



Tourism for Conservation | Conservation for Tourism

## Kashmir & Ladakh High Altitude Birds and Mammals

Delhi, Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Sonmarg, Kargil, Leh, Khardung La, Puga, Tso Moriri, Tso Kar

Best Time: May to November

Duration: 15 Days

Tour Pace: Easy to Moderate

Minimum tour participants: 02

Maximum tour participants: 08

Transport: Exclusive

Birding guide: Asian Adventures birding guides

Tour Code: 128

### Description

Kashmir and Ladakh lie at the northern extreme of Indian Subcontinent and in terms of birding, as well as culture, offer a stark contrast to the rest of the country and each other. Together they form a part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir but are separated by the Great Himalayan Chain. Their position means that, particularly in winter and during migration, birds from the northern Palearctic turn up as vagrants, and there are several sightings of species not recorded elsewhere in India. Spring and summer, however, we see peak avian activity with several local breeding specialities.

Our trip begins at Srinagar and takes us through Gulmarg, Sonmarg, Kargil, Leh and areas of Ladakh. Many waterfowls join the residents of Dal lake during migration. Black-crowned Night Heron and Pied Kingfisher are resident. In summer, Clamorous Reed Warblers are common, and a few Little Bittern inhabit the reed beds while Whiskered Terns hunt over the water.

Dachigam National Park is a must visit location. It used to be a game reserve and was turned into a National Park to protect Hangul, or Kashmir Stag, as well as drinking water catchment for Srinagar. It has an area of some 140km<sup>2</sup> and covers a wide altitudinal range from the edge of Kashmir Valley up to about 4200m in Upper Daicham. The park lists numbers more than 150 birds many of which breed. Among the more notable are Besra, Northern Goshawk, Himalayan Griffon, Lammergeier, Himalayan Monal, and Tawny owl to name a few. Also, mammals like Hangul, Jackal, Langur, Leopard and Yellow-throated Martens are common.

Another highlight of the tour is birding in Ladakh. Ladakh lies in the rain shadow of Himalayas, more than 300m above sea level. The low precipitation results in barren moon like landscape traversed by green ribbons of river valley surrounded by spectacular snow-clad mountains. As you wander into Leh, the capital of Ladakh, expect to see some of the endemics like Black-billed Magpie. Along the stream in winter look for Solitary Snipe and White-throated Dipper. Other birds found in this region are Red-billed Chough, Robin and Brown Accentors and Fire-fronted Serin. Other birds found in the region are

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Common Swift, Oriental Skylark, Common Buzzard, Golden Eagle, Snow Pigeon, Himalayan Griffon, Common Tern, Common and Alpine Swifts, Lesser sand Plover, Horned Lark, Eurasian Craig Martin and Rudy Shelduck.

#### Itinerary overview

- Day 01: Arrive Delhi
- Day 02: Delhi to Srinagar
- Day 03: Srinagar
- Day 04: Srinagar to Gulmarg to Srinagar
- Day 05: Srinagar to Gulmarg to Srinagar
- Day 06: Srinagar to Sonmarg to Kargil
- Day 07: Kargil to Leh
- Day 08: Surrounding area of Leh
- Day 09: Leh to Khardung-La to Leh
- Day 10: Leh to Puga
- Day 11: Puga to Tso Moriri to Puga
- Day 12: Puga to Tso Kar - Leh
- Day 13: Leh to Delhi
- Day 14: Delhi to Departure



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## Highlights

- Pristine Himalayas
- Excellent Birding
- Great Food
- Quaint lodges and camps
- Himalayan road trips
- Short walks and hikes
- Ever changing landscape
- Barren and colorful Trans-Himalayan Landscape
- Barren and colorful Trans-Himalayan Landscape
- Tibetan specialties
- Amazing mammal life
- A complete Himalayan experiences

## ITINERARY

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Meals: On own

Accommodation: Hotel Shanti Palace

Arrive Delhi in the evening. You will be met and transferred to for overnight stay.



Day 02: Delhi to Srinagar

Meals: Breakfast in Delhi and Dinner in Srinagar

Accommodation: Ibrahim Houseboat.

Morning transfer to Delhi airport to connect late morning flight to Srinagar. Arrive Srinagar late morning or at noon. You will be met and transferred to Ibrahim Houseboat. Evening birding tour in the forest near Shankaracharya Temple. Return to your houseboat overnight stay



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Day 03: Srinagar  
Meals: Breakfast & Dinner  
Accommodation: Ibrahim Houseboat.

After sunrise, we'll leave for a full day birding tour in Dachigam National Park. We return back to our houseboat in the evening. Overnight stay.



Day 04: Day Excursion to Pahalgam  
Meals: Breakfast and dinner  
Accommodation: Ibrahim Houseboat

Today we continued our birding trip to Pahalgam and will leave houseboat around 5 AM. After full day birding, drive back to Srinagar. Overnight stay



Day 05: Day Excursion to Gulmarg  
Meals: Breakfast and dinner  
Accommodation: Ibrahim Houseboat.

Today we'll leave at 5 am to reach Gulmarg little early for birding. Return to Srinagar. Arrive houseboat early in the evening where we can expect Whiskered tern, Common kingfisher and lots of black-eared kite around our houseboat. Overnight stay



Day 06: Srinagar to Sonmarg to Kargil  
Meals: Breakfast and dinner

Check-out from your houseboat at 5 AM and drive to Sonmarg. After driving for 2 and half hour we'll reach Sonmarg. After couple of birding in Sonmarg, get ready for drive to Kargil (4.5 hours). Arrive Kargil in the evening. Overnight stay



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Day 07: Kargil to Leh  
Meals: Breakfast and dinner  
Accommodation: Hotel Pangong.

Get ready for long drive from Kargil to Leh (7-8 hours) with few birding stops on the way. Arrive Leh in the evening. Overnight stay



Day 08: Surrounding area of Leh  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today morning we will bird along Shey marshes. Afternoon visit to Trisul Lake. Overnight in a hotel.



Day 09: Leh to Khardung La (18,380 ft) - By Surface / 49 km / Approx 2½ hr.  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today morning we will be going on an excursion to bird at Khardung La. We will be reaching a height of 18380 ft, the highest motorable pass in the world. Afternoon is free to discover the riches of this exotic destination with a visit to Leh town. Overnight in a hotel.



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Day 10: Leh to Puga (14,520 ft) - By Surface / Approx 5½ hr.  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Accommodation: tented camp at Puga.

We will spend the day travelling to Puga stopping en route for birding at Chumathang. Check the stream at Puga emerging out of sulphur spring for productive birding. Overnight stay



Day 11: Puga to Across Namshang La (15,840 ft) to Thadsang Karu (15,246 ft) to Tso Moriri (14,916 ft) to Puga  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner  
Accommodation: tented camp at Puga.

Morning excursion to the lakes for birding. Spend the evening near the camp and opt for bird walks Overnight stay



Day 12: Puga to Across Polo Konga (16,236 ft) to Tso Kar (14,949 ft; 2½ hr.) to Leh (4 hours)  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Travel to Tso Kar in the morning across Polo Kongka Pass. Return to Leh. Overnight stay.



Day 13: Leh to Delhi  
Meals: Breakfast  
Accommodation: Hotel Shanti Palace.

Fly back to Delhi in the morning. Arrive Delhi at noon. You will be met and transferred to Hotel Shanti Palace. Evening free for culture activities or for shopping etc. Overnight stay



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Day 14: Delhi to Departure

Meals: Breakfast

Transfer to airport to connect flight back to home. Tour Ends.



Tour cost (per person)

Tour cost (per person): INR 163,000 (minimum 06-08 paying persons)

Tour cost (per person): INR 172,000 (minimum 04 paying persons)

Tour cost (per person): INR 182,000 (minimum 02 paying persons)

Single room supplement: INR 37500



Services includes only:

- Accommodation on twin sharing basis
- Meals as per the itinerary
- Guided birding throughout
- All permits and entrances
- All surface transfers by a private air-conditioned vehicle
- All taxes



Above cost does not include:

- Optional tours/excursions, personal & incidental expenses.
- Tips, laundry, phone calls, alcohol, camera fee, elephant ride etc.
- Air fare, visa, insurance.



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Passport details required of all the participants for booking safaris & tickets

- Full Names as mentioned on passport
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- Passport Number
- Passport Issue date
- Passport Expiry date

