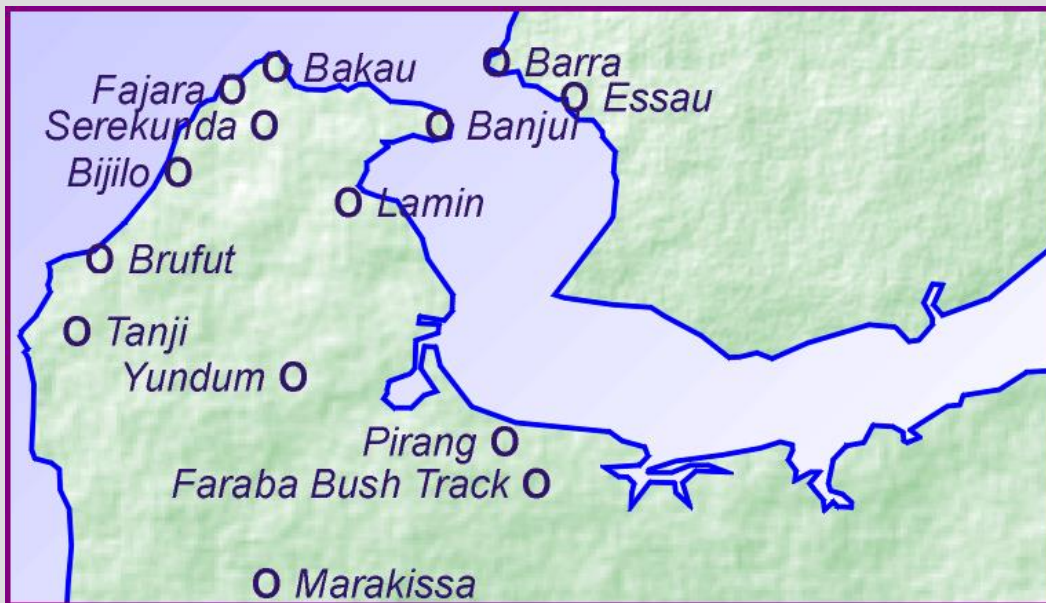


# The Gambia



4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1999





Thursday, 4 <sup>th</sup>	Airport to Badala Park Hotel Badala Park Hotel & Kotu Creek	16:00 - 17:00 18:00 - 19:20
Friday, 5 <sup>th</sup>	Kotu Creek, Cycle Track, Beach, Fajara Golf Course, Sewage Pits	07:45 - 19:20
Saturday, 6 <sup>th</sup>	Abuko Kotu Creek & Cycle Track	08:10 - 14:00 15:30 - 18:45
Sunday, 7 <sup>th</sup>	Pirang Pirang Fish Ponds Faraba Bush Track Lamin Fields Yundum Pool	08:30 - 10:00 10:15 - 11:15 11:30 - 12:30 16:00 - 18:00 18:15 - 19:30
Monday, 8 <sup>th</sup>	Marakissa Tanji Beach Tanji Brufut Beach Brufut Woods Kotu Cycle Track	08:30 - 10:45 12:15 - 13:45 13:45 - 15:00 15:00 - 15:45 16:00 - 17:00 19:00 - 19:45
Tuesday, 9 <sup>th</sup>	Abuko Kotu Creek	08:10 - 16:00 17:00 - 19:15
Wednesday, 10 <sup>th</sup>	Barra Essau Area Kotu Sewage Pits	09:45 - 11:00 11:30 - 16:00 18:30 - 19:15
Thursday, 11 <sup>th</sup>	Kotu Creek & Atlantic Road	07:50 - 12:10

# THE GAMBIA

4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1999

## Introduction

For those wanting an easy to arrange trip with over 200 mainly exotic species in a week, The Gambia should be high on the wanted list. We stayed in a package booked hotel, with birding on the doorstep and within easy reach of the resort. The Kotu Stream area seems to hold most of the hotels, and one of these (Badala Park, Bungalow Beach, Kombo Beach or Bakotu) is probably the ideal base, since the surrounding land offers a good mix of habitats - including coastal scrub, woodland, river, marsh, and open farmland - giving a high number and variety within walking distance. Areas covered later such as the Kotu Stream, Fajara golf course, Casino cycle track, and sewage farm are all within minutes of the hotels mentioned.



The people in The Gambia proved without exception to be very friendly, and I believe violent crime is almost unheard of. The down side is that there is constant hassle from almost all - for genuine curiosity to begging and offers for paid guiding (both birding and otherwise). We got used to this and didn't find it a problem, but it may put some off (you can always cop out and spend a week by the pool!). A general rule seems to be polite but firm, and don't give in to the begging, since the feeling of other Gambians is that this would just compound the problem.

For convenience, we booked a half board package at The Badala Park, where the accommodation was basic yet adequate, and the food quite tasty. We were careful to drink only bottled water and only once ate out of the hotel (giant prawns at a beach bar - highly recommended), and had no major stomach upsets. The array of jabs pre-holiday included tetanus, typhoid, Hepatitis A, yellow fever and polio on a spoon. Anti-malarial prophylaxis is also a must - mosquitoes were few and far between but we did get the odd bite, so better safe than sorry. For those taking mosquito plugs for the rooms (the odd bug found its way in) be prepared with a British 3 pin adapter, which our rooms had as standard.

The currency is the Dalasis, with the exchange rate 17 to the pound during our stay. This was at the hotel, and not quite as good as the exchange booths (there is one opposite the Bakotu), but much better than the airport and back home. Sterling is regularly taken (and preferred by some), but it is generally better to have a sum of Dalasis on you.

## Weather and timing

Our trip was during the Early Dry Season. The wet season is mainly during August and September, with some rains still during October. Because of this and the loss of breeding plumage by many birds shortly after, November is generally considered to be the best time to visit (with December second best). However, we still had a combined trip list of over 230, which is probably a total similar to that for the "better" months, and the drabber plumage of some (mainly Finch types) is balanced by the better views, since crops have been harvested and a lot of the vegetation has died back leaving more open land.

The weather during the whole week was hot and sunny (apart from a slight mist on the first full day), but a North to Easterly moderate wind in most areas near the coast kept the 90+ degrees more palatable. Sun cream or sun block is a must, as are decent walking shoes. Shorts are also ideal for the temperature, but we sometimes put up with the discomfort of trousers to fend off the many spiked plants that occur.

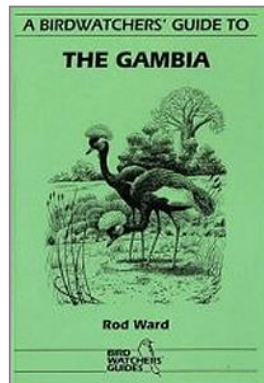
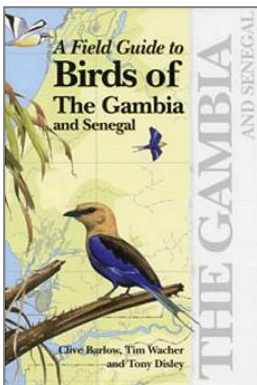
Dawn was just before 8am, and dusk around 7:30pm.

## Guides

One of the most common things we heard was "hey birdwatchers", particularly in the Kotu Stream and Golf Course areas. This is because many of the locals have gathered that a guide is more or less a must for we "twobobs", and so they are legion. From our perspective, a guide is essential for the sites away from the Kotu Creek, not just to find the birds, but also to find your way to and around the sites, and to fend off the usually persistent locals. The problem is finding the right one, since they vary from good to useless. In reality there are probably less than 10 experienced birders worth their salt, so we were lucky to find Barry (Momodou W Barri, c/o 30A Grant Street, Banjul, Tel: 461201 after 8pm; mobile: 00220 7031 278; email: [modoubarry7@hotmail.com](mailto:modoubarry7@hotmail.com) web: [www.gambiabirdwatching.com](http://www.gambiabirdwatching.com)) who was generally very good and we would very much recommend. We also came across Seedy, who also seemed to know his stuff. Barry's strengths were that he knew the sites and had a good spotting eye, but we found it best to always double check identification. A full day with him cost £10 each, and he organised the taxi himself (another 600 Dalasis).

For those wanting to arrange their own transport, which is only a good idea for some of the local sites and Abuko, the green tourist taxis are present outside all the hotels, and they are used to ferrying birders around. The yellow taxis are for locals, since they are allowed to pick up from the roadside, and are probably less well controlled and maintained than the greens. The latter also have boards displaying standard ferrying and waiting fees near them.

## References



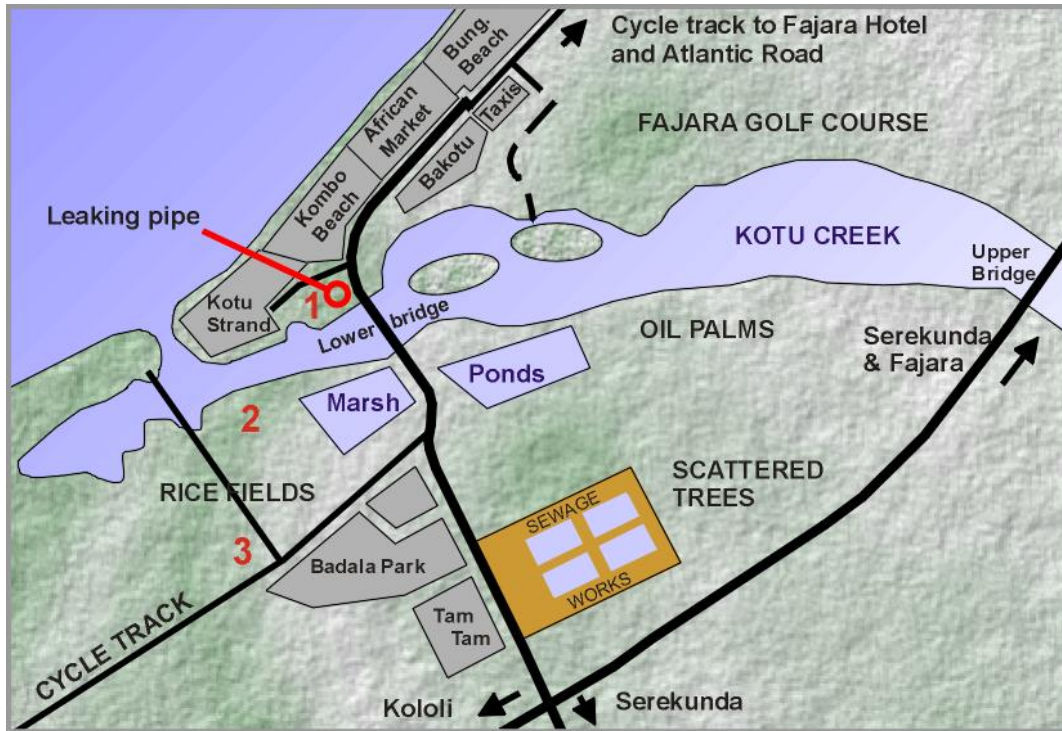
Rob Wards "Birdwatchers' Guide to The Gambia" is excellent for site maps and general birding information. A road map isn't needed.

For identification, the new guide by Barlow is all that is necessary, although a copy of the Birds of West Africa is useful to look up the birds and names used by the guides - most use a battered copy of this as standard.

A useful website for birding in The Gambia is [www.gambiabirding.org](http://www.gambiabirding.org).

**SITES VISITED**

**Kotu Creek and Ponds**



The Lower Bridge spanning the Creek is a good place to start. From here there are good views of the open water and vegetation of the Creek, and it is here that most of the Gambian bird "experts" will be found. Plenty of waders, Herons and Kingfishers can be seen from here, as well as close views of regular Wire-tailed Swallows. A very good and not obvious spot is a leaking pipe under the trees at **1**. It is found by taking the first track on the left to the North of the lower bridge, which goes to the Kotu Strand Hotel. The pipe is under the trees on the left, about 30 metres from the main road. Birds here included our only Oriole Warblers and Yellow-throated Greenbul of the trip, Snowy-crowned Robin Chat and Common Gonolek.



The gardens of the hotels in this area are also worth checking, in particular for sunbirds. The Ponds next to the bridge allow close approach to a variety of water birds - Black Heron, Hamerkop, Senegal Thick-knee, Sacred Ibis, Oxpecker and a mobile Malachite Kingfisher were all regular.

Any sewage works abroad are a must, and the 30 Dalasis fee for the ones opposite the Badala Park Hotel are no exception. There are 4 rectangular pits which act as a magnet for waders and White-faced Whistling Duck, but the openly wooded area next to them are also worth a look (Fine Spotted Woodpecker, Bearded Barbet, Shikra and flocks of Red Bishops).





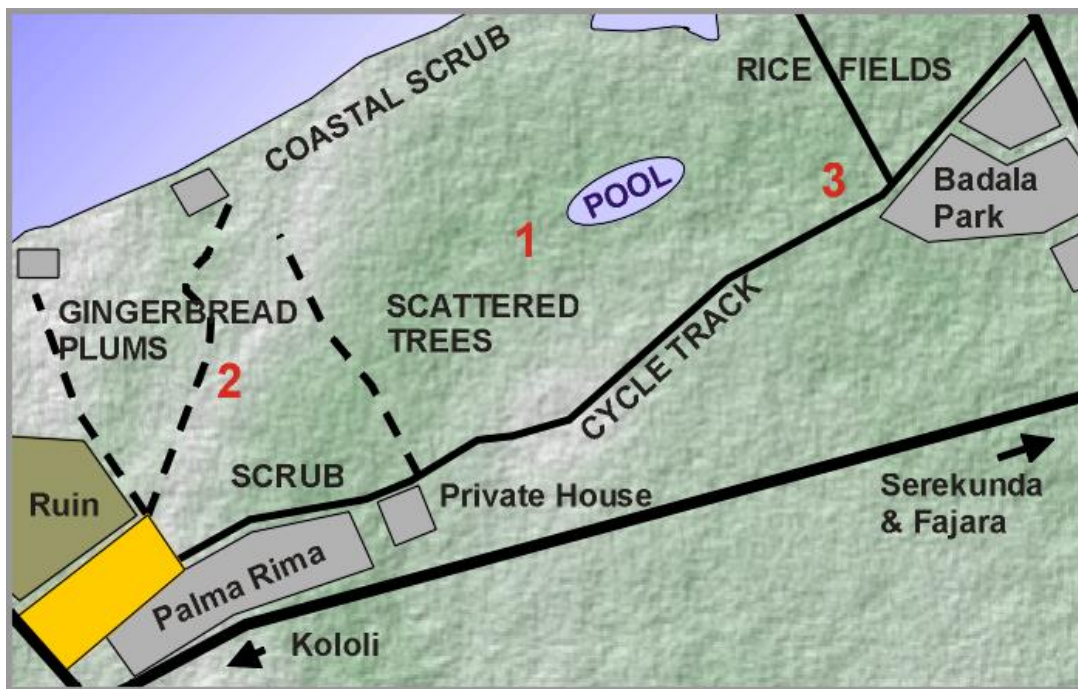
*Sewage works*



*Rice fields*

On the opposite side of the road to the ponds, a marsh is good for waders, African Jacana, and herons. The rice fields around these should be searched through as well, since Yellow-throated Longclaw and Cisticolas aren't always obvious at first, but they are present around **2** and **3**.

### Casino Cycle Track.



The cycle track follows the northern wall of the Badala Hotel, and continues for a few hundred metres to the rear of the Palma Rima Hotel. The small area of acacias and bushes parallel to the Badala **3** are good for Grey-headed Sparrows, small finches and Little Bee-eaters, with Yellow-throated Longclaws possible. The rice fields next to this **1** are open and reliable for Blue-bellied Rollers and Harrier Hawk. There is also a pool worth checking near the centre of the fields. Further along, various tracks cross a thick area of gingerbread plum. This is worth spending some time at, since the birds are not always immediately obvious, but include Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Bearded Barbet, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, and Common Gonolek. This is also one of the regular sites for Standard-wing & Long-tailed Nightjar. The best place to stand is near the centre of the diagonal track that starts at the Palma Rima **2**. The birds start to fly up over the whole area just before dusk (our first was at 19:26), and the track itself is also worth checking since they regularly land out in the open.

## Fajara Golf Course and Atlantic Road

The golf course is well worth a visit for extra species such as Splendid Sunbird, Blue-eared Glossy Starlings, and roosting White-faced Scops Owl. We didn't have time to try for the latter, but the general rule is either to go with your regular guide, or use one of the "guides" next to the entrance of the Fajara Golf Clubhouse. I'm not sure how good they are, but the Owls are probably only possible early in the morning and in the evening. When working the golf course itself, access should be free, although someone might ask for money which it is not actually necessary to pay. The only tip is to keep off the browns (ie greens). The hotel end entrance for a walk is just beyond the car park used by the green taxis.



On our last morning we also walked along part of Atlantic Road, which is found by continuing past the Golf Course. Despite the noisy traffic going by, we had good views of Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Bearded Barbet, and Beautiful Sunbird.

## Tanji and Brufut woods

These two sites are quite close, and so worth doing back to back. Tanji reserve was quiet (we were there mid afternoon) apart from a couple of Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters & Stone Partridge, but the beach to the south and Brufut beach to the north are worth checking for Kelp & Slender-billed Gulls among the more common Grey-headed. Brufut woods were also fairly quiet, apart from a Klaas's Cuckoo and Pin-tailed Whydah.

## Pirang

The main reason for visiting this area seems to be the Black-crowned Cranes that were absent when we went, but the open woodland and especially large derelict fish ponds offer a lot. It was in the woods that we had our best views of African Oriole, as well as a variety of other passerines, and the fish ponds have a good chance of Plain-backed Pipit. To the rear of the ponds are some lagoons that hold the higher numbers of terns (including marsh) and Pink-backed Pelicans.

Faraba Bush Track is only a short distance to the South of Pirang. It is a good area for raptors (particularly November to January), but we also had Striped Kingfisher, Yellow-fronted Canary, and plenty of Rufous-crowned Rollers.



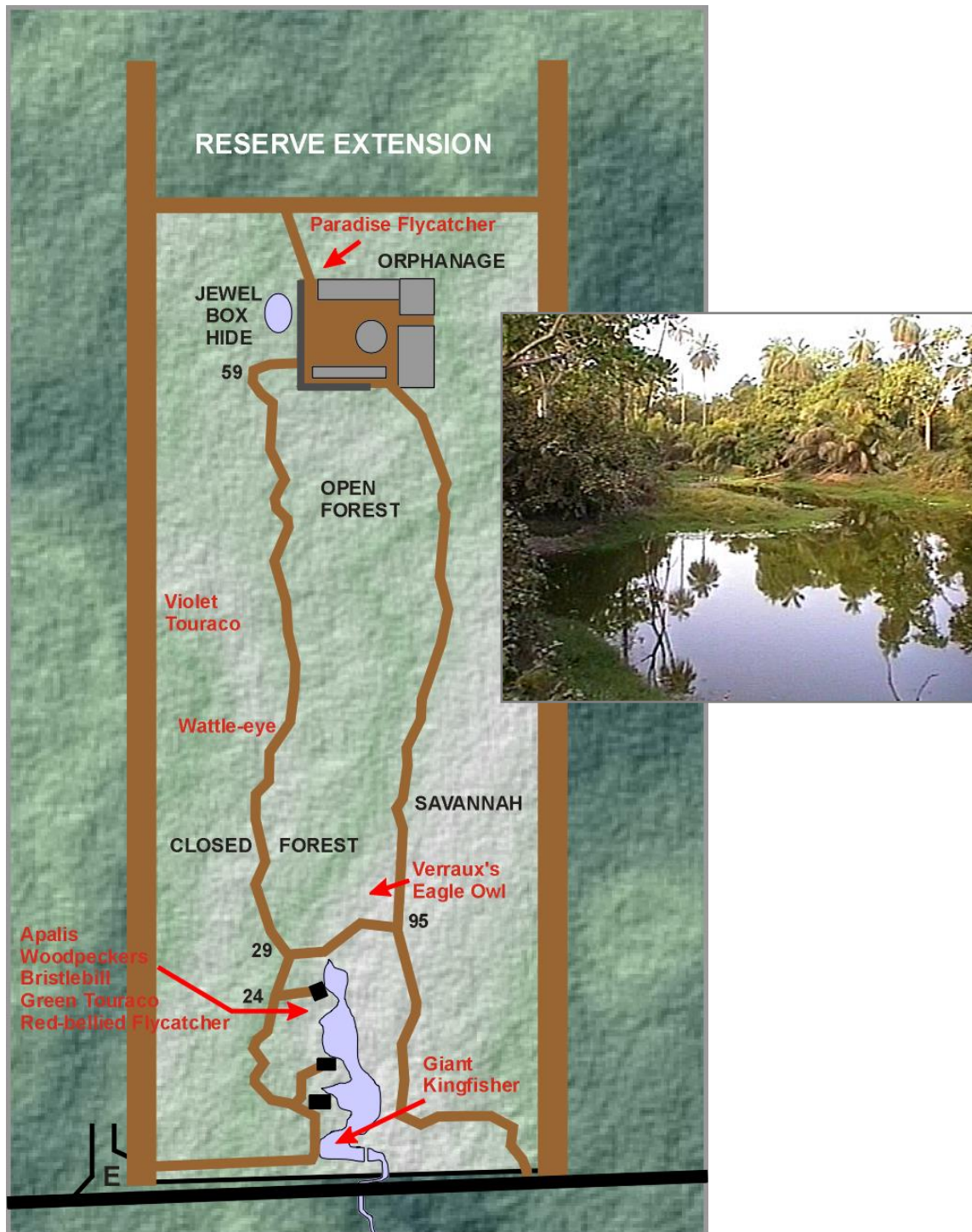
*Pirang fish ponds*



*Faraba bush track*



## Abuko Nature Reserve



Despite being one of the smallest reserves in Africa, it is worth spending a full day in Abuko - the opening hours are from 8am to 6pm. We found the best plan was to negotiate for the tourist taxi to drop us off and arrange a pick up time later (this cost 250 Dalasis) - the board prices are usually for the taxi to wait for a certain number of hours. Our taxi driver was very reliable on both visits to the reserve. Entry fee is 30 Dalasis each, and it is well worth paying an extra 50 Dalasis to book the photo hide at the Orphanage. It only comfortably seats 3, but has a constantly filled small pool which attracts a host of birds and animals, including Bluebill, Gonolek, Violet Turaco, Lavender Waxbill, Bushbuck, Red Colobus Monkey, Green Vervet Monkey, and Monitor Lizard. The area around the orphanage attracts many Bronze Mannikins, Firefinches, and Hooded



Vultures, and we found the toilet area to be reliable for African Paradise Flycatcher. The extension was very disappointing, with very little to see on our visit.

The main part of the reserve is heavily wooded, with some semi-open parts. The best tactic is to walk slowly round stopping regularly for skulkers, and also to spend some time in the hides and exhibition centre terrace. Giant Kingfisher is regular at the first pool, with breeding Hamerkops and various herons & birds of prey around / over the crocodile pool. Within the woods, one of the most productive areas was between posts 24 and 29, where most of the bird parties seemed to pass at some time. However, patience is needed here, since it is more often quiet, but goodies included Senegal Eremomela, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Green Turaco, Grey-headed Bristlebill, Snowy-crowned Robin Chat, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, and Black-necked Weaver. The regular Verreaux's Eagle Owl is just past the junction of paths at marker 95, but this is the one time when a guide might be useful at Abuko, since it does move around. The small bushes in this area are also worth checking for Scarlet-chested & Collared Sunbirds.

### **Marakissa**

This is a recently discovered area, just under an hours drive inland from Fajara. It consists of a mixture of woodland, open scrub, and rice fields which include a marshy section. The main attraction when we were there was a good selection of raptors, most overhead, but also some hunting and perching low. There are also reports of less easily seen passerines, but our main tally included Glossy Starlings, African Oriole, and fleeting Violet Turaco.



### **Lamin Fields**

Lamin is the other side of Serekunda to Kotu, and is a good area for Temminck's Courser. The melon fields are harvested towards the end of the year, leaving a quite large open area good for a few pairs of coursers. The small flocks of passerines should also be checked carefully - we had Cut-throat, Bush Petronia and Yellow-fronted Canary amongst them.

### **Yundum pools**

A number of Four-banded Sandgrouse come to drink regularly at these pools. They are easily seen, being only a couple of hundred metres to the south and on the opposite side to the airport entrance, on the Lamin to Brikrama road. The birds start to come in at dusk (around 19:25 in our case).

### **Barra and Essau**

These areas are on the north side of the River Gambia, and well worth visiting for some species not normally seen on the south side. A guide is essential, both for finding the bird sites and getting there. Our guide sorted out the taxis at both sides, as well as shepherding us on the ferry, which is an experience in itself. Once off the ferry, the tidal peninsular to the north of Fort Bullen is a short walk, and has a variety of waders (including White-fronted & Kentish Plovers) and terns (Caspian, Royal & Lesser Crested) with the gulls. The area around Essau is very good for Northern Anteater-chat and Pygmy Sunbird, as well as Viillot's Barbet and Senegal Eremomela. A variety of raptors also occur here.

## SPECIES SEEN

### Little Grebe

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Up to 5 on Sewage Pits opposite Badala Park Hotel

### Pink-backed Pelican

*Pelecanus rufescens*

About 15 seen at Pirang Fish Ponds, and flocks of 2 and 20 seen on separate days over Kotu Creek

### Great Cormorant

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

One on wires over Oyster Creek

### Long-tailed Cormorant

*Phalacrocorax africanus*

Seen every day at various locations - maximum 20 on one day



### Darter

*Anhinga melanogaster*

Overflying birds seen only - 1 over the Cycle Track, and 3 over Marakissa

### Grey Heron

*Ardea cinerea*

Small numbers seen every day

### Black-headed Heron

*Ardea melanocephala*

Up to 12 at Abuko, and 1 in the Kotu area



### Great Egret

*Ardea alba*

Up to 5 seen each day

### Black Heron

*Egretta ardesiaca*

At least 2 birds were on the ponds next to Kotu Creek, and were very approachable even when feeding



### Little Egret

*Egretta garzetta*

Up to 5 seen around Kotu Creek regularly, 3 at Marakissa, and 1 at Tanji

### Western Reef-Egret

*Egretta gularis*

15 at Camaloo Corner en route to the Barra ferry, 6 at Pirang Fish Ponds, up to 3 at Kotu, and singles at Tanji & Brufut beaches - all dark phase

### Squacco Heron

*Ardeola ralloides*

Maximum 6 at Marakissa, 2 at both Abuko and the marsh beside Kotu Creek, and 1 at the Kotu sewage pits



**Cattle Egret**

*Bubulcus ibis*

Very common - seen every day in most areas

**Striated Heron**

*Butorides striata*

3 sightings on Kotu Creek

**Night Heron**

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

One adult and a juvenile at the Crocodile Pool, Abuko

**Hamerkop**

*Scopus umbretta*

3 in Kotu area, 2 building nest at Abuko, 5 in Essau area, and 2 at Marakissa



**Yellow-billed Stork**

*Mycteria ibis*

1 adult circling over Kotu, and a juvenile on Kotu Creek

**Sacred Ibis**

*Threskiornis aethiopicus*

Up to 5 in the Kotu area

**African Spoonbill**

*Platalea alba*

A single bird flew from Kotu Creek

**White-faced Whistling-Duck**

*Dendrocygna viduata*

18 birds were at the Sewage Pits on one of two visits, and 12 birds flew over Kotu Creek the following day



**Osprey**

*Pandion haliaetus*

Most common at Barra (10), but up to 4 seen on most days

**Black-shouldered Kite**

*Elanus caeruleus*

Up to 4 birds seen on every full days birding - usually perched on telegraph wires or hovering

**Black Kite**

*Milvus migrans*

Very common in all areas

**Palm-nut Vulture**

*Gypohierax angolensis*

2 sightings at Abuko, 2 sightings at Kotu, and 1 in the Essau area

**Hooded Vulture**

*Necrosyrtes monachus*

Very common



**Short-toed Eagle**

*Circaetus gallicus*

Only one seen flying (from the car) mid-week

**Brown Snake Eagle**

*Circaetus cinereus*

A single bird was looking for thermals directly overhead at Marakissa

**Marsh Harrier**

*Circus aeruginosus*

1 seen from the aeroplane on landing, and a male at Marakissa

**Montagu's Harrier**

*Circus pygargus*

1 male over Faraba Bush Track

**African Harrier-Hawk**

*Polyboroides typus*

A maximum of 5 birds seen each day (usually 1-2), including a couple of juveniles

**Lizard Buzzard**

*Kaupifalco monogrammicus*

2 at Marakissa, 2 at Brufut Woods, and singles at Yundum Pool, Essau, and Kotu Cycle Track

**Dark Chanting Goshawk**

*Melierax metabates*

Less common than expected - singles at Pirang and the journey from Faraba Bush Track to the coast

**Gabar Goshawk**

*Melierax gabar*

A pair on route from Faraba Bush Track to the coast

**Shikra**

*Accipiter badius*

3 on one day, and singles on every other day

**Tawny Eagle**

*Aquila rapax*

1 at Abuko

**Wahlberg's Eagle**

*Aquila wahlbergi*

1 over Marakissa

**Booted Eagle**

*Aquila pennatus*

1 over Lamin Village

**Kestrel**

*Falco tinnunculus*

1-2 seen on most days

**Grey Kestrel**

*Falco ardosiaceus*

3 on Atlantic Road, up to 3 in the Kotu area, 2-3 at Abuko, 2 at Pirang, and 1 at Essau

**Red-necked Falcon**

*Falco chicquera*

1 over Pirang Fish Ponds

**Lanner Falcon**

*Falco biarmicus*

1 at Abuko

**Peregrine Falcon**

*Falco peregrinus*

3 on journey from Kotu to Barra

**Double-spurred Francolin**

*Francolinus bicalcaratus*

1-2 sightings every day, with parties of singles to 8 birds

**Stone Partridge**

*Ptilopachus petrosus*

2 flew up from track at Tanji

**African Jacana**

*Actophilomis africanus*

Up to 8 beside Kotu Creek, 2 at Abuko, and 6 at Essau

**Black-winged Stilt**

*Himantopus himantopus*

100+ in Kotu area, and 2 at Pirang Ponds

**Avocet**

*Recurvirostra avosetta*

Up to 15 on Kotu Creek

**Senegal Thick-knee**

*Burhinus senegalensis*

Up to 15 on Kotu Creek

**Temminck's Courser**

*Cursorius temminckii*

A pair was eventually located on the Lamin Fields

**Spur-winged Plover**

*Vanellus spinosus*

Commonly seen in all areas

**Black-headed Lapwing**

*Vanellus tectus*

4 on Fajara Golf Course, 3 at Kotu Sewage Pits, 12 at Lamin Fields, 8 at Essau



**African Wattled Lapwing**

*Vanellus senegallus*

Up to 10 in the Kotu area, 2 on the Cycle Track, 5 at Yundum Pools, 2 at Lamin Fields, 5 at Marakissa, 2 at Tanji



<b>Grey Plover</b>	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Seen most days in single figures, although up to 20 on Barra coastline	
<b>Ringed Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
One on Kotu Creek, at least 20 on Barra coastline	
<b>White-fronted Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>
At least 40 on Barra coastline	
<b>Kentish Plover</b>	<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>
At least 15 on Barra coastline	
<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Up to 10 on Kotu Creek, 2 on Kotu Sewage Pits	
<b>Bar-tailed Godwit</b>	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
4 on Barra coastline	
<b>Whimbrel</b>	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Small numbers seen on most days	
<b>Curlew</b>	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Up to 5 seen on most days	
<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
2 on Kotu Creek, 1 on Kotu Sewage Pits	
<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Up to 5 on Kotu Creek, 1 at Tanji Beach, 2 on Kotu Sewage Pits	
<b>Greenshank</b>	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
2 at Pirang Fish Ponds, singles at Kotu Creek and Tanji	
<b>Marsh Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa stagnitalis</i>
2 at Kotu Sewage Pits, 1 at Pirang Fish Ponds	
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Up to 20 around Kotu Creek, 10 on Kotu Sewage Pits	
<b>Redshank</b>	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Occasional birds seen at Kotu Creek and Pirang Fish Ponds	
<b>Turnstone</b>	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
10 at Brufut Beach, 20 at Barra coastline, 1 at Pirang Fish Ponds	
<b>Sanderling</b>	<i>Calidris alba</i>
50 on Barra Coastline	
<b>Little Stint</b>	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
2 together at Pirang Fish Ponds	
<b>Curlew Sandpiper</b>	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
3 on Kotu Creek	
<b>Ruff</b>	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Up to 30 on Kotu Creek, 20 on Kotu Sewage Pits	
<b>Kelp Gull</b>	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>
15 on the water at Tanji Beach, 5 on the water at Brufut Beach, 20 from the Banjul to Barra ferry	
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
3 from Banjul to Barra ferry	
<b>Yellow-legged Gull</b>	<i>Larus micahellis</i>
Up to 8 on Tanji and Brufut beaches, 20 at Barra	
<b>Grey-headed Gull</b>	<i>Larus cirrocephalus</i>
Very common - seen every day in good numbers	
	
<b>Black-headed Gull</b>	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Small numbers seen in Grey-headed Gull flocks	
<b>Slender-billed Gull</b>	<i>Larus genei</i>
Up to 40 on Tanji beach, 3 on Barra coastline	

**Gull-billed Tern**

*Gelochelidon nilotica*

5 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 1 at Brufut Beach, 2 from Banjul to Barra ferry

**Caspian Tern**

*Hydroprogne caspia*

Up to 3 over Kotu Creek, 6 at Tanji Beach, about 50 in mixed Tern flock on Barra coastline

**Royal Tern**

*Sterna maximus*

12 at Brufut Beach, about 50 in mixed Tern flock on Barra coastline, singles at Kotu Beach

**Sandwich Tern**

*Sterna sandvicensis*

Small numbers seen regularly at coastal sites

**Lesser Crested Tern**

*Sterna bengalensis*

About 15 birds amongst Tern flock on Barra coastline

**Pomarine Skua**

*Stercorarius pomarinus*

1 from Banjul to Barra ferry

**Arctic Skua**

*Stercorarius parasiticus*

1 from Banjul to Barra ferry

**Four-banded Sandgrouse**

*Pterocles quadricinctus*

27 birds flew into Yundum pool just before dusk

**Speckled Pigeon**

*Columba guinea*

Seen every day - from odd birds to small flocks of up to 10

**African Mourning Dove**

*Streptopelia decipiens*

Very common - seen every day at most sites

**Red-eyed Dove**

*Streptopelia semitorquata*

Common but sometimes seen irregularly

**Vinaceous Dove**

*Streptopelia vinacea*

Probably the most common of the *Streptopelia* doves

**Laughing Dove**

*Streptopelia senegalensis*

Very common - seen every day at all sites

**Black-billed Wood-Dove**

*Turtur abyssinicus*

Most commonly seen at Abuko (up to 20 birds), but small numbers seen at other sites, such as 10 at Essau

**Blue-spotted Wood-Dove**

*Turtur afer*

Commonly seen, although not quite as many as Black-billed Wood-Dove. Up to 20 also seen at Abuko



**Namaqua Dove**

*Oena capensis*

10 in Essau area, and singles at Marakissa and Yundum Pool area

**African Green Pigeon**

*Treron calvus*

12 at Marakissa, 3 at Tanji, 2 at Pirang, and singles on Fajara Golf Course and the coast

**Rose-ringed Parakeet**

*Psittacula krameri*

2 sightings of 3 in Kotu area, 1 at Pirang, 4 over the Kotu Cycle Track, 3 at Marakissa

**Senegal Parrot**

*Poicephalus senegalus*

Up to 5 in the Kotu area, 8 at Pirang, 4 at Marakissa, 5 at Essau

**Western Plantain-eater**

*Crinifer piscator*

Common - seen on all days and usually approachable





<b>Green Turaco</b>	<i>Tauraco persa</i>
At least 4 at Abuko	
<b>Violet Turaco</b>	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>
2 separate birds at Abuko (1 came to photo hide)	
<b>Klaas's Cuckoo</b>	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>
A single bird was seen at Brufut Woods	
<b>Senegal Coucal</b>	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>
Seen every day - from singles to 25 in one day	
<b>Verreaux's Eagle Owl</b>	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>
1 at Abuko. This bird is regularly seen, and can usually be found by one of the guides	
<b>Pearl-spotted Owlet</b>	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>
Only one seen - just before dusk in a tree between Kotu Creek and Badala Park Hotel	
<b>Long-tailed Nightjar</b>	<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>
5 flying over Kotu Cycle Track, including 2 which landed on the tracks	
<b>Standard-winged Nightjar</b>	<i>Macrodipteryx longipennis</i>
5 flying over Kotu Cycle Track, including 1 on the track	
<b>Mottled Spinetail</b>	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>
1 bird only - flying overhead at pirang	
<b>African Palm Swift</b>	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
Quite common - seen in small parties every day (up to 20 birds in one day)	
<b>Common Swift</b>	<i>Apus apus</i>
Hundreds in the air over Banjul ferry terminal, only occasional birds seen elsewhere	
<b>Little Swift</b>	<i>Apus affinis</i>
A hundred or so birds over Banjul ferry terminal, 3 over Kotu Sewage Pits, 3 over Pirang Fish Ponds, 10 over Atlantic Road	
<b>Malachite Kingfisher</b>	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>
1 bird seen on 3 occasions alongside Kotu Creek lower bridge	
<b>African Pygmy-Kingfisher</b>	<i>Ispidina picta</i>
A single bird was seen fishing briefly in front of the exhibition centre at Abuko	
<b>Striped Kingfisher</b>	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>
2 seen - 1 on Fajara Golf Course and the other at Faraba Bush Track	
<b>Giant Kingfisher</b>	<i>Megaceryle maximus</i>
1 landed at the first pool at Abuko, and 3 further sightings of birds flying over Kotu Creek	
<b>Pied Kingfisher</b>	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Seen every day in all areas with open water - maximum around 30 in one day	



<b>Little Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
Regularly seen on all days, with perhaps up to 50 as a daily maximum	



<b>Swallow-tailed Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>
3 at Tanji, and a very approachable group of 4 feeding beside Atlantic Road	
<b>Blue-cheeked Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops persicus</i>
7 at Mangrove area next to Pirang Fish Ponds, 1 over Abuko	

**Rufous-crowned Roller**

*Coracias naevius*

Up to 8 seen at Faraba Bush Track, 1 at Essau

**Blue-bellied Roller**

*Coracias cyanogaster*

Seen every day, usually in pairs or groups. Maximum of 12 in one day

**Abyssinian Roller**

*Coracias abyssinicus*

Seen every day, usually as lone birds - maximum of 8 in one day



**Hoopoe**

*Upupa epops*

1 at Kotu Sewage Pits, 1 at Essau

**Black Scimitar-bill**

*Rhinopomastus aterrimus*

2 birds together on Fajara Golf Course

**Green Woodhoopoe**

*Phoeniculus purpureus*

Seen every day - always in small groups. Up to 15 on any one day



**Western Red-billed Hornbill**

*Tockus erythrorhynchus*

Very common in all areas

**African Pied Hornbill**

*Tockus fasciatus*

Up to 4 at Abuko, 1 at Pirang, 2 at Marakissa, 1 at Brufut Woods

**African Grey Hornbill**

*Tockus nasutus*

1 at Pirang, 4 at Yundum, 1 at Marakissa, 1 at Brufut Woods, 4 at Abuko, 2 at Essau

**Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird**

*Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

A single bird in the coastal scrub at Kotu

**Viellot's Barbet**

*Lybius vieilloti*

2 separate birds at Essau

**Bearded Barbet**

*Lybius dubius*

2 next to Kotu Sewage Pits, 1 at Abuko, a group of 3 on Atlantic Road, 3 at Pirang, 1 next to Brufut Beach, 1 at Essau



**Fine-spotted Woodpecker**

*Campethera punctuligera*

An adult with a juvenile at Fajara Golf Course, 2 separate birds next to Kotu Sewage Pits, singles at Pirang and Essau

**Buff-spotted Woodpecker**

*Campethera nivosa*

A single bird at Abuko

**Grey Woodpecker**

*Dendropicus goertae*

2 separate birds at Abuko, 3 at Essau



<b>Lesser Honeyguide</b>	<i>Indicator minor</i>
2 separate birds seen at Abuko	
<b>Crested Lark</b>	<i>Calerida cristata</i>
Main sight was at Pirang Fish Ponds (12), with another 2 on Kotu Beach	
<b>Fanti Sawwing</b>	<i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>
Up to 30 at Tanji, about 12 at Abuko	
<b>Sand Martin</b>	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
1 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 3 at Tanji	
<b>Barn Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Occasional birds seen only	
<b>Red-chested Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo lucida</i>
Up to 20 birds seen on any day	



<b>Wire-tailed Swallow</b>	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
Closest views were of 5 at Kotu Creek lower bridge, a further 6 over the Cycle Track, 5 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 4 at Tanji Beach	
<b>Plain-backed Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>
3 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 1 at the Lamin Fields	
<b>Tree Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
1 at Pirang Fish Ponds	
<b>Yellow-throated Longclaw</b>	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>
Up to 4 birds together in the marsh area next to Kotu Creek	
<b>White Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
1 at the airport on arrival, 1 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 1 at Tanji Beach	
<b>Yellow Wagtail</b>	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
4 next to Kotu Cycle track, 2 at Lamin, 1 at Tanji, 2 at Brufut Woods, 2 at Kotu Creek	
<b>Common Bulbul</b>	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
Very common in all habitats	
<b>Little Greenbul</b>	<i>Andropadus virens</i>
Up to 6 birds at Abuko, 1 at Marakissa	
<b>Yellow-throated Greenbul</b>	<i>Chlorocichla flavicollis</i>
1 bird only seen at the dripping pipe beside Kotu Creek	
<b>Grey-headed Bristlebill</b>	<i>Bleda canicapillus</i>
A single bird at Abuko	
<b>African Thrush</b>	<i>Turdus pelios</i>
Up to 15 birds seen on most days in wooded areas	
<b>Zitting Cisticola</b>	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
2 birds in the Kotu Marsh and Pond area	
<b>Tawny-flanked Prinia</b>	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
Seen on most days - quite common and usually obvious on call	
<b>Yellow-breasted Apalis</b>	<i>Apalis flavida</i>
Up to 3 birds at Abuko in the vicinity of marker 24	
<b>Oriole Warbler</b>	<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>
The only site where these were seen was at the dripping pipe next to the Kotu Creek, where there were probably 3 birds	
<b>Green-backed Camaroptera</b>	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>
2 separate birds at Abuko, 1 near Kotu Creek, and 1 near Yundum Pool	
<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
1 at the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek	
<b>Reed Warbler</b>	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
6 around the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek	

**Eastern Olivaceous Warbler** *Hippolais pallida*

Singles at Kotu Creek and the Kotu Cycle track

**Melodious Warbler** *Hippolais polyglotta*

2 at Tanji

**Senegal Eremomela** *Eremomela pusilla*

Best views were of up to 6 birds in an isolated tree near Essau, also 2 at Abuko and 1 at Faraba Bush Track

**Northern Crombec** *Sylvietta brachyura*

3 sightings at Abuko, 1 at Faraba Bush Track, 1 at Lamin Fields

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

3 in the Kotu area

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

1 at the Kotu Sewage Pits area, and 1 at Marakissa

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

A single bird only at Tanji

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A single female at the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek

**Greater Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

1 at Tanji Beach

**Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans*

2 sightings in the Kotu Creek area

**Northern Black-Flycatcher** *Melaenornis edolioides*

2 in Tam Tam night club grounds (Kotu), 3 on the Kotu Cycle track, 1 at Pirang, 5 Marakissa / Pirang

**Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat** *Cossypha niveicapilla*

Up to 4 at Abuko, 1 at the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek, 1 at Yundum pool

**Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Singles at Kotu and Essau

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

1 in the Lamin fields, 1 at Essau

**Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

10 in the Lamin Fields, 1 at Pirang Fish Ponds, 3 at Essau

**Northern Anteater-Chat** *Myrmecocichla aethiops*

A single bird was seen between Essau and Barra

**Brown-throated Wattle-eye** *Platysteira cyanea*

The only site where these were seen was at Abuko, where up to 10 birds were seen, often finding location by song

**Black-headed Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone rufiventer*

Up to 4 birds were seen at Abuko - a mixture of males and females

**African Paradise-Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone viridis*

What was probably the same male bird was seen near the toilets at Abuko orphanage

**Blackcap Babbler** *Turdoides reinwardtii*

Around 6 in a group around the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek, 6 in Abuko, 1 at Essau

**Brown Babbler** *Turdoides plebejus*

Very common - seen every day

**Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris*

A family party of male, female and juvenile at Abuko, the only other sighting was a male at Pirang

**Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

A party of 3 males and 3 females were feeding together near the Verraux's Eagle Owl site at Abuko, a separate male was in the canopy near to Abuko Exhibition Centre, and another male was in the Essau area



**Pygmy Sunbird**

*Hedydipna platura*

4 males were in the Essau area

**Beautiful Sunbird**

*Cinnyris pulchella*

The most common sunbird around hotel gardens. 20 were also seen on Atlantic Road, singles at the Cycle Track and Kotu Beach scrub, and 1 at Marakissa

**Splendid Sunbird**

*Cinnyris coccinigastrus*

8 birds on Fajara Golf Course, 2 at Abuko, and singles at Tanji Beach and Brufut Woods



**Variable Sunbird**

*Cinnyris venustus*

Seen on all days but one. Highest daily count was around 20 in the Kotu area. There were also 6 on the north side of the river in the Essau area



**African Golden Oriole**

*Oriolus auratus*

2 at Pirang, 1 at Marakissa

**Woodchat Shrike**

*Lanius senator*

Seen on most days, with maximum daily count of 8

**Yellow-billed Shrike**

*Corvinella corvina*

Common - seen every day, usually in small parties



**Northern Puffback**

*Dryoscopus gambensis*

1 male at Marakissa

**Black-crowned Tchagra**

*Tchagra senegalus*

Single birds at Brufut Beach and Brufut Woods

**Common Gonolek**

*Laniarius barbarus*

1 at the dripping pipe next to Kotu Creek, up to 4 in the Cycle Track area, 1 at Yundum Pool, 1 at Essau, and up to 6 on Atlantic Road

**Piapiac**

*Ptilostomus afer*

Seen on almost every day - common and usually seen in groups



**Fork-tailed Drongo**

*Dicrurus adsimilis*

5 at Marakissa, 1 next to Kotu Ponds, 1 at Kotu Cycle Track, 2 at Abuko, 1 at Pirang, and 2 at Essau

**Pied Crow**

*Corvus albus*

Very common in all areas



**Greater Blue-eared Glossy Starling**

*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

2 on Fajara Golf Course, 1 at Marakissa, and about 30 in the Starling flocks at Essau

**Lesser Blue-eared Glossy Starling**

*Lamprotornis chloropterus*

6 at Marakissa, and about 10 in the mixed starling flocks in Essau

**Splendid Glossy Starling**

*Lamprotornis splendidus*

5 birds were in a single group on one of two visits to Abuko

**Purple Glossy Starling**

*Lamprotornis purpureus*

About 15 birds in 2 mixed Starling flocks in the Essau area

**Long-tailed Glossy Starling**

*Lamprotornis caudatus*

The most common Starling by far, although not always very approachable. Seen every day on both sides of the river, with a daily maximum of 25 birds

**Yellow-billed Oxpecker**

*Buphagus africanus*

Up to 12 birds on cattle around Kotu Ponds, 2 birds at Essau, and 1 at Lamin



**House Sparrow**

*Passer domesticus*

Seen occasionally, with by far the largest concentration at the Banjul ferry terminal

**Grey-headed Sparrow**

*Passer griseus*

Seen at most sites in small flocks, and on most days, with a maximum of around 20 in one day



**Bush Petronia**

*Petronia dentata*

2 in Lamin Fields and 2 at Essau

**Village Weaver**

*Ploceus cucullatus*

Extremely common - possibly the most common bird of the trip





**White-billed Buffalo-Weaver**

*Bubalornis albirostris*

Very common - seen on most days in flocks, with the largest of about 100 birds near Essau

**Black-necked Weaver**

*Ploceus nigricollis*

Up to 20 at Abuko, 2 at Pirang, 2 at Brufut Woods

**Orange Bishop**

*Euplectes franciscanus*

Occasional flocks of birds (perhaps up to 100 in each) seen next to Kotu Sewage Pits, Lamin Fields, and Kotu Cycle Track

**Lavender Waxbill**

*Estrilda caerulescens*

2 birds together at Pirang, and up to 10 birds visited the pool in front of the Jewel Box hide at Abuko

**Orange-cheeked Waxbill**

*Estrilda melpoda*

4 birds together near Kotu Cycle Track, and one on the coast south of Tanji

**Western Bluebill**

*Spermophaga haematina*

A male and female came to the drinking pool in front of the Jewel Box photo hide at Abuko

**Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu**

*Uraeginthus bengalus*

Seen every day in good numbers

**Red-billed Firefinch**

*Lagonosticta senegala*

Very common - seen on almost every day in good numbers



**Cut-throat**

*Amadina fasciata*

A single male was with other finches on the open land of the Lamin Fields

**Bronze Mannikin**

*Spermestes cucullatus*

At least 50 birds around the Abuko orphanage, 6 in the Kotu area, 6 at the Kotu Sewage Pits, and 6 on Atlantic Road

**African Silverbill**

*Euodice cantans*

20 at the Kotu Cycle Track, 2 at Tanji, and around 10 in the gardens of the Badala Park Hotel



**Pin-tailed Whydah**

*Vidua macroura*

A male in non-breeding plumage was in Brufut Woods

**Village Indigobird**

*Vidua chalybeata*

A male and 2 separate females seen in the Kotu area

**Yellow-fronted Canary**

*Serinus mozambicus*

3 at Lamin, 3 at the Faraba Bush Track, 2 at Essau

**TOTAL SPECIES = 216**