

ITINERARY

NAMIBIA & BOTSWANA

I: March 28-April 16, 2023

II: October 31-November 19, 2023



Rueppell's Bustard is a near-endemic, found in Namibia and parts of Angola. We'll watch for them in the dry regions near Sossusvlei. Photograph by guide Terry Stevenson.

We include here information for those interested in the 2023 Namibia & Botswana tours:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- an annotated list of the birds recorded on a previous year's Field Guides trip to the area, with comments by guide(s) on notable species or sightings (may be downloaded from our web site)
- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a reference list
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

A unique combination of Namibia's spectacular desert scenery and the magical crystal waters of Botswana's Okavango Delta: Gemsbok standing before a huge red dune at Sossusvlei, the skeletal shapes of a dead quiver tree, or the delightful White-tailed Shrike hopping along the ground are just some of the memories that one takes away from Namibia. While in the Okavango, who could forget the dawn duetting of Gabon Boubou, perhaps a Pel's Fishing-Owl watching from the canopy of a leafy fig, or scanning a shallow lagoon for Slaty Egret or Lesser Jacana.

In Namibia we'll visit some of the world's most beautiful and varied deserts as we search out a wealth of localized bird life, some unique plants, and some fascinating mammals. At Sossusvlei we'll travel through some of the highest sand

dunes on Earth as we watch for Namaqua Sandgrouse and the endemic Dune Lark. On the Atlantic coast we'll see thousands of flamingos, shorebirds, gulls, and terns. In the Erongo Mountains we'll look for the endemic Herero Chat, and a whole range of very localized birds including Hartlaub's Francolin, Rueppell's Parrot, Monteiro's Hornbill, White-tailed Shrike and Carp's Tit. Further north in Etosha, we'll have repeated encounters with Africa's famed big game, which will likely include African Elephant, Black Rhino, Gemsbok, Greater Kudu, and herds of Burchell's Zebra and Springbok. Seen against a backdrop of one of Africa's most famous national parks, the shimmering pan, the golden grasslands, and the spreading acacias are home to an exciting assortment of mammals and birds.

We complete our tour in the renowned Okavango Delta, where we travel by charter plane and stay in two fabulous camps right in the heart of the best birding and mammal viewing areas. We'll be able to enjoy the classic safari experience as we travel by 4X4 vehicles and a variety of watercraft, specially chosen for a mixture of both water and land-based viewing. Meandering through a mosaic of waterways, lagoons, floodplains, and woodlands, we hope to encounter such local species as Slaty Egret, Wattled Crane, Lesser Jacana, and the magnificent Pel's Fishing-Owl. Again, photographic opportunities will be plentiful as we search out Lechwe, Topi, Blue Wildebeest, Common Giraffe, Burchell's Zebra, Lion, and perhaps even the extremely rare Hunting Dog.



Special Note: So that you may enjoy the wonderful areas we visit on this tour at their very best, we have limited the number of participants to just six. We will be traveling in specially adapted safari vehicles in both countries, with everyone having a window seat in Namibia, and in open safari cruisers in Botswana. The strict limit of six participants in one vehicle means no driving in second place, no hours of swallowing dust. In Namibia we stay in the best accommodation available, which is generally good to excellent. In Botswana we stay in the finest camps, not only in the best birding and mammal viewing areas, but in small exclusive properties dedicated to providing us with the best of services as and when we require it—none of the crowded scenes of some other popular African destinations.

Finally, to maximize our time in the delta, we have chosen to move between our main camps by charter plane. Of course, this adds to the overall cost of the tour, but we feel (and we hope you will agree) it's money well spent and sets our tour apart from those offered by other companies.

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (which includes a booster for those eligible to have one). Having a vaccinated group will greatly diminish but not eliminate the possibility of the group and individual participants being adversely affected by COVID-19. **We are requiring all of our staff guides to be vaccinated, including getting the booster.** Note too, that many travel destinations are or soon will be requiring proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time. Proof of a booster shot, too, may become a requirement for some travel destinations if they choose to declare that vaccinations do not last indefinitely. And having a booster means your risk is lowered and your travel plans and those of our group are less likely to be disrupted.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** Moderate amounts of rather easy walking (up to 2 miles per day), some of it on dirt roads, but in other areas on rocky tracks, and at Sossusvlei, on soft sand dunes.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We cover much ground on this tour, and on several days we have long drives, usually on good roads. Participants should be able to step up 18 inches into and out of our safari-vehicle. In the Okavango Delta we will be using small boats for some of our viewing.
- **PACE:** Often we will have a pre-breakfast walk, or an early breakfast at about 6 a.m. (once at 5:30) we will then bird until lunch time. We may have picnic lunches to extend our time in the field (or when traveling). We often have an after-lunch break at the lodge (or else continue traveling in the vehicle to our next destination). In Botswana we will make some afternoon drives which may last until about 30 minutes after dark, i.e. 7:30 p.m.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures will range from the low 60s at night to 90s F during the day. Rain showers are a possibility.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion. Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Participants must be prepared to make comfort stops in nature for most of this tour, as there are simply no other options along most of the tour's route, away from our lodgings.
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

If you are uncertain whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide.



Our camps in the Okavango put us in the middle of this amazing place, allowing exceptional experiences with many of the mammals and birds of the region. On a previous tour, we were delighted to see a large herd of elephants bathing and drinking at a waterhole just yards away from where we were having lunch! Photograph by guide Terry Stevenson.



Pel's Fishing Owl is widespread, but very localized in distribution. The Okavango Delta in Botswana is one of the best places to see these attractive owls, and we've had great success on our tours. Photograph by guide Tarry Butcher.

Itinerary for Namibia & Botswana

Day 1, Tue, 28 Mar. or 31 Oct. Depart from the US; to Johannesburg. There are direct flights from the US to Johannesburg. Your tour manager will be happy to look for the best schedule from your home city—just let her know.

Day 2, Wed, 29 Mar. or 1 Nov. Arrive Johannesburg. As the group will probably be arriving on different planes at different times, we suggest you take the shuttle bus to the Safari Club Lodge. Transfer will be arranged once your flight information is received by our office. If you prefer to take a private taxi, these can be found in the shuttle bus area at an extra cost of about Rand 180 (about \$17.00). As you may well be very tired after your long flights, you are “on your own this evening,” but **your guide will contact you around 6:00 p.m. to inform you about the arrangements for tomorrow morning.** Night at the Safari Club in Johannesburg.

Day 3, Thu, 30 Mar. or 2 Nov. Flight from Johannesburg to Windhoek. We'll be met on arrival in Windhoek and then transfer to our hotel. Windhoek is a birdy city, and if time permits, we'll do some local birding, perhaps seeing a variety of herons, ducks, and marsh birds at the local water works—or in the nearby bush country for Bradfield's Swift, White-backed Mousebird, Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill, Pied Barbet, Pririt Batis, Crimson-breasted Gonolek, Black-fronted (Red-eyed) Bulbul, Barred Wren-Warbler, Rufous-vented Warbler, Cape Crombec, Mariqua Flycatcher, Short-toed Rock-Thrush, Pale-winged Starling and Red-headed Finch. Night at Galton House, Windhoek.

Day 4, Fri, 31 Mar. or 3 Nov. To Sossusvlei. Today we'll take a picnic lunch and head south-west through the ranch country of central Namibia. The habitat is predominantly open bush and wooded grassland and of course we'll be making birding stops along the way. With virtually every bird being a new species, it should be a fabulous “travel day,” where in addition to most of the species mentioned for Day 3, we should also see Pale Chanting-Goshawk, Gray Go-away Bird, Cape Penduline-Tit, Black-chested Prinia, Chat Flycatcher, Familiar Chat, Social Weaver and Yellow Canary. If seasonal ponds are present along the way, we may also find Hamerkop, Maccua Duck, South African Shelduck, Cape Teal and Cape Shoveler. The final part of the drive is through much more arid country where our first Common Ostrich or Ludwig's and Rueppell's bustards may occur; we expect to arrive at our lodge in the late afternoon. Night at Desert Hills Lodge or Namib Desert Lodge.

Day 5, Sat, 1 Apr. or 4 Nov. Sossusvlei area. We'll spend the day around Sossusvlei where we'll wander among some of the world's highest sand dunes, some as high as 400 meters. The scenery is spectacular as the light on the dunes constantly changes, emphasizing their running, free form shapes; to many, the sight of a Gemsbok standing before the

dunes of Sossusvlei is the essential Namibia. As one might imagine, the bird life of the dunes is not diverse, but we'll make a special effort for the endemic Dune Lark. This little-known species inhabits the coarse grassy areas growing on some dunes; it is not an easy bird to find.

A short distance to the east of the dunes is an area of gravel plains cut here and there by small, lightly wooded, dry river beds. We'll search this area for Burchell's Courser, Namaqua Sandgrouse, Pygmy Falcon, Speckled Pigeon, Ashy Tit, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Mountain Wheatear, Dusky Sunbird, White-throated Canary, Cape Sparrow, and Scaly Weaver (Scaly-feathered Finch). Night at Desert Hills Lodge or Namib Desert Lodge.



We'll look for the endemic Dune Lark in the dunes of Sossusvlei. Although it can be difficult to spot amid the red sands and sparse grass, we've had good luck on previous tours. Photograph by participants David and Judy Smith.

Day 6, Sun, 2 Apr. or 5 Nov. To Walvis Bay. This morning we'll head north-west through more spectacular desert country to Walvis Bay. Although it is a long drive, the roads are excellent and we should be on the Atlantic shore by mid-afternoon. Walvis Bay is a Ramsar site, and the numbers of water birds can be incredible. Kelp (Cape) and Hartlaub's gulls noisily scream overhead, and thousands of Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stints, Bar-tailed Godwits, Common Ringed and White-fronted plovers and Pied Avocets feed on the tidal flats. In the lagoons both Greater and Lesser flamingos can be seen, and on the sand banks Sandwich and Common terns and Great Crested-Terns come to roost. At this time of year, the localized Damara Tern is also present, but it can be difficult to find among the larger numbers of other species. Night at Oysterbox Guest House, Walvis Bay.

Day 7, Mon, 3 Apr. or 6 Nov. Walvis Bay area and Swakopmund. We'll start today with more birding in the Walvis Bay area, making a special effort for Damara Tern if we missed it yesterday, and we'll then make a short drive to Swakopmund where the cold, seabird-rich Benguela Current runs north. The current supplies ample fish for the thousands of Cape Cormorants that inhabit a manmade guano platform here—and we'll also be searching for the far less common Crowned Cormorants that often perch on the supporting legs of the platforms. African Oystercatchers sometimes feed on the rocky promontories that jut into the sea.

The desert just inland can be cold and foggy, but as it clears we'll make a drive across the gravel plains, looking for Gray's Lark and Tractrac Chat; the landscape here is stark and bare but for lichens and the dollar bush. Yellow Mongoose (and occasionally 'Meerkat') can be seen as they run from burrow to burrow. In the afternoon we'll continue north-easterly towards Usakos at the southern end of the Erongo Mountains. Night at Hohenstein Lodge, near Usakos.

Day 8, Tue, 4 Apr. or 7 Nov. The southern Erongo Mountains. Early this morning we will begin our search for the elusive Herero Chat (one of the region's most difficult endemics), and then, as the day progresses, we'll bird the rocky arid bush country and perhaps a dry river bed as we look for Red-billed Francolin, Lanner Falcon, Monteiro's and Damara Red-billed hornbills, Rueppell's Parrot, White-tailed Shrike, Bokmakierie, Carp's Tit, Rockrunner, Burchell's Starling and White-throated Canary. Night at Hohenstein Lodge, near Usakos.



We'll look for the endemic Herero Chat near our lodge in the Erongo Mountains. Photograph by guide Tarry Butcher.

Day 9, Wed, 5 Apr. or 8 Nov. Omaruru area. Today we'll make the drive to the northern side of the Erongo Mountains where our newly renovated, air-conditioned accommodations have been built amongst many massive granite boulders – the home of Hartlaub's Francolin—a shy species that lives in rocky crevices only announcing its presence with a loud dawn call. The area immediately around our lodge provides us with some fascinating birding and many of the following will be seen: Verreaux's Eagle, Rosy-faced Lovebird (in large numbers), Pearl-spotted Owlet, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Rufous-crowned Roller, Sabota Lark, Red-backed Scrub-Robin, Green-winged Pytilia and Cape Bunting. In the evening we'll try for Freckled Nightjar, which breeds on the granite kopjes and often feeds around the small waterhole. Mammals here will certainly include Rock Hyrax (hundreds) but we should also encounter Kirk's Dikdik, and the somewhat cute Dassie Rat (only member of the family *Petromuridae*). Night at AiAiba Lodge.

Days 10-12, Thu-Sat, 6-8 Apr. or 9-11 Nov. To Etosha National Park. This morning we'll drive to Etosha—a wild wonderland of birds, plants, and mammals covering more than 22,000 square kilometers. The famous “pan” usually appears as an endless expanse of white salt, not particularly attractive to any form of life, although a few Common Ostrich or antelope often wander out onto it, their shapes soon distorted by the shimmering mirage. With annual evaporation of 2700 mm, only exceptional rains are able to fill the 6000 square-km pan. (Average annual rainfall is only 400-500 mm—about 15-20 inches—falling mainly from January to March.)

In wet areas along the edge of the main pan, however, and at artificial waterholes and in the surrounding woodlands, we'll find an abundance of bird and mammal life. Herds of elephant are common, as are Gemsbok, Springbok, Blue Wildebeest, Greater Kudu, and Burchell's Zebra. In the *mopane* woodland of the eastern part of the park roam Common Giraffe, (Black-faced) Impala and Kirk's Dikdik. Lion are not uncommon, and although they are difficult to see, there is a good population of Black Rhinoceros. Etosha is a carefully run park; for instance, we cannot drive off the main roads in pursuit of any quarry, but the roads are laid out to give excellent coverage of the wet areas that concentrate wildlife.

The special bird of the park is Bare-cheeked Babbler, but we'll enjoy many others: Bateleur, Secretary-bird, Red-necked Falcon, Kori, Red-crested and White-quilled bustards, Blue Crane, Double-banded Courser, Double-banded Sandgrouse, Namaqua Dove, Violet Woodhoopoe, White Helmetshrike, Pink-billed and Spike-heeled larks, Groundscraper Thrush, Southern Pied-Babbler, Violet-eared Waxbill and Southern Cordonbleu.

Nights at Okaukuejo and Halali Park Department bungalows (within the park), and at Uris Safari Lodge or Mushara Lodge (outside the park) as we traverse the area from west to east.

Day 13, Sun, 9 Apr. or 12 Nov. The Okavango River and the northern border. Today we'll head north-east towards Rundu and the banks of the Okavango River. Although quite populated along the river itself, there are still many quiet stretches with great birding both from the riverside and in the surrounding woodlands. Just some of the new birds we

could encounter include Rufous-bellied Heron, Long-toed and Wattled lapwings, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Red-faced Mousebird, Malachite, Giant and Pied kingfishers, Gabon (Swamp) Boubou, African Paradise-Flycatcher, Wire-tailed and Mosque swallows, Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Tawny-flanked Prinia, White-browed Robin-Chat, Kurrichane Thrush, Hartlaub's Babbler, African Yellow White-eye, Plain-backed Pipit, Holub's Golden-Weaver and Brown Firefinch. Night at Taranga Safari Lodge.

Days 14-15, Mon-Tue, 10-11 Apr. or 13-14 Nov. To the Okavango Panhandle. After early breakfast we'll continue east to the western part of the Caprivi Strip and then south to a wonderful little park called Mahango. Here among the woodlands and grasslands (with scattered giant baobab trees) we could find any of the species listed for Hakusembe, plus many of the following; Black-breasted Snake-Eagle, White-browed Coucal, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Pearl-breasted Swallow, Southern Black-Tit, Arrow-marked Babbler, Meves' Starling, Cut-throat and Golden-breasted Bunting. Large mammals are also common, with African Elephant, Burchell's Zebra, Greater Kudu and Impala all being seasonally numerous, while smaller numbers of Lechwe should be seen. And if we're very lucky, even Roan and Sable antelopes are possible.

After a picnic lunch in the park, we'll cross the border (usually a simple procedure) and transfer to our very pleasant camp, isolated on a peninsula within the "panhandle." During two nights, we'll be birding and mammal viewing both on foot and from boats. The woodlands immediately around the camp are good for Meyer's Parrot, Green Woodhoopoe, Woodland Kingfisher, Crested Barbet, Golden-tailed and Bennett's woodpeckers, African Golden Oriole, Terrestrial Brownbul and Ashy Flycatcher. While the wetlands are excellent for hippos and crocodiles, and if we are lucky, the rare Sitatunga (a swamp-dwelling antelope with long splayed hooves which allow it to move through the floating vegetation without sinking). In addition to many water birds which may include African Pygmy-goose, African Fish-Eagle and Lesser Jacana, we'll be checking overhanging trees for White-backed Night-Heron (a real super-skulker) and the reed beds for Greater Swamp-Warbler, Chirping Cisticola and Southern Brown-throated Weaver. Our main target, however, will be the enormous Pel's Fishing-Owl—for many birder's one of the most wanted birds in the whole of Africa! Nights at Xaro Lodge or Drotsky's Lodge.



*Kingfishers abound in the Okavango, where we'll watch for the lovely Malachite Kingfisher in addition to several larger species.
Photograph by participants David and Judy Smith.*

Days 16-18, Wed-Fri, 12-14 Apr. or 15-17 Nov. Deep in the Okavango Delta. On Day 16 we'll transfer to Shakawe airstrip and take a charter flight to Macatoo Camp, a wonderful oasis on a private concession in the western part of the delta. The flight itself can be beautiful as we pass over a vast expanse of sparkling clear water, reed beds, and grass-covered islands. On arrival we'll take the advice of the resident expert guides and then set forth on our first exploration of the area, perhaps an escorted walk, or a drive in an open-sided vehicle. As in much of the Okavango Delta, water levels

vary tremendously from year to year, so our activities will be arranged to make the best of what birds and mammals are around at the time—rest assured, we'll make every effort to see the very best of this fabulous wilderness.

In addition to many of the birds already mentioned, we also hope to find the following; Swainson's Francolin, Slaty Egret, Goliath and Black herons, Saddle-billed Stork, Banded Snake-Eagle, Wattled Crane, African Green-Pigeon, African Barred Owllet, Broad-billed Roller, Black-collared Barbet, Bearded Woodpecker, Dickinson's Kestrel, Meyer's Parrot, Chinspot Batis, Retz's Helmetshrike, Magpie Shrike, African Black-headed Oriole, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Red-billed and Yellow-billed oxpeckers, White-breasted Sunbird, and Pin-tailed Whydah. We'll also spend a good deal of time looking for and photographing mammals, which may include Lechwe, Topi, Blue Wildebeest, Burchell's Zebra, Warthog, and Chacma Baboon. Lion and Leopard also occur in small numbers, as does the rare Wild Dog and some simply massive African Elephants.

We will try to see as many of these mammals as possible, and by returning to camp late one evening, we may also pick up some nocturnal species, perhaps Moholi Bushbaby, African Wild Cat, or Common Genet. Nights at Macatoo Camp.

Note: As water levels can rise and fall unpredictably, the amount of time devoted to looking for land and water based species at either camp will be decided on arrival. We will be based in two of the very best areas and we'll make every effort to see as many birds and mammals as possible.

Day 19, Sat, 15 Apr. or 18 Nov. Flight to Maun. After some final birding in the Okavango Delta, we'll take a second charter flight to Maun. We'll then connect with the scheduled flight to Johannesburg and our further connections home. **Please don't plan any departures from Johannesburg until 7:30 p.m. or later.** Depending on your routing, you may need to spend this night in Johannesburg. Our office will gladly help with hotel reservations.

Day 20, Sun, 16 Apr. or 19 Nov. Arrival home.

About Your Guides

Tour I

Tarry Butcher was born and raised in Namibia, where his interest in birds was kindled at an early age. He spent much of his childhood exploring the vast open areas of the dry Namibian wilderness, where his love for birds and animals grew. His interest in and knowledge of wildlife in general, and birds in particular, drew him inevitably to a career in guiding. That interest was further developed during his studies in Game Ranch Management in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, and he undertook additional travels to explore different areas of South Africa in search of new birds in different habitats.

After working as a Naturalist-Guide in the region for eight years, Tarry made the jump to guiding birding groups in both Namibia and South Africa, with his past experience as a solid base. He has also traveled to other parts of Africa, where he has always been keen to learn about new birds. Tarry's easy-going nature, his sense of humor, hosting, and logistical skills, and his yearning for adventure, coupled with his passion for sharing his love of nature with people of all ages, make him an excellent guide.

In recent years, Tarry worked as a driver/guide on Field Guides tours under Terry Stevenson's leadership, and during fall 2022 he co-led three additional Field Guides tours to South Africa and Namibia with Field Guides veterans Megan Edwards Crewe, Marcelo Padua, and Doug Gochfeld, who with their groups found him to be a delightful and knowledgeable guide and traveling companion, as we think you will too. Tarry lives in Pretoria, South Africa.

Tour II

Terry Stevenson; originally from England, Terry has made Kenya his home since 1977. He is the senior author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi*—the only guide in the region to have a text and maps opposite plates format; it has recently been released as an app, with the added advantage of making it possible to hear many of the calls. He is also co-author to *Birds of the Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and Socotra*. Published in 2009, this acclaimed guide is the only one to this region. On November 30, 1986, he set a new World Big Day record with 330 species *seen* in one day in Kenya; the record stands today. One of Africa's and India's foremost bird-tour guides, Terry has led numerous Field Guides tours across the African continent, in Madagascar, and in India. He is currently living in a mud-and-cow-dung mansion near Mt. Kenya.

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for complete tour schedules for all of our guides; just click on a photo.

Financial Information

FEE: \$17150

DEPOSIT: \$1700 per person (\$500 is non-refundable due to early deposits we must remit to parks and suppliers)

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: September 29, 2022 (Tour I); May 4, 2023 (Tour II)

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$2100

(Please note that, depending on the number of single travelers we have, single rooms may not be available at all of the lodges.)

LIMIT: 6

Special Note: Tour fees may be subject to change due to the global economic effects of COVID-19.

We have published the itinerary and price for this tour with the understanding that during these uncertain times we are likely to encounter unforeseen changes. Some of our tours may incur higher costs due to increases in currency exchange rate fluctuations or COVID-19 related fees imposed by countries and/or suppliers. Travel and hospitality companies all over the world have been adversely affected by the pandemic, and there is no guarantee that all of the lodging and transportation we have booked for this tour will still be available at the time of departure. We hope to maintain our services as indicated in our itinerary as well as our published tour fee. However, if changes are required, we will make every effort to maintain the quality of the itinerary as it is published with the most appropriate substitutions available. Should any necessary changes or other unforeseen causes result in an increase in service rates to us, we reserve the right to pass on those increases in fees to the tour participant.

Other Things You Need to Know

NOTE REGARDING TRIP INSURANCE: Travel and medical insurance is compulsory for guests visiting the lodges in Botswana, and each guest will need to provide their insurance details in advance. This is due to the remoteness of the camps we use in Botswana.

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

A NOTE ON ACCOMMODATIONS: (accommodations are subject to change) In Namibia, we'll be staying mainly in comfortable guesthouses, lodges, and camps, and in Game Department bungalows in Etosha National Park. Generally, they offer an amazing degree of comfort and convenience in some of Namibia's very best birding habitats. In Botswana, we'll stay at two of the finest camps in the whole of the Okavango Delta, where we will have an abundance of wildlife on our doorstep.

In recent years many of the larger Windhoek hotels have expanded, added casinos, and become correspondingly noisy. Therefore, we have moved to the much smaller Galton House, a small, modern, comfortable guesthouse (with tea and coffee making facilities in the rooms); everyone liked it and recommended we stay here on future tours - we hope you'll enjoy it too. For our visit to the Sussosvlei area we will stay at either Desert Hills Lodge or Namib Desert Lodge, both are luxury lodges set in this superb desert landscape. At Walvis Bay, the Oyster Box Guesthouse is another nice small establishment, with fabulous birding just minutes away. In the Usakos area, we stay at the delightful Hohenstein Lodge. Set in an area of rocky mountains and acacia bush country, it gives us the best chance to find one of the more difficult endemics – Herero Chat. Famous for its rock paintings, AiAiba Lodge is a series of well-appointed units, each built separately and placed strategically among huge granite boulder. Each unit provides a private viewing deck with stunning views of the surrounding area, as well as ensuite bathroom with walk-in shower. For our visit to Etosha, we stay at the newly refurbished game department bungalows at Okaukuejo and Halali (a vast improvement on earlier years), and also at our lodge, either Uris Safari Lodge or Mushara Lodge, to the east of the park. Taranga Safari Lodge (our last night in Namibia) is another high-end lodge, built on the banks of the Okavango River with a wealth of new birds all around.

Our camps in Botswana, Xaro or Drotsky's, and Macatoo, are considered to be some of the best birding camps in the delta. All are small and well known for the excellent service that these privately-owned properties provide. Xaro and Drotsky's are on the Okavango River in the pan-handle and as such, activities are mainly water-based. Macatoo is in the west-central part of the main delta and gives us opportunity for more land-based activities. The camp was originally set up for adventurous horse riding safaris, and although we will NOT be taking part in these activities, we will be able to go birding in a specially adapted, open-sided 4X4 vehicle, and on foot – a special experience not available in some of the other delta lodges.

Private bathrooms are provided at all accommodations throughout this tour. Single rooms may not be available at some destinations, so please check with the tour manager if you require this facility. All camps have 24-hour electricity, although this is often provided by a solar system, and at one or two properties hair-driers may not be used.

Note: Although most of our hotels, lodges and camps in both Namibia and Botswana now have internet access, it is often painfully slow, or not working at all. Please do not expect to have fast and regular access to the internet, although things are improving (slowly) with every tour. Macatoo Camp has no internet service at all.

DOCUMENTS: A **passport**, valid six months beyond the date of your return, is required of US citizens for entry into South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana. The passports of all travelers entering South Africa must contain at least two clean (unstamped) visa pages at each time entry is sought. Amendment and endorsement pages cannot be used in lieu of visa pages and we recommend having two blank pages for each country, each time entry is sought, so at minimum you should have eight blank pages to be safe. US citizens entering South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana **are permitted stays of up to 90 days without a visa.**

If you are not a US citizen, please check with the South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana consulates nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees.

Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility.

ALSO, PLEASE NOTE: BAGGAGE ON CHARTER FLIGHTS IN BOTSWANA IS STRICTLY LIMITED TO 44 POUNDS (20 KGS) PER PERSON IN A DUFFEL BAG, NO SUITCASES (INCLUDING THOSE WITH SOFT-SIDES).

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **tour fee** is \$17150 for one person in double occupancy from Johannesburg. The tour fee includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 18, all meals from breakfast on Day 3 through lunch (a lite lunch) on Day 19, all flights within the tour, all ground transportation, entrance fees and permits, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does **not** include your airfare to and from Johannesburg, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages. Optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry in Namibia, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** is \$2100. (Please note that single rooms may not be available at all of the lodges.) If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please [contact our office](#). Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of \$1700** per person, or see our Payment Options at <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/>. Please note, \$500 of the deposit is non-refundable due to early deposits we must remit to our suppliers to secure the lodges we plan to use, as well as for park fees. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by September 29, 2022 (Tour I); May 4, 2023 (Tour II)**. **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.**

Please note that if you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will require **proof of travel insurance**. Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of that insurance is not refundable, so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. If you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will **require proof of travel insurance**. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 90 to 179 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive information from us regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit.

Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

NCP 7/2020
11/Aug/18TS
1/22; 2/22peg