



*Our cover star is the Green-breasted Pitta which allowed some sensational views this year! (Nik Borrow)*

# SHOEBILLS & GORILLAS OF UGANDA

23 JULY – 3 AUGUST 2022

**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 'Mountain' 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 able to watch an adult standing guard

over a recently hatched chick! We also managed to find the often-elusive Weyns's Weaver and at least one 'wintering' Blue Swallow nearby.



*It was a real treat to see an adult Shoebill standing watch over its recently hatched chick at Mabamba Swamp. (Nik Borrow)*

On day two, a Bat Hawk, brightly coloured Papyrus Gonoleks and a skulking White-winged Swamp Warbler all featured en route to Kibale National Park where, after a lengthy search we enjoyed a close encounter with Chimpanzees and (far more easily) obtained marvellous views of both adult and juvenile Green-breasted Pittas which we were privileged to be able to follow through the forest as they foraged just metres ahead of us. The forest also held secretive Scaly-breasted Illadopsis whilst the Bigodi Wetland walk produced great views of White-spotted Flufftail. Our stay in Queen Elizabeth National Park was most enjoyable although it was very dry and even burned in places. Highlights included African Crake and glorious Red-throated Bee-eaters whilst the fantastic boat trip along the Kazinga Channel produced a large flock of African Skimmers and tremendous looks at Giant Forest Hogs. 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 the speedy little Neumann's Warbler and the decidedly rare Grauer's (or African Green) Broadbill. These steep hills and beautiful forests also held a whole host of Albertine Rift endemic specialties that included Regal and Purple-breasted Sunbirds as well as Handsome Spurfowl, Rwenzori Batis, Lagden's Bushshrike, Stripe-breasted Tit, Grauer's Warbler, Grauer's Swamp Warbler, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Rwenzori Apalis, Mountain Masked Apalis, Red-throated Alethe, Archer's Ground Robin, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Albertine and Willard's Sooty Boubous, Blue-headed Sunbird and Strange Weaver. We finished our African adventure with a bonus Red-faced Barbet and a splendid flock of Brown-chested Lapwings near Lake Mburo. Amongst the many other mouth-watering specialties that we encountered were Montane (Rwenzori) Nightjar, Black-billed Turaco, Red-chested Flufftail, Grey-throated (Grey-headed) Barbet, Yellow-spotted Barbet, Hairy-breasted (Streaky-throated) Barbet, 'Eastern' Yellow-billed Barbet, Speckle-breasted and Elliot's Woodpeckers, Doherty's Bushshrike (heard only), Pink-footed Puffback, Montane Oriole, Joyful Greenbul (heard only), Olive-breasted and White-throated

Greenbuls (heard only), White-browed Crombec, Highland Rush Warbler, Trilling, Chubb's and Carruthers's Cisticolas, Black-faced Prinia, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Rwenzori Hill Babbler, Green White-eye, Mountain Illadopsis, Black-lored Babbler, Slender-billed and Stuhlmann's Starlings, Chapin's Flycatcher, White-bellied, Grey-winged and Blue-shouldered Robin-Chats, Equatorial Akalat, Grey-headed Sunbird, Red-chested Sunbird, Golden-backed Weaver, Kandt's Waxbill, Red-headed Bluebill and Western Citril.



*Long-toed Lapwings were easily seen during our boat trip at Mabamba Swamp. (Nik Borrow)*

Our action-packed journey around Uganda began in Entebbe and at 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 90 minutes journey along dusty dirt roads to the landing stage produced a few birds and most notably a super Black Sparrowhawk that sat and posed for us. On arrival we soon found ourselves on the water in two small, motorised wooden pirogues. Our success with the Shoebill was rapid this year as we were taken straight to a nest that had only been recently discovered before our visit. On our arrival one of the adult birds returned but stood a little distance away from the nest which contained the youngster that was clearly bothered by the heat of the rising sun as it shuffled to a cooler part of the platform surrounded by papyrus. We watched these prehistoric looking creatures for as long as we wished and having had our fill of the Shoebill we went in search of other species.

As we wended our way around the creeks of the extensive swamps surrounding Lake Victoria, our boats gliding through the extensive lily pads, we flushed jewel-like Malachite Kingfishers that darted from the reeds whilst chequered Pied Kingfishers hovered overhead. The handsome Long-toed Lapwings with chicks were much in evidence, Blue-headed Coucals perched atop the dense swampland vegetation along with numbers of Blue-breasted Bee-eaters and there were also vociferous African Fish Eagles, numerous Yellow-billed Ducks, small numbers of Grey-headed Gulls, African Jacanas, Black Crakes, and an African Swamphen. No less than four Rufous-bellied Herons were put up, African Hobby was seen overhead, an African Marsh Harrier sailed past and we also noted White-faced Whistling Duck, Egyptian Goose, Spur-winged Lapwing, African Openbill, Marabou Stork, Reed Cormorant, Hadada Ibis, Striated Squacco, Grey and Purple Herons, Western

Cattle, Great, Intermediate and Little Egrets, Hamerkop, Winding and Carruthers's Cisticolas, Swamp Flycatcher, Red-chested Sunbird and Slender-billed and Northern Brown-throated Weavers.



*No less than four Rufous-bellied Herons were seen during the Mabamba boat trip (left) and Marsh Tchagra (right) showed well at the edge of the swamp. (Nik Borrow)*

Back on land we watched an obliging Marsh Tchagra and a Grey-capped Warbler and then went in search of the somewhat nomadic Weyns's Weaver. We were lucky enough to track down a male in breeding plumage as there seemed to be very few around at this time. A handsome male Golden-backed Weaver was also seen and careful study of the masses of Barn, Angolan and Lesser Striped Swallows also produced White-headed Saw-wing, Red-breasted and Grey-rumped Swallows and ultimately a 'wintering' Blue Swallow. A breeding plumage male Marsh Widowbird was found and we enjoyed great views of Uganda's National Bird the spectacular Grey Crowned Crane. Other species seen during this very busy first day included African Palm, Little and White-rumped Swifts, Eastern Plantain-eater, Ross's Turaco, Blue Malkoha, Red-eyed Dove, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, African Green Pigeon, Black-headed Heron, Black-winged Kite, Palm-nut Vulture, Long-crested and Wahlberg's Eagles, Lizard Buzzard, Shikra, Yellow-billed Kite, Speckled Mousebird, Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill, Broad-billed Roller, Striped Kingfisher, Woodland Kingfisher, White-throated and Olive Bee-eaters, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Red-headed Lovebird, Black-headed Gonolek, Pied Crow, Dark-capped Bulbul, Tawny-flanked and White-chinned Prinias, Grey-capped Warbler, Green White-eye, Splendid Starling, African Thrush, Brown-backed Scrub Robin, Northern Black Flycatcher, White-browed Robin-Chat, Sooty Chat, Collared Sunbird, Scarlet-chested and Copper Sunbirds, Northern Grey-headed and House Sparrows, Thick-billed, Spectacled, Village and Vieillot's Black Weavers, Bronze Mannikin, Grey-headed Nigrita, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Red-billed Firefinch, Village Indigobird, African Pied Wagtail, Yellow-throated Longclaw and Plain-backed Pipit.

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 first Hooded Vultures of the trip were seen. We were headed to Kibale National Park and the long journey was brightened considerably by a stop that produced a marvellous Bat Hawk as well as marvellously top-knotted Great Blue Turacos, Afep Pigeon and a most obliging Uganda Grey-cheeked Mangabey. At a convenient roadside swamp, a simply stunning pair of colourful Papyrus Gonoleks put on a magnificent show and a skulking White-winged Swamp Warbler was coaxed into view. True to its nature the latter species did not flaunt itself but we were still pleased to tuck this one under our belts!

The journey took us further and further west and other roadside birds included White-browed Coucal, Speckled Pigeon, Laughing Dove, African Harrier Hawk, Hooded Vulture, Brown Snake Eagle, African Goshawk, Green Wood Hoopoe, Crowned Hornbill, Grey Kestrel, Meyer's Parrot, Grey-backed and Northern Fiscals, Mosque Swallow, Rüppell's Starling and Black-headed Weaver.



*Fantastic views of Papyrus Gonolek were obtained en route to Kibale. (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 somewhat quiet birdwise and the paved road led to traffic thundering by somewhat too close for comfort at times but nonetheless we still managed to see some interesting species. Our main target was the Lowland Masked Apalis which was heard easily but not everyone managed views. We had our first looks at some crazy looking Grey-throated (sometimes split as Grey-headed) Barbets with their 'rhinoceros' nasal-tufts and at a river crossing we found the unassuming Cassin's Flycatcher and Mountain Wagtail whilst one lucky person got a brief view of an African Finfoot. Other species seen during our short time here included African Emerald Cuckoo, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, Blue-throated Roller, 'Streaky-throated' Hairy-breasted Barbet, Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher, Yellow-whiskered Greenbul, Lowland Masked Apalis, Purple-headed Starling, Grey-chinned and Green-headed Sunbirds and Black-necked Weaver. The remaining drive to our lodge took us via Fort Portal where a small swamp gave us Highland Rush Warbler, Chubb's Cisticola, Black Bishop, Black-crowned Waxbill and Western Citril and we still managed to arrive at our comfortable lodge 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. We began our day in the darkness watching three African Wood Owls and then our guide, Justice led us through the grey dawn into the sleeping forest that was just beginning to stir. We weren't expecting the pittas to call because the known pair had only just raised two fledged youngsters so instead, we headed for their favourite feeding area. Our success was pretty immediate and we were treated to prolonged and close views of an adult and one of the juveniles, the luminous colours glowing in the dim forest light. Words cannot express our emotions but the whole experience was simply wonderful!

Eventually we lost the pittas and managed to tease out a secretive Scaly-breasted Illadopsis from its hiding place before turning 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 of the eastern race *schweinfurthii*, although with time available it is highly unlikely that one could miss these great apes on a day visit to the forest. The creatures were found easily because they were feeding right by where we had parked the car in order to walk for the pitta but they were feeding high in the trees throughout our time with them so the views were never that close but we saw them well enough.



*Just one of the Chimpanzees seen during our morning walk in Kibale National Park. (Marc Junio)*

A well-earned break at lunch back at the lodge also proved to be worthwhile with good looks at a Speckle-breasted Woodpecker as well as Double-toothed Barbet, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Rock Martin, African Dusky Flycatcher, Blue-throated Brown, Olive, Green-throated, Olive-bellied and Variable Sunbirds, Pin-tailed Whydah and Brimstone Canary. We returned to the forest in the afternoon and worked the main road so that by the end of the day we had also added the following species to our lists; Sabine's Spinetail, Tambourine Dove, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Bocage's Bushshrike, Western Oriole, Velvet-mantled Drongo, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Dusky Tit, Slender-billed, Honeyguide and Little Greenbuls, Green Crombec, Narrow-tailed Starling, Ashy and Sooty Flycatchers, Red-headed Malimbe and White-breasted Nigrita.

Early the next morning we embarked 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. We started off well with views of a Shining-blue Kingfisher before starting the walk. The highlight of the morning had to be the super little White-spotted Flufftail that walked around in front of us but we also enjoyed good views of Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat, Purple-banded Sunbird and Red-headed Bluebill as well as adding species that included Klaas's Cuckoo, Woolly-necked Stork, Little Sparrowhawk, African Pygmy Kingfisher, (Eastern) Yellow-billed Barbet, Cardinal Woodpecker, Brown Illadopsis, White-tailed Ant Thrush, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Compact Weaver, Black-and-white Mannikin and Common Waxbill.



*Both Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat (left, Nik Borrow) and Purple-banded Sunbird (right, Marc Junio) showed well at Bigodi.*

After a good lunch at our lodge, we set off for Queen Elizabeth National Park and a completely new set of birds. We arrived at the park entrance where we scanned the hillsides and lake at Queens Pavilion and spotted our only African Spoonbills of the tour as well as our first Great White Pelicans, Hippos and a selection of big game. Despite the clouds of dust caused by driving into the park along the dirt roads, Red-necked Spurfowl were easily seen by the roadsides and on a rather sulphurous crater lake there was a small group of Lesser Flamingo. Other species noted included Helmeted Guineafowl, Ring-necked Dove, Water Thick-knee, Senegal and African Wattled Lapwings, Bateleur, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Little Bee-eater, Spot-flanked Barbet, Fork-tailed Drongo, Banded Martin, Wire-tailed Swallow, Red-faced and Croaking Cisticolas, Arrow-marked Babbler, Fawn-breasted Waxbill and Green-winged Pytilia. We ended the day with two sleepy young male Lions before arriving at the sumptuous Mweya Lodge for two nights stay.



*We found two sleepy male Lions in QENP but this one seems to have had a tough time recently! (Nik Borrow)*

Our time spent in Queen Elizabeth National Park is always considered to be yet another of the great highlights of this action-packed tour and after an early breakfast we set out to explore the park. Along the main road the desiccated grasslands were badly burned out in many places but in some protected areas in the cool of the

morning we managed to get brief looks at African Crake and spotted small numbers of Black Coucal (mainly in non-breeding plumage) as well as Moustached Grass Warbler and Fan-tailed Grassbird.



*Black Coucal in non-breeding plumage (left) and a Crowned Lapwing (right) (Nik Borrow)*

Scattered out over the close-cropped Kasenyi Plains were Crowned Lapwing, Black-bellied Bustard, Rufous-naped and Flappet Larks, plenty of Zitting Cisticolas and African Pipit. 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! This tour we also had amazing repeated encounters with the often-elusive Giant Forest Hog some of which were astonishingly close!

The park landscape is dotted with thickets and punctuated by Candelabra Euphorbias and in this bushy territory we also found Mourning Collared Dove, Blue-naped Mousebird, African Hoopoe, Black-crowned Tchagra, African Paradise Flycatcher, Black-lored Babbler and White-winged Widowbird. The open country was also perfect for spotting raptors and we notched up Hooded and White-backed Vultures, and Wahlberg's and Martial Eagles,





*The African Skimmer experience on the Kazinga Channel was as magical as ever! (Marc Junio)*

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 and during the 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. The star attraction had to be the flock of about 85 African Skimmers that our boat glided right up to for some close-up views and having had our fill we cruised along the banks where there were huge numbers of Hippopotamus and 'Lake Chad' Buffalo, a few Nile Crocodiles and some thirsty African Elephants.



*The numbers of Pied Kingfishers along the Kazinga Channel are simply astonishing. (Nik Borrow)*

As usual there were amazing numbers of Pied Kingfishers catching and carrying fish everywhere. A large congregation of White-breasted Cormorants was gathered and also dotted along the shore were numbers of Egyptian Goose, Great White and Pink-backed Pelicans, Yellow-billed and Marabou Storks as well as a few Reed Cormorant, African Sacred Ibis, African Spoonbill, Squacco, Goliath and Grey Herons, Great and Little

Egrets, Hamerkop, Black Crake, Gull-billed Tern and a smattering of waders included Black-winged Stilt, Kittlitz's and Three-banded Plovers and Common Sandpiper. A trio of Red-throated Bee-eaters added a brilliant splash of colour and Brown-throated Martins darted across the waters where African Fish Eagles stood sentinel. Back at the lodge as dusk fell, a female Pennant-winged Nightjar flew right past us thus ending a totally superb day.



*Giant Forest Hogs put on an incredible performance this trip with repeated sightings. (Nik Borrow)*

The next day we bade farewell to Mweya Lodge and drove out taking in some Crested Francolin, Wattled Starlings and White-browed Scrub Robin along the way as 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 fierce little Pearl-spotted Owlets that attracted a gathering of unhappy species such as Common Scimitarbill, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Western Black-headed Batis, Tropical Boubou, Black and Red-shouldered Cuckooshrikes, Northern Crombec, Trilling Cisticola, Buff-bellied Warbler and Yellow-breasted Apalis. A Crested Barbet was a good find and a pair of Black Bee-eater in Maramagambo Forest were much admired.

We also hunted out Stout Cisticola in the grasslands before reaching the Ishasha sector of the park where some striking White-headed Barbets were seen at the gate and a number of Uganda Topi were spotted on the open plains. Other species seen included Rüppell's Vulture, Western Banded Snake Eagle, Greater Honeyguide, Violet-backed Starling, Holub's Golden and Lesser Masked Weavers and Fan-tailed Widowbird.

It was then time to close the roof of the landcruiser and head on to our next destination pausing for a while to search out a splendid Red-throated Wryneck; a species that is increasingly harder to find on this tour as its scrubby habitat disappears to cultivation. We arrived in the ever-growing village of Buhoma, situated at the edge of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park 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.



*Bar-tailed Trogon (left) and the Albertine Rift endemic Red-throated Alethe (right) were just two of the specials seen in the Buhoma area during our stay. (Nik Borrow)*

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 Grey-headed and Blue-headed Sunbirds whilst the notoriously skulking Neumann's Warbler was seen by all and the recently described Willard's Sooty Boubou was teased out of the tangles and its distinctive pale blue-grey iris was noted.



*At Buhoma we all enjoyed views of the diminutive Neumann's Warbler (left, Nik Borrow) and obtained some excellent views of the recently described Albertine Rift endemic Willard's Sooty Boubou and even noted its blue iris! (right, Marc Junio)*

Furtive Equatorial Akalats flitted in the undergrowth, Black-billed Turacos posed well as did the uncommon Chapin's Flycatcher. A fine male African Broadbill twirled and displayed upon his perch and during our walk we also managed views of Bar-tailed Trogon and the pretty White-bellied Robin-Chat. A fine supporting cast of other species included Ansorge's Greenbul, a species first discovered in the country during BirdQuest's 2001 Uganda tour as well as Dusky Long-tailed and Red-chested Cuckoos, Western Bronze-naped Pigeon, Least Honeyguide, Buff-spotted and Elliot's Woodpeckers, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Pink-footed Puffback, Lühder's Bushshrike, African Shrike-flycatcher, Grey Cuckooshrike, Mountain Oriole, Red-tailed Bristlebill, Red-tailed and Yellow-streaked Greenbuls, Black Saw-wing, Black-throated, Buff-throated and Grey Apalises,

Olive-green Camaroptera, Black-faced Rufous Warbler, Waller's and Stuhlmann's Starlings, Fraser's Rufous Thrush, Grey-throated Tit-flycatcher, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Grey-winged Robin-Chat, Little Green and Northern Double-collared Sunbirds and Brown-capped Weaver.

We had already seen a fine selection of primates that included Red-tailed, L'Hoest's and Blue Monkeys, Vervet, Guereza, Uganda Grey-cheeked Mangabey, Olive Baboon, Uganda 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 everyone had opted to go in search of our close cousins.



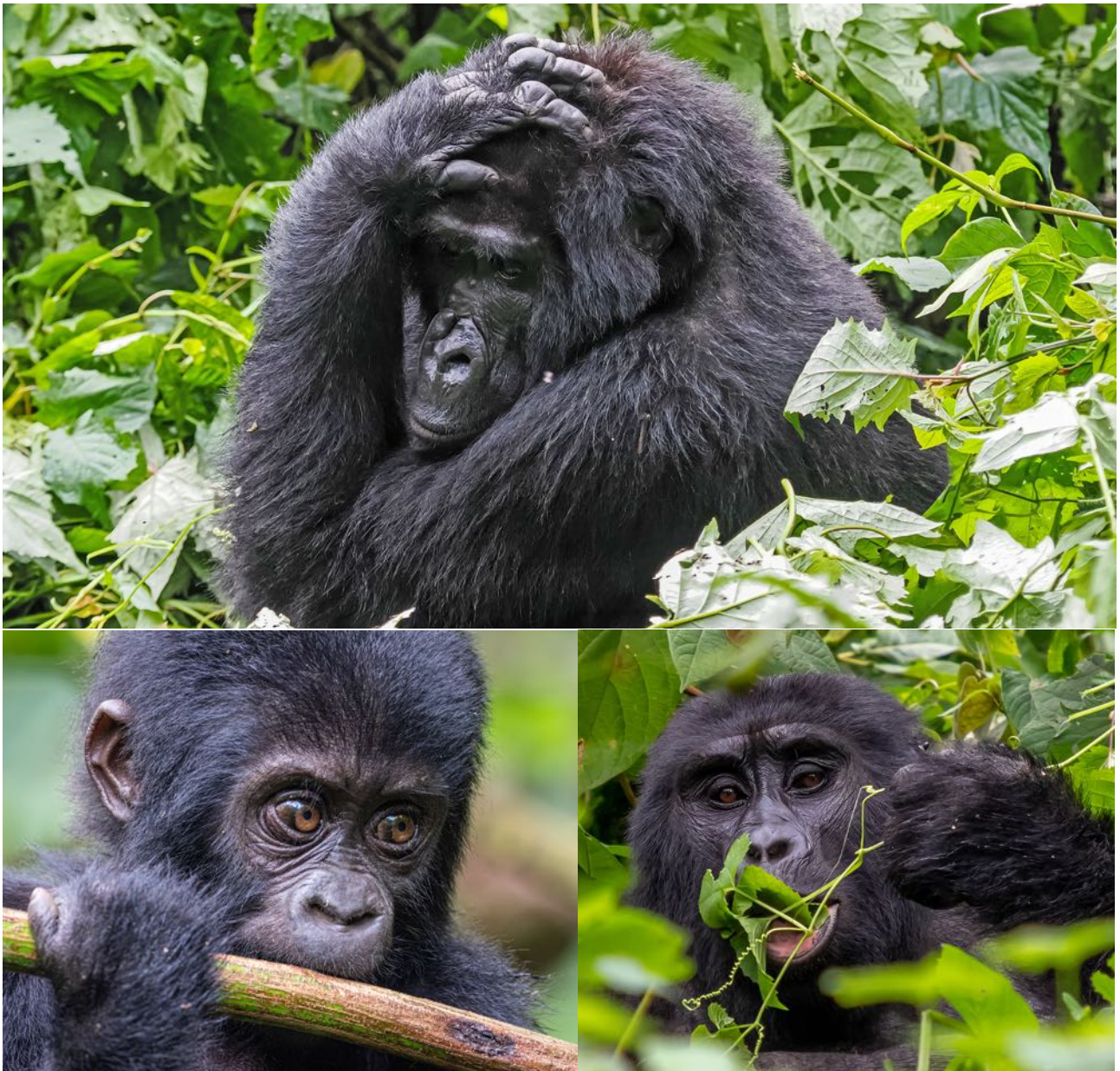
*A close and intimate encounter with a silverback on the steep hillsides of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. (Marc Junio)*

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 groups 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 and this year it seemed that our group was some way away and it turned out to be a lengthy hike down and up, then down and up again over tangled roots and knotted vegetation before we found them. 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 (briars and 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 and passing wind loudly!

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.



*Eating is a serious business for the family groups of Eastern Gorillas of Bwindi. (top and left Marc Junio, right Mike Hardman)*

After our two full days in the Buhoma area of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, it was time to relocate to the higher section of the park at Ruhija. We saw a Red-capped Robin-Chat at Buhoma before departing and then embarked on our next short journey which took us from the lower part of the forest and through the cultivated valleys where we successfully teased out a Red-chested Flufftail into view and also saw Augur Buzzard, Mackinnon's Shrike, African Stonechat, Yellow-mantled Widowbird 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 and in particular a pair of African Black Duck, Petit's Cuckooshrike and Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat. Ruhija was to be our base for the next two nights and the wooded hillsides here provided suitable habitat that allowed us to add to our growing collection of forest species and Albertine Rift endemics and some late afternoon birding provided us with a superb, prolonged look at Albertine endemic Grauer's Warbler, Mountain

Masked Apalis, Regal Sunbird and a confiding Handsome Spurfowl as well as African Olive Pigeon, Western Tinkerbird, Fine-banded Woodpecker, Northern Puffback and White-necked Raven.



*African Olive Pigeon (left) and Handsome Spurfowl (right) both allowed incredible views at Ruhija. (Nik Borrow)*

We stayed out until dusk fell and promptly on cue a Montane (sometimes split as Rwenzori) Nightjar showed briefly but there was a wet mist in the air and it did not reappear as the rain started to fall.



*Albertine Rift endemics at Ruhija; Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher (left) and the glorious Regal Sunbird (right). (Nik Borrow)*

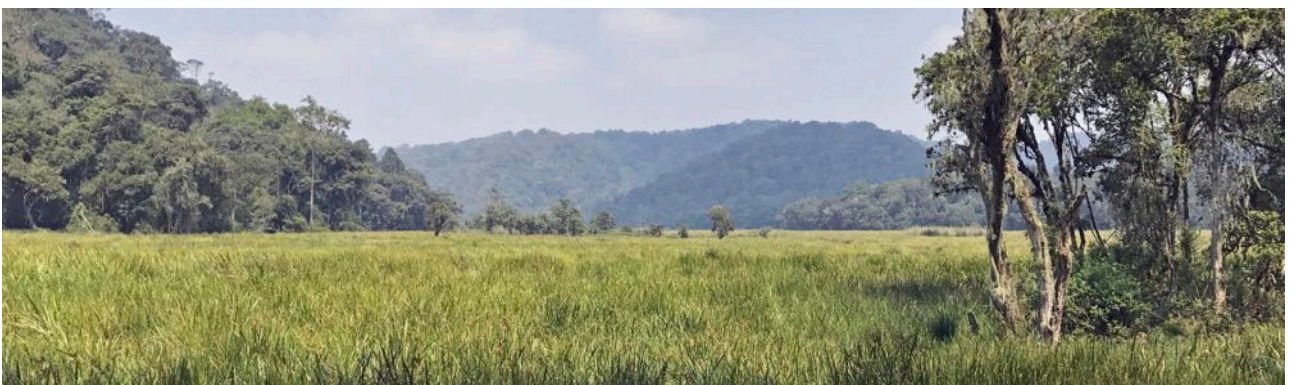
For at least some of the group, perhaps the main reason for coming to Ruhija was to trek up and down and then down, down and down to the Mubwindi Swamp where some major targets occur. It was however a wet night and it was still raining when we got up early in the morning. Although two people opted out for easier birding along the road that runs through the higher parts of the park with our driver guide Hilary, the rest of us followed the original itinerary and began our walk, well-dressed in waterproof clothing as the rain continued to fall. We followed a well-trodden trail which due to the excessive rain and elephant damage was slippery and pot-holed but despite these adverse conditions we still managed to see Mountain Illadopsis and the Albertine endemic Rwenzori Batis, Rwenzori Apalis, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Strange Weaver and pretty Archer's Ground Robin.

Sadly, it was still raining when we reached the floor of the valley and the area where we knew that a pair of Grauer's Broadbill had recently fledged young. There was little left to do but rest in the sodden vegetation and wait and hope that the rain would stop and just before lunch time this is what it appeared to do. With lighter rainfall we decided to head to the swamp itself and try to walk the short distance to Mubwindi Swamp to try our luck with the Grauer's Swamp Warbler. As we neared the swamp a bird party contained the rare Lagden's Bushshrike and we enjoyed good looks at this seldom seen species. Upon arrival by the side of the extensive swamp the warblers were very active with a number of individuals sat up in the rushes and we watched them performing their short display flights as the rain finally stopped. We now felt that our luck might be turning so we ate our lunch and returned to the area favoured by the broadbill while our talented guides Amos and Gordon went in search of the birds. Incredibly it wasn't too long before a hoot of success reached our ears and it then meant a crazy uphill scramble through highly saturated vegetation in a quest to reach the spot before the bird moved on but amazingly, we all did it and to our delight and relief there was a broadbill still sat feeding in the trees ahead of us!



*A most memorable lifer! Grauer's (or African Green) Broadbill on a very wet day around Mubwindi Swamp! (Marc Junio)*

Needless to say, the mood was exuberant and to make things even better the rain had now stopped completely and the remainder of the afternoon was dry which allowed for continued birding.



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

Those that had opted to bird along the road also scored successfully with views of the gorgeous Albertine Rift endemic Purple-breasted Sunbird and other species seen during the day by the group included Albertine Rift endemic Albertine Sooty Boubou and Stripe-breasted Tit as well as Crowned Eagle, Mountain Buzzard, White-

bellied Crested Flycatcher, Olive-breasted Greenbul, White-browed Crombec, Cinnamon Bracken Warbler, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Rwenzori Hill Babbler, Slender-billed Starling, Abyssinian Thrush, Kandt's Waxbill and Thick-billed and Streaky Seedeaters.

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 another Montane Nightjar as we left Ruhija. A brief stop at a convenient pool gave us a pair of White-backed Duck before the journey took us past Mbuoro National Park an area that comprises of 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 which in turn supported a few new species of birds for us. We had just enough time to enable us to squeeze some more goodies in the form of a pair of restricted range Red-faced Barbets with a Black-collared Barbet in tow near Lake Mbuoro and we ended up munching our lunchtime sandwiches amongst Impala and Plains Zebra with a flock of highly desirable Brown-chested Lapwings. Also spotted during our lunch break were Wood Sandpiper, Lappet-faced Vulture, African Grey Hornbill, African Grey Woodpecker, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Red-headed Weaver, Red-billed Quelea and Yellow-fronted Canary. The final new bird of the trip was Lilac-breasted Roller on the telegraph wires as we left Mbuoro.



*A pair of restricted range Red-faced Barbets near Lake Mbuoro was a surprise addition to the bird list. (Nik Borrow)*

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 Hilary, our hardworking driver guide who really made our tour a holiday to remember.





*This pair of Black Bee-eaters in Maramagambo Forest was a joy to behold! (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).

### BIRDS

**Total of bird species recorded: 419**

**White-faced Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata* Small numbers at Mabamba Swamp.

**White-backed Duck** *Thalassornis leuconotus* 1 was seen near Mburo on the journey back to Entebbe.

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

**African Black Duck** *Anas sparsa* 1 pair and a singleton were seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

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

**Handsome Spurfowl** *Pternistis nobilis* Fantastic views of 1 at Ruhija.

**Scaly Francolin** *Pternistis squamatus* Heard at Mabamba Swamp by all and seen by Phil.

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

**Montane [Rwenzori] Nightjar** *Caprimulgus [poliocephalus] ruwenzorii* 2 males seen briefly at Ruhija.

**Pennant-winged Nightjar** *Caprimulgus vexillarius* 1 female seen at dusk in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Sabine's Spinetail** *Rhaphidura sabini* 5 seen flying over Kibale NP.

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

**Common Swift** *Apus apus* (NL) 5 over-summering or early returning Palearctic migrants in 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* Most numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.

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



Great Blue Turacos are surprisingly easy to see in Uganda! (Marc Junio)

- Bare-faced Go-away-bird (Black-f G-a-b) *Crinifer [personatus] leopoldi* (NL)** 1 seen near Lake Mburo.
- Eastern Plantain-eater (E Grey P-e) *Crinifer zonurus*** Widespread sightings of this noisy bird.
- Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae*** Best views were near 'The Neck'.
- Black-billed Turaco *Tauraco schuettii*** Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.
- Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster*** 2 sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus*** 1 at Mabamba Swamp and also in a swamp near 'The Neck'.
- White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus*** Particularly numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*** At least 8 seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Blue Malkoha (B Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares aereus*** Seen at Mabamba Swamp and Bigodi.
- Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*** Seen well at Bigodi Swamp.
- African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus*** 1 female seen in Kibale Forest.
- Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx mechowi*** 1 seen in Bwindi NP and heard in Kibale NP.
- Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius*** Only 1 sighting for some but heard by all.
- 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*** A few seen in Kibale Forest.
- African Olive Pigeon *Columba arquatrix*** Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.
- Western Bronze-naped Pigeon *Columba iriditorques*** 1 seen 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.
- Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer*** The common wood dove of moister country and regularly encountered.
- Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistris*** Commonly encountered in the forested areas but often just in flight.
- African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*** Widespread sightings at the beginning of the tour.
- African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis* (NL)** Phil saw one briefly in Kibale NP.
- White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra*** Great views of a male at Bigodi Swamp.
- Red-chested Flufftail *Sarothrura rufa*** 2 were coaxed into view near 'the Neck'.
- African Crake *Crex egregia*** Brief views of 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- African Swamphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis*** 1 seen well at Mabamba Swamp.
- Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra*** Easily seen at Mabamba Swamp and along the Kazinga Channel.



*African Swamphen takes flight in Mabamba Swamp. (Marc Junio)*

- Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum*** Widespread sightings and good numbers near Kabale.
- Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*** 5 on a crater lake en route to Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor*** About 20 on the crater lake in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus*** Just 3 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*** 6 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Long-toed Lapwing *Vanellus crassirostris*** Most numerous at Mabamba Swamp.
- Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*** 1 at Mabamba Swamp and easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Senegal Lapwing (S Plover) *Vanellus lugubris*** Good numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP and 1 at Mburo.
- Crowned Lapwing (C Plover) *Vanellus coronatus*** Good numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

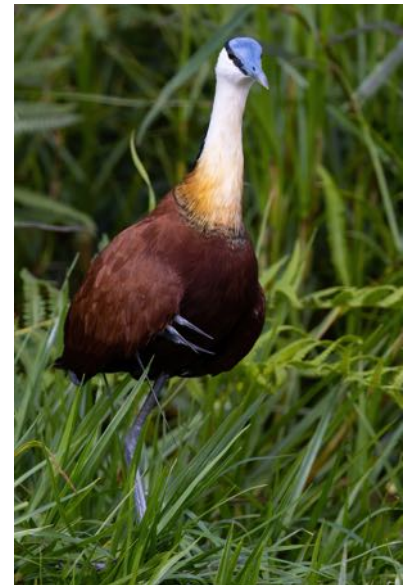


*Crowned Lapwing (left) in Queen Elizabeth NP and a flock of about 10 Brown-chested Lapwings (right) near Mburo. (Nik Borrow)*

- African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus*** Easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Brown-chested Lapwing *Vanellus superciliosus*** A flock of about 10 near Lake Mburo NP.
- Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*** Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris* 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP and 1 near Mburo.

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



*Three-banded Plover (left) in Queen Elizabeth NP and African Jacana (right) at Mabamba Swamp. (Nik Borrow)*

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

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* 1 of these Palearctic migrants near Mburo.

**African Skimmer** *Rynchops flavirostris* 85+ on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Grey-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus* Seen well at Mabamba Swamp and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* 2 in non-breeding plumage on the Kazinga Channel.

**Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* Easily seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**African Openbill (A Open-billed Stork)** *Anastomus lamelligerus* Widespread sightings in appropriate habitat.

**(African) Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia [episcopus] microscelis* 3 at Bigodi Swamp and 2 near Buhoma.

**Marabou Stork** *Leptoptilos crumenifer* Common and widespread, Uganda's garbage disposal team!

**Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C)** *Microcarbo africanus* Numerous at Mabamba and Queen Elizabeth NP.

**White-breasted Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax lucidus* Many on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

**African Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and as we journeyed back to Entebbe.

**Hadada Ibis** *Bostrychia hagedash* A noisy, common and widespread bird.

**African Spoonbill** *Platalea alba* Just 3 distant birds in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Striated Heron** *Butorides striata* 3 sightings at Mabamba near Kampala and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Squacco Heron (Common S H)** *Ardeola ralloides* Easy to see at Mabamba and Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Rufous-bellied Heron** *Ardeola rufiventris* 4 at Mabamba Swamp.

**Western Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* Widespread and common in suitable habitat.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea* Small numbers at Mabamba Swamp and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Black-headed Heron** *Ardea melanocephala* Scattered sightings and a few breeding colonies.

**Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath* 1 seen well along the Kazinga Channel.

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* About 15 at Mabamba Swamp with more en route to Kibale.

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba* Scattered sightings in watery places.

**Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E)** *Ardea [intermedia] brachyrhyncha* First seen at Mabamba Swamp.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* This familiar species was observed at various wetlands throughout the country.

**Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta* Common and widespread in suitable habitat.

**Shoebill (Whale-headed Stork)** *Balaeniceps rex* An amazing sighting of an adult with a nestling at Mabamba Swamp!

**Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Large numbers seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Pink-backed Pelican** *Pelecanus rufescens* Small numbers in 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.



*Palm-nut Vulture in Queen Elizabeth National Park. (Nik Borrow)*

**Hooded Vulture** *Necrosyrtes monachus* Small numbers seen en route to Kibale and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus* 25+ seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and 2 at Mburo.

**Rüppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppelli* 1 in the Ishasha Sector of Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Lappet-faced Vulture** *Torgos tracheliotus* 1 seen at Mburo.

**Brown Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinereus* 1 en route to Kibale and 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Western Banded Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinerascens* Just 1 in the Ishasha Sector of Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Bat Hawk** *Macheiramphus alcinus* Excellent looks at 1 en route to Kibale.

**Crowned Eagle** *Stephanoaetus coronatus* Displaying birds over Mubwindi Swamp.

**Martial Eagle** *Polemaetus bellicosus* At least 2 adults and 1 juvenile in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Long-crested Eagle** *Lophaetus occipitalis* A regularly encountered roadside bird with an impressive hairdo!

**Wahlberg's Eagle** *Hieraetus wahlbergi* 5 widespread sightings during the tour.

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

**African Goshawk** *Accipiter tachiro* (LO) Nik saw 1 en route to Kibale and heard in Bwindi NP.

**Shikra** *Accipiter badius* 4 sightings from Entebbe to Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Little Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter minullus* 1 at Bigodi Swamp.

**Black Sparrowhawk (Great S)** *Accipiter melanoleucus* 1 near Mabamba and a juvenile at Ruhija.

**African Marsh Harrier** *Circus ranivorus* Just 1 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.

**Mountain Buzzard** *Buteo oreophilus* A pair at Mubwindi Swamp.

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

**Pearl-spotted Owllet** *Glaucidium perlatum* A pair seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Verreaux's Eagle-Owl** *Bubo lacteus* 1 seen by Nik at Kibale and another by all in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**African Wood Owl** *Strix woodfordii* 3 seen in Kibale NP and another at Ruhija.

**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* 2 seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**African Hoopoe** *Upupa africana* 2 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**White-headed Wood Hoopoe** *Phoeniculus bollei* Family groups seen well in Kibale and Bwindi Forests.  
**Green Wood Hoopoe** *Phoeniculus purpureus* A family group seen well en route to Kibale.  
**Common Scimitarbill** *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* 2 seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Crowned Hornbill** *Lophoceros alboterminatus* Widespread sightings in small numbers.  
**African Grey Hornbill** *Lophoceros nasutus* Just 2 near Mburo.  
**Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill** *Bycanistes subcylindricus* Pleasingly numerous during the tour.



*Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill (Marc Junio)*

**Lilac-breasted Roller** *Coracias caudatus* Just 3 were seen by the road between Mburo and Masaka.  
**Blue-throated Roller** *Eurystomus gularis* Nik saw 1 in Kibale Forest and another was seen in Bwindi.  
**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 and a surprise 1 in Bwindi.  
**Striped Kingfisher** *Halcyon chelicuti* Widespread roadside sightings from Entebbe to Kibale.  
**Blue-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon malimbica* 1 in Kibale Forest.  
**Woodland Kingfisher** *Halcyon senegalensis* Widespread sightings.  
**African Pygmy Kingfisher** *Ispidina picta* Sightings at Bigodi, Queen Elizabeth NP and Mburo.  
**Malachite Kingfisher** *Corythornis cristatus* Easily seen in appropriate habitat.  
**Shining-blue Kingfisher** *Alcedo quadribrachys* 1 at Bigodi Swamp.  
**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis* Astonishingly numerous at Mabamba and along the Kazinga Channel.  
**Black Bee-eater** *Merops gularis* Seen well in Maramagambo and Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.  
**Little Bee-eater** *Merops pusillus* Small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP and Mburo.  
**Blue-breasted Bee-eater** *Merops variegatus* Easily seen at Mabamba Swamp.  
**Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater** *Merops oreobates* Numerous sightings near Kibale and in the Bwindi area.  
**Red-throated Bee-eater** *Merops bulocki* 3 along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**White-throated Bee-eater** *Merops albicollis* Seen on the outskirts of Entebbe and en route to Kibale.  
**Olive Bee-eater (Madagascar B-e)** *Merops superciliosus* Seen at Mabamba Swamp and Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**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 at Ruhija.

**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* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**(Eastern) Yellow-spotted Barbet** *Buccanodon duchaillui* The 'snoring' song was heard more than the bird seen.

**Hairy-breasted Barbet (Streaky-throated B)** *Tricholaema [hirsuta] ansorgii* Seen in the lower altitude forests.

**Spot-flanked Barbet** *Tricholaema lacrymosa* Good views in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**White-headed Barbet** *Lybius leucocephalus* 4 seen in the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Red-faced Barbet** *Lybius rubrifacies* A pair was seen well at Mburo.

**Black-collared Barbet** *Lybius torquatus* 1 was seen well at Mburo.

**Double-toothed Barbet** *Lybius bidentatus* Seen in Kibale and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**(Eastern) Yellow-billed Barbet** *Trachyphonus [p.] purpuratus* Seen well by all at Bigodi Wetland.

**Crested Barbet** *Trachyphonus vaillantii* Good views of 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Willcocks's Honeyguide** *Indicator willcocksii* (NL) 1 seen by Mike and Toni at Ruhija.

**Least Honeyguide** *Indicator exilis* 1 seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**Thick-billed Honeyguide** *Indicator conirostris* (H) Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable forests.

**Lesser Honeyguide** *Indicator minor* (H) Heard only at Bigodi Swamp.

**Greater Honeyguide** *Indicator indicator* 1 male in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Red-throated Wryneck** *Jynx ruficollis* 1 was seen en route to Buhoma.



*Yellow-throated Tinkerbird (left) in Kibale NP and a beautiful Red-throated Wryneck (right) en route to Buhoma. (Nik Borrow)*

**Buff-spotted Woodpecker** *Campethera nivosa* 1 in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**Fine-banded Woodpecker** *Campethera taeniolaema* 1 in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**Speckle-breasted Woodpecker** *Dendropicos poecilolaemus* A male seen well at Kibale.

**Cardinal Woodpecker** *Dendropicos fuscescens* Singletons at Bigodi and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Elliot's Woodpecker** *Dendropicos elliotii* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**African Grey Woodpecker** *Dendropicos goertae* (LO) Seen by Nik at Mburo.  
**Olive Woodpecker** *Dendropicos griseocephalus* (H) Heard only at Ruhija.  
**Grey Kestrel** *Falco ardosiaceus* 7 widespread sightings in appropriate habitat.  
**African Hobby** *Falco cuvierii* 2 at Mabamba Swamp.  
**Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus* (NL) 1 roadside bird en route to Kibale.  
**Grey Parrot** *Psittacus erithacus* Great views in Kibale NP.  
**Meyer's Parrot (Brown P)** *Poicephalus meyeri* 6 seen en route to Kibale.  
**Red-headed Lovebird** *Agapornis pullarius* Fast flying birds over Mabamba.  
**Grauer's Broadbill (African Green B)** *Pseudocalyptomena graueri* 1 was seen well at Mubwindi Swamp.  
**African Broadbill** *Smithornis capensis* A splendid displaying male in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.  
**Green-breasted Pitta** *Pitta reichenowi* Fantastic views of an adult and a juvenile in Kibale NP.

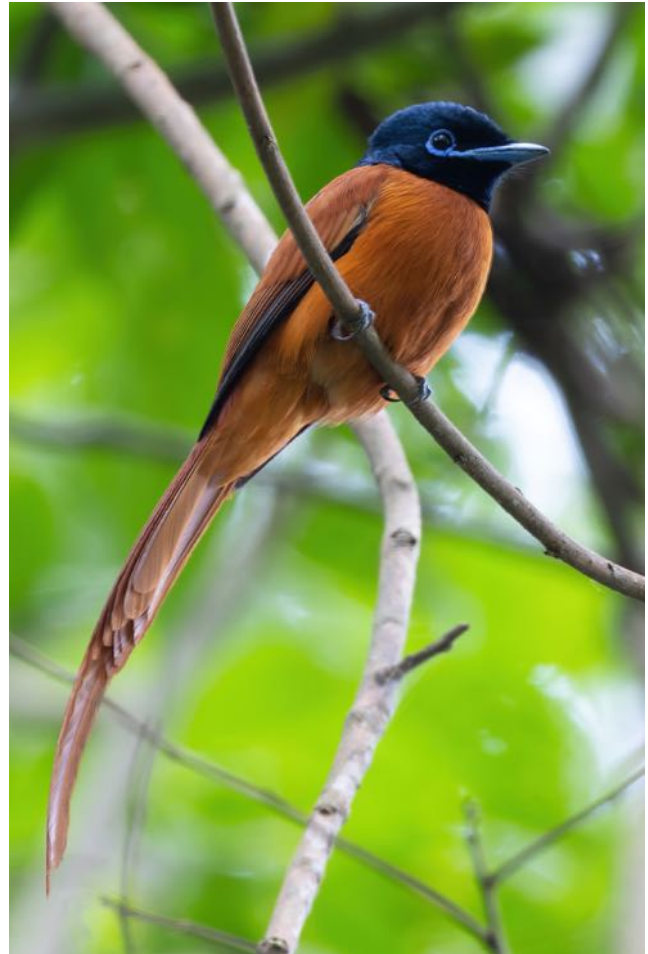


A flock of Grey Parrots (left) put on a colourful show in Kibale NP and a juvenile Green-breasted Pitta (right). (Nik Borrow)

**Rwenzori Batis** *Batis diops* This Albertine Rift endemic was seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.  
**Chinspot Batis** *Batis molitor* (H) Heard only in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.  
**Western Black-headed Batis** *Batis erlangeri* 1 male in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Chestnut Wattle-eye** *Platysteira castanea* A few seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Brown-throated Wattle-eye (Common W-e)** *Platysteira cyanea* Widespread encounters during the tour.  
**Lagden's Bushshrike** *Malaconotus lagdeni* An amazing sighting in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.  
**Many-coloured Bushshrike** *Chlorophoneus multicolor* (H) Heard in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Bocage's Bushshrike** *Chlorophoneus bocagei* Seen in Kibale NP and in Bwindi.  
**Doherty's Bushshrike** *Telophorus dohertyi* (H) This species is getting difficult to see now in the Ruhija area.  
**Marsh Tchagra (Blackcap T)** *Bocagia minuta* A male at Mabamba and a female in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Brown-crowned Tchagra (Brown-headed T)** *Tchagra australis* More often heard than seen.  
**Black-crowned Tchagra** *Tchagra senegalus* A few seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Pink-footed Puffback** *Dryoscopus angolensis* Small numbers seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Northern Puffback** *Dryoscopus gambensis* Small numbers seen in the Ruhija area.  
**Albertine Sooty Boubou** *Laniarius poensis* 1 seen 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 the Bwindi forests.  
**Tropical Boubou** *Laniarius major* 3 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Papyrus Gonolek** *Laniarius mufumbiri* Incredible views of this papyrus specialist again this year.  
**Black-headed Gonolek** *Laniarius erythrogaster* Especially numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**African Shrike-flycatcher** *Megabyas flammulatus* Seen in Kibale and Bwindi NPs.  
**Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher** *Bias musicus* Commonly encountered during the tour.  
**Grey Cuckooshrike** *Coracina caesia* Good views in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.



**Black Cuckooshrike** *Campephaga flava* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth and Bwindi NPs.  
**Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike** *Campephaga phoenicea* 1 male seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Petit's Cuckooshrike** *Campephaga petiti* 1 male seen well at 'The Neck'.  
**Mackinnon's Shrike** *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 2 seen in Kibale NP.  
**Mountain (Montane) Oriole**  $\diamond$  *Oriolus percivali* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Velvet-mantled Drongo** *Dicrurus modestus* 1 seen well in Kibale Forest.  
**Fork-tailed Drongo (Common D)** *Dicrurus adsimilis* Commonly encountered in the savannahs.  
**Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone rufiventer* Seen in Kibale Forest and Bigodi Wetland.



A female Mackinnon's Fiscal (left) near 'The Neck' and a Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher (right) at Bigodi Swamp. (Nik Borrow)

**African Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone viridis* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* Common and widespread.  
**White-necked Raven (W-naped R)** *Corvus albicollis* 1 at Bwindi and seen en route to Kabale.  
**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* 2 seen at Mubwindi Swamp.  
**Dusky Tit** *Melaniparus funereus* Seen in the Kibale and Bwindi Forests.  
**Stripe-breasted Tit** *Melaniparus fasciiventer* Just 2 of these Albertine Rift endemics at Ruhija.  
**Western Nicator** *Nicator chloris* Great views at Bigodi Wetland.  
**Rufous-naped Lark** *Mirafra africana* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Flappet Lark** *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Slender-billed Greenbul** *Stelgidillas gracilirostris* Easily seen in the forests.

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

**Yellow-throated Leaflove** *Atimastillas flavicollis* (H) The creamy-throated race *flavigula* was heard only.

**Joyful Greenbul** *Chlorocichla laetissima* (H) Heard only in Kibale NP.

**Honeyguide Greenbul** *Baeopogon indicator* Seen in Kibale and heard in Bwindi Forests.

**Olive-breasted Greenbul (O-b Mountain G)** *Arizelocichla kikuyuensis* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

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

**Little Greenbul** *Eurillas virens* Common but more often heard than seen in the forests.

**Yellow-whiskered Greenbul** *Eurillas latirostris* Common and easily seen in the forests.

**Plain Greenbul (Cameroon Sombre G)** *Eurillas curvirostris* Small numbers in the forests.

**Ansorge's Greenbul** *Eurillas ansorgei* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

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

**Cabanis's Greenbul** *Phyllastrephus cabanisi* (H) Heard only at Buhoma.

**Yellow-streaked Greenbul** *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus* Tail-pumping, wing-flicking birds seen well in Bwindi NP.

**Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor* Every day!

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

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

**Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta* At least 5 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Brown-throated Martin (Plain M)** *Riparia paludicola* At least 2 along the Kazinga Channel.

**Grey-rumped Swallow** *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* Just 1 at Mabamba Swamp.

**Rock Martin** *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* Seen at Kibale and Buhoma.

**Blue Swallow** *Hirundo atrocaerulea* 1 of these intra-African migrants seen at Mabamba.

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

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Some of these Palearctic migrants at Mabamba, and Queen Elizabeth NP.

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



Blue Swallow (left, Marc Junio) at Mabamba and Angolan Swallow (right) at Buhoma (Nik Borrow)

**Red-breasted Swallow** *Cecropis semirufa* Singletons at Mabamba and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Mosque Swallow** *Cecropis senegalensis* 2 en route to Kibale.

**Lesser Striped Swallow** *Cecropis abyssinica* Widespread sightings.

**Moustached Grass Warbler (African M W)** *Melocichla mentalis* 2 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Northern Crombec** *Sylvietta brachyura* 1 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Green Crombec** *Sylvietta virens* Seen at Kibale, Bigodi and in Queen Elizabeth NP.

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

**Neumann's Warbler (Short-tailed W)** *Urosphena neumanni* 1 seen by all in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**Green Hylia** *Hylia prasina* (H) Often heard in the lower altitude forests.

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

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

**Greater Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus rufescens* (H) Heard at Mabamba Swamp.

**Fan-tailed Grassbird** *Catriscus brevirostris* 2 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Cinnamon Bracken Warbler** *Bradypterus cinnamomeus* (NL) Seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.

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

**Grauer's Swamp Warbler** *Bradypterus graueri* Good views of several in Mubwindi Swamp.

**Highland Rush Warbler** *Bradypterus centralis* 1 at Fort Portal.

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

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

**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 also in Mubwindi Swamp.

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

**Croaking Cisticola** *Cisticola natalensis* Seen well 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 Mabamba Swamp.

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

**Buff-bellied Warbler** *Phyllolais pulchella* 1 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Yellow-breasted Apalis (Black-breasted A)** *Apalis flavida* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP and heard elsewhere.

**Lowland Masked Apalis (M A)** *Apalis binotata* Seen by some in Kibale Forest.

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

**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.



Yellow-breasted Apalis (left) in Queen Elizabeth NP and Grey-capped Warbler (right) at Mabamba Swamp. (Nik Borrow)

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

**Olive-green Camaroptera** *Camaroptera chloronota* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

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

**Rwenzori Hill Babbler** *Sylvia atriceps* Just 1 was seen at Ruhija.

**Green White-eye** *Zosterops stuhlmanni* Widespread.

**Brown Illadopsis** *Illadopsis fulvescens* Seen at Bigodi Wetland and heard elsewhere.

**Mountain Illadopsis** *Illadopsis pyrrhoptera* Seen at Ruhija.

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

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

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

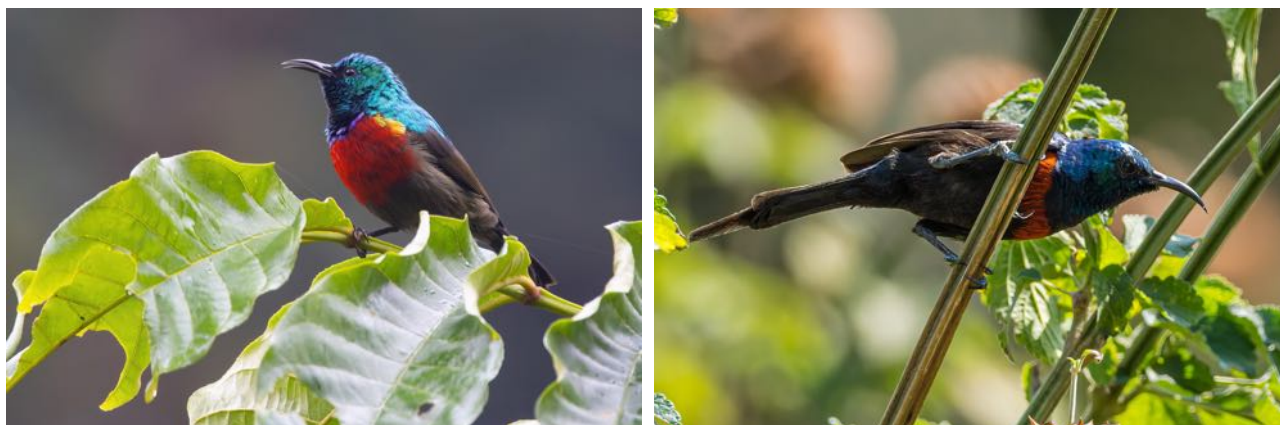
**Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea* Just small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Purple-headed Starling** *Lamprotornis purpureiceps* Small numbers in Kibale NP.  
**Greater Blue-eared Starling (B-e S)** *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* 1 was seen near Mburo.  
**Splendid Starling** *Lamprotornis splendidus* Seen from Entebbe to Kibale.  
**Rüppell's Starling (R's Long-tailed S)** *Lamprotornis purpuropterus* Very common and widespread.  
**Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Just a pair in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Slender-billed Starling** *Onychognathus tenuirostris* (NL) Seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.  
**Waller's Starling** *Onychognathus walleri* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Stuhlmann's Starling**  $\diamond$  *Poeoptera stuhlmanni* Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Narrow-tailed Starling** *Poeoptera lugubris* 3 seen in Kibale Forest and 1 at 'The Neck'.  
**Yellow-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus africanus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and near Mburo.  
**Fraser's Rufous Thrush (Rufous Flycatcher T)** *Stizorhina fraseri* Heard in Kibale and seen in Bwindi NPs.  
**White-tailed Ant Thrush** *Neocossyphus poensis* Seen in Kibale NP and Bwindi NPs.  
**Red-tailed Ant Thrush** *Neocossyphus rufus* (H) Heard in Kibale NP.  
**African Thrush** *Turdus pelios* Widespread sightings.  
**Abyssinian Thrush** *Turdus abyssinicus* (NL) Seen by some in the Ruhija area.  
**Brown-backed Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia hartlaubi* 1 at Mabamba.  
**White-browed Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia leucophrys* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher** *Myioparus griseigularis* Often heard and occasionally seen in the various forests.  
**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 caeruleascens* 1 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* Seen along rivers in Kibale Forest and at 'The Neck'.  
**Chapin's Flycatcher** *Muscicapa lendu* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**African Dusky Flycatcher** *Muscicapa adusta* Easy to see at Kibale and in the southwest.  
**Dusky-blue Flycatcher** *Muscicapa comitata* Easily seen in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.



Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher (left) at Ruhija and Dusky-blue Flycatcher (right) at Bigodi Swamp. (Nik Borrow)

**Sooty Flycatcher** *Muscicapa infuscata* Treetop birds in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable forests.  
**Red-throated Alethe** *Chamaetylas poliophrys* Good views of this Albertine Rift endemic in Bwindi Forest.  
**Brown-chested Alethe** *Chamaetylas poliocephala* (H) Heard only in Kibale NP.  
**White-bellied Robin-Chat** *Cossyphicula roberti* Seen well in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Archer's Ground Robin** *Cossypha archeri* Good views of this Albertine Rift endemic in Bwindi Forest.  
**Grey-winged Robin-Chat** *Cossypha polioptera* 2 seen well at Buhoma.

**Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat** *Cossypha cyanocampter* Glimpses of this notorious skulker at 'The Neck'.  
**White-browed Robin-Chat (Heuglin's R)** *Cossypha heuglini* Particularly numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Red-capped Robin-Chat** *Cossypha natalensis* Seen well at Buhoma.  
**Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat (S-headed R-c)** *Cossypha niveicapilla* Seen at Bigodi and 'The Neck'.  
**White-starred Robin** *Pogonocichla stellata* (H) Only heard in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Equatorial Akalat** *Sheppardia aequatorialis* Several sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus* Widespread sightings in the southwest in small numbers.  
**Sooty Chat** *Myrmecocichla nigra* Most numerous in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Grey-headed Sunbird** *Deleornis axillaris* 1 was seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Little Green Sunbird** *Anthreptes seimundi* Several in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Grey-chinned Sunbird (Green S)** *Anthreptes rectirostris* Present in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable forests.  
**Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris* A common and widespread sunbird.  
**Green-headed Sunbird** *Cyanomitra verticalis* 1 sighting in the Kibale area.  
**Blue-throated Brown Sunbird** *Cyanomitra cyanoaema* Present in Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable forests.  
**Blue-headed Sunbird** *Cyanomitra alinae* Just 2 in Bwindi Impenetrable forests.  
**Olive Sunbird** *Cyanomitra olivacea* Common throughout the various forests but more often heard than seen.  
**Green-throated Sunbird** *Chalcomitra rubescens* Present in the Kibale area.  
**Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Easily seen from Entebbe to Kibale area.  
**Purple-breasted Sunbird** *Nectarinia purpureiventris* (NL) Seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.  
**Bronzy Sunbird (Bronze S)** *Nectarinia kilimensis* Small numbers at Kibale and Bwindi.  
**Olive-bellied Sunbird** *Cinnyris chloropygius* Small numbers in the Kibale area and in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**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.  
**Red-chested Sunbird** *Cinnyris erythrocerus* A stunning sunbird and common around the swamps and wet places.



A male Northern Double-collared Sunbird (left, Nik Borrow) at Buhoma and the beautiful Red-chested Sunbird (right, Marc Junio).

**Purple-banded Sunbird** *Cinnyris bifasciatus* 1 male seen well at Bigodi Swamp.  
**Variable Sunbird** *Cinnyris venustus* (NL) Just 1 at Kibale.  
**Copper Sunbird** *Cinnyris cupreus* A few at Mabamba.  
**Northern Grey-headed Sparrow (G-h S)** *Passer griseus* Very common and widespread.  
**House Sparrow (introduced)** *Passer domesticus* Roadside birds seen around settlements during journeys.  
**Thick-billed Weaver (Grosbeak W)** *Amblyospiza albifrons* Small numbers mainly from Entebbe to 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* 1 seen at Mabamba.  
**Black-necked Weaver** *Ploceus nigricollis* A few in the Kibale area.  
**Strange Weaver** *Ploceus alienus* This Albertine Rift endemic was seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Holub's Golden Weaver** *Ploceus xanthops* Just 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP and more in the Bwindi area.  
**Northern Brown-throated Weaver** *Ploceus castanops* Seen well at Mabamba Swamp and Fort Portal.  
**'Victoria' Masked Weaver** *Ploceus 'victoriae'* Several seen at Fort Portal. See Note.

**Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius*** 1 in Queen Elizabeth NP with more at Mburo.  
**Village Weaver (Black-headed W) *Ploceus cucullatus*** Everywhere except in the southwest.  
**Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus*** A common bird often seen in colonies by roadside villages.  
**Weyns's Weaver *Ploceus weynsi*** 3 breeding plumaged males at Mabamba.  
**Black-headed Weaver (Yellow-backed W) *Ploceus melanocephalus*** An abundant waterside weaver.  
**Golden-backed Weaver *Ploceus jacksoni*** Several seen at Mabamba.



*The nomadic Weyns's Weaver (left) and red-eyed Golden-backed Weaver (right) were seen well at Mabamba. (Nik Borrow)*

**Compact Weaver *Ploceus superciliosus*** Small flocks at Bigodi and in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Brown-capped Weaver *Ploceus insignis*** Small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.  
**Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis*** Singletons in Kibale Forest and at 'The Neck'.  
**Northern Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes [rubriceps] leuconotus*** 1 at Mburo.  
**Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*** 4 at Mburo.  
**Black Bishop *Euplectes gierowii* (LO)** Nik saw a breeding plumaged male at Fort Portal.  
**Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix*** Birds in moulting plumage in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Fan-tailed Widowbird (Red-shouldered W) *Euplectes axillaris*** Birds in breeding plumage in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes [macroura] macrocercus*** 1 in non-breeding plumage near Buhoma.  
**Marsh Widowbird *Euplectes hartlaubi*** 1 male in breeding plumage at Mabamba.  
**White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus*** 4 seen in non-breeding plumage in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullatus*** Common and widespread except in the southwest.  
**Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor*** Seen at Bigodi Swamp and at 'The Neck'.  
**White-breasted Nigrita (W-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus*** Small numbers in Kibale and Bwindi forests.  
**Grey-headed Nigrita (G-crowned Negrofinch)** Widespread from Mabamba to Buhoma.  
**Black-crowned Waxbill *Estrilda nonnula*** Seen well from Entebbe to Kibale.  
**Kandt's Waxbill *Estrilda kandti* (NL)** Seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.  
**Fawn-breasted Waxbill *Estrilda paludicola*** Several flocks in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*** A flock at Bigodi Swamp.  
**Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus*** Seen at Mabamba.  
**Red-headed Bluebill *Spermophaga ruficapilla*** 2 seen at Bigodi Swamp.  
**Green-winged Pytilia (Melba F) *Pytilia melba*** 3 seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and a male at Mburo.  
**Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*** Widespread sightings and particularly common in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Village Indigobird (Red-billed Firefinch I) *Vidua chalybeata*** A few in the Entebbe area.  
**Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*** Widespread sightings with some in breeding plumage.  
**Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis*** Just 1 seen in the southwest.  
**Mountain Wagtail *Motacilla clara*** 3 in Kibale NP and a few in the Bwindi area.  
**African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*** Everywhere!

**Yellow-throated Longclaw** *Macronyx croceus* Very common in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**African Pipit (Grassland P)** *Anthus cinnamomeus* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Plain-backed Pipit** *Anthus leucophrys* Seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.  
**Western Citril** *Crithagra frontalis* Seen at Fort Portal and Ruhija.  
**Yellow-fronted Canary** *Crithagra mozambica* Seen at Mburo.  
**Brimstone Canary** *Crithagra sulphuratus* Seen at Kibale, Queen Elizabeth NP and Mburo.  
**Thick-billed Seedeater** *Crithagra burtoni* (NL) 2 seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.  
**Streaky Seedeater** *Crithagra striolatus* (NL) 1 seen by Hilary, Mike and Toni at Ruhija.  
**Golden-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza flaviventris* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and Mburo.



*Yellow-throated Longclaw (left, Marc Junio) was common in Queen Elizabeth NP where we also found Golden-breasted Bunting (right, Nik Borrow)*



*Ugandan sunset (Mike Hardman)*



Uganda is a great destination for watching primates and we encountered eleven species during the tour including the lovely L'Hoest's Monkey. (Nik Borrow)

## MAMMALS

Total of mammal species recorded: 39

- African Elephant** *Loxodonta africana* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP. See Note.
- Lion** *Panthera leo* 2 young males in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Central African Large-spotted Genet** *Genetta maculosa* 3 sightings in Kibale and Bwindi areas.
- Spotted Hyaena** *Crocuta crocuta* (H) Heard at night in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Side-striped Jackal** *Lupulella adusta* 2 sightings in the Ruhija area.
- Common Dwarf Mongoose** *Helogale parvula* 3 at Mbuero.
- Egyptian Mongoose** *Herpestes ichneumon* 2 in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Banded Mongoose** *Mungos mungo* A friendly troop in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Plains Zebra (Common Z)** *Equus quagga* The race *boehmi* near Lake Mbuero NP.
- Forest Hog (Giant F H)** *Hylochoerus meinertzhageni* Amazing repeated encounters in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Common Warthog** *Phacochoerus africanus* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Impala** *Aepyceros melampus* 6+ near Mbuero.
- Black-fronted Duiker** *Cephalophus nigrifrons* Seen 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* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibius* Common in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Yellow-winged Bat** *Lavia frons* Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.
- Hammer Bat** *Hypsignathus monstrosus* (H) Heard at night at Kibale.
- Spectacled Lesser Galago** *Galago matschei* 1 seen at night at Ruhija.
- L'Hoest's Monkey** *Cercopithecus lhoesti* Seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.



**Red-tailed Monkey (Black-cheeked White-nosed M) *Cercopithecus ascanius*** Common and widespread.

**Blue Monkey (Gentle M) *Cercopithecus mitis*** The form *stuhlmanni* seen in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forests.

**Vervet (Savanna Monkey) *Cercopithecus pygerythrus*** Seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and at Mburo.

**Guereza (Eastern Black-and-white Colobus) *Colobus guereza*** Widespread sightings.

**Uganda Grey-cheeked Mangabey (U Crested M) *Lophocebus ugandae*** Seen well mainly in the Kibale area.

**Olive Baboon *Papio anubis*** Common from Kibale to Queen Elizabeth NP.

**Uganda Red Colobus (Central African R C) *Piliocolobus [rufomitratu] tephrosceles*** Seen well in Kibale NP.

**Eastern Gorilla *Gorilla beringei*** This year our group visited two different groups in the Ruhija area.

**Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes*** The race *schweinfurthii* seen in Kibale NP and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest at Buhoma.

**Carruthers's Mountain Squirrel (M Tree S) *Funisciurus carruthersi*** A few seen in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

**Red-legged Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus rufobrachium*** 1 seen in Kibale NP.

**Ruwenzori Sun Squirrel (Mountain S S) *Heliosciurus ruwenzori*** Small numbers seen in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

**Boehm's Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus boehmi*** 1 seen at Ruhija.

**Giant Forest Squirrel *Protoxerus stangeri*** 1 seen in Kibale NP.

**Striped Ground Squirrel *Xerus erythropus*** 2 sightings at Mabamba and Mburo.

**African Grass Rat *Arvicanthis niloticus* (NL)** Seen by some in Queen Elizabeth NP.

#### NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

##### 'Victoria' Masked Weaver *Ploceus 'victoriae'*

The weavers seen at Fort Portal are as yet to be positively identified which are part of a population that occurs throughout the swamps of Uganda from Entebbe to Fort Portal and Queen Elizabeth National Park to Lake Bunyonyi. They are somewhat variable in plumage and superficially similar to Northern Masked Weaver *Ploceus taeniopterus* and may well prove to be an undescribed race of this species, a hybrid or a species in their own right. They have been treated as Northern Masked Weaver in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Stevenson & Fanshawe's "*Birds of East Africa*" but this has not been formally accepted by the East African Rarities Committee. These weavers have a convoluted history; In the journal *Ibis* in 1986, John Ash described a new species from Entebbe and named it Victoria Masked Weaver *Ploceus victoriae*. The form was later deemed 'not recognised' and considered to be a hybrid between Northern Brown-throated Weaver *P. castanops* and Black-headed Weaver *P. melanocephalus*. Although blood samples were taken the results of the tests were either not completed or lost and so the true identity was actually never solved. The stronghold for this form appears to be around Lake Bunyonyi where small colonies are easily seen.

##### 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 Queen Elizabeth National 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.



*Hippopotamus* (Marc Junio)