

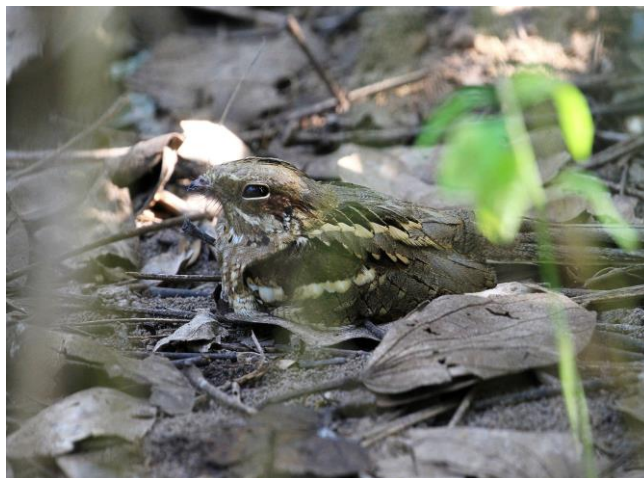
The Gambia

Naturetrek Tour Report

12th – 26th November 2021



Egyptian Plover



Long-tailed Nightjar



Greyish Eagle Owl



Northern Carmine Bee-eater

Report by Robert Mileto and images courtesy of Robert Mileto and Chris Pugh.



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Tour participants: Robert Mileto & Dembo Sonko (leaders), Baba (driver) with six Naturetrek clients.

Day 1

Friday 12th November

Rob and four guests met up bright and early (well... early..) in Gatwick and boarded the six hour flight to very warm Banjul, Gambia. There was little turbulence and, with largely clear skies, we had great views of the Atlas Mountains and the amazing multi-coloured hues of the Sahara Desert. After landing, immigration and baggage retrieval was a touch slow, but a necessary evil.

Some of us had already spotted our first Gambian bird - Little Swift wheeling and twittering above the terminal building. From our cool air-conditioned transfer bus, we were able to spot several more including Western Cattle Egret, Yellow-billed Kite, Pied Crow and dinky Vinaceous Doves.

After settling in we met Dembo, our local guide, along with his boss, Solomon. We had dinner at a nearby hotel, then to bed, lulled to sleep by the tinkling melodies of fruit bats and frogs.

Day 2

Saturday 13th November

Kotu creek, Abuko and Lamin rice fields

Next morning some chose to start the day at 06:30 with a stroll down to the nearby Kotu creek. Here Black-crowned Night Heron were busy going to bed! As the rosy fingers of dawn spread across the sky, Senegal Thick-Knee, Broad-billed Roller, Lesser Blue-eared Starling, Western Plantain-eater, Hammerkop, Western Reef Heron, Common Sandpiper, Beautiful Sunbird, Pied Kingfisher and a stonking Giant Kingfisher all put in a welcome appearance. All too soon it was time to head back to the Bakotu Hotel for breakfast, though even this short walk provided views of Village Weaver and Northern Grey-headed Sparrow.

After breakfast, we negotiated the busy roads to Abuko National Park. Soon we were walking through thick primary forest with some huge trees, as well as small wetland clearings. Green Monkey and West African Red Colobus crashed through the canopies whilst elegant Pied Hornbills glided between forest giants. Grey Hornbill called plaintively and a Shikra dashed through the undergrowth in search of prey. A splendid Violet Turaco perched nearby but an annoying branch in front of its head stymied the photographers - not so a Nile Monitor and a Broad-billed Roller that sat obligingly sans branches. As we walked on slowly, it was a delight to see the diddy and gorgeous African Pygmy Kingfisher, along with Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Black-necked Weaver, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Blue-spotted Wood Dove and the shy Little Greenbul. However, bird of the morning, if not the day, was a pair of cracking Green Turacos showing well in the branches of a large fig tree.

Lunch was at Lamin Lodge in the mangroves and thus punctuated with Mangrove Sunbird views as well as Speckled Pigeon. It was very hot, so we had a Siesta until 15:00, listening to tunes played by a local musician on his kora.

It was only a short drive to the Lamin rice fields where Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird heralded our arrival with its characteristic tink-tink-tink-tink call (well, now you know why it is called a tinkerbird!). In the fields themselves we had, at one point, Long-tailed Glossy Starling, African Grey and Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Yellow-crowned

Gonolek, Yellow-billed Shrike and Green Wood-hoopoe in three closely adjacent trees. It was hard to know where to look! Shortly afterwards we had our first views of the lovely Blue-bellied Roller.

Returning to a welcome refreshing shower, the subsequent checklist log was followed by a delicious dinner.

Day 3

Sunday 14th November

Kotu creek, Brufut and Tanji east

Another early start for the keenest found us again at Kotu creek and the Black-crowned Night Heron heading to roost for the day. Giant Kingfisher also made an appearance, as did the rather smaller but rather more dashing, Blue-breasted Kingfisher. Spur-winged Lapwing were very noisy and there was a flyby by an Osprey. On the walk back to breakfast a Beautiful Sunbird and a Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher made welcome appearances.

This morning we met Baba, our excellent and ever smiling driver for the rest of the trip. He drove us to the Brufut area where we spent the morning. Here we met Tony, a local warden, with whom we saw White-billed Buffalo Weaver, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, African Pigmy Kingfisher, Singing Cisticola, Yellow-throated Leaflove, Bronze-tailed Glossy Starling, Splendid Sunbird, Northern Crombec, Bronze Mannikin, Whistling Cisticola and a pastel-hued Lavender Waxbill drinking its fill at a puddle. It was then time for the grand finale, Tony almost magically conjured up a marvellously camouflaged and almost invisible (see cover) Long-tailed Nightjar deep in the forest undergrowth – what a star! Back at the edge of the forest, water in placed water pots quenched the thirst of African Thrush, Black-billed Wood Dove, Greater Honeyguide and a stunning Violet Turaco (this one branch-free), while chilled soft drinks were on offer to quench ours. A fly past by Great White Pelicans in V formation had us all craning our necks upwards to see the spectacle.

Lunch at the nearby Eco Lodge also had water pools to attract thirsty birds. Visitors new to our list here were Levaillant's Cuckoo and the dainty Orange-cheeked Waxbill. Here too we had a siesta until the temperature cooled... slightly.

Our short afternoon visit to Tanji east reserve gave us excellent views of hunting Osprey, our first Grey-headed Gull, Intermediate Egret and Common Greenshank. As we walked slowly back to the van, delicate Portia Widow dragonflies weaved amidst our feet in the hope of catching any stray insects we disturbed with our passage.

The evening checklist log was followed by another superb dinner – the menu choices were extensive, so it was easy to try something different each time.

Rob stayed up to welcome two additional guests. Since the original flight had been full, the additional two had taken a flight a couple of days later (and would go on to stay for a couple of additional days).

Day 4

Monday 15th November

Kotu to Tendaba (via Mandina Ba, Farabantang and Kampanti bridge)

A warm welcome was given to the new arrivals at breakfast. Soon after, our full complement set off on the long journey 'up river'.

En route, our first little stop was at Mandina Ba. Here amongst the trees and shrubs, Northern Puffback, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Blue-bellied Roller, Northern Black Flycatcher, Blue-breasted kingfisher and the always lovely Lavender Waxbill were all showing well.

As we drove eastwards along the south bank road a Rufous-crowned Roller and several Yellow-billed Shrikes perched prominently on wires or shrubs, begging us to stop and admire them.

Another short stop was taken at Farababanta woodland (more shrubs than wood) where both Singing and Whistling Cisticolas regaled us with both song and fine views (albeit of small brown birds). Far, far more showy was the Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Black-winged Bishop and Variable Sunbird that positively radiated colour. A lazy fly over by both Beaudouin's Snake and Long-crested Eagles topped off the stroll swimmingly.

We enjoyed a packed lunch at Kampanti bridge. This bridge is also known as the 'raptor bridge' and we very soon discovered why when several African Harrier-hawks put in an appearance, as well as characteristically rufous grasshopper buzzards (subsequently named the Ed Sheeran buzzard) and a grand finale of a Lanner Falcon.

We arrived at Tendaba, our camp for the night, in the mid-afternoon to a flight of Pink-backed Pelicans. In the car park, a large mango tree held roosting Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bats – who watched us watching them with their big bulbous brown eyes. After a quick wash and brush up and a refreshing cold drink, we set off on a walk through the village (punctuated with Village Indigobird, naturally) and into the woodland beyond. Accompanied by three curious local children, we soon spotted, Senegal Parrot and Rose-ringed Parakeet. Not really that difficult given how raucous they were being! Trickier was the White-rumped Seedeater. Having showed us their school (complete with nesting Northern Grey-headed Sparrows), the children headed back to their village and we had a short walk to a hide at a small waterhole. Here both Bronze-tailed and Purple Glossy Starling perched in a near leafless tree and positively shone iridescence in the slanting evening light. A Melodious Warbler was spending the northern hemisphere's winter nearby and, as we strolled back, we were treated to an elegant Abyssinian Roller and a couple of beautiful Bearded Barbet.

Arriving back in time for a shower and freshen up, some popped out briefly to seek African Scops Owl. On this occasion, we heard one, but a sighting proved elusive. The checklist for the day was followed by a tasty buffet dinner.

Day 5

Tuesday 16th November

Tendaba to Janjanbureh (via Tendaba airfield, Kudong quarry and Brikamar Ba)

It was a short drive after breakfast to the euphemistically named Tendaba airfield. There is no airfield. Tendaba is a small village, but, apparently, during an election a while back, the local candidate promised that if he were

elected an international airport would be built to attract waves of tourists and make everyone rich locally. The villagers cleared vegetation in eager anticipation and the candidate was duly elected.... But the airport never materialised. There is a moral there somewhere...

So today, the likes of Lizard Buzzard, Broad-billed Roller (mobbing a Yellow-billed Kite), Palm-nut Vulture, Abyssinian Rollers (both perched and rolling) cruise the phantom terminal and runway.

As we drove further east, deeper into the country, the likes of Bearded Barbet perched obligingly, and in the rice fields Intermediate and Great Egret, Woolly-necked and Black Stork, Green Sandpiper, and African Wattled Lapwing were all enjoyed.

We had planned to walk some fifteen minutes to a Bateleur nest, but no sooner had we set off, then one came lazily drifting over our heads, jinking characteristically left and right. Job done!

Short roadside stops can be productive and today, we saw the likes of Long-tailed Cormorant, Spur-winged Lapwing, Western Reef Heron and Dark Chanting Goshawk. A roadside wetland warranted close scrutiny and revealed adult and juvenile ~~Ed-Sheeran~~ Grasshopper Buzzards, African Darter, Striated Heron, a female Cut-throat Finch, and a fly over by Beaudouin's Snake Eagle and Senegal Parrot. From the road we also saw Patas Monkey and Guinea Baboon.

Our packed lunch today was taken under the canopy of a huge roadside tree which held Abyssinian Roller and Senegal Parrot.

Early in the afternoon we stopped at Kudang quarry. The hoped for Spotted Thick-knee eluded us, but it was good to see African Savanna Hare. Later, we stopped and walked across what appeared to be a playing field to Birkamba Ba's 'big tree'. In this big tree was a big owl, a whoppingly big owl, a whoppingly big owl with pink eyelids, blinking curiously at us – a Verreaux's Eagle-owl

By 15:00 we were at Baobolong Annexe Camp in Janjanbureh enjoying a cold drink and a shower. Janjanbureh was previously called Georgetown and is on an 8km long island (Janjanbureh Island, formerly MacCarthy Island) in the river and by 17.15 we were out at its western end. Here we spotted elegant Black-headed Lapwing, a Pearl-spotted Owllet being mobbed by Beautiful Sunbird and Village Indigobird, a gaudy Yellow-crowned Gonolek and a rather graceful Palm-nut Vulture.

Day 6

Wednesday 17th November

River cruise and Janjanbureh rice fields

After breakfast this morning we walked the short distance to the local jetty to embark on a cruise down and then back up the river. As we waited, a few Mottled Spinetails dashed amongst the many swallows and African Palm Swifts wheeling above the murky waters. Snacking bananas purchased, we heaved off and were soon admiring a fly over by a squadron of Spur-winged Geese. Chugging slowly upstream, hugging the bank birds such as Palm-nut Vulture, Red-necked Falcon, Black-headed Weaver, Mourning Collared Dove, Grey Kestrel, Croaking Cisticola, Spotted and Swamp Flycatchers, edged slowly into view and then slowly faded back out again.

Marabou storks outsized even the many White-backed Vultures we saw. No less than five, yes, five species of kingfisher (Grey-headed, Blue-breasted, Woodland, Malachite and Pied) were spotted, along with three species of primate (Green Monkey, Guinea Baboon and West African Red Colobus). We even caught a glimpse of Hippopotamus.

After a siesta to escape the heat of the day, we set out at 16.30 to the nearby Janjanbureh rice fields. Here Dembo went in search of and flushed a Painted Snipe that dashed away all too quickly. Black-headed herons stalked the paddies in search of tasty tidbits and Bishops and Pin-tailed Wydahs were plentiful, albeit mostly in drab non-breeding plumage. Still, some were pleasantly surprised how handsome the black stripes on a mottled brown background can be in the close-up view of a telescope. We patiently hunted down a Grey-backed Camaroptera via its bleating call and finally were rewarded with decent views of this skulking little gem of a bird.

After dark, but before a buffet dinner, we went in search of owls but found only fruit bats.

Day 7

Thursday 18th November

Wassu rice fields, stones and quarry

While we waited for the ferry to take us to the north bank of the river, a Shikra sat in a large tree but failed to avoid the angry attentions of Yellow-billed Shrike. Spookily, as per the previous day, Spur-winged Geese gave us an aerial display. The crossing itself only took a few minutes and just down the road a small pool held African Jacana and bejewelled Red-throated Bee-eater (bee-eater 1). Here, the flyover was by White-faced Whistling Duck.

At Wassu rice fields, a winding path brought us to Winding Cisticola as Western Marsh Harrier floated over the flooded fields in search of breakfast. There were soooo many Village Weavers, at times they became a small murmuration weaving around the clear blue sky. Dembo managed to find a cracking Painted Snipe, cryptically hidden in a rice tuft. Even through the telescope it was a tricky spot, but with some repositioning by both us and the bird, we all had decent views. The Wood Sandpipers it was with were much more obliging! There were plenty of Senegal Coucal but sadly no Black.

Nearby were Wassu stones, but, on the approach road, we were halted in our tracks by glorious Northern Carmine Bee-eaters (bee-eater 2). This striking shocking pink and powder blue stonker was the subject of many photos and appreciative comments that held us up, in a good way, for quite a while. Eventually we dragged ourselves away (well, actually, the bee-eaters flew off!) to Wassu stones is a collection of 11 stone circles, A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the monuments have been dated as being placed between 927 and 1305 AD. While some admired the stones and listened to stories from a local guide, others admired Green bee-eater (bee-eater 3) and Pygmy Sunbird. From there it was just another short drive to Wassu quarry where many more Red-throated Bee-eaters awaited us, far more than we had previously seen, along with some Little Bee-eaters (bee-eater 4). Here there was also Chestnut-backed Sparrow-lark.

After enjoying quite a rowdy but joyful and good natured ferry ride back to Janjanbureh Island c/o an election rally, we were back at our hotel for a late lunch and a siesta.

In the cool(er!) late afternoon, we ventured to the eastern end of the island where our strolling afforded us fine views of Malachite Kingfisher, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Black-rumped Waxbill and also more Red-throated Bee-eater... and, White-throated Bee-eater! Our fifth bee-eater species for the day. As we strolled back to the van in the fading evening light, a Stone Partridge was spotted deep in a bush. Not the best view but at least a glimpse of this rather skulking species.

Day 8

Friday 19th November

Janjanbureh to Morgan Kunda (via Njau, Kuntaur, Kauren, Kaur and Solomon's pool)

Today's 'waiting for the ferry bird' was a Greater Blue-eared Starling in a tall tree. Once on the north bank road, we headed west and soon stumbled across a Brown Snake Eagle with scary yellow irises. Soon afterwards, there was a Lizard Buzzard being mobbed by Drongo (Glossy-backed Drongo no less, now split from the East and Southern African, Fork-tailed Drongo, from which it is virtually indistinguishable!). Roadside pools proved fruitful, one with Red-throated and Green Bee-eater side by side, just asking for photos to be taken; another with a smart Black Heron (the only one of the trip) and White-backed Vulture. Patas Monkeys in a roadside bush were also a welcome treat.

At Njau pool, an unpromising muddy watering hole, we hoped for Egyptian Plover. We thought we saw one way over on the far bank... and then we realised there was not one, but two not 50m away on the bank we were stood by! These glorious birds are the holy grail of many a Gambian birding trip, but often fail to be spotted, yet here were a couple effectively at our feet. Dapper in their white, grey, black and buff striped regalia, Rob for one had waited over thirty years to lay eyes on these magnificent birds. White Wagtail, Green Sandpiper and a lurking Nile Monitor were also present, although these paled into insignificance... or was that just for me?!

We had an excellent buffet lunch at Kauren, a small restaurant and guesthouse with fabulous hill top views over the River Gambia and well beyond. Red-rumped Swallows swooped over us as we ate and there was an all too brief visit by a Scarlet-chested Sunbird. Meanwhile Lavender Waxbill quenched its thirst drinking from a dripping sink tap.

Solomon's pool is a muddy pool that provides an excellent drinking point for small birds. Today there was a mass of frenzied activity by many Black-winged and Northern Red Bishops (albeit most in non-breeding or intermediate plumage) along with the odd Cinnamon-breasted Bunting and Yellow-fronted Canary. However, the top spot went to the fly past by an Exclamatory Paradise Whydah complete with its unfeasibly long trailing tail.

We arrived at Morgan Kunda lodge in the heat of the afternoon. After refreshing ourselves with chilled drinks, we watched the likes of Red-billed Firefinch, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Lavender and Black-rumped Waxbill drink deeply from a water bowl placed for that purpose, often drinking at the same time.

Later in the afternoon, we took a walk through local peanut fields (an important crop in the area) and grasslands. There was Black-headed Lapwing to be seen and nearby a small waterhole had European Bee-eater swooping down to drink. There was a particular large bird we were seeking, but the grasslands seemed empty apart from

the odd Tree Pipit. Somewhat dejectedly we headed back in the direction of the van. However, one guest caught a blob of black out of the corner of his eye – it was at some distance, but binoculars and telescope confirmed it was our target bird – an Abyssinian Ground Hornbill! To much excitement, we headed through the long grass in its direction, often losing sight of it on the undulating ground. Then, finally, we crested a small ridge, and there it was, ponderously walking the sward in search of tasty invertebrates. Given the length of the grass, it was tricky to have full views. This became academic when it was spooked by some villagers walking past, but at least that gave a short chance to see it in its full glory, complete with large white wing patches as it lumbered away and out of sight.

Elated we headed for the van, but there was still a flyover by many Western Reef Herons (including a one white phase individual) and Four-banded Sandgrouse coming to drink to enjoy as the light faded and dusk fell.

Day 9

Saturday 20th November

Baobalong wetlands and peanut fields

A Yellow-crowned Gonolek graced us with its presence at breakfast at 07:00. Replete, we set off for the nearby wetlands. On arrival, a Western Marsh Harrier drifted lazily over, whilst Ruff probed the mud for tasty worms and Red-rumped and Wire-tailed Swallows hawked over the waters. Slender-billed Gulls were frequent and were a new addition to our trip checklist. They seem to have mastered the art of hovering over the water to fish. In order to perambulate a circular route we had to negotiate the narrow tops of sluice walls, crystal maze fashion. Safely across, there were African Wattled Lapwing to enjoy on the other side... but then another sluice wall to negotiate! Safely back on the road a pair of African Silverbill was a welcome surprise and large mixed egret flock provided excellent photographic opportunities and, as a departing treat, a European Roller perched obligingly on wires above our van.

After lunch at the lodge, there was time to relax, although some chose to explore the gardens and discovered Piapiac, White-billed Buffalo Weaver, dinky Black-rumped and Lavender Waxbill and a lovely African Golden Oriole.

The late afternoon walk in the peanut fields began with a mass of children politely asking for their photographs to be taken. They were unfeasibly excited even though there was no real way to provide them with a copy of said photos. There were peanuts in various stages of collection and dropped nuts attracted many African Grey Hornbills, African Wattled Lapwing, Black-headed Lapwing and a scattering of awakening Senegal Parrots. The target bird for the day again was proving elusive, but as we walked back, this time it was Dembo who heard it call. Heading off, we watched as he sought to find it, but he only succeeded in flushing the Savile's Bustard. Well, it was better to see it fly off into the distance than not to see it at all, and Dembo's super-excited cries of "Savile's Bustard... Savile's Bustard, wow! Look Savile's Bustard! There - that's fantastic, look at that, Savile's Bustard!" were pretty much as entertaining as the bird itself!

Dinner was at 20:00, preceded by the daily checklist update.

Day 10

Sunday 21st November

Morgan Kunda to Tendaba

Today's breakfast bird was White-crowned Robin Chat. Packed up and ready to leave by 08:00, Grasshopper Buzzard and an elegant Grey Kestrel were the cause of our first roadside stops. To break up the travel, we had a wander through some more peanut fields. A Double-spurred Francolin, which to date we had seen only as a brown blur flying brusquely away, was this time perched for a change and allowed us to admire its well patterned and coloured plumage. A Kite flew over, close enough for us to see its bill – black tipped - so more probably a Black Kite instead of the more usual Yellow-billed. There was a yellow billed bird that did also fly over though – a Yellow-billed Stork.

We took a bridge back over to the south bank, and enjoyed Western Reef Heron and African Harrier-hawk whilst tootling along west towards Tendaba. Tendaba airfield is always -worth a look and today it held the seventh bee-eater for the trip, the elegant Swallow-tailed Bee-eater. There were also Whimbrel and Gull-billed Tern to enjoy.

After lunch and a short siesta it was time for the second boat trip of the holiday, this time on a smaller boat, which was just as well given the narrow overgrown creeks we would find ourselves negotiating! There were kingfishers in abundance, especially Pied, but also the lovely Blue-breasted, Grey-headed and Woodland Kingfisher. White-throated and European Bee-eaters also put in an appearance. Rounding a corner, it is now hard to remember if it was the (White-breasted) Cormorant festooning the trees or the pungent smell of ammonia that was most striking. Either way, the visual and nasal experience of the rookery was spectacular and decongesting in respectively equally measure!

In the dark skies of rural Gambia, Rob's telescope gave us fine views of some planets between dinner courses. A crescent Venus, Jupiter with its Europa and Ganymede moons and the rings of Saturn could all be clearly seen.

Day 11

Monday 22nd November

Tendaba to Kotu (via Furuya forest)

An early morning walk to the airfield in a lovely dawn revealed Common Greenshank but sadly not the hoped for Black Coucal.

Fed, packed up and ready by 08:30, another hoped for bird of peanut fields, the elegant Temminck's Courser, proved elusive, but the bonus was a Sahel Paradise Whydah. At Furuya forest we took a stroll which initially proved rather sparse on the bird front with just Bearded Barbet and Sahel Bush Sparrow, Black Scimitarbill and Black-crowned Tchagra putting in all too brief appearances. However, as we wandered back towards the van, we wandered into a bird party and suddenly the trees around us were alive with the likes of Vieillot's Barbet, Brubru, Senegal Batis, Brown-rumped Bunting, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Pygmy Sunbird, White-fronted Black Chat, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver and the punk 'haired' White-crested Helmetshrike – what an amazing half hour!

As on our outward journey, we enjoyed a packed lunch at Kampanti/raptor bridge. Today, Wahlberg's Eagle, African Harrier-hawk, Lanner Falcon, Hooded and White-backed Vultures, a dinky Brown-throated Wattle-eye, and a noisy Northern Puffback.

We were back on the Atlantic coast and luxuriating in air-conditioned rooms by 15:00 and with time for a little relaxation at the bar by the pool. At 17:00, some had a walk to Kotu creek and saw Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Little Bee-eater, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Broad-billed Roller and four absolutely cracking Senegal Parrots arguing on top of a dead palm trunk in the evening light. As we walked back an Oriole Warbler showed briefly - a fantastic end to the birding day.

Day 12

Tuesday 23rd November

Farasuto forest and Marakissa

Today our early morning stroll to the creek revealed Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, White-crowned Robin-chat and the ever impressive Giant Kingfisher.

After breakfast it was off to the Farasuto forest. Here, as well as probably our best views of Yellow-crowned Gonolek, we were escorted deep into bushes to see Long-tailed Nightjar. There were two of the little beauties, as cryptic and well-hidden as the one we had seen earlier on the holiday. We were then escorted (via Cardinal Woodpecker) to a nearby part of the forest where a pair of Greyish Eagle-owl were perched remarkably low down on a remarkably small tree! Since they were next to a well-used footpath, they seemed unperturbed by the excited attention they were getting. We returned to the parking spot and very welcome cold water c/o Baba and took a short break before venturing into the tall forest. Forest birding is often challenging and today was no exception, but with patience we glimpsed Snowy-crowned Robin-chat and Grey-headed Bristlebill. The placed bowls at the water point proved an easier place to see the likes of Red-billed Firefinch, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Black-rumped and the delicate Orange-cheeked Waxbill. It was also a good place to quench our own thirst with the soft drinks on offer.

The Marakissa river camp, hidden away by a creek, was our stop for a late lunch. Adama, our larger than life Gambian hostess, put out an amazing buffet with surely the best chips of the holiday – and masses of them! We could eat overlooking more placed watering pots, but other than a distant Violet Turaco, the only takers were Western Plantain-eaters. It turned out Adama, as well as being a top class cook, is also a crocodile whisperer – I say whisperer, more shrill shouter! To the repeated and high pitched call of CROCKY CROCKY CROCKY as well as some leftover chicken, a West African Crocodile dutifully came gliding out of the reeds and munched its fill, much to our mutual amazement. Bidding our farewell to Adama, we had a quick look along the nearby creek, but it was just the usual suspects, so we headed back to Kotu.

We had a change from the usual (Kombo beach) restaurant this evening – and we went for an Indian meal instead. What excellent food it was, though, in such prodigious quantities, much of it had to be left uneaten.

Day 13

Wednesday 24th November

Pirang forest, Marakessa and Cape Point lagoon

We had an early start in an attempt to avoid the traffic, so there was no early morning walk. There was, however, the Giant Kingfisher on Kotu creek bridge. As we arrived at Pirang forest a perched Long-crested Eagle very close to the track was a fantastic start. Soon after we met Kawsu and Mariam, the local warden/guides in this community forest. Mariam took us to nearby trees to see White-faced Owl. However, not only were they well hidden by leaves but they had also taken up residence in an area infested with army ants. Lots and lots of very bitey army ants and they were not best pleased that we had trampled through their long snaking runs. We ended up watching our vulnerable feet as much as we watched the owls!

Leaving the owls and ants behind, as we strolled back there were Variable, Collared and Beautiful sunbirds to be seen, along with a party of Green Wood Hoopoe. We then had quite a long and brisk walk through a lovely gallery forest and to an unpromising damp, dark thicket. Here Kawsu started making a low repeated whistle, when, to our surprise, the whistle was returned and out popped a darling little White-spotted Flufftail! Amazing! This is surely one of the trickiest birds to set eyes on, but here was one calling away not five metres in front of us! Having made its point, the flufftail disappeared into the shadows and we wound our way back past the huge webs of Golden Orb-web spider and the chattering of Black-necked Weavers. A Pied Hornbill was a welcome spot as was our second Verreaux's Eagle-owl for the trip.

It was back to Marakissa for lunch – more mouth-watering food including mountains of glorious chips! CROCKY CROCKY CROCKY again brought the crocodile to with a couple of metres of Adama and this time we were all ready and waiting with our cameras and videos. The placed watering pots today attracted thirsty and raucous Brown Babblers.

There was just time for a quick visit to Cape Point lagoon. As we stepped from the van, there, on the wires, was the eighth and last of all the bee-eaters on the trip checklist - Blue-cheeked bee-eater. We strolled to the mudflats on the edge of the ocean and were rewarded with views of Eurasian Oystercatcher, and masses of Common Ringed Plover, Common Redshank and Black-tailed Godwit.

Day 14

Thursday 25th November

Kartong, Stallia and Tanji beach

Today's plan to avoid the traffic was a seven o'clock start with a packed breakfast. Navigating the busy streets, we arrived at Kartong for breakfast with expat Colin Cross who runs the observatory there. As well as kindly providing hot drinks, he also gave us an invaluable insight into what bird and habitat conservation in Gambia was really like.

We then walked through the observatory grounds where Rose-ringed Parakeet fed noisily, Splendid Sunbird perched obligingly and African Swamphen foraged cautiously. There were also Purple Heron and a couple of Fulvous Whistling Duck amongst the White-faced. The Beautiful Sunbirds lived up to their name in the morning light. In the last pool before the beach, we had an all too fleeting view of a Black Crake.

On the beach itself, an entrepreneurial chap had set up a makeshift beach bar. As we indulged in cold drinks or freshly squeezed grapefruit juice, we could watch the likes of Osprey and Sandwich Tern patrolling the breakers. A stroll along the beach (some paddling – well, why not eh?) provided Grey Plover and Common Redshank on the muddy areas and Blue-cheeked Bee-eater and Black-winged Bishop on the breach crest bushes.

Lunch was at Stallia on the Senegalese border. Here we ate as Grey-headed Gull and enormous carrot-billed Caspian Terns passed by. Post-lunch, there was time to relax and Rob discovered the nest of a Mangrove Sunbird, furnishing plenty of opportunity to take photos of it feeding its chicks, preening and even removing faecal sacks!

Rested, we set off towards Tanji and thence our hotel... only to be asked to pull off the road by the police. Had we inadvertently done something wrong? Surely not, since all vehicles were being asked to pull over. It transpired the whole road was being cleared so that the cavalcade of the President could drive unhindered to an election rally. They passed to rather limited cheering and waving, although it transpired he was subsequently re-elected.

Thus, somewhat later than anticipated, we dropped into Tanji beach and the fish market. The market was a sight to behold – a riot of colour, smell, noise and activity. Hundreds of people dressed in bold reds, blues, yellows and greens awaiting and receiving fish by the bowl-load from equally colourful boats with a myriad of squabbling Grey-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls picking off the discarded and dropped fish. It was an apparently chaotic and evocative African scene that will linger in the memory.

Our last dinner of the holiday was another fabulous Indian meal.

Day 15

Friday 26th November

Kotu to London Gatwick (via Tujereng)

A final packed breakfast on our last morning gave some who chose more time at Tujereng woods. We had good views Red-winged Warbler, Levillant's Cuckoo, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Winding Cisticola, Cardinal Woodpecker, Lesser Honeyguide, Bearded Barbet and Orange-breasted Bushshrike. A migrating Barn Swallow flying past and an Osprey with huge fish provided excellent photographic opportunities. A final stop at the nearby Tujereng cemetery gave us our 249th and final bird species for the trip, the verdant and lovely Green Pigeon.

We were back by 11:00 and it was time to pack and have a bite to eat before heading off to the airport, via the hotel where two of the guests were going to spend their extra couple of days.

Once at the airport we said our goodbyes to our ever smiling driver, Baba, and our hard working and immensely knowledgeable local guide, Dembo. Our flight back was uneventful, and we arrived at Gatwick a touch ahead of schedule and met up in the baggage reclaim. Here we bade each other fond farewells and made each our way home, full of memories of a wonderful country enjoyed on our Gambian odyssey.

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Checklist

Birds

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>							✓	✓	✓					✓	
2	Fulvous Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i>														✓	
3	Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	
4	Stone Partridge	<i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i>							✓								
5	Double-spurred Francolin	<i>Pternistis bicalcaratus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓					
6	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>								✓							
7	Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>										✓					
8	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					✓										
9	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>					✓			✓		✓	✓				
10	Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>						✓	✓								
11	African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>										✓					
12	Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>						✓									
13	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>														✓	
14	White-backed Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius leuconotus</i>										✓					
15	Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>		✓	✓			✓									
16	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>		✓			✓	✓			✓			✓			
17	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
18	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
19	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
20	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
21	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		✓				✓								✓	
22	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
23	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
24	Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>								✓							
25	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓				
26	Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
27	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
28	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>			✓											✓	

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
29	Pink-backed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>				✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓	
30	Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
31	White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>			✓						✓	✓				✓	
32	African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	
33	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>			✓	✓				✓						✓	✓
34	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				
35	Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>					✓	✓		✓					✓		
36	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
37	White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>						✓		✓			✓				
38	Beaudouin's Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus beaudouini</i>				✓	✓										
39	Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>								✓							
40	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>															
41	Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>				✓			✓						✓		
42	Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>				✓							✓				
43	Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>					✓										
44	Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>					✓										
45	Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>					✓			✓							
46	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	
47	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>						✓	✓		✓					✓	
48	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>										✓					
49	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>							✓			✓			✓		
50	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
51	African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>						✓									
52	Grasshopper Buzzard	<i>Butastur rufipennis</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓				
53	Savile's Bustard	<i>Lophotis savilei</i>									✓						
54	White-spotted Flufftail	<i>Sarothrura pulchra</i>													✓		
55	Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>														✓	
56	African Swampphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>														✓	
57	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>							✓								
58	Senegal Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
59	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>													✓		
60	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
61	Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
62	Black-headed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus tectus</i>					✓				✓	✓					
63	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>		✓			✓	✓			✓		✓				
64	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>													✓	✓	
65	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>									✓				✓	✓	
66	Egyptian Plover	<i>Pluvianus aegyptius</i>								✓							
67	Greater Painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>						✓	✓								
68	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>							✓	✓							
69	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
70	Eurasian Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata orientalis</i>													✓		
71	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>													✓		
72	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>														✓	
73	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>														✓	
74	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>									✓						
75	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>							✓								
76	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
77	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓					
78	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>													✓	✓	
79	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>							✓								
80	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			✓						✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
81	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>										1					
82	Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>			✓											✓	
83	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>														✓	
84	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>		✓							✓	✓					
85	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>			✓							✓			✓	✓	
86	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>														✓	
87	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>														✓	
88	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>														✓	
89	Four-banded Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles quadricinctus</i>					✓			✓							
90	Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										✓
91	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
92	Mourning Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>		✓				✓	✓					✓			

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
93	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	
94	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓			
95	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
96	Black-billed Wood Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>			✓				✓	✓	✓						
97	Blue-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>		✓	✓		✓							✓			
98	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
99	Bruce's Green Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>				✓	✓			✓							
100	African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>															1
101	Guinea Turaco	<i>Tauraco persa</i>		✓													
102	Violet Turaco	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>		✓	✓									✓			
103	Western Plantain-eater	<i>Crinifer piscator</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
104	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
105	Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>			✓		✓										✓
106	African Scops Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>				h						✓					
107	Greyish Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo cinerascens</i>												✓			
108	Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>					✓								✓		
109	Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>		✓			✓							✓			
110	Long-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>			✓									✓			
111	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					
112	Mottled Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>						✓	✓								
113	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>						✓	✓				✓			✓	✓
114	European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>									✓						
115	Purple Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>				✓	✓	✓					✓				
116	Abyssinian Roller	<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
117	Blue-bellied Roller	<i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>		✓	✓	✓									✓		✓
118	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	
119	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>						✓	✓			✓				✓	
120	Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>				✓											
121	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon malimbica</i>			✓	✓		✓				✓					
122	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>			✓			✓				✓	✓			✓	
123	African Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>		✓	✓	✓											
124	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>						✓	✓							✓	

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
125	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>		✓	✓									✓	✓	✓	✓
126	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
127	Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>										✓	✓				
128	Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>						✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓
129	Red-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops bulocki</i>							✓	✓							
130	White-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops albicollis</i>							✓			✓					
131	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>							✓	✓							
132	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>													✓	✓	
133	European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>								✓		✓					
134	Northern Carmine Bee-eater	<i>Merops nubicus</i>							✓								
135	Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>					✓		✓			✓			✓	✓	
136	Black Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus aterrimus</i>		✓									✓				
137	Abyssinian Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>								✓							
138	Western Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus kemp</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
139	African Pied Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros fasciatus</i>		✓											✓		
140	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
141	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>		✓	✓	✓								✓		✓	✓
142	Vieillot's Barbet	<i>Lybius vieilloti</i>											✓				
143	Bearded Barbet	<i>Lybius dubius</i>				✓	✓						✓				✓
144	Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>				✓											✓
145	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>			✓		✓										
146	Fine-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera punctuligera</i>		✓													
147	Buff-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera nivos</i>													✓		
148	Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>												✓			✓
149	African Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓			
150	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>									✓						
151	Grey Kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>					✓	✓				✓					
152	Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>						✓									
153	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus erlangeri</i>				✓							✓				
154	Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
155	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓
156	Senegal Batis	<i>Batis senegalensis</i>											✓				

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
157	Brown-throated Wattle-eye	<i>Platysteira cyanea</i>											✓	✓			
158	Orange-breasted Bushshrike	<i>Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus</i>				✓											✓
159	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>											✓				
160	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>				✓							✓				
161	Yellow-crowned Gonolek	<i>Laniarius barbarus</i>		✓			✓				✓			✓			✓
162	Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>											✓				
163	White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>											✓				
164	Yellow-billed Shrike	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓	✓
165	African Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>									✓						
166	Glossy-backed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus divaricatus</i>						✓					✓				
167	Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓								✓		
168	African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>					✓										
169	Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>				✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
170	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
171	Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>							✓								
172	Flappet Lark	<i>Mirafra rufocinnamomea</i>											✓				
173	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
174	Little Greenbul	<i>Eurillas virens</i>		✓											✓		
175	Yellow-throated Leaflove	<i>Atimastillas flavicollis</i>			✓	✓											
176	Fanti Saw-wing	<i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>			✓	✓									✓		
177	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>									✓						
178	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>															✓
179	Red-chested Swallow	<i>Hirundo lucida</i>				✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	
180	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>					✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		
181	Pied-winged Swallow	<i>Hirundo leucosoma</i>				✓											
182	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>					✓			✓	✓	✓					
183	Northern Crombec	<i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>			✓	✓											
184	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>										✓					
185	Western Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Iduna opaca</i>														✓	
186	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>				✓											✓
187	Singing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cantans</i>			h	✓											
188	Whistling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lateralis</i>			h	✓											

			Date: 12th-26th November 2021														
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
189	Winding Cisticola	<i>Cisticola marginatus</i>							✓								✓
190	Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>						✓									
191	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>					✓				✓						
192	Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>		✓								✓		✓			✓
193	Red-winged Warbler	<i>Heliosais erythropterus</i>		✓												✓	✓
194	Yellow-breasted Apalis	<i>Apalis flavida</i>		✓													
195	Oriole Warbler	<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>											✓				
196	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>						✓	✓								
197	Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>				✓							✓				✓
198	Brown Babbler	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓		✓		✓
199	Blackcap Babbler	<i>Turdoides reinwardtii</i>		✓												✓	
200	Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>								✓							
201	Lesser Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chloropterus</i>		✓	✓								✓				✓
202	Bronze-tailed Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalcurus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
203	Purple Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>				✓	✓	✓									
204	Long-tailed Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
205	Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>					✓	✓								✓	
206	African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>		✓	✓									✓	✓		
207	Northern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis edolioides</i>				✓											
208	Swamp Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa aquatica</i>						✓									
209	White-crowned Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha albicapillus</i>										✓		✓			
210	Anteater Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla aethiops</i>							✓								
211	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe</i>										✓					
212	White-fronted Black Chat	<i>Oenanthe albifrons</i>											✓				
213	Mangrove Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes gabonicus</i>		✓												✓	
214	Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>													✓		
215	Pygmy Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna platyura</i>							✓				✓				✓
216	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓						
217	Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
218	Splendid Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris coccinigastrus</i>			✓											✓	
219	Variable Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>				✓						✓					✓
220	Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

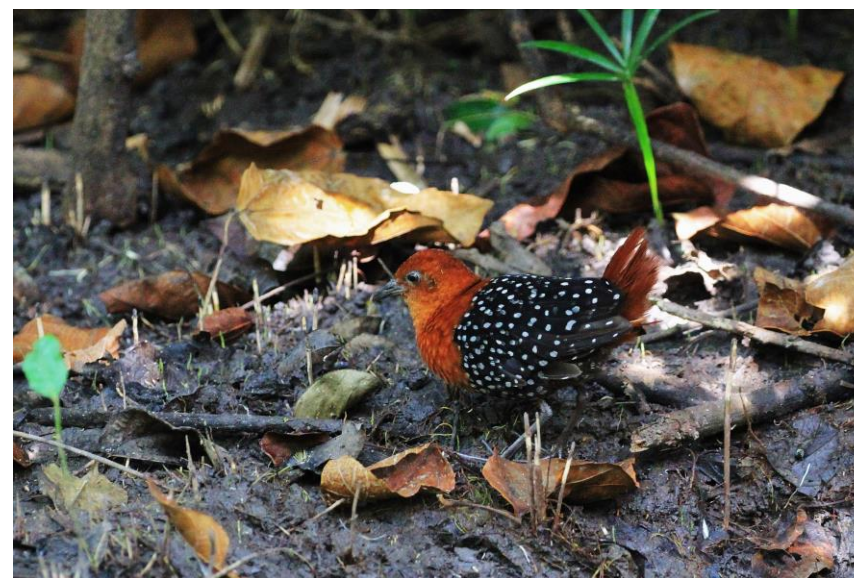
			Date: 12th-26th November 2021															
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
221	Sahel Bush Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris dentata</i>					✓											
222	White-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis albirostris</i>			✓				✓	✓	✓						✓	
223	Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser superciliosus</i>											✓					
224	Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>									✓						✓	
225	Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis</i>		✓	✓										✓			
226	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
227	Black-headed Weaver	<i>Ploceus melanocephalus</i>						✓	✓									
228	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓							
229	Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>					✓											
230	Black-winged Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>				✓			✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
231	Northern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes franciscanus</i>				✓								✓				
232	Cut-throat Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>					✓		✓		✓	✓						
233	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
234	Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>			✓	✓				✓	✓			✓			✓	
235	Lavender Waxbill	<i>Estrilda caerulescens</i>			✓	✓				✓	✓			✓				
236	Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>			✓									✓				
237	Black-rumped Waxbill	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>				✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
238	African Silverbill	<i>Euodice cantans</i>									✓	✓						
239	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>			✓													
240	Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									
241	Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>					✓	✓										
242	Sahel Paradise Whydah	<i>Vidua orientalis</i>								✓								
243	Exclamatory Paradise Whydah	<i>Vidua interjecta</i>											✓					
244	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>								✓								
245	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>								✓	✓	✓						
246	White-rumped Seedeater	<i>Crithagra leucopygia</i>				✓												
247	Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>			✓	✓	✓						✓				✓	
248	Brown-rumped Bunting	<i>Emberiza affinis</i>											✓					
249	Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>								✓								

Mammals

		Date: 12th-26th November 2021															
	Common name	Scientific name	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	Green Monkey	<i>Chlorocebus sabaeus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	
2	Patas Monkey	<i>Erythrocebus patas</i>					✓			✓							
3	Guinea Baboon	<i>Papio papio</i>					✓	✓								✓	
4	West African Red Colobus	<i>Procolobus badius</i>		✓				✓									
5	Gambian Sun Squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>		✓		✓							✓	✓			✓
6	Striped Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus erythropus</i>											✓				
7	African Savanna Hare	<i>Lepus victoriae</i>															
8	Common Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>						✓									
9	Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus gambianus</i>				✓	✓	✓				✓					

Other

Common name	Scientific name
Reptiles and Amphibians	
Orange-flanked Skink	<i>Mabuya perrotetii</i>
Nile Monitor Lizard	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>
Agama Lizard	<i>Agama agama</i>
West African Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus suchus</i>
Common African Toad	<i>Sclerophrys regularis</i>
Fish	
African Red Snapper	<i>Lutjanus agennes</i>
Atlantic Mudskipper	<i>Periophthalmus papillo</i>
Guinean Tilapia	<i>Tilapia guineensis</i>
Butterflies	
Citrus Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demodocus</i>



White-spotted Flufftail

Common name	Scientific name
African Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia florella</i>
Common Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema hecabe</i>
Common Dotted Border	<i>Mylothris chloris</i>
Small Orange Acraea	<i>Acraea serena</i>
Dark Blue Pansy	<i>Junonia oenone</i>
Pea Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>
Elegant Acraea	<i>Acraea egina</i>
Diadem	<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>
Guineafowl Butterfly	<i>Hamanumida daedalus</i>
Dragonflies	
Portia Widow	<i>Palpopleura portia</i>
Scarlet Darter	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>
Strong Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum brachiale</i>
Other invertebrates	
Giant Millipede	<i>Diplopoda: family Odontopygidae</i>
West African Fiddler Crab	<i>Uca tangeri</i>
West African Mangrove Oyster	<i>Crassostrea tulipa</i>
Desert Locust	<i>Schistocerca gregaria</i>
Golden Orb Web Spider	<i>Nephila sp.</i>



West African Red Colobus