

Wingspan Bird Tours

Trip Report: The Gambia 23rd Nov - 7th Dec 2010

Leaders: Bob Buckler & Modou Colley

Participants:

Patrick Crowley

Alison Bunning

Trevor & Jean Percival

Reg Cox

Tom Green

Gill Suida

Roy Jackson

David Roberts

Chris & Sandra Woodruff



Day 1. Tuesday 23rd Nov. UK – Gambia – transfer to Senegambia

Following a good flight from London we arrived on time at Banjul, the warm tropical air felt welcoming and inviting as the group descended the steps from the plane. After a long wait for luggage we cleared arrivals, met our guide Modou Colley and boarded our bus for the short journey to our hotel in Kololi. Excitement buzzed through the bus as we started seeing a number of species during the journey. Speckled Pigeon was the first and Hooded Vulture the second, they were quickly followed by Yellow-billed Black Kite, Laughing Dove, Pied Crow, Blue-bellied Roller (8), White-billed Buffalo Weaver (a colony), Grey Kestrel, Black-winged Kite and a Yellow-billed Shrike.

After smoothly checking-in we settled into our rooms, unpacked and met on the hotel terrace some 30 minutes later, then the fun began. Many new species were quickly found in the spacious, wooded, gardens of the hotel. Common Bubul, Broad-billed Roller (6), Ring-necked Parakeet, Senegal Parrot and a pair of beautiful White-crowned Robin Chats sent our heads reeling in the first 5 minutes!

A Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird added some excitement, 3 species of Glossy Starlings & 3 species of Hornbill added some colour and a Northern Black Flycatcher added intrigue by only giving us a brief showing. A special day-one bonus was the finding of an Oriole Warbler, fairly good views of this elusive bird was had by many of the group. The vibrant colour of a male Beautiful Sunbird was followed on to the list by a pair of Grey Woodpeckers then a party of six Bronze Mannikins dropped into the same dead-tree.

We ventured onto the beach and logged Black-headed & Grey Headed Gulls flying passed whilst on the beach a lone Whimbrel was the only wading bird. As the sun set we looked across the sea to a yellow horizon and in fading light we could see thousands of Caper White butterflies migrating up the coast, it was quite some spectacle.

Lastly we ventured to the far corner of the garden where we watched Little and Palm Swifts high in the sky, a sole Hammerkop landed on one of the apartment blocks giving us all our last bird of the day. We dispersed and met later at 7:30pm in the bar ready for dinner at 8 which was taken outside in the warm evening air. It was a lovely and memorable start to our Gambian experience.

Day 2. Wednesday 24th Nov. Koto Stream, Sewage Works, Bijilo Forest.

Breakfast was taken at 7am on the terrace in the cool morning temperature, we left the hotel at 8am. It was a bright and breezy morning as we disembarked from the tour bus at the Bridge over the Kotu Creek. Then chaos struck, we had birds coming out of our ears, they were everywhere. It was low tide and the creek had a large expanse of exposed mudflats which can be over=looked from the bridge. Several waders were joined by the emblematic Senegal Thicknee on the mud, whilst Pied Kingfishers lined the telephone wires and they were joined by a Giant Kingfisher.

Small parties of Red-billed Firefinches darted around, as did Red-cheeked Cordonbleu but it was the Beautiful Sunbird, the Woodland Kingfisher and the butterflies that stole the show. An abundance of dragonflies were preyed upon by Red-billed Hornbills whilst Green Wood Hoopoes and Long-tailed Glossy Starlings searched the trees for insects.

Along the Casino cycle track we had close encounters with both Monitor & Agama Lizards, whilst overhead the sky was littered with drifting Hooded Vultures and marauding yellow-billed Black Kites. Palm Swifts glided by and small flock of Red-chested Swallows were joined by Little Swifts.

At the Kotu Ponds (AKA the Sewer works) we had a great opportunity to compare three confusing look-alike species, as Wood, Green & Common Sandpipers sat very close to one another on a concrete wall. The edges of the disused sewer pits were over grown with grass, reeds and much of the water surface was covered by loofer which made a perfect platform for Jacana, Black-winged Stilts, Cattle Egrets and the Sandpipers to feed from, there was an abundance of insect life everywhere.

As the heat increased and the breeze dropped, we headed back to the hotel for a long lunch, most went for a swim and others just relaxed in the lush grounds.

So it was 3pm when we took the short walk to Bijilo Forest from the hotel, more butterflies were noted along the way as was a Palm Nut Vulture. During the 3hr visit we had a wonderful time as we walked the mature woodland along well trodden pathways. Palm trees dwarfed the scrub and baobab trees held

groups of Green Vervet Monkeys. Bee-eaters were represented by the superb White-throated and the Little varieties, but we also enjoyed Blue-bellied Roller, Common Gonolek, Red-billed Firefinch, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Snowy-crowned Robin-chat, Grey Kestrel, Red-necked Falcon, Lanner Falcon, Oriole Warbler, Common Wattle-eye, Blackcap Babbler, Black Flycatcher and lots more. However, the bird of the day went to the Ahanta Francolin which appeared for the lucky few at the front of the group, a very good sighting of a seldom seen bird.

Day 3 – Thursday 25th Nov. Brufut Woods, Tanjeh, Faraba Banta

We enjoyed our breakfast out on the terrace listening to the dawn chorus of dove calls, hornbills and bubuls. By 9am we were out in the sticks at the entrance to the Brufut Woods nature reserve, listening to even more doves! Over the next few minutes we watched 3 species of hornbill, a couple of Peal Spotted Owlets and a Klaas's Cuckoo. The wide track was bordered by elegant Baobab trees that stretched hundreds of feet into the air, each held several birds including the owlets. We enjoyed the lovely colours of both the African Paradise Flycatcher and the Red-bellied Flycatcher, a Grey-backed Cameroptera was found down low in the scrub, Black-capped Babblers, Sunbirds and Bubuls added to the enjoyment.

We were then led into the thickets of the woodland to look for roosting nightjars and very soon we were watching a Long-tailed Nightjar, it had a near perfect camouflage and was very hard to pick out amongst the leaf-litter.

A small compound had been built in a tiny clearing where benches and cold drinks were both welcomed. A couple of drinking trays had been sited so that we could watch birds whilst enjoying the shade. Many doves came to drink including both Black-billed and Blue Spotted Wood Doves. We also saw Greater Honeyguide, Lavender Waxbills, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and above us an African Harrier Hawk drifted by. The bus arrived to collect us and as we were about to board it a Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird sat on top of a nearby bush and sang its heart out much to the delight of the photographers.

We drove along the wide track down to the coast at Tenjeh stopping at a ford to watch Yellow-billed Oxpeckers and a very obliging Striated Heron. We had pre-ordered lunch so it wasn't long before we were enjoying our food at the lodge overlooking the river mouth, the tide was receding, Caspian Terns made regular sorties right passed us, several Whimbrel, Common Sandpipers, Pied Kingfisher and Western Reef Herons fed nearby.

After lunch we walked the few yards to the beach and scanned the roosting gulls and terns picking out Kelp, Slender-billed, Lesser Black-backed, Grey Headed & Black Headed Gulls, also Lesser Crested, Royal & Sandwich Terns, a flock of Ruddy Turnstones, a few Bar-tailed Godwits and many more Whimbrel. An Osprey or two were fishing off-shore, the whole scene looked idyllic with golden soft sand, bright blue calm sea and a gentle cooling breeze. A pair of Crested Larks played hide-and-seek with us as we left the beach.

After another rest at the lodge we set for our last birding venue of the day, Tujereng. This consisted of a walk through open woodland savannah and weedy fields, although the sun was still hot a cooling breeze helped to ease the temperature. During our walk we saw many new species the highlights of which included: Brubru, Rufous-crowned Roller, Cardinal Woodpecker, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Dark

Chanting Goshawk, lots of Willow Warblers, a Red-winged Warbler, Tawny Flanked Prinia and a brief view of a Pied Flycatcher.

Day 4 – Kololi to Tenda Ba Camp

An early breakfast was taken by most of the group before we set off for Tendaba along the southern side of the river. We worked our way through the busy Banjul suburbs before finally reaching open woodland. We made a couple of early stops to walk some trails and tracks to search for woodland species. It wasn't long before we were listing new birds for the trip, our guide Modou 'called in' a Pearl Spotted Owlet and an entourage of several other species, a Red-shouldered Cuckoo Shrike was a nice surprise as was a Yellow White-eye, Splendid & Beautiful Sunbirds added more colour. Before we had walked much further we had listed Cardinal Woodpecker, Northern Puffback, African Golden Oriole and many more common species. African Green Pigeon showed well as we left the wood and it was another hour before we stopped again.

From the bus we watched Dark Chanting Goshawk, Black-winged Kite, African Harrier Hawk and Mottled Spinetail before stopping at Kafuta for another woodland walk. We were lucky to have a nice breeze throughout the day so the heat didn't have a tiring effect. Several good birds were seen well during this walk, including: Red Bishop & Black-winged Bishop both of which were in full breeding regalia, beautiful. Yellow-fronted Canaries were everywhere, we also found a couple of goodies, Pygmy Kingfisher and Orange-cheeked Waxbill, the former seen by most of the group and the latter only by the stragglers.

Our lunch stop was at Campaty where we sat under a huge baobab tree and ate our picnic lunch. We looked over a small area of rice fields which were surrounded by mature woodland. During our 2 hour lunch break we found an impressive 31 species without leaving the spot. African Harrier Hawk, Grasshopper Buzzard, Shikra, Black Kite, Wahlberg's Eagle, White-backed Vulture, Pink-backed Pelican, Woolly-Necked Stork, hammerkop, Bateleur & Yellow-billed Stork provided the aerial sightings whilst Bearded Barbet, Yellow-throated Leaflove, Glossy Starlings and Sunbirds provided good views in the trees. The marsh and rice fields held Cattle Egrets and Squacco Heron and lots of Weavers.

We scanned another pool on the other side of the main track as we headed back to the bus, this proved rewarding as we found Namaqua Dove, Black-headed Heron and Blue-breasted Kingfisher.

Between Campaty & Tendaba Camp we stopped at Kalagi where, from the bridge we listed Whimbrel, Osprey, about 100 little Swifts, Redshank, our first Tawny Eagle and several Senegal Thicknees. Other stops produced Grasshopper Buzzard, Bateleur, Malibou Stork and a handful of Abyssinian Rollers.

Our arrival at Tendaba Camp produced the usual pandemonium but we sorted out the room allocation and we were soon back, after unpacking, heading for the bar for a cold drink. Tendaba Camp sits on the south bank of the river and is a superb venue for bird watching groups. All meals are taken outdoors overlooking the river and the pace of life there emulates the flow of the river, slow and peaceful.

We gathered after a short break at the bus and then drove the short distance to the 'airfield', a huge flood plain that was covered in an inch or two of water and was frequented by many bird species. A thin stretch of woodland borders the 'airfield' on three sides whilst mangrove swamp borders the fourth side, all these habitats held many species too.

A Long-crested Eagle posed for the cameras showing extremely well as it sat on top of a low bush whilst in the distance 3 tawny Eagles sat near their nest in a dead tree, not a bad start. In and around the water there were about 20 species with Marsh Sandpiper, Spur-winged Goose, Little Ringed Plover, Purple Heron & Black Headed Plover being new for our list.

In the trees nearby a troop of Patas Monkeys were feeding but we also enjoyed watching Pearl Spotted Owllet, Bearded Barbet, Senegal Parrot, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Abyssinian Roller, Purple Glossy Starling and several more species. We called it a day at 6:30pm and headed back to camp for a shower and a lovely al fresco dinner at the side of the river.

Day 5 – Sat 27th Nov – Kiang Forest – Tendaba Airfield

We visit the Kiang Forest Park on two occasions during the day, the morning visit began at 8am and lasted 4 hours then again during late afternoon we made a second visit and waited until dark before coming back to camp.

After leaving the Camp for the morning excursion we only travelled 300 meters up the lane when we stopped to look at a Lizard Buzzard, but one thing led to another and soon we were watching many other species the best of which was a Harrier Hawk (seen climbing up the trunk of a tree?), a Lesser Honeyguide, sitting right next to a giant wasp's nest that hung from a thick bough and the Lizard Buzzard posed well for the cameras.

At Kiang we walked along a couple of overgrown rides whilst Modou called some birds to us with his whistling skills. A great sighting was a male Pygmy Sunbird, then a Scarlet-chested Sunbird put on a show whilst it preened in full view. We spent a fair amount of time waiting for a Black-crowned Tchagra to show and in the meantime we watched a Yellow White-eye, an African Golden Oriole and a Yellow Penduline Tit, it was what you might call a 'yellow patch'!

We added a couple of butterflies to the increasing list with a superb Diadem alighting on the track and a Clouded Flat rested on a large leaf. A showy Grey Woodpecker, lots of Bearded Barbets, Senegal Parrots, Abyssinian Rollers, Weavers, Bishops and Grey Headed Sparrows added further colour to our enjoyment.

We searched an area of open woodland with grassy glades for Spotted Thicknee which eventually showed and gave us all a good view at some stage. During this search we found Fork-tailed Drongo, Chestnut Headed Sparrow Weaver and plenty of doves. It was now getting very hot so we followed the narrow track which led us back to a small village and out of the forest park, we turned towards Tendaba and returned to the camp for a long lunch.

A 3 hour break was much appreciated, during which time, most of the group sat on the sheltered jetty where a gentle cooling breeze was most welcomed. At 4pm we set off to re-visit the forest park but we stopped at the airfield first to look for larks & pipits. The usual array of waders was present along with Great Egrets, Pink-backed Pelican & Purple Heron. Raptors were represented by Marsh Harrier, a couple of Tawny Eagles and a Harrier Hawk. Failing to find the pipits, but flushing a Zitting Cisticola in the process of looking, we headed off to the forest park.

It seemed quite quiet in the woodland savannah until Modou starting whistling that is, very soon we had an array of species around us. Both Pygmy & Scarlet-Chested Sunbirds showed up and then a pair of superb Senegal Batis arrived causing quite a stir amongst the group. We watched Vieillot's Barbet, Little Weaver, Yellow White-eye, Green-backed (Senegal) Eremomela, Forked -tailed Drongo and various common species. As we returned to the bus in failing light we found a beautiful White-shouldered Black Tit, what a beauty that one was, it gave us superb views.

Lastly we stopped in near darkness to wait for nightjars, we didn't wait long. A fantastic Long-tailed Nightjar threaded its way through the glades and open spaces between the bushes and alighted on the ground within a few meters of us, a great sighting. Several more were seen they seemed to like settling on the sandy track. Suddenly another species alighted, settling not far from us, it had a shorter tail, no white wing markings, we had found a Standard -winged Nightjar. A great bird to finish off another exciting day, a delighted group returned to camp for a delicious dinner. We returned in full moonlight and we saw a couple of Hares on the track during the journey back.

Day 6 – Baobalong Creek crawl – Tendaba to Georgetown Island

What a fantastic trip the creek-crawl really is, outstanding habitat, tremendous variety and density of species, coupled with the peace & tranquillity of the river and perfect weather of course.

We set off at 7:20am heading upriver first before crossing to the mangrove swamp at the mouth of the Baobalong Creek. Our pirogue drifted into another world as we entered the creek, a wild world of densely-packed tangled roots, thick vegetation that stretched as far as you could see upstream and everywhere there was bird sounds. The diminutive Mouse Brown Sunbird with its plaintive call flitted about amongst the lower shrubs whilst the distinctive loud cry of the Blue Breasted Kingfisher could be heard every few hundred meters. A high tide was just about to turn, many waders waited patiently for the water level to drop. They sat on anything available to roost, it was an odd sight to see Whimbrel, Greenshank and Common Sandpipers perched on tree boughs and dead stumps.

We followed the meandering river passing open areas of sedge and reeds, this was where we found the likes of Spur-winged Goose, Woolly-necked Stork, Yellow Billed Stork and lots of Pelicans.

Our most memorable time must be when the boat's engine packed up!! We were stranded at the furthest most point from camp, the captain called base for a replacement whilst we sat it out and waited. Not a bad thing really we notched a great variety of species whilst just sitting there. Black Egrets sat just up-stream in the trees, Pied Kingfishers dashed about in good numbers, Senegal Thicknees flew over and landed on the large open marsh next to us. But it was passerines, that we probably wouldn't normally have seen, that made it more enjoyable. There was Common Redstart, Cut-throat, Greater Honeyguide and Sedge Warbler to name but a few. A partial display flight by an Abyssinian Roller was the most colourful highlight of our stranded–wait.

Our rescuers arrived and soon we were on our way back, there were even more birds to see now as the water level had dropped and exposed a margin of mud. Lots of waders, egrets, herons littered the banks whilst an increasing number of raptors began to appear. We found Western Banded Snake Eagle, Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, Osprey, Hooded Vulture and African Harrier Hawk.

The best sightings of the boat trip that come to mind were the African Scop's Owl, so well hidden that it took 10 minutes to get everyone to see it, the White-backed Night Heron which showed reasonably well, but best of all was the very rare Ayres's Hawk-eagle which was our last sighting, it flew right over us and gave us a lovely parting present.

The rest of the day was full of incidents and not much birding. We set off heading further upcountry along the bumpy road towards Georgetown Island. We stopped a couple of times, the most memorable was to see a Verreaux's Eagle Owl, a superb bird. It sat roosting high up in a Baobab tree, this giant owl looked nonchalantly down at us, with closed eyes revealing bright pink eyelids!

The next stop was unscheduled, we had a tyre blow out which took 30 minutes to fix, we took shelter from the sun under an Acacia tree and watched raptors drifting by. A Gonolek and a Fork-tailed Drongo entertained us in the nearby trees. The next unscheduled stop was to buy a new tyre, we stopped in the centre of Soma where we bought fruit and bread. We ate our lunch sitting in the shade at the side of the garage meeting local Gambians and sampling the real Gambian way of life.

The third unscheduled stop was for a second puncture, what a day everything seemed to be breaking down. The wheel was quickly changed and we set off for the last leg of the trip. A brief stop at Jally Rice fields produced some good birds including a female Painted Snipe, wow, what a bird to finish the day with! We also saw a flock of 5 Pygmy Geese, 50+ Jacanas, Spur-winged Plovers, lots of egrets and a Red-necked Falcon. We arrived at Baobalong Camp at 6:30pm with just enough light to sit and enjoy a cold drink before heading off to our rooms. The camp is very basic and in very poor condition, but just about good enough for a short stay, the food was surprisingly good.

Day 7 – Monday 29th Nov. Georgetown Island, Sunkuta Kunta and a river cruise

24 Species of Raptor in one day- can you beat that?

I've haven't had such a great bird-watching morning as this for a long, long time, it was truly incredible, the sheer number of species in such a small area in a short space of time was beyond belief.

We ate breakfast at 7am and headed south in the bus from the camp at 7:45am we only drove 1km before we stopped just over the new bridge on the southern shore to look at a raptor in the sky. Within minutes we had logged two Martial Eagles, a pair of Hawk Eagles, Wahlberg's Eagle, Marsh Harrier, Red-necked Falcon and a Grey Kestrel. On the rice fields in front of us we watched Black-headed Heron, Hammerkop, Jacana, Senegal Thicknee & plenty more.

We then drove another kilometre or so and parked at the roadside to walk into some woodland savannah, this is where the fun started. Small bushes, grassy patches and larger mature trees with some standing deadwood covered the landscape. Birds were everywhere, Village Indigobird, started us off then we found Abyssinian Roller, Red-throated Bee-eater, Green Bee-eater, Paradise Whydah, Pin-tailed Paradise Whydah, Quailfinch, Yellow fronted Canary, Red Bishop, Grey headed Sparrow, Senegal Parrot, Ring-necked Parakeet, Dark Chanting Goshawk, three Harrier-hawks, Shikra & White backed Vulture.

All the above was found without moving from the roadside! We then started to walk into the shrubs and found Cinnamon Breasted Bunting, Fork-tailed Drongo, Yellow-backed Eremomela, Common Redstart, Pied

Flycatcher, Scartlet-chested Sunbird, White-rumped Seedeater and a lucky few got onto a Red-winged Pytillia!

Modou whistled up a whole host of new birds for us including the superb Pygmy Sunbird, a pair of Brown-backed Woodpeckers and a fantastic Yellow-breasted Hyliota. Yet still it got better, Bruce's & African Green Pigeons sat side by side, lots more sunbirds appeared, then the morning warmed up and the raptor sightings took over. Three Gabar Goshawks were followed by two Brown Snake Eagles, a Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, White-backed Vulture, Ruppell's Vulture, the rare White Headed Vulture (2) was an excellent find, Grasshopper Buzzard, another Martial Eagle and a sub-adult Bateleur. It was just fantastic we listed 20 raptors in the course of 3 hours. Everyone was exhausted so we headed back to camp for a long lunch.

At 3:30pm we set off for a short walk to the quay to catch a boat for a river cruise in search of Hippos and birds, we found plenty of birds but not the hippos. We drifted slowly down river close to the northern shore and found lots to see. A Swamp Flycatcher was the first of many and new for us, we also found many Striated Herons. Before long we realised that this was something special with a lovely tranquil air to the river, beautiful light, a cooling breeze and bird song everywhere. We found six species of Kingfisher, there were many Pied, a few Malachite & Blue-breasted, a single Woodland and a couple of Grey headed. But the star was the Shining Blue Kingfisher, what a gem, voted bird of the day by many of the group.

Other highlights included large numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons, lots of Red Colobus Monkeys, a huge Monitor Lizard, Hadada Ibis & an Osprey fishing. We turned the boat and headed eastward back upriver and as the sun began to drop the sky turned a crimson red behind us, we then found a Lizard Buzzard, a distant African Fish Eagle, more Hadada Ibis and several roosting Palm-nut Vultures. In fading orange sunlight, long strings of Cattle Egrets threaded their way down the river on their way to roost, there were hundreds of them. It was a fitting end to a day that started with many different species and ended with many of one species.

Day 8 – Tuesday 30th Nov Georgetown Island – Banjul

Our return journey to the coast took up most of the day, but at least the roads were all tarmac-covered, which made it much more enjoyable than the journey upriver. We stopped several times to look for new species, the first stop was one of the best! A flock of Carmine Bee-eaters was picked out sitting on a distant tree. What a stunning bird, some say too gaudy, but a real treat nonetheless. We counted 24 of them and had great views particularly of one individual which sat on a wooden stump just a few meters from the Bus. We also found Abyssinian Roller, Village Indigobird and lots of other Weavers.

Modou spotted a pair of Northern Anteater Chats as we zoomed along, so a quick stop and a bit of reversing got us into position to see them. We all had excellent views, as the pair was jumping into a well for either water or insects, showing off their white wing patches as they flitted about.

The next bird brought oohs and ahs from the group as we pulled over to watch 2 roadside Egyptian Plovers, what a gem. Described by one of the group as "the bird with perfect plumage", the cameras were clicking away for these very confiding birds.

At the Kaur Marshes we spent some time looking at wading birds, a flock of some 19 Kittlitz's Plover was the highlight but there was also Marsh Sandpiper, Ruff, Collared Pratincole, Redshank, Greenshank, Hammerkop, lots of egrets and herons. The large flock of wintering pratincoles, which numbers in the thousands, could not be found.

As the morning wore on we passed through Farrafenni and stopped at a roadside watering hole to watch a Warthog wallowing in the mud, but it soon saw us and was gone in seconds. At another pool we stopped for lunch spending an hour watching various species coming to drink, which included Red-cheeked Cordonbleau, Yellow-fronted Canary, Bush Petronia, Namaqua Dove, Wood Doves, Little Swifts, Red-rumped Swallows, Weavers, Bishops and Red-billed Queleas.

Two more stops at small wetland areas produced quite good list of new birds for us and good views of some 'catch-up' species. Black Crake was one such bird catch-up, Yellow-crowned Bishop another, a surprising Northern Shoveler was discovered and we caught glimpses of Great Reed Warbler, Sedge Warbler and Quailfinch. A small flock of Cut-Throat Finches were joined by several African Silverbills and a dozen or so of Black-rumped Waxbills.

Soon we arrived at Barra and then the fun began. What a chaotic place it seemed, hundreds of people milled about amongst, vehicles, trash, heat, noise and smells. The queue for the ferry was huge because one of the ferries was out of action and it was a case 'who you know', not 'what you know'. Modou seemed to know everyone and managed to get us to the front of the queue and on the very next ferry much to the annoyance of a group of Dutch travellers in a similar bus. They made an attempt to try to stop us getting on board, but we persisted and the altercation soon passed!!

The crossing went well, we saw a good number of gulls and terns and added Common Tern, Arctic & Pomerine Skuas to our list. We arrived at the hotel before 7pm and all enjoyed the luxury of a 'proper' hotel room having suffered the basic conditions at Tendaba & Georgetown, it was nice to back but we were glad we went.

Day 9 – Wednesday 1st Dec. Abuko Forest – Lamin Lodge & Lamin Rice Fields

The forest trails and hides of Abuko, The Gambia's first nature reserve which was founded some 30 years ago, was our venue for this morning. It never disappoints, although you do have to work for your birds, the wide, well used pathways thread their way through mature forest with palms, figs, baobab & several other tree species towering above you. There are several pools and the forest undergrowth is dense and dark. So it was in these conditions that we set out to find several species missing from our list.

At the Darwin visitor's centre we watched over a pool from a raised observation area where we saw Fanti Sawing, Bearded Barbet, Palm Nut Vulture, Striated Heron, Black-headed Herons & a Striped Ground Squirrel. For 2 hours we traced our way along the trails stopping so Modou could call out the birds with his whistling, we found a Pygmy Kingfisher whilst looking for a Yellow-breasted Apalis, we found both African Paradise & Red-bellied Flycatcher & also the hybrid between the two! A Snowy Crowned Robin-Chat showed much better than our previous sighting and a few of us got onto a Green Crombec as it passed through the scrub.

We had a great time watching the butterflies too, apart from the hundreds of whites and greens we found Common Dotted Border, Narrow-banded Green Swallowtail & Soldier Pansy.

The birds kept coming, we spent quite a while tracking down a Grey-headed Bristlebill but we all eventually saw it and what a beautiful little song it has. Then a couple of star birds were found in the shape of both of the Turacos, Green & Violet, their stunning, vibrant colours seemed very apt for this jungle setting. Our last good sighting for the visit was of a Western Little Sparrowhawk, this seldom seen species was a real bonus.

Lunch was taken at the superb Lamin Lodge, a place that seems to have got it right, the food was good the service great and the hospitality perfect. We spent 3 hours there, sitting high-up overlooking the river & mango swamp, at 4 pm we set off for the Lamin Rice fields.

For some reason the temperature seemed to rise instead of abate, the humidity also went very high as we walked the dykes around the rice paddies. A good selection of birds were present, the highlights being a pair of Black-shouldered Kites, Splendid Sunbirds, Green Wood Hoopoes, Striated Heron and the best for me was a Black Heron performing its 'cloak & dagger' hunting method, what a great show it put on. The outstanding sighting was the Painted Snipe which after much perseverance was found in the depths of a rice paddy, it was a colourful female and gave the group the best thrill of the day, a much sought after species and one that wasn't seen well earlier in the trip.

Day 10 – Thursday 2nd December Kartang Ringing Station.

We made a very early start and took a packed breakfast with us so that we could arrive at Kartang just as it was getting light, after a bit of fumbling along dirt tracks we eventually found the ringing station.

Colin Cross is the resident ringer and has been in place for about a year during which time he has rung a first for The Gambia, a Cassin's Honeyguide and hundreds of other birds covering 70+ species. His patio overlooks a large shallow pool with a central reed-bed and in the distance you can see open scrub dotted with some very old baobab trees with a sand dune system behind them. From there Colin has recorded 234 species!!!

We were very unlucky because in the nets today he only trapped 1 bird, a male beautiful Sunbird, nevertheless we enjoyed a 3 hour stay and watched over 30 species in and around the pool. We found Giant, Pied and Malachite Kingfishers, Squacco & Purple Herons, White Faced Whistling Ducks, Little Grebe and Black Heron to name but a few.

Our return to the hotel was at 11:30am and we decided to take a break from birding and use the rest of the day to relax and to enjoy the hotel facilities.

Day 11 – Friday 3rd Dec. Mandino Ba – Pirang Shrimp Farm – Faraba Bantu Track

We all met at breakfast on the outside terrace at 7am to enjoy our victuals in the cool morning air. An hour later we were disembarking from the bus along a track at Mandino Ba. A track well used by the locals is also a well known area for several good species, our target was the Grey-headed Bush Shrike but after several attempts to call one to us we failed to see it. In the meantime we clocked African Green Pigeon, Beautiful & Scarlet Chested Sunbirds, Blackcap Babblers, Pearl Spotted Owlet and an Olive Sand Snake.

Next we drove to the Pirang Shrimp Farm, a privately owned site, we paid our way into the open lagoons and enjoyed a couple hours of good birding. It is a huge area with many open lagoons having shallow water and some reeds, much like salt pans and well liked by birds. Several new birds went onto our list which included the Gambian national bird – the Black crowned Crane. A super bird with lovely colours, four of them were seen, two in flight and two feeding in tall grass in a disused shrimp lagoon.

We also added Wire-tailed Swallow, Crested Lark, Plain Backed Pipit, Eurasian & African Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Stork, Gull-billed Tern & Little Tern. Both White and Yellow Wagtails frequented the pools, whilst in the scrub we found several very large spiders, the locals told us that these spiders were known to catch Cisticolas in their webs, I believed them. We stayed until 5pm and then headed back to the hotel for a relaxing cold drink on the terrace.

Day 12 – Saturday 4th Nov – Marakissa Forest Park, Marshes + Lodge

Our journey today was as far south as we could go without crossing into Southern Senegal. We set off at 7:30am for the trip south which took nearly an hour, our destination, the forest park at Marakissa. We had hoped to find some species that are seldom found elsewhere in The Gambia but it turned out to be very quiet and we were mildly disappointed with the results of walking for 3 hours in open woodland savannah. During the first hour we logged African Green Pigeon, Pearl Spotted Owlet, all 3 hornbills and but it wasn't until just before lunch time that we began to see new species for the trip. A Melodious Warbler sang for us, a brief sighting of a Pygmy Kingfisher and a Tawny Flanked Prinia were the best of the bunch.

At a nearby bridge over a small stream we noted Red-chested Swallow, Striated, Purple & Squacco Herons. We then walked to Marakissa Lodge and had wonderful long-lunch, the lodge is a fantastic place with wooded gardens and a large freshwater pool. A sheltered seating area overlooks the garden which has several watering vessels for the birds, we watched at close quarters Firefinch, Beautiful Sunbird, Pia-piac, Long-tailed Glossy Starling and Red-cheeked Cordonbleu. A short walk before lunch produced Northern Crombec, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin, Greenshank, Senegal Thicknee and Common Sandpiper.

After a delicious buffet lunch we were shown a Barn Owl roosting in the lodge roof, before we set off further south to look at some grassland near the border. The short drive got us to an area of tree-less grassland, having very wide open spaces around a large expanse of shallow water. Tall grass and sedges bordered the water, this is where we walked and found 3 species of Cisticola! Singing was first to be found then Zitting and lastly Black-backed Cisticola. In the meantime we spent a while looking skyward and noting some very interesting raptors. Marsh Harrier, Black Kite, African Harrier-Hawk, Osprey and a pair of Hawk-Eagles were added to our list.

Back at the bus we scanned the nearby pools and found Giant Kingfisher, Marsh Sandpiper, Pied Kingfisher and Wattled Plover. The last stop we made was a long a narrow forest track, we walked some 100 meters when Modou called out a small group of White-crested Helmet Shrikes, what an amazing bird, they stayed for ages giving us all excellent views and photographic opportunities. The drive home was a happy one especially as we arrived during happy hour at the bar!

Day 13 – Sunday 5th Dec. – Tujereng Woodland track – Crocodile park – Bund Rd.

We left on time at 7:30am heading south towards Tujereng where we turned off the main road and entered a sandy track. We had visited this area before but only during the afternoon and not the birding peak-time of early morning. The air was alive with bird song and calls, the Red-winged Warbler was first on the list, singing loudly from the top of a bush.

As we walked through open scrub dotted with small clumps of trees we collected a sizeable list, Senegal Batis and the Brubru got the group buzzing but it was the White-fronted Black-chat that really got us going. Little & Swallowtail Bee-eaters, Black-crowned Tchagra, Variable, Scarlet Chested and Beautiful Sunbirds were often seen flitting about. We also found Brown-backed & Grey Woodpeckers, in the open areas we found a couple of western Palaearctic migrants in the form of a Woodchat Shrike & a Whinchat.

As the morning drifted into midday the temperature rose and the breeze eased off so it got very hot, at 11am we decided to give it another 30 minutes before retiring for lunch, we spent most the extra-time watching a group of 4 White-crested Helmet Shrikes! They gave us the run-around but we did get excellent views of them, we also watched a pair of Grey Woodpeckers excavating a nest-hole, we saw an Osprey, it was carrying a fish whilst soaring on the thermals, perhaps it was trying to cook it?

A long lunch back at the hotel from 12 noon to 3pm was enjoyed by all and most of the group opted to visit the crocodile farm as a tourist excursion. We drove through the worst district of Banjul to get there, there were open sewers running along the side of the road, hundreds of people lined the streets, litter and dust and filth and smells were everywhere.

The crocodile centre was a little wooded haven set in the middle these surroundings, it consisted of 3 small round buildings which housed an interesting cultural museum. The croc pool was circular, dirty and looked uninviting even for the reptiles. Several beasts lay on the banks fast asleep, they allowed you to touch them, not the way I wanted to see crocodiles, I found the whole experience disappointing, the only saving grace was sighting a pair of very obliging Klaas's Cuckoos and a Blue Breasted Kingfisher.

Happy to be away from the squalour of the suburbs we arrived at a mango swamp some 30 minutes later and watching a good selection of species. Lots of gulls, terns, egret, herons and waders were present. We also found Crested Lark, Northern Wheatear, Giant, Pied & Malachite Kingfishers and a Shikra flew over.

We went a little further to the Bund road, the mangrove swamp there was in a terrible state, most of it was dead or dying and everywhere, as far as the eye could see there was trash and pollution. On the river bank, the tide was still fairly high so only pockets of roosting of gulls, terns, egrets, herons & pelicans could be seen. A good number of Pied Kingfishers were found, we counted 18 in a short span of telephone wire along the length of Bund Road.

It was now getting late so we set off for the hotel and arrived in good time to enjoy a relaxing cold drink before showering for dinner.

Day 14 – Monday 6th December. Faraba banta peanut fields + woodland track

Our last full day was spent fully in the field. We ate an early breakfast, met our bus and Modou our guide outside the hotel at 7:30am. The drive to Faraba took the best part of an hour and the weather was it's

usual glorious self. One quick stop interrupted our journey and that was to watch a couple of Mottled Spinetails as they circled over the road.

Our morning walk took us 3 hours to complete although we didn't walk very far, most of our time was spent scanning peanut fields and cous-cous plantations in search of Temminck's Courser. We failed to find the bird but instead we uncovered a wealth of other bird life that varied from the tiny Northern Crombec to the huge White-backed Vulture. We turned up a few Palaearctic species as we had done yesterday, these included Woodchat Shrike, Whinchat & Melodious Warbler. A pair of Black-headed Plovers was nice to see, we also had good sightings of Black-crowned Tchagra, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver, all four Rollers, Four-banded Sandgrouse, Black-rumped Waxbill and a great surprise find was an African Cuckoo!

With the sun getting high, along with the temperature, we got back onto the bus and drove across to Faraba Bantu woodland track where we spent 3 hours sitting in the shade sipping cold drinks and eating our picnic lunch. It was very hot but some birds ventured out, we trained our scopes on a large fig tree some 20 meters away. Good numbers of Purple Glossy Starlings made frequent raiding visits to eat the figs and were joined by the Greater & Lesser Blue-eared Glossy varieties. In an adjacent tree we found roosting African Green Pigeons together with Bruce's Green Pigeon whilst back in the fig tree we finally tracked down a Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird that was calling constantly.

Over the next couple of hours we noted 3 or 4 Yellow White-eyes, a couple of parties of Yellow Penduline Tits, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Greater Honeyguide and lots of Common Bubuls. In the sky above the woodland a steady movement of raptors was noted with Hooded Vultures, Lanner Falcon, Brown Snake Eagle, Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, a superb adult Bateleur, Harrier Hawks, Grasshopper Buzzard and the usual high count of Yellow-billed Black Kites.

At 3:30pm we drove deeper into the forest and then walked along a couple of wide tracks having more mature trees and shrubs. Modou called out a fantastic number of Sunbirds we must have seen around 20-30 individuals of 6 species which included the Pygmy & the rare Voilet-backed Sunbirds. We could hear Helmeted Guineafowl calling from the thickets.

Other sightings of note were a Square-tailed Drongo, our first for the trip, a small flock of 7 Stone Partridges, Double-spurred Francolin, African Thrush & many common species. At 5:30pm we called it a day and as we walked back to the bus one of the group almost stepped on a huge Black Scorpion. A tired group returned to the hotel for a refreshing cold drink before showering and dinner. We had a lovely meal outside on the terrace and spent some time recalling the highlights of our 2 week Gambian adventure.

Day 15 – Tuesday 7th December – Abuko Forest Park (am only).

Most of the group made it to the bus on this, our last morning, we set off for a return visit to the Abuko Nature Reserve. It was a typical forest walk, plenty of birds calling but very little on show. We watched several Splendid Sunbirds in the tree tops and had excellent views of Red Colobus Monkeys feeding in bushes just off the track. Over the next couple of hours we had a great time getting much better views of Pygmy Kingfisher, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Little Greenbul & Snowy-crowned Robin-chat. The best was yet

to come with excellent views of both the Violet & the Green Turaco and then Modou found us a small party of Ahanta Francolins, what a good find, we got reasonable views as they strolled in the dense undergrowth.

Other species that showed well included the Wren-like Grey-backed Cameroptera, a bird that most of the group had missed earlier in the trip. The Red-bellied Flycatcher gave us an entertaining time and one of the last sightings was a Pied-winged Swallow, the butterflies were as good as ever, we all enjoyed this last excursion and felt sad to be leaving.

We assembled in hotel lobby at 1pm ready for our departure, the journey to the airport went smoothly in light traffic. Having bade farewell to our guide Modou and our driver Noah we checked our bags and waited for the flight home. The journey home was quicker than the outbound one at 5 ½ hours, the temperature on arrival was a shock. We all went our separate ways after a long wait for our luggage (typical of Gatwick), the tour was over.

We all had had a great time, plenty of laughs, excitement and incidents, all topped by fantastic birding. The group list was a respectable 288 species, a tremendous effort by all.

Special thanks go to Modou for his tireless endeavour and incredible ability to find birds, his eyesight is exceptional. Noah our driver was also fantastic and drove us safely throughout the two tours. Lastly the group themselves were excellent at finding birds, they gelled well and made the tour a pleasure to lead.

| | SPECIES LIST | NUMBER OF BIRDING DAYS SEEN | HIGHEST COUNT |
|----|---|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Grebe, Little or Dabchick <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis capensis</i> | 2 | 8 |
| 2 | Pelican, Great White <i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i> | 3 | 50 |
| 3 | Pelican, Pink-backed <i>Pelecanus rufescens</i> | 12 | 100+ |
| 4 | Cormorant, White-breasted <i>Phalacrocorax carbo maroccanus</i> | 1 | 50+ |
| 5 | Cormorant, Long-tailed <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i> | 12 | 40+ |
| 6 | Darter, African <i>Anhinga rufa</i> | 5 | 30+ |
| 7 | Hamerkop <i>Scopus umbretta</i> | 12 | 30+ |
| 8 | Heron, Striated or Little <i>Butorides striatus</i> | 9 | 4 |
| 9 | Heron, White-backed Night- <i>Gorsachius leuconotus</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 10 | Heron, Black-crowned Night- <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> | 3 | 20+ |
| 11 | Heron, Squacco <i>Ardeola ralloides</i> | 10 | 6 |
| 12 | Black-headed Heron <i>Ardea melanocephalus</i> | 11 | 10 |
| 13 | Heron, Black <i>Egretta ardesias</i> | 5 | 20 |
| 14 | Egret, Cattle <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> | 15 | C |
| 15 | Egret, Great <i>Egretta alba</i> | 11 | 30+ |
| 16 | Egret, Intermediate or Yellow-billed <i>Ardea intermedia</i> | 3 | 6 |
| 17 | Egret, Little <i>Egretta garzetta</i> | 6 | 30+ |
| 18 | Egret, Western Reef- <i>Egretta gularis</i> | 11 | 50+ |
| 19 | Heron, Grey <i>Ardea cinerea</i> | 9 | 20+ |
| 20 | Goliath Heron <i>Ardea goliath</i> | 1 | 1 |

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|----|---|----|-----|
| 21 | Heron, Purple <i>Ardea purpurea</i> | 5 | 4 |
| 22 | Stork, Woolly-necked <i>Ciconia episcopus</i> | 3 | 12 |
| 23 | Stork, Yellow-billed <i>Mycteria ibis</i> | 3 | 6 |
| 24 | Stork, Marabou <i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i> | 3 | 15 |
| 25 | Spoonbill, African <i>Platalea alba</i> | 4 | 9 |
| 26 | Spoonbill, Eurasian <i>Platalea leucorodia</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 27 | Crane, Black Crowned- <i>Balearica pavonina</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 28 | Northern Shoveler <i>Anas clypaeta</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 29 | Goose, African Pygmy- <i>Nettapus auritus</i> | 1 | 5 |
| 30 | Goose, Spur-winged <i>Plectropterus gambensis gambensis</i> | 4 | 6 |
| 31 | Duck, White-faced Whistling- <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i> | 5 | 30+ |
| 32 | Ibis, Hadada <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i> | 1 | 6 |
| 33 | Ibis, Sacred <i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i> | 2 | 4 |
| 34 | Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus haliaetus</i> | 10 | 3 |
| 35 | Vulture, Hooded <i>Necrosyrtes monachus monachus</i> | 15 | 50+ |
| 36 | Vulture, Palm-nut <i>Gypohierax angolensis</i> | 6 | 3 |
| 37 | Vulture, Ruppell's Griffon <i>Gyps rueppellii rueppellii</i> | 1 | 3 |
| 38 | Vulture, White-backed <i>Gyps africanus</i> | 4 | 5 |
| 39 | Vulture, White-headed <i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 40 | Harrier-Hawk, African <i>Polyboroides typus pectoralis</i> | 12 | 2 |
| 41 | Crow, Pied <i>Corvus albus</i> | 15 | C |
| 42 | Eagle, African Fish- <i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 43 | Eagle, African Hawk- <i>Aquila spilogaster</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 44 | Eagle, Ayre's Hawk- <i>Aquila ayresii</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 45 | Eagle, Western Banded Snake- <i>Circaetus cinerascens</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 46 | Eagle, Tawny <i>Aquila rapax belisarius</i> | 3 | 3 |
| 47 | Eagle, Booted <i>Aquila pennatus</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 48 | Eagle, Martial <i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 49 | Eagle, Long-crested <i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i> | 3 | 3 |
| 50 | Eagle, Wahlberg's <i>Aquila wahlbergi</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 51 | Eagle, Beaudouin's <i>Circaetus beaudouini</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 52 | Eagle, Brown Snake- <i>Circaetus cinereus</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 53 | Bateleur <i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i> | 5 | 2 |
| 54 | Kite, (Yellow-billed) Black <i>Milvus migrans parasiticus</i> | 15 | C |
| 55 | Kite, Black-winged or shouldered <i>Elanus caeruleus caeruleus</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 56 | Buzzard, Grasshopper <i>Butastur rufipennis</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 57 | Harrier, Western or Eurasian Marsh- <i>Circus a. aeruginosus</i> | 8 | 4 |
| 58 | Buzzard, Lizard <i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus monogrammicus</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 59 | Goshawk, Dark Chanting- <i>Melierax metabates metabates</i> | 10 | 3 |
| 60 | Goshawk, Gabar <i>Melierax gabar</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 61 | Shikra, or Little Banded Goshawk <i>Accipiter badius sphenurus</i> | 9 | 2 |
| 62 | Western Little Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter erythropus</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 63 | Falcon, Lanner <i>Falco biarmicus abyssinicus</i> | 5 | 2 |
| 64 | Falcon, Red-necked <i>Falco chicquera ruficollis</i> | 7 | 2 |
| 65 | Hobby, African <i>Falco cuvierii</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 66 | Kestrel, Common or Eurasian <i>Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 67 | Kestrel, Grey <i>Falco ardosiaceus</i> | 12 | 2 |
| 68 | Francolin, Ahanta <i>Pternistis achantensis</i> | 2 | 3 |
| 69 | Francolin, Double-spurred <i>Pternistis bicalcaratus</i> | 9 | 5 |
| 70 | Partridge, Stone <i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i> | 3 | 8 |
| 71 | Sandgrouse, Four-banded <i>Pterocles quadricinctus</i> | 2 | 7 |
| 72 | Crake, Black <i>Amauornis flavirostra</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 73 | Jacana, African <i>Actophilornis africanus</i> | 8 | 30+ |
| 74 | Snipe, Greater Painted- <i>Rostratula benghalensis</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 75 | Thick-knee, Senegal <i>Burhinus senegalensis senegalensis</i> | 11 | 30+ |
| 76 | Thick-knee, Spotted <i>Burhinus capensis maculosus</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 77 | Plover, Egyptian or Crocodile-Bird <i>Pluvianus aegyptius</i> | 1 | 5 |
| 78 | Pratincole, Collared <i>Glareola pratincola fueleborni</i> | 2 | 5 |
| 79 | Lapwing, Spur-winged <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> | 11 | 25+ |

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| 80 | Lapwing, Wattled <i>Vanellus senegallus senegallus</i> | 9 | 15+ |
| 81 | Lapwing, Black-headed <i>Vanellus tectus tectus</i> | 4 | 4 |
| 82 | Plover, Grey or Black-bellied <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> | 4 | 11 |
| 83 | Plover, Kittlitz's <i>Charadrius pecuarius</i> | 1 | 19 |
| 84 | Plover, Common Ringed <i>Charadrius hiaticula; C.h.tundrae</i> | 3 | 20+ |
| 85 | Plover, Little Ringed <i>Charadrius dubius</i> | 2 | 9 |
| 86 | Godwit, Bar-tailed <i>Limosa lapponica lapponica</i> | 3 | 3 |
| 87 | Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus phaeopus</i> | 11 | 30+ |
| 88 | Redshank, Common <i>Tringa totanus</i> | 8 | 5 |
| 89 | Greenshank, Common <i>Tringa nebularia</i> | 10 | 15+ |
| 90 | Sandpiper, Common <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> | 10 | 10+ |
| 91 | Sandpiper, Green <i>Tringa ochropus</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 92 | Sandpiper, Marsh <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 93 | Sandpiper, Wood <i>Tringa glareola</i> | 5 | 10+ |
| 94 | Stilt, Black-winged <i>Himantopus himantopus himantopus</i> | 8 | 18 |
| 95 | Snipe, Common <i>Gallinago.g.faeroeensis</i> | 3 | 4 |
| 96 | Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> | 2 | 21 |
| 97 | Turnstone, Ruddy <i>Arenaria interpres interpres</i> | 3 | 10+ |
| 98 | Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina schinzii; C.a.arctica</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 99 | Skua or Jaeger, Pomarine <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 100 | Skua or Jaeger, Pomarine <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i> | 1 | 5 |
| 101 | Gull, Black-headed, <i>Larus ridibundus</i> | 3 | 10+ |
| 102 | Gull, Grey-headed, <i>Larus cirrocephalus</i> | 8 | 100+ |
| 103 | Gull, Slender-billed <i>Larus genei</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 104 | Gull, Kelp or Southern Black-backed <i>Larus dominicanus vetula</i> | 3 | 4 |
| 105 | Gull, Lesser Black-backed <i>Larus fuscus graellsii/intermedius</i> | 3 | 50+ |
| 106 | Tern, Caspian <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> | 10 | 60+ |
| 107 | Tern, Royal <i>Sterna maxima albidorsalis</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 108 | Tern, Lesser Crested <i>Sterna bengalensis torresii</i> | 4 | 40+ |
| 109 | Tern, Sandwich <i>Sterna sandvicensis sandvicensis</i> | 5 | 20+ |
| 110 | Tern, Common <i>Sterna hirundo hirundo</i> | 1 | 5 |
| 111 | Tern, Gull-billed <i>Sterna nilotica nilotica</i> | 5 | 6 |
| 112 | Tern, Little <i>Sternula albifrons guineae</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 113 | Dove, Black-billed Wood- <i>Turtur abyssinicus</i> | 13 | 10+ |
| 114 | Dove, Blue-spotted Wood- <i>Turtur afer</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 115 | Dove, European Turtle- <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 116 | Dove, Laughing or Palm <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> | 15 | C |
| 117 | Dove, African Mourning <i>Streptopelia decipiens</i> | 7 | C |
| 118 | Dove, Namaqua <i>Oena capensis</i> | 5 | 10+ |
| 119 | Dove, Red-eyed <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i> | 15 | C |
| 120 | Dove, Vinaceous <i>Streptopelia vinacea</i> | 15 | C |
| 121 | Pigeon, African Green- <i>Treron calva</i> | 6 | 14 |
| 122 | Pigeon, Bruce's Green- <i>Treron waalia</i> | 6 | 17 |
| 123 | Pigeon, Feral <i>Columba livia feral</i> (introduced) | 7 | C |
| 124 | Pigeon, Speckled or Rock <i>Columba guinea</i> | 15 | C |
| 125 | Piapiac <i>Ptilostomus afer</i> | 12 | 14 |
| 126 | Cuckoo, African <i>Cuculus gularis</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 127 | Cuckoo, Klaas's <i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i> | 2 | 3 |
| 128 | Cuckoo, Dideric <i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 129 | Cuckoo, Levallant's or African Striped <i>Clamator levallantii</i> | 5 | 2 |
| 130 | Coucal, Senegal <i>Centropus senegalensis</i> | 14 | C |
| 131 | Owl, African Scops- <i>Otus senegalensis senegalensis</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 132 | Owl, Barn <i>Tyto alba affinis</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 133 | Owl, Greyish <i>Bubo cinerascens</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 134 | Owl, Verreaux's or Giant Eagle- <i>Bubo lacteus</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 135 | Owl, Northern White-faced <i>Ptilopsis leucotis</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 136 | Owlet, Pearl-spotted <i>Glaucidium perlatum perlatum</i> | 4+3H | 2 |
| 137 | Nightjar, Long-tailed <i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i> | 2 | 3 |
| 138 | Nightjar, Standard-winged <i>Macrodipteryx longipennis</i> | 1 | 1 |

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|-----|---|----|------|
| 139 | Swift, African Palm- <i>Cypsiurus parvus</i> | 15 | 20+ |
| 140 | Swift, Little <i>Apus affinis</i> | 12 | 100+ |
| 141 | Swift, Pallid <i>Apus pallidus</i> | 5 | 20+ |
| 142 | Spinetail, Mottled <i>Telacanthura ussheri</i> | 3 | 5 |
| 143 | Woodhoopoe, Green <i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i> | 8 | 9 |
| 144 | Kingfisher, African Pygmy- <i>Ispidina picta picta</i> | 3 | 1 |
| 145 | Kingfisher, Blue-breasted <i>Halcyon malimbica torquata</i> | 6 | 24 |
| 146 | Kingfisher, Giant <i>Megaceryle maxima maxima</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 147 | Kingfisher, Grey-headed <i>Halcyon leucocephala leucocephala</i> | 2 | 1 |
| 148 | Kingfisher, Malachite <i>Alcedo cristata galerita</i> | 6 | 4 |
| 149 | Kingfisher, Pied <i>Ceryle rudis rudis</i> | 11 | 8 |
| 150 | Kingfisher, Shining-blue <i>Alcedo quadibrachys quadibrachys</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 151 | Kingfisher, Striped <i>Halcyon chelicuti chelicuti</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 152 | Kingfisher, Woodland <i>Halcyon senegalensis senegalensis</i> | 2 | 1 |
| 153 | Roller, Abyssinian <i>Coracias abyssinica</i> | 9 | 20+ |
| 154 | Roller, Blue-bellied <i>Coracias cyanogaster</i> | 11 | 15 |
| 155 | Roller, Broad-billed <i>Eurystomus glaucurus afer</i> | 11 | 8 |
| 156 | Roller, Rufous-crowned <i>Coracias naevia naevia</i> | 9 | 7 |
| 157 | Bee-eater, Blue-cheeked <i>Merops persicus chrysocercus</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 158 | Bee-eater, European <i>Merops apiaster</i> | 3 | 11 |
| 159 | Bee-eater, Green <i>Merops orientalis viridissimus</i> | 1 | 6 |
| 160 | Bee-eater, Little <i>Merops pusillus pusillus</i> | 7 | 10+ |
| 161 | Bee-eater, Northern Carmine <i>Merops nubicus</i> | 1 | 27 |
| 162 | Bee-eater, Red-throated <i>Merops bullocki bullocki</i> | 1 | 9 |
| 163 | Bee-eater, Swallow-tailed <i>Merops hirundineus chrysolaimus</i> | 6 | 7 |
| 164 | Bee-eater, White-throated <i>Merops albicollis</i> | 2 | 4 |
| 165 | Parakeet, Ring-necked <i>Psittacula krameri</i> | 10 | 16 |
| 166 | Parrot, Senegal <i>Poicephalus senegalus senegalus</i> | 9 | 7 |
| 167 | Turaco, Guinea or Green <i>Tauraco persa buffoni</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 168 | Turaco, Violet <i>Musophaga violacea</i> | 6 | 3 |
| 169 | Plantain-eater, Western Grey <i>Crinifer piscator</i> | 15 | C |
| 170 | Tinkerbird, Yellow-fronted <i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i> | 8 | 2 |
| 171 | Barbet, Bearded <i>Lybius dubius</i> | 11 | 5 |
| 172 | Barbet, Vieillot's <i>Lybius vieillotii</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 173 | Hornbill, African Grey- <i>Tockus nasutus nasutus</i> | 14 | C |
| 174 | Hornbill, African Pied- <i>Tockus fasciatus semifasciatus</i> | 6 | 4 |
| 175 | Hornbill, Red-billed <i>Tockus erythrorhynchus kempii</i> | 15 | C |
| 176 | Woodpecker, Brown-backed <i>Dendropicos obsoletus obsoletus</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 177 | Woodpecker, Cardinal <i>Dendropicos fuscescens lafesnayi</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 178 | Woodpecker, Fine-spotted <i>Campethera p. punctuligera</i> | 3 | 1 |
| 179 | Woodpecker, Grey <i>Dendropicos goertae goertae</i> | 11 | 3 |
| 180 | Honeyguide, Greater <i>Indicator indicator</i> | 4 | 3 |
| 181 | Honeyguide, Lesser <i>Indicator minor</i> | 3 | 1 |
| 182 | Sparrow-lark, Chestnut-backed <i>Eremopterix leucotis</i> | 1 | 10+ |
| 183 | Lark, Crested <i>Galerida cristata</i> | 3 | 4 |
| 184 | Pipit, Plain-backed <i>Anthus leucophrys</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 185 | Swallow, Mosque <i>Hirundo senegalensis senegalensis</i> | 3 | 4 |
| 186 | Swallow, Pied-winged <i>Hirundo leucosoma</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 187 | Swallow, Red-chested or Gambia <i>Hirundo lucida lucida</i> | 12 | C |
| 188 | Swallow, Red-rumped <i>Hirundo daurica</i> | 6 | 10+ |
| 189 | Swallow, Wire-tailed <i>Hirundo smithii smithii</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 190 | Martin, Sand <i>Riparia riparia riparia</i> | 1 | 20+ |
| 191 | Martin, Northern House- <i>Delichon urbica urbica</i> | 3 | 50+ |
| 192 | Sawwing, Fanti <i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i> | 2 | 5+ |
| 193 | Wagtail, White <i>Motacilla alba</i> | 2 | 4 |
| 194 | Wagtail, Yellow <i>Motacilla flava</i> | 3 | 5 |
| 195 | Shrike, Red-shouldered Cuckoo- <i>Campephaga phoenicea</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 196 | Oriole, African Golden- <i>Oriolus auratus</i> | 6 | 4 |
| 197 | Drongo, Fork-tailed <i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i> | 9 | 5 |

| | | | |
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| 198 | Drongo, Square-tailed <i>Dicrurus ludwigii</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 199 | Bulbul, Common <i>Pycnonotus barbatus inornatus</i> | 12 | C |
| 200 | Greenbul, Little <i>Andropadus virens</i> | 2 | 1 |
| 201 | Leaflove , Yellow-throated <i>Chlorocichla flavicollis flavicollis</i> | 3 | 5 |
| 202 | Bristlebill, Grey-headed <i>Bleda canicapilla</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 203 | Babbler, Blackcap <i>Turdoides reinwardii</i> | 5 | 6 |
| 204 | Babbler, Brown <i>Turdoides plebejus</i> | 4 | 8 |
| 205 | Warbler, Oriole (Moho) <i>Hypergerus atriceps</i> | 5+1H | 3 |
| 206 | Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i> | 2 | 1 |
| 207 | Wheatear, Northern <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 208 | Chat, Northern Anteater- <i>Myrmecocichla aethiops</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 209 | Chat, White-fronted Black- <i>Myrmecocichla albifrons frontalis</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 210 | Chat, Snowy-crowned Robin- <i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i> | 3+1H | 2 |
| 211 | Chat, White-crowned Robin- <i>Cossypha albicapilla</i> | 10 | 4 |
| 212 | Redstart, Common <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 213 | African Thrush <i>Turdus pelios</i> | 8 | 9 |
| 214 | Warbler, Eurasian Reed- <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 215 | Warbler, Great Reed- <i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus</i> | 1 | 2+1H |
| 216 | Warbler, Melodious <i>Hippolais polyglotta</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 217 | Warbler, Willow <i>Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus</i> | 5 | 5 |
| 218 | Warbler, Sedge <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> | 2 | 1+1H |
| 219 | Cisticola, Singing <i>Cisticola cantans</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 220 | Cisticola, Zitting <i>Cisticola juncidis uropygialis</i> | 4 | 5 |
| 221 | Cisticola, Winding or Black-backed <i>Cisticola galactotes</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 222 | Warbler, Red-winged <i>Heliolais erythroptera</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 223 | Prinia, Tawny-flanked or Plain <i>Prinia subflava subflava</i> | 4 | 4 |
| 224 | Eremomela, Yellow-backed (Senegal) <i>Eremomelapusilla</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 225 | Crombec, Northern <i>Sylvietta brachyura</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 226 | Crombec, Green <i>Sylvietta virens</i> | 3 | 1 |
| 227 | Camaroptera, Grey-backed <i>Camaroptera brachyura</i> | 3 | 1 |
| 228 | Apalis, Yellow-breasted, <i>Apalis flavida</i> | 2 | 3 |
| 229 | Yellow White-eye <i>Zosterops senegalensis</i> | 4 | 3 |
| 230 | Tit, Yellow-penduline <i>Anthropsopus parvulus senegalensis</i> | 2 | 6 |
| 231 | White-shouldered Black Tit <i>Parus leucomelas</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 232 | Yellow-bellied Hylia <i>Hylia flavigaster</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 233 | Flycatcher, Northern Black- <i>Melaenornis edolioides</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 234 | Flycatcher, Swamp <i>Muscicapa aquatica</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 235 | Flycatcher, European Pied- <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 236 | Wattle-eye, Common <i>Platysteira cynea</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 237 | Flycatcher, African Paradise- <i>Terpsiphone viridis</i> | 4 | 2 |
| 238 | Flycatcher, Red-bellied Paradise- <i>Terpsiphone r. rufiventer</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 239 | Sunbird, Beautiful <i>Nectarinia pulchella</i> | 14 | 6 |
| 240 | Sunbird, Collared <i>Anthreptes collaris</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 241 | Sunbird, Mouse-brown <i>Anthreptes gabonicus</i> | 1 | 8 |
| 242 | Sunbird, Pygmy <i>Anthreptes platurus</i> | 2 | 3 |
| 243 | Sunbird, Scarlet-chested <i>Nectarinia senegalensis</i> | 9 | 4 |
| 244 | Sunbird, Splendid <i>Nectarinia coccinigaster</i> | 6 | 2 |
| 245 | Sunbird, Violet-backed <i>Anthreptes longuemarei</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 246 | Sunbird, Variable or Yellow-bellied <i>Nectarinia venusta</i> | 5 | 4 |
| 247 | Tchagra, Black-crowned <i>Tchagra senegala</i> | 4+1H | 2 |
| 248 | Gonolek, Common <i>Laniarius barbarus</i> | 7+4H | 3 |
| 249 | Shrike, Woodchat <i>Lanius senator</i> | 2 | 2 |
| 250 | Shrike, Yellow-billed <i>Corvinella corvina</i> | 12 | 14 |
| 251 | Brubru <i>Nilaus afer afer</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 252 | Puffback, Northern <i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i> | 5 | 4 |
| 253 | Helmet-Shrike, White <i>Prionops plumatus</i> | 3 | 9 |
| 254 | Starling, Greater Blue-eared Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i> | 8 | C |
| 255 | Starling, Lesser Blue-eared Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis chloropterus chloropterus</i> | 9 | C |
| 256 | Starling, Long-tailed Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i> | 15 | C |

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| 257 | Starling, Purple Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i> | 6 | 20+ |
| 258 | Oxpecker, Yellow-billed <i>Buphagus africanus africanus</i> | 3 | 7 |
| 259 | Sparrow, House <i>Passer domesticus</i> | 2 | 12 |
| 260 | Sparrow, Northern Grey-headed <i>Passer griseus griseus</i> | 12 | 10+ |
| 261 | Bush Petronia , <i>Petronia dentata</i> | 2 | 6 |
| 262 | Seedeater, White-rumped <i>Serinus leucopygius riggenbachi</i> | 1 | 3 |
| 263 | Canary, Yellow-fronted <i>Serinus mozambicus caniceps</i> | 8 | 6 |
| 264 | Weaver, Black-headed <i>Ploceus m. melanocephalus</i> | 1 | 4 |
| 265 | Weaver, Black-necked <i>Ploceus nigricollis brachypterus</i> | 6 | C |
| 266 | Weaver, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow- <i>Plocepasser superciliosus</i> | 4 | 4 |
| 267 | Weaver, White-billed Buffalo- <i>Bubalornis albirostris</i> | 10 | C |
| 268 | Bishop, Northern Red <i>Euplectes franciscanus</i> | 5 | 20+ |
| 269 | Bishop, Black-winged <i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i> | 3 | 2 |
| 270 | Bishop, Yellow-crowned <i>Euplectes afer afer</i> | 1 | 2 |
| 271 | Weaver, Little <i>Ploceus luteolus</i> | 6 | 10+ |
| 272 | Weaver, Village or Spotted-backed <i>Ploceus cucullatus</i> | 15 | C |
| 273 | Weaver, African (Vitelline) Masked- <i>Ploceus vitellinus</i> | 2 | 4 |
| 274 | Bunting, Cinnamon-breasted <i>Emberiza tahapisi</i> | 1 | 3 |
| 275 | Firefinch, Red-billed <i>Lagonosticta senegala senegala</i> | 11 | 8 |
| 276 | Pytilia, Red-winged <i>Pytilia phoenicoptera phoenicoptera</i> | 1 | 1 |
| 277 | Cordonbleu, Red-cheeked <i>Uraeginthus bengalus bengalus</i> | 9 | 10+ |
| 278 | Waxbill, Lavender <i>Estrilda caerulescens</i> | 4 | 10+ |
| 279 | Waxbill, Black-rumped <i>Estrilda troglodytes</i> | 4 | 12 |
| 280 | Waxbill, Orange-cheeked <i>Estrilda melpoda melpoda</i> | 3 | 6 |
| 281 | Silverbill, African <i>Lonchura cantans cantans</i> | 2 | 10+ |
| 282 | Mannikin, Bronze <i>Lonchura cantans</i> | 11 | 10+ |
| 283 | Whydah, Long-tailed or Exclamatory Paradise- <i>Vidua interjecta</i> | 2 | 10+ |
| 284 | Whydah, Pin-tailed <i>Vidua macroura</i> | 2 | 4 |
| 285 | Cut-Throat , <i>Amandina fasciata</i> | 3 | 10+ |
| 286 | Red-billed Quelea <i>Quelea quelea</i> | 2 | 10+ |
| 287 | Indigobird, Village or Steel-blue Widowfinch <i>Vidua chalybeata</i> | 4 | 5 |
| 288 | Quailfinch, Black-faced <i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i> | 2 | 5 |

| MAMMALS | | | Group 1 Nov 16 th - 23 rd | Group 2 Nov 23 rd - Dec 7 th |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1 | Striped Ground Squirrel | <i>Xerus erythropus</i> | | √ |
| 2 | Gambian Sun Squirrel | <i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i> | √ | √ |
| 3 | Gambian Giant Pouched Rat | <i>Cricetomys gambianus</i> | | √ |
| 4 | Common Slender Mongoose | <i>Herpestes sanguineus</i> | √ | |
| 5 | Cape Clawless Otter | <i>Aonyx capensis</i> | √ | |
| 6 | Straw-coloured Fruit Bat | <i>Eidolon helvum</i> | √ | √ |
| 7 | Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat | <i>Epomophorus gambianus</i> | √ | √ |
| 8 | Western Red Colobus | <i>Piliocolobus badius</i> | √ | √ |
| 9 | Western Baboon | <i>Papio papio</i> | √ | √ |
| 10 | Green Vervet Monkey | <i>Chlorocebus sabaues</i> | √ | √ |
| 11 | Patas Monkey | <i>Erythrocebus patas</i> | √ | √ |
| 12 | Wart Hog | <i>Phacochoerus africanus</i> | | √ |
| 13 | Western Bush Buck | <i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i> | √ | √ |
| BUTTERFLIES | | | | |
| 1 | Citrus Swallowtail | <i>Papilio demodocus demodocus</i> | √ | √ |
| 2 | Narrow-banded Green Swallowtail | <i>Papilio nireus nireus</i> | | √ |
| 3 | African Emigrant | <i>Catopsilia florella</i> | √ | √ |
| 4 | Small Grass Yellow | <i>Eurema brigitta brigitta</i> | √ | √ |
| 5 | Common Grass Yellow | <i>Eurema hecabe solifera</i> | √ | √ |
| 6 | Large Orange Tip | <i>Colotis antevippe antevippe</i> | √ | √ |
| 7 | Tiny Orange Tip | <i>Colotis evagore antigone</i> | √ | √ |
| 8 | Caper White | <i>Belenois aurota</i> | √ | √ |
| 9 | African Caper White | <i>Belenois creona creona</i> | √ | √ |
| 10 | African Spirit (Wood White) | <i>Leptosia alcesta</i> | √ | |
| 11 | Common Dotted Border | <i>Mylothris chloris chloris</i> | | √ |
| 12 | Common Hairstreak | <i>Hypolycaena philippus philippus</i> | √ | |
| 13 | Common Zebra Blue | <i>Leptotes pirithous</i> | √ | |
| 14 | African Grass Blue | <i>Zizeeria knysna</i> | √ | √ |
| 15 | Dark Grass Blue | <i>Zizina antanossa</i> | √ | √ |
| 16 | African Tiger | <i>Danaus chrysippus chrysippus</i> | √ | √ |
| 17 | Pearl Charaxes | <i>Charaxes varanes vologeses</i> | | √ |
| 18 | Cream-bordered Charaxes | <i>Charaxes epijasius</i> | | √ |
| 19 | Savannah Demon Charaxes | <i>Charaxes viola viola</i> | | √ |
| 20 | Darker Commedore | <i>Precis antilope</i> | √ | |
| 21 | Diadem | <i>Hypolimnas misippus</i> | | √ |
| 22 | Blue Pansy | <i>Junonia orithya madagascaiensis</i> | √ | √ |
| 23 | Dark Blue Pansy | <i>Junonia oenone</i> | √ | √ |
| 24 | Yellow Pansy | <i>Junonia hierta cebrene</i> | | √ |
| 25 | Soldier Pansy | <i>Junonia terea</i> | | √ |
| 26 | Guineafowl | <i>Hamamumidadaedalus</i> | √ | √ |
| 27 | Small Orange Acraea | <i>Acraea serna serena</i> | √ | √ |
| 28 | Elegant Acraea | <i>Acraea egina egina</i> | √ | |
| 29 | Large Spotted Acraea | <i>Acraea zeteszetes</i> | √ | |
| 30 | Striped policeman | <i>Coeliades forestan forestan</i> | √ | |
| 31 | Clouded Flat | <i>Tagiades flesus</i> | | √ |
| 32 | Common Grizzled Skipper | <i>Spialia spio</i> | √ | |