



**BIRDING  
AFRICA**  
THE AFRICA SPECIALISTS

# Zambia Pitta Tour

**Tour Leaflet  
2024**



*African Pitta © Yann Muzika*

**28 November – 5 December 2024**

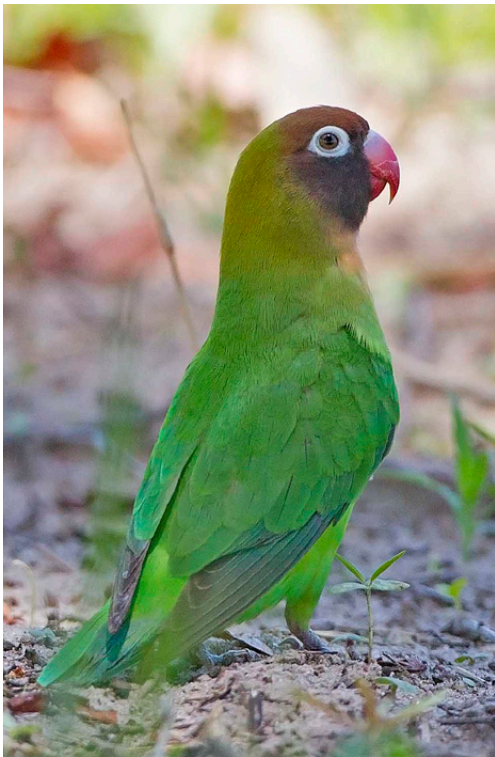
# Zambia Pitta Tour 2024



## TIMED FOR AFRICAN PITTA

- three mornings in prime African Pitta display area
- Targets Zambia's two endemics, Chaplin's Barbet and Black-cheeked Lovebird
- Good miombo birding

Black-cheeked Lovebird © Tertius Gous



## TOUR LEADER: MICHAEL MILLS



Michael's incredible focus, dedication and ability to locate and show Africa's toughest birds is probably unequalled on the continent. He has led dozens of tours across Africa and his experience in locating birds on just the softest of calls or briefest of views impresses those who travelled with him.

### 2024 DATES

Pitta Tour 28 Nov – 5 Dec

### 2024 PRICES

Per Person Sharing \$3350  
Single Room Supplement \$340

Starts Livingstone, ends Lusaka

### BOOK ONLINE

Visit [www.birdingafrica.com](http://www.birdingafrica.com)  
Deposit (\$150) by credit card  
Email [info@birdingafrica.com](mailto:info@birdingafrica.com)



Chaplin's Barbet © Tertius Gous

Our 8-day Zambia Pitta Tour gives you two morning to look for African Pitta, at the best time to find this secretive species; when they have just arrived on their breeding grounds and are displaying to set up territories. The tour runs immediately after our Zambia Main Tour, which can be booked together with this trip to give you a comprehensive tour of Zambia.

We'll start off in the far south-west of the country, looking for the localised, endemic Black-cheeked Lovebird, where we may also see Dickinson's Kestrel and Dwarf Bittern. Some birding along the Zambezi River could turn up Slaty Egret, Long-toed Lapwing, Swamp Boubou and Brown Firefinch.

Then we'll search for the endemic Chaplin's Barbet in the Choma area, where we may also find Rufous-bellied Heron, Spotted Crane, Racket-tailed Roller, Miombo Pied Barbet, Amur Falcon, Rufous-bellied Tit and Miombo Scrub Robin.

Finally, in the Zambezi Valley we'll search for African Pitta, along with Pennant-winged Nightjar, African Broadbill, Livingstone's Flycatcher and Meves's Starling.

## TOUR FOCUS

Southern Zambia offers a good list of specials for world listers and a wide array of species and other wildlife for those with a more general interest.

This trip has a strong focus on watching birds, but there are opportunities too for some mammal watching and bird (and other) photography.

Let us know if you have target species or want to know more about the species we might encounter. A species list will be handed out to you at the start of the tour and is available beforehand upon request.

The tour is timed to coincide with the peak time for displaying African Pitta. We expect to encounter some rain, mostly as afternoon thunderstorms. Most days, especially in the Zambezi Valley, will be very hot, although rain will bring some relief from the high temperatures.

We will mostly make use of one or two four-wheel-drive vehicles. More details about what to expect, how to prepare and what to pack are provided in our Tour Instructions.





Shelley's Sunbird © Tertius Gous

### ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Accommodation and meals are generally fairly good by African standards, and vary from private lodges and guest houses to rustic bush camps and small hotels. Rooms mostly have private facilities and hot water. We may need to share ablution facilities only on the odd occasion.

Meals are Western-style. Please advise if you are vegetarian and what foods you enjoy, so that we can cater for you.

Water is not safe to drink so we supply complimentary bottled water in the vehicle.

### GROUP SIZE

Maximum 9 participants.

### INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Please plan to fly into Livingstone by the evening of 28 November 2024.  
Departure from Lusaka not before 7 pm on the night of 5 December 2024.

Please email [callan@birdingafrica.com](mailto:callan@birdingafrica.com) a copy of your proposed flight details for approval before paying for your ticket.

### WALKING

This tour requires at least a moderate degree of fitness. Most walks will be done at a gentle pace, although there will be a couple of longer hikes lasting several hours. Conditions underfoot can be muddy at times.

## INTRODUCTION

Zambia, lying on the interface between Central and southern Africa, is largely blanketed in miombo woodlands and dotted with swamps and dambos. In moister areas tropical forests have developed and the drier south also holds mopane woodlands and acacia woodlands and gallery forests along the Zambezi Valley. Although the country only holds two endemics, Chaplin's Barbet and Black-cheeked Lovebird, a wide range

of specials can be found and it is one of the best places to see the desirable African Pitta. Given the quality of the birds on offer Zambia must be regarded as one of Africa's most under-birded countries.  
Our 8-day Pitta Tour takes in the best that the south of the country has to offer, and aims to find as many regional specialties as possible in compliment to our Main Tour.

African Broadbill (left) and Narina Trogon (right) © Tertius Gous





# ITINERARY AND MAP

- Day 1
- Arrive Livingstone. Overnight at Livingstone.
- Day 2
- Livingstone to Upper Zambezi. Overnight along the Upper Zambezi.
- Day 3
- Black-cheeked Lovebird Day Trip. Overnight along the Upper Zambezi.
- Day 4
- Upper Zambezi to Choma area. Overnight at Nkanga River.
- Day 5
- Nkanga River Conservation Area. Overnight at Nkanga River.
- Day 6
- Choma to Lower Zambezi area. Overnight in the Lower Zambezi area.
- Day 7
- Lower Zambezi area (first Pitta day). Overnight in the Lower Zambezi.
- Day 8
- Lower Zambezi (second chance for Pitta) to Lusaka. Tour ends.

*African Skimmer © Tertius Gous*





# DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

## Day 1: Arrive in Livingstone

Welcome to Zambia! The tour commences with dinner and an overnight stay near Livingstone.

## Day 2: Livingstone to Upper Zambezi

The tour kicks off in the bird-rich Livingstone area, beside the mighty Victoria Falls. Along the river itself we hope to see African Finfoot, and wetland birds may include Greater Painted-Snipe. In the late morning we'll visit Victoria Falls on the Zambian side, before driving west along the Zambezi to our overnight accommodation, watching for Southern Carmine Bee-eater as we go.

## Day 3: Black-cheeked Lovebird

We have a full day to explore the mopane woodlands of south-western Zambia, in search for the localised, endemic Black-cheeked Lovebird. Other species that we may see during the day include Dickinson's Kestrel, Southern Ground Hornbill, Meyer's Parrot, Burnt-necked Eremomela, Magpie Shrike, Bennett's Woodpecker and African Cuckoo. If we're lucky we will find Dusky Lark.

## Day 4: Zambezi River to Choma

We will bird along the Zambezi River in the early morning, before making our way to the Choma area for a two nights' stay. Along the river we hope to find Slaty Egret, Meves's Starling, Red-billed Francolin, Swamp Boubou, Southern Brown-throated Weaver, Brown Firefinch and Coppery-tailed Coucal. We plan to arrive in Choma in time to search for Chaplin's Barbet near our lodge in the late afternoon.

## Day 5: Choma/Nkanga River

The localised, endemic Chaplin's Barbet is the main target of our visit to the Choma area, and prefers open, fig-dominated savanna. A wide variety of species can be seen in the Choma area, including several miombo specialties and some good wetland specials. Miombo species may include Southern Hylia, Miombo Blue-eared Starling, Miombo Pied Barbet, Racket-tailed Roller, Cabanis's Bunting, Stierling's Wren-Warbler, Green-capped Eremomela, Wood Pipit, Miombo Tit and Rufous-bellied Tit. We may also find Three-banded Courser, Schalow's Turaco, Bennett's Woodpecker, African Cuckoo-Hawk and Cuckoo Finch,



Collared Palm Thrush © Tertius Gous

and around wetlands, Rufous-bellied Heron, White-backed Duck and Spotted Crake.

## Day 6: Choma to lower Zambezi Valley

After a final morning of birding in the Choma area we'll continue east to Siavonga in the Zambezi valley, where we will be based for the final two nights of the trip.

## Days 7: Lower Zambezi

We have a full day in the lower Zambezi Valley, where our main target will be African Pitta. Some years they are easy to find and on

others it may take a couple of attempts. While looking for the pittas we'll watch out for a range of other lowland thicket species, which may include African Broadbill, Livingstone's Flycatcher, Eastern Nicator, Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Eastern Bearded Scrub-Robin, Natal Francolin, Purple-crested Turaco and Narina Trogon.

## Day 8: To Lusaka

Today we have a second chance for African Pitta in the early morning, before driving back to Lusaka, a three-hour drive.



Livingstone's Flycatcher © Tertius Gous

## INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE

- Services of Birding Africa tour leader and local guides
- Entry fees and activities as per itinerary
- Ground transport in Zambia
- Accommodation and all meals starting with dinner on the first night and ending with lunch on the last day
- Airport transfers
- Bottled water in the vehicle and one soft drink per sit-down meal
- general tips

## QUESTIONS?

Please email the office, [info@birdingafrica.com](mailto:info@birdingafrica.com), to reserve a place or ask questions (you can also cc [michael@birdingafrica.com](mailto:michael@birdingafrica.com) and [callan@birdingafrica.com](mailto: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.

