



Trip Report

Kenya and Tanzania Mega Mammal Safari

27th April – 13th May 2013 (17 days)

Trip Report compiled by tour leader James Kydd



Report

Our journey to East Africa took us through some of the world's greatest and most spectacular wildernesses, the world's largest volcanic caldera teeming with a seemingly impossible amount of wildlife, the endless plains and herds of the Serengeti, vast lakes stained pink with flamingos, wetlands shadowed by Kilimanjaro, the mystical rainforests of Mount Kenya, the stark semi-arid beauty of the Samburu District, spectacular neon green fever tree forests, and the birth place of mankind.



Our adventure began in Arusha at Ngare Sero, a quaint colonial estate dating back to the beginning of the last century. It was the perfect place to recuperate from our flights and the surrounding forest was full of animal entertainment. Silvery-cheeked hornbills soared over our heads like pteridactyls, screeching their way into the canopies where they fought over figs. Blue monkeys feasted in front of our lodge the entire day. And then one of the highlights of the trip: a troop of Guereza Colobus Monkeys appeared. They floated through the canopies like ghosts with their black and white capes trailing behind them. At the dams we had great sightings of a Taveta Weaver and a Malachite Kingfisher hiding at the water's edge. We fell asleep to the pinging of fruit bats and the raucous cries of Thick-tailed Galagos.

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Our first impression of Lake Manyara was the thick wall of forest that greeted us as we entered the reserve, interspersed with magnificent baobabs. As the forest opened we got our first view of the plains animals including good herds of Blue Wildebeest, Cape Buffalo and Burchell's Zebra. We also had a good view of a pod of hippos resting in a muddy waterhole, and our first glimpse of a Kirk's Dik-dik with its enormous beady eyes. We found Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Meyer's Parrot, D'Arnaud's Barbet, Chestnut Weaver, Collared Palm-Thrush and Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater.

A few hours later we were ascending the walls of the Ngorongoro Crater through more spectacular rainforest. The view that greeted us on arrival was breath-taking. It's hard to describe the feeling of staring down onto the green floor of the world's largest intact volcanic caldera, only 600 metres down, and seeing the little specs of thousands of herd animals in a (seemingly) enclosed ecosystem. From our lodge on the rim we watched the sun setting over the crater, anticipating the excitement that dawn would bring.

We left our lodge the next morning in the darkness and were rewarded for our early rise with a Honey Badger crossing the road (driver Abdul's second sighting in 13 years of safari). The descent into the crater was like entering some prehistoric world. We were engulfed by a great mist and as we left the rim umbrella thorn trees appeared like giants from the greyness. As the forest gave way to the savanna strange dark shapes bounced between the tall grass blades: hordes of Jackson's Widowbirds in their pogo-stick courtship display.

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For first timers to East Africa the densities of animals are almost unbelievable. There were Zebra, Wildebeest and Buffalo everywhere we looked, as well Thompson's and Grant's Gazelle.

As the light started breaking through the clouds a lion and lioness strolled in between one of these mixed herds and the atmosphere as their ungulate audience snorted and alarm-called all around them was palpable. (We ended up having four different lion sightings that day, including a total of five adult male lions). Seeing a herd of Eland, Cooke's Hartebeest, Black Rhinoceros and Defassa Waterbuck with the impressive volcanic walls behind them was a delight. Collared Pratincoles swooped over the water beside flocks of greater and lesser flamingos. A Wildebeest chased after a Spotted Hyena.

Flocks of Common Ostrich and Grey Crowned Cranes accompanied by herds of Elephant with incredible tusks drifted through fields of yellow flowers. Other birding highlights included scaly and Hildebrandt's Francolins, Kori Bustards, Red-rumped Swallows, Yellow-billed Oxpeckers, Rufous-tailed Weavers and a Rosy-throated Longclaw.

We spent the entire day on the crater floor mesmerized by this wonderland and then enjoyed another spectacular sunset on the rim.

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Our journey from Ngorongoro to the Serengeti took us past plains where cattle fed alongside Zebra and Wildebeest, and through a traditional Masai village where we welcomed in and spent time trading stories about our cultures.

We passed through Olduvai Gorge, the supposed cradle of mankind, and revelled in the atmosphere that the ancient footprints of our ancestors commanded. There was excellent birding in and around the gorge: the magnificent Steel-blue and straw-tailed Whydahs, Blue-capped Cordon-bleus and Grey Woodpeckers.

The road into the Serengeti held two wonderful surprises for us. First: a Caracal, sneaking along through the grass towards a herd of Thompson's Gazelle. Second: we caught up with the migration. Good rains meant they were still quite far south. A line of Wildebeest that stretched across half the horizon marched towards the swollen dark clouds in the distance. We spent an hour surrounded by the feeding thousands before moving onto our lodge in the central part of the reserve.

Visiting the Serengeti at this time of year (low season) gave us a number of advantages. The vehicle densities are much lower, and many of our sightings we were able to enjoy to ourselves. The vegetation was lush and photographically it added a wonderfully colourful backdrop. We enjoyed very dramatic skies: the days were beautiful building up to dark skies and stunning late afternoon showers scattered in between the sun rays across the plains.

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The high grass actually provided us with great sightings of some of the cats. We saw Lion and Leopard resting in the trees (we found a remarkable five Leopards lounging in trees, a total of seven over all). We also saw an incredible nine different Serval, who were using the road to hunt from (including one stalking what sounded like a python and a mother with two cubs).

Other mammal highlights included big troops of playful Olive Baboons, an African Civet drinking metres from us in broad daylight, a pride of Lions with cubs feeding on a Buffalo. We found a young leopard resting in a rocky outcrop, and watched a female Leopard jump from a tall tree to begin hunting Impala. We had a hippo bull chase an intruding male past our vehicle, and saw a Golden Jackal with her pups at their den.

The bird life in the Serengeti was phenomenal: Grey-breasted Spurfowl, Lappet-faced Vulture, Grey Kestrel, White-bellied Bustard, Three-banded Courser, Fischer's Lovebird, Von der Decken's Hornbill, Nubian and Tulberg's Woodpecker, Cardinal Quelea, Grey-headed Silverbird, and Yellow-throated Longclaw.

Leaving the Serengeti we climbed the Naabi Koppies and had another fantastic view of the migration, as well as the hordes of Vultures, Jackals and Spotted Hyenas that had gathered to feast on the fallen. With the endless plains behind us we headed to our lodge in the Ngorongoro Highlands, where we enjoyed a walk through the nearby rainforest.



The trails were full of tracks from Elephant, Buffalo, Hyena and Leopard, and we were lucky to see Yellow-bellied Waxbill and White-tailed Crested Flycatcher in the forest, as well as Golden-backed Weaver, Bronzy Sunbird and Mourning Wheatear at the lodge.

Crossing over the Kenyan border we headed to Amboseli National Park. We watched a Gabar Goshawk trying to steal chicks from a White-headed Buffalo Weaver nest, eventually being chased off by a Fork-tailed Drongo. We saw an enormous troop of around two hundred Yellow Baboon scattered throughout the fever tree forest near our lodge, and then, as the clouds cleared, had our first view of the shy snow-capped peak of Kilimanjaro. Amboseli provided some excellent Elephant viewing and we were thrilled to come across a mother Cheetah and her two youngsters. Birding highlights included Yellow-necked Spurfowl, Eastern Chanting Goshawk, Long-toed Lapwing, Black-lored Babbler and the incredibly vocal spotted Palm Thrush.

We crossed over the equator, stopping to learn about some of local weaving techniques, and had a great view of some nesting Speke's Weavers.

The rainforests of Mount Kenya National Park were another highlight of our trip. Our lodge was like a large wooden ark surrounded by magnificent trees and facing a clearing where the animals would come to wallow, lick minerals from the clay and drink.

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From our rooms we saw so much life (there is also an underground hide) including Buffalo, Baboons and hordes of Bushbuck (at one stage there were 25 together: very unusual for this often solitary species).

Walking through the forest was enchanting, and also gave us excellent views of White-starred Robin, Emerald Cuckoo, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, flocks of Red-fronted Parrots and Hartlaub's Tauraco, as well as three of the tiny and shy Suni. At night the waterhole was lit, and Large-spotted Genet and Water Mongoose visited. There were three Water Mongoose and they swam, played, and even teased one of the Bushbuck. The night noises were thrilling: screaming Tree Hyraxes, Galagos, and the constant barking of Bushbuck who sensed a nearby Leopard. We left a misty Mount Kenya with a brief view of the attractive Syke's Monkey.

The semi-arid Samburu district was so different to anything we'd seen this far on the trip, and our first afternoon drive in Shaba rewarded us with all the dry country specials: Desert Warthog, Beisa Oryx, the strange Gerenuk, the beautifully marked Reticulated Giraffe and the endangered Grevy's Zebra. We also had sightings of Guenther's Dik-dik and the Common Waterbuck. Many of these animals were seen against the very picturesque backdrop of Mount Shaba.

The Ewaso Ng'iro River running through Shaba and neighbouring Buffalo Springs felt like a true oasis, dotted with palms and frequented by flocks of Orange-bellied Parrots and herds of Elephant that we could watch from our

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rooms. We had good Lion viewing, saw a mother Cheetah and her sub-adult son, unstriped Ground Squirrels, a pair of Honey Badgers being shadowed by a pair of Jackal, a Bat-eared Fox with her youngsters emerging from their den, and an incredible herd of around eighty Beisa Oryx.



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At dinner on our last night in Buffalo Springs we were commenting on the incredible luck we'd had when a Striped Hyena made an appearance at the waterhole! Birding highlights were the spectacular Vulturine Guinea fowl, Golden-breasted Starling, Red-headed Weaver building outside our rooms, being circled by a flock of thirteen Grey-crowned Cranes, Somali Courser, Lichtenstein's and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Pygmy Falcon, Pearl-spotted Owlet, the striking Eastern Violet-backed Sunbird, animated flocks of White-throated Bee-eaters, and a Rosy-patched Bushshrike (what a voice on this bird!).

Our final destination was Lake Nakuru National Park, which, although across the Lake from Kenya's fourth largest urban centre, was an Eden for wildlife. We had four different Lion sightings, including a mother nursing her young cubs at her den and a pride climbing up a fallen tree to call for the rest of their family in one of the most beautiful fever tree forests imaginable. We had great views of both Black and White Rhinoceros, and endless numbers of Buffalo caked in white clay.

We saw the proud Broad-billed Roller, Saddle-billed Stork, Southern Ground Hornbill, displaying Long-tailed Widowbirds with their seemingly impossible tail plumage, great White Pelicans and huge flocks of Cattle Egrets that delighted the eyes.



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As with any journey like this it is something hard to describe in words, and must be seen first hand to understand. For those considering a trip to East Africa know that you will be blown away by the diversity of birds, the majesty of the mountains, the proud culture, the overwhelming numbers of animals, the vastness of the plains and the daily dramas that unfold in this theatre. It is an incredible life experience.

Thanks to local driver guides Abdul and William for their help in making this a very memorable tour.



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 at one of the visitor's centres in the Serengeti.

Colobid Monkeys Colobidae

Guereza (Black-and-white) colobus *Colobus guereza*

This fantastic primate was seen in the outskirts of Arusha, and in the forests of Mt. Kenya

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Olive baboon

Papio [hamadryas] anubis

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

Yellow baboon

Papio [Hamadryas] cynocephalus

We saw an enormous troop in Amboseli.

Blue (White-throated/Sykes's) monkey *Cercopithecus nictitans mitis*

We saw blue monkey in the forests around Arusha (Ngare Sero) and the Ngorongoro Crater, and the attractive Syke's race in the forests around Mount Kenya.

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 in the rainforests of Mount Kenya.

Squirrels Sciuridae

Unstriped ground squirrel

Xerus rutilus

First observed in Amboseli, and seen a couple of times in the semi-arid Samburu district/

Ochre bush squirrel

Paraxerus ochraceus

We spotted this squirrel in the forested slopes of Mt. Kenya.

Rats and mice Muridae

African grass rat

Arvicanthus niloticus

We found this rodent surprisingly relaxed at the entrance to the Serengeti.

Dogs & Allies Canidae

Golden jackal

Canis aureus

We saw a mother with her young denning in the Serengeti.

Black-backed jackal

Canis mesomelas

Serengeti, Shaba and Buffalo Springs gave us great views of this canid.

Bat-eared fox

Otocyon megalotis

We saw them twice, in the Serengeti, and then we were lucky to find a den site at Buffalo Springs.

Mustelids Mustelidae

Honey badger

Mellivora capensis

We were extremely lucky to see three individuals on the trip, one in the Serengeti just outside Serena Lodge, and two being trailed by jackals in Buffalo Springs.

Mongoose Herpestidae

Slender mongoose

Herpestes sanguinea

Two separate sightings, one in the Serengeti and the other in Shaba.

Dwarf mongoose

Helogale parvula

We recorded these splendid little animals in the Serengeti and Buffalo Springs

Banded mongoose

Mungos mungo

This gregarious species was seen well in the Serengeti.

Hyaenas Hyaenidae

Spotted hyena

Crocuta crocuta

We had excellent sightings in Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti and Amboseli.

Striped hyena

Hyaena hyaena

We were lucky to see one individual visiting the waterhole in front of our lodge at Buffalo Springs.

Genets & Civets Viverridae

Large-spotted genet

Genetta maculata

We had superb views of this beautifully patterned genet at our lodge on the slopes of Mt. Kenya.

African Civet -

Civettictis civetta

We had a wonderful sighting of this striking animal drinking water in broad daylight!

Cats Felidae

Lion

Panthera leo

We had incredible lion viewing. 4 different sightings of lions in the Ngorongoro Crater including a total of five adult males. In the Serengeti we saw lions feeding on a buffalo, as well as a whole pride in a tree. In Buffalo Springs we had a great view of a pride with a lioness walking past us, and then at Lake Nakuru we had three different sightings in one afternoon, including a mother nursing young cubs at a den, and a pride lounging high up on a fallen tree

Leopard

Panthera pardus

We saw a remarkable seven different individuals in the Serengeti, another bonus of the long grass: 5 were spotted lounging in the trees. We saw one juvenile, and one female who leaped out of the tree to begin stalking some impala.

Cheetah

Acinonyx jubatus

We saw a mother with two cubs in Amboseli, and had a great view of a mother and sub-adult at Buffalo Springs.

Caracal

Caracal caracal

We were thrilled to find one shy individual just before entering the Serengeti

Serval

Leptailurus serval

We saw an incredible nine individuals (including a mother with two cubs), perhaps due to the high grass at this time of year they were spending a lot of time on the road.

Hyraxes Procaviidae

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Yellow-spotted hyrax

Heterohyrax brucei

We saw them in the Serengeti and Lake Nakuru

Rock hyrax

Procavia capensis

There was an entertaining colony at our lodge in the Serengeti, together with their yellow-spotted relatives.

Elephants Elephantidae

African elephant

Loxodonta africana

We had great elephant sightings on most days. We saw some huge tuskeders in the Ngorongoro Crater, excellent sighting in the Serengeti, and arguably our best sightings in Buffalo Springs where we could view them from our balconies.



Horses Equidae

Common (Burchell's /Plain's) zebra

Equus burchelli

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

Grevy's zebra

Equus grevyi

This stunning animal which is now an endangered species was seen in Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

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 in the Ngorongoro Crater and at Lake Nakuru.

Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibious

We had great sightings at Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro Crater, the Serengeti and Amboseli, including a territorial male chasing a young bull past our car.

Pigs Suidae

Common warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

This species was seen on most days of the trip in the grassland/savanna habitats.

(Note: some consider the desert warthog we encountered in the Samburu District as a separate species)

Giraffes Giraffidae

Reticulated giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis reticulata

This magnificent animal was seen in Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

Rothchild's giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis cottoni

During our visit to Lake Nakuru we spotted a couple of these range restricted giraffe.

Maasai giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis tippelskirchi

Seen well in Lake Manyara and in the Serengeti.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

Thomson's gazelle

Gazella thomsonii

The Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti and Lake Nakuru produced this species in great numbers.

Grant's gazelle

Gazella granti

In addition to the aforementioned sites, we also found this antelope in Kenya's arid northern reserves.

Gerenuk

Litocranius walleri

Shaba and Buffalo Springs produced sightings of this bizarre-looking animal.

Guenther's dik-dik

Madoqua guentheri

We had a brief sighting of this antelope in Shaba.

Kirk's dik-dik

Madoqua kirkii

This tiny antelope was seen in Lake Manyara, the Serengeti and Buffalo Springs.

Suni

Neotragus moschatus

Seen on foot in Mount Kenya

African buffalo

Syncerus caffer

These bovids were seen on most days of the tour, with good views in the Serengeti, Lake Nakuru and Mt. Kenya.

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

We had brilliant sightings at the waterhole in front of our lodge on Mt. Kenya.

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

We saw a herd in the Ngorongoro Crater and a bull leaving the Serengeti

Bohor reedbuck

Redunca redunca

This species was found as we entered the Serengeti.

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Common waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus ellipsiprymnus

Amboseli, Shaba and in Buffalo Springs are where we had numerous sightings.

[Defassa waterbuck]

Kobus ellipsiprymnus defassa

Seen at Ngorongoro, Serengeti and Mt Kenya.

Beisa oryx

Oryx gazella beisa

This stunning animal was found in the arid areas of Buffalo Springs and Shaba.

Coke's hartebeest (Kongoni)

Alcelaphus buselaphus cokei

We recorded this large antelope on a daily basis in the Serengeti.

Blue wildebeest

Connochaetes taurinus

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

Topi (Tsessebe)

Damaliscus lunatus

One of the fastest antelope over long distance, we found a few herds in the Serengeti.

Impala

Aepyceros melampus

Seen in the Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti, Lake Nakuru and Buffalo Springs.



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

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We observed large flocks in the Ngorongoro Crater, as well as Amboseli and the Serengeti.

Guineafowl Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Good numbers were seen on most days during the tour.

Vulturine Guineafowl

Acryllium vulturinum

These incredibly beautiful birds were observed in Buffalo Springs and Shaba, and were a real highlight.

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 in the Serengeti

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

Seen at Buffalo Springs

Scaly Francolin

Pternistis squamatus

Fleeting sightings around the Crater.

Hildebrandt's Francolin

Pternistis hildebrandti

It was seen daily along the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Yellow-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis leucoscepus

Good numbers in Amboseli and Buffalo Springs.

Grey-breasted Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis rufopictus

This localised Serengeti endemic was seen in the National Park.

Harlequin Quail

Coturnix delegorguei

We had a good sighting of a male crossing the road in the Crater.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae

Fulvous Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna bicolor

This duck was recorded in Amboseli.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

We found great numbers within the Crater.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

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

Cape Teal

Anas capensis

This species was observed on saline lakes of Ngorongoro.

Red-billed Teal (Duck)

Anas erythrorhyncha

It was observed at wetlands/water bodies in the Ngorongoro Crater and Amboseli.

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

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

We had a few birds in the Crater and again in the Serengeti.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

We had good views at Nagre Sero, Arusha.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

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Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopterus ruber

The saline lakes in Ngorongoro Crater and Lake Nakuru yielded sightings of these birds, as well as in the Serengeti.

Lesser Flamingo

Phoenicopterus minor

Were seen in conjunction with the Greater flamingos

Storks Ciconiidae

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

Small numbers of this attractive stork were observed at scattered wetlands sites during the tour.

White Stork

Ciconia ciconia

This Palaearctic migrant species was found at Lake Manyara and the Serengeti.

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

Always one of the highlight birds, this species was seen in the Serengeti and Lake Nakuru.

Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumeniferus

We had incredibly close up views on foot at the entrance to the Serengeti.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

[African] Sacred Ibis

Threskiornis aethiopicus

This widespread species was seen at the Crater and Lake Nakuru.

Hadada (Hadedda) Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

First seen in Arusha, it was then recorded in Amboseli, Samburu and Lake Nakuru.

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

Ngorongoro Crater gave us a sighting of this species.

African Spoonbill

Platalea alba

Amboseli and Lake Nakuru were where we found this interesting bird.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Striated (Green-backed) Heron

Butorides striatus

Seen in the Serengeti.

[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 throughout the Crater and the Serengeti

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 in Amboseli

[Western] Great (White) Egret

Ardea alba

Seen at scattered localities fantastic numbers were seen in Amboseli.

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

Black Heron

Egretta ardesiaca

We had one bird in the flooded grassland at Amboseli.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

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This common wetland species was recorded in Lake Nakuru.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

This unique African species was recorded in Arusha, the Crater and the Samburu District.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

These magnificent giants were seen well at Lake Nakuru.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelacanus rufescens

We had a few birds at Lake Nakuru as well as Lake Manyara.

Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

Great (White-breasted) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax lucidus

This large cormorant was seen in great numbers at Lake Nakuru, as well as an individual at Lake Manyara.

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

Secretarybird Sagittariidae

Secretarybird

Sagittarius serpentarius

We had a number of really good sightings throughout all the national parks we visited, including a pair taking off from a nest at Buffalo Springs.

Hawks, Eagles & Kites Accipitridae

Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Fairly common and widespread they were seen at most sites visited.

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 throughout the trip best views were in the picnic sites in the Crater where they circled overhead.

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 seen well in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater

Hooded Vulture

Necrosyrtes monachus

This small vulture was seen in the central part of the Serengeti.

(African) White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

Good numbers of this common vulture were seen in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro.

Lappet-faced Vulture

Torgos tracheliotus

Small numbers were recorded in the Serengeti.

Black-chested (-breasted) Snake Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

We found this striking bird at Lake Manyara and Amboseli.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Black-breasted Snake-Eagle.

Brown Snake Eagle

Circaetus cinereus

Seen at Lake Manyara

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Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

This magnificent African raptor was recorded regularly in the Serengeti.

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.

African Harrier Hawk

Polyboroides typus

We had a fantastic sighting from above at Lake Nakuru.

Dark Chanting Goshawk

Melierax metabates

Seen in the Serengeti and Buffalo Springs.

Eastern Chanting Goshawk

Melierax poliopterus

Seen in Amboseli.

Gabar Goshawk

Micronisus gabar

A great sighting of one hunting sparrow-weaver chicks in Shaba.

Shikra

Accipiter badius

We had a bird just after lunch outside of our lodge in Shaba.

Little Sparrowhawk

Accipiter minullus

An individual was seen flying around our accommodation in Arusha.

African Goshawk

Accipiter tachiro

We saw a juvenile on the way to Mt. Kenya

Augur Buzzard

Buteo augur

Great sightings on the Crater rim

Tawny Eagle

Aquila rapax

Regularly encountered in savanna/woodland habitats on the tour.

Wahlberg's eagle

Aquila wahlbergi

An excellent viewing at Amboseli

African Hawk-Eagle

Aquila spilogaster

We had good sightings of this raptor in the Serengeti and Shaba.

Martial Eagle

Polemaetus bellicosus

We had a few sightings throughout the tour, the highlight being a juvenile with a recent dik-dik kill.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

Scattered sightings of this attractive bird were had throughout the tour

Crowned (Hawk-) Eagle

Stephanoaetus coronatus

We had a brief view of "the leopard of the sky" at Mount Kenya.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Crowned Hawk-Eagle.

Falcons & Kestrels Falconidae

Greater Kestrel

Falco rupicoloides

An individual was seen in the Serengeti.

Pygmy Falcon

Polihierax semitorquatus

This minute falcon was seen frequently in Buffalo Springs.

Grey Kestrel

Falco ardosiaceus

We had a great view of this smart bird in the Serengeti.

Bustards Otididae

Kori Bustard

Ardeotis kori

Our best views of this massive bird were in the Ngorongoro Crater, but they were seen in Amboseli and Buffalo Springs too.

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White-bellied Bustard

Eupodotis senegalensis

The Serengeti and Amboseli produced some fantastic sightings.

NOTE: This species represents the northern form of White-bellied Bustard. Clements lumps the northern form of White-bellied Bustard E. senegalensis with the Southern African endemic Barrow's or Southern White-bellied Bustard E. barrowi.

Black-bellied Bustard

Lissotis melanogaster

We had good views of this attractive bustard in Amboseli.

Hartlaub's bustard

Lissotis hartlaubii

One sighting in the Crater.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostra

We managed to get some great views of this confiding rail in Serengeti.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Seen at Ngare Sero, Arusha

Red-knobbed Coot

Fulica cristata

Recorded in the Serengeti

Cranes Gruidae

Grey Crowned Crane

Balearica regulorum

Seen throughout the trip, we had a good numbers in the Crater, Lake Manyara, and the highlight being circled by a flock of thirteen at Buffalo Springs.

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

Thick-knees Burhinidae

Water Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus vermiculatus

We had small numbers at Lake Manyara.

Spotted Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus capensis

A pair were spotted in the Serengeti.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

We had sightings at Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti

Pied Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

We had a few birds in Lake Magadi in Ngorongoro Crater

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Long-toed Lapwing

Vanellus crassirostris

This stunning bird was seen well in the flooded grasslands of Amboseli, and also Lake Nakuru

Blacksmith Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus armatus

A common and widespread African bird, it was regularly recorded during the tour.

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

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Spur-winged Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus spinosus

First seen in Lake Manyara, it was later observed in the arid reserves of north central Kenya.

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.

Black-winged Lapwing

Vanellus melanopterus

Seen in the Serengeti

Kittlitz's Plover

Charadrius pecuarius

We had a great sighting of a mother with youngsters in the Crater.

Three-banded Plover

Charadrius tricollaris

Seen throughout the Serengeti

Jacanas Jacanidae

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

Seen outside Arusha and at Amboseli.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

Common Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

Seen well in the Crater.

Wood sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Seen once in the Crater.

Coursers & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Somali Courser

Cursorius somalensis

We recorded several of these arid country coursers on the dusty plains of Shaba.

Note: Clements does not recognise this species as a true species. He lumps the bird with Cream-coloured Courser C. cursor.

Double-banded Courser

Rhinoptilus africanus

Small numbers were observed on the degraded plains in the Serengeti and Amboseli.

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

Three-banded Courser

Rhinoptilus cinctus

Excellent sightings of a pair in the central Serengeti.

Collared Pratincole

Glareola pratincola

We had good sightings in the Serengeti.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae

Grey-hooded (-headed) Gull

Larus cirrocephalus

We recorded this species in Ngorongoro

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

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybrida

Briefly seen in Ngorongoro

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

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Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse

Pterocles exustus

Ngorongoro and Buffalo Springs provided views of this elegant bird.

Yellow-throated Sandgrouse

Pterocles gutteralis

This absolute stunner was seen well in the Serengeti.

Black-faced Sandgrouse

Pterocles decoratus

Seen in the Serengeti

Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse

Pterocles lichtensteinii

Seen on the way to in Shaba.

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 Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti and arid reserves on north central Kenya.

African Olive (Rameron) Pigeon

Columba arquatrix

This attractive pigeon was observed at Mount Kenya

Eastern Bronze-naped (Delegorgue's) Pigeon

Columba delegorguei

We had a brief view on the rim of Ngorongoro.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Delegorgue's Pigeon.

Mourning Collared (African Mourning) Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

Encountered regularly at suitable woodland areas during the tour.

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

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

This widespread & common dove was first seen at Arusha and again at Shaba.

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove

Streptopelia capicola

Common and widespread, good sightings in the Serengeti.

Laughing (Palm) Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

We had scattered sightings, good numbers in the drier areas of Kenya.

Emerald-spotted (Green-spotted) Wood Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

This bird was seen in Lake Manyara and in the Samburu District.

Tambourine Dove

Turtur tympanistria

Disturbed from the forest floor in Mt. Kenya

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

This attractive, long-tailed dove was recorded in Serengeti and Amboseli.

Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

Fischer's Lovebird

Agapornis fischeri

These gorgeous birds were seen on most days in the Serengeti. It is an East African endemic.

Red-fronted Parrot

Poicephalus gulielmi

Unfortunately we only had birds in flight at Mt Kenya.

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot

Poicephalus meyeri

We had good views in the Serengeti.

Red-bellied (African Orange-bellied) Parrot

Poicephalus rufiventris

This beautiful bird was seen very well in Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

Turacos Musophagidae

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Hartlaub's Turaco

Tauraco hartlaubi

We had an excellent view in the forests of Mt. Kenya.

Bare-faced Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides personatus

We encountered this species in the southern Serengeti.

White-bellied Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides leucogaster

First seen close to the Namanga border we found good numbers in the reserves of north central Kenya.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

Seen well and a variety of locations, first sighting was in the Serengeti.

Black Cuckoo

Cuculus clamosus

The woodland at the edge of Lake Nakuru held a sighting of this cuckoo.

Diederick Cuckoo

Chrysoccyx caprius

A brief sighting in the Serengeti

African Emerald Cuckoo

Chrysoccyx cupreus

One of the birding highlights was seeing this delightful bird on a forest walk in Mt. Kenya.

Owls Strigidae

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

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

Nightjars Caprimulgidae

Square-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus fossii

Seen on the Crater rim.

Swifts Apodidae

African Palm Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

Associated with palms we saw many birds in Buffalo Springs.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

By far the most common swift on tour, it was seen on most days in good numbers.

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 Buffalo Springs

Trogon Trogonidae

Narina Trogon

Apaloderma narina

We were extremely fortunate to find the absolute stunner at Mt Kenya.

Rollers Coraciidae

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata*

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

Purple Roller *Coracias naevius*

Seen in the Serengeti and on the way to Shaba.

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*

This species was seen in the yellow-barked Acacia forest at Lake Nakuru.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Grey-headed (-hooded) Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*

Lake Manyara, and Shaba produced sightings of this attractive kingfisher.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris*

We had one sighting outside Arusha

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*

Another truly stunning species, it was encountered in the southern Serengeti.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*

It was recorded at Ngare Sero.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

Seen well at Lake Nakuru.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

This attractive little bird was seen in the Serengeti and Amboseli

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates*

Excellent sightings from the lodge hide at Mt Kenya.

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*

We saw them in the Serengeti and Lake Nakuru.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*

Good numbers of these birds were observed daily in the arid reserves of north central Kenya.

Hoopoes Upupidae

African Hoopoe *Upupa africana*

The southern cousin to the above species, it was seen very well throughout the trip.

Wood Hoopoes Phoeniculidae

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*

A flock of these noisy, iridescent birds was encountered in the Serengeti.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*

We found a pair in Lake Manyara.

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*

First seen in Lake Manyara, and then later in the Serengeti

Northern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus*

This species was encountered daily in the arid reserves of Kenya.

Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus ruahae*

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We managed to find this range restricted bird in the Serengeti.

Von der Decken's Hornbill *Tockus deckeni*

This attractive hornbill was seen well in the Serengeti.

Silvery-cheeked Hornbill *Bycanistes brevis*

This magnificent hornbill was a highlight of our stay at Ngare Sero.

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

Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae

Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri*

We had an excellent sighting at Lake Manyara as well as Lake Nakuru.

African Barbets Lybiidae

Red-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus pusillus*

We had a brief sighting at Oldupai gorge.

D'Arnaud's Barbet *Trachyphonus darnaudii*

This species was found at Lake Manyara.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica*

This common woodland species was recorded in the Serengeti, Mt. Kenya and Shaba.

Tullberg's Woodpecker *Campethera tullbergi*

Seen once in the Serengeti.

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*

A fly-by viewing at Amboseli.

[African] Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae*

We had a good view at Oldupai gorge and in the Serengeti.

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

Bushshrikes Malaconotidae

Rosy-patched Bushshrike *Rhodophoneus cruentus*

We had a fantastic sighting in Buffalo Springs.

Brown-crowned (Three-streaked) Tchagra *Tchagra australis*

We had sightings in Serengeti and at Buffalo Springs

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla*

We managed to find a single bird at Lake Manyara.

Slate-colored Boubou *Laniarius funebris*

Good sightings at our lodge in the central Serengeti.

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus*

We had a great view in the Serengeti.

Brubru *Nilaus afer*

This woodland species was observed in the Serengeti and Amboseli.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae

Grey Cuckooshrike *Coracina caesia*

Seen on the way to Lake Nakuru

Purple-throated Cuckooshrike *Campephag quiscalina*

A brief sighting at Mt. Kenya

Shrikes Laniidae

Magpie (Long-tailed) Shrike *Urolestes (Corvinella) melanoleucus*

We saw a few birds in the Serengeti.

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

Northern White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus rueppelli*

It was commonly encountered in the Serengeti.

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

Grey-backed Fiscal *Lanius excubitoroides*

We recorded this species daily in the wooded grasslands of the Serengeti and again at Lake Nakuru.

Long-tailed Fiscal *Lanius cabanisi*

First seen in Arusha.

Taita Fiscal *Lanius dorsalis*

Was seen in the Serengeti.

Common Fiscal *Lanius collaris*

Seen in the Crater and the Serengeti.

Old World Orioles Oriolidae

Mountain (Montane/Black-tailed) Oriole *Oriolus percivali*

This species was observed in the forests on the slopes of Mt. Kenya.

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 at our lodge in the southern Serengeti.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

Cape (Black) Crow *Corvus capensis*

We had a number of birds passing the Ngorongoro Conservation area.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus*

The urban areas and rural settlements attract this species; peak numbers spotted over Arusha.

Fan-tailed Raven *Corvus rhipidurus*

We saw a pair in Shaba.

White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis*

Seen along the forested rim of the Ngorongoro Crater.

Tits Paridae

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White-bellied Tit

Parus (Melaniparus) albiventris

We had daily sightings at Lake Nakuru NP.

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

Larks Alaudidae

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafraga africana

One of the more common larks of the trip, it was recorded on most days in suitable grassland habitat.

Red-capped Lark

Calandrella cinerea

A lark that is fond of dry, patchy grassland, it was seen in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Fischer's Sparrow-Lark

Eremopterix leucopareia

Numerous throughout the tour, it was recorded on most days in arid/broken ground areas.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

[Dodson's] (Common) Bulbul

Pycnonotus dodsoni

This arid-country species was seen in Buffalo Springs.

NOTE: Part of another very confusing polytypic species complex. In Africa the IOC nomenclature recognises the following good species: Common Bulbul (*P. barbatus*), Dark-capped Bulbul (*P. tricolor*), Somali Bulbul (*P. somaliensis*) and Dodson's Bulbul (*P. dodsoni*). Clements does not and lumps the above as Common Bulbul (*P. barbatus*).

[Dark-capped] (Common) Bulbul

Pycnonotus tricolor

This ubiquitous species was seen on most days of the trip.

(Eastern) Mountain Greenbul

Andropadus nigriceps

We obtained sightings of this bird at Mt Kenya.

NOTE: IOC splits the Mountain Greenbul complex into several species: including the nominate Mountain Greenbul (*A. nigriceps*) endemic to the highland forests of S Kenya & N Tanzania, Yellow-throated Greenbul (*A. chlorigula*) endemic to S Tanzania and Black-browed Greenbul (*A. fusciceps*) endemic to Malawi, N Mozambique & extreme S Tanzania.

Slender-billed Greenbul

Andropadus gracilirostris

We had a few sightings of this bird at Mt. Kenya.

Cabanis's Greenbul

Phyllastrephus cabanis

We managed to find a single bird during our short time at Mt Kenya.

Martins & Swallows Hirundinidae

Black Sawwing

Psalidoprocne pristoptera

This species was observed at Ngare Sero, Arusha.

NOTE: The Black Sawwing (*P. pristoptera* complex) was split into 8 full species, which caused extreme confusion with regard to their distributions and field identification, however, all authorities including IOC have now accepted one species.

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin

Riparia paludicola

A small flock of birds were seen flying over the shore of Lake Nakuru.

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

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

There were some in Ngorongoro and in the Samburu.

Wire-tailed Swallow

Hirundo smithii

We found individuals in the Serengeti.

Rock Martin

Ptyonoprogne fuligula

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Our first sighting was around Olduvai George, and was seen numerous times throughout the trip.

Lesser Striped Swallow

Cecropis abyssinica

This intra-African migrant was recorded regularly during our time spent in the southern Serengeti.

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica

Seen daily in the Ngorongoro Conservation area and then in Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chiniana

This common woodland bird was recorded in the Serengeti.

Boran Cisticola

Cisticola bodessa

On our way to Shaba we managed to call up a single bird next to the side of the road.

Croaking Cisticola

Cisticola natalensis

Commonly found throughout the Serengeti

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

The Serengeti produced views of this widespread species.

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

Seen in the Serengeti

Buff-bellied Warbler

Phyllolais pulchella

We had a number of sightings of this tiny bird in the Serengeti.

Bar-throated Apalis

Apalis thoracica

A pair of these forest birds was seen on the Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Yellow-breasted Apalis

Apalis flava

Seen twice in the Serengeti

NOTE: This widespread polytypic African species may be split into two or more species. The split most widely accepted is that of Brown-tailed Apalis (A. f. viridiceps) of Somalia and adjacent Ethiopia. IOC does not as yet recognise this split.

Grey Apalis

Apalis cinerea

We found this species in Mt Kenya.

Grey-(Green) backed Camaroptera

Camaroptera brevicaudata

Regularly recorded throughout the tour, it was first seen in Lake Manyara.

Babblers Timalidae

African Hill Babbler

Pseudoalcippe abyssinica

We found 1 of these birds in the forested slopes of Mt. Kenya.

Rufous Chatterer

Turdoides ayleri

We had a group at our lodge in Buffalo Springs

Black-lored Babbler

Turdoides sharpei

The woodland of the Serengeti produced sightings of these vocal birds.

Arrow-marked Babbler

Turdoides jardineii

This species was seen well at Lake Nakuru.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

Kikuyu (Broad-ringed/Montane) White-eye

Zosterops poliogastrus

The forests Mt Kenya are where we found this species..

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NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Broad-ringed White-eye.

Abyssinian White-eye

Zosterops Abyssinicus

Seen in the forests on the edge of The Ngorongoro Conservation area

Starlings Sturnidae

Wattled Starling

Creatophora cinerea

Seen in Amboseli and Lake Nakuru

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 almost daily in the Serengeti.

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 most tour days.

Golden-breasted Starling

Lamprotornis regius

A brief but excellent sighting in Buffalo Springs

Hildebrandt's Starling

Lamprotornis hildebrandti

This gorgeous bird was found in throughout the Serengeti.

Fischer's Starling

Lamprotornis fischeri

We managed to find this attractive Starling on the way from Namanga to Amboseli.

Red-winged Starling

Onychognathus morio

Seen in the Serengeti.

Oxpeckers Buphagidae

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus

We recorded this species in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Red-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus erythrorhynchus

Much more common than the aforementioned species, it was seen on most days.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

African Thrush

Turdus pelios

In the gardens of Thompsons Falls is where we found this species.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

White-stared Robin

Pogonocichla stellata

We were very fortunate to get a sighting on a walk at Mt Kenya.

Cape Robin-Chat

Cossypha caffra

Good views were had of this bird in the Serengeti.

White-browed Robin-Chat

Cossypha heuglini

First seen in the Serengeti then again at Lake Nakuru.

Stonechat

Saxicola torquatus

Seen on the crater rim

Collared Palm Thrush

Cichladusa guttata

We did well to find this species at the top of a palm tree in Lake Manyara.

Spotted Palm (Morning-) Thrush

Cichladusa guttata

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Our initial sighting was at the airport in Arusha followed by good views in Buffalo Springs.

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

White-browed Scrub Robin *Erythropgia (Cercotrichas) leucophrys*

We found a bird at our lodge in the Seregeti.

NOTE: This widespread African complex is being reviewed for a 3-way split, the Southern African C. l. leucophrys group would become White-browed Scrub Robin, the Central African C. l. zambesiana would remain as Red-backed Scrub Robin and the Northern African C. l. leucoptera would become White-winged Scrub Robin. IOC does not as yet recognise these splits.

Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata*

En route to the Serengeti we had numerous sightings of this species which thrives in disturbed arid habitat.

Mourning Wheatear *Oenanthe lugens*

We had a sighting at our lodge in the Ngorongoro highlands.

NOTE: This extremely variable complex with an extensive range and many distinctive isolated populations is a perfect candidate for multi-splitting. IOC recognises the resident Ethiopian form, Abyssinian Wheatear (O. lugubris), as a full species but does not consider Schalow's Wheatear (O. schalowi), the form we recorded in Tanzania as a full species yet.

(Northern) Anteater Chat *Myrmecocichla aethiops*

We observed this species in the grasslands of the Crater, Lake Nakuru and the central plateau of Kenya.

Note: The Clements common name for this bird is Northern Anteater-Chat.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher *Dioptrornis (Melaenornis) fischeri*

This higher altitude flycatcher was commonly recorded along forest edge at suitable sites.

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

Silverbird *Empidonax semipartitus*

This stunning species was found in the Serengeti.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

This Palaearctic migrant was seen along the Western Corridor in the Serengeti.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*

We observed this diminutive species at Mt. Kenya.

Sunbirds Nectarinidae

Eastern (Kenya) Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes orientalis*

Seen at our lodge in Buffalo Springs.

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

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*

The forests around Arusha and Mt Kenya held views of this pretty species.

Tacazze Sunbird *Nectarinia tacazze*

This species was recorded at our lodge in the Crater.

Bronzy (Bronze) Sunbird *Nectarinia kilimensis*

We recorded this species at the higher altitude forested sites of Ngorongoro and in the Serengeti.

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

Eastern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris mediocris*

It was fairly common at the forest edge of the Crater and on the slopes of Mt. Kenya.

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Variable Sunbird

Cinnyris venusta

This species was seen in Arusha and the Serengeti.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser mahali

Seen daily in the arid reserves of north central Kenya.

Donaldson-Smith's Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser donaldsoni

Buffalo Springs yielded good numbers of this species.

Rufous-tailed Weaver

Histurgops ruficauda

The Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti held views of this East African endemic. Interestingly enough, it was once considered a Tanzanian endemic but was recently discovered in the Maasai Mara in Kenya.

Grey-capped (headed) Social Weaver

Pseudonigrita arnaudi

Good numbers were seen at close quarters in the Serengeti.

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

Black-capped Social Weaver

Pseudonigrita cabanisi

Good numbers of this gregarious species were seen in Buffalo Springs.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

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

Kenya (Rufous) Sparrow

Passer rufocinctus

We recorded this attractive sparrow at scattered localities, including excellent sightings on the way to and in the Serengeti

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

Parrot-billed Sparrow

Passer gongonensis

An arid country species, it was observed daily in the national reserves of Kenya.

Swahili Sparrow

Passer suahelicus

This bird was seen in small numbers in the Serengeti.

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

Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver

Bubalornis niger

Another gregarious species, we found then in central Kenya.

NOTE: This species complex might be split into two, the nominate group would become Southern Red-billed Buffalo Weaver and the form in Ethiopia would become Northern Red-billed Buffalo Weaver (*B. intermedius*). IOC does not as yet recognize this split.

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White-headed Buffalo Weaver

Dinemellia dinemelli

This colourful bird was seen in Serengeti, Amboseli, Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

Speckle-fronted Weaver

Sporopipes frontalis

Oldupai Gorge and Serengeti produced this species.

Baglafecht Weaver

Ploceus baglafecht

Seen in the Serengeti and Mount Kenya.

Golden Palm Weaver

Ploceus blojeri

Encountered at Buffalo Springs

Taveta (Golden) Weaver

Ploceus castaneiceps

Seen at Ngare Sero, Arusha

Speke's Weaver

Ploceus spekei

Seen at the equator stop on the way to Mt. Kenya

Brown-capped Weaver

Ploceus insignis

We had a sighting of this species in the forests of Mt. Kenya.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes melanotis (rubriceps)

A pair were nesting outside our room at Buffalo Springs.

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

We had a small flock in the Serengeti.

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

Large flocks of these birds were seen on a few occasions during the trip.

Yellow-crowned Bishop

Euplectes afer

We had a flock in the flooded grasslands of Amboseli.

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Black Bishop

Euplectes gierowii

Seen on the rim of the Crater.

[Southern] Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

This striking species was recorded in the grasslands of Ngorongoro Crater rim.

Fan-tailed (Red-shouldered) Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

We found this species in the Ngorongoro Crater.

White-winged Widowbird

Euplectes albonotatus

Seen a couple of times in the Serengeti and in Amboseli.

Red-collared Widowbird

Euplectes ardens

The Serengeti was where we found this striking bird.

Long-tailed Widowbird

Euplectes progne

We had phenomenal views of this magnificent species displaying on the way to Lake Nakuru.

Jackson's Widowbird

Euplectes jacksoni

Their strange display greeted us at the bottom the the Ngorongoro Crater.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

This common & widespread firefinch was seen in the Serengeti.

Blue-capped Cordon-bleu

Uraeginthus cyanocephalus

We found this little beauty in the Serengeti.

Yellow-bellied Waxbill

Estrilda quartinia

Seen in the forests of the Ngorongoro Highlands.

African Quail-Finch

Ortygospiza fuscocrissa

We were treated to good sightings of this striking bird in the Ngorongoro Crater Buffalo Springs.

Grey-headed Silverbill

Lonchura griseicapilla

We were very lucky to have such a great sighting in the Serengeti.

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

Red-backed Mannikin

Lonchura (Spermestes) nigriceps

One individual was seen in a baobab at Lake Manyara.

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

Indigobirds Viduidae

Village Indigobird

Vidua chalybeata

Found at Lake Manyara.

Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

Was seen throughout the tour.

Steel-blue Whydah

Vidua hypocherina

We enjoyed excellent sightings of males in full breeding plumage in the Serengeti

Straw-tailed Whydah

Vidua fischeri

We had a great sighting of this stunner on the Crater rim and in the Serengeti.

Long-tailed (Eastern) Paradise Whydah

Vidua paradisaea

This attractive bird was seen on the way to Amboseli.

NOTE: The Clements common name for this species is Eastern Paradise-Whydah.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

Mountain (Long-tailed) Wagtail *Motacilla clara*

We saw them in Arusha and Mt. Kenya

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

Seen regularly, including Lake Manyara and Mt. Kenya.

Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus*

This species was recorded in the Serengeti and Lake Nakuru.

Rosy-throated (Pink-throated) Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae*

This gorgeous species was observed in the grasslands of the Crater.

Finches Fringillidae

Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra (Serinus) mozambica*

Seen in the Serengeti

Streaky Seed eater *Crithagra (Serinus) striolata*

First seen at Gibb's Farm, it was then observed daily on the forested rim of the Crater and at Mt. Kenya.

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

Thick-billed Seed eater *Crithagra (Serinus) burtoni*

It was encountered on the forested rim of the Crater and in the forest of Gibbs Farm.

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



Reptiles and Amphibians

Helmeted Terrapin

Seen in the Crater and Buffalo Springs

Pelomedusa subrufa

Leopard Tortoise

We saw a large individual at Buffalo Springs.

Geochelone pardalis

Striped Skink

We saw some at Ngara Sero.

Mabuya striata

Variable Skink

Seen at our lodge in Buffalo Springs.

Mabuya varia

Red-headed Rock Agama

We had a number of these reptilians in the Serengeti.

Agama agama

Mwanza Rock Agama

Seen at our lodge in the central Serengeti

Agama mwanzee

Tropical House Gecko

One or two individuals were seen at our lodges in the Serengeti and Shaba.

Hemidactylus mabouia

Nile Monitor

We had a few sightings in Lake Manyara, Serengeti, Shaba and Buffalo Springs.

Varanus niloticus

Nile Crocodile

Seen in the Serengeti, and Buffalo Springs

Crocodylus niloticus

Photo credits – all images photographed by James Kydd

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