



THONGA TRAILS BIRDING

Discover the unique coastline of Maputaland





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MAPUTALAND SLACK-PACK ADVENTURE



Maputaland: A Birding Paradise

Thonga Trails offers birding enthusiasts an unparalleled journey through one of South Africa's richest birding regions. Whether you're exploring forest trails, wetlands, or lakes, the area's unique avian diversity promises an unforgettable experience for birders of all levels. Whether you're a seasoned birder or a curious beginner, this experience immerses you in South Africa's stunning bird habitats.

Included in the experience: 3 Nights Accommodation / 2 Boat Trips / Daily Walks / All Meals / Selection of Drinks / Park Fees

Date: 21 August - 24 August 2025 / R12 750 per person



Coastal Forests:

Explore Bhanga Neck's trails to spot Woodward's Batis, Rudd's Apalis, and Pink-throated Twinspots. Keep an ear out for Crowned Eagles and look for Narina Trogons in the shaded forest interiors.

Kosi Lakes:

A boat trip provides opportunities to encounter Pel's Fishing Owl, Palmnut Vultures, and flamingos feeding near the fish traps. Reedbeds reveal Rufous-winged and Pale-crowned Cisticolas for dedicated birders.

Estuary and Coastline:

At low tide, the Kosi Mouth estuary is alive with waders and terns, including Eurasian Whimbrels and Ruddy Turnstones. Mangrove Kingfishers add a unique winter highlight.

Open Plains and Savanna:

The Umdoni savanna offers sightings of Southern Banded Snake Eagles, Lemon-breasted Canaries, and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters, while Lake Silonde hosts African Pygmy Geese and African Jacanas.



Showcasing the 5 areas

WHETHER YOU'RE A SEASONED BIRDER OR A CURIOUS BEGINNER, THONGA TRAILS PROVIDES AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY THROUGH ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S RICHEST AVIAN HABITATS.



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Day 1 - Arrival

Arrive at our camp around midday, located on the shore of the Kosi Bay camp. Settle in and enjoy an afternoon birding walk.

Day 2 - Kosi Lakes

Explore the lakes and the area around the lakes, from 3rd lake all the way up to 1st lake and the upper reaches of the Kosi Bay Estuary. Enjoy a scrumptious lunch at a very special place (keeping details a surprise!) and enjoy a slow cruise back for sundowners at camp.

Day 3 - Coastal Forest & Raffia Forest

Enjoy an early breakfast and walk through the Coastal Forest onto the beach at the back of Bhanga Nek. After lunch we hop back on the boat and explore the area close to the 4th lake and the Raffia Palm Forest.

Day 4 - Departure

Enjoying the last morning while we head out towards the wetlands and grasslands behind the dunes. Saying goodbye's late in the morning.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A GUIDELINE AND A BIRD TARGETLIST, DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER AND THE WISHES, WE'LL REVIEW EACH NIGHT AROUND THE FIRE WHAT THE FINAL PLANS ARE.

About your guide

Dr. Gareth Hempson is an ecologist, botanist, and birding guide with a lifelong passion for the natural world. Raised in Mpumalanga's escarpment forests and Lowveld savannas, he developed a deep love for birds and nature from an early age. He holds an MSc in Botany from the University of Cape Town and a PhD in Rangeland Ecology from the University of Edinburgh. His work explores the dynamics of ecosystems shaped by herbivores, fire, and climate, spanning diverse habitats such as the Richtersveld, Kruger National Park, and Zululand. An avid traveler, Gareth has explored Africa and beyond, including two years following the Serengeti wildebeest migration. Now based in Kosi Bay, he shares his expertise and enthusiasm for birds and plants through guided expeditions, inspiring a deep appreciation for conservation and the region's incredible biodiversity.



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