

A Birding (& Herping) Trip to

Uganda



8th to 14th March, 2024



Fri 8 th March	Entebbe to Nakitoma Nakitoma Kabalega Restaurant Murchison Fall NP main highway
Sat 9 th March	Park Side Safari Lodge Tangi Gate area & Murchison NP Murchison NP Red Chilli Restaurant & Falls cruise Murchison NP via Student Cebtre Track
Sun 10 th March	Murchison NP Kabalega Resort, Masindi Masindi-Kafu Stretch
Mond 11 th March	The Royal Mile, Budongo Forest
Tues 12 th March	Mityana Forest Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana
Wed 13 th March	Mityana Forest Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana
Thur 14 th March	Mityana Forest "Mamba Zone" Entebbe Botanical Garden

Uganda

Friday, 8th to Thursday 14th March, 2024

We had both been to Uganda before, for my part with my wife on an extremely successful trip to the South of the country for the wildlife – Gorillas, Chimpanzees, Queen Elizabeth Park, safari, and even managed to include Shoebill amongst the 224 species of birds that I saw on ostensibly a non-birding trip. We had in recent years found some excellent trips elsewhere that combined both birding and herping, so adding some wonderful snakes to our lists. With this in mind, we came up with a trip to Uganda organised by Herping & Wildlife Safaris (herpingtoursafaris-smc.com). This meant that we could combine the three interests that keep us ticking – birds and mammals in the North-west at Murchison Falls NP area, and snakes (with some birding thrown in by default) back towards Kampala in the East, although not too close since it is an extremely busy and sprawling area to tolerate.

For flights out, as usually happens, KLM offered the best times (duration, etc) and costs, but for obvious reasons they aren't as fluid as the more expensive carriers who use other less convenient hubs. This meant they don't always have the reliability you might hope for, quite often resulting in tight turnaround times when connecting in Amsterdam. A trip in 2022 had a missed connection via Lima, Peru so we landed the following morning, although there was the sweetener of a decent compensation amount. The current trip resulted in no luggage arriving at Entebbe airport, and the lack of a flight the next day meant it didn't arrive until three days later. No compensation apart from payment of receipts for essentials this time! Luckily, we had all that we needed for this not to affect the enjoyment of that time – binoculars, cameras, phones for entering information, and a pair of pants and a T shirt! Switching from shooting video to still images also extended the battery lives as well.



This company was set up in 2019 by a chap called Alphar (*centre above*) and I can highly recommend them. I can't think of one part of their organisation of the trip I would change or want improved. They even functioned as the intermediary with KLM for our luggage retrieval, which wasn't straightforward due to accommodation changes during the trip. Alphar also sorted the last day that included herping in the morning and a hotel near the airport, where we would have a room to freshen up/change clothes and be offered a lift to the botanical gardens. They specialise in finding snakes, but our experience showed they were equally as adept at guiding for birds, mammals, general reptiles etc, and this can easily include primates in the South-west. Alphar tends to be the snake specialist and takes along a couple of guides (Charles – *above left* - and his son Nicholas – *above right*) whose expertise in finding them has to be seen to be believed. For birds, mammals, and seemingly everything else that moves (and even doesn't move, since it also includes trees and flowers) they have Arshley Brian (*below* - twinmarttours.com). He is a young pup of only 29, and it's unbelievable that he's only been birding since 2017. His senses and knowledge about the fauna and flora are superb (just don't tell him I said that!). He seems to have a self-fulfilling aim of having knowledge in all aspects of the natural world, and to be amongst the best of guides.



TIPS

We didn't encounter many biting flies and insects (only a few bites noticed), but antimalarials are recommended

For herping, wellies and long trousers are a must, as well as a hat/cap for thorny bushes

Many places, including some hotels and shops, do not take a credit card. There are ATM's available in towns to withdraw Uganda Shillings (beware they often have a \$10 transaction fee)

Try the local Nile Beer. Very refreshing and only £1/\$1.25 for a 500ml bottle

For those planning to do the herping, don't expect a plethora of snakes. While there are a lot around somewhere, a lot of work (mainly by the guides) is needed to find the few

The barbequed chicken served by the roadside vendors is delicious. Similar price to the beer

First light was a 6:45am; last light at 19:15pm

Take rain wear. We had no rain, but it does occur, and threatened a couple of times late afternoon

Day 1 - Friday 8th March

Entebbe to Nakitoma

The trip didn't start well – landing at a decent time the midnight before was unfortunately lacking our suitcases. They were found to be still in Amsterdam! Not only that, but there was no following day flight so they wouldn't be delivered for at least 2 days (if at all). However, Izzy from Herping and Wildlife Safaris turned up even before the 6.30am due departure time the next morning, and we were on our way to the North-west. Escaping from Entebbe, we naturally passed a lot of urbia, along with its human encroachment on most of the natural habitat, although it wasn't long before a couple of Marabous in a dirty ditch were followed by the national bird in the form of Grey-crowned Crane. Similarly perched aloft telegraph poles the Black-headed Herons soon after seemed unlikely although welcome. Before we progressed any further, our pickup driver Izzy, the brother-in-law to Alphar, switched to be replaced by our bird guide for the next three days, a chap called Arshley Brian. Although just birding since 2017, he proved to be incredibly good at finding birds and helping with ID, including tips on why they were what they were. The continued morning journey was then followed by open and very straight roads through both bush country and the more common populous villages, with the odd stop for anything that looked interesting. Among many of the supposed commoner species, parking next to a cattle field was very productive, with Yellow-billed Egret and Woolly-necked Storks (*below*) accompanying Hamerkop and Wattled Lapwing between the cows, and Grey-backed Fiscal and Diederik Cuckoo, with Ross's Turaco at another stop along with Shikra and Grey-headed Kingfisher. Long-crested Eagles perched were regular, as were thermalling Abdim's Stork kettles and a roost of Pink-backed Pelicans atop a tree next to the road.



Nakitoma



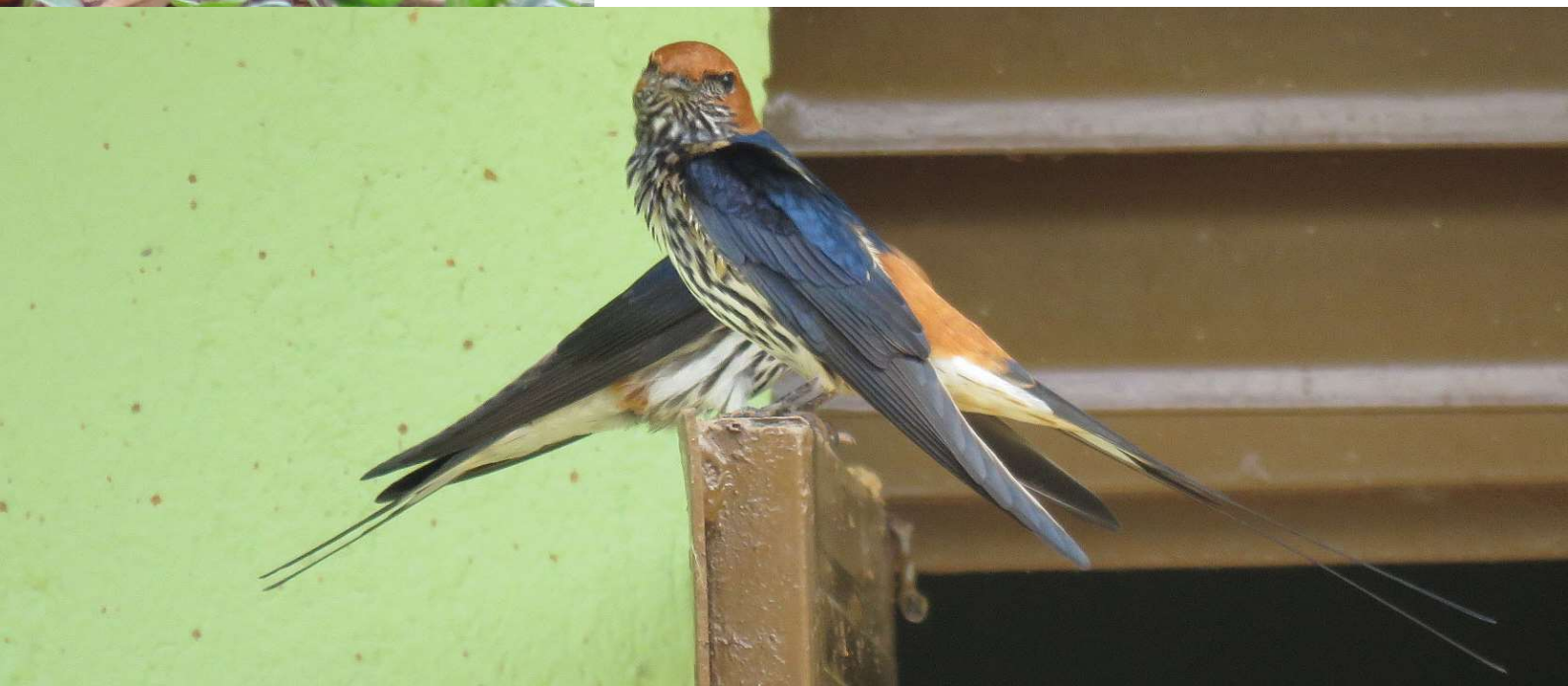
We turned off the main highway to a track at Nakitoma, which would eventually lead to Akuma Rhino lodge (a few tourist buses passed us in this very quest). We searched the track instead for a short time in the increasing heat and were rewarded with a nice selection of birds. This was instigated by a superb Western Banded Snake-eagle (*left*) overhead. A male Diederik Cuckoo (*below*) called from telegraph wires, while a bunch of Speckled Mousebirds plied to and fro across the track. Angola Swallows were circling around the area. In the bushes were a pair of Marico Sunbirds, a calling Tropical Boubou, and the last species on the way out, a Black-headed Gonolek.



Kabalega Diner



We then found oasis in the Kabalega Diner. This was an intentional choice, since ordering the food and being served had a time lapse, but the intervening time was well spent in their active bird rich grounds. We were welcomed by a couple of Golden-breasted Buntings (*left*), and a Northern Black Flycatcher. What seemed an active Weaver colony behind the buildings contained both Viellot's Black and Village. A mix of Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and Bronze Mannikins were mixing with good numbers of African Thrush on the ground, as well as Starlings in the form of Violet-backed & Lesser Blue-eared. A couple of Eurasian Hoopoes joined them at the rear of the property, but trying to get views of a White-crested Turaco were thwarted. Patience among the branches of the trees pulled out a trio of Green-backed Cameropteras and Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, while a possible nesting group of Lesser Striped Swallows (*below*) were to the rear of the kitchen.



Northern Black Flycatcher



Violet-backed Starling



African Thrush

Yellow-throated Leaflove



Budongo Forest and Murchison NP



We left the restaurant and completed the journey to one of the gateways for Murchison NP, which turned out to be through similar country and roads to the morning, but less interesting bird wise. We arrived at the gate where there was a lengthy process of gaining the entry tickets by Arshley for some reason. There were a few other tourist vans already present, although not sufficient to cause a delay. Instead of waiting by the car, we wandered around the small entrance area and turned up a pair of African Pygmy Kingfishers, a Green-backed Eremomela, and Bateleur overhead (*left*).

Once through the gates, we slowly drove along the well-kept drive, initially through the forest on either side of the road to reach the open country and the start of the mammal glut. We did come across two primates on the initial forest drive – a few Mantled Guereza and larger groups of Olive Baboon. It was impressive how Arshley managed to pick up bird species as he drove, mostly on calls. These tended to be in small numbers due to the thick habitat, but were regular and varied. Pick of these might have been a couple of fly-through Tambourine Doves, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird (*bottom*), Gabar Goshawk, a couple of Grasshopper Buzzards, Green Crombec, and Collared & Western Violet-backed Sunbirds.



The terrain then started to open out to well vegetated open bush land, and one of the most surprising sights was large groups of Abdim's Storks both circling in the air and feeding on the ground where there was a controlled bush fire, obviously lapping up any morsels disturbed by the flames. There were even decent sized groups hovering on the actual road itself. At this time, a few Tawny Eagles appeared in the area, almost following our car's journey.



We stopped at a pull-in to try to catch up with Cabanis's Bunting. This was unsuccessful, but a dancing white morph African Paradise Flycatcher and Western Violet-backed Sunbird were adequate compensation. It wasn't until the habitat opened out fully to almost rolling grassland with bush that the focus switched from birds to mammals. There were some good birds here to be fair – crowned by a trio of Abyssinian Ground Hornbills, single Red-necked Falcon, separate Grasshopper Buzzards, and the sight of a duet of Tawny & Lesser-spotted Eagles seeing off a Bateleur, with young White-backed Vulture sneaking off to the side. The mammals, however, dominated by sheer numbers. A quartet of Elephants got the ball rolling (*below*), quickly unleashing teams of Warthogs and antelope – Kob, Oribi, Waterbuck and even a few handsome Jackson's Hartebeest. While watching, a lone Side-striped Jackal meandered harmlessly through the throng. All was excellent and the animals were superb, until we tried to start the engine of the van to move on. Nowt! The outcome was that Arshley called in some local help, and he had the vehicle ticking over again in minutes. If it had to happen on any trip – after the luggage fiasco this just had to be! We thus had used up more time than expected so headed on to our next digs for 2 nights – The Park Side Lodge on the opposite side of the national park to where we had entered. On the way, we added our first African Fish Eagle and Pied Kingfishers of the trip as we crossed the River Nile in its formative, yet still impressive, stages.





Abyssinian Ground Hornbill



Northern Carmine Bee-eater



Grasshopper Buzzard

Day 2 - Saturday 9th March



Kob

The location of the Murchison Falls National Park is reputedly at a fairly low altitude and so is very hot throughout the day (and night to be fair!). We were to set off at first light so that we could spend as much of the morning as possible in the cooler earlier hours, ostensibly spending less time on individual species so we could cram more in. Well that worked well! As it turned out, we got to the planned restaurant at 12.30, and the open roof with shelter kept the temperatures down to a reasonable level up until the end. The way the morning panned out was to drive slowly out of the lodge grounds, spend a little time searching around before entering the park gates, then drive slowly on the tarmac through the open park habitat, then drop down to the rougher tracks through the open grasslands and acacia scrubland. The whole morning was superb from both bird and mammal perspectives.

Park Side Lodge



View outside of the Lodge

After the false start when I had to return to the room to collect the forgotten camera, the plus side was that the other vans parked up had left, leaving us to bird the very rough track on which the Park Side Lodge is based. The pair of menacing Marabou Storks that had greeted us on exiting our room in the semi-dark had by now departed. Senegal Coucal had preceded the shameful return to the room and was in the area again when we returned. White-browed Coucal was a little further on. Alongside another lodge, a long-awaited species in the form of Brubru eventually posed in the canopy. A Black-crowned Tchagra was in the same area, but a lot closer, as was a Grey-backed Fiscal (*right*)



Tangi Entrance (to National Park) Area

On to the main road, which turned left on to the track through the national park, and we spent a short time at the side of this road picking up semi marshland birds. A Moustached Grass Warbler was the first to be seen, along with one or two very elusive Warblers (purportedly including African Reed & Lesser Swamp). *Hirundines* in the area were a little perplexing at first but turned out to be Wire-tailed Swallows without their trademark tails. Good numbers of Grey-headed Kingfishers (*below*) were noisy and active all around. African Woolly-necked Stork was perched above a fishing Yellow-billed Egret. Along the small stream, our first and only Red-throated Bee-eater of the morning was perched.



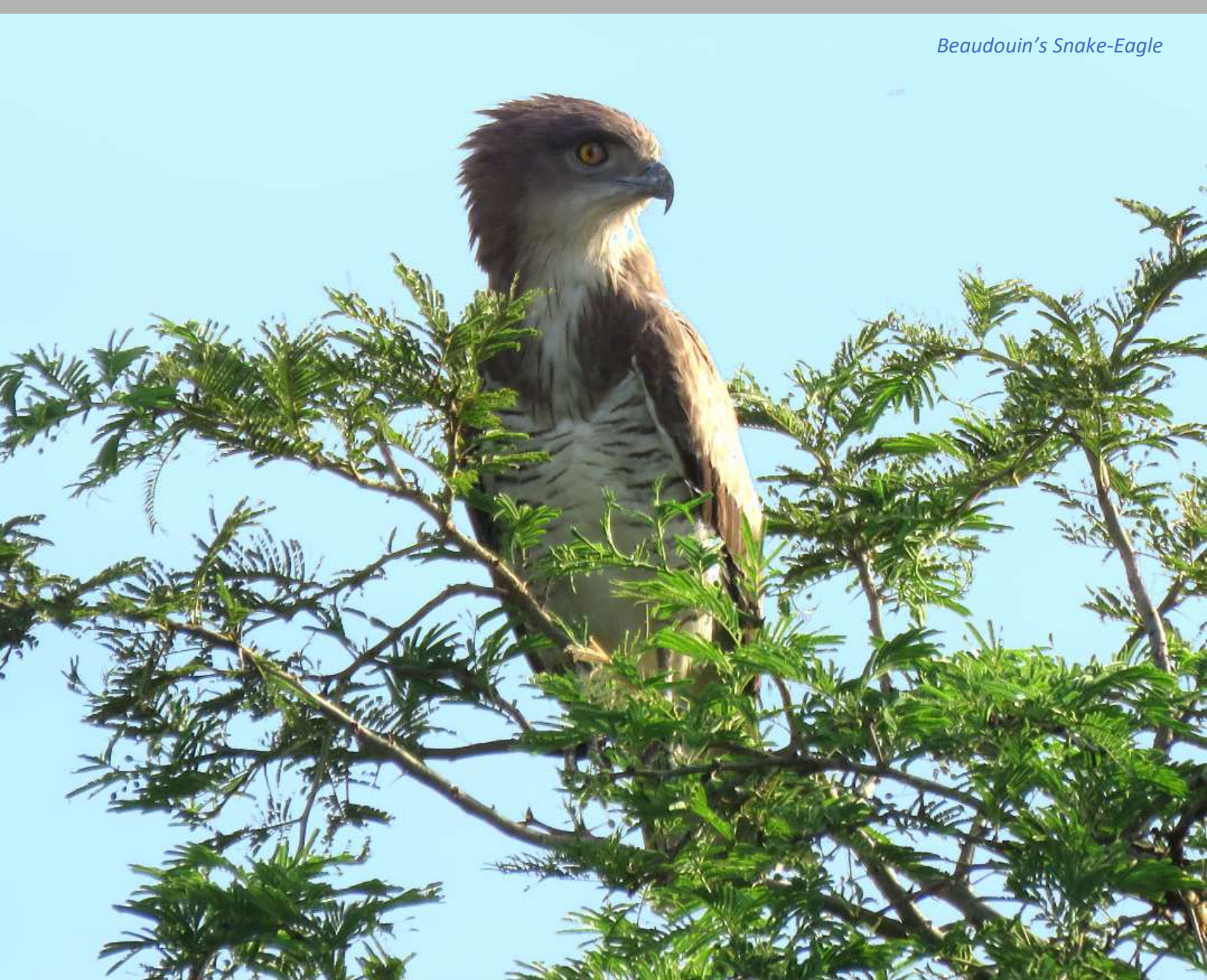
Murchison Falls National Park

The entrance to the park was again patrolled by the feisty group of Olive Baboons seen the previous evening. We passed along the tarmac road for some time before turning off on to a rougher track, which allowed much more personal views of the whole habitat. The size of the park is impressive, mainly comprising open grassland, but also occasionally breaking out into thicker acacia woodland. The numbers and quality of the mammals and birds was outstanding. Kob and Buffalo numbered in the many hundreds, possibly thousands in the former case, with Oribi not far behind. Birds were regular, in good numbers, and in many varied species (63 seen). It would be folly to list them all here when they are all detailed in the species list, but there were many highlights, prime of which had to be the Secretarybird (*below*) ambling along the grassland. This was apparently only the second one to have been seen in the park. Seeing a young Harrier-hawk hanging upside down from the tree trunks grappling for something to eat from within. Other notables were; the Beaudouin's Snake-eagle, perched near to the road, another apparently uncommon sighting here; and trying to sort out some of the birds which didn't show what is described in the books (Water Thick-knee with very little white above the wing coverts, Little Bee-eater with white above the yellow in the cheeks, which Blue & Cinnamon Breasted are supposed to sport). ID books are there to be obeyed wild birds!





Juvenile Harrier-Hawk



Beaudouin's Snake-Eagle



Silverbird



Grey Kestrel



Little Bee-eater



Spotted Hyena



Leopard



Nubian Giraffe

Equally as impressive, outside of the sheer numbers of game everywhere, were (predictably) a couple of carnivore sightings. A lone Spotted Hyena was next to the road (eventually crossing said road in front of a van) and was unfortunately seen to have what looked like a noose around its neck. Later in the morning, a Leopard was found lounging in a large tree on a horizontal branch. Unfortunately, two other guide led tourist vans pulled up, and one had the brainwave of exiting his vehicle and slamming the door shut. It's more than a dozing cat can take, so the Leopard slunk along the branch and exited stage rear and into the long grass. A third van missed out on the sighting narrowly due to this!

Murchison river boat cruise – Red Chili Restaurant



Prior to this outing, we had lunch at the Red Chili Restaurant. A good lunch stop but nabbing the table next to the bird bath provided extra benefits. In addition to the sleeping Warthogs next to the bath, a Spotted Palm Thrush (*above*) made an early appearance. This was in the company of a few Northern Grey-headed Sparrows. Weavers entering the fray a little later were Speckle-fronted & Black-headed. While (still) waiting for our meal to arrive, the song of Grey-capped Warbler was picked up, and we managed to tempt this understated and “better than the books” bird to a nearby tree. This was yet another restaurant having birds as side dishes!



Speckle-fronted Weaver

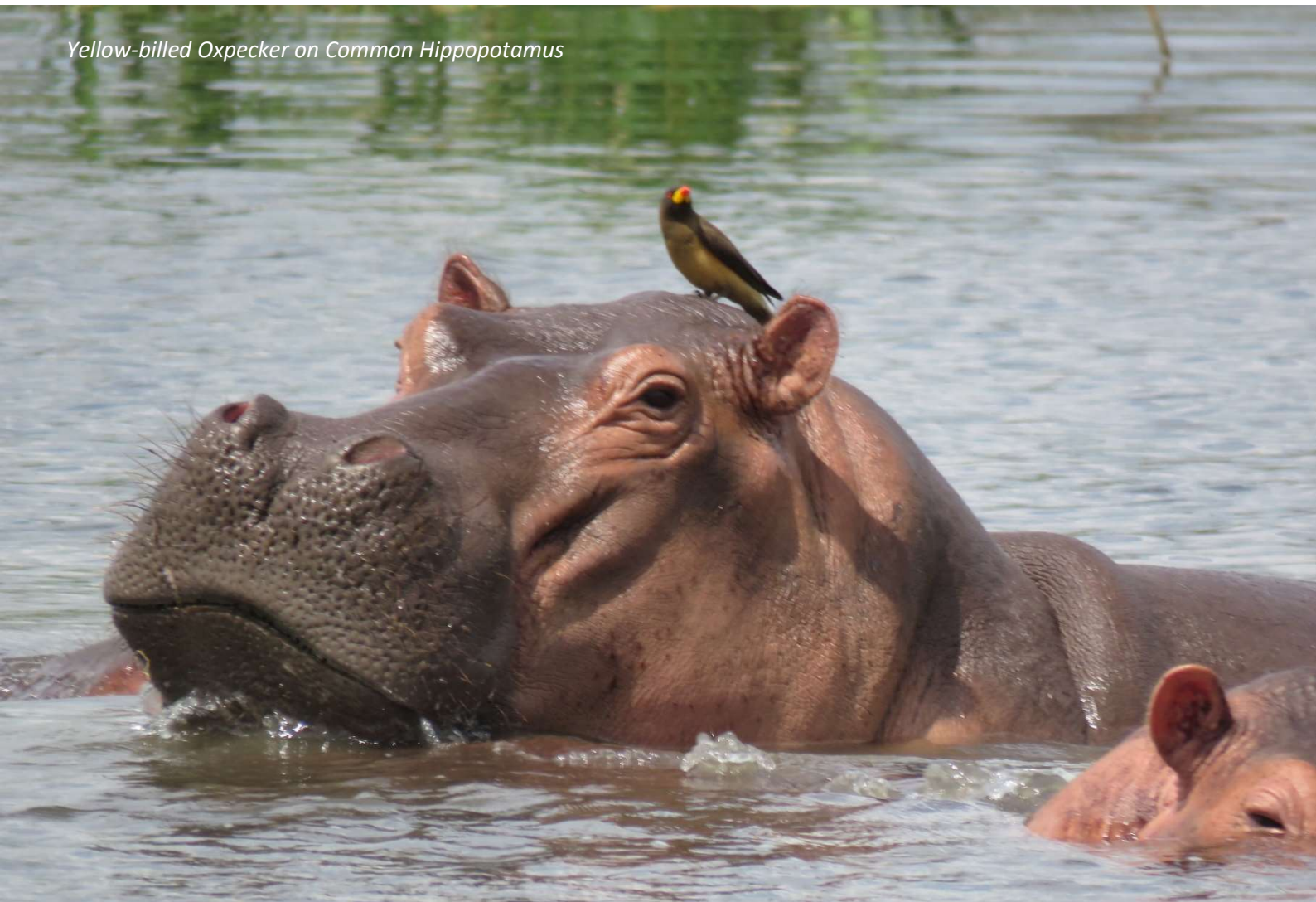
Black-headed Weaver

Murchison Falls NP Cruise



Many birders might be surprised when turning up for one of these that it is based on a clientele of Johnny Tourist, and not specifically birders (unless more is paid for a private one). To be quite honest, the extra for that is likely unnecessary, since the guys in charge of the boat try to point out anything interesting anyway, usually closing in on the shore for better views. The main aim is to reach and view and applaud the views of the falls at the terminus, which is possibly a lot better in anticipation than reality. However, we did spot 38 species of birds, which is a handsome payback for a laid-back ride. It seems a good tip to get on the boat ahead of time – boarding is by 10 minutes before cast-off but can be done earlier - and get a seat on the port/left hand side since this is the one next to the banks on the way out, and not much time is spent looking for stuff on the way back. Also, all the seats on the boat are covered – a benefit in the local high heat.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker on Common Hippopotamus





The modus operandi was simple – we chugged along the 9 miles there and same back, skimming reasonably close to the left-hand bank. Most of the bank was covered in thickish vegetation, with regular open areas of more vegetation/sand etc. Possibly the best location was at an inlet which held a large collection of African Skimmers (*above*). Closer inspection revealed a Common Greenshank, 4 Knob-billed Ducks (*above*), and a couple of Gull-billed Terns landed there on our return. Also only on the return journey was a single Swamp Flycatcher. At one time, both Great, Yellow-billed & Little Egret were almost together for comparison. African Fish-Eagles (*left*) were sporadic but provided good views, as did a Harrier-Hawk making the flight across the river. Kingfishers were predictably common – Pied & then Grey-headed, with only a single Malachite, and Red-throated Bee-eaters nesting in the sand cliffs were also regular. 2 Goliath Herons (*below left*) and single Saddle-billed Stork (*below right*) graced the shore, and African Darters became more obvious as time went on. The punters though demanded Hippos, and of course were rewarded in good measure.





Lappet-faced Vulture

A not too African name for a track, but it is one of the many ways to enter and traverse the inner parts of the national park. Arshley had wanted to do some birding after the cruise in the park for different species but had warned us beforehand that this particular track had a bit of an issue with the delightful tsetse fly. So, we smothered a layer of abysmally ineffective locally bought insect repellent to our exposed limbs and went into the fray. It transpired that the track began after a short drive on the north bank of the Nile, precisely where it turned from tarmac to dirt. It seemed like a more enclosed bush area, breaking in no time to the now familiar open grassland of the park itself. And not a hint of a tsetse fly! The ploy worked almost straight away with the addition of a pair of Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weavers. It also became apparent that this section of the park was a hotspot for Jackson's Hartebeest (*image next page*), with numbers almost rivalling the ubiquitous Kob.

There were certainly a few highlights over and above our normal expectations of birding in the park. Prime must have been Black-bellied Bustard (*below right*). Arshley had heard one call, and we searched for the culprit at some distance before he encouraged it out from a hiding place only about 20 metres away in long grass. It then proceeded to make its way in our direction – almost alongside the van. It stayed there for ages, really until we decided ourselves to break off the meeting. Minutes later, a second flying bird was seen flying over us and landing nearby – a landing display to rival no other! With a short way to go into its descent, it almost contorted itself into a bustard parachute. Most weird. Further on, Arshley again managed to pick out a well camouflaged Heuglin's Spurfowl (*below left*) from a muddy scrape while driving. More mundane yet enjoyable birding was when we picked out a young Martial Eagle in a large tree, then scanned a little further afield to uncover a pair of Lappet-faced Vultures. With darkness and the park exit approaching, we added a new antelope to our list – Bohor Reedbuck. A little like a slightly blown up Oribi (in my opinion only), we managed a group of 3 then further singles later on.





Jackson's Hartebeeste

Day 3 - Sunday, 10th March

Park Side Lodge

Last of our 2 nights here and it was time to decamp, with the glittering news that our luggage was awaiting our eager arrival at the next lodge. The plan was in some ways a reverse of our first day, retracing steps from the original arrival gate at Tangi, and then slowly birding the Northwest to Southeast road through the national park on the way to our stop in Masindi. This was to give the access to the birding location the next day at The Royal Mile, to then venture back further East for 3 days herping. The breakfast this morning was a little later for some reason (7am) meaning we missed some first light birding. We partly made up for this by scanning some of the trees ourselves as we made our way to the restaurant. After passing the usual Marabou Stork sentinel, the endeavour was made worthwhile when we pinned down a stunning Orange-breasted Bushshrike in the canopy. An interesting note for those who use the Merlin app for sound ID - it didn't recognise the song presumably since the database may be a different race. While we did a cursory search of the track surrounds following check-out and departure, there wasn't much to add to the previous day's tally apart from Whinchat.

Murchison Falls NP via the Tangi Gate

As mentioned, the route through Murchison was direct and what we had already done in reverse, yet it is amazing how many new birds can be seen on a return visit. The first difference this morning was that there was no welcoming committee of squabbling Olive Baboons the other side of the entrance gate, but we did admire 2 separate bull Elephants soon after (as well as spotting some Hippo's in a smallish pond), predictably carrying their quota of attendant Piapiacs (*below*). A little further down the road we added our first new bird of the day in the form of Sooty Chat (*next page, top*). So much easier to sort out this white-shouldered male than the female all black White-fronted Black Chat seen the previous day. The grassland game was also as it should be - Kob, Jackson's Hartebeest, Oribi, Warthog, Waterbuck and even small numbers of Nubian Giraffe on the roster.

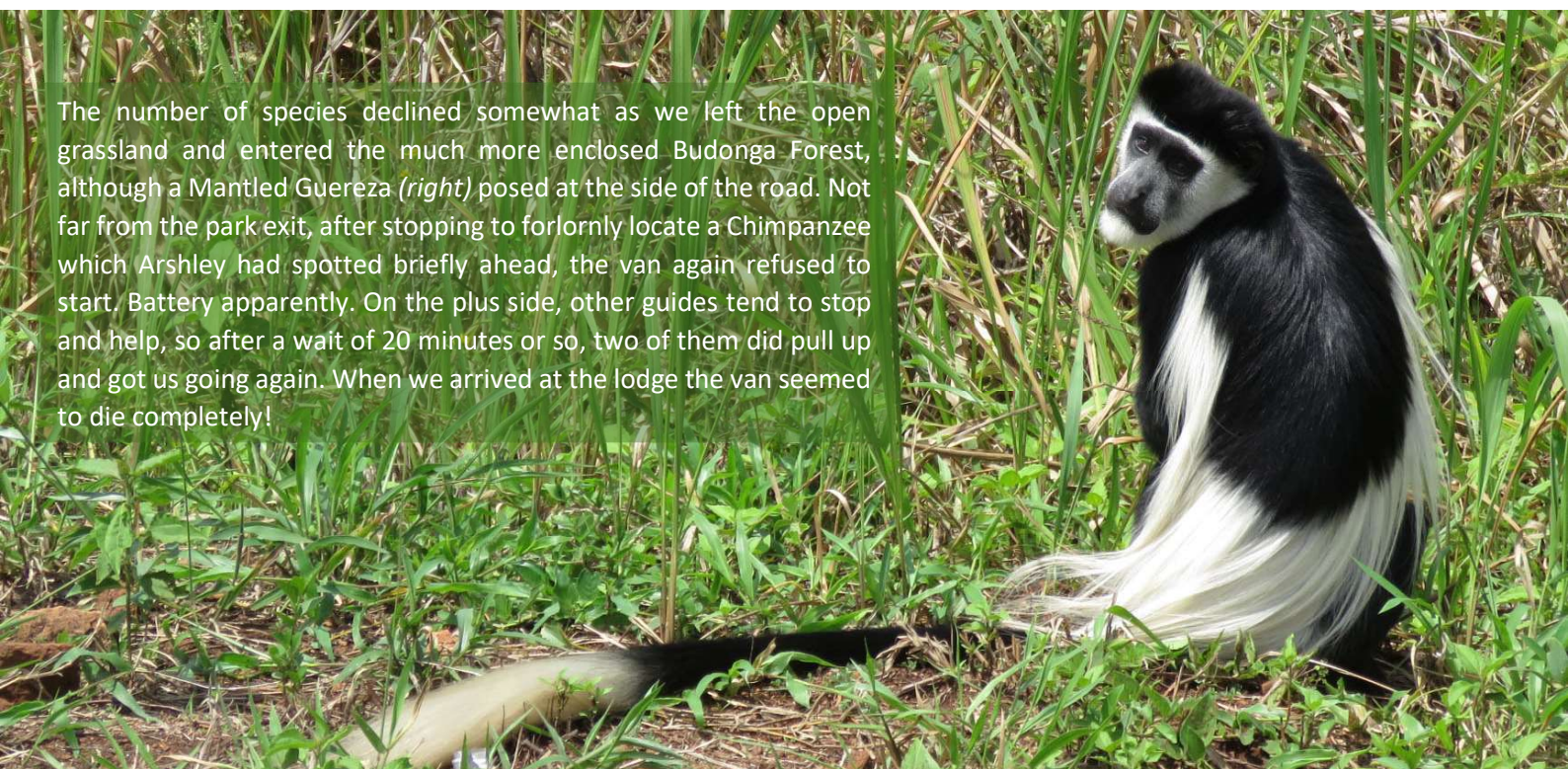




Arshley kept up his impressive picking up of birds by sight and sound while driving slowly. After bypassing an Abyssinian Ground Hornbill at the top of a dead tree, he stopped and listened for Foxy Cisticola. Bronze Mannikins around the area complicated this a little, but the warmly toned individual eventually turned in sporting nesting material. The bridge over the River Nile was met, and a single perched African Fish Eagle was joined by a companion, while an Osprey fished nearby. Both Grey & Goliath Heron were close to each other nearby. Once past here, we picked up more good birds. A secretive Blue Malkoha (*below*) could be heard coming closer, but only gave itself up briefly as it flew across the road. A bit of patience was applied and rewarded with decent views within the trees. A male Scarlet-chested Sunbird was out in more of the open but only for seconds. A Red-chested Cuckoo was perched at the rear of a nearby clearing, with Northern Puffback at the same level. Travelling on, and the wispy flight of a male white morph African Paradise Flycatcher (with rufous mate) was brief while traversing the road, although soon after we stopped to successfully locate a Pygmy Sunbird which had similarly made a road crossing. It and its mate didn't take too long for stunning views. A pair of Fawn-breasted Waxbills sat tight in the roadside verge, but eventually gave up their trademark red bill and rump.



The number of species declined somewhat as we left the open grassland and entered the much more enclosed Budonga Forest, although a Mantled Guereza (*right*) posed at the side of the road. Not far from the park exit, after stopping to forlornly locate a Chimpanzee which Arshley had spotted briefly ahead, the van again refused to start. Battery apparently. On the plus side, other guides tend to stop and help, so after a wait of 20 minutes or so, two of them did pull up and got us going again. When we arrived at the lodge the van seemed to die completely!



A photograph showing two yellow-fronted canaries perched on a branch of a flowering tree. The tree has long, thin green stems with clusters of small, dark, round buds. The background is a clear blue sky.

Kabalega Resort, Masindi

We had arrived at the one night only hotel at lunchtime, and with a 4:30pm departure for birding, took a bit of time to shower etc. However, a look around the grounds of the resort was obviously necessary, seeming to have a reasonable amount of birding potential in a fairly busy suburban location (a park area opposite hosted a large flock of feeding Abdim's Storks on the cut grass). The best birding spot in the grounds seemed to be not far from our room, where there were a few flowering trees. However, we started at the clothes drying section just outside of our window and were rewarded with singing White-browed Robin-chat (*below right*) and a couple of Yellow-fronted Canaries (*above*). The migration to the flowering trees was very productive. African Thrush had already proved to be very common, but an earlier stop off on the way to our room had unearthed a pair of Double-toothed Barbets. That was the only time they were seen. Most common bird next to Thrush were busy Olive-bellied Sunbirds, added to by a single Scarlet-chested Sunbird. A couple of Yellow-throated Leafloves were regular. The rest of the gardens were of very much less interest, apart from a Greater Blue-eared Glossy Starling (*below left*) which took some time to sort from Lesser. Later in the day, a roost of Marabou & Abdim's Storks were collecting atop palms outside of the boundary fence.



Masindi-Kafu Stretch

We had wanted to do some birding not far from the accommodation, and this road fit the bill. We drove eastwards for a few miles to leave the higher trees and lack of viewing to more open land, which seemed part cultivated/managed and also marshy or fallow. There were a few collections of villages on the way, and the downside was that there was a fairly constant passage of traffic along the road, meaning we had to tuck our bums in for fear of being wiped out. There were some good birds to be seen though, and well worth the look out, despite it being very windy at the start of the outing. A Striped Kingfisher (*below right*) in one of the villages kicked off proceedings, before noting that predominant birds along the whole of the way were *hirundines* and swifts. The former dominated, with more Angolan Swallows overall, but a large batch of Lesser Striped Swallows were nesting under a bridge. Plain Martins began to appear later on. Swifts were almost exclusively African Palm in small sporadic groups but were joined at one time by a couple of White-rumped Swifts, and later Alpine Swift.



The initial plan of stopping occasionally and scanning the area brought some success, particularly with the early discovery of a Brown-backed Bush Robin (*above right*), accompanied by a quartet of female Little Weavers. A more productive habitat was the water channel further on separating the road from some marshy type fields. Black Crake and African Jacana were predictable here, as was perhaps the male

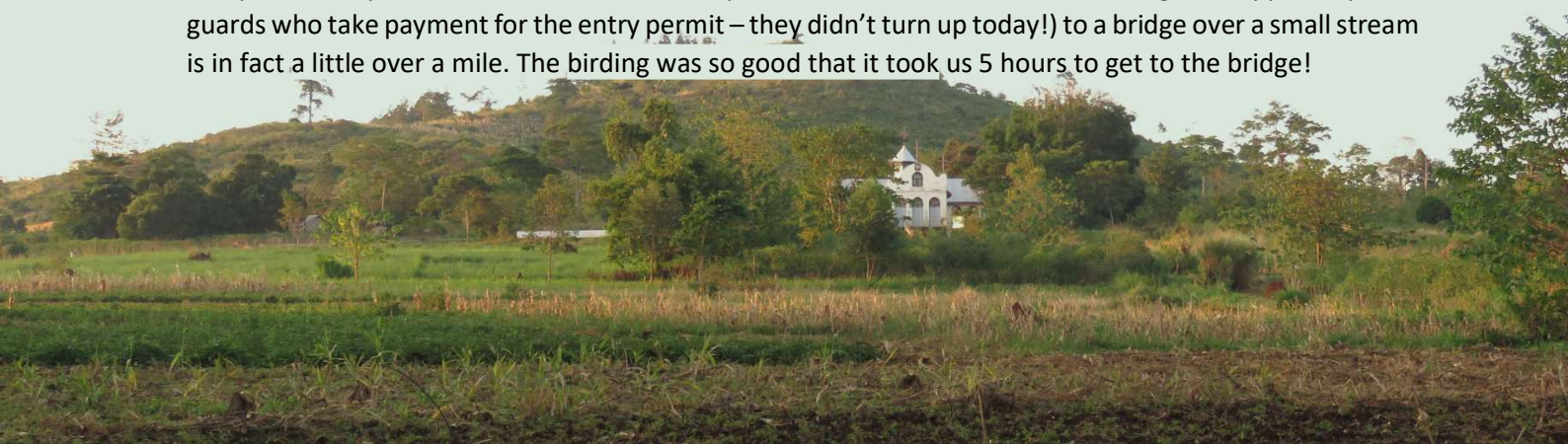
Western Marsh Harrier which barely enjoyed its Wattle Lapwing escort. A single Lesser Blue-eared Starling was perched in the open, while a chattering colony of Village Weavers was hard to miss. On the return, the two highlights were a perched Banded Snake Eagle, and a pair of Grey-crowned Cranes (*below*) which followed an earlier singleton.



Day 4 - Monday, 11th March

The Royal Mile, Budongo Forest

Our location the previous evening at Masindi meant that the journey to here was relatively short, taking a side road out of the town and heading South-west on tracks to reach this rather excellent habitat, which was it turned out on the southern edge of the Budongo Forest, which we had passed through further North the previous day as we exited the Murchison NP. The Royal Mile itself was apparently created indeed by a real king – King Omukama Kabalega in the mid-19th Century, as a training ground for his army. The present day finds it used for much more peaceful means. From the entrance gate (supposedly with guards who take payment for the entry permit – they didn't turn up today!) to a bridge over a small stream is in fact a little over a mile. The birding was so good that it took us 5 hours to get to the bridge!





The morning kicked off well with a dapper Black-winged Kite seen perched in a tree to the right of our track, but when we reached the last village before the farmland and track to the entrance gate, Arshley parked up to pick up the local guide, Raymond. Ending the phone call with a comment of “he’s still warming his bed” wasn’t a good start, but we proceeded to the fields ourselves anyway. By the time we got ourselves out, started looking, and gorged on one of the White-thighed Hornbills present, Raymond ambled into view. The Hornbill proved to be regular attendee throughout the morning, with an additional couple of not dissimilar Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills (*below*) in between. His arrival was good news, since this is his local area of coverage, and he proved to be a superb spotter of birds, both visually and by sight. He started by having Arshley play the song of Cabanis’s Bunting (*above*), a bird we had failed to locate a couple of days earlier. Suffice to say that a superb male eventually perched very close to where we were stood. From this field to the gate, the track was populated by a stream of schoolchildren filing along to the nearby school premises, but this didn’t stop the bird sightings – Plain-backed Pipit, Black Crowned Mannikins and Red-billed Firefinch were also there. Above the gate itself was a small collection of White-headed Saw-wings, with only 1 male amongst the almost all dark females to solve some ID confusion. A couple of African Pied Wagtails treated the van as a welcome perch!





And so began the slow procession along the track through surrounded by thick forest that is the Royal Mile. I say thick and not dense, since while this was most definitely forest birding, with the accompanying neck-breaking staring into the canopy, there was enough visibility to ensure this was one of the best forest birding outings we had ever done. It didn't even require or in fact include the necessary mind-boggling bird parties at occasional times to stir the interest and boost the numbers of species seen. There seemed to be a constant procession of interesting birds during the walk. This was of course largely due to the excellent skills of Raymond and an apprentice of his who joined later. Without them we would have struggled to bring home a fraction of the total. This is partly because there were naturally some species that (selfishly) preferred to stay in the canopy, such as Dusky Tit, Rufous-crowned Eremomela and arguably the worst culprit – Uganda Woodland Warbler. Others didn't stick quite so rigidly to height but made up for this by being secretive – Blue-throated Brown Sunbird, Red-tailed Ant-Thrush, Chestnut-capped Flycatcher and a bird that took some calling in then stayed in the darker interior – Forest Robin.

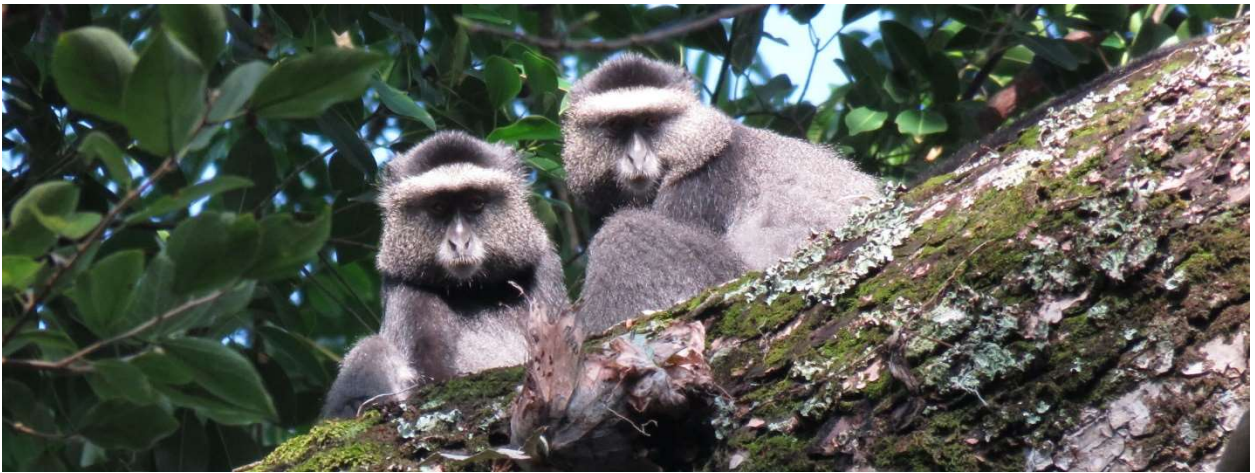


This left a lot of interesting species that were more than happy to display their wares. That's not to say all posed majestically on a useful perch right in front of us, but they were certainly not too hard work to find. Brown-eared Woodpeckers flew around quite high up but had a great habit of sticking to one trunk for some time. A Chocolate-backed Kingfisher characteristically chose a high perch in the canopy but made this an open one and called quite regularly. African (Fraser's) Forest Flycatchers were similarly high by also perched in the open. But then there the real showstoppers, making things easy for us. Both small Kingfishers – Dwarf & Pygmy (*latter above*) – chose perches at eye level next to the track; Red-bellied



Brown-eared Woodpecker

Paradise Flycatcher similar, and Western Golden Oriole was just above us. Other birds which couldn't decide just what they were doing were Chestnut Wattle-eye, Speckled Tinkerbird, Dusky Tit, Plain & Grey Greenbuls and African Flycatcher Thrush. A Willcock's Honeyguide had been seen regularly in the same tree for a few years, but it took some time to pick it out of the rather distant perch. The reward at the end of the walk were a couple of very distinctive Cassin's Spinetails overhead in a clearing through the trees.



Mammals also had a part to play in the overall production. Predictably, this was kicked off by a small welcoming committee of Olive Baboons seen from the entrance gate. They were seen often and even followed and passed us on the track. A pair of Red-tailed Monkeys were impressive overhead, with equally attractive Blue Monkeys (*above*) also at some height a little later, interspersed with a couple of Mantled Guereza. Perhaps most surprising and rewarding of all was a single Chimpanzee (*below*). It was spotted some way down the track and stayed there for a little while. Hope of closing the distance for better views were dashed when it strode off into the forest again. The sounds of chimps were also heard briefly a little later. The terminus at the bridge concluded our memorable outing, and the van was waiting for the long journey to Mityana for our herping spell, which included changing guides from Arshley to Alphar, the owner of the company and snake specialist.



Day 5 - Tuesday 12th March

Mityana Forest



Herping doesn't usually start as early as birding, so we had to convince Alphar our herping guide to pick us up at 7am rather than 7:30am just in case. We would be awake anyway, so why not! This decision was exactly the correct one, since we arrived a little early to start looking for snakes, and instead spotted a few good birds. The location was found by turning right (to the South) on to a very rough track just before the small town of Kikonge from Mityana, leaving the van in a small garden of a house a couple of hundred metres towards the forest. First bird was calling Lizard Buzzard, followed by Little Sparrowhawk. The identification of the latter individual, which we had suspected in flight views anyway, was helped greatly when it landed in a tree next to a Red-eyed Dove, and the size difference was appreciable. We then noticed a Great Blue Turaco in a tree some distance away with another similar sized but dark bird. I took a record shot on my bridge camera, zoomed in, and a Bat Hawk was staring at us! After then seeing 2 in flight with their distinctive shape, we managed to get somewhat closer for better record shots. Then a small flock of largish dark finch type birds with big bills flew over, calling all the time. My initial call of Thick-billed Weaver was confirmed when calls were examined. While in the forest looking for snakes, there was very little evidence of birdlife in the thick foliage, but we did encounter an Orange-breasted Bush Shrike and overhead a perplexing bird of prey. Shape of an eagle, it looked all dark underneath apart from a whitish tail and dark terminal band. Any ideas? (Juvenile Fish Eagle apparently). Exiting the forest 4 hours later, and a second Lizard Buzzard overhead preceded a Red-chested Sunbird in one of the gardens.



Tawny-flanked Prinia



The herping was a different experience altogether from birding, which we had done before in other countries. It entailed slow progress through the thick forest (the guides had constantly used machetes to clear a route), searching individual trees with many branches to look for a herpid with similar branch shaped outline. Also, we had thought to pack a pair of wellies each for the experience, and these were absolutely essential. We regularly came across mud and water that would have enveloped even hiking boots, so this is the prime tip to pick up. It was also advised to wear long trousers and a cap to fend off the oncoming thorned vegetation which can be painful. As mentioned, we spent 4 hours in the forest, and came out with sightings of 2 snakes. The big bonus is that the first was THE one I had wanted to see – Gaboon Viper. Incredible snake. The way the guys worked was to have Alphar and 2 local guides spread out with walkie talkies. After an hour, Charles said he had found something, and we started to walk towards his location, using calls. It was also reported to be a ground dweller, so either Gaboon or Rhinoceros Viper. We were shown the spot and even then had difficulty seeing it – he had been using a technique of gently prodding bases of trees with his stick and heard the warning grunt. They did bring the Gaboon Viper (*below*) into the open for viewing, and then replaced it in the same spot. The dancing of the guides in joy said it all! Apart from all seeing an Emerald Snake (*right*) late on, the other guide, Nicholas, had disturbed a Jameson’s Mamba which shot off before anyone else could catch up with it.



Makanhills Resort Lodge

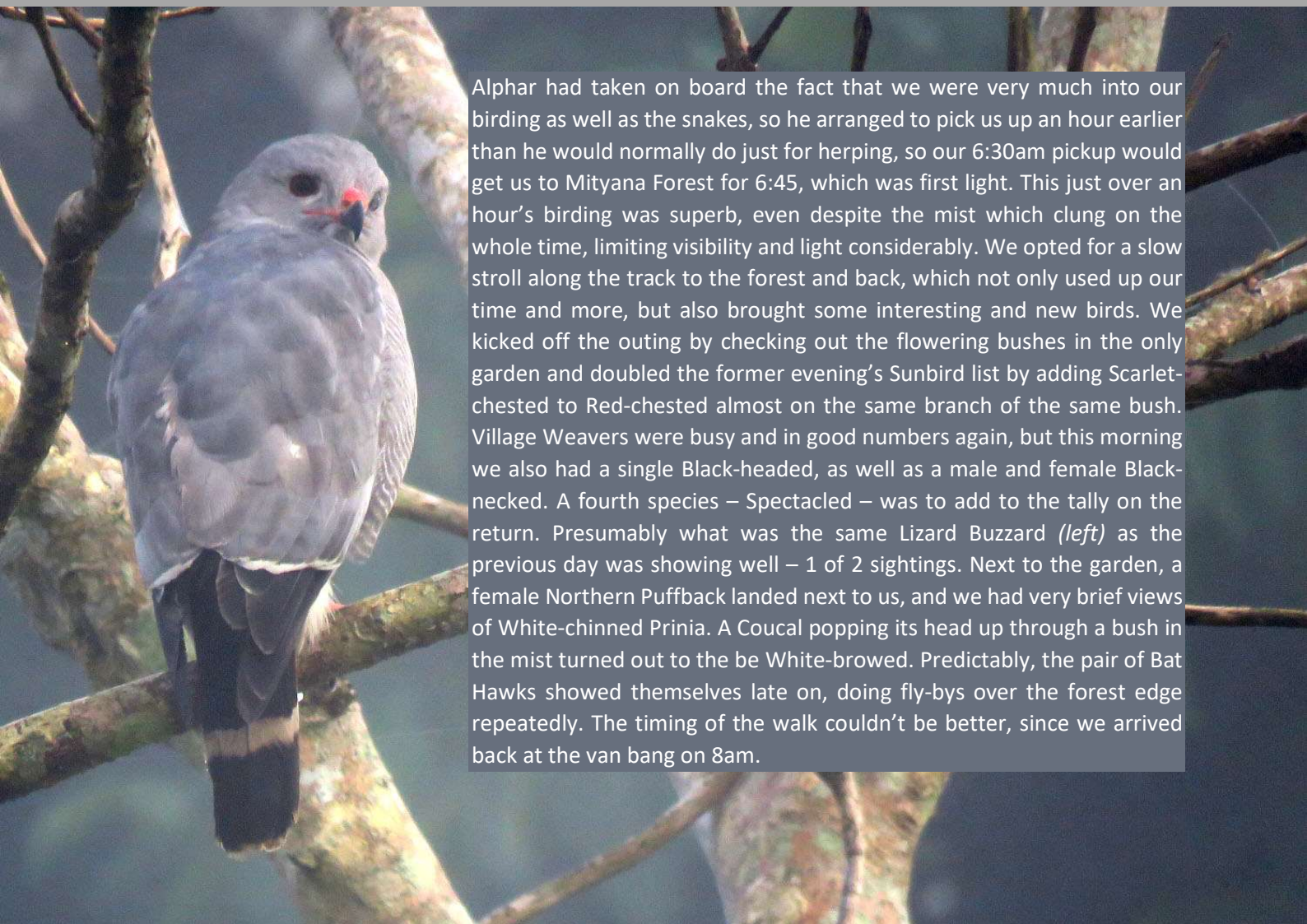


This is apparently the only half decent accommodation close to the first main herping location. It is located up a dirt track from the main drag of Mityana town – bustling and not of any interest to a birder. The lodge is set with very limited grounds and had locked guarded gates. Essentially, it would take no time to cover the grounds and achieve seeing a few decent species. However, the secret is to climb the four floors of (unfinished) stairs to the roof, where there is a commanding view of the upper canopy of the garden trees and the surrounding area. The latter doesn't at first seem too enamouring, but an hour or so scouring the four vantage walls dug up some very nice birds. Top of these must have been the more than noticeable White-headed Barbet, which plied to and fro every few minutes, zipping underneath. A pair of Meyer's Parrots (*below right*) were much more obliging, as was an African Green Pigeon (*below left*), being perched at eye level height. Starlings included Lesser Blue-eared & a large group of Violet-backed, in addition to the predicted Ruppell's Starling. Another bird at eye-level was a single Baglafaecht Weaver (*above*), while a pair of Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills were in a tree in the surrounding land. It's likely that none of these would have been seen from the ground easily.



Day 6 - Wednesday 13th

Mityana Forest



Alphar had taken on board the fact that we were very much into our birding as well as the snakes, so he arranged to pick us up an hour earlier than he would normally do just for herping, so our 6:30am pickup would get us to Mityana Forest for 6:45, which was first light. This just over an hour's birding was superb, even despite the mist which clung on the whole time, limiting visibility and light considerably. We opted for a slow stroll along the track to the forest and back, which not only used up our time and more, but also brought some interesting and new birds. We kicked off the outing by checking out the flowering bushes in the only garden and doubled the former evening's Sunbird list by adding Scarlet-chested to Red-chested almost on the same branch of the same bush. Village Weavers were busy and in good numbers again, but this morning we also had a single Black-headed, as well as a male and female Black-necked. A fourth species – Spectacled – was to add to the tally on the return. Presumably what was the same Lizard Buzzard (*left*) as the previous day was showing well – 1 of 2 sightings. Next to the garden, a female Northern Puffback landed next to us, and we had very brief views of White-chinned Prinia. A Coucal popping its head up through a bush in the mist turned out to be White-browed. Predictably, the pair of Bat Hawks showed themselves late on, doing fly-bys over the forest edge repeatedly. The timing of the walk couldn't be better, since we arrived back at the van bang on 8am.



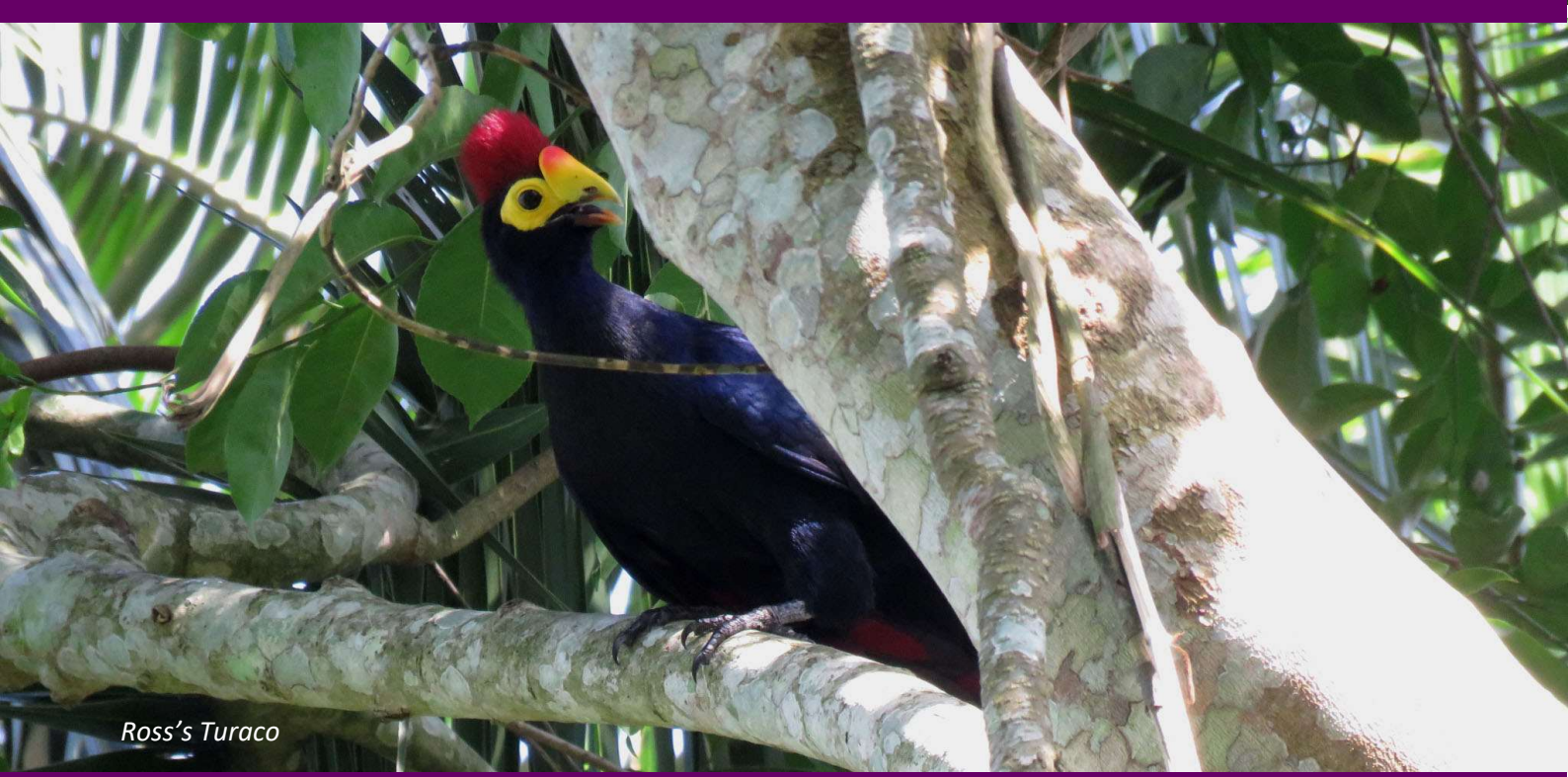
After yesterday's success with Gaboon Viper, Alphar was determined this morning to show us at least one of the Bush Vipers in the forest. So much so that he stated, "we will not leave today until we've seen one, even taking a packed lunch in!". To us that meant there was a reasonable chance of seeing another much sought after snake. We had taken the luxury of wearing our walking shoes and not wellies for the first hour's birding session, but it was back to donning the green monsters again for the rest of the morning. And, believe me, they are more than necessary, with plenty of water to plodge through at times. This also includes wearing long trousers – there are plenty of spiked plants out to get you! Yet the first part of the walk, back to the forest entrance, served up yet more birds. First was a Western Citril (*above*), a nice variation to the not dissimilar Yellow-fronted Canaries from earlier in the week. Then a pair of Northern Fiscals (*below left*) and a Violet-backed Starling preceded much better views of White-chinned Prinia (*below right*) which was out in the open preening itself.



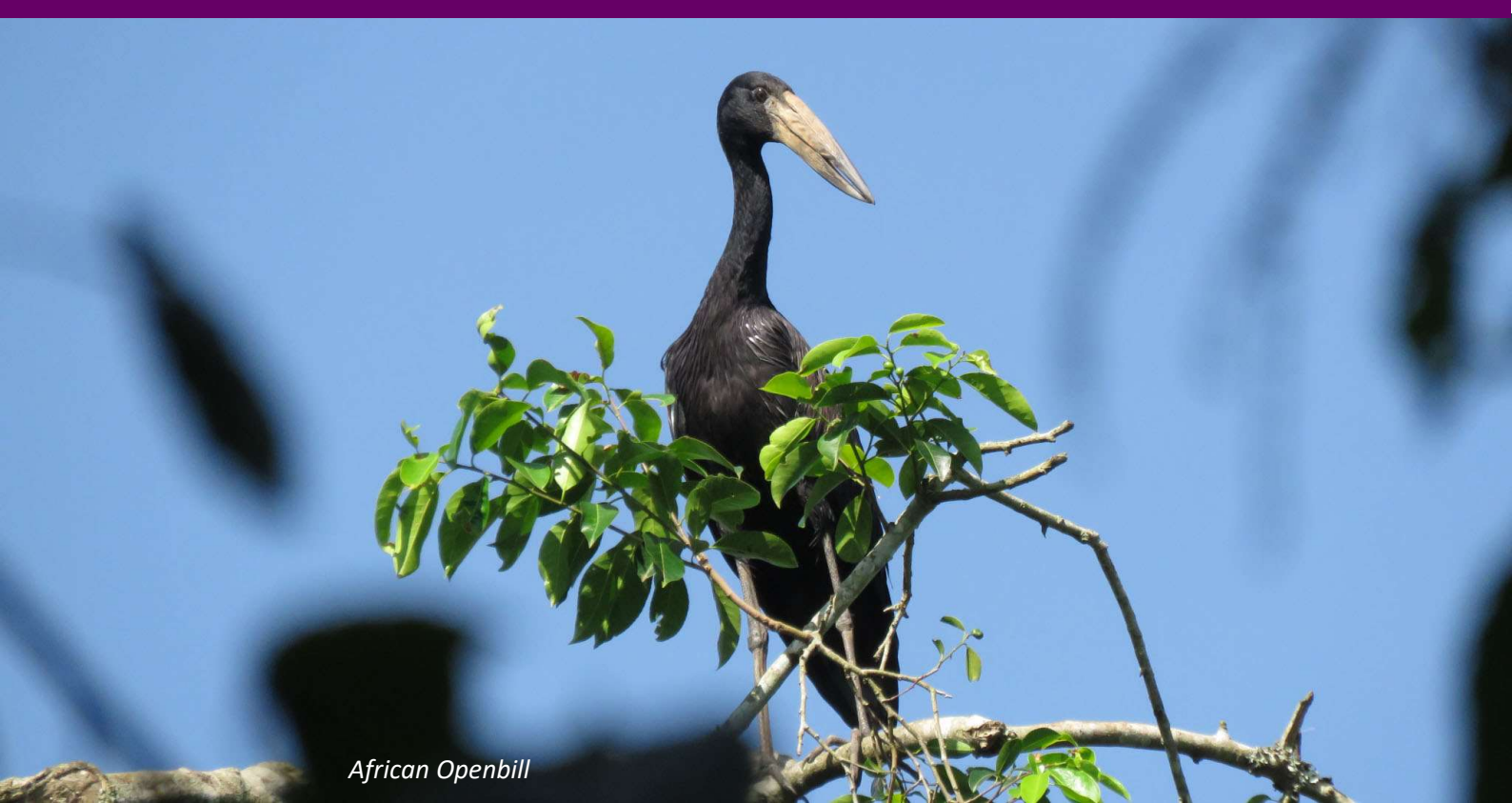
Once into the forest, we had the same feeling of the temperatures going down a few degrees, apart from when we exited to search the forest edge later looking for sunning snakes. The plan was a slow walk with the group split up looking for the aforementioned Bush Vipers. One big difference between this and the previous morning was that there seemed a lot more bird life visible both inside and outside of the trees. We located one of the Bat Hawks perching inside of the forest almost as soon as we had entered. In the more open land outside the top of the forest, a group of Black-crowned Waxbills were with some Bronze Mannikins, and a Woodland Kingfisher perched alongside the perimeter. A Little Sparrowhawk was disturbed in the stubble, showing off its white and rufous rump as it quickly departed the scene. We were just about to re-enter when a large bird sprung into view and landed in the canopy. A search and assistance from harassing Great Blue Turaco's unearthed a superb Verraux's Eagle Owl staring down at us. It wasn't much later into the shade again that a pair of Ross's Turaco's appeared above us. As we approached and then waded through the edge of what must have been a reedbed, a Great Reed Warbler could be heard singing.



Bat Hawk



Ross's Turaco



African Openbill



But then over 2 hours into the trek, the walkie talkie I was carrying crackled into life. “We have a snake” was calmly almost whispered from not too far away, the guides used a series of whistles to guide us to them, and we found them gloating over a beautifully coloured Large-eyed Green Tree Snake. Totally non-venomous, the little fella had a couple of goes at Alphar for his troubles.

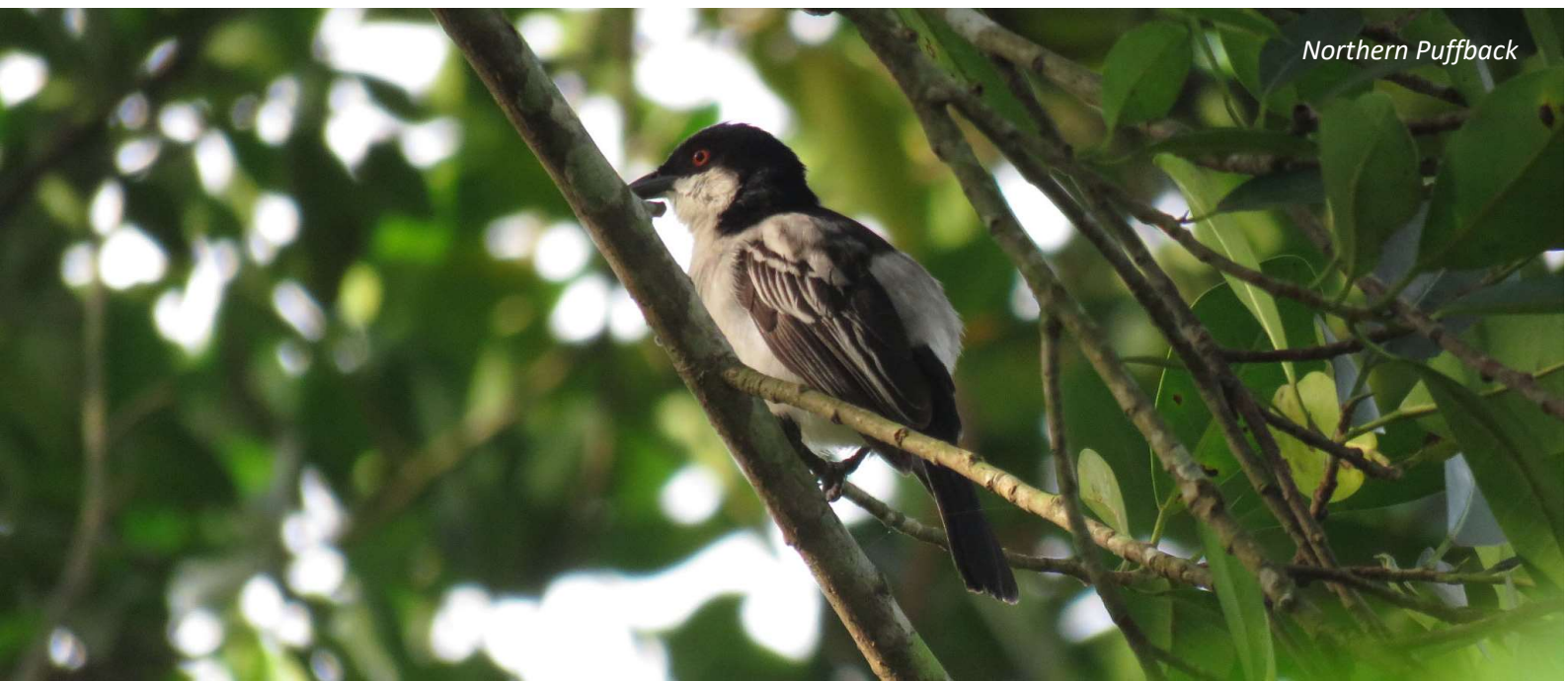


Almost another hour went by, and this time we were all covering the ground together. Charles had been goading Alphar saying he walked too quickly to find the snakes, when he pointed out the most dragon headed snake possible – a Green Bush Viper. Success! We didn't have to keep searching until after the lunch and into the night! The small size of this snake makes it seem impossible to find, along with the green colour. Yet find it they did, although admitting it wouldn't be incorrect to say we might have passed at least ten others before finding this one.

Day 7 - Thursday 14th

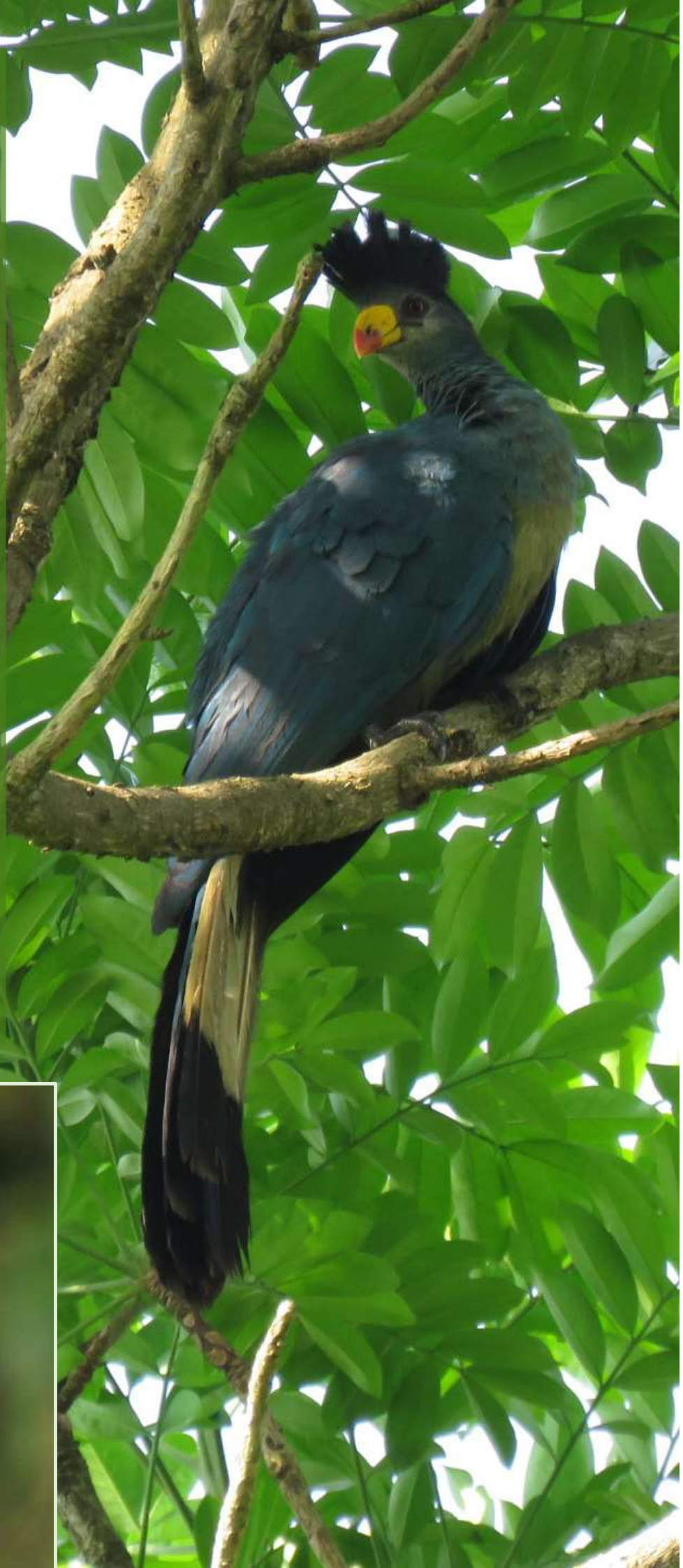
Mityana Forest “Mamba Zone”

The “Mamba Zone” description is not an official one, but so named by Alphar due to the high numbers of mambas that were found in the early days. It is still one of the best forests to find them, although these days they are much more difficult. It is reached by taking a rough track from the village near to the 2 previous visits to the forest but takes about three quarters of an hour to reach. This passes the home of Charles and Nicholas, who we picked up on the way. The forest is apparently still part of Mityana Forest, but the type of search for the mambas is very different. They prefer wet areas, and this did indeed prove to be the case, so the plan of attack was for us to follow Alphar at the edge of the forest, while he and the others waded through the much wetter innards. Thus, we weren't actively participating in locating any snakes, although how much good we would have done compared to their experienced eyes is fairly obvious. But this did give us more time than we had expected to do some birding while waiting for the expectant shouts for “snake”, and the area was very open allowing for some good birds to be seen, while still avoiding some hidden marshy patches.



Northern Puffback

It hadn't looked too good when the van was parked next to someone's house - all we saw were a Village Weaver and Common Bulbul before we turned off the track into the rough grass and marsh. However, soon after Alphar had disappeared into the thicker vegetation, having left us on the edges, we picked up a male Northern Puffback. It took a little time for us to get into our groove, but good collections of Village Weavers and some Bronze Mannikins were apparent, and sifting through these at a little distance soon turned up Spectacled Weaver, followed by a couple of Holub's Golden Weavers, and then a trio of Compact Weavers (*below*) still in non-breeding plumage and approaching us more closely. A couple of noisy Great Blue Turacos (*right*) were in the canopy of a palm tree just in front of us, and an African Cuckoo flew over our heads and landed in the distance over the marsh. After Alphar had emerged from the swampy marshes for the third time, he left us again in another open area with one or two taller trees. This was to be the best lookout spot so far. After a White-shouldered Black Tit had briefly entertained us close to, we picked up a pair of Black-and-white Shrike Flycatchers hunting insects at the edge of the clearing for the whole duration of our stay. A Double-toothed Barbet flew over our heads and was another bird to land within the trees in front of us. Two Sunbirds were here briefly - Olive-bellied & separate Green-headed.





Black-and-white Shrike Flycatcher

The last of our stops, while watching another pair of White-shouldered Black Tits, was rudely interrupted by the call for a snake. Alphar went to examine but unfortunately it had escaped the scene. Disappointment turned to hope when another was found in the same spot minutes later. This one was a goer, so we were led into the swampy part of the marsh. We tentatively tried to avoid the water spilling over into our wellies at first, with Nicholas trying to assist by cutting branches to make temporary “bridgelets”. This was abandoned when we decided wet feet would dry, but chances of seeing wild Jameson’s Mamba (*below*) were at a premium. So, with squidgy footwear we ended up in a muddy area, picking out the much-wanted herpid (or more accurately, small parts of the snake that could be made out through the branches and foliage). At this point, I was over the moon when I managed to glance its head briefly! Astonishingly, a second Mamba was spotted in the same tree, but was moving. So off went the lads, leading a chase while focusing on one of the individuals, when some time later they emerged from the swamp holding the snake. We had by now poured most of the water from our boots, and they carefully put the Jameson’s Mamba on a low tree – or a “studio” as they called it – while we all gorged on the views of this terrific if menacing looking snake. Alphar then replaced it back to the spot where we had found it, but only before he discovered he didn’t have the van keys in any pocket. No chance they would be found again if they’d dropped somewhere, but thankfully the dingbat had locked them in the van, which they managed to break into again to send us on our journey to Entebbe.



Entebbe Botanical Garden

This location must be one of the best placed near airport stops for those flying out from Entebbe airport. Alphar had arranged for us to have a room from when we arrived in Entebbe early afternoon until we departed for the airport at 9pm. This meant no worries having time to get through the traffic to arrive in Entebbe, laze around in the room in the hot hours, and then be dropped off and picked up by the hotel courtesy bus for a few hours at the gardens. Our hotel was adjacent to the gardens, and 10 minutes from the airport, but we still needed the ride because there was no way in from our location. The entrance fee to the botanical gardens is 20000 shillings per person, or £4 each. They are quite extensive and contain some impressively high tree specimens, although this is not so good if the birds are perched at the top. There are plenty of open spaces and tracks through the gardens, which appear more like wooded parkland. Main downside is that it is also used by day trippers, so there are people at all points.

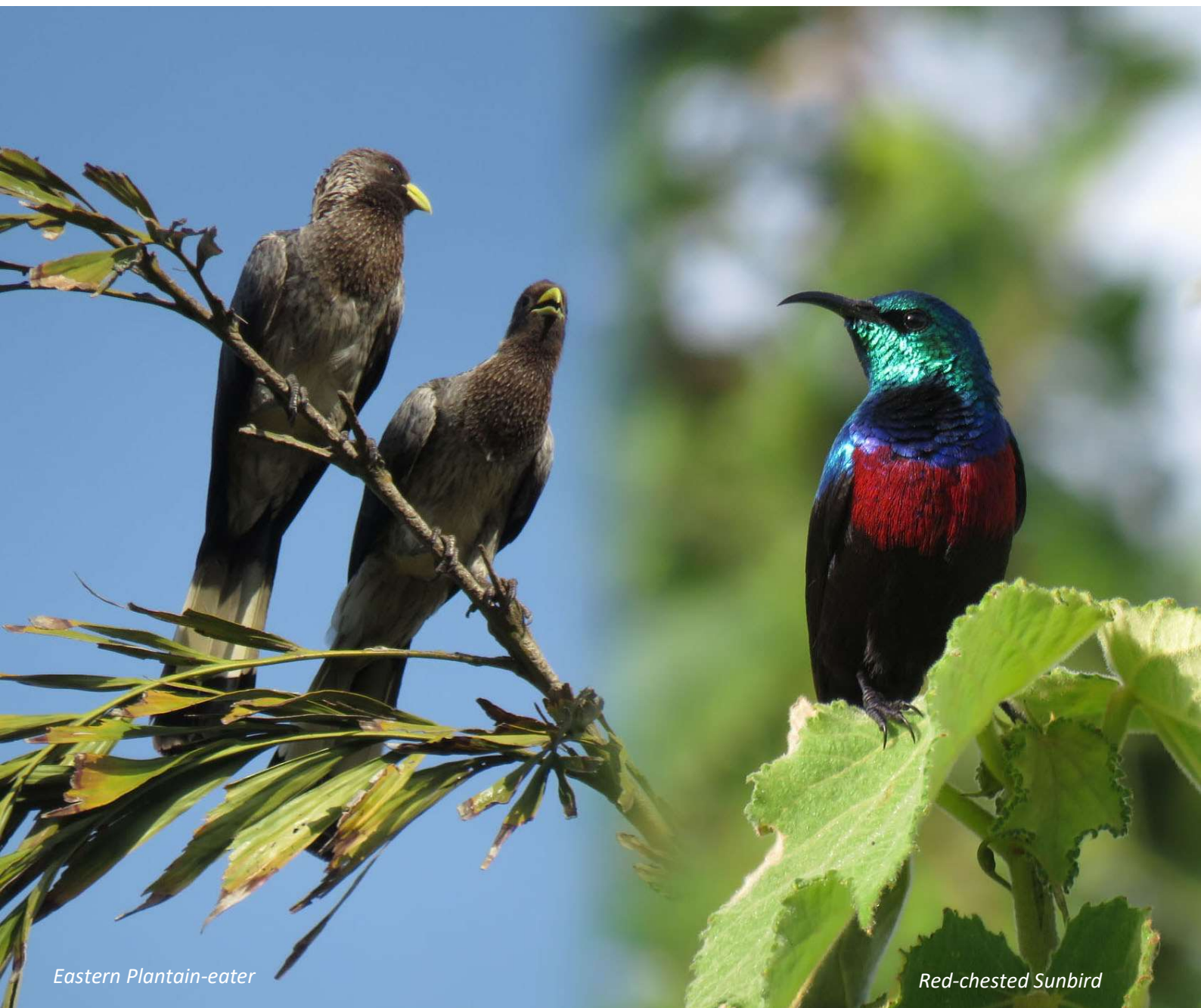


Snowy-crowned Robin Chat

However, that does not distract from an excellent bit of pre-flight birding. We had barely put our toes across the entrance gate than Scarlet-breasted Sunbird and quite a few Great Blue Turacos and Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills were noisily going about their business. We decided to head straight down to a rough track ending on the shore of the lake, and of course Pied Kingfishers dominated the scene. Pink-backed Pelicans (*right*) were regular overhead, and a superb male Red-chested Sunbird posed in bushes. We then followed the track adjacent to the shoreline, kicking up various species as we progressed.



Chief amongst these was a pair of Grey Parrots, a perched Meyer's Parrot, and a couple of Snowy-crowned Robin Chats. A pair of Hobbies overhead played hard to get, but later eventually showed well enough for ID as African. A good decision was to take a track down to a length of shoreline, despite the noise from visitors. As we descended, a pair of Striated Herons flew towards a small island populated by weavers, before landing in a tiny bit of waterside thicket. They were picked up within, and this also revealed a Malachite Kingfisher. Closer scrutiny of the weaver colony found that it was populated by mainly Golden-backed Weavers and a couple of Orange Weavers. Time then to depart, with the Great Blue Turacos and Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills still vocal and obvious, with the pair of African Hobbies overhead.



Eastern Plantain-eater

Red-chested Sunbird

LIST OF SPECIES

BIRDS

Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>
9 March 4 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>
9 March 4 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
8 March 4 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison; 2 Murchison NP; 40 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
10 March 1 Kabalega Resort	
14 March 20 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
8 March 3 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 6 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP; 15 Murchison NP; 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
Heuglin's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis icterorhynchus</i>
9 March 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Cassin's Spinetail	<i>Neafrapus cassini</i>
11 March These are very distinctive with their almost non-existent tails, especially when in a mixed flock as this pair were. 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
8 March 30 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 30 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP; 50 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
10 March 3 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP; 7 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance; 3 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
13 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarpitis melba</i>
10 March 2 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
9 March 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP	
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>
10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Great Blue Turaco	<i>Corythaeola cristata</i>
11 March 1 Kampala to Masindi	
12 March 1 Mityana Forest	
13 March 3 Mityana Forest	
14 March 4 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 2 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Eastern Plantain-eater	<i>Crinifer zonurus</i>
8 March 4 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 2 Kabalega Diner	
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
12 March 3 Mityana Forest	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest; 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 8 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Ross's Turaco	<i>Tauraco rossae</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest; 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden	

Black-bellied Bustard	<i>Lissotis melanogaster</i>
2 birds seen in a short stretch. First was tempted in to right next to our van on the main track, second was picked up flying, where it was followed and landed in dramatic fashion looking as if had deployed a parachute with its wings	
9 March 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP	
White-browed Coucal	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP; 3 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest	
Blue Malkoha	<i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Nakitoma	
Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>
10 March Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
14 March 2 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Kabalega Diner	
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
8 March 2 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
10 March 2 Kabalega Resort	
12 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest; 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>
10 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP	
Black-billed Wood Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>
9 March 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP	
Tambourine Dove	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>
8 March 2 separate birds flying across main road Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
12 March 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Black Crake	<i>Zapornia flavirostra</i>
10 March 2 separate birds in wet ditches either side of the road Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Grey Crowned Crane	<i>Balearica regulorum</i>
8 March 2 perched on lamp post before leaving Kampala	
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
10 March 3 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>
The white stripe above the grey on the wings (separating from Senegal Thick-knee) needs to be looked for carefully. The birds we saw had only the hint of white on the wing panel	
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus Himantopus</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>
9 March ~12 Murchison Falls NP; 4 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	

Black-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus tectus</i>
8 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP	
Senegal Lapwing	<i>Vanellus lugubris</i>
9 March Group of 5 next to track Murchison Falls NP	
African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 3 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
10 March 4 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance; 4 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>
9 March 4 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
African Skimmer	<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>
9 March Group of ~100 collected in large group at lake shore Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
9 March Pair landed at end of group of African Skimmers Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
African Openbill	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>
12 March 2 Mityana Forest	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest	
Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>
8 March ~30 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 5 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 9 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 5 Kabalega Resort	
14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Abdim's Stork	<i>Ciconia abdimii</i>
Possibly the most populous species we saw. This was mainly due to the large migrating flocks, mainly seen as circling kettles in the air, but also large groups feeding on the ground	
8 March ~30 Entebbe to Nakitoma; ~200 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March ~700 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch; 26 Kabalega Resort	
African Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia microscelis</i>
8 March 2 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP	
12 March 1 Mityana Forest	
African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>
9 March 7 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>
8 March 35 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road~	
9 March 6 Murchison Falls NP; ~20 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	

African Sacred Ibis*Threskiornis aethiopicus*

9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP; 4 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP

Hadada Ibis*Bostrychia hagedash*

8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road

9 March 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP

10 March 2 Masindi-Kafu Stretch

12 March 2 Mityana Forest; 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana

13 March 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana

Glossy Ibis*Plegadis falcinellus*

11 March 2 Kampala

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma

9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls

13 March ~70 flying to roost early evening Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana

Striated Heron*Butorides striata*

14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden

Western Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

9 March ~125 amongst game herds, Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 7 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP

14 March 4 Entebbe Botanical Garden

Great Egret*Ardea alba*

9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls

Yellow-billed Egret*Ardea brachyrhyncha*

8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma

9 March 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 12 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls

Grey Heron*Ardea cinerea*

9 March 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls

10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance

Black-headed Heron*Ardea melanocephala*

8 March ~20 Entebbe to Nakitoma

10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch

Goliath Heron*Ardea goliath*

9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls

10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance

Hamerkop*Scopus umbrette*

8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma

10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch

13 March 1 Mityana Forest

14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden

Pink-backed Pelican*Pelecanus rufescens*

First group were seeking out a roost in a tree next to the main road through Murchison Falls NP. All others were flyovers

8 March 8 Entebbe to Nakitoma

14 March 28 Entebbe Botanical Garden

Secretarybird*Sagittarius serpentarius*

9 March Perhaps the surprise of the trip. We were reliably informed only 1 had been seen in Murchison Falls NP once before, so the bird we saw confidently striding close to the van through the grasslands was officially the second there

Osprey*Pandion haliaetus*

10 March 1 fishing on the River Nile after entering Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance

Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
11 March First bird we saw on approaching Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile perched in a tree	
African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>
9 March 1 juvenile searching tree holes, and later adult over, in Murchison Falls NP; 1 adult flying over river during Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 6 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 3 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Rüppell's Vulture	<i>Gyps rueppelli</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Lappet-faced Vulture	<i>Torgos tracheliotos</i>
9 March Pair on top of tree in open grassland at Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Beudouin's Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus beudouini</i>
9 March 1 on top of a tree next to the main road in Murchison Falls NP	
Western Banded Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinerascens</i>
8 March 1 overhead at Nakitoma	
10 March 1 perched Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>
8 March 3 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 Mar 2024 6 Murchison Falls NP	
Bat Hawk	<i>Macheiramphus alcinus</i>
12 March 2 Mityana Forest	
13 March 2, same pair as previous day, Mityana Forest	
Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>
9 March Juvenile perched at top of tree - Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>
8 March 3 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarine</i>
8 March 1 with other eagles at Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
8 March 5 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
12 March 2 Mityana Forest	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest; 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>
9 March 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	

Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
Little Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter minullus</i>
12 March 1 flying then landing in tree next to Red-eyed Dove Mityana Forest	
13 March 1 within Mityana Forest	
Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>
13 March Stunning view of an adult from eye level while on roof of Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
10 March 1 male Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
9 March 1 male hunting over open grasslands at Murchison Falls NP	
Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>
The most regularly seen species, being ubiquitous in the areas visited	
8 March 4 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 15 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; ~20 Murchison Falls NP; ~30 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 4 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP; 10 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
12 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
14 March 10 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
African Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga vocifer</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP; 4 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
12 March 1 juvenile overhead Mityana Forest	
Grasshopper Buzzard	<i>Butastur rufipennis</i>
8 March 2 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Steppe (Common) Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo vulpinus</i>
All the Common Buzzards seen were of the vulpinus/Steppe Buzzard subspecies, characteristically showing rufous uppertails in flight	
8 March 3 Murchison Falls NP- - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
10 March 3 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Ketupa lacteal</i>
13 March 1 flew from open area into branches within forest, to then be mobbed by Great Blue Turacos, at Mityana Forest	
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>
8 March 2 Nakitoma	
9 March 20 Murchison Falls NP	
12 March 4 Mityana Forest	
13 March 3 Mityana Forest	
Blue-naped Mousebird	<i>Urocolius macrourus</i>
9 March 1 flew in front of car to open grassland Murchison Falls NP	
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
8 March 2 Kabalega Diner	
Abyssinian Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>
8 March 3 (1 male, 2 females), then pair Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 3 (pair and separate male) Murchison Falls NP; 3 (male and 2 females) Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance at top of dead tree trunk	
Crowned Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros alboterminatus</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	

African Grey Hornbill*Lophoceros nasutus***8 March** 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**9 March** 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP**10 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance**White-thighed Hornbill***Bycanistes albotibialis***11 March** 8 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill***Bycanistes subcylindricus***11 March** 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**12 March** 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**13 March** 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**14 March** 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 6 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Broad-billed Roller***Eurystomus glaucurus*

A regular sight on telegraph wires over the main road from Entebbe to Murchison Falls NP

8 March 6 Entebbe to Nakitoma**10 March** 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch**14 March** 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Chocolate-backed Kingfisher***Halcyon badia***11 March** 1 high above us just below the canopy at Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Grey-headed Kingfisher***Halcyon leucocephala***8 March** 3 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**9 March** 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 7 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP**10 March** 8 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance**Striped Kingfisher***Halcyon chelicuti***10 March** 1 on wires next to track within village Masindi-Kafu Stretch**Blue-breasted Kingfisher***Halcyon malimbica***8 March** 1 flying across main road within forest Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**Woodland Kingfisher***Halcyon senegalensis***13 March** 1 Mityana Forest**14 March** 6 Entebbe Botanical Garden**African Dwarf Kingfisher***Ispidina lecontei***11 March** 2 separate birds Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**African Pygmy Kingfisher***Ispidina picta***8 March** Pair briefly in woodland behind entrance gate Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**11 March** 2 separate birds Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Malachite Kingfisher***Corythornis cristatus***9 March** 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls**14 March** 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Pied Kingfisher***Ceryle rudis***8 March** 2 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**9 March** 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP; 14 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls**14 March** 12 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Swallow-tailed Bee-eater***Merops hirundineus***9 March** 4 Murchison Falls NP**Little Bee-eater***Merops pusillus***9 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP

Red-throated Bee-eater*Merops bulocki***9 March** 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP; 19 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls**10 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance**European Bee-eater***Merops apiaster*

All birds were flyovers:

8 March 2 Nakitoma; 9 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**13 March** 2 Mityana Forest; 11 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**Northern Carmine Bee-eater***Merops nubicus***8 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**9 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP--Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP**10 March** 4 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance**Speckled Tinkerbird***Pogoniulus scolopaceus***11 March** 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Yellow-throated Tinkerbird***Pogoniulus subsulphureus***8 March** 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**White-headed Barbet***Lybius leucocephalus***12 March** Single bird passed rooftop vantage point regularly Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**Double-toothed Barbet***Pogonornis bidentatus***9 March** 1 Murchison Falls NP**10 March** 2 Kabalega Resort**13 March** 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**14 March** 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"**Willcocks's Honeyguide***Indicator willcocksi***11 March** 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Brown-eared Woodpecker***Pardipicus caroli***11 March** 4 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Grey Kestrel***Falco ardosiaceus***8 March** 2 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road**9 March** 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls**10 March** 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance**Red-necked Falcon***Falco chicquera***8 March** 1 Murchison Falls NP--Paraa to Murchison Falls road**African Hobby***Falco cuvierii***14 March** Pair regularly circling over Entebbe Botanical Garden**Grey Parrot***Psittacus Erithacus***14 March** Pair Entebbe Botanical Garden**Meyer's Parrot***Poicephalus meyeri***12 March** 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**13 March** 3 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana**14 March** 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Chestnut Wattle-eye***Platysteira castanea***11 March** 1 or 2 pairs Budongo Forest Reserve--Royal Mile**Orange-breasted Bushshrike***Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus***10 March** 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP**12 March** 1 Mityana Forest**Black-crowned Tchagra***Tchagra senegalus***9 March** 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP

Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Tropical Boubou	<i>Laniarius major</i>
8 March 1 Nakitoma	
Black-headed Gonolek	<i>Laniarius erythrogaster</i>
8 March 1 Nakitoma	
9 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	
Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison FallsNP	
Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher	<i>Bias musicus</i>
14 March Pair Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Western Oriole	<i>Oriolus brachyrynchus</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
13 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>
8 March 1 male white morph Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
10 March Pair (male white morph) Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Grey-backed Fiscal	<i>Lanius excubitoroides</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP	
Northern Fiscal	<i>Lanius humeralis</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
12 March 1 Mityana Forest	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Isabelline Shrike	<i>Lanius isabellinus</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>
The most regularly seen bird within the National Park, usually associating with game (particularly Elephant and Buffalo):	
8 March 3 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 20 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP; 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 20 Murchison Falls NP; 10 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March ~50 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
12 March 12 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
8 March 2 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 1 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	
White-shouldered Black Tit	<i>Melaniparus guineensis</i>
14 March 1 + 2 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	

Dusky Tit	<i>Melaniparus funereus</i>
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Yellow-throated Leaflove	<i>Atimastillas flavicollis</i>
8 March 2 Kabalega Diner	
10 March 1 Kabalega Resort	
Plain Greenbul	<i>Eurillas curvirostris</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Little Grey Greenbul	<i>Eurillas gracilis</i>
11 March 3 separate birds Budongo Forest Reserve- - Royal Mile	
Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
8 March 1 Nakitoma; 2 Kabalega Diner	
9 March 5 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 4 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 4 Kabalega Resort; 4 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
11 March 3 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
12 March 1 Mityana Forest; 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 4 Mityana Forest; 4 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
14 March 5 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 6 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
White-headed Saw-wing	<i>Psalidoprocne albiceps</i>
11 March Group of 8 on branches above entrance to Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile. Confusingly, all but one were all dark females, resembling Black Saw-wing, but there was thankfully a white headed male with them. Careful inspection also found white on the throats of some of the females	
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
10 March ~30 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Angola Swallow	<i>Hirundo angolensis</i>
8 March 3 Nakitoma; ~30 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 5 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
10 March - ~50 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
13 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
9 March 10 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP	
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>
8 March 4 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 4 Kabalega Diner; 5 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
10 March ~30 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Moustached Grass Warbler	<i>Melocichla mentalis</i>
9 March 2 Tangi, Tangi Gate Approach, Murchison Falls NP	
Green Crombec	<i>Sylvietta virens</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Chestnut-capped Flycatcher	<i>Erythrocerus mccallii</i>
11 March 4 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>
11 March 1 singing male Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Uganda Woodland Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus budongoensis</i>
11 March a neck-breaking find – this individual was true to type clinging to the uppermost branches of the canopy in Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
13 March 1 heard singing next to Mityana Forest	
Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>
8 March 1 Kabalega Diner	
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	

Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>
11 March 1 Masindi, singing in bush as we travelled through the town	
12 March 2 Mityana Forest	
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>
9 March 4 singing males Murchison Falls NP	
Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>
9 March 1 singing male Murchison Falls NP	
Foxy Cisticola	<i>Cisticola troglodytes</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP	
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
8 March 2 Nakitoma	
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
12 March 5 Mityana Forest	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest	
White-chinned Prinia	<i>Schistolais leucopogon</i>
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
Buff-bellied Warbler	<i>Phyllolais pulchella</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
Grey-capped Warbler	<i>Eminia lepida</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Red Chilli Rest Camp	
Green-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>
8 March 3 Kabalega Diner	
Green-backed Eremomela	<i>Eremomela canescens</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Rufous-crowned Eremomela	<i>Eremomela badiceps</i>
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Northern Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>
8 March 1 Nakitoma	
13 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>
10 March 1 Kabalega Resort	
Lesser Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chloropterus</i>
8 March 1 Kabalega Diner	
10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
12 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Rüppell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpuroptera</i>
8 March 8 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 5 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
9 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 1 Student Centre Track, Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 4 Mark Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP; 4 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance; 4 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
12 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 3 Mityana Forest	
Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>
8 March 1 Kabalega Diner	
12 March 30 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest; ~75 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	

Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>
9 March 2 on Giraffes Murchison Falls NP; 2 on Hippopotamus Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Fraser's Rufous Thrush	<i>Stizorhina fraseri</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Red-tailed Ant Thrush	<i>Neocossyphus rufus</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve--Royal Mile	
African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>
8 March 10 Kabalega Diner	
10 March 8 Kabalega Resort	
12 March 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 5 Mityana Forest	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 7 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Brown-backed Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas hartlaubi</i>
10 March 1 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Fraser's Forest Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria ocreata</i>
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Ashy Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria caerulescens</i>
11 March 3 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Northern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis edolioides</i>
8 March 3 Kabalega Diner	
14 March 2 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Silverbird	<i>Empidonis semipartitus</i>
9 March 5 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance	
Swamp Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa aquatica</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
Forest Robin	<i>Stiphornis erythrothorax</i>
11 March This very shy male was patiently staked out in the depth of the forest itself at Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
10 March 1 Kabalega Resort	
Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i>
14 March 2 together in Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Spotted Palm Thrush	<i>Cichladusa guttata</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP: 1 drinking and bathing in provided water pool at Murchison Falls NP - Red Chilli Rest Camp	
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP	
10 March 2 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison Falls NP	
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Sooty Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla nigra</i>
10 March 1 at top of bush next to track at Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe Oenanthe</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
White-fronted Black Chat	<i>Oenanthe albifrons</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Western Violet-backed Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes longuemarei</i>
8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Little Green Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes seimundi</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	

Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>
8 March 3 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Pygmy Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna platura</i>
10 March Pair flew over road and then back again Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
Green-headed Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Blue-throated Brown Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra cyanolaema</i>
11 March 1 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP, Tangi Entrance; 1 Kabalega Resort	
12 March 1 Mityana Forest	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
14 March 2 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Olive-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris chloropygius</i>
10 March 6 Kabalega Resort	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"; 7 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP	
Marico Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>
8 March 2 Nakitoma	
Red-chested Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris erythrocerus</i>
12 March 1 Mityana Forest	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest; 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
14 March 1 Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Shelley's Sparrow	<i>Passer shelleyi</i>
9 March 1 with Speckle-fronted Weavers Murchison Falls NP	
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Murchison Falls NP - Red Chilli Rest Camp	
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
8 March 1 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 5 Murchison Falls NP - Paraa to Murchison Falls road	
Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser superciliosus</i>
9 March 2 Student Centre Track, Murchison NP	
Speckle-fronted Weaver	<i>Sporopipes frontalis</i>
9 March 6 Murchison Falls NP; 3 Murchison Falls NP - Red Chilli Rest Camp	
Thick-billed Weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>
12 March Group of 8 calling birds flew over farmland at Mityana Forest	
Baglafecht Weaver	<i>Ploceus baglafecht</i>
12 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>
10 March 4 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
Spectacled Weaver	<i>Ploceus ocularis</i>
13 March 2 Mityana Forest	
14 March 1 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis</i>
13 March 3 Mityana Forest	
Holub's Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus xanthops</i>
14 March 2 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	

Orange Weaver	<i>Ploceus aurantius</i>
14 March 2 with larger numbers of Golden-backed Weavers at Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>
10 March 1 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>
8 March 6 Kabalega Diner	
10 March ~50 Masindi-Kafu Stretch	
11 March 6 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
12 March 10 Mityana Forest; 2 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
13 March ~20; ~15 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Vieillot's Black Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigerrimus</i>
8 March ~10 Entebbe to Nakitoma; 2 Kabalega Diner	
Black-headed Weaver	<i>Ploceus melanocephalus</i>
9 March 3 Murchison Falls NP - Red Chilli Rest Camp	
11 March ~20 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
13 March 1 Mityana Forest	
Golden-backed Weaver	<i>Ploceus jacksoni</i>
14 March Colony of ~30 birds about 20 metres from shore at Entebbe Botanical Garden	
Compact Weaver	<i>Ploceus superciliosus</i>
14 March 3 non-breeding plumaged birds Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>
9 March 1 Park Side Safari Lodge, Murchison NP	
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullate</i>
8 March 2 Kabalega Diner	
10 March 6 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance	
11 March 8 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
13 March ~15 Mityana Forest; ~10 Mityana Forest	
14 March 5 Mityana Forest, "Mamba Zone"	
Black-and-white Mannikin	<i>Spermestes bicolor</i>
11 March ~10 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Black-crowned Waxbill	<i>Estrilda nonnula</i>
11 March 3 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
13 March 4 Mityana Forest	
Fawn-breasted Waxbill	<i>Estrilda paludicola</i>
10 March 2 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance, feeding on roadside verge	
Black-rumped Waxbill	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>
9 March ~12 Murchison Falls NP	
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>
8 March 4 Kabalega Diner	
10 March 3 Murchison Falls NP via Tangi Entrance; 1 Kabalega Resort	
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>
11 March 3 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
9 March 2 Murchison Falls NP	
African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
8 March 4 Entebbe to Nakitoma	
9 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - Boat trip Paraa to Murchison Falls	
11 March 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	
13 March 1 Makanhill Resort Hotel, Mityana	
Plain-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>
11 March 1 in open field Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile	

Western Citril*Crithagra frontalis***13 March** 1 Mityana Forest**Yellow-fronted Canary***Crithagra mozambica***10 March** 2 Kabalega Resort**11 March** 2 Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**Golden-breasted Bunting***Emberiza flaviventris***8 March** 2 Kabalega Diner**Cabanis's Bunting***Emberiza cabanisi***11 March** 1 singing male in open area before Budongo Forest Reserve - Royal Mile**MAMMALS****African Bush Elephant***Loxodonta Africana***8 March** 2 with calf Murchison Falls NP**9 March** 3 Murchison Falls NP; 5 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP**10 March** 4 Murchison Falls NP**Red-tailed Monkey***Cercopithecus Ascanius***11 March** 2 Royal Mile, Budongo Forest**14 March** 6 Mityana Forest "Mamba Zone"**Blue Monkey***Cercopithecus mitis***11 March** 3 Royal Mile, Budongo Forest**Green Monkey***Chlorocebus sabaesus*

Formerly part of the Vervet Monkey complex

8 March 1 Budongo Road**10 March** 4 Budongo Forest**Patas Monkey***Erythrocebus patas***8 March** 12 Murchison Falls NP**9 March** 2 Murchison Falls NP**Olive Baboon***Papio Anubis***8 March** ~20 Budongo Road; ~30 Murchison Falls NP**9 March** ~20 Tangi Entrance; ~25 Murchison Falls NP; 3 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP**10 March** 10 Murchison Falls NP**11 March** ~30 Royal Mile, Budongo Forest**Mantled Guereza (*Black-and-white Colobus*)***Colobus guereza***8 March** 5 Murchison Falls NP**9 March** 1 (Murchison) Falls River Cruise**10 March** 2 Murchison Falls NP; 2 Budongo Forest**11 March** 2 Royal Mile, Budongo Forest**12 March** 2 Mityana Forest**14 March** 4 Entebbe Botanical Garden**Common Chimpanzee***Pan troglodytes***11 March** While we were aware that Chimpanzee can be found in the Budongo Forest, we certainly didn't expect to see the lone individual crossing the track ahead of us at the Royal Mile**Boehm's Bush Squirrel***Paraxerus boehmi***11 March** 1 Royal Mile, Budongo Forest**Leopard***Panthera pardus***9 March** A typical daytime pose of this single cat resting along a vertical branch amongst thick leaves in Murchison Falls NP

Spotted Hyena*Crocuta Crocuta*

9 March First of the 2 seen was alongside the track in Murchison Falls NP, unfortunately sporting what looked like the remains of a noose around its neck. The second was some distance away on the 1 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

Side-striped Jackal*Canis adustus*

8 March 1 Murchison Falls NP - striding away from where we were parked/broken down

Common Wart-hog*Phacochoerus africanus*

8 March ~50 Murchison Falls NP

9 March At least 30 Murchison Falls NP; 3 Red Chili Restaurant, Murchison Falls NP; 1 Red Chili Restaurant, Murchison Falls NP; ~40 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP; ~50 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

10 March ~25 Murchison Falls NP

Common Hippopotamus*Hippopotamus amphibius*

9 March 10 Murchison Falls NP; ~40 (Murchison) Falls River Cruise

Northern (Nubian) Giraffe*Giraffa camelopardalis camelopardalis*

Considered as a subspecies of Northern Giraffe, one of the 4 species of Giraffe currently recognised

9 March 20 Murchison Falls NP; 8 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

10 March 8 Murchison Falls NP

Lelwel (Jackson's) Hartebeeste*Alcelaphus buselaphus lelwel*

A subspecies of the one recognised species of Hartebeeste, they are a common site throughout Murchison Falls NP

8 March 3 Murchison Falls NP

9 March ~30 Murchison Falls NP; ~100 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

10 March ~25 Murchison Falls NP

Oribi*Ourebia ourebi*

8 March ~50 Murchison Falls NP

9 March At least 50 Murchison Falls NP

10 March ~10 Murchison Falls NP

African Buffalo*Syncerus caffer*

8-10 March 100's Murchison Falls NP; 100's Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

Waterbuck*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*

8 March 1 + 6 Murchison Falls NP

9 March 9 Murchison Falls NP; 9 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP; 100-200 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

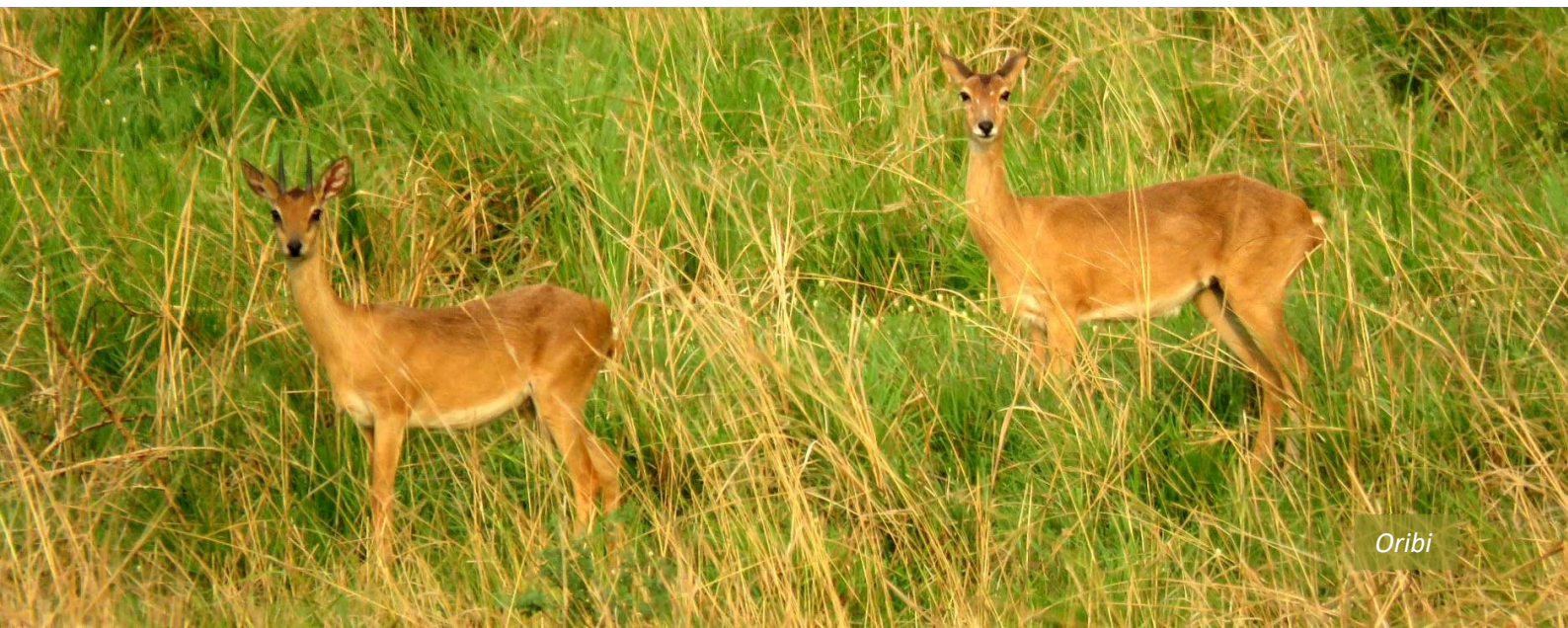
10 March 6 Murchison Falls NP

Kob*Kobus kob*

8-10 March 100's Murchison Falls NP; 100-200 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP

Bohor Reedbuck*Redunca redunca*

9 March 3 + 1 +1 Student Centre Track to Murchison Falls NP



Oribi

SNAKES

Emerald Snake

Hapsidophrys smaragdinus

An impressive little non-venomous snake that puffs up its throat when unhappy

March 12 1 Mityana Forest

Large-eyed Green Treesnake

Rhamnophis aethiopissa

March 13 1 Mityana Forest

Jameson's Mamba

Dendroaspis jamesoni

These seem to prefer a wetter environment to the other snakes we saw, so taking a pair of wellies with us was a definite benefit. In addition to the 2 we saw in the same tree, a third had been found and lost in the same area minutes before we arrived at the scene

March 14 2 Mityana Forest "Mamba Zone"

Green Bush Viper

Atheris squamigera

These are a lot smaller than imagined so took some finding

13 March 1 Mityana Forest

Gaboon Viper

Bitis gabonica

The technique to find these beasts is impressive. The herpers patted around the base of leaf covered slightly buttressed trees and listened for the sound of the grumpy vipers. Camouflage was immense with these snakes – even when you know they are there they are hard to pick out

March 12 1 Mityana Forest

Jameson's Mamba

