

Angola

2024 Tour Leaflet



Swierstra's Francolin © Michael Mills

21 August – 8 September 2024

Angola 2024



ENDEMIC IN COMFORT

- Targets all endemics
- Red-crested Turaco, White-headed Robin-Chat, Braun's Bushshrike, Gabela Akalat
- Led by Angola's top birder

TOUR LEADER: MICHAEL MILLS



Michael's incredible focus, dedication and ability to locate and show Africa's toughest birds is probably unequalled. He has led dozens of tours across the continent and his experience in locating birds on just the softest of calls or briefest of views impresses those who travelled with him. Michael has spent a total of more than four years in Angola, and knows the country's birds better than anyone.

DATES

2024	21 Aug – 8 Sep
2025	28 Aug – 15 Sep
2026	20 Aug – 7 Sep

PRICES FOR 2024

Per person sharing	\$7950
Single supplement	\$690

Starts/ends in Luanda.

BOOK ONLINE

Visit www.birdingafrica.com
 Deposit (\$150) by credit card
 Email info@birdingafrica.com



Monteiro's Bushshrike © Tertius Gous



Gabela Helmetshrike © Michael Mills

We have pioneered birding tours to Angola since 2005. Our comprehensive 19-day itinerary is crafted on up-to-date knowledge of ever-changing road conditions, to comfortably and efficiently target all of Angola's endemics.

Our tour commences in Luanda, with the first birding on the northern escarpment for the striking Braun's Bushshrike. From here we move east to Kalandula to search for White-headed Robin-Chat, before starting our journey to southern Angola. We'll stop at Kissama—for Grey-striped Francolin, Gabela Helmetshrike, White-fronted Wattle-eye and Monteiro's Bushshrike—and Kumbira forest—for Gabela Akalat, Gabela Bushshrike and Pulitzer's Longbill—before spending several days in the varied Mt Moco region. Here targets include Brazza's Martin, Bocage's Sunbird, Bocage's Weaver, Margaret's Batis and Black-chinned Weaver. This is followed by a loop through the arid south for Angola Slaty Flycatcher, White-tailed Shrike, Hartlaub's Francolin, Cinderella Waxbill, Swierstra's Francolin and Angola Cave Chat, before returning to Luanda.

TOUR FOCUS

This comprehensive itinerary will give us a good chance to see all of Angola's endemic birds, including splits, and a large number of specials. We expect to record 550 species in total. The tour is heavily bird-focused (little other wildlife), although the scenery is often spectacular and we will visit top attractions such as Kalandula Falls and Leba Pass.

A species list will be handed out to you as part of your tour booklet at the start of the tour and is available beforehand upon request.

The tour is timed to coincide with the breeding season of the endemic birds. Days will typically be warm to hot, but nights cooler in the highlands. We are likely to encounter a small amount of rain.

Travel conditions are generally reasonable, although service in hotels is often a bit slow. The route we follow makes use of the best roads and avoids the worst, but sections are still potholed and under construction, or a bit bumpy and dusty.



Red-crested Turaco © Tertius Gous

ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Accommodation and meals are generally of a reasonable standard. All rooms have private bathrooms and cold and hot running water is generally available. Although power supply can be unreliable, most hotels have backup generators.

Meals are a generally Portuguese-style, with a strong emphasis on starch and meat. Vegetarian options are limited. Some breakfasts and most lunches may be taken in the field.

Water is not safe to drink so we supply free bottled water in the vehicle that you can take to your rooms for drinking and brushing teeth.

GROUP SIZE

Maximum 9 participants in two 4x4s.

WALKING

This tour requires only a moderate degree of fitness. All walks will last less than four hours, except for one at Mt Moco, and be conducted at a manageable pace. Terrain where we walk is generally flat, except at Mount Moco where it is much steeper and rocky.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Participants are required to make their own international flight reservations.

The tour starts with dinner and accommodation in Luanda on 21 August 2024. The tour ends in Luanda on the evening of 8 September 2024 (excluding accommodation or dinner). Participants can leave Luanda any time after 21h00.

INTRODUCTION

Angola is one of the most biologically diverse countries in Africa. Following 30 years of civil war that ended in 2002, the country has been slow in opening up, which means that few birders have had the opportunity to sample its delights. With habitats ranging from Congo Basin forests to the Namib Desert, it is little surprise that the country has over 960 birds recorded. In addition, the escarpment and highlands of western Angola hold isolated patches of Afromontane and Congo Basin forests where numerous endemics have evolved in isolation. The combination of varied habitats, high species diversity and significant numbers of endemics and specials makes Angola one of the continent's top birding destinations.

On this tour we will visit all the key birding habitats in Angola. For the northern escarpment forests we base ourselves out of Uíge, where numerous Congo Basin birds occur alongside the endemic Braun's Bushshrike. The broadleaved woodlands and gallery forests of the Kalandula area host forest specials such as White-headed Robin-Chat alongside miombo species such as Anchieta's Barbet and Sharp-tailed Starling. Along the central escarpment, Kissama NP hosts dry forests at the foot of the escarpment. Here we hope to find

Gabela Helmetshrike, Monteiro's Bushshrike, White-fronted Wattle-eye, Grey-striped Francolin, Angola Batis, Yellow-throated Nicator, Pale-olive Greenbul, Hartert's Camaroptera, Landana Firefinch and Golden-backed Bishop. On top of the central escarpment we hope to find three of Angola's most Endangered endemics, namely Gabela Bushshrike, Gabela Akalat and Pulitzer's Longbill, with other possibilities including Red-crested Turaco, Yellow-throated Nicator, Yellow-necked Greenbul, Pale-olive Greenbul, Black-faced Canary and Landana Firefinch. We spend four days Afromontane habitats around Mount Moco and Tundavala. Here our main targets include Swierstra's Francolin (hard to see), Finsch's Francolin, Fülleborn's Longclaw, Angola Swee Waxbill, Dusky Twinspot, Bocage's Weaver, Black-chinned Weaver, Oustalet's Sunbird, Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird, Bocage's Sunbird, Angola Slaty Flycatcher, Angola Cave Chat, Bocage's Akalat, Huambo Cisticola, Black-and-rufous Swallow, Brazza's Martin, Black-collared Bulbul and Angola Lark. Finally, the arid habitats of the south are home to "Namibian specials" such as Cinderella Waxbill, Benguela Long-tailed Starling, Rüppell's Korhaan, Hartlaub's Spurfowl, White-tailed Shrike and Monteiro's Hornbill.

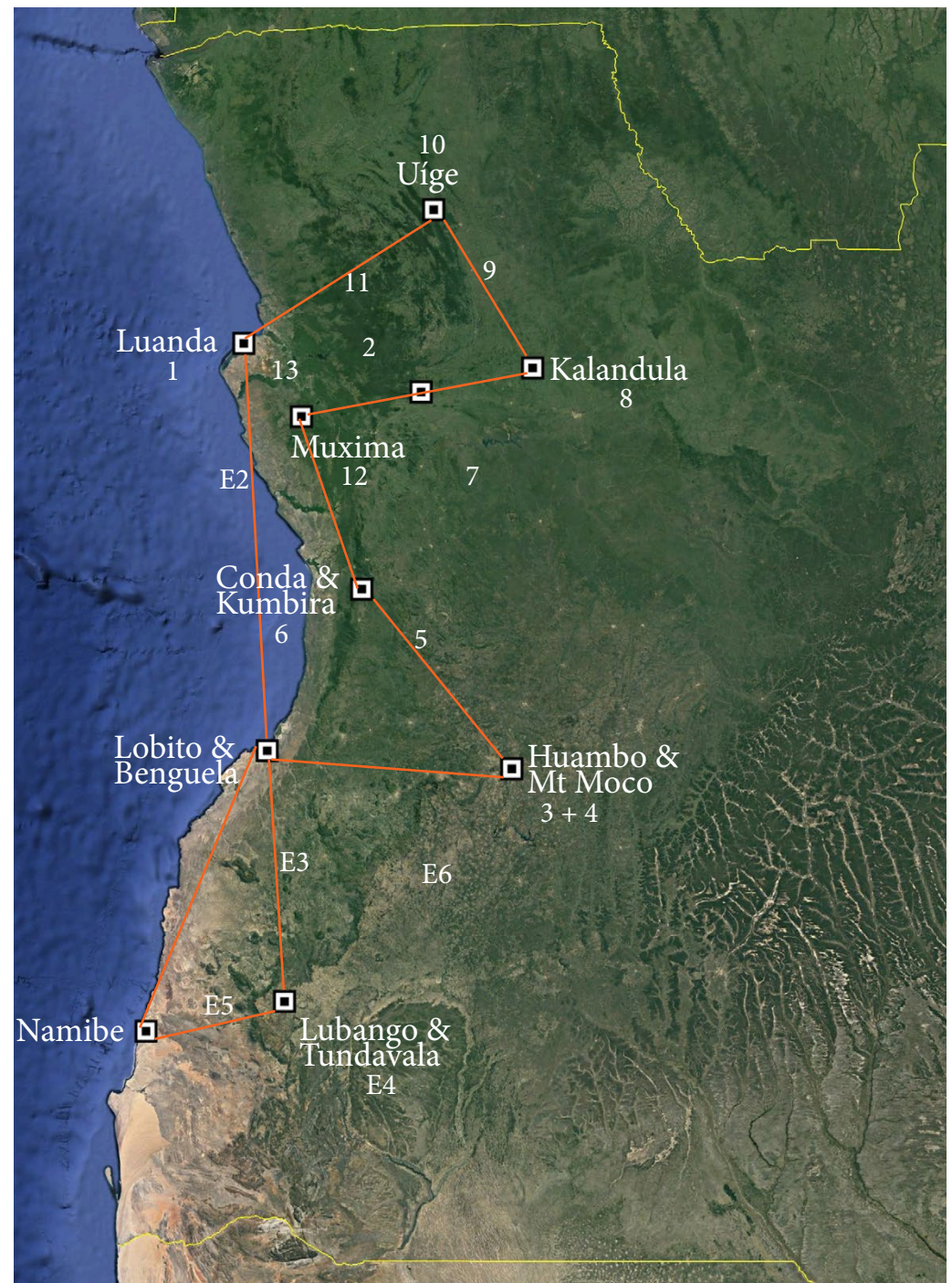
Angola Batis © Michael Mills



ITINERARY AND MAP

Day 1	21 Aug 2024	Arrive. Overnight in Luanda.
Day 2	22 Aug 2024	Luanda to Uíge. Overnight in Uíge.
Day 3	23 Aug 2024	Northern escarpment birding. Overnight in Uíge.
Day 4	24 Aug 2024	Uíge to Kalandula. Overnight in Kalandula.
Day 5	25 Aug 2024	Full day in the Kalandula area. Overnight in Kalandula.
Day 6	26 Aug 2024	Lubango to Huambo. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 7	27 Aug 2024	Kalandula to Muxima. Overnight near Muxima.
Day 8	28 Aug 2024	Full day in the Muxima area. Overnight near Muxima.
Day 9	29 Aug 2024	Muxima to Conda. Overnight near Conda.
Day 10	30 Aug 2024	Kumbira Forest and surrounds. Overnight near Conda.
Day 11	31 Aug 2024	Conda to Huambo. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 12	1 Sep 2024	Full day in the Mt Moco region. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 13	2 Sep 2024	Full day in the Mt Moco region. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 14	3 Sep 2024	Mt Moco to Benguela. Overnight in Benguela.
Day 15	4 Sep 2024	Benguela to Lubango. Overnight in Lubango.
Day 16	5 Sep 2024	Full day at Tundavala. Overnight in Lubango.
Day 17	6 Sep 2024	Lubango to Namibe. Overnight near Namibe.
Day 18	7 Sep 2024	Namibe to Lobito. Overnight in Lobito.
Day 19	8 Sep 2024	Lobito to Luanda. Tour ends.

Brazza's Martin © Michael Mills



DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive in Luanda

Welcome to Angola! The tour officially commences with dinner and an overnight stay in the heart of Luanda, Angola's vibrant capital city.

Day 2: Luanda to Uíge

After an early breakfast we will strike out north-east of Luanda on the road to Uíge. Our first planned stop will be for a short walk in some dry forests where we should see our first endemics: Red-backed Mousebird and Bubbling Cisticola are usually present, and Gabela Helmetshrike and Monteiro's Bushshrike are both possible. As we near Uíge in the afternoon we will stop in some moister roadside forest for our first try for Braun's Bushshrike. Overnight in Uíge town.

Day 3: Northern escarpment

We have a full day to explore various patches of northern escarpment forest within an hour's drive of Uíge. Braun's Bushshrike is, of course, the main target for the day, but a long

list of other species is possible, including Banded Prinia, Lowland Masked Apalis, Black-throated Apalis, Buff-throated Apalis, Brown-backed Scrub Robin, Orange-tufted Sunbird, Purple-throated Cuckooshrike, Forest Chestnut-winged Starling, Black-winged Oriole, Velvet-mantled Drongo, Brown Twinspot, Common Naked-faced Barbet, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Eastern Yellow-billed Barbet, White-breasted Nigrita, Black Bee-eater, Green-throated Sunbird, Little Green Sunbird, Congo Pied Hornbill, Bristle-nosed Barbet, Speckled Tinkerbird, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Sooty Flycatcher, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Eastern Piping Hornbill, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Red-fronted Parrot and Cassin's Honeybird. Unfortunately most of the accessible forests have been heavily logged, making it very hard to find the localised Angola White-throated Greenbul. White-collared Oliveback, discovered on a Birding Africa tour in 2011, is also possible but rather rare. Overnight in Uíge town.



Pale-billed Hornbill © Michael Mills

Day 4: Uíge to Kalandula

After some final birding in the Uíge area we'll drive to Kalandula Falls, birding various gallery forests and woodlands en route. Possible new birds for the day include Red-crested Turaco and Anchieta's Barbet. Overnight in Kalandula town.

Days 5–6: Kalandula Falls region

Our main reason for visiting the Kalandula Falls region is to search for the striking and localised White-headed Robin-Chat in the gallery forests some 40 km north of the falls. Sharing the same habitat are species such as Grey-winged Robin-Chat, Bannerman's Sunbird, Brown-headed Apalis, African Broadbill, Narina Trogon, Cabanis's

Greenbul and Red-crested Turaco.

We'll also bird the surrounding woodlands which are the most reliable site for Anchieta's Barbet and Sharp-tailed Starling. Other species of interest may include Pale-billed Hornbill, Rufous-bellied Tit, Anchieta's Sunbird, Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Red-throated Cliff Swallow, Thick-billed Cuckoo (rare) and Miombo Scrub Robin. Nights in Kalandula town.

Day 7: Kalandula to Muxima area

Today we drive to the Muxima area, along the mighty Kwanza River. We'll stop en route to look for Rock Pratincole, and as we near our accommodation we'll enjoy some wetland birding. Overnight near Muxima.

Braun's Bushshrike © Tertius Gous





Day 11: Conda to Huambo

Today we take our time to bird the road from Conda to Huambo, stopping in miombo woodlands and dambo grasslands to search for various specials such as Brazza's Martin. See Days 12–13 for a more detailed description of the birds to be searched for. Overnight near Huambo.

Days 12–13: Mount Moco region

The greater Mount Moco region is one of the most diverse in the country and we allow ourselves a generous amount of time to explore its Afromontane forests, montane grasslands, miombo woodlands and dambo grasslands. A significant amount of time will be focussed on Mount Moco itself, where the forests support diminishing populations of Swierstra's Francolin, Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird, Bocage's Akalat, Schalow's

Turaco, Evergreen Forest Warbler, Thick-billed Seedeater, Grey Apalis, African Hill Babbler, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, Olive Woodpecker, Western Green Tinkerbird and Western Black-backed Barbet. Forest edge supports Huambo Cisticola, Yellow-throated Leaflove, Dusky Twinspot, Angolan Sweet Waxbill, Black-throated Wattle-eye, Oustalet's Sunbird, Bronzy Sunbird, African Spotted Creeper, Red-throated Wryneck and Black-chinned Weaver. The surrounding grasslands and rocky areas hold an endemic race of Mountain Wheatear, Horus Swift, Striped Pipit, Capped Wheatear, Black-collared Bulbul, Angola Lark, Broad-tailed Warbler, Wing-snapping Cisticola and the very difficult Finsch's Francolin. On one of these days we'll make a 6-hour return hike to search for Margaret's Batis in the largest remaining patch of Afromontane forest.

Angola Lark © Michael Mills



Gabela Akalat © Michael Mills

Day 8: Kissama National Park

Dry forests in the vicinity of Muxima make for some of the country's most endemic-rich birding. In the early morning we'll watch for Grey-striped Francolin on the sides of the road. A whole host of dry forest birds is on offer, with Gabela Helmetshrike, Monteiro's Bushshrike and White-fronted Wattle-eye top of the list. Other species on offer include African Barred Owlet, Red-backed Mousebird, Olive Bee-eater, Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Pale-olive Greenbul, Swamp Boubou, Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush, Bubbling Cisticola, Forest Scrub Robin, Green Crombec, Purple-banded Sunbird, Yellow-throated Nicator and Angola Batis. Overnight near Muxima.

Day 9: Muxima to Conda

After some final birding in the Muxima area we'll drive down the ever-drier coast. In the afternoon we'll visit some remnant patches of central scarp forest, with a chance of Gabela Akalat. Night near Conda.

Day 10: Kumbira

Kumbira Forest is home to three Endangered central-scarp endemics, namely Pulitzer's Longbill, Gabela Bushshrike and Gabela Akalat. Unfortunately slash-and-burn farming has caused major population declines in all three species, although the akalat is still common and the longbill is normally not too hard to find. The bushshrike has become rather rare and hard to find now, having been fairly common only 15 years ago, so we may have to search for it at some backup sites. Other birds we may find at Kumbira include Red-crested Turaco, Southern Hyliota, Dusky Tit, Yellow-throated Nicator, Yellow-necked Greenbul, Pale-olive Greenbul, Brown Illadopsis, Hartert's Camaroptera, Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye, Superb Sunbird, Forest Scrub Robin, Gorgeous Bushshrike, African Broadbill, Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Black-faced Canary, Pink-footed Puffback, Angolan Naked-faced Barbet, Trumpeter Hornbill and Grey Waxbill. Overnight near Conda village.

Miombo woodlands and dambo grasslands in the surrounds of Mount Moco hold an equally impressive variety of birds. Black-necked Eremomela, the curious local race of Brubru, Green-capped Eremomela, Miombo Scrub Robin, Miombo Pied Barbet (rare), Miombo Wren-Warbler, Red-capped Crombec, Woodland Pipit, Salvadori's Eremomela, Pale-billed Hornbill, Yellow-bellied Hyltiota and White-breasted Cuckooshrike may be seen in the woodlands. However, the dambo grasslands hold the greatest interest, and here we will be hoping to find: Black-and-rufous Swallow, Fülleborn's Longclaw, Sooty Chat, Chirping Cisticola, Fawn-breasted Waxbill, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Brown Firefinch, Locust-Finch, Hartlaub's Marsh Widowbird, Stout Cisticola, Bocage's Sunbird and Bocage's Weaver. Nights near Huambo town.

Day 14: Mount Moco to Benguela

After some final birding in the Mount Moco region we'll make our way westwards to the coast. Wetlands around Lobito and Benguela offer a variety of waterbirds, potentially including Lesser Flamingo and Chestnut-banded Plover. Overnight in Benguela town.

Day 15: Benguela to Lubango

The arid savanna and rocky hillsides some 50 km inland of Benguela form the most northerly tongue of Namibian Escarpment habitat, and provide an opportunity to look for several species mostly associated with Namibia. We have a morning here. Hartlaub's Francolin call from the rock-tops in the early morning, and we hope to find Bare-cheeked Babbler, Rüppell's Parrot, White-tailed



Angola Cave Chat © Michael Mills

Shrike, Cape Penduline Tit, Carp's Tit, Pririt Batis, Monteiro's Hornbill and Southern Yellow-billed. During the afternoon we'll drive to Lubango. Overnight in Lubango.

Day 16: Tundavala

Views down the spectacular southern escarpment are best had from Tundavala near Lubango. The rocky area also holds a variety of grassland, escarpment and forest birds. Top of the list is the localised Angola Cave Chat, found alongside Angola Slaty Flycatcher, Swierstra's Francolin (rare), Short-toed Rock Thrush, Angolan Sweet Waxbill, Freckled Nightjar, Bradfield's Swift, Rockrunner, Tinkling Cisticola, Wailing Cisticola, Buffy Pipit, Striped Pipit, Oustalet's Sunbird and Anson's Firefinch (split from Jameson's Firefinch). We'll also search for the recently rediscovered White-bellied Barbet. Overnight in Lubango town.

Day 17: Tundavala to Namibe

The road from Lubango to Namibe starts at around 2300 m altitude on the Humpata Plateau, rapidly dropping down the spectacular Leba Pass to the lowlands below. Our first stop will be at the base of the escarpment where we hope to track down

Cinderella Waxbill, Hartlaub's Babbler, Bennett's Woodpecker and Benguela Long-tailed Starling. As we drive west towards the coast the habitat gets drier and drier. Initially arid bushveld is home to Dusky Sunbird, Karoo Chat, Chat Flycatcher, Cape Sparrow and Southern Fiscal, but eventually we'll reach barren desert plains where Benguela Long-billed Lark and Rüppell's Korhaan are the main targets. Other possibilities include Ludwig's Bustard, Double-banded Courser, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Greater Kestrel, Pale-winged Starling, Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark and Stark's Lark. Overnight near Namibe.

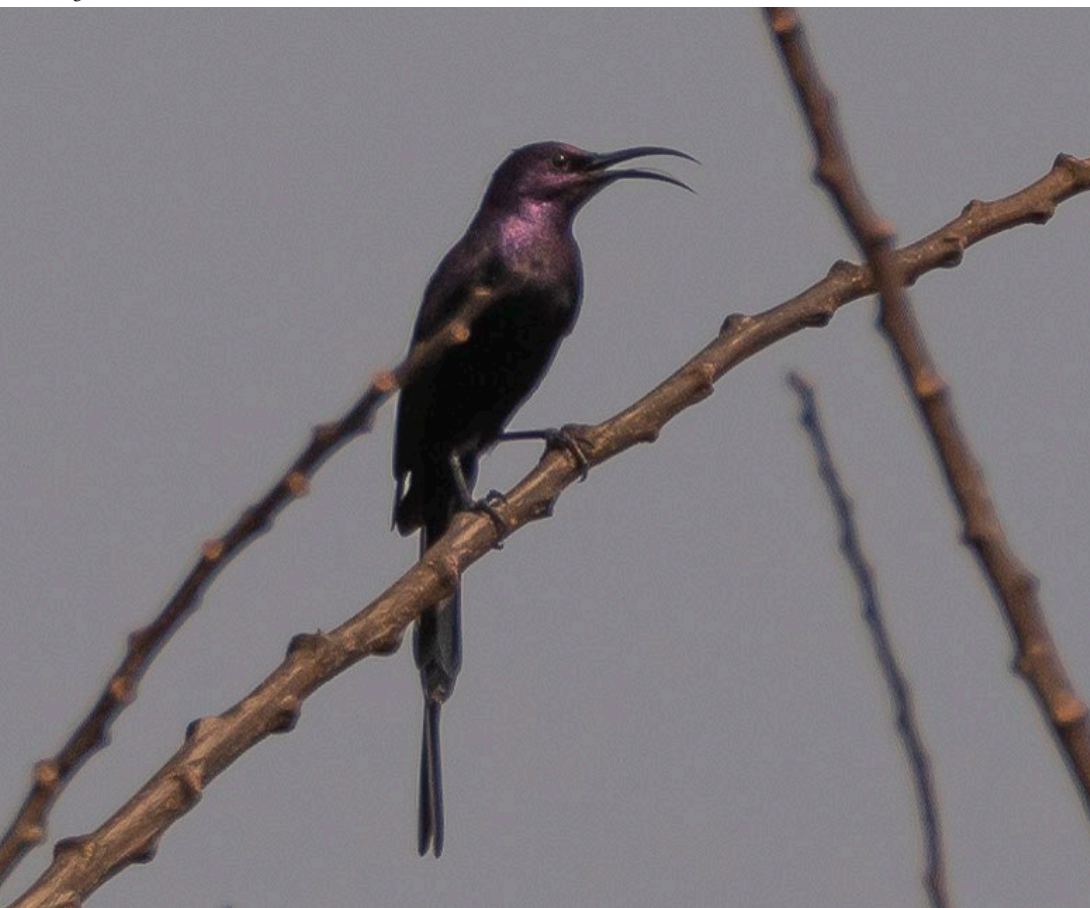
Day 18: Namibe to Lobito

Today we continue our journey through the arid landscapes, mopping up species that we may have missed and enjoying the spectacular mountains. Overnight at Lobito.

Day 19: Lobito to Luanda

Today we return to Luanda along the coastal route. Lunch will be taken at the Kwanza River mouth, where Brown Sunbird occurs in the mangroves. Our final stop will be at Mussulo Bay for some wader watching. The tour ends on arrival back in Luanda.

Bocage's Sunbirds © Michael Mills



INCLUDED

- Guiding services of the Birding Africa tour leader
- Entry fees and activities as per itinerary
- Hotel accommodation throughout
- Airport transfers in Luanda on 21 August and 8 September
- Bottled water in the vehicle
- One soft drink at each sit-down meal
- General tips

QUESTIONS?

Please email the office, info@birdingafrica.com, to reserve a place or ask questions (you can also cc michael@birdingafrica.com and callan@birdingafrica.com who are both involved in the planning of this tour.

BOOKLET AND CHECKLIST

Birding Africa provides:

1. this tour leaflet with detailed itinerary
2. the tour information pack, emailed to you
3. the tour booklet with checklists, on the tour

HOW TO BOOK

1. Complete our easy online booking form.
2. Secure your booking deposit by credit card on our 3D secure online payment site (\$150).
3. Settle the balance by bank transfer 150 days before the tour. We will email you a reminder and the banking details.

