

ITINERARY

***Essential Short Uganda:
Shoebills, Gorillas, Chimps and Albertine Rift Birding***
November 23 – December 6, 2023



*We will visit the Mabamba Swamp in search of the enigmatic, unusual Shoebill. These large birds are found from South Sudan, through parts of Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, but they are rare and localized within this rather large range. One of the best places to find them is Uganda, and we have created this itinerary to feature these amazing creatures.
Photograph by guide Jesse Fagan.*

We include here information for those interested in the 2023 Field Guides Essential Short Uganda tour:

- a general introduction to the tour
- a description of the birding areas to be visited on the tour
- an abbreviated daily itinerary with some indication of the nature of each day's birding outings

These additional materials will be made available to those who register for the tour:

- a detailed information bulletin with important logistical information and answers to questions regarding accommodations, air arrangements, clothing, currency, customs and immigration, documents, health precautions, and personal items
- a Field Guides checklist for preparing for and keeping track of the birds we see on the tour
- after the conclusion of the tour, a list of birds seen on the tour

Uganda has some megastar attractions – Shoebill at Mabamba Swamp, Chimpanzees at Kibale Forest, and Eastern Mountain Gorillas in the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest among them. It also has an incredible variety of birds (sometimes in incredible numbers as well) across the country. If you don't have the time, money or stamina for our regular three-week tour, which is offered every other year, this shorter offering – focusing on the attractions outlined above – may fit the bill. It visits fewer locales than our regular tour (cutting out Murchison Falls, Masindi and the Budongo Forest), but should still provide a satisfying experience with many Ugandan specialties, both avian and mammalian. However, if you're hoping to have the chance to look for every possible Albertine Rift endemic, this isn't the tour for you!

We'll start with a morning at Mabamba Swamp looking for the incredible Shoebill, with plenty of other waterbirds also on offer. A boat trip on Lake Mburo could yield African Finfoot, White-backed Night-Heron (rare), African Fish-Eagle, and big numbers of Hippopotamuses, while the park's grasslands offer the tour's only chances for Burchell's Zebra and Impala – plus a host of grassland species. Next up is Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest, with the chance to track a family of Eastern Mountain Gorillas and sample some of the avian riches of this extensive forest. Widely considered to be one of the top birding hotspots in Africa, the site is home to nearly 350 bird species.



A full day in the vast Queen Elizabeth National Park will offer up another slice of classic East Africa, with possibilities including mammals such as African Elephant, Topi and Kob, and a big list of open-country birds such as eagles (Black-chested Snake-Eagle, Bateleur, and Tawny and Wahlberg's eagles), Red-necked Francolin, Harlequin quail, and Small Buttonquail. We'll finish with a visit to Kibale Forest, where we'll spend a morning with a ranger, tracking some of the park's Chimpanzees. The forest is home to 13 species of primates, including the rare l'Hoest's monkey and East Africa's largest population of the threatened Uganda Red Colobus, as well as a host of forest birds.

Our two-week exploration of Uganda should bring a host of highlights, and the thrill of seeing some of the world's most iconic mammals and birds. The mix of habitats we'll visit should yield a fine variety of bird species, including dozens with names that will sound new and strange to those who've never birded in this part of the world before: various species of illadopsis, boubou, brubru, camaroptera, apalis, tchagra, gonolek and greenbul, as well as barbets, turacos, sunbirds, and more. Join us for the adventure!

All participants will be required to confirm they will have completed a full COVID vaccination course at least two weeks prior to the tour (which includes a booster for those eligible to have one). Having a vaccinated group will greatly diminish but not eliminate the possibility of the group and individual participants being adversely affected by COVID-19. **We are requiring all of our staff guides to be vaccinated, including getting the booster.** Note too, that many travel destinations are or soon will be requiring proof of vaccination for entry to bypass testing delays or quarantine, and that entry requirements for a destination can change at any time. Proof of a booster shot, too, may become a requirement for some travel destinations if they choose to declare that vaccinations do not last indefinitely. And having a booster means your risk is lowered and your travel plans and those of our group are less likely to be disrupted.

We want to be sure you are on the right tour! Below is a description of the physical requirements of the tour. If you are concerned about the difficulty, please contact us about this and be sure to fully explain your concerns. We want to make sure you have a wonderful time with us, so if you are uncomfortable with the requirements, just let us know and we can help you find a better fitting tour! Field Guides will not charge you a change or cancellation fee if you opt out within 10 days of depositing.

Physical requirements of this tour

- **TRAILS & WALKING:** Moderate amounts of walking (up to 4-5 miles per day), some of it on roads, some on trails. Two longer treks, of varying length, are planned to visit families of Chimpanzees and Mountain Gorillas, and these treks may involve steep trails on very uneven terrain. These primates move around, so their locations on the particular days of our visits determine the length of these hikes.
- **POTENTIAL CHALLENGES:** We cover much ground on this tour, and on many days, we must use rough, dusty, potholed roads. Participants must be able to step up/down 12 inches to get into and out of our safari vehicles and other transport. We do spend a bit of time standing to watch birds on this tour; a small folding stool can provide

relief as needed. Minor inconveniences are to be expected, ranging from potholes to power outages to occasional cold showers. Accommodations are basic in several locations but have improved tremendously in the past several years.

- **PACE:** Early mornings (5:30-6:00 a.m. breakfasts), with most days spent in the field (with boxed-lunch picnic) or traveling to our next destination, with stops for birding. On occasion, we'll have an afternoon break at our lodge. Optional nighttime outings will also be offered.
- **WEATHER:** Temperatures will range from the low 60s at night to low 80s F during the day. Humidity is generally high (75% or higher), and rain showers are a distinct possibility, particularly in the rainforest.
- **VEHICLE SEATING:** So that each participant has equal opportunity during our travel, we employ a seat rotation system on all tours. Participants will need to be flexible enough to maneuver to the back of the vehicle on occasion. Those who experience motion sickness will need to bring adequate medication for the duration of the tour, as we are not able to reserve forward seats for medical conditions.
- **BATHROOM BREAKS:** Participants must be prepared to make comfort stops in nature for most of this tour, as there are simply no other options along most of the tour's route, away from our lodgings.
- **OPTING OUT:** Where we are staying multiple days in the same lodging, participants can easily opt to sit out a day or sometimes a half-day. This will not be possible on days when we are changing locations.

For many, Uganda brings to mind a troubled past, including the reign of Idi Amin. But "past" is the key word, and today Uganda is a country of ambition and progress. There are problems along the border with Sudan, but we do not visit that region. Otherwise, Uganda is one of Africa's models of progress. New lodges are being built, roads repaired, farms replanted, and the cell phone coverage is incredible. There is a new sense of growth and prosperity in the country that may once again become known as "The Pearl of Africa."

If you are uncertain about whether this tour is a good match for your abilities, please don't hesitate to contact our office; if they cannot directly answer your queries, they will put you in touch with the guide.



*The chance to see the endangered Eastern Mountain Gorilla is a special part of this tour.
Photograph by participant Daphne Gemmill.*

About Eastern Mountain Gorillas: With the demise of gorilla-watching opportunities in Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire), Uganda has become a prime gorilla-viewing destination, which is reflected in the price and the availability. It can be an extraordinary experience and is usually a very memorable event, but it is strenuous: the trails are steep and you often have to go off the trails to find the gorillas. The search typically involves up to 3 to 4 hours of slow walking, with porters to help. You must be in good physical shape to do it, but using the area porters is a great boost to the local economy and a tremendous help to us, as they are very helpful, and experienced in getting people safely up and down the mountain trails. Gorillas are not the only reason to visit this forest, as many hard-to-find central African birds also occur here; we'll have at least one day for birding together as a group.

The success rate of seeing gorillas is very high, but there are no guarantees for reasons both obvious (such as unusually bad weather) and less obvious. For instance, at one point a few years ago, one of the habituated troops experienced a “change in leadership” (a euphemism for a new male coming in and beating the daylights out of the group’s original silverback). The new leader was not habituated, and gorilla-watching opportunities were reduced for a while. This is a difficult situation for everyone: we want you to be very motivated and excited about the potential experience and yet be realistic about the situation. We will do the best we can, and we work with a great local operator. ***You must contact our office to reserve and purchase your permit(s) at the time of your deposit. Availability of permits is not guaranteed until payment is made.***



The elegant Gray-crowned Crane, seen here with a group of Spur-winged Geese, is the national bird of Uganda. We're sure to get some great views of these beautiful birds. Photograph by guide Jesse Fagan.

Itinerary for Essential Short Uganda: Shoebills, Gorillas, Chimps and Albertine Rift Birding

Days 1-2, Thu-Fri, 23-24 Nov. Departure from the US; arrival in Entebbe. If you're traveling from the US, you will need to leave on Thursday 23 Nov., in order to arrive in Entebbe by Friday, 24 Nov. As people will be arriving on different flights at different times, the most convenient way to transfer to our hotel is with the hotel shuttle bus; please make your transfer arrangements through our office. Night of Day 2 at The Boma Hotel in Entebbe, near the Entebbe airport.

Day 3, Sat, 25 Nov. Entebbe Botanical Gardens. After a morning to recover from yesterday's long flights, we'll convene in the afternoon for a visit to the Entebbe Botanical Gardens, a 100-acre park located a 10-minute drive away from our hotel along the shores of Lake Victoria. The gardens house a collection of plant species from the world's tropical, sub-tropical and temperate zones, as well as local species which have regenerated naturally over the years. This is a great place to come to grips with some of Uganda's more common birds, as well as a few of its specialties. More than 200 species have been recorded here, and several monkeys are also possible. Among the species we're likely to see are Marabou Stork, Hadada Ibis, Woodland Kingfisher, Black-headed Gonolek, Double-toothed Barbet, and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, and we'll keep an eye out for the spectacular Great Blue Turaco (and its smaller cousin, the Ross's Turaco), Spectacled, Vieillot's, and the very range-restricted Orange weavers, Superb Sunbird, and Bare-faced Go-away Bird. Night at The Boma Hotel in Entebbe.

Day 4, Sun, 26 Nov. Mabamba Swamp. After an early breakfast, we'll head to nearby Mabamba Swamp, an Important Bird Area which sprawls along the edge of Lake Victoria, and one of the few remaining swamps in the country protected by its local community. Once we reach the site, we'll transfer to a trio of narrow, local boats and work our way out into the labyrinth of channels that wind through the vast papyrus beds. Our primary target this morning will be the enigmatic

Shoebill – surely one of the most sought-after species in Africa. However, we should also see a good selection of classic East African wetland species, including White-faced Whistling-Duck, Yellow-billed Duck, Long-tailed Cormorant, Hamerkop, African Openbill, Saddle-billed Stork, African Fish-Eagle, African Marsh-Harrier, Purple Swamphen, Allen's Gallinule, African and (if we're lucky) Lesser jacanas, Long-toed and Spur-winged plovers, and Pied Kingfisher. We're also likely to see a nice variety of open country and water edge species, perhaps including Palm-nut Vulture, Black (Yellow-billed) Kite, Shikra, Speckled Pigeon, African Green-Pigeon, Eastern Plantain-eater, Malachite Kingfisher, White-browed and Blue-headed coucals, Crowned Hornbill, Angola and Rufous-chested Swallows, Winding and Red-faced cisticolas, Greater and Lesser Swamp Warblers, Swamp Flycatcher, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Papyrus Gonolek, Slender-billed, Northern Brown-throated, and Golden-backed Weavers and Fan-tailed Widowbird.

In the afternoon, we'll proceed to Lake Mbuo National Park, stopping along the way if we see anything of interest. Night at Mantana Tented Camp, a very comfortable, classic, old-style safari tent camp.

Day 5, Mon, 27 Nov. Lake Mbuo. This small, delightful park contains multiple habitats, and our time will be divided between an extensive area of wetland and the lake, some forested areas, and open country with numerous mammals. More than 300 bird species have been recorded here, and it is the only place on our tour to see Burchell's Zebra and Impala; we should also find Olive Baboon, and Black-faced Vervet Monkey.

We'll take a short boat trip out onto the lake, looking for African Darter, African Finfoot, Spur-winged Goose, White-backed Night-Heron (rare) and Striated Heron, and this is another place to try (along the lake's fringes) for Papyrus Gonolek. The more open acacia grassland, particularly along the Zebra Track, is worth exploring for species such as Coqui Francolin, Red-necked Spurfowl, Black-bellied Bustard, Temminck's Courser and Common Quail, and this is where we might find the small number of migratory Brown-chested Lapwings that winter in the park.

Other possibilities include African Hawk-Eagle, Lizard Buzzard, African Goshawk, Water Thick-knee, Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove, Red-headed Lovebird, Lilac-breasted Roller, Green Woodhoopoe, Greater Honeyguide, Green-backed Woodpecker, the restricted-range Red-faced Barbet (at its only Ugandan location), Mosque and Rufous-chested swallows, Rufous-naped and Flappet larks, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Fan-tailed Grassbird, Singing, Siffling and Tabora

cisticolas, Gray Tit-Flycatcher, Chin-spot Batis, White-winged Black-Tit, African Penduline-Tit, Violet-backed Starling, and Holub's Golden-Weaver. As dusk falls, we'll do some birding along the entrance road, looking for African Scops-Owl, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, and Black-shouldered, Fiery-necked, and Pennant-winged Nightjars. If it can be arranged, we'll offer an optional night drive into the park. Night at Mantana Tented Camp.



*The beautiful Black Bee-eater is on the eastern edge of its range in Uganda; we should find them in the forested areas such as Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest.
Photograph by participant Greg Griffith.*

Day 6, Tue, 28 Nov. To the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest.

Today, we'll continue further south and west, to the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest, taking a packed lunch with us. Depending on what species we're still looking for, we may spend part of the morning in Lake Mbuo National Park before heading out. Otherwise, we'll head straight for the town of Buhoma, which sits right at the edge of the Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest and spend the afternoon birding near our lodge. Night at Haven Lodge, a very comfortable, community-owned lodge in Buhoma, at the edge of the vast forest.

Day 7, Wed, 29 Nov. The Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest.

After an early breakfast, we'll report to the park headquarters for a briefing prior to heading out into the forest in search of Eastern Mountain Gorillas. Several groups of habituated gorillas are accessible to visitors at the park, and by prior arrangement, we will have an opportunity to visit these magnificent creatures. However, please note that only a limited number of visitors are allowed to see them on any one day, so visits must be booked well in advance.

(see **About Gorillas** for more information). We'll do our best to stick together as a group, but (depending on our group size) it's possible the park officials may split us up between multiple groups. It's a fantastic (some prior clients have said life-changing) experience to stare into the eyes of these gentle giants, and watch as they eat, groom, play and go about their daily activities. While some gorilla families may be closer than others (and thus require less hiking to reach them), **you must expect to be out all day hiking, walking, scrambling, etc. to see your gorilla family, typically leaving at 8:30 a.m. and not returning until 3 or 4 p.m.** For \$20 US, you can hire a porter to carry your belongings and help you up and down the hills; believe us, it's money very well spent! Those who don't think they're up to the rigors of gorilla tracking have the option of birding in the park instead. Night at Haven Lodge, Buhoma.

Day 8, Thu, 30 Nov. Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest. This forest, which is home to more than 20 Albertine Rift endemics, is widely considered to be one of the top birding hotspots in all of Africa. Scores of species are possible, including Black Goshawk, Augur Buzzard, Crowned Eagle, Rameron and Bronze-naped pigeons, Black-billed and Ross's turacos, African, Barred Long-tailed, and African Emerald cuckoos, Red-chested Owlet, Narina and Bar-tailed trogons, Black and Cinnamon-chested bee-eaters, Blue-throated Roller, White-headed Woodhoopoe, Gray-throated and Yellow-spotted barbets, Yellow-rumped tinkerbirds, Thick-billed honeyguide, Tullberg's, Speckle-breasted, Elliot's, and Olive woodpeckers, African Broadbill, Rock Martin, Black Sawwing, Gray and Petit's cuckooshrikes, Ansorge's and Cabanis's greenbuls, White-tailed Ant-Thrush, Kivu Ground-Thrush, Olive Thrush, Red-throated Alethe, Chubb's Cisticola, Banded Prinia, Black-throated, and Black-faced apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera, Grauer's Warbler, White-browed Crombec, Red-faced Woodland-Warbler, White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher, Yellow-eyed Black-Flycatcher, Sooty and Chapin's flycatchers, White-starred Robin, White-bellied Robin-chat, White-tailed and African blue-flycatchers, Pale-breasted and Mountain illadopses, African Hill Babbler, Gray-headed, Western Violet-backed, Green, Green-headed, Blue-headed, Green-throated, Northern Double-collared Sunbird, Mackinnon's Shrike, Luehder's, Gray-green, and Many-colored bush-shrikes, Velvet-mantled Drongo, Slender-billed, Waller's, Narrow-tailed, Stuhlmann's, and Sharpe's starlings, Black-billed, Strange, and Brown-capped weavers, Jameson's Antpecker, and Red-faced Crimsonwing. Night at Haven Lodge.



We'll look for the imposing Verreaux's Eagle-owl at Queen Elizabeth National Park. Photograph by participant Craig Caldwell.

Day 9, Fri, 1 Dec. To Queen Elizabeth National Park. This morning, we'll drive north to Uganda's second-largest national park—Queen Elizabeth National Park, named for the current queen of England, who visited the park in 1954. In terms of diversity, it ranks among the best birding destinations in Uganda, with more than 610 species recorded and a one-day record of 296 species. Special birds include Harlequin and Blue quails, Small Buttonquail, African Crake, White-winged Warbler, Martial Eagle, African Skimmer, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Ovampo Sparrowhawk, Greater and Lesser flamingoes, Caruthers's Cisticola, Secretary Bird, and Temminck's Courser. Mammals may include African Elephant, Spotted Hyena, Leopard, Lion, Kob, Side-striped Jackal, Olive Baboon, Bushbuck, Waterbuck, Warthog, and Giant Forest Hog, to mention but a few. Our newly renovated lodge is situated on a hill overlooking both Lake Edward and the Kazinga Channel; beyond it lies an extensive area of rolling grass-covered hills, wooded valleys, and a series of extinct volcanic craters. Night at Mweya Safari Lodge.

Day 10, Sat, 2 Dec. Queen Elizabeth National Park. The varied habitats within the park should provide us with an extensive bird list and many new mammals, too. We should find many of the following birds, and undoubtedly others not mentioned: Little Grebe, Great White and Pink-backed pelicans, Goliath Heron, Little Bittern, Black-shouldered Kite, White-backed Vulture, Black-chested Snake-Eagle, Bateleur, Tawny and Wahlberg's eagles, Red-necked Francolin, Black Crake, Water Thick-knee, Senegal Lapwing, Kittlitz's and White-fronted plovers, Whiskered and White-winged terns, Blue-spotted Wood-Dove, Levallant's and Dideric cuckoos, Black Coucal, White-rumped Swift, Little Bee-eater, Common

Scimitar-bill, Rufous-naped and Red-capped larks, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Trilling, Stout, and Croaking cisticolas, Red-faced Crombec, Northern Black-Flycatcher, Black-lored Babbler, Black-crowned Tchagra, Tropical Boubou, Little Weaver, Red Bishop, White-winged Widowbird, Fawn-breasted Waxbill, Yellow-fronted Canary, and Golden-breasted Bunting. In the late afternoon, we'll take a boat cruise on the Kazinga Channel, a narrow neck of water that connects Lake Edward and Lake George. This should give us some excellent up-close looks at—and a great chance to photograph—many waterside birds and mammals, including African Spoonbill, Three-banded Plover, Marsh, Green, Wood and Common sandpipers, Gray-headed Gull, Plain Martin, Lesser Swamp-Warbler, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, African Elephant and possibly even Giant Forest Hog. Night at Mweya Safari Lodge.

Day 11, Sun, 3 Dec. To Kibale Forest National Park. After breakfast, we will drive to Kibale Forest National Park, planning to arrive in Fort Portal by late afternoon. The park contains one of the loveliest and most varied tracts of tropical forest in Uganda, boasting 13 species of primates. It holds some 1450 chimpanzees – Uganda's largest population of this endangered primate – and is well-known as East Africa's best location for chimpanzee tracking. The park also boasts 325 bird species, including six that are endemic to the Albertine rift region: Black-capped and Collared apalises, Blue-headed and Purple-breasted sunbirds, Dusky Crimsonwing, and Red-faced Woodland Warbler. Night at Chimpanzee Forest Lodge.

Day 12, Mon, 4 Dec. Kibale Forest. Today, we'll have a full day at Kibale Forest. We'll start by joining one of the park's excellent guides for a several-hour Chimpanzee tracking expedition. We may also encounter Blue and Copper-tailed monkeys, Mantled Guereza (also known as Black-and-white Colobus), and Gray-cheeked Mangabey. The park is also home to the rare l'Hoest's monkey and East Africa's largest population of the threatened Uganda Red Colobus, so we may find some of those as well.

Birdlife is prolific, but as in many tropical forests, birds can be shy and difficult to observe. The park is a good site for a number of birds that are hard to find elsewhere, including Speckle-breasted Woodpecker, Cabanis's and Joyful greenbuls, White-spotted Flufftail, Olive Long-tailed and Dusky Long-tailed cuckoos, Lesser and Least honeyguides, Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat, White-chinned Prinia, Gray Apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera and White-collared Oliveback. We'll hope for Gray Parrot, Narina's Trogon, Gray-throated Barbet, Honeyguide Greenbul, White-tailed Ant-Thrush, Fire-crested Alethe, African Shrike-Flycatcher, Narrow-tailed Starling, and White-breasted Nigrita. If we're extremely lucky, we may also see African and Green-breasted pittas, Black Bee-eater, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Little Greenbul, Brown-chested Alethe, Blue-breasted kingfisher, and Crowned Eagle. Night at Chimpanzee Forest Lodge.

Day 13, Tue, 5 Dec. To Entebbe. After breakfast we'll work our way out of the park, stopping, of course, for any new birds that we see. The journey back to Entebbe will take much of the day, and we'll probably have to fight Kampala and Entebbe traffic before arriving at our hotel in the mid-afternoon, where we can rest and repack before our final dinner. Those participants taking late evening flights (which will probably be most of us) will be transferred to the airport after dinner. Night at The Boma Guesthouse.

Day 14, Wed, 6 Dec. Arrival home.

About Your Guides

Megan Edwards Crewe has been birding since childhood, when she discovered she could have her father all to herself (rather than sharing him with her brother and sisters) if she was willing to get up very early on Saturdays and tramp around the woods in search of birds. After graduating from Purdue University, she sampled an impressive variety of jobs before discovering Field Guides. Megan, who brims with information and enthusiasm, delights in sharing the wonders and adventures of birding and the natural world with participants—something she has done for more than two decades now. One unexpected bonus of the job has been meeting her British husband, Mike, with whom she co-led a trip to France in 2000. They've bounced back and forth between the US and the UK during their marriage, and are now back in England, living in a tiny village along the North Sea coast. There, they stay busy converting their half-acre garden into a wildlife paradise, enjoying the surrounding countryside and reveling in the area's cultural history. She has made eight previous trips to Africa, including two to East Africa, and is looking forward to getting back to Uganda.

"Megan Crewe was a bird in her former life, and will be again in her next incarnation. She knows them intimately, loves and respects them (wonderful to witness), and never, never loses composure." M. L.; Holiday Costa Rica

Visit <https://fieldguides.com/our-staff/> for Megan's complete tour schedule; just click on her photo.

Herbert Byaruhanga, locally known as "papa of birding in Uganda", has been instrumental in the establishment of professional safari guides in Uganda. He pioneered a birding guides club in Uganda, and has worked to bring about an accreditation process for new guides, while helping to provide a framework for wildlife tourism in the country. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Uganda Women Birders Club, and has helped Uganda to become a world leader in the training of women as bird guides. Herbert is a common figure at the International birding expos and festivals in the USA, South America and Asia, and has earned himself an international reputation for his vast knowledge of birding and wildlife in East Africa. Traveling with Herbert is a real pleasure; he is well known within both Uganda and Rwanda for all he has done for wildlife tourism, making tours a breeze!

Financial Information

FEE: \$7975 from Entebbe

DEPOSIT: \$800 per person

FINAL PAYMENT DUE: May 27, 2023

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional): \$1100

LIMIT: 8

Special Note: Tour fees may be subject to change due to the global economic effects of COVID-19.

We have published the itinerary and price for this tour with the understanding that during these uncertain times we are likely to encounter unforeseen changes. Some of our tours may incur higher costs due to increases in currency exchange rate fluctuations or COVID-19 related fees imposed by countries and/or suppliers. Travel and hospitality companies all over the world have been adversely affected by the pandemic, and there is no guarantee that all of the lodging and transportation we have booked for this tour will still be available at the time of departure. We hope to maintain our services as indicated in our itinerary as well as our published tour fee. However, if changes are required, we will make every effort to maintain the quality of the itinerary as it is published with the most appropriate substitutions available. Should any necessary changes or other unforeseen causes result in an increase in service rates to us, we reserve the right to pass on those increases in fees to the tour participant.

Other Things You Need to Know

TOUR MANAGER: The manager for this tour is Sharon Mackie. Sharon will be happy to assist you in preparing for the tour. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call her!

ACCOMMODATIONS: In Entebbe, we stay in a restored colonial homestead just five minutes from the International airport. The Boma Guesthouse offers a free shuttle service with each room, and each room is equipped with its own en-suite bathroom. The Entebbe Botanical Gardens are nearby, but we do not recommend you go there unless in a group and with one of the hotel staff or a local guide. The Mantana Tented Camp is a classic, old-style tented camp with extremely spacious and well-appointed tents and bathrooms with hot-water showers. Please note that single rooms aren't always available here.

The Haven Lodge in Buhoma is a newly-built, community-run lodge located right at the entrance to Bwindi-Impenetrable Forest National Park. It has cool, spacious rooms with en-suite bathrooms; the tubs have spectacular views! Mweya Safari Lodge is a large, classic lodge in the style similar to the well-known lodges of Kenya or Tanzania, also with en-suite bathrooms and with a fabulous view of either the Kazinga Channel or Lake Edward. Chimpanzee Forest Lodge, formerly the residence of the British district commissioner, has self-contained cottages with en-suite bathrooms as well as the main lodge building, all situated within 100 acres of lawns, gardens, forest and pastures only half a kilometer from the headquarters of Kibale National Park.

DOCUMENTS: A **current passport** valid for six months beyond the date of your return and a **tourist visa** are necessary for US citizens to enter Uganda; **application for the visa should be made well in advance of the tour. We will provide you with the necessary visa application forms.** An International Certificate of Vaccination for Yellow Fever is also required.

If you are not a US citizen, please check with the Ugandan consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or you can contact us and we will be happy to look this up for you. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey. Some countries require a blank page for their stamp and as a precaution it is best to have one blank page per country you will visit or transit.

AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Field Guides is a full service travel agency and your tour manager will be happy to assist you with flights to join this tour. Field Guides does not charge a service fee for these services to clients booking a tour. However, we understand that tech-savvy clients often prefer to shop online or that you may wish to use mileage to purchase tickets. Regardless of which method you choose, your tour manager will be happy to provide assistance regarding ticket prices and schedules, along with rental cars and extra hotel nights as needed.

Please be sure to check with your tour manager prior to purchasing your ticket to make sure the flights you have chosen will work well with the tour itinerary and that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. Field Guides cannot be responsible for these fees. **Also, it is imperative that we receive a copy of your comprehensive flight itinerary—including any and all flights not covered in the tour fee—so that we may track you in the event of missed connections, delays, or other mishaps.**

LUGGAGE: Please be aware that many airlines have recently modified their luggage policies and are charging additional fees for checked bags. Updates could easily occur before your departure, so you may wish to contact your airline to verify the policy. Additional charges for bags on any flights, whether these are covered by the tour fee or not, will be the client's responsibility. Also **NOTE that luggage space is limited in our vehicle.** We must carry bottled water (which takes up space), and excess baggage must be packed inside on the floor—which gets in the way when having to get out quickly for your lifer Handsome Francolin! We ask that you limit your baggage to **one medium duffel and a carry-on.** (Duffels are much easier to pack than suitcases.)

TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS: The **tour fee** is \$7975 for one person in double occupancy from Entebbe. It includes all lodging from Day 2 through Day 12 and day rooms in Entebbe on Day 13, all meals from breakfast on Day 3 through dinner on Day 13, boat trips, all ground transportation, entrance fees, and the guide services of the tour leader(s). Tipping at group meals and for drivers, porters, and local guides is included in your tour fee and will be handled for the group by your Field Guides leader(s). However, if you would like to recognize your Field Guides leader(s) or any local guide(s) for exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are optional and not expected.

The above fee does not include your airfare to and from Uganda, optional gorilla permit, airport taxes, visa fees, any checked or carry-on baggage charges imposed by the airlines, any alcoholic beverages, optional tips to local drivers, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature.

The **single supplement** for the tour is \$1100 (Singles are often not available at the Mantana Tented Camp. In the event that doubling up is required, a refund of a portion of the single supplement will be provided.) If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee. The single supplement is calculated by taking the actual cost of a single room and subtracting one-half the cost of a double room (plus any applicable taxes).

TOUR LIMITS: Our limits are firm and we don't exceed the limit by one to accommodate a couple when only one space remains open. However, on occasion, we will send along a guide in training on a tour. In these cases, one seat in the van or bus will be taken by the guide in training. Our guides will have a rotation system within the vehicle so that clients share the inconvenience equally. We hope this minor inconvenience will be more than offset by the advantages of having another guide along.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please **contact our office**. Our office will be in touch with you by email by the next business day (Mon-Fri) with instructions on how to complete our new electronic registration form and medical questionnaire. (We are no longer accepting the paper version.)

Please mail your **deposit of \$800** per person, (plus optional \$700 fee for a Gorilla Permit; these permits go fast, so let us know as soon as possible if you are planning to join in on the gorilla trekking outing) or see <https://fieldguides.com/payment-options/> for our Payment Options. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 180 days prior to departure, or **by May 27, 2023.** **We will bill you for the final payment at either 180 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.**

Please note that if you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will require **proof of travel insurance**. Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

SMOKING: Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. If you smoke, please be sensitive to the group and refrain from smoking at meals, in vehicles, and in proximity to the group on trails and elsewhere.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 180 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 179 and 90 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable and non-transferable.

Our cancellation policy only applies to payments made to Field Guides for tour (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of that insurance is not refundable, so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airline's restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure. In most such cases, full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. Note this exception, however: If you have been advised pre-tour that there is a non-refundable portion of your tour fee no matter the reason for Field Guides cancellation of the tour, that portion will not be refunded. The right is reserved to substitute in case of emergency another guide for the original one.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE: We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. If you are traveling on a tour **outside your country of domicile** (for example, outside the US for US residents), we will **require proof of travel insurance**. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, you acknowledge and agree that we will not issue a refund when cancellation occurs within 90 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 90 to 179 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

US citizens will receive information from us regarding optional tour cancellation/emergency medical insurance. Our agent, CSA, will insure for trip cancellation and interruption, medical coverage, travel delay, baggage loss and delay, and emergency medical transportation. If you purchase the insurance prior to, or within 24 hours of making final payment for the tour, and cover all non-refundable parts of the trip (including any non-refundable flights and in some cases, other arrangements), pre-existing conditions are covered. You may purchase your CSA policy on-line by visiting our website at <https://fieldguides.com/trip-cancellation-insurance/> and clicking the link to CSA. The CSA webpage also includes a contact number.

Currently we are unable to offer CSA insurance policies to residents of New York and Hawaii. We have had clients provide positive feedback after acquiring insurance thru InsureMyTrip (<https://www.insuremytrip.com/>) in the past, and would suggest that company as an alternative. When purchasing insurance with a company other than CSA, you will want to understand whether the timing of your purchase will affect coverage before paying your first deposit. Insurance purchase requirements can vary from company to company, and such requirements could limit your options if you do not look into this until making your final payment for your tour. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.

Please note, once the insurance is purchased it is non-refundable, so please check with your tour manager prior to making the purchase to assure the tour will operate as scheduled. Citizens of other countries are urged to consult their insurance broker.

RESPONSIBILITY: For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Field Guides Incorporated, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the registration form. Field Guides Incorporated acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. You acknowledge and agree that Field Guides Incorporated is not responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Field Guides Incorporated reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, the information bulletin, and other pertinent matter provided by Field Guides. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

NCP 7/2020

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