



A **Tropical Birding** Custom Tour

TANZANIA Birding with a Camera tour (BwC)

18th – 29th April 2023



The jaw dropping **Golden-winged Sunbird** from the highlands near **Ngorongoro Crater** was an avian highlight on a tour that was also heavy in mammal highlights too (*Sam Woods*)...

*All photos provided by guide **Sam Woods** and tour participant **John Blakemore** (individually indicated).*



Some of the best mammal sightings included 6 different **Cheetahs**, 40 different **Lions** and a single **Leopard** (Sam Woods)

INTRODUCTION:

*Tanzania is an exceptional destination for both seeing and photographing wildlife, whether it be birds or big game. There were lots and lots of birds to photograph throughout, and on many occasions large game was also around to look at too. It is true to say that Tanzania is one of the ultimate wildlife destinations in all of Africa, and we got to appreciate this first-hand on each and every day of this tour. While the birding at Tarangire was outstanding, the mammal viewing at Ndutu, Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti was equally remarkable, and we quickly understood that their legendary reputations are richly deserved. We got masses of birds, sprinkled with specialties, as well as plentiful sightings of large animals, including 40 **Lions** seen, 6 **Cheetahs** sighted, 1 **Leopard**, and 2 **Black Rhinos**, as well as regular encounters with **wildebeest**, **buffalo**, **giraffes**, **hippos**, **elephants**, and a series of antelope species. This tour had been set up for someone who is also keen on getting photos of much of what he sees, and Tanzania fit this bill perfectly. Each and every day was an extended game drive, inside a specially adapted wildlife viewing vehicle, which yielded endless photo opportunities of most of the best birds and mammals that we saw. Specialty birds like **Yellow-collared and Fischer's Lovebirds**, **Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill**, **Karamoja Apalis**, **Rufous-tailed Weaver**, **Ashy Starling** and **Gray-breasted Spurfowl** all featured.*

Other avian highlights included **Secretarybirds** seen on 8 separate occasions (photo page 4), **five species of bustard** (with **Kori Bustards** seen on 8 days and the rarest of these, **Hartlaub's Bustard** featuring only once), **four species of courser** (**Bronze-winged, Three-banded, Double-banded, and Temminck's Coursers**), **three sandgrouse species** all photographed at close range (**Chestnut-bellied, Black-faced and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse**), **nine species of pheasants** (including **five species of spurfowl and Coqui Francolin**), **six species of hornbills** (including **Silvery-cheeked Hornbill**), as well as two groups of dramatic **Southern Ground-Hornbills** stalking the road beside our vehicle, **three longlaws**, and an assortment of bee-eaters that included **Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater** in the highlands. Other highlights included **Black-headed Gonolek, Schalow's and Hartlaub's Turacos**, and a displaying **African Broadbill** in the montane forest at Arusha. Seeing recent kills attended by up to four species of vulture was also a major highlight, as they battled for a place at the kill. Other notable mentions go to some great looks at both **Woodland and Giant Kingfishers**, a nice selection of barbets including the Usambiro form of **D'Arnaud's Barbet**, (which is sometimes considered a separate species), **Brown-breasted Barbet** and some close ups of the dazzling **Red-and-yellow Barbet**, and some stunning highland sunbirds, like **Golden-winged, Bronze, and Malachite Sunbirds**.



Southern Red Bishop in the crater at **Ngorongoro** (Sam Woods)

A special mention should go to the *timing* of the tour too. While the spring rains made this a great time to visit for bird activity, this was still the *quiet* season for general tourism in Tanzania. What this meant was that we had most of the birds and mammals all to ourselves (two of the three **Cheetah** sightings were alone), and sometimes we were the only ones in the safari camps too. A special mention needs to go to the displaying birds that featured through the tour following recent rains and a flush of new plant growth. We managed to observe displaying **Yellow-crowned, Black, Black-winged, and Southern Red Bishops** (*photo page 3*), and **Jackson's and Fan-tailed Widowbirds**. We also managed to see repeated views of pristine male **Straw-tailed, Steel-blue, and Pin-tailed Whydahs**. From start to finish we saw not only many good species of birds but also lots and lots of individual birds everywhere. Tanzania was an extremely birdy place following the recent spring rains, and plentiful large mammals acted as a backdrop to most of the birds throughout. The endless landscapes of this part of East Africa were captivating too, with the major highlight being looking down into *Ngorongoro Crater* one of the most special locations for viewing large mammals on Earth. This was a very special tour that yielded more than 130 new bird species for the person who put it together, in spite of two previous visits to Africa, and many thousands of photos of birds and other animals to remember it by.



Secretarybird was a major target on the tour, and we got to see them on no less than eight different occasions (*John Blakemore*)

TOUR SUMMARY:

A carpet of thousands of **Lesser Flamingos** covered *Momela Lake* in *Arusha NP*, which was the standout moment of our first day (*Sam Woods*)

Day 1 (of birding): 19th April 2023 – Arusha National Park.

Following a late night arrival, we made our way into *Arusha National Park* at 8:30am the next morning. The weather was not what we had hoped for, with low cloud hanging ominously over nearby *Mount Meru*, and the montane forest on the upper slopes of the park. However, we forgot this for a moment, when we struck gold with **Taveta Golden-Weavers** in the parking lot of the national park, quickly followed by some confiding **Scaly Spurfowls** and **Cape Robin-Chats**. The national park comprises of an exciting mix of habitats, including open grasslands, savanna, and montane forest and is studded with birdy wetlands too. We covered all of these during our full day inside the park. This resulted in us finding dozens of species we were not to see again, making this a landmark site for the tour. Our first focus was inside the mist-enshrouded forests, which were tough going, what with regular downpours hampering viewing. However, our mood was lifted by a displaying **African Broadbill**, and then a **Green Malkoha** showing up by our specially-adapted safari wildlife viewing vehicle.

Brown-headed Apalis, a pair of **Black-fronted Bushshrikes**, some bright eyed **Kilimanjoro White-eyes**, and a tree full of half dozen hyperactive **Hartlaub's Turacos** were also prize finds in the rainy rainforest. We also bumped in to our only **Lemon and Tambourine Doves** of the tour. It took some time to pull out the prize mammalian features of this rainforest, but were suitably impressed when the broad, feather duster, white tails of some **Guereza Pied Colobus** finally homed into view. Several **Blue Monkeys** (*photo below*) were arguably no less handsome. Late in the day, we also found Africa's smallest antelope, the **Suni** in these same forests, though several burnt-red, **Harvey's Red Diukers** were more cooperative there.



Some interesting primates were found within the Afrotropical Montane Forest of *Arusha NP*, including this **Blue Monkey** and some impressively coated **Guereza Pied Colobus Monkeys** (*Sam Woods*)

By lunchtime, we had moved a little lower in the park, where the clouds had shifted, and sunshine broke through. We took our first of many picnic lunches, beside a sun-dappled lake, where **Cape Teals** and **Southern Pochards** fed in the shallows, and **Long-tailed** and **Great Cormorants** held their wings out to dry. On the fringes of the lake, some weavers were busy making their trademark, weaved nests, which included the widespread **Baglafaecht Weaver** and the extremely handsome, well-monikered, **Golden-backed Weaver**. The open areas of the park, near the lakes, were alive with birds and provided our only **White-fronted Bee-eaters**, **Moustached Grass-Warbler** and **Yellow Bishops** of the tour.

We closely surveyed the grasslands in the hope of a handsome pipit, which local guide *Njano* found with some skill, as it dropped into deep grass cover. We waited impatiently, and were rewarded for our patience, when a **Pangani Longclaw** (*photo below*) emerged to reveal its trademark streaked flanks and peach-flushed throat. This was the first of three different longclaws to be seen and photographed well by the tour end (which also included **Rosy-throated and Yellow-throated Longclaws**). Our only **Brown-breasted Barbet** of the tour came this afternoon too. Lakes brought us some of the best highlights of this opening stanza, with a gorgeous **Saddle-billed Stork** overshadowed at *Momela Lakes* by a blizzard of thousands of rose-tinted **Lesser Flamingos** (*photo page 5*), which brought audible gasps of appreciation from us all, as we witnessed a true avian spectacle on our first afternoon. The same lake held our first **Hamerkop, Spur-winged Lapwing, Black-headed Heron, and African Sacred Ibises**. We were also to come across our first beasts of the tour, with **zebras, giraffes, and waterbuck** all featuring for the first time, all of which were to come regularly through the tour after then too. By late afternoon, after a very busy day with a late start and early finish, we had returned to our Arusha hotel for a second night.



Pangani Longclaw was the first of three longclaws recorded on the tour, at **Arusha National Park** on Day 1. We also found Rosy-throated and Yellow-throated Longclaws later on the tour (Sam Woods).



Rosy-throated Longclaw at *Ngorongoro Crater* (TOP) and Yellow-throated Longclaw in the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)



Day 2 (of birding): 20th April 2023 – Arusha to Tarangire National Park.

This morning we took a leisurely breakfast in *Arusha*, before leaving for *Tarangire National Park* to the west. The drive time meant we did not reach the park until mid-morning, although by the end of the day the late start counted for little, as we notched up some very good birds. *Tarangire* is often birder's favorite location in Tanzania, and we understood this perfectly after much of the day inside the park.



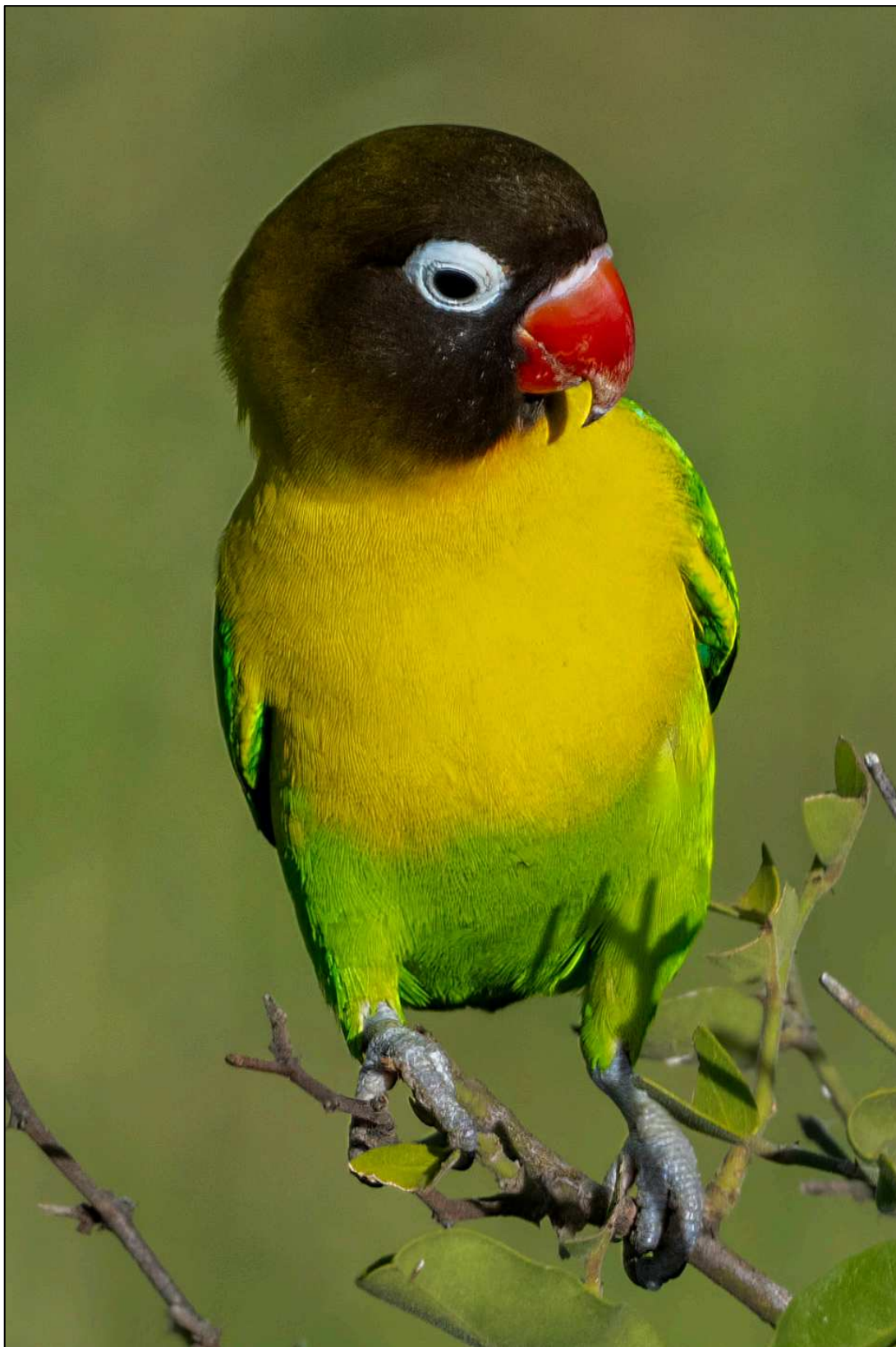
A single Pearl-spotted Owlet was seen on the tour, at Tarangire (John Blakemore)

On arrival in the park, we begun seeing some of the park's star birds, some of which are pretty abundant and easy there. This included **Rufous-tailed Weavers**, a species that is a now a near-endemic to the country, having recently sneaked over the border into the *Maasai Mara* of Kenya. **Ashy Starlings** (photo page 13) were locally common in *Tarangire*, but non-existent elsewhere on the tour, unlike the well-named **Superb Starling** (photo page 13) that numbered in their hundreds on this day and in their thousands by the trip end. As we drove through the park for the first time, we picked up a fierce looking **Pearl-spotted Owlet** (photo above), which John photographed, got out first **Abyssinian Scimitarbills** too, and came upon a number of **Red-bellied Parrots**. One of the most delightful *Tarangire*, and Tanzania, specialties, is the handsome **Yellow-collared Lovebird** (photo page 11), a tiny parrot that was seen and photographed well during our first day in the park. Stopping at a camp, while allowing us to stretch our legs, also allowed us to find **Black-necked and Red-headed Weavers**, and we had to kick away **White-headed Buffalo-Weavers** looking for a hand around from our lunch packs!

However, we had to work a little harder for **Bronze-winged Courser** (*photo page 12*), a scarce nocturnal shorebird that we tracked down in a group of 8 within a single roosting area of hilly grasslands within the stunning, baobab-studded, landscapes of *Tarangire*. By the end of the day we had netted another courser, with the distinctly more abundant and easier to come by, **Double-banded Courser** (*photo page 12*), with double figures of them being encountered by nightfall. The same area held the first of three sandgrouse species to feature on the tour, with a very confiding pair of **Black-faced Sandgrouse** (*photo below*) just inches from the car. Not far from there a **Buff-crested Bustard** (*photo page 14*) called within a few feet of our vehicle too! I should also mention that *Tarangire* provided our first **African Bush Elephant** sightings, an animal that was to become very familiar on the tour, being sighted on eight different days. We checked into a luxurious wonderful safari tented camp in the afternoon, with an impressive vista over the park, and hornbills nesting on the grounds. As night fell at our safari camp, the local **lions** began to roar, a vivid reminder of the need to use our ever-attendant escorts at night to our rooms!



Three species of Sandgrouse were seen on the tour, with this **Black-faced Sandgrouse** the first species seen at *Tarangire*. Later on the tour we recorded **Chestnut-bellied and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse**, around *Ndutu* and the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)



Yellow-collared Lovebirds were easy at *Tarangire*, although this was the only site they were seen (*John Blakemore*)



Two courser Day: **Bronze-winged** (TOP) and **Double-banded Coursers** both featured on our first day at **Tarangire** (Sam Woods)





Two starlings from *Tarangire*: **Ashy Starling**, a specialty only seen there (TOP) and the widespread **Superb Starling** (*Sam Woods*)





This **Buff-crested Bustard** at **Tarangire** was the first of FIVE bustard species seen during the tour. *Bustards* are a big feature of safaris in East Africa. We recorded bustards on 10 out of 12 days on this tour (*Sam Woods*)

Day 3 (of birding): 21st April 2023 – Tarangire National Park.

A full day was spent in *Tarangire*, spreading our net considerably wider in the park than the day before, and notching up great birds through the day. Tanzania, and *Tarangire* itself are extremely birdy places, so that even picking a list of birds to narrow down as highlights for a report like this can be challenging! We easily passed 100 species for the day, without even trying, while also seeing our first **Lions**, and well over 1000 **African Buffalos** by the day's end, with some very large herds coming by us, some of which were accompanied by attendant **Yellow-billed Oxpeckers**. Birding and photographing birds in *Tarangire* just after the spring rains have fallen is a dizzy experience, as birds were everywhere, and often in epic numbers. Continually through the day we came upon flocks numbering hundreds (or more) of **Chestnut Weavers** and **Red-billed Queleas** for example, which we could confidently say numbered in their thousands on this day alone! Along with numbers of birds, this day featured some quality birds themselves and quality experiences with many of them.

Much to *Irene* and *John's* wild delight, we found our first **Secretarybirds** on day 3 of the tour, a species that had eluded them on two previous trips to Africa. East Africa, and Tanzania, must be one of the premier places to see this species, and we saw it on no less than 8 occasions on this tour!



Woodland Kingfisher was perched low down on this game drive in **Tarangire** (*Sam Woods*)

We also had our best close ups up of majestic **Gray Crowned-Cranes** (*photo page 16*), which let us photograph them to our heart's content. During the morning we also ran into some of East Africa's greatest avian "showmen", the *bishops*, seeing displaying males of both **Southern Red Bishop** and **Yellow-crowned Bishop**. We also saw all 4 possible species of *whydah* by the close of the day (**Pin-tailed, Eastern Paradise, Steel-blue, and Straw-tailed Whydahs**). All species involved males in pristine plumage. We had remarked on the lack of *spurfowls* seen the day before, in a park that is full of them, although we made up for it on this day, with a more typical experience, with multiple individuals of both **Yellow-necked and Red-necked Spurfowl** clocked up through the day. We also sighted three different bustards, with our first **Kori, White-bellied and Black-bellied Bustards**. Other notable birds today were our first **Silverbirds, Green Woodhoopoes**, and our best photo opp with a **Woodland Kingfisher** (*photo above*).



Gray Crowned-Cranes were seen on five days of the tour, in *Arusha, Tarangire* and in the crater at *Ngorongoro* (*Sam Woods*)

We also came across a flock of **Northern Pied Babblers** (that only featured only a few times on the tour), got an **African Scops-Owl** (*photo page 18*) at a day roost at our camp, which also held a very confiding pair of **Kirk's Dikdiks** (*photo below*). We sighted three hornbills species at various points through the day (**Northern Red-billed, Von der Decken's, and African Grey Hornbills**), and had our only good looks at a pair of **Pygmy Falcons** (*photo page 18*). A single **Martial Eagle** featured again too, and we also recorded our first handsome **Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike**. One of the few sightings of **Green-winged Pytilia** also came on this day too.

Migrants had been thinning out since the last Tropical Birding tour through the area a week or so before (evidenced by the fact we found it difficult to find a *European Roller* anywhere), and so it was unsurprising that we had our only **Lesser Gray Shrike, Willow Warbler, and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters** on this day, and one of only a few **Great Spotted Cuckoos** for the entire tour. We also stopped in on some wetland areas, which yielded our only **Squacco Herons** and **Water Thick-knees** of the tour, one of only a handful of sightings of **African Jacanas**, as well as our best count of **Long-toed Lapwings** and **Whiskered Terns** of the tour, as well as **Whistling-ducks, Knob-billed Ducks** and **Spur-winged Geese**, among many others. In the late afternoon, before darkness fell and the *lions* began roaring again, we returned to our excellent safari camp for a second and final night, where the views, the food and the rooms were just fantastic.



Kirk's Dikdik was very tame around our camp at **Tarangire**. They were most numerous though in **Ndutu** (*Sam Woods*)



Pygmy Falcon (TOP) and African Scops-Owl from Tarangire (John Blakemore)



Day 4 (of birding): 22nd April 2023 – Tarangire to Ngorongoro via Lake Manyara.

On this day we started out at *Tarangire*, making one final drive inside the park, then drove to *Lake Manyara National Park*, on the way to a hotel on the rim of the crater at *Ngorongoro*. Our biggest find at *Tarangire*, was a group of three **Three-banded Coursers** (*photo below*) along the road out, which included a juvenile bird too. We finally also got crackerjack looks at a **Coqui Francolin**, following only poor views earlier on the tour. Leaving *Tarangire* meant this was the last time we saw **Yellow-collared Lovebirds** and **Ashy Starlings** on the tour, and the only place we saw a single **White-browed Sparrow-Weaver** was in the parking lot there too. Few **Eastern Chanting Goshawks** were seen on the tour, though one was seen before leaving there too, as was our second **Secretarybird** sighting in two days (they were to be seen on 6 of the 7 days at this point of the tour). Our only, if brief, sighting, of **Pied Kingfisher** was one our final drive through *Tarangire* too. We also found one of only a few **White-bellied Bustards** during that time too. As we drove from there to *Lake Manyara*, we stumbled into the only **Broad-billed Roller** of the tour.

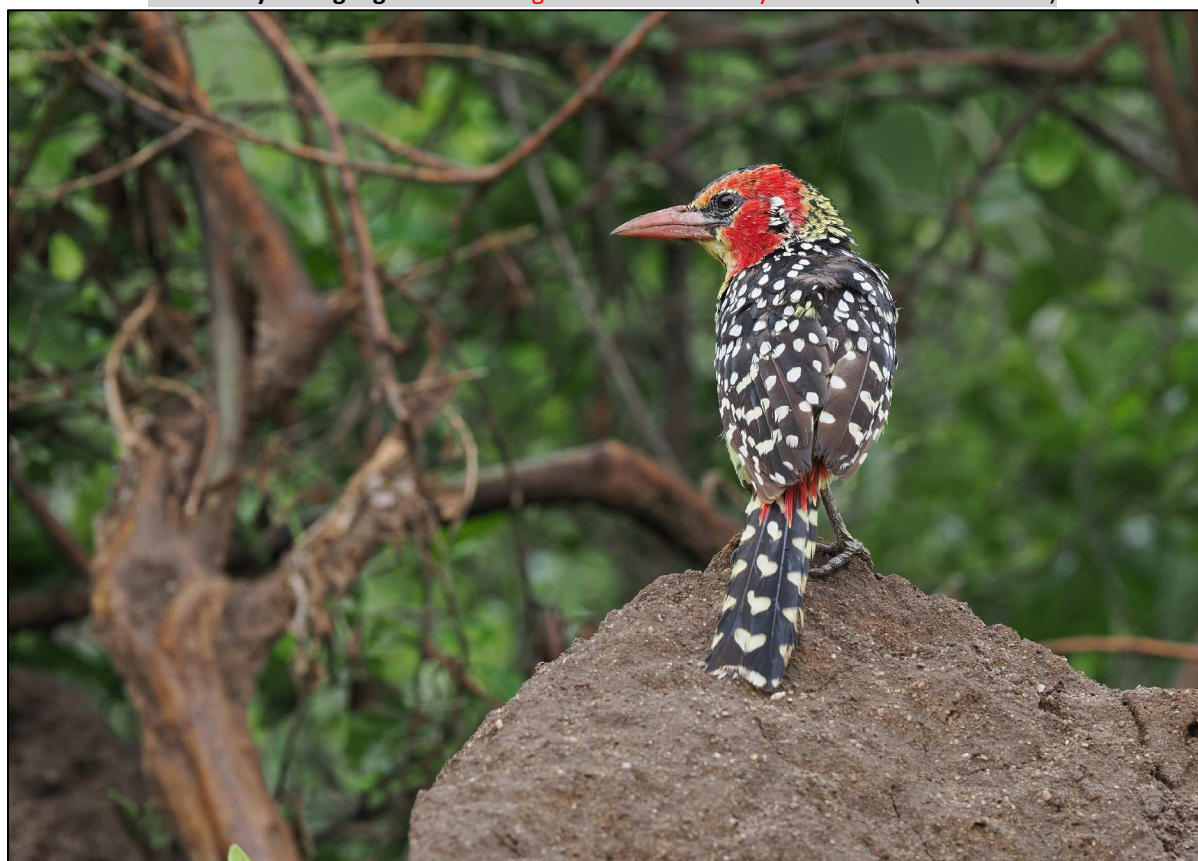


Our third (of four) *coursers* seen was this adult and juvenile **Three-banded Courser** close to our camp in *Tarangire* (*Sam Woods*)

We reached *Lake Manyara* full of excitement at the chance to drive through another game park, this one famed for its “tree-climbing Lions”. *Lake Manyara* contains a mix of open country, scrubby areas, wetland spots and dense forest. On arrival in the park, rain began falling and continued to hamper us through the rest of our visit there.



Lake Manyara Highlights: **Giant Kingfisher** and **Red-and-yellow Barbet** (*Sam Woods*)



We made the best of it though, finding a perched **African Hawk-Eagle** and getting an early highlight when *Sam* spotted a **Giant Kingfisher** (*photo page 20*) calmly sitting beside the vehicle that provided plentiful photo opportunities. Next up, we tried for **Collared Palm-Thrush**, as this was our only shot for it on the tour. It took longer than expected as the bird largely refused to sing in the persistent rain, but thankfully we got it in the end. In the more open areas, we got our only good views of **Blue-naped Mousebird** of the tour, although this was somewhat overshadowed by a male **Black Bishop** (*photo below*) that displayed as if there was no rain whatsoever. Over the edge of the lake a flock of hundreds of **Yellow-billed Stork** passed over rather impressively. We also found one of the only migrant **Red-backed Shrikes** seen on the tour in these areas and were treated to an extremely close **Red-and-yellow Barbet** (*photo page 20*) perched atop a termite mound. Our second and final **Pangani Longclaw** of the trip was also found in a grassy open area. There were truly epic numbers of **Laughing Doves** along the edge of the lake, but the few **Emerald-spotted Wood-Doves** seen in the park were to be our only ones of the tour.



This male **Black Bishop** put on a show at **Lake Manyara** (*Sam Woods*)

We took a lunch stop at an unusually popular camp at this time (for most of this tour, during the quiet season, we often had places all to ourselves), where we saw the only **Yellow-bellied Greenbul** of the tour, and then found some non-tree climbing **Lions**, sitting quietly and discretely on the ground just outside the camp.

We radioed to the others at the camp to ensure they were on their guard after this! As we drove through the forest in the reserve, we spotted some more **Blue Monkeys** and **Olive Baboons** (*photo below*), and kept an eye out for highland hornbills, eventually, finding a small flock of **Silvery-cheeked Hornbills** as hoped and our only **Crowned Hornbills** of the tour too. In the same forest we also got the only **African Green-Pigeons** of the trip. With rain still falling, we left *Manyara* and drove the short way to *Ngorongoro*, being denied views from our crater top hotel of the impressive crater by virtue of heavy rain and mist obscuring the view and calling an early stop to our birding for the day. We compensated for this by enjoying a traditional *Maasai* dance in the hotel bar that evening, washed down with a Serengeti beer!



Olive Baboon from *Lake Manyara* (John Blakemore)

Day 5: 23rd April 2023 – Ngorongoro Crater.

We awoke to sunshine and splendid views of the world famous *Ngorongoro Crater*, and were immediately filled with excitement, knowing the bottom of that crater was home to an impressive concentration of large mammals. As we drove down from our hotel on the crater rim, towards the base of it, we started seeing some good game and birds. **Dusky Turtle-Doves** flushed from the sides of the road, a **Gray-capped Warbler** (*photo next page*) was called out from the scrub, **Hildebrandt's Spurfowl** (*photo page 52*) stood boldly on the road, **Speke's Weavers** were nesting in the thorny bushes, and a **Black-crowned Tchagra** (*photo next page*), and **Capped and Abyssinian Wheatears** (*photos page 24*) perched on exposed rocks, and a **Common Eland** (the largest of all antelopes), approached our vehicle (*photo page 28*)!



Gray-capped Warbler (TOP) and Black-crowned Tchagra were both seen on the drive down into the crater (John Blakemore)





As we drive down from the crater rim at **Ngorongoro**, we found **Abyssinian** (TOP) and **Capped Wheatears** (Sam Woods)



More than 10 species of large mammals featured through the day, including a pride of **Lions**, some of which sat within feet of the vehicle, as a fully-maned male rested further away. Plentiful **Thomson's Gazelles**, **Plains Zebras**, **Blue Wildebeests**, and **African Buffalos** (*photo page 28*), in addition to a few **elephants** (*below*) featured too. **Black Rhinoceros** were also seen at this, the only possible site of the tour but were rather more distant than we would have wished for. Our first **Hippopotamus** was seen *out of the water* too. The large *Lake Magadi* sits at the bottom of the crater, and hosted **African Spoonbill**, **Red-knobbed Coot**, **Red-billed Duck**, **Cape Teal**, lots of **Kittlitz's Plovers** and lonely singles of **Ruff** and **Common Ringed Plover**. Continuing with the birding, when we got to the base of the crater, we got stellar looks at our second *longclaw* species of the tour, with a very showy **Rosy-throated Longclaw** (*photo page 8*). The grasslands at the crater base were alive with **Fan-tailed and Jackson's Widowbirds** in display, and the odd **Red-cowled Widowbird** (*photo page 26*) also turned up. Another displaying male *bishop*, this time **Southern Red Bishop** (*photo page 3*) was also admired. *Larks* were also prominent, with good numbers of **Rufous-naped and Red-capped Larks** in particular. **Gray Crowned-Cranes** peppered the crater floor, along with the aforementioned animals. Our first **Black-chested Snake-Eagle** coasted overhead.



African Bush Elephants were seen on 8 out of 12 days. This one was taken in **Tarangire** (*John Blakemore*)

We returned to the crater rim, and our hotel, by mid-afternoon, dropping *Irene* off for a much earned rest. *John*, *Njano* and *Sam* went out for some highland birds though, focusing first on *sunbirds* near a local village where the *leonotis* flowers were in bloom en-masse and attracted **Bronze**, **Malachite** and **Golden-winged Sunbirds**

(photos page 27). The latter two species were particularly cooperative and provided some stand out photo moments. The acacias near the village also held **Brown Parisoma** as hoped. During the late afternoon we concentrated around the grounds of our lodge, where **Eastern Double-collared Sunbirds**, **Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater**, **Streaky and Thick-billed Seedeaters**, and **Yellow-bellied Waxbills** were the highlights before we retired for the night.



Red-cowled Widowbird from **Ngorongoro** (John Blakemore)

Photos Next Page: **Malachite Sunbird** (TOP) and **Golden-winged Sunbird** (Sam Woods)

Photos Page 26: **Common Eland** (TOP) Sam Woods and **African Buffalo** (John Blakemore)





Day 6: 24th April 2023 – Ngorongoro Crater to Ndutu.

On this day we moved out of our hotel in the highlands on the crater rim of *Ngorongoro* to *Ndutu Safari Lodge* in the game-heavy lowlands, which took us all morning to reach. However, the drive to there was perhaps one of the best mornings of the entire tour, comprising an excellent game drive with some good birding thrown in top. Before leaving though, we made a last gasp effort to track down some highland species, right around the hotel. We started out by observing some **Red-winged Starlings** clambering around the buildings and watched a **White-necked Raven** calling the hotel roof. Then, we hit the jackpot early on, with the much hoped for **Schalow's Turaco** that we had missed the evening before. Other highland birds we saw in just an hour or so of searching included a marvelous **Tacazze Sunbird** and a no less impressive **Golden-winged Sunbird**. A calling **Rameron Pigeon** was our only encounter, while we were pleased to upgrade our looks of **Cinnamon-chested Bee-eaters** (*photo below*) that morning too.



Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater was seen in the grounds of our hotel located on the crater rim at *Ngorongoro* (*Sam Woods*)

An hour later, we were on the road to *Ndutu*, although we turned off the main road there, and went off road for much of the way, which was an inspired choice by our local guide and brought us some memorable sightings. During the morning, we got to see many migrating **Blue Wildebeest** and **Plains Zebras**, bumped into a **Cheetah** we had all to ourselves, got another **Secretarybird**, and even watched an assortment of scavengers coming into a recent kill. A **Maribou Stork** and a **Lappet-faced Vulture** (*photo page 30*) watched on as **Ruppell's Griffons** (*photo page 30*) and **White-backed Vultures** visibly fought over the unfortunate *wildebeest*.

Photos Next Page: **Lappet-faced Vulture** (TOP) *John Blakemore* and **Ruppell's Griffon** (*Sam Woods*)



The **Cheetah** was found after some odd behavior from a small pack of **Black-backed Jackals** led us to it, they were following it to see if they could plunder anything off it. In the end the *jackals* departed once the **Cheetah** took to resting in the shade, mere yards from us. Other notable sightings on the way included a fly over from three **Brown Snake-Eagles**, and several sandgrouse close ups, starting with some **Yellow-throated Sandgrouse** (*photo page 33*), then followed by some equally confiding **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** (*photo page 33*) to complete the trio of possible sandgrouse for us in *Tanzania*. Another striking male **Straw-tailed Whydah** was seen en-route too. We reached the hotel not long after lunch, checked in, and then set off for an afternoon drive after a short break. In the afternoon we got some cracking views of another key parrot for the trip, this time **Fischer's Lovebird** (*photo below*), some of which were seen investigating a cavity. Another key species, the **Gray-breasted Spurfowl** (*photo page 32*) also made several afternoon appearances too. Other interesting afternoon sightings included our only **Pied Cuckoo** of the tour, our first **Dark Chanting Goshawk** and first identifiable **Harlequin Quails**, our second **Three-banded Courser** sighting, a flock of some 500 or more **Lesser Flamingos**, and a pair of **Spotted Thick-knees** which took us quite some effort to find. It was also a good day for *waxbills*, with **Purple Grenadier**, **Cut-throat**, and **Crimson-rumped** and **Black-faced Waxbills**.



Fischer's Lovebird was our second lovebird of the tour, and was seen best in **Ndutu** (*Sam Woods*)

However, arguably the most popular sighting of the afternoon was a massive **Verreaux's Eagle-Owl** (*photo page 32*) spotted roosting in a large acacia tree, and was wide awake, with its trademark bright pink eyelids on show! seen before we got back to the safari lodge, where, as dinner was served a group of **Common Genets** appeared to observe proceedings from their lofty position in the rafters of the roof!



Ndutu Highlights: **Gray-breasted Spurfowl** and **Verreaux's Eagle-Owl** (both John Blakemore)





The drive to **Ndutu** produced two new sandgrouse, **Chestnut-bellied (TOP)** and **Yellow-throated** (both *Sam Woods*)



Day 7: 25th April 2023 – Ndutu.

While the *Serengeti* and *Ngorongoro* may have the name recognition, the plains around *Ndutu* are perhaps equally impressive for large animal sightings. This was proven with a quick glance at our day's list, which included a pair of **Bat-eared Foxes** that we had all to ourselves, a trio of **Black-backed Jackals**, a single **Spotted Hyena**, a group of four bloody-faced **Cheetahs** (*photo page 36*) eating a fresh kill, in addition to three separate groups of **Lions** (*photos page 37*) encountered, (which were by now becoming a nearly daily tour animal). Along with these marquee animals, we got multiple **Kirk's Dikdiks**, here at their most abundant site on the tour, along with more **elephants**, **giraffes**, **hippos**, **zebras**, and an assortment of other antelope that included many **Thompson's Gazelles** and numerous **Impala**. Birding wise, we were not short of work either. Birdwise, a **Kori Bustard** (*photo below*) displayed against the backdrop of a migrating herd of *Wildebeest*. However. Two species of displaying bishops were arguably the standout birds of the day, which included our first **Black-winged Bishops**, and further **Southern Red Bishops** too. Other flashy species included another male **Straw-tailed Whydah** and several more **White-winged Widowbirds**.



Kori Bustard was the most conspicuous of the five bustard species seen, being recorded on 8 days. This one was displaying in front of a line of migrating wildebeest at **Ndutu** (*Sam Woods*)



Three-banded Plover was seen at two sites, *Tarangire* and *Ndutu* (*John Blakemore*).

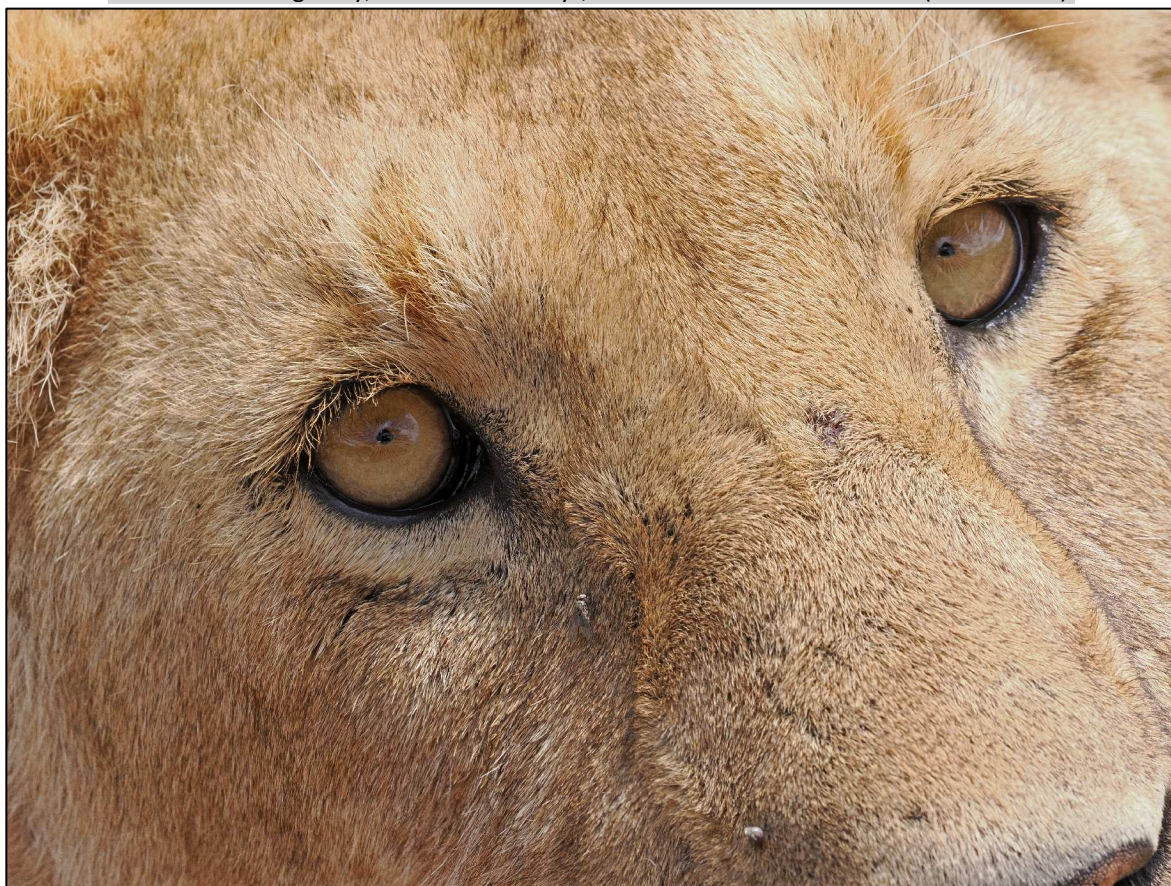
We spent some time scouring the edges of *Lake Ndutu* searching for shorebirds, as were missing a key one, and some of the migrant ones that had clearly moved out since the last birding tour through the area. We found our main target, a single **Chestnut-banded Plover**, in an area rich in plovers that also held multiple **Kittlitz's and Three-banded Plovers** (*photo page 35*) too and a lonesome **Ruff**. In some drier areas we found more **Double-banded Coursers**, which by now were very familiar to us with dozens recorded. **Common Ostriches** were by now an expected daily feature too, and we were not shocked when yet another **Secretarybird** showed up either, (our *fifth* sighting of the trip)! *Ndutu* was the site where we got to see the highest numbers and best views of **Fisher's Lovebirds** a key target species for the tour, and so we were perfectly content to see more of those through the day too. We had been happy seeing a single **Verreaux's Eagle-Owl** the afternoon before, though this was trumped with a parliament of *three* on this afternoon! It was a good day for raptors, with **Long-crested and Martial Eagles, Brown Snake-Eagle, Dark Chanting and Gabar Goshawks, and Augur Buzzard**. It was also a good day for vultures, with our only **Hooded** of the tour among 4 vulture species seen through the day. Babblers were a clear feature of this day too, with **Rufous Chatterer, Black-lored Babbler and Northern Pied Babbler** all seen well. Some of the other avian highlights included our only **African Openbill, African Cuckoo, Somali Short-toed Lark, and Red-throated Tits** of the trip, one of few **Saddle-billed and White Storks, White-bellied Canaries** and **Village Indigobirds** seen on the trip (oddly the latter turned up right after we wondered out loud why we had not seen one!). Back at camp, **Slate-colored Boubous** were conspicuous during the day, as were the **Common Genets** again by night! All-in-all, another fantastic day of large mammals and birds to boot!



Cheetahs were seen 3 times, including a party of 4 at *Ndutu*. Twice we had them all to ourselves (*John Blakemore*)



Lions featured regularly, on 7 different days, and 40 individuals were seen! (Sam Woods).



Day 8: 26th April 2023 – Ndotu to Serengeti NP.

Today we entered the heart of *Serengeti National Park*, and so it was somehow fitting that we got a good haul of *mammals* for the day, with more than 20 species recorded. The *Serengeti* is quite remarkable and deceptive. It means “endless plains”, and we certainly could relate to that when we were greeted by what appears to be a perfectly flat landscape. It is so flat that it feels that it could not possibly hide some of the large mammals, as it feels they would be visible for miles around. However, we saw that through the day, when we bumped into **Lions** that appeared out of nowhere, successfully chased after a **Leopard** hiding very well in a large tree and came upon plentiful *antelopes* which appeared as if from nowhere, including **Coke’s Hartebeest** and **Topi**, the latter two which only featured in the *Serengeti* on this tour. Early on, we picked up one of the most wanted remaining *shorebirds* of the tour, with a party of **Temminck’s Coursers**, which featured a further two times by the end of the day but were not seen on any other days. The endless grasslands were also good bustard habitat, evidenced by the fact we accrued 4 species through the day, including our only **Hartlaub’s Bustard** of the tour. Here and there, trees studded the landscape, and where there were few others around held birds perched atop them, like **Lappet-faced Vulture** and both **Lesser and Greater Kestrels** (*photo page 39*), the latter two of which both featured for the first time.



Serengeti Highlights: **Greater Kestrel** and **Black Coucal** (*John Blakemore*)



Indeed, it was a good day for *falcons* in general, as we stumbled into a small group of **Amur Falcons** perched on the road, and then found a **Gray Kestrel** too later in the day. There is rarely a dull day for raptors in East Africa and this was no different, with another **Martial Eagle** and more **Brown and Black-chested Snake-Eagles** too. **Lilac-breasted Rollers** had featured heavily on this tour, but few other roller species had been seen, although we managed to find both **European Roller** (many of which must have already left) and **Rufous-crowned Roller** for only the second (and final time) on the tour. While watching the dozing **Leopard** (*photo below*), the birders among us were distracted by some other forms in the same tree, which were the only **White-headed Barbets** seen on the tour.



Leopard is arguably the most difficult of the regular cats on this tour.
We chased after this one in the *Serengeti*, after receiving news on the radio (*John Blakemore*)

As we continued our game drive we were surprised to encounter a couple of very showy **Black Coucals** (*photo page 39*), which even came in for photos. A camp stop was marked by interruptions from scavenging birds and animals. The birds were represented by **Hildebrandt's Starling** (*photo page 41*), **Gray-capped Social-Weaver** and "**Usambiro**" **D'Arnaud's Barbet** (*photo page 41*), a form that is often split as a separate species, while the scavenging mammals were **Dwarf Mongoose** that scampered around the picnic tables. We also saw only the second (and final) **Spur-winged Lapwing** of the tour, although dozens of **Crowned Lapwings** turned up through the day. For much of the drive in the morning, we had been noting small finches taking off the road, and we knew exactly what they were – **Quailfinches**, although it took several dozen flight views before we managed to stop in time to get a proper look at one on the ground!



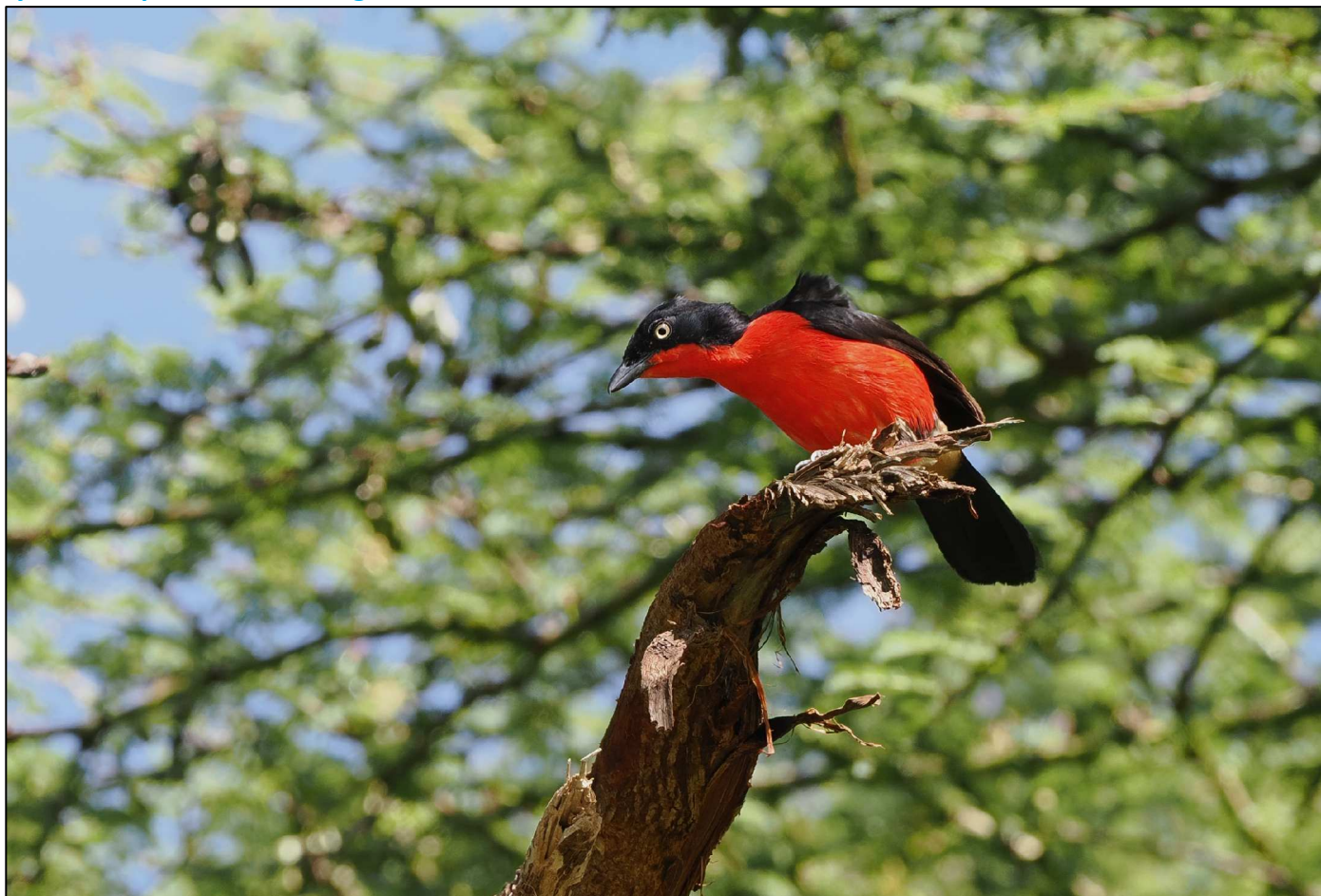
We photographed tame "Usambiro" D'Arnaud's Barbets and Hildebrandt's Starlings at a Serengeti camp (Sam Woods)



We were also seeking our third and final longclaw and managed to get decent looks and photos of it by the end of the day, with a pair of **Yellow-throated Longclaws** (*photo page 8*) eventually found. The first few **Ruppell's Starlings** also showed up too. However, one of the most memorable bird sightings came in the afternoon, when we came upon a troop of four **Southern Ground-Hornbills** (*photo below*) walking the road, which allowed us to sidle right up next to them, as so many birds and mammals seem to do in Tanzania, a nature photographers dream destination. Once we reached the camp, we had time for some final birding before dusk, which yielded **Mocking Cliff-Chat** sitting on top of one of our rooms, a male **Purple-banded Sunbird** and **Chinspot Batis** in the garden, along with our only **Rock-loving Cisticolas** of the tour, which I am sure *Irene* was pleased to do without (she was not a *cisticola* fan)!



Our second troop of **Southern Ground-Hornbills** gave extreme close ups in the *Serengeti* (*Sam Woods*)

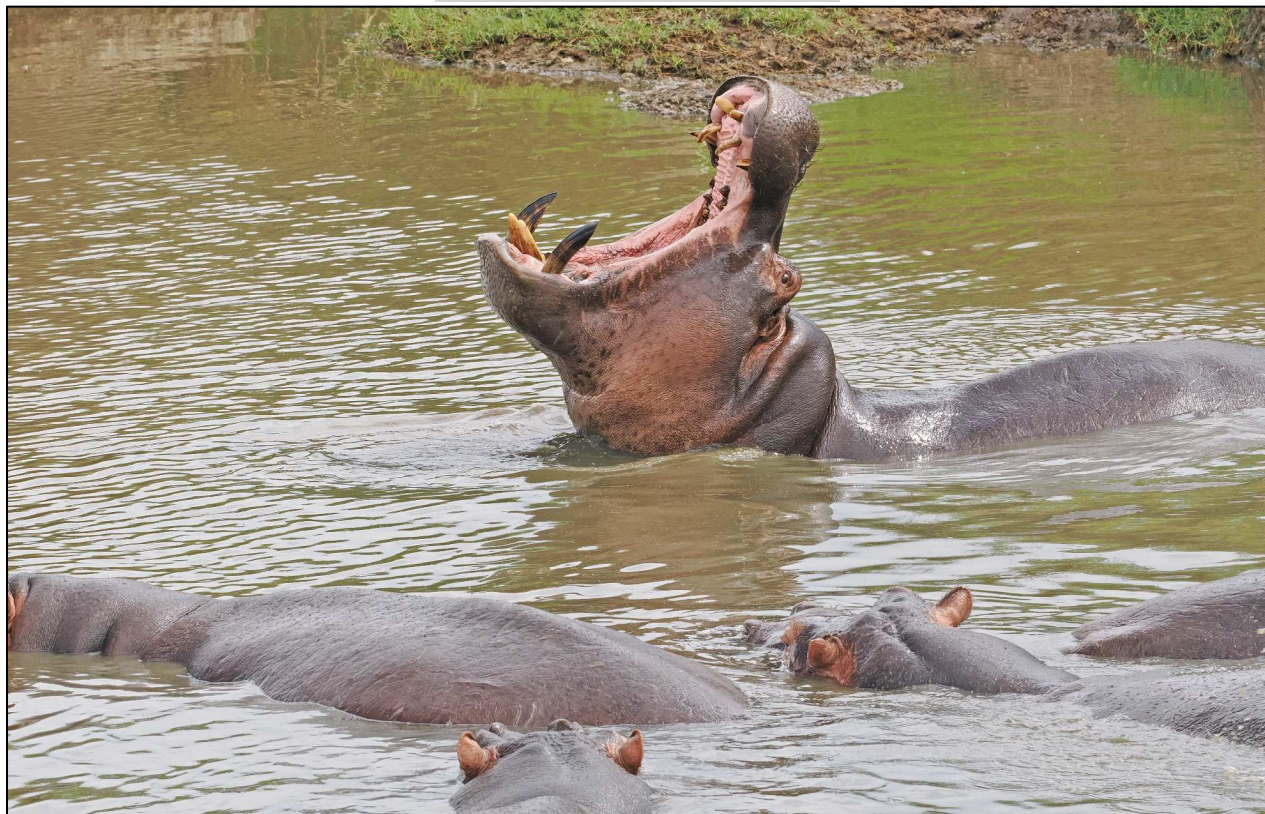
Day 9: 27th April 2023 – Serengeti NP.

Black-headed Gonolek was a highlight of our final full day in the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)

For our final full day of game driving we ventured into the *Western Serengeti* (having covered the Central part the day before). This was a strategic choice as we knew the west might bring some key bird species. We made our way west into an area of untidy looking Whistling Thorns trees, an area of habitat necessary for a scarce specialist we were seeking. Luckily, they did not prove too difficult to find, and we came upon at least two parties, comprising 7 individual **Karamoja Apalis**, as hoped. The next major specialty we were after was found in riparian woodland and was a splendid **Black-headed Gonolek** (*photo above*), a striking black-and-red bushshrike. Later, we found our sixth and final hornbill of the tour, **Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill** (*photo page 46*), which even initiated *Sam* to open the windows to capture images for himself and John, although the fly bites that followed were arguably not worth it! Two pairs of **Eastern Plantain-Eaters** were also found there as hoped. We also stumbled into our final **Secretarybird** of the trip too. We also visited a wallow for **hippos** (*photo page 44*), which gave us some cracking views as they opened their jaws at one another, although the smell of the place was also memorable! We had been on the lookout for babblers since *Ndutu*, and finally found a single flock of **Arrow-marked Babblers**. A pool held 4 **Black Crakes**, which was our sole sighting. We also found more **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse**, a species that was only seen a few times. As we left the park and rolled into our lodge outside the park that evening, we came upon a flock of **Black-winged Lapwings** beside the road. We of course had plentiful game again and were especially pleased to get some good close ups of some **Yellow-billed Oxpeckers** (*photo page 45*) sitting on the hide of a close feeding giraffe.



Hippos in the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)





Yellow-billed Oxpeckers on the neck of a Masai Giraffe in the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)

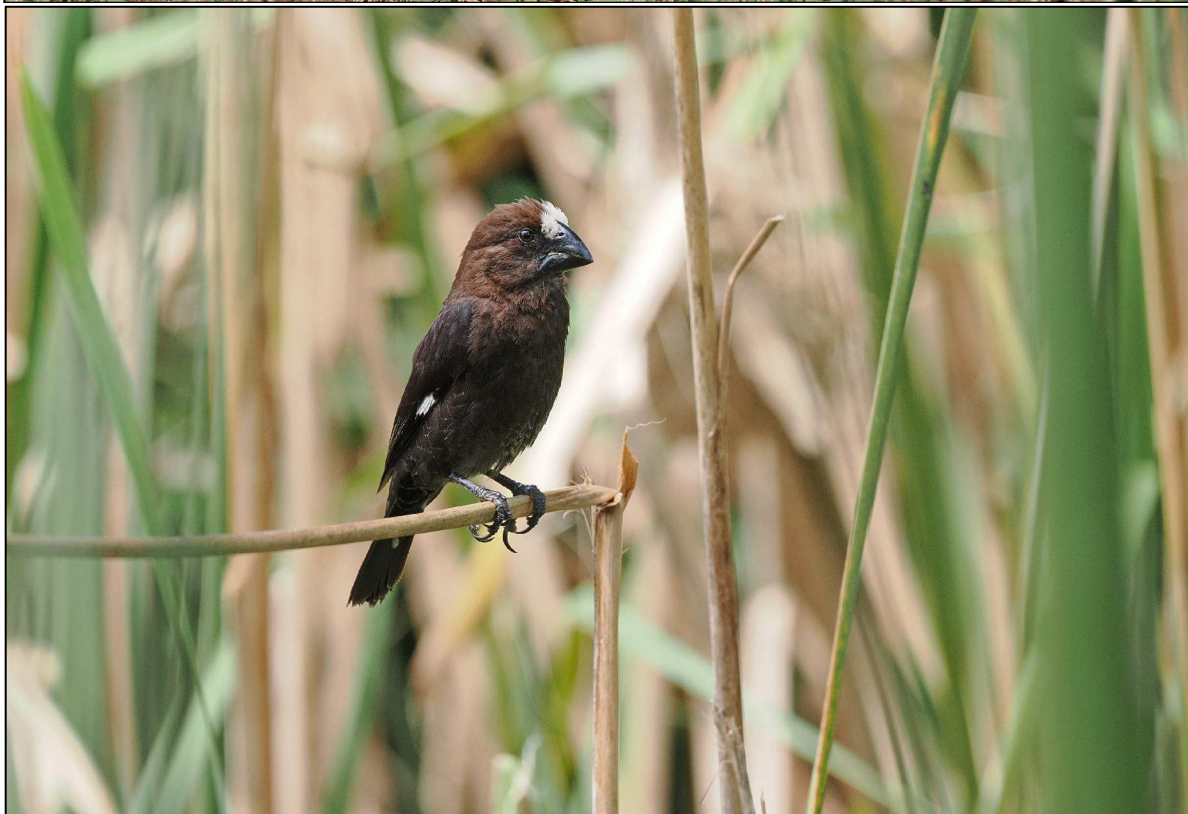
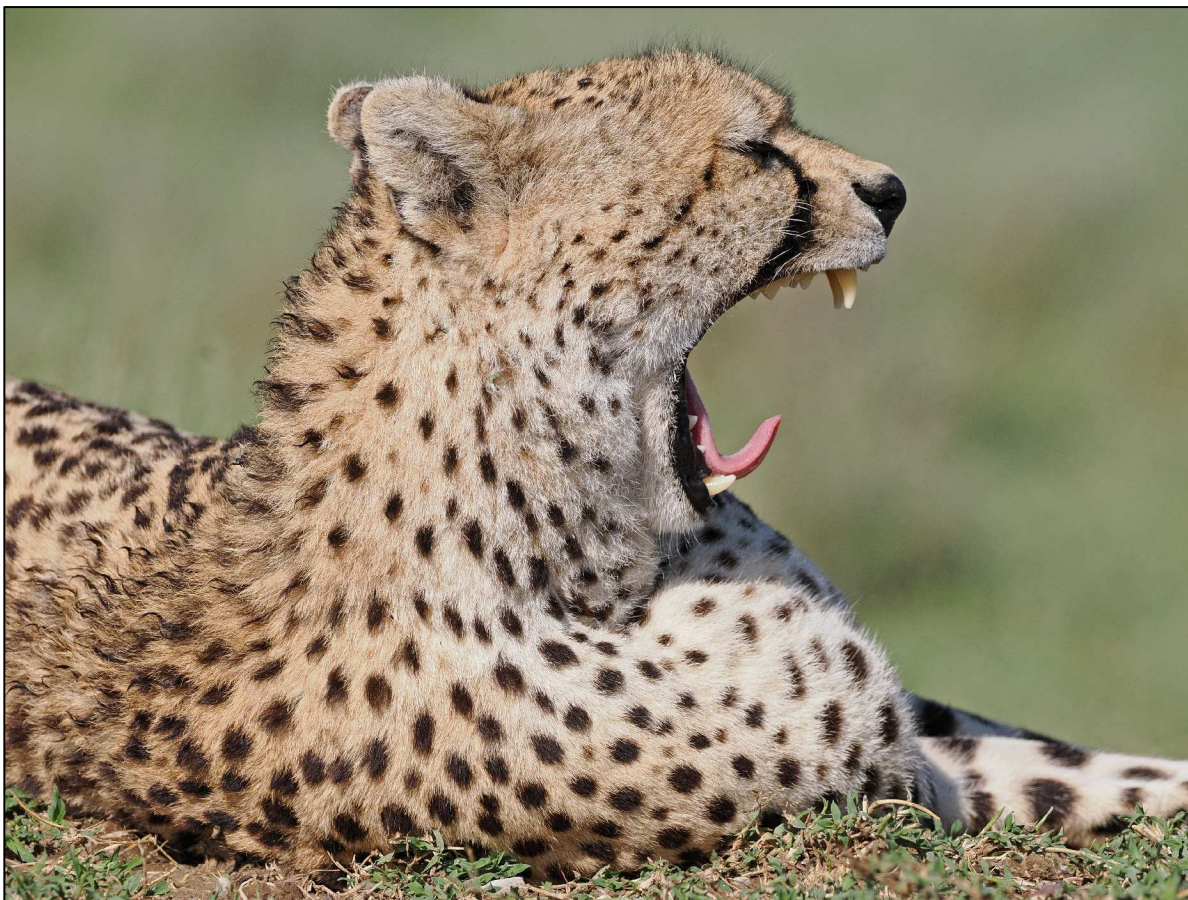


Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill was seen in the western corridor of the *Serengeti* (Sam Woods)

Day 10: 28th April 2023 – Serengeti NP to Gibb’s Farm and Arusha.

This was a long travel day, which involved backtracking from the furthest, most western site (*Serengeti NP*) all the way back to our eastern most site in the city of *Arusha*. With the long travel time there was little time for birding and game, but we still managed to have a **Cheetah** (*photo next page*) all to ourselves and see some final **Lions**. Birdwise, the best sighting of the day were the **Grosbeak Weavers** (*photo next page*) at our lunch stop in *Gibb’s Farm*, which were nesting in a small pond in the garden. At the end of the day, we birded around our lodge near *Arusha NP*, where we found a pair of **Silvery-cheeked Hornbills**, a singing **Ruppell’s Roin-Chat** and a **Bronze Mannikin** in the garden in just 30 minutes or so of birding. Not bad for a travel day! Our final night was spent in *Arusha*.

Photos Next Page: Our sixth and final **Cheetah** was had all to ourselves as we exited the *Serengeti* and **Grosbeak Weaver** from *Gibb’s Farm* (both Sam Woods)



Day 11: 29th April 2023 - Lark Plains.

The last day had finally come, and with only a half day at our disposal, due to evening flights out, we visited *Lark Plains*, north of *Arusha* for the morning. It was a tight schedule, but thankfully our main target showed up early, the “Beesley’s” form of **Spike-heeled Lark** (*photo below*) giving good views a short time after arrival. Likewise, a **Red-fronted Prinia** also gave stellar looks at it sang from a scrubby patch in the plains. We also saw our only Fischer’s Starlings of the tour and found a **Southern Grosbeak Canary** in the thicker stands of woods, which was our final addition of the tour. We then needed to return to Arusha, and Kilimanjaro airport, from where we flew out at the end of an amazing tour for both birds and animals.

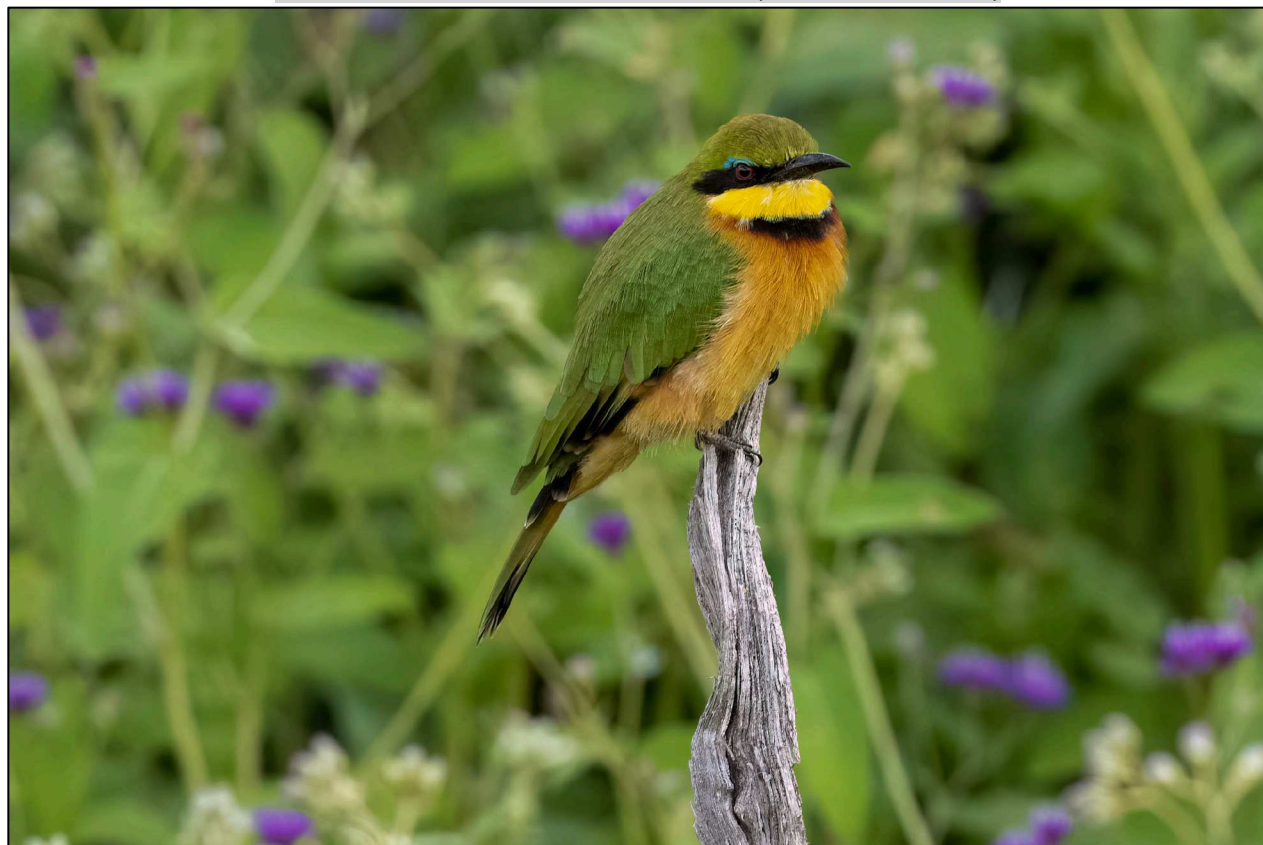


The highlight on the Lark Plains was this **Spike-heeled Lark** of the rare Beesley’s form (*Sam Woods*)

PLEASE SEE THE NEXT PAGES FOR MORE PHOTOS AND THE TOUR CHECKLIST...

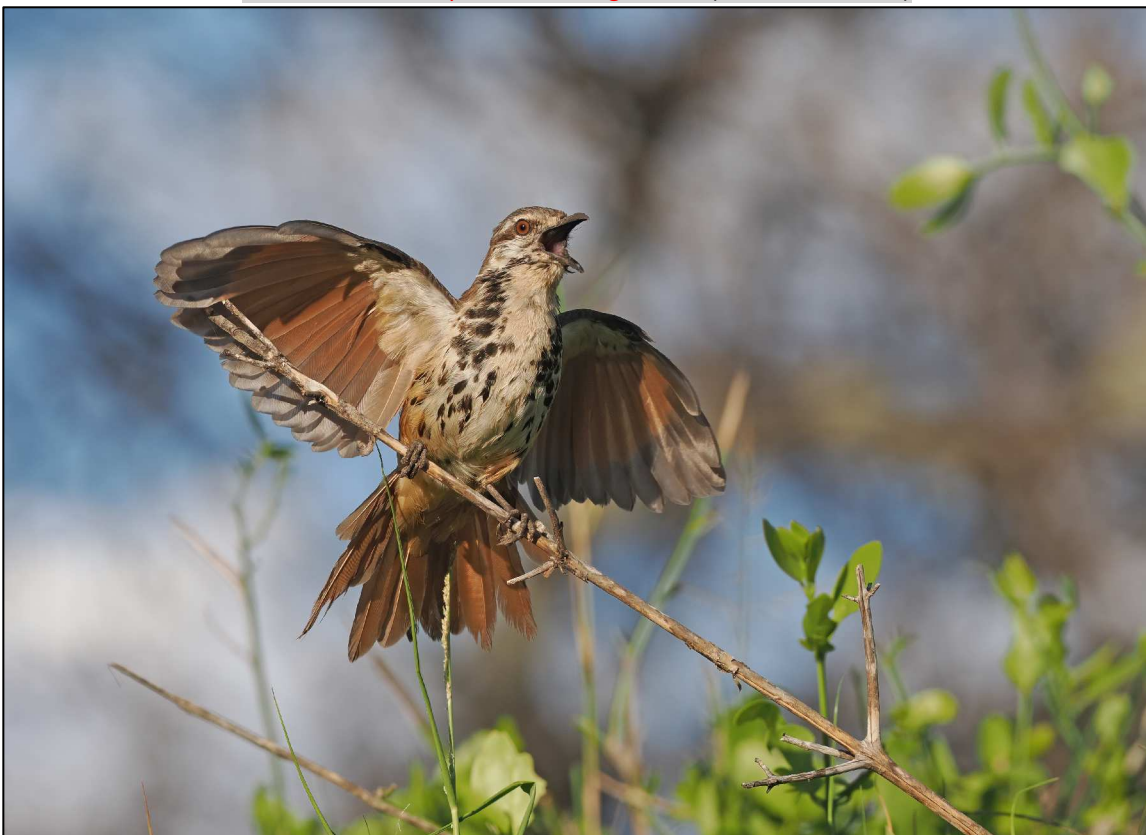


Golden-backed Weaver and Little Bee-eater (both John Blakemore)





Plains Zebras and Spotted Morning-Thrush (both Sam Woods)





Martial Eagle and Straw-tailed Whydah (both John Blakemore)





Coqui Francolin and Hildebrandt's Spurfwowl (both Sam Woods)





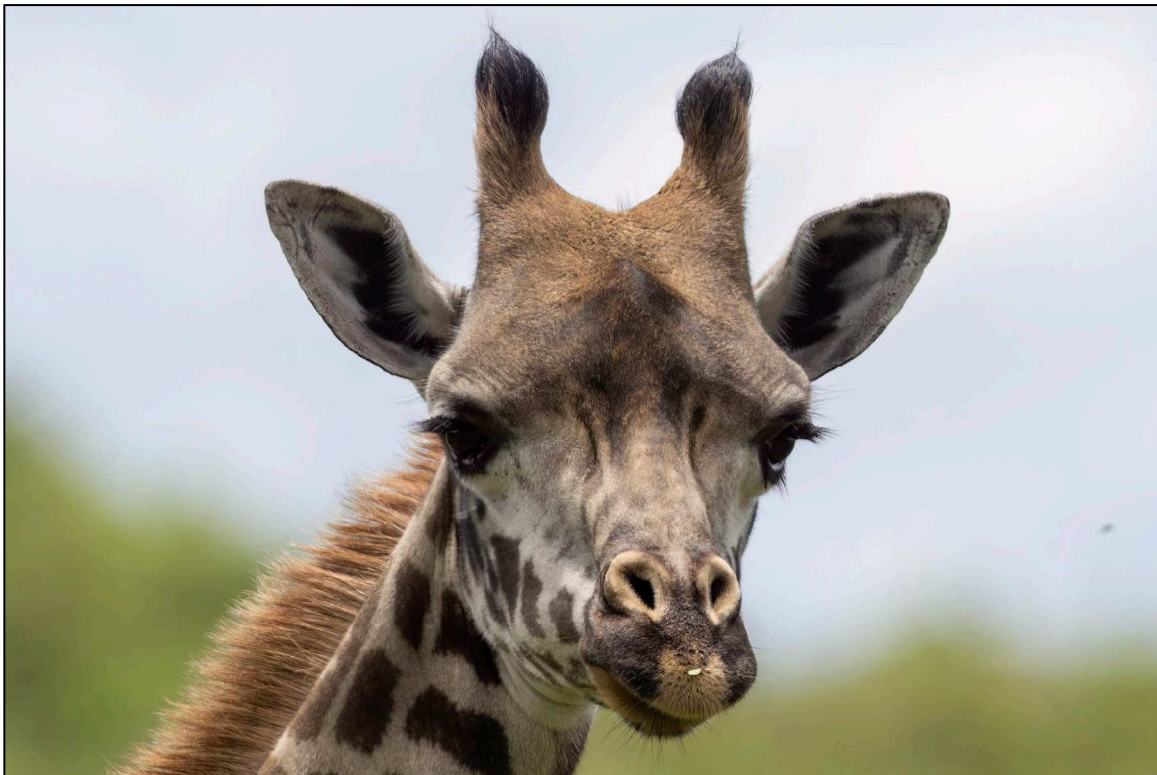
Lions and Saddle-billed Stork (both *John Blakemore*)





Speke's Weaver (TOP) and Baglaffeht Weaver (both Sam Woods)





Masai Giraffe (TOP) and Black-backed Jackal (both John Blakemore)



CHECKLISTS:**BIRDS**

The taxonomy of the bird list follows **Clements, James F., White, Anthony W., and Fitzpatrick, John W.** *The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World*. Cornell, 2007. *This list is up to date with changes published by Cornell in October 2022.*

(H) - INDICATES A SPECIES THAT WAS HEARD ONLY.

(GO) – INDICATES A SPECIES RECORDED BY THE GUIDE ONLY.

PLEASE NOTE: Mentions of Arusha in the checklist refer to the national park, and not the city of Arusha unless specifically stated..

Ostriches: Struthionidae

Common Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*): Recorded on 7 days, (Tarangire, Ngorongoro, Nduu & Serengeti).

Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl: Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna viduata*): Recorded on 2 days in Tarangire only.

Fulvous Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*): 1 group were seen at Tarangire.

Knob-billed Duck (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*): Recorded on 3 days, in Tarangire only.

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*): Recorded on 7 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Ngorongoro, Nduu, Serengeti).

Spur-winged Goose (*Plectropterus gambensis*): Recorded on 3 days (Tarangire & Ngorongoro).

Cape Teal (*Anas capensis*): Recorded on 2 days (Arusha & Ngorongoro).

Red-billed Duck (*Anas erythrorhynchos*): A handful were seen on one day only, in the crater at Ngorongoro.

Southern Pochard (*Netta erythrophthalma*): Numerous at Arusha NP, also seen on one other day at Ngorongoro.

Guineafowl: Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*): Recorded on 10 days of the tour, at almost all sites.

Pheasant, Grouse and Allies: Phasianidae

Crested Francolin (*Dendroperdix sephaena*): Recorded on 5 days, at Arusha, Tarangire and Lark Plains.

Coqui Francolin (*Peliperdix coqui*): Seen on 3 days, at Tarangire and in the Serengeti.

Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*): 1 was identified in the Serengeti. Many unidentified quail were seen in flight.

Harlequin Quail (*Coturnix delegorguei*): Recorded on 4 days (Tarangire, Nduu, Serengeti).

Hildebrandt's Spurfowl (*Pternistis hildebrandti*): Seen on one day, on the drive down to the crater at Ngorongoro.

Scaly Spurfowl (*Pternistis squamatus*): 2 were seen at Arusha NP.

Yellow-necked Spurfowl (*Pternistis leucoscepus*): Seen on all 3 days in Tarangire.

Gray-breasted Spurfowl (*Pternistis rufopictus*): Recorded on 4 days in Nduu and the Serengeti.

Red-necked Spurfowl (*Pternistis afer*): Seen on all 3 days in Tarangire.

Flamingos: Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*): Noted on 2 days (Arusha, Ngorongoro).

Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*): Recorded at 3 sites (Arusha, Ngorongoro, Nduu), with the most impressive concentration of many thousands being seen in Arusha NP.

Grebes: Podiicipedidae

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*): Seen on 3 days of the tour (Arusha, Ngorongoro, Nduu).

Pigeons and Doves: Columbidae

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*): Just seen around the city of Arusha on 2 days.

Speckled Pigeon (*Columba guinea*): Seen on 3 occasions, around gates in the Serengeti.

Rameron Pigeon (*Columba arquatrix*): 1 was seen at our highland lodge on the crater rim at Ngorongoro.

Lemon Dove (*Columba larvata*): 1 was seen in Arusha NP.

Dusky Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia lugens*): Just seen on 2 days below the crater rim in Ngorongoro.

Mourning Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decipiens*): Numerous throughout, recorded on most days.

Red-eyed Dove (*Streptopelia semitorquata*): Most numerous around Tarangire at the start of the tour.

Ring-necked Dove (*Streptopelia capicola*): Abundant, recorded on at least 10 days of the tour.

Laughing Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*): Very abundant (some days hundreds were seen), recorded on at least 9 days.

Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove (*Turtur chalcospilos*): Just a few were seen during our visit to Lake Manyara.

Tambourine Dove (*Turtur tympanistris*): 1 was seen in Arusha NP.

Namaqua Dove (*Oena capensis*): Regularly encountered at Tarangire and Ndotu (6 days).

African Green-Pigeon (*Treron calvus*): Only seen the once at Lake Manyara.

[Sandgrouse: Pteroclididae](#)

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles exustus*): Recorded 3 days, near Ndotu, in the Serengeti and in flight at Lark Plains.

Yellow-throated Sandgrouse (*Pterocles gutturalis*): Only seen on 2 days, near Ndotu and in the Serengeti.

Black-faced Sandgrouse (*Pterocles decoratus*): Recorded on all 3 days in Tarangire and once in the Serengeti.

[Bustards: Otidae](#)

Kori Bustard (*Ardeotis kori*): The most regular bustard species, seen on 8 days.

White-bellied Bustard (*Eupodotis senegalensis*): Seen twice in Tarangire and once in the Serengeti.

Buff-crested Bustard (*Eupodotis gindiana*): Seen once only, in Tarangire.

Black-bellied Bustard (*Eupodotis gindiana*): Sighted on 2 days (Tarangire & the Serengeti).

Hartlaub's Bustard (*Lissotis hartlaubii*): Just the one was seen, in the Serengeti.

[Turacos: Turacidae](#)

Schalow's Turaco (*Tauraco schalowi*): 4 birds were seen in the grounds of our highland lodge in Ngorongoro.

Hartlaub's Turaco (*Tauraco hartlaubi*): A group of at least 6 birds were in a single fruiting tree in Arusha.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird (*Corythaixoides personatus*): Seen around Tarangire, the Serengeti and at Lark Plains.

White-bellied Go-away-bird (*Corythaixoides leucogaster*): Seen on all 3 days at Tarangire.

Eastern Plantain-eater (*Crinifer zonurus*): This was a specialty we successfully chased after in the Western Corridor of the Serengeti, where two pairs were seen.

[Cuckoos: Cuculidae](#)

White-browed Coucal (*Centropus superciliosus*): The most abundant cuckoo, recorded on at least 8 days.

Black Coucal (*Centropus grillii*): 2 were seen in the same area of the Serengeti.

Green Malkoha (*Ceuthmochares australis*): A single was seen within the montane rainforest at Arusha NP.

Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius*): Seen twice, once in Tarangire and then in Ndotu.

Pied Cuckoo (*Clamator jacobinus*): A single was seen in Ndotu.

Dideric Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx caprius*): Heard more than seen. Recorded on at least 7 days.

Klaas's Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx klaas*): 1 was heard in Arusha.

Red-chested Cuckoo (*Cuculus solitarius*): Recorded on at least 6 days.

African Cuckoo (*Cuculus gularis*): Seen twice, in Tarangire and Ndotu.

[Nightjars and Allies: Caprimulgidae](#)

Swamp Nightjar (*Caprimulgus natalensis*) (H): Heard from our camp just outside Serengeti NP.

Freckled Nightjar (*Caprimulgus tristigma*): 1 was seen very well at our safari camp just outside Serengeti NP.

[Swifts: Apodidae](#)

Little Swift (*Apus affinis*): Recorded in good numbers on 5 days of the tour (Tarangire, Ndotu & Serengeti).

White-rumped Swift (*Apus caffer*): Recorded on 3 days in the Serengeti.

African Palm Swift (*Cypsiurus parvus*): Only noted on 2 days, on the way to Tarangire and in Lake Manyara.

[Rails, Gallinules and Coots: Rallidae](#)

Eurasian Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*): Only seen 3 times (Tarangire, Ngorongoro & Serengeti).

Red-knobbed Coot (*Fulica cristata*): Double figures were seen in the crater at Ngorongoro, the only day it was seen.

Black Crake (*Zapornia flavirostra*): A single sighting of 4 birds in the Serengeti.

[Cranes: Gruidae](#)

Gray-crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*): Recorded on 5 consecutive days (Arusha, Tarangire & Ngorongoro). Most numerous in the crater.

Thick-knees: Burhinidae

Water Thick-knee (*Burhinus vermiculatus*): A party of 4 birds at Tarangire were the only ones seen.

Spotted Thick-knee (*Burhinus capensis*): Seen twice, once in Nduvu and then in the Serengeti.

Stilts and Avocets: Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*): Recorded on 4 days of the tour (e.g., Arusha).

Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*): Recorded on 3 days (Arusha & Nduvu).

Plovers and Lapwings: Charadriidae

Long-toed Lapwing (*Vanellus crassirostris*): Seen on only 2 days, in Tarangire and Ngorongoro.

Blacksmith Lapwing (*Vanellus armatus*): One of the most regularly recorded shorebirds, seen on at least 7 days.

Spur-winged Lapwing (*Vanellus spinosus*): Two singles were seen at Arusha and the Serengeti.

Black-winged Lapwing (*Vanellus melanopterus*): The same group were seen on 3 consecutive days in the Serengeti.

Crowned Lapwing (*Vanellus coronatus*): Recorded on 7 days (Ngorongoro, Nduvu, Serengeti & Lark Plains).

Kittlitz's Plover (*Charadrius pecuarius*): Recorded on 2 days, with double figures at Ngorongoro and a few at Nduvu.

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*): Singles were seen at Ngorongoro and Nduvu.

Three-banded Plover (*Charadrius tricollaris*): Seen on 3 days (Tarangire & Nduvu).

Chestnut-banded Plover (*Charadrius pallidus*): 1 was found at Lake Nduvu.

Jacanas: Jacanidae

African Jacana (*Actophilornis africanus*): Seen on 3 days only (Tarangire & Serengeti).

Sandpipers and Allies: Scolopacidae

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*): 2 singles were seen at Ngorongoro and Nduvu.

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*): 5 were seen at Ngorongoro Crater and then 30 or more were seen at Lake Nduvu.

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*): A couple was seen at Nduvu.

Pratincoles and Coursers: Glareolidae

Temminck's Courser (*Cursorius temminckii*): 3 groups were seen on a single day in Serengeti NP and just outside there.

Double-banded Courser (*Smutsornis africanus*): Recorded on 6 days of the tour (Tarangire, Nduvu & Serengeti). The maximum count was 8 birds on one day in Tarangire, where a chick was also seen.

Three-banded Courser (*Rhinoptilus cinctus*): Seen twice, and adult and chick in Tarangire, and then a pair at Nduvu.

Bronze-winged Courser (*Rhinoptilus chalcopterus*): A single party of 8 birds was found in Tarangire.

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers: Laridae

Gray-hooded Gull (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*): A couple of birds were seen at Ngorongoro.

Gull-billed Tern (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*): Recorded on 2 days of the tour, including in the crater at Ngorongoro.

Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*): Recorded on 2 days, at Tarangire and Ngorongoro.

Storks: Ciconiidae

African Openbill (*Anastomus lamelligerus*): Just a single was seen at Lake Nduvu.

White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*): A single was seen in Nduvu, and 3 birds were seen in the Serengeti.

Saddle-billed Stork (*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*): Noted on 2 days, a single at Arusha, and 2 at Nduvu.

Marabou Stork (*Leptoptilos crumenifer*): Recorded on 4 days, at Tarangire, Nduvu & the Serengeti.

Yellow-billed Stork (*Mycteria ibis*): Recorded 3 days (e.g., Ngorongoro & Serengeti), with c.150 seen in flight at Lake Manyara.

Cormorants and Shags: Phalacrocoracidae

Long-tailed Cormorant (*Microcarbo africanus*): Double figures were seen at Arusha, and a single in Tarangire.

Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*): 4 birds were seen in Arusha NP.

Pelicans: Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*): A few were seen on the long journey to the city of Arusha from Gibb's Farm.

Hamerkop: Scopidae

Hamerkop (*Scopus umbretta*): Singles were seen on 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Ngorongoro, Nduvu & Serengeti).

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns: Ardeidae

Gray Heron (*Ardea cinerea*): Recorded on 5 days, with 10 being the maximum in Ngorongoro.

Black-headed Heron (*Ardea melanocephala*): The most regular heron, seen on 6 days, with more than 35 at Ngorongoro.

Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*): 1 was seen briefly at Lake Mugadi (Ngorongoro).

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*): Just a few were seen at Arusha and Tarangire.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*): Two singles were noted at Arusha and Tarangire.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): The most regular egret, seen on at least 5 days.

Squacco Heron (*Ardeola ralloides*): A couple were seen at a swamp in Tarangire.

Striated Heron (*Butorides striata*): 1 was seen in the Serengeti.

Ibises and Spoonbills: Threkiornithidae

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*): A single at Tarangire and 30+ at Ngorongoro.

African Sacred Ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*): Recorded in small numbers on 2 days (Arusha & Ngorongoro).

Hadada Ibis (*Bostrychia hagedash*): A single sighting on 6 days, including around the city of Arusha.

African Spoonbill (*Platalea alba*): 3 birds were seen in the crater at Ngorongoro.

Secretarybird: Sagittariidae

Secretarybird (*Sagittarius serpentarius*): One of the birds of the tour, recorded on 8 separate occasions, at 5 different sites.

Hawks, Eagles and Kites: Accipitridae

Black-winged Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*): Recorded on 5 days (Lake Manyara, Ndutu & Serengeti).

African Harrier-Hawk (*Polyboroides typus*): Singles at Lake Manyara and in the Serengeti.

White-headed Vulture (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*): 1 was seen perched in the Serengeti.

Lappet-faced Vulture (*Torgos tracheliotos*): Recorded on 6 days.

Hooded Vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*): A single was seen in Ndutu.

White-backed Vulture (*Gyps africanus*): The most regularly encountered culture, featuring on at least 5 days.

Rüppell's Griffon (*Gyps rueppelli*): Seen on 2 days in and around Ndutu, including some gathered at kills.

Bateleur (*Terathopius ecaudatus*): Seen on 3 days (double figures were seen in Tarangire, also Ndutu & Serengeti).

Black-chested Snake-Eagle (*Circaetus pectoralis*): Singles were seen on 3 days (Ngorongoro & Serengeti).

Brown Snake-Eagle (*Circaetus cinereus*): Recorded on 4 days (Ndutu & Serengeti).

Martial Eagle (*Polemaetus bellicosus*): Singles were seen on 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Ndutu, Serengeti).

Long-crested Eagle (*Lophaetus occipitalis*): Seen only 3 times (Ndutu & Serengeti).

Tawny Eagle (*Aquila rapax*): One of the most regularly noted large raptors, on at least 7 days.

African Hawk-Eagle (*Aquila spilogaster*): 2 pairs were seen in Tarangire and a single at Lake Manyara.

Dark Chanting Goshawk (*Melierax metabates*): Recorded on 4 days at Ndutu and in Serengeti.

Eastern Chanting Goshawk (*Melierax poliopterus*): 2 singles were seen in Tarangire.

Gabar Goshawk (*Micronisus gabar*): 2 singles were seen in and around Ndutu.

Little Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter minullus*): 1 was seen over our lodge in Ngorongoro.

Black Goshawk (*Accipiter melanoleucus*): A single flew by at Lake Manyara.

Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*): A few were seen near Arusha city, and a few others in Ngorongoro.

African Fish-Eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*): 2 were seen in Tarangire, and a single in Serengeti.

Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*): 1 flew over in Ndutu.

Augur Buzzard (*Buteo augur*): A regularly encountered raptor, recorded on 6 days.

Owls: Strigidae

African Scops-Owl (*Otus senegalensis*): Seen in our camp at Tarangire (day & night), also heard at our camp in the Serengeti.

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl (*Ketupa lacteus*): A single and a group of 3 were seen in Ndutu in the daytime.

Pearl-spotted Owlet (*Glaucidium perlatum*): A single bird was seen at Tarangire.

Mousebirds: Coliidae

Speckled Mousebird (*Colius striatus*): Recorded on 6 days (e.g. Tarangire, around our hotel in Arusha).

Blue-naped Mousebird (*Urocolius macrourus*): Recorded at Tarangire, Lake Manyara and in Ndutu.

Trogons: Trogonidae

Narina Trogon (*Apaloderma narina*) (H) Heard in montane forest at Arusha NP.

Hoopoes: Upupidae

Eurasian (African) Hoopoe (*Upupa epops africana*): A few were seen in Tarangire and Ndutu.

[Woodhoopoes and Scimitarbills: Phoeniculidae](#)

Green Woodhoopoe (*Phoeniculus purpureus*): Seen 3 times in Tarangire and once each in Lake Manyara and the Serengeti.
Abyssinian Scimitarbill (*Rhinopomastus minor*): 2 singles, once in Tarangire, and then near Nduu.

[Ground-Hornbills: Bucorvidae](#)

Southern Ground-Hornbill (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*): Seen twice in Tarangire and once in the Serengeti.

[Hornbills: Bucerotidae](#)

Crowned Hornbill (*Lophoceros alboterminatus*): Half a dozen was seen during our visit to Lake Manyara.
African Gray Hornbill (*Lophoceros nasutus*): Recorded on 3 days (twice in Tarangire and once in the Serengeti).
Von der Decken's Hornbill (*Tockus deckeni*): Seen 2-3 times in Tarangire and once in Nduu.
Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill (*Tockus ruahae*): A singleton was seen in the western corridor of the Serengeti.
Northern Red-billed Hornbill (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*): Regularly recorded in Tarangire (the only site it was seen).
Silvery-cheeked Hornbill (*Bycanistes brevis*): Recorded on 2 days, at Lake Manyara and also in our Arusha hotel.

[Kingfishers: Alcedinidae](#)

Malachite Kingfisher (*Corythornis cristatus*): 1 was seen briefly in flight in the Serengeti.
Gray-headed Kingfisher (*Halcyon leucocephala*): A single was seen in Tarangire.
Woodland Kingfisher (*Halcyon senegalensis*): Heard regularly and seen 3 times (in Tarangire and Nduu).
Striped Kingfisher (*Halcyon chelicuti*): Seen 3 times, in Tarangire and Lake Manyara.
Giant Kingfisher (*Megaceryle maxima*): Fantastic views of a confiding bird in Lake Manyara.
Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*): A single brief sighting in Tarangire.

[Bee-eaters: Meropidae](#)

White-fronted Bee-eater (*Merops bullockoides*): 7 birds were seen in Arusha NP.
Little Bee-eater (*Merops pusillus*): The most regularly encountered bee-eater, noted on at least 5 days.
Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater (*Merops oreobates*): Seen around our lodge on the crater rim in Ngorongoro.
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (*Merops persicus*): About 6 birds were seen on one day in Tarangire.

[Rollers: Coraciidae](#)

European Roller (*Coracias garrulus*): Only 3 singles were seen in the Serengeti.
Lilac-breasted Roller (*Coracias caudatus*): Regularly encountered, featuring on at least 7 different days.
Rufous-crowned Roller (*Coracias naevius*): 2 singles, one on the way to Nduu and another in the Serengeti.
Broad-billed Roller (*Eurystomus glaucurus*): 1 was seen on the journey between Tarangire and Lake Manyara.

[African Barbets: Lybiidae](#)

Red-and-yellow Barbet (*Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*): Some good looks in Tarangire and Lake Manyara.
D'Arnaud's Barbet (*Trachyphonus darnaudii*): 2 were seen in Tarangire and the Usambiro form, (sometimes split as a separate species), was seen on 4 days of the tour, at Nduu and in the Serengeti.
White-eared Barbet (*Stactolaema leucotis*) (H) Heard in the forest in Arusha NP.
Moustached Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus leucomystax*) (H): Heard in Arusha NP.
Red-fronted Barbet (*Tricholaema diademata*): Singles were seen on 2 days in the Serengeti, including at our lodge just outside of the park.
Spot-flanked Barbet (*Tricholaema lacrymosa*): 1 was seen as we entered the park in Arusha.
White-headed Barbet (*Lybius leucocephalus*): A couple shared a tree with a Leopard in the Serengeti.
Brown-breasted Barbet (*Lybius melanopterus*): 1 was seen in Arusha NP.

[Woodpeckers: Picidae](#)

Cardinal Woodpecker (*Dendropicos fuscescens*): 2-3 sightings, in Tarangire and Lake Manyara.
Bearded Woodpecker (*Dendropicos namaquus*): 2 singles in Nduu.
Mountain Gray Woodpecker (*Dendropicos spodocephalus*): Noted on 2 days, in Tarangire and near Nduu.
Nubian Woodpecker (*Campethera nubica*): Recorded once in Arusha and twice in Tarangire.

[Falcons and Caracaras: Falconidae](#)

Pygmy Falcon (*Polihierax semitorquatus*): A pair was seen in Tarangire. Another was seen in the Serengeti.
Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*): 2 birds were seen on our first day in the Serengeti.

Greater Kestrel (*Falco rupicoloides*): Recorded 4 times in the Serengeti.

Gray Kestrel (*Falco ardosiaceus*): 2 singles were seen, in Tarangire and in the Serengeti.

Amur Falcon (*Falco amurensis*): A surprise sighting of a group of 4 sitting on the road in Serengeti NP.

Lanner Falcon (*Falco biarmicus*): 2 birds blasted overhead at Lark Plains.

[Old World Parrots: Psittaculidae](#)

Fischer's Lovebird (*Agapornis fischeri*): Recorded on 5 days, with our best looks coming in Ndotu.

Yellow-collared Lovebird (*Agapornis personatus*): Only seen in Tarangire, where it was recorded on all 3 days.

[New World & African Parrots: Psittacidae](#)

Meyer's Parrot (*Poicephalus meyeri*): A few were seen in Tarangire and in the Serengeti.

Red-bellied Parrot (*Poicephalus rufiventris*): Around 10 birds were seen on one afternoon in Tarangire.

[Broadbills: Calyptomenidae](#)

African Broadbill (*Smithornis capensis*): Watching a displaying bird in the montane forest at Arusha was one of the highlights of our time in that park.

[Cuckooshrikes: Caprophagidae](#)

Gray Cuckooshrike (*Coracina caesia*): 2 were seen near our lodge on the crater rim in Ngorongoro.

[Old World Orioles: Oriolidae](#)

African Black-headed Oriole (*Oriolus larvatus*): Only heard in Tarangire, then seen at Lake Manyara.

[Wattle-eyes and Batises: Platysteridae](#)

Short-tailed Batis (*Batis mixta*): A single was seen in the montane forest in Arusha NP.

Chin-spot Batis (*Batis molitor*): Singles recorded on 3 days (Serengeti, Gibb's Farm and Lark Plains).

[Bushshrikes and Allies: Malaconotidae](#)

Brubru (*Nilaus afer*): Heard at a number of sites (e.g. Tarangire) and seen in Ndotu.

Black-backed Puffback (*Dryoscopus cubla*): Recorded on 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Serengeti).

Black-crowned Tchagra (*Tchagra senegalus*): 1 showed out in the open in the crater at Ngorongoro.

Brown-crowned Tchagra (*Tchagra australis*): Noted on 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Ndotu & Serengeti).

Tropical Boubou (*Laniarius major*): Recorded on at least 3 days (e.g., Arusha, Ngorongoro).

Black-headed Gonolek (*Laniarius erythrogaster*): This spectacular bushshrike was seen in the western Serengeti.

Slate-colored Boubou (*Laniarius funebris*): Recorded on 7 days. Particularly conspicuous around the camp in Ndotu.

Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike (*Telophorus sulfureopectus*): Seen twice, in Tarangire and at our camp in the Serengeti.

Black-fronted Bushshrike (*Telophorus nigrifrons*): 2 birds were seen in Arusha NP.

[Drongos: Drongidae](#)

Fork-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*): Regularly encountered, on at least 6 days.

[Monarch Flycatchers: Monarchidae](#)

African Paradise-Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone viridis*): Recorded at 3 sites (Arusha, Lake Manyara & Serengeti).

[Shrikes: Laniidae](#)

Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*): Only a few were seen at Lake Manyara and around Ndotu.

Red-tailed Shrike (*Lanius phoenicuroides*): 1 was seen near our Serengeti camp.

Lesser Gray Shrike (*Lanius minor*): 2 birds were seen in Tarangire.

Gray-backed Fiscal (*Lanius excubitoroides*): Recorded on 2 days, at Ndotu and 6 in one day in the Serengeti.

Long-tailed Fiscal (*Lanius cabanisi*): Seen in small numbers on all 3 days in Tarangire.

Magpie Shrike (*Corvinella melanoleuca*): Seen in good numbers on all 3 days in Tarangire.

Taita Fiscal (*Lanius dorsalis*): 2 birds were noted on the way to Ndotu.

Northern Fiscal (*Lanius humeralis*): Seen most often on the journeys out of Arusha city; also seen at the Lark Plains.

White-rumped Shrike (*Eurocephalus ruppelli*): A very abundant, conspicuous bird in Tanzania, seen on at least 6 days.

[Crows, Jays and Magpies: Corvidae](#)

Cape Crow (*Corvus capensis*): Seen around Ngorongoro and in the Serengeti in small numbers.

Pied Crow (*Corvus albus*): Recorded on 5 days, and quite conspicuous around the city of Arusha.

White-necked Raven (*Corvus albicollis*): A single bird was perched on the roof of our lodge on the crater rim at Ngorongoro.

[Tits, Chickadees and Titmice: Paridae](#)

Red-throated Tit (*Melaniparus fringillinus*): A party of 3 was seen in Ndotu; also heard at Lark Plains.

[Larks: Alaudidae](#)

Spike-heeled Lark (*Chersomanes albofasciata*): The rare "Beesley's" form of this species was seen at Lark Plains. 3 individuals were seen. Recent genetic tests have indicated it is a form of this species, and not genetically distinct.

Fischer's Sparrow-Lark (*Eremopterix leucopareia*): Very numerous on this tour, particularly in Ndotu and the Serengeti.

Fawn-colored Lark (*Calendulauda africanoides*): Singles were seen on 5 days.

Rufous-naped Lark (*Mirafra africana*): The most regularly encountered lark species, on at least 8 days.

Flappet Lark (*Mirafra rufocinnamomea*): Recorded on 2 days, at Tarangire and the Serengeti.

Red-capped Lark (*Calandrella cinerea*): Seen at 2 sites, Ngorongoro Crater and Lark Plains.

Somali Short-toed Lark (*Alaudala somalica*): 2 birds were seen on the Ndotu plains.

[Nicators: Nicatoridae](#)

Eastern Nicator (*Nicator gularis*) (H) Heard in the rainforest at Lake Manyara.

[African Warblers: Macrosphenidae](#)

Red-faced Crombec (*Sylvietta whytii*): Singles were seen on 5 days, including in Arusha, Tarangire, and at Lark Plains.

Moustached Grass-Warbler (*Melocichla mentalis*): Only recorded on the first day, at Arusha NP.

[Cisticolas and Allies: Cisticolidae](#)

Green-backed Camaroptera (*Camaroptera brachyura*): One of the most regular sounds of the tour, recorded near daily.

Gray Wren-Warbler (*Calamonastes simplex*) (H) Several calling birds could not be located in our short trip to Lark Plains.

Buff-bellied warbler (*Phyllolais pulchella*): Recorded at many sites, including in Tarangire and Ndotu.

Bar-throated Apalis (*Apalis thoracica*): One was found in our hotel grounds at Ngorongoro.

Yellow-breasted Apalis (*Apalis flavida*): Seen on at least 3 days (Arusha, Tarangire and Serengeti).

Brown-headed Apalis (*Apalis alticola*): 1 was seen in the montane forest at Arusha NP.

Karamoja Apalis (*Apalis karamojae*): Two groups of 7 birds were seen in the western Serengeti.

Tawny-flanked Prinia (*Prinia subflava*): Sightings scattered throughout (e.g., Arusha, Tarangire, Lake Manyara).

Red-fronted Prinia (*Prinia rufifrons*): 3 birds were seen in scrubby areas on Lark Plains.

Gray-capped Warbler (*Eminia lepida*): A pair was seen along the drive to the crater floor at Ngorongoro.

Singing Cisticola (*Cisticola cantans*): A few were seen at Arusha NP.

Trilling Cisticola (*Cisticola woosnami*) (H) Recorded at Arusha NP.

Hunter's Cisticola (*Cisticola hunteri*): Good looks at a pair on the crater rim at Ngorongoro.

Rock-loving Cisticola (*Cisticola aberrans*): A single bird was seen in our camp just outside Serengeti NP.

Rattling Cisticola (*Cisticola chiniana*): One of the most widespread cisticolas, recorded on at least 7 days.

Winding Cisticola (*Cisticola marginatus*): Recorded in several sites, including Tarangire and in the Serengeti.

Croaking Cisticola (*Cisticola natalensis*): Recorded at a few sites, including Tarangire and in the Serengeti.

Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*): A couple were seen in Tarangire.

Desert Cisticola (*Cisticola aridulus*) (H): Recorded in Tarangire.

Pectoral-patch Cisticola (*Cisticola brunnescens*): 1 was seen on the crater floor at Ngorongoro.

[Swallows: Hirundidae](#)

Plain Martin (*Riparia paludicola*): Recorded at 3 sites, Arusha, Ngorongoro and at Gibb's Farm.

Rock Martin (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*): A couple of nesting pairs were seen at camps, en-route to Ndotu and in the Serengeti.

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*): Recorded at least twice, in Arusha and Ngorongoro.

Wire-tailed Swallow (*Hirundo smithii*): Regularly seen around camps in the Serengeti.

Red-rumped Swallow (*Cecropis daurica*): Scattered sightings throughout (on 6 days).

Lesser Striped Swallow (*Cecropis abyssinica*): Recorded at 3 sites, being most conspicuous around camps in the Serengeti.

Mosque Swallow (*Cecropis senegalensis*): Seen on at least 2 days (Tarangire and in the Serengeti).

Black Sawwing (*Psalidoprocne pristoptera*): A few were flying around the entrance of Arusha NP.

[Bulbuls: Pycnonotidae](#)

Stripe-cheeked Greenbul (*Arizelocichla milanjensis*): 1 was seen in Arusha NP.

Yellow-bellied Greenbul (*Chlorocichla flaviventris*): 1 was at our lunch camp in Lake Manyara.

Common Bulbul (*Pycnonotus barbatus*): An abundant bird in Tanzania, recorded on at least 7 days.

[Leaf-Warblers: Phylloscopidae](#)

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*): A single was seen in Tarangire.

[Sylviid Warblers, Parrotbills, and Allies: Sylviidae](#)

Banded Parisoma (*Curruca boehmi*): Recorded at Tarangire and Nduu.

Brown Parisoma (*Curruca lugens*): 2 were seen in a stand of acacias in the highlands in the Ngorongoro area.

[White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies: Zosteropidae](#)

Mbulu White-eye (*Zosterops mbuluensis*): Several were seen in highland forest on the crater rim at Ngorongoro.

Kilimanjaro White-eye (*Zosterops eurycricotus*): This broad-ringed white-eye was seen in montane forest in Arusha NP.

[Laughingthrushes and Allies: Leiothrichidae](#)

Rufous Chatterer (*Turdoides rubiginosa*): 3 different groups were seen in Nduu.

Arrow-marked Babbler (*Turdoides jardineii*): Just a single group were found in the Serengeti.

Black-lored Babbler (*Turdoides sharpei*): 4 groups were seen on 4 days (Nduu and the Serengeti).

Northern Pied-Babbler (*Turdoides hypoleuca*): 2 groups were seen in Tarangire and a single group in Nduu.

[Oxpeckers: Buphagidae](#)

Red-billed Oxpecker (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*): Only recorded in Arusha NP, where around 10 birds were seen.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker (*Buphagus africanus*): Recorded on at least 5 days (Tarangire, Nduu & Serengeti).

[Starlings: Sturnidae](#)

Wattled Starling (*Creatophora cinerea*): Recorded on 4 days, with big numbers in the Serengeti.

Red-winged Starling (*Onychognathus morio*): A group was seen around our highland lodge at Ngorongoro.

Hildebrandt's Starling (*Lamprotornis hildebrandti*): Recorded at Nduu and in Serengeti, with the most at the latter site.

Rüppell's Starling (*Lamprotornis purpuroptera*): Recorded on 2 days in the Serengeti, most numerous in the western part.

Ashy Starling (*Lamprotornis unicolor*): A key species at Tarangire, where they were conspicuous on all 3 days there.

Superb Starling (*Lamprotornis superbus*): The most abundant starling and one of the most abundant birds of the tour, recorded on 10 days, and numbering in their hundreds on some of these.

Fischer's Starling (*Lamprotornis fischeri*): Dozens were seen at Lark Plains.

[Old World Flycatchers: Muscicapidae](#)

African Dusky Flycatcher (*Muscicapa adusta*): A handful were seen on the first day in Arusha NP.

African Gray Flycatcher (*Bradornis microrhynchus*): Recorded on 3 days (Tarangire, Serengeti & Lark Plains).

Silverbird (*Melaenornis semipartitus*): A handsome flycatcher seen on at least 6 days (e.g., Tarangire, Nduu, Serengeti).

White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher (*Melaenornis fischeri*): Recorded at 3 highland sites (Arusha, Ngorongoro & Gibb's Farm).

Red-backed Scrub-Robin (*Cercotrichas leucophrys*): Recorded on at least 5 days.

Cape Robin-Chat (*Cossypha caffra*): Some good looks at Arusha NP and at our highland lodge in Ngorongoro.

Rüppell's Robin-Chat (*Cossypha semirufa*): 1 was seen in Arusha NP and another in our hotel close to there.

White-browed Robin-Chat (*Cossypha heuglini*): Seen at Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro and in the Serengeti.

Collared Palm-Thrush (*Cichladusa arquata*): 1 was seen at Lake Manyara.

Spotted Morning-Thrush (*Cichladusa guttata*): Seen twice, at Tarangire and Lake Manyara.

African Stonechat (*Saxicola torquatus*): A few were seen in Arusha NP and on the way to the highlands at Ngorongoro.

Mocking Cliff-Chat (*Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris*): 1 was perched on a cabin at our camp just outside Serengeti NP.

Northern Anteater-Chat (*Myrmecocichla aethiops*): Regularly encountered around Ngorongoro. 1 also in the Serengeti.

Capped Wheatear (*Oenanthe pileata*): Recorded at Ngorongoro, Nduu and Lark Plains.

Familiar Chat (*Oenanthe familiaris*): 1 was noted at our camp just outside Serengeti NP.

Abyssinian Wheatear (*Oenanthe lugubris*): A few were seen on the way down to the crater floor at Ngorongoro.

[Sunbirds and Spiderhunters: Nectarinidae](#)

Collared Sunbird (*Hedydipna collaris*): A few sightings in the highlands, at Arusha NP and around Ngorongoro.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird (*Chalcomitra senegalensis*): Recorded on 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire & Serengeti).

Tacazze Sunbird (*Nectarinia tacazze*): 1 was seen in our lodge garden in Ngorongoro.

Bronze Sunbird (*Nectarinia kilimensis*): Some good looks on the edge of a highland village near Ngorongoro.
Malachite Sunbird (*Nectarinia famosa*): 7 or so were seen in a stand of flowering *Leonotis* in the highlands near Ngorongoro.
Golden-winged Sunbird (*Drepanorhynchus reichenowi*): A few were seen in the highlands in Ngorongoro.
Eastern Double-collared Sunbird (*Cinnyris mediocris*): Regular in our lodge garden in Ngorongoro.
Beautiful Sunbird (*Cinnyris pulchellus*): Recorded on 5 days (Tarangire, Ndotu & Serengeti).
Purple-banded Sunbird (*Cinnyris bifasciatus*): A pair was seen in our camp garden near the Serengeti NP.
Variable Sunbird (*Cinnyris venustus*): A few were seen here and there (e.g., Arusha and Ndotu).

[Weavers and Allies: Ploidae](#)

Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver (*Bubalornis niger*): Commonly encountered in Tarangire and Ndotu in particular, also Serengeti.
White-headed Buffalo-Weaver (*Dinemellia dinemelli*): Recorded on 6 days, being most numerous in Tarangire.
Speckle-fronted Weaver (*Sporopipes frontalis*): Recorded in small numbers on 6 days (Tarangire, Ndotu & Serengeti).
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver (*Plocepasser mahali*): Just a couple were seen on 2 days in Tarangire.
Rufous-tailed Weaver (*Histurgops ruficauda*): Seen on 7 different days (Tarangire, Ngorongoro, Serengeti).
Gray-headed Social-Weaver (*Pseudonigrita arnaudi*): Seen on 2 days inside the Serengeti; numerous around some camps.
Red-headed Weaver (*Anaplectes rubriceps*): A single sighting only, at a lunch stop in Tarangire.
Baglafaecht Weaver (*Ploceus baglafaecht*): A commonly encountered weaver on 6 different days (e.g. Arusha, Ngorongoro).
Black-necked Weaver (*Ploceus nigricollis*): 2 were seen at a lunch stop in Tarangire on one day only.
Taveta Golden-Weaver (*Ploceus castaneiceps*): 5 birds that were seen in the Arusha NP parking lot was the only sighting.
Lesser Masked-Weaver (*Ploceus intermedius*): A breeding colony was observed on 2 days in Serengeti NP.
Vitelline Masked-Weaver (*Ploceus vitellinus*): Some nesting birds were seen in Tarangire and Ndotu (3 days).
Speke's Weaver (*Ploceus spekei*): Some breeding birds were seen in Ngorongoro and Ndotu (2 days only).
Chestnut Weaver (*Ploceus rubiginosus*): Extremely numerous in Tarangire, where more than a 1000 were seen in a single day. Small numbers were also seen in Ndotu.
Golden-backed Weaver (*Ploceus jacksoni*): This gorgeous weaver was seen in small numbers or singly on 4 days (Arusha, Ndotu and Serengeti).
Cardinal Quelea (*Quelea cardinalis*): Good numbers were around; it was seen on 5 days (e.g. Tarangire & Ndotu).
Red-billed Quelea (*Quelea quelea*): Extremely numerous, with 1000s seen in Tarangire and Ndotu (recorded on 5 days).
Southern Red Bishop (*Euplectes orix*): Recorded on 5 days, with the most males seen in Tarangire, but also in the crater.
Black-winged Bishop (*Euplectes hordeaceus*): 4 males were seen on a single day only in Ndotu.
Black Bishop (*Euplectes gierowii*): 2 gorgeous males were seen in Lake Manyara, the only site they were noted.
Yellow-crowned Bishop (*Euplectes afer*): 3 males were seen displaying in Tarangire on 1 day only.
Yellow Bishop (*Euplectes capensis*): Just the one male seen at Arusha NP.
White-winged Widowbird (*Euplectes albonotatus*): Recorded on 3 days of the tour, in Tarangire (25+ in 1 day) and Ndotu.
Red-cowled Widowbird (*Euplectes laticauda*): A few were seen in the crater at Ngorongoro.
Fan-tailed Widowbird (*Euplectes axillaris*): Common in the grassland on the crater floor at Ngorongoro but only seen once away from there in the Serengeti.
Jackson's Widowbird (*Euplectes jacksoni*): Double figures were seen on the crater floor in Ngorongoro (1 day only).
Grosbeak Weaver (*Amblyospiza albifrons*): A few were seen at 2 sites (Arusha NP and Gibb's Farm).

[Waxbills and Allies: Estrildidae](#)

Gray-headed Silverbill (*Spermestes griseicapilla*): A single party were seen in the Serengeti.
Bronze Mannikin (*Spermestes cucullata*): A few were seen at Gibb's Farm, and at our hotel near Arusha NP (on 2 days).
Yellow-bellied Waxbill (*Coccyzygia quartinia*): Recorded on the grounds of our highland lodge above Ngorongoro Crater.
Black-faced Waxbill (*Brunhilda erythronotos*): A couple of singles at Ndotu were our only sightings (on 2 days).
Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*): A few were seen in Arusha NP on our first day only.
Crimson-rumped Waxbill (*Estrilda rhodopyga*): 1 was noted in Ndotu.
Quailfinch (*Ortygospiza atricollis*): A few were seen briefly in Tarangire. Regular in the Serengeti, although most were poor flights views as they flushed off the road. We did, eventually, get a view of some perched ones beside a roadside puddle.
Cut-throat (*Amadina fasciata*): Just one sighting in Ndotu.

Purple Grenadier (*Granatina ianthinogaster*): Noted on at least 5 days (Tarangire, Nduu & Serengeti).

Red-cheeked Cordonbleu (*Uraeginthus bengalus*): Sighted in Tarangire and the Serengeti.

Blue-capped Cordonbleu (*Uraeginthus cyanocephalus*): Recorded in at least Tarangire and Nduu.

Red-billed Firefinch (*Lagonosticta senegala*): Seen in both Tarangire and the Serengeti.

[Indigobirds: Viduidae](#)

Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*): Males were a wonderful, regular feature of the tour (on at least 6 days).

Eastern Paradise-Whydah (*Vidua paradisaea*): A handful were seen on both days in Tarangire.

Steel-blue Whydah (*Vidua hypocherina*): Spectacular males were seen on at least 3 days (Tarangire, Nduu, Serengeti).

Straw-tailed Whydah (*Vidua fischeri*): Another stunning bird, males were noted on at least 4 days.

Village Indigobird (*Vidua chalybeata*): A few were seen in Nduu.

[Old World Sparrows: Passeridae](#)

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*): Noted on at least 2 days, around camps.

Kenya Rufous Sparrow (*Passer rufocinctus*): A few were seen around camps in Nduu and the Serengeti.

Northern Gray-headed Sparrow (*Passer griseus*): Seen at the start of the tour (e.g., around Arusha NP).

Swahili Sparrow (*Passer suahelicus*): Regularly encountered on the last part of the tour (e.g., Serengeti).

Chestnut Sparrow (*Passer eminibey*): Only a few were seen at Tarangire and on the journey to Nduu.

Yellow-spotted Bush Sparrow (*Gymnoris pyrgita*): Noted at least around Tarangire and Nduu.

[Wagtails and Pipits: Motacillidae](#)

Mountain Wagtail (*Motacilla Clara*): A single was seen at Lake Manyara.

African Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla aguimp*): Noted on at least 4 days of the tour.

African Pipit (*Anthus cinnamomeus*): The regular tour pipit, encountered on around half of the days.

Yellow-throated Longclaw (*Macronyx croceus*): A few were seen on 2 different days in the Serengeti.

Pangani Longclaw (*Macronyx aurantiigula*): 2 sightings, in Arusha NP and Lake Manyara.

Rosy-throated Longclaw (*Macronyx ameliae*): Excellent looks in the crater at Ngorongoro; also seen in the Serengeti.

[Finches, Euphonias, and Allies: Fringillidae](#)

Yellow-fronted Canary (*Crithagra mozambica*): Seen around Nduu and the Serengeti.

Southern Citril (*Crithagra hyposticta*): Just noted a couple of times, in Arusha NP and Ngorongoro.

Reichenow's Seedeater (*Crithagra reichenowi*): Noted on at least 3 days (e.g., Tarangire, near Nduu).

White-bellied Canary (*Crithagra dorsostriata*): A few were seen in Nduu (2 days).

Southern Grosbeak-Canary (*Crithagra buchanani*): A couple were seen in scrubby areas of Lark Plains.

Streaky Seedeater (*Crithagra striolata*): Numerous in our highland lodge garden at Ngorongoro.

Thick-billed Seedeater (*Crithagra burtoni*): 1 was found in our highland lodge garden in Ngorongoro.

[Old World Buntings: Emberizidae](#)

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza tahapisi*): 1 was seen in the garden of our camp just outside Serengeti NP.

MAMMALS & OTHER WILDLIFE

Guereza Pied Colobus (*Colobus guereza*): This fantastic monkey, with the outrageous feather duster tail, was seen at Arusha.

Olive Baboon (*Papio anubis*): Big groups were seen at Arusha, Lake Manyara and in the Serengeti.

Vervet Monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*): The bright blue testicles of the males were of some amusement to us! Seen on 5 days.

Blue (Diademed) Monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*): Some good looks in the highland forests in Arusha and Lake Manyara.

Unstriped Ground Squirrel (*Xerus rutilus*): Noted in Tarangire and on Lark Plains.

African (Wolf) Golden Jackal (*Canis lupaster*): Seen twice in the Serengeti.

Black-backed Jackal (*Lupulella mesomelas*): Recorded on 4 occasions. The most notable was the first when a small party seemed to be following something, which turned out to be a Cheetah, which we had all to ourselves.

Bat-eared Fox (*Otocyon megalotis*): We specifically looked for this at Nduu and found a pair.

Spotted Hyaena (*Crocota crocuta*): 1 or 2 were seen on 5 different days, in Tarangire, Nduu, and in the Serengeti.

Common Genet (*Genetta genetta*): The flagship animal of Ndotu Safari Lodge, where they appear at dinnertime each night in the rafters of the main building. Up to three different animals were present on both of our nights there.

Leopard (*Panthera pardus*): Scarce for us. We ended up chasing one successfully in the Serengeti on one of our last days.

Lion (*Panthera leo*): Recorded on 7 days of the tour, and 40 different individuals were seen!

Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*): Seen on 3 different days, twice in the Ndotu area and then finally in the Serengeti. The first single and the last single we had all to ourselves, at extremely close range. The middle sighting was of a group of 4 animals at a recent kill, which even then involved only 3 cars present at the time.

Rock Hyrax (*Procavia capensis*): Seen on at least 3 occasions in Tarangire and the Serengeti.

African Bush Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*): Seen on 8 different days of the tour, being most numerous in Tarangire and the Serengeti (more than 30 seen in a day there).

Plains (Grant's) Zebra (*Equus quagga boehmi*): A numerous and regular animal on the tour, recorded on at least 7 days. On some days hundreds were seen (e.g., around Ndotu, where they were migrating at the time).

Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*): A very local species in Tanzania, 4 were seen in the crater at Ngorongoro.

Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*): Regularly encountered (on at least 6 days), with our best close ups coming in at fusty hippo pools in the Serengeti.

Common Warthog (*Phacochoerus africanus*): Recorded on at least 5 days (Arusha, Tarangire, Serengeti).

Masai Giraffe (*Giraffa tippelskirchi*): Regularly encountered (8 days of the tour), being most numerous in Ndotu, where dozens were seen. We enjoyed watching giraffes being attended by oxpeckers in the Serengeti.

African Buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*): A regularly seen animal (8 days), with some massive herds in particular in Tarangire, where some groups numbered hundreds of animals.

Cape Bushbuck (*Tragelaphus sylvaticus*): Only seen a couple of times, in Arusha and Ngorongoro.

Common Eland (*Taurotragus oryx*): This is the largest antelope in Tanzania and the second largest in the world. Not numerous on the tour, seen in small numbers of 4 days (e.g., Ngorongoro and the Serengeti).

Suni (*Nesotragus moschatus*): This tiny highland antelope was seen just briefly in the montane forest at Arusha NP.

Harvey's Red Duiker (*Cephalophus harveyi*): This gorgeous reddish antelope was seen several times in the highland forest at Arusha NP.

Bohor Reedbuck (*Redunca redunca*): Just the one was seen in the Serengeti.

Kirk's Dikdik (*Madoqua kirkii*): A cute, small antelope seen on at least 7 days, being most numerous in Ndotu and very conspicuous around our camp in Tarangire.

Common Waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*): Recorded on at least 4 days of the tour (e.g., Arusha, Tarangire, Serengeti).

Thompson's Gazelle (*Eudorcas thomsonii*): A numerous antelope, recorded on at least 7 days, with hundreds being seen on the crater floor at Ngorongoro.

Grant's Gazelle (*Nanger granti*): Another commonly encountered antelope, with a hundred or more in Ngorongoro, though seen on at least half of the days of the tour.

Impala (*Aepyceros melampus*): Another numerous antelope, recorded on at least tour 7 days.

Topi (*Damaliscus korrigum*): Only seen in the Serengeti, where small numbers were seen on all 3 days there.

Coke's Hartebeest (Kongoni) (*Alcelaphus buselaphus cokii*): Mostly encountered in the Serengeti, but also in Tarangire and Ngorongoro.

Brindled Gnu (Blue Wildebeest) (*Connochaetes taurinus*): Mainly encountered in and around Ndotu, where they were migrating through at the time in their thousands.

Common Slender Mongoose (*Herpestes sanguineus*): 1 was noted in the Serengeti.

Common Dwarf Mongoose (*Helogale parvula*): Recorded just a couple of times, with a group scuttling in and out of a termite mound in Tarangire, and other were scavenging openly around a camp in the Serengeti.

Leopard Tortoise (*Stigmochelys pardalis*): 1 was seen on the journey to Ndotu.

Mwanza Flat-headed Rock (Spider-man) Agama (*Agama mwanzae*): 1 was seen in the Serengeti.

Nile (Water) Monitor (*Varanus niloticus*): This massive lizard was seen in Tarangire.

Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*): A handful were seen along rivers in the Serengeti.