



### THE BIRDS OF MACHHAPUCHHARE AND CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK Grade 3 maximum altitude 3820m

#### Day 1 Kathmandu 1350m

Kathmandu, prior to your landing in Kathmandu, you should have some excellent views of the Himalayas eastwards of Dhaulagiri. Evening welcome dinner and final briefing.

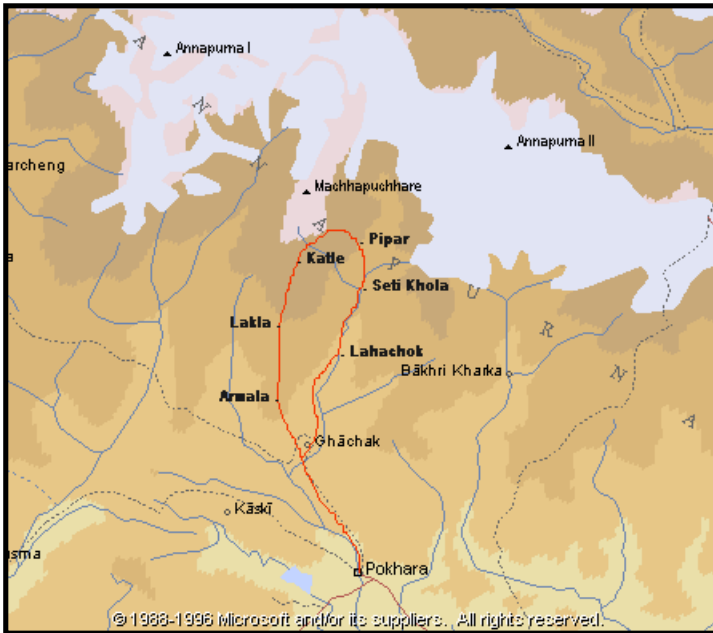
#### Day 2 Kathmandu

Kathmandu stands at 1350 meters and the valley is surrounded by hills at an altitude of around 2400 meters. There are three important cities in the valley, the most significant being Kathmandu itself. Patan is the most Buddhist of the three and is across the Bagmati River to the south of Kathmandu, but so close as to be almost an extension of the capital. Bhaktapur, also known as Bhadgaon, is the most "mediaeval" and is situated in the eastern part of the

valley. While Kathmandu and Patan have undergone great changes in the two decades since Nepal ended its long isolation, Bhaktapur has changed very little and is still much as it was three decades ago.

Machendra Nath Temple, a pagoda of high artistic beauty. Hanuman Dhoka, historic seat of Royalty with old temples and palaces. Temple of the Living Goddess (Kumari) with profusely carved wooden balconies and window screens. Kasthamandap, an edifice constructed from wood of a single tree. The National Museum houses a splendid collection of ancient artifacts. Singh Durbar, an imposing stucco palace built in neo classical style as residence of the erstwhile Rana Prime ministers now acts as State secretariat.

**Patan**, 5 kilometers southwest of Kathmandu, Patan is full of Buddhist monuments and Hindu temples. It is also known as the city of artists. Visit Durbar



Square, residential palace of Malla Kings. See Krishna Mandir with stone carvings from Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, statue of bird God Garuda, Big Bell Royal baths, Ashoke Stupa, Taleju Temple, Temples of Maha Buddha and Jagat Narian. Visit the Tibetan refugee centre to watch the spinning, dyeing and weaving of hand made carpets of intricate designs.

**Bhadgoan**, 13 kilometers west of Kathmandu, Bhadgoan was built in 889 A.D. and is home of medieval art and architecture. See Durbar square with the Lion gate, Palace of 55 windows, Bell of barking dogs, Nayatapola, Bhairava and Dattaraya Temples and monastery with carved Peacock windows.

**Swayambu Nath**, 6.5 kilometers west of Kathmandu, situated on a hillock, this 2000 years old stupa is the world's most glorious Buddhist shrine and is surrounded by several small pagodas. The main temple is capped by a pinnacle of copper gilt and is painted on the four sides with all seeing eyes of Lord Buddha.

**Boudhnath**, 8 kilometers east of Kathmandu, this colossal Buddhist stupa is built on an octagonal base, inset with prayer wheels. It is 1500 years old and is the largest Lamaist shrine in the world.

**Pashupati Nath**, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is the holiest and most famous Nepalese temple. Situated 5 kilometers northeast of Kathmandu on the bank of the sacred Bagmati River, it is an impressive pagoda style structure with gilt roof and richly carved

## Day 3 Hyangja 900m

We start with a 6 hrs. drive from Kathmandu to Pokhara stopping for lunch along the way. After Pokhara we continue with a short drive to the Tibetan Refugee Camp at Hyangja. Here we should have a fine introduction to the Nepal birdlife. This should include Egret, Kites, Hawks, Eagles, Vultures, Pigeons, Doves, Parakeets, Cuckoos, Swifts, Kingfishers, Barbets, Woodpeckers, Swallows, Minivets, Bulbuls, Shrikes, Chats, Mynas, Orioles, Drongos and Magpie.

## Day 4 Lumre Riverside 1100m

Walking approx. 4hrs.

After an early morning birding walk on the ridge above Hyangja, we start for a short distance along the road, before heading across paddy fields, through Surikhet and the Mardi Khola. We cross the river by a footbridge at Lamachok where we stop for lunch. This spot below the cliffs beside the river is an excellent place for Kites, Vultures, Kingfishers, Forktails River Chat and Redstart. We also see plenty of Butterfly and flowers. You may also consider a swim in these crystal clear waters, which are surprisingly warm, as they do not originate from glaciers. After lunch we follow this small river to our campsite beside the river on the forest edge.

## Day 5 Aderung Forest Camp 2000m

Walking approx. 6 hrs.

From our campsite beside the river we enter forest and climb to a forest clearing with a single small house. The trail follows a small stream providing excellent opportunities to see Forktails, Riverchat, Redstart, Woodpeckers, Barbets, Minivets, Bulbuls, Leafbirds, Rubythroat, Bush Robins, Blue Whistling Thrush, Ground Thrush, Blackbirds, Stonechats, Babblers, Laughing Thrush, Warblers, Leaf Warblers, Flycatcher Warblers, Prinia, Flycatcher, Tits, Nuthatch, Tree Creepers, Flowerpeckers, Sunbirds, and Drongos.

## Day 6 Papron Deorali 2900m

Walking approx. 6 hrs.

We continue to climb through Rhododendron and Magnolia forest to the main ridge that we will follow for the next two days points directly to the center of the famous Machhapuchhre (6995m). Our campsite is situated in Rhododendron forest. Birds are everywhere here and include Nepal and Fire-tailed Sunbirds, Babblers, Laughing Thrushes, Cutia, Hoary Barwing, Minla, Fulvetta, Sibia, Yuhina, Parotbill, Tesia, Bush Warbler, Leaf Warbler, Flycatchers, Tits, Finch, Nuthatch, Tree Creeper, Buzzard, Eagle and Vultures

## Day 7 Korchon 3600m

Walking approx. 6 hrs.

We climb through steep rocky grassland edged by Rhododendrons to Khumai where we stop for lunch. We should have our first views of Pheasants and the Rhododendrons just below the lunch stop is usually full of birds including Golden Bush- robin, Rufous-bellied Niltava and Rosefinch. On the open grassland we can see Pipits and Accentors. After another steep climb through Pheasant Terrain we reach Korchon and camp a short distance down in a outcrop of Rhododendron. The sheer size and beauty of the Annapurna range is breathtaking.

## Day 8 Pipar Gully 3200m

Walking approx. 5 hrs.

We start along a thick bamboo covered ridge with plenty of evidence that the Red Panda is common resident here and various species of Sunbirds and Rosefinches can be seen at close range. The second part of today's walk involves ups and downs as we descend across several ridges to a clearing in thick Bamboo and Rhododendron. Today will be our best chance to see Blue sheep and Himalayan Thar. Alpine Chough, Ravens, Lammergeier, Himalayan Griffon, Golden Eagle and Accentors should be a common sight here.

## Day 9 Pipar 3260m

Walking approx. 4hrs.

After a short descent we cross a small river and climb through bamboo through heavily forested jungle. Keep together, as traces of a 'path' are sometimes non existent. The chances of sighting the Danfe Pheasant (the national bird of Nepal) and other interesting high altitude birds and animals are good. After reaching a clear with stunning views we continue down a good trail past a small lake to a clearing in the Rhododendrons and our camp for the next two days. A small stream near the camp provides water for washing and bathing.

## Day 10 Pipar

Full day for exploring the surrounding jungle for birds and other wildlife. Below the campsite animal trails provide access to the steep heavily forested mountainside. Closer to the campsite are Rhododendrons with open grass areas, whilst steep slopes covered in Rhododendrons continue above the camp to rocks and steep grass slopes. You should be able to find a large number of birds here and all six species of Himalayan pheasants can be found in the surrounding area.

## Day 11 Khobang 1750m

Walking approx. 6 hrs.

A short climb brings us back to Pipar Lake from here the trail goes steeply downhill, first through open

grass covered grass covered steep slopes with rock outcrops followed by Rhododendrons and later thick forest. The relentless walking downhill is tough on the knees but take your time as birds are plentiful. The campsite is a small flat field with a few cows surrounded by forest. The area is full of birds and include Skylark, Flycatcher, Bulbul, Sibia, Sunbirds, Tits, Nepal Cutia, Yuhina, Woodpeckers, Drongo, Barbet, Leaf Warblers, Parakeet, Malkoha, Minivets, Thrush, Flycatchers, Warblers, Tailorbird, Wood Shrike and Minla.

## Day 12 Khobang

Full day exploring surmounting forest.

## Day 13 Kodi Khola 1315m

Walking approx. 5 hrs.

Decent to the Seti Khola and follow the valley floor passing through several small villages. Plenty of birds and Butterflies along the way.

## Day 14 Pokhara

We continue along the river for a short distance before a short climb to the plateau above. We follow the edge of the plateau with excellent views of Kestrel, Vultures, Eagles and Kites flying past us over the edge of the plateau. A short steep decent brings us to Lamachok and lunch beside the Mardi Khola. You have time for a swim and a beer before a short walk to the roadside from where we take a bus to Pokhara, camping at the Tourist Camping Ground. Hot showers are available in nearby Hotels. You will also have time to swim in the lake, take a boat out or explore the forest on the southern shore of the Lake. You will also have the opportunity to purchase souvenirs, most of which are made in the Tibetan Refugee Camp and are sold in the campsite by the inhabitants of the camp.

## Day 15 Pokhara 915m

Today we explore in detail the forest along the southern shore of the lake. Apart from the many birds found here, you will also be rewarded with some of the best views of the Annapurnas and Machhapuchhre, Pokhara has to offer. Species regularly seen in this forest and along the shore of the lake include Besra, Red-thighed Falconet, Pallid and Pied Harriers, Eurasian Griffon, Red-headed and Eurasian Black Vultures, Kalij Pheasant, Ducks, Gulls, Terns, Waders, Bulbul, Black-backed Forktail, Puff-throated Babbler, White-crested, Lesser Necklaced and Rufous-chinned Laughing Thrushes, Red-billed Leiothrix, Minivets, Crimson Sunbird, Maroon Oriole, Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo, Red-billed and Green Magpies, Long-tailed Mountain Thrush, Chestnut-headed and Grey-bellied Tesias, Chestnut-crowned Warbler, Small and Rufous-bellied Niltavas and Snowy-brown Flycatcher, Long-tailed

Broadbill, Pale Blue Flycatcher, White-tailed Robin, Spiny Babbler, White-browed Scimitar-Babbler, Striated Munia, Lesser Whitethroat and Thick-billed Warbler.

## Day 16 By Road to Chitwan

Transfer by road from Pokhara to Chitwan. A drive of approx. 4 hours. After checking in, you will have time for a late afternoon Nature Walk or Elephant Safari. The Royal Chitwan National Park covers 932 sq. km. and supports some 450 species of birds. Flocks of Common and Demoiselle Cranes occur on passage between March and May and October/November. Along the marshes and small lakes there are Cormorants, Darter, Cinnamon Bittern, Black-crowned Night and Purple Herons, Asian Openbill, Woolly-necked and Lesser Adjutant Storks, Lesser Whistling Duck, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Balloons Ruddy-breasted and Brown Crakes, Purple Gallinule, Bronze-winged Jacana, Painted Snipe and Stork-billed Kingfisher, Chestnut-crowned and Spotted Bush Warblers, Yellow bellied Prinia, Clamorous Reed, dusky and Smoky Warblers, and Red-capped Babbler. Forest species regular seen are Lesser Fishing and Grey headed Eagle, Brown Fish Owl, Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Kalij Pheasant, Emerald Dove, Orange-breasted Green and Pompadour Green Pigeon, Moustached Parakeet, Green-billed Malkoha, Brown Hawk Owl, Crested Treeswift, Pied and Great Hornbills, Streak-throated Green, Rufous, Himalayan Golden-backed and Greater Golden-backed Woodpeckers, Large Woodshrike Rosy Minivet, Black- crested Bulbul, Golden fronted Leafbird, Pale-chinned Flycatcher, Black-napped Monarch, Puff-throated Babbler, White-browed Scimitar-Babbler, Grey-throated Babbler, Crimson Sunbird, Thick-billed Flowerpecker, Hill Mynah, Black-hooded Oriole, White-rumped Shama, Lesser Necklaced, Greater Necklaced and Rufous-necked Laughing-thrushes, Nepal Fulvetta, Streaked Spiderhunter, yellow-bellied Warbler, Rufous-bellied Eagle, Forest Eagle, Tawny Fish Owls, Red-headed Trogon, White-browed Piculet, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Long-tailed Broadbill, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird and Little Spiderhunter.

**Elephant Safari**, travel through open grassland and dense forests on elephant back in search of rare game. Be on the look out for the great one horned rhino, four species of deer, wild boar, sloth bear, leopard, bison and the big one, The Royal Bengal Tiger.

**Canoeing**, a traditional dugout canoe takes you on a silent trip down the Rapti River to view birds, crocodiles and the animals of the riverbank.

**Nature walk**, our trained naturalists take you to prime spots to view deer, rhino, sloth bear and other wild life. Detailed knowledge of the wild life and jungle will enhance your trip.

**Birding**, an early morning walk along the Rapti River is a must to view many of the 450 species of exotic birds including Giant Hornbill, Lesser Florican and Paradise Flycatcher. Again, you will be accompanied by our experienced naturalists.

**Evenings** are as exciting as the days' adventures. Our friendly trained naturalists and jungle guides are there to make you feel at home and tell you exciting jungle stories.

## Day 17 Chitwan

Full day Safari Program

## Day 18 Chitwan

We depart the Lodge by Land Rover for an excursion further into the Chitwan National Park.

## Day 19 Chitwan

After lunch we have a one-hour drive to Hetauda where hopefully we will find the very rare Ibisbill in the gravel beside the Rapti River.

## Day 20 Kathmandu

After an early morning Birdwatching walk we transfer by road to Kathmandu.

## Day 21

Depart Kathmandu

Bird sightings depend greatly on season, timing, and patience. Sightings mentioned in the itinerary are only a guideline and can not be guaranteed

**Cost includes:** All ground transfers, accommodation in Kathmandu and Pokhara on twin share B&B basis, National Park entry fees, English speaking local guide, porters and all meals whilst on trek.

**Important:** Before you travel please check your **Tour Voucher** and **Arrival Information** for the latest joining instructions. This will be sent to you upon receipt of final payment.

**All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.**