



TOUR INFORMATION FOR INDONESIA: The Lesser Sunda Islands

These notes are designed to help you prepare for your tour. Please read carefully.

ENTERING INDONESIA: All citizens will need a passport valid for a minimum of 6 months from date of entry into Indonesia.

UK citizens can get a 30-day Tourist Visa-on-Arrival, free-of-charge, at airports in Jakarta, **Bali (Denpasar)**, Surabaya, Banda Aceh, Medan, Padang, Pekanbaru, Manado, Biak, Ambon, Balikpapan, Pontianak, Kupang, Batam, and South Sumatra. An onward/return ticket is required to apply for a Visa-on-Arrival at these ports of entry.

If obtaining a Visa on Arrival, please be aware that there may be a long queue if several flights arrive at the same time. If this concerns you, it may be worth considering applying for your visa from your nearest Indonesian Embassy prior to departure.

Please check this website for the most up-to-date information:

http://www.indonesianembassy.org.uk/consular/consular_visa_type_free.html

Citizens of other countries should check with their local consulate/embassy for instructions.

No compulsory vaccinations are required to enter Indonesia, however a valid Yellow fever vaccination is required only if you are arriving within five days of leaving a country where the disease occurs.

It is always a good idea to take a photocopy of your passport and air ticket with you when travelling abroad. They can prove invaluable in helping you get replacements if your originals are lost or stolen. Obviously you should keep the photocopies in a separate bag to the originals.

CURRENCY: Indonesian Rupiah - IDR. Although there should be no difficulty exchanging major currencies in the main tourist areas, problems may occur elsewhere. Exchange facilities are available for all incoming and outgoing flights at the international airports. American Express, Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted in the major tourist areas with limited availability elsewhere.

LANGUAGE: Indonesian is the national language. Some younger people speak a little English but it can be difficult at times to find someone who speaks English fluently. Your tour leader speaks, reads, and writes Indonesian.

CLIMATE: During the tour, you will experience a wide range of temperatures and climate, from the 70s, high 80s and 90s in the lowlands, to as low as 30 degrees at higher elevations. It is always possible we will encounter some rain. Generally it will be cooler in the morning and warm to hot, but dry at midday. At the higher altitudes of Gunung Mutis and other sites it will be noticeably cooler. A light sweater for the evening, especially if we go on a night drive, will be welcome.

PACE OF THE TOUR: Our birding days will normally begin relatively early to avoid the heat of midday when bird activity is also very low. We'll then bird most of the day while warmer and light, with rests after lunch. There are some drives of three to four hours, and four internal flights. Most of the driving is on reasonably well-surfaced roads.

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There are no particularly long walks or strenuous activities. The longest walk will be at Lewa in Sumba, where trails into the forest for perhaps four kilometres and possibly a bit further. There are some inclines as it is a hilly area, though not steep, and we will walk at a very relaxed pace. Mostly the walking is fairly easy, on flat or downhill terrain with plenty of stops for birding. Very often we'll be birding from or close to the vehicle. It is hot and humid in the lowland areas, with maximum temperatures of about 30°C, and sometimes lower.

HEALTH: It is essential that you contact your own doctor to obtain the latest information on the regions you are visiting. Please contact your doctor well in advance of your tour's departure as some medication must be initiated weeks before the period of possible exposure.

It is recommended that you are up-to-date on routine vaccinations. These include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, and your yearly flu jab. It is further recommended that most travellers have protection against Hepatitis A and Typhoid. Typhoid vaccination is particularly important because of the presence of *S. typhi* strains resistant to multiple antibiotics in this region.

Malaria: It is recommended that you have a malaria prophylaxis. Please consult your doctor. Useful information on all aspects of malaria, including how to reduce your chances of being bitten can be found at the website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/malaria/prevention>

Yellow Fever: There is no risk of Yellow Fever. Proof of a valid Yellow Fever vaccination is required only if you are arriving from a country where Yellow Fever is endemic.

Miscellaneous: Leeches are rarely a problem on this tour but there is the potential for chiggers. We suggest treating your clothing with permethrin (see notes below). Most of our birding will be done at or close to sea level, except on Gunung Mutis at 7963 feet and a couple of sites on Flores, where we'll bird along roads at no more than 4000 feet.

For further information on health advice refer to the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad website www.masta-travel-health.com

ACCOMMODATION: Our accommodation is in Western-style hotels throughout. The rooms are comfortable with modern facilities and air conditioning.

LAUNDRY: Inexpensive laundry services are available at most of the hotels.

ELECTRICITY: Electricity - Indonesia uses 220 volts. Indonesian-style plug with two parallel flat pins. A small torch or headlamp may come in handy at times for night walks or in your rooms. An international travel adaptor is useful and can be bought in most airport departure lounges.

FOOD: The food is fresh and delicious. Vegetarian options are available although somewhat limited. Most meals are served with a meat (usually chicken) and a seafood dish.

Snacks: Snacks- you may wish to bring granola-type bars, dried fruit or other snacks. Grocery stores are very common and widespread; but they probably won't stock many snacks and other products that you will be familiar with. Your leader will stock up on various types of tasty snacks throughout the tour, ranging from western style cookies and chips to local cakes and delicacies.

Sunbird tours are all-inclusive and no refunds can be issued for any tour meals participants choose to miss. While we will try to do all we can to accommodate the requirements of all participants, please note that we cannot guarantee all causes of food allergies can be avoided at every destination.

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Many restaurants offer set menus and are unable to accommodate all special requests within a group. Thus, participants with significant food allergies or special dietary needs should bring appropriate foods with them for those times when their needs can, regrettably, not be accommodated.

Our tours are carefully scheduled to ensure the best possible birding experience and although the leaders will do all they can to make sure the group eats at a reasonable time, sometimes early or late lunches and/or evening meals cannot be avoided. Any participants who need to eat at specific times may need to take supplemental food with them.

DRINKS: Bottled water, a soft drink or a beer (or wine if appropriate) are provided at meals, as is coffee or tea. In addition, we keep a supply of bottled water on the tour vehicles. Bottled or filtered water may also be provided in some rooms where we stay.

INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE ACCESS: Free WiFi is generally available in the hotels in larger towns. Most require a password, which we'll receive on check-in. In the more remote areas it will be difficult to find internet access.

Mobile phones can be useful while on tour but keep in mind that many countries operate on a different cellular technology. Your phone may be incompatible with the local system, so please check with your local carrier. Fortunately, with the advent of smartphones, it is easy to download applications such as Skype or Google Voice, which can make calling home free or very inexpensive. Another option is to replace the data ("SIM") card in your phone in-country. The SIM cards, including data can be very cheap. If you wish to use this option you will need to check that your smart phone has a SIM card slot.

FIELD CLOTHING: Please avoid *light or bright colours*. Lightweight, dull-coloured field clothing is recommended throughout. This includes several pairs of trousers and cool, comfortable shirts. Long-sleeved shirts, a dull-coloured hat, and sunglasses are recommended for protection from the sun and mosquitoes. Long socks are very useful so that you can tuck in your trousers and thus avoid biting insects or grass seeds. Rain clothes is always essential in the Asian tropics, including waterproof trousers, which are very useful in case we encounter rain while in a boat. A collapsible umbrella is ideal as ponchos can get very hot. Dress will be casual, although you may prefer something slightly dressier for the hotels in Denpasar.

Please remember that this area is rather conservative about standards of dress. Women should dress modestly; no halter tops, shorts or miniskirts, please. As should men – shorts are generally unacceptable at cultural sites and shirts should be worn at all times.

Although there will be few, if any, really rigorous walks or uphill jaunts, it is always possible we may encounter mud, slippery surfaces, and stony or uneven ground. We are on our feet for much of the day and it is MOST IMPORTANT that you provide suitable protection and support for your feet and ankles. Light-weight boots (of Gore-Tex or some similar material) that come up to the ankle and have a good lug-sole are ideal. Many people are apprehensive that these will be too heavy; this is not true. The protection, grip and day-long comfort such boots afford is far superior to the seemingly comfortable sneakers/training shoes.

FIELD CLOTHING: The following items are basic:

Long trousers, preferably two pairs.
Warm jacket, (preferably windproof)
Sturdy walking shoes
Light rain clothes

Cotton shirts
Sweater
Sun hat
Bandana

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MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

Notebook/pencil	Alarm clock
Small rucksack/daypack	Travel towel
Torch with extra batteries	Face cloth
Pocket knife (placed in your checked-in luggage!)	Water bottle
Sunglasses & sunscreen	Laundry bag & laundry soap
Small LED headtorch (Useful for doing the birdlist in the evenings)	
Personal medication	Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)

Optional: Telescope & tripod (recommended if you have them), camera, memory cards, spare binoculars and spare spectacles (in case of loss or damage), field guide, swimwear.

Note: The most effective insect repellents are those containing at least 35% of the active ingredient diethyltoluamide (DEET). The higher the percentage, the greater the effectiveness. However, care must be taken to avoid getting the repellent on to optical equipment as it dissolves rubber and plastic and can damage coated lenses. A reasonably effective alternative, which isn't corrosive, is Mosi-guard, produced by MASTA, and we recommend this. It is available in most high street chemist (including those at the airport). Camping supply stores sell a product containing permethrin 0.5%, which must be applied directly to clothing in advance of wearing and allowed to dry. This non-staining, odourless chemical is non-toxic to humans and protective on clothing through several launderings. Please make sure you never to spray insect repellent inside the vehicle or when you are standing close to other participants – it may drift on to their optical equipment.

LEADER'S EQUIPMENT: The leader will have a telescope, sound playback equipment, a spotlight, a laser pointer, a first aid kit and copies of the more important field guides, references and maps. *Note:* The leader's telescope is not to be used for digiscoping. Please do not handle the leader's telescope and tripod without prior permission.

LUGGAGE: Our Final Information document, which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure, will give details about baggage weight and size restrictions imposed by the airline used for this tour.

If possible, please bring your luggage in soft-sided bags or cases (rather than large hard 'Samsonite'-type suitcases) as these pack more easily into our vehicles during the tour. Please note that on many tours there are no porters to carry your luggage so please ensure that **no bag is so heavy that you are unable to lift and carry it yourself**. As a general rule, in addition to using your luggage labels, it is a good idea to fix identification to the *inside* of each piece of luggage.

Rules governing the luggage that may be checked in for flights or carried on board vary considerably between airlines with some companies now allowing only one checked bag per person, while others still allow two. Our Final Information document which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure will give details of the specific regulations imposed by the airline that we will be using for this tour.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Scenery and cultural photos will be easy to obtain as will photos of a number of open country birds. Taking good photographs of forest birds will be difficult. Camera equipment should be packed in moisture and dust-proof bags, as a precaution. Digiscoping is perfectly compatible with the tour, though it is recommended you bring your own telescope as the leader's telescope will not be available for this.

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Please note that this is essentially a birdwatching tour. There will be plenty of opportunities to take photos of birds, mammals and scenery and the leaders will do all they can to accommodate anyone wishing to take photographs. However if you are a serious photographer please bear in mind that this is first and foremost a birdwatching tour. Please do not allow your photographic desires to conflict with other participants' birdwatching activities.

TRANSPORT: We will be traveling in a 10 seater air-conditioned minibus and in some areas in 4WD vehicles. The leader will arrange a seating rotation. Participants should be able to ride in any seat in tour vehicles.

SMOKING: Smoking is not allowed in the vehicles or when the group is gathered for meals, checklists etc. If you are sharing a room with a non-smoker, please do not smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, we ask that you do so well away and downwind from the group if possible.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel insurance is essential and we insist that you take out suitable cover as soon as your tour is booked. If you are bringing expensive optical equipment or other valuable items, please make sure they are also adequately insured on your home contents policy, as most travel insurance policies do not cover very expensive individual items. You may wish to consult your insurance broker regarding coverage. Please also ensure that your policy covers you in the event of a medical emergency, cancellation of a trip or severe delays. Medical costs abroad can often be extremely expensive. Please note that Sunbird is not liable for any medical or repatriation costs resulting from injury or illness during a tour or for covering any costs resulting from a flight delay such as extra hotel accommodation.

If you wish, insurance can be arranged by Helen Fisher, Bullerwell Independent Insurance Brokers, 13 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY. Tel: 01234-866964. Please contact Helen for a quote and she will send the schedule directly to you.

TIPPING: All tour-based tips are included in the tour price. These include tips to local guides, drivers, hotel porters, and waiters and waitresses when we have group meals together in restaurants. You only need to pay tips for personal services such as room service or drinks from the bar.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Field Guides:

James A. Eaton, Bas van Balen, Nick W. Brickle, Frank E. Rheindt. *Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago*. Lynx Editions, 2016. While the taxonomy differs slightly from Clements and the IOC, the plates and maps make this an extremely useful guide. **Recommended.**

Strange, Morten. *A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Indonesia*. Princeton University Press, 2003.

There is some excellent contemporary literature about Indonesia, including its natural history and its wildlife. The following is a small selection of titles that may be of interest.

Daws, Gavan and Marty Fujita. *Archipelago: The Islands of Indonesia from the Nineteenth-Century Discoverie of Alfred Russel Wallace to the Fate of Forests and Reefs in the Twenty-First Century*. California University Press, 1999. A simply stunning coffee table book and will make you want to go everywhere in Indonesia!

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Kathryn A Monk, Yance Fretes and Gayatri Reksodiharjo-Lilley. *The Ecology of Nusa Tenggara and Maluku*. Oxford University Press, 1997. Presents extensive baseline data on the region's natural history, people, ecosystems, biodiversity, and land-use. It discusses these in historical context, as well as in the context of the socio-economic development of the region. Highly illustrated, and accessible to any reader with an interest in the region, it also provides guidelines to scientific researches on worthwhile ecological and socio-economic research projects. It will be invaluable to all individuals involved in development planning and environmental management within the region.

Ruud de Lang. *The Snakes of the Lesser Sunda Islands (Nusa Tenggara), Indonesia: A Field Guide to the Terrestrial and Semi-aquatic Snakes with Identification Key*. Edition Chaimara, 2011. This guide makes it possible to identify snake species on the islands. It also includes biological and conservation status information.

McNeely, Jeffrey A. and Paul Spencer Sochaczewski. *Soul of the Tiger: Searching for Nature's Answers in Exotic Southeast Asia*. University of Hawaii Press, 1995. Out of print but very informative and entertaining.

OBTAINING BOOKS: Most of the field guides and the major ornithological references in print are available by mail order from booksellers specialising in natural history titles.

Natural History Book Service Ltd
Tel: 01803 865913
www.nhbs.co.uk

WildSounds
Tel: 01263 741100
www.wildsounds.co.uk

MAPS: Maps of the region may be available from:

The Map Shop
Tel: 01684 593146
www.themapshop.co.uk

Stanfords
Tel: 020 7836 1321
www.stanfords.co.uk

ORIENTAL BIRD CLUB: Please support this charity which aims to raise money to support conservation projects, encourages an interest in the conservation of birds, and liaises with and promotes the work of existing societies within the region. You will find their contact details and further information about the Club at www.orientalbirdclub.org

FINAL INFORMATION: Final information with instructions for meeting the group, hotel addresses etc., and your air tickets will be sent out about three weeks before the start of the tour. Other news will be communicated as necessary. If you have any questions, please contact us.