

Day 1:

Due to our midnight arrival we decided to spend our first day at leisure. We spent the morning birding from the deck and around the gardens of our guesthouse. By the afternoon we were all well rested and eager to start exploring this wonderful country. We headed to the Entebbe Botanical Gardens where we spent the next few hours birding, looking at butterflies and being in awe of massive trees. Highlights included Grey Parrot, Red-chested and Olive-bellied Sunbirds, Black-headed Gonolek, Double-toothed Barbet, African Hobby, Splendid and Rüppell's Starling, Ross's and Great Blue Turaco, Black-and-White Casqued Hornbill, Swamp Flycatcher, Grey-capped Warbler as well as Black headed, Orange and Golden-backed Weaver. Mammals included Vervet Monkey and Mantled Guereza (Colobus) and a few reptiles like Tropical House Gecko and Finsch's Agama.



Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Day 2:

After breakfast we headed to Mabamba Swamps, the most reliable spot to find the unique-looking Shoebill. En-route to the swamp we saw White-throated and Blue-breasted Bee-eater, Brimstone Canary, White-headed Saw-wing, Sooty Chat and African Harrier-Hawk. The Nile is in a big flood and the water levels were higher than they had been in many years. As a result we spent some time poling with our boats through the marsh and managed to spot our first Shoebill, which took off before being able to approach it. After making our way to deeper water and trying to pin where it had landed a second Shoebill flew in and landed right next to the deep channel allowing us to approach and have amazing views of it attempting to hunt lungfish. We spent quite a bit of time with this individual and managed great photos and video footage. We had another three Shoebills flying above us on our way back to the dock and so our total number of Shoebills for the morning stood at five! We also had great views of Winding and Curruther's Cisticola, African Marsh Harrier, Blue-headed Coucal, Greater Swamp

Warbler, Northern Brown-throated and Weyn's Weavers, Yellow-billed Duck and Madagascar (Olive) Bee-eaters. Back at the dock we added Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu as well as a roosting colony of Singing Fruit Bats under the roof of the rangers hut. We arrived back at the guesthouse for lunch and headed back to the Entebbe Botanical Gardens late afternoon where we managed a few new species for the trip: Black-and-White Shrike Flycatcher, African Emerald Cuckoo, Green Crombec, Yellow-throated Leaflove, Little Greenbul and African Yellow White-eye. A Red-legged Sun Squirrel was added to the mammals list.



Shoebill

Day 3:

Today was a long day of travel with a few stops en-route to target certain species. The first stop was to find an elusive inhabitant of thick papyrus swamp, the Papyrus Gonolek. Having had good looks at an individual shortly upon arrival we continued toward the town of Kayabwe on the equator. While waiting for our take-away teas and coffees we attended a brief demonstration on the equator and its gravitational forces before continuing to Mbarara for lunch. En-route we saw a few drier country birds like Bare-faced Go-away Birds, Arrow-marked Babbler, Grey Crowned Crane and Grey-backed and Northern Fiscal. A few Boehmi subspecies Plains Zebra were seen near Lake Mburo. As we ascended into the higher elevations we started seeing a few new species such as Mackinnon's Shrike and Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater. Another stop at a papyrus marsh allowed further views of another Papyrus Gonolek and great looks at an otherwise skulking Bradypterus, the White-winged Swamp Warbler. We added Black-lored Babbler around the swamp area. As we climbed towards Ruhija, in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, we were treated to great evening views of the exceptionally elusive Handsome Francolin. L'Hoest's and Blue Monkeys ended the evening's sightings as we arrived at Broadbill Forest Camp.



Papyrus Gonolek



White-winged Swamp Warbler

Day 4:

An early morning start for most of the group who left for Gorilla trekking into the rainforest. A later start for the remainder of the group who saw some good birds around the lodge's gardens like Yellow-breasted Waxbill, Streaky Seedeater, Variable Sunbird and Chubb's Cisticola well as finding no less than 8 Rwenzori Three-horned Chameleons.



Rwenzori Three-horned Chameleon

The Gorilla trek was quite a tough trek as the Gorilla family we were following had moved quite far off into tougher terrain. With the help of the rangers and porters we managed to find the Gorilla family and everyone managed a good experience with the hour we spent with them.

Several good Rwenzori/Albertine endemics were seen on the trek, including White-headed Woodhoopoe, Yellow-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Blue-headed Sunbird and Mountain Masked Apalis. Other highlights included Bar-tailed Trogon, Banded Prinia, Northern Double-collared Sunbird and Waller's Starling. After trekking we went back to camp. En-route we saw Rwenzori Red Duiker as a new mammal and the rest of the group also got to see the Rwenzori Chameleons and

some of the garden birds on arrival at camp. Carruther's Mountain Squirrel was a new mammal for the day seen around the gardens.



Eastern Mountain Gorilla

Day 5:

We had another early start into the forest, for a more leisurely full day birding walk on the Amufa Trail. We spent time looking for some of the Albertine Rift endemics and found Rwenzori Apalis, Strange Weaver, Grauers Warbler, Stripe-breasted Tit, Rwenzori Batis and the main target Grauer's Broadbill . Although this species made us work very hard it finally allowed amazing views. Other range restricted species encountered were Chestnut-throated Apalis, Abyssinian Thrush, Mountain Greenbul, White-bellied Crested Flycatcher, Grey-chested Babbler (Illadopsis), Tiny Sunbird, Dwarf and Least Honeyguide. When weren't looking at birds we were mesmerized by butterflies, flowers, fungi, frogs and the sheer size of the trees and ferns of this magical forest. En-route back we added Blue-throated Roller to the day list. We celebrated our success with wines and whiskeys by the warm and cozy fireplace.



Grauer's Broadbill



Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher



Mountain Masked Apalis

Day 6:

We departed the Ruhija section of Bwindi to the mid elevation at Buhoma with a few birding stops en-route. We stopped just outside camp after breakfast and tried for a few skulking forest specialists and managed good views of Red-throated Alethe, Rwenzori Hill Babbler and Mountain Illadopsis. We did the guides trail at Ruhija and also had excellent views of Regal Sunbird, Thick-billed Seedeater and White-tailed Blue Flycatcher. A stop at a river further on gave us our first Mountain Wagtail, Dusky Blue Flycatcher and Chestnut Wattle-eye. A stop at 'The Neck' produced Black Bee-eater, Ansorge's and Shelley's Greenbul, Purple-breasted Sunbird, Speckled Tinkerbird and a fly over Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo. A great sighting of Africa's largest butterfly, the African Giant Swallowtail, brought huge excitement to the group.

We arrived at Buhoma Community Rest Camp for lunch and had views of White-chinned Prinia, Black-necked and Black-billed Weaver, Petit's Cuckooshrike, White-breasted Nigrita and Bocage's Bushshrike all seen from the restaurant deck. The views from the restaurant decks as well as the rooms are truly spectacular and birding here is simply excellent.

A late afternoon walk to the edge of the forest produced Black-throated Apalis, Many-coloured and Luhder's Bushshrike, White-tailed Ant Thrush and Grey-

winged Robin-chat. A few Olive Baboons, Red-tailed Monkeys and a Rwenzori Sun Squirrel added to the mammals list.



African Giant Swallowtail

Day 7:

We spent a full day at mid-elevation, on a slow walk in Bwindi Impenetrable Rainforest. Even before entering the gate we added African Shrike-flycatcher, Plain Greenbul, Yellow-billed Barbet, Grey Apalis, Crested Guinea fowl, Narrow-tailed Starling, Cassin's Honeybird, Yellow-spotted Barbet and amazing views of Black-faced Rufous Warbler. Around the corner we had a sighting of Black-fronted Red Duiker as it posed in the pathway ahead. Once in the forest we saw Crowned Eagle, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, Elliot's Woodpecker, Ayre's Hawk-eagle, Olive-green Cameroptera, a displaying African Broadbill as well as Little-grey, Red-tailed and Cabanis's Greenbul. Just before lunch we managed our main targets for the day: Red-faced Woodland Warbler and Neumann's Warbler, two tough-to-see undergrowth dwellers.

After a well-earned packed lunch we added great views of Blue-throated Brown Sunbird and Cassin's Hawk Eagle. As we left the park we found the very odd looking Spectral Pygmy Chameleon which is a quite widespread equatorial species.



Spectral Pygmy Chameleon

Day 8:

Departing Buhoma we travelled through the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park keeping our eyes open for large game such as the famous tree-climbing Lions. The habitat turns into drier grassland and acacia savannah and so a different mix of species were seen en-route such as Trilling, Stout and Croaking Cisticolas, Common Scimitarbill, White-browed Scrub-Robin, Blue-naped Mousebird, White-headed Barbet and Yellow-throated Longclaw. Several new mammals were encountered including African Elephant, Banded Mongoose, African Buffalo, Defassa Waterbuck, Ugandan Kob, Nile Bushbuck and Common Warthog. We had to rush through the park a bit to catch our afternoon boat trip on the Kazinga Channel, a channel of water linking Lake Edward and Lake George.

On the boat cruise, a highlight for many of us, we saw good numbers of previously mentioned mammals adding Hippopotamus and Cape Hare. A few large Nile Crocodiles patrolled the river banks. A number of new birds were seen such as Red-throated Bee-eater, African Skimmer, Western Black-headed Batis, African Blue Flycatcher, Red-headed Lovebird, Senegal Lapwing, Goliath Heron, Collared Pratincole, Martial Eagle, Saddle-billed stork, Blue-spotted Wood-dove, Gull-billed Tern, Crested Francolin, African Hoopoe and Tropical Boubou. We arrived at the Bush Lodge a little before sunset and managed to see Giant Forest Hog around the grounds as well as a large female Boomslang being mobbed by a number of bird species.



Elephant and Hippos on the Kazinga Channel

Day 9:

Pre-breakfast birding around camp produced Snowy-crowned Robin-chat, Black-colored Babbler and Yellow-fronted Canary. After our delicious breakfast of pancakes, muffins, fresh fruit and eggs we checked out and embarked on a morning game drive into Queen Elizabeth National Park. Once in the park we saw White-backed Vulture, Black-chested and Brown Snake Eagle, Eurasian Marsh Harrier (unusual for this time of year), White-tailed, Flappet, Rufous-naped and Red-capped Larks, Copper Sunbird, Gabar Goshawk, Lesser Moorhen, Dwarf Bittern, Greater and Lesser Flamingo also showed around roadside marshes. We arrived late afternoon at Kibale Forest and checked into our guesthouse.



Yellow-throated Longclaw

Day 10:

Pre-dawn saw us head into the forest in search of the elusive Green-breasted Pitta. As we entered the park a large bull forest Elephant walked on the road ahead of us reminding us that we should tread carefully. Entering the forest in darkness we headed straight to where the ranger last saw the Pitta. He left us and went to survey for the Pitta, when we noticed some movement above us in a Chimp nest. Peering down at us through sleepy eyes we saw a large male Chimpanzee waking from his slumber and proceeded to wake up at his leisure doing what chimps do that time of morning. After stretching and yawning he slowly came down from his nest, checked us out for a bit before ambling onto the path where he woke up the rest of the forest with loud screams and banging against the bark of a tree. It was a magical and unexpected experience.



Chimpanzee

We added Brown Illadopsis and Toro Olive Greenbul to the bird list and continued to another part of the forest as the Pitta was not playing ball in that specific area. We walked through a swampy area with lots of elephant signs and as the heat of the day crept in and all hopes of the Pitta were lost we suddenly heard it. We proceeded with some heavy bushwhacking before getting great views of this little, elusive jewel.

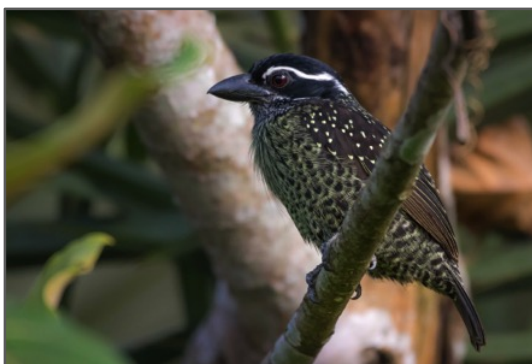
After spending some time with the Pitta we slowly headed back to our vehicle. Our guide was not only an expert birder but he also turned out to be an expert in butterflies. Needless to say we were blown away by the plethora of butterflies seen throughout Kibale Forest.



Green-breasted Pitta

After lunch at our Guesthouse we went on a walk into the Bigodi Wetlands. This is particularly productive for a number of primate species, even Chimpanzees sometimes. We saw Red-tailed and Blue Monkey, Central African Red Colobus, Mantled Guereza, Uganda Mangabey and Olive Baboon all on this afternoon's walk. Good birds were also seen on the way and great views of White-spotted Flufftail, White-tailed Ant thrush, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Grey-headed Nigrita and Shining Blue Kingfisher were enjoyed. We enjoyed a brief flyover of Purple-headed Starling and Grey Parrots.

That evening, there was a good number of Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bats around the guesthouse.



Hairy-breasted Barbet



Uganda Mangabey

Day 11:

We had a long day of travel to Masindi with several stops en-route. We had a distant view of Chimps high up in the forest as we drove through. A birding stop at a river produced great views of Western Nicator, Grey-throated Barbets and the spectacular Red-headed Bluebill. A quick stop outside of Fort Portal produced Highland Rush Warbler (very similar to Little Rush but a split). Another roadside stop in a stretch of Kibale Forest produced Honeyguide Greenbul and Scarce Swift.

Getting closer to Masindi we added Black Bishop and Black-winged Red Bishop (males in breeding plumage), Singing Cisticola, Brown Babbler and Moustached Grass Warbler. Entering Masindi we saw the first Piacpiacs (a small, long tailed corvid). A Slender Chameleon added to the reptile list.



Western Nicator

Day 12:

We did a full day of birding along the 'Royal Mile' in Budongo Forest Reserve. We set out early and en-route saw several Tantalus Monkeys on the roadside. After some heavy rainfall there had been a large flying ant eruption and being a large source of protein they were being eaten by everything including the local people. We had at least 30 Black-and-White Casqued Hornbills on the ground feeding as well as a few White-thighed and Crowned Hornbills. En-route we stopped at a few suitable habitats for Olivebacks and managed to see Black Sparrow-hawk, Brown-backed Scrub Robin, Compact Weaver, Red-collared Widowbird, Black-crowned Waxbill, Cabanis's Bunting and Senegal Coucal. Entering the forest we heard Blue-breasted Kingfisher but it only allowed fly-by views. Shortly afterwards we got Nahan's Partridge calling around us but only poor views were had of this tough forest skulker. Chocolate-backed Kingfisher gave great scope views as well as the diminutive African Dwarf Kingfisher. African Pied Hornbill, Green Hylia and Fire-crested Alethe showed well. Some of the tougher birds we saw well were Chestnut-capped Flycatcher, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Jameson's Wattle-eye, Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Grey and Yellow Longbill, Fraser's Forest Flycatcher and Forest Robin. The Butterflies were really good and some time was spent with them in the heat of the day. Narina Trogon, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Yellow-crested Woodpecker and Sabine's Spinetail rounded off the day. A beautiful Blue Duiker was seen on the pathway as well as Alexander's Bush Squirrel and Western Tree Hyrax.



Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill

Day 13:

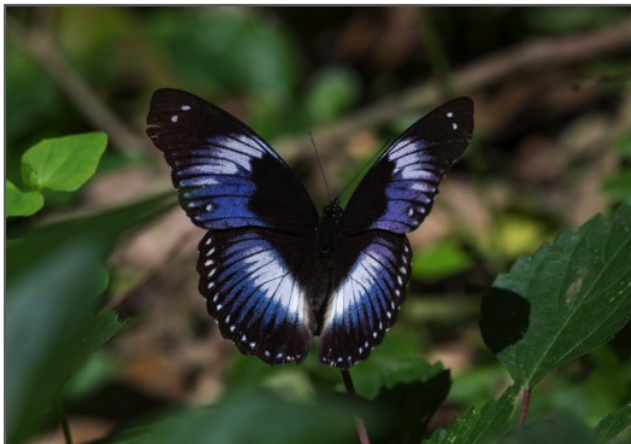
A short drive to Murchison Falls National Park meant a slightly later departure. We tried birding a field outside of Masindi, for the Oliveback. A number of seedeaters were active in the seeding grasses. Bronze-tailed Starling, Northern Red Bishop, Whistling Cisticola, Brown Twinspot, Pin-tailed Whydahs and finally the stars of the show a pair of Grey-headed Olivebacks made an appearance.



Grey-headed Oliveback

We drove to the edge of the Butiaba Escarpment and did a quick stop in search of a few of the more dry country birds. Vitelline Masked Weaver, Lesser Blue-eared Starling, Vinaceous Dove, Beautiful Sunbird, Green-winged Pytilia, Green Woodhoopoe, Black-billed Barbet, Black-rumped Waxbill, Northern Crombec, Brubru, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Dusky Babbler and Foxy Cisticola were all added en-route down the escarp. At the bottom we had Shelley's Sparrow, Cut-throat Finch, Silverbird, White-rumped Seedeater, Dark Chanting Goshawk and White-faced Whistling duck.

Entering the park toward the Murchison Falls we encountered lots of Tsetse Flies and due to the midday heat we did not see too many birds. The Murchison falls looked stunning with the largest flood on the Nile in decades and we even managed to see one Rock Pratincole on the only exposed section of rock. The sheer power of that much water gushing past was a sight to behold. During our short game drive through the park to the lodge we saw a few new mammals: Rothschild's Giraffe, Lelwel Hartebeest and Oribi. Another new species of chameleon, the Smooth Chameleon was seen on the road as well as a new lizard, the Speckle-lipped Skink. Abyssinian Ground Hornbills had everyone's full attention while Black-billed Wood Dove and Brown-rumped Bunting were also seen. The last light in the garden provided Spot-flanked Barbet, Nubian Woodpecker, Western Violet-backed Sunbirds, Eurasian Hoopoe and Black-crowned Tchagra. A spectacular sunset over the Nile with Gin and Tonics brought another great day to an end. There were several Yellow-winged Bats hunting in the lights around the lodge gardens.



Blue Diadem



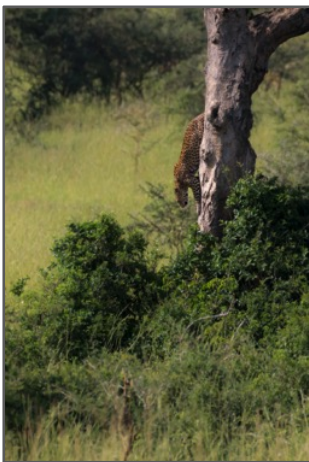
Yellow-winged Bat

Day 14:

An early morning had us out on a game drive in some of the most spectacular scenery in Africa. Borasses palms as far as the eye can see in a Savannah habitat teaming with Buffalo, Kob, Oribi, Elephant, Defassa Waterbuck and Rothschild's Giraffe. We added good views of a savannah primate, the Patas Monkey. We had a late morning sighting of three Lions and a Side-striped Jackal. After some good birding through the morning we added Heuglin's Spurfowl, Red-necked Falcon, Black-bellied Bustard, Speckle-fronted Weaver, Rüppell's Vulture, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, Spotted Palm Thrush, Denham's Bustard and Black-headed

Lapwing. The first of three Leopard sightings was one sitting in a tree a little way off the road but it eventually jumped out. The second Leopard was also sleeping in a tree a little closer to the road but didn't do much, and the third Leopard was on two Kob kills right next to the road. She gave a great show climbing in and out of the tree, up and down the termite mound and feeding on two separate carcasses.

After a packed lunch with the Leopard we continued to the old ferry dock (now there is a bridge) where we did an afternoon boat cruise on the Nile. We had good views of a variety of already seen birds and animals as well as a few big Nile Crocodiles. The boat cruise ends below the falls, which from that angle was very scenic with the large amounts of water coming over. We arrived back at camp before sunset.



Leopard 1



Leopard 3

Day 15:

After breakfast we did a bit of morning birding on the lodge grounds before departing. A few of us saw a Greyish Eagle-owl before the break of dawn. Birding in the garden was productive and we had Bruce's Green Pigeon, Brown-backed Woodpecker, White-headed and Spot-flanked Barbet, Grey-headed Bushshrike, Spotted Morning Thrush, Silverbird, Brown Babbler, Grey-capped Warbler, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike and Black-headed Gonolek.

We then took the long drive to Entebbe via Kampala. A few stops en-route finally yielded one of our main targets: the White-crested Turaco. It is certainly one of the prettiest in its family and we had few really good fly by views. Western Black-headed Orioles gave good views at lunch at the Kabalega Diners. We then braved Kampala traffic and made it to Entebbe early afternoon where we did our Covid tests before arriving back at our guesthouse.



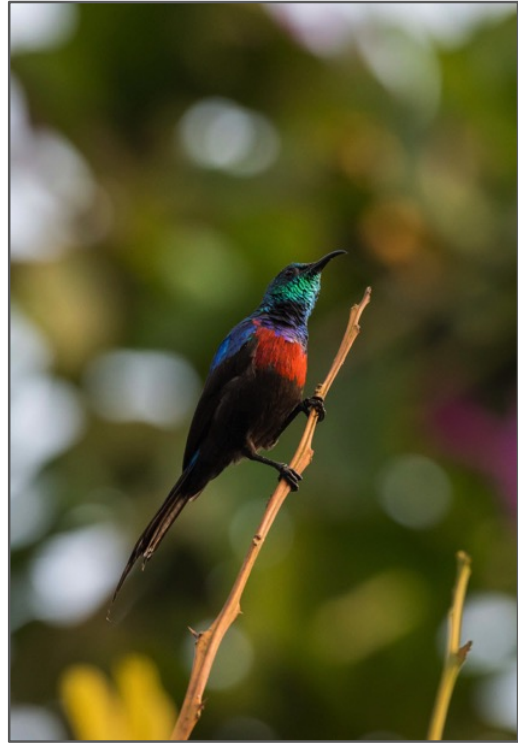
Northern Carmine Bee-eater

Day 16:

Our final day was spent at leisure - birding in the gardens, getting better images of some of the common garden birds and packing for our late night departure.



Black-headed Gonolek



Red-chested Sunbird

Birds of Uganda:



Lizard Buzzard



White-browed Robin Chat



Woodland Kingfisher



Ross's Turaco



African Emerald Cuckoo



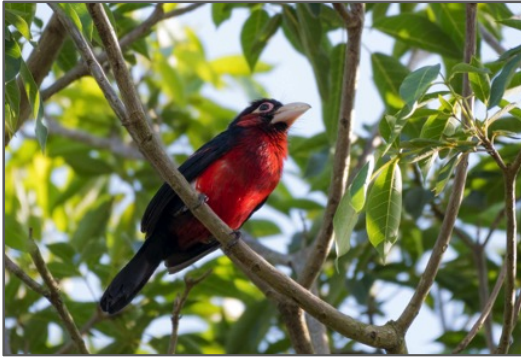
Long-crested Eagle



African Thrush



Black-headed Gonolek



Double-toothed Barbet



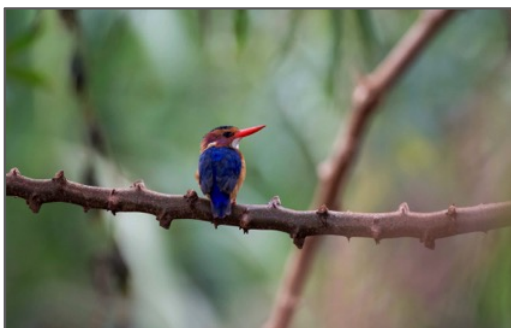
Great Blue Turaco



Eastern Plaintain-eaters



Grey-crowned Crane



African Pygmy Kingfisher



African Blue Flycatcher



African Grey Parrot



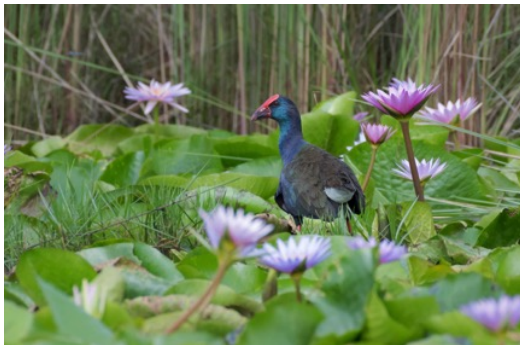
Pink-backed Pelican



Purple Heron



African Jacana



African Swamphen



Mountain Wagtail



Yellow-breasted Apalis



Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird



Shoebill



Brown-backed Woodpecker



Red-throated Bee-eater



White-tailed Ant Thrush



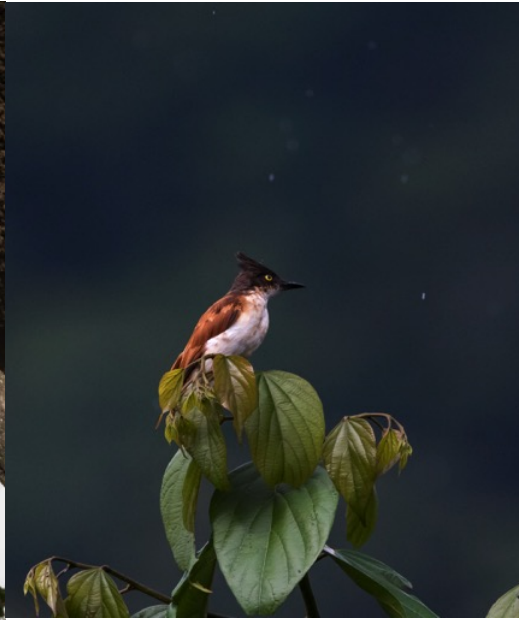
White-tailed Lark



African Skimmers



Red-headed Lovebird



Black & White Shrike Flycatcher (female)



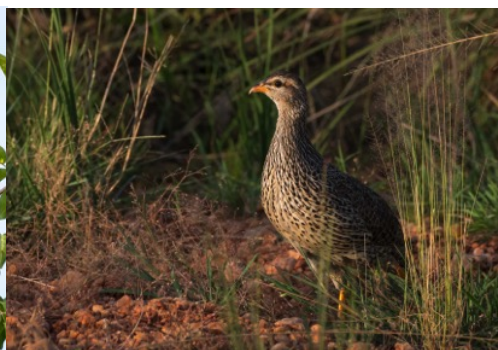
Many-coloured Bushshrike



Red-bellied Paradis Flycatcher



Green-backed Eremomela



Heuglin's Spurfowl



Abyssinian Ground Hornbill



White-thighed Hornbill



Grey-headed Nigrita



Bronzy Sunbird

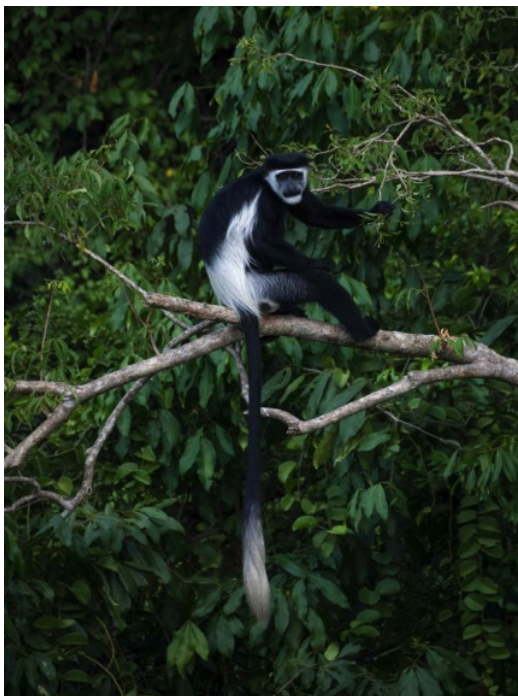


Eurasian Hoopoe



Grey-capped Warbler

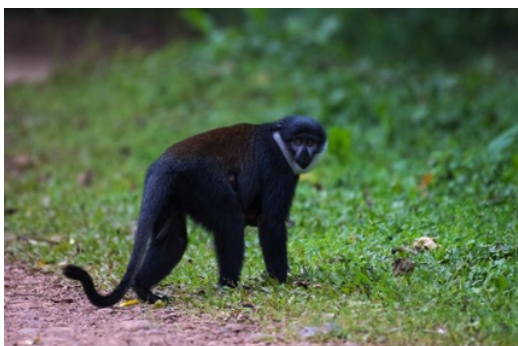
Common animals of Uganda:



Mantled Guereza



Olive Baboon



L'Hoest's Monkey



Red-tailed Monkey



Patas Money



Chimpanzee



Red Colobus



African Elephant



Defassa Waterbuck



Leopard



Leopard



Rothschild's Giraffe



Lake Albert



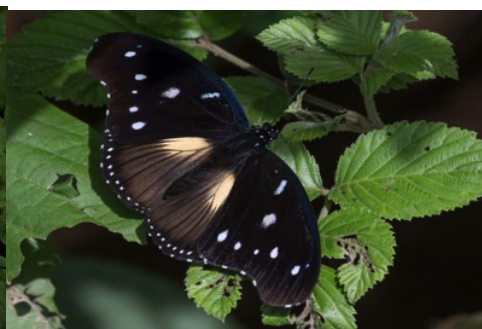
African Elephants



Leopard



Lelwel Hartebeest





Bwindi Impenetrable Forest



Murchison Falls National Park



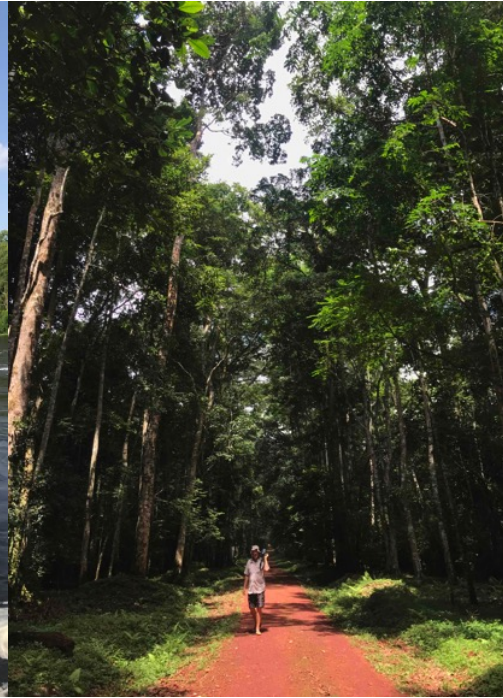
Edge of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park



Bwindi Impenetrable National Park



The Nile below Murchison Falls



The Royal Mile in Budongo Forest



'The Neck' in Bwindi



The team on the Equator