

*Birds of the Himalaya  
Sikkim & West Bengal  
11 Nights/ 12 Days.*



*A bird does not sing because it has an answer,  
It sings because it has a song. . . . .*

01

## Bagdogra/NJP- Lava (7000 fts / 105 kms / 5 hrs)

At the altitude of around 7000 fts, it is one of the few places in West Bengal to receive snow in winter. It is a small bazaar once a halting place for caravans on the trade routes to Bhutan and Sikkim. It is the entry point to the **Neora Valley National Park** from Kalimpong. The route to Lava is scenic with the change in vegetation from **tropical deciduous** to the wet **alpine** trees of **fir, pine** and **birch**. The verdant forests are a popular spot for picnicking, trekking and bird-watching. Wild animals such as the **Himalayan Black Bear** and **barking deer** are found in these parts. A Buddhist monastery is present on one of the hills of Lava. Notable sites include **Changey Waterfalls** and **Lava Jamgyong Kongtrul Monastery**.  
Overnight at the Hotel/Lodge.

02

## Excursion/Birding in the Neora Valley National Park.



Lava is considered a prime birding destination in this region, One can sight yellow billed blue Magpie, Coral billed Scimitar Babbler, Scaly breasted Wren Babbler, Golden Breasted Fulvetta, Hill Partridge, Rufus throated Partridge, Satyr Tragopan, Wedge tailed Green Pigeon, Speckled Wood Pigeon, Ashy Wood Pigeon, Emerald Dove, Lesser Cuckoo, Crimson breasted Woodpecker, Lesser Yellow nape, Long tailed Broadbill, Mountain Bulbul, Orange bellied Leaf bird, Long billed Thrush, Chestnut Thrush, Eye browed Thrush, Dusky Thrush, Chestnut headed Tesia, Slat belled Tesia, Russer Bush Warbler, White spectacled Warbler, Pygmy Blue flycatcher, Golden Bush Robin, Blue fronted Robin, Spotted Laughing thrush, Cutia, Maroon Oriole, Common Rose finch, Red Crossbill etc.

Overnight at the Hotel/Lodge.



03

## Birding to Rachela Pass (10500 fts) – Kolakham (6200 fts/10 kms/1 hr)

Rachela Pass is actually a trekking route 12 kilometers from Lava through the Neora Valley Nature Reserve which is entered through Lava but is accessed by road in a hired vehicle. The route however difficult and steep it is, also offers scenic beauty of magnolias, rhododendrons and bamboo trees. It takes about 2 hours to arrive at Rachela Pass through the steep road. The scenic beauty along the route mesmerizes the trekkers and makes them forget about their tiredness. Rachela Pass is virtually considered as a junction between Sikkim, Bhutan and Bengal. It used to be a trade route in the past. One of the most significant trade routes in the history of India, one could witness mules carrying merchandize within countries. The tracks are still noticeable. You can also spot the 4 chief ridges dividing the valleys known as Neora, Rishi, Rangli and Jaldhaka. From Rachela Pass, other passes of Jelep La and Nathu La are visible. Also visible are the Singalila Range with its proud peak Kanchenjunga, world's 3rd highest and also the entire Chola Range. Later, we drive back to Lava and head further to Kolakham, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with the largest biodiversity covering an area of 89 square kilometers. Full of rhododendrons and mountains streams in every nook and cranny, the park is home to the endangered Red Panda. Apart from this rare animal, you will also notice others including wild boar, leopard, sloth bear, Himalayan Flying Squirrel and many more. The King Cobra among the reptiles has also been spotted here. It is also a bird watcher's paradise.

Overnight at the Lodge/Homestay.

04

## Birding & Drive to Kalimpong (4200 fts/32 kms/2 hrs)

As the place is considered a largest bio-diversity, we explore around and later in the afternoon time, we depart from Kolakham and drive further to Kalimpong. Kalimpong is famous for its indigenous arts and crafts. Kalimpong has developed good silk trading business with Tibet till 1950. Until the 18th century Kalimpong was a part of Sikkim. It was then taken over by the Bhutanese. In the 19th century Kalimpong became a part of Darjeeling district. Evening time is free to go for a walk around the town.

Overnight at the Hotel.



05

## Kalimpong-Ravangla (7000fts/84kms/4hrs)

Drive through the Teesta and Rangeet Valley to Damthang Forests, stopping en route to look for Shikra, Red Jungle Fowl, River Lapwing, Green billed Malkoha, White throated Kingfisher, Crested Kingfisher, Chestnut headed Bee eater, Indian Roller, Dollarbird, Great Barbet, Greater Yellow nape, Black backed Wagtail, Small Minivet, Scarlet Minivet, Black crested Bulbul, White cheeked Bulbul, Red vented Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Golden fronted Leaf bird, Orange bellied Leaf bird, Common Iora, Blue Rock Thrush, Chestnut bellied Rock Thrush, White capped Redstart, Hair crested Drongo, Green Magpie, Himalayan Swiftlet, and oriental White Eye. At the Damthang forest we will take a birding walk for 6 hrs. Some of the species we might see are: Eurasian Buzzard, Eurasian Kestrel, Green Billed Malkoha, Dollarbird, Black winged Cuckoo etc.  
Reach Ravangla at the Evening time, check into the Hotel.

06

## Birding & drive to Pelling (6250 fts/51 kms/3 hrs)

The morning time is scheduled for a 4 hrs birding walk to Menam forests of Oak, Chestnut, Magnolia and Rhododendrons at altitude of 2900 mtrs. Likely to spot the same species as seen at Damthang. Later, we come back to the Hotel, have lunch and drive to Pelling, with birding halts en route at selected spots. Upon arrival, check into the Hotel.

Overnight at the Hotel.

## 07 Excursion & Birding

Pelling offers the spectacular views of Eastern Himalayas. To-day we bird for the full day in the adjoining areas including visit to Pemayangtse and Sangachoeling Monasteries. Birds we are likely to see are : Mountain Hawk Eagle, Black Eagle, Himalayan Griffon, Indian Cuckoo, White throated Needletail, Great Barbet, Grey headed and Bay Woodpecker, Lesser Yellow nape, Grey Tree pie, Striated Bulbul, Rufus capped and black chinned Babbler, Hoary throated and Rusty fronted Barwing, Striated, Rey sided and Greater Necklaced Laughing thrush, etc.

Overnight at the Hotel.

## 08 Birding to Khechupalri - Yuksum (5800 fts/3 hrs)

We check out after having breakfast and start our journey to the famous and Holy Khechupalri lake (28 kms/1 hr), after a while at the lake, we explore around for birding where we can sight migrant ducks, black necked grebe, Baer's pochard, Speckled wood pigeon, Emerald Cuckoo, Blue winged and Scaly Laughing thrush, whitenaped Yuhina and many more. Later in the afternoon time, we drive to Yuksum (27 kms/1 hr). Yuksum, the first capital of erstwhile kingdom of Sikkim is also a base for the trekking to worldwide famous Dzungri-Goechala trek. The history of Sikkim's erstwhile monarch starts from this very place dating back to 1641-42 A.D.

Overnight at the Hotel.



## 09 Excursion & Birding

We spend the day birding around Yuksum. Some of the birds you are likely to see are : Mountain Hawk Eagle, Crimson breasted Woodpecker, Maroon Oriole, Short billed and Grey chinned Mine vets, Bulbul, Mina, White napped Yakima, various Thrushes, Grey winged blackbird, various Tits, various Nuthatch and various songbirds and bush cats. Apart from the birding, we also visit the Norbu Ghang Coronation Throne, the place where the first king of Sikkim was coronated, the place where the coronation took place is marked by the original stone throne and an amazing footprint on a rock face the footprint is said to have left by one (first) of the three monks.

Evening time is free to relax.

Overnight stay at Hotel.

## 10 Yuksum-Darjeeling (6700 fts/135 kms/5-6 hrs)

After breakfast we will be driving to Darjeeling to explore today which will take around 6 hrs to reach from Yuksum crossing the Jorethang bazaar and Melli Check Post where will do the exit formalities and reach Darjeeling. Darjeeling is famous for Heritage Toy Train, Tea Gardens, Mountaineering and Education Institutions, British and Mountaineering legacy and also the modernization of today.

Afternoon is free as we will be doing a walking orientation tour of Darjeeling. We will walk to Chowrasta and stroll around Chowrasta and the Mall and evening we will stroll around market till late evening.

Overnight at the Hotel.

# 11

## Darjeeling Sightseeing

The Tiger Hill at about 2600 mtrs, is a place from where we can have a magnificent sunrise view over the mountain, the mountain of Everest, Khanchendzonga, Makalu & Lhotse- the four giants of the Himalaya is seen from the top which explains why the Darjeeling is named "the queen of the Hills " we spend most of the morning here mesmerizing the view of a lifetime and we slowly head back to the town to visit the Dali Gumpa (Gelug sect monastery), We can also add Batasia loop in our itinerary but after the view from the top of Tiger Hill, the view doesn't give much of compares but still has got its own beautiful ambience to offer to the world . The breakfast is served at the hotel and an hour rest is essential after a bite. The day follows with a visit to the Padma-jha Naidu Zoological Garden and the famous HMI(Himalayan Mountaineering Institute) founded by Lt.Tenzing Norgay (First man to summit Mt.Everest with Sir Edmund Hillary) and some of his close friends. The museum at HMI is a place to observe and learn many things about the Himalaya, the mountaineering skills and techniques. We have a afternoon Evening time free to stroll around the famous Chow-rasta(Mall) to collect a souvenirs' from the hills to carry back home which will reminds you of your beautiful and memorable trip to this part of the world for a life time.

\*Padma-jha Naidu Zoological park & HMI are closed on Thursday.

Overnight stay at the Hotel.

# 12

## Darjeeling-Bagdogra (70 kms/4 hrs)

This morning after breakfast we will then drive back to Bagdogra Airport via beautiful tea valleys in Kurseong and finally reaching the plains of India and to the airport for further Journey back home.