

# Wildlife Adventures

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## Sri Lanka



## Sri Lanka – A Wildlife Paradise

Sri Lanka is filled with unlimited treasures. This land despite its size consists of unbelievable landscapes. From pristine beaches, towering mountains, tropical rainforests, mangroves, arid savannahs and much more. This is an ancient land spanning a rich history of over 3,000 years.

The true treasure of Sri Lanka is its biodiversity. It is one of the most ecologically rich countries in the world and recognized as a biodiversity hotspot. Its varied climate and topographical conditions have given rise to this rich species diversity, believed to be the highest in Asia in terms of unit land area. Of 3,210 flowering plants belonging to 1,052 genera, 916 species and 18 genera are endemic.

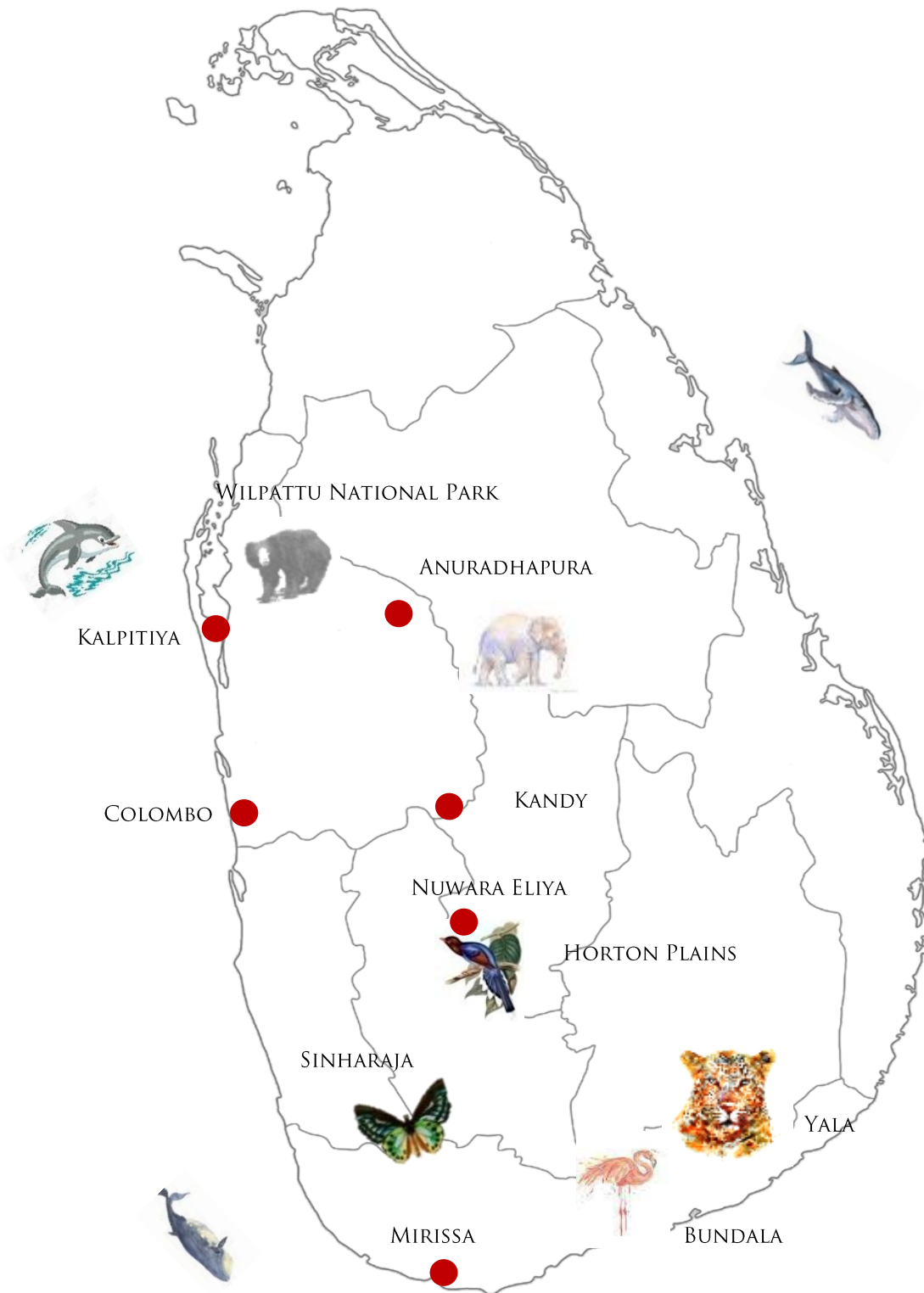
Wildlife of Sri Lanka includes its flora and fauna and their natural habitats. Sri Lanka has one of the highest rates of biological endemism. 16% of the fauna and 23% of flowering plants are endemic in the world even though it is relatively small.





# Wildlife Adventures

Sri Lanka





## Itinerary Options

- Mammals of Sri Lanka  
Colombo – Udawalawe National Park – Yala National Park – Bundala National Park – Mirissa – Galle – Colombo
- Birding in Sri Lanka  
Colombo – Sinharaja Forest Reserve – Bundala National Park – Horton Plain National Park – Kandy – Colombo
- Diversity of Northern Sri Lanka  
Colombo – Minneriya National Park – Dambulla & Sigriya – Trincomalee – Pigeon Island National Park – Wilpattu National Park – Kalpitiya – Colombo
- Diversity of Southern Sri Lanka  
Colombo – Kandy – Horton Plains National Park – Udawalawe National Park – Sinharaja Forest Reserve – Mirissa – Hikkaduwa National Park – Colombo



## Mammals of Sri Lanka

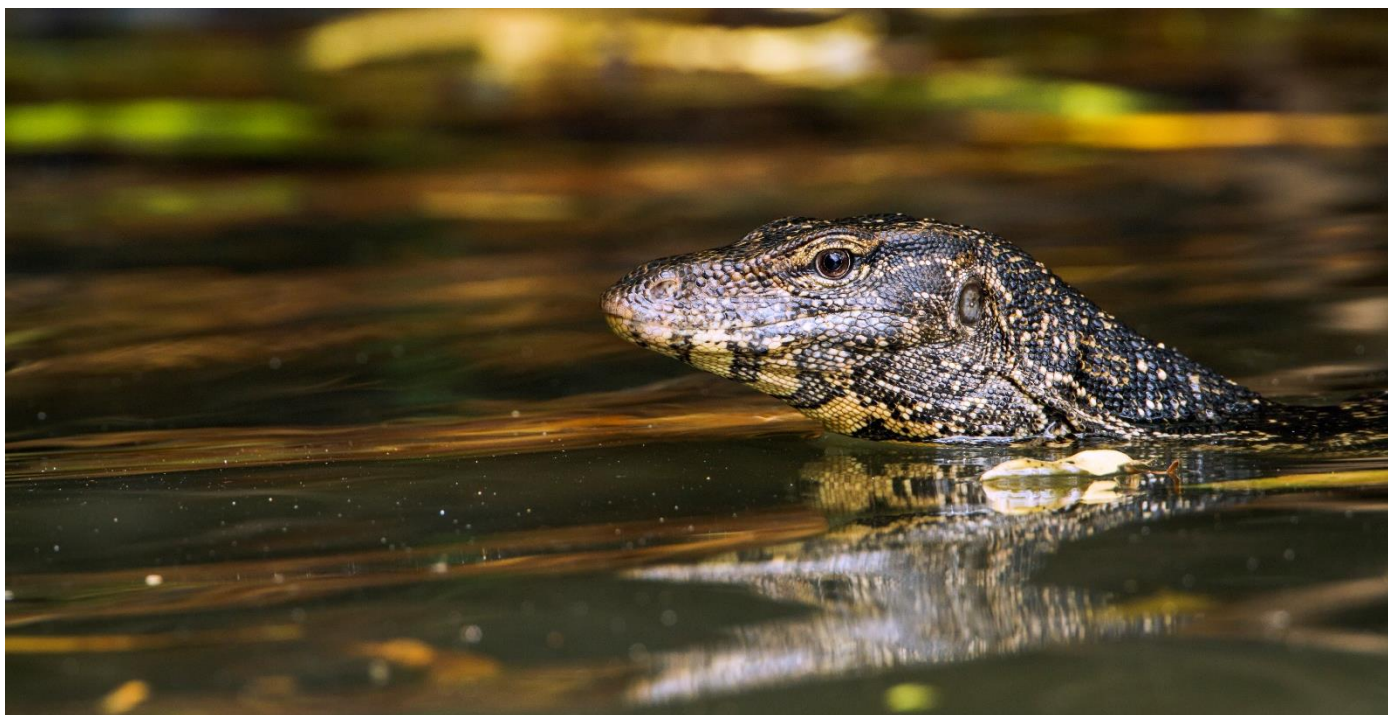
- Day 1: Arrive in Colombo early morning | Transfer by road to Udawalawe | Afternoon at leisure | Overnight at Udawalawe
- Day 2: Explore Udawalawe National Park | Overnight at Udawalawe
- Day 3: Explore Udawalawe National Park | Overnight at Udawalawe
- Day 4: Transfer to Yala National after breakfast | Lunch at the lodge in Yala | Afternoon safari in Yala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 5: Explore Yala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 6: Explore Bundala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 7: Transfer by road to Mirissa | Lunch at Mirissa | Explore Mirissa | Overnight at Mirissa
- Day 8: Whale Watching at Mirissa | Transfer to Galle | Lunch at Galle | Explore Galle | Overnight at Galle
- Day 9: Transfer by road to Colombo | Rest of the day at leisure | Overnight at Colombo
- Day 10: Catch your onward flight back home





## Birding in Sri Lanka

- Day 1: Arrive in Colombo early morning | Transfer by road to Sinharaja Forest Reserve | Afternoon at leisure | Overnight at Sinharaja Forest Reserve
- Day 2: Explore Sinharaja Forest Reserve | Overnight at Sinharaja Forest Reserve
- Day 3: Explore Sinharaja Forest Reserve | Overnight at Sinharaja Forest Reserve
- Day 4: Transfer to Bundala National Park after breakfast | Lunch at the lodge in Yala | Afternoon Explore Bundala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 5: Explore Yala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 6: Explore Bundala National Park | Overnight in Yala
- Day 7: Transfer by road to Nuwara Eliya | Lunch at Nuwara Eliya | Explore surrounding tea estates | Overnight at Nuwara Eliya
- Day 8: Explore birding at Horton Plains National Park | Overnight at Nuwara Eliya
- Day 9: Explore birding at Horton Plains National Park | Overnight at Nuwara Eliya
- Day 10: Transfer to Kandy | Explore Kandy | Overnight at Kandy
- Day 11: Transfer to Colombo | Rest of the day at leisure
- Day 12: Catch your onward flight back home



## Diversity of Northern Sri Lanka

- Day 1: Arrive in Colombo early morning | Transfer by road to Habarana | Afternoon explore Minneriya National park | Overnight at Habarana
- Day 2: Explore Dambulla & Sigriya | Overnight at Habarana
- Day 3: Transfer by road to Trincomalee | Lunch at the hotel | rest of the day at leisure to enjoy the beaches at Trincomalee | Overnight in Trincomalee
- Day 4: Day excursion to Pigeon Island National Park | Overnight at Trincomalee
- Day 5: Transfer by road to Wilpattu National Park | Lunch at the lodge | afternoon safari into Wilpattu | Overnight at Wilpattu
- Day 6: Explore Wilpattu National Park | Overnight in Wilpattu
- Day 7: Explore Wilpattu National Park | Overnight in Wilpattu
- Day 8: Transfer by road to Kalpitiya | Dolphin watching in Kalpitiya | Overnight in Kalpitiya
- Day 9: Enjoy & unwind at the beaches of Kalpitiya or enjoy birding and dolphin watching | Overnight at Kalpitiya
- Day 10: Transfer to Colombo | Rest of the day at leisure | Overnight at Colombo
- Day 11: Catch your onward flight back home



## Diversity of Southern Sri Lanka

- Day 1: Arrive in Colombo early morning | Transfer by road to Kandy | Afternoon at leisure | Overnight at Kandy
- Day 2: Explore Kandy | Overnight at Kandy
- Day 3: Transfer by road to Nuwara Eliya | Lunch at the hotel | Explore tea estates in the afternoon | Overnight in Nuwara Eliya
- Day 4: Day excursion to Horton Plains National Park | Overnight at Nuwara Eliya
- Day 5: Day excursion to Horton Plains National Park | Overnight at Nuwara Eliya
- Day 6: Transfer by road to Udawalawe National Park | Lunch at the lodge | Afternoon safari in Udawalawe National Park | Overnight at Udawalawe
- Day 7: Explore Udawalawe National Park | Overnight at Udawalawe
- Day 8: Transfer by road to Sinharaja Forest Reserve | After lunch explore Sinharaja | Overnight at Sinharaja
- Day 9: Explore Sinharaja | Overnight at Sinharaja
- Day 10: Transfer to Mirissa | Whale watching in Mirissa | Overnight at Mirissa
- Day 11: Transfer to Hikkaduwa National Park | Explore the park | Overnight at Hikkaduwa
- Day 12: Explore Hikkaduwa | In the evening transfer to Colombo | Overnight at Colombo
- Day 13: Catch your flight back home





## Udawalawe National Park

The national park was created to provide a sanctuary for wild animals displaced by the construction of the Udawalawe Reservoir on the Walawe River, as well as to protect the catchment of the reservoir. Udawalawe is an important habitat for water birds and Sri Lankan elephants. It is a popular tourist destination and the third most visited park in the country.

The habitat surrounding at the reservoir includes marshes, the Walawe river and its tributaries, forests and grasslands. Udawalawe is an important habitat for Sri Lankan elephants, which are relatively hard to see in its open habitats. Many elephants are attracted to the park because of the Udawalawe reservoir, with a herd of about 250 believed to be permanently resident. The Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home was established in 1995 for the purpose of looking after abandoned elephant calves within the park.

The rusty-spotted cat, fishing cat and Sri Lankan leopard are members of the family Felidae present in Udawalawe. The Sri Lankan sloth bear is seldom seen. Sri Lankan sambar deer, Sri Lankan axis deer, Indian muntjac, Sri Lankan spotted chevrotain, wild boar and water buffalo are among other mammal species. Golden jackal, Asian palm civet, toque macaque, tufted grey langur and Indian hare also inhabit the park. A study conducted in 1989 found that considerable numbers of golden palm civets inhabit the forests of Udawalawe.

Udawalawe is also a good birdwatching site. Endemics such as Sri Lanka spurfowl, red-faced malkoha, Sri Lanka grey hornbill, brown-capped babbler, and Sri Lanka junglefowl are among of the breeding resident birds. White wagtail and black-capped kingfisher are rare migrants. The open parkland attracts birds of prey such as white-bellied sea eagle, crested serpent-eagle, grey-headed fish eagle, booted eagle, and changeable hawk-eagle. Land birds are in abundance, and include Indian roller, Indian peafowl, Malabar pied hornbill and pied cuckoo.

Oriental garden lizards, painted-lip lizards, mugger crocodiles, Asian water monitors, Bengal monitors and 30 species of snake are found in the park.



## Sinharaja Forest Reserve

Sinharaja Forest Reserve is a national park and a biodiversity hotspot in Sri Lanka. It is of international significance and has been designated a Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site by UNESCO. It is a treasure trove of endemic species, including trees, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Because of the dense vegetation, wildlife is not as easily seen as at dry-zone national parks such as Yala. There are about 3 elephants and the 15 or so leopards that are rarely seen. The most common larger mammal is the endemic purple-faced langur. Sinharaja is a paradise of endemic and other species of fauna. Over 50% of endemic species of fauna are living in Sinharaja Tropical rain forest. There are about 282 birds recorded in Sinharaja out of 384 in Sri Lanka. It is 73%. Most of species who are endemic to Sri Lanka can be seen on Sinharaja. Butterflies, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals are major fauna types.

An interesting phenomenon is that birds tend to move in mixed feeding flocks, invariably led by the fearless greater racket-tailed drongo and the noisy orange-billed babbler. Of Sri Lanka's 26 endemic birds, the 20-rainforest species all occur here, including the elusive red-faced malkoha, green-billed coucal and Sri Lanka blue magpie.

Reptiles include the endemic green pit viper and hump-nosed vipers, and there are a large variety of amphibians, especially tree frogs. Invertebrates include the endemic common birdwing butterfly and the inevitable leeches.







## Wilpattu National Park

Wilpattu is the largest and one of the oldest National Parks in Sri Lanka. Wilpattu is among the top national parks world-renowned for its leopard population. The unique feature of this park is the existence of "Willus" (Natural lakes) - Natural, sand-rimmed water basins or depressions that fill with rainwater. Nearly sixty lakes (Willu) and tanks are found spread throughout Wilpattu.

There are many types of vegetation to be found in Wilpattu, including littoral vegetation, such as salt grass and low scrub monsoon forest with tall emergent, such as palu, and satin, milla, weera, ebony and wewarna.

31 species of mammals call Wilpattu national park their home. Some of the key species to look out for when visiting this park are: Asiatic elephant, sloth bear, leopard, sambar deer and spotted deer. The painted stork, the open bill, little cormorant, Sri Lankan junglefowl along with many species of owls, terns, gulls, eagles, kites buzzards are to be found at Wilpattu National Park. Wetland bird species that can be seen in Wilpattu are the garganey, pintail, whistling teal, spoonbill, black-headed ibis, large white egret, cattle egret and purple heron. The most common reptiles found in the park are the monitor lizard, mugger crocodile, common cobra, rat snake, Indian python, pond turtle and the soft shelled turtle which are resident in the large permanent Villus.







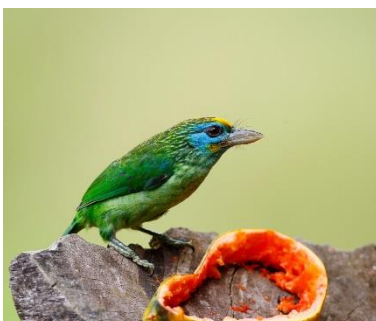
## Horton Plains National Park

Horton Plains is a World Heritage Site located on the Southern edge of the Central Highlands. Host to a vast array of unique and endemic flora and fauna this park is unlike any park in the country. Situated 2,000m above sea level the cold climes result in cloud forests and open moors akin the Scottish highlands.

The park offers a unique landscape. Home to a sheer cliff named “World End” which plunges vertically almost 700m. This amazing location provides breath-taking views of the Southern landscape of the island. There are many peaks found in the park including Kirigalpotta which is Sri Lanka’s second tallest mountain. Bakers Falls named after English Hunter Samuel Baker is one of the main attractions of the park.

The park is home to many species of endemic bird species. The most sought after and rarest is the ever elusive Arrenga or Sri Lanka Whistling Thrush. The best place known to be the haunt of this jewel of the forest is the infamous “Arrenga Pool” where its known to be seen. Equally rare and hard to find is the montane endemic bird the Sri Lanka Bush Warbler. Other endemic birds found in the park are the Dull Blue Flycatcher, Sri Lanka White Eye, Scimitar Babbler, Wood Pigeon and Sri Lanka Jungle Fowl. Bird watching requires patience, keen eyes and hearing, if one is vigilant and observant he/she will be treated to an avifaunal display like nowhere else on earth.

Other interesting species to look out for are the Purple Faced Leaf Monkey, Rhino-horned Lizard and the Common Rough Sided Snake.







## Yala National Park

Yala is perhaps one of the best places in the world to see the elusive leopard. Sri Lanka's premier wildlife destination is the most visited and second largest park in the country. Consisting of five blocks, it is Block I which is most frequented by visitors due to the high density of wildlife and regularity of sightings in the area.

Yala National Park has a variety of ecosystems including moist monsoon forests, dry monsoon forests, semi deciduous forests, thorn forests, grasslands, fresh water and marine wetlands, and sandy beaches.

Yala provides some of the best wildlife viewing in all of Sri Lanka with most of the large mammals seen regularly including elephant, water buffalo, sloth bear, mugger crocodile and the most iconic of the park, the leopard. Over 25 leopards have been recorded in Block I alone. The general accustomed nature of these felines makes Yala one of the best places in the world to see a leopard.

Birdlife in the region is especially spectacular. One could combine a visit to Bundala National Park, especially in the winter months as it is the wintering ground for the Greater Flamingos. Other species in the park are the Eurasian Spoonbills, Black Necked Stork, Asian Openbill and Lesser Adjutant Stork to name a few.

Bundala is also home to the Fishing Cat and the Rusty Spotted Cat – big attractions for those who are interested in wildcats.







## Mirissa

Mirissa is the largest fishing port on the south coast and is known for its tuna, mullet, snapper and butterfish. It is also one of the best places in Sri Lanka for Whale Watching and Dolphin Watching. After a hectic trip it is the perfect way to unwind at the end of your tour to Sri Lanka.







## Pigeon Island National Park

Pigeon Island National Park is one of the two marine national parks of Sri Lanka. The island's name derives from the rock pigeon which has colonized it. The national park contains some of the best remaining coral reefs of Sri Lanka. The island was used as a shooting range during the colonial era.

The large pigeon island's coral reef fauna is dominated by *Acropora* spp. with some *Montipora* spp. *Faviidae*, *Mussidae* and *Poritidae* species dominate the coral reef around the rocky islets. Areas with soft corals such as *Sinularia*, *Lobophyton*, and *Sarcophyton* can also be observed. The coral reef harbors many vertebrates and invertebrates. Many of the 100 species of corals and 300 coral reef fishes recorded around the Trincomalee area are found in the national park. Juvenile and adult blacktip reef shark are seen around the shallow coral areas. Hawksbill turtle, green turtle and olive ridley are the visiting sea turtles of the coral reef. The island is important breeding ground for the rock pigeon.





## Thank You

No place is boring if you've had a good nights sleep  
and have a pocket full of unexposed film.

~ Robert Adams

For the born traveler, traveling is a besetting vice.  
Like other vices, it is imperious, demanding its  
victims time, money, energy and the sacrifice of  
comfort.

~ Aldous Huxley



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