

Reach Africa Birding and Getaways



Email:
birding@reachafrica.co.za

Tel: 011-4757436
Cell: 0825772102

P.O Box 409
Allens Nek
1737
Roodepoort, South Africa

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AFRICAN PITTA ADVENTURE

15 DAY TRIP: 2 to 16 December 2012

The main target of our trip, the African Pitta, is surely the most beautifully coloured of all the birds in our region—those lustrous blue patches on the wing and the rump, the deep red belly, green back, golden-buff chest, pink throat, black tail and a boldly striped black and yellow head.



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In Mozambique, our trip focuses on the region north of Beira and towards the Zambezi River.

The Pitta is by no means the only attraction of this part of the world. This area boasts all the Mozambique “specials”, with the exception of the Olive-headed Weaver. These “specials” include the following birds which, within southern Africa, are found exclusively in Mozambique: Green-headed Oriole, White-chested Alethe, East Coast Akalat, Yellow-bellied Hyliota and Speckle-throated Woodpecker.

Wetland areas hold out the prospect of finding Blue Quail, Great Snipe and Eurasian Bittern

A summer trip to the area often yields exceptional cuckoo sightings. Our trip in December 2009 produced, besides the usual suspects, Thick-billed, Barred Long-tailed and Lesser Cuckoo.

Three nights of our trip are spent in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe, en route from Mozambique. We will be based in the Bvumba highlands where birding is excellent and where we are sure to add some of the Zimbabwe specials to our list.

THE DESTINATIONS

Rio Savane resort lies at the mouth of the mangrove lined Savane River, some 30km north of Beira. The surrounding area consists of extensive marshland and remnant patches of coastal forest.

Gorongosa Mountain is an isolated mountain peak of 1863m in central Mozambique. It is sacred in local tradition and the only site in southern Africa to see the Green-headed Oriole. Habitats include lowland woodland with riverine thickets at the base, cliffs, scrubby slopes and montane forests higher up, with montane grassland at the peak. Footpaths lead from the base to the forests on the slopes and birding is rewarding all the way.



From our base at **Catapu**, situated 32km south of the Zambezi River we explore the Zambezi River area. This area includes extensive pristine coastal forest, mixed woodland, miombo woodland, pans and swamps. Good roads traverse the area and access all the main habitats.

The Bvumba highlands lie approximately 25km above the city of Mutare and offer exciting and varied birding opportunities. Habitats within this area are varied and include montane grassland, montane forest, miombo woodland and exotic plantations.



BIRDING ATTRACTIONS

Rio Savane

Eurasian Bittern, Great Snipe, Blue Quail, Mangrove Kingfisher, Collared Pratincole, Greater Sand Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Short-tailed Pipit, Locustfinch, Tiny Greenbul, Copper Sunbird, Green Malkoha, Magpie Mannikin, Rufous-winged Cisticola, Square-tailed Nightjar.

Gorongosa Mountain and Gorongosa area:

Green-headed Oriole, Anchieta's Tchagra, Livingstone's Turaco, Blue-spotted Wood-Dove, Pallid Honeyguide, Stripe-cheeked Greenbul, Lesser Seedcracker, Broad-tailed Warbler, Moustached Grass-Warbler, Black-winged Bishop
 Grey-headed Parrot, Arnot's Chat, Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Speckle-throated Woodpecker, Thick-billed Cuckoo, Pennant-winged Nightjar, Racket-tailed Roller,

Zambezi Delta area (Catapu)

African Pitta, Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo, Thick-billed Cuckoo, Southern Banded Snake-Eagle, Pennant-winged Nightjar, Livingstone's Turaco, Speckle-throated Woodpecker, Green-backed Woodpecker, White-chested Alethe, East Coast Akalat, Black-headed Apalis, Red-winged Warbler, Black-and-white Flycatcher, Pale Batis, Livingstone's Flycatcher, Chestnut-fronted Helmet-Shrike, Plain-backed Sunbird, Tiny Greenbul, Yellow-bellied Hyliota, Dickinson's Kestrel, Grey-headed Parrot,

Vumba (Seldomseen, Vumba Botanical Gardens, Cecil Kop NR, Mutare)

Eleonora's Falcon, Tree Pipit, Collared Flycatcher, Garden Warbler, Swynnerton's Robin, Orange Ground-Thrush, White-tailed Crested Flycatcher, Red-faced Crimsonwing, Chirinda Apalis, Roberts's Warbler, Black-fronted Bush-Shrike, Stripe-cheeked Greenbul, Bronzy Sunbird, , Variable Sunbird, Miombo Double-collared Sunbird, Eastern Saw-wing, Mottled Swift, Yellow-bellied Waxbill, Cinnamon-breasted Tit, Orange-winged Pytilia, Miombo Tit, Cabanis's Bunting, Whyte's Barbet, Spotted Creeper, Southern Hyliota, Miombo Rock-Thrush..