

Wildlife Cruise on River Brahmaputra



Duration : 11 Days/10 Nights

**Destinations : Jorhat/ Dibrugarh – Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary -
Majuli – Nameri National Park - Orang National Park – Kaziranga
National Park – Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary – Guwahati**



Brahmaputra Cruise Private Limited

Email : enquiry@brahmaputrarivercruises.com

Website : www.brahmaputrarivercruises.com

Day 1

Received by our representatives at the Jorhat/ Dibrugarh Airport before noon. Drive to Neemati Ghat to embark the vessel.

Day 2

After morning breakfast we will drive to the Gibbon Sanctuary at Mariani. Here we will walk through the forest in the company of a local forest guard in search of Hoolock Gibbons, India's only species of ape, as well as a wealth of birdlife. On our return to the vessel we will set off down the river, cruising for about an hour or so across to Majuli Island, the world's largest river island. The island offers excellent birdwatching, due to the number of wetlands which gives us a fine introduction to Assam's wetland birds.

Day 3

Majuli is the largest human inhabited river island in the world & also the cradle of Assamese Culture. The religious and cultural traditions are kept alive by the dedicated monks living in the monasteries locally known as Sattra. The whole island is now shortlisted for UNESCO World Heritage Status. We will visit a few prominent monasteries in the island, take a glimpse at the simple ways of life of the monks, interact with them, visit the prayer halls and see the unique artifacts.

For those lacking a 'cultural leaning', there will be further opportunities for birding on the island, and from the ship, today.

Later we will return to the ship and spend a couple of hours cruising downstream as the sun sets and lines of waterbirds stream back to their night-time roosts.

Day 4

We will spend much of the day on the river today, watching waterbirds and for otters and Gangetic River Dolphins, not to mention the fascinating activities and techniques of the local fishermen. Our one riverside stop will be at the tribal village, where we will make an interesting visit.

By the afternoon, Kaziranga National Park will be on our left, and wild Asian Elephants and other mammals such as Hog Deer and wild Water Buffalo may sometimes be seen from the boat. The evening, as the sun sets on the river and when a beer is safely at hand, will be the ideal time to meticulously scan the river banks and islands for mammals and birds.

Day 5

In the morning, we do a short sailing to reach our next destination Silghat. Noon, we leave the vessel and drive to the Kaziranga Park's little eastern range. Here we take a jeep ride through the good woodland and grassland, and the wildlife they support, can be viewed from look-out towers.

Kaziranga protects an area of 430 sq kms and is one of the world's most beautiful national parks. It lies on the south bank of the great Brahmaputra River and is one of the last haunts of the Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros. The area was first given protection as a forest reserve in the early years of the twentieth century, but it was not opened to visitors until 1938, and it was not until 1954 that the Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros was given complete statutory protection, allowing Kaziranga to become the most important – and one of the final – refuges for this endangered mammal. In 1974 the wildlife sanctuary was given national park status, and today there are over 1,100 rhinos in the park, a figure which represents over 70% of the world population. The extensive areas of tall elephant grass mean that sightings of Tigers are few, and less frequent than in Kanha and Bandhavgarh; however, in addition to the rhinos, we can expect to see Kaziranga's important population of wild Water Buffalo (one of the last remaining wild populations), wild Asian Elephants, Wild Boar, Hog Deer, Swamp Deer, Sambar, Barking Deer, Rhesus Macaques and a wide variety of other mammal species. We will also make every effort to locate the other more elusive inhabitants of the park such as Gaur, Leopard, Leopard Cat and Sloth Bear.

Kaziranga's birdlife is equally diverse and includes an exceptional range of waterbirds (amongst them many species of cormorants, herons, egrets, storks, geese, ducks, waders and terns), birds of prey, and such regional specialities as Swamp Partridge, Bengal Florican, Abbott's Babbler, Sultan Tit, Black-breasted Thrush, Bristled Grass Warbler, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker and Little Spiderhunter. It really is a wonderful place to visit.

The reserve comprises a vast area of seasonally-inundated swamps, interspersed with broad tracts of tall elephant grass, open forests, watercourses (known as Jheels) and reedbeds. To the south the ground rises to 1,200 metres to form the Mikir Hills, an important refuge for the park's wildlife when the lowlands flood during the annual monsoon.

Evening return to the vessel at Silghat.

Day 6

We will rise very early this morning and disembark before dawn in order to drive to Kaziranga's Central Range for an early morning elephant ride, the best way to get really close to the rhinos and all of Kaziranga's other mammals. Later in the morning, after our breakfast in a beautiful lodge, we will return to Kaziranga's Central Range for a morning jeep safari before returning to the boat.

Later we will return to the vessel and start cruising downstream to Tezpur as the sun sets and lines of waterbirds stream back to their night-time roosts. Evening we can take a walk in the markets of this ancient town of Tezpur.

Day 7

Again we will disembark very early today, and drive north to Nameri National Park, which lies in the foothills of the eastern Himalaya an hour's drive north of Tezpur.

Nameri was given 'wildlife sanctuary' status in 1985, before becoming a national park in 1998. It spans 212 sq kms and its north-eastern boundary adjoins Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary in the neighbouring state of Arunachal Pradesh. Together they protect over 1,000 sq kms of tropical evergreen, semi-evergreen, and moist deciduous forests with bamboo and cane brakes, and narrow strips of grassland along the Bhoroli River (which runs through the park) and its many tributaries. This is excellent elephant country, and the park may hold in excess of 200 Asian Elephants. However, it is Wild Boar, Sambar, Hog and Barking Deer, Rhesus and Assamese Macaques, Capped Langur and Malayan Giant Squirrel that are amongst the common mammals most likely to be seen. Such other mammals as Gaur, Sloth Bear and Himalayan Black Bear, Dhole, Leopard and Tiger require exceptional luck!

The park is a haven for birds, over 315 species having been recorded. A healthy population of the rarely seen Ibisbill is perhaps the highlight, along with a large population of three hornbill species – Great, Oriental Pied and Wreathed Hornbill. Blue-bearded Bee-eaters and a wide range of babbler species may also be along the Bhoroli River.

We will enjoy a walk around the eco camp to look for birds and mammals, then later board inflatable dinghies for around three hours float trip down the Jia Bhoroli River through the park. In the evening, we return by road to Tezpur for overnight stay onboard at Tezpur.

Day 8

Early morning, we drive to Orang National Park for an exciting Jeep Safari in the park.

Orang, like Nameri, was given 'wildlife sanctuary' status in 1985, before becoming a national park in 1999. It spans 78 square kilometres and lies along the north bank of the Brahmaputra River. Known as 'Mini Kaziranga', it is a low-lying reserve that protects similar habitats to Kaziranga, notably seasonally-inundated swamps and river islands interspersed with broad tracts of tall elephant grass, open forest, watercourses (known as Jheels) and reedbeds. The park holds a reasonable population of Greater Indian One-horned Rhinoceros, whilst other mammals include Asian Elephants, Sambar, Hog and Barking Deer, and small numbers of Tigers (seen very occasionally by

our groups here) and Leopards. Recently the little-known and extremely elusive Pygmy Hog has been discovered here, though our chances of seeing one are perhaps a little slim!

The park is an exceptional haven for waterbirds, with winter visitors and migratory species prominent, especially at the time of our visits. Such specialities as Spot-billed Pelican, Black-necked Stork, Greater and Lesser Adjutant, and Pallas's Fishing Eagle may all be seen here and, with luck, we may also see the rare and elusive Bengal Florican of which the park holds 30-40.

After safari, we return to our vessel at Tezpur and start sailing further downstream past Singri. Overnight stay onboard downstream Singri.

Day 9

This morning we sail and pass through a range of jungle-covered hills and stop at the idyllic, isolated sand island near Ganesh Pahar by the evening. We may take a small ride in our small boat towards Kajoli Choki in the evening (if time permits) to have glimpse of the river side village market. Return to the vessel before dark for overnight stay onboard downstream Ganesh Pahar.

Day 10

We rise early morning to sail to Kajoli Choki in our small boat to drive to Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary. Here we do an exciting elephant safari in the park which is believed to have the highest density of rhinos in the entire region. Pobitora is also a birder's paradise as we will see a lot of migratory birds while in the park.

By noon, we return to our vessel and sail upto Guwahati. Evening, we can visit this city of Guwahati which is the fastest developing city in the region. Today is our last night on the vessel. We enjoy the farewell dinner and get introduced to the vessel staff. Also, a brief moment for sharing our memories of the cruise.

Day 11

Today after an early breakfast, we visit the Peacock Island (with its population of Golden Langur monkeys) and then drive to Nilachal Hill, high above Guwahati, where a good selection of birds may be found in the woodland surrounding the Kamakhya Temple. After a short temple visit, transfer to Airport for the onward Journey. **Tour Terminates**