



Uganda Comprehensive Birding and Wildlife 18-Day Birding Tour

Day 1: Arrival into Uganda and Transfer to Hotel

Johnnie will meet you all at the airport upon your arrival into Entebbe. After grabbing bags and getting organized in the vehicle, Johnnie (and likely the driver William) will take you to your Hotel (about 7 to 10 minutes away from the airport).

Before departing for the evening, everyone should get on the same page with Johnnie for an early morning start for good looks at the Shoebill on Day 2 of the trip.

Day 2: Mabamba Wetlands for Shoebill and Complete Afternoon of Birding in Areas Surrounding Mabamba and Entebbe

After an early breakfast (about 6 AM) and after Johnnie secures packed lunches from the hotel, the group will proceed to Mabamba Wetlands at about 6:15 AM. Birding stops will break up the drive to Mabamba Wetlands, but short stops will be necessary to assure timeliness on finding the Shoebill before the fishermen scare them away. Once arriving at the wetlands, a very basic bathroom opportunity will be available before getting on to the boat. You will be paddled in a canoe through the swamp, looking for the mighty Shoebill and other birds like Pink-backed Pelican, Long-tailed Cormorant, Squacco Heron, Yellow-billed Duck, Malachite Kingfisher, Long-toed Plover, Blue-headed Coucal, Blue-breasted Bee-eater and more.

Birding along the road back towards Entebbe can be excellent for several species. You will get a good start here on several Sunbird species (like Red-chested Sunbird, Olive-bellied Sunbird, Collared Sunbird, Variable Sunbird) and several weavers (like Black-headed Weaver, Slender-billed Weaver, Northern Brown-throated Weaver, Yellow-backed Weaver, Orange Weaver) among a good number of other species. Additional

birding on several spots (right along the road) on the way back to Entebbe will also be worthwhile. On your way back to Entebbe, the group should find Grey Kestrel, African Green Pigeon, Great Blue Turaco, Ross's Turaco and more. Be sure to ask Johnnie to clarify which Swift species you will see flying overhead.

You will likely see one or two hornbill species, as well as several more birds and likely Red-billed Firefinch before the end of the day.

If time is left in the day, it will be worthwhile to bird the shoreline and walkways of the Entebbe Botanical Gardens. Past trips have picked up Pied Kingfisher, Spur-winged Lapwing, Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill, Orange Weaver, Black-crowned Waxbill and more.

We will need to get back to the hotel by about 5 PM. We will have dinner and complete the bird list so we can get ready for bed by about 8 PM.

Another early start will be worthwhile as we get on our way to Murchison Falls National Park.



Eastern Plantain-eater

Day 3: AM Birding Stops on way to Murchison Falls National Park: PM Birding near Paraa and Other Areas near Murchison Falls National Park

We will leave early and just after breakfast, as we proceed to Murchison falls national park. We will stop for some birding breaks as new birds and suitable habitat offers the opportunity for new trip birds.

Lunch will be at the Hotel. After lunch, continue with the drive to Paraa via the top of the falls. If time allows, we will have a short walk around the top of the falls down to the river's edge, and from here, we will see the waters narrow as they are forced through a rocky cleft and plunge down 35 meters in a majestic cascade.

We will then continue with the drive to accommodation.

Throughout the day, we will look out for birds including several raptors, Rock Pratincole, Red-throated Bee-eater, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Grey-backed Fiscal, Piapiac, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Lesser Blue-eared Starling, Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling, Black-headed Weaver, Grosbeak Weaver, Golden-backed Weaver, Yellow-backed Weaver, Vieillot's Black Weaver, Brown Twinspot, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Red-billed Firefinch, Fawn-breasted Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin, Pin-tailed Whydah, Village Indigobird among others.



African Citril

Day 4: Birding and Wildlife Viewing at Murchison Falls National Park

After an early breakfast, proceed for a game drive getting back in time for lunch. After lunch, we will transfer to the Paraa northern bank for the boat trip up to the bottom of the Falls. Here, it is possible to view hundreds of hippos, crocodiles, and a variety of bird life. The birds we hope to see include Egyptian Goose, White-faced Whistling Duck, African Harrier-Hawk, Helmeted Guineafowl, Crested Francolin, Black-billed Wood Dove, Venaceous Dove, White-crested Turaco, Diederick Cuckoo, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Red-throated Bee-eater, Broad-billed Roller, Wire-tailed Swallow, Rattling Cisticola, Silverbird, Beautiful Sunbird, Black-headed Gonolek, Abyssinian Ground Hornbill, Black-headed Plover, Rock Pratincole, Swallow-tailed Bee-Eater, Red-throated Bee-eater, Black-billed Barbet, Spotted Morning Thrush, Speckle fronted Weaver, White-browed Sparrow Weaver and more. Look out for mammals like the graceful Rothchild Giraffe, Jackson's Hartebeest, Uganda Kob, Defassa Waterbuck, Buffaloes, Elephants, Warthog, Hippos, and Oribi. If we are lucky, we may see a Leopard and/or a Lion.



Shining-blue Kingfisher

Day 5: Birding on Way to Masindi: The Escarpment; Busingiro Forest Center and Additional Birding in the Afternoon

After an early breakfast and after Johnnie has gotten the packed lunches in order, we will proceed for the drive back to Masindi driving through the rift valley escarpment, where you will have good views of Lake Albert. We will bird the escarpment before proceeding to Busingiro Forest Center. This morning we should find species such as Sacred Ibis, Western-banded Snake Eagle, Bateleur, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, White-browed Coucal, African Palm Swift, Flappet Lark, Spotted Morning Thrush, Zitting Cisticola, Beautiful Sunbird, Grey-backed Fiscal, Brown-crowned Tchagra and other new trip species.

In the afternoon, we will bird around the vicinity of the road, as we head towards Masindi. We will be on the lookout for birds like Striped Kingfisher, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Black-billed Barbet, Cliff Chat, Spotted Morning Thrush, Northern Crombec, Red-faced Crombec, Green-backed Eremomela, Yellow-bellied Hyliota, Rattling Cisticola, Foxy Cisticola, Red-winged Grey Warbler, Black-headed Batis, Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Red-winged Pytilia, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Black-faced Waxbill and more.

Day 6: Bird the Royal Mile with Wildlife Viewing

After an early breakfast, we will proceed to bird the Royal Mile. We will look for African Crowned Eagle, Hugin's Francolin, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Dwarf Kingfisher, White-thighed Hornbill, a selection of Tinkerbirds and Barbets, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Brown-eared Woodpecker, Greenbuls, Fire-crested Alethe, Red-tailed Ant-thrush, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Rufus-crowned Eremomela, Whistling Cisticola, Black-throated Apalis, Black-capped Apalis, Grey-throated Flycatcher, Forest Flycatcher, Ituri Batis, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Chestnut-capped Flycatcher, Western Black-headed Oriole, Purple-headed Starling, Brown Twinspot among others.

We should find a variety of primates, including Blue Monkey, Red-tailed Monkey, Black-and- white Colobus Monkey, and several other mammal species.



African Paradise-Flycatcher

Day 7: Drive with Birding along the way to Fort Portal; Late PM Birding at Kibale Forest National Park

After an early breakfast, we drive south to Fort Portal. We will bird several forest areas (stopping 2 or 3 times based upon what we have seen so far) to break up this drive. Though we will cover about 4 hours of driving before noon, adding several birding stops as we go which gets us there in the evening.

We will stop several times for birding en-route. We hope to find Western-banded Snake Eagle, Striped Kingfisher, Great Blue Turaco, Lizard Buzzard, Lesser Striped Swallow, Joyful Greenbul, Chubb's Cisticola, Masked Apalis, Cassin's Grey Flycatcher, Whinchat, Stonechat, Green-headed Sunbird, Common Fiscal among many others. Johnnie's eyes and ears will help us find numerous trip birds as well travel along. As we get close to Fort Portal, we will bird Kibale Forest National Park in the late afternoon. We will hope to add a few trip birds before heading to the hotel for check in and dinner. Dinner and overnight at Mountains of the Moon.

Day 8: AM Birding; Quick Transfer to Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP) with Birding and Wildlife Viewing at QENP for Most of Day

We may try some early birding back at the forested area outside of Fort Portal. Johnnie will have good judgment about the best way for the group to maximize productive birding that day, by either birding Kibale in the morning or to get to Queen Elizabeth National

Park earlier. No matter the morning plan, we will likely want to get to Queen Elizabeth National Park (which is only a few hours away) before it is too hot at mid-day.

In the morning, we will be driving along the foothills of the Rwenzori Mountains (crossing the Equator). We will be looking for mammals and bird species including Pied Kingfisher, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Woodland Kingfisher, Pygmy Kingfisher, Lesser Striped Swallow, Winding Cisticola, Trilling Cisticola, Siffling Cisticola, Zitting Cisticola, Grey-backed Fiscal, Common Fiscal, Black-headed Gonolek, Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling, Purple-headed Starling, Wattled Starling, Fan tailed Widowbird, Red-collared Widowbird among others.

Once at Queen Elizabeth National Park, we will find some good birding. We will hope to find some new trip birds, and we will look for Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Double-toothed Barbet, Little Greenbul, Green Crombec, Black-and-white Shrike-Flycatcher, Bronze Sunbird, Fan-tailed Widowbird, Black Bishop, Grey-headed Negrofinch, and Black-crowned Waxbill.



Winding Cisticola

Day 9: Birding at Queen Elizabeth National Park with Wildlife Watching

After an early breakfast, we will set off for a birding and wildlife safari. One of our first stops will be a reliable spot for Shining-blue Kingfisher. We may also see African Fish Eagle, Yellow-billed Kite, Helmeted Guineafowl, Red-necked Spurfowl, Yellowbill, African Grey Hornbill, and White-winged Widowbird. After enjoying our packed lunch, we will take a boat trip on the Kazinga Channel. Here we should see hundreds of hippos, crocodile and bird life from a boat for about two hours. We will look for Great White Pelican, Pink-backed Pelican, Green-backed Heron, Saddle-billed Stork, Yellow-billed Stork, Open-billed Stork, African Spoonbill, Martial Eagle, Kittlitz's Plover, Water Thick-knee, Senegal Plover, Wattled Plover, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Arrow-marked Babbler and Black-lored Babbler. Mammals could include Uganda Kob, Bushbuck, Defassa Waterbuck, Cape Buffalo, Elephants, and Warthog. If we're lucky, we could see Leopard, Spotted Hyena and Lion among others.



Little Bee-eater

Day 10: AM Birding in Queen Elizabeth National Park on Way to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park (BIFNP) with PM Birding through Ishasha Sector of BIFNP with Wildlife Watching

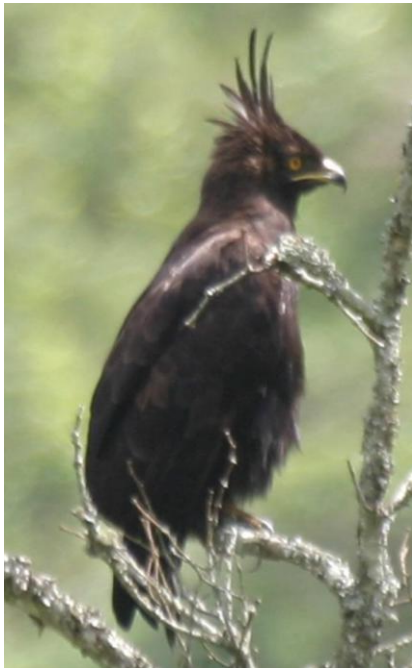
After breakfast, we will drive south to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park. We will take a several productive birding stops en-route, and we will hopefully encounter African White-backed Vulture, Lappet-faced Vulture, White-headed Barbet, Spot-flanked Barbet, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Nubian Woodpecker, Flappet Lark, Rufous-naped Lark, Plain-backed Pipit, Lesser Striped Swallows, Zitting Cisticola, Grey-backed Shrike, Common Fiscal, Lesser Blue-eared Starling, and Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling.

After our picnic lunch, we will leave Queen Elizabeth National Park and proceed to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest through Ishasha sector, arriving in the late afternoon. We will all be on the lookout for mammals like Topi, Uganda Kob, and Buffaloes and (when lucky) tree climbing Lions. We will also look for several new trip species including Black Kite, Black-shouldered Kite, Palm-nut Vulture, Western-banded Snake Eagle-Eagle, Lizard Buzzard, Shikra, Augur Buzzard, Long-crested Eagle, Spot-flanked Barbet, Double-toothed Barbet, White-browed Robin-Chat, Sooty Anteater Chat, Black Cuckooshrike, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, Bronze Sunbird, Olive-bellied Sunbird, Copper Sunbird, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Red-chested Sunbird, Fork-tailed Drongo, Rufous-napped Lark, Flappet Lark, Stout Cisticola, Grassland Pipit, Plain-backed Pipit, Golden-breasted Bunting, Red-collared Widowbird and Fan-tailed Widowbird.

Day 11: Bird Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park and Buhoma Trail

After an early breakfast, we find our way into Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, learning the area does not quite live up to its name. Bwindi is home to nearly two dozen species that are endemic to the Albertine Rift zone. Some species we hope to see are: Black Bee-Eater, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Yellow-spotted Barbet,

Elliot's Woodpecker, African Broadbill, Ansorge's Greenbul, White-bellied Robin-Chat, Red-throated Alethe, Chapin's Flycatcher, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Grauer's Warbler, Mountain Masked Apalis, Bocage's Bush-shrike, Luhder's Bush-shrike, Pink-footed Puffback, Petit's Cuckooshrike, Blue-throated Brown Sunbird, Purple-breasted Sunbird, Black-billed Weaver, and Brown-capped Weaver among others. In addition to a rich bird habitat, the park provides protection for numerous butterfly and tree species. Much of this montane rift zone is over 6000 feet in elevation.



Long-crested Eagle

Day 12: Gorilla Trek or More Birding at Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

For those going on the National Park provided Mountain Gorilla Trek (\$600 fee in 2017), Johnnie will assure everyone is awake and has breakfast before the short walk to get to the National Park gate. At the gate, Johnnie will introduce you to the Park guides, who will lead the Gorilla trek. Please ask Johnnie if you need more guidance here.

A birding trip will also be available for those not on Mountain Gorilla Trek. After an early breakfast and after we have seen the Gorilla Trekkers depart, we will re-enter the forest and track down some of the birds we didn't encounter the previous day. Maybe we will find White-tailed Ant-Thrush, Scaly-breasted Illadopsis, Mountain Illadopsis, Short-tailed Warbler, Dwarf Honeyguide and Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo . We should find mixed feeding flocks with several species seen in one tree or location. In addition to forest, Bwindi affords some marshland birding and a bamboo zone with its own avifauna. Before we leave Bwindi we hope to see: Stuhlmann's Starling, Chubb's Cisticola and African Citril.

After the Gorilla trek, we will meet back up as a full group and try for some additional birding for those left with the energy to continue on.



Lion

Day 13: More Birding at the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park Birding the Neck on the way to Ruhija

After breakfast, we will bird as we travel to Ruhija via the neck, looking out for birds like Black Bee-eater, Red-throated Wryneck, Mountain Wagtail, Toro Olive-Greenbul, White-starred Robin, Olive Thrush, Cassin's-grey Flycatcher, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Grader's Warbler, Chubb's Cisticola, Banded Prinia, Mountain Masked Apalis, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Collared Apalis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Grey Cuckoo-shrike, Sharpe's Starling, Regal Sunbird, Strange Weaver, Dusky Twinspot, Yellow Bishop, Black-throated Seedeater among others. Birding through the neck is often very productive.

Though the wasps build fascinating and massive nests here, you do need to be careful. (Please listen to Johnnie's direction about the best use of mosquito repellent and likely not using any repellent at all).

A late evening drive along the road can often turn up Rwenzori Nightjar and several other nocturnal birds. Be sure to remind Johnnie about the night birding here.

Day 14: Bird Mubwindi Swamp

After breakfast, we'll walk down to the Mubwindi Swamp, where you can find the Grauer's Rush Warbler, Archers Robin Chat and African Green-Broadbill. We will also be looking for other specialties including the Black-billed Turaco, Western Green Tinkerbird, Fine-banded Woodpecker, Mountain Greenbul, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, African Hill Babbler, Mountain Illadopsis, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Grauer's Warbler, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Collared Apalis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Rwenzori Batis, Doherty's Bush-shrike, Bar-

tailed Trogon, Blue-headed Sunbird, Regal Sunbird, Black Saw-wing and more. If we are very lucky, we may find African Green-Broadbill.

Certainly one of the highlights of any birding trips in Uganda, this walk is physically challenging, but taken slowly it is quite manageable for many participants. The elevation change is about 1000 feet.

For those not thinking the Mubwindi Swamp is suitable for the physical abilities, an alternative birding day with a National Park Guide can be arranged. If you make this choice, you will be separated from the rest of the group for the day.



African Elephant

Day 15: AM Final Birding in Ruhija Section of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park; Birding throughout Rest of Day on Way to Lake Mburo

After an early breakfast, we will bird around the Ruhija and the National Park entrance (as we exit) for a little bit more birding as we leave. We may yet add a few more Albertine Rift endemics, likely get a few better looks at a few key species, and likely add a few other surprises before leaving the National Park. We will then start a good drive to Lake Mburo. We will take several birding stops to break up the trip. These short stops will be right along the road as suitable habitat presents itself. By late afternoon, we will reach Lake Mburo. Lake Mburo National Park is located in southern Uganda, west of Lake Victoria.

This day we will find various number of species including species like Bateleur, Crested Francolin, Emerald-spotted Wood Dove, Brown Parrot, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Blue-

naped Mousebird, African Grey Hornbill, Spot-flanked Barbet, Yellow-breasted Apalis, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Fork-tailed Drongo, Black-crowned Waxbill, and Black-headed Waxbill among others.



Brown-throated Wattle-eye

Day 16: Bird Lake Mbuoro National Park with Wildlife Watching

After an early breakfast, we will then spend a whole day birding Lake Mbuoro National Park. Habitat here is acacia forest, lake and a large expanse of papyrus wetlands. The papyrus swamps are host to numerous species found in no other habitat. We'll be looking for species like the African Marsh Harrier, Wahlberg's Eagle, Grey-crowned Crane, Marsh Tchagra, Papyrus Gonolek, Brown-backed Scrub Robin, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Red-faced Barbet, White-headed Saw-wing, Nubian Woodpecker, Diederik and Klass's Cuckoos, Long tailed Cisticola, Yellow-breasted Apalis and more. We will also enjoy great looks at mammals, like the gorgeous Eland, Zebra, Impala, Buffalo, Reedbuck, Topi, Waterbuck, Bushbuck, Hippos, Oribi, Bush-duiker and others.

If we can fit in a boat trip on the lake, African Finfoot is a distinct possibility. This may be best after we spend the morning birding.

After dinner, we will try for the African Scops Owl, Swamp Nightjar, Black-shouldered Nightjar and Freckled Nightjar.

Day 17: AM Birding Lake Mbuoro National Park and Birding on Way to Entebbe; Birding at Entebbe Botanical Gardens Late in Day

We will need to spend some time ensuring the bags are all packed for the journey home. But after breakfast, we will be able to spend another full morning birding at Lake Mbuoro, likely focusing on some of the bird species we may have missed. This may also be the best time for the boat trip for African Finfoot (unless we accomplished this during the day before). After lunch and after some final birding at Lake Mbuoro, we will proceed for the return journey back to Entebbe, arriving in the late afternoon. We may have time for a little more birding at Lake Mbuoro as we leave the Park, but we likely will have seen

all the key species, and it may make more sense to bird several stops on the way back to Entebbe.

On the way we will look out for any remaining birds which we may have missed. Perhaps Bateleur, Long-crested Eagle, Grey Kestrel, Crested Francolin, Red-necked Spurrow, Grey Crowned Crane, Speckled Pigeon, Laughing Dove, Broad-billed Roller, Lilac-breasted Roller, White-headed Barbet, Brown-backed Scrub-Robin, Black-lored Babbler, Tropical Boubou, Splendid Glossy Starling will round out the trip list.

If we were not able to bird the Entebbe Botanical Gardens on the second day of the trip, we may also re-adjust trip plans to add a visit to the Entebbe Botanical Gardens at the end of the day here. This will mean getting to the airport later, but I have picked up 25 plus trip birds here in 3 hours birding in the late afternoon.

Flights should be planned for after 8 PM, allowing a full day of birding your last day in Uganda. Most flights leave in the evening, and you are free to fly home the next day.



Vieillot's Black Weaver

Day 18: Flights Home Today

According to your flight time and plans, we will arrange a convenient transfer to the airport.

As you travel home today, you can reflect on the amazing Uganda experience that you just have had