

WILD ABOUT TRAVEL - INDIA



Ref: BT4

Birdwatching, Taj Mahal & Tiger Tour

(includes Kanha National Park)

Best time to visit: November - March

13 days Delhi – Bharatpur – Chambal (day trip) – Agra – Kanha– Delhi

Refer to BT4B for budget version

See spectacular birdlife in Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, take a boat safari along the Chambal river for Indian Skimmers, Gharials and maybe River Dolphins. Marvel at the Taj Mahal then explore Kipling-country at Kanha in search of Tiger and a wealth of other wildlife.

Bird species likely to be seen: Painted, Black-necked, Woolly-necked, Lesser Adjutant and Open-billed Storks; Dusky Eagle-owl, Collared Scops Owl, Coppersmith Barbet, Indian Courser, Greater Painted-snipe, Crested Serpent-eagle, Greater Spotted Eagle, Indian Grey Hornbill, Sarus Crane, Bar-headed Goose, Yellow and Red-wattled Lapwings, Indian Skimmer, Small Pratincole, Green Bee-eater, Red Junglefowl, Plum-headed Parakeet, Orange-headed Thrush, Purple Sunbird, Grey and Large-tailed Nightjars, Bronze-winged Jacana and Golden-fronted Leafbird

Mammals likely to be seen: Bengal Tiger, Indian Bison (Gaur), Swamp Deer, Nilgai, Sambar Deer, Spotted Deer, Barking Deer, Fruitbats, Wild Boar, Jungle Cat, Hanuman (Common) Langur, Rhesus Macaque, Five-striped Palm Squirrel, Grey and Small Indian Mongoose. Leopard, Sloth Bear and Wild Dog are present at Kanha but more difficult to see.

Itinerary

Day 1: Flight (excluded, but easily booked via the internet)

Day 2: Delhi

Meals: Payable directly on this day

You will be welcomed at Delhi airport and taken to check in at a local hotel (check in is from 12 noon). Spend the remainder of the day exploring Delhi sites with your driver.

Day 3: Delhi – Bharatpur

Meals: Breakfast in Delhi, lunch and dinner at Bharatpur

After breakfast your driver will take you to Bharatpur. The journey can take anywhere between 5 and 7 hours, depending on traffic. We recommend leaving no later than 7am, earlier if you can, to avoid the worst of the rush hour. Check in to your hotel, just a few hundred meters from the entrance to Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary. Spend the remainder of the day exploring the sanctuary with an experienced guide. Bharatpur is an incredible place for wetland birds when water is plentiful. Even in drought years (there have been several recently) you can see a large number of species in a day in grassland, dry thorn, forest and remaining wet areas. Expect wonderful views of several species of stork, Eurasian Spoonbill, Glossy and Black-headed Ibises as well as Sarus Crane and often Black Bittern. It's worth checking adjacent fields for Indian Courser and Yellow-wattled Lapwing. Relax for the evening at your hotel.

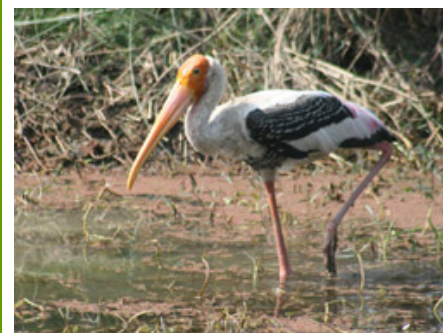
Day 4: Bharatpur

Meals: Breakfast, packed lunch (served inside the park) and dinner

Explore Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary for the whole day with an experienced guide. The wet woodland, dry acacia scrub and extensive grasslands attract many brightly coloured birds. Bluethroat, Oriental Magpie Robin and Pied Bushchat hop around by the track-sides and the skulking Siberian Rubythroat is seen each year and can often be found with a bit of time and effort. Spotted Owlet, Collared Scops Owl, Coppersmith and Brown-headed Barbets, Red-vented Bulbul, Small Minivet and Golden Oriole are all regularly seen and much more. Look out for mammals too: Golden Jackal, Nilgai and Sambar Deer are just a few of the common species you can see with the help of your guide. Pack your bags tonight,



Bengal Tiger © P Telfer



Painted Stork © J Thomas



Crested Serpent-Eagle © K Barnes



Brown-headed Barbet © C Bradshaw



Indian Skimmer © C Bradshaw

as you'll be leaving early next morning. Relax for the evening at your hotel.

Day 5: Bharatpur – Chambal – Agra

Meals: Breakfast and packed lunch from Bharatpur, dinner payable directly in Agra. After an early breakfast you will leave for the Chambal River at Dholpur with your bird guide accompanying for the day. The journey, in part through typical Uttar Pradesh countryside, will take approximately 1¼ hours. You will observe people at work in the fields and rural businesses including brick furnaces. Enjoy a three hour boat safari on the Chambal River. Species here might include Indian Skimmer, Gharial (an uncommon fish-eating crocodile), Marsh Crocodile, many species of bird and, if you are lucky, you might glimpse the rare Ganges Fresh Water River Dolphin. Have your packed lunch and then return to Agra where you will say goodbye to your bird guide. Check in at your hotel and relax for the remainder of the day. Night in Agra.

Day 6: Agra – overnight train to Jabalpur (near Kanha)

Meals: Breakfast at hotel, lunch and dinner payable directly. After breakfast spend several hours exploring Agra. First of all we would recommend you visit Agra Fort, a World Heritage Site (WHS) worthy of a few hours of anyone's time. Then have lunch and consider ordering a packed dinner for the train journey later; we can recommend a restaurant or two if you wish. A stay in this bustling city is not complete without a visit to the Taj Mahal. A mid-afternoon viewing is recommended when the marble often turns from brilliant white to peach tinted. We are sure you'll find this a most memorable day and you can look for birds here too: Black Kites soar overhead and Ruddy Shelduck and River Lapwing could be on the banks of the Yamuna river. **The Taj Mahal is closed on Fridays.** You will then be transferred to the railway station to catch the Gondwana Express departing Agra at 1850 hours. Night on the train in first class air-conditioned sleeper (pillow, sheet and blanket provided).

Day 7: Jabalpur – Kanha

Meals: Breakfast at Hotel Jackson in Jabalpur, lunch and dinner at your lodge. Your train is expected to arrive early in Jabalpur at 0715 hours, though sometimes it can run late, so you should ask other passengers or the ticket checker and they will advise accordingly. This is the end of the line for this train, so you will have plenty of time to disembark. Your driver will be waiting for you on the station platform, so look for your name on a placard. From here you'll be taken to Hotel Jackson for breakfast, then Kanha is a 3½ to 4 drive. Check in at your safari lodge is usually from 12 noon, earlier if rooms are available but if not, you can relax in the communal areas of the lodge. Rest of day at leisure for birdwatching in and around the lodge environs with the lodge naturalist – please enquire on arrival. See supplement if you'd prefer to include an extra safari this afternoon.

Days 8, 9 and 10: Kanha

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner at your lodge. Enjoy morning and afternoon jeep safaris inside Kanha National Park, home to the ultimate of predators, the Bengal Tiger. Kanha is also an excellent place for Gaur, Swamp Deer, Wild Dog and Jungle Cat. Sloth Bear and Leopard are occasionally seen, but require more luck. Kanha boasts an impressive bird list and species might include Scarlet Minivet, Orange-headed Thrush, Black-hooded Oriole, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher and Plum-headed Parakeet. You might also see the ugly yet characterful Lesser Adjutant Stork and the impressive Changeable Hawk-eagle, while Red Spurfowl or Red Junglefowl might race across the jeep track. Note: If a Tiger is found away from the jeep track, but accessible by elephant, you may be offered the opportunity to transfer onto an elephant to help get a view. This is dependent on successful tiger tracking and cannot be guaranteed so the cost is payable directly (approx. £10 per person per short ride) should you choose to take this option.

Day 11: Kanha – Jabalpur – overnight train to Delhi

Meals: Breakfast, early lunch or packed lunch and packed dinner from your lodge. Have a leisurely few hours at your lodge or explore locally around the lodge environs with the lodge naturalist. Alternatively you can add in an extra safari drive if you wish - see supplement for this. Later in the morning you will be transferred to Jabalpur station to connect with the 1555 hours Gondwana Express to Delhi. Night on the train in first class air-conditioned sleeper carriage (pillow, sheet and blanket provided).



Gharial © C Bradshaw



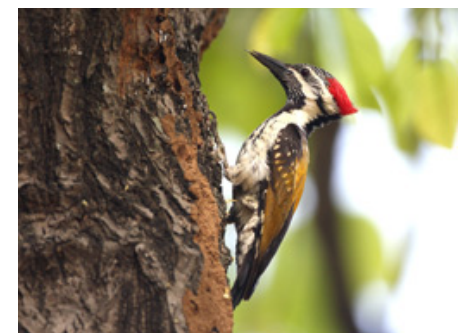
Taj Mahal © K Barnes



Golden Jackal © C Bradshaw



Black-hooded Oriole © C Bradshaw



Black-rumped Flameback © C Bradshaw

Day 12: Delhi

Meals: Payable directly

Your train will arrive in Delhi at 0725 hours. Your driver will meet you at the station platform (scan the placards for your name). You will have the car and driver at your disposal for the remainder of the day for local sightseeing in Delhi (monument fees and any guide fees to be paid directly). Check in at your hotel will be after 12 noon. Night at your hotel.

Day 13: Delhi

Meals: Breakfast

On this day we have included a departure transfer to the airport to connect with your international flight home (to be booked by you directly).

Tour ends.



Rhesus Macaque © J Bridges

Price per person on twin-share basis for TWO travelling (all jeep safaris by exclusive jeep): £1425 for STANDARD accommodation, £1535 for DELUXE accommodation. See supplement if you would prefer an exclusive jeep.

Price per person on twin-share basis for THREE travelling (all jeep safaris by exclusive jeep): £1220 * for STANDARD accommodation, £1345 * for DELUXE accommodation

Price per person on twin-share basis for FOUR travelling (all jeep safaris by exclusive jeep): £1120 for STANDARD accommodation, £1245 for DELUXE accommodation

Single Room supplement: Standard £300, Deluxe £385

* Single room supplement to be applied for extra room.

Supplement for each extra safari in an exclusive jeep in Kisli zone: £95 per jeep (divided by number in jeep).

Supplements may apply for the Christmas/New Year period (20th December – 5th January). Please enquire for details.

Prices valid till 31 March 2012.

For low and middle budget categories of accommodation see separate itinerary. Luxury options are also available on request.

Please note that the booking of this itinerary is with Wild About Travel and their booking terms and conditions apply.

| Place | Standard | Deluxe | No. nights |
|-----------|--|--|------------|
| Delhi | Justa Gurgaon, Superior Room, Bed & Breakfast | Justa Gurgaon, Superior Room, Bed and Breakfast | 1 |
| Bharatpur | Hotel Sunbird, Deluxe Room/Cottage, Full Board | Hotel Sunbird, Suite Room, Full Board | 2 |
| Agra | Raj Mahal, Deluxe Room, Bed & Breakfast | Hotel Trident, Garden Room, Bed & Breakfast | 1 |
| Kanha | Tulli Tiger Resort, AC cottage, Full Board | Earth Lodge, AC Cottage, Full Board | 4 |
| Delhi | Justa Panchsheel, Luxury Room, Bed & Breakfast | Justa Panchsheel, Luxury Room, Bed and Breakfast | 1 |

Price includes:

Accommodation in the above mentioned hotels as per category

Meals as per itinerary

Air-conditioned saloon for all transfers mentioned in the above itinerary

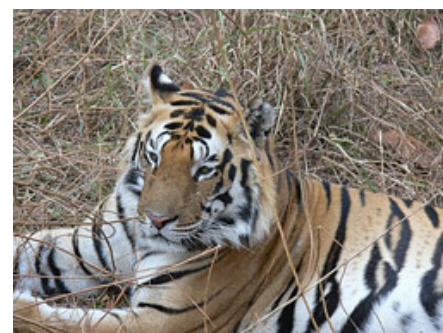
1½ days birdwatching with experienced guide at Bharatpur (including entry to park and rickshaw drop off and pick up once each day), but excluding camera fee

1 boat trip (for three hours) on the Chambal River and birding along banks with guide accompanying from Bharatpur (inclusive of entrance fee)

6 exclusive jeep safaris (including entrance fee) inside Kanha National Park Kisli zone with accompanying lodge naturalist and mandatory Park guide

Half day exploring (on foot) locally around lodge with the resident lodge naturalist on Day 7 (pm) and Day 11 (am)

First class air-conditioned overnight express train from Agra to Jabalpur and Jabalpur to Delhi



Bengal Tiger © D A Hopkins

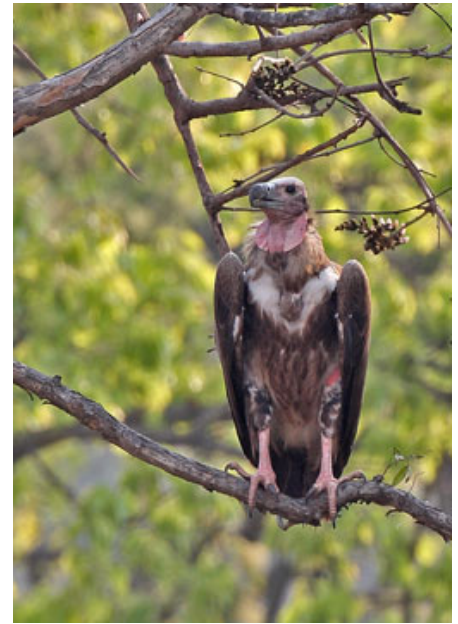
Inclusions cont'd

All currently applicable taxes
Bird/mammal checklist and pre-travel information

Price excludes:

Flights and any airport tax (if extra)
Tourist visa and travel insurance
Camera and camcorder fee where this is not included in park/monument entrance fee
A few meals where these are not specified above
Entrance fees to Agra Fort and Taj Mahal – allow approx. £15 pp. payable in rupees
Monument guide for visits to Agra Fort and Taj Mahal
Elephant ride (subject to availability) – allow approx. £10 per person payable in rupees.
Any expenses of a personal nature such as hard/soft drinks, laundry, phone/fax calls, tips etc.
Any item not mentioned above
Any additional taxes levied by the Government of India on the tourism sector in future or increase in park entrance fees

Cost incidental to any change in the itinerary or stay on account of flight cancellation due to bad weather, ill health, roadblocks and/or any other factors beyond our control.



Red-headed Vulture © C Bradshaw

How to book

The booking of this itinerary is with Wild About Travel Limited and their booking terms and conditions apply. Please contact Jo Thomas at Wild About Travel (jo@wildabouttravel.co.uk) / 01480-370593 to register your interest.

To confirm your booking please complete the booking form and send a 25% deposit by £ sterling cheque payable to Wild About Travel via the Wild About Travel Office, 25 Sapley Road, Hartford, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 1YG.

Remaining balance to reach Wild About Travel at least 40 days before tour commencement by £ sterling cheque made payable to Wild About Travel.

For any help or advice please call or email Wild About Travel and we would be happy to assist.

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Email: jo@wildabouttravel.co.uk Visit: www.wildabouttravel.co.uk

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Rural Rajasthan © C Bradshaw