



The White-necked Rockfowl is somewhat sadly named as it has both a yellow neck and head! The name is presumably inspired by the dried and colourless corpses to be found in museum collections. Once again, we enjoyed a marvellous and unforgettable encounter with this wonderful bird. (Nik Borrow)

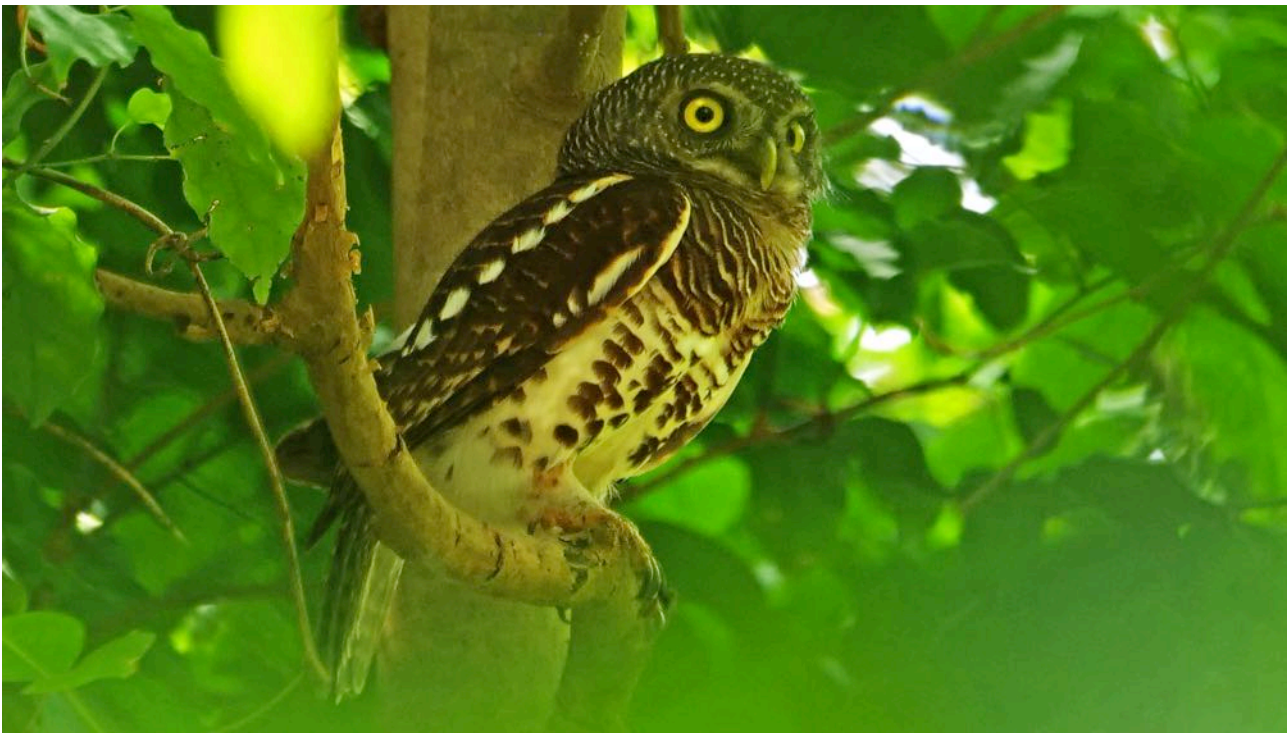
BEST OF GHANA

7 – 21 MARCH 2019

LEADERS: NIK BORROW and JAMES NTAKOR

Ghana, once known as the 'Gold Coast' is situated in the very heart of West Africa and the country's growing tourist industry has much to offer visitors through the country's colourful and vibrant culture, turbulent history and a coast lined with beautiful beaches and numerous slave forts that are still left standing to remind visitors of a grim past. However, the aim of our 'Best of' tour was to discover the cream of Ghana's avian riches and our focus was on an exciting selection of Upper Guinea Forest endemic birds and one very special species in particular; the strange and bizarre White-necked Rockfowl (aka Yellow-headed Picathartes). Our success with this charismatic species was total and absolute with close views of five individuals at close range and this event was surely the highlight of the trip! Our tour started at Shai Hills where, birding in the thickets that

surround the base of the rocky outcrops frequented by White-crowned Cliff Chats and colourful Bearded Barbets, we managed to see the scarce local form of African Barred Owlet sometimes split as Etchécopar's Owlet and in the grasslands flushed a Blue Quail. Sadly, the Winneba Plains have recently been largely destroyed and turned into a solar energy plant but even so we enjoyed views of Moustached Grassbird there. Spending time at Kakum National Park both on its famous canopy walkway and in the surrounding forest and farmbush we were introduced to a mind-boggling array of forest zone species that included Upper Guinea endemics such as Fire-bellied and Melancholy (heard only) Woodpeckers, West African and Red-cheeked Wattle-eyes, Sharpe's Apalis, Buff-throated Sunbird and other mouth-watering species like Congo Serpent Eagle, White-spotted Flufftail, Rosy Bee-eater, Fraser's Eagle-Owl, Long-tailed Nightjar and Puvel's Illadopsis as well as some mammals with Olive Colobus, West African Potto and the wonderful and strange Pel's Anomalure being the highlights. Rock Pratincoles and White-bibbed Swallows showed well on the Pra River and then travelling westwards, stops along the coastal road gave us Allen's Gallinule, Hartlaub's Duck and Mangrove and Reichenbach's Sunbirds. As usual, the superb evergreen forest at Ankasa was hard work and often frustrating but we had many successes with views of the Upper Guinea endemic Yellow-bearded Greenbul, Red-billed Helmetshrike, Finsch's Rufous Thrush, White-tailed Alethe, Rufous-winged Illadopsis and Red-fronted Antpecker as well as rarely seen species such as White-crested Tiger Heron, Dwarf Bittern, Spot-breasted Ibis, Long-tailed Hawk, Akun Eagle-Owl, Red-chested Owlet, Plain Nightjar, Shining-blue and White-bellied Kingfisher with a terrific sighting of a pair of Nkulengu Rail at their roost site. Heading up to the north the visit to Mole National Park was a great experience with close up views of the desirable Forbes's Plover, Greater Painted-snipe, Standard-winged Nightjar, Fox Kestrel, several Sun Larks, Brown-rumped Bunting and a pair of showy White-throated Francolins. A visit to Daboya produced some astounding views of Egyptian Plover before we returned south to visit the butterfly sanctuary at Bobiri where Brown Nightjar and both Black and Red-billed Dwarf Hornbills showed themselves well. Amongst the many other wonderful specialties encountered during this tour were Stone Partridge, Latham's and Ahanta Francolins (heard only), Red-chested Goshawk, Violet Turaco, Black-throated Coucal, Yellow-throated Cuckoo, 'Guinea' Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, Black Spinetail, Blue-bellied Roller, Forest Wood Hoopoe, 'West' African Pied, 'Western' Piping, 'Western' White-crested, Brown-cheeked and Yellow-casqued Hornbills, Bristle-nosed, Hairy-breasted and 'Western' Yellow-billed Barbets, Yellow-footed Honeyguide, African Piculet, Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Senegal Batis, Lowland Sooty Boubou, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Forest Penduline Tit, White-throated Greenbul, Green-tailed (heard only) and Grey-headed Bristlebills, Western Bearded Greenbul, Fanti Saw-wing, West African Swallow, Preuss's Cliff Swallow, Kemp's Longbill, Rufous Cisticola, Oriole Warbler, Violet-backed Hylia, Copper-tailed Starling, Forest Scrub Robin (heard only), White-crowned Robin-Chat, 'Western' and 'Ghana' Forest Robins, White-fronted Black Chat, Pygmy and Reichenbach's Sunbirds, Orange, Heuglin's Masked and Vieillot's 'Chestnut-and-black' Weavers, Red-vented Malimbe, Red-winged Pytilia, Black-faced Firefinch, Magpie Mannikin and Exclamatory Paradise Whydah.



The seldom seen 'Etchécopar's' African Barred Owlet showed well for us at Shai Hills. (Nik Borrow)

As the group arrived in Accra in Ghana the main question on everyone's lips (or at the very least that was in our minds) was "will we see it?" The 'it' in this case referred to the totally bizarre rockfowl but it was going to be some time before the chance of seeing this very special bird would arise. Our arrival was in the evening for an overnight stop and a short night's sleep in an hotel near the airport for we were up early the next day at five for breakfast after which we drove the short distance to the Shai Hills Reserve, an area that comprises open grassland savannah and rocky inselbergs. Our visit was well into the dry season but recent rains meant that the vegetation was quite lush. Before us extended a range of wooded hills that were covered in thick shrubbery and emergent trees where Violet Turacos and shaggy-crested Western Plantain-eaters were feeding and a pair of Blue-headed Coucals was watched calling loudly whilst Senegal Parrots screeched past and our first major target, a dapper pair of White-crowned Cliff Chats perched up on top of the boulders.

Away from the thickets, the piping calls of African Grey Hornbills sounded out over the plains where small numbers of Buffon's Kob were grazing, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbirds hammered away and our first colourful Vieillot's and Bearded Barbets were seen. There were numerous Double-spurred Francolins flushed from the tracks as we made our way around one of the well-vegetated inselbergs that rise up out of the surrounding scrubby plains but we were all very surprised when a small quail-like bird rose up from the side of the bus. The views were brief but it was clearly too dark for a buttonquail and we realised that we had seen a Blue Quail, an excellent 'write-in' for the trip! Further on two Black-bellied Bustards were found and another surprise was a non-breeding plumaged Black Coucal, these sightings a sure sign that the early rain was producing some unexpected results. A Black Scimitarbill was discovered as we drove along the sandy tracks and other species included Helmeted Guineafowl, Lizard Buzzard, Red-necked Buzzard, Senegal Coucal, Piapiac, Pied Crow, Common Bulbul, Croaking and Short-winged Cisticolas, Purple Starling, Yellow-throated Longclaw and Tree Pipit.



The gorgeous Blue-bellied Roller (left) at Shai Hills Reserve and Yellow-billed Shrike at Sakumono (right) (Nik Borrow)

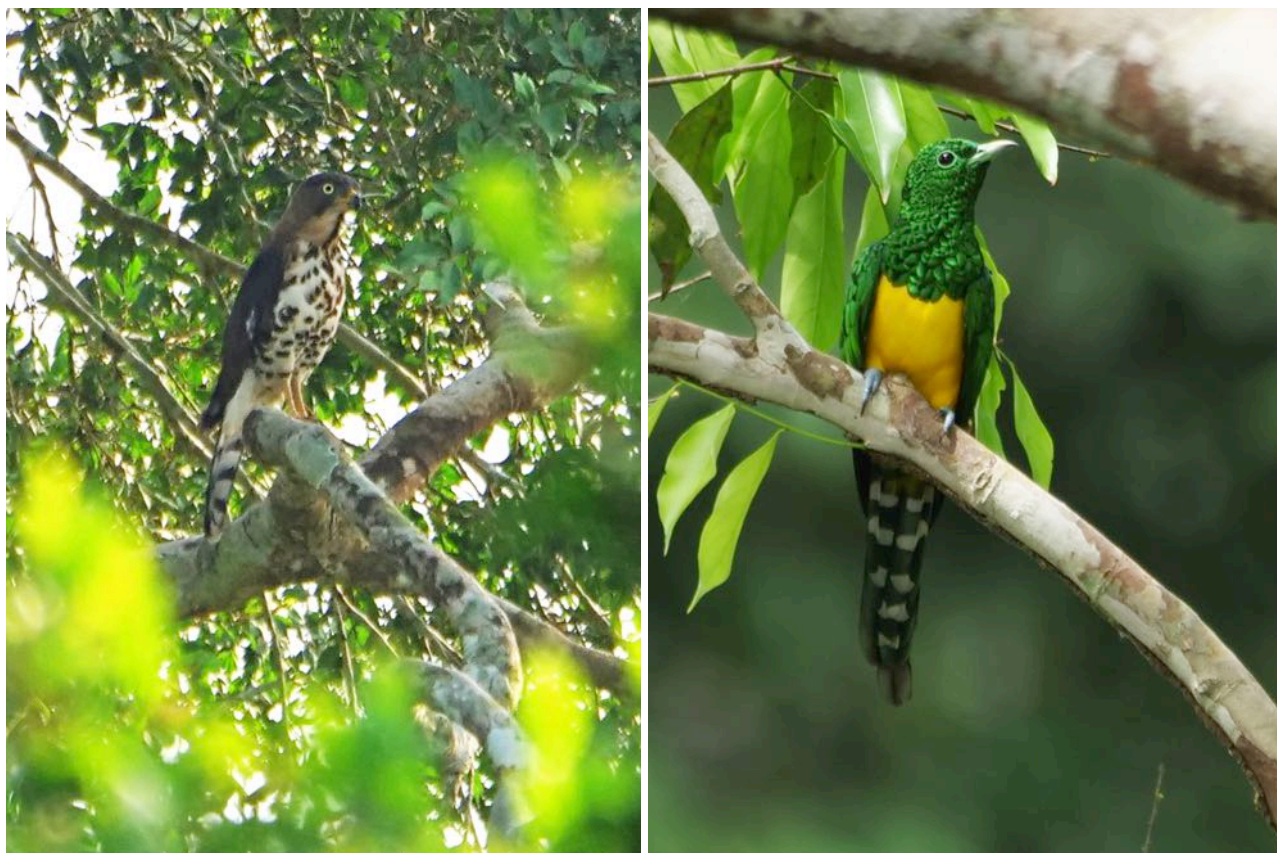
While the morning was still fresh we struggled in the dense scrub to lure into view the local form of African Barred Owlet that is sometimes treated as a separate species; Etchécopar's Owlet. At the first attempt we managed to get a vocal response but the bird soon fell quiet. At another site the elicited response was much more aggressive for the bird started calling persistently and amazingly enough James spotted the singing bird sat quietly in the mid canopy looking quite furious at being disturbed. After this success we looked around for whatever else could be found in our remaining time and were pleased to gain excellent looks at the bizarre Oriole Warbler along with Klaas's Cuckoo, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Grey-backed Camaroptera and Square-tailed Drongo. Back out on the plains, a pair of African Hobby was watched circling over the hills and there were also colourful White-throated Bee-eaters and Blue-bellied Roller along with spectacularly plumed White-crested Helmetshrikes. Other species noted included Green Wood Hoopoe, Black-crowned Tchagra, Northern Puffback, Fork-tailed Drongo, Rock Martin, Senegal Eremomela, African Thrush, Whinchat and Splendid Sunbird.

After lunch we headed back towards Accra where the heavy traffic in and around the capital consumed us and the only birds apparent were a few Yellow-billed Shrikes along the way with numerous Western Cattle Egrets, Laughing Doves, Northern Grey-headed Sparrows, Yellow-billed Kites, African Palm and Little Swifts, Barn Swallow, Village Weaver and the ubiquitous Pied Crow. Sakumono Lagoon is pretty much silted up these days but we made a brief stop just to check and admired our first pair of intensely coloured Yellow-

crowned Gonoleks. Waders were few but we did see Senegal Thick-knee, Spur-winged and African Wattled Lapwings, Common Ringed Plover, Common and Wood Sandpipers and Common Greenshank and there was also Grey Heron, Great Egret, Reed Cormorant, Shikra, Western Marsh Harrier, Red-eyed Dove, Pied Kingfisher, African Grey Woodpecker and Scarlet-chested Sunbird. Driving on we also noted Black-winged Kite, Purple Roller, Woodland Kingfisher, Splendid Starling and African Pied Wagtail during the journey westwards.

Eventually we got to what is left of the Winneba Plains for some late afternoon birding. The majority of this area of once open grassland has now basically been destroyed and covered with solar panels for a renewable energy project so we spent our short time here birding the shrubby areas amongst the thickets and Eucalyptus trees. A colourful Orange-breasted Bushshrike was appreciated and Plain-backed Pipit seen well as a Flappet Lark displayed high overhead. We also managed brief looks at Moustached Grass Warbler, Red-faced Cisticola and Red-winged Warbler whilst other new birds included Tawny-flanked Prinia, Copper Sunbird and Yellow-mantled Widowbird. As the day was fast drawing to a close we then drove the remaining distance to the somewhat strangely named Hans Cottage Botel near Kakum National Park for a three night's stay as our usual hotel had been taken over by a funeral for the weekend.

Our first day in the area was spent in the famous Kakum National Park. Although created in 1932, the park wasn't officially opened to the public until 1994. Covering an area of 347 square kilometres, it is semi-evergreen rain forest that in the recent past was 'selectively' logged so that anyone expecting to find pristine forest here would be sadly disappointed. Fortunately, the regenerating secondary growth can be extremely 'birdy'! Kakum is perhaps most famous as being the site of Africa's first and to date only rainforest canopy walkway. Constructed in 1995 it is comprised of about 350 metres of bridges suspended between six tree platforms that reach a height of up to 40 metres above the forest floor. Officially, it opens at 8.30 a.m. to a seemingly constant stream of whooping and screaming tourists that treat the whole thing like a funfair ride but we had arranged early entry into the park from dawn onwards that meant we had the place more or less to ourselves during the most productive time of day. In the early morning half-light, we started climbing the stone steps that led us up the hillside to the start of the walkway itself and near the entrance a Rufous-sided Broadbill performed and allowed some good views as it twirled around on its perch like a mechanical toy.



*Our morning on the canopy walkway came up trumps with this amazing Congo Serpent Eagle that posed nicely for scope views (left)
This male African Emerald Cuckoo was another popular bird (right) (Nik Borrow)*

As we crossed the walkway it bounced and swayed whilst the platforms around the boles of the enormous trees creaked and shifted and it was a strange feeling to be suspended underneath the main canopy and amongst the boughs of the medium sized trees but high above the tops of the vine covered trunks and shrubbery below us. Speckled, Red-rumped and Yellow-throated Tinkerbirds and Bristle-nosed, Naked-faced, Yellow-spotted and Hairy-breasted Barbets pooped, trilled and squeaked all around us but were not easy to see. Our first Upper Guinea endemic species were encountered; West African Wattle-eye in the shrubbery and Sharpe's Apalis and Buff-throated Sunbird in the higher branches of the giant trees were seen. A Congo Serpent Eagle was heard calling and it wasn't long before we saw the bird itself and enjoyed some remarkable views.

During our vigil Velvet-mantled Drongo and African Pied Hornbill were virtually constant companions. Green Hylias piped out their disyllabic call from thick vegetation that provided wonderful hiding places for Tambourine Dove as well as spiky-crested Levillant's, African Emerald and Black Cuckoos, Willcocks's Honeyguide, Blue Cuckooshrike, Grey Longbill, Chestnut-capped Flycatcher, Green Hylia, Wood Warbler and Yellow-browed Camaroptera. Amongst the fruiting trees we were introduced to a confusing array of greenbuls that included Slender-billed, Little, Little Grey, Plain, Yellow-whiskered, Honeyguide and Spotted Greenbuls whilst liberal splashes of colour were provided by species such as African Green Pigeon, Blue-throated Roller and an amazing selection of glittering sunbirds that included Little Green, Collared, Olive and Tiny Sunbirds.



Love them or hate them, greenbuls are a feature of the West African forests! Little Grey Greenbul (left) was seen from the canopy walkway but the Upper Guinea endemic Western Bearded Greenbul (right) was found skulking in the dark forests below. (Nik Borrow)

Higher in the trees a Chocolate-backed Kingfisher was calling; Red-headed Malimbres crept along the bare branches whilst the spreading canopies allowed good foraging opportunities for Rufous-crowned Eremomela and Violet-backed Hyliota and Brown-cheeked Hornbill, Chestnut-winged Starling and Chestnut-breasted and Grey-headed Nigritas were also seen. In the skies above were some high-flying Rosy Bee-eaters, screeching Red-fronted Parrots and the large and seemingly tail-less Cassin's Spinetail along with the smaller Sabine's Spinetail, Common Swift and Fanti Saw-wing. A few airborne raptors included African Harrier-Hawk, Palm-nut Vulture and Black Sparrowhawk.

As the morning wore on, the sweat bees increased as the humidity rose and the first groups of screaming visitors arrived to play on the walkway. We therefore deemed it best to make a hasty retreat and sought the shade of the forest interior. In the dim, tangled mesh of vegetation we hunted out Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Icterine, White-throated, Western Bearded and Red-tailed Greenbuls, Grey-headed and Red-tailed Bristlebills, Fraser's Sunbird and also enjoyed great views of the Upper Guinea endemic White-tailed Alethe although seeing the pretty little 'Ghana' Forest Robin was more of a struggle. This population is of the recently described form *inexpectatus* that has even been proposed to be a separate species! As we left the forest a family of Tit Hylia was seen well by the entrance.

Taking a break for lunch in the afternoon we returned to the canopy walkway and waited for any evening activity. Lowe's and Lesser Spot-nosed Monkeys and Olive Colobus were busy feeding below us in the quiet of the afternoon and as dusk fell a Brown Nightjar started calling but remained out of sight. The astonishing Pel's Anomalure showed for some but glided away only too soon. Returning to the bus we spotlighted West African Potto and a little later a roadside stop produced several Long-tailed Nightjars including a female with two newly hatched chicks.

The next morning, we travelled to Antwikwaa, an area on the northern edge of the main Kakum forest. Cocoa farms, oil palm and other cultivation have eaten into the forest on this border of the park but indeed this sort of farm bush can be surprisingly productive. Initially we spent a long time in a thicket where we successfully prised out a pair of White-spotted Flufftails from the shadows and watched them flaunt themselves in front of us for some truly amazing views. Vieillot's Black Weavers were common and here are of the striking *castaneofuscus* form, which is sometimes treated as separate species known as Chestnut-and-black Weaver. Further on we walked through the farm bush where some superb Black Bee-eaters perched up for all to see. A Long-tailed Hawk was heard calling and we spent a long time trying to coax it into view but it kept its distance only being seen briefly in flight by some of our group. The Upper Guinea endemic Fire-bellied Woodpecker, African Cuckoo-Hawk, Black-casqued Hornbill and the very impressive White-crested Hornbill were equally elusive but we managed excellent looks at Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Red-breasted Swallow, Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher, Whistling Cisticola, Fraser's Forest Flycatcher and White-breasted Nigrita whilst other species seen here included Blue-spotted Wood Dove, Yellow-billed Turaco, Diederik Cuckoo, Grey Kestrel, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Green Crombec, Olive-bellied and Superb Sunbirds, Black-necked Weaver, Black-winged Red Bishop and Black-and-white Mannikin.

As the day was getting hotter and the humidity was rising fast we travelled further north to visit a river that gave us shining White-bibbed (or White-throated Blue) Swallows nesting on a rock in the river as well as several Rock Pratincoles of the rufous-naped race *liberiae*. We also noted African Palm Swift, Little Bee-eater, Northern Fiscal and Ethiopian and Lesser Striped Swallows. Nearby good numbers of Preuss's Cliff Swallows were breeding under a culvert and the comings and goings of the busy colony was quite a spectacle.



A visit to a colony of Preuss's Cliff Swallows is always one of the highlights of the trip. (Nik Borrow)

With the morning session over, we returned to the lodge for lunch and a short siesta before venturing out again to the forest at Abrafo. Afternoons are always quiet and this one was no exception, in fact it was actually incredibly birdless! A pair of Black Spinetail was seen briefly by some and sightings of high-flying Upper Guinea endemic Copper-tailed Glossy Starling did little to improve the situation. However, after dark a superb Fraser's Eagle-Owl eventually surrendered itself and the afternoon was saved.

The next morning, we started soon after dawn birding in a still dark thicket in farmbush at the edge of Kakum where a Puvel's Illadopsis was singing loudly and it was only a relatively short battle to get everyone to see this secretive species. We fared less well with a Red-cheeked Wattle-eye that shot back and forth like a speeding bullet but managed slightly better with the mega-skulking Kemp's Longbill although it too kept well hidden in the tangles despite singing and calling almost constantly. The struggles continued with a Brown Illadopsis that also kept to the thickest undergrowth but everyone saw a pair of Lowland Sooty Boubou and a Black-throated Coucal surprised us all by crashing into a vine tangle in front of us only to disappear almost immediately! Also, in the farmbush we added Guinea Turaco, African Pygmy Kingfisher, Pale Flycatcher, Green-headed Sunbird and Bronze Mannikin but the prize of the morning was probably the wonderful Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat that sat still long enough for mouth-watering scope views.

After lunch by the historic slave fort at Cape Coast in a restaurant overlooking the sea where 'West African' Royal and Sandwich Terns were passing by and Hooded Vulture was seen we set off for Ankasa making two short (but very productive) stops en route. The first was at a pool where many weavers were busy breeding and we found some Orange Weavers amongst the more numerous Village and 'Chestnut-and-black' Vieillot's Black Weavers. An adult and juvenile Allen's Gallinule here was a real bonus and there were also White-faced Whistling Duck, African Pygmy Geese, Little Grebe, Common Moorhen and African Jacana.



Fraser's Eagle-Owl was seen at Kakum (left) and in Ankasa we found the yellow-eyed Akun Eagle-Owl (right) (Nik Borrow)

Later at a river crossing no less than five Hartlaub's Ducks were watched through the scopes and we were also treated to views of two specialist West African sunbirds, Reichenbach's and Mangrove (or Brown) Sunbird the latter sitting in its nest in the middle of the river. Also, at this wetland we added Western Reef Heron, Whimbrel, Malachite Kingfisher and Orange-cheeked Waxbill to the list with Mottled Spinetails and House Sparrow seen en route before arriving at Ankasa Conservation Area late in the afternoon. After dinner we enjoyed great views of a very fine Akun Eagle Owl and for one of our group a friendly African Wood Owl was seen by the toilet block. During our stay it proved to be a bird that only showed for one person at a time!

Ankasa Conservation Area is a superb area of wet evergreen forest that between the years 1960 to 1974 only suffered relatively light logging. Ten years ago, we were the first organised birding group to visit this forest but since then visiting the forest has been made easier and this year we stayed once again in a tented camp situated just inside the park. It must be stressed that West African forests are not easy places to go birding. The tall trees hide their avian treasures very well and bird densities are comparatively low and often there are long periods of inactivity between sightings and this morning proved to be no exception! After a

good breakfast a Red-chested Goshawk was calling at dawn on the edge of the forest and we enjoyed some good views of it. A Shining-blue Kingfisher was seen briefly by some on the river where pairs of Cassin's Flycatchers were in residence but little else was active so we slipped in between the enormous trees in search of the rare Upper Guinea endemic Rufous-winged Illadopsis. We reached a known territory and fortunately the bird was vocal although initially not easy to see but with perseverance everyone managed some good views. In the same area Yellow-bearded Greenbul, another scarce regional endemic was found in a very active bird party that surrendered its other treasures somewhat reluctantly but Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Shining Drongo, Finsch's Rufous Thrush and Blue-billed Malimbe were seen whilst some managed views of a male Red-fronted Antpecker (another Upper Guinea endemic) and we all enjoyed some excellent looks at a European Honey Buzzard.

In the afternoon we set off in 4WD vehicles that took us deeper into the forest where we walked further to a series of small pools where a watch and wait tactic was adopted. A juvenile African Finfoot was in residence on one of the pools seemingly unconcerned by our presence and it wasn't long before a brilliant little White-bellied Kingfisher put in a superb appearance but the 'mega' find was of an immature White-crested Tiger Heron lurking in the shadows of the tangled waterside vegetation. Other species seen here included the striking Upper Guinea endemic Red-billed Helmetshrike as well as Blackcap Illadopsis and Blue-throated Brown Sunbird whilst at dusk a pair of Spot-breasted Ibis flew right over our heads calling loudly. As darkness descended so we turned our attentions to finding the bizarre Nkulengu Rail going to roost and sure enough on cue, their raucous cries sounded out through the inky blackness. James, Jackson and the drivers were swiftly on the case trying to locate the birds before they ceased to call and fortunately our luck was in for a pair was quickly located and it was not long before we were staring up at a pair perched precariously just above our heads. Fortunately, the roosting birds remained on their perch and we all had amazing views. As if this success wasn't enough we also managed to squeeze in a sighting of a Plain Nightjar on the track before we went to dinner!



A pair of Nkulengu Rails on their roost in Ankasa Conservation Area was the big prize of our stay there. (Nik Borrow)

The next day we returned to the pools at first light and this time the White-crested Tiger Heron was flaunting itself out in the open, apparently unconcerned by our attentions being totally absorbed in looking for food. A Striated Heron was also present and at another pool we found a dapper Dwarf Bittern and a confiding Hartlaub's Duck. These pools had certainly come up trumps this year and the views of all these specialties had been exceptionally pleasing. Other new species for the morning included brief views of Forest Penduline Tit as well as impressively top-knotted Great Blue Turacos, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, Western Oriole, Pale-breasted Illadopsis, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Johanna's Sunbird and Western Bluebill. In the afternoon we explored one of the forest trails where we saw Blue-headed Wood Dove, both 'Guinea' Dusky and Olive Long-tailed Cuckoos and a super little Red-chested Owlet that attracted the wrath of the small birds in the area.

During the final morning of our stay we explored the main track and also a side trail where a Long-tailed Hawk was calling and although it was difficult to see in the canopy above our heads we all managed to finally obtain some scope views. Some noisy Yellow-casqued Hornbills were glimpsed as they flew through the enormous trees and a tiny African Dwarf Kingfisher was seen by some in the dark undergrowth. Square-tailed Saw-wings fluttering over the forest were seen by all and we also caught up with Ansorge's Greenbul, 'Western' Forest Robin and Red-vented Malimbe.



Amazingly, we had good perched views of both of these shy and retiring long-tailed cuckoos at Ankasa this year. Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo (left) and Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo (right) (Nik Borrow)

Our time at Ankasa had passed too quickly and after an early lunch we retraced our steps back towards Kakum. In the late afternoon we broke our journey at an area of coastal scrub where surprisingly, we found another non-breeding plumaged Black Coucal and managed a brief glimpse of a Palearctic migrant Great Reed Warbler whilst four Piping Hornbills flew past. A male Marsh Tchagra was a more expected find and there were also Simple Greenbul, Mosque Swallow, Singing Cisticola, Bar-breasted Firefinch, Pin-tailed Whydah and Western Yellow Wagtail.

We spent the following somewhat damp morning birding in farmbrush along the southern edge of Kakum National Park where we spotted Great Spotted Cuckoo, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Red-headed Quelea, African Firefinch and Magpie Mannikin before moving on for the time had now come for us to set off to a site where we all were hoping to find the main prize of the tour, namely the totally amazing Yellow-headed Picathartes. This species is rather unfortunately named White-necked Rockfowl in some lists but the neck is certainly not white as the yellow colour of the skin shines through the feathers as if lit from within. This peculiar bird nests in the rainy season and makes swallow-like mud-cup nests which are attached beneath the dry overhangs of the large granitic boulders and inselbergs that are such a feature of the region. We arrived at the nearest villages that benefit from the proceeds raised by visiting birders donating to the community-based project and met up with the guides that were to accompany us to the rocks where the birds nest. The excitement and tension were certainly mounting as we embarked on an hour's relatively easy although undulating uphill walk with only the last few minutes being a climb up the steeper slope to the rocks where the nests are situated. There were several goodies to be seen along the way for at the forest edge firstly a pair of low-flying Black Spinetail was watched circling low over the farmbrush where we also heard Grey-throated Tit-flycatcher and saw a splendid Yellow-throated Cuckoo. We reached the colony in good time and settled into our seats and at about 17:00 the first birds arrived for the evening show and the relief of finally setting our eyes on these incredible creatures was simply immense! Anyone who has ever seen the

picathartes has always been overwhelmed by their beauty and oddness. Indeed, there is something mysterious and even spiritual about them and the sculpted rocks where they live and it is easy to see why they are revered rather than hunted in certain areas. It was then a long three hour's drive to our hotel in Kumasi for an overnight stop where we ate a late meal, celebrated with cold beer and collapsed into our beds tired but very happy.

From Kumasi we spent most of the day travelling as our long journey took us northwards to Mole National Park. While it was still relatively cool we made a stop on the edge of Opro Forest and although it did not look very promising the walk was certainly worthwhile with the following additions made to our lists; Red-chested Cuckoo, Broad-billed Roller, Double-toothed Barbet, 'Western' Yellow-billed Barbet, Black-winged Oriole, Western Nicator, Olive-green Camaroptera and Grey Tit-flycatcher.

Travelling north along the main road was good for spotting raptors and there were sightings of Dark Chanting Goshawk and good numbers of Grasshopper Buzzards. Vinaceous Dove, Abyssinian Roller, Northern Carmine Bee-eater were also seen and we reached Mole National Park just after dark.

We had three full days to try to see the best of Mole's birds and despite the very hot conditions we did well. There had recently been rain so some of the bird flocks and gatherings had dispersed, as there was less need to be drawn to the more permanent water sources. Around the large waterhole that lies below the motel are the thickets where we began our first day. In the cool of the morning dowdy Swamp Flycatchers hawked for insects and the bizarre Oriole Warbler (or Moho, which is currently placed in the family *Cisticolidae*) although often skulking was this morning easy to see at an ant column.

Pigeons and doves are a feature of this dry bush country and the chorus of Vinaceous Doves was a constant soundtrack to the early mornings and we also noted Black-billed Wood Dove and Bruce's Green Pigeon. Rainbow coloured Red-throated Bee-eaters nest in eroded banks around the waterholes and everywhere was a riot of colour with species like Purple, Violet-backed and Long-tailed Glossy Starlings alongside Grey-headed Kingfisher, Northern Red-billed Hornbill, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Red-headed Lovebird, African Paradise Flycatcher, Snowy-crowned and White-crowned Robin-Chats, gorgeous Pygmy, Scarlet-chested and Beautiful Sunbirds, Red-winged Pytilia, Red-billed and Black-faced Firefinches, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and the pretty little Lavender Waxbill.



Red-throated Bee-eater (left) is very common in Mole National Park but we were certainly very fortunate to see this superb Shining-blue Kingfisher by the main waterhole. (Nik Borrow)

Around the main waterhole Helmeted Guineafowl scurried about, Woolly-necked Stork was seen and we also caught up with Hadada Ibis, Black-crowned Night Heron, Squacco and Purple Herons, Intermediate Egret, Hamerkop, Black Crake and perhaps best of all a superb confiding Shining-blue Kingfisher. At one of the other waterholes away from the motel we were particularly delighted to find a female Greater Painted-snipe. The surrounding Guinea savanna woodlands were also generally richer in birdlife and other species encountered during our stay included Pearl-spotted Owlet, Greater Honeyguide, White-shouldered Black Tit,

Red-chested Swallow, West African Swallow, Melodious Warbler, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Blackcap Babbler, African Yellow White-eye, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, European Pied Flycatcher, Bush Petronia, Little Weaver, Exclamatory Paradise Whydah, Yellow-fronted Canary and Cabanis's Bunting.

As the days warmed up so the raptors took to the thermals and we were pleased to see good numbers of Bateleur as well as quite a few Hooded and White-backed and several White-headed Vultures. The heat of the day was too hot to go birding and the vultures took to loafing around the waterhole that could be viewed from the motel where African Elephants also came to bathe. During the afternoons of our stay we searched the dry lateritic plains for the much-wanted Forbes's Plover. The first afternoon was disappointing with just a couple glimpsed but on our second attempt we were totally successful and counted up to seven individuals with small numbers of Sun Larks also seen. As dusk fell the purring bleeps of African Scops Owls sounded out and we managed to track one down along with a few splendid Four-banded Sandgrouse.



Brown-rumped Bunting (left) showed well for us this year and Stone Partridge (right) also proved easy to see. (Nik Borrow)

The second day we started our birding in some wooded cultivation on the edge of the park where a pair of White-throated Francolin allowed some good looks whilst intensely coloured African Golden Orioles were numerous and we were treated to some excellent views of the attractive Brown-rumped Bunting. On the edges of the park there were few annoying insects but at times during walkabouts in the dry bush country we were seriously plagued by sweat bees that endeavoured to enter our eyes, ears, noses and mouths but as a reward for our suffering we were treated to views of a pair of White-fronted Black Chat. Other species noted during the day included noisy (and easily seen) Stone Partridges, African Cuckoo, Fine-spotted and Brown-backed Woodpeckers, Senegal Batis, Grey-headed Bushshrike, African Blue Flycatcher, Wire-tailed Swallow, Willow Warbler, Rufous Cisticola, Brown Babbler, Familiar Chat, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver and Heuglin's Masked Weaver. We ended the day watching an incredible male Standard-winged Nightjar in full breeding plumage performing display flights over his territory.

On our third day we left the park and drove some distance to the town of Daboya in search of the sublime Egyptian Plover. Along the way a short roadside stop gave us Winding Cisticola, Red-billed Quelea and Northern Red Bishop but we didn't linger too long as we were keen to get to the White Volta River before it got too hot. Fortunately, we saw our target bird immediately upon arrival and the water levels were low enough for us to walk out over the sandbanks to where the Egyptian Plovers were feeding and were treated to some really superb views of this unique shorebird. We watched at least seven adults for as long as we wished as they fed on the sandy waters edge or engaged in territorial squabbles. Other new birds present during our visit were Speckled Pigeon, Black-rumped Waxbill and African Silverbill whilst on the drive back we also found a lovely Graceful Chameleon.

In the afternoon we were back in the park where a Fox Kestrel was something of a surprise find but the only other new birds for the trip were Brubru and White-breasted Cuckooshrike. During our time in Mole we also found a number of large mammals including Patas and Green (Callithrix) Monkeys, African Elephant,

Common Warthog, 'Central' Bushbuck, 'Defassa' Waterbuck, 'Buffon's' Kob, Red-flanked and Common Duikers and 'Western' Hartebeest all being seen well.

Our time at Mole had come to an end and once again we boarded our bus. As we left we had time for a short cultural visit to the ancient mosque at Larabanga, which is built with mud and reeds in the Sudanic-Sahelian architectural style and dates from 1421 but then it was back on the road for a long journey that took us back to Kumasi arriving in time to make a late afternoon visit to Bobiri Forest and Butterfly Sanctuary a place that is usually also blessed with good birds. On arrival we were met by a treetop flock of Grey Parrots and as dusk fell we finally got to grips with a showy Brown Nightjar and enjoyed some great scope views.

We returned to the forest the following morning and there was a reasonable amount of bird activity and although many species were in the treetops after a short battle a tiny African Piculet ventured down lower and eventually gave itself up. We also saw Crested Malimbe foraging in the tangled lianas but species such as Forest Wood Hoopoe, Blue Cuckooshrike, Lemon-bellied Crombec and Yellow-mantled Weaver all kept to the canopy. A singing male Narina Trogon sat on his perch and allowed good scope views, several Blue Malkohas showed and a male Black Dwarf Hornbill was seen well several times. After a lot of effort Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill was also added to the seen list and in the process, we also gained views of Yellow-footed Honeyguide and Sabine's Puffback.

The trip had passed all too rapidly and we had reached the end of our grand tour of the country so all that was left to do was to pack our bags and make the final journey back to Accra airport. Ghana is a friendly and stable country; the roads are mostly good although in some places getting a little too pot-holed for comfort these days. The food is definitely tasty and the accommodation really quite comfortable. The Yellow-headed Picathartes is currently very reliable and usually seen extremely well and the sighting of a good number of the Upper Guinea regional endemics certainly made the visit more than worthwhile. With Liberia and Ivory Coast still out of the game and Sierra Leone in a state of recovery Ghana really does offer the visitor a chance to get to grips with one of the most charismatic of all West African birds in much more comfort and less time than anywhere else presently available. This tour is now a classic BirdQuest!



Egyptian Plovers were seen up close and personal at Daboya and were a fitting climax to our tour. (Nik Borrow)



This superb White-crested Tiger Heron in Ankasa Conservation Area was just one of the big prizes of our stay there. (Nik Borrow)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **IOC World Bird Names**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

BIRDS

Total of bird species recorded: 402

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* Widespread sightings during journeys.

Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubii* Great scope views of 5 at Ebi River and a pair at Ankasa.

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* 12 on a roadside pool near Takoradi.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Most common in Mole NP but also at Shai Hills.

Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus* These 'rock chickens' were easily seen in Mole NP.

Latham's Francolin (Forest F) *Peliperdix lathamii* (H) Heard only in various forests.

White-throated Francolin *Peliperdix albogularis* Excellent views of a pair in Mole NP.

Ahanta Francolin *Pternistis achantensis* (H) Heard only on the edge of Abrafo Forest at dusk.

Double-spurred Francolin *Pternistis bicalcaratus* This large francolin seen well at Shai Hills and Mole NP.

Blue Quail *Excalfactoria adansonii* 1 was flushed at Shai Hills.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 40+ on Cape Coast lagoon and a few on a roadside pool near Takoradi.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* At least 2 seen in Mole NP.

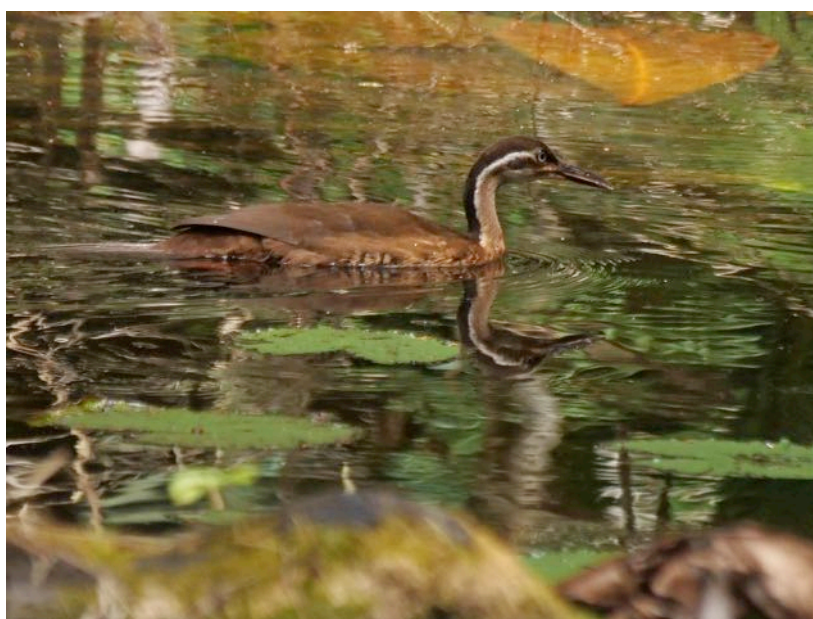
Spot-breasted Ibis *Bostrychia rara* A pair seen flying over Ankasa at dusk.
Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.
White-crested Tiger Heron *Tigrionis leucolopha* Amazing views of a juvenile at Ankasa.
Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii*. Excellent views of one at Ankasa.



Hartlaub's Duck (left) and Dwarf Bittern (right) were just two of the stars of our visit to Ankasa. (Nik Borrow)

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Seen flying over Accra and at least 4 in Mole NP.
Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* A few seen at Ankasa and in Mole NP.
Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* A few seen in Mole NP.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Widespread sightings of this common bird throughout the tour.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Widespread sightings in suitable habitat.
Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* Just a few seen in the Mole NP area.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* One in Mole NP.
Great Egret *Ardea alba* One at Sakumono Lagoon.
Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E) *Ardea [intermedia] brachyrhyncha* One in Mole NP.
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* 3+ by a roadside pool heading back to Kintampo.
Western Reef Heron *Egretta gularis* Small numbers at coastal locations.
Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* Easily seen in Mole NP.
Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus* Small numbers at coastal locations.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* A few roadside sightings but not common.
African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus* Widespread sightings and regularly encountered.
Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* Just 1 at Kakum and 3 in Mole NP.
European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Ankasa.
African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides* Sightings at Antwikwaa, Opro Forest and en route back to Kintampo.
Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* 1 at Cape Coast and a maximum count of 8 in Mole NP.
White-backed Vulture (African W-b V) *Gyps africanus* At least 10 seen in Mole NP.
White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis* 3 seen in Mole NP.
Congo Serpent Eagle *Circaetus spectabilis* Excellent views from the Kakum canopy walkway.
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* Small numbers seen in Mole NP with a maximum count of 6.
Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* A few widespread sightings throughout the tour.
Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates* At least 6 between Mole and Kintampo.
Long-tailed Hawk *Urotriorchis macrourus* Singletons at Antwikwaa and Ankasa.
Red-chested Goshawk *Accipiter toussenelii* 1 at Ankasa and 2 at Bobiri.
Shikra *Accipiter badius* Widespread sightings throughout the tour.
Black Sparrowhawk (Great S, B Goshawk) *Accipiter melanoleucus* 3 sightings in the Kakum area.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Sakumono.
Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* A commonly encountered and widespread species.
Grasshopper Buzzard *Butastur rufipennis* Easily seen in the north.
Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis* Regularly seen in appropriate habitat throughout the tour.
Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster* 2 at Shai Hills, heard at Winneba and 1 seen near Mole NP.
White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra* Incredible views of a pair at Antwikwaa.
African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis* A juvenile seen exceptionally well at Ankasa.
Nkulengu Rail *Himantornis haematopus* A pair watched on their roost site at Ankasa.
Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* 3 seen in Mole NP.
Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni* An adult and a juvenile on a roadside pool near Takoradi.
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 12+ on a roadside pool near Takoradi.
Senegal Thick-knee *Burhinus senegalensis* Easily seen at Sakumono and in Mole NP.
Spur-winged Lapwing (S-w Plover) *Vanellus spinosus* Seen on coastal lagoons and numerous at Sakumono.
African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus* Small numbers scattered on coastal lagoons and in the north.
Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Sakumono.
Forbes's Plover *Charadrius forbesi* Excellent encounters with 7 birds in Mole NP.



We enjoyed watching a very showy juvenile African Finfoot (left) on one of the pools at Ankasa. No less than 7 Forbes's Plovers were seen together in Mole National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Egyptian Plover *Pluvianus aegyptius* Super views of at least 7 adults at Daboya.
Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* 1 female in Mole NP.
African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* Widespread sightings in appropriate habitat.
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Ebi River.
Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants at coastal localities.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* A few of these Palearctic migrants at coastal localities.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* A few of these Palearctic migrants at coastal localities.
Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis* 3 of the race *liberiae* on the Pra River.
Royal Tern (West African R T) *Thalasseus [maximus] albididorsalis* 12+ out at sea at Cape Coast.
Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* 1 out at sea at Cape Coast.
Four-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles quadricinctus* Seen well in Mole NP.
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* Domestic 'Table' birds only.
Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* A few in the Mole/Daboya area.
Afep Pigeon *Columba unicincta* (H) Heard at Bonkro.
Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* Common and widespread.
Vinaceous Dove *Streptopelia vinacea* Common in the north.

Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis* Abundant and widespread.

Black-billed Wood Dove *Turtur abyssinicus* Small numbers seen in the north.

Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer* Regularly encountered in the forest zone.

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* Commonly encountered in the forest although mainly heard or in flight.

Blue-headed Wood Dove *Turtur brehmeri* Just 2 sightings in Ankasa NP.

Bruce's Green Pigeon *Treron waalia* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.

African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus* Widespread sightings and commonly encountered in the south.

Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata* These impressive turacos were seen well at Ankasa.

Guinea Turaco (Green T) *Tauraco persa* Seen well in the Kakum area.

Yellow-billed Turaco *Tauraco macrorhynchus* We had several chances to see this species well in the forests.

Violet Turaco *Musophaga violacea* Seen well at Shai Hills and heard in Mole NP.

Western Plantain-eater *Crinifer piscator* Commonly encountered with widespread sightings during this tour.

Black-throated Coucal *Centropus leucogaster* As is often the case, heard in the forests but views for some.

Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis* Widespread sightings.

Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus* First seen well at Shai Hills.

Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*. Non-breeding plumaged birds at Shai Hills and Brenu Road.

Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares aereus* Our best views were at Bobiri Forest.

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* Great views of 1 at Abrafo.

Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii* Sightings of this spiky-crested cuckoo in Kakum NP.

Diederik Cuckoo (Didric C) *Chrysococcyx caprius* A leader only sighting and also heard by all in the Kakum area.

Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* Widespread encounters but more often heard than seen.

Yellow-throated Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx flavigularis* An excellent encounter at Bonkro.

African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus* A male seen in Kakum NP and heard elsewhere.



Yellow-throated Cuckoo (left) is not a common bird in Ghana and we did well to see it at Bonkro. This little African Scops Owl (right) was watched calling from a hole in a tree in Mole National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx mechowii* 2 sightings at Ankasa.

Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx olivinus* 1 seen well at Ankasa.

Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus* 2 sightings in the Kakum area.

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* 1 at Opro Forest.

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* Excellent views in Mole NP.

African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis* It took a while but finally seen well in Mole NP.

Northern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis leucotis* (H) Only heard at Mole.

Fraser's Eagle-Owl *Bubo poensis* Fantastic views of 1 in the Kakum area.

Akun Eagle-Owl *Bubo leucostictus* 1 was seen well at Ankasa.

African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* Nik and Jean were the only ones to see this at Ankasa NP.
Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* 2 seen during the day in Mole NP.
African Barred (Etchécopar's) Owlet *Glaucidium [capense] ethecopari* Seen well at Shai Hills.
Brown Nightjar *Veles binotatus* 1 seen well at Bobiri.
Plain Nightjar *Caprimulgus inornatus* Excellent views of 1 in the Ankasa area.
Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus* Adults with young in the Kakum area and also seen in Mole NP.
Standard-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longipennis* Great views of breeding plumaged males in Mole NP.



We were treated to some excellent sightings of the incredible Standard-winged Nightjar in Mole National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri* Widespread sightings in the south.
Black Spinetail *Telacanthura melanopygia* Pairs seen flying over Abrafo and the farmbush at Bonkro.
Sabine's Spinetail *Rhaphidura sabini* Seen well over the canopy walkway.
Cassin's Spinetail *Neafrapus cassini* Seen well over the canopy walkway and Antwikwaa.
African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* Widespread sightings and commonly encountered throughout the tour.
Common Swift *Apus apus* Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant at widespread localities in the forest zone.
Little Swift *Apus affinis* Widespread sightings and commonly encountered throughout the tour.
Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* A splendid male in Bobiri Forest.
Purple Roller (Rufous-crowned R) *Coracias naevius* 1 en route to Kakum but more common in the north.
Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus* Easily seen in the north.
Blue-bellied Roller *Coracias cyanogaster* A pair at Shai Hills, Opro Forest and in the Mole area.
Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis* Several sightings over the Kakum forests.
Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* Small numbers seen from Opro northwards.
Chocolate-backed Kingfisher *Halcyon badia* Glimpsed in Kakum NP and seen well at Ankasa.
Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Stunning colours and easily seen in Mole NP.
Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* Heard at Shai Hills and Ankasa and seen well in Mole NP.
Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* Widespread sightings in the forest zone.
African Dwarf Kingfisher *Ispidina lecontei* Views for some in Ankasa NP. This is not an easy bird in Ghana.
African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* Regularly encountered with scattered sightings during the tour.
White-bellied Kingfisher *Corythornis leucogaster* Excellent views at Ankasa.
Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus* Seen at the Ebi River and in Mole NP.
Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys* Briefly seen at Ankasa but Wonderful views in Mole NP.
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Small numbers in appropriate habitat.
Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis* 6 seen well at Antwikwaa.
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus* Good looks at several in Mole NP.
Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* Singletons at the Pra River and at the pool near Takoradi.

Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki* This glorious bee-eater is impossible to miss in Mole NP.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis* Non-breeding migrants are common and easy to see on this tour.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* 1 of these Palearctic migrants seen by Richard and heard by all at Mole.

Rosy Bee-eater *Merops malimbicus* Just 2 of these beautiful bee-eaters seen from the canopy walkway.

Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus* Small numbers in the Mole area.

Forest Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus castaneiceps* 1 treetop bird at Bobiri Forest.

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* Leader only at Shai Hills and heard in Mole NP.

Black Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus aterrimus* 1 at Shai Hills and a pair in Mole NP.

Northern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* Small numbers in the Mole area.

(West) African Pied Hornbill *Lophoceros [fasciatus] semifasciatus* Common and easy to see on this tour.

African Grey Hornbill *Lophoceros nasutus* Easily seen in the savannah zone.

Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill *Lophoceros camurus* Heard at Kakum and seen in Bobiri Forest.

Piping Hornbill (Western P H) *Bycanistes fistulator* 4 seen in flight at Brenu Road.

Brown-cheeked Hornbill *Bycanistes cylindricus* 5 were seen in flight in the Kakum area.

Black-casqued Hornbill (B-c Wattled) *Ceratogymna atrata* Glimpsed at Antwikwaa.

Yellow-casqued Hornbill (Y-c Wattled) *Ceratogymna elata* Glimpses through the canopy at Ankasa.

Black Dwarf Hornbill (Western Little H) *Horizocerus hartlaubii* Great views of a male in Bobiri Forest.

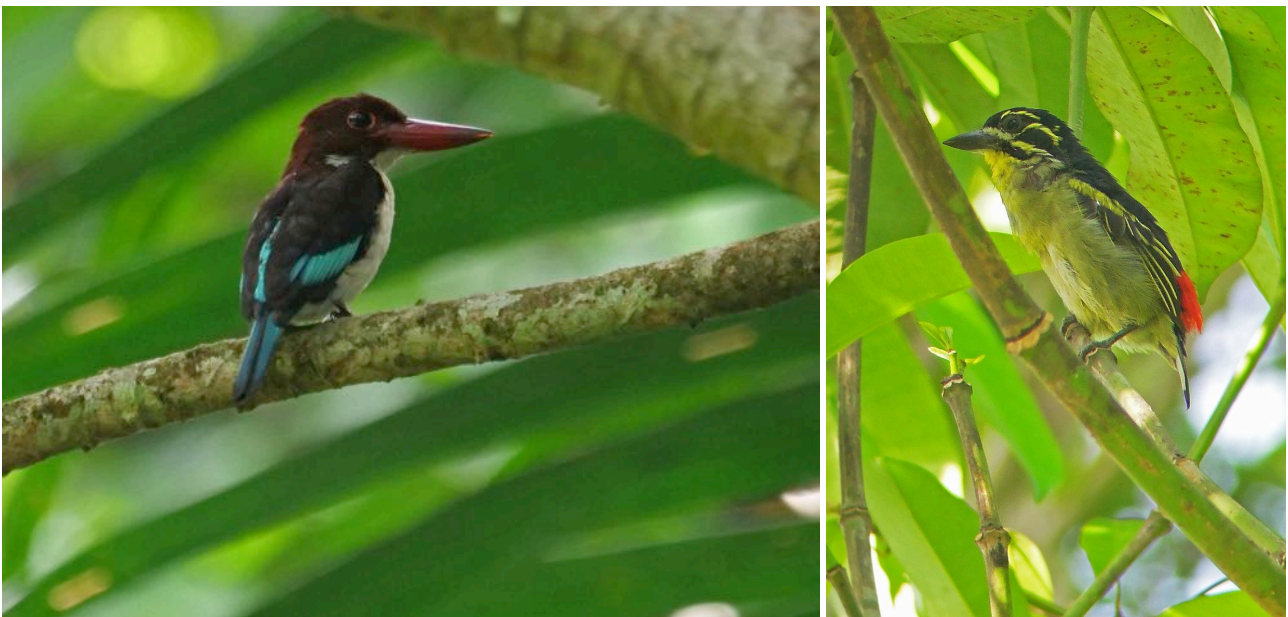
White-crested Hornbill (Western Long-tailed H) *Horizocerus albocristatus* Several sightings in the forests.

Bristle-nosed Barbet *Gymnobucco peli* 2 sightings in the Kakum area.

Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus* 1 of these 'punkish' barbets for some in Kakum NP.

Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus* The most commonly seen tinkerbird in the forests.

Red-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus atroflavus* Often heard and seen well at Kakum.



At Ankasa we found a Chocolate-backed Kingfisher (left) that wasn't perched high in the canopy! At Antwikwaa we watched the attractive Red-rumped Tinkerbird (right) (Nik Borrow)

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus subsulphureus* Heard more often than seen in the various forests.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* 1 seen at Abrafo and heard at Opro Forest.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* Seen well in Mole NP.

Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon duchaillui* Often heard in the forests and occasionally seen.

Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta* Occasionally heard and seen in the forests.

Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti* Widespread sightings in savannah and forest edge.

Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus* Seen well at Opro Forest.

Bearded Barbet *Lybius dubius* Several opportunities to see this amazing barbet well at Shai Hills and in the north.

Yellow-billed Barbet (Western Y-b B) *Trachyphonus [purpuratus] goffinii* Seen briefly at Opro Forest.

Yellow-footed Honeyguide *Melignomon eisentrauti* Heard at Bonkro and seen at Bobiri Forest.

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksii* 1 from the canopy walkway.
Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* 2 males seen in Mole NP.
African Piculet *Sasia africana* This tiny bird seen at Bobiri Forest.
Fine-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera punctuligera* 1 seen in Mole NP.
Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivos* Heard in Kakum and seen at Ankasa.
Fire-bellied Woodpecker *Chloropicus pyrrhogaster* Seen briefly in the Kakum forests.
Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens* 1 female in Mole NP.
Melancholy Woodpecker *Dendropicos lugubris* (H) Heard only in the Kakum area.
African Grey Woodpecker (G W) *Dendropicos goertae* Seen at Sakumono and heard in Mole NP.
Brown-backed Woodpecker *Dendropicos obsoletus* A pair seen in Mole NP.
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* Mostly noted in towns during journeys.
Fox Kestrel *Falco alopex* Great views of 1 in Mole NP and another pair as we left the park.
Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus* Several widespread sightings in open areas.
African Hobby *Falco cuvierii* Good looks at Shai Hills and other widespread sightings.
Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* A minimum of 7 were seen at Bobiri Forest.
Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gularis* Heard more often than seen flying over the various forests.
Senegal Parrot *Poicephalus senegalus* Good numbers at Shai Hills with more in the north.
Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* 4 in Mole NP.
Red-headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullarius* A pair was seen on two occasions over Mole NP.
Rufous-sided Broadbill *Smithornis rufolateralis* Displaying males seen well in Kakum and Ankasa forests.



Male Rufous-sided Broadbill (left) at Ankasa and Marsh Tchagra (right) along the Brenu Road. (Nik Borrow)

Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis* Seen well in Mole NP.
West African Wattle-eye *Platysteira hormophora* Great views in the Kakum forests.
Brown-throated Wattle-eye (Common W) *Platysteira cyanea* Scattered sightings at Shai Hills and the north.
Red-cheeked Wattle-eye *Platysteira blissetti* Views for some at Abrafo.
Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* 1 seen well in Mole NP.
Orange-breasted Bushshrike (Sulphur-b B-s) *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Singletons at Winneba and Brenu.

Marsh Tchagra *Bocagia minuta* Great looks at a male at Brenu.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis* 1 for some at Antwikwaa.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus* Seen well in the various savannahs.

Sabine's Puffback (Large-billed P) *Dryoscopus sabini* A male seen well in Bobiri Forest.

Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis* Seen well in the various savannahs.

Lowland Sooty Boubou *Laniarius leucorhynchus* A pair seen at Abrafo.

Yellow-crowned Gonolek *Laniarius barbarus* First seen at Sakumono with more great views in Mole NP.

Brubru *Nilaus afer* 1 in Mole NP.

White-crested Helmetshrike (W H-s) *Prionops plumatus* Busy flocks at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Red-billed Helmetshrike *Prionops caniceps* Great views of these characterful birds in the various forests.

African Shrike-flycatcher *Megabyas flammulatus* (H) Heard only at Ankasa.

Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher (Vanga F) *Bias musicus* 1 male seen at Antwikwaa and heard in Opro Forest.

White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Cebilepyris pectoralis* Two sightings in Mole NP.

Blue Cuckooshrike *Coracina azurea* Just 1 in Kakum NP but better views at Bobiri.

Yellow-billed Shrike *Corvinella corvina* Small numbers seen around Accra and in the savannahs.

Northern Fiscal *Lanius humeralis* Regularly encountered throughout the tour, often by roadsides.

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* Regularly encountered in Mole NP.

Western Oriole (W Black-headed O) *Oriolus brachyrrhynchus* Small numbers were seen or heard in the forests.

Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis* Less common than the previous species in the forests.

Square-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus ludwigii* Briefly seen at Shai Hills.

Shining Drongo *Dicrurus atripennis* Only small numbers seen in Ankasa NP.

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* The common drongo of the savannahs.

Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus [modestus] coracinus* Replaces the previous species in the forests.

Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher *Trochocercus nitens* 2 sightings in the forests but more often heard.

Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer* Commonly encountered in the forests.

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* Just 1 sighting in Mole NP.

Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer* Small numbers in the north and also seen at Shai Hills.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* An abundant and widespread species.

White-necked Rockfowl (Yellow-headed Picathartes) *Picathartes gymnocephalus* A total success! 5 birds.

African Blue Flycatcher *Elminia longicauda* 1 was seen well in Mole NP.

White-shouldered Black Tit *Melaniparus guineensis* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.

Forest Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus flavifrons* Brief views of 4 distant birds at Ankasa.

Western Nicator *Nicator chloris* Often heard in the various forests and seen at Opro Forest.

Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* 1 displaying over Winneba.

Sun Lark *Galerida modesta* Small numbers in Mole NP.



The 'long-crested' form of White-crested Helmetshrike (left) and Sun Lark (right) both in Mole National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* A ubiquitous species absent only from interior forest.

Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris* Small numbers encountered in the various forests.

Little Greenbul *Eurillas virens* Heard more often than the bird was seen in the forests.

Little Grey Greenbul *Eurillas gracilis* Seen from the canopy walkway.

Ansorge's Greenbul *Eurillas ansorgei* 1 seen in Ankasa but heard elsewhere.

Plain Greenbul (Cameroon Sombre G) *Eurillas curvirostris* Heard more often than the bird was seen in the forests.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris* Juveniles were much in evidence from the walkway.

Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator* Seen from the canopy walkway.

Spotted Greenbul *Ixonotus guttatus* A small flock seen from the canopy walkway.

Simple Greenbul (S Leaflove) *Chlorocichla simplex* Good views at Brenu and in the Kakum farmbrush.

Swamp Palm Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucoptera* Best views at Ankasa, heard more than seen.

Icterine Greenbul *Phyllastrephus icterinus* A common member of mixed bird parties in the various forests.

White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigularis* Seen well in Kakum NP.

Red-tailed Bristlebill (Common B) *Bleda syndactylus* (H) Often heard in the various forests but seemingly invisible!

Green-tailed Bristlebill *Bleda eximius* (H) Heard at Ankasa and Bonkro.

Grey-headed Bristlebill *Bleda canicapillus* A skulking bird, heard often and seen occasionally in the forests.

Western Bearded Greenbul *Criniger barbatus* Heard often and seen a few times in the forests.

Red-tailed Greenbul *Criniger calurus* Heard often and seen a few times in the forests.



Greenbuls might not be everyone's 'cup of tea' but they are a feature of West African forest birding! Red-tailed Greenbul (left) and a juvenile Yellow-whiskered Greenbul (right) both from the Kakum area. (Nik Borrow)

Yellow-bearded Greenbul *Criniger olivaceus* Seen at Ankasa.

Square-tailed Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne nitens* 4 seen flying over Ankasa.

Fanti Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne obscura* Small numbers flying over the canopy walkway.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* A Palearctic migrant commonly encountered in good numbers mainly in the south.

Red-chested Swallow *Hirundo lucida* Easily seen in the north.

Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica* Commonly noted during the tour on journeys in the south.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* Easily seen in Mole NP.

White-bibbed Swallow (White-throated Blue S) *Hirundo nigrita* A nesting pair on the Pra River and 1 on the Ebi.

Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* 1 over Shai Hills.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* Widespread sightings during this tour.

Red-breasted Swallow (Rufous-chested S) *Cecropis semirufa* Seen on the edge of Kakum and a pair in Mole NP.

West African Swallow *Cecropis domicella* (LO) 1 briefly in Mole NP.

Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi* Seen well at their nesting site north of Kakum.

Moustached Grass Warbler (African M W) *Melocichla mentalis* 1 at Winneba and another in the Mole area.

Kemp's Longbill *Macrosphenus kempii* Glimpses of these skulkers in the Kakum area and at Bobiri.

Grey Longbill *Macrosphenus concolor* Regularly encountered in the forest zone more often heard than seen.

Northern Crombec *Sylvietta brachyura* Seen in Mole NP.

Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens* More often heard than seen but we managed views in the Kakum area.

Lemon-bellied Crombec *Sylvietta denti* 1 in the treetops at Bobiri.

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher *Erythrocerus mccallii* Seen well in Kakum NP and again in Bobiri Forest.

Green Hylia *Hylia prasina* Numerous opportunities to see this one in the forests.

Tit Hylia *Pholidornis rushiae* An adult and a juvenile in Kakum NP.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants in the various forests.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant in Mole NP.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* A singing bird glimpsed along the Brenu Road.

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta* 2 of these Palearctic migrants in Mole NP.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops* Heard more often than seen in the farmbrush and savannahs.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans* Seen along the Brenu Road.

Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis* Seen well in the Kakum farmbrush.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus* Seen en route to Daboya.

Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis* Easily seen at Shai Hills.

Short-winged Cisticola (Siffling F) *Cisticola brachypterus* Glimpsed at Shai Hills and Brenu Road.

Rufous Cisticola *Cisticola rufus* 1 seen in Mole NP.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* Widespread sightings

Red-winged Warbler *Heliolais erythropterus* 1 at Winneba, 3 along the Brenu Road and heard in Mole NP.

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida* Seen well in Mole NP.

Sharpe's Apalis *Apalis sharpii* Seen well in the Kakum forests and at Bobiri.

Oriole Warbler *Hypergerus atriceps* Skulking but noisy birds seen well at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata* Heard more often than seen in the farmbrush and savannahs.

Yellow-browed Camaroptera *Camaroptera supercilialis* More often heard than seen on the forest edges.



The canopy walkway allows us to obtain some great views of often skulking birds; juvenile Green Hylia (left) and Yellow-browed Camaroptera (right). (Nik Borrow)

Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota* Seen well at Opro Forest.

Senegal Eremomela *Eremomela pusilla* These pretty little warblers were easy to see at Shai Hills and the north.

Rufous-crowned Eremomela *Eremomela badiceps* A canopy flock in Kakum NP.

Blackcap Illadopsis *Illadopsis cleaveri* Seen by one of the pools at Ankasa.

Rufous-winged Illadopsis *Illadopsis rufescens* Most people managed to see the individual in Ankasa NP.

Puvel's Illadopsis *Illadopsis puveli* Several seen well at the edge of the Kakum forests.

Pale-breasted Illadopsis *Illadopsis rufipennis* Skulking birds at Ankasa.

Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens* Skulking birds at the edge of the Kakum forests.
Blackcap Babbler *Turdoides reinwardtii* Noisy but skulking groups in Mole NP.
Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus* 1 group seen well in Mole NP.
African Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.
Violet-backed Hyliota *Hyliota violacea* A male seen well from the canopy walkway.
Copper-tailed Starling (C-t Glossy S) *Hylopsar cupreocauda*. High flying birds over Abrafo and Ankasa Forests.
Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus* Seen in the south with huge flocks going to roost at Brenu.
Purple Starling *Lamprotornis purpureus* Seen at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.
Long-tailed Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis caudatus* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.
Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Seen well in Mole NP.
Chestnut-winged Starling *Onychognathus [fulgidus] hartlaubii* Small numbers in the Kakum Forests.
Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* Small numbers seen in the Mole area.



Yellow-billed Oxpeckers are not always welcome! (Nik Borrow)

Finsch's Rufous Thrush (F's Flycatcher T) *Stizorhina finschi* Often heard and occasionally seen in the forests.
African Thrush *Turdus pelios* Seen at Shai Hills and in the north.
White-tailed Alethe *Alethe diademata* Often heard and seen particularly well at ants in Kakum NP.
Forest Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas leucosticte* (H) Heard in Opro Forest.
Fraser's Forest Flycatcher *Fraseria ocreata* Noisy birds at Kakum and again at Ankasa.
Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher (G-t F) *Myioparus griseigularis* (H) Only heard in the forests.
Grey Tit-Flycatcher (Lead-coloured F) *Myioparus plumbeus* Seen well at Opro Forest.
Northern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis edoloides* Seen easily in Mole NP.
Pale Flycatcher *Melaenornis pallidus* A pair on the edge of Kakum and another in Mole NP.
Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica* Small numbers in Mole NP.

Cassin's Flycatcher *Muscicapa cassini* Several seen in Ankasa NP.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata* A pair at Ankasa.

Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat *Cossypha cyanocampter* Wonderful views on the forest edge at Kakum.

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla* Seen at Brenu, Opro Forest and in Mole NP.

White-crowned Robin-Chat *Cossypha albicapillus* Several seen in Mole NP.

Forest Robin (Western F R) *Stiphornis [erythrothorax] erythrothorax* Seen well at Ankasa.

Forest Robin (Ghana F R) *Stiphornis [erythrothorax] inexpectatus* Seen briefly in Kakum NP.

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* A few sightings of this Palearctic migrant in the north.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 2 of these Palearctic migrants at Shai Hills.

White-crowned Cliff Chat *Thamnolaea coronata* 2 pairs seen well at Shai Hills.

White-fronted Black Chat *Oenanthe albifrons* A pair seen well in Mole NP.

Familiar Chat *Oenanthe familiaris* 1 seen in Mole NP.

Fraser's Sunbird (Scarlet-tufted S) *Deleornis fraseri* This atypical sunbird was seen well in the various forests.

Mangrove Sunbird (Brown S) *Anthreptes gabonicus* A pair was nesting at the Ebi River.



Swamp Flycatchers in West Africa look very different from their East African counterparts (left). This little Mangrove Sunbird was nesting at the Ebi River (right). (Nik Borrow)

Little Green Sunbird *Anthreptes seimundi* Seen from the canopy walkway.

Grey-chinned Sunbird (Green S, Yellow-chinned S) *Anthreptes rectirostris* (LO, H) Heard only at Kakum.

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris* Common and widespread in the forests.

Pygmy Sunbird *Hedydipna platyura* Small numbers seen well in the north.

Reichenbach's Sunbird *Anabathmis reichenbachii* Seen at the Ebi River and on the edge of Ankasa.

Green-headed Sunbird (Olive-backed S) *Cyanomitra verticalis* A pair with a juvenile on the edge of Kakum.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanaolaema* Occasionally encountered in the various forests.

Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea* Common and widespread in the various forests.

Buff-throated Sunbird *Chalcomitra adelberti* A beautiful sunbird, seen well from the walkway albeit a bit distant.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Common in the north.

Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius* Small numbers in the Kakum forests but prefers edge and farm bush.

Tiny Sunbird *Cinnyris minullus* Small numbers in the Kakum forests.

Beautiful Sunbird *Cinnyris pulchellus* Easily seen in the north.

Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinigastrus* Sightings at Shai Hills and Brenu Road.

Johanna's Sunbird *Cinnyris johannae* Just 1 was seen briefly at Ankasa.

Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus* 2 males in Kakum and Opro forests.

Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus* Small numbers in the coastal savannas.

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Seen at a petrol station en route to Ankasa.

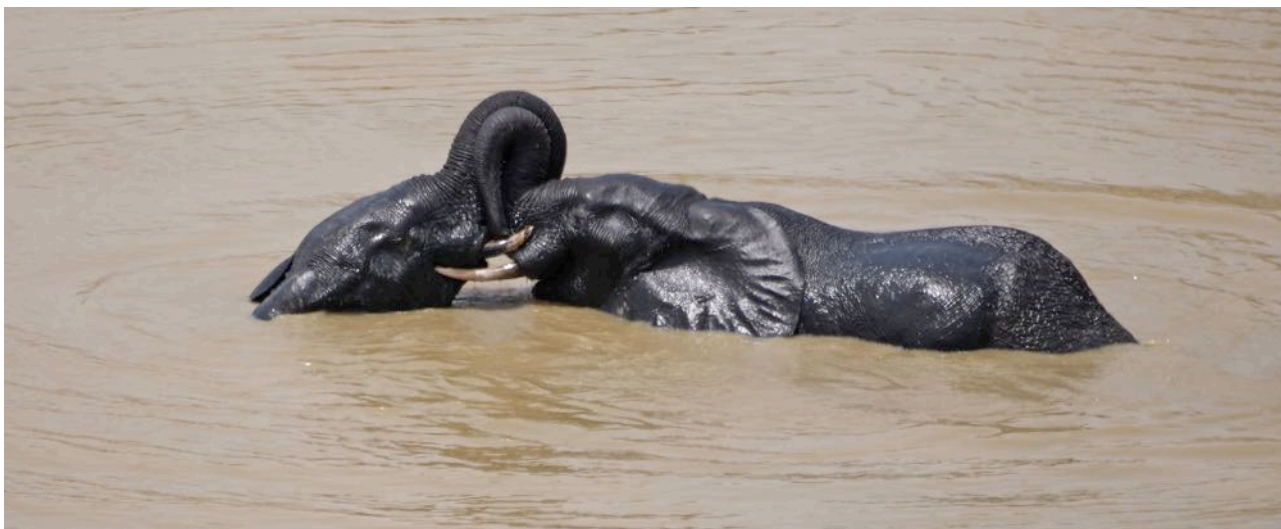
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* Widespread and mainly seen on journeys.
Bush Petronia *Gymnoris dentata* Common in the north.
Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser superciliosus* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus* 1 male in Mole NP.
Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis* Small numbers in the forest zone.
Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius* Seen well en route to Ankasa.
Heuglin's Masked Weaver *Ploceus heuglini* Small numbers in non-breeding plumage in Mole NP.
Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus* Common and widespread.
Vieillot's Black Weaver (Chestnut-and-black W) *Ploceus [nigerrimus] castaneofuscus* Common in the south.



Orange Weaver (left) and Vieillot's Black Weaver (right) sometimes split a separate species, Chestnut-and-black Weaver. (Nik Borrow)

Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus* Non-breeding plumaged birds in Mole NP.
Yellow-mantled Weaver *Ploceus tricolor* Seen well at Bobiri Forest.
Red-vented Malimbe *Malimbus scutatus* 4 seen at Ankasa.
Blue-billed Malimbe (Gray's M) *Malimbus nitens* Small numbers seen in the forests.
Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis* Easily seen in the various forests.
Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus* Just 1 in Bobiri Forest.
Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops* Small numbers of non-breeding birds in farmbrush at Abrafo.
Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* 1 for some en route to Daboya.
Black-winged Red Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus* Non-breeding plumaged birds in farmbrush at Abrafo.
Northern Red Bishop (Orange B) *Euplectes franciscanus* Non-breeding plumaged birds en route to Daboya.
Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura* Non-breeding plumaged birds only.
Red-fronted Antpecker *Parmoptila rubrifrons* Great looks at a male for some at Ankasa.
White-breasted Nigrita (W-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus* 2 seen at Antwikwaa.
Chestnut-breasted Nigrita (C-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita bicolor* Small numbers seen in the forests.
Grey-headed Nigrita (G-crowned Negrofinch) *Nigrita canicapillus* Commonly encountered in the forests.
Red-winged Pytilia *Pytilia phoenicoptera* 4 seen well in Mole NP.

Western Bluebill *Spermophaga haematina* A skulking bird at Kakum and again at Ankasa.
Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta* Seen along the Brenu Road and in the north.
Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* Small numbers in Mole NP.
African Firefinch (Blue-billed F) *Lagonosticta rubricata* A few seen at Abrafo on the edge of Kakum.
Black-faced Firefinch *Lagonosticta larvata* A few including a male seen in Mole NP.
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus* Commonly encountered in the north.
Lavender Waxbill *Estrilda caerulescens* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda* Seen at Ebi River and in the north.
Black-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda troglodytes* Seen in the Daboya area.
African Silverbill *Euodice cantans* 3 seen at Daboya.
Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* Common and widespread.
Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor* Small flocks were seen in the forest zone.
Magpie Mannikin *Lonchura fringilloides* 5 were seen at Abrafo on the edge of Kakum.
Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* A few widespread sightings but all non-breeding plumaged birds.
Exclamatory Paradise Whydah *Vidua interjecta* Non-breeding plumaged birds presumably this species in Mole NP.
Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* Palearctic migrants at Brenu, Kakum and Mole.
African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* Scattered sightings in the south.
Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus* Seen well at Shai Hills.
Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* A pair at Winneba.
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* Palearctic migrants seen at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.
Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica* Small numbers in the north.
Brown-rumped Bunting *Emberiza affinis* Seen well in Mole NP.
Cabanis's Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi* (LO) James saw 1 in Mole NP.



African Elephants in Mole NP (Nik Borrow)

MAMMALS

Total of mammal species recorded: 31

African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Western Tree Hyrax *Dendrohyrax dorsalis* (H) Heard at night in the forests.
(West African) Potto *Perodicticus potto* Seen well at night in Kakum NP and again at Ankasa.
Northern Lesser Galago (Senegal G) *Galago senegalensis* (LO) Seen by James at night in Mole NP.
Demidoff's Dwarf Galago *Galagoides demidovii* Seen at night in the various forests.
Lowe's (Campbell's) Monkey *Cercopithecus [campbelli] lowei* (H) Seen well in Kakum NP.
Lesser Spot-nosed Monkey *Cercopithecus petaurista* Seen well in Kakum NP.
Green Monkey (Callithrix M) *Cercopithecus sabaeus* A few in Mole NP.
Patas Monkey *Erythrocebus patas* Common in Mole NP.
Olive Baboon *Papio anubis* Seen at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Olive Colobus *Procolobus verus* A few seen in Kakum NP.

Pel's Anomalure (P's Flying Squirrel) *Anomalurus peli* 2 for some at night in Kakum NP.

Fire-footed Rope Squirrel *Funisciurus pyrrhopus* Seen by some in the forests.

Small Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus punctatus* Seen from the canopy walkway in Kakum NP.

Red-legged Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus rufobrachium* 1 seen at Ankasa.

Green Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus poensis* 2 sightings in the forests.

African Giant Squirrel (African G S) *Protoxerus stangeri* 1 seen at Ankasa.

Striped Ground Squirrel *Euxerus erythropus* Seen at Winneba and in the north.

Common Cusimanse *Crossarchus obscurus* 2 seen by the first car in Ankasa.

Common Genet *Genetta Genetta* (LO) 1 ran across the road at night in Mole NP.

Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* Easily seen in Mole NP.

Western Hartebeest *Alcelaphus [buselaphus] major* 3 in Mole NP.

Red-flanked Duiker *Cephalophus rufilatus* A couple seen in Mole NP.

Common Duiker (Bush D) *Sylvicapra grimmia* 1 seen at night in Mole NP.

Waterbuck (Defassa W) *Kobus [ellipsiprymnus] defassa* 8+ seen well in Mole NP.

Buffon's Kob *Kobus kob* Seen first at Shai Hills but common in Mole NP.

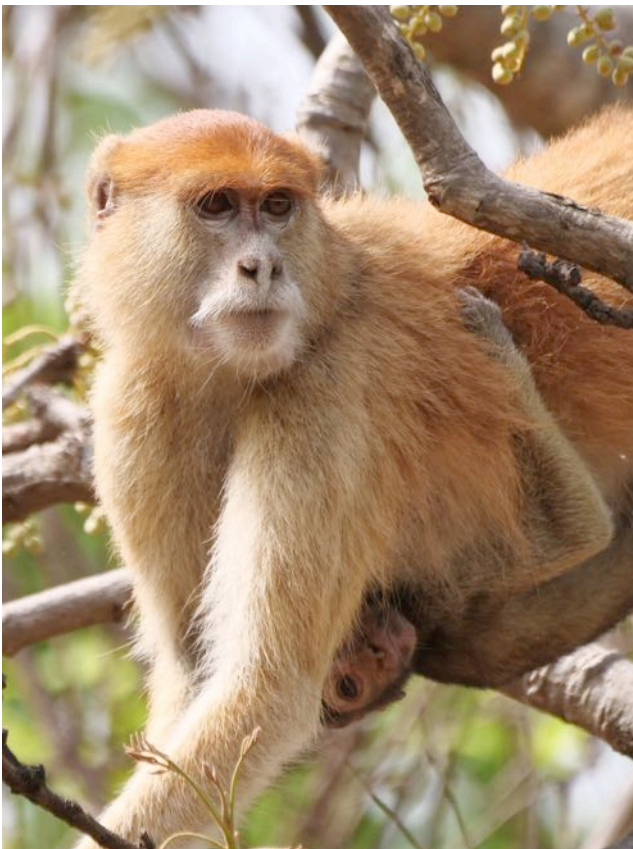
Central Bushbuck *Tragelaphus phaleratus* Small numbers in Mole NP.

Straw-coloured Fruit Bat *Eidolon helvum* Thousands seen flying over Accra.

Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus gambianus* Seen in Mole NP.

Franquet's Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomops franqueti* Seen at Ankasa.

Hammer-headed Fruit Bat *Hypsignathus monstrosus* Seen in the Kakum area and at Ankasa.



Patas Monkey in Mole National Park (left) and Graceful Chameleon en route to Daboya. (Nik Borrow)