

UGANDA

JANUARY 8 - 26, 2007

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Trip Report

Uganda

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Compiled by: David Hoddinott



Shoebill.

All photographs taken by David Hoddinott

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“But the forests of Uganda, for magnificence, for variety of form and color, for profusion of brilliant life – plant, bird, insect, reptile, beast – for the vast scale and awful fecundity of the natural processes that are beheld at work, eclipsed, and indeed effaced, all previous impressions. One becomes, not without a secret sense of aversion, the spectator of an intense convulsion of life and death. Reproduction and decay are locked struggling in infinite embraces.”

~W.S. Churchill wrote of Budongo Forest, 1908



Chimpanzee in Kibale Forest

Uganda is justly famous as the home of the bizarre Shoebill, the dream of many a birder, and for supporting over half the world's remaining mountain gorillas. Our jam-packed itinerary produced far more than the intimate experiences we enjoyed of these main targets. In all, we found over 550 species of birds and a wealth of other wildlife in this, one of Africa's most biologically diverse countries. Our other highlights ranged from magical experiences with a large family group of chimpanzees, a new record of all 12 diurnal primate species on the trip, amazing tree-climbing lions, and cruising the mighty Victoria Nile, to watching a displaying pair of Thick-billed Cuckoos.

After an early morning arrival at sleepy Entebbe (where the aircraft from the famous 1976 raid still lies derelict on a runway!), we transferred to Mabira Forest near the source of the Nile. This exciting forest produced the rare Black-bellied Seedcracker, the giant Great Blue Turaco, a magnificent adult Crowned Hawk-Eagle, Gray Parrot (wonderful to see these common cage birds flying wild over rainforest!), African Pied Hornbill, the rare Lesser (Green-tailed) Bristlebill, Yellow-mantled Weaver, and the highly elusive Green-backed Twinspot. In the late afternoon we arrived at Jinja where we found a huge roost of straw-colored fruit bats and a wonderful pair of Bat Hawks.

Next we drove northwards to Masindi, picking up some great birds en route including Banded Snake-Eagle, White-headed and Spot-flanked barbets, Purple Glossy-Starling, and a stunning male Klaas' Cuckoo.

We made our acquaintance with East Africa's vastest rainforest the following day at the world-famous Royal Mile, one of Africa's highest rated forest birding sites. Highlights included great scope views of Blue-breasted Kingfisher; African Emerald Cuckoo; Sabine's Spinetail; localized White-thighed Hornbill; Golden-crowned Woodpecker; Spotted Greenbul; Lemon-bellied Crombec; Chestnut-capped, African Forest, and

African Shrike flycatchers; the beautiful Superb Sunbird; and Crested Malimbe.

The huge Murchison Falls National Park, which straddles the mighty Victoria Nile, was our next destination. Departing from our tranquil lodge perched overlooking the Nile, we explored various sections of the park. On our boat trip to the Lake Albert Delta, hundreds of waterbirds lined the banks, and mammals—including African buffalo and African elephant—were evident. Later we encountered large herds of game during an excursion into palm savannas north of the Nile. During our game drives along the Nile we picked up the steely-eyed and most impressive Shoebill. At Kaniyo Pabidi forest we managed superb views of Puvell's Illadopsis, here at its only East Africa location. Further exploration in the park took us to the mighty falls themselves, where the Nile is forced through a ten-meter gap resulting in the strongest flow of water on the planet! Rock Pratincoles were in evidence and other birding highlights included Rueppell's Griffon, stately Martial Eagles, Grasshopper Buzzard, Red-necked Falcon, Heuglin's Francolin, the nomadic Caspian Plover, several Stanley Bustards, Temminck's Courser and Black-headed Lapwing which had been attracted by the dry conditions, stolid Abyssinian Ground-Hornbills and stunning Northern Carmine Bee-eaters, Abyssinian Roller, Black-billed Barbet, Silverbird, Brown-backed Woodpecker, Red-winged Gray Warbler, the rare White-fronted Black-Chat, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, and elusive Red-winged Pytilia.

Heading south, we re-entered the forest zone again at Budongo, finding—amongst many other species—a stunning Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, the rare Ituri Batis, splendid Jameson's Wattle-eye, and the stunning Black-capped Apalis. Kibale Forest, Africa's premier chimpanzee-watching destination, was our next stop. Our chimpanzee trek provided superb encounters with our closest living relatives. Primates are particularly abundant here and we enjoyed excellent viewing of several species of monkeys including gray-cheeked mangabey and red colobus. Birding highlights included a magnificent male White-spotted Flufftail, Crested Guinea fowl, a superb Black-shouldered Nightjar, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, an obliging Red-chested Owlet, Narina Trogon, the radiant Black Bee-eater, the bizarre Yellow-billed Barbet, Joyful Greenbul, Mountain Wagtail, the localized Masked Apalis, striking Brown-capped and Forest weavers, and rare Speckle-breasted Woodpecker.

The world-renowned Queen Elizabeth National Park was our next destination and we had sightings of both flamingo species, Banded Snake-Eagle, a stunning male Pallid Harrier, African Hobby, African Crake, Black Coucal, and literally thousands of waterbirds, including a flock of 300 African Skimmers and Heuglin's Gulls. Fantastic sightings of tree-climbing lions and large aggregations of elephant and hippopotamus during our unforgettable boat ride on the Kazinga Channel were further highlights.

However, we had an appointment in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, and our sense of excitement mounted as we approached this unique and priceless reserve. Approximately 650 mountain gorillas have survived the ravages of modern times, one for each ten million humans, and we were certainly privileged to be amongst those few who have, at

first-hand, experienced these gentle giants. Although it required an arduous trek, the awe in watching a family of mountain gorillas feeding, interacting, and resting, is undoubtedly one of the greatest wildlife experiences.

The birding at Bwindi is also nothing short of spectacular and we found a good selection of Albertine Rift endemics and other exciting forest birds. Memorable sightings included a beautiful Bar-tailed Trogon; Willcock's Honeyguide; Tullberg's and Elliot's woodpeckers; African Broadbill displaying; Red-throated Alethe; Red-faced Woodland, Black-faced Rufous, and Grauer's warblers; White-browed Crombec; the shy Neumann's Warbler; Equatorial Akalat; White-bellied Robin-Chat; Ruwenzori Batis; and Ansorge's Greenbul, only discovered in Uganda in 2001. In the evenings we relaxed at one of the most luxurious tented camps on the continent. Time at higher elevation sites in the reserve resulted in a different set of special birds and we were fortunate in observing stunning Regal Sunbird, Ruwenzori and Chestnut-throated apalis, Stripe-breasted Tit, and the multicolored Doherty's Bush Shrike.



Ishasha tree-climbing Lion

In Lake Mburo National Park we found the uncommon Little Bittern and a good number of raptors including Lappet-faced and White-headed vultures and Bateleur, Coqui Francolin, Green Sandpiper, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, a very confiding Pearl-spotted Owlet, Tabora Cisticola, Red-headed Weaver, the rare Red-faced Barbet, and a magnificent African Finfoot. As if this weren't enough, we topped it all with a wonderful pair of displaying Thick-billed Cuckoos, a difficult bird throughout its range. Mammals abound in the park and we were treated to herds of zebra and impala.

Our final birding stop, at Entebbe, produced the striking Orange and Golden-backed weavers. An unforgettable and very successful African adventure had come to an end and we boarded our return flights home.



Crowned Hawk-Eagle

Annotated List of Bird Species recorded

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

Grebes

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

We found two at a roadside wetland en route from Kampala to Masindi.

Pelicans

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

This large pelican was seen in small numbers (30) along the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens

A common bird in Uganda, regularly nesting at the roadside with high numbers recorded in Jinja and on the Kazinga Channel boat cruise.

Cormorants & Shags

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Our first sighting was of one at Jinja and later a large roost of an estimated fifty birds was found on our Kazinga Channel boat cruise.

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

Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

We recorded these widespread African cormorants in small numbers on the Nile River at Jinja and again from the Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Anhinga & Darter

Darter

Anhinga melanogaster

A couple near Jinja and later up to twenty along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns

Gray Heron

Ardea cinerea

A well-known, widespread heron, recorded in small numbers along the Nile and in Queen Elizabeth NP with highest numbers of eight seen during the Nile boat cruise.

Black-headed Heron

Ardea melanocephala

Uganda's commonest heron, we recorded it almost daily in small numbers with highest numbers of twenty seen during the drive from Buhoma to Kabale.

Goliath Heron

Ardea goliath

A spectacular bird recorded in several wetlands. We recorded five on the Nile at Murchison, some of them providing fantastic close up views and allowing great video opportunities of the largest heron in the world.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Another widespread bird, three seen along the Nile.

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

Great (White) Egret

Ardea alba

Fairly common in Uganda, recorded along the Kazinga Channel and at wetland sites in Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls NP's.

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

Intermediate Egret

Egretta intermedia

Generally the least common of the three white, aquatic egrets, with our only sighting of one on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Common in wetlands throughout, with our first sightings at Jinja.

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

(Common) Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

Good numbers along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and again in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

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

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

Striated Heron

Butorides striatus

Recorded twice along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP and five seen in Lake Mburo NP.

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

Little Bittern

Ixobrychus minutus

We had superb views of one stunning male in Lake Mburo NP.

Hamerkop

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

This bizarre bird, forming a monotypic family endemic to the Afrotropics, is pleasantly common throughout Uganda, with our first sightings at Entebbe on our first day and peak numbers of eighteen on the Kazinga Channel.

Storks

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

Observed at several wetlands in Murchison Falls NP and Queen Elizabeth NP. It was on the Kazinga Channel where we had fantastic views of an adult in full breeding plumage, which allowed great video footage.

African Openbill (~ed Stork)

Anastomus lamelligerus

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

Abdim's Stork

Ciconia abdimii

Our first sighting was of one en route from Mabira Forest to Kampala. A small flock of thirty was also seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Woolly-necked Stork

Ciconia episcopus

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

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

This magnificent bird was first seen at Murchison Falls NP with further sightings on the Kazinga

Channel.

Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumeniferus

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

Shoebill

Shoebill

Balaeniceps rex

The essence of Uganda, we found two individuals including wonderful views of one at the edge of tall papyrus on our Nile game drive.

Ibises & Spoonbills

Sacred Ibis

Threskiornis aethiopicus

Small numbers seen in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth, and again twelve in meadows near Kabale.

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

Hadada Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

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

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

A total of two of these cosmopolitan birds were seen in the Lake Albert delta.

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba

This distinctive bird was found on the Kazinga Channel where we saw 3 birds.

Flamingos

Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopterus roseus

We had superb scope views of one at Lake Katwe near Queen Elizabeth NP.

Lesser Flamingo

Phoenicopterus minor

We saw a flock of a thousand at Lake Katwe near Queen Elizabeth NP.

Swans, Geese & Ducks

White-faced Whistling-Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

This widespread and familiar duck was seen at a roadside wetland en route from Kampala to Masindi.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiacus

Another common waterfowl, seen at wetlands in Murchison Falls NP and later in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*

An estimated six seen on the Nile boat cruise to Murchison Falls.

Red-billed Duck *Anas erythrorhyncha*

We found one at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota*

We had great views of a flock of twenty at Katwe Crater Lake and a further six at a roadside wetland en route from Lake Mburo to Kampala.

Comb (Knob-billed) Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Up to twenty found on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Osprey Pandionidae

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Three seen along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*

We enjoyed wonderful views of a pair in the early morning at Jinja.

Black-shouldered (-winged) Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Another well-known raptor seen in small numbers in open habitats in Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls NP.

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

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

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

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

African Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*

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

Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*

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

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*

The common vulture around human habitation, with small numbers recorded near Kampala at the beginning and the end of the trip with additional birds in Queen Elizabeth NP.

(African) White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*

The common vulture in savanna areas, we recorded seven in Queen Elizabeth NP and two in Lake Mburo NP.

Rueppell's Griffon *Gyps rueppellii*

Two were seen on the north bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus*

Two seen flying over our camp in Lake Mburo NP.

White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis*

A superb female was seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Beaudouin's Snake-Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*

This rare raptor was seen exceptionally well near Masindi where we observed two birds flying nearby.

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

Brown Snake-Eagle *Circaetus cinereus*

The commonest snake-eagle in Uganda, we recorded three, one near Masindi, another in Murchison Falls NP and finally one in Lake Mburo NP.

(Western) Banded Snake-Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens*

One of these uncommon raptors was seen near Masindi and another in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

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

Western (Eurasian) Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

This Palearctic migrant was seen in small numbers throughout Uganda with highest counts of eight individuals in a single day in Murchison Falls NP.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*

This elegant Palearctic bird was seen in the vicinity of Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth, where we had great views of a stunning male.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Generally less common than Pallid Harrier in Uganda, we nevertheless recorded a magnificent male in Murchison Falls NP.

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus*

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

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*

An attractive raptor that was first seen near Kampala with further sightings at scattered sites around Uganda.

Dark Chanting-Goshawk

Melierax metabates

We obtained excellent views of two of these long-legged raptors in Murchison Falls NP.

Gabar Goshawk

Micronisus gabar

This uncommon raptor was seen very well in Jinja and again in Lake Mburo NP where we found one melanistic bird.

African Goshawk

Accipiter tachiro

This widespread, forest *Accipiter* was heard making its distinctive “clicking” near Bigodi Swamp.

NOTE: The West African forms are sometimes separated as Red-chested Goshawk A. tousseni. Clements accepts this controversial split.

Shikra (Little Banded Goshawk)

Accipiter badius

This small *Accipiter* was seen at scattered sites throughout Uganda.

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

Black Goshawk

Accipiter melanoleucus

A scarce species in Uganda. A juvenile was seen perched at Buhoma.

Grasshopper Buzzard

Butastur rufipennis

A total of five of these impressive raptors were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Eurasian (Common) Buzzard

Buteo buteo

This Palearctic raptor was seen in small numbers in Murchison Falls and Bwindi Impenetrable NP's.

Augur Buzzard

Buteo augur

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

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

Wahlberg's Eagle

Aquila wahlbergi

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

Martial Eagle

Polemaetus bellicosus

We enjoyed great sightings of four, two in Murchison Falls NP, one in Queen Elizabeth NP and finally one in Lake Mburo NP.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

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

(African) Crowned Hawk-Eagle

Stephanoaetus coronatus

This impressive raptor, the most powerful in Africa and Africa's version of the Harpy Eagle (it preys largely on monkeys), was seen extremely well at Mabira Forest where we found an adult. A further adult was later seen at Busingiro Forest.

Falcons & Caracaras

Eurasian (Common/Rock) Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

This widespread, familiar raptor was seen in small numbers in Murchison Falls NP.

Gray Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus*

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

Red-necked Falcon *Falco chicquera*

Two of these striking raptors were seen in Murchison Falls NP, including great sightings of one during the Nile boat cruise.

African Hobby *Falco cuvierii*

This sought after falcon was observed in the Ishasha section of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Pheasants & Partridges

Coqui Francolin *Francolinus coqui*

This localized species was heard during breakfast from the Mantana Tented Camp in Lake Mburo NP and later three were seen from the vehicles.

Ring-necked Francolin *Francolinus streptophorus*

A very difficult bird to see, we heard one calling near Murro.

Crested Francolin *Francolinus sephaena*

Six individuals of this bantam-like bird were observed in the vicinity of Masindi with further sightings in Murchison Falls NP.

Nahan's Francolin *Francolinus nahani*

We heard several calling on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

Heuglin's Francolin *Francolinus icterorhynchus*

We saw a record number of five in Murchison Falls NP, this can be a particularly hard bird to find.

Red-necked Spurfowl *Francolinus afer*

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

Guineafowl

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*

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

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

Crested Guineafowl

Guttera pucherani

We obtained good views of eight of these fowls on a “Bad Hair Day” at Kaniyo Pabidi with further sightings of fifteen at Kibale Forest.

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

Cranes

Gray (Southern) Crowned-Crane

Balearica regulorum

Uganda’s handsome national bird is delightfully common throughout the country, with our initial encounter of ten in Murchison Falls NP and later sixty near Kabale.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots

White-spotted Flufftail

Sarothrura pulchra

This secretive, forest rail’s hooting call was heard in several forests and we enjoyed phenomenal views of one male near Kibale Forest.

Buff-spotted Flufftail

Sarothrura elegans

We heard one calling at Buhoma.

African Crake

Crecopsis egregia

We obtained brief views of this species at Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

Africa’s common wetland crake, we saw several on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP, with small numbers at wetlands elsewhere on the trip.

Purple Swamphen

Porphyrio porphyrio

We found one at a roadside wetland en route from Lake Mburo NP to Kampala.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

We found one at a roadside wetland en route from Lake Mburo NP to Kampala, an unusually scarce bird in Uganda.

Finfoot

African Finfoot

Podica senegalensis

An uncommon and highly sought-after species, we were fortunate to have good views of one in Lake Mburo NP.

Bustards

Stanley Bustard

Neotis denhami

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

Black-bellied Bustard

Lissotis melanogaster

An uncommon bird to see in Uganda, we managed great views of one in Queen Elizabeth NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

Jacanas

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

This widespread and characteristic wader was conspicuous in wetlands throughout the tour. First found near Masindi with many further sightings in Murchison Falls NP along the Nile River where we estimated twenty individuals in a single day.

Stilts & Avocets

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

This characteristic wader was found in small numbers at Lake Katwe where we estimated ten birds and a further flock of twenty on Lake Victoria.

Thick-knees

Water Thick-knee

Burhinus vermiculatus

Common at the edges of wetlands in Queen Elizabeth NP, with up to thirty-eight seen and a further ten at Lake Mburo NP.

Senegal Thick-knee

Burhinus senegalensis

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

Coursers & Pratincoles

Temminck's Courser

Cursorius temminckii

We had superb views of one during our game drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole

Glareola pratincola

This elegant wader was seen first in Murchison Falls NP, where we observed a flock of one hundred on the Nile. Later a single bird was seen on the Kazinga Channel.

Rock (White-collared) Pratincole

Glareola nuchalis

A common denizen of rapids in the Victoria Nile, two were seen around Murchison Falls. We enjoyed superb scope views and watched them foraging in the mists of the falls.

Plovers & Lapwings

Long-toed Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus crassirostris

Up to twenty of these elegant waders were found at Murchison Falls NP and four more were later observed in Lake Mburo NP.

Spur-winged Plover (Lapwing) *Vanellus spinosus*

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

Black-headed Lapwing *Vanellus tectus*

A total of twelve were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Senegal (Lesser Black-winged) Lapwing *Vanellus lugubris*

A lapwing of burnt or heavily grazed grassland, we recorded single birds in Kibale, Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP's.

Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus*

A flock of thirty was seen en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Wattled Lapwing (Plover) *Vanellus senegallus*

This grassland-dwelling lapwing was found in small numbers throughout the trip, with our first sighting coming from Masindi with further sightings at Murchison Falls, Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP's. Peak numbers of twelve were seen during the drive from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Three of these Palaearctic migrants were seen at Lake Katwe near Queen Elizabeth NP.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

This scarce Palaearctic migrant to Uganda was seen near the Nile River in Murchison Falls NP where we enjoyed a good sighting of ten.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*

Small numbers were recorded on the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

We found one in Murchison Falls NP.

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus*

We had fantastic views of thirty in Murchison Falls NP.

Sandpipers & Allies

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

This Palaearctic migrant was first seen at a roadside wetland near Masindi with a further sighting in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Two of these attractive migrant waders were seen along the Kazinga Channel and a further one on Lake Victoria.

Spotted Redshank

Tringa erythropus

We were fortunate to have great views of one on the Kazinga Channel. A rare bird in Uganda.

Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

Eight were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP, along the Kazinga Channel and a further two on Lake Victoria.

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

First observed in Murchison Falls NP, with peak numbers of six in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

Two seen in Queen Elizabeth NP and a further three in Lake Mburo NP.

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

First observed in Murchison Falls NP, again in Queen Elizabeth NP, and again at Lake Mburo NP.

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

Large numbers observed in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NP's.

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

Up to fifty seen at Lake Katwe.

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

Four seen at Lake Katwe.

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

Fifteen seen at Lake Katwe.

Gulls

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

About one hundred seen at Katwe Lake and a further fifty on the Kazinga Channel.

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

Heuglin's Gull

Larus heuglini

A total of three of these pale-backed gulls were seen on the Kazinga Channel.

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

Gray-headed Gull

Larus cirrocephalus

About one hundred seen on the Kazinga Channel.

Black-headed Gull

Larus ridibundus

We had good views of one on the Kazinga Channel.

Terns

Gull-billed Tern

Sterna nilotica

Large numbers of five hundred were estimated along the Kazinga Channel, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybridus

A flock of six was seen on the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Skimmers

African Skimmer

Rynchops flavirostris

One of Africa's most elegant birds. Our first sighting was of a flock of fifty on the Nile and later we were fortunate to observe a flock of about three hundred on the Kazinga Channel.

Doves & Pigeons

Rock Pigeon

Columba livia

Common in Kampala and major towns.

Speckled Pigeon

Columba guinea

We found two in Kabale.

Rameron (African Olive) Pigeon

Columba arquatrix

This widespread African forest pigeon only occurs in the higher parts of Bwindi NP, where we saw a flock of twenty-five.

(Western) Bronze-naped Pigeon

Columba iriditorques

A compact, elusive canopy-dweller, far more often heard than seen. We heard several calling at Buhoma.

African Mourning Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

Another fairly common savanna dove, with its distinctive call being a regular background sound in Murchison Falls NP. Many were seen along the Nile.

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

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

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove

Streptopelia capicola

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

Vinaceous Dove

Streptopelia vinacea

This richly marked dove replaces the much more widespread Ring-necked Dove as the common savanna dove in the drier areas along the Nile, and is most easily separated from that species by its call. We enjoyed good views of up to twenty in Murchison Falls NP.

Laughing (Palm) Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

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

Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove *Turtur chalcospilos*

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

Black-billed Wood-Dove *Turtur abyssinicus*

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

Blue-spotted Wood-Dove *Turtur afer*

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

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria*

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

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*

We obtained great views of three of this attractive long-tailed dove on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Bruce's Green-Pigeon *Treron waalia*

Two were seen near Masindi and a further three in Murchison Falls NP.

African Green-Pigeon *Treron calva*

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

Parrots, Macaws & Allies

Red-headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullarius*

A lovely little parrot, which we observed at Masindi and Murro.

(African) Gray Parrot *Psittacus erithacus*

Small numbers were seen in flight at Mabira Forest and a further eight at Buhoma. It is so much better to see them in the wild than as the usual cage bird.

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri*

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

Turacos

Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata*

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

Black-billed Turaco

Tauraco schuettii

The common turaco of Uganda forests, we had several encounters with this beautiful bird. This species was first seen at Mabira Forest and later at several sites in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

White-crested Turaco

Tauraco leucolophus

We obtained superb views of two near Murro. Often considered the most beautiful of all turacos.

Ross' Turaco

Musophaga rossae

Another stellar turaco, which we observed several times during the tour with our best views being two pairs near Murro.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides personatus

A bizarre bird with enormous character, we found two in Queen Elizabeth NP and later had great views of up to four daily in Lake Mburo NP.

Eastern (Gray) Plantain-eater

Crinifer zonurus

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

Cuckoos

Pied Cuckoo

Clamator jacobinus

We had good views of several in Murchison Falls NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

Thick-billed Cuckoo

Pachycoccyx audeberti

We were extremely fortunate to find a pair of these rare birds in Lake Mburo NP. We watched the pair displaying above the canopy, certainly one of the highlights of the trip.

Red-chested Cuckoo

Cuculus solitarius

This familiar bird was frequently heard throughout the trip, but only seen on several occasions, the first being on the "Royal Mile" in Budongo Forest.

Black Cuckoo

Cuculus clamosus

The "I'm so saAAD!" call of this bird was heard at several localities and we enjoyed great views of one near Bigodi Swamp.

African Cuckoo

Cuculus gularis

A total of four were seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx mechowi

The most commonly heard and widespread of the three long-tailed cuckoos in Uganda, we managed to finally see it near our camp in Kibale NP.

Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx olivinus

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

Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo

Cercococcyx montanus

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

Klaas' Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx klaas

A brood parasite favoring the cup nests of woodland birds, many heard throughout the tour and a male seen near Masindi.

African Emerald Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx cupreus

Generally more shy and less common than its congeners, we heard this species throughout the tour and finally managed good scope views in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Dideric Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx caprius

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

Yellowbill

Ceuthmochares aereus

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

Black Coucal

Centropus grillii

We enjoyed splendid views of this handsome coucal in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Blue-headed Coucal

Centropus monachus

This large swamp-dwelling coucal was seen at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

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

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

Typical Owls

African Wood-Owl

Strix woodfordii

We enjoyed great views of one near Kabale NP.

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

We had great looks at one in Lake Mburo NP.

Red-chested Owlet

Glaucidium tephronotum

We had superb scope views of one in Kibale NP.

Nightjars & Allies

Black-shouldered Nightjar

Caprimulgus nigriscapularis

We enjoyed good views of one near Kibale Forest.

Swamp Nightjar

Caprimulgus natalensis

We found two during our night drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Freckled Nightjar

Caprimulgus tristigma

We heard one calling at Masindi.

Long-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus climacurus

We enjoyed fantastic views of a male during our night drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Swifts

Sabine's Spinetail

Rhaphidura sabini

This scarce forest spinetail was observed at Mabira and Budongo Forests.

African Palm-Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

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

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

African Swift

Apus apus

An estimated ten individuals were seen during the drive from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

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

White-rumped Swift

Apus caffer

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

Mousebirds

Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

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

Blue-naped Mousebird

Urocolius macrourus

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

Trogon

Narina Trogon

Apaloderma narina

The guttural hooting of this magnificent bird was heard at several forest sites, a female was seen in Kibale NP and a superb male seen was seen at Ruhizha.

Bar-tailed Trogon

Apaloderma vittatum

We enjoyed great sightings of two males of this beautiful bird at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Kingfishers

Malachite Kingfisher

Alcedo cristata

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

African Pygmy-Kingfisher

Ispidina (Ceyx) picta

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

Chocolate-backed Kingfisher

Halcyon badia

A species, which can prove particularly elusive, however we were afforded superb, scope views of one at Busingiro Forest.

Gray-headed (Chestnut-bellied) Kingfisher

Halcyon leucocephala

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

Woodland Kingfisher

Halcyon senegalensis

One of the characteristic sounds of moist African savanna, this beautiful bird was first seen en route to Masindi and thereafter regularly encountered throughout Uganda.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher

Halcyon malimbica

This forest equivalent of the Woodland Kingfisher was seen exceptionally at Mabira Forest and again along the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest.

Striped Kingfisher

Halcyon chelicuti

Rather more drab than its spectacular cousins, this small, terrestrial kingfisher was first observed en-route on the second day near Luwero Swamp, and thereafter seen in small numbers at other savanna areas with peak numbers of six in Lake Mburo NP.

Giant Kingfisher

Megaceryle maxima

We had three sightings of this giant of the kingfisher world, all along the Nile River during our boat cruises in Murchison Falls NP.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

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

Bee-eaters

Black Bee-eater

Merops gularis

A truly magnificent forest bee-eater with a most unlikely colour combination. We had fantastic scope views of one near Kibale Forest and later observed birds on both days at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Red-throated Bee-eater

Merops bulocki

The northern equivalent of the more familiar White-fronted Bee-eater and every bit as beautiful, good numbers were found along the Nile and around our lodgings at Murchison. Two were also seen on the Kazinga Channel.

Little Bee-eater

Merops pusillus

The most widespread and familiar of a suite of look-alike bee-eaters in Uganda, we found them first in Murchison Falls NP and later in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NP's.

Blue-breasted (White-checked) Bee-eater

Merops variegatus

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

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

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater

Merops oreobates

The largest of the three small look-alike bee-eaters and favouring forest fringes at higher altitudes, they were fairly commonly seen in Buhoma and Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater

Merops hirundineus

An elegant bee-eater of dry savanna, we found our first one near Masindi and later several birds daily in Murchison Falls NP.

White-throated Bee-eater

Merops albicollis

Small flocks of these migratory birds were seen regularly throughout Uganda. They breed in the Sahelian savanna but winter in the Equatorial forests.

Blue-checked Bee-eater

Merops persicus

Another migrant, though typically found in larger flocks in the vicinity of water. We first recorded this species in Murchison Falls NP, with further daily sightings in Queen Elizabeth NP.

European Bee-eater

Merops apiaster

This Palearctic migrant bee-eater was seen at scattered localities throughout Uganda. Our best sighting was of forty near Masindi.

Northern Carmine Bee-eater

Merops nubicus

This stunningly coloured bee-eater was only found in Murchison Falls NP where we had incredible views of six.

Rollers

European Roller

Coracias garrulus

We found one during our game drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Abyssinian Roller

Coracias abyssinica

This beautiful and elegant long-tailed roller was observed in Murchison Falls NP where we enjoyed superb views of one.

Lilac-breasted Roller

Coracias caudata

Seven of these magnificent birds were seen during our drive from Lake Mburo to Kampala, on the last day of the tour.

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

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*

The common roller of moist, open country throughout Uganda, with highest numbers of ten birds seen between Lake Mburo and Kampala.

Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis*

Replaces Broad-billed Roller in closed forest environments and was observed at Mabira Forest and in Kibale NP.

Hoopoes

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Two of these unique birds were seen near Masindi and a further two were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognized by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar U. marginalis and Eurasian U. epops. The white-winged African form which we encountered in Uganda is often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe U. senegalensis with the fourth species being African Hoopoe U. africana. However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African. Further confusion arises in the placement of the senegalensis form within this grouping with most authorities placing it with the dark-winged africana group, however, Stevenson & Fanshawe place it with the white-winged Eurasian nominate grouping.

Woodhoopoes

Green Woodhoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*

One was seen in the savanna in Murchison Falls NP with further sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

White-headed Woodhoopoe *Phoeniculus bollei*

This uncommon forest bird was observed at Kibale Forest where we found a flock of six. The group called and comically swung their tails back and forth in pendulum style.

Black Scimitar-bill *Rhinopomastus aterrimus*

A pair was seen in the dry savanna of Murchison Falls NP.

Common (Greater) Scimitar-bill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

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

Hornbills

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*

Common and widespread in moister habitats across the country, we saw our first birds at Mabira Forest on our first day with further sightings throughout the tour.

African Pied Hornbill *Tockus fasciatus*

Much more localised than its similar crowned cousin and with white tail edges (rather than tail tips), we found this species in small numbers at Mabira Forest.

African Gray Hornbill

Tockus nasutus

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

Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill

Ceratogymna subcylindricus

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

White-thighed Hornbill

Ceratogymna albotibialis

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

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

Abyssinian (Northern) Ground-Hornbill

Bucorvus abyssinicus

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

Barbets

Gray-throated Barbet

Gymnobucco bonapartei

The barbet with the nose tufts and the toy-trumpet call. Seen well at Kibale Forest, with good numbers in Buhoma thereafter.

Speckled Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus scolopaceus

A scruffy, ubiquitous bird in lower altitude forest in Uganda, where its purring call is one of the common background sounds. We obtained great views of several at Budongo Forest on the Royal Mile.

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus subsulphureus

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

Yellow (Golden) -rumped Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus bilineatus

A ubiquitous bird in Uganda, occurring in savanna and forest throughout. Small numbers were seen and heard on several occasions.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus chrysoconus

A savanna species seen on several occasions including sightings at Masindi and Murchison Falls NP.

Yellow-spotted Barbet

Buccanodon duchaillui

An elegant forest barbet with a beautiful purring call. We had good views at Kibale Forest and again several times in Buhoma.

Hairy-breasted Barbet

Tricholaema hirsuta

This unkempt-looking bird was first seen through the scope at Mabira Forest and again at Buhoma.

Spot-flanked Barbet

Tricholaema lacrymosa

We had excellent views of this savanna barbet near Masindi and again in Lake Mburo NP.

White-headed Barbet

Lybius leucocephalus

This localized and often elusive barbet was first observed *en route* to Masindi on our second day and again in Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-faced Barbet

Lybius rubrifacies

We enjoyed great views of this stunning, rare bird in Lake Mburo NP. At least seven individuals were seen.

Black-billed Barbet

Lybius guifsohalito

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

Double-toothed Barbet

Lybius bidentatus

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

Yellow-billed Barbet

Trachyphonus purpuratus

An elusive forest barbet, heard in all the western forests and often never seen but we were amazingly lucky with several obliging individuals in Kibale Forest.

Honeyguides

Scaly-throated Honeyguide

Indicator variegates

We were very fortunate to find one in a bush at a roadside wetland en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP. A rare species in Uganda.

Greater Honeyguide

Indicator indicator

This, the only guiding honeyguide, was heard calling in Murchison Falls NP.

Lesser Honeyguide

Indicator minor

One was seen in Murchison Falls NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

Willcocks's Honeyguide

Indicator willcocksii

We obtained good views of one of these elusive and rarely seen honeyguides at Busingiro, Budongo Forest and another at Buhoma.

Woodpeckers & Allies

Rufous-necked Wryneck

Jynx ruficollis

We had wonderful views of one near Buhoma.

Nubian Woodpecker

Campethera nubica

This attractive savanna species was observed in Murchison Falls and Lake Mburo NPs.

Tullberg's Woodpecker

Campethera tullbergi

We had great views of one during our forest walk at Buhoma.

Buff-spotted Woodpecker

Campethera nivos

This diminutive forest woodpecker was first seen on the “Royal Mile” in Budongo Forest with a further sighting at Buhoma.

Brown-eared Woodpecker

Campethera caroli

We enjoyed superb scope views of a pair on the “Royal Mile” in Budongo Forest with a further sighting at Bigodi Swamp.

Speckle-breasted Woodpecker

Dendropicos poecilolaemus

We had great views of a male at Bigodi Swamp.

Cardinal Woodpecker

Dendropicos fuscescens

This widespread African woodpecker was observed on several occasions including great views in Lake Mburo NP.

Bearded Woodpecker

Dendropicos namaquus

A pair was seen exceptionally well in Lake Mburo NP.

Golden-crowned (Yellow-crested) Woodpecker

Dendropicos xantholophus

This large forest woodpecker (with the almost invisible yellow crest!) was seen on the “Royal Mile” and at Busingiro Forest.

Elliot's Woodpecker

Dendropicos elliotii

This fine woodpecker was seen twice at Buhoma accompanying a mixed flock.

Gray Woodpecker

Dendropicos goertae

Our first observation was in Jinja and later we found several near Masindi.

Brown-backed Woodpecker

Dendropicos obsoletus

We had wonderful views of one in Murchison Falls NP.

Broadbills

African Broadbill

Smithornis capensis

We managed to obtain great views of one at Buhoma, performing its strange and noisy circular display flight.

Larks

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafra africana

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

Flappet Lark

Mirafra rufocinnamomea

Uganda's most widespread lark, with our first sighting in Murchison Falls NP and others in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-capped Lark

Calandrella cinerea

We had good views of two in Queen Elizabeth NP.

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

Swallows

Bank Swallow (Sand Martin)

Riparia riparia

We recorded good numbers of this common and familiar hirundine in open country throughout the trip. Our most spectacular sightings came from Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NP, where thousands were seen on several days.

Rock Martin

Hirundo fuligula

This dark hirundine was seen during our walk in search of Gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

NOTE: This confusing polytypic complex is being reviewed for multi-species splitting. Within the African populations, three potential species exist. The southern African nominate form H. f. fuligula would remain as Rock Martin and the more northern populations would become Red-throated Rock Martin H. pusilla which is resident in Uganda. Palaearctic birds would become Pale Crag Martin H. obsoleta. Clements does not as yet recognise any of these splits.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

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

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

Angola Swallow

Hirundo angolensis

Another common hirundine in Uganda, we found several on our first day around the airport. Small numbers were also seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Wire-tailed Swallow

Hirundo smithii

Conspicuous along the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Lesser Striped-Swallow

Hirundo abyssinica

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

Rufous-chested (Red-breasted) Swallow

Hirundo semirufa

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

Mosque Swallow

Hirundo senegalensis

Another large attractive swallow, a pair was seen near Budongo Forest.

Red-rumped Swallow

Hirundo daurica

An uncommon species in Uganda, which we observed in Queen Elizabeth NP and also foraging over the forests at Ruhizha.

NOTE: This species complex may be a candidate for multi-species splitting, the Ugandan form remaining within the

nominate group but H. d. melanocrissus of Ethiopia becoming Black-vented Swallow and H. d. domicella becoming West African Swallow.

White-headed Sawwing

Psalidoprocne albiceps

This elegant bird was first seen foraging over the road our first day at Mabira Forest, with further regular sightings at scattered locations throughout Uganda.

Black Sawwing

Psalidoprocne holomelas

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

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

Wagtails & Pipits

African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

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

Cape Wagtail

Motacilla capensis

This species was seen only near our lodging at Buhoma in the Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Vast numbers of these Palearctic migrants were found in open country throughout Uganda, with peak totals of up to one hundred birds daily in Murchison Falls NP. We also observed the *feldeggi* black-headed race, considered by some authorities to be a separate species. An unusual sighting was of one walking on the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest, usually a species of open country where they prefer short grassland.

Mountain (Long-tailed) Wagtail

Motacilla clara

One of these elegant birds was seen on the stream in Kibale Forest.

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

This meadowlark-like bird is a fairly common denizen of open habitat in Uganda, with small numbers recorded daily in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Plain-backed Pipit

Anthus leucophrys

We obtained excellent views of two in a scrubby field outside Budongo Forest.

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

African (Grassland/Grassveld) Pipit

Anthus cinnamomeus

We found two during our game drives in Queen Elizabeth NP.

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

Long-billed Pipit

Anthus similis

We had great views of three on a rocky hillside during the drive from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Two of these Palearctic migrants were observed in Murchison Falls NP.

Cuckoo-shrikes

Gray Cuckoo-shrike

Coracina caesia

Two were seen in the higher parts of Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Petit's Cuckoo-shrike

Campephaga petiti

An uncommon forest cuckoo-shrike that we recorded in small numbers in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Black Cuckoo-shrike

Campephaga flava

Small numbers were seen daily in Lake Mburo NP.

Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike

Campephaga phoenicea

One stunning male was seen at Murro.

Bulbuls

Common Bulbul

Pycnonotus barbatus

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

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

Little Greenbul

Andropadus virens

Along with Yellow-whiskered, the commonest greenbul in lower altitude forest in Uganda, though much more commonly heard than seen. First seen in Mabira Forest, with small numbers seen in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Gray Greenbul

Andropadus gracilis

We found one in Mabira Forest on our first day.

Ansorge's Greenbul

Andropadus ansorgei

Only recently discovered in Uganda, this species was seen very well at Buhoma.

Plain (Cameroon Sombre) Greenbul

Andropadus curvirostris

This inconspicuous greenbul was seen in small numbers in Mabira and Budongo Forests.

Slender-billed Greenbul

Andropadus gracilirostris

A common greenbul of forest canopy, we saw a few at Budongo Forest and several in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul

Andropadus latirostris

A common greenbul of forest undergrowth and mid-storey, we had good sightings of two in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Eastern Mountain-Greenbul

Andropadus nigriceps

A conspicuous and attractive bird of highland forests that we found twice at Buhoma.

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

Honeyguide Greenbul

Baeopogon indicator

The querulous calls of this canopy-dwelling greenbul are common sounds in lower altitude forest throughout Uganda. We heard them calling at Budongo and Buhoma.

Spotted Greenbul

Ixonotus guttatus

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

Yellow-throated Greenbul (Leaflove)

Chlorocichla flavicollis

A species that was heard on several occasions and finally found in Murchison Falls NP.

Joyful Greenbul

Chlorocichla laetissima

A strangely local greenbul in Uganda, we found one in Kibale Forest NP.

Yellow-streaked Greenbul

Phyllastrephus flavostriatus

We had good views of two of this wing-flicking species, one at Buhoma and another at Ruhizha.

White-throated Greenbul

Phyllastrephus albigularis

We had our first sighting at Kaniyo Pabidi and later enjoyed great views of several at Busingiro.

Common (Red-tailed) Bristlebill

Bleda syndactyla

The quiet, purring calls of this attractive greenbul are commonly heard at all forest sites on the trip, however, this shy, ant-following species was only seen at Bigodi Swamp.

Lesser Bristlebill

Bleda notata

We had brief views of this reclusive species at Mabira Forest.

Yellow-spotted (Western) Nicator

Nicator chloris

An aberrant hook-billed greenbul that was observed exceptionally well in Budongo Forest and at Bigodi Swamp where we found a particularly confiding individual.

Red-tailed Greenbul

Criniger calurus

One of the most handsome of all greenbuls and a relatively common forest bird throughout Uganda, we found our first one at Budongo Forest and saw good numbers with bird parties in Bwindi NP.

Thrushes & Allies

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

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

Red-tailed Ant-Thrush

Neocossyphus rufus

We found one at Kaniyo Pabidi and another in Kibale NP.

White-tailed Ant-Thrush

Neocossyphus poensis

We enjoyed wonderful views of a confiding individual near Kibale Forest.

Olive Thrush

Turdus olivaceus

In Uganda, restricted to higher altitudes, we had great views of one in Kabale.

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

African Thrush

Turdus pelios

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

Red-throated Alethe*

Alethe poliophrys

We first heard this species calling and later enjoyed fantastic views of two at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Fire-crested Alethe

Alethe diademata

This ant-following species was heard calling in Mabira Forest.

NOTE: The Ugandan form is sometimes split from the nominate White-tailed Alethe of West Africa, becoming A. castanea.

Cisticolas & Allies

Red-faced Cisticola

Cisticola erythrops

This common, widespread and vocal species was heard on many occasions and seen first near Masindi with further good sightings in Murchison Falls NP.

Singing Cisticola

Cisticola cantans

We enjoyed good views of two near Buhoma, a scarce species in Uganda.

Whistling Cisticola

Cisticola lateralis

We had good views of one near Budongo Forest.

Trilling Cisticola

Cisticola woosnami

The strange, quavering call of this woodland cisticola was first heard and then seen in Queen Elizabeth NP with further sightings in Lake Mburo NP where we saw several individuals.

Chubb's Cisticola

Cisticola chubbi

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

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chinianus

A common and conspicuous denizen of drier *Acacia* savanna in the northern part of the country, we found six in Murchison Falls NP.

Winding Cisticola

Cisticola galactotes

The commonest wetland cisticola in Uganda, its winding song was heard issuing from reedbeds, papyrus swamps and damp grassland throughout the trip. Seen in wetlands near Lake Mburo NP.

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

Carruthers' Cisticola

Cisticola carruthersi

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

Stout Cisticola

Cisticola robustus

We found one in the Ishasha section of Queen Elizabeth NP.

Croaking (Striped) Cisticola

Cisticola natalensis

A common denizen of moist grassland, we encountered this species in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Tabora (Long-tailed) Cisticola

Cisticola angusticaudus

This colorful cisticola has only recently been discovered in Uganda and we found three individuals in Lake Mburo NP, where we obtained excellent views.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped with the more southerly Neddicky or Piping Cisticola C. fulvicapillus.

Siffling Cisticola

Cisticola brachypterus

Three of these tiny birds were seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Foxy Cisticola

Cisticola troglodytes

A species associated with very dry acacia woodland, we found one on the Butiaba escarpment.

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

Small numbers were seen in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs.

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

Another noisy and familiar African warbler, seen throughout the tour, with our first sightings near Mabira Forest our first day.

White-chinned Prinia

Prinia (Schistolais) leucopogon

This confiding, gregarious species was first observed near Murchison Falls NP with several more sightings in Bwindi.

Banded Prinia

Prinia bairdii

This snappy-looking but at times skulking prinia was seen only in Bwindi Impenetrable NP where we had great sightings of three birds.

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

Red-winged Prinia (Warbler)

Heliolais erythroptera

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

Red-winged Gray Warbler

Drymocichla incana

A localized species, which we observed in thick woodland near the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Ruwenzori (Collared) Apalis*

Apalis ruwenzorii

A beautiful Albertine Rift endemic that we found only in the montane forest around Ruhizha where we commonly heard and finally observed three birds.

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

Black-capped Apalis

Apalis nigriceps

A scarce bird in Uganda, we were fortunate to observe one in a bird party at Busingiro.

Black-throated Apalis

Apalis jacksoni

One of the commonest forest and forest edge apalises in Uganda, we saw this beautiful bird at Buhoma.

Masked Apalis

Apalis binotata

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

Black-faced (Mountain Masked) Apalis*

Apalis personata

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

Buff-throated Apalis

Apalis rufogularis

A relatively common resident of the canopy of lower altitude forest in Uganda, with sightings at Mabira and Budongo Forests.

Chestnut-throated Apalis

Apalis porphyrolaema

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

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

Gray Apalis

Apalis cinerea

This species was seen at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Gray-capped Warbler

Eminia lepida

This attractive, yet skulking bird was heard on many occasions, but we obtained excellent views of one at Luwero Swamp.

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

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

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

Yellow-browed Camaroptera

Camaroptera superciliaris

We had great views of a pair in Mabira Forest.

Olive-green Camaroptera

Camaroptera chloronota

Another skulking camaroptera, it's piercing calls were heard at all lower altitude forest sites, with confiding individuals seen at Mabira Forest and along the Royal Mile.

Old World Warblers

White-winged Scrub-Warbler

Bradypterus carpalis

This highly localized and beautiful swamp-dwelling warbler was heard at several papyrus swamps.

Cinnamon Bracken-Warbler

Bradypterus cinnamomeus

We heard one calling at Ruhizha.

Black-faced Rufous Warbler

Bathmocercus rufus

The "reversing truck" call of this beautiful warbler was commonly heard at lower altitudes in Bwindi Impenetrable NP and we were treated to superb views of three near Buhoma.

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

This attractive warbler, a denizen of rank grass, was encountered several times during the tour with great views of a singing bird in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Eurasian Reed-Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

We found two in Murchison Falls NP.

Great Reed-Warbler

Acrocephalus arundinaceus

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

Greater Swamp-Warbler

Acrocephalus rufescens

One was seen in rank vegetation en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo and another was seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Eastern Olivaceous Warbler

Hippolais pallida

Two were seen well during our game drives in Murchison Falls NP.

Mountain Yellow Warbler

Chloropeta similis

This beautiful songster was heard calling in the montane forest around Ruhizha.

Buff-bellied Warbler

Phyllolais pulchella

This *Acacia*-inhabiting species was observed in Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NP.

Grauer's Warbler*

Graueria vittata

This unusual, barred warbler (with a Scaly-throated Honeyguide-like call), was seen at Buhoma.

Rufous-crowned Eremomela

Eremomela badiceps

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

Green Crombec

Sylvietta virens

The commonest and most widespread forest crombec, though small and inconspicuous (except by call). We heard the species almost daily at many forest sites, though it was seen on only a few occasions. Our first two were seen at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Lemon-bellied Crombec

Sylvietta leucophrys

We were fortunate to observe a single bird on the Royal Mile, Budongo Forest, a very scarce bird in Uganda.

White-browed Crombec

Sylvietta leucophrys

We found a pair during our forest walk at Buhoma.

Red-faced Crombec

Sylvietta whytii

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

Neumann's Warbler

Hemitesia neumanni

We had great views of one in the forest at Buhoma.

Yellow Longbill

Macrosphenus flavicans

This skulking species was heard calling at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Gray Longbill

Macrosphenus concolor

This is another secretive species, which we saw at Budongo Forest.

Green Hylia

Hylia prasina

Its "HEE-lia!" call was one of the common background sounds at all the lower altitude forest sites on the tour. We first observed it at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Red-faced Woodland-Warbler*

Phylloscopus laetus

Another Albertine Rift endemic, which we had good views of at Buhoma.

Willow Warbler

Phylloscopus trochilus

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

Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

This attractive Palaearctic migrant was observed at Ruhizha where we had two individuals visiting fruiting trees.

Old World Flycatchers

Silverbird

Empidonis semipartitus

This beautiful flycatcher with chestnut underparts, was seen exceptionally well within Murchison Falls NP, where it was common on the North bank of the Nile.

Pale Flycatcher

Bradornis pallidus

Seen in small numbers in Murchison Falls NP.

White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher

Melaenornis fischeri

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

Northern (Western) Black-Flycatcher *Melaenornis edolioides*
First recorded on the drive to Masindi with further sightings throughout the tour.

Southern Black-Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina*
A pair of this scarce bird in Uganda seen well near our camp in Lake Mburo NP.

African (Fraser's) Forest-Flycatcher *Fraseria ocreata*
This large, fairly noisy flycatcher, which was seen very well on the “Royal Mile”, Budongo Forest.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*
We found one in Murchison Falls NP and another at our hotel in Masindi.

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

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

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*
A common forest-edge species regularly encountered at Buhoma.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata*
A quiet, inconspicuous bird that we found in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Cassin's (Gray) Flycatcher *Muscicapa cassini*
A sprightly bird restricted to the vicinity of water, often hawking insects directly above it, we found individuals along the river in Kibale Forest NP and a pair on the “Neck” in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens*
This widespread woodland denizen was seen in Budongo Forest.

Gray-throated Tit-Flycatcher *Myioparus griseigularis*
This active species, which replaces the next in the forest interior, was seen on several occasions including sightings along the Royal Mile and Busingiro, Budongo Forest.

Gray Tit- (Lead-colored) Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus*
We obtained excellent views of one in Murchison Falls NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

White-starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata*
We found this beautiful Afro-montane forest robin only at Ruhizha in Bwindi Impenetrable NP where we managed to obtain excellent views of one individual.

Forest Robin

Stiphornis erythrothorax

We heard one calling in Mabira Forest.

Equatorial Akalat

Sheppardia aequatorialis

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

Common Nightingale

Luscinia megarhynchos

We heard one calling from a thicket in Murchison Falls NP.

White-bellied Robin-Chat

Cossypha (Cossyphicula) roberti

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

Cape Robin-Chat

Cossypha caffra

We had good views of one at Ruhizha.

Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat

Cossypha cyanocampter

We heard this species calling and some of us managed to get brief views of one on the "Neck", Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

White-browed (Heuglin's) Robin-Chat

Cossypha heuglini

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

Snowy-crowned (~headed) Robin-Chat

Cossypha niveicapilla

This beautiful songster was seen near Bigodi Swamp.

Spotted Morning-Thrush

Cichladusa guttata

Another beautiful songster, recorded in the vicinity of Murchison Falls NP.

Brown-backed Scrub-Robin

Cercotrichas hartlaubi

This species was seen singing from an exposed perch near Murro.

Red-backed (White-browed) Scrub-Robin

Cercotrichas leucophrys

This widespread African scrub-robin was seen exceptionally well in Lake Mburo NP.

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

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

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

African (Common) Stonechat

Saxicola torquata

This widespread and familiar bird is common only in the higher parts of Uganda, with our first records near Kibale NP.

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

Northern Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Another familiar European species, we recorded them near Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth NP.

Isabelline Wheatear

Oenanthe isabellina

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

Familiar Chat

Cercomela familiaris

We had good views of one on a rocky hillside en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Sooty Chat

Myrmecocichla nigra

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

White-fronted Black-Chat

Myrmecocichla albifrons

We were treated to superb views of two in Murchison Falls NP, a species that occurs at low density.

Wattle-eyes

African Shrike-flycatcher

Megabias (Bias) flammulatus

These large, tail-wagging forest flycatchers were seen on several occasions, with our first sighting of one along the “Royal Mile”, Budongo Forest.

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

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

Brown-throated (Common) Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*

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

Chestnut Wattle-eye

Platysteira castanea

These attractive little birds, were first seen on the “Royal Mile” and later at Busingiro, Budongo Forest.

Jameson’s Wattle-eye

Platysteira jamesoni

We had splendid views of one at Busingiro, Budongo Forest.

Ruwenzori Batis*

Batis diops

This attractive species was seen on the forest trail at Buhoma.

Chinspot Batis

Batis molitor

This widespread African batis was seen at Ruhizha and in Lake Mburo NP.

Black-headed Batis

Batis minor

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

Ituri Batis

Batis ituriensis

A very rare species mostly restricted to inaccessible areas of the Congo, we were very fortunate to observe a single bird through the scope at Busingiro.

Monarch Flycatchers

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher

Erythrocercus mccallii

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

African Blue-Flycatcher

Elminia longicauda

Another lively bird, which constantly fans and wags its tail, we recorded it at Mabira Forest and near Kibale Forest.

White-tailed Blue-Flycatcher

Elminia albicauda

The montane equivalent of the above species in Uganda, we recorded it at Buhoma and Ruhizha where we found a pair nesting.

White-bellied Crested-Flycatcher

Elminia albiventris

We had good views of two at Buhoma.

Black-headed (Red-bellied) Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone rufiventer

First seen well at Kaniyo Pabidi and later in Kibale Forest.

African Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

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

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

Babblers

Scaly-breasted Illadopsis

Illadopsis albipectus

This forest understorey skulker was heard at Budongo and Kibale Forests.

Puvel's Illadopsis

Illadopsis puveli

In East Africa, still known only from Kaniyo Pabidi in Budongo, where we were rewarded with great views of one.

Brown Illadopsis

Illadopsis fulvescens

We had brief views of one on the "Royal Mile" and several more were seen at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Mountain Illadopsis

Illadopsis pyrrhoptera

Commonly heard at all altitudes in Bwindi Impenetrable NP, two were seen alongside a forest road at Buhoma.

African Hill Babbler

Illadopsis abyssinica

We had brief views of one at Ruhizha.

Black-lored Babbler

Turdoides sharpei

We enjoyed great views of five in Queen Elizabeth NP and several more in Lake Mburo NP.

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

Brown Babbler

Turdoides plebejus

We had a good sighting of five near Masindi.

Arrow-marked Babbler

Turdoides jardineii

This widespread African woodland babbler was observed near Buhoma.

Chickadees & Tits

White-winged Black Tit

Melaniparus leucomelas

We had superb views of several daily in Lake Mburo NP.

White-shouldered Black Tit

Melaniparus guineensis

We had cracking views of a pair near Masindi.

Dusky Tit

Melaniparus funereus

We had superb views of a pair on the "Royal Mile" feeding chicks and later numerous sightings at Buhoma.

Stripe-breasted Tit*

Melaniparus fasciiventer

This handsome Albertine Rift endemic was seen well at Ruhizha.

Sunbirds & Spiderhunters

Western Violet-backed Sunbird

Anthreptes longuemarei

We had superb views of a pair in Murchison Falls NP.

Little Green Sunbird

Anthreptes seimundi

This inconspicuous, drab sunbird was seen at Mabira and Budongo Forests.

Green Sunbird

Anthreptes rectirostris

A small yet relatively conspicuous sunbird, we found several at most forest sites. We were afforded some great scope views of this canopy species at Mabira Forest.

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

Collared Sunbird

Hedydipna (Anthreptes) collaris

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

Green-headed Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) verticalis

This attractive species was seen well at Buhoma.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) cyanolaema

This large forest sunbird was first seen at Sebitole with further sightings in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Blue-headed Sunbird

Cyanomitra alinae

One stunning male was seen at Ruhizha.

Western Olive-Sunbird

Cyanomitra (Nectarinia) obscura

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

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

Green-throated Sunbird

Chalcomitra (Nectarinia) rubescens

This uncommonly recorded sunbird, was seen on several occasions at Buhoma.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Chalcomitra (Nectarinia) senegalensis

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

Bronze Sunbird

Nectarinia kilimensis

This attractive long-tailed sunbird was first seen in the vicinity of Kibale NP, with more sightings coming from the dry scrub land between Buhoma and Ruhizha.

Olive-bellied Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) chloropygia

A common forest-edge species, which we first observed at Mabira Forest and thereafter encountered in small numbers at scattered sites.

Tiny Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) minulla

This diminutive species was observed once at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Northern Double-collared Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) preussi

The common sunbird of forest edge at Buhoma and Ruhizha, where several were seen daily.

Regal Sunbird*

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) regia

One of the highlights of Ruhizha, with one stunning male seen.

Beautiful Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) pulchella

This exquisite sunbird is common only in the drier northern savanna around Murchison Falls NP, where a total of three were recorded.

Mariqua Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) mariquensis

This dry country species was first seen at Luwero Swamp.

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

Red-chested Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) erythrocerca

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

Purple-banded Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) bifasciata

Our first sighting was of one in the garden at Jinja and several more of these sunbirds were seen at Lake Mburo NP.

NOTE: The form N. e. tsavoensis of Kenya is sometimes split off as Tsavo Purple-banded Sunbird.

Superb Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) superba

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

Variable Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) venusta

The beautiful orange-bellied form of this sunbird, was seen on several occasions in the vicinity of Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

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

Copper Sunbird

Cinnyris (Nectarinia) cuprea

We enjoyed several sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

White-eyes

African Yellow White-eye

Zosterops senegalensis

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

Old World Orioles

Western Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus brachyrhynchus

This forest interior species was first observed at Mabira Forest with further sightings at Budongo.

African (Eastern) Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

Replaces the above species in savanna habitat, but by no means a common bird in Uganda, with a single bird seen near Masindi and a second bird in Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black-tailed (Montane) Oriole

Oriolus percivali

This common denizen of montane forests was recorded twice in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Shrikes

Red-backed Shrike

Lanius collurio

We found two in Murchison Falls NP.

Rufous-tailed (Isabelline) Shrike

Lanius isabellinus

Several of these Palearctic migrants were recorded in open savanna north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Gray-backed Fiscal

Lanius excubitoroides

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

Mackinnon's Shrike (Fiscal)

Lanius mackinnoni

The forest-edge fiscal in Uganda, one seen near Buhoma.

Common Fiscal

Lanius collaris

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

Woodchat Shrike

Lanius senator

One of these dapper Palearctic migrants was seen north of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Bushshrikes & Allies

Brubru

Nilaus afer

Another widespread African savanna bird that is relatively uncommon in Uganda, and we saw only one individual in Lake Mburo NP.

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

Northern Puffback

Dryoscopus gambensis

Uganda's common puffback, we recorded one near Masindi and two near Kabale.

Pink-footed Puffback

Dryoscopus angolensis

This uncommon forest shrike was seen daily at Buhoma in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Marsh Tchagra

Tchagra minuta

We had fantastic views of a pair, of this diminutive tchagra in Queen Elizabeth NP.

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

Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegala

The most widely distributed tchagra, we saw (and especially heard) small numbers daily in all open areas.

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

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

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

Lühder's Bushshrike

Laniarius luehderi

This very attractive species, was observed exceptionally well in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Tropical Boubou

Laniarius aethiopicus

A widespread shrike commonly heard and significantly less often seen, we had good views of two in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Black-headed Gonolek

Laniarius erythrogaster

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

Papyrus Gonolek

Laniarius mufumbiri

The swamp equivalent of the Black-headed Gonolek (and one of Uganda's papyrus specialties), we had good views of this colorful bird at Bigodi Swamp.

Sooty Boubou

Laniarius leucorhynchus

We heard one calling at Mabira Forest.

Mountain Sooty Boubou

Laniarius poensis

We were fortunate to have great views of one in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

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

Gray-green (Bocage's) Bushshrike

Telophorus bocagei

This elegant shrike (which is neither gray nor green nor any combination thereof) was seen very well at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike

Telophorus sulfureopectus

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

Many-colored Bushshrike

Telophorus multicolor

We found one at the "Neck" in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Doherty's Bushshrike

Telophorus dohertyi

A stunning creature, we found one at Ruhizha.

Gray-headed Bushshrike

Malaconotus blanchoti

We heard one calling in Murchison Falls NP.

Drongos

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

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

Velvet-mantled Drongo

Dicrurus modestus

This recently split forest equivalent of the Fork-tailed Drongo, was only seen once in Mabira Forest where the group had outstanding scope views.

NOTE: Older versions of Clements lump this species within Fork-tailed Drongo D. adsimilis but the split has been recognized in recent Clements updates.

Crows, Jays & Magpies

Piapiac

Ptilostomus afer

This bizarre corvid was first observed near our hotel in Jinja and thereafter seen commonly in Murchison Falls NP.

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

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

White-necked Raven

Corvus albicollis

Restricted to mountainous areas in southern Uganda, we obtained superb sightings of three near Kabale.

Starlings

Wattled Starling

Creatophora cinerea

We found single birds in Queen Elizabeth and Lake Mburo NPs, a very nomadic species.

Greater Blue-eared Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis chalybaeus

Small numbers were seen in Lake Mburo NP.

Lesser Blue-eared Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis chloropterus

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

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

Bronze-tailed Starling

Lamprotornis chalcurus

We had superb sightings of several at Masindi.

Splendid Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis splendidus

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

Purple Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis purpureus

We had excellent views of this unusually proportioned starling, in dry country, near Masindi.

Rueppell's (Long-tailed) Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis purpuropterus

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

Purple-headed Glossy-Starling

Lamprotornis (Hylopsar) purpureiceps

This beautiful forest starling was first observed at Mabira Forest with further sightings in Bwindi NP.

Violet-backed (Plum-coloured/Amethyst) Starling

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

This exquisite bird was seen very well in Lake Mburo NP where we found four birds.

Narrow-tailed Starling

Poeoptera lugubris

We saw a flock of this diminutive long-tailed starling at Kibale NP and smaller numbers were seen at Buhoma, Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Stuhlmann's Starling

Poeoptera stuhlmanni

Small numbers were observed at Buhoma.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

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

Old World Sparrows

Shelley's Rufous Sparrow

Passer motitensis

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

(Northern) Gray-headed Sparrow

Passer griseus

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

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

Weavers & Allies

Speckle-fronted Weaver

Sporopipes frontalis

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

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser mahali

We found one bird and several nests on the North bank of the Nile in Murchison Falls NP.

Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser superciliosus

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

Baglafaecht Weaver

Ploceus baglafaecht

A common weaver of moister, open habitats, we found small numbers daily in Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

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

Slender-billed Weaver

Ploceus pelzelni

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

Little Weaver

Ploceus luteolus

We observed this dry country species once in Murchison Falls NP.

Lesser Masked Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

An uncommon species in Uganda, we first observed this species in Queen Elizabeth NP with

further sightings in Lake Mburo NP.

Spectacled Weaver

Ploceus ocularis

A common weaver of moist woodland and forest edge. We had a good sighting of a pair near Masindi.

Black-necked Weaver

Ploceus nigricollis

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

Black-billed Weaver

Ploceus melanogaster

Another dapper bird of forest fringes, which we recorded in good numbers during our stay at Buhoma.

Strange Weaver*

Ploceus alienus

This elusive Albertine Rift endemic was observed once at Ruhizha.

Holub's (Large) Golden-Weaver

Ploceus xanthops

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

Orange Weaver

Ploceus aurantius

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

Village Weaver

Ploceus cucullatus

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

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

Viillot's (Black) Weaver

Ploceus nigerrimus

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

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

Black-headed (Yellow-backed) Weaver

Ploceus melanocephalus

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

(Jackson's) Golden-backed Weaver

Ploceus jacksoni

This particularly beautiful weaver was observed in small numbers at Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

Yellow-mantled Weaver

Ploceus tricolor

We found one stunning male at Mabira Forest.

Forest Weaver

Ploceus bicolor

We had great views of one at Sebitole, Kibale NP.

Brown-capped Weaver

Ploceus insignis

This handsome forest weaver was observed at Kibale and Bwindi Impenetrable NP.

Compact Weaver

Pachyphantes superciliosus

An uncommon, rank grassland species, which we observed in small numbers near Murro.

Crested Malimbe

Malimbus malimbicus

We enjoyed good views of two in Budongo Forest.

Red-headed Malimbe

Malimbus rubricollis

The only common malimbe in Uganda, with our first sightings of a pair at Budongo Forest and thereafter regularly encountered at most other forest sites.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes rubriceps

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

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

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

Black Bishop

Euplectes gierowii

We found one in scrubby vegetation near Buhoma.

Black-winged Bishop

Euplectes hordeaceus

We found five in Murchison Falls NP.

Orange Bishop

Euplectes franciscanus

Several birds were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

(Southern) Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

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

Yellow Bishop (Yellow-rumped/Cape Widow)

Euplectes capensis

Observed on several occasions in cultivations in the south-western highlands of Uganda.

Fan-tailed (Red-shouldered) Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

The most widespread Ugandan widowbird, we observed several en route to Lake Mburo NP.

Yellow-shouldered Widowbird

Euplectes macrourus

This species was recorded in small numbers at Masindi.

White-winged Widowbird

Euplectes albonotatus

We had good views of several in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Red-collared Widowbird

Euplectes ardens

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

Grosbeak (Thick-billed) Weaver

Amblyospiza albifrons

A fairly common bird in Uganda, which we first recorded near Budongo Forest with further sightings at Sebitole.

Waxbills & Allies

White-breasted Negrofinch

Nigrita fusconota

The descending song of this negrofinch was heard at all lower altitude forests, with our first sighting coming from Mabira Forest and further sightings at Sebitole.

Gray-headed Negrofinch

Nigrita canicapilla

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

Gray-headed Oliveback

Nesocharis capistrata

This uncommon and elusive but exceptionally beautiful seedeater was seen very well near Murchison Falls NP.

Red-winged Pytilia

Pytilia phoenicoptera

We enjoyed superb views of three of these striking seedeaters in Murchison Falls NP.

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

We found a superb pair in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Green-backed Twinspot

Mandingoa nitidula

We had phenomenal prolonged views of a pair of these generally very shy birds.

Black-bellied Seedcracker

Pyrenestes ostrinus

We had great views of a pair with two chicks at Mabira Forest.

Red-headed Bluebill

Spermophaga ruficapilla

We had good views of a pair at Bigodi Swamp.

Bar-breasted Firefinch

Lagonosticta rufopicta

We enjoyed good views of four in Murchison Falls NP.

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

By far Uganda's most regularly recorded firefinch, and often common around rural homesteads, we found it frequently in open habitats with peak numbers of one hundred in Queen Elizabeth NP.

African Firefinch

Lagonosticta rubricata

We had good views of a pair at Murro and another pair at Buhoma.

Red-cheeked Cordonbleu

Uraeginthus bengalus

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

Fawn-breasted Waxbill

Estrilda paludicola

A small flock was seen in Murchison Falls NP.

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

Black-rumped Waxbill

Estrilda troglodytes

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

Common Waxbill

Estrilda astrild

Africa's most widespread waxbill was only seen at Murro where we had good views of eight.

Black-crowned Waxbill

Estrilda nonnula

An attractive species, which we found in small numbers at Bigodi Swamp.

Black-cheeked Waxbill

Estrilda erythronotos

We had brief views of one in Bugungu Game Reserve, Murchison Falls NP.

Zebra Waxbill

Sporaeginthus subflavus

We had wonderful views of a small flock of four in Murchison Falls NP.

Red-billed Quailfinch

Ortygospiza gabonensis

We had stunning views of one male in Murchison Falls NP.

Bronze Mannikin

Lonchura cucullata

Ubiquitous in moist habitats throughout Uganda. Peak numbers of twenty were seen at Bigodi Swamp.

Black-and-white Mannikin

Lonchura bicolor

Although more localized than the preceding species, we had good views of six at Bigodi Swamp.

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

Magpie Mannikin

Lonchura fringilloides

This rare species was first observed near Mabira Forest with further sightings near Murchison Falls NP and at Buhoma.

Indigobirds

Village Indigobird

Vidua chalybeata

This, the brood parasite of Red-billed Firefinch, was observed on several occasions with good sightings of a pair in Kasese.

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

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

Siskins, Crossbills & Allies

Yellow-crowned Canary

Serinus flavivertex

This is delightful bird with a wonderful song. A flock of eight was seen at Ruhizha.

Papyrus Canary

Serinus koliensis

We enjoyed fantastic views of three at a large papyrus swamp en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Black-throated Canary *Serinus atrogularis*

Our first sighting was of two on the roadside near Buhoma. A pair was later seen at a small rocky outcrop alongside the road en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus*

This widespread African species was first observed outside Budongo Forest and seen regularly thereafter.

Brimstone (Bully) Canary *Serinus sulphuratus*

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

Streaky Seedeater *Serinus striolatus*

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

Thick-billed Seedeater *Serinus burtoni*

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

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

Buntings

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*

Our first sighting was brief views of one on the Butiaba escarpment. We enjoyed good views of two birds at a rocky outcrop en route from Kabale to Lake Mburo NP.

Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris*

We found one near Masindi and another in Lake Mburo NP.

Cabanis' Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi*

We enjoyed great views of one in Murchison Falls NP.

Annotated List of Mammal Species recorded

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

Apes

Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes*

The piercing screams of our closest living relative, were heard along the Royal Mile in Budongo Forest followed by brief views of one crossing the trail at Kaniyo Pabidi. We also enjoyed good trekking at Kibale where we had superb views of twenty feeding in a fruiting tree.

(Mountain) Gorilla

Gorilla gorilla

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

Colobid Monkeys

Central African Red Colobus

Procolobus oustaleti

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

Guereza Colobus

Colobus guereza

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

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys

Olive (Anubis) Baboon

Papio anubis

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

Gray-cheeked Mangabey

Lophocebus albigena

This dark, forest-dwelling primate, the males of which sport an unusual cape of hair on their mantles, was found in Mabira Forest and Kibale NP, where we had fantastic views of a family of thirty individuals and four individuals, respectively.

Patas Monkey

Cercopithecus patas

We had good but brief views of one on the road in Murchison Falls NP.

Tantalus Monkey

Cercopithecus tantalus

During the boat cruise on the Victoria Nile up to the base of Murchison Falls we encountered one on the North bank in Murchison Falls NP.

Vervet Monkey

Cercopithecus pygerythrus

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

L'Hoest's Monkey

Cercopithecus lhoesti

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

Blue (Gentle) Monkey

Cercopithecus mitis

This long-tailed monkey was far more frequently heard than seen, although we did obtain superb

sightings at Budongo, Kibale, and further encounters at Ruhizha.

Red-tailed Monkey

Cercopithecus ascanius

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

Lorisids

Senegal Galago

Galago senegalensis

We were very fortunate to see this nocturnal species, during the day, in the car park at Kaniyo Pabidi.

Flying-Foxes

Straw-coloured Fruit Bat

Eidolon helvum

We found a large roost of several thousand of these bats at Kabale while driving in the evening to our hotel.

Large-Winged Bats

Yellow-winged Bat

Lavia frons

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

Hares & Rabbits

Scrub Hare

Lepus saxatilis

Seen during a night drive in dry habitat in Queen Elizabeth NP with a further sighting of one in Lake Mburo NP.

Uganda Grass-Hare

Poelagus marjorita

Three seen during our drive in Murchison Falls NP.

Squirrels

Striped Ground Squirrel

Xerus erythropus

This tiny terrestrial squirrel was seen several times in Murchison Falls NP.

Carruthers' Mountain Squirrel

Funisciurus carruthersi

A fairly nondescript forest squirrel that we saw at Ruhizha.

Alexander's Squirrel

We found two of these tiny squirrels in Budongo Forest.

Red-legged Sun Squirrel

Heliosciurus rufobrachium

This large squirrel was seen on several occasions at Mabira Forest.

Mustelids

Spot-necked Otter

Lutra maculicollis

We found one at a crater lake en route from Kabale to Queen Elizabeth NP.

Mongoose

Dwarf Mongoose

Helogale parvula

We observed two during a drive in Lake Mburo NP.

Banded Mongoose

Mungos mungo

These entertaining creatures were observed on the grounds of Mweya Lodge, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Hyaenas

Spotted Hyaena

Crocuta crocuta

We heard one calling in Murchison Falls NP and another in Lake Mburo NP.

Cats

Lion

Panthera leo

We had distant views of three in Murchison Falls NP and later fantastic views of three “tree-climbing” lions in Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth NP.

Elephants

African Elephant

Loxodonta africana

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

Horses

Common (Burchell’s) Zebra

Equus burchelli

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

Hippopotamuses

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibius

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

Pigs

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

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

Giraffes

Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

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

Bovids & Horned Ungulates

African Buffalo

Syncerus caffer

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

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

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

Yellow-backed Duiker

Cephalophus silvicultor

We found one of these huge duikers at Buhoma, a very lucky find !

Oribi

Ourebia ourebi

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

Uganda Kob

Kobus kob thomasi

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

Defassa Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

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

Impala

Aepyceros melampus

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

Topi (Tsessebe)

Damaliscus lunatus

Fairly common in Lake Mburo NP and near the Ishasha River, where we observed small numbers of this unusually proportioned antelope.

Kongoni (Jackson's Hartebeest)

Alcelaphus buselaphus

Replaces the Topi in the drier savanna of Murchison Falls NP, where we found small numbers

daily, north of the Nile.

Annotated List of Reptile Species recorded

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

We enjoyed good sightings of several in Murchison Falls NP and again on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Nile Monitor

Varanus niloticus

We had good views on the Nile and several on the Kazinga Channel.

Red-headed Rock Agama

Agama agama

Small numbers were seen in Murchison Falls NP.

Blue-headed Tree Agama

Acanthocercus atricollis

One was seen in Queen Elizabeth NP.

Moreau's Tropical House Gecko

Hemidactylus mabouia

We found several in our guesthouse at Jinja.