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## AFRICAN ADVENTURE TOURS

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**AAT-1126**

### **BIRDING IN ETHIOPIA**

**Duration: 19 Days / 18 Nights**



#### **Tour Highlights:**

- Visit one of the most attractive birding sites in Africa accompanied by an experienced birding guide
- Over 850 species of birds live in Ethiopia. Enjoy endemic, near-endemic, localized and less often found species
- See Awash National Park, the Rift Valley Lakes and the famous Bale Mountains National Park with its spectacular landscapes and afro-alpine vegetation
- Drive in a modern, air-conditioned 4WD and stay in the best available accommodations
- Traditional Ethiopian farewell dinner with “coffee ceremony” and traditional dances of different ethnic groups

#### **Travel date:**

Every day departure with a minimum of two participants.

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<p><b>Day 1: Arrival in Addis Ababa</b>  WELCOME TO ETHIOPIA. On arrival in Addis Ababa our representative will meet you at the airport. After transfer to your hotel an overview of the program will be given. We spend some time birding around the extensive grounds of the Ghion Hotel. Among the species spotted here are the White-backed Black Tit and the Brown Tit Warbler. After lunch we leave for Geferssa Reservoir where Blue-winged Goose, Black-headed Siskin, Abyssinian Long Claw and Wattled Ibis can be seen. In the evening return to Addis Ababa. Overnight Ghion Hotel</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 2: Alem Ketema</b>  After a final morning birding around the cliffs surrounding our hotel we drive north across the Sululta Plains and to the Jemma Valley.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 3: Explore Jemma Valley</b>  We explore Jemma Valley for Harwood's and Erkel's Francolin as well as for other birds. A very early start will be needed to find Harwood's Francolin. If we miss Erkel's Francolin here there is another chance later in the programme. The lower valley holds, due to its great depth, lowland species as Speckle-fronted Weaver. We shall look for it and make our way back up the gorge to seek Rueppell's Black Chat and White-winged Chat, always keeping an eye open for Lammergeyers patrolling the cliff edges. Overnight (very basic) hotel</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 4: Alem Ketema to Debre Birhan</b>  An early departure from Alem Ketema is essential in order to be at our chosen site when the endemic Harwood's Francolin is at its most vocal, thus providing our best opportunity to see this elusive species. We will have a picnic breakfast at the river and bird the surrounding woodlands.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 5: Awash</b>  From Debre Birhan we head to Ankober and descend the escarpment to look for the elusive Yellow-throated Serin in the vicinity of Melka Guba. We continue our descent into the hot acacia woodlands birding en route to Awash. Birds we will hope to see include: Bateleur, Dark-chanting Goshawk, Gabar Goshawk, Shikra, Pygmy Falcon, Arabian Bustard, Buff-crested Bustard, Black-headed Lapwing, Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse, African Collared-dove, African Mourning Dove, Ring-necked Dove, Laughing Dove, Namaqua Dove, Orange-bellied Parrot and many, many more. As we progress across the sands of the encroaching desert we approach the Fantalle Volcano, where we hope to find Sombre Chat in its black lava fields.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 6: Awash National Park</b>  All day birding in Awash National Park, which is located in the Rift Valley. Many species of birds and mammals live here. African Orange-bellied Parrots, Bustards, Weavers, European Hoopoe, Sombre Rock-chat, Yellow-throated Serine, Red-fronted Barbet, Pygmy Bait, Lesser Striped Swallow, House Martin, etc. - just to name a few. Also mammals like the Anubis Baboon, Colobus Monkey, Black-backed Jackal, Bat-eared Fox, Warthog, Beisa Oryx, Soemmering's Gazelle, Lesser Kudu and Dik-dik live in the park.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Day 7: Bilen Lodge</b>  Explore Awash National Park and the surrounding area including a visit to the Awash River Gorge and the Awash waterfall. Here we search the acacia woodlands and grasslands for specialties</p>		



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including: Ostrich, Secretary Bird, Arabian Bustard, Kori Bustard, White-bellied Bustard, Lappet-faced Vulture, Martial Eagle, Swallow-tailed and Black-winged Kite, African Hobby, Bateleur, Crowned Plover, Black-headed Plover, White-rumped Helmet-shrike, Chestnut-bellied and Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse, Eastern Grey Plantain-eater, White-bellied Go-away-bird and many more. Also a variety of mammals can be seen (Beisa Oryx, Swayne's Hartebeest, Greater & Lesser Kudu, Waterbuck, Soemmering's Gazelle, Spotted Hyena, ...)



**Day 8: Langano**  
 This morning we search the vicinity of the lodge for more East African acacia birds. Then we head south to the lake district of the Ethiopian Rift Valley. Along the way a variety of raptors can be seen. A stop at Lake Ziway will reveal a bewildering assortment of water birds: Great White Pelican, Long-tailed Cormorant, Darter, Squacco, Intermediate Egret, Hammerkop, etc. In the evening we will look for Freckled Nightjar along the cliff pathways.




**Day 9: Wondo Genet**  
 Morning birding in the extensive acacia woodland near the hotel (Banded Barbet, Superb Starling, Little Rockthrush, Red-fronted Tinkerbird, Red-fronted Barbet, African Black-headed Oriole, Bearded Woodpecker,...). After lunch we will look for Roosting Verraux's and Spotted Eagle Owl then visit the Abiata-Shalla National Park. At Lake Abiata thousands of Lesser Flamingos and sometimes Wattled Cranes gather. The lake has been in recent years much dryer than usual but if the water level returns it will continue to be a stopping place for birds migrating along the Rift Valley. This attracts also raptors like: African Fish Eagle, Pallid, Montague's and Marsh Harriers.

**Day 10: Wondo Genet**  
 All day will be used to explore the lush wooded valley with its thermal springs. There are many trails to walk and look for birds. Endemics here include: Yellow-fronted Parrot, Abyssinian Woodpecker, White-winged Cliffchat and Thick-billed Raven. Also Abyssinian Ground Thrush, Silvery-cheeked Hornbill, Lizard Buzzard, Nerina's Trogon and Half-collared Kingfisher inhabit the area together with Scaly Francolin, African Thrush and more. Colobus and Vervet Monkeys can be found right on the hotel grounds.



**Day 11: Bale**  
 We leave the Rift Valley and start the ascent of the Bale Mountains. Endemics here are Blue-winged Goose, Wattled Ibis, White-backed Black Tit, Rouget's Rail, White-collared Pigeon, Catbird, Abyssinian Black-headed Oriole, Thick-billed Raven, Abyssinian Slaty Flycatcher, Abyssinian Longclaw and Abyssinian Black-headed Siskin. Also Lammergeier, Little Sparrowhawk, Black Goshawk, Red-chested Sparrowhawk, Abyssinian Ground Thrush, Rueppell's Robin-Chat, Red-billed Chough, Somali Crow and more can be found in the park. We should also see some of the mammals, like Mountain Nyala, Menelik's Bushbuck, Klipspringer, Bohor Reedbuck, Grey Duiker and Warthog.



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<p><b>Day 12: Excursion to Sof Omer</b>  Travel to Sof Omer to seek Salvadori's Serin birding en-route. After travelling on the Bale Plateau we drop down 1,300 metres to the dry acacia landscape. On the way we pass through villages where small camel caravans arrive with salt. Birds that we expect to see are: Long-legged Buzzard, Wahlberg's Eagle, Nubian and Cardinal Woodpecker, Grey-headed Batis, Pale Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Apalis and many more. If time allows we will take a look to the large cave system of Sof Omer, before returning to Goba.</p>		
	<p><b>Day 13: Senette Plateau</b>  The Senette Plateau with its afro-alpine vegetation is one of the highlights of the tour. The majority of the vegetation is low which ensures good views of our target species: the endemic Spot-breasted Plover and Simien Red Wolf. It is unlikely to be disappointed in our search for these species. Also we will look for Yellow-billed and Ruddy Shelduck, Chestnut-naped and Moorland Francolin, Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk, Wattled Crane, Slender-billed Starling and the endemic Starck's Hare. We drive down the escarpment to the Herrena Forest in search for: Mountain Buzzard, Cinnamon Bracken Warbler and endemic Abyssinian Woodpecker, Brown Sawwing and near endemic White-cheeked Turaco. Then descend further to the area where Prince Ruspoli's Turacos can be found. A variety of raptors, plover, weaver and many more can be seen on the way.</p>	
<p><b>Day 14: Negele</b>  The morning will be spent seeking Prince Ruspoli's Turaco and other birds in the area like Golden-breasted and Violet-backed Starling. In the afternoon we head for the Negele Plain where we seek the endemic Sidamo and Somali Short-toed Lark. The Sidamo Lark is quite secretive and inhabits a very small area. While there we will also look for other plains species like Kori Bustard, Teminck's Courser, White-crowned Starling, Plain-backed Pipit, Zitting Cisticola, Pectoral-patch Cisticola, Pale Prinia, Rufous Sparrow, etc.</p>		
<p><b>Day 15: Negele</b>  We spend the day seeking the Degodi Lark (if not seen the day before), White-winged Dove and Juba Weaver, two specialties of the area. Also Black-faced Sandgrouse, Chestnut-headed Sparrow-lark, Scaly Chatterer and more live in the area. We return to Negele, birding along the way.</p>		
<p><b>Day 16: Yabello</b>  Today we enter the region of the endemic White-tailed Swallow and Stresemann's Bushcrow, which we expect to see. Other species like Ostrich, Secretary Bird, Rueppell's Griffon Vulture, Martial Eagle, Grasshopper Buzzard, Pygmy Falcon, Vulturine Guinea-fowl, Kori Bustard, Donaldson Smith's Nightjar, Star-spotted Nightjar, Coqui Francolin, Yellow-billed Hornbill, Lilac-breasted Roller and many more live in the area.</p>		
<p><b>Day 17: Yabello</b>  The day will be spent in the Yabello Wildlife Reserve where we look for Stresemann's Bushcrow, White-tailed Swallow,</p>		

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<p>Somali Courser, African Bare-eyed Thrush, Little-spotted Woodpecker, Pringle's Puffback, Little Tawny Pipit, etc. Also mammals like Burchell's Zebra, Aardvark, Grant's and Thompson's Gazelle and Lesser-spotted Genet inhabit the reserve.</p>		
<p><b>Day 18: Awassa</b> Today we head back up the Rift Valley to Awassa, birding the acacia bush and highlands as we go.</p>		
<p><b>Day 19: Addis Ababa, Departure</b> Morning visit the Awassa freshwater lake on the search of species previously missed. Birds like Pink-backed Pelican, Black and Goliath Heron, African Openbill, Glossy Ibis, Black Crake, Banded Snake Eagle, African Harrier Hawk, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Blue-headed Coucal, Senegal Thicknee, several Kingfisher, Carmine Bee-eater, Little Bee-eater, Red-breasted Wryneck, Black-billed Woodhoopoe, Tropical Bou Bou and many more live in the area as well as Hippopotamus. Afterwards we drive to Debre Zeyit's crater lakes, birding along the Rift Valley. Then drive to Addis Ababa. Evening fare well dinner party, with dances from the different ethnic groups, in a traditional Ethiopian restaurant and transfer to the airport for flight home.</p>		
<p><b><u>PRICE</u></b></p> <p><b>Price per person (on the basis of 2 travellers) = US \$ 3.612</b>  <b>Price per person (on the basis of 3 travellers) = US \$ 2.876</b>  <b>Price per person (on the basis of 4 travellers) = US \$ 2.620</b>  <b>Single room supplement = US \$ 250</b></p>		
<p><b>Price includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Special qualified birding guide as well as mandatory local guide or scout fees in parks and villages</li> <li>- 4-star hotel in Addis Ababa and the best available accommodation outside of Addis Ababa</li> <li>- All accommodation based on twin room occupancy</li> <li>- Meals in Addis, on bed and breakfast basis</li> <li>- Meals out of Addis, on full board basis</li> <li>- Farewell dinner in Addis to enjoy traditional Ethiopian food and music</li> <li>- All entrance fees at sites, churches, parks and villages</li> <li>- All transfers and visits in Addis Ababa using mini-bus according to the itinerary</li> <li>- All ground transportation including insurance, fuel and all costs of the driver</li> <li>- Traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony at a convenient time in the program</li> <li>- Government taxes</li> </ul> <p><b>Price doesn't include</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International flights</li> <li>- Lunch and dinner in Addis Ababa</li> <li>- Any kind of drinks, alcoholic or non-alcoholic, incidental meals and snacks</li> <li>- Video filming and photographing fees</li> <li>- Tips and items of personal nature like laundry, souvenirs, etc .</li> <li>- All what is not included in the list above</li> </ul>		