

This trip was our first time visiting The Gambia and first time visiting sub-Saharan Africa, so we were excited, as everything would be a new experience. Coming from a herpetological background of interest, this was our first purpose birding trip we decided to join. We learned of Karanta through the website of Bird watcher Association of The Gambia, but due to changes of plans and shifting funds our trip was delayed from winter 2022/2023 to early 2024. All this time we were in contact with him through social media, and even with delay he was understanding and utmost professional.

We enjoy nature and wildlife in general, and we had a lot of that throughout the tour. Small secluded drinking spots, wildlife trails, shallows and riverbanks, specific fields where a certain bird is usually there only for a small amount of time? Karanta seemed to draw on unlimited well of knowledge and experience, and that resulted in over 200 seen and confirmed bird species, including some very rare and unique encounters, which for us non-birders was an awesome experience. As enthusiast photographers we also appreciated the guidance how close and from what angle approach the animals for best results, which is something you rarely get from guides. We also need to commend him on his patience when our herping side got out, chasing Nile monitors and agamas, flipping random logs or stones, getting excited about a puffadder trail and even pulling a juvenile African rock python from the Gambia river during the river cruise.

Throughout the tour we were well cared for, with field lunches and water always available. Accommodations were well chosen, practical, clean and tidy, basically all you need on such a tour, along with good local food.

All-in-all a most enjoyable experience, worth repeating. We've been on other specialised wildlife tours with different guides, and without a doubt Karanta could teach most of those guides a thing or two about customer care and professionalism.

Erika & Tomaz, Slovenia