

ITINERATUR

Socotra Island

The alien world



Turn Here



Starring Paulo The Travel Bird

Welcome to Itineratur magazine, my name is Paulo. I'm the ,cutest, smartest and funniest tour guide you'll ever meet. In this edition of Itineratur we're traveling to the island of Socotra an archipeligo in Yemen home to some of the world's greatest biodiversity. Let's get started!

The Island of Socotra is an archipelago located off the coast of Yemen in the Indian Ocean in front of the Horn of Africa. It has a plethora of unique fauna and flora. 307 species of plant life, 90% of reptile species and 95% of snail species in Socotra are endemic species meaning that they cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The island's wide variety of interesting fauna and flora is often attributed to it's hot and dry climate. Speciation (the formation of new and distinct species in the course of evolution) is what is thought to have kept a great deal of the plant life alive. The plant life adapted to such harsh conditions over the course of many years.



The photograph above depicts a group of Golden Snub Nosed Monkeys huddling close together perhaps because they are quite startled by the photographer. These primates are known for their striking features such as their bright golden looking fur and their pale blue eye area. The monkeys are primarily located in temperate forests in China but can also be found in the mountainous regions of Socotra.

The Monkey's conservation status is endangered. These creatures are unfortunately in decline due to hunting for, fur, meat and medicinal purposes. This coupled with a loss of habitat due to human activities have been the main factors in the decline of their population. The monkeys are very social creatures and have been known to create groups of up to 200 monkeys in the summer months and 20-30 in the winter months. In some cases various groups have been known to come together and form a unit of up to 600 monkeys in total.



The **Blue Baboon Tarantula** is native to Socotra Island. Despite its appearance the Blue Baboon is actually quite docile in comparison to other baboon spiders. If threatened they will bite and inject painful venom however, they are not typically considered dangerous to humans. They prefer to evade confrontation and are often described as skittish. These spiders enjoy a diet rich in, crickets cockroaches and other small insects. They are known for their breathtaking sky blue color and rarity.



This Beetle is a Beetle commonly known as **Julodis Clouei**. It is common to Socotra island and is a species of jewel beetle known for its colorful and metallic exoskeleton.




The Egyptian Vulture is a small vulture with a very distinct appearance. The bird is covered in white plumage but has a black beak and a bald bright yellow face. Typically these birds prefer to live solitary lives however in some cases they will be seen in pairs, in these cases the two birds are most likely mates. The Egyptian Vulture is a monogamous creature, couples will typically build nests in caves or less commonly in trees. When these birds are finished breeding the parents will both incubate the eggs and feed the chicks until they are old enough to venture out into the world on their own. The Egyptian Vulture can be found in many areas of the world such as, Europe, East to Central Asia, North West India, The Sahel Zone and of course The Island of Socotra. They tend to live in dry desert like areas and need a rocky environment for nesting.

This species is listed as endangered the main culprits in Africa include overgrazing of Livestock and overpopulation of wild ungulates. In Europe the causes for the rapid decline of the Egyptian Vulture population include, human interference, lead poisoning from gunshot, Poisoning and electrocution from power lines, European Union's attempt to control animal carcass disposal which has led to the starvation of many of these creatures and Avian pox. In India an anti inflammatory drug used on livestock called diclofenac is toxic to the birds, the birds ingest the carcass of the livestock and in turn die off rapidly.



Top Ten Socotra Hot Spots



Whoa these guys are too cool I want to hangout with them. Oh, Hello again! Did you know that Socotra has tons of fun activities and attractions to see? Well if you didn't then take it from me, Socotra island has it's own hidden gems. Read on to learn more about Itinerantur's Top Ten recommended trips for Socotra island and to see me take a ride with these guys, Wheeeee!

Qalansiyah Beach is claimed by some to be the world's most beautiful beach. It is every cliché you've ever heard about a magnificent tropical beach put together. This fisherman village is the second largest residential area on the island. Take a brisk stride along Detwah lagoon and enjoy the scenic views. Pavlo's tip is be sure to ask your guide to take a boat trip early in the morning to Shoab and you can see massive pods of spinner and bottlenose dolphins.



Shoab Beach is one of the greatest beaches in the world. The sands are white and powder like, the waters are clear and have an azure color to them, think Tom Hanks Cast Away. Although it is not formerly known as a main tourist destination Shoab beach is certainly a sight to behold. To get to the beach you must take a boat, during the boat ride you may see dolphins. Pavlo's tip is if you plan on spending a lot of time at Shoab bring food and water as there are no local places to get supplies.



Dihamri is one of the greatest places on the island of Socotra for snorkeling and scuba diving. Although Dihamri is not ideal for swimming, after just a few meters of traveling into the water you will be astonished. Around 80 species of coral and hundreds of fish of all sizes and colors make their home here. Pavlo's tip is to not be discouraged from snorkeling and diving in this area, equipment can be rented on the spot and the prices are affordable.

