

# BIRD TREKS

## THAILAND

### The Best of Southeast Asia

Tuesday, 1 March through Friday, 18 March 2011: 18 days & 17 nights

**We'll visit** **Khao Yai National Park**, only two hours from **Bangkok**. This beautiful park is home to tigers, elephants, and gaur. Among the abundant birdlife here are several of the elusive **pittas**. This is one of the best spots for **Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoo** and the beautiful **Siamese Fireback**.

In northwest Thailand we'll go to **Doi Lang**, **Doi Angkhang**, and Thailand's highest peak, **Doi Inthanon**. These beautiful mountains near the Myanmar border are home to most of Thailand's specialty birds, including the **Giant Nuthatch**.

**Kaeng Krachan National Park** is the most rugged and wildest park in the country. Most of Southeast Asia's large mammals are found here. Bird species include several of the very spectacular **broadbills** and an isolated population of the rare **Ratchet-tailed Treepie**.

#### Some of the birds that we should see include . . .

Asian Openbill	Great Barbet	Lesser Necklaced Laughingthrush
Lesser Whistling-Duck	Golden-throated Barbet	Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush
Crested Serpent-Eagle	Blue-throated Barbet	Golden Babbler
Collared Falconet	Speckled Piculet	Silver-eared Mesia
Scaly-breasted Partridge	Heart-spotted Woodpecker	White-browed Shrike-Babbler
Siamese Fireback	Bar-winged Flycatcher-Shrike	Spectacled Barwing
White-breasted Waterhen	White-headed Bulbul	Chestnut-tailed Minla
Emerald Dove	Siberian Blue Robin	Rufous-winged Fulvetta
Vernal Hanging-Parrot	White-capped Redstart	Rufous-backed Sibia
Asian Emerald Cuckoo	Plumbeous Redstart	Black-backed Sibia
Green-billed Malkoha	Slaty-backed Forktail	Yellow-cheeked Tit
Asian Barred Owllet	White-crowned Forktail	Sultan Tit
Great Eared-Nightjar	Yellow-bellied Fantail	Green-tailed Sunbird
Red-headed Trogon	Black-naped Monarch	Chestnut-flanked White-eye
Orange-breasted Trogon	Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	Maroon Oriole
Blue-bearded Bee-eater	White-crested Laughingthrush	Asian Fairy-Bluebird
Great Hornbill		Green Magpie

*[More target birds & daily itinerary begin on page 2]*

**Birds we will make a special effort to see include . . .**

Rufous-throated Partridge	White-browed Scimitar-Babbler
Malaysian Plover	Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler
Nordmann's Greenshank	Pygmy Wren-Babbler
Spoonbill Sandpiper	White-hooded Babbler
Yellow-vented Pigeon	Spot-breasted Parrotbill
Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoo	Black-throated Parrotbill
Banded Kingfisher	Giant Nuthatch
Blue Pitta	Ratchet-tailed Treepie
Crested Finchbill	Crested Bunting

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Spoon-billed Sandpiper at Baan Paktale!

## **THAILAND** *Magical Tour of Asia*

1 - 18 March 2011

### Day    Agenda

- 1**    **1 Mar**    Depart the United States for your international flight to **Thailand**. Overnight six miles high in the sky.
- 2**    **2 Mar**    Arrive in **Bangkok** in the evening for a good night's sleep at the Asia Hotel before beginning the tour the next day. Today's hotel is included in the tour fee but the meals are not.
- 3**    **3 Mar**    Our first destination is Khok Kham, Samut Sakhon. Among the hundreds of shorebirds on the mudflats at Samut Sakhon every winter are a few individuals of the rare **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**. This bird will be our priority. After lunch we'll continue to Laem Phakbia to board a small boat and search for **Malaysian Plover**, as we find many of the birds on the first few pages of your checklist. We'll then move inland to the A & B Bungalow that will be our base for three nights, as we explore Kaeng Krachan National Park.
- 4-5**    **4-5 Mar**    Both days will be spent birding in the mountains of Kaeng Krachen. This is the largest national park in Thailand and much less visited than Khao Yai, making a trip here a unique wilderness experience. **Leopard** and **Gaur** are both found in this region, and the fresh piles of **Elephant** dung on the road every morning are a constant reminder of the remoteness of this area. As we drive up the park's only road, we first meander through drier lowlands with many snags good for **woodpeckers**, including the diminutive **Heart-spotted Woodpecker**. A little farther along, the road turns to dirt and starts to climb. Any stop here can produce such magnificent birds as **Orange-breasted Trogon**, **Green Magpie**, and **Asian Paradise-Flycatcher**. Closer to the top we will be searching for roving flocks of **babblers**. Among the more common **White-crested Laughingthrushes** we may find **White-hooded Babblers**, **Black-throated Laughingthrushes**, and **White-browed Scimitar-Babblers**, but the most coveted bird in this area is the **Ratchet-tailed Treepie**. There is a small population here that is

completely isolated from the rest of the species in northern Viet Nam and surrounding areas. At the very top of the road, **Wreathed Hornbill**, **Vernal Hanging-Parrot**, and **Gray Treepie** are among the likely finds. Other highlights may include **Bar-backed** or **Scaly-breasted Partridges**, or the sight of hundreds of **Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters** gathered on snags to roost.



**Blue-bearded Bee-Eaters**  
 - - *Kittipon Burarasompob*

**6 6 Mar** As we ascend the road into Khao Yai National Park, there is an immediate sense of wildness. Besides the **Pig-tailed Macaques** lining the roadsides, there are other signs of wilderness, real signs - ‘elephant crossing’ ‘gaur crossing’ ‘leopard crossing’ ‘cobra crossing’ and of course, ‘**TIGER crossing**’! The birdlife is just as mythical - **Siamese Firebacks**, **Banded Kingfishers**, and **Blue Pittas** are often seen on trails into the forest and, on a recent tour, patient observers were regularly rewarded with a pair of the incredibly elusive **Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoos** near one of the campgrounds. **Brown-backed Needletails** hawk insects over the lakes. Watching the sun set as **hornbills** drift by on their way to roost is a great way to end the day. Seeing **Great Eared-Nightjars** emerge from hiding to start their nightly patrols is icing on the cake. The following three nights will be at Juldis Khao Yai Resort.

- 7-8 7-8 Mar** Two more days of birding at spectacular Khao Yai National Park, with our nights at Juldis Khao Yai Resort.
- 9 9 Mar** After some last minute birding in the Khao Yai area, we’ll head to the airport for our flight north to Chiang Mai, where we’ll stay at the Suriwongse Hotel. The remainder of our afternoon will be spent birding local wetlands. After dinner there will be time to explore Chiang Mai’s fantastic night bazaar.
- 10 10 Mar** Towering cliffs on our way to Doi Ang Khang will give us an opportunity to search for **Crested Treeswift** and **Crested Bunting**, with various **prinias** on the grassy slopes. Nearer to Doi Ang Khang, flowering trees provide food for numerous **bulbuls**. The show continues at the beautiful Angkhang Nature Resort, where we’ll spend the next two nights. The impeccably manicured landscapes are alone worth the visit, but seeing ten or more species of **bulbuls** in a day, including the difficult **Crested Finchbill**, make it especially enticing for birders.

[Day 11 begins on page 4]

- 11 **11 Mar** In the surrounding highlands of Doi Angkhang, several trails provide access to dense scrubby hillsides, where the babbler flocks include **Golden Babbler**, **Silver-eared Mesia**, **Blue-winged Minla**, and **Black-backed** and **Rufous-backed Sibilias**. This is also the best spot for one of the more sought-after babblers - the **Red-faced Liocichla** - and we will spend ample time trying for good looks at this skulking rarity. Other stakeout birds we will target include **Spot-breasted Parrotbill** and **White-browed Laughingthrush**. A quick stop at the guard post at the Myanmar border can produce some interesting open country wintering birds to boost our trip list.
- 12 **12 Mar** Our last morning at Doi Angkhang will be used to look for any of the difficult birds we may have missed, and for a last minute show of the **shrikes** and **bulbuls** on the grounds near our hotel. After lunch we will drive to Thaton and check into the Maekok River Village Resort for the next two nights. Some great birds await us at the nearby Thaton Marsh.
- 13 **13 Mar** Doi Lang is part of Doi Pha Hom Pok, the second highest mountain peak in Thailand, adjacent to the Burmese border. The habitat is moist, montane, evergreen forest. We will start very early to Doi Lang with a packed breakfast and spend half the day, as the birding is best before it gets too hot in the afternoon. At Doi Lang we will look for **Red-tailed Laughingthrush**, **Jerdon's Bushchat**, **Black-throated Parrotbill**, **Scarlet Finch**, and many additional, exciting species. We will return to Thaton in the afternoon for a break, then go birding at Thaton Marsh in the late afternoon. Possibilities there include **Marsh Harrier**, **Red-throated Pipit**, **Blue-breasted Quail**, **Bluethroat**, and **Siberian Rubythroat**.
- 14 **14 Mar** There will be one more morning at Doi Lang, then we pack up and head toward Inthanon. Along the way we'll be looking for new species, then there may be time to study **Indian Roller**, **White-throated Kingfisher**, or perhaps **White-rumped Shama** and **Black-collared Starling** on the grounds of the Inthanon Highland Resort. That is where we spend the next three nights.
- 15-16 **15-16 Mar** The tallest peak in Thailand, Doi Inthanon has a number of species not easily found elsewhere in the country. The boardwalk through the famous 'summit marsh' (actually a boggy forested area near the summit) is home to most of Inthanon's unique species. **Yellow-bellied Fantail**, **Ashy-throated Warbler**, **Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush**, **Chestnut-tailed Minla**, and **Rufous-winged Fulvetta** will likely be seen here, and nowhere else on our tour. An endemic subspecies of **Green-tailed Sunbird** is found only in this area and, by slowly and quietly walking the boardwalk several times, we hope to be rewarded with some of the more secretive residents such as **Eurasian Woodcock**, **Pygmy Wren-Babbler**, and **White-browed Shortwing**. Lower elevation flocks are good for **Yellow-cheeked Tit** and **Spectacled Barwing**, the iridescent **Asian Emerald Cuckoo** could be found anywhere, and local waterfalls have both **White-capped** and **Plumbeous Redstarts**. **Collared Falconet**, one of the smallest diurnal raptors in the world, is not too difficult to find in the dry forests at the base of the mountain. Both nights at Inthanon Highland Resort.

*[Days 17 and 18 are on page 5]*

- 17 **17 Mar** We'll have one final morning to explore Doi Inthanon. We may use this time to search for **Black-throated Parrotbills** in patches of bamboo, **Fire-capped Tits** that sometimes winter in a local orchard, or take a final spin on the summit marsh boardwalk. After lunch we'll drive to Chiang Mai for our flights to Bangkok. Then, after some free time and dinner on your own, the tour ends and you'll begin your return flights to the US.
- 18 **18 Mar** Return to the United States with **MANY** stories about your adventures in the incredible land of Thailand!

Our tour group poses at the highest point in the country.



There is lots of spectacular bamboo habitat at Kaeng Krachen.

*[Important details on page 6]*

**Leader** Bird Treks Thailand Tour will be led by **Kamol** and **Patcharee Komolphalin** from Nature Trails Birdwatching, the local experts in Bangkok and all of Thailand. They are intimately familiar with all parts of the itinerary and have led our previous tours.

**Price** Approximately \$4195 from Bangkok, based upon double occupancy and a minimum of five participants. Price could vary according to the cost of domestic transportation. Single accommodations can be arranged for an extra fee of \$495.

**Includes** Expert guide service, all boat rides, all ground and air transportation within Thailand, all entrance fees, all meals (except as specified), and lodging for the entire tour, beginning the night of 2 March 2011.

Does not include the cost of alcoholic beverages and beverages during meals, items of a personal nature, or international air transportation to Bangkok and airport departure tax. As opposed to most Bird Treks tours, tips are not included in the tour fee. Upon request **BIRD TREKS** will help you obtain the best possible airfare and coordinate arrivals into Bangkok.

**Extra Services** We offer the services of our exclusive Bird Treks travel agent, **Lori Heathcote**, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 25 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her through Bailey Travel, **1-800-224-5399**, or you can e-mail her directly at **lori@baileytravel.com**. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.

**Deposit** A \$1000 deposit will assure your reservation on the Thailand tour. The balance of the fee is due 1 December 2010. Send your deposit **SOON** so that we can secure the best and least expensive airfare to Bangkok and reserve your spot on this exciting, exotic tour.



‘ Birds of Thailand ’

- - Kamol Komolphalin, your tour leader

**Refund & Cancellation Policy** With written notice more than 90 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$100 service fee. With 30-90 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you provide a replacement for your spot on the tour. No partial refund can be given once a tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Contact Access America at **1-800-284-8300** and mention **BIRD TREKS (ACCAM # F021096)**. You can apply by telephone or through the Internet at **www.accessamerica.com**.