

Photography tour to Hungary: Bence Maté's photo hides during winter

8 days | 30 Jan 2027 - 06 Feb 2027

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This photography trip to Kiskunsági National Park in Hungary is a dream come true for every nature photographer. From specially built photography hides (possibly the best equipped ones in the world), you will have a wide variety of species right in front of your lens. The fact that you're also personally guided makes this trip truly complete. We will meet the world-famous nature photographer Bence Maté in person during a lecture full of practical tips. We now also offer this trip in late winter, which brings a completely different atmosphere and experience. We swap the little bitterns and rails for great bitterns, white-tailed eagles and herons: the giants of the marshlands.

Perfected Photography Hides

In the surroundings of his holiday farm, the world-renowned Hungarian nature photographer Bence Maté has built dozens of photography hides. These hides are located close to where we stay, all within reach of the beautiful wetlands.

We stay at Bence's holiday farm near Kiskunsági National Park, just a few kilometers from the village of Pusztaszer and close to the Serbian border. From Budapest, it is only about an hour and a half drive to our accommodation.

We specifically organize this trip in late winter to photograph the giants of the wetlands: great egret, grey heron, white-tailed eagle, pygmy cormorant, great cormorant and more. You can choose from no fewer than seven different hides, each with diverse backgrounds and varying light conditions. Depending on the time of day, you can capture spectacular action shots of birds displaying, mating or flying in with all kinds of prey.

You photograph freely through one-way glass, making you invisible to the birds. Even changing your camera or lens goes completely unnoticed by your subject.



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The Theatre or the Cinema: nature as the stage



Two of the hides (the Theatre and the Cinema) are located near shallow water. Fish are being fed here by using an ingenious system. These luxury hides are equipped with even more innovative features. In the Cinema, you can not only operate a one-way mirror screen, but also switch on artificial lighting. This means you can continue photographing in the evening – or even in complete darkness. The Cinema is perhaps the best place in Europe to photograph otters.

The larger Theatre, on the other hand, is the place to photograph all species of herons and wading birds up close (sometimes even *too* close!). In both underground hides (with a low camera position!), you sit in luxury armchairs. Each photographer has a swivel arm with two ball heads for two cameras. Switching from one camera to the other takes only a few seconds.

Telephoto or wide-angle shots of swimming, foraging, and squabbling birds – complete with elegant splashing water and perfect framing – are all guaranteed!

We photograph from early morning until late evening. Depending on your preference, you stay in the hide for three to six hours.

Unique European birds and a small, charming mammal

Expect a wide range of spectacular waterbirds. In the forest, we have three hides with “drinking stations”. These are located by a small pond where many species come to drink and bathe. You may come face to face with hawfinches, sparrowhawks and goshawks. But black woodpeckers, roe deer and pine martens are also among the possibilities.

The Theatre is the place to photograph spoonbills, great egrets, pygmy cormorants and more. In the Cinema, we regularly see great bitterns, kingfishers and grey herons.

In the Footsteps of Bence Máté

The Hungarian nature photographer Bence Máté has already won the BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition twice. He also received a bronze award in the “Nature” category at the World Press Photo Contest. He is the pioneer of using one-way glass in photography hides, perfected the concept, and has built hides over the past fifteen years in Hungary, Costa Rica, Brazil and South Africa.

On one of the evenings during our stay, Bence will personally tell us more about his work. He will also give us specific tips to help us create unique images from a photography hide.



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What makes this photography trip to Hungary so special?

- You photograph from some of the best-equipped, specialized photography hides in the world.
- You attend a lecture by Bence Máté, a top photographer and pioneer of the use of one-way glass in photography hides.
- You are guaranteed to capture stunning images of various species such as white-tailed eagles, great egrets and pygmy cormorants.
- Single-occupancy rooms are included in the price!

Meet your tour leader

Yves Adams is no stranger to Hungary. He already guided several hide-based photography trips there, making him the perfect person to help you achieve the best results. Yves is a passionate bird photographer and workshop leader. He will not only teach you about bird behavior, but will also assist you with camera settings, composition and techniques to create truly exceptional images.



Is this photography tour to Hungary something for you?

- You are passionate about nature photography, whether you're a beginner or a seasoned pro.
- You dream of capturing unique wild birds and mammals in the best possible conditions.
- Spending three to six hours at a time in a photography hide doesn't scare you – on the contrary!

Itinerary & Locations

The tour schedule is flexible and dependent on the weather, local conditions and observations.

30/01

Departure day Brussels/Amsterdam – Budapest – Kiskunsági (flights not included)

31/01 - 05/02

Kiskunsági National Park

We spend the entire trip photographing from around seven hides belonging to the world-famous nature photographer Bence Máté. These hides are specially designed to offer the most comfortable and high-quality nature photography experience.

06/02

Return journey Kiskunsági – Budapest – Brussels/Amsterdam (flights not included)

Practical

Accommodation, transport and flights

We stay in the fully renovated lodge of Bence Máté. Bence's team serves a warm, tasty dinner every evening. In the morning, we prepare our own breakfast in the main building. Lunch is usually simple, as each group eats whenever it fits into the excursion schedule. At any time of day, you can help yourself to as much fruit, bread, and toppings as you like. Fruit juice, soft drinks, coffee and tea are also included in the price.

Single-occupancy rooms are included in the price of this trip. If you are a couple, of course you can share a room.

International flights to and from Budapest are not included in the price of this trip. Once the departure is guaranteed, STARLING will propose suitable flights (from Charleroi – Brussels South, due to cost efficiency). You can expect flight prices of approximately €300–500 per person. You may also choose to arrange your own flights.

Climate and clothing

The weather varies greatly during this time of year, with temperatures ranging from -5°C to 10°C. Snow is of course possible, but you will always be inside a (heated) hide, so you will stay dry. Warm clothing (hat, scarf, gloves, etc.) is essential for this trip. Before departure, we will provide you with all the necessary information.

We recommend wearing black or dark-colored long-sleeved clothing during the hide sessions to minimize reflections and remain completely unnoticed by the birds.

Nature photography

Whether you are a beginner in nature photography or a seasoned professional, this trip is guaranteed to be enjoyable. Our main focus is on bird photography, but we also have a great chance of photographing various mammals (perhaps even a fox or a roe deer). And don't forget the adorable ground squirrels!

We recommend bringing as many lenses as possible. In addition to your super-telephoto lens, a 200–300mm lens is essential. A standard lens or even a wide-angle lens is also useful for photographing birds here.

We make full use of our time at this unique location for photography. This means there is little time during the trip to review photos. Of course, our guide is always on hand to help and advise you while shooting.

Each evening, we select the hides for the following day. A rotation system ensures that everyone can use the best hides available at that moment. Local guides take us to the hides and pick us up again at the time of your choice.



Price

4595 euro (Price per person)

Included

- all drinking water
- all excursions and entrance tickets for parks
- all meals
- all transport at site
- enthusiast guiding by professional STARLING photographer
- insurance guarantee fund
- specialized local guides
- tips for local collaborators (horeca, hotel,...)

Excluded

- alcoholic beverages and soda
- international flights and airport taxes
- personal expenses
- tips for local collaborators (horeca, hotel,...)
- travel insurance and cancellation insurance (available for purchase through us)

