



# Sustainable management and biodiversity protection in Cat Tien National Park

**C**at Tien National Park stretches across the 3 provinces of Dong Nai, Lam Dong, and Binh Phuoc, with more than 80,000 hectares surrounded by 90km of the Dong Nai river. The Cat Tien National Park contains valuable biodiversity resources not only for Vietnam but also for the world. With a rich flora and fauna system, Nam Cat Tien is a place to explore, learn and make a great getaway for those who love nature and want to learn more about the world.

## THE ECOTOURISM PARADISE

Cat Tien National Park offers visitors an opportunity to discover nature and contemplate the beauty of mountains, glass-plots, forests of high trees, waterfalls and diversified ecosystems with rare plant and animal species.

Nam Cat Tien was recognized by UNESCO as one of the world's biosphere reserve zones in 2001; the Ramsar Convention Secretariat recognized the Bau Sau wetland system as a Ramsar site of international importance in 2005; and the Government of Vietnam ranked Cat Tien National Park as a special national relic on September 27, 2012.

The ideal time to go to Nam Cat Tien is around December to May, as during this time there is little rain with dry weather, suitable for sightseeing or camping overnight in the forest. If you're traveling in June–November, be sure to check the weather forecast before you go out to avoid the unwanted rain. You can camp overnight in the woods, but remember to ask the ranger for permission before camping. Currently, the resort and accommodation services here are being well invested in and developed. You can easily find resorts where you can rest and enjoy the atmosphere while being in harmony with nature.

### *Experience the natural habitat at Bau Sau*

Bau Sau is a famous tourist resort in Nam Cat Tien where visitors can visit the rich flora and fauna, which is even more interesting than what you might imagine. To get to Bau Sau, you need to take a car for about 10 km, then walk 5 km more to get there. In Bau Sau, you can see firsthand

the natural habitat of more than 60 species of freshwater crocodiles and how they prey and live underwater. The resort is the home of Siamese crocodiles, one of the two extremely rare species of crocodiles. Not only that, but Bau Sau is also the home of other rare species such as bulls, yellow-cheeked gibbons, great hornbills... You should stay at Bau Sau so that you can relax and enjoy the specialties here, as well as rest and regain strength for the 5km hike on your way home.

### *Visit Tien Island - Bear Rescue Station*

Tien Island is a nature reserve, located near Nam Cat Tien Forest Ranger Station. With an area of 57ha, Tien Island is home to rare and endangered animals such as: Germain's langur, black-shanked douc, pygmy slow loris, yellow-cheeked gibbon... The Bear Rescue Station is home to rescued or injured bears. They are brought here for care and treatment, and then returned to the wild.

### *Explore animal nightlife*

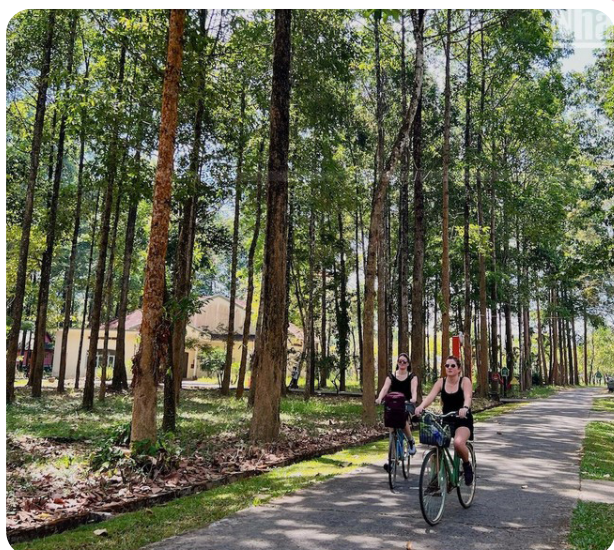
The experience of watching wild animals hunt for food at Nam Cat Tien forest is one of the most interesting activities that you can participate in. With a rich variety of animals such as deer, sambar deer, squirrels, ferrets, and wild boar... with many different lifestyles and food habits, this will definitely give visitors an unforgettable experience. If you want to participate in this activity, you need to contact the management of Nam Cat Tien Ecotourism Area to buy tickets.

### *Get to know the traditional beauty of the ethnic minorities in Ta Lai*

Ta Lai is home to many of the ethnic minorities in Vietnam, such as the Tay, S'tieng, Ma... Coming here, you will have the opportunity to learn about their culture, life, and customs as well as enjoy the wild dishes prepared by the locals. Many young people choose to rent bicycles to roam to Ta Lai, to take in the natural beauty of the Nam Cat Tien forest, with interesting experiences along the way as well as stopping to capture the beautiful sights.

### *Eating in the middle of nature*

Besides strolling on the romantic roads, visitors will also have the opportunity to enjoy wild and unique delicacies such as: water-orchid soup, river fish hotpot, wild vegetables, climbing perch, and snakehead fish... The water-orchid soup has a sweet and refreshing taste and is cooked with both the stem and flowers of the water-orchid. If you try it just once, you will surely remember it forever. The weather in the woods makes it an ideal place to enjoy hot pot.



▲ The forest ecosystems of Cat Tien National Park play a very important role in biodiversity conservation

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STRATEGY OF CAT TIEN NATIONAL PARK

Cat Tien National Park is one of the leading protected areas in environmental education for visitors in Vietnam. Plastic-free tourism and green tourism have been their signatures for more than 10 years. Particularly, methods are used to raise awareness and responsibility for visitors at Cat Tien National Park, for instance, asking visitors to handover single-use plastics and providing compostable bags upon entrance; imposing penalties on restaurants if they neglect consumption of bushmeat; only bicycles and electric vehicles are allowed within the national park; displaying signs and messages of environmental protection along trails.

With practical solutions and relentless efforts in attaining plastic-free and green tourism, in 2020, Cat Tien national park was awarded the Vietnam Environment Award by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This award is for organizations, individuals and communities, an accreditation of

outstanding achievements in environmental protection, rational use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation and biosecurity.

Center for Nature Conservation and Development (CCD) has supported to Cat Tien National Park in implementing more advanced training programs, and provide technical support to the park to monitor all important species and nurture its ecosystem and biodiversity. By obtaining the updated information and sufficient skills to monitor the ecosystems and biodiversity, the staffs are more capable to manage and mitigate impacts human activity and climate change, thus preserve and restore Cat Tien's forest. At the training, botanist/plant conservation and forestry experts shared approaches and recommended methods on inventory, monitoring the population of endangered trees particularly for rosewood species.

The forest ecosystems of Cat Tien National Park play a very important role in biodiversity conservation and provide valuable ecosystem services that support people's lives and local economic development ■

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