

# Cambodia – Stunning Nature and Wildlife

Nature is in abundance in the kingdom of Cambodia. The country being located in Southeast Asia enjoys tropical wet and dry climate. With 435 km long coastline, Cambodia is positioned amidst the Indo-China peninsula sharing its north and west borders with Thailand, east with Vietnam, again north with Laos and west with Gulf of Thailand.



The geography comprising of plain lands, mountains, highlands, rivers, and lakes has made Cambodia rich in natural surroundings making it popular habitat for some of the most endangered species on the planet Earth. With increased, popularity of Cambodia as a wildlife destination, the country witness large number of tourists coming every year from all around the world.

The rich natural surroundings and climate of Cambodia has boosted the wildlife and adventure tourism in the country. It has grown to cover all the parameters for becoming a popular tourist destination. Looking back to the wildlife tourism, Cambodia calls for nature lovers as it is home to more than 200 species of mammals, 850 genus of fish, 536 species of birds, 240 types of reptiles and many types of non marine mollusk that reside in fresh water and not in the sea. Some of the most popular sites for nature, wildlife and hiking lovers in Cambodia are as follows.

## **Bokor National Park**

Bokor located in south western part of Cambodia is known for Preah Monivong National Park commonly called Bokor National park. Bokor was developed as a hill station by French in 1920 on Damrei Mountains. The Bokor province was destroyed twice, first by Vietnamese and second by Khmer rouge. Bokor National Park is spread over an area of 1581 sq km predominantly a tropical forest rich in some of the rare species of flora and fauna.

The landscape of Bokor National park made it a destination of choice for adventurous activities like trekking and cycling. The entrance fee to the Bokor National park is US\$5. Trekking is the best way to watch wildlife in its most natural form at the Bokor National Park. Trekkers get to see some of the most unusual animals like the Asiatic black bear, Pileated Gibbon, Malayan sun bear, Indian Elephant, Leopard, pangolin, mongoose and red muntjac deer.



One more attraction on the trek of Bokor are the Ppopkvill falls. The upper fall is 15 meters high while the lower is 18 meters high. The best time to visit Bokor National Park is rainy season when the forest is green.

### **Mondulkiri**

Mondulkiri province located in the Eastern part of Cambodia is bordered by Kratie in the west, Stung Treng in the northwest, Ratanakiri in the north and Vietnam in the south east. It is the largest province in Cambodia with the least population. The main occupants of the region are Pnong tribals and their elephants. Mondulkiri is a great blend of nature and wild landscape. Mondulkiri Protected Forest is the largest forest conserved area in the entire Southeast Asia. The jungles of Mondulkiri, its cool climate, natives, mountains and hidden waterfalls have all made Mondulkiri province one of the most popular attractions for nature lovers to watch the rarest among all and newly discovered species of wild life.

### **Kratie**

Kratie is a province located in the northeast part of Cambodia. The famous Mekong River flows through Kratie. The river's high flow is a reason for large marshland found in Cambodia which adds to the wildlife found in the river and on the banks of the river. Kratie is popularly known for Irrawaddy freshwater dolphins which are located 20 km away at village of Kampi. Adventure lovers can take a 30 km cycling or motor biking route from the town of Kratie to the village of Kampi to watch the rare species of the dolphins. The 200 km long stretch of the Mekong River flowing through the plains of Cambodia is home to around 80 Irrawaddy Dolphins.



### **Sihanouk Ville**

Sihanouk Ville offers the tourists pristine beaches and clear water surroundings. Sihanouk Ville is surrounded by tiny islands and sprawling white sand beaches. It is a great place to unwind in the most luxurious facilities and surroundings better than highly populated shores of neighboring countries.

Sihanouk Ville offers great food, variety of resorts and good night life.

### **Tonle Sap**

Tonle Sap is home to the largest freshwater lake in the entire Southeast Asia. The Lake has unique ecosystem that is witnessed in the monsoon and in dry season. The melted snow from Himalayas and the rainwater bulge the Mekong River which in turn feed the Tonle Sap Lake thereby increasing the lake basin five times. This causes floods in forests surrounding the lake that shelter some of the rarest creatures like large variety of fish, snakes, turtles, crocodiles and otters. The area becomes habitat to many of the unusual breed of birds like pelicans and storks.

Date: 2012-06-25

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-cambodias-nature-and-wildlife-lure-thousands-of-tourists-article1881>