

# ECOTOURISM

## In Nam Et - Phou Louey National Protected Area, Lao PDR



## The Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area - the last home for wild tigers in Laos

**THE NAM ET-PHOU LOUEY** National Protected Area (NPA) is the second largest protected area in Laos and has the greatest wildlife biodiversity in the country.

The terrain is mountainous with altitude ranging between 336 and 2257 metres above sea level. The highest point is the peak of Phou Louey (Forever Mountain) and the lowest the Nam Et river valley.

**WILDLIFE.** The NEPL NPA contains large areas of intact primary forests, and supports an outstanding diversity of carnivores including the last wild tigers of Laos and five other cat species such as leopard, clouded leopard, golden cat, marbled cat, and leopard cat.

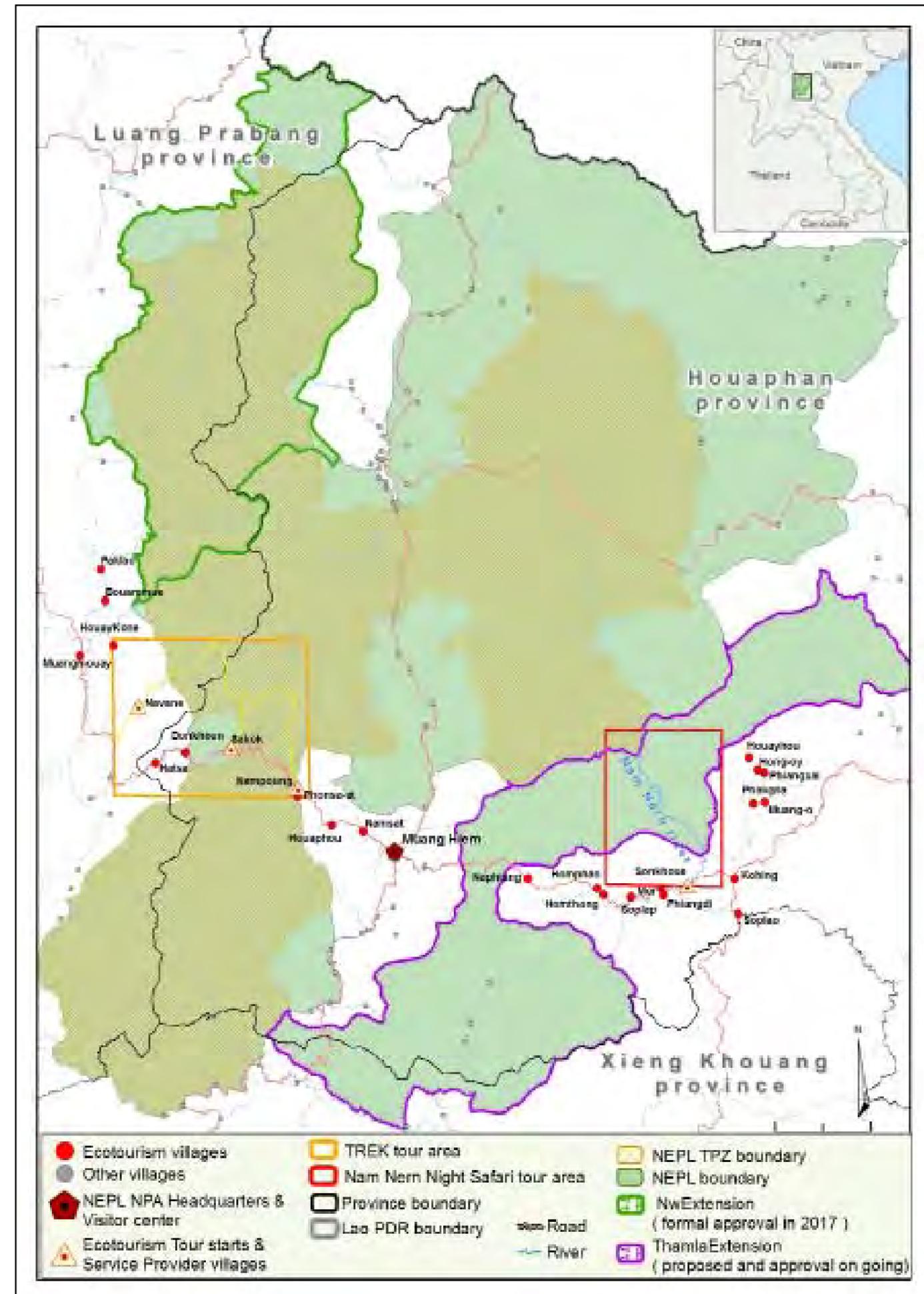
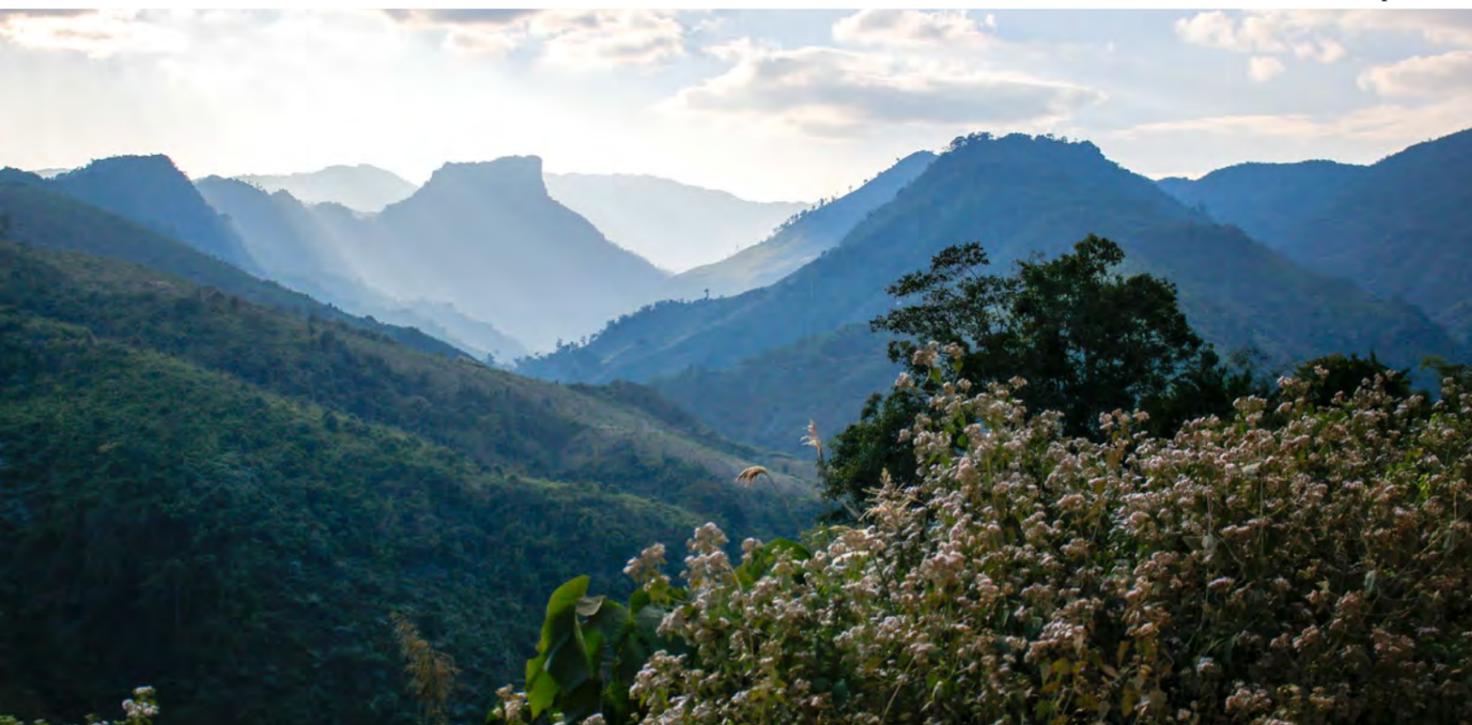
The area is also inhabited by dhole (status: endangered), 2 bear species (Asian black bear and sun bear, status: vulnerable), and other endangered wildlife. The five key species of NEPL NPA are: Tiger, Gaur, White-cheeked crested gibbon, Sambar deer, and Otters.

Tiger  
*Panthera tigris*

Sun Bear  
*Ursus Mayalanas*

Sambar Deer  
*Rusa unicolor*

Photos from the WCS/NEPL camera traps



## The NEPL ecotourism model

Ecotourism in NEPL NPA is supported by the NGO Wildlife Conservation Society and has been designed to create positive impacts by encouraging local people to protect endangered wildlife such as tigers and their prey.

The ecotourism activities at NEPL NPA have been developed to provide an alternative livelihood opportunity for local people, and designed to create a direct link between conservation and tourism so that the money that visitors pay has a positive impact on encouraging local people to protect endangered wildlife. This is achieved through active community involvement and creation of conservation linked financial incentive mechanisms based on the conservation of wildlife.

### EXAMPLE OF THE NAM NERN NIGHT SAFARI

Every visitor pay a fee to the village development fund before entering the area (included in the total tour price). A village development fund is shared equally between the 14 villages that surround the Nam Nern area.

The amount of money received by the villages depends on the numbers of wildlife seen by the tourists, who are required to fill out a wildlife monitoring form at the end of the trip. The money from the fund is used to support small-scale village development activities chosen by each village, rather than cash payments.

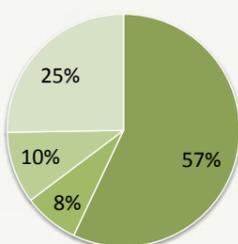
The amount of money in the fund can be reduced in the event that a villager breaks the laws of the national protected area. Every family from each village has agreed to this benefit-sharing system by signing a contract.

The site and eco-lodge is managed and operated by the local people of Ban Son Koua village in cooperation with Nam Et-Phou Louey NPA.

There are five service groups in the village: the guide group, boat group, cooking group, camp group and handicraft group. Each group has between five and ten members who have been selected through an open interview process conducted by the NPA. In order to spread the benefits of tourism fairly in the village, any one family in the village is allowed to have membership in only one service group; and the members within each service group must take turns to share work equally. Service group members must adhere to a code of conduct that prohibits them from breaking the rules of the NPA.

### WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? (IF 2 PERSONS VISIT THE NAM NERN NIGHT SAFARI)

Fees for the services offered by each group are pre-determined and included in the total cost of the tour. Most of your tour fee goes directly to villagers. The Nam Nern Night Safari tour price breakdown based on the price as for 2 visitors presents that:



- 57% of the income paid by visitors is directly benefiting the village revenues,
- 8 % for Government revenue (Tourism District Fee; and NPA Entrance fee, which can be used to fund PA and ecotourism activities.),
- 10% for the tour operator commission
- 25% for the Ecotourism Operation Fund, used for the ecotourism activities only: Maintenance, Trainings, Salary, Marketing etc

## Ecotourism Wildlife Camera Traps

The wildlife camera traps have been installed along the trekking tours and offer to the protected area's visitors a unique opportunity to track wild species such as white-cheeked gibbon, leopards, bears, wild dog (dhole) and other species.

Visitors are assisting the NEPL NPA's ecoguides in camera traps maintenance and data collection process and all collected information on seen wildlife during the trekking tours is further incorporated into the PAs wildlife-monitoring program.



Sumatran Serow (*Naemorhedus sumatraensis*)



Muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjak*)



Marbled Cat (*Pardofelis marmorata*)



Porcupines (*Hystrix brachyura*)

## Visit Nam Et-Phou Louey National Protected Area

These eco-tours are not only one of the only opportunities in Laos to view rare wildlife, but all the trips are designed to support alternative livelihoods for local people and generate community support for conservation of tigers and other wildlife.

### NAM NERN NIGHT SAFARI

(Easy 24 hour tour)

This innovative and adventurous journey by traditional long-tail boat offers some great nature activities that include bird watching, wildlife tracking, nighttime wildlife spotting, medicinal plant exploration and moderate hiking.



[VIEW NIGHT SAFARI ITINERARY](#)

### RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS

We are proud that the Nam Nern Night Safari eco-tour in the heart of Nam Et-Phou Louey protected area has won the two prestigious 'World Responsible Tourism Awards' at the World Travel Mart in London, England. In 2013 in the category 'Best for Responsible Wildlife Experiences' and in year 2014 in the category 'People's Choice in Responsible Tourism'.



## New Trekking Tours!

### 'THE NEST'

(Moderate/Hard trek - 2 or 3 days)

Trekking tour with overnight in cosy spherical basket hanging from the trees. Check wildlife camera traps along the trail and try your luck to spot wildlife from the observation tower at the nearby salt lick which attracts animals such as the rare Sambar deer from far and wide.



[VIEW 2 DAYS ITINERARY](#)

[VIEW 3 DAYS ITINERARY](#)

### 'CLOUD FOREST CLIMB'

(Challenging trek - 4 or 5 days-including 'The Nests').

Climb up to the summit (2257m) of Phou Louey (Forever Mountain) to one of the few cloud forests in the region. The trek goes through the evergreen forest and offers a rare opportunity to track wild species such as white-cheeked gibbon, leopards, bears and wild dog using camera traps, which will be set up along the trail and maintained by tourists.



[VIEW 4 DAYS ITINERARY](#)

[VIEW 5 DAYS ITINERARY](#)

Tour Name	Duration	Homestay	The Nests	Jungle camp	Difficulty level
<b>The Nests 2d.</b>	2 D. / 1 N.	-	On Night 1	-	Moderate to hard
<b>The Nests 3d.</b>	3 D. / 2 N.	-	On Night 2	On Night 1	Moderate to hard
<b>Cloud Forest Climb 4d.</b>	4 D. / 3 N.	On Night 1	-	On Night 2 & 3	Challenging
<b>Cloud Forest Climb 5d.</b>	5 D. / 4 N.	On Night 1	On Night 4	On Night 2 & 3	Challenging

## Nam Nern Night Safari

**DIFFICULTY: EASY**

### DAY 1

**MORNING.** 8h00: Departure from Viengthong by public mini bus or private van.

After a 1.5-hour drive along a curvy road through gorgeous mountainous landscapes you arrive at Ban Son Koua, an ethnic Khmu Village.

9h30: Meet those coming from Sam Neua or Phonesavan in Son Koua village. Tour starts.

Village guides and boatmen will be awaiting you to greet you and take you on a short tour of the village where you will learn about daily life and the animist tradition of appeasing the village spirits. Guests then embark on a 1.5-hour journey to the park substation on the Nam Nern River by long-tail boat, along the way learning about upland rice cultivation and having opportunities to spot monitor lizards (depending on the time of year) and bird life.

After arriving at the park substation, visitors will be shown to their accommodation, bamboo huts close to the river, and will then be offered a lunch prepared by the village cooking group. After lunch, you will receive a briefing by park staff about the on-the-ground efforts in protecting tigers and their prey.

**Afternoon.** At mid-afternoon, the group takes the boat again to continue the journey upriver. After about 50 minutes the boats will stop, and the group will hike into the forest to visit a salt lick. The local guide, a skilled hunter and tracker, explains how local people track deer and other wild ungulates. The guide points out evidence of wildlife, such as tracks or scat at the salt lick.



**DINNER.** The boats continue upriver to the dinner site, a sandy, flat bank, where the group takes a picnic around a campfire. After dinner, the guides tell Khmu folktales and stories about dragons, wildlife, and ghosts. The guides also educate tourists about the species of animals they may see during the spotlighting and explain the rules and expectations for spotlighting. The group may also look at photos of animals captured by the camera trap at the salt lick.

**EVENING.** The group departs for the night spotlighting 2-3 hours after dark, floating down the river with engines off. The guides (1 per boat) use their headlamp to spot wildlife. If they see something, they will give a clear sign. Then you can switch on your own flashlight to have a better look at the animal. Hence, tourists will have their flashlights switched off most of the time to avoid scaring animals. The guides and boat drivers communicate via hand signals to avoid talking that might disturb the animals. Animals that may be seen include Sambar deer, otters, barking deer, various species of civets, loris, porcupine and owls. (Seeing tigers is very rare because they usually don't come close to the river.)

**NIGHT.** Overnight in eco-lodge.

### DAY 2

**MORNING.** Before breakfast, local guides take you on a walk around the jungle, teaching about the use of some medicinal plants and explaining the history of the site, which was once a major settlement during the Secret War. After breakfast, the boats float back through the core zone at a relaxing pace with engines off, while the guides point out wildlife along the way.

**RETURN.** Arrival at the Ban Son Khoua village around 10-11am.

Before departing, the group will be asked to fill out a wildlife monitoring form that is used to monitor wildlife abundance and indicate the amount of bonuses put into the village development fund from the tour costs. (There is no extra fee if you are so lucky to see a tiger.)

**DEPARTURE.** Visitors may continue on towards Viengxay or Phonesavan (about 100km+ in either direction) or head back to Viengthong (50km), Nong Kiau (230km), or Luang Prabang (350km). The public buses are driving through the village daily. Please inform our guides in advance about your further travel plans and they will make sure that you catch the right bus in time.

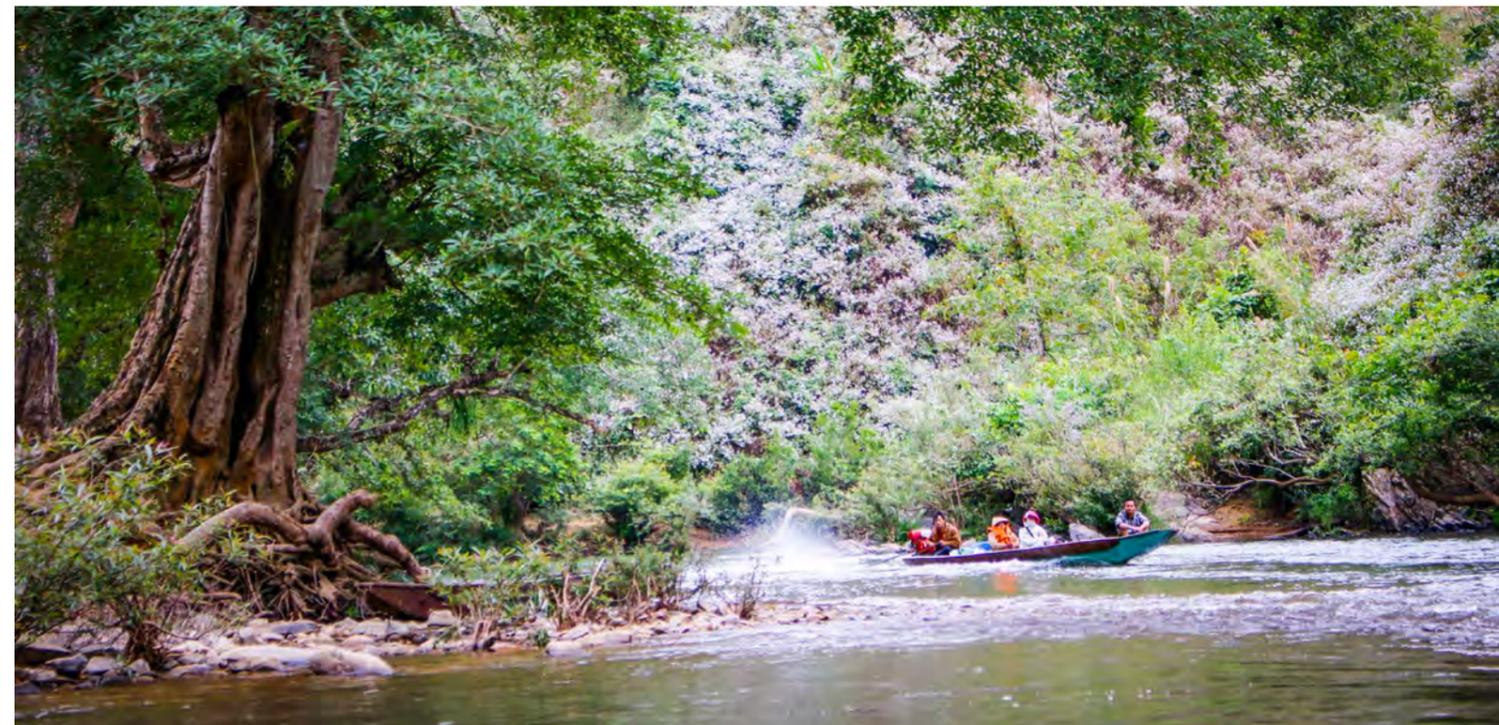
### RATES

1 PAX - 1'800'000 LAK/PAX

2 PAX - 1'300'000 LAK/PAX

3 PAX & MORE- 1'200'000 LAK/PAX

SEE AVAILABILITY ONLINE  
& BOOK THE TOUR



## The Nests 2 Days trek

**NEW!**

### DIFFICULTY: MODERATE TO HARD

#### DAY 1

**MORNING.** 8:30AM - Our guide with driver will meet clients at their guesthouse in Muang Hiem (Viengthong). After a 30-minute drive in a private minivan through gorgeous mountainous landscapes, you arrive at Ban Nam Pong Village, an ethnic Khmu village situated on the edge of the national protected area boundary.

The village guide, porters and cooks will meet clients at the village visitor center and give a brief orientation about the area and itinerary. At 9.30 clients will get on a hand tractor (tok tok) - a tractor for plowing rice paddies that can be converted into a transportation vehicle and pass through this Khmu village. This is a good opportunity to see the daily village life and briefly learn about Khmu culture. The following 7km trail will continue through the village's rice and corn fields with moderate climbs, learning along the way about upland rice cultivation and rural livelihoods.

At the edge of the fields and forest, enjoy a local picnic lunch inside a farmer's hut. The guides will explain the different management zones of the park and how local people coexist with nature.

**AFTERNOON.** After lunch, start trekking into the forest following a 7km trail built and maintained by the village. This trail passes through a thick jungle and mixed deciduous forest. The local guide will show you medicinal plants and spot animal tracks along the way. After approximately 4 hours of walking, you will arrive at The Nests campsite and will be shown to your accommodation - the hanging spherical "nest". Enjoy free time to relax, bathe in the nearby river and enjoy the nature.

**DINNER.** Enjoy traditional Khmu dinner prepared by the village cooking group at around 6-7pm - before it becomes dark. It's important to take an early dinner so that the smell of food and fire is not strong when you visit the wildlife observation platform later this evening. Dinner is eaten at the camp and is not allowed at the observation tower.

**EVENING.** After dinner, you will receive a briefing about wildlife viewing at the Pong Nied Salt Lick - one of the largest salt licks in the protected area. The guides will inform tourists about the species of animals they may see and explain the rules and expectations for spotlighting.

It's important to follow the introduced rules, such as: no talking, no eating at the salt lick observation tower and how to return to the camp in case you need to use the toilet.

We will stay at the observation tower for a few hours (depending on your curiosity and patience) until no later than 11:30 pm. Overnight sleeping on the tower is not allowed in order to reduce any negative impacts and disturbances to the wildlife.

The most common animals that you might spot include Sambar and barking deer (AKA muntjak) and various species of civets, although, if lucky, you may see also other protected animals such as bears, dhole, several species of wild cats and others.

**NIGHT.** Overnight in The Nests. Maximum two people per Nest for your safety and comfort.

#### DAY 2

**MORNING.** Before breakfast, your guide will walk you back to the salt lick to identify different wildlife tracks. You will also spend approximately an hour in the observation platform, as morning is a great time for bird watching. Afterwards, follow the guide to check the camera traps and help change the camera trap memory cards.

Once back to the camp, enjoy breakfast and help your guide to sort photos of wildlife taken by the camera traps during the previous night. These photos will be uploaded to the website after your trip for your viewing and download.

Twelve surrounding villages involved in this project receive monetary bonuses in the form of a village development fund based on the number and type of wildlife spotted at night and captured by the camera traps (Fee is included in your tour price).

**RETURN.** Trek back through the forest to the village's fields, and enjoy a farmer's picnic before riding the tok tok (hand tractor) back to the village. Once arriving in the village your village hosts will bid you goodbye. You will be transferred back to Muang Hiem by private truck or van. Arrival in Muang Hiem is at around 4-5pm, which is the end of the tour.

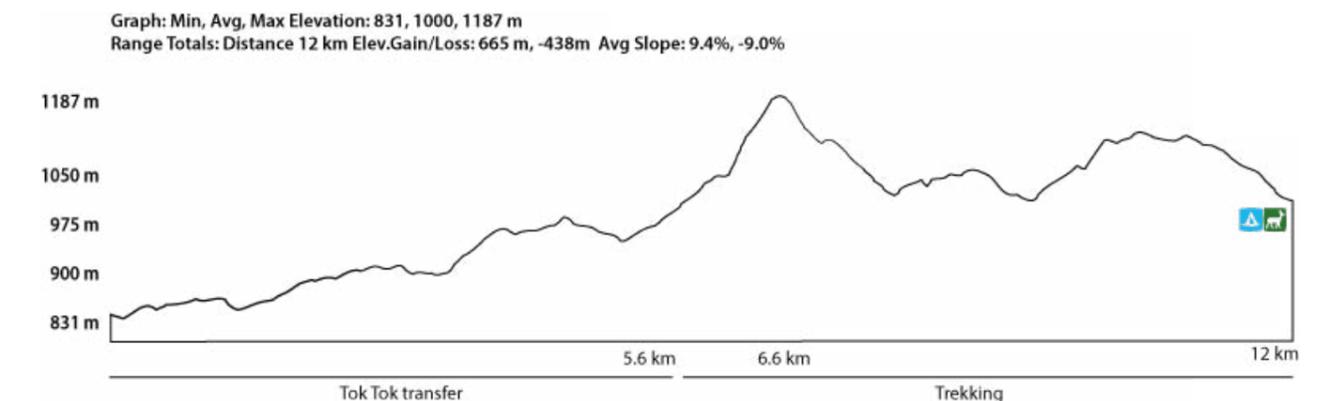
#### DEPARTURE SUGGESTION (IF TRAVEL WITH LOCAL TRANSPORT)

Overnight in Muang Hiem after the tour.

In Muang Hiem go for a walk through the school forest trail and/or enjoy the Muang Hiem Hot Springs To Phonsavan and Sam Neau local bus departs at 8am every morning from the bus station.

To Nong Khiaw, Luang Prabang local bus passes through Muang Hiem every day at around 12pm - 1pm.

**DIFFICULTY NOTE!** - Please note this package requires a total of 14 kilometers walking over quite difficult terrain over two days (rocky streams to cross, steep hills to climb and dense vegetation). Please sign up for this tour only if you have experience with trekking and if you are confident in your physical ability to deal with such stresses.



#### RATES

1 PAX - 2'200'000 LAK/PAX  
2 PAX - 1'500'000 LAK/PAX  
3 PAX & MORE- 1'200'000 LAK/PAX

[SEND INQUIRY](#)

[SEE THE NESTS 3 DAYS](#)

## The Nests 3 Days

**DIFFICULTY: MODERATE TO HARD**

**NEW!**

### DAY 1

**MORNING.** 8h30: Our guide with driver will meet clients at their guesthouse in Muang Hiem (Viengthong). After a 45-minute drive along a curvy road through gorgeous mountainous landscapes and through the protected area corridor you arrive at Ban Sakok, an ethnic Khmu Village, situated on the edge of the protected area core zone boundary.

The village guide, porters and cooks will be waiting to greet you at the village visitor center, which has beautiful panoramic views of the village and surrounding mountains. The guide will inform you about the itinerary of the following tour.

The trekking starts at around 9.30am by taking a tok tok ride (a small tractor used for plowing rice paddies and convertible to a vehicle for transportation) out of the Khmu village – an opportunity to see the daily village life and briefly learn about Khmu culture. The following 4km trail will continue through the village's rice and cornfields with moderate climbs, learning along the way about upland rice cultivation and rural livelihoods.

At the edge of the fields and forest, enjoy a local picnic overlooking fields and the backdrop of Phou Louey Mountain. Here your guides will explain about the different management zones of the park and how local people are able to coexist with nature.

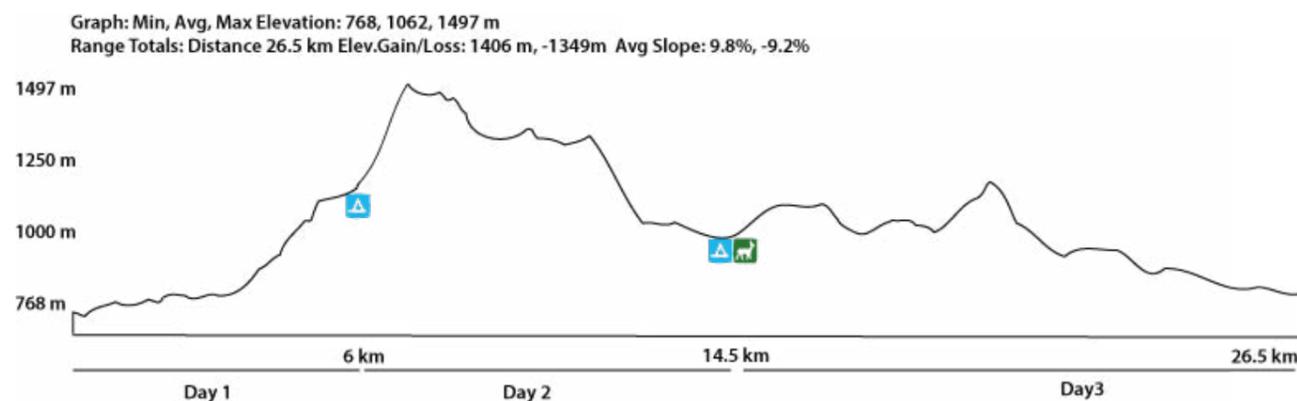
**AFTERNOON.** After lunch, begin trekking into the forest following a 4km path built and maintained by the village onwards to Tad Loy Camp. The trail climbs steadily into mixed deciduous forests. Your local guide may show you medicinal plants along the way.

This first day of trekking is quite short and the elevation gain is roughly 400m. After approximately 2 hours, you will arrive at Tad Loy camp. Enjoy free time to visit Tad Loy Waterfall, the most beautiful waterfall found in the park area, or bathe and relax by the nearby river.

**EVENING- DINNER.** Enjoy a traditional Khmu dinner prepared by the village cook and porters. Optional: After dinner, your guide will take you on a short (around 30min) night walk nearby the camp to see insects and other small creatures of the night.

After the walk, enjoy the campfire and the wild outback of Nam Et-Phou Louey. The guides may tell you Khmu folktales and stories about dragons, wildlife and ghosts.

**NIGHT.** Overnight in jungle bamboo huts (two people per hut).



### DAY 2

**MORNING.** Wake up early and before breakfast walk up to a nearby mountain to listen for the calls of the rare White-cheeked crested gibbon. After returning back to the campsite, enjoy breakfast. Today you will trek from the foothills of Phou Louey Mountain across the rugged and mountainous landscape to Pong Nied and The Nests campsite. The trek is approximately 9km with a steep ascent followed by a gradual descent down to the salt lick and The Nests camp. The route traverses some unique forest and landscapes.

Enjoy a picnic lunch along the trail. The village cook prepares the lunch in the morning before your departure from the Tad Loy camp.

**AFTERNOON.** You will arrive at The Nests camp in the mid-afternoon and will be shown to your accommodation – the hanging spherical “nest”. Enjoy free time to relax, bathe in the nearby river and enjoy the nature.

**EVENING.** After dinner, you will receive a briefing about wildlife viewing at the Pong Nied Salt Lick - one of the largest salt licks in the protected area. The guides will inform tourists about the species of animals they may see and explain the rules and expectations for spotlighting.

It's important to follow the introduced rules, such as: no talking, no eating at the salt lick observation tower and how to return to the camp in case you need to use the toilet.

We will stay at the observation tower for a few hours (depending on your curiosity and patience) until no later than 11:30 pm. Overnight sleeping on the tower is not allowed in order to reduce any negative impacts and disturbances to the wildlife.

The most common animals that you might spot include Sambar and barking deer (AKA muntjak) and various species of civets, although, if lucky, you may see also other protected animals such as bears, dhole, several species of wild cats and others.

**Note!** Please wear warm clothes as it can be quite cold in the late evening/night time.

### DAY 3

Same as the Day 2 of the 2 days/1 night The Nests itinerary.

**DIFFICULTY NOTE!** - Please note this package requires a total of 25 kilometers walking over difficult terrain over three days (rocky streams to cross, steep hills to climb as well as dense vegetation). Please sign up for this tour only if you have experience with difficult trekking and if you are confident in your physical ability to deal with such stresses.

#### RATES

1 PAX - 3'500'000 LAK/PAX  
2 PAX - 2'300'000 LAK/PAX  
3 PAX - 2'000'000 LAK/PAX  
4 PAX & MORE - 1'700'000 LAK/PAX

**SEND INQUIRY**

**SEE THE NESTS 2 DAYS**

## Cloud Forest Climb 4 Days **NEW!**

### DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING

#### DAY 1

**MORNING.** 8h00: Departure from Muang Hiam by private minivan. After a 1.5 hour drive through the mountainous landscape, you will arrive at the trek starting point - at Ban Nam Soy. The village guide will meet you and will give you a brief orientation about the following tour. From here you will get on a tok tok (a hand tractor used for plowing rice paddies and convertible to a transportation vehicle) along a 9 km trail crossing local villages and overlooking agricultural fields to Ban Navene, a remote Khmu village. Enjoy late lunch hosted by the village cooking group at the village visitor center.

**AFTERNOON - EVENING.** After lunch, guides will give a orientation about the village and you will be introduced to your homestay family. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon exploring the village and helping your homestay family with the daily tasks around the house or in the nearby fields. You will spend the evening with your homestay family and experience the tranquility of life in a remote, off-the-grid village with limited electricity. Suggestion: Bring pictures and maps from home and your travels to show to your homestay family.

#### DAY 2

**MORNING.** After an early breakfast, we depart for the first of the two day ascent to the peak of the Phou Louey Mountain. The first 5 km of the trail climbs up through a mosaic of shifting agricultural fields, with rest stops taken at the farmer's huts. Your guide will explain about local agriculture, which villagers depend on for their both their food and income.

After a 2-hour walk, the trail enters the forest and the core zone of the protected area before reaching the Park Substation, located 6.5 km from the village. The village cook will prepare a lunch while the guide will introduce you to the park rangers who will explain about the importance of their work for the park.

**AFTERNOON - EVENING.** After lunch, short half an hour walk until arriving at Tad Ang Waterfall. After visit, the trail continues a gradual ascent until reaching the Houay Kaneng camp. Follow the guide to the nearby camera trap to change the memory card. Once back at the camp, enjoy a traditional Khmu dinner by campfire prepared by the village cook. In the evening help to sort the photos of wildlife taken by the camera traps. Overnight in bamboo huts (two people per hut).

**DIFFICULTY NOTE!** - Please be aware that this has been found to be a very difficult trek. It involves full days of climbing up steep hills and other difficulties associated with thick jungle. Please sign up for this tour only if you have experience with difficult trekking and if you are confident in your physical ability to deal with such stresses.



#### DAY 3

**MORNING.** Before breakfast, walk down the path to the nearby waterfall, where in the early morning you can see different bird species. Enjoy breakfast back at the camp before starting the final climb up to the Cloud Forest and Phou Louey Peak. The climb is 7km to the peak, which is usually covered in clouds. However, if you're lucky with good weather conditions and clear sky, you may see a breathtaking view of thick, old growth forest covering "Forever Mountain" for as far as the eye can see.

**LUNCH.** To minimize the negative impacts on this fragile and extremely special ecosystem, lunch will be taken at the edge of the forest. Please do not pick any plants from the Phou Louey Peak area and please stay on the trail to reduce the footprints on this rare plant community.

**AFTERNOON.** After enjoying the wonders of the cloud forest, the trail descends down to Tad Loy camp, which is about 6.5km from the top. Along the way, you will help to check the camera traps and change their memory cards. Phou Louey is known for its abundance of wildlife, and so the chance to see some great camera trap photos of different species is quite high (click here to see the list of the animal species).

Arrival to the camp in late afternoon. Enjoy free time to relax and bathe in the nearby river. Help your guide to sort through photos of wildlife taken by the camera traps during the previous night. These photos will be uploaded to the website after your trip for viewing and download.

**EVENING - DINNER.** Enjoy a traditional Khmu dinner prepared by the village cook and porters at the campfire and the wild outback of Nam Et-Phou Louey, Your guides may tell you also some Khmu folktales and stories about dragons, wildlife and ghosts. Overnight in bamboo hut (two people per hut).

#### DAY 4

Wake up early and before breakfast to walk up a nearby mountain to listen for the calls of the rare White-cheeked crested gibbon. After around an hour, return back to the camp to enjoy breakfast.

Your final day of trekking is approximately 4km and is mostly a descent through forest and jungle leading to an irrigation canal and the fields of Ban Sakok Village. If weather conditions allow and the sky is clear you may be able to see Phou Louey Mountain and the trail that you hiked over the past couple days.

At the fields another tok tok will pick you up and take you down the dirt mountain road through the fields for about 4 km until reaching Sakok Village, where you will have lunch. After the lunch, your village guide, cook and porters will bid you goodbye and will return to their village in Ban Nam Soy. You will be transferred back to Muang Hiem by private truck or van, arrival at around 2-3pm.

#### RATES

1 PAX - 4'800'000 LAK/PAX  
2 PAX - 3'000'000 LAK/PAX  
3 PAX - 2'500'000 LAK/PAX  
4 PAX & MORE - 2'000'000 LAK/PAX

SEND INQUIRY

SEE CFC 5 DAYS

## Cloud Forest Climb 5 Days **NEW!**

DIFFICULTY: CHALLENGING

**NOTICE:** The first 3 days of the 5 day itinerary are identical to the 4 days/3 nights itinerary. Please find below the day 4 and 5 specific to this 5 day/4 nights tour.

### DAY 4

**MORNING.** Wake up early and before breakfast to walk up to a nearby mountain to listen to the calls of the rare White-cheeked crested gibbon. After about an hour, return back to the campsite and enjoy breakfast.

Today you will trek from the foothills of Phou Louey Mountain across the rugged and mountainous landscape to Pong Nied and The Nests campsite. The trek is approximately 9km, with a steep ascent to begin with and a gradual descent down to Pong Nied Salt Lick and The Nests camp. The route traverses some unique forest and landscapes. Enjoy a picnic lunch along the trail. The village cook prepares the lunch in the morning before your departure from the Tad Loy camp.

**AFTERNOON.** You will arrive at The Nests camp in the mid-afternoon and will be shown to your accommodation – the hanging spherical “nest”. Enjoy free time to relax, bathe in the nearby river and enjoy the nature.

**DINNER.** Enjoy a traditional Khmu dinner prepared by the village cooking group at around 6-7pm - before it gets dark. It's important to take an early dinner so that the smell of food and fire is not strong when you visit the wildlife observation platform later this evening. Dinner is eaten at the camp and is not allowed at the observation tower.

**EVENING.** After dinner, you will receive a short briefing by your guide about wildlife viewing at the Pong Nied Salt Lick - one of the largest salt licks in the protected area. It's important to follow the introduced rules about the observation tower, such as: no talking, no eating at the salt lick and how to return to the camp in case you need to use the toilet. The guides will also educate tourists about the species of animals they may see during the spotlighting and explain the rules and expectations for spotlighting.

Spot the wildlife at the observation tower until not later than 11:30 pm. An overnight sleeping is not allowed in order to reduce any negative impacts and disturbances to the wildlife. The most common animals that you might spot include Sambar and Barking deer and various species of civets, although, if lucky, you may see also other rare animals such as bears, dhole, several species of wild cats and others.

**Note!** Please wear warm clothes as it can be quite cold in the late evening/night time.

**NIGHT.** Overnight in The Nests. Maximum two people per Nest for your safety and comfort.

### DAY 5

**MORNING.** Before breakfast, your guide will walk you back to the salt lick to identify different wildlife tracks. You will also spend approximately an hour in the observation platform, as morning is a great time for bird watching. Afterwards, follow the guide to check the camera traps and help change the camera trap memory cards.

Once back to the camp, enjoy breakfast and help your guide to sort photos of wildlife taken by the camera traps during the previous night. These photos will be uploaded to the website after your trip for your viewing and download.

Twelve surrounding villages involved in this project receive monetary bonuses in the form of a village development fund based on the number and type of wildlife spotted at night and captured by the camera traps. (This fee is included in your tour price.)

**RETURN.** Trek back through the forest to the village's fields, and enjoy a farmer's picnic before riding the tok tok (hand tractor) back to the village. Once arriving in the village your village hosts will bid you goodbye. You will be transferred back to Muang Hiem by private truck or van. Arrival in Muang Hiem is at around 4-5pm, which is the end of the tour.

### DEPARTURE SUGGESTION (IF TRAVEL WITH LOCAL TRANSPORT)

Overnight in Muang Hiem after the tour.

In Muang Hiem go for a walk through the school forest trail and/or enjoy the Muang Hiem Hot Springs

To Phonsavan and Sam Neau local bus departs at 8am every morning from the bus station.

To Nong Khiaw, Luang Prabang local bus passes through Muang Hiem every day at around 12pm -1pm.

**DIFFICULTY NOTE!** - Please be aware that this has been found to be a very difficult trek. It involves full days of climbing up steep hills and other difficulties associated with thick jungle. Please sign up for this tour only if you have experience with difficult trekking and if you are in very good level of physical fitness.



### RATES

1 PAX - 5'500'000 LAK/PAX  
2 PAX - 3'500'000 LAK/PAX  
3 PAX - 3'000'000 LAK/PAX  
4 PAX & MORE - 2'500'000 LAK/PAX

SEND INQUIRY

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## Getting to the Nam Et - Phou Louey NPA

### NAM ET-PHOU LOUEY HQ & VISITOR CENTRE IN MUANG HIAM (FORMERLY VIENGTHONG)

Muang Hiam (formerly Viengthong) is the location of the Nam Et-Phou Louey NPA headquarters and Visitor Centre. Basic accommodation is available in town, as well as a handful of restaurants serving Lao food. The town is a rural paradise, with many trails to follow and one of the best hot springs in the country.

### NAM NERN NIGHT SAFARI START (BAN SON KOUA)

The start of the Nam Nern Night Safari is at a small Khmu village called Ban Son Koua. If you are traveling from Phonsavan or Sam Neua, you will meet your guide here. If you are traveling from Luang Prabang, you can either meet your guide in the HQ in Muang Hiam (Viengthong) or you can travel to Ban Son Koua independently, and meet your guide here.

### TREKKING TOURS

The Trekking Tour start points are in 3 different villages depending on the tour - located 30 min to 1,5 hour away from Muang Hiam onwards Nong Kiau. The best is to meet in Muang Hiam and continue to the tour start point together with NEPL guides. If you prefer to travel directly to the tour start point, please contact our team.

### TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY?

The roads are narrow and winding but are in surprisingly good condition for such a remote area. The views are always scenic. Good quality public busses leave Luang Prabang, Sam Neua and Phonsavan regularly, with drop-offs regularly along the entire route.

### FROM LUANG PRABANG

**PUBLIC BUS:** Take the bus heading to Sam Neua, which leaves daily between 7-8 am from the Luang Prabang northern bus station. The bus trip to Viengthong is about 10 hours. An addition 1.5 hours to Ban Son Koua.

**CAR/MOTORCYCLE:** From Luang Prabang go north on Road #13 about 100 km and turn right onto Road #1C at the Pak Mong junction (follow the sign towards Nong Kiau). Travel 200 km on Road #1C northeast to Viengthong about 7-8 hours. An addition 1.5 hours to Ban Son Koua the Night Safari start.

### FROM SAM NEUA

**PUBLIC BUS:** Buses and public mini vans leave from the Sam Neua bus station towards Viengthong daily between 7-8 am. The trip is about 4 hours, with an addition 1 hour to Viengthong (HQ).

**CAR/MOTORCYCLE:** Follow Road #6 southwest towards Muang Kham/Phonsavan. Turn right at the Ko Hing junction and follow Road #1C for another 7km. An addition 1 hour drive to Viengthong.

### FROM PHONESAVANH

**PUBLIC BUS:** There is a daily bus leaving Phonsavan at 8:30 am from the Bus station of Xiengkhouang province to Muang Hiam (Viengthong). The bus drive to Ban Son Koua is about 5.5 hours and an additional 1.5 hour to Viengthong.

**CAR/MOTORCYCLE:** Follow Road #6 northeast towards Sam Neua passing Muang Kham. Turn left at the Ko Hing junction and follow Road #1C for 7km until Ban Son Koua. The trip is about 4 hours.

### NEARBY ATTRACTIONS:



The Viengxai Cave



Luang Prabang



The Plain of Jars

## Approximate Driving Durations

From	To	Approximate drive length
Luang Prabang	Nong Khiaw	125 km (3-4 hours)
Luang Prabang	Muang Hiam (The HQ)	300 km (8 hours)
Luang Prabang	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	350 km (9-10 hours)
Muang Hiam (The HQ)	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	50 km (1.5 hour)
Muang Hiam (The HQ)	The Nests 2 day start point	20 km (30 min)
Muang Hiam (The HQ)	The Nests 3 day start point	30 km (45 min)
Muang Hiam (The HQ)	Cloud Forest Climb 4 days/5days	50 km (1.5 hour)
Nong Khiaw	Muang Hiam (The HQ)	177 km (4.5 hours)
Nong Khiaw	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	225 km (6 hours)
Nong Khiaw	The Nests 2 day start point	150 km (4 hours)
Nong Khiaw	The Nests 3 day start point	140 km (3.15 hours)
Nong Khiaw	Cloud Forest Climb 4 days/5days	120 km (3 hours)
Phonsavan	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	150 km (3-4 hours)
Phonsavan	Muang Hiam (The HQ)	200 km (4-5 hours)
Phonsavan	Xam Neua	143 km (6-7 hours)
Standing Stones of Hintang	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	43 km (1 hour)
Tad Saleuy Waterfall	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	60 km (2 hours)
Xam Neua	Ban Son Khoua (Night Safari Start)	100 km (3 hours)
Xam Neua	Tad Saleuy Waterfall	40 km (1 hour)
Xam Neua	Standing Stones of Hintang	57 km (2 hour)
Xam Neua	Vieng Xai Caves	30 km (30min)



## WHAT TO BRING?

Please bring just one small bag/backpack for the trip itself. You can leave the large suitcases or long-haul backpacks in the village. Weather can be both very hot during the daytime and very cold at night. It is recommended that you bring clothes for both extremes.

Please bring the following:

- light rain jacket
- fleece jacket (strongly recommended as the night safari can be very cold)
- both sun hat for daytime and wool cap for night
- long pants for walking in the forest
- good walking shoes that are easy to take on and off and sandals for bathing
- an extra t-shirt and maybe shorts for sleeping/bathing.
- insect repellent
- snacks (food is provided, but you might want to bring something to snack on)
- binoculars (we have just one pair)
- towel and toiletries
- flashlight
- reusable water bottle (help us reduce waste)

What you don't need to bring:

- Food and water
- Sleeping Equipment
- Mosquito nets



## OUR GUESTS HAVE SPOKEN:

“The highlight of our trip to Laos... totally off the beaten path, away from all the tourists.” – Manisha

“The drift down the river in moonlight was one of the most memorable experiences in our whole trip.” – Richard, Wiltshire, UK.

“Words simply aren't enough, you must really see for yourselves how wonderful nature can be if you're doing tourism right.” – Mark, Idaho, USA

“The river and the mountains are just stunningly beautiful and pristine. This is a journey for people who have a huge respect for nature and will value the passion that the local people have for saving their tigers and other wildlife.” – Jani, Brisbane, Australia



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RECOMMENDED BY:



DEVELOPED BY:



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY LAOS  
AND NAM ET-PHOU LOUEY NATIONAL PROTECTED AREA

website: [www.NamEt.org](http://www.NamEt.org)  
Email: [info@NamEt.org](mailto:info@NamEt.org)

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IN COOPERATION WITH:

