Hungary

Bird Photo Tour

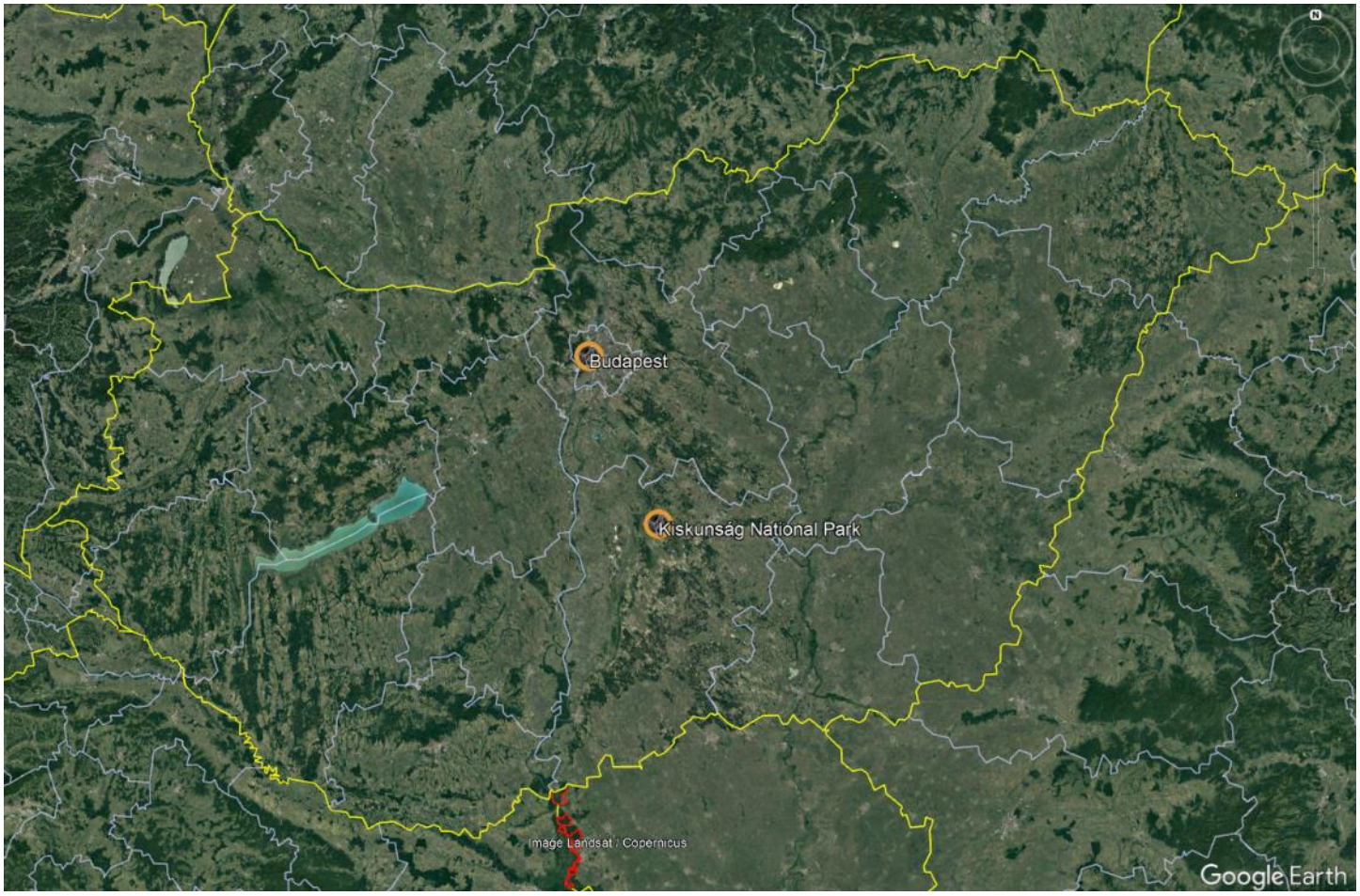


Common Kingfisher by David White

This short photo holiday is based in a photography centre surrounded by professionally placed photo blinds. We'll make use of up to 17 different blinds situated in diverse habitats, including wetlands, forests, steppe environments, and tree canopies. Unlike many photo tours, here you'll be able to work with your subject over time, capturing shots in different situations, making it incredibly productive. This setup is ideal for honing your skills, experimenting with settings and gear, and developing your compositional style. Most birds will be within 2 - 10 meters from the blinds and hides.

The blinds are just a short drive from our lodge, with a typical day involving a morning session with optimal lighting, followed by an afternoon session. During the middle of the day, you can rest, edit photos, or photograph birds, dragonflies, or terrapins in the lodge gardens. We may also take a small motorboat to photograph herons in oxbow lakes or a European Beaver family. Alternatively, go on a safari-style drive to capture Red Fox, Roe Deer, and Brown Hare. Towards the end of the tour, we'll spend time birding and photographing in the northern part of the park, where we'll visit vast fish farms, steppes, and marshes, encountering many more species.

Itinerary & Map



Hungary Bird Photo Tour

Day 1	**Arrival in Budapest, transfer to Tiszaalpár, Kiskunság**
Days 2 to 6	**Kiskunság National Park – photography hides & blinds**
Days 7 & 8	**Kiskunság National Park – northern sector birding & photography**
Day 9	**Kiskunság National Park to Budapest area**
Day 10	**Final departure**

Highlights

- ***Exceptional photographic opportunities for up to 50 European species.***
- ***Large diversity of photographic platforms and blinds, including towers, floating wetland blinds, subterranean hides and small boats.***

Sites in detail

Kiskunság National Park. Our photo tour of Hungary commences in summer, after long-distance African migrants such as colony-nesting Red-footed Falcons, Common Kestrels, European Bee-eaters and European Rollers have returned to their breeding grounds. European Hoopoes are likely to be raising their second brood of the season, whilst various wetlands host a variety of migrating and local breeding waders, egrets, herons, grebes, ducks, and other waterfowl. Drinking pools, attracting large numbers of both migrant and resident birds, become particularly active during the warm summer days. European Bee-eaters will be at their colonies, with good numbers even using grasslands and roadsides as breeding sites. Summer provides excellent opportunities to photograph foraging egrets, herons, storks, and even early migrant waders.



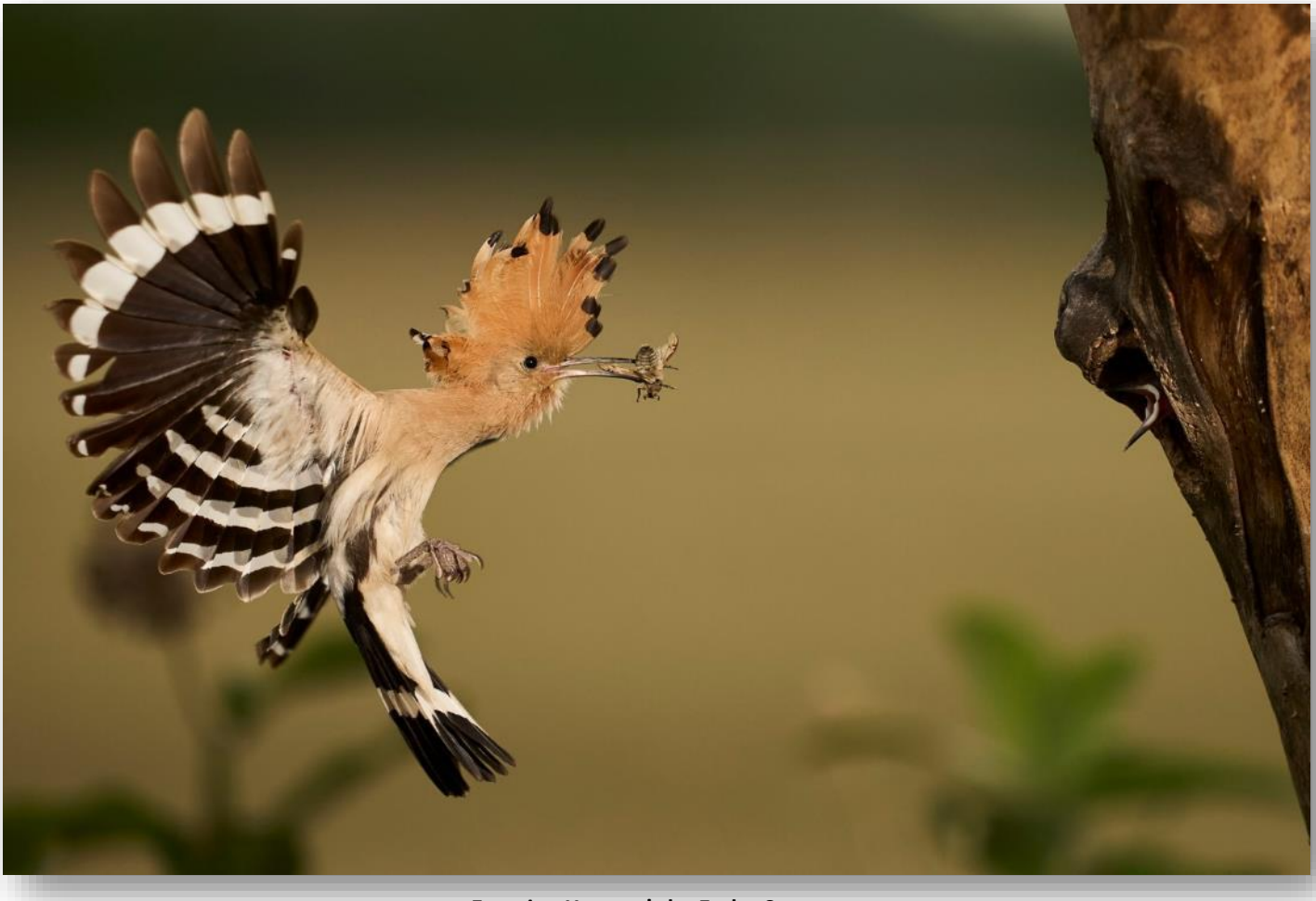
Eurasian Spoonbills by Tibor Horváth

Wetland Hides – There are two main types of blinds set up at a variety of wetland sites. The first is a floating, tunnel-shaped lie-in hide. These camouflage structures are rainproof, have solid flooring, and can comfortably accommodate two people lying down or sitting up. Photographers shoot through camo netting, and we provide mattresses and beanbags or ground pods on site. There are typically six to nine of these hides, depending on the season and available locations, and they are used for half-day sessions. Due to the varying distance to the birds, we recommend long lenses, and rubber boots are usually needed to access the hides. The floating design allows easy adjustments to the shooting direction and distance, letting photographers optimize backgrounds and lighting.

The second type is a unique triple-seated hide that floats and is submerged in a natural lakeside location. This spot is surrounded by a diverse wetland environment including open water (both deep and shallow), swamps, reedbeds, and more, which attracts a rich variety of wildlife. Accessing this hide involves a 250m walk and a

short boat ride. Photographers can expect to see a wide array of birds such as egrets, herons (7-8 species), geese, ducks, grebes, gulls, terns, cormorants, white-tailed eagles, marsh harriers, and more. Occasionally, even Eurasian Beavers and Eurasian Otters can be spotted. Long lenses are recommended here as well.

Tower Hides – There are two elevated hides. The smaller hide is +-4.5 meters tall, accommodating two photographers at a time, while the larger one is approximately 6 meters tall with space for three people. Both hides are equipped with one-way glass windows facing west, north, and east, allowing for use throughout the day and in various lighting conditions. Sturdy ladders provide safe access to the hides.



Eurasian Hoopoe's by Endre Strausz

These towers are situated amidst an artificial nestbox colony specifically designed for Red-footed Falcons, Common Kestrels, European Rollers, and Western Jackdaws. The distance to the nestboxes ranges from 6 to 10 meters. We typically spend half-day sessions in both the morning and afternoon. In most years, Eurasian Hoopoes, Little Owls, and Lesser Grey Shrikes also breed near the hides, and we often have close encounters with European Turtle Doves, Common Starlings, Eurasian Golden Orioles, European Green Woodpeckers, Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, and other species. The elevated hides also provide excellent views of the surrounding fields, where Red Foxes and Western Roe Deer can occasionally be seen.

Other hides – Several species such as European Roller, Eurasian Hoopoe, and Little Owl, frequently utilize the low-mounted nest boxes that have been installed in appropriate environments. When photographing these species and other ground-nesting birds like the European Bee-eater or Sand Martin, we use temporary hides throughout their breeding season. For photographing woodpecker nests, we typically rely on pop-up hides.

Several subterranean hides, each equipped with 4 - 5-meter reflecting pools, are strategically placed in diverse environments (mixed gallery forest, puszta grassland, and planted acacia forest). These hides, suitable for 2 - 3 photographers, offer options for photography through one-way glass or with camouflage netting. From a ground-level sitting position, photographers can capture a wide array of species, depending on the season and temperature. The reflecting pools attract birds, both with food and as a water source for drinking and bathing, making them particularly active during the breeding season.



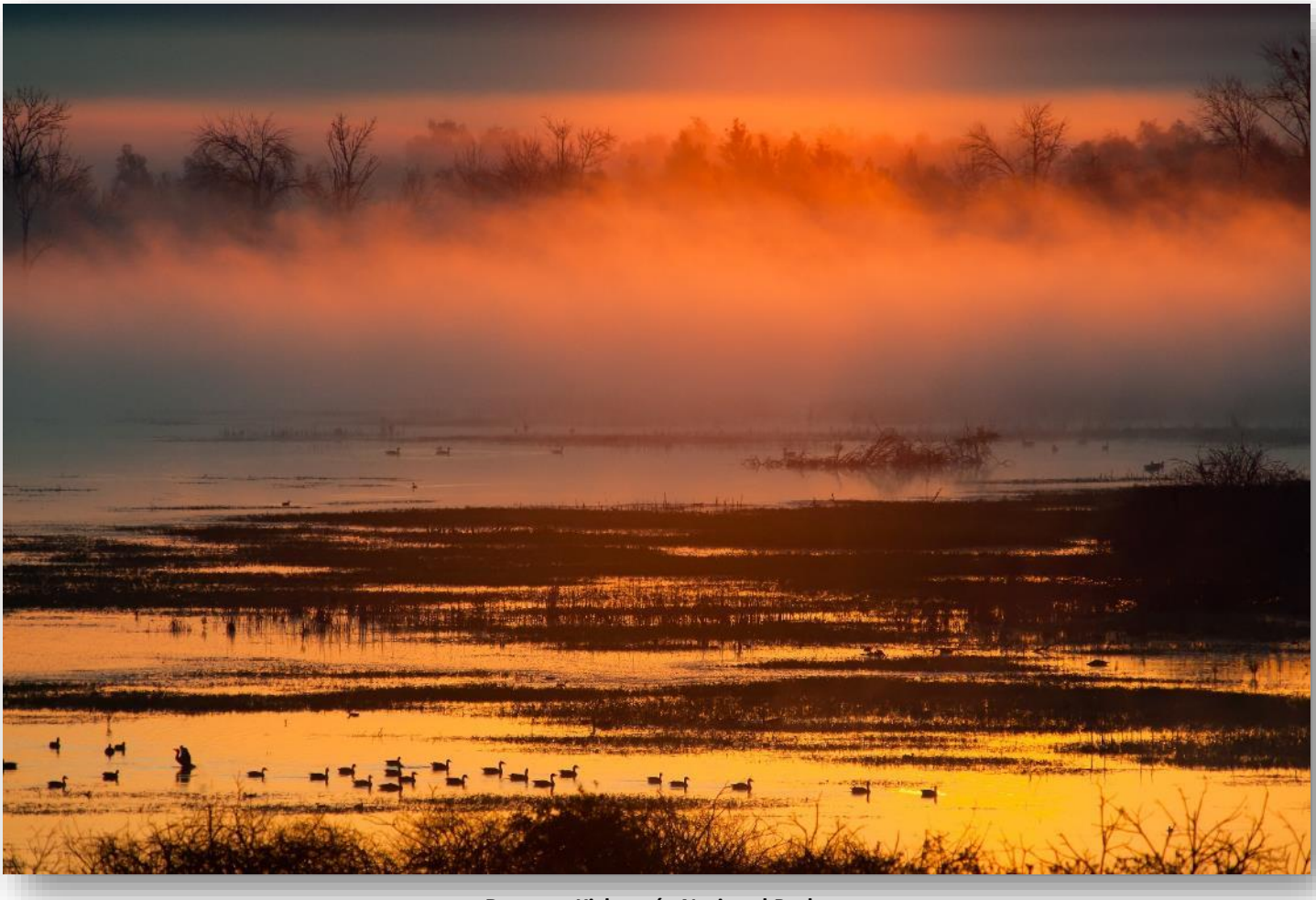
Red-footed Flacon by Gorazd Golob

Boat Photography - In the summer months, we may have the opportunity for a leisurely boat trip on two nearby oxbow lakes, using a quiet electric-powered boat with comfortable floor cushions for low-angle photography. You can easily approach and capture stunning photos of various bird species perched on dead trees against beautiful backdrops, including Black-crowned Night Heron, Squacco Heron, Grey Heron, Little Bittern, Purple Heron, Mute Swan, Pygmy Cormorant, Common Kingfisher, and Whiskered Tern. European Pond Terrapins are often seen basking in the sun, and occasionally, Eurasian Beavers may make an appearance.

Norther sector – We'll spend several days in the northern sector of the national park. Here, huge fishfarms, steppes and marshes will be visited, searching for several key species, such as Saker Falcon, Eastern Imperial Eagle and the magnificent Great Bustard. We'll also have good chances to find flocks of the elegant Bearded Reedling, Eurasian Penduline Tit perhaps on its uniquely built nest, Savi's, Sedge, and Moustached Warblers, Bluethroat, Black Stork and several own including Tawny, Little and Western Barn Owls.

Tour Grading & Key

Photography	☐ ☐ ■	Excellent. Professionally built, well located hides & blinds.
Overall Ease	☐ ☐ ■	Comfortable. Almost all activities are optional.
Accommodation	☐ ☐ ■	Comfortable with en suite facilities.
Walking / Trails	☐ ☐ ■	Mostly short walks on flat ground. Patches of marsh & wetland that may require a little wading.
Vehicles / Roads	☐ ☐ ■	Short drives each day to reach the photographic blinds.
Birding Ease	☐ ☐ ■	Birding is undemanding. Primary focus is photography.
Annoyances	☐ ☐ ■	Mosquitoes may be present, but their presence & density are dependent on wetland conditions.



Dawn at Kiskunság National Park

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 10.
- Bottled drinking water.
- All lodgings.
- Two transfers to the blinds per day (AM & PM).
- All reserve entrance fees.
- All guiding services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees.
- ANY flights.
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels).
- Optional excursions.
- No tips or gratuities.
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

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.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities are NOT included on this tour. If you feel that your leader/s have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is 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. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

- Rubber boots may be useful. To save space in your luggage, boots are available to purchase in Hungary, or used boots can be provided if you require them.
- Do ensure that you bring your own tripods. Bean bags can be provided on site.
- As most photography takes place on, or near to a floodplain, mosquitoes can be present. Repellent is advisable.

Bird Photo Tours

- Our Bird Photo Tours are a hybrid between our Classic birding tours and dedicated photographic tours. You don't have to be a professional photographer or have the biggest lens; this is for everyone with an interest in photography and birding. Whether you're using a bridge camera or the latest body and prime lens, our aims are the same.

- These tours are not aimed at seeing the most species possible on the route, rather taking time to photograph key targets and any other interesting species we may find. Naturally, the overall species list will be lower than a comparable birding focused tour.
- Unlike our normal Bird Photo tours, this tour does make extensive use of blinds, feeders and hide setups and we'll be spending many hours every day at the blinds and hides.
- These tours is suitable for photographers who prefer both extensive blinds time and opportunistic photography.
- Our leaders will assist in helping everyone secure good photographic opportunities and advise as much as they can on camera setup. However, they are not professional photographic tour leaders.

Arrival and Departure Details

The tour departs Budapest airport on Day 1 with a group transfer to the village of Tiszaalpár. The tour will conclude mid-morning of Day 10 at Budapest airport.

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.

Budapest Ferenc Liszt International Airport, Budapest (IATA: BUD) is the main port of entry and departure for international flights for this tour.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.