

# Lochinvar National Park

## 16-19 October 2020



**Dates:** Friday 16 to Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October. You are welcome to join for 1, 2 or 3 nights.

Please contact us if you would prefer a longer itinerary, for instance tying in Choma or Kafue NP.

**Number of people:** Flexible.

**Package type:** Birds & Bush – we will spend all our time in the field, where the focus is on birding and exploring, with ample attention for all wildlife.

**Package and accommodation type:** Camping safari on self-driving and self-catering basis.

**Package price:** \$50 pppn.

This 2020 Special rate includes specialist guiding by Frank Willems and Leslie Reynolds and use of general camp setup (toilet & shower, kitchen and dining). Excluded are park fees (k135.50/k57 pppn for resident/citizen including camping the last time we visited, and k25.50 per vehicle per night)

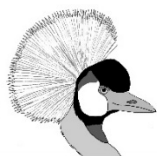
The following are optional: use of kitted tent (\$50 pppn), catering (\$50 pppn), transport (cost-covering charge, depending on number of people interested), drinks (on cash bar basis). Prior notice essential.

*This special applies to BirdWatch Zambia members only. Non-members pay an additional \$25 with which comes BWZ membership for 2020 and 2021. For each booking, a donation will be made to BirdWatch Zambia.*



## **Birding Zambia**

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## Introduction

Lochinvar is part of the Kafue Flats, a million hectares floodplains area, not far short of the size of the Okavango and Bangweulu. It can easily be argued to be Zambia's prime birding site. Against a background of stunning scenery dotted with the endemic Kafue Lechwe, it holds internationally important congregations of numerous waterbirds. Possibly most notable are the large populations of Grey Crowned and Wattled Crane and (seasonally) African Skimmer and Caspian Plover. It is the only site in Zambia where Black-tailed Godwit, Caspian Tern and Gull-billed Tern are present in numbers year-round while Slaty Egret and Greater Flamingo are regular. The many thousands of migrant waders and terns commonly include vagrants. The adjacent drier shrubs are excellent for warblers including seasonally Olive-tree Warbler (Zambia's only annual location?) while the drier plains hold breeding populations of Secretarybird, Denham's Bustard and (seasonally) large numbers of Yellow-throated Sandgrouse. Among numerous raptors are Montague's and Pallid Harrier (seasonal), Red-necked Falcon and all vultures (resident). Kafue Lechwe will be seen in good numbers, while Serval and Oribi are among other mammals of interest likely to be seen.

In early 2020, Lochinvar reinforced its status as Zambia's prime rarity spot producing Zambia's first Little Terns as well as Lesser Sand, Pacific Golden and Grey Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Cape Teals, Cape Shovelers (suspected to now breed), Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-winged Pratincole and Red-rumped Swallow, among others.

October is prime wader month in Zambia. We expect to see many Palearctic waders having returned from their Arctic breeding grounds, in great numbers and diversity, including Marsh and Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint and Ringed Plover. Still present are dry-season migrants such as Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, Temminck's Courser and Capped Wheatear, migrating within tropical Africa in 'opposite order' compared to most other migrants, as well as non-breeding visitors from Southern Africa including White-throated and Pearl-breasted Swallow.

We're keeping our fingers crossed for rarities, which in October may include a long list of waders and other Palearctic migrants, as well as African wanderers such as Chestnut-banded Plover, Lesser Flamingo, Cape Vulture or Greater Kestrel. And we are still really hoping to see some 'Cape Shovelings' which would provide ultimate confirmation of the species now breeding here.



Birding Zambia and partners are proud to be the only operators offering packages to Lochinvar. We will pick a camping site next to the shore of Chunga Lagoon, which forms the prime birding area. Exact locality depends on water levels and hence birding concentrations.

Fanatic birders will easily enjoy more than 3 nights to explore the area. Alternatively, consider combining it with a visit to the Choma and Livingstone areas, Kafue N.P. or the Zambezi Valley, all of which Birding Zambia can facilitate.

### Itinerary

16 October: Drive from Lusaka or Livingstone. It takes roughly 5 hours from either starting point to the camp site on Chunga Lagoon. See below for directions.

17 and 18 October: full days in Lochinvar. We will let the program depend on where the birds are (strongly dominated by water levels). Presumably focus on adjacent areas of Chunga Lagoon in the morning. Afternoon drive into the plains to the northeast or west.

19 October: Early morning exploration of the southern parts of the park, which hold the Gwimbi and Banda Hotsprings (good for plains species like Secretarybird and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse), Big Baobab and Drumming Rocks. Continue to Lusaka/Livingstone from here.

### Boating the Kafue

We are considering bringing out a boat to explore the Chunga Lagoon and possibly boat to the Kafue Bridge. Please let us know if you are keen on this.



## Directions & Map

A Google Map search for 'Chunga Rest Camp' will produce the correct route.

- Turn off the T1 onto the tarred D365 directly north of Monze, where a sign for Lochinvar NP is present.
- The turn after 24.3 km is clearly signposted, though shade of a tree may cause it to be overlooked; if you get to the end of the tarmac, you have gone too far.
- After 13 km on dirt, you reach the gate for the park which cannot be missed.
- Keep right after 4 km (straight quickly brings you to the old Lochinvar House and scout houses)
- Once in the plains, ignore the well-used right turn to the gypsum mine.
- Exact locality of the chosen camp site varies but will be along the lake shore within 2 km south of the indicated Chunga Rest Camp (now a scout camp).

