

Wild Isle

14 nights / 15 days

Sri Lankan Wildlife Retreat

DAY 01:

Welcome to Sri Lanka! On arrival, transfer to Hotel in **Negombo** for first night. Reminder of the day at leisure or city and fishing village tours are optional.

DAY 02:

After breakfast leave for **Sigiriya / Dambulla / Habarana** for two nights. En route, visit **Dambulla Cave Temple**, which is famous for its rock paintings and rock temples and is one of the most important sites for Buddhist pilgrimage. You may enjoy encountering animals in action.

DAY 03:

Morning, visit **Polonnaruwa** (A UNESCO World Heritage Site), the medieval capital of Sri Lanka. Visit the world famous rock-cut Buddha statues of Gal Vihara and the Parakrama Samudra ('Sea of Parakrama') a 2500-hectare man made reservoir built by King Parakramabahu I (1153 –1186 AD) with a capacity of 134 million cubic meters. Afternoon, **jeep-safari Minneriya National Park** for Elephants. Over 300 elephants gather on the receding shores of the Minneriya Tank. 'The Gathering' of Elephants at Minneriya is one of those awesome spectacles, which should rank alongside better-known wildlife spectacles.

DAY 04:

Morning, visit **Sigiriya Rock Fortress**, which was the pleasure capital of a single king called Kashyapa in the 5th century A.D.

After lunch leave for Nuwara Eliya for two nights.

DAY 05:

Morning visit **Horton Plains National Park** to see Cloud Forests and rare montage fauna, which include the endemic Rhino-horned Lizard, which was featured in Charles Darwin's monumental work on evolution, Bear Monkey, Giant Squirrel and Sāmbhar. Walk through the grasslands and Cloud Forests to a popular viewpoint know as World's end, which is an escapement with a 870 m drop. We also look for endemic birds Yellow-eared Bulbul and Sri Lanka Hill White-eye and Dull blue Flycatcher.

Afternoon if the weather clutches we could visit **Hakgala Gardens**, established in 1860, it is 7 miles outside Nuwara Eliya and should give us a glimpse of several new species such as (Anax immaculifrons) Mountain Emperor and (Sympetrum fonscolombi) Red-veined Darter.

DAY 06:

After breakfast leave for **Kithulgala** for two Nights, Birding at the **Kelani Valley Forest Reserve**. This is ideal for any missed lowland endemics such as Sri Lanka Myna, Green-billed Coucal, Spot-winged Thrush, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, Sri Lanka Spurfowl, Brown-capped Babbler and Red-faced Malkoha. Also look for Hill Mynah, Lesser Yellownape, Crested Drongo, Greater and Black-rumped Flamebacks, Black-capped Bulbul, Black Bulbul, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Velvet-fronted Nuthatch and Black Eagle. As the sunset falls look for the sub continental endemic Sri Lanka Frogmouth.

DAY 07:

Spend a full day visiting rivers and streams around the **Kitulgala** area looking at forest and river damselflies and dragonflies, both adults and larvae. You may find the more secretive endemic Forest species (Drepanosticta) and Blurry Forest Damselfly (Platysticta maculata) and beautiful Gossamerwing (Euphaea splendens) and Green-wing Damsels (Neurobasis chinensis) on the rivers and streams. Dragonflies next to the streams include colorful Dropwing (Trithemis species), and in the faster water Iris Cascader (Zygonyx iris ceylonicus) whose larvae cling to stones in waterfalls.

DAY 08:

After breakfast leave for **Sinharaja** for three nights. Afternoon, visit Sinharaja **Rainforest** (A UNESCO World Heritage Site) for lowland endemics and mixed species bird flocks. According to a study of the mixed species bird on average 42 individual birds occur in the flocks, which makes this world's largest mixed species bird flock. The mixed species Bird flock study of Sinharaja forest has been abiding since 1981 and is considered as the World's longest studied bird flock study. Birding highlights include Red-faced Malkoha, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie, White-faced Starling and Scaly Thrush.

DAY 09:

Full day's birding at **Sinharaja Rainforest**. Your guide will take you to some of his favorite spots to look for the Serendib Scoop Owl etc.

DAY 10:

After breakfast, leave for **Yala** for two nights. Reminder of the day at leisure.

DAY 11:

Morning and afternoon, jeep-safari at **Yala National Park**. Yala Block 1 has one of the highest densities of Leopards in the world. Yala therefore offers one of the best chances in Asia to see Leopards. Other large animals you may see include Elephant, Sloth Bear, Mugger Crocodile, Spotted Deer, Sāmbhar, Barking Deer, Wild Boar, Wild Buffalo, Jackal, Grey Langur and Mongoose. Birding highlights include Malabar Pied Hornbill, Painted Stork, Lesser Adjutant and Black-necked Stork.

DAY 12:

Arrival in Sri Lanka and transfer to **Galle** for two nights. Remnants of the day at leisure.

DAY 13:

Mornings, take the boat from the **Mirissa** Fisheries Harbor out to sea. **Blue Whales** in concentrations not seen elsewhere in the world would be the highlight. A concentration of blue whales of this nature is something which whale watchers can only dream about. During the migration, Blue whales are seen relatively close to shore as the continental shelf is narrow to the South of Dondra. After seeing the blue whales, your naturalist will take you further out to sea look for **sperm whales**. Even sperm whales sometimes come within a few kilometers of shore. On most days, pods of **Spinner Dolphins**, often numbering in the hundreds may also be seen. The Spinners are a treat to watch in action.

Remnants of the day at leisure. In the afternoon, visit the Dutch-built **Galle Fort**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

DAY 14:

Morning, one last whale watching from **Mirissa** Fisheries Harbour out to sea to look for Blue Whales, Sperm Whales and Spinner Dolphins.

Afterwards leave for **Colombo** for one night. Afternoon walk along **Talangama Lake** for Black and Yellow Bitterns & other common sub-continental species.

DAY 15:

Transfer to International Airport

Note: You can choose your own choice of alternative suitable accommodation subject to availability.

Package Includes:

- Accommodation on BB / HB / FB
- Transportation in an A/C Car / Family-Van / Mini Coach or Large Coach
- Airport transfers
- Services of English Speaking Driver-Guide or National Tour Guide.
- Government Taxes.

Package Excludes:

- Flights and Visas
- Early check in and late checkout charges (If required)
- Tips and Porter charges
- Expenses of a personal nature.
- Entrance tickets for sites mentioned. (can be paid directly in LKR, US\$, Euro)
- Safari Jeeps for sites mentioned. (can be paid directly in LKR, US\$, Euro)

Tour package can be customized as per your choices and hotels can be chosen with your preferences.

Please write to us personally; we will organize your own Sri Lankan Wild Life Retreat as you wish.

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