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TOUR INFO

BULGARIA

DRAGONFLIES OF BULGARIA TOUR (13 DAYS)

DATES: 10 – 22 June 2024

Suitable period: Middle of June



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For the moment in Bulgaria there were registered 69 species of Dragonflies, including one new dragonfly species: Bulgarian emerald (*Corduliochloa borisi*) discovered in 1999. During this tour we expect to observe around 45 species of Dragonflies.

VIA PONTICA TOURS Ltd., 55, Midzhur Str., Sofia 1421, Bulgaria

Phone: (+359 888) 63.88.68, E-mail: info@viapontica.com; Web: www.viapontica.com

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Day 1

Arrival at Sofia airport and transfer to town of Melnik, where we will stay for three nights. Along the road we will make a short exploration stop at Vedena River and Kresna Gorge where we expect to see among the others *Beautiful and Banded Demoiselles*, *Common Clubtail* and *Sombre Goldenring*. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in the town of Melnik. Melnik is a picturesque historic village famous for its locally produced wines. After an accommodation in the hotel we will visit a typical cave and we will test different wines.

Day 2

After breakfast we will explore the area near Struma River and we expect to see *Eastern Willow Spreadwing*, *Variable* and *Small Red-eyed Damselflies*, *Blue-eye*, *Green-eyed* and *Blue-eyed Hawk*, *River Clubtail*, *Scarce Chaser* and *White-tailed Skimmer*, *Scarlet*, *Southern*, *Red-veined* and *Marshland Darters*, and other species. We will visit the only known locality in Bulgaria for the *Black Pennant* and newly discovered *Bladetail*. In the evening we will return to our hotel for a second overnight.

Day 3

This day is dedicated to the lower slopes of (will be spent in) Alibotush and Pirin Mts where we expect to see *Balkan Goldenring*, *Eastern Spectre*, *Southern Skimmer* and some other species. This region is also famous with great number of butterfly species – more than 70 species appear there and we expect to see *Sandy Grizzled Skipper*, many blues such as *Phalakron Blue*, *Mountain Alcon Blue*, *Meleager's Blue*, up to three species of *anomalous blue*, *Osiris Blue*, *Escher's Blue* and *False Eros Blue*.

Day 4

Transfer to spectacular Trigrad gorge in Western Rhodope Mountain with several stops along the road for *Somber Goldenring*, *Banded Darter* and *Yellow-winged Darter*; *Green-eyed Hawker*, *Lesser Emperor*, *Downy Emerald*, *Broad Scarlet (Darter)*; *Yellow-winged Darter*, *Scarce Emerald Damselfly* and *Green-eyed (Norfolk) Hawker*. This spectacular gorge is one of the best places to watch the *Wallcreeper* in Europe. Diner and overnight.

Day 5

On this day we continue our trip east to the Eastern Rhodope Mts with longer stop at Smolyan Lakes exploring *Northern Damselfly*, *Downy Emerald*, *Four-spotted* and *Scarce Chaser*, *Blue-eyed Hawker* and some other species. Lunch on the way and late in the afternoon we arrive in our hotel in the Eastern Rhodope Mts for three-nights stay.

Day 6

After breakfast we will explore Arda and Krumovitsa River valleys for *Small Red-eyed Damselfly*, *Dainty Damselfly*, *Odalisque*, *Eastern Spectre*, *Balkan* and *Southern Emerald*, *Lesser Emperor*, *Southern Darter* and many more. Picnic lunch. Late in the afternoon we will return to our hotel for a second overnight.

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Day 7

We will have a day spent close to the border at Biala reka River valley for *Blue-eye*, *Small Red-eyed*, *Scarce Emerald* and *Southern Emerald Damselfly*, *Dainty Damselfly*, *Western Willow Spreadwing*, *Bulgarian and Balkan Emeralds*, *Turkish Goldenring*, *Eastern Spectre*, *Blue-eyed Hawker*, *Ruddy Darter*. Picnic lunch. Late in the afternoon we will return to our hotel for the last night there.

Day 8

Transfer to Burgas on the Black Sea coast with two special stops on the way. Species we expect to see - *Southern Emerald Damselfly*, *Small Spreadwing*, *Eastern Willow Spreadwing*, *Winter Damselfly*, *Blue-eye*, *Dainty Bluet*, *Lesser Emperor*, *White-tailed* and *Southern Skimmers*, *Broad Scarlet (Darter)*, *Southern and Red-veined Darters*; *Ornate Bluet*, *River and Common Clubtails*, *Scarce Chaser*. We will arrive at our hotel late in the afternoon for four-nights stay.

Day 9

On this day we will explore Burgas wetlands. There we can expect more than twenty species of Dragonflies including *Southern Emerald Damselfly*, *Dark Spreadwing*, *Winter Damselfly*, *Dainty Damselfly*, *Goblet-marked Damselfly (Blue-eye)*, *Norfolk Hawker*, *Lesser Emperor*, *Vagrant Emperor*, *White-tailed Skimmer*, *Scarlet Darter*, *Southern Darter*. This is the second locality of *Black Pennant* in the country.

Day 10

Drive south where we will visit several protected areas and coastal wetlands – marshes and river mouths near the Black Sea coast. Species include *Western and Eastern Willow Spreadwings*, *Small Emerald Damselfly*, *Lesser and Vagrant Emperors*, *Blue-eyed and Turkish Goldenrings*, *Balkan Emerald*, *Scarce Chaser*, *Keeled Skimmer*, *Red-veined Darter*. Picnic lunch on the coast. Back to our hotel in the evening.

Day 11

On this day we will explore Strandzha Mt searching for *Odalisque*, *Goblet-marked Damselfly*, *Southern Migrant Hawker*, *Small Pincertail*, *Eastern Spectre*, *Turkish Goldenring* and many more. Late in the afternoon we will return to our hotel. Picnic lunch.

Day 12

Transfer to Stara Zagora region for the final night-stay with two stops on the way (near Tvurditsa). Species we expect to see: *Southern Migrant Hawker*, *Eastern Spectre*, *Small Pincertail*, *Balkan* and *Sombre Goldenrings*.

Day 13

Transfer to Sofia with stop at Maritsa River looking for *Small Pincertail*, *River Clubtail* and *Green Snaketail*, *White-tailed Skimmer* and some other species. Departure.

Group size: 4-14 persons 1 155 EUR

Individual: 2-3 persons 1 395 EUR

Deposit: 200 EUR

Single room supplement: 170 EUR

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

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