



Nature Israel Southern Discovery Mission
March 6th – 11th 2022

“Israel is literally dotted with lovely corners and even a few species that would have long ago disappeared without SPNI's uncompromising voice.”

Pollution in a Promised Land, an environmental history of Israel – Professor Alon Tal

You are invited to spend a week with us in March 2022 to see some of these corners and species that through your support of SPNI you've helped save.

For veteran SPNI supporters this week is a chance for us to show you how thankful we are for your generosity. We will take you to enjoy Israel's finest nature and share with you the inside story of how you've made a difference to our country.

For first-timers to Israel and SPNI, you'll see a different, beautiful side to Israel that you never realized existed while learning about the history of one of the world's oldest environmental organizations.

Enjoy a week of unique insights, beautiful nature, 5-star accommodation, great company and amazing food

For more information please contact lawrence@spni.org.il

Sunday – March 6th

Gazelle Valley Park

Gazelle Valley Located in the shadow of the infamous Holyland apartment block, the Gazelle Valley was saved by SPNI and turned into an urban wildlife park. A haven for the endangered Israeli mountain gazelle. Amir Balaban, our Director of Urban Nature, will tell you the story of how the park came to be and how it's being used as a model for urban sustainability in Israel and around the world.

Levi Eshkol House

Levi Eshkol is arguably Israel's most underappreciated Prime Minister. We will give you a guided tour of Israel's Historic Prime Ministers' Residence where you will learn about Levi Eshkol's impact on Israeli-American relations, developing Israel's economy and building the National Water Carrier.

Tour of Jerusalem Hills to see Wildfire Recovery

Over 6000 acres of the Jerusalem forest was torched by wildfires in August. You will hike in places affected by the fire first hand to witness the recovery and see how resilient nature is.

Return to hotel to freshen up before dinner as a group

Overnight - Jerusalem

Monday March 7th

Nili and David Jerusalem Bird Observatory

In 1993 two young birdwatchers discovered a banded migrant bird from Sweden and so started the Nili and David Jerusalem Bird Observatory. Now over 50,000 children from Jerusalem and the surrounding area visit the JBO. You'll be joining them to experience an unforgettable up-close bird banding activity and learn about the importance of Israel on bird migration routes.

Visit an Environmental Educational Program in Beer Sheva

SPNI is the leading provider of environmental education in Israel. You'll get to visit one of the schools we work with in Beer Sheva and get your hands dirty with the students in one of their lessons in their school's garden.

Wadi Attir Bedouin Program

This project is a groundbreaking initiative of the Bedouin community in the Negev establishing a model sustainable agricultural operation. Designed to leverage Bedouin traditional values, know-how and experience with modern-day science and cutting edge technologies, you will learn about this approach to sustainable development in an arid environment.

Overnight - Dead Sea, Ein Bokek

Tuesday March 8th

Masada

In the days of the Great Revolt, the last of the rebels against Rome entrenched themselves at Masada and turned their desperate fight into a symbol of the struggle for freedom. You will ascend this world UNESCO heritage site by cable car and learn the tragic history of this famous Jewish stronghold

Ein Gedi Field School

SPNI is the biggest provider of environmental education in Israel, including hundreds of classes each year at our network of Field Schools. You'll learn about our ambitious plans to revolutionize sustainable building in Israel together with experiential environmental education.

Wadi David Hike

Enjoy an easy hike to David's waterfall, one of the many trails in the area. Learn about the natural and biblical history of Ein Gedi during a 60-90 minute walk up this ancient desert spring.

The afternoon will be spent at leisure in our hotel to enjoy a float in the Dead Sea or the spa facilities. Dinner in the hotel.

Overnight – Dead Sea, Ein Bokek

Wednesday March 9th

Hatzeva Field School

At SPNI's Field School in the middle of the Arava desert, you'll be introduced to a most curious flock of birds, the Arabian babbler. These birds maintain a rigid social structure and were the topic of SPNI co-founder Amotz Zehavi's Ph.D. research into evolutionary behavior. These birds are used to human presence so look forward to getting extremely close to these friendly avians.

Evrona Nature Reserve

Evrona Nature Reserve was devastated after an oil spill in 2014. Home to delicate Dorcas gazelles, other small mammals and an acacia tree forest. The nature reserve is still recovering and you'll get exclusive access to the scene of Israel's biggest environmental disaster.

Kibbutz Ketura

You will visit Kibbutz Ketura, the epicenter of Israel's solar energy industry. You'll tour the kibbutz and learn about Israeli solar technology and about the balance that needs to be found between clean energy and protecting open spaces.

After arrival in Eilat an evening at your leisure

Overnight - Eilat

Thursday March 10th

Eilat International Birding and Research Center

You'll enjoy a VIP tour of this birding hotspot, one of Eilat's top tourist attractions. Visiting at the beginning of the spring migration you will get a chance to see many different bird species, hopefully including some seasonal rarities.

Coral Reefs

Enjoy a ride on a glass-bottom boat to see Eilat's coral reefs. You'll receive expert insight about why Israel's corals are so resilient and the experimental techniques scientists are using to protect them.

Timna Park

You will hike through Timna Valley and discover some of the amazing geology and landscapes of Timna Valley, including strips of volcanic magma frozen into the cliffs.

Overnight - Eilat

Friday March 11th

Maktesh Ramon Jeep Tour

On your return to Jerusalem, you'll stop in Mitzpe Ramon and swap the bus for a 4x4 jeep. The jeep will go off the beaten track into the heart of the Maktesh to learn more about the origins of this unique geological area and about some of the fascinating life that survives in this arid wilderness.

Arrive in Jerusalem in mid-afternoon.

Prices and Important Information:

Per person in double room: \$2,599

Per person in a single room: \$3,299

Price includes 5* accommodation 6-11th March inclusive, private transport, guide, all activities, breakfasts and lunch and three dinners except where stated

- Tips (\$20 per person per day, collected on the first day)
- Airfare and airport transfer not included
- Participants should be able to handle light to moderate intensity activities
- Participants must have own travel insurance

Participants will need to show proof of COVID vaccination records and abide by COVID restrictions.