

WINGSPAN BIRD TOURS

IN

THE GAMBIA

NOVEMBER 22ND – DECEMBER 6TH 2016



TRIP REPORT

LEADERS: BOB BUCKLER, MODOU COLLEY, LAMIN NJIE

PARTICIPANTS: STEPHEN BERRY, RAY MARSH, PAUL EDLIN, DOUGLAS HARDING, JEANNE VITKOVSKIS

Day 1 - November 22nd 2016

Flights UK to Banjul - transfer to Kololi - Hotel gardens walk

We all arrived safely and on time at Banjul on two separate flights. Lamin our guide was there to meet us, he guided us to our bus for the journey to the hotel. It was hot, over 30C!

From the airport apron we logged our first bird, Cattle Egret and from the car park we added Hooded Vulture, Yellow-billed Kite, Spectacled Pigeon, Red-chested Swallow, House Sparrow and Lesser Blue-eared Glossy Starling.

The journey to the hotel was delayed because we made several stops to see roadside species such as; Wattled Lapwing, Namaqua Dove, Vinaceous Dove, Laughing Dove, White-billed Buffalo Weaver and lots more Vultures.



Once we had settled in our rooms at the Senegambia Hotel we went for a walk in the lush grounds which was alive with bird calls and movement. On the main lawn we saw Red-billed Hornbill, White-crowned Robin-chat, Red-billed Firefinch and a large mixed flock of both Lesser and Greater Blue-eared Starlings. Grey Plantain-eater and an Olive Sunbird sat high up in the trees. Green Vervet and Red Colobus Monkeys roamed the gardens and some extra bird species were seen by individuals in the group, these included Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Common Gonolek and African Thrush.

A brief sea-watch produced Caspian and Lesser-crested Terns and not much else.

A tired group ate dinner at 7pm out on the terrace in a lovely evening temperature, we all went to bed early.

Day 2 - Wednesday 23rd November 2016

Weather: wall to wall sunshine, 32C

I just love the first morning in the Gambia, especially the sights, sounds, smells and the weather! We ate breakfast outside in a perfect temperature surrounded by lush gardens and serenaded by dozens of birds, it was magical. We

watched Palm Swifts hawking above us with Yellow-billed Kites and Hooded Vultures ever present. We heard Common Gonolek and added Broad-billed Roller to our list, Cattle Egrets were coming down to feed on scraps from the breakfast tables.

Our first birding venue was at the Bridge over the Kotu Stream, we were blown away by the number of species seen there it was simply fantastic. Malachite and Pied Kingfishers showed down to 3 meters whilst the Giant Kingfisher stayed further afield. The usual crop of waders were present, several of them were familiar to us but Doug from Canada and Jeanne from South Africa were overwhelmed and bemused respectively.

As we strolled into the rice fields Little Bee-eaters stole the show along with our fourth Kingfisher, the Woodland variety. Bronze Mannikin, Senegal Coucal, Grey Woodpecker, Little Swifts, Lanner Falcon, Osprey (carrying a fish) and Rose-ringed Parakeets all went into the notebook.



Malachite Kingfisher

The sewer farm adjacent to the rice fields was a bit of a disappointment, the pits had been dredged and cleared of 90% of the vegetation. In this barren environment we only added Black-winged Stilt, Little Grebe, African Jacana, White-faced Whistling Duck, Common Sandpiper and not much else.

Our walk through the golf course was also mostly unproductive, it was getting hot now, birds were quiet and light was quite harsh. We added Long-tailed & Greater Blue-eared Glossy Starlings, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird and the beautiful Blue-bellied Roller to our day-list. A single acacia tree held seven species, Olivaceous & Subalpine Warblers, Fork-tailed Drongo, White-billed Buffalo Weaver, Vinaceous Dove, Village Weaver and Red-billed Firefinch!

We were collected by our driver Ali and driven back to the Kotu area where we took a short walk along the 'Casino Track' and that is where our birding stepped up a level.

A small warbler was seen by Steve hopping about in an acacia tree, it looked at first like a Willow Warbler with a well-marked supercilium, then it showed better and what a shock!! It was a full-on YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER, an outstanding find, I think the last sighting of one these in the Gambia was 2005, eleven years ago. We speculated that this bird was one of the recent influx of this species to western Europe, it should be wintering in Southern Asia.

To follow that sighting would be hard, however, we enjoyed another hour looking around a pool where we found African Darter, Common Greenshank, Common Moorhen, Purple Heron, Spur-winged Plover and our target species the Black Crake.

From there we returned to the hotel for a long lunch, it really was hot and sticky by now.

We reconvened at 4pm, the heat had eased off and the light was not so harsh. A short walk from the hotel got us to Bijilo Forest nature reserve, we found Black-capped Babbler on the edge of the forest. Our second surprise of the day came next. For some reason the government have given permission to uproot a large section of the Bijilo forest for development, what a disaster! The bulldozers were in.

Far fewer birds were seen than during past visits the forest was eventually 'found' after walking for quite a way. We did eventually find a number of species including the beautiful Swallow-Tailed Bee-eater, also lots of Little Bee-eaters, Green Woodhoopoe, African Grey Hornbill, African Thrush, Black-necked Weavers and we heard Oriole Warbler. By far the best sighting was of Stone Partridge, a little beauty sat on a branch low to the ground calling out loudly.

We returned to the hotel at 6:30pm just as it was getting dark. Dinner was taken an hour later, we counted the species total after calling the bird log, 92 were seen today, terrific start!

Day 3 - Thursday 24th November 2016

ABUKO NATIONAL PARK - LAMIN LODGE & LAMIN RICE FIELDS

Weather: cloudy to start with then hot and humid all day, 30C

Abuko national park protects over 100 hectares of rain forest in the midst of the Banjul urban sprawl. We arrived at 8am to begin our walk through the forest. It was typical forest birding throughout the morning, lots of calls, plenty of waiting for birds to appear with regular triumphs and the odd disappointment. Also typical was that a number of the group missed certain birds whilst other saw them and vice versa. However we did ensure that all the goodies were seen by all of the group.

Our first good sightings were made at the Darwin centre where an elevated balcony looks over a large pool and the surrounding forest. A Palm-Nut Vulture sat nicely for us as did three Hammerkops, Squacco Heron, Black-headed Heron and our star find, the Violet Turaco.

A lovely walk through Primary Forest ensued, it was fabulous, quiet to start with but our sightings increased exponentially as time went on. We found many new species for the trip list, the best sightings were: African Paradise & Red-bellied Flycatchers (also a hybrid of these two), Lesser Honeyguide, Yellow-breasted Apalis, the stunning Collared Sunbird, Fanti Saw-wing, Common Wattle-eye, Little Greenbul, Swallow-Tailed Bee-eater and two star birds Western Bluebill and Oriole Warbler.

We reached the animal Rescue Centre in the centre of the park where we bought cold drinks and sat in the shade for a while. A superb photographic hide was where we spent the next hour or so. We had an excellent time there as many species came to drink or bath in the artificial pool created in front of the hide. We added Lavender Waxbill, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Pygmy Kingfisher, Woodland Kingfisher, Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat and more doves than you can shake a stick at.

Our return journey was as good as the outward one except we took it much quicker, we had in-the-scope views of Grey-headed Bristlebird, another glimpse of Western Bluebill and many more sightings.

It was 2pm by the time we got to Lamin Lodge for lunch, and what an experience! The rickety, three-storey, wooden building offered a unique venue for lunch, views over the mangrove swamp and parts of the river with a lovely cool breeze. The food was basic, the service slow and you had to 'beat off' Vervet Monkeys that tried to steal food your off the plate but it was a wonderful lunch-break.



Blue-bellied Roller

Three new species were added to the list during lunch, Lappet-faced Vulture (another rare sighting at the coast), Blue-cheeked Bee-eater and Black Heron. A short walk immediately after lunch produced several species but nothing new.

From 4-6pm we walked a figure-of-eight circuit around the Lamin Rice Fields. I cannot begin to describe all the sightings, it was jam-packed with birds and all in good numbers.

Our 'new species' list included; Pied Flycatcher, Striated Heron, Red Quelea, Red Bishop, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Grey Kestrel, Black Crake, Wood Sandpiper, but we failed to see the hoped-for Painted Snipe, next time perhaps. At any given moment you could see at least 10 species!

We got back to the hotel at 7pm and ate dinner at 8pm. Our bird-log produced our biggest tally yet, 98 species, all seen in one day, amazing!!

Day 4 - FRIDAY 25th November 2016

BRUFUT WOODLANDS - TANJI BIRD RESERVE

Another day in this birding paradise of The Gambia, another large list of species and one more rarity to extend our bragging rights.

A well behaved group finished breakfast on time so we were all loaded onto the bus by 7:45am. BRUFUT woods isn't very far so we arrived in less than 30 minutes and went into birding mode a few minutes later.

Our walk took us along a dirt track towards Brufut Woods with open woodland and some farmland on both sides of us, as usual birds were everywhere. It took quite a while to move more than 100 meters!

Grey-backed Cameroptera was one of the first on the list quickly followed by Variable Sunbird, Senegal Parrot, Fanti Saw-wing, Northern Black Flycatcher, Northern Puffback and a Fork-tailed Drongo. Phew, give us a break! The birds just kept on coming, soon we added Northern Crombec, Lizard Buzzard, Singing Cisticola, Shikra, Western Olivaceous Warbler, Yellow-fronted Canary and Common Chiffchaff.

We ended up in the forest where a make-shift shelter and seating area had been built by the local guys for the purpose of serving hot & cold drinks for birds and birders. We watched dozens of birds coming to drink: Pygmy Kingfisher, Lesser Honeyguide, Blue-spotted Wood-Dove and Little Weavers joined a host of common birds.

Two excursions into the forest were led by local guides who showed us Northern White-faced Owls and Long-tailed Nightjars, smashing! We heard Oriole Warbler, Common Gonolek and Black-crowned Tchagra without seeing any of them!

For lunch we drove back to the coast road turning southward to Tanji where we pulled into the Tanji Bird Reserve and had lunch at the lodge. During lunch we watched two pools where many birds were coming to drink and bathe.

What a show, we added a few new species such as Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Blackcap and best of all, Western Bluebill, what a gem that one is. About twenty species came to the pools it was a fantastic luncheon venue.



Swallow-tailed Bee-eater

Tanji Beach was our afternoon birding site, we parked on the edge of town and walked about a mile to the river mouth along the beach. A dozen or so waders went onto the day list including our second rarity find of the trip; American Golden Plover, now that wasn't expected at all.

A vast roost of Terns, gulls and waders were constantly flushed by Ospreys flying over, at least four of them were fishing (none had wing tags). We saw Lesser-crested, Caspian, Royal, Sandwich, Common and Gull-billed Terns as well as Grey-headed, Lesser Black-backed and Slender-billed Gulls.

Lots of Sanderling, Bar-tailed Godwits, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstones and Grey Plovers were joined by singles of; Eurasian Curlew, Red Knot, Greenshank as well as herons, Darters, egrets and a few Crested Larks were found on the beach.

We left the beach at 5pm and got back to the hotel at 6pm, a relaxed dinner was eaten 90 minutes later. Our bird tally reached new heights as we topped the 100 mark for the day!!

Day 5 - Saturday, 26th November 2016

TUJERING BUSH TRACK - TANJI BEACH - TANJI BIRD RESERVE

WEATHER: hot, dry, sunny and humid. 30C

Tujering was our destination for this morning's outing, we arrived at 8:30am after another lovely breakfast on the outside terrace of the hotel.

The flat landscape borders the beach area and consists mainly of dense scrub up to a meter high with small stands of trees. As usual many birds called or sang from the scrub and/or trees, we quickly amassed a nice list. Striped Kingfisher was one of the first with Whistling & Singing Cisticolas coming close second.

Deeper into the scrub we found both Brown-backed & Fine-spotted Woodpeckers and a Wryneck all in the same tree! Yellow-fronted Canary, Willow Warbler, Velliot's & Bearded Barbets, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird and Red-necked Falcon were further finds in the trees, whilst Osprey, African Harrier-Hawk, Black-winged Kite and Pink-backed Pelican were seen as fly-overs.



Bearded Barber

Along a track near some cultivated plots we added Tree Pipit, Willow Warbler, Northern Wheatear, Wattle Lapwing, Four-banded Sandgrouse, Variable & Scarlet-chested Sunbirds, Levallant's Cuckoo and Red-winged Warbler, they just kept on coming.

The return walk produced a few more new species for the list including yet another western European migrant, the Whinchat along with Wire-tailed & Red-chested Swallow, Palm Swifts and Chestnut-headed Sparrow-Weaver.

After nearly four hours of walking in the hot Sun we were flagging a bit so we stopped and drove to nearby Tangi Bird Reserve for a long lunch where we sat in the gardens watching birds coming to drink and bathe in two small pools. Even

more European migrants were seen in the shape of Garden Warblers and Blackcaps. A nice couple of hours drifted by with many sightings of local common species listed, at 4:30pm we finished for the day and set off back to the hotel.

Day 6 - Sunday 27th November 2016

TRANSFER FROM COASTAL REGION TO TENDABA CAMP IN THE MIDDLE RIVER SECTION, CALING AT PIRANG FOREST, FARABA BUSH TRACK AND TENDABA 'AIRFIELD'

Weather: overcast all day, lower temperature around 25C

Although we left the hotel at 7:45am we didn't actually set off for Tendaba until 3pm, this was because we spent all morning walking the tracks in the Pirang Forest, then we ate lunch and spent a couple hours birding the Bush Track at FARABA.

Pirang forest is a fine example of primary forest with some impressive 'ancient' stands of trees. We never arrived until 9:30am but the birding was excellent. Modou was now our guide for the rest of the trip and he led us through the forest with a local guide.

It took a while to find our first birds but a Northern White-faced Owl showed really well before we 'chased-down' an African Goshawk which showed very briefly and to only a few of us. This was the pattern for the next few species such as Yellowbill Coucal, Green Crombec, Green Hylia and Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat, they all put in brief appearances.

Two prized birds came next, the first is making this piece of forest quite famous after its discovery in 2013. A pair of White-spotted Flufftails are seen regularly at a particular spot in the forest and today was no exception, what a cracker!



Abyssinian Roller

We then had better views of Green Crombec and Green Hylia before being shown a Verreaux's Eagle Owl, our second most prized bird.

Back at the entrance we sat drinking cold fantas whilst watching a drinking pool where a nice selection of birds were coming to drink. We added our first Black-rumped Waxbill to the list and enjoyed a good number of other species including a Pygmy Kingfisher.

From Pirang we continued our easterly journey before turning off at Faraba to explore the open forest along a Bush Track.

It was midday, hot and humid but still overcast, a hour long walk produced very little with Dark Chanting Goshawk being the most remarkable. We ate lunch in the shade of a large tree before spending an hour in a bird 'photography' hide where a selection of birds came to drink but nothing new for us.

Our journey to Tendaba started in earnest at 3pm! We set off with no more stops planned, but of course we stopped a dozen times to look at perched raptors and other interesting species.

Both Lizard and Grasshopper Buzzards were seen on a number of occasions, as was Long-crested Eagle, Dark Chanting Goshawk and Grey Kestrel, We also stopped to look at Abyssinian Roller, Rufous Crowned Roller, both African and Bruce's Green Pigeons, Red-billed Oxpecker and an African Cuckoo!

At Tendaba we stopped for a walk on the old 'airfield' site looking for Ground-Hornbills without success but we did see a good number of species including the African Hobby, Pink-backed Pelican, Senegal Parrot, Gull-billed Tern, Hammerkop and a good deal more.

We arrived at the camp just before dark and dinner was taken at eight in the large covered terrace. I am pleased to report that the camp is going through a much needed renovation programme and the road from Banjul is now tarmac all the way to Tendaba!



Fine-spotted Woodpecker

Day 7 - Monday 28th November 2016

Tendaba Creek Crawl - Local birding - Kiang West Forest

Weather: overcast until 11am, then bright sunshine and high temp. 30C+

My absolute favourite part of this tour is the Creek Crawl into the mangroves at Tendaba. A tranquil, very enjoyable trip into the heart of the swamps with so many species to look for in superb weather condition and idyllic habitat. Previous records for this trip have topped the 70 species mark with 77 being a WINGSPAN record count.

We set out just after 8am and headed up river for a short distance before turning across the river and entering the mangroves. Within minutes we had logged 10 species with African Spoonbill and Pink-backed Pelican showing the best. It's difficult to describe the calming effect you feel when you drift into the mangroves as though you are entering a green open-topped tunnel, a deep silence pervades, broken only by bird song and the odd splash as Darters drop from their perches into the water.



Blue-breasted Kingfishers call out their monotonous song whilst higher pitched sounds come from Mouse-Brown Sunbirds and African Blue Flycatchers. We saw all three of those species along with a multitude of others. Our boat drifted onwards to open areas of marsh where egrets, herons and a few waders were listed.

The strange looking Hammerkop is common there, it builds a huge nest, a domed-mound of sticks with a large entrance hole at its base. Every bend we rounded a new sighting would appear, a Martial Eagle's nest had a sitting bird but it was difficult to see it, a Dideric Cuckoo dashed across the boat and perched briefly showing well, the same happened with Malachite and Grey-headed Kingfishers.

We saw our first White-throated Bee-eaters, Red-rumped Swallows, Sand Martins, Brown Snake-Eagle, Great White Pelican, Black Heron and also European and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters

At the turning point we caught sight of a pair of Black-crowned Cranes, Gambia's iconic, national bird, which is now very rare. We then hit a purple patch when a number of new sightings came thick and fast. Marsh Harrier, Yellow-billed

Stork, Woolly-necked Stork, African Fish Eagle, Mosque Swallow, Montagu's Harrier, Great-spotted Cuckoo and 3 more Fish Eagles.

Our journey ended as we broke cover from the mangroves and hit the open water of the River Gambia, we crossed the river and returned to the camp at noon. It had been another fantastic trip with a superb list of 68 species, 22 of which were new for our list.

After a long lunch break we went for two more birding excursions, the first was a walk from the camp to a new site where a hide and a watering pool had been installed. It was now hot and very humid so the going was a little slow.

We found several species in the area with Village Indigobird, Brubru, Bush Petronia, Yellow-fronted Canary, Sahel (Exclamatory) Whydah, Scimitar-Bill (heard) and Northern Red Bishop forming the best part of our list.

At 4pm we jumped onto our bus and drove the short distance to Kiang West Bird Reserve where we took a Bush track and also walked across open peanut fields. Again many species were seen with several new species added to our list. A couple of migrant bird species were found in the form of Yellow Wagtail and Woodchat Shrike, we also saw Pygmy Sunbird, Violet-chested Sunbird, Spotted Thick-knee, Black-headed Lapwing and Senegal Parrot but we just missed a sighting of Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill as another group of birders saw two of them five minutes before we arrived.

As the Sun dropped quickly over the horizon we got back on the bus only to stop after 10 minutes to look at Nightjars, we saw a couple of Standard-winged Nightjars, the male showing off its wing-pennants as it dashed through the night sky. It was a lovely ending to another bird-filled day, we had seen 115 species and our total now stands at 232, wow, still 7 days to go!

Day 8 - November 29th 2016

TRANSFER FROM TENDABA WITH STOPS AT FARAFENNI PEANUT FIELDS, KAUR MARSHES, ROADSIDE WATERING HOLES - WASSU SAND QUARRY

Weather: hot, sunny and humid, the hottest day so far 35C+



Red-throated Bee-eater

Just when you think the birding would ease off a little and finding of new species would reduce we have another excellent day full of great finds and new birds.

We ate breakfast early and was on the road by 7:15am, our ferry crossing timing was important and we needed to get there as early as possible. We crossed the river with a little delay and drove northwards on the northern shore to Fara Fenni where we bought lunch before driving a few kilometres out of town to walk in the peanut fields.

It was hot already at 9am as we started our walk, the peanut harvest was well under way so many local people were out in the fields, this made our job a little harder because of the disturbance factor. We notched up quite a few local species and few migrants during the first hour such as; Northern Wheatear, Whinchat, Tree Pipit, Red-throated Pipit, Crested Lark and Greater Short-toed Lark.

As we crossed into some knee-high scrub we inadvertently flushed a few parties of Bustards, both Black-bellied and Savile's were identified, great birds for the list. We also saw Double-spurred Francolin and a Little Buttonquail was put up by Douglas.

Just after the Bustard excitement we heard the call of our main target species the Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill, it seemed extraordinary that we had walked passed this huge bird as the call came from just behind us. We repositioned ourselves and sure enough the bird came into view but as soon as it saw us it flew off. We tracked it with our bins and managed to follow it until it landed, but then it ran with an awkward and comical gait until we lost sight of it, an amazing bird.

After another search of the fields for Temminck's Courser, which failed to show, we walked back to the bus noting several Dark Chanting Goshawks, African Harrier-Hawk, Red-necked Falcon and groups of vultures which included both Ruppell's and White-backed Vultures.

It was now getting on for midday so we drove a little further and stopped at a roadside pool to eat lunch and watch flocks of birds coming to drink.



Hammerkop

Again we were amazed by the number of species listed there in just one hour. Apart from large flocks of weavers, bishops, queleas and doves we saw Bush Petronia, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Northern Sahel Whydah, Yellow-fronted Canary, Little Swift, Dark Chanting Goshawk, Black-rumped and Lavender Waxbills, Namaqua Dove and Green Bee-eater.

From the pools we drove another 20km to Kaur Marshes a very large area of reed fringed pools, mudflats and scrub. The road forms a raised causeway through the centre of the marsh which is ideal for viewing from. We found Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark just before we located our major target species of the tour, the Crocodile Bird or Egyptian Plover, what a stunner we notched up three of them in quick succession, amazing!

Kaur Marsh is also excellent for waders especially over-wintering Collared Pratincoles of which there were about 500 in view. The Kittlitz's Plover is also a feature there, we saw about a dozen with Ringed & Little-Ringed Plover, Marsh Sandpiper, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper and a Single Painted Snipe. Three Knot-billed Ducks landed in the reeds but were only seen by a couple of the group and many common water birds were present including Hammerkop, Jacana, lots of egrets, herons and cormorants.

We left the area and continued towards Georgetown making a few stops to photograph perched raptors and rollers, also we saw our first Wahlberg's Eagle circling high up.

One last stop was made at Wassu Sand Quarry, where a colony of Red-throated Bee-eaters have bred for Donkey's years, the numbers have steadily been increasing. Today over 100 pairs were present, in my opinion they are the most beautiful and photogenic of all the Bee-eater species found in the Gambia, they posed well for us.

Green Bee-eater is another beauty which was also present along with a dozen or so other species including; Northern Anteater-Chat, White-rumped Seedeater, Northern Sahel Whydah and lots of weaver species.

A short ferry ride took us onto Georgetown, which is an Island in the middle of the Gambian River, we are now some 300km upriver from Banjul where the river is very wide and still tidal! We settled into our rooms in the Boabolong Camp after a cold drink. A nice relaxed break was enjoyed before dinner at 8. Our list for today was the biggest of the tour so far with 119 species recorded!

Day 9 - November 30th 2016

WASSU AREA AND SAND QUARRY - 'HIPPO' RIVER CRUISE

WEATHER: sunshine all day; hot and humid. Temp. 35C

Another fantastic morning of sunshine, birds and birdsong. After a frugal breakfast of bread, jam, cheese-triangles and an omelette we set off to the ferry for our trip back to the north shore. The vehicle queue for the ferry was quite large so we went across as foot-passengers and birded around the river until the bus came over some 45 minutes later. We saw a good variety of species, the large African Harrier-Hawk flew over carrying a lizard for breakfast, Grey Kestrels dashed passed us, whilst Senegal Coucal, Yellow-billed Shrike and Vinaceous Dove sat in the same bush. We watched Grey-backed Cameroptera, Velliot's Barbet and several other species before boarding the bus.

Apart from the large colony of Red-throated Bee-eaters Wassu quarry is a good place to look for Carmine Bee-eaters especially in the morning, our short search of the area produced a number of them within minutes, what a stunning looking beast. We also watched the Red-throated and the Green Bee-eaters along with large numbers of Northern Sahel Whydahs, Northern Red Bishops, White Rumped Seedeaters, Cut-throats, Waxbills and weavers.

The sky was full of birds too, a number of raptors began to appear and including Dark Chanting Goshawk & Grasshopper Buzzard, which were seen along the way, we listed ten species this morning.

First a pair of African Hawk-Eagles showed really well then African Harrier-Hawk came over and Beaudouin's Eagle hovered above us. A Lanner Falcon dive-bombed another Beaudouin's Eagle just before we sighted a Martial Eagle carrying prey (the prey looked like a squirrel), phew, what a purple patch. Also up there with the eagles was Hooded, Ruppell's & White-backed Vultures as well as Sand Martin, Little Swift, Mottled Spintail and both Red-chested & Red-rumped Swallows. Abyssinian Rollers were everywhere with Rufous-crowned Roller seen on the telephone wires.



Carmine Bee-eater

A short watch at the quarry pools produced even more species as Pin-tailed Whydah, Cuthroat, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Weaver, Red Bishop, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting joined lots of weaver's and Waxbills coming to drink and Anteater-Chat sat singing from earth mounds.

It was getting very hot so we eventually gave up and drove back to the ferry, again there was a long boarding delay so we hired a private boat to take us to our camp leaving Ali the driver and the bus in the queue. A long lunch ensued and we met again at 3pm back at the jetty in time to board a boat for our private river cruise, it was still stifling hot at this stage.

Out on the river a cool breeze was most welcomed, we relaxed and began to enjoy a series of sightings over the next three hours as we motored down the river hugging the shore on either side. Highlights during the first hour include sightings of an African Fish Eagle which dropped into the water on a fishing expedition, a Palm-nut Vulture, several Night Herons roosting and a number of Swamp Flycatchers feeding from overhanging branches.

We ventured up a side creek where Kingfishers were a prominent feature, Malachite, Woodland, Grey-headed and Blue-breasted all made it onto the list, whilst the main target Shining Blue remained elusive. It was on the return journey from this creek visit that we made our best sighting when we joined another birding boat-party who had just seen an African Finfoot.



Finfoot – this one and the front page picture taken by Steve Berry

At this stage our engine had some trouble and for fifteen frustrating minutes we drifted away from the sighting whilst the other group were getting occasional views. Eventually we got going and returned to the site just as the other boat left and to our great relief the bird came out from hiding. We had the most fantastic views of it out in the open, what a colourful bird which looks ten times better in real life than its depiction in the field guide.

Next we ventured further down river adding more species to the list, Yellow-throated Leaf-love, Little and Red-throated Bee-eaters, Hammerkop, Senegal Thick-knee, Wattled Lapwing and Common Gonolek. We also saw several Monitor Lizards, Red-Colobus Monkeys, Green Vervet Monkeys and a huge Hippopotamus, this beast rose up out of the water and breached like a whale with gaping jaws - I think we got a little too close so we beat a hasty retreat.

The light began to fade as we returned upriver but before it was too bad we notched our second most wanted species, the Shining Blue Kingfisher. We had a number of brief views of them as they dashed from perch to perch and we did see it for a short time perched on over-hanging branches but it was difficult and you had to be quick with your bins, we all saw one but not everyone had satisfactory views before bad light thwarted our efforts.

A beautiful sunset lit up the sky behind us as we made it back to the jetty behind our camp on Georgetown Island. We logged just over 40 species on the trip with the two main must-see birds in the bag and a scary Hippo on the mammal list!

Dinner was at 8 pm so we had time to call the log beforehand and enjoy a cold drink at the same time. We now had 275 species on our list, tomorrow we head back to Tendaba along the south bank this time.

Day 10 - 1st December 2016

TRANSFER FROM GEORGETOWN ISLAND TO TENDABA CAMP WITH STOPS AT JAHALLY RICE FIELDS AND KIANG WEST BUSH TRACK

WEATHER: our hottest day yet, 39C and humid.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION-DAY IN THE GAMBIA

Our air-conditioned bus was a saviour today and it was difficult to get the group off it at times. We set off at 8am and travelled westward back to Tendaba, we crossed onto the south bank of the river from Georgetown on the 'new' bridge

and stopped just after to look at a pair of Verraux's Eagle Owls. The owls were in their usual baobab tree and showed very well, we also found Gabar Goshawk, Marsh Harrier, Senegal Parrot, Mosque Swallow and a few common weaver's.

After another 20km we stopped to look at a colony of Maribou Storks, these huge, ugly birds are holding up well in the Gambia. Modou, our guide, took us to another Verraux's Eagle Owl site a little further on where we had much better views especially good for photography.



Egyptian Plover

It was 10:30am by the time we reached the huge rice fields at Jahally, where hot and humid conditions prevailed. We coaxed the group off the bus with the 'carrot' of Painted Snipe being our best offer! We saw a dozen snipe, mostly Common Snipe but a few were most definitely Painted Snipe, but we only saw them in flight. An hour and a half walking in the heat produced over 30 species which included a European Roller, a rare sighting in the Gambia, as well as Black Crake, dozens of Jacanas, our first Black-faced Quail-finch, also Red-billed Quelea, Purple, Grey, Black-headed and Squacco Heron.

From Jahally we drove through Soma picking up picnic supplies before sitting in the shade of the forest to eat it. Between there and Tendaba we stopped several more times to look at raptors high in the sky or perched on roadside trees. We added Tawny Eagle to our trip list and also saw Wahlberg's, Brown Snake-Eagle, Dark Chanting Goshawk, African Harrier-Hawk, Lanner Falcon and Grey Kestrel.

We arrived at Tendaba Camp at 3pm and decided to wait until the heat abated before we went out birding. So it was 5pm when we set off for the 10 minute drive to Kiang West Bush tracks. Our first track was excellent we saw Four-banded Sandgrouse on the track itself, Black-crowned Tchagra in the bushes then we added several new species in quick succession as Modou whistled the call of the Pearl-spotted Owlet. First we found a Scimitar-bill, then a Brubru, Senegal Batis and a most wanted species, the White-shouldered Tit. It was certainly a great fifteen minutes, we also saw Yellow-breasted Eremomela and a Brown-backed Woodpecker.

Back on the main track our sightings continued despite the fading light. We saw two more Eremomelas with a Yellow White-eye and a Brown-rumped Bunting. A Common Redstart was one of the last birds we recorded before the light finally gave way.

Back at the camp we discovered that 120 British Students had checked in, I am listening to very loud disco music as I write this at 10pm, they have promised to end the disco at midnight!

Day 11 - Friday 2nd December, 2016

TRANSFER FROM TENDABA TO SENEGAMBIA HOTEL WITH STOPS AT TENDABA 'AIRFIELD' - KIANG WEST BUSH TRACK AND NATURE RESERVE HEADQUARTERS

WEATHER: Another scorcher with temps above 35C

After checking out of the Tendaba Camp for the second time on this tour we stopped a couple of kilometers along the road at the post-war aerodrome site. Our target was the Plain-backed Pipit which failed to show but we enjoyed the early morning temperature and a good number of species too.



White-crested Helmet-Shrike

From there we drove to the KIANG WEST Bush track where we had enjoyed good sightings last night. It was equally as good this morning, birds seemed to be everywhere. We relocated the White-shouldered Tit and in the same tree we found Striped Kingfisher, Yellow-fronted Canary, Yellow-breasted Eremomela and Pygmy Sunbird. Further along the track we saw a couple of Black-crowned Tchagras, Four-banded Sandgrouse and our first White-crested Helmet-Shrike. Senegal Batis was a show-stopper, we had much better views of it this morning.

A Bateleur Eagle was a great sighting it flew right over us, smashing! Dark-chanting Goshawk, African Harrier-hawk, Lanner Falcon and Grey Kestrel were some of the other raptors seen.

For the rest of the morning we drove round to another Bush track a few kilometers further west but still in the reserve, this track led us to the park headquarters and a group of bird-ringers were operating a temporary ringing station. We stayed for an hour or so watching them process a number of species.

A Lizard Buzzard was a superb catch for them and a little beauty in the hand, the guys pointed out the extraordinary large legs and feet on this species. Grey-backed Cameroptera, Common Bulbul, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and Vinaceous

Doves were some of the birds ringed. Ray Marsh, one of our group was also a ringer and he handled a couple of species too, particularly doves, he loved ringing a Black-billed Wood-Dove.



Lizard Buzzard – looks a bit like a ventriloquist and his dummy-bird called lizzy!

Well, we had to leave the ringers and continue our drive to Banjul, we stopped a couple more times to look at Long-crested Eagle, Grasshopper Buzzard and Abyssinian Rollers for photographic opportunities and we got out to stretch our legs at a raptor watch-point. We added Booted Eagle and Common Swift to our trip list before setting off again.

The remainder of the journey was a bit of a nightmare and it reminded me of a 'movie scene'. The election results were in and the current President of 22 years had been toppled! The population were ecstatic and took to the streets in their thousands. Each village we came to had large cheering, gatherings of exuberant youths either in the road or along it, we had to trickle through some very rowdy mobs, the closer we got to Banjul the bigger the mobs, they surrounded the bus bashing on windows and side panels, climbing on the roof!

Ali our driver took us through side tracks to avoid the main road areas as we approached KOLOLI where our hotel was, we made it back around 3pm, a little late but all in one piece. We called it day after that and didn't venture out of the hotel grounds for the rest of the day.

The bird-log revealed that our total stands at 286 species recorded, we have 3 full days to look for another 30+ species or at least crack the 300 target we have set for ourselves.

Day 12 - Saturday 3rd December 2016

TUJERING - TANJI BEACH - TANJI BIRD RESERVE

WEATHER: hot and very humid, 30C

A return to TUJERING to look for a couple of species missing from our list was our morning's objective after we had enjoyed a 'proper' breakfast back at the Senegambia hotel. We arrived at 8am in clear weather with a rising temperature, it was already humid.

Within minutes we were watching one of our target species the Yellow Penduline Tit, we saw two of them in the scrub, a lovely little bird. Several other species were also noted during that first half hour, with Common Gonolek, Black-crowned Tchagra, Singing Cisticola and Velliot's Barbet all showing well.

As we progressed deeper into the scrub we found Green-backed Eremomela, Yellow-fronted Canary, Brown-backed Woodpecker, Willow Warbler, Melodious Warbler, Wryneck and Little Bee-eater.

During the next hour we walked between small stands of young trees where Double-spurred Francolin, Brubru, Bearded Barbet, Lanner Falcon, Ring-necked Parakeet, Splendid & Violet Chested Sunbirds were seen, we also added our second new species of the day, Pied-winged Swallow.



White-fronted Black-Chat

An area of small, walled cultivated fields provided our next excitement when Modou our guide discovered a pair of very showy White-fronted Black-Chats, we had been after this species on a number of occasions and Douglas, our Canadian group member was particularly pleased to see it. We also added Common Whitethroat to the list and saw Whinchat, Yellow Wagtail, Woodchat Shrike, two Ospreys, Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Bearded Barbet and a few common species especially doves.

The heat increased and bird activity reduced so we walked back to the main track to catch our bus, we had walked for 3 1/2 hours in hot sunshine and needed a cold drink. We drove to Tanji, the next village and sat in the shade of a restaurant terrace drinking cold drinks, we ordered lunch which took an hour to arrive.

It was 2pm when we set off on foot to walk to the gull roost at Tanji Beach, hundreds of birds were feeding in the sea and along the shore. The usual large numbers of Grey-headed Gulls were joined by Lesser -Black-backed Gulls and we found the huge Kelp Gull sitting in the water not too far offshore.

Sanderlings scurried ahead of us with Ruddy Turnstone, Bar-tailed Godwits and Grey Plover as we walked out to the sand-bar gull-roost. Masses of Terns produced another trip-tick when we found a bunch of Little Terns with Common, Sandwich, Lesser-crested, Caspian and Royal Terns. A dozen Ringed Plovers fed on the soft sand across the river-mouth and to our great delight we found three White-fronted Plovers, another newbie.



Kelp Gull

The American Golden Plover we had discovered at Tanji a few days ago was nowhere to be seen but an odd looking Whimbrel had us pondering! After we walked back to the restaurant we jumped onto the bus and drove to Tanji Bird Reserve where we had another cold drink whilst watching their 'drinking pools'. A Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat and a Paradise Flycatcher were the best of the sightings there.

From the bird reserve we had good views over the Tangi Beach a little further north than the gull roost site, we added our last new trip-tick of the day in the shape of a Pomerine Skua, that made 8 new species for the day and brought the trip total to 294.

We drove back to the hotel and finished the day at 5pm. Dinner was at 7pm. It was so nice to have proper room facilities once again including hot water and air-con.

Day 13 - Sunday 4th December 2016

FARASUTO FOREST - BUND ROAD (BANJUL) - BANJUL FERRY BEACH

Weather: hot, not so humid. 30C

New species for the list are going to be extremely hard to find from now on but there are still about 30 possible ticks for us. We decided to go for forest birds in the morning and shorebirds in the afternoon, this plan worked well with a 2 hour break back at the hotel during the hottest part of the day.

We arrived at Farasuto Forest at 8:30am, this community-based conservation enterprise is run by the local village. We were met by a local lad who guided us to his prized birds, he led us through forest, open woodland and a mangrove marsh area. Our first target was the Northern Greyish Eagle-Owl of which we saw two very well. We then went to another section of the forest to search for another owl, this time we found an African Brown Owl, this one was quite an excellent bird for the list, an uncommon species and one we never expected to see.

A variety of other species were heard during this time but we never saw many until we came to the edge of the forest and broke out into the open mangrove marsh. We could see across a pool of open water into a row of trees where a pair

of WHITE-BACKED NIGHT-HERONS could clearly be seen. This was another unexpected surprise, a superb addition to the trip list.



White-backed Night Heron

In the open area we had views over small pools and mangroves, we saw Senegal Thick-Knee, Wattled Plover, Malachite Kingfisher, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Red-billed Firefinch and a lucky couple of the group saw Bar-breasted Firefinch! A couple of nice Sunbirds appeared, Beautiful, Splendid and Variable and a Lanner Falcon flew over us.

Back in the forest, near the entrance, a resting place has been built where a seating area and a drinking station for both birds and birders can be enjoyed. We sat drinking cold drinks whilst watching the drinking pots put out for the birds. Not a single bird turned up in 30 minutes! So we went for a second walk, this time along the open approach track.

We saw African Harrier-Hawk, Lizard Buzzard, Yellow-billed Kite and Hooded Vulture in the open sky whilst a number of birds fed in the trees. One particular acacia tree held Olivaceous, Bonelli's and Willow Warbler as well as Greater Honeyguide, Variable Sunbird and a number of Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu.

Another bush gave us Northern Crombec and Scarlet-chested Sunbird, after that we walked back to watering station. This time a number species came to drink and apart from a number of doves we saw our first Green-headed Sunbird and we noted Common Wattle-eye, Olivaceous Warbler and African Thrush.

At 1pm we drove back to hotel for a midday break and lunch which was taken at the beach bar. By 3pm we were back on the bus heading to Banjul and after a delay caused by military road-blocks (this is usual on the main road to Banjul) we arrived at BUND ROAD mangrove marsh. It was still high tide so the open marsh and pools were covered in roosting birds, thousands of them! I won't list everything but we added Black-tailed Godwit, Pied Avocet, Curlew Sandpiper and Dunlin to our wader list but also present was six species of Terns, African Spoonbill, Yellow-billed Stork, lots of herons and egrets, it really was quite magical.

By the time we got to Banjul Ferry Beach the tide had turned and the light began to fade but it was still fantastic birding. Hundreds of gulls and terns were feeding just off-shore, they were being pestered by Skuas. Both Pomerine and Arctic

Skuas came extremely close to the shore chasing gulls etc. we had great views of them, we also picked up our thirteenth new species of the day when a Black Tern flew by.

Well it had to end, another excellent day with only one more to go! Our total now stands at 307.

Day 14 - Monday 5th December 2016

MARAKISSA BUSH TRACK - MARAKISSA RIVER LODGE

WEATHER: all day hot sunshine, low humidity but very hot.

Yes our last full day had finally arrived and all too quickly! We spent a hard exhausting time looking for a few species we had missed, walking in hot sunshine with little cover, it drained all of us and by 4pm it really did feel like the last day. It was still enjoyable especially the first two hours when the temperature was still bearable and light quite exquisite for photography.

After breakfast we drove to the south to Marakissa village and onto a bush track. As soon as we got off the bus we found Northern Puffback, African Red-bellied Flycatcher and a flock of six Yellow White-eye. A Senegal Coucal sat out in the Sun and a distant Klaas' Cuckoo did the same, we then tracked down our first 'new bird' as we followed the calls of the Leaflove, two of them showed in flight and perched for short periods. Pied Hornbills seemed to be everywhere but we couldn't find a Green Turaco which was still missing from the list.



African Scops Owl roosting in bamboo

After 3 hours we logged about 30 species but the temperature crept up and so we crept back to the bus, our walk back produced another trip tick when Modou found a Black-winged Bishop, in non-breeding plumage it was quite plain looking thing.

We drove straight to MARAKISSA RIVER LODGE where we spent most of the rest of the day. We first sat in comfy chairs watching drinking pools where within minutes we found another new species, a Spotted Honeyguide, marvellous, the bird showed extremely well. An array of brightly coloured birds adorned the gardens and drinking pools and it wasn't long before another beauty went onto the list. We tracked this one down by call and had to work a little for it. The Grey-

headed Bush-Shrike is a stonker, look it up, we had excellent sightings as it fed in the nearby trees, a bonus was the finding of an Oriole Warbler which was less conspicuous and gave only fleeting views.



American Golden Plover

After another hour of watching groups of Piapiacs, Purple Glossy Starlings, Bronze Mannikins, Red-billed Firefinches and Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu we went for a short walk. The path we chose took us passed a a lagoon where Senegal Thick-Knee, Spur-winged Lapwing, Long-tailed Cormorant and a few other species were seen, it then went up to a small farm where in the driveway we looked for a roosting owl.

Two African Scops Owls were roosting high up in a bunch of bamboo, their favoured roost site, marvellous, this was our sixth owl of the trip!! After that excitement we returned to our sheltered seating area in Marakissa Lodge where we had lunch, a little knap-time and some more birding by the pools.

At 3pm we went for a walk to a nearby bridge along the now asphalted road, we were just 1km from the border with Southern Senegal. From the road we could see over a marsh with reed-beds, lily-covered pools and some open water. We had hoped for Purple Swampphen and African Crake but what we saw was African Jacana, Black Crake, Hammerkop, Common Moorhen, Squacco Heron, Purple Heron, Cattle, Little and Great Egrets. On the open water we watched Long-tailed Cormorant, African Darter and Pied Kingfisher. A Grey Woodpecker landed in a dead tree, a Pearl-spotted Owlet showed up after calling for a while and a pair of Common Gonoleks called from the same tree.

Our last return to the lodge was made in hope of seeing the Green Turaco which was still missing from our sighting's list! We gave it until 5pm without joy, we did see Violet Turaco, Lesser Honeyguide and the usual visitors to the drinking pools.

At 5pm we called it day and set off back to Kololi to our hotel which took nearly an hour. Our last bird-log of the holiday was called after dinner, we had seen another 5 species which brought our sightings list to 313.

Despite the heat and humidity all the group said that they really enjoyed the trip because the superb birding and photographic opportunities vastly out-weighed the heat discomfort.

Next year's trip will be two weeks earlier to avoid such high temperatures, from the 7th November, book your place now to avoid disappointment!

Day 15 - 6th December, 2016

Garden walk SENEGAMBIA HOTEL - transfer to Banjul Airport - flight to UK

WEATHER: Hot! With a nice sea-breeze, 30C

We all decided not to go on an official birding trip this last morning. Instead we had a nice leisurely breakfast followed by a walk in the grounds of the hotel. It was surprising to see how many species were seen but we all commented on the lack of flowering shrubs, the Sunbirds that go with them and the general reduction in the number of species now found in the 'manicured' gardens.



White-capped Robin-Chat

Some of the goodies seen were; Oriole Warbler, Common Gonolek, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, White-crowned Robin-Chat, Green Wood Hoopoe, Northern Black Flycatcher, Palm Swift, Little Swift, Piapiac and Yellow-billed Shrike.

I walked down to the beach for a spot of sea-watching, there were hundreds of terns out there. I noted distant Skuas chasing the terns around and close by six White-winged Terns flew by, this would have been a new species for the trip but as I was alone I didn't count it.

Soon it was time to go, we met Ali and Modou who loaded us and our luggage onto the bus for the 30 minute drive to the airport. The group disbanded as we boarded our separate flights, the tour was over!

PLACES VISITED

TUESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER FLIGHTS UK – BANJUL, GAMBIA – TRANSFER TO KOLOLI – GARDEN WALK IN HOTEL GROUNDS
WEDNESDAY 23RD NOVEMBER KOTU STREAM – KOTU RICE FIELDS – SEWERAGE PONDS – GOLF COURSE – CASINO CYCLE TRACK – BIJULO FOREST
THURSDAY 24TH NOVEMBER ABUKO NATIONAL PARK – LAMIN RICE FIELDS
FRIDAY 25TH NOVEMBER BRUFUT WOODS – TANJI BIRD RESERVE - TANJI BEACH WALK
SATURDAY 26TH NOVEMBER TUJERING – TANJI BIRD RESERVE
SUNDAY 27TH NOVEMBER PIRANG FOREST – FARABA BUSK TRACK – TRANSFER TO TENDABA CAMP
MONDAY 28TH NOVEMBER MANGROVE CREEK CRAWL, TENDABA – KIANG WEST BUSH TRACK
TUESDAY 29TH NOVEMBER TRANSFER TO GEORGETOWN ISLAND – FARAFENNI PEANUT FIELDS – ROADSIDE POOLS – KAUR MARSHES – WASSU SAND QUARRY – JANJANBURAY FERRY TO GEORGETOWN
WEDNESDAY 30TH NOVEMBER JANJANBURAY FERRY – WASSU QUARRY – RIVER ‘HIPPO’ CRUISE
THURSDAY 1ST DECEMBER TRANSFER GEORGETOWN ISLAND TO TENDABA ALONG SOUTH BANK – JAHALLEY RICE FIELDS – KIANG WEST BUSH TRACK
FRIDAY 2ND DECEMBER TRANSFER – TENDABA CAMP – KOLOLI, BANJUL – TENDABA ‘AIRFIELD’ – KIANG WEST BUSH TRACK
SATURDAY 3RD DECEMBER TUJERING BUSH TRACKS – TANJI BEACH – TANJI BIRD RESERVE
SUNDAY 4TH DECEMBER FARASUTO FOREST – BUND ROAD MANGROVE SWAMP – BEACH AREA AROUND BANJUL FERRY
MONDAY 5TH DECEMBER MARAKISSA BUSH TRACK – MARAKISSA RIVER LODGE
TUESDAY 6TH DECEMBER SENEGAMBIA GARDEN WALK – TRANSFER TO BANJUL AIRPORT – FLIGHT TO UK

SPECIES RECORDED NOVEMBER 22ND – DECEMBER 6TH 2016

√ = seen H = heard only LO = leader/s only sighting

1.	Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	√
2.	African Darter	Anhinga rufa	√
3.	Long-tailed Cormorant	Phalacrocorax africanus	√
4.	White-breasted' Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo (lucidus)	√
5.	Great White Pelican	Pelecanus onocrotalus	√
6.	Pink-backed Pelican	Pelecanus rufescens	√
7.	Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	√
8.	Black-headed Heron	Ardea melanocephala	√
9.	Purple Heron	Ardea purpurea	√
10.	Black-crowned Night Heron	Nycticorax nycticorax	√
11.	White-backed Night Heron	Gorsachius leuconotus	√
12.	Squacco Heron	Ardeola ralloides	√
13.	Western Reef Egret	Egretta gularis	√
14.	Black Egret	Egretta ardesiaca	√
15.	Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	√
16.	Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	√
17.	Intermediate Egret	Egretta intermedia	√
18.	Great White Egret	Egretta alba	√
19.	Hammerkop	Scopus umbretta	√
20.	Dwarf Bittern	Ixobrychus sturmii	√
21.	Striated Heron	Butorides striata	√
22.	Yellow-billed Stork	Mycteria ibis	√
23.	Woolly-necked Stork	Ciconia episcopus	√
24.	Marabou Stork	Leptoptilos crumeniferus	√
25.	African Spoonbill	Platalea alba	√
26.	White-faced Whistling Duck	Dendrocygna viduata	√
27.	African Pygmy Goose	Nettapus auritus	√
28.	Knob-billed Duck	Sarkidiornis melanotos	LO
29.	Spur-winged Goose	Plectropterus gambensis	√
30.	African Fish Eagle	Haliaeetus vocifer	√
31.	Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	√
32.	Palm-nut Vulture	Gypohierax angolensis	√
33.	African Harrier-Hawk	Polyboroides typus	√
34.	Bateleur	Terathopius ecaudatus	√
35.	Hooded Vulture	Necrosyrtes monachus	√
36.	White-backed Vulture	Gyps africanus	√
37.	Rüppell's Vulture	Gyps rueppellii	√
38.	Yellow-billed Kite	Milvus parasitus	√
39.	Western Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus	√
40.	Montagu's Harrier	Circus pygargus	√
41.	Beaudouin's Snake-eagle	Circaetus beaudouini	√
42.	Brown Snake-Eagle	Circaetus cinereus	√
43.	Black-shouldered Kite	Elanus caeruleus	√
44.	Shikra	Accipiter badius	√
45.	African Goshawk	Accipiter tachiro	LO

46.	Gabar Goshawk	Micronisus gabar	✓
47.	Dark Chanting Goshawk	Melierax metabates	✓
48.	Lizard Buzzard	Kaupifalco monogrammicus	✓
49.	Grasshopper Buzzard	Butastur rufipennis	✓
50.	Wahlberg's Eagle	Aquila wahlbergi	✓
51.	Tawny Eagle	Aquila rapax	✓
52.	Booted Eagle	Aquila pennata	✓
53.	Martial Eagle	Polemaetus bellicosus	✓
54.	Long-crested Eagle	Lophaetus occipitalis	✓
55.	African Hawk Eagle	Hieraaetus spilogaster	✓
56.	Ayer's Hawk Eagle	Aquila ayersii	✓
57.	Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus	✓
58.	Lanner Falcon	Falco biarmicus	✓
59.	Grey Kestrel	Falco ardosiaceus	✓
60.	Red-necked Falcon	Falco chicquera	✓
61.	African Hobby	Falco cuvierii	✓
62.	Double-spurred Francolin	Francolinus bicalcaratus	✓
63.	Ahanta Francolin	Francolinus achantensis	H
64.	Little Button-Quail	Turnix sylvatica	✓
65.	Stone Partridge	Ptilopachus petrosus	✓
66.	Four-banded Sandgrouse	Pterocles quadricinctus	✓
67.	Black Crake	Amaurornis flavirostra	✓
68.	Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	✓
69.	African Jacana	Actophilornis africana	✓
70.	African Finfoot	Podica senegalensis	✓
71.	Black-crowned Crane	Balearica pavonina	✓
72.	Black-bellied Bustard	Lissotis melanogaster	✓
73.	Savile's Bustard	Lophotis savilei	✓
74.	Senegal Thick-knee	Burhinus senegalensis	✓
75.	Spotted Thick-knee	Burhinus capensis	✓
76.	Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	✓
77.	Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta	✓
78.	Common Snipe	Gallinago gallinago	✓
79.	Egyptian Plover	Pluvianus aegyptius	✓
80.	Greater Painted-snipe	Rostratula benghalensis	✓
81.	Collared Pratincole	Glareola pratincola	✓
82.	Black-headed Lapwing	Vanellus tectus	✓
83.	Spur-winged Lapwing	Vanellus spinosus	✓
84.	Wattled Lapwing	Vanellus senegallus	✓
85.	Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres	✓
86.	Red Knot	Calidris canutus	✓
87.	Kittlitz's Plover	Charadrius pecuarius	✓
88.	Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula	✓
89.	Little Ringed Plover	Charadrius dubius	✓
90.	White-fronted Plover	Charadrius marginatus	✓
91.	Grey Plover	Pluvialis squatarola	✓
92.	American Golden Plover	Pluvialis dominica	✓
93.	Black-tailed Godwit	Limosa limosa	✓
94.	Bar-tailed Godwit	Limosa lapponica	✓
95.	Eurasian Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus	✓
96.	Eurasian Curlew	Numenius arquata	✓

97.	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	✓
98.	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	✓
99.	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	✓
100.	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	✓
101.	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	✓
102.	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	✓
103.	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	✓
104.	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	✓
105.	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	✓
106.	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	✓
107.	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	✓
108.	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	✓
109.	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	✓
110.	Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	✓
111.	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	✓
112.	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓
113.	Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>	✓
114.	Slender-Billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>	✓
115.	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	✓
116.	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	✓
117.	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	✓
118.	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	✓
119.	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	✓
120.	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>	✓
121.	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	✓
122.	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	✓
123.	Bruce's Green Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>	✓
124.	African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>	✓
125.	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	✓
126.	African Mourning Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>	✓
127.	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	✓
128.	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	✓
129.	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	✓
130.	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	✓
131.	Blue-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>	✓
132.	Black-billed Wood Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>	✓
133.	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	✓
134.	Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>	✓
135.	Violet Turaco	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>	✓
136.	Green Turaco	<i>Tauraco persa</i>	H
137.	Western Grey Plantain-Eater	<i>Crinifer piscator</i>	✓
138.	Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	✓
139.	Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	✓
140.	Great Spotted Cuckoo	<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	✓
141.	Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>	✓
142.	African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>	✓
143.	Yellowbill	<i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>	✓
144.	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>	✓
145.	African Wood Owl	<i>Strix woodfordii</i>	✓
146.	Pearl-spotted Owl	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	✓
147.	African Scops Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>	✓

148.	Northern White-faced Owl	<i>Ptilopsis leucotis</i>	✓
149.	Greyish Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo cinerascens</i>	✓
150.	Verreaux's Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo lacterus</i>	✓
151.	Long-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>	✓
152.	Standard-winged Nightjar	<i>Macrodipteryx longipennis</i>	✓
153.	Mottled Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>	✓
154.	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	✓
155.	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	✓
156.	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	✓
157.	African Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Ceyx pictus</i>	✓
158.	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>	✓
159.	Shining-blue Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo quadribrachys</i>	✓
160.	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	✓
161.	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	✓
162.	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>	✓
163.	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon malimbica</i>	✓
164.	Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>	✓
165.	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>	✓
166.	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓
167.	Northern Carmine Bee-eater	<i>Merops nubicus</i>	✓
168.	Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>	✓
169.	Red-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops bullocki</i>	✓
170.	Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>	✓
171.	White-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops albicollis</i>	✓
172.	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>	✓
173.	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓
174.	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>	✓
175.	Rufous-crowned Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>	✓
176.	Blue-bellied Roller	<i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>	✓
177.	Abyssinian Roller	<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>	✓
178.	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	✓
179.	Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>	✓
180.	Black Scimitar-bill	<i>Rhinopomastus aterrimus</i>	✓
181.	(Western) Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus (erythrorhynchus) kemp</i>	✓
182.	African Pied Hornbill	<i>Tockus fasciatus</i>	✓
183.	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>	✓
184.	Abyssinian Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>	✓
185.	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	✓
186.	Bearded Barbet	<i>Lybius dubius</i>	✓
187.	Vieillot's Barbet	<i>Lybius vieilloti</i>	✓
188.	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>	✓
189.	Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>	✓
190.	Spotted Honeyguide	<i>Indicator maculatus</i>	✓
191.	Fine-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera punctuligera</i>	✓
192.	Brown-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos obsoletus</i>	✓
193.	Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>	✓
194.	Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>	✓
195.	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	✓
196.	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	✓
197.	Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>	✓
198.	Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>	✓

199.	Sand Martin	Riparia riparia	√
200.	Red-chested Swallow	Hirundo lucida	√
201.	Wire-tailed Swallow	Hirundo smithii	√
202.	West African' Red-rumped Swallow	Hirundo daurica domicella	√
203.	Mosque Swallow	Hirundo senegalensis	√
204.	Rufous-chested Swallow	Hirundo semirufa	√
205.	Pied-winged Swallow	Hirundo leucosoma	√
206.	Fanti Saw-wing	Psolidoprocne obscura	√
207.	Tree Pipit	Anthus trivialis	√
208.	Red-throated Pipit	Anthus cervinus	√
209.	Yellow Wagtail	Motacilla flava	√
210.	White Wagtail	Motacilla alba	√
211.	Common Bulbul	Pycnonotus barbatus	√
212.	Leaflove	Pyrrhurus scandens	√
213.	Yellow-throated Leaflove	Chlorocichla flavicollis	√
214.	Little Greenbul	Andropadus virens	√
215.	Grey-headed Bristlebill	Bleda canicapilla	√
216.	African Thrush	Turdus pelios	√
217.	White-crowned Robin Chat	Cossypha albicapilla	√
218.	Snowy-crowned Robin Chat	Cossypha niveicapilla	√
219.	Common Redstart	Phoenicurus phoenicurus	√
220.	Northern Wheatear	Oenanthe oenanthe	√
221.	Whinchat	Saxicola rubetra	√
222.	White-fronted Black Chat	Myrmecocichla albifrons	√
223.	Northern Anteater Chat	Myrmecocichla aethiops	√
224.	Western Olivaceous Warbler	Hippolais opaca	√
225.	Melodious Warbler	Hippolais polyglotta	√
226.	Garden Warbler	Sylvia borin	√
227.	Common Whitethroat	Sylvia communis	√
228.	Subalpine Warbler	Sylvia cantillans	√
229.	Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla	√
230.	Chiffchaff	Phylloscopus collybita	√
231.	Willow Warbler	Phylloscopus trochiloides	√
232.	Western Bonelli's Warbler	Phylloscopus bonelli	√
233.	Yellow-browed Warbler	Phylloscopus inornatus	√
234.	Green Hylia	Hylia prasina	√
235.	Senegal Eremomela	Eremomela pusilla	√
236.	Northern Crombec	Sylvietta brachyura	√
237.	Green Crombec	Sylvietta virens	√
238.	Oriole Warbler	Hypergerus atriceps	√
239.	Grey-backed Camaroptera	Camaroptera brachyura	√
240.	Tawny-flanked Prinia	Prinia subflava	√
241.	Red-winged Warbler	Heliolais erythropterus	√
242.	Yellow-breasted Apalis	Apalis flavida	√
243.	Zitting Cisticola	Cisticola juncidis	√
244.	Whistling Cisticola	Cisticola lateralis	√
245.	Singing Cisticola	Cisticola cantans	√
246.	Winding Cisticola	Cisticola galactotes	√
247.	Northern Black Flycatcher	Melaenornis edolioides	√
248.	African Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone viridis	√
249.	Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone rufiventer	√

250.	African Blue Flycatcher	<i>Elminia longicauda</i>	✓
251.	Swamp Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa aquatica</i>	✓
252.	Senegal Batis	<i>Batis senegalensis</i>	✓
253.	Common Wattle-eye	<i>Platysteira cyanea</i>	✓
254.	Blackcap Babbler	<i>Turdoides reinwardtii</i>	✓
255.	Brown Babbler	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>	✓
256.	White-shouldered Black Tit	<i>Parus guineensis</i>	✓
257.	Yellow Penduline Tit	<i>Anthoscopus parvulus</i>	✓
258.	Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	✓
259.	Western Violet-backed Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes longuemarei</i>	✓
260.	Mouse-brown Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes gabonicus</i>	✓
261.	Pygmy Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes platurus</i>	✓
262.	Collared Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes collaris</i>	✓
263.	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>	✓
264.	Green-headed Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>	✓
265.	Variable Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>	✓
266.	Splendid Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris coccinigastrus</i>	✓
267.	Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>	✓
268.	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	✓
269.	Yellow-billed Shrike	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>	✓
270.	White Helmet-Shrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>	✓
271.	Grey-headed Bush-Shrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>	✓
272.	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>	✓
273.	Yellow-crowned Gonolek	<i>Laniarius barbarus</i>	✓
274.	Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>	✓
275.	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>	✓
276.	African Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>	✓
277.	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	✓
278.	Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>	✓
279.	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	✓
280.	Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>	✓
281.	Chestnut-bellied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis pulcher</i>	✓
282.	Purple Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	✓
283.	Greater Blue-eared Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>	✓
284.	Lesser Blue-eared Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chloropterus</i>	✓
285.	Long-tailed Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>	✓
286.	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓
287.	Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>	✓
288.	Bush Petronia	<i>Petronia dentata</i>	✓
289.	Chestnut-crowned Sparrow Weaver	<i>Plocepasser superciliosus</i>	✓
290.	Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>	✓
291.	Vitelline Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus vitellinus</i>	✓
292.	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	✓
293.	Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis</i>	✓
294.	White-billed Buffalo-Weaver	<i>Bubalornis albirostris</i>	✓
295.	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	✓
296.	Black-winged Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>	✓
297.	Northern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes franciscanus</i>	✓
298.	Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>	✓
299.	Red-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia phoenicoptera</i>	✓
300.	Western Bluebill	<i>Spermophaga haematina</i>	✓

301.	Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	✓
302.	Lavender Waxbill	<i>Estrilda caerulescens</i>	✓
303.	Black-rumped Waxbill	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	✓
304.	Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	✓
305.	Bar-breasted Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rufopicta</i>	✓
306.	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	✓
307.	Cut-throat Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>	✓
308.	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullata</i>	✓
309.	Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	✓
310.	Sahel (Paradise) Whydah	<i>Vidua orientalis</i>	✓
311.	Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	✓
312.	White-rumped Seedeater	<i>Serinus leucopygius</i>	✓
313.	Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	✓
314.	Brown-rumped Bunting	<i>Emberiza affinis</i>	✓
315.	Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>	✓
MAMMAL/REPTILE/AMPHIBIAN SIGHTINGS			
	Gambia Sun Squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>	✓
	Gambian Epauletted Friut bat	<i>Epomophorus gambianus</i>	✓
	Green Vervet (Callithrix Monkey)	<i>Chlorocebus sabaeus</i>	✓
	Guinea Baboon	<i>Papio papio</i>	✓
	Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	✓
	Patas Monkey	<i>Erythrocebus patas</i>	✓
	Striped Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus erythropus</i>	✓
	Western Red Colobus Monkey	<i>Procolobus badius</i>	✓
	Nile Crocodile	<i>Osteolaemus tetraspis</i>	✓
	Nile Monitor Lizard	<i>Varanus n. niloticus</i>	✓
	Yellow-headed Rock Agama	<i>Agama a. agama</i>	✓
	Brook's House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus brooki angulatus</i>	✓
BUTTERFLIES			
	Narrow-banded Green Swallowtail	<i>Papilio nireus nireus</i>	✓
	Citrus Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demodocus demodocus</i>	✓
	African Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia florella</i>	✓
	Common Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema hecabe solifera</i>	✓
	Small Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema brigitta brigitta</i>	✓
	Zebra White	<i>Pinacopteryx eriphia tritogenia</i>	✓
	Large Orange Tip	<i>Colotis antevippe antevippe</i>	✓
	Tiny Orange Tip	<i>Colotis evagore antigone</i>	✓
	Caper White	<i>Belenois aurota</i>	✓
	African Caper White	<i>Belenois creona creona</i>	✓
	African Spirit	<i>Leptosia alcesta</i>	✓
	Common Dotted Border	<i>Mylothris chloris chloris</i>	✓
	Common Zebra Blue	<i>Leptotes pirithous</i>	✓

	African Grass Blue	<i>Zizeeria knysna</i>	✓
	Mediterranean Pierrot	<i>Tarucus roseacus</i>	✓
	African Tiger	<i>Damaus chrysippus chrysippus</i>	✓
	Bush Charaxes	<i>Charaxes achaemenes atlantica</i>	✓
	Diadem	<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>	✓
	Variable Eggfly	<i>Hypolimnas anthedon</i>	✓
	Yellow Pansy	<i>Junonia hierta cebrene</i>	✓
	Soldier Pansy	<i>Junonia terea</i>	✓
	Guineafowl	<i>Hamanumida daedalus</i>	✓
	Small orange Acraea	<i>Acraea serena serena</i>	✓
	Elegant Acraea	<i>Acraea egina egina</i>	✓
	Common Grizzled Skipper	<i>Spialia spio</i>	✓
	Olive-haired Swift	<i>Borbo borbonica borbonica</i>	✓