible here, such as **Greater Adjutant, Green Cochoa, Long-tailed Broadbill, Great and Wreathed Hornbills, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Pied Falconet, Pied Harrier, Oriental Hobby, White-browed Piculet, Grey-bellied Tesia, Pale-chinned Blue Flycatcher, and Black-backed Forktail**, and we will make sure to try and find as many of these as possible. On one day we will take a boat/raft ride along the river here, where we could find **Ibisbill, Small Pratincole, River Tern, River Lapwing, Great Stone-curlew, Sand Lark, Striated Grassbird**, and the huge **Crested Kingfisher**.

Overnight: Nameri (two nights)

Day 8. Nameri National Park to Guwahati

After some final early-morning birding we will head back to Guwahati. From here you can connect to Kolkata or to New Delhi and fly home.

Or if you would rather not fly back home on this day we can organize additional nights in India, or we can further extend your birding or provide you with a cultural tour in any other part of India. Just let us know what you'd like to do and see, maybe an extension to visit the Taj Mahal, or Ranthambhore National Park to look for the majestic Bengal Tiger, or the Chambal River to look for Ganges River Dolphin? There are lots of choices on offer.

Duration: 8 days
Date: 15th – 22nd April 2019
Limit: 4-6
Start: Guwahati
End: Guwahati

Price: US\$3,015 per person
Single supplement: US\$330

Price includes:

All accommodation (as described above – please note that the accommodation in northeast India is basic to very basic, often with shared bathroom/toilets in permanent camp sites away from the cities)

Meals (from lunch on day 1 until breakfast on day 8)

Drinking water – two bottles of mineral water per day per person from our tour vehicle (if taken from hotel/camps this will be at your own cost)

Expert tour leader and local bird/wildlife guide fees

National park/birdwatching reserve entrance fees and jeep safaris

All ground transport and tolls while on tour, including airport pick-up and drop-off

Rafting at Nameri

Price excludes:

Flights to/from Guwahati

Visa

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.

Optional tours (e.g. monument entrance fees)

Soft/alcoholic drinks

Camera (still/video) permits

Personal travel insurance

Gratuities

Please note that the itinerary above cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different international guide to the one advertised due to tour scheduling.