

Natures Images

Golden Eagles and Vultures

Day 1 - On arrival at Sofia airport we will transfer to Mirkovo village (approx one hour) for overnight accommodation, dinner and planning the next few days' photography.

Days 2 to 5 - The prime focus for these four days will be Golden Eagle photography from specially prepared hides, 25-35m away from a regularly baited mountainous setting, allowing for memorable opportunities to photograph these majestic wild birds and their natural behaviour. We will be kept up to date of approaching birds by our guides who will be observing from a distance, giving us the best chance of some flying and landing images too. During our time based here you can spend 2, 3 or 4 days in the one of the two hides (offering slightly different viewpoints), with the option to spend a day photographing passerines from portable hides at prepared feeding stations. These could include Sombre, Marsh, Willow and Great Tits, Syrian, Great Spotted, possibly Middle Spotted and even Grey-headed Woodpeckers, Hawfinch, Buntings, Jay, Tree Sparrow etc.

Day 6 - After a morning photographing passerines we will spend the afternoon travelling to Madjarovo, in the Eastern Rodope Mountains, reaching our hotel in the evening and staying overnight here for the next 3 nights.

Days 7 and 8 - Both days will be spent in a specially prepared hide, again at a regularly baited mountain setting, photographing Griffon Vultures. They can visit in large numbers here so there's the chance for group shots, plenty of interactive behaviour as well as individual portraits. The site is regularly visited by other species interested in the bait, and these include Raven, Black Vulture, White-tailed and even Imperial Eagles.

Day 9 - long transfer (four and a half hours of driving) to Sofia airport for return flights.

Recommended Kit: You will need to provide your own photographic equipment - a 300mm lens (with converters) should meet your needs (especially on a cropped sensor) but obviously there are also certain advantages of anything longer. A stable tripod is a must. There may be some interesting landscape and other environmental opportunities along the way so bring some alternative options in terms of lenses for this as well.

Additional information:

Please note that the hide based days will be long and surprisingly tiring - we have to be in the hides before first light at around 07.00 a.m. and can only leave once it is dark - generally not before 07.00 pm., although if there is unfavourable weather conditions such as fog or heavy rainfall and when it is sure that the eagles will not see us leave we can exit before this time.

Registered Office:

4 Deer Park Drive, Newport, Shropshire TF10 7HB

Tel: 01952 411436

E-Mail: sales@natures-images.co.uk

www.natures-images.co.uk

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