

## ETHIOPIA

May 5, 2011 to May 28, 2011  
Terry Stevenson & George Armistead

This totally revised and extended Ethiopia tour included a chance to find many of the rarer or remote endemics while staying in good accommodations (except at Negele -- for Prince Ruspoli's Turaco). This is the only birding tour to include

visits to the Jemma Valley (for Harwood's Francolin) Melka Ghebdu (for Yellow-throated Serin and Red-billed Pytilia),

and Gemessa Gebel (for Ankober Serin), all while staying in such good accommodations. Additionally, the newly upgraded hotel at Yabello makes our visit to see Stresemann's Bush-Crow and White-tailed Swallow a positive pleasure, while the extension to the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela gave us great looks at Erckel's Francolin right at our hotel. Add to that the stunning Rift Valley scenery, sparkling lakes, Ethiopian Wolf in the Bale Mountains, and a whole bunch of other endemic birds -- Ethiopia is an area no serious world birder should miss!

Starting in Addis (at the Hilton) we made day trips (and 1 overnight) to the high-altitude grasslands and Rift Valley escarpments to the north. Highlights here included Blue-winged Goose, Wattled Ibis, and Abyssinian Longclaw in the marshy areas, and White-collared Pigeon, Erlanger's Lark, and Black-headed Siskin in the grasslands. In the remnant forest patches we saw our first Black-winged Lovebirds and Banded Barbets, while on escarpments troops of Gelada (baboons) and Ankober Serin were along the upper ridges, Harwood's Francolin, White-winged Cliff-Chat, and Rueppell's Chat down the slopes, and Blue-breasted Bee-eater, Yellow-breasted Barbet, Shining Sunbird, Yellow-throated Seedeater, and Red-billed Pytilia near the bottom -- while Lammergeier and Thick-billed Raven crossed the skies.

We then headed east to the Awash area where numerous new birds and some spectacular mammals were added to our list -- Salt's Dikdik, Soemmerling's Gazelle, Lesser Kudu, and Beisa Oryx were the most notable antelopes, and many of the group thought the calling lions just outside our rooms at Bilen Lodge were the best 'heard' of the tour. But it was the varied bird life that really excited most of us as we both walked and drove the mix of riverine forest, acacia bush, open arid plains, and a bare black lava flow. Just a few of the most memorable species were Bateleur, Arabian Bustard, Senegal Thick-knee, Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Bruce's Green-Pigeon, White-bellied Go-away-bird, Blue-naped Mousebird, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, Abyssinian Roller, Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill, White Helmetshrike, Rosy-patched Bushshrike, Gillett's Lark, Sombre Chat, and the gorgeous Nile Valley Sunbird.

We then headed south to some of the lakes along the Rift Valley where we saw a spectacular variety of the more widespread African ducks, cormorants, herons, egrets, ibis, storks, and rails. Lesser Jacana was particularly enjoyed, but so were African Pygmy-goose, Greater Flamingo, Pink-backed Pelican, Hamerkop, African Fish-Eagle, and a good variety of Palearctic shorebirds (some in breeding plumage).

Changing to 4X4 vehicles we then made our way eastward and higher, and in to the wonderful Bale Mountains. The main target here was the endangered Ethiopian Wolf, of which we saw five -- two of them right next to our vehicles. We also enjoyed the bizarre Giant Root-Rat (the wolves' cuisine) and some spectacular birds, with almost tame Rouget's Rails and Spot-breasted Lapwings around the mountain pools, and Red-billed Chough on the moorlands. In the forest we enjoyed White-cheeked Turaco, the hard to find Abyssinian Woodpecker, Abyssinian Catbird, and White-backed Tit. Stark's Hare, Mountain Nyala, and Menelik's Bushbuck were good additions to our mammal list. We were then due to head to the remote Negele region in the south but first made a day trip to the Sof Omar area, where we had excellent views of the very localized Salvadori's Serin.



*One of the great bird's of the tour: Prince Ruspoli's Turaco  
(Photo by guide George Armistead)*

Our drive to Negele was scenically gorgeous as we crossed the Bale Mountains and then descended to the comparatively arid bush land. Unfortunately there are no 'good hotels' in this area,

but it's a must for any birder visiting Ethiopia as it's the only place to see the exquisite Prince Ruspoli's Turaco and the critically endangered Sidamo Lark. We saw both within two hours on the first morning and immediately left for the luxury of the Haile Resort! We now had an extra day to enjoy Lake Awassa while based in a modern hotel, and the photographers took full advantage -- as many waterbirds, and the more widespread bush birds are exceptionally tame here. The total change of pace was enjoyed by all.

Back on track we then headed south towards Kenya and the Yabello region -- the bird life here is fabulously different and home to two of Ethiopia's most range restricted endemics. The strange Stresemann's Bush-Crow was relatively common, and with a little effort we also found the much scarcer White-tailed Swallow. A walk in the mixed acacia bushland also added such delights as Pygmy Falcon, Buff-crested Bustard, Pygmy Batis, Taita Fiscal, Foxy Lark, Somali Tit, Tiny Cisticola, Pale Prinia, Somali Crombec, Shelley's Starling, and Northern Grosbeak-Canary.

We then began our long drive back towards Addis, breaking the journey at Wondo Genet. Here amongst the few remaining indigenous trees (and with dusk all around us) we finally saw two of the few remaining Yellow-fronted Parrots in this area -- sadly this species, so common here just a few years ago, is now very difficult to find in its rapidly disappearing habitat.

The main tour was now concluding, but almost everyone had signed up for the Lalibela Churches extension, and so most of us took the scheduled flight and arrived there in just two hours (rather than the earlier years' two-day drive). Our delightful new hotel had spectacular views from the top of the lofty excarpment and the rock-hewn churches (often described as "The Eighth Wonder of the World") were only a ten-minute drive away. Additionally though, the endemic Erckel's Francolins right at the edge of our hotel garden were a resounding, successful finale for our first Ethiopia: Endemic Birds, Ethiopian Wolves (and Good Hotels) tour!

--Terry

*We have more information about this itinerary and future departures on our web page for [Ethiopia](#).*

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## KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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## BIRDS

### *Struthionidae (Ostrich)*

**OSTRICH (SOMALI)** (*Struthio camelus molybdophanes*) – Eight in the Lake Abijatta area were apparently from introduced stock.

### *Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)*

**WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna viduata*) – A total of about 100 were seen around the marshy fringes of lakes Koka and Ziway.

**FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) – About 100 at Lake Ziway.

**WHITE-BACKED DUCK** (*Thalassornis leuconotus*) – Great looks at 20 of these unusual ducks at Lake Awassa.

**BLUE-WINGED GOOSE** (*Cyanochen cyanoptera*) – We saw these attractive endemic geese at several wetlands areas in the highlands north of Addis Ababa, and in the Bale Mountains; in all we saw about 90. [E]

**COMB DUCK** (*Sarkidiornis melanotos*) – Two at Lake Ziway.

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE** (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) – Very common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour.

**RUDDY SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna ferruginea*) – A total of 8 on several pools on the Sanetti Plateau in the Bale Mountains.

**SPUR-WINGED GOOSE** (*Plectropterus gambensis*) – Thirty at Lake Ziway and 14 at Lake Awassa.

**AFRICAN PYGMY-GOOSE** (*Nettapus auritus*) – Fabulous looks at several exceptionally tame birds at both Lake Ziway and Lake Awassa; in all we saw about 35.

**YELLOW-BILLED DUCK** (*Anas undulata*) – Small numbers were widespread at a variety of wetlands throughout the

tour.

**RED-BILLED DUCK** (*Anas erythrorhyncha*) – Ten on a seasonal pool near Yabello.

**HOTTENTOT TEAL** (*Anas hottentota*) – Three at Lake Awassa.

Numididae (Guineafowl)

**HELMETED GUINEAFOWL** (*Numida meleagris*) – Fairly common in and around Awash NP, and a few near Lake Langano.

**VULTURINE GUINEAFOWL** (*Acryllium vulturinum*) – Heard calling from within the dense bush south of Yabello.

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**CRESTED FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus sephaena*) – Small numbers at Awash NP, Sof Omar, and Goba; we saw a total of about 10.

**MOORLAND FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus psilolaemus*) – Can be very difficult as they are shy and well camouflaged, however we were lucky and had great looks at 5 in the Bale Mountains.

**ERCKEL'S FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus erckelii*) – Heard at Jemma Valley, and then seen really well near our hotel at Lalibela. [E]

**CLAPPERTON'S FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus clappertoni*) – Unbelievable looks at two exceptionally tame birds at Lake Langano.

**HARWOOD'S FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus harwoodi*) – This shy and uncommon endemic was seen in flight (when flushed by our local guides) in the Jemma Valley. [E]

**YELLOW-NECKED FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus leucoscepus*) – A few singles in the Awash NP area.

**CHESTNUT-NAPED FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus castaneicollis*) – Repeated good looks at a total of about 20 in the Bale Mountains. [E]



Another one of the great trip highlights: Strsemann's Bush-Crow  
(Photo by guide George Armistead)

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LITTLE GREBE** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Widespread at wetlands throughout the tour.

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

**GREATER FLAMINGO** (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) – Forty at Lake Koka and 20 at Lake Abijatta.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

**ABDIM'S STORK** (*Ciconia abdimii*) – Small numbers were seen to the north of Addis, near Awash NP, near Ziway, and south of Awassa.

**WOOLLY-NECKED STORK** (*Ciconia episcopus*) – One in flooded farmland south of Awassa.

**SADDLE-BILLED STORK** (*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*) – Two very distantly at Lake Koka, and then a closer bird at Lake Awassa.

**MARABOU STORK** (*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*) – Especially common in and around Awash NP, at Lake Ziway, and Lake Awassa, with a few others elsewhere; in all we saw about 450.

**YELLOW-BILLED STORK** (*Mycteria ibis*) – Eight at Lake Ziway, and 1 near Negele.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**GREAT CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Fairly common on most of the Rift Valley lakes; in all we saw about 130.

**LONG-TAILED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax africanus*) – Small numbers were widespread on a variety of wetlands throughout the tour.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

**AFRICAN DARTER** (*Anhinga rufa rufa*) – Two singles in Awash NP.

*Pelecanidae (Pelicans)*

**GREAT WHITE PELICAN** (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – A distant bird was seen at Lake Awassa.

**PINK-BACKED PELICAN** (*Pelecanus rufescens*) – Good looks in several areas including lakes Hora, Ziway and Awassa; in all we saw about 75.

*Scopidae (Hamerkop)*

**HAMERKOP** (*Scopus umbretta*) – Widespread in small numbers throughout the tour; in all we saw about 25.

*Ardeidae (Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns)*

**BLACK-HEADED HERON** (*Ardea melanocephala*) – Singles at Awash and Lake Awassa, and 4 in the Negele area.

**GOLIATH HERON** (*Ardea goliath*) – Two singles at Lake Awassa; Goliath is the world's largest heron.

**PURPLE HERON** (*Ardea purpurea*) – Two singles flying over the reeds near Bilen Lodge.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Small numbers at Awash NP, Lake Ziway, and at Lake Awassa.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – Two at Lake Ziway, and about a dozen at Lake Awassa.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Common and widespread.

**SQUACCO HERON** (*Ardeola ralloides*) – Widespread in small numbers at a variety marshy fringed wetlands.

*Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)*

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Twenty-five at Lake Ziway, and 1 at Lake Awassa.

**SACRED IBIS** (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) – Widespread in small numbers; in all we saw about 150.

**HADADA IBIS** (*Bostrychia hagedash*) – Most common around Awassa and Wondo Genet, but small numbers were also widespread in other highland areas.

**WATTLED IBIS** (*Bostrychia carunculata*) – This endemic was widespread in the highlands; in all we saw about 130. [E]

**AFRICAN SPOONBILL** (*Platalea alba*) – Small numbers were at lakes Beseka and Koka, and 1 near Negele.

*Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)*

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*) – Singles to the north of Addis, near Goba, and near Yabello.

**BLACK KITE (YELLOW-BILLED)** (*Milvus migrans parasitus*) – Very common and widespread.

**AFRICAN FISH-EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) – Two at Awash NP, and about 25 along the Rift Valley lakes.

**HOODED VULTURE** (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) – Very common and widespread.

**LAMMERGEIER** (*Gypaetus barbatus*) – Two singles at Ankober, and 1 at Lalibela.

**WHITE-BACKED VULTURE** (*Gyps africanus*) – Widespread throughout the tour; in all we saw about 100.

**RUEPPELL'S GRIFFON** (*Gyps rueppellii*) – Another widespread vulture; in all we saw about 60.

**LAPPET-FACED VULTURE** (*Torgos tracheliotus*) – Great looks at a low flying pair near Yabello.

**WHITE-HEADED VULTURE** (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*) – We saw this 'attractive' vulture at Dodola and near Yabello.

**BATELEUR** (*Terathopius ecaudatus*) – Singles at Awash NP, and around Yabello.

**AFRICAN HARRIER-HAWK** (*Polyboroides typus*) – Singles at Awash, Bale Mountains, Negele, and Yabello.

**DARK CHANTING-GOSHAWK** (*Melierax metabates*) – Common from the Awash area to Lake Langano.

**GABAR GOSHAWK** (*Micronisus gabar*) – Two in the Yabello area.

**RUFOUS-CHESTED SPARROWHAWK** (*Accipiter rufiventris*) – Some of the group saw 1 near Ankober.

**BLACK GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter melanoleucus*) – Good looks at a bird in flight near Addis Ababa.

**AUGUR BUZZARD** (*Buteo augur*) – Very common in the highlands.

**TAWNY EAGLE** (*Aquila rapax*) – Common and widespread in a variety of open country.

**VERREAUX'S EAGLE** (*Aquila verreauxii*) – Three adults together on the way to the Bale Mountains.

**AFRICAN HAWK-EAGLE** (*Aquila spilogaster*) – We scoped a distant perched bird at Sof Omar.

**WAHLBERG'S EAGLE** (*Hieraaetus wahlbergi*) – One in the Bale Mountains.

**AYRES'S HAWK-EAGLE** (*Hieraaetus ayresii*) – Great looks at a low flying bird at Negele.

**LONG-CRESTED EAGLE** (*Lophaetus occipitalis*) – One along the road to Shashemene.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)*

**PYGMY FALCON** (*Polihierax semitorquatus*) – Two pairs in the Yabello area.

**EURASIAN KESTREL** (*Falco tinnunculus*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**LANNER FALCON** (*Falco biarmicus*) – The resident 'rufescens' race was widespread in open country; we saw a total of 16.

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**ROUGET'S RAIL** (*Rougetius rougetii*) – We saw 11 of these attractive and tame rails in the Bale Mountains area. [E]

**BLACK CRAKE** (*Amauornis flavirostra*) – Three at Lake Ziway, and about 20 at Lake Awassa.

**COMMON MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Small numbers at lakes Ziway and Awassa.

**RED-KNOBBED COOT** (*Fulica cristata*) – Very common at Lake Awassa (300+), and about another 40 at Lake Ziway and Dinsho Pools.

Otididae (Bustards)

**ARABIAN BUSTARD** (*Ardeotis arabs*) – Great close looks at this rather uncommon bustard near Bilen Lodge.



*A village near Yabello (Photo by guide George Armistead)*

**WHITE-BELLIED BUSTARD** (*Eupodotis senegalensis*) – Five in Awash NP.

**BUFF-CRESTED BUSTARD** (*Eupodotis gindiana*) – One to the south of Yabello.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**SENEGAL THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus senegalensis*) – One seen (and about 6 heard) at Bilen Lodge.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**SPUR-WINGED PLOVER** (*Vanellus spinosus*) – Fairly common around wetlands in the Awash area, and along the Rift Valley lakes; in all we saw about 65.

**BLACK-WINGED LAPWING** (*Vanellus melanopterus*) – Twelve on the high altitude grasslands north of Addis, and 4 on the Liben Plains near Negele.

**CROWNED LAPWING** (*Vanellus coronatus*) – About a dozen in the Lake Abijatta area, 10 on the Liben Plains, and 6 near Lake Awassa.

**WATTLED LAPWING** (*Vanellus senegallus*) – One near Negele.

**SPOT-BREASTED LAPWING** (*Vanellus melanocephalus*) – This handsome endemic was fairly common high in the Bale Mountains - where we saw small flocks totalling about 30. [E]

**KITTLITZ'S PLOVER** (*Charadrius pecuarius*) – About 8 on the shores of Lake Abijatta.

**COMMON RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – One at Lake Abijatta.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius dubius*) – One at Lake Ziway.

**THREE-BANDED PLOVER** (*Charadrius tricollaris*) – Singles at lakes Beseka and Ziway, and then at Dinsho Pools.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-WINGED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Three at Lake Ziway.

Jacanidae (Jacanas)

**LESSER JACANA** (*Microparra capensis*) – Can be very difficult, but we were lucky this tour seeing 2 very close birds at Lake Ziway, and then a single at Lake Awassa.

**AFRICAN JACANA** (*Actophilornis africanus*) – Twenty at Lake Ziway, and about 50 at Lake Awassa.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – One in Awash NP, and 4 at Lake Ziway.

**SPOTTED REDSHANK** (*Tringa erythropus*) – One (showing quite a lot of breeding plumage) was at a pool on the way to Jemma Valley.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – About a dozen at Lake Ziway, and a few others at several widely scattered wetlands.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** (*Limosa limosa*) – Ten at Lake Ziway.

**LITTLE STINT** (*Calidris minuta*) – About 100 at Lake Abijatta.

**TEMMINCK'S STINT** (*Calidris temminckii*) – One at Lake Ziway.

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*Calidris ferruginea*) – About 100 at Lake Abijatta.

**RUFF** (*Philomachus pugnax*) – One hundred at Lake Abijatta, and a few others at various scattered wetland sites.

**AFRICAN SNIPE** (*Gallinago nigripennis*) – One at Dinsho Pools.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**GRAY-HOODED GULL** (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*) – About 20 were seen at lakes Ziway and Abijatta.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Singles at lakes Hora, Ziway and Abijatta.

**WHITE-WINGED TERN** (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) – About 10 (with at least 4 in breeding plumage) at Lake Langanu.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – One in breeding plumage at Lake Ziway, and 3 at lakes Abijatta and Langanu.

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)

**CHESTNUT-BELLIED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles exustus*) – Good looks at 4 on the road near Bilen Lodge.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**SPECKLED PIGEON** (*Columba guinea*) – Very common and widespread throughout the tour.

**WHITE-COLLARED PIGEON** (*Columba albitorques*) – This endemic was common in all highland areas including Addis, the Bale Mountains, and at Lalibela. [E]

**RAMERON PIGEON** (*Columba arquatrix*) – One in flight in the Harena Forest on the south side of Bale Mountains.

**LEMON DOVE** (*Columba larvata*) – Amazing looks at this normally shy bird as 1 drank from a leaking pipe at Debre Libanos.

**DUSKY TURTLE-DOVE** (*Streptopelia lugens*) – Common and widespread in the highlands; in all we saw about 45.

**AFRICAN MOURNING DOVE** (*Streptopelia decipiens*) – Common in the Awash area and parts of the Rift Valley around Lake Awassa.

**RED-EYED DOVE** (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) – Widespread at a variety of scattered sites throughout the tour.

**RING-NECKED DOVE** (*Streptopelia capicola*) – Seen at Awash NP, within the Rift Valley, and Yabello.

**VINACEOUS DOVE** (*Streptopelia vinacea*) – First seen at Sof Omar, and then around Yabello.

**LAUGHING DOVE** (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Common and widespread.

**EMERALD-SPOTTED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur chalcospilos*) – About a dozen in the Goba and Sof Omar areas.

**BLUE-SPOTTED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur afer*) – One for some of the group at Lake Awassa.

**NAMAQUA DOVE** (*Oena capensis*) – Common in the Awash NP area.



*A fantastic Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill showing every feather! (Photo by guide George Armistead)*

**BRUCE'S GREEN-PIGEON** (*Treron waalia*) – We saw about 16 of these attractive pigeons at Awash NP, Negele, Lake Awassa, and Wondo Genet.

*Psittacidae (Parrots)*

**BLACK-WINGED LOVEBIRD** (*Agapornis taranta*) – These gorgeous lovebirds were widespread in small numbers, but our very best looks were at Debre Libanos (10) and Lalibela (70). [E]

**RED-BELLIED PARROT** (*Poicephalus rufiventris*) – More commonly known as African Orange-bellied Parrot, we saw 4 at Lake Langanu, and then about 20 at Sof Omar, and 10 at Yabello.

**YELLOW-FRONTED PARROT** (*Poicephalus flavifrons*) – In recent years this endemic parrot is becoming increasingly scarce, but with the help of our local guides we were able to see 2 as they came to their evening roost at Wondo Genet. [E]

*Musophagidae (Turacos)*

**WHITE-CHEEKED TURACO** (*Tauraco leucotis*) – A gorgeous turaco of the highland forests; we saw them at Bale Mountains, Agere Maryam, and Wondo Genet. [E]

**PRINCE RUSPOLI'S TURACO** (*Tauraco ruspolii*) – For many of the group this was the bird of the trip; and what amazing views we all had - right in the open on a low tree only 20 feet away - just fantastic! [E]

**WHITE-BELLIED GO-AWAY-BIRD** (*Corythaixoides leucogaster*) – Widespread in acacia woodlands throughout the tour.

**EASTERN PLANTAIN-EATER** (*Crinifer zonurus*) – Small numbers at Melka Ghebdu, and Awash NP.

*Cuculidae (Cuckoos)*

**PIED CUCKOO** (*Clamator jacobinus*) – Two singles in the Yabello area.

**LEVAILLANT'S CUCKOO** (*Clamator levaillantii*) – Two singles at Sof Omar.

**RED-CHESTED CUCKOO** (*Cuculus solitarius*) – Four near Negele (and others heard elsewhere in the south).

**BLACK CUCKOO** (*Cuculus clamosus*) – Good looks at 1 of the form 'jacksoni' (with rufous across the breast) near Negele.

**KLAAS'S CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx klaas*) – One at Bilen Lodge.

**AFRICAN EMERALD CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*) – Fabulous scope views at Wondo Genet.

**DIDERIC CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx caprius*) – One at Lake Ziway.

**BLUE-HEADED COUCAL** (*Centropus monachus*) – We saw about 6 of these big coucals along the shores of Lake Awassa.

**WHITE-BROWED COUCAL** (*Centropus superciliosus*) – Singles at Bilen Lodge, Awash NP, and near Negele.

*Strigidae (Owls)*

**CAPE EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo capensis dillonii*) – Great scope views of a pair on a rocky ridge on the way to Debre Birhan.

**GRAYISH EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo cinerascens*) – One at Lake Hora, and then 3 and another pair in the Langanu- Abijatta area.

**PEARL-SPOTTED OWLET** (*Glaucidium perlatum*) – Good day time looks at Sof Omar, and around Yabello.

*Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)*

**SLENDER-TAILED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus clarus*) – Seen by some of the group at Bilen Lodge, and then at a day roost on the ground at Lake Langanu.

*Apodidae (Swifts)*

**SCARCE SWIFT** (*Schoutedenapus myoptilus*) – Very uncommon in Ethiopia but we had good looks at birds flying over the Harena Forest.

**ALPINE SWIFT** (*Apus melba*) – Two near the Bale Mountains, and 4 at Lalibela.

**NYANZA SWIFT** (*Apus niansae*) – Fairly common in the highlands.

**LITTLE SWIFT** (*Apus affinis*) – About 20 at Lake Awassa.

**HORUS SWIFT** (*Apus horus*) – A total of about 30, first at Dinsho Pools and then at Lake Awassa.

**WHITE-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Apus caffer*) – Small numbers at Goba, Yabello, and Lalibela.

**AFRICAN PALM-SWIFT** (*Cypsiurus parvus*) – About 30 in the Awash area.

Coliidae (Mousebirds)

**SPECKLED MOUSEBIRD** (*Colius striatus*) – Very common and widespread throughout the tour.

**BLUE-NAPED MOUSEBIRD** (*Urocolius macrourus*) – Quite common at Awash and in the drier parts of the Rift Valley - especially in acacia woodland.

Trogonidae (Trogons)

**NARINA TROGON** (*Apaloderma narina*) – Good looks at a male at Agere Maryam, and then another for some of the group at Wondo Genet.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**MALACHITE KINGFISHER** (*Corythornis cristatus*) – Most common at Lake Awassa (30+), but also at lakes Hora and Ziway.



*The endemic Ethiopian Wolf gave us some terrific views. (Photo by guide George Armistead)*

**AFRICAN PYGMY-KINGFISHER** (*Ispidina picta*) – Singles at Melkha Ghebdu.

**GRAY-HEADED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon leucocephala*) – Small numbers were seen at a variety of woodland sites throughout the tour.

**WOODLAND KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon senegalensis*) – One at Lake Ziway, and about 6 at Lake Awassa.

**STRIPED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon chelicuti*) – One in Awash NP.

**PIED KINGFISHER** (*Ceryle rudis*) – At least 100 at Lake Awassa, and perhaps another 40 at other widespread wetlands.

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**LITTLE BEE-EATER** (*Merops pusillus*) – Fairly common around Bilen Lodge and in Awash NP.

**BLUE-BREASTED BEE-EATER** (*Merops variegatus*) – These beautiful bee-eaters were widespread; in all we saw about 35.

**WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER** (*Merops albicollis*) – Common in and around Awash NP.

**MADAGASCAR BEE-EATER** (*Merops superciliosus*) – Three at Lake Beseka, and 2 singles in Awash NP.

**EUROPEAN BEE-EATER** (*Merops apiaster*) – About 100 were seen in the Debre Birhan area.

**NORTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER** (*Merops nubicus*) – We saw about 25 of these stunning birds in the Awash NP area.

Coraciidae (Rollers)

**ABYSSINIAN ROLLER** (*Coracias abyssinicus*) – Another gorgeous bird of the Awash area, where we saw about 20.

**LILAC-BREASTED ROLLER** (*Coracias caudatus lorti*) – We saw 4 singles of the lilac-throated form 'lorti' in the Negele to Yabello area.



**RUFOUS-CROWNED ROLLER** (*Coracias naevius*) – Singles at Melka Gehebdu, Bilen Lodge, Awash NP, and Yabello.

*Upupidae (Hoopoes)*

**EURASIAN HOOPOE (EURASIAN)** (*Upupa epops waibeli*) – Small numbers were fairly common and widespread throughout the tour.

*Phoeniculidae (Woodhoopoes and Scimitar-bills)*

**BLACK-BILLED WOODHOOPOE** (*Phoeniculus somaliensis*) – Almost endemic to the Horn region (but just crossing the border into extreme north Kenya) we saw small flocks at Awash NP, Sof Omar, near Negele, and at Yabello.

**ABYSSINIAN SCIMITAR-BILL** (*Rhinopomastus minor*) – A total of 7 were seen in the Bilen Lodge and Awash areas.

*Bucerotidae (Hornbills)*

**RED-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*) – Common in the lower altitude acacia country, like at Sof Omar and Yabello; in all we saw about 80.

**EASTERN YELLOW-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus flavirostris*) – Small numbers were at a variety of dry lowland sites; in all we saw about half a dozen.

**VON DER DECKEN'S HORNBILL** (*Tockus deckeni*) – Another dry country hornbill, we saw these at Lake Langano, Sof Omar, and Yabello.

**HEMPRICH'S HORNBILL** (*Tockus hemprichii*) – Two on the bird feeder at Lake Langano and then about another 8 in the Lalibela area.

**AFRICAN GRAY HORNBILL** (*Tockus nasutus*) – Small numbers around Awash NP and Negele.

**SILVERY-CHEEKED HORNBILL** (*Ceratogymna brevis*) – We saw over 100 of these massive hornbills at the Harena Forest, Awassa, and Wondo Genet.

**ABYSSINIAN GROUND-HORNBILL** (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*) – Pairs and family groups were widespread in open country; we saw a total of 11.

*Lybiidae (African Barbets)*

**YELLOW-BREASTED BARBET** (*Trachyphonus margaritatus*) – Four at Melka Ghebdu, 8 at Bilen Lodge, and another couple in Awash NP.

**D'ARNAUD'S BARBET** (*Trachyphonus darnaudii*) – Four at Bilen Lodge, and about a dozen around Yabello.

**RED-FRONTED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus pusillus*) – One at Bilen Lodge, and 2 at Sof Omar.

**YELLOW-FRONTED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus chrysoconus*) – Singles at Agere Maryam and Lalibela.

**RED-FRONTED BARBET** (*Tricholaema diademata*) – Singles at Bilen Lodge and Sof Omar.

**BLACK-THROATED BARBET** (*Tricholaema melanocephala*) – Singles at Awash NP and near Yabello.

**BANDED BARBET** (*Lybius undatus*) – These endemic barbets were most common on the Lalibela extension, but we all saw them earlier at Debre Libanos, Negele, and Wondo Genet. [E]

**BLACK-BILLED BARBET** (*Lybius guifsobalito*) – About 10 in the Lake Hora to Awash area.

**DOUBLE-TOOTHED BARBET** (*Lybius bidentatus*) – We saw 4 of these striking barbets at Wondo Genet.

*Indicatoridae (Honeyguides)*

**GREEN-BACKED HONEYGUIDE** (*Prodotiscus zambesiae*) – One was seen by some of the group as we waited for the Yellow-fronted Parrots at Wondo Genet.

**LESSER HONEYGUIDE** (*Indicator minor*) – Good looks at 3 birds at Sof Omar and then in the Harena Forest.

*Picidae (Woodpeckers)*

**RUFOUS-NECKED WRYNECK** (*Jynx ruficollis*) – Great looks at 1 in the grounds of our lodge at Lake Langano.

**NUBIAN WOODPECKER** (*Campethera nubica*) – Small numbers were widespread in acacia country.

**ABYSSINIAN WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos abyssinicus*) – We had excellent views of this uncommon endemic on the slopes of the Bale Mountains. [E]

**CARDINAL WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos fuscescens*) – Singles at Awash NP, Lake Langano, and Sof Omar.

**GRAY-HEADED WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos spodocephalus*) – First seen at Debre Libanos, and then at Lake Langano, and Sof Omar.

*Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises)*

**BROWN-THROATED WATTLE-EYE** (*Platysteira cyanea*) – Briefly for some at Agere Maryam, and then seen well by

everyone at Wondo Genet.

**GRAY-HEADED BATIS** (*Batis orientalis*) – Five in the Awash NP area, and 2 at Sof Omar.

**BLACK-HEADED BATIS** (*Batis minor*) – One at Lake Langano.

**PYGMY BATIS** (*Batis perkeo*) – One at Yabello.

*Prionopidae (Helmetshrikes and Allies)*

**WHITE HELMETSHRIKE** (*Prionops plumatus*) – We saw a flock of 7 near our lodge in Awash NP.

*Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)*

**BRUBRU** (*Nilaus afer*) – Small numbers at Awash, Lake Langano, and in the Yabello area.

**NORTHERN PUFFBACK** (*Dryoscopus gambensis*) – Three at Agere Maryam, and 2 at Yabello.

**BLACK-CROWNED TCHAGRA** (*Tchagra senegalus*)  
– Singles at Debre Libanos, Lake Langano, and Lalibela.

**TROPICAL BOUBOU** (*Laniarius aethiopicus*  
*aethiopicus*) – Many African authorities now split this form as Ethiopian Boubou which is almost endemic to the region; small numbers were widespread.

**SLATE-COLORED BOUBOU** (*Laniarius funebris*) –  
Small numbers were widespread in the dry lowland areas; in all we saw about 20.

**ROSY-PATCHED BUSHSHRIKE** (*Rhodophoneus*  
*cruentus*) – These striking birds were quite common (or at least very obvious) in Awash NP, we also saw 1 near Yabello.

**SULPHUR-BREASTED BUSHSHRIKE** (*Telophorus*  
*sulfureopectus*) – Good looks in Awash NP, and then at Sof Omar and Negele.

**GRAY-HEADED BUSHSHRIKE** (*Malaconotus blanchoti*) – Heard near Bilen Lodge.

*Campephagidae (Cuckoo-shrikes)*

**GRAY CUCKOO-SHRIKE** (*Coracina caesia*) – One in the Hareenna Forest on Bale Mountains.

**RED-SHOULDERED CUCKOO-SHRIKE** (*Campephaga phoenicea*) – We saw a pair at Wondo Genet.

*Laniidae (Shrikes)*

**RED-BACKED SHRIKE** (*Lanius collurio*) – A male in Awash NP and an immature bird at Lake Awassa.

**LESSER GRAY SHRIKE** (*Lanius minor*) – One in Awash NP.

**GRAY-BACKED FISCAL** (*Lanius excubitoroides*) – About 6 along the shores of Lake Awassa.

**TAITA FISCAL** (*Lanius dorsalis*) – One near Yabello.

**SOMALI FISCAL** (*Lanius somalicus*) – Two in Awash NP.

**COMMON FISCAL** (*Lanius collaris*) – Small numbers were widespread in the highlands.

**WHITE-RUMPED SHRIKE** (*Eurocephalus rueppelli*) – Common in the lower dry country like Awash NP, Negele and Yabello; in all we saw about 70.

*Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)*

**EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus oriolus*) – Four in the Bilen Lodge to Awash area.

**DARK-HEADED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus monacha*) – Seen in flight at the Hareenna Forest, and then much better for everyone at Wondo Genet. [E]

**AFRICAN BLACK-HEADED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus larvatus*) – Six were seen in a variety of widespread scattered areas; prefers more open woodland than the previous species.

*Dicruridae (Drongos)*

**FORK-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) – Common and widespread.

*Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)*



*The endemic Blue-winged Geese (Photo by guide George Armistead)*

**AFRICAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER** (*Terpsiphone viridis*) – Widespread in small numbers.

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

**STRESEMANN'S BUSH-CROW** (*Zavattariornis stresemanni*) – Another real trip favourite, and a very range restricted endemic; we saw about 25 in the Yabello area. [E]

**RED-BILLED CHOUGH** (*Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax*) – Two in the higher area of the Bale Mountains.

**CAPE CROW** (*Corvus capensis*) – Common and widespread.

**PIED CROW** (*Corvus albus*) – Very common and widespread.

**SOMALI CROW** (*Corvus edithae*) – Also known as Dwarf Raven; we mainly saw them in the higher country where they were widespread in small numbers.

**FAN-TAILED RAVEN** (*Corvus rhipidurus*) – Common and widespread.

**THICK-BILLED RAVEN** (*Corvus crassirostris*) – One of the most striking endemics; widespread in small numbers, we saw them on 8 different days. [E]

*Alaudidae (Larks)*

**SINGING BUSHLARK** (*Mirafraga cantillans*) – Three in Awash NP.

**GILLETT'S LARK** (*Mirafraga gilletti*) – We saw 2 of these localised endemic larks in Awash NP. [E]

**SIDAMO LARK** (*Heteromirafraga sidamoensis*) – One of the world's rarest birds, perhaps with a world population of as few as 250 birds; we had excellent looks at 2 on the Liben Plains near Negele. [E]

**FOXY LARK** (*Calendulauda alopex*) – Three in the Yabello area.

**ERLANGER'S LARK** (*Calandrella erlangeri*) – About 8 were drinking at a stream in the high altitude grasslands near Debre Libanos. [E]

**SOMALI SHORT-TOED LARK** (*Calandrella somalica*) – About a dozen on the Liben Plains.

**THEKLA LARK** (*Galerida theklae*) – Small numbers in the highlands north of Addis Ababa, in the Bale Mountains, and at Lalibela.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**PLAIN MARTIN** (*Riparia paludicola*) – Widespread, especially in open country and wetlands; in all we saw about 140.

**BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) – Small numbers at lakes Beseka and Ziway.

**BANDED MARTIN** (*Riparia cincta*) – Two in the highlands near Debre Libanos, and 1 at Lake Awassa.

**ROCK MARTIN** (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*) – Widespread around towns, villages, and cliffs.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Two near Debre Libanos, and about 10 over the Liben Plains.

**ETHIOPIAN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo aethiopica*) – Small numbers at Awash NP, the Liben Plains, and near Yabello.

**WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo smithii*) – First seen at Lake Beseka, and then at Bilen Lodge, and around Negele.

**WHITE-TAILED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo megaensis*) – Another very range restricted endemic, we had great looks at one to the south of Yabello. [E]

**RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** (*Cecropis daurica*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**LESSER STRIPED-SWALLOW** (*Cecropis abyssinica*) – Small numbers at Negele, Yabello, and Lalibela.

**BLACK SAWWING** (*Psalidoprocne pristoptera pristoptera*) – We saw these purplish-blue birds at Debre Libanos and Lalibela; they are sometimes split as Blue Sawwing.

**BLACK SAWWING** (*Psalidoprocne pristoptera antinorii*) – We saw these brown colored sawwings at the Haremma Forest; they are sometimes split as Brown Sawwing.

*Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)*

**WHITE-WINGED BLACK-TIT** (*Melaniparus leucomelas*) – Three individuals were seen in the woodlands around Lake Langanu.

**WHITE-BACKED BLACK-TIT** (*Melaniparus leuconotus*) – Some of the group saw this endemic at Debre Libanos, but we then all had good looks on the slopes of the Bale Mountains. [E]

**SOMALI TIT** (*Melaniparus thruppi*) – About 6 in the Yabello area.

*Certhiidae (Creepers)*

**SPOTTED CREEPER** (*Salpormis spilonotus*) – Great looks at this widespread but uncommon species in the woodlands at Lake Awassa.

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus schoanus*) – This dark-headed white-vented form was common in the highlands; if split it is known as Common Bulbul.

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus somaliensis*) – With a white neck-patch and white vent this form was common at Awash NP; if split this becomes Somali Bulbul.

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus spurius*) – With a dark head and yellow vent this is sometimes split as Dark-capped Bulbul; we saw them in the Hareenna Forest and at Agere Maryam.

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus dodsoni*) – With a white neck-patch and yellow vent this form is sometimes split as Dodson's Bulbul; these were common around Negele and Yabello.

**NORTHERN BROWNBUL** (*Phyllastrephus strepitans*) – Four at Agere Maryam, and 1 at Lake Awassa.

Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)

**BROWN WOODLAND-WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus umbrovirens*) – Singles at Debre Libanos, Agere Maryam, and Lalibela.

**WILLOW WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – About a dozen were seen in the early part of the tour between the Jemma Valley and Awash NP.

Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)

**EASTERN OLIVACEOUS WARBLER** (*Hippolais pallida*) – About 6 in the scrubby valley at Melka Ghebdu.

**SEDGE WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – One at Lake Ziway.

**GREAT REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) – Singles at Lake Ziway and Lake Awassa.

**LESSER SWAMP-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus gracilirostris*) – Singles near Addis and Lake Ziway, and then about 6 at Lake Awassa.

Megaluridae (Grassbirds and Allies)

**CINNAMON BRACKEN-WARBLER** (*Bradypterus cinnamomeus*) – Great looks at this normally shy 'Bradypterus' on the slopes of the Bale Mountains.

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

**YELLOW-BREASTED APALIS** (*Apalis flavida*) – We saw a total of about 20 in the Yabello area.

**GREEN-BACKED CAMAROPTERA** (*Camaroptera brachyura brevicaudata*) – Very common and widespread, all the birds we saw were of the gray-backed form 'brevicaudata'.

**GRAY WREN-WARBLER** (*Calamonastes simplex*) – Three (plus many heard) in the Yabello area.

**RED-FACED CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola erythroptus*) – Two at Lake Awassa.

**SINGING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola cantans*) – Small numbers in the Bale highlands, 4 at Wondo Genet, and 40+ around Lalibela.

**RATTLING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola chiniana*) – Common around Yabello, and a few others at Lake Langanu and Negele.

**ASHY CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola cinereolus*) – Fairly common at Awash NP, and a few near Yabello.

**WINDING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola galactotes lugubris*) – Most African authorities now split this form as Ethiopian Cisticola, we saw small numbers in the highlands throughout the tour.

**CROAKING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola natalensis*) – Heard near Lalibela.

**TINY CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola nana*) – Good looks at 2 in the dry bush country south of Yabello.

**PECTORAL-PATCH CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola brunnescens*) – Two on the Liben Plains.

**BUFF-BELLIED WARBLER** (*Phyllolais pulchella*) – Small numbers in acacia country at Awash NP, Lake Langanu, and at Lake Awassa.

**TAWNY-FLANKED PRINIA** (*Prinia subflava*) – Widespread in small numbers throughout the tour.

**PALE PRINIA** (*Prinia somalica*) – Good looks at 1 south of Yabello.

**YELLOW-BELLIED EREMOMELA** (*Eremomela icteropygialis*) – A total of about a dozen were seen in the lower altitude dry bush country.

Sylviidae (Old World Warblers)

**ABYSSINIAN CATBIRD** (*Parophasma galinieri*) – Great looks at about 6 of these rather unusual endemic babblers (although Clements puts them in old world warblers) in the Bale Mountains. [E]

**BLACKCAP** (*Sylvia atricapilla*) – About half a dozen in the scrubby valley at Melka Ghebdu.

**GARDEN WARBLER** (*Sylvia borin*) – Four at Melka Ghebdu.

**GREATER WHITETHROAT** (*Sylvia communis*) – One was seen by some of the group at Melka Ghebdu.

**NORTHERN CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta brachyura*) – Small numbers in the acacia trees near Bilen Lodge and at Sof Omar.

**RED-FACED CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta whytii*) – One at Ziway, and about 6 around Lake Langano.

**SOMALI CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta isabellina*) – One at Yabello.

*Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)*

**AFRICAN GRAY FLYCATCHER** (*Bradornis microrhynchus*) – Widespread in the dry acacia country; in all we saw about 50.

**ABYSSINIAN SLATY-FLYCATCHER** (*Melaenornis chocolatinus*) – Small numbers at Addis Ababa, the Harena Forest, Agere Maryam, and Wondo Genet. [E]

**NORTHERN BLACK-FLYCATCHER** (*Melaenornis edolioides*) – Singles at Lake Langano and near Goba, and then 3 at Yabello.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa striata*) – One at Lake Langano.

**AFRICAN DUSKY FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa adusta*) – Small numbers in wooded areas of the Rift Valley and near Bale Mountains.

**RUEPPELL'S ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha semirufa*) – We saw a total of about 20 at a variety of scattered highland sites.

**WHITE-BROWED ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha heuglini*) – One at Lake Awassa.

**SPOTTED MORNING-THRUSH** (*Cichladusa guttata*) – Two in the Yabello area.

**RED-BACKED SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Cercotrichas leucophrys*) – Common around Yabello, and just 1 at Awash NP.

**MOURNING WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe lugens lugubris*) – Many African authorities now split this as Abyssinian Black Wheatear which is endemic to the region; we saw about 15 to the north of Addis, and 7 in the Lalibela area. [E]

**RED-BREASTED WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe bottae*) – Small numbers on the high altitude grasslands north of Addis and in the Bale Mountains.

**STONECHAT** (*Saxicola torquatus*) – Most African authorities now split this as African Stonechat; we saw them in the highlands north of Addis, and at the Bale Mountains.

**SOMBRE CHAT** (*Cercomela dubia*) – We had fantastic views of this little known and extremely localised endemic on the lava fields near Awash NP. [E]

**MOORLAND CHAT** (*Cercomela sordida*) – Very common on the high altitude grasslands.

**RUEPPELL'S CHAT** (*Myrmecocichla melaena*) – Small numbers at Ankober and Jemma Valley, and then common around Lalibela. [E]

**MOCKING CLIFF-CHAT** (*Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris*) – Small numbers were widespread in the highlands and along Rift Valley escarpments.

**WHITE-WINGED CLIFF-CHAT** (*Thamnolaea semirufa*) – Three in the Jemma Valley, 3 at Wondo Genet, and at least 6 around Lalibela. [E]

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**LITTLE ROCK-THRUSH** (*Monticola rufocinereus*) – Most common at Lalibela, but 6 others were seen in the Jemma Valley and around Lake Langano.

**ABYSSINIAN GROUND-THRUSH** (*Zoothera piaggiae*) – We had scope views of 1 in the Harena Forest.

**GROUNDSCRAPER THRUSH** (*Psophocichla litsipsirupa*) – Widespread in the highlands.

**OLIVE THRUSH** (*Turdus olivaceus abyssinicus*) – The form 'abyssinicus' (which is often split as Mountain Thrush) was common throughout all the highland areas.

**AFRICAN THRUSH** (*Turdus pelios*) – One at Melka Ghebdu, 4 in the Negele area, and 1 at Lake Awassa.

*Timaliidae (Babblers)*

**AFRICAN HILL BABBLER** (*Pseudoalcippe abyssinica*) – Good looks at this often secretive (but a lively songster) in the Harena Forest.

**RUFOUS CHATTERER** (*Turdoides rubiginosa*) – We saw small flocks at Lake Langano, Sof Omar, and Yabello.

**WHITE-RUMPED BABBLER** (*Turdoides leucopygia*) – Almost endemic (but the range just extends into Sudan), we saw them at Sof Omar, Negele, Lake Awassa, and Wondo Genet, and finally at Lalibela.

*Zosteropidae (White-eyes)*

**BROAD-RINGED WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops polioogastrus polioogastrus*) – Strangely included in babblers these days (at least by some) the grey-bellied nominate form was seen in all the highlands forest blocks.

**WHITE-BREASTED WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops abyssinicus abyssinicus*) – The pale gray-bellied nominate race was widespread in small numbers, while at Yabello we saw the yellow-bellied form 'jubaensis'.

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**WATTLED STARLING** (*Creatophora cinerea*) – Occasional small flocks were widespread in the lowlands.

**GREATER BLUE-EARED GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*) – Common and widespread throughout the tour.

**LESSER BLUE-EARED GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis chloropterus*) – Three on the Ankober Escarpment.

**RUEPPELL'S GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis purpuroptera*) – Small numbers in the Awash area, at Lake Langano, and around Awassa.

**GOLDEN-BREASTED STARLING** (*Lamprotornis regius*) – One on the way to Negele.

**SUPERB STARLING** (*Lamprotornis superbus*) – Very common from Awash to Shashemene, and then in the lower country below the Bale Mountains through to Negele and south to Yabello.

**SHELLEY'S STARLING** (*Lamprotornis shelleyi*) – About 20 in the Yabello region.

**WHITE-CROWNED STARLING** (*Spreo albicapillus*) – First seen on the Liben Plains (20+), and then in the Yabello area (40+). [E]

**RED-WINGED STARLING** (*Onychognathus morio*) – Two at Yabello, and then about 10 around Lalibela.

**SLENDER-BILLED STARLING** (*Onychognathus tenuirostris*) – Four in the Jemma Valley, 8 in the Bale Mountains, and 1 at Lalibela.

**BRISTLE-CROWNED STARLING** (*Onychognathus salvadorii*) – Seven in the gorge at Sof Omar.

**WHITE-BILLED STARLING** (*Onychognathus albirostris*) – We had great views of this endemic starling at Debre Birhan, Debre Libanos, and then at Lalibela; in all we saw about 80. [E]

*Buphagidae (Oxpeckers)*

**RED-BILLED OXPECKER** (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*) – Widespread in a variety of areas with both big game and local domestic animals; in all we saw about 30.

*Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)*

**KENYA VIOLET-BACKED SUNBIRD** (*Anthreptes orientalis*) – Good looks at a single male near Yabello.

**NILE VALLEY SUNBIRD** (*Hedydipna metallica*) – We saw several of these striking sunbirds in the Awash area.

**WESTERN OLIVE SUNBIRD** (*Cyanomitra obscura*) – One at Agere Maryam.

**SCARLET-CHESTED SUNBIRD** (*Chalcomitra senegalensis*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**HUNTER'S SUNBIRD** (*Chalcomitra hunteri*) – Great looks at 2 males near Yabello.

**TACAZZE SUNBIRD** (*Nectarinia tacazze*) – Common in the highlands.

**MALACHITE SUNBIRD** (*Nectarinia famosa*) – Some of the group saw 1 near Debre Birhan.

**BEAUTIFUL SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris pulchellus*) – A common and just 'beautiful' sunbird of the lowlands.

**MARIQUA SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris mariquensis*) – One in Awash NP, and then about 30 in the Rfit Valley.

**SHINING SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris habessinicus*) – Another gorgeous sunbird of the lowlands.

**VARIABLE SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris venustus*) – Small numbers of the yellow-bellied form 'fazoqlensis' in the highlands, and about 6 white-bellied 'albiventris' near Yabello.

*Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL (BLUE-HEADED)** (*Motacilla flava beema*) – About 10 on the shores of Lake Koka included some nice looking adults males.

**MOUNTAIN WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla clara*) – Singles along streams at Debre Libanos, in the Harenna Forest, and at Wondo Genet.

**AFRICAN PIED WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla aguimp*) – One near our lodge in Awash NP.

**AFRICAN PIPIT** (*Anthus cinnamomeus*) – One near Debre Birhan.

**LONG-BILLED PIPIT** (*Anthus similis*) – Two on the Jemma Valley Escarpment.

**PLAIN-BACKED PIPIT** (*Anthus leucophrys*) – Two near Lake Abijatta, and about 6 on the Liben Plains.

**ABYSSINIAN LONGCLAW** (*Macronyx flavicollis*) – Great close looks at 1 near Debre Libanos, and then several more

distantly near the Bale Mountains. [E]

*Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)*

**HOUSE BUNTING** (*Emberiza striolata striolata*) – Also known as Striolated Bunting, we saw 1 near Debre Libanos.

**CINNAMON-BREADED BUNTING** (*Emberiza tahapisi*) – Eight in the Jemma Valley.

**SOMALI BUNTING** (*Emberiza poliopleura*) – Four in Awash NP, and about 10 around Yabello.

*Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)*

**ANKOBER SERIN** (*Carduelis ankoberensis*) – We had fantastic views of about 14 of these little known endemics on the escarpment to the NE of Debre Birhan - great photographs for some of the group too!

**YELLOW-CROWNED CANARY** (*Serinus flavivertex*) – Six on the escarpment above Ankober.

**ABYSSINIAN SISKIN** (*Serinus nigriceps*) – A common endemic in the highlands. [E]

**AFRICAN CITRIL** (*Serinus citrinelloides*) – Common and widespread.

**REICHENOW'S SEEDEATER** (*Serinus reichenowi*) – Common and widespread away from the low dry country.

**YELLOW-RUMPED SERIN** (*Serinus xanthopygius*) – After a good deal of searching this was seen by the leader only on the escarpment below Lalibela. [E]

**WHITE-BELLIED CANARY** (*Serinus dorsostriatus*) – Four at Lake Langano and 6 near Yabello.

**YELLOW-THROATED SERIN** (*Serinus flavigula*) – We all had great views of this little known endemic in the gorge near Melka Ghebdu.

**SALVADORI'S SERIN** (*Serinus xantholaemus*) – Another rare and little known serin; we had fantastic views at Sof Omar. [E]

**NORTHERN GROSBEAK-CANARY** (*Serinus donaldsoni*) – Good looks at a female south of Yabello.

**STREAKY SEEDEATER** (*Serinus striolatus*) – Common in the highlands; in all we saw about 160.

**BROWN-RUMPED SEEDEATER** (*Serinus tristriatus*) – A common endemic seedeater in the highlands. [E]

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**SHELLEY'S RUFOUS SPARROW** (*Passer shelleyi*) – Two single males near Yabello.

**SWAINSON'S SPARROW** (*Passer swainsonii*) – Very common and widespread.

**PARROT-BILLED SPARROW** (*Passer gongonensis*) – About 4 near Yabello.

**CHESTNUT SPARROW** (*Passer eminibey*) – About 20 at Lake Langano, and 4 at Yabello.

**YELLOW-SPOTTED PETRONIA** (*Petronia pyrgita*) – Small numbers at Awash NP, Sof Omar, and around Negele.

*Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)*

**RED-BILLED BUFFALO-WEAVER** (*Bubalornis niger*) – Small flocks at Awash NP, near Negele, and at Yabello.

**WHITE-HEADED BUFFALO-WEAVER** (*Dinemellia dinemelli*) – Widespread in low dry bush country.

**WHITE-BROWED SPARROW-WEAVER** (*Plocepasser mahali*) – Widespread in dry bush country, especially with acacia trees.

**GRAY-HEADED SOCIAL-WEAVER** (*Pseudonigrita arnaudi*) – About 6 near Yabello.

**BLACK-CAPPED SOCIAL-WEAVER** (*Pseudonigrita cabanisi*) – Six near Yabello.

**RED-HEADED WEAVER** (*Anaplectes rubriceps*) – One at Melka Ghebdu, 4 at Sof Omar, 2 near Negele, and 1 at Wondo Genet.

**BAGLAFECHE WEAVER** (*Ploceus baglafecht*) – Very common and widespread in the highlands.

**LITTLE WEAVER** (*Ploceus luteolus*) – Two at Melka Ghebdu, and 2 at Lake Langano.

**SPECTACLED WEAVER** (*Ploceus ocularis*) – We saw a single male at Wondo Genet.

**LESSER MASKED-WEAVER** (*Ploceus intermedius*) – Six near Yabello.

**VITELLINE MASKED-WEAVER** (*Ploceus vitellinus*) – Most common near Yabello, but a few others were seen around Melka Ghebdu and near Awash.

**RUEPPELL'S WEAVER** (*Ploceus galbula*) – Small numbers at Lake Hora, Awash NP, and at Lake Langano.

**SPEKE'S WEAVER** (*Ploceus spekei*) – Some of the group saw about a dozen on the Liben Plains.

**VILLAGE WEAVER** (*Ploceus cucullatus*) – Widespread at a variety of scattered sites throughout the tour.

**CHESTNUT WEAVER** (*Ploceus rubiginosus*) – Birds in non-breeding plumage were seen at Melka Ghebdu and Lake Langano, and we then saw about 100 males in breeding plumage near Yabello.

**RED-BILLED QUELEA** (*Quelea quelea*) – Small numbers around Awash NP and at Lake Awassa.

**ORANGE BISHOP** (*Euplectes franciscanus*) – Small numbers (mostly in non-breeding plumage) at Awash NP, and near several Rift Valley wetlands.

**YELLOW BISHOP** (*Euplectes capensis*) – About 20 at widespread sites in the highlands.

**RED-COLLARED WIDOWBIRD** (*Euplectes ardens*) – Ten near Debre Libanos.

#### *Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)*

**YELLOW-BELLIED WAXBILL** (*Coccyzygia quartinia*) – One at Debre Libanos, 6 at Yabello, and 4 at Lalibela.

**FAWN-BREASTED WAXBILL** (*Estrilda paludicola ochrogaster*) – If split this distinctive form is known as Abyssinian Waxbill and is almost endemic to the region; we had great looks in the grounds of our hotel at Lake Awassa.

**CRIMSON-RUMPED WAXBILL** (*Estrilda rhodopyga*) – Ten at Lake Langano.

**COMMON WAXBILL** (*Estrilda astrild*) – Ten along the shores of Lake Awassa.

**RED-CHEEKED CORDONBLEU** (*Uraeginthus bengalus*) – Common and widespread throughout the tour.

**PURPLE GRENADIER** (*Granatina ianthinogaster*) – We saw these gorgeous colorful waxbills in Awash NP and at Yabello.

**RED-BILLED PYTILIA** (*Pytilia lineata*) – This local and uncommon pytilia was watched preening for over 15 minutes at Melka Ghebdu - a special bonus for our tour.

**GREEN-WINGED PYTILIA** (*Pytilia melba*) – Four at Awash NP, and 1 near Lake Langano.

**RED-BILLED FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta senegala*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**AFRICAN FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta rubricata*) – Four at Wondo Genet.

**CUT-THROAT** (*Amadina fasciata*) – About a dozen at Lake Langano, 2 at Lake Awassa, and 2 at Yabello.

**BRONZE MANNIKIN** (*Spermestes cucullatus*) – Small flocks at a variety of mainly highlands sites; in all we saw about 50.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE MANNIKIN** (*Spermestes bicolor*) – Four at Wondo Genet.

#### *Viduidae (Indigobirds)*

**PIN-TAILED WHYDAH** (*Vidua macroura*) – Most common from Negele to Awassa and south to Yabello; we saw a total of about 60.

**STEEL-BLUE WHYDAH** (*Vidua hypocherina*) – We saw a male in full breeding plumage near Yabello.

**STRAW-TAILED WHYDAH** (*Vidua fischeri*) – About 12 (including 1 in full breeding plumage) near Yabello.

**VILLAGE INDIGOBIRD** (*Vidua chalybeata*) – A male in breeding plumage at Yabello.

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## MAMMALS

**BLACK-FACED VERVET MONKEY** (*Cercopithecus aethiops*) – First seen in the Jemma Valley, and then commonly in the Awash area and at Sof Omar, we had also had a few at several other widespread sites; in all we saw about 160.

**HAMADRYAS BABOON** (*Papio hamadryas*) – Some of the group saw 2 near Sof Omar.

**OLIVE BABOON** (*Papio anubis*) – Widespread in a variety of habitats, but most common at Awash NP, and between Bale Mountains and Negele; in all we saw about 200.

**GELADA** (*Theropithecus gelada*) – We saw about 70 of these huge grass-eating 'baboons' at the edge of the escarpment NE of Debre Birhan. [E]

**MANTLED GUEREZA** (*Colobus guereza*) – More commonly known as Eastern Black-and-white Colobus we saw them at Awash NP, around Lakwe Awassa, and at Wondo Genet.

**CAPE HARE** (*Lepus capensis*) – Most common at Awash NP and Yabello, but we also saw singles at a variety of widespread sites; in all we saw about 15.

**STARCK'S HARE** (*Lepus starcki*) – Four in the high altitude grasslands of the Bale Mountains. [E]

**UNSTRIPED GROUND SQUIRREL** (*Xerus rutilus*) – Four in Awash NP, and about 10 around Yabello.

**NAKED-SOLED GERBIL** (*Tatera* sp.) – About a dozen on the high plains north of Addis Ababa.

**ETHIOPIAN MOLE-RAT** (*Tachyoryctes macrocephalus*) – Also known as Giant Mole-Rat and Giant Root-Rat we at fantastic looks at these totally bizarre creatures on the Sanetti Plateau in Bale Mountains. [E]

**SIMIEN FOX (ETHIOPIAN WOLF)** (*Canis simensis*) – Amazing close looks this tour, including watching them hunting; in total we saw 5. [E]

**BLACK-BACKED JACKAL** (*Canis mesomelas*) – Some of the group saw 3 at Lake Langano.



**EGYPTIAN MONGOOSE** (*Herpestes ichneumon*) – Good looks at 1 on the Liben Plains.

**SLENDER MONGOOSE** (*Herpestes sanguineus*) – One near Bilen Lodge.

**EASTERN DWARF MONGOOSE** (*Helogale hirtula*) – About 10 at Lake Awassa.

**LION** (*Panthera leo*) – Heard repeatedly at night around Bilen Lodge.

**ROCK HYRAX** (*Procavia capensis*) – Ten on the escarpment NE of Debre Birhan, and a few at Sof Omar.

**WARTHOG** (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) – Common at Awash NP and in the Bale Mountains; in all we saw about 120.

**HIPPOPOTAMUS** (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) – A female and tiny baby in the river north of Awassa.

**MOUNTAIN NYALA** (*Tragelaphus buxtoni*) – Great looks at a couple of herds totalling about 30 in the Bale Mountains.

[E]

**MENELICK'S BUSHBUCK** (*Tragelaphus scriptus meneliki*) – Two near the park offices in the Bale Mountains. [E]

**LESSER KUDU** (*Tragelaphus imberbis*) – Seven near our lodge in Awash NP.

**BUSH (GRAY) DUIKER** (*Sylvicapra grimmia*) – Three in the Bale Mountains.

**BOHOR REEDBUCK** (*Redunca redunca*) – Four in the Bale Mountains.

**BEISA ORYX** (*Oryx beisa*) – We saw about 40 of these beautiful antelopes in Awash NP.

**KLIPSPRINGER** (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) – Three in the Bale Mountains.

**SALT'S DIK-DIK** (*Madoqua saltiana*) – These attractive dikdiks were common around Bilen Lodge and at Awash NP.

**GUENTHER'S DIK-DIK** (*Madoqua guentheri*) – About 6 in the Yabello area.

**SOEMMERING'S GAZELLE** (*Gazella soemmerringi*) – Four in Awash NP. [E]

**GRANT'S GAZELLE** (*Gazella granti*) – Three near Lake Abijatta.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

We saw the following reptiles on the tour:

Nile Crocodile, 3 in Awash NP.

Agama Lizard, about 20 in the rocky areas of Awash NP and around Lake Langano.

Leopard Tortoise, 2 very large ones were seen in Awash NP.

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**Totals for the tour: 396 bird taxa and 30 mammal taxa**