






## Gabon Wildlife Adventure

**Destination:** Gabon

**Season:** July - August

-  Track, follow and observe up to 700 Mandrills with a world expert in the species
-  Spotlighting in Lope and Loango for a stunning wealth of nocturnal wildlife
-  Track Giant Pangolins & become one of a handful of people to ever see this species
-  Over 10 species of primates possible, including Mandrills & Lowland Gorillas
-  River safaris along the beautiful Akaka River where Manatees are possible

### Dates:

Group tour: 6<sup>th</sup> Jul – 15<sup>th</sup> Jul 2022 **2 places**

~~Group tour: 13<sup>th</sup> Jul – 22<sup>nd</sup> Jul 2022~~

Group tour: 23<sup>rd</sup> Jul – 1<sup>st</sup> Aug 2022 **3 places**

### Private / Tailored Tour information:

This tour can be booked anytime between of the year, however the wet season can make the terrain very muddy and also outside of the mandrill breeding season (June – August) their behaviour can be unpredictable and the magnificent males are often solitary. Between July and August the males join the large troops of females, youngsters and sub adult males and you can see many hundreds of mandrills in the forest.

So we choose the dry season (northern hemisphere summer time) which also coincides with the mandrill breeding season.

Whilst we have a good success rate in filling tours some people prefer to book a private tour to avoid any disappointment and guarantee the departure.

We can run this tour with any number of people (up to a maximum of 8 people), however the price advertised for our group tour is our cheapest rate (based on a full trip), for lower numbers the per person price does increase.

We also have flexibility for the duration of trip you would like to book.

We have an optional extension to be included after the end of this tour, it is to explore the wonderful and diverse national park of Ivindo and if you are interested you can find out more information on this.

Trips for any group size and any duration are possible, please enquire further for more information on our tailored Gabon wildlife tours.

### Prices (2022 season):

Group Tour (9 nights)

£6,650 per person

### Overview

**Days 1-2:** Libreville / Akanda NP

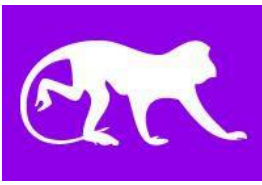
**Days 3-5:** Lope NP

**Day 6:** Lamberene

**Days 7-9:** Loango NP / Akaka River

**Day 10:** Loango – Port Gentil – Libreville - Home





# Tour Information

## Introduction

Gabon is a natural paradise little known by the Western traveller. A country with huge swathes of forest intact and large populations of African forest elephants, lowland gorillas, mandrills and many other rare and iconic species.

The 'jewel in the crown' of Gabon's natural park's is Loango National Park, where there's almost no humans living around the park and where wild animals live protected by the rivers surrounding this natural part of Central Africa.

Travelling to the little known country of Gabon in Central Africa to track down some of the world's most enigmatic primates including the colourful Mandrill and the huge and endearing Lowland Gorilla (among other awesome species) is what this tour is all about.

There is a great diversity of wildlife in the country and with over 10 species of primates possible, including gorillas and chimps as well as mandrills and many species of nocturnal primate, you will not be disappointed by what Gabon has to offer.

But not only that, in the last year or so the same researcher who has studied the mandrills and made it possible for people to see this incredible species, has started studying giant pangolins and there is the amazing and unique opportunity to track and observe one of the world's rarest and most elusive species, the stunning and huge giant pangolin.

In addition to the easily spotted big mammals such as the forest elephant, red forest buffalo, red river hogs (with their furry ears), sitatunga, various duiker species, and the variety of monkey species; there is a huge array of birds and reptiles as well.

This itinerary also visits Lope National Park with the most beautiful landscape of Gabon and the largest population of accessible mandrills in the world.

Gabon is also the home of one of the world's most iconic and famous species of primate; the Mandrill. Immortalized by Rafiki in The Lion King, the world's largest species of monkey is found here and can be seen easier than anywhere else in the world.

But it is not just mandrills that are the attraction for this tour. As mentioned above we will spend time with lowland gorillas and also have a fantastic chance to see forest elephants, red river hogs and other species known from the Central African tropical rainforest; this is a unique chance to also track a studied population of giant pangolins, this activity is not 100% guaranteed in advance as it depends on where the pangolins are, but we have access to them if they are close by and will allow you the unique and amazing experience to see the world's largest species of pangolin and one of the world's most elusive mammals close up in the wild.

All in all we believe that this tour is one that any wildlife enthusiast and particularly anyone interested in primates will love. We are exploring a seldom visited country with expert local guides on the trail of some of Africa's most incredible wildlife.

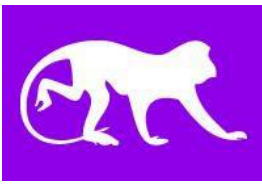
Below is our itinerary, for further information, photographs and booking information please contact us further.

## Itinerary

Day 1	Libreville / Akanda NP	Travelling & Rest / Wildlife Watching
<b><u>Accommodation:</u></b> Hotel Oceane (Boutique Hotel)	<b><u>Food:</u></b> No meals will be included today.	<b><u>Transportation:</u></b> Private vehicle, boat & Walking

Arrival in Libreville where the guide will be meet you at the airport and transfer you to the hotel. If everyone arrives early today then it may be possible for us to organise a trip to Akanda National Park (at extra expense GBP £190 and this will be added to the total cost of the trip once we can confirm this). Akanda National Park is a huge wetland ecosystem home to a wealth of birdlife and also West African manatees (however these are very rarely seen), we will be making our way to a small ranger station island where a population of northern talapoins (a small monkey species) live. If we cannot arrange this for today, we will endeavour to arrange this for the morning of day 2, before we leave for the train station. For ease of logistics we tend to arrange this for the morning of day 2 which negates any possible problems for people whose flights may be delayed on arrival into Libreville.

If you book our Ivindo National Park pre-trip extension you will miss today completely – but Akanda can be added to your arrival before departing for Ivindo. You will join the main group on this itinerary on day 2 on the train to Lope National Park



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## Day 2 Libreville – Lope NP

## Rest & Travelling

### Accommodation:

Lope Hotel (Safari Lodge)

### Food:

Breakfast is the only meal included today and will be served at the hotel.

### Transportation:

Private vehicles & Train.

Free morning in the hotel or to walk and bath in the beach, we can also arrange a small city tour if you wish. If we didn't visit Akanda National Park yesterday and the park is open we will make the trip this morning – as mentioned on day 1, we usually do visit Akanda now and are back in time for lunch which can be served at the hotel. We will depart for the train station in the mid afternoon and then catch the evening train (departure is at 18:50) to Lope. We will arrive into Lope around 00:00 - 01:00, on arrival we will have a short (15 min) transfer to the hotel and then straight to the rooms. The wildlife watching will start at around 7-8am tomorrow.

If you are booked on the Ivindo National Park pre-trip extension you will meet the rest of the group and join this itinerary on the train to Lope.

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## Days 3-4 Lope National Park

## Wildlife Watching

### Accommodation:

Lope Hotel (Safari Lodge)

### Food:

All meals will be served at the lodge in between wildlife excursions, however only breakfast is included on these days.

### Transportation:

Private vehicle & Walking.

Over the next two days the group will be most split into two, this is because the maximum group size that can track the mandrills is 4 people per day.

So we will split the group into two and then after breakfast on day 3 half of the group will head out on a jeep safari into Lope National Park, the park is great for African forest elephants, bushbuck, forest buffalo and primate species (with 5 species commonly seen here) as well as many birds and other wildlife. They will come back for lunch as the temperatures rise and the wildlife starts to disappear into the forest.

The other group will be collected by the mandrill researcher (David Lehmann) and driven into the park, he will then use the radio telemetry to find the troop. You will then drive and walk as direct as possible to the mandrills and once you have found them, you will have around 1 hour with them. You will then come back to the lodge for lunch.

In the afternoon the whole group will meet up and have a jeep safari into the park once again and then after dinner we can go back for some spotlighting (if the park allows) and if not we can walk a little around the lodge grounds, which can be good for galagos, fruit bats and genets.

It is whilst in Lope we may have the unique chance to track and study a giant pangolin (there are a few microchipped for research here) and if one of them is currently accessible in the deep forest we will be split into groups of 4 again (as with the mandrill tracking) and in the evenings of days 3-4 be taken out to see the pangolin with the researcher. This will be done in the evenings and we will rotate the groups so that the people who saw the mandrills on the morning of day 3 will track the pangolin on the evening of day 4 and vice versa.

The morning of day 4 will see the groups reversed with the same pattern of yesterday.

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## Day 5 Lope National Park

## Wildlife Watching & Travelling

### Accommodation:

Train (Train)

### Food:

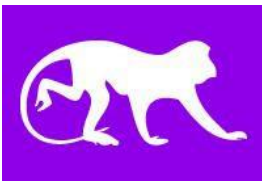
All meals will be served at the lodge in between wildlife excursions, however only breakfast is included today.

### Transportation:

Private Vehicle & Train.

The train we have to catch from Lope to take us to Ndjole is not until around midnight, so we will have the room available in Lope Hotel until then and spend the day (morning and afternoon) exploring the park once again by jeep. There is also a possibility of a second mandrill tracking for 4 people (at extra expense) if there is availability today, this can be discussed and arranged with David whilst in Lope.

When we leave Lope Hotel to catch the train we will then be on the train from around midnight to 3am. Once we arrive in Ndjole we will drive to the town of Lamberene (2 hours) and when we get there, breakfast will be ready for us and we can spend the morning resting.



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## Day 6 **Ndjole - Lamberene**

### *Travelling*

#### Accommodation:

Albert Schweitzer Hospital (Guest House)

#### Food:

All meals will be served at the guest house in Lamberene today.

#### Transportation:

Private vehicle.

After the night drive you will arrive in Ndjole before dawn and then we have to wait here until sunrise (tourist vehicles are not allowed to drive the road in the dark) and then when it is light we continue our journey to the colonial town of Lambarené, a river island town famous for its many natural lakes with several endemic bird and fish species and the Albert Schweitzer Hospital and Museum.

This unique hospital was established in 1913 by German Doctor Albert Schweitzer. Its Medical Research Unit is one of the leading scientific institutions in Africa working to end the scourge of malaria, and also serves as a highly-regarded training site for African physicians and scientists. We will visit the hospital, the house (now museum) of Albert Schweitzer and its beautiful natural surroundings. We have nothing specific planned for today, other than relaxing and catch up on sleep from a night travelling.

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## Day 7 **Ogooue River / Loango NP**

### *Travelling & Spotlighting*

#### Accommodation:

Loango Lodge (Wildlife Lodge)

#### Food:

Breakfast will be served at the guest house, lunch will be at Omboue and then dinner at the lodge.

#### Transportation:

Private vehicles, Speed boat & Walking.

Today is a long day of travelling, we will leave after breakfast and then take a speed boat trip with a motor boat along the Omboué town along the Ogooué River. The trip lasts around 5h and it is just amazing, we travel fast but it is still possible to see crocodiles, birds and primates along the way. You can get a real feeling of how the first explorers felt navigating along the Africa tropical rivers. We will reach to Omboue and have lunch there, before being driven (2h) to the Iguela Lagoon, in the Loango National Park and your lodge.

After dark we can have a nocturnal walk through the savanna / forest mosaic which can produce galagos, anomalures, civets and genets.

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## Day 8 **Loango NP / Akaka River**

### *Wildlife Watching*

#### Accommodation:

Akaka Camp (Wildlife Camp)

#### Food:

Breakfast will be served at the lodge with lunch and dinner at Akaka Camp.

#### Transportation:

Private vehicles, Safari boat & Walking.

Today after breakfast the group will be split again, as the gorillas can only be tracked with a group of 4 people maximum. We will take the boat across the lagoon and towards the gorilla conservation headquarters, along the way it is possible to see common hippos and red-capped mangabeys.

So 4 people will do the gorilla tracking today, this will consist of a briefing and then a hike to the gorillas (usually this is 1-2 hours long) and then you will spend one hour with the gorillas before heading back and being taken to the Akaka camp in your own boat to meet up with rest of the group.

The other half of the group will have a river safari down the wonderful Akaka river after leaving the gorilla headquarters. You have a great chance of seeing slender-nosed crocodiles, African forest elephants, primates, situngas, many birds and possibly manatees along the river.

When everyone is together in the late afternoon we will have dinner and then an spotlighting cruise along the river.

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## Day 9 **Akaka River / Loango NP**

### *Wildlife Watching*

#### Accommodation:

Loango Lodge (Wildlife Lodge)

#### Food:

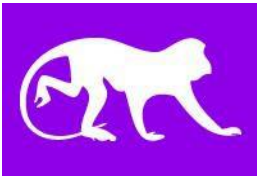
Breakfast and lunch will be served at the camp, with dinner at the lodge.

#### Transportation:

Private vehicles, Safari boat & Walking.

This morning after breakfast the group who did the gorillas yesterday will have a morning boat safari around the Akaka river and the other group will go to the gorillas.

After both of these activities everyone will meet up again and head back to the lodge. After dinner it can be possible to arrange a night walk again.



## Day 10 Port Gentil - Libreville - Home

## Travelling & Departure

### Accommodation:

NA

### Food:

Breakfast will be at the lodge and no other meals will be served today.

### Transportation:

Private vehicles & Internal flight.

This morning we will have one more excursion into the park, and this time we will have a jeep safari into the savanna region of Loango and focus on the red river hogs around here. We will return for breakfast and then leave the lodge and drive to Port Gentil (~4-5 hours), we will have lunch in Port Gentil and then catch our flight to Libreville in the evening.

It can be possible to make connections to international departures today, however in case of any delays with the internal flight we recommend spending the night in Libreville and arranging your departure flight for the next day. So on your arrival back to Libreville from Port Gentil you can either be escorted to the international airport to check into your flight home or be dropped at the hotel in Libreville.

### Your tour and all Royle Safaris services end upon transfer to the airport

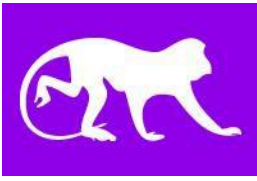
Please note that the itinerary stated above is correct as our planned intentions for the tour.

However adverse weather conditions and other local considerations can necessitate some modifications of the itinerary during the course of the tour; any chances will be made to make the best of the time, weather conditions and other constraints forced upon us and all changes will be made in conjunction with our terms and conditions.

### Tour Inclusions

Absolutely everything mentioned in the above itinerary is included (except where it is expressly mentioned as an optional extra).

- All accommodation as mentioned above or of a similar standard as mentioned.
- All meals as mentioned in the itinerary; ***please note that some lunches and dinners are not included when travelling through Libreville and Loango National Park in this itinerary.***
- Bottled mineral or purified (boiled) water will be provided throughout and on request.
- Private vehicles and boats for all transfers and safari drives / cruises.
- One Mandrill tracking permit is included per person.
- One Lowland Gorilla tracking permit is included per person.
- English speaking local driver and guide with years of experience in working in the areas we are travelling.
- All fuel, tolls, taxes and other expenses relating to driving.
- Professional zoologist escort provided by Royle Safaris (where available)
- All safari drives, hikes, boat trips and night safaris as mentioned in the itinerary.
- A selection of field guides of the local areas will be available on request from the zoologist escort.
- Also documentaries about the local area are sometimes available (depending on the electricity usage in the areas we are camping).
- Entrance fees and permits needed.
- Night excursions where possible in Loango and Akaka
- Internal flight from Port Gentil to Libreville (in economy class)



### Tour Exclusions

Nearly everything you will need is included in the price you have already paid for the tour. However there are some things not included.

- International flights to and from the tour start and end points.
- Travel insurance including any fees that result from emergency medical or evacuation needs.
- Visa fees for entering the country(s).
- Vaccinations and any medication are not included.
- Any food other than the meals provided and mentioned in the above itinerary; ***please not that some lunches and dinners when travelling through Libreville and Lope National Park are not included in this itinerary***
- Any drinks not including in the meal.
- Any items of a personal nature are not included, such as souvenirs, medication, toiletries, laundry and phone calls.
- Tips are also not included.
- We will include a trip to Akanda National Park as standard on the itinerary (once we can confirm the park will be open for our visit) this will be arranged on either day 1 or day 2 and will cost an extra GBP £190 per person – this will be automatically added onto the balance cost.
- We will include a Giant Pangolin tracking permit as standard on the itinerary (once we can confirm this activity will be open for our visit) this will be arranged on either day 3, 4 or day 5 and will cost an extra GBP £325 per person – this will be automatically added onto the balance cost.
- If any internal flights are cancelled on this trip (should any be included in the itinerary); due to unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances then any extra costs incurred such as hotels, food and transfers are extra.
- Any departure taxes which may be due when leaving are not included (but may be included in the cost of your flights).

**Please refer to our Terms & Conditions (<http://www.royle-safaris.co.uk/terms-conditions/>) before booking any trips – email or paper copies of Terms & Conditions can be provided if needed**