

Sam Veasna Center for Wildlife Conservation



SVC Tour Itinerary

Group name: DOF Travel - 2017

ID:

Tour date: Feb 23rd – 7th Mar, 2017 (Datoer er foreløbige)

Tour Itinerary Notes

Our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below; a degree of flexibility is built in if needed. This is a 13-day birding tour organized by Sam Veasna Center with support from Wildlife Conservation Society. It begins February 23rd until 7th March, 2017 and covers 8 sites: Angkor Wat, Prek Toal, Ang Trapeng Thmor, Florican Grassland, Tmatboey, Kratie, Seima Protected Forest, Cambodian Tailorbird and Bokor National Park.

You're SVC Bird Guide

A tour guide is an integral part of any SVC tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced bird guides who has been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our guides are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travelers who are bursting with first-hand knowledge of birds, wildlife and local customs, which they love to share. Your bird guide will also take care of all the planning and organization details so you can enjoy your birding journey.



Summary Itinerary:

- Day-1 : Arrival Siem Reap
- Day-2 : Angkor Wat
- Day-3 : Prek Toal bird sanctuary
- Day-4 : Ang Trapeng Thmor
- Day-5 : Florican Grassland / Tmatboey
- Day-6 : Tmatboey
- Day 7 : Tmatboey
- Day-8 : Tmatboey / Kratie
- Day-9 : Kratie / Seima Protected Forest
- Day-10 : Seima Protected Forest
- Day-11 : SPF / Cambodian Tailorbird / Kampot
- Day-12 : Bokor
- Day-13 : Bokor / PP airport

DAY 1 Arrival Siem Reap

23rd Feb

The guide and the driver will pick up the group from Siem Reap airport and transfer the group to Siem Reap hotel

Included meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Sonalong Boutique Hotel

DAY 2 Angkor Wat

24th Feb

We will start with tour to Angkor Wat for temples as well as birding, with the pick-up time at 5.30am. We will spend the morning for birding behind Angkor Wat before visiting Angkor Thom in the morning and Angkor Wat in the afternoon, with lunch near the temple.



Angkor Wat and the 200 plus temples in the Angkor Great Park are truly a wonder of the world. Apsara the Cambodian ministry responsible for the management and conservation of the temples has preserved at least some of the mature dry forest and in places allowed undergrowth to grow, which offers habitat for common species and the odd rarity. Oriental Darter in the moat, Hainan Blue, Taiga and Asian Brown Flycatchers, White-throated Rock-Thrush, Black Baza, Blue Rock Thrush, Forest Wagtails, Olive-backed Pipit, Greater Racquet-tailed Drongos, Asian Barred Owlets Coppersmith Barbet, Ashy Minivet, Yellow-browed and Pale-legged Leaf-Warbler, raucous Red-breasted and Alexandrine Parakeets and White-crested Laughing thrushes.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Accommodation: Sonalong Boutique Hotel

DAY 3 Prek Toal

25th Feb

We will start our first day tour to Prek Toal bird sanctuary, leaving Siem Reap at 5am for the port of Mechrey, about 30km by road. Our group transfers to a boat for the journey across Tonle Sap to Prek Toal. Depending on the lake water level the boat journey cuts through the flooded scrub surrounding Mechrey and a small band of primary forest lining the edge of the lake. The boat moors at this point for breakfast. At Prek Toal the group transfers to a local boat, part of an initiative to help spread income from eco-tourism to the local village economy, and heads off into the core reserve for a WCS observation platform next to a bird colony (water level in February is pretty shallow so we probably can't reach the observation platform). A pack lunch can be organised allowing the group to maximise the time spent in the core reserve.

The Tonle Sap is the largest natural lake in South East Asia, fed by the phenomenal annual backflow of water from the Mekong River. Situated in the North West corner of the lake, Prek Toal core bird reserve is home to the largest breeding colony of water birds in South East Asia.



The reserve covers 22,000 hectares of seasonally flooded forest where only the tallest trees stand proud of the lake during the annual flood, providing habitat for cormorants, darters, pelicans, storks, and many other birds to roost and nest.

The village of Prek Toal, adjacent to the reserve, floats at the river mouth of the Sangke River. Every house is built on a platform of bamboo and moves according to the changing water levels. Schools, local restaurants, a church, even vegetable patches, pig-pens and crocodile farms all float.

In Cambodia and throughout South East Asia, Prek Toal is unmatched for the number and population of endangered water birds it supports during the dry season. Large numbers of cormorants, storks and pelicans are virtually guaranteed from January to May along with herons, egrets and terns.

The sanctuary harbours seven species of global conservation significance: Spot-billed Pelican, Milky and Painted Storks,

Lesser Adjutant, Greater Adjutant, Black-headed Ibis and Oriental Darter and has a globally significant population of Grey-headed Fish Eagle.

Since the Core Reserve was declared in 2002 and came under the protection of Ministry of Environment as advised by WCS, the numbers of all the above species have increased.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Accommodation: Sonalong Boutique Hotel

DAY 4 Ang Trapaeng Thmor

26th Feb

Originating as an ancient Angkorian reservoir northwest of Siem Reap, ATT was rebuilt as by slave labour during the Khmer Rouge regime in 1976 and finished with assistance from the Japanese, post-war. The reservoir is now a Sarus Crane reserve administered by the Forestry Administration (FA) with advice from WCS, with over 300 of these magnificent birds congregating to feed each dry season. Over 250 species have been recorded from the site, 18 of which are globally threatened.

By February the dry season will be well underway and a few pairs of Black-necked Storks frequent the site along with many of the large water birds seen at Prek Toal; Black-headed Ibis, Milky and Painted Storks, Spot-billed Pelicans, Oriental Darters, Asian Openbills and Greater and Lesser Adjutants.



A few pairs of Bengal Floricans breed here during the dry months, though they are wary and a treat rather than a certainty to see. Other grassland specialists include Red Avadavat, Blue-breasted Quail, and the 3 species of lark occurring in Cambodia. 6 species of duck, including the resident Comb Duck, can be seen along with birds of prey that are rare in the much of the country such as Black Kite, Greater Spotted Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Eastern Marsh & Pied Harriers. Numerous waders, rails and shore birds can be found in the marshy belts of aquatic habitats.

The critically endangered Eld's Deer can often be seen in numbers, at times exceeding 20 individuals, from February to the start of the rains in May.

ATT is about two hours from Siem Reap, depending on the route taken, which varies according to feedback from previous trips, to see species of interest along the way.

In 2011, SVC worked with WCS to further involve the local community in eco-tourism, training local guides who will locate, in advance, the Sarus Crane and other target species. The entrance fee is a conservation contribution that each visitor pays. It is used for local development and conservation projects such as nest protection and a 'rice bank' which stock piles local farmers' rice as insurance for this staple food for the local community in case of crop failure..

Silk, traditionally spun and woven in the adjacent village of Phnom Srok is available at the weavers' homes. There is a small Angkorian temple 10 km from the WCS Station. If time allows, both can be added to the day's activities.

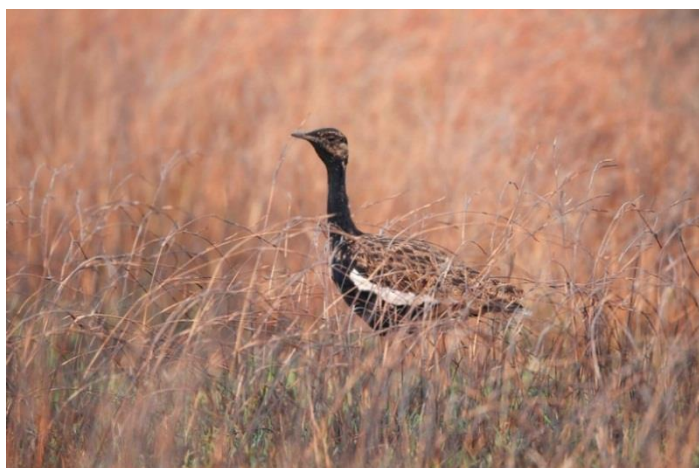
Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Accommodation: Sonalong Boutique Hotel

DAY 5 Florican Grassland / Tmatboey

27th Feb

Today we first head out to see the Bengal Florican and spend a few hours there then heading north to Tmatboey.



Bengal Florican Conservation Areas is the great inundated grassland which is protected and managed for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use by local communities. The conservation areas mainly contain grassland dominant landscapes, which are now extremely rare in South-East Asia and which have been disappearing rapidly in Cambodia in recent years. The target species of BFCAs such as Bengal Florican, the rare wintering Manchurian Reed-warbler, Raptors including Greater Spotted Eagle, Pied Harrier and Eastern Marsh-harrier, Siberian Ruby Throat, and Small Buttonquail.

Tmatboey is a remote Khmer village of about 230 families (2008) situated in the center of the Northern plains of Cambodia; it is entirely within Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary, the country's largest protected area managed by

the Ministry of Environment. Tmatboey is one of the two known nesting site in ASIA for Giant Ibis, which are threatened by conversion and habitat disturbance. White-shouldered Ibis is found closer to the villages, where they are reliant upon grassland habitats beneath the deciduous dipterocarp forest canopy. Tmatboey is a pilot ecotourism project developed by WCS in 2005; the project aims to demonstrate the viability of community based ecotourism, which engages the community in the conservation. The target species here such as Giant Ibis, White-shouldered Ibis, White-rumped Pygmy-falcon, Pale-capped Pigeon, various owl species at their day-roosts, various woodpecker species including Black-headed and Rufous-bellied, typical species of the habitat such as White-browed Fantail and Indochinese Bushlark.

The Tmatboey Ibis Site is a conservation project set up by WCS with support from the Cambodian Government and Tmatboey village. Once it was realised that the site had potential for bird watching tourism, a local committee was elected to build guest accommodation and with training from SVC, provides services for visiting bird watching groups. In return for the income that tourism brings, the villagers have signed no hunting and land conversion agreements.

After settling in to accommodation the group can take a short walk through the open forest to where the White-shouldered Ibis come to roost at sunset

Included meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner
Accommodation: Tmatboey Eco-lodge

DAY 6-7 Tmatboey

Feb 28th – 1st Mar

We will start early around 4 or 4.30am with a quick cup of tea or coffee, then a drive and a walk to less disturbed areas of forest where Giant Ibis have been located. Returning around 9am for breakfast at the Lodge. Within these 2 full day birding at Tmatboey, you will have good chance to see all the species at Tmatboey at no rush. We will spend whole days birdwatching in the Deciduous Dipterocarp (tropisk lavlands regnskov) forest to see other birds including the target species above. We will also stay late in the forest until dark for Nightjar (Savanna and Large-tailed) and Owl (Oriental Scops Owl and Barn Owl). Head light and torch are recommended to take along with you.



The Lodge, recently renovated and expanded with the aid of Building Trust International and funded by ecotourism, is comprised of a central recreational thatched building and 5 surrounding bungalows each with 2 double en-suite rooms with solar powered electricity. The accommodation is basic but comfortable. The group can discuss with the SVC Guide how they wish to spend the day outside the sunrise and sunset birding. Packed lunches can be arranged if they want to spend more time in the forest and night drives / walks can spot the owls and Savanna Nightjar. The village of Tmatboey is remote and self-sufficient. SVC organizes an optional village tour, which takes in local trades as well as the school, a market garden, a still for sugar palm wine and points out the projects that the visitor's conservation contributions have assisted.

With your SVC Guide, the group can discuss how you wish to spend the day outside the sunrise and sunset birding. Packed lunches can be arranged if you want to spend more time in the forest, and night drives / walks can spot the owls and Savanna & Indian Nightjars.

The village of Tmatboey is remote and self-sufficient; SVC organises an optional village tour, which takes in local trades as well as the school, a market garden, a still for sugar palm wine and points out the projects that the visitor's conservation contributions have assisted.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Accommodation: Tmatboey (Tmatboey eco-lodge)

DAY 8 Tmatboey / Kratie

2nd Mar

Leave Tmatboey after some final early morning birding and head to Kratie by road and arrive by 4pm, then will finish the afternoon in the wetlands and rice paddy near town that hold Asian Golden and Streaked Weavers. Crakes, bitterns and Rusty-rumped Warbler have been recorded here.

Included meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner
Accommodation: Oudom Sambath Hotel (to be confirmed)

DAY 9 Kratie / Seima Protected Forest

3rd Mar

Kratie birding and lunch; transfer to Mondulkiri and Seima Protected Forest (SPF); hotel in Sen Monorom.

A short 15 km ride north of Kratie takes us to the Kampi Pools where the Irrawaddy Dolphin can be seen from boats, along with the Mekong Wagtail (*Motacilla samveasnae*, named after Sam Veasna).

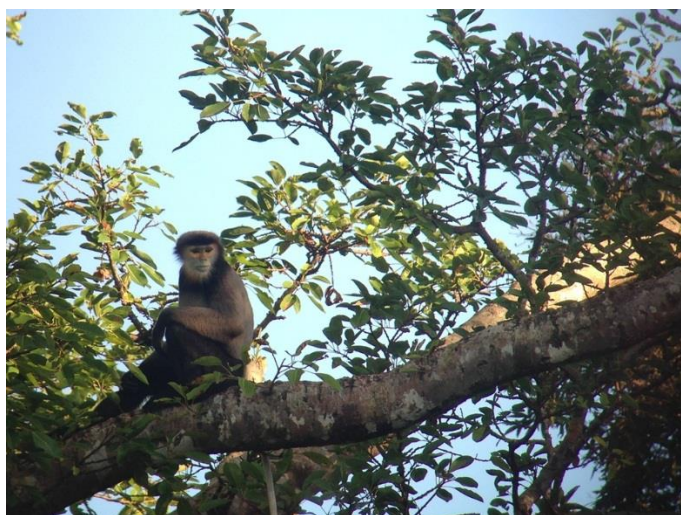


Mid-day will be spent transferring to Seima Protection Forest in Mondulkiri. The reserve's name is a bit of wishful thinking, as the western side of the reserve represents the frontline in the battle to preserve Southeast Asian forests. Burgeoning population growth continues to overwhelm conservation efforts to halt the growth of illegal timber and wildlife trade in the region.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Accommodation: Senmonorom (Mondulkiri Hotel)

DAY 10 Seima Protected Forest (Andong Kroloeng) 4th Mar

Fortunately, wildlife still remains in the disturbed areas. The Orange necked Partridge has been seen and more often heard calling in the thick bamboo forest around the Forestry Administration and WCS headquarters at Seima; it was seen by groups in 2012 and 2013. There are many other species to be looked for, reflecting the mixed habitat types: Bamboo, evergreen and DDF. Second on our birders' wish lists is the Green Peafowl, which continues to be predictable here.



White-browed & Large Scimitar Babblers, Germain's Peacock -Pheasant, Red-vented Barbet, Scaly-breasted, & Orange-breasted Partridges and Gray-faced Tit-babbler have also been seen on trails close to the headquarters. We will watch for the presence of fruiting trees which can draw Golden-crested and Hill Mynas, barbets, pigeons and hornbills.

The SPF is home to the largest population of Black-shanked Douc in the world, which is regularly seen. Northern Pig-tailed and Long-tailed Macaque and Yellow-cheeked Crested Gibbon, Pygmy Loris are other possible primate sightings. Groups have spotted Gaur close to the FA and WCS Station.

A feature of the itinerary at SPF is a night drive and the possibility of mammals including Common-palm and Small-toothed Civets and Giant Flying Squirrel as well as Lesser

Mouse-Deer or Lesser Oriental Chevrotain.

Located just an hour from Mondulkiri, the hills along the Vietnamese border reach over 800m. Remaining forest patches here hold an interesting collection of birds unlike any other site in Cambodia. Black eagle, Pale-capped pigeon, Indochinese Barbet, Blue-winged Siva (Minla), Silver eared Mesia, White-cheeked Laughingthrush, Rufous-capped Babbler, Black-chinned Yuhina, Black-crowned Parrotbill, Grey-crowned tit, and Black-browed Fulvetta are some of the records from this site.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
Accommodation: Senmonorom (Mondulkiri Hotel)

DAY 11 SPF / Cambodia Tailor site / Kampot 5th Mar

After birding along the trails around Keo Seima in the morning we will set off for the long drive, about nine hours, to Kampot-Bokor. We will stop en route, near Phnom Penh to see the Cambodian Tailorbird.



In 2012, a new bird species found only in Cambodia was described by WCS staff. The bird, named Cambodian Tailorbird *Orthotomus chaktomuk*, occurs only in floodplain wetlands where the mighty Mekong river meets the Tonle Sap and Bassac rivers. This area was known by the ancient Khmers as *Chaktomuk*, literally 'four faces,' which was used to refer to the confluence of these rivers. This area is also excellent for open-country species such as **Plain-backed Sparrow & Chestnut Munia** We often see large waterbirds, such as **Oriental Darter** and **Painted Stork**. In the scrub in which the tailorbird is found we should

also see a range of winter visitors, such as **Black-browed Reed-warbler, Brown Shrike** and **Siberian Rubythroat**. The group arrives in Kampot late evening and checks in to the hotel to get ready for the cool, misty heights of Bokor mountain, the next morning.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Accommodation: Kampot – Blue Buddha Hotel

DAY 12

Bokor

6th Mar



As we climb up through the evergreen forest to Bokor we will start to notice a change in the ecosystem and by the time we reach the top of the escarpment we will be in refreshingly cool, stunted montane forest, a welcome relief from the steamy-hot lowlands we have left behind.

Our key bird targets at Bokor are the near-endemic **Chestnut-headed Partridge** and **Silver Broadbill, Long-tailed Broadbill, Indochinese Green Magpie, Great Hornbill, Wreathed Hornbill, Wedge-tailed Green Pigeon**.

Included meals: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Accommodation: Kampot - Blue Buddha Hotel

DAY 13

Saltpan / Phnom Penh airport

7th Mar

On our last day morning we will visit the saltpans where we hope to add some shorebirds to our list. After that we will transfer to Phnom Penh airport for departure.