Trip Report UGANDA 2015
20 DAYS UGANDA BIRDING AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP – PRIVATE TOUR

**Date:** January 30, 2015 - February 18, 2015

**Participants:** B. Ullrich and Dr. M. Zieger, photographies and text

**Guide:** Crammy Wanyama, planning, organizing, driving and guiding

**Route:**

**Scope:** Not only to see as much wild-life as possible, but to get (good) photographies of birds!

371 species seen and photographed, thereof 53 mere „documented“ quality (not mentioned in the text)
**Program:**

Day 1 – January 30, 2015: Arrival in Entebbe, Transfer & check-in, Birding Entebbe Botanical Gardens. Situated on the northern shores of Lake Victoria, the Botanical Gardens are virtually on the Equator. Overnight Entebbe Travellers Inn, ideal located little town hotel, close to the airport & in walking distance to the Botanical Gardens passing by the "Viktoria Mall". (2 nights)


Mantled Guereza


Shoebill, Swamp Flycatcher, African Jaçana, Western yellow Wagtail, Wood Sandpiper, Long-toed Lapwing, Malachite Kingfisher, Blue-breasted Bee-eater

and later in the afternoon Mpanga forest, unfortunately very dry and only low bird activity. Red-chested Cuckoo, Chestnut Wattle-eye, some butterflies.
then birding along the Gulu-Highway to **Murchison Falls National Park** via **Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary** for the White Rhino. Overnight at **Fort Murchison - Lazy Camping** very nice built in Kasbah-style, located with view at the Nile & quite a number of wildlife around, unfortunately by far not enough time to enjoy it. (3 nights)
Black-headed Oriole, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Black-headed Batis, **Thick-billed Cuckoo**, White-headed Barbet, Standard-winged Nightjar (first use of our new spot-light!), Beaudoin's Snake-Eagle
Reedbuck

Day 4 – February 02, 2015: Early morning start. Game drive in the Park, burning savanna providing swarms of hungry birds. Heading back after dawn.
Bar-breasted Firefinch, Speckle-fronted Weaver, Rattling Cisticola, Grasshopper Buzzard, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Zitting Cisticola, **Silverbird**, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, **Abdim’s Stork**, Red-billed Quelea, European Roller, Senegal -, Eurasian -, Spotted thick-knee, Mourning collared Dove, Steppe Eagle, Kittlitz’s Plover, Pallid -, Montagu’s Harrier, Black-headed Lapwing, Whinchat
Patas Monkey, Oribi, Lelwel Hartebeast, African Buffalo, Red-headed Rock Agama, Warthog, Western striped Ground-Squirrel

Day 5 – February 03, 2015: **Boat trip** up the stream to observe the Falls from the bottom and riverbank wildlife. Getting to the starting point is challenging because of the huge amount of distracting fauna along the road ...
Grey Kestrel, Marabou Stork, Woodchat Shrike, Red-necked Falcon, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill, Grey Woodpecker, **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**, Grey-crowned Crane, African Skimmer, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Rock Pratincole
Elephants, Patas Monkey, Uganda Kob, Crocodiles
Nile Bushbuck, Rothschild Giraffe

Day 6 – February 04, 2015:
Game drive to top of the falls using the **Paraa-Ferry**. Complete different view from above with splashing torrent producing rainbow.
Birding via Buliisa to **Budongo Forest** (the largest natural forest in East Africa) through the escarpment area, view of **Lake Albert** and the **Rift Valley** to Budongo.

Overnight **Masindi Hotel**, reasonable equipped and quiet Hotel (2 nights)


Guereza Colobus

Day 7 – February 05, 2015: Birding Budongo Forest & the **Royal Mile**, Uganda's historically known leisure spot for the traditional King. Very few tourists. White-thighed-, Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill, Banded Snake-Eagle, Wooly-necked Stork, Purple glossy Starling, some nice butterflies

Day 8 – February 06, 2015: Birding via Hoima and Fort Portal to **Kibale Forest National Park**, best tour destination for chimpanzee tracking in East Africa.

Overnight at **Kibale Forest Camp**, idyllic place amidst nature with large terrasse (2 nights)

Crowned Hawk-Eagle, Laughing Dove, Striped Kingfisher, Bronze-tailed Glossy Starling, Double-toothed Barbet, Brimstone Canary, Lizard Buzzard, Copper Sunbird, Grey-headed Sparrow, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Purple-banded Sunbird, Village Indigobird, Cassin's Flycatcher Central African Red Colobus, Bush baby

Day 9 – February 07, 2015:
Chimpanzee Tracking with early morning tea, about 1 hour hike to the first Chimpanzees

Afternoon birding along the road.
Also seen: Crested Guineafowl, Speckled Tinkerbird, Grey-headed Nigrita, Crowned Hornbill

Day 10 – February 08, 2015:
Early (breakfast 5 a.m.) morning search for the Green-breasted Pitta, 4 hours, not even heard.
Purple-headed Starling, Narina Trogon, Red-bellied Paradise-Flycatcher (nesting pair), Brown-throated Wattle-eye

leisurely Birdwatching in **Bigodi wetland** through papyrus on wood-planked trail (2-3 hrs)
Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher, Olive-bellied Sunbird, Great Blue Turaco
Grey-cheeked Mangabey, Red-tailed Monkeys

Day 11 – February 09, 2015: Birdwatching via crater lake and Kasese to **Queen Elizabeth National Park** (second largest national park in Uganda) and afternoon Launch cruise, starting from Mweya peninsula on the **Kazinga channel** (2 overwhelming & shooting finger straining hours).
Overnight at **The Bush Lodge**, nice romantic place with view to the Kazinga channel (2 nights)

European Bee-eater, Giant Kingfisher, African Pipit

Day 12 – February 10, 2015: Morning game drive around the park for lions, instead our first Bustard. **Lake Katwe** where salt is mined is unfortunately nearly dry. Afternoon photo opportunities at the lodge with bathing elephants, Kingfishers flying around and Fish-Eagles close by.


**Herd of Elephants, Nile monitor, Warthog, Bush Pig, Crocodiles**

Day 13 – February 11, 2015: Birding through Ishasha sector for the Tree-climbing Lions via Kisenyi to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. Today fresh traces of lions, at least!

Overnight **Lake Kitangara Tented Camp Buhoma** located close to the gorilla tracking, thus reachable after a long day out ...

**quiet, big tent with huge beds, very friendly, interesting fauna (3 nights)**


Day 14 – February 12, 2015: Mountain Gorilla Tracking Experience. Distance to be kept 7 m, valid only for humans.

Panga-men, rifle-rangers, guide, porters make for a real excursion. Indeed a lifetime experience.

Day 15 – February 13, 2015: Birding along the Mail trail up to the falls. Opportunity to test our rain-gear.
Day 16 – February 14, 2015: Birdwatching to Ruhiija in Bwindi, Buhoma. Passing „the Neck“ for Albertine Endemics
Overnight Gorilla Mist Camp, phantastic view, impressive bungalow surrounded by plants and birds (2 nights)

Day 17 – February 15, 2015: Full-day trekking at 2400 m above sea-level

Day 18 – February 16, 2015: Leaving Bwindi Impenetrable NP with sharp border to terrassed fields. Birding via Great Lakes Museum & Mbarara to Lake Mburo National Park, the only national park that contains an entire lake, game drive Overnight Arcadia Cottages Lodge, inside the park (!) at night surrounded by Kobs (and more, thus a ranger brings and gets the guest during the dark), excellent view and meals (only 2 nights, a pity)

Day 19 – February 17, 2015: Game drive along the park, afternoon boat trip on Lake Mburo in search of the African Finfoot
Day 20 – February 18, 2015: Birding home via Mbararo to Kaku Swamp Area (Lyantonde), Birding to the Swamp Finally back to Entebbe & Departure

For more infos visit my blog (in German) and search for "Uganda". There will be a link to my photobooks as well.