

Birding in the Pandemic, Year 2

Contributed by Jos
Last Updated Wednesday, 21 April 2021

INTRODUCTION

All things considered, 2020 turned out to be a most excellent year. Despite restrictions and lockdown, and a desire to isolate as much as possible, opportunities arose that allowed me to spend more time than ever birding and travelling - after a year start in New Zealand and a quick trip to Israel before the world came to a halt, national shutdown in Lithuania allowed me to work remote, the result being several very pleasurable months on my land in Labanoras, a stay spanning the entire spring migration period. Thereafter, as Covid cases dropped and travel bubbles opened up, and while battling tick-borne encephalitis, I managed trips both to the Arctic and the Alps. However, as summer turned to autumn, dark clouds were brewing - while Lithuania managed to scrape through the spring Covid wave relatively lightly hit, Covid cases soared from early autumn, Lithuania plunging towards the 'honorable' title of worst affected country in the world, more per capita cases than anywhere else. Still, silver linings ... with work still firmly remote, I opted to flee Lithuania and instead spend the four months in Covid-safe lands of Namibia, a fantastic way to end the year, birds, mammals and butterflies galore.

And that is where 2021 started - on the banks of the Okavango River in the far north of Namibia, Carmine Bee-eaters and Lechwe antelopes, Rock Pratincoles and Hippopotamus. As 2021 progressed, and global travel restrictions actually tightened rather than eased, the hope was that I would be able to steer a pretty similar course through the year - safe travel where feasible, hopefully another spring in the splendid isolation of my land. So, here it is, Birding in the Pandemic, Year Two!

Scroll down this page for a full account of the year, click on any of the links to view specific sections/months: Namibia, The Great Escape.(added soon) March 2021. Return to Lithuania. After months in Namibia, a return to Lithuania for the start of spring, the weather none too amazing, but a good movement of migrants nonetheless, plus a few nice additions such as Three-toed Woodpecker and, in the latter parts of the month, butterflies including Yellow-legged Tortoiseshell. [CLICK HERE TO READ](#). April 2021, Hesitant Spring. A total hotch-potch of weather, some snow, some days at 20 C. Generally slow migration, but excellent additions at Labanoras such as the arrival of Spotted Crakes, overflying Smew and the establishment of breeding Whooper Swans. Also increasing numbers of butterflies, including Camberwell Beauty and three species of tortoiseshell. [CLICK HERE TO READ](#).