ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

# India

## Small Group Tour

## Northern Birds & Tigers

***28th January to 13th February 2023 (17 days)***



**Tiger by Daniel Danckwerts**

*Home to over a billion people in arguably the world's richest cultural landscape, India is a country with no equal. This great nation boasts a staggering geographical diversity ranging from deserts and forests to tropical, palm-lined shores and snow-capped peaks. India is, of course, also famous for its rich avifauna and iconic mammalian megafauna, foremost of which is the regal Tiger. Our tour visits all the famous birding sites in the north central region of this amazing country, and includes a visit to the fabled Ranthambhore National Park, the tiger reserve widely considered to be one of the best places to see this most magnificent of the world's big cats! Join us in this unforgettable celebration of India's incredible birds, iconic mammals, dramatic scenery and kaleidoscope of cultures!*

## THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

**THE ITINERARY**

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| **Day 1** | **Arrival in New Delhi** |
| **Day 2** | **Sultanpur National Park & Okhla and Yamuna River** |
| **Day 3** | **New Delhi to Sattal via Kathgodam** |
| **Day 4** | **Sattal to Nainital** |
| **Days 5 & 6** | **Nainital** |
| **Day 7** | **Nainital to Kosi River** |
| **Day 8** | **Kosi River to Jim Corbett National Park** |
| **Day 9** | **Jim Corbett National Park** |
| **Day 10** | **Jim Corbett National Park to New Delhi** |
| **Day 11** | **New Delhi to Ranthambhore** |
| **Days 12 & 13** | **Ranthambhore National Park** |
| **Day 14** | **Ranthambhore to Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur)** |
| **Day 15** | **Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur)** |
| **Day 16** | **Bharatpur to Chambal River via Fatehpur Sikri** |
| **Day 17** | **Chambal to New Delhi via Taj Mahal** |

## TOUR ROUTE MAP…




## THE TOUR IN DETAIL…

**Day 1: Arrival in New Delhi.** On arrival in India's bustling capital city of New Delhi, we will transfer to our accommodations within the city limits where we will meet for a welcome dinner.



**Red Avadavat by Adam Riley**

**Day 2: Sultanpur National Park & Okhla and Yamuna River.** Sultanpur National Park or Sultanpur Jheel, as it more commonly referred to, was proclaimed as a national park in 1991. It is located to the southwest of New Delhi in the state of Haryana. It offers an excellent introduction to Indian birding with over 300 species having been recorded here. We intend to spend the morning here, taking in Acacia woodland, the jheel itself, cultivated fields, pastures and semi-

desert areas using the trail that circumnavigates the lake.

The water level of the jheel does vary from season to season and is largely dependent on the rainfall from the previous summer monsoon. We will scan the wetland and its fringes for species such as striking Painted and Black-necked Storks, Little and Indian Cormorants, Indian Pond Heron, Bar-headed Goose, Indian Spot-billed Duck, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Red-crested and Common Pochards, Ferruginous Duck, Grey-headed Swamphen, Red-naped Ibis and White-tailed Lapwing.



**A family of water-loving Nilgai by Adam Riley**

Exploring the woodland and scrubby areas may produce White-throated Kingfisher, Indian Robin, Red-vented Bulbul, Spotted Owlet, Ashy Prinia, Black Drongo, Black Redstart, Large Grey and Jungle Babblers, Black-rumped Flameback, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Eurasian Hoopoe, Hume's Leaf Warbler and Purple Sunbird. With some luck we may find the scarce Sind Sparrow, Black-breasted Weaver, Red Avadavat, Eastern Orphean Warbler, Bluethroat and even Orange-headed Thrush. Raptors that we will be on the lookout for include Indian Spotted and Eastern Imperial Eagles, Western Marsh Harrier and Western Osprey. We should also get excellent views of Nilgai (Blue Bull), while possibilities exist for Golden Jackal, Indian Fox and Jungle Cat.

After lunch, we will make our way to the inner-city surroundings of Okhla Island and the Yamuna River. Here we will spend the afternoon searching for a small number of resident species that cannot be found elsewhere on the tour such as Striated Babbler and Yellow-bellied Prinia. We also have further chances to see many of the species we searched for earlier in the day at Sultanpur such as Bluethroat, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Red Avadavat, small flocks of Indian Silverbill and Scaly-breasted Munia.



**Wintering Bluethroat by Clayton Burne**

**Day 3: New Delhi to Sattal via Kathgodam.** Early this morning we will head to New Delhi train station for a 5 hour journey to Kathgodam (timber depot), in the Kumaon Himalaya foothills. From the train station, we will ascend to the hill town of Sattal (7 lakes). This popular tourist area is set in well-wooded hillsides surrounding seven lakes, which provide fantastic mid-altitude birding at around 1,500masl (4,500ft).

In the afternoon, we will set out for a rewarding birding walk along the

road to the main lake. The road continues through fields, scrub and then taller woodland which supports Mountain Hawk-Eagle, Kalij Pheasant, Slaty-headed Parakeet, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Grey Treepie, Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler, Maroon Oriole, Greater Flameback, Slaty-blue Flycatcher, Chestnut-bellied Rock Thrush, White-crested Laughingthrush, Golden Bush Robin, Rufous-breasted and Black-throated Accentors, Blue-fronted and Blue-capped Redstarts, Green-tailed and (Eastern) Crimson Sunbird, White-capped Bunting and Common Rosefinch.



**Red-billed Blue Magpie by Stuart Elsom**

**Day 4: Sattal to Nainital.** We have a full morning to continue our exploration of Sattal, working our way along the main roads and forest trails. Aside from the above-mentioned species, we will be searching for Lesser Yellownape, Siberian Rubythroat, Grey-winged Blackbird, Blue-winged Minla, Black and Ashy Bulbuls, Himalayan Black-lored Tit, Common Green Magpie, Red-billed Leothrix, Speckled Piculet, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, Rufous Sibia, Whistler's Warbler and the cryptic Scaly-breasted Cupwing.

After another excellent mornings birding, we will make our way to Nainital – our home for the next three nights. Set at an altitude of over 2,000m (6,550ft), Nainital is chilly at this time of year and serves as the perfect base for exploring the surrounding pine-clad slopes, scrubby gullies and bird-rich terraced fields of the Himalayan foothills.



**Grey-winged Blackbird by Clayton Burne**

**Days 5 & 6: Nainital.** We have two full days to explore the avian riches of this picturesque high-altitude region. On one of the days, we will explore the high-lying grasslands, where a hefty dose of luck might have us watching Cheer and Koklass Pheasants. Other birds in this area may include Himalayan and Griffon Vultures, Himalayan Buzzard, swirling flocks of Altai and Rufous-breasted Accentors, Yellow-browed Tit, Eurasian Crag Martin, Striated Prinia, Himalayan Bluetail, Streaked Laughingthrush and Plain Mountain Finch. Our focus on the

grasslands is likely to reveal Himalayan Goral, a remarkably sure-footed mountain goat.

Later on we will search the open coniferous and native broad-leaved forest where we may find Oriental Turtle Dove, Nepal House Martin, small flocks of Black-chinned Babbler, White-throated, Chestnut-crowned, White-crested and Striated Laughingthrushes, the beautiful Rufous Sibia, Eurasian Jay, Rufous-gorgeted Flycatcher, flighty Yellow-bellied Fantail, ubiquitous Grey Bush Chat, Green-backed Tit, Indian White-eye, Russet Sparrow and loose flocks of Yellow-breasted Greenfinch.



**Himalayan Black-lored Tit by Stuart Elsom**

The forested ridges and scrub-filled gorges could produce Great and Blue-throated Barbets, Speckled Piculet, a host of woodpeckers, including Scaly-bellied, Himalayan, Rufous-bellied and Brown-fronted, both Mountain and Himalayan Bulbuls, Black-headed Jay, Buff-barred, Ashy-throated and Grey-hooded Warblers, Maroon Oriole, the secretive White-tailed Rubythroat, Himalayan Bluetail, the ubiquitous Blue Whistling Thrush, Black-throated and Tickell's Thrushes, Coal (Spot-winged) and Himalayan Black-lored Tits, Black-throated Bushtit, both Chestnut-bellied and White-tailed Nuthatches, Bar-tailed Treecreeper, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, the stunning Scarlet Finch and often-elusive Pink-browed Rosefinch. The oak forests are also home to some new mammals, including Nepal Grey Langur and the voracious Yellow-throated Marten.

Raptors are commonly seen soaring along the steep ridges and we will watch for Bearded and the huge Cinereous Vultures. A number of more elusive and uncommon birds may also be found in the vicinity of Nainital and these include Himalayan and Green Shrike-babblers, Plain-backed and Chestnut Thrushes, Grey-winged Blackbird and even Red-fronted Serin.



**Golden Bush Robin by Daniel Danckwerts**

**Day 7: Nainital to Kosi River.** We depart Nainital early this morning and descend the Kumaon foothills to the Kosi River. Clear mountain streams in this area support a selection of torrent specialists, notably the striking Crested Kingfisher, Plumbeous Water and stunning White-capped Redstarts, Grey Wagtail and active Brown Dipper. Rock-lined river banks support small wintering populations of two highly desirable, but rare birds, the



**Wallcreeper by Clayton Burne**

incredible Ibisbill and glamorous Wallcreeper; the former would be a lucky find while the latter is more regular.

The forests in this area are excellent for birding and may yield Great Hornbill, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Common Green Magpie, Black-chinned Babbler and Great Slaty Woodpecker. Along the streams, we could find Spotted and Little Forktails, while the thickets and gullies hold Chestnut-headed Tesia and both Scaly-breasted and Nepal Cupwings, although we will have to have patience and a little luck to see these shy understory species.

We will then enjoy birding the scenic foothill forest along the Corbett National Park borders, strolling a series of wooded back roads and forested trails in search of some delightful species, including Lineated and Brown-headed Barbets, Grey-capped Pygmy, Streak-throated, Grey-headed and Fulvous-breasted Woodpeckers, Golden-fronted Leafbird, outrageous Rufous Treepie, flocks of Red-breasted Parakeet, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike – often associating with mixed flocks containing a host of bulbuls, such as Black-crested, Ashy and Red-whiskered, both Yellow-eyed and Tawny-bellied Babblers, the very attractive White-crested Laughingthrush, Slaty-blue and Snowy-browed Flycatchers, the stunning Rufous-bellied Niltava, Long-tailed Minivet often perched high in the treetops, White-throated Fantail, Lemon-rumped, Buff-barred and Whistler's Warblers, and the charismatic Velvet-fronted Nuthatch. With a dash of luck, we may even find the scarce Long-billed Thrush, an impressive and aptly named winter visitor from higher altitudes.



**Ibisbill by Adam Riley**

**Day 8: Kosi River to Jim Corbett National Park.** On our second day in this area, we will make an early morning departure for Jim Corbett National Park. Here we will search the Ramganga River for Black, Woolly-necked and the handsome Black-necked Storks, Pallas's

and Lesser Fish Eagles, Himalayan Swiftlet, White-rumped Spinetail and Crested Treeswift. We will a good chance of spying Gharial and Mugger from the various lookout points over the river.



**Collared Falconet by Clayton Burne**

Further along, our drive through the park may yield the minuscule Collared Falconet, Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Cinereous and Himalayan Vultures, Black-crested Bulbul, Common Woodshrike, Maroon Oriole, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, Coppersmith and Lineated Barbets, Scarlet Minivet, Crimson Sunbird and Red Junglefowl. Common Emerald Dove often fly off the road, and, with luck, we will hopefully see roosting Tawny and Brown Fish Owls, which our local guides will attempt to locate.

**Day 9: Jim Corbett National Park.** Today we will have a full day around Dhikala, one of the best birding sites within Jim Corbett National Park. There are a number of key habitats to explore here and we should end up with an excellent selection of great birds and game by the end of the day. The forest edge and extensive grasslands provide excellent habitat for the shy Black Francolin, while the wetland floodplain below our accommodation teems with a wealth of water-associated birdlife such as Western Osprey, Hen Harrier, Green and Wood Sandpipers, Lesser Coucal, noisy flocks of Plum-headed and Slaty-headed Parakeets, Crested Kingfisher, Grey-throated Martin, Barn and Red-rumped Swallows, Long-tailed and Grey-backed Shrikes, Golden-headed Cisticola and Common Rosefinch.



**Black Francolin by Daniel Keith Danckwerts**

Jim Corbett will also offer us a chance to see several distinctive and well-known Indian mammals such as Rhesus Macaque, the elegant Tarai Grey Langur, Golden Jackal, Jungle Cat, small families of Asian Elephant, Wild Boar, Chital (Spotted Deer) and the endangered Hog Deer, Sambar (the largest Indian deer), and Northern Red Muntjac (also called Common

Barking Deer). Tiger is also present in the park, but they are elusive here and are only occasionally seen.



**Himalayan Rubythroat by Stuart Elsom**

**Day 10: Jim Corbett National Park to New Delhi.** This morning we will continue birding and game viewing in the park searching for species we might have overlooked, or would like better views of. We may well find Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Blue-throated Barbet, White-bellied Drongo and Jungle Myna around our lodge, Kalij Pheasant, Ashy Bulbul, Black-throated Thrush, Himalayan Rubythroat and Aberrant Bush Warblers at the forest edge, whilst the grasslands may turn up Yellow-eyed Babblers and Yellow-breasted Greenfinch. We will then make our way down the Kosi River valley to Ramnagar. The Kosi Barrage often has hundreds of Ruddy Shelduck, a smattering of Gadwall and Common Pochard as well as Streak-throated Swallows overhead. We will then continue onwards to Kathgodam, where we will take an afternoon train back to New Delhi for the night.

**Day 11: New Delhi to Ranthambhore National Park.** With our time in the Himalayas over, it is now time to switch our attention to the deciduous forests, woodlands and lakes of the central plateau. A morning train ride will take us to the famous Ranthambhore National Park.

The tropical dry deciduous and thorn forest covers an area of more than 1,300km$^2$ (500m$^2$); needless to say, there is plenty of area to roam! Dominated by the 10$^{th}$ century Ranthambhore Fort which sits atop a plateau 700ft above the plains, this scenic reserve contains high concentrations of herbivores such as Chital (Spotted Deer), Sambar and Wild Boar, and it is this abundance of prey species that supports one of the healthiest populations of Tiger anywhere on Earth. Locating these magnificent cats requires a combination of skill and patience – and, of course, a small dose of luck!



**Displaying Indian Peafowl by Marius Coetzee**

We will use open-top jeeps and canter vans to explore the park in search of Tigers, watching for tell-tale signs such as pugmarks or scat in the road and listening for the alarm calls of Sambar, Chital, Southern Plains Grey Langurs and Indian Peafowl.

With luck, these will lead us to a Tiger padding along a dusty track or sprawled out in the dappled sunlight of a bamboo thicket. Looking into the amber eyes of this, the largest of all the big cats, undoubtedly ranks as one of the world's ultimate wildlife experiences! In addition to Tigers and their favourite prey species, during our safari drives, we may also come across Ruddy Mongoose or even Jungle Cat, Leopard and Sloth Bear.



**Plum-headed Parakeets by Adam Riley**

**Days 12 & 13: Ranthambhore National Park.** We have the next two full days to explore this fantastic reserve and the surrounding area. Although our main reason for visiting Ranthambhore is to search for Tigers, the rich woods and meadows of this scenically stunning park also offer excellent birding and the valley floors support good numbers of Painted Spurfowl, Jungle and Rock Bush Quail, the uncommon White-naped Woodpecker, Indian Scops Owl, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Alexandrine and Plum-headed Parakeets, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Sirkeer Malkoha, Common Iora, White-bellied Drongo, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher (which can often be located by its sweet song given from dense bamboo patches), the active White-browed Fantail, Grey-breasted and Rufous-fronted Prinias and Yellow-throated Sparrow.

While in the area, we will also keep our eyes peeled for Indian Vulture, Pallid Harrier, Shikra, Bonelli's Eagle and Crested Serpent Eagle. If time permits, on one of the days we may visit Soorwal Lake to look for a host of water associated birds that could include Dalmatian and Great White Pelicans, Spotted Redshank, Temminck's Stint, Common Ringed Plover, Indian Courser, Indian Stone-curlew, Green Bee-eater, Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark, Indian Bush Lark, Moustached Warbler, Ashy and Yellow-bellied Prinias, Rosy Starling and the ever-popular Greater Painted-snipe.



**Rufous Treepie by Adam Riley**

We will also take the opportunity to bird around our lodge, which regularly produces the endemic Painted Sandgrouse, Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Indian Roller, Indian Stone-curlew, Brahminy Starling, Common Woodshrike and Ashy-crowned sparrow-Lark, whilst a good degree of luck is required to find Marshall's Iora.

**Day 14: Ranthambhore to Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur).** We have one more game drive this morning to search for any species we may be missing. Depending on our schedule, we expect to

depart Ranthambhore after brunch and make our way to Bharatpur, taking a short 2 hour train ride to the north east. We will base ourselves a few minutes from the entrance to the incredible Keoladeo National Park. Usually known simply as 'Bharatpur', the extensive series of shallow ponds were artificially created as a duck-shooting preserve by a former Maharaja of Bharatpur, but is now a wetland sanctuary attracting thousands of wintering waterfowl, waders, cranes and raptors.



**Painted Spurfowl by Adam Riley**

**Day 15: Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur).** We have a full day today to explore the riches of this amazing reserve on foot, following the network of raised dykes that criss-cross the labyrinth of ponds. Scanning through the waterbirds is usually our first priority and we will likely be overwhelmed by the staggering numbers of species. Possibilities include the beautiful Bar-headed Goose, whose migration sees them travelling from northern China over the high Himalayan mountain ranges to winter here on the plains. Other species may include Garganey, Northern Pintail, Lesser Whistling, Indian Spot-billed and Ferruginous Ducks, Red-crested Pochard, Cotton Pygmy Goose, Common and Pied Kingfishers, Little and Indian Cormorants, Oriental Darter, Grey and Purple Herons, Great, Yellow-billed and Little Egrets, Black-crowned Night Heron, Painted, Woolly-necked and Black-necked Storks, Asian Openbill, Black-headed Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill, Pheasant-tailed and Bronze-winged Jacanas, White-breasted Waterhen, Grey-headed Swamphen, Black Bittern and Black-winged Stilt. Regal and elegant Sarus Cranes are often heard calling before they are seen striding over the flooded grasslands.



**Sarus Cranes by David Hoddinott**

The marshy edges attract a variety of migrant passerines, including the secretive Bluethroat, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Rosy Pipit, Western Yellow, Citrine and White-browed Wagtails, whilst Wire-tailed Swallows hawk insects overhead. Raptors are especially well represented at Bharatpur, with concentrations of large migrant eagles such as Eastern Imperial, Greater Spotted, Steppe and Indian Spotted being of special interest. Other raptors we may find include Western Marsh Harrier and Laggar Falcon.

Extensive areas of arid *Acacia* dominated woodland and dry grasslands surround the ponds and we will be sure to explore this habitat for Black-rumped



**Fatehpur Sikri by Adam Riley**

Flameback, Yellow-crowned Woodpecker, Indian Grey Hornbill, Greater Coucal, Brahminy Starling, the very uncommon and localised Marshall's Iora, White-eared Bulbul, Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher, Zitting Cisticola, Purple Sunbird, Baya Weaver and small flocks of Indian Silverbill. These Indian residents share their habitat during the winter months with a wide range of migrants from northern Asia, notably Red-breasted Flycatcher, the scarce Brooks's Leaf Warbler, skulking Siberian Rubythroat, Olive-backed Pipit and Isabelline Wheatear. We will also search for the nocturnal residents at their day roosts, including Dusky Eagle-Owl, Spotted Owlet and Large-tailed Nightjar, while a visit to the plant nursery may produce a wintering Orange-headed, Scaly or even Tickell's Thrush. Mammals we should see include groups of the huge Nilgai (Blue Bull), largest of all, Asian antelope, as well as Golden Jackal, Sambar and the attractive Five Striped Palm Squirrel. Reptiles such as the huge Flap-shelled Turtle are often seen sunbathing on dry land, Water Monitors patrol for prey items and Checkered Keelbacks are often seen sunbathing just above the water. If we are very lucky, we may even come across an Indian Rock Python sunning itself.

**Day 16: Bharatpur to Chambal River via Fatehpur Sikri.** This morning, we depart early on the journey to the Chambal River. Our first stop of the day will be at the ancient city of Fatehpur Sikri. This amazingly well preserved historical -city was constructed by Mughal emperor Akbar in 1570 and served as the empire's capital from 1571 until 1585. Though it took 15 years to build, it was abandoned after only 14 years because the water supply was unable to sustain the growing population. Today numerous notable imperial buildings and a fabulous mosque still stand, and a visit to Fatehpur Sikri is a truly memorable experience.



**Indian Courser by Clayton Burne**



**Indian Skimmer by Adam Riley**

Thereafter, we head for our lodge in the region of the Chambal River where we will take lunch before proceeding on a boat trip. Despite the presence of this majestic river, the area is surprisingly dry. We will focus our attentions on the river itself, searching for a number of river specialists. The endangered Indian Skimmer, one of our main reasons for visiting this reliable site, can often be found on islands in the river together with Black-bellied and River Terns. During our boat trip, we will do a lot of scanning and this could turn up other exciting species in the form of Ruddy Shelduck, Black Stork, Red-naped Ibis, Small Pratincole, Long-legged Buzzard, Laggar Falcon, Short-toed Snake Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, River Lapwing, Pallas's Gull, Great Stone-curlew, Sand Lark, Desert Wheatear, and possibly even Indian Eagle-Owl roosting on the small cliff faces.

We will also be keeping a sharp eye out for one of the rarer inhabitants of this river, the unique Ganges River Dolphin that is confined largely to the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and their tributaries. Another rare species we should encounter is the bizarre, long-snouted Gharial – one of the most localised and critically endangered crocodilians on the planet, together with Mugger Crocodile and Flap-shelled Turtle.

We may have some time to search the woodlands around our lodge grounds, which often hold wintering migrants such as Verditer Flycatcher and Booted and Sykes's Warblers, as well as Indian Flying Fox. At night we will take a short walk to look for Brown Hawk-Owl and even Common Palm Civet, which is often found in the trees around the lodge grounds.



**Sykes's Lark by Clayton Burne**

**Day 17: Chambal to New Delhi via Agra (Taj Mahal).** After breakfast, we shall head slightly west of the Dholpur and spend an hour or two birding grassy plains, interspersed with scrubby brush. This relatively newly discovered birding site has some very interesting species such as the



**Taj Mahal by Daniel Keith Danckwerts**

endemic Sykes's Lark, as well as healthy populations of the normally scarce Indian Courser. Whilst walking and scanning the plains, we should find Yellow-wattled Lapwing, Egyptian Vulture, Desert, Isabelline and Variable Wheatears, Isabelline Shrike and Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark.

After a short, but exciting morning, we will head to Agra for the cultural highlight of the trip, the simply magnificent Taj Mahal, literally meaning "Crown of Palaces". It is also a World Heritage Site and is famous for the elegance of its design, its extraordinary translucent white marble dome, its mathematical symmetry and the immense numbers of intricately carved and inlaid semi-precious stones that adorn its walls. Begun in 1632, tens of thousands of architects and labourers, and over a thousand elephants, toiled for more than 20 years to complete this breath-taking edifice, which was commissioned by the grief-stricken Shah Jahan after his third wife died during the birth of their 14$^{th}$ child. This is without a doubt one of India's most iconic and impressive sites and should not be missed!

In Agra, we will also visit the fabled Agra Red Fort, located in the centre of the city and serving as a monumental reminder of the fascinating history of the region. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is more accurately a 94-acre walled city and was constructed in the 16$^{th}$ century. Exploring this architecturally spectacular complex is fascinating and from here we will also enjoy further views of the shimmering marble Taj Mahal. In fact, Shah Jahan spent his final years here at the Agra Fort as a captive of his son Aurangzeb who deposed him. Shah Jahan apparently died here whilst imprisoned in a tower with a view of the Taj Mahal.

Whilst marvelling at these impressive historical sites, we will no doubt also keep an eye out for birds, and species that we may encounter include Brown Rock Chat and Dusky Crag Martin which call these buildings home, families of Spotted Owlets in the gardens, raptors (Egyptian Vultures are frequently seen around the Taj Mahal), and waterbirds on the holy Yamuna River, including the elegant River Lapwing. We end the day with a final drive to New Delhi where the tour will conclude.

**FINANCIAL ARANGEMENTS:**

**Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES below.**

This includes:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to dinner on day 17;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings during the tour (including day room in New Delhi on day 17);
- All ground transportation (including train journeys);
- Boat excursion on the Chambal River;
- All national park and other reserve entrance fees; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services).

This excludes:

- **ANY** flights;
- Visa fees;
- Any drinks;
- Special gratuities; and
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.
- Camera fees.

**Single Supplement:** The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.**

**b) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.**

**c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**

**d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader/s at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

**Tipping:** As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If, therefore, you feel that he/they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them.

**Please note:**

- Roads outside of Indian cities are poorly maintained, causing vehicles to travel very slowly. In order to make best use of our time in India, we use several train journeys to cut travel times and increase both comfort and safety. **We no longer make use of any overnight trains.**
- Our local agents, tour leaders and porters ensure that all your luggage is stowed aboard at embarkation, as well as taken off and transferred to our vehicles at disembarkation. The train rides

are generally smooth, and relatively quite, allowing you to process photos, update social media or simply to rest.
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20 kg (44 lb) for check in luggage and 8 kg (+-18 lb) for hand luggage.
- This tour does not require a high level of fitness, but participants should be in good general health and reasonably fit as some of the birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time. Guests will be notified when longer walks may be undertaken.
- It is not permissible to leave the open safari vehicles within Corbett and Ranthambhore National Parks, except at designated sites.
- If you have any physical or medical limitations or conditions, please notify us in advance of departure. Please note that for much of this tour we will be far away from modern medical facilities.
- Accommodation throughout the trip is of a good standard, and the hotels and resorts that we make use of range from comfortable to rather luxurious. There is no camping on this trip.
- Overnight temperatures, particularly in the Himalayan foothills, can be quite cool and it is advisable to bring layered clothing for warmth and convenience.
- The open jeep tours can be very cold (especially in the mornings), please bring sufficient warm clothing, including gloves, scarf/buff and a beanie (woolly hat).

**ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:**

This tour **does not** include **ANY** airfares. The tour will begin in New Delhi on day 1, and as this is scheduled as an arrival day; you are free to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude with our evening farewell dinner in New Delhi on day 17.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

**FLIGHTS:**

Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi (IATA: DEL) is the main port of entry for international flights into India for this tour and is well serviced by many of the world's major airlines. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**