Our pitta tour to Zambia in December 2014 was again highly successful with both the target birds, African Pitta and Chaplin’s Barbet, seen on the same day!

Finding African Pitta in the Zambezi valley was more difficult than last year but eventually a pair showed very well, with one bird displaying right in the open!

The pitta thickets hosted many other good birds such as African Broadbill, African Goshawk, Red-throated (Peter’s) Twinspot, Livingstone’s Flycatcher, Eastern Nicator, Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Eastern Bearded Scrub-Robin, Terrestrial Brownbul, Dark-backed Weaver, Crowned Hornbill, Purple-crested Turaco, Emerald Cuckoo, Sombre Bulbul, Ashy
Flycatcher, Black-throated Wattle-eye and Narina Trogon, while overhead large numbers of Southern Carmine Bee-eaters and Amur Falcon’s passed by.

Chaplin’s Barbet was seen in the fig dominated mixed woodlands near Choma on the Zambian plateau. We were rewarded with not only one bird, but a pair with two juveniles with much activity and calling.
The miombo woodlands around Lusaka and Choma were very productive and we managed to find special such as Schalow’s Turaco, Shikra, Martial Eagle, Black Cuckoo, Pennant-winged Nightjar, Racket-tailed Roller, Miombo Pied Barbet, Bennett’s Woodpecker, Woodland Pipit, Miombo Scrub-Robin, Arnot’s Chat, Southern Hyliota, Green-capped Eremomela, Stierling’s Wren-Warbler, Pallid Flycatcher, Miombo Tit, Grey Penduline-Tit, Yellow White-eye, African Golden Oriole, White Helmet-Shrike, Miombo Blue-eared Starling, Yellow-throated Petronia, Black-eared Seedeater and Cabanis’s Bunting. The wetlands and water bodies in the Choma area did not disappoint and we managed excellent views of Lesser Jacana, African Jacana, Rufous-bellied Heron, African Rail, Black Crake, African Purple Swamphen, Allen’s Gallinule, African Pygmy-Goose,
Knob-billed Duck, White-backed Duck, African Black Duck, African Finfoot, Marsh Owl, Senegal Coucal and Sooty Chat

We ended the six-day tour with a total of 273 birds.