



NEPAL BIRDING TOUR OCTOBER 2024

Flynn's Tours of the Indo-Pacific, Australia.

Where? Nepal is a beautiful country perched between the giant nations of India and China. The nation stretches from the plains of India through the foothills to the peaks of the Himalayas proper; offering mountain scenery unmatched anywhere in the world. Here, in the mountains, Mount Everest, the world's highest peak, stands at nearly 9000 metres above sea level. High in these mountains people live as they have for centuries; grazing their animals, growing their crops and practising their Buddhist faith. In the foothills but still at a serious elevation as far as Australians are concerned are sprawling cities that maintain their history through a variety of temples, stupas and statues. The lowlands, in contrast, are home to people, more Indian in appearance and culture, who practise the ancient faith of Hinduism. These lowlands host many great National Parks, including Chitwan – home to Tigers, Great Indian Rhinos, Sloth Bears and over 400 species of birds.



Black-throated Tit [Binaya Shrestha]

This two-week birding tour to Nepal visits four main areas to search for birds and wildlife: Kathmandu Valley, Kosi Tappu in the nation's south east, Pokhara and Chitwan National Park. Our tour will have local guides and will be led by Ken Cross who has visited and birded in Nepal three times previously. If you would like to add a trek to this itinerary please contact Flynn's Tours. October is an excellent month to be in the Himalaya!

Nepal has a huge bird list for its size [approximately twice the size of Tasmania - over 900 bird species! Some truly exciting megafauna is also possible in the country like Greater One-horned (Indian) Rhinoceros, Bengal Tiger, Red Panda, Ganges River Dolphin, Asian Elephant, and Indian Leopard to name a few.

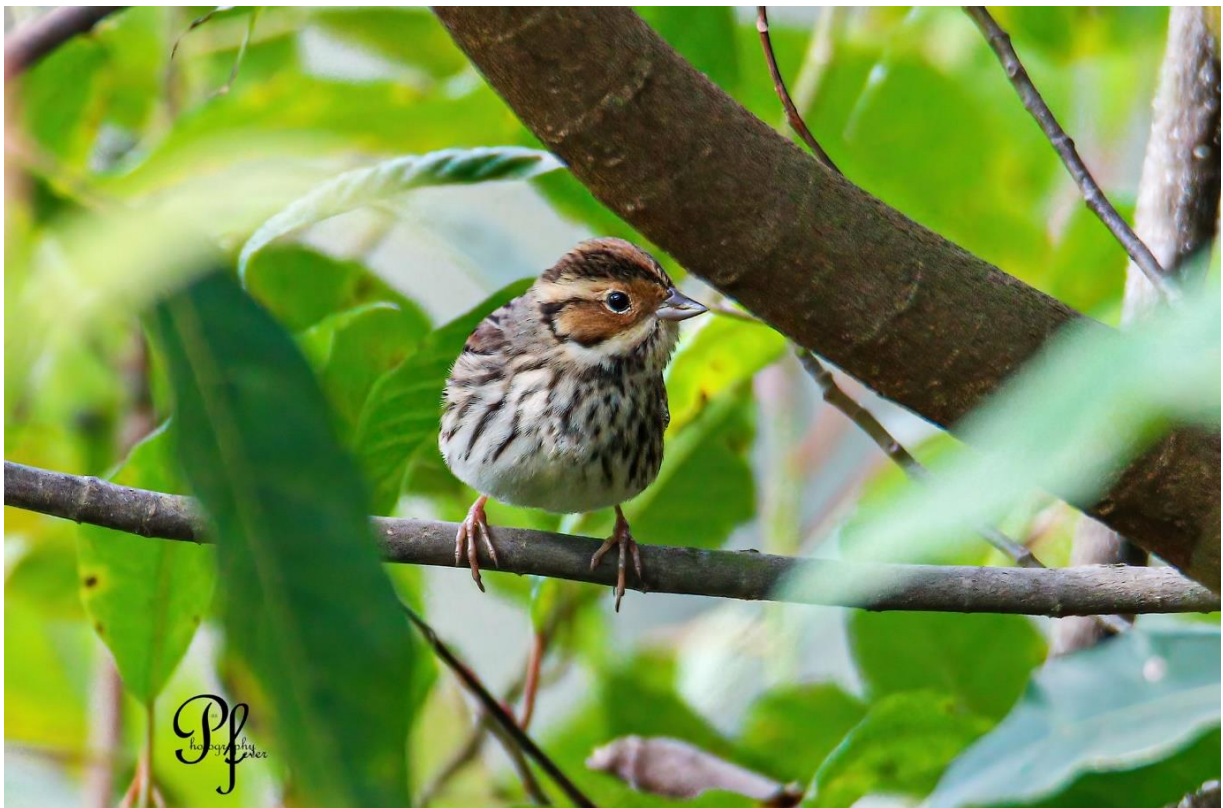
Why visit Nepal? Nepal is an unforgettable destination. For Australian travellers Nepal offers sights, knowledge and experiences simply unavailable in Australia. In addition to scenes of natural beauty, Nepal shows,

through the lives of its citizens, how much of the rest of the world lives. This, perhaps, is not always easy to watch. Nepal remains one of the world's poorest countries and some Nepalese people live lives that are much materially poorer than ours. Experiencing Nepal will cause Australian travellers to reflect on their own lives and their own nation in ways that would otherwise be impossible.

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Itinerary in Brief.

Day 1 - S 12/10: Arrival in Kathmandu	O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar
Day 2 - S 13/10: Kathmandu Sightseeing	O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar
Day 3 - M 14/10: Full day Phulchoki Bird watching.	O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar
Day 4 - T 15/10: Full day Shivapuri NP Bird Watching.	O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar
Day 5 - W 16/10: Kathmandu to Biratnagar Koshi Tappu	O/n Aqua Birds Eco Resort
Day 6 & 7 - T 17/10 & F 18/10: Birding Koshi Tappu area	O/n Aqua Birds Eco Resort
Day 8 - S 19/10: Fly back to Pokhara via Kathmandu	O/n Teeka Resort or similar
Day 9 - S 20/10: Birdwatching around Fewa Lake.	O/n Teeka Resort or similar
Day 10 - M 21/10: Birdwatching around Begnas Lake.	O/n Teeka Resort or similar
Day 11 - T 22/10: Drive to Chitwan National Park	o/n Hotel Parkland or similar
Day 12, 13, 14 - W 23/10 T 24/10 F 25/10: Around Chitwan National Park.	o/n Hotel Parkland or similar
Day 15 - S 26/10: Drive back to Kathmandu	O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar
Day 16 - S 27/10: Departure – Return to Australia or take the extension to Sri Lanka	



Little Bunting [Binaya Shrestha]

ITINERARY IN DETAIL

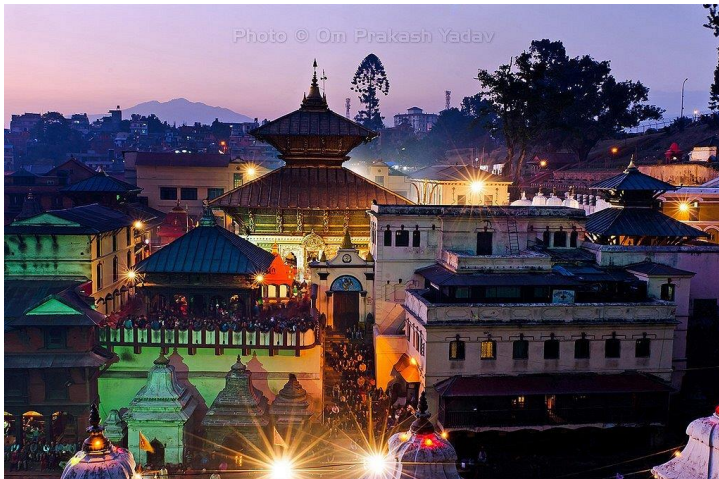
Day 1 - S12/10: Arrival in Kathmandu

It's a thrill flying into **Kathmandu**, especially for Australians who are starved of mountains, to see the long range of the snow-capped Himalaya. Upon arriving we will have the experience of the chaos of Kathmandu as we transfer to our accommodation. We have little planned for our first day; save meeting our guide and resting for the days ahead.

O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar L, D (if you've arrived in KTM)

Day 2 - S13/10: Kathmandu Sightseeing.

Our first day is designed to experience the history and culture of Kathmandu via a sightseeing tour of three main sites. We will, in addition to seeing some of the more common bird species, visit three religious and cultural sites; **Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa and Kathmandu Durbar Square.**



Pashupatinath Temple [Trip Adviser]

Pashupatinath Temple: It is one of the most celebrated Hindu temples in South Asia and a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. The temple is devoted to Lord Shiva. The Bagmati River, flowing beside the temple, is religiously and spiritually significant for Hindus where cremation of dead bodies takes place. Pashupatinath Temple is adjacent to a small forest where over 100 bird species have been recorded including **Spotted Dove,**

House Swift, Black Kite, Great and Blue-throated Barbets, Alexandrine and Rose-ringed Parakeets, House Crow, Barn Swallow, Red-vented Bulbul, Common and Jungle Mynas, and Oriental Magpie Robin.



Great Barbet [Binaya Shrestha]

Swayambhunath [also known as the Monkey Temple: Located atop a hill west of Kathmandu city, the Swayambhunath complex has been in use since the 5th century and consists of a magnificent domed stupa, as well as a variety of shrines and temples. Each temple is extremely ornate and



richly decorated with gold and vibrant prayer flags, though it's not only the spiritual décor that draws visitors.

This sacred pilgrimage site is also home to hundreds of monkeys [Rhesus Macaques]

considered holy to Tibetan Buddhists and Hindus. According to legend, Manjushree, the bodhisattva of wisdom, was in the process of raising the temple hill when the lice in his hair transformed into these monkeys. Swayambhunath means self-arisen and is derived from that legend.

The story alone provides enough inspiration for visitors to struggle through the climb to the temple, and the sights at the summit are worth the trek. From the top of the hill, visitors can see a panorama of the Kathmandu valley, along with playful monkeys swinging from trees and prayer flags hanging around the colorful temple. According to ebird over 110 bird species have been recorded at the site.

Kathmandu Durbar Square:



Kathmandu Durbar Square is a historically and culturally significant site, being one of the three Durbar (royal palace) Squares in the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal that are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Although the construction of the square began in the 3rd century, the



White-browed Fulvetta [Binaya Shrestha]

major structures within it were added in later periods.

The outer complex consists of a number of 16th-century temples built during the reign of Malla kings. These buildings are adorned with meticulously carved facades characteristic to Newar architecture. The central square is surrounded by palace complexes built during the Malla and Shah periods. The most well-known among them is the Nautalle Durbar, a nine-story palace built by Prithvi Narayan Shah to commemorate the Unification of Nepal.

O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar. B , L , D

Day 3 - M 14/10: Full day Phulchoki Bird watching.

Many consider Phulchowki Hill to be Nepal's primary birding hotspot with nearly three hundred bird species recorded, and we will spend a full day exploring this area. We will travel towards the top of Phulchowki Hill and then descend, birding along the way. It will be difficult to focus your attention away from the magnificent views of the Himalayas to the many species of birds we will see. Many raptors, including Steppe Eagle and Black Mountain-Hawk, are possible. Laughingthrushes such as Streaked, White-throated, and Chestnut-crowned may be seen. Eurasian Jays and a variety of woodpeckers are also possibilities. The Rufous Sibia is common, as are the Striped-throated and Rufous-vented Yuhinas. Other birds we may see include the Red-flanked Bluetail, Blue-capped Redstart, Dark-breasted Rosefinch, and many others.



Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler [Binaya Shrestha]

Lower down the hill we hope to encounter such species as Maroon Oriole, White-bellied Drongo, Yellow-bellied Fantail, Red-rumped Swallow, Green-backed Tit, Gray-hooded Warbler, White-browed Fulvetta, White-crested Laughingthrush, Verditer Flycatcher, Blue Whistling-Thrush, Golden Bush-Robin, Blue-fronted Redstart, and Fire-breasted Flowerpecker. **O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar. B , L , D**



Brahminy Starling [Binaya Shrestha]

Day 4 - T 15/10: Full day Shivapuri Bird Watching.

Today will be spent birding in Shivapuri National Park, which is located just north of Kathmandu. Spiny Babbler and Hoary-throated Barwing are common in the park. On the way to the park, we have a good chance of spotting one or two of the elusive Spotted Forktails as they make their way along the stream that parallels the road. We can expect to see several species of Barbets (Great, Golden-throated, and Blue-throated), as well as stunning White-capped Water Redstarts. We hope to see a variety of Bulbuls, Fantails, Redstarts, Minivets, Flycatchers, Mynas, and Wagtails while exploring Shivapuri. **O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar. B , L , D**



Bluethroat [Binaya Shrestha]

Day 5 - W 16/10: Kathmandu to Birinaagr to Koshi Tappu

Today we fly to Nepal's south-east, specifically to the town of Biratnagar. From there we have a two-hour drive towards Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. The Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve is a protected area in the Terai of eastern Nepal covering 176 km² of wetlands. It comprises extensive reed beds and freshwater marshes in the floodplain of

the Kosi River. Over 450 bird species have been recorded in the reserve in addition to many mammals. Nepal's last remaining population of about 150 wild water buffalo inhabit the area, while the Ganges River Dolphin can be sighted in the river.

O/n – Aqua Birds Eco Resort. B , L , D

Days 6 and 7 - T 17/10 & F 18/10 Birding around Koshi Tappu



Spotted Redshank [Binaya Shrestha]

We will enjoy two full days exploring the grasslands and wetlands of Koshi. Birds which can be seen at Koshi Tappu include Sarus Crane, Indian Skimmer, Ruddy Shelduck, Yellow-eyed Babbler, White-tailed Stonechat, Black-necked Stork, Swamp Francolin, Baer's Pochard, Pallas's Fish Eagle, Striated Marsh Warbler, Black-bellied Tern, Pied and Marsh Harriers, Great and Little Cormorants. Raptors to look out for include the Brown Fish-Owl,

Imperial Eagle, and Greater Spotted Eagle. Asian Openbill, Black Stork, and Lesser Adjutant can be found in the sandy areas near the rivers, as can Indian Coursers, Oriental Skylarks, and Sand Larks. Greater and Black-rumped Flamebacks, Speckled Piculet, and Fulvous-breasted Woodpecker are among the woodpeckers found in the area. Drongo species found here include the Black, Ashy, White-bellied, Spangled (Hair-crested), and Greater Racket-tailed. Red-throated Flycatchers and Common Stonechats are common, as are Jungle Babblers.

O/n – Aqua Birds Eco Resort. B , L , D,



World Peace Pagoda above Pokhara

Day 8 - S 19/10: Fly back to Pokhara via Kathmandu

Today will be a travel day such that we can maximise birding on other days. We will fly to the town of Pokhara via Kathmandu. Pokhara is a beautiful town overlooking Fewa Tal [Lake] and offering [again] great mountain views. **O/n Teeka Resort or similar. B , L , D**

Day 9 - S 20/10: Birdwatching around Fewa lake.

Today's birding adventure takes us to the serene surroundings of Fewa Lake. Embarking on a boat ride followed by a leisurely stroll along lakeside trails promises a delightful experience for bird enthusiasts. Fewa Lake serves as an ideal habitat for a rich variety of bird species, making bird watching here truly rewarding. Among the common sightings are Bar-headed Geese, Great Cormorants, Little Egrets, Common Kingfishers, Black-headed Gulls, and Pied Kingfishers.

After an eventful morning, we retreat to our hotel for a satisfying lunch before venturing out again in the evening. This time, our destination is the Peace Pagoda, a Buddhist stupa, where we continue our birding expedition. **O/n Teeka Resort or similar B , L , D**



Day 10 - M 21/10: Birdwatching around Beggas Lake.

After enjoying breakfast at a nearby hotel, we set off towards Beggas Lake for a day of bird watching. The lake is home to a variety of bird species including Osprey, Common Pochard, Purple Heron, Eurasian Coot, Red-Wattled Lapwing, White Wagtail, and more.

The journey begins with a scenic drive from Pokhara up the hill, offering stunning views of the lake and snow-capped mountains. Along

the way, numerous local birds could be spotted. The hillside, known as Pachabhaiya Danda, provided an excellent vantage point for observing birds. **O/n Teeka Resort or similar . B , L , D**

Day 11 - T 22/10: Drive to Chitwan National Park



Hoopoe [Supradeepra Neupane]

Today we drive from Pokhara, elevation 800 metres above sea level, to Chitwan National Park, elevation approximately 100 metres above sea level. The drive is scenic and takes about five hours.

Chitwan National Park is the first national park of Nepal protecting nearly 1000 km² of sub-tropical terai lowlands, specifically grasslands and deciduous forests dominated by Sal trees [Shorea robusta]. The wide range of vegetation types in the Chitwan National Park host a great variety of wildlife. Nearly 70 mammal species can be found here including Tiger, Leopard, Sloth Bears, and Indian Rhino plus deer – Chital, Sambar, Hog and Barking. Chitwan's bird list numbers well over 500 species! Expect to see some of the park's reptiles, especially Mugger Crocodiles and Gharials.

We will check into our accommodation and have a late lunch. In the afternoon we will begin our exploration of this area. **O/n Hotel Parkland or similar. B , L , D**

Days 12-13 14 - W 23/10 T 24/10 F25/10 Around Chitwan National Park.

For the next three days, you begin your day with a sunrise bird watching tour, obviously before breakfast.

We will try to explore this ecosystem in a variety of ways: via boats, jeep and on foot Great Hornbill, Indian Peacock, Kingfishers, Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Himalayan Griffon Vulture,



Great Indian one-horned Rhino [Wikipedia]

Red-headed Trogon, Oriented Pied Hornbill, Ruddy Shelduck, Sarus Crane, Crested Serpent Eagle and others birds along with can be observed at Chitwan National Park.

O/n Hotel Parkland or similar. B , L , D.

Day 15 - S 26/10: Drive back to Kathmandu

After having breakfast at our hotel, we take a seven hour drive to Kathmandu. Tonight we will enjoy our last Nepalese feast and argue over the bird or birds of the trip!

O/n Kathmandu Garden Home or similar. B , L , D.

Day 16 - S 27/10: Departure

Today's business involves a transfer to Kathmandu's international airport to return to Australia or to continue to Sri Lanka!

Breakfast inc.

(Free Lunch & Dinner for those joining the Sri Lankan 16 day Tour)

16 Day/ 15 Night Birding Tour of Nepal

This tour to Nepal visits four main areas to search for birds and wildlife: Kathmandu Valley, Kosi Tappu in the nation's south east, Pokhara and Chitwan National Park.

COST INCLUDES:

- Kathmandu International airport transits
- 15 nights of Nepal's 3-star level accommodation
- 15 breakfasts, 15 Lunches & 15 Dinners listed in itinerary.
- Australian Tour Leader – Ken Cross
- Nepalese / English speaking licensed bird watching guide.
- Flight ticket from Kathmandu to Biratnagar
- Flight ticket from Biratnagar to Kathmandu
- Flight ticket from Kathmandu to Pokhara
- All required Land Transportation
- All required entry fee and permits.
- Domestic airport transits
- Service charge and all government charges

COST EXCLUDES:

- Any bar bills (alcoholic drinks, mineral water, and cold drinks), cigarettes, client's personal insurance, any kinds of unforeseen expenses etc.
- Gratuities to Guide and drivers (Not mandatory but expected as customary thank you for the service)
- International air ticket and visa fee.
- Any other costs which are not defined in "cost includes" section.

Price per person = AUD4,800 Twin Share

Single Supplement = AUD590

Combined Nepal / Sri Lanka 32 Day / 31 Night

Price per person = AUD8,990

Single Supplement = AUD1,360

Includes a discount of AUD210 Plus Free : Colombo Sightseeing Tour

Free : 1 nights accommodation in Negambo

Free : 1 x Breakfast, 3 x Lunches & 2 Dinners