



Trip Report

Kenya: Flamigos and the Great Migration Safari

31st July – 11th August 2013 (12 days)

Trip Report compiled by tour leader James Kydd



Report

Our journey to Kenya took us through some of East Africa's most spectacular wildernesses, from the rift valley crater lakes stained pink with flamingos, through the great fever tree forests of Lake Nakuru to the endless plains of the Masai Mara where we were engulfed by all the drama of the most spectacular mammal migration on the planet.



After a wonderful Nairobi evening meeting everyone we began our Kenyan adventure. The road took us through impressive forests of Cape Chestnuts and past staggering views of the Great Rift Valley, studded with crater lakes and extinct volcanoes. As we headed further North over the equator the trees thinned and the landscape became drier.

Children in smart school uniforms ran along the roadsides. White-bellied go-away birds watched our passing from their acacia perches. We arrived on the freshwater shores of Lake Baringo and transferred our luggage to the boats.

It was delightful to be on the water. Blue-cheeked and white-throated bee-eaters hawked insects from the skeletal trees on the shoreline. A striated heron chick eyed us warily from its nest. We passed a fisherman in the middle of the lake, hunting for his quarry on a tiny raft powered by cup shaped oars not much bigger than his hands. Soft cumulus clouds reflected on the watery

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

canvas sliding underneath our boat as Samatia Island appeared on our horizon. Mary asked me if we could try to find some owls.



Unusually high floodwaters had risen above some of the lodge rooms, and as sad as we were for the lodge, it meant that we had this isolated piece of paradise to ourselves. I jumped off the boat to help with the mooring and to my disbelief saw a completely relaxed Verraux's eagle-owl perched above us.. a wonderful welcome reception!



The island was so idyllic it was hard not to spend the rest of the day there, but we went for a short boat ride around the perimeter. We saw the fairy-like white morph of the paradise flycatcher, a red-fronted barbet peering out of it's cavity nest, malachite kingfishers, black-throated barbets, fish eagles and watched a dark chanting goshawk hunting on the rocks.

We enjoyed a sunset dinner from a viewing deck accompanied by the owl and retired to our open-air rooms.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari



The next morning we left in the darkness for Lake Bogoria, enjoying the first rays of colour on the water's surface. A memory that will be etched in our minds forever is cresting a hill and getting our first view of the great lake and its neon pink flamingo rim.



Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

At the water's edge the noise was surreal: tens of thousands of the elegant birds splashing through the water, filtering the cyanobacteria that had lured them here, squawking to each other in the chaos.



We spent most of the morning with these amazing birds, everywhere we drove we encountered more and more. We stopped to observe some geothermal activity and a school group came over to sing in incredible harmony for us.

That afternoon we took a boat ride to a nearby island sanctuary where we encountered the rare Rothschild giraffe, as well as ostrich, on foot. The latter curiously followed us for some distance, presumably they had been used to human presence at some stage.

Our third day at Lake Baringo included a visit to a darter and egret colony, where we had intimate views of these birds as well as a crocodile circling the nests in the hope of an easy meal.

Our afternoons at Samatia Island were one of the tour highlights. The peace and solace we experienced there was remarkable. This time was spent birding or resting, and watching the daily storms build over the expanse of water. The rooms were open and had no windows, and the breeze would blow right in bringing with it the electric atmosphere of the distant rain clouds. A pair of spotted morning-thrushes nesting in the roof would take turns to incubate the eggs, the mates always accompanying their arrival with elaborate song.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari



Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Beautiful sunbirds, paradise flycatchers and Hemprich's hornbills stopped to watch us before continuing their forage.

On our last morning we enlisted the help of a local bird guide to help us track down some nest sights and were rewarded with excellent views of slender-tailed nightjars, pearl-spotted owlet, Burchell's courser, spotted eagle-owl and yellow-winged bats before embarking on our journey to Lake Nakuru.



Lake Nakuru was in flood, and while this limited our access to some parts of the reserve, also provided some wonderful photographic opportunities. The fever tree forests, for me the highlight of Nakuru, were all accessible and made for an ethereal backdrop to the incredibly abundant wildlife of this national park. Huge buffalo bulls walked through the grasslands, stained white by the clay they'd been rolling in. We had excellent sightings of white rhinoceros, Defassa waterbuck, and herds of Rothschild giraffe.

One morning in Lake Nakuru started with a pride of lions with young cubs. The lionesses kept looking nervously over their shoulders, and eventually we spotted a large male lion about a kilometre behind them, tracking their scent.

We spent hours mesmerized by the antics of the olive baboons. Vervet monkeys raced through the canopies above. We watched a pair of hamerkops building their incredible nest. Guest Monika was sketching our sightings, which meant we got to spend quality time with our subjects. We were blessed not only with excellent sightings of white rhino but by the appearance of their

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

shyer black cousin too. We had excellent views of Augur buzzard, and a long-crested eagle whose crest was soaked by the rain.



Baby impalas and zebras chased each other around under the watchful eyes of their mothers, occasionally disturbing the superb starlings who would lift into the sky in an explosion of colours. A huge herd of buffalos made their way to the water's edge as the shadow of a squadron of pelicans passed over them. We saw four different species of sunbird (bronzy, amethyst, scarlet-chested and golden-winged) feeding off the orange *Leonatis* flowers near the lodge. We also had great sightings of grey woodpecker, Klaas's cuckoo, red-cheeked cordon-bleau and grey-crested helmetshrike.

The part of our tour we had most been looking for was upon us: our journey into the Masai Mara. The flight in was spectacular, passing over the endless plains dotted with tens of thousands of herbivores. Our first afternoon outing started with a serval leaping out of the grass in front of us hunting rodents. We spent some time with her before she joined up with her cub and disappeared into the grass. Not long afterwards we found a mother cheetah with her three subadults. We watched them playing in the late afternoon light and then returned to our beautiful Little Mara Bush Camp.

Day two in the Mara started with a female leopard close to the lodge. Not long afterwards we were able to relocate the four cheetah of the previous evening. One of the youngsters leaped onto our back tire in order to get a better view of its surroundings, bringing itself eye-level with us! A hyena was tailing them hoping for an easy meal, but instead got the surprising wrath of one the male

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

sub-adults, who aggressively chased it off. We stayed with them for some time and soon they had slunk their bodies low and were stalking a herd of Thompson's gazelles.



A mistake by one of the youngsters at the back alerted the gazelle, who disappeared. The herds were beginning to gather at one of the major crossing points of the Mara River, so we made our way down there and had our first close look at the famous river. On either side, a few hundred head of wildebeest and zebra had gathered, hesitating on the banks. Below them was the river, in which lay the scattered corpses of the fallen. Ruppell's and white-backed vultures perched on the cadavers, and the most gigantic crocodiles were basking on the banks, too full to engage in feeding, or perhaps waiting for the next crossing to unfold. We stayed with the herds for a couple of hours as they approached and then retreated from the water, fearing the dangers underneath the surface. The tension in the air was palpable. It was the zebra that initiated that first plunge into the river, and as it did, the goosebumps rose on our skin. In between a cloud of dust and an explosion of water the herd members plunged into the Mara, one after the other, swimming desperately to the other side. One of the zebras made it to the together side, but then remained in the shallows. We sadly realised it had broken its leg and its journey had come to an end. It was an incredibly powerful spectacle to witness, and we went back to the lodge filled with awe.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari



Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari



One of the highlights of Little Mara Bush Camp was the hippo pool at the far end of the camp. Being able to sit so close to these water giants on a daily basis was well worth the smell we had to put up with! The noise during the night as they waded past our tents was such a thrill. One of the evenings was spent listening to a fight between two bulls that lasted through to the next day!

On our second afternoon we spent time at a hyena den enjoying the social antics of these fascinating carnivores. On the way back to the lodge we found a freshly killed wildebeest carcass, and knowing a leopard was nearby we sat and waited while all the other vehicles moved on. Our patience was rewarded as the leopardess emerged from a nearby watercourse and returned to open the carcass in front of us.

The next day started with a herd of Maasai giraffe at sunrise. We found two young male lions that had killed both a wildebeest and a giraffe close to our camp. We watched a different four cheetah walk through a herd of topi and later on attempt to hunt a Thompson's gazelle. We drove through endless herds of wildebeest and zebra. We found another two lionesses and watched them chasing a herd of wildebeest up a hill. And then just as we thought the day was complete we found a caracal who was patiently trying to hunt a scrub hare in a thicket.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari



Day four in the Mara began with a leopardess stalking Thompson's gazelle close to our lodge. After an unsuccessful hunt we journeyed further afield and found the famous Marsh pride lions. One lioness had two tiny cubs with her that she was returning to a den. The rest of the pride including two handsome males passed close by our vehicle. We had a brief sighting of a bohor reedbuck, and an exceptional view of a strangely relaxed pair of harlequin quails. Close to camp the two males that were feeding on the giraffe were hunting again, even with their huge larder of food. On the access road to our camp we found another caracal, and stayed with it for a while, watching it stalk a Kirk's dik-dik. That night we had lion and leopard roaring around the camp to cap another sensational day in one of the world's most famous national parks!

Our last morning was spent with a small pride that seemed to be looking for the rest of their family. We had an excellent sighting of a pair of southern ground hornbills hunting in the grasslands and then later we came across three of the subadult cheetah we had seen before feeding on a freshly killed young Thompson's gazelle.

We were all devastated to get back on the plane and leave Kenya, and wished for another week or two in this majestic land. It was hard to fathom what we had seen in such a short space of time, and how different our time and experiences had been at each place, starting with the serenity of Lake Baringo and ending with what was undoubtedly our tour highlight, our stay in the Masai Mara. If you've been to see "the Greatest Show on Earth" you'll know what I'm talking about, and are likely itching to return. If you haven't, then what are you waiting for?

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Thanks to local driver guide Silas for his help in making this a very memorable trip.



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*

This attractive bat with its impressive ears was seen flying between the trees on the shores of Lake Baringo.

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Olive baboon *Papio [hamadryas] anubis*

Large troops of this shaggy-haired creature were recorded throughout the tour.

Vervet monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops*

This widespread African monkey was seen at most woodland/savanna areas.

Hares Leporidae

African savanna (Scrub) hare *Lepus victoriae*

This species was recorded on the edge of Lake Bogoria and on the grasslands of the Mara.

Rats and mice Muridae

African grass rat *Arvicanthus niloticus*

We found this rodent surprisingly relaxed at the Sarova Lodge grounds at Lake Nakuru.

Dogs & Allies Canidae

Black-backed jackal *Canis mesomelas*

Surprisingly we had only one sighting of this canid at Lake Nakuru, strange that we did not see more in the Mara.

Mongoose Herpestidae

Dwarf mongoose *Helogale parvula*

We recorded these splendid little animals in the Masai Mara

Hyaenas Hyaenidae

Spotted hyena *Crocuta crocuta*

We had excellent sightings in Lake Nakuru and the Masai Mara, including watching one being chased by a young cheetah, and visiting a den site.



Cats Felidae

Lion

Panthera leo

We had incredible lion viewing. An awesome sighting of a male tracking a pride was the highlight of those at Nakuru, while in the Mara we watched one pride hunting, watched a mother moving her tiny new cubs back to a densite, and had two very handsome males stroll past our vehicle. Two younger males also killed a giraffe and a wildebeest just a few hundred metres from our camp.

Leopard

Panthera pardus

We saw a leopard on numerous occasions in the Mara, the highlight sighting was when we found a leopardess returning to her freshly-killed wildebeest to feed.

Cheetah

Acinonyx jubatus

We had some of the best cheetah sightings imaginable. We saw 2 separate mothers with three sub-adults each. We watched them hunting, feeding, chasing hyenas, and even had one climb onto the back wheel of our Land Cruiser which was thrilling beyond words.

Caracal

Caracal caracal

We had two incredible caracal sightings, one on the access road to our camp. We watched one stalk a dik-dik and the other a scrub hare.

Serval

Leptailurus serval

We had an excellent sighting of a hunting serval leaping into the air, and then reuniting with her cub.

Hyraxes Procavidae

Yellow-spotted hyrax

Heterohyrax brucei

We saw a group at Lake Nakuru

Rock hyrax

Procavia capensis

We saw them at both lake Baringo and Lake Nakuru.

Elephants Elephantidae

African elephant

Loxodonta africana

We had good sightings of these grey giants in The Masai Mara.

Horses Equidae

Common (Burchell's /Plain's) zebra

Equus burchelli

We had great sightings throughout the trip, including the migrating masses in the Mara.

Rhinoceroses Rhinocerotidae

White rhinoceros

Ceratotherium simum

During our stay in Lake Nakuru we had a number of different sightings.

Black rhinoceros

Diceros bicornis

We were fortunate to see a few of these highly endangered creatures at Lake Nakuru.



Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibious

One of the highlights of the trip was the incredible pod we had visible from our rooms at Little Mara... well worth their smell we had to put up with.

Pigs Suidae

Common warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

This species was seen at Lake Nakuru and throughout the Mara.

Giraffes Giraffidae

Rothchild's giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis cottoni

During our visit to Lake Nakuru we spotted a couple of these range restricted giraffe, as well as an encounter on foot one of the islands in Lake Baringo.

Maasai giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis tippelskirchi

Seen well in The Masai Mara.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

Thomson's gazelle

Gazella thomsonii

The Mara and Lake Nakuru produced this species in great numbers.

Grant's gazelle

Gazella granti

Seen throughout the trip

Kirk's dik-dik

Madoqua kirkii

This tiny antelope was seen at Lake Bogoria.

African buffalo

Syncerus caffer

Lake Nakuru produced excellent sightings of this bovid.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Greater kudu

Tragelaphus strepsiceros

We had one sighting at Lake Bogoria

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

We saw a herd as we entered the Mara.

Bohor reedbuck

Redunca redunca

We had one brief sighting in the Masai Mara.

Defassa waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus defassa

Seen on numerous days at Lake Nakuru and Masai Mara.

Coke's hartebeest (Kongoni)

Alcelaphus buselaphus cokei

We recorded this large antelope on a couple of days in the Masai Mara.

Blue wildebeest

Connochaetes taurinus

One of the highlights was seeing the migration in all its magnitude in the Masai Mara.

Topi (Tsessebe)

Damaliscus lunatus

One of the fastest antelope over long distance, we found many herds in the Mara.

Impala

Aepyceros melampus

Seen at Nakuru and the Mara.

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

We observed a few in the Mara, and were followed by some on one of the Islands of Lake Baringo.

Guineafowl Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Good numbers were seen on many days during the tour.

Francolins & Quails Phasianidae

NOTE: Clements places all francolins and spurfowls into the genus *Francolinus* and does not use the common name spurfowl for the larger francolins.

Coqui Francolin

Peliperdix coqui

Seen at Lake Nakuru

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

Seen at Lake Bogoria

Red-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis afer

Seen in the Mara

Harlequin Quail

Coturnix delegorguei

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

We had a good sighting of a strangely relaxed pair in the Mara.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*

This duck was recorded on Lake Baringo.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

By far the most common waterfowl, it was seen on most days of the tour.

Yellow-billed duck *Anas undulata*

This species was observed at Lake Nakuru.

Cape Teal *Anas capensis*

Seen at Lake Nakuru

Red-billed Teal (Duck) *Anas erythrorhyncha*

It was observed at Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Red-billed Duck.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

We had good views at Baringo and Nakuru.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

We had great sightings at Baringo and Nakuru.

Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor*

One of the highlights of the trip: fantastic numbers were seen at Lake Baringo, as well as a few seen at Nakuru.

Storks Ciconiidae

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*

Small numbers of this attractive stork were observed throughout the tour.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

This Palearctic migrant species was found at Lake Baringo.

Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*

Always one of the highlight birds, this species was seen at Lake Nakuru.

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus*

Seen often throughout the tour.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

[African] Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*

This widespread species was seen throughout the tour

Hadada (Hadedu) Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*

Seen throughout the tour, with great sightings in the fever trees of Nakuru.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

One sighting at Lake Nakuru.

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*

Lake Nakuru was where we found this interesting bird.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Striated (Green-backed) Heron *Butorides striatus*

Seen at Lake Bogoria and lake Baringo.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

Seen at Baringo, Bogoria and Naukuru.

[Western] Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Another common and widespread bird, it was recorded on most days during the tour.

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

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

Seen at Nakuru and in the Mara.

Black-headed Heron

Ardea melanocephala

Another common African heron, it was seen in suitable grassland habitat throughout.

Goliath Heron

Ardea goliath

We had sightings of this enormous bird at Lake Baringo.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Seen at Lake Baringo

[Western] Great (White) Egret

Ardea alba

Seen at Baringo and Nakuru

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

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

This common wetland species was recorded in Lake Nakuru.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

This unique African species was recorded throughout the tour.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

These magnificent giants were seen at Lake Bogoria and Lake Nakuru

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelacanus rufescens

We had a few birds at Lake Nakuru.

Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

Great (White-breasted) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax lucidus

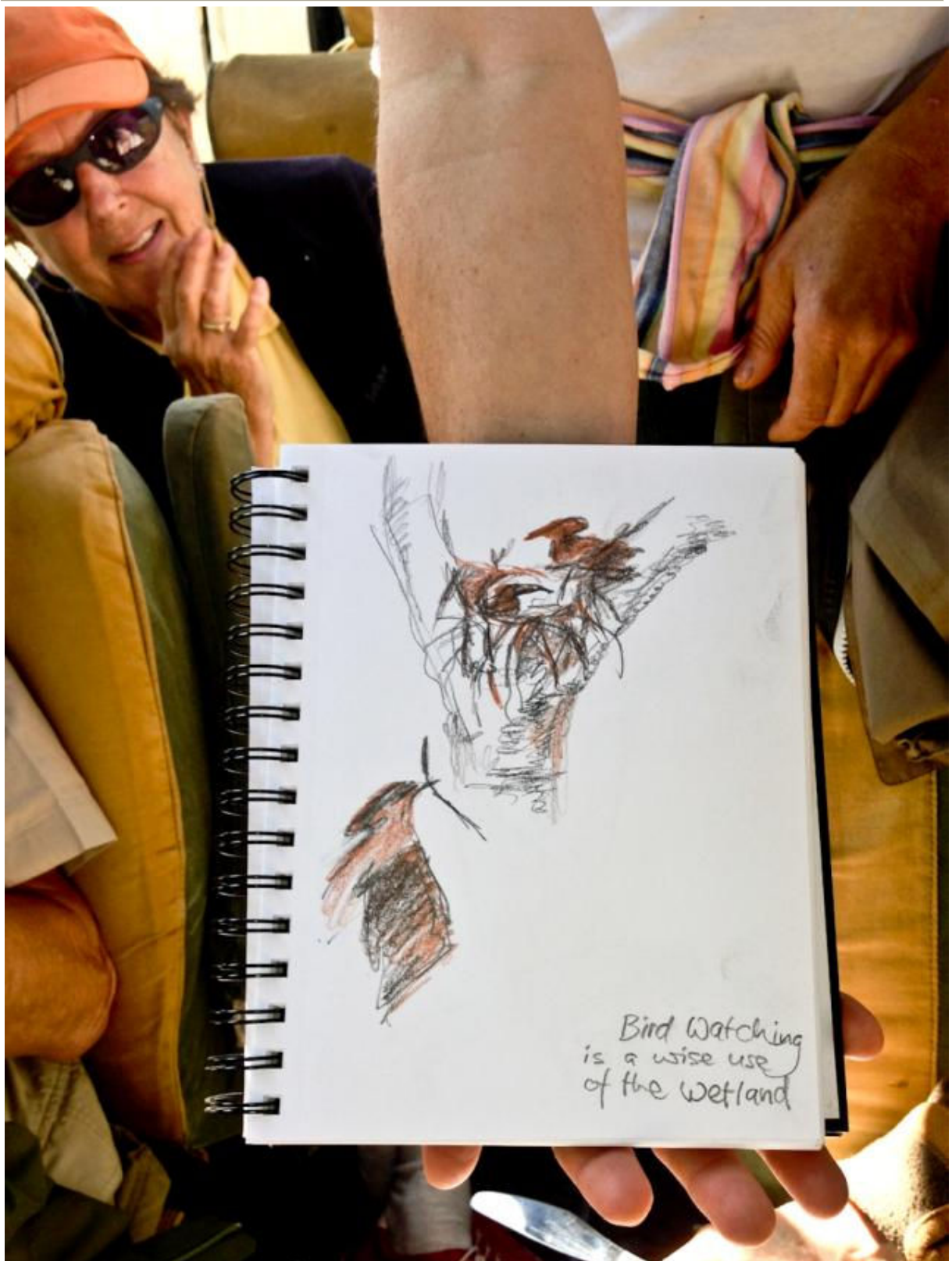
Seen at Lake Bogoria and Lake Nakuru

Reed cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

This cormorant was seen at Lake Baringo around the lodge and heronries

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



Anhingas Anhingidae

Darter

Anhinga melanogaster

Seen frequently around Samatia Island

Secretarybird Sagittariidae

Secretarybird

Sagittarius serpentarius

We had a good sighting of a pair at Lake Nakuru

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae

Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Seen at Baringo and in the Mara.

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.

Black (Yellow-billed) Kite

Milvus migrans

Seen on the way to Lake Baringo.

Note: Some authorities split this complex into Black Kite M. migrans and Yellow-billed Kite M. aegyptius. We observed the yellow-billed form on this tour. The IOC does not yet recognise this split.

African Fish Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

This stunning raptor was throughout Lake Baringo and Bogoria.

Hooded Vulture

Necrosyrtes monachus

This small vulture was seen in the Masai Mara.

(African) White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

Good numbers of this common vulture were seen in the Masai Mara.

Ruppell's Vulture

Gyps rupellii

Seen feeding on numerous wildebeest carcasses.

Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

This magnificent African raptor was recorded in the Masai Mara.

African Marsh Harrier

Circus ranivorus

A single bird was seen in the Ngorongoro Crater.

We had great views in Lake Manyara, where we watched one hunting in a tree.

Dark Chanting Goshawk

Melierax metabates

We had a great sighting of one hunting at Samatia Island

Eastern Chanting Goshawk

Melierax poliopterus

Seen at Lake Bogoria.

African Goshawk

Accipiter tachiro

Seen outside our hotel in Nairobi.

Augur Buzzard

Buteo augur

Seen at Baringo as well as some great sightings at Lake Nakuru.

Tawny Eagle

Aquila rapax

Seen at Lake Nakuru as well as in the Mara.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

Sensational sightings at Lake Nakuru.

Bustards Otididae

Black-bellied Bustard

Lissotis melanogaster

We had good views of this attractive bustard in the Masai Mara.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

We managed to get some great views of this confiding rail at Lake Baringo and Lake Bogoria.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Red-knobbed Coot

Fulica cristata

Recorded at Lake Nakuru.

Cranes Gruidae

Grey Crowned Crane

Balearica regulorum

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Grey Crowned-Crane.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

We had sightings at Lake Nakuru.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Blacksmith Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus armatus

Seen at Lake Baringo and Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Blacksmith Plover.

Spur-winged Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus spinosus

Seen throughout the tour.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Spur-winged Plover.

Crowned Lapwing

Vanellus coronatus

Commonly encountered in more disturbed, open habitats during the trip.

Wattled Lapwing

Vanellus senegallus

Seen in the Masai Mara.

Three-banded Plover

Charadrius tricollaris

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Jacanas Jacanidae

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

Seen at Lake Bogoria.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

Wood sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Seen at Nakuru and in the Mara.

Common sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

Seen throughout the tour

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Coursers & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Three-banded Courser

Rhinoptilus cinctus

Excellent sightings of a pair at Lake Baringo.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Grey-hooded (-headed) Gull

Larus cirrocephalus

We recorded this species at Lake Nakuru.

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

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Yellow-throated Sandgrouse

Pterocles gutteralis

This absolute stunner was seen well in the Serengeti.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae

Common (Feral) Pigeon (Rock Dove) *Columba livia*

Feral populations were seen in some of the small towns we passed.

Speckled (Rock) Pigeon

Columba guinea

Seen in Nairobi.

Mourning Collared (African Mourning) Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

Encountered regularly at Lake Baringo

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is African Mourning Dove.

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

This widespread & common dove was seen at Lake Nakuru.

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove

Streptopelia capicola

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Laughing (Palm) Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Emerald-spotted (Green-spotted) Wood Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

This bird was seen in Lake Bogoria.

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

This attractive, long-tailed dove was recorded at Lake Bogoria.

Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot

Poicephalus meyeri

We had good views in the Serengeti.

Turacos Musophagidae

White-bellied Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides leucogaster

First seen close to Lake Baringo.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

Seen well alongside the Crater Lakes.

Klaas's Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx klaas

Excellent sighting of this shy bird at Lake Nakuru

Diederik cuckoo

Chrysococcyx caprius

Seen twice at Lake Baringo.

Owls Strigidae

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

We had an excellent sighting in Buffalo Springs, just before it was mobbed by a drongo

Spotted Eagle-Owl

Bubo africanis

Excellent sighting of a pair on their nest at Lake Baringo

Verraux's Eagle-Owl

Bubo lacteus

There was a habituated individual at Samatia Island

Nightjars Caprimulgidae

Slender-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus clarus

Excellent day-time sighting provided by a local bird guide at Lake Baringo.

Swifts Apodidae

Little Swift

Apus affinis

Seen at Lake Baringo.

Mousebirds Coliidae

Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

This common and widespread bird was observed on most days of our tour.

Blue-naped Mousebird

Urocolius macrourus

The fast-flying, dry savanna species was seen during our stay at Lake Baringo.

Rollers Coraciidae

Lilac-breasted Roller

Coracias caudata

This gorgeous bird was recorded on most days of the tour.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Grey-headed (-hooded) Kingfisher

Halcyon leucocephala

Lake Baringo and the Mara produced sightings of this attractive kingfisher.

Striped Kingfisher

Halcyon chelicuti

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Woodland Kingfisher

Halcyon senegalensis

Another truly stunning species, it was encountered at Lake Nakuru.

Malachite Kingfisher

Alcedo cristata

It was recorded throughout the tour.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

Seen well at Lake Baringo.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Little Bee-eater

Merops pusillus

This attractive little bird was seen in the Masai Mara.

White-fronted Bee-eater

Merops bullockoides

We saw them at Lake Nakuru.

White-throated Bee-eater

Merops albicollis

Good numbers of these birds were observed daily at Lake Baringo.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater

Merops persicus

Seen at Lake Baringo.

Hoopoes Upupidae

African Hoopoe

Upupa africana

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Wood Hoopoes Phoeniculidae

Common Scimitarbill

Rhinopomastrus cyanomelas

Excellent sighting of this shy bird at Lake Nakuru.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Hemprich's Hornbill

Tockus hemprichii

Seen at the lodge on Samatia Island.

Northern Red-billed Hornbill

Tockus erythrorhynchus

This species was encountered at Lake Baringo.

Jackson's Hornbill

Tockus jacksoni

This attractive hornbill was seen at Lake Baringo.

Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae

Southern Ground Hornbill

Bucorvus leadbeateri

We had an excellent sighting in the Mara.

African Barbets Lybiidae

Red-fronted Barbet

Tricholaema diademata

An excellent sighting of one in a nest cavity at Lake Baringo.

Black-throated Barbet

Tricholaema melanocephala

Seen well at Lake Baringo.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae

Lesser Honeyguide

Indicator minor

Seen at Lake Baringo.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

Nubian Woodpecker

Campethera nubica

This common woodland species was recorded at Lake Nakuru.

[African] Grey Woodpecker

Dendropicos goertae

We had a good view at Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: This species is lumped by IOC with Gray-headed Woodpecker (*D. spodocephalus*).

Helmetshrikes Prionopidae

Grey-crested Helmetshrike

Malaconotus blanchoti

An excellent sighting of this uncommon avian at Lake Nakuru.

Bushshrikes Malaconotidae

Tropical Boubou

Laniarius aethiopicus

We had a great view at Lake Nakuru.

Shrikes Laniidae

Grey-backed Fiscal

Lanius excubitoroides

We recorded this species throughout the trip again at Lake Nakuru.

Common Fiscal

Lanius collaris

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Old World Orioles Oriolidae

Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatusi

This species was observed at Lake Nakuru.



Drongos Dicruridae

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

This common and widespread species was seen on many days of the trip.

Monarchs Monarchidae

African Paradise Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

This attractive intra-African migrant was spotted throughout the trip, including the beautiful white morph on Samatia Island.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

Seen at Lake Baringo and Lake Nakuru.

Penduline Tits Remisidae

Mouse-coloured Penduline Tit

Anthroscopus musculus

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Larks Alaudidae

Short-tailed Lark

Pseudalaemon fremantlii

Seen in the grasslands of Lake Nakuru.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

[Dark-capped] (Common) Bulbul

Pycnonotus tricolor

This ubiquitous species was seen at Lake Baringo.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Northern Brownbul

Phyllastrephus strepitans

We obtained sightings of this bird at Lake Baringo.

Martins & Swallows Hirundinidae

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin

Riparia paludicola

A small flock of birds were seen In the Masai Mara.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Plain Martin.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

There were some at Lake Baringo,

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chiniana

This common woodland bird was recorded at Lake Nakuru.

Buff-bellied Warbler

Phyllolais pulchella

Seen at Samatia Island Lodge.

Red-fronted Apalis

Urorhipis rufifrons

Seen once at Lake Baringo.

Yellow-breasted Eremomela

Eremomela icteropygialis

We found this species at Lake Baringo.

Babblers Timalidae

Arrow-marked Babbler

Turdoides jardineii

This species was seen well at Lake Nakuru.

Starlings Sturnidae

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

We had good numbers at Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Greater Blue-eared Glossy-Starling.

Rüppell's (Glossy-) Starling

Lamprotornis purpuroptera

This sleek starling was observed at Lake Baringo.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Rueppell's Glossy-Starling.

Superb Starling

Lamprotornis superbus

This ubiquitous, yet attractive bird was seen in good numbers on many tour days.

Oxpeckers Buphagidae

Red-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus erythrorhynchus

This bird was seen on most days of the tour.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

African Thrush

Turdus pelios

Seen at Lake Nakuru on the lodge grounds.

Olive thrush

Turdus olivaceous

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

White-browed Robin-Chat

Cossypha heuglini

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Trip Report Kenya and Tanzania 2013 Mega Mammal Safari

Spotted Palm (Morning-) Thrush

Cichladusa guttata

Nesting in our lodge room at Samatia Island.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Spotted Morning-Thrush.

Brown-tailed Chat

Cercomela scotocerca

Seen at Lake Baringo.

(Northern) Anteater Chat

Myrmecocichla aethiops

We observed this species at Lake Nakuru.

Sooty Chat

Mermicocichla nigra

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher

Dioptrornis (Melaenornis) fischeri

Good sighting at Lake Nakuru.

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata

This Palaearctic migrant was seen at Lake Nakuru.

Sunbirds Nectarinidae

Eastern (Kenya) Violet-backed Sunbird

Anthreptes orientalis

Seen nesting in the grounds at the Sarova Lodge, Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Kenya Violet-backed Sunbird.

Amethyst Sunbird

Chalcomitra amethystina

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Chalcomitra senegalensis

Seen at Lake Nakuru Lodge.

Bronzy (Bronze) Sunbird

Nectarinia kilimensis

Excellent sightings at Lake Nakuru.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Bronze Sunbird.

Golden-winged Sunbird

Drepanorhynchus reichenowi

This gorgeous sunbird was seen on the *Leonatis* flowers at Lake Nakuru.

Beautiful Sunbird

Cinnyris pulchellus

This species was seen often at Lake Baringo.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser mahali

Seen daily in the arid areas of Central Kenya.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Small numbers of this introduced species was seen at urban sites during the tour.

Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

Baglafecht Weaver

Ploceus baglafecht

Seen on the way to Lake Baringo.

Little Weaver

Ploceus luteolus

Encountered at Samatia Island.

Northern Masked Weaver

Ploceus taeniopterus

Seen on Lake Baringo.



Lesser Masked Weaver

Seen on Lake Baringo.

Speke's Weaver

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Black-headed Weaver

Seen at Lake Baringo.

Golden-backed Weaver

Seen often at Lake Baringo.

Ploceus intermedius

Ploceus spekei

Ploceus melanocephalus

Ploceus jacksoni

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

Seen at Lake Nakuru.

Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu

Uraeginthus cyanocephalus

We found this little beauty at Lake Nakuru.

Crimson-rumped Waxbill

Estrilda rhodopyga

Seen at Lake Baringo.

African Quail-Finch

Ortygospiza fuscocrissa

We saw flocks passing by in the Mara.

Indigobirds Viduidae

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

Was seen at Lake Bogoria.

Long-tailed (Eastern) Paradise Whydah

Vidua paradisaea

This attractive bird was seen at Lake Bogoria.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

Seen regularly throughout the tour.

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

This species was recorded at Lake Baringo.

Long-billed Pipit

Anthus similis

Seen twice at Lake Nakuru.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Speke's Sand Lizard

Heliobolus spekii

Seen crossing the road near Lake Baringo.

Leopard Tortoise

Geochelone pardalis

We saw a large individual near Lake Baringo

Tropical House Gecko

Hemidactylus mabouia

One or two individuals were seen at our lodge at Samatia Island.

Nile Monitor

Varanus niloticus

Seen at Samatia Island.

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

Some enormous specimens were seen along the banks of the Mara.

Photo credits – all images photographed by James Kydd

INDRI

Ultimate Wildlife Tours

Division of Rockjumper Birding Tours CC reg 2001/059480/23

4 Sunbird Circle, Kommetjie, Cape Town, 7975, South Africa

Tel: +27 21 783 4380

Fax: +27 88 033 394 0225

Email: info@indritours.com

Website: www.indritours.com