



Join Nils and Sarah Warnock on an outstanding birding safari in Botswana, accompanied by private guide and expert African birder, Martin Benadie.



Botswana Birding Safari

6th - 18th December 2025



Itinerary Overview

With over 600 listed bird species, Botswana is a top birding destination. You will begin your safari in the Okavango Delta - a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for the incredible abundance of wildlife it supports and for being home to an intact ecosystem still inhabited by a large assemblage of megafauna. Slowly you will migrate through the Linyanti wetland system and end your safari along the banks of the mighty Zambezi River near Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Join Dr. Nils and Sarah Warnock and expert African birding guide Martin Benadie for an incredible journey through the African Bush, absorbing the beauty and exciting wilderness and wildlife.

Early December is a fascinating time to travel to Botswana because it is the beginning of the rainy season where the parched land flushes with green, flowers appear, migratory birds have arrived and animals have their babies. The weather is dramatic, with gorgeous cloudscapes and breathtaking sunsets. When it rains it is usually in short bursts which adds to the excitement.

Xugana Island Lodge, 2 nights: From the town of Maun you will take a bush plane to Xugana for the start of your safari. Xugana is ideally situated on an island in the heart of the permanent Delta. This is a wonderfully relaxing start to your safari, with only water activities and walking (no game drives). We think this is a gentle way to ease into the Okavango birding safari experience, and recover from your international travel while getting to learn about the fascinating Okavango ecosystem. By boat you will spot beautiful birds like the Malachite Kingfisher, as well as meet one of the engineers of the Okavango – the hippopotamus.

Kwara Camp, 4 nights: Overlooking a lagoon in the northern Okavango Delta, Kwara offers a comprehensive Okavango experience. Its location allows access to the permanent waterways of the Delta as well as expansive dry land areas, admired for their quality game viewing and varied habitats excellent for a diversity of birds. This luxurious camp is the perfect base for enjoying the many birds and mammals of Botswana. Activities are varied, including day and night game drives and boating. A highlight is the boat ride to the Godikwa Lagoon heronry inhabited by a variety of wetland birds. For those also interested in the hairy creatures, Kwara is known for its consistent sightings of predators, including lion, cheetah, leopard and the elusive serval.

Kwando Lagoon, 3 nights: Set on the Kwando River that forms the border between Namibia and Botswana, Lagoon camp in the Linyanti Swamps is a remote camp in over 500,000 acres of privately managed and protected land. Game drives and walks with the possibility of some boating make for a fantastic birding and game experience in this beautiful part of Botswana. In December you are likely to have excellent Carmine Bee-Eater sightings along with the chance of seeing the distinguished Secretary Bird and lumbering Southern Ground-Hornbill.

Old Drift Lodge, 3 nights: A flight and road transfer will take you into Zimbabwe and along the banks of the Mighty Zambezi. Winding down from an exciting safari here you will still have the luxuries of being in big game country, but with the focus being along this amazing river overlooking Zambia. There are excellent birding opportunities here, including getting to see African Skimmers. A highlight would be visiting the World's largest waterfall, the Victoria Falls with the possibility of scoping the enigmatic Taita Falcon or brilliant Schallow's Turaco. From here you fly home out of Victoria Falls airport.



Nils Warnock (Ph.D.) and Sarah Warnock

Together, Nils and Sarah Warnock have worked in bird conservation across the world, with a special focus on shorebird migration along the Pacific Flyway from Alaska to Mexico. Both are currently employed at Audubon Canyon Ranch - Nils as Director of Conservation Science, and Sarah in Development. Nils previously served as executive director of Audubon Alaska and as a vice president of the National Audubon Society; he is currently a Fellow of the American Ornithological Society. Both Sarah and Nils are avid birders and have led trips in Alaska, California, and the Galapagos Islands.



Martin Benadie

Martin is a fanatical birder and an expert on birds in Africa, having seen over 1300 species on the continent. He is a qualified DEAT/FGASA Level 3 and SKS (birding) guide. Martin was born in Zimbabwe. After graduating from university with a commerce degree (his dissertation focused on the economic and social spin-offs of avitourism), he worked as a specialist birding guide for several world-renowned bird tour companies. He then joined Wilderness in 2007 in their Impact Department where he focuses on the ongoing conservation and restoration of the wilderness areas the company operates in. One of his favourite current birding projects in Botswana is working with the Southern African Bird Atlas Project (SABAP2) to continue the Wilderness bird atlasing initiative to map the distribution and relative abundance of all bird species in the areas the company operates in. Martin is also a published photojournalist.

This special safari for curious birders and wildlife enthusiasts is handcrafted by True Wild to give you an exceptional experience!



True Wild LLC is a conservation and safari company based in San Francisco's North Bay. Our mission is to connect people strongly to nature through experiences and encourage individual action to conserve our planet. We do mountain lion research and conservation, and work with communities on how to co-exist with wildlife. We offer outdoor experiences connected to this work including designing personalized safaris, specializing in authentic journeys to Africa. In all we do, we strive for conservation impact.

Logistics

Group size: 8-12 people. Price will be all inclusive (accommodation, food, drinks, activities, transfers between camps, group leaders) but will exclude international travel (to Maun, Botswana and from Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe), visas, insurance, and gratuities. *Singles in their own room will be charged an additional single-supplement rate and quoted separately.

Join Nils and Sarah!

Contact Quinton Martins:
quinton@truwild.org
707 721 6560

