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Ultimate Wildlife Tours

Trip Report

Tanzania Northern circuit Safari

3rd – 17th June 2013 (15 days)



Trip Report compiled by tour leader Markus Lilje

Report

We started our tour heading into the Arusha NP, which is always interesting as a first reserve in this area as it displays a variety of habitats as well as the species supported by them. After finding a number of animals in a grassy forest clearing, we headed up to the Ngurdoto Crater viewpoint from where we enjoyed a great view of the reed- and forest covered floor of this very impressive caldera. The huge Crowned Eagle made an appearance nearby,



when we surprised it as we drove around a corner – it gave us a great close look before disappearing into the thick vegetation. Other species in the forest included a large troop of Olive Baboon that we could watch nearby, Retz's Helmetshrike, Stripe-faced Greenbul, Harvey's Duiker and the brightly-coloured Hartlaub's Turaco among others. In the more open grasslands and bushy areas we frequently

came across large numbers of Masaai Giraffe, African Buffalo, Waterbuck, Warthog and Bushbuck along more open edges. Interestingly this included 3 albino baboons among a large troop of their more normally coloured brethren. Driving around large saline lakes allowed us close views of huge numbers of Lesser and a few Greater Flamingos taking advantage of the ideal saline water conditions. They were joined after lunch by birds such as Grey Crowned Crane, Yellow Bishop, White-fronted Bee-eater, Cape Teal, Baglaffeht Weaver and Scaly Francolin. A great start to a fascinating tour through Tanzania's northern safari circuit.

After a morning around the gardens of our lodge, where we added species like Mountain Wagtail, Terrestrial Brownbul, Little Grebe and Taveta Weaver, we headed west. Our first new reserve was the Tarangire National Park (NP), that is famed for its many huge Baobab trees and large Elephant numbers that come to the river as the surroundings start to dry out. On the way there we passed



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through some very arid savannah areas, where we walked for a while and watched as a wide variety of birds came down to drink at a drying pool. A few of the many birds we found in this way were Long-tailed Paradise and Pin-tailed Whydahs, Green-winged Pytilia, Blue-capped and Red-cheeked Cordon-bleus, Cut-throat Finch, Lesser Masked Weaver and Red-fronted Barbet.

Our two days inside the park were certainly not disappointing – in addition to the endless vistas and great panoramas we found the huge numbers of African Elephant, for which the park is famous. The Tarangire River is the big attraction for all the species in the dry season, when they come in in huge numbers to quench their thirst. Despite it not yet being quite the dry season we found hundreds of very relaxed behemoths along the roadside every day, allowing us to get a close-up view of their fascinating behaviour. Other species we found here included Masaai Giraffe, Banded, Slender and Dwarf Mongoose that all showed well and numerous other species like Grant's Gazelle, Kirk's Dik-dik, Bat-eared Fox and Common Waterbuck that would prove to be more common later on during the tour.



Birds were here in good numbers too and kept us busy as we recorded large numbers of Great White Pelican visiting the river alongside a variety of herons, Yellow-billed and Marabou Storks, Hamerkop, Water Thick-knee and African Fish Eagle. The woodlands of this great reserve are where the top avian treasures are generally found though and stunning Red-and-yellow Barbet vied with Yellow-collared Lovebird for our attention. Dwarf Bittern was a great addition in the riverbed area and we had wonderful views of the unique and majestic Bateleur and the much smaller Grey Kestrel. Grey-headed Kingfisher is always great to see and Blue-capped and Red-cheeked Cordon-bleus, Superb and Hildebrandt's Starlings and Red-billed Firefinch added a splash of colour to the shrikes, babblers, hornbills, woodpeckers and flycatchers that seemed to be around all the time. Due to the open woodland habitat that dominates this park it is also ideal for ground-living birds that are often very common here and include Yellow-necked and



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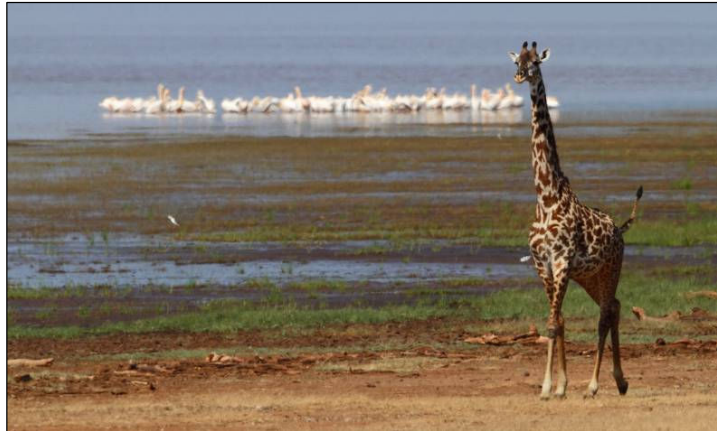
Red-throated Spurrows, Coqui and Crested Francolins and Black-faced Sandgrouse.



Secretarybird always dominate the grasslands if they are around and we found a

few birds despite the very extensive tall grass. White-bellied and Bare-faced Go-away-birds were also common yet special birds of Tarangire's woodlands, letting us know when they were around by uttering their harsh, far-carrying calls. Weavers are well-represented here, with Rufous-tailed Weaver and Red-billed and White-headed Buffalo Weavers being the larger and more visible species.

Next we headed further west to Lake Manyara NP, where the narrow strip of flatter land between the lake itself and the rift valley wall escarpment hosts a wide variety of species that call this area their home. While the park is much smaller than Tarangire, it is interesting too, showing a wide variety of habitats in a limited area and with that a good range of species. The water-level in the lake was the highest it has been for years, so there were fairly small numbers of the sometimes abundant Lesser Flamingos. Abundant fruit in the forest meant good numbers of Blue and Vervet Monkeys, Olive Baboon and Silvery-cheeked and Crowned Hornbills were vying for the best figs and other titbits. Although we frequently were on what seemed to be fresh Lion tracks, we never managed to find them down here. African Elephant again entertained us a few times and we enjoyed good views of Hippopotamus out of the water, African Buffalo running through some shallow water and Thompson's Gazelle and Bohor Reedbuck on short grassland and in the shorter reeds respectively. A few Grey-headed Kingfisher were unusually relaxed and allowed amazing approaches and photos, Saddle-billed Stork and Grey Crowned Crane were the most attractive large birds along the edge of the water and were joined by the smaller Blacksmith,



the water, African Buffalo running through some shallow water and Thompson's Gazelle and Bohor Reedbuck on short grassland and in the shorter reeds respectively. A few Grey-headed Kingfisher were unusually relaxed and allowed amazing approaches and photos, Saddle-billed Stork and Grey Crowned Crane were the most attractive large birds along the edge of the water and were joined by the smaller Blacksmith,

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Long-toed and Spur-winged Lapwings as well as African Jacana on the floating vegetation and the very special Three-banded Courser on drier land. White-headed and d'Arnaud's Barbets, Common Scimitarbill, Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Slate-coloured Boubou, Rufous Chatterer, Banded and Buff-bellied Warblers and White-bellied Canary were some of the other highlights we encountered. Another great bonus for the day was finding a fairly large African Rock Python sunning itself on a pile of driftwood that had been piled up near a stream during the recent flood in the area.

We headed further west again, this time for just a brief visit to the forest on the outer rim of the Ngorongoro Crater around Gibb's Farm. The garden here already has a lot to offer and we found African Golden Oriole, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, Bronzy, Green-headed and Collared Sunbirds, Arrow-marked Babbler, Southern Citril, Streaky and Thick-billed Seedeaters and Tambourine Dove before we even headed into the forest. During a walk in the forest itself we had further great sightings that included Grey-headed Nigrita, Crowned Eagle, Schalow's Turaco, Tropical Boubou, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, Mountain Greenbul, Grey-capped Warbler, African Hill Babbler, Montane White-eye, Baglaffeht and Spectacled Weavers and Brown-headed Apalis.



Two days in the Ngorongoro Crater was the next target for our trip, harbouring one of the highest permanent concentrations of megafauna on the planet. The crater is one of the top big game destinations in the world and always seems to deliver some amazing sightings, despite the very high expectations that most people tend to come here with. The very high density of grazers means that the density of large predators is high too and we had

some amazing encounters with both Lion and Spotted Hyena at close range over the 2 days we spent in the area. This is really the last remaining area in Tanzania, where the chance to see Black Rhino exists and we were rewarded for our searching efforts by getting good views of a single animal that unexpectedly repeatedly charged a group of Spotted Hyena! The sheer numbers of Blue Wildebeest, Plains Zebra, African Buffalo, Grant's and Thompson's Gazelles and Warthog were very impressive throughout the short-grass habitat they mostly prefer and we even had some close views of Hippo grazing in the open and fighting out of the water.

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A few of the birds we observed included many Grey Crowned Crane, huge Kori Bustard, Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, Rosy-throated Longclaw, nesting Wattled Starling, a majestic Martial Eagle shredding a Scrub Hare on the roadside, African Quailfinch, Fan-tailed Widowbird, Hildebrandt's Francolin, Hottentot and Cape Teals, Lesser Flamingo, Northern Anteater Chat, many Rufous-naped and Red-capped Larks, Black-crowned Tchagra and Kenya Sparrow. On the way back to the lodge the road on the rim of the crater passes through some scrub and forest habitat, where we had some stunning views of Golden-winged, Malachite and Tacazze Sunbirds as well as White-starred Robin and Dusky Turtle Dove.



Before getting to the final region for the tour, we made a stop at the world-famous Olduvai Gorge area. Famed for the archaeological riches that were found in the area, this is a must-see visit in this part of the country. After a short explanation and tour of the museum we spent a bit of time in the surrounding dry woodland looking for birds like Purple Grenadier, Southern Grosbeak Canary, Black-faced Waxbill, Black Bishop and Straw-tailed Whydah.



A visit to one of the local Masaai villages also gave us a look into the rather different lives of these semi-nomadic people that live on the outskirts of the vast Serengeti.

Next we headed to the first of two lodges in the Serengeti region, Ndutu in the south, where we stayed for 2 nights. The undoubted highlight in this area was having the opportunity to watch a large pride of lions with many cubs interacting and playing on the edge of a large wetland. The young lions would not just stalk, run and jump on each other, but we could watch how clearly different individual characters were in the group. The same area was also very

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good for birds coming in to drink and we had the pleasure of watching hundreds of Fisher's Lovebird, sandgrouse and a variety of smaller birds. When we watched a herd of African Buffalo walk through the same wetland they even flushed a number of Marsh Owl that are usually not easy to find in their moist and extensive habitat. Around the lodge itself there was a lot of activity with a huge variety of species coming into the small drinking pool that provided an opportunity for the birds to quench their thirst and have a quick bath in the otherwise very dry conditions. Verreaux's Eagle-Owl also gave some great views, where we first heard it and then found it in a large tree close to the road.



We crossed over the vast and seemingly endless short-grass plains of the southern Serengeti to head into the Seronera area, the final area we spent time in during this tour. We were fortunate to bump into the amazing extensive herds of zebra and wildebeest that make up the famous migration, on every day in this area. We spent much time with these constantly moving and calling herds and were particularly interested in their panicked movements when they went to drink. This central area of the national park is far more wooded than the open south and is inhabited by a variety of smaller and larger animals that included African Elephant, Kirk's Dik-dik, Black-backed Jackal, Spotted Hyena and Topi. This is also known as being one of the best places in the park for good Leopard

sightings and we were certainly not disappointed with a female animal giving us amazing and repeated views with her 2 cubs. Over the days we had here, we watched them interact with each other, climb up and down trees and eat and fight with the prey they had stored up in same large *Acacia* trees. Birds are also plentiful in this area, a few of the species that showed well included



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Goliath Heron, 5 species of vulture, Hartlaub's and White-bellied Bustards, Greater Painted Snipe, Temminck's Courser, Purple Roller, Tanzania Red-billed Hornbill, Mosque Swallow, Red-faced Crombec, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Black-lored Babbler, White-headed Buffalo Weaver, Green-winged Pytilia, Usambiro Barbet and the lovely and scarce Grey-headed Silverbill. Around our lodge itself there were a number of very interesting species too, many allowing very close approaches including Marico Sunbird, Yellow-spotted and Rock Hyrax as well as Mwanza Flat-headed Agama.

At the end of the time in the Serengeti we took a flight back to Arusha, where we had some time in town, where we could study some artwork as well as think about some of the great experiences we had over the last weeks. All in all we had some great sightings and huge variety of species in this, one of the world's great remaining wildlife hotspots.

Annotated List of Mammal Species seen

Taxonomy and nomenclature follows 'The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals' by Jonathan Kingdon, Academic Press, 1997.

Large-winged Bats Megadermatidae

Yellow-winged Bat

Lavia frons

A distinctive bat that was seen at lunch in Tarangire, where a drongo chased it and at the entrance to the Serengeti NP.

Colobid Monkeys Colobidae

Guereza (Black-and-white) Colobus

Colobus guereza

A very striking species that was seen well in Mt Kenya's forest and once in Lake Nakuru NP.

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Olive Baboon

Papio anubis

Often seen in large troops, we saw them throughout the tour, almost daily, except in Amboseli NP. Always great to watch as they are usually quite active or there is something interesting going on.

Blue Monkey

Cercopithecus nictitans

A single animal was seen on the day in the Ngorongoro Crater, before we had much better views of the many animals in the forest in Lake Manyara NP.

Vervet Monkey

Cercopithecus aethiops

Seen almost every day of the tour.

Galagos Galagonidae

Senegal Galago (Lesser Bushbaby)

Galago senegalensis

Heard at night from our lodge on the slopes of Mt Kenya.

Hares Leporidae

African Savanna Hare

Lepus victoriae

Seen at night at our lodge on the slopes of Mt Kenya as well as at other occasions during the Kenya section of the tour.

Squirrels Sciuridae

Unstriped Ground Squirrel

Xerus rutilus

This species was seen daily in Tarangire NP as well as in Shaba / Buffalo Springs.

Ochre Bush Squirrel

Paraxerus ochraceus

A few were seen very well in Tarangire NP.

Rats & Mice Muridae

African Grass Rat

Arvicanthis niloticus

We saw them easily at Nabi Hill Gate in the Serengeti.

Dogs & Allies Canidae

Bat-eared Fox

Otocyon megalotus

We had a total of 10 animals over 3 days in the Serengeti, where they were seen in open grassland.

Golden Jackal

Canis aureus

Surprisingly we only had single animals during drives to and from the Serengeti, where they like the very open conditions.

Black-backed Jackal

Canis mesomelas

A widespread species in Africa, seen in Tarangire NP, the Ngorongoro Crater, the Serengeti and Amboseli reserves.

Mongoose Herpestidae

Slender Mongoose

Herpestes sanguinea

Seen in Tarangire NP, in the Serengeti and Shaba NR in the north.

Dwarf Mongoose

Helogale parvula

A very cute little creature, we had great views of a number of colonies in Tarangire and Serengeti NPs.

Banded Mongoose

Mungos mungo

This communal species was seen in Tarangire and the Serengeti NP, including some close views.

White-tailed Mongoose

Ichneumia albicauda

This large nocturnal mongoose was seen on the road in the early morning near Ndutu lodge.

Hyaenas Hyenidae

Spotted Hyena

Crocuta crocuta

Very large numbers were seen in the Ngorongoro Crater, with others in the Serengeti, Amboseli, Mount Kenya and 1 in Lake Nakuru NP.

Aardwolf

Proteles cristatus

A very scarce animal in the Serengeti area, partly because it is mostly nocturnal, we had very close views of a resting animal in the Ndutu area, near the Large Swamp.

Genets & Civets Viverridae

Small-spotted (Common) Genet *Genetta genetta*

One of these animals was seen very well under the floodlights at our lodge in Buffalo Springs.

Cats Felidae

Lion *Panthera leo*

The “king of the jungle” was seen on 7 days during the tour, including good numbers in the Ngorongoro Crater with others in Tarangire NP, the Serengeti, where we had a male and female climb into a tree for a rest, and a single lioness with 2 cubs in Buffalo Springs.

Leopard *Panthera pardus*

A gorgeous creature, on the first full day in the Serengeti we had an amazing female with 2 cubs very close to the car, and found the same group with a young Wildebeest up a tree 2 days later.

Hyraxes Procavidae

Rock Hyrax *Procavia capensis*

In the central Serengeti rocky areas, this species lives alongside the following one, this species being browner and larger.

Yellow-spotted Hyrax *Heterohyrax brucei*

Common around our lodge in Tarangire, as well as on koppies in the Serengeti.

Tree Hyrax *Heterohyrax arboreus*

One at least was heard giving their high-pitched screech on Mt Kenya.

Elephants Elephantidae

African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*

We saw a very large number of these incredible creatures on this tour in both Tanzania and Kenya, with largest herds probably seen in Tarangire NP and along the Ewaso Nyiro river.

Horses Equidae

Plain's (Common) Zebra *Equus quagga*

Common at most savanna parks, with astonishing numbers in the Ngorongoro and Serengeti areas.

Rhinoceroses Rhinocerotidae

Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*

We had the fairly usual distant views of this endangered mammal in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibious*

Another huge mammal, we saw them well in the Ngorongoro Crater, big numbers in the Serengeti and then finally in Amboseli NP.

Pigs Suidae

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Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

We saw this species frequently throughout the tour, many in Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti.

Giraffes Giraffidae

Maasai Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis tippelskirchi

Seen almost daily in Tanzania as well as Amboseli NP, where it is the only occurring giraffe race.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

Thomson's Gazelle

Gazella thomsonii

These delicate antelope were seen in Ngorongoro Crater, the Serengeti, Amboseli and Lake Nakuru.

Grant's Gazelle

Gazella granti

Seen at a variety of similar savanna sites as the smaller previous species, but this was also in the drier parts of the northern Kenyan reserves, where it was common on the abundant grasslands.

Steenbok

Raphicerus campestris

Fairly commonly encountered in Tanzania's woodland reserves, it overlaps with the previous species in the drier northern reserves.

Kirk's Dik-dik

Madoqua kirkii

Fairly commonly encountered in Tanzania's woodland reserves, it overlaps with the previous species in the drier northern reserves.

Suni

Neotragus moschatus kirchenpaueri

These tiny antelope were seen near our lodge at Mt Kenya.

African Buffalo

Syncerus caffer

Recorded at most savanna parks. We got extended views of this species at Mt Kenya, where good numbers utilised the waterhole in front of our accommodations.

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

The first records were in the Crater and in Lake Manyara's forest, with huge numbers at the waterhole at our Mt. Kenya lodge, particularly at night.

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

The largest antelope, we had views of about 9 birds in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Bohor Reedbuck

Redunca redunca

With the grass everywhere very long, we only saw a few of these antelope: Ngorongoro, Serengeti, Amboseli and Lake Nakuru NP.

Common Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus ellipsiprymnus

We saw them in scattered parks (i.e. Tarangire, Amboseli, northern Kenyan dry country reserves).

Defassa Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus defassa

Good views of these antelope in Mt Kenya (where there were some tiny offspring) and Lake Nakuru.

Beisa Oryx

Oryx gazella beisa

This elegant species was seen in the dry northern reserves of Shaba, Samburu and Buffalo Springs.

Coke's Hartebeest (Kongoni)

Alcelaphus buselaphus cokei

Seen on 6 consecutive days in Tanzania: in the Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti NP.

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Blue Wildebeest

Connochaetes taurinus

Very large numbers were seen in the southern and central Serengeti, where they were spread over most of the visible grassland at some points. Amazingly they seemed to follow us north and we saw them every day in the park, often mixed with zebra and followed by vultures!

Topi (Tsessebe)

Damaliscus lunatus

These swift, long distance runners were seen very well in the Serengeti.

Impala

Aepyceros melampus

Widespread, and seen in a variety of savanna woodland areas.

Harvey's Duiker

Cephalophus harveyi

This is an uncommon species – we had single animals on 2 occasions in Mt. Kenya NP.

Annotated List of Bird Species seen

Taxonomy used is based on: Gill, F. and M.Wright. 2006. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Notes indicate differences with the Clements Taxonomy.

Ostriches Struthionidae

Common Ostrich

Struthio camelus

First seen in Tarangire, with multiple sightings and great views on all days after that.

Guineafowl Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Recorded frequently. A widespread African savanna species.

Francolins & Quails Phasianidae

Coqui Francolin

Peliperdix coqui

We had good views of a few birds in savannah in Tarangire and Ndutu.

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

This bantam-like francolin was recorded in woodland in Tarangire NP.

Scaly Francolin

Pternistis hildebrandti

Seen very well in Arusha NP, where we had 8 birds.

Hildebrandt's Francolin

Pternistis hildebrandti

After a first bird was seen calling in Tarangire NP, we had a number of other birds around the Ngorongoro Crater area.

Yellow-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis leucoscepus

Commonly seen in Tarangire NP.

Grey-breasted Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis rufopictus

A Serengeti endemic, where we saw them very well daily.

Red-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis afer

Seen daily and in good numbers in Tarangire NP.

Harlequin Quail

Coturnix delegorguei

This is a nomadic species that irrupts in areas after rain – seen briefly a few times in good areas.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

A pair was seen in Lake Manyara NP.

Fulvous Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna bicolor

2 birds were seen well in flight in one of the Ngorongoro Crater's wetlands.

White-backed Duck

Thalassornis leuconotus

A single bird fairly distant on a lake in Arusha NP.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

After one bird was seen in flight in Arusha we had a number of others feasting on seeds in the Crater.

Knob-billed Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

A single bird was seen in flight in Tarangire NP.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

The most common waterbird of the tour – seen almost daily.

Cape Teal

Anas capensis

Common on the saline lakes in Arusha NP, smaller numbers in the Crater and Ndutu areas.

African Black Duck

Anas sparsa

After being seen on the arrival day near Arusha, we had another pair well in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Red-billed Teal (Duck)

Anas erythrorhyncha

A few birds were seen in the Crater and in the Ndutu area.

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

Small numbers were seen on both days in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Southern Pochard

Netta erythrophthalma

Around 12 birds were seen on a large lake in Arusha NP.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Seen at the lake at our first accommodation near Arusha NP.

Black-necked (Eared) Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

There were a lot of grebes on Lake Ndutu, at least some of these were of this species.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopus ruber

Good numbers were recorded in the Ngorongoro Crater after we had a few birds in Arusha NP.

Lesser Flamingo

Phoenicopus minor

We enjoyed some close views in the Crater after getting many hundred in the salty lakes of Arusha NP.

Storks Ciconiidae

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

A very widespread species in Tanzania, where it was recorded in Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs as well as in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

This bird was seen on 2 days along the Tarangire river and then 4 birds were seen in Lake Manyara NP.

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Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumeniferus

This huge, impressive bird was seen at various localities during the tour, mainly in Tarangire NP.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

African Sacred Ibis

Threskiornis aethiopicus

Another wetland associated bird that was seen at various waterbodies, many at Lake Manyara.

Hadada Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

A few scattered sightings, especially in the Arusha area and at Lake Manyara.

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

A large distant flock and a few closer birds were seen at Lake Manyara wetlands.

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba

God numbers were seen at wetlands in Lake Manyara, a few scattered elsewhere.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

A single bird was seen slwpping in the sedges at Ngorongoro Hippo pool.

Striated (Green-backed) Heron

Butorides striatus

One bird showed along a forest stream in Lake Manyara NP.

Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

After we had a single bird near our Arusha lodge, we recorded a few more feeding on the edge of Lake Manyara.

Rufous-bellied Heron

Ardeola rufiventris

A pair of bird was seen well when they flew up from a small patch of reeds near the Tarangire river, another was seen on the next day.

Western Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Commonly recorded on tour east of the Serengeti system.

Note: Clements does not yet recognise the split of the Cattle Egret complex.

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

This bird was commonly seen on the tour near wetlands.

Black-headed Heron

Ardea melanocephala

Commonly recorded in suitable open-country habitat, a small breeding colony in central Serengeti.

Goliath Heron

Ardea goliath

The world's biggest heron, a single was seen very well in Serengeti NP.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

A single bird flew high overhead in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Great Egret

Ardea alba

Scattered sightings in Tarangire, Manyara and the Ngorongoro Crater.

Intermediate Egret

Egretta intermedia

A single bird was seen in flooded grasslands in Arusha NP.

Black Heron

Egretta ardesiaca

A few distant birds were seen, mainly in flight, at the Lake Manyara NP Hippo pools.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Common along the Tarangire river and the Lake Manyara wetlands, a few in

the Crater.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

Belonging to a monotypic African family, recorded frequently, especially during the first days of the tour around wetlands.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

A huge waterbird, it was seen in large numbers in Tarangire NP, at Lake Manyara and the Ngorongoro Crater.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelacanus rufescens

4 birds were seen on Lake Manyara's shoreline.

Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

White-breasted Cormorant

Phalacrocorax lucidus

2 birds were scoped at the Hippo pools in Lake Manyara.

Note: Clements still regards this species as part of the Great Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo).

Secretarybird Sagittariidae

Secretarybird

Sagittarius serpentarius

This fascinating bird was seen on about half the days on tour, with huge number being encountered in the grasslands of the southern Serengeti region in particular – this bizarre monotypic birds with their interesting hunting technique are always a popular and sought-after species.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae

Black-winged(-shouldered) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Abundant in the Serengeti's savanna and grassland areas, a few elsewhere.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Black-shouldered Kite. Some authorities lump this species with Australian Kite E. axillaris and the American E. leucurus White-tailed Kite.

Yellow-billed Kite

Milvus aegyptius

A few birds sighted near Tarangire, Lake manyara and at a picnic site in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Note: Some authorities split this complex into Black Kite M. migrans and Yellow-billed Kite M. aegyptius. The IOC now recognises this split.

African Fish Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

We saw them at various wetland sites on 6 days, highest numbers in Tarangire NP. This eagle's call is one of the characteristic and memorable sounds of the waterways of wild Africa.

Hooded Vulture

Necrosyrtes monachus

This small vulture was seen in the Crater and then very well in the Serengeti NP.

White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

We recorded good numbers of this species in savanna areas throughout much of the tour.

Rüppell's Vulture (Griffon)

Gyps rueppellii

The first bird was seen in Tarangire NP, with a few others in the Serengeti.

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White-headed Vulture

Trigonoceps occipitalis

Seen well in flight in Tarangire NP and very well perched up in the Serengeti.

Lappet-faced Vulture

Torgos tracheliotus

The largest vulture in Sub-Saharan Africa, we recorded them in fairly good numbers, particularly in the Crater and around various parts of the Serengeti.

Black-chested(-breasted) Snake Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

Small numbers were seen on many days of the tour – a very smart and distinctive species.

Brown Snake Eagle

Circaetus cinereus

Much less commonly seen than the previous species, although we saw them very well in Tarangire NP.

Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

A characteristic raptor of the African savanna, we saw them on many occasions in suitable savannah habitat during the tour.

African Marsh Harrier

Circus ranivorus

We had disappointingly distant views of this species over grasslands in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Montagu's Harrier

Circus pygargus

A very late-staying young male was seen over grassland in Amboseli NP.

African Harrier-Hawk

Polyboroides typus

This species, also known as the Gymnogone, was seen on two days in the Ndutu area.

Dark Chanting Goshawk

Melierax metabates

An inhabitant of moister savanna than the following species, we saw a few birds in the Serengeti area.

Eastern Chanting Goshawk

Melierax poliopterus

2 birds were seen in both Tarangire NP as well as on the way to the Serengeti.

Gabar Goshawk

Micronisus gabar

A widespread small raptor, it was seen in a number of reserves, including some melanistic individuals in the Ndutu area.

African Goshawk

Accipiter tachiro

A forest raptor that was seen in flight over the lodge at Arusha and in Arusha NP.

Shikra

Accipiter badius

A single bird showed briefly, flying through Tarangire's woodland.

Little Sparrowhawk

Accipiter minullus

We saw an adult and a juvenile bird on one day in the Tarangire area.

Augur Buzzard

Buteo augur

A common inhabitant of higher altitudes, but also seen at other sites.

Tawny Eagle

Aquila rapax

The common brown eagle in most savannah areas, seen in good numbers.

African Hawk-Eagle

Hieraaetus spilogaster

We had lovely birds in flight in Tarangire NP and Ndutu.

Martial Eagle

Polemaetus bellicosus

One of the memorable moments of the tour was having one of these powerful eagles tear apart a Scrub Hare just 5m from the vehicle.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

A number of these very impressive birds were seen, mainly in Ndutu and Serengeti areas.

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Crowned (Hawk-)Eagle

Stephanoaetus coronatus

We had an amazing 4 separate sightings in Arusha NP, where 2 perched birds gave fantastic views. Another was seen well in flight over the forest at Gibb's Farm.

Falcons & Kestrels Falconidae

Pygmy Falcon

Polihierax semitorquatus

This tiny raptor was seen on numerous occasions in savanna areas during the tour. This is the smallest raptor on the continent, and uses the nest of the White-headed Buffalo Weaver to nest in in this region.

Common Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

A single bird was seen circling over the Olduvai Gorge area.

Greater Kestrel

Falco rupicoloides

We had a few sightings in the open plains of the southern Serengeti NP, best seen near Ndutu.

Grey Kestrel

Falco ardosiaceus

We were lucky with this species, getting 2 phenomenal views in Tarangire NP.

Lanner Falcon

Falco biarmicus

A big, powerful falcon; seen in Lake Manyara NP very briefly.

Bustards Otididae

Kori Bustard

Ardeotis kori

A contender for heaviest flying bird on earth, we saw fairly good numbers in a number of grassland areas with highest numbers in the crater and the southern Serengeti.

White-bellied Bustard

Eupodotis senegalensis

Seen on a number of occasions in Ndutu and the Serengeti, despite the very tall grass in the area.

Hartlaub's Bustard

Lissotis hartlaubii

2 female birds gave us good views in the grasslands near our lodge in the Serengeti – a very sought-after and tricky species.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

We saw this smart and fairly unshy rallid in wetlands throughout much of the tour.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Seen on the small lake near our accommodations at Arusha.

Red-knobbed Coot

Fulica cristata

A few birds were seen on wetlands in Arusha NP, many more were seen in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Cranes Gruidae

Grey Crowned Crane

Balearica regulorum

Very large numbers of this beautiful bird were seen in the Ngorongoro Crater, smaller numbers in Arusha NP, Lake Manyara and the Serengeti NP.

Thick-knees Burhinidae

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Water Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus vermiculatus

After first distant views in Tarangire NP, we had a very close pair under a bush in Lake Manyara NP.

Spotted Thick-knee

Burhinus capensis

This well-camouflaged and nocturnal species was seen well a few times, most sightings in drier open habitats of the Ndutu area.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

Recorded at open and shallow water sites: Ngorongoro Crater, Lake Manyara and Lemuru ponds were the main sites.

Pied Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

A few birds were seen well, if somewhat distantly around Lake Ndutu.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Long-toed Lapwing

Vanellus crassirostris

We recorded around 6 birds near the Hippo Pool in Lake Manyara NP.

Blacksmith Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus armatus

Regularly recorded on the tour's wetlands.

Spur-winged Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus spinosus

First views in Lake Manyara, 2 more in the Seronera area.

Black-winged Lapwing

Vanellus melanopterus

Seen in the short grasslands as we drove towards Ndutu.

Crowned Lapwing

Vanellus coronatus

Seen almost daily. An open country inhabitant, we had huge numbers near Ndutu.

African Wattled Lapwing

Vanellus senegallus

A single bird showed well in the Seronera area, where it landed close to our vehicle.

Kittlitz's Plover

Charadrius pecuarius

Good numbers in the Ngorongoro Crater and around Lake Ndutu.

Three-banded Plover

Charadrius tricollaris

A small wetland plover, it seen widely along wetland edges during the tour.

Chestnut-banded Plover

Charadrius pallidus

A scarce inhabitant of saline wetland edges – seen at Lake Ndutu.

Jacanas Jacanidae

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

Seen at various well-vegetated wetland sites around Arusha and Lake Manyara.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

A single bird was seen in the open wetland in Lake Manyara NP.

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

A few birds were seen at Lake Manyara, another later in Ndutu's Big Marsh.

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

A single very distant bird was seen on the edge of Lake Magadi in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Courasers & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Temminck's Courser

Cursorius temminckii

We were very lucky to enjoy brief but good views of 2 birds on a burnt area in the Serengeti.

Double-banded Courser

Rhinoptilus africanus

Seen incredibly well in grasslands of Tarangire, Ndutu and the Serengeti.

Note: Clements places this species in a different genus to the IOC nomenclature, namely Smutsornis.

Three-banded Courser

Rhinoptilus cinctus

Another stunning bird – we had a pair sitting out in the open in Lake Manyara NP.

Collared Pratincole

Glareola pratincola

We had very good views of flying and perched birds in Lake Manyara – a very elegant species.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Grey-hooded(headed) Gull

Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus

A few birds were seen first around Lake Manyara in the Ngorongoro and then the Ngorongoro Crater.

Gull-billed Tern

Sterna nilotica

2 birds were seen along the shores of Lake Manyara, another in the Crater.

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybrida

Fairly common along the shorelines in Lake Manyara and the Ngorongoro Crater.

White-winged Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus

A single non-breeding bird was seen at a small lake in the Seronera area.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse

Pterocles exustus

We must have seen around a thousand birds coming to drink at the large marsh in the Ndutu area.

Yellow-throated Sandgrouse

Pterocles gutturalis

Huge numbers came to drink at the same pool as the above species; smaller numbers were encountered in both the Ngorongoro Crater and the central Serengeti.

Black-faced Sandgrouse

Pterocles decoratus

Seen at savanna sites on the tour: many views in Tarangire NP and a few in Ndutu.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae

Speckled Pigeon

Columba guinea

Frequently recorded in small numbers, particularly around our various accommodations.

Dusky Turtle Dove

Streptopelia lugens

A few good views of this highland species were enjoyed at close range around the Ngorongoro Crater.

Mourning Collared (African Mourning) Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

Seen and heard regularly mainly during our time in Ndutu.

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Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

This species was seen in Arusha, Lake Manyara and Gibb's Farm.

Ring-necked Dove

Streptopelia capicola

Recorded virtually daily – huge numbers in Ndutu.

Laughing Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

Another widespread dove that was seen in many of the drier areas we visited.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

A smaller woodland dove, we saw them at a few scattered sites.

Tambourine Dove

Turtur tympanistria

Seen very well at Gibb's Farm after a few showed in Arusha NP.

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

A delicate, long-tailed dove, fairly common in the drier areas.

African Green Pigeon

Treron calva

A single bird was seen well, feasting on figs in Lake Manyara NP, another joined it as it left the tree.

Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

Fischer's Lovebird

Agapornis fischeri

Endemic to the east Africa, this bird provided one of the spectacles of the trip, when dozens of birds came to drink in Ndutu.

Yellow-collared Lovebird

Agapornis personatus

Another east African endemic, we saw them in very good numbers in Tarangire NP.

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot

Poicephalus meyeri

Recorded at Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs and then seen very well in the Serengeti.

Red-bellied (African Orange-bellied) Parrot

Poicephalus rufiventris

We had a few birds in flight in Tarangire.

Turacos Musophagidae

Schalow's Turaco

Tauraco schalowi

This stunning species was seen once when it showed well but briefly during a Gibb's Farm walk.

Hartlaub's Turaco

Tauraco hartlaubi

Another beauty that was seen jumping and flying in large trees in Arusha NP.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides personatus

Seen daily in Tarangire and on a few occasions in the Serengeti NP.

White-bellied Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides leucogaster

A few birds showed well and around Tarangire NP.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

Commonly recorded on the tour, in bushy areas and tall grassland.

Black Coucal

Centropus grillii

A single bird was seen in tall grasslands of the central Serengeti, losing its all black breeding plumage.

Great Spotted Cuckoo

Clamator glandarius

A few possibly overwintering or even breeding birds were seen very well in Ndutu's woodlands.

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Diderick Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx caprius

We had views near Tarangire and in Lake Manyara NPs as well as in Ndutu.

Red-chested Cuckoo

Cuculus solitarius

A brief view of this bird was had in Tarangire NP, while it proved frustratingly close but invisible on a number of other occasions, when its call was often heard.

African Cuckoo

Cuculus gularis

We had good views of this bird a few times in Ndutu.

Owls Strigidae

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl

Bubo lacteus

Seen very well in Ndutu, where one bird was very close and a second only showed in flight.

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

The common small owlet in the area was seen well in Tarangire NP, Lake Manyara and Ndutu.

Marsh Owl

Asio capensis

A big surprise was seeing a few of these at the large swamp in Ndutu.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae

Slender-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus clarus

Heard only on an early morning in Ndutu.

Swifts Apodidae

Scarce Swift

Telacanthura ussheri

A single bird was seen over Lake Manyara NP.

Mottled Spinetail

Telacanthura ussheri

This bird breeds in Baobab trees and was seen in Tarangire NP.

African Palm Swift

Tachymarptis melba

Fairly commonly seen in Tarangire NP and Lake Manyara, also later in Seronera.

Alpine Swift

Tachymarptis aequatorialis

A huge swift, seen in a large flock in Tarangire NP where they circled over our lodge.

Mottled Swift

Tachymarptis aequatorialis

Another huge swift, a few of which were seen on 2 days over our lunch area in the Tarangire NP.

African Black Swift

Apus barbatus

Seen in the late afternoon from our lodge overlooking Lake Manyara.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

The commonest swift on tour, seen almost daily.

White-rumped Swift

Apus caffer

A few birds were encountered in Tarangire NP, a few others near the Crater.

Mousebirds Coliidae

Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

Widespread and seen on most days of the tour.

Rollers Coraciidae

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Purple (Rufous-crowned) Roller *Coracias naevia*

A single bird was seen in the Seronera area of the Serengeti.

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata*

This colourful bird was seen almost daily in savanna areas, sometimes in good numbers – one of the favourite species of the whole tour!

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*

Fantastic views were had of this striking bird at a number of sites during the first half of the tour.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris*

Seen well in Arusha NP and at our Arusha lodge.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*

3 single birds were seen in Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*

A beautiful kingfisher with a lovely call, it was seen during our time in Tarangire NP.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*

A single stunning bird was seen in some sedges near the Tarangire river.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta*

Glimpsed very briefly as it flew off its perch in some Lake Manyara NP thickets.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

A few birds were seen along the Tarangire River during our first few days of the trip.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

We saw this delightful bird at a number of woodland sites, almost daily throughout the tour.

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates*

A montane forest inhabitant, we saw it very well at Gibb's Farm and on the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*

Lovely views of this multi-coloured species were enjoyed in Arusha NP.

Hoopoes Upupidae

African (Eurasian) Hoopoe *Upupa africana*

This interesting and very popular species was seen on many occasions in woodland sites.

Wood Hoopoes Phoeniculidae

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*

Fairly commonly recorded at a few different locations, with the best sighting probably one in Lake Manyara NP.

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

2 birds were seen very well in Lake Manyara, where they were seen feeding in an *Acacia* for an extended period.

Abyssinian Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus minor*

A very good-looking species, seen in the Olduvai Gorge area and Ndutu.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Crowned Hornbill

Tockus alboterminatus

We had good views of around 15 birds during our full day in the Lake Manyara NP.

African Grey Hornbill

Tockus nasutus

Common in Tarangire, Ndutu and Serengeti NP.

Northern Red-billed Hornbill

Tockus erythrorhynchus

We saw this species daily and well in Tarangire NP.

Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill

Tockus rauhae

This fairly recently split species, was seen well; a very range-restricted bird in the Serengeti.

Von der Decken's Hornbill

Tockus deckeni

Encountered daily in Tarangire NP, with fewer views in Serengeti NP and Ndutu.

Silvery-cheeked Hornbill

Bycanistes brevis

An impressive large bird, seen around Arusha and very well in the figs in Lake Manyara NP.

Note: Clements places this species in a different genus to the IOC nomenclature, namely Ceratogymna.

Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae

Southern Ground Hornbill

Bucorvus leadbeateri

This regal bird was well seen in Tarangire NP on a few occasions, with more views in Lake Manyara NP, Ndutu and the Serengeti NP.

African Barbets Lybiidae

White-eared Barbet

Stactolaema leucotis

Seen well in Arusha NP as well as in the garden of our lodge nearby.

Red-fronted Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus pusillus

We saw this species briefly in the garden near Lake Manyara and in the central Serengeti NP.

Red-fronted Barbet

Tricholaema diademata

After a first views near a small pool of water north of Tarangire NP, we had a few more in Ndutu, where we had great views.

Spot-flanked Barbet

Tricholaema lacrymosa

A few birds gave excellent views in the forest edge in Arusha NP.

White-headed Barbet

Lybius leucocephalus

We were fortunate to get good views of this species in Lake Manyara NP as well as in the Crater and the Serengeti NP.

Red-and-yellow Barbet

Trachyphonus erythrocephalus

This very colourful bird was seen very well in Tarangire NP and later in Lake Manyara.

D'Arnaud's Barbet

Trachyphonus darnaudii

This bird was seen well in Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs as well as the Serengeti – see note below.

NOTE: The drabber sub-species, Usambiro Barbet (T. d. usambiro), that we recorded in the Serengeti is sometimes treated as a full species. This is due to larger size, greyer bill, and greenish tone to the head and a darker breast band. IOC does not recognize this split, however Clement's does.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

Nubian Woodpecker

Campethera nubica

A few individuals were seen at scattered locations during the tour – including in Tarangire NP.

Cardinal Woodpecker

Dendropicos fuscescens

This small woodpecker was seen well in Lake Manyara NP, working on *Acacia* trees.

African Grey Woodpecker

Dendropicos goertae

Good views of this species were had throughout much of the tour, mainly around Tarangire NP and the Ndutu area.

Wattle-eyes, Batises & Allies Platysteiridae

Chinspot Batis

Batis molitor

First views on the way to Tarangire at our small pool, with more views at Gibb's Farm and Ndutu.

Helmetshrikes Prionopidae

White-crested Helmetshrike

Prionops plumatus

A flock of around 10 birds showed well in the woodland in Lake Manyara NP.

Retz's Helmetshrike

Prionops retzii

A flock of 7 birds were seen fairly well in the forest at Arusha NP, just after our close Crowned Eagle.

Bushshrikes Malaconotidae

Orange(Sulphur)-breasted Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus

sulfureopectus

Seen in tall *Acacia* woodland in Lake Manyara NP.

Rosy-patched Bushshrike

Telophorus cruentus

We made a roadside stop on the way to Lake Manyara to add this dry-zone bird to the list after it was heard calling.

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

A few birds were seen at scattered locations, first bird on our final morning in Tarangire NP.

Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegala

A single bird showed in the Lerai forest in the Crater.

Black-backed Puffback

Dryoscopus cubla

This species was first seen in Arusha NP, with more views later around Lake Manyara and especially at Gibb's Farm.

Slate-coloured Boubou

Laniarius funebris

First seen in Lake Manyara NP as well as in the Olduvai Gorge area.

Tropical Boubou

Laniarius aethiopicus

First seen in Arusha NP, with additional sightings at Gibb's Farm and in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Brubru

Nilaus afer

A common inhabitant of savanna areas, this lovely shrike was first seen in Tarangire NP, with some very good views in the Serengeti.

Shrikes Laniidae

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Magpie (Long-tailed) Shrike

Urolestes melanoleucus

Commonly recorded especially in Tarangire as well as in Serengeti NP.

NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus to the IOC nomenclature, namely Corvinella.

Northern White-crowned Shrike

Eurocephalus rueppelli

Also commonly recorded during the tour, where we had great views of many birds around Tarangire and the Serengeti system.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is White-rumped Shrike.

Grey-backed Fiscal

Lanius excubitoroides

This is a common species in the Serengeti NP's more open areas.

Long-tailed Fiscal

Lanius cabanisi

Occurs further east of the previous species: Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs.

Taita Fiscal

Lanius dorsalis

This species is a dry country inhabitant, first seen near Olduvai Gorge, also in the Ndutu area.

Northern Fiscal

Lanius humeralis

Widespread, and seen in higher-lying open country throughout much of the tour.

NOTE: Common Fiscal *Lanius collaris* was recently split by IOC into Southern Fiscal *L. collaris* found in southern and south-central Africa, and Northern Fiscal *L. humeralis* (which we saw) found over much of east Africa and across to savannas in west Africa.

Old World Orioles Oriolidae

African Golden Oriole

Oriolus auratus

We had a really great view of this unexpected bonus species as we started our walk in Gibb's Farm.

(African) Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

3 birds were seen – one very close – in Lake Manyara NP's woodlands.

Drongos Dicruridae

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

Widespread and seen at scattered localities throughout much of the trip.

Monarchs Monarchidae

African Paradise Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

This smart species was seen on only a single day, when we had it in Arusha NP.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

Cape (Black) Crow

Corvus capensis

3 birds were seen in the very open short grasslands of the southern Serengeti.

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

Widespread, and seen near human habitation.

White-necked Raven

Corvus albicollis

We had this species more frequently than usual, with views in Arusha NP and on the Ngorongoro Crater rim a few times.

Fairy Flycatchers Stenostiridae

White-tailed Blue Flycatcher

Elminia albicauda

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We enjoyed a few views of this very active and interesting bird near the Gibb's Farm garden.

Tits Paridae

Red-throated Tit

Parus (Melaniparus) fringillinus

Single birds were seen on 2 days – once in Ndutu and then at close range in central Serengeti.

Larks Alaudidae

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafraga africana

Abundant in relatively moist grassland in the Ngorongoro Crater, small numbers later during the tour.

Red-capped Lark

Calandrella cinerea

Great views in Ngorongoro Crater, and then in suitable habitats in the southern Serengeti region.

Fischer's Sparrow-Lark

Eremopterix leucopareia

Very commonly recorded in open country mainly in the west – an unusual and small lark.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Dark-capped Bulbul

Pycnonotus tricolor

We saw them frequently in the east, with much fewer in Serengeti area.

(Eastern) Mountain Greenbul

Andropadus nigriceps

A total of 4 birds were seen in the Gibb's Farm area and the rim of the Crater.

Stripe-faced (cheeked) Greenbul

Andropadus striifacies

A fairly scarce bird that was recorded in Arusha NP, where we had 2 birds.

Yellow-bellied Greenbul

Chlorocichla flaviventris

2 birds were seen at our lodge near Lake Manyara.

Terrestrial Brownbul

Phyllastrephus terrestris

This inhabitant of thick bush and forest was seen twice on the morning we had in the garden of our Arusha lodge.

Martins & Swallows Hirundinidae

Black Saw-wing

Psalidoprocne pristoptera

Recorded in good numbers at scattered forest sites throughout the tour, most in Arusha NP.

Grey-rumped Swallow

Pseudohirundo griseopyga

This was seen well on both days in the grasslands of the Ngorongoro Crater.

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin

Riparia paludicola

This small swallow was first seen in Arusha NP, proved fairly common around many waterbodies.

Banded Martin

Riparia cincta

We recorded around 20 birds over the grasslands in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Wire-tailed Swallow

Hirundo smithii

Commonly recorded around waterbodies throughout much of the tour.

Rock Martin

Ptyonoprogne fuligula

Seen well at a few sites during the tour, such as our Tarangire and Serengeti NPs.

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Lesser Striped Swallow

Cecropis abyssinica

Many birds were seen in the Tarangire area, with smaller numbers elsewhere during the tour.

Mosque Swallow

Cecropis senegalensis

A few of these very large and distinctive swallows were seen on 2 days in the Seronera area.

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica

This is mainly an inhabitant of the higher altitudes, such as on the Ngorongoro Crater rim, but was well seen at a few scattered locations.

South African Cliff Swallow

Petrochelidon rufigula

We were very surprised to find this species flying around the dam in the Seronera area as it has possibly never been recorded in Tanzania previously.

Crombecs, African Warblers Macrosphenidae

Red-faced Crombec

Sylvietta whytii

2 birds were seen on the way to Tarangire NP and then we had some great views in the Seronera area.

Reed Warblers & Allies Acrocephalidae

Lesser Swamp Warbler

Acrocephalus gracilirostris

A few birds were seen in small reedbeds at the Hippo pools inside the Ngorongoro Crater.

Dark-capped Yellow Warbler

Iduna natalensis

A single bird showed very well in tall grass in the Arusha NP.

Grassbirds & Allies Locustellidae

Fan-tailed Grassbird

Schoenicola brevirostra

This usually very shy and skulking bird was seen sitting and calling in the open just after we entered Arusha NP.

Little Rush Warbler

Bradypterus baboecala

Heard and seen briefly in a reedbed at the lake at our Arusha lodge.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Red-faced Cisticola

Cisticola erythrops

Arusha NP and the Ngorongoro Crater provided views of single birds.

Singing Cisticola

Cisticola cantans

A few birds were seen well in Arusha NP.

Trilling Cisticola

Cisticola woosnami

A noisy species, seen well in Arusha NP – heard often there.

Hunter's Cisticola

Cisticola hunteri

3 birds were seen at our lodge on the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chiniana

Common in Tarangire and the Serengeti area.

Winding Cisticola

Cisticola marginatus

Moist grassland and wetland edge in Arusha and Tarangire NPs and the Ngorongoro Crater all provided views of this widespread species.

NOTE: The IOC nomenclature has split this widespread African group into five species. Winding Cisticola (C. galactotes) that we observed is now C. marginatus and occurs in East, Central and West Africa. The other four species are Coastal Cisticola (C. haematocephalus) that occurs in

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coastal East Africa, *Luapula Cisticola* (*C. luapula*) occurring largely in Zambia, Rufous-winged *Cisticola* (*C. galactotes*) of coastal Southern Africa and Ethiopian *Cisticola* (*C. lugubris*) endemic to Ethiopia. Clements does not as yet recognise these splits.

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

At least 3 birds were seen calling distinctly in the taller grass in Tarangire NP.

Pectoral-patch Cisticola

Cisticola brunnescens

Huge numbers of birds were seen in the short grass of the Ngorongoro Crater, numerous others in the southern Serengeti.

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

4 birds were seen in Tarangire NP, with another 2 later in the central Serengeti NP.

Buff-bellied Warbler

Phyllolais pulchella

Best views of this species were in Lake Manyara, where we had 2 birds around a nest during our lunch stop – more were seen in Ndutu and the Serengeti – found in *Acacia* trees.

Yellow-breasted Apalis

Apalis flava

3 birds were seen in the Tarangire NP, with a few more later in Gibb's Farm and Ndutu areas.

Brown-headed Apalis

Apalis alticola

Good views of this species were had around the Ngorongoro Crater rim, including at Gibb's Farm.

Grey-capped Warbler

Eminia lepida

This attractive species was seen during the Gibb's Farm walk.

Grey(Green)-backed Camaroptera

Camaroptera brevicaudata

Seen at many scattered forest edge and woodland sites during the tour.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela

Eremomela icteropygialis

A single bird was seen really well in the Seronera area, when it came in to the owl whistle.

Laughingthrushes Leithrichidae

Rufous Chatterer

Turdoides rubiginosa

Seen in the Lake Manyara area, where we came across 2 flocks in the thickets.

Black-lored Babbler

Turdoides sharpei

A fairly common species in the woodland of Ndutu and the Serengeti NP.

Arrow-marked Babbler

Turdoides jardineii

A widespread species that was seen on one occasion as we arrived at Gibb's Farm.

Northern Pied Babbler

Turdoides hypoleuca

Tarangire NP's woodlands produced many good views of this east African endemic.

Sylvid Babblers Sylviidae

African Hill Babbler

Pseudoalcippe abyssinica

We had good views of 2 birds during our walk in the forest near Gibb's Farm.

Banded Parisoma (Warbler)

Parisoma (Sylvia)

boehmi

A very distinctive bird that was seen in Tarangire and again in Lake Manyara NP.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

Abyssinian White-eye

Zosterops abyssinicus

A dry zone species that was encountered at Olduvai Gorge, where it showed well.

Montane White-eye

Zosterops poliogastrus

A total of around a dozen birds were seen in Arusha NP and at Gibb's Farm.

NOTE: Clements does not split this and the following species, and instead names them Broad-ringed White-eye *Z. poliogastrus*.

Starlings Sturnidae

Wattled Starling

Creatophora cinerea

Common throughout the tour, great views of adults feeding young birds in the Crater.

Greater Blue-eared (Glossy-) Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

Seen in small numbers with best views in Tarangire and Lake Nakuru NPs.

Rüppell's (Glossy-) Starling

Lamprotornis purpuroptera

An inhabitant of moist savanna, we saw them daily in the Serengeti.

Superb Starling

Lamprotornis superbus

This is one of the most common, and yet stunning birds in savanna areas of this region.

Hildebrandt's Starling

Lamprotornis hildebrandti

Another beautiful starling; we saw them in Tarangire NP, the Ngorongoro Crater, Ndutu and the Serengeti NP.

Ashy Starling

Lamprotornis unicolor

Endemic to Tanzania, we saw them in Tarangire NP, where they are very common.

NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus to IOC, namely: *Spreo*.

Red-winged Starling

Onychognathus morio

A few birds were seen around our Tarangire and Lake Manyara lodges.

Waller's Starling

Onychognathus walleri

3 birds were seen fairly briefly in the tall forest of Arusha NP.

Oxpeckers Buphagidae

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

This species was fairly common in the Serengeti area, after a first bird was seen in Tarangire NP.

Red-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus erythrorhynchus

Much more common than the previous species, it was seen at various reserves throughout the tour.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

White-starred Robin

Pogonocichla stellata

We had some superb views of this beauty from the rim road of the Ngorongoro Crater.

Cape Robin-Chat

Cossypha caffra

Recorded on the rim of the Ngorongoro Crater a few times.

Rüppell's Robin-Chat

Cossypha semirufa

A number of these birds were seen in the Gibb's farm area.

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White-browed Robin-Chat

Cossypha heuglini

Occurring in lower-lying areas than the previous species – best views in the central Serengeti.

Spotted Palm (Morning-) Thrush

Cichladusa guttata

A beautiful songster, abundant in Lake Manyara after first views in Tarangire NP.

White-browed (Red-backed) Scrub Robin

Erythropygia

leucophrys

The Serengeti NP produced a single sighting of a calling bird of this widespread species.

African Stonechat

Saxicola torquatus

Seen in scrubby vegetation and open country in Arusha NP and around the Ngorongoro area.

NOTE: Clement's does not recognise this as a full species and lumps it with Eurasian Stonechat.

Capped Wheatear

Oenanthe pileata

Seen in the drier, short-grass areas of the Ngorongoro, and the road into the Serengeti produced many sightings of this species.

Mourning Wheatear

Oenanthe lugens schalowi

2 birds were seen well on the roadside between Lake Manyara and Gibb's Farm.

NOTE: The form we saw is sometimes split as Schalow's Wheatear O. schalowi, however this treatment is not followed by IOC or Clements.

(Northern) Anteater Chat

Myrmecocichla aethiops

Very common in the Ngorongoro Crater, a few others on the drive to Olduvai Gorge.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher

Dioptrornis (Melaenornis) fischeri

A single bird was seen well in the forests of Arusha NP.

NOTE: Clements places this species in a different genus to the IOC nomenclature, namely Melaenornis.

Pale (Mouse-coloured) Flycatcher

Bradornis pallidus

3 birds were seen at the information centre in the Seronera area.

African Grey Flycatcher

Bradornis microrhynchus

Big numbers were seen mainly in the Tarangire area, with others in Ndutu.

Silverbird

Empidonax semipartitus

A very smart bird, first seen in Tarangire NP, later in Ndutu and the Serengeti NP on a number of occasions.

Ashy Flycatcher

Muscicapa caerulescens

Seen well and often in the Gibb's Farm and Ngorongoro Crater rim areas.

African Dusky Flycatcher

Muscicapa adusta

A small, forest associated species, we saw them in Arusha NP and the Ngorongoro Crater forests.

Sunbirds Nectarinidae

Eastern (Kenya) Violet-backed Sunbird

Anthreptes orientalis

A dry country species that was seen once in Lake Manyara NP.

Collared Sunbird

Hedydipna collaris

This dainty little sunbird was commonly seen around the Gibb's Farm garden after a first view in the Arusha area.

Green-headed Sunbird

Cyanomitra verticalis

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A single bird was seen briefly at Gibb's Farm.

Amethyst Sunbird

Chalcomitra amethystina

2 birds showed in Arusha NP on the first day.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Chalcomitra senegalensis

The male is a gorgeous bird; first seen outside Tarangire NP with more later in the drier Ndutu area.

Tacazze Sunbird

Nectarinia tacazze

2 birds were seen feeding around the edges of our lodge on the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Bronzy (Bronze) Sunbird

Nectarinia kilimensis

Seen a few times in the higher parts of the tour including Arusha NP and the Gibb's Farm gardens.

Malachite Sunbird

Nectarinia famosa

We had a number of stunning males on flowers near the top of the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Golden-winged Sunbird

Drepanorhynchus reichenowi

This fabulous species was another of the sunbirds that we saw in scrub on the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Eastern Double-collared Sunbird

Cinnyris mediocris

Relatively common at the Ngorongoro Crater and Gibb's Farm.

Beautiful Sunbird

Cinnyris pulchella

We saw these birds in dry woodland in the Tarangire NP area.

Marico (Mariqua) Sunbird

Cinnyris mariquensis

This bird was seen on 2 days in the central Serengeti NP.

Variable Sunbird

Cinnyris venusta

A bird that occurs in slightly moister and bushy areas than many of the others – often seen on the tour.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

Rufous-tailed Weaver

Hirundo ruficauda

An east African endemic; we saw it daily in good numbers in all of the woodland areas during the tour.

Grey-capped (headed) Social Weaver

Pseudonigrita arnaudi

After we had a single bird drinking in the Ndutu area, they were fairly common in the central Serengeti area later on.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Seen in association with human settlements a few times during the tour.

Kenya (Rufous) Sparrow

Passer rufocinctus

We saw this bird well at scattered locations that included the Ngorongoro Crater, Ndutu and the Seronera area in the Serengeti NP.

NOTE: Some authorities including Clements split this African sparrow into five species. Shelley's Sparrow (P. shelleyi) occurs largely in Ethiopia, Great Sparrow (P. motitensis) occurs in Southern Africa, Kenya Sparrow (P. rufocinctus) occurs in East Africa, Kordofan Sparrow (P. cordofanicus) occurs in Sudan and Socotra Sparrow (P. insularis) which is endemic to Socotra.

Northern Grey-headed Sparrow

Passer griseus

Many were seen at the start of the tour, in the Tarangire NP area in particular.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Gray-headed Sparrow.

Swahili Sparrow

Passer suahelicus

Recorded on a good number of occasions in the Serengeti system, where it takes over from the previous species.

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Chestnut Sparrow

Passer eminibey

There was a waterbody near the road to the north of Tarangire NP – here we had a number of these birds coming in to drink; more in the Ndutu area.

Yellow-spotted Petronia

Gymnoris (Petronia) superciliaris

This bird was seen in small numbers in Lake Manyara NP, where we saw them well in the dry woodlands.

Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver

Bubalornis niger

Recorded commonly at scattered locales throughout the tour, beginning with Tarangire NP and later in Ndutu and the Serengeti NP.

White-headed Buffalo Weaver

Dinemellia dinemelli

A very common and colourful savanna inhabitant in Tarangire NP, less common later in the Serengeti NP.

Speckle-fronted Weaver

Sporopipes frontalis

Seen at various drier sites with first views north of Tarangire NP.

Thick-billed (Grosbeak) Weaver

Amblyospiza albifrons

2 birds showed well in Arusha NP.

Baglafecht Weaver

Ploceus baglafecht

After first seeing these smart birds near Arusha, we had numerous good views later in the area around the Ngorongoro Crater.

Spectacled Weaver

Ploceus ocularis

We saw them in thick tangles in the Arusha area and in forest at Gibb's Farm.

Black-necked Weaver

Ploceus nigricollis

We were fortunate to find a single bird in the drier woodland at Lake Manyara NP, where it showed well.

Taveta (Golden-) Weaver

Ploceus castaneiceps

A bright and range-restricted species: they breed near water at our Arusha Lodge, where they provided us with some great views.

Lesser Masked Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

A few birds were seen around water in the Tarangire area.

Vitelline Masked Weaver

Ploceus vitellinus

Fairly common in the Olduvai Gorge area and Ndutu.

Speke's Weaver

Ploceus spekei

A large pale-eyed weaver that was seen in the southern Serengeti NP.

Golden-backed (Jackson's) Weaver

Ploceus jacksoni

This is an uncommon species, single males were seen on the drive to Tarangire NP and inside the park itself.

Chestnut Weaver

Ploceus rubiginosus

A nomadic species that showed well in breeding plumage in Arusha NP.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes melanotis

A single bird was recorded in Tarangire NP.

NOTE: This species complex might be split into two, the southern nominate group would remain Red-headed Weaver and the northern black-faced form which we recorded in Tanzania would become Red-winged Weaver (A. leuconotos). IOC does not as yet recognize this split.

Cardinal Quelea

Quelea cardinalis

Just 2 birds were seen at the big marsh in Ndutu, where a great diversity of birds was coming in to drink.

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

Probably the world's most populous species; seen in fair numbers on a few

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days during the first half of the tour.

Black Bishop

Euplectes gierowii

Although we were reaching the end of the breeding season, we still had a few good males showing great plumage in Tarangire and Lake Manyara NPs as well as around Olduvai Gorge.

Southern Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

Another stunner in breeding plumage – we had birds on 3 days – with first birds recorded on the first day between Arusha and Tarangire NP.

Yellow Bishop

Euplectes capensis

Seen very well in Arusha NP and later in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Fan-tailed Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

Very common in moist tall grassland in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

Grey-headed Nigrita (Negrofinch)

Nigrita canicapillus

This is a very tricky species to find in Tanzania, we had very good views during our walk in the Gibb's Farm forests.

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

This gorgeous species was seen a few times during the tour – coming to drink north of Tarangire NP and in the central Serengeti NP.

Cut-throat Finch

Amadina fasciata

Our first sighting was during a short walk north of Tarangire on the first day, a few others showed later in the Serengeti area.

Abyssinian Crimsonwing

Cryptospiza salvadori

A single bird was glimpsed a few times during our descent back to Gibb's Farm after our walk.

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

A widespread species, recorded on 5 days during the tour.

African Firefinch

Lagonosticta rubricata

We had a few of these shy forest-associated birds feeding on the roadside in Arusa NP.

Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu

Uraeginthus bengalus

An attractive little species that was seen in numerous savanna areas during the tour, especially around Tarangire NP.

Blue-capped Cordon-bleu

Uraeginthus cyanocephalus

Similar to the above species, also seen in similar areas, although more common in the drier Ndutu area.

Purple Grenadier

Uraeginthus ianthinogaster

Another stunning seedeater, we saw them in small numbers at a few scattered sites on 5 days of the tour, with a great first view at Olduvai Gorge.

Yellow-bellied Waxbill

Estrilda quartinia

A forest waxbill that was encountered near Gibb's Farm.

Crimson-rumped Waxbill

Estrilda rhodopyga

Seen first in the Arusha area, before we had good views of a number of birds in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Common Waxbill

Estrilda astrild

About a dozen birds were seen over 2 days in and around wetland areas in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Black-faced(cheeked) Waxbill

Estrilda erythrionotos

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We had views of this scarce bird in scattered drier *Acacia* savanna sites.

African Quail-Finch

Ortygospiza fuscocrissa

We saw this tiny bird fantastically well when they repeatedly landed on the road in the Ngorongoro Crater, usually an incredibly tough bird to find.

Grey-headed Silverbill

Odontospiza griseicapilla

This is a very hard-to-find species that we got very lucky with: getting records on 2 days in the central Serengeti area.

Indigobirds Viduidae

Village Indigobird

Vidua chalybeata

5 birds were seen during the first week of the trip, most around Tarangire NP.

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

We had a few of these birds, most around the Ngorongoro Crater area.

Straw-tailed Whydah

Vidua fischeri

Another stunner in good plumage – a single male was seen well in dry scrubby habitat at Olduvai Gorge.

Long-tailed (Eastern) Paradise Whydah

Vidua paradisaea

Yet another great species, seen in fairly good numbers in the area to the north of Tarangire NP and around Lake Manyara.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

Mountain Wagtail

Motacilla clara

A smart bird that was seen well at the lake at our Arusha accommodations as well as along a small stream in the forest of Lake Manyara NP.

African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

Widespread and seen at scattered wetland locales throughout the trip.

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

First recorded in the Ngorongoro Crater, with most birds seen in the Serengeti.

Rosy(Pink)-throated Longclaw

Macronyx ameliae

We had fantastic views of this gorgeous species in the Ngorongoro Crater.

African Pipit

Anthus cinnamomeus

Recorded often in the short grass of the Ngorongoro Crater and Ndutu area.

NOTE: African pipit taxonomy is in rather disarray and much further research is required in the phylogeny of this grouping. Several forms which are considered subspecies are likely to become full species in their own rights and several new forms are surely still to be described..

Long-billed Pipit

Anthus similis

A pair was seen well in Arusha NP.

Plain-backed Pipit

Anthus leucophrys

Common on the open grasslands in the Crater area as well as the southern Serengeti region.

Finches Fringillidae

Southern Citril

Crithagra (Serinus) hyposticta

This species was seen well in the Gibb's Farm garden.

Reichenow's (Yellow-rumped) Seed-eater

Crithagra reichenowi

Best views were on the way to Tarangire NP.

Southern Grosbeak-Canary

Crithagra buehleri

2 of these birds gave us a great view of their unusual bills at Olduvai Gorge.

White-bellied Canary

Crithagra dorsostriata

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Frequently recorded during the tour, very large numbers in the Ndutu area.

Streaky Seedeater

Crithagra striolata

Ngorongoro and Gibb's Farm were sites where we saw this species frequently.

Thick-billed Seedeater

Crithagra burtoni

Much less common than the previous species, seen well at Gibb's Farm.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Helmeted/Marsh Terrapin

Pelomedusa subrufa

One of these terrapins was seen on a dusty road, looking for water in Lake Manyara NP.

Striped Skink

Trachylepis striata

A single sun-bathing animal was seen on rocks at our Ngorongoro Lodge.

Blue-headed Tree Agama

Acanthocerus atricollis

A few large lizards were seen well in the area around Ndutu.

Red-headed Rock Agama

Agama agama

Seen on 4 days during the tour, with best views enjoyed in Tarangire NP.

Mwanza Flat-headed Agama

Agama mwanzae

The Serengeti produced numerous sightings, including at the gate and at our central lodge.

Nile Monitor

Varanus niloticus

Single animals, usually associated with water, were seen in Tarangire NP.

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

A number of these ancient reptiles were seen well in the Serengeti NP.

Flap-necked Chameleon

Chamaeleo dilepis

We had very good close-up views of a single large mottled individual in the garden at Ndutu.

African Rock Python

Python natalensis

We were lucky to find a very large individual lying on a pile of wood along a small stream in Manyara NP.

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