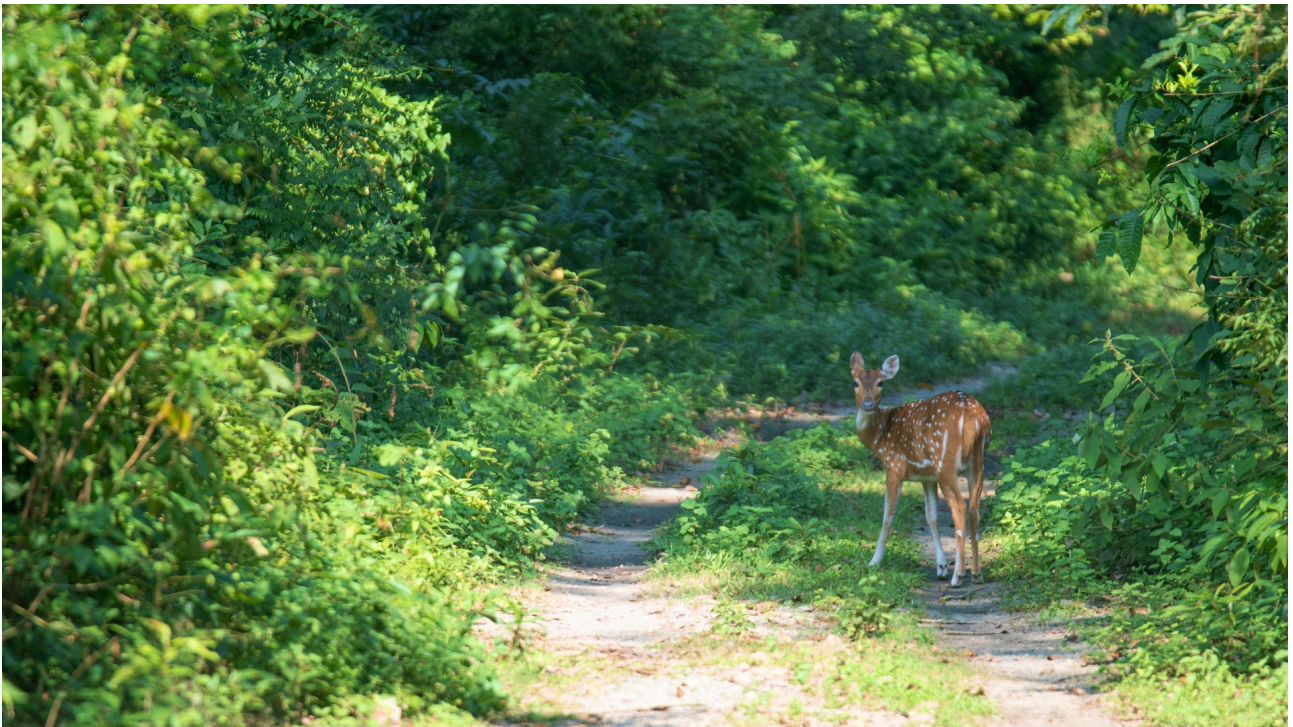


Elephant & Tiger Trails: Bardiya and Shuklaphanta National Parks



Trip Overview

The Elephant & Tiger Trails is a nine-day wildlife adventure through the Terai lowlands of western Nepal, combining forest, grassland, and riverine ecosystems. Guests explore Bardiya National Park, home to tigers, wild Asian elephants, swamp deer, and Gangetic dolphins, followed by the expansive grasslands of Shuklaphanta National Park. Guided by expert naturalists, the itinerary includes jeep safaris, river cruises, tower hide observations, and walking excursions that maximize wildlife encounters. Alongside thrilling predator and elephant sightings, travelers enjoy immersive cultural experiences with local Tharu communities. From the sal forests and floodplains of Bardiya to the “phantas” of Shuklaphanta, this journey blends biodiversity exploration, conservation education, and authentic Terai landscapes in comfort and safety.

Total Trip Days: 9 Days / 8 Nights

Trip Highlights

- Safari through Bardiya National Park with jeep rides, river safaris, and grassland walks
- Spot Bengal tigers, wild Asian elephants, swamp deer, nilgai, and one-horned rhinoceros
- Explore Shuklaphanta National Park, including grassland “phantas” and forest edges
- Comfortable lodges, VIP transfers, and domestic flights connecting Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, and the parks
- Birdwatching opportunities for Bengal florican, greater adjutant stork, black-necked stork, and raptors
- Observe Gangetic river dolphins during guided river excursions
- Explore Shuklaphanta National Park, including grassland “phantas” and forest edges
- Birdwatching opportunities for Bengal florican, greater adjutant stork, black-necked stork, and raptors
- Observe Gangetic river dolphins during guided river excursions
- Cultural immersion with visits to Tharu villages and insights into traditional conservation practices
- Guided nocturnal walks and tower hide observations for small mammals, civets, and owls
- Comfortable lodges, VIP transfers, and domestic flights connecting Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, and the parks

Itinerary

Day 1:

Your wildlife journey begins in Kathmandu, where you are greeted at Tribhuvan International Airport and transferred to a comfortable heritage-style hotel. In the evening, your naturalist guide briefs the group on the ecosystems of western Nepal, emphasizing the lowland Terai forests of Bardiya and Shuklaphanta, home to tigers, wild elephants, and rare grassland birds.

Day 2:

After a short morning flight to Nepalgunj, you drive westwards to the edge of Bardiya National Park. Along the way, the landscape changes from plains to dense sal forests interspersed with grasslands and riverine habitats. Upon arrival at your lodge, you enjoy an evening walk along forest edges, observing the first signs of wildlife such as sambar deer, wild boar, and a variety of birds, including the vibrant paradise flycatchers and hornbills.

Day 3:

The day begins with a pre-dawn jeep safari into the core of Bardiya National Park, where tigers are most active during early morning hours. Your naturalist guides interpret pugmarks, scratch marks, and scent posts along the forest paths. After a midday break, you embark on a river safari along the Karnali, seeking Gangetic river dolphins and spotting riverine birds such as the Pallas's fish eagle and river terns. The afternoon concludes with a grassland walk, observing herds of nilgai and swamp deer.

Day 4:

A full day is spent exploring both the forest and grassland zones of Bardiya. The morning jeep safari continues to target tiger sightings and the observation of wild elephants in their natural habitat. Lunch is taken in a forest hide, offering panoramic views of open grasslands and occasional rhino sightings. The evening provides an opportunity for nocturnal spotting along safe buffer roads, where civets, jungle cats, and owls may be observed.

Day 5:

After breakfast, you drive southwest to Shuklaphanta, known for its expansive grasslands, or "phantas," which attract large herds of swamp deer and provide hunting grounds for tigers. The journey across Terai plains reveals seasonal wetlands and birding opportunities. Upon arrival, the lodge offers immediate access to forest edges and tower hides for afternoon wildlife scanning.

Day 6:

The morning begins with a guided grassland walk, observing herds of swamp deer and their predator interactions. A tower hide offers elevated views of the expansive phantas, where large raptors and grassland birds are abundant. The afternoon focuses on forest trails and riverine edges for spotting wild elephants, wild boar, and smaller mammals. Evenings are ideal for photography sessions in the golden light of the phantas.

Day 7:

Today combines wildlife observation with cultural immersion. Early morning is reserved for birding along forest edges and wetland patches, seeking species such as the Bengal florican, black-necked stork, and the greater adjutant. Later, a visit to a nearby Tharu village allows insight into traditional forest management and conservation practices, illustrating the harmonious coexistence of local communities with wildlife.

Day 8:

A final morning safari provides one last chance to glimpse tigers, elephants, and rare grassland birds. After lunch, you drive back to Nepalgunj and take a late afternoon flight to Kathmandu. The evening is free to relax or explore the capital's vibrant markets. A farewell dinner celebrates the wildlife encounters and scenic landscapes of western Nepal.

Day 9:

Your adventure concludes with a transfer to the airport for your onward journey. You leave with unforgettable memories of tigers stalking grasslands, elephants moving silently through forests, and the rare and charismatic species that make Bardiya and Shuklaphanta world-class wildlife destinations.