



East Africa Birds, Mammals, and Wildlife Expedition

Duration: 37 Days

Destinations: Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda

Best Time to Visit: December – February

Trip Theme: Birds, Mammals, Primates, Culture, Scenic Landscapes & Wildebeest Migration

Expert Guides: Highly experienced local birding and safari guides, including trained female birders

Accommodation: Comfortable mid-range lodges and tented camps

Overview

East Africa is a sanctuary for birding enthusiasts, wildlife photographers, and nature lovers. This 37-day expedition is a deep dive into the heart of Africa's most breathtaking landscapes — from the sweeping Serengeti plains to the misty forests of Uganda's Albertine Rift. Encounter over 1,000 bird species, marvel at the legendary Wildebeest Migration, track mountain gorillas and chimpanzees, and engage with the diverse cultures of East Africa.

With expert guides and carefully chosen accommodations, you'll enjoy unrivaled opportunities to explore diverse habitats such as acacia savannahs, montane forests, highland plateaus, and endemic-rich wetlands.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Arusha – Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO)

Arrive at Kilimanjaro International Airport where our ground team will warmly welcome and transfer you to your lodge in Arusha. Depending on your flight arrival time, you may meet your expert bird guide for a trip briefing.

Meals: Bed & Breakfast

Accommodation: Comfortable mid-range lodge in Arusha

Days 2–3: Central Serengeti & Olduvai Gorge

Embark on a scenic drive to the Central Serengeti, passing through the historic Olduvai Gorge, known as the Cradle of Mankind. Over two days, explore vast grasslands and Acacia

woodlands teeming with birdlife and big game.

Highlights:

- Wildebeest, zebra, and antelope migration
- Bird species: Karamoja Apalis, Grey-crested Helmet-shrike, Red-billed Hornbill, Coqui Francolin

Accommodation: Mid-range tented camp in Central Serengeti

Days 4–5: Ndutu Region during Calving Season

Venture into the southeastern Serengeti and Ndutu woodlands, a prime location during calving season. Witness predators in action and enjoy phenomenal birding opportunities.

Birding Targets: Ostriches, Secretary Birds, Bee-eaters, Fischer’s Sparrow-Larks, endemic species

Accommodation: Ndutu Safari Lodge

Day 6: Ngorongoro Crater Floor Safari

Descend into the breathtaking Ngorongoro Crater – a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Search for the ‘Big Five’ and bird species such as flamingos, raptors, and Variable Sunbird.

Accommodation: Lodge in Karatu Village

Day 7: Ngorongoro Highlands Bird Walk – Transfer to Tarangire

Explore the Endoro forest trail for sightings of the African Broadbill, Sunbirds, and Warblers. After lunch, transfer to Tarangire National Park.

Accommodation: Mid-range lodge near Tarangire

Day 8: Tarangire National Park – Baobab Country

Discover Tanzania’s third-largest ecosystem. Observe elephants, giraffes, and hundreds of bird species.

Bird Highlights: Ashy Starling, Yellow-collared Lovebird, African Scops Owl, Nightjars

Optional: Night game drive available

Accommodation: Tarangire Safari Lodge or similar

Day 9: Final Game Drive – Return to Arusha

Enjoy a morning game drive and birding session before returning to Arusha for an overnight stay.

Target Birds: African Red-bellied Parrots, Mountain Gray Woodpecker

Accommodation: Arusha mid-range lodge

Day 10: Cross Border – Transfer to Amboseli National Park, Kenya

Depart Arusha early and cross into Kenya via Namanga. Arrive in Amboseli National Park beneath the towering Mount Kilimanjaro.

Birding En Route: White-fronted Bee-eater

Accommodation: Lodge in Amboseli National Park

Day 11: Amboseli National Park – Kilimanjaro Views

Spend the day exploring Amboseli's open plains and swamps. Renowned for its elephant herds and exceptional birdlife.

Birding Focus: Buff-crested Bustard, Pink-breasted Lark, Hartlaub's Bustard, waders, storks

Accommodation: Amboseli Safari Lodge

Day 12: Transfer to Mt. Kenya Forest Region

After breakfast, head north to the forested slopes of Mount Kenya. Enjoy a peaceful evening with chances to hear the Montane Nightjar.

Accommodation: Lodge nestled in Mt. Kenya forest

Day 13: Mt. Kenya Highlands Exploration

Search the forest canopy and clearings for Red-fronted Parrot, Crowned Eagle, Narina Trogon, and Colobus Monkeys.

Accommodation: Same Mt. Kenya lodge

Day 14: Transfer to Shaba National Reserve

Travel through diverse ecosystems towards the arid landscapes of Shaba, spotting Widowbirds and other grassland species en route.

Accommodation: Riverside lodge in Shaba

Days 15–16: Shaba & Buffalo Springs Reserves

Immerse yourself in the unique dryland habitats of northern Kenya. These reserves are known for their endemics and striking landscapes.

Target Species: Somali Ostrich, Vulturine Guineafowl, Shining Sunbird, Palm-nut Vulture

Accommodation: Same lodge in Shaba

Day 17: Birding Through Samburu National Reserve and Transfer to Lake Baringo

This morning, we'll depart early from Shaba and head southwards toward the spectacular freshwater body of **Lake Baringo**, an ornithological paradise. Along the way, enjoy birding stops to search for dryland species, such as the **Vulturine Guineafowl**, **White-headed Buffalo-Weaver**, **Golden-breasted Starling**, and **Donaldson-Smith's Sparrow-Weaver**.

Upon arrival at Lake Baringo, the late afternoon offers an optional boat ride to observe **African Fish Eagles**, **Goliath Herons**, and **Crowned Lapwings** along the shoreline. The lake's surroundings also host **Heuglin's Courser**, **Spotted Thick-knee**, and **Three-banded Courser**. Overnight stay near Lake Baringo.

Day 18: Full Day Birding and Cultural Exploration at Lake Baringo

Lake Baringo provides excellent birdwatching opportunities across its varied habitats—riparian woodlands, cliffs, and acacia scrub. Early morning birding may reveal **Jackson's Hornbill**, **Northern Red Bishop**, and **Bristle-crowned Starling**.

We'll also visit local Njemps communities to learn about their traditional fishing and cultural heritage. Later, explore the cliffs above the lake, where **Verreaux's Eagle**, **Mocking Cliff-Chat**, and **Hemprich's Hornbill** may be sighted. Night at Lake Baringo.

Day 19: Transfer to Lake Bogoria for Flamingo Spectacle and Geysers

Today, we head to **Lake Bogoria**, famous for its geothermal activity and massive flocks of **Lesser Flamingos**. As we walk near the hot springs and steaming geysers, we may spot **Little Grebes**, **Black-necked Grebes**, and **Avocets**.

The acacia-dotted plains around the lake support **White-crested Turaco**, **Bare-faced Go-away-bird**, and **Hunter's Sunbird**. After an immersive experience, we return to Lake Baringo for overnight rest.

Day 20: Drive to Kakamega Forest – Kenya's Only Tropical Rainforest

Following breakfast, we journey westward to **Kakamega Forest**, a remnant of the Congolese rainforest and a hotspot for forest-dependent species rarely seen elsewhere in East Africa.

Evening birding may yield **Great Blue Turaco**, **Ross's Turaco**, **Grey Parrot**, and **Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill**. Overnight near Kakamega Forest.

Day 21: Full Day Birding in Kakamega Forest

Spend the entire day exploring Kakamega's trails, home to over 360 bird species. Targets include **Blue-headed Bee-eater**, **Purple-throated Cuckooshrike**, **African Blue Flycatcher**, **Yellow-spotted Barbet**, and the elusive **Turner's Eremomela**.

Butterfly and primate diversity is equally rich, with sightings of **Red-tailed Monkeys** and **Colobus Monkeys** likely. Overnight at Kakamega.

Day 22: Cross Into Uganda – Transfer to Mabira Forest

We cross the border into Uganda and continue to **Mabira Forest**, a central Ugandan rainforest reserve. This forest is home to Uganda's endemic **Forest Francolin** and supports a good variety of birds, butterflies, and primates.

Late afternoon birding may produce **Nahan's Francolin**, **Tit Hylia**, **African Shrike Flycatcher**, and **Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo**. Overnight near Mabira Forest.

Day 23: Birding Mabira and Transfer to Entebbe

After an early bird walk through Mabira, depart for **Entebbe** on the shores of Lake Victoria. We may explore the **Entebbe Botanical Gardens**, where **Black-headed Gonolek**, **Great Blue Turaco**, and **Palm-nut Vulture** are often seen.

Optional sunset boat trip on **Lake Victoria** for **Papyrus Gonolek** and **Carruthers's Cisticola**. Overnight in Entebbe.

Day 24: Fly to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest – Ruhija Sector

Today, take a domestic flight to **Bwindi Impenetrable Forest**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and stronghold of the endangered **Mountain Gorilla**. We transfer to the **Ruhija sector**, known for its high-elevation birding and rare species.

Evening birding may offer glimpses of **Regal Sunbird**, **Ruwenzori Batis**, **Stripe-breasted Tit**, and **Dusky Twinspot**. Overnight in Ruhija.

Day 25: Birding Ruhija and Gorilla Trekking Option

Optional **Mountain Gorilla trekking** (permit required) for an unforgettable wildlife experience. Non-trekkers will enjoy a full day of birding, targeting **African Green Broadbill**, **Grauer's Rush Warbler**, and **Shelley's Crimsonwing**.

Evening birding walk around the forest edge may produce **Bar-tailed Trogon**, **Lagden's Bushshrike**, and **Black Bee-eater**. Overnight in Ruhija.

Day 26: Transfer to Buhoma Sector with En Route Birding

We'll bird our way through **The Neck**, a rich corridor connecting Ruhija to **Buhoma**. Species along this stretch include **Black-faced Rufous Warbler**, **Western Bronze-naped Pigeon**, **Grey-throated Barbet**, and **Many-colored Bushshrike**.

Late afternoon walk around Buhoma community trails. Overnight in Buhoma.

Day 27: Full Day Birding in Buhoma Forest Trails

Buhoma's lower altitude forest offers different species from Ruhija. We target **African Wood Owl**, **White-tailed Ant Thrush**, **Red-throated Alethe**, **Kivu Ground Thrush**, and **Cassin's Hawk-Eagle**.

Evening spotlighting may reveal **Bat Hawk**, **African Wood Owl**, or even **Montane Nightjar**. Overnight in Buhoma.

Day 28: Transfer to Queen Elizabeth National Park – Ishasha Sector

Today we travel north to **Queen Elizabeth National Park**, passing through the **Ishasha sector**, known for its **tree-climbing lions** and open savannahs.

Birding highlights include **Black-bellied Bustard**, **Flappet Lark**, **Brown Snake Eagle**, and **White-winged Widowbird**. Overnight in Ishasha.

Day 29: Game Drives and Birding in Ishasha

Morning and afternoon game drives to spot **tree-climbing lions**, **African Elephants**, and large herds of **Uganda Kob**. Birding targets include **Ross's Turaco**, **Yellow-throated Longclaw**, and **Broad-billed Roller**.

Optional sundowner game drive. Overnight in Ishasha.

Day 30: Drive to Mweya Peninsula – Kazinga Channel Boat Safari

We move to the **Mweya Peninsula** and enjoy a **boat safari on Kazinga Channel**, famed for its dense populations of **Hippos**, **Nile Crocodiles**, and waterbirds.

Birds to expect include **African Skimmers**, **Water Thick-knee**, **Goliath Heron**, and **African Spoonbill**. Overnight in Mweya.

Day 31: Full Day Game Drive in Queen Elizabeth NP – Northern Sector

Explore the **Kasenyi Plains**, targeting **Lion**, **Leopard**, and **Buffalo**. Avian highlights include **Temminck's Courser**, **African Crake**, and **Red-necked Spurfowl**.

Afternoon birding along the crater lakes may produce **Greater Painted-snipe**, **Black Coucal**, and **White-tailed Lark**. Overnight in Mweya.

Day 32: Drive to Kibale Forest National Park

Travel to **Kibale Forest**, home to **13 species of primates** including **Chimpanzees**. En route, bird farmlands and wetlands for **White-headed Saw-wing**, **Fawn-breasted Waxbill**, and **African Hobby**.

Evening forest walk may reveal **African Wood Owl** and **Demidoff's Galago**. Overnight near Kibale.

Day 33: Chimpanzee Tracking and Birding in Kibale Forest

Morning **chimpanzee tracking** (permit required) in the dense forest, with opportunities to also spot **Green-breasted Pitta**, **Afep Pigeon**, and **Red-chested Owlet**.

In the afternoon, explore **Bigodi Wetland Sanctuary**, home to **Papyrus Gonolek**, **Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat**, and **Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher**. Overnight near Kibale.

Day 34: Drive to Murchison Falls National Park via Fort Portal

Early drive to **Murchison Falls NP**, birding along escarpments and wooded grasslands. Targets include **Rufous Sparrow**, **Black Bishop**, **White-crested Helmetshrike**, and **African Firefinch**.

Evening arrival in Murchison Falls. Overnight near the Nile River.

Day 35: Game Drive and Boat Trip to Murchison Falls

Morning game drive on the northern banks of the Nile to search for **Lions**, **Giraffes**, and **Oribi**, with birds like **Abyssinian Ground Hornbill**, **Denham's Bustard**, and **Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver**.

Afternoon boat cruise to the base of **Murchison Falls**, with sightings of **Rock Pratincole**, **Goliath Heron**, and **Red-throated Bee-eater**. Overnight at Murchison.

Day 36: Birding and Drive to Entebbe

After a final morning bird walk in the park, we head back to Entebbe with birding en route. Look out for **White-rumped Swift**, **Grey-headed Kingfisher**, and **Blue-naped Mousebird**.

Evening farewell dinner and overnight in Entebbe.

Day 37: Departure Day – Entebbe International Airport

Depending on your international flight schedule, enjoy a relaxed morning or optional birding walk in Entebbe. Transfer to **Entebbe International Airport** for your flight home, concluding a remarkable 37-day East African ornithological, wildlife, and cultural journey.