

Namibia

with a touch of Zambia and Botswana

November 5 – 22, 2022

Day 00 or Day 0, Nov 3 or 4

You should plan to leave the United States 1 or 2 days prior to Day 1 of the tour. If you opt to arrive one or two days early, we will make reservations for lodging for you in Johannesburg or at a lodge in Livingstone, our first stop on the tour (extra fee). Many people like to have a day to rest after the long transatlantic flight. We recommend leaving the US on November 3, arriving in Johannesburg on November 4, spending the night there and proceeding to Livingstone on November 5 to begin the tour.



Day 1, Nov 5

Your international flights will arrive in Livingstone today from various destinations and usually via Johannesburg in South Africa. Most flights arrive just after lunch, which will allow us enough time to visit the mighty Victoria Falls for which the native name, Mosi-oa-Tunya, means “the smoke that thunders”. We’ll encounter our first birds here, which could include the handsome Schalow’s Turaco, the dowdy Terrestrial Brownbul or even a noisy family group of Yellow-breasted Apalis. Time permitting, we might also pop in at the local waste water treatment plant which can turn up all kinds of things, including the likes of Dickinson’s Kestrel, African Purple Swamphen, African Rail, Orange-breasted Waxbill and several species of waterfowl. From town we have a short drive to our lodge situated ideally on the banks of the mighty Zambezi River.

[O/N Chundukwa River Lodge or similar, Livingstone, Zambia \(LD\)](#)

Day 2, Nov 6

Today we'll head out very early to reach our destination about an hour's drive from the lodge. The Machile area is renowned for being one of the most accessible places in Zambia to see the near endemic Black-cheeked Lovebird, our main target for today. Our breakfast stop at a small wetland often produces Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, Saddle-billed Stork, Hamerkop, Grey-rumped Swallow and numerous Meyer's Parrots - all these and more while enjoying our packed breakfast. The Mopane woodland is a favorite among cavity-nesting species such as Arnott's Chat, Meve's Starling, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, African Grey Hornbill and Southern Red-billed Hornbill. Grassy areas often have Swainson's Spurfowl, Southern Ground Hornbill and the sought-after Black Coucal in residence. After several kilometers on a rough track we'll finally get into the strike zone for the Lovebirds; stopping and listening will be our modus operandi to locate these little critters. We can also expect the likes of Bennett's Woodpecker, Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike and White-crested Helmetshrike. If all goes well, we should be done and dusted around lunch, which will enable us to get back to the lodge for some afternoon birding as things will have quieted down significantly in the Machile area in the mid-day heat.

[O/N Chundukwa River Lodge or similar, Livingstone, Zambia \(BLD\)](#)



Hamerkop



Saddle-billed Stork

Day 3, Nov 7

We have a fairly busy day ahead of us, starting with some early morning birding near the lodge for some target species just before breakfast. Our search will concentrate on Racket-tailed Roller, Miombo Pied Barbet and Miombo Rock-Thrush. All three of these highly sought-after species occur side-by-side not too far from our lodge. We'll return for breakfast and hopefully get on the road shortly thereafter, heading west to our next destination, the Caprivi Strip of Namibia. En route we have one more essential stop to look for Lesser Jacana, with the possibility of African Pygmy Goose, White-backed Duck, Slaty Egret and Greater Painted Snipe. We'll enter Namibia near the town of Katimo Mulilo, where we might stop briefly for Schalow's Turaco if we failed to locate them in Livingstone before heading to our lodge. We will hopefully arrive in time for some afternoon birding.

[O/N Kalizo Lodge or similar, Katimo Mulilo, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 4, Nov 8

Early morning birding at the lodge can be phenomenal, with the likes of Southern Carmine Bee-eater, African Mourning Dove, Horus Swift and Marico Sunbird all possible. We'll depart shortly after breakfast, stopping at several

wetlands on the way out for the likes of African Openbill, Rufous-bellied Heron, Coppery-tailed Coucal and African Marsh Harrier. Another fairly long drive will take us west across the Caprivi and into the Bwabwata National Park. En route we will cross the Kwando River, which is always worth a stop. Scanning the extensive floodplain from the bridge often produces interesting birds such as Saddle-billed Stork and a variety of waterfowl. Continuing onward we'll be on the lookout for raptors in particular, with species such as Dark Chanting Goshawk, Lizard Buzzard, Martial Eagle, Bateleur and Brown Snake-Eagle often encountered.

[O/N Mahango Safari Lodge or similar, Divundu, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)



Day 5, Nov 9

Even though we're only spending a single night in the Divundu area, the fact that we have a very short distance to travel to Shakawe in Botswana will enable us to bird the area around Divundu thoroughly before crossing the border. Once again some birding around the lodge before breakfast should produce the likes of Luapula Cisticola, African Snipe, Hartlaub's Babbler and Grey-headed Bush-Shrike. After breakfast we'll head into the Mahango Game Reserve, a fabulous birding spot where one can bird the dry woodland that borders the extensive floodplains of the Kavango River and of course the floodplains themselves. The superb Crimson-breasted Shrike calls Mahango its home, alongside birds such as Crested Barbet, Grey Tit-Flycatcher, Broad-billed Roller and African Hoopoe. We also have another shot at Slaty Egret, African Spoonbill, Intermediate Egret and even the stately Wattled Crane here. Several big mammals occur here and we are likely to bump into Elephant, African Buffalo, Hippopotamus, Roan Antelope, Sable Antelope and if we're really lucky, even Lion. Another short stop just north of the park is usually a good stake-out for Rock Pratincole when the water levels are low enough to expose rocks. Time permitting, we could visit the Buffalo Camp section of Mahango where we could locate Black-faced Babbler and Bennett's Woodpecker before heading for our border crossing into Botswana.

[O/N Drotsky's Cabins or similar, Shakawe, Botswana \(BLD\)](#)

Day 6, Nov 10

A full day exploring the Panhandle of the spectacular Okavango Delta by boat awaits us. We'll pay particular attention to our target species, which include Pel's Fishing Owl, Slaty Egret, White-backed Night-Heron, White-fronted Bee-eater and several species of Kingfisher. Other good birds to look out for are Western Banded Snake-Eagle, Long-crested Eagle, Greater Swamp Warbler, Chirping Cisticola, Little Rush Warbler, Little Bittern and occasionally even Allen's Gallinule. Extensive woodland around the lodge usually holds Brown Firefinch, Swamp Boubou, Retz's Helmetshrike and African Green Pigeon while drier woodland nearby usually has Bradfield's Hornbill and Black-faced Babbler. At dusk we'll try to locate African Barred Owlet as well as Fiery-necked Nightjar.

[O/N Drotsky's Cabins or similar, Shakawe, Botswana \(BLD\)](#)

Day 7, Nov 11

A fairly early departure will see us heading back into Namibia and then heading west again toward Rundu. We'll pass through some extensive areas of broad-leaved and teak woodland where we'll have a good go at finding a variety of birds such as Souza's Shrike and Tinkling Cisticola on the way; we could also encounter Green-capped Eremomela. Sharp-tailed Starlings are a bit of a hit and miss affair, but we'll keep our eyes peeled nonetheless. This is usually another good road for raptors and we are sure to add to our ever-growing list. Depending on our time of arrival in Rundu, we might be able to squeeze in some afternoon birding at the local sewage works where, over the years, several regional rarities have been recorded and there is usually a nice surprise in store.

[O/N Kaisosi Lodge or similar, Rundu, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 8 & 9, Nov 12 - 13

After an early morning coffee we head out for some birding before breakfast. We could get lucky with species such as Ovambo Sparrowhawk, Burnt-necked Eremomela and Water Thick-knee. Our usual ritual of departure after breakfast will again prevail, with a short stop to look for Rufous-bellied Tit just outside the town of Rundu, en route to the amazing Etosha National Park. This is mostly a driving day with short birding stops on the way, as we need to reach the park before gate closing time. For day 9 we will have a full day in the park and by staying in the east of the park it will enable us to explore the Andoni plains area to the north of Namutoni, this area is particularly good for the likes of Burchell's Sandgrouse, Secretarybird and also gives us access to the isolated population of Blue Crane that occur here.

[O/N Namutoni Camp or Mokuti Lodge or a combination of the two, Etosha National Park, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 10, Nov 14

Our second morning in one of Africa's great parks, we'll do a short game drive to a nearby waterhole before breakfast and hope to get our first taste of more typical Namibian avifauna as well as the chance of terrific big game sightings. Tawny Eagles are abundant and several Vulture species are present as well, including the magnificent Lappet-faced Vulture. Carp's Tit and Southern White-crowned Shrike are often seen on the route to the main entrance gate; the latter are somewhat nomadic and unpredictable in occurrence. The diminutive Damara Dik-Dik, a curious small antelope, is very common around this area and should provide good photographic opportunities. After breakfast we'll be heading west to our next camp in Etosha, birding en route. This route should produce chances at Burchell's, Temminck's and Double-banded Coursers, the latter usually more common further west in the park. The stately Secretary Bird is often seen along with Kori Bustard along this route. We'll also have several chances to get closer to the Etosha Pan after which the park is named, where we have a good chance for Chestnut-banded Plover. Note that the water levels in the pan can vary tremendously and whilst it is normally dry, wet years can produce a waterbird spectacle with thousands of Flamingos and Pelicans present. At camp we'll make full use of the chance to enjoy the floodlit waterhole, a feature shared by all the main camps in Etosha. We usually see Double-banded Sandgrouse coming in to drink just after dusk.

[O/N Halali Camp, Etosha National Park \(BLD\)](#)

Day 11, Nov 15



Another full day in the park, we now head further west from the center of the park. Before breakfast we'll look for some of the resident owls around camp and hope to find African Scops Owl (pictured on the next page), Southern White-faced Scops Owl and sometimes even Barn Owl. Before leaving camp we'll hopefully connect with Violet Woodhoopoe and Damara Hornbill. The more open areas to the west usually harbour Double-banded Courser,

Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark, Gabar Goshawk and several species of Lark. We should also encounter our first Sociable Weaver colonies and the possibility of finding Pygmy Falcon, who often shares the Weaver's nests. We will focus much of our attention on the multitude of waterholes that dot the park, which act as magnets for hundreds of mammals and birds to come and quench their thirst, often followed by the ever-opportunistic predators, both avian and mammalian. Commonly encountered mammal species are Common Zebra, Black-faced Impala, Red-Hartebeest, Elephant, Giraffe, Greater Kudu, Gemsbok and Springbok. Possible carnivores include Black-backed Jackal, Lion, African Wild Cat, Spotted Hyena and even Leopard and Cheetah. Some of the more common birds to look out for are Grey Go-away-bird, Cape Glossy Starling, White-bellied Sunbird, Brubru and Cardinal Woodpecker. A more sought-after bird, occurring here as an isolated population, is Rufous-eared Warbler, and we hope to add this desirable tick to our list.

[O/N Okaukuejo Camp, Etosha NP, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 12, Nov 16

Today we will transect into the far western part of Etosha, an area that was off limits to the general public for many years. At first we will bird the area just north of Okaukuejo for birds such as Pink-billed and Spike-heeled Larks, Northern Black Korhaan, Capped Wheatear and Pale Chanting Goshawk before making our way to Dolomite camp. This camp is quite different from the other camps, offering such speciality birds as Hartlaub's Spurfowl, Ruppel's Parrot, Rockrunner, Short-toed Rock-Thrush and Violet Woodhoopoe. More common birds such as African Red-eyed Bulbul and Red-headed Finch are easy to spot in and around the camp.

[O/N Dolomite Camp or Hobatere Lodge or a combination of the two, Etosha NP, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 13, Nov 17

By popular demand we will now spend an extra day in either the western section of Etosha NP or in the Hobatere conservancy, both offering very similar birds and mammals. Hobatere offers some exceptional photographic opportunities to boot, and night drives (optional) from either of these two camps are highly recommended.

[O/N Dolomite Camp or Hobatere Lodge or a combination of the two, Etosha NP, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 14, Nov 18

Another early morning of birding, watching Sandgrouse coming to drink in large numbers with the ever-present Gabar Goshawk harassing them in the hope of an early breakfast and Great Sparrows and several other seed-eating birds also put in a showing. In the past we've even had elephants drinking from the swimming pool early morning. Mid-morning we'll head to our next lodge not far away and should arrive in time for lunch and a well deserved break before going out for some afternoon birding.

[O/N Rustig Toko Lodge or similar, Kamanjab area, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 15, Nov 19

Again birding around the lodge early morning can be most rewarding, with some truly spectacular birds often within an arm's length, making for superb photographic opportunities. We'll be in the company of some real Namibian specialties such as White-tailed Shrike, Monteiro's Hornbill, Carp's Tit, Rockrunner, Hartlaubs' Spurfowl and Common Scimitarbill. Other, more common birds like Green-winged Pytilia, Black-faced Waxbill, Barred Wren-



Warbler and Ashy Tit make up the colorful supporting cast. We bid Kamanjab farewell as we head south towards the old mining town of Uis near Namibia's highest mountain, known as Brandberg (Burning Mountain). We are now well and truly entering the more arid parts of Namibia and will be on the lookout for Ruppel's Korhaan, Ludwig's Bustard, Benguella Long-billed Lark, Stark's Lark and Bradfield's Swift to name but a few.

[O/N White Lady Lodge or similar, Brandberg area, Uis, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 16, Nov 20

Early morning birding around the lodge could produce the likes of Bearded Woodpecker, Grey-backed Cisticola and Layard's Tit-Babbler. Soon after breakfast we'll be on the road and heading a straight line for the coast with some essential stops en route for arguably Namibia's toughest endemic, Herero Chat, and further on for Gray's Lark, Trac-Trac Chat and Karoo Eremomela. Pretty soon we will catch our first glimpses of the Atlantic, providing it's a clear day of course, and the rolling fog that the west coast of Namibia is famous for hasn't decided to hide the ocean under its blanket. Time and weather permitting, we'll make some stops at various spots along the coast where we'll be on the lookout for African Black Oystercatcher, White-fronted and Grey Plovers and maybe even the likes of Sooty Shearwater or White-chinned Petrel.

[O/N Lagoon Lodge or similar, Walvis Bay, Namibia \(BLD\)](#)

Day 17, Sept 5 / Nov 21

Our lodge is situated right on the Walvis Bay Lagoon and often has Orange River White-eye, now an accepted split by Clements, in the garden. Soon after breakfast we'll head inland again for our appointment with another Namibian endemic, Dune Lark. We'll find this bird at the base of some majestic red sand dunes and the brave among us might well opt to climb to the top of one of these dunes. Believe me, it's tougher than it looks. The area often holds a variety of other species such as Bokmakierie, Common Fiscal and Dusky Sunbird. We should be back in town for lunch before heading to the Mile 2 Saltworks at Swakopmund where we will search for Cape, Bank and Crested Cormorants in addition to Damara Tern and a whole plethora of shorebirds.

O/N Lagoon Lodge or similar, Walvis Bay, Namibia (BLD)

Day 18, Nov 22

This is our final morning in Namibia and we will concentrate our efforts on the local salt works as well as the extensive bay where we will have another chance at Damara Tern as well as Red-necked Phalarope, Grey Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Hartlaub's Gull, Bar-tailed Godwit and Sanderling. All too soon we'll have to head for the airport on the outskirts of Walvis Bay from where you'll fly to Johannesburg for your connecting flights home. (B)

Important Notice

Please be aware that some of the birding areas mentioned in this itinerary are very remote and can become inaccessible due to bad weather, bush fires or poor road conditions and in these cases the guide will change, substitute or omit a particular spot at his discretion.

Optional night drives are now possible from most camps in Etosha National Park and we encourage you to join at least one of these during the course of our stay in the park (fee).

Accommodation as outlined in the itinerary is not guaranteed and Etosha National Park in particular can be tough to book, often necessitating a shuffle of camp nights or, worst case, having to book at one of the fine lodges outside the park gates.

Price includes:

- ~ All lodging
- ~ All meals from lunch on day 1 through breakfast on day 18
- ~ Bottled water
- ~ All ground transportation, including airport transfers
- ~ All park entry fees
- ~ Expert local birding guide(s) at a ratio of no more than 6 birders per guide
- ~ Pre-trip gift package
- ~ Post-trip electronic version of final checklist

Price does not include:

- ~ International airfare from the US to Livingstone and from Johannesburg to the US
- ~ Airfare Walvis Bay – Johannesburg
- ~ Airport transfers if you arrive on a day other than the scheduled start date or the day before
- ~ Items of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls, extra snacks and/or beverages, etc.
- ~ Gratuities

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- ~ Deposit of \$950 is required with registration (registration forms available online).
- ~ Balance is due 4 months prior to the start date.
- ~ Checks should be made payable to *Cheepers! Birding on a Budget* and mailed with the registration form to:

Cheepers! Birding on a Budget

Post Office Box 385

Spring Valley, OH 45370

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Cancellation must be made in writing (email or snail mail)

More than 6 months prior to departure – full refund of deposit

Between 4 and 6 months prior to departure – 50% refund of deposit

Less than 4 months prior to departure – No refund of deposit

If cancellation occurs after full payment is made, a refund will be given only if the vacant spot is filled.

Trip insurance is recommended.

You can compare prices offered by various trip insurance companies at these websites:

<http://www.insuremytrip.com>

http://www.quotewright.com/?sub_id=6056

Cheepers! Birding on a Budget LLC reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary if the need should arise due to unforeseeable circumstances such as weather, landslides, and other natural phenomena, as well as suggestions by local guides in order to take advantage of an unusual birding opportunity. Lodging is subject to change based on availability.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

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