

SRI LANKA UNTAMED

MARCH 4-14, 2024

CRAIG GREER
photo workshops

THE TOUR

Of the 91 mammal species found in Sri Lanka, leopards, Asian Elephants, Sloth Bears, Purple-faced Langurs, Sambar Deer and Water Buffaloes will be highlights. Bird life is the jewel in Sri Lanka's crown with species such as Sri Lankan Blue Magpie, Sri Lankan Grey Hornbill, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Crested Serpent Eagle, three species of kingfishers, Chestnut-crowned, Blue-tailed and Green Bee-eater, Emerald Dove and more. A vast array of species will fill the memory cards of reptile lovers, including Green Pit-viper, Hump-nosed Lizards, Bark Geckos, Kangaroo Lizards, Green Forest Lizards, Mugger Crocodile and more.

THE GUIDES



Craig Greer : www.facebook.com/craiggreerphotos

Craig is based in Adelaide where he runs bird and wildlife photography workshops. His interest in wildlife goes back to his childhood growing up in the bush in Victoria and Tasmania. In recent years, Craig has combined his love of nature, wildlife and photography and has spent countless hours photographing a diverse range of animal species, particularly bird life, from Adelaide to Alice Springs and Malaysia to Bruny Island. Craig has a background in teaching, training and communications and his photos have appeared in field guides and conservation publications.



Nicolas Rakotopare : www.facebook.com/nicolasrakotoparephotography

Originally from Madagascar, Nicolas is an ecologist and professional wildlife photographer and film-maker based in SE Queensland. He has filmed wildlife throughout South-East Asia and the sub-continent, including Sri Lanka. Nicolas is an excellent communicator and enjoys sharing both his ecological and technical knowledge with others.

Nicolas has extensive experience capturing beautiful wildlife images and video which is used by a number of organisations to promote important conservation outcomes for endangered species.

Local Guide: In Sri Lanka we work with one of the country's premier wildlife guides, with an unmatched reputation for finding wildlife and getting us in position for some incredible photographic opportunities.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1. Mon 4 Mar '24 Colombo to Mannar **Accom:** Hotel Agape

Day 2. Tues 5 Mar '24 Morning and afternoon in Mannar photographing migrating Greater Flamingos. **Accom:** Hotel Agape

Day 3. Weds 6 Mar '24 Afternoon Safari in Wilpattu NP targeting leopards and a range of species **Accom:** Claughton Wild

Day 4. Thurs 7 Mar '24 Full day Safari in Wilpattu NP targeting leopards and a range of species **Accom:** Claughton Wild

Day 6. Fri 8 Mar '24 Full day Safari in Wilpattu NP targeting leopards and a range of species **Accom:** Claughton Wild

Day 6. Sat 9 Mar '24 Transfer to Yala National Park. **Accom:** Lalan Yala Villa, Tissamaharama

Day 7. Sun 10 Mar '24 Full day Safari in Yala NP targeting leopards, birds and more. **Accom:** Lalan Yala Villa, Tissamaharama

Day 8. Mon 11 Mar '24 Full day Safari in Yala NP targeting leopards, birds and more. **Accom:** Lalan Yala Villa, Tissamaharama

Day 9. Tues 12 Mar '24 Full day bird and reptile photography in Sinharaja Rainforest. **Accom:** Martin's Lodge

Day 10. Weds 13 Mar '24 Full day bird and reptile photography in Sinharaja Rainforest. **Accom:** Martin's Lodge

Day 11. Thurs 14 Mar '24 Transfer to Colombo Hotel in preparation for return/onward travel or tour extension.

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DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1
MON
4 MAR

Colombo to Mannar

Today you will be met at your hotel by your guides and together we'll travel by air conditioned coach to Mannar in the country's north where we will see and photograph migrating Greater Flamingos in their thousands. The migration season has seen flamingos arrive in Mannar in large numbers to feed and select a mate for breeding.

DAY 2
TUES
5 MAR

Greater Flamingos and other wetland species

Nestled along the pristine north-western coast of Sri Lanka lies a hidden gem for wildlife enthusiasts and avid photographers - the enchanting Mannar Wetlands. This breathtaking sanctuary, renowned for its diverse avian population, provides a mesmerizing backdrop for capturing the ethereal beauty of **Greater Flamingos** and other waterbirds. As the sun rises over the horizon, painting the sky with hues of gold and pink, the wetlands come alive with a symphony of colors, sounds, and graceful movements.

The melodic calls of various waterbirds fill the air, providing an auditory backdrop to your photographic journey. From the elegant egrets and herons perched upon slender branches to the elusive **Painted Storks** and **Black-necked Storks**, each species offers its own unique charm and photographic opportunity.

The wetlands are also home to countless species of **ducks**, **shorebirds**, and other migratory birds, offering us many great photo opportunities.

During the day, Craig and Nico will support you to achieve some gorgeous images of the incredible birds and scenery, with a focus on achieving correct exposure and sharp bird in flight images.

DAY 3
WED
6 MAR

Mannar to Wilpattu National Park

Today we drive to the famous Wilpattu National Park, which borders the Indian ocean to the west and two rivers from north and south, and is characterised by dry-zone lowland forest. Within the park are a number of lakes (Villus), created by fault depressions in the earth which fill with rain water. The lakes play a crucial role in maintaining Wilpattu's diverse eco-system.

While the landscape differs to that we'll experience later in Yala, the wildlife in Wilpattu National Park is quite similar. We will search for **Sri Lankan Leopard**, **Asian Elephant** and as always, we'll be keeping an eye out for any wildlife activity that will provide good photography opportunities, especially bird life.

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DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 4
THUR
7 MAR

Wipattu National Park

Today we will venture back into Wilpattu NP for a full day safari. Wilpattu holds a large number of Sri Lanka's endemic bird species along with dozens of near endemics from the region. Leopards, Elephants, Sloth Bears, Mongoose and a number of other unique mammals will provide us with non-stop photography action as we traverse the park.

DAY 5
FRI
8 MAR

Wilpattu National Park

Today we will continue our search for birds and mammals and aim to capture images of any species we may not have seen before we return to the accommodation in the evening.

DAY 6
SAT
9 MAR

Wilpattu to Yala National Park

Today we will have a slightly later departure as we head to Yala National Park, a hotspot of the Sri Lankan leopards in the south-west of the island. We will arrive at our amazing accommodation, Lalan Yala Villa, in the early evening.

DAY 7
SUN
10 MAR

Yala National Park

Spanning 97,881 Ha and comprising 5 blocks, Yala National Park, in the country's south-east, is the oldest and most popular national park in Sri Lanka. The park is situated in the dry semi-arid climatic region and receives monsoonal rains later in the year. Yala's ecosystems are diverse, ranging from monsoon forests to freshwater and marine wetlands.

Sri Lankan Leopard is the big target mammal at Yala, which has one of the highest leopard densities on the planet. We will be focusing on getting the best possible images of this species in the early morning and late afternoon while we also search for Asian Elephants, Sloth Bears, Spotted Deer, Sambar Deer and the many birds that inhabit the park.



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DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 8
SUN
11 MAR

Yala National Park safaris continue

Today we return to Yala for another full-day safari to photograph more of the incredible wildlife that inhabits the park. Along with the large number of birds and mammals, Yala is home to some amazing reptiles and we will aim to photograph species such as Estuarine and **Mugger Crocodile**, and **Common Monitor Lizard**.

DAY 9
MON
12 MAR

Yala National Park to Sinharaja Rainforest Reserve

Today we'll leave the more open habitat of Yala and travel to world heritage listed **Sinharaja Rainforest Reserve**, a protected area of high biodiversity importance containing many of Sri Lanka's endemic bird, reptile and insect species. Our accommodation will be at the famous **Martin's Lodge**, which borders the reserve. The staff at Martin's Lodge are renowned for their hospitality and fabulous traditional cooking.

Once checked in, we will spend the remainder of the day photographing birds and reptiles close to the lodge.

DAY 10
TUES
13 MAR

Sinharaja Rainforest Reserve

Today we will head into the reserve in search of endemic birds, reptiles and insects. Sinharaja's "bird waves" of mixed feeding flocks provide opportunities to photograph a wide range of endemic and near-endemic birds with species like **Red-faced Malkoha**, **Sri Lankan Frogmouth**, **Ashy-headed Laughingthrush**, **Green-billed Coucal** and **Sri Lanka Blue Magpie** among the highlights. **Purple-faced Langurs**, **Giant Black Squirrels** and **Toque Macaques** also inhabit the reserve.

DAY 11
WEDS
14 MAR

Sinharaja to Colombo

This morning, after breakfast, we'll say our goodbyes to the friendly staff at Martin's Lodge and hit the road back to Colombo in preparation for return/onward travel.





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Further Information

While this tour is geared toward bird and wildlife photography, we will be locating and observing a large number of species, making it suitable for both casual and dedicated bird and wildlife watchers. Both Craig and Nico will provide constant tuition/advice to ensure you return from the tour not only with great images, but improved skills to **take your wildlife photography forward** in the future.

Accommodation

The accommodation on the tour has been chosen based on its proximity to the locations we will be visiting and access to wildlife. The rooms are basic, clean and secure. Food will consist of **local and home-cooked cuisine**. Breakfast and lunch packs will be provided for meals not eaten at our accommodation. The local hospitality is second-to-none.

Transport

All transport for the duration of the tour is included in the tour price. We will travel between locations in an air-conditioned coach that will remain with us during the tour. Transport within the parks will be in **safari jeeps set-up specifically for wildlife photography**.

Planning your trip

We recommend flying to Colombo **at least one day prior to the commencement of the tour (March 3)** and flying out the day after **(March 15)**. To assist in a smooth departure from Colombo on Day 1 we recommend booking into **Hush Lagoon 30 at Negombo** which is close to the airport. **Is your passport valid?** It's important to make sure you have an up-to-date and valid passport/visa at least a few months in advance of departure. We also recommend seeing your local GP or a travel doctor for **advice on any immunisations** you may require for travel to Sri Lanka. While we don't anticipate any problems, we highly recommend taking out **travel insurance and insurance on your camera equipment** in the event of any changes, cancellations or disruptions to travel, damage to equipment or medical treatment that may be necessary.

Inclusions

The tour price includes **expert local guiding and daily photography instruction** from Craig and Nico, travel within Sri Lanka for the duration of the tour **(March 4 - 14)**, all accommodation and supplied meals (Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner), all transport within Sri Lanka from the pick-up in Colombo on March 4, until the drop-off on March 14, and all entry fees to parks included in the tour program.

Exclusions

The tour price does not include international flights to and from Sri Lanka, accommodation in Sri Lanka prior to or after the tour, extra meals other than those included as above, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages or expenses of a personal nature (e.g snacks, internet, laundry, travel insurance, tips etc.)

\$5850.00 AUD

Tour price is based on twin share and a group size of six participants.
Single supplement: TBC

To make an enquiry or booking: www.craiggreer.com/workshops
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