



Our cover star is the unique and totally bizarre Shoebill...It was a privilege to watch this massive bird at exceedingly close quarters on our first day at Mabamba Swamp! (Nik Borrow)

SHOEBILLS & GORILLAS OF UGANDA

19 – 29 JULY 2018

LEADER: NIK BORROW

Uganda is famously quoted as being the 'Pearl of Africa' and although neither Henry Morton Stanley nor Winston Churchill had birders and ecotourists in mind when they awarded the country this title, it is most certainly an appropriate one! Uganda is surely an essential destination for any world-travelling birdwatcher as it is home to the incredible Shoebill, a good number of Albertine Rift endemics and is also an excellent place to see a few otherwise difficult western African forest species. A visit to this friendly and welcoming country also offers a great mammal-watching experience and primates in particular with Eastern Gorilla and Chimpanzee obviously at the top of the list! It is not often that the mammals get a mention before the birds, but on this occasion, it is apt, as our encounters with the incredible Eastern Gorillas of Bwindi Impenetrable

National Park were truly unforgettable! The incomparable Shoebill was a worthy rival and fortunately surrendered to our collective gaze on day one when we were also lucky to find Lesser Jacana, a huge colony of the often-elusive Weyns's Weaver and several 'wintering' Blue Swallows nearby. Brightly coloured Papyrus Gonoleks allowed amazing views in a swamp en route to Kibale National Park where we enjoyed a close encounter with Chimpanzees and obtained marvellous views of a Green-breasted Pitta and were privileged to be able to follow it through the forest as it foraged just metres ahead of us. The Bigodi Wetland walk produced fantastic views of pairs of White-spotted Flufftail and Speckle-breasted Woodpecker. Our stay in Queen Elizabeth National Park was most enjoyable although the recent drought meant that conditions were incredibly dry. Despite the dust we managed to see Common Buttonquail, Black Coucal, glorious Red-throated Bee-eaters and some impressive Giant Forest Hogs whilst the boat trip along the Kazinga Channel that produced a large flock of African Skimmers was most definitely a trip highlight. In the wonderfully named Bwindi Impenetrable Forest we spent a magical hour with a family of Eastern Gorillas and scored enormously with excellent views of a pair of the little-known and decidedly rare Grauer's (or African Green) Broadbill feeding their fledged youngster. These steep hills and beautiful forests also held a whole host of Albertine Rift endemic specialties that included the gorgeous Doherty's Bushshrike, Regal and Purple-breasted Sunbirds as well as Handsome Francolin, Dwarf Honeyguide, Ruwenzori Batis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Grauer's Warbler, Grauer's Swamp Warbler, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Ruwenzori Apalis, Mountain Masked Apalis, Red-throated Alethe, Archer's Ground Robin, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Willard's Sooty Boubou, Blue-headed Sunbird, Jameson's Antpecker, Dusky Crimsonwing and Strange Weaver. We finished our African adventure with a splendid flock of Brown-chested Lapwings near Lake Mburo. Amongst the many other mouth-watering specialties that we encountered were Black-billed Turaco, Montane (Ruwenzori) Nightjar, Elliot's Woodpecker, Lagden's Bushshrike (heard only), Mountain Sooty Boubou (heard only), Mountain Oriole, Kakamega, Olive-breasted, Joyful, Toro Olive and White-throated (heard only) Greenbuls, White-browed Crombec, Mountain Yellow Warbler, White-winged Swamp Warbler, Trilling, Chubb's and Carruthers's Cisticolas, Black-faced Prinia, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Scaly-breasted and Mountain Illadopsises, Black-lored Babbler, Ruwenzori Hill Babbler, Grey-chested Babbler, Stuhlmann's Starling, Oberländer's Ground Thrush (heard only), Chapin's Flycatcher, White-bellied, Grey-winged and Blue-shouldered Robin-Chats, Equatorial Akalat, Grey-headed Sunbird, Red-chested Sunbird, Red-headed Bluebill, Dusky Twinspot, Kandt's Waxbill and Western Citril.



African Skimmers are one of the target species during our boat trip on the Kazinga Channel. (Nik Borrow)

Our action-packed journey around Uganda began in Entebbe and soon after dawn we set off for Mabamba Swamp to search for the species, which for many of us was to be the 'ultimate' bird of the tour – the enormous and totally unique Shoebill. The hour-long journey to the landing stage was uneventful and as the sun began to rise in the sky, we soon found ourselves on the water in two small, motorised wooden pirogues. Our success with the Shoebill took a little while of searching but in the interim we came across a female Lake Victoria Sitatunga that allowed some good looks before it crashed away through the swamp. Eventually the grey bulk of our quarry was seen against a wall of papyrus. Binoculars and cameras were raised whilst some extremely skilful manoeuvring of our boats enabled us to sneak closer and closer. Having had our fill of the Shoebill we went in search of other species and landed at a spot where our guide knew there to be a colony of little-known Weyns's Weavers. With our feet on terra firma we could see countless numbers of these birds dashing past at speed but seeing them at rest was almost impossible until we reached the colony itself where there were hundreds of nests tightly packed in the papyrus and at last we could obtain some great views of these busy creatures.



At Mabamba Swamp, the sighting of a Lake Victoria Sitatunga (left) was a rare treat and a visit to a breeding colony of Weyns's Weavers (right) was another highlight of the day. (Nik Borrow)

Returning to the pirogues, we wended our way around the creeks of the extensive swamps surrounding Lake Victoria and during the trip our boats flushed jewel-like Malachite Kingfishers darting from the reeds whilst chequered Pied Kingfishers hovered overhead. The handsome Long-toed Lapwings with a number of chicks were much in evidence, as were numerous Yellow-billed Ducks and African Jacanas. A few African Marsh Harriers sailed past, there were large numbers of both Grey-headed Gulls and White-winged Terns, a lone Blue-headed Coucal was perched atop the dense swampland vegetation along with numbers of Blue-breasted Bee-eaters and we also noted Egyptian Goose, Hadada Ibis, Squacco Heron, Western Cattle Egret, Black-headed and Purple Herons, Little Egret, Hamerkop, Pink-backed Pelican, Reed Cormorant, Black Crake, Winding Cisticola, Swamp Flycatcher and Slender-billed, Northern Brown-throated and Black-headed Weavers. However, we were primarily on the lookout for another specialty of the swamp, the diminutive Lesser Jacana. To see this tiny bird, we glided over the still waters through the extensive lily pads and fortuitously it wasn't long before we had found one but it was somewhat furtive and it took a little time for one of our mini flotilla of two boats to get satisfactory views. However, finally all was well, and everybody dutifully ticked the bird so we headed back to land.

Some areas of remnant grassland and scrub round the shores of the lake still survive amongst the ever-expanding cultivated areas. At one such patch we had fun testing our identification skills on the numerous hirundines that were swooping low all around us. Our prize was finding the rare 'wintering' Blue Swallow and we managed to see at least three individuals amongst the more numerous Grey-rumped Swallows

intermixed with Barn, Angolan and Lesser Striped Swallows. Also near the landing stage we were entertained by a succession of new birds: Yellow-billed Kites and the vociferous African Fish Eagle were both to be expected in this habitat and other common species in the Mabamba area included Black-winged Kite, African Harrier-Hawk, Palm-nut Vulture, Lizard Buzzard, Red-eyed Dove, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, Eastern Plantain-eater, Klaas's Cuckoo, African Palm Swift, Speckled Mousebird, Woodland Kingfisher, African (or Congo) Pied Hornbill, Yellow-rumped and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbirds, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Northern Puffback, Black-headed Gonolek, Dark-capped Bulbul, White-headed Saw-wing, African Yellow (or Green) White-eye, Rüppell's Starling, Scarlet-chested, Olive-bellied and gorgeous Red-chested Sunbirds, Northern Grey-headed Sparrow, Spectacled and Vieillot's Black Weavers, Red-billed Firefinch, Black-crowned Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin, African Pied Wagtail, Yellow-throated Longclaw, African Pipit and Yellow-fronted Canary.



Our first day produced a number of other colourful weavers including Northern Brown-throated Weaver (left, Nik Borrow) and Orange Weaver (right, Martin Rutz)

In the afternoon we returned to Entebbe for a visit to the Botanical Gardens which allowed us to see small numbers of the localised Orange Weaver. Also present were bizarrely top-knotted Great Blue Turacos and impressive Black-and-white-casqued Hornbills and the desired Grey Parrot showed well perched in a large palm tree. The distinctive Grey-capped Warbler showed well and an African Hobby made an appearance with other species present including African Openbill, Marabou Stork, Striated Heron, White-breasted Cormorant, Red-knobbed Coot, Tambourine Dove, Olive Bee-eater, Broad-billed Roller, Grey Kestrel, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Green Crombec, Splendid Starling and Village Weaver.

We left Entebbe early the next morning and took the newly opened express way in order to avoid Kampala's horrendous traffic problems where our only Hooded Vulture of the trip was seen. We were headed to Kibale National Park and the long journey was brightened considerably by striking Ross's Turacos en route and also a family group of Piapiacs. A stop made at a convenient roadside swamp produced a simply stunning pair of colourful Papyrus Gonoleks whilst further on another swamp yielded skulking White-winged Swamp Warblers, Greater Swamp Warbler and a Shining-blue Kingfisher. Other species noted during the long drive included Long-crested Eagle, Gabar Goshawk, Shikra, Speckled Pigeon, Ring-necked and Laughing Doves, African Green Pigeon, Little Swift, Striped Kingfisher, White-throated Bee-eater, Crowned Hornbill, Meyer's Parrot, Grey-backed and Northern Fiscals, Fork-tailed Drongo, African Blue Flycatcher, White-browed Robin-Chat, Copper Sunbird and the recent colonising House Sparrow.



Papyrus Gonoleks are not always this showy! We saw a pair easily as we left Kampala – colours to burn an everlasting image onto the retina! (Nik Borrow)

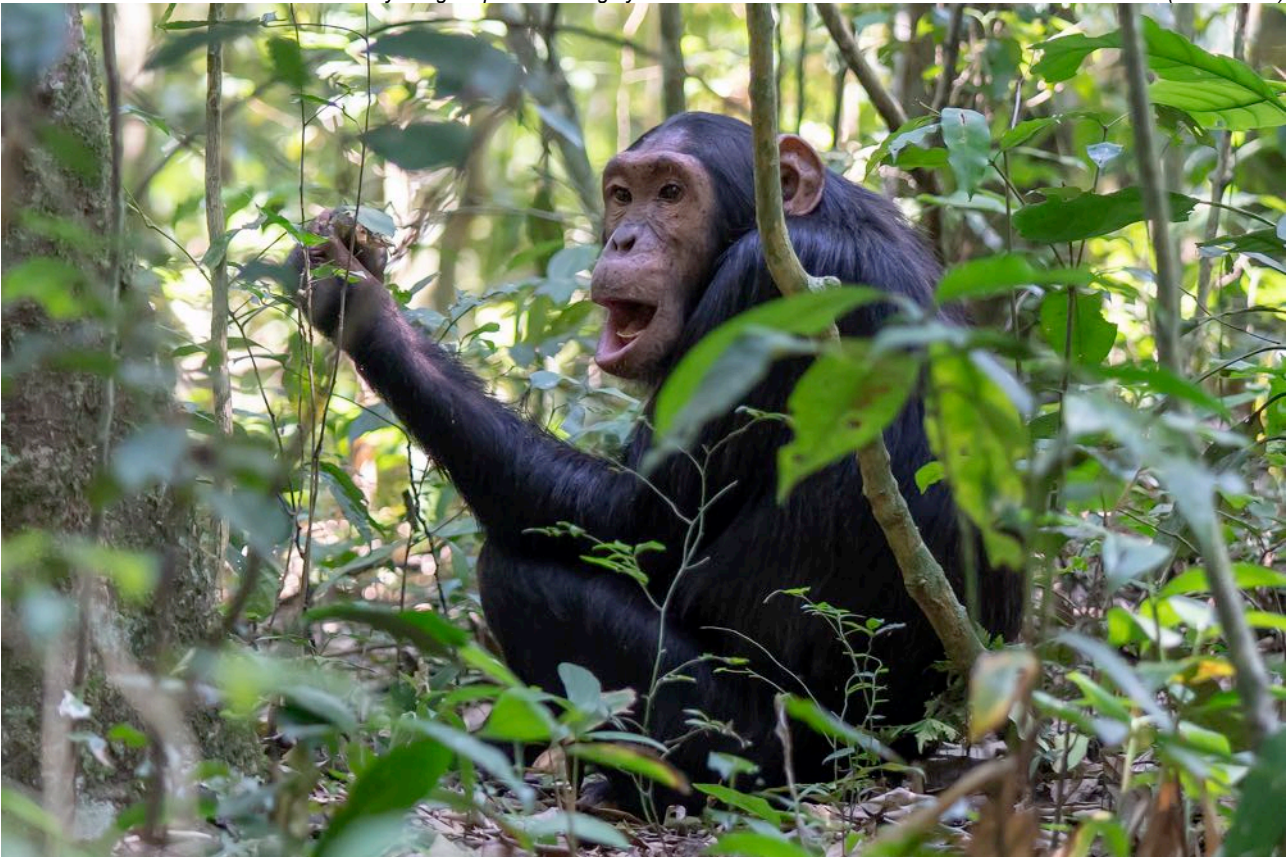
We reached the edge of Kibale National Park situated near the town of Fort Portal in the mid afternoon and were able to begin our first explorations of the area with some roadside birding. It was very dry and somewhat quiet and to make things worse the road was being repaired so that we were covered with billowing clouds of dust as vehicles passed us by but nonetheless we still managed to see some interesting species. We had our first looks at some crazy looking Grey-throated (sometimes split as Grey-headed) Barbets with their 'rhinoceros' nasal-tufts, the attractive Lühder's Bushshrike was seen and we managed to connect with the brightly coloured Joyful Greenbul which was a contrast to the more sombre Slender-billed, Plain and Honeyguide Greenbuls present. Other species seen during our time here included Afep Pigeon, Red-chested Cuckoo, Blue-throated Roller, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Green Hylia, Red-faced and Chubb's Cisticolas, Buff-throated Apalis, Purple-headed and Stuhlmann's Starlings, Grey-chinned, Collared and Blue-throated Brown Sunbirds, Black-necked and Dark-backed Weavers and White-breasted and Grey-headed Nigritas. The remaining drive to our lodge took us through a large tea estate which somewhat surprisingly gave us a string of new birds including Scaly Francolin, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, Short-winged Cisticola, Brown-backed Scrub Robin and African Stonechat but we managed to arrive before dusk.

The following morning, we had to be up well before dawn in order to increase our chances of finding the elusive Green-breasted Pitta, a species that normally prefers to display at first light. Our guide led us through the darkness into the sleeping forest that still had not yet stirred. The night creatures were still active and we managed to see a pair of African Wood Owls as we walked towards where the pittas had been seen the previous day. In the pitch black we waited and strained our ears to catch the sound of the frog-like "blip" of the pitta; a mechanical noise made by the wings but frustratingly we listened in vain. A trio of Chimpanzees walking through the undergrowth seemed surprised to see us up so early before the official chimp tracking sessions began and we took time to watch them watching us before returning to our pitta-quest and resorting

to walking round and round sporadically playing the pitta's call in the hope that one would answer and eventually our wishes were granted. Having heard the sound now all that remained was to find the bird as it refused to respond further! Walking down into the valley from where the call had come from we fortuitously flushed the bird but it immediately flew into deep cover. Our guide succeeded in relocating it and we all managed to gain great views as it foraged a short distance in front of us, the luminous colours glowing in the dim forest light.



It took a while but we finally caught up with the highly desirable Green-breasted Pitta in Kibale National Park. (Nik Borrow)



Just one of the Chimpanzees seen during our morning walk in Kibale National Park. (Martin Rutz)

Eventually we lost the pitta so we turned our attentions to the forest's other star attraction – Chimpanzee. Kibale National Park has surely got to be THE place to see Chimpanzee as it now boasts of at least a 90% hit rate chance of seeing members of their habituated troops although I'm sure that it is highly unlikely that one could miss these great apes. Although we had already seen them we decided that more prolonged views and some photographic opportunities would be nice. The creatures had been very noisy all morning so we followed the direction of the sound of their blood-curdling screams and howls but by this time the animals had descended from their feeding trees and were moving quite rapidly through the forest so that it was not quite so easy to catch up with them and eventually our allocated time had run out and we returned to birding as we walked out of the forest. During the morning we enjoyed good views of Scaly-breasted Illadopsis and a normally skulking Red-capped Robin-Chat flaunted itself and we also managed several encounters with rather obliging Crested Guineafowl.

A break for lunch was most welcomed back at the lodge where Paul found an Ayres's Hawk-Eagle and staked out a pair of Speckle-breasted Woodpeckers for us. There was also Little Sparrowhawk, Cardinal Woodpecker, Rock Martin, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Bronzy Sunbird and Brimstone Canary with breeding plumaged Black Bishop nearby. In the cool of the late afternoon we returned to the forest and were pleased to locate some dazzling Black Bee-eaters whilst on a small river a Mountain Wagtail was seen briefly and Cassin's Flycatcher showed well. Other species included a male African Emerald Cuckoo, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, 'Eastern' Yellow-billed Barbet, Elliot's Woodpecker, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Western Oriole, Yellow-whiskered Greenbul, Violet-backed, Chestnut-winged and Narrow-tailed Starlings, White-tailed Ant Thrush, Fraser's Rufous Thrush, Ashy and Sooty Flycatchers, Little Green Sunbird, Thick-billed Weaver and Velvet-mantled Drongo.



An African Goshawk feasting on its prey (left) and a female White-spotted Flufftail (right) were just two of the highlights of our swamp walk at Bigodi Wetland. (Nik Borrow)

Early the next morning we found a pair of enormous Verreaux's Eagle-Owls at our lodge before embarking on a somewhat lengthy but thoroughly enjoyable walk around the nearby Bigodi Wetland that produced a number of interesting species. This is a community-operated nature reserve that always provides some excellent birding being a mixture of cultivation, papyrus swamp and riparian woodland. A noisy colony of Village Weavers greeted us at the starting point and our guide led us along a trail that ran around the swamp, at one point crossing it via a boardwalk. The drought had taken its toll here and the water levels were the lowest that we have ever seen it. However, with a little effort we found a shadowy damp corner where a pair of White-spotted Flufftails crept to and fro on the edges of the marsh. Elsewhere an African Goshawk posed nicely for us as it ate its prey, characterful Black-and-white Shrike-flycatchers were admired, a stunning Red-headed Bluebill was seen and to top it all another pair of Speckle-breasted Woodpecker was

found and we all managed incredible views of this scarce and localised species. Other new species for the trip included Speckled Tinkerbird, Yellow-spotted Barbet, African Shrike-flycatcher, Bocage's Bushshrike, Marsh Tchagra, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, African Yellow Warbler, White-chinned Prinia, Brown Illadopsis, Grey Tit-Flycatcher, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat, Purple-banded and Superb Sunbirds, Red-headed Malimbe, and Black-and-white Mannikin. After a good lunch at our lodge we set off for Queen Elizabeth National Park and a completely new set of birds.



The Speckle-breasted Woodpecker is a sparsely distributed species and we were treated to superb views at Bigodi Wetland. This is the female. (Nik Borrow)

At the equator we paused briefly for the obligatory tourist shots before reaching the open savannas of Queen Elizabeth National Park, which because of the drought was incredibly dry and dusty and these inhospitable conditions thwarted our search for African Crakes. At the park entrance we scanned the hillsides and lake at Queens Pavilion where we saw two distant Forest Hogs, Spur-winged Lapwing, Black-winged Stilt and some Pied Avocets. Despite the clouds of dust driving into the park along the dirt roads Red-necked Spurfowl were easily seen by the roadsides and Blue-naped Mousebirds, Yellow-throated Longclaws and vibrantly coloured Black-headed Gonoleks were everywhere. At park closing time, we arrived at the sumptuous Mweya Lodge for a two night stay and during our time spent in the area we explored the extensive savannas, acacia woodlands and waterways both in our sturdy Landcruiser and by boat. Our luxurious accommodation overlooked the Kazinga Channel and the grounds held glorious Red-chested Sunbirds, tame Swamp Flycatchers and numerous Black-headed and Slender-billed Weavers that also joined us at the dining table at lunch-time allowing ample opportunity for close study!

Our time spent in Queen Elizabeth National Park is always considered to be yet another of the great highlights of the tour and after an early breakfast we set out to explore the park. Along the road in the cool of the morning and in spite of the desiccated conditions we luckily spotted a single non-breeding plumaged

Black Coucal atop a shrubby clump of vegetation that it had claimed as a perching post. Scattered out over the close-cropped Kasenyi Plains were Senegal, African Wattled and Crowned Lapwings, Kittlitz's Plover, and Collared Pratincole. Plenty of Quailfinch were seen this year and some of those studied did not appear to be of the expected 'Black-chinned' race *dorsostriata* but rather one of the white-chinned forms, presumably *ugandae* or perhaps intermediates between the two. We were also lucky to encounter a few buttonquails and although at least one may have been Black-rumped the others were certainly Common Buttonquail. The open country was perfect for spotting raptors and we notched up White-backed, White-headed and Lappet-faced Vultures, Brown Snake Eagle, Bateleur and the mighty Martial Eagle. Typical birds of the plains included plenty of Zitting and Croaking Cisticolas, Rufous-naped, Flappet and Red-capped Larks, as well as species that included Helmeted Guineafowl, Crested Francolin, Black-bellied Bustard, Plain-backed Pipit, Red-breasted and Mosque Swallows, Alpine and White-rumped Swifts and even a lone Saddle-billed Stork was seen. The park landscape is dotted with thickets and punctuated by Candelabra Euphorbias and in this bushy territory we also found Mourning Collared Dove, White-browed Coucal, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Little Bee-eater, African Grey Hornbill, Spot-flanked Barbet, Western Black-headed Batis, Black-crowned Tchagra, African Paradise Flycatcher, Moustached Grass Warbler, Red-faced Crombec, Black-lored and Arrow-marked Babblers, Wattled Starling, Northern Black Flycatcher, Sooty Chat, Lesser Masked Weaver, Red-billed Quelea, Fawn-breasted Waxbill and Golden-breasted Bunting. This habitat is home to good numbers of large mammals and we spent some time on the mating grounds watching the richly coloured and excitable Uganda Kob with a supporting cast of Common Warthog, Lake Chad Buffalo (often sporting Yellow-billed Oxpeckers!), Nile Bushbuck, and Defassa Waterbuck. Good numbers of elephants were seen, the population here being curious as the gene pool of African 'Savanna' Elephants has been infiltrated by that of the smaller Forest Elephant (perhaps those fleeing from devastated forests in Congo, seeking safer lands) so that the population in Queen Elizabeth National Park is now deemed to be predominantly hybrid!



Just one of the many African Elephants of Queen Elizabeth National Park against a frieze of buffalos and hippos in the Kazinga Channel. (Nik Borrow)

At lunchtime we shared the dining table with tame Black-headed and Slender-billed Weavers and Swamp Flycatchers as we gazed out at the spectacular view over the broad Kazinga Channel flowing below us. Later that afternoon we sat back and enjoyed the fantastic experience of an afternoon boat trip on the waters, an event that offered excellent wildlife viewing with plenty of photographic opportunities for waterside birds. There were huge numbers of Hippopotamus and Lake Chad Buffalo, a few Nile Crocodiles and some

thirsty African Elephants. As usual there were amazing numbers of Pied Kingfishers catching and carrying fish everywhere. A large congregation of White-breasted Cormorants was gathered and dotted along the shore were numbers of Egyptian Goose, Great White and Pink-backed Pelicans, Yellow-billed Stork, African Openbill and Marabou Storks as well as a few Reed Cormorant, African Sacred Ibis, African Spoonbill, Black-crowned Night Heron, Striated and Grey Herons, Great Egret, Black Crake, Water Thick-knee, Gull-billed Tern and a smattering of Palearctic waders included Common Greenshank and Common, Marsh and Wood Sandpipers. Several Red-throated Bee-eaters added brilliant splashes of colour and Wire-tailed Swallows darted across the waters where African Fish Eagles stood sentinel. For enthusiasts a number of large gulls have been over-summering and the jury is out as to the exact identity of them although they would appear to be either eastern *cachinnans* (Caspian Gull) or *barabensis* ('Steppe' Gull currently placed in Lesser Black-backed Gull by the IOC) or intergrades between the two. The taxonomy of these forms is far from clear and the identification of them even more so! We scratched our heads over them for a while but it must be said that the large flock of African Skimmer held our interest for much longer! Before dusk fell we managed to see a super male Square-tailed Nightjar landed on the ground in front of us thus ending a totally superb day.



Red-throated Bee-eater (left) was arguably the most beautiful bird seen during our Kazinga channel boat trip but surely the striking Pied Kingfisher (right) was the most numerous! (Nik Borrow)

Leaving Mweya Lodge the next day we embarked upon what was basically a very long 'game drive' that took us through some wild country into the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park. A productive stop in some open Acacia woodland gave us a pair of Pearl-spotted Owlet as well as species such as Nubian Woodpecker, Green Wood-hoopoe, Common Scimitarbill, Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Tropical Boubou, Trilling Cisticola, Buff-bellied Warbler, Yellow-breasted Apalis and Holub's Golden Weaver.

Travelling further through the park a Lowland Sooty Boubou was heard in some moist evergreen forest but disappointingly showed for 'leader only' views. A Western Banded Snake Eagle posed well and we also hunted out Stout Cisticola in the grasslands before reaching the Ishasha sector of the park where a few Uganda Topi were spotted on the open plains and a White-headed Barbet was seen in the scattered fig trees that we searched in vain for elusive 'tree-climbing' Lions. Our final bird species came in the form of a flock of White-winged Widowbird that included a male in breeding plumage before it was time to leave the park for our next destination, the village of Buhoma that is situated at the edge of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. We arrived at the end of the day and settled into our comfortable and welcoming lodge with its rooms that overlook a deep valley and the impressive steep forested slopes beyond. This beautiful forest dates back to before the Pleistocene ice age, which makes it at over 25,000 years old, one of the most biologically diverse in Africa and goes by the name wonderfully evocative name the 'Impenetrable Forest', due to the steepness

of its hills as opposed to the density of its vegetation and with this view came the promise of seeing a selection of fascinating Albertine Rift endemics and other exciting birds.

The next few days were spent trying to hunt out the specialties of the region and we started our explorations in the forest above Buhoma. The trail itself was pleasantly birdy and without being overwhelmed by birds we managed to see some of those important and coveted Albertine Rift endemic species such as Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Red-throated Alethe and Jameson's Antpecker. The recently described Willard's Sooty Boubou was teased out of the tangles and its distinctive blue iris was noted. During our walk we also managed views of the pretty White-bellied Robin-Chat and furtive Equatorial Akalats were also eventually seen as well as the supposedly 'rare' but probably simply overlooked Chapin's Flycatcher. After frustratingly only having heard the species in Kibale forest several Black-billed Turacos were now seen well and Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo also allowed good views. A fine supporting cast of other species included Anson's Greenbul, a species first discovered in the country during BirdQuest's 2001 Uganda tour as well as White-headed Wood Hoopoe, Willcocks's Honeyguide, Tullberg's (sometimes split as Fine-banded) Woodpecker, Many-coloured Bushshrike, Petit's Cuckooshrike, Mountain Oriole, Dusky Tit, Toro Olive, Cabanis's and Red-tailed Greenbuls, Red-tailed Bristlebill, Black Saw-wing, Black-throated and Grey Apalises, Olive-green Camaroptera, Black-faced Rufous Warbler, Mountain Illadopsis, Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher, Grey-headed, Olive and Northern Double-collared Sunbirds and Black-billed and Brown-capped Weavers. Even the decidedly little-known Oberländer's Ground Thrush was heard that day but too deep in the forest to see



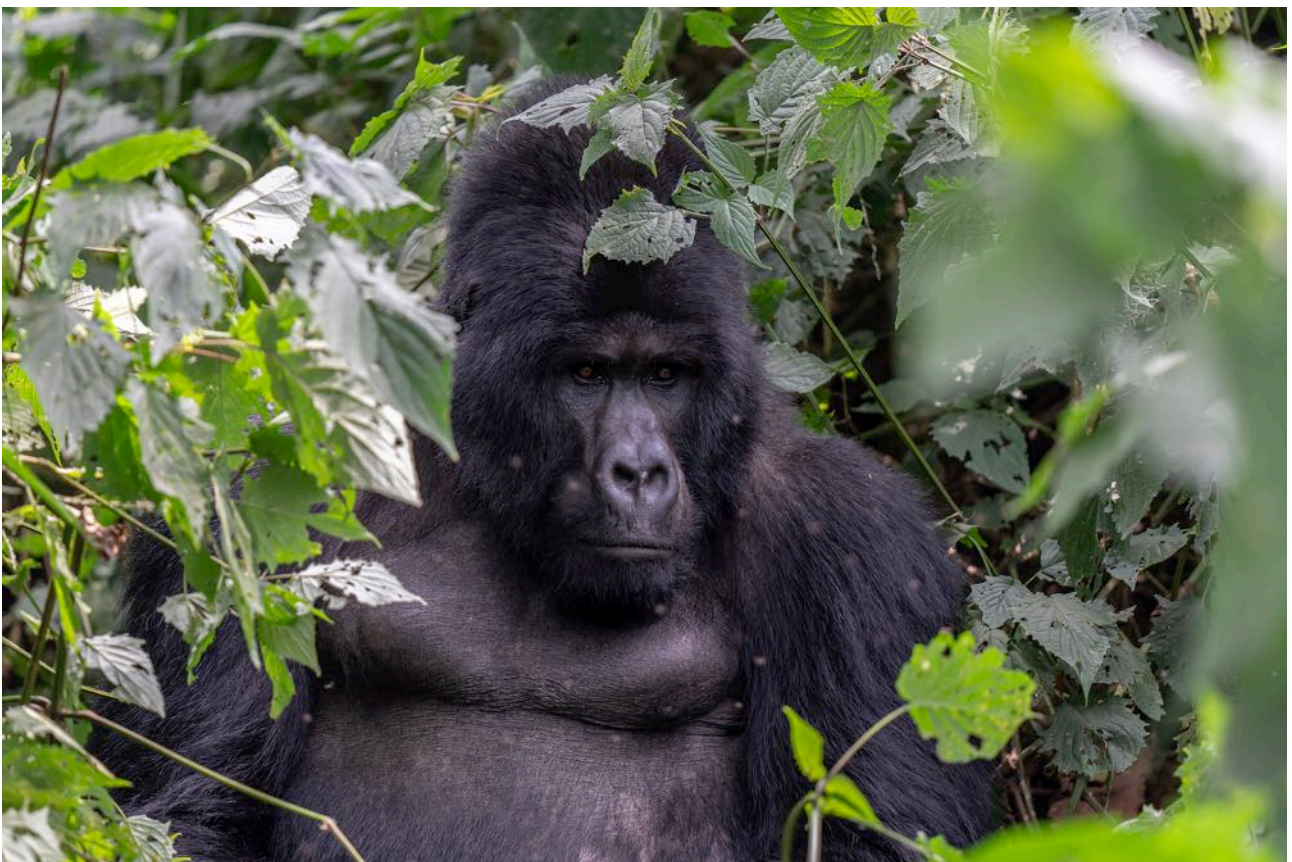
At Buhoma we saw the pretty Grey-winged Robin-Chat (left, Nik Borrow) exceptionally well and obtained some excellent views of the recently described Albertine Rift endemic Willard's Sooty Boubou and even noted its blue iris! (right, Martin Rutz)

Early the following morning in the half-light we found two beautiful songsters; Grey-winged Robin-Chat gave itself up fairly easily but the secretive Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat required a little more patience but ultimately allowed itself to be seen. Our next short journey took us from the lower part of the forest at Buhoma through the cultivated valleys where noisy and excitable Chubb's Cisticolas were in the undergrowth and we also found Augur Buzzard, Mackinnon's Shrike, Baglafaecht Weaver, African Firefinch, Western Citril and Cape Wagtail.

At 'The Neck', a narrow corridor of forest connecting two sections of the park we picked up a few more forest species such as striking and excitable Black-faced Prinias and a Kakamega Greenbul that crept along the mossy boughs along with Brown-eared Woodpecker for some and Oriole Finch. Above the forest, the intensive cultivation of the high altitude hills has made finding Dusky Twin-spot much more difficult recently but this year we quickly succeeded in finding a family group in the few remaining weedy fields alongside species that included Yellow-bellied Waxbill and Streaky Seedeater. On the forest edge we began to find

some of the higher-level specialities of the Impenetrable Forest; Chestnut-throated Apalises 'trilled' from the treetops, the delightful White-tailed Blue Flycatcher was seen and eventually the drop-dead-gorgeous Doherty's Bushshrike was coaxed into view. The Variable Sunbird of the distinctive race *igneiventris* was found and we also enjoyed good looks at the Albertine Rift endemic Blue-headed Sunbird whilst other species seen that afternoon included African Olive Pigeon, Chinspot Batis, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Ruwenzori Hill Babbler, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, African Dusky Flycatcher and White-starred Robin. We stayed out until dusk fell and promptly on cue a Montane (sometimes split as Ruwenzori) Nightjar treated us to some flyby views! It had been another great day and we settled into our lodge at Ruhija with its panoramic views and rested up for a good night's sleep to prepare for the next day.

We had already seen a fine selection of primates that included Red-tailed, L'Hoest's and Blue Monkeys, Vervet, Guereza, Grey-cheeked (or Uganda Crested) Mangabey, Olive Baboon, Eastern Red Colobus and of course Chimpanzee but Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is particularly famous for its gorilla trekking opportunities and this 'Great Ape' was the star attraction and most of us had opted to go in search of our close cousins.



The silverback Eastern Gorilla from Kyagurilo group. (Martin Rutz)

Of course, we were wondering just how easy (or difficult depending on how you view your half-filled glass) it was going to be to see these gentle giants! This year we had permits to visit 'Kyagurilo' group from Ruhija. After the lengthy briefing session, we set off on our 'trek'. It was the luck of the draw how far away the animals are as the gorillas obviously move daily in search of food but this year it seemed that our group was only a short hike away although a steep climb over tangled roots was needed before they were found. During the excursion, the pace is always geared to that of the slowest member of the group and expert guides, guards, porters and trackers ensured the safety of all. Approximately just over 1,000 'mountain' Gorillas have survived the ravages of modern times and a population of about 400 animals is believed to inhabit Bwindi itself. Patiently our guides and trackers led us deeper amongst the troop thus introducing us to the various family members and revealing an ever-moving, somewhat theatrical tableau, at times carefully peeling the vegetation away from the animals so that we could see them better.

The emotional and spiritual experience of seeing these huge apes always more than compensates for any physical discomfort (stinging nettles!) or hardship (those steep hills!) that is required. Although these habituated troops might occasionally object to our human presence, mostly it seems that they are either oblivious to our attentions or, in the case of the youngsters, a little too curious for their own good and it is normal to be able to watch these creatures at rest and play. However, for the most part, all they are usually intent on doing is sleeping or packing more food into their already distended stomachs!

The taxonomy of the 'mountain' Gorillas has been hotly debated in recent decades. Most taxonomists seem to agree now on two species of Gorilla, Western Lowland Gorilla (*G. gorilla*) and Eastern Gorilla (*G. beringei*). The eastern group includes both the Eastern Lowland Gorilla (*G. beringei graueri*) and two mountain populations of the nominate form *G. b. beringei*. The Bwindi population is at the centre of the argument and has been suggested to form a third subspecies *G. beringei bwindi*. It has been claimed that these are not 'mountain' gorillas at all on morphological and ecological grounds. Mitochondrial DNA research however reveals the Bwindi and Virunga populations to be indistinguishable.



Members of the Kyagurilo group of Eastern Gorillas. (Martin Rutz)

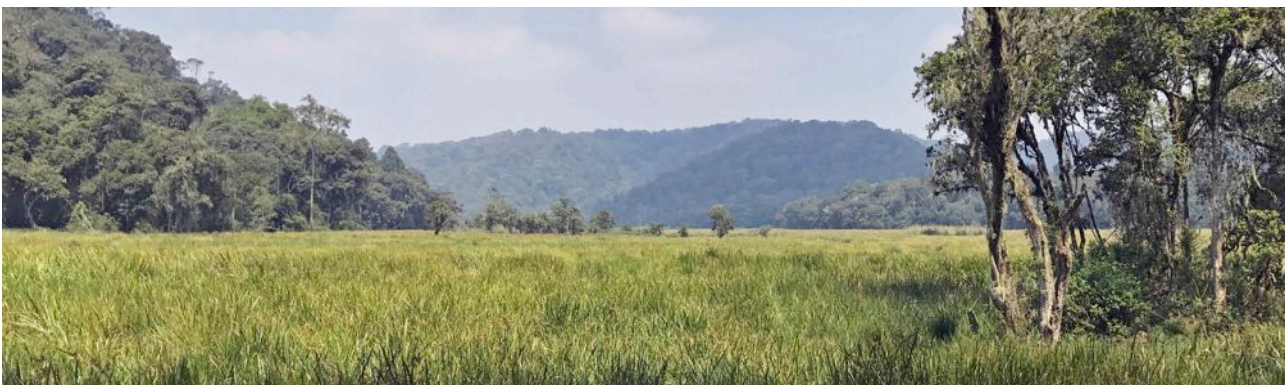
The gorilla trekkers were back by lunchtime and re-joined the birders during the afternoon. The wooded hillsides provided suitable habitat that allowed us to add to our growing collection of Albertine Rift endemics and first up was the normally retiring and secretive Grauer's Warbler. It was a small struggle this year but eventually we all got views of this rather dowdy bird. Albertine endemic Stripe-breasted Tits were easy to see, we had good looks at colourful Regal Sunbird, the attractive Ruwenzori Apalis, Mountain Masked Apalis and an Archer's Ground Robin virtually flaunted itself in front of us for some outstanding views. Other species seen during the day included Western Tinkerbird, Olive-breasted Greenbul, White-browed Crombec, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Slender-billed Starling, Abyssinian Thrush and Thick-billed Seed-eater. At the end of the day a solitary moulting male Purple-breasted Sunbird was found and at dusk a Bat Hawk flew over as the Handsome Francolins started calling from their roost and the Ruwenzori Nightjar put in another brief appearance.

For at least some of the group, perhaps the main reason for coming to Ruhija was to trek up and down and then down, down and down to the Mubwindi Swamp where some major targets occur. It was a fine, dry morning and the views over the forest were superb. Most of the group opted to do this trek and following a well maintained trail we were aiming to get to the bottom as early as we could for we knew that the pair of Grauer's Broadbill had recently fledged young and were no longer by the nest and so the probabilities of locating them were much reduced. The trail was very birdy so getting to our destination was not an easy task, however we had already seen most of the specialties and so it was a little easier to walk past them! However, we dared not walk past a Grey-chested Babbler calling from the undergrowth and a couple of brief fly-past views were obtained but as this species often behaves in this manner we decided to pass on so as to not waste time. We had far better views of the Albertine endemic Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher and a lucky find of a Dwarf Honeyguide was certainly worth looking at! We also finally got views of Ruwenzori Batis and found wing flicking, tail-pumping Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Bar-tailed Trogon, Pink-footed Puffback, Grey Cuckooshrike and White-bellied Crested Flycatcher.



Although the Grauer's Broadbill family had left the nest we were still successful in seeing the birds (left). Archer's Ground Robin (right) is another Albertine Rift endemic that showed magnificently for us. (Nik Borrow)

We reached the bottom of the valley and were taken to where the vacated nest was and then led on to a fruiting tree that the birds had been last seen feeding in a few days ago. We were left to watch the tree whilst our dedicated local guide Amos went to check other potential sites. It was surprisingly only a relatively short time before a pair of broadbills with their surviving youngster made an appearance in the branches above our heads and after the inevitable initial panic the birds seemed to settle down and make regular visits to the food source returning to feed the juvenile.



The forests around Mubwindi Swamp are a hot spot for Albertine Rift endemics. (Nik Borrow)

Following this amazing success, we decided to continue down and walk the short distance to Mubwindi Swamp and try our luck with the Grauer's Swamp Warbler. The timing was good as the birds were still active and we had views of them performing their display flights and even sitting in the vegetation. Also present here whilst we ate our picnic lunch were Carruthers's Cisticolas and the charming Kandt's Waxbill as a Crowned Eagle displayed high above the swamp. The return walk produced little new although a fine Cassin's Hawk-Eagle was found perched in one of the wayside trees, and along the trail pretty Dusky Crimsonwings were glimpsed as was a skulking Evergreen Forest Warbler. A pair of Handsome Francolins was also seen ahead of us on the path but they scurried off before the group members could see them.

Our final day was strictly a travel day as we had to get all the way back to Entebbe to connect with late evening flights. However, the birds kept coming with plenty of Grey Crowned Cranes in the fields en route to Kabale. Common Kestrel and Village Indigobird were also seen along the way and a brief stop at a roadside pool gave us a pair of White-backed Duck, Common Moorhen and some non-breeding plumaged Southern Red Bishops. The journey took us past Mburu National Park which comprises dry acacia bush surrounding the lake itself and much open grazing land for the ridiculously large-horned Ankole Cattle, hence this was a new habitat that supported a few new species of birds for us. A very timely lunch stop enabled us to squeeze one more goodie and we enjoyed munching our sandwiches amongst a flock of highly desirable Brown-chested Lapwings. Also spotted during our lunch break were Emerald-spotted Wood Dove, Red-headed Lovebird, and Brubru. After this we noted plenty of Lilac-breasted Rollers along the main road but otherwise it was an uneventful drive back to Entebbe where some of the group had to rush to catch a flight. The rest of us lingered a little longer and squeezed in one last cheeky tick in the form of a Northern White-faced Owl that interrupted our evening meal!

It had surely been an amazing trip with so many memories to cherish! Uganda is the proud owner of an extensive network of well-managed parks and reserves which contain a wide range of habitats: high to low altitude rain forests, vast open wetlands, thorn-bush and dry savannahs. The country boasts a bird list of over 1,000 species, as well as large numbers of big game and wonderful facilities for unrivalled primate watching, making this one of the most outstanding eco-destinations anywhere in the world. All of these natural wonders are complemented by the extremely high standard of comfortable accommodation that is now available (and is improving every year). The people are friendly and helpful and in particular thanks to our hardworking driver who really made our tour a holiday to remember.



African Skimmer on the Kazinga Channel. (Martin Rutz)



The Shoebill has to be seen in order to be believed! (Nik Borrow)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

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).

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.

White-backed Duck *Thalassornis leuconotus* A pair was seen near Mburo on the journey back to Entebbe.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata* Common at Mabamba Swamp and seen again near Mburo.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Crested Guineafowl *Guttera [pucherani] verreauxi* Approachable birds in Kibale NP and 2 at Buhoma.

Crested Francolin *Dendroperdix sephaena* Small numbers seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Scaly Francolin *Pternistis squamatus* A pair seen near Kibale NP.

Handsome Francolin *Pternistis nobilis* Views for some at Ruhija.

Red-necked Spurfowl *Pternistis afer* Common and easy to see in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* Small numbers but easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Openbill (A Open-billed Stork) *Anastomus lamelligerus* Most numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.

(African) Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia [episcopus] microscelis* In the Buhoma area and en route to Entebbe.

Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer* Common and widespread.
African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* Some in Queen Elizabeth NP and we journeyed back to Entebbe.
Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* Common and widespread.
African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* 4 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A juvenile on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* 2 at Mabamba and 3 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Squacco Heron (Common S H) *Ardeola ralloides* Common at Mabamba Swamp and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Widespread and common in suitable habitat.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* Scattered sightings but only small numbers.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* c. 8 at Mabamba Swamp.
Great Egret *Ardea alba* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* This familiar species was observed at various wetlands throughout the country.
Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* Common and widespread.
Shoebill (Whale-headed Stork) *Balaeniceps rex* (V) Fantastic close encounters with 1 at Mabamba Swamp.
Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* A large flock was seen on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.
Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* Most numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus* Numerous at Mabamba and Queen Elizabeth NP.
White-breasted Cormorant *Phalacrocorax lucidus* Hundreds on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-winged Kite (B-shouldered K) *Elanus caeruleus* Small numbers were seen at widespread locations.
African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus* Small numbers were seen at widespread locations.
Palm-nut Vulture (Vulturine Fish Eagle) *Gypohierax angolensis* Seen at widespread locations.



Squacco Heron (left) and Palm-nut Vulture (right) seen along the Kazinga Channel. (Nik Borrow)

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* (CR) Just 1 in Entebbe.
White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* (CR) 7+ seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis*. (CR) Males were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and near Mburo.
Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* (E) Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus* A few in Queen Elizabeth NP and 1 near Mburo NP.
Western Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens* 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* (NT) Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus* 1 seen at dusk over Ruhija.
Crowned Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus* (NT) Displaying birds over Mubwindi Swamp.
Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* (V) An adult and a juvenile in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* A regularly encountered roadside bird with an impressive hairdo!
Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraetus wahlbergi* 3 sightings during the tour.
Ayres's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraetus ayresii* (NL) Paul saw 1 over Kibale.
Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Aquila africana* A perched bird at Mubwindi Swamp.

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* A number of widespread sightings particularly by roadsides.

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar* A pair en route to Kibale.

African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro* 1 with prey at Bigodi Wetland.

Shikra *Accipiter badius* 1 en route to Kibale Forest.

Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus* 1 at Kibale.

African Marsh Harrier *Circus ranivorus* Small numbers at Mabamba Swamp.

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* Widespread sightings throughout the tour.

African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* Easily seen at Mabamba Swamp and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Augur Buzzard *Buteo augur* Small numbers in the southwest.

Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster* 2 males in Queen Elizabeth NP.

White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra* A pair well watched in the shadows of Bigodi Swamp.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* Easily seen at Mabamba Swamp and along the Kazinga Channel.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 1 seen near Mburo.

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata* 1 was seen in Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum* (E) Good numbers of this superb species near Kabale.

Common Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticus*. A pair was identified in Queen Elizabeth NP. Others were left unidentified.

Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus* Common and easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* 2 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Long-toed Lapwing *Vanellus crassirostris* Seen well at Mabamba Swamp.



Western Banded Snake Eagle in Queen Elizabeth NP (left) and Long-toed Lapwing at Mabamba Swamp (right) (Nik Borrow)

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus* Easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Senegal Lapwing (S Plover) *Vanellus lugubris* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Crowned Lapwing (C Plover) *Vanellus coronatus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Brown-chested Lapwing *Vanellus superciliosus* A flock of about 30 near Lake Mburo NP.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Lesser Jacana *Microparra capensis* 1 seen at Mabamba Swamp.

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* Easily seen in appropriate habitat.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 2 of these Palearctic migrants on the Kazinga Channel.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* 1 of these Palearctic migrants on the Kazinga Channel.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 1 of these Palearctic migrants on the Kazinga Channel.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* 1 of these Palearctic migrants on the Kazinga Channel.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* 25+ in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris*. 60+ on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus* 100+ at Mabamba Swamp and 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* Over-summering Palearctic migrants on the Kazinga Channel. See note.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* 25+ in Queen Elizabeth NP.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* 100's of these Palearctic migrants at Mabamba Swamp.

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

Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* Seen on urban electric wires and rooftops.

Afep Pigeon *Columba uncinata* 2 seen in Kibale Forest.

African Olive Pigeon *Columba arquatrix* Several seen in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Western Bronze-naped Pigeon *Columba iriditorques* (H) Heard in in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Mourning Collared Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* This common and widespread species sings "I am a Red-eyed Dove".

Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* Widespread sightings.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* 1 seen near Mburo.

Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer* The common wood dove of moister country and regularly encountered.

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* Commonly encountered in the forested areas but often just in flight.

African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus* Widespread sightings.

Great Blue Turaco *Corythaëola cristata* Uganda is one of the easiest places in Africa to see this magnificent bird.



African Olive Pigeon (left) and Great Blue Turaco (right) in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Black-billed Turaco *Tauraco schuettii* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable NPs.

Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae* First seen well en route to Kibale Forest.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird (Black-f G-a-b) *Corythaixoides [personatus] leopoldi* 3 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Eastern Plantain-eater (E Grey P-e) *Crinifer zonurus* Widespread sightings of this noisy bird.

Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus* 1 at Mabamba Swamp and usually associated with papyrus in Uganda.

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus* Widespread sightings throughout the savannas.

Black Coucal *Centropus grillii* Just 1 in non-breeding plumage in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares aereus* (H) Heard in the Bwindi forests.

Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* 1 at Bigodi Wetland and heard elsewhere.

African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus* A male in Kibale Forest and a female in Bwindi NP.

Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx mechowi* 2 seen in Bwindi NP.

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* 3 sightings during the tour.

Northern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis leucotis* 1 for those on later flights the night we left Entebbe.

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl *Bubo lacteus* A pair in our lodge garden at Kibale.

African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* A pair was seen in Kibale NP.

Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* A pair in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Montane [Ruwenzori] Nightjar *Caprimulgus [poliocephalus] ruwenzorii* 1 male seen at dusk at Ruhija.

Square-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* Excellent views of a male in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* Small numbers seen in suitable habitat.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* 1 over Queen Elizabeth NP.

Little Swift *Apus affinis* Most often a bridge and town bird (that's where their nesting habitat is!).

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* An abundant and very widespread species noted throughout the tour.

Blue-naped Mousebird *Urocolius macrourus* Common in bush country though often flying by at a rate of knots!

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* (H) Heard in Kibale Forest.

Bar-tailed Trogon *Apaloderma vittatum* A pair seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus* Good numbers were seen by the road between Mburo and Masaka.

Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis* Singletons in Kibale NP.

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* First seen well and most numerous in the Mabamba area.

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* Widespread roadside sightings in appropriate habitat.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* (H) Heard in Kibale Forest.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* Widespread sightings.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* Most easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

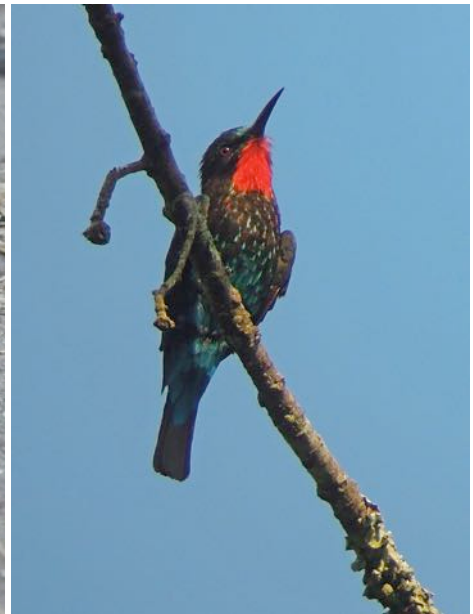
Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus* Easily seen in appropriate habitat.

Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys* 1 seen en route to Kibale.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* (NL) 1 seen by Jean-Francois as we left Entebbe.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Astonishingly numerous at Mabamba and along the Kazinga Channel.

Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis* Seen well in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.



Square-tailed Nightjar (left) in Queen Elizabeth NP and a Black Bee-eater (right) in Bwindi. (Nik Borrow)

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Blue-breasted Bee-eater *Merops variegatus* Easily seen at Mabamba.

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates* Numerous sightings near Kibale and in the Bwindi area.

Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki* At least 8 along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis* Seen en route to Kibale.

Olive Bee-eater (Madagascar B-e) *Merops superciliosus* Seen in the Entebbe area and Queen Elizabeth NP.

White-headed Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus bollei* Groups seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Crowned Hornbill *Lophoceros alboterminatus* Widespread sightings in small numbers.
African Pied Hornbill (Congo P H) *Lophoceros [f.] fasciatus* First seen well at Mabamba.
African Grey Hornbill *Lophoceros nasutus*. Just 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill *Bycanistes subcylindricus* Pleasingly numerous during the tour.
Grey-throated Barbet (G- headed B) *Gymnobucco [bonapartei] cinereiceps* Kibale and Bwindi Forests.
Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus* More often heard than seen in the lower altitude forests.
Western Tinkerbird (W Green T) *Pogoniulus coryphaei* Seen well in Bwindi Forest.
Yellow-throated Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus subsulphureus* More often heard than seen in the lower altitude forests.
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* Regularly recorded in the higher altitude forests and cultivation.
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* Sightings at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon duchaillui* The 'snoring' song was heard more than the bird was seen in forest.
Hairy-breasted Barbet (Streaky-throated B) *Tricholaema [hirsuta] flavipunctata* Seen in the lower altitude forests.
Spot-flanked Barbet *Tricholaema lacrymosa* Good views in Queen Elizabeth NP.
White-headed Barbet *Lybius leucocephalus* 2 seen in the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth NP.
Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus* Widespread sightings.
(Eastern) Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus [p.] purpuratus* Seen well in Kibale and at Bigodi Wetland.
Dwarf Honeyguide *Indicator pumilio* Excellent views of this scarce bird at Mubwindi Swamp.



Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird (left) is common and easily seen. In contrast the Albertine Rift endemic Dwarf Honeyguide (right) is rarely seen. (Nik Borrow)

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksii* 1 seen at Buhoma.
Thick-billed Honeyguide *Indicator conirostris (H)* Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica* 1 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Green-backed Woodpecker (Little Spotted W) *Campethera cailliautii*. A male of the race *nyansae* in QENP.
Tullberg's Woodpecker (Fine-banded W) *Campethera [tullbergi] taeniolaema* 2 in Bwindi Forest.
Brown-eared Woodpecker *Campethera caroli*. 1 seen by some at 'the Neck'.
Speckle-breasted Woodpecker *Dendropicos poecilolaemus* Pairs seen well at Kibale and Bigodi Wetland.
Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens* 3 widespread sightings.
Elliot's Woodpecker *Dendropicos elliotii* Seen well in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.
African Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae* A female seen in Entebbe.
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* 1 seen near Kabale.
Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus* 4 widespread sightings in appropriate habitat.
African Hobby *Falco cuvierii* 1 in residence at our Entebbe guest house and another at the Botanical Gardens.
Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* 1 roadside bird en route back to Entebbe.
Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus (E)* Great views of a pair at Entebbe Botanical Gardens.
Meyer's Parrot (Brown P) *Poicephalus meyeri* At our Entebbe guest house and en route to Kibale.
Red-headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullarius* A pair at Mburo.
African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis (H)* Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Grauer's Broadbill *Pseudocalyptomena graueri (V)* A pair and 1 juvenile seen well at Mubwindi Swamp.
Green-breasted Pitta *Pitta reichenowi* Fantastic views in Kibale NP.

African Shrike-flycatcher *Megabyas flammulatus* A pair at Bigodi Wetland.
Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher *Bias musicus* Seen well at Bigodi Wetland and Buhoma.
Ruwenzori Batis *Batis diops* A pair in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Chinspot Batis *Batis molitor* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Western Black-headed Batis *Batis erlangeri* Singletons in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Chestnut Wattle-eye *Platysteira castanea* Small numbers seen in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable forests.
Brown-throated Wattle-eye (Common W-e) *Platysteira cyanea* Widespread sightings during the tour.
Lagden's Bushshrike *Malaconotus lagdeni* (NT) (H) Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Many-coloured Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus multicolor* A male seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Bocage's Bushshrike (Grey-green B S) *Chlorophoneus bocagei* Seen well at Bigodi and heard in Bwindi.
Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Doherty's Bushshrike *Telophorus dohertyi* This gorgeous bird was seen well at Ruhija.
Marsh Tchagra (Blackcap T) *Bocagia minuta* A male seen well at Bigodi Wetland.
Brown-crowned Tchagra (Brown-headed T) *Tchagra australis* A few seen at Ruhija.
Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus* Just 1 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Pink-footed Puffback *Dryoscopus angolensis* 1 male seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis* Widespread sightings during this tour.
Lowland Sooty Boubou *Laniarius leucorhynchus* Only Nik saw a calling bird in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Mountain Sooty Boubou *Laniarius poensis* (H) Heard in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Willard's Sooty Boubou *Laniarius willardi* The blue eyes were seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Lühder's Bushshrike *Laniarius luehderi* Seen well in Kibale and Bwindi forests.



Bocage's Bushshrike at Bigodi (left, Martin Rutz) and Lühder's Bushshrike at Ruhija (right, Nik Borrow)

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and heard elsewhere.
Papyrus Gonolek *Laniarius mufumbiri* (NT) Incredible views of this papyrus specialist again this year.
Black-headed Gonolek *Laniarius erythrogaster* Especially numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Brubru *Nilaus afer* A pair were seen at Mburo.
Grey Cuckooshrike *Coracina caesia* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea* Males at Bigodi and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Petit's Cuckooshrike *Campephaga petiti* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Mackinnon's Fiscal *Lanius mackinnoni* Small numbers were seen in the southwest.
Grey-backed Fiscal *Lanius excubitoroides* Common and widespread but absent from forest and the southwest.
Northern Fiscal *Lanius humeralis* Widespread sightings during the tour.
Western Oriole (W Black-headed O) *Oriolus brachyrhynchus* Often heard but just 1 seen in Kibale NP.
Mountain (Montane) Oriole *Oriolus percivali* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Fork-tailed Drongo (Common D) *Dicrurus adsimilis* Commonly encountered in the savannahs.
Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus modestus* 1 seen well in Kibale Forest.
Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer* Seen in Entebbe, Kibale Forest and Bigodi Wetland.
African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* Seen from Queen Elizabeth NP to Bwindi NP.

Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer* A roadside family party en route to Kibale.
Pied Crow *Corvus albus* Common and widespread.
African Blue Flycatcher *Elminia longicauda* Widespread sightings of this dainty bird.
White-tailed Blue Flycatcher *Elminia albicauda* Seen well in the Bwindi area.
White-bellied Crested Flycatcher *Elminia albiventris* 1 seen on the Mubwindi swamp walk.
Dusky Tit *Melaniparus funereus* Easily seen in the Bwindi Forests.
Stripe-breasted Tit *Melaniparus fasciiventer* Great views of these Albertine Rift endemics at Ruhija.



The Stripe-breasted Tit is an Albertine Rift endemic. (Nik Borrow)

Western Nicator *Nicator chloris* (H) Heard at Bigodi Wetland.
Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea* A pair seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor* Every day!
Kakamega Greenbul *Arizelocichla kakamegae* Just 1 seen at 'the Neck'.
Olive-breasted Greenbul (O-b Mountain G) *Arizelocichla kikuyuensis* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris* Easily seen in the forests.
Little Greenbul *Eurillas virens* Common but more often heard than seen in the forests.
Ansorge's Greenbul *Eurillas ansorgei* Just 1 seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Plain Greenbul (Cameroon Sombre G) *Eurillas curvirostris* Small numbers in the forests.
Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris* Common and easily seen in the forests.
Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator* Seen in Kibale and heard in Bwindi Forests.
Joyful Greenbul *Chlorocichla laetissima* 3 seen in Kibale Forest.
Yellow-throated Leaflove *Atimastillas flavicollis* Widespread sightings of the creamy-throated race *flavigula*.
Toro Olive Greenbul *Phyllastrephus hypochloris* 1 seen at Buhoma and 2 more at 'the Neck'.

Cabanis's Greenbul *Phyllastrephus cabanisi* 2 seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albogularis* (H) A shy but vocal forest greenbul in Kibale.

Yellow-streaked Greenbul *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus* Seen well at Ruhija.

Red-tailed Bristlebill *Bleda syndactylus* Sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Red-tailed Greenbul *Criniger calurus* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

White-headed Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne albiceps* A widespread bird throughout the lower country.

Black Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne [pristoptera] holomelas* Common around Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* Appeared to be breeding at Mabamba Swamp.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Good numbers of this Palearctic migrant at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Angolan Swallow *Hirundo angolensis* Numerous during the tour, particularly around settlements.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* (V) 3 of these intra-African migrants seen at Mabamba.

Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* Widespread sightings.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* Widespread sightings.

Red-breasted Swallow *Cecropis semirufa* Small numbers seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis* 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* A few at Buhoma and Mburo.

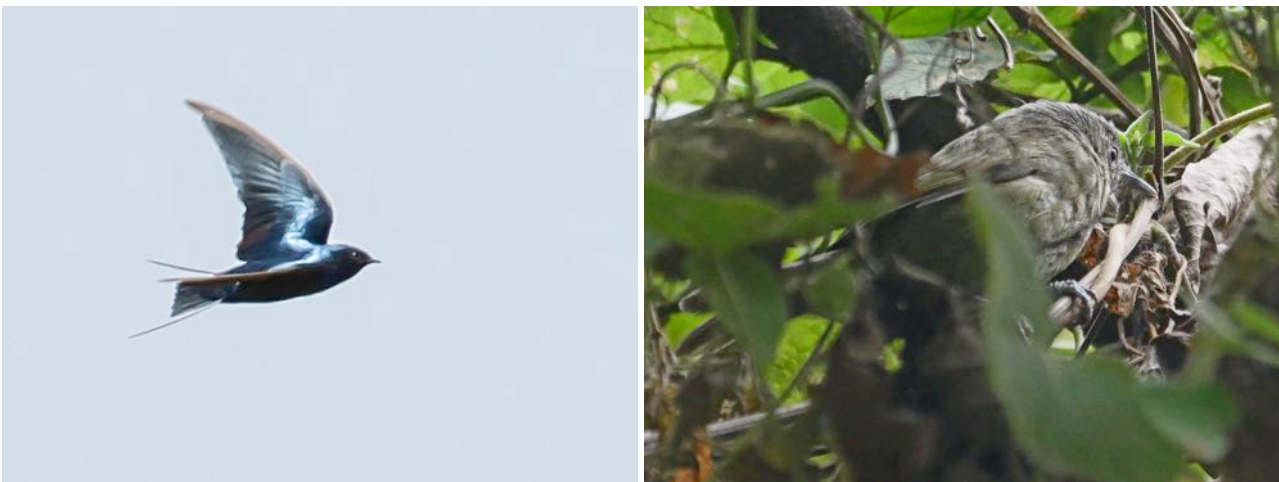
Moustached Grass Warbler (African M W) *Melocichla mentalis* A few seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-faced Crombec *Sylvietta whytii* A few seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens* Seen in Entebbe Botanical Gardens and heard elsewhere.

White-browed Crombec *Sylvietta leucophrys* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Grauer's Warbler *Graueria vittata* This lover of vine tangles was seen well at Ruhija.



Blue Swallow at Mabamba (left, Martin Rutz) and the Albertine Rift endemic Grauer's Warbler (right, Nik Borrow)

Green Hylia *Hylia prasina* Often heard but only seen once in Kibale NP.

Red-faced Woodland Warbler *Phylloscopus laetus* An Albertine Rift endemic seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens* 1 seen en route to Kibale.

Lesser Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* (H) Heard along the Kazinga Channel.

African Yellow Warbler (Dark-capped Y W) *Iduna natalensis*. 1 seen at Bigodi Wetland.

Mountain Yellow Warbler *Iduna similis*. 2 sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

White-winged Swamp Warbler *Bradypterus carpalis* Often heard in swamps and seen en route to Kibale.

Grauer's Swamp Warbler *Bradypterus graueri* (E) Typically brief views of several in Mubwindi Swamp.

Cinnamon Bracken Warbler *Bradypterus cinnamomeus* (H) Heard at Ruhija.

Evergreen Forest Warbler *Bradypterus lopezi* Views of a skulking bird on the Mubwindi swamp walk.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops* Often heard throughout the tour and occasionally seen.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans* A pair near Buhoma.

Trilling Cisticola *Cisticola woosnami* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Chubb's Cisticola *Cisticola chubbi* First encountered in Kibale Forest and common in the southwest.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus* A common and showy cisticola seen frequently in appropriate wetlands.

Carruthers's Cisticola *Cisticola carruthersi* Mostly associated with papyrus but seen well in Mubwindi Swamp.

Stout Cisticola *Cisticola robustus* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Short-winged Cisticola (Siffling C) *Cisticola brachypterus* Seen at Kibale and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed C) *Cisticola juncidis* Easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* Common and widespread but heard more than seen.

Black-faced Prinia *Prinia melanops* This attractive species was seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

White-chinned Prinia *Prinia leucopogon* First seen well at Bigodi Wetland.

Ruwenzori Apalis (Collared A) *Oreolais ruwenzorii* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Buff-bellied Warbler *Phyllolais pulchella* 4 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Yellow-breasted Apalis (Black-breasted A) *Apalis flavida* A pair seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Lowland Masked Apalis (M A) *Apalis binotata* (H) Only heard in Kibale Forest.

Mountain Masked Apalis (Black-faced A) *Apalis personata* Easy to see in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.



Red-faced Woodland Warbler (left) and Mountain Masked Apalis (right) are Albertine Rift endemics. (Nik Borrow)

Black-throated Apalis *Apalis jacksoni* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Chestnut-throated Apalis *Apalis porphyrolaema* The warbler with the 'trim-phone' call in the southwest.

Buff-throated Apalis *Apalis rufogularis* Numerous opportunities to see this species well in the various forests.

Grey Apalis *Apalis cinerea* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Grey-capped Warbler *Eminia lepida* Often heard and occasionally seen.

Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata* Common and widespread.

Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Black-faced Rufous Warbler *Bathmocercus rufus* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Scaly-breasted Illadopsis *Illadopsis albipectus* Seen well in Kibale Forest and heard in Bwindi Forest.

Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens* Seen in Kibale Forest and Bigodi Wetland.

Mountain Illadopsis *Illadopsis pyrrhoptera* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides sharpei* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Ruwenzori Hill Babbler *Pseudoalcippe atriceps* Small numbers were seen at Ruhija.

African Yellow White-eye (Green W-e) *Zosterops [senegalensis] stuhlmanni* Widespread. See Note.

Grey-chested Babbler (G-c Illadopsis) *Kakamega poliothorax* Flight views only on the Mubwindi swamp walk.

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* Just 1 was seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Purple-headed Starling *Lamprotornis purpureiceps* Small numbers in Kibale NP, Bigodi Wetland and Bwindi.

Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus* Seen from Entebbe to Kibale.

Rüppell's Starling (R's Long-tailed S) *Lamprotornis purpuropterus* Very common and widespread.

Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*. From Kibale to Queen Elizabeth NP.

Slender-billed Starling *Onychognathus tenuirostris* Large numbers seen flying over Ruhija.

Chestnut-winged Starling *Onychognathus [fulgidus] hartlaubii* A pair was seen in Kibale Forest.

Stuhlmann's Starling *Poeoptera stuhlmanni* Small numbers in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.

Narrow-tailed Starling *Poeoptera lugubris* 1 was seen in Kibale Forest.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and at Mburo.

White-tailed Ant Thrush *Neocossyphus poensis* Seen in Kibale NP.

Fraser's Rufous Thrush (Rufous Flycatcher T) *Stizorhina fraseri* Seen well in Kibale and Bwindi Forests.

Oberländer's Ground Thrush *Geokichla oberlaenderi* (H) Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

African Thrush *Turdus pelios* Widespread sightings.

Abyssinian Thrush (Mountain T) *Turdus abyssinicus* 1 sighting in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Brown-backed Scrub Robin *Erythropygia hartlaubi* First seen en route to Kibale.

White-browed Scrub Robin *Erythropygia leucophrys* (H) Heard in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher *Myioparus griseigularis* Often heard and occasionally seen in the various forests.

Grey Tit-Flycatcher (Lead-coloured F) *Myioparus plumbeus* 1 seen at Bigodi Wetland.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher *Dioptornis fischeri* Small numbers seen in the southwest.

Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis ardesiacus* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Northern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis edolioides* Seen in the Entebbe area and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens* 7 seen in Kibale NP.

Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica* Seen at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Cassin's Flycatcher (C's Grey F) *Muscicapa cassini* A pair seen along a river in Kibale Forest.

Chapin's Flycatcher *Muscicapa lendu* (V) Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta* Easy to see in the southwest.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata* Easily seen at Bigodi Wetland and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa infusata* Treetop birds in Kibale Forest.

Red-throated Alethe *Chamaetylas poliophrys* Great views of this Albertine Rift endemic in Bwindi Forest.

White-bellied Robin-Chat *Cossyphicula roberti* 2 seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Archer's Ground Robin *Cossypha archeri* Amazing views of this Albertine Rift endemic in Bwindi Forest.

Grey-winged Robin-Chat *Cossypha polioptera* A pair seen well at Buhoma.

Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat *Cossypha cyanocampter* Close-up views of this notorious skulker at Buhoma.

White-browed Robin-Chat (Heuglin's R) *Cossypha heuglini* Particularly numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-capped Robin-Chat *Cossypha natalensis* Seen well in Kibale NP and at Buhoma.



Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher (left) in Bwindi and a Red-capped Robin-Chat (Right) in Kibale. (Nik Borrow)

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat (S-headed R-c) *Cossypha niveicapilla* Seen from Bigodi to Buhoma.

White-starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata* Several sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Equatorial Akalat *Sheppardia aequatorialis* Several sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

African Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus* Seen en route to Kibale Forest and in Mubwindi Swamp.

Sooty Chat *Myrmecocichla nigra* Easy to see in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Grey-headed Sunbird *Deleornis axillaris* 2 were seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Little Green Sunbird *Anthreptes seimundi* 1 in Kibale Forest.
Grey-chinned Sunbird (Green S) *Anthreptes rectirostris* Present in Kibale Forest.
Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris* A common and widespread sunbird.
Green-headed Sunbird *Cyanomitra verticalis* A few sightings in the Kibale area and the southwest.
Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanolaema* A few widespread sightings in the forests.
Blue-headed Sunbird *Cyanomitra alinae* A poor showing (just one!) in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea* Common throughout the various forests but more often heard than seen.
Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Seen from Entebbe to Kibale.
Purple-breasted Sunbird *Nectarinia purpureiventris* A moulting male at Ruhija.
Bronzy Sunbird (Bronze S) *Nectarinia kilimensis* Small numbers at Kibale and Bwindi.
Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius* Seen at Mabamba Swamp.
Northern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris reichenowi* Common in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Regal Sunbird *Cinnyris regius* Small numbers of this wonderful sunbird in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest at Ruhija.



Albertine Rift endemic Blue-headed Sunbird (left, Martin Rutz) and Regal Sunbird (right, Nik Borrow)

Red-chested Sunbird *Cinnyris erythrocerus* A stunning sunbird and common around the swamps and wet places.
Purple-banded Sunbird *Cinnyris bifasciatus* Pairs seen well at Bigodi Wetland and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus* A male seen at Bigodi Wetland.
Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus* The attractive orange-bellied race, *igneiventris* was seen at Ruhija.
Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus* A few widespread sightings from Entebbe to Queen Elizabeth NP.
House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Roadside birds seen around settlements during journeys.
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow (G-h S) *Passer griseus* Very common and widespread.
Thick-billed Weaver (Grosbeak W) *Amblyospiza albifrons* Small numbers in the Kibale area.
Baglafaecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafaecht* The race *stuhmanni* was seen in the southwest
Slender-billed Weaver *Ploceus pelzelni* Associated with papyrus, lakes and dining tables!
Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis* A few seen at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis* A few sightings in the Kibale area.
Strange Weaver *Ploceus alienus* Good views of this Albertine Rift endemic in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Black-billed Weaver *Ploceus melanogaster* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* Just 1 pair in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius* 6 seen in Entebbe Botanical Gardens.
Northern Brown-throated Weaver *Ploceus castanops* Seen well at Mabamba Swamp and around Entebbe.
Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Village Weaver (Black-headed W) *Ploceus cucullatus* This species was a constant companion throughout the tour.
Viellot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus* A common bird often seen in colonies by roadside villages.
Weyns's Weaver *Ploceus weynsi* A huge colony with breeding plumaged males at Mabamba Swamp.
Black-headed Weaver (Yellow-backed W) *Ploceus melanocephalus* An abundant waterside weaver.
Brown-capped Weaver *Ploceus insignis* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis* Seen at Bigodi Swamp and in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Black Bishop *Euplectes gierowii* Breeding plumaged males at Kibale.
Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* Birds in non-breeding plumage near Mburo.
White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Jameson's Antpecker *Parmoptila jamesoni* A pair in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
White-breasted Nigrita (W-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus* Small numbers at Kibale and Bwindi Forest.
Grey-headed Nigrita (G-crowned Negrofinch) Small numbers only and first encountered at Mabamba.
Dusky Crimsonwing *Cryptospiza jacksoni* 2 seen as we walked up from Mubwindi Swamp.
Red-headed Bluebill *Spermophaga ruficapilla* Great looks at Bigodi Wetland.
Dusky Twinspot *Euschistospiza cinereovinacea* A pair with a juvenile at Ruhija.
Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* Widespread sightings and particularly common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
African Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata* 2 near Buhoma.
Yellow-bellied Waxbill *Estrilda quartinia* Small numbers in the Ruhija area.
Fawn-breasted Waxbill *Estrilda paludicola* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Black-crowned Waxbill *Estrilda nonnula* Seen well from Mabamba to Kibale.
Quailfinch *Ortygospiza atricollis* Good numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP. The exact race is in question.



Dusky Twinspot at Ruhija (left) and Quailfinch at Queen Elizabeth National Park (right). This is apparently a moulting male but field features suggest it to be the race ugandae rather than the expected dorsostriata. (Nik Borrow)

Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullatus* Common and widespread.
Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor* Seen at Bigodi Wetland and 'the Neck'.
Village Indigobird (Red-billed Firefinch I) *Vidua chalybeata* A few en route to Entebbe.
Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* Widespread sightings with some in breeding plumage.
Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis* Small numbers in the southwest.
Mountain Wagtail *Motacilla clara* 1 in Kibale Forest.
African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* Everywhere!
Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus* Very common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
African Pipit (Grassland P) *Anthus cinnamomeus* Common at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Oriole Finch *Linurgus olivaceus* A few sightings in the Bwindi forests.
Western Citril *Crithagra frontalis* A few sightings in the southwest.
Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica* Common from Entebbe to Queen Elizabeth NP.
Brimstone Canary *Crithagra sulphuratus* Seen at Kibale and near Buhoma.
Thick-billed Seedeater *Crithagra burtoni* 2 in the Bwindi area.
Streaky Seedeater *Crithagra striolatus* 2 at Ruhija.
Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP.



Uganda is a great destination for watching primates and we encountered twelve species during the tour including both 'Stuhlmann's' Blue Monkey (left) and Guereza Colobus (right). (Nik Borrow)

MAMMALS

- African Elephant** *Loxodonta africana* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP. See Note.
- Spectacled Lesser Galago** *Galago matschei* 2 seen at night at Ruhija.
- Demidoff's Dwarf Galago** *Galagoides demidovii* (LO) 1 seen by Nik pre-dawn in Kibale Forest.
- Red-tailed Monkey (Black-cheeked White-nosed M)** *Cercopithecus ascanius* Common and widespread.
- L'Hoest's Monkey** *Cercopithecus lhoesti* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.
- Blue Monkey (Gentle M)** *Cercopithecus mitis* The form stuhlmanni seen in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.
- Vervet (Savanna Monkey)** *Cercopithecus pygerythrus* Widespread sightings.
- Guereza (Eastern Black-and-white Colobus)** *Colobus guereza* Widespread sightings.
- Grey-cheeked Mangabey (Ugandan Crested M)** *Lophocebus [albigena] ugandae* Small numbers at Bigodi.
- Olive Baboon** *Papio anubis* Common and widespread.
- Eastern Red Colobus (Central African R C)** *Piliocolobus [rufomitratu] oustaleti* Seen in Kibale NP.
- Eastern Gorilla** *Gorilla beringei* (NL) This year our group visited 'Kyagurilo' group.
- Chimpanzee** *Pan troglodytes* Seen in Kibale NP and heard in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
- Cane Rat sp.** *Thryonomys sp.* (NL) What was probably this mammal was seen by some in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- African Grass Rat** *Arvicanthis niloticus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Peters' Hybomys (Hump-nosed M)** *Hybomys univittatus* 1 seen in Kibale NP.
- Red-legged Sun Squirrel** *Heliosciurus rufobrachium*. Seen in Kibale and Bwindi forests.
- Ruwenzori Sun Squirrel (Mountain S S)** *Heliosciurus ruwenzori* Small numbers seen in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
- Boehm's Bush Squirrel** *Paraxerus boehmi* Seen in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.
- Banded Mongoose** *Mungos mungo* The radio-collared troop in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Spotted Hyaena** *Crocuta crocuta* (H) Heard in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Plains Zebra (Common Z)** *Equus quagga* The race *boehmi* near Lake Mburo NP.
- Forest Hog (Giant H)** *Hylochoerus meinertzhageni* Seen on two occasions in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Common Warthog** *Phacochoerus africanus* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibius* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Impala (Common I)** *Aepyceros melampus* Small numbers seen near Lake Mburo NP.
- Harvey's [Johnston's] Duiker** *Cephalophus [harveyi] johnstoni* 1 for some in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
- Black-fronted Duiker** *Cephalophus nigrifrons* 4 seen at higher elevations in Bwindi Impenetrable NP
- Yellow-backed Duiker (W Y-b D)** *Cephalophus silvicultor* (H) Heard in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
- [Uganda] Topi** *Damaliscus [lunatus] ugandae* Seen in the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth NP.
- [Defassa] Waterbuck** *Kobus [ellipsiprymnus] defassa* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- [Uganda] Kob** *Kobus [kob] thomasi* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Buffalo (Lake Chad B) *Syncerus [caffer] brachyceros* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Bushbuck (Nile B) *Tragelaphus [scriptus] bor* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP and at Mubwindi Swamp.
Sitatunga (Lake Victoria S) *Tragelaphus spekii* A great sighting of 1 at Mabamba Swamp.
Yellow-winged Bat *Lavia frons* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus wahlbergi* Seen at Mabamba Swamp and at night in Entebbe.
Hammer Bat *Hypsignathus monstrosus* (H, LO) Heard at night at Kibale.

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* A mixed flock of large gulls was seen during the Kazinga Channel boat trip on 23rd July. The identity of these gulls has not been completely ascertained as the features do not happily fall within one species. The majority appear to be 'Baltic' Gull *Larus f. fuscus* but two were larger and paler and it seems that experts cannot agree upon a certain identity. The evidence seems to support 'Steppe' Gull *Larus fuscus barabensis* but some authorities feel that the features better fit 'Eastern' Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* or an intergrade between the two.



The 'mystery' gulls on the Kazinga Channel. (Nik Borrow)

African Yellow White-eye (Green W-e) *Zosterops senegalensis*

"A taxonomic review of the genus *Zosterops* in East Africa, with a revised list of species occurring in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania" has been recently published in *Scopus* 37 (1), January 2017. It suggests that the form *stuhlmanni* that we encountered should be treated as a separate species; Green White-eye *Zosterops stuhlmanni*. It remains to be seen if IOC will adopt this taxonomy.

African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*

It has been suggested that there are two species of African Elephant however a paper in *Molecular Ecology* (2015) 24, 6134-6147 by Samrat Mondol *et al.* suggests that the border of DRC and Uganda forms a major hybrid zone between African Savanna Elephant *Loxodonta [a.] africana* and Forest Elephant *Loxodonta [a.] cyclotis* this is somewhat surprising as the park is just outside the current known range of forest elephants but may be explained by 'savanna' elephants moving into the forests for food and 'forest' elephants fleeing the effects of poaching into the park from DRC or simply moving into the savannas for food.



Footnote (Nik Borrow)