



We enjoyed exceptionally good views of the amazing little Quail-plover in the far north of Cameroon. This incredible bird truly deserves to be in a family of its own! (Nik Borrow)

ULTIMATE CAMEROON

2 – 29 MARCH 2014

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Cameroon may not be a tour for those who like their creature comforts but it certainly produces a huge bird list and if one intends to only ever visit one western African country then this is surely an essential destination. Our comprehensive itinerary covers a superb and wide range of the varied habitats that this sprawling country has to offer. We started our tour at the end of the dry season but the rains had arrived early this year and even in the usually arid north we had a little rain. This year we nailed Red-headed Picathartes (or Grey-necked Rockfowl) on our very first day at an easily accessible site and watched them over two afternoons with a count of at least 10 individuals hopping all around us. A Long-tailed Hawk on our return journey was a real bonus! In the far north we relished incredible views of Quail-plover and Cricket Warbler. Once again we found the restricted range Rock Firefinch (first discovered in the country in 2005 by

BirdQuest) and the recently rediscovered Chad Firefinch. In Bénoué National Park as always the sublime Egyptian Plover enchanted and Adamawa Turtle Dove was found. The dark forested gullies at Ngaoundaba surrendered Spotted Thrush-babblers and Bamenda Apalis whilst breeding plumaged Standard-winged Nightjars amazed. The Bamenda Highlands gave us the expected Bannerman's Turaco, Banded Wattle-eye, Bannerman's Weaver and Bangwa Forest Warbler. For the long climb up to the treeline on Mount Cameroon we were rewarded with fine views of the Mount Cameroon Speirops. Struggling with rain in Korup National Park both Sjöstedt's Owlet and Bare-cheeked Trogon brightened our days with a Congo Serpent Eagle as a reward as we left. Finally at Mount Kupe and in the Bakossi Mountains the tour peaked with views of Mount Kupe Bushshrike. Of the other regional endemics we also recorded Cameroon Olive Pigeon, Green-breasted Bushshrike (heard only), Yellow-breasted Boubou, Cameroon Montane, Western Mountain, Cameroon Olive and Grey-headed Greenbuls, Mountain Saw-wing, Black-capped Woodland Warbler, Cameroon and Bangwa Forest Warblers, Brown-backed Cisticola, Green Longtail, White-tailed Warbler, White-throated Mountain Babbler, Alexander's (split from Bocage's) Akalat (heard only), Mountain Robin-chat, Cameroon and Ursula's Sunbirds and Shelley's Oliveback. Many other specialities were recorded including much-wanted species such as Black Guinea fowl (heard only), Latham's, White-throated and Clapperton's Francolins, Hartlaub's Duck, Scissor-tailed Kite, Fox Kestrel, Arabian Bustard, Red-chested Flufftail, Nkulengu Rail (heard only), Black Crowned Crane, Bronze-winged Courser, Grey Pratincole, Four-banded Sandgrouse, Violet Turaco, Black-throated Coucal, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo (heard only), Fraser's Eagle Owl and Pel's Fishing Owl (both heard only), Black-shouldered Nightjar, Black Spinetail, Bates's Swift, Blue-bellied Roller, White-bellied Kingfisher, Blue-moustached Bee-eater, Yellow-casqued Hornbill, Western Tinkerbird, Bristle-nosed, Vieillot's and Bearded Barbets, Lyre-tailed Honeyguide (heard only), African Piculet, Tullberg's, Gabon and Elliot's Woodpeckers, Grey-headed Broadbill, West African Batis, Black-necked Wattle-eye, Rufous-bellied Helmetshrike, Fiery-breasted Bushshrike, Sabine's Puffback, Mountain Sooty Boubou, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Rufous-vented and Bates's Paradise Flycatchers, Dusky Crested Flycatcher, Sennar Penduline Tit, Yellow-throated Nicator (heard only), Sun Lark, Golden, Xavier's, Eastern Bearded and White Bearded Greenbuls, Sjöstedt's Greenbul (heard only), Yellow-lored Bristlebill, Square-tailed and Petit's Saw-wings, West African and Forest Swallows, Preuss's Cliff Swallow, Chattering, Rock-loving, Red-pate, Dorst's and Rufous Cisticolas, River and Banded Prinias, Black-collared Apalis, Red-winged Grey Warbler, Lowland Masked Apalis, Oriole Warbler, Ruwenzori Hill Babbler, Forest White-eye, Grey-chested Babbler, African Spotted Creeper, Purple-headed, Chestnut-bellied, Neumann's and White-collared Starlings, Crossley's Ground Thrush (heard only), Western Forest Robin, White-bellied, Grey-winged and White-crowned Robin-chats, African Scrub Robin, Heuglin's Wheatear, White-fronted Black Chat, White-crowned Cliff Chat, Yellow-footed Flycatcher, Reichenbach's, Carmelite and Orange-tufted Sunbirds, Cassin's, Red-vented and Blue-billed Malimbés, Pale-fronted Nigrita, Grey-headed Oliveback, Yellow-winged Pytilia, Black-bellied Seedcracker, Brown and Dybowski's Twinspots, Black-faced Firefinch, Black-headed Waxbill, Sahel Paradise Whydah, Cameroon and Long-legged Pipits and White-rumped and West African Seedeaters. The problems of hunting and poaching mean that mammals are scarce or very shy. Frustratingly we only heard Drill in Korup National Park but saw small numbers of Kordofan Giraffe, Loder's Kob, Red-fronted Gazelle and Korrigum in Waza National Park. Four Forest Buffalo in Bénoué were a surprise and here we saw our only solitary Roan Antelope of the trip and plenty of Hippopotamus.

We began our grand tour of this panhandle of a country in Douala and were met by a blast of hot and humid air as we made our way out through the sweaty and bustling airport. With only a short night to acclimatise ourselves we set off early the next morning before dawn in order to beat the early morning busy rush hour traffic, which can jam the roads for hours. The plan worked well and we soon arrived at a small forest pool by the roadside which has become a rather well known 'duck pond' in Cameroon as it usually holds at least a few Hartlaub's Ducks. However on arrival there were none to be seen and we were wondering if the encroaching city had finally pushed these birds off for good when a pair flew in thus disrupting our bush breakfast. Green Crombec, Green-throated Sunbird and a pair of Carmelite Sunbirds were seen and also on the pool were an African Darter and eight African Pygmy Geese as well as Little Grebe, Striated Heron and African Jacana. As it was time to leave Long-legged Pipit was found right next to our cars.

Our next stop was at the Sanaga River where we scanned the sandbanks that broke the surface of the wide waters and found numerous Grey Pratincoles and African Skimmers scattered over the flats. Pied

Kingfishers hovered over the waters and Palearctic migrant Blue-headed Wagtail and waders such as Little Ringed Plover, Common Greenshank, Green, Wood and Common Sandpipers and Little Stint were seen although perhaps of more interest to our group were the White-crowned Lapwings with their pendulous wattles and fearsome spurs and White-fronted Plover. Great Blue Turacos posed, a family of Scaly Francolin was unusually sat out in the open at the edge of a field and a Blue-headed Coucal was also posed well in the rank vegetation but we could not linger long because our journey was to take us southwards almost to the border with Equatorial Guinea. Under the bridges and culverts Preuss's Cliff Swallows were getting ready to breed whilst large numbers of migrant Barn Swallows were gathering presumably fattening themselves up for their imminent departure back to Europe. Colonies of Village and Vieillot's Black Weavers were commonly seen by the roadsides and other species recorded during the journey included numerous Western Cattle Egrets, Little Egret, Yellow-billed Kite, African Harrier-hawk, Palm-nut Vulture, Lizard Buzzard, Red-eyed Dove, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, African Green Pigeon, Grey Parrot, African Palm Swift, Little Swift, Woodland, African Pygmy and Malachite Kingfishers, African Pied, Piping, White-thighed and Black-casqued Hornbills, Pied Crow, Common Bulbul, Red-breasted Swallow, Chattering Cisticola, African Thrush, Northern Grey-headed Sparrow, Bronze and Black-and-white Mannikins and Pin-tailed Whydah.

We enjoyed a great lunch at Kribi where freshly cooked fish was prepared before us and some hours later we found ourselves on the edge of Campo Ma'an with just enough daylight to spare to make our first attempt to see the phenomenal Red-headed Picathartes (or Grey-necked Rockfowl). The colony was only about 15 minutes easy walk from where we left the vehicles and at this season the birds have not yet begun breeding but habitually frequent the nest site in the late afternoon and we soon found ourselves face to face with what was probably the most wanted bird of the trip! Over the two afternoons that we spent at these rocks we enjoyed some intimate encounters with the very special picathartes or rockfowl and counted at least 10 individuals bouncing all around us, visiting their nest sites and hissing with puffed up necks and spiky hackles. All in all it was an experience nothing short of superb! Anyone who has ever seen the picathartes well has always been overwhelmed by their beauty and oddness. Indeed there is something mysterious and even spiritual about them and it is easy to see why they are revered in certain areas.



The incredible Red-headed Picathartes (or Grey-necked Rockfowl) (left) was perhaps the most wanted target bird of the entire trip and we were treated to excellent views during our first two days of the tour. The Yellow-throated Tinkerbird (right) is conversely one of the most common birds of the forest but is heard much more often than it is seen. (Nik Borrow)

With perhaps the main target bird of the trip happily underneath our belts we were free to explore the forest itself. Sadly there is not a decent infrastructure of trails inside the park and we were limited to the main tracks that run through the forest. As dawn broke large numbers of Grey Parrots squawked and whistled as they left their roosts to feed. A fruiting tree in the clearing around our simple accommodation attracted many species and we watched Speckled and Yellow-throated Tinkerbirds, Green Hylia, Yellow-browed Camaroptera,

Sooty Flycatcher and other goodies such as Cassin's Malimbe, Sabine's Puffback and Pale-fronted Nigrita come and go. From the tall trees Swamp Palm Bulbuls cackled at each other and a variety of greenbuls such as Little, Little Grey, Ansorge's, Slender-billed, Yellow-whiskered, Golden, Icterine, Red-tailed and Spotted Greenbuls tested our identification skills. The birding pace was slow but by moving along a comfortably wide track we regularly came across new species. Colourful birds such as Yellow-billed Turaco, Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill, Yellow-spotted Barbet, Blue Cuckooshrike, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Black-winged Oriole and Purple-headed Starling were discovered and an array of sunbirds included Fraser's, Little Green, Collared, Blue-throated Brown, Olive, Tiny and Superb Sunbirds. However alongside the successes were the frustrations and try as hard as we might mouth-watering species such as Black Guinea fowl, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Lyre-tailed Honeyguide and Rufous-sided Broadbill all remained disembodied voices echoing through the dense vegetation. However some Rufous-bellied Helmetshrikes was a good find and a stunning Red-chested Owlet was persuaded to reveal itself well in daylight whilst other species recorded that day included Afep Pigeon, Blue Malkoha, African Emerald Cuckoo, Common Swift, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Shining Drongo, Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Western Nicator, Lesser Striped Swallow, Grey Longbill, Buff-throated Apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera and White-breasted Nigrita. At night we spotlighted a selection of nocturnal mammals that included Allen's Squirrel, and Demidoff's Galagos, African Palm Civet and disturbed some roosting Northern Talapoin Monkeys.



At Campo Ma'an, we enjoyed a superb sighting of a Red-chested Owlet (left) in broad daylight and the views of a male Sabine's Puffback (right) could not have been better! (Nik Borrow)

We spent the morning in the Campo Ma'an area and still managed to add some new species. Some Bates's Swifts and Square-tailed Saw-wings flew over our camp where a female Black-bellied Seedcracker was also found and in the nearby forests we found Bristle-nosed Barbet, Western Oriole, Velvet-mantled Drongo, Little Grey and Honeyguide Greenbuls, Crested Malimbe and Chestnut-breasted Nigrita. During the long journey back to Douala we picked up some very useful species such as a pair of Blue-throated Rollers, Africa's smallest bird the diminutive Tit Hylia and a superb Long-tailed Hawk that flew across the road in front of our vehicles but was called back only to perch in full view and gaze suspiciously back at us! At some river crossings we found small numbers of Rock Pratincoles, African Pied Wagtail and a small mixed colony of Slender-billed and Orange Weavers.

Douala airport is not a comfortable place to spend any length of time at all and so we were all overjoyed when the check-in and departure of our plane to the north early the next morning went without any hitch or delay – in fact it arrived ahead of schedule! The plane took us from the dripping humidity of the coastal forest zone to the searing heat of the north at Maroua. We were greeted by a blast of hot air that was so dry that any sweat that dared to break through the skin had little chance of remaining there for long! We transferred to our air-conditioned minibus that carried us swiftly to our hotel where we enjoyed a delicious lunch.

The actions of a group named Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria have been of some concern in recent months and the Cameroonian government is very keen that nothing happens in northern Cameroon to destabilise the country. As a result of this there is a heavy military presence and a policy of guarding tourists with an escort and during our time in the north we were well protected by a group of well-armed soldiers who shadowed us discretely and saw that we came to no harm. In the afternoon began our explorations of the area under clear blue skies that enabled a blistering sun to beat down onto the bare rocks and sand. However as the day cooled down so the bird activity increased. The huge ghostly rocky inselbergs loomed out of the flat landscape and we spent some time birding around these enormous piled heaps of giant boulders where Gosling's (split from Cinnamon-breasted) Buntings were common and in the bushes comical Blue-naped Mousebirds clung spread-eagled to the vegetation. Brightly coloured Green Bee-eaters sallied out from exposed perches and handsome White-crowned Cliff Chats perched up on the huge boulders shared by perky Rock-loving Cisticolas. A few Red-pate Cisticolas were seen, Clapperton's Francolin were flushed and garrulous Stone Partridges scampered over the rocks like little bantams as the much-wanted Fox Kestrel drifted overhead. A pair of White-headed Barbets showed well in fig trees that provided food for a number of Bruce's Green Pigeons. Pretty Red-cheeked Cordon-bleus and Lavender Waxbills enchanted and ultimately to everyone's great pleasure we watched several Rock Firefinches, a species previously only known from Nigeria but confirmed in Cameroon for the first time by BirdQuest in 2005. As dusk fell Freckled Nightjars were seen well. Other birds in the area included Laughing and Namaqua Doves, African Grey Hornbill, Rock Martin, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Senegal Eremomela, Common Whitethroat, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, African Scrub Robin, Pygmy, Scarlet-chested and Variable Sunbirds, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver, Speckle-fronted and Vitelline Masked Weavers, Black-winged Red and Northern Red Bishops, African Silverbill and Yellow-fronted Canary.



In the absence of big game Yellow-billed Oxpeckers (left) were found on domestic livestock around the rocky inselbergs that typify the far north of Cameroon and are habitat to Rock-loving Cisticola (right) and the recently discovered population of Rock Firefinch. (Nik Borrow)

The cool of the morning in the far north does not last long but the first hours of daylight are essential for notching up some quality birds. The next day found us setting off on a walkabout hoping to flush one of the most wanted species of the tour; the bizarre and remarkably little known Quail-plover. At this time of year the air is normally full of sand and dust blown from the Sahara by the prevailing Harmattan winds, but this year we had piercing blue skies and the sun beat down on us mercilessly and temperatures rose to 49° C. In order to see this highly desirable species much ground needs to be covered in the hope of ultimately flushing this tiny bird. We set off in an organised line through the bush and after some distance we chanced upon our quarry remarkably easily this year and our first views were of a strange little bird that flapped away looking half lark and half quail! It was an extremely obliging individual and we watched it crouched in the shelter of some vegetation eyeing us warily until it became used to our presence and then began its bobbing and swaying 'chameleon mode' walk to feed unconcerned by our continued attentions. The views were astounding this year and in the end we simply walked away from the bird. We then spent a long, long time in a search for another target species – the delightful Cricket Warbler (a species first discovered in Cameroon by BirdQuest in 1995). There was plenty to look at along the way as various raptors such as Black-winged

Kite and Booted Eagle drifted overhead whilst Western Marsh and Pallid Harriers skimmed low over the bushes in search of tasty morsels although most popular of all was the elegant Scissor-tailed Kite. Colourful Abyssinian Rollers and Yellow-crowned Gonolek were enjoyed and striking species such as Black Scrub Robin cocked and fanned their tails everywhere and Green-winged Pytilia were common and easy to see. Little groups of Black-headed Lapwings were encountered and both White-bellied Bustard and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse got up from the stubble fields. Other species seen during the morning included Black-headed Heron, Speckled Pigeon, African Collared Dove, Senegal Coucal, Central African Hoopoe, Vieillot's Barbet, Black-crowned Tchagra, Southern Grey Shrike, Fork-tailed Drongo, Singing Bush Lark, Crested Lark, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-lark, Ethiopian Swallow, Northern Crombec, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Long-tailed Glossy and Chestnut-bellied Starlings and Northern Wheatear. By the end of the morning we had drawn a blank and one last scan around revealed nothing except a recently deceased human corpse lying face down in the dust. We left the gruesome discovery for our armed military guard to deal with and finally admitting defeat with the mid-day sun sizzling fearsomely overhead retired to the shade of a local bar for a good lunch where strangely enough for a predominantly Muslim population, only beers and no soft drinks at all were on sale! After rehydrating and a welcome rest we returned to the open plains where we resumed the quest and literally at the last possible minute a trio of Cricket Warblers popped into view and all was well in the world as we enjoyed some excellent close views of this charismatic species. The road north of Maroua had continued to worsen considerably over the past years to the point where we wondered if the word 'road' could be used at all to describe what we were travelling on! We noted African Openbill and White-billed Buffalo Weaver en route but progress was slow and we arrived at the Campement de Waza at dusk only to find that the mains electricity had failed. The generator was brought to life but sadly was not strong enough to power the air conditioning and so we all suffered a rather sweaty time until the normal power returned late in the night.



The elegant Scissor-tailed Kite (left) is a joy to see in the far north. Very elusive this year but we finally caught up with a family of Cricket Warbler (right) that allowed some excellent views. (Nik Borrow)

We woke to another clear morning. Waza National Park has a mean annual rainfall that varies from between 550 and 750 mm that usually only falls between June and September. Therefore we were here in one of the driest months when temperatures can be expected to reach 45°C and much animal activity gathers around the artificial waterholes. Travelling from one such oasis to the next, with Clapperton's Francolins and Helmeted Guineafowl scurrying from the roadsides, was the order of the day, and at each stop large numbers of birds greeted us. In such parched conditions the lure of water is strong and the swirling flocks of Red-billed Queleas, Bush Petronias and Northern Red Bishops were simply overwhelming at times. Smaller numbers of Cut-throat, Black-rumped Waxbill and Sahel Paradise Whydah were also present. This year unusually large numbers of Marabou Storks were present and some beautiful Black Crowned Cranes, a Pink-backed Pelican, a juvenile Saddle-billed Stork and Woolly-necked Storks loitered by pools where Spur-winged Goose, African Sacred Ibis, Squacco and Grey Herons, Black-winged Stilt and Spur-winged Lapwing could also be found. Everywhere there was a sense of ebb and flow as species after species having rested or quenched their thirst then moved on thus presenting an ever-changing tableau. Joining the Ethiopian Swallows over the pools were West African Swallows and Palearctic migrant Sand and Common House

Martins. This was a great opportunity to get to know your doves as the Vinaceous, European Turtle, Mourning and African Collared Doves that filled the trees eventually came down to drink. As seems to be the worrying trend in other parts of Africa these days vulture numbers were very low and only a few Rüppell's Griffon Vultures and Lappet-faced Vultures were seen. Sadly it also seemed that numbers of other raptors that historically have always been well represented in the park were substantially down on previous years but we did find single examples of Short-toed and Brown Snake Eagles, Bateleur, Long-crested Eagle and Lanner Falcon. A few Tawny Eagles, Gabar Goshawks, Montagu's Harriers, Grasshopper Buzzards and Common Kestrel and small numbers of Dark Chanting Goshawk. It was a pleasing to see a pair of Secretarybirds but they were very shy and would not allow close approach. Perhaps the most unexpected raptor of the morning was a superb and confiding immature Bat Hawk sheltering from the midday sun that allowed prolonged views. During our drives we were fortunate to find an Arabian Bustard that did not seem to mind being looked at unlike another later in the day that was only seen in flight. The dowdy River Prinia was also easy to see here as was Anteater Chat and other species seen during the day included glorious Northern Carmine Bee-eater, Green Wood Hoopoe, Northern Red-billed Hornbill, African Grey Woodpecker, Western Olivaceous Warbler, Beautiful Sunbird and White-rumped Seedeater. This year mammals were again worryingly scarce but we had some wonderful encounters with the beautiful Kordofan Giraffe (with attendant Yellow-billed Oxpeckers) and also saw Patas Monkey, Red-fronted Gazelle and Korrigum (split from Topi). It had been a great day and this whole experience was surely as much about the overwhelming Sahelian spectacle as it was about ticking off some memorable life birds!



The discovery of an immature Bat Hawk (left) sheltering in the heat of the day was a real trip highlight. The River Prinia (right) is a somewhat unassuming 'target' species of the Waza floodplain. (Nik Borrow)

Our remaining time in the Waza area was spent searching for the remaining specialities and in particular Sennar Penduline Tit, Savile's Bustard and Little Grey Woodpecker. We saw the tit easily and so well that you could see the little black dots on the forehead with no trouble at all. Sadly although we trekked over large areas of open country we never did find the woodpecker or the bustard, both always at extremely low densities in this area anyway. However it can be little coincidence that our lack of success coincided with the highly visible and on-going destruction of habitat. At one site we found a single man who appeared to be solely responsible for cutting down at least 15 mature trees in one small area. Our military escorts checked his papers and he indeed had no permission or legal right to be felling trees in this place at all and had actually travelled in from a totally different region in order to poach this timber. Of course he was told not to do it and to be careful for breaking the law but we left him there with his axes and it can be sure that the felling continued after we had left. All in all we had a rather thin day, but a migrant Black Stork was a good site record and other Palearctic visitors included Lesser Whitethroat and Subalpine Warbler. Noisy Brown Babbler squabbled in the thickets and in what was left of the sparse woodlands we found Rose-ringed Parakeet, Senegal Parrot, Black Scimitarbill and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird. The rapidly drying pools in the

area still held Swamp Flycatcher and attracted numerous thirsty birds including some Red-billed Firefinches and the parasitic Village Indigobird. A regular stream of people were also taking advantage of the diminishing waters and we watched as the same pool successively provided water for livestock, washing and ultimately drinking. The birds mainly kept away but as dusk fell the Four-banded Sandgrouse came for their share and with the night so did impressively tailed Long-tailed Nightjars.



The stately Arabian Bustard (left) showed well inside Waza National Park Green Bee-eaters (centre) were easily seen and you know that you have had a great view when you have seen the black dots on the forehead of the Sennar Penduline Tit (right). (Nik Borrow)

Before leaving Waza some of us were up before breakfast enjoying the resident Western Barn Owls that frequent the camp along with nocturnal mammals such as Sand Fox. It was time to head south to the town of Garoua for a short overnight stay as we were to leave very early the next morning in order to get to the remote town of Poli, a lengthy diversion to our main route.



Once again we succeeded to see the Chad Firefinches (left) at Poli and also added Heuglin's Wheatear (juvenile, centre) and the unassuming Dorst's Cisticola (right) to our lists. (Nik Borrow)

The reason for our visit was because of the rediscovery in Cameroon six years previously of the little known Chad Firefinch. At that time we had been the first group allowed into the area to see this species and we were hoping to repeat our success this year. Unfortunately the site is in a mining area and special permission is needed to visit but fortunately this was not a problem as there has been no further development at the site since our last visit and indeed the access road had fallen into disuse. We paused to take in a White-fronted Black Chat and then bounced up the mountainside in a 4X4 clinging on for dear life as some sections are particularly steep and the exercise resulted for some in a collection of bruises as colourful souvenirs of the event! However, all of the hardship was worthwhile because shortly after alighting

from the vehicle the distinctive dry trills of the firefinches were heard and we were soon watching the birds themselves. A small group of Dybowski's Twinspots were also seen with them and a little further on a Willcocks's Honeyguide holding territory. Various other small birds were seen and we added African Blue Flycatcher, White-shouldered Black Tit, Yellow-throated Leaflove, African Yellow White-eye, Familiar Chat, Northern Black Flycatcher, European Pied Flycatcher, Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Green-headed Sunbird, Copper Sunbird and West African Seedeater to the list. Purple and Violet-backed Starlings were seen, our first Western Plantain-eater put in an appearance and Violet Turacos were coaxed into view. As we made our way down again a Red-necked Buzzard flew over and there were plenty of Red-throated Bee-eaters around. It was far warmer at the base of the mountain and most birds had moved to shadier places by the time that we reached there however we still managed to find some Heuglin's Wheatears and Dorst's Cisticola as well as Brown-backed Woodpecker, Woodchat Shrike, Piapiac, Red-faced and Croaking Cisticolas, Whinchat and Yellow-mantled Widowbird.



Double-spurred Francolins (left) and Four-banded Sandgrouse (right) welcomed us into Bénoué National Park. (Nik Borrow)

We arrived at Bénoué National Park in the late afternoon and found our drive in to be quite eventful with a number of sightings of Four-banded Sandgrouse as well as Double-spurred Francolin, Black-billed Wood Dove, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Senegal Batis and a stunning pair of Blue-bellied Rollers. More of a surprise was the sighting of what were apparently four Forest Buffalo. We were told that this group turned up in the park about six months ago and quite where they came from is a mystery for if the identification is indeed correct, these animals are apparently a long way from their expected distribution. We arrived at the idyllically situated Campement de Bufflé Noir to find that sadly once again due to government lack of funding that many of the best rooms had fallen into disrepair. It seems that maintenance of the touristic infrastructure is simply not of importance to the Cameroonian government.

The next morning we were up early and were exceedingly fortunate to find a pair of White-throated Francolins by the roadside that stuck around for some simply amazing views. The Tsetse flies and sweat bees in the dry woodlands were less of a problem this year than they could be but sadly the birds seemed to have taken the day off as well and the pace was slow. The time is always too short here before the temperatures get too high and/or the bees torment one to distraction and today things never really got moving at all. Striped Kingfishers were seemingly one of the only birds making a sound. Silvery White-breasted Cuckooshrikes joined loose bird parties that gathered together briefly and amongst these we noted Yellow-bellied Hylia, White-crested Helmetshrikes, Northern Puffback, Willow Warbler and African Golden Oriole whilst Short-winged and Rufous Cisticolas and Red-winged Warbler lurked in the dry grasses. As we headed back for lunch we met with an Abyssinian Ground Hornbill by the roadside.

In the afternoon we went down by the river and as the hot afternoon sun began to fall in the sky we sought the shelter of patches of shade in a tranquil riverine setting. An African Hobby had come down to drink and charming and excitable Red-winged Grey Warblers showed well in the thick riverine vegetation where there were also Black-headed Gonolek and both Snowy-crowned and White-crowned Robin Chats to brighten up

the day. Along the sandy riverbed we had some wonderful encounters with Egyptian Plovers as well as Three-banded Plover, Grey-rumped and Wire-tailed Swallows, Spectacled and Black-headed Weavers, Orange-cheeked Waxbill and colourful Grey-headed, Blue-breasted and Giant Kingfishers. Hamerkops and Hadada Ibises moved from one shady bank to another where dowdy Swamp Flycatchers sallied back and forth alongside the strange Oriole Warbler or Moho that sang loudly from the thick riverine vegetation, which also provided ample cover for noisy Blackcap Babblers. As the day ended a Greater Honeyguide was seen and the African Scops Owls began calling whilst in the torchbeam on the way back we caught a tiny Senegal Galago wrapped around a branch seemingly trying to hide from us on its exposed perch.



Two of the most spectacular birds of Bénoué National Park are the Blue-bellied Roller (top left) and the glorious Red-throated Bee-eaters (top right). One of the major highlights of the trip is the time spent with the sublime Egyptian Plover (bottom left). The African Spotted Creeper (bottom right) is more elusive specialty of the park. (Nik Borrow)

We were up long before dawn the next morning listening to the distant hoots from a Pel's Fishing Owl that was sadly too far away to even have a hope of seeing. As the day dawned an Adamawa Turtle Dove started its deep purring song and we had great scope views of it singing as the evocative yodelling cries of African Fish Eagles echoed down the river. We spent a fair amount of time birding a shady dry creek where a pool of water was attracting many thirsty birds and had some excellent views of Lesser Honeyguide, Bar-breasted, Black-bellied and Black-faced Firefinches and Cabanis's Bunting as they came down to drink. The superb

White-crested Turaco was watched in the tangled lianas and we also saw Yellow-breasted Apalis, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Orange-breasted Bushshrike, African Paradise Flycatcher and a Grey-headed Oliveback. A Shikra put in an appearance, a Fine-spotted Woodpecker was seen and we enjoyed very fine views of the magnificently grotesque Bearded Barbet and a singing African Spotted Creeper before it was time to leave and it must be said that some very pleasant hours were spent walking the drying riverbed amongst the company of sublime Egyptian Plovers and snorting hippos.

Leaving Bénoué National Park behind us we continued further south up the twisting hairpin-bend road currently being totally reconstructed to the 'cooler' heights of the Adamawa Plateau and Ngaoundéré. We stopped at a lake that we scanned relentlessly for Lesser Jacana but without success. However, we did manage to find Yellow-billed Ducks here at the westernmost limit of their range, a couple of hulking African Swampheens and Marsh Widowbird in non-breeding plumage. Also spotted were a Garganey, Purple Heron, Western Great Egret, Reed Cormorant, Black Crake, Northern Fiscal, Moustached Grass Warbler and Singing and Winding Cisticolas.

After several years of not being available to tourists the ranch buildings at Ngaoundaba were once again open for business and we were pleased to be able to stay on site again. During the past three years the construction team building a new road linking the north and the south had hired the ranch as a site camp and had even built what amounts to a small village on the property. The effect on the landscape at this normally peaceful location has been immense particularly as they were also quarrying from the area. At what was previously a somewhat more idyllic location, the ranch guesthouse overlooks an attractive crater lake surrounded by rolling grassy hills and beautiful gallery forest that is home to some very special birds. Early on our first morning in the area we began our explorations and wandered down to the lakeside. Historically each night hundreds of egrets, cormorants, ibises, weavers and starlings would come into roost on an island in the middle of the lake but the egrets were virtually absent again this year with only small numbers of Western and Intermediate Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons seen. However the starlings and weavers were present and as they left the roost we ticked off Splendid and Bronze-tailed Glossy Starlings although getting views of the localised White-collared Starling took a little more time but by the end of our stay everyone had succeeded. On the lake African Water Rail was heard and seen by some, Black Crakes scuttled over the lily pads, three Hartlaub's Ducks showed well and Common Moorhen and even an Allen's Gallinule was found. Greater Swamp Warblers spent most of their time buried in the rushes and in the waterside vegetation were Baglafaecht Weavers and a flock of Brown Twinspots foraged around the ranch buildings.



At Ngaoundaba a roosting male Standard-winged Nightjar (left) complete with standards was much admired and the regionally endemic Bamenda Apalis (right) was seen easily. (Nik Borrow)

Our two and a half days at Ngaoundaba were spent walking in various directions around the grounds of the ranch in search of the specialties. Here, abundant yellow-vented Dark-capped Bulbuls had replaced the white-vented birds encountered elsewhere during the tour, although perhaps of more interest was the regionally endemic Bamenda Apalis that proved particularly easy to see this year. Some stunning long-tailed black-and-white morph African Paradise Flycatchers were a joy to watch and fantastic Ross's Turacos displayed their marvellous colours whilst their raucous calls were a soundtrack to our walks. In the galleries Red-tailed Leafloves were very noisy and thus much in evidence but as their name suggests weren't always easy to see amongst the dense foliage. The pretty little and secretive Grey-winged Robin-Chat (recently deemed to now be an akalat!) was glimpsed and after much searching we finally heard the impressively loud gong-like song of Spotted Thrush Babblers and with some persistent effort we all managed to see them well. Elsewhere in the damp shady gullies we watched a White-spotted Flufftail and other species noted included excitable White-chinned Prinias, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Double-toothed Barbet, Green-backed Woodpecker, Square-tailed Drongo, Northern Double-collared and Splendid Sunbirds and Black-necked Weaver.



A family of Sun Lark (left) and a glittering male Klaas's Cuckoo (right) were both popular finds. (Nik Borrow)

The open bush around the ranch stretches for miles and during our convoluted, meandering forays cross-country we came upon roosting Standard-winged Nightjars, the males resplendent with their bizarre standards. An obliging family of Sun Lark was much appreciated and a Bronze-winged Courser was a great find. The striking Brubru sounded out its 'half time whistle' cry, smart male Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrikes were seen and tail-wagging Yellow-billed Shrikes put in an appearance. One morning a flock of early Abdim's Storks that had apparently roosted overnight was seen taking off to continue on their journey and one evening another Bat Hawk was watched catching bats and later that night a Black-shouldered Nightjar was persuaded to show itself. Other species seen during our stay included White-backed Vulture, African Wattled Lapwing, Klaas's Cuckoo, Broad-billed Roller, Cardinal Woodpecker, Western Black-headed Batis, Grey-headed Bushshrike, Tropical Boubou, Whistling Cisticola, Wattled Starling, Pale Flycatcher, Red-headed Quelea, African Firefinch, Black-crowned Waxbill and Plain-backed and Tree Pipits.

We returned to Garoua for a (remarkably punctual!) flight southwards to Yaoundé for an overnight stay. The ever-growing capital is set amongst rolling hills within the forest zone and there is not much to recommend the sprawling city to the birder so we promptly left heading for Bamenda in Anglophone Cameroon, pausing only briefly in the rapidly disappearing forests on the city outskirts. Here members from a colony of nasal-tufted Grey-throated Barbets were busy feeding in the fruiting trees. A series of black-and-white birds gave us male African Shrike-flycatcher, West African Batis and Red-eyed Puffback and the colourful Bates's Paradise Flycatchers were rather more popular than the Plain Greenbul that was spotted. Palearctic migrant Wood Warblers were singing and we also frustratingly heard a Yellow-throated Nicator (which we never did

actually set eyes on). At the Sanaga River we saw our only White-bibbed Swallows of the trip and at an opportune lunch spot were our first White-throated Bee-eater, a Mottled Spinetail and an elusive male Yellow-winged Pytilia. On the journey we drove through swarms of African Beak butterflies (*Libythea labdaca*) before arriving at Bamenda in the late afternoon just in time to find some Neumann's Starlings on the cliff face above the town as a rather dull afternoon drew to a close.

Our first day in the Bamenda area was spent exploring a patch of remnant forest that has been protected for centuries by the local Fon and his community. The forest itself cloaks a steep hillside and although it is small it is still magnificent and in it cling for survival some of the avian jewels of the Cameroonian crown of endemism. No sooner had we arrived than we were watching a bright yellow Bannerman's Weaver in the farmbrush. Here also there were Mackinnon's Shrike, Forest White-eye, African Stonechat, African Dusky Flycatcher and Orange-tufted Sunbird. From deep inside the forest we could hear the raucous guttural cries of turacos so we climbed onwards and upwards but the birds frustratingly fell silent as we reached the top of our climb. Although it was perhaps somewhat quieter than usual inside the forest we eventually found the dapper endemic Banded Wattle-eye sporting intensely red wattles. Naked-faced Barbets squealed above us where Western Mountain Greenbuls were seen moving through the high canopy in contrast to the rather drab Cameroon Olive Greenbuls that crept through the lush undergrowth. Regional endemics such as Green Longtail and Cameroon Sunbird were spotted and we also enjoyed views of the attractive Black-collared Apalis and Ruwenzori Hill Babbler as well as Cassin's Honeybird, Bocage's Bushshrike, Grey Cuckooshrike, White-bellied Crested Flycatcher, Grey Apalis and Black-billed and Brown-capped Weavers. A flash of red and green through the treetops proved to be Guinea Turaco rather than the hoped for endemic species but there were fruiting trees here and it wasn't long until a Bannerman's Turaco bounced into view. By now it was midday and with the birding activity at a lull we moved on in the afternoon to the more open grasslands where an attractive vista of rolling grasslands, rocky escarpments and patches of gallery forest laid out before us. In this terrain we added a few new species and in particular excitable Brown-backed (split from Chubb's) Cisticolas as well as Peregrine Falcon, Black Swift, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Yellow Bishop, Red-collared Widowbird and Common Waxbill.



In the Bamenda Highlands we were treated to an assortment of regional endemics that included Bannerman's Turaco (left), Bangwa Forest Warbler (centre) and Bannerman's Weaver (right). (Nik Borrow)

The following day began with a cool morning and we spent our time at a small crater lake that held three African Black Ducks and a Yellow-billed Duck. During our time on the forested crater rim we renewed our acquaintance with the marvellous Bannerman's Turaco and enjoyed far superior views than the previous day thus etching this beautiful bird firmly onto our lists. At the same time we were treated to exceptional views of the regionally endemic, Bangwa Forest Warbler from an individual that did not seem to know what skulking meant. The totally stunning and brightly coloured Yellow-breasted Boubou was a suitably mouth-watering species and having tasted our fill of these marvellous birds we broke for one of George's tasty bush

breakfasts! After eating our fill nearby we found Cameroon Montane Greenbul and some of us managed views of a secretive pair of Grey-chested Babblers tossing leaves in the undergrowth. Out on the open grasslands we found Pectoral-patch Cisticola and a Cameroon Pipit and we wound up the mornings birding with a chunky Oriole Finch and Thick-billed Seedeater. We then bade our farewells to the members of the group who were returning home that day and a smaller intrepid band of travellers journeyed on to Buea at the foot of Mount Cameroon.

We awoke to clear skies behind the ever-rising Mount Cameroon. The true height of the mountain is argued to lie between 4,040 and 4,095 metres and is actually thought to be increasing every year. We set off at first light for the climb up the famous 'Guinness track', the location of an annual race to and from the summit that is normally completed in something like four and a half hours! All we had to do was merely stagger to the tree line at about 2,000 metres where the endemic Mount Cameroon Speirops occurs. We wended our way through the fields, bracken and regenerating forest that covers the lower slopes and as we climbed slowly, higher and higher the path entered the sadly degraded forest and new birds began to appear. A few Cameroon Montane Greenbuls amongst the far more common Western Mountain Greenbuls gradually replaced the Little Greenbuls of the lower slopes. Regional endemics such as the endearing Shelley's Oliveback and pretty Mountain Robin Chats presented little problem to see. A pair of Cameroon Olive Pigeons flew over as we climbed higher, an Ayres's Hawk Eagle circled overhead and small numbers of graceful endemic Mountain Saw-wings were watched flying around us. Western Tinkerbird, Banded Prinia, African Hill Babblers and Dark-backed Weavers allowed good views but we struggled a little harder with the skulking Cameroon Forest (split from Evergreen Forest) Warbler however the strange White-tailed Warbler that squealed at us from the gloomy tangles proved easy to get to grips with meaning that everyone saw it well with the first try! Mountain Sooty Boubous flaunted themselves, both Tullberg's and Elliot's Woodpeckers put in an appearance and both Red-chested Cuckoo and Thick-billed Honeyguide were seen. We eventually reached the tree line and as we ate our lunch a large party of charming Mount Cameroon Speirops passed through the bushes in front of us and we were rewarded with some very close views. There was little else to do but begin our descent. The loose rocks along the pathway made the descent somewhat treacherous but making our way carefully down we found a Brown-chested Alethe that sat and posed quietly out in the open and at the bottom persuaded some Red-chested Flufftails to show themselves. We reached the bottom weary and tired but very satisfied with our successful day.



It is a 1,000-metre climb from the start of the trail to the treeline but this has to be done if Mount Cameroon Speirops (left) is to be added to the list! Mountain Robin-chats (right) can be seen along the way. (Nik Borrow)

We paid an early morning visit to Limbe situated on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean where we spent a few hours in the Botanical Gardens. Sadly there were few flowers to be found but we managed to see the coastal specialist Reichenbach's Sunbird and a family of Rufous-vented Paradise Flycatchers. Species such as the

unobtrusive Cassin's Flycatcher, Western Reef Heron, Olive-bellied Sunbird and Western Bluebill were expected but we were most surprised to find a Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher there. Our time in the gardens was short as we had a long drive on a route that is notorious for claiming many a vehicle during the rainy season. However a newly graded road meant that our journey was more speedy than arduous and we travelled onwards towards the Nigerian border and the small town of Mundemba on the edge of Korup National Park. On the journey we saw a fine Shining-blue Kingfisher and we reached Mundemba at the same time as a heavy downpour of rain. After the deluge the late afternoon remained grey but we managed to find Simple Greenbul in the cultivated areas around the hotel.



The stunning Yellow-breasted Boubou (left) was one of the highlights of our day on Mount Cameroon. A male Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher (right) was a somewhat unexpected find in Limbe Botanic Gardens. (Nik Borrow)

The following morning we found ourselves at the foot of the impressive suspension bridge spanning the Mana River. Some solid concrete steps now replace the once rickety wooden ladder thus making the experience of crossing the river somewhat less hair-raising although when wet a few slippery planks here and there still test the grip on your walking boots! The sounds of a bird party welcomed us into the gloom and from this point on a thick wall of primary rainforest engulfed our party as we slipped inside the dark green mass of vegetation and began trekking along narrow trails between tall solid tree trunks and looped and tangled lianas, heading to our base camp some eight kilometres away. We really started our time in the park with a bang as the first hour or so was incredibly birdy and we saw both Pale-breasted and Blackcap Illadopsis easily as well as the brown-throated *iboensis* form of Brown Illadopsis. Skulking Fire-crested Alethe and both Red-tailed and Yellow-lored Bristlebills were seen whilst roving bird parties gave us a taster of mixed greenbul flocks and we managed to sort out Xavier's, Red-tailed, White-bearded and Eastern Bearded Greenbuls. A superb Blue-moustached Bee-eater appeared at close quarters on the trail ahead of us and it seemed like everything was going our way and then for some reason the activity quietened and thereafter for the rest of our stay everything was a bit of a struggle. As we moved through the forest, we were accompanied by the sound of enormous Black-casqued and Yellow-casqued Hornbills as they moved from tree to tree, the buzzing whirr of their wings slicing the silence of the forest. Getting a view of them through the high, dense canopy however was a near-on impossible task in itself! Normally a feature of the forest are the numerous ant swarms and their attendant bird species but this year we did not find one single active swarm although there were ants around as we could testify whenever we trod in them for in seconds they were up our trouser legs! The three days were spent working some of the forest trails but we quickly discovered that forest birding here is definitely not easy and were soon coping with the frustrations of catching (or perhaps missing) furtive shadowy shapes that slipped away before we had hardly even registered their presence! However, these occasions of hair-tearing and teeth-gnashing frustration were surely offset by the joys of seeing an Sjöstedt's Barred Owlet in broad daylight and some careful stalking enabled us to see a stunning male Bare-cheeked Trogon well. Handsome Blue-headed Wood Doves

responded to playback but would only pose briefly for us on an exposed branch before diving back into the forest. Western Forest Robins glowed out in the dim light of the forest floor whilst Sabine's and Cassin's Spinetails fluttered over the clearings in the forest. A pair of responsive Latham's Francolins was called in but frustrated by dashing away as soon as they saw us. A White-bellied Kingfisher was almost subliminal as it shot past at speed and other species added to the list included Black Cuckoo, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye, Dusky Crested Flycatcher, White-tailed Ant Thrush, Fraser's Rufous Thrush and Blue-billed Malimbe. To make matters worse we had more than our fair share of rain over these days and no doubt the poor weather did not help us at all.



Rock Pratincoles (left) gathered on the Mana River, Korup National Park. An exceedingly wet Congo Serpent Eagle (right) was a great surprise as we left Mundemba. (Nik Borrow)

The plan was to bird along the road as we left Mundemba but our departure coincided with heavy rain for the first two hours of daylight. We waited until it had stopped and then ventured out on the muddy road. The bad weather was instrumental to pushing the hirundines and swifts low and a Black Spinetail was seen. Suddenly there was activity and we continued to add new species such as Red-fronted Parrot, Streaky-throated Barbet, Gabon Woodpecker and Red-vented Malimbe. However it was a great surprise to see a very wet Congo Serpent Eagle flap out of the vegetation and land in a bare tree just in front of us. This was indeed a great reward after our lean time inside the forest and the good birds did not stop there for a little later we were watching a hulking Black-throated Coucal and some intensely coloured Black-headed Waxbills before it was time to move on. We travelled with the cries of "white-man, white-man" ringing in our ears and arrived at our final destination, Nyasoso at the foot of Mount Kupe at the end of the day.

The Mount Kupe part of the tour, based at Nyasoso, was an altogether different experience. Here there were people, noise and the excitement of village life. We were immediately made to feel welcome as we were being accommodated for four nights in the home of a most hospitable local family who did their best to make us comfortable.

Climbing up the mountain was a strenuous exercise that left everyone lighter and hopefully fitter by the end of the stay, but the rewards were great and we were all eager to try and track down the mountain's special inhabitants. Mount Kupe is uncompromisingly steep in places but on our first day we took it very slowly up Max's trail, as there was much to see on the way. Little Rush Warbler was the first bird of the day as they were singing just outside of our accommodation. On the cultivated lower slopes we enjoyed great views of Lühder's Bushshrikes creeping through the undergrowth and a lot of time was spent birding this highly productive farmbrush where it was somewhat easier to see species that had been frustrating us since the beginning of the tour as disembodied voices in the depths of the forest. Red-rumped Tinkerbird and Yellow-billed Barbet showed well and Black-throated and Black-capped Apalises and Rufous-crowned Eremomelas put in appearances. Once again we saw the hyliotas that appear to show the field characters of Southern Hyliota rather than the Yellow-bellied that had 'officially' been recorded from the mountain up until our visit in 2005 when we started looking at these birds with a more critical eye. There is one specimen of a Southern

Hyltiota collected by Serle in 1965 from the nearby Rumpi Hills and this has always remained a bit of a puzzle. However, this *slatini* rain forest population of 'Southern Hyltiota' ranges from just a little further east and reaches as far as Kenya's Kakamega Forest and the Angolan scarp forests and there are surely closer links with this form and the recently split Usambara Hyltiota from Tanzania rather than the miombo dwelling races of Southern Hyltiota. A beautiful Many-coloured Bush-shrike calling persistently was lured in to the open trees above us where we managed excellent views. Here also Yellow-footed and Dusky-blue Flycatchers sat out in the open, colourful Petit's Cuckoo-shrikes were seen and Black Sparrowhawk, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Pink-footed Puffback and Ashy Flycatcher were all added to the tally. We entered the forest but here the path rises steeply and the birding became progressively more difficult. A juvenile Black-necked Wattle-eye was seen being attended to by its parent, the regionally endemic Black-capped Woodland Warbler was present, African Piculet allowed excellent views whilst a Dark-backed Weaver was one of the few observable members of an invisible bird party. Best bird of the afternoon was probably the easily overlooked Ursula's Sunbird.



Yellow-footed Flycatcher (left) and Dusky-blue Flycatcher (centre) are usually easy to see in the farmbrush on the lower slopes of Mount Kupe. On the other hand the tiny Ursula's Sunbird (right) is easily overlooked in the dark forests but this year we were treated to marvellous views. (Nik Borrow)

The next two days were spent in the nearby Bakossi Mountains. The advantage of this locality is that the village is already at the altitude preferred by many of the special birds that we previously needed to climb the steep slopes of Mt Kupe for and so by driving to Kodmin the difficult climb up is avoided although it must be remembered that the steep paths at Kodmin then of course only lead down and they need to be climbed again! BirdQuest discovered the first record of Mount Kupe Bushshrike at Kodmin in 2002 and this now seems to be a reasonably reliable site for this elusive species as well as the regional endemic Green-breasted Bushshrike. We had no problems with the village community this year which has now sorted out their differences and are once again united under one chief. A little time was needed in order to sort out the arrangements and the libation ceremony had to be witnessed. Unfortunately land ownership and access isn't that simple in parts of Cameroon so that one cannot freely wander about and the chiefs, councils and local gods all have to be appeased mainly by beer, whisky, cola nuts and ultimately money. However finally the settlement was reached, the Gods blessed us and we were allowed to enter the forest.

Sadly from this year onwards the appearance of this hitherto unspoilt forest has been changed forever with the construction of a new road that has bulldozed through prime Mount Kupe Bushshrike habitat. The villagers themselves are delighted with the "progress" and "development" but for the nature lover something very special has now been lost. With the road will undoubtedly come ribbon development and the pristine forest here will have been irreversibly opened up forever. Because of the destruction we had to venture deeper into the forest where we spent most of our time trying to track down a bird party or better still the Mount Kupe Bushshrike itself. As with everywhere in this hilly region the terrain often presents more

problems in seeing the birds than the birds themselves! Steep, densely vegetated valleys and narrow trails do not make it easy for groups of people to get onto birds. However after some searching, once again this year we were fortunate enough to see quite by chance the desirable Mount Kupe Bushshrike and then hear its grating calls echoing through the forest. The bird did not respond well to playback and gradually became more and more elusive but we were fortunate that we had all seen it clearly. We did not have the same luck with the Green-breasted Bushshrike, which remained just a voice, its mournful hoots tormenting our ears as we stared into the dense foliage in search of movement. The same applied to Alexander's (split from Bocage's) Akalat for this little bird resolutely remained hidden in the undergrowth. However we did manage to scope Cameroon Olive Pigeon, found a marvellous a male Grey-headed Broadbill and it was also easy to get some marvellous views of the regionally endemic White-throated Mountain Babblers and very attractive tail-pumping Grey-headed Greenbuls. We obtained some excellent views of Bar-tailed Trogon and other species included Cassin's Hawk-Eagle, Red-chested Goshawk, Red-thighed Sparrowhawk, Afep Pigeons, Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo, European Bee-eater, Lowland Masked Apalis, Chestnut-winged and Waller's Starlings and White-bellied Robin Chat.

Back at Nyasoso at night Fraser's Eagle Owls were heard calling but they remained stubbornly unresponsive. We also fought a long and hard battle trying to see a pair of Fiery-breasted Bushshrikes that were glimpsed inside the foliage. However furtive Black-faced Rufous Warblers were seen well and the last lifer of the trip was a Forest Swallow. Although difficult to work, Mount Kupe is still a wonderful place and since the BirdLife and WWF projects has seen a high level of protection but it is worrying that trees have been cut down inside the boundary of the 'protected' forest and it remains to be seen what will happen next.

Although perhaps not an 'easy' destination, Cameroon is probably the 'ultimate' western African country to visit and our 28 days tour had taken us virtually the entire length of the country, through all the major habitats and had surrendered many of the best birds that western Africa has to offer. From Mount Cameroon itself to the Sahel spectacle, the rare endemics of the Adamawa Plateau and Bamenda Highlands and finally the rich lowland and Montane forests of the southwest, we had surely sampled a wide range of habitats and some beautiful scenery as well! The infrastructure in the country seems at best fragile and if Cameroon turns out to be yet another African country forced off of the ecotourist/birding map of destinations then it will be a very great loss indeed.



The tranquil and beautiful river setting in Bénoué National Park. (Nik Borrow)



The delightful White-throated Francolin allowed amazing views both in Bénoué National Park this year. (Nik Borrow)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **IOC World Bird Names**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home>

CR = Critically Endangered, **E** = Endangered, **V** = Vulnerable, **NT** = Near Threatened, **DD** = Data Deficient.

BIRDS

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* Seen well in Waza NP and at Dang Lake.

Hartlaub's Duck ◊ *Pteronetta hartlaubii* 4 near Douala and 3 at Ngaoundaba. See Note.

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* 8 near Douala.

African Black Duck *Anas sparsa* 3 at Lake Awing.

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata* Good numbers at Dang Lake and 1 at Lake Awing.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Dang Lake.
Black Guinea fowl ◊ *Agelastes niger* (H) Heard during both days at Campo Ma'an.
Helmeted Guinea fowl *Numida meleagris* Common and easy to see in the far north.
Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus* Easily seen near Maroua and in Bénoué NP.
Latham's Francolin ◊ *Peliperdix lathamii* A responsive pair in Korup still proved difficult to see. See Note.
White-throated Francolin ◊ *Peliperdix albogularis* Amazing views in Bénoué NP.
Scaly Francolin *Pternistis squamatus* First seen by the Sanaga River.
Double-spurred Francolin *Pternistis bicalcaratus* Easily seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Clapperton's Francolin ◊ *Pternistis clappertoni* Impossible to miss in the far north. See Note.
Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Small numbers near Douala, Dang Lake, Ngaoundaba, and Lake Awing.
Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* Good numbers were seen in the far north.
African Openbill (A O Stork) *Anastomus lamelligerus* Good numbers were seen in the far north.
Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* 1 was seen at Waza.
Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii* A flock of 13 at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* 4 in Waza NP.
Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* 1 juvenile in Waza NP and an adult and 2 juvs in Bénoué NP.



Unusually large numbers of Marabou Storks had gathered in Waza this year. (Nik Borrow)

Marabou Stork M *Leptoptilos crumenifer* To see hundreds in Waza NP was quite a surprise. See Note.
African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* Some in the far north and a couple at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* Seen well in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A few at Ngaoundaba.
Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* A few widespread sightings.
Squacco Heron M *Ardeola ralloides* Small numbers in the north. See Note.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Common and widespread throughout the tour.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Widespread sightings in the north.
Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* Low numbers in the north.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Individuals seen at Dang Lake and Ngaoundaba.
Western Great Egret *Ardea [alba] alba* Small numbers at Dang Lake and Ngaoundaba.
Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E) *Egretta intermedia* Singletons at Ngaoundaba.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Small numbers on the main tour and 1 on the Mana River, Korup NP.
Western Reef Heron (W R Egret) *Egretta gularis* 1 in Limbe Botanic Gardens.
Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* Small numbers in Bénoué NP and Ngaoundaba and 1 on the Mana River, Korup NP.
Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* 1 in Waza NP.

Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus* In appropriate habitat from Dang Lake to Korup NP.

African Darter *Anhinga rufa* 1 near Douala.

Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius* (V) A very timid pair in Waza NP.

Black-winged Kite (B-shouldered K) *Elanus caeruleus* Widely encountered during the main tour.

Scissor-tailed Kite ◊ (African Swallow-tailed K) *Chelictinia riocourii* Easily seen in the far north.

African Harrier-hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus* Widespread sightings throughout the tour. See Note.

Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* Widespread in small numbers but absent from the far north.

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* (E) Small numbers in the north. See Note.

White-backed Vulture M (African W-b V) *Gyps africanus* (E) 2 at Ngaoundaba was our only sighting. See Note.

Rüppell's Vulture (R's Griffon V) *Gyps rueppellii* (E) 8 in Waza NP. See Note.

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* (V) 4 in Waza NP. See Note.

Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* 1 or 2 in Waza NP.

Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus* Singletons in Waza NP, the Bénoué area and Bamenda.

Congo Serpent Eagle ◊ *Circaetus spectabilis* An amazing encounter near Mundemba with a very wet individual.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* (NT) Singletons in Waza and Bénoué NPs. See Note.

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus* Incredible views of an immature in Waza NP and another hunting at Ngaoundaba.

Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* Widespread sightings in small numbers throughout the tour.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraetus wahlbergi* (LO) 1 en route back to Garoua. See Note.

Booted Eagle *Hieraetus pennatus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen at Mora.



We enjoyed a great look at an Ayres's Hawk-Eagle circling over our heads on Mount Cameroon. (Nik Borrow)

Ayres's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraetus ayresii* 1 was seen on Mount Cameroon. See Note.

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* 6 sightings in the north.

Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Aquila africana* 1 seen at Kodmin. See Note.

African Hawk-Eagle *Aquila spilogaster* (NL) Jaap saw a pair at Ngaoundaba.

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* 5 widespread sightings during the tour.

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar* 3 sightings at Waza. See Note.

Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates* Small numbers in the far north.

Long-tailed Hawk ◊ *Urotriorchis macrourus* Excellent looks at 1 as we drove back from Campo Ma'an.

Red-chested Goshawk *Accipiter toussenelii* Just 1 at Kodmin.

Shikra *Accipiter badius* Scattered sightings in the north.

Red-thighed Sparrowhawk (Western Little S) *Accipiter erythropus* A good sighting at Kodmin.

Black Sparrowhawk (Great S) *Accipiter melanoleucus* 3 sightings at Mount Kupe and Kodmin.

Western Marsh Harrier (Eurasian M H) *Circus aeruginosus* Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant in the north.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* (NT) 5+ sightings of this Palearctic migrant in the far north.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* 4 sightings of this Palearctic migrant in the far north. See Note.

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* Common to abundant almost everywhere.

African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* 2 in Bénoué NP and 1 as we left Mundemba.

Grasshopper Buzzard *Butastur rufipennis* 6 sightings in the north.

Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis* First seen at Poli with widespread scattered sightings thereafter.

Arabian Bustard ◊ *Ardeotis arabs* (NT) 2 sightings in Waza NP.

White-bellied Bustard *Eupodotis senegalensis* Small numbers in the far north.

White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra* Seen at Ngaoundaba and in Korup NP.

Buff-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura elegans* (H) Heard at Nyasoso.

Red-chested Flufftail ◊ *Sarothrura rufa* 3 were seen on Mount Cameroon.

Nkulengu Rail ◊ *Himantornis haematopus* (H) Heard in Korup NP. See Note.

African Rail (A Water R) *Rallus caerulescens* Heard by all and seen by some at Ngaoundaba.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* Common at Ngaoundaba.

African Swampphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis* 2 on Dang Lake.

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni* 1 at Ngaoundaba. See Note.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Small numbers at Ngaoundaba and Lake Awing.

Black Crowned Crane ◊ *Balearica pavonina* (V) At least 100 were seen in Waza NP.

Quail-Plover ◊ *Ortyxelos meiffrenii* Stunning views of this unique bird in the far north. At least 5 were seen.

Senegal Thick-knee *Burhinus senegalensis* 2 were seen in Bénoué NP.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Small numbers were seen in the Waza area.

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus* Small numbers in the north.



Black-headed Lapwings are easily seen in the dry countryside of the far north. (Nik Borrow)

Black-headed Lapwing *Vanellus tectus* Common in the far north.

White-crowned Lapwing (W-headed L) *Vanellus albiceps* Seen on the Sanaga River and in Bénoué NP.

African Wattled Lapwing (Senegal W L) *Vanellus senegallus* 1 at Ngaoundaba.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* 6 were seen on the Sanaga River.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* A pair was seen in Bénoué NP.

White-fronted Plover (W-f Sand P) *Charadrius marginatus* 1 was seen on the Sanaga River.

Egyptian Plover ◊ (Crocodile Bird) *Pluvianus aegyptius* 5 pairs were counted in Bénoué NP.

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* Widespread sightings in appropriate habitat during the main tour.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Singletons of these Palearctic migrants on the Sanaga River and Waza NP.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants in the north.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants in the north.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants throughout the tour.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* 1 of these Palearctic migrants on the Sanaga River and 2 in Waza NP.

Bronze-winged Courser ◊ (Violet-tipped C) *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* Great looks at 1 at Ngaoundaba.

Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis* Small numbers seen on various rocky river crossings.

Grey Pratincole ◊ *Glareola cinerea* Distant but great scope views of 30+ on the Sanaga River.

African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris* (NT) Distant but great scope views of 250+ on the Sanaga River.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse *Pterocles exustus* Large flocks were seen in the Waza area.

Four-banded Sandgrouse ◊ *Pterocles quadricinctus* Seen well in the Waza area and in Bénoué NP.

Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* Feral or 'table' birds only.

Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* Commonly encountered in the north.

Afep Pigeon *Columba unicincta* Small numbers at Campo Ma'an and Kodmin. See Note.

Cameroon Olive Pigeon ◊ *Columba sjostedti* Seen in flight on Mount Cameroon and 1 scoped at Kodmin.

European Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* 100's in the Waza area.

Adamawa Turtle Dove ◊ *Streptopelia hypopyrrha* Just 1 in Bénoué NP.



African Collared Dove dwarfs a Vinaceous Dove at the Waza 'dove-fest'. (Nik Borrow)

African Collared Dove M (Rose-grey D) *Streptopelia roseogrisea* Easy to see in the far north.

Mourning Collared Dove M (African M D) *Streptopelia decipiens* Easy to see in the far north.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* Absent from the far north and the deep forest.

Vinaceous Dove *Streptopelia vinacea* Abundant throughout the north.

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* Common in the north.

Black-billed Wood Dove *Turtur abyssinicus* A dry country dove of the north.

Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer* Replaces the previous species in wetter and more humid regions.

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* Heard more often than seen in forested regions.

Blue-headed Wood Dove *Turtur brehmeri* Several seen in Korup NP.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* Very common in the far north. See Note.

Bruce's Green Pigeon (Yellow-bellied G P) *Treron waalia* Widespread sightings in the north. See Note.

African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus* Absent from the far north.

Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata* Present in the forests but heard more often than seen.

Guinea Turaco (Green T) *Tauraco persa* Seen well in the Bamenda Highlands, Mount Kupe and Kodmin.

Yellow-billed Turaco *Tauraco macrorhynchus* Seen at Campo Ma'an, Mounts Cameroon and Kupe and Kodmin.

White-crested Turaco *Tauraco leucolophus* Seen well in Bénoué NP and Ngaoundaba.

Bannerman's Turaco ◊ *Tauraco bannermani* (E) Excellent views in the Bamenda Highlands. See Note.

Violet Turaco ◇ *Musophaga violacea* Seen well at Poli and in Bénoué NP.
Ross's Turaco M *Musophaga rossae* Seen at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
Western Plantain-eater M (W Grey P-e) *Crinifer piscator* Seen from Poli to Ngaoundaba.
Black-throated Coucal ◇ *Centropus leucogaster* Good looks as we left Mundemba.
Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis* Widespread sightings in the north.
Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus* First seen well at the Sanaga River.
Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares aereus* Widespread sightings in the forests.
Levaillant's Cuckoo (African Striped C) *Clamator levaillantii* (NL) Steve saw 1 at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* First seen well at Ngaoundaba. See Note.
African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus* Seen at Campo Ma'an and on Mount Kupe.
Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo ◇ *Cercococcyx mechowi* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an.
Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx olivinus* 2 seen at Kodmin.
Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus* 1 seen in Korup NP.
Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* Seen near Yaoundé and at Kodmin.
African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* (H) Heard at Lake Awing.
Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Seen well around the Campement de Waza.
African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis* Just glimpsed by Nik in Bénoué NP.
Fraser's Eagle-Owl ◇ *Bubo poensis* (H) Only heard at Nyasoso. See Note.
Pel's Fishing Owl ◇ *Scotopelia peli* (H) Only heard in Bénoué NP. See Note.
African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* (H) Only heard in Korup NP.
Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* Great views in Bénoué NP.



This juvenile Red-chested Owlet was found at Kodmin. This plumage until now was apparently unknown. (Nik Borrow)

Red-chested Owlet *Glaucidium tephronotum* Singletons at Campo Ma'an and Kodmin.
Sjöstedt's Barred Owlet ◇ *Glaucidium sjostedti* 1 seen in the late afternoon in Korup NP. See Note.
Black-shouldered Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus nigriscapularis* 1 seen well at Ngaoundaba.
Freckled Nightjar *Caprimulgus tristigma* Singletons seen near Maroua and in Bénoué NP.
Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus* Seen well at Waza.
Standard-winged Nightjar ◇ *Caprimulgus longipennis* Excellent views in daylight at Ngaoundaba.
Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri* 1 near Tonga.
Black Spinetail ◇ *Telacanthura melanopygia* 1 near Mundemba.
Sabine's Spinetail *Rhaphidura sabini* 1 seen over Korup NP. See Note.
Cassin's Spinetail *Neafrapus cassini* 2 seen over Korup NP.
African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* Common and widespread throughout the tour.

Common Swift (European S) *Apus apus* Seen over the forest zone.

African Black Swift *Apus barbatus* Small numbers in the Bamenda Highlands.

Little Swift *Apus affinis* Common and often associated with man-made structures.

Bates's Swift ◊ *Apus batesi* 4 seen over Campo Ma'an. See Note.

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* First seen at Ngaoundaba.

Blue-naped Mousebird *Urocolius macrourus* Small numbers in the north.

Bare-cheeked Trogon ◊ *Apaloderma aequatoriale* 2 males were seen well in Korup NP.

Bar-tailed Trogon *Apaloderma vittatum* Great views of a male at Kodmin.

Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus* Easily seen in the far north.

Blue-bellied Roller ◊ *Coracias cyanogaster* Good looks at a displaying pair in Bénoué NP.

Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis* A pair was seen as we left Campo Ma'an.

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* Singletons at Ngaoundaba and near Mundemba.

Chocolate-backed Kingfisher *Halcyon badia* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an.

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Small numbers from Bénoué NP to Ngaoundaba.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* 1 in Bénoué NP.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* Seen in Bénoué NP, Ngaoundaba and Korup NP.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* Common roadside bird of the forest zone.

African Dwarf Kingfisher *Ispidina lecontei* (H) Heard in Korup NP.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* Widespread and regularly encountered in the south.

White-bellied Kingfisher ◊ *Corythornis leucogaster* A subliminal fly-by in Korup NP.

Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus* Scattered, widespread sightings.

Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys* Great looks near Mundemba.



A Giant Kingfisher waits on the bridge over the Mana River in Korup National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* Singletons in Bénoué and Korup NPs.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Most numerous in Bénoué NP.

Blue-moustached Bee-eater *Merops mentalis* (NT) Great views in Korup NP

Blue-breasted Bee-eater *Merops variegatus* 5 seen at Loum.

Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki* Impossible to miss in the Bénoué area.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis* Only numerous when we reached Kodmin.

Green Bee-eater (Little G B-e) *Merops orientalis* Intense colour in the far north.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* A flock of these Palearctic migrants over Kodmin on 28/3.

Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus* Small numbers in the north.

Central African Hoopoe *Upupa [epops] senegalensis* All of the hoopoes seen in the north appeared to be this form.

Green Wood Hoopoe (Red-billed W H) *Phoeniculus purpureus* Scattered sightings in the north.

Black Scimitarbill (Black/Lesser Wood Hoopoe) *Rhinopomastus aterrimus* 1 pair seen in the Waza area.

African Pied Hornbill *Tockus fasciatus* The common forest zone hornbill.

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus* A common hornbill in the north.

Northern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* A very common hornbill in the north.

Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill *Tockus camurus* 2 seen in Campo Ma'an and heard in Korup NP.

Piping Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator* A common forest zone hornbill.

White-thighed Hornbill *Bycanistes albotibialis* Small numbers seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Black-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna atrata* Small numbers seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Yellow-casqued Hornbill ◊ ***Ceratogymna elata* (V)** Commonly heard but difficult to see through the closed canopy.

Abyssinian Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus abyssinicus* A male was seen in Bénoué NP.

Grey-throated Barbet *Gymnobucco bonapartei* Easily seen as we left Yaoundé.

Bristle-nosed Barbet ◊ ***Gymnobucco peli*** 3 seen at Campo Ma'an.

Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus* First seen in the Bamenda Highlands.

Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus* Seen well at Campo Ma'an and heard elsewhere in the forests.



A Western Tinkerbird came in close for a better view on Mount Cameroon. (Nik Borrow)

Western Tinkerbird ◊ **(W Green T) *Pogoniulus coryphaea*** Great looks on Mount Cameroon.

Red-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus atroflavus* We had to wait until Mount Kupe to see our first.

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus subsulphureus* The common forest zone tinkerbird.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* Prefers higher elevations to the previous species.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* The common tinkerbird of the north.

Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon duchaillui* The 'snoring' barbet!

Streaky-throated Barbet *Tricholaema [hirsuta] flavipunctata* Seen well as we left Mundemba.

Vieillot's Barbet ◊ ***Lybius vieilloti*** Seen well in the far north. See Note.

White-headed Barbet *Lybius leucocephalus* Good views of a pair near Maroua.

Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus* 2 seen at Ngaoundaba.

Bearded Barbet ◊ ***Lybius dubius*** This magnificently grotesque bird was seen well in Bénoué NP.

Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus purpuratus* We had to wait until Mount Kupe to see our first.

Cassin's Honeybird *Prodotiscus insignis* 1 seen in the Bamenda Highlands.

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksii* 1 seen at Poli. See Note.

Thick-billed Honeyguide *Indicator conirostris* 1 seen in Korup NP.

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* 1 watched coming down to drink in Bénoué NP.

Greater Honeyguide (Black-throated H) *Indicator indicator* 3 sightings in the north.

Lyre-tailed Honeyguide ◊ *Melichneutes robustus* (H) This difficult species was heard at Campo Ma'an.

African Piculet ◊ *Sasia africana* Singletons at Campo Ma'an and Mount Kupe.

Fine-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera punctuligera* 1 in Bénoué NP.

Green-backed Woodpecker (Little Spotted W) *Campethera cailliautii* 2 at Ngaoundaba.

Tullberg's Woodpecker *Campethera tullbergi* Seen on Mount Cameroon and at Kodmin. See Note.

Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosa* 1 was seen in Korup NP.

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens* Small numbers were seen at Ngaoundaba.

Gabon Woodpecker ◊ *Dendropicos gabonensis* Seen near Mundemba and on Mount Kupe.

Yellow-crested Woodpecker *Dendropicos xantholophus* A pair at their nest hole on Mount Kupe.

Elliot's Woodpecker ◊ *Dendropicos elliotii* Seen on Mount Cameroon and at Kodmin. See Note.

African Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae* Scattered sightings in the north.

Brown-backed Woodpecker *Dendropicos obsoletus* Scattered sightings in the north.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Palearctic migrants in the Waza area and resident *rufescens* elsewhere.

Fox Kestrel ◊ *Falco alopex* A pair seen near Maroua.

African Hobby *Falco cuvierii* 1 was seen in Bénoué NP.

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* Sightings in the Waza area, in Yaoundé and the Bamenda Highlands.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* 1 in the Bamenda Highlands.

Rose-ringed Parakeet (Ring-necked P) *Psittacula krameri* Small numbers in the far north.

Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* (V) Most numerous at Campo Ma'an.

Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi* A flock of about 8 flew over near Mundemba.

Senegal Parrot *Poicephalus senegalus* Easy to see in the north.

Grey-headed Broadbill ◊ *Smithornis sharpei* Great looks at a male at Kodmin.

Rufous-sided Broadbill *Smithornis rufolateralis* (H) Unresponsive birds were only heard at Campo Ma'an.

African Shrike-flycatcher *Megabyas flammulatus* A male was seen near Yaoundé.

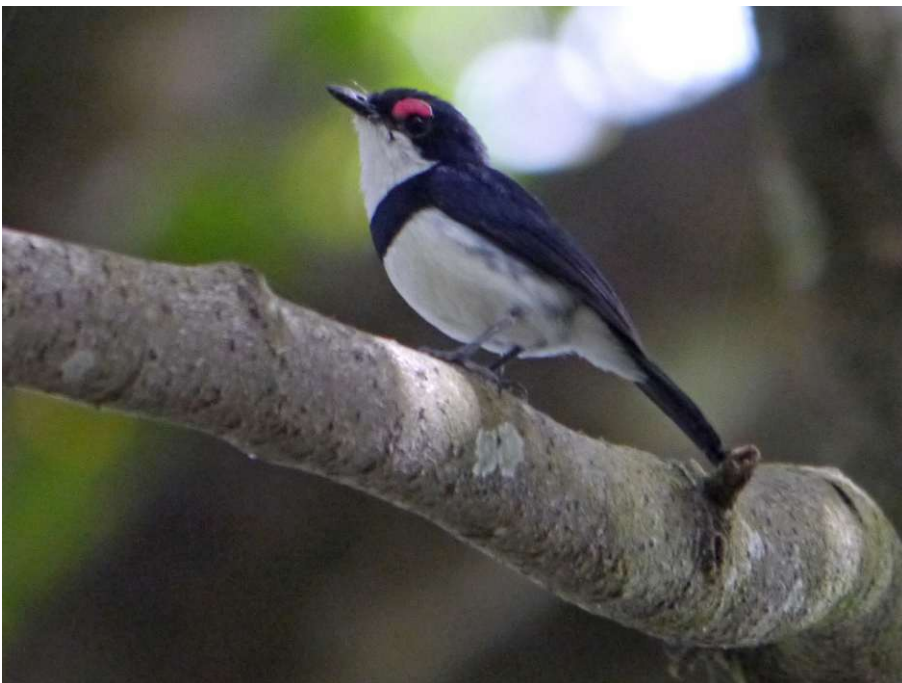
Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher *Bias musicus* Seen well in Limbe Botanic Gardens and on Mount Kupe.

Senegal Batis M *Batis senegalensis* Seen at Poli and in Bénoué NP.

Western Black-headed Batis *Batis erlangeri* A male seen at Ngaoundaba.

West African Batis ◊ *Batis [poensis] occulta* A pair was seen near Yaoundé.

Chestnut Wattle-eye *Platysteira castanea* Regularly seen in the forests.



A pair of endemic Banded Wattle-eyes was a welcome find in the Bamenda Highlands. (Nik Borrow)

Banded Wattle-eye ◊ *Platysteira laticincta* (E) This endemic was seen well in the Bamenda Highlands. See Note.

Brown-throated Wattle-eye (Common W-e) *Platysteira cyanea* Widespread sightings from Bénoué south.

Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye *Platysteira concreta* Seen in Korup NP and on Mount Kupe.

Black-necked Wattle-eye ◊ *Platysteira chalybea* An adult feeding a juvenile on Mount Kupe.

White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus* Easy to see in Bénoué NP and Ngaoundaba.

Rufous-bellied Helmetshrike ◊ *Prionops rufiventris* 3 were seen well at Campo Ma'an.

Fiery-breasted Bushshrike ◊ *Malaconotus cruentus* An elusive pair was seen briefly on Mount Kupe.

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* Good views at Ngaoundaba.

Green-breasted Bushshrike ◊ *Malaconotus gladiator* (V) (H) Heard only at Kodmin.

Mount Kupe Bushshrike ◊ *Chlorophoneus kupeensis* (E) 2 birds seen at Kodmin. See Note.

Many-coloured Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus multicolor* An orange-breasted male was seen well on Mount Kupe.

Bocage's Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus bocagei* Seen in the Bamenda Highlands. See Note.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike M (Sulphur-b B) *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Seen in Bénoué and Ngaoundaba.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis* Singletons in the Bamenda Highlands and on Mount Cameroon.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus* Widespread sightings in the north.

Sabine's Puffback ◊ *Dryoscopus sabinii* Great views of a male at Campo Ma'an.

Pink-footed Puffback *Dryoscopus angolensis* Easily seen on Mount Kupe.

Red-eyed Puffback (Black-shouldered P) *Dryoscopus senegalensis* Seen near Yaoundé and on Mount Kupe.

Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis* Seen well in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Mountain Sooty Boubou ◊ *Laniarius poensis* Great views of a pair on Mount Cameroon.

Lühder's Bushshrike *Laniarius luehderi* Great views of a pair on Mount Kupe. See Note.

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major* A few seen at Ngaoundaba.

Yellow-crowned Gonolek ◊ *Laniarius barbarus* This colourful bird was only in the far north.

Black-headed Gonolek *Laniarius erythrogaster* Intensely coloured birds seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Yellow-breasted Boubou ◊ *Laniarius atroflavus* A stunning species seen well at Lake Awing and Mount Cameroon.

Brubru *Nilais afer* Just 1 seen at Ngaoundaba.

Grey Cuckooshrike *Coracina caesia* Seen at all the highland localities.

White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Coracina pectoralis* Seen well in Bénoué NP.

Blue Cuckooshrike *Coracina azurea* Seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea* Easily seen at Ngaoundaba.

Petit's Cuckooshrike *Campephaga petiti* A pair was seen on Mount Kupe. See Note.

Yellow-billed Shrike *Corvinella corvina* Seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.



A Mackinnon's Shrike enjoys a tasty morsel at Kodmin. (Nik Borrow)

Mackinnon's Shrike *Lanius mackinnoni* Bamenda Highlands and more on Mount Kupe and Kodmin. See Note.

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* 2 sightings in the far north.

Northern Fiscal *Lanius humeralis* First seen well at Dang Lake.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Poli.

Eurasian Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* Scattered sightings of these Palearctic migrants.

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* Small numbers seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Western Oriole (W Black-headed O) *Oriolus brachyrhynchus* Seen well at Campo Ma'an and Mount Kupe.

Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis* Widespread sightings in the forests.

Square-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus ludwigii* The race *sharpei* seen at Ngaoundaba and in the Bamenda Highlands.

Shining Drongo *Dicrurus atripennis* Seen in the forests and usually associated with bird parties.

Fork-tailed Drongo M *Dicrurus adsimilis* The common savannah Drongo of the north.

Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus [modestus] coracinus* Seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher *Trochocercus nitens* This skulking bird seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Rufous-vented Paradise Flycatcher ◊ *Terpsiphone rufocinerea* Adults with young in Limbe Botanic Gardens.

Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer* Seen well in the forests.

Bates's Paradise Flycatcher ◊ *Terpsiphone batesi* Seen near Yaoundé and on Mount Kupe.

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* Most numerous at Ngaoundaba.

Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer* Seen near Poli and at Ngaoundaba.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* Common and widespread throughout the tour but avoids mature forest.

Grey-necked Rockfowl ◊ (Red-headed Picathartes) *Picathartes oreas (V)* At least 10 birds at Campo Ma'an.

African Blue Flycatcher (B Fairy F) *Elminia longicauda* First seen at Poli and from there throughout the tour.

Dusky Crested Flycatcher *Elminia nigromitrata* Several seen in Korup NP.

White-bellied Crested Flycatcher *Elminia albiventris* Small numbers noted in the montane forests.

White-shouldered Black Tit *Melaniparus guineensis* Seen near Poli and at Ngaoundaba.

Sennar Penduline Tit ◊ (Sudan P T) *Anthoscopus punctifrons* A pair allowed excellent views at Waza.

Western Nicator *Nicator chloris* Seen at Campo Ma'an and during the extension. See Note.

Yellow-throated Nicator ◊ *Nicator vireo (H)* This skulking bird was only heard near Yaoundé.

Singing Bush Lark *Mirafra cantillans* 5 were seen in the far north.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata* Just 1 was seen at Mora.

Sun Lark ◊ *Galerida modesta* 2 adults and 2 young were seen at Ngaoundaba.



Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Larks coming down to drink in Waza National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis* Abundant in the far north.

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* Literally the common bulbul!

Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor* The yellow-vented form found at Ngaoundaba.

Cameroon Greenbul ◊ (C Montane G) *Arizelocichla montana (NT)* Seen at Bamenda, Mt Cameroon and Kodmin.

Western Greenbul ◊ (W Mountain G) *Arizelocichla tephrolaema* The common greenbul of montane forests.

Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris* Seen well at Campo Ma'an and Mount Kupe.

Little Greenbul *Eurillas virens* A common greenbul heard far more often than seen from Ngaoundaba south.

Little Grey Greenbul *Eurillas gracilis* Only seen at Campo Ma'an.

Ansorge's Greenbul *Eurillas ansorgei* Seen at Campo Ma'an but heard in the other forests. See Note.

Plain Greenbul (Cameroon Sombre G) *Eurillas curvirostris* Seen near Yaoundé and on Mount Kupe.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris* Seen at Campo Ma'an but heard in the other forests.
Golden Greenbul ◊ *Calyptocichla serinus* Seen at Campo Ma'an and on Mount Kupe.
Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator* Seen at Campo Ma'an but heard in the other forests.
Sjöstedt's Greenbul ◊ *Baeopogon clamans* (H) Heard in Campo Ma'an and Korup NP.
Spotted Greenbul *Ixonotus guttatus* Wing-flicking flocks at Campo Ma'an and near Yaoundé.
Simple Greenbul (S Leaflove) *Chlorocichla simplex* Views for some of us at Mundemba.
Yellow-throated Leaflove *Atimastillas flavicollis* Nominate in Bénoué NP and white-throated *soror* at Ngaoundaba.
Swamp Palm Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucopleura* Seen well at Campo Ma'an.
Red-tailed Leaflove (Leaflove) *Phyllastrephus scandens* Skulking birds at Ngaoundaba.
Cameroon Olive Greenbul ◊ *Phyllastrephus poensis* Seen in the Bamenda Highlands and at Kodmin.
Icterine Greenbul *Phyllastrephus icterinus* Commonly seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.
Xavier's Greenbul ◊ *Phyllastrephus xavieri* Seen well in Korup NP. See Note.
Grey-headed Greenbul ◊ *Phyllastrephus poliocephalus* An attractive regional endemic seen well at Kodmin.
Red-tailed Bristlebill (Common B) *Bleda syndactylus* Heard at Campo Ma'an, seen in Korup NP.
Yellow-lored Bristlebill ◊ (Lesser B) *Bleda notatus* Seen well in Korup NP.
Eastern Bearded Greenbul ◊ *Criniger chloronotus* The one with a spiky white throat in Korup NP.
Red-tailed Greenbul (White-b G) *Criniger calurus* Seen well at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.
White-bearded Greenbul ◊ *Criniger ndussumensis* Only vocally distinct from the previous species in Korup NP.
Square-tailed Saw-wing ◊ *Psalidoprocne nitens* Seen at Campo Ma'an and Mount Kupe.
Mountain Saw-wing ◊ *Psalidoprocne fuliginosa* Easily seen on Mount Cameroon.
Petit's Saw-wing ◊ *Psalidoprocne [pristoptera] petiti* Seen from Ngaoundaba south.
Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* Small numbers in Bénoué NP.
Sand Martin M (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia* 2 of these Palearctic migrants were seen in Waza NP.
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* A common and widespread Palearctic migrant.
Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica* Seems to have expanded its range down to Douala.
Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* Small numbers in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
White-bibbed Swallow (W-throated Blue S) *Hirundo nigrita* Just one on the Sanaga River.
Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* Seen at Maroua and in the Bamenda Highlands.
Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen in Waza NP.
Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* Widespread sightings of this common swallow.
Red-breasted Swallow (Rufous-chested S) *Cecropis semirufa* Scattered sightings through the forest zone.
West African Swallow ◊ *Cecropis domicella* Small numbers in the Waza area and en route to Bamenda.
Preuss's Cliff Swallow ◊ *Petrochelidon preussi* Some large colonies were encountered. See Note.
Forest Swallow ◊ *Petrochelidon fuliginosa* 1 or 2 on Mount Kupe.
Moustached Grass Warbler M (African M W) *Melocichla mentalis* 1 seen at Dang Lake.
Yellow Longbill *Macrosphenus flavicans* (H) A persistent but invisible songster in the forests.
Grey Longbill (Olive L) *Macrosphenus concolor* Often heard and occasionally seen in the forests.
Northern Crombec *Sylvietta brachyura* Widespread sightings in the north.
Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens* Often heard and occasionally seen in the forest zone.
Lemon-bellied Crombec *Sylvietta denti* (H) Heard in Korup NP where we did not stand a chance of seeing it.
Green Hylia *Hylia prasina* Often heard and occasionally seen in the forests.
Tit Hylia *Pholidornis rufiae* A trio seen well as we left Campo Ma'an.
Black-capped Woodland Warbler ◊ *Phylloscopus herberti* Small numbers seen on Mount Kupe and at Kodmin.
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* This Palearctic migrant was regularly seen in the forests.
Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens* Seen at Ngaoundaba and heard at Nyasoso.
Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* A singing Palearctic migrant was seen by some at Ngaoundaba.
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen at Ngaoundaba.
African Yellow Warbler *Iduna natalensis* (H) Heard in the Bamenda Highlands.
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna pallida* (NL) Seen by some at Maroua.
Western Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna opaca* Singletons of this Palearctic migrant at Waza and in Bénoué NP.
Little Rush Warbler (African Sedge W) *Bradypterus baboecala* Seen well at Nyasoso.
Cameroon Forest Warbler ◊ *Bradypterus [lopezi] lopezi* Skulking birds on Mount Cameroon.
Bangwa Forest Warbler ◊ *Bradypterus bangwaensis* (NT) Incredible views at Lake Awing. See Note.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops* Seen in Bénoué but heard elsewhere.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans* Seen at Bamenda.

Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis* Sightings at Ngaoundaba and Tonga.

Chattering Cisticola ◇ *Cisticola anonymus* A common forest zone cisticola.

Brown-backed Cisticola ◇ *Cisticola [chubbi] discolor* Easily seen in montane areas.

Rock-loving Cisticola ◇ *Cisticola emini* Several seen near Maroua.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus* 1 at Dang Lake.

Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis* Seen well at Poli and in Bénoué NP.

Red-pate Cisticola ◇ *Cisticola ruficeps* Easy to see in the far north.

Dorst's Cisticola ◇ (Plaintive C) *Cisticola guinea* Seen well at Poli and in Bénoué NP. See Note.

Short-winged Cisticola (Siffling C) *Cisticola brachypterus* 1 seen in Bénoué NP.

Rufous Cisticola ◇ *Cisticola rufus* Several seen in Bénoué NP.

Pectoral-patch Cisticola *Cisticola brunescens* Easily seen in the Bamenda Highlands.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* Widespread sightings in the north.

River Prinia ◇ *Prinia fluviatilis* Only seen on the Waza floodplain.

Banded Prinia ◇ *Prinia bairdii* Good looks at this well-marked bird on Mount Cameroon and Kupe.

White-chinned Prinia *Schistolais leucopogon* Seen well from Ngaoundaba south.

Red-winged Warbler *Heliolais erythropterus* A pair was seen in Bénoué NP.

Green Longtail ◇ *Urolais epichlorus* This regional endemic was common in the montane forests.

Black-collared Apalis ◇ *Oreolais pulcher* A charming and attractive warbler from the Bamenda Highlands.

Red-winged Grey Warbler ◇ *Drymocichla incana* Excitable birds in Bénoué NP.

Cricket Warbler ◇ (Scaly-fronted W) *Spiloptila clamans* After a long search a trio was seen at Mora.

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida* Seen in Bénoué NP and heard at Ngaoundaba.

Lowland Masked Apalis ◇ (M A) *Apalis binotata* 1 was seen at Kodmin.

Black-throated Apalis *Apalis jacksoni* Heard in the Bamenda Highlands and seen on Mount Kupe.

Black-capped Apalis *Apalis nigriceps* Favoured the high canopy on Mount Kupe.

Buff-throated Apalis *Apalis rufogularis* Sightings at Campo Ma'an and near Yaoundé.

Bamenda Apalis ◇ *Apalis bamendae* Seen easily at Ngaoundaba and in the Bamenda Highlands.

Grey Apalis *Apalis cinerea* Seen well in the Bamenda Highlands and on Mount Cameroon.

Oriole Warbler ◇ (Moho) *Hypergerus atriceps* Good looks in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata* Widespread sightings throughout the tour.

Yellow-browed Camaroptera *Camaroptera superciliaris* Great views at Campo Ma'an where watched singing.

Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota* Seen at Campo Ma'an and heard elsewhere.

Black-faced Rufous Warbler *Bathmocercus rufus* Great views of a pair on Mount Kupe.

White-tailed Warbler ◇ *Poliolais lopezi* This strange regional endemic seen well on Mount Cameroon and at Kodmin.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis* Just 1 at Mora.

Senegal Eremomela *Eremomela pusilla* Widespread sightings in the north of this attractive warbler.

Rufous-crowned Eremomela *Eremomela badiceps* Small numbers seen on Mount Kupe.

Spotted Thrush-Babbler ◇ *Ptyrticus turdinus* Excellent views at Ngaoundaba this year.

Blackcap Illadopsis *Illadopsis cleaveri* Superb views in Korup NP.

Pale-breasted Illadopsis *Illadopsis rufipennis* Easily seen in Korup NP and 1 at Kodmin.

Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens* The brown-throated form *iboensis* (Moloney's Illadopsis) in Korup NP.

White-throated Mountain Babbler ◇ *Kupeornis gilberti* (E) Excellent looks at this unusual bird at Kodmin. See Note.

Blackcap Babbler *Turdoides reinwardtii* Heard in Bénoué NP and seen at Ngaoundaba.

Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus* Widespread sightings in the north.

African Hill Babbler *Pseudoalcippe abyssinica* Easy to see on Mount Cameroon.

Ruwenzori Hill Babbler ◇ *Pseudoalcippe atriceps* Easy to see in the Bamenda Highlands.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* (H) Heard at Ngaoundaba.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen in the far north.

Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* A common Palearctic migrant in the far north.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen in the far north.

Mount Cameroon Speirops ◇ *Zosterops melanocephalus* (V) Great views on top of Mount Cameroon.

African Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis* Common in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Forest White-eye ◇ *Zosterops [senegalensis] stenocricotus* Seen well in the forest zone.

Grey-chested Babbler (G-c Illadopsis) *Kakamega poliothorax* Views for some of us at Lake Awing.

Yellow-bellied Hyliota *Hyliota flavigaster* Seen well in Bénoué NP.

Southern Hyliota *Hyliota australis* The race *slatini* seen well on Mount Kupe.

African Spotted Creeper ◊ *Salpornis salvadori* Great views in Bénoué NP.

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* 5 seen flying over at Ngaoundaba.

Purple-headed Starling ◊ *Hylopsar purpureiceps* Just 1 at Campo Ma'an.

Greater Blue-eared Starling (B-e Glossy S) *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* The common starling of the north.

Bronze-tailed Starling (Short-t Glossy S) *Lamprotornis chalcurus* Small numbers at Ngaoundaba.

Splendid Starling (S Glossy S) *Lamprotornis splendidus* Particularly numerous at Ngaoundaba.

Purple Starling (P Glossy S) *Lamprotornis purpureus* Common in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Long-tailed Glossy Starling (Northern L-t S) *Lamprotornis caudatus* Easily seen in the far north.

Chestnut-bellied Starling ◊ *Lamprotornis pulcher* Easily seen in the far north.

Violet-backed Starling (Amethyst S) *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Easily seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Chestnut-winged Starling (Forest C-w S) *Onychognathus [fulgidus] hartlaubi* Just 1 at Kodmin.

Waller's Starling M *Onychognathus walleri* A pair at Kodmin. See Note.



Cameroon is currently the only tour on which we see Neumann's Starlings. (Nik Borrow)

Neumann's Starling ◊ *Onychognathus neumanni* Great looks at Bamenda. See Note.

White-collared Starling ◊ *Grafisia torquata* Somewhat scarce at Ngaoundaba this year with a maximum of 15.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* Scattered sightings in the north, with most in the Bamenda Highlands.

White-tailed Ant Thrush *Neocossyphus poensis* Brief sightings in Korup NP.

Fraser's Rufous Thrush (R Flycatcher T) *Stizorhina fraseri* Heard more often than seen in the various forests.

Crossley's Ground Thrush ◊ *Geokichla crossleyi* (NT) (H) A beautiful but invisible songster at Kodmin. See Note.

African Thrush *Turdus pelios* Common from Ngaoundaba south. The race *nigrilorum* on Mount Cameroon.

Fire-crested Alethe *Alethe castanea* Seen well in Korup NP.

Black Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas podobe* Common and easy to see in the far north.

African Scrub Robin ◊ *Cercotrichas [galactotes] minor* Easy to see in the far north.

White-browed Forest Flycatcher ◊ *Fraseria cinerascens* (H) Heard in Korup.

Grey-throated Tit-flycatcher (G-t F) *Myioparus griseigularis* (H) Heard in Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.

Grey Tit-flycatcher (Lead-coloured F) *Myioparus plumbeus* (H) Heard in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Northern Black Flycatcher M *Melaenornis edolioides* Seen well in Bénoué, Ngaoundaba and Bamenda Highlands.

Pale Flycatcher (Pallid F) *Melaenornis pallidus* Small numbers at Ngaoundaba.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Kodmin.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens* A pair on Mount Kupe.

Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica* Seen at Waza and in Bénoué NP.

Cassin's Flycatcher *Muscicapa cassini* Seen in Limbe Botanic Gardens and the Korup area.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta* Easy to see in montane forest areas.



A juvenile African Dusky Flycatcher on Mount Cameroon. (Nik Borrow)

Yellow-footed Flycatcher ◇ *Muscicapa sethsmithi* Confiding birds on Mount Kupe.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata* Confiding birds on Mount Kupe.

Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa infusca* Singletons at Campo Ma'an and on Mount Kupe.

Brown-chested Alethe *Pseudaethe poliocephala* Great looks on Mount Cameroon.

White-bellied Robin-Chat ◇ *Cossyphicula roberti* A pair at Kodmin.

Mountain Robin-Chat ◇ *Cossypha isabellae* Easy to see on Mount Cameroon.

Grey-winged Robin-Chat ◇ *Cossypha polioptera* Brief looks at skulking birds at Ngaoundaba.

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla* Seen in Bénoué NP and heard elsewhere.

White-crowned Robin-Chat ◇ *Cossypha albicapillus* Easily seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Western Forest Robin ◇ *Stiphrornis [erythrothorax] erythrothorax* Seemingly this form in Korup NP.

Alexander's Akalat ◇ *Sheppardia [bocagei] poensis* (H) Frustratingly impossible to see at Kodmin. See Note.

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* Palearctic migrants common in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* This Palearctic migrant was most common at Ngaoundaba.

African Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* Easily seen in the Bamenda Highlands and on Mount Cameroon.

White-crowned Cliff Chat ◇ *Thamnolaea coronata* Seen well near Maroua, Poli and Bamenda.

Anteater Chat M (Northern A C) *Myrmecocichla aethiops* Small numbers in the far north.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants in the far north.

Heuglin's Wheatear ◇ *Oenanthe heuglini* Seen well at Poli and in Bénoué NP. See Note.

White-fronted Black Chat ◇ *Oenanthe albifrons* A male was seen near Poli.

Familiar Chat M (Red-tailed C) *Oenanthe familiaris* Small numbers in Bénoué NP.

Fraser's Sunbird (Scarlet-tufted S) *Deleornis fraseri* Good views of this atypical sunbird in the forests.

Western Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes longuemarei* Seen well in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.

Little Green Sunbird *Anthreptes seimundi* Easily seen at Campo Ma'an.

Grey-chinned Sunbird (Green S) *Anthreptes rectirostris* Seen well during the extension.

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris* Seen at Campo Ma'an and on the extension.

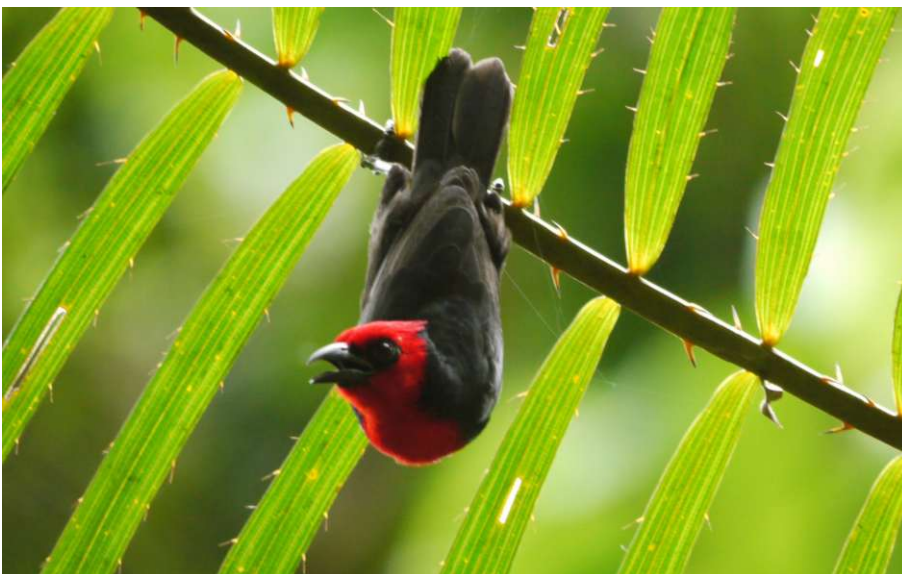
Pygmy Sunbird *Hedydipna platura* Common in the north.

Reichenbach's Sunbird ◇ *Anabathmis reichenbachii* Easy to see in the Limbe Botanic Gardens. See Note.

Green-headed Sunbird (Olive-backed S) *Cyanomitra verticalis* Scattered sightings from Bénoué south.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanoaema* Seen at Campo Ma'an and near Yaoundé.

Cameroon Sunbird ◊ *Cyanomitra oritis* Singletons in the montane forests.
Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea* The most common forest sunbird.
Carmelite Sunbird ◊ *Chalcomitra fuliginosa* A pair seen well near Douala. See Note.
Green-throated Sunbird *Chalcomitra rubescens* Seen near Douala and during the extension.
Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Small numbers in the north.
Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius* Seen in Limbe Botanic Gardens and in the Korup area.
Tiny Sunbird *Cinnyris minullus* A male at Campo Ma'an.
Northern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris reichenowi* Seen at Ngaoundaba and in the montane forests.
Beautiful Sunbird *Cinnyris pulchellus* Seen easily in the north.
Orange-tufted Sunbird ◊ *Cinnyris bouvieri* Small numbers in the Bamenda Highlands.
Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinigastrus* Seen well from Ngaoundaba south.
Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus* A few at Campo Ma'an and Mount Kupe.
Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus* Small numbers in the north.
Ursula's Sunbird ◊ (U's Mouse-coloured S) *Cinnyris ursulae* (NT) Fantastic views on Mount Kupe. See Note.
Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus* Small numbers at Poli, Bénoué NP and Ngaoundaba.
Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser superciliosus* A few in the far north.
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* Common and widespread throughout the tour.
Bush Petronia *Gymnoris dentata* Very common in the north.
White-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis albirostris* Numerous colonies in the far north.
Speckle-fronted Weaver (Scaly-f W) *Sporopipes frontalis* Common in the far north.
Baglafaecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafaecht* Seen well at Ngaoundaba and in the Bamenda Highlands.
Bannerman's Weaver ◊ *Ploceus bannermani* (V) This endemic was seen well in the Bamenda Highlands.
Slender-billed Weaver *Ploceus pelzelni* Breeding birds on the Sanaga River.
Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis* Small numbers in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis* Easy to see on the extension.
Black-billed Weaver (Black Mountain W) *Ploceus melanogaster* Seen in the montane forests.
Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius* Breeding birds on the Sanaga River.
Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus* Common in the far north. See Note.
Village Weaver (Black-headed W) *Ploceus cucullatus* Abundant except in the far north.
Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus* Abundant in the forest zone.
Black-headed Weaver (Yellow-backed W) *Ploceus melanocephalus* Non-breeding plumaged birds in Bénoué NP.
Dark-backed Weaver (Forest W) *Ploceus bicolor* A few on Mount Kupe and at Kodmin.
Brown-capped Weaver *Ploceus insignis* Seen well in the Bamenda Highlands and at Kodmin.
Cassin's Malimbe *Malimbus cassini* A family group seen well at Campo Ma'an.
Red-vented Malimbe *Malimbus scutatus* Seen well near Mundemba.
Blue-billed Malimbe ◊ (Gray's M) *Malimbus nitens* Small numbers in Korup. See Note.



Malimbés are Western African forest weavers – this is the Crested Malimbe. (Nik Borrow)

Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus* 1 at Campo Ma'an.
Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps* 2 in Bénoué NP.
Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops* A flock at Ngaoundaba in non-breeding dress.
Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* Far lower numbers than usual in the far north all in non-breeding dress.
Black-winged Red Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus* Common and widespread in the north but in non-breeding dress.
Northern Red Bishop *Euplectes franciscanus* Lower numbers than usual in the far north all in non-breeding dress.
Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis* Small numbers in non-breeding dress in the Bamenda Highlands.
Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura* Flocks in non-breeding dress in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Marsh Widowbird (Hartlaub's M W) *Euplectes hartlaubi* A non-breeding plumaged male at Dang Lake.
Red-collared Widowbird *Euplectes ardens* Small numbers in non-breeding dress in the Bamenda Highlands.
White-breasted Nigrita (W-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus* Seen well at Campo Ma'an and on the extension.
Chestnut-breasted Nigrita (C-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita bicolor* Seen well in the various forests.
Pale-fronted Nigrita ◊ (P-f Negrofinch) *Nigrita luteifrons* A female was seen well at Campo Ma'an.
Grey-headed Nigrita (G-crowned Negrofinch) *Nigrita canicapillus* Seen well in the various forests.



The pretty little Shelley's Oliveback was just one of the avian treats on Mount Cameroon. (Nik Borrow)

Shelley's Oliveback ◊ *Nesocharis shelleyi* This delightful little bird was seen well on Mount Cameroon. See Note.
Grey-headed Oliveback ◊ (White-cheeked O) *Nesocharis capistrata* Seen in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Yellow-winged Pytilia ◊ (Red-faced P) *Pytilia hypogrammica* A male by chance near Tonga.
Green-winged Pytilia (Melba Finch) *Pytilia melba* Easily seen in the far north.
Cut-throat Finch (C-t) *Amadina fasciata* Easily seen in the far north.
Black-bellied Seedcracker ◊ *Pyrenestes ostrinus* A female at Campo Ma'an and a male near Mundemba.
Western Bluebill *Spermophaga haematina* Brief sightings in Limbe Botanic Gardens and near Mundemba.
Brown Twinspot ◊ *Clytospiza monteiri* Great looks at Ngaoundaba.
Dybowski's Twinspot ◊ *Euschistospiza dybowskii* A small group at Poli. See Note.
Black-bellied Firefinch *Lagonosticta rara* Great views in Bénoué NP.
Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta* Great views in Bénoué NP.
Red-billed Firefinch M *Lagonosticta senegala* Great views at Waza and in Bénoué NP.
Rock Firefinch ◊ *Lagonosticta sanguinodorsalis* At least 7 seen in the far north.
Chad Firefinch ◊ *Lagonosticta umbrinodorsalis* At least 6 seen at Poli.
African Firefinch (Blue-billed F) *Lagonosticta rubricata* Pairs seen at Ngaoundaba.
Black-faced Firefinch ◊ *Lagonosticta larvata* Great views of birds coming to drink in Bénoué NP.
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus* Common and easy to see in the north.
Lavender Waxbill *Estrilda caerulescens* Seen well near Maroua and at Poli.
Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda* Widespread sightings from Bénoué NP south.
Black-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda troglodytes* Very common in the far north.
Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* Flocks seen in the Bamenda Highlands and on the extension.
Black-crowned Waxbill *Estrilda nonnula* Commonly encountered from Ngaoundaba south.
Black-headed Waxbill ◊ *Estrilda atricapilla* Great views of a pair near Mundemba.

African Silverbill (Warbling S) *Euodice cantans* Common in the far north.

Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* Widespread sightings.

Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor* Common in the forest zone.

Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata* A breeding plumaged male at Waza.

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* Singletons at Campo Ma'an and en route to Nyasoso.

Sahel Paradise Whydah ◊ (Northern P W) *Vidua orientalis* Moulting birds in the far north.

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla [flava] flava* Widespread sightings.

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* 1 at the Nyong River and more in Bénoué NP.

Cameroon Pipit ◊ *Anthus cameroonensis* 1 seen in the Bamenda Highlands.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* Seen well at Ngaoundaba and 1 on Mount Cameroon on 20/3.

Long-legged Pipit ◊ *Anthus pallidiventris* Seen well to and from Campo Ma'an and also at Mundemba.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* This Palearctic migrant was common at Ngaoundaba and the Bamenda Highlands.

Oriole Finch *Linurgus olivaceus* Sightings in the Bamenda Highlands and on Mount Cameroon.

White-rumped Seedeater ◊ (Grey Canary) *Crithagra leucopygia* Small numbers in the far north.

Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica* Widespread sightings during the tour.

West African Seedeater ◊ *Crithagra canicapilla* Seen well at Poli and in Bénoué NP.

Thick-billed Seedeater *Crithagra burtoni* A few in the Bamenda Highlands.

Gosling's Bunting M ◊ *Emberiza goslingi* Seen well in the north. See Note.

Brown-rumped Bunting *Emberiza affinis* (NL) Colin saw 1 in Bénoué NP.

Cabanis's Bunting M *Emberiza cabanisi* A pair was seen coming down to drink in Bénoué NP. See Note.



White-throated Bee-eaters are non-breeding visitors to the forest zone and move to the Sahel to breed in the rains. (Nik Borrow)

Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an.
Western Gorilla *Gorilla gorilla* (H, NL) The call was pointed out at Campo Ma'an.
Preuss's Red Colobus *Piliocolobus preussi* Glimpsed in Korup NP.
Guereza Colobus (Eastern Black-and-white C) *Colobus guereza* Small numbers in Bénoué NP.
Olive Baboon *Papio anubis* Common in Bénoué NP.
Drill *Mandrillus leucophaeus* (H) Heard in Korup NP.
Northern Talapoin *Miopithecus ogouensis* Seen at Campo Ma'an.
Patas Monkey *Cercopithecus patas* Seen in the north.
Tantalus Monkey *Cercopithecus tantalus* Seen in the north.
Mona Monkey *Cercopithecus mona* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.
Putty-nosed Monkey *Cercopithecus nictitans* (H) Heard in Korup NP.
Red-eared Monkey *Cercopithecus erythrotis* (H) Heard in Korup NP.
Allen's Squirrel Galago *Galago alleni* 1 seen at night at Campo Ma'an.
Senegal Galago *Galago senegalensis* Seen at night in Bénoué NP and at Ngaoundaba.
Demidoff's Galago *Galagoides demidoff* Seen well at Campo Ma'an, even 1 during the day!
Straw-coloured Fruit Bat *Eidolon helvum* Seen at Campo Ma'an.
Hammer Bat *Hypsignathus monstrosus* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an.
Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus gambianus* The large fruit bats in the north.
African Savanna Hare *Lepus victoriae* (NL) 1 seen at Ngaoundaba.
Striped Ground Squirrel (Geoffroy's Ground S) *Euxerus erythropus* Seen in the far north.
Red-cheeked Rope Squirrel (Orange-headed Tree S) *Funisciurus leucogenys* Seen at Campo Ma'an.
Lady Burton's Rope Squirrel *Funisciurus isabella* Seen on Mount Cameroon.
Cooper's Mountain Squirrel (C Green S) *Paraxerus cooperi* 1 seen at Kodmin.
Green Squirrel (Small G S) *Paraxerus poensis* 1 seen at Campo Ma'an.
Gambian Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus gambianus* 1 seen en route to Bamenda.
Red-legged Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus rufobrachium* Seen at Campo Ma'an and in Korup NP.
African Giant Squirrel *Protoxerus stangeri* Seen at Campo Ma'an and Ngaoundaba.
Beecroft's Anomalure *Anomalurus beecrofti* (H) Heard on Mount Cameroon.
Peters's Hump-nosed Mouse *Hybomys univittatus* Seen on Mount Cameroon.
Common Jackal M (Golden J) *Canis aureus* 2 in the far north.
Sand Fox *Vulpes pallida* Seen at night at Waza.
African Clawless Otter *Aonyx capensis* 1 at Ngaoundaba.
Ichneumon Mongoose (Egyptian M) *Herpestes ichneumon* 3 at Waza.
Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguinea* 1 near Maroua.
Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo* 8 at Waza.
Common Genet (Small-spotted G) *Genetta genetta* 2 at Waza.
African Palm Civet *Nandinia binotata* Great looks at night at Campo Ma'an.
Black-necked Rock Hyrax *Procavia johnstoni* Several near Maroua.
Western Tree Hyrax *Dendrohyrax dorsalis* (H) Heard at Campo Ma'an and Nyasoso.
Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* Plenty in Bénoué NP.
Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* Seen in Waza NP.
Kordofan Giraffe *Giraffa (camelopardalis) antiquorum* At least 23 in Waza NP.
Forest Buffalo *Syncerus nanus* A surprise sighting of 4 in Bénoué NP.
Central Bushbuck *Tragelaphus phaleratus* 2 in Bénoué NP.
Red-flanked Duiker M *Cephalophus rufilatus* Small numbers in Bénoué NP.
Defassa Waterbuck *Kobus defassa* Several in Bénoué NP.
Loder's Kob *Kobus kob* Small numbers in Waza and Bénoué NPs.
Red-fronted Gazelle *Eudorcas rufifrons* 6 in Waza NP.
Korrigum *Damaliscus lunatus* 150+ in Waza NP.
Roan Antelope *Hippotragus equinus* 1 in Bénoué NP.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubii*

Gustav Hartlaub (1814-1900) was a German ornithologist connected with the Bremen Natural History Society Museum. He had a specialist interest in the birds of West and East Africa.

Latham's Francolin *Peliperdix lathamii*

Dr John Latham (1740-1837) was a British physician, naturalist and author of a *General History of Birds*.

Clapperton's Francolin *Pternistis clappertoni*

Hugh Clapperton was a member of the 1823 expedition to chart the course of the Niger River. A "fiery, one-handed adventurer" he eventually died in Niger of fever and dysentery in 1827.

Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii*

Bey El-Arnaut Abdim (1780-1827) was a Turkish governor of Dongola in Sudan who was of great help to Rüppell during his northeast African expedition.

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer*

The name is early 19th century French derived from the Arabic *murabit* or holy man, the stork being regarded as holy.

African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*

This species was revered and even mummified by the ancient Egyptians as the incarnation of Thoth, the god of wisdom and knowledge. He was also the moon god and therefore only a 'moon-coloured' ibis was good enough although sometimes the ibis mummies were fakes containing bones and remains of other assorted animals.

Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*

The name is an onomatopoeic rendering of the call and has been spelt in a number of different ways.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

The name 'squacco' is derived from a purely local Italian name. In the absence of a native name, Willughby noted c. 1672 "*Ardea quam Sguacco vocant in Vallibus dictis Malalbergi*"; this he had from the Renaissance encyclopaedist Ulisse Androvandi ('Ornithologia' 1599-1603). Ray ('The Ornithology of Francis Willughby' Translated into English, and enlarged by J. Ray, 1678) translated it as "the Heron which they call Sguacco in the Valleys of Malalbergo". Hill ('A General Natural History' 1748-52) erroneously spelt the name 'squacco'. Latham ('General Synopsis of Birds' 1781-5) took over this misspelling and added 'Heron'. The original name 'sguacco' supposedly imitates the husky call.

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus*

Also known as Gymnogene meaning bare-cheeked.

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*

In a very worrying development this species has been up-listed to 'Endangered' by BirdLife International. The species has experienced a very rapid decline due to hunting, persecution and indiscriminate poisoning.

White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*

BirdLife International has now classified this declining species as 'Endangered'. However it is still the most widespread and common vulture in Africa, occurring from Senegal, Gambia and Mali in the west, throughout the Sahel region to Ethiopia and Somalia in the east, through East Africa into Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa in the south. Its global population has been estimated at 270,000 individuals. Consistent with other vulture species it has declined by over 90% in West Africa. The species has also declined in Sudan and Kenya, but is apparently more stable in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and across southern Africa where an estimated 40,000 individuals remain. The primary threat at least in East Africa is poisoning particularly from the highly toxic pesticide carbofuran.

Rüppell's Vulture *Gyps rueppellii*

Birdlife International has now classified this severely declining species as 'Endangered' for the same reasons as other vulture species. Wilhelm Peter Eduard Simon Rüppell (1794-1884) was a German explorer, cartographer and zoologist, best known for ornithological discoveries in Ethiopia and the interior of northeast Africa.

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos*: A lappet is a little flap and refers to the folds of skin on the sides of the head and neck.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

The name means ' juggler' in French and refers to the balancing mode of flight employed by this distinctive and spectacular birds! The Bateleur is also the magician or 'wand-user' of the Tarot Cards.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraaetus wahlbergi*

The species, described by Sundevall in 1851, is named after Johan August Wahlberg (1810-1856) a Swedish collector specialising in southern African species. A wounded elephant at Lake Ngami in Bechuanaland unfortunately killed him!

Ayres's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresii*

Thomas Ayres (1828-1913) was a British collector who settled in South Africa. His other lines of work included gold digging and brewing beer!

Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Aquila africana*

John Cassin (1813-69) was an American businessman and renowned systematic ornithologist. He became curator of ornithology and Vice-President of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*

In this case the word Gabar is derived from two French words *garde* (guard) and *barré* (barred).

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

George Montagu (1735-1815) was a British soldier and Natural Historian who after being court-marshalled from the Wiltshire militia subsequently dedicated his life to his mistress and ornithology. He collected the harrier in 1803 near his Devonshire home.

Nkulengu Rail *Himantornis haematopus*

According to local legend, the bird was a secretive spirit that supposedly once left the dark forest near a village for a chicken that it had fallen in love with. Unfortunately the bright sun burned its legs whilst it was mating with the bird. The spirit returned to its hiding place in a foul mood. Its cry is supposedly complaining that "My feet became red; I married a chicken!"

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni*

Admiral William Allen (1793-1864) was an English naval officer involved in fighting the slave trade. He survived two ill-fated expeditions up the Niger River and the type specimen was procured during the second. However, he himself does not seem to have been particularly interested in birds.

Afep Pigeon *Columba uncinata*

The name 'Afep' is a name for the bird in the Bulu language from Cameroon.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*

Namaqualand is part of southern Namibia and coastal southwest South Africa.

Bruce's Green Pigeon *Treron waalia*

James Bruce was the Scottish explorer with an interest in birds who discovered the source of the Blue Nile at Lake Tana.

Bannerman's Turaco *Tauraco bannermani*

This Cameroon endemic is now severely threatened and is classified as 'Endangered' by BirdLife International. It is thought that the total population lies somewhere between 2,500 - 10,000 birds. David Armitage Bannerman (1886-1979) was a staff member of British Museum (Natural History) and author of the important work *Birds of Tropical West Africa*.

Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae*

Lady Ann Ross (1817-1857) was the wife of Rear-Admiral Sir James Clark Ross who discovered the Magnetic North Pole and the Ross Sea and Ice Shelf. The turaco was sent to her from West Africa during the time that she was stationed on St Helena. She kept the bird as a pet for ten years and sent sketches and moulted feathers to John Gould who named the turaco after her. The wings were once a popular addition to fashionable ladies hats.

Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii*

François Levaillant (1753 -1824), a great French taxidermist, collector and ornithologist who had a specialist interest in the birds of southern Africa. Levaillant's reputation is somewhat marred as he was proved to be something of a 'stringer' inventing not only new species but even the journeys on which he claimed to have found them!

Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*

Named by François Levaillant (1753 -1824), who is said to have named this bird after his Khoikhoi (Hottentot) manservant whose wife, Narina (the name he dedicated to a most beautiful trogon), also just happened to be Levaillant's mistress!

Fraser's Eagle-Owl *Bubo poensis*

Louis Fraser (1819-1866) was a British museum man, naturalist, explorer, author and member of the infamous ill-fated Niger River Expedition of 1841-42. He also collected specimens from Fernando Po (Bioko) and was eventually appointed British Consul at Ovidah in West Africa.

Pel's Fishing Owl *Scotopelia peli*

Hendrik Severinus Pel (1818-76) was a Dutch amateur naturalist and Governor of the Gold Coast. Bonaparte described the owl in 1850.

Sjöstedt's Barred Owlet (Chestnut-backed O) *Glaucidium sjostedti*

Bror Yngve Sjöstedt (1866-1948) was a Swedish entomologist and ornithologist who collected in Cameroon between 1890-91.

Sabine's Spinetail *Rhaphidura sabini*

Edward Sabine (1788-1883) was an English scientist mainly interested in terrestrial magnetism and astronomy. He collected this spinetail and a puffback, both named after him, in Sierra Leone and donated them to the British Museum where J. E. Gray officially described the specimens.

Bates's Swift *Apus batesi*

George Latimer Bates (1863-1940) was a British naturalist who worked in West Africa, especially Cameroon between 1895 and 1931 and was author of the *Handbook of the Birds of West Africa* published in 1930.

Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*

Louis Jean Pierre Vieillot (1748-1831) was a French businessman forced to take refuge in the United States during the French Revolution and because of slave rebellions on San Domingo where he had his business in the spice trade. He had a consuming passion for ornithology dedicating his life to it.

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksii*

General Sir James Willcocks (1847-1926) commanded the expedition to suppress the Ashanti rebellion of 1900.

Tullberg's Woodpecker (Fine-banded W) *Campethera tullbergi*

Tycho Fredrik Hugo Tullberg (1842-1920) was a Swedish Zoologist.

Elliot's Woodpecker *Dendropicos elliotii*

Daniel Giraud Elliot (1835-1915) was Curator of Zoology at the Field Museum in Chicago and a founder of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Banded Wattle-eye *Platysteira laticincta*

Classified as 'Endangered' by BirdLife International, its habitat was reduced by half in the period between 1965-1985 and the species is now restricted to an area no bigger than 500 square kilometres. The total population is estimated to be between 2,500 - 10,000 adults.

Mount Kupe Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus kupeensis*

BirdLife International classes this Cameroon endemic as 'Endangered'. The population is estimated to be between 50-249 individuals and habitat loss is the most obvious threat. This species was thought to be endemic to Cameroon but it has recently been found in neighbouring Nigeria.

Bocage's Bushshrike (Grey-green B-s) *Chlorophoneus bocagei*

José Vicenta Barboza du Bocage (1823-1907) was Portuguese and Director of the National Zoological Museum of Lisbon and had a specialist interest in the birds of Angola.

Lühder's Bushshrike *Laniarius luehderi*

W. Lühder (1847-1873) was a German naturalist who collected in Cameroon in 1872.

Petit's Cuckooshrike *Campephaga petiti*

Louis Petit (1856-1943) was a French naturalist who collected in Angola between 1876 and 1884.

Mackinnon's Shrike *Lanius mackinnoni*

Archibald Donald Mackinnon (1864-1937) was a Scottish medical officer serving in Uganda and later director of Transport there. Sharpe described the bird in 1891 from a specimen collected by Jackson in Kenya.

Western Nicator *Nicator chloris*

The name *Nicator* is a combination of Greek and Latin and can be interpreted as 'conquest doer'.

Ansorge's Greenbul *Andropadus ansorgei*

Dr William John Ansorge (1850-1913) was an English explorer who collected in Africa.

Xavier's Greenbul *Phyllastrephus xavieri*

Xavier Dybowski was a French explorer who collected in the Congo during 1891-2. It is not clear as to whether or not he is the same person as, or perhaps the brother of Jan Dybowski (1856-1928) who has a twinspace named after him.

Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi*

Paul Preuss (1861-1926) was a Polish-born German naturalist who collected in West Africa between 1886-98. He was responsible for constructing the botanical gardens at Limbe (formerly Victoria) in 1901.

Bangwa Forest Warbler *Bradypterus bangwaensis*

The Bangwa people are part of the Bamileke group of tribes dwelling in the Bamenda Highlands.

Dorst's Cisticola *Cisticola guinea*

Professor Dr Jean Dorst (1924-2001) was a French ornithologist and head of the Laboratoire de Zoologie of the French Natural History Museum.

White-throated Mountain Babbler *Kupeornis gilberti*

BirdLife International classifies this Cameroonian and Nigerian highlands endemic as 'Endangered' because its high montane primary forest habitat is constantly under threat. The Bakossi Mountains form a stronghold for the species and the world population is thought to number between 10,000-20,000. Dr William Serle who was a doctor in the British Colonial Service first described the species in 1949. The generic name describes the collecting locality and Gilbert Nkwocha was Serle's collector and skinner.

Waller's Starling *Onychognathus walleri*

Gerald Waller was an English naturalist collecting in East Africa in the late 1800's.

Neumann's Starling *Onychognathus neumanni*

Oskar Rudolph Neumann (1867-1946) was a German ornithologist who collected throughout Africa in the late 1800's.

Crossley's Ground Thrush *Zoothera crossleyi*

It is a mystery actually who this Crossley was or whether several members of the same family were involved. However there was certainly a Crossley collecting in Cameroon and Madagascar in the 1870's.

Alexander's Akalat *Sheppardia [bocagei] poensis*

Boyd Alexander (1873-1910) was a British Army Officer, African explorer and a superb field-ornithologist. Alexander collected the type specimen of *poensis* from Bioko in 1903. Serle collected the type specimen of the race we saw from Mt Kupe in 1949.

Heuglin's Wheatear *Oenanthe heuglini*

Theodor von Heuglin (1824-76) was a German explorer and ornithologist with a specialist interest in African birds.

Reichenbach's Sunbird *Anabathmis reichenbachii*

Heinrich Gottlieb Ludwig Reichenbach (1793-1879) was an important German systematist and Director of the Dresden Natural History Museum.

Ursula's Sunbird *Cinnyris ursulae*

Ursula Davies was the niece of the British explorer Captain Boyd Alexander who described and named the sunbird.

Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus*

Vitelline pertains to the yolk of an egg and presumably refers to the yellow colour of the bird.

Blue-billed Malimbe (Gray's M) *Malimbus nitens*

John Edward Gray (1800-1875) was a British ornithologist and entomologist.

Shelley's Oliveback *Nesocharis shelleyi*

George Ernest Shelley (1840-1910) was an English ornithologist related to the famous poet and an authority on sunbirds. He travelled in Africa and had a specialist interest in the continent.

Dybowski's Twinspot *Euschistospiza dybowskii*

Jan Dybowski (1856-1928) was a French botanist and African explorer leading expeditions to Congo and Chad.

Gosling's Bunting *Emberiza goslingi*

This form was previously lumped in Cinnamon-breasted Bunting *E. tahapisi*. Captain G. B. Gosling (1872-1906) was an explorer and zoologist and a member of Boyd Alexander's expedition following the Uele River collecting from the Niger to the Nile.

Cabanis's Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi*

Jean Louis Cabanis (1816-1906) was a German ornithologist working at the Berlin Museum.



Hartlaub's Ducks at Ngaoundaba. (Nik Borrow)