



**CENTRAL THAILAND: SHOREBIRD SPECTACLE AND  
JUNGLE BIRDING**

**TOUR-SPECIFIC INFORMATION**



*Spoon-billed Sandpiper is one of over 40 shorebird species possible on this tour.*

**GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THAILAND CAN BE READ [HERE](#)****TOUR OUTLINE**

This seriously exciting bird tour of central Thailand starts and ends in the capital city, Bangkok. We visit the Bay of Bangkok for a bonanza of shorebirds including **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**, **Nordmann's Greenshank**, **Asian Dowitcher**, **White-faced Plover**, and many more. We will then spend time forest birding where we will look for a range of pheasants, pittas, broadbills, trogons, kingfishers, laughingthrushes, and hornbills (such as **Silver Pheasant**, **Blue Pitta**, **Silver-breasted Broadbill**, **Red-headed Trogon**, **Banded Kingfisher**, **White-crested Laughingthrush**, and **Great Hornbill**). Several of the sites we visit offer very good photo opportunities, and a wide range of animals are possible on the tour too, such as **Lar Gibbon**, **Asian Elephant**, and **Siamese Crocodile**.

**DAILY ACTIVITIES, PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, AND TOUR PACE**

This Thai birdwatching tour runs at a fairly fast pace with some long days. Depending on the exact area we will be birding, mealtimes and birdwatching times may vary a little from day to day.

On most days we will have early morning birding sessions and then rest between late morning and early afternoon, followed by a late afternoon birding session and, at a few locations, some evening owling. We will usually have breakfast at 05:30–06:30 before we leave to go birding, have lunch around midday, and dinner around 18:30–19:30, though these times are not fixed. The areas we bird during this tour are often very hot and bird activity drops during the middle of the day. During the rest periods there will be opportunities for personal birding around the hotel grounds or relaxing (e.g. some of the hotels we stay in have swimming pools). Some mornings, especially at the coast, we might have a later breakfast after an early morning birding session. We may also take picnic breakfasts and/or picnic lunches on some days.

At the coast we will be birding in salt pans, mangroves, rice paddies, and along the beach/seashore. There will be very little shade when birding in these areas which is why we try and cover them in the early morning or late afternoon, due to the heat, however as our birding time here will need to consider tide times, we may end up having to do some birding during the hotter parts of the day. We stay at a comfortable hotel while at the coast which is excellent for relaxing during the heat of the day. Most of our birding in these areas will be carried out from or near vehicles, with walks probably of less than 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) at a time, at a very relaxed place. We will also take a small-boat trip through the mangroves to the famed [Laem Pak Bia Sandspit](#), this often entails a wet-feet landing on the beach.

Our forest birding in [Kaeng Krachan National Park](#) and [Khao Yai National Park](#) will include time walking/driving through suitable wooded habitat (these national parks have roads that pass through them providing excellent access to birding areas – though we might need to use a 4x4 pickup truck to access some areas) and we will also spend time birding from forest blinds/bird hides, waiting patiently for rare and secretive birds to show. On some days, during our forest birding, we will spend the whole day within the forest, resting up there rather than returning to our accommodations. Several of the birding areas within the national parks can be covered close to vehicles with limited walking, rather just standing and scanning, but some of the areas require

a walk of up to 2–3 miles (3–5 kilometers) on undulating/inclined forest trails. We will always take these slowly so that most people will be able to manage them without problems. The national parks do occasionally change or restrict access to certain roads and trails within the parks, with rules changing unexpectedly, and so our exact birding within the parks will be dictated by where we are allowed to go. The majority of birding activities are totally optional so if you'd prefer to sit one out and relax around the accommodation, that will be perfectly fine.

We will be birding at sea-level at the coastal sites but at Kaeng Krachan and Khao Yai National Parks we will be covering a range of elevations from sea-level up to a maximum of 4,000 feet/1,200 meters.

Driving times will vary each day depending on where we will be heading. The birding at the coast and at Kaeng Krachan are very close to where we will be staying, but there could be a drive of an hour through the national park depending on where we will be birding there. These drives will be interspersed with lengthy stops for birdwatching. There will be a drive of approximately one hour from our accommodation to the birding zone at Khao Yai and then we will drive around the park visiting different sessions, with birding stops throughout the day. There will be one long driving day as we move between Kaeng Krachan and Khao Yai (this can be anywhere between 4–6 hours, depending on traffic). The drives from Bangkok to the coast take approximately two hours, with the drive from Khao Yai to Bangkok usually taking a little longer, say three hours. The roads to/in the national parks are windy, particularly at Khao Yai and if you are susceptible to travel sickness, medication is advised (noting the details in the “Transportation and Seat Rotation” section of the Thailand General Information document).

## SAFETY

Trips and falls while on the trails at Khao Yai National Park are possible. Despite this being the most visited (and most expensive) national park in Thailand, visitor facilities in terms of trails and maintenance of them is very poor. Care should be taken when walking away from paved roads. If you are not steady on your feet a walking stick/hiking pole is recommended to help on these trails.

## WEATHER/CLIMATE

While birding in the lowlands (e.g. around Bangkok, the coast, rice paddies, and around our accommodation at Kaeng Krachan and Khao Yai) we can expect daytime temperatures of around 86–95 °F (30–35 °C) and nighttime temperatures around 59–72 °F (15–22 °C). When birding in Khao Yai National Park and Kaeng Krachan National Park we will spend time at higher elevations and the temperature can be expected to be a bit cooler, particularly in the early morning when we are driving to our birding spots. While it is usually dry at this time of year, rain can occur in the form of afternoon thunderstorms. The sun is strong at this time of year and care should be taken to remain hydrated and use sun protection.

## ACCOMMODATION

We will stay at a range of accommodation on the tour. We spend the first night of this central Thailand bird tour in a high-standard hotel near the airport in Bangkok, such as the Best Western



or equivalent, this offers good facilities and a mix of western, Asian, and Thai food, and is very convenient as it is close to the airport, but away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Note the airport is a c. 30-minute drive from downtown Bangkok, if you do want to do some city sightseeing. We will stay in wildlife lodges, hotels, and spas throughout the tour. These places have been chosen for their location near to birding sites, as well as for their quality and we have been using them for many years. These locations have good grounds to relax and birdwatch/photograph during the middle of the day. All accommodation will have air-conditioning and Wi-Fi (though at some places the Wi-Fi may only be in communal areas).

## MEALS

The hotel we stay at in Bangkok offer a mix of western and Asian food including at breakfast time. At the other locations we visit food will be more typical Thai-style. On some occasions we will take a picnic-style/boxed breakfast or lunch (often a fried-rice or fried-noodle style dish), depending on the specifics of the day's plan, such as on the days we bird in the national parks.

## WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING AND OTHER ITEMS

Nothing specific is required for this tour, please see the Thailand General Information for recommended clothing. A hiking pole/walking stick will be useful if you are not steady on your feet for a couple of the trails we will bird within the national parks. If you have a telescope it will be extremely useful while looking for shorebirds at the coast and is likely to increase your enjoyment of the spectacle.



*Attractive broadbills, including this **Black-and-yellow Broadbill**, are possible on this tour.*