Senegal

Birding the Sahel



Golden Nightjar by David Hoddinott

The small West African nation of Senegal is a popular birding holiday destination, for many reasons. One of these is the ability to escape the cold Northern winters to a summer wonderland only a few hour's flight away, though add in easily accessible, and superb West African birding habitats and many sought after birds and it's easy to understand why so many birders flock to this nation on an annual basis.

Rockjumper is, therefore, pleased to be offering a superb tour to this great birding destination, and our very comprehensive tour encompasses the avian highlights of this remarkable region, targeting an array of very special and sought-after species. For anyone seeking a relaxed and enjoyable introduction to African birds and birding and excellent photographic opportunities, this tour comes highly recommended!

Itinerary & Map

Day 1	**Arrival in Dakar**
Day 2	**Dakar to Richard Toll**
Day 3	**Richard Toll area**
Day 4	**Richard Toll to Podor**
Day 5	**Podor to Djoudj National Park**
Day 6	**Djoudj National Park**
Day 7	**Djoudj National Park to Kaolack**
Day 8	**Kaolack to Wassadou**
Day 9	**Wassadou to Kedougou**
Day 10	**Day trip to Dindinvelo**
Day 11	**Kedougou to Wassadou**
Day 12	**Wassadou to Kaolack via Saloum Delta**
Day 13	**Kaolack to Dakar & final departure**



Birding sites in detail



Sennar Penduline Tit by David Hoddinott

Dakar to Richard Toll. We depart the capital city of Senegal heading north towards Richard Toll. After departing the bustling capital, our birding experience kicks into full gear as we enter the Sahel (the semi-arid area along the southern edge of the great Sahara Desert). We will stop as and when we see birds while travelling to Richard Toll. Likely species in this harshly dry habitat include Blue-naped Mousebird, Mosque Swallow, Chestnut-bellied Starling and Sudan Golden Sparrow, the males of which are rather eye-searing. We will also keep our eyes on the skies for mixed flocks of vultures; whilst the ubiquitous Hooded Vulture will be seen regularly around villages. It is the carcases of dead cattle, however, that attract the more interesting species such as White-backed, Rüppell's, Lappet-faced and hopefully even one or two Griffon Vultures that spend the winter in this area.

This region also holds the localised Savile's Bustard and we will make a determined effort to see this rarely sighted species. We may also encounter some interesting migrants including Western Orphean and Sub-alpine Warbler and Beaudouin's Snake-Eagle. If we are very fortunate we may even chance upon a Quail-plover, though we would be extremely lucky to connect with this enigmatic species.

Richard Toll. The area is very dry, Acacia scrub predominates and it holds a few sought after Sahel species. In the cool of the morning, before the temperature rises we'll search for such gems as Little Grey Woodpecker, the delightful Cricket (or Scaly-fronted) Warbler, diminutive Sennar Penduline Tit and Western Red-billed Hornbill all of which occur in the area. If we are exceptionally fortunate, we may even find the little known Kordofan Lark which has been seen here.



Arabian Bustard by Clayton Burne

Although these birds are our main targets, we will also come across plenty of other interesting species including Cream-colored Courser, Eurasian Stone-curlew, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, African Collared and Namaqua Doves, Eurasian Hoopoe, Eurasian Wryneck, Black-crowned and Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Larks, Singing Bush Lark, Yellow-bellied and Senegal Eremomela, Southern Grey Shrike, Black Scrub Robin, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Pygmy Sunbird and Speckle-fronted Weaver. The region is a major wintering area for Palearctic migrants and we should come across Black Kite (though we'll need to look carefully at hundreds of Yellow-billed Kites to find one!), Tree Pipit, Common Redstart, Northern (including the seebohmii race that breeds in north-west Africa) and



Black Crowned Crane by Clayton Burne

Black-eared Wheatears, Western Olivaceous, Western Bonelli's, Western Orphean and Subalpine Warblers, both Common and Iberian Chiffchaffs as well as Woodchat Shrike.

Podor area. In the evening we will do a night drive to search for the stunning Golden Nightjar.

Djoudj National Park. This mighty wetland is located on the border with Maurtiania and is of significant international importance due to the hundreds of thousands of waterbirds that make it their winter home. We will come across flocks of wildfowl including colossal numbers of White-faced Whistling Duck and Northern Pintail, with lesser numbers of Spur-winged and Egyptian Geese, Fulvous Whistling Duck, Garganey and Northern Shoveler.

We can expect to see Greater Flamingo, hundreds of Great White Pelicans, White-breasted Cormorant, African Darter, Little Bittern, Purple and Squacco Herons, Glossy and African Sacred Ibis, Eurasian and African Spoonbills, Black, White and Yellow-billed Storks, Knob-billed Duck, African Fish Eagle, African Swamphen, Black Crowned Crane, African Jacana, Greater Painted-snipe and Collared Pratincole, while amongst the throngs of waders we will search for Little Ringed, Common Ringed and Kittlitz's Plovers, Wood, Marsh and Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stint, Dunlin, Ruff and Black-tailed Godwit. We could also come across White-winged and Whiskered Terns, African Stonechat of the moptanus race, Greater Swamp Warbler and Black-headed (Yellow-backed) Weaver.

However, the area is not just about waterbirds and in the surrounding dry country we will look for Montagu's and Western Marsh Harriers, the endangered Arabian Bustard, Sand Martin, Western Yellow and White Wagtails, Tawny Pipit, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, Whinchat, Sedge, rare Aquatic and European Reed Warblers, the recently described River Prinia - one of our main targets during this leg of the tour, Winding Cisticola, (Black-faced) Quailfinch, Orange-breasted (Zebra) Waxbill and thousands of Red-billed Quelea. Long-tailed Nightjars inhabit the area, as does Western Barn Owl, which we may find in our Hotel grounds. A real bonus would be a Short-eared Owl, a very rare visitor to the sub-Sahara that occasionally frequents this park and which we will search for in suitable habitat. We should also encounter Common Warthog and Common Jackal during our time in this very special area.



Scissor-tailed Kite roost by David Hoddinott

Djoudj National Park to Kaolack. While principally a travel day, we will have further chances to look for any species



Cricket Warbler by David Hoddinott

we may have missed earlier or perhaps require better views of as we head towards Kaolack. En route we may see a variety of raptors including the majestic Bateleur and Dark Chanting Goshawk and we will also have further chances for the enigmatic Quail-plover.

Wassadou. We're based close to the Niokolo-Koba National Park, situated on the Gambia River which offers superb birding. Hamerkop, Brown Snake Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle, African Hawk-Eagle, African Fish Eagle, Mourning Collared, Vinaceous and Black-billed Wood Dove, Violet Turaco, Western Plantain-eater, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Red-throated and Northern Carmine Bee-eaters, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird and Vieillot's Barbet.

Wassadou to Kedougou. This drive traverses some superb Guinea savanna which has a good selection of species. Here we will keep a lookout for; White-throated Francolin, Short-toed Snake Eagle, Bronze-winged Courser, Black-headed Lapwing, Standard-winged Nightjar, Mottled Spinetail, Purple, Abyssinian and Blue-bellied Roller, Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Grey Kestrel, African Hobby, Grey-headed and Orange-breasted Bushshrikes, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Blackcap Babbler, Sahel Paradise Whydah, Green Wood Hoopoe, Abyssinian Ground Hornbill, Bearded Barbet, Greater Honeyguide, Senegal Parrot, White-crested Helmetshrike, Yellow-billed Shrike, African Golden Oriole, West African Swallow, Long-tailed Glossy Starling and Yellow-billed Oxpecker.

Around Wassedou we will take a boat trip to search for African Finfoot, Adamawa Turtle Dove, Egyptian Plover, Shining-blue Kingfisher, Palmnut Vulture, Pel's Fishing Owl, White-backed Night Heron and Four-banded Sandgrouse.

Dindinvelo. This mixed woodland area holds a good variety of species and we may see Stone Partridge, Double-spurred Francolin, Western Banded Snake Eagle, Grasshopper Buzzard, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, Bruce's Green Pigeon, Senegal Coucal, Red-necked Falcon, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Rock Martin, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, Piapiac, African Blue Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Yellow-bellied Hyliota, Green-headed and Variable Sunbird, Black-necked Weaver, Lavendar Waxbill and Mali Firefinch.



Egyptian Plover by Nigel Redman

Saloum Delta. Here we will search for the elusive White-crested Tiger Heron. Other

species we may encounter include Goliath and Black Heron, Senegal Thick-knee, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and Mangrove Sunbird.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Tour pace is moderate with several long travel days. Not suitable for anyone with mobility or health challenges.
Birding Ease		Several difficult target species, some species are low density/or difficult.
Accommodation		Simple & comfortable on some nights, otherwise good. All en suite.
Walking / Trails		Mostly short walks on flat ground & roadside birding.
Vehicles / Roads		Numerous long drives. Unsealed roads are variable, sealed roads in reasonable condition. Some patches of very poor road. Traffic can be heavy in large towns or cities.
Photography		Worthwhile to good. No dedicated hides. Limited forest.
Annoyances		Long drives. Weather varies from warm to very hot.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

This tour is made available through our Tailor-made tours department. To explore this offering further for pricing, precise day to day itinerary, inclusions & exclusions, or to tailor the tour to your personal requirements, please contact our Tailor-made team on tailormade@rockjumper.com

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.

- **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.**

- In some areas, it may be very hot, especially in the north of Senegal. We will thus make good use of the early mornings and will have many early starts, to avoid birding in the middle of the day as far as is possible.
- This tour is designed to be a dedicated, fast paced birding experience and we will attempt to obtain good views of as many bird species as possible.
- This tour DOES require a good level of fitness and participants should be in good general health, as much of the birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours (on mostly flat terrain) at a time. Should

you have any physical or medical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure. Please note that for most of this tour we will be far away from modern medical facilities.

- Accommodations are generally of a good standard. The lodge in Wassadou, although fairly simple, is quite comfortable. We will do our utmost to make your stay as comfortable as possible, but at times we may experience maintenance issues that are beyond our control. We will stay either in hotels, guesthouses or park chalets.
- A fair amount of our time is spent in vehicles as we do have to cover some long distances to get to the best birding areas. Some of the roads can be poor, and the going may be slow and potentially frustrating. Traffic in certain urban areas can be very time consuming too. The more luggage you pack, the less room there is in the vehicle, so it is important for your comfort and that of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg for check in luggage and 8kg for hand luggage.

Arrival and Departure Details

The tour departs from Dakar on day 1, as this is an arrival day, you are free to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude in Dakar in the afternoon of day 13.

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.

Dakar International Airport (IATA: DKR) is the main port of entry for international flights into Senegal.

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.