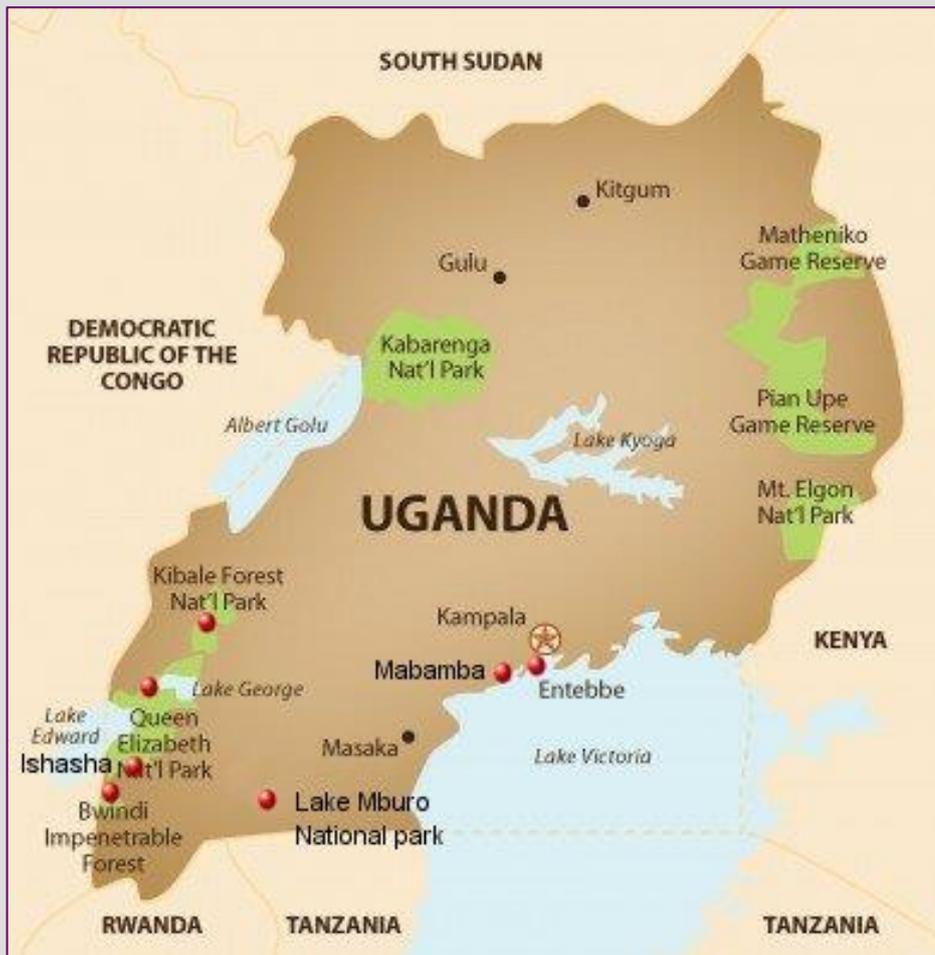


Uganda



24th February to 4th March, 2015



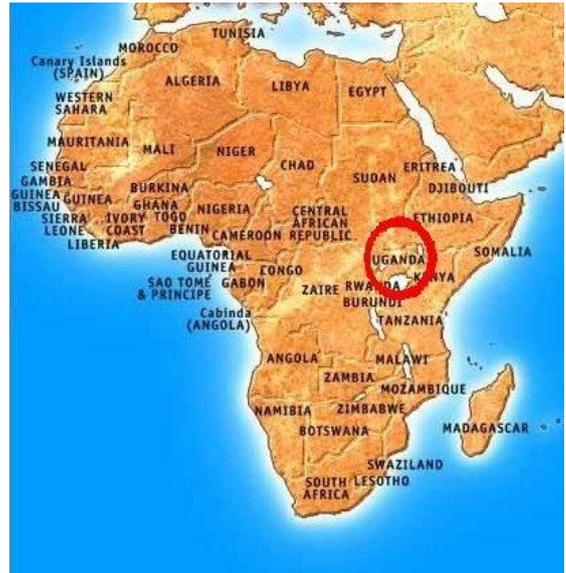
Day 1 Tuesday 24th	Mabamba Swamp Journey to Lake Mburo National Park	9.00 - 11.30
Day 2 Wednesday 25th	Guided walk around Mburo Boat trip on Lake Mburo	7.00 - 9.00 16.00 - 17.30
Day 3 Thursday 26th	Journey from Mburo to Bwindi	
Day 4 Friday 27th	Gorilla trekking in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Birding walk in Bwindi	8.45 - 11.00 16.00 - 18.00
Day 5 Saturday 28th	Ishasha Queen Elizabeth National Park	11.00 - 13.00 15.30 - 17.30
Day 6 Sunday 1st	Queen Elizabeth National Park Boat trip on Kazinga Channel	7.30 - 10.00 16.00 - 17.30
Day 7 Monday 2nd	Mweya Lodge to Kibale Swamp walk near Kibale	16.30 - 18.30
Day 8 Tuesday 3rd	Chimpanzee trekking in Kibale Forest	9.00 - 13.30
Day 9 Wednesday 4th	Entebbe Botanical Gardens	11.30 - 13.30

SOUTH WEST UGANDA

24th February to 4th March, 2015

Introduction

As with many bird and mammal watchers, there is a list of species and/or habitats and regions that simply must be logged before the legs, mind and body give up the ghost. For the latter, we have been lucky to tick off some notable goodies, including Tiger, Grizzly, Polar & Black Bears, Panda, Orang Utan, Meerkat, and a host of African specialities . However, Gorillas and Chimps hoisted themselves up the list over the years to claim undisputed top spot. The glitch was that Rwanda seemed the obvious choice for the former but ideally required a separate site for the latter, and a lot of focus was on the two great apes. Enter Venture Uganda (www.ventureuganda.org) , and a huge image of a gorilla on the exhibition stand at one of the travel shows. This proved to be the seed that grew into the tree. Lesley Harris, the company director, outlined a circuit in the South-west of the country that could take in both the great ape habitats, as well as varied safaris and other wild/birdlife. The costs she came up with were more than reasonable and competitive, with the inclusive bonus of the trip being tailor made just for the two of us - a driver/guide and vehicle, all to ourselves. No having to pretend to make new friends! Result! Lesley is proficient at replying to emails, unless she is on a tour, and tailored the route to our needs. We also met up at the same travel show (2 years on) to sit down and go through last minute details. Our guide/driver turned out to be Michael, who is also Lesley's business partner. He is keen on all wildlife, and will take any opportunity to point out birds as well as mammals. We were driven in a 4 wheel drive van, which was capable of taking 7 passengers, although Venture Uganda work on a tailor made principle, so we had it to ourselves. We were delighted with the overall service delivered by the company, and wouldn't hesitate recommend them to anyone wanting a wildlife holiday to the country.



Our itinerary was basically a clockwise circuit of the South-west of the country, and chose late February to early March since it was just before the wet season, and one of the better times recommended for the Gorillas. As it turned out, more or less all of the birds which changed plumage, such as the weavers, seemed to be in full breeding plumage. Also, we only had a smattering of rain on one occasion, while in Queen Elizabeth NP, although rain can still fall more often even at this time of the year. Temperatures ranged from mild (but not requiring a jacket) at night to 30°C, although the overall impression was of not being quite as baked as we expected. The condition of

roads also varied, from decent tarmac to bumpy uneven clay types of surfaces, and transfer between locations up to 5 hours. We did take antimalarials, but were pleasantly surprised at the low incidence of mosquitoes. The electricity is almost universally the UK 3 pin plug type, although Mihingo Lodge and Engagi run on solar power, so don't have additional sockets in the rooms - charging equipment can be done in the main reception areas however.

Gorilla and Chimpanzee trekking

These were the two main reasons for the trip, with the additional benefit in Uganda of being able to add on plenty of game drives and birdwatching without too much extra travel and effort. Both can be done at excellent sites in the far South-west of the country, next to the Congo and Rwanda borders.

There are a selection of locations where Gorillas can be sought, but the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest is probably the most predictable, with Buhoma being the sector where there is likely to be less distance needed to find the quarry. Permits cost \$600 each (\$750 in Rwanda), and are usually bought as part of the package - Venture Uganda advise on the best time to buy these and then do the purchasing for you. Once bought they are non refundable, so it is best to be certain of dates and other arrangements. The trekking starts at 8am, and a briefing is given beforehand on what to do, with each person allocated to a maximum of 8 in a group per Gorilla family. Length of time to find them cannot be guaranteed (anywhere from 30 minutes to 4+ hours), although it is likely that there is more or less a 100% chance of finding them, as long as the time is put in. Terrain can be taxing, with steep and high slopes combining with some thick and moist vegetation. Long sleeves and trousers are recommended, with the latter tucked in to fend off ants, and even gardening gloves are useful to counteract some of the spiked plants.

Tracking the Chimpanzees is quite a different affair. There are several locations where this can be done in Uganda, but Kibale is probably the better choice, since the success rate is around 85%. Kick off time is again around 8am, and each person is allocated to a guide. The terrain is a lot kinder than in Bwindi, since the floor of the forest is a lot flatter. Also, almost all of the walking is on well trodden paths, although these can vary in vegetation density. Cost is \$150. Similar attire to that for the Gorilla trekking is recommended, however.



Flights

These were very interesting - we had expected to pay in the region of £600+, but ended up forking out just less than half of that. I'm not exactly sure how this came about. Lesley, our tour operator kindly offered to broker a deal through Brussels Airlines in this ball park area. However, on searching through some of the meta analysis agents, Opodo came up with around £280 each for the return flights from Newcastle via Brussels. She even called the airline to see how these had been made available, but they also were looking at the larger sum. Naturally, we snapped up the bargain, but I was suspicious all along as to whether they were genuine or even existed. Phoning the airline direct a couple of times found they were indeed in existence, and they even allocated seat numbers on the international leg. I was uneasy nearer to departure, since we're couldn't check in online on either the BMi short flight or the Brussels airlines international leg. However, we turned up for both and there seemed no problem. Weirdly, the BMi flight to Brussels flagged up full payment not made, but again this didn't seem to be an issue - I

assume it was an internal matter between the two carriers. At Brussels on the outward journey, we simply checked in at the African flights transfer desk.

Accommodation

Mihingo Lodge

This accommodation is situated just outside of Mburu National Park, and overlooks part of the park from its elevated position on the hillside. The central dining area has paths radiating from it, where the 12 or so secluded lodges have their own private area. The rooms are an interesting mixture of solid build for the washing areas, with canvas tent attached for the sleeping area, with a decent balcony in front of this. Our room, Bushbaby, had a particularly good view of the park below, with bathroom facilities also having uninterrupted vistas from the open rooms. Even dining is a wildlife pleasure, with the front tables overlooking the waterhole and salt lick below. In the early evening, around 8pm, there are a couple of Bushbabies which have been habituated and visit the lower deck. The woodland surrounding the premises is good for regular birding, and the salt lick for mammals.



Engagi Lodge



This wasn't our first choice, since the Silverback Lodge had been block booked, but we needn't have worried, since the Engagi is a very nice place to stay. It is situated in its own grounds within the very edge of the forest, with these abutting the tea plantations of the village of Buhoma. There are 8 individual cottages set apart in the woodland, and each has a large room and bathroom. The balconies look on to the forest, and can have some interesting birds passing by. There is also a walk through the forest and down to the river, forming a circle by returning

through the tea plantation. This isn't very long, only taking 10 minutes or so, but is certainly pleasant enough for a short outing. Like all the other lodges in Buhoma designed to feed the Gorilla trekking, it is situated only minutes in the car from the entrance and reception to the Bwindi Forest.

Myema Lodge

This is an altogether larger and busier (relatively) affair than the preceding lodges we had stayed at. More facilities, more staff, and a different aspect. It is set above the wide channel connecting Lakes Edward and George, and has blocks of terraced style rooms which are spacious and even have their own electricity sockets. The grounds are manicured with views over the lake and channel below, and have a good selection of birds on the grounds (such as Swamp Flycatcher, Red-chested Sunbird, various Weavers, White-



browed Robin-chat, and Southern Black Flycatcher). Due to the proximity of the lakes and the channel, boat trips depart from the dock below, and are well worth the time and money for a range of birds and mammals.

Kibale Guest House

This is perhaps the most basic of the accommodations we had had, but was still clean and more than adequate, with good food again the order of the day. 8 or so self contained rotunda have a bedroom and attached wet room. There are even sockets in the room. The grounds are ok for birds - the area around the entrance gate is probably best. Location is good, being only 10 minutes or so drive from the entrance to the chimp trekking.



DAILY DIARY

Mabamba Swamp

Day 1



The ferry before boarding



The "arrival dock" for Mabamba

Waking up early for a quick departure for the ferry across Lake Victoria was made all the easier by the vocal presence of a White-crowned Robin-Chat in the lodge gardens even before full light. Following a not so quick breakfast, we made the short journey through an already bustling Entebbe market area to the ferry, which was to take us across the neck of the lake to the West bank. Angola Swallows and Ruppells Starlings saw us off, with a hitchhiking pair of African Pied Wagtails stowed on board. Palmnut Vultures overhead and a line of marsh Terns hastened our crossing, where the arrival dock found hordes of Pied Kingfishers, as well as Hamerkop, Splendid Glossy Starling, and various waders.



The launch area for the boats at Mabamba

A trio of separate Great Blue Touracos hastened our journey to the Mabamba Swamp, where the main target was a bird wanted for almost 4 decades, since poring over bird books as a lad. This is one of the most reliable places for Shoebill, and requires a sedate lift in a dugout canoe for the search. A noisy colony of Village & Vieillot's Black Weavers saw us off, with an usher in the form of Swamp Flycatcher over the boat mooring. Malachite Kingfisher were almost constant along then channels, with African Marsh Harrier and singing Winding Cisticola over and amongst the papyrus. It wasn't long before we spotted a couple of parked canoes up one of the channels, with the ridiculous sight of a monstrous Shoebill just beyond, well out in the open. We could approach to a significant distance from the static bird, drinking in its ridiculous proportions. Northern Brown-throated Weaver and Purple Herons kept up the backing groups, and we departed the scene after half an hour or so.

The journey continued in the opposite direction, through a more open area of lower swamp. A Blue-headed Coucal preceded a courting couple of Long-toed Lapwings, and a perching pair of Blue-breasted Bee-eaters. Possible prize in this section were three separate Lesser Jacanas, which unlike the much more common and obvious African Jacana is a harder bird entirely to pin down.



After a 3 hour journey across the equator, we came to Lake Mburo reserve. There is a lake here, but we wouldn't see it until the following day. What did impress us through the 20km drive from the main road along dirt tracks to Mihingo Lodge was the mammalian presence. Our guide had asked us what we expected to see first on arrival, but we were stumped when a mother and calf Waterbuck crossed the track in front of us not long after the start of the journey. We made our way through various densities of bush, with common sightings of Impala, Warthog, Zebra, Olive Baboon and Vervet Monkey, and occasional sightings of the glamorous Topi. Best surprise however was a group of 8 or so Banded Mongoose busying themselves not far from us. The omens bode well for our

impending game walk the next morning, and were heightened by the antics of a pair of regular Greater Galagos after dark at dark at the lodge.

Lake Mbuoro National Park

Day 2

Day dawned with a pre breakfast guided walk on the cards, so we drove the 10 minutes from the lodge to the second park entrance. Light was just about ok by the time we met the armed guide there, who had already begun the walk with another client, but we had started the day well with an early Bushbuck, and bigger prize of a brace of Spotted Hyenas feeding on the remains of the head and rib cage of a long gone Impala. The Hyenas had been calling through the night, but are much harder to pin down in the light. The walk was of 2 hours of so, and traced a circle through the bush that was adjacent to the main track through the park. This varied from fairly open ground to slightly more enclosed acacia woodland. The majority of the mammals were perhaps initially in the more open areas, with the Hyenas still present while we were on foot, and small numbers of Impala, Topi, and Warthog. Birds came along steadily, with White-winged Tit, Spot-flanked Barbet and Black-bellied Bustard the highlight, although Helmeted Guineafowl were numerous, with smaller numbers of Red-necked Spurfowl and Wattled Lapwing. Species slowed down until we crossed the track and found a small herd of Zebra in the denser bush. These were also host to a second Striped Kingfisher, Black-crowned Tchagra, Black Cuckooshrike, Yellow-fronted Canary, and Golden-breasted Bunting. The second hour of the walk was much quieter, with occasional Vervet Monkey collections and the odd Impala, until we neared the finishing line, where a Dwarf Mongoose was regular, and a small group of Orange-breasted Bush-shrikes was overhead.



Back at the lodge and breakfast - traditional Ugandan bacon and eggs. The dining area is superb, with our table overlooking the valley and waterholes below. While noshing on the grub, a pair of Eland, our first of the trip, joined a couple of Zebra and a Warthog at the waterholes. Closer to home, a quietly feeding pair of Red-billed Firefinches were then superceded by a calling Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird in front of us, to be joined by a small party of young Scarlet-chested Sunbirds. Noisy Hadada Ibis informed us of their incoming on to a large tree below, and a Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher flew in front. Even back at the room, which itself has an excellent open location, Speckled Mousebirds quietly fed nearby, and a Grey-backed Cameroptera was almost underneath our balcony.

Lake Mbuoro

The drive to this site had certainly whetted the appetite, with early hits of Narina Trogon across the track, and Ross's Turaco inside the park, with a Grey Hornbill feeding roadside. Mammals also had come out in force, with copious Waterbuck this afternoon, and our first Buffalo in the distance. Our guide had left an extra hour to get to the lake, which was just as well since we stopped regularly for more views of the now well known Zebra, Bushbuck, Impala, Warthogs, and Topi, as well as numerous Baboons and Vervets, with the odd appearance by Dwarf Mongoose for good measure.

We arrived at the dock on the lake in good time, and were informed this was to be a 1½ hour tour. The boats were smaller than expected for a "cruise", with the great smell of

diesel fumes added in for good measure. Only 5 others were on the same boat, although it would only accommodate another 2 if needed. The plan for the trip was to aim for a small inlet first, then double back to follow the shoreline - this was also at a sedate pace with ample stops when something was seen. For the punters, the Hippos are probably the main attraction, and they certainly don't disappoint, with many groups peering over the surface of the water near the shoreline. We had expected as many crocodiles, but only 2 were seen at a regular haul out (with a pair of Water Thick-knees for good measure!).



Top target for the birders has to be Finfoot. I had resisted the temptation to ask the driver for special dispensation to look for these, but resisted this since it looked like we had a "Johnny normal trips" in charge. Not a problem - I spotted one of these skulking blighters some way into the voyage, and it proved a useful male. It even offered better views while still remaining in the overhanging vegetation. Not to be outdone, the driver delivered a female Finfoot of his own a little further on, although this stayed more hidden. Pied & Malachite Kingfishers were aplenty, with a Woodland thrown in. African Fish Eagles were also a treat, and seemed to be perched closer as we chugged on. Additional goodies were Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters and Striated Heron, with both African & Eurasian Marsh Harriers overhead.

The journey back took as long as the one out, with regular stops for the mammals we had seen before and new birds. The latter included a pair of Wahlberg's Eagles, Blue-naped Mousebirds, Woodland & Striped Kingfishers, Sooty Chat, and Brown Snake Eagle.

Gorillas

Day 4

So the big day had come at last! Many years of hoping and months of planning, and the 6.15 alarm signified the morning call to go trekking for Gorillas. The early wakening was to ensure a decent breakfast and also to make the UWA reception for 7.30 - not too difficult since this was only a five minute drive from the lodge. We had been given a walking stick each as we left Engagi, although this was swiftly dispensed with as soon as possible. Once at the rendezvous point within the national park, we were sat in front of a video of Gorillas while waiting for three late arrivals. We then had an orientation session with David, one of the senior guides. There were only 24 trekkers today, which meant allocation to 3 groups of 8 each. Ours was Rushegura, so called apparently because they tend to prefer being closer to the edge of the forest, and also allow close views. This is also the same family that occasionally leaves the forest to visit the local village and lodges. Pay dirt! Some folk specifically ask for a long trek, but we were more than happy to visit a closer group if we could. We were driven the short distance to the meeting point by our own



guide, and then set off through the edge of the village and banana plantation with David, some extra porters, and a couple of armed guards, just in case the gorillas fancied a bit of a kerfuffle.



The initial assault on the hill was in the open, and it was already getting hot. We all had the recommended long sleeves and tucked in long trousers, and with the forest looming dense and enclosed above us - up the hill in other words - this looked like the start of a hot experience. Imagine our delight as we neared the forest edge when David had been in contact with the scouts ahead, and that things looked "promising". An understatement indeed, since we were then asked to down the bags and walking sticks, and that the regulation hour had begun. They were here, and barely half an

hour into the walk! We then scrambled up a steep and slippery slope, although this wasn't for too long, when the first brace of the family were spotted in a lone spindly tree. I was at the back of the group, and wondered why everyone was sitting in a row, when a procession of 3 Gorillas found us! The regulation distance is 7 metres, but that is for us - not our fault if the animals themselves seek us out! We then moved around this small area, scrambling at times when the going got steep and slippery again, and took in the whole if the family. The silverback - not quite the correct term as yet since this 12 year old was just changing from black back to silver, was contenting himself on choice stems at the back of the group.

We had expected to be trekking for some hours and then to have only reasonable views - no more than half an hour to connect with the Gorillas and then the family themselves approaching us so closely? You really can't buy that luck.





After a celebratory cup of coffee on the balcony - high rollers or what? - I went for a short walk around the Engagi Lodge grounds. Things had already looked good when a Neuman's Warbler passed by the balcony (normally a shy and difficult to see species) as well as Klaas's Cuckoo across the path. Heading in the direction of the river walk, under the main bar area, a Levillant's Cuckoo flew across and landed in a tree nearby. With this good luck in the bag, I retraced steps back toward the main gate, to where there was quite a bit of bird activity. Sunbirds in the form of Bronzy & Rwenzori Double-collared were regular in the flowering bushes, and a static Streaky Seedeater was in a higher bush. A small collection of Speckled Mousebirds were next to another of the lodges. Just before evening meal, a Ross's Turaco would add to the excitement with two flypasts in front of our own lodge.

Before that, however, our guide had suggested a walk for a couple of hours to look for some birds. My feeling was that he was looking for any excuse to spend some time in the forest to look at the birds - no real excuses needed for me to join you here, Michael! We drove the short journey back into the park, and left the van just above the meeting area for the Gorilla trekking. The plan was to slowly walk along the main track, which could also reach a waterfall eventually, and then to turn down to the river to complete a circuit. This took all of two hours, and was extremely enjoyable. First we had to negotiate a calling Bulbul - it was only at the end of the walk that we pinned it down to the magnificent Little Greenbul! And then after some superb close views of a White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, the masochistic task of sorting out a brown flycatcher. Quite enjoyable really, and by the way the answer was Ashy Flycatcher. Then the birds really started to turn out. After a couple of White-eyes and a Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, an outstanding Lüdher's Bushshrike darted across the track, to start calling on the opposite side of a bush. Then a single tree offered Bocage's Bushshrike, a Grey Apalis, and female Petit's Cuckooshrike. The possible partner to the latter, a stunning male, was picked up only minutes later further down the track. We then turned down towards the river, and the birds were much more sparse. Apart from some Black Sawwings overhead, the main

attraction was Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, which was especially welcome since it was also a new bird for the Michael.

Ishasha

Day 5



The famed possessions of this reserve are the tree climbing lions. I'm not sure why this elevates them above lesser ground dwelling lions, but there must be a reason. Yet it only took us a short time before we saw them, lazing around on a horizontal branch. The two females were certainly lions, and were in a tree, so let's tick them off. There are occasional signs which state that there should be no off road driving, for fear of a \$150 fine and "management", but we had somehow picked up one of the armed guards from the nearby exit point for the park proper, and after much chuntering between themselves, they escorted us and the three other vehicles to closer inspection with them present. This park also held the last of the Topi to be seen, and the Impala had been replaced by copious Kob. There were some birds in this fairly open bushy area, but not great amounts, but still some of interest. Before seeing the lions, an adult and juvenile Palmnut Vulture flew in front of us and happily perched in a nearby tree. On the roadside, small collections of finches included a full breeding plumaged Pin-tailed Wydah, seemingly weighed down by the unfeasibly long tail. White-browed Coucal was very impressive. Soaring overhead were 2 separate Western Banded Snake Eagles, showing the distinctive tail patterns, although the banding on the lower belly was hard to see. Lunch was spent in the park, tucking into a more than substantial picnic put up by the hotel, and located on a table set up beside a small river on the Congo border. 2 pairs of Hippopotamus lounged in the river, blissfully unaware of their dual nationality!



Queen Elizabeth National Park



What a coup - we arrived at the park mid afternoon, and for most of the time were the only car that we saw in the park. We had passed an impressive collection of 7 large Elephants close to on the way, and our guide had asked of we wanted to go to the accommodation and then relax, or do a game drive first? I have heard of some silly questions but ! The highlight here is probably the good population of lions, which we had to keep an eye out for. This is not a surprise, judging by the large numbers of Kob, and lesser numbers of Waterbuck and Warthog. However, we did come across 2 families of lions. The first were spread out and had a half hearted go at a passing Warthog. The second pride were right next to the track, and included a trio of young cubs, who were intent on fun rather than growing up. When most of the pride had gone, leaving the head female and cubs, a lone young male approached, and the female was not happy with its presence. There was also a decent number of Elephants here, of various ages. This location offered a good selection of raptors, with Pallid Harriers, Long-crested Eagle, Lappet-faced Vulture, and a pair of Grey Kestrels trying to pillage what looked like an out of date Kamerkop nest. A pair of Black-headed Gonoleks next to the track flew behind us, but then disappeared into the denser bush - another later was marginally more accommodating. More Pin-tailed Wydahs bobbed around near to the road, and it was again satisfying to see that they had reached breeding plumage.



Queen Elizabeth National Park

Day 6

The lodge we were staying in is all very "upper crust", but struggles to cater for the early morning wildlife watchers. Breakfast is from 7am, but that was also the time we were

due to head out. Not a problem - a banana can have a lasting effect. The drive from Myema Lodge back to the park is around 20km, and takes half an hour through thick bush and lush grassland. We decided to take a different track to the previous evening, this time principally searching for good views of Elephants. We spent 2 hours driving these tracks, but overall there seemed fewer mammals than the previous evening. Waterbuck, Warthogs, Kob, and Buffalo were around, but only in small numbers. Best mammals were a busy group of Banded Mongoose scampering from one bush to another, aware of our presence.



Early Marsh Harrier and Black-shouldered Kite preceded a couple of perched Eagles. These presented more problems than we hoped for - brown eagles, not too big, gap to bottom of eye. It should be easier than this! We settled for Lesser Spotted. Rufous-naped Larks added to the more common Yellow-throated Longclaws, and Zitting Cisticolas seemed almost in epidemic numbers. It was also good to see both Pin-tailed Wydahs and Southern Red Bishops yet again in full breeding plumage - so much easier as well as attractive. A bunch of Village Weavers at their own nest site had double trouble - an African Cuckoo probably didn't offer too much of a threat, but they all scattered when a Grey Kestrel came homing in on the colony.



Next activity after breakfast was the boat trip around the channel, early afternoon, which left time for an hour or so walk around the lodge grounds. There are 3-4 blocks of rooms, and more canvas & separate rooms, all fenced in with manicured lawns and connecting roads throughout, in an area which was easy to cover in the time available. There are a couple of feeding tables in front of the restaurant, which is a good place to start. Three species of Weavers seem to nest in the grounds, Village, Black-necked & Little, and the latter 2 are regulars at the feeding area. This also

attracts Southern Black Flycatcher, Black-headed Gonolek, and very close Swamp Flycatcher (often on the tables!), with regular Red-chested Sunbird and White-browed Robin Chat passing by. So then it was out of reception and into the grounds. While closing in on a family of Northern Black Flycatchers one of the bushes, a movement within turned out to be a skulking Neuman's Warbler - the second of the trip. Red-chested Sunbirds turned out to be very common and vocal throughout, but a pair of Woodland Kingfishers seen a few times may have been the same birds each time. Within the bushes, a couple of Grey-backed Cameropteras were found. Overhead, and within the *hirundine* flock, were a few Horus Swifts.

Then it was to the boat ride around the Kazinga Channel, which lasted for 2 hours. This was quite a different experience to the one at Mabamba, being on a much larger boat full of a variety of folk. The plan was to set off and cover the bank below and to the left of the lodge, and then cross to cover the other side towards the lake exit. The early part of the journey was all about



the Elephants, with a good sized family of all ages making its way along a well worn path by the water's edge. Main bird life here were the first of multitudes of Pied Kingfishers and the odd Squacco Heron. This all increased exponentially on the opposite bank. The shoreline here was much more open, and included some exposed damp mud. Most obvious were the Cape Buffalo and Hippopotamus at the edge, interspersed by the odd crocodile. Waders were in variety - Common, Wood & Marsh Sandpiper, Greenshank, Ruff, Black-winged Stilt, Little Stint, Ringed Plover, and a call of Caspian Plover, although I didn't see the latter well enough for positive ID. Herons etc were in the form of Grey Heron, Little & Great Egret, Hamerkop, Yellow-billed Stork and Hadada Ibis. A Fish Eagle was tearing its catch apart, hungrily watched by a pair of Hamerkops. The Hippopotamus were regularly encountered as we continued, and it was good to see some very young animals with them. The cruise terminated before returning at a small and busy fishing village, just after a single Red-throated Bee-eater had been picked out, and it was also just after this that we saw the large colony of mixed species on the shoreline. Most obvious were the Grey-headed Gulls and Gull-billed Terns at the front, and behind them concentrated Great Cormorants. Amongst them were a handful of Marabou Storks and Pink-backed Pelicans, with a statuesque Saddle-billed Stork meandering between.



Shoreline on the opposite shore of the channel to Myema Lodge

The evening, from 6pm onwards, was intended for a dusk Leopard search. This was, believe it or not, on a track called the Leopard Loop. We set off at the allotted time, and quickly came across a family of Elephants in the bush just outside of the lodge area. Some time was spent on them, before we set off in earnest. However, after having chalked up Little Sparrowhawk overhead, and perched Grey Kestrel and Grey-backed Fiscal, the annoying grating of the worn left break reached dangerous level, and so we decided to let safety overcome foolishness and drive back to camp, so that our guide could try to sort out the problem.

From Queen Elizabeth NP to Kibale

Day 7



During the drive to Kibale we stopped off at a small lake in the hills for our picnic lunch. There was a small area with tables and even half decent toilets, and the added bonus of a group of Red Colobus in the trees overhead. In the canopy a short way over, there was also a group of Black and White Colobus. Lunch was preceded by African Dusky Flycatcher and a pair of Cinnamon-breasted Bee-eaters. When we had finished, we made our way down the short track to water level. It didn't take long to pick out a pair of Giant Kingfishers, and a pair of Black and White Casqued Hornbills flew overhead.

With an hour or so to kill before our early evening activity, a slow walk around the not too large grounds of the Kibale Guest Lodge grounds was quite productive. The best area was at the entrance gate, where a noisy colony of Vieillot's Black Weavers masked the presence of a small group of Black-capped Manakins. A pair of Green-headed Sunbirds were in addition to a superb male Bronzy Sunbird. As usual, a pair of Blue Flycatchers were challenging, but seemed to have white in their tails for White-tailed.

4pm found us at the beginning of the swamp walk. This was to be a circuit of the swamp, which was around 5km, and take around 3 hours. We had donned long trousers and sleeves in case of biting bugs, although there didn't seem to be many about. The swamp was more of a wet woodland in places, although there were some boardwalks over wetter and occasionally muddy parts in places. Outside of these, the swamp was dense and not easy to penetrate, although this was never the aim. The main claim to fame here is the variety of primates. They generally had to be carefully searched for, but all 4 of the species we saw - Red & Black and White Colobus, Red-tailed Monkey and Grey-cheeked Managabey - showed particularly well. The swamp is also known for its birds. We started well with Bronzy & Olive-bellied Sunbird, and Pygmy Kingfisher in bushes just below the reception. First big birds were a trio of Great Blue Turacos, obviously feeding at the top of a palm tree. Then came a small bird party including White-chinned Prinia, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, and Blue Malkoha. After successfully luring out a Snowy-crowned Robin-chat, another bird party contained Purple-headed Starlings, Red-headed Malimbe, and Western Nicator, and the extra mammal in the form of Buhoma Squirrel. By the end of the walk, we were very hot and sweaty, but the offerings of both mammals and birds made this worthwhile.



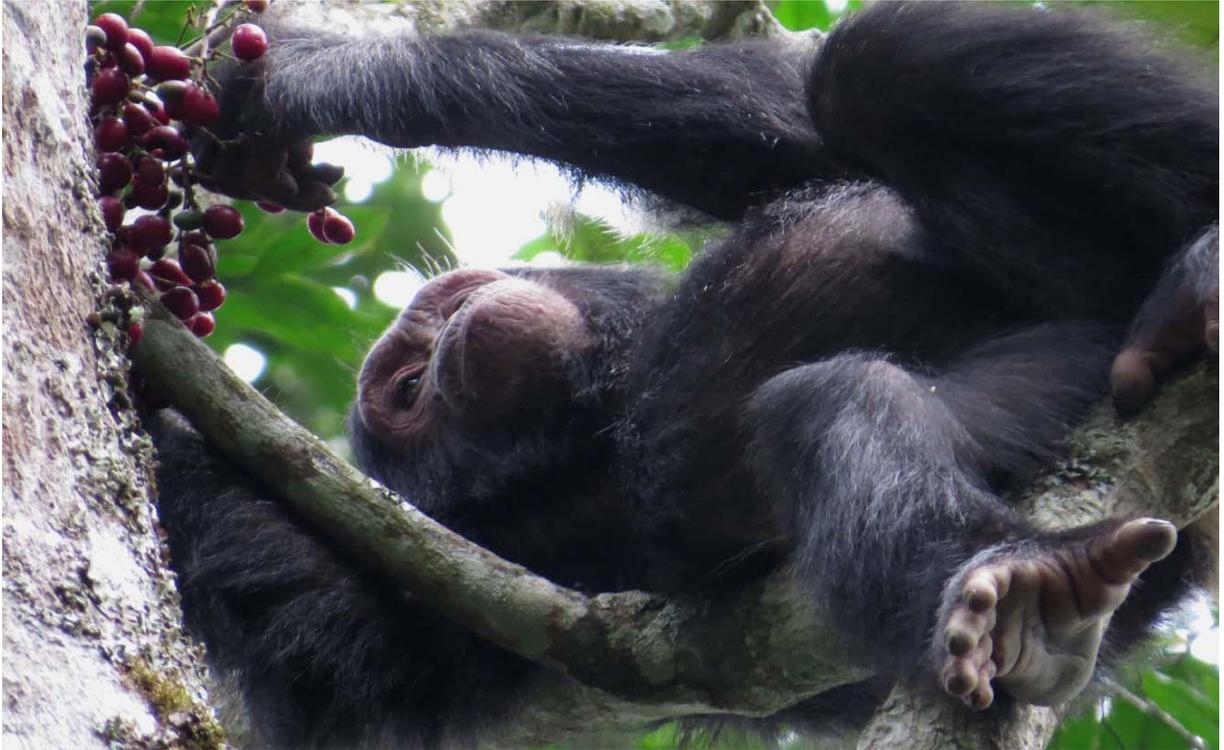
Chimpanzees in Kibale

Day 8

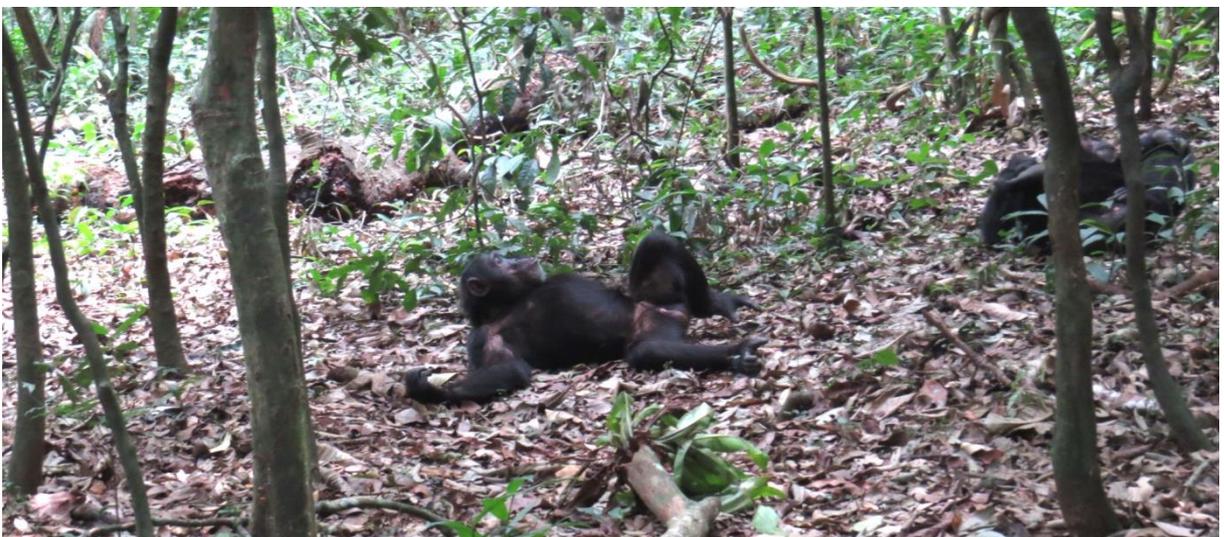
The best day was arguably left until the last. While the swamp walk the previous evening was good, this area is famous for its population of Chimpanzees. Over 1000 are reputed to live in the forest, with 3 families being habituated, 2 of these for study purposes, and the third for tourists. That is where we come in, collecting at the forest reception at 8am for the briefing, and then being allocated to a guide with only two other intrepid explorers in our particular group. The other group was led straight from the reception into the forest, but we were driven to another part to increase the chances of finding the Chimps. The forest here is much flatter than Bwindi for the Gorillas, so it is time rather than elevation that would provoke tiredness. And this seemed to threaten. We had been going some time without a sniff of the quarry, and the 85% success rate seemed to turn round



to focus on the 15% failure rate. Even the guide reported that the other group were also struggling. By the time we came across them, all we had to show was a Golden-winged Sunbird and Crested Francolin - birds were also hard to come across!



However, after we sat for a rest here, the guides came back with the good news that a Chimp was close by, although when we got there it was tightly curled in a newly made nest. We camped out hopefully underneath this for some time, trying to decide whether views of an outstretched arm and hand counted for a tick, when another appeared in the canopy. Decent views this time, and the first individual also raised itself from its slumbers. Even better news was that another guide had found the main family, so we were frog marched back to the van at reception, and dropped off just a little further up than the earlier disembarkation. We expected to optimistically see Chimps in better numbers, but perhaps still in the trees. Wrong! The first 2 were sat on the ground grooming each other, and as time went on, we came across more again on the ground. They were totally oblivious to our (close) presence, and were either flat out resting, or eyeing each other up. 2 youngster topped the bill playing with each other and their mothers. We were allowed the regulation one hour drinking in this wonderful entertainment, before having to return to the vehicles.



Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Day 9

With the itinerary over yesterday, today was travelling day. However, the flight wasn't until almost midnight, so there was time to kill. After getting up a little later than usual for the holiday, and wandering around the meagre gardens of the Cassia Lodge in Kampala for an hour (highlights Grey Kestrel perched on a roof in front of the reception and a pair of Harrier-hawks behind the buildings), we made our way to Entebbe and the Botanical Gardens. These are not only a stone's throw from the airport, but are also a relaxing way to spend a couple of hours and pick up some interesting birds - some were even new for the trip, and with a lifer thrown in!



Once we had deposited the car near the entrance, the first few minutes was for mammals - a Striped Ground Squirrel and 2 Black and White Colobus. There are some well marked tracks through the various local and imported trees, and the clockwise circuit we took quickly came across and followed the shoreline of Lake Victoria, and then back through the parkland style gardens again to the an. The first of 2 Great Blue Turacos shortly followed the mammals, and also the first of a few noisy Eastern Plantain-eaters. The shoreline produced a few of the expected birds - Pied Kingfisher, Long-tailed Cormorant, African Jacana, Little Egret - but there was also room for some perching birds such as Broad-billed Roller, Grey-backed Fiscal, Woodland Kingfisher, and Scarlet-chested & Red-chested Sunbird. Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills were regular in both sight and sound, but Crowned Hornbill, as well as Grey Parrot, were an added bonus. After skirting the water's edge, we turned back and came across a small bird party. This contained African Paradise Flycatcher and Green Crombec, and a Plain Greenbul. Following a couple of White-eyes, our guide strangely got on the back of a motor bike with a local he had a quick chat with, and reappeared 10 minutes later. The reason was a good one - he had been shown a Verraux's Eagle Owl perched high in one of the larger trees.



SPECIES SEEN

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

~50 at the Kazinga Channel, along the shoreline; 6 Entebbe Botanical Gardens, in pairs perched in the trees



Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP

Knob-billed Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP

Yellow-billed Duck

Anas undulate

Quite common Mabamba Swamp; small numbers on flooded marsh journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 2 Picnic spot near Kibale

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Common guided walk around Mburo and later small numbers Mburo to Bwindi; Common Queen Elizabeth National Park; small numbers Ishasha; ~25 on tracks to and in Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~20 Mwemi to Kibale



Crested Guineafowl

Guttera pucherani

1 Kibale Forest, crossing path while looking for Chimps

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

3 Mburo in bush next to track up to Mihingo Lodge; 1 Mburo to Bwindi



Red-necked Spurfowl

Pternistis afer

Quite common guided walk around Mburo; small numbers Mburo to Bwindi; small numbers Ishasha; ~12 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~6 Mwemi to Kibale

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

~15 flooded Marsh journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 2 + 1 juv Kazinga Channel



African Openbill

Anastomus lamelligerus

2-3 in Mabamba Swamp area; 1 Ishasha

Abdim's Stork

Ciconia abdimii

~16 + 1 Kibale to Kampala. Only seen on this journey, where the group were feeding on a cultivated field near to the main road, and the single bird was flying over a small town

Woolly-necked Stork

Ciconia episcopus

2 overhead Mburo to Bwindi

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

1 on flooded marsh journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 1 Kazinga Channel, walking amongst colony of gulls, terns, and cormorants



Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumenifer

Very common in some towns and villages journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 2 at roost Mburo; Common in some towns Mburo to Bwindi; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~5 Kazinga Channel; ~6 Mwemi to Kibale; some in towns Kibale to Kampala; Quite common Cassia Lodge, Kampala to Entebbe, & Entebbe Botanical Gardens

African Sacred Ibis

Threskiornis aethiopicus

2 groups of ~10 birds Mburo to Bwindi; 2 Kazinga Channel



Hadada Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

Always noisy when arriving - Small numbers in Mabamba Swamp area; 2 landed in front of Mihingo Lodge; 1 + 1 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Bwindi; 1 Bwindi to Ishasha; 4 Kazinga Channel; 4 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba

2 Kazinga Channel



Striated Heron

Butorides striata

3 Lake Mburo, all separate birds, and perched in vegetation at the edge of the lake

Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

4 Mabamba Swamp; 2 Lake Mburo; 3 Kazinga Channel

Western Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Common in patches with cattle - small numbers Mburo to Bwindi; ~40 with Cape Buffalo Queen Elizabeth National Park



Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

4 Kazinga Channel

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP

Black-headed Heron

Ardea melanocephala

1 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Kibale to Kampala; 1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Goliath Heron

Ardea goliath

1 Kazinga Channel

Great Egret

Ardea alba

2 Kazinga Channel



Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

~12 Mabamba Swamp; 5 Kazinga Channel; 3 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

4 on rails at jetty from Entebbe ferry; 1 Lake Mburo; 1 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 6 Kazinga Channel; 1 making nest just outside of Mwemi Lodge; 5 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens

4 over Mwemi Lodge, 5 Kazinga Channel; 2 Mwemi to Kibale; 1 flying over Entebbe airport in dark

Reed Cormorant

Microcarbo africanus

Common from Entebbe to and including Mabamba Swamp; ~8 Kazinga Channel ~20 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

~120 Kazinga Channel

Black-winged Kite

Elanus caeruleus

1 attacking Brown Snake Eagle Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park (1 on each visit)

African Harrier-Hawk

Polyboroides typus

1 Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park; 1 Kazinga Channel; 2 Cassia Lodge



Palm-nut Vulture

Gypohierax angolensis

4 overhead in Entebbe and Mabamba Swamp area; 1 and juvenile Ishasha; 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 Kazinga Channel; 2 Mwemi to Kibale

White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

1 soaring Ishasha; 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park



Rüppell's Vulture

Gyps rueppelli

1 on tree Mburo

Lappet-faced Vulture

Torgos tracheliotos

1 perched Queen Elizabeth National Park

Black-chested Snake Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

2 separate birds Mburo to Bwindi

Brown Snake Eagle

Circaetus cinereus

1 Mburo; 1 being harassed by Black-winged Kite Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park; 6 Queen Elizabeth National Park (3 on each visit); 1 Mwemi to Kibale



Western Banded Snake Eagle*Circaetus cinerascens*

2 separate birds over Ishasha

Bateleur*Terathopius ecaudatus*

1 over Mburo; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park, on tree together & seen from the road

Long-crested Eagle*Lophaetus occipitalis*

4 journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo ; 1 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park; 1 + 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park 1;1 Swamp walk near Kibale; 2 Kibale to Kampala

**Lesser Spotted Eagle***Clanga pomarina*

3 Queen Elizabeth National Park. Despite being sat on trees next to the track, they gave some problems with ID. This was based on size, gape length, and contrasting wing plumage. The legs couldn't be seen clearly to aid ID

Wahlberg's Eagle*Hieraetus wahlbergi*

2 together on tree Mburo

**Lizard Buzzard***Kaupifalco monogrammicus*

1 Swamp walk near Kibale

Little Sparrowhawk*Accipiter minullus*

1 over track just outside of Mwemi Lodge

Western Marsh Harrier*Circus aeruginosus*

1 male Lake Mburo; 1 + 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park. All in flight

African Marsh Harrier*Circus ranivorus*

3 in flight over papyrus at Mabamba Swamp; 2 Lake Mburo

Pallid Harrier*Circus macrourus*

3 females Queen Elizabeth National Park; 1 male Mwemi to Kibale. All in flight

Yellow-billed Kite*Milvus aegyptius*

Very common from Entebbe to Mburo; 2 over Lake Mburo; Few Mburo to Bwindi; 2 Bwindi to Ishasha; Common over Kampala

African Fish Eagle*Haliaeetus vocifer*

~15 Lake Mburo; 1 Ishasha, 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~8 Kazinga Channel

**Common Buzzard***Buteo buteo*

1 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Augur Buzzard*Buteo augur*

1 over Mburo to Bwindi

Black-bellied Bustard

Lissotis melanogaster

1 male guided walk around Mburo and 2 later on return to Mburo from Lake Mburo ; 1 Ishasha; 1 Mwemi to Kibale



African Finfoot

Podica senegalensis

The tourist boat trip on Lake Mburo offers excellent chances of seeing Finfoot. The boat chugs around the shoreline of the lake, and if the driver isn't proficient at finding them, it is worth checking under the overhanging vegetation to see if any can be spotted. Both happened on our tour, with the first/male being spotted by me, and a subsequent female by the driver

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Mabamba Swamp

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

1 Mabamba Swamp; ~8 Kazinga Channel



Grey Crowned Crane

Balearica regulorum

Up to 100 on flooded Marsh journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 2 Mburo to Bwindi

Water Thick-knee

Burhinus vermiculatus

2 pairs Lake Mburo; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 9 Kazinga Channel



Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

~20 Kazinga Channel

Spur-winged Lapwing

Vanellus spinosus

1 Mabamba Swamp; ~20 Kazinga Channel



African Wattled Lapwing

Vanellus senegallus

5 Mburo; 1 pair guided walk around Mburo and 1 pair Mburo; 4 Mburo to Bwindi; ~16 + 20 Queen Elizabeth National Park on two visits

Senegal Lapwing

Vanellus lugubris

2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 1 on nest next to track just outside of Mwemi Lodge

Long-toed Lapwing

Vanellus crassirostris

Pair at Mabamba Swamp



Common Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

2 Kazinga Channel

Lesser Jacana

Microparra capensis

3 birds were seen from medium distance on Mabamba Swamp

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

~20 Mabamba Swamp; 2 on vegetation platform Lake Mburo; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

2 Kazinga Channel

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

2 Kazinga Channel

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

2 Lake Mburo; 1 Ishasha

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

1 Entebbe ferry departure; 1 Mabamba Swamp; 1 Ishasha; 3 Kazinga Channel; 1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

Common near Entebbe ferry landing jetty; 3 Lake Mburo; 1 Ishasha; 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 8 Kazinga Channel

Ruddy Turnstone

Arenaria interpres

2 Kazinga Channel

Sanderling

Calidris alba

~20 Kazinga Channel

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

2 Kazinga Channel



Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

2 Kazinga Channel

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

4 Kazinga Channel

Grey-headed Gull

Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus

~100 Kazinga Channel



Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

~40 Kazinga Channel

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica

~150 Kazinga Channel



White-winged Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus

~100+ over Lake Victoria from ferry; ~60 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Shoebill

Balaeniceps rex

1 Mabamba Swamp



Speckled Pigeon

Columba guinea

3 Cassia Lodge

Ring-necked Dove

Streptopelia capicola

~10 Mburo; Small numbers Mburo to Bwindi; Small numbers Ishasha; Occasional Queen Elizabeth National Park

Laughing Dove

Spilopelia senegalensis

1 Myema Lodge; Occasional Queen Elizabeth National Park

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

1 guided walk around Mburo. Wood Doves were regularly spotted flying to the undergrowth, but this one was the only one positively identified

Tambourine Dove

Turtur tympanistria

1 Swamp walk near Kibale, flying along the forest edge

African Green Pigeon

Treron calvus

1 Kibale Guest Lodge

Great Blue Turaco

Corythaeola cristata

3 separate birds en route from Entebbe to Mabamba Swamp; 3 + 1 Swamp walk near Kibale; 1 Kibale to Kampala; 1 Kampala to Entebbe; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Ross's Turaco

Musophaga rossae

1 Mburo; 1 flew past accommodation twice Engagi Lodge

Bare-faced Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides personatus

1 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Ishasha

Eastern Plantain-eater

Crinifer zonurus

1 near landing area for Mabamba Swamp; 1 Mburo; 4 Cassia Lodge; 8 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

1 Ishasha; 3+5 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 track from Mwemi Lodge; 1 Mwemi to Kibale

Blue-headed Coucal

Centropus monachus

1 Mabamba Swamp



Blue Malkoha

Ceuthmochares aereus

1 Swamp walk near Kibale

Levaillant's Cuckoo

Clamator levaillantii

1 Engagi Lodge, which was seen flying into a tree directly in front of the dining area, where it stayed for some time



Klaas's Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx klaas

1 male from balcony Engagi Lodge

African Cuckoo

Cuculus gularis

1 Mburo; 1 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl

Bubo lacteus

1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens – this bird had been seen by one of the locals the day before, and he kindly showed its location to our guide



African Palm Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

2 Kibale to Kampala

Alpine Swift

Tachymarptis melba

4 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Common Swift

Apus apus

1 Mburo

Little Swift

Apus affinis

~10 around restaurant stop Mburo to Bwindi

Horus Swift

Apus horus

4 over Mwemi Lodge

Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

Very common and regularly seen, usually in small groups flying in tight formations - 1 on approach to Mabamba Swamp; 3 near accommodation Mihingo Lodge; 3 groups of 2-4 birds each Mburo to Bwindi; ~6 Engagi Lodge; Small groups regular Ishasha, Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Queen Elizabeth National Park; Common Mwemi to Kibale



Blue-naped Mousebird

Urocolius macrourus

3 on track Mburo



Narina Trogon

Apaloderma narina

1 Mburo

Lilac-breasted Roller

Coracias caudatus

2 together on wires journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; 1 guided walk around Mburo



Broad-billed Roller

Eurystomus glaucurus

Very common from Entebbe to Mburo, usually on roadside wires; 1 Bwindi to Ishasha; 3 Kampala to Entebbe, 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Grey-headed Kingfisher

Halcyon leucocephala

1 Mwemi to Kibale



Striped Kingfisher

Halcyon chelicuti

1 Mburo; 1 guided walk around Mburo; 2 Mburo

Woodland Kingfisher

Halcyon senegalensis

1 Mabamba Swamp; 1 Mburo, 1 Lake Mburo; 1 in a town Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Swamp walk near Kibale; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



African Pygmy Kingfisher

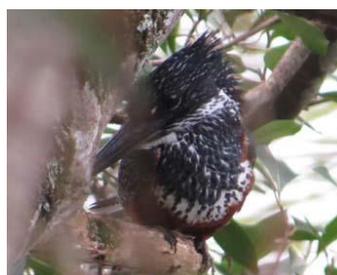
Ispidina picta

1 Swamp walk near Kibale

Malachite Kingfisher

Corythornis cristatus

Very common Mabamba Swamp; Very common Lake Mburo; 1 Kazinga Channel; 1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Giant Kingfisher

Megaceryle maxima

2 Picnic spot near Kibale. This was at a small lake (about 100m in length) surrounded by forest. They spent most of the time in the trees on the opposite shore, but one did come to the adjacent bank

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

This is by far the most common Kingfisher encountered, and seems to occur wherever there is water - Large numbers near landing dock for Entebbe ferry, with good numbers Mabamba Swamp Very common Lake Mburo; 2 separate birds Mburo to Bwindi; Abundant Kazinga Channel; Common Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Little Bee-eater

Merops pusillus

1 Mburo

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater

Merops oreobates

2 birds above river valley Mburo to Bwindi; 2 Picnic spot near Kibale



Red-throated Bee-eater

Merops bulocki

1 Kazinga Channel

Blue-breasted Bee-eater

Merops variegatus

Pair Mabamba Swamp

White-throated Bee-eater

Merops albicollis

3 on track from Mwemi Lodge; 2 Mwemi to Kibale; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater

Merops persicus

4 Lake Mburo; 2 Mburo to Bwindi



Crowned Hornbill

Lophoceros alboterminatus

2 Kibale to Kampala 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

African Pied Hornbill

Lophoceros fasciatus

2 Mburo

African Grey Hornbill

Lophoceros nasutus

1 Mburo; 1 Mburo



Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill

Bycanistes subcylindricus

By far the most regularly seen Hornbill, as well as the noisiest! 2 pairs on tracks near Mabamba Swamp; 2 Picnic spot near Kibale; 2 Swamp walk near Kibale; 4 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Speckled Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus scolopaceus

1 Engagi Lodge; 1 Swamp walk near Kibale



Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus bilineatus

1 singing outside of restaurant Mihingo Lodge; 2 Bwindi bird walk; 1 Kibale Forest

Spot-flanked Barbet

Tricholaema lacrymosa

3 guided walk around Mburo

Double-toothed Barbet

Lybius bidentatus

Pair in woodland Mburo to Bwindi



Buff-spotted Woodpecker

Campethera nivos

2 Swamp walk near Kibale

Grey Kestrel

Falco ardosiaceus

1 on approach to Mabamba Swamp; 2+1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 1 on track from Mwemi Lodge; 1 Cassia Lodge



Eurasian Hobby

Falco subbuteo

1 circling over Cassia Lodge

Grey Parrot

Psittacus erithacus

2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Meyer's Parrot

Poicephalus meyeri

2 flying Mburo

Brown-throated Wattle-eye

Platysteira cyanea

2 males in front of lodge Mburo; 1 next to accommodation Engagi Lodge



Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher

Bias musicus

1 female Bwindi

Bocage's Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus bocagei

2 Bwindi bird walk



Orange-breasted Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus

4 guided walk around Mburo; 1 Mburo; 1 Engagi Lodge

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

1 in bush of restaurant Mburo to Bwindi



Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegalus

1 Mburo guided walk

Lühder's Bushshrike

Laniarius luehderi

1 Bwindi bird walk



Black-headed Gonolek

Laniarius erythrogaster

The first few birds were seen from the van and seemed to be shy and retiring, but subsequent birds around Mwemi lodge were very confiding, coming to the edge of the restaurant - 2+1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~6 Queen Elizabeth National Park the following day;; 6 Mwemi Lodge; 1 on track from Mwemi Lodge; 3 Mwemi to Kibale

Black Cuckooshrike

Campephaga flava

1 yellow shouldered male guided walk around Mburo

Petit's Cuckooshrike

Campephaga petiti

Male and separate female Bwindi bird walk



Grey-backed Fiscal

Lanius excubitoroides

2 early on guided walk around Mburo; 1 Ishasha, 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 on track from Mwemi Lodge; 5 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 Mwemi to Kibale; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Northern Fiscal

Lanius humeralis

~6 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 Bwindi to Ishasha; 1 Mwemi to Kibale

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

~6 guided walk around Mburo

Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher

Terpsiphone rufiventer

1 in front of Mihingo Lodge restaurant; 1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



African Paradise Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

~6 journey from Mabamba Swamp to Mburo; Common in towns Mburo to Bwindi; ~6 some towns Mwemi to Kibale; Common Kampala



White-tailed Blue Flycatcher

Elminia albicauda

These and African Blue Flycatcher are more confusing than expected. This species is brighter than suggested by the field guides, and the white in the tail is not at all obvious, so close observation is needed when seen - Pair from balcony Engagi Lodge; 2 Engagi Lodge; 4 Bwindi bird walk; 2 Kibale Guest Lodge; 1 Kibale Forest

White-winged Black Tit

Melaniparus leucomelas

~6 guided walk around Mburo

Western Nicator

Nicator chloris

1 Swamp walk near Kibale



Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafra Africana

4 Queen Elizabeth National Park



Common Bulbul

Pycnonotus barbatus

One of the most common and well distributed birds encountered - Small number Mburo; Common Mburo to Bwindi; Common Engagi Lodge; Common Bwindi bird walk; Abundant Queen Elizabeth National Park, Mwemi Lodge, and Kazinga Channel; Common Mwemi to Kibale, Kibale Guest Lodge, and Swamp walk near Kibale; Very common Kampala



Plain Greenbul

Eurillas curvirostris

1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Little Greenbul

Eurillas virens

1 Bwindi bird walk

Black Saw-wing

Psalidoprocne pristoptera

4 over Bwindi bird walk

Mosque Swallow

Cecropis senegalensis

Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Quite common see and Mabamba Swamp; Common Ishasha, Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Queen Elizabeth National Park ; Common Mwemi Lodge; Common Queen Elizabeth National Park

Angolan Swallow

Hirundo angolensis

Few on departure dock of Entebbe ferry; Some identified Mwemi Lodge



Lesser Striped Swallow

Cecropis abyssinica

2 Mabamba Swamp; 6 Lake Mburo; 4 Bwindi; Very common Mwemi Lodge



Red-breasted Swallow

Cecropis semirufa

~10 guided walk around Mburo; Common Queen Elizabeth National Park

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica

Small numbers over Engagi Lodge

Green Crombec

Sylvietta virens

1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Neumann's Warbler

Urosphena neumanni

1 from balcony of accommodation Engagi Lodge; 1 Mwemi Lodge

Chubb's Cisticola

Cisticola chubby

1 singing around balcony Engagi Lodge

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

Common Queen Elizabeth National Park

Winding Cisticola

Cisticola marginatus

1 singing Mabamba Swamp

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

2 Swamp walk near Kibale



White-chinned Prinia

Schistolais leucopogon

2 Swamp walk near Kibale

Grey Apalis

Apalis cinerea

1 Bwindi bird walk

Bleating Camaroptera

Camaroptera brachyura

1 next to accommodation Mihingo Lodge; 3 Mwemi Lodge; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Green-capped Eremomela

Eremomela scotops

1 guided walk around Mburo

Brown Babbler

Turdoides plebejus

3 Mburo; 1 Mwemi Lodge



African Yellow White-eye

Zosterops senegalensis

3 Bwindi bird walk; 1 Kibale Guest Lodge; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Purple-headed Starling

Hylopsar purpureiceps

3 Swamp walk near Kibale



Rüppell's Starling

Lamprotornis purpuroptera

Very common and obvious throughout - Common Entebbe ferry landing; Very common Mburo; Very common Mburo to Bwindi; Common Bwindi to Ishasha, Ishasha, Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Queen Elizabeth National Park; Quite common Queen Elizabeth National Park; Regular around Mwemi Lodge; Common Mwemi to Kibale; 2 Cassia Lodge

Violet-backed Starling

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

Pair Ishasha

Splendid Starling

Lamprotornis splendidus

Entebbe

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

1 on tree guided walk around Mburo; 1 on Zebra Mburo; 1 on Buffalo Ishasha; 1 on Buffalo Kazinga Channel



African Thrush

Turdus pelios

1 Bwindi bird walk; 1 Swamp walk near Kibale; 2 Victoria Hotel, Entebbe

Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher

Melaenornis ardesiacus

3 Bwindi bird walk



Northern Black Flycatcher

Melaenornis edolioides

~8 Mwemi Lodge; ~3 on track from Mwemi Lodge ~10 Mwemi to Kibale

Ashy Flycatcher

Muscicapa caerulescens

1 Bwindi bird walk



Swamp Flycatcher

Muscicapa aquatica

~10 Mabamba Swamp; Very common around Mwemi Lodge

African Dusky Flycatcher

Muscicapa adusta

1 + juv Picnic spot near Kibale, 1 Swamp walk near Kibale



White-browed Robin-Chat

Cossypha heuglini

1 singing first thing at Entebbe lodge; ~4 Mwemi Lodge; 1 Mwemi to Kibale

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat

Cossypha niveicapilla

1 Swamp walk near Kibale, where the guide lured the bird out; 1 Entebbe Botanical Gardens, much more obliging under a fairly open tree

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

1+3 Queen Elizabeth National Park

African Stonechat

Saxicola torquatus

1 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Sooty Chat

Myrmecocichla nigra

1+3 Mburo

Collared Sunbird

Hedydipna collaris

3 Mihingo Lodge; 1 Engagi Lodge

Green-headed Sunbird

Cyanomitra verticalis

2 Kibale Guest Lodge, where they were feeding on palm plants



Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Chalcomitra senegalensis

4 juveniles Mihingo Lodge, together in a tree with calling Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird; 2 adults – a male and female - Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Bronzy Sunbird

Nectarinia kilimensis

1 from balcony Engagi Lodge; Male and 2 females Engagi Lodge; Pair Kibale Guest Lodge, 1 Swamp walk near Kibale



Golden-winged Sunbird

Drepanorhynchus reichenowi

1 Kibale Forest, unfortunately not one of the stunning males, but a female which was fairly drab with wing and tail patches under the cover of the forest while on the Chimp trek

Olive-bellied Sunbird

Cinnyris chloropygius

1 Swamp walk near Kibale

2 Kibale Forest

Ruwenzori Double-collared Sunbird

Cinnyris stuhlmanni

Male and female Engagi Lodge. The Double-collared Sunbirds can be a bit of a minefield, but images reviewed later showed the blue of the rump



Northern Double-collared Sunbird

Cinnyris reichenowi

1 Engagi Lodge

Red-chested Sunbird

Cinnyris erythrocerus

1 Queen Elizabeth National Park; Common around Mwemi Lodge; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Northern Grey-headed Sparrow

Passer griseus

1 at Entebbe Ferry landing; 1 Lake Mburo; 4 restaurant stop Mburo to Bwindi; Quite common in some villages Bwindi to Ishasha; 2 Mwemi Lodge; 2 Kibale Guest Lodge



Baglafaecht Weaver

Ploceus baglafaecht

1 male from balcony Engagi Lodge

Slender-billed Weaver

Ploceus pelzelni

Common around Mwemi Lodge



Male



Female

Holub's Golden Weaver

Ploceus xanthops

Pair Mburo to Bwindi

Northern Brown-throated Weaver

Ploceus castanops

2-3 Mabamba Swamp; ~6 Victoria Hotel, Entebbe

Village Weaver

Ploceus cucullatus

Colony at Mabamba Swamp landing dock; Small numbers Lake Mburo ; Small numbers in some towns Bwindi to Ishasha and Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park, and also Ishasha; Colony at one end of Mwemi Lodge Colony Swamp walk near Kibale, They were often associating with Vieillot's Black Weavers in shared colonies



Vieillot's Black Weaver

Ploceus nigerrimus

Small numbers in Village Weaver colony Mabamba Swamp; Colony Kibale Guest Lodge; Colony Swamp walk near Kibale

Black-headed Weaver

Ploceus melanocephalus

Very common around Mwemi Lodge



Red-headed Malimbe

Malimbus rubricollis

1 Swamp walk near Kibale

Southern Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

~40 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Grey-headed Nigrita

Nigrita canicapillus

2 Swamp walk near Kibale

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

Pair Mihingo Lodge, in front of the restaurant; Common Queen Elizabeth National Park, ~30 around Mwemi Lodge



Black-crowned Waxbill

Estrilda nonnula

~8 Kibale Guest Lodge

Bronze Mannikin

Lonchura cucullata

~25 Swamp walk near Kibale



Black-and-white Mannikin

Lonchura bicolor

Group of ~12 Mburo to Bwindi; ~20 Swamp walk near Kibale

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

1 Ishasha; 3 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~25 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2 Mwemi Lodge; Pair Swamp walk near Kibale



Male



Female

Western Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

2+5 Mburo; 3 Mburo to Bwindi; ~8 Mwemi Lodge ; 6 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Mountain Wagtail

Motacilla clara

1 Bwindi to Ishasha



African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

2 on Entebbe ferry; 2 Mihingo Lodge restaurant; Pairs regular Mburo to Bwindi; 2 Bwindi; 2 Mwemi Lodge; 2 Kibale Forest

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

~6 Mburo; ~6 Ishasha; ~12 Queen Elizabeth National Park

Western Citril

Crithagra frontalis

Male from balcony Engagi Lodge

Yellow-fronted Canary

Crithagra mozambica

1 guided walk around Mbuuro

Streaky Seedeater

Crithagra striolata

1 Engagi Lodge



Golden-breasted Bunting

Emberiza flaviventris

1 guided walk around Mbuuro; 1 in woodland Mbuuro to Bwindi

TOTAL SPECIES = 224

MAMMALS SEEN

African Savanna Elephant

Loxodonta africana

Usually seen in family groups, they were only regular in the Queen Elizabeth NP area - 7+1 on the Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park journey; ~10 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 3 herds Kazinga Channel; 2 herds early evening on track just outside of Mwemi Lodge; 2 small groups Mwemi to Kibale



Thick-tailed Greater Galago

Otolemur crassicaudatus

2 Mbuuro, where the lower deck below the bar at Mihingo Lodge is usually visited each evening at around 8pm

Grey-cheeked Mangabey

Lophocebus albigena

2 groups Swamp walk near Kibale



Red-tailed Monkey

Cercopithecus ascanius

3 groups Swamp walk near Kibale; 1 Kibale Forest, where it was the only other primate than Chimpanzee seen

Vervet Monkey

Chlorocebus pygerythrus

Common Mburo Common Lake Mburo; Common Mburo to Bwindi; 3 Ishasha; 2 Queen Elizabeth National Park



Olive Baboon

Papio anubis

Very common Mburo; Small numbers Mburo to Bwindi; Regular groups Ishasha, Ishasha to Queen Elizabeth National Park, and Queen Elizabeth National Park; 4 Kazinga Channel

Mantled Guereza

Colobus guereza

1 group Picnic spot near Kibale; 2 groups Swamp walk near Kibale; 2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens



Ashy Red Colobus

Piliocolobus tephrosceles

Small group Picnic spot near Kibale, large group Swamp walk near Kibale

Eastern Gorilla

Gorilla beringei

14 Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. THE reason for the trip. The Buhoma sector of Bwindi Forest seems to be the place to go for guaranteed sightings and a range of length of walk to see them. We were fortunate to find a group on the edge of forest within half an hour, but this is unusual



Chimpanzee

Pan troglodytes

2 + family Kibale Forest. Not to be outdone, the Chimps rivalled their larger cousins with a superb display. We were made to walk a lot further over less harsh terrain to find them, but they performed when we found them



Boehm's Bush Squirrel

Paraxerus boehmi

1 Swamp walk near Kibale



Striped Ground Squirrel

Euxerus erythropus

2 Entebbe Botanical Gardens

Lion

Panthera leo

2 Ishasha, 10 + 11 Queen Elizabeth National Park. The Lions at Ishasha are a bit of a tourist attraction, but were no more impressive than the others seen. Also, I would guess that sightings are far from guaranteed



Common Dwarf Mongoose

Helogale parvula

1 guided walk around Mburo; 2 Mburo; 3 singles Mburo to Bwindi

Banded Mongoose

Mungos mungo

Family of ~8 Mburo; 15 Mwemi Lodge (where they were raiding the bins behind the restaurant); 12 Queen Elizabeth National Park



Spotted Hyena

Crocuta crocuta

2 guided walk around Mburo, seen very early, and picking morsels from the head of an Impala

Burchell's Zebra

Equus burchellii

These are only present in the Lake Mburo Park area: ~20 Mburo; Small herd guided walk around Mburo; Common Mburo; 2 herds Mburo to Bwindi



Common Wart-hog

Phacochoerus africanus

Abundant Mburo; Common guided walk around Mburo; Common Lake Mburo; Common Mburo to Bwindi; Few Ishasha; Few Queen Elizabeth National Park; 3 Mwemi Lodge, 1 on track outside of Mwemi Lodge; ~20 Mwemi to Kibale

Common Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibious

At least 50 Lake Mburo; 4 Ishasha; ~50 Kazinga Channel; 1 Mwemi to Kibale



Impala

Aepyceros melampus

~30 Mburo; Common guided walk around Mburo; Some Lake Mburo; Good numbers Mburo to Bwindi

Topi

Damaliscus korrigum

~25 Mburo; Some guided walk Mburo; Good numbers Mburo to Bwindi; ~25 Ishasha



Cape Buffalo

Bubalus bubalis

5 early afternoon Mburo; Small herd early afternoon Mburo; ~80+ Ishasha; ~15 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~60 Queen Elizabeth National Park ~80 Kazinga Channel; ~40 Mwemi to Kibale

Common Eland

Taurotragus oryx

2 females water hole below Mihingo Lodge; Herd of 7 Mburo to Bwindi



Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

2 Mburo; Quite common Mburo; Very common Lake Mburo; ~6 Mburo to Bwindi; ~20 Ishasha; ~40 Queen Elizabeth National Park; 20 Mwemi to Kibale

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

Quite common Mburo & Lake Mburo; 3 Mburo to Bwindi; 1 on track near Mwemi Lodge



Kob

Kobus kob

Common Ishasha; Common Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~70 Queen Elizabeth National Park; ~50 Mwemi to Kibale