

17 Days of Uganda birding and Photography Safari

Key Sites; Entebbe Botanical Gardens, Mabamba or Kamengo, Murchison Falls National Park, Budongo Forest, Kibale Forest, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Lake Mburo National Park.

Note; don't forget to come along with your most wanted bird checklist!

Overview

This trip covers the most key wildlife destinations of Uganda's best birding and general wildlife spots and the strategic points which are highly regarded as important reserves of the best wildlife encounter. Our guides pay attention to the need of your trip and your expectations in order to make your journey fruitful. Please come with your most wanted checklist along!

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival

Early arrivals will give a chance for birding at Entebbe botanical gardens located on the northern part of Lake Victoria. The gardens harbor a collection of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate plants and shrubs which regenerate over the years. The place is a habitat of a large array of about 250 bird species.

Among others, we shall have a chance to trace for; **Great Blue Turaco, Ross's Turaco, Saddle-Billed Stork, Golden-Backed Weaver, Yellow-Backed Weaver, Orange Weaver, African Palm-Swift, Winding Cisticola, Splendid Glossy-Starling, Northern Brown-Throated Weaver, Slender-Billed Weaver, Scaly Francolin, Green-Backed Heron, Tawny-Franked Prinia, Black And White-Casqued Hornbill, Black Kite, Yellow-Fronted Tinkerbird, Saddle-Billed Stork, Open-Billed Stork, Marabou Stork, Grey-Caped Warbler, Pied Crow, Little Egret, Black-Headed Heron, Cattle Egret, Spotted-Backed Weaver, Black And White-Manikin, Bronzy Manikin, Red-Cheeked Cordon-Bleu** etc. Stay at Lake Victoria View Guesthouse B&B

DAY 2: Birding Mabamba or Kamengo swamp situated on western part of Entebbe, afternoon Mpanga forest.

This morning, we have an early breakfast, and go birding to Mabamba or Kamengo. One of a few remaining productive wetland in Uganda protected by the local communities. extensive papyrus swamps with labyrinth's channels and lagoons, classified as an important bird area (IBA), it's a home of multiple Shoebills-Uganda's most famous avian resident and the only representative in its family, is the amongst most sought after birds

in the whole African continent! Its only traced by canoeing through the channels by the wooden boat. other birds at Mabamba or Kamengo include; **Papyrus Gonolek, Blue-Breasted Bee-Eater, Lesser Jacana, African Jacana, White-Winged Black Tern, Grey-Headed Gull, African Skimmers, Little Egret, Long-Toed Lapwing, Spur-Winged Lapwing, African Fish-Eagle, Goliath Heron, Purple Heron, Common Squacco Heron, Striated Heron, Blue-Headed Coucal, Malachite Kingfisher, Black Crake, Hamerkop, African Marsh-Harrier, Yellow-Billed Duck, Hadada Ibis, White-Browed Scrub-Robin, Swamp Flycatcher, Vanga Flycatcher, Weyn's Weaver, Eastern Grey Plantain-Eater, Sedge Warbler, Wood Sandpiper, Pied Kingfisher, Cape Wagtail, Rufous-Napped Lark, Green Backed Heron, African Snip, Croaking Cisticola, White-Faced Whistling Duck, Spur-Winged Goose, Black-Crowned Waxbill, Scarce Swift, Bern Swallow, African-Dusky Flycatcher, African Yellow Warbler, Collard-Sunbird** etc. later retreat back to the guesthouse for overnight.

DAY 3: Birding to Murchison falls national park through Masindi town.

After breakfast we depart for Murchison falls national park stopping at Masindi town for lunch. Murchison falls national park is the largest and oldest game park of all the parks in Uganda. It lies at the northern end of the Albertine rift valley hosting 76 species of mammals and about 460 bird species, the park is famous of its worlds powerful falls which appear along an area just 6m wide! It is dominated by vast palm-dotted savanna and forest patches in the south.

Special birds there include among others; **Red-throated Bee-Eater, Northern carmine Bee-Eater, Crested Francolin, Black-faced Waxbill, Marsh Tchagra, Northern Red bishop, Black-winged Red Bishop, Namaqua Dove, Wire-tailed Swallow, White-browed-sparrow Weaver, Cliff Chart, Abyssinian Ground Hornbill, , Senegal Coucal, Silverbird, Standard Winged Night-Jar, Yellow-billed Duck, Black-headed Lapwing, Golden-backed Weaver, Green-winged Pytilia, Shoebill, African Fish Eagle, Black Kite, Black-shouldered Kite, Buff-bellied Warbler, Abyssinian Roller, Speckle-fronted Weaver, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver, Pennat-winged Night-Jar, White-rumped Canary,** etc. Stay at Fort Murchison 2nights FB

DAY 4: Whole day birding in MFNP.

We leave early with our packed lunch for morning game drive into the park birding towards the Nile ferry within the Borassus savanna where we will also encounter a variety of **Antelopes, Elephants, Cape Buffalos, Giraffes, Lions and Leopards, Jackson's Heart-beasts** among others. In the afternoon we have a launch cruise to the bottom of the falls where a variety of water and special birds will be seen such as **Rock Pratincole, Northern Carmine Bee-Eater, Red-Throated Bee-Eater, White-Crested Turaco, Vinaceous Dove,**

Beautiful Sunbird, Red-Winged Warbler, Senegal Thick-Knee, Grosbeak Weaver, Bruce's Green-Pigeon, Chestnut-Crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Spotted Morning-Thrush, Osprey, Bar-Breasted Firefinch, Black-Headed Gonolek, Pel's Fishing-Owl, Yellow-Fronted Tinkerbird, Red-Necked Francolin, Little Bittern, Namaqua Dove, Little Sparrow-Hawk, Senegal Thick-Knee, Bat Hawk, Heugln's Francolin, Blue Spotted Wood Dove, Black-Billed Wood Dove, Swallow Tailed Eee-Eater, Madagascar Bee-Eater, Siffling Cisticola, Singing Cisticola, Yellow-Mantled Widowbird, Olive-Bellied Sunbird, African Quailfinch, Cabanis Bunting Etc.

DAY 5: Birding to Budongo forest.

Budongo forest is one of the largest natural forests in Africa, home of a combination of vegetation and tree species found elsewhere in forests of Africa and has the most challenging bird species some skulk on the tree canopies which calls for kin observation with a kin ornithologist! Birding through Kanyiyi Pabidi area will give a chance to see rare species like **puvel's Illadopsis**. In Budongo, we shall be looking for; **Crested Malimbe, Red-Headed Malimbe, Lemon Bellied Crombec, Rufous-Crowned Eremomela, Black-Eared Ground-Thrush, Black-Throated Apalis, Black-Caped Apalis, Buff-Throated Apalis, Green Hylia, Nahan's Francolin, Hairy-Breasted Barbet, Yellow-Spotted Barbet, Yellow-Billed Barbet, Western Black-Headed Oriole, Yellowbill, Brown-Eared Woodpucker, Yellow-Crested Woodpucker, Chocolate-Backed Kingfisher, African Dwarf, Shining Blue, Blue-Breasted Kingfisher, Yellow Longbill, African Crowned-Eagle, Forest Flycatcher, Yellow-Browed Camaroptera, Grey-Backed Camaroptera, Yellow-Mantled Weaver, Red-Headed Bluebill, Sabines Spinetail, Casin's Spinetail, Red-Tailed Anti-Thrush, Cameron Sombre, Slender Billed, Wilcock's Honeyguides, Jameson's Wattle-Eye, Blue-Throated Brown Sunbird, Little-Green Sunbird, Uganda Woodland Warbler, Rufous Flycatcher-Thrush etc.** Stay at Budongo Eco-lodge or Masindi hotel 2nights FB

DAY 6: Whole day birding in the royal mile

Early after breakfast, carry our picnic lunch and drive a short distance from the hotel that take us to one of the best birding spots in Uganda the royal mile and busingiro forest. The name reveals the African historical leisure spot for the traditional king of Bunyoro. At the mile, the forest being a bit dense, the trail lining was cleared to make a perfect view with good light for the bird photographs. And later after our excellent birding we get back to the hotel for refreshment, dinner and overnight.

DAY 7: Transfer to Kibale forest.

Morning after breakfast, with our packed lunch, we depart for Kibale national park. It will be quite a long distance with numbered stops for stretching and look at birds. Early arrivals will give a chance to do evening birding around the hotel. This primarily forest park is not only the best place to track chimpanzees, but also its greatest primate diversity and a thrilling variety of forest birds! Stay at Chimpanzee Forest Guesthouse 2nights FB

DAY 8: Birding and optional chimpanzee tracking.

(divided day; Birding and Chimp Tracking)

Wake up early and start birding along the roadside from the hotel to Bigodi sanctuary or wake up early at 5:00am and prepare ourselves for the most sought bird the **Green-breasted Pitta!** Thereafter we continue normal birding getting out from the forest to our hotel for lunch break. In the afternoon drive to the park visitor center for briefing and Chimp tracking. Kibale is a home of 13 primates and about 375 bird species. Primates include; **L'Hoest's Monkey, Red Colobus Monkey, Bush Baby, Olive Baboon, Red-Tailed Monkey, Grey-Cheeked Mangabey, Black And White Colobus, Blue Monkey, Chimpanzee etc.** and a long list of sought bird species like; **Afep Pigeon, Red-Winged Francolin, Narina Trogon, Bar-Tailed Trogon, Black-Billed Turaco, Black Bee-Eater, White-Headed Wood-Hoopoe, Yellow-Rumped Tinkerbird, African Pitta, Velvet Mantled Drongo, Petit's Cuckoo Shrike, African Broad Bill, Wilcock's Honeyguide, White-Spotted Flufftail, Western Nicator, White-Tailed Anti-Thrush etc.**

DAY 9: Birding to Queen Elizabeth National Park.

"Medley of wonders" is the second largest national park after Murchison, it's a home of over 600 species of birds! Therefore, it's one of the reason why this park is ranked among the best birding destinations in Africa. The park name was after the Queen of England's visit in 1954.

Common Scimitarbill, Whinchat, Spurb, Bronzy, Olive-Bellied, Marico, Purple-Banded, Orange-Tufted, Scarlet-Chested, Beautiful, Red-Chested Sunbirds, Three-Banded Plover, Caspian Plover, Kittlitz's Plover, Red-Caped Lark, Brown Babbler, Temminck's Courser, Northern Wheatear, Black-Winged Pratincole, White-Tailed Lark, Mosque Swallow, Black-Bellied Bustard, Little Swift, Harliquin Quail, Button Quail, White-Winged Warbler, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Ovampo Sparrowhawk, Secretarybird, Caruther's Cisticola, African Skimmers, Black-Headed Gonolek, Papyrus Gonolek, Red-Faced Cisticola, Red-Chested Cuckoo, Northern Puffback, Tropica Boubou, Diederik, Klaas's, African-Emerald Cukoos, Little Stint, Temminck's Stint, African-Wood Owl, Black-Shouldered Night-Jar, Yellow-Throated Long-Claw, East-African Swee, Common

Waxbill, Crimson-Rumped Waxbill, Fawn-Breasted Waxbill, Zebra Waxbill, Village Indigobird etc.. Stay at Bush Lodge or Park View 2nights FB

DAY 10: whole day birding in QENP

early after breakfast we leave the hotel for game drive. We'll have a chance to see a number of birds and mammals like **Giant Forest Hog, Elephants, Bush Bucks, Water Bucks, Wart Hogs, Baboons, Uganda Cobs** etc. early afternoon have our lunch and get ready for the afternoon launch cruise along the great Kazinga channel. Along this channel, you'll have about 4 to 5KM boat ride that is rich in savanna and water birds as well as a plenty of mammals! On your ride, you'll be guided by a well knowledgeable site guide and he/she will be in position to help you in all means concerning the wilderness of this park.

DAY 11: Depart for Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Early in the morning we depart for Bwindi through the southern sector of QENP-Ishasha where a chance may be granted for you to see the tree climbing lions. Bwindi is situated in southwestern Uganda, famous of its habitat of about 408 mountain gorilla's half of world's population! Including several habituated groups which can be tracked and home of about 350 species of birds including 23 Albertine rift endemics! And at least 14 species recorded nowhere else in Uganda! Opportunities abound to discover the local Bakiga and Batwa pygmy cultures through performances, workshops and village walks. It lies at a relatively higher altitude and temperature here is cooler ranging from 10 to 18°C. 23 Albertine rift endemics include; **Red-Throated Alethe, Archer's Robin-Chat, Yellow Eyed Flycatcher, Chapin's Flycatcher, Blue-Headed Sunbird, Regal Sunbird, Rockefeller's Sunbird, Purple-Breasted Sunbird, Strange Weaver, Dusky Crimson-Wing, Red-Collard Mountain Babbler, Chapin's Mountain Babbler, Grauer's Warbler, Neumann's' Warbler, Prigogine's Greenbul, Black-Faced Apalis, Collard Apalis, Stripe-Breasted Tit, Grauer's Cukooshrike, Red-Billed Helmet Shrike, Ruwenzori Batis, African Green Broadbill, Dwarf Honeyguide, Prigogin's Nght-Jar, Albertaine Owlet, Congo Bay-Owl, Ruwenzori Turaco, Handsome Francolin** and other birds. Stay at Broadbill Forest Camp 3nights B&B

DAY 12: Gorilla tracking (optional activity)

Morning after breakfast you report to park headquarters for briefing prior to gorilla tracking excursion. This activity may take anywhere between one to eight hours so a reasonable degree of fitness is required. Gorilla tracking is a remarkable experience to stare in the eyes of these gentle giants, watch them as they play, and go about their daily activities. Its indeed "once in lifetime" experience that you must never miss! Each encounter is different and has own rewards! But you're likely to enjoy the close view of adults feeding, grooming and resting as the youngsters' frolic and swing on the vines in a

delightful display! Since it's an optional event, some of you may wish to stay and continue normal birding as we wait for our colleagues to join us after trekking.

DAY 13: Whole day birding on the main trail.

Forest birding in Bwindi ranks the best in Uganda with the best sight guides who use their mouth whistles to call birds. At the main trail we bird all the way to Mubwindi swamp and the specials to look at are; **Chapin's Flycatcher, Blue-Headed Sunbird, Regal Sunbird, Rockefeller's Sunbird, Purple-Breasted Sunbird, Strange Weaver, Dusky Crimson-Wing, Red-Collard Mountain Babbler, Chapin's Mountain Babbler, Grauer's Warbler, Neumann's' Warbler, Prigogine's Greenbul, Black-Faced Apalis, Collard Apalis, Stripe-Breasted Tit, Grauer's Cukooshrike, Yellow-Crested Helmetshrike, Ruwenzori Batis, African Green Broadbill, Dwarf Honeyguide** etc.

DAY 14: Birding to lake Mburo national park.

After breakfast we depart for lake Mburo national park, it's on a distance of about 400KM from Kisoro-Bwindi therefore our drive takes more hours of our day having strategic stops to stretch our legs and look at birds. Stay at Eagles-nest camp 2nights HB

DAY 15: Early birding and afternoon boat cruise in lake Mburo national park.

While in the park we shall look out for birds like; **African-Grey Hornbill, Black-Loward Babbler, Red-Headed Weaver, Greater Blue-Eared Starling, Trilling Cisticola, Green-Wood Hoopoe, Brown-Chested Lapwing, Scaly-Throated Honeyguide, Lesser-Masked Weaver, White-Backed Vulture, Tabora Cisticola, Crestd-Spurfowl, Red-Faced Barbet, Little Bee-Eater** Etc. And **Mammals** Like **the Zebra, Eland, Topi, Impala, Cape Buffalo, Warthog** etc.

today we target the boat ride along lake Mburo where we hardly miss African **Finfoot, White Backed and Black Crowned Night Heron, Giant Kingfisher**. A night drive always produces good views of **Black Shouldered, Northern Tanzania Fiery Necked Nightjar, Nocturnal Mammals and Bush Babies**.

DAY 16: Birding to Entebbe.

Stay at Lake Victoria View Gesthouse

DAY 17: END! Your flight.