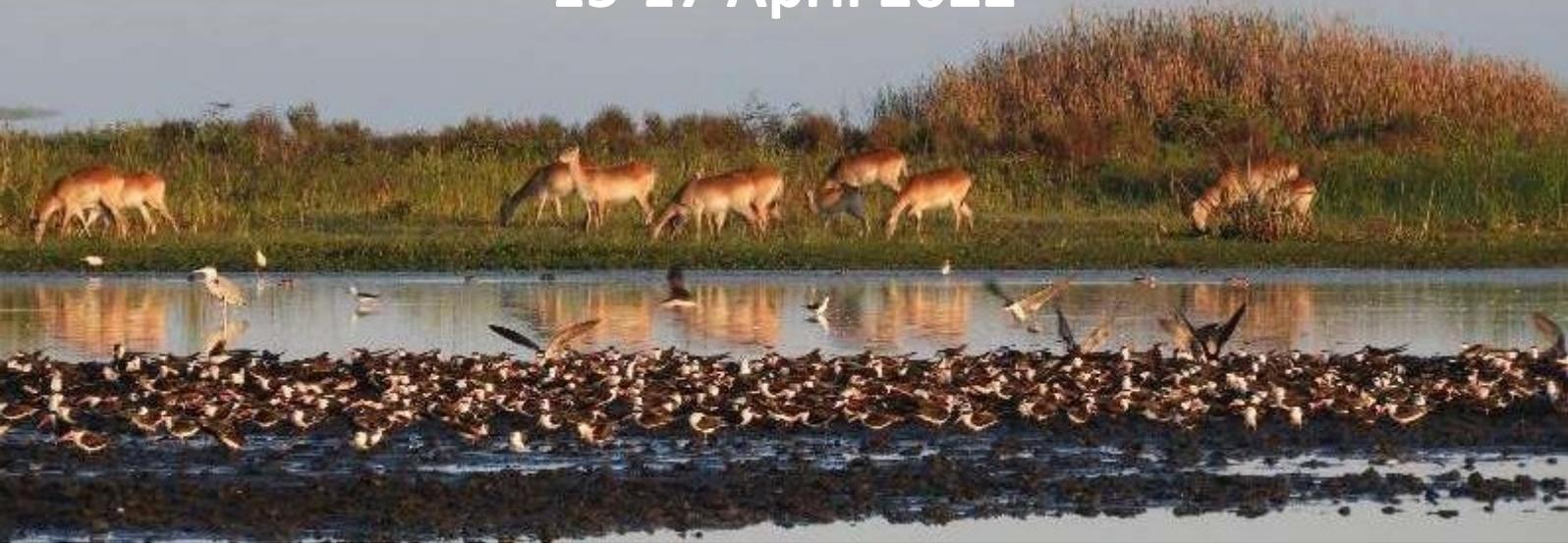


Lochinvar National Park

15-17 April 2022



Dates: Friday 15 to Sunday 17 April 2022. You are welcome to join for 1 or 2 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 includes specialist guiding by Frank Willems and use of general camp setup (toilet & shower and dining area). 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 2022/2023.

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 a remarkable diversity in waterbirds, many of which in internationally important congregations. 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 Montagu'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 2020-2021, Lochinvar reinforced its status as Zambia's prime rarity spot producing Zambia's first Little Terns (with 1-3 individuals seen during visits in 2020 and 2021) as well as Lesser Sand, Pacific Golden and Grey Plover, Pectoral and Terek Sandpiper, Curlew, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Cape Teals, Cape Shoveler (suspected to have bred), Baillon's Crake, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-winged Pratincole and Red-rumped Swallow, among others.

April is transition period between the wet and dry seasons. Migrant waders from the (sub)arctic region are still present in numbers, many in stunning breeding plumage, while dry-season migrants like Yellow-throated Sandgrouse have started arriving. The plains should be dry enough to explore extensively along the Chunga Lagoon and further afield.



Birding Zambia is proud to be the only operator 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. In case of very high Kafue River water levels, we may opt for the Bwanda Hotsprings area instead. Exact location will be communicated in good time.

Fanatic birders will easily enjoy more than 2 nights to explore the area. Alternatively, consider combining it with a visit to the Choma or Livingstone areas, Kafue N.P. or the Zambezi Valley, all of which Birding Zambia can facilitate.

Itinerary

Details may vary according to water levels.

15 April 2022: 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.

16 April: Full day 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.

17 April: Early morning exploration of the southern parts of the park, which hold the Gwimbi and Bwanda Hotsprings. Especially Bwanda is a great area for plains species like Secretarybird and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse and may hold large concentrations of cranes. Continue to Lusaka/Livingstone from here.



Directions & Map

A Google Map search for 'Chunga Rest Camp' will produce the correct route, apart from the turnoff from the T1 when coming from Kafue side – better continue on the T1 for another 13 km.

- 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)
- Keep going on the track past the gypsum mine, until you see the tall Acacia trees of the Chunga Rest Camp (now a scout camp). Take a sharp left onto the lakeshore track just before the camp.
- Exact locality of the camp site we choose varies with water levels hence bird concentrations, but normally is along the lake shore within 2 km south of Chunga Rest Camp. We will communicate the location once we scout it out prior to your arrival.

