

Uganda 2006

- en stortur med DOF Travel

Af Søren Skov og David Hoddinot.

FORORD:

Rockjumper Birding Tours Uganda 2002 Trip Report
"The Best of African Birding"
www.rockjumper.co.za

Det blev en sand eventyrrejse, da DOF-København i dagene 19. februar – 10. marts 2006 besøgte Uganda i Østafrika. Vi fik set noget af de fineste natur i Uganda:

Tågeregnskoven i Bwindi National Park med bjerggorillaer og de mange endemiske fugle, den tørre hede savanne i Murchison Falls National Park med den fabelagtige sejlads til Nilens delta i Lake Albert, hvor vi så hele seks Træskonæb og den fugtige savanne i Queen Elisabeth National Park med endnu en enestående flodsejlads.

Også den fine lavlandsregnskov i Budongo og Mabira gjorde et stort indtryk.

Vi fik naturligvis også set en perlerække af enestående afrikanske fugle og dyr. Der var kort sagt så mange uforglemmelige fugle-og dyreoplevelser på rejsen, at det derfor er en næsten umulig opgave at afgøre, hvilke der har gjort størst indtryk, men mon ikke de bizarre træskonæb og mødet med vores nærmeste slægtninge, chimpanser og gorillaer, var højdepunkterne for de fleste af os.

I alt så og hørte vi 581 fuglearter og 46 pattedyr-arter på rejsens tre uger.

Det succesrige udfald af vores besøg i Uganda skyldes ikke mindst vores helt uundværlige guide David Hoddinott og hans enestående iagttagelsesevne. David lagde et stort arbejde i, at vi alle skulle få en vellykket rejse til Uganda, og at vi alle fik set fuglene. Tak for det.

Traditionen var også denne DOF-rejse præget af godt humør og et godt kammeratskab blandt hele holdet. Også derfor er det altid en fornøjelse at rejse med DOF.

Vejret undervejs var ret vekslende, men hvis vi ser bort fra de højtliggende dele af Bwindi National Park var der tale om variationer af meget varmt vejr. Omkring 30-38 grader. I Bwindi var der imidlertid temperaturer på ned til 15 grader om morgenen, men også her blev det hurtigt varmt op ad dagen, og da luftfugtigheden samtidig var høj, oplevede vi klimaet som ganske lunt under hele vort ophold i Uganda.

Sidst på rejsen oplevede vi også et par regnvejrskage, men heldigvis i så små mængder, at det ikke generede os. Der var dog overraskende mange dage med overskyet og tungt vejr. Måske fordi regntiden var startet tidligt i år.

Også vores helbred var desværre temmelig vekslende. Først på rejsen var mange af os plaget af maveproblemer. Siden blev over halvdelen af holdet ramt af en virus med feber, ondt i halsen, snot og hoste samt almen utilpashed.

Men selv om mange af os undervejs blev nødt til at tage en sygedag i et roligt tempo, var vi alle enige om, at det på ingen måde havde ødelagt denne rejsen.

Deltagerne i dette afrikanske eventyr var: Vivi Westh, Povl Westh, Vibeke Skov Møller, Flemming Skov Møller, Carl Axel Henriksen, Torben Carlsen, Vibeke Tofte, Hanne Kapala, Lise Larsen, Inger Meltofte, Hans Meltofte, Peter Schousboe, Søren Skov, (turleder) og vores guide David Hoddinott.

Denne rapport er skrevet af Søren og David, idet Søren har skrevet den danske dagbog, mens David har skrevet selve rapporten på engelsk med en gennemgang af de fugle og dyr, vi så på vores rejse.

REJSEN DAG FOR DAG:

19. februar

Eventyrrejsen startede ganske jordnært. På en nedkølet og grå vinterdag mødtes vi som aftalt i Københavns Lufthavn kl. 14 med store forventninger og lettere rejsefeber. Første etape af rejsen forløb ganske begivenhedsløst - kl. 16.05 fløj vi med British Airways til London, og herfra fløj vi 19.55 lokal tid videre med British Airways direkte til Entebbe.

20. februar:

Solen var kun lige stået op over Entebbe, da flyet kl. 7.35 satte hjulene på den tropevarme landingsbane. Efter en rutinemæssig paskontrol og udlevering af bagage, nåede vi ud af lufthavnen. Her var der et lettere tilløb til panik, for der var ingen David Hoddinot fra Rockjumper og ej heller nogen biler. Efter en forvirrende halv time, som Søren brugte til maniske telefonopringninger, dukkede David op ifølge med to store Toyota Landcruisere og to chauffører - Livingstone og Male, begge fra det lokale safarifirma Far Horizons. David havde fået forkert besked om ankomsten for British Airways og undskyldte fejltagelsen.

Nu var vi klar til at begynde på vores rundrejse gennem Uganda og dets fugleliv. Første etape gennem Kampala by var præget af tæt trafik og en massiv os af stinkende diesel, men også med mange glade mennesker, der vinkede begejstrede til os i den tro, at vi var internationale valgobservatører, der skulle overvåge at det kommende valg gik retfærdigt til.

Udover de mange vinkende mennesker kunne vi på vores færd gennem byen også beundre de første Marabou Storke, Yellow-billed Kite og Hættegribbe.

Omsider var vi ude af storbyen og satte straks kursen mod nord. Efter et par timer standsede vi ved et vådområde, og fik her for første gang rigtigt lov til at stifte bekendtskab med Ugandas rige fugleliv. De første musefugle vakte stor begejstring - men mest imponerende var de mange tusinde Abdims Storke. De sås ganske overalt, både kredsende i store flokke og rastende på markerne.

Efterhånden som vi kom længere mod nord, blev landskabet mere tørt og temperaturerne steg støt til godt 35 grader.

På denne første dag var der forvirrende mange nye arter for de fleste af os, men vi husker alle en fin Whitecrested Turaco, der sås meget flot og gjorde et stort indtryk. Dertil kom bl.a. White-headed Barbet, Lizard Buzzard og begge de to grønne frugtduer.

Sidst på dagen nåede vi frem til Masindi Hotel. Efter middagen gik vi alle tidligt i seng, trætte efter både flyrejsen og en lang køredag med mange nye oplevelser.

21. februar

Tidligt op og af sted, mens det endnu var mørkt, så vi kunne nå til Budongo Skoven umiddelbart efter solopgang. Budongo Forest Reserve er kendt for at huse en lang række

centralafrikanske regnskovsfugle, som man ellers skal til Congo for at se. Vi brugte næsten hele dagen på den berømte ”Royal Mile”, der er en halvanden km lang grusvej gennem et lille hjørne af den 800 kvadratkilometer store lavlandsregnskov.

Det er en hel del sværere at se på fugle inde i skoven end på savannen, men netop Royal Mile er med sin åbne underskov kendt for at være et rigtigt sted, hvor det er nemt at se mange skovfugle, og det lykkedes da også for os at finde mange forskellige og imponerende fugle. Vi fik bl.a. set den store White-thighed Hornbill, den farvestyrålende Chocolate-backed og den lille Dwarf Kingfisher plus den underlige gøg Yellowbill og meget mere.

Budongo Skoven er også kendt for at huse næsten 1000 chimpanser, og vi så da også en fin chimpanse komme slentrede hen af skovvejen et par hundrede meter foran os.

Desuden hørte vi dem flere gange kalde i skoven. Her var også et væld af imponerende sommerfugle i alle farver og former.

På vej tilbage standsede vi i det dyrkede land vest for Masindi og så bl.a. en familie Rednecked Falcon. Vi overnattede på ny på Masindi Hotel.

22. februar

Vi begyndte dagen med et besøg i en anden del af Budongo Skoven, nemlig Kaniyo Pabidi, der ligger i den sydlige del af Murchison Falls National Park. Mens skoven ved Royal Mile er åben, så fuglene er nemme at opdage, er denne del af skoven meget mere lukket, og fuglene var langt sværere at få at se. Vi fik dog alle set Black og White Casqued Hornbill ved rede og nogle så et glimt af den sky skovhøne Nahan Francolin. Kaniyo Pabidi er også kendt for at være det eneste sted i Østafrika, hvor man kan se Puvels Illadopsis, men den kunne vi ikke finde.

Vi fortsatte derpå mod nord og dermed længere ind i hjertet af Murchison Falls National Park.

Nu blev landskabet hurtigt meget mere tørt. Regnskoven veg til fordel for savannen, og her var Grasshopper Buzzard en karakterfugl. Et par sælsomme Abyssinian Ground Hornbill sås og rejsens første vortesvin og kafferbøfler anskueliggjorde, at vi nu var inde i en af Afrikas store nationalparker.

Først på eftermiddagen nåede vi frem til Sambiya River Lodge, og efter lidt afslappet fuglekiggeri omkring lodgen kørte vi sidst på eftermiddagen til det berømte vandfald, Murchison Falls, som nationalparken er opkaldt efter. Det var en fascinerende oplevelse at se Nilen strøomme gennem det smalle og meget kraftfulde vandfald - ikke mindst fordi vi også kunne se nogle meget fine Rock Pranticole på klipperne ovenfor faldet.

Da det blev mørkt, fløj tusindvis af flagermus ud fra hulerne omkring vandfaldet. Flere rovfugle, bl.a. en vandrefalk, gik på rov blandt de mange flagermus, og vi spejdede ivrigt efter Bat Hawk, da netop Murchison Falls er et af bedste steder i Uganda at se denne sjældne rovfugl, men desværre dukkede den ikke op.

Vi kørte tilbage til lodgen i tusmørket. Med vores kraftige spotlights havde vi gode muligheder for at studere de mange natravne på vejen og det gav pote i form af en af Afrikas mest karismatiske fugle: Standard-winged Nightjar, men desværre sås hannen på nogen afstand.

Også et næsten lige så fascinerende pattedyr sås i form af en caracal. Mætte efter en dag med mange gode oplevelser gik vi tidligt i seng. Da lyset blev slukket i vores hytter, kunne flere af deltagerne glæde sig over dyrelivet inden dørene, da deres hytter viste sig at have flagermus som loggerende i loftet.

23. februar

Denne dag blev ganske enkelt uforglemmelig. En dag, hvor de store oplevelser stod i kø fra morgen til aften. Allerede inden det blev lyst, kørte vi af sted gennem den mørke savanne, da vi skulle sejle på Nilen kl. 7. Undervejs havde vi alle først en meget fin obs af Standard-winged Nightjar i form af en han i fuldt pragtdragt siddende på vejen få meter foran bilen, og kort derefter opdagede vi en flok løver, der stirrede på os med lysende øjne i nattemørket.

Efter både at have oplevet en af Afrikas mest fascinerende fuglearter og en af de mest imponerende afrikanske pattedyr tæt på, fulgte sejladsen til Nilens delta i Albertsøen, der ganske enkelt var fabelagtig. Højdepunktet var naturligvis, at vi så hele seks Træskonæb! Derudover var her et væld af vandfugle - både overvintrende europæiske arter som Hvidvinget Terne og lokale specialiteter som Fulvous Tree Duck og en flok meget smukke krontraner, der sås på få meters afstand. Det hele blev krydret med et væld af flodheste og krokodiller.

Dagen blev afsluttet med en meget fin game-drive på nordsiden af Nilen. Her er der åbne græssletter, og den nordlige del af Murchison Falls NP var da også det bedste sted for store klassiske afrikanske pattedyr på rejsen. Vi så nogle meget fine giraffer, elefanter og bøfler samt rigtig mange Oribi og Uganda Kob. Men det dyr, der måske gjorde størst indtryk på os, var en flok Patta Monkey, som løb hen over sletten.

Også fuglene var fine med bl.a. steppehøg, hedeheg, nonnestenpikker og flere afrikanske tørlandsarter, bl.a. sås både Chestnutcrowned og Whitebrowed Sparrow Weaver.

24. februar

De morgenduelige gik en morgentur omkring lodgen. Udover at løbe ind i en flok bøfler, der heldigvis trak sig tilbage, sås bl.a. African Cuckoo Hawk.

Fra Sambiya River Lodge satte vi kursen mod vest, og nu blev landskabet endnu mere tørt og sandet. Undervejs sås et lokal hit i form af Dark Chanting Goshawk.

En frokostpause ved Butiaba Escarpment bød på en meget fin udsigt over den vestlige Rift Valley med Lake Albert og Congo i det fjerne.

Området ved Butiaba Escarpment er kendt for at være meget fuglerigt, men der var ganske enkelt ulideligt varmt, mens vi var der, og som følge heraf var der heller ikke megen aktivitet hos fuglene. Vi fik dog nogle af de lokale specialiteter i hus, bl.a. den meget smukke Cliff-Chat.

Herefter fortsatte vi mod øst og nåede snart den vestlige del af Budongo Skoven. Den frodige skov var en meget stor kontrast til det tørre land vi netop havde oplevet. Her var der gensyn med mange af fuglearterne fra Royal Mile. Om aftenen var vi tilbage i Masindi og dermed også på det velkendte Masindi Hotel.

25. februar

En rejsedag. I det dyrkede land syd for Masindi havde vi et fuglerigt stop om formiddagen på et par timer. Her sås mange småfugle og en rigtig farveladefugl i form af Ross Turaco.

Ad dårlige grusveje fortsatte vi derpå mod Kibale Forest National Park, som vi nåede sidst på eftermiddagen. Denne del af skoven når op i 1700-1800 meters højde – ca. 500 meter højere end området ved headquarter, og en lille gåtur langs med vejen var da også meget udbytterig med flere arter, der ikke kan ses lavere nede. Bl.a. sås en flok meget fine White-headed Wood Hoopoe og Central African Red Colobus.

Også de vidtstrakte temarker viste, at vi nu var nået op i bjergene.

Herefter fortsatte vi til Mantana Tented Camp i den lavere del af Kibale Skoven. Ved vores lodge, der lå lige uden for nationalparken, tudede en African Wood Owl ivrigt om aftenen. Den sås fint i stavlygtens skær.

26. februar

Denne dag stod i chimpansens tegn. Kibale Forest er kendt som det bedste sted i Uganda at se på chimpanser. Her er flere 1000 end chimpanser og bestanden er stigende som følge af bedre beskyttelse.

Man har vænnet et par familieflokke til at få besøg af mennesker og for en pris på 50 dollars + nationalparkgebyr - hvilket er meget billigt i forhold til Gorillaerne - kan man her komme på en guidet tur, hvor der er næsten 100 pct. sikkerhed for at se chimpanser. Vi mødte op ved nationalparkens headquarter kl. 8. Da vi var 13 (Carl Axel var desværre syg) og der kun måtte være seks på hvert hold, blev vi inddelt i tre grupper. Og så var det bare af sted.

Mødet med vores nærmeste slægtninge midt i den afrikanske urskov var en stor oplevelse for os alle.

Om eftermiddagen var det meget mørkt i vejret, og der faldt også lidt regn. Som følge af vejret var der ikke megen aktivitet inde i skoven, og vi kiggede derfor på fugle i kanten af skoven i stedet. Især en bro over en lille flod gjorde indtryk, for her så vi både African Black Duck og Mountain Wagtail.

27. februar

Morgenen blev brugt ved vores lodge, og det gav pote da vi alle fik set en meget fin White-spotted Flufftail. En mystisk fugl, der normalt lever meget skjult, men som blev

lokket frem af Davids båndoptager.

Resten af formiddagen blev brugt til en givtig gåtur omkring Buguti Swamp få km fra vores lodge. Her sås mange småfugle, en Forest Cobra og en ny abeart for turen i form af Grey-cheeked Mangabey.

Herefter hurtig kørsel af dårlige veje mod syd. Vi spiste en sen frokost i Kasese for foden af Ruwenzori-bjergene - også kendt for det eksotiske tilnavn Mountains of the Moon. Herfra er der kun få km til Queen Elisabeth National Park, og vi kørte langsom safarikørsel med åbent tag ind til den fine Mweya Lodge, der skulle være vores hjem for de næste to nætter. Undervejs sås bl.a. Martial Eagle og verdens største vilde svin - Giant Forest Hog. Fra lodgen var der en fin udsigt til Kazinga Kanalen, hvor vi, om end på nogen afstand, kunne se flokke af African Skimmers fouragere på deres specielle "skimmer-måde" om aftenen.

28. februar

Vi lagde ud med en tidlig game-drive før det endnu var blevet lyst, og det var givtigt.

Blandt de mange fine oplevelser huskes især en flok Kaspiske Præstekræver, hvoraf flere var i deres smukke sommerdragt, flere Verreaux Eagle Owl og en flok løver.

Sidst på formiddagen var vi et lille smut til saltsøen Lake Katwe, der ligger nordvest for lodgen. Hans havde besøgt søen for en halv snes år siden, da han talte vandfugle i Uganda for DOF. Dengang med stor succes. Søen er en lille enklave, der ikke er med i nationalparken, da der foregår udvinding af salt, og når der er vand i søen, kan der være store flokke af flamingoer og andre vandfugle. Men denne gang var søen desværre helt udtørret og dermed fugletom.

En flok Banded Mongoose ved lodgen sås lege få meter fra os og gjorde et stort indtryk på de fleste af os.

Men dagens højdepunkt var uden tvivl eftermiddagens sejltur på Kazinga Kanalen. Dels var her meget fuglerigt og dels så vi fuglene kanon-godt. Bagefter var det svært at få armene ned efter de mange gode oplevelser.

Denne forrygende dag blev afsluttet med en kort gamedrive i det smukke aftenlys, inden vi vendte tilbage til en velmagende aftensmad på rejsens bedste lodge.

1. marts

Vi kørte stille og roligt ud af Queen Elisabeth National Park. Vi drog gennem den sydlige del af nationalparken, der er kendt for sine træklatrende løver, men selv om vi så flere store træer med mærker efter kløer, så vi aldrig løverne. Store mængder af sommerfugle sås langs med vejen og dertil nogle fine elefanter.

Vi besøgte også Maramagambo Forest nær Jacana Safari Lodge, og så bl.a. en meget fin Narina Trogon. Derpå kørte vi med få stop undervejs ad dårlige grusveje til det sydvestligste hjørne af Uganda. Nu forlod vi det flade forland foran Ruwenzori-bjergene og kom i stedet op i højlandet. Nye fugle som Makinnons Shrike viste, at vi nu var nået ind i en ny faunazone.

Vel fremme i Buhoma indlogerede vi os på den udmærkede lodge, Buhoma Homestead, på kanten af den forjættede Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

2. marts

Vi udforskede i dag den lavere del af Bwindi-skoven. Og hvilken skov - de gamle træer stod med deres tykke stammer og grene helt dækket af drivende våde mosser og laver. Tågeregnskoven i Bwindi er en meget fugtig, men også dybt fascinerende skov. Skoven er ikke alene flot. Den er også meget fuglerig. Vi så rejsens første Albertine Rift-endemiske arter, bl.a. Ruwenzori Batis. Dertil fine Congofugle som Black Bee-eater og andre, der bare er generelt ualmindelige såsom Bar-tailed Trogon. En udbrydergruppe forlod os andre efter frokost for at tage på landsbytur. Det var en stor succes, idet de bl.a. besøgte en traditionel medicinmand, smagte på afrikansk banan-gin og var ude at danse med en gruppe pygmæer, der havde levet som jægere og samlere i Bwindi-skoven indtil for bare 15 år siden.

3. marts

Dette blev så dagen, hvor vi kom i audiens hos bjerggorillaerne. Vi mødte op ved nationalpark-kontoret kl. 8, hvor vi blev inddelt i tre forskellige hold. Efter at have hyret bærere, drog vi forventningsfulde af sted mod hver vores gruppe gorillaer. Vi fik alle gorillaer at se. For nogle af os blev mødet med gorillaerne en af rejsens største oplevelser, men det var desværre ikke os alle, der så dem lige godt. Nogle af os oplevede gorillaerne på få centimeters afstand, men andre måtte nøjes med et halvdårligt kig til en familie gorillaer, der var mere eller mindre gemt i den tætte bjergregnskov. Fælles for os alle var, at vandringen til gorillaerne var lang og anstrengende. Op og ned af bjergene gennem tæt krat, som blev ryddet med pangaer undervejs. Da vi nåede frem til gorillaerne, fik vi lov til at være ved flokken i præcis én time. Vi var først tilbage ved vort hotel midt på eftermiddagen. Her var det tid til at udveksle erfaringerne om vores gorilla-trek. En lille energisk gruppe kunne slet ikke få nok af at vandre svedige rundt i det kuperede terræn, og drog på den samme landsbytur, som andre havde gjort dagen før. Også denne gruppe blev belønnet med dansende pygmæer og smagsprøver på banan-gin.

4. marts

Vi kørte stille og roligt til Ruhizha, der ligger i knap 2400 meters højde og dermed i den højeste del af Bwindi-nationalparken. Undervejs havde vi et længere ophold ved "The

Neck” – et stykke bjergregnskov på mellemniveau, som passeres, når man kører ad vejen til Ruhizha. Også her sås mange fugle, men desværre begyndte de første deltagere her at mærke til den influenzaagtige virus, der i de følgende dage skulle ramme halvdelen af holdet.

Fremme i Ruhizha kunne vi konstatere, at vores hjem for de næste tre nætter, en tidligere ranger-station, var meget primitivt, om end maden var god.

Vi måtte sove i dårlige køjesenge med fire på hvert værelse, og toilettet var et fælles udendørs das. Men alle tog det med godt humør, om end det var ret uheldigt, at vi netop havde rejsens mest primitive overnatninger samtidig med at halvdelen af os var syge og kunne trænge til lidt ekstra luksus.

De barske betingelser hindrede os dog ikke i at have en udbytterig aften-obs med mange fine fugleoplevelser. Bl.a. sås de farvestrålende og endemiske Regals Sunbird, Strange Weaver og Dusky Crimsonwing meget fint.

5. marts

Dette var dagen, hvor vi vandrede til Mubwindi Swamp – en tur, der var lige så anstrengende som vores gorilla-trekking. Selve vandreturen er kun tre til fire km hver vej, men den er meget kuperet. Først går den lidt op og ned, men derefter falder terrænet ca. 300 meter. Det var hårdt for knæ og benmuskler at gå nedad, men det var endnu værre den anden vej. Ikke mindst fordi det også var både varmt og i en forholdsvis stor højde.

Fremme i Mubwindi Swamp blev vi imidlertid belønnet med synet af et redebyggende par Green Broadbill – og det var jo alle anstrengelserne værd.

I selve sumpen sås endnu en fin endem i form af Grauers Scrub Warbler, der i hele verden kun er kendt fra netop Mubwindi Swamp.

6. marts

Efter den anstrengende vandring dagen før, blev dette en langt mere afslappet dag, hvor vi kørte rundt i bjergregnskoven og gik flere fine småture ved udvalgte steder – primært i den øvre bambuszone.

Igen i dag var vi heldige med mange fine fugleoplevelser. I flæng kan nævnes Western Tinkerbird, Abyssinian Hill Babbler, Mountain Buzzard, Mountain Oriole og White-starred Robin.

Det var tiltrængt med en dag i et roligt tempo - mange af os havde feber, hoste og slem forkølelse. For ikke at blive syg spiste Hans store mængder rå hvidløg i hele fed. Om det var derfor han ikke blev syg, skal være usagt, men sikkert var det, at man hele tiden kunne dufte, hvor Hans opholdt sig.

7. marts

Tidligt af sted og kørsel mod nord. Vi kørte stille og roligt ned af bjergene med et par

givtige stop undervejs. Derpå satte vi farten op og kørte mod nord. Da vi passerede Ækvator var der dømt turiststop – her var der både butikker, en særlig Ækvator-afmærkning til foto og ikke mindst mulighed for at se en forevisning af Coriolis-kraften, når vandet løb ud af en spand og drejede mod uret i afløbet nogle få meter nord for ækvator, men med uret nogle få meter sydligere. Men selv om Coriolis-kraften er reel nok, var showet blot et flot udført falsum. Vi fortsatte derpå til Lake Mburo, hvor vi ankom midt på eftermiddagen. En af de første fugle vi så, var den meget lokale Red-faced Barbet, men for de fleste var det nok nationalparkens mange zebraer og impalaer, der gjorde størst indtryk. Lake Mburo National Park er det eneste sted i Uganda, hvor man ser disse klassiske afrikanske savanne-dyr. Også en Plettet Hyæne på vores gamedrive om aftenen var en god oplevelse. Vi overnattede på Mantana Safari Camp med udmærket mad. Om aftenen begyndte det at regne, og vi kunne høre regnen slå vores telte det meste af natten.

8. marts

Da det blev lyst samledes vi hos Søren og David, der havde det yderste telt og dermed en fin udsigt over savannen. Der var pause i regnen, men himlen var stadig grå som på en dansk novemberdag og der var ikke megen aktivitet hos fuglene.

Efter morgenmaden kørte vi til søen, hvor vi skulle sejle i en times tid. Båden havde ikke så mange så mange pladser, så vi delte os i to hold, der på skift tog ud at sejle. Her var der fine flodørne og forskellige hejrer, men den fugl, der gjorde mest indtryk, var uden tvivl African Finfoot, som begge hold så på få meters afstand - en underlig og nærmest mytisk svømmende riksefugl.

Mens vi var ude at sejle, var det kalret op med tørvejr, men desværre begynder det at regne igen, da vi var på vej ud af nationalparken og kørte videre mod nordvest. I dag virkede køreturen ekstra lang, og da vi omsider ankom til vort hotel, Gately on the Nile, i byen Jinja øst for Kampala, var vi alle godt trætte. Lige før vi nåede hotellet, passerede vi nogle store træer, hvor vi kunne se flere hundrede store frugtflagermus, men de fleste af os var så trætte, at vi fortsatte efter et kort stop.

9. marts

Da det blev lyst, mødtes vi og gik en runde i hotelhaven, der var usædvanlig fuglerig. Her var der rart at være. Efter morgenmaden var der afgang til Mabira Forest, men inden vi kom så langt, tog vi os tid til at opleve de mange frugtflagermus i træerne nær vort hotel.

Mabira Forest var fuglerig, og det lykkedes os bl.a. at se en fin Jamesons Wattlee og nogle fine Nahan Francolin, men skovvejen var meget mudret efter nattens omfattende regnvejr. Vores støvler voksede hurtigt til dobbelt størrelse med alt det mudder, der sad fast på dem.

Vi tog os tid til et længere stop ved et turistmarked i Kampala, hvor de sidste souvenirs blev købt ind, og så trillede vi stille og roligt til Entebbe Botanical Garden. Besøget i den fuglerige park ned til Victoria-søen var en god afslutning på rejsen. Herfra var der kun få

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minutters kørsel til rejsens sidste hotel, det kun et år gamle Imperial Beach Resort, der med sin gennemførte dårlige smag er en sand rædsel trods sit forsøg på at være et luksushotel.

10. marts

For sidste gang på rejsen stod vi tidligt op og stillede kufferterne uden for døren, så bilerne kunne blive pakket, mens vi spiste morgenmad. Fra hotellet var der kun ti minutters kørsel til lufthavnen, og herfra lettede vi planmæssigt kl. 10 med kurs mod London. Efter en begivenhedsløs flyrejse og et flyskift i London ankom vi til Københavns Lufthavn i Kastrup kl. 21.35 – hjemme igen til sne og frost.

Rockjumper Birding Tours & Danish Ornithological Society

Trip Report Uganda

20th February – 10th March 2006

Compiled and written by David Hoddinott from records kept during the course of the trip.



Chimpanzee and Murchison Falls.

Tour Leaders: Soeren Skov and David Hoddinott

Participants: Torben Carlsen & Vibeke Tofte, Carl Henrichsen, Hanne Kapala, Lise Larsen, Flemming & Vibeke Moeller, Hans & Inger Meltofte, Peter Schousboe, Porl & Vivi Westh

Uganda is justly famous as the home of the bizarre Shoebill, the dream of many a birder, and for supporting over half the world's remaining Mountain Gorillas. Our jam-packed itinerary produced far more than the intimate experiences we enjoyed of these main targets. In all, we found over five hundred and fifty species of birds and a wealth of other wildlife in this, one of Africa's most biologically diverse countries. Our other highlights ranged from obtaining fantastic photographic opportunities of Grauer's Broadbill one of

Africa's rarest birds, to boating down the mighty Victoria Nile and watching Giant Forest Hog and magical experiences with several families of Chimpanzees.

After a morning arrival at sleepy Entebbe (where the aircraft from the famous 1976 raid still lies derelict on a runway!), we transferred to Luwero Swamp where we were treated to the spectacle of thousands of Abdim's Storks. Next we drove northwards to Masindi, picking up some great birds *en route* including Bruce's Green-Pigeon, the stunning White-crested Turaco, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, White-headed Barbet, Spotted Flycatcher and Purple Glossy-Starling.

We made our acquaintance with Uganda's vast rainforests the following day, at the world-famous Royal Mile, one of Africa's highest rated forest birding sites. Highlights included great scope views of Dwarf and Blue-breasted Kingfishers, the magnificent Crowned Hawk-Eagle, a confiding Gray Parrot, a stunning male Emerald Cuckoo, Sabine's Spinetail, Blue-throated Roller, the scarce White-thighed Hornbill, Chestnut-capped, African Forest and African Shrike Flycatchers, the beautiful Black-capped Apalis and finally the mega Ituri Batis.

The vast Murchison Falls National Park, which straddles the mighty Victoria Nile, was our next destination. Departing from our tranquil lodge, we explored various sections of the park. On our boat trip to the Lake Albert Delta, hundreds of waterbirds lined the banks including the impressive Shoebill and mammals including African Buffalo and African Elephant were evident. Later, we encountered large herds of game during an excursion into palm savannas north of the Nile. Here we were lucky to locate the seldom seen Patas Monkey. Further exploration in the park took us to the mighty Falls themselves, where the Nile is forced through a ten metre gap resulting in the strongest flow of water on the planet! Rock Pratincoles wheeled in the spray and other birding highlights included good numbers of Grasshopper Buzzards, Lesser Spotted Eagle, the nomadic Caspian Plover, Abyssinian Roller and a Stanley Bustard which had been attracted by the grass fires, stolid Abyssinian Ground-Hornbills and the stunning Northern Carmine Bee-eaters, Black-billed Barbet, Silverbird, Brown-backed Woodpecker and uncommon Pygmy Sunbirds.

Heading south, we re-entered the forest zone again at Budongo, finding amongst many other species, a magnificent male White-spotted Flufftail, Speckle-breasted Woodpecker and Compact Weaver. Kibale Forest, Africa's premier Chimpanzee-watching destination was our next stop. Our Chimpanzee trek provided superb encounters with our closest living relatives. Primates are particularly abundant here and we enjoyed excellent viewing of several species of monkeys. Birding highlights included Crested Guineafowl, Black-billed Turaco, the bizarre Yellow-billed Barbet, White-headed Woodhoopoe, Joyful Greenbul, Mountain Wagtail, the gorgeous Many-colored Bushshrike, the localized Masked Apalis and striking Brown-capped Weavers.

The world-renowned Queen Elizabeth National Park was our next destination and we had sightings of Banded Snake-Eagle, a stunning male Pallid Harrier, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl,

a magnificent male Narina Trogon, Brown-eared Woodpecker, White-tailed Lark and literally thousands of waterbirds including a flock of eighty African Skimmer. Sightings of Giant Forest Hog, the largest and undeniably ugliest pig on the planet and large aggregations of Elephant and Hippopotamus during our unforgettable boat ride on the Kazinga Channel were further highlights.

However we had an appointment in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and our sense of excitement mounted as we approached this unique and priceless reserve. Approximately 600 Mountain Gorillas have survived the ravages of modern times, one for each ten million humans, and we were certainly privileged to be amongst those few who have at first hand, experienced these gentle giants. Although it requires an arduous trek, the awe in watching a family of Mountain Gorillas feeding, interacting and resting, is undoubtedly one of the greatest wildlife experiences. The birding at Bwindi is also nothing short of spectacular and we found a good selection of Albertine Rift endemics and other exciting forest birds. Memorable sightings included a beautiful Bar-tailed Trogon, Elliot's Woodpecker, Red-faced Woodland and Black-faced Rufous Warbler, the rare Chapin's Flycatcher, Equatorial Akalat, White-bellied Robin-Chat and Ansorge's Greenbul, only discovered in Uganda in 2001. Time at higher elevation sites in the reserve resulted in a different set of special birds and we were fortunate in observing the very rare Grauer's Broadbill, the stunning Regal Sunbird, Ruwenzori and Chestnut-throated Apalis, the striking Ruwenzori Batis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Dusky Crimsonwing and the multicoloured Doherty's Bush Shrike were all highlights.

In Lake Mburo National Park, we found African Finfoot and good numbers of raptors including majestic African Fish-Eagle and Palmnut Vulture. Other species included the rare Red-faced Barbet, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, a very confiding Pearl-spotted Owlet and Red-headed Weaver. Mammals abound in the park and we were treated to herds of Zebra and Impala.

Next it was on to Mabira Forest near the source of the Nile. This wonderful forest produced many gems including Great Blue Turaco, Jameson's Wattle-eye, the rare Weyns' Weaver, Toro Olive-Greenbul and Purple-throated Cuckooshrike. In the late afternoon we arrived at Jinja where we observed a huge roost of Straw-coloured Fruit Bats.

Our final birding stop, at Entebbe, produced and no less than six species of weavers including nest building Orange and Northern Brown-throated Weavers.



Grauer's Broadbill and Black Bee-eater. Photographs taken by David Hoddinott

Annotated List of Bird Species recorded

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows J. F. Clements *Birds of the World: A Checklist* 5th Edition (2000) Ibis Publishing Company, with updates to January 2005.
An asterisk (*) indicates an Albertine Rift endemic species.

Grebes

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

We enjoyed good scope views of one on a crater lake en route to Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pelicans

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

This large pelican was first seen at Lake Kikorongo where we found twenty, later small numbers were seen along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens

This is a common species in Uganda, regularly nesting at the roadside. Peak numbers of thirty were seen on the Kazinga Channel boat cruise, and smaller numbers at Lake Albert and finally at Lake Mburo.

Cormorants & Shags

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

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A large roost of an estimated eighty birds was found on our Kazinga Channel boat cruise, and smaller numbers at the Entebbe Botanical Gardens on our final day.

NOTE: The resident white-breasted African subspecies P. c. lucidus is regarded by some authorities to be a distinct species; White-breasted Cormorant.

Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

We recorded these widespread African cormorants on the Nile River cruise in Murchison Falls NP, on the Kazinga Channel and finally on Lake Victoria.

Anhinga & Darter

Darter

Anhinga melanogaster

Up to ten along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and smaller numbers in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

NOTE: The resident African subspecies P. c. rufa is regarded by most authorities to be a distinct species; African Darter.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns

Gray Heron

Ardea cinerea

A well-known, widespread heron, up to eight seen along the Nile and small numbers along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP and at Lake Mburo.

Black-headed Heron

Ardea melanocephala

Uganda's commonest heron, we recorded it almost daily in small numbers with highest numbers of thirty seen at a nesting colony near Queen Elizabeth NP.

Goliath Heron

Ardea goliath

A spectacular bird recorded in several wetlands including five on the Nile at Murchison, some of them providing fantastic close up views and allowing great photo opportunities of the largest heron in the world. Small numbers were also seen on the Kazinga Channel and at Lake Mburo NP.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Another widespread bird, four along the Nile, one near Murro and three on the Kazinga Channel.

NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands A. p. bournei is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne's Heron

Great (White) Egret

Ardea alba

Fairly common in Uganda, recorded along the Kazinga Channel and at several other wetlands including peak numbers of eight along the Nile.

NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.

Intermediate Egret

Egretta intermedia

Generally the least common of the three white, aquatic egrets, with our only sightings of two on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and two on the Kazinga Channel.

NOTE: This group may be split into 3 species, Yellow-billed Egret E. brachyrhyncha (which is the form we recorded in Uganda), Plumed Egret E. plumifera and the nominate Intermediate Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Common in wetlands throughout, with our first sighting of one on Lake Victoria and peak numbers of thirty on the Nile at Jinja.

NOTE: Clements lumps Little, Western Reef E. gularis and Madagascar's Dimorphic Egret E. dimorpha into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.

(Common) Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

Good numbers along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and again in Queen Elizabeth NP, especially on the Kazinga Channel.

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Ubiquitous, conspicuous and regularly seen accompanying herds of antelope, Buffalo or Elephants in the parks.

NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret E. coromanda. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.

Striated Heron

Butorides striatus

Recorded twice along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and several more seen on Lake Mburo.

NOTE: A polytypic and cosmopolitan superspecies with over 30 recognized forms. Clements recognizes three full species, the North American Green Heron B. virescens, Galapagos Heron B. sundevalli and the most widespread nominate form which we recorded in Uganda. This split is not recognized by Handbook of Birds of the World (del Hoyo et al) who lump these forms under the nominate..

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

One was seen during the boat cruise along the Nile, in Murchison Falls NP.

Hamerkop

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

This bizarre bird, forming a monotypic family endemic to the Afrotropics, is pleasantly common throughout Uganda, with our first sightings at Entebbe on our first day.

Storks

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

Four were seen on the Kazinga Channel where we had fantastic views of an adult in full breeding plumage, which allowed great video footage.

African Openbill (~ed Stork)

Anastomus lamelligerus

A common bird in Uganda, this freshwater mussel specialist was encountered on our first day and around wetlands elsewhere on the trip including good numbers of an estimated fifty birds on the Nile boat cruise.

Abdim's Stork

Ciconia abdimii

Large flocks totaling several thousand individuals were seen in Murchison Falls NP, and a small flock of thirty in Lake Mburo NP.

Woolly-necked Stork

Ciconia episcopus

Some participants saw one near Kabale and finally we all had great views of one in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens on our last day.

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

This magnificent bird was first seen along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP where we saw peak numbers of six, with further sightings on the Kazinga Channel and at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumeniferus

A very common and conspicuous bird in Uganda, where it has become commensal with man in many areas. We saw them in the Queen Elizabeth NP, Murchison Falls NP and even in downtown Kampala, where they nest atop ornamental trees in the city gardens!

Shoebill

Shoebill

Balaeniceps rex

The essence of Uganda, we found an amazing six at the edge of tall papyrus on our Nile boat cruise. We had particularly good scope views of our first two birds.

Ibises & Spoonbills

Sacred Ibis

Threskiornis aethiopicus

Small numbers seen in Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth, Lake Mburo and Jinja.

NOTE: The Malagasy *T. e. bernieri* and Aldabran *T. e. abbotti* are sometimes split off as Madagascar White Ibis *T. bernieri*

Hadada Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

Another typical sound of moist areas in Africa, Hadadas were found almost daily in small numbers.

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

A single bird was seen in the Lake Albert delta with a further sighting of one on the Nile at Jinja.

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba

This distinctive bird was first seen in the Lake Albert delta with a further sighting in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Swans, Geese & Ducks

Fulvous Whistling-Duck

Dendrocygna bicolor

Up to forty were seen from our boat on the Nile in Murchison falls and we had extended views of this attractive duck.

White-faced Whistling-Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

Amazingly, this widespread and familiar duck was seen at only one site along the Nile where we found ten birds.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiacus

Another common waterfowl, first seen at wetlands in Murchison Falls NP and peak numbers of twenty on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP. A further pair was seen in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

A flock of twenty were seen at a roadside wetland, en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Comb (Knob-billed) Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

A flock of thirty were found on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

NOTE: The Old World nominate *S. m. melanotos* (African Comb Duck) is sometimes considered separate from the New World *S. m. sylvicola* (American Comb Duck). Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

African Black Duck

Anas sparsa

A scarce species in Uganda, we were able to find two on a small stream in Kibale Forest.

NOTE: The Old World nominate (the form we recorded in Uganda) is sometimes lumped with the New World Green-winged Teal *A. carolinensis*. Clements does recognize this split.

Yellow-billed Duck

Anas undulata

Six birds were seen at a roadside wetland en route to Lake Mburo NP.

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

Six birds seen at a roadside wetland en route to Lake Mburo NP.

Osprey Pandionidae

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

A total of three seen along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae

African Cuckoo Hawk

Aviceda cuculoides

We had good views of two near our lodge in Murchison Falls NP.

European Honey-buzzard

Pernis apivorus

Our first sighting was of one on the Royal Mile at Budongo Forest, one in Kibale NP and finally one in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Black-shouldered (-winged) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Another well-known raptor seen in small numbers in open habitats at scattered sites including sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP and again in Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: Some authorities lump the African and Asian Black-shouldered Kite E. caeruleus with Australian Kite E. axillaris and the American E. leucurus White-tailed Kite. Clements recognizes these three forms as full species.

Black Kite

Milvus migrans

This ubiquitous, fork-tailed raptor was found in good numbers through-out Uganda. All birds seen were of the resident, yellow-billed African races.

NOTE: Many authorities treat the resident African subspecies of this raptor as a separate species, Yellow-billed Kite M. parasitus.

African Fish-Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

A familiar bird whose ringing call is one of the archetypal sounds of Africa, we recorded good numbers around wetlands throughout the tour, with tame pairs along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP being especially memorable. We were afforded great views of several atop large *Euphorbia*'s which provided wonderful photo opportunities.

Palm-nut Vulture

Gypohierax angolensis

We first observed this handsome vulture in Murchison Falls NP and various sights throughout Uganda, with most records coming from Queen Elizabeth NP.

Hooded Vulture

Necrosyrtes monachus

The common vulture around human habitation, with good numbers recorded near Kampala at the beginning and the end of the trip.

(African) White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

The common vulture in savanna areas, we recorded eight birds soaring in a thermal in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Rueppell's Griffon

Gyps rueppellii

We had wonderful views of three on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

White-headed Vulture

Trigonoceps occipitalis

A single seen flying on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Beudouin's Snake-Eagle

Circaetus beaudouini

This rare raptor was seen daily in flight in Murchison Falls NP where we were fortunate to locate up to four individuals in a day.

NOTE: This resident and partially migratory Sahelian species is regarded by some authorities to be a form of Short-toed Eagle C. gallicus.

Black-breasted (~ched) Snake-Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

One of these strikingly patterned raptors were observed in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: This resident Central and Southern African species is regarded by some authorities to be a form of Short-toed Eagle C. gallicus.

Brown Snake-Eagle

Circaetus cinereus

The commonest snake-eagle in Uganda, where we recorded two, one below the Butiaba escarpment and another in Lake Mburo NP.

(Western) Banded Snake-Eagle

Circaetus cinerascens

Two of these uncommon raptors were seen at Ishasha in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

The "tightrope-walker" of the raptor world is a handsome species that we found in healthy numbers in the savanna parks of Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth.

Western (Eurasian) Marsh-Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

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This Palearctic migrant was seen in small numbers throughout Uganda with highest counts of five individuals in a single day in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pallid Harrier

Circus macrourus

This elegant Palearctic bird was seen in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NPs, where we had a total of three individuals, all stunning males.

Montagu's Harrier

Circus pygargus

Generally less common than Pallid Harrier in Uganda, we nevertheless recorded a total of five individuals. Peak numbers were three in Murchison Falls NP.

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene)

Polyboroides typus

A distinctive raptor recorded six times at scattered sights throughout Uganda.

Lizard Buzzard

Kaupifalco monogrammicus

An attractive raptor that was first seen at Luwero Swamp, with further sightings at scattered sites around Uganda.

Eastern Chanting-Goshawk

Melierax poliopterus

We obtained excellent views of this long-legged raptor in Bugungu GR in Murchison Falls NP. This individual was well south of its normal range and this due perhaps to the favourable, extremely dry conditions in the area.

Gabar Goshawk

Micronisus gabar

This uncommon raptor was seen once in Bugungu GR in Murchison Falls NP. We had great views of a juvenile which was seen eating another bird.

Shikra (Little Banded Goshawk)

Accipiter badius

This small *Accipiter* was seen very well near Masindi.

NOTE: We recorded the Northern Shikra A. b. spheonurus which some authorities consider distinct from the southern African Southern Shikra A. b. polyzonoides. These forms may also be split from the Asian nominate A. b. badius and other Asian forms. Clements does not as yet recognize any of these splits.

Little Sparrowhawk

Accipiter minullus

This diminutive, yet fierce *Accipiter* was seen once during our day at Kibale NP. We had great scope views of an adult.

Black Goshawk

Accipiter melanoleucus

We had superb views of one soaring above our camp near Kibale NP. A further one was seen roosting during our night drive at Ruhizha.

Grasshopper Buzzard

Butastur rufipennis

Extensive bush fires in the Murchison Falls NP area had brought about an irruption of this Sahelian migratory species, and we enjoyed superb sightings of up to forty a day in the park.

Eurasian (Common) Buzzard

Buteo buteo

This Palearctic raptor was seen in small numbers at Murchison Falls NP and again near Lake Mburo NP.

Mountain Buzzard

Buteo oreophilus

A total of five birds were observed in the Ruhizha area over a period of two days.

NOTE: Some authorities including del Hoyo et al in HBW lump the Southern African Forest Buzzard B. trizonatus within this species. Clements recognizes them as two full species.

Augur Buzzard

Buteo augur

A handsome buzzard that is pleasantly common in the mountainous, southwestern corner of Uganda, we recorded a total of six birds with highest numbers in the Ruhizha area.

NOTE: Some authorities lump the Southern African Jackal Buzzard B. rufofuscus and the Somalia Archer's Buzzard B. archeri within this species. Clements and most other authorities now recognize three full species.

Lesser Spotted Eagle

Aquila pomarina

This brown Palearctic eagle with “stove-pipe” legs, was seen in Murchison Falls NP where we found two birds.

Tawny Eagle

Aquila rapax

We found one in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Wahlberg's Eagle

Aquila wahlbergi

This raptor was commonly seen in open habitat throughout Uganda, with most sightings coming from the Murchison Falls area. At this site we had both dark and pale morph individuals.

Martial Eagle

Polemaetus bellicosus

This, Africa's largest eagle, was seen twice in Queen Elizabeth NP, our first sighting was of a wonderful adult seen alongside the road with a further sighting of a juvenile on the Kazinga Channel.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

A very common raptor in Uganda, with small numbers daily in moist woodland habitats.

Cassin's Hawk-Eagle

Spizaetus africanus

This rare forest-dwelling raptor was seen at Mubwindi Swamp where we all obtained wonderful views of a pair soaring above us.

(African) Crowned Hawk-Eagle

Stephanoaetus coronatus

This impressive raptor, the most powerful in Africa and Africa's version of the Harpy Eagle (it preys largely on monkeys), was first seen at Budongo forest with further sightings at Kibale and Buhoma.

Falcons & Caracaras

Lesser Kestrel

Falco naumanni

We had good views of four on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Eurasian (Common/Rock) Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

This widespread, familiar raptor was seen once near Masindi.

Gray Kestrel

Falco ardosiaceus

This open country raptor was observed in small numbers several times during the tour with our best views at Murchison Falls.

Red-necked Falcon

Falco chicquera

This elegant raptor, which is uncommon in Uganda, was seen near Masindi where we found a superb pair with four juveniles.

African Hobby

Falco cuvierii

This sought after falcon was observed once near Jinja.

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

This cosmopolitan raptor was seen once in Murchison Falls NP.

Pheasants & Partridges

Coqui Francolin

Francolinus coqui

This localized species was heard in Lake Mburo NP.

Crested Francolin

Francolinus sephaena

Two individuals of this bantam-like bird were first observed in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

Scaly Francolin

Pternistes squamatus

This elusive species was heard near Murro.

Nahan's Francolin

Francolinus nahani

Three birds were seen very briefly at Kaniyo Pabidi and later we were treated to superb views of three in Mabira Forest.

Heuglin's Francolin

Francolinus icterorhynchus

Four of these localized francolins were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Red-necked Spurfowl

Francolinus afer

The most commonly recorded francolin on the trip, with large numbers seen in the savanna reserves of Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP's.

Harlequin Quail

Coturnix delegorguei

We had splendid views of one walking in a burnt field in Murchison Falls NP.

Blue Quail

Coturnix adansonii

We had superb views of two males at Murro, a rare bird in Uganda.

Guineafowl

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Common and ubiquitous, Helmeted Guineafowl were encountered in good numbers at many sites.

NOTE: The nominate N. m. meleagris (Helmeted Guineafowl) which we recorded in Uganda, is sometimes regarded as distinct from the western N. m. galeata (West African Guineafowl) and the southern N. m. mitrata (Tufted Guineafowl.) Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Crested Guineafowl

Guttera pucherani

We obtained good views of two of these fowls on a "Bad Hair Day" at Budongo Forest and again crossing the road near Kaniyo Pabidi.

NOTE: The form concerned is sometimes split off as Western Crested Guineafowl G. edouardi

Buttonquail

Small Buttonquail

Turnix sylvatica

We saw one briefly in Murchison Falls NP.

Cranes

Gray (Southern) Crowned-Crane

Balearica regulorum

Uganda's handsome national bird is delightfully common throughout the country, with a stunning encounter of seventy-five on the Nile River in Murchison Falls NP. Later we found good numbers in Lake Mburo NP.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots

White-spotted Flufftail

Sarothrura pulchra

This secretive, forest rallid's hooting call was heard in several forests and one stunning male was seen near Kibale Forest. This was certainly one of the highlights of the trip !

Red-chested Flufftail

Sarothrura rufa

A secretive swamp-swelling rail, we heard one calling at Mubwindi Swamp.

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

Africa's common wetland crake, we saw six on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP, with a further six on the Kazinga Channel.

Purple Swampphen

Porphyrio porphyrio

This usually common rallid is strangely scarce in Uganda, with our only sighting being of two at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognised as distinct species. The form we recorded would then become African Swampphen P. madagascariensis. Other forms to be recognised may include Indian Swampphen P. poliocephalus, Philippine Swampphen P. pulverulentus and Eastern Swampphen P. melanotus.

Finfoot

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African Finfoot

Podica senegalensis

An uncommon and sought-after species, we were fortunate to have excellent views of a female in Lake Mburo NP. One of the avian highlights of the trip.

Bustards

Stanley Bustard

Neotis denhami

A rare and nomadic bird in Uganda, we were fortunate to have great views of one individual in Murchison Falls NP.

Black-bellied Bustard

Lissotis melanogaster

An uncommon bird to see in Uganda, we managed great views of several individuals in Murchison Falls NP, and again in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Jacanas

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

A widespread and characteristic wader was conspicuous in wetlands throughout the tour. First found at Murchison Falls NP along the Nile River where we estimated eight individuals in a single day with further sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Stilts & Avocets

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

This characteristic wader was found in good numbers on the Kazinga Channel where we estimated twenty birds.

Thick-knees

Water Thick-knee

Burhinus vermiculatus

This species is common at the edges of wetlands in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs, with up to twenty individuals seen along the Kazinga Channel.

Eurasian Thick-knee

Burhinus oedicephalus

A rare and seasonal visitor to Uganda, we managed to find a magnificent flock of sixty on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Senegal Thick-knee

Burhinus senegalensis

The common thick-knee along the Victoria Nile, a total of three birds seen on the boat cruise.

Coursers & Pratincoles

Temminck's Courser

Cursorius temminckii

We had great views of three in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole

Glareola pratincola

This elegant wader was seen first at Murchison Falls, where we observed a flock of forty individuals along the Nile. A further ten were seen on the Kazinga Channel.

Rock (White-collared) Pratincole

Glareola nuchalis

A common denizen of rapids in the Victoria Nile, where at least thirty were present around Murchison Falls. We enjoyed superb scope views and watched them foraging in the mists of the falls.

Plovers & Lapwings

Long-toed Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus crassirostris

Six of these elegant waders were found at Murchison Falls NP and eight more were later observed at Lake Mburo NP.

Spur-winged Plover (Lapwing)

Vanellus spinosus

The northern counterpart of the familiar Blacksmith Plover, these vociferous birds were common and conspicuous in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NPs.

Black-headed Lapwing

Vanellus tectus

We had wonderful views of a pair with two chicks on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Senegal (Lesser Black-winged) Lapwing

Vanellus lugubris

A lapwing of burnt or heavily grazed grassland, we recorded a flock of ten at Ishasha in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Crowned Lapwing

Vanellus coronatus

Up to four were seen daily in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Wattled Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus senegallus

This grassland-dwelling lapwing was found in small numbers throughout the trip, with our first sighting coming from an open area in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings of up to twenty on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP and six in Lake Mburo NP.

Common Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

This Palearctic migrant was seen only on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP where we saw four birds.

Kittlitz's Plover

Charadrius pecuarius

Ten seen on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Caspian Plover

Charadrius asiaticus

We enjoyed wonderful sightings of this nomadic species, sixty in Murchison Falls NP and up to eighty in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Sandpipers & Allies

Common Snipe

Gallinago gallinago

This Palearctic migrant was seen in small numbers at Murchison Falls NP, Queen Elizabeth NP, and finally at Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: The New World Wilson's Snipe G. g. delicata is sometimes considered distinct from the Old World nominate form..

Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

Seen only in Queen Elizabeth NP, six along the Kazinga Channel.

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

First observed in Murchison Falls NP, with higher counts in Queen Elizabeth NP and finally a single in Lake Mburo NP.

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

Up to five seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

First observed in Murchison Falls NP, again in Queen Elizabeth NP, and finally peak numbers of six at Lake Mburo NP and the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Peak numbers of up to six observed in Murchison Falls NP, with further sightings in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Six along the Kazinga Channel and ten in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

A scarce bird in Uganda, we found a single bird along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Four seen along the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Eight seen along the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Gulls

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

About thirty seen along the Kazinga Channel.

NOTE: This polytypic species has a confusing taxonomy and several forms have been split off and several other forms may be split off in the future.

Heuglin's Gull *Larus heuglini*

A single individual of this pale-backed gull seen along the Kazinga Channel.

NOTE: This form has recently been split from Lesser Black-backed Gull L. fuscus.

Gray-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus*

About forty individuals seen on the Kazinga Channel.

(Common) Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

A single bird in non-breeding plumage along the Kazinga Channel

Terns

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*

Thirty estimated along the Kazinga Channel and one in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

We found one on the Kazinga Channel and twenty on Lake Victoria seen from the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Thousands were seen along the Nile, Murchison Falls NP.

Skimmers

African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris*

One of Africa's most elegant birds. We were fortunate to observe a flock of eighty on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Doves & Pigeons

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*

Common in urban environments especially in Kampala.

Speckled Pigeon

Columba guinea

One seen in Kampala with further sightings of ten in Kabale.

Afep Pigeon

Columba unicincta

This plump, forest pigeon was only observed at Kibale Forest, where one was seen flying across the road.

Rameron (African Olive) Pigeon

Columba arquatrix

This widespread African forest pigeon only occurs in the higher parts of Bwindi NP, where we saw small numbers daily at Ruhizha.

African Mourning Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

Another fairly common savanna dove, with its distinctive call being a regular background sound in Murchison Falls NP and Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

Probably Uganda's commonest dove, inhabiting a wide range of moist woodland and forest habitats, with good numbers recorded almost daily throughout the trip.

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove

Streptopelia capicola

Common in open savanna in the southern parts of the country, with large numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP and again in Lake Mburo NP.

Vinaceous Dove

Streptopelia vinacea

This richly marked dove replaces the much more widespread Ring-necked Dove as the common savanna dove in the drier areas along the Nile, and is most easily separated from that species by its call.

Laughing (Palm) Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

A widespread, familiar species recorded in good numbers at several locations during the tour.

Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

In Uganda, this familiar woodland dove is restricted to the southern and eastern savannas, and we found a pair in Lake Mburo NP.

Black-billed Wood-Dove

Turtur abyssinicus

The common wood-dove of the dry, northern savanna around Murchison Falls NP where we obtained great views of several birds.

Blue-spotted Wood-Dove

Turtur afer

Uganda's most widespread wood-dove and commonly recorded on many days of the tour. Its stuttering, down-scale hooting characteristically ends abruptly (rather than tailing off like the similar Emerald-spotted and Tambourine Dove).

Tambourine Dove

Turtur tympanistria

The forest equivalent of the wood-doves, and therefore widespread and common in Uganda, we saw small numbers on many tour days (with many more heard daily).

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

We obtained brief views of this attractive long-tailed dove at the base of the Butiaba Escarpment.

Bruce's Green-Pigeon

Treron waalia

A total of eight were seen in a fruiting fig tree near Masindi.

African Green-Pigeon

Treron calva

Another common pigeon in Uganda, their distinctive lime-yellow bodies were frequently seen perched atop roadside trees throughout the tour.

Parrots, Macaws & Allies

Red-headed Lovebird

Agapornis pullarius

A lovely little parrot, three were seen by some participants en route to Murchison Falls NP.

(African) Gray Parrot

Psittacus erithacus

A stunning pair was scoped at Budongo Forest with further sightings at scattered forest sites throughout the trip. It is so much better to see them in the wild than as the usual cage bird.

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot

Poicephalus meyeri

A parrot of moister savanna and woodland. We first observed a pair near Masindi with further sightings from Lake Mburo NP.

Turacos

Great Blue Turaco

Corythaeola cristata

Arguably one of Africa's most spectacular birds, this huge frugivore is wonderfully common in Uganda and we found good numbers on several days.

Black-billed Turaco

Tauraco schuettii

The common turaco of Uganda forests, we had several encounters with this beautiful bird. This species was scoped and seen exceptionally well at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

White-crested Turaco

Tauraco leucolophus

We obtained superb scope views of one alongside the road en route from Luwero Swamp to Masindi. Often considered the most beautiful of all turacos.

Ross' Turaco

Musophaga rossae

Another stellar turaco, which we observed several times during the tour with our best views being of our first sighting of a pair near Murro.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides personatus

A bizarre bird with enormous character, we had great views of several in Lake Mburo NP.

Eastern (Gray) Plantain-eater

Crinifer zonurus

This floppy-winged bird with a maniacal call is the essence of moist woodland in Uganda and we saw many individuals throughout.

Cuckoos

Pied Cuckoo

Clamator jacobinus

We had great views of two in Murchison Falls NP, a scarce bird in Uganda.

Levaillant's (African Striped) Cuckoo

Clamator levaillantii

Several individuals of this long-tailed cuckoo seen in the Buhoma area.

Red-chested Cuckoo

Cuculus solitarius

This familiar bird was frequently heard throughout the trip, but only seen on three occasions, the first being in Budongo Forest where we obtained great scope views of one.

Black Cuckoo

Cuculus clamosus

The "I'm so saAAD!" call of this bird was heard at several localities and we had superb scope views of one of the gabonensis race near Murro and the nominate at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Common Cuckoo

Cuculus canorus

We found several of these migrants in Bwindi Impenetrable NP with scattered sightings elsewhere.

African Cuckoo

Cuculus gularis

Several seen in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NP's.

Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx mechowi

The most commonly heard and widespread of the three long-tailed cuckoos in Uganda.

Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx olivinus

A very difficult species to see. We had it calling at close quarters in Bwindi Impenetrable NP on several occasions.

Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx montanus

Another species far more often heard than seen, we heard several at Ruhizha.

Klaas' Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx klaas

A brood parasite favoring the cup nests of woodland birds, many heard throughout the tour and one seen in Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Emerald Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx cupreus

Generally more shy and less common than its congeners, we had good views of this species on the Royal Mile and again on the Neck, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Dideric Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx caprius

This widespread African species was heard on many days of the tour and first observed in Murchison Falls, with further sightings at several other localities.

Yellowbill

Ceuthmochares aereus

This peculiar, malkoha-like cuckoo was seen at several forest sites including Bwindi and Budongo.

Black Coucal

Centropus grillii

We had magnificent views of one adult in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Blue-headed Coucal

Centropus monachus

This large swamp-dwelling coucal was first observed inside Murchison Falls NP, with a further sighting at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Senegal Coucal

Centropus senegalensis

An uncommon bird in Uganda, we had good views of one near Murro.

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

The commonest coucal in Uganda, and across much of East Africa. We first observed it at Murchison Falls, with further sightings from Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: Clements does not recognise the widely accepted split of the southern dark-browed Burchell's Coucal C. burchelli from the northerly White-browed Coucal C. superciliosus which we recorded in Uganda.

Typical Owls

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl

Bubo lacteus

Three magnificent views of this species in Queen Elizabeth NP with a further sighting at Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: Clements splits this northern, dark-eyed form from the, more southerly yellow-eyed Spotted Eagle-Owl B. africanus. This split is not widely accepted.

African Wood-Owl

Strix woodfordii

Fantastic views of a single bird at dusk inside of our camp at Kibale.

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium tephronotum

We enjoyed fabulous scope views of one in Lake Mburo NP. It's false eyes on the back of its head were also clearly seen.

Nightjars & Allies

Black-shouldered Nightjar

Caprimulgus nigriscapularis

We heard this species near Kibale Forest.

Montane (Ruwenzori) Nightjar [*]

Caprimulgus ruwenzorii

We had fair views of a single bird in the spotlight at Ruhizha.

NOTE: Clements lumps the nominate Rwenzori endemic form of this nightjar with the more widespread Montane or Abyssinian Nightjar, widely regarded as a different species C. poliocephalus. Furthermore, Usambara Nightjar C. guttifer, a Tanzanian endemic, is regarded as a third species within this complex. Clements does not accept these splits, however, they are treated as distinct by Stevenson & Fanshawe.

Swamp (White-tailed/Natal) Nightjar

Caprimulgus natalensis

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A single bird was seen well in Lake Mburo NP, during our night drive.

Slender-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus clarus*

A single bird was seen in Murchison Falls NP, during our night drive.

Square-tailed (Mozambique/Gabon) Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii*

Four birds were seen well in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Standard-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx longipennis*

One of the world's most bizarre species and certainly one of the highlights of our tour. We obtained superb views of six individuals on our night drive in Murchison Falls, including several males, with stunning long standards.

Swifts

Scarce Swift *Schoutedenapus myoptilus*

This forest swift was seen at the Neck, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Sabine's Spinetail *Rhaphidura sabini*

This scarce forest spinetail was observed over the Royal Mile at Budongo Forest.

African Palm-Swift *Cypsiurus parvus*

Plentiful around palms throughout, we observed large numbers almost daily during the tour.

NOTE: The nominate African form of the Palm-Swift is considered to be distinct from the Malagasy form C. p. gracilis by some authorities. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*

A flock of five were seen in Kasese during our lunch stop.

Common (Eurasian) Swift *Apus apus*

An estimated ten individuals of this Palearctic migrant were seen flying near Budongo Forest with further sightings at scattered sites.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*

The common urban swift, with large numbers found near Kampala.. We saw many birds at Mweya Lodge in Queen Elizabeth NP.

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*

Fork-tailed and with a sickle-shaped (rather than square) white rump, we found this species daily in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Mousebirds

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus*

A contender for commonest bird of the trip, with large numbers recorded daily.

Blue-naped Mousebird *Urocolius macrourus*

The fast-flying, savanna cousin of Speckled Mousebird and sporting a most unlikely blue patch on its nape, we found this species first in Murchison Falls NP, with good numbers thereafter at Queen Elizabeth NP and again in Lake Mburo NP.

Trogon

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina*

The guttural hooting of this magnificent bird was heard at several forest sites and a superb male seen in Maramagumbo Forest, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Bar-tailed Trogon *Apaloderma vittatum*

We enjoyed an incredible seven sightings of this beautiful bird in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Kingfishers

Malachite Kingfisher

Alcedo cristata

The common, small kingfisher of aquatic habitats, with maximal numbers seen on our launch cruises in Queen Elizabeth NP, Murchison Falls NP, and again at Lake Mburo.

African Pygmy-Kingfisher

Ispidina (Ceyx) picta

This beautiful, little bird was seen in small numbers in savanna habitat throughout, with our best sightings coming from Murchison Falls NP.

(African) Dwarf Kingfisher

Ispidina (Ceyx) lecontei

Another elusive forest kingfisher which availed to incredible telescope views along the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

Chocolate-backed Kingfisher

Halcyon badia

A bird which we heard on many occasions along the Royal Mile, we were extremely fortunate to obtain great scope views of a single bird.

Gray-headed (Chestnut-bellied) Kingfisher

Halcyon leucocephala

This beautiful woodland kingfisher was first observed near Murchison Falls and thereafter frequently recorded in all savanna areas. The highest daily count was ten individuals in Murchison Falls.

Woodland Kingfisher

Halcyon senegalensis

One of the characteristic sounds of moist African savanna, this beautiful bird was first seen by the roadside on our first day and thereafter regularly encountered throughout Uganda.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher

Halcyon malimbica

This forest equivalent of the Woodland Kingfisher was heard on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

Striped Kingfisher

Halcyon chelicuti

Rather more drab than its spectacular cousins, this small, terrestrial kingfisher was first observed en-route on the first day near Luwero Swamp, and thereafter seen in small numbers daily in Lake Mburo NP.

Giant Kingfisher

Megaceryle maxima

We had brief views of one of this giant of the kingfisher world, along the Nile during our cruise in Murchison Falls NP. However we were treated to superb scope views of a pair in Entebbe Botanical Gardens on the last day of the tour.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

The world's commonest kingfisher was seen in large numbers in wetlands throughout, but seemed especially conspicuous on the launch cruises along the Kazinga Channel and Nile, and of course along the shores of Lake Victoria. As usual, it was one of the first and last tour birds!

Bee-eaters

Black Bee-eater

Merops gularis

A truly magnificent forest bee-eater with a most unlikely colour combination. We had fantastic scope views of a pair at Buhoma and later observed eight birds on the Nek in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Red-throated Bee-eater

Merops bullocki

The northern equivalent of the more familiar White-fronted Bee-eater and every bit as beautiful, good numbers were found along the Nile and we found a further four on the Kazinga Channel.

Little Bee-eater

Merops pusillus

The most widespread and familiar of a suite of look-alike bee-eaters in Uganda, we found them first in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings daily in Lake Mburo NP.

Blue-breasted (White-checked) Bee-eater *Merops variegatus*

Slightly larger and with a preference for fringes of papyrus beds, we found three individuals at Luwero Swamp.

NOTE: The Ethiopian form *M. v. lafresnayii*, is sometimes considered a distinct species, Abyssinian Bee-eater.

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates*

The largest of the three small look-alike bee-eaters and favouring forest fringes at higher altitudes, our first sighting was of up to sixteen in Kibale NP and they were seen on a daily basis at Buhoma and Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*

An elegant bee-eater of dry savanna, we found several on our first day near Masindi with further sightings in Murchison Falls NP.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*

Small flocks of these migratory birds were seen at two localities, our first sighting was of a flock at the post office in Hoima, later we enjoyed regular sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP. They breed in the Sahelian savanna but winter in the Equatorial forests.

Blue-checked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*

Another migrant, though typically found in larger flocks in the vicinity of water. We first recorded this species at Luwero Swamp, with sightings at other scattered sites throughout Uganda. Peak numbers of ten were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

This Palearctic migrant bee-eater was seen exceptionally well near Masindi where we found fifteen perched along powerlines.

Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus*

This stunningly coloured bee-eater was only found in Murchison Falls NP where we had splendid views of up to ten birds daily.

Rollers

European Roller *Coracias garrulus*

We had wonderful views of two on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinica*

This beautiful and elegant long-tailed roller was first observed on our first day near Masindi. We had one other sighting of a splendid adult in Murchison Falls NP. These birds were well south of their normal range, in the Sahelian savannas.

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata*

These magnificent birds were seen in Lake Mburo NP, on one of the last days of the tour.

NOTE: The Ethiopian, *C. c. lorti* might be split as Blue-breasted Roller.

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*

The common roller of moist, open country throughout Uganda, with highest numbers of ten birds seen between Jinja and Entebbe.

Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis*

Replaces Broad-billed Roller in closed forest environments and was observed on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest, where we enjoyed superb scope views of a pair.

Hoopoes

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One of these unique birds was seen at Ishasha in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognised by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar *U. marginalis* and Eurasian *U. epops*. The

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white-winged African form which we encountered in Uganda is often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe *U. senegalensis* with the fourth species being African Hoopoe *U. africana*. However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African. Further confusion arises in the placement of the *senegalensis* form within this grouping with most authorities placing it with the dark-winged *africana* group, however, Stevenson & Fanshawe place it with the white-winged Eurasian nominate grouping.

Woodhoopoes

Green Woodhoopoe

Phoeniculus purpureus

Three seen in the savanna in Lake Mburo NP.

White-headed Woodhoopoe

Phoeniculus bollei

This uncommon forest bird was first observed at Kibale Forest with further sightings from Buhoma and Ruhizha. Our first sightings were incredible as we all obtained scope views as the group of birds called and comically swung their tails back and forth in pendulum style.

Common (Greater) Scimitar-bill

Rhinopomastus cyanomelas

Another widespread and familiar African bird that we encountered once leaving Queen Elizabeth NP and again in the savannas of Lake Mburo NP.

Hornbills

Crowned Hornbill

Tockus alboterminatus

Common and widespread in moister habitats across the country, we saw our first birds north of Luwero Swamp our first day with further sightings throughout the tour.

African Pied Hornbill

Tockus fasciatus

Much more localised than its similar crowned cousin and with white tail edges (rather than tail tips), we found three in Entebbe Botanical Gardens on our last day.

African Gray Hornbill

Tockus nasutus

The common savanna hornbill in Uganda, with small numbers seen in the drier savannas of Murchison Falls and Lake Mburo NPs.

Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill

Ceratogymna subcylindricus

Another spectacular bird that is delightfully common, this species was seen in good numbers almost daily, starting with several at Entebbe on the first day.

White-thighed Hornbill

Ceratogymna albotibialis

Only seen in Budongo Forest, where we located eight in the vicinity of the Royal Mile.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped with the West African Brown-cheeked Hornbill *C. cylindricus*.*

Abyssinian (Northern) Ground-Hornbill

Bucorvus abyssinicus

A total of nine of these spectacular and unique birds were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Barbets

Gray-throated Barbet

Gymnobucco bonapartei

The barbet with the nose tufts and the toy-trumpet call. First found at Kibale Forest, with good numbers in also seen in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Speckled Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus scolopaceus

A scruffy, ubiquitous bird in lower altitude forest in Uganda, where it's purring call is one of the common background sounds. We obtained great views of one at Budongo Forest on the Royal Mile and a further one at Buhoma.

Western Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus coryphaeus

We had superb views of one at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus subsulphureus

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Similar to its more familiar yellow-rumped cousin but with a contrastingly yellow throat and a more rapid tempo to its “tinking”, this forest barbet was seen in small numbers at Budongo Forest and again at Buhoma.

Yellow (Golden) -rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus*

A ubiquitous bird in Uganda, occurring in savanna and forest throughout. Small numbers were seen and heard almost daily.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

A savanna species seen on several occasions, one near Masindi, another in Queen Elizabeth NP and finally one in Lake Mburo NP.

Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon duchaillui*

An elegant forest barbet with a beautiful purring call. Some of us had good views at Kibale Forest and later we all enjoyed superb views of one at Bidogi Swamp.

Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*

This unkempt-looking bird was first seen through the scope at Kaniyo Pabidi and again in Buhoma.

Spot-flanked Barbet *Tricholaema lacrymosa*

We had excellent views of this savanna barbet at Murchison Falls NP and again in Lake Mburo NP.

White-headed Barbet *Lybius leucocephalus*

This localized and often elusive barbet was first observed near Masindi where we found eight feeding in a fruiting fig.

Red-faced Barbet *Lybius rubrifaciens*

A very scarce and localised bird, we were extremely fortunate to see two in Lake Mburo NP.

Black-billed Barbet *Lybius guifsobalito*

A dapper-looking bird that was only encountered in Murchison Falls NP where we had good views of several birds.

Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus*

A spectacular barbet that is widespread in moist savanna, overgrown cultivation and gardens in Uganda. We had magnificent scope views of a pair in Jinja.

Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus purpuratus*

An elusive forest barbet, heard in all the western forests and often never seen but we were amazingly lucky with an obliging pair on the Royal Mile at Budongo Forest with a further sighting at Buhoma.

Honeyguides

Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator*

This, the only guiding honeyguide, was seen once in Murchison Falls NP.

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*

We had good views of one near Masindi.

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksi*

We obtained sightings of these elusive and rarely seen honeyguides in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

(Western) Least Honeyguide *Indicator exilis*

Some of us had extended scope views of one at Mubwindi Swamp at Ruhizha.

Cassin's Honeyguide (Honeybird) *Prodotiscus insignis*

We had excellent views of two individuals, of this elusive species, on the Nek in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Woodpeckers & Allies

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Rufous-necked Wryneck

Jynx ruficollis

We had great scope views of one near Buhoma.

Nubian Woodpecker

Campethera nubica

This attractive savanna species was observed in Murchison Falls, and finally at Queen Elizabeth NP.

Tullberg's Woodpecker

Campethera tullbergi

A beautiful forest woodpecker seen at Ruhizha in Bwindi NP by some of the group.

NOTE: The Ugandan form is split by some authorities and called Fine-banded Woodpecker, C. taeniolaema.

Buff-spotted Woodpecker

Campethera nivosa

This diminutive forest woodpecker was seen at Bigodi Swamp.

Brown-eared Woodpecker

Campethera caroli

Another beautiful forest-dwelling woodpecker, we had splendid views of one in Maramagumbo Forest, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Speckle-breasted Woodpecker

Dendropicos poecilolaemus

We had superb views of one of these rare birds at Bigodi Swamp.

Cardinal Woodpecker

Dendropicos fuscescens

This widespread African woodpecker was observed on several occasions. We enjoyed great views of a pair in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Golden-crowned (Yellow-crested) Woodpecker

Dendropicos xantholophus

This large forest woodpecker (with the almost invisible yellow crest!) was seen on both days in the Budongo Forest and we obtained good views of another at Buhoma.

Elliot's Woodpecker

Dendropicos elliotii

This fine woodpecker was first observed on several occasions in Buhoma with a mixed flock.

Gray Woodpecker

Dendropicos goertae

Our first observation was in Murchison Falls, with further sightings at our lunch stop in Kasese finally in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Olive Woodpecker

Dendropicos griseocephalus

We had great views of one at Mubwindi Swamp, Ruhizha.

Brown-backed Woodpecker

Dendropicos obsoletus

We found one on the Butiaba Escarpment

Broadbills

African Broadbill

Smithornis capensis

We managed to obtain great scope views of this species at Buhoma, while it was performing its strange and noisy circular display flight.

Grauer's Broadbill

Pseudocalyptomena graueri

We were treated to a spectacle of a pair nesting near the Mubwindi Swamp. We enjoyed incredible views of one of Africa's rarest birds.

Larks

White-tailed Lark

Mirafra albicauda

We had great views of one alongside the road in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafra africana

Several birds were seen daily during our drive through the dry savannah of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Flappet Lark

Mirafra rufocinnamomea

Uganda's most widespread lark, with sightings of small numbers daily in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-capped Lark

Calandrella cinerea

We had good views of a single individual in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: The African Red-capped Lark complex C. cinerea, was lumped within the Greater Short-toed Lark complex C. brachydactyla but is now considered distinct by most authorities. Several distinctive groupings have now been split off from Red-capped Lark, including Blanford's Lark of Ethiopia C. blanfordi.

Swallows

Bank Swallow (Sand Martin)

Riparia riparia

We recorded good numbers of this common and familiar hirundine in open country throughout the trip. Our most spectacular sightings came from Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NPs, where several thousand were estimated in a single day.

Rock Martin

Hirundo fuligula

This dark hirundine was seen en route from Buhoma to Ruhizha and again in the vicinity of Ruhizha.

NOTE: This confusing polytypic complex is being reviewed for multi-species splitting. Within the African populations, three potential species exist. The southern African nominate form H. f. fuligula would remain as Rock Martin and the more northern populations would become Red-throated Rock Martin H. pusilla which is resident in Uganda.

Palearctic birds would become Pale Crag Martin H. obsoleta. Clements does not as yet recognise any of these splits.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

An abundant Palearctic migrant recorded on almost every single day of the trip in good numbers.

NOTE: This cosmopolitan species complex is likely to be split based on the Old World nominate form and its congeners which would become Eurasian Swallow H. rustica and the New World Barn Swallow H. erythrogaster. Further splitting within the group may also be done e.g. the distinctive H. r. savignii which breeds in the Nile Valley and would be named Egyptian Swallow. We only recorded representatives of the Palearctic migrant Barn/Eurasian Swallow. Clements does not as yet recognise any of these splits.

Angola Swallow

Hirundo angolensis

Another very common hirundine in Uganda, we found several on our first day at Entebbe Airport. Small numbers were seen on most days thereafter.

Wire-tailed Swallow

Hirundo smithii

Conspicuous along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP, where four were seen. A single bird was also seen along the Kazinga Channel.

NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form which would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow which would be H. filifera. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Lesser Striped-Swallow

Hirundo abyssinica

A widespread African swallow that is fairly common in Uganda, with several at the roadside on our first day and found at several locations thereafter throughout the tour.

Rufous-chested (Red-breasted) Swallow

Hirundo semirufa

This large, handsome swallow was seen at close quarters near Kibale and again in Lake Mburo NP.

Mosque Swallow

Hirundo senegalensis

Another large attractive swallow, which we observed in Murchison Falls NP.

Red-rumped Swallow

Hirundo daurica

An uncommon species in Uganda, our first sighting was of two at Mweya, Queen Elizabeth NP with further sightings of several daily in the Ruhizha area which we observed foraging over the forest.

NOTE: This species complex may be a candidate for multi-species splitting, the Ugandan form remaining within the nominate group but H. d. melanocrissus of Ethiopia becoming Black-vented Swallow and H. d. domicella becoming West African Swallow.

House Martin

Delichon urbica

Another uncommon Palaearctic hirundine, which we observed in small numbers in the Ruhizha area.

White-headed Sawwing

Psalidoprocne albiceps

This elegant bird was first seen foraging near the Royal Mile, Budongo Forest. We had further sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black Sawwing

Psalidoprocne holomelas

Outnumbers the above species in most of the higher altitude sites in Uganda, with up to twenty daily in the south-western highlands, especially around Ruhizha.

NOTE: The Black Saw-wing complex is sometimes split into eight full species with the Ugandan form being retained in P. holomelas.

Wagtails & Pipits

African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

A common and familiar African bird that we found in good numbers virtually daily.

Cape Wagtail

Motacilla capensis

This species was seen only at Buhoma near our lodging

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Vast numbers of these Palaearctic migrants were found in open country throughout Uganda, with peak totals of up to sixty in the Mweya area.

Mountain (Long-tailed) Wagtail

Motacilla clara

We found a pair of these elegant birds on the stream in Kibale Forest.

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

This meadowlark-like bird is a common denizen of open habitat in Uganda, with small numbers recorded throughout the tour, and peak numbers of six individuals daily in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Plain-backed Pipit

Anthus leucophrys

We obtained excellent views of two birds near Budongo Forest and another near Masindi.

NOTE: A. l. goodsoni of central and SW Kenya may be split off from the nominate group A. leucophrys. The Ugandan races we recorded would probably remain within the nominate complex. Clements does not recognise this split.

African (Grassland/Grassveld) Pipit

Anthus cinnamomeus

The commonest and most widespread pipit in Africa, two were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: African pipit taxonomy is in rather a disarray and much further research is required in the phylogeny of this grouping. Several forms which are considered subspecies are likely to become full species in their own rights and several new forms are surely still to be described. The identification of two new species of pipits from an urban hockey field in Kimberley, South Africa, provides an excellent illustration regarding how little is known about African pipits and how little attention has been paid to them.

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Our first sighting was of three in Budongo Forest. Good numbers of this Palaearctic migrant were observed near Kibale Forest.

Cuckoo-shrikes

Gray Cuckooshrike

Coracina caesia

A total of five seen in the higher parts of Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Petit's Cuckooshrike

Campephaga petiti

An uncommon forest cuckoo-shrike that we recorded in small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable NP. We found a female sitting on a nest at Buhoma.

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike

Coracina phoenicea

We were fortunate to have great views of a stunning male near Masindi, a further one was seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Purple-throated Cuckooshrike

Coracina quiscalina

Three individuals (all males) seen well in Mabira Forest.

Bulbuls

Common Bulbul

Pycnonotus barbatus

A ubiquitous species and one of the few birds to be recorded on every day of the trip, with numerous daily tallies in excess of twenty individuals.

NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognised as distinct species within the super-species. The form that we saw in Uganda, P. b. tricolor may be split as Dark-capped Bulbul, Clements does not recognize this split.

Little Greenbul

Andropadus virens

Along with Yellow-whiskered, the commonest greenbul in lower altitude forest in Uganda, though much more commonly heard than seen. First seen at Kaniyo Pabidi, with small numbers seen at all other subsequent forest sites.

(Little) Gray Greenbul

Andropadus gracilis

We had good views of two on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

Ansorge's Greenbul

Andropadus ansorgei

Only recently discovered in Uganda, this species was seen exceptionally well at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Plain (Cameroon Sombre) Greenbul

Andropadus curvirostris

This inconspicuous greenbul was seen on several occasions in Budongo Forest.

Slender-billed Greenbul

Andropadus gracilirostris

A common greenbul of forest canopy, we saw them first at Budongo Forest, with small numbers at all other forest sites on the trip.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul

Andropadus latirostris

A common greenbul of forest undergrowth and mid-storey, we had superb sightings at Ruhizha and small numbers at Buhoma.

Eastern Mountain-Greenbul

Andropadus nigriceps

A conspicuous and attractive bird of highland forests that we found in good numbers in the upper sections of Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: Clements splits the form concerned as Eastern Mountain Greenbul, as opposed to Western Mountain Greenbul A. tephrolaemus of West Africa. Stevenson & Fanshawe and other authorities do not as yet accept this split and refer to the complex simply as Mountain Greenbul A. nigriceps.

Honeyguide Greenbul

Baeopogon indicator

The querulous calls of this canopy-dwelling greenbul were heard in Budongo Forest and again in Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Spotted Greenbul

Ixonotus guttatus

This species, which is restricted to Budongo Forest, was seen exceptionally well as we scoped one along the Royal Mile.

Yellow-throated Greenbul (Leaflove)

Chlorocichla flavicollis

A species that was heard throughout the trip, we finally had good views of two at Buhoma.

Joyful Greenbul

Chlorocichla laetissima

A strangely local greenbul in Uganda, we found it only in Kibale Forest NP, where it is a common resident at higher altitudes.

Toro Olive-Greenbul

Phyllastrephus hypochloris

Another confusing greenbul that usually makes matters worse by remaining in thick cover, we had a wonderful sighting of two in Mabira Forest.

NOTE: Baumann's Greenbul P. baumanni of West Africa is sometimes lumped into this species.

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Yellow-streaked Greenbul

Phyllastrephus flavostriatus

We first observed this wing-flicking species at Buhoma and a further one was observed at Ruhizha, where they are commoner.

White-throated Greenbul

Phyllastrephus albigularis

Another uncommon, skulking greenbul, of which we found a single bird along the Royal Mile with a subsequent sighting in Kibale Forest.

Common (Red-tailed) Bristlebill

Bleda syndactyla

The quiet, purring calls of this attractive greenbul were commonly heard at all forest sites on the trip, however, this shy, ant-following species was only seen at Mabira Forest our final day.

Yellow-spotted (Western) Nicator

Nicator chloris

An aberrant hook-billed greenbul that was observed exceptionally well along the roadside in Budongo Forest.

Red-tailed Greenbul

Criniger calurus

One of the most handsome of all greenbuls and a relatively common forest bird throughout Uganda, we saw good numbers with bird parties in Bwindi NP.

Thrushes & Allies

Rufous Flycatcher-Thrush (Fraser's Ant-Thrush) *Neocossyphus fraseri*

The distinctive whistle of this rufous, forest-based thrush, is one of the background sounds in many western Ugandan forests. We obtained good views of one on the Royal Mile.

Red-tailed Ant-Thrush

Neocossyphus rufus

This elusive species was seen at Kaniyo Pabidi where we enjoyed good views of two.

White-tailed Ant-Thrush

Neocossyphus poensis

This often secretive species was observed several times in Kibale Forest.

Rufous-tailed Rock-Thrush

Monticola saxatilis

We had good views of one in Murchison Falls NP, a scarce species in Uganda.

Olive Thrush

Turdus olivaceus

In Uganda, restricted to higher altitudes, with our only records coming from Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP where some of us had superb views of several birds.

NOTE: This polytypic species complex may be split into many as ten different species, and several are already generally accepted e.g. Taita Thrush T. helleri. The main north/south split is likely to be in Tanzania with the northern birds (including those in Uganda) becoming Mountain Thrush T. abyssinicus and the nominate form being called Olive Thrush.

African Thrush

Turdus pelios

Uganda's most common thrush, we first found it at Entebbe, and encountered this species in moist woodland and forest elsewhere on the trip.

Red-throated Alethe*

Alethe poliophrys

One of the most handsome Albertine Rift endemics, we found and heard several of these beautiful forest thrushes along the track at Buhoma, where we enjoyed splendid views.

Cisticolas & Allies

Red-faced Cisticola

Cisticola erythrops

This common, widespread and vocal species was heard on many occasions and seen first at Murro.

Singing Cisticola

Cisticola cantans

This species was seen in Murchison Falls NP where we found a single individual.

Trilling Cisticola

Cisticola woosnami

The strange, quavering call of this woodland cisticola was heard in Queen Elizabeth NP where we obtained great views of one. Later we enjoyed several sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

Chubb's Cisticola *Cisticola chubbi*

Another noisy cisticola with wonderful duetting songs, we found good numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chinianus*

A common and conspicuous denizen of drier *Acacia* savanna in the northern part of the country, we found three on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola galactotes*

The commonest wetland cisticola in Uganda, its winding song was heard issuing from reedbeds, papyrus swamps and damp grassland throughout the trip. First seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: This widespread African species complex has been proposed for multi-species splitting and the Ugandan form C. g. nyansae is likely to remain within the nominate grouping.

Carruthers's Cisticola *Cisticola carruthersi*

Replaces Winding in the center of papyrus swamps and hence less frequently encountered. We finally obtained great views of one at a roadside swamp en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Croaking (Striped) Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis*

A common denizen of moist grassland, we encountered this species first near Masindi with a further sighting in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Siffling (Short-winged) Cisticola *Cisticola brachypterus*

A small, nondescript warbler of open, bushy areas, which we observed at Ishasha in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Foxy Cisticola *Cisticola troglodytes*

This handsome bird of dry *Acacia* savanna was seen briefly on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*

Small numbers were seen in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NPs.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*

Another noisy and familiar African warbler, seen throughout the tour, peak numbers were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

White-chinned Prinia *Prinia (Schistolais) leucopogon*

This confiding, gregarious species was first observed on the higher section of Kibale Forest, with small numbers seen near Masindi and Bigodi Swamp.

Banded Prinia *Prinia bairdii*

This snappy-looking but at times skulking prinia was seen very well in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: The Ugandan form is sometimes split off as Black-faced Prinia P. melanops.

Red-winged Prinia (Warbler) *Heliolais erythroptera*

A widespread African warbler of local distribution in Uganda, we found a single individual in woodland in Murchison Falls NP.

Ruwenzori (Collared) Apalis* *Apalis ruwenzorii*

A beautiful Albertine Rift endemic that we found only in the montane forest around Ruhizha where we commonly heard but observed only once.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into Black-collared Apalis A. pulchra.

Black-capped Apalis *Apalis nigriceps*

A scarce bird in Uganda, we were fortunate to observe two individuals in a bird party along the Royal Mile.

Black-throated Apalis *Apalis jacksoni*

One of the commonest forest and forest edge apalises in Uganda, we saw this beautiful bird daily in Buhoma with further sightings at most forest sites.

Masked Apalis *Apalis binotata*

In Uganda, largely restricted to Kibale Forest NP, where we found one in an afternoon in the higher altitude, northern part of the park.

Black-faced (Mountain Masked) Apalis* *Apalis personata*

Another Albertine Rift endemic restricted to the south-western corner of the country, we found good numbers around Buhoma and Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flava*

This widespread, woodland apalis is relatively scarce in Uganda, with our only sightings being one in Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: This widespread polytypic African species is likely to be split into two or more species, with the central Ugandan form becoming Green-tailed Apalis A. caniceps. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Buff-throated Apalis *Apalis rufogularis*

A relatively common resident of the canopy of lower altitude forest in Uganda, with sightings first from the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest and later at Buhoma.

Chestnut-throated Apalis *Apalis porphyrolaema*

The commonest apalis in montane forest, with its “ringing telephone” call frequently heard, we obtained superb views of a three at close quarters at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: The more southerly form (occurring in Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi) is sometimes split off as Chapin’s Apalis A. chapini.

Gray Apalis *Apalis cinerea*

This species was seen at Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Gray-capped Warbler *Eminia lepida*

This attractive, yet skulking bird was first seen at Luwero Swamp with further sightings at Buhoma.

Green-backed (Gray-backed) Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*

The bleating calls of this common bird were heard in moist wooded habitat throughout Uganda, with our first sighting at Kaniyo Pabidi.

NOTE: Most authorities now recognise the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms C. brevicaudata. We encountered the grey-backed form in Uganda. Clements still lumps these two groups.

Yellow-browed Camaroptera *Camaroptera supercilialis*

This handsome warbler was heard in Budongo and Mabira Forests.

Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota*

Another skulking camaroptera, it’s piercing calls were heard at all lower altitude forest sites, with our only sighting of one at a confiding individual first seen along the Royal Mile.

Old World Warblers

White-winged Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus carpalis*

This highly localized and beautiful forest-dwelling warbler heard at many papyrus swamps and finally seen at a roadside swamp en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Grauer's Scrub- (Rush-) Warbler* *Bradypterus graueri*

Two individuals of this localised species, which is restricted to a handful of marshes in the Albertine Rift, were seen in Mubwindi Swamp in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Cinnamon Bracken-Warbler *Bradypterus cinnamomeus*

This undergrowth-dwelling warbler was heard in the Ruhizha area.

Cameroon (Evergreen Forest) Scrub-Warbler *Bradypterus lopezi*

We heard this species at Ruhizha, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Black-faced Rufous Warbler *Bathmocercus rufus*

The “reversing truck” call of this beautiful warbler was commonly heard at lower altitudes in Bwindi Impenetrable NP, several were seen at Buhoma.

Moustached Grass-Warbler (African Moustached-Warbler) *Melocichla mentalis*

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This attractive warbler, a denizen of rank grass, was encountered several times in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Sedge Warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

This Palearctic migrant was heard near our lodge in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Eurasian Reed-Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

This migrant warbler was observed in the tangled thickets of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Greater Swamp-Warbler

Acrocephalus rufescens

A single was seen in rank vegetation from our boat trip along the Kazinga Channel.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler

Hippolais pallida

We had great views of one in Murchison Falls NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

African (Dark-capped) Yellow Warbler

Chloropeta natalensis

This species was seen exceptionally well at Bigodi Swamp with a further sighting in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Mountain Yellow Warbler

Chloropeta similis

This beautiful songster was found in the montane forest around Ruhizha, with three birds seen including one at its nest.

Papyrus Yellow Warbler

Chloropeta gracilirostris

Some participants had brief views of one at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Buff-bellied Warbler

Phyllolais pulchella

This *Acacia*-inhabiting species was observed in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Grauer's Warbler*

Graueria vittata

This unusual, barred warbler (with a Scaly-throated Honeyguide-like call), was seen exceptionally well at Ruhizha skulking through the tangled vines.

Green-backed Eremomela

Eremomela canescens

This attractive warbler was seen very well in Murchison Falls NP where we found a small group of three.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into the West African E. pusilla (Senegal Eremomela.) The enlarged species is called Green-backed Eremomela.

Rufous-crowned Eremomela

Eremomela badiceps

Local in Uganda, we found this attractive bird on the Royal Mile and at Busingiro in Budongo Forest in small numbers.

Green Crombec

Sylvietta virens

The commonest and most widespread forest crombec, though small and inconspicuous (except by call). We heard the species almost daily at many forest sites, it was finally seen well in Maramagumbo Forest, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Lemon-bellied Crombec

Sylvietta leucophrys

We were fortunate to observe two along the Royal mile, a very scarce bird in Uganda.

White-browed Crombec

Sylvietta leucophrys

We found this attractive crombec at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Northern Crombec

Sylvietta brachyura

This dry *Acacia* woodland species was seen several times in Murchison Falls NP.

Red-faced Crombec

Sylvietta whytii

An uncommon woodland species, which we observed once near Lake Mburo NP.

Neumann's (Short-tailed) Warbler*

Hemitesia neumanni

This elusive Albertine Rift endemic literally ran circles around us in the undergrowth at Buhoma. We heard it on several occasions.

Yellow Longbill

Macrospenus flavicans

This skulking species was heard in Mabira Forest.

Gray Longbill

Macrospenus concolor

Another secretive species which we saw on the Royal Mile and again at Busingiro in Budongo Forest.

Green Hylia

Hylia prasina

Its “HEE-lia!” call was one of the common background sounds at all the lower altitude forest sites on the tour, with sightings from Sebitole and Bigodi Swamp.

Red-faced Woodland-Warbler*

Phylloscopus laetus

Another Albertine Rift endemic, which we encountered in good numbers in Ruhizha and Buhoma.

Willow Warbler

Phylloscopus trochilus

This tiny Palaearctic migrant was regularly encountered in small numbers, throughout Uganda.

Wood Warbler

Phylloscopus sibilatrix

We had good views of several in the canopy on the Royal Mile, Budongo Forest.

Yellow-bellied Hylia

Hylia flavigaster

We found one on the Butiaba Escarpment, a seldom seen bird in Uganda.

Fan-tailed Grassbird

Schoenicola brevirostris

We obtained excellent views of five of these uncommon birds, in rank grass, in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: This African species is sometimes lumped with the Indian *S. platyura* Broad-tailed Warbler.

Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

This attractive Palaearctic migrant was observed near Ruhizha where we had four individuals visiting fruiting trees.

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

We had good views of one at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Old World Flycatchers

Silverbird

Empidonax semipartitus

This beautiful flycatcher with chestnut underparts, was seen exceptionally well within Murchison Falls NP.

Pale Flycatcher

Bradornis pallidus

We saw a pair in Murchison Falls NP.

White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher

Melaenornis fischeri

Birds of the race *toruensis*, which lacks a white eye-ring, were common in Bwindi Impenetrable NP, with several seen daily.

Northern (Western) Black-Flycatcher

Melaenornis edolioides

First recorded in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Southern Black-Flycatcher

Melaenornis pammelaina

A pair of this scarce bird was seen well near our camp in Lake Mburo NP.

Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher *

Melaenornis ardesiacus

Two were seen near Mubwindi Swamp. A scarce Albertine Rift endemic.

African (Fraser's) Forest-Flycatcher

Fraseria ocreata

A large, noisy flycatcher that was conspicuous along the Royal Mile and Busingiro, Budongo Forest.

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata

One was seen on our first day near Masindi, a scarce migrant to Uganda.

Sooty Flycatcher

Muscicapa infusata

A swallow-like bird often seen perched in groups on dead snags high above the forest canopy, with our first records from Busingiro, Budongo Forest and several further encounters at Buhoma.

Swamp Flycatcher

Muscicapa aquatica

A common denizen of swamp edges throughout southern Uganda, especially tame individuals hawked near our lunch tables at Mweya.

Chapin's Flycatcher* *Muscicapa lendu*

This rare bird was seen once by some participants at Buhoma.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*

A common forest-edge species regularly encountered at Buhoma.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata*

A quiet, inconspicuous bird that we first found at Bidogi Swamp, with further sightings at several locations in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Cassin's (Gray) Flycatcher *Muscicapa cassini*

A sprightly bird restricted to the vicinity of water, often hawking insects directly above it, we found individuals along the river in Kibale Forest NP and another pair at "The Neck" in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens*

This widespread woodland denizen was seen very well in Budongo Forest.

Gray-throated Tit-Flycatcher *Myioparus griseigularis*

This active species, which replaces the next in the forest interior, was seen on several occasions including a great sighting of two at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Gray Tit- (Lead-colored) Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus*

We obtained excellent views of this species at Bigodi Swamp.

Semi-collared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata*

We had wonderful scope views of a male on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

White-starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata*

We found this beautiful Afro-montane forest robin only at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP where we managed to obtain excellent views of several individuals.

Forest Robin *Stiphrornis erythrothorax*

This shy species was heard at Mabira.

Equatorial Akalat *Sheppardia aequatorialis*

A fairly common, though somewhat retiring denizen of the forest undergrowth near Buhoma, we had good views of two.

White-bellied Robin-Chat *Cossypha (Cossyphicula) roberti*

This akalat-like bird with a robin-chat-like voice was seen very well at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Archer's Robin-Chat (~ Ground-Robin)* *Cossypha archeri*

An Albertine Rift Endemic that occurs at higher altitudes in Bwindi Impenetrable NP, with several heard singing along the road above Ruhizha. We were all finally rewarded with fantastic views of this stunning species.

Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat *Cossypha cyanocampter*

We heard this retiring species in Mabira Forest.

White-browed (Heuglin's) Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini*

The crescendo calls of this handsome bird were amongst the dominant sounds of the dawn chorus in woodland throughout the trip. We recorded them in good numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP, where they hopped around on the lawns of Mweya. Also seen in small numbers in Lake Mburo NP.

Snowy-crowned (~headed) Robin-Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla*

This beautiful songster was seen near Masindi where we had great views of three.

Spotted Morning-Thrush *Cichladusa guttata*

Another beautiful songster, recorded in Murchison Falls NP.

Brown-backed Scrub-Robin *Cercotrichas hartlaubi*

This species was seen once near Budongo Forest and once near Kibale Forest.

Red-backed (White-browed) Scrub-Robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys*

This widespread African scrub-robin was seen once in Murchison Falls NP.

NOTE: This widespread African complex is being reviewed for a 3-way split, the Southern African C. l. leucophrys group would become White-browed Scrub-Robin, the Central African C. l. zambesiana (the Ugandan form) would remain as Red-backed Scrub-Robin and the Northern African C. l. leucoptera would become White-winged Scrub-Robin. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

Good numbers of this Palearctic migrant were recorded in open country throughout the trip, with peak numbers in the savanna parks of Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls.

African (Common) Stonechat

Saxicola torquata

This widespread and familiar bird is common only in the higher parts of Uganda, with our first records in the tea plantations near Kibale NP. Two were also seen near Ruhizha.

NOTE: Clements recognizes the split of African S. torquata and Common S. rubicola Stonechats (the latter a Palearctic species), which is not followed by all authorities. Further splitting may occur in both groups including the highland Ethiopian form S. t. albofasciata which may become Ethiopian Stonechat.

Northern Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Another familiar European species, we recorded them in Murchison Falls NP.

Pied Wheatear

Oenanthe pleschanka

We found one on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Isabelline Wheatear

Oenanthe isabellinus

An unusual sighting was a single individual seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Familiar Chat

Cercomela familiaris

A single bird was seen at a rocky outcrop en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Sooty Chat

Myrmecocichla nigra

Distinctive and ubiquitous, Sooty Chats were first found at Murchison Falls NP with regular subsequent sightings.

Mocking Cliff-Chat

Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris

A relatively local bird in Uganda, we found a stunning male on the Butiaba Escarpment.

Wattle-eyes

African Shrike-flycatcher

Megabias (Bias) flammulatus

These large, tail-wagging forest flycatchers were seen on several occasions, with our first sightings of two birds along the Royal Mile.

Black-and-white (Vanga) Shrike-flycatcher *Bias musicus*

These characterful, hammer-headed flycatchers were first observed at Bigodi Swamp, where we saw both males and females and we had further fantastic views of several at Buhoma and again in Mabira Forest.

Brown-throated (Common) Wattle-eye

Platysteira cyanea

By far the most commonly encountered wattle-eye in Uganda, with several in moist woodland and at forest edge throughout.

Chestnut Wattle-eye

Platysteira castanea

These attractive little birds, were first seen at Budongo Forest and later in the trip several in Maramagumbo Forest in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Jameson's Wattle-eye

Dyaphorophya jamesoni

We had brief views of one on the Royal Mile however we were extremely fortunate in obtaining a superb sighting at Mabira Forest on our last day.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into the West African Red-cheeked Wattle-eye D. blissetti

Ruwenzori Batis*

Batis diops

This attractive species was seen in the vicinity of Buhoma and Ruhizha, where a total of three individuals were counted. Our first sighting at Buhoma, where we obtained point-blank views was particularly memorable.

Chinspot Batis

Batis molitor

This widespread African batis was only observed in small numbers on a daily basis at Ruhizha.

Black-headed Batis

Batis minor

Largely replacing Chinspot Batis in the northern savanna of Uganda, we found several of this species in Murchison Falls NP.

Ituri Batis

Batis ituriensis

A very rare species mostly restricted to inaccessible areas of the Congo, we were very fortunate to observe two through the scope along the Royal Mile.

Monarch Flycatchers

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher

Erythrocercus mccallii

A snappy-looking, sprightly flycatcher recorded at its only East African site, Budongo.

African Blue-Flycatcher

Elminia longicauda

Another lively bird, which constantly fans and wags its tail, we recorded it at scattered localities including a great sighting near Masindi.

White-tailed Blue-Flycatcher

Elminia albicauda

The montane equivalent of the above species in Uganda, we recorded it commonly in the Ruhizha area (with our first sighting at Buhoma).

Dusky Crested-Flycatcher

Elminia nigromitrata

One was seen briefly in Mabira Forest.

White-bellied Crested-Flycatcher (Monarch)

Elminia albiventris

We saw one at Buhoma and a further two at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

White-tailed Crested-Flycatcher

Elminia albonotata

We had superb views of a pair in the Bamboo zone at Ruhizha, a scarce species in Uganda.

Black-headed (Red-bellied) Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone rufiventer

First seen well in Budongo Forest along the Royal Mile and again at Mabira Forest and in Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

African Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

A handsome bird recorded in good numbers daily in wooded habitats.

NOTE: The northern races of this widespread African species which include the nominate form are likely to be separated from the southern races which would become Grey-headed Paradise-Flycatcher T. plumbeiceps. The subspecies which we recorded in Uganda T. v. ferreti in the central areas and T. v. kivuensis in the south-west will fall within the northern African Paradise-Flycatcher complex T. viridis if the group were to be split. Beside plumage and distributional differences, only the northern forms display polymorphism in males and we observed an example of this phenomenon in Uganda. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Babblers

Scaly-breasted Illadopsis

Illadopsis albipectus

This forest understorey skulker was heard at Kibale Forest and Buhoma.

Brown Illadopsis

Illadopsis fulvescens

This understorey babbler was seen once at Bigodi Swamp.

Mountain Illadopsis

Illadopsis pyrrhoptera

Commonly heard at all altitudes in Bwindi Impenetrable NP, with several birds seen amazingly well alongside a forest road at Ruhizha.

African Hill Babbler [*]

Pseudoalcippe abyssinica

Another skulking forest babbler seen only at Bwindi Impenetrable NP, where two were seen at Ruhizha. This form is endemic to the Albertine Rift and is almost certainly specifically distinct from eastern birds.

NOTE: The Rwenzori form in south-western Uganda, I. a. atriceps is usually split off as Rwenzori Hill Babbler and the subspecies occurring in East Africa from Zambia to Eritrea remain with the nominate grouping I. a. abyssinica African Hill Babbler. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Black-lored Babbler

Turdoides sharpei

One was seen near Masindi and a further two in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: The Ugandan form is sometimes lumped within the White-rumped Babbler T. leucopygius complex which would then include the nominate T. l. leucopygius White-rumped Babbler- an Ethiopian near-endemic, T. l. sharpei Black-lored Babbler of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and neighboring countries and T. l. hartlaubii Hartlaub's Babbler of Namibia, Botswana, Angola, Zambia and neighboring countries.

Brown Babbler

Turdoides plebejus

We had a great sighting of two near Masindi.

Arrow-marked Babbler

Turdoides jardineii

This widespread African woodland babbler was observed at Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs. Our best sighting was of a flock joining us for breakfast at Mweya Lodge in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Chickadees & Tits

White-winged Black-Tit

Melaniparus leucomelas

Two were seen in Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: Most authorities split this complex into 2 full species. The nominate dark-eyed M. l. leucomelas which we recorded in Uganda remains White-winged Black-Tit and the more northern and western yellow-eyed M. l. guineensis becomes White-shouldered Black-Tit. Clements does recognize this split.

White-shouldered Black Tit

Melaniparus [leucomelas] guineensis

A pair of these tits was seen in Murchison Falls NP with another two seen on the Butiaba Escarpment near Masindi.

Dusky Tit

Melaniparus funereus

We had superb views of a group of two of these tits in Budongo Forest with further sightings at several other forest sites.

Stripe-breasted Tit*

Melaniparus fasciiventer

This handsome Albertine Rift endemic was observed on three consecutive days at Ruhizha.

Penduline Tits

Tit-Hylia

Pholidornis rushiae

A pair of these delightful birds was seen at Buhoma. A rare species in Uganda and it is the smallest bird in Africa.

Sunbirds & Spiderhunters

Gray-headed Sunbird

Deleornis (Anthreptes) axillaris

One was seen in Budongo Forest, with several birds seen during our stay at Buhoma.

NOTE: The species is sometimes lumped with the West African Scarlet-tufted (Fraser's) Sunbird D. fraseri.

Little Green Sunbird

Anthreptes seimundi

This inconspicuous, drab sunbird was seen at Budongo Forest.

Green Sunbird

Anthreptes rectirostris

A small yet relatively conspicuous sunbird, we found two at Budongo Forest, with further sightings at Buhoma. We were afforded some great scope views of this canopy species.

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NOTE: This species is sometimes split into two forms, the Eastern (including Ugandan) Grey-chinned Sunbird *A. tephrolaemus* and the nominate Western Yellow-chinned Sunbird.

Collared Sunbird

Hedydipna (Anthreptes) collaris

The commonest *Anthreptes* sunbird in Uganda, we recorded good numbers almost daily throughout the tour.

Pygmy Sunbird

Hedydipna platura

We were fortunate to have views of two splendid males of this scarce nomadic sunbird in Murchison Falls NP.

Green-headed Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) verticalis

This attractive species was first seen at Bigodi Swamp, with a further sighting at Ruhizha.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) cyanolaema

This large forest sunbird was first seen at Budongo with a further sighting at Bidogi Swamp.

(Ruwenzori ~) Blue-headed Sunbird*

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) alinae

Several of these handsome endemics were found at Mubwindi Swamp in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Western Olive-Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) obscura

Its distinctive call was heard daily in all lower altitude forests, with our first sighting in Budongo Forest.

NOTE: The Olive-Sunbird species complex has been split into two full species by Clements and some other authorities, namely the nominate Eastern Olive-Sunbird *C. olivacea* and the form which we recorded in Uganda, Western Olive-Sunbird. There has been a review of this split and several authorities are in doubt of the validity, which is based upon the presence, or lack thereof, of pectoral tufts in the females of the various forms within the complex.

Green-throated Sunbird

Chalcomitra (Nectarinia) rubescens

This uncommonly recorded sunbird, was seen at Bigodi Swamp where we enjoyed great scope views of a male.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Chalcomitra (Nectarinia) senegalensis

A common bird in Uganda, we recorded it almost daily, with good numbers in open woodland habitats.

Bronze Sunbird

Nectarinia kilimensis

This attractive long-tailed sunbird was seen daily around the Buhoma area.

Olive-bellied Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) chloropygia

A common forest-edge species, which we first recorded at Kaniyo Pabidi with further sightings at Mabira Forest and Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Tiny Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) minulla

This diminutive species was observed on one occasion at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Northern Double-collared Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) preussi

The common sunbird of forest edge at Buhoma and Ruhizha, where fourteen individuals were recorded in five days.

Regal Sunbird*

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) regia

One of the highlights of Ruhizha, with eight seen, including a number of stunning, co-operative males.

Beautiful Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) pulchella

This exquisite sunbird is common only in the drier northern savanna around Murchison Falls NP, where we had stunning views of a pair.

Mariqua Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) mariquensis

This dry country species was recorded on our first day at Luwero Swamp with further sightings at Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: Some authorities split this complex into 2 full species. The *C. m. suahelicus* which we recorded in Uganda would become Swahili Sunbird as opposed to the nominate form which would remain as Mariqua Sunbird. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Red-chested Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) erythrocerca

The common, long-tailed sunbird of wetland edges, with our largest number of sightings coming from Queen Elizabeth NP (where males were conspicuous around Mweya Lodge).

Superb Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) superba

This large, spectacular sunbird was observed during our time in Budongo Forest.

Variable Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) venusta

The beautiful orange-bellied form of this sunbird, was seen on several occasions, with our best sightings from the vicinity of Ruhizha.

NOTE: This complex may be split into 3 full species based on belly colour, although at this stage the details are rather vague.

Copper Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) cuprea

We obtained a brief sighting of one near Masindi, however we were treated to a great sighting of one attending a termite emergence near Lake Mburo NP.

White-eyes

African Yellow White-eye

Zosterops senegalensis

The only white-eye in Uganda, and common in wooded habitat throughout the tour.

Old World Orioles

Western Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus brachyrhynchus

This forest interior species was first observed at Budongo and heard and seen in most forest sights thereafter.

African (Eastern) Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

Replaces the above species in savanna habitat, but by no means a common bird in Uganda, with a pair seen at Jinja.

Black-tailed (Montane) Oriole

Oriolus percivali

This common denizen of montane forests was recorded daily around Ruhizha.

Shrikes

Rufous-tailed (Isabelline) Shrike

Lanius isabellinus

Three of these Palaearctic migrants were recorded in open savanna north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Lesser Gray Shrike

Lanius minor

We found one at Luwero Swamp and another near Masindi.

Gray-backed Fiscal

Lanius excubitoroides

Uganda's commonest fiscal, occupying a variety of moist woodland habitats. First recorded at the roadside on our first morning, and daily at savanna sites during the rest of the trip.

Mackinnon's Shrike (Fiscal)

Lanius mackinnoni

The forest-edge fiscal in Uganda, with small numbers seen outside our camp at Buhoma and in the Ruhizha area.

Common Fiscal

Lanius collaris

Not as common as elsewhere in Africa, though nevertheless seen daily in savanna habitats, with peak numbers around Mweya in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Bushshrikes & Allies

Brubru

Nilaus afer

Another widespread African savanna bird that is relatively uncommon in Uganda, we heard one in Murchison Falls NP.

NOTE: This previously monotypic genus might be split 4 ways: Northern Brubru N. afer, Black-browed Brubru N. nigritemporalis, Angola Brubru N. affinis and Southern Brubru N. brubru. Only the Northern Brubru occurs in Uganda. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Northern Puffback

Dryoscopus gambensis

Uganda's common puffback, we recorded several in the highlands of Ruhizha.

Pink-footed Puffback

Dryoscopus angolensis

This uncommon forest shrike was first observed at Kibale, with further sightings at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Marsh Tchagra

Tchagra minuta

We had fantastic views of one near Kaniyo Pabidi and another at Murro.

NOTE: The more southerly forms of this species are often separated as Anchieta's Tchagra T. anchietae with the Ugandan form retained in the nominate group.

Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegala

The most widely distributed tchagra, we saw one near Masindi on our first day.

NOTE: Moroccan Tchagra T. s. cucullata of north-west Africa may be split from the nominate form which we recorded in Uganda. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

This species prefers moister country, than the preceding one, and we obtained good views at several locations with our first views near Murro and several sightings near Kibale Forest.

Lühder's Bushshrike

Laniarius luehderi

This very attractive species, was first observed at Buhoma with further sightings at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Tropical Boubou

Laniarius aethiopicus

A widespread shrike commonly heard and significantly less often seen, we had good views of a pair near Buhoma and several also seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Black-headed Gonolek

Laniarius erythrogaster

A brilliantly coloured bush-shrike that is delightfully common in savanna parts of Uganda, with our first sightings coming from Luwero Swamp and peak totals from Queen Elizabeth NP.

Papyrus Gonolek

Laniarius mufumbiri

The swamp equivalent of the Black-headed Gonolek (and one of Uganda's papyrus specialties), we had brief views of this colourful bird at Bigodi Swamp, and later enjoyed good scope views of one at a roadside papyrus swamp near the town of Kabale.

Mountain Sooty Boubou

Laniarius poensis

We obtained good views of two individuals at Buhoma and a further one at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into Fuelleborn's Black Boubou L. fuelleborni.

Gray-green (Bocage's) Bushshrike

Telophorus bocagei

This elegant shrike (which is neither gray nor green nor any combination thereof) was seen very well at Bigodi Swamp and several sites in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike

Telophorus sulfureopectus

A widespread African savanna species that was heard on several occasions. We obtained excellent views of a pair at Ishasha in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Many-colored Bushshrike

Telophorus multicolor

This stunning bird was seen well by most of us in Kibale Forest.

Doherty's Bushshrike

Telophorus dohertyi

Excellent views of this stunning creature, at Ruhizha, was one of the highlights of Bwindi.

Lagden's Bushshrike

Malaconotus lagdeni

This very rare species was only heard on a walk at Ruhizha.

Gray-headed Bushshrike

Malaconotus blanchoti

Another elusive species. We heard its hooting calls in the distance on two occasions, and had good views of one in Murchison Falls NP.

Drongos

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

A familiar, ubiquitous bird, which was first seen *en route* to Masindi our first day and thereafter regularly recorded in open savanna habitats.

Crows, Jays & Magpies

Piapiac

Ptilostomus afer

This bizarre corvid that was first observed near Masindi on our first day was also seen in good numbers in Murchison Falls NP and around Jinja.

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

A common and familiar crow, recorded in good numbers on our first day and on all the road trips thereafter.

White-necked Raven

Corvus albicollis

Restricted to mountainous areas in southern Uganda, we obtained superb sightings of two individuals near our camp at Ruhizha.

Starlings

Wattled Starling

Creatophora cinerea

This irruptive species was observed in Bugungu GR, Murchison Falls NP where we found a single bird and later we found a flock of over twenty individuals attending a termite emergence near Lake Mburo NP.

Greater Blue-eared Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis chalybaeus

We found two in Lake Mburo NP.

Lesser Blue-eared Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis chloropterus

Common only in the drier northern savanna, where we recorded our first flocks near Masindi, with others being seen within Murchison Falls NP.

NOTE: This species complex is widely treated as two distinct species, the nominate group which we recorded in Uganda, remains as Lesser Blue-eared Glossy-Starling and the southern broad-leaved woodland form becomes Southern Blue-eared or Miombo Glossy-Starling L. elisabeth. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Bronze-tailed Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis chalcurus

Flemming & Vibeke were fortunate to see one at Masindi Hotel.

Splendid Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis splendidus

This spectacular, large starling is wonderfully common in moist woodlands throughout southern and central Uganda. We had good views of our first birds outside of Kampala, with peak numbers at Jinja.

Purple Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis purpureus

We had excellent scope views of two of this unusually proportioned starling, in dry country, near Masindi on the first day of the tour.

Rueppell's (Long-tailed) Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis purpuropterus

This ubiquitous bird is Uganda's commonest starling and its loud calls were a regular component of the dawn choruses we heard throughout the trip. Good numbers were observed on all drive days.

Purple-headed Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis (Hylopsar) purpureiceps

This beautiful forest starling was observed on several occasions in Kibale Forest.

Violet-backed (Plum-coloured/Amethyst) Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

This exquisite bird was seen exceptionally well at Murro, where we scoped a male. A further two were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Slender-billed Starling

Onychognathus tenuirostris

This large starling is infrequently recorded in Uganda and we observed one on the Nek, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Waller's Starling

Onychognathus walleri

This forest-dwelling species was seen several times at Ruhizha, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Narrow-tailed Starling

Poeoptera lugubris

We saw flocks of this diminutive long-tailed starling at all sites in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Stuhlmann's Starling

Poeoptera stuhlmanni

Less common than the preceding species, however it was observed on a daily basis in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Sharpe's Starling

Pholia (Cinnyricinclus) sharpii

A localised and elusive bird of montane forests in Uganda, we had excellent scope views at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

This “specially modified” starling was found on ungulate herds in Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP's.

Old World Sparrows

Shelley's Rufous Sparrow

Passer motitensis

We recorded three of this uncommon species north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

(Northern) Gray-headed Sparrow

Passer griseus

Uganda's commonest sparrow is plentiful throughout and was recorded on an almost daily basis.

NOTE: The Gray-headed Sparrow complex P. griseus has been split into five full species with the central and southern Ugandan form being retaining in the nominate grouping with the same nomenclature.

Weavers & Allies

Speckle-fronted Weaver

Sporopipes frontalis

Common only north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP, where we found four individuals.

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser mahali

We recorded two at their nests on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP. This was a lucky sighting as they were well south of their normal range.

Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser superciliosus

This relatively uncommon species was observed once in the dry savannas of Murchison Falls NP.

Baglaffeht Weaver

Ploceus baglaffeht

A common weaver of moister, open habitats and we enjoyed daily sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: This polytypic species complex has been considered for multi-species splitting. Two distinct forms occur in Uganda, the widespread P. b. stuhlmanni (Stuhlmann's Weaver) and in the north, P. b. emini (Emin's Weaver). We only recorded the former during our tour.

Slender-billed Weaver

Ploceus pelzelni

This tiny species was very common in Queen Elizabeth NP, where tame individuals fed off our breakfast table. It was also recorded on our last day at Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Little Weaver

Ploceus luteolus

We observed this dry country species several times in Murchison Falls NP.

Lesser Masked Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

Our first sighting was of one in Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP with further sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

Spectacled Weaver

Ploceus ocularis

A common weaver of moist woodland and forest edge. We enjoyed good views of one near Masindi.

Black-necked Weaver

Ploceus nigricollis

A snappy-looking weaver of forest edge that we recorded in good numbers at all lower altitude forest sites.

Black-billed Weaver

Ploceus melanogaster

Another dapper bird of forest fringes, which we saw really well at Buhoma.

Strange Weaver*

Ploceus alienus

This elusive Albertine Rift endemic was observed on both days in Ruhizha.

Holub's (Large) Golden-Weaver

Ploceus xanthops

A large, richly coloured weaver of moist grassland and reedbeds, we found several in the vicinity of Buhoma.

Orange Weaver

Ploceus aurantius

A beautiful bird largely restricted to the wetlands of the Lake Victoria basin, we had superb views of nest-building males in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Northern Brown-throated Weaver

Ploceus castanops

Another swamp associated species, which we observed on our last day in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Vitelline Masked Weaver

Ploceus vitellinus

We found several in Murchison Falls NP.

Village Weaver

Ploceus cucullatus

One of Uganda's most conspicuous birds, with large colonies found in many towns. First seen near Masindi.

NOTE: This widespread African complex is also a candidate for multi-species splitting and the subspecies P. c. bohndorffi which we recorded in Uganda will probably remain within the nominate Village Weaver P. cucullatus group. These splits are not as yet recognized by Clements.

Viellot's (Black) Weaver

Ploceus nigerrimus

Rivals the above for title of commonest Ugandan weaver with daily sightings of large colonies.

NOTE: The distinctive West African form of this weaver is sometimes split off as Chestnut-and-black Weaver P. castaneofuscus.

Weyn's Weaver

Ploceus weynsi

This irruptive species, which can be very difficult to find, was observed in Mabira Forest where we found one male.

Black-headed (Yellow-backed) Weaver

Ploceus melanocephalus

Another common weaver of wetlands throughout Uganda, which we prolifically encountered in Queen Elizabeth NP. Another species that fed off our dining tables at Mweya Lodge!

(Jackson's) Golden-backed Weaver

Ploceus jacksoni

This particularly beautiful weaver was observed at Jinja, Lake Mburo NP and again on the last day at Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Brown-capped Weaver

Ploceus insignis

This handsome forest weaver was observed on a daily basis in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Compact Weaver

Pachyphantes superciliosus

An uncommon, rank grassland species, which was observed only once with two individuals seen at Bigodi Swamp.

Crested Malimbe

Malimbus malimbicus

We had good views of one on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest. A rare bird in East Africa confined to this site and the lowlands around Semliki NP.

Red-headed Malimbe

Malimbus rubricollis

The only common malimbe in Uganda, with our first sightings of one at Busingiro Forest and thereafter a further sighting in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes rubriceps

A scarce bird in Uganda, we had great views of a pair in Lake Mburo NP.

Red-headed Quelea

Quelea erythrops

We found five at Bigodi Swamp.

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

We found the “African avian locust” in Murchison Falls NP, with peak numbers of fifty.

Black Bishop

Euplectes gierowii

Two of these stunning birds were seen near Buhoma.

(Southern) Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

This species was observed in breeding plumage in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Fan-tailed (Red-shouldered) Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

The most widespread Ugandan widowbird, which we observed in Queen Elizabeth NP and near Lake Mburo.

Yellow-shouldered Widowbird

Euplectes macrourus

This species was recorded once in Murchison Falls NP.

White-winged Widowbird

Euplectes albonotatus

This species was found in the rank grasses of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-collared Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

We found a flock of fantastic breeding plumage males, in the grasslands of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Grosbeak (Thick-billed) Weaver

Amblyospiza albifrons

A common bird in Uganda, which we first recorded at Sebitole with further sightings at Maramagumbo Forest, Queen Elizabeth NP and at Mabira Forest.

Waxbills & Allies

White-breasted Negrofinch

Nigrita fusconota

The descending song of this negrofinch was heard at all lower altitude forests, with our first of many sightings coming from Budongo Forest.

Gray-headed Negrofinch

Nigrita canicapilla

Even more common than its congener, we found small numbers daily at all forest sites, with our initial sightings coming from Kibale Forest.

Gray-headed Oliveback

Nesocharis capistrata

This uncommon and elusive but exceptionally beautiful seedeater was seen in Murchison Falls NP, where we enjoyed great views of a pair.

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

A pair was seen briefly on the Butiaba escarpment and another one in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Dusky Crimson-wing*

Cryptospiza jacksoni

This rarely recorded Albertine Rift endemic was seen daily in the highlands of Ruhizha where we had unprecedented scope views.

Red-headed Bluebill

Spermophaga ruficapilla

Another elusive seedeater, which we first found at Sebitole with further stunning sightings at Bigodi Swamp.

Brown Twinspot

Clytospiza monteiri

This beautiful seedeater of rank vegetation was seen in the cultivations near Murro.

Dusky Twinspot

Euschistospiza cinereovinacea

We were very fortunate in obtaining views of a pair of these elusive seedeaters near Ruhizha.

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

By far Uganda's most regularly recorded firefinch, and often common around rural homesteads, we found it frequently in open habitats.

Black-bellied Firefinch

Lagonosticta rara

This large firefinch was seen in Murchison Falls NP and near Masindi.

African Firefinch

Lagonosticta rubricata

Some of us had good views of two near Maramagumbo Forest in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-cheeked Cordonbleu

Uraeginthus bengalus

This widespread species was commonly recorded near Masindi and again in Murchison Falls.

Yellow-bellied Waxbill

Estrilda quartinia

This attractive bird of the highlands, was seen very well in the vicinity of Bigodi Swamp, with a further sighting near Ruhizha.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped in the South African Sweet Waxbill E. melanotis.

Fawn-breasted Waxbill

Estrilda paludicola

This seedeater was first observed near Masindi, then Murchison Falls NP, with a final sighting in the rank vegetation in Queen Elizabeth NP.

NOTE: The Ethiopian near-endemic E. p. ochrogaster is sometimes recognized as a distinct species, Abyssinian Waxbill.

Crimson-rumped Waxbill

Estrilda rhodopyga

We had incredible views of six on the road near Maramagumbo Forest.

Common Waxbill

Estrilda astrild

Africa's most widespread waxbill was first observed at Bigodi Swamp, with a further sighting in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black-crowned Waxbill

Estrilda nonnula

An attractive species, which we first saw in large numbers at Bigodi Swamp with further sightings at Buhoma.

Kandt's Waxbill

Estrilda atricapilla

Restricted to the highlands, we observed several birds at Ruhizha in Bwindi.

Black-cheeked Waxbill

Estrilda erythronotos

Two of these delightful birds were seen on the Butiaba Escarpment.

Red-billed Quailfinch

Ortygospiza gabonensis

We had good views of this rarely observed and secretive seedeater in the grasslands of Queen Elizabeth NP. I spoke with Adam about this sighting as I had some doubt regarding the species but he says African Quail Finch does not occur in this area so we can be sure of our sighting.

Bronze Mannikin

Lonchura cucullata

Ubiquitous in moist habitats throughout Uganda, we found small flocks near Kibale Forest and large flocks at Bigodi Swamp.

Black-and-white Mannikin

Lonchura bicolor

More localized than the preceding species, we found our first ones in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings at Mabira Forest.

NOTE: This complex may be split two-ways, the southern and eastern Brown-backed Mannikin L. nigriceps and the northern and western nominate group which would remain as Black-and-white Mannikin. The latter is the form we recorded in Uganda. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Indigobirds

Village Indigobird

Vidua chalybeata

This, the brood parasite of Red-billed Firefinch, was only observed once at Kasese where we had good views of a male and two females.

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

This species, which usually parasites Common Waxbill, was observed in good numbers throughout the tour.

Siskins, Crossbills & Allies

Western Citril

Serinus citrinelloides

Widespread but never very common in moist habitat in Uganda (usually where Yellow-fronted Canaries are scarce or absent), we had good views of three near Buhoma.

NOTE: This complex is treated by some authorities as 3 distinct species, the eastern East African Citril S. hypostictus, the western Western Citril S. frontalis (which is the form occurring in Uganda) and the nominate African/Abyssinian Citril S. citrinelloides. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Papyrus Canary

Serinus koliensis

We had superb views of one at a roadside swamp en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

White-rumped Seedeater

Serinus leucopygius

We had good views of two in Bugungu GR en route to the Butiaba Escarpment.

Yellow-fronted Canary

Serinus mozambicus

This widespread African species was first observed near Masindi and seen regularly thereafter.

Brimstone (Bully) Canary

Serinus sulphuratus

This large canary was seen in small numbers in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Streaky Seedeater

Serinus striolatus

A common bird of highland forest edges, which we found in small numbers in the vicinity of Ruhizha.

Thick-billed Seedeater

Serinus burtoni

Another canary that is fairly common in and around Bwindi Impenetrable NP, and we had good sightings at Buhoma.

NOTE: The Tanzanian endemic S. b. melanochrous is sometimes split off a Kipengere Seed-eater.

Buntings

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting

Emberiza tahapisi

We enjoyed good views of two birds through the scope on the Butiaba Escarpment and a further one seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Golden-breasted Bunting

Emberiza flaviventris

We had superb views of one on the Butiaba escarpment.

Cabanis' Bunting

Emberiza cabanisi

This rarely recorded species was observed exceptionally well in Murchison Falls NP.

Annotated List of Mammal Species recorded

Taxonomy and nomenclature follows 'The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals' by Jonathan Kingdon, Academic Press, 1997.

Apes

Chimpanzee

Pan troglodytes

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The piercing screams of our closest living relative, were heard along the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest followed by excellent views of one male which we watched crossing over the dirt track. We enjoyed fantastic experiences with family groups in Kibale NP.

(Mountain) Gorilla

Gorilla gorilla

All three groups of habituated gorillas were visited by participants. Despite the treks being long and hard, the experience of sitting with these forest giants for an hour, made it all worth it! Certainly one of the world's greatest wildlife experiences!

Colobid Monkeys

Central African Red Colobus

Procolobus oustaleti

We found numerous groups of these relatively scruffy-looking monkeys in the higher part of Kibale Forest NP. Like all colobi, they feed primarily on leaves, with this species favoring the newer, more tender foliage.

Guereza Colobus

Colobus guereza

This mature-leaf folivore, arguably the most beautiful of all monkeys, is delightfully common in Uganda and we found healthy populations in all the western forests.

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys

Olive (Anubis) Baboon

Papio anubis

This familiar primate occurs widely in Uganda, preferring woodland and forest edge. Large troops were regularly encountered at the roadside in Murchison Falls NP and again in Lake Mburo NP.

Gray-cheeked Mangabey

Lophocebus albigena

This dark, forest-dwelling primate, the males of which sport an unusual cape of hair on their mantles, was found in Kibale Forest NP and Mabira Forest, where we had fantastic views of an individual at each site.

Patas Monkey

Cercopithecus patas

A large troop was seen on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Vervet Monkey

Cercopithecus pygerythrus

The savanna monkeys are, with the *Papio* baboons, the most widely distributed primates in Africa, inhabiting woodland and savanna habitats throughout the continent. In Uganda, two (sub)species hybridize broadly across the centre of the country, though individuals north of the Nile appear to be almost pure *Tantalus* and those around the shores of Lake Victoria pure Vervet. Small numbers were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

L'Hoest's Monkey

Cercopithecus lhoesti

This handsome, mainly terrestrial guenon, is Uganda's rarest monkey, however we were fortunate in obtaining fantastic views at Kibale and again in Ruhizha, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Blue (Gentle) Monkey

Cercopithecus mitis

This long-tailed monkey was far more frequently heard than seen, although we did obtain superb sightings at Budongo, Kibale, and further encounters at Buhoma.

Red-tailed Monkey

Cercopithecus ascanius

The smallest and most strikingly patterned Ugandan guenon, is also the most commonly encountered, occurring in forests and forest-edge throughout the country.

Flying-Foxes

Straw-coloured Fruit Bat

Eidolon helvum

We found large numbers roosting in Jinja while driving in the evening to our hotel. We had superb looks at this large colony in Jinja the following day.

Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus sp.*

We had fantastic views of four at Mabira Forest.

Large-Winged Bats

Yellow-winged Bat *Lavia frons*

This beautiful animal was found on a number of occasions in the thicket savannas of Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Hares & Rabbits

Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis*

Seen on a night drive in dry habitat in Lake Mburo NP.

Uganda Grass-Hare *Poelagus marjorita*

One was observed during our night drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Squirrels

Striped Ground Squirrel *Xerus erythropus*

This terrestrial squirrel was seen in the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Carruthers' Mountain Squirrel *Funisciurus carruthersi*

A fairly nondescript forest squirrel that we saw at Ruhizha.

Boehm's Squirrel *Paraxerus boehmi*

This tiny forest squirrel was commonly observed in Buhoma and Ruhizha.

Red-legged Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus rufobrachium*

This large squirrel was first seen at Budongo, with a further sighting near Buhoma.

Rats and Mice

Northern Unstriped Grass Rat *Arvicanthis niloticus*

This plain rodent was seen in the vicinity of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Mustelids

Spot-necked Otter *Lutra maculicollis*

We had brief views of a single animal on a crater lake near Kibale with a further sighting of a pair at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Mongoose

Ichneumon (Egyptian) Mongoose *Herpestes ichneumon*

We had a good sighting of a single animal in Mabira Forest.

Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguinea*

One was seen briefly in Murchison Falls NP.

Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo*

These entertaining creatures were commonly observed on the grounds of Mweya Lodge.

Hyaenas

Spotted Hyaena

Crocuta crocuta

We had a fantastic sighting of one in Lake Mburo NP.

Genets & Civets

Common (Small Spotted) Genet

Genetta genetta

One was seen in Murchison Falls NP during our night drive.

Cats

Caracal

Felis caracal

We had fantastic views of an adult during our night drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Lion

Panthera leo

At first we encountered a large pride in Murchison Falls NP during our night drive and later we saw three in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Elephants

African Elephant

Loxodonta africana

Elephants were common and conspicuous in the savanna parks of Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls, with numerous close encounters of drinking, bathing and feeding individuals.

Horses

Common (Burchell's) Zebra

Equus burchelli

Another animal restricted to the southern savanna and therefore, in Uganda, to Lake Mburo NP, where we found it common.

Hippopotamuses

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibius

Uganda is arguably the best place in Africa to see and photograph hippos, with habituated groups lounging around on the banks of the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP and the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Pigs

Giant (Forest) Hog

Hylochoerus meinertzhageni

We had sightings of two of these oversized animals in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

Another familiar savanna animal that we found in suitable habitat throughout, with our first sightings in Murchison Falls NP and especially tame individuals around Mweya Lodge in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Giraffes

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Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

Fifteen of the well-marked “Rothschild’s” race, were found north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates

African Buffalo

Syncerus caffer

This fearsome animal was observed in all the savanna national parks, with our most memorable sightings being large herds in Murchison Falls NP. Groups feeding along the Kazinga channel were especially photogenic.

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

This elegant and attractively marked, mainly nocturnal antelope, was seen in all three savanna reserves that we visited.

Bush (Common/Gray) Duiker

Sylvicapra grimmia

This widespread African species is rather uncommon in Uganda, and we observed one near Masindi.

Rwenzori Red Duiker

Cephalophus rubidus

This uncommon forest duiker was seen on several occasions in Ruhizha from our vehicles.

Oribi

Ourebia ourebi

Large numbers of this elegant antelope were seen on the plains north of the Nile, in Murchison Falls NP.

Bohor Reedbuck

Redunca redunca

Several of these nondescript antelope were found in Lake Mburo NP.

Uganda Kob

Kobus kob thomasi

A handsome antelope that is ubiquitous in the moist savanna grasslands of western Uganda, being particularly conspicuous in the lekking grounds along the Kasenyi Track in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Defassa Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

In smaller aggregations than its congener, though nevertheless numerous, we found this large antelope first in Murchison Falls NP, with large numbers from the savanna park of Queen Elizabeth.

Impala

Aepyceros melampus

This most familiar of antelope is another southern savanna “special”, with our only records coming from Lake Mburo NP, where it is common.

Topi (Tsessebe)

Damaliscus lunatus

Fairly common in Lake Mburo NP, where we observed good numbers of this unusually proportioned antelope.

Kongoni (Jackson's Hartebeest)

Alcelaphus buselaphus

Replaces the Topi in the drier savanna of Murchison Falls NP, where we found up to twenty-five individuals in an afternoon, north of the Nile.

Annotated List of Reptile Species recorded

Southern (Blue-headed) Tree Agama

Acanthocercus atricollis

We had a good sighting of one near Masindi and another at Buhoma.

Red-headed Rock Agama

We had good views of several in Murchison Falls NP.

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

Up to thirty were seen on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP including some exceptionally large

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individuals. Small numbers were also seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Nile Monitor *Varanus niloticus*

Small numbers were seen on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and again on the Kazinga Channel.

Rock Monitor *Varanus albigularis*

We had fantastic views of one on the road in Murchison Falls NP.

Forest Cobra *Naja melanoleuca*

We had awesome scope views of one at Bigodi Swamp.

Flap-necked Chameleon *Chamaeleo dilepis*

We had wonderful views of one during our lunch in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Moreau's Tropical House Gecko *Hemidactylus mabouia*

Small numbers were seen each night at Masindi Hotel.

Other

We also experienced the irrepressible Tsetse Fly and an array of beautiful Butterflies.