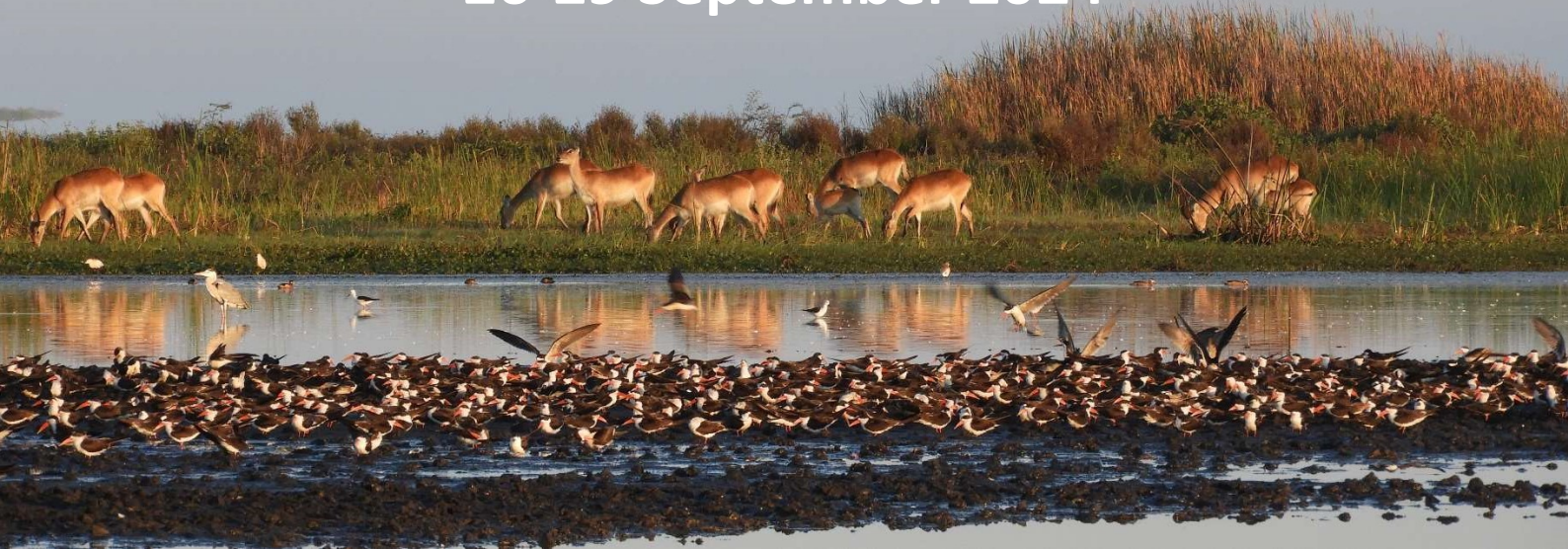


Lochinvar National Park

26-29 September 2024



Dates: Thursday 26 to Sunday 29 September 2024. You are welcome to join for the full 3 nights, or for only 1 or 2 nights

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

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*

Accommodation type: Mobile lodging (3-star). Optional on self-driving and self-catering basis



BIRDING ZAMBIA

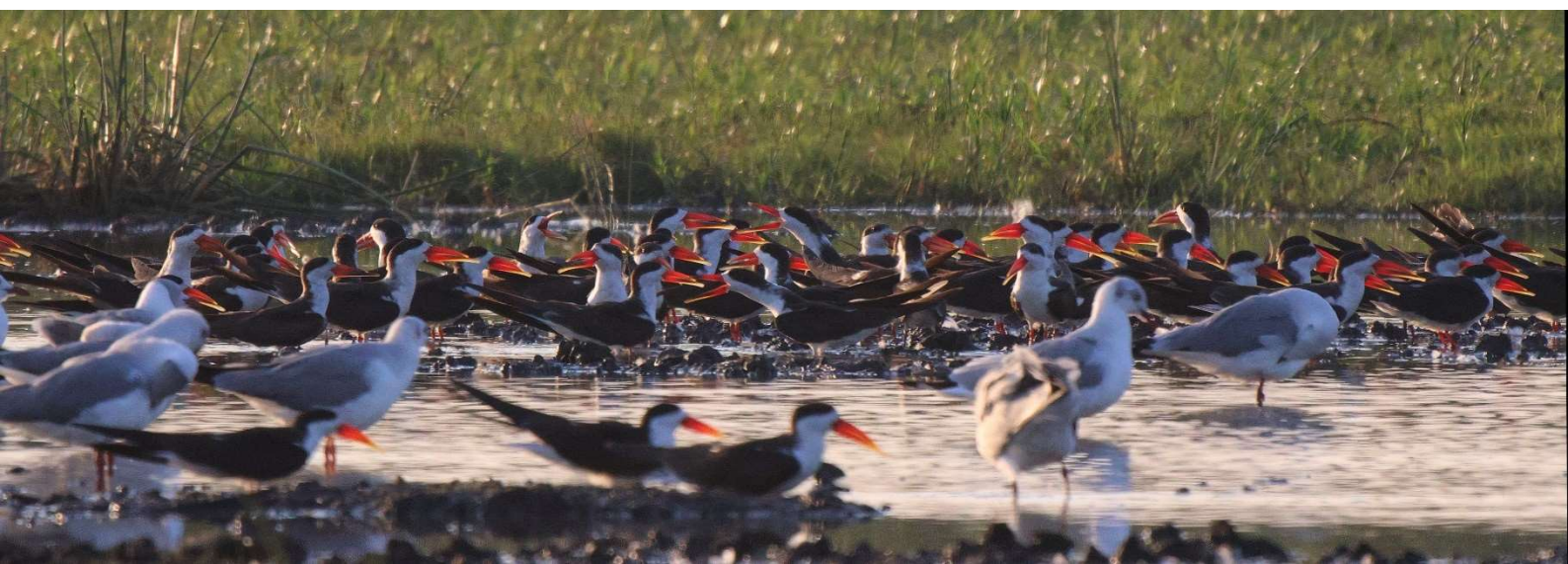
Introduction

Lochinvar is part of the Kafue Flats, a million hectares floodplains area, not far short of the size of the Okavango Delta and Bangweulu Wetlands. It can 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. Most notable are the large populations of Grey Crowned and Wattled Crane and (seasonally) African Skimmer and Caspian Plover. Slaty Egret occurs in good numbers and presumably breeds. It is the only site in Zambia where Black-tailed Godwit, Caspian Tern and Gull-billed Tern are present in numbers while Greater Flamingo is 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 known reliable 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 which may be seen.

Since 2020, Lochinvar has reinforced its status as Zambia's prime rarity spot producing Zambia's first Little Terns (with 1-3 individuals seen during most summer visits in 2020-2024) as well as for instance Lesser Sand, Pacific Golden and Grey Plover, Pectoral and Terek Sandpiper, Curlew, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Cape Teal, Cape Shoveler (suspected to have bred), Baillon's Crake, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-winged Pratincole and Red-rumped Swallow.

Mid-September is prime season for waders. A similarly timed visit in 2021 yielded a wealth of interesting waders species and large numbers of plains species such as Yellow-throated Sandgrouse. Access tends to be straight-forward this time of year and visibility of waterbirds optimal in the short shoreline vegetation.

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, probably not far from Melindi Tree, which forms the prime birding area. Exact locality depends on water levels and hence birding concentrations.



Itinerary

Details may vary according to water levels.

Day 1: Thursday

It takes roughly 5 hours from either Lusaka or Livingstone to the camp site at Chunga Lagoon. See below for directions. Along the way, we might try to find the endemic Chaplin's Barbet.

For self-drive participants: you are welcome to arrive from Thursday 14:00 onwards.

Day 2 and 3: Friday and Saturday

We will focus on the shores of the Chunga Lagoon during the mornings. This is where most waders and other waterbirds concentrate. The sections along the southern parts are generally most productive, with concentrations depending on water levels.

In the afternoons, we might venture further afield into the plains to the northeast, which is a mixture of dry and wet floodplains holding great wader numbers as well as cranes, bustards and Marsh Owl, and the Gwisho and Bwanda Hotspots area which often is a prime site for cranes, Secretarybird and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse.

Day 4: Sunday

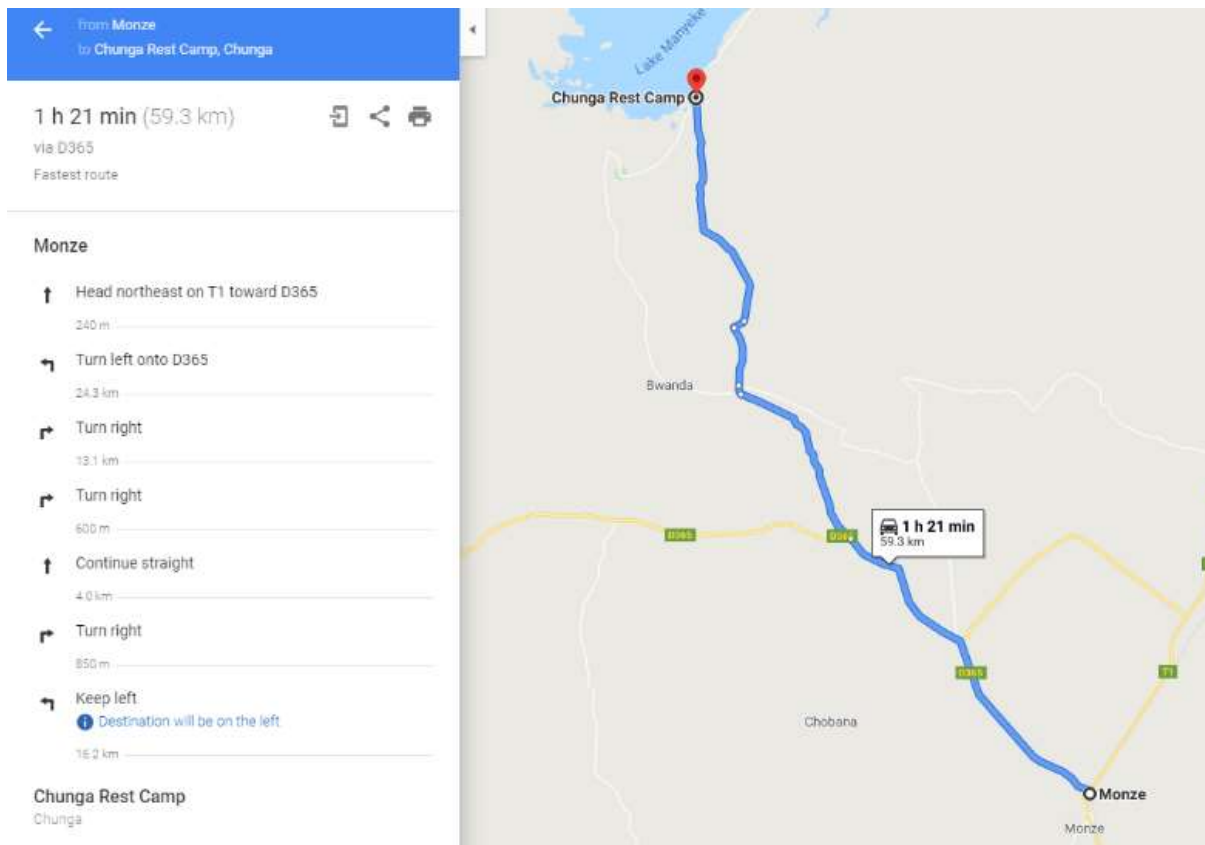
Morning in Lochinvar National Park. Departure before noon, aiming to reach Lusaka by late afternoon.



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 (going straight quickly brings you to the old Lochinvar House and scout houses; turn around)
- Keep going on the track passing the gypsum mine. We will probably camp near Melindi Tree, for which take a left at -15.889155, 27.23689.
- Exact locality of the camp site we choose varies with water levels hence bird concentrations. We will communicate the location once we scout it out prior to your arrival.



Package price

All-inclusive, 4-day package:

\$950 International rate

\$760 African residents

This includes transport from and to Lusaka, expert guiding, accommodation and catering. Excluded are park fees (k25/\$7/10 per day for resident/international) and bar.

Self-drive options:

\$75 per person per night with own camping kit, self-catering

\$40 per person per night for accommodation (tented unit)

\$60 per person per night high-quality catering

This includes expert guiding and use of general camp setup (toilet & shower, kitchen and dining). Excluded are park fees (k25/\$7/10 per day for resident/international) and bar.

This special 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 our Mwinilunga Conservation Initiative

