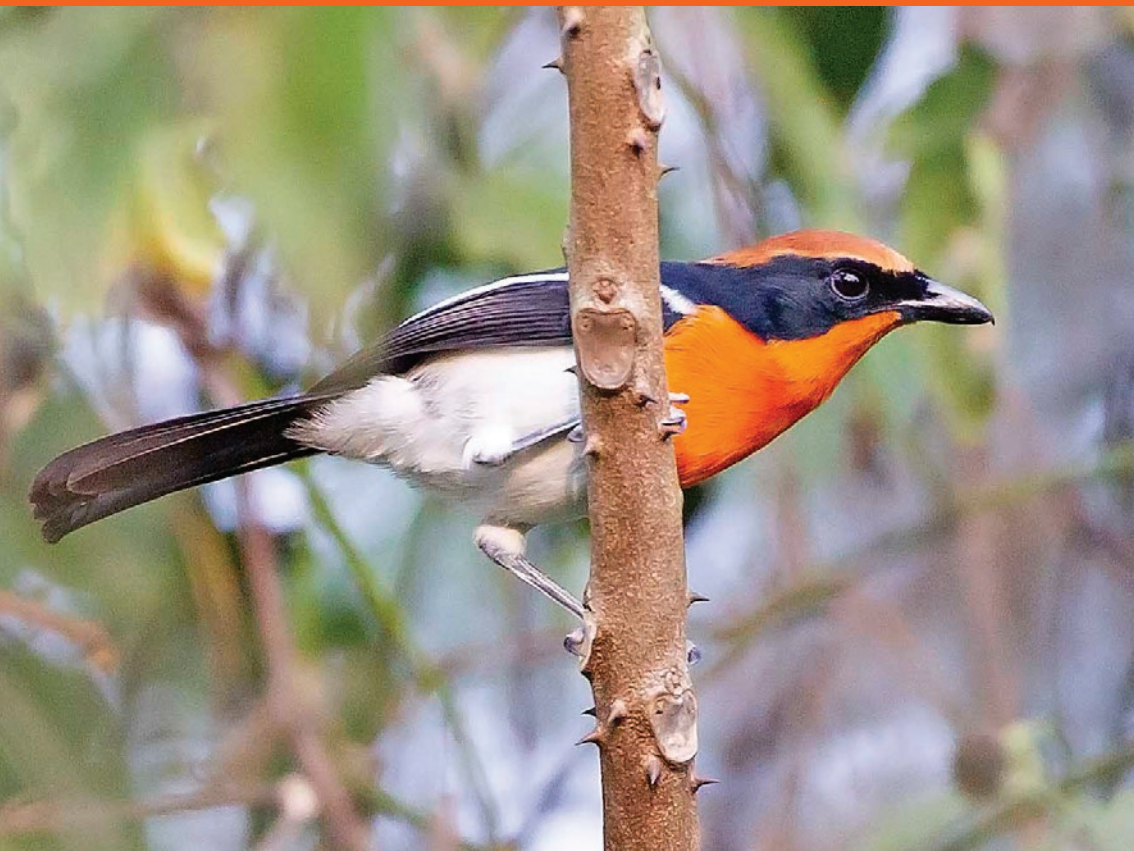


Comprehensive Angola

**Tour Leaflet
2023**



Braun's Bushshrike © Tertius Gous

26 August – 13 September 2023

Comprehensive Angola 2023



ENDEMIC BIRDS IN COMFORT

- Targets all endemic birds and many specials
- Red-crested Turaco, White-headed Robin-Chat, Braun's Bushshrike, Angola Cave Chat
- From Namib Desert to Congo Basin Forests and miombo
- Led by Angola's top birder, with 15 years of experience
- 100% success with endemics

Monteiro's Bushshrike © Tertius Gous



TOUR LEADER: MICHAEL MILLS



Michael's incredible focus, dedication and ability to locate and show Africa's toughest birds is probably unequalled. He has led dozens of tours across the continent and his experience in locating birds on just the softest of calls or briefest of views impresses those who travelled with him. Michael has spent a total of more than four years in Angola, and knows the country's birds better than anyone.

DATES (2023)

Angola 26 Aug – 13 Sep

PROVISIONAL PRICES

Per person sharing	\$7950
Single supplement	\$690

Includes all ground costs, Luanda-Luanda

BOOK ONLINE

Visit www.birdingafrika.com
 Deposit (\$150) by credit card
 Email info@birdingafrika.com



Swierstra's Francolin © John Hopkins

We have been pioneering birding tours to Angola since 2005. Our Comprehensive 19-day itinerary has been carefully crafted based on up-to-date knowledge of ever-changing road conditions, to comfortably and efficiently target all of Angola's endemic birds. We offer the only fully hotel-accommodated bird tour of Angola visiting all of the most important sites in western Angola.

Our tour starts in Luanda, with the first birding in the northern escarpment forests where the striking Braun's Bushshrike is found. From here we move east to the Kalandula Falls area to search for White-headed Robin-Chat and Anchieta's Barbet, before starting our journey to southern Angola, pausing along the northern escarpment again near N'dalatando. Kissama NP is visited for Grey-striped Francolin, Gabela Helmetshrike, White-fronted Wattle-eye and Monteiro's Bushshrike before we bird the northern extreme of the Namibian escarpment near Benguela for White-tailed Shrike and Hartlaub's Francolin. At Lubango we will make a day-trip to the coastal deserts for Benguela Long-billed Lark, searching for Cinderella Waxbill en route, and hope to find Swierstra's Francolin, Angola Slaty Flycatcher and Angola Cave Chat at Tundavala. Starting our journey back north, we spend three days in the Mount Moco area for Brazza's Martin, Bocage's Sunbird, Bocage's Weaver, Margaret's Batis and Black-chinned Weaver. Finally we search for Gabela Akalat, Gabela Bushshrike and Pulitzer's Longbill at Kumbira Forest, before returning to Luanda where the tour ends.

TOUR FOCUS

This Comprehensive Angola tour will give us a good chance to see all of Angola's endemic birds, including several BirdLife splits, and a large number of specials. We expect to record around 550 species in total. It is heavily bird focused (there is little other wildlife), although the scenery is often spectacular and we will visit some of the country's top attractions, such as Kalandula Falls and Leba Pass.

Our itinerary has been fine-tuned over many years to give us the best chance to see all endemics. We use hotels throughout the tour, which means extra comfort, although some of the drives to birding sites are longer than if we were camping (all under two hours).

A species list will be handed out to you as part of your tour booklet at the start of the tour and is available beforehand upon request.

The tour is timed to coincide with the breeding season of the endemic birds. Days will typically be warm to hot, but nights cooler in the highlands. We are likely to encounter a small amount of rain.

Travel conditions are generally reasonable, although service in hotels is often a bit slow. The route we follow makes use of the best roads and avoids the worst, but sections are still potholed and under construction, or a bit bumpy and dusty.



Red-crested Turaco © Tertius Gous

ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Accommodation and meals are generally of a reasonable standard. All rooms have private bathrooms and cold and hot running water is generally available. Although power supply can be unreliable, most hotels have backup generators.

Meals are a generally Portuguese-style, with a strong emphasis on starch and meat. Vegetarian options are limited. Some breakfasts and most lunches will be taken in the field.

Water is not safe to drink so we supply free bottled water in the vehicle that you can take to your rooms for drinking and brushing teeth.

GROUP SIZE

Maximum 9 participants in two 4x4s.

WALKING

This tour requires a moderate degree of fitness. Almost all walks will be fairly short and at a manageable pace, with the exception of one big hike planned at Mount Moco to search for Margaret's Batis. Alternative plans can be made for those not wanting to join this hike.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

The tour officially starts on the evening of 26 August 2023, with dinner and accommodation in Luanda. The tour ends after lunch in Luanda on the evening of 13 September 2023. Participants can leave Luanda any time after 21h00 on 13 September. We can assist with hotel bookings for anyone wanting to spend the night of 13 September in Luanda after the tour ends.

INTRODUCTION

Angola is one of the most biologically diverse countries in Africa. Following 30 years of civil war that ended in 2002 the country has been slow in opening up, which means that few birders have had the opportunity to sample its delights. With habitats ranging from Congo Basin forest to Namib desert, it is little surprise that the country has over 940 birds recorded. In addition the escarpment and highlands of western Angola hold isolated patches of Afromontane and Congo Basin forests where numerous endemics have evolved in isolation. The combination of varied habitats, high species diversity and significant numbers of endemics and specials makes Angola one of the continent's top birding destinations.

The tour will start by sampling the northern escarpment forests based out of Uíge, where numerous Congo Basin birds occur alongside the striking endemic Braun's Bushshrike. Next we visit the broadleaved woodlands and gallery forests of the Kalandula area, which host forest specials such as White-headed Robin-Chat and Bannerman's Sunbird alongside miombo species such as Anchieta's Barbet, Sharp-tailed Starling and Anchieta's Sunbird. Moving on to the central escarpment we visit Kissama National Park which hosts dry forests at the foot of the escarpment. Here Gabela Helmetshrike, Monteiro's Bushshrike, White-fronted Wattle-eye, Grey-striped Francolin, Angola Batis, Yellow-

throated Nicator, Pale-olive Greenbul, Hartert's Camaroptera and Golden-backed Bishop will be on our radars. Heading down the arid coast we enter the most northern tongue of Kalahari and Namibian escarpment habitat near Benguela, with birds such as White-tailed Shrike, Hartlaub's Francolin, Bare-cheeked Babbler, Rüppell's Parrot, Pirit Batis, Cape Penduline Tit and Kalahari Scrub Robin to be found. In the Lubango area we then visit Tundavala in search of Angola Cave Chat, Swierstra's Francolin, Angola White-headed Barbet and Anson's Firefinch, and make a day trip to the coastal deserts to find Benguela Long-billed Lark, Rüppell's Korhaan, Cinderella Waxbill and Benguela Long-tailed Starling. Next comes the varied Mount Moco region with Afromontane forests, montane grasslands and miombo woodlands. Here our main targets include Finsch's Francolin, Fülleborn's Longclaw, Angola Sweet Waxbill, Dusky Twinspot, Bocage's Weaver, Black-chinned Weaver, Oustalet's Sunbird, Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird, Bocage's Sunbird, Angola Slaty Flycatcher, Bocage's Akalat, Huambo Cisticola, Black-and-rufous Swallow, Brazza's Martin, Black-collared Bulbul, Angola Lark and Margaret's Batis. Finally, at Kumbira Forest at the top of the central escarpment, we look for Gabela Bushshrike, Gabela Akalat, Pulitzer's Longbill, Red-crested Turaco, Yellow-necked Greenbul and Black-faced Canary, before returning to Luanda.

Angola Cave Chat © Tertius Gous



ITINERARY AND MAP

Day 1	26 Aug 2023	Arrive. Overnight in Luanda.
Day 2	27 Aug 2023	Luanda to Uíge. Overnight in Uíge.
Day 3	28 Aug 2023	Full day in the Uíge area. Overnight in Uíge.
Day 4	29 Aug 2023	Uíge to Kalandula. Overnight in or near Kalandula.
Day 5	30 Aug 2023	Full day in the Kalandula Falls area. Overnight in or near Kalandula.
Day 6	31 Aug 2023	Kalandula Fall area to N'dalatando. Overnight in N'dalatando.
Day 7	1 Sep 2023	Tombinga Pass. Afternoon to Kissama NP. Overnight in Muxima.
Day 8	2 Sep 2023	Full day in Kissama. Overnight at Muxima.
Day 9	3 Sep 2023	To Benguela. Overnight in or near Benguela.
Day 10	4 Sep 2023	Benguela to Lubango. Overnight in Lubango.
Day 11	5 Sep 2023	Tundavala. Overnight in Lubango.
Day 12	6 Sep 2023	Namibe Day Trip. Overnight in Lubango.
Day 13	7 Sep 2023	Lubango to Huambo. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 14	8 Sep 2023	Full day at Mount Moco. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 15	9 Sep 2023	Full day in the Mount Moco region. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 16	10 Sep 2023	Full day at Mount Moco. Overnight near Huambo.
Day 17	11 Sep 2023	Huambo to Conda. Overnight near Conda.
Day 18	12 Sep 2023	Full day at Kumbira Forest and surrounds. Overnight near Conda.
Day 19	13 Sep 2023	To Luanda. Tour ends.

Brazza's Martin © Tertius Gous



DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive in Luanda

Welcome to Angola! The tour officially commences with dinner and an overnight stay in the heart of Luanda, Angola's vibrant capital city.

Day 2: Luanda to Uíge

After a quick look at the large, dark swifts nesting in downtown Luanda, currently thought to be dark Mottled Swifts, we will strike out north-east of Luanda on the road to Uíge. Our first planned stop will be for a short walk in some dry forests where we should see our first endemics: Red-backed Mousebird and Bubbling Cisticola are usually present and Gabela Helmetshrike and Monteiro's Bushshrike are both possible. As we near Uíge in the afternoon we will stop in some moister roadside forest for our first try for Braun's Bushshrike. Overnight in Uíge town.

Day 3: Northern escarpment

We have a full day to explore various patches of northern escarpment forest within an hour's drive of Uíge. Braun's Bushshrike is, of course, the main target for the day, but a long list of other species is possible, including Banded Prinia, Lowland Masked Apalis, Black-throated Apalis, Buff-throated Apalis, Brown-backed Scrub Robin, Orange-tufted Sunbird, Purple-throated Cuckooshrike, Forest Chestnut-winged Starling, Black-winged Oriole, Velvet-mantled Drongo, Brown Twinspot, Naked-faced Barbet, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Yellow-billed Barbet, White-breasted Nigrita, Black Bee-eater, Green-throated Sunbird, Little Green Sunbird, African Pied Hornbill, Bristle-nosed Barbet, Speckled Tinkerbird, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Sooty Flycatcher, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Piping Hornbill,

Gabela Bushshrike © Tertius Gous



Gabela Helmetshrike © Tertius Gous

Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Red-fronted Parrot and Cassin's Honeybird. Unfortunately most of the accessible forests have been heavily logged, making it very hard to find the local race of White-throated Greenbul. White-collared Oliveback, discovered on a Birding Africa tour in 2011, is also possible but rather rare. Overnight in Uíge town.

Day 4: Uíge to Kalandula

After some final birding in the Uíge area we'll drive to Kalandula Falls, birding various gallery forests and woodlands en route. Possible new birds for the day include Red-crested Turaco and Anchieta's Barbet. Overnight in Kalandula town.

Day 5: Kalandula Falls region

Our main reason for visiting the Kalandula region is to search for the striking and localised White-headed Robin-Chat in the gallery forests some

40 km north of the falls. Sharing the same habitat are species such as Grey-winged Robin-Chat, Bannerman's Sunbird, Brown-headed Apalis, African Broadbill, Narina Trogon, Cabanis's Greenbul and Red-crested Turaco.

We'll also bird the surrounding woodlands which are the most reliable site for Anchieta's Barbet and Sharp-tailed Starling. Other species of interest may include Pale-billed Hornbill, Rufous-bellied Tit, Anchieta's Sunbird, Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Red-throated Cliff Swallow, Meyer's Parrot, Retz's Helmetshrike, and Miombo Scrub Robin. Overnight in Kalandula town.

Day 6: Kalandula to N'dalatando

We'll spend a full second morning in the Kalandula area before driving to N'dalatando, ready for some nearby forest birding the next morning. En route we'll pause to look for Rock Pratincole along the Lucala River. Overnight in N'dalatando town.



Gabela Akalat © Tertius Gous

Day 7: N'dalatando to Muxima

After some final birding in the northern scarp forests, at Tombinga Pass (where we saw Congo Serpent Eagle in 2018!) we will drive to Muxima on the mighty Kwanza River, in Kissama National Park. Overnight in Muxima village.

Day 8: Kissama National Park

Dry forests in the vicinity of Muxima make for some of the country's most endemic-rich birding. In the early morning we'll watch for Grey-striped Francolin on the sides of the road. A whole host of dry forest birds is on offer, with Gabela Helmetshrike, Monteiro's Bushshrike and White-fronted Wattle-eye top of the list. Other species on offer include African Barred Owlet, Red-backed Mousebird, Olive Bee-eater, Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Pale-olive Greenbul, Swamp Boubou, Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush, Bubbling Cisticola, Forest Scrub Robin, Green Crombec, Purple-banded Sunbird, Yellow-throated Nicator and Angola Batis. Overnight in Muxima village.

Day 9: Muxima to Benguela

After some final birding in the Muxima area we'll drive down the ever-drier coast, birding the coastal wetlands of Lobito as we approach Benguela, with Cape Teal, Black Heron and Royal Tern possible alongside a variety of other herons and waders. If there is time in the afternoon we'll bird some of the dry savanna near to Benguela. Night in Benguela town.

Day 10: Benguela to Lubango

The arid savanna and rocky hillsides some 50 km inland of Benguela form the most northerly tongue of Namibian Escarpment habitat, and provide an opportunity to look for several species mostly associated with Namibia. We have an afternoon and a morning here. Hartlaub's Francolin call from the rock-tops in the early morning, and we hope to find Bare-cheeked Babbler, Rüppell's Parrot, White-tailed Shrike, Cape Penduline Tit, Carp's Tit, Pririt Batis, Monteiro's Hornbill and Southern Yellow-billed. Overnight in Lubango town.

Day 11: Tundavala

Views down the spectacular southern escarpment are best had from Tundavala near Lubango. The rocky area also holds a variety of grassland, escarpment and forest birds. Top of the list is the localised Angola Cave Chat, found alongside Angola Slaty Flycatcher, Swierstra's Francolin (rare), Short-toed Rock Thrush, Angolan Sweet Waxbill, Freckled Nightjar, Bradfield's Swift, Rockrunner, Tinkling Cisticola, Wailing Cisticola, Buffy Pipit, Striped Pipit, Oustalet's Sunbird and Anson's Firefinch (split from Jameson's Firefinch). We'll also search for the recently rediscovered Angolan White-headed Barbet. Overnight in Lubango town.

Day 12: Namibe Day Trip

The road from Lubango to Namibe starts at around 2300 m altitude on the Humpata Plateau, rapidly dropping down the spectacular Leba Pass to the lowlands below. Our first stop will be at the base

of the escarpment where we hope to track down Cinderella Waxbill, Hartlaub's Babbler, Bennett's Woodpecker and Benguela Long-tailed Starling. As we drive west towards the coast the habitat gets drier and drier. Initially arid bushveld is home to Dusky Sunbird, Karoo Chat, Chat Flycatcher, Cape Sparrow and Southern Fiscal, but eventually we'll reach barren desert plains where Benguela Long-billed Lark and Rüppell's Korhaan are the main targets. Other possibilities include Ludwig's Bustard, Double-banded Courser, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Greater Kestrel, Pale-winged Starling, Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark and Stark's Lark. Overnight in Lubango town.

Day 13: Lubango to Huambo

Today is essentially a travel day, as we start our trip back north to Luanda, this time taking the inland route through miombo woodlands, with possible new birds including Woodland Pipit and Pearl-breasted Swallow. Overnight outside Huambo town.

© Tertius Gous Margaret's Batis





Angola Slaty Flycatcher © Tertius Gous

Days 14–16: Mount Moco region

The greater Mount Moco region is one of the most diverse in the country and we allow ourselves three days to explore its Afromontane forests, montane grasslands, miombo woodlands and dambo grasslands. A significant amount of time will be focussed on Mount Moco itself, where the forests support diminishing populations of Swierstra's Francolin, Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird, Bocage's Akalat, Schalow's Turaco, Evergreen Forest Warbler, Thick-billed Seedeater, Grey Apalis, African Hill Babbler, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, Olive Woodpecker, Western Green Tinkerbird and Black-backed Barbet. Forest edge also supports Huambo Cisticola (Angola's newest bird species), Yellow-throated Leaflove, Dusky Twinspot, Angolan Sweet Waxbill, Black-throated Wattle-eye, Oustalet's Sunbird, Bronzy Sunbird, Spotted Creeper, Red-throated Wryneck and Black-chinned Weaver. The surrounding grasslands and rocky areas hold an endemic race of Mountain Wheatear, Horus Swift, Striped Pipit, Capped Wheatear, Black-collared Bulbul, Angola Lark, Broad-tailed Warbler (Fan-tailed Grassbird),

Ayres's/Wing-snapping Cisticola, and the very difficult Finsch's Francolin. On one of these days we'll make a 6-hour return hike to search for Margaret's Batis in the largest remaining patch of Afromontane forest.

Miombo woodlands and dambo grasslands in the surrounds of Mount Moco hold an equally impressive variety of birds. Black-necked Eremomela, the curious local race of Brubru, Green-capped Eremomela, Miombo Scrub Robin, Miombo Pied Barbet (rare), Miombo Wren-Warbler, Red-capped Crombec, Woodland Pipit, Salvadori's Eremomela, Pale-billed Hornbill, Yellow-bellied Hyliota and White-breasted Cuckooshrike may be seen in the woodlands. However, the dambo grasslands hold the greatest interest, and here we will be hoping to find: Brazza's Martin, Black-and-rufous Swallow, Fülleborn's Longclaw, Sooty Chat, Chirping Cisticola, Fawn-breasted Waxbill, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Brown Firefinch, Locust-Finch, Hartlaub's Marsh Widowbird, Stout Cisticola, Bocage's Sunbird and Bocage's Weaver. Nights near Huambo town.

Day 17: Huambo to Conda

After some final birding in the Mount Moco region we'll make our way to the central escarpment, searching for Gabela Bushshrike and Pulitzer's Longbill in the evening. Night near Conda.

Day 18: Kumbira

Kumbira Forest is home to three Endangered central-scarp endemics, namely Pulitzer's Longbill, Gabela Bushshrike and Gabela Akalat. Unfortunately slash-and-burn farming has caused major population declines in all three species, although the akalat is still common and the longbill is normally not too hard to find. The bushshrike has become rather rare and hard to find now, having been fairly common only 15 years ago, so we may have to search for it at some backup sites. Other birds we may find at Kumbira

include Red-crested Turaco, Southern Hyliota, Dusky Tit, Yellow-throated Nicator, Yellow-necked Greenbul, Pale-olive Greenbul, Brown Illadopsis, Hartert's Camaroptera, Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye, Superb Sunbird, Forest Scrub Robin, Gorgeous Bushshrike, African Broadbill, Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Black-faced Canary, Pink-footed Puffback, Angolan Naked-faced Barbet, Trumpeter Hornbill and Grey Waxbill. Overnight near Conda village.

Day 19: Conda to Luanda

After some final birding in the Kumbira area we'll return to the coast and drive north back to Luanda. If time allows we'll stop at the Kwanza River to look for Brown Sunbird, and at Mussulo Bay for some wader watching. The tour ends on arrival back in Luanda. You may take flights out of Luanda any time from 21h00.

Benguela Long-billed Lark © Tertius Gous





Black-and-rufous Swallow © Tertius Gous (above) and *Monteiro's Bushshrike* (below) © John Hopkins



Angolan White-headed Barbet © Tertius Gous



White-fronted Wattle-eye © Tasso Leventis (above, left), *Bocage's Sunbird* © Alexandre Vaz (above, right) and *Pulitzer's Longbill* (below) © Tasso Leventis



INCLUDED

- Birding Africa tour leader
- Entry fees and activities as per itinerary
- Hotel accommodation throughout
- Airport pickup on 26 August and airport drop off on 13 September
- Bottled water in the vehicle
- One soft drink at each sit-down meal
- General tips

QUESTIONS?

Please email the office, info@birdingafrica.com, to reserve a place or ask questions (you can also cc michael@birdingafrica.com and callan@birdingafrica.com who are both involved in the planning of this tour).

BOOKLET AND CHECKLIST

Birding Africa provides:

1. this tour leaflet with detailed itinerary
2. the tour information pack, emailed to you
3. the tour booklet with checklists, on the tour

HOW TO BOOK

1. Complete our easy online booking form.
2. Secure your booking deposit by credit card on our 3D secure online payment site (\$150).
3. Settle the balance by bank transfer 150 days before the tour. We will email you a reminder and the banking details.



Grey-striped Francolin © Tertius Gous