

MAGNIFICENT MOZAMBIQUE

Dec. 2 - 15, 2021

14 Days / 13 Nights

67,700 ZAR*

Single supplement 5450 ZAR

*Your choice of TWO Pre-tour
Extensions!*

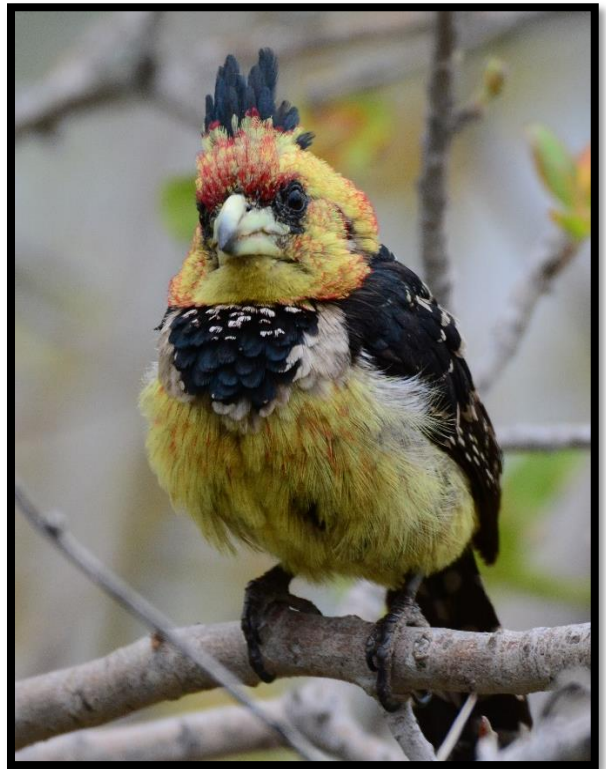
Nov. 28 – Dec. 2

Swaziland Extension 24,950 ZAR

Kruger Extension 24,950 ZAR

Single Supplement 2800 ZAR

Please note that the extensions occur at the same time. You cannot take both; you must choose one.



***Small group surcharge will apply for groups smaller than 6**

Mozambique, a country once ravaged by a 15-year civil war, is now fast on track to once again become a major draw card for tourists from all over the world. With investment pouring in due to the largest natural gas finds in Africa, coupled with reasonable and improving infrastructure and great natural beauty, Mozambique offers any visitor a mixture of comfort and adventure. What is of interest to us, however, is that Mozambique offers the visiting birder a bewildering array of species. It features the longest Indian Ocean coastline in Africa, complete with intertidal flats, floodplains, abundant lakes, natural pans and large river systems that attract thousands of waterbirds to the country annually. Coastal forests in the east and montane forests and grassland in the west provide habitat for birds such as the enigmatic African Pitta (in summer) and Blue Swallows that breed in the montane grasslands in the west, near the border with Zimbabwe. Vast tracts of Miombo woodland host most of the species to be expected from this unique habitat and endless white beaches will be explored for a plethora of shorebirds, including such tantalizing species as Crab Plover and Great Knot. Wetlands host the sought-after Eurasian Bittern, Great Snipe and Wattled Crane. Gorongosa National Park (once referred to as the Garden of Eden) is fast being re-established to its former glory as a top wildlife destination, the associated Gorongosa Mountain hosting such avian delights as Green-headed Oriole, Swynnerton's Robin and Black-fronted Bush-Shrike. Further north the extensive lowland forest around Inhamitanga serves as a vast breeding ground for Mangrove Kingfisher in summer, joined by such treasures as Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo and supported by a resident cast which include the likes of East Coast Akalat, White-chested Alethe and Livingstone's Flycatcher, to name but a few. There will be opportunities for snorkeling and even swimming with (or just viewing) the majestic Whale Sharks near the coastal village of Inhambane. Mammals are never neglected and, apart from at least four of the Big 5, we could also expect to see such unusual species as Tree Hyrax with its eerie calls that will reverberate through the camp at Mphingwe at night. Here, Bush Pigs can sometimes be spotted foraging amongst the chalets under the cover of darkness and Thick-tailed Galagos can be heard running over the tin roofs.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 00 – Day 0 – Nov 30 – Dec 1, 2021

You will need to depart the US a day or two early in order to arrive in Johannesburg on Dec 1 and then on to Maputo on Dec 2. Alternatively, you can arrange to fly from the US to Maputo with arrival on Dec 2.

Day 1 – Dec. 2

Arrive in Maputo from the US or Johannesburg. You will be met at the international airport by our guide. Once everyone has arrived, we'll waste no time in getting out of the city and heading north, where we should arrive at Honeypot Camp near the town of Xai-Xai in the afternoon. The grounds here support a whole host of the more common woodland species such as **African Goshawk**, **Yellow-breasted Apalis** and **Purple-banded Sunbird**.

O/N Honeypot Camp (LD), Driving Distance – 198km



African Goshawk

Day 2 – Dec. 3

Some early morning birding in the grounds before breakfast should yield a few more birds including the likes of **Pale Flycatcher** and **Scarlet-chested Sunbird**. An isolated population of **Red-throated Twinspot** occur here. We will spend some time scanning the extensive Limpopo Floodplains just before Xai-Xai for the likes of **Rosy-throated Longclaw** before heading further north. The drive to Inharrime (175 km) should leave us ample time to bird along the way. We might even venture off the beaten track a few times to find some good birds.

O/N Caju Afrique or similar, Inharrime (BLD), Driving Distance – 200km

Day 3 – Dec. 4

First thing in the morning we will head straight for the town of Panda, the only place in southern Africa where the very localized **Olive-headed Weaver** occurs. We will bird some of the Miombo woodland here, which is under constant logging pressure. Miombo birding is all about finding mixed flocks, and birding can be frantic once we find such a “bird party”. Birds often seen here include **White-breasted Cuckoo-Shrike**, **Southern Hyliota**, **Common Scimitarbill**, **Pale Batis** and **Red-faced Crombec**. Some of the side roads near Panda can also be very rewarding with trips in the past producing birds such as **Racket-tailed Roller**, **African Broadbill**, **Bat Hawk**, **Neergaard’s Sunbird** and **Crested Guineafowl**.

O/N Caju Afrique or similar, Inharrime (BLD), Driving Distance – Local driving for birding



Neergaard's Sunbird



Crested Guineafowl

Day 4 – Dec 5

Today we have a short drive allowing plenty of time for birding. Our destination is the town of Inhambane, but not before visiting a local wetland where we often find **Eurasian Bittern** and **Rufous-bellied Heron**. We'll be staying at one of the lodges situated perfectly on the beach at Ponta de Barra. This is a good spot for **Crab Plover** with flocks of up to 180 birds recorded, although numbers have dwindled recently. With some luck we might find some early migrant waders including the likes of **Greater** and **Lesser Sand Plovers**.

O/N Hotel Tofo Mar or similar, Tofo (BLD), Driving Distance – 120km

Day 5 – Dec 6

Today we have an optional activity of going out by boat to look for Whale Shark and for those brave enough even a swim with these gentle giants (extra fee estimated \$50 USD, snorkeling gear will be provided). For those not keen on this aquatic adventure, we have a full day to explore the general area and one of our first stops will be the Mangroves opposite Barra Lodge, here we will look for **Mangrove Kingfisher**, **Lemon-breasted Canary** and **African Hobby** and we might also encounter **Black-throated Wattle-Eye**. There are numerous small pans in the area which are a haven for various species of waterfowl. Back at the lodge we will look for the resident **Square-tailed Nightjars** at dusk.

O/N Hotel Tofo Mar or similar, Tofo (BLD), Driving Distance – Local driving for birding

Day 6 – Dec 7

Today we'll make a detour to find **Green Tinkerbird**, rediscovered in 2013, 55 years after the original and only southern African specimen was collected in 1958. Several other good birds occur in the area and we are likely to find **Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird**, **Gorgeous Bush-Shrike**, **Scaly-throated Honeyguide** and **Plain-backed Sunbird**. Our next stop will be the town of Vilanculos, here we will look for **Madagascar Bee-Eater** that are regularly recorded here. Further along the EN1 we'll reach a patch of Baobab trees where we will search for both **Bohm's-** and **Mottled Spinetails**. **Grey-headed Parrot's** and **Pied Mannikin** are also commonly seen here.

O/N Palmeira Lodge or similar, Vilanculos (BLD), Driving Distance – 360km

Day 7 – Dec 8

About 70 km of bad road lie ahead of us before reaching the Save River, with a quick stop at an excellent wetland about 12 km before the river. This idyllic spot often host **African Pygmy Goose**, **White-backed Duck** and **Lesser Jacana**. Once we cross the river, where we'll keep a lookout for **Mosque Swallows** overhead, we will be back on good tarmac. Depending on time we will make a quick detour into the Rio Save Game Reserve, birding here can be very rewarding with species such as **Arnott's Chat**, **Bennet's Woodpecker**, **Flappet Lark** and **Green-headed Eremomela**. From here we head for our camp inside the famous Gorongosa National Park, since access to Mt. Gorongosa is no longer possible we now opt to stay in the park.

O/N Chitengo Camp, Gorongosa NP (BLD), Driving Distance – 420km



Bennett's Woodpecker

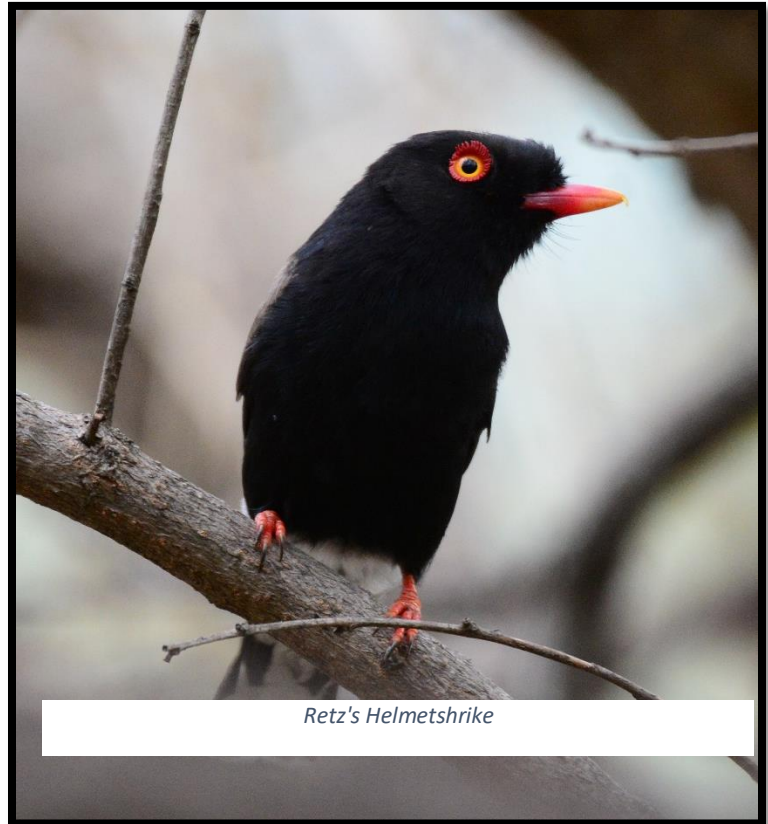
Day 8 – Dec 9

This morning we'll focus our attentions on the access road to the park where we can bird freely (restricted in the park due to the presence of dangerous animals), we hope to find the likes of **Racket-tailed Roller**, **Cabanis's Bunting** and many more. Closer to camp we'll make a concerted effort to find **Speckle-throated Woodpecker**, another special from this area.

O/N Chitengo Camp, Gorongosa NP (BLD), Driving Distance – Local Driving for birding

Day 9 – Dec 10

Today, we will take it easy and we will spend the day in Gorongosa National Park, hailed in its heyday as one of the top parks in all of Africa. At Chitengo Camp, we will look for the resident **Black-and-White (Vanga) Flycatchers** (now sadly very rarely recorded here) as well as **Collared Palm Thrush**. After some birding in the camp we head into the park proper, Lion and Elephant sightings have become more frequent as the animals make a comeback after years of poaching and civil war. The large wetlands will be our main focus for today and we can expect birds such as **Pink-backed Pelican**, **Woolly-necked Stork**, **Saddle-billed Stork**, **Grey-Crowned Crane** and **Long-toed Lapwing**. The surrounding woodlands should produce **Bronze-winged Courser**, **Lemon-breasted Canary** and **Retz's Helmet-Shrike**.
O/N Chitengo Camp, Gorongosa NP (BLD), Driving Distance – Local driving for birding



Retz's Helmetshrike

Day 10 – Dec 11

Shortly after breakfast we depart for Catapu, birding along the way. This road can be particularly rewarding for raptors, and we'll hope for sightings of **Dickinson's Kestrel**, **Cuckoo Hawk** and numerous larger Eagles, which are regular here.

We'll make a stop at the Zungue River Bridge where the rare **Basra Reed Warbler** is often recorded in late summer. We might be a bit early but there are usually several species of Weaver and even the likelihood of **Black Coucal** here. Mphingwe Camp is situated in beautiful woodland and birding around the camp always delivers something special.

O/N Mphingwe Camp, Caia (BLD), Driving Distance – 260km

Day 11 – Dec 12

We depart early and drive to Inhamatinga from where we will access Coutada 12. We should find amazing birds such as **Livingstone's Flycatcher**, **Speckle-throated Woodpecker**, **White-chested Alethe**, **East Coast Akalat** and we'll put in a concerted effort to find the elusive but spectacular **African Pitta**. Further along the road we will come across some areas of spectacular woodland, a good place to search for **Silvery-cheeked Hornbill**.

O/N Mphingwe Camp, Caia (BLD), Driving Distance – Local Driving for Birding

Day 12 – Dec 13

Depending on our success in the Coutadas the previous day we might head back there to clean up on birds we might have missed. We'll head back for lunch at the lodge and thereafter we will drive north to the town of Caia and then further along the mighty Zambezi River to the village of Sena where an isolated population of **Bohm's Bee-eater** was recently discovered, the first confirmed population of this species in southern Africa. Numerous wetlands along the way attract large numbers of waterfowl and birds such as **Lesser Moorhen**, **Black-winged Bishop**, **Rufous-winged Cisticola** and **Lesser Jacana** are very real possibilities.

O/N Mphingwe Camp, Caia (BLD), Driving Distance – Local Driving for birding

Day 13 – Dec 14

A bit of birding before breakfast sees us on our way to Beira, the second largest city in Mozambique. The Inhamatinga-Dondo road usually produces some spectacular birding and today should be no exception. Time permitting, we will stop

at Chinizua for lunch and bird the surrounding woodlands where we might find the rather elusive **Black-headed Apalis** as well as **Chestnut-fronted Helmet-Shrike**. Just before entering the main city center of Beira we will branch away and head to the Rio Savanne floodplain for a quick bit of birding. The floodplain is a good place for **Locust Finch**, **Blue Quail** and **Great Snipe**. Pockets of tall woodland are also productive and we might find **Red-throated Twinspot** here.
O/N Jardim das Velas or similar, Beira (BLD), Driving Distance – 280km (about 180km on dirt)

Day 14 – Dec 15

Early morning birding where **Grey Sunbird** is resident but hard to find, **Mangrove Kingfisher** puts in the occasional appearance and **Green-backed Woodpecker** has also been seen. After breakfast we will again bird the floodplains on the way to the airport where you will catch an afternoon flight back to Johannesburg to connect with your international flights home.

(BL), Driving Distance - Local

Price Includes:

- ~ Lodging
- ~ All meals as indicated
- ~ All land transportation within Mozambique
- ~ Airport transfers
- ~ Park fees
- ~ Bottled water throughout tour
- ~ Expert birding guide(s) at a ratio of no greater than 6:1
- ~ Services of Cheepers tour leaders
- ~ All activities not listed as optional
- ~ Pre-trip gift package, including customized checklist
- ~ Post-trip electronic version of final checklist

Price does NOT Include:

- ~ International airfare to Maputo and from Beira
- ~ Expenses of a personal nature such as laundry, phone calls, extra drinks and snacks, souvenirs, etc.
- ~ Tips
- ~ Optional activity snorkeling/swimming with whale sharks

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Deposit of \$750 with registration. Balance is due 4 months prior to start date of the tour.

Cancellation policy:

- Cancellation should 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

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.

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