

ITINERARY
GHANA

March 21-April 9, 2019



One of the highlights of a birding tour to Ghana is the chance of finding the unusual White-necked Rockfowl. These large passerines plaster their mud nests on the walls of small caves and overhangs. We've found a site where we can observe these interesting birds without a long hike. Photograph by guide Phil Gregory.

We include here information for those interested in the 2019 Field Guides Ghana tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

Those who register for the tour will be sent this additional material:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our web site)
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a reference list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

With over 755 species of birds, Ghana is an exciting birding destination, featuring excellent opportunities for a number of West African endemics and other highly prized avian species. Foremost perhaps among those endemics is the legendary White-necked Rockfowl, *Picathartes gymnocephalus*, a sensational prize. The site in Ghana is one of the best in West Africa, with a colony of the birds constructing their bulky mud-cup nests on an overhanging rock face deep in the forest. Enjoying this "charisma bird," one of just two members of the family, will doubtless be one of the highlights of the tour, which makes for an excellent introduction to West African birding in a bustling, safe and fast-developing country.

We will also visit several of the country's national parks, including Kakum Forest with its spectacular canopy walkway, ideal for providing access to a range of canopy dwellers. In addition to many world-class species, Kakum Forest hosts a

remarkable array of hornbills: the rare Black-casqued, Yellow-casqued and Brown-cheeked, both Red-billed and Black Dwarf, and White-crested! We'll also visit Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary, critical in conserving another fragment of the sorely endangered West African primary lowland forest; nearby Atewa reserve, conserving forest that holds additional species including Blue-moustached Bee-eater, Blue-breasted Kingfisher and Red-cheeked Wattle-eye; the drier savannas at Shai Hills; and Mole National Park, where White-throated Francolin, Forbes's Plover, Long-tailed and Standard-winged nightjars, Stone Partridge, and Lavender Waxbill are possible as well as some big game including African Elephant. A long drive north will take us to the Burkina Faso border in search of the monotypic family, Egyptian Plover, which nests at this site on the Volga River tributary, while a rocky granite area in the Tongo Hills gives us a chance of Fox Kestrel, Mocking Cliff-chat, and Rock-loving Cisticola.

Our tour this year again visits Ankasa in the far west, on the border with Ivory Coast, with a new forest site at Nsuta promising additional exciting species including perhaps White-crested Tiger-Heron, Spot-breasted Ibis and African Piculet. Camping is no longer required and we will use simple hotels at both sites. Targets there include Hartlaub's Duck, Congo Serpent Eagle, Shining-blue and White-bellied Kingfisher, Cassin's and Black Spinetail, Rufous-sided Broadbill, as well as Forest Robin, Yellow-bearded Greenbul, and three species of bristlebill. En route out we can expect both Mouse-colored and Reichenbach's sunbirds and maybe Orange Weaver.

Note: *In the following we have highlighted in green any text that we consider requires your special attention.*

About the Physical Requirements & Pace: Our pace will be mostly moderate, but note there are a few long travel days to get to some of our birding sites, and also this is quite a hot tour as might be expected from West Africa. The terrain is generally either flat or slightly hilly, with nothing too strenuous; much of our watching is from tracks or roads so we will be standing around quite a bit. The Picathartes site is a couple of miles (3 km) through forest and a short steep (100 yds.) clamber up to the rock overhang at the end; walking sticks would be useful here as the terrain is up and down and rough in places. The walkway at Kakum involves a short uphill walk (750 yds) on an uneven stepped track to the structure itself; the walkway is about 40 yards above the forest floor and has several observation platforms linked by stretches of rope and board walkway where a good head for heights is helpful!



*The walkway at Kakum allows us to have a bird's-eye view of forest birds.
Photograph by participant Martha Vandervoort.*

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide for the tour.

Accommodations: Accommodations are generally quite good with some nice hotels and one or two more basic. Do be aware, however, that maintenance is an issue throughout West Africa, and things may not be quite what they are back in Kansas! Power points often don't work, a/c may be sporadic, hot water can be erratic, etc. The facility at Mole NP is government-run but now smartened up and perfectly adequate for our needs, and right at the birding site.

About the Birding Areas

Sakumono (Sakumona) Lagoon is a great waterbird site near Accra, actually a RAMSAR site. It's an important area for migrant West Palearctic shorebirds, including Ruff and Wood Sandpiper, as well as Senegal Thick-knee, Collared Pratincole, sometimes Black Egret (Heron), Western Reef Egret, Royal and Black terns, Yellow-throated Longclaw, and Senegal Eremomela. This will be done on arrival day if the flight timings permit or next day if not.

Winneba Lagoon is an important shorebird site on the coast, good for the soon to be split West African form of Royal Tern and shorebird migrants. This site will be visited if the time and tide are correct.



Kakum National Park—Set in hill and ridge country, Kakum preserves a precious fragment of the gravely threatened Upper Guinea forest habitat. The walkway is an incredible rope and wood slat bridge slung some 40m up in the mid stratum giving great access to some huge forest trees. Two endemic hornbills, the rare Brown-cheeked and Yellow-casqued, are possible here, as well as such good forest birds as Forest Wood-hoopoe, Sharpe's Apalis, Violet-backed Hyliota, Black and Rosy bee-eaters, and Black and Sabine's spinetails. A dusk foray can be good for mammals such as Potto, Prince Demidoff's Galago, and the extraordinary Pel's Anomalure, with chance of the rare Brown Nightjar and Fraser's or even Akun Eagle-Owl.

Bonkro is a forest patch on a small hill area that is home to a colony of the enigmatic, legendary White-necked Rockfowl (Yellow-headed Picathartes), which will surely be a major trip highlight. This colony is built on the overhang of a huge rock, and it's possible to get a good view of the large, mud-cup nests as well as the birds when they return to the nests in the late afternoon. Revenues from visiting birders have become a very important source of income for the local village, which provides guides and helps to manage and protect the forest. You may wish to make a donation to Ashanti Africa's Primary School project here. On past tours we have waited from a few minutes to several hours for the birds to come in—you never know. We then had incredible views, but please be aware that a lengthy sit in silence on newly constructed bench seats may be necessary.

Mole National Park is a completely different savanna and grassland habitat in the dry north where we have a chance of Forbes's Plover, White-throated Francolin, Stone Partridge, Standard-winged and Long-tailed nightjars, and the amazing African endemic family of Bucorvidae (Ground-Hornbills), here represented by the Abyssinian species. Lavender Waxbill and Black-faced Firefinch can be seen, as can the striking and noisy Oriole Warbler, Sun Lark, and both Pygmy and Beautiful sunbirds.

White Volta River at Sapeliga on the Burkina Faso border—Some two hours from Bolgatanga, this area in the Sudan savanna gives us an excellent chance for the iconic Egyptian Plover, which nests here on the sandbars; the supporting cast can include Black-headed Lapwing, White-billed Buffalo-Weaver, Chestnut-bellied Starling and Yellow-billed Oxpecker.

Tongo Hills is an attractive rocky outcrop and sacred shrine area near Bolgatanga, which offers us Fox Kestrel, Rock-loving Cisticola, Mocking Cliff-chat, Familiar Chat, Gosling's (Cinnamon-breasted) Bunting, and maybe White-rumped Seedeater.

Bobiri Reserve—Set aside for its incredible variety of butterflies, Bobiri is also an important refuge for some scarce forest birds. Here we'll have a chance for Long-tailed Hawk, Bristle-nosed Barbet, Afep Pigeon, Red-billed Dwarf and White-crested hornbills, Forest and/or White-headed woodhoopoes, the rare Preuss's Weaver, and a good selection of other forest birds. We were lucky enough to see a Long-tailed Pangolin here in 2014.

Atewa is a hill-forest reserve that holds one of the few Blue-moustached Bee-eater sites in Ghana. It's also the home of such specialties as Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Rufous-winged, Brown, Puvel's, and Blackcap illadopses, Golden Greenbul, formerly the very rare Nimba Flycatcher (not seen since 2014 and never by me), Narina Trogon, Western Bluebill, Black-and-white Flycatcher, West African Batis, Western Bearded Greenbul, and several other apalis and flycatcher species. Birding the access foothills is good and means a longish steady and quite warm climb, but well worth the effort as we saw Yellow-throated Cuckoo here in 2012 and 2013.

Shai Hills is a dry, thorn-scrub reserve near Tema with attractive rocky hills that hold the localized Mocking Cliff-Chat (White-crowned Cliff-Chat, if *coronatus* is split). Other bird species possible here include Stone Partridge, Red-necked Buzzard, African Gray Hornbill, Violet Turaco, Blue-bellied Roller, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Senegal Eremomela, Senegal Batis, and Bearded, Double-toothed, and Vieillot's barbets.



*This male Standard-winged Nightjar was seen at an airstrip near Mole on a recent Field Guides tour.
Photograph by participant Greg Griffith.*

Itinerary for Ghana

Days 1-2, Thu-Fri, 21-22 Mar. Flight from US to Ghana; coastal birding. Flights depart the US for Ghana on Day 1 (March 21) and arrive the following day (March 22). If possible, please plan to arrive before 2:00 p.m. You will be met on your arrival at the Kotoka International Airport Accra, which is situated on the attractive sandy gold coast of Western Africa, for your transfer to the hotel. Look out for the *Ashanti African Tours* or *Field Guides* signboard when you leave the main terminal building after passing through customs, and **don't get railroaded by importunate taxi-drivers if you somehow miss us; come back and check!** After boarding our air-conditioned vehicle, which will be your mode of transport for the duration of the tour, you'll be transferred to the hotel in Accra. Meet for dinner in the lobby at 7 pm.

Assuming everyone arrives more or less on schedule in the early afternoon on March 22—and if time permits—we will visit Sakumono Lagoon after checking in at the hotel. We'll have this afternoon and much of Day 3 to bird nearby areas in hopes of finding Purple and Gray herons, Western Reef Egret, Long-tailed Cormorant, Garganey, Black-winged Stilt, Collared Pratincole, Black-tailed Godwit, Ruff, Ruddy Turnstone, Senegal Thick-knee, African Swamphen and Black Tern, to mention just a few. Night of day 2 in or near Accra.

Day 3, Sat, 23 Mar. Shai Hills. We'll have an early start today to what is always an enjoyable tour of the Shai Hills savanna area reserve—a dry, thorn-scrub reserve near Tema with attractive rocky hills that hold the localized Mocking Cliff-Chat (White-crowned Cliff-Chat, if *coronatus* is split). Other bird species possible here include Stone Partridge, Red-necked Buzzard, African Gray Hornbill, Violet Turaco, Blue-bellied Roller, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Senegal Eremomela, Senegal Batis, Senegal Parrot and Bearded, Double-toothed, and Vieillot's Barbet. Lunch near Tema and an afternoon birding session back in the park before returning to Accra and the *Erata Hotel*.

Day 4, Sun, 24 Mar. Primarily a travel day, we head over towards Ankasa, via the bustling coastal city of Takoradi, for an overnight stop at Nsuta Forest near Sekondi in a small lodge. If time and weather permit, we will plan some owling for Akun Eagle Owl and perhaps Rufous Fishing Owl. This is the spot where we found Spot-breasted Ibis in 2018! Night at a simple guesthouse in Shama.

Day 5, Mon, 25 Mar. Nsuta Forest. Early morning birding at seldom-visited Nsuta for a chance of some rarely seen species such as White-crested Tiger-Heron, Spot-breasted Ibis and African Piculet, although all are hard to find. We will then travel to Ankasa National Park on the border with Ivory Coast, stopping at some coastal wetlands for Hartlaub's Duck. Night at a simple hotel near Ankasa.

Day 6, Tue, 26 Mar. Ankasa is Ghana's only pristine, wet-evergreen upper-Guinea rainforest, a rarely visited forest protecting some wonderful species. We'll have an early start today to get a full day in at the park, where we will be in quest of Hartlaub's Duck, African Finfoot, African Crowned-Eagle, Great Blue and Yellow-billed Turaco, Yellow-casqued, Black-casqued, Red-billed Dwarf and Black Dwarf Hornbill, White-bellied, Shining-blue, and Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Red-billed Helmetshrike, Purple-throated Cuckoo-shrike, Blackcap, Pale-breasted, Rufous-winged, and Brown illadopsis, Red-tailed and Green-tailed Bristlebill, Yellow-bearded, Western Bearded, Plain, Spotted, Sombre, and Red-tailed Greenbul, Blue-headed Wood-Dove, Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo, White-tailed Ant-Thrush, and Red-fronted Antpecker, to name a few. Also, there is sometimes a slight chance for Nkulengu Rail during the early evening. Night at a simple hotel near Ankasa.

Day 7, Wed, 27 Mar. Ankasa early morning; on to Kakum. We'll be out early this morning at Ankasa, and then make the long drive to near Kakum, stopping in the palms for Reichenbach's Sunbird and in the mangroves for Mouse-coloured Sunbird, then at Brenu Beach for savanna species such as Marsh Tchagra. The lodge is quite comfortable and will be our base for the next 3 nights. Night at Rainforest Lodge near Kakum National Park.



The gorgeous African Emerald Cuckoo is found in forested areas. We've seen them from the canopy walkway at Kakum, where this male was observed. Photograph by guide Phil Gregory.

Day 8, Thu, 28 Mar. Kakum National Park. We'll be out early this morning, heading for the canopy walkway at Kakum National Park. We will be spending the most critical hours 40m above the forest floor on the canopy walkway; the platforms here are large enough to support a telescope. Kakum National Park protects critically endangered primary Guinea tropical rainforest, and the species we hope to see from the canopy include Green Hylia, Violet-backed Hylia, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Little Gray Flycatcher, Gray-headed, White-breasted, and Chestnut-breasted Nigrita, Gray Longbill, White-headed, and Forest Woodhoopoe, West African Batis, Western Bluebill, Blue Cuckooshrike, Chestnut-bellied Helmetshrike, Sabine's Puffback, Sharpe's Apalis, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Brown-cheeked, Black-casqued, Piping, Yellow-casqued, and Black Dwarf hornbills, the scarce and beautiful Preuss's Weaver, Red-headed, Blue-billed and Red-vented Malimbe, Rosy Bee-eater, Yellow-spotted and Hairy-breasted Barbet, Red-fronted and Gray Parrot, and Velvet-mantled Drongo. The raptors we may see include Red-necked Buzzard, Palm-nut Vulture, African Cuckoo-Hawk, maybe Congo Serpent-Eagle, Cassin's Hawk-Eagle, and perhaps Long-tailed Hawk. During the heat of mid-afternoon, we'll have the chance to rest at the hotel. Tonight, we'll stay late on the walkway to try for crepuscular and nocturnal species like Brown Nightjar, Bat Hawk, and Potto and Pel's anomalures. Night at Rainforest Lodge near Kakum NP.

Day 9, Fri, 29 Mar. Kakum National Park. This morning we'll be concentrating our attention on the Antwikwaa section of Kakum National Park, as well as some trails within and surrounding the park, which should prove to be very productive. We can attempt to find White-tailed (Fire-crested) Alethe, Red-tailed and Gray-headed bristlebills, Johanna's, Tiny and Olive-bellied sunbirds, Blue-headed Wood Dove, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Black Dwarf and Red-billed Dwarf hornbills,

Black-headed Paradise Flycatcher, Finsch's Flycatcher-thrush, Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat, Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo, Pale-breasted Illadopsis, Red-chested Goshawk, Yellow-billed and Guinea turacos, Long-tailed Hawk, Fire-bellied and Melancholy woodpeckers, Black-throated Coucal, Western Black-headed Oriole, African Finfoot, and possibly a Congo Serpent Eagle. There's also a remote chance of Ahanta Francolin, Black-collared Lovebird, and Willcocks's or Spotted Honeyguide. We may stay out to dusk to try again for Fraser's Eagle Owl and Akun Eagle Owl, and perhaps Brown Nightjar. Night at Rainforest Lodge near Kakum NP.

Day 10, Sat, 30 Mar. Kakum early on; drive to Bonkro for the Picathartes trek. We'll make an early start for our final morning at Kakum, visiting some of the outlying sections of the park or surrounds. We will spend all morning trying to see any species we may have missed previously, this being generally a good area for White-spotted Flufftail, Western Nicator, Kemp's Longbill, malimbos, and Black-throated Coucal.

After lunch we'll set off for a remote village in the Ashanti region of Ghana for what should be a highlight of our tour. Our destination is a nesting site for White-necked Rockfowl (Yellow-headed Picathartes). There are around 20 nests at this location and catching a glimpse of this remarkable bird is an amazing feeling; after getting good looks, we'll transfer across to Kumasi to be in position for the drier savanna section of the tour, a drive of around three hours. Night in Kumasi.



*White-throated Francolin can be found in Mole National Park.
Photograph by participant Greg Griffith.*

Day 11, Sun, 31 Mar. Travel day to Mole National Park.

We'll leave Kumasi early after breakfast heading north towards Mole National Park. We can expect to see different bird species en route as we gradually enter the Sudan savanna plains of northern Ghana. On our arrival at the park, we'll check into our hotel, the only accommodation in the area. Situated on a 250-metre-high escarpment overlooking the park, it offers highly scenic views. It is an amazing feeling to be sitting around the pool on the hotel terrace watching African savannah elephants bathing in the two nearby watering holes, which are also inhabited by crocodiles. After our evening meal, we shall set off for an evening of birding around the Mole Airstrip where we hope to see displaying Standard-winged and perhaps other nightjars. The airstrip may also be productive for owls such as Grayish Eagle and maybe African Scops. Night in Mole National Park.

Day 12, Mon, 1 Apr. Mole National Park. We'll awake early and move to the hotel terrace, which is an excellent spot to set up our telescopes and watch the dawn activity. We hope to see Stone Partridge, Red-throated Bee-eater, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Lavender and Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Red-billed and Bar-breasted finches—with a chance of Black-bellied and Black-faced if we are lucky, Senegal Batis, and Beautiful and Pygmy sunbirds. The watering hole attracts Senegal Thick-knee as well as Woolly-necked Stork and Hadada Ibis. Raptors are more frequent in Mole, and in this area, we hope to see White-

headed, Hooded, and perhaps White-backed Vulture, Bateleur, Beaudouin's Snake-Eagle, Lizard Buzzard, African Hobby, Lanner Falcon, and perhaps several accipiters.

We'll take game guard escorted walks into the woodland surrounding the waterhole in the cooler early morning and late afternoon, expecting to encounter Bruce's Green Pigeon, Purple and Long-tailed glossy-starlings, White-shouldered Black Tit, Senegal Eremomela, Oriole Warbler, Violet Turaco, Golden-tailed, Fine-spotted, and Gray Woodpecker, Blackcap and Brown Babbler, Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Northern Puffback, perhaps Rufous Cisticola, Swamp and Lead-colored Flycatcher, and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird. The laterite pans to the north hold Forbes's Plover, Sun Lark and White-throated Francolin and they will be a focus this afternoon, with a drive back around dusk to check for nightjars

During the heat of the afternoon we can be resting or birding around the hotel grounds, where you have to watch out for warthogs. Night in Mole National Park.

Day 13, Tue, 2 Apr. Mole NP, visiting Mognori River circuit. This riparian growth holds Shining-blue and Giant Kingfisher, Square-tailed Drongo, African Blue Flycatcher, and White-crowned Robin-chat. We will bird some nearby savanna areas later for Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Brown-backed Woodpecker, Brown-rumped Bunting and Rufous Cisticola. Night in Mole National Park.



Senegal Batis is found in a large part of western Africa, including much of Ghana. Photograph by participant Greg Griffith.

Day 14, Wed, 3 Apr. Mole National Park to Bolgatanga. After an early breakfast, we'll depart for Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region. We'll make a short cultural excursion to nearby Larabanga and the interesting 15th Century Malian-style mud and stick mosque (complete with swarms of over-eager local guides!). As we venture northwards, the landscape becomes far drier with more open savannah woodland. We pass through many villages and stop at Tamale for lunch and refreshments. Tamale is Ghana's third largest city and the capital of the Northern Region. We will make a quick stop in the baking heat at Nasia wetland near the White Volta River to look for Black-faced Quailfinch, Zebra (Orange) Waxbill, African Silverbill and Black-backed Cisticola. We'll arrive in Bolgatanga in the late afternoon and check into our guesthouse for the evening. We will do some evening birding at the attractive sacred site of the Tongo Hills, where we hope to find Rock-loving Cisticola, Fox Kestrel, Gosling's Bunting, and perhaps Mocking (White-crowned) Cliff-Chat. Night in Bolgatanga.

Day 15, Thu, 4 Apr. Bolgatanga. We'll want an early start for the 2-hour bumpy road drive to the site on the White Volta River on the Burkina Faso border for the beautiful Egyptian Plover, now in a family of its own. In addition to this wonderful bird we hope to see African Mourning and Namaqua Dove, African Silverbill, and maybe Yellow-billed Oxpecker. Return for lunch, then in the afternoon visit Tono Dam, a large irrigation project near Bolgatanga where we hope to find Dark Chanting-Goshawk, Four-banded Sandgrouse, Northern Carmine bee-eaters, Chestnut-bellied Starling, and various farm-bush species. Night in Bolgatanga.

Day 16, Fri, 5 Apr. Bolgatanga to Kumasi. After an early breakfast, we'll set off on the very long drive for Kumasi, retracing our journey of a few days earlier. En route we will stop for lunch; we hope to spot some additional species along our way with another chance of Black-faced Quailfinch, but this is mainly a travel day. Night in Kumasi.

Day 17, Sat, 6 Apr. Kumasi to Atewa. We'll wake early to visit the Bobiri Forest Reserve, an amazing butterfly sanctuary with about 420 species recorded! Upon our arrival, we'll search this lush forest for Red-billed Dwarf and White-crested Hornbill, White-headed and Forest Woodhoopoe, Swamp Palm Greenbul, Western Nicator, and some of the many raptors present, including Cassin's Hawk-Eagle, Red-thighed Sparrowhawk, African Cuckoo-Hawk, and just maybe the great prize, Long-tailed Hawk.

After lunch we'll set off for Atewa, planning to arrive in the late afternoon to check into our hotel before an owling and farm-bush foray to the edge of Atewa forest after Fraser's Eagle Owl, before returning to our hotel for dinner. Night in Atewa.

Day 18, Sun, 7 Apr. Birding Atewa. The forest here contains many special birds and despite damage from illegal gold mining (*galamsey*) in the farm-bush nearby, remains a great site. We'll get as far up into the hill forest as is feasible, looking for Long-tailed Hawk, West African Batis, Red-cheeked wattle-eye, Golden Bulbul, and the rare Blue-moustached Bee-eater and Yellow-throated Cuckoo if we access the higher areas. Night in Atewa.

Day 19, Mon, 8 Apr. Atewa to Accra; flights home. With an early start this morning, we will revisit the lower forest at Atewa, then return to the hotel to shower and change for the flights home and have lunch before heading back to Accra some two hours away. A visit to an art and craft market can be made on the way. Depending on your departure times, we will visit a nearby local restaurant and enjoy our final dinner together before heading to the airport. If possible, try to book your flights home after 10:00 p.m. to allow enough time for dinner. Flights currently depart from Accra this evening, arriving in the US the following morning.

Day 20, Tue, 9 Apr. Arrival home.

About Your Guide

Phil Gregory was born in Southampton, UK, and became a birder as a youth when the steam engines were scrapped and birding offered a way to travel and look for wonderful things. The quest for birds has led to many forays in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, and the Pacific. Phil and his wife, Sue, worked as teachers for eight years in Nigeria and Zambia, where they raised their family and made serious inroads into the birds of Africa, before transferring to the Falkland Islands for a two-year stint. In 1991-97 they relocated to Papua New Guinea where the 400-plus endemics proved a great challenge, and since then they have lived in the Northern Territory and far north Queensland, Australia.

Phil's major interests are field identification, vocalizations, and the geographic distribution of birds. He is also a writer with assorted contributions to many reference books including doing some family accounts for the *Handbook of Birds of the World*. He is currently in the final stages of the *Birds-of-paradise and Bowerbirds* title in the Pica/Helm series, and a *Field Guide to the Birds of New Guinea* for Lynx Edicions was published in May 2017, with next up a *Photoguide to North Queensland Birds* with local photographer and guide Jun Matsui. He has also published and now maintains three Checklists, one for the Birds of Australia and its Island Territories, one for the Solomon Islands and the other of New Guinea and Associated Islands.

Phil and Sue run the well-known Cassowary House, a birding and nature lodge situated in a great birding spot in the rainforest at Kuranda, near Cairns in the far north of Queensland.

"The tour was excellent. The accommodations were fine and the food as well. The Ashanti team was superb throughout. This was our fourth tour with Phil Gregory, one of FG's finest." B.S., Ghana

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/guides> for Phil's complete tour schedule; just click on his photo.

An expert **local guide** will be added as tour size warrants.

Financial Information

FEE: \$6975

DEPOSIT: \$700

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: November 21, 2018

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$565

LIMIT: 8

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

ACCOMMODATIONS: Accommodations are generally quite good in some nice hotels with one or two more basic. A few of the hotels have swimming pools, so bring your swimsuits if you wish! Do be aware, however, that maintenance is an issue throughout West Africa, and things may not be quite what they are back in Kansas! Power points often don't work, a/c may be sporadic, hot water can be erratic, etc. The facility at Mole NP is government-run and a tad dilapidated, but perfectly adequate for our needs and right at the birding site.

DOCUMENTS: US citizens will need a passport valid for six months beyond the date of their return and a visa to enter Ghana. In accordance with INTERNATIONAL SANITARY REGULATIONS, all persons entering Ghana are requested to have a valid certificate of immunization against yellow fever. Ashanti, our ground operator, will issue a letter of invitation and accommodation—details that you will need when applying for your visa.

If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Ghana consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: If possible, please plan to arrive in Accra, Ghana, at or before 2:00 p.m. on March 22. You are welcome to book departure flights as early as 6:00 p.m. on the evening of April 8; however, since dinner is included on Day 19, keep in mind that you will miss the final dinner if you depart before 10:00 p.m.

Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **tour fee** is \$6975 for one person in double occupancy from Accra. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 18, all meals from dinner on Day 2 through dinner on Day 19, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fees do not include your airfare to and from Ghana, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$565. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes). A couple of the hotels do not have twin share rooms.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, complete the Registration/Release and Indemnity form and return it with a **deposit of \$700** per person. If registering by phone, a deposit must be received within fourteen days, or the space will be released. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by November 21, 2018. We will bill you for the final payment at either 120 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.** Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 120 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 119 and 70 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour fees (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer any refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 70 to 119 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive from us a brochure regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, 24-hour accident protection, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance when making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights), pre-existing conditions are covered. The CSA brochure includes a contact number; you may also purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/travelinsurance.html> and clicking the link to CSA. Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Field Guides Incorporated accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION. 4/18PG; 7/18 peg.