



Malawi Zambia

TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA



ZAMBIA

MALAWI

Come explore our world — Adventures to fill your soul



Awaken your senses

Whether you are a wellness warrior, culture vulture, slow travel tourer, serious shutterbug or adventure seeker the Malawi Zambia TFCA has a memorable experience for you.



Sound

Hear the late dry season pistol-crack of Msasa pods as they split in two and shoot out seeds, or the distant trumpeting of elephant and a lion's roar.



Smell

Nothing quite like the perfume of a light rain on a parched bushveld, the buttered popcorn smell of a leopard's territory marking, or the night-time scent of a potato bush.



Sight

Endless pristine landscapes, shimmering waterways, misty mountains, fields of flowers and up-close wildlife encounters.



Taste

Gourmet meals with traditional taste notes, wild herbs, bush barbecues, luxury liqueur from the marula tree.



Mind and spirit

Connect and calm your mind, spirit and body through a soothing bush or lakeside spa experience.



Touch

Tread in the footsteps of wildlife, feel the heat of the sun on your skin, and a hot coffee cup in your hands at dawn on a cold winter's morning.

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Pel's fishing-owl
(*Scotopelia peli*)

Zambia — key facts

From the vast plains of Kafue National Park, to the Luangwa River, to adrenaline-fuelled Victoria Falls, a luxury Zambian safari has it all. Remote and untouched, Zambia's wild areas are home to fascinating and often rare wildlife — from antelope to predators. Explore the Malawi Zambia TFCA, one of Africa's wildest and most remote destinations; adventure-filled and unforgettable.

The People of Zambia

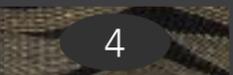
Zambians are a warm and friendly people, eager to help if you are in difficulties and anxious for you to enjoy your visit to Zambia. People are generally conservative, particularly in rural areas. When approaching someone, it is polite to greet them and enquire after their health. A handshake is fine but a gentle grip rather than a firm grip is customary.

Zambia is composed of 72 ethnic groups, most of which are Bantu-speaking, but English is spoken everywhere and is the official language. About 90% of the population falls into nine major ethno-linguistic groups: the Nyanja-Chewa, Bemba, Tonga, Tumbuka, Lunda, Luvale, Kaonde, Nkoya and Lozi. Each ethnic group has its own traditions and festivals, such as the Kwenje Festival in north-eastern Zambia.



© Bernie Olbrich

Senga drummer, Chifunda, Musalangu Game Management Area, bordering North Luangwa.



North Luangwa
NATIONAL PARK
Z A M B I A



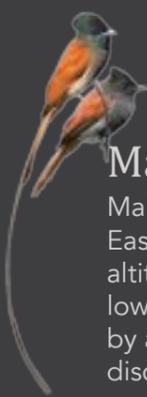
Elephants on the Luangwa River bank graze on fallen river thorn (*Faidherbia albida*) pods.

POPULATION SIZE — 18.9 Million
CURRENCY — Zambian Kwacha (ZMK)
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA — 752,614 km²
BEST TIME TO VISIT —

- Migrant and resident birdlife reaches its peak in 'Green Season' (generally from November to April). Some lodges and camps still close over this time so plan your itinerary accordingly.
- Plains game often drop their young in Green Season to take advantage of abundant grazing and water. If it's predator action you want, now is a good time as the big cats often move in to prey on vulnerable youngsters.
- The dry season (around July to October) is when wildlife is easiest to find and see because water is scarce and animals don't move too far from remaining sources.
- Late dry season is also good for predator action. As grazing dwindles in October and the heat ramps up, many plains game become weaker and more vulnerable, making it easier for the cats and canids to ambush them at the last-remaining waterholes.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE — English





African paradise flycatcher
(*Terpsiphone viridis*)

Malawi — key facts

Malawi, is defined by its landscape of highlands split by the Great East African Rift Valley, the vastness of Lake Malawi, the cool, high altitude grasslands of the Nyika Plateau and the savannas of the lowlands. Much of the natural landscape has been transformed by agriculture, but many natural and cultural pearls remain to be discovered.

The People of Malawi

Malawi is known, with good reason, as the 'Warm Heart of Africa'. Malawians are warm, welcoming and friendly. People will greet you and ask how you are, where you are from and are you enjoying your visit to their country. You should return the greeting in the same way before you jump into business.

There is a rich cultural mix in Malawi with the Chewa being the most numerous tribe. In the north, the Tumbuka are dominant. Each tribe has contributed to the modern Malawi cultural potpourri, in dress, dance and language.



Village girls practising dance, between Chintcheche and Salima, Lake Malawi.

Lake Kazuni VWAZA MARSH WILDLIFE RESERVE M A L A W I

POPULATION SIZE — 19.89 Million

CURRENCY — Malawian Kwacha

GEOGRAPHICAL SIZE — 118,484 km²

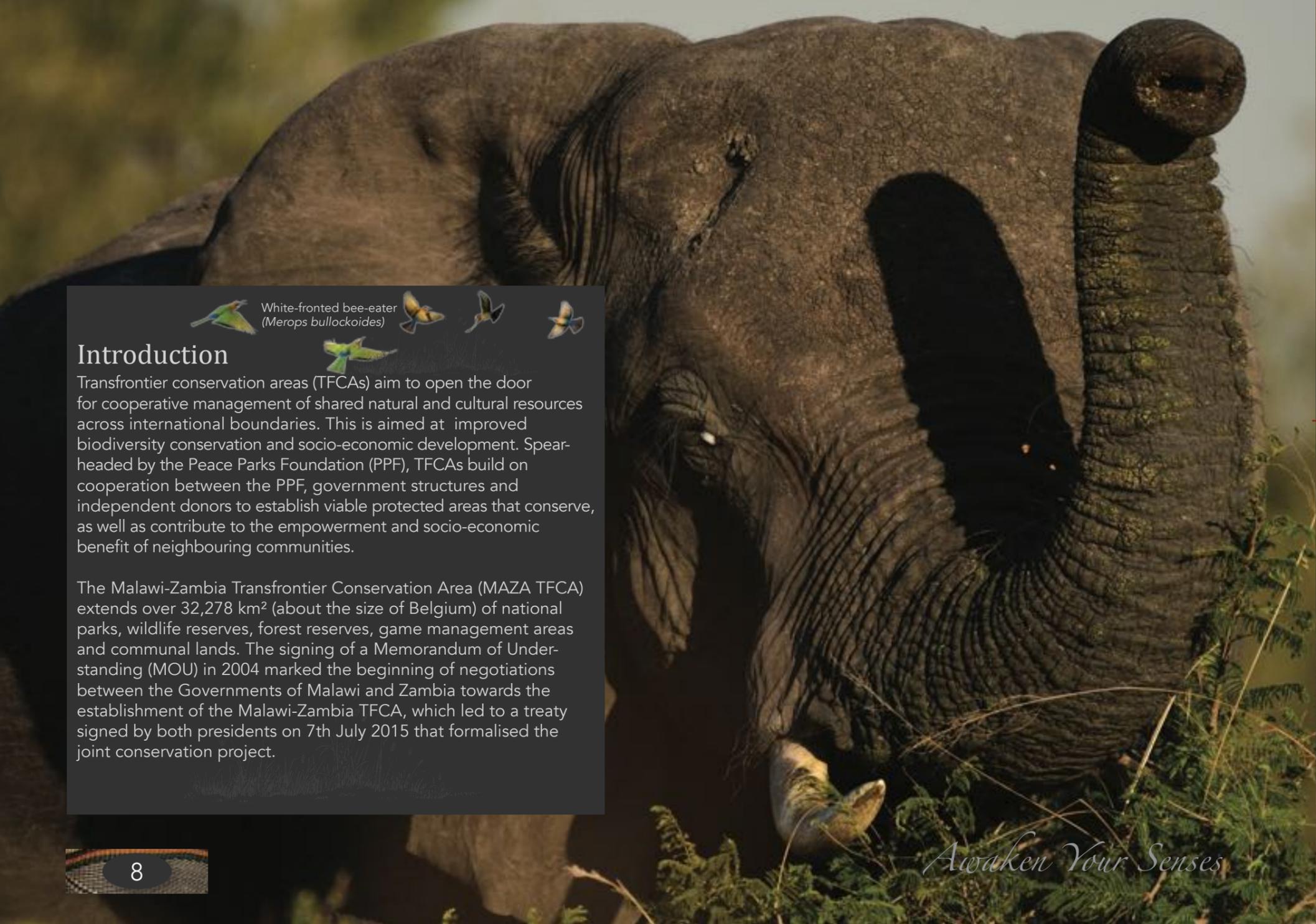
LANGUAGE — Chichewa, English

BEST TIME TO GO

- Cool-dry Season: May – August (Temperature: 15°C - 26°C). Fresh and chilly evenings with bright sunshine during the day, perfect for travellers from the Northern Hemisphere.
- Hot Season: September to November (Temperature: 22°C - 42°C) best for game viewing.
- Rainy Season: November to April. Migrant birds flood in, the bush is lush and emerald green, so this time is best for photographic safaris and birding.

*Experience wildlife, safari adventure, community and culture.
Come find a beautiful place to get lost.*





Introduction

Transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) aim to open the door for cooperative management of shared natural and cultural resources across international boundaries. This is aimed at improved biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development. Spear-headed by the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), TFCAs build on cooperation between the PPF, government structures and independent donors to establish viable protected areas that conserve, as well as contribute to the empowerment and socio-economic benefit of neighbouring communities.

The Malawi-Zambia Transfrontier Conservation Area (MAZA TFCA) extends over 32,278 km² (about the size of Belgium) of national parks, wildlife reserves, forest reserves, game management areas and communal lands. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2004 marked the beginning of negotiations between the Governments of Malawi and Zambia towards the establishment of the Malawi-Zambia TFCA, which led to a treaty signed by both presidents on 7th July 2015 that formalised the joint conservation project.

Awaken Your Senses

The MAZA TFCA comprises two components. The Nyika-North Luangwa and Vwaza/Lundazi components, comprising Malawi's Nyika National Park, Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve, and Zambia's Nyika National Park, North Luangwa National Park, Lundazi Forest Reserve, Mitengi Forest Reserve, Mikuti Forest Reserve and the Musalangu Game Management Area. The second component, Kasungu/Lukusuzi, is composed of the Kasungu National Park in Malawi, and the Lukusuzi National Park in Zambia. A narrow corridor of customary land lies between the parks. Customary, or communal land, is land owned by indigenous communities and administered in accordance with their customs, as opposed to state tenure. In the context of TFCAs this ensures that communities affected by the TFCA are the primary beneficiaries of the economic and improved livelihoods opportunities of conservation.



Getting Around

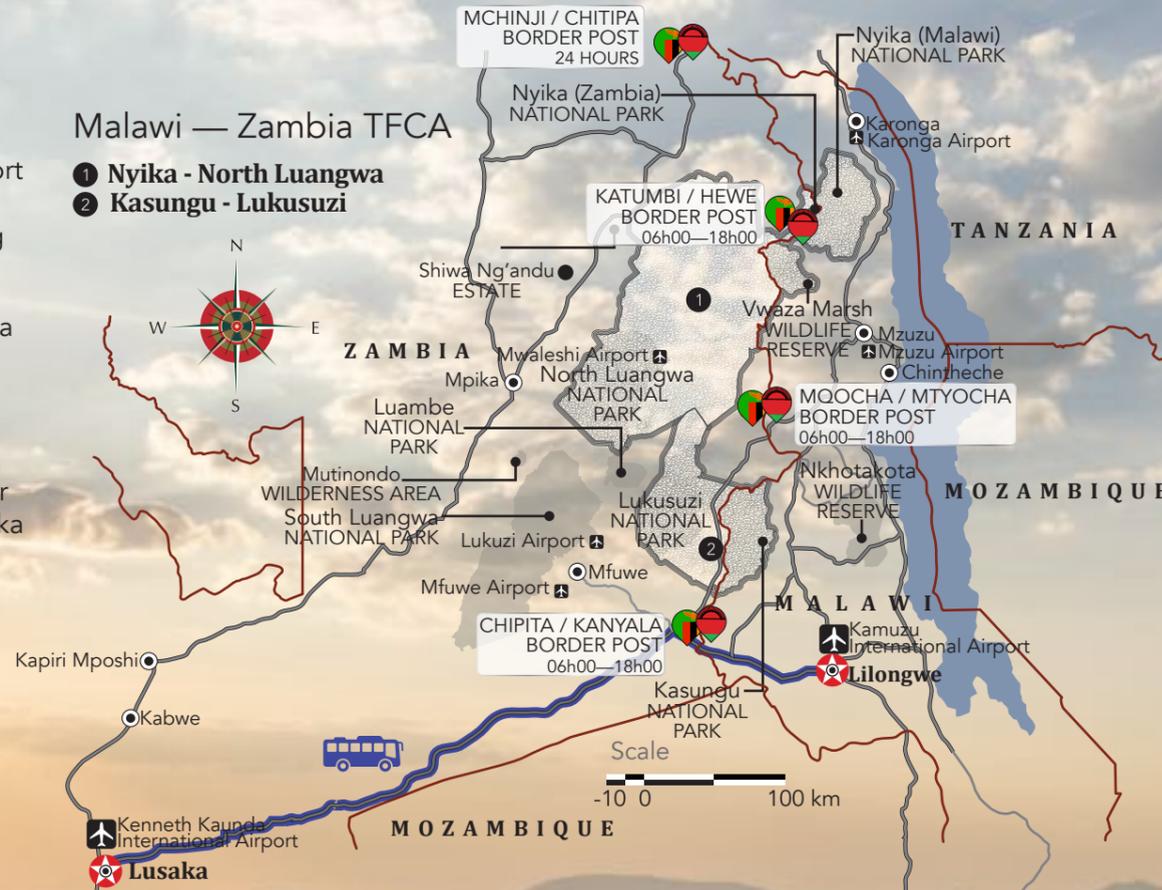
Malawi's main international travel hub is Kamuzu International airport in the capital city Lilongwe. Blantyre's Chileka International Airport also receives international flights. There are bus companies running from regional capital cities to Malawi.

Zambia has four international airports, at Livingstone, Lusaka, Ndola and Mfuwe. The major international airline hub is Kenneth Kaunda International Airport at Lusaka. Charter flights from these airports can take you to the airstrips in both North and South Luangwa national parks. Transfers to the lodges can be arranged in advance. Lodges will send a vehicle to meet you at Mfuwe airport for transfer to your lodge. Four-wheel drive campers can be hired in both Lusaka and Mfuwe, but should be booked well in advance of your trip.

DISTANCES AND APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIMES				
Lusaka to Lilongwe — 710 km	26h00	10h15m	10h15m	1h15mins
Lusaka to Mfuwe — 668 km		9h32m	9h32m	1h20mins
Lilongwe to Mfuwe — 273 km		4h14m	4h14m	1h23mins
Mfuwe to North Luangwa — 289 km			6h00m	45mins
Lilongwe to Nyika — 528 km	9h19m	9h32m	9h32m	56mins
Lilongwe to Likoma Island — 236km				1h00

Malawi — Zambia TFCA

- 1 Nyika - North Luangwa
- 2 Kasungu - Lukusuzi



Malawi is perhaps one of the best countries in which to head out onto the road and self-explore, preferably in a fully equipped four-wheel drive camper to take the roads less travelled. If you are staying at lodges then a four-wheel drive without camping equipment, or high clearance vehicle will be adequate to cruise from lodge to lodge with confidence.

There's no better way to experience Zambia than to travel these diverse landscapes in a four-wheel drive camper. SADC driver's licences are valid in both Malawi and Zambia. All other travellers must have both their local licence and an international driving permit. Traffic drives on the left-hand side. A four-wheel drive, or at least a high clearance vehicle if you are not camping, is your best choice for both Zambia and Malawi as some roads may be heavily rutted or potholed.

Stick to speed limits and be aware that some roads may be in poor condition, you are likely to be travelling great distances so it may take much longer than you expect to cover them due to traffic and road conditions. Do not drive at night, many vehicles are without lights and pedestrians, cyclists and animals may be in the road.

For a detailed map and more useful information go to: <https://tinyurl.com/mynbwmxr>



Miombo Woodland

Black Rock KASUNGU NATIONAL PARK MALAWI



Pont crossing Luangwa River at Ituba, North Luangwa National Park, Zambia.

Mopane (*Colophospermum mopane*) twigs have been traditionally used as tooth brushes.

Crowned hornbill
(*Lophoceros alboterminatus*)



© Bernie Olbrich



Little bee-eater
(*Merops pusillus*)

Transfrontier Conservation Areas

Northern component: Nyika - North Luangwa

- 1 Nyika (Malawi) National Park
- 2 Nyika (Zambia) National Park
- 3 Mitenge National Forest Reserve
- 4 Musalangu Game Management Area
- 5 Fungwe Forest Reserve
- 6 Lundazi Forest Reserve
- 7 Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve
- 8 North Luangwa National Park

Southern component: Kasungu - Lukusuzi

- 9 Lukusuzi National Park
- 10 Kasungu National Park
- 11 Lundazi Forest Reserve

Surrounding areas

- 12 South Luangwa National Park
- 13 Mafinga Mountains Forest Reserve
- 14 Lake Malawi
- 15 Luambe National Park
- 16 Communal land
- 17 Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve



Sjambok pod (*Cassia abbreviata*) grows mostly in the north-east on termite mounds and in all kinds of woodland. A brew of stem bark is used as a malaria remedy.



12



North Luangwa
NATIONAL PARK
ZAMBIA



'Not all those who wander are lost.'
J.R.R. Tolkien



13



African pygmy goose
(*Nettapus auritus*)

North Luangwa National Park

In Zambia, to the west of Nyika National Park, is the remote wilderness of North Luangwa National Park. Extending over 4,712 km², the Park lies at the heart of almost untouched bushveld landscapes. There is abundant wildlife including the Big-5, and expertly guided walking trails through the bush are not to be missed. You can reach the Park in a four-wheel drive vehicle or by air charter, but only from June to October. Transfers by air between North and South Luangwa are available. From November to May the Park is inaccessible by road and the camps are closed for the rainy season.

The North Luangwa ecoregion is a part of the Zambebian regional centre of endemism and has the greatest floral richness of the African miombo ecoregions. This extraordinarily rich ecoregion supports over 3,000 plant species, of which several hundred are endemics, plants found only in this region. The vegetation ranges from mopane woodland to riverine forest. Trees include the beautiful sausage tree, vegetable ivory palms, red mahogany, pod mahogany, tamarind and leadwood.

Wildlife in the Park includes: elephant, black rhino, Cape buffalo, lion, leopard, African wild dog, spotted hyenas and smaller carnivores. There is also a good variety of antelope including: hartebeest, roan, sable, Cookson's wildebeest, Crawshay's zebra and Lichtenstein's hartebeest. There are also Thornicroft's giraffe.

The North Luangwa Conservation Programme, established in 1986, is a partnership between the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and the Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife. The initiative focuses on conservation in partnership with neighbouring communities. In 2003, 2008 and 2010, the FZS introduced black rhino, absent from Zambia for many years, to a secure area deep inside the Park.

www.northluangwa.org



There are three luxurious camps in the Park and some excellent lodges outside and on the boundary of the Park. These offer expertly guided game drives and walks but also allow self-drive exploration. If you are on a more slender budget and are travelling in a four-wheel drive vehicle, there are several campsites in the Park on the Lufila River and also some excellent campsites outside the Park. You can then explore the Park in your own vehicle, although you may not enter the Park before 06h00 and must be out of the Park by 18h00. You should buy your food and water, and top up your fuel in Mfuwe before you venture into the wilderness.

Important fossils, including the ancestors of mammals, large armoured reptiles, giant amphibians, fish, and many others have been found in the Park since the early 1970's. Fossils of archosaurs, (the ancestors of dinosaurs, crocodiles and birds), as well as therapsids (the small, active, carnivorous ancestors of mammals that survived the great extinction at the end of the Permian) are also found in the Park. The fossils range from the Late Permian, more than 260 million years ago, to the Late Triassic around 230 million years ago. Look how far we mammals have come!

Odontocyclops

This huge skull belongs to a mammal-like reptile called Odontocyclops, meaning 'toothy cyclops' for the one-eyed giants from Greek mythology. Although it had two normal eyes, a small opening in the skull allowed the animal to detect light and temperature. It was one of the first successful terrestrial herbivores which lived more than 250 million years ago. The Odontocyclops' diet most likely consisted of a variety of seeds, leaves, stems, and fleshy parts of plants. This specimen is on display in the Livingstone Museum.



© Steve Tolan

Lodge
NORTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK
Z A M B I A





African skimmer
(*Rynchops flavirostris*)

ADVENTURE SEEKER

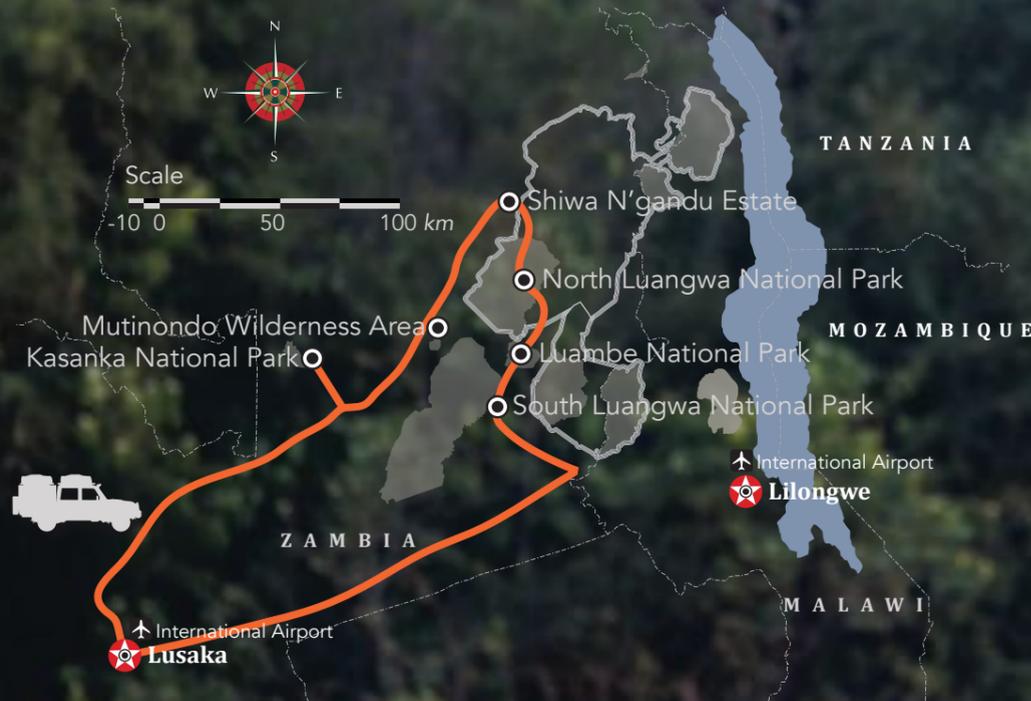
WILDLIFE WANDERER



North Luangwa — self drive ~14 days 1,980 km
Great North Road, Kasanka, Mutinondo Wilderness, Shiwa N'gandu, North Luangwa, Luambe and South Luangwa National Parks.

You will need a fully equipped four-wheel drive vehicle, the experience to use it, and a high degree of self-sufficiency in this very remote and wild area.

If you travel north from Lusaka on the Great North Road to North Luangwa National Park's northern entrance, you can easily take a turn to Kasanka National Park. Kasanka is a summer home to millions of migratory, straw-colored fruit bats (*Eidolon helvum*). The bats begin arriving in about the middle of October reaching the greatest number of bats by mid-November. Numbers are estimated to be between eight and 10 million. This is believed to be the greatest concentration of mammals, and the greatest mammal migration on Earth. Next stop could be Mutinondo Wilderness where you can hike and swim freely and safely on your own. From there move on to Shiwa N'gandu Estate considered 'one of the most fascinating and unique destinations in Zambia'. North Luangwa National Park is your next stop for one of Africa's finest wilderness experiences. Travel on to spend a relaxed day or two at Luambe National Park and then to your final stop at South Luangwa, known as 'one of the greatest wildlife sanctuaries in the world'.



North Luangwa
NATIONAL PARK
ZAMBIA

Buffalo-thorn (*Ziziphus mucronata*) The leaves are edible and can be cooked into spinach. The seeds can be roasted and ground as a substitute for coffee. The fruits are not very tasty, although a kind of beer can be made from them.



By Air

Transfers to and from North Luangwa are normally organised as part of your safari package, on small 4–6 seater light aircraft. A short hop here by light aircraft from Mwanza (South Luangwa) or Mfuwe takes about 45–60 minutes, or arrange a charter direct from Lusaka or Lilongwe. Ideally, pair five nights in North Luangwa with three nights in South Luangwa, and then a few days on the beach on Lake Malawi, at a lakeside lodge or a lodge on one of the Lake's islands.

Accommodation

There are very few lodges or camps in North Luangwa National Park and, although they may not offer the opulent luxury of other more famous destinations, you are guaranteed a no frills, authentic African safari that is amongst the finest on the continent. On a busy day, with fewer than a dozen people in the Park, the chances of seeing any other guests are very low.

Safari options



Made famous by its renowned walking safaris and world-class guides, you can experience wildlife the way explorers did, in the past; on foot, with the music of nature the only sounds around you.



Day and night vehicle safaris are a popular activity offering you the chance to watch wildlife as the sun goes down with a cool drink in hand, or alternatively try a safari by mountain bike.



All lodge guides are avid birders and excellent birding guides.



Puku (*Kobus vardonii*) are found mostly in marshy grassland and dambos and are active in the early morning and late afternoon. Listen for their shrill whistle when alarmed.



European bee-eater
(*Merops apiaster*)

Musalangu Game Management Area

One of the largest protected areas in Zambia is the Musalangu Game Management Area (GMA) of 17,350 km². This area extends from the eastern escarpment of the Luangwa Valley to the Mpika escarpment on the western side. The Luangwa River flows through Musalangu from north to south. It is divided into several blocks for various uses that provide enormous direct benefits to communities, in addition to the positive national economic benefit from tourism.

This GMA aims to enhance the conservation, preservation and sustainable utilisation of the natural and heritage resources of the area for the improvement of the livelihoods of the local households. As part of the GMA's management plan, a community conservation area or Special Use Zone is proposed in the eastern parts of Musalangu GMA to increase management effectiveness and efficiency of the protected area, reduce illegal resource use, increase the biodiversity status, provide increased livelihood benefits and improve connectivity to other protected areas in the TFCA. It offers opportunities for public private partnerships in the conservation of biodiversity and heritage resources. Within the GMA, the Kambombo Nature Park in the Chama Block is under development as a partnership between the local community and a cooperating partner/investor.



© Lex Hes

Senga drumming and dancing, Chifunda Village, Musalangu.



Msasa
(*Brachystegia spiciformis*)

Lake Kazuni
Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve
Malawi

Musalangu
GAME MANAGEMENT AREA
Z A M B I A

Miombo Woodland
Foreground Malawi — looking into Musalangu GMA Zambia

'Wetlands are essential for the planet's water security – they provide water for people and nature, regulate the global climate, and are home to a vast array of plants and animals.'

Anon

Wetlands



Vwaza Marsh
WILDLIFE RESERVE
M A L A W I

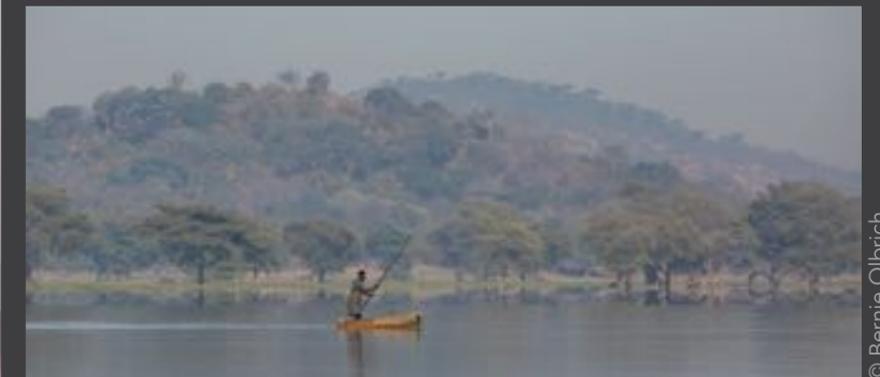


Lilac-breasted roller
(*Coracias caudatus*)



Wvaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve

Vwaza Marsh in Malawi lies below the montane grasslands of the Nyika National Park. It has a more familiar African bushveld landscape of lake and marsh vegetation, flood-plain grassland, dambos, thickets, riparian forest, and miombo woodland. A visit taking in these two parks is perhaps the most magical experience in Malawi. The Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve is home to the typical African bushveld species; there are Cape buffalo, African elephant, and antelope such as eland, sable, roan, sitatunga and Lichtenstein's hartebeest. The Reserve is also home to large predators such as lion, leopard, cheetah, and spotted hyena, whilst baboons and vervet monkeys are abundant. African wild dogs, or painted wolves, one of the world's most endangered mammals, are also found in the Park.



Local fisherman on Lake Kazuni



Lake Kazuni has a large hippo population



Crowned eagle
(*Stephanoaetus coronatus*)



Mafinga Mountains

FOREST RESERVE
Z A M B I A

Makutu Hills and Mafinga Mountains

If you are really adventurous, look to the scenic Makutu Hills west of Nyika National Park and Mafinga Mountains located in the remote north-east of Zambia, that fall into the highlands ecosystem and are home to a wealth of birdlife with more than 40 bird species confined to this zone. The Mafinga massif extends over some 230 km². Around 67% of the mountain range is a protected forest reserve hosting dozens of plant and bird species, many unique to this area. The Mafinga Mountains are a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA). The mountains are the watershed and source of the Luangwa River, and offer superb hiking trails, guided or self-guided, that take you to Namitawa Peak, Zambia's highest point at 2,339 m. There are guest houses at Mafinga Boma, Muyombe and Mpika, where porters and guides can be engaged. You are expected to provide food and drink for the guides and porters. If you spend several days in the mountains you would also need to provide shelter.



Churring cisticola
(*Cisticola njombe*)

Makutu Hills

FOREST RESERVE
Z A M B I A



There are no facilities in the mountains and so, fully self-contained wild camping is the best way to experience these often misty and mysterious landscapes. Be prepared for windy, cold and wet conditions — the weather can be very different at over 2,000 m to that in the lowland. Roads from Lundazi onwards are rough gravel, and fuel may be scarce. Make sure you have extra cans of fuel, best purchased in Chipata, an inflated spare wheel and the tools to change it should you get a puncture.



'I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list.'

Susan Sontag





Wattled crane
(*Bugeranus carunculatus*)

Nyika National Park Malawi and Zambia

The Nyika-North Luangwa component is centred on the beautiful, malaria-free, 3,200 km² Nyika National Park's predominantly high, undulating montane grassland plateau interspersed with forest. It rises at its highest point to Nganda Hill 2,600 m above the bushveld and wetlands of Vwaza Marsh. The Park, often shrouded in mist, straddles the border between the two countries and so there is a small portion of the Park in Zambia. There are more than 3,000 plant species here, and during the spring and summer months from October to February, myriad flowers, including more than 200 species of orchid, spring up in the grasslands.

Birdlife is abundant with over 400 species including the endangered wattled crane and the world's largest breeding population of the extremely rare blue swallow. Mammals include Crawshay's zebra, eland, roan, reedbuck, blue duiker, klipspringer and bushpig. Nyika is also home to one of the greatest densities of leopards in central Africa, look out for them in and around the forested areas.



Guest house Nyika National Park, Zambia.

© Bernie Olbrich

The orchid, (*Disa satyriopsis*), is edible. These orchids, known locally as 'chikande' or 'chinaka', are an important source of both food and income.

Nyika Plateau NYIKA NATIONAL PARK M A L A W I



Crawshay's zebra and roan antelope, Nyika National Park.

© Lex Hes



Denham's bustard
(*Neotis denhami*)

'One of our planet's most vital but undervalued biomes, grasslands have been around for more than 30 million years.'

Grasslands



© Lex Hes

Indigenous Forest



Nyika — by air

Why not fly into Lilongwe, spend a week on the shores of Lake Malawi or one of its islands, before flying in to Nyika for a few days spent on this undulating montane grassland plateau?

Black-lored cisticola
(*Cisticola nigriloris*)



Small scale, community bee-keeper.



© Lex Hes

Lodge

NYIKA NATIONAL PARK
MALAWI



Like Riding a Bicycle
Mountain bike trails through Nyika National Park can bring you face-to-face with wildlife, a rare and sublime experience.



Roan antelope



Eland

© Lex Hes

© Lex Hes

© Lex Hes

© Lex Hes



Helmeted guineafowl
(*Numida meleagris*)

Lukusuzi and Kasungu National Parks

To the south of North Luangwa is the Lukusuzi National Park. Its sister park, Kasungu National Park in Malawi, is a short way to the east. They lie in an important area for biodiversity conservation, the Central Zambezian Miombo Woodland Ecoregion. This ecoregion is home to a wide diversity of plants, mammals, and birds: about 3,000 plant, 112 mammal and almost 400 bird species. The two parks are linked by a corridor of community land under traditional tenure.

Both parks have suffered from poaching and so wildlife is sparse but includes a variety of antelope, Cape buffalo, zebra, elephant, leopard, hyenas and African wild dogs. Lukusuzi is known for its large pack of African wild dogs.



© Lesley Lane

African wild dog



Lucky beans or rosary pea (*Abrus precatorius*) seeds are toxic because of the presence of abrin. Ingestion of a single seed, well chewed, can be fatal to both adults and children.



Lukusuzi
NATIONAL PARK
ZAMBIA



© Steve Tolan

Lukusuzi National Park entrance gate.



Cattle egret
(*Bubulcus ibis*)

In 2022, 263 elephants and 431 additional animals were translocated to Kasungu National Park. The parks are currently, in 2023, under restoration. There are minimal basic facilities at the only camp in Kasungu, located on the Lifupa Dam. It offers day and night game drives, walking trails, good birding, and visits to neighbouring communities.

There are no facilities at all in Lukusuzi. Access to the Park is over very rough roads and there is only one road through the Park, so be sure you are ready for a challenge and wild camping before you embark on a trip to this Park. Accommodation is available about 60 km to the north-west in Luambe National Park, but the road is poor gravel and travel is slow. Bookings at Luambe are essential.



© Lesley Lane

Spotted hyaena, hooded and white-backed vultures



Woodland sugarbush
(*Protea angolensis*)



Black Rock
KASUNGU NATIONAL PARK
M A L A W I



Miombo Woodland

Night Sounds
The night sounds of a nearby lion's deep roar reverberating in your chest, or the eerie 'whoops' and shrieks of spotted hyenas. will raise the hair on the back of your neck — and live in your memory.

© Bernie Olbrich



South Luangwa
SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK
Z A M B I A



Adrenaline in Spades
Walking trails in South Luangwa, your senses on full alert to the sights, sounds and smells of the bush; is that the deep rumbling growl of a hidden elephant you hear? An adrenaline-pumping experience!



Southern carmine bee-eater
(*Merops nubicooides*)

South Luangwa National Park

South Luangwa is not in the TFCA but it is easily accessible and close to North Luangwa National Park. The 9,050 km² Park offers stunning and diverse landscapes of grasslands, woodlands and meandering rivers. It is rich in wildlife including the Big 5: elephant, white rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard. Accommodation is mostly along the Luangwa River in luxurious lodges, all offering a sublime safari experience on game drives and adrenaline-pumping walking trails. Wildlife includes: Thornicroft's giraffe, Crawshay's zebra, Cookson's wildebeest, and over 400 species of birds.

Although not part of the TFCA, the Park will definitely be a tempting extension of your trip to North Luangwa. A visit will reward you with a lifetime of safari memories and dreams of Africa — and a longing to return. Among the more common trees in the valley are the mopane, leadwood, winterthorn, ivory palm, marula and the magnificent tamarind tree. There are also some ancient and gigantic baobab specimens and a few large ebony forests to admire.



© Bernie Olbrich



© Lesley Lane

Accommodation

There is a wide range of accommodation from which to enjoy all that this incredible Park has to offer. Most of the lodges are along the Luangwa River, so you can see hippos, crocodiles, elephants and more without leaving the comfort of your deck. Elephants, hippos, giraffes, vervet monkeys, baboons, bushbuck and other species often wander around within the grounds of the unfenced lodges, adding to your unique and truly wild African experience.

Safari options

Mobile walking safaris: You will be accompanied by a guide as you walk along the river banks, from one overnight camp to another deep in the heart of the Park, exploring areas where there are no roads, so you are unlikely to see anything but wildlife. This Park is one of the best known for this kind of safari.



Birding safaris: There is a vast array of birds in the Park. Accompanied by an expert guide, you will have the time to listen to bird song, twitters and calls, as well as seeing large game.



Boat safaris: The Luangwa River offers a wildlife viewing experience from the safety and comfort of a boat. The rainy season between October and May is best for these boat trips. Hippos and crocodiles are everywhere, elephants are common, but most other animals do not need to come to the river in the wet season so the focus will be on the experience itself more than game viewing.

Other activities



A spa experience in the heart of the Park is tranquil and rejuvenating. The therapists use treatments such as a coffee grounds exfoliation before a deep cleanse with marula and moisturising with sausage tree or baobab masks. Relax in the jacuzzi or enjoy a reflexology massage, all in the magical African bush.

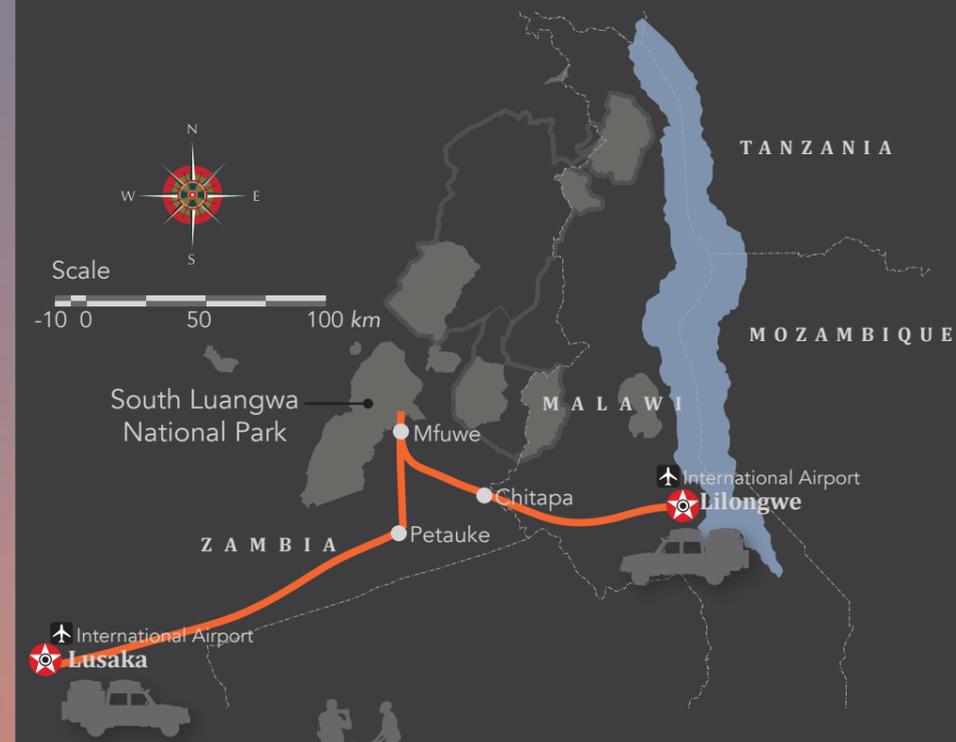
South Luangwa — self drive

It is about 145 km from Lilongwe to Chitapa in Zambia via the Mchinji border crossing. This will take you three to four hours. From Chitapa to Mfuwe at South Luangwa is 123 km on a corrugated road and takes about two hours.

If travelling in a four-wheel drive vehicle from Lusaka, it is possible to take a short cut from the Great East Road at Petauke, alongside the Luangwa River to Mfuwe. This should only be attempted well into the dry season and only if you are a competent and experienced driver. Distance is 668 km which will take between nine and 10 hours via the T4 road.

South Luangwa — by air

Mfuwe International Airport is the hub for air travel. There are flights to South Luangwa from Lusaka all year (frequencies increase in high season). Charter planes also offer seat rates to South Luangwa. All lodges provide transfers to and from the airport. Why not fly into Lilongwe, spend a week on the shores of Lake Malawi or one of its islands before flying in to Mfuwe for a week in the bush, a few days in South Luangwa and a few days in North Luangwa?



For culture vultures



Just outside the Park is Kawaza village, home to the Kunda tribe. Experience the culture of the local people and the opportunity to stay in a simple African thatched hut. The village is a past winner of the prestigious British Guild of Travel Writers' Silver Otter Award for the 'Best Overseas Tourism Project'.



South Luangwa
SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK
Z A M B I A





African fish eagle
(*Haliaeetus vocifer*)

Lake Malawi — a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Not far to the east of the TFCA lies the southern-most lake of the East African Rift Valley, the tranquil, shimmering jewel of Lake Malawi, David Livingstone's 'Lake of Stars'. It is some 570 km long and 75 km wide at its widest point. There are many easily accessible tourist camps along its shores, ranging from backpacker camps to beach-side resorts and private island getaways — something to suit all tastes and budgets. Camps and resorts offer a wide range of activities from snorkelling and diving in the clear lake waters, to boating, paragliding above the Lake, and horse riding on the shores. Most lodges and camps can organise visits to nearby villages where you can experience a real-life encounter with rural Malawians. Karonga is one of Malawi's most northern towns and home of the 'Cultural and Museum Centre Karonga' (CMCK) which displays cultural history and the recent archaeological finds of dinosaur and hominid bones. It's worth spending an hour or two looking around its main exhibition of 'Malawi, from Dinosaurs to Democracy' includes a full size replica of the 12 m long and 3 m high, 120 million-year-old *Malawisaurus* skeleton found in the Karonga district nearly 100 years ago. There is also a replica of the jawbone of the world's oldest known fossil of *Homo rudolfensis*, found to the south near Chilumba. The museum has an internet café and a traditional café and is well worth a visit.



© Lesley Lane



Chintheche
LAKE MALAWI
M A L A W I



Take a Deep Breath
Snorkelling or scuba diving amongst the more than 800 species of Lake Malawi's multicoloured cichlids. These rainbow-hued fish are found only in some of the East African Rift Valley lakes.

*It's not what you look at that matters.
It's what you see.'*
Henry David Thoreau



Bush to Beach — by charter
Lake Malawi, Likoma Island, North Luangwa and South Luangwa

Charter flights can take you from your bush retreat to Lake Malawi resorts and islands allowing you to enjoy two completely different adventures.

Senga Bay, 128 km from Lilongwe, is a great place to relax or choose from a range of activities at the Lake, if you are an energetic type. Kuti Wildlife Reserve can be visited overnight or on a day trip from Senga Bay. This community project is a good introduction to Malawi's wildlife.

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, 130 km from Senga Bay, offers a true wilderness experience. Elephants can often be seen at the lodges, and activities include canoeing and fishing.

Nkhata Bay, 146 km from Nkhotakota, is a vibrant and popular small town on the Lake shore. This is a great place for chilling out, or snorkeling and diving. The lodge has qualified diving instructors so you could even take a scuba course at the PADI diving centre. You may want to visit Chintheche on the way, famous for its clear, warm waters and white sand beach.

Nyika National Park, 230 km from Nkhata Bay, is a unique, high-altitude park, with a very different feel to the reserves in the south. Although not a Big Five destination, it is the best place in Malawi to see leopard, and the pristine landscapes are outstanding.

Northern Malawi — self-drive 14 days
Lake Malawi, Senga Bay, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, Nkhata Bay, Nyika National Park and Vwaza Wildlife Reserve



Likoma Island
LAKE MALAWI
M A L A W I

Likoma Island, just 8 km long and 3 km wide, is a Malawi territory but lies in the Mozambican waters of the Lake. The lodges offer tranquil experiences with visits by a local choir and male Malipenga and female Chioda dancing teams, an integral part of Malawi culture. Feathers in caps, socks pulled up to the knees and the haunting trumpeting of the calabash tell the story of colonial days gone by. Visit the enormous St. Peter's cathedral built by missionaries in 1905. On a Sunday you might attend a service and enjoy the beautiful singing of the cathedral's choir.



Greater flamingo
(*Phoenicopiterus roseus*)



A Gourmet Safari

The TFCA and its neighbours don't just provide a safari experience and wood-fired barbecues. Many lodges have appointed world class chefs and the gourmet food reflects this. You may enjoy snacks and drinks on game drives, traditional afternoon teatime spreads, posh picnics and fabulous feasts, usually overlooking beautiful landscapes and waterholes.

Enjoy peppered Zambian beef carpaccio, homemade ravioli, and triple-chocolate mousse cakes to die for, all accompanied by a dawn and evening chorus of birdsong, the grunting and splashing of hippo or perhaps elephant drinking and playing in the river. There are fresh salads of seared tuna, homemade flatbreads, spicy dips, and Asian-style grilled 'chambo' (delicious fish from Lake Malawi). Before you start, how about a few drinks such as cocktails made with Malawi gin? There is a range of beers, or try 'thobwa', a grainy, thick, sweet beer, made from fermented white maize and millet. Chibuku is a commercial interpretation. Both are traditional drinks but admittedly not to everyone's taste.

In Malawi you might try sweet and fluffy 'mandazi', a Malawian donut made from flour, coconut milk, baking powder, egg, peanuts, cardamom, sugar and yeast. The mandazis are fried to a golden brown. 'Zitumbuwa' is made of bananas, corn flour and many different spices, deep fried in hot oil. Usually served with sugar and butter, it is typically eaten as a quick snack.

'Chibwabwa' is a relish made from pumpkin leaves. Pumpkin leaves are tasty greens and can be eaten raw in a salad or puréed into a soup. The leaves are usually chopped and sautéed in olive oil with tomatoes, onion and garlic.

The really brave might try mopane worms, usually served dried and crunchy, but also in a tomato and onion sauce served with 'nshima' (a stiff maize porridge) for lunch or dinner.



African short-tailed eagle/bateleur (*Terathopus ecaudatus*)

Luambe National Park

A short way to the north of Lukusuzi National Park is Luambe National Park, Zambia's second smallest, and not included within the TFCA. The Park has more than 200 species of birds and a variety of mammals including elephant, lion, leopard and African wild dogs. A less visited park with only one camp, it is likely you will have the Luambe National Park all to yourself and can spend all the time you wish at something that captures your interest, such as the colonies of nesting carmine bee-eaters in September and October. The camp offers walking trails, game drives, sundowners and sleep-outs on the Luangwa River banks.

© Martin Mecnarowski—Shutterstock



Southern carmine bee-eaters (*Merops nubicoides*) are intra-African migrants and arrive here at their breeding grounds in September and October.

© Lesley Lane



African short-tailed eagle/bateleur (*Terathopus ecaudatus*).



Miombo Woodland

Luambe
NATIONAL PARK
Z A M B I A



© Bernie Olbrich



Narina Trogon
(*Apaloderma narina*)

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve

Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve, Malawi's biggest and oldest reserve, covers 1,800 square kilometres. It is covered in a dense woodland cut through by three rivers leading to Lake Malawi. For years, poaching severely reduced wildlife numbers, the elephant population fell to just 100, making the Reserve a silent forest. In 2015, Malawi's government partnered with African Parks to restore and manage the reserve. They reintroduced 500 elephants and 2,000 other animals in 2016 and 2017, with more additions in 2022. The also provides jobs and business opportunities like beekeeping, fish farming, and chili production. Additionally, it invests in education, healthcare, nutrition, and infrastructure, benefiting many people.



© Lesley Lane

African Parks translocated 15 hippo into the Park — a first for African Parks. Hippo — essential to the ecology of rivers and waterbodies.



Natal mahogany (*Trichelia emetica*) grow largest along river banks, their roots helping prevent erosion.



Nkhotakota
WILDERNESS RESERVE
ZAMBIA



© Earth Walker



Nyau Dancers

The sinister Nyau dancers are called 'vilombo' (animals) in Chewa, and are believed to be possessed by the spirits of the ancestors. There are many Nyau dances at ceremonies in both Zambia and Malawi. More than 30 different Nyau dances are performed at a single festival where dancers wear different masks and an array of coloured costumes. These dancers are at the Tumbuka, tribal Kwenje ceremony held annually in October under the auspices of Snr. Chief Kambombo.



Origins and Cultural Heritage

Africa has a rich cultural heritage — colourful, vibrant and regionally diverse. Tradition is expressed through many different art forms, such as music, dance, art, sculpture and beadwork. These traditions are deeply ingrained into the whole African culture although colonialism eroded some of these, especially in urban areas. However, many rural communities have retained their traditional and regionally unique customs and values.

In Zambia, the National Heritage Conservation Commission has established cultural villages and private museums to promote artistic cultural traditions from wood carving to music and dance. In October, the Senga-Tumbuka people hold the annual, colourful Kwenje festival with its drums,

snake dance and dancers wearing rattles, feathers and masks, in the TFCA area of Kwambombo in north-eastern Zambia. Traditional tribal beliefs are embraced alongside Christianity by most people.

An important part of Malawi culture is music. Most tribes have their own songs and dances and use instruments such as drums, mambirilira (similar to a xylophone) and a variety of rattles. The 'Lake of Stars' is a three-day festival held annually in September, at different venues from northern to southern Lake Malawi, that features a variety of music, dance, poetry and other performances from Malawi and around the world. There is also the 'Sand Music Festival' in July, August and September at various venues and featuring mostly Malawian artists. Check for dates and venues on the Sand Festival website.

Within Nyika National Park is Lake Kaulime which has spiritual significance to local people. It is believed the lake was home to a snake and a being who provided a channel for communication with God. There is a cave at Fingora Rock where bones of hunter gatherers, more than 8,000 years old, have been discovered along with stone artifacts and shells. There are also ancient iron smelting sites and rock paintings at several places within the TFCA.

People have been settled in southern Africa for millenia. The fossil skull of Broken Hill Man (also known as Kabwe Man), dated between about 300,000 and 125,000 years B.C.E. (B.C.), shows that the area was inhabited by early humans. Uraha is an Early Stone Age site at Uraha Hill, northern Malawi. It is part of the 4.3-0.6 million year old Chiwondo Beds site where mammal fossils and the fossilised jawbone of an ancient human, dating back 2.4 million years, have been found. This is one of the oldest fossils of the genus *Homo* and is thought to be of the species *Homo rudolfensis*. Archaeological excavations in Zambia at the 221 m high Kalambo Falls, on the border with Tanzania, record a succession of human cultures, with ancient settlements revealing stone tools dated to more than 36,000 years ago.

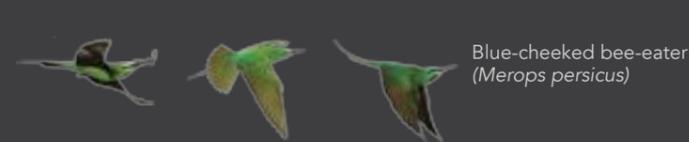
Modern Zambia was once inhabited only by the Khoisan and Batwa peoples until around C.E. (A.D.) 300, when migrating, farming Bantu began to settle in the area. The hunter-gatherers left a legacy of rock art in many rock shelters throughout the country. The Bantu Ba-Tumbuka and Senga settled in eastern Zambia and Malawi.



Senga drumming, Chifunda Village, Musalangu, Zambia.



Senga dancing for conservation, Chifunda Village, Musalangu, Zambia.



Blue-cheeked bee-eater
(*Merops persicus*)

The Birds and the Trees

The TFCA has a spectacular variety of trees ranging from forest and bushveld giants, miombo species with their carnival of spring colours from burgundy through golden to emerald green, to the thorny *Vachellia* (*Acacia*) spp. and baobabs thousands of years old. In the dry winter months, especially in miombo, many birds form parties of as many as 20 species. The woodland is bare one minute and the next, a noisy, multi-species bird party feeding on insects arrives. A typical mixed-party may include miombo pied barbet, woodpeckers, cinnamon-breasted tit, Arnot's chat, flycatchers, yellow-bellied eremomela, red-capped crombecs and Stierling's wren-warblers.



Sausage tree (*Kigelia africana*)



Lillian's lovebird
(*Agapornis lilianae*)

Birds and birding hotspots

Zambia has 782 bird species recorded to date. Two species are endemic to Zambia, Chaplin's barbet and black-cheeked lovebird, whilst the Zambian papyrus yellow warbler is near-endemic to Zambia. Many more species are endemic to the miombo ecoregion. The vast wetlands and national parks, although not all within the TFCA, hold internationally important populations of many large species such as wattled and grey crowned crane, shoebill, African skimmer and four vulture species. Other major ticks for your life list include African pitta and Pel's fishing owl.

Although Malawi is far smaller than Zambia, and much more densely populated, its more than 630 bird species still offer some excellent birding. There is a diversity of accessible habitats and a wide range of species including several near-endemics and, in the summer, a rich variety of Palaearctic and intra-African migrants; it is a really worthwhile birding destination.

Zambia is a big country, Malawi is much smaller, however travel in both countries, from one park or hot spot to another, may be over considerable distances on generally poor roads. Your journeys will probably take far longer than you might expect.

Birding information supplied by Pete Leonard and Frank Willems. 2005. Leonard P. M. Important Bird Areas in Zambia: Priority sites for conservation. Zambian Ornithological Society, Lusaka. ISBN 9982-811-01-0

1 North Luangwa National Park

345 species

Some of the special species you find in the Park are: babbling starling, African broadbill, African crane, African pitta, African skimmer, Allen's gallinule, barred long-tailed cuckoo, black-throated wattle-eye, cardinal quelea, chestnut-backed sparrow-weaver, collared palm-thrush, dwarf bittern, Horus swift, moustached grass-warbler, Narina trogon, Pel's fishing-owl, racket-tailed roller, western banded snake eagle, white-headed black chat, white-headed lapwing, woodland (Senegal) kingfisher, yellow-throated longclaw.

Typical birds along the river are Egyptian goose, African fish eagles, African finfoot, water thick-knee, half-collared kingfisher, white-crowned lapwing and white-fronted plover. In the riverine habitats you can expect to see African mourning dove, bat-like (Böhm's) spinetail, Lillian's lovebird and if you are lucky, Pel's fishing owl. Both white-fronted and southern carmine bee-eaters nest in the sand banks along the river.

2 Shiwa Ng'andu

373 species

This area was named by the Bena Ng'andu people, 'Ishiba Ng'andu' — 'Lake of the Royal crocodile'. It is a little over 100 km from North Luangwa National Park and well worth a visit, not least for its lovely 1930s manor house. The habitat is mostly miombo but there are diverse habitats including hot springs, a waterfall, the beautiful Lake Shiwa, and marshland. There is a host of waterbirds: herons, storks, and ducks whilst in the papyrus beds are several warblers, including greater swamp warbler. Along the rivers are African finfoot and half-collared kingfisher. Palm-nut vultures are often seen.

The dambos (shallow grassy, seasonally flooded wetlands) are home to black-rumped button quail, long-toed flufftail, great snipe, grass owl, white-cheeked bee eater, rosy breasted longclaw, broad-tailed warbler, the striking black and red, black-bellied seed cracker and many others. Afromontane species include cinnamon dove, Bocage's robin, evergreen forest warbler, bar-throated apalis and white-tailed crested flycatcher. In the miombo are many species including specials such as bar-winged weavers, white-headed sawwing, spotted creeper, Whyte's barbet and white-breasted cuckoo- shrike.

3 Mutinondo Wilderniss

362 species

This reserve is not in the TFCA and it is a long drive from Lusaka. However, if you are on an expedition to North Luangwa, it's well worth a visit to this private 100 km² reserve, which you can explore on your own. The vegetation is very varied from narrow strips of riverine bush lining crystal clear streams and moist, grassy dambos to miombo woodland and enormous granite inselbergs with their own vegetation. It is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area with good birding primarily for miombo species such as: southern hylia, chestnut-headed flufftails in the wet dambos, white-breasted cuckooshrike, pink-throated twinspot, pale-billed hornbill, racket-tailed roller, Schalow's turaco and a wide range of raptors including palm nut vultures. The reserve is said to be the best site in the world for several specials including the long-toed flufftail and the bar-winged weaver.

The unpretentious camp consists of a small self-catering camp and a main camp with a campsite and a fully catered lodge with four chalets.

4 Nyika National Park

Zambian portion 224 species — total including Malawi 428 species

Over 40 species of birds on the Zambian list are found only in the Afromontane eastern highlands. True forest species include African olive pigeon, bar-tailed trogon, moustached green tinkerbird, eastern mountain greenbul, yellow- streaked bulbul, olive thrush, white-chested alethe, olive-flanked robin, chestnut- headed apalis, white-tailed crested flycatcher, African hill babbler, eastern double-collared sunbird, Fülliborn's black boubou, Waller's red-winged starling and red-faced crimsonwing. Some species, such as white-starred robin and Cape batis inhabit forest patches of all sizes. Others, such as the orange thrush and Sharpe's akalat, tend to live in more extensive forest patches over which you may see feeding scarce swifts. Bush blackcaps are common and silver-cheeked hornbills are occasionally seen. Forest edges and bracken-briar include red-breasted sparrowhawk, Hildebrandt's francolin, dusky (pink-breasted) turtle dove, montane nightjar, Cape robin, cinnamon bracken warbler, mountain yellow warbler, black-lored cisticola, slaty flycatcher, bronze sunbird, baglafaecht and Bertram's weavers, swee waxbill, Cape canary, African

cont.

African baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) fruit and flower.



citril and streaky seedeaters, and slender-billed and chesnut-winged starling. The brown parus is found almost exclusively in dense canopies of *Vachellia* (*Acacia abyssinica*) trees. Often associated with proteas and other small flowering shrubs are yellow-tufted malachite, scarlet-tufted and greater double-collared sunbirds. Birds characteristic of the grasslands include pallid and Montagu's harriers, red-winged francolin, common quail, red-tailed flufftail, wattled crane, Denham's bustard, grass owl, blue swallow, wing-snapping, wailing and churring cisticolas and mountain marsh widowbird. The rocky western escarpment supports a number of other species such as augur buzzard, red-rumped swallow, mottled and African black swifts. Four birds in the Park are not found anywhere else in Malawi: mountain yellow warbler, chirping cisticola, wing-snapping cisticola and mountain marsh widowbird.

5 South Luangwa National Park
458 species

Because of abundant game, the area is a stronghold for yellow-billed and red-billed oxpeckers. There are also large numbers of raptors and vultures. Gamebirds such as helmeted guineafowl, Swainson's and red-necked spurfowl are common. Along the river are hadeda, Egyptian goose, white-faced whistling duck, water thick-knee, white-fronted sand plover, white-crowned lapwing and pied kingfisher whilst African skimmers breed on some of the sand bars. In the late dry season, large

colonies of southern carmine bee-eaters breed in the sand cliffs along with Horus swift, white-fronted bee-eaters and African sand martin. In the riparian forest are western banded snake eagles and Pel's fishing owl. Large numbers of water birds are attracted to the oxbows and particularly large concentrations occur as fish are trapped in drying pools, where also are found characteristic birds such as white pelican, great white egret, saddle-billed stork, marabou stork and African fish eagle. Many water birds breed during the rains when water levels are high. There is a yellow-billed stork colony in the Nsefu sector. The salt pan nearby attracts good numbers of grey crowned crane and painted snipe. Mopane birds include: red billed hornbill, southern grey-headed sparrow and white-browed sparrow weaver. The scarce mottled spinetail is closely associated with baobab trees. Bat-like (Böhm's) spinetail are distributed more widely. Many migrants visit during the rains including dwarf bittern and lesser gallinule around the seasonal pools, Senegal (woodland) kingfisher and broad-billed roller in the woodlands, and cardinal quelea in areas of tall grass. The area around Kabvumbu pans holds white-backed duck, blue quail, African water rail and parasitic weavers. Several areas along the western boundary hold about 20 species not found in the rest of the Park. Many of these are Zambezian endemics. These include miombo birds such as red-capped crombec, Sousa's shrike and bar-winged weaver as well as forest species such as eastern forest warbler, Laura's warbler and black-bellied seedcracker.

6 Lukusuzi National Park
210 species

This is one of the few areas in Zambia where the olive-headed weaver is found. It is localised since it depends on significant amounts of lichen. There are white-winged starling, racket-tailed roller, pale-billed hornbill, miombo pied barbet, little spotted (green-backed) woodpecker, miomborock thrush, central (miombo) bearded scrub robin, red-capped crombec, yellow-bellied hylia, Böhm's flycatcher, rufous-bellied tit, spotted creeper, violet-backed sunbird, miombo double-collared sunbird, Sousa's shrike, chestnut-mantled sparrow weaver and black-eared seed eater. African black duck and half-collared kingfisher are common along the streams. Mocking chat are found on the hills.

7 Mafinga Mountains
144 species

Several species only occur in Zambia's Mafinga Mountains. These include yellow-throated warbler and Cabanis' greenbul. Silvery-cheeked hornbills occur more regularly here than at any other Zambian site. Typical forest birds include African olive pigeon, cinnamon dove, bar-tailed trogon, moustached green tinkerbird, eastern mountain greenbul, yellow-streaked bulbul, olive thrush, white-chested alethe, chestnut-headed apalis, Cape batis, white-tailed crested flycatcher, eastern double-collared sunbird and multi-coloured bushshrike. Birds along the forest edge and in the shrub layer include Hildebrandt's francolin, mountain nightjar, Cape robin, slaty flycatcher,

bronze sunbird, Bertram's weaver, swee waxbill, cape canary, citril and streaky seedeater. Wailing cisticola and yellow-tufted malachite sunbird are characteristic of the grassland, and in the rocky areas, are species such as common kestrel, red-rumped swallow, mottled and African black swifts. Zambezian endemics include red-capped crombec, miombo double-collared sunbird, black-eared seedeater, miombo grey and rufous-bellied tits.

8 Luambe National Park
+200 species

The landscape ranges over riverine forest, cathedral mopane woodland, acacia thickets to grassy floodplains dotted with sausage trees. Keen birders can enjoy excellent birding with rarities such as the African skimmer, racket-tailed roller, Pel's fishing owl, white-backed night-heron, African pitta and Lillian's lovebirds. Large colonies of southern carmine bee-eaters nest in the river banks in September and October. Other regularly seen species include: martial, tawny, and African fish eagles as well as a variety of water birds including herons, ducks, and geese.

Birding hotspots
LEGEND

-  Grassland on poorly drained soils
-  Wetter miombo woodland
-  Drier miombo woodland
-  Zambezian mopane
-  Mopane woodland and scub woodland
-  Dry cryptosepalum
-  Salt marsh
-  Dry acacia



Mutinondo
WILDERNESS AREA
ZAMBIA



Msasa
(*Brachystegia spiciformis*)

Miombo Woodland

9 Kasungu National Park

370 species

The vegetation consists mainly of tall miombo woodland, locally mixed with Combretum and Terminalia. The woodlands are dissected by a network of grassy, seasonally flooded dambos which drain into the major rivers of the Park. A few bare inselbergs rise above the woodland in the west. The Park was recognised as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) in 2001 because of significant numbers of key species: wattled crane, pale-billed hornbill, racket-tailed roller, Whyte's barbet, miombo pied barbet, Dickinson's kestrel, Souza's shrike, miombo tit, rufous-bellied tit, red-capped crombec, Stierling's wren-warbler, Kurrichane thrush, miombo scrub-robin, Böhm's flycatcher, miombo rock thrush, Arnot's chat, Anchieta's sunbird, Shelley's sunbird, eastern miombo sunbird, chestnut-backed sparrow-weaver, broad-tailed paradise whydah, black-eared seedeater and olive-headed weaver. Pallid harriers are uncommon winter visitors whilst lesser kestrels on passage are sometimes seen feeding over the grasslands.

10 Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve

341 species

This Park is rarely visited because of rough roads, difficult terrain and its relative inaccessibility. It is characterised by mopane and miombo woodland and marshy wetlands, which attract a significant number of birds to the Park, so a visit is worthwhile. With 341 species recorded, Vwaza Marsh offers great bird-watching opportunities. Lake Kazini is an excellent place to look for water-associated birds, including ducks, storks, egrets and herons. Osprey, fish eagle and palm-nut vulture are regularly seen around the lake. The very localised white-winged babbling starling is a resident in the Park and can be found in the woodland around the camp. A guided walk to the lake is recommended to see some of the waders (shorebirds). Other species common to the miombo landscapes of the TFCA are: African grey hornbill, babbling starling (NE), Bennett's woodpecker, black-collared barbet, Böhm's flycatcher, Carp's tit, chestnut-backed sparrow-weaver, golden-breasted bunting, greater honeyguide, green-backed (little spotted) woodpecker, grey-headed bush shrike, Meyer's parrot, purple-crested turaco, rufous-bellied tit, Senegal (lesser black-winged) lapwing, Swainson's spurfowl and white-breasted cuckoo-shrike.

11 Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve

280 species

Nkhotakota's diverse vegetation from wetlands, through miombo woodland, riverine forest and a small patch of mid-altitude forest on the imposing Mt. Chitapa, makes the reserve a great birding destination with 289 recorded species. There are waterfowl, a wide range of herons, African finfoot, kingfishers such as the half-collared kingfisher. Look out for raptors, such as the extremely rare Taita falcon, palm-nut vultures, martial eagles, Pel's fishing owl. There are collared palm thrush in the drier scrub savanna and in the woodland, miombo pied barbets, pale-billed hornbill, broad-billed roller, Chapin's apalis and Anchieta's sunbird. The evergreen forest on Mount Chipata has its own specials, such as bar-tailed trogon, trumpeter hornbill, African broadbill, white-starred robin, moustached green tinkerbird, grey-olive greenbul and bar-tailed turaco.

African comb duck (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*) lay 7-15 eggs in tree cavities or long grass



Mwaleshi River
SAMALA COMMUNITY CAMP,
MUKUNGULE GAME MANAGEMENT
AREA
Z A M B I A





Starlight Express

Many people, particularly the younger generation, have never seen a sky glittering with thousands of stars, looked into the Milky Way and the centre of our galaxy, or watched shooting stars burning trails across the sky. This is your opportunity!

MALAWI

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