

Liuwa Plain National Park

15 – 22 November 2026



Dates:

- ✓ From Lusaka: Sunday 15th – Sunday 22nd November 2026 (8 days / 7 nights)
- ✓ Only Liuwa Plain (self-drive): Monday 16th – Saturday 21st November 2026 (6 days / 5 nights)

Guides: One or two of our expert birding guides (Frank Willems, Wouter van Spijker and Leslie Reynolds)

Number of people: Minimum 4, maximum 12

Package type: Birds & Wildlife guided safari: *the tour is a balanced mix of birding and wildlife watching, in an area with abundant megafauna and other wildlife.*

Accommodation type: Lodging TBC. Camping option available.



BIRDING ZAMBIA

Introduction

Mid November is the prime time to visit Liuwa Plain National Park in Zambia's Western Province. The early rains have turned the vast sandy plains in a flower-rich carpet of shades of green, red and pink. It is perfectly timed to see the huge herds of wildebeest, for which this is calving season, and other large mammals. Among huge bird numbers that congregate in early November is almost the global population of Black-winged Pratincole.



Liuwa Plain National Park (366,000 ha) is bound to become one of Africa's best-known parks. The photogenic open grasslands, dotted with pans and filled with large mammals and birds, are simply spectacular. Since African Parks took on the management of the park in 2004, visitor numbers are steadily growing. The Wildebeest number over 50,000 by now, rapidly recovering from decades of neglect, representing the 2nd largest Wildebeest migration in Africa. Large herds congregate in the central plains in November. Zebra numbers in the thousands as well, while Buffalo, Red Lechwe and Tsessebe are among large mammals seen in variable numbers. Oribi and Steinbuck are amazingly common.

All Zambian large predators are present in the area, following the wildebeests in their tracks. Spotted Hyena is very common throughout the system, with a population in the hundreds. Lion, Wild Dog and Cheetah reside in the plains in growing numbers and are regularly encountered. Among the many smaller carnivores, Selous's Mongoose and Zorilla are often seen, while also Meller's Mongoose, African Wild Cat and Striped Weasel are possibilities.



The area is among the most important in the world for Wattled and Grey Crowned Crane which are commonly seen in small and large groups. Pelicans and various duck species might occur in large numbers.

A little-known wildlife spectacle is the vast numbers of the rare Black-winged Pratincole. Almost the whole world population, some 150-200,000 birds, stage in the area in October – November. It is likely we will see clouds of many thousands forming mesmerizing murmurations in the sky.

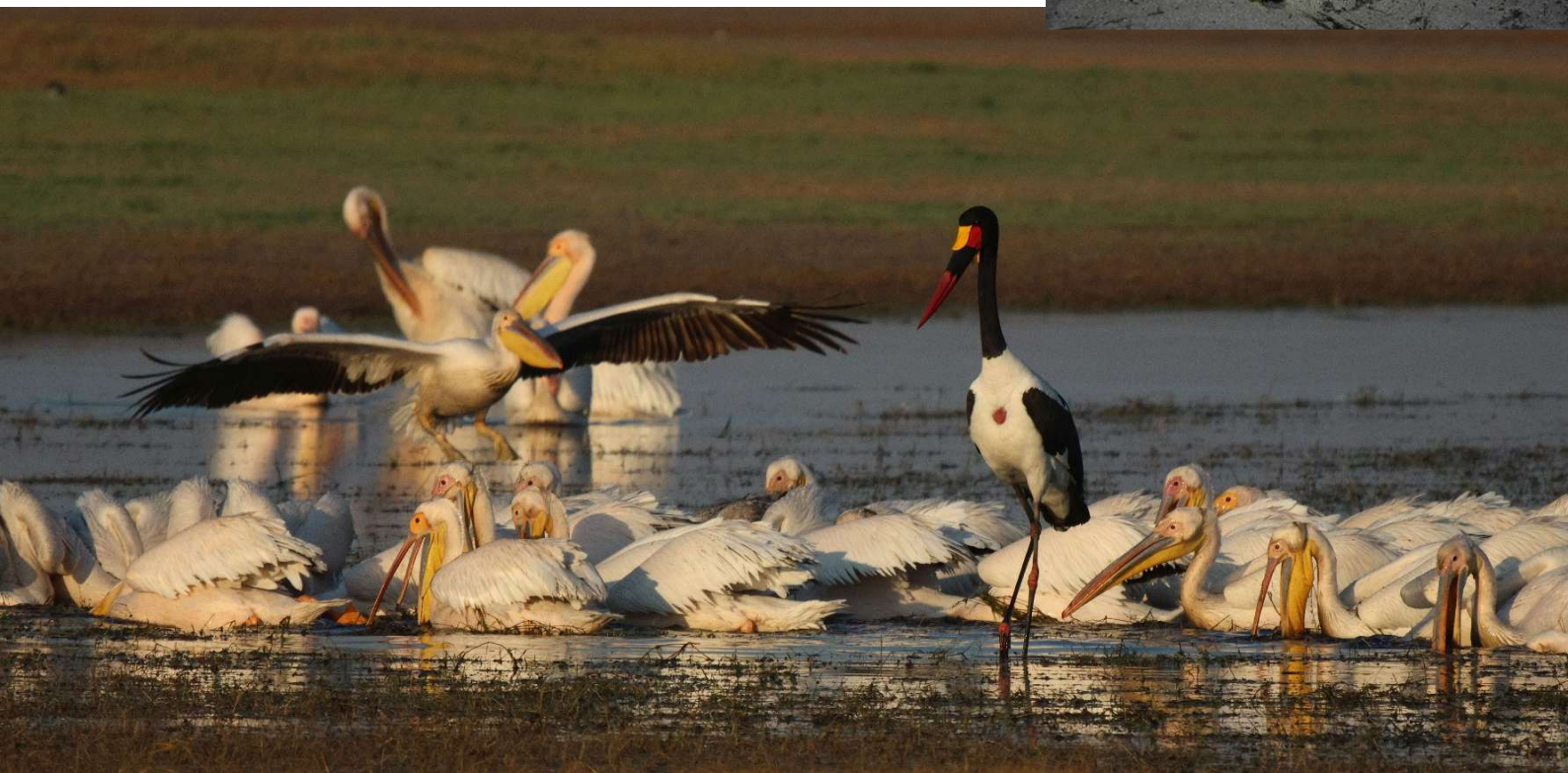


Of global importance are also the numbers of migratory Caspian Plover, which is abundant in November. Other characteristic waders include Pied Avocet and a range of migrant waders, including regularly scarce species like Curlew or Black-tailed Godwit. The attractive White-bellied Bustard is among several bustard species and is commonly seen. Raptors are everywhere including the characteristic Secretarybird (largest population in Zambia) and Greater Kestrel. We expect to see excellent numbers of White-backed, Lappet-faced, Hooded and White-headed Vultures, together with other scavengers like Bateleur and Tawny Eagle and with luck Palm-nut Vulture. Red-footed Falcon and Amur Falcon both occur, as do Pallid and Montague's Harrier. We may get lucky finding Red-necked Buzzard, a species only recorded three times in Zambia to date, with all records coming from Liuwa Plain.



Several races of passerines are endemic to the area, notably the local forms of Clapper and Pink-billed Larks. These occur alongside other characteristic larks including Grey-backed Sparrow-lark and Fawn-coloured Lark, both of which are uncommon elsewhere in Zambia. Swamp and Rufous-cheeked Nightjar are of interest. Flamboyant Long-tailed Widows display above wetter sections of the grasslands where also Rosy-throated Longclaws and Desert Cisticolas breed. Blue-cheeked and Blue-breasted Bee-eater further add colour.

The timing is excellent also to come across some of Liuwa's fascinating amphibians and reptiles, such as the endemic, recently described Bullfrog species and Anchieta's Cobra.



Detailed program

The itinerary starts and ends in Lusaka, with vehicle transfer to and from Liuwa. You are also welcome to join on a self-drive basis for the days in Liuwa only.

Day 1: Sunday 15th November 2026

Pickup from Lusaka and transfer by road to Mongu (9hr). We will pass through Kafue National Park where we will have a bite and a cup of coffee while enjoying the birds and mammals.



Day 2: Monday 16th November 2026

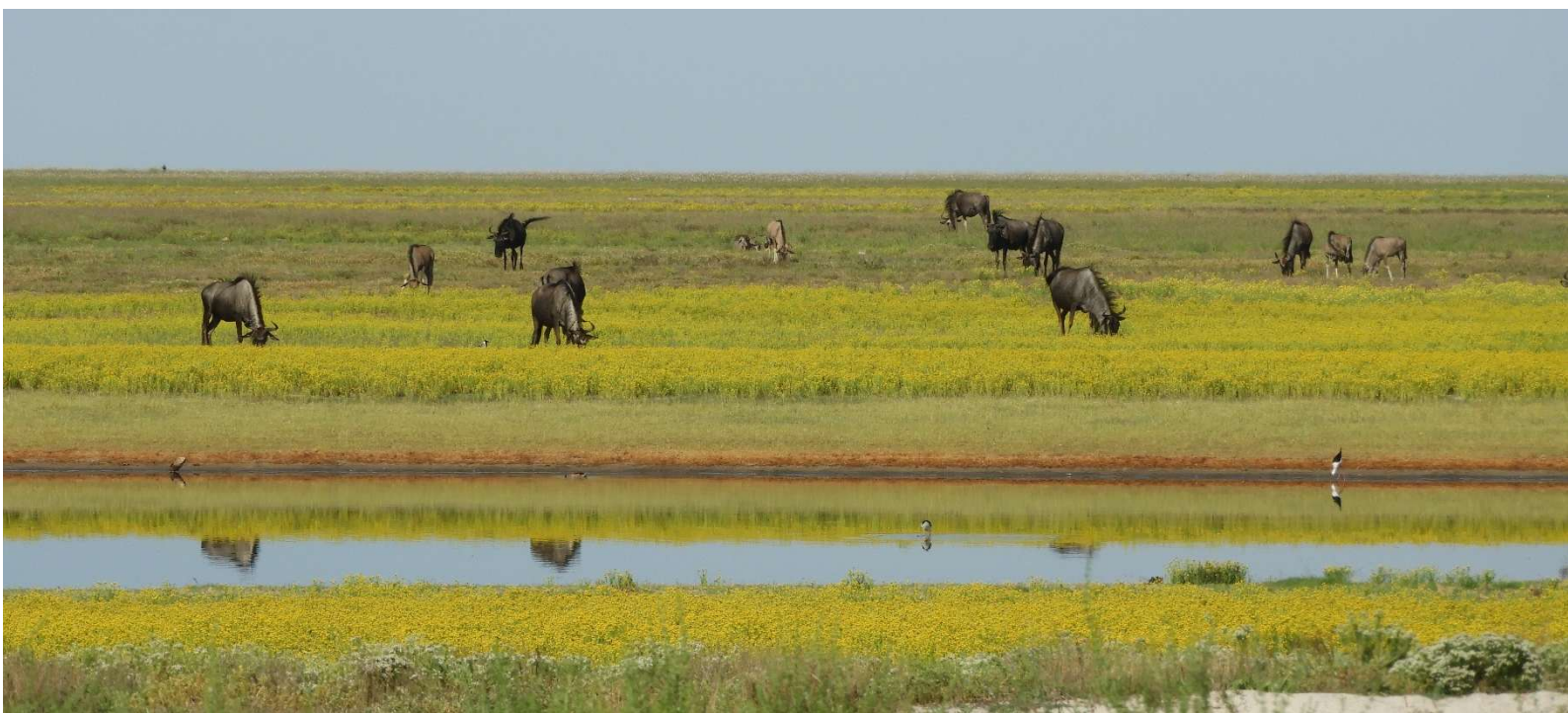
Early morning transfer to the Liuwa Plain National Park. The route goes through the vast Barotse Floodplains. This floodplain complex is among the biggest such systems in the world, covering thousands of square kilometres. Internationally important waterbird concentrations occur here, with Openbill Stork, African Skimmer and many herons occurring in large numbers. Lesser Black-backed Gull surprisingly occurs year-round and may be seen from the main bridge with luck. It is also here that the famous Kuomboka Ceremony takes place.

Self-drivers will join us at the gate of Liuwa Plain National Park.

Via the recently constructed bridges over the Zambezi and the Luanginga, we will enter the Liuwa system. It is a pleasant 1-2 hour drive to our base for the coming days, Katoyana Camp. This comfortable camp has 4 spacious luxury tented units plus space for additional tents. (TBC)

Day 3 - 6: Tuesday 17th – Friday 20th November 2026

We will have four full days to fully explore the Liuwa Plain National Park. Sibika is strategically located on the edge of the central plains where the vast wildebeest and zebra herds tend to congregate at this time of year, followed in their footsteps by the large carnivores, vultures and





other scavengers. We will explore the vast plains, the many pools and the Matamanene Stream system in search of birds, mammals and other wildlife. We will return each day to the camp to enjoy the top cuisine prepared by our team and a campfire under the stars.

Day 7: Saturday 21st November 2026

Early start, enjoying the southern section of the Liuwa Plain and Barotse Floodplains on our way out.

Self-drivers will go their own way from here. Participants with the full packages, will drive to Kaoma for the night, a drive of some 4 hours from Kalabo.

Day 8: Sunday 22nd November

Return to Lusaka. The airport is a 6-hour drive from Kaoma.



Package price

(*) African Park is planning to rebuild Sibika Camp, which was destroyed in a fire. At the moment we don't know yet if the camp will be ready in time, and what the new rates will be. The current package prices are based on a stay in this camp. We will confirm / adjust as soon as we know more.

8-day package, fully inclusive including transport from/to Lusaka. Accommodation at Sibika Tented Camp (*)

Zambian / African citizens / residents	\$3,199
International	\$3,999
Single supplement 25%	

6-day package, self-drive. Accommodation at Sibika Tented Camp (*)

Zambian / African citizens / residents	\$2,049
International	\$2,559
Single supplement 25%	

6-day package, self-drive & camping with own gear at Sibika Camp (*)

Zambian / African citizens / residents	\$1,699
International	\$2,124
No single supplement	

Included are all guiding services, catering, tea & coffee, accommodation. Excluded are park fees (per person per night \$40 international / \$20 African resident / K30 Zambian citizen, \$15 / \$7 for international/local vehicle), drinks and items of a personal nature. The rate applies to BirdWatch Zambia members only. Non-members pay an additional \$25 with which comes BWZ membership for 2025 and 2026. For each booking, donations will be made to BirdWatch Zambia and the Mwinilunga Conservation Project.

Please enquire about our back-to-back pre-tour to Kasanka NP and the Pitta / endemics extension tour.

