



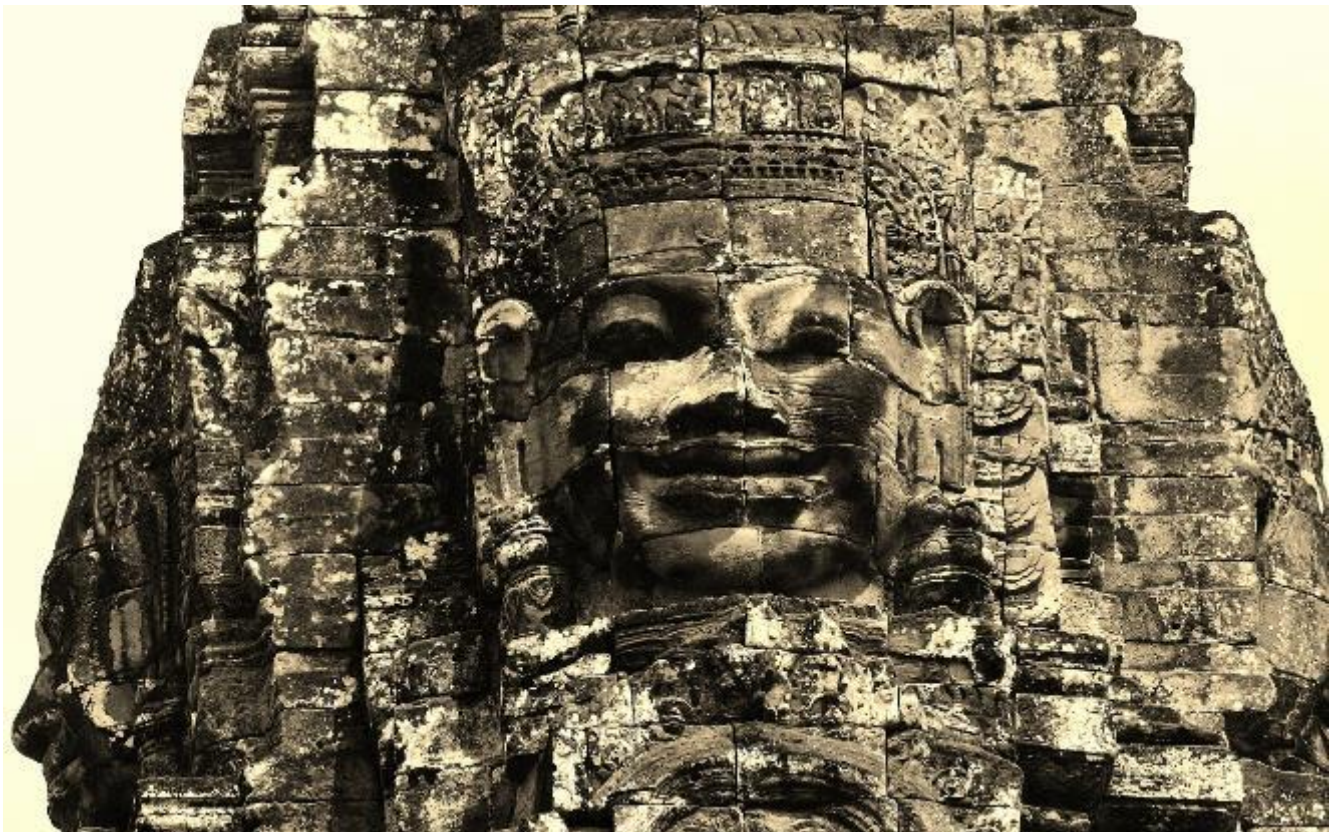
VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

CAMBODIA

FEBRUARY 15–MARCH 2, 2025

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Giant serene, smiling faces look down upon you—carved in superb detail at Angkor Wat. © Dion Hobcroft

The forests and wetlands of this small Southeast Asian country harbor some of the rarest birds and mammals in Southeast Asia, making it one of the most exciting birding destinations in the region. The Cambodian people are indeed custodians of a very special natural heritage. In recent years a number of hugely exciting discoveries have been made. These include the near mythical Giant Ibis; two newly described species—the Mekong Wagtail and Cambodian Tailorbird, and a breeding population of the rapidly declining eastern race of Sarus Crane. Other highly threatened species to

be seen on this special tour include a breeding population of White-shouldered Ibis; Green Peafowl; Gray-headed Fish-Eagle; Slender-billed, White-rumped and Red-headed vultures; White-rumped Pygmy-Falcon; Bengal Florican; Manchurian Reed-Warbler; and Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoo.

On the wetlands surrounding huge Tonle Sap Lake are the biggest breeding colonies of waterbirds in Southeast Asia, representing one of the finest of Asia's many birding spectacles. Healthy populations of Greater Adjutant (which has declined alarmingly elsewhere), the still relatively common Lesser Adjutant, a couple of pairs of Milky Stork, Spot-billed Pelican and many others can be observed nesting at Prek Toal. This is surely a dream list of birds!

In addition, we will encounter a number of other species that are usually considered difficult to see in other countries—Rufous-winged Buzzard, Black-headed Woodpecker and Knob-billed Duck being just a small sample. The dry dipterocarp woodlands of Cambodia harbor a plethora of hugely attractive birds and other animals. For example, we have a chance to see one of the world's loveliest primates, the Black-shanked Douc Langur, in the attractive Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary. In fact, Seima has proved a happy hunting ground for us, including sightings of Great Hornbill, bugling Green Peafowl, Pale-capped Pigeon, Black-crowned Parrotbill and the localized White-cheeked Laughingthrush.

Our accommodations in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh are of a high standard; these lovely hotels are just one highlight of the tour. Our short expedition to northern villages will involve just three nights of basic but comfortable accommodation. That said, there is no doubt our time in Tmatboey and Veal Krous is a wonderful experience and has a true benefit to both the local communities and endangered wildlife.

As if the birds of Cambodia are not exciting enough, we also have the opportunity to visit some of the greatest surviving architectural monuments of Asia—the temples of the ancient city of Angkor. They represent the heart and soul of Cambodia, harking back to an era of unrivalled influence over the entire region. The Khmer Empire once ruled over south China, Vietnam, Thailand, Burma and Malaysia. Built at the height of the Khmer civilization from the eighth to the twelfth centuries, the Angkor complex was erected during a time of extraordinary artistry and we will allow ample time to explore and reflect on these architectural masterpieces.

Join us on what is undoubtedly one of the most charming and fascinating tours to Southeast Asia. This tour can be taken by itself or in combination with Thailand Highlights (March 2-22, 2025).

February 15-16, Days 1-2: Travel to Siem Reap, Cambodia. Participants can take any of a number of connections which depart the USA on February 15 and arrive into Siem Reap Angkor International Airport (airport code SAI) on February 16. Upon arrival and after clearing customs and immigration, participants will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel. Participants wanting to avoid the risk of misconnecting with the group or missing dinner should consider arriving in Siem Reap on or before February 15 and spending the night. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with any additional lodging arrangements.

NIGHT (February 16): Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap

February 17, Day 3: Morning and Afternoon at Angkor Wat, Preah Khan and Angkor Thom. We start our tour of Cambodia with a visit to the magnificent and ancient complex of Angkor Wat. We will visit the main complex with its fantastic bas-relief carving, the superb Bayon Temple of Angkor Thom and in the afternoon Ta Prohm, the so-called "Jungle Temple" which has been left to the elements with strangler fig roots snaking around the crumbling walls and ancient statues. Each is a wonderful experience. The birding in the beautiful forests of Angkor is a great

adjunct to this experience with noisy flocks of Red-breasted and Alexandrine parakeets, super views of Black Baza, often Asian Barred Owlets and Common Hill Mynas. In the drier forests we may find White-crested Laughingthrush, Black-hooded Oriole, Forest Wagtail, White-throated Rock-Thrush and Hainan Blue-Flycatcher. This whole area is alive with birds, culture and history. As is usual we aim to have a break in the middle of the day when the birds go quiet and the day heats up.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap



Another critically endangered Asian wetland species Cambodia is quite famous for—the superb Greater Adjutant photographed at Tonle Sap
© Dion Hobcroft

February 18, Day 4: Full Day at Prek Toal on Tonle Sap Lake.

Tonle Sap Lake is one of the great geographic features of Cambodia. It is a huge lake fed by the mighty Mekong River, and the protected flooded scrub-forests of Prek Toal on its northwestern shores host the greatest breeding colonies of large waterbirds in Southeast Asia. Surrounded by small fishing boats, we will cross the huge lake as the sun rises. At the mouth of a small river we will transfer to smaller boats, depending on the water level, before entering the narrow watercourses and making our way to the colonies of Lesser Adjutants, Painted Storks and Spot-billed Pelicans. As we view this amazing scene, we will search for the rarer Greater Adjutant and the very rare Milky Stork. There is constant bird activity ranging from Black, Yellow and Cinnamon bitterns to Indian and Little cormorants, Oriental Darter, Black-headed Ibis, the scarce Gray-headed Fish-Eagle, chances for Watercock and Ruddy-breasted Crake with plenty of Whiskered Terns, and even the occasional Brown-headed Gull. This is indeed one of the great spectacles of Asia. Please note that ear plugs can be handy on this day as the local people in the village we visit use noisy outboard engines.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap

February 19, Day 5: Search for Bengal Florican; Drive to Tmatboey.

This morning, we must depart early in order to reach a very attractive area of grasslands with scattered small pools called Prolay. This very important and surprisingly bird-rich habitat supports arguably the world's single largest population of the endangered Bengal Florican. This striking and aberrant member of the bustard family is declining rapidly due to continuing loss of its grassland habitat throughout its global range. Here the floricans are well protected and we have an excellent chance at multiple encounters with the flamboyant males. Undoubtedly the contribution we make through our donation, which is paid directly to the villages, goes a long way towards long-term protection of these lands. Other birds we may encounter during our florican search include Woolly-necked and Painted storks, Greater Spotted Eagle, Small Buttonquail, Pied and Eastern Marsh harriers, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Lanceolated Warbler, Siberian Rubythroat, Bluethroat and the endangered Manchurian Reed-Warbler. From Prolay we will head north, gradually working our way into extensive areas of dry dipterocarp forest. This is a bird-rich habitat that supports a tremendous diversity of birds. These forests are home to some of the healthiest populations of Asian endemics such as Rufous-



The critically endangered White-shouldered Ibis will be, along with Giant Ibis, amongst our primary targets at Tmatboey. © Dion Hobcroft

winged Buzzard and Blossom-headed Parakeet. Our base here for the next two nights will be at a lodge near the remote village of Tmatboey. From here we will spend the next two days searching for the critically endangered and near-mythical Giant Ibis. To add to the excitement, there is a very good chance of finding White-shouldered Ibis. The villagers here work in conjunction with conservation organizations to protect these fabulous birds and our presence is not only very welcome, it is very beneficial to the community. Our visit will contribute directly to the benefit of the village, including the provision of wells, electricity and education which help to improve the quality of life in this remote place. The local people do a fantastic job of catering for us and helping to find the elusive birds.

NIGHT: Phnom Tbeng Resort, Preah Vihear

February 20, Day 6: Tmatboey. In the cool of the early morning, we will venture out into the neighboring forest and woodland. Our plan is to walk to nearby *trapeangs*, or permanent waterholes, where the ibises tend to gather during the dry season. As we walk, we will keep an eye out for Woolly-necked Stork; Red Junglefowl; Chinese Francolin; Shikra; Barred Buttonquail; Red-wattled Lapwing; Yellow-legged and Orange-breasted pigeons; Banded Bay, Square-tailed Drongo, Indian and Violet cuckoos; Brown Wood-Owl; Brown Fish-Owl; Oriental Scops-Owl and Brown Boobook; Savanna Nightjar; Stork-billed Kingfisher; Blue-bearded Bee-eater; Burmese Shrike; Great Iora; Small Minivet; Red-billed Blue-Magpie; Racket-tailed Treepie; White-shouldered Starling; Velvet-fronted and Chestnut-bellied nuthatches; Brown Prinia; Pin-striped Tit-Babbler; Golden-fronted Leafbird; Ruby-cheeked, Purple and Van Hasselt's sunbirds; and Plain-backed Sparrow.

At the permanent watercourses there is good bird activity as different species come to drink and bathe. We may find Green and Chestnut-headed bee-eaters, Eurasian Hoopoe, Green-billed Malkoha, Rufous Treepie, Radde's Warbler, White-crested Laughingthrush, Abbott's Babbler and Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher. Tmatboey is famous for woodpeckers. Some 13 species are known in the district including the beautiful Black-headed, giant Great Slaty, scarce White-bellied and Rufous-bellied, Greater and Common flamebacks and the delightful Heart-spotted. It is an excellent birding destination.

NIGHT: Phnom Tbeng Resort, Preah Vihear*
*Single accommodations may not be available

February 21, Day 7: Morning in Tmatboey; Afternoon Drive to Veal Krous. After another morning birding in the forests and woodlands of Tmatboey, we will drive to Veal Krous. About three hours away, this site is best known for its population of vultures and our visit will pay for a cow carcass to feed these critically endangered birds. Until the 1970s Cambodia supported one of the great wildlife populations in Southeast Asia, compared in fact to the Serengeti. Herds of Gaur, Banteng and Kouprey (all species of wild cattle), Eld's Deer, plus Asian Elephant and Tiger all flourished in this district. With the tragic complete extinction of all of these mega mammals in this region, the last remaining vultures are dependent on humans for their welfare. We hope to see White-rumped, Slender-billed and Red-headed vulture, all extremely rare anywhere else, even in remote India. There is also a chance for the scarce Indian Spotted Eagle. Mammals are possible including the Indochinese Silver Langur, a spectacular leaf monkey, and Golden Jackal may show up at the Vulture Restaurant. The woodlands here are in excellent condition and beyond the birds already mentioned, on previous visits we have seen Large-tailed Nightjar, Vernal Hanging-Parrot, Banded Broadbill, Swinhoe's Minivet, Indochinese Cuckoo-shrike, Cinereous Tit, Gray-headed Canary-Flycatcher, Gray-eyed Bulbul, Puff-throated Babbler and occasionally the scarce Sulphur-breasted Warbler. As in Tmatboey, our visit directly benefits the local village and wildlife in this remote area.

NIGHT: Mey Mey Guest House, Veal Krous*
*Single accommodations may not be available

February 22, Day 8: Veal Krous; Afternoon Return to Siem Riep. After a morning enjoying wildlife viewing and photography, we will return to Siem Reap to our lovely hotel and enjoy a bit of luxury. Along the drive we will stop at a site that has proven reliable to look for the scarce White-rumped Pygmy-Falcon as well as the fantastic temple complex of Beng Mealea.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap

February 23, Day 9: Ang Trapeang Thmor Wildlife Reserve. This morning, we will drive westwards toward the Thai border to visit a very special reserve. The old reservoir and surrounding forest harbor a very rare population of the Southeast Asian race of Sarus Crane. At times this magnificent bird can be seen in large flocks of up to 100 birds! In addition, we should encounter impressive gatherings of Knob-billed Duck, Lesser Whistling-Duck, Cotton Pygmy-Goose, Painted Stork, Eastern Marsh-Harrier, Pied Harrier, Greater Spotted Eagle, Black-backed Swamphen, Pheasant-tailed and Bronze-winged jacanas, a variety of shorebirds, plus species like Red-throated Pipit and Singing Bushlark. This site has also regularly produced Spotted Wood-Owl, Spotted Owlet and Barn Owl.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap

February 24, Day 10: Chang Kran Roy. This morning we will visit a recently discovered location, close to Siem Reap (1.5hr drive), where several hides allow for excellent viewing of a host of tricky forest species. Another ecotourism project, our visit will contribute to the local community to ensure the continued protection of this forest area. The star bird of this location is the amazing Coral-billed Ground-Cuckoo which can be a fairly reliable visitor to the hides. We should enjoy a relaxing and enjoyable session with excellent photographic opportunities. The list of potential species here is extensive, but some of the highlights include Scaly-breasted Partridge, Racket-tailed Treepie, Puff-throated Bulbul, Large Scimitar-Babbler, and Siberian Blue Robin.

NIGHT: Angkor Village Resort, Siem Reap

February 25, Day 11: Drive to Kratie. Today is primarily a travel day as we head into the eastern part of the country, before following the Mekong, the longest river in Southeast Asia, to the riverside town of Kratie. During the afternoon (time allowing) we will explore a mosaic of farmland and marshes which host quite a nice selection of birds including Yellow, Cinnamon and Black bitterns; Ruddy-breasted and White-browed crakes; Watercock; Black-crowned Night-Heron; Pallas's Grasshopper-Warbler; Bluethroat; several warblers and prinias; and with a bit of luck, a large mixed-flock of munias and weavers including Asian Golden, Baya and Streaked.

NIGHT: Mekong Dolphin Hotel, Kratie

February 26, Day 12: Morning on the Mekong River; Afternoon Drive to Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary. Early this morning while the air is still pleasantly cool and fresh, we will drive a short distance north along the Mekong where we will take to small boats to search for the recently discovered Mekong Wagtail. This highly localized and delightful species, which was first described in 2001, is reliably seen here. Also reliably present is the very rare Irrawaddy Dolphin. Small numbers of this beakless freshwater dolphin can usually be seen hunting fish in these waters. Occasionally we have seen them spitting water to herd the schools of fish towards each other. Here among small river islands we may also encounter Small Pratincole, Kentish and Little Ringed plover, Blue-tailed Bee-eaters, Gray-throated Martin and White Wagtail. After breakfast, we will pack up and head east into the furthest reaches of Cambodia.

NIGHT: Nature Lodge Resort, Sen Monorom

February 27-28, Days 13-14: Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary. Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary is a vast area of gently and not so gently rolling hills that are still covered in little explored semi-evergreen lowland forests. An excellent road bisects the entire reserve, from which emanate a series of tracks along which we will seek out some of Seima's most exciting birds and other wildlife. Happily, Seima is just that little bit higher in elevation than we experience during the rest of our time in Cambodia and as a result the temperature is noticeably slightly cooler and more comfortable. Our explorations will encompass a range of forest types and elevations from hill forest on the border with Vietnam at circa 800-900m (3,000 ft.) to 350m (1,000 ft.). The Seima-Sen Monorom is still relatively poorly studied and new species to the Cambodian bird list remain to be found in this area.

Some of the birds and mammals that we may (and hope to) find include the rare Orange-necked Partridge; Germain's Peacock-Pheasant (both of these are typically heard only as they are extremely shy); spectacular and endangered Green Peafowl – we have a chance of seeing this magnificent bird at dawn but it has been getting harder in recent years; Pale-capped, Thick-billed and Pin-tailed pigeons; both Green and Mountain imperial-pigeons; Great and Oriental Pied hornbills; Annam, Blue-eared, Green-eared and Red-vented barbets; Seima is especially rich in woodpeckers hosting some many species including Speckled Piculet, Pale-headed, White-bellied, Black-and-buff and Great Slaty woodpeckers; Banded Kingfisher; Orange-breasted Trogon; Collared Falconet; with a great deal of luck Bar-bellied or Blue-rumped pittas; Long-tailed, Silver-breasted and Dusky broadbills; Indochinese and Large cuckoo-shrikes; and a wonderful array of babblers including the increasingly scarce Black-throated Laughingthrush and Indochinese endemic White-cheeked Laughingthrush. Our recent tours have produced several surprises including the White-browed and Clicking shrike-babblers, Black-throated Tit (of the sometimes split Gray-crowned subspecies), Black-crowned Parrotbill, Lesser Shortwing, recently split Annam Prinia, Silver-eared Mesia, Blue-winged Minla and White-cheeked Laughingthrush.

NIGHTS: Nature Lodge Resort, Sen Monorom



The Cambodian Tailorbird is one of the most recently described birds in the world.
©Dion Hobcroft

March 1, Day 15: Morning at Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary; Afternoon Drive to Phnom Penh. After a final morning's birding in the Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, we will make our way westwards to the capital city of Phnom Penh, arriving in the late afternoon. On the outskirts of Phnom Penh, we will try and see the recently discovered Cambodian Tailorbird, described to science in 2013.

NIGHT: Sunway Hotel, Phnom Penh

March 2, Day 16: Departure from Phnom Penh. Transfers will be provided to Phnom Penh International Airport (airport code PNH) in time for various morning or early afternoon departures.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 8 participants.

TOUR LEADER: Max Breckenridge with the assistance of a local leader



Max Breckenridge was born in the UK, but has lived virtually his entire life in Sydney, Australia. At age 12, his passion for birds was fostered when his parents took him and his brother out of school for 10 weeks to travel across Australia. After completing high school in Sydney, Max drove solo from Darwin to Broome, birding all the way, and spent the next month volunteering at the world-renowned Broome Bird Observatory. Max completed a Bachelor of Biodiversity & Conservation at Macquarie University in 2018. He has birded across every state and almost every corner of the Australian landmass. He has an excellent eye, and especially ear, for Australian birds. Some of his birding exploits in Australia include two separate trips to the remote rainforests of Iron Range National Park on Queensland's Cape York (including a fly-in-fly-out trip during the middle of the wet season, when he spent two weeks under a tarp

in order to see some of the key migrants from Papua New Guinea). Max is at home birding in the Old World and has spent the last decade covering as much of it as possible. He is incredibly passionate about wildlife conservation. In addition to guiding, he has spent much of his spare time working for BirdLife Australia, monitoring and researching the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater, including working on several captive-releases of zoo-bred individuals. Max receives immense pleasure from birding and showing birds to others and takes pride in writing detailed trip reports. He is currently living on Lake Macquarie, north of Sydney, with his partner, Fernanda.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for this tour is **\$6,995** per person in double occupancy from Siem Reap (ends in Phnom Penh). This includes all meals beginning with dinner on Day 2 to dinner on Day 15, lodging during the tour, ground transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leader. The tour fee does not include flights from your home to Siem Reap and return from Phnom Penh, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$790**. Please note that this fee does not cover nor guarantee single accommodations on Days 5, 6 and 7 (see **TMATBOEY/VEAL KROUS ACCOMMODATIONS** section below). However, your preference will be noted and accommodated, if possible, at no additional cost.

TMATBOEY/ VEAL KROUS ACCOMMODATIONS: At Tmatboey we will be staying in a small lodge with individual huts and private bathrooms. The beds are surprisingly comfortable with good quality bedding and mosquito netting. The bathroom and toilet are simple and there is solar hot water. Towels are provided but we suggest you please bring a small towel. The toilets are western style. There is also a very welcome overhead fan. There is solar powered electricity available which is typically sufficient for recharging batteries, but best to be fully charged before heading out. Please do not wear your shoes inside the room. A pair of flip flops or sandals are convenient to bring along. At Veal Krous for one night we stay nearby at a basic guesthouse with A/C and private bathrooms. These accommodations are simple yet peaceful and refreshing. The local people do a fantastic job of catering for us and our visit directly contributes to the conservation of several of this region's most endangered birds.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at <https://ventbird.com>) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits,

interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days prior to the tour departure date (September 18, 2024).

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may **NOT** be available. **For this reason, travel insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Through Ripcord, “emergency evacuation” can be purchased as a stand-alone benefit or as part of a comprehensive travel insurance policy. If you choose not to purchase insurance through Ripcord, you are required to obtain it through another provider.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

Cancellation by Participant:

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For participants’ protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

<u>If participant cancels:</u>	<u>Participant’s refund will be:</u>
180 days or more before departure date	Participant’s deposit minus \$500*
179 to 151 days before departure date	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour fee will be refunded
150 days or less before departure date	No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Cancellation by VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage

of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

Cancellation by Participant:

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For participants' protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

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150 days or less before departure date

Participant's refund will be:

Participant's deposit minus \$500*

No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour fee will be refunded

No refund available

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FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: <https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip cost in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

In line with the decision made by the federal government (including the CDC), Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a **Coronavirus FAQ** page on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link: https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing**

your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your airline to find out specific weight restrictions. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>.

It is suggested that you wear clothing and a pair of shoes suitable for birding in case your baggage is delayed.

CLIMATE: Most of our time will be spent in dry tropical lowland forest and wetlands. Cambodia is generally hot, sometimes very hot, and dry at this time of year. During our three days in and around Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, it will be noticeably cooler or at least less hot. Night time temperatures can be hot in the north but generally cool enough for a light jacket. It is unlikely that we will encounter any rain, but there is always a possibility.

CLOTHING: Please remember that dark-browns, dark-blues and dark-greens are less likely to startle birds and mammals. Please avoid bright colors or loud, crackling plastics. Bring light-weight and predominantly cotton field clothing; a warm sweater; a hat with a good brim to keep the sun off while you are seated in a boat; a waterproof poncho, jacket or the like; a small collapsible umbrella; and comfortable boots with rugged soles. You should also have relatively thick socks to cushion your feet during long walks. It is ideal that you buy them calf-length so that you can tuck the bottoms of your trousers into them as protection against scratches and "bugs."

DIFFICULTY: In general, this tour of Cambodia is easy and not especially physically demanding. Most of the time we will be walking on level ground either on paved or unpaved roads or tracks and occasionally trails. There is some walking through grassland but very little uphill walking. Where there is, this will always be at a gentle pace with regular stops. Again, this will not be especially physically demanding.

At most of the places we visit it will be important to be in the field at or before dawn so that we can hear the birds singing as the day starts up and to make the very most of the cool morning temperatures. In several cases, including for some very critical species such as the Giant Ibis, this may be our only opportunity to discover if they are present or not. In addition, it can be a very good time to catch the occasional nightjar, owl or even nocturnal mammal. Typically, we return to our hotel or lodge for lunch or even earlier and then rest up and re-charge our stamina batteries before going out again in the late afternoon. This is NOT wasting good birding time because bird activity is virtually nil during the heat of the day and by re-charging our batteries and concentrating our efforts at the most optimal time of day, we will be in good shape to properly enjoy whatever comes our way.

Please be aware that Cambodia is hot compared to most places one visits in the tropics of the Oriental Region and it will be very important to drink lots of water, of which there will always be plenty available. It can also be dusty.

CURRENCY: Riel (r). The Riel is accepted in remote areas but the de facto and preferred currency is the U.S. dollar. Change is often given in Riel. Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express are accepted at the larger hotels. We suggest you DO NOT change any money into Riel but rather bring fresh new US dollar notes in small denominations. For example, even the tuk tuk drivers will quote you in US dollars! US Dollars are dispensed from ATM machines and this can be a convenient way of getting cash.

DOCUMENTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure and visa are required for United States citizens to enter Cambodia. A one-month tourist visa is available upon arrival in Cambodia for a cost of \$30. We suggest that you carry a couple of recent passport photos in case requested by the local officials.

Another option is to apply ahead of time for an electronic visa on Cambodia's official website:

<https://www.evisa.gov.kh/>

All of the above information is subject to change without notice. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars (in your carry-on luggage) that are in good condition along with a belt or day pack (good for carrying books, sunscreen, camera, etc.). Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. Other items to bring should include a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle, alarm clock, sunglasses and sunscreen.

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

Tap water should be avoided. In smaller towns and rural areas, assume the water is unsafe and stick with bottled or boiled drinks. Bottled spring water is widely available and copious amounts will be with us throughout this tour. Sanitation throughout Cambodia is relatively very good compared to most tropical areas of the world. Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating and make sure meat is cooked thoroughly. Be sure to bring all necessary prescription drugs, as well as aspirin, antacids, and a supply of antihistamines should you develop a cold.

No vaccinations are required; however, cholera, typhoid and tetanus should be current. Gamma globulin may be taken to prevent hepatitis. Malaria is present, including the chloroquine-resistant strain. There are several options for malaria prophylaxis including Mefloquine (Lariam), Malarone, and Doxycycline. These medications are available by prescription only. Please consult your physician or local travel clinic for recommendations. Please note we are traveling at the peak of the dry season typically and we do not encounter many mosquitoes.

Insects such as mosquitoes and sand-flies can be a problem although scarce in the dry season. This is best dealt with by wearing long-sleeved shirts of sufficient thickness and density of weave that the "bugs" cannot bite through, and long trousers tucked into long socks. We also recommend *CUTTER* lotion in the squeeze bottle or pump-style *OFF!* (see below).

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying "Up to Date" with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19. Please visit the **Coronavirus Travel Update** page of our website <https://ventbird.com/covid-19> for our official statement regarding COVID-19 and the operation of our tours. Please visit the CDC website for the most up to date information about COVID-19 and associated guidance for proper health and hygiene: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

Insect Repellents – There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin) is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.
- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

INTERNET ACCESS: Expect Wi-Fi to be available in most locations except Tmatboey and Veal Krous.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Electricity - 220 volts, 50 cycles

Language – Khmer (Cambodian), English, some people speak French.

Time - 12 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

Cambodia Bird Guides Association. *Birds of Cambodia* Lynx and Birdlife International Field Guides, Barcelona: Lynx Edicions, 2019. A new field guide covering the country in good detail. Some taxonomic differences from Clements/Cornell yet easily the recommended bird book to bring along on this tour.

Das, I. *A Field Guide to the Reptiles of South-East Asia*. London, UK: New Holland, 2010. A superb field guide that permits you to identify, for the first time, virtually all of the reptiles you encounter in the wild.

Francis, C. *A Field Guide to the mammals of Thailand and South-East Asia*. UK: New Holland, 2008. A superb field guide covering all the wonderful mammals of SE Asia.

Hudson, C. *The Killing Fields*. A very moving account of the distressing events of the war; also an excellent film.

Keown, D. *Buddhism – a very short introduction*. Oxford, 2000. OUP.

Loung Ung. *First They Killed My Father*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2000. A riveting memoir of one family's survival in the Pol Pot years.

Parr, J. W. K. *Large Mammals of Thailand*. Thailand: Sarakadee Press, most current edition.

Ray, N. *Cambodia*. Melbourne: Lonely Planet, most current edition.

Robson, Craig. *A Guide to the Birds of Southeast Asia*. Princeton University Press, 2000.

Rooney, D. *Angkor – An Introduction to the Temples*. Passport Books, 1997.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, “**VENT**”) act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on June 14, 2024 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands

of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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