

Gujarat Wildlife Tours

Duration : 12 Nights / 13 Days

Destination Covered : Ahmedabad - Dasada - Rann of Kutch - Mandvi - La La Bustard Sanctuary - Jamnagar - Porbandar - Gir - Palitana - Velavadar - Sayla - Nalsarovar - Ahmedabad

Day 01 : Ahmedabad - Dasada

Arrive Ahmedabad and drive to Dasada. Late-afternoon safari in the Little Rann of Kutch, a sanctuary for the endangered Asiatic Wild Ass. the mammals of the Rann other than the wild ass, there are chances of seeing nilgai, chinkara gazelle, white footed desert and Indian foxes, the wolf, jungle cat (occasionally also desert cat), pale and long-eared hedgehogs and hare. Crested and Sykes larks, Oriental skylark, bimaculated lark, greater short-toed lark, singing and Indian bush larks, ashy-crowned and black-crowned sparrow-larks, are likely sightings and greater hoopoe lark is possible.



Desert and variable wheatears, southern grey, long-tailed, rufous-tailed and bay-back shrike, common wood shrike are also likely sightings and the desert warbler is among the many winter visiting warblers. We will also look for chestnut-bellied and spotted sand grouse, Indian courser (cream-colored visits occasionally), quails, yellow-legged and barred buttonquails, grey francolin, wryneck, brown-rock chat, pied bush chat, rufous-tailed scrub robin, blue-headed rock thrush, black redstart and buntings in the scrubby areas. At sunset, it is possible to watch marsh, Montagu and pallid harriers, aquila eagles, falcons and buzzards heading for their roosting sites.

Day 02 : Rann of Kutch

Morning drive to the bays, elevated patches in the Rann covered with scrub and grass. In winter, this is a likely area for Macqueen's bustard. Long-legged, common and white-eyed buzzard, booted eagle, Bonelli's eagle, short-toed snake eagle, are often seen during the drive. Evening visit to Nawa Talao, a lake where demmossile and common cranes gather in large flocks during the winter months. Greater and lesser flamingo are seen in large numbers as are great white pelican with spot billed and dalmatian recorded.

Painted, openbill, woolly-necked, white, black and black-necked stork could be seen as also black, glossy and black-headed ibis. Northern pintail, common teal, spot-billed duck, mallard, gadwall, wigeon, garganey, shoveler, cotton pygmy goose, pochards, tufted duck, lesser whistling duck, brahmyni and comb duck are among the many visitors to the lake. Waders include pratincoles, lapwings, sandpipers, ruff and other birds in good numbers.

Day 03 : Dasada - Mandvi (320km)

Drive to Mandvi and stay at the beach resort camp in the palace estate. Visit the creeks of Mandvi for coastal birding.

Day 04 : Mandvi - La La Bustard Sanctuary - Mandvi

Depart with picnic breakfast for the Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary near Naliya. These grasslands are the habitat of the endangered Indian bustard, white-naped tit, stoliczka's bushchat, and other birds. Spend the whole day at the grassland.



Day 05 : Mandvi - Jamnagar (350km)

Drive to Jamnagar. Evening visit to Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, where there are fairly good chances of seeing Indian skimmer.

This sanctuary is a breeding area for many species of birds that do not nest elsewhere in peninsular India. Great-crested grebe, black-necked stork, Caspian tern and many other birds can be seen besides most of the species recorded in the Little Rann area. Stay at Hotel President.

Day 06 : Jamnagar

Visit coastal areas along the Gulf of Kutch, one of the finest birding stretches along the Indian coastline. You are likely to see crab-plover, Kentish plover, oystercatcher, ruddy turnstone, broad-billed sandpiper, sanderling, dunlin, curlew sandpiper, blackheaded gull, Pallas' gull, temmincks stint, lesser-crested tern, gull-billed tern, common tern, little tern, black-bellied tern, whiskered tern, whiskered tern, darters, western reef egret and other birds could be seen on this route. Time permitting, walk to Lakhota Lake to watch brown-headed gulls and a variety of ducks. Stay at Hotel President.

Day 07 : Jamnagar - Porbander - Gondal

Depart at dawn with a picnic lunch for Porbandar. This coastal city is good for watching and photographing birds at close range. Besides large flamingo and crane flocks, this area also receives yellow-legged gull, henglin's gull, sandwich tern, black bellied tern, etc. Travel to Gondal and check-in at the Riverside Palace/Orchard Palace.

These heritage hotels are good for birding with many species coming in to the orchards and on the river-shores. Drive to the grasslands where there are chances of seeing Eurasian eagle-owl, Montagu harrier, short-eared owl, rock bush quail, ashycrowned sparrow-lark, southern grey and rufous-tailed shrike, pipits, pied bushchat, among other birds. The lakes of Gondal attract large flocks of demmossile and common cranes, white pelicans, ducks, and other birds.

Day 08 : Gondal - Gir

After breakfast, travel to Gir and take a mini-bus Tours of the Interpretation Zone, an enclosed cross-section of Gir habitats. Dinner and overnight in a private orchard of Gir with a forest view.

Day 09: Gir

A tapestry of dry deciduous forests, acacia scrub and grassland, fed by rivers and reservoirs, Gir is the last abode of the Asiatic lion and has a thriving population of panther (leopard), sambar, chital (spotted deer), nilgai (blue bull antelope) and wild boar. Gir is also one of the major habitats of chousingha (the world's only fourhorned antelope) and chinkara (Indian gazelle) that are hard to spot in the teak forests along the game drive trails.

Among the many birds of Gir, changeable hawk eagle, crested serpent eagle, Bonneli's eagle, shaheen peregrene falcon, laggar falcon, shikra, painted sand grouse, quails, black-hooded and golden oriels, marshall's and common iora, Asian paradise flycatcher, tickell's blue, red-throated, verditer and Asian brown flycatchers, yellow-crowned, brown-capped pygmy, black-rumped flameback woodpeckers, green and blue-cheeked bee-eaters, coppersmith barbet, common, lesser pied and white-throated kingfisher, blossom-headed parakeet, hoopoe, black, ashy and white-bellied drongos, rufous treepie, large cuckoo shrike, small mini vet, red-vented and white-eared bulbul, tawny-bellied, yellow-eyed, jungle and large grey babblers, grey-breasted, ashy, rufous-fronted, plain, jungle and graceful prinias, zitting cisticola, clamorous reed-warbler, booted warbler, greenish warbler, lesser and Hume's warbler, orphean warbler and blyth's reed warbler, are among the many birds that could be seen here. Those interested in herpetology can visit the crocodile breeding farm at Sasan.



Day 10: Gir - Palitana

Travel from Gir to Palitana and check-in at the Vijay Vilas, a family - run heritage hotel. This countryside is good for birding and the grey-necked bunting is one of the many species seen. Those interested in combining culture with natural history can visit the magnificent Jain temple complex atop Shatrunjaya Hill.

Day 11: Palitana - Velavadar - Sayala

Early morning depart for Velavadar National Park with a picnic lunch. Known for its large blackbuck antelope population, Velavadar is also one of the few places where the wolf is proliferating in India though they are rarely seen in the daylight. Jackal, jungle cat and hare are more easily seen and Indian fox on the periphery. Sirkeer malkoha, painted francolin, chestnut-bellied and spotted sand grouse, rufous-tailed, crested and sykes' larks, red-rumped swallows, desert and variable wheatears and other birds are seen and many raptors visit specially short-toed snake eagle, imperial, steppe, tawny, greater and lesser spotted eagles, laggar falcon, hobby, common kestrel, red-necked falcon, peregrine falcon, white-eyed and long-legged buzzard, black-shouldered kite, shikra, Eurasian sparrow-hawk and occasionally northern goshawk. Rarities include the Stoilczka's bush chat. In the evening, witness a massive roost of montagu, pallid and marsh harrier. Depart for Sayla and stay at Old Bell Guest House.

**Day 12: Sayala - Nalsarovar - Ahmedabad**

Morning trip to Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary, known for its waterfowl congregations and return to Ahmedabad.