



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 2020

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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 we birded the thickets that

surround the base of the rocky outcrops frequented by White-crowned Cliff Chats, Heuglin's Masked Weaver and colourful Bearded Barbets. A brief visit to Winneba Lagoon produced the recently split West African Crested Tern and our first Western Reef Herons but sadly, the neighbouring Winneba Plains have recently been largely destroyed and turned into a solar energy plant but even so we enjoyed views of Senegal Lapwing, Red-winged Warbler and Guinea Turaco 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, White-tailed Alethe, Buff-throated Sunbird, Copper-tailed Starling and other mouth-watering species such as Long-tailed Hawk, Congo Serpent Eagle, White-spotted Flufftail, Rosy Bee-eater, Fraser's Eagle-Owl, Black-shouldered and Long-tailed Nightjars as well as some good 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, a stop along the coastal road gave us Allen's Gallinule. 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 Finsch's Rufous Thrush, Rufous-winged Illadopsis, and Red-fronted Antpecker as well as rarely seen species such as a juvenile White-crested Tiger Heron on the nest, Spot-breasted Ibis, Akun Eagle-Owl, Red-chested Owlet, Shining-blue and White-bellied Kingfishers plus a terrific sighting of a pair of Nkulengu Rail at their roost site. The return journey gave us Hartlaub's Duck and Mangrove and Reichenbach's Sunbirds as well as some secretive Baumann's Greenbuls. From Kumasi we headed north and stopping at a patch of forest we were delighted to see Red-billed Helmetshrike, Fiery-breasted Bushshrike and Puvell's Illadopsis. 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, Standard-winged Nightjar, Ovambo Sparrowhawk, several Sun Larks, Brown-rumped Bunting and a showy White-throated Francolin. A visit to Daboya produced some astounding views of Egyptian Plover before we returned south to visit the butterfly sanctuary at Bobiri where we saw Red-chested Goshawk and Red-thighed Sparrowhawk before heading back to Accra where the trip ended.

Amongst the many other wonderful specialties encountered during this tour were Stone Partridge, Latham's Francolin (heard only), Brown Nightjar, Black Spinetail, Violet Turaco, Black-throated Coucal, Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, 'West' African Pied, 'Western' Piping, 'Western' White-crested, Brown-cheeked and Yellow-casqued (heard only) Hornbills, Blue-bellied Roller, Bristle-nosed, Hairy-breasted, Bearded and 'Western' Yellow-billed Barbets, Yellow-footed Honeyguide, African Piculet (heard only), Fine-spotted and Little Green (heard only) Woodpeckers, Brown-necked Parrot, Senegal and Fernando Po (heard only) Batises, Lowland Sooty Boubou (heard only), Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Western Square-tailed and Fanti Drongos, Forest Penduline Tit, White-throated Greenbul (heard only), Green-tailed and Grey-headed Bristlebills, Western Bearded and Yellow-bearded (heard only) Greenbuls, Fanti Saw-wing, Preuss's Cliff Swallow, Kemp's Longbill, Dorst's and Rufous Cisticolas, Oriole Warbler, Violet-backed Hyliota, Olivaceous, Gambaga and Ussher's Flycatchers, White-crowned Robin-Chat, 'Western' and 'Ghana' Forest Robins, White-fronted Black Chat, 'Yellow-chinned' Grey-chinned and Pygmy Sunbirds, Orange, Heuglin's Masked, Vieillot's 'Chestnut-and-black', Maxwell's Black and Preuss's Weavers, Red-vented Malimbe, Red-winged Pytilia, Black-faced Firefinch, Magpie Mannikin, Exclamatory Paradise Whydah and West African Seed-eater.



We were treated to some excellent sightings of the incredible Standard-winged Nightjar in Mole National Park. (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 supposedly well into the dry season but recent rains meant that the vegetation was quite lush and a heavy overnight storm meant that the bus could not access the interior of the park. 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. The piping calls of African Grey Hornbills sounded out over the plains whilst Senegal Parrots screeched past and our first major target, a dapper trio of White-crowned Cliff Chats perched up on top of the boulders. African Pygmy Kingfishers were busy zipping to and fro, pretty Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters were seen and high overhead were our first Rosy Bee-eaters. Yellow-rumped and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbirds hammered away and colourful Vieillot's, Double-toothed and Bearded Barbets and the stunning Yellow-crowned Gonolek were seen. We teased some Grey-headed Bristlebills out of the shadows and were pleased to gain first looks at the bizarre Oriole Warbler (or Moho, which is currently placed in the family *Cisticolidae*). Some Heuglin's Masked Weavers were a good find and other species noted included Common Swift, Senegal Coucal, Laughing Dove, African Cuckoo-Hawk, Shikra, Yellow-billed Kite, Red-necked Buzzard, Cardinal Woodpecker, Lanner Falcon, Brown-throated Wattle-eye, Northern Puffback, Pied Crow, Glossy-backed Drongo, Common Bulbul, Melodious Warbler, Croaking and Short-winged Cisticolas, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Blackcap Babbler, Purple Starling, African Thrush, Spotted and European Pied Flycatchers, Olive-bellied, Splendid and Copper Sunbirds and Black-necked Weaver.



Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird (left) and Vieillot's Barbet (right) were both seen during our first morning birding Shai Hills. (Nik Borrow)

After lunch we headed back towards Accra where the heavy traffic in and around the capital consumed us and the only birds apparent were numerous Western Cattle Egrets, Black-winged Kite, Northern Grey-headed Sparrows, African Palm and Little Swifts, Barn Swallow, Village Weaver and the ubiquitous Pied Crow. Reaching Winneba in the late afternoon we headed first to the lagoon where we quickly found numbers of the recently split West African Crested Tern as well as both colour morphs of Western Reef Heron. The mud flats supported fair numbers of shorebirds and we duly ticked off Black-winged Stilt, Spur-winged Lapwing, Grey Plover, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Common Sandpiper and Common Greenshank. A single Sandwich Tern was seen and there was also Grey Heron, Great Egret and Malachite and Pied Kingfishers.

A few Piapiacs were seen in the town itself as we relocated to the nearby 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. Colourful Guinea Turacos were encouraged to show themselves,

White-throated Bee-eaters were pleasingly numerous and a Senegal Lapwing was an excellent find. A Red-winged Warbler showed well and other new birds included Red-eyed Dove, Black-billed Wood Dove, Grey Kestrel, Flappet Lark, Senegal Eremomela, Violet-backed Starling, Whinchat, Yellow-mantled Widowbird, Bronze Mannikin and Tree Pipit. As the day was fast drawing to a close we then drove the remaining distance to our hotel conveniently situated near Kakum National Park for a three night's stay.



Ghana's famous canopy walkway in Kakum National Park. (Nik Borrow)

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 steep stone steps that led us up the hillside to the start of the walkway itself where a Blue-throated Roller was there to greet us. As we passed along the rope cradle it bounced and swayed whilst the platforms around the boles of the enormous trees creaked and shifted. Resting on one of the platforms, 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. Here we waited for the activity to commence and eventually our first Upper Guinea endemic specialties were encountered and during the morning we enjoyed views of the strikingly patterned Brown-cheeked Hornbill that flew in to land on a nearby tree; a family party of no less than 5 Fire-bellied Woodpeckers made an appearance; several West African Wattle-eyes and Fanti Drongos were seen and the rather drab Ussher's Flycatcher was sighted right at the top of the tallest trees.

We were lucky to see a pair of Olivaceous Flycatchers building their nest nearby, Red-fronted Parrots screeched past and Green Hylias piped out their disyllabic call from thick vegetation that provided wonderful hiding places for species such as Yellow-billed Turaco, Blue Malkoha, African Emerald Cuckoo, Tambourine Dove, White-crested Hornbill, Sabine's Puffback, Black-winged Oriole, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Violet-backed Hylota, Fraser's, Collared, Tiny and Johanna's Sunbirds and Crested Malimbe. Amongst the fruiting trees we were introduced to a confusing array of greenbuls that included Little Grey, Plain, Yellow-whiskered, Honeyguide and Spotted Greenbuls whilst Speckled and Red-rumped Tinkerbirds and Naked-faced, Yellow-spotted and Hairy-breasted Barbets pooped, trilled and squeaked all around us but were not easy to see.

Higher in the trees we spotted the handsome Blue-headed Wood Dove and also African Green Pigeon, African Pied and Black-casqued Hornbills and the pretty Black Bee-eater. Red-headed Malimbos crept along the bare branches whilst the spreading canopies allowed good foraging opportunities for Chestnut-winged Starling, Yellow-mantled Weaver and Grey-headed Nigritas. In the skies above a few airborne raptors included African Harrier-Hawk, Palm-nut Vulture and European Honey Buzzard whilst over our heads were some high-flying Sabine's Spinetail, Common Swift, Fanti Saw-wing and Common House Martin.



The walkway allowed us to get up close to the seldom seen Olivaceous Flycatcher (left). Our sighting of a Black-bellied (or Long-tailed) Pangolin (right) was the highlight of the morning! (Nik Borrow)

However, there was one sighting that almost eclipsed all of the birds that we had seen put together and this was of a superb Black-bellied (aka Long-tailed) Pangolin that James discovered feeding in the foliage below us. Great views were obtained but 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 the Upper Guinea endemic Western Bearded Greenbul, Sharpe's Apalis and Finsch's Rufous Thrush although seeing the pretty little 'Ghana' Forest Robin was more of a struggle. This population is presumably of the recently described endemic form *inexpectatus* that has even been proposed to be a separate species! We also saw the more widespread Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher.

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 the astonishing Pel's Anomalure showed and a Brown Nightjar started calling but remained out of sight. Returning to the bus we spotlighted Demidoff's Galago and West African Potto and a little later a stake-out produced the hoped for Fraser's Eagle-Owl.

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 farmbrush can be surprisingly productive. Initially we spent some time in a dark thicket where we successfully prised out a male White-spotted Flufftail from the shadows. 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 farmbrush where some superb Black Bee-eaters perched up for all to see. The Upper Guinea endemic Buff-throated Sunbird was admired and easily seen and was followed by a Red-cheeked Wattle-eye that was heard calling. Our endeavours to see it were for once fairly painless and we had some wonderful looks at this spectacular little bird. We were not quite so fortunate with a furtive Kemp's Longbill only gaining a brief glimpse and a trio of Red-vented Malimbos were also only seen briefly but to compensate we did see other skulkers such as Grey Longbill, Green Crombec, Olive-green Camaroptera and also the tiny Tit Hylia which lays claim to being Africa's smallest bird. To add to the excitement, a Long-tailed Hawk was heard calling and we spent a while trying to coax it into view and finally enjoyed terrific scope views of it perched in the top of a tall tree.



Two spectacular species were seen at Antwikwaa; Africa's smallest bird, the strange Tit Hylia (left) and the stunning Red-cheeked Wattle-eye (Right) (Nik Borrow)

A sighting of a Black-throated Coucal was an added bonus and other species seen during this productive morning included Black Spinetail, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, Bristle-nosed Barbet, Red-rumped and Yellow-throated Tinkerbirds, Thick-billed Honeyguide, Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher, Swamp Palm Bulbul, Splendid and Narrow-tailed Starlings, Fraser's Forest and Dusky-blue Flycatchers, Little Green and Olive Sunbirds, Chestnut-breasted Nigrita 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 resting on the rocks in the river as well as six Rock Pratincoles of the rufous-naped race *iberiae*. We also noted Ethiopian and Lesser Striped Swallows and African Pied Wagtail. 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.

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, but we started well with a beautiful view of a male Rufous-sided Broadbill spinning on his perch like a mechanical toy in the dark undergrowth. We battled with a Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo that was reluctant to leave the tangles and got glimpses of Western Bluebill and a pair of Blue-headed Crested Flycatchers in the undergrowth, several Maxwell's Black Weavers in a vine tangle but the sighting of high-flying Upper Guinea endemic Copper-tailed Glossy Starling was somewhat disappointing to say the least. We fared much better with a pair of White-tailed Alethes just before dusk when the shadowy shape of a Brown Nightjar sailed past and started calling from the nearby shrubbery. Unfortunately, the single view was all that it gave but as we drove back a superb male Black-shouldered Nightjar posed for us and a Long-tailed Nightjar was illuminated by the headlights as it dashed across the road.



In the Kakum forests we watched a dapper male Rufous-sided Broadbill (left) twirling on his perch and after dark an obliging male Black-shouldered Nightjar (right) posed for us. (Nik Borrow)

The next morning, we started soon after dawn birding in the farmbrush surrounding Kakum and picked up quite a few species in this disturbed habitat. The weedy fields sheltered Red-faced and Singing Cisticolas, Black-winged Red Bishop, Bar-breasted and African Firefinches, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Magpie Mannikin and Pin-tailed Whydah. A Blue-headed Coucal was calling from a cassava, a male Marsh Tchagra popped into view along with Northern Fiscal and Simple Greenbul whilst overhead we saw some Piping Hornbills, Mottled Spinetail and Black Sparrowhawk. We then continued into the forest that we had visited the previous day where we finally all got to grips with the mega-skulking Kemp's Longbill. Further along the track a trio of Sabine's Puffback passed back and forth above our heads, a superb Chocolate-backed Kingfisher was scoped and we also saw Western Oriole, Icterine Greenbul and White-breasted Nigrita.

After lunch we set off for Ankasa making two short stops en route. The first was very productive at a pool where we found some Orange Weavers. An adult, immature and juvenile Allen's Gallinules here were a real bonus and there were also White-faced Whistling Duck, African Pygmy Geese, Common Moorhen and African Jacana.

Later we spent a fruitless hour at a river crossing where we looked for Hartlaub's Duck and Reichenbach's and Mangrove (or Brown) Sunbird but to no avail and as time was by now pressing we headed on to Ankasa Conservation Area where, due to the state of the road we had to abandon the bus and transfer into some land rovers to get to our camp near the entrance of the park. After a fine dinner and cold beers we enjoyed great views of a very fine Akun Eagle Owl and a friendly African Wood Owl.

Ankasa Conservation Area is a superb area of wet evergreen forest that between the years 1960 to 1974 only suffered relatively light logging. Eleven 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 tour proved to be no exception!

After a good breakfast our first port of call was to check on a juvenile White-crested Tiger Heron sitting on the nest. Sadly, the adults were not apparent during our stay but the youngster was quite a character! We

watched the river for a while where a pair of Cassin's Flycatchers was in residence, Little Greenbuls foraged in the shrubbery and our only Grey Parrot of the tour flew overhead but little else was active so we boarded the vehicles and headed deeper in to the forest where we walked further into the interior to a series of small pools where a watch and wait tactic was adopted. A Shining-blue Kingfisher was present when we arrived and it wasn't long before a brilliant little White-bellied Kingfisher put in a superb appearance. Blue-billed Malimbos were nesting but trying to squeeze new species out of the forest was hard work. A skulking Green-tailed Bristlebill was no more than a disembodied voice and some moving vegetation. We fared better with some Ansorge's Greenbuls and a pretty 'western' Forest Robin but battled with a Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill until it eventually showed to all. The Square-tailed Saw-wings over the forest were easy enough to see but a 'Western' Yellow-billed Barbet gave the briefest of views and try as hard as we could we simply could not see some vocal Upper Guinea endemic Yellow-bearded Greenbuls amongst the tall trees.



Our first full day at Ankasa started well with great views of White-bellied Kingfisher (left) and Shining-blue Kingfisher (right). (Nik Borrow)

We were planning to watch the pools until dusk in the hope of seeing a Spot-breasted Ibis and searching for roosting Nkulengu Rails but before the appointed time the skies darkened prematurely and a wind got up with an advancing storm and as the heavens opened we retreated back to the cars and were forced to return to base for a wet night.

With this set-back we had to formulate a new plan and so we found ourselves up and away by four in the morning driving through the inky blackness of the quiet forest, the only sound was the water dripping from the trees. We made our way to the tree where we hoped the Nkulengu Rails would still be roosting and as luck would have it they were there and we successfully spot-lighted three birds standing in a row on an exposed branch way above our heads! This species had in the past been one to dream about but never see, however the local guides and drivers have become adept at finding these peculiar birds on their roosts at night and although not guaranteed sightings have now become much more reliable. With this early morning success, we headed back for breakfast after which we explored the trails near our camp. We slipped in between the enormous trees in search of the rare Upper Guinea endemic Rufous-winged Illadopsis and reached a known territory where fortunately the bird was vocal and although initially not easy to see with perseverance everyone managed some good views. There was definitely more activity in the forest this morning and fortunately we came across an ant swarm that had attracted quite a selection of birds. The presence of Shining Drongo was a good sign as they are often associated with bird parties and noisy Red-tailed Greenbuls darted back and forth high in the lianas. We also managed views of a female Red-fronted Antpecker (another Upper Guinea endemic) and lower down on or near the ground we found some showy Red-tailed Bristlebills and a very fine Green-tailed Bristlebill (a rare and endangered Upper Guinea endemic) that sat and posed for us as well as White-tailed Ant Thrush and a smart Brown-chested Alethe. In the afternoon we returned to the pools but once again it was very quiet but at dusk a pair of Spot-breasted Ibis flew right over our heads calling loudly. The Nkulengu Rails however had found another perch that evening!

During the final morning of our stay we explored the main track and also a side trail where a tiny African Dwarf Kingfisher was seen by some in the dark undergrowth. An Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo showed pretty well and we also saw impressively top-knotted Great Blue Turacos, Black-capped Apalis and a furtive Blackcap Illadopsis but the prize of the morning had to be a super little Red-chested Owlet that stared angrily down at us from the canopy.



Our sighting of the bright-eyed Akun Eagle-Owl (left) and bizarre Nkulengu Rail (right) were highlights of our time spent at Ankasa. It was hard work but worth it! (Nik Borrow)

Our time at Ankasa had been a bit of a struggle but we had seen some top quality species so all agreed that the hardship had been worth it and after an early lunch we retraced our steps back towards Kakum. We paused briefly at the river where this time the desired Hartlaub's Ducks were showing well and we also managed good views of the Mangrove (or Brown) Sunbird and a brief look at Reichenbach's Sunbird before a fierce storm caught up with us and we had to retreat to the bus.

In the late afternoon we broke our journey at an area of coastal scrub and although time was short we added a few excellent species. We obtained our best views of Guinea Turaco and a pair of African Hobby was seen at their nest. Overhead were some vocal Pallid Swifts and we also saw Senegal Thick-knee and Western Yellow Wagtail. However, the prize bird was the unassuming Baumann's Greenbul which preferred to keep deep in the thickets only showing briefly before diving back into cover. A daytime Long-tailed Nightjar was found in the process of trying to get better views and our final tick of the day was a trio of Tropical Boubou.

The following morning, we returned to the canopy walkway at Kakum as this seemed the best choice to maximise our new birds. A low mist hung over the trees making viewing difficult and certainly quietened any activity. A Congo Serpent Eagle was heard calling and with some persistence we saw the bird itself and enjoyed some remarkable scope views particularly when the mist lifted! It was somewhat frustrating to see some Violet-backed Hyliotas fly over without stopping and we had similarly brief views of Levillant's and Black Cuckoos and the 'Yellow-chinned' form of Grey-chinned Sunbird but we fared better with some tiny Forest Penduline Tits and Chestnut-capped Flycatchers foraging over our heads and also added Purple-throated Cuckooshrike, Slender-billed and Golden Greenbuls, Wood Warbler, Superb Sunbird and a super pair of Preuss's Weavers to our list.

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. We paused along the way at the forest edge where we saw a fine Blue Cuckooshrike after which we completed the walk to the nests without any other new birds and reached the colony in good time to settle into our seats. After about ten minutes the first bird appeared showing well for us early and although the views were good we were eager for more so stayed on for the show to start in earnest. It was a bright and sunny afternoon but after a while there were some ominous thundery rumbles and as the magic hour of 17:00 neared so the wind started whipping up and the skies blackened. For a while we didn't know whether to stay or leave and there was no sign of the birds but at 17:10 they came bouncing in only a few feet away and the decision was made for us. 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. This year the phenomenal experience was perhaps the most dramatic it has ever been, the birds were almost close enough to touch and the wind was sending loose branches and vegetation crashing to the ground as a few spots of rain fell. In fact, one large branch nearly hit our local guides! We braved the storm which passed through quite quickly in the company of five picathartes until we deemed it safe enough to return through the forest and leave them to go to roost. 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 a pair of Brown-necked Parrots and a Red-thighed Sparrowhawk shot past and we saw our first colourful Blue-bellied and Broad-billed Rollers. A flock of striking Upper Guinea endemic Red-billed Helmetshrikes showed well, a pair of Puvell's Illadopsis was watched foraging in the leaf litter and we had another encounter with some Baumann's Greenbuls. Perhaps the highlight of the morning was the presence of a trio of Fiery-breasted Bushshrikes and we spent a good deal of time trying to make sure that everyone had views. Other additions to our lists included Lizard Buzzard, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, African Paradise Flycatcher, Western Nicator and Tree Pipit.



At Opro Forest we saw our first colourful Blue-bellied Rollers (left) and further north en route to Mole National Park sightings of Grasshopper Buzzards (right) increased. (Nik Borrow)

Travelling north along the main road we added Speckled Pigeon, Black Crake, Green Sandpiper, Intermediate and Little Egrets and Hamerkop by the Black Volta and the journey was also good for spotting raptors with sightings of Gabar Goshawk, Dark Chanting Goshawk and good numbers of Grasshopper Buzzards. Vinaceous Dove, Common Kestrel and Purple and Bronze-tailed Starlings were also seen and we reached Mole National Park just as it was getting dark and perfectly timed to see a male Standard-winged Nightjar in full breeding regalia which was a fantastic way to end this busy travel day!

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 Red-billed Firefinch, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and the pretty little Lavender Waxbill scabbled for food in dry leaf litter. We were particularly pleased to find a male Red-winged Pytilia which can sometimes be difficult to see and some non-breeding plumaged paradise-whydahs here were presumably Exclamatory Paradise Whydah. 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. Rainbow coloured Red-throated Bee-eaters nest in eroded banks around the waterholes and everywhere was a riot of colour with species like Grey-headed and Blue-breasted Kingfishers, African Blue Flycatcher, Long-tailed Glossy Starling, Snowy-crowned and White-crowned Robin-Chats and gorgeous Western Violet-backed, Pygmy, Scarlet-chested and Beautiful Sunbirds. Other thicket species included Yellow-breasted Apalis, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Little and Black-headed Weavers and Northern Red Bishop.

Around the main waterhole flocks of Helmeted Guineafowl scurried about, Woolly-necked Stork was seen and we also caught up with Hadada Ibis, Black-crowned Night Heron, Striated, Squacco, Black-headed and Purple Herons, Hamerkop, African Wattled Lapwing, Black Crake and Wire-tailed Swallow.

The surrounding Guinea savanna woodlands held a somewhat different variety of birdlife and species encountered during our stay included Stone Partridge, Double-spurred Spurfowl, Green Wood Hoopoe, Abyssinian Roller, Greater Honeyguide, Fine-spotted Woodpecker, Senegal Batis, Brubru, African Golden Oriole, White-shouldered Black Tit, Willow Warbler, Brown Babbler, Northern Yellow White-eye, Grey Tit-Flycatcher, Northern Black Flycatcher, White-fronted Black Chat, Sahel Bush Sparrow, and Black-faced Firefinches, and Yellow-fronted Canary.

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 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.



Sun Larks (left) were seen several times on the sweat-bee infested plains. A pair of Gambaga Flycatchers (right) was a particularly good find! (Nik Borrow)

During the afternoon we searched the dry lateritic plains for the much-wanted Forbes's Plover where we were seriously plagued by sweat bees that endeavoured to enter our eyes, ears, noses and mouths. To appease our suffering, we found small numbers of Sun Larks and Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Larks and in particular, a pair of scarce Gambaga Flycatchers was a great find whilst a pair of Black-headed Lapwing appears to be the first record for the park.

In the late afternoon a male White-throated Francolin allowed some good looks and as dusk fell the purring bleeps of African Scops Owls sounded out and we enjoyed another intimate encounter with another male Standard-winged Nightjar in full plumage. On the drive back to the motel a couple of Greyish Eagle-Owls were seen as well as some leaping Northern Lesser Galagos and the sleek Common Genet.

On our second day we left the park and drove some distance to the town of Daboya in search of the sublime Egyptian Plover. Along the way we noted Red-chested Swallows in the villages and a short roadside stop gave us Winding Cisticola and Moustached Grass Warbler 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 we were treated to some really superb and prolonged views of this unique shorebird. As we watched them searching for food they were joined on the sand banks by White-crowned Lapwing and some of us also saw Giant Kingfisher, Red-billed Quelea and an African Silverbill. On the drive back, we saw our first Purple (or Rufous-crowned) Roller and stopped for some spectacularly plumed White-crested Helmetshrikes where a Red-headed Weaver was also found.



Egyptian Plover, perhaps the world's most beautiful wader? (Nik Borrow)

In the afternoon we were back in the park and visited a small creek where we stayed out until dark. We made slow progress with the birds but did add a number of species although not all were seen by everyone with some views being brief in flight to somewhere else. New for the list included African Cuckoo, Black Scimitarbill, Striped Kingfisher, Rose-ringed Parakeet, African Grey and Brown-backed Woodpeckers, White-breasted Cuckooshrike and Lesser Blue-eared Starling. The hoped for Four-banded Sandgrouse did not come to the pools to drink but we successfully found some by the side of the road as we drove back to the motel.

For our last day we started our birding in some wooded cultivation on the edge of the park where we finally saw some Bruce's Green Pigeons and Yellow-billed Shrikes that had been curiously missing. A small bird party held Pale Flycatcher and both Rufous and Dorst's Cisticolas, a family of West African Seedeaters and the attractive Brown-rumped Bunting. As the day warmed up we moved on to Mognori where we saw a

Lesser Honeyguide and a female Standard-winged Nightjar at a roost but spent most of our time trying to get good views of Western Square-tailed Drongo. At lunchtime a pair of Beaudouin's Snake Eagles flew over the lodge and would have been seen well by all were it not for the lack of binoculars available! In the afternoon a walk below the motel gave us long overdue Northern Red-billed Hornbill as well as a fine Ovambo Sparrowhawk and a super Pearl-spotted Owlet. At night our struggles continued and we must have spent an hour trying to see a Northern White-faced Owl which we finally found in the top of one of the larger trees. 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, 'Buffon's' Kob and Red-flanked Duiker.



We concluded our stay in Mole National Park with two owls; Pearl-spotted Owlet (left) and Northern White-faced Owl (right). (Nik Borrow)

Our time at Mole had come to a wet end for heavy overnight thunder storms meant that we woke to a damp morning and a rather soggy Familiar Chat was our last bird before we 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.

Our final morning of the tour was spent at Bobiri Forest and Butterfly Sanctuary a place that is usually also blessed with good birds. However, the activity this visit was definitely on the slow side. A singing Narina Trogon remained a disembodied voice hidden in the canopy but we did get another chance to see species such as Red-chested Goshawk, Red-thighed Sparrowhawk, Hairy-breasted Barbet and Copper-tailed Starling whilst Common Cuckoo and Ashy Flycatcher were new for the trip.

The time 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 only for the adventurous 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!

A special thanks must be made to James Ntakor, Jackson Owusu and our excellent driver Anim who all worked so hard to make this tour a success as borders and flights started shutting down due to the rise of Coronavirus. Fortunately we managed to run the tour to its rightful conclusion and I'm glad that everyone got home safely.



A juvenile White-crested Tiger Heron on the nest at Ankasa. (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: 415

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Common in Mole NP.

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

Latham's Francolin (Forest F) *Peliperdix lathamii* (H) Heard only at night near Abrafo.

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

Double-spurred Francolin *Pternistis bicalcaratus* This large francolin seen well in Mole NP.

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* Seen en route to Ankasa.

Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubii* Great scope views of 4 at Ebi River on our second attempt.

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* 10+ on a roadside pool near Takoradi and a female at the Ebi River.

Brown Nightjar *Veles binotatus* 1 seen briefly at dusk in the Kakum forests.

Black-shouldered Nightjar *Caprimulgus nigriscapularis* Excellent views of a male near Abrafo.

Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus* Widespread sightings by both night and day.

Standard-winged Nightjar *Caprimulgus longipennis* Great views of breeding plumaged males in Mole NP.
Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri* Just 2 seen at Abrafo.
Black Spinetail *Telacanthura melanopygia* 1 seen flying low over Antwikwaa.
Sabine's Spinetail *Rhaphidura sabini* Seen well over the various forests.
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.
Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* A Palearctic migrant seen and heard over Brenu and Mole NP.
Little Swift *Apus affinis* Widespread sightings and commonly encountered throughout the tour.
Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata* These impressive turacos were seen well at Ankasa.
Guinea Turaco (Green T) *Tauraco persa* A number of widespread sightings this tour from Winneba to Opro Forest.



This female Standard-winged Nightjar (left) was found during the daytime in Mole National Park. Guinea Turacos (right) proved easy to see during this trip. (Nik Borrow)

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 Mole NP.
Western Plantain-eater *Crinifer piscator* Commonly encountered with widespread sightings during this tour.
Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster* (NL) 2 seen en route to Mole NP.
Black-throated Coucal *Centropus leucogaster* 2 sightings at Antwikwaa and Bobiri.
Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis* Widespread sightings.
Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus* Seen well near Abrafo.
Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares aereus* Widespread sightings in the various forests.
Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii* 3 sightings of this spiky-crested cuckoo.
Diederik Cuckoo (Didric C) *Chrysococcyx caprius* 2 females seen near Abrafo.
Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* More often heard than seen but scope views of a male near Abrafo.
African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus* A female seen in Kakum NP and heard elsewhere.
Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx olivinus* 1 glimpsed at Kakum but seen well at Ankasa.
Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus* More often heard than seen but seen from the canopy walkway.
African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* Excellent views in Mole NP.
Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus* 2 of these Palearctic migrants seen at Bobiri.
Four-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles quadricinctus* Seen well in Mole NP.
Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* Domestic 'Table' birds only.
Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* Seen by the Black Volta and at Daboya.
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* First seen on the Winneba Plains but most common 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* A pair was seen well from the canopy walkway.

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.

White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra* Good looks at a male at Antwikwaa.

African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis* 1 briefly at the Ebi River.

Nkulengu Rail *Himantornis haematopus* A trio watched on their roost site at Ankasa.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* Seen by the black Volta and in Mole NP.

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni* An adult, immature and a juvenile on a roadside pool near Takoradi.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* 6+ on a roadside pool near Takoradi.

Senegal Thick-knee *Burhinus senegalensis* Easily seen in Mole NP.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* 20+ at Winneba Lagoon.

Spur-winged Lapwing (S-w Plover) *Vanellus spinosus* Seen on coastal lagoons and also in the north.

Black-headed Lapwing *Vanellus tectus* An unusual sighting of a pair in Mole NP on 17/3.

White-crowned Lapwing (W-headed L) *Vanellus albiceps* A pair was seen at Daboya.

Senegal Lapwing (Lesser Black-winged L) *Vanellus lugubris* A good sighting of 1 at Winneba Plains.

African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus* Small numbers seen in the north.

Grey Plover (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* 20+ of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon.

Forbes's Plover *Charadrius forbesi* Excellent encounters with at least 3 birds in Mole NP.



A pair of Black-headed Lapwing (left) in Mole NP appear to be the first records for the park! Three Forbes's Plovers (right) were seen together in Mole National Park. (Nik Borrow)

Egyptian Plover *Pluvianus aegyptius* Super views of at least 4 adults at Daboya.

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* Widespread sightings in appropriate habitat.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* A few of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon and the Ebi River.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 8+ of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* 30+ of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants at widespread localities.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants by the Black Volta.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* 3 of these Palearctic migrants at the Ebi River.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants at coastal localities.

Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis* 6 of the race *iberiae* on the Pra River.

West African Crested Tern (Royal T) *Thalasseus albididorsalis* 20+ at Winneba Lagoon.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Winneba Lagoon.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* A pair seen in Mole NP.

Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus* Just 3 widespread sightings during this tour.

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 *Tigriornis leucolopha* Amazing views of a juvenile on the nest at Ankasa.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Singletons flying over Accra, at the Ebi River and 2 in Mole NP.

Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata* 2 sightings in Mole NP.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* A few seen at the Ebi River and in the Mole area.

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* Small numbers seen in the Mole NP area.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* One in Mole NP.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* Widespread sightings in suitable habitat.

Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E) *Ardea [intermedia] brachyrhyncha* One by the Black Volta.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Only reliably seen by the Black Volta and in the north.

Western Reef Heron *Egretta gularis* Small numbers of both colour morphs at coastal locations.

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* Easily seen in Mole NP and the north.

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Just 1 roadside sighting en route to Kakum.

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus* Widespread sightings and regularly encountered.

Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* Just 4 sightings all in the south.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* 1 of these Palearctic migrants seen by some at Kakum.

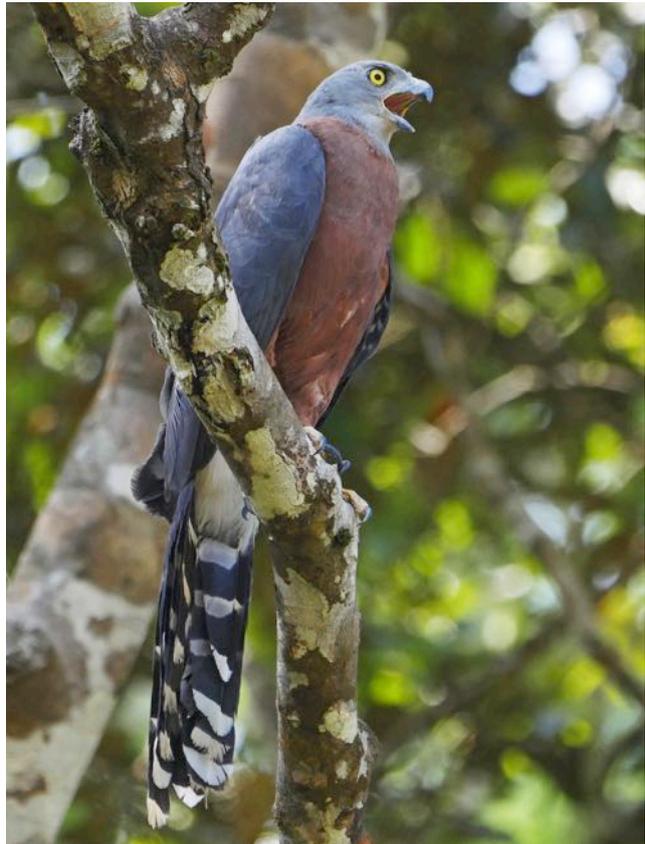
African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides* Sightings at Shai Hills, Antwikwaa and Bobiri Forest.

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* Seen along the coast road and at least 20 in Mole NP.

White-backed Vulture (African W-b V) *Gyps africanus* At least 15 seen in Mole NP.

Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini* A pair seen over Mole Motel one lunch time.

Congo Serpent Eagle *Circaetus spectabilis* Scope views from the Kakum canopy walkway.



Congo Serpent Eagle (left) and Long-tailed Hawk (right) are two raptors that everybody wants to see on this tour and this year we enjoyed scope views of both in the Kakum area. These photos were not taken on this tour but representative of our views! (Nik Borrow)

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* Small numbers seen in Mole NP with a maximum count of 8.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraetus wahlbergi* 1 seen by the roadside en route to Mole.

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* A few widespread sightings in the north.

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar* 3 sightings in the north.

Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates* Small numbers seen in the north.

Long-tailed Hawk *Urotriorchis macrourus* Scope views of a calling bird at Antwikwaa.

Red-chested Goshawk *Accipiter toussenelii* Our best views were at Bobiri.

Shikra *Accipiter badius* Widespread sightings throughout the tour.

Red-thighed Sparrowhawk *Accipiter erythropus* Flight views at Opro and Bobiri Forests.

Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis* Good flight views in Mole NP.

Black Sparrowhawk (Great S, B Goshawk) *Accipiter melanoleucus* 2 sightings in the Kakum area and 1 at Ankasa.

***Circus sp.* (NL)** A grey harrier seen near Cape Coast was thought to be either Pallid or Montagu's.

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* Sightings at Shai Hills and in the north.

African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis* (H) Only heard at Mole.

Northern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis leucotis* It took a while but finally seen well in Mole NP.

Greyish Eagle-Owl *Bubo cinerascens* At least 2 seen in Mole NP.

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

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

African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* Around our camp at Ankasa.



It was a great trip for owls; Greyish Eagle-Owl (left) was seen in Mole NP and African Wood Owl (right) at Ankasa. (Nik Borrow)

Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* 1 seen during the day in Mole NP.

Red-chested Owlet *Glaucidium tephronotum* Scope views of a canopy bird at Ankasa.

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* (H) Only heard in Bobiri Forest.

White-headed Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus bollei* A family group was seen at Antwikwaa.

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* Garrulous groups in Mole NP.

Black Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus aterrimus* 1 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* Just 1 seen at Ankasa.

Piping Hornbill (Western P H) *Bycanistes fistulator* Pairs seen in flight at Kakum and the Ebi River.

Brown-cheeked Hornbill *Bycanistes cylindricus* Great looks at a female from the canopy walkway.

Black-casqued Hornbill (B-c Wattled) *Ceratogymna atrata* Seen from the canopy walkway.
Yellow-casqued Hornbill (Y-c Wattled) *Ceratogymna elata* (H) Heard only at Ankasa.
White-crested Hornbill (Western Long-tailed H) *Horizocerus albocristatus* 3 sightings in the forests.
Purple Roller (Rufous-crowned R) *Coracias naevius* 3 sightings in the north.
Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinicus* Easily seen in the north.
Blue-bellied Roller *Coracias cyanogaster* Seen well at 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* Seen well in Kakum NP and glimpsed at Ankasa.



Abyssinian Rollers (left) were a riot of colour in the bright sunlight in Mole NP. At Kakum we found a Chocolate-backed Kingfisher (right) that wasn't perched high in the canopy! (Nik Borrow)

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Stunning colours and easily seen in Mole NP.
Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* 1 seen in Mole NP.
Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* Seen well in Mole NP and heard in the south.
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 Winneba Lagoon, the Ebi River and in Mole NP.
Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys* Wonderful views at Ankasa.
Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* Brief flight views of 1 for some at Daboya.
Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Small numbers in appropriate habitat.
Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis* Best views were obtained at Antwikwaa.
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus* Good looks at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.
Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* Just 1 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.
Rosy Bee-eater *Merops malimbicus* Small numbers of these beautiful bee-eaters seen in flight only.
Bristle-nosed Barbet *Gymnobucco peli* Seen well at Antwikwaa and Bobiri.
Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus* A few of these 'punkish' barbets in Kakum NP.
Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus* The most commonly seen tinkerbird in the forests.
Red-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus atrofasciatus* Often heard and seen well at Kakum.
Yellow-throated Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus subsulphureus* Heard more often than seen in the various forests.
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* 1 seen at Shai Hills and heard at Abrafo and Opro Forest.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* Seen at Winneba Plains and in Mole NP.
(Western) Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon [duchailui] dowsetti* More often heard than seen in the forests.
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 Shai Hills, Winneba Plains and Opro Forest.
Bearded Barbet *Lybius dubius* Several opportunities to see this amazing barbet well at Shai Hills and in the north.



Red-rumped Tinkerbird (left) was seen in the Kakum area and Bearded Barbet (right) was easily seen in Mole NP. (Nik Borrow)

Yellow-billed Barbet (Western Y-b B) *Trachyphonus [purpuratus] goffinii* (LO) Seen briefly at Ankasa.
Yellow-footed Honeyguide *Melignomon eisentrauti* Heard at Kakum but only Pete saw it.
Thick-billed Honeyguide *Indicator conirostris* 1 seen at Antwikwaa.
Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* 1 seen at Mognori.
Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* (LO) 1 seen by James in Mole NP.
African Piculet *Sasia africana* (H) Heard only at Bobiri Forest.
Fine-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera punctuligera* Several seen in Mole NP.
Little Green Woodpecker *Campethera maculosa* (H, LO) Heard whilst waiting for picathartes.
Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosa* Heard in Kakum and at Opro Forest.
Fire-bellied Woodpecker *Chloropicus pyrrhogaster* Small numbers in the Kakum forests.
Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens* 1 at Shai Hills.
Melancholy Woodpecker *Dendropicos lugubris* (H) Heard only in the Kakum area and at Ankasa.
African Grey Woodpecker (G W) *Dendropicos goertae* Seen well in Mole NP.
Brown-backed Woodpecker *Dendropicos obsoletus* (LO) Only seen by James in Mole NP.
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* A few noted in towns during journeys.
Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus* 4 widespread sightings in open areas.
Red-necked Falcon *Falco [chicquera] ruficollis* A pair was seen in the Mole area.
African Hobby *Falco cuvierii* A pair was seen by their nest at Brenu.
Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* Seen en route to Kakum and Mole.
Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* Just 1 was seen in flight over Ankasa.
Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi* Seen flying over the canopy walkway.
Senegal Parrot *Poicephalus senegalus* Good numbers at Shai Hills with more in the north.
Rose-ringed Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* 6+ in Mole NP.
Rufous-sided Broadbill *Smithornis rufolateralis* A displaying male seen well at Kakum and a female at Ankasa.
Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis* Seen well in Mole NP.
Fernando Po Batis (West African B) *Batis [poensis] occulta* (H) Heard only at Antwikwaa and Ankasa.
West African Wattle-eye *Platysteira hormophora* Good views in the Kakum forests.

Brown-throated Wattle-eye (Common W) *Platysteira cyanea* Scattered sightings, first seen at Shai Hills.

Red-cheeked Wattle-eye *Platysteira blissetti* Excellent views at Antwikwaa.

Fiery-breasted Bushshrike *Malaconotus cruentus* A trio was seen at Opro Forest.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike (Sulphur-b B-s) *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* (H) Heard only at Mole.

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

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis* 1 at Opro Forest.

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

Sabine's Puffback (Large-billed P) *Dryoscopus sabini* Best views were in Abrafo Forest.

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

Lowland Sooty Boubou *Laniarius leucorhynchus* (H) Heard only at Antwikwaa.

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

Brubru *Nilaus afer* 1 seen and others heard in Mole NP.

White-crested Helmetshrike (W H-s) *Prionops plumatus* Busy flocks in the Mole area.

Red-billed Helmetshrike *Prionops caniceps* Great views of these characterful birds Opro and Bobiri forests.



Helmetshrikes are justifiably popular birds; White-crested Helmetshrike (left) and Red-billed Helmetshrike (right). (Nik Borrow)

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

White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Cebilepyris pectoralis* A brief sighting in Mole NP.

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea* (LO) Seen by Jackson in Opro Forest.

Purple-throated Cuckooshrike *Campephaga quiscalina* A female seen well from the canopy walkway.

Blue Cuckooshrike *Coracina azurea* Heard in Kakum NP and at Ankasa but seen at Bonkro.

Yellow-billed Shrike *Corvinella corvina* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.

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

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.

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

Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis* Small numbers were seen or heard in the forests.

Western Square-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus occidentalis* Good views (eventually) at Mognori.

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

Glossy-backed Drongo *Dicrurus divaricatus* The common drongo of the savannahs.

Fanti Drongo *Dicrurus aedon* Replaces the previous species in the forests.

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

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

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* First seen at Bonkro but small numbers in Mole NP and the north.

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

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* Several seen well in Mole NP.
White-shouldered Black Tit *Melaniparus guineensis* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.
Forest Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus flavifrons* Good views of 2 birds from the canopy walkway.
Western Nicator *Nicator chloris* Often heard in the various forests and seen at Opro Forest.
Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis* About 6 seen in Mole NP.
Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* 1 on the Winneba Plains.
Sun Lark *Galerida modesta* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* A ubiquitous species absent only from interior forest.
Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris* Remarkably scarce this tour but seen well at Opro Forest.
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* Several seen in Ankasa.
Plain Greenbul (Cameroon Sombre G) *Eurillas curvirostris* Heard more often than the bird was seen in the forests.
Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris* Heard more often than the bird was seen in the forests.
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 in the Kakum farmbrush.
Swamp Palm Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucoptera* Shy birds at Kakum and Ankasa, heard more than seen.
Baumann's Olive Greenbul *Phyllastrephus baumanni* Skulking birds at Brenu and Opro Forest.
Icterine Greenbul *Phyllastrephus icterinus* A common member of mixed bird parties in the various forests.
White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigularis* (H) Only heard in Kakum NP.
Red-tailed Bristlebill (Common B) *Bleda syndactylus* Excellent views at the Ankasa ant swarm.
Green-tailed Bristlebill *Bleda eximius* Amazing views at the Ankasa ant swarm.



Bristlebills are notoriously elusive so imagine our delight at being able to watch Red-tailed Bristlebill (left) and the endangered Green-tailed Bristlebill (right) at leisure at an ant swarm in Ankasa. (Nik Borrow)

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.
Yellow-bearded Greenbul *Criniger olivaceus* (H) Only heard at Ankasa.
Square-tailed Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne nitens* 6+ seen flying over Ankasa.
Fanti Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne obscura* Small numbers flying over the canopy walkway and 1 in Mole NP.
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* 2 pairs on the Pra River.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum* 1 of these Palearctic migrants was seen over Kakum NP.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* Small numbers in the Kakum area.

***Cecropis* sp.** Sightings of unidentified large swallows on journeys were either Red-breasted or Mosque Swallows.

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

Moustached Grass Warbler (African M W) *Melocichla mentalis* 2 in the Mole area.

Kemp's Longbill *Macrosphenus kempii* Pretty good views of this skulker in the Kakum area.

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

Northern Crombec *Sylvietta brachyura* (H) Heard 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 from the canopy walkway.

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher *Erythrocercus 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 rufiae* Family groups seen at Antwikwaa and from the canopy walkway.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Small numbers of these Palearctic migrants in Kakum NP.

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

Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta* A few sightings of these Palearctic migrants at Shai, Winneba and Mole NP.

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

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans* Seen at Abrafo.

Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis* (H) Heard only in the Kakum farmbrush.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola marginatus* 1 seen en route to Daboya.

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

Dorst's Cisticola *Cisticola guinea* Excellent views in Mole NP.

Short-winged Cisticola (Siffling F) *Cisticola brachypterus* Seen at Shai Hills and Winneba Plains.

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



Uncommon cisticolas in Mole NP; Dorst's Cisticola (left) and Rufous Cisticola (right). (Nik Borrow)

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* Widespread sightings

Red-winged Prinia *Prinia erythropterus* 1 at Winneba, 3 in Mole NP.

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

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

Oriole Warbler *Hypergerus atriceps* Skulking but noisy birds seen 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 superciliaris* More often heard than seen on the forest edges.

Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota* Seen at Antwikwaa.

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

Rufous-crowned Eremomela *Eremomela badiceps* (H) Heard in the canopy in Kakum NP.

Blackcap Illadopsis *Illadopsis cleaveri* Seen at Ankasa.

Rufous-winged Illadopsis *Illadopsis rufescens* We all managed to see the individual in Ankasa NP.

Puvel's Illadopsis *Illadopsis puveli* A pair seen well at Opro Forest.

Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens* (H) Heard only at the edge of the Kakum forests.

Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus* Several groups seen well in Mole NP.

Blackcap Babbler *Turdoides reinwardtii* Noisy but skulking groups at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Northern Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis* Small numbers seen in Mole NP.

Violet-backed Hyliota *Hyliota violacea* A pair flew over the canopy walkway.

Copper-tailed Starling (C-t Glossy S) *Hylopsar cupreocauda* High flying birds over Abrafo and Bobiri Forests.

Lesser Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chloropterus* 2 seen in Mole NP.

Bronze-tailed Starling (B-t Glossy S) *Lamprotornis chalcurus* A good showing with several sightings in the north.

Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus* Best views were at the roadside pool near Takoradi.

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 at Winneba Plains and in Mole NP.

Chestnut-winged Starling *Onychognathus [fulgidus] hartlaubii* 2 seen from the canopy walkway.

Narrow-tailed Starling *Poeoptera lugubris* 25+ seen flying over Antwikwaa.

White-tailed Ant Thrush *Neocossyphus poensis* 2 sightings for some at Ankasa.

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 Kakum and Ankasa.

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 in Mole NP.

Northern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis edolioides* Seen easily in Mole NP.

Pale Flycatcher *Melaenornis pallidus* Several seen in Mole NP.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 2 of these Palearctic migrants at Shai Hills.

Gambaga Flycatcher *Muscicapa gambagae* Excellent views of a pair in Mole NP.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caeruleascens* 1 seen and heard in Bobiri Forest.

Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica* Small numbers in Mole NP.



The Upper Guinea endemic White-tailed Alethe (left) and the somewhat dowdy Swamp Flycatcher (right). (Nik Borrow)

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

Olivaceous Flycatcher *Muscicapa olivascens* A pair were nest building by the canopy walkway.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata* Small numbers in the Kakum area and at Ankasa.

Ussher's Flycatcher *Muscicapa ussheri* Tree-top individuals in the Kakum forests.

Brown-chested Alethe *Chamaetylas poliocephala* Good views (if you could see it!) at the Ankasa ant swarm.

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla* Seen in Mole NP and heard elsewhere.

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

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

Forest Robin (Ghana F R) *Stiphrornis [erythrothorax] inexpectatus* Presumably this form seen in Kakum NP.

European Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant at Shai and in the north.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 1 of these Palearctic migrants at Shai Hills and another at Opro Forest.

White-crowned Cliff Chat *Thamnodia coronata* 2 males and a female 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 in the various forests.

Mangrove Sunbird (Brown S) *Anthreptes gabonicus* 1 seen at the Ebi River.

Western Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes longuemarei* A female was seen in Mole NP.

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

Grey-chinned Sunbird (Green S, Yellow-chinned S) *Anthreptes rectirostris* Poor views at Kakum.

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

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



Western Forest Robin (left) in the dark Ankasa forests and breeding male Pygmy Sunbirds (right) were seen in the north. (Nik Borrow)

Reichenbach's Sunbird *Anabathmis reichenbachii* Seen briefly at the Ebi River.

Green-headed Sunbird (Olive-backed S) *Cyanomitra verticalis* (NL) Seen in the garden of our Kakum Hotel.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanoaema* Regularly 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 at Antwikwaa.

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

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

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

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

Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinigastrus* Seen at Shai Hills, Winneba Plain and the garden of our Kakum hotel.

Johanna's Sunbird *Cinnyris johannae* Nesting by the canopy walkway and seen in some other forests.

Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus* A pair seen well from the canopy walkway.

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

House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Seen en route to Ankasa.

Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* Widespread and mainly seen on journeys.

Sahel Bush Sparrow (B Petronia) *Gymnoris dentata* Common in the north.
Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser superciliosus* Seen well in Mole NP.
Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis* Small numbers at Shai Hills and 1 in Mole NP.
Orange Weaver *Ploceus aurantius* Seen well en route to Ankasa.
Heuglin's Masked Weaver *Ploceus heuglini* Seen well at Shai Hills, Opro Forest and 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.
Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus* Non-breeding plumaged birds in Mole NP.
Yellow-mantled Weaver *Ploceus tricolor* Seen well from the canopy walkway and at Bobiri Forest.
Maxwell's Black Weaver *Ploceus albinucha* Small numbers in the Kakum forests.
Preuss's Weaver *Ploceus preussi* Good looks at a pair from the canopy walkway.
Red-vented Malimbe *Malimbus scutatus* Poor flight views only in the Kakum area and at Bobiri Forest.
Blue-billed Malimbe (Gray's M) *Malimbus nitens* Breeding at Ankasa.



This male Preuss's Weaver (left) was seen well from the canopy walkway. Blue-billed Malimbés (right) were feeding young at Ankasa.
 (Nik Borrow)

Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis* Easily seen in the various forests.
Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus* Several seen in the Kakum forests.
Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps*. A male was seen along the Daboya road.
Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* A small flock was seen coming to drink at Daboya.
Black-winged Red Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus* Non-breeding plumaged birds at Abrafo and in the north.
Northern Red Bishop (Orange B) *Euplectes franciscanus* Non-breeding plumaged birds in the north.
Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura* Non-breeding plumaged birds at the Winneba Plains.
Red-fronted Antpecker *Parmoptila rubrifrons* Some brief looks at a female for some at Ankasa.
White-breasted Nigrita (W-b Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus* 2 sightings in the Kakum forests.
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* 1 seen well in Mole NP.
Western Bluebill *Spermophaga haematina* A skulking bird at Kakum.
Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta* Seen at Abrafo and in Mole NP.
Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* Small numbers in Mole NP.
African Firefinch (Blue-billed F) *Lagonosticta rubricata* A male seen at Abrafo on the edge of Kakum.
Black-faced Firefinch *Lagonosticta larvata* A pair seen in Mole NP.
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus* Small numbers in the north.
Lavender Waxbill *Estrilda caerulescens* Small numbers in Mole NP.
Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda* Seen at Abrafo and in the north.
African Silverbill *Euodice cantans* 1 seen by some at Daboya.

Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* Common and widespread.

Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor* Small flocks were seen in the forest zone.

Maggie Mannikin *Lonchura fringilloides* 3 were seen at Abrafo on the edge of Kakum.

Vidua sp. An indigobird in non-breeding plumage seen in Mole was either Village or Wilson's Indigobird.

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* A small flock was seen at Abrafo.

Exclamatory Paradise Whydah *Vidua interjecta* Non-breeding plumaged birds presumably this species in Mole NP.

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* (LO) A Palearctic migrant seen by Nik at Brenu.

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* Scattered sightings throughout the tour.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* Palearctic migrants seen at Winneba Plains and in Mole NP.

Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica* Small numbers in the north.

West African Seedeater *Crithagra canicapilla* 3 seen well in Mole NP.

Brown-rumped Bunting *Emberiza affinis* Seen well in Mole NP.



Olive Colobus (left) and *Lesser Spot-nosed Monkey* (right) were seen from the canopy walkway. (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* Seen 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* Seen well in Kakum NP.

Lesser Spot-nosed Monkey *Cercopithecus petaurista* Seen well at Shai Hills and in Kakum NP.

Green Monkey (Callithrix M) *Cercopithecus sabaesus* Seen well at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Patas Monkey *Erythrocebus patas* Small numbers 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.

African Savanna Hare *Lepus microtis* Seen at night in Mole NP.

Pel's Anomalure (P's Flying Squirrel) *Anomalurus peli* 1 at night in Kakum NP.

Forest Giant Pouched Rat *Cricetomys emini* (NL) Seen by Brenda at Ankasa.

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

Kintampo Rope Squirrel *Funisciurus substriatus* 2 seen in Mole NP.

Red-legged Sun Squirrel *Heliosciurus rufobrachium* Seen in Kakum NP.

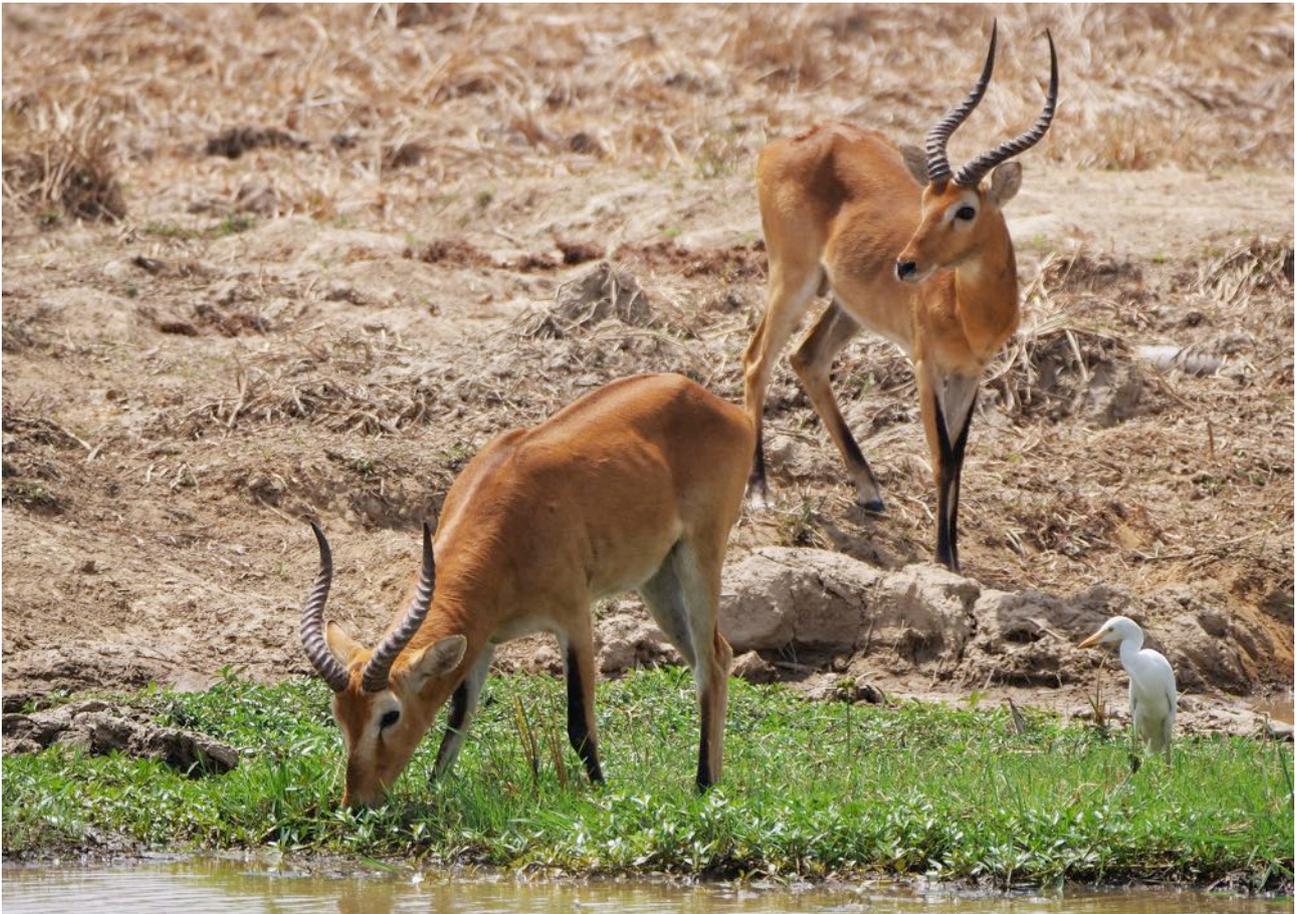
Green Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus poensis* 1 at Antwikwaa.

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

Striped Ground Squirrel *Euxerus erythropus* 1 seen in Mole NP.

Common Cusimanse *Crossarchus obscurus* 1 seen by some in Kakum NP.

African Palm Civet *Nandinia binotata* Heard at night in Kakum NP.
Common Genet *Genetta Genetta* Several seen at night in Mole NP.
Black-bellied Pangolin (Long-tailed P) *Uromanis tetradactyla* A fantastic sighting from the canopy walkway.
Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* Easily seen in Mole NP.
Red-flanked Duiker *Cephalophus rufilatus* 1 seen by some in Mole NP.
Buffon's Kob *Kobus kob* Common in Mole NP.
Central Bushbuck *Tragelaphus phaleratus* 2 at Shai Hills and small numbers in Mole NP.
Yellow-winged Bat *Lavia frons* 1 in Mole NP.
African Straw-coloured Fruit Bat *Eidolon helvum* 1 seen in Abrafo Forest.
Gambian Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus gambianus* Seen in Mole NP.



Buffon's Kob (above) and African Elephants below) in Mole National Park (Nik Borrow)