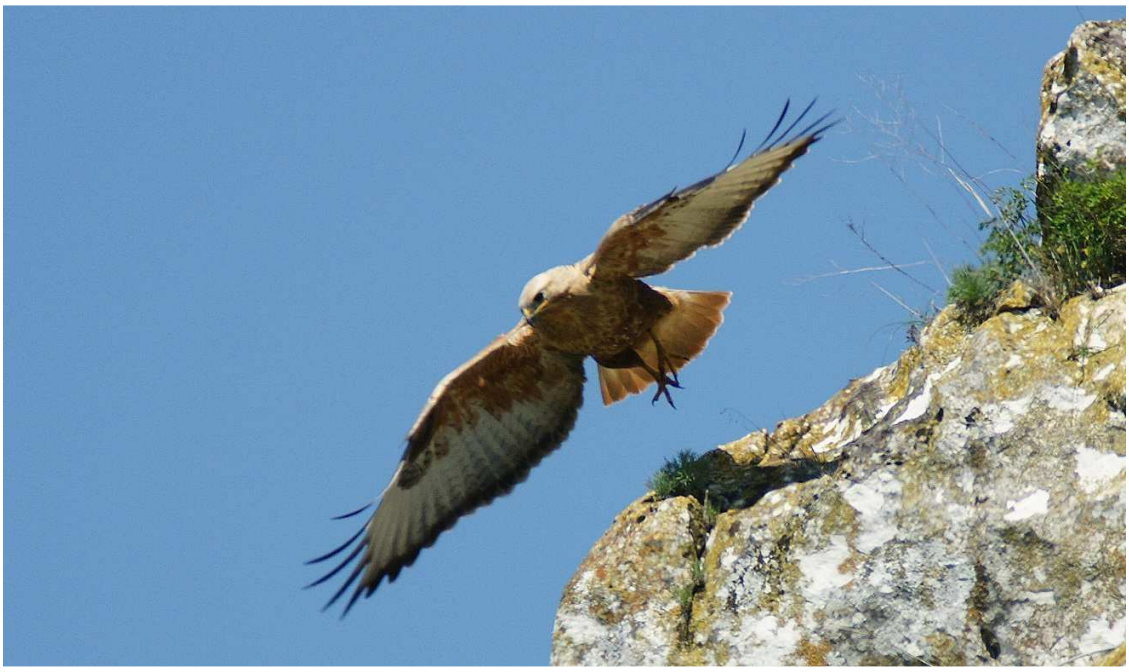
# BULGARIA

***BIRDS OF PREY TOUR (11 DAYS)***

**DATES: 2 – 11 May 2019**
**Suitable period: End of April – end of June**



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On this tour we can enjoy many breeding and migrating birds of prey. We can observe especially *Black, Griffon* and *Egyptian Vultures, Eastern Imperial, Lesser Spotted, Short-toed* and *Booted Eagles, Levant Sparrowhawk, Long-Legged Buzzard, Saker* and *Red-footed Falcons,* all four species of the European *Harriers* and many more interesting birds. See the itinerary for more detailed description of the tour.

## Day by day itinerary

**Day 1**
Arrival at the Sofia Airport and transfer to the hotel in West Balkan. After accommodation in the hotel we are going to birdwatch around. Diner and overnight.

**Day 2**
We will birdwatching in this area. We can observe many birds of prey and especially *Saker Falcon, Short-toed Eagle, Long-legged Buzzard, Golden Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Levant Sparrowhawk* and many other birds. After a picnic lunch we will go to the Central Balkan. After several stops for birdwatching we will arrive in a picturesque village – architectural reserve. Accommodation, diner and overnight in a local hotel – restored typical house-museum.

**Day 3**
After breakfast we will go to the north to reach the Danube River. We will stop at several places for birdwatching. In the afternoon we will visit the Natural Park "Rusenski Lom" – a beautiful valley with many rock monasteries and rock cliffs. We can observe many birds of prey: *Long – legged Buzzard, Booted Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Lesser Spotted Eagle* and many other species. Accommodation, diner and overnight in a local hotel.

**Day 4**
This day we will go to the region of Dobrudja – the unique conserved natural steppe in Bulgaria. We will visit the biosphere reserve "Srebarna" a site included in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We can observe the colony of endangered *Dalmatian Pelican, Ruddy Shelduck, Red-necked Grebe, Squacco Heron, Whiskered Tern, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Black Kite, Marsh Harrier* and if we have a luck - *White-tailed Eagle.* After a long transfer with many stops for birdwatching we will arrive in the hotel on the Black Sea coast. We will spend two nights there. After accommodation we will birdwatch around and observe a pair of breeding *Levant Sparrowhawk, Syrian Woodpecker,* etc.

**Day 5**
We will visit the lakes Durankulak and Shabla – the wintering places for the world population of Red-breasted Goose. We can observe many birds and especially *Red-footed falcon, Red-necked Grebe, Little Bittern, Whiskered and White-winged Terns, Collared Pratincole, Paddyfield Warbler, Pied Wheatear,* etc. After lunch in a local fish restaurant on the board of the lake we will go to birdwatching on the steppe. We will visit a breeding place of the *Eagle Owl.* If we are lucky we can observe the *Pallid Harrier* a very rare breeding bird on the steppe. We will observe a *Peregrine Falcon, Red-footed Falcon, Mediterranean Shearwater, Rose-coloured Starling, Calandra* and *Short-toed Larks* and many other birds. Late in the afternoon we will return to the hotel for the second overnight.

**Day 6**
We will travel to the town of Burgas along the Black Sea Coast. We will stop in Goritza forest. Here we can observe *Lesser Spotted Eagle, Honey buzzard,* many species of *Woodpeckers, Semi-collared Flycatcher,* etc. After a lunch we will continue our trip to the south. After several stops for birdwatching we will arrive at the hotel near to the town of Burgas. The town of Burgas is the best point for observation of the migration in the migratory corridor called Via Pontica. We will spend two nights there.

**Day 7**
After breakfast we will go to visit the lakes around Burgas – Mandra and Atanassovo. On these lakes we can observe many birds and especially *White-tailed Eagle, Lesser spotted Eagle, Honey Buzzard, Short – toed* and *Booted Eagles, Goshawk, Marsh Harrier, Pygmy Cormorant, Squacco, Night, Purple* and *Grey Herons, Little* and *Great Egrets, Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis,* etc. In the afternoon we will visit the Ropotamo River reserve. In this reserve we can observe many water birds, *Woodpeckers, Short-toed Treecreeper,* etc. Late in the afternoon we will return to our hotel.

**Day 8**
Today we will enter in the Mountain of Strandja – the biggest natural park in Bulgaria. Many pairs of *Golden Eagles* are breeding on the trees in this area. Picnic lunch on the point for observation of birds of prey. In the afternoon we will enter in the Mountain of Sakar. In this mountain one of the big breeding population of the *Imperial Eagle* (more than 5 pairs) is concentrated. This day we can observe many birds and especially *Golden* and *Imperial Eagles, Short-toed, Booted* and *Lesser Spotted Eagles, Black Kite, Montagu's Harrier, Olive-tree Warbler, Masked* and *Woodchat Shrikes.* In the evening we will arrive at the hotel.

**Day 9**
We will visit the paradise for birds of prey – the Eastern Rodope. Today we can observe the unique breeding colony of *Griffon vulture* in Bulgaria. We will visit also the feeding place where we can observe *Egyptian* and *Black Vultures, Golden* and *Imperial Eagles, Long – legged Buzzard, Levant Sparrowhawk, Peregrine Falcon, Black Stork, Rock Nuthatch, Subalpine, Orphean* and *Sardinian Warblers, Rock* and *Blue Rock Thrushes, Somber Tit* and many other birds. In the afternoon we will birdwatch on the Krumovitza River Valley. In this very interesting place we can observe *Egyptian* and *Griffon vultures, Black Stork, Stone Curlew, black-headed bunting, Bee-eater, Roller, Golden Oriole, Rock Nuthatch, Red-rumped swallow, Somber Tit, Lesser Grey Shrike,* etc. Late in the afternoon we will arrive at our hotel in the Central part of the Rodope Mountain.

**Day 10**
Today we will visit the Trigrad Gorge. This spectacular gorge is one of the best places to watching the *Wallcreeper* in Europe. We can observe also *Peregrine falcon, Golden eagle, Pallid* and *Alpine Swifts, Crag Martin,* etc. After a lunch we will continue our trip through the Rodope Mountain. After several stops for birdwatching we will arrive in the town-museum of Koprivstitza. Diner and overnight.

**Day 11**
Early in the morning we will observe a breeding pair of *Imperial Eagle* nearly to the town. Transfer to the town of Sofia (100 km). Depending of your departure flight we will stop for birdwatching around Sofia.

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| **Group size**: | 4-14 persons | 825 EUR |
| **Individual**: | 2-3 persons | 935 EUR |
| **Deposit:** | | 200 EUR |
| **Single room supplement:** | | 150 EUR |

**Price include**: Transport with comfortable bus and coach, accommodation in good hotels with private facilities, full board, professional guide, all entrance taxes.

**The price does not include**: Airfares, travel insurance, alcohol drinks and cigarettes, room service, telephone calls.