



**BIRDING TOUR INDIA: THE WEST – FOREST
OWLET EXTENSION**

22 - 25 FEBRUARY 2026

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Forest Owlet is the primary target of this special extension (photo G. Adhikari).

On this short (four-day) tour we will look for the enigmatic and highly sought **Forest Owlet** near Mumbai. Discovered in 1872, with six specimens collected until 1884, the species was then not seen again until 1997, a full 113 years later! Since its rediscovery the bird has since been found in three Indian states: Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra (where we will be looking for it). The population of this endemic bird is considered low and globally threatened with less than 1,000 birds; the species is considered 'Endangered' by BirdLife International and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The lush deciduous forest in which we will be looking for **Forest Owlet** is at the northern tip of the Western Ghats mountain range and is therefore also home to many other interesting and localized species. During our stay in the area we also hope to find some of the following species: **Malabar Trogon, Blue-winged (Malabar) Parakeet, Indian Grey Hornbill, Jerdon's Leafbird, White-cheeked Barbet, White-spotted Fantail, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Mottled Wood Owl, Jungle Owlet, Indian Scops Owl, White-bellied Drongo, and Vigor's Sunbird**. However, with our limited time here and with our focus being the owlet, we should not necessarily expect to see all of the above!

This short extension has been designed to run after our exciting **Birding Tour India: The Northwest – Lions and Desert Birding in Gujarat**. We have several other tours in India, which all combine to give you an incredible range of birding and wildlife-watching options in this wonderful country. See the full range of our Indian tours [here](#).

We can also arrange this trip to fit before or after any of our other India birding tours, though the costs for this may vary from the costs provided for the dates given here.



*The colorful **Plum-headed Parakeet** is one of the few parakeet species we hope to encounter on this tour.*

Itinerary (4 days/3 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Mumbai and travel to the Tansa area

After your morning arrival at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, either as an international arrival or if coming from our **Birding Tour India: The Northwest – Lions and Desert Birding in Gujarat**, we will meet for lunch near the airport. After lunch we will commence our journey to the Tansa area, a couple of hours to the northeast of Mumbai. Here, time permitting, we will start our search for the main target bird of this tour, **Forest Owlet** (which is a diurnal species, closely related to Burrowing Owl, Little Owl and Spotted Owlet, all often placed in the same genus, *Athene*).

Overnight: Tansa area

Day 2. Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary

We will spend the full day birding in and around the Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary, where we will continue looking for **Forest Owlet**. The teak forests here hold numerous other good birds, such as **Malabar Trogon** (difficult here) **White-cheeked Barbet**, **Vigors's Sunbird**, and **Blue-winged** (Malabar) **Parakeet**.



*The stunning **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo** occurs in Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary, and we will look for this stunning species while searching for Forest Owlet.*

We will also likely see many more-widespread Indian species in the forest, such as **Jerdon's** and **Golden-fronted Leafbirds**, **Tickell's Blue Flycatcher**, **Indian Paradise Flycatcher**, **Indian Grey Hornbill**, **Black-rumped Flameback**, **Yellow-crowned Woodpecker**, **Alexandrine** and **Plum-headed Parakeets**, **Greater Racket-tailed Drongo**, **Rufous Treepie**, **Indian Roller**, **Indian Golden Oriole**, **Yellow-footed Green Pigeon**, **Mottled Wood Owl**, **Indian Scops Owl**, **Jungle** and **Spotted Owlets** and **Indian**, **Savanna** and **Jungle Nightjars**. It is certain to be a great day.

Overnight: Tansa area



The picturesque Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary, where we'll be searching for Forest Owlet.

Day 3. Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary to Mumbai

The morning will be spent birding within and around the Tansa Wildlife Sanctuary, hopefully getting further views of **Forest Owlet** or some of the other species listed above. After lunch we will transfer back to Mumbai, where we will have our final group evening meal of this short trip.

Overnight: Mumbai

Day 4. Departure from Mumbai

Departure from Mumbai.

Overnight: Not included

Please note that the itinerary 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 guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling or other factors.

Duration:	4 days
Group Size:	4 – 8
Dates:	22 - 25 February 2026 22 - 25 February 2027
Start:	Mumbai
End:	Mumbai
Prices:	US\$1,769 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants (2026) US\$1,965 per person sharing – based on 4 - 8 participants (2027)
Single Supplements:	US\$222 (2026) US\$245 (2027)

Price includes:

All accommodation (as described above)
Meals (from lunch on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 4)
Drinking water – two bottles of mineral water per day per person from our tour vehicle, please bring a refillable water bottle (if taken from the hotel this will be at your own cost)
Expert tour leader
Local bird and wildlife guide fees
National park/birdwatching reserve entrance fees
All ground transport and tolls while on tour, including airport pick-up and drop-off

Price excludes:

Flights to/from Mumbai International Airport
Visa
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.
Optional tours (e.g. monument entrance fees and associated additional travel expenses)
Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding/sightseeing/monument excursions
Soft/alcoholic drinks
Camera (still/video) permits
Personal travel insurance
Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))