



TOUR INFORMATION FOR ZAMBIA

These notes are designed to help you prepare for your tour. Please read carefully.

ENTERING ZAMBIA: United Kingdom citizens will need a passport which is valid for three months after the date of return, and a Visa. The easiest way is to obtain an e-Visa online (<https://eservices.zambiaimmigration.gov.zm/#/home>). Please call the Zambia High Commission in London (tel: 020 7589 6655) if you have any questions.

Although it is possible to obtain a visa-on-arrival we strongly discourage this so as to prevent the group being delayed from departing the airport if there is a long visa queue or if immigration find an issue with your documentation. We understand that, by the end of 2021, it may even be mandatory to apply for a tourist visa online prior to arrival. Please contact us if you need a letter of invitation to accompany your visa application.

Citizens of other nations should contact the nearest Zambia Embassy for entry requirements.

It is always a good idea to take a photocopy of your passport and air ticket with you when travelling abroad. They can prove invaluable in helping you get replacements if your originals are lost or stolen. Obviously you should keep the photocopies in a separate bag to the originals.

DEPARTING ZAMBIA: Note this tour begins in Lusaka and ends in Livingstone – both cities have an airport with international connections. The tour vehicles will be driving back to Lusaka and it may be possible to join them if flight connections from Lusaka are easier, but there will be extra costs involved, such as meals and an extra overnight in Lusaka.

CURRENCY: The currency is the Kwacha (ZMW). All major credit cards are acceptable in the major centres only, Lusaka and Livingstone. Get local currency from an ATM machine or money exchange upon arrival in the airport. As the tour price includes all travel, hotel and main meal costs, you need bring only enough to cover gifts, snacks, extra drinks or other purchases of a purely personal nature.

LANGUAGE: Approximately 70 individual languages are spoken; English is the official language in government, business, and education.

CLIMATE: November is typically the transition month from dry hot weather to rains. When the rainy season does commence it is likely to be sporadic showers which should leave plenty of non-rainy time for birding. The arrival of the rains increases the birding activity considerably. Average high temperatures at this time of year are 28°C (82°F) while average lows are around 18°C (64°F). A light jacket along with suitable water-proof clothing are recommended.

PACE OF TOUR AND DAILY ROUTINE: The first thing to realise about this tour is that in order to cover the full range of habitats there is a fair amount of driving involved, and although a lot of time is spent in the vehicles to cover the large distances between localities, there will be ample exercise on the non-travel days, though this will be far from strenuous. There are some very early starts. These are usually because of the need to be on site at dawn, or shortly after, to take advantage of the early morning bird activity. On a number of days we will have packed breakfasts and lunches.

When we have had a particularly early start, we will try to have a break in the middle of the day, which is often a quiet period for birds anyway. On most days, apart from the days we do some owling, we will finish in good time to allow an hour or so for washing and changing before the checklist and evening meal. The tour is not a strenuous one, though there are some nice long walks, and anyone with a reasonable degree of fitness will be able to take part fully.

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HEALTH: It is essential that you contact your own doctor to obtain the latest information on the regions you are visiting. Please contact your doctor well in advance of your tour's departure as some medication must be initiated weeks before the period of possible exposure.

It is recommended that you are up-to-date on routine vaccinations, in particular it is further recommended that most travellers have protection against Hepatitis A & B, Typhoid and Yellow Fever. It might also be worth checking that you are adequately protected against tetanus. Rabies is present throughout Africa and normal precautions against being bitten or licked by animals should be employed. If you are over 60 years of age, and have never had a Yellow Fever inoculation, your doctor may advise you not to have one. Further information on Yellow Fever can be found here https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/247/zambia#Vaccine_recommendations

Malaria is endemic in Zambia and therefore a malaria preventative is essential. Further information on all aspects of malaria, including how to reduce your chances of being bitten, can be found at the website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/malaria/prevention>

Biting insects are only a local nuisance and in most places are absent or few. Insect repellent will provide adequate protection. Many brands use diethyltoluamide (DEET) which, while providing the best protection, can be corrosive and therefore require care when using. There are many 'natural' and less-harmful repellents available from various camping supply stores. The strong sunlight at times makes sun-glasses and a sun hat essential. Upset stomachs are a rare occurrence. Bottled or filtered water is provided throughout the tour.

Finally, please ensure you bring adequate supplies of all personal medication, as it may be impossible to obtain them during the tour.

For further information on health advice refer to the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad website www.masta-travel-health.com

ACCOMMODATION: Hotels and lodges will vary from adequate to very good. We will spend some time in smaller camps where facilities may be limited. Some lodging may not have mosquito nets so it is a good idea to bring along your own, just in case. Hotels in Lusaka and Livingstone are more 'standard' with typical amenities.

- **Mutanda Nature Lodge** consists of 8 rooms in total, which can be used as singles or doubles. The rooms have no-frills but are comfortable with queen-size beds and air conditioning. The toilets are ensuite, and the shower and sink both have hot and cold water.
- **Nsobe Game Camp** has 5 en-suite safari tents and 7 chalets serviced by a restaurant and bar. The tents contain twin or double beds with ensuite bathrooms.
- **Wina wa Nzambi**** The main house has 2 large en-suite bedrooms and central kitchen /dining / living room and a sunset deck. Rooms each have a king-size bed and a single/ bunk bed. 2 x large en-suite chalets with decks and outside kitchen. Chalets each have a double bed and a single.
- **Kalwelwe Lodge** consists of 5 double tents and 3 smaller 3m x 3m bow tents as singles. This is the most basic lodging and has a shared outdoor shower block (private stalls of course).
- **Mutinondo Wilderness** consists of a full catering lodge and chalets which are well-built, thatched buildings set on a rocky outcrop. The lodge has four chalets, a self-service bar and dining facilities. Limited solar lighting and WiFi is unavailable in the chalets. Each chalet has a solar and wood water heater.
- **Gwabi Lodge**** has chalets that are well furnished with comfortable beds and air conditioning. They are all ensuite with large walk-in showers.
- **Masuku Lodge**** has 6 attractive, no-frills thatched chalets, with twin or double beds, all ensuite facilities. Each chalet has a veranda.

** **Single rooms** may not be available at Wina wa Nzambi, Gwabi Lodge and Masuku Lodge depending on group size and make-up.

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LAUNDRY: Laundry service is available at some hotels where we will have a two-night stopover. There is usually a charge for this service. Note that if the weather is wet the laundry may not fully dry.

ELECTRICITY: 220V at 50Hz. Most sockets are the same three pin, square fittings as used in the UK. You may find the following website helpful: <http://www.power-plugs-sockets.com>.

Power in camps/lodges: Mutanda Nature Camp, Gwabi Lodge, Masuku Lodge, and Livingstone have electricity. Kafue River Camp has power as well as a backup generator. Except at Mutanda, there are power outlets in the rooms. At Mutinondo Wilderness, limited WiFi and solar power for recharging cameras etc are available in the office. At Kalwelwa Camp, Mwinilunga there is a small charging system that can charge phones and a camera battery in the dining area. In the tents there are only solar lamps but these might also be able to charge your phone/device. Please note, however, that power outages are common at the end of the dry season so if you have a battery backup for your phone or device, it is worth bringing it.

FOOD: This excellent, plentiful, and usually very European, although hot and spicy food is available at some centres.

Our tours are all-inclusive and no refunds can be issued for any tour meals participants choose to miss. While we will try to do all we can to accommodate the requirements of all participants, please note that we cannot guarantee all causes of food allergies can be avoided at every destination. Participants with significant food allergies or special dietary needs should bring appropriate foods with them for those times when their needs can, regrettably, not be accommodated. Our tours are carefully scheduled to ensure the best possible birding experience and although the leaders will do all they can to make sure the group eats at a reasonable time, sometimes early or late lunches and/or evening meals cannot be avoided. Any participants who need to eat at specific times may need to take supplemental food with them.

DRINKS: Bottled water and/or a soft drink, beer or wine is provided at lunch and dinner, as is coffee or tea. All other drinks or 'personal' drinking water for use in your room and during the day is the responsibility of the individual.

INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE ACCESS: WiFi is available in Lusaka, Gwabi River Lodge, Nsoke Game Camp, possibly Mutanda Nature Camp, Masuku Lodge and in Livingstone. It is typically very poor or non-existent elsewhere. There is no wireless at Mwinilunga (Wina or Kalwelwa). Check with your mobile phone provider regarding coverage while in Zambia.

CLOTHING: These need to be as comfortable as possible. Although we can expect generally warm to very hot weather, be prepared for rather cold temperatures early in the morning. Lightweight trousers or shorts, T-shirts or lightweight 'bush' shirts are recommended.

Light-weight jacket or fleece	Shorts
Sturdy footwear with good soles	Long and short-sleeved shirts
Quick-drying fabric trousers	Warm sweater
Light-weight rain-proof clothes	Sun hat
Rubber boots (optional, but helpful if muddy)	Sandals

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT: Please bring the following:

Notebook and pen	Alarm clock
Small rucksack/shoulder bag	Sun glasses and sunscreen
Headtorch with spare batteries [Essential]	Plastic bags (to keep dust off optics)
Insect repellent	Water bottle or canteen
Mosquito net (as some lodges may not have them)	Personal medication

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Optional: Telescope and tripod (recommended if you have them), spare binoculars and spare spectacles (in case of loss or damage), field guide.

LEADER'S EQUIPMENT: The leader will provide the following:

Telescope and tripod

Reference books and maps

Basic first-aid kit

Playback equipment

LUGGAGE: Our Final Information document, which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure, will give details about baggage weight and size restrictions imposed by the airline used for this tour.

If possible, please bring your luggage in soft-sided bags or cases (rather than large hard 'Samsonite'-type suitcases) as these pack more easily into our vehicles during the tour. Please note that on many tours there are no porters to carry your luggage so please ensure that **no bag is so heavy that you are unable to lift and carry it yourself**. As a general rule, in addition to using your luggage labels, it is a good idea to fix identification to the *inside* of each piece of luggage.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Photographic opportunities will be endless in the varied and diverse habitats we will be visiting. Zambia is extremely scenic and you will find a wide-angle lens useful for panoramic shots. The wildlife is fairly approachable and something like a 400 mm lens should help you to take some good photographs. Mammals are nowhere near as plentiful as in East Africa but we could encounter elephant and a variety of antelope and other grazing species.

Many of the roads will be dusty so it is advisable to keep camera equipment in dust proof bags. If you wish to 'digiscope' please ensure that you bring your own telescope.

Please note that if you are a serious photographer please bear in mind that this is first and foremost a birdwatching tour. Please do not allow your photographic desires to conflict with other participants' birdwatching activities.

It is very important that you do not take any photos of the local people unless you ask permission first. In some rural areas in particular, people object to their photo being taken.

TRANSPORT: Transportation will be 4 x 4 vehicles driven by the leaders. The leaders will arrange a seating rotation. Participants should be able to ride in any seat in tour vehicles.

SMOKING: Smoking and vaping is not allowed in the vehicles or when the group is gathered for meals, checklists etc. If you are sharing a room with a non-smoker, please do not smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, we ask that you do so well away and downwind from the group if possible.

INSURANCE: Insurance is essential and we insist that you take out suitable cover as soon as your tour is booked. If you are bringing expensive optical equipment or other valuable items, please make sure they are also adequately insured on your home contents policy, as most travel insurance policies do not cover very expensive individual items. You may wish to consult your insurance broker regarding coverage. Please also ensure that your policy covers you in the event of a medical emergency, cancellation of a trip or severe delays. Medical costs abroad can often be extremely expensive. Please note that Sunbird is not liable for any medical or repatriation costs resulting from injury or illness during a tour or for covering any costs resulting from a flight delay such as extra hotel accommodation.

If you wish, insurance can be arranged by Bullerwell Independent Insurance Brokers, 13 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY. Tel: 01234-866964. Please contact them for a quote and they will send the schedule directly to you.

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TIPPING: All tour-based tips are included in the tour price. These include tips to local guides, drivers, hotel porters, and waiters and waitresses when we have group meals together in restaurants. You only need to pay tips for personal services such as room service or drinks from the bar.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

There are many books on the birds and wildlife of Southern Africa. The following are just a few that we think will be useful.

Sinclair I, Ryan P. *Birds of Africa South of the Sahara: A Comprehensive Illustrated Field Guide*. ISBN 1868 728 579. Rather bulky but the only book to cover all the birds found on this tour. **Recommended.**

Other Guides:

Stuart, C. *Stuarts' Field Guide to Mammals of Southern Africa*. 2014. Penguin Random House South Africa. ISBN 1775841111. This excellent field guide covers the mammals of Southern Africa with the addition to Angola, Mozambique, and Zamiba. **Recommended.**

Tarbuton, W. *A Guide to the Dragonflies & Damselflies of South Africa*. 2015. ISBN: 978-1868727247. A recently revised guide covering the odonata of South Africa, many of which occur in Zambia.

Woodhall, S. *Field Guide to Butterflies of South Africa*. 2005. ISBN: 978-1775841845. Covers butterflies of South Africa, many of which occur in Zambia.

AFRICAN BIRD CLUB: Please support this charity which aims to raise money to support conservation projects, encourages an interest in the conservation of birds, and liaises with and promotes the work of existing societies within the region. You will find their contact details and further information about the Club at www.africanbirdclub.org

FINAL INFORMATION: Final information with instructions for meeting the group, hotel addresses etc., and your air tickets, will be sent to you about three weeks before the start of the tour. If you have any questions about any aspect of the tour, please contact us.