



HIGHLIGHTS

An extended bird watching trip including time at Camp Forktail Creek, Bhakrakot village, Kumeria, Kosi, Dhikala, Bijrani and Lohachaur ranges of Corbett Tiger Reserve. This promising trip, in an area that boasts of over 550 bird species, reaps many lifers like Ibisbill, Wallcreeper, Great Thick Knee, Tawny Fish Owl...



CORBETT TIGER RESERVE, INDIA
 ☎: 91-5947-287804 or 91-941107749
 91- 8954942516
 E: info@campforktailcreek.com
 W: www.campforktailcreek.com

BEST TIME

Mid-November to mid March



OUTLINE ITINERARY

- Day 1 Arrive at Camp Forktail Creek by noon. Lunch and then birding in and around Camp. Night in Camp.
- Day 2 Morning game drive into the Bijrani range and afternoon bird watching by Kosi River. Night in Camp.
- Day 3 Camp to Lohachaur range. Full day of bird watching in and around Lohachaur. Night in Lohachaur FRH.
- Day 4 Full day of bird watching along the Mandal and Ramganga Rivers. Night in Lohachaur FRH.
- Day 5 Full day of bird watching at the Lohachaur range. Return to Camp by evening. Night in Camp.
- Day 6 Camp to Dhikala range. Full day in and around Dhikala. Night in a room at Dhikala FRH complex.
- Day 7 Full day game drive at the Dhikala range with a try for an elephant ride. Night in Dhikala.
- Day 8 Full day in and around the Dhikala range. Return to Camp by evening. Night in Camp.
- Day 9 Depart for onward journey post breakfast.



PLAN WOULD INCLUDE

- Accommodation at Camp for four nights, Lohachaur FRH and Dhikala FRH for two nights at each place (accommodation at all 'FRH' -forest rest houses would be subject to availability).
- All meals from lunch on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9, aerated drinks, mineral or filtered drinking water, tea/ coffee.
- Escorted hikes into the forests around Camp.
- One elephant ride (2-hour each) while inside the National Park (subject to availability as it cannot be booked in advance).
- A dedicated 4WD open jeep with a driver and a naturalist for all excursions and game drives.
- All relevant entries fees and permits (charges levied by the forest department are subject to change without prior notice)
- Accompanying chef and other assistants from Camp for the overnight stay in Lohachaur FRH.
- A pilot jeep for staff and supplies.

EXTRA EXPENSES

Expenses of personal nature such as beverages (except those mentioned above) laundry, telephone calls, internet, souvenirs and tips.



INFORMATION ON FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION

Camp Forktail Creek is a small jungle camp located on the north-eastern periphery of Corbett Tiger Reserve, India (23 kms from the town of Ramnagar). It is set amidst dense Sal forests and accommodation is in locally handcrafted ensuite mud huts. Elaborate and sumptuous home-cooked meals accompany each trip with enjoyable, courteous and knowledgeable naturalists, who have been in the region most of their lives.

Camp is in a village which does not have electricity but ample lighting is provided with solar powered lamps and lanterns and candles.



Dhikala Forest Rest House Complex is the largest tourist rest house complex within Corbett Tiger Reserve. It stands atop the left bank of Ramganga River overlooking the expansive grasslands called 'chaurs' further below which is the huge Ramganga reservoir, the heart of Corbett. The grasslands of Dhikala are home to a small but endangered population of Hog Deer.

Being the largest complex, accommodation varies from simple dormitory bunk beds to more comfortable rooms to the old heritage building in middle of the complex called the "Old FRH".

Lohachaur Forest Rest House is a charming 2-room bungalow, built in the early 1900's with architecture typical to the smaller forest bungalows made in those days; 2 ensuite bedrooms with a central dining area and a deep verandah running all along the front of the structure. Its scenic location, with panoramic view of the Mandal River, is in the midst of a moist, fern laden subtropical forest which the northern range of the Tiger Reserve is famous for. The rich landscape in the valleys of Mandal and Ramganga rivers make this a chosen spot for bird watching.

Entry into this range is from Durgadevi Gate, about 5 kms from Camp. The forest rest house is 17kms from this gate.

Over the last few years each place of stay within the Tiger Reserve, has been tastefully restored, making it a very pleasant stay. In addition, the team from Camp inspects and readies each room prior to the arrival of our guests. Essential toiletries, bed and bath linen are taken from Camp and replaced for the duration of your stay. Meals at Dhikala are at the restaurant in the complex which serves wholesome clean vegetarian food and at Lohachaur FRH a team from Camp would accompany your visit and help with hot meals right on site!



INTRODUCTION TO YOUR PLACES OF VISIT

Corbett Tiger Reserve is India's first and one of her finest Tiger Reserves. It supports a strong historical background, which can be traced to the early 1800's when its forests were private property of the rulers of the princely state of Tehri Garhwal.

Nestling in the foothills of the mighty Himalayas, Corbett Tiger Reserve lies mainly in the hilly districts of Nainital, Almora and Pauri Garhwal. At present the Tiger Reserve covers an area of 1318.54 sq km and includes within it Corbett National Park (520.82 sq km), Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary(301.18 sq km) and Reserve Forest (496.54 sq km).



Three rivers feed Corbett Tiger Reserve - Ramganga, which flows in from the northeast and meanders through the Park to form the reservoir at Dhikala. It is then dammed at Kalagarh, in the southwest; Sonanadi, a tributary of Ramganga River flows in from the northwest; Palain, another tributary of Ramganga flows in from the north.

Besides these, Mandal River flows in through the northeast, forming a portion of the northeastern boundary and merging with the Ramganga River at Domunda. The Kosi River forms the eastern boundary of the reserve but does not enter the park at any point.

Corbett Tiger Reserve has three distinct topographic zones within it...

-the Shivaliks in the north -the Bhabar tract of the Patlidun valley and -the swampy Terai in the south
The reserve has an elevation ranging from 400m to 1200m, thus having a rich diversity of flora, fauna and habitats.

The most dominant tree in these mixed deciduous forests is Sal (*Shoera robusta*); it accounts for about 73% of the floral coverage. The valleys thrive with grassland locally called 'chaurs' and riverine forests. About 110 species of trees, 51 species of shrubs and 33 species of grasses and bamboo are listed in Corbett.



Corbett also boasts of a rich variety of faunal species. About 50 species of mammals, about 600 species of birds, 26 species of reptiles, 7 species of amphibians and many insect species are found in the reserve.

Besides, being home to the Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), Corbett is also the northern most tract of habitat for the Asiatic Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) and one can see large herds in the grasslands during the summer months. Other mammals of the reserve include the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*), Leopard Cat (*Felis bengalensis*), 4 kinds of deer - Sambar (*Cervus unicolor*), Hog Deer (*Axis porcinus*), Spotted Deer (*Axis axis*), Barking Deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), Rhesus Monkey (*Macaca mulatta*) & Langur Monkey (*Presbytis entellus*), Ghoral or Mountain Goat (*Nemorhaedus goral*), Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*), Sloth Bear (*Melursus ursinus*), Indian Grey Mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsi*), Small Indian Civet (*Viverricula indica*), Indian Crested Porcupine (*Hystrix indica*), Asiatic Jackal (*Canis aureus*), Yellow-throated Marten (*Martes flavigula*) etc.

There have also been rare sightings of Serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*) and the Himalayan Black Bear (*Selenarctos tibetanus*).

The Mugger or the fresh water Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*), Gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*), Common Otter (*Lutra lutra monticola*), Smooth-coated Otter (*Lutra perspicillata*), Small-clawed Otter (*Aonyx cinerea*), turtles and a variety of fishes; Golden Masheer (*Barbus Tor putitora*), Goonch (*Bagarius yarelli*), Trout, etc are seen in and around the Ramganga River.



Reptile species include Monitor Lizard or the Bengal Monitor (*Varanus bengalensis*), King Cobra (*Ophiophagus Hannah*), Indian Rock Python (*Python molurus*), Indian Trinket Snake (*Elaphe Helena*), Common Indian Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*), Spectacled or Indian Cobra (*Naja naja*)...

Corbett is also a bird watchers paradise with a count of about 600 species (almost 50% of the total count for the Indian Subcontinent) and some of the avian attractions include a variety of Woodpeckers, Kingfishers, Hornbills, Parakeets, Shrikes, Barbets, Drongos, Minivets, Storks, Owls, Pheasants, Eagles, Vultures, Harriers... Please download the 'bird checklist' from our website for the entire list.

Corbett Tiger Reserve has three main tourist zones.

One is called the **Bijrani Range**, entry is through Amdanda Gate. Though this is a much smaller range it is preferred for day-visits and has many criss-cross tracks, making wildlife tracking a joy. One could do a game drive here in the morning or afternoon or the whole day. One could also stay overnight at the Bijrani forest rest house (FRH) and Malani FRH- both in this zone. Two-hour elephant rides are possible in Bijrani in the morning or afternoon but they are subject to availability and cannot be booked in advance. **This zone is open from mid-October to end June.**

The other range, a much larger range, is collectively referred to as **Dhikala**. Entry here is through Dhangari gate and is restricted to those who have a permit to stay overnight in any one of the forest rest house's within this section of the Park, namely, Sultan, Gairal, Sarpduli, Khinnanauli, Dhikala or Kanda. Each of these rest houses has a superb location- Dhikala taking the cake, being located by the reservoir of the Ramganga River which in turn is surrounded by vast grasslands. Apart from being beautiful, it's great for wildlife sighting. Two-hour elephant rides are possible at some of the rest houses in the morning or afternoon but they are subject to availability and cannot be booked in advance. **This zone is open from mid-November to mid-June.**

The third, lesser known range is **Lohachaur** with excellent fern laden patches and moist sub tropical jungles. Entry here is through Durgadevi gate. This is the best zone for birding. This is also the zone where multi-day elephant safaris are permitted by the forest department. Lohachaur and Kanda are the two bungalows accessible in this zone, where overnight stays are possible. **This zone is open from mid-November to mid-June.**



DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 - 2: Camp Forktail Creek

Arrive at Camp Forktail Creek in time for lunch. You would spend your first two nights here. Spend your first afternoon exploring the surrounding forest and streams for species like Great Hornbill, Chestnut Headed and Grey Bellied Tesia, Great Slaty Woodpecker, Spotted Forktail, Long Billed Thrush, Slaty Backed Forktail, Brown Fish Owl, Tawny Fish Owl, Collared Falconet, Red Billed Leothrix, Snowy Browed Flycatcher, Scaly Breasted Wren Babbler and many more species.

On the second day, we leave the Camp early in the morning for a game drive into the Bijrani range of Corbett Tiger Reserve in search of the elusive Bengal Tiger. While there we could spot the Brown Headed Barbet, Black Stork, Orietal Pied Hornbills, Little Pied Flycatcher, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Shikra... We would be back in Camp by lunch and then an afternoon on the banks of the Kosi River to try and spot the Ibisbill, Wall Creeper and Great Thick Knee.

Both days, we would be back in camp by sundown for that hot cup of tea, campfire, followed by dinner, which is leisurely and personal. Along with the excellent cuisine, your guide and hosts will amuse and amaze you with their stories of exciting experiences. It is time to relax and enjoy carefree chatter by the fireside whilst feasting on the unique sounds and smells that your exclusive location offers, before retiring to bed in a mud hut.

Day 3 - 4: Lohachaur Forest Rest House

Next two days involve challenging birding in the Mandal Range of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Species to look out for includes Long Tailed Broadbill, Little Forktail, Grey Headed Fish Eagle, Maroon Oriole, Rufous Gorgeted Flycatcher, Slaty Blue Flycatcher, Silver Eared Mesia, Lesser Racquet Tailed Drongo, Black Chinned Yuhina, White Crested Laughing Thrush, Small Niltava, Rufous Bellied Niltava, Bar Tailed Treecreeper and Chestnut Bellied and Velvet Fronted Nuthatch.



We set up camp at the Lohachaur forest rest house - an old forest rest house built in the early 1900's. We would be amidst some excellent patches of fern laden, moist sub tropical jungles and would encounter a variety of wildlife and birds. The rest house is known to have visiting wild elephants all round the year, though our site keeps us safe with the elephant trench that surrounds it.

Both nights at the Lohachaur forest rest house, escorted by our team from Camp.

Day 5: Camp Forktail Creek

Return to Camp Forktail Creek for a refresher. A visit to Bhakrakot village provides an inside view of the local lifestyle and birding around the village could reap birds like the Fire Tailed Sunbird, Blue Throat, Scarlet Minivet, Black Hooded Oriole, Black Crested Bulbul, Zitting Cisticola, Striated Prinia, Crested Treeswift, Eurasian Hobby, Collared Falconet and Rufous Bellied Eagle. The next day we head for 'Dhikala Range' in the heart of the National Park for two nights.



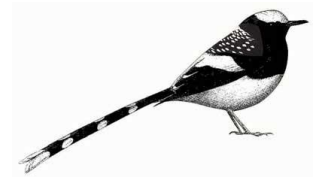
Day 6 - 7: Dhikala FRH

Dhikala is the largest tourist center of Corbett National Park. So, it also has many restrictions and walking is prohibited in this zone except in designated areas. Our stay for two nights in Dhikala would involve game drives to observe the wildlife of the area, an elephant ride to probe into the thick jungles and short walks wherever possible. Birding in Dhikala is quite an attraction and species that can be observed here include Lesser Fish Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Cinereous Vulture, Red Headed Vulture, Pallas' Fish Eagle, Pied Harrier, Black Francolin, Tawny Pipit, Oriental Pied Hornbill, Slaty Headed Parakeet, Emerald Dove and Jungle Bush Quail.

Both nights in a room at Dhikala Forest Rest House complex.

Day 8: Camp Forktail Creek (return from Dhikala)

Return to Camp Forktail Creek from Dhikala by late evening. Around camp you might hear the Spot Bellied Eagle Owl at night, or if lucky, the sawing of a leopard. Night in Camp.



Day 9: Depart for onward destination...

Optional bird-walk in the morning, if desired. Breakfast and depart for onward destination...

