

Zambia – June 2004

Report by Sjef Öllers

Introduction

This holiday in Zambia was our second Africa trip. Some of the more memorable moments were the scenery in Bangweulu and seeing the incredible shoebill there and the sighting of African wild dogs on a hunt that ended with a competitor taking the prize. Equally unforgettable was a hike in North Luangwa national park where on a single morning's walk we were charged by a hippo and a grumpy old male buffalo and almost literally stumbled over a sleeping male lion while tracking a leopard.

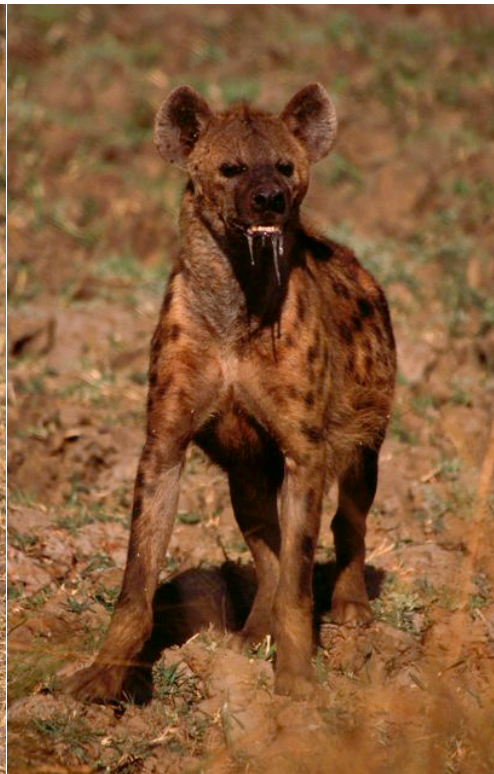
Travel Arrangements and Notes

At the time we used a Dutch tour operator to book this tour, but it is no problem and maybe even better to book these destinations directly with the Kasanka Trust (www.kasanka.com) for Bangweulu/Kapishya, Remote Africa (www.remoteafrica.com) for Tafika and Mwaleshi Camp and the Bushcamp Company (www.bushcampcompany.com) for Chindeni and Chamilandu Bush Camp. They can also book the domestic flights in Zambia. All places visited were well worth the visit and I would love to go back to any of them one day. Food was generally good and in most places even excellent. The guiding on the walking safaris in North Luangwa and South Luangwa was professional and of a high standard. The guides in Bangweulu knew the mammals and more charismatic birds very well, but for the LBJs you would be on your own, but maybe this has changed. We were lucky enough to have Bob Stjernstedt guide us the first two days in Bangweulu.

The trip lists at the end of the report were compiled directly after the trip, but all the text and information were written in June/July 2012 based on notes and a rather concise diary made at the time, so the day-to-day entries are relatively short.



Puku



Spotted Hyena

Itinerary

- June 10: Flights: Brussels – London and London – Johannesburg
June 11: Arrival in Johannesburg in the morning.
Flights: Johannesburg – Lusaka and Lusaka – Bangweulu
June 12: Bangweulu
June 13: Bangweulu
June 14: Bangweulu
June 15: Morning Bangweulu – Flight to Kapishya Lodge
June 16: Kapishya Lodge
June 17: Morning visit to Shiwa N'gandu Manor
Flight to North Luangwa national park: Mwaleshi Camp
June 18: North Luangwa national park: Mwaleshi Camp
June 19: North Luangwa national park: Mwaleshi Camp
June 20: Flight from Mwaleshi Camp to Tafika Camp in the Nsefu Sector
in South Luangwa national park
June 21: South Luangwa national park - Tafika Camp
June 22: South Luangwa national park: Flight Tafika – Mfuwe and stopover at Mfuwe Lodge
Transfer from Mfuwe Lodge to Chamilandu Bush Camp
June 23: South Luangwa national park: Chamilandu – Chindeni Bush Camp
June 24: South Luangwa national park: Chindeni Bush Camp
June 25: South Luangwa national park: Chindeni Bush Camp
June 26: Transfer Chindeni – Mfuwe airport, flights back home
June 27: Arrival Brussels



Luangwa valley

Day-to-Day Diary

June 10-11: Brussels – London – Johannesburg – Lusaka – Bangweulu

After three international flights we were glad that it was a relatively short flight to Bangweulu. At Lusaka airport we were picked up by Edmund Farmer, manager of the Kasanka Trust. Rather quickly after leaving Lusaka we flew over a seemingly empty country with only the occasional village or hamlet. Along the border with Congo the miombo woodland seemed quite pristine with barely signs of villages, but unfortunately the picture was and is less rosy on the ground. Primary/pristine forest and woodland are almost non-existent in Zambia and both forest and woodland loss has accelerated dramatically over the last ten years mainly due to widespread slash-and-burn agriculture, charcoal production and illegal logging.

When we finally approached our destination, the woodland suddenly made way for endless expanses of grassland and swamp. The views upon approaching the landing strip in Chikuni were unforgettable, vast plains with hundreds of black lechwes and large wetland areas with thousands of waterbirds. In Chikuni, which is nothing more than a hamlet, we were met by the staff of Shoebill Island Camp and then transported to the lodge by mokoro. The mokoro ride to the camp was spectacular with African spoonbill (>100), glossy ibis (>300), sacred ibis (>100), black egret, three white egret species in large numbers, squacco heron, open-billed stork, hundreds of ducks including fulvous whistling duck, both jacanas, and numerous LBJs. Late afternoon we saw at least 400 collared pratincoles at the causeway behind the lodge.

Upon arrival we were introduced to guides and staff, which included a Dutch volunteer that doubled as a guide and Bob Stjernstedt. At the time I didn't know who he was (they updated us on Bob in Tafika), but it quickly became clear that we were in good hands with Bob.



Shoebill Island Camp

I really liked Shoebill Island Camp. I have read that the accommodation has been upgraded a bit, but at the time it was fairly basic (a plus in my opinion, excessive luxury would spoil the atmosphere of the place): the tents were very small with just enough room for two beds and luggage. You couldn't really stand in the tents and the tents were basically for sleeping only. The long-drop toilet and shower

were a few meters behind the tent. Take a good torch when you go to the toilet at night because snakes do show up in the camp, in particular in the wet season. There were a couple of chairs to sit in front of your tent, which was a great way to soak up the atmosphere of the place. There also was a simple but comfortable communal area with some books, coffee, filtered water, etc.

June 12: Bangweulu – Searching for the Shoebill

In the morning we took the mokoro to go back to Chikuni and then made a game drive on the grasslands before exploring the wetlands in the Lukulu River area. The mokoro ride was very birdy again, but we didn't stop very much in order to have enough time to track down a shoebill. The water levels were lower than usual, so the guides weren't quite sure how long it would take to track down a shoebill.



Black Lechwes

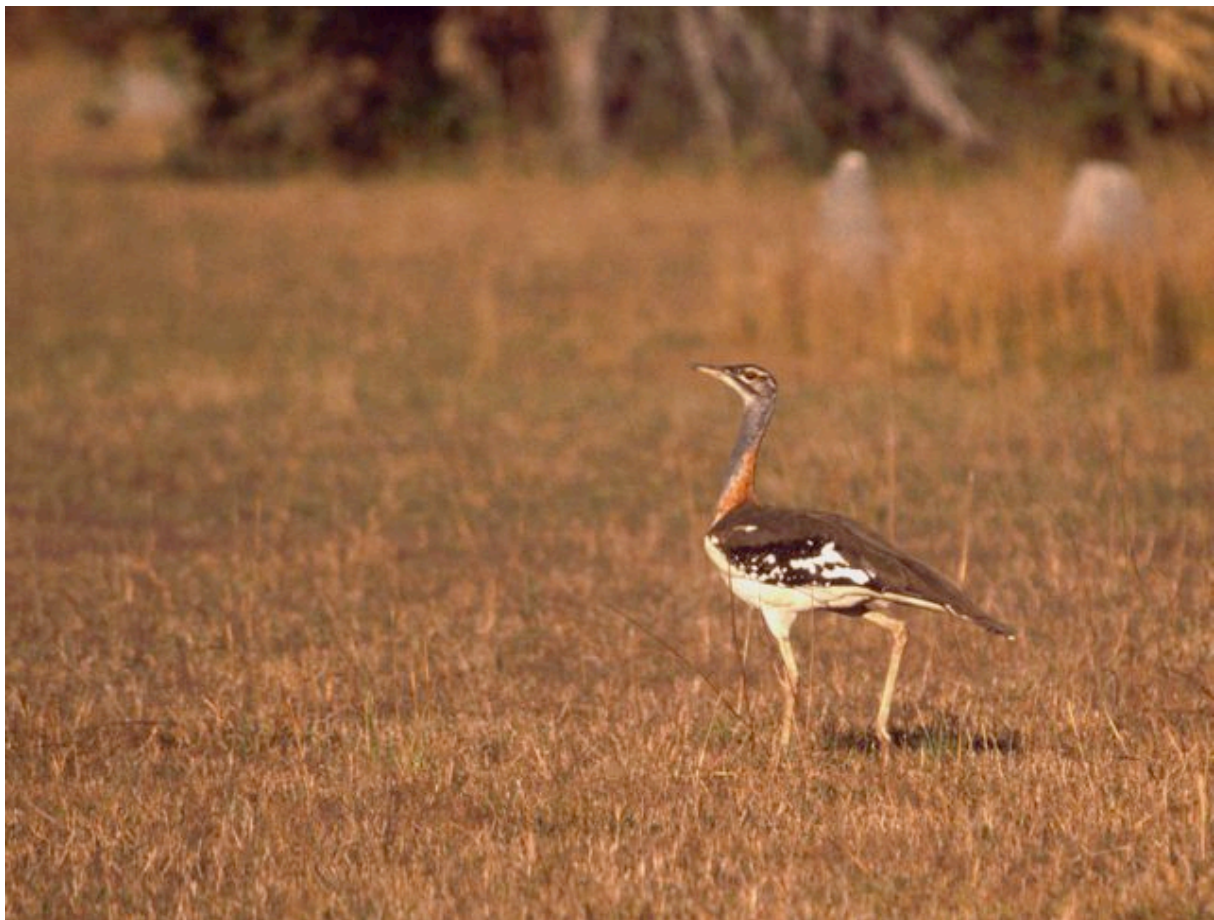
The sight of hundreds of black lechwes on the grasslands on the ground was as impressive as it was from the air yesterday. After some birding on the grasslands we visited a marshy area near the Lukulu River; with the help of local fishermen we luckily located a shoebill fairly quickly. It was quite distant but we were elated. Undoubtedly one of the most spectacular birds in the world. Other highlights that morning were martial eagle, lappet-faced vulture, harlequin quail, striped fluff-tail, rosy-breasted longclaw, lesser jacana and African water rail. Last night's collared pratincole sighting was impressive enough, but today we saw some 2000 fly past overhead. David, one of the guides, suggested that we should follow the Lukulu River, which proved to be an excellent idea, as we saw another shoebill and this time closer.

In the afternoon we made a mokoro trip north of the camp, but we got stuck because the water level was already too low and we didn't reach the area we wanted to go to. It was still good fun with good numbers of black egret and blue-breasted bee-eater plus several lesser jacobins. On the ride back we took some more time to work on the LBJs and Bob called in lesser swamp warbler, little rush warbler, swamp flycatcher, and chirping cisticola among others.

June 13: Bangweulu – Woodland and Grasslands

The plan today was to explore the woodland and grasslands south of Chikuni. On our drive through the woodland area we also passed the community camp Nsoke, but they mainly get hunters as guests.

The birding on the grasslands was excellent again and included Temminck's courser and woolly-necked stork. Mammals seen were plains zebra, black lechwe and buffalo. When we were about to enter the woodland area we picked up two side-striped jackals. In the woodland we saw among others vervet monkeys, striped kingfisher, yellow-fronted tinkerbird, black-backed barbet, bru bru, and swallow-tailed bee-eater. Only shortly after our picnic lunch our car broke down. While the two polers/guides tried to get the car working, Bob and I went birding (seeing among others greater honeyguide, black-collared barbet, green-capped eremomela and golden-breasted bunting) but when we returned after a couple of hours later the car still wasn't working, so Bob got involved as well. While taking a break I suddenly noticed that we were stranded right next to a tree where a martial eagle had an active nest. For a while the adult birds kept circling and calling nervously above our heads but at some point one of the adults wanted to check the nest, allowing great views of the bird landing and on the nest. In the late afternoon our car still wouldn't start and vultures started landing in the trees around us to roost (possibly also anticipating that we were hunters leaving offal behind). The vultures coming down to roost were mostly white-backed vultures, but also a few hooded vultures and one lappet-faced vulture. When the sun was already quite low on the horizon, the car finally got going again. On our way back we saw a few dozens of shy tsessebes. More confiding were two Denham's bustards in beautiful afternoon light.



Denham's Bustard

A little before dusk we got back to the landing in Chikuni. Near the landing we saw two white-headed vultures feeding on what looked like a dead fish on the floating vegetation in the marshes. The polers did their best to go back as fast as possible in order to avoid having to pole back in the dark, but the birding that evening was very good again with wattled crane, African water rail, little bittern and as always hundreds of the commoner ibis, heron and duck species. In the evening we heard that Bob unfortunately had to leave next morning to guide some group elsewhere last minute. He was surprised too and did not seem happy to leave Bangweulu.

June 14: Bangweulu – Into the Swamps

Today was our last full day in Bangweulu, but this time without Bob, which was definitely a handicap for finding LBJs and skulkers. When we walked to the boat landing in the camp, we witnessed an unbelievable congregation of waterbirds, which included two wattled cranes, several dozens of spoonbills, and hundreds of ducks and herons of various species. We went again to an area north of the camp but via a different route and this time we didn't get stuck. The mokoro ride was great, again fantastic scenery and good birding. We saw a painted snipe, hottentot and red-billed teal, pink-backed pelican, and at least five wattled cranes. Interesting was a broken-wing display of a long-toed plover, who was nesting on the floating vegetation close to the channel of water we were "peddling" through.



Wattled Cranes

In the late afternoon we made a walk along the causeway out of the camp and saw again hundreds of collared pratincoles plus greyheaded gull, whiskered tern, black-chested snake eagle, coppery sunbird and a group of about forty skimmers.

June 15: Morning Bangweulu – Afternoon flight to Kapishya

In the morning I did some birding around the camp, but the only new species was red-shouldered widowbird. Mid-morning we flew to Kapishya. The flight was one of the worst I have ever been on. There was a lot of turbulence and the plane made vertical drops constantly. I was feeling really sick when I got out of the plane. The rest of the afternoon I did mostly nothing and just sat down in the very pleasant hot pools.

June 16: Kapishya Lodge

For some reason I still wasn't feeling well in the morning and I resorted to armchair birding and a few more sessions in the hot pools. In the afternoon I was starting to feel better and we made a walk along the entrance road. My list for the day was very short, but we did get some nice species such as black-

backed barbet, Heuglin's robin, yellow-rumped tinkerbird, miombo double-collared sunbird, and black-throated wattle-eye.

June 17: Visit Shiwa Ng'andu – Flight to North Luangwa national park

In the morning we were picked up and driven to Shiwa Ng'andu. One of the staff gave us a tour around the mansion, which was interesting. We were then taken to the airstrip for a spectacular flight to North Luangwa national park. Mwaleshi Camp is great: remote location, excellent food, outstanding guides and a lot of activities on foot. During our stay only the two of us and a friendly British couple stayed at the camp. They also enjoyed hiking so we could go out on relatively long walks each morning.

In the afternoon we made our first walk. The scenery was great, but the mammal sightings were relatively mundane: plains zebra, puku, impala, greater kudu and slender mongoose. We picked up a few interesting birds though, best of all being Lillian's lovebird.

June 18: North Luangwa national park: Mwaleshi Camp

In the morning we set off on a long hike to the confluence of the Luangwa and Mwaleshi River. Birding was good, in particular in the gallery forest along the rivers. Lillian's lovebird, white-fronted and little bee-eater, brown-hooded, pied and giant kingfisher, goliath heron, a single skimmer, coppery-tailed and Senegal coucal, Meves' starling, long-toed plover and martial eagle were some of the species seen. Mammals included bushbuck, Smith's bush squirrel, puku, zebra, impala, and waterbuck. At the confluence of both rivers there were a lot of hippos (at least 200) and also a good number of crocodiles. At the confluence the camp's staff surprised us with a very tasty three-course bush lunch. After the lunch we made a game drive back to the camp and added red-billed wood hoopoe, African hawk eagle, gabar goshawk and double-banded sandgrouse.



Cookson's wildebeests

In the afternoon we made a walk through a dry parched-looking area that was nevertheless very scenic. In a denser stretch of mopane we almost walked into three elephants and had to sneak out quietly in order not to disturb them and avoid a charge. A bit further on we bumped into a serval that was hunting for rodents. Late afternoon we continued by vehicle and we saw among others a group of about 35-40 Cookson's wildebeests and a single three-banded (Heuglin's) courser. After dark we picked up four-toed elephant shrew, Central African large-spotted genet, scrub hare, bronze-winged courser and Mozambique nightjar.

June 19: North Luangwa national park: Mwaleshi Camp

This morning we made a long hike more or less following the Mwaleshi River west of the camp passing through a variety of habitats. The birding was good with bearded woodpecker, white-crested

helmet-shrike, African firefinch, blue waxbill, Lillian's lovebird, Meyer's parrot, black-crowned tchagra, scarlet-chested sunbird, red-billed buffaloweaver, horus swift and Böhm's spinetail.

During a short break for drinks our guide Ed spotted a leopard in the distance but it disappeared before any of the group saw it. We decided to cross the river to see if we could track the leopard. We followed his tracks and at some point the tracker and Ed saw the leopard in a flash a few hundred meters ahead of us, but again all four of us missed it. We kept following the leopard spoor but then got stopped in our tracks by a group of old male buffaloes about 50-60 meters away. They weren't in a great mood and one animal that seemed to be wounded decided to charge us. The tracker and Ed told us to wait behind some bushes while they drew attention to the charging buffalo. Initially the buffalo raced straight toward us but in the end he made a bit of a turn and stampeded past us. Only a few minutes later we walked along the edge of a stretch of high elephant grass when the tracker in front suddenly jumped back and pulled out his gun (almost breaking Ed's ribs with the gun in the process). A huge male lion jumped up with a savage roar and lucky for us he ran away only 6-7 meters in front of us. The lion clearly had been fast asleep and was probably as surprised as we were. On we went to cross a small stream. Just when we were crossing the river, we noticed that a hippo was about hundred meters away from us (and any water). Initially, the hippo seemed a bit uncertain what to do, but then decided to charge. We crossed the river at lightning speed and managed to get to a safe area before the hippo managed to go into a full-blown charge. Quite a morning.



Battle-scarred Hippo

In the afternoon we made a relatively short walk. Little new was seen and a roosting Verreaux's eagle owl was the only species of note. Just before sunset and back at the camp Ed called us. A serval was hunting in front of the camp only about 30-40 meters way. He was actively hunting and made several impressive pounces. Excellent prolonged views of this elegant cat.

Lunch and dinner were elaborate affairs again with very tasty food, which was particularly impressive considering the simple conditions the cooks had to work in. At dinner we met our pilot for tomorrow's flight. He would sleep in the camp in order to get up very early for the short flight to Tafika Camp in South Luangwa.

June 20: Flight from Mwaleshi to Tafika (South Luangwa national park)

We got up before dawn and had a last delicious breakfast. Reluctantly we left Mwaleshi. On our short drive to the airstrip we found a group of fourteen spotted hyenas not far from the airstrip. The flight

from North Luangwa to the Nsefu sector in South Luangwa was fantastic again. Straight from the airstrip we made our first game drive, which proved to be interesting with a lioness and a group of spotted hyena feeding on a buffalo carcass. Initially the lioness was feeding on the carcass alone with two hyenas standing only a few meters away, one heavily drooling saliva. The lioness growled every now and then, but pretty much ignored them. After a while one hyena left, but the other hyena sneaked to the other side of the buffalo furthest away from the lion and to my amazement they were both eating from the carcass at some point. Another highlight was my first sighting of southern carmine bee-eaters. Other goodies were martial eagle, southern ground hornbill, brown snake eagle and unfortunately less than optimal views of Ovambo sparrowhawk. Back at the lodge we saw a single skimmer fly over the river.



On our evening drive we checked out the buffalo carcass again and now found eight hyenas. The lioness was still around as well, but was resting a few hundred meters from the carcass. About eight Thornicroft giraffes and ten elephants were seen plus numerous zebras, pukus, and impalas. Birds included grey crowned crane, skimmer, shikra, spoonbill, both oxpeckers, hamerkop, water thick-knee, red-billed firefinch and darter. After dark we drove back to the buffalo carcass where we heard the hyenas crunching buffalo bones from quite a distance before we could actually see them. The night drive initially seemed a bit dull, but not far from the lodge a leopard appeared out of nowhere and we had excellent views only 6-7 meters from the car.

June 21: South Luangwa national park - Tafika

In the morning we made a game drive to a nearby yellow-billed stork colony, where we stopped for coffee and some snacks. The colony was spectacular with several hundred birds present and dozens constantly flying in and out. On the ground marabous were finishing off young birds that had fallen out of the nest. At some point a young martial eagle attacked the colony and tried to get to the young birds, but he was stopped by combined efforts of the adult birds.

It was mainly a birding morning with several interesting species such as red-billed wood hoopoe, large golden weaver, southern carmine bee-eater, Heuglin's robin, horus swift, open-billed stork, goliath heron and saddle-billed stork. Mammal-wise not much of interest was seen. On the way back a lot of

raptors were up in the air including bateleur, lizard buzzard, African hawk eagle, brown snake eagle, gymnogene and a shikra. We also found a roosting Verreaux's eagle owl.

Before lunch I birded the lodge grounds, which was pretty good with among others black-headed oriole, red-billed firefinch, green-backed cameroptera, black-backed puffback, African paradise-flycatcher and southern black flycatcher.

The afternoon game drive led through a scenic area, where we saw another family group of red-billed wood hoopoes, black-chested snake-eagle, seven grey crowned cranes and purple indigobird. Mammals seen included several greater kudus, two southern reedbucks, two slender mongooses and two spotted hyenas. After dark we saw greater bushbaby (poor views), three civets, four white-tailed mongooses and no less than six Central African large-spotted genets. Birds seen while spotlighting included bronze-winged courser, fiery-necked nightjar and Mozambique nightjar.

June 22: South Luangwa national park: Flight Tafika – Mfuwe: Transfer to Chamilandu

In the morning I decided to give a flight with the microlight a go. It was more fun than I thought it would be. Great views over the Luangwa valley, but the aircraft flew low enough to see animals as well (even monkeys and larger and medium-sized birds in trees). Elephant, buffalo, impala, zebra, baboons, waterbuck and best of all a group of eland were seen from the air.

The flight from Tafika to Mfuwe was relatively dull compared to the previous flights. A representative of Mfuwe Lodge, the main lodge of the Bushcamp Company, picked us up at the airport. A drive of about 45 minutes took us from the airport to the main entrance of South Luangwa national park. We stopped for a drink and some formalities at Mfuwe Lodge and were then transferred to Chamilandu Bush Camp. On the first stretch not much was seen, but things got more interesting beyond Kuyenda Bush Camp. Here we saw a group of grey crowned cranes and a bit further in a dry riverbed a large male leopard.



The half-open tents of Chamilandu Camp are beautiful but the location along the Luangwa River is not that special in my opinion. The food was good, but the least exciting of all the camps we stayed at in South Luangwa. The afternoon drive was relatively quiet with the best sightings being eight Thornicroft's giraffes, a group of banded mongooses and a single skimmer. After dark we encountered white-tailed mongoose, Central African large-spotted genet, civet, four-toed elephant shrew, a baboon spider, African scops owl, bronze-winged courser and Mozambique nightjar.

June 23: South Luangwa national park: Chamilandu - Chindeni

During our night drive last night we had seen very bright eye-shine in the distance and both the guide and the spotter were convinced they were lions. So early morning we drove back to the area and quite quickly we found the lions, two females and two males. Brilliant views of one male walking right past the vehicle. We also saw six warthogs and lots of pukus and impalas.



The game drive was kept short because after an early breakfast we were to walk from Chamilandu to Chindeni. It was a good walk with nice scenery along the way, but it was very hot and humid that day. Mammal sightings weren't that exciting with warthog, elephant, and waterbuck the most noteworthy species. The most interesting birds were tawny eagle, bearded woodpecker, lesser honeyguide, village indigobird, and lappet-faced vulture. Most interesting sighting was probably a flap-necked chameleon that changed colour while crossing the road. The classic safari tents of Chindeni Camp were maybe less hip than the posh designer look of Chamilandu, but the scenery from the balcony of our tent was much better. From the balcony you overlook a large oxbow lake, where animals come to drink and a good selection of birds always seems present. The woodland around the camp was good for birding as well. Food and guiding were excellent here.

The afternoon walk and ensuing night drive didn't bring any new birds or mammals. Most interesting was a large buffalo herd of at least hundred animals. Elephant, a single spotted hyena and Thornicroft's giraffe were seen as well. The night drive produced civet, white-tailed mongoose and large-spotted genet.

June 24: South Luangwa national park: Chindeni

We had barely left the lodge grounds when we ran into a pack of about eight African wild dogs. They were walking towards us and moving quickly, so we had to turn the car but kept having trouble keeping up with them in the rather dense woodland and eventually we lost them. The lodge staff told us that a little later they had raced right through the middle of the camp. We pursued our original plan to drive to the northern edge of the oxbow lake in front of Chindeni Camp. The terrain here was quite open and we were surprised to see four more “painted” dogs. They started a hunt only a few minutes after we arrived on the scene. Their speed, agility and endurance were amazing. We had to do some crazy driving to keep up with them. At some point the dogs had singled out one of the female pukus and were closing in on the animal. In a desperate attempt to escape the puku ran into the oxbow lake right in front of the tents of the camp and was determined to swim to the other side. The dogs followed her into the water for a few meters, but clearly were scared to go further and kept looking at the puku from the water’s edge. The puku swam to the other side and only had some 15 meters to swim before it would reach the bank on the other side of the lagoon. Out of nowhere a massive crocodile jumped up, grabbed the puku and drowned and killed the animal almost instantly. The four dogs regrouped and barely a few minutes later, they were again hunting at full speed after some impalas. Again they managed to single out a young female, but this impala also ran into the oxbow lake but she only went in about thirty meters, where she could just stand on the ground and still hold her head above the water. The impala and the wild dogs kept looking at each other for a while, but the dogs were well aware of what was lurking in the water and in the end they gave up and walked back to the area where we had first seen them. We followed them and watched them making the characteristic “hoo” contact call. Our guide Freya told us to wait and indeed about ten minutes later a larger subgroup of the pack joined the four. In total we now counted at least eleven animals (a few more seemed to be lurking in denser woodland nearby, because we kept hearing calls). It was fun to watch the greeting rituals between the individuals. Eventually the dogs started walking again and we lost them rather quickly in an area of dense mopane.



African Wild Dogs on the lookout and a couple of minutes before they started the hunt

In the late afternoon we went out again. Before we got driving we first made a relatively short walk but saw little of note. As always the after-dark part of the evening drive was the most productive and we got decent views of greater bushbaby, one four-toed elephant shrew, three genets, a civet, two white-tailed mongooses and best of all a porcupine. It was a little too distant for photos but we had unrestricted views and it stayed around long enough for a good look.



Bushbuck



Young Eli's

June 25: South Luangwa national park: Chindeni

After yesterday it was almost inevitable that today would be a bit of an anti-climax, and it was. In the morning the best sighting was an unidentified gerbil, probably a bushveld gerbil. Most noteworthy bird was a greater honeyguide. The afternoon/night drive delivered the usual suspects with a banded sand snake being the only novelty.

June 26: Transfer Chindeni - Mfuwe, flights back home

Unfortunately it was time to go back to Europe. The drive back to Mfuwe produced no new mammals, but we had nice views of a group of southern ground hornbills. Flights back to Europe were uneventful.



Evening ambiente in the Chindeni area in South Luangwa



African Wild Dogs

Trip lists, Literature and Index

Finding a field guide for the birds of this part of Africa initially seemed to be quite a problem at the time, but luckily *Birds of Africa (South of the Sahara)* by I. Sinclair and P. Ryan was published late 2003. Despite its shortcomings (bulky, variable quality of the drawings, surprising splits, etc.) the book was a sensation in my opinion. It is still the best choice for a trip to Zambia if you want to take just one guide. For mammals I took *Field Guide to African Mammals* by J. Kingdon. For general travel information and preparation, I used a couple of trip reports and the excellent Bradt Travel Guide on Zambia. Feedback on the trip lists is most welcome, contact me at olpa [at] onsneteindhoven.nl

The trip lists were compiled in June 2004 and I haven't made much updates to nomenclature, splits, etc. The following acronyms are used in the lists below: BW = Bangweulu, KP = Kapishya Lodge, NL = North Luangwa national park and SL = South Luangwa national park.



Nesting Yellow-billed Storks and attacking Martial Eagle (upper right corner)

MAMMAL LIST

Yellow Baboon *Papio cynocephalus* - common in NL and SL. Not sure if Yellow Baboon is still correct, because they are now sometimes referred to as the endemic race: Luangwa (Chacma) Baboon *Papio ursinus jubilaeus*

Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus pygerythrus* (or Malbrouck, *Chlorocebus cynosures*) - regular but not daily sightings in NL and SL. One group in BW in the woodland.

Greater Bushbaby (a.k.a. Thick-tailed Galago) *Otolemur crassicaudatus* – one on a night drive at Tafika, several pairs of very bright eyeshine bouncing around in trees (but far away) in Chindeni were probably this species as well.

Four-toed Elephant Shrew *Petrodromus tetradactylus* – seen on June 18 in NL, 1-3 seen on almost every night drive in SL, particularly good sightings in Chindeni

Cape Porcupine *Hystrix africae australis* – one on a night drive in Chindeni

Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis* – 1-3 on most night drives in SL, also seen in NL

Smith's Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus cepapi* - fairly common in NL and SL

[Gerbil species – one crossed the road in Chindeni, but disappeared too quickly to identify, maybe Bushveld Gerbil]

[Bat species – several species were seen around dusk at NL and SL, but no idea which species]

Straw-coloured Fruitbat *Eidolon helvum* – only seen in SL (Chindeni and Chamilandu)

Serval *Leptailurus serval* – one on a walk late afternoon in NL on June 18, another one hunting in front of Mwaleshi camp in NL on June 19

Side-striped Jackal *Canis adustus* – two in BW

African Wild Dog *Lycaon pictus* – unforgettable views of a pack hunting at Chindeni, see diary on June 24. A total of about 11-12 animals was seen.

Spotted Hyena *Crocuta crocuta* - a group of fourteen animals was seen not far from the airstrip on our way out from NL to SL, a pack of at least twelve was hanging around a buffalo carcass in the Nsefu sector in SL on June 20. Two were seen on the afternoon drive on June 21, single animals were seen several times in the Chindeni area

African Civet *Civettictis civetta* - seen on almost every night drive in SL

Central African Large-Spotted Genet *Genetta maculata* - seen on almost every night drive in SL. The IUCN maps suggest that Miombo/Angolan Genet *G. angolensis* only occurs west of the Muchinga escarpment and not in the Luangwa valley, so I guess it is *G. maculata* in the Luangwa valley.



Central African Large-Spotted Genet

Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguinea* – one in NL on June 17, two on the afternoon drive on June 21 in the Nsefu sector in SL, a few sightings around Chindeni and Chamilandu in SL

Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo* – seen about 5-6 times in NL and SL

White-tailed Mongoose *Ichneumia albicauda* - 1-4 on almost every night drive in SL, also seen in NL

Leopard *Panthera pardus* - a female on a nightdrive in the Tafika area was seen at close range, one male in a dry riverbed near Kuyenda Bush Camp en route from Mfuwe Lodge to Chamilandu Bush Camp, another leopard was only seen by the guide and trackers in NL

Lion *Panthera leo* – a female at Tafika on a buffalo carcass, two males and two females walked right past our vehicle at Chindeni, and we almost literally stumbled over a large sleeping male in NL

African Savannah Elephant *Loxodonta africana* – three in NL, common in SL

Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* - common in NL and SL, heard only in BW

Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* – common, seen in BW, SL and NL

(Crawshay's) Plains Zebra *Equus quagga crawshayi*– about ten in BW, seen daily in SL and NL, but typically in fairly low numbers (5-15)

Thornicroft's Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis thornicrofti* – only seen in SL, about 2-10 daily

Cookson's Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus cooksoni* – only seen in NL, about 5-6 sightings in total, usually small groups of 4-8 animals, but once a group of about 35-40, relatively shy

African Savannah Buffalo *Syncerus caffer* – a total of about 100 on the plains in BW, very common in NL with some large groups of up to 200 animals, relatively uncommon in SL (in comparison to NL) when we were there

Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus* – fairly common, 1-2 seen on most days in NL and SL

Greater Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* – only one sighting in SL

Eland *Taurotragus oryx* - a group of about 20-25 was seen from the microlight in Tafika

Puku *Kobus vardoni* - common in SL and NL

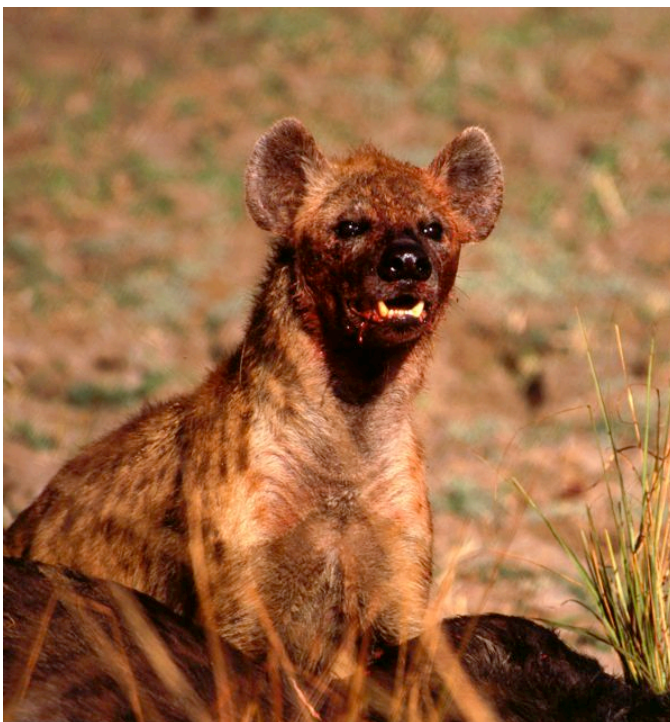
Black Lechwe (or Bangweulu Lechwe) *Kobus leche smithemani* – at least several hundred on the plains in BW and also about 70-100 daily around the camp.

Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus* – only a few sightings in NL, daily in good numbers in SL

Tsessebe *Damaliscus lunatus superstes* – a few dozens in BW on June 13

Impala *Aepyceros melampus* - common in NL and SL

Southern Reedbuck *Redunca arundinum* – two on the afternoon game drive on June 21 in the Nsefu sector in SL, an uncommon sighting according to our guide



Spotted Hyena



Protective Elephant Mum

BIRD LIST

Reed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus* – common in BW

Darter *Anhinga rufa* – a few sightings in SL (Tafika)

Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* – about 5-6 in BW on June 12 and 14

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus (pavesii)* – fairly common in BW

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* – regular sightings in BW

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* – common in BW

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* – common in BW, small numbers elsewhere

Green-backed Heron *Butorides striatus* – fairly common in SL, 1-2 daily around Chindeni and Chamilandu

Black Egret *Egretta ardesiaca* - good numbers in BW, often in groups of 20-40, often feeding in front of the camp including a group of at least fifty on June 14.



Black Egrets in Bangweulu

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* – common in BW

Great White Egret *Egretta alba* – common in BW, NL, and SL

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* – common in BW, regular elsewhere

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* – only small daily numbers (1-3) in BW, NL and SL

Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* – about 6-7 sightings in total, seen in NL and SL

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* – fairly common in SL (several daily)

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* – common in NL and SL, the breeding colony near Tafika was spectacular

Open-billed Stork *Anastomus lamelligerus* - uncommon, only 1-2 on a few days, seen in BW, NL, SL

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* – up to eight on the plains in BW

Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* uncommon, a few sightings in in NL and SL

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* – not that common, small numbers in BW, NL, SL

Shoebill *Balaeniceps rex* – two in BW

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* - common in BW, and quite common in NL and SL

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* – common in BW, one at Chindeni in SL

Hadedda Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* – common, seen in BW, NL, SL, KP

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* – common in BW, also small numbers seen in SL

Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* - small numbers (5-15) in BW and SL

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* – common in BW and SL

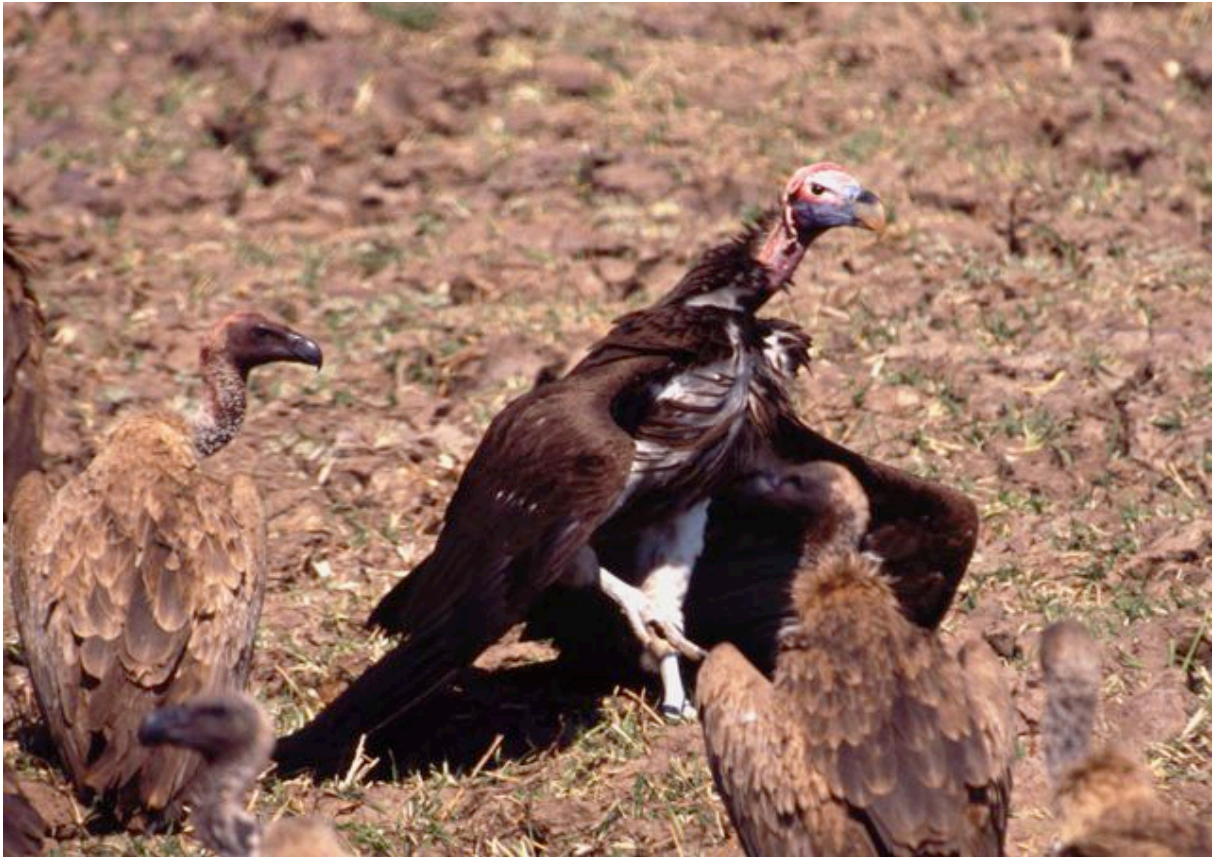
Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* - common

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* – common in BW, regular sightings in SL

Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* – common in BW, also seen in SL

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata* – small numbers in BW

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* - small numbers in BW
Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* – a few in BW
African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* – common
White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* - common in BW, NL, and SL



Top: Lappet-faced and White-backed Vulture // Bottom: White-headed vulture

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* – low numbers in BW, SL and NL
White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis* - two in BW and small numbers in SL and NL

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* – small numbers (5-10) in the woodlands in BW, NL and SL
 Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus* – a total of three sightings, one in NL and twice in Tafika (SL)
 Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* – fairly common, about 3-5 seen on most days of the tour
 Gymnogone *Polyboroides typus* – an adult at Tafika, an adult and juvenile SL at Chindeni on June 24
 African Marsh Harrier *Circus ranivorus* - 1-2 daily in BW
 Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates* - one in the woodland area in BW
 Gabar Goshawk *Melierax gabar* – one in SL
 Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis* – fairly poor views of one in the Tafika area
 Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus* - one in NL, and a probable one in SL
 Shikra *Accipiter badius* – one in SL (Tafika area), a possible one in BW
 Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* – one in the Tafika area in SL
 Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* – about 4-5 sightings in SL
 African Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster* – a subadult bird in SL in the Nsefu sector
 Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* - a couple of sightings in BW
 Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* – several in BW including two on the nest in the woodland, regular sightings in NL and SL



Young Martial Eagle mobbed by Yellow-billed Storks

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* – one in BW
 Swainson's Francolin *Francolinus swainsonii* – fairly common in NL and SL
 Red-necked Francolin *Francolinus afer* – small numbers in NL, SL, and BW
 Harlequin Quail *Coturnix delegorguei* – a pair in BW on the edge of the plains
 Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* – common in NL and SL
 Striped (aka Red-tailed Flufftail) *Sarothrura affinis* – seen on two days in BW!!
 African Water Rail *Rallus caerulescens* - several seen in BW
 [African Crake *Crecopsis egregia* – a possible one in BW]
 Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostris* – common in BW

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio* – quite common in BW
 Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* – common in BW
 Wattled Crane *Grus carunculatus* - about 2-8 daily in BW
 Southern Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum* – about 2-10 daily in SL
 Denham's Bustard *Neotis denhami* – two seen in BW on the plains



Grey Crowned Cranes

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* - common
 Lesser Jacana *Microparra capensis* - a few daily in BW, one sighting in SL
 Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* – one in BW
 Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* – common in BW, SL
 Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus* – seen regularly in SL in NL with 5 on the morning hike on June 19
 Three-banded (or Heuglin's) Courser *Rhinoptilus cinctus* – one in NL
 Bronze-winged Courser *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* – one seen in NL, two on the night drive in Chamilandu in SL
 Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii* – two on the plains in BW
 Common Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* – several tens in BW
 Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* – fairly common in BW
 Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* – a few in NL
 African Wattled Lapwing (Senegal Wattled Plover) *Vanellus senegallus* – fairly common in BW, NL, SL one on June 22 at Mfuwe lodge
 White-crowned Lapwing/Plover *Vanellus albiceps* – fairly common in BW, NL, SL
 Blacksmith Lapwing/Plover *Vanellus armatus* – common in BW, fairly common SL
 Crowned Lapwing/Plover *Vanellus coronatus* – only seen in NL
 Long-toed Lapwing/Plover *Vanellus crassirostris* – fairly common in BW, also seen in NL
 Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* – one in NL on June 19, one on June 22 at Mfuwe lodge, a few on most days in NL and SL
 Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* – only seen in BW
 Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* - a few in SL
 Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus* – a small group in in BW from the causeway
 Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* – four in BW from the causeway
 African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris* – about forty in BW seen from the causeway, one in NL on June 18, singles and small groups in SL along the Luangwa river (Tafika and Chamilandu)
 Double-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicinctus* – only seen in NL

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* – fairly common, seen in NL, SL, KP
 African Mourning Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* - common
 Cape Turtle Dove *Streptopelia capicola* - common
 Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* – one on June 17
 Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* – fairly common, seen in NL, SL and KP
 Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri* – a handful of sightings in NL and once in SL (two on June 19)
 Lilian's Lovebird *Agapornis lilianae* – a total of four sightings in in NL and SL
 [Purple-crested Turaco *Tauraco porphyreolophus* – heard only in NL and SL]
 Grey Lourie *Corythaixoides concolor* – quite common in NL and SL
 Coppery-tailed Coucal *Centropus cupreicaudus* – common but low daily numbers (3-5) in BW
 Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis* – a few scattered sightings in NL and SL
 White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosis* – my notes on this one were a bit confusing, but I am pretty sure we saw at least one in BW and SL
 Burchell's Coucal *Centropus burchelli* – two in SL
 [Barn Owl *Tyto alba* - heard only in BW]
 African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis* – one in SL on the night drive in Chamilandu
 Giant Eagle Owl *Bubo lacteus* – one roosting in daytime in NL, several sightings in SL on night drives
 Fiery-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus pectoralis* – several sightings on night drives in SL
 Natal Nightjar *Caprimulgus natalensis* – seen at dusk in BW
 Gaboon/Mozambique Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* - seen at BW, SL and NL
 Böhm's (Bat-like) Spinetail *Neafrapus boehmi* – a small group seen along the Mwaleshi River in NL on June 19
 Little Swift *Apus affinis* – common, seen in NL and SL
 Horus Swift *Apus horus* – quite common in NL and SL
 Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* – seen in BW around the camp, also in SL and NL
 Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata* – common in BW, one in NL on June 19, regular sightings in SL
 Brown-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris* – 1-3 almost daily in NL and SL
 Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* – only seen in the woodland areas in BW
 Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* – a handful of sightings in NL and SL
 Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* - common in BW, regular sightings in SL and NL
 Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* – common in NL and SL
 Blue-breasted (aka White-cheeked) Bee-eater *Merops variegatus* - common in BW
 Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus* – a few in BW in the woodland area
 White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides* - fairly common in BW, SL, and NL
 Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides* – small numbers in SL (mainly around Tafika)
 Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata* - common
 [Racket-tailed Roller *Coracias spatulata* – my notes were pretty messy on this one. I seem to recall that we saw one in the woodlands in BW, but my notes only show a question mark]
 Red-billed Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* – a few sightings in NL and SL
 Hoopoe *Upupa epops* – a few in NL and SL (Chindeni)
 Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* – common in NL and SL
 African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus* – fairly common in NL and SL
 Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus cafer* – a total of five sightings, seen NL and SL
 Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* – seen in the miombo woodland in BW
 Golden-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* - good views of one at KP
 Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus* – seen well in the woodland in BW
 Black-backed Barbet *Lybius minor* – two seen in BW (woodland) and one in KP
 Greater honeyguide *Indicator indicator* - one in the woodland area in BW and one in SL
 Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* – two sightings in SL
 Bennett's Woodpecker *Campethera bennettii* – one in SL
 Bearded Woodpecker *Thripias namaquus* – one seen in NL on June 19, one on a walk in the Chindeni area on June 23
 Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea* – only seen in BW on the plains
 African Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola* – fairly common in NL, SL
 Banded Martin *Riparia cincta* – a few seen in BW

Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* – common in BW, NL, SL
 Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica* – fairly common in NL, SL
 Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis* – only seen in BW
 African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* – quite common, seen in KP, SL, and NL
 Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* – quite common on the plains in BW
 Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* – one identified by Bob in BW
 Rosy-breasted Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae* - two at BW (on the plains)
 Terrestrial Brownbul *Phyllastrephus terrestris* - fairly common in SL
 Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* – common, in particular in BW en KP, seen on most days
 Heuglin's Robin *Cossypha heuglini* – quite common, seen in BW, KP, SL
 Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* – a few seen at BW
 Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata* – fairly common in BW
 Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala* – a few sightings in BW, taped into view by Bob
 African Moustached Warbler *Melocichla mentalis* – one in SL, identified by the guide
 Lesser Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* - a few sightings in BW, taped into view by Bob
 African Yellow Warbler *Chloropeta natalensis* – a couple seen in BW
 Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops* – two seen in the woodland in BW
 Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops* – a couple of sightings in BW
 Chirping Cisticola *Cisticola pipiens* – seen twice in BW, lured into view by Bob
 Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* – a few seen in NL, SL
 Green-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura* – two in the grounds of Tafika Lodge
 Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina* – one in NL, one at Tafika Camp
 Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica* – quite common in BW
 Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens* - one in KP along the entrance road, also seen in SL
 Black-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira peltata* - a male in KP and a couple in SL
 Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* – quite common, seen in BW, SL, NL, and KP
 Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii* – seen a few times in SL
 Hartlaub's (aka White-rumped) Babbler *Turdoides leucopygius* – three sightings in BW
 Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* – one male on June 19 in NL
 Collared Sunbird *Nectarinia venusta* – a few at KP
 White-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia talatala* – ticked as seen but no location and can't remember where
 Miombo Double-collared Sunbird *Nectarinia manoensis* – two at KP
 Coppery Sunbird *Nectarinia cuprea* – several seen at BW and KP
 African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* – one in SL
 Eastern Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus* – two in Chindeni Camp
 Fiscal Shrike *Lanius collaris* – common in BW
 Brubru *Nilaus afer* – fairly common, seen in BW, NL, SL
 Southern Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla* - fairly common in SL and NL
 Brown-headed Tchagra *Tchagra australis* – a few scattered sighting throughout the tour
 Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegala* – a couple on June 19 in NL, one at Chindeni on June 25
 Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus* - fairly common in SL and NL, seen a few times
 White Helmet Shrike *Prionops plumatus* – a small group in NL on June 19
 Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* – very common
 Pied Crow *Corvus albus* – only seen in BW and KP
 Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* – regular sightings in BW
 Southern Long-tailed (Meves') Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii* – common in NL and SL
 Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* – seen in NL, SL and BW
 Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* – seen on buffalo on the plains in BW, quite common in NL and SL
 Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* - common in NL and SL
 Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger* – a group on June 19 in NL
 White-browed Sparrow-weaver *Plocepasser mahali* - quite common in NL and SL
 Holub's (Large Golden) Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* – a few sightings in BW and SL
 Southern Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus* – only seen in BW
 Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* – common in NL and SL

Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* – seen in BW, but none in breeding plumage
 Red-shouldered Whydah *Euplectes axillaris* – only seen in BW
 Brown Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta* – a couple seen in BW
 Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* – about 5-6 sightings in NL and SL
 Blue-billed (aka African) Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata* – seen on June 19 in NL
 Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* – 3-4 sightings in NL and SL
 African Quail-Finch *Ortygospiza atricollis* - two on the plains in BW called in by Bob, a scarce species there
 Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata* – only seen in SL
 Dusky (aka Purple) Indigobird *Vidua purpurascens* – only seen in SL
 Eastern Paradise-Whydah *Vidua paradisaea* – seen in NL and SL
 Broad-tailed Paradise-Whydah *Vidua obtusa* – seen in SL
 Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* – two in BW in the woodland area



Heuglin's Courser / Lilian's Lovebird / Shoebill

OTHER WILDIFE

Nile Crocodile *Crocodylus Niloticus* – common in NL and SL
 Water Monitor Lizard *Varanus salvator* – one in NL, one at Tafika, one from the hide at Mfuwe lodge
 Bibron Gecko *Pachydactylus bibronii* – single animals on two different night drives in Chindeni
 [Unidentified Gecko species – one at Tafika]
 Flap-necked Chameleon, *Chamaeleo dilepis* – one on the afternoon drive in Tafika on June 21, one on the walking safari from Chamilandu to Chindeni
 [Tree Frog species – dozens in Chamilandu]
 [Viper species – one near Chamilandu]
 Baboon spider species – two on night drives in Chindeni



Flap-necked Chameleon