

Itinerary – 09 – Birding, Mammals and other wildlife tour with Whale watching in Sri Lanka - 14 Days 13 Nights

Day 01 – Morning arrival and proceed to Sigiriya.

Afternoon visit the Sigiriya forest looking for dry lowland forest birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Sigiriya.

Possible highlights of birds: Forest Eagle Owl, Oriental Scops Owl, Brown Fish Owl, Indian Nightjar, Jerdon's Nightjar, Ceylon Grey Hornbill, Blue-faced Malkoha, Indian Pitta, Jerdon's Bushlark, Ceylon Woodshrike, White-browed Bulbul, Indian Blue Robin, Orange-headed Thrush, White-rumped Shama, Jungle Prinia, Green Warbler, Large-billed Warbler, Brown-capped Babbler, Streaked Weaver.

Possible highlights of mammals: Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (dry zone race), Tufted Grey Langur e, Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (dry zone race), Grey Slender Loris e, White-striped Chevrotain E, Brown Palm Civet E, Rusty-Spotted Cat e, Jungle Cat.

Day 02 – Full day birding around Sigiriya area. Optional visit to Sigiriya Rock Fortress.

Overnight Hotel in Sigiriya

Possible highlights of birds: Forest Eagle Owl, Oriental Scops Owl, Brown Fish Owl, Indian Nightjar, Jerdon's Nightjar, Ceylon Grey Hornbill, Blue-faced Malkoha, Indian Pitta, Jerdon's Bushlark, Ceylon Woodshrike, White-browed Bulbul, Indian Blue Robin, Orange-headed Thrush, White-rumped Shama, Jungle Prinia, Green Warbler, Large-billed Warbler, Brown-capped Babbler, Streaked Weaver.

Possible highlights of mammals: Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (dry zone race), Tufted Grey Langur e, Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (dry zone race), Grey Slender Loris e, White-striped Chevrotain E, Brown Palm Civet E, Rusty-Spotted Cat e, Jungle Cat.

Day 03 - Morning leave for Kandy, on route visit Dambulla cave temple. Check in at a hotel in Kandy by lunch time, for one night. Afternoon visit Botanic gardens in Peradeniya near Kandy, the garden is good for some common birds in the area including endemic Ceylon Small (Crimson-fronted) Barbet and Lesser Hill-Myna. Late evening visits the Kandy Temple.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Kandy.

Possible highlights of birds: Layard's Parakeet, Ceylon Hanging- parrot, Ceylon Junglefowl, Malarbar Trogon, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Crimson-backed Flameback, Black-capped Bulbul, Spot-winged Thrush, Rufous (Orange-billed) Babbler, Lesser Hill Myna

Possible highlights of mammals: Toque Macaque E (wet zone race), Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (wet zone race), Indian Giant Flying Squirrel, White-striped Chevrotain E, Brown Palm Civet E.

Day 04 – After short nature walk before breakfast, morning leave for Nuwara Eliya in the high hills. Check in at a hotel in Nuwara Eliya by lunch time (Four hours drive), for two nights.

We will take intermittent stops when important sightings do permit good observation, also couple of regular stops at stakeouts for some good species.

Evening visit Victoria Park in town looking for Indian Pitta, Pied Thrush, Kashmir Flycatcher and some highland endemic birds.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Nuwara Eliya.

Possible highlights of birds: Yellow-eared Bulbul, Ceylon Whistling Thrush, Ceylon Wood Pigeon, Dusky (Dull) Blue Flycatcher, Kashmir Flycatcher, Indian Blackbird (endemic race *kinnissi* a possible future split from the Indian Blackbird), Ceylon Hill white-eye, Ceylon Bush Warbler, Black-throated Munia (endemic nominate race, the Ceylon Hill Munia, a possible future split from the Indian races), Himalayan Buzzard, Pied Bush Chat.

Possible highlights of mammals: Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (highland race), Sambar, Toque Macaque E (highland race), Dusky-striped Jungle Squirrel E, Striped-necked Mongoose e, Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (highland race), Golden Palm Civet E.

Day 05 - Early morning proceed to Horton Plains National Park (Hotel to park entrance - one hour drive) on further higher up in the hills, the park consists of grasslands and cloud forest in higher cool climatic conditions, looking for highland open country and forest birds including endemics, and also butterflies, highland forest mammals and other wildlife.

Return to hotel for late lunch. Late afternoon visit Victoria park in the town or a forest near town.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Nuwara Eliya

Blackbird), Ceylon Hill white-eye, Ceylon Bush Warbler, Black-throated Munia (endemic nominate race, the Ceylon Hill Munia, a possible future split from the Indian races), Himalayan Buzzard, Pied Bush Chat.

Possible highlights of mammals: Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (highland race), Sambar, Toque Macaque E (highland race), Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (highland race), Dusky-striped Jungle Squirrel E, Striped-necked Mongoose e.

Day 06 - Morning leave for Thissamaharama for two nights. Check in at the hotel by lunch time. Afternoon visit Yala National Park by jeeps, the park consists of wetlands, and dry grasslands, scrublands and forest, looking for waterbirds, shorebirds, forest and nocturnal birds including some endemics, and also butterflies, Asian Elephant, Leopard, Sloth Bear and other forest mammals, and other wildlife.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Thissamaharama.

Possible highlights of birds: Black-necked Stork, Spot-billed Pelican, Lesser Adjutant, Ceylon Junglefowl, Indian Nightjar, Jerdon's Nightjar, Jerdon's Bushlark, Ceylon Woodshrike, White-browed Bulbul, Marshall's Iora, Brahminy Starling, Rosy Starling.

Possible highlights of mammals: Chital, Sambar, Asian Elephant, Tufted Grey Langur e, Eurasian Wild Boar, Golden Jackal, Sloth Bear e, Leopard, Rusty-Spotted Cat e, Jungle Cat, Striped-necked Mongoose e, Ruddy Mongoose e, Indian Grey Mongoose, Indian Gerbil, Wild Water Buffalo, Indian Hare e.

Day 07 – Morning safari drive in Bundala National Park consisting wetlands, scrublands and forest in dry climatic conditions, looking for waterbirds, shorebirds, coastal seabirds, dry open country, forest and nocturnal birds, some mammals, butterflies and other wildlife.

Afternoon visit wetlands around Tissamaharamma looking for waterbirds.

Overnight stay at the hotel in Tissamaharamma.

Possible highlights of birds: Great Thick-knee, Black and Yellow Bitterns, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Small Pratincole, Watercock, Brown Fish Owl, Indian Scops Owl, Blue-faced Malkoha, Ceylon Woodshrike, Marshall's Iora, Tawny-bellied Babbler, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Jungle Prinia, Rosy starling.

Possible highlights of mammals: Chital, Sambar, Asian Elephant, Tufted Grey Langur e, Eurasian Wild Boar, Golden Jackal, Striped-necked Mongoose e, Ruddy Mongoose e, Indian Grey Mongoose, Indian Gerbil, Wild Water Buffalo, Indian Hare e.

Day 08 - Morning leave for Udawalawa. Check in to hotel in Udawalawa by lunch time, for one night. Subsequently an afternoon visit to Udawalawa National Park (Hotel to park entrance - 10 minutes drive) on jeeps, the park consists of dry grassland, scrub and forest, looking for open country and grassland birds including some endemics and also butterflies, Asian Elephant and other forest mammals, and other wildlife.

Overnight stay at hotel in Udawalawa.

Possible highlights of birds: Crested Hawk-Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Indian Peafowl, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Sirkeer Malkoha, Blue-faced Malkoha, Indian Scops Owl, Alexandrine Parakeet, Plum-headed parakeet, Orange-breasted Green Pigeon, Marshall's Iora, Crested Treeswift, Coppersmith Barbet, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Jerdon's Bushlark, Blyth's Pipit, Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, Lesser Adjutant, Ceylon Woodshrike, Indian Black Robin, White-browed Bulbul, Jungle Prinia, Ashy Prinia, Plain Prinia, Grey-breasted Prinia, Yellow-eyed Babbler, Black-headed Munia, Rosy Starling.

Possible highlights of mammals: Ruddy Mongoose, Asian Elephant, Golden Jackal, Jungle Cat, Indian Flying Fox, Lesser Tube-nosed Bat.

Day 09 - Morning leave for Sinharaja rainforest. Check in to Hotel near Sinharaja by lunch time, for three nights. Evening birding in Sinharaja forest.

Overnight stay at Hotel in Sinharaja.

Possible highlights of birds: Ceylon Spurfowl, Serendib Scops Owl, Ceylon Junglefowl, Chestnut-backed Owlet, Ceylon Frogmouth, Green-billed Coucal, Red-faced Malkoha, Layard's Parakeet, Ceylon Hanging- parrot, Malarbar Trogon, Crimson-backed Flameback, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Black-capped Bulbul, Spot-winged Thrush, Ceylon Scally Thrush, Rufous (Orange-billed) Babbler, Ashy-headed Laughing-thrush, Legge's Flowerpecker, White-faced Starling, Ceylon Crested Drongo, Ceylon Hill Myna, Ceylon Blue Magpie

Possible highlights of mammals: Toque Macaque E (wet zone race), Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Red Slender Lorises E, Sri Lanka Flameback squirrel E, Dusky-striped Jungle Squirrel E, Sri Lanka Yellow Spotted Chevrotain E, Sambar, Wholly Horse-shoe Bat, False Vampire Bat, Rainbow Bat.

Day 10 – Morning a short jeep drive to the Sinharaja rainforest and birding in the forest till evening. In the forest looking for rainforest birds including endemics; and also butterflies, forest mammals and other wildlife.

Overnight stay at the forest lodge in Sinharaja.

Possible highlights of birds: Ceylon Spurfowl, Serendib Scops Owl, Ceylon Junglefowl, Chestnut-backed Owlet, Ceylon Frogmouth, Green-billed Coucal, Red-faced Malkoha, Layard's Parakeet, Ceylon Hanging- parrot, Malarbar Trogon, Crimson-backed Flameback, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Black-capped Bulbul, Spot-winged Thrush, Ceylon Scally Thrush, Rufous (Orange-billed) Babbler, Ashy-headed Laughing-thrush, Legge's Flowerpecker, White-faced Starling, Ceylon Crested Drongo, Ceylon Hill Myna, Ceylon Blue Magpie

Possible highlights of mammals: Toque Macaque E (wet zone race), Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Red Slender Lorises E, Sri Lanka Flameback squirrel E, Dusky-striped Jungle Squirrel E, Sri Lanka Yellow Spotted Chevrotain E, Sambar, Wholly Horse-shoe Bat, False Vampire Bat, Rainbow Bat.

Day 11 – Morning a short jeep drive to the Sinharaja rainforest and birding in the forest till evening. In the forest looking for rainforest birds including endemics; and also butterflies, forest mammals and other wildlife.

Overnight stay at the forest lodge in Sinharaja.

Possible highlights of birds: Ceylon Spurfowl, Serendib Scops Owl, Ceylon Junglefowl, Chestnut-backed Owlet, Ceylon Frogmouth, Green-billed Coucal, Red-faced Malkoha, Layard's Parakeet, Ceylon Hanging- parrot, Malarbar Trogon, Crimson-backed Flameback, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Black-capped Bulbul, Spot-winged Thrush, Ceylon Scally Thrush, Rufous (Orange-billed) Babbler, Ashy-headed Laughing-thrush, Legge's Flowerpecker, White-faced Starling, Ceylon Crested Drongo, Ceylon Hill Myna, Ceylon Blue Magpie

Possible highlights of mammals: Toque Macaque E (wet zone race), Purple-faced Leaf Monkey E (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Giant Squirrel e (wet zone race), Sri Lanka Red Slender Lorises E, Sri Lanka Flameback squirrel E, Dusky-striped Jungle Squirrel E, Sri Lanka Yellow Spotted Chevrotain E, Sambar, Wholly Horse-shoe Bat, False Vampire Bat, Rainbow Bat.

Day 12 – Morning birding in Singharaja.

After lunch proceed to Mirissa for two nights (Four hours drive).

Overnight stay at hotel in Mirissa.

Day 13 – Morning first Whale watching tour, back to hotel at lunch time.

Afternoon leisure at beach

Overnight stay at hotel in Mirissa.

Species often encountered: Bryde's Whale (*Balanoptera edeni*), Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*), Sperm Whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), and Long-snouted Spinner Dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*).

Occasionally observed species: Short-finned Pilot Whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*), False Killer Whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*), Risso's Dolphin (*Grampus griseus*), Pantropical Spotted Dolphin (*Stenella attenuata*), and Striped Dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*).

Day 14 – Morning second whale watching tour. Lunch at hotel. Afternoon drive to airport for departure at night or next day morning.

Overnight stay at hotel near airport.

Species often encountered: Bryde's Whale (*Balanoptera edeni*), Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*), Sperm Whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), and Long-snouted Spinner Dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*).

Occasionally observed species: Short-finned Pilot Whale (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*), False Killer Whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*), Risso's Dolphin (*Grampus griseus*), Pantropical Spotted Dolphin (*Stenella attenuata*), and Striped Dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*).