

# Wise Birding Holidays

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## Trip Report

GHANA:

### Picathartes to Plover Tour

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Nov. - Tuesday 3rd Dec. 2013



**Tour Participants:** John Archer, Bob Watts, Graeme Spinks, Peter Alfrey, Nigel & Kath Oram

**Leaders:** Chris Townend & Robert Oteng-Appau

### HIGHLIGHTS OF TRIP

**Yellow-headed Picathartes:** Whilst sitting quietly in the magical forest, we were wowed by at least 5 different birds as they returned to their roost site.

**Egyptian Plover:** A minimum of 5 adults were seen very well on the White Volta River, along with a very young chick. **Confirmed as the first breeding record for Ghana!**

**Rufous-sided Broadbill:** A smart male performed admirably as it carried out its acrobatic display flight with amazing mechanical whirring sound.

**Black Dwarf Hornbill:** An amazing 4 different birds seen throughout the tour!

**Black Bee-Eater:** A very understated name for such a fantastically stunning bird!



**This Yellow-headed Picathartes taken by tour participant Peter Alfrey was one of five birds seen and voted bird of the trip!!**

### **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November: Arrive Accra**

The whole group arrived on time into Accra's Kotoka Airport. Here, we boarded our spacious air-conditioned coach which was to be our transport for the next 15 days. After about 30 minutes we arrived at our beach hotel and were all soon checked in to our rooms. Everyone was tired, but full of anticipation for our first full days' birding in Ghana. It was straight to bed for some whereas others were in need of a cool beer before sleep!

### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November: Sakumono Lagoon / Winneba Plains**

It was a relaxed start today with a brief look at the sea before breakfast where the highlights were a few **Royal Terns** and a **Caspian Tern** along with our first **Copper Sunbird** and **Laughing Dove** in the hotel gardens. After a leisurely breakfast with sea view, we headed east along the coast to the nearby Sakumono Lagoon, a Ramsar site for hundreds of waterbirds. The water levels were quite high, but there were still a good selection of birds with an impressive flock of at least 50 **Collared Pratincole**, numerous **Little Stint**, the odd **Curlew Sandpiper** and **Grey Plover** as well as **African Watled Lapwing** and **Spur-winged Lapwing**. A cracking **Yellow-throated Longlaw** did the decent thing and perched up for good scope views and our first **Ethiopian Swallow** gave some good flight views. Herons and Egrets were well represented with **Cattle Egret**, **Little Egret**, **Intermediate Egret**, **Great Egret**, dark morph **Western Reef Heron** and at least six **Black Herons**. All these species were all lined up allowing some great comparisons to be made in the scope. Raptors were also in good supply with a good count of three **Osprey** circling high above the lagoon, two **Lanners** hunting the edge of the wetland and a superb **Grey Kestrel** perched on wires.

We then drove around to view the lagoon from a different angle and enjoyed birding from the comfort of a shaded garden whilst drinking coffee! We spent the next hour here scanning through more waders and also seeing a few winter migrants as well as our first true African specialities. Highlights in the wooded scrub included a gang of **Yellow-billed Shrikes**, a beautiful **African Grey Hornbill** playing hide and seek behind the trunk of a nearby tree, a dazzling **Yellow-crowned Gonolek**, **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Willow Warbler** and **Wood Warbler**. On the lagoon we found a group of **Avocet** and **Black-tailed Godwit** as well as **Marsh Sandpiper**, a lone **Glossy Ibis** and a **Honey Buzzard** and **Marsh Harrier** over the site.

We then boarded our coach and headed west along the coast and enjoyed a restaurant meal close to the Winneba Plains as we waited for the temperature to drop a little. In the garden of the restaurant, a couple of **Shikra** performed well, as did our first **Splendid Sunbird** and **Senegal Coucal**.

Late afternoon birding at the Winneba Plains was successful as we slowly walked the road and explored various areas of burnt grassland. **Yellow-mantled Widowbirds**, **Bar-breasted Firefinch**, **Orange-cheeked Waxbill** and **Bronze Mannikins** were in good numbers and a **Black-faced Quailfinch** flew over calling. A **Simple Greenbul (Leaflove)** was typically shy, but eventually showed well enough to be seen by all and both sexes of **Black-necked Weaver** gave some good views. The weavers showed off their plain green back and striking black eyestripe, but despite the name, the black neck is absent in this

particular *brachypterus* race. Other highlights included **Broad-billed Roller**, **White-throated Bee-Eater**, **Melodious Warbler** and some excellent views of both **Short-winged Cisticola** and **Croaking Cisticola**, the latter soon renamed by Graeme as "Gormless Cisticola!" As dusk approached, we had to leave and we headed on our journey towards the famous Kakum Forest, where we soon arrived at our hotel at Hans Cottage where we were to spend the next four nights. Here we all enjoyed a beer and a good meal before a good night's sleep ahead of an early start ready to explore the forest!

### **Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November: Bekampa Track / Antwikwaa**

This morning we were all up early and headed out to the Bekampa Track, now a very well known birding area within the Kakum Forest area. Dawn was broken by a calling **Red-chested Goshawk** and gave good scope views as it perched in a nearby tree. We then birded the main track where we enjoyed our first views of **Blue Spotted Wood-Dove**, **Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher**, **Grey-backed Camaroptera** and a **Black-winged Red Bishop** in full breeding plumage, brilliantly illuminated in the early morning sunshine. A singing **Puvel's Illadopsis** had Chris beckoning everyone into a nearby wooded area but it just did not want to play ball! Cisticolas kept us busy with **Whistling Cisticola** and the striking **Red-faced Cisticola** as well as the less helpful named **Singing Cisticola**. A couple of new Sunbirds revealed themselves with a small and smart **Olive-bellied Sunbird** in contrast to the rather large and drab **Olive Sunbird**. As we tucked into our packed breakfasts and much needed coffee, we enjoyed great views of **African Pied Hornbill** and a group of three **Piping Hornbills** flew past us with their distinctive fluttering flight. Our Bulbul list increased too, with views of a gang of very noisy **Swamp Palm Bulbuls** and the rather unobtrusive **Slender-billed Greenbul**. Other more common species included **Red-eyed Dove**, the distinctive and fast flying **Tambourine Dove** and the very smart looking **African Green Pigeon**.

One of the morning's clear highlights was seeing our first **Black Bee-Eaters** as two of these fantastic birds hawked insects from a nearby tree. All our scopes were trained on these stunning birds and we all agreed they were most definitely a very impressive bird with an underwhelming name! Then came our first Upper Guinea Forest Endemic (UGFE), as a couple of **Ussher's Flycatcher** perched prominently in the top most branches, as is typical behaviour for this species. We were then treated to at least 6 **Rosy Bee-Eaters**! These Bee-Eaters are notorious for seemingly never perching, but we were lucky and scoped a bird sat on a dead tree before the flock then gave us some nice flight views directly overhead! A hooting **White-spotted Flufftail** lured us into the forest edge, but our attention was soon diverted by a very smart **Gray's Malimbe (Blue-billed Malimbe)** that we watched building a nest! Shortly after this, a **Dusky-Blue Flycatcher** appeared nearby and was equally obliging in the views that it gave.

It was beginning to get hot so we entered some of the more mature forest areas where we enjoyed some excellent views of **West African Wattle-Eye** with a black and white male and a chestnut female both vying for our attention! A **Fanti Saw-Wing** hawked overhead and then the finale was a cracking male **African Emerald Cuckoo** that took a little searching for as it sang continuously, but soon gave itself up in the scope.

Nice views of a **Chestnut-breasted Nigrita** (Negrofinch) and a **Little Greenbul** ended our birding session for the morning and we retired to our very much appreciated air-conditioned coach!

Back at Hans Cottage we all took time to relax and enjoy a shower before lunch. Lunches at Hans Cottage are always a treat as the dining area and bar overlook a pool and gardens that are always full of bird life whilst you eat. As a result binoculars always need to be close to hand! The **Cattle Egret** and **Village Weaver** colonies above the lake were always great to watch as **Yellow-billed Kites** and the odd **African Harrier-Hawk** glided past. **Malachite Kingfishers** sat quietly beside the water's edge whilst a **Reed Cormorant** dived for fish, and the beautiful **Woodland Kingfisher** posed for everyone to see. However, it was the **Orange Weaver** colony that was perhaps the real star of the show, as we watched birds busily add material to their hanging nests just inches away from us! Or maybe the highlight was the **Crocodiles** that waited for their daily feed from the kitchen staff!

During the late afternoon, we headed back out to explore some more forest around the Antwkwaa area. Here we enjoyed a great spell of bird activity with some great views of various woodpeckers in particular. Here we enjoyed some excellent scope views of a single **Buff-Spotted Woodpecker**, followed by two mating **Melancholy (Gabon) Woodpeckers** and a female **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**, the latter two species being UGFs and all in just a 10 minute period! Our attention was then diverted by the very striking scarlet and black plumage of both **Red-headed Malimbe** and **Crested Malimbe** as well as a **Black-winged Oriole**, **Yellow-throated Tinkerbird** and **Speckled Tinkerbird**. A **Blue-throated Brown Sunbird** fed high up in the canopy and another UGFE in the form of the well named **Hairy-breasted Barbet** performed well. However, it was probably the **White-spotted Flufftail** that won best bird of the afternoon. These striking tiny crane-like birds, although very vocal are always tricky to see, frequenting the most inaccessible wet ditches. Luckily, this particular bird sneaked through a small gap where at least two or three of the group managed to get a decent view! Finally, we travelled to a nearby woodland and waited until dusk where we heard the hoped for **Fraser's Eagle Owl** but it refused to show itself, so we left it for another day!

#### **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November: Kakum / Cape Coast/ Brenu Beach Road**

Today we headed out for a dawn start on the famous canopy walkway! The walkway is always one of the highlights of a trip to Ghana as it is one of the best ways to find many of Ghana's special birds. Today was to be no exception as most of the key species seemed to just fall into place one after the other! Birding could not have been much better as we spent a good three hours birding from each of the platforms, and all in a very civilised fashion whilst we ate our breakfast and sipped coffee suspended 35 metres above the forest floor!

The morning began with the "gentle giants" of the forest as no sooner had we arrived on our first platform than we were all scoping three **Black-casqued Hornbills**! Two rusty-headed females, and a wonderful male with huge black casque. Another three large hornbills also appeared and we soon realised that we had three **Brown-cheeked Hornbills** in the scope too! What a great start and the latter being an Upper Guinea Forest Endemic as well! As we savoured

the hornbill views we slowly began to see more new birds around us. **Chestnut-winged Starlings** perched above us, **Velvet-mantled Drongos** called from nearby branches, and a very obliging **Fraser's Forest Flycatcher** perched on the cables of the walkway. The very smart **Yellow-mantled Weavers** were busy nest building whilst both **Sabine's Spinetail** and the highly distinctive silhouette of the **Cassin's Spinetail** could both be seen gliding around in the sky above. Then the distinctive call of an **African Grey Parrot** had us all quickly turn around to see a couple of birds fly quickly overhead and was soon followed by the bizarre and rather non-avian call of the **Yellow-billed Turaco**. With a little patience, we were soon rewarded with some great views of this beautiful bird, as it glided past us revealing its vivid crimson wing flashes, before quickly running along the branches into the crown of a tree. Kath then spotted our second **Black Bee-Eater** sighting of the trip, though not causing quite as much excitement as yesterday's bird, as there were just too many new birds to see! Birds were not the only excitement this morning as we were also treated to at least three **Lesser Spot-nosed Monkeys** gave great views as they leapt from tree to tree! A **Red-tailed Greenbul** (this race lacks the red tail) showed well as we peered into the thick tangles of vegetation below us and the bird puffed out its distinctive white throat. Next, the highly distinctive **Honeyguide Greenbul** showed very well, its location given away by its distinctive black and white tail markings. Then John and Graeme picked up a hornbill in the tree directly opposite us. The bird was partly obscured by the trunk, but Chris soon became rather excited as it revealed itself to be what is considered Ghana's most difficult hornbill to find, the superb **Black Dwarf Hornbill**! We all had great views as it searched for food for a couple of minutes amongst the branches and then dropped out of view. New birds continued to show themselves to us with **Rufous-crowned Eremomelas** flitting through the canopy, a singing male **Sharpe's Apalis** (another UGFE), and a striking male **Sabine's Puffback** sat motionless in the scope for a few minutes. **Naked-faced Barbets** called noisily above us, a **White-breasted Nigrita** (Negrofinch) showed to some and then another couple of UGFEs in the form of a **Little Green Woodpecker** and a cracking **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**, this time a male complete with fire-coloured belly. We then enjoyed some Sunbird views including **Blue-throated Brown Sunbird**, the aptly named **Superb Sunbird**, a streaky throated female **Johanna's Sunbird** and then a UGFE, a cracking male **Buff-throated Sunbird** and probably the most beautiful of them all!

We then decided to try our luck at another platform and it turned out to be a good move as no sooner had we stepped foot on the platform than we were watching a pair of stunning **Violet-backed Hyliotas**! These can often be tricky to find, but this pair gave great views as we watched the brighter throated female repeatedly bash a caterpillar on a branch before feeding on it. Next up was Ghana's smallest bird as we watched a **Tit-Hylia** feeding on a flowering tree. Then the aptly named **Chestnut-capped Flycatcher** and a noisy **Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill)** as it played hide and seek in the nearby vine tangles. Then a couple of very odd looking and rather straight-billed **Fraser's Sunbird** showed themselves in a flowering tree, before a shout of raptor had us all looking in the sky above us. First were a group of three **Black Sparrowhawks** circling high above the forest and then as if by magic a superb **Long-tailed Hawk** flew through our binocular view – just fantastic!

Back on terra firma, we took time to enjoy some pineapple refreshment in the forest before trying for another key bird of Kakum Forest. This time it was the striking **Rufous-sided Broadbill** and we were not to be disappointed. After a little time searching, we were soon spoiled with absolutely fabulous views of a displaying male complete with striking rufous sides, black square shaped head and black breast streaking as it performed an outrageous acrobatic head over heels spin complete with diagnostic mechanical whirring sound! We simply lapped it up for the next five minutes, before quietly walking away.

There were already whispers from the group about it being bird of the day and it wasn't even 11am yet! We picked up some reasonable views of **Icterine Greenbul** and a **Grey-headed Bristlebill** on our route back to the coach, but a calling **Yellow-bearded Greenbul** unfortunately eluded us. We then returned to the now much needed air conditioning of our coach and headed back to Hans Cottage for some rest and another relaxing lunch by the Weaver nests!

In the afternoon, we headed to the coast for some variation. Here we spent a little time at Cape Coast Lagoon where we enjoyed some waders including **Spur-winged Lapwing**, **Wood Sandpiper** and **Grey Plover** and Bob found a couple of **Black Crakes** that were lurking at the back of the lagoon. A large colony of **Reed Cormorants** were a pleasant distraction with birds of varying plumages and we also saw our first **Striated Heron**. We then travelled to the well known birding site at the Brenu Beach Road where we spent the last couple of hours of the day. No sooner were we out of the coach at Robert's stakeout for **Guinea Turaco (Green Turaco)**, than Kath had pulled it out of the bag! Nice one Kath! It sat up prominently on the top of a bush where we all enjoyed good scope views of this savannah cousin of the **Yellow-billed Turaco** seen earlier in the morning. Other highlight birds of the area included: **Bar-breasted Firefinch**, **Yellow-crowned Gonolek**, **Double-spurred Francolin** and a stunning, albeit rather brief view of an **Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike**. Cisticolas were evident as ever with some good views of **Short-winged Cisticola (Siffling Cisticola)** giving a rather unusual song and a little colour was given to us in the form of a male **Splendid Sunbird**. A rather unobliging **Plain-backed Pipit** disappeared into long grass and we loitered with intent for the **Preuss's Cliff Swallow** roost. Whilst waiting, sharp-eyed Bob found us another of our targets, a cracking **Marsh Tchagra** that finally gave itself up for great views. However, the finale of the day was the impressive sight of **200+ Preuss's Cliff Swallows** coming to roost as an **African Hobby** whizzed overhead in the hope of a meal.

### **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November: Bekampa Forest/ Kakum Canopy Walkway**

This morning we returned to explore the Bekampa Forest and we enjoyed a pre-birding coffee as dawn broke and we took in the now familiar sounds of the forest. The distinctive noise of a displaying **Rufous-sided Broadbill** was one of the first birds as we entered the forest, but this was soon forgotten as a **Congo Serpent Eagle** could be heard calling a little further up the track. We waited a while as the bird continued to taunt us, but there were just no clear views through the forest and we had to make do with just hearing this elusive species! A calling **Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo** was the next species to have our attention as its distinctive siren-like call echoed around the forest. Chris was determined that this one would not slip away without being seen! After some perseverance, the bird responded to some playback and now it was just a case of finding it! These cuckoos are notorious for sitting motionless in the vine tangles and can be



very difficult to locate. The bird continued to call and then finally showed itself and we all enjoyed good views. Closer inspection revealed the bird had lost some of its tail feathers giving the bird a rather underwhelming name! Nonetheless, it was a good bird and we did well to see it so well. Further into the forest Graeme and Kath enjoyed some good views of **Golden Greenbul** in the scope and Chris and Pete rather frustratingly only heard a **Great Blue Turaco**, a scarce bird in these forests.

Later in the morning, we came across a feeding flock. Here, we found **Shining Drongo**, **Copper-tailed Starling** (UGFE) and **Black-winged Oriole** as well as a couple of **Western Bearded Greenbuls** (UGFE) complete with puffy beards. A brief **Black Dwarf Hornbill** was a great surprise and Pete got lucky with a superb **Red-cheeked Wattle-Eye** (UGFE), unusually, sat motionless for a few seconds! Things began to warm up a little, but despite the temperature an open area of forest was very productive with **Black Bee-Eater** and a large number of hirundines including **Square-tailed Saw-Wing** and a **Mosque Swallow** high in the sky. A **Yellow-browed Camaroptera** showed well and the morning ended with some great views of a singing **Blue Cuckoo-Shrike**.

After another very relaxing lunch and rest at Hans Cottage, we headed out for a late afternoon session on the Kakum Canopy walkway. As we began our walk up to the walkway, a singing **Cameroon Sombre Greenbul** showed out in the open. A rather frustrating **White-crested Hornbill** played hide and seek with us and all to the background noise of what sounded like a thousand screaming school children from the walkway! We loitered a while and waited for the children to leave before we stepped out, once again to experience the walkway. It did not take long for the calmness of the forest to resume and we were rewarded with some superb views of **White-crested Hornbill** posing in full view as well as a small group of **Lesser Spot-nosed Monkeys** and at least four **Lowe's Monkeys**. This was soon followed by a small mixed group of **Black-casqued Hornbills** and **Brown-cheeked Hornbills** that although a little more distant than the previous day, was still very much appreciated by all! A superb male **Buff-throated Sunbird** showed well from our platform and two **Red-fronted Parrots** gave good scope views as they fed on a fruiting tree. As the light began to fade a feisty **Yellow-billed Turaco** showed exceptionally well and came very close, seeming quite grumpy at our presence as if it was requesting us to leave now! However, we ignored the grumpy Turaco and waited until dark in the hope that some nocturnal birds might play ball. It is a great experience being on the walkway at night, but despite our best efforts, once again **Fraser's Eagle Owl** chose to ignore us, perhaps third time lucky!?

### **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November: Antwkwaa/ Pra River/Assin Fosu /Bonkro**

Today was a big day and everyone had a definite spring in their step, as today was Picathartes day! As usual, we headed out early and waved goodbye to Hans Cottage before heading out towards the forest at Antwkwaa. Here we spent a couple of hours birding and enjoying breakfast. We did not really need to move from one spot and much of our time focused on trying to see **White-spotted Flufftail**. It was definitely worth the wait as almost everyone (sorry Kath!) managed to get some great views of this truly stunning forest skulker. Other birds seen this morning included **Red-necked Buzzard**, **Yellow-throated**

**Tinkerbird** and a nice group of three **Vielliot's Barbets** sunning themselves in the morning sunshine. A small group of **African Yellow White-Eyes** showed well and Pete had some nice views of a singing male **Western Bluebill**. However, bird of the morning had to go to a **Kemp's Longbill** (UGFE) that Graeme and Bob saw close enough to even see the pale iris!

We continued our journey north and within an hour we were birding the now regular birding site on the Pra River at Twifo Praso. Here, whilst birding from the busy bridge, we had great views of our three main target species. We enjoyed good scope views of a total of five **Rock Pratincoles** as well as the beautiful **White-throated Blue Swallow** and two **White-crowned Lapwings** . Once everyone was fully content, we continued our journey to the busy town of Assin Fosu where we had a relaxed lunch ready for Operation Picathartes!

We arrived in the village of Bonkro in good time and as usual met the local village guides who monitor the Picathartes. It was still warm, so we headed into the shade of the forest and followed our village escorts to a site where a Picathartes bird was apparently already sitting on eggs. However, on arrival at the site it soon became apparent that there was no bird incubating yet, so we set off on a rather hot and sweaty walk through the forest to the key site. We arrived at a very welcome viewing area complete with wooden benches looking towards the nesting cave area and a much better set up than my previous visits here! It was now just a waiting game as we all sat in silence and gazed towards the rocky outcrop. We waited.....and waited... and waited some more and then from nowhere, a **Yellow-headed Picathartes** (UGFE) bounced through the forest in front of us and then vanished. The smiles all round confirmed everyone had seen it and we sat tight hoping for another view. A little while later and it soon became apparent that Bob, John, and Graeme were watching a bird for a prolonged period just out of view from the rest of us! Their smiling faces were a picture but the rest of us just had to sit tight, grin and bear it and be patient! Then after what seemed like an eternity, it was our turn and we too were rewarded with some excellent views and it was time to relax and just enjoy the wonderful scene of these truly magical forest birds! We enjoyed a good show of five birds over the next 30 minutes or so, but with the light fading and the rumble of thunder in the distance, we had to pull ourselves away! We arrived back at the coach just in time and avoided the torrential downpour that arrived just as we left! Back at Assin Fosu, we all enjoyed a celebratory meal and beer and I have no doubt everyone dreamt of the wonderful **Yellow-headed Picathartes**!

### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November: Aboabo Forest / Bobiri Forest**

This morning we headed out to explore another part of the Kakum Forest NP, this time the most northerly section at Aboabo. Here we spent the whole morning birding a quiet dirt road that was very productive. As was now the familiar drill, we enjoyed coffee and breakfast with birds all around us. The morning started with some great views of **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**, **Klass's Cuckoo** and **Diederik Cuckoo** and all to the constant deep hooting of a **Black-throated Coucal** that refused to show. A **Finsch's Flycatcher-Thrush** showed in the upper branches of a nearby tree and called regularly whilst a rather frustratingly brief flight view of a "**Wood-Hoopoe**" narrowly escaped John's sharp eyes to assign it to species. Then our first **Bristle-nosed Barbet** of



the trip, complete with full bristles, showed well for everyone before our attention was diverted by a calling **Yellow-billed Barbet**. The bird continued to call from a dense vine tangle and then showed itself briefly to reveal a yellow belly and bill before vanishing once again! **Green Hylia** and **Yellow-browed Camaropteras** performed well with Nigel particularly happy to see these species well after a couple of days of having UTVs! Amazingly, our third **Black Dwarf Hornbill** of the trip appeared briefly in front of us before dropping out of sight! We did particularly well for aerial birds with some excellent views of both **Cassin's Spinetail** and **Sabine's Spinetail**, soon followed by a **Black Spinetail** that quickly whizzed through above us. Shortly after all the Spinetail excitement, a lone low flying swift with distinctive flickering wingbeats and short glides and deeply forked tail allowed careful scrutiny to identify it as a **Bates's Swift**. Then Chris was soon calling everyone for the distinctive sound of **Red-billed Helmet-Shrike** (UGFE). A quick dash up the road soon revealed there to be at least four of these very smart and vocal birds, including a juvenile bird. The rare **Tessman's Flycatcher** showed well to John and Graeme and we were then treated to a nice selection of Sunbirds which included some great scope views of **Blue-throated Brown Sunbird**, **Buff-throated Sunbird** and the dazzling **Superb Sunbird**. One of the rarest bird of the morning were two **Black-collared Lovebirds** that typically whizzed overhead very quickly, their presence only announced by their call; allowing just Robert and Pete to get onto them before they were gone. Other highlights this morning were a single **Narrow-tailed Starling**, **Tit-Hylia** and **Rufous-crowned Eremomela**. Once again, the heat was reducing bird activity and we headed back to our hotel, via a rather elaborate **Red-vented Malimbe** nest that Robert pointed out to us.

After lunch and a wheel change on our coach(!) we continued our journey north to the bustling city of Kumasi. Here we checked in to our very pleasant hotel, where some of the group squeezed in a little more birding before dark. The highlight was a superb pair of **Black-and-White Flycatchers**, a speciality of the hotel gardens! We then enjoyed an early evening meal with slightly overdone Yam Chips(!) and headed out to the Bobiri Forest for some night birding. Here we enjoyed a night walk to the sound of **Latham's Forest Francolins** and **African Wood Owls**, but it was the **Fraser's Eagle Owl** that was the real performer, and we all enjoyed great scope views – Third time lucky!

### **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November: Travel day from Kumasi to Mole NP**

Today, everyone enjoyed a well earned late breakfast before our long journey north to Mole NP. It was time to wave goodbye to the forests for a few days as the next few days were all about savannah birding! The vastly improved roads on this route allowed a faster journey time and we arrived at Mole NP at around 6.30pm via a very pleasant lunch stop at Kintampo.

Although, primarily a travel day with no designated birding stops, there was still plenty to see from the window of our coach as the habitat slowly changed.

New birds today included, the first of many **Grasshopper Buzzards**, up to nine dazzling **Blue-bellied Rollers** plus a single **Purple Roller** and **Abyssinian Roller**. A timely leg stretch close to the entrance of the National Park produced a small burst of bird activity where during the last hour of light we had great views of a perched **Dark Chanting Goshawk** and then at a roadside puddle we watched **Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark**, **Bush Petronia**, **Yellow-fronted Canary**, **Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting** and a splendid male **Togo**

**Paradise-Whydah.** We then arrived at our hotel, where we were greeted by a **Common Genet** narrowly missing our vehicle(!), and this was to be our home for the next four nights.

### **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November: Samole Loop/ Brugbani and Mole Airstrip**

The first morning at a new birding site is always exciting and today was to be no exception as nearly every bird we saw was a new species for the trip! Everyone seemed very relaxed in the somewhat easier savannah birding habitat and it gave a nice break from the forest birding, which can often be quite challenging.

We headed off from our hotel shortly after first light, passing the groups of friendly **Common Warthogs** on our way, and began birding an area below the rocky escarpment where our hotel was situated. The mammal theme continued with **Olive Baboons** and a group of **Callithrix Monkeys** on the way to our first stop. Once out of the coach, the gorgeous **Red-throated Bee-Eaters** were, as always, a true crowd pleaser as they hawked for insects in the early morning sunshine. Noisy **Helmeted Guinefowls** scuttled around on the dirt tracks and a couple of tiny **Cardinal Woodpeckers** pecked at the top of a dead tree. A distinctive fluty song led us to an **Oriole Warbler** which showed well but briefly in a typical elusive fashion. A **Northern Black Flycatcher** sat stationary at eye level and then a flash of colour led us to a female **Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike**. A showy **White-crowned Robin-Chat** and stunning **Red-cheeked Cordon-Bleu** injected yet more colour into our bins and a small group of **Senegal Eremomelas** flicked their way through the nearby trees. It wasn't long before the need for coffee was calling, so we took time to relax and enjoy breakfast with birds all around us. A singing **Northern Red-billed Hornbill** bubbled away and a **Wilson's Indigobird** performed very well, as did scope views of a posing **Greater Blue-eared Starling**. A **Grey-headed Kingfisher** added to our Kingfisher list and a couple of **Long-tailed Glossy Starlings** strutted around in a very self-important way!

After breakfast, we took a short walk through the woodland and added **Green Wood-Hoopoe** as well as **Black Scimitarbill** to our ever-increasing morning tally. A singing **Yellow-breasted Apalis** sat out in the open and we were then treated to an **African Paradise Flycatcher** and a superb duo of **African Blue Flycatchers** within a few metres of each other. We finished the morning's birding overlooking a peaceful waterhole where from the shade of our viewing platform we could scan the whole area. Here we had some good views of **Woolly-necked Stork, Hadada Ibis, African White-backed Vulture, Bateleur, Hamerkop, Senegal Thick-Knee** and sharp-eyed Pete found us two **White-rumped Swifts** flying low over the water. Mammals were also abundant, as watched **Waterbuck, Kob** and the beautiful **Bushbuck**. Other new birds this morning included **Common Wattle-Eye, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Red-billed Firefinch, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Senegal Parrot** and **Northern Puffback**. By mid morning, it was beginning to get very hot, so we headed back to our coach where the always smiling Kwame took us back to the hotel where we took advantage of some air-conditioning and the hotel swimming pool!

After a relaxing few hours back at the hotel, we headed back out in the coach to explore a different part of the national park. A **Patas Monkey** showed well from the coach as it slowly disappeared into the nearby savannah and we then made a short birding stop en route to Brugbani Camp. Once out of the coach we soon

experienced the joys of birding with Tsetse Flies! Despite the odd bite, we braved the pain and managed to see **White-breasted Cuckoo-Shrike, Pygmy Sunbird, Lavender Waxbill** and best of all, a cracking male **Black-faced Firefinch**. A number of **Red-headed Lovebirds** whizzed overhead for those that were quick enough(!) and then a superb **Pearl-spotted Owlet** came to check us out, before we returned to the Tsetse free zone of the coach! We continued our journey towards Brugbani Camp birding from the coach and had good views of **African Golden Oriole, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver** and **White-shouldered Black Tit** that does exactly what it says on the tin! As we neared Brugbani those on the right hand side of the coach had some very close, but very brief views of **Four-banded Sandgrouse**, as two birds flushed from the roadside and rather frustratingly, were never seen again! We then headed out to an area known for our main target, the very localised **Forbes's Plover**. Robert, Chris and our local guide Zac ventured out of the coach to search different areas, but it seemed the rest of the group preferred the comfort of the coach and found amusement in other people's pain! The continual swatting of Tsetse Flies whilst searching for plovers by Chris was later given the official name of the "Tsetse Dance!" Sadly, despite our best efforts we failed to find any **Forbes's Plovers** – No pain no gain! However, all was not lost as a couple of perched **White-headed Vultures** gave excellent views and then as the light began to fade Bob spotted some movement ahead of the coach. It was two **Abyssinian Ground Hornbills** that were just disappearing into the tall grass! We headed closer, but they had vanished and despite looking in the area, we could not find them, but a **Yellow-winged Bat** was worth the walk.

Before dinner, we tried our luck on the Mole airstrip, now a very well known site for the amazing **Standard-winged Nightjar**, but despite our best efforts, we could not find one. However, a superb **Greyish Eagle Owl** was certainly worth the visit as we all watched a bird in the coach's headlights as it walked along the airstrip hunting prey – a superb end to a fantastic first day in Mole!

### **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November:** **Brugbani/Samole Loop/ and Mole Airstrip**

The morning started very well for John and Graeme who were both up at first light and were delighted to see a bull **Elephant** from the hotel viewing area. Amazingly, this was the only sighting of the trip, presumably due to the large amount of rainfall prior to our visit and a vast choice of drinking holes available. Once we had negotiated the now familiar scene of numerous **Common Warthogs** wandering the hotel gardens, we boarded our coach and headed back towards Brugbani to try once again for the elusive Plovers! Today we were clearly in luck, as we spent a good hour watching at least five **Forbes's Plovers** at close range, using the coach as a hide and we even enjoyed coffee with them! Other new birds in the area were a number of **Sun Larks, Wire-tailed Swallows** and a couple of the aptly named **White-fronted Black Chats** and a very obliging **African Cuckoo**. With our main objective for the morning now complete, we slowly headed back towards the hotel where we made another short stop at Tsetse Corner! It was worth the annoyances of the Tsetse Flies as we found **Square-tailed Drongo**, the very striking **Western Violet-backed Sunbird, Red-headed Weaver** and best of all, two **Abyssinian Ground Hornbills** that flew up from the ground very close to us. This time giving some excellent views! Happy with our haul, we headed back to our hotel as the temperature seemed to be rising very quickly today!

Once again, we took time to relax at the hotel and either enjoy the air conditioning or take a dip in the pool before lunch. Shortly after eating, a scan from the hotel viewing area revealed a fantastic **Saddle-billed Stork** which we all took time to duly admire, and rightly so for such a superb bird! We then headed back out and explored the Samole Loop area where we spent a little time overlooking the pool from the comfort of the shaded viewing platform. Here we had our first **Black-headed Heron** of the trip and a great flyby from a **Western Banded Snake Eagle**. The birding seemed quiet this afternoon and the temperature still very hot, so we took a short walk in the shade of the wooded area along the side of the dry river. Here we found the gorgeous **Violet Turaco** and a rather scruffy looking immature **Greater Honeyguide** high up in the treetops. Due to the angle and scruffy plumage, it took a little while to identify at first, though Robert still identified it with the naked eye! **Grey Woodpecker** was also a new addition, as were a group of three **Brown Babblers** that were typically elusive, whilst the constant piping call of **Pied Flycatchers** reminded us it would not be long before these migrants would be heading back north. Another look at the Mole airstrip at dusk, sadly failed to locate the hoped for **Standard-winged Nightjar**, but once again, we had superb views of not one but two **Greyish Eagle Owls** as they hunted the runway and nearby dirt tracks.

#### **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November: Mognori Road/Haraba Pool/Brugbani**

It was our final full day in Mole NP and everyone was keen to make the most of it! We followed our usual drill of up and out just after dawn and we headed to the Mognori Road and Mole River. The call for coffee seemed to be a little earlier than normal today(!) but it was not a bad thing as where we stopped was very productive. A couple of **Bearded Barbets** showed well in the morning sunshine and we had great views of a group of **White-crested Helmet-Shrikes**, complete with punk hair style. A male **Exclamatory Paradise Whydah** allowed a good scope view to see the differences compared to the **Togo P-W** seen earlier in the week. Then a couple of new woodpeckers put in brief appearances in the form of a **Fine-spotted Woodpecker** for Graeme and a **Brown-backed Woodpecker**. As we neared the river, a **Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat** showed briefly to John and then a couple of **Lizard Buzzard** performed very well as they slowly soared above us showing off their black vertical throat stripes. Down at the river, we were rewarded with a stunning **Shining Blue Kingfisher** that gave good views on a couple of occasions. A **Blackcap Babbler** played hide and seek with us, in contrast to a male **Beautiful Sunbird** that performed admirably, as did an **African Blue Flycatcher** that Nigel was most pleased with, as it was quickly upgraded in terms of his previous views! A group of around 30+ **House Martins** hawked in the sky above us and a **Wahlberg's Eagle** glided over, before we decided to walk along the shaded riverside. A **Giant Kingfisher** was the real prize here, as everyone connected with this monster kingfisher, but sadly no sooner had it been found, than it vanished down river. Once again, the temperature seemed to be getting hotter earlier and so we headed back to our coach and returned to the hotel, happy with our haul of new species.

The late afternoon was spent birding around the Haraba Pool where things were slow going due to the heat. **Swamp Flycatchers** were fairly abundant and a rather cross looking **Pearl-spotted Owlet** sat in a nearby tree and glared at us.

However, it was the **Moustached Warbler** that most impressed everyone. Skulking at first and singing occasionally, but finally it showed very well indeed and surprised everyone at what a smart bird it really was. As dusk approached, a couple of **African Scops Owls** began to sing and we slowly drove the nearby tracks hoping for nightjars. Once again, bird activity seemed very sparse at first, but with a little perseverance, we succeeded with a cracking male **Long-tailed Nightjar** that did the decent thing and sat on the ground whilst we admired it by torchlight. The drive back to our hotel gave us our best views yet of a superb **Greyish Eagle Owl** and a **Common Genet** dashed across the road ahead of us before we arrived back at our hotel for our final evening meal in Mole.

### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November: Mole NP / White Volta River / Bolgatanga**

Today we enjoyed a slightly later breakfast at the hotel, giving time for everyone to pack or do some final birding around the hotel grounds. Bob did extremely well to pick out no less than five **Greater Painted Snipe** on the pool below our hotel and visible from the hotel viewing area! Other highlights before departing were a hunting **Red-necked Falcon**, **Lesser Honeyguide** and a fly past **Bruce's Green Pigeon**. Of course today everyone only had one bird on their minds, and that was the Crocodile Bird, or **Egyptain Plover!** So we waved goodbye to Mole and continued our journey north to the town of Bolgatanga, within 40Km of the Burkina Faso border. We checked into our hotel and had lunch before heading off to the White Volta River where we hoped to find our prize!

**Speckled Pigeon** was added to the trip list, as was **Red-chested Swallow** and within a couple of hours, we arrived at the White Volta River where we were soon scanning the sandy banks of the river for our target species.

Robert was clearly a man of his word and as promised, within a couple of minutes we were watching a lone **Egyptian Plover!** It was a little distant and the light was harsh, but the pressure was off and we spent the rest of the afternoon trying to get a little closer and for the sun to drop. As we walked a little further along the river, it soon became apparent that there were a number of these beautiful waders using the area. As our views improved and everyone became lost in photography, Chris alerted everyone to a tiny **Egyptian Plover chick!** It turns out that this is actually the first confirmed breeding record for Ghana, so quite an exciting find for everyone!

We waited for the sun to drop a little more and got into a position overlooking a particular sand bar that the birds were regularly feeding on. Here, we spent the next 90 minutes or so, just simply lapping up the views as at least five of these beautiful waders went about their business, much to the delight of us all! The light was just fantastic and the colour of the birds' plumage seemed to intensify as the sun dropped and then when the birds took flight – WOW!

We returned to Bolgatanga, arriving a little later than expected, due to someone leaving their rucksack at the side of the river and forcing us to make a detour to go back and find it! Who was that? – surely not one of the leaders!!?? Everyone returned to the hotel happy with mission accomplished!

### **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November: Tono Dam/ Bolgatanga to Bobiri Forest**

Once again, we were all up early (except Kath who decided to enjoy a very well earned lie-in!) and we headed to the well known birding area of Tono Dam. The clear highlight of the morning at this site was the accidental disturbing of a roosting **Standard-winged Nightjar!** It came as a total surprise as this bird suddenly flew up from Pete, John and Nigel's feet and then landed again a few meters away. Not only was it a surprise, but it was a great "pull-back" bird as everyone had been disappointed at not connecting with this species whilst in Mole NP. Not only that, but it was a cracking male complete with "standards!" We must have spent a good hour watching this bird, studying the intricacies of its plumage and trying to photograph it, as it was partly obscured by the tall grasses! Once everyone was happy, we moved on for a walk amongst the wooded grassland and once again, the rising temperature was always against us. Other highlights here were **Lesser Blue-eared Starling** and the very smart **Chestnut-bellied Starling, Bruce's Green Pigeon** and a number of smaller passerines in the form of **Red-winged Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Familiar Chat, Variable Sunbird** and **Little Weaver**. The huge lake had nothing out of the ordinary, other than huge flocks of **White-faced Whistling Ducks** and the odd **Western Marsh Harrier** hawking over the water's edge. A **Black-shouldered Kite** en route to the hotel was a new bird for the trip. Back at the hotel we had time to pack and ready for the mammoth drive back to Kumasi.

We had a packed lunch on the bus and Robert supplied us with, the now expected, Pineapple and trusty Kwame steered our way back towards Kintampo where we had an early evening meal. We did have time for one short stop where a couple of pools have often been productive on previous trips. Here we found the hoped for target, **Red-winged Pytilia** as well as a unco-operative **Grey-headed Bush-Shrike** that called but refused to show itself! A ringtail harrier seen from the bus was left unidentified, but **Pallid Harrier** seemed most likely.

We finally arrived at the wonderful Bobiri Forest late in the evening, to which we have only Kwame to thank for his fantastic and safe driving. At Bobiri, we enjoyed some coffee or Milo for some(!) and for those not too exhausted we headed out for some night birding. It was a frustrating night and one when birds just did not want to show, regardless of effort! However, it was great to be out in the forest at night taking in the sound of screaming **Western Tree Hyraxes**, soothing **Latham's Forest Francolins** and we came very close to seeing **Akun Eagle Owl!** Everyone certainly heard the bird, but it just always perched out of sight. A **Red-chested Owlet** also called briefly and as before, **African Wood Owls** continued to taunt us, before our beds were calling!

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December: Bobiri Forest / Atewa Farmbush**

Another early start this morning and even earlier for Bob who clearly couldn't sleep and as a result did very well to hear a **Brown Nightjar** calling distantly from our accommodation. Similarly, a calling **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher** taunted us as the gloom of dawn slowly began to disappear.

We all enjoyed a very pleasant breakfast on the veranda whilst taking in the sounds of the forest and waking up with a morning caffeine injection! **Hairy-breasted Barbet** called continuously from the garden and gave good scope views before we took a walk into the forest. Two vocal **Grey Parrots** gave excellent low flight views as their scarlet vents gleamed out in the morning light.

A small group of **Maggie Mannakins** were a new bird for the trip list and a **Black Cuckoo** sat up in full view for everyone. As we continued our walk, we entered a more enclosed forest area where **Bristle-nosed Barbet** and **Western Bearded Greenbul** showed well. Pete got lucky with an **Ahanta Francolin** that flushed nearby and a couple of **African Cuckoo Hawks** circled above us, giving some great views. **Yellow-spotted Barbet**, **Blackcap Illadopsis** and **Afep Pigeon** all unfortunately made it onto the "heard only" list whereas a total of three **Western Bronze-naped Pigeons** were a little more co-operative! Other highlights this morning included: **Red-fronted Parrot**, **Red-billed Helmet-Shrike**, **Black Sparrowhawk**, **Buff-throated Sunbird**, **Superb Sunbird**, **Vieillot's Barbet** and a pair of **Fire-bellied Woodpeckers** before we returned to our accommodation for an early lunch. Here, we took a little time to relax and take in the great butterflies and for some, enjoy our fourth view of **Black Dwarf Hornbill**. An incredible tally for Ghana's hardest Hornbill!

After lunch, we took the journey to the Atewa Hills and associated Forest where we spent the last couple of hours of the day birding the "farmbush" area. Highlights here included our first **African Pygmy Kingfisher** of the trip as well as some good views of our only remaining Malimbe; **Red-vented Malimbe**. As we slowly ambled up to the start of the forest trail to the Atewa Ridge we loitered for a while and most of the group got views of a noisy **Western Nicator** as well as **Grey Longbill** and finally, the long awaited **Yellow-whiskered Greenbul** that was now, such a familiar sound of the forests. As we slowly retraced our steps, a singing **Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher** showed very well near its nest and both **Northern Puffback** and **Black-and-White Flycatcher** gave some good views, as did the only **Garden Warbler** of the trip. We then boarded our coach and took the short journey to our accommodation, taking in the huge **Straw-coloured Fruit Bat** roost en route, which made for an impressive spectacle against the moody dusk sky.

### **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December:** Atewa Ridge Forest

Once again it was time for a pre-dawn breakfast at our hotel and then we returned to the start of the Atewa Ridge Forest Trail where we began our 6Km walk to the top of the ridge. There was no rush, as we had all day to play with and Robert had arranged for some local men to take our lunch and additional water to the top of the ridge, so we were not too heavily laden! In previous tours, the track has been driveable, but recent changes in the forest have now made this impossible, but the trail has only a gradual incline and everyone enjoyed the walk.

The familiar call of a **Red-chested Goshawk** was one of the first birds to greet us, as we began our hike. Yesterday's **Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher** allowed some more views as did the more obliging **Western Nicator**. A singing **Kemp's Longbill** showed very well in some vine tangles, particularly for a species that is often very tricky to see. Even better, it was soon followed by a **Grey Longbill**. Always good start to the day with a *Longbill double*! A little further up the trail and a singing **Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher** had our full attention and with a little perseverance, it showed pretty well. A huge **Black-throated Coucal** then slowly flapped across the path in front of us, soon to be followed by a beautiful male **Black-bellied Seedcracker** that perched out on the edge of the path for the fortunate ones at the front, before it disappeared into the dense



undergrowth. Our third **Little Green Woodpecker** sighting of the trip was a welcome distraction, as was a personal flyby of a **White-crested Hornbill** for Kath before we continued on our onward and upward journey! Robert alerted us to a calling **Brown Illadopsis** pretty close to the path, so we slowly shuffled along and all peered into a thick bush where with some determination; the bird could be seen through a small gap in the vegetation! Considering it is a known skulker, just seeing the bird creeping slowly through the gloom of the forest floor was a pretty good view for this species! A singing **Forest Robin** sang within the forest interior and despite another effort to try and coax it into view, it remained a species not wanting to be seen.

With the temperature slowly rising, we then quickened our pace a little, eager to get to the best Bee-Eater spot, as today was hopefully **Blue-moustached Bee-Eater** day! Our next distraction was a real stunner, albeit a little frustrating as a calling **Narina's Trogon** gave us a quick flyby! Both **Yellow-billed Barbet** and **Rufous-sided Broadbill** were added to the heard list for the day and we soon arrived at the top of the ridge by around late morning. A stunning **Black Cuckoo** of the forest race *gabonensis*, complete with "red-chest", showed very well whilst a **Red-chested Cuckoo** continued to call nearby but could not be found. A female **Sharpe's Apalis** showed well in a nearby tree staying unusually low for the species whilst a couple of **Lemon-bellied Crombecs** also showed well fairly low down.

We all took time to relax and enjoy our picnic lunch with chips(!) and Robert wandered off to look for the hoped for Bee-Eater whilst still in contact with Chris by radio. After a short while a **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher** began to call extremely close to us, but at the very same moment there was a clear message from Robert on the radio "I have the Blue-moustached Bee-Eater, come quickly!" It was then a reflex reaction as everyone hurried along the trail to where Robert was standing, hoping the Kingfisher would wait until later! We soon arrived to meet a beaming Robert as we enjoyed fantastic views of a single **Blue-moustached Bee-Eater** hawking over the main trail and perching on some branches just above our heads. We all simply lapped up the great views and watched as the bird regularly swung its tail back and forth like a pendulum and hawked for insects. Whilst watching the Bee-Eater a very vocal **Crowned Eagle** made its presence known and a look up into the only gap in the canopy revealed a displaying pair of these wonderful Eagles for all to admire.

Happy with our Bee-Eater views we slowly started our journey back down the trail. The **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher** had unfortunately moved on, but a **Black-capped Apalis** high in the canopy gave some rather neck-breaking views as they uttered their distinctive rattling call. A second **Narina's Trogon** gave a better view than earlier and perched out in the open briefly before disappearing once again! Other highlights between the group on our descent included: **Black Bee-Eater**, **Violet-backed Hylia**, **Red-billed Helmet-Shrike** and a second **Blue-moustached Bee-Eater** and **Square-tailed Saw-Wings**. Attempts to see some of the more skulking species was frustrating with both **Green-tailed Bristlebill** and **Red-tailed Bristlebill** giving near misses, but a fantastic **Blue-headed Wood-Dove** feeding on the path in front of us was a real bonus. However, the grand finale clearly went to the **White-tailed Alethe** that sat motionless on the forest floor for a couple of minutes that most of the group saw very well thanks to Pete's sharp eyes.

## **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December: Shai Hills / Sakumono Lagoon**

We left our hotel very early to ensure that we arrived at the Shai Hills for dawn. En route a **Long-tailed Nightjar** flew in front of the coach for those not sleeping! Once at Shai Hills we enjoyed our breakfast and coffee with four **Mocking Cliff-Chats** and the **Olive Baboons!** We then took a slow drive around this mostly savannah grassland reserve and explored on foot too. A **Long-crested Eagle** increased our raptor tally for the trip and the now familiar **Short-winged Cisticola** and **Croaking Cisticola** were very common. A **Blue-bellied Roller** brightened up the morning and small flocks of **Yellow-mantled Widowbirds** flew amongst the open grassland. We then focused on a singing **Grey Tit Flycatcher (Lead-coloured)** that took a little while to track down, but it finally gave itself up with good scope views as did a **Klaas's Cuckoo**. A couple of **Plain-backed Pipits** showed very well on the main track and a pair of **Senegal Batis** was a new trip species, as was a singing **Brown-crowned Tchagra** that showed well. Other notable birds in the park included **Whinchat**, **Violet Turaco**, **Green Wood-Hoopoe**, **Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird**, **Double-toothed Barbet** and **Northern Black Flycatcher**.

Yet again the heat of the day saw us retreating to the shade where we had lunch and then slowly made our back to where our tour began at our beach side hotel in Accra. A **Piapiac** en route was the final new species for the trip and despite a second look at Sakumono Lagoon, high water levels showed a very low concentration of birds.

Once at the hotel we all had plenty of time to have a shower and re-pack before enjoying our final meal together and taking time to reflect on our birding adventure in Ghana! Kwame and Robert then took us to the airport where we took our return flight back to a somewhat chillier UK!

### **Conservation Donation – Following the successful conclusion of this tour, a £240 donation from Wise Birding Holidays was made to the BTO's Tracking Cuckoos to Africa Project:**

This fantastic project has been satellite tracking the movement of Cuckoos from the UK to their wintering grounds in Africa, some of which have passed through Ghana. The project hopes to learn more about the challenges these birds face on their journey and therefore try and help reverse their decline. The cuckoo has decreased by 63% in England between 1995 – 2010 and this seems to be representative of a downward trend amongst many other UK breeding migrants that make similar migration journeys like the Spotted Flycatcher and Turtle Dove. Prior to this exciting project, very little was known about the Cuckoo after it left the UK to winter in Africa. **Being based in Devon, Wise Birding Holidays is excited to soon be sponsoring one of the cuckoos selected from Dartmoor and due to be tagged in the spring of 2014!** You will be able to follow the bird's journey and find out more about this project by following this link: <http://www.bto.org/science/migration/tracking-studies/cuckoo-tracking>

## Some bird highlights from the Upper Guinea Forests.....



Brown-cheeked Hornbills showed well on our first morning on the Kakum canopy walkway. An Upper Guinea Forest Endemic...



Piping Hornbill is a fairly common species which we saw at various localities....



This Black Dwarf Hornbill showed superbly from the Kakum canopy walkway – we had an incredible 4 different birds during the trip!



*Some bird highlights from the Upper Guinea Forests.....*



The Blue Moustached Bee-Eater, recently split from Blue-headed Bee-Eater, was well worth the walk to the Atewa Ridge Forest....



Rosy Bee-Eater is a stunning bird and we were treated to at least 6 birds along the Bekampa Track....



The Black Bee-Eater is a fairly common species of forest edge where we enjoyed some wonderful views....

*Some bird highlights from the Upper Guinea Forests.....*



Yellow-browed Camaroptera is a very vocal species and inflates its blue air sacs when calling!



This Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher is often tricky to see. This bird appeared to be nest building in the Atewa Forest....



We enjoyed great views of this male Sabine's Puffback from the Kakum canopy walkway. The alternative name is Large-billed Puffback...



## Some bird highlights from the Upper Guinea Forests....



Golden Greenbul is one of the easier Greenbuls to see and one of the simplest to identify!



This superb Yellow-headed Picathartes, an Upper Guinea Forest Endemic, was voted bird of the trip! One of at least 5 birds seen coming to roost...



This Little Green Woodpecker showed well from the Kakum canopy walkway. An Upper Guinea Forest Endemic...

**Some bird highlights from Hans Cottage and forest edge.....**



The Orange Weaver is a very localised species and Hans Cottage is one of the best places to find it. A daily treat whilst eating lunch!



This Black-winged Red Bishop was one of only two birds that was in full breeding plumage...



Woodland Kingfisher is a very common species in Ghana, but an impressive bird nonetheless.....



## Some highlight birds of Northern Ghana and Mole NP.....



Forbes's Plover is patchily distributed in West and Central Africa. It prefers rocky areas and recently burnt grassland. We had great views of 5+ birds whilst in Mole NP....



This Greyish Eagle Owl showed incredibly well in Mole NP where we enjoyed a number of sightings.....



White-crested Helmet-Shrike is always a pleasure to see and this bird showed very well in Mole NP....

**Some highlight birds of Northern Ghana and Mole NP.....**



The distinctive "jizz" of the Bataleur was a daily occurrence whilst birding in Mole NP....



We were treated to at least 5 of these beautiful Egyptian Plovers and also found a young chick. This was the first confirmed breeding for Ghana!



Abyssinian Rollers were a common bird of the northern region, but always a pleasure to see, particularly in flight....



**Some highlight birds of Northern Ghana and Mole NP.....**



This African Moustached Warbler, photographed by tour participant Peter Alfrey, was a bit of a skulker whilst in Mole, but it finally gave itself up!



This male Long-tailed Nightjar, photographed by tour participant Nigel Oram, was seen very well in Mole NP....



This male Standard-winged Nightjar was a great surprise whilst birding around Tono Dam during the day!



*Some of the scenery whilst birding in Ghana.....*



The famous Kakum canopy walkway!  
Constructed in 1995 and  
suspended 35 metres  
above the forest floor...



Birding beside the Mole  
River on the Mognori  
Road...



*Some of the other wildlife whilst birding in Ghana.....*



*Kob was seen daily when in Mole NP and also at the Shail Hills NP....*



*Nile Crocodiles are a regular feature of Hans Cottage!*



*Common Warthogs were a common sight around our hotel in Mole NP....*



*Birds, butterflies and our group.....*



The very shy Blue-headed Wood Dove, photographed by tour participant Peter Alfrey, was a real treat as it fed on the ground unconcerned by our presence at Atewa....



## WISE BIRDING HOLIDAYS

### BIRD LIST: Ghana - Picathartes to Plover Tour

18<sup>th</sup> November – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 **408 Species Recorded (382 seen)**

**Red = Upper Guinea Forest Endemic 17 seen**   **Blue = Heard only 26 including 4 UGFE**

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NOTES
1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Recorded on 3 days at Sakumono and Cape Coast Lagoons
2	Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>	Recorded on 6 days with sightings at Sakumono and Cape Coast Lagoons and Hans Cottage
3	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	Recorded on 5 days with most sightings from Mole NP
4	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	Small numbers recorded on 8 days
5	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Recorded on all but one day
6	Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>	Sakumono Lagoon allowed us some good views with a maximum count of 6 birds
7	Western Reef Heron	<i>Egretta gularis</i>	Recorded at Sakumono and Cape Coast Lagoons and an unusual sighting of a bird at Hans Cottage –dark phase
8	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Mostly single birds recorded on just 3 days
9	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	Recorded on 2 days with most birds at Sakumono Lagoon
10	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Recorded at wetland areas on 5 days
11	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Recorded on 7 days mostly at Sakumono Lagoon and Mole NP
12	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>	Recorded on 4 days with most sightings from Mole NP
13	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	A single bird at Sakumono Lagoon
14	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>	Recorded daily whilst in Mole NP
15	Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>	A single bird in Mole viewable from our hotel was a very welcome sighting
16	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	Seen daily when in Mole NP with a maximum count of 6 birds
17	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	A single bird at Sakumono Lagoon
18	Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>	Daily sightings of this very vocal Ibis in Mole NP
19	White-faced Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	Recorded on 4 days with many hundreds of birds at Tono Dam
20	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	A total of 3 birds at Sakumono Lagoon was a good find by Pete
21	Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>	Recorded on 7 days including a bird on the nest from the canopy walkway
22	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	Daily sightings throughout the tour
23	White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>	Recorded only in Mole NP on 3 days with a maximum count of 3 birds
24	White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>	Recorded only in Mole including a number of birds coming to drink



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25	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>	Recorded on 4 days whilst in the north, mostly in Mole NP
26	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>	Recorded on 9 days
27	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus axillaris</i>	A single bird whilst leaving the Tono Dam
28	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Careful checking of YB Kites revealed 2 birds whilst in Mole NP
29	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>	Daily sightings throughout the tour
30	African Cuckoo-Hawk	<i>Aviceda cuculoides</i>	Two birds showed well whilst at Bobiri Forest
31	Pallid / Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus / pygargus</i>	A ringtail harrier seen from the bus whilst travelling south from Bolgatanga was most probably a Pallid Harrier
32	Western Marsh-Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Recorded on 3 days at Sakumono Lagoon and Tono Dam
33	Western Banded Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinerascens</i>	A single bird gave a great fly-by whilst at the main Mole waterhole viewing platform
34	Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst in and around Mole NP and a maximum count of 6 birds
35	Dark Chanting-Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>	Single birds on 2 days with the best sighting en route to Mole NP
36	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	A fairly common raptor recorded on 7 days
37	Red-chested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter toussenelii</i>	Recorded on 4 days - The best view was a perched bird at dawn from the Bekampa Track
38	Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>	Recorded on 2 days from the Kakum canopy walkway and a brief sighting at Bobiri Forest
39	Congo Serpent-Eagle	<i>Circaetus spectabilis</i>	A calling bird taunted us whilst birding the forest near the Bekampa Track in Kakum
40	Long-tailed Hawk	<i>Urotriorchis macrourus</i>	Whilst watching Black Sparrowhawks from the canopy walkway, this species gave us all a very welcome fly-by!
41	European Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	Single birds recorded on 5 days mostly around the Kakum Forest area
42	Grasshopper Buzzard	<i>Butastur rufipennis</i>	This attractive raptor was recorded on 6 days whilst in the north of the country
43	Red-necked Buzzard	<i>Buteo auguralis</i>	This fairly common raptor was recorded on 8 days in low numbers
44	Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	A single pale phase bird was seen from the bus whilst travelling from Bolgatanga to Bobiri
45	Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>	Some good views of a bird at Shai Hills on our last day
46	Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Aquila wahlbergi</i>	A total of 2 birds seen – one just outside Mole NP on the Mognori Road and a bird at Shai Hills
47	Crowned Eagle	<i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i>	A pair soaring above the Atewa Ridge was a welcome distraction whilst watching Blue Moustached Bee-Eater!
48	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Recorded on 7 days
49	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>	A good number of sightings with birds recorded on 9 days and a maximum count of 2 birds
50	Grey Kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>	Always a pleasure to see with sightings on 10 days
51	Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>	Single birds recorded over 3 days whilst in Mole NP
52	African Hobby	<i>Falco cuvierii</i>	Recorded on the first 3 days of the tour with the best views at Brenu Beach Road
53	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	Daily sightings from Mole NP with a maximum count of 10 birds

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54	Stone Partridge	<i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i>	Recorded in Mole NP and the Shai Hills with some good views out in the open
55	Latham's Forest Francolin	<i>Francolinus lathamii</i>	Heard during a couple of night birding sessions in the Bobiri Forest
56	Ahanta Francolin	<i>Francolinu achantensis</i>	A bird was heard calling near Antwikwaa and Pete flushed a bird near the Bobiri Forest
57	Double-spurred Francolin	<i>Francolinus bicalcaratus</i>	Recorded on 7 days with the best sightings from the Brenu Beach Road, Mole NP and the Shai Hills
58	White-spotted Flufftail	<i>Sarothrura pulchra</i>	We had two sightings of this fantastic looking bird near Antwikwaa where a bird showed out in the open
59	Black Crake	<i>Amauornis flavirostra</i>	Recorded on 3 days including the Cape Coast and Mole NP
60	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	The only sighting was of 4 birds at Sakumono Lagoon
61	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	The only sighting was of a single bird at Cape Coast Lagoon
62	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	Recorded on 10 days
63	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Recorded on 5 days from Sakumono Lagoon to Tono Dam
64	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	A small group of 15+ birds were seen at Sakumono Lagoon
65	Senegal Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>	Recorded on 5 days from the Pra River to the Tono Dam
66	Egyptian Plover	<i>Pluvianus aegyptius</i>	One of the highlights of the tour was watching at least 5 adults and a very young chick on the White Volta River
67	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	A group of 50+ birds at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day was the only sighting
68	Rock Pratincole	<i>Glareola nuchalis</i>	A total of 5 birds were enjoyed on the Pra River – all were of the rufous-naped <i>liberiae</i> race
69	Forbes's Plover	<i>Charadrius forbesi</i>	We enjoyed great views of a minimum of 5 birds in Mole NP, plus one at night whilst watching LT Nightjar!
70	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Single birds were recorded on just 3 days
71	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>	Recorded on 6 days with a maximum count of at least 7 birds
72	White-crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus albiceps</i>	The Pra River produced the goods with good scope views of 2 birds before they were disturbed by a boat
73	Spur-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	Recorded in small numbers on 5 days from Sakumono Lagoon to the Tono Dam
74	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Recorded on 2 days at the Sakumono and Cape Coast Lagoons
75	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	The only sighting was of a maximum of 5 birds with a group of Avocet at Sakumono Lagoon
76	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	A single bird was seen at Cape Coast Lagoon
77	Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Three birds were seen at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
78	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	A small flock was seen at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
79	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	A small number was seen at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
80	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Recorded on 5 days from Sakumono Lagoon to the Tono Dam
81	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	Two birds were seen in flight with Greenshank at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
82	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Recorded on 5 days in small numbers from Sakumono Lagoon to Mole NP

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83	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Recorded on 4 days from Sakumono Lagoon to Mole NP
84	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Recorded on 9 days at various sites and a maximum count of 10 birds at Cape Coast Lagoon
85	Greater Painted-Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	A great find by Bob was of 5 birds visible from the Mole Motel on the main wetland
86	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	A single sighting of 2 birds from the Mole Motel on the main wetland
87	Caspian Tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Two birds were seen offshore on our first morning from our hotel
88	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst on the coast
89	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	A single bird at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
90	Four-banded Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles quadricinctus</i>	Some of the group got lucky when 2 birds flew up from beside the bus whilst in Mole NP
91	Blue-spotted Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>	Recorded on at least 4 days and seen best along the Bekampa Track
92	Black-billed Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>	This savannah cousin of the above species was recorded on 8 days
93	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	Rather frustratingly, the only sighting was of a bird from the bus whilst travelling north from Mole NP
94	Tambourine Dove	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>	Recorded on at least 6 days whilst with birds whizzing through the forests and a very familiar song in the forest
95	Blue-headed Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur brehmeri</i>	A great sighting of a bird feeding on the main track at Atewa was welcomed by all thanks to Pete's sharp eyes
96	African Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>	Recorded on 9 days
97	Bruce's Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron waalia</i>	This very distinctive pigeon was recorded in Mole NP and the Tono Dam in ones and twos
98	Western Bronze-naped Pigeon	<i>Columba iriditorques</i>	Three birds were seen well in flight in the Bobiri Forest and heard at Atewa
99	Afep Pigeon	<i>Columba unicincta</i>	Frustratingly only heard whilst birding the Bobiri Forest
100	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	Recorded on 2 days with good views when north of Bolgatanga
101	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	One of the commonest doves recorded on all but one day
102	African Mourning Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>	A couple of birds were seen well whilst watching Egyptian Plovers on the White Volta River
103	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	Recorded on 8 days whilst in the savannah areas
104	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	One of the commonest doves recorded on all but one day
105	Red-headed Lovebird	<i>Agapornis pullarius</i>	If the Tsetse flies weren't distracting you(!) this species was seen well in flight on two occasions in Mole NP
106	Black-collared Lovebird	<i>Agapornis swindernianus</i>	Pete and Robert got lucky with 2 birds that flew over calling at Aboabo
107	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Recorded on 4 days whilst in the Mole NP
108	Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>	This attractive and vocal parrot was recorded on 5 days mostly in Mole NP as well as the Shai Hills
109	Red-fronted Parrot	<i>Poicephalus gularis</i>	Recorded on 4 days with some good scope views of perched birds from the canopy walkway
110	Grey Parrot	<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>	Recorded in Kakum with some reasonable flight views, but the best views were certainly at Bobiri
111	Guinea Turaco	<i>Tauraco persa</i>	Kath did well to find this sometimes tricky species along the Brenu Beach Road

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112	Yellow-billed Turaco	<i>Tauraco macrorhynchus</i>	Regularly heard throughout the forests and seen well on 3 days with the best views from the canopy walkway
113	Violet Turaco	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>	Probably the smartest of the Turacos and recorded on 3 days with singles in Mole NP and Shai Hills
114	Great Blue Turaco	<i>Corythaeola cristata</i>	A bird was heard calling by Chris and Pete when birding the Bekampa Forest
115	Western Grey Plantain-eater	<i>Crinifer piscator</i>	Recorded on 12 days
116	Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>	A bird was heard at the Egyptian Plover site, but understandably everyone was more interested in the Plovers!
117	Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>	A single bird was seen from the bus en route to Assin Fosu and another was heard in Mole NP
118	Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Cercococcyx olivinus</i>	A calling bird at Bekampa led to a lot of careful searching until Chris located this often very difficult to see species
119	African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>	A single bird in Mole NP allowed some good scope views from the bus!
120	Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>	A bird was singing at Atewa but not located
121	Black Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus clamosus</i>	Heard at Bekampa and finally seen well at both Bobiri and Atewa – both the red-throated <i>gabonensis</i> forest race
122	Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	Recorded on 5 days and seen well
123	Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	Recorded on 4 days, seen on 2 days at Bekampa and Aboabo
124	African Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>	A cracking male was scoped at Bekampa and other birds were heard throughout the forests
125	Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill)	<i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>	Recorded on 6 days with plenty of opportunities to see this smart bird
126	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>	Recorded on all but one of the days
127	Blue-headed Coucal	<i>Centropus monachus</i>	Heard on at least one day around Bekampa
128	Black-throated Coucal	<i>Centropus leucogaster</i>	The deep resonating hoot was heard on at least 4 days, but a bird finally showed on our walk up to Atewa Ridge
129	Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	A single bird was seen flying in front of the bus at night on our return journey from the Egyptian Plovers
130	Greyish Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo cinerascens</i>	Some fabulous views of up to 5 different birds whilst in Mole NP, the best being one right beside the bus
131	Fraser's Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo poensis</i>	After two nights of “heard only” our persistence finally paid off on our third attempt, with great views at Bobiri
132	Akun Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo leucostictus</i>	Rather frustratingly, a bird repeatedly called in the early hours at Bobiri Forest, but just refused to show itself!
133	African Wood-Owl	<i>Strix woodfordi</i>	Heard on our 2 nights at Bobiri Forest with up to 2 birds calling, but neither showed any interest in us!
134	Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	Always good to see and always good views, with three separate sightings in Mole NP
135	Red-chested Owlet	<i>Glaucidium tephronotum</i>	A bird called for a short time whilst we were trying to locate the Akun Eagle Owl!
136	African Scops-Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>	Up to 3 birds heard on one night whilst in Mole NP
137	Brown Nightjar	<i>Veles binotatus</i>	Despite trying earlier in the evening with no joy, Bob heard a bird calling at dawn whilst staying at Bobiri
138	Long-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>	Great views of a male in Mole NP and a 2nd brief sighting from the bus on our last morning for those still awake!
139	Standard-winged Nightjar	<i>Macrodipteryx longipennis</i>	After failing to find any birds in Mole NP, a male bird flushed in daylight at the Tono Dam was a great bonus
140	Sabine's Spinetail	<i>Rhapidura sabini</i>	Recorded on 3 days with some good views of hawking birds

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141	Black Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura melanopygia</i>	A single bird passed directly overhead when at Aboabo
142	Mottled Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>	Recorded on 4 days
143	Cassin's Spinetail	<i>Neafrapus cassini</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst in the forests allowing useful comparisons to be made with nearby Sabine's Spinetail
144	African Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	Recorded daily
145	Bates's Swift	<i>Apus batesi</i>	A single bird with a distinctive almost "common sandpiper" flight was seen by some of the group when at Aboabo
146	White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>	Recorded on 2 days in Mole with 2 birds drinking from one of the pools
147	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	Recorded on all but one of the days
148	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Recorded on 9 days
149	African Pygmy-Kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>	This tiny Kingfisher was seen well on 2 days around the Atewa farmbush and at Shai Hills
150	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>	Always associated with water and recorded on 7 days
151	Shining-blue Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo quadribrachys</i>	A highly sought after species and one showed well on the Mole River at the Mognori Road
152	Chocolate-backed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon badia</i>	Frustratingly only heard despite being very close! Birds taunted us at Bobiri and at Atewa
153	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst in Mole NP
154	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon malimbica</i>	Recorded on 4 days with good sightings on 3 days
155	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	Probably the commonest Kingfisher in Ghana, but nonetheless stunning and recorded on 9 days
156	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Recorded on 7 days around lakes and pools
157	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>	A single bird was seen well, albeit briefly as it flew down the Mole River near the Mognori Road
158	Blue-moustached Bee-eater	<i>Merops mentalis</i>	Well worth the 7Km walk to the Atewa Ridge. Here we enjoyed excellent views of a single bird and a 2 <sup>nd</sup> bird later
159	Black Bee-eater	<i>Merops gularis</i>	Recorded on 5 days whilst around the forest clearings and always enjoyed to the full – a truly stunning bird!
160	Rosy Bee-eater	<i>Merops malimbicus</i>	Recorded on 3 days with the best views at Bekampa with birds overhead and perched!
161	Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>	Recorded only along the Brenu Beach Road where 3 birds showed well
162	Red-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops bulocki</i>	Recorded on 3 days with wonderful views whilst in Mole NP
163	White-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops albicollis</i>	A very common species in the south and recorded on 9 days
164	Purple Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>	Recorded on 3 days when travelling on the bus and a bird flew overhead when at the Mognori Road
165	Blue-bellied Roller	<i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>	The most impressive of the Rollers, recorded on 4 days with a peak count of 9 from the bus en route to Mole NP
166	Abyssinian Roller	<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>	Recorded on 6 days with the best views in and around Mole NP
167	Blue-throated Roller	<i>Eurystomus gularis</i>	This forest species was recorded on at least 2 days whilst in the forests of Kakum
168	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>	Recorded on 5 days with high counts of at least four when in Mole NP
169	Narina's Trogon	<i>Apaloderma narina</i>	We were lucky to find two birds whilst walking up to Atewa. A singing male gave some brief but good views

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170	Forest /White-H Wood-Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus castaneiceps</i>	A Wood-Hoopoe species seen briefly in flight whilst at Aboabo, but not seen sufficiently to identify to species
171	Green Wood-Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>	Recorded on 3 days in Mole NP and the Shai Hills. The maximum count was 8 birds whilst in Mole NP
172	Black Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus aterrimus</i>	Recorded on 2 days whilst in Mole NP
173	Black Dwarf Hornbill	<i>Tockus hartlaubi</i>	The toughest hornbill to find and incredibly we had no less than 4 sightings: Kakum, Bekampa, Aboabo and Bobiri
174	Northern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i>	Recorded on 4 days whilst in the north of the country
175	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>	Recorded on 10 days and a bird that seems to be increasing in its distribution with birds from Accra to the north
176	African Pied-Hornbill	<i>Tockus fasciatus</i>	One of the commonest of the hornbills and a familiar call of the forest and forest edge recorded on 8 days
177	Piping Hornbill	<i>Bycanistes fistulator</i>	Less commonly encountered than its Pied cousin, recorded on 3 days around Kakum and the Cape Coast
178	White-crested Hornbill	<i>Tropicranus albocristatus</i>	An exceptionally long tail and surprisingly secretive. Great views from the canopy walkway. Recorded on 3 days
179	Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus abyssinicus</i>	We were lucky to find these gentle giants whilst in Mole with sightings on 2 days with 2 birds on both occasions
180	<b>Brown-cheeked Hornbill</b>	<b><i>Bycanistes cylindricus</i></b>	<b>We were spoiled with sightings of 3 birds on two separate days from the canopy walkway</b>
181	Black-casqued Hornbill	<i>Ceratogymna atrata</i>	Once again the canopy walkway came up trumps on two separate days with up to 4 birds including a male
182	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	Recorded on 5 days whilst in the savannah regions
183	Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i>	Seen well on at least one day whilst at Antwikkwa and heard on others
184	Yellow-throated Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus subsulphureus</i>	A familiar sound of the forest recorded on at least 4 days. This white-throated form is similar to the above species
185	<b>Red-rumped Tinkerbird</b>	<b><i>Pogoniulus atroflavus</i></b>	<b>Rather embarrassingly, this species was only heard as we always seemed distracted by other species !</b>
186	Speckled Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus scolopaceus</i>	A familiar sound of the forest with its varying “pooping” and bubbling calls. Recorded on 7 days
187	<b>Yellow-spotted Barbet</b>	<b><i>Buccanodon duchaillui</i></b>	<b>Frustratingly only heard due to the closed canopy whenever we heard one!</b>
188	<b>Hairy-breasted Barbet</b>	<b><i>Tricholaema hirsuta</i></b>	<b>Recorded on at least 3 days with some excellent views from the canopy walkway and Bobiri Forest</b>
189	Vieillot's Barbet	<i>Lybius vieilloti</i>	A stunning Barbet and recorded on 7 days with the highest count being 4 birds whilst in Mole NP
190	Double-toothed Barbet	<i>Lybius bidentatus</i>	Pete and Robert saw one whilst in the Shai Hills
191	Bearded Barbet	<i>Lybius dubius</i>	Recorded on 2 days whilst in the north of the country
192	Bristle-nosed Barbet	<i>Gymnobucco peli</i>	Seen well at Aboabo and Bobiri Forests complete with full bristles!
193	Naked-faced Barbet	<i>Gymnobucco calvus</i>	The commoner of the <i>Gymnobucco</i> barbet species and recorded on 5 days
194	Yellow-billed Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus purpuratus</i>	Surprisingly elusive for a barbet and heard more often than seen. Recorded on 2 days and seen at Aboabo
195	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>	Recorded on just 2 days whilst in Mole NP, including an interestingly plumaged immature male
196	Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>	A single bird was seen from the Mole Motel by some of the group on our day of departure
197	Fine-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera punctuligera</i>	Graeme and Pete had good views of a single bird along the Mognori Road near Mole NP



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198	Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>	Two birds were seen well whilst in Mole NP on one day
199	Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>	Three of Ghana's smallest Woodpecker were seen well during our first morning in Mole NP
200	Brown-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos obsoletus</i>	A single bird was seen along the Mognori Road on one day
201	Buff-spotted Woodpecker	<i>Campethera nivosa</i>	A single bird was seen very well during a busy time of woodpecker activity close to Antwikwaa!
202	Little Green Woodpecker	<i>Campethera maculosa</i>	Some excellent views from the canopy walkway and Atewa. Recorded on 3 days
203	Melancholy Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos lugubris</i>	Some excellent views in quick succession after the above species near Antwikwaa and also seen in Kakum
204	Fire-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos pyrrhogaster</i>	Plenty of opportunities to see this aptly named and Ghana's largest woodpecker. Recorded on 6 days
205	Rufous-sided Broadbill	<i>Smithornis rufolateralis</i>	A definite highlight was the stunning male that performed exceptionally in Kakum NP. Heard on 2 other days
206	Sun Lark	<i>Galerida modesta</i>	A number of small groups were seen one day whilst exploring Mole NP
207	Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>	John did well to spot the only 2 birds of the trip whilst approaching Mole NP on our first evening
208	Square-tailed Saw-wing	<i>Psalidoprocne nitens</i>	This forest species performed well in association with its "swallow-tailed" cousin at Bekampa as well as Atewa
209	Fanti Saw-wing	<i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>	Some good views mostly around the Kakum area and recorded on 5 days
210	White-throated Blue Swallow	<i>Hirundo nigrita</i>	A minimum of 3 of these gorgeous swallows were watched on the Pra River in the presence of Rock Pratincoles
211	Common Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	A single bird flew over whilst in the Antwikwaa area
212	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	A flock of at least 30+ birds was seen whilst birding the Mognori Road near Mole NP
213	Lesser Striped-Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>	A very smart and common swallow recorded on at least 4 days
214	West African Swallow	<i>Cecropis domicella</i>	John had a bird that was most likely this rather than its European <i>daurica</i> cousin on Egyptian Plover day!
215	Mosque Swallow	<i>Cecropis senegalensis</i>	A single bird picked up by Pete whilst near the Bekampa Track in with a large movement of swallows
216	Preuss's Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon preussi</i>	Recorded on 3 days, the most memorable being the 200+ birds coming in to roost along the Brenu Beach Road
217	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	Some nice views whilst in the north and recorded on 3 days
218	Ethiopian Swallow	<i>Hirundo aethiopica</i>	Seen well on our first day around Sakumono Lagoon and then no doubt overlooked with groups of Barn Swallows
219	Red-chested Swallow	<i>Hirundo lucida</i>	Seen well on 2 days in the north, close to the White Volta River and our hotel in Bolgatanga
220	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Recorded on at least 11 days
221	African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>	Recorded on 3 days
222	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Recorded on 5 days with the highest count being around 40+ when at Cape Coast and Brenu Beach Road
223	Yellow-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>	Seen very well and perched on our first day at Sakumono Lagoon
224	Plain-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>	Recorded on 2 days when birding the Brenu Beach Road and the best views at Shai Hills
225	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Single birds seen or heard on 3 days
226	Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>	Some good views of both males and females whilst in Mole NP



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227	White-breasted Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Coracina pectoralis</i>	A single bird showed briefly whilst in Mole NP if you ignored the Tsetse Flies!
228	Blue Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Coracina azurea</i>	Two birds were seen very well whilst birding the Bekampa Forest and another was heard at Bobiri Forest
229	Slender-billed Greenbul	<i>Stelgidillas gracilirostris</i>	This fairly easy to see Greenbul was recorded on at least 3 days mostly feeding in the canopy
230	Little Greenbul	<i>Eurillas virens</i>	A very familiar sound in Ghana recorded on 7 days. Plenty of opportunities to see this fairly nondescript Greenbul
231	Little Grey Greenbul	<i>Eurillas gracilis</i>	Seen and heard well at Atewa on 2 days
232	Plain (Cam. Sombre) Greenbul	<i>Eurillas curvirostris</i>	Heard more often than seen, but seen well at Kakum NP on our walk up to the canopy walkway in the afternoon
233	Yellow-whiskered Greenbul	<i>Eurillas latirostris</i>	A daily sound in the forests and recorded on 7 days, but finally seen at Bobiri and Atewa Forests
234	Golden Greenbul	<i>Calyptocichla serinus</i>	One of the easier and more striking Greenbuls. Seen well in the Bekampa Forest with some good scope views
235	Honeyguide Greenbul	<i>Baeopogon indicator</i>	A single bird was seen from the canopy walkway
236	Icterine Greenbul	<i>Phyllastrephus icterinus</i>	One of the easier Greenbuls to see. Good views were had in Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa. Recorded on 4 days
237	Simple Greenbul (Leaflove)	<i>Chlorocichla simplex</i>	A fairly unobtrusive Bulbul recorded on 4 days
238	Swamp Palm Bulbul	<i>Thescelocichla leucoptera</i>	Gregarious and noisy! Recorded on 4 days
239	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	Recorded every day
240	Western Nicator	<i>Nicator chloris</i>	A very smart bird and well worth being patient to see this often skulking species. Recorded on 3 days
241	Red-tailed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda syndactylus</i>	Heard on a minimum of 2 days at Bobiri and Atewa but as is often the case with this species, not seen
242	Green-tailed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda eximius</i>	This UGFE was sadly only heard with our best chance at Atewa, but we failed to coax it into view
243	Grey-headed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda canicapillus</i>	Recorded on 4 days and seen by various members of the group on 2 days
244	Western Bearded Greenbul	<i>Criniger barbatus</i>	Recorded on 4 days and the bird's distinctive spiky beard was seen well by all at the Bekampa Forest and Bobiri
245	Red-tailed Greenbul	<i>Criniger calurus</i>	Recorded on 3 days – distinctive puffy white throat! Our first view was from the canopy walkway looking down!
246	Yellow-bearded Greenbul	<i>Criniger olivaceus</i>	Sadly, this UGFE was only heard in Kakum just before we saw the male Rufous-sided Broadbill
247	Forest Robin	<i>Stiphornis erythrorax</i>	This very smart UGFE escaped us and we had to make do with hearing the song at Aboabo and Atewa
248	White-tailed Alethe	<i>Alethe diademata</i>	After being taunted on our walk up to Atewa, Pete did well to find a bird sat motionless for some of the group
249	Finsch's Flycatcher-Thrush	<i>Stizorhina finschii</i>	Recorded on 5 days and seen well at Aboabo
250	Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i>	A bird was seen briefly by Robert and John near the river Mole
251	White-crowned Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha albicapillus</i>	Everyone enjoyed good views of this very striking species on our first morning's birding in Mole NP
252	African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>	Singles were recorded throughout the tour on 5 days
253	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	At least 3 birds were recorded – one just before arriving in Mole NP and at least 2 birds in the Shai Hills
254	Familiar Chat	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>	Bob found a single bird near the Tono Dam

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255	White-fronted Black-Chat	<i>Pentholaea albifrons</i>	Two birds, including a smart male were seen when exploring Mole NP
256	Mocking Cliff-Chat	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>	A total of 4 birds including a juvenile bird were seen very well in the Shai Hills whilst having coffee!
257	Moustached Grass Warbler	<i>Melocichla mentalis</i>	This very smart warbler performed superbly whilst in Mole NP during one afternoon
258	Melodious Warbler	<i>Hippolais polyglotta</i>	Single birds were recorded on the Winneba Plains, the Tono Dam and the Shai Hills
259	Senegal Eremomela	<i>Eremomela pusilla</i>	This attractive warbler was seen in small groups and recorded on 4 days - around Mole and near the Tono Dam
260	Rufous-crowned Eremomela	<i>Eremomela badiceps</i>	A canopy species seen best from the canopy walkway and John had one at Aboabo. Recorded on 2 days
261	Green Crombec	<i>Sylvietta virens</i>	This cheerful songster was recorded on 4 days
262	Lemon-bellied Crombec	<i>Sylvietta denti</i>	The mostly canopy dwelling cousin of the above species was seen well by some at Atewa on one day
263	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Small numbers of this familiar species were recorded on 5 days
264	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Recorded on 8 days and always good to see whilst birding in the forests and forest edge
265	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	A single bird was seen whilst birding the Atewa Farmbush
266	Green Hylia	<i>Hylia prasina</i>	A very familiar call of the forests and recorded on at least 6 days and plenty of opportunity to see well
267	<b>Kemp's Longbill</b>	<b><i>Macrosphenus kempii</i></b>	<b>This often elusive Longbill performed well for Bob and Graeme near Antwikwaa and for the rest of us at Atewa</b>
268	Grey Longbill	<i>Macrosphenus concolor</i>	Heard often and recorded on at least 4 days, but seen very well by all at Atewa
269	Violet-backed Hylia	<i>Hylia violacea</i>	This very pretty warbler performed superbly with pairs from the canopy walkway and again for some at Atewa
270	Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>	A very striking Cisticola and recorded on 3 days
271	Singing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cantans</i>	Despite the name, a somewhat disappointing song! Recorded on 4 days
272	Whistling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lateralis</i>	A loud and distinctive song and recorded well with good scope views along the Bekampa Track
273	Short-winged Cisticola	<i>Cisticola brachypterus</i>	A small Cisticola recorded on 4 days with the best views on the Winneba Plains in the early evening
274	Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>	A large and very striking Cisticola and renamed "Gormless Cisticola" by Graeme! Recorded on 3 days
275	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Recorded on 2 days at Sakumono Lagoon and the Tono Dam
276	Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	Recorded on at least 4 days
277	Red-winged Warbler	<i>Heliolais erythropterus</i>	Recorded on 4 days with the best views along the Bekampa Track and the Tono Dam
278	Yellow-breasted Apalis	<i>Apalis flavida</i>	Some good views whilst in Mole NP and recorded on 2 days
279	Black-capped Apalis	<i>Apalis nigriceps</i>	Somewhat "neck breaking" views whilst at Atewa along with the diagnostic rattling song
280	<b>Sharpe's Apalis</b>	<b><i>Apalis sharpii</i></b>	<b>A familiar repetitive song of the forest. Recorded on at least 4 days. Seen well from the walkway/Atewa</b>
281	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>	Typically noisy and recorded on 4 days in farmbush habitat and in Mole NP
282	Yellow-browed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera superciliaris</i>	An extremely smart bird recorded on 4 days and seen well, complete with inflated blue air sacs!
283	<b>Olive-green Camaroptera</b>	<b><i>Camaroptera chloronota</i></b>	<b>Typically only heard at Atewa!</b>

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284	Oriole Warbler	<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>	Recorded on 4 days with the first being heard along the Brenu Beach Road. A couple of birds showed in Mole NP
285	Fraser's Forest-Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria ocreata</i>	Recorded on 2 days with the best view being a very obliging bird perched on the canopy walkway wires
286	Northern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis edolioides</i>	Recorded on 4 days, mostly in Mole NP and then Shai Hills
287	Pale Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pallidus</i>	A single bird showed well near Antwikwaa
<b>288</b>	<b>Ussher's Flycatcher</b>	<b><i>Muscicapa ussheri</i></b>	<b>A number of these somewhat "hirrundine-like" flycatchers were recorded on 4 days around Kakum and Atewa</b>
289	Dusky-blue Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa comitata</i>	Recorded on 3 days from Bekampa, Aboabo and Atewa
290	Tessmann's Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa tessmanni</i>	A single bird showed itself at Aboabo, just after having seen Dusky-blue Flycatcher for a good comparison
291	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Singles of these familiar flycatchers were recorded on 3 days at Sakumono Lagoon, Atewa farmbush and Shai Hills
292	Swamp Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa aquatica</i>	This fairly chunky and nondescript flycatcher was seen well whilst in Mole NP on 2 days
293	Grey-throated Tit Flycatcher	<i>Myioparus griseigularis</i>	Excellent views of this sometimes tricky species were had of a nesting pair at Atewa
294	Grey Tit-Flycatcher (Lead Colo'd)	<i>Myioparus plumbeus</i>	A singing bird at the Shai Hills took some time to locate, but good scope views were had in the end
295	Pied-Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	A quite common species whilst birding the north. Recorded on 4 days in Mole and Tono Dam
296	African Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	Seen well whilst birding Mole NP and recorded on 2 days with the best views by the Mole River
297	Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>	This very smart flycatcher was recorded on 5 days in the forests
298	Chestnut-capped Flycatcher	<i>Erythrocerus mccallii</i>	A distinctive flycatcher usually in small parties and recorded on 3 days whilst birding in Kakum and Atewa
299	African Blue-Flycatcher	<i>Elminia longicauda</i>	A very smart flycatcher seen very well whilst birding in and around Mole NP
300	Blue-headed Crested-Flycatcher	<i>Trochocercus nitens</i>	After a couple of heard only birds at Bekampa and Aboabo, a bird finally showed well at Atewa
301	Black-and-white Flycatcher	<i>Bias musicus</i>	A cracking flycatcher with both male and female birds seen at our hotel in Kumasi and also at Atewa
302	Senegal Batis	<i>Batis senegalensis</i>	A pair showed well on our last day at the Shai Hills Reserve
303	West African Wattle-eye	<i>Dyaphorophya hormophora</i>	Some excellent views of this species on 4 days including males and the distinctive chestnut female
<b>304</b>	<b>Red-cheeked Wattle-eye</b>	<b><i>Dyaphorophya blissetti</i></b>	<b>Pete got lucky with a stationary bird for a few seconds whilst birding the Bekampa Forest</b>
305	Common Wattle-eye	<i>Platysteira cyanea</i>	Recorded on at least 5 days from the Shai Hills to Mole NP
<b>306</b>	<b>Yellow-headed Picathartes</b>	<b><i>Picathartes gymnocephalus</i></b>	<b>Unsurprisingly voted bird of the trip! At least 5 birds performed very well in the forest near Bonkro</b>
307	Brown Babbler	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>	Recorded on 3 days, but seen only once with 3 birds near the main water pool on the Samole Loop in Mole NP
308	Blackcap Babbler	<i>Turdoides reinwardtii</i>	Recorded on only 1 day with a frustrating bird by the Mole River
309	Brown Illadopsis	<i>Illadopsis fulvescens</i>	First heard at Kakum but this ground dwelling skulker was seen by some at Atewa
<b>310</b>	<b>Blackcap Illadopsis</b>	<b><i>Illadopsis cleaveri</i></b>	<b>Heard only along the Bekampa Track and at Bobiri Forest</b>
<b>311</b>	<b>Rufous-winged Illadopsis</b>	<b><i>Illadopsis rufescens</i></b>	<b>This skulking UGFE was only heard at Bobiri Forest</b>
<b>312</b>	<b>Puvel's Illadopsis</b>	<b><i>Illadopsis puveli</i></b>	<b>One of the easier Illadopsis to see, but unfortunately the bird calling at Bekampa did not want to play ball!</b>

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313	White-shouldered Black Tit	<i>Parus guineensis</i>	This aptly named Tit was seen well on 3 days whilst in Mole NP
314	Tit-hylia	<i>Pholidornis rushiae</i>	Ghana's smallest bird was seen particularly well at Aboabo and the Kakum Forests
315	<b>African Spotted Creeper</b>	<i>Salpornis salvadori</i>	<b>Rather frustratingly, this highly distinctive species was only heard whilst on a walk in Mole NP</b>
316	African Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	Seen well on 4 days in the south and the north of the country
317	Western Violet-backed Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes longuemarei</i>	Two of these distinctive and almost "un-sunbird like" birds were seen well whilst in Mole NP
318	Fraser's Sunbird	<i>Deleornis fraseri</i>	Two birds with their vaguely warbler-like bills showed well on our first morning on the canopy walkway
319	Green-headed Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>	The best views were a pair that showed well in the Hans Cottage Gardens, but also seen in Mole NP
320	Blue-throated Brown Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra cyanolaema</i>	Recorded on 4 days with the best views whilst around the Kakum area
321	Olive Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra olivacea</i>	A very common and fairly large nondescript Sunbird. Recorded in the south on 6 days
322	<b>Buff-throated Sunbird</b>	<i>Chalcomitra adelberti</i>	<b>Surely the most stunning of all the Sunbirds in Ghana and seen on at least 4 days</b>
323	Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>	The commonest Sunbird, but nonetheless pretty smart and vocal. Recorded on 9 days
324	Pygmy Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna platura</i>	This impressive Sunbird was seen on 4 days whilst in the north of the country including some long-tailed males
325	Olive-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris chloropygius</i>	Very similar to the Tiny Sunbird and recorded on 5 days
326	Beautiful Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris pulchellus</i>	A single male showed well whilst birding by the Mole River on the Mognori Road
327	Variable Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>	Bob and Robert saw this species whilst birding at the Tono Dam
328	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>	This smart looking Sunbird was recorded on 4 days whilst in the north of the country
329	Johanna's Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris johannae</i>	At least a single streaky female was seen well from the Kakum canopy walkway
330	Superb Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris superbus</i>	This very large and very beautiful Sunbird was seen very well on at least 3 days from Kakum to Atewa
331	Splendid Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris coccinigastrus</i>	A Sunbird of coast/savannah and recorded on at least 3 days around the Cape Coast, Winneba Plains & Shai Hills
332	Copper Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris cupreus</i>	Again, mostly a coastal and Savvanah species recorded on at least 4 days with the first at our hotel in Accra
333	Northern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	A common species of roadside wires when travelling and recorded on 5 days
334	Yellow-billed Shrike	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>	This attractive and communal Shrike was seen well on at least 2 days with our first sighting at Sakumono Lagoon
335	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	A single bird was seen whilst birding around the Tono dam
336	<b>Grey-headed Bush-Shrike</b>	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>	<b>This large Bush- Shrike was only heard with its distinctive drawn out hooting at a roadside stop on the 30<sup>th</sup></b>
337	Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike	<i>Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus</i>	A very attractive Bush-Shrike and just a single bird showed briefly whilst birding the Brenu Beach Road
338	Marsh Tchagra	<i>Bocagia minuta</i>	This very localised Tchagra showed well with an excellent view of a male along the Brenu Beach Road
339	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>	The commonest Tchagra recorded on 4 days from the south to the north of the country
340	Brown-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra australis ussheri</i>	A single bird was seen well whilst birding the Shai Hills

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341	Sabine's Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus sabini</i>	Recorded on 5 days, often heard, but the best views were definitely from the Kakum Canopy at eye level
342	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>	A species of drier savannah habitat and farmbrush recorded on 5 days
343	<b>Brubru</b>	<i>Nilaus afer</i>	<b>The distinctive telephone-like call of this bird was heard only around the Tono dam</b>
344	Yellow-crowned Gonolek	<i>Laniarius barbarus</i>	A stunning species with definite wow factor and recorded on 5 days in the drier savannah type habitats
345	White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>	Five of these splendid birds complete with punk hairstyles were seen along the Mognori Road near Mole NP
346	<b>Red-billed Helmetshrike</b>	<i>Prionops caniceps</i>	<b>Some good views of these noisy and attractive birds with sightings at Aboabo, Bobiri and Atewa</b>
347	Black-winged Oriole	<i>Oriolus nigripennis</i>	This species was seen well on at least 3 days
348	Western (Black-headed) Oriole	<i>Oriolus brachyrhynchus</i>	Similar to the above species but for the pale wing panel and recorded on at least 3 days
349	African Golden-Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>	This very bright and striking Oriole was seen well on 3 days whilst in Mole NP
350	Square-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus ludwigii</i>	This distinctive Drongo, complete with square-ended tail was seen well on 2 days whilst in Mole NP
351	Shining Drongo	<i>Dicrurus atripennis</i>	Always associating with bird flocks in the forest and typically vocal. Recorded on 2 days and seen at Bekampa
352	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	The common Drongo of savannah and open areas and recorded on 7 days mostly in the north but also Shai Hills
353	Velvet-mantled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus modestus</i>	The forest form of the above species and with classic "fish tail" recorded on at least 5 days
354	Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>	A single bird was seen very well perched on a telegraph pole just outside the Shai Hills Reserve
355	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	A very common species and recorded on all but one day
356	Narrow-tailed Starling	<i>Poeoptera lugubris</i>	A distinctive Forest Starling recorded on 2 days at Aboabo and Atewa forests
357	Chestnut-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus fulgidus</i>	A common Forest Starling recorded on 4 days
358	<b>Copper-tailed (Glossy) Starling</b>	<i>Hylopsar cupreocauda</i>	<b>Surprisingly, just a single bird was recorded whilst exploring the Bekampa Forest</b>
359	Splendid (Glossy) Starling	<i>Lamprotornis splendidus</i>	One of the commonest and the largest Starlings and very vocal. Recorded on 8 days
360	Purple (Glossy) Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	An attractive Starling with a very distinctive jizz. Recorded on 4 days whilst in the north of the country
361	Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>	A single bird recorded whilst in Mole NP
362	Lesser Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chloropterus</i>	A single bird recorded whilst birding the Tono Dam
363	Long-tailed Glossy-Starling	<i>Lamprotornis caudatus</i>	An impressive Starling and a daily occurrence whilst in Mole NP. Recorded on 5 days
364	Chestnut-bellied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis pulcher</i>	A number of these northern specialities were seen on 3 days. At the Tono Dam and whilst travelling in the north
365	Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	A very smart Starling recorded on 3 days and mostly flying over forest edge sites
366	Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>	A very common species mostly associated with Urban areas and recorded on 10 days
367	Bush Petronia	<i>Petronia dentata</i>	A daily and somewhat nondescript species recorded on 5 days in Mole NP
368	Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Ploceopasser superciliosus</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst in Mole NP
369	Little Weaver	<i>Ploceus luteolus</i>	A single bird was seen by a few of the group at Tono Dam

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370	Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis brachypterus</i>	A common species recorded on 8 days and a distinctive race lacking the black neck
371	Orange Weaver	<i>Ploceus aurantius</i>	Some excellent views of the small nesting colony at Hans Cottage on 3 days
372	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	The commonest Weaver species recorded on 10 days
373	Heuglin's Masked-Weaver	<i>Ploceus heuglini</i>	A single bird seen by Bob and Chris whilst in Mole NP
374	Yellow-mantled Weaver	<i>Ploceus tricolor</i>	A striking Weaver recorded on 5 days with probably the best views from the Kakum canopy walkway
375	Vieillot's Black Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigerrimus</i>	Probably better known by the old name of Black-and-Chestnut Weaver and recorded on 5 days
376	Maxwell's Black Weaver	<i>Ploceus albinucha</i>	These almost miniature Jackdaw-like Weavers were recorded on 3 days whilst in the forests
377	Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>	Recorded on 2 days in Mole NP with a male on one day and a female on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> day
378	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	The only sighting was at the Tono Dam
379	Blue-billed Malimbe	<i>Malimbus nitens</i>	This species also known as Gray's Malimbe and was seen well on 2 days including a bird building a nest
380	Crested Malimbe	<i>Malimbus malimbicus</i>	Seen well in and around the Kakum Forests and Atewa totalling 3 days
381	Red-vented Malimbe	<i>Malimbus scutatus</i>	After seeing the species distinctive nest at Aboabo we finally saw the bird in the Atewa Farmbush
382	Red-headed Malimbe	<i>Malimbus rubricollis</i>	The commonest and largest of the Malimbés and recorded on 6 days
383	Yellow-mantled Widowbird	<i>Euplectes macroura</i>	Most in non-breeding plumage with flocks of up to 25+ and recorded at Winneba Plains, Brenu Beach & Shai Hills
384	Black-winged Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>	Recorded on 5 days with the odd bird in full breeding plumage, the best being along the Bekampa Track
385	Grey-headed Nigrita	<i>Nigrita canicapillus</i>	Recorded on 7 days and a distinctive call of the forests
386	Chestnut-breasted Nigrita	<i>Nigrita bicolor</i>	Recorded on just 2 days but seen well on the Bekampa Track and Bobiri
387	White-breasted Nigrita	<i>Nigrita fusconotus</i>	One of the most striking Nigritas/Negro-Finches and recorded on 4 days
388	Red-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia phoenicoptera</i>	A single bird was seen in the heat of the day at a roadside pool when travelling south from Bolgatanga
389	Western Bluebill	<i>Spermophaga haematina</i>	Single birds seen on 2 days, including a singing male by Pete near Antwikwaa
390	Black-bellied Seedcracker	<i>Pyrenestes ostrinus</i>	A cracking male showed briefly on the walk to the Atewa Ridge
391	Bar-breasted Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rufopicta</i>	The commonest of the Firefinches recorded on 8 days
392	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	Surely the most attractive of all the Firefinches recorded only in the north on 4 days
393	Black-faced Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta larvata</i>	A good tally for this attractive speciality with singles recorded on 4 days whilst in Mole NP
394	Lavender Waxbill	<i>Estrilda caerulescens</i>	A very beautiful Waxbill recorded on at least 2 days whilst in Mole NP
395	Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	This attractive Waxbill was recorded on at least 5 days
396	Black-rumped Waxbill	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	Recorded on 2 days whilst in the north with the first sighting whilst watching Egyptian Plovers!
397	Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	A great name and a great bird recorded on 2 days whilst in Mole NP

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NOTES
398	Black-faced Quailfinch	<i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i>	Recorded on 3 days with sightings at Winneba Plains, Tono Dam and the Shai Hills
399	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullatus</i>	A very common species recorded on 12 days
400	Black-and-white Mannikin	<i>Spermestes bicolor</i>	The larger cousin of the above species recorded on 3 days
401	Magpie Mannikin	<i>Spermestes fringilloides</i>	The largest of the Mannakins with 5 birds seen whilst at Bobiri in the open areas
402	Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	A single bird showed well on our first morning in Mole NP
403	Wilson's Indigobird	<i>Vidua wilsoni</i>	Seen on just one day in Mole NP
404	Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	Recorded on 3 days with all birds in non-breeding plumage
405	Exclamatory Paradise-Whydah	<i>Vidua interjecta</i>	Breeding males were seen on 2 days whilst in the Mole area
406	Togo Paradise-Whydah	<i>Vidua togoensis</i>	Breeding males were recorded on 2 days whilst in the Mole area
407	Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>	This distinctive species was recorded on 5 days mostly in the north but also a single bird at Winneba Plains
408	Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>	Single birds seen on 2 days whilst in the north



## WISE BIRDING HOLIDAYS

### MAMMAL LIST: Ghana - Picathartes to Plover Tour

18<sup>th</sup> November – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014    22 Species Recorded

#	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NOTES
1	Olive Baboon	<i>Papio Anubis</i>	Recorded on 5 days in Mole NP and Shai Hills
2	Callithrix Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus sabaesus</i>	Recorded on 3 days in Mole NP and Shai Hills
3	Patas Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus patas</i>	Recorded on 3 days in Mole NP
4	Lowe's Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus lowei</i>	Recorded on 3 days. Four animals seen from the canopy walkway and heard on the remaining 2 days
5	Lesser Spot-nosed Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus petaurista</i>	Recorded on 2 days, both times from the canopy walkway with a maximum count of 6
6	Demidoff's Galago	<i>Galagoides demidoff</i>	Heard on 2 days and seen only by Chris in Kakum
7	Straw-coloured Fruit Bat	<i>Eidolon helvum</i>	Recorded on 3 days with the most impressive sighting being the huge roost near Atewa
8	Gambian Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus gabianus</i>	A bat thought to be this species was seen in the Bobiri Forest
9	Yellow-winged Bat	<i>Lavia frons</i>	A single was disturbed from its roost whilst looking for Abyssinian Ground Hornbills in Mole NP
10	African Savannah Hare	<i>Lepus microtis</i>	Recorded on 2 days in Mole NP
11	Striped Ground Squirrel	<i>Euxerus erythropus</i>	Recorded on 3 days in Mole NP
12	Gambian Sun Squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus gambianus</i>	Recorded on the 25 <sup>th</sup> when travelling between Kumasi and Mole
13	Slender-tailed Squirrel	<i>Protoxerus aubinnii</i>	Recorded on 3 days around the Kakum area
14	Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguinea</i>	Recorded on 3 days at the Winneba Plains, Mole NP and Bobiri
15	Common Genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>	Recorded on 2 night drives whilst in Mole. A single on our first night when arriving and 2 animals on the 28th
16	Western Tree Hyrax	<i>Dendrohyrax dorsalis</i>	The blood curdling screaming call was heard on at least 3 nights when looking for night birds
17	African Savannah Elephant	<i>Loxodonta Africana</i>	Surprisingly, only a single animal was seen from our hotel by John and Graeme on the morning of the 27th
18	Common Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Seen daily whilst in Mole NP
19	(Central) Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus phaleratus</i>	Seen daily whilst in Mole NP with a maximum count of 10 animals
20	(Buffon's) Kob	<i>Kobus kob</i>	Seen daily whilst in Mole NP with a maximum count of 100 on one day
21	Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	Recorded on 3 days whilst in Mole NP with a maximum count of 3 on one day
22	African Giant Rat	<i>Cricetmoys gambianus</i>	Recorded on 2 nights around the Kakum area



# Wise Birding Holidays

*All tours donate to conservation projects worldwide!*



## Wise Birding Holidays Ltd

3, Moormeath, Budleigh Salterton, DEVON, EX9 6QA

Website: [www.wisebirding.co.uk](http://www.wisebirding.co.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/wisebirdingholidays](https://www.facebook.com/wisebirdingholidays)

Email: [chris@wisebirding.co.uk](mailto:chris@wisebirding.co.uk)

Telephone: **07973 483227**