

Joy of Birding beginners foundation course

A 5 day 4 night Immersive Birding Course in Central India

Date: 6th October to 10th October , 2027

Venue: Kanha Earth Lodge, Kanha, Madhya Pradesh

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Birding is not about collecting names. It is about learning to observe, listening to habitats, understanding behaviour, recognizing movement, and slowly becoming aware of the living world around us.

This 5 days and 4 nights experiential course introduces participants to the fundamentals of birding through immersive outdoor learning in the forests of Central India.

Designed especially for beginners and enthusiasts, the program focuses on:

- Practical field birding
- Bird identification
- Bird calls
- Behaviour interpretation
- Habitat understanding
- Developing observational skills



COURSE HIGHLIGHTS



Experiential Based

- Majorly outdoor learning
- Minimal classroom sessions
- Learning through activities and games
- Guided bird walks and immersive field experiences



Learn Birding from Scratch

Ideal for:

- Beginners
- Wildlife enthusiasts
- Photographers
- Students
- Safari travellers
- Nature lovers



Birding Without Binoculars

One of the signature modules of the course participants learn:

- Naked-eye observation
- Silhouette recognition
- Movement tracking
- Behaviour-based identification
- Habitat interpretation

The idea is to train participants to observe first, and use optics later. By the end of the course, participants begin identifying many birds before even seeing them



NO PRIOR BIRDING EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!!

COURSE DETAILS

Feature	Details
Duration	5 Days / 4 Nights
Location	Kanha Earth Lodge
Format	Experiential & Field-Based
Difficulty	Beginner Friendly
Ideal Age	18+ years



COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, participants will:



Understand the basics of birding



Bird confidently without binoculars



Identify common bird groups



Interpret habitats and movement



Recognize birds through shape and behaviour



Gain confidence in independent birding



Understand bird calls and vocalizations

TOPICS COVERED IN THE COURSE

“Learning to Observe”

- What is birding?
- Birding ethics
- How to watch birds
- Understanding bird behaviour
- Introduction to binoculars
- Field etiquette
- Using field guides and apps
- Guided introductory bird walk
- Observation exercises
- Sit-and-watch sessions

“From Shape to Species”

- Bird silhouettes
- Beak types
- Tail patterns
- Flight styles
- Feeding behaviour
- Habitat associations
- Size and posture
- Comparing similar species
- Habitat specifics
- Behaviour-based identification

Key Learning:

Birding starts with observation, not identification

“Listening to the Forest”

- Why birds vocalize
- Songs vs calls
- Alarm, territorial and contact calls
- Mimicry
- Dawn chorus interpretation
- Blind birding exercises
- Bird-call repetition activities

“Birding with Eyes Closed”

Participants identify birds through:

- Sound
- Movement
- Wingbeats
- Environmental cues

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Participants begin recognizing common species before seeing them.

“Seeing Beyond Equipment”

- Naked-eye birding
- Tracking movement
- Flight recognition
- Perch preference
- Habitat clues
- Silhouette-based birding
- Silent observation exercises
- Distance birding challenges



OUTCOME

Participants become less dependent on optics and more attentive to ecological cues

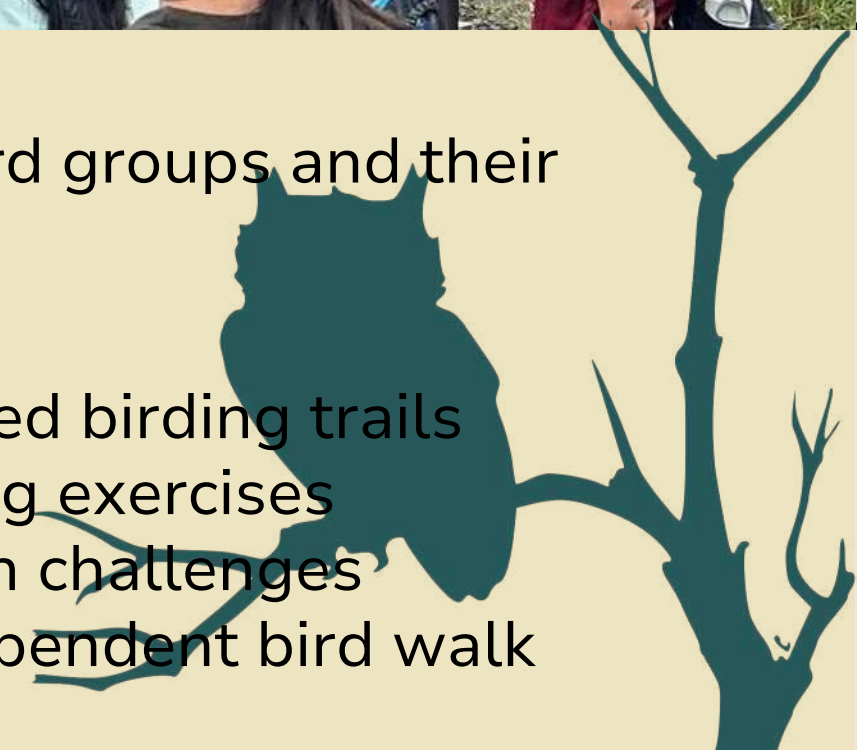


“Understanding Bird Families”

Instead of memorizing isolated species, participants learn broader bird groups and their ecological roles.

BIRD GROUPS COVERED

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| • Raptors | • Woodpeckers | • Sunbirds | • Habitat-based birding trails |
| • Flycatchers | • Kingfishers | • Owls | • Bird grouping exercises |
| • Babblers | • Bee-eaters | • Waterbirds | • Identification challenges |
| • Warblers | • Shrikes | • Waders | • Guided independent bird walk |



FINAL EXERCISE

Participants conduct a short bird walk independently with mentor guidance

SPECIAL EXPERIENCES

Dawn Chorus Session

Experience forests waking up through sound and activity.

Night Birding

Depending on season and conditions:

- Owls
- Nightjars
- Nocturnal calls
- Acoustic exploration

Citizen Science Introduction

- eBird, iNaturalist
- Merlin Bird ID
- Bird Count India

Bird Journaling

Participants maintain:

- Sketches
- Field notes
- Behaviour records
- Sound observations



WHAT MAKES THIS COURSE DIFFERENT?

Most beginner birding programs focus only on species names.

This course focuses on:

- Observation
- Listening
- Interpretation
- Behaviour
- Movement
- Ecological awareness

Participants leave with not just bird names, but the ability to truly observe birds.



Dr. Nikhil Bhopale - Lead Trainer

Dr. Nikhil Bhopale is a wildlife educator, naturalist, and conservationist with over two decades of experience in natural history and environmental education. A former ornithologist and herpetologist with the **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**, he has served as faculty for the **BNHS Basic Courses in Ornithology and Herpetology**, **BNHS Leadership Course in Biodiversity Conservation**, **Pugdundee Professional Naturalist Training Programme**, and training programmes in **Chitwan National Park, Nepal**. He is also a member of the **IUCN Commission on Education and Communication**.

An engaging field educator, Dr. Bhopale has trained hundreds of naturalists and wildlife guides. He is the **co-author** of **Birds of the Indian Subcontinent: A Field Guide (Oxford University Press & BNHS)** and was awarded an **Honorary Doctorate in Wildlife Sciences**.

FEES

- Rs 47,500 + 5% GST per person on twin sharing basis
- Rs. 25,000 + 5% GST per person on single room supplement

SEATS AVAILABLE: 12 SEATS

INCLUDES

- Stay at Kanha Earth Lodge in twin sharing
- 2 Safaris in Kanha National park
- All Meals
- Tea/Coffee Service

DOES NOT INCLUDES

- **Travel to/from Kanha Earth Lodge:** We will create a WhatsApp group for all participants to help coordinate and share transfers with others arriving or departing at similar times.
- Laundry, beverages etc.

CANCELLATION POLICY

- Initial deposit once paid is non-refundable.
- 50% cancellation charges between 31-59 days from the commencement of course.
- 100% cancellation charges within 30 days from the commencement of course.