

The Gambia in Style

Naturetrek Tour Report

21 - 28 April 2017



Blue-bellied Rollers by Julia Burton



Long-crested Eagle by John Haynes



Scarlet-chested Sunbird by Julia Burton



Pair of Hammerkops by Julia Burton

Report compiled by Rob Mileto
Images courtesy of Julia Burton & John Haynes



Naturetrek

Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour participants: Rob Mileto (leader), Lamin Jarju and Alajie Bojang - AJ (local guides),
Baba (driver) and five Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Friday 21st April

London Gatwick to Mandina Lodge Grey & cold in London; hot & sunny in Mandina

The group met in the departures lounge at Gatwick airport and boarded our Titan Airlines six hour flight to Banjul. The service on board was impeccable and food tasty. Into the bargain, there was virtually no 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 pick up was a quick and easy process for most; however the luggage of one group member had never made it onto the flight, so we spent a little time filling out forms. Once out, the first birds of the trip for most were the Western Cattle Egrets on the airport lawns. It was only a short walk to our minibus, and a very welcome bottle of water and a woven little fan provided as gifts to cool us on our onward journey. We stopped briefly in the town of Birkama to get some essentials for our 'luggage-less' member and then, by around 4pm, we were sipping a cold drink by the Mandina Lodge pool.

Whilst we were given a warm reception from Linda the manager, it was hard not to be distracted by the White-throated Bee-eaters, Common House Martins and Fanti Saw-Wings all swooping down to drink and bathe in the pool. Having refreshed ourselves, late afternoon strolls around the grounds revealed an host of lovely birds including Pied Kingfisher, Western Plantain-Eater, Hooded Vulture, Speckled Pigeon, the colourful yet dainty Red-billed Firefinch and the rather bizarre looking African Darter.

Later, as we did the checklist in the restaurant, the large roost of bats made themselves obvious above our heads. Some were clearly the large Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bats, but there was another, smaller fruit bat, probably a Dwarf Epauletted Fruit Bat, as well as at least one type of insectivorous bat. Dinner was delicious, enjoyed to the sound of a kora played by a local musician. Soon after dinner, we all had an early night, given what a long day it had been.

Day 2

Saturday 22nd April

Am - canoe to Kembujah and walk; pm - walk to mudflats Hot and sunny

We met at 7am for tea, coffee and biscuits in the restaurant. Early arrivals had the bonus of seeing a very smart Giant Kingfisher at close quarters, as well as the more usual Mourning Collared Doves and Speckled Pigeons. We boarded our canoes and set off upstream at 7.30am.

As we slowly paddled along the Red Mangrove-lined creek, the most obvious birdlife was what flew overhead, and that included Piapiac, Brown Sunbird, Western Osprey, Black Heron and Black-headed Heron. However, with a bit of searching, we also spotted and a stunning Goliath Heron, Reed Cormorant, and Red-chested Swallows, either perching in mangroves or on mudflats.

Disembarking from the canoes, we immediately spotted a couple of Senegal Thick-knees and a Namaqua Dove, then several birds came thick and fast: Black Kite, Hooded Vulture, Village Weaver and perhaps in top spot, a pair of glorious Purple Starlings, shining iridescent purple and blue in the early morning sun – especially through

the telescope. Just down a track, seed on the cultivated land was attracting Orange-cheeked Waxbills, Red-billed Firefinch and Red-cheeked Cordon-Bleu, which gave us some fine views. Nearby a pair of Black-billed Wood Doves perched long enough for a telescope view, and were joined by a Northern Puffback. Just a little further on a Pearl-spotted Owlet did a reasonable job of trying to hide, but sat for long enough for us all to see it, eventually.

Sadly breakfast was calling and all too soon it was time to retrace our steps back to the canoes, but not before we had stunning views of Beautiful Sunbird, Violet-backed Starling, Violet Turaco and Bearded Barbet. At the canoes a large group of local youths were having a noisy and colourful 'circumcision party' and this added an intriguing cultural angle to the morning's proceedings, modernised by the requests for photos of us for their Facebook pages!

The birding was not over, with displaying Blue-bellied Roller and close perched Western Reef Heron and Blue-cheeked Bee-eater adding to what had been a great morning out. We enjoyed a hearty full English breakfast on our return at 10.15am and then there was plenty of time for relaxation.

For those that met around 3.30pm by the pool, there was the usual gathering of bathing and drinking White-throated Bee-eaters and Fanti Saw-Wings. In the tree above there was also a pair of tiny near-tailless Northern Crombecs. At 4.30pm, as the heat of the day subsided, we set off on a short walk to the 'mudflats', which are actually more of a small wetland area surrounded by farmed land, just beyond a cashew nut plantation. Just beyond the lodge gates, we stopped at the water tanks whose dripping connections were being visited as a refreshment stop, mostly by Common Bulbuls, but also Little Weaver, Little Greenbul, African Thrush, Greater Honeyguide and the rather shy Grey-headed Bristlebill.

Continuing our walk, we tried a bit of cashew apple which was too astringent for most tastes, but some of us had seconds! At the mudflats, perhaps the most obvious birds were a pair of very smart Spur-winged Lapwings and, after a little searching we also spotted Senegal Coucal, African Jacana, Black-headed Heron and Western Red-billed Hornbill. As we headed back through the cultivated land, a perched Blue-bellied Roller was a colourful treat, but even this was eclipsed by a pair of resplendent Senegal Parrots. A little further on a Dark Chanting Goshawk perched obligingly in the top of a tree, and we stumbled upon a troop of Guinea Baboons feeding in a Locust Bean tree. They were very relaxed with us watching and photographing them as they munched on the beans, mostly in the tree, but with a few on the ground picking off the fallen pods

We were back in time to shower and change before the checklist with attendant bats as darkness fell, followed by another excellent dinner.

Day 3

Sunday 23rd April

Drive to Kartong Bird Observatory; lunch at Rainbow Beach, Sanyang Hot and sunny

We met for an early continental breakfast at 7am with the rather excellent local addition doughnuts! By just after 7.30am we were heading for Kartong Bird Observatory, but we did not get very far before a large black shape in a nearby tree turned out to be a magnificent Long-crested Eagle. Shortly after we had had our fill of that, we stopped again to see some lovely Long-tailed Glossy Starlings and some noisy Brown Babblers. Our local guide AJ joined us at the main road and off we went. After a drive of about 45 minutes, we neared the wetlands, only

to be sidetracked by our first (of several for the day) Abyssinian Roller – a bird surely worthy of a sidetrack. When we finally arrived at Kartong, we spent some time looking over a marshy area where we quickly spotted several new birds: Western (Purple) Gallinule, Wood Sandpiper and White-face Whistling Duck, amongst others. A Greater Painted Snipe showed very briefly on being flushed, giving us just a tantalising view.

We then set off down a small track, south of the wetland, so that the sun was behind us. As we strolled, we saw a succession of lovely birds. African Harrier-Hawks passed overhead on several occasions and Lanner Falcons and Pink-backed Pelicans were seen at a distance. Closer to us were African Wattled Lapwings, Spur-winged Goose, the underwhelming Winding Cisticola and the late to migrate Common Redstart and Western Yellow Wagtail. Towards the end of our stroll, a pair of perching Grey-headed Kingfishers was a real treat.

On the Atlantic coast there were a goodly number of seabirds. Most impressive was perhaps the Caspian Tern with its large coral-red bill standing out amongst the more numerous yellow billed Royal Terns and the smaller, but also yellow billed, Lesser Crested Terns. There were also a few tiny Little Terns and some elegant Slender-billed Gulls. A few shorebirds were also added to our list: Sanderling, Bar-tailed Godwit and Grey Plover.

Boarding our bus, we set off for a beachside restaurant for lunch, only to be waylaid by a group of Piapiac and a pair of lovely Blue-bellied Rollers. We still managed to get to our lunch stop at a reasonable hour and had a rather excellent meal of local (Lady) fish and chips, along with fried rice, chicken wings and a fine green salad. As we ate, Grey-headed Gulls floated lazily past.

Fed and watered, we made our way back to the lodge and had a break before some walked the short distance to the water tanks and saw Little Greenbul, Grey-headed Bristlebill and Black-necked Weaver taking drinks in between visits by thirsty Green Vervet Monkeys

The checklist was partaken in the scenic bar area with Blue-breasted Kingfisher, followed by another lovely dinner.

Day 4

Monday 24th April

Am - walk to Cultural Centre; pm - canoe trip to Bafuloto area or sunset cruise

Today's early risers got a glimpse of a Senegal Parrot before coffee/tea and biscuits at 7am. By 7.30am we were good to go. We got as far as the lodge gate before we were trying to see African Paradise Flycatcher, Grey-backed Cameroptera and Purple Starling at the same time! Luckily, they were all reasonably obliging and everyone seemed to get some sort of a view.

Eventually we started our walk proper, but with all the early morning birdlife, it was still very much a stop/start affair, as all good bird walks should be! The open forest and bushland (locally loosely termed savannah) soon revealed Brown-throated Wattle-Eye, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and Double-spurred Francolin. We then heard the unmistakable screeching of baboons and decided to investigate. Soon we were amongst a troop, some 150 strong. They seemed entirely unperturbed by our presence, pretty much showing nothing but indifference, even though we were right amongst them. They just got on with baboon life – eating, fighting (to establish dominance), grooming, playing, riding under mum, riding on top of mum...

We walked on and came across several more lovely birds like African Pied Hornbill, Pallid Swift, a smart Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, the unfeasibly coloured Yellow-crowned Gonolek and Scarlet-chested Sunbird. The plan had been to walk to an area called Nambikah, but we had progressed so slowly (due to sightings, not laziness!) that we ended up in the Cultural Centre instead. Hereabouts we saw Stone Partridge, Violet Turaco, and Green-headed and Pygmy Sunbirds, whilst the baboons passed us by again. Then we had rather neck-breaking views of Northern White-faced Owls, well hidden in a eucalyptus.

It was then time to head back towards the lodge and breakfast, but not surprisingly, we were distracted. This was mostly by views of African Harrier-Hawk, but also Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher. We did get back a little after 10.15am for a hearty full English breakfast, and then we had a nice long relax.

Around 4.30pm, two set off in a motorboat on a sunset cruise and were rewarded with excellent views of Pink-backed Pelican, African Spoonbill, African Fish Eagle, Yellow-billed Stork, African Sacred Ibis, Western Red Colobus and a roost for hundreds of egrets, as well as the sunset. The remaining four set off in canoes to the Bafuloto area and saw White-faced Whistling Duck and a very obliging Malachite Kingfisher on the way. Once ashore, we strolled around the cultivated areas and small wetland, picking up a host of sightings including a lovely pair of Lizard Buzzards. As we strolled back, the cooling temperature brought out even more birdlife and we had our best view yet of the skulking but stunning Yellow-crowned Gonolek, as well as some lovely Long-tailed Glossy Starlings, Northern Crombec, a fly past by a pair of African Green Pigeons and the ever-enchancing Blue-bellied Rollers.

As we paddled back in the twilight, the birding was not yet complete as Lamin's eagle-eye spotted a white streak in the mangroves that resolved itself into the white back of the elusive White-backed Night Heron, and both African Cuckoo and Brown-necked Parrot flew over.

The checklist was sneaked in between dinner courses, and then it was off to bed.

Day 5

Tuesday 25th April

Am - Abuko NP & Lamin rice fields; pm - Cape Point & Tanji fish market Hot and sunny

Breakfast was set for 8am, so there was time for some to do a short bird walk around the lodge grounds. We added two rather grey/brown birds to the list: Bush Petronia and Northern Grey-headed Sparrow.

After breakfast, we set off for the Abuko National Park but, as usual, we were waylaid by birds like African Wattled Lapwing. We still arrived at the park entrance at a reasonable hour and were soon walking through thick primary forest with some huge trees, as well as small wetland clearings. In the forest, the neck-craning was rewarded with our first view of the exotic Guinea (or Green) Turaco as well as three 'Africans' – African Green Pigeon, African Thrush, and the smart African Pied Hornbill. The wetlands rewarded us with excellent views of perched Giant Kingfisher and Palm-nut Vulture. Also amongst the trees were some shy but lovely Western Red Colobus Monkeys, Gambian Sun Squirrel and the odd Green Vervet Monkey.

We then crossed the road to an area of cultivation and wetland known as the Lamin rice fields. Here, the trees held a gaggle of noisy Green Woodhoopoe and a pair of Shikra. To the delight of one of the party, in the wetland was a distant but distinctive, and personally sought after, Hamerkop.

It was then time to head north to Cape Point and lunch at the Calypso. Our shaded table overlooked a pool with several Nile Crocodiles and a Nile Monitor Lizard present, as well as Caspian Terns swooping down to drink. At one point we were joined by a Pied Kingfisher and an Agama Lizard... and wouldn't you know it... a pair of Hamerkop sailed in and even gave us a quirky head bobbing display.

We could easily have spent the afternoon in that idyllic spot, but it was time for a little local colour at the Tanji fish market. En route, a roadside pool gave us our first 'umbrellaring' Black Heron and yet more Hamerkop.

Tanji fish 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 Gulls and the odd Royal Tern picking off the discarded and dropped fish. It was an apparently chaotic and evocative African scene that will linger in the memory. We even managed to tick off some new but familiar birds, in the shape of Ruddy Turnstone, Barn Swallow and House Sparrow.

Slightly away from the hurly burly of the beachside market were rows upon rows of racks upon which some of the fish was being salted and dried, and nearby there were some huts where fish was also smoked. We tried some – it was delicious and reminiscent of a fine smoked kipper!

Heading back, we were at the lodge for 5.30pm. The checklist was at 7pm (with a Goliath Heron and a Senegal Tick-knee) and yet another fine dinner at 7.45pm.

Day 6

Wednesday 26th April

Am - canoe to Kubuneh; pm - relaxation and sunset cruise Hot and sunny

Today's early risers got a view of African Grey Woodpecker, and Blue-breasted Kingfisher and Purple Starling entertained us during coffee/tea and biscuits at 7am. By 7.30am we were aboard canoes and paddling against the incoming tide. The mangroves were quiet, but we managed really good views of Great Egret and a pair of Pied Kingfishers. After some 40 minutes we docked at Kubuneh. The villagers manually and laboriously processes gathered mangrove oysters, and the ladies were happy for us to look around and take photographs. The razor-sharp shells are first steamed in half an old oil drum over an open fire before the now softer shells are prized open and the mussel sized 'meat' extracted with a knife. We bought a few to try – and they were indeed similar in taste and texture to mussels.

As we strolled away from the water and towards the village, a fluting flash of yellow was an African Golden Oriole and several more followed including Yellow-billed Shrike, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Senegal Parrot and the diminutive but delightful Lavender Waxbill.

In the centre of the village was a massive Kapok tree with huge buttress roots. Strolling back, in the shade of mango trees, a small long tailed black bird caught our attention – a Northern Black Flycatcher, and a further new species for the trip. Once back in the canoes, we were speedily back to a full English breakfast and more relaxation.

At 4.30pm four set off for their sunset cruise and the two that had already been did some serious relaxing in the bar area, and still managed to spot Red-billed Firefinch and Brown Sunbird. Out on the water, we slowly made

our way upstream and soon encountered a real treat – in the shade of the stilted mangrove roots was an unassuming brown and white bird with a red bill – the almost mystical African Finfoot, often sought but rarely seen. We cruised further downstream, spotting African Darter and Western Reef Heron as the river grew ever wider. A Marsh Mongoose hunting amongst the mangrove roots was a welcome mammal for our list. Soon enough, the creek opened out on the broad and majestic mouth of the River Gambia itself. Here there were Pink-backed Pelicans, but too distant to photograph and with too low a tide to approach. Luckily, as we turned to return up the tributary, one left its roost, floated overhead and landed in the water nearby – photographs aplenty were taken.

Wending our way back up the creek, we took a slightly different route and found a fishing Osprey which deftly plucked an unwary Tilapia from the water, turned the fish to face streamline forward on the wing and made off with it, all whilst being harried by a Black Kite trying to make the Osprey drop the prey to pick up an easy meal.

We cruised on and as the sun set, we moored near a tiny treed island supporting a few Long-tailed Cormorants and Western Reef Herons. As darkness fell, more of those species along with Great Egrets, Intermediate Egrets, Cattle Egrets and African Darters began to arrive. At first this was in dribs and drabs, but slowly the numbers and the frequency of arrivals increased until birds were arriving in forties and fifties, and the trees were soon awash with cackling waterbirds all seeking the best position for a good night's sleep. As it was becoming really dark, it was time for us to circumnavigate the island, taking one last close look at the roost of maybe 800 birds, and then back to the lodge for checklist and dinner.

Day 7

Thursday 27th April

Am - canoe to Kembujah and walk; pm - walk to Base Camp

Partly cloudy but hot

Today's breakfast entertainment was mainly a Lesser Blue-eared Starling, although an African Thrush also got a look in. By 7.30am we were aboard canoes and paddling with the incoming tide. In the mangroves a very obliging perched Blue-breasted Kingfisher provided the best views yet of this beautifully marked bird that also adorns the local beer bottles. After some 30 minutes we docked at Kembujah.

The birds were not as immediately as obvious as on our previous visit, but as soon as we started strolling, the fun began. In a nearby tree we found a perched Pearl-spotted Owlet being mobbed by mainly Common Bulbuls, but also a Splendid Sunbird. On another tree were perched four Senegal Parrots, lit by the early morning sunlight. A further large kapok held a resting African Harrier-Hawk. Throughout, the cultivated land and scattered bushes held Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Brown Babbler, Bronze Mannikin, Bronze-tailed and Long-tailed Glossy Starlings, Yellow-billed Shrike and, new for the list, White-billed Buffalo Weaver and Northern Red Bishop (sadly in drab non-breeding plumage).

As we strolled back towards the canoes, another Pearl-spotted Owlet was spotted, this one being mobbed by a Scarlet-chested Sunbird, and finally a fine Violet-backed Starling polished off our early morning walk. It was hard work for the guides, paddling back against the current of the incoming tide, but they did a fine job and got us back for 10.30am.

A final long siesta was flowed by a short but productive walk to nearby Base Camp. The water tanks on the way were always worth a look and today, as well as the usual suspects, we found a Spotted Honeyguide. As we

continued through the forest, there was a smart Snown-capped Robin Chat, closely followed by a Grey-headed Bristlebill. Strolling on, a party of Black Scimitarbills turned up as we were watching a Common Ringed Plover, and nearby some Senegal Parrots helpfully stopped off in a nearby tree. Near Base Camp we had a tricky choice to make; should we sneak around trying to get better views of a couple of Ahanta Francolin, or should be just take one last photograph of a remarkably tame and obliging Blue-bellied Roller. Needless to say, it rather separated the birders from the photographers!

We had more kora music with dinner and Linda kindly laid on some Kir Royals (crème de cassis topped with champagne).

Day 8

Friday 28th April

Walk to the mudflats; drive to Banjul airport; flight to Gatwick

Some chose to relax on their final day, but an intrepid four set off at 7.30am on a quest for African Pygmy Kingfisher, which is often seen in the cashew nut plantation, near the mudflats. However, as usual, we had barely made it out of the gate when an African Paradise Flycatcher gave us the usual run around as we tried to get photographs. In the cool of the early morning air, our first top spot was a fleeting first and only view of an Oriole Warbler, closely followed by a decent view of Grey-headed Bristlebill. Nearby an African Pied Hornbill perched obligingly on a bare branch and a Violet-backed Starling dazzled in the dawn sun. Next, there were two more new birds for the list in the shape of a Klaas's Cuckoo and a pair of Yellow-fronted Tinkerbirds.

Then we arrived at the cashew nut plantation and fanned out in order to increase our chances of seeing a 12cm bird amongst thousands of trees – even if it does have a bright red bill! Yet after only a few minutes of searching, there was the little beauty, sat on a low branch and just asking for many photographs to be taken. It switched branches on several occasions, but each time we managed to re-spot it, until finally it eluded us. Elated, we strolled on to the mudflats and here more treats awaited: Lizard Buzzard, Pearl-spotted Owlet and our last new bird for the list, a Black Crake. We strolled home, happy taking in a few more now familiar birds and also our last new mammal: a small troop of Patas Monkeys was a very welcome late addition.

After breakfast and packing, we said our fond farewells to our host, guides and staff who had looked after us so well during our stay. We then headed to the airport, where we said goodbye to our smiling driver. Our flight back was uneventful, and we had more excellent views of north-west Africa. 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 our ways home, full of memories of the 171 bird species seen and wonderful country enjoyed on our Gambian odyssey.

Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at www.facebook.com is quick, free and easy. The [Naturetrek Facebook page](#) is now live; do please pay us a visit!

Species Lists

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

	Common name	Scientific name	April							
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1	Stone Partridge	<i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i>				5				
2	Double-spurred Francolin	<i>Pternistis bicalcaratus</i>				1			1	13
3	Ahanta Francolin	<i>Pternistis achantensis</i>							2	
4	White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>			8	10		22		
5	Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>			1					
6	Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>				2				
7	African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>				1		1		1
8	White-backed Night Heron	<i>Gorsachius leuconotus</i>				1				
9	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>						1		
10	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>			1		2			
11	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	6			6	14	100s	4	
12	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			1	2		2		1
13	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>		2	1	1				
14	Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>		1			1	2		
15	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>					1			
16	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		1		1		50		
17	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>					1	5		1
18	Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>		1			1	1		
19	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		2	1	1	2			
20	Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>		3	3	1	1	50	✓	
21	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>					4		1	
22	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>				2				
23	Pink-backed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>			4	6		7		
24	White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>						1		
25	Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>	3	3		2	1	✓		
26	African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>	1	1		4	2	✓	✓	
27	Western Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		1	1	1		2	1	
28	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		1	1		✓	✓	✓	
29	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>	2	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30	African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>				1				
31	Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>		1	1		1	2		
32	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
33	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>		1	4		1	1	1	1
34	Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>			1					1
35	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>					2	1	1	
36	Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>			1	2			1	1
37	Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>			1					
38	Grey Kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>			1					
39	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>			2					
40	African Finfoot	<i>Podica senegalensis</i>						1		
41	Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>								1
42	Western (Purple) Swampfen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>			6					
43	Senegal Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>		2		2	1			
44	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>			1					
45	Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>		2	15	✓	✓	✓		✓
46	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>			2		2			

	Common name	Scientific name	April							
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
47	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>			10			1		
48	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>							1	
49	Greater Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>			1					
50	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>		2	10		4			2
51	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>			1					
52	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	17	1	2	✓		✓	✓	✓
53	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			1	1				
54	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		1		1		3		
55	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>			1					
56	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>				1		2	1	
57	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>					16			
58	Slender-billed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus genei</i>			5		3			
59	Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>			15		300			
60	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>			5	1	15			
61	Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>			20		6	1		
62	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>			13					
63	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>			1					
64	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>			10					
65	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia domestica</i>					2			
66	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	19	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
67	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
68	Mourning Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>	16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
69	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
70	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	2	1					2	
71	Black-billed Wood Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>		2	1	✓			✓	
72	Blue-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>		1		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
73	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>		1						
74	African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>				2	3			
75	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		16		3		10	✓	
76	Brown-necked Parrot	<i>Poicephalus fuscicollis</i>				2				
77	Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>		2		1		3	9	
78	Guinea Turaco	<i>Tauraco persa</i>		H			2			
79	Violet Turaco	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>		2		2	1	1	1	2
80	Western Plantain-Eater	<i>Crinifer piscator</i>	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
81	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>		1	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	
82	African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>				1				
83	Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>								1
84	Northern White-faced Owl	<i>Ptilopsis leucotis</i>				2				
85	Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>		1					2	1
86	Mottled Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>		1						
87	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
88	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>				1				
89	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>			4					
90	Abyssinian Roller	<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>			6					
91	Blue-bellied Roller	<i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>		4	4	5	4		2	2
92	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>					1			
93	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>			2					
94	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon malimbica</i>			1	1	1	1	2	
95	African Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>								1
96	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>			2	1			1	
97	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>		2			1			

	Common name	Scientific name	April							
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
98	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	2	4		4	1	14	✓	✓
99	Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>				2		1		
100	Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>		3	2		1	2	✓	✓
101	White-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops albicollis</i>	16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
102	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>	2	4				6		
103	Black Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus aterrimus</i>							4	
104	Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>					6			
105	African Pied Hornbill	<i>Tockus fasciatus</i>				1	1		✓	✓
106	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>		1	✓	2	3		✓	
107	Western Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus kemp</i>		4	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
108	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>								2
109	Bearded Barbet	<i>Lybius dubius</i>		2	2	4		1	1	
110	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>		1				1		
111	Spotted Honeyguide	<i>Indicator maculatus</i>							1	
112	Fine-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera punctuligera</i>		1						
113	African Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>		1				1	3	1
114	Brown-throated Wattle-Eye	<i>Platysteira cyanea</i>				2				
115	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>		1						
116	Yellow-crowned Gonolek	<i>Laniarius barbarus</i>		H		2	5	2	✓	✓
117	Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike	<i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>				2				
118	Southern Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius meridionalis</i>	1							
119	Yellow-billed Shrike	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>					1	4	4	
120	African Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>			1			5		
121	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>		1		2				
122	Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>				2	1			✓
123	African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>				2		1		✓
124	Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>		1	6	✓	✓	✓		
125	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	17	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
126	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>		7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
127	Little Greenbul	<i>Eurillas virens</i>		1	2					
128	Grey-headed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda canicapillus</i>		1	1				1	1
129	Fanti Saw-Wing	<i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>	18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
130	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>					4			
131	Red-chested Swallow	<i>Hirundo lucida</i>	10	2	✓	✓		✓	✓	
132	Pied-winged Swallow	<i>Hirundo leucosoma</i>			1	2		3		
133	Northern Crombec	<i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>		2	2	2			2	
134	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>				4				1
135	Winding Cisticola	<i>Cisticola marginatus</i>			2					
136	Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>								H
137	Oriole Warbler	<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>								1
138	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>				1			2	1
139	Senegal Eremomela	<i>Eremomela pusilla</i>				1				
140	Brown Babbler	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>			4				7	
141	Lesser Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chloropterus</i>							1	2
142	Bronze-tailed Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalcurus</i>		3				1	1	
143	Purple Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>		2		2		2		
144	Long-tailed Glossy Starling	<i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>	1		6	10	4		6	
145	Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaste</i>		3	1				1	2
146	African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>		1	1		1		2	1
147	Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i>		1					2	2
148	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>			1					

	Common name	Scientific name	April							
			21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
149	Northern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis edolioides</i>						2		
150	Mangrove Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes gabonicus</i>		2				1		2
151	Green-headed Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>				2	1		2	1
152	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>				2			2	
153	Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>	1	8	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
154	Splendid Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris coccinigastrus</i>		2			1		1	
155	Pygmy Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna platura</i>			1					
156	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>					2			
157	Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>					2		1	
158	Bush Petronia	<i>Gymnoris dentata</i>					1			
159	White-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis albirostris</i>							6	
160	Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>		1		2			10	
161	Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis</i>			1		2		2	
162	Vitelline Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus vitellinus</i>		2						
163	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>		16	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
164	Northern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes franciscanus</i>							2	
165	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	2	18		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
166	Red-cheeked Cordon-Bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>		4		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
167	Lavender Waxbill	<i>Estrilda caerulescens</i>						✓		2
168	Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>		10					2	
169	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>		13	11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
170	Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>			1	1			2	
171	Western Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>			2					

Mammals

1	Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus gambianus</i>	2	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Peter's Dwarf Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Micropterus pusillus</i>	10	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Western Red Colobus Monkey	<i>Procolobus badius</i>				1	13			
4	Patas Monkey	<i>Erythrocebus patas</i>								5
5	Guinea Baboon	<i>Papio papio</i>		16	150	✓				6
6	Gambian Sun Squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>				4				
7	Slender Mongoose	<i>Galerella sanguinea</i>		1						
8	Marsh Mongoose	<i>Atilax paludinosus</i>				2		1		
9	Green Vervet Monkey	<i>Chlorocebus sabaeus</i>	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Reptiles

1	Nile Monitor Lizard	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>				1	1			
2	West African Nile Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus suchus</i>				1	6			
3	Agama Lizard	<i>Agama agama</i>				1	5			

Butterflies

Citrus Swallowtail, *Papilio demodocus*
 Small Grass Yellow, *Eurema brigatta*
 African Grass Blue, *Zizeeria knysna*

African Emigrant, *Catopsilia florella*
 African Tiger, *Danaus chrysippus*
 Dark Blue Pansy, *Junonia oenone*

Other Fauna

African Giant Snail, *Achatina sp.*
 West African Mangrove Oyster, *Crassostrea tulipa*
 Guinean Tilapia, *Tilapia guineensis*

West African Fiddler Crab, *Uca tangeri*
 Atlantic Mudskipper, *Periophthalmus papillo*

Flora

Baobab, *Adansonia digitata*

Red Mangrove, *Rhizophora mangle*

Kapok, *Ceiba pentandra*

African Fan Palm, *Borassus aethiopum*

Black Mangrove, *Avicennia germinans*

Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit www.naturetrek.co.uk to sign up.



Abuko Reserve by Julia Burton