



**INDONESIA: SULAWESI AND HALMAHERA –
SPECTACULAR ENDEMIC BIRDING**

GENERAL INFORMATION



The stunning Ivory-breasted Pitta will be a big target on this tour.

Important Information/Packing List:

Some Items to Bring:

1. Field guide, see [here](#) for some guidance. We will provide you with a bird checklist for daily use on the tour, this will follow IOC taxonomy (which we follow at Birding Ecotours) but will also give reference to the other major taxonomies used in the other world checklists (e.g. eBird/Clements and HBW/BirdLife) covering the region (and the field guide we recommend you use as that uses a different taxonomy again). There is a huge amount of confusion among bird names and taxonomy in Indonesia with many new species likely to be recognized in the coming years. We will do everything possible to help you keep track of the bird names and confusing taxonomy! We will also keep eBird checklists for each area visited each day of the tour and will share these with participants who wish to keep track of sightings in this way.
2. Binoculars and camera. Your tour leader will have a Swarovski spotting scope and for space reasons, it is not recommended that you bring your own.
3. Sunscreen, hat (wide-brimmed for open-areas, e.g. the beach, and baseball-style cap for forest birding - so as to not block visibility for people behind you on a trail!), and insect repellent – conditions are likely to be swampy, hot and humid and mosquitos are prevalent, particularly in the lowlands, chiggers are also present in some areas (e.g. north Sulawesi).
4. Anti-malaria tablets – Halmahera is a high-risk malaria area, lower risk in Sulawesi (but see section on Health and Medical Conditions information below). Insect repellent essential.
5. Leech socks – useful, particularly if it is wet.
6. A small first aid kit – contents should include hand sanitizer, blister bandages, antibiotic cream, anti-itch cream, any prescription drugs required, aspirin, ibuprofen and/or paracetamol, anti-diarrheal (e.g. Imodium), valoid, ciprofloxacin antibiotic for gastrointestinal upset. Most of these are available at pharmacies in Indonesia, but it saves time if you bring them with you (some places we will be going will not have pharmacies nearby).
7. Footwear – a matter of personal preference. Rubber boots probably essential in muddy conditions and often dry out quickly, but often lack suitable ankle support which can be given by walking/hiking boots (especially useful on the hike up the Anaso Track), but helpful for reducing the chance of chigger bites, where they occur (e.g. Tangkoko). If you don't mind getting dirty, in favor of better ankle support, go with walking boots (and preventative methods for chigger bites). If it is particularly wet during the tour it may be possible to purchase rubber boots in one of the towns/cities if there is time/availability of your size. Trainers (running/tennis shoes) can be useful for time spent in vans or time around the accommodation as can flipflops/sandals.
8. Walking stick – linked to above, a walking stick can help provide additional balance on steep/slippery/wet terrain and is particularly useful on the Anaso Track (Sulawesi) and walking to Standardwing lek (Halmahera).
9. Quick-dry clothes – consider a long-sleeved shirt over a T-shirt, for protection against the

sun and mosquitos.

10. Clothes – should be dull/dark for birding as these are less likely to disturb the birds we will be searching for. Some warm clothes would be useful as temperatures may drop to below 10-12°C overnight, possibly a bit cooler if wet on the mountains.
11. Rain jacket/coat.
12. Bathing suit, mask and snorkel for optional swimming during free time at Weda Resort which is on the coast.
13. A small hand towel or wash cloth can be useful for cleaning and drying things when in the rainforest. Not essential but handy.
14. A day pack suitable for carrying essential personal items such as field guides, bottles of water, snacks, cameras, etc.
15. A dry bag to keep valuable documents in such as passports, cell phones, wallets etc., as well as cameras if it's raining.
16. Torch (flashlight) and/or headlamp, and spare batteries – essential kit.
17. Power-bank – useful for keeping phones etc. charged.
18. Small umbrella – can be very useful if we experience a rain shower.

Please ask us if you have any specific questions about what to bring on this tour.

Important Information:

Remember you are visiting a developing country, expect many things to be very different to what you might expect from home. We have tried to make this tour as comfortable as possible however some areas we visit are still very remote, even by Indonesian standards, but the birding certainly makes up for that.

Physical Toughness:

The birding on this tour is a mix of flat forest trails and roadside birding, gently sloping low hills (on a mix of proper trails and more “off-piste” – e.g. if we have to go and look for a day-roost of an owl, or a hornbill nest, or pitta etc.), some short forest trails that might be considered tricky in places by some people, e.g. when we go to the Standardwing lek in Halmahera (particularly when the heat and humidity of some areas is considered), and one difficult hike (the Anaso Track – a former logging track that is now a heavily eroded gulley but offers some of the best birding in Lore Lindu National Park). Most days we will take a “siesta” during the middle of the day when the heat is at its strongest and bird activity generally wanes which will be good for resting and relaxing for a few hours. We have local guides and other support staff with us so if at any time anyone in the group wants to opt out of an activity that will be possible.

Accommodation:

In Sulawesi we stay in accommodation ranging from good hotels in the towns and cities, such as

in Makassar, Tomohon, and Luwuk, to more basic yet comfortable lodges catering for birders such as in Tangkoko, the countryside outside of Makassar, and at Lore Lindu. In Halmahera we stay in a comfortable dive resort for the duration of our stay on the island. All accommodation has been chosen for its proximity to excellent birding locations while still providing an adequate level of comfort. Most accommodation has either air con or a ceiling/standing fan, and sometimes a combination of both. Where necessary (such as in Halmahera) accommodation has mosquito nets and provides insect repellent/mosquito coils. Some accommodation have swimming pools and the resort on Halmahera has a sheltered bay for swimming.

Power Sockets:

In Indonesia the power sockets are of type C and F. The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz. See [here](#) for details. You may need to consider a converter and/or an adaptor.

Phone and Internet:

Phone service (and therefore mobile internet etc.) is not widely available, particularly in the forest and on the mountains and we do not have a satellite phone. Local sim cards can be purchased in the towns that will have limited connection in some places. Most places we stay at (particularly in the cities, and occasionally in the more rural areas) will have WiFi.

Meals:

Food is of local Indonesian style in most places, some of the larger hotels in the towns and cities may have more western style food but this is not necessarily to be expected. Bringing energy/cereal bars might be advantageous for during early morning hikes etc.

Please remember to give us your dietary preferences. Are you vegetarian? Can you eat spicy foods?

Weather:

It is likely to be hot and humid in the lowlands, more so in Halmahera and northern Sulawesi versus southern Sulawesi, with a possible temperature range of c.77-95°F (c.25-35°C). It is likely to be a touch cooler when we are in the mountains such as c.59-68°F (c.15-20°C) and may go cooler overnight. July is typically one of the drier months in the region but rain could occur at any time.

Travel:

We use various forms of transport on the tour. In Sulawesi we will likely use a range of minibuses of varying sizes, sometimes 4x4s. In Halmahera the driving is carried out in 4x4 vehicles. Depending on the final group size we may have 1-3 vehicles. We will take six internal flights to move around the two islands, a necessity in Indonesia. We will use a speedboat to get between Ternate and Halmahera and we will take a smaller outrigger boat for a mangrove trip in northern Sulawesi. The boat trip to the mangroves may result in wet/sandy feet as we enter and exit the boat on the beach, the speedboat trip between the islands involves proper harbours.

Luggage:

Make your luggage as light as possible, most domestic flights only allow 44 lb (20 kg) of hold luggage per person, any overweight luggage may not be carried and/or will be charged extra. The tour cost includes 44 lb (20 kg) of baggage only (per person), any excess charges will need to be paid for locally by cash payments only.

Currency:

Currency exchange is only available in Makasar, Manado, Pulau, and Jakarta but ATMs are available in every town. Traveller's cheques are not accepted in most banks or stores in Indonesia, and we don't recommend the use of credit cards except in major hotels or larger stores. Plan on either using your ATM card for money (ideally bring two), and bring American money (US\$), preferably \$100 bills. But Note: *Any bills dated 1996 or 1999 will not be accepted anywhere in Indonesia due to counterfeiting problems in the past.* The highest rate they will accept is the newest edition of \$100 bills. Allow at least several weeks for your bank to obtain these for you. Also, throughout Indonesia, people will not accept bills that are worn or ripped. A rip of only 1/16th of an inch can make a bill unusable. Note that ATMs will usually allow you to only take a small amount of cash out in one go, such as IDR 1,500,000 (c\$100 at the time of writing this in October 2020). Please also note that you will most likely be charged by one or both banks (at home and in Indonesia) for each withdrawal. The following cards seem to work best in Indonesia: Mastercard, Visa, Cirrus, and Alto.

Passport:

Your passport must be valid for a period of at least 6 months after the date of your departure from Indonesia. Please make sure that there is at least one full empty page available in your passport. Please make sure that you also bring a photocopy of your passport, to be kept in a different location from your passport (given to your tour leader), in case of loss/damage of your passport.

Visa and Arrival into Indonesia:

Makassar (where the tour starts and ends) is an Indonesian international arrival city. It is here that you will get your passport stamped and visa issued. If you are traveling around the region before the tour, the other international arrival points into Indonesia are Denpasar (Bali) and Jakarta (Java), both have frequent flights to Makassar.

Most visitors to Indonesia usually gain a 30-day visa on arrival. If you are planning to stay longer than 30 days you will need a different visa. Please check with your government advice as you will likely need to visit an embassy or consulate to gain this. Evidence of onward travel may be required on your arrival into Indonesia. We will provide you with the name and address details of the hotel for the first night of the tour which you will need for immigration.

Travel Insurance:

We require that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect yourself against accidents, medical, illness, loss of valuables, luggage etc., and travel interruptions or delays of all kinds. You can email us copies of this information.

Health and Medical Conditions:

Please consult your doctor regarding any vaccine requirements. All travelers should be up to date with routine vaccination courses and boosters (e.g. tetanus). There is no risk of yellow fever transmission in Sulawesi/Halmahera, however, there is a certificate requirement if travelers have visited/come from the following countries. Malaria is a risk in Halmahera and so anti-malarial drugs are recommended. See here for further specifics on yellow fever and malaria in the region.

Some travelers may require hepatitis A, tetanus, typhoid, cholera, hepatitis B, Japanese encephalitis, rabies, and tuberculosis (TB). Please see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for a useful overview of the requirements and recommendations here. Please also refer to the advice of your own country.

Sunblock should be carried, and a hat should be worn to protect from the powerful rays from the sun, with sunglasses to help prevent glare. A plentiful supply of water should be carried at all times to maintain hydration (please bring a refillable bottle with you).

Please make sure that you are covered with medical insurance in case of an emergency while on this tour. Without insurance the cost of medical care can be extremely high. Please notify us at the time of registering for this tour of any medical conditions you think we should know about (including allergies, heart conditions, epilepsy, etc.). This will greatly help us to cater to your needs and update emergency services if required.

If you bring any prescription medication into Indonesia, make sure you have a copy of the prescription with you. The prescription must cover the quantity of medication you bring. Be aware that some prescription or other medication available in the US/UK/other countries, including some psychotropic medicines, may be illegal in Indonesia. If you are unsure, speak to your doctor and the Indonesian Embassy for advice before you travel.

Do not forget – Binoculars, prescription drugs (also bring the generic names for these drugs and information stated above), toiletries, prescription glasses (and a spare pair), insect repellent, sunscreen and sunglasses, camera, flashlight, batteries (for electronic equipment, and chargers for the re-chargeable batteries if required), converter plug set if needed and plug adaptors, alarm clock, money pouch, field guide(s), and daypacks.

We will provide all clients signing up to the tour with further information and a packing list along with a detailed itinerary, bird checklist, and animal checklist.