

WINGSPAN BIRD TOURS



TRIP REPORT

THE GAMBIA

5TH - 16TH NOVEMBER 2012

Leaders: BOB BUCKLER & MODOU COLLEY

All photographs taken by Johan Verbanck

SUMMARY

What a wonderful place The Gambia is, a perfect introduction to African birding, birds are everywhere! To prove my point, I am sitting outside my apartment, in the grounds of the Senegambia hotel, as I write this introduction, I can see a White-crowned Robin-chat, A Hooded Vulture, 3 Yellow-billed Shrikes and a Pied Crow all within a few meters of me and I can hear a multitude of other species.

This was, in fact, a photographic tour, I led 8 clients from Belgium for these past 11 days and the emphasis was most definitely placed on photography rather than listing species, we didn't even have a bird log in the evening, however, I did keep a tally which amounted to 252 species.

Birding highlights included sightings of: African Finfoot, Painted Snipe, Black Coucal, Black Wood Hoopoe, Copper Sunbird and the rarest, a Dwarf Bittern.

DAY 1 – 5TH November 2012

London to Banjul – transfer to the Senegambia Hotel

There were no fireworks as I arrived alone at Banjul, on time at 2:30pm on November 5th! As I stepped off the plane a blast of hot air hit me and the humidity immediately produced beads of sweat on my brow, I had forgotten about that part. My trip to the terminal from the aircraft produced several Hooded Vultures, Speckled Pigeon, Pied Crow and some distant hirundines. The passage through immigration and baggage control went much smoother than in previous years so we within an hour of touching down I was in The Gambia.

My group didn't arrive until much later, so I was collected from the terminal by my guide Modou and taken to the Senegambia Hotel. The short drive to the hotel went uneventful and I never saw as many species as last time but the usual White-billed buffalo Weaver colonies were still in the roadside trees hundreds of doves sat the wires whilst Yellow-billed Kites circled with the Hooded Vultures.

As I was on my own for the rest of the afternoon I took a stroll in the sumptuous gardens of the hotel and had a very enjoyable few hours getting reacquainted with the calls of all the common birds. The doves are a nightmare at first but soon you can separate Vinaceous, Red-eyed and Laughing Doves from Speckled Pigeon and African Mourning Doves. I also caught sight of quite few other birds: four different Glossy Starlings, Greater Blue-eared, Lesser Blue-eared, Purple and Long-tailed, Northern Black flycatcher, Common Bubul, Brown Babbler, Broad-billed Roller, Hammerkop, Yellow-billed Shrike, Grey Woodpecker, Red-billed Hornbill, Grey Plantain-Eater, Senegal Parrot, Woodland Kingfisher and Grey-headed Sparrow.

I met up with Modou once again at 9pm when we drove back to the airport to meet my group of clients; they arrived 30 minutes late at 10pm from Brussels. We finally sat down to dinner at 11:30pm and I was in bed at midnight after rising at 4am.....a long day to say the least, but I am now in beautiful Gambia and raring to go tomorrow!

DAY 2 - 6TH NOVEMBER 2012

KOTU STREAM – CASINO CYCLY TRACK – KOTU RICE FIELDS – KOTU SEWER WORKS (HOW NICE) - BIJILO FOREST NATURE RESERVE

Our first full day and what a successful day we had! We all met at 7am for breakfast which we ate out on the terrace that overlooks the gardens. Every few minutes some-one would rush for their camera. We had good close views of Black-necked Weavers, Beautiful Sunbirds, Speckled Pigeon and a few of the doves before we had even finished our toast!

At 8am we loaded onto the bus and set off with our guide, Modou Colley, for the short trip to the Kotu Stream, as soon as we got off the bus all hell let loose. Birds were everywhere cameras were pointing in all directions, chaos! After an hour we all settled and realised we had seen 35 species whilst just standing on the bridge! Wow, how much better can the Gambia be! Our highlights were the Pied Kingfishers of course, beautiful and always so obliging! We also saw



Malachite Kingfisher and Woodland Kingfisher, there were lots of waders, gulls and egrets and the usual array of herons and egrets, a Striated Heron perched on a telephone wire seemed a little bizarre. Talking of wires, we had great views of Wire-tailed Swallow too!

We set off to walk along the cycle track and nearly trod on a mixed party of Red-billed Fire-Finches and Red-cheeked Cordonbleu, we got so close you could almost touch them. Along the track we added Variable Sunbird, Scarlet chested Sunbird, Hammerkop, White-billed Buffalo Weaver, Shikra,

Northern Red Bishop (a fantastic male) and several other species.

On the return journey we stopped to look for a Common Gonolek and whilst doing so we found Northern Puffback, Black-necked Weaver, Green Wood-Hoopoe, Grey Woodpecker and another Gonolek.

Our walk across the rice fields was not very productive as it was now getting very hot, but we did find some Little Bee-eaters and a very obliging Woodland Kingfisher. At the sewer works (which was very smelly) we added Black-winged Stilt, Wood Sandpiper, White faced Whistling Duck, African Jacana, Little Swift and Palm Swift.

We then drove back to the hotel for a long lunch break and a well earned siesta. We re-emerged at 4pm when we loaded onto the bus and drove less than a kilometer to the forest nature trails at Bijilo. A 2-hour walk produced a good number of sightings including Oriole Warbler, which performed well, we found two singing males on territories. We also got great views of Swallow-tailed and White-throated Bee-eaters, the latter being the most sought after species for this particular venue. The track through the forest led us to open views of the ocean across some scrubland and it was there that we found another of the group's favourite sightings, the Blue-bellied Roller, what a stunning bird this is.

We headed back as it got dark well pleased with our late afternoon sortie. Dinner was at eight which was followed by very loud drum-beating-and-African-Dancing....I beat a hasty retreat to my room!!!!

DAY 3 – 7TH NOVEMBER 2012

ABUKO NATURE RESERVE – LAMIN RICE FIELD

Today we sat out in the warm morning air and ate breakfast on the terrace, a wonderful experience with the bird calls and all the sounds of Africa surrounding us. We set off at 8am and drove straight to Abuko making only one unscheduled stop to watch a Red-necked Falcon that was perched on a roadside wire, click, click, went the cameras.

Abuko is a large area of primary forest, now rarely found in the Gambia, there are also pools and well trodden trails, it can be full of birds or very quiet, you can list 20 species or on a good day 50, today was a good day.

We made a series of good sightings starting from the first bridge where we encountered a Giant Kingfisher, a pair had taken up residence near the bridge and they showed well to us all. From the 'Darwin Centre' we looked over a large pool from a second floor terrace and added half a dozen new species to our list which included: Night Heron, Black-headed Heron, Purple Heron and African Darter, all new for the tour. Back on the trail we heard the loud call of the Ahanta Francolin and after a short while two of them walked across the track just behind us, these are normally very secretive birds so we had done well to see them. Our next find was a real gem in the shape of a Pygmy Kingfisher; it was like going from the sublime to the ridiculous, first a Giant and then a Pygmy! This tiny little jewel was so obliging it allowed us to stand within a meter of it, what a delight. The bird was completely unmoved by the clicking cameras and the flash photography, brilliant!



It took us over an hour to walk the next hundred meters as the species list increased. We had excellent views of Common Wattle-Eye, Yellow Breasted Apalis, African Pied Hornbill, Fanti Saw-wing, Pied-winged Swallow, Little Greenbul, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher (and a hybrid), Lesser Honeyguide and lots of the common species. We spent a lot of time searching the canopy for the much sought-after Turacos and eventually we were rewarded with extended views of both the Green and the Violet species.

We stopped for a cold drink at the animal sanctuary where we found Bronze Manakin, Blue-spotted Wood Dove and a Bearded Barbet, how can a bird be both beautiful and ugly at the same time? We finished the forest walk and then retired for a long lunch; we sat under the shelter of a covered hut and ate bread, fruit, and cheese, washed down with cold drinks. We then sat and relaxed and waited for the heat of the day to subside.

Later in the afternoon we took a walk onto the rice fields of Lamin and spent 3 hours having a great time and seeing some great species. There were lots of egrets and herons, the Black Heron went down particularly well with the group but also a Jacana with very small chicks attracted a lot of attention.

A creek with a sand bar held many birds as they came down to drink or bathe. Along with over 20 African Mourning Doves we saw Spur-winged Plover, Wattled Plover, Whimbrel, Hammerkop, Senegal Thick-knee and a Wood Sandpiper. But it was the last hour that really captivated us. We stood in one spot and were mesmerised by the activity in front of us. A short area with just a few bushes and a single dead tree, held over 20 species.

The Blue-bellied Rollers, (8 in all) were simply stunning in the late afternoon sunlight. Even the common Village Weaver looked fantastic with its bright red eye, dark brown head and yellow body. We watched a party of Yellow-billed Shrikes hunting flying insects whilst a party of young Piapiacs played with a piece of netting which was hanging from a branch, it was very comical. Whilst all this was going on the rollers were pairing off and mating every few minutes, the display flight was fantastic. We also watched Brown Babblers, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, 3 species of sunbirds, Long-tailed Glossy Starlings, Senegal Coucal, Grey Headed Sparrow, Grey Plantain-eaters, Hornbills and lots of species up in the sky.

We eventually dragged ourselves away from this spectacle and headed off back the hotel just as the light was beginning to fade. We had seen over 80 species today and over 100 in the first two days, what a great place the Gambia is, a birder's paradise.

DAY 4 – 8TH NOVEMBER 2012

BRUFUT WOODS AND TANJI BEACH

Another early start saw us leaving the hotel at 7:30am for the journey to Brufut woods, we made it in good time despite the atrocious state of the sandy tracks. God knows how you travel here in the rainy season.

Anyway, it was another beautiful morning, great light and a warm 25C. We were soon watching lots of birds on the wide approach track to the woods. A Klaas's Cuckoo was a nice start and then a pair of Copper Sunbirds showed very well. We found a fruiting fig tree which contained Green Turaco, African Green Pigeon, Yellow Throated Leaflove, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, African Golden Oriole, a couple of Yellow White-eyes and lots of Common Bubuls. They were all in one tree, amazing!! We also found many other species along the track, a Bearded Barbet was nice, seen eating figs, a Grey-backed Camaroptera was only seen by me and both the Yellow Breasted Apalis and the Yellow fronted Tinkerbird were very vocal.

We ventured into the wood itself along a side track and had great views of Black-billed Wood Dove, Variable Sunbird and a Long-tailed Nightjar. Another area of open scrub produced Black-crowned Tchagra, Northern Red Bishop (a beautiful male in full summer plumage), Grey Headed Sparrow and lots of Weavers.

We took a break in a small seating area where we were served cold drinks as we watched a drinking pool used by the birds. During the next hour we saw: Lavender Waxbill, Red-cheeked Cordonbleu, Greater Honeyguide, Village Weavers, Common Bubuls, Yellow-throated Leafloves and lots of doves.

Our lunch was taken at a beach-side restaurant with a terrace that overlooked the mouth of a river at Tanji. A bridge across the river provided nest sites for Little Swifts, Wire-tailed Swallow and Red-chested Swallows.

Along the shore of the river we saw Western Reef Heron (a black morph), Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Grey Headed Gull and Long-tailed Cormorant, a couple of Pied Kingfishers were using the telephone wires as a perch from which to fish from. In the bushes there were a couple of beautiful Gonoleks, Village Weavers, Grey Headed Sparrows and a White Wagtail.

After lunch we took a walk on the beach and walked to the mouth of the river where a gulls roost held, Grey-headed, Slender-billed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Royal and Lesser crested Tern (1) and a Sanderling. A little further away a large roost held many of the larger gulls and at least two Kelp Gulls were present.

Waders along the shoreline included: Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, Bar-tailed Godwits and Whimbrel. We left the area at 3pm in order to be back early at the hotel so that we could pack in readiness for our journey upriver tomorrow.

DAY 5 – 9TH NOVEMBER 2012

BANJUL TO BARRA (across the river by ferry) – KAUR WETLANDS – GEORGETOWN

What a Fantastic day! Despite travelling over 200km upriver, taking two ferry crossings and not making too many stops we recorded 111 species, incredible really, 45 species were added to our trip tally which now stands at 180 after 4 days!

It was dark and cool as we left our hotel at 6:30am, we boarded the bus and drove quickly to the ferry terminal in Banjul. We needed to catch the first ferry at 7:30am so that we could be on the road north of the river by 9am. Everything went to plan except that the hotel forgot to make our packed-breakfast, this meant that we had to stop in Barra, on the north side of the river, to eat our breakfast. So by 9:45am we were finally on our way along the north bank. The crossing was excellent and we listed quite a few terns and gulls as well as two Pomerine Skuas and a Gull-billed Tern, both of which was new for the list.

Our drive upriver also went smoothly, we stopped umpteen times to look at perched birds and for the photographers to do their stuff. Brilliant views were had of both of the Bishops, Northern Red and Black-winged, we also stopped for Lizard and Grasshopper Buzzards. One stop was made to look at a Dark Chanting Goshawk, it also produced Veillot's Barbet and Striped kingfisher in the same tree and a Melodious Warbler also flew out of it. Another stop was made to pick up a Pygmy Kingfisher that we saw sitting in the road, it had obviously been hit by a car and was dazed, it couldn't fly so we took it under our wing, so to speak!

A scheduled stop, next to a large wetlands area, was superb, we spent a great hour there. The marshes were packed solid with birds, thousands of them. We saw both Pelican species in high numbers, hundreds of Great White Egrets with Intermediate, Cattle and Little Egrets. Also seen was Western Reef Egrets, Grey, Purple and Squacco Herons, Yellow-billed Storks, African Spoonbills and the superb Black Heron several of which were striking up their umbrella feeding pose, fantastic. All around this mass of black and white there were Sengal Thick-knee, Spur-winged Plover, Wattled Plover and a single Greenshank.

Other birds seen around the marshes were Zitting Cisticola, Black-faced Quailfinch, Long-tailed Cormorant and a few Yellow-billed Kites. We drove into Farrafenni where we picked up picnic supplies for lunch which we ate sitting by the side of a large watering hole a few kilometers further east. Despite the disturbance of frequent visits to the water by herds of cows, we logged a good number of bird species there. A large mixed flock of birds were regularly visiting the pool, the flock was made up of weavers, buntings, canaries and lots of doves were also there. The Exclamatory Paradise Whydah (shown above), Namaqua Dove, Green bee-eater, Cut-throat Finch, Cinnamon Breasted Bunting and the Red Bishop added a lot of colour to the throngs of dull weavers.

We drove to a second pool where there was less disturbance from cattle, we watched even more birds, it was a delight to see so many species. New birds here were Bush Petronia, Pin-tailed Whydah and Red-billed Quelea.

We continued on our eastward journey and made brief stops at small wetlands where we again added more species to the growing daily tally, Black Crake was seen several times and a family party of the colourful, but tiny, Pygmy Goose was an excellent find. We also saw more Squacco Herons, Malachite Kingfisher and Jacana.

The vast expanse of the Kaur Marsh was our next destination, it again, held thousands of birds but our main interest was focused on finding the 'Crocodile bird' AKA as the Egyptian Plover. It took us all of 2 minutes to locate one, what a beautiful wader. There were also hundreds of wintering Collared Pratincoles, Yellow Wagtails, White Wagtails and a huge total of Senegal Thick-knees, I have never seen so many.

It was now getting late and we had still quite a long way to go, so off we went, only stopping at the ferry across to Georgetown Island. We crossed the river to the 'island' of Georgetown in the dark and the only species that was added to the list was an African Scops Owl, two of them called from a tree above us as we sat and ate our dinner.

DAY 6 - 10TH NOVEMBER 2012



BAOBALONG CAMP – WASSU SAND QUARRY – RIVER BOAT TRIP

An exciting day began as we met for breakfast at 7am, we sat in the open-plan diner in lovely warm conditions. The food was good and filling, by 8am we were at the ferry waiting for a crossing from the island back to the north side of the river. We were heading back westward because we were so late yesterday afternoon we missed a couple sites and now we going back to visit them.

Both sites were near the village of Wassu and before long we were heading back westward along the north-bank, making the usual stops for roadside birds. Good views were had of Abyssinian Roller, Grasshopper Buzzard, Grey Kestrel and several common species. Soon we were watching one of the star birds of the trip – the Carmine Bee-eater, a couple of these real beauties were found in the open fields not far from the village of Wassu. We also saw in the area Black-headed Plover, Rufous-crowned Roller and Long-tailed Spotless Starling.

We then spent an hour or so at the old sand quarries on the east side of the village watching a colony of Red-throated Bee-eaters, they have been breeding there for a good number of years. These little gems are, for me, the most beautiful of them all, having a superb blend of colours. Some of the quarries held water and we found Wattled Plover, Spur-winged Plover, Pied Kingfisher, Senegal Thick-knee and a family party of Anteater Chats. The nearby trees held Purple Glossy Starling, Vitelline and Little Weavers, Green Bee-eaters and a Shikra.

Several raptors came up as the morning got later, first an African Harrier-Hawk, then two Grasshopper Buzzards, a couple of Ospreys, a Wahlberg's Eagle and a Brown Snake Eagle.

Our journey back to the ferry included two stops, one was to look at another group of Carmine Bee-eaters, this time we found about 50. They were using a large dead tree to hunt from and in the same tree we recorded: Grey-headed Sparrow, Abyssinian Roller, Village Indigobird, White-rumped Seedeater, Cut-throat Finch and Village Weaver!

A large pond with flowering lilies produced Jacana, Western Marsh Harrier, Striated Heron and Squacco Heron. Along the road we stopped to look at a Senegal Chameleon as it crossed road and an Olive Snake that just didn't make it across.

We ate lunch back at the Camp before setting off for a late afternoon cruise.

The "hippo cruise" was very successful in more ways than one, yes, we did see 10 or so Hippopotamus but we also saw a great number of bird species. One superb find was an African Finfoot, a species similar to a grebe, but is rarely seen and very hard to find. What luck we had in finding one. The cruise lasted 4 hours, we went down river first, hopping from one bank to another before turning around and doing the same on the return journey. One down side was that it clouded over and went quite dull for most the trip, it even rained for a short period, so we never got to see the famous Gambian setting sun.

However, we did see some news species for the trip, Swamp Flycatcher, appeared several times as did both Woodland and Grey-headed Kingfisher. One Kingfisher that was new for us, was the Blue-breasted variety, but only a few of us saw it. Hadada Ibis was seen late on in the trip and Bruce's Green Pigeon was seen about the same time. All in all we saw about 40 species of birds as well as Nile Monitor Lizard, Hippo, Baboon (three troops), Green Vervet Monkeys, Red Colobus Monkey and a Sun Squirrel.

DAY 7 - 11TH NOVEMBER 2012

GEORGETOWN ISLAND TO TENDABA CAMP, STOPPING AT JAHALY RICE FIELDS AND SOMA WETLANDS.

Transfer days never produce much but we were happy with our sightings today. New species for the list are becoming harder to find as the list grows. It was dull and overcast and therefore somewhat cooler as we left Georgetown. Not long after we had had crossed the 'new' bridge to the south bank we stopped to look for new birds. After checking out some Green bee-eater nesting holes we found some Red-throated Bee-eaters sitting in the trees just across the road. Our guide whistled up a whole host of species by imitating the call of the Pearl-spotted Owlet. Soon we were watching lots of Sunbirds, the Pygmy Sunbird was new for us. We also saw Northern Crombec, which is an odd little bird with no tail, also Grey-backed Eremomela, about half a dozen turned up.

In the same area we saw Cinnamon Breasted Bunting, Long-tailed Whydah, Village Indigobird and plenty of common species.

Next we stopped at Jahaly Rice Fields, where we spent the rest of the morning. The star find was the Black Coucal which is a very rare sight in The Gambia in November, we saw 4 of them. The sought-after Painted Snipe took second place but only because we couldn't find one on the ground, they kept flushing before we had a chance to find them. Other birds added to our list were Croaking Cisticola and Yellow-crowned Bishop. We also had brief sightings of Gabar Goshawk and a Red-necked Falcon, our first Western Marsh Harrier was also seen there. We ate our lunch in the shade of the old pumping station where we watched a colony of Village Weavers, a couple of Pied Kingfishers and several Squacco Herons. During our time at the rice fields we also recorded: Senegal Coucal, Jacana, Senegal Thick-knee, Spur-winged Plover, Black-winged Stilt, Common and Wood Sandpipers.

We set off again along the main southern route towards Banjul stopping several times to look at perched raptors which turned out to be mostly snake eagles: we saw the African Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, the Brown Snake Eagle and Short-toed Snake Eagle. A pair of Grey kestrels sat at a pool and posed nicely for the cameras and a couple of Grasshopper Buzzards were seen in flight as were Long-crested Eagles.

At Soma the tarmac ran out! So we were on dirt roads from now on, a much slower process. We stopped at the huge wetlands just east of Soma and spent an hour or so searching the open water and reedy pools. Caspian and Gull-billed Terns were seen, Greenshank, Black-winged Stilt, White Wagtail. Pink-backed Pelican and several of the common herons were also on show.

The east end of the marshland gave way to forest, at the edge of the forest we found; Red-rumped Swallows, Senegal Parrots, a single Stone Partridge flew across the track and a Pearl-spotted Owlet called without showing and refused to be coaxed out. Then we flushed a couple of Four-banded Sandgrouse before we had had good views of them.

We had 25km left to travel on the dirt road, it took an hour but as we neared our destination, Tendaba Camp on the bank of the river, the road improved dramatically. It was dark when we checked in, so after a quick shower we met up for dinner which was taken in the open plan dining area on the bank of the river, a gorgeous setting.



DAY 8 - 12TH NOVEMBER 2012

TENDABA MANGROVE CREEK CRAWL – KIANG FOREST

If you have never experienced a creek crawl then you are missing a fantastic nature-experience. We boarded our piroque at the jetty immediately after breakfast at 8:30am. It was peaceful and calm with some high cloud, but the light was very good.

During our 4 hour trip we enjoyed some superb birding, we crossed the river and drifted into the mangroves, entering a network of channels where the forest looms over you on either side and occasional open spaces appear which are covered in grass and pools of water. The sounds of the forest are eerie with many strange bird calls. We listed over 50 species during the trip, the list is shown below and here are some of the highlights:

We found several hanging nests of the Mouse-brown Sunbird all of which were occupied, we got very close to them and the adult bird could be seen sitting on eggs or chicks. The odd called of the Blue-breasted Kingfisher was most common, we managed to see over 20 of these beauties but a Malachite Kingfisher allowed closer approach. Both the Woodland

and the Grey-headed Kingfishers were also seen and many Pied Kingfishers gave us great views. A Fish Eagle perched high up for us on the main river, as we were watching it an African Hobby flew by, followed by a Woolly-necked Stork.

MOUSE-BROWN SUNBIRD - THE NEST AND THE ADULT BIRD SEEN IN THE MANGROVE SWAMP AT TENDABA

We had some excellent sightings of the normally hard to find White-backed Night-Heron, fortunately for us the boatmen knew of two locations where they had nested very close to the water's edge, the same applied to a roost of an African Scop's Owl.

Pink-backed Pelicans were a sight to behold as they sat on the water just in front of the boat and we got very close to African Darters both in the water and on perches. I must mention the Martial Eagles, we had one in flight high above us, what a huge bird that one is, we also saw a second one just afterwards perched in a tree not too far from the boat. On the thermals there were Black kites, Woolly-necked Storks, Pink backed Pelicans and a Long-tailed Cormorant? How odd was that mix of species.

By the time we got back to the camp we had logged 56 species, not as many as usual but a good total for a high tide trip.

We took a really long lunch and set out again at 4pm for an afternoon trip to the Kiang West national park. It was fairly quiet and still very hot but we managed to see several new species. We stopped to look at a Gabar Goshawk which promptly disappeared but we found Grasshopper Buzzard, Blue-eared Starlings, both species, also Pygmy Sunbird and we had great views of Black-winged Bishops, there were many males displaying in the long grasses. A Rufous-crowned Roller posed well for the cameras and several Abyssinian Rollers were in the area.

A short walk along the track produced a good number of species, many of which were seen in one bush! This was because guide Modou made the call of the Pearl Spotted Owlet and they gathered to mob the owlet. We saw lots of yellow birds, Yellow Fronted Canary, a female Pygmy Sunbird, Yellow Penduline Tit and a Yellow White-eye. There was also Bush Petronia, Beautiful Sunbird and we heard a White-shouldered Black Tit calling.

Not much else was seen and as it grew dark we jumped back onto the bush and drove back to Tendaba Camp, along the way we stopped to look at Nightjars, we found a couple sitting on the track and got good close views of one of them, it turned out to be a Standard Winged Nightjar, a great species to finish the day with.

DAY 9 - 13TH NOVEMBER 2012

TENDABA TO SENEGAMBIA TRANSFER WITH STOPS AT TENDABA 'AIRFIELD & KIANG

Breakfast was as usual taken at 7am and by 8am we were on the road once again, we didn't travel far before we stopped for our first walk. As some time in the past this area was a grass field and had a aircraft landing strip but that was long ago, it is now a flood meadow with pools and reed beds and some patches of long grass. It is usually good for pipits and waders, we quickly found a Plain Backed Pipit but then our attention was drawn to the water meadow because we heard the unmistakable call of cranes.

We walked for a kilometer towards the main river so that we could get a better view of the marshland and a after a short while we saw two Black-crowned Cranes in flight, they landed on top of a bush and promptly started making more cranes!! This is good news as they are now very rare in the Gambia with less than 50 individuals. We also saw Spur-winged Goose, Pink-backed Pelicans, Great White Egrets and the usual plovers.

In the scrub behind us we found a fruiting tree which attracted both the Grey and the Red-billed Hornbills as well as two confiding Bearded Barbets, African Golden Oriole and Common Bubul. We also had fun watching Abyssinian Rollers, Bruce's Green Pigeon and a Gonolek.

On the way back to the bus guess who slipped over and landed in thick slimy mud!! Yes, yours' truly!

We drove to Kiang West and walked into some open scrub in search of a few species missing from our list, we didn't see any of them but we added Common Redstart and had superb views of Yellow-Fronted Tinkerbird, Dark Chanting Goshawk, Gabar Goshawk and a Martial Eagle which was perched in a dead tree, yes what a great sight.

Between Kiang and Senegambia we stopped a couple times, one time was we saw a dead cow at the side of the side covered in vultures. Several Hooded Vultures remained on the carcass even when we got out of the bus. We then noticed a couple of Ruppell's Vultures circling overhead and one of them landed in a nearby tree, giving great views.

Another stop was to search for a White-faced Scops Owl which failed to show. Soon we were back at the coast and our upriver adventure was over, we had added about 80 species to our list which was now approaching 240, not bad for a photographic tour, as most the photographers had photographed 200+ species.



DAY 10 - 14TH NOVEMBER 2012

MARAKISSA AREA INCLUDING THE RIVER SIDE LODGE

We set off at our usual time of 8am and headed south towards the Senegalise border, a couple of stops were made to buy provisions and we arrived at 9:15am at our first stop.

We had only walked a hundred meters when we bumped into two new species for the trip list in the form of, firstly, a pair of them were sitting at the top of a dead branch up in the canopy, and secondly, as we were watching the woodpeckers a Levillant's

Cuckoo came into view just below them. Both bird species showed well enough to be photographed. We continued our run of good luck when we stumbled across a Dwarf Bittern, what a great find that was, a very rare sighting in the Gambia. The bird flew off when only half the group had seen it, but a little later it came back and perched up for all of to admire it, see photo below.

A Forked-tailed Drongo mobbed a Dark Chanting Goshawk and many weavers were seen in the same tree, we added Blue-Breasted Roller to the day list, 3 Leafloves were new for our trip list and a Splendid Sunbird showed splendidly.

The gardens of the Marakissa Lodge are a haven for birds, the owners are bird friendly and provide a wonderful lunch whilst you sit and watch many species coming to drink at the pools set up for them. A track leads from the garden through a wood to a couple of larger pools, birds are everywhere. We spent the whole afternoon there, some of the group relaxed in the shade, some took their cameras and sat quietly in some corner of the garden and others like me went birding all over the grounds.

By 4pm we had amassed quite a list between us with new birds for the list being: Green Crombec, Black-headed Babbler, African Silverbill and a Barn Owl which roosts in the roof of the lodge. But star birds for the cameras were

Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Red Bishop, Gonolek and Beautiful Sunbird. We did see other species too such as Double-spurred Francolin, Pied Kingfisher, Long-tailed Cormorants, Western Reef Heron, Greenshank, Red-billed Firefinch and many more.

Our second walk was short, we walked from the lodge to a bridge where we saw our first Pearl-spotted Owlet (even though we had heard several during our tour), we also saw Striated Heron, Leaflove, Pied Kingfisher, Jacana and another Owlet. The heat was finally subsiding but it had fatigued the group so by 5pm we were ready for a cool shower and a cold beer back at the hotel.

DAY 11 - 15TH November 2012

TUJERING (morning visit) – Faraba Banta track (afternoon)

I love the open woodland habitat that is found at Tujering, scattered trees tower over low scrub and it is easy to see birds as they fly up into the trees. It is a good area to see raptors too as there is far more open sky to view. Unfortunately the habitat is quickly being destroyed as the local people cut down the trees for firewood, I am afraid that in the next few years it will have gone altogether.

We arrived at 9am and quickly got into our stride with sightings of Eurasian Chiffchaff, Red-winged Warbler, Grey Headed Sparrow and Village Weaver all in the same bush. Next we found a Cardinal Woodpecker (male) which showed very well, as did a Whinchat. A Striped Kingfisher was very noisy and a Lanner Falcon posed nicely for the cameras. Black-crowned Tchagras called from all directions and we continued adding new species as we found African Silverbill, Red-billed Firefinch, Blue-cheeked Cordonbleu, Lavender Waxbill and another Whinchat.

As we crossed some fields, where ground-nuts were growing, we came across a White-fronted Black Chat, another good bird for list. We then located a Lesser Honeyguide which called incessantly from the canopy of a nearby tree. Yellow-fronted Canaries were nice to see and a juvenile Dideric Cuckoo gave us the run around. A Grey Kestrel was found as it sat on top of a tree and many Red-winged Warblers sang from all directions. Birds flying around us included Black Kites (yellow-billed), Grasshopper Buzzard, Pied-winged Swallows, Red-chested Swallow and Palm Swifts.

By 11 am it started to get hot, we had logged over 40 species so we decided to head back to the hotel for a siesta. A quick stop at the bridge at Tanji produced Caspian Tern, Pied Kingfisher, Grey-headed Gull, Whimbrel, Cattle Egret and Hooded Vultures.

Faraba Banta Track (pm)

At 3pm we set off for an afternoon walk along the tracks adjacent to the forest at Faraba Bannta, it was still quite hot when we got there but it did cool off. Unfortunately there were not too many birds around and it took some effort to even find one! We spent some time stalking a party of Stone Partridges without success and then a party of White Helmet Shrikes showed briefly but failed to come back even when lured by tape.

We finally found a new species, a Black Wood-hoopoe, it called and then showed well for a brief period, this was a good find and enjoyed by the group. We also watched a Variable Sunbird preening and a very obliging Red-billed Firefinch. Our second new bird for the trip was an African Hawk-eagle, this superb bird was perched high in a dead tree, the light wasn't good for photography but the bird was special.

The walk back to the bus produced very little, a Greater Honeyguide showed well but it was now beginning to get dark and the wildlife was settling down for the night. We got back to the hotel at 7:30pm in the dark, this was the end of our last full day of the tour.

DAY 12 - 16TH NOVEMBER 2012

Bijilo Forest walk

Our very last morning attracted just over half of the group for a walk to the nearby Bijilo Forest. We set off at for the short walk, during which, we saw Greater and Lesser blue-eared Glossy Starlings, Village Indigobird, Grey and Red-billed Hornbills and lots of Cattle Egrets on the golf course.

The walk through the forest began with a close encounter with a Snowy-crowned Robin-chat and its cousin the White-crowned version. We then went on to find Bearded barbet, Shrikra, Little and Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters, Green Woodhoopoe, Double-spurred Francolin and a host of common birds. Two Gonoleks gave great views and so did Brown Babbler, further along the track we photographed a Grey-backed Cameroptera and heard an Oriole Warbler.

Soon it was time to return to the hotel, we decided to walk back along the beach which was crowded with sunbathers but we still saw several good species. A group of Piapiacs showed well and a Green Woodhoopoe searched a small play area for insects. Out at sea we saw Sandwich and Caspian Terns, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and some distant skuas which were too far out to identify.

Well that was the end of the tour, the rest of the day was spent relaxing around the hotel grounds, some of the group went into Banjul whilst others roamed around with cameras at the ready. The tour was over at noon but there a long wait before the return flight, it was scheduled for 9:45pm.

WINGSPAN BIRD TOURS

CHECKLIST 1 NOVEMBER 5TH - 16TH 2012

CHECKLIST 2 NOVEMBER 16TH - 30TH 2012

		1	2
1	African Thrush <i>Turdus pelios</i>	✓	✓
2	Apalis, Yellow-breasted, <i>Apalis flavida</i>	✓	✓
3	Babbler, Blackcap <i>Turdoides reinwardii</i>	✓	✓
4	Babbler, Brown <i>Turdoides plebejus</i>	✓	✓
5	Barbet, Bearded <i>Lybius dubius</i>	✓	✓
6	Barbet, Vieillot's <i>Lybius vieilloti</i>	✓	✓
7	Bateleur <i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>	✓	✓
8	Batis, Senegal <i>Batis senegalensis</i>		✓
9	Bee-eater, Blue-cheeked <i>Merops persicus chrysocercus</i>	✓	✓
10	Bee-eater, European <i>Merops apiaster</i>	✓	✓
11	Bee-eater, Green <i>Merops orientalis viridissimus</i>	✓	✓
12	Bee-eater, Little <i>Merops pusillus pusillus</i>	✓	✓
13	Bee-eater, Northern Carmine <i>Merops nubicus</i>	✓	
14	Bee-eater, Red-throated <i>Merops bullocki bullocki</i>	✓	✓
15	Bee-eater, Swallow-tailed <i>Merops hirundineus chrysolaimus</i>	✓	✓
16	Bee-eater, White-throated <i>Merops albicollis</i>	✓	✓
17	Bishop, Black-winged Red- <i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>	✓	✓
18	Bishop, Northern Red <i>Euplectes franciscanus</i>	✓	✓
19	Bishop, Yellow-crowned <i>Euplectes afer afer</i>	✓	
20	Bittern, Dwarf <i>Ixobrychus sturmi</i>	✓	✓
21	Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla</i>		✓
22	Black-headed Heron <i>Ardea melanocephalus</i>	✓	✓
23	Bluebill, Western <i>Spermophaga haematina haematina</i>		✓
24	Bristlebill, Grey-headed <i>Bleda canicapilla</i>	H	✓
25	Brubru <i>Nilaus afer afer</i>		✓
26	Bulbul, Garden or Common <i>Pycnonotus barbatus inornatus</i>	✓	✓
27	Bunting, Cinnamon-breasted <i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>	✓	✓
28	Bush Petronia, <i>Petronia dentata</i>	✓	✓
29	Bush-Shrike, Grey-headed <i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>		✓
30	Bush-Shrike, Sulphur-breasted <i>Telophorus sulfureopectus</i>		✓
31	Buzzard, Grasshopper <i>Butastur rufipennis</i>	✓	✓
32	Buzzard, Lizard <i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus monogrammicus</i>	✓	✓
33	Camaroptera, Grey-backed <i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	✓	✓
34	Canary, Yellow-fronted or Yellow-eyed <i>Serinus mozambicus caniceps</i>	✓	✓
35	Chat, Northern Anteater- <i>Myrmecocichla aethiops</i>	✓	✓
36	Chat, Snowy-crowned Robin- <i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i>	✓	✓
37	Chat, White-crowned Robin- <i>Cossypha albicapilla</i>	✓	✓
38	Chat, White-fronted Black- <i>Myrmecocichla albifrons frontalis</i>	✓	✓
39	Chiffchaff, Common or Eurasian <i>Phylloscopus collybita collybita</i>	✓	✓

40	Cisticola, Croaking <i>Cisticola natalensis</i>	✓	
41	Cisticola, Whistling <i>Cisticola lateralis</i>		✓
42	Cisticola, Zitting <i>Cisticola juncidis uropygialis</i>	✓	✓
43	Cordonbleu, Red-cheeked <i>Uraeginthus bengalus bengalus</i>	✓	✓
44	Cormorant, Great or White-breasted <i>Phalacrocorax c. maroccanus</i>	✓	✓
45	Cormorant, Long-tailed <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	✓	✓
46	Coucal, Black <i>Centropus grillii</i>	✓	
47	Coucal, Senegal <i>Centropus senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
48	Crake, Black <i>Amauornis flavirostra</i>	✓	✓
49	Crane, Black Crowned- <i>Balearica pavonina</i>	✓	
50	Crombec, Green <i>Sylvietta virens</i>	✓	
51	Crombec, Northern <i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>	✓	✓
52	Crow, Pied <i>Corvus albus</i>	✓	✓
53	Cuckoo, African <i>Cuculus gularis</i>		✓
54	Cuckoo, Dideric <i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	✓	✓
55	Cuckoo, Klaas's <i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	✓	
56	Cuckoo, Levallant's or African Striped <i>Clamator levallantii</i>	✓	✓
57	Curlew, Eurasian <i>Numenius arquata arquata</i>		✓
58	Cut-Throat, Amandina fasciata	✓	✓
59	Darter, African <i>Anhinga rufa</i>	✓	✓
60	Dove, African Mourning <i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>	✓	✓
61	Dove, Black-billed Wood- <i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>	✓	✓
62	Dove, Blue-spotted Wood- <i>Turtur afer</i>	✓	✓
63	Dove, European Turtle- <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>		✓
64	Dove, Laughing or Palm <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
65	Dove, Namaqua <i>Oena capensis</i>	✓	✓
66	Dove, Red-eyed <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	✓	✓
67	Dove, Vinaceous <i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	✓	✓
68	Drongo, Fork-tailed <i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	✓	✓
69	Duck, Comb or Knob-billed <i>Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos</i>		✓
70	Duck, White-faced Whistling- <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	✓	✓
71	Eagle, African Fish- <i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	✓	✓
72	Eagle, African Hawk- <i>Aquila spilogaster</i>	✓	✓
73	Eagle, Beaudouin's <i>Circaetus beaudouini</i>	✓	✓
74	Eagle, Booted <i>Aquila pennatus</i>		✓
75	Eagle, Brown Snake- <i>Circaetus cinereus</i>	✓	✓
76	Eagle, Long-crested <i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>	✓	✓
77	Eagle, Martial <i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>	✓	✓
78	Eagle, Short-toed Snake- <i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	✓	✓
79	Eagle, Wahlberg's <i>Aquila wahlbergi</i>	✓	✓
80	Eagle, Western Banded Snake- <i>Circaetus cinerascens</i>		✓
81	Egret, Cattle <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓
82	Egret, Great <i>Egretta alba</i>	✓	✓
83	Egret, Intermediate or Yellow-billed <i>Ardea intermedia</i>	✓	✓

84	Egret, Little <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓
85	Egret, Western Reef- <i>Egretta gularis</i>	✓	✓
86	Eremomela, Green-backed (Senegal) <i>Eremomela pusilla</i>	✓	✓
87	Falcon, Lanner <i>Falco biarmicus abyssinicus</i>	✓	✓
88	Falcon, Red-necked <i>Falco chicquera ruficollis</i>	✓	✓
89	Finfoot, African <i>Podica senegalensis senegalensis</i>	✓	
90	Firefinch, Red-billed <i>Lagonosticta senegala senegala</i>	✓	✓
91	Flycatcher, African Blue- <i>Elminia longicauda</i>	H	
92	Flycatcher, African Paradise- <i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	✓	✓
93	Flycatcher, Northern Black- <i>Melaenornis edoloides</i>	✓	✓
94	Flycatcher, Red-bellied Paradise- <i>Terpsiphone rufiventer rufiventer</i>	✓	✓
95	Flycatcher, Swamp <i>Muscicapa aquatica</i>	✓	✓
96	Francolin, Ahanta <i>Pternistis achantensis</i>	✓	✓
97	Francolin, Double-spurred <i>Pternistis bicalcaratus</i>	✓	✓
98	Gannet, Northern <i>Morus bassanus</i>		✓
99	Godwit, Bar-tailed <i>Limosa lapponica lapponica</i>	✓	✓
100	Godwit, Black-tailed <i>Limosa limosa limosa</i>		✓
101	Gonolek, Common <i>Laniarius barbarus</i>	✓	✓
102	Goose, African Pygmy- <i>Nettapus auritus</i>	✓	✓
103	Goose, Spur-winged <i>Plectropterus gambensis gambensis</i>	✓	✓
104	Goshawk, Dark Chanting- <i>Melierax metabates metabates</i>	✓	✓
105	Goshawk, Gabar <i>Melierax gabar</i>	✓	✓
106	Grebe, Little or Dabchick <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis capensis</i>		✓
107	Greenbul or Leaf-love, Yellow-throated <i>Chlorocichla flavicollis flavicollis</i>	✓	✓
108	Greenbul, Little <i>Andropadus virens</i>	✓	✓
109	Greenshank, Common <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	✓	✓
110	Gull, Grey-headed, <i>Larus cirrocephalus</i>	✓	✓
111	Gull, Kelp or Southern Black-backed <i>Larus dominicanus vetula</i>	✓	✓
112	Gull, Lesser Black-backed <i>Larus fuscus graellsii/intermedius</i>	✓	✓
113	Gull, Slender-billed <i>Larus genei</i>	✓	✓
114	Gull, Yellow-legged <i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓	✓
115	Hamerkop <i>Scopus umbretta</i>	✓	✓
116	Harrier, Western or Eurasian Marsh- <i>Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus</i>	✓	✓
117	Harrier-Hawk, African or Gymnogene <i>Polyboroides typus pectoralis</i>	✓	✓
118	Helmet-Shrike, White <i>Prionops plumatus</i>	✓	✓
119	Heron, Black <i>Egretta ardesias</i>	✓	✓
120	Heron, Black-crowned Night- <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	✓	✓
121	Heron, Grey <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓
122	Heron, Purple <i>Ardea purpurea</i>	✓	✓
123	Heron, Squacco <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	✓	✓
124	Heron, Striated or Little <i>Butorides striatus</i>	✓	✓
125	Heron, White-backed Night- <i>Gorsachius leuconotus</i>	✓	✓
126	Hobby, African <i>Falco cuvierii</i>	✓	✓
127	Honeyguide, Greater <i>Indicator indicator</i>	✓	✓

128	Honeyguide, Lesser <i>Indicator minor</i>	✓	✓
129	Hornbill, African Grey- <i>Tockus nasutus nasutus</i>	✓	✓
130	Hornbill, African Pied- <i>Tockus fasciatus semifasciatus</i>	✓	✓
131	Hornbill, Red-billed <i>Tockus erythrorhynchus kempi</i>	✓	✓
132	Ibis, Hadada <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>	✓	✓
133	Ibis, Sacred <i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	✓	✓
134	Indigobird, Village <i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	✓	✓
135	Jacana, African <i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	✓	✓
136	Kestrel, Grey <i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>	✓	✓
137	Kingfisher, African Pygmy- <i>Ispidina picta picta</i>	✓	✓
138	Kingfisher, Blue-breasted <i>Halcyon malimbica torquata</i>	✓	✓
139	Kingfisher, Giant <i>Megaceryle maxima maxima</i>	✓	✓
140	Kingfisher, Grey-headed <i>Halcyon leucocephala leucocephala</i>	✓	✓
141	Kingfisher, Malachite <i>Alcedo cristata galerita</i>	✓	✓
142	Kingfisher, Pied <i>Ceryle rudis rudis</i>	✓	✓
143	Kingfisher, Shining-blue <i>Alcedo quadribrachys quadribrachys</i>		✓
144	Kingfisher, Striped <i>Halcyon chelicuti chelicuti</i>	✓	✓
145	Kingfisher, Woodland <i>Halcyon senegalensis senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
146	Kite, (Yellow-billed) Black <i>Milvus migrans parasiticus</i>	✓	✓
147	Kite, Black-winged or shouldered <i>Elanus caeruleus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓
148	Lapwing, Black-headed <i>Vanellus tectus tectus</i>	✓	✓
149	Lapwing, Spur-winged <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	✓	✓
150	Lapwing, Wattled <i>Vanellus senegallus senegallus</i>	✓	✓
151	Lark, Crested <i>Galerida cristata</i>		✓
152	Leaf-love <i>Pyrrhurus scandens</i>	✓	H
153	Mannikin, Bronze <i>Lonchura cantans</i>	✓	✓
154	Martin, Northern House- <i>Delichon urbica urbica</i>	✓	
155	Moorhen, Common <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓
156	Nightingale, Common, <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>		H
157	Nightjar, Long-tailed <i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>	✓	✓
158	Nightjar, Standard-winged <i>Macrodipteryx longipennis</i>	✓	✓
159	Oriole, African Golden- <i>Oriolus auratus</i>	✓	✓
160	Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus haliaetus</i>	✓	✓
161	Owl, African Scops- <i>Otus senegalensis senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
162	Owl, Barn <i>Tyto alba affinis</i>	✓	✓
163	Owl, Verreaux's Eagle- <i>Bubo lacteus</i>	✓	✓
164	Owlet, Pearl-spotted <i>Glaucidium perlatum perlatum</i>	✓	✓
165	Oxpecker, Yellow-billed <i>Buphagus africanus africanus</i>	✓	✓
166	Oystercatcher, Eurasian <i>Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus</i>		✓
167	Parakeet, Ring-necked <i>Psittacula krameri</i>	✓	✓
168	Parrot, Brown-necked or Cape <i>Poicephalus robustus</i>		✓
169	Parrot, Senegal <i>Poicephalus senegalus senegalus</i>	✓	✓
170	Partridge, Stone <i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i>	✓	✓
171	Pelican, Great White <i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	✓	✓

172	Pelican, Pink-backed <i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>	✓	✓
173	Piapiac <i>Ptilostomus afer</i>	✓	✓
174	Pigeon, African Green- <i>Treron calva</i>	✓	✓
175	Pigeon, Bruce's Green- <i>Treron waalia</i>	✓	✓
176	Pigeon, Feral <i>Columba livia feral</i> (introduced)	✓	✓
177	Pigeon, Speckled or Rock <i>Columba guinea</i>	✓	✓
178	Pipit, Plain-backed <i>Anthus leucophrys</i>	✓	
179	Pipit, Tree <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	✓	✓
180	Plantain-eater, Western Grey <i>Crinifer piscator</i>	✓	✓
181	Plover, Common Ringed <i>Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula</i> ; <i>C.h.tundrae</i>	✓	✓
182	Plover, Egyptian or Crocodile-Bird <i>Pluvianus aegyptius</i>	✓	✓
183	Plover, Grey or Black-bellied <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		✓
184	Plover, Kittlitz's <i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>		✓
185	Pratincole, Collared <i>Glareola pratincola fueleborni</i>	✓	✓
186	Prinia, Tawny-flanked or Plain <i>Prinia subflava subflava</i>	✓	✓
187	Puffback, Northern <i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>	✓	✓
188	Pytilia, Red-winged <i>Pytilia phoenicoptera phoenicoptera</i>		✓
189	Quailfinch, Black-faced <i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i>	✓	✓
190	Quelea, Red-billed, <i>Quelea quelea</i>	✓	✓
191	Redshank, Common <i>Tringa totanus</i>	✓	✓
192	Redshank, Spotted <i>Tringa erythropus</i>		✓
193	Redstart, Common <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	✓	✓
194	Roller, Abyssinian <i>Coracias abyssinica</i>	✓	✓
195	Roller, Blue-bellied <i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>	✓	✓
196	Roller, Broad-billed <i>Eurystomus glaucurus afer</i>	✓	✓
197	Roller, Rufous-crowned <i>Coracias naevia naevia</i>	✓	✓
198	Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	✓	✓
199	Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	✓	✓
200	Sandgrouse, Four-banded <i>Pterocles quadricinctus</i>	✓	✓
201	Sandpiper, Common <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>	✓	✓
202	Sandpiper, Curlew <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>		✓
203	Sandpiper, Green <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	✓	✓
204	Sandpiper, Wood <i>Tringa glareola</i>	✓	✓
205	Sawwing, Fanti <i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>	✓	✓
206	Seedeater, White-rumped <i>Serinus leucopygius riggenbachi</i>	✓	✓
207	Shikra, or Little Banded Goshawk <i>Accipiter badius sphenurus</i>	✓	✓
208	Shrike, Red-shouldered Cuckoo- <i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>	✓	✓
209	Shrike, Yellow-billed <i>Corvinella corvina</i>	✓	✓
210	Silverbill, African <i>Lonchura cantans cantans</i>	✓	✓
211	Skua or Jaeger, Pomarine <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	✓	✓
212	Snipe, Greater Painted- <i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	✓	✓
213	Sparrow, House <i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓	✓
214	Sparrow, Northern Grey-headed <i>Passer griseus griseus</i>	✓	✓
215	Sparrow, Sudan Golden- <i>Passer luteus</i>		✓

216	Sparrow-lark, Chestnut-backed <i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>	✓	✓
217	Spinetail, Mottled <i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>	✓	✓
218	Spoonbill, African <i>Platalea alba</i>	✓	✓
219	Spoonbill, Eurasian <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	✓	✓
220	Starling, Bronze-tailed Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis chalcurus</i>		✓
221	Starling, Greater Blue-eared Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>	✓	✓
222	Starling, Lesser Blue-eared Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis chloropterus chloropterus</i>	✓	✓
223	Starling, Long-tailed Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>	✓	✓
224	Starling, Purple Glossy- <i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	✓	✓
225	Stilt, Black-winged <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	✓	✓
226	Stork, Marabou <i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>	✓	✓
227	Stork, Woolly-necked <i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	✓	✓
228	Stork, Yellow-billed <i>Mycteria ibis</i>	✓	✓
229	Sunbird, Beautiful <i>Nectarinia pulchella</i>	✓	✓
230	Sunbird, Collared <i>Anthreptes collaris</i>		✓
231	Sunbird, Copper <i>Nectarinia cuprea</i>	✓	
232	Sunbird, Mouse-brown <i>Anthreptes gabonicus</i>	✓	✓
233	Sunbird, Pygmy <i>Anthreptes platurus</i>	✓	✓
234	Sunbird, Scarlet-chested <i>Nectarinia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
235	Sunbird, Splendid <i>Nectarinia coccinigaster</i>	✓	✓
236	Sunbird, Variable or Yellow-bellied <i>Nectarinia venusta</i>	✓	✓
237	Sunbird, Western Violet-backed <i>Anthropteslonguemarei</i>		✓
238	Swallow, Mosque <i>Hirundo senegalensis senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
239	Swallow, Pied-winged <i>Hirundo leucosoma</i>	✓	✓
240	Swallow, Red-chested or Gambia <i>Hirundo lucida lucida</i>	✓	✓
241	Swallow, Red-rumped <i>Hirundo daurica</i>	✓	✓
242	Swallow, Wire-tailed <i>Hirundo smithii smithii</i>	✓	✓
243	Swamphen, (African) Purple <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>		✓
244	Swift, African Palm- <i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	✓	✓
245	Swift, Common <i>Apus apus</i>		✓
246	Swift, Little <i>Apus affinis</i>	✓	✓
247	Swift, White-rumped <i>Apus caffer</i>		✓
248	Tchagra, Black-crowned <i>Tchagra senegala</i>	✓	✓
249	Tern, Caspian <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	✓	✓
250	Tern, Common <i>Sterna hirundo hirundo</i>		✓
251	Tern, Gull-billed <i>Sterna nilotica nilotica</i>	✓	✓
252	Tern, Lesser Crested <i>Sterna bengalensis torresii</i>	✓	✓
253	Tern, Little <i>Sternula albifrons guineae</i>		✓
254	Tern, Royal <i>Sterna maxima albidorsalis</i>	✓	✓
255	Tern, Sandwich <i>Sterna sandvicensis sandvicensis</i>	✓	✓
256	Thick-knee, Senegal <i>Burhinus senegalensis senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
257	Thick-knee, Spotted <i>Burhinus capensis maculosus</i>		H
258	Tinkerbird, Yellow-fronted <i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	✓	✓
259	Tinkerbird, Yellow-rumped <i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i>		✓

260	Tit, White-shouldered <i>Parus guineensis</i>	H	
261	Tit, Yellow Penduline- <i>Anthoscopus parvulus senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
262	Turaco, Guinea or Green <i>Tauraco persa buffoni</i>	✓	✓
263	Turaco, Violet <i>Musophaga violacea</i>	✓	✓
264	Turnstone, Ruddy <i>Arenaria interpres interpres</i>	✓	✓
265	Vulture, Hooded <i>Necrosyrtes monachus monachus</i>	✓	✓
266	Vulture, Palm-nut <i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>	✓	✓
267	Vulture, Ruppell's Griffon <i>Gyps rueppellii rueppellii</i>	✓	✓
268	Vulture, White-backed <i>Gyps africanus</i>	✓	✓
269	Wagtail, White <i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓
270	Wagtail, Yellow <i>Motacilla flava</i>	✓	✓
271	Warbler, Garden <i>Sylvia borin borin</i>		✓
272	Warbler, Melodious <i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	✓	✓
273	Warbler, Oriole (Moho) <i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>	✓	✓
274	Warbler, Red-winged <i>Heliolais erythroptera</i>	✓	✓
275	Warbler, Subalpine <i>Sylvia cantillans</i>		✓
276	Warbler, Western Olivaceous <i>Hippolais opaca</i>		✓
277	Warbler, Willow <i>Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus</i>	✓	✓
278	Wattle-eye, Common <i>Platysteira cynea</i>	✓	✓
279	Waxbill, Black-rumped <i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	✓	✓
280	Waxbill, Lavender <i>Estrilda caerulescens</i>	✓	✓
281	Waxbill, Orange-cheeked <i>Estrilda melpoda melpoda</i>	✓	✓
282	Weaver, African (Vitelline) Masked- <i>Ploceus vitellinus</i>	✓	✓
283	Weaver, Black-headed <i>Ploceus melanocephalus melanocephalus</i>	✓	✓
284	Weaver, Black-necked <i>Ploceus nigricollis brachypterus</i>	✓	✓
285	Weaver, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow- <i>Plocepasser superciliosus</i>		✓
286	Weaver, Little <i>Ploceus luteolus</i>	✓	✓
287	Weaver, Village or Spotted-backed <i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	✓	✓
288	Weaver, White-billed Buffalo- <i>Bubalornis albirostris</i>	✓	✓
289	Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus phaeopus</i>	✓	✓
290	Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	✓	✓
291	White-eye, Yellow <i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	✓	✓
292	Whydah, Long-tailed or Exclamatory Paradise- <i>Vidua interjecta</i>	✓	✓
293	Whydah, Pin-tailed <i>Vidua macroura</i>	✓	✓
294	Woodhoopoe, Black <i>Rhinopotamos aterrimus</i>	✓	✓
295	Woodhoopoe, Green <i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>	✓	✓
296	Woodpecker, Brown-backed <i>Dendropicus obsoletus obsoletus</i>		✓
297	Woodpecker, Buff-spotted <i>Campethera nivosa nivosa</i>	✓	
298	Woodpecker, Cardinal <i>Dendropicus fuscescens lafesnayi</i>	✓	
299	Woodpecker, Fine-spotted <i>Campethera punctuligera punctuligera</i>	✓	✓
300	Woodpecker, Grey <i>Dendropicus goertae goertae</i>	✓	✓
301	Wryneck, Eurasian <i>Jynx torquilla torquilla</i>		✓
302	Yellowbill or Green Coucal <i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>		✓
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BUTTERFLIES

This List is based on previous sightings: The sequence and names follow Penney, 'Field Guide to the Butterflies of the Gambia', 2009.



1	Narrow-banded Green Swallowtail <i>Papilio nireus nireus</i>	✓	✓
2	Citrus Swallowtail <i>Papilio demodocus demodocus</i>	✓	✓
3	African Emigrant <i>Catopsilia florella</i>	✓	✓
4	Common Grass Yellow <i>Eurema hecabe solifera</i>	✓	✓
5	Small Grass Yellow <i>Eurema brigitta brigitta</i>	✓	✓
6	Zebra White <i>Pinacopteryx eriphia tritogenia</i>	✓	✓
7	Large Vagrant <i>Nepheronia argia argia</i>	✓	✓
8	Scarlet Tip <i>Colotis danae eupompe</i>	✓	✓
9	Large Orange Tip <i>Colotis antevippe antevippe</i>	✓	✓
10	Tiny Orange Tip <i>Colotis evagore antigone</i>	✓	✓
11	Caper White <i>Belenois aurota</i>	✓	✓
12	African Caper White <i>Belenois creona creona</i>	✓	✓
13	African Albatross <i>Appias epaphia epaphia</i>	✓	✓
14	African Spirit <i>Leptosia alcesta</i>	✓	✓
15	Common Dotted Border <i>Mylothris chloris chloris</i>	✓	✓
16	Iasis sapphire <i>Iolais iasis iasis</i>	✓	✓
17	Common Zebra Blue <i>Leptotes pirithous</i>	✓	✓
18	Pea Blue <i>Lampides boeticus</i>	✓	✓
19	African Grass Blue <i>Zizeeria knysna</i>	✓	✓
20	Tiny Grass Blue <i>Zizula hylax</i>	✓	✓
21	Mediterranean Pierrot <i>Tarucus roseacus</i>	✓	✓
22	African Tiger <i>Damaus chrysippus chrysippus</i>	✓	✓
23	Pearl Charaxes <i>Charaxes varanes vologeses</i>	✓	✓
24	Bush Charaxes <i>Charaxes achaemenes atlantica</i>	✓	✓
25	Painted Lady <i>Vanessa cardui</i>	✓	✓
26	Darker Commodore <i>Precis antilope</i>	✓	✓
27	Diadem <i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>	✓	✓
28	Variable Eggfly <i>Hypolimnas anthedon</i>	✓	✓
29	Blue Pansy <i>Junonia orithya madagascariensis</i>	✓	✓
30	Dark Blue Pansy <i>Junonia oenone</i>	✓	✓
31	Yellow Pansy <i>Junonia hierta cebrene</i>	✓	✓
32	Soldier Pansy <i>Junonia terea</i>	✓	✓
33	Little Commodore <i>Junonia sophia</i>	✓	✓
34	River Sailor <i>Neptis serena serena</i>	✓	✓
35	Guineafowl <i>Hamanumida daedalus</i>	✓	✓
36	Encedon Acraea <i>Acraea encedon encedon</i>	✓	✓
37	Small orange Acraea <i>Acraea serena serena</i>	✓	✓
38	Elegant Acraea <i>Acraea egina egina</i>	✓	✓
39	Striped Policeman <i>Coeliades forestan forestan</i>	✓	✓

40	Grey Elfin <i>Sarangesa laelius</i>	✓	✓
41	Common Grizzled Skipper <i>Spialia spio</i>	✓	✓
42	Olive-haired Swift <i>Borbo borbonica borbonica</i>	✓	✓
REPTILES/AMPHIBIANS/MAMMALS			
1	Banded Mongoose <i>Mungos mungo</i>		✓
2	Gambia Sun Squirrel <i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>	✓	✓
3	Gambian Epauletted Friut bat <i>Epomophorus gambianus</i>	✓	✓
4	Green Vervet (Callithrix Monkey) <i>Chlorocebus sabaesus</i>	✓	✓
5	Guinea Baboon <i>Papio papio</i>	✓	✓
6	Hippopotamus <i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	✓	✓
7	Patas Monkey <i>Erythrocebus patas</i>	✓	✓
8	Striped Ground Squirrel <i>Xerus erythropus</i>	✓	✓
9	Western Bush Buck <i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>	✓	✓
10	Western Red Colobus Monkey <i>Procolobus badius</i>	✓	✓
11	Dwarf Crocodile <i>Osteolaemus tetraspis</i>	✓	✓
12	Nile Monitor Lizard <i>Varanus n. niloticus</i>	✓	✓
13	Yellow-headed Rock Agama <i>Agama a. agama</i>	✓	✓
14	Olive Grass Snake <i>Psammophis phillipsi</i>		✓
15	Senegal Chameleon <i>Chamaeleo senegalensis</i>	✓	✓