

# Fourteen Days Primates, Albertine Endemic and Papyrus-restricted birds Tour in Rwanda

*Period: 30<sup>th</sup> November to December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

**Birding Sites:** *Volcanoes NP, Nyungwe NP, Akagera NP, Gashora Marsh/Bugesera and Nyandungu Urban Wetland Eco-tourism Park*

**Historical sites and Museums:** *Kigali Genocide Memorial, Ethnographic and Rwanda Art Museums*

## TOUR REPORT



Picture 1: Red-faced Barbet (*Lybius rubricacies*)/ Akagera National Park, picture by Claudien

*Tour Guides: Claudien Nsabagasani and Claver Ntoyinkima*

*Driver: Kayitare Alexi and Claudien Nsabagasani*

Email: [info@birdingrwanda.com](mailto:info@birdingrwanda.com), [rwandabirding@gmail.com](mailto:rwandabirding@gmail.com), Tel: +250 788754615

Website: [www.birdingrwanda.com](http://www.birdingrwanda.com)

Known as the land of a thousand hills, Rwanda's stunning scenery and warm, friendly people offer unique experiences in one of the most remarkable countries in the world. It is blessed with extraordinary biodiversity, with incredible wildlife living throughout its volcanoes, montane rainforest, sweeping plains and wetlands. The country is renowned for its Mountain Gorillas in the Volcanoes National Park, but the country is also home to Chimpanzees, Golden Monkey, L'Hoest's Monkey, Black and White Colobus Monkey, Blue-Monkeys, Olive Baboons, a high density of birdlife and unique culture.

Despite being one of the smallest countries in Africa, Rwanda offers arguably the best African Montane Birding anywhere with 710 bird species. Among the resident species are 29 Albertine Rift Endemics and several Lake Victoria Basin Endemics, which should be on any birder's wish list. The prime birdwatching destinations are Nyungwe National Park, the easiest site to see Albertine Rift Endemics, Akagera NP, with a mixed habitat ranging from savanna to wetlands, as well as wetlands in Bugesera, habitat to wetland-dwellers bird species like **Papyrus Gonolek** (*Laniarius mufumbiri*) and **Papyrus Canary** (*Serinus koliensis*).

Our 14 days tour started with few hours of quarantine at hotel in Kigali waiting the results of the test of COVID-19 before we proceeded with tracking Mountain Gorillas and Golden Monkeys in Volcanoes NP. After trekking and short biding around Volcanoes NP, we went to Nyungwe NP to see Chimpanzees and Albertine Rift Endemics and then 2 days in Akagera National Parc. The last 2 days we visited Gashora Marsh, in Bugesera, and the Nyandungu Urban Eco-Tourism Wetland Park. In total 283 bird species were sighted among them 23 endemics to the Albertine Rift and many more unexpected animals like L'Hoesty Monkey, Black and White Colobus Monkeys.

### **30<sup>th</sup> November 2021: Arrival in Kigali**

On arrival in the evening of 30<sup>th</sup>November 2021, with KLM from Amsterdam, the client had a PCR test at Kigali International Airport and were driven at the quarantine's hotel at Gorilla Hotel, where he waited the test's results which come out in the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

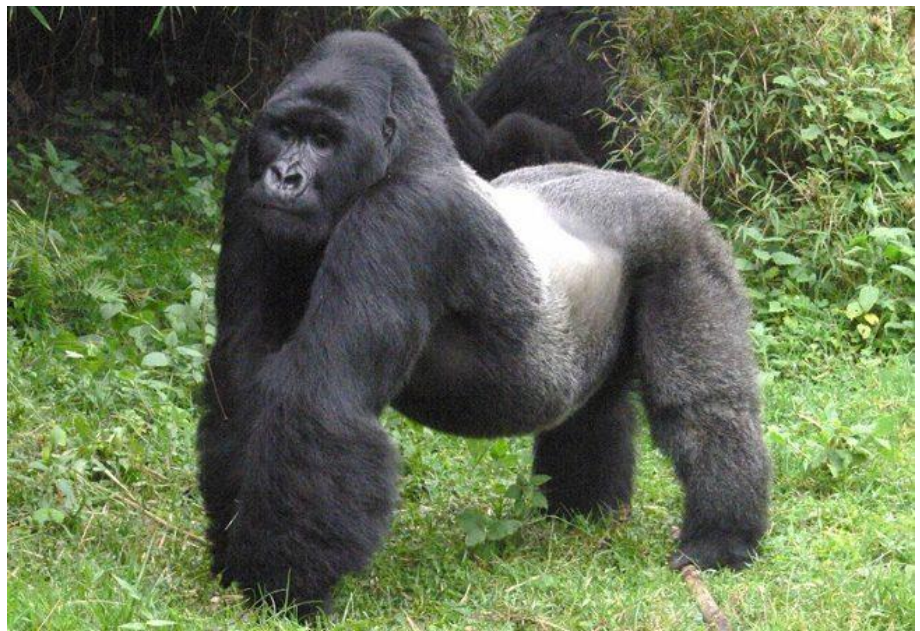
### **1<sup>st</sup> December 2021: Kigali City Tour, Genocide Memorial and Transfer to Musanze**

At 10am, when the results of the test of COVID-19 were available and after an introduction to the 14 days ahead of exploring the nature and birds of Rwanda, we had a short City Tour of Kigali, the cleanest City in Africa and then we drove to Kigali Genocide Memorial. The client learnt the

events leading up to the Tutsi Genocide in 1994 before we had our lunch. After a delicious lunch at Bourbon Coffee in City Center, we drove to Musanze, a Town of Mountain Gorillas and Golden Monkeys. On our Northway to Volcanoes region, we had a brief stop at Mukungwa, a river outing from Ruhondo Lake, where we saw widespread African birds as well as some migrants, such as **Common Sandpiper** (Intra-African migrant). We have seen also **Yellow-billed Duck, Little Swift, Yellow-billed Stork, Hamerkop, African Sacred Ibis, Hadada Ibis, Black Kite (Yellow-billed), Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, African Paradise-Flycatcher, Pied Crow, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Swamp Flycatcher, Bronze Sunbird, Black-headed Weaver, Bronze Mannikin, Cape Wagtail and African Pied Wagtail.**The accommodation was at *DAVINCI Gorilla Lodge*, a medium tourist accommodation around on the foothill of Sabyinyo Volcanoes.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021: Trekking Mountain Gorilla and birding around Volcanoes region**

After the early breakfast, at 6.30am, we drove at headquarters of Volcanoes National to register our document before we start the Gorilla tracking. The unique opportunity to see Mountain Gorillas in their natural habitat is unforgettable, some even say life changing. Encounters with gorillas as they go about their daily lives are carefully managed, with expert trackers and guides leading small groups of tourists up bamboo-covered slopes to spend a precious and awe-inspiring hour just a few feet away from the gentle creatures. There are twelve gorilla families living in the Volcanoes National Park, which are fully habituated, with a few others habituated solely for scientific research. The groups, or troops, consist of at least one silverback along with several females and youngsters.



**Picture 2: Silverback Mountain Gorillas/Volcanoes NP**

After a welcome hot coffee at the park Headquarters' Offices and briefing on Gorilla trekking, the client was allocated to **Hirwa family group**, located on foot of Sabyinyo volcanoes. Hirwa means "***the Lucky One***" in native Kinyarwanda; the group is composed of 13 gorillas made of Silverback, 2 adult females, 2 black-backs, 4 sub adults, 1 juvenile and 3 infants. Tracking went up to midday when we drive to the lodge for lunch.

After few hours of break and lunch, at the lodge, we started our birding at the garden of Davinci Gorilla Lodge, a designed Birders-friendly Accommodation in Volcanoes region, we recorded **Red-eyed Dove, Hadada Ibis, African Harrier-Hawk, Black Kite (Yellow-billed), Speckled Mousebird, Mackinnon's Shrike, Pied Crow, Chubb's Cisticola, Common Bulbul (Dark-capped), White-browed Robin-Chat, Baglafaecht Weaver, Holub's Golden-Weaver, Yellow Bishop, Northern Gray-headed Sparrow and Streaky Seedeater**. We continued our birding in farms surrounding the HQ of Volcanoes NP, 20 minute drive from our lodge. This was a rewarding afternoon with common birds around the mountain areas including **Speckled Pigeon, Dusky Turtle-Dove, Red-eyed Dove, Hadada Ibis, Augur Buzzard, Chinspot Batis, African Paradise-Flycatcher, Mackinnon's Shrike, Northern Fiscal, Pied Crow, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, Stripe-breasted Tit, Chubb's Cisticola, Banded Martin, Angola Swallow, Abyssinian Thrush, African Dusky Flycatcher, White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher, Cape Robin-Chat, White-browed Robin-Chat, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Baglafaecht Weaver, Holub's Golden-Weaver, Yellow Bishop, African Pied Wagtail, African Pipit, Streaky Seedeater**. At 6pm, we head back to the lodge for dinner and accommodation.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021: Tracking Golden Monkey and transfer to Nyungwe National Park**

All activities at Volcanoes NP start at 7am with reporting at the office, a warming tea and coffee were offered as well as a brief introduction to the attraction. As previous day, we reported at the office at 7am; after briefing on tracking of Golden Monkeys we drove the foot hill of Sabyinyo Volcanoes, at Kabatwa Hill, which give the name of this group of Golden Monkeys. The drive was too short; about 15 minutes. The monkeys were easily found in 30 minutes of walk, where they were swinging from the bamboo trees in the forest. Client stayed with monkeys for 1 hour taking pictures, learning the family behaviors and ecology of these endemics' primates to the Albertine Rift, from guides. The trekking ended by 11am when we drove at the lodge for lunch and cleaning the shoes before we started our drive to Nyungwe NP. We had a pleasant drive to



Nyungwe NP via KIVU Belt Road and reached EAR Guest House/ Ken Barham Guest House around 6pm.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> December 2021: Tracking Chimpanzees and birding in Cyamudongo Forest**

On 4th December it was scheduled for trekking Chimpanzees. The journey started at 5.30am from the guest house when we had an early breakfast and then drove to Cyamudongo, a small fragmented forest of only 19km<sup>2</sup> located in one hour drive of Nyungwe NP. A group of Chimpanzees showed up in canopy of trees around 9am and we stayed with this group until 10am. After trekking, we stayed some hours in this small forest to see some of mountain forest and endemic species to the Albertine Rift region including Rwenzori Turaco. We have also seen some specific species of this sites including **Lühder's Bushshrike, Black-billed Turaco, Ross's Turaco, Narina Trogon, Cabanis's Greenbul, Stuhlmann's Starling**, etc. We head back to the guest house for lunch and a brief break before we had an afternoon birding around the lodge; the accommodation and dinner were at EAR/Ken Barham Guest House.

#### **Four consecutive days birding in Nyungwe NP**

Nyungwe National Park is a tropical montane rainforest, in South-Western of Rwanda. The park is home to 322 bird species (29 are endemics to Albertine Rift region) as well as 13 species of primate and numerous endemic plant species. The star attraction is undoubtedly the **Red-collared Mountain Babbler** (*Kupeornis rufocinctus*) and Nyungwe is the only safe place to see this stunning bird. Other specialties include **Handsome Francolin, Rwenzori Nightjar, Grauer's Warbler, Regal, Blue-headed and Purple Breasted Sunbirds, Grauer's Swamp Warbler and Neumann's Warbler**. All of these and more can be seen easily from a well-maintained network of trails with the help of the park's expert bird guides.

#### **5th December 2021: On the first day in Nyungwe National Park**

We focused on finding the Endemics birds to the Albertine Rift. Our morning birding was on **Rangiro road** and we saw 33 species including **Stripe-breasted Tit, Rwenzori and Kungwe Apalises, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Purple-breasted Sunbird, Red-throated Alethe and Dusky Crimsonwing**. Other mountain bird species includes **Black-billed Turaco, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Olive Woodpecker, Gray Cuckoo-shrike, Black-tailed Oriole, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Olive and Collared Sunbirds, Northern Double-collared Sunbird, Archer's Robin**, etc. At midday, we stopped for lunch and a brief break at the lodge before we continue our birding in the afternoon.

At 3pm, we resumed our birding around **Gisakura office**, on the western exit of the park and we have recorded 26 species including endemics to the Albertine Rift like **Blue-headed Sunbird, Red-faced Woodland-Warbler, Regal Sunbird, Neuman's Warbler and Willard's Sooty Boubou**. We have also seen a group of **European Bee-eater** and other stunning birds like **Oriole**

Finch, Green White-eye, Thick-billed Seedeater, Black-billed Turaco, White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher, White-browed Crombec, Siffling Cisticola, etc. Our day ended up at 6pm when we drove back to the Guest House for a dinner and accommodation.

### 6th December 2021: The second day in Nyungwe NP at Bururi trail

After a well appreciated breakfast, we had our birding at Bururi trail. With the help of the park guide, Mr Claver Ntoyinkima, we saw 44 bird species including Tambourine Dove, Blue Malkoha, African Harrier-Hawk, Bar-tailed Trogon, White-headed Woodhoopoe, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, Gray-throated Barbet, Greater Honeyguide, Elliot's Woodpecker, Gray Cuckooshrike, Violet-backed Hyliota, Black-throated Apalis, Black-faced Apalis, Kungwe Apalis, Gray Apalis, Banded Prinia, Black-faced Rufous-Warbler, Slender-billed Greenbul, Waller's Starling, Yellow-eyed Black-Flycatcher, Purple-breasted Sunbird, Forest Weaver, Brown-capped Weaver, Scaly Francolin, etc.



Picture 3: Rwenzori Turaco/Nyungwe NP, picture by Claudien

### 7th December 2021: Birding at Bigugu trail to try the Red-collared Mountain Babbler

After the breakfast, we drove to Bigugu, a trail heading to the highest point of the park, and the target was to see the **Red-collared Mountain-Babbler** that we have finally well seen along this hike. The slope was not very easy but was rewarding with a number of attractive bird species including Albertine Boubou, Handsome Francolin, Rwenzori Turaco, Long-crested Eagle, Rwenzori Batis, Northern Puffback, Doherty's Bushshrike, Rwenzori Apalis, Black-faced Apalis, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Chubb's Cisticola, Mountain Yellow-Warbler, Cinnamon Bracken-Warbler, Yellow-whiskered Greenbul, Rwenzori Hill Babbler, Archer's Robin-

**Chat, White-starred Robin, Red-throated Alethe, Stuhlmann's Sunbird.** After an interesting morning hiking and sighting of these stunning birds, we drove at the lodge for lunch.

After our lunch at the lodge, we headed at **Rangiro road** and the target was the **Dwarf Honeyguide** that we have easily seen in few minutes. We saw also new endemics on this tour like **Stripe-breasted Tit** as well as other species seen before among others **Rwenzori Turaco, Black-tailed Oriole, Black-faced Apalis, Albertine Boubou, Archer's Robin-Chat, White-starred Robin,** etc. We stayed at Rangiro road until 5.30pm then we drove to the Guest House for dinner and accommodation.

### **8th December 2021: Our last day in Nyungwe NP**

It was unfortunate that our birding in paradise bird jungle comes to an end; we went to Waterfall trail, where you can really see how Nyungwe NP is an indigenous forest. As you take a different direction in Nyungwe, you can't miss new birds and more attractive species! At this trail we have seen new birds among others **Pink-footed Puffback, Shelley's Greenbul (Kakamega)** and **Equatorial Akalat**, etc. We have also seen the species that we have seen before including **African Green-Pigeon, White-breasted Nigrita, Black-billed Turaco, Hadada Ibis, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Elliot's Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye (Heard only), Pink-footed Puffback, Lühder's Bushshrike (Heard only), African Paradise-Flycatcher, White-browed Crombec, Black-faced Apalis, Kungwe Apalis, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Gray Apalis, Banded Prinia, Black-faced Rufous-Warbler, Siffling Cisticola, Black Sawwing, Shelley's Greenbul (Kakamega), Eastern Mountain Greenbul, Red-faced Woodland-Warbler, Mountain Illadopsis, Abyssinian Ground-Thrush (Kivu), Abyssinian Thrush, African Dusky Flycatcher, White-bellied Robin-Chat, Red-throated Alethe, Equatorial Akalat, African Stonechat, Collared Sunbird, Blue-headed Sunbird, Bronze Sunbird, Variable Sunbird, Black-billed Weaver, Black-crowned Waxbill, Common Waxbill, Pin-tailed Whydah, Yellow-fronted Canary, Streaky Seedeater.** Our birding in Nyungwe was closed at lunch time and it was a time when we separated with our park guide, Mr Claver and we continued our way to Huye Town with dinner and accommodation at Gallileo Hotel.

### 9th December 2021: Coffee processing Experience and Ethnographic Museum

We had a day stop in Huye to experience the coffee processing from plantation to the final product in the cup. Our guide Eric at Maraba Coffee Wahing Station was knowledgeable on history of coffee, different types grown in the area/region, the main diseases affecting the good production, etc. We ended our tour by testing the locally roasted coffee before we proceeded to the Ethnographic Museum.

The Ethnographic Museum, formerly the National Museum of Rwanda, is one of the six museums that make up the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda. It is located in Butare/Huye Town and opened in 1989. At this museum, we have visited the seven galleries which display historical, ethnographic, artistic and archaeological artefacts accompanied by visual aids, giving visitors a rich insight into the Rwandan culture. After lunch in Huye, we drove straight to Akagera Rhino Lodge, an accommodation around Akagera NP, with a stunning view of lakes of the park.

### 10th December 2021: Birding and animal viewing in Akagera NP

Our birding in savannah region started at Akagera Rhino Lodge and our morning was blessed by an introduction of savannah birds. On our breakfast we have seen **Red-necked Francolin, Ring-necked Dove, Laughing Dove, Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove, Speckled Mousebird, Spot-flanked Barbet, Tropical Boubou, Flappet Lark, Red-faced Crombec, Green-backed Camaroptera, Trilling Cisticola, Yellow-throated Greenbul, Common Bulbul (Dark-capped), Willow Warbler (Palearctic migrant), Mountain Illadopsis, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Familiar Chat, Collared Sunbird, Red-headed Weaver, Holub's Golden-Weaver, Village Weaver, Red-cheeked Cordonbleu, Red-billed Firefinch, Northern Gray-headed Sparrow and Yellow-fronted Canary**. We continued our birding in Akagera NP and on our way to the park we have seen **Ruhuaha and Sooty Chat, Lilac-breasted Roller, Laughing Dove, Greater Blue-eared Starling**, etc.

After checking our negative results of COVID test on the southern gate of Akagera NP, we were welcomed by herd of **Buffaloes** and many birds. As we were heading to the park reception, we recorded common savannah birds among others **Spur-winged Goose, Red-eyed Dove, Ring-necked Dove, Laughing Dove, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, White-browed Coucal and Klaas's Cuckoo, Gray Crowned-Crane, Collared Pratincole, Hamerkop, Cattle Egret, Rufous-bellied Heron, Hadada Ibis**, etc. After registration at the park reception, we continued our birding and animal viewing at the Giraffe plain, a valley with not only some ground and raptors birds but



also a flat area with fresh grass which attract angulates and other big mammals. We have recorded **Red-chested Cuckoo, Black-winged Kite, Bateleur, Brown Snake-Eagle, Long-crested Eagle, African Fish-Eagle.** After playing a call-back of **Pearl-spotted Owlet, Brubru and Slate Colored Cuckoo** which replied easily, we continued our way to the plain and we have seen **Speckled and Blue-napped Mousebirds, Green Woodhoopoe, Common Scimitarbill, Crowned Hornbill, African Gray Hornbill, Malachite, Striped and Woodland Kingfishers,** the migrants **European Bee-eater Barn Swallow and Willow Warbler, Spot-flanked Barbet, Lesser Honeyguide, Meyer's Parrot, African Black-headed Oriole, Gray-backed Fiscal, Red-faced Crombec, Green-backed Camaroptera, Gray-capped Warbler, Trilling and Winding Cisticolas, Banded Martin, Lesser Striped Swallow, Rüppell's Starling, Sooty Chat, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Red-cheeked Cordonbleu, Red-billed Firefinch, Pin-tailed Whydah and Lilac-breasted Roller.**



Picture 4: Lilac-breasted Roller/Akagera NP by Claudien

At the plain, additional to stunning species of birds, we have seen different animals including **Masai Giraffe, Zebra, Topiand Impalas.** We have seen again a herd of Buffaloes with **Yellow-billed Oxpecker** which were cleaning and taking ticks on the back of Buffaloes.

We continued birding along the fence toward the hill side of the park and we have recorded different birds from both birds of community farms and Interior Park. We have seen the grassland and dryland birds including **Harlequin Quail, Red-necked Francolin, Helmeted Guineafowl.** As we continued driving, we recorded **Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Greencap Eremomela, Miombo Wren-Warbler, Croaking and Tabora (long-tailed) Cisticolas, Spotted and Pale**

**Flycatchers, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting**, etc. At midday, we drove at Akagera Game Lodge for lunch and a brief break before we head to Ihema Lake for a sunset boat.

We resumed our birding at 3pm and we drove to Lake Ihema where we were welcomed by Mr Emmanuel Nkuranga, a boat captain at Akagera NP. On the boat, we toured Lake Ihema, mainly along the edge of the lake and around Nyirabiyoro Island, a roosting and breeding site for waterbirds. We have recorded flocks of waterbirds including thousands of **White-faced Whistling-Duck**, hundreds of **Spur-winged Goose**, **Eurasian Moorhen**, **Black Crake**, **Common Sandpipers**, **African Darter**, **Long-tailed and Great Cormorant**, **Black-headed, Purple and Goliath Herons** and **Black-crowned Night-Heron** with many chicks. We have recorded a small population of **Temminck's Stint**, **Glossy Ibis**, **African Spoonbill** and the migrant **Marsh Sandpiper**. On the shore of the lake, we have also seen **Little and Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters**, **White-chinned Prinia**, **Swamp Flycatcher**, **Pin-tailed Whydah**, etc. Along the lake, we have also encountered float of *Hippopotamus and Nile Crocodile* and inland animals coming for watering or grazing along the lake like *Elephants and Warthogs*. After the sunset boat, we drove at Akagera Game Lodge for dinner and accommodation.



Picture 5: Spur-winged Goose/Akagera NP

## 11th December 2021: Last day in Akagera NP and driving to Kigali

After the early breakfast, we started our birding in garden of Akagera Game Lodge to try the **Red-faced Barbet**. The rare barbet showed up easily feeding on the fig tree near the parking along with **Spot-flanked Barbet**. After staying some minutes with the Barbets, we had a half day birding and we combined both hillside and lake circuits to maximise the chances of missed birds on the previous day. It was a good end of our birding in a savannah area as we have recorded 64 species including the new species of this tour like **White Helmetshrike, Chinspot Batis, Flappet Lark, Cardinal Quelea and White-winged Widowbird**. On Hillside, we have encountered a good number of **Red-necked Francolin, Ring-necked and Laughing Doves, Crested Barbet, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Speckled and Blue-naped Mousebirds and Bronze Mannikin** and a flock of the migrant **European Bee-eater**. **African Fish-Eagle, Little Bee-eater, Siffling Cisticola, Willow Warbler, Green White-eye, African Thrush, Plain-backed Pipit, Golden-breasted Bunting, Black-winged Kite, Arrow-marked and Black-lored Babblers, Sooty and Ruaha Chats**, etc.

Around 10am, we diverted our hills side to lake circuit and we have sighted the **Double-toothed Barbet** and **African Green-Pigeon** in fig trees along Lake Birengero. On the shore of this lake we have also sighted **Black Crake, Spur-winged Lapwing, Common Sandpiper, Marsh Sandpiper, African Openbill, Squacco Heron, Woodland Kingfisher and Egyptian Goose, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater**, etc.

When we were driving back to the reception, we were told by one of the guides that there are lions at Giraffe Valley/plain and we immediately drove at this site to see these lions. Luckily, we have stayed more than 30 minutes with 3 lions in this valley before we drove back to Kigali. On the way, we had stop at Imigongo Center in Kayonza Town for a brief break and lunch. We reached Kigali around 5pm and our accommodation and dinner were at Gorilla Hotel.



Picture 6: Lion/Akagera National Parc



## 12th December 2021: Birding at Gashora Wetland in Bugesera

On this day, we went to Gashora Wetland in Bugesera and the target was papyrus-dwellers birds. After an hour drive from Kigali via Nyamata town, we reached the wetland around 8.30. The wetlands is fragmented in two sides separated by a dusty road, one side with the native papyrus and the other side transformed into rice farms. We were welcomed by flocks of Fulvous and White-faced Whistling-Ducks which were flying over the wetlands while other groups wereresting in blocs of rice farms. After some minutes of searching in vain, we tried a voice call and a couple of **Papyrus Gonolek** showed. The couple stayed some minutes searching if there is a rival in their territory and we had time to see them very well and taking pictures.



Picture 7: Papyrus Gonolek/Gashora-Bugesera, picture by Claudien

Along the rice farms, there are some ponds of water where we have seen waterbirds like **Spur-winged Goose, Blue-billed Teal, Yellow-billed Duck, African Swamphen, Black-winged Stilt, Long-toed and Spur-winged Lapwings, Three-banded Plover, African Jacana, Marsh Sandpiper, Hamerkop, Gray Heron, Purple Heron, Great, Intermediate, Cattle and Little Egrets, African Sacred Ibis, Black-headed and Squacco Herons, Black Crake. Kingfishers** were also around fishing in ponds and these include **Malachite, Woodland, Giant and Pied Kingfishers**. Different species of **Cisticolas** including **Winding, Trilling and Carruthers's** were also sighted. A flock of the migrant **European Bee-eater, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** as well as the **Barn Swallow** were also recorded. Other species recorded include **Red-eyed Dove, Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove, Blue-headed Coucal, Diederick Cuckoo, African Marsh Harrier, Black Kite (Yellow-billed), Gray-capped Warbler, Banded Martin, Wire-tailed Swallow, Common Bulbul (Dark-capped), Swamp Flycatcher, Red-chested Sunbird, Black-necked Weaver, Holub's Golden-Weaver, Village Weaver, Red-billed Quelea, White-winged Widowbird, Fan-tailed Widowbird, Fawn-breasted Waxbill, Common Waxbill and Northern Gray-headed Sparrow**. We tried other papyrus-dwellers like *Papyrus Canary* and *Papyrus Yellow Warbler* but we didn't find. When we walked back to the car, we were surprised by a couple of Blue Monkeys which were moving out the papyrus.

At 11am, we went to Kamatana, an artificial dam near Nyamata Town. The dam has small pond of water surrounded by farms of rice. At the dam we have recorded 29 species and many of them



were water birds like **White-faced Whistling-Duck, Spur-winged Goose, Eurasian Moorhen, Red-knobbed Coot, Long-toed and Wattled Lapwings, African Jacana, African Openbill, etc.** We have also seen **Cattle Egret, Red-eyed Dove, Little, White-rumped and African Palm-Swift, Black Kite (Yellow-billed), Malachite and Pied Kingfishers, Black-headed Gonolek, Gray-backed Fiscal, Pied Crow, Winding Cisticola, Angola, Wire-tailed and Red-rumped and Lesser Striped Swallows, Arrow-marked Babbler, Bronze Sunbird, Red-chested Sunbird, Fan-tailed Widowbird and African Pipit.** We drive back to Kigali around 2pm and after lunch we had a Covid test at Kigali Conference and Exhibition Village (KCEV) commonly known as Camp Kigali. After testing we visited the Belgian Peacekeeping Memorial closer to the testing centre.

### **13th December 2021 last day birding**

This day was our last day birding on this round and we headed to Nyandungu Urban Wetland Eco-tourism Park located in few kilometres towards east of Kigali City. This eco-park is formally degraded wetland and currently transformed into recreational eco-park composed by ornamental ponds, eastern gallery forests, medicinal plant gardens, paved walk ways, etc. and it has restaurants, information center and other recreational services. At the site, we recorded a total of 58 bird species including the new species on this tour like **Greater Swamp Warbler, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Cardinal Woodpecker, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Black-and-white Mannikin and Copper Sunbird.** We visited the 2 small ponds found at this site and we have easily seen **Yellow-billed Duck, Black Crake, Wattled Lapwing, African Openbill, Long-tailed Cormorant, Black-headed Heron, Intermediate Egret, Cattle Egret, African Sacred Ibis, Hadada Ibis** and many Pied Kingfisher and Malachite Kingfisher busy fishing.

We had a round walk along the trails well paved with locally made paves and stones. The trails are surrounded by sampling of native trees mixed with exotic plants and swamp vegetations. We have recorded a big population of **Little Bee-eater (with many juveniles), Speckled Mousebird, Red-eyed Dove, Blue-headed Coucal, Trilling and Winding Cisticolas, Wire-tailed, Red-rumped and Lesser Striped Swallows, African Palm-Swift, etc.** Raptors recorded at this site I clude among others **Palm-nut Vulture, Wahlberg's Eagle, Black Kite (Yellow-billed) and Augur Buzzard.**

After a short break coffee at Bourbon Coffee inside the eco-park, we continued our birding and we have seen **Black-headed Gonolek, Gray-backed Fiscal, Green-backed Camaroptera, Banded Martin, Common Bulbul (Dark-capped), the migrant Willow Warbler, Black-lored Babbler, African Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, White-browed Robin-Chat, African Stonechat, Scarlet-chested, Bronze, Red-chested and Variable Sunbirds, Slender-billed, Holub's Golden-Weaver and Village Weavers, Red-billed Quelea, Southern Red Bishop, Fan-tailed Widowbird, Common Waxbill, Green-winged Pytilia, Pin-tailed Whydah, Yellow-fronted Canary and Western Citril.** At 12pm, we drove at the Heaven Hotel, where the client spent the final night. In the green garden of the hotel an **African Hobby** was hanging on a top of a dead tree.



Picture 8: Little bee-eater/ Nyandungu Urban Wetland Eco-tourism Park, Picture by Claudien

#### **14th December 2021: Rwanda Art Museum**

On our last day of the tour, we visited the Rwanda Art Museum, located in 4 kilometers from Kigali International Airport. This former Presidential Palace Museum changed into Rwanda Art Museum effective from 18th May 2018. At this museum, we have seen the displays contemporary artworks produced by both Rwandan and international artists and we have witnessed the originality of Rwandan creativity, arts development from centuries up-to-date, whilst not overlooking traditional or modern imaginations. We visited also the flight debris from the FALCON 50's presidential jet that went down on 6th April 1994. After a refresher coffee on the exit of the Art Museum, we drove our client to the airport to capture with the evening flight“Turkish airlines” to Los Angeles via Istambourg.

Briefly, the 14 days tour was very successful more than expected. We have recorded 272 bird species including 25 Albertine Rift Endemics out of 29 in Nyungwe NP, we only missed Kivu Ground Thrush (that we heard), Rwenzori nightjar and other hard species which generally need a confirmation namely Rokefeller's Sunbird, Shelley's Crimsonwing.

## List of sighted birds by site

No	Common Name	Endemism	Mukungwa River	Davinci Gorilla Lodge	Volcanoes NP HQ	Cyamudongo Forest	Nyungwe NP	Akagera Rhino Lodge	Akagera NP	Gashora Marsh	Kamatana Valley	Nynadungu Eco-tourism Park
1	Abyssinian Ground-Thrush (Kivu)	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
2	Abyssinian Thrush				X		X					
3	Africa-Harrier-Hawk											
4	African Black-headed Oriole								X			
5	African Darter								X			
6	African Dusky Flycatcher				X	X	X					
7	African Fish-Eagle								X			
8	African Gray Hornbill								X			
9	African Green-Pigeon					X	X		X			
10	African Harrier-Hawk			X			X					
11	African Jacana									X	X	
12	African Marsh-Harrier									X		
13	African Openbill								X		X	X
14	African Palm-Swift										X	X

15	African Paradise-Flycatcher		X		X	X	X		X		
16	African Pied Wagtail		X		X						
17	African Pipit				X				X		X
18	African Sacred Ibis		X							X	X
19	African Spoonbill										
20	African Stonechat						X				X
21	African Swamphen								X		
22	African Thrush								X		X
23	Albertine Boubou	Albertine Rift Endemic					X				
24	Angola Swallow				X						X
25	Archer's Robin-Chat	Albertine Rift Endemic					X				
26	Arrow-marked Babbler								X		X
27	Augur Buzzard				X						X
28	Baglafaecht Weaver			X	X						
29	Banded Martin				X				X	X	X
30	Banded Prinia (Black-faced)						X				
31	Bare-faced Go-away-bird								X		
32	Barn Swallow		X						X	X	



33	Bar-tailed Trogon						X					
34	Bateleur								X			
35	Black Crake								X	X		X
36	Black Kite (Yellow-billed)		X	X						X	X	X
37	Black Sawwing						X					
38	Black-and-white Mannikin											X
39	Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill					X						
40	Black-billed Turaco					X	X					
41	Black-billed Weaver					X						
42	Black-crowned Night-Heron								X			
43	Black-crowned Waxbill						X					
44	Black-faced Apalis	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
45	Black-faced Rufous-Warbler						X					
46	Black-headed Gonolek								X		X	X
47	Black-headed Heron								X	X		X
48	Black-headed Weaver		X									
49	Black-lored Babbler								X			X
50	Black-necked Weaver									X		

51	Black-tailed Oriole					X	X					
52	Black-throated Apalis						X					
53	Black-winged Kite								X			
54	Black-winged Stilt								X	X		
55	Blue Malkoha						X					
56	Blue-billed Teal									X		
57	Blue-cheeked Bee-eater								X	X		
58	Blue-headed Coucal									X		X
59	Blue-headed Sunbird	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
60	Blue-naped Mousebird								X			
61	Broad-billed Roller								X			
62	Bronze Mannikin		X						X			
63	Bronze Sunbird		X				X				X	X
64	Brown Snake-Eagle								X			
65	Brown-capped Weaver						X					
66	Brown-throated Wattle-eye								X			
67	Brubru								X			
68	Cabanis's Greenbul					X	X					
69	Cape Robin-Chat				X							

70	Cape Wagtail		X									
71	Cardinal Quelea								X			
72	Cardinal Woodpecker											X
73	Carruthers's Cisticola									X		
74	Cattle Egret								X	X	X	X
75	Chestnut-throated Apalis						X		X			
76	Chinspot Batis				X							
77	Chubb's Cisticola			X	X		X					
78	Cinnamon Bracken-Warbler						X					
79	Cinnamon-breasted Bunting								X			
80	Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater		X				X					
81	Collared Pratincole								X			
82	Collared Sunbird						X	X				
83	Common Bulbul (Dark-capped)			X			X	X	X	X		X
84	Common Cuckoo								X			
85	Common Sandpiper		X						X			
86	Common Scimitarbill								X			
87	Common Waxbill						X			X		X

88	Copper Sunbird											X
89	Crested Barbet							X				
90	Croaking Cisticola							X				
91	Crowned Hornbill					X		X				
92	Dideric Cuckoo									X		
93	Doherty's Bushshrike						X					
94	Double-toothed Barbet							X				
95	Dusky Crimsonwing	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
96	Dusky Turtle-Dove				X							
97	Dwarf Honeyguide	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
98	Eastern Mountain Greenbul						X					
99	Egyptian Goose							X				
100	Elliot's Woodpecker						X					
101	Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove							X	X	X		
102	Equatorial Akalat						X					
103	Eurasian Moorhen								X		X	
104	European Bee-eater						X		X	X		
105	Familiar Chat							X				



106	Fan-tailed Widowbird									X	X	X
107	Fawn-breasted Waxbill						X			X		
108	Flappet Lark							X	X			
109	Forest Weaver						X					
110	Fulvous Whistling-Duck									X		
111	Giant Kingfisher									X		
112	Glossy Ibis								X			
113	Golden-breasted Bunting						X		X			
114	Goliath Heron								X			
115	Gray Apalis				X		X					
116	Gray Crowned- Crane								X			
117	Gray Cuckooshrike						X					
118	Gray Heron									X		
119	Gray-backed Fiscal								X		X	X
120	Gray-capped Warbler								X	X		
121	Gray-headed Nigrita						X					
122	Gray-throated Barbet				X		X					
123	Great Blue Turaco						X					
124	Great Cormorant								X			
125	Great Egret								X	X		
126	Greater Blue- eared Starling							X	X			

127	Greater Honeyguide						X					
128	Greater Swamp Warbler											X
129	Green White-eye					X	X		X			
130	Green Woodhoopoe								X			
131	Green-backed Camaroptera					X	X	X	X			X
132	Greencap Eremomela								X			
133	Green-winged Pytilia											X
134	Hadada Ibis		X	X	X		X		X			X
135	Hamerkop		X						X	X		
136	Handsome Francolin	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
137	Harlequin Quail								X			
138	Helmeted Guineafowl								X			
139	Holub's Golden-Weaver			X	X			X		X		X
140	Intermediate Egret								X	X		X
141	Klaas's Cuckoo								X			
142	Kungwe Apalis	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
143	Laughing Dove							X	X			
144	Lesser Honeyguide								X			

145	Lesser Striped Swallow								X		X	X
146	Little Bee-eater								X			X
147	Little Egret								X			
148	Little Swift		X								X	
149	Long-crested Eagle						X		X			
150	Long-tailed Cormorant								X			X
151	Long-toed Lapwing									X	X	
152	Lühder's Bushshrike					X	X					
153	Mackinnon's Shrike			X	X							
154	Malachite Kingfisher								X	X	X	X
155	Marabou Stork								X			
156	Mariqua Sunbird								X			
157	Marsh Sandpiper								X	X		
158	Meyer's Parrot								X			
159	Miombo Wren-Warbler								X			
160	Mountain Illadopsis						X	X				
161	Mountain Yellow-Warbler						X					
162	Narina Trogon					X						
163	Neumann's Warbler	Albertine Rift Endemic							X			

164	Northern Double-collared Sunbird						X		X			
165	Northern Fiscal				X				X			
166	Northern Gray-headed Sparrow			X				X	X	X		
167	Northern Puffback						X					
168	Olive Sunbird					X	X					
169	Olive Woodpecker						X					
170	Oriole Finch						X					
171	Pale Flycatcher								X			
172	Palm-nut Vulture											X
173	Papyrus Gonolek									X		
174	Pearl-spotted Owllet								X			
175	Pied Crow		X	X	X						X	
176	Pied Kingfisher								X	X	X	X
177	Pink-footed Puffback						X					
178	Pin-tailed Whydah						X		X			X
179	Plain-backed Pipit								X			
180	Purple Heron								X	X		
181	Purple-breasted Sunbird	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
182	Red-billed Firefinch							X	X			



183	Red-billed Quelea									X		X
184	Red-cheeked Cordonbleu							X	X			
185	Red-chested Cuckoo								X			
186	Red-chested Sunbird						X			X	X	X
187	Red-collared Mountain- Babbler	Albertine Rift Endemic										
188	Red-eyed Dove			X	X				X	X	X	X
189	Red-faced Barbet								X			
190	Red-faced Crimsonwing						X					
191	Red-faced Crombec							X	X			
192	Red-faced Woodland- Warbler	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
193	Red-headed Weaver							X	X			
194	Red-knobbed Coot										X	
195	Red-necked Francolin							X	X			
196	Red-rumped Swallow										X	X
197	Red-throated Alethe	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
198	Regal Sunbird	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					

199	Ring-necked Dove							X	X			
200	Ross's Turaco					X						
201	Ruaha Chat								X			
202	Rufous-bellied Heron								X			
203	Rufous-naped Lark								X			
204	Rüppell's Starling								X			
205	Rwenzori Apalis	Albertine Rift Endemic						X				
206	Rwenzori Batis	Albertine Rift Endemic						X				
207	Rwenzori Hill Babbler	Albertine Rift Endemic						X				
208	Rwenzori Turaco	Albertine Rift Endemic				X		X				
209	Scaly Francolin							X				
210	Scaly-throated Honeyguide									X		
211	Scarlet-chested Sunbird				X					X		X
212	Shelley's Greenbul (Kakamega)							X				
213	Siffling Cisticola							X		X		
214	Slate-colored Boubou									X		
215	Slender-billed Greenbul							X				

216	Slender-billed Weaver											X
217	Sooty Chat							X				
218	Southern Red Bishop											X
219	Speckled Mousebird			X				X	X			X
220	Speckled Pigeon				X							
221	Spot-flanked Barbet							X	X			
222	Spotted Flycatcher								X			X
223	Spur-winged Goose								X	X	X	
224	Spur-winged Lapwing								X	X		
225	Squacco Heron								X	X		
226	Strange Weaver	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
227	Streaky Seedeater			X	X		X					
228	Stripe-breasted Tit	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
229	Striped Kingfisher								X			
230	Stuhlmann's Sunbird					X	X					
231	Swamp Flycatcher		X						X	X		
232	Tabora Cisticola								X			
233	Tambourine Dove						X					

234	Tawny-flanked Prinia											X
235	Temminck's Stint							X				
236	Thick-billed Seedeater					X						
237	Three-banded Plover								X			
238	Trilling Cisticola						X	X				X
239	Tropical Boubou						X	X				
240	Variable Sunbird					X						X
241	Village Weaver						X	X	X			X
242	Violet-backed Hyliota					X						
243	Violet-backed Starling							X				
244	Wahlberg's Eagle											X
245	Waller's Starling					X						
246	Water Thick-knee							X				
247	Wattled Lapwing									X		X
248	Western Citril											X
249	Western Yellow Wagtail							X				
250	White Helmetshrike							X				
251	White-bellied Robin-Chat					X						
252	White-breasted Nigrita					X						

253	White-browed Coucal						X		X			
254	White-browed Crombec						X					
255	White-browed Robin-Chat			X	X				X			X
256	White-chinned Prinia						X		X			
257	White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher		X		X		X					
258	White-faced Whistling-Duck								X	X	X	
259	White-headed Woodhoopoe						X					
260	White-necked Raven						X					
261	White-rumped Swift										X	
262	White-starred Robin						X					
263	White-tailed Blue Flycatcher		X		X		X					
264	White-winged Widowbird								X	X		
265	Willard's Sooty Boubou	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
266	Willow Warbler							X	X			X
267	Winding Cisticola								X	X	X	X
268	Wire-tailed Swallow									X	X	X
269	Woodland Kingfisher								X	X		
270	Yellow Bishop			X	X							

271	Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye -- Heard only						X					
272	Yellow-bellied Waxbill						X					
273	Yellow-billed Duck		X							X		X
274	Yellow-billed Oxpecker								X			
275	Yellow-billed Stork		X									
276	Yellow-breasted Apalis											X
277	Yellow-eyed Black- Flycatcher	Albertine Rift Endemic					X					
278	Yellow-fronted Canary						X	X	X			X
279	Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird					X	X		X			
280	Yellow-streaked Greenbul						X					
281	Yellow-throated Greenbul							X	X			
282	Yellow-throated Longclaw								X			
283	Yellow- whiskered Greenbul					X	X					