

The Best of Ethiopia

Naturetrek Tour Report

8 – 24 February 2015

Report compiled by Marcus John



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Tour Summary

During our successful tour we travelled across Ethiopia from north to south, visiting an amazing range of diverse environments. We stayed first in Bahar Dar, enjoying the abundant birdlife around Lake Tana (the third biggest lake in Africa) and visiting the nearby Blue Nile Falls. Next we drove to the old capital city of Gondar and visited the historic Royal Enclosure. From Gondar we dove into the heart of the Simien Mountains where we stayed in a superb lodge and spent time with the beautiful Gelada Baboons, against a backdrop of awe-inspiring mountain scenery.

The second part of the tour took us back south, first to Awash National Park in the Rift Valley. Endemic birds and mammals vied for our attention but watching Hyenas emerge from their cave at dusk was the highlight for most. Next we drove up into the Bale Mountains where we had close views of Ethiopian Wolf and Bale Mountain Vervet monkey, not to mention Serval and African Wildcat! We spent our last two days back in the Rift Valley at the relaxing Bishingari Lodge. We enjoyed spending time just walking around the woodland and shores of Lake Langano, where we enjoyed the remarkably plentiful birdlife and reflected on a truly memorable holiday.

Day 1

Sunday 8th February

Addis Ababa – Bahar Dar – Lake Tana

After a comfortable flight from London Heathrow we were met at Addis Ababa airport by our local tour leader, Abiy Dagne. We were taken straight to the Ghion Hotel for breakfast in a cool and comfortable dining room. We spent about an hour in the extensive gardens and had our first taste of Ethiopian birds. While dozens of Yellow-billed Kites and Hooded Vultures soared overhead, we found Ruppell's Robin Chat, Abyssinian (or Mountain) Thrush and Brown Parisoma among other passerines feeding around the grounds.

We returned to the airport for our short flight to Bahar Dar, drove directly to the Tana Hotel and arrived in time for a late lunch. We then spent a leisurely afternoon looking at birds in the picturesque hotel gardens, right on the edge of Lake Tana. A number of exciting finds included several endemic Black-winged Lovebirds; Double-toothed Barbets could be seen visiting their nest-hole whilst Eastern Plantain Eaters were conspicuous in the top

of a tall tree. When we strolled down the entrance road past wet fields we found Wattled Lapwings, the first of many African Jacanas and had close views of Malachite, Striped and Woodland Kingfishers.

After a good dinner, those that still had some energy left joined Marcus in a short night walk and were rewarded with prolonged views of a large White-tailed Mongoose – our first mammal species!

Day 2

Monday 9th February

Bahar Dar – Blue Nile Falls – Lake Tana

We rose at dawn to join Abiy in a walk around the hotel gardens where an exotic chorus of birdsong greeted us in the half-light. We found new several new species including Northern Puffback, but what really caught our attention was the flock of Silvery-cheeked Hornbills that flapped noisily all around us as they fed on the fruiting trees. As we sat down for breakfast, one bird even fell to the ground right outside the restaurant window!

We drove into Bahar Dar and quickly left the tarmac road for the dusty drive to the Blue Nile Falls. We made slow progress through a road packed with vehicles, pedestrians and livestock; the burgeoning population was spread along the road for several kilometres. After about forty minutes we stopped by a smoking rubbish dump which played host to hundreds of raptors, corvids and storks. We saw Egyptian, Hooded, White-backed and Ruppell's Vultures; Chris also picked out a close Tawny Eagle in a nearby tree.

When we arrived at the Blue Nile, we parked our coach and took a boat across the river, watching Little Bee-eaters flying out over the water to feed. Once safely across, we walked along the far bank and found more exciting birds, including our first Northern Carmine and Blue-breasted Bee-eaters. We had been told that the hydro-electric plant often reduces the flow of water over the falls to a trickle but we were lucky and the cascading water was an impressive sight. We all appreciated the spectacle of this great waterfall before retracing our steps to return to Bahar Dar for a delicious lunch overlooking Lake Tana.

We spent the afternoon on a boat ride across the lake, first visiting the island monastery of Debre Maryam. We climbed up to the temple at the top of the steep island. Here we admired the vibrant mural paintings that are a key feature of all Ethiopian churches and monasteries. Next we sailed slowly across to the source of the Blue Nile; in these sheltered waters we found a group of Hippopotamus loafing near the shore. Birds around Lake Tana included herons, kingfishers, terns, gulls and huge flocks of Great White Pelicans. The boat dropped us back at our hotel where Abiy used playback to draw in four White-cheeked Turacos for everyone to see – a lovely way to complete a memorable day.

After dinner, Marcus took a group back out to look for nocturnal mammals and we again found a White-tailed Mongoose close to the hotel.

Day 3

Tuesday 10th February

Bahar Dar – Gondar

We set off early on the long road north to Gondar but stopped twice to look for birds on the flat grasslands north of Bahar Dar, the second time when the driver had to change a flat tyre! In addition to hundreds of

Common Cranes, there were two beautiful Black Crowned Cranes quite close to the road. Wintering European visitors included literally thousands of Yellow Wagtails, amongst which we found the beautiful African Quailfinch and the endemic Erlanger's Lark. Montagu's Harriers quartered the plains whilst Long-crested Eagles scanned from roadside poles.

On arriving in Gondar, we enjoyed a delicious lunch at the superb Four Sisters restaurant – probably the best in Ethiopia! Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to try a wide range of local Ethiopian dishes and to enjoy the traditional coffee ritual.

In the afternoon, an expert local guide led us around the fascinating Royal Enclosure, a walled compound in the very centre of Gondar, which contains six castles built by the Emperor Fasilidas and his immediate successors. The sixteenth century buildings have been sympathetically restored and are very atmospheric. We also visited Fasilidas' Pool, and Debre Birhan Silassie Church, where we were lucky to witness a lively wedding celebration. Walking around these cultural sites also revealed some new birds including Black-headed Oriole and Mocking Cliff Chat.

We spent a pleasant evening relaxing over dinner at the Goha hotel, with its spectacular views over the city. Dozens of raptors and corvids rode the updrafts around us, including Steppe Eagle and our first Thick-billed Ravens.

Day 4

Wednesday 11th February

Gondar - Debarq – Simien Mountain Lodge

After an early breakfast, we left our lakeside hotel for the next leg of our journey. We first drove on a good tarmac road to Debarq, which hosts the headquarters of the Simien National Park. Abiy and Marcus obtained our permits and we were joined by our local guide and two guards who were all very friendly! It was market day in the town and hundreds of people thronged in the roads as ravens, vultures and kites filled the sky. After a coffee break, we left the tarmac and headed up the steep, rocky road that leads onto the high plateau of the Simiens.

After a memorable journey through impressive mountain scenery, we arrived at our lodge in time for lunch. On setting off to explore, we almost immediately found a large herd of Gelada close to the lodge entrance and we spent the next three hours in their company. Dozens of Gelada walked slowly across the grass meadows, quietly feeding, sometimes stopping to groom each other whilst the youngsters played, chasing and tumbling after one another. We sat right amongst them, watching their fascinating social interactions and appreciating the great variety of their vocalisations. They were unconcerned by our presence and would approach within touching distance. It was a truly extraordinary experience that will live long in the memory.

When we could drag our eyes away from the Gelada, the scenery was breath-taking. Beyond the plateau on which we stood, the escarpment fell away to reveal a wide expanse of volcanic foothills that stretched into the far distance. A range of raptors flew close overhead, riding the updraft. Both Peregrine and Lanner Falcon were joined by several beautiful Augur Buzzards. Most impressive of all were the elegant Lammergeier (or Bearded Vulture), which we watched carrying bones and dropping them from a great height in order to crack them open.

We did not have much time to look for other birds but we did find another endemic, the rather shy Ethiopian Cisticola.

We enjoyed an excellent dinner in the lodge dining room, where a fire burned in the large circular fireplace in the centre of the room. Later, we sat in the bar and watched a video documentary about the Gelada whilst enjoying Ethiopian wine and beer.

Day 5

Thursday 12th February

Simien Mountain Lodge – Chennek Camp

We left our lodge at 7.30am to drive east along the road in search of the Walia Ibex, the mountain goat that is endemic to this range of mountains. We followed the massive northern escarpment towards Ras Dashen, the highest peak in Ethiopia. We broke the journey when we stopped to watch a lovely Klipspringer and then a group of Erckel's Francolin close to the road. Groups of Gelada sat out enjoying the early morning sunshine and raptors soared overhead.

The road is rough and rocky so we made slow progress through to Chennek Camp. Abiy checked with the local guides and found that no Ibex had been seen that morning. So we continued on for several more kilometres to an elevation of 4,200 metres (about 14,000 feet), when we came across another, larger group of Geladas. Abiy decided to stop and scan the surrounding slopes because the Ibex often associate with Geladas. After a lengthy search, we found a female Walia Ibex and we were able to approach close enough to get clear views and photographs.

We ate our picnic lunch at a view point above Chennek Camp; the vista was simply stunning. Fan-tailed and Thick-billed Ravens hovered over the precipice, occasionally snatching discarded bread. We then walked along the scarp to another vantage point, where the view was equally awe-inspiring. Abiy's persistence paid off when he found a male Walia Ibex with an impressive set of horns; everyone had the opportunity to admire him through the telescopes.

On the drive back we saw another Klipspringer and a total of five Menelik's Bushbucks, as they ran away from the roadside. We also enjoyed excellent views of the endemic montane wader, Spot-breasted Lapwing. We stopped to scan for more endemic birds and were rewarded with good numbers of the black-headed Ethiopian Siskin. A fine end to another memorable day.

Day 6

Friday 13th February

Simien Mountain Lodge – Sankaber Camp

A relaxed 9am departure made a welcome change, though some still rose at dawn to walk around the lodge. Lindsay was particularly pleased when she spotted a Black-backed Jackal as it ran through the lodge grounds.

We drove part of the way back east but this time only as far as Sankaber Camp. Our local guide took the lead today, taking us on lengthier walks following the long-distance trekking trail close to the cliff edge. We enjoyed more superb views of the Grand Canyon-like foothills in the pellucid morning light.

When we stopped for our picnic lunch, we found three Klipspringer quite close by, including a nice male. We then drove a little further east and took another walk along the next section of the trail, where birds were quite plentiful. We found a noisy group of White-rumped Babblers as they moved through the wooded slopes. Three beautiful Abyssinian Catbirds were soon followed by a flock of White-backed Blacktits, two of the more beautiful species endemic to the Horn of Africa.

During the morning we watched family groups of Gelada climbing the upper slopes and crags of the escarpment wall. We eventually found ourselves walking right amongst a big herd, when an angry confrontation broke out. We watched spellbound as the alpha male chased off some rival bachelor males, with loud screams and a spine-tingling display of aggression.

Later that afternoon, as we drove slowly back, we encountered three more Klipspringers and a male Menelik's Bushbuck as it ran down a track by the road. We saw lots of raptors including three species of Sparrowhawk: Rufous-breasted, Little and Black. In addition, the unusual trees, shrubs and flowering plants were greatly appreciated.

We returned to the lodge just as a big thunderstorm rolled in. From the safety of our rooms we heard crashing thunder and watched lightning bolts flash across the blackened sky above the mountains. Later, we enjoyed another fine meal by the fire in this most comfortable of lodges.

Day 7

Saturday 14th February

Simien Mountain Lodge – Gondar

A dawn walk around the lodge did not reveal any new species but the crisp morning light threw the mountains into sharp relief and justified the early start. After another excellent breakfast, we drove back to Debarq and said goodbye to our local guide and guards, who had accompanied us throughout our time in the Simiens. We rejoined the tarmac road and set off back to Gondar.

We had a delightful stop at the Kosoye Lodge, where we enjoyed excellent coffee whilst watching Lammergeier and Augur Buzzards soaring over the steep hillside. Just before reaching Gondar, we visited the Ploughshare Women's Training Centre, which provides training to single and disadvantaged women who have lost their husbands through war, disease and displacement. The manager, Tesfalem Abera, gave us a guided tour of the centre which gives women an opportunity to learn skills, build confidence and become self-sufficient. Everyone took the opportunity to buy gifts and support this valuable project.

After a second fantastic lunch at the Four Sisters Restaurant, we had time for some leisurely birding around the grounds of the Goha Hotel. In addition to Tawny and Steppe Eagles, we also found a range of passerines including Grey-headed Batis, Singing Cisticola and Tawny-flanked Prinia. As the sun set, we again enjoyed the panoramic views of the city of Gondar whilst sipping cold drinks on the hotel terrace. It was satisfying to reflect on a very successful week in the north of Ethiopia and a chance to unwind before another long day's travel.

Day 8

Sunday 15th February

Gondar – Addis Ababa – Lakes Chelekleka and Beseka - Awash Falls

In order to see the very best that Ethiopia has to offer, it is necessary to travel some significant distances and today was taken up with a flight back to Addis and then the long drive south-east to the Awash Falls Lodge. It was a long day but thankfully it was broken up with stops at two beautiful Rift Valley lakes.

Lake Chelekleka was teeming with thousands of birds! There were huge numbers of Common Cranes and both Greater and Lesser Flamingoes. In the shallow pools we had very close views of a wonderful range of waders: Black-winged Stilt, Avocet, Spur-winged Lapwing, Kittlitz's Plover, Common Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit, Spotted Redshank, Marsh Sandpiper, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Little Stint, Ruff and Collared Pratincole. The watersides were thronged with storks, egrets and ibis, as well as our first Hamerkops.

The saline Lake Beseka lies close to the Awash National Park and here we had our first views of Nile Crocodiles; several were hauled out on the lakeside just where Abiy said they would be! Soon afterwards, we left the main thoroughfare and headed along a rough road to the Awash Falls Lodge. As the sun set, we had our first look at some of the typical birds of the open acacia woodland, like Helmeted Guineafowl and Crested Francolin.

We arrived at the lodge in darkness but quickly checked in and had a late dinner in the open dining area, around the fire, with the sound of the falls in our ears – it was very atmospheric!

Day 9

Monday 16th February

Awash National Park

After a good night's sleep (during which we could hear Hyenas calling around the lodge), we ate our breakfast in the raised dining area, where we could see African Grey Hornbills and Grivet monkeys in the treetops.

We spent the morning on a game drive through the acacia woodland of Awash National Park. Mammals could be difficult to spot in the denser patches of thorn bushes and trees but these were interspersed with clearings and wider expanses, where larger acacia trees were widely spaced. Some mammals and birds were seen from the coach, others were found as we walked through the more open areas.

Within minutes of leaving the lodge, we saw an adult Hyena walking away from the road; an exciting start to the day! Soon after this, we had great views of a beautiful Black-backed Jackal. We saw several Warthogs as we drove along, often feeding at the roadside. Also close to the road but less obliging were two Lesser Kudu. We saw a total of 15 Harar Dik-diks, an endemic sub-species of Salt's Dik-dik. These skittish little antelopes have huge eyes and are really tiny; they are a similar weight to the local Scrub Hares!

During the morning we saw an outstanding range of new birds, including two species of bustard - Kori and White-bellied. Pygmy Falcons sat up in full view and White-bellied Go-away-birds were equally showy. Much harder to find were Abyssinian Scimitarbill and Three-banded Courser. We were almost overwhelmed with the variety of visually stunning species including Yellow-breasted Barbet, Grey-headed Bushshrike and Rosy-patched Bushshrike. But outshining them all were the sunbirds, especially the gloriously iridescent Nile Valley Sunbird.

After a delicious lunch, we spent the afternoon in a more open grassland area of the National Park. Here we found more mammals including several Soemmerring's Gazelles. We also spent time watching and photographing Beisa Oryx. These are impressively big and muscular with bold, black and white facial markings. They have straight, slender horns, which can be over a metre in length. We saw many of these superb animals during our time in Awash. The most notable birds in this open landscape were a pair of majestic Secretarybirds, stalking across the grass and then flying into the flat top of a large acacia tree, where we thought they might have a nest. After sunset, we set out for a night drive and quickly found several Scrub Hares and more Beisa Oryx. Two more Hyenas were seen and then we saw a Genet close to the coach. Better still, as we returned towards the lodge, two Bat-eared Foxes walked slowly out across the road, providing great views.

Day 10

Tuesday 17th February

Aledeghe Wildlife Reserve – Awash National Park

After another early breakfast, we set off at 7.30am and drove out of Awash. We headed east along the Addis-Djibouti road for about 90 kilometres to reach the Aledeghe Reserve. This is an open, arid plain with sparse acacia trees and short grass. Mammals were quite distant but we saw over 50 Soemmerring's Gazelles, at least 20 Beisa Oryx and several Gerenuks. At least a dozen Grevy's Zebra could be seen, grazing the sparse vegetation. We enjoyed much closer views of a Golden Jackal and a confiding Unstriped Ground Squirrel.

As far as birds were concerned, it was a case of quality rather than quantity. There was less variety than in Awash but some real specialities including Somali Ostrich, Brown-bellied Sandgrouse and Black-headed Lapwing. The undoubted avian highlight, however, was watching a Northern Carmine Bee-eater using an Arabian Bustard as a mobile foraging perch!

After a good lunch in Awash Saba, we returned to the lodge for an early afternoon break, before heading out to the Hyena cave in the late afternoon. After stopping en route to watch some rather shy Hamadryas Baboons, we arrived about an hour before sunset. We walked across the strange volcanic landscape, where deep cracks have opened up as the Rift Valley continues to spread apart. Dusk fell as we sat expectantly on a hillock above the cave entrance. We could see across the open, dusty landscape to the distant mountains that marked the rim of the Rift Valley.

After the emergence of a couple of Warthogs, a lone Hyena eventually appeared and ran away across the dry grassland, leaving a trail of dust. A female and a young Hyena came out next and remained close to the cave entrance. In the twilight, we watched as more Hyenas came out and began to chase each other around a termite mound, barking and cackling, throwing up plumes of dust into the darkening sky. To watch this interaction at close quarters was a real privilege and an undoubted highlight of the entire tour.

Day 11

Wednesday 18th February

Awash National Park - Ziway and Langano Lakes – Hawassa

After breakfast, we drove slowly through the park and stopped at the main entrance for a final short walk. We found two new birds for the tour in the shape of Blue-naped Mousebird and Brubru. We also saw half a dozen Harar Dik-diks and had good views of a Lesser Kudu (in addition to more Warthogs and Beisa Oryx).

We enjoyed a break from the long drive back west towards Addis when we stopped to admire a big group of Hamadryas Baboons. These normally shy animals were preoccupied with licking something (possibly salt) from the road surface, thus providing a rare photographic opportunity. Soon after this, we stopped again to admire our first Abyssinian Ground Hornbills.

After another tasty lunch at the Bethlehem Hotel, we visited the shores of Lake Ziway where the local children feed birds with scraps from the fish market. Literally hundreds of Marabou Storks and Great White Pelicans were joined by a selection of waders. We enjoyed the opportunity to photograph several species at close quarters including Wood Sandpiper and African Jacana. Wildfowl on the open water included Garganey, Hottentot Teal and Pygmy Goose. Abiy took us on a short walk near the market to show us a very relaxed Tree Hyrax, a new mammal for most of us.

In the late afternoon, we visited the grounds of the Waba Shebelle Hotel where we saw another Greyish Eagle Owl and had close views of roosting Slender-tailed Nightjars.

Dusk fell as we arrived at the Hotel Hawassa; it had been a long day of travel but there had been some great wildlife along the way!

Day 12

Thursday 19th February

Hawassa - Bale Mountains - Goba

A pre-breakfast walk through the hotel grounds and along the lake shore revealed a good variety of birds. New species included the impressive Blue-headed Coucal and an active pair of Spotted Creepers which are surprisingly large compared to more familiar treecreeper species.

After breakfast, we enjoyed intimate views of the Mantled Guereza monkeys that are semi-habituated within the hotel grounds. Cameras clicked as adults and young sat up in the trees and then descended to play together on the grass.

We left the hotel and spent a memorable morning at the Hawassa Fish Market, which was a busy throng of people and birds. Marabou Storks fed on scraps whilst White-winged Terns milled overhead and waders flew around our feet. Out on the lake, wildfowl included White-backed Duck, White-faced Whistling Duck and Pygmy Goose. We walked along the shore to an area of open woodland, where Abiy found two delightful Gambian Sun Squirrels and we saw several more Grivet monkeys.

After an excellent lunch in Shashemene, we embarked on the long drive up into the Bale Mountains. As the road climbed higher, we passed through increasingly green fields before finally entering the national park itself. Soon after passing the sign, we came across a flock of Spot-breasted Lapwings and saw several Rouget's Rails. Later, as we crossed a plateau, we saw over 50 Reedbuck and several of the impressive Mountain Nyala.

When we stopped at the park headquarters, Abiy went to get our permits. He returned to the coach to tell us that he had found a Serval. After hurriedly clambering out, we had brief but close views of this elusive cat before it slipped quietly into cover; what a superb start to our Bale experience!

Day 13

Friday 20th February

Bale National Park - Sanetti Plateau and Haremma Forest

First thing in the morning, we headed out of Goba to drive up onto the Sanetti Plateau which has an average elevation of over 4,000 metres. Our first stop overlooked a large montane pool. The landscape was striking; undulating, rocky ground with heather and scattered giant lobelia. There were fewer birds of prey compared to the Simiens, mainly Steppe Eagle and Augur Buzzard. The small lake held Pintail, Yellow-billed Duck and best of all, several Blue-winged Geese. We enjoyed watching this endemic goose displaying in the early morning sunshine. Several waders were feeding around the water's edge including two African Snipe.

As we watched our first Ethiopian African Mole Rat popping its head in and out of a hole near the lakeside, an Ethiopian Wolf appeared in the distance. It trotted closer and then spent about fifteen minutes hunting rodents just across the lake from where we stood - a magical experience! It is a superb predator, with a gorgeous red-brown coat offset by clean, white underparts.

Once the wolf had moved off, we boarded the coach but didn't get very far because we spotted a number of Blick's Grass Rats close to the road. It was fascinating to watch these endearing little creatures (also known as Blick's Arvicantis), which are endemic to the Bale Mountains. We continued across the plateau and then descended the southern slopes, pausing to admire the view and to photograph a superb Chestnut-naped Francolin that sat nicely atop a roadside rock.

We spent the afternoon walking through the ancient Haremma Forest, looking for monkeys and endemic birds. Abiy showed his remarkable skills by locating both Ethiopian Oriole and Abyssinian Ground Thrush, which were calling from high in the canopy. We saw three troupes of Mantled Guereza, climbing through the huge, old trees of the pristine forest. However, we couldn't find any sign of the endemic Bale Mountain Vervet and so we set off back up the steep road towards the plateau. However, Abiy insisted on checking one last area of forest. Chris quite quickly found a Bale monkey but it was hidden deep in some bamboo. We all walked carefully into the trees to try and get a glimpse. With patience and good teamwork, everyone eventually had good views of the endemic monkeys as they moved through the bamboo and climbed into the taller trees.

As we returned across the plateau towards Goba, we again had excellent views of several Ethiopian Wolves. We watched one group for several minutes as they played and tumbled together in the afternoon sunshine. Before we left the Sanetti Plateau, we walked through the Giant Lobelia to find Ethiopian Highland Hare; they were very skittish but we did eventually see four of them as they raced around this unique landscape.

Day 14

Saturday 21st February

Bale National Park - Gaysay Plain and Dinsho area

We picked up our local park guide in Dinsho and set off across the Gaysay Plain in search of mammals. We left the coach and took a long, circular walk across the grassy plain, where we found dozens of Reedbuck, several Mountain Nyala, Warthog and two Golden Jackals.

Next, we drove to the edge of a steep ravine where, with the help of a local teenager, we eventually located a roosting Cape Eagle Owl which was well hidden in the lower branches of a large conifer. The more intrepid

amongst us climbed down the rocks to get a better look! Those who remained on top had ample time to admire the Rock Hyrax that were sitting right out in the sunshine. Better still, whilst looking for the owl, we saw three Egyptian Mongoose running around the rocky landscape below us.

We enjoyed a relaxing lunch at the Dinsho Lodge, which is superbly located in the middle of a scenic, wooded area of the national park. A park guide took us out for a short walk to see both African Wood Owl and Abyssinian Owl. Also in the vicinity of the lodge were good numbers of Mountain Nyala and Bush Duiker. In addition, we saw Mantled Guereza and a Menelik's Bushbuck.

Late afternoon saw us back on Gaysay Plain, where Abiy soon spotted another Serval as it disappeared into a small area of dense bush. We all descended from the coach but despite the fact that Abiy knew exactly where it was, we simply could not see it. Mohamed, our local guide, set off to circle the bushes when the Serval broke cover and ran across open grass before disappearing into more bushes. We felt privileged to have seen our second Serval in two days, and this time right out in the open! When we recovered our composure, we also noticed several Mountain Nyala, including two impressive males.

Day 15

Sunday 22nd February

Goba - Gaysay Plain - Senkele Reserve - Bishingari Lodge

We enjoyed our last breakfast in Goba, which set us up for the long journey to Lake Langano. Before we left the Bale Mountains, we stopped by the large pool on Gaysay Plain for a last look at some Blue-winged Geese. We also saw good numbers of Rouget's Rail, Ethiopian Siskin and African Citril. Just after we left the pool, our driver spotted something moving slowly through the short grass to the left of the road. We all climbed out to enjoy extended views of a superb African Wildcat. Although only a sub-species of Wildcat, it is plainer overall and greyer on the flanks, so quite distinctive. Like all wildcats, it is rarely seen so we were very grateful to our sharp-eyed driver!

We drove down through the foothills and onto the flat farmland that surrounds Shashemene. Abiy spotted vultures on carrion close to the road. With some Egyptian and Hooded Vultures were our first White-headed and Lappet-faced Vultures.

After a second excellent lunch in the Rift Valley Resort Hotel, we drove for an hour to reach the Sankele Reserve. The grasslands were studded with large acacia trees and as we drove past, the local farmers were busy gathering in the harvest. We enjoyed good views of Oribi and over a hundred Swayne's Hartebeest, a sub-species that is endemic to Ethiopia. We also saw four new species of birds: Clapperton's Francolin, Black-winged Lapwing, Black-billed Wood Hoopoe and Long-billed Pipit. The photographers were able to get quite close to an eye-catching Lilac-breasted Roller and an equally colourful Northern Carmine Bee-eater.

Day 16

Monday 23rd February

Bishingari Lodge

The lodge provided early morning coffee and tea, which was very welcome when we rose at dawn to walk around the extensive grounds. We were immediately impressed by the abundance of birdlife in the woodland

around the lodge. Some of the more interesting species included Scaly Francolin, Blue-spotted Wood Dove and African Goshawk. Mammals were also much in evidence; there were lots of Warthogs and noisy Olive Baboons, several Common Reedbuck and both Mantled Guereza and Gambian Sun Squirrels in the trees around the bar.

After an excellent breakfast in the large, open dining area, we set off across the grass behind the lodge to an area of more extensive woodland. Several new birds included African Olive Dove, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Black Scimitarbill and both Scaly-throated and Greater Honeyguides. The highlight, however, was a pair of Verreaux's Eagle Owls, perched high in the trees near a local village. It was a real pleasure to watch these huge owls for several minutes and nice to show them to local villagers through the telescopes.

After lunch and a break from the early afternoon heat, we set out to explore the shores of Lake Langano. There was the usual array of storks, egrets, herons and waders; three Goliath Herons were most impressive, as were groups of Pink-backed Pelicans. We also saw our first Grey-headed Gulls and Curlew Sandpipers. As we were enjoying the avian spectacle, a big thunderstorm rolled across so we retreated back around the shore, towards the lodge. Hundreds of hirundines flew low under the darkening sky, including at least one Ethiopian Swallow.

We went out for a final night walk after dinner but unfortunately mammals were few, though Abiy did identify a Senegal Bush baby (even though most of us saw only eye-shine). However, we did see two more Hyenas running across the grass near the lake shore.

Day 17

Tuesday 24th February

Bishingari Lodge – Abbiata-Shalla Lakes National Park – Addis Ababa

It is a testament to Bishingari that our stay was so relaxing but also full of wildlife. We appreciated a good range of mammals, especially the local Warthogs, who were highly entertaining! We found lots of new bird species and it was great to finish on a high with birds like Yellow-fronted Parrot, Broad-billed Roller and Narina Trogon.

On the long journey back to Addis Ababa, we made a fruitful visit to the Abbiata-Shalla National Park. We walked out through open acacia woodland where Somali Ostrich were seemingly unconcerned by our close approach. We saw our first Grant's Gazelles which showed well as they watched us warily from the shade of the trees. We saw a good range of new birds including Red-bellied Parrot, Von Der Decken's Hornbill, Bearded Woodpecker and Marico Sunbird. Reluctantly, we had to leave and continue the drive to the capital.

We arrived back at the Ghion Hotel with just enough time to have a shower and to repack before our last supper in an atmospheric pizza restaurant in downtown Addis! We enjoyed a hearty meal and good conversation, including a chance for a last chat with Abiy and Tony from Ethiopian Quadrants. We reflected on the superb range of both mammals and birds that we had encountered on our journey across Ethiopia. Equally memorable were the extraordinary landscapes, from the precipitous mountains to the wide plains and lakes of the Rift Valley.

We arrived at the airport in plenty of time and were able to complete the checklists as well as browse the airport shops for last minute souvenirs. Our flight home was happily uneventful and we landed back at Heathrow as scheduled.

We received good support from a number of local guides and guards, all of whom were friendly and helpful. We were also grateful to our two drivers, who were very supportive and who expertly navigated the often challenging roads of Ethiopia! Finally, the greatest thanks go to Abiy, whose knowledge, skills and tireless efforts were the key to our success; he is an outstanding guide!

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Species Lists

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	Somali Ostrich	<i>Struthio molybdophanes</i>											10						10
2	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>									✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
3	Moorland Francolin	<i>Scleroptila psilolaema</i>												8					
4	Crested Francolin	<i>Dendroperdix sephaena</i>								4									✓
5	Scaly Francolin	<i>Pternistis squamatus</i>																10	
6	Clapperton's Francolin	<i>Pternistis clappertoni</i>														5			
7	Chestnut-naped Francolin	<i>Pternistis castaneicollis</i>											1						
8	Erckel's Francolin	<i>Pternistis erckelii</i>					20	10											
9	Yellow-necked Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis leucoscepus</i>								4									
10	White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>											60	4					
11	African Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus auritus</i>											✓	✓					
12	White-backed Duck	<i>Thalassornis leuconotus</i>											10						
13	Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓				✓					
14	Blue-winged Goose	<i>Cyanochen cyanoptera</i>													9	12	30		
15	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓				✓	✓
16	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>													3				
17	Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>													10		8		
18	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>								12									
19	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>													7				
20	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>												4	4				
21	Hottentot Teal	<i>Anas hottentota</i>												4	10			20	✓
22	Southern Pochard	<i>Netta erythrophthalma</i>												1					
23	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓						✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	
24	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>								✓			✓					✓	✓
25	Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>								✓									
26	Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>								2									4
27	Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
28	African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
29	Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>		✓	✓					✓				✓			✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
30	Wattled Ibis	<i>Bostrychia carunculata</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓					
32	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>								1			1					4	✓
33	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>									1								
34	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	2	2	1					2	2	1	1	10				3	✓
35	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
36	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		1	1					1			1	2			3	3	✓
37	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>		1	2					1			1				3		
38	Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>			1													3	✓
39	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		1						1			1	2				4	
40	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>		✓	✓									✓					
41	Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>											1	1					
42	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓											✓					
43	Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>								✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
44	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>								✓			✓	✓					
45	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	✓	✓									✓	✓				✓	✓
46	Pink-backed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>																✓	
47	Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>	1	✓	1									2	20				
48	White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>		✓										✓				✓	✓
49	African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>	1	✓															
50	Secretarybird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>									2								
51	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>											1						
52	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>			1														
53	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
54	African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	2	4								1		1	10			6	✓
55	Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>				4	4	6	3										
56	Egyptian Vulture	<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>		10														1	
57	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
58	White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓		
59	Rüppell's Vulture	<i>Gyps rueppellii</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
60	White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>																2	
61	Lappet-faced Vulture	<i>Torgos tracheliotus</i>																3	

	Common name	Scientific name	February																			
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
62	Black-chested Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>									2		2	2	1							
63	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>		2								1										
64	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>									2			1	1			1				
65	Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>										4			1			1	1			
66	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>			✓	1	1						1		2							
67	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>													1							2
68	Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>		2									1	1	1							
69	Eastern Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax poliopterus</i>														1						
70	African Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>																				1
71	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	1																			
72	Little Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter minullus</i>							1													1
73	Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter rufiventris</i>								1	2											
74	Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>								1												1
75	Mountain Buzzard	<i>Buteo oreophilus</i>		1						1												
76	Augur Buzzard	<i>Buteo augur</i>		1	1	15	15	6	5						1	2	10	6	2			
77	Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>								2												
78	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>		1	1					1			1		1	6						
79	Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>		1	3	5					1				1	3				1		1
80	Pygmy Falcon	<i>Polihierax semitorquatus</i>										2	3									
81	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			1	5	10	3			2	2	3			2	2	2	4			
82	Grey Kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>				1																
83	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>				2	3	2	1													
84	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				1		3	1													
85	Kori Bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>										2										
86	Arabian Bustard	<i>Ardeotis arabs</i>												4								
87	Buff-crested Bustard	<i>Lophotis gindiana</i>												1								
88	White-bellied Bustard	<i>Eupodotis senegalensis</i>										5										
89	Rouget's Rail	<i>Rougetius rougetii</i>													10	2	3	5				
90	Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>		3	5										1	10						
91	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>													✓	✓						
92	Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>									✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
93	Black Crowned Crane	<i>Balearica pavonina</i>		8	2							2										

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
94	Common Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>			✓						✓								
95	Senegal Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>																2	
96	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>								✓		✓	✓					✓	
97	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>								✓									
98	Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>		✓						✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
99	Black-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus tectus</i>										16							
100	Black-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus melanopterus</i>															80		
101	Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>									4						2		
102	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>	2																
103	Spot-breasted Lapwing	<i>Vanellus melanocephalus</i>					10						60	1		30			
104	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>											1					10	✓
105	Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>								2								3	✓
106	Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>															2		
107	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	1	4									10	10					
108	African Snipe	<i>Gallinago nigripennis</i>													2			1	
109	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>								2			2						
110	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>								✓		✓						✓	✓
111	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>								2									
112	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>								2		2						4	✓
113	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>								✓				✓				✓	✓
114	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		1									4		1	1	1	1	✓
115	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	1							✓		10	10			3	10	✓	
116	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		1						1	1	2	2	2	2			4	✓
117	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>								✓		✓						✓	✓
118	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>																3	
119	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>								✓		✓	✓					✓	✓
120	Three-banded Courser	<i>Rhinoptilus cinctus</i>									1								
121	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>								3									
122	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>		✓						✓		✓						✓	✓
123	Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>								✓								✓	✓
124	Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus</i>		✓															
125	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>		✓															

	Common name	Scientific name	February																		
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
126	Baltic Gull	<i>Larus fuscus fuscus</i>		3																	
127	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	1	2						8								3	✓		
128	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>		✓										1							
129	White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>		✓									✓	✓					✓		
130	Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles exustus</i>											4								
131	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
132	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia 'feral'</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
133	White-collared Pigeon	<i>Columba albitorques</i>			✓		✓	✓									✓	✓			
134	African Olive Pigeon	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>																	4		
135	Lemon Dove	<i>Columba larvata</i>		1															✓		
136	Dusky Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia lugens</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
137	Mourning Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>											✓								
138	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
139	Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>											1								
140	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>		1																	
141	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
142	Blue-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>																	3	1	
143	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>		6	3						2	10	6					✓	✓	✓	
144	Bruce's Green Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>	2	20	3																
145	Black-winged Lovebird	<i>Agapornis taranta</i>	10	4	2	10									2					4	
146	Red-bellied Parrot	<i>Poicephalus rufiventris</i>																		2	
147	Yellow-fronted Parrot	<i>Poicephalus flavifrons</i>																		4	8
148	White-cheeked Turaco	<i>Tauraco leucotis</i>	1	4											2					2	
149	Bare-faced Go-away-Bird	<i>Corythaixoides personatus</i>																		2	
150	White-bellied Go-away-Bird	<i>Corythaixoides leucogaster</i>								1	5	2	4							✓	
151	Eastern Plantain-Eater	<i>Crinifer zonurus</i>	4	10	4																
152	Blue-headed Coucal	<i>Centropus monachus</i>												1							
153	White-browed Coucal	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>								1											
154	Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	1																	1	
155	Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>																		1	
156	Cape Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo capensis</i>														1					
157	Greyish Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo cinerascens</i>											2	1							

	Common name	Scientific name	February																	
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
158	Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>																2		
159	African Wood Owl	<i>Strix woodfordii</i>															1			
160	Abyssinian Owl	<i>Asio abyssinicus</i>														1				
161	Slender-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus clarus</i>											3							
162	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>									✓		✓	✓						
163	Mottled Swift	<i>Tachymarptis aequatorialis</i>													✓					
164	Nyanza Swift	<i>Apus niansae</i>							✓	✓					✓		✓			
165	Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
166	Blue-naped Mousebird	<i>Urocolius macrourus</i>												4						
167	Narina Trogon	<i>Apaloderma narina</i>																	5	
168	Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>													2			10		
169	Abyssinian Roller	<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>										2	✓	✓	2					
170	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>																	1	
171	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>		1								1								
172	Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>	2	✓								1								
173	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	1											1	4			3	6	✓
174	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>	2	2										1	10					✓
175	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>		2																
176	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	1	5	1										6				2	✓
177	Little Bee-Eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>	1	2	✓							2	1	1				2	2	✓
178	Blue-breasted Bee-Eater	<i>Merops variegatus</i>		1										3					6	✓
179	Northern Carmine Bee-Eater	<i>Merops nubicus</i>		6	4									10	70			20	2	✓
180	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	2	1							4	2	1		1				✓	✓
181	Black-billed Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus somaliensis</i>																3		
182	Black Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus aterrimus</i>																	1	2
183	Abyssinian Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus minor</i>										1								
184	Hemprich's Hornbill	<i>Tockus hemprichii</i>			2	2					2								2	1
185	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>										6	3	2						
186	Northern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i>										2		2						1
187	Von Der Decken's Hornbill	<i>Tockus deckeni</i>																		1
188	Silvery-cheeked Hornbill	<i>Bycanistes brevis</i>	✓	✓	✓										✓			✓	✓	✓
189	Abyssinian Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>													2					10

	Common name	Scientific name	February																	
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
190	Red-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus pusillus</i>										1	1	1	1				6	✓
191	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	3	1																
192	Red-fronted Barbet	<i>Tricholaema diademata</i>										1								
193	Banded Barbet	<i>Lybius undatus</i>				2													2	1
194	Black-billed Barbet	<i>Lybius guifsobalito</i>		1								2		2	1					
195	Double-toothed Barbet	<i>Lybius bidentatus</i>	4	4	4														2	
196	Yellow-breasted Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus margaritatus</i>										1		1						
197	Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>	2																	2
198	Scaly-throated Honeyguide	<i>Indicator variegatus</i>																		1
199	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>																		1
200	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>		1								1								
201	Nubian Woodpecker	<i>Campethera nubica</i>		2															1	4
202	Bearded Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicus namaquus</i>																		2
203	African Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>	2																	
204	Eastern Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos spodocephalus</i>			1										2					2
205	Grey-headed Batis	<i>Batis orientalis</i>	2	2	1				4		2			1						
206	Western Black-headed Batis	<i>Batis erlangeri</i>																	6	✓
207	Brown-throated Wattle-Eye	<i>Platysteira cyanea</i>		1											1					
208	White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>									1									
209	Grey-headed Bushshrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>									1									
210	Orange-breasted Bushshrike	<i>Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus</i>																	3	1
211	Rosy-patched Bushshrike	<i>Telophorus cruentus</i>									2									
212	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>							1		1	1	1						1	1
213	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>		1														1	4	2
214	Slate-colored Boubou	<i>Laniarius funebris</i>									1	1								
215	Ethiopian Boubou	<i>Laniarius aethiopicus</i>	2	2	1									1					2	1
216	Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>												1					1	
217	Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike	<i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>																	2	
218	Northern White-crowned Shrike	<i>Eurocephalus ruppelli</i>									10	6	4							✓
219	Turkestan Shrike	<i>Lanius phoenicuroides</i>										1								
220	Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>									2									
221	Common Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓					

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
222	Grey-backed Fiscal	<i>Lanius excubitoroides</i>		2	2													✓	✓
223	Somali Fiscal	<i>Lanius somalicus</i>									6	10		2			10		
224	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>									4	1							
225	Ethiopian Oriole	<i>Oriolus monacha</i>													2				
226	Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>			1														
227	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	1	1						2		2	1				2	4	2
228	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax</i>					70	✓											
229	Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		
230	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
231	Somali Crow	<i>Corvus edithae</i>															✓	✓	
232	Fan-tailed Raven	<i>Corvus rhipidurus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
233	Thick-billed Raven	<i>Corvus crassirostris</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		
234	White-winged Black Tit	<i>Parus leucomelas</i>																	6
235	White-backed Black Tit	<i>Parus leuconotus</i>						5	2										
236	Gillett's Lark	<i>Mirafra gilletti</i>									2								
237	Erlanger's Lark	<i>Calandrella erlangeri</i>			1														
238	Thekla Lark	<i>Galerida theklae</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓	
239	Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>										10			✓				
240	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
241	Dark-capped Bullbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus tricolor</i>													✓	✓	✓	✓	
242	Black Saw-Wing	<i>Psalidoprocne pristoptera</i>													✓		✓		✓
243	Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>																✓	400
244	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
245	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
246	Ethiopian Swallow	<i>Hirundo aethiopica</i>																1	1
247	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>												3					
248	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>						✓											
249	Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										✓
250	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>						✓		✓							✓	✓	✓
251	Mosque Swallow	<i>Cecropis senegalensis</i>	1		2														
252	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>						3									1	1	
253	Northern Crombec	<i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>											1						

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
254	Red-faced Crombec	<i>Sylvietta whytii</i>																4	✓
255	Brown Woodland Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus umbrovirens</i>						1			1								
256	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>		1	1	1	2	1					1	1					
257	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	1	1				100	4	5	1		2	4	2	30	10	2	✓
258	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>											1	1					
259	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>			1														
260	African Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i>		1										✓					
261	Eastern Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna pallida</i>												1					
262	Cinnamon Bracken Warbler	<i>Bradypterus cinnamomeus</i>					1												
263	Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythropus</i>											2				2		
264	Singing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cantans</i>						1	2										
265	Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>																3	
266	Ethiopian Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lugubris</i>				1	10	10	2							6	2		
267	Pectoral-patch Cisticola	<i>Cisticola brunnescens</i>				1		1											
268	Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>							1					2		1	1	1	✓
269	Buff-bellied Warbler	<i>Phyllolais pulchella</i>																4	✓
270	Red-fronted Warbler	<i>Urorhipis rufifrons</i>										2							
271	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>	1	1	1				1					1				4	1
272	Rufous Chatterer	<i>Turdoides rubiginosa</i>									6		2						
273	White-rumped Babbler	<i>Turdoides leucopygia</i>						15						3				✓	✓
274	Abyssinian Catbird	<i>Parophasma galinieri</i>						3						1	2	✓			
275	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>												1	1	2		4	✓
276	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>												✓				4	✓
277	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>																	1
278	Brown Parisoma	<i>Sylvia lugens</i>	1					2											
279	Abyssinian White-Eye	<i>Zosterops abyssinicus</i>		20	4									1	1				
280	Montane White-Eye	<i>Zosterops poliogastrus</i>	✓		10				2					1	4	4	2	2	✓
281	Spotted Creeper	<i>Salpornis spilonotus</i>												2					
282	Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>											1						✓
283	Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
284	Rüppell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpuroptera</i>											✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
285	Superb Starling	<i>Lamprotornis superbus</i>	✓										✓	✓				✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	February																		
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
286	Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓										
287	White-billed Starling	<i>Onychognathus albirostris</i>				4		3													
288	Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>		2	1														5		
289	Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>		3								4	2	4							
290	Abyssinian Ground Thrush	<i>Geokichla piaggiae</i>													2						
291	Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Psophocichla litsitsirupa</i>				1		2	8					2	4	3	1				
292	African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>		✓	1								1	1			3	✓	✓		
293	Abyssinian Thrush	<i>Turdus abyssinicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				1	4	1	4	✓	✓	
294	Rüppell's Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha semirufa</i>	3	4	4										2				2		
295	White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>												1							
296	White-browed Scrub Robin	<i>Erythropygia leucophrys</i>										1	1								
297	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>													2				3	✓	
298	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	2																		
299	Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>												1	1						
300	African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>				1										10	1				
301	Red-breasted Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe bottae</i>		4	1	2									1						
302	Isabelline Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe isabellina</i>			✓							✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
303	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>										✓									✓
304	Pied Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pleschanka</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓				✓	✓	
305	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>			1																
306	Desert Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe deserti</i>								1											
307	Abyssinian Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe lugubris</i>				2															
308	Moorland Chat	<i>Pinarochroa sordida</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓			
309	Rüppell's Black Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla melaena</i>				1															
310	White-winged Cliff Chat	<i>Thamnolaea semirufa</i>				2		2													
311	Mocking Cliff Chat	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>			4	1			4	2				✓							
312	Little Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rufocinereus</i>							2												
313	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>				1		1	1												
314	Abyssinian Slaty Flycatcher	<i>Dioptrornis chocolatinus</i>	1		6	1		4						1	4	2					
315	Northern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis edolioides</i>		4	1	1													6	✓	
316	African Grey Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis microrhynchus</i>									6										
317	African Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>			1				6				1	1	4	4	2	4	✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	February																
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
318	African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	✓	✓	✓					2			1	2				✓	
319	Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>									✓								
320	Nile Valley Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna metallica</i>									10							1	
321	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
322	Tacazze Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia tacazze</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
323	Malachite Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>							1								2		
324	Bronzy Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia kilimensis</i>	✓																
325	Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>									✓		✓	✓				✓	✓
326	Marico Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>																	4
327	Shining Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris habessinicus</i>									1	4							
328	Variable Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓
329	White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>									20		✓				2	2	✓
330	Swainson's Sparrow	<i>Passer swainsonii</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
331	Bush Petronia	<i>Gymnoris dentata</i>			1													1	
332	Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>									4						2		
333	White-headed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Dinemellia dinemelli</i>									20	6	6				6		
334	Baglafaecht Weaver	<i>Ploceus baglafaecht</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
335	Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>											1					✓	✓
336	Spectacled Weaver	<i>Ploceus ocularis</i>											1	✓				1	
337	Rüppell's Weaver	<i>Ploceus galbula</i>								✓	✓		✓					✓	✓
338	Vitelline Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus vitellinus</i>									1								
339	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
340	Chestnut Weaver	<i>Ploceus rubiginosus</i>																1	
341	Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>												2				6	✓
342	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>									✓	✓	✓						
343	Black-winged Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>									✓								
344	Northern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes franciscanus</i>									✓		✓						
345	Yellow Bishop	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>					6	10	20					15		100	30		
346	Cut-throat Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>											2	2					
347	Green Twinspot	<i>Mandingoa nitidula</i>																10	2
348	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>		✓					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
349	African Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>																2	

	Common name	Scientific name	February																	
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
350	Red-cheeked Cordon-Bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	✓	✓	✓					✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
351	Yellow-bellied Waxbill	<i>Coccyzygia quartina</i>															10			
352	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>												10		10				
353	African Quailfinch	<i>Ortygospiza fuscocrissa</i>			40															
354	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>		10												6				✓
355	Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>		✓	✓															
356	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
357	Black-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>								✓			✓	✓				✓	✓	
358	Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>			✓					✓			✓	✓	✓			✓		
359	Grey-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
360	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>		7											1			2		
361	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		✓	✓								✓	✓				✓	✓	
362	African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>		✓								✓		✓	✓					
363	Abyssinian Longclaw	<i>Macronyx flavicollis</i>				2										1	✓			
364	African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>												2	1	2				
365	Long-billed Pipit	<i>Anthus similis</i>																	3	
366	Plain-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>								✓										
367	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>															2	1		
368	Red-throated Pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>			4				1		2					2	1	1		
369	Yellow-crowned Canary	<i>Serinus flavivertex</i>																1		
370	Ethiopian Siskin	<i>Serinus nigriceps</i>						100								20	60	20	6	
371	African Citril	<i>Crithagra citrinelloides</i>													2		1	20	✓	✓
372	Yellow-rumped Seedeater	<i>Crithagra xanthopygia</i>		2																
373	Brown-rumped Seedeater	<i>Crithagra tristriata</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		
374	Streaky Seedeater	<i>Crithagra striolata</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		
375	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>						1												

Mammals

1	Egyptian Fruit Bat	<i>Rousettus aegyptiacus</i>		1																
2	Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus sp.</i>												30						
3	Yellow-spotted Rock Hyrax	<i>Heterohyrax brucei</i>							2				5				6			
4	Tree Hyrax	<i>Dendrohyrax arboreus</i>												1						

	Common name	Scientific name	February																	
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
5	Senegal Bushbaby	<i>Galago senegalensis</i>				3						16	1	2	20				1	
6	Griwet Monkey	<i>Chlorocebus aethiops</i>																		
7	Bale Mountain Vervet (Bale Monkey)	<i>Chlorocebus djamdjamensis</i>													10					
8	Olive Baboon	<i>Papio anubis</i>									50	10	20	15	10		100	100	70	20
9	Hamadryas Baboon	<i>Papio hamadryas</i>									50		30	50						
10	Gelada	<i>Theropithecus gelada</i>				200	200	400	200											
11	Mantled Guereza (Colobus)	<i>Colobus guereza</i>											8	10	15	5			20	
12	Ethiopian Hare	<i>Lepus fagani</i>								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
13	Ethiopian Highland Hare	<i>Lepus starcki</i>														4				
14	Common Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>														1				
15	Wildcat	<i>Felis silvestris</i>																1		
16	Serval	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>													1		1			
17	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>													1					
18	Common Genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>										1		1						
19	White-tailed Mongoose	<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>	1	1																
20	Egyptian Mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>															3			
21	Spotted Hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>										3	6						2	
22	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>											1				2			
23	Black-backed Jackal	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>						1		1	1									
24	Ethiopian Wolf	<i>Canis simensis</i>														6				
25	Bat-eared Fox	<i>Otocyon megalotis</i>										2								
26	Bush Pig	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>	1																	
27	Common Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>										6	6	5	6	1	50	30	20	20
28	Common Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>		3											1					
29	Swayne's Hartebeest	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus swaynei</i>																100		
30	Gerenuk	<i>Litocranius walleri</i>											4							
31	Harar Dikdik	<i>Madoqua hararensis</i>									4	15	8	6						
32	Grant's Gazelle	<i>Gazella granti</i>																		15
33	Soemmerring's Gazelle	<i>Nanger soemmerringii</i>										10	50							
34	Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>					2	7												
35	Oribi	<i>Ourebia ourebi</i>																20		
36	Mountain Nyala	<i>Tragelaphus buxtoni</i>													4		30			

	Common name	Scientific name	February																	
			8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
37	Lesser Kudu	<i>Tragelaphus imberbis</i>								4	2	2	6							
38	Menelik's Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus scriptus meneliki</i>					5	1						1	5					
39	Bush Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>											1	2	10					
40	Beisa Oryx	<i>Oryx beisa</i>								2	25	35	10							
41	Common Reedbuck	<i>Redunca redunca</i>												50		100		4	5	
42	Walia Ibex	<i>Capra walie</i>					2													
43	Unstriped Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus rutilus</i>											3							
44	Gambian Sun Squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>													2				3	1
45	Ethiopian African Mole Rat	<i>Tachyoryctes macrocephalus</i>														2			1	
46	Ethiopian Buff-spotted Brush-furred Rat	<i>Lophuromys flavopunctatus</i>								1										
47	Blick's Arvicanthis	<i>Arvicanthis blicki</i>					✓									✓		✓		

Plants

Common Name**Scientific Name****Notes**

African Redwood

*Hagenia abyssinica*Amharic name is *Kosso*. Has many uses, inc as a treatment for tapeworm.

Giant Lobelia

Lobelia rhincopetalum

Endemic to Ethiopia; only occurs in Afromotane habitat of Bale and Simien Mountains

Alchemilla haumanni

Endemic to the Bale Mountains

Bidens ghedoensis

Apparently little known

Crotolaria rosenii

Appears to be endemic to Ethiopia.

Globe thistle species

Echinops ellenbeckii

Apparently little known

Red-hot poker species

Kniphofia foliosa

Appears to be endemic to Ethiopia.

Solanecio gigas

Appears to be endemic to Ethiopia. Thought to have medicinal properties but in fact poisonous!

Vepris dainellii

Grows in forest shade, often found with wild arabica coffee plants