



**SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE BIRDING TOUR –
OLIVE-HEADED WEAVER, GREEN TINKERBIRD & CRAB-
PLOVER!**

Date TBA



*The highly prized **Crab-plover** is a major target on this tour!*

This is a special pre-tour, specifically set up to facilitate easy and safe travel during the Covid-19 pandemic, and will be run prior to our main **Mozambique – African Pitta Tour**, with which it can be easily combined.

This tour takes place throughout the southern half of Mozambique, and targets incredibly localized and rare species such as **Olive-headed Weaver** and **Green Tinkerbird** (although both of these targets will require some degree of luck, as they have become difficult in recent years) and one of the most sought-after birds in the world, the monotypic **Crab-plover**. Additionally, this is an excellent birding tour all round, with a wide array of habitats explored and a large number of birds possible. Further exciting birds such as **Saunders's Tern**, **Racket-tailed Roller**, **Neergaard's Sunbird**, **Rudd's Apalis**, **Gorgeous Bushshrike** and **Lemon-breasted Canary** are all likely!

Beginning in Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique, this tour gradually works its way northwards up the Mozambique coastline, eventually ending in Beira, where the main tour begins.



Rudd's Apalis is one of the many localized species we'll be searching for.

Itinerary (10 days/9 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Maputo, Mozambique and birding Macaneta

Today your international flight arrives into Maputo. Following your arrival, we will depart to our comfortable lodge, just north of the city, on the vast tidal wetland and coastal grasslands of the Macaneta Peninsula.

Depending on your exact arrival time, there may be some time available for us to explore some of the nearby areas. A wide array of birds, especially waterbirds can be found here and the trip will get off to a flying start with a large number of species easily possible here. In particular, we'll be looking out for species such as **Collared Pratincole**, **Pink-backed Pelican**, **Pale-crowned Cisticola**, **Southern Brown-throated Weaver** and **Rosy-throated Longclaw**.

Overnight: Macaneta

Days 2 – 3. Transfer to Inharrime and birding Panda woodlands

We will have some time on the morning of Day 2 to further bird and explore the vast wetlands and floodplains around Macaneta, to continue searching for some of the species mentioned under Day 1 above, along with many others. Macaneta is a birdy area, and we will accumulate a long bird list. Following our morning birding the area, we will begin the transfer further up the coast to the Inharrime area. Here we will be based for two nights as we explore the rich miombo woodlands around the small village of Panda.

These woodlands are quite simply legendary, as they are the only site within the southern African subregion where the rare and difficult-to-find **Olive-headed Weaver** occurs. This will be our primary target, but these woodlands are brimming with birds, and we will also search for other sought-after species as **Racket-tailed Roller**, **Green-backed Honeybird**, **Neergaard's Sunbird**, **Thick-billed Cuckoo**, **Pale Batis**, **White-breasted Cuckooshrike**, **Lemon-breasted Canary** and more. We will explore seasonally flooded wetlands (depending on water levels) in the area which host exciting species such as **Eurasian Bittern**, **Rufous-bellied Heron**, **Lesser Jacana**, **African Pygmy Goose** and more.

Overnight: Inharrime



Within southern Africa, Olive-headed Weaver only occurs around Panda.

Days 4 – 5. Transfer to Morrungulo and birding Unguane

We will have a final chance on the morning of Day 4 to bird and explore the Panda area, searching for any of the exciting species we may not yet have found (mentioned under Days 2 – 3 above), before continuing further north to the coastal resort of Morrungulo. Here we will base ourselves for two nights, as we explore the Unguane woodland.

Like the Panda woodlands, we would have just come from, the woodlands around Unguane are also legendary, as they are the only site of the recently rediscovered (only in 2013) local population of **Green Tinkerbird**. This is a poorly known and patchily distributed species along Africa's east coast, that is nowhere common, and will be the main quarry for our birding in the area. Unfortunately, this species has become difficult to find in recent years, and we'll need some luck to come across it. An entirely different array of species can be found here, as the dense thickets support a different suite of birdlife. Species we're likely to come across while searching for the tinkerbird include **Gorgeous Bushshrike**, **Livingstone's Flycatcher**, **Rudd's Apalis**, **Red-throated Twinspot** and **Plain-backed Sunbird**. Overhead, we're sure to come across **Mottled** and **Böhm's Spinetails** while the coastal forest around the Morrungulo resort usually provides **Black-throated Wattle-eye**.

Overnight: Morrungulo Resort



Green Tinkerbird was only rediscovered in southern Africa in 2013!

Days 6 – 7. Transfer to Vilankulos and birding the Sao Sebastien Peninsula

We will have a final chance on the morning of Day 6 to visit the woodlands around Unguane should we still be searching for **Green Tinkerbird**, or any of the other possibilities (mentioned above under Days 4 – 5). We will proceed further up the coast a short distance to the coastal town

of Vilankulos, where we will embark on an exciting boat ride to a lodge on the nearby Sao Sebastien Peninsula. We will base ourselves here for two nights as we explore this rich coastal area.

The Sao Sebastien Peninsula gives one access to the southern end of the Bazaruto Archipelago, more specifically ‘The Sanctuary’, which has proven to be one of the ultimate shorebird hotspots in southern Africa! Of our primary target species, large numbers of the monotypic and highly sought-after **Crab-plover** reliably occur, as do small numbers of the scarce and poorly known **Saunders's Tern**. In recent years, **Damara Terns** have also been found to be regular, adding yet another sought-after species to the list of possibilities. In local terms, this is also a hotspot for rarities, with species such as **Eurasian Oystercatcher** and **Gull-billed Tern** regularly seen. Aside from these mouth-watering birds, we will also see many other species, including large numbers of **Greater and Lesser Sand Plovers**, **Eurasian Whimbrel**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Ruddy Turnstone**, **Sanderling** and **Terek Sandpiper**, along with **Lesser Crested Tern**. Additionally, while we are navigating the mix of waterways, sandspits and mudflats, we also stand a chance of seeing **Dugong** – a type of manatee (marine-going mammal).

Overnight: Curlew Lodge, The Sanctuary



*Vast numbers of **Lesser Sand Plover** (and other shorebirds) can be seen in the area.*

Day 8. Birding the Sao Sebastien Peninsula and transfer to The Buffalo Camp

We will have the full morning available for us to further explore and bird the incredible Sao Sebastien Peninsula, searching for any of the above-mentioned species that may still be eluding us. We will then transfer back to the mainland at Vilankulos, by boat, from where we will continue our journey northwards through the country. We anticipate reaching our destination in the late afternoon and, depending on our arrival time, we may be able to do some birding in the nearby

mixed woodlands. A wide array of species are possible here, and might include the likes of **Trumpeter Hornbill**, **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**, **Pale Batis** and the large **Brown-necked Parrot**.

Overnight: The Buffalo Camp, Machanga

Day 9. The Buffalo Camp to Beira

We will spend the first part of the morning birding in the productive mixed woodlands around the lodge. Additional to the species mentioned under Day 8 above, we will also be looking for the likes of **Collared Palm Thrush**, **Eastern Nicator**, **Stierling's Wren Warbler** and **Green-backed Woodpecker**. We will then begin the transfer north to the port city of Beira, in central Mozambique – this is a long journey, and we anticipate arriving in the afternoon. Should there be time available, we may try and get a head-start on some of the species listed below, that can be found around Beira.

Overnight: Beira



*The scarce **Wattled Crane** can be seen in the floodplains around Beira.*

Day 10. Birding around Beira and departure/start of Mozambique – African Pitta Tour

This is the final day of this exciting pre-tour, and Day 1 of our primary **Mozambique – Africa Pitta Tour**. You are welcome to depart at your leisure, or meet up with the group who will be joining the main tour.

Regardless of the logistics, our morning will be spent birding in and around Beira, and we will likely spend it exploring the vast Rio Savane floodplains. This is a very birdy area, and can host

some truly exciting birds. Note that at this time of the year, the floodplains will likely be fairly dry, but small bodies of water are scattered throughout. Some of the prized, yet somewhat nomadic birds we'll be searching for are **Blue Quail**, **Black-rumped Buttonquail**, **Locust Finch** and **Great Snipe**. Resident species we'll be on the lookout for include the elegant **Wattled Crane**, **Rufous-bellied Heron**, **Lesser Jacana**, **African Pygmy Goose**, **Southern Banded Snake-Eagle**, **Black-bellied Bustard** and **Red-headed Quelea**.

Overnight: No overnight included (part of main tour)

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different international guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling.

Duration: 10 days
Group Size: 4 - 8
Dates: TBA
Start: Maputo, Mozambique
End: Beira, Mozambique
Prices: TBA
Single Supplements: TBA

Price includes:

All accommodation
Meals (from lunch on Day 1 until breakfast on Day 10)
Unlimited bottled water
Expert tour leader
All entrance fees
All ground transport, including airport pick-up and drop-off
All boat excursions (Vilankulos)

Price excludes:

International flights (to Maputo and from Beira)
Visas (Mozambique)
Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.
Any pre- or post-tour accommodation, meals, or birding excursions
Soft/alcoholic drinks
Personal travel insurance

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))

Covid test (we facilitate this test at the end of the tour, but the cost is excluded – we anticipate it being roughly ZAR1000-2000 (~US\$100-150) per person)