

JAO RESERVE WILDLIFE & ECOLOGY

The Jao Reserve is 60 000 hectares (150 000 acres) in extent and lies in the north-western area of the Okavango Delta, situated below the Okavango Panhandle. The Moremi Game Reserve forms the eastern boundary of the Concession.

CAMPS

- Jao
- Kwetsani
- Tubu Tree
- Little Tubu
- Jacada
- Pelo



Situated in the very heart of the wetlands of the Okavango Delta, the Jao Concession embodies all the magic and mystique of Botswana with vegetation that varies from permanent swamps to dry land. In the east, the Jao Flats boast water channels that cut their way through the papyrus and reed beds, providing the perfect environment for wildlife. Beautiful lush palm islands dot the water. Further west, the area gets progressively dryer and Hunda Island, which is the tip of a large 'sand tongue,' is the largest area of dry land in the Jao Concession during the inundation (July-Sept). Hunda Island has sandveld vegetation supporting many species of nutritious acacia and grewia shrubs which in turn provide excellent browsing.

Around the Jao Flats, spectacular herds of red lechwe are followed by their predators – lion and leopard. Hippo and Nile crocodile are regularly sighted. Other game includes blue wildebeest, impala, tsessebe, southern giraffe, elephant, hippo and crocodile, spotted-necked otter and even the occasional sitatunga. The drier west harbours similar species, with greater concentrations of Burchell's zebra and blue wildebeest.

Birding is exceptional in the Jao Concession: Vulnerable wattled crane, slaty egret, rosy-throated longclaw, Pel's fishing-owl, and lesser jacana are found on the eastern side, with the western drier areas hosting crimson-breasted shrike, Dickinson's kestrel and Meyer's parrot. Other exceptional species often recorded at Jao include swamp nightjar and brown firefinch.