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Founder's Circle Trip to Botswana and Zambia

Investigate exotic bats with Merlin Tuttle in some of the world's most pristine wilderness . .

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The new millennium offers BCI Founder's Circle members an extraordinary journey to the southern African countries of Botswana and Zambia. Our expedition begins at Victoria Falls, one of the world's natural wonders. This mile-wide, thundering waterfall offers a breathtaking panorama of sunlit spray and endless rainbows. Walkways surrounding the falls will lead us to forests where antelope, warthogs, vervet monkeys, and hornbills can easily be approached under the mist of the falls. Elephants, hippos, giraffes, and white rhinos also roam nearby, as well as a host of birds and bats, including the famous, but rare, crested free-tailed bat (*Chaerephon chapini*). The male of this species has special hairs on its head that spread like the tail of a strutting peacock during courtship.

Next we'll stay at Kings Pool Camp, near the Chobe National Park. The camp borders a private reserve, offering the opportunity to view unspoiled wilderness and amazing animals—from lions, leopards, cheetahs, and hyenas, to more than 350 bird species and herds of elephants. This diverse habitat bodes well for observing a variety of bats, some of which may not even be known to science, as the local bat fauna has not yet been studied.

Finally our group will enjoy the land-and-water experience of the Okavango Delta, lauded as both the continent's largest and most beautiful oasis, as well as its greatest natural wildlife preserve. Our headquarters will be the Moremi region—the centerpiece of the delta—where big game abounds, including buffalo, lions, and leopards. It is estimated that 50,000 elephants also roam this area. But perhaps the reserve's most interesting resident is the wild dog, with one of the largest packs in all of Africa. The chance of tracking and observing the pack's daily activities will be a unique thrill.

We'll also be able to see the abundant wildlife at water level in a mokoro, a traditional dugout canoe, piloted by a local "poler." This is a birder's paradise, teeming with endemic species of cranes, shrikes, egrets, babblers, and owls. Crocodiles and hippos are also close by, but are best seen from four-wheel-drive vehicles! Nets will be set in the evening to catch fruit- and nectar-eating bats, among others. Space is limited, so please reserve your place today!

January 16-28, 2000

Cost: \$5,195 (from Johannesburg)

Includes \$1,000 tax-deductible contribution to BCI, which entitles you to the Founder's Circle level of membership and corresponding benefits for one year.

Travel is arranged by Natural Habitat Adventures. For a complete itinerary, contact Arnie Phifer at BCI, (512) 327-9721, ext. 26, or via e-mail: aphifer@batcon.org



Hildebrandt's horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hildebrandti*) is one of dozens of intriguing species we are likely to catch and observe on our year 2000 southern African expedition.

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