

India

Goa | Coast & Western Ghats

2023 Saturday 7th-Monday 23rd January (17 days)
Small group tour with David Walsh



Malabar Pied Hornbill is found only in the Western Ghats and the mountains of Sri Lanka © Kevin Elsby, wildlifeontheweb.co.uk

Limosa's comfortable, three-centre birdwatching tour to Goa, on the shores of the Arabian Sea, will introduce you to the bountiful birdlife of this former Portuguese enclave. We travel there in January, the best time for birding in Western India, when daytime temperatures are at their coolest and the region's many exciting resident species are joined by a host of wintering birds from further north. Malabar Whistling Thrush, Flame-throated Bulbul, Vigors's Sunbird and Grey-fronted Green Pigeon are among a fine range of species that are endemic or near-endemic to the Western Ghats. We have extended our tour to a fortnight which will make the pace a little more relaxed and allow us to revisit the best sites as needed.

Highlights

- An ideal destination both for well-travelled birders and those visiting Asia for the first time
- Fine range of species that are endemic or near-endemic to the Western Ghats
- South Goa: Malabar Trogon, Malabar Barbet, Vigors's Sunbird, Rufous Babbler
- Bhagwan Mahaveer: Blue-capped Rock Thrush, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Forest Wagtail
- Coastal north Goa: Collared Kingfisher, Pallas's Gull, Plum-headed Parakeet
- Superb winter visitors including Indian Pitta, Indian Blue Robin, Orange-headed Thrush
- Supporting cast of colourful butterflies, dragonflies and interesting mammals
- Expertly led by Limosa's **David Walsh** and an English-speaking Indian bird guide

What's Included?

- Limosa Tour Leader
- Expert English-speaking Indian bird guide
- 14 nights accommodation in Goa: two comfortable hotels and one highly regarded birding lodge
- All main meals: tasty Goan cuisine, with drinking water provided throughout
- Transport by air-conditioned small coach
- Boat trip on the Zuari river in search of Collared Kingfisher and White-bellied Sea Eagle
- All excursions, entry fees, permits, tour based tips (local guides, drivers, etc) and taxes



The Green Bee-eater was one of four species of bee-eater seen on our 2020 holiday © Gary Elton



Eight species of kingfishers were found on our 2020 holiday including the gorgeous Blue-eared Kingfisher © Gary Elton

Outline Itinerary

Days 1-2

We fly to Goa. Early morning arrival on Day 2 then transfer to hotel in coastal south Goa. Afternoon at Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary. Night Patnem

Days 3-4

We visit Cotigao and Netravali Wildlife Sanctuaries. Patnem (2 further nights)

Day 5

Travel to Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary, birding at the Maina-Curtorim Lake complex along the way. Night Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary

Days 6-9

Birding in and around Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary. Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary (4 further nights)

Day 10

We travel to Arpora in coastal north Goa. En route we spend the morning birding at Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary then have lunch at a spice plantation. Night Arpora

Days 11-15

Exploring coastal north Goa. Arpora (5 further nights)

Day 16-17

Another full day's birding, then relax at our hotel before evening transfer to airport. Early morning (day 17) departure to the UK arriving on the same day.



Little Spiderhunter making use of a bird bath © Gary Elton

Tour Overview

Situated on India's west coast, some 250 miles south of the bustling metropolis of Mumbai, the historic former Portuguese enclave of Goa measures less than 80 miles by 50 miles and is India's smallest state. Once there, distances to travel are thus short and this exciting 17-day birdwatching tour offers a relaxed, comfortable and bird-filled introduction to India, making it ideal for first-time visitors, and a refreshingly 'easy' and yet remarkably diverse birding destination for more experienced travellers to the subcontinent. Accommodation is good and on a previous trip some clients rated the tasty Goan cuisine as the 'best ever on a bird tour'!

Our trip runs at the very best time of year for birding in Goa, when daytime temperatures are at their coolest and the region's many resident and endemic species are joined by a wealth of wonderful wintering birds from further north. Remarkably, this tiny state has a bird list of over 450 species, including more than half of those species that are either endemic or near-endemic to the Western Ghats.

Broadly speaking, Goa can be divided into three main ecological regions: the low-lying coastal plain dissected by numerous mangrove-lined waterways and freshwater wetlands; the central dry, rocky plateau of scrub and savannah grassland; and the undulating tropical forests of the interior.

From its 70 mile long Arabian Sea coastline, Goa's terrain rises into the Sahyadri Range of the Western Ghats, which run the length of its eastern boundary less than 45 miles away. The proximity of the ghats to the sea results in a rapid variation of habitat across Goa's breadth that is reflected in the significant diversity of species found within its borders, a diversity which somewhat belies its small size.

This comfortable Limosa tour provides both a comprehensive coverage of Goa's varied habitats and an excellent introduction to the birds of southern India. In coastal areas we will encounter a fine selection of waterbirds and waders, complemented by widespread Indian and Asian species in scrub, woodland and grassland, plus a host of overwintering migrants from northern India and the Palaearctic. Exploring the dense protected forests of wildlife sanctuaries at the foot of the Western Ghats, we should augment our list with a host of new species, including regional endemics of the Western Ghats and the southern Indian peninsula, enigmatic forest specialities and a good selection of night birds.

Our trip to Goa differs from those of several other companies in that we use three centres rather than the traditional two. We start by spending three nights in south Goa, an area that is surprisingly underwatched given the superb woodland habitat at Cotigao and Netravali, in the foothills of the Western Ghats.

From there, we move northeast to spend the next five nights at a birding lodge close to an impressive forest reserve, Bhagwan Mahaveer. Heading west, we conclude our holiday with six nights near the coast at the resort of Arpora, where we explore a fine array of wetland, coastal, grassland and woodland sites and take a boat trip along the Zuari river.

The pace will be leisurely. On most days we will be in the field early and late, taking a siesta in between. The birds are likely to include many new species for everyone, including those who have previously visited northern India or Sri Lanka. Species endemic or near-endemic to the Western Ghats include Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Malabar Whistling Thrush, Flame-throated and Grey-headed Bulbuls, Vigors's and Crimson-backed Sunbirds, and White-bellied Blue Flycatcher. A host of mouth-watering south Indian specialities such as Sri Lanka Frogmouth, Malabar Pied Hornbill and Malabar Trogon will also excite us, as will forest and coastal birds including Indian Pitta, White-bellied and Heart-spotted Woodpeckers, Indian Scops Owl, Jungle and Jerdon's Nightjars, White-bellied Sea Eagle, Lesser Adjutant and Pallas's Gull. We can reasonably hope to see as many as eight species of kingfisher, including Oriental Dwarf, Blue-eared and Collared.

In addition to the wonderful avifauna, there are many beautiful butterflies (with over 250 species recorded in the state) and colourful dragonflies, as well as some exciting Indian mammals.

Limosa has operated a wide-ranging programme of birdwatching tours across India since 1990. Our January 2023 tour will be guided by David Walsh's ninth visit to the Indian subcontinent, and his third tour to Goa with a local wildlife expert.

Daily Itinerary

Days 1-2

FLY TO GOA, TRANSFER TO PATNEM

Our birdwatching tour to Goa in western India commences with a flight from the UK to Goa, where having arrived early on day 2 we clear Indian immigration.

We will be met by our local guide and drive south for around 90 minutes to Patnem, where we spend three nights in a comfortable hotel just a short walk from the beach. Our arrival time means it is likely we will rest for the morning before heading to Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary in the afternoon. *Night Patnem*

Days 3-4

SOUTH GOA: COTIGAO AND NETRAVALI WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES

We have another full day to explore Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary, one of Goa's less well-known forest reserves. Lying at the state's southern border, a network of trails here provides easy access to the mixed deciduous forest. The vegetation is noticeably drier than elsewhere in Goa and we will look for birds associated with this habitat type, including our first regional endemics.

Key species to watch for at Cotigao include Crested Serpent Eagle, Green and Mountain Imperial Pigeons, Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Common Emerald Dove, Malabar Barbet, White-bellied Woodpecker, Malabar Pied and Malabar Grey Hornbills, Asian Fairy-bluebird, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Forest Wagtail.

As the morning starts to warm up, the birds generally become less active and butterflies, many with fancy names, start to appear. Commander, Monkey Puzzle, Peacock Pansy, Common Bluebottle and Common Silverline are some of those we could see.

Two species of deer, Chital and Sambar, occur in the park and, if we are very lucky, we might also encounter a group of Indian Bison or perhaps even a Leopard. Bird activity starts to pick up again from mid-afternoon and, ending the day beside a river, we may find a gathering of Malabar Starlings in the bamboo, a Malabar Whistling Thrush on the water's edge, a variety of swifts and hirundines overhead and perhaps an Indian Pitta in the bushes!

Our final full day at Patnem is spent at Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary. Described as perhaps the most scenic drive in Goa, the quiet road climbs to the peak of the rounded hills, allowing access to some untouched forest, thick in places with cane and lianas. This is the most reliable site in Goa to see Rufous Babbler, an endemic of the Western Ghats more commonly found further south. The forest supports an exceptional diversity of birds, including vocal groups of Indian Scimitar Babbler and three of the most sought-after species of the entire tour: Malabar Trogon, Indian Blue Robin and the bizarre Sri Lanka Frogmouth. Speckled Piculet, Rufous Treepie, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Loten's Sunbird, Little Spiderhunter and Greater Racket-tailed Drongo are also present, whilst more open areas around the isolated villages provide a good opportunity to scan for raptors. Black Eagle, Crested Goshawk and Legge's Hawk-Eagle are among the possibilities.

Netravali is one of the best sites to see butterflies in Goa, among them the delightful Malabar Tree Nymph, which is often found gliding through the forest.

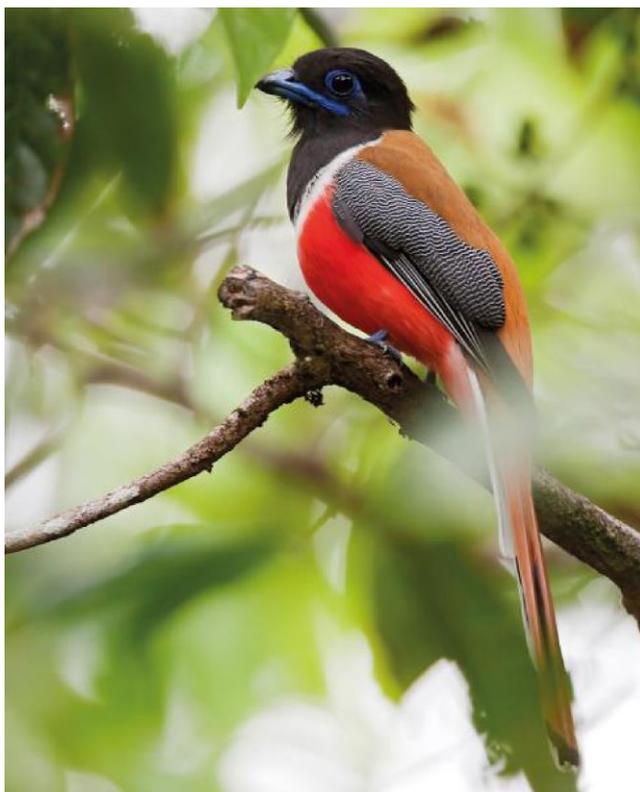
Indian Pond Heron, Black and Brahminy Kites, Red-wattled Lapwing, White-throated Kingfisher, Green Bee-eater, Indian Roller, Red-whiskered Bulbul and Oriental Magpie-Robin are likely to be among the species seen most frequently during our journeys. *Two further nights Patnem*

Day 5

PATNEM TO BHAGWAN MAHAVEER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Leaving south Goa this morning we visit Curtorim Lake and its surrounding paddyfields and marshes. This is one of Goa's largest wetlands and we should find a splendid selection of birds, from the diminutive Cotton Pygmy Goose and Indian Spot-billed Duck to Asian Openbill, Oriental Darter, Little Cormorant and River Tern.

Later we continue to our destination, Nature's Nest Resort, a comfortable birding lodge close to the exceptional Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and our base for the next five nights. We arrive in time for lunch, followed by an afternoon's birding nearby. *Night at Nature's Nest Resort*



Malabar Trogon is found in parts of eastern India and on Sri Lanka as well as in the Western Ghats © Kevin Elsby, wildlifeontheweb.co.uk



Crimson-backed Sunbird is endemic to the Western Ghats and we should find it on multiple occasions during our tour © Gary Elton

Days 6-9

WESTERN GHATS: BHAGWAN MAHAVEER WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The Sahyadri Hills, which delineate Goa's eastern border, form part of the Western Ghats, a range of low mountains extending for 900 miles parallel to the west coast of India and down into Sri Lanka. Widely renowned as one of the most ecologically rich regions in the world, the Ghats are home to a number of restricted range endemics.

The Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary is Goa's largest protected area and covers around 100 square miles of monsoon forest, encompassing both deciduous and evergreen woodlands within its gently undulating terrain. With four full days to explore the dense forest, riparian jungle and cultivated fields of the surrounding villages, we will want to make the most of the early mornings and late afternoons here, taking time to relax in between.

Birdlife within the reserve is dominated by forest and scrub species, including many Western Ghats endemics. We hope to find an exciting array of

birds, with the colourful Indian Pitta, ground-dwelling Grey Junglefowl and 'familiar' Indian Peafowl, Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Blue-winged Parakeet, Black-rumped and Greater Flamebacks, Brown-backed Needletail, White-rumped Spinetail, Crimson-backed Sunbird, Orange-headed Thrush, Blue-capped Rock Thrush, White-rumped Shama, Brown-cheeked Fulvetta and White-bellied Blue Flycatcher being among a long list of treats in store. The shade-loving Blue-eared Kingfisher frequents the forest streams.

In the tropics, forest edges are frequented by itinerant 'bird waves' and it's always a thrill to check through these feeding flocks as they move through the forest. At Bhagwan, the feverish procession might include Orange Minivet, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Heart-spotted Woodpecker, Golden-fronted Leafbird, Black-naped Oriole, Flame-throated, Yellow-browed and Square-tailed Bulbuls, Western Crowned Warbler, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and both Puff-throated and Dark-fronted Babblers.

We will also make a particular effort to find some of the nocturnal species found in these forests, including Brown Hawk Owl, Jungle Owlet and both Jerdon's and Jungle Nightjars. If we are lucky, during the day we may come across a roosting Brown Fish Owl.

The sanctuary merges into the cultivated rice fields of the surrounding villages and these are attractive to a number of seed-eating species, some of which can be difficult to find elsewhere. We shall be watching closely for Yellow-throated Sparrow, Red-headed, Black-headed and Grey-necked Buntings, Black-throated and White-rumped Munias, and Common Rosefinch.

Mammal densities are modest throughout Goa, but there is the prospect at Bhagwan of seeing the endemic Malabar subspecies of Indian Giant Squirrel, as well as mischievous troops of Southern Plains Grey Langur, Bonnet Macaque and the ubiquitous Three-striped Palm Squirrel.

Remarkably, more than 150 species of butterflies have been recorded in the area around our lodge, including Southern Birdwing (the largest butterfly in the Indian region), plus several species that are unique to the Western Ghats, such as Blue Oakleaf and Tamil Lacewing. The names of the colourful dragonflies will both baffle and amuse us: Clear-winged Forest Glory and Crimson Marsh Glider are just two such possibilities. *Four further nights at Nature's Nest Resort.*



Despite the name, Sri Lanka Frogmouth can also be found in southwest India and has been seen previously during our stays at Nature's Nest Resort © Gary Elton

Day 10

TO BONDLA RESERVE & ARPORA

Today we leave Nature's Nest for the coast, stopping along the way to visit Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary. Despite being the smallest of Goa's forest reserves, covering just four square miles, this little gem often produces some of the best birding! We will already have travelled here for a morning whilst staying at Nature's Nest, so our visit today will be a second opportunity to enjoy this superb site.

The habitat here is productive mixed forest, situated on undulating terrain at the foot of the Western Ghats. In more open areas we may find Blue-faced Malkoha, Indian Robin, Rufous Woodpecker, Black-headed Cuckooshrike, White-browed and Grey-headed Bulbuls, Malabar Woodshrike and Jacobin Cuckoo, whilst venturing deeper into the forest adds chances of Red Spurfowl, Crested Treeswift, Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker, White-naped Woodpecker, Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike, Black-naped Monarch and, the real jewel in the crown at Bondla, Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher.

Although the early hours of the morning will be cool, by mid-morning temperatures rise and the surrounding hills can be excellent for birds of prey rising on thermals, with 'Crested' Hawk-Eagle, Crested Honey Buzzard, Shikra and Besra all possible here.

We continue on for a delicious Goan lunch at a spice plantation (which gives an insight into how many of the tropical spice crops are cultivated), before completing our journey to north Goa.

Afternoon arrival at our comfortable hotel in the coastal resort of Arpora, which will be our home for the next six nights. There will be time to settle in before we begin our exploration of habitats very different from those we have seen so far. *Night Arpora*

Days 11-15**COASTAL NORTHERN GOA**

We have five full days to birdwatch at a number of productive localities within north Goa's coastal region. On most days we are likely to return to our hotel for lunch before heading out again from mid-afternoon as the temperature begins to cool.

There are a wide variety of habitats very close to our base. The Baga Hills contain remnants of dry forest where we hope to find Indian Black-lored Tit, Grey-fronted Green Pigeon, Plum-headed Parakeet and White-spotted Fantail. The pockets of woodland are relatively small, but they can still harbour species such as Indian Golden Oriole, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, Jerdon's Leafbird, Coppersmith Barbet, Vigors's Sunbird and Nilgiri Flowerpecker.

The local fields provide good habitat for Long-tailed and Brown Shrikes, Siberian Stonechat and Pied Bush Chat as well as several species of pipit - including Paddyfield, Blyth's and Richard's to seriously challenge our identification skills!

Marshy areas might produce Black-headed Ibis, Cinnamon Bittern, Striated Heron, Greater Painted-snipe and Pin-tailed Snipe, with Spotted Owlet nearby. Not far away, we might also be lucky to see both Indian and Greater Spotted Eagles in the sky together, an awesome sight.

Three well-known sites are each little more than half an hour's drive away from our base:

To the east, Carambolim Lake can be teeming with waterbirds during the dry season. Large numbers of wildfowl, egrets and herons will be present and we hope to find Indian Cormorant, Lesser Whistling Duck, Grey-headed Swamphen, Pied Kingfisher and both Pheasant-tailed and Bronze-winged Jacanas.



Indian Pond Heron is likely to be one of the most frequently encountered heron species during our holiday © Gary Elton

North of Arpora, the sandy beach at Morjim is famous for waders. Lesser and Greater Sand Plovers will be side by side for comparison, with Pacific Golden Plover, Terek Sandpiper and Small Pratincole also likely. This area is also a roosting place for Caspian, Lesser and Greater Crested Terns as well as Pallas's, 'Heuglin's', 'Steppe', Slender-billed and Brown-headed Gulls. The grasslands behind the beach are the haunt of both Barred and Yellow-legged Buttonquails but they are very hard to unearth!

Travelling south, we will visit Fort Aguada. Built in 1612, it stands on the top of a headland. Offshore we look for the resident pods of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins, whilst the open bushes around the fort are a good place to see species present throughout Goa, such as subtle Blyth's Reed and Greenish Warblers, as well as more colourful birds such as Small Minivet.



We should see several species of kingfisher during our boat trip on the Zuari River with one of the possibilities being Collared Kingfisher © Gary Elton

One of many super highlights on this tour is a boat trip up the Zuari River. White-bellied Sea Eagles will be sailing overhead, whilst king-sized kingfishers include Stork-billed, Black-capped and the localised Collared. Imposing Lesser Adjutants and Woolly-necked Storks perch on the bushes, Streak-throated Swallows swoop for insects and Western Reef Herons feed on the mud. We may be lucky enough to see a Slaty-breasted Rail scurrying through the twisted roots of the mangroves, which are also the home of the aptly named Marsh Muggers Crocodiles!

Butterfly communities in the mixed habitats of the coastal region can be equally diverse. Amongst a host of delightful species to be found in the grassland, woodland and scrubby areas here are Plain Tiger, Lemon Pansy, Danaid Eggfly, Common Sailer, Common Mormon and Crimson Rose. *Five further nights Arpora*

Days 16-17

DEPART GOA FOR THE UK

We have the opportunity for another full day in the field. We retain our hotel rooms until the evening. After a final dinner at our hotel in Arpora this evening, we transfer to Goa airport for an early morning flight back to the UK where our birding tour to Goa concludes.

Trip Information

Group Size Maximum of 12 participants and 2 leaders (both guides will travel regardless of group size)

What To Expect A 17-day birdwatching tour to Goa in coastal western India, featuring three complementary areas: south Goa (the Cotigao and Netravali Wildlife Sanctuaries); inland Goa (Bhagwan Mahaveer and Bondla Wildlife Sanctuaries); and coastal north Goa (with its fine variety of bird-rich habitats within a relatively small area).

January is the best month to visit Goa, when the climate should be reasonably comfortable with minimum temperatures around 18C (64F) and the maximum likely to be about 31C (88F). The chance of rainfall at this time of year is low.

Early starts are the norm for birding tours in tropical regions, where the daylight hours are relatively short (in Goa at this time, approx. 7.00am-6.15pm). Overall, the tour is not an especially strenuous one, but you should be prepared for early starts to enjoy the best of the morning's birding before the heat and humidity builds and activity starts to wane. After a lull during the hot middle part of the day, the birding tends to pick up again from mid-afternoon, so we are likely to be out until near dusk on a more or less daily basis.

For both birdwatching and butterfly watching, Goa also offers the distinct advantage of access to a range of habitats on foot, which can be difficult to enjoy elsewhere in India. This, in turn, enhances opportunities for bird and wildlife photography on this tour.

Our guides will be able to advise you locally about the day's events. If you wish to opt out of a particular session or walk, please don't be afraid to ask them.

Given the warm temperatures and chance of high humidity, a reasonable level of fitness is required. Apart from this there are no specific health considerations providing you are in overall good health and able to walk reasonable distances at a normal walking pace.



During our 2020 holiday we had some fantastic views of Temminck's Stint at the Arpora Wetlands © Gary Elton

Birds 230-260 species

Mammals 10-15 species

Butterflies 40-50 species

Dragonflies 10-15 species

Accommodation 14 nights accommodation in India, spread between two good hotels and one birding lodge in Goa.

We begin in Patnem, with three nights at the comfortable Tubki Resort. Moving inland, we spend the next five nights at the Nature's Nest Resort, a highly rated birding lodge near Tambdi Surla close to Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary. Our final port of call is the coastal resort of Arpora, where we enjoy a six-night stay at the impressive Marinha Dourada hotel.

All rooms have a private bathroom. There are swimming pools at the hotels in Patnem and Arpora. The latter also has laundry facilities which, whilst not cheap, are very efficient, with the laundry being returned in immaculate condition!

Meals All main meals are included in the tour price (and with drinking water also provided), commencing with breakfast at Patnem on Day 2 and concluding with dinner at our hotel in Arpora on Day 16.

Breakfast, lunches and dinners will mostly be taken at the hotels. We may occasionally take a packed breakfast with us into the field, and on our transfer days (and occasionally at other times) we may enjoy breakfast or lunch in a well-chosen restaurant. Sit down meals at the two hotels will be waiter served with our guide choosing a range of dishes to suit our tastes; international cuisine may be available as an alternative to local fare. At Nature's Nest there will be local dishes served as a hot buffet. On a previous tour, some clients rated the tasty Goan cuisine as the 'best ever on a bird tour'!

Walking Easy to moderate walks at a gentle pace. Although much birding is on foot, no long treks are involved. Comfortable, lightweight walking shoes or boots with stout soles and good grip are recommended.

Weather Goa's climate is typical of its tropical latitude, with warm to hot daytime temperatures (28-34C/82-93F) throughout the year, and cooler nights and early mornings. December until early February is the coolest time of the year (January averages the coolest month), and although midday temperatures remain hot year round, minimums at night can drop below 15C/59F, with the marked difference between day and night temperatures being especially pronounced away from the moderating influence of the sea.



Our 2020 trip enjoyed stunning views of the diminutive Vernal Hanging Parrot © Gary Elton

The period from October to May is India’s 'dry season'. Goa receives almost all of its annual precipitation during the SW monsoon (May to September), with a lesser amount falling during the NE monsoon, which can extend into December. The climate here is typically dry from December to May. Humidity can be high (70-90%), particularly inside the dense forests of the Western Ghats, but this is somewhat alleviated in coastal areas by gentle sea breezes.

Please do keep in mind that it is impossible to accurately predict weather on any tour - even more so in recent years - so that variations higher or lower than that specified may occur.

Flights Due to the pandemic, it is proving extremely difficult to predict future flight prices and schedules, especially when a trip is scheduled for beyond the period when flights can be booked. As a result, we have taken the decision to price our holidays as excluding all international flights.

To keep the process as simple as possible for our clients, however, we are now working closely with an agent from Travel Counsellors who will be able to advise you on which flights we are recommending for each holiday and he will be able to book these for you.

Following the demise of Monarch, Jet Airways and Thomas Cook, there are now few direct options for flights to Goa.

We anticipate for this holiday that we will probably use a Middle Eastern airline (such as Qatar Airlines) which will require a change of plane in each direction but this will have the major advantage that we will fly directly into Goa, rather than going via New Delhi or Mumbai.

Ground Transport By air-conditioned small coach.

Boat Trip We will enjoy a relaxing boat trip along the Zuari river during our stay in Arpora. Life jackets are available on the boat.

Insects As would be expected in the tropics, there are mosquitoes in this part of India, but the risk of malaria in Goa is low.

Photography Good-excellent opportunities to photograph birds, butterflies and other wildlife. Many of the places we visit are also highly scenic!



As well as the familiar Grey and Yellow Wagtails, we stand a good chance of finding White-browed Wagtail during our holiday © Gary Elton



The appropriately named Wire-tailed Swallow was seen on multiple occasions on our 2020 holiday © Gary Elton

Tour Cost

2023 (17 days):

Land only cost: £3195

Single supplement: £695

Deposit: £750

Cost includes

- Limosa Tour Leader
- Expert English-speaking Indian bird guide
- 14 nights accommodation in Goa: two comfortable hotels and one highly regarded birding lodge All main meals
- All main meals: tasty Goan cuisine, with drinking water provided throughout
- Transport by air-conditioned small coach
- Boat trip on the Zuari river in search of Collared Kingfisher and White-bellied Sea Eagle
- All excursions, entry fees, permits
- All tour-based tips and taxes
- Limosa checklist of birds

Cost excludes

International flights, visa costs, insurance, drinks, airport and in-flight meals and snacks and other items of a personal nature.

About Your Guide

David Walsh David lives in Suffolk, where he has recently retired from full-time teaching, although he continues with part-time maths tutoring and enjoys singing in local choirs. He has been a keen birdwatcher since his primary school days and still has his notebooks from the early 1970s to prove it! At home in Suffolk, he puts his love of bird songs and calls to good use, running surveys to monitor breeding birds in the spring and searching out migrants in the autumn.

He has been leading tours since 1986 and in the last 12 years has focused especially on Europe, North Africa, Asia and South America, developing his interest in butterflies and dragonflies as well as birds.

David's boundless energy and enthusiasm, coupled with a determination to ensure that everyone in the group sees the birds, made him very popular with clients on the tours he led for Ornitholidays between 2007 and 2018 and we were very pleased when he became part of the Limosa team in 2019!

Our January 2023 tour will be David's ninth visit to the Indian subcontinent, and his third tour to Goa.

How to Enquire

Due to the considerable uncertainty created by the pandemic, Limosa Holidays are not currently accepting bookings for any trips, however, you are welcome to contact us either by email or phone to register your interest in any of our holidays.

Whilst some tour companies may be willing to take a deposit from you and say a trip is a “confirmed departure”, our approach is going to be to wait a little longer as we consider this both honest and realistic.

Once we are confident that the trip can run, we will be in touch to confirm your place and ask for a deposit.

We do encourage you to register your interest as we are expecting considerable demand, once the consensus is that it is safe to travel again.

Any Questions

Please do not hesitate to contact us by email or phone. Our office is generally open from 09:30-17:30 but you are welcome to contact us outside these times too. We are happy to take calls in the evening and at weekends but if no one is available the call will go to our answerphone.

Thank you for your interest in our tours. We do hope that you will be able to join us once the pandemic is over and we look forward to hearing from you.



Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher – the participants on our 2020 trip were rewarded with some great views of this tiny kingfisher at Bondla © Gary Elton

