



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Ghana: Window Into West African Birding 2018**

Mar 29, 2018 to Apr 17, 2018

Phil Gregory & James Ntakor

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*We had a marvelous time on this tour! Here is part of the group, taking a break at Atewa just before the end of the tour. Photo posted by guide Phil Gregory.*

This was the ninth Field Guides Ghana tour (my eleventh overall), with pretty good weather, not being too hot or too wet this time. Ghana seems to be undergoing a building boom, with half-finished buildings all over the country. It was truly strange, but the place is clearly thriving and makes an ideal portal to West African birding and we had a very enjoyable trip.

Sakumono Lagoon late in the afternoon was as ever quite rewarding, albeit again very green and overgrown this year with a lot of late rainfall making things very verdant here, and few terns or shorebirds in evidence. Senegal Thick-knees showed very well, and a Marsh Sandpiper coming into summer plumage was nice. Unexpected finds were Black Coucal, and my first Greater Swamp Warbler for Ghana heard nicely, plus a great view of Yellow-crowned Gonolek and African Swamphen, whilst Little Rush-Warbler was heard singing well again this year, very far west for this species.

Shai Hills is always a good introduction to Ghanaian birding, with nice looks at the Senegal trio of Batis, Parrot, and Eremomela, our first Blue-bellied Rollers, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Vieillot's Double-toothed and Bearded barbets, and good looks at Violet Turaco. A scramble up to Sayu Cave gave some of us what is meant to be Egyptian Tomb-bat tucked away squeaking in a dark crevice. One of the Senegal Parrots was an astonishingly vivid yellow variant, an incredible sight, I posted a video to the IBC and it should be on the FG site too.

We headed west to Nsuta Forest, a new destination for us, and despite heavy rain that afternoon we scored brilliantly on Spot-breasted Ibis and then Akun Eagle Owl at dusk. Next morning got us Tessmann's Flycatcher, a presumed Least Honeyguide and lots of Piping Hornbills.

A marsh near Takoradi turned up Orange Weaver, Allen's Gallinule and Phil's first Ghana African Darter, then it was time for Ankasa where Plain Nightjars awaited us on the drive to dinner from our simple accommodation.

Next day the pond gave us a fantastic flyby of a male Hartlaub's Duck, plus White-bellied Kingfisher and Yellow-casqued Hornbill, and we got to grips with Western and Yellow-bearded Greenbuls, Icterine Greenbul and Red-vented Malimbe. Great Blue Turaco also showed nicely, and Forest Robin sang and showed quite well that afternoon. Finding 2 Blue-moustached Bee-eater was great, as this is now difficult at Atewa, a major highlight.

The final morning got us Rufous-winged Illadopsis and nice looks at Reichenbach's Sunbird on the way out. Brenu Beach turned up Marsh Tchagra for great views, and a bonus Great-spotted Cuckoo that was amazingly vocal.

Kakum National Park and the surrounding area is an important part of the tour. Star birds from this area included Brown Nightjar, Brown-cheeked, Piping, and Black-casqued hornbills, Sabine's and Cassin's spinetails, Rosy Bee-eater, Violet-backed Hyliota, Johanna's, Blue-throated Brown, Tiny, Olive-bellied, and Superb sunbirds, plus Rock Pratincole and White-throated Blue Swallow at the customary Pra River site.

The Picathartes day was rewarding, as again this year we accessed a new site at a slightly lower and closer location on the same escarpment. The reward came within 90 minutes, with a fine bird hopping in and then sitting on a vine for some minutes, with a second bird appearing later for fantastic views of this iconic species, and 2 more as we came out.

Mole came next and this is a very different part of the tour, coming into the much drier Sudan savanna zone. Star birds included White-throated Francolin, Forbes's Plover, Bruce's Green-Pigeon, Sun Lark, Standard-winged Nightjar male, Grayish Eagle-Owl and African Scops-Owl, Pygmy and Beautiful sunbirds, White-crowned Robin-Chat, Lavender Waxbill, and Fine-spotted, Brown-backed, and African Gray woodpeckers. Surprises this year included my first Dorst's Cisticola for Ghana, a flock of 18 Red-footed Falcons downed by overnight rain, and a fine female Lesser Kestrel at the airstrip. Elephants are always a great addition too, and a herd of Cape Buffalo were my first from Ghana.

Heading north the stop at Tongo Hills was, as always, rewarding, with Fox Kestrel, Mocking Cliff-chat, Gosling's Bunting, and a great view of Rock Cisticola.

The Egyptian Plover requires a several-hour bumpy ride out to the Volga tributaries on the Burkina Faso border, and this year we saw some 4 birds very nicely. Northern Carmine Bee-eater was a pleasing addition, as was Chestnut-bellied Starling, Speckle-fronted and White-billed buffalo-weavers, plus African Scrub-robin. Tono Dam was relatively quiet this year, but always turns up something notable, this year being Singing Bushlark. Four-banded Sandgrouse was nice too, plus African Silverbill, and not so nice a severe thunderstorm at dusk.

Heading south we did well at Nasia Pond, with Black-faced Quailfinch, African Silverbill, and Black-backed Cisticola, all from the road. Next day at Bobiri was very overcast and quiet, and with a big open-air Eastern church ceremony going on, so birding was tougher than usual. We struggled here, but did salvage Black-winged Oriole, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Preuss's Weaver and the controversial honeyguide now thought to be Lesser.

The extra time at Atewa was useful, giving us an afternoon and a morning to locate the specials, so the last day came though nicely with with Crested Malimbe, Red-cheeked wattle-eye, Western Nicator, and finally Kemp's Longbill.

This was a fun trip, with a congenial group who kept things entertaining and dealt with the various quirks along the way, though I suspect rice, eggs, chicken and chips may be off the menu for a while! We had a very good total of bird species despite not doing Winneba mudflats and losing some time to rain. James and Philip from Ashanti African Safaris did their customary excellent job, and Kofi was a very good driver over some very long days. Thanks also to Sharon at FG HQ for good logistical support; it all worked nicely. I look forward to sharing future birding trips with you all at some point. Safe travels, good health, and happy birding!

Phil in Accra / Dubai/ Kolkata

#### Itinerary

Fri, 30 Mar -- Morning at rest, birding at Sakumono in the afternoon

Sat, 31 Mar -- Shai Hills & Sayu Cave

Sun, 1 Apr -- Tema-Winneba Plains / Winneba Lagoon/ Mankessim Pond/ Cape Coast Fosu Lagoon / Nsuta Forest 1500-1840 with heavy rain till dusk

Mon, 2 Apr -- Nsuta FR 0645-1100/ swamp near Takoradi/Ebi River. Ankasa 1730.

Tues, 3 Apr -- Ankasa ponds till 1100/ main track 1445-1745

Wed, 4 Apr -- Ankasa NP, with heavy rain in the afternoon

Thurs, 5 Apr -- Ankasa River Trail / Brenu Beach 1600-1715 / Rainforest Lodge 1815

Fri, 6 Apr -- Ebekawopa farmbrush and forest / Pra River at Twifo Praso pm. Rain overnight.

Sat, 7 Apr -- Stingless Bee Road (Abrafo) rain/ Jukwa farmbrush 0730-0815/Assin Fosu/Bonkro 1430-1815/Kumasi by 2100.

Sun, 8 Apr -- Kumasi / Kintampo / Mole NP 1700.

Mon, 9 Apr -- Rain till 0900 Mole Airstrip / Mognori R / Brugbani Loop and Haraba pond in the afternoon

Tues, 10 Apr -- Mole NP Samole Loop and waterhole in the morning. Road near Larabanga and airstrip late afternoon till 1930.

Wed, 11 Apr -- Mole / Larabanga mosque /Tamale / Nasia Pond / Tongo Hills 1600-1715 / Bolgatanga

Thurs, 12 Apr -- White Volta at Sapeliga; afternoon at Tono Dam 1530-1800 with heavy local thunderstorm at dusk

Fri, 13 Apr -- Bolgatanga / Nasia Pond 0730-0800/ Kintampo 1330/Kumasi 1845

Sat, 14 Apr -- Bobiri 0630-1015, heavily overcast. Atewa farmbrush 1600-1900

Sun 15 April Atewa foothills/ rain in the afternoon, brief birding at Asiakwa 1730-1800

## 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

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

**WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna viduata*) – Eight day records at nine sites; the most at Mole, where we had 22 at the waterhole.

**HARTLAUB'S DUCK** (*Pteronetta hartlaubii*) – A beautiful male at the first pond; he flew over, disappeared then came back for a great flyby, if only I'd had the video ready! One of the birds of the trip.

### *Numididae (Guineafowl)*

**HELMETED GUINEAFOWL (WEST AFRICAN)** (*Numida meleagris galeatus*) – Great looks up in Mole.

### *Odontophoridae (New World Quail)*

**STONE PARTRIDGE** (*Ptilopachus petrosus*) – 3 at Shai Hills, then 6 on the Brugbani loop at Mole, feeding like bantams on the woodland edge.

### *Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)*

**DOUBLE-SPURRED FRANCOLIN** (*Pternistis bicalcaratus*) – More than usual, with 7 day records; seen well at Sakumono and Shai Hills, then at several sites in Mole before the last at Tono Dam.

**WHITE-THROATED FRANCOLIN (WHITE-THROATED)** (*Peliperdix albogularis buckleyi*) – Seen well at Mole, where we lured one at two sites, the best being the one that circled us up on the Brugbani loop.

### *Ciconiidae (Storks)*

**WOOLLY-NECKED STORK (AFRICAN)** (*Ciconia episcopus microscelis*) – Only seen at Mole, where there was one at the waterhole. This is split by HBW/BirdLife as African Woollyneck.

### *Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)*

**LONG-TAILED CORMORANT** (*Microcarbo africanus*) – 5 at Sakumono and singles at 3 other sites later, with 2 at Nasia.

### *Anhingidae (Anhingas)*

**AFRICAN DARTER** (*Anhinga rufa*) – A fine male at the swamp near Takoradi was Phil's first from Ghana, where it seems mostly restricted to the Volta River system.

### *Scopidae (Hamerkop)*

**HAMERKOP** (*Scopus umbretta*) – One along Stingless Bee Road was well south of the usual haunts at Mole, where we saw a couple of the huge untidy nests as well as a few birds.

### *Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)*

**GRAY HERON** (*Ardea cinerea*) – One at Ebi River, and 2 in Mole were the only ones.

**BLACK-HEADED HERON** (*Ardea melanocephala*) – A small nesting colony at the White Volta River bridge as we left Mole; it seems very scarce in Ghana.

**PURPLE HERON** (*Ardea purpurea*) – Two at Sakumono and odd birds from Mole.

**GREAT EGRET (AFRICAN)** (*Ardea alba melanorhynchos*) – Just 6 day-records of singles, with one in breeding dress with a black bill (rarely seen in this plumage as it's only held for a short period) at Fosu Lagoon, Cape Coast.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET (YELLOW-BILLED)** (*Ardea intermedia brachyrhyncha*) – 4 at Sakumono, and one at Nasia was it for the trip. This is split as Yellow-billed Egret by BirdLife/HBW.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – 2 at Sakumono and 5 at Brenu salt pans.

**WESTERN REEF-HERON (WESTERN)** (*Egretta gularis gularis*) – One at Fosu lagoon, then 19 at Brenu salt pans and mangroves, plus 10 white morph birds (which can be very hard to distinguish from Little Egret).

**BLACK HERON** (*Egretta ardesiaca*) – 5 at Sakumono were the only sighting. It is good they are back at what used to be a regular site.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Small numbers of the western taxon throughout.

**SQUACCO HERON** (*Ardeola ralloides*) – 3 at Sakumono, one at Ebi River, and a couple in Mole; herons generally seem curiously scarce here.

**STRIATED HERON** (*Butorides striata*) – One at Nsuta and a few sightings from Mole.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – One at the the Pra River and 3 at Haraba in Mole were it for the trip.

### *Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)*

**SPOT-BREASTED IBIS** (*Bostrychia rara*) – The addition of Nsuta to the itinerary paid off, as we had great success with this very elusive species, heard calling at dusk then flying right over, even landing in a huge tree at one point. Phil had only heard it previously so this was his bird of the trip!

**HADADA IBIS** (*Bostrychia hagedash*) – Only in Mole at the waterhole and then Haraba pond; a great loud voice at dawn, and dusk too.

### *Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)*

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*) – One near Tema and one in Mole were the only sightings.

**AFRICAN HARRIER-HAWK** (*Polyboroides typus*) – Six day records of singles, starting at Ankasa and Kakum.

**PALM-NUT VULTURE** (*Gypohierax angolensis*) – Seen twice around Kakum.

**EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD** (*Pernis apivorus*) – Two singles from Kakum, and most saw one with James at Atewa.

**AFRICAN CUCKOO-HAWK** (*Aviceda cuculoides*) – A good trip for them, with two from the Nsuta area, then Kakum and finally Atewa, more than normal.

**HOODED VULTURE** (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) – Six day records but no big numbers due to the sad decline. 7 at Mole is a good count these days, and we had 5 as we were heading south towards Tamale.

**WHITE-BACKED VULTURE** (*Gyps africanus*) – 5 in Mole was the only sighting.

**BATELEUR** (*Terathopius ecaudatus*) – A handful in Mole, with two adults and an immature one day and 2 next day, the only place we saw them.

**CONGO SERPENT-EAGLE** (*Dryotriorchis spectabilis*) – One seen very well from the walkway; it came by and landed not too far away for good scope views. Video on the website.

**BEAUDOUIN'S SNAKE-EAGLE** (*Circaetus beaudouini*) – One at Shai Hills was well south of the usual range.

**BAT HAWK** (*Macheiramphus alcinus anderssoni*) – A lovely flyby at dusk from the walkway, just after I'd said to watch out for it.

**LONG-CRESTED EAGLE** (*Lophaetus occipitalis*) – James spotted us one as we came out from Kintampo, a good sighting as this bird is very scarce in Ghana, not seen every trip.

**LIZARD BUZZARD** (*Kaupifalco monogrammicus*) – Great views at Winneba, then in Mole and en route north.

**DARK CHANTING-GOSHAWK** (*Melierax metabates*) – One en route to Mole, then a couple up around Tono Dam.

**GABAR GOSHAWK** (*Micronisus gabar*) – Just one flyby at Winneba.

**GRASSHOPPER BUZZARD** (*Butastur rufipennis*) – Good views of this attractive bird as we got near to Mole, then at Nasia and Tono Dam later.

**EURASIAN MARSH-HARRIER** (*Circus aeruginosus*) – A couple from Sakumono, and one at Nasia.

**RED-CHESTED GOSHAWK (BANDED)** (*Accipiter toussenelii macroscelides*) – Two records of birds giving the distinctive "kvik" display call, at Kakum and Bonkro.

**SHIKRA** (*Accipiter badius*) – One at Sakumono and a couple of sightings from Mole.

**BLACK GOSHAWK** (*Accipiter melanoleucus*) – John picked up one going over as we were heading to Atewa, and we got off the bus in time for a good flight view of this big, dark and uncommon Accipiter.

**LONG-TAILED HAWK** (*Urotiorchis macrourus*) – Heard calling distantly at Atewa and sadly could not be enticed closer. [\*]

**BLACK KITE (YELLOW-BILLED)** (*Milvus migrans parasitus*) – The default raptor, seen almost every day of the trip, and with a big roost in a huge tree near Rainforest Lodge, with over 100 birds emerging at dawn one day.

**RED-NECKED BUZZARD** (*Buteo auguralis*) – Seen at Shai Hills and Atewa, quite a striking bird with a reddish tail.

#### Otididae (Bustards)

**BLACK-BELLIED BUSTARD** (*Lissotis melanogaster*) – A female flushed at Shai Hills was a lucky find.

#### Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**BLACK CRAKE** (*Zapornia flavirostra*) – One at the swamp near Takoradi was the only one of the tour.

**ALLEN'S GALLINULE** (*Porphyrio alleni*) – 3 at the swamp near Takoradi, a good pick up of an elusive and nomadic species.

**AFRICAN SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio madagascariensis*) – One at Sakumono, and another at the swamp at Takoradi.

**EURASIAN MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – 2 at Sakumono and 3 at the swamp near Takoradi.

#### Sarothruridae (Flufftails)

**WHITE-SPOTTED FLUFFTAIL** (*Sarothrura pulchra*) – Heard at several sites, and seen by Joanne and Tim as we tried to lure one in at the Atewa forest. Basically it was lost due to rain on the day we were going to try for it.

#### Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**SENEGAL THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus senegalensis*) – A couple at Sakumono, then small numbers very vocal at Mole before 2 at Tono Dam.

#### Pluvianidae (Egyptian Plover)

**EGYPTIAN PLOVER** (*Pluvianus aegyptius*) – Nice looks at at least 4 birds on the White Volta at Sapeliga; the river was low this year so there was a lot of sand and they seemed more dispersed than usual.

#### Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-WINGED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*) – 12 at Sakumono and 6 at Fosu wetland.

#### Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Just one at Sakumono.

**SPUR-WINGED LAPWING** (*Vanellus spinosus*) – 12 at Sakumono and a handful in Mole and at Sapeliga.

**WATTLED LAPWING** (*Vanellus senegallus*) – A scattering of records of one or 2 birds starting at Sakumono, then Winneba and Mole.

**COMMON RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – 20 at Sakumono.

**FORBES'S PLOVER** (*Charadrius forbesi*) – Nice looks at 2 at the laterite pans at Brugbani, feeding along damp edges and allowing us scope views. This can be an elusive bird, so good to get it easily this year.

#### Jacaniidae (Jacanas)

**AFRICAN JACANA** (*Actophilornis africanus*) – 12 at Sakumono, then small numbers at many other wet areas.

#### Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – 2 at Sakumono and 1 at Brenu salt pans.

**RUFF** (*Calidris pugnax*) – Just 7 at Sakumono.

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – 5 at Sakumono, then a scattering at various other wetland sites including Ebi River, Mole and Sapeliga.

**COMMON GREENSHANK** (*Tringa nebularia*) – 10 at Sakumono and 3 at Brenu salt pans.

**MARSH SANDPIPER** (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – A single at Sakumono; an uncommon bird and one we don't see every trip. It was coming into the spotty-above summer plumage.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – 8 at Sakumono, 4 at Fosu lagoon and one at Nasia.

#### Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

**COLLARED PRATINCOLE** (*Glareola pratincola*) – One at Tono Dam was the only record this trip.

**ROCK PRATINCOLE (RUFIOUS-NAPED)** (*Glareola nuchalis liberiae*) – 4 on the rocks at the Pra River; great to see them in reasonable temperatures and not the usual blistering heat of mid-day.

*Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)*

**LITTLE TERN** (*Sternula albifrons*) – One at Fosu lagoon.

**BLACK TERN (EURASIAN)** (*Chlidonias niger niger*) – 7 at Sakumono and 5 at Fosu lagoon.

**ROYAL TERN (AFRICAN)** (*Thalasseus maximus albidorsalis*) – Two off Sakumono, and one off the lunch stop at Cape Coast. A split is imminent as this taxon is closer to Lesser Crested Tern than it is to Royal.

**SANDWICH TERN** (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One off Sakumono.

*Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)*

**FOUR-BANDED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles quadricinctus*) – Some got brief views at Haraba Pond in Mole where they were calling at dusk, but much better were those at Tono Dam, where we had 7 birds in all and saw a couple on the ground very nicely.

*Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)*

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – A few in the major urban centres. [I]

**SPECKLED PIGEON** (*Columba guinea guinea*) – Nice views at Bolgatanga and at Tono Dam.

**MOURNING COLLARED-DOVE** (*Streptopelia decipiens*) – Seen well at Sapeliga, a northern special in Ghana.

**RED-EYED DOVE** (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) – Widespread and vocal, the distinctive "I am - a Red eyed Dove" was commonly heard.

**VINACEOUS DOVE** (*Streptopelia vinacea*) – Oddly scarce, the only numbers were in Mole and we saw one at Sakumono; they seem to have moved away from the south this year.

**LAUGHING DOVE** (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Widespread and seen almost every day.

**BLACK-BILLED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur abyssinicus*) – A few seen in Mole.

**BLUE-SPOTTED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur afer*) – Some good views at Bobiri and Atewa.

**TAMBOURINE DOVE** (*Turtur tympanistria*) – Vocal but not seen much; the best was one at Atewa.

**BLUE-HEADED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur brehmeri*) – Only heard at Atewa foothills, where it came close by but alas, did not show. [\*]

**NAMAQUA DOVE** (*Oena capensis*) – Only in the far north, with about 10 at Tono Dam, also at Sapeliga and Nasia.

**BRUCE'S GREEN-PIGEON** (*Treron waalia*) – Nice looks from Mole waterhole viewpoint, where we saw up to 20.

**AFRICAN GREEN-PIGEON** (*Treron calvus*) – Small numbers at all the main forest sites and at Mole.

*Musophagidae (Turacos)*

**GREAT BLUE TURACO** (*Corythaeola cristata*) – Two showed very well by the huge power lines at Ankasa, one spectacular bird.

**GUINEA TURACO** (*Tauraco persa*) – One at Winneba, with some nice flight views, and heard at Ebekawopa farmbrush. [E]

**YELLOW-BILLED TURACO** (*Tauraco macrorhynchus*) – Seen at Kakum and Ebekawopa, and heard at Ankasa as well. [E]

**VIOLET TURACO** (*Musophaga violacea*) – Three at Shai Hills, and a couple of good views from Mole.

**WESTERN PLANTAIN-EATER** (*Crinifer piscator*) – Widespread in the south with small numbers most days, starting at Sakumono.

*Cuculidae (Cuckoos)*

**BLACK-THROATED COUCAL** (*Centropus leucogaster*) – This huge skulker can be elusive, but we saw it at Stingless Bee Road, Ebekawopa and then at Atewa, an unusual number of sightings as we hear them far more often.

**SENEGAL COUCAL** (*Centropus senegalensis*) – Small numbers from Sakumono, Mole and Atewa.

**BLUE-HEADED COUCAL** (*Centropus monachus*) – Seen well at Atewa farmbrush.

**BLACK COUCAL** (*Centropus grillii*) – One from Sakumono was a good find of an elusive species.

**BLUE MALKOHA** (*Ceuthmochares aereus*) – Oddly sparse this trip, it was seen briefly at Nsuta and heard at Stingless Bee Road and Atewa. The old name of Yellowbill is far more appropriate, I can't see why it isn't simply Blue Yellowbill.

**GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO** (*Clamator glandarius*) – A fantastic excited bird from Brenu Beach, calling loudly and really showing off, then another on the way into Mole.

**THICK-BILLED CUCKOO (AFRICAN)** (*Pachycoccyx audeberti brazzae*) – Heard at Samole loop in Mole but distant and not able to be lured over. [\*]

**DIDERIC CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx caprius*) – Curiously silent, only heard at a couple of sites around Bobiri and Atewa. [\*]

**KLAAS'S CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx klaas*) – Much more vocal and heard all over, seen well at Kakum and Mognori.

**AFRICAN EMERALD CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*) – Two fine males at Nsuta, then again at Atewa, and heard at all the forest sites.

**OLIVE LONG-TAILED CUCKOO** (*Cercococcyx olivinus*) – Heard at Kakum but distant. [\*]

**BLACK CUCKOO** (*Cuculus clamosus*) – Heard at Bobiri. [\*]

**AFRICAN CUCKOO** (*Cuculus gularis*) – One at Mole where it was also heard calling.

*Strigidae (Owls)*

**AFRICAN SCOPS-OWL** (*Otus senegalensis*) – Heard at Haraba Pond, then seen very well at Larabanga Road, where one came and sat right by us.

**NORTHERN WHITE-FACED OWL** (*Ptilopsis leucotis*) – Heard at Larabanga Road, and I thought we'd see it until 2 Senegal Galago interrupted proceedings. [\*]

**GRAYISH EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo cinerascens*) – A fine bird at Mole airstrip, and one was on the power poles by the rooms at the motel for some of us.

**FRASER'S EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo poensis*) – Heard from the walkway at dusk, but not responsive. [\*]

**AKUN EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo leucostictus*) – A very good sighting from Nsuta, it replied and came and sat for some time in good view.

**PEARL-SPOTTED OWLET** (*Glaucidium perlatum*) – One at Mognori in daylight was a nice sight.

*Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)*

**STANDARD-WINGED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus longipennis*) – Excellent this year at Larabanga Road, a male going by early on with the standards erect over the back like two miniature pursuers, and more views later, plus several females. One of the birds of the trip.

**BROWN NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus binotatus*) – A good one from the walkway, calling well and spotlighted, sat on a bush where it looked very small and dark. Usually now placed in the genus *Veles* as it is rather distinct from all *Caprimulgus* nightjars. Video on the IBC site. [E]

**PLAIN NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus inornatus*) – Amazingly good at Ankasa on the road to our cabins, we got great views from the bus on both nights, video on the IBC site.

**LONG-TAILED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus climacurus*) – A fine male sat on Mole airstrip and showing very nicely; we'd seen none the night before on the way back from the north of the park, so I was relieved this was here.

#### Apodidae (Swifts)

**MOTTLED SPINETAIL** (*Telacanthura ussheri*) – Just one at Brenu Beach.

**BLACK SPINETAIL** (*Telacanthura melanopygia*) – One at Atewa was a good pick-up of an elusive bird, thanks Philip. [E]

**CASSIN'S SPINETAIL** (*Neafapus cassini*) – Just one of this tailless stealth-bomber shaped bird from Kakum, and I and maybe one or two others saw one at Ebekawopa.

**COMMON SWIFT** (*Apus apus*) – Small numbers of this migrant from Kakum and Mole.

**LITTLE SWIFT** (*Apus affinis*) – Widespread, they breed in the road culverts.

**WHITE-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Apus caffer*) – Just 2 at Jukwa farm bush, an uncommon bird here.

**AFRICAN PALM-SWIFT** (*Cypsiurus parvus*) – Small numbers throughout wherever there are palms.

#### Trogonidae (Trogons)

**NARINA TROGON** (*Apaloderma narina*) – A fine male at Mognori, he sat for some time for nice looks.

#### Phoeniculidae (Woodhoopoes and Scimitarbills)

**GREEN WOODHOOPOE** (*Phoeniculus purpureus*) – One from Sakumono and 6 flew by at Mole waterhole viewpoint.

**BLACK SCIMITARBILL** (*Rhinopomastus aterrimus*) – One from Shai Hills and 2 in Mole.

#### Bucorvidae (Ground-Hornbills)

**ABYSSINIAN GROUND-HORNBILL** (*Bucorvus abyssinicus*) – One of the birds of the trip, this enormous creature was walking in the woodlands as we headed up to Brughani, and we stopped to let it cross the road in front of us. Usually they are in pairs, and always a great bird to see.

#### Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

**RED-BILLED DWARF HORNBILL** (*Lophoceros camurus*) – Seen well at Kakum, and with a great mournful call.

**AFRICAN PIED HORNBILL** (*Lophoceros fasciatus*) – The widespread Ghanaian hornbill, seen on 10 days with up to 10 birds, and very vocal. HBW/BirdLife split this into Eastern and Western species.

**AFRICAN GRAY HORNBILL** (*Lophoceros nasutus*) – Seen at Sakumono and Shai Hills, then scattered records from Mole and the north. One was eating a large praying mantis at Shai Hills.

**NORTHERN RED-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*) – Seen in Mole, then with 4 at Tono Dam and Sapeliga.

**WHITE-CRESTED HORNBILL** (*Horizocerus albocristatus*) – A single at Atewa foothills, elusive but seen briefly. It is usually a hard bird to see well, and another one that HBW/BirdLife now split into E and W species.

**BLACK-CASQUED HORNBILL** (*Ceratogymna atrata*) – One seen in flight at Kakum was a lucky sighting. This is by no means guaranteed to be seen these days; all the big hornbills are now rare in Ghana.

**YELLOW-CASQUED HORNBILL** (*Ceratogymna elata*) – We got lucky at Ankasa and both saw and heard this big rare species; a female was perched up for some seconds and there were 3 birds in all. [E]

**BROWN-CHEEKED HORNBILL** (*Bycanistes cylindricus*) – A lucky find from Kakum, where we had 2 in flight, and then a single later which was, I think, a juvenile by the small casque. Another rare bird, classified as Endangered now. [E]

**PIPING HORNBILL** (*Bycanistes fistulator*) – Another one that HBW/BirdLife now split into E and W species, we saw 4 of these diminutive birds at Nsuta, then a flock of 7 there next morning.

#### Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

**MALACHITE KINGFISHER** (*Corythornis cristatus*) – Singles from Ebi River, Pra River and Mole this trip.

**WHITE-BELLIED KINGFISHER** (*Corythornis leucogaster*) – A very nice one from Ankasa waterhole where it perched nicely and was a lifer for most. Also heard in the forest next day and I posted a sound cut of the flight call to the IBC and XC.

**AFRICAN PYGMY-KINGFISHER** (*Ispidina picta*) – 5 day records, starting at Shai Hills.

**AFRICAN DWARF KINGFISHER** (*Ispidina lecontei*) – This was heard in the forest at Ankasa but no sighting, a pity as it's quite a hard species to get. [\*]

**CHOCOLATE-BACKED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon badia*) – Frustratingly only heard at Ankasa and Ebekawopa, and did not want to come and show itself this time. [\*]

**GRAY-HEADED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon leucocephala*) – Lovely views from Mole.

**WOODLAND KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon senegalensis*) – Just a few this trip, with 5 day records starting at Nsuta. The grey headed local taxon *fuscopileus* showed well on wires at Asiakwa.

**BLUE-BREASTED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon malimbica*) – 7 day records, and seen twice at Mole.

**STRIPED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon chelicuti*) – One at Winneba led us a dance and did not show itself, but we got another for good views at Mole airstrip, not a common bird in Ghana.

**GIANT KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle maxima*) – A great one which caught a fish at Mole waterhole.

**PIED KINGFISHER** (*Ceryle rudis*) – 7 day records, with 3 at Sakumono, and singles at Ebi River, Mole, Nasia and Sapeliga.

#### Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

**BLACK BEE-EATER** (*Merops gularis gularis*) – Great views of 2 at Ankasa, then 2 at Atewa on the last day, a beautiful bird.

- BLUE-MOUSTACHED BEE-EATER** (*Merops mentalis*) – A fantastic pick-up at Ankasa of this very elusive, low density species, where we walked up to 2 sat over the trail. A hard bird to get, and has been tough at Atewa of late, so this was very fortunate. One of the great prizes of the trip. [E]
- RED-THROATED BEE-EATER** (*Merops bulocki*) – Common and showy in Mole where it nests.
- LITTLE BEE-EATER** (*Merops pusillus*) – Singles at Sakumono, Brenu Beach and Atewa.
- SWALLOW-TAILED BEE-EATER** (*Merops hirundineus chrysolaimus*) – John saw this in Shai Hills, then we all got one near Zaina Lodge in Mole.
- WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER** (*Merops albicollis*) – Small numbers of this intra-African migrant were widespread. We had 10 day records and up to 45 birds in a noisy flock at Atewa.
- EUROPEAN BEE-EATER** (*Merops apiaster*) – Just a couple of sightings from Mole, in flight only.
- ROSY BEE-EATER** (*Merops malimbicus*) – 3 over at Kakum, with one next day at Ebekawopa, which people managed to see pink on! A West African special and new for most. [E]
- NORTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER** (*Merops nubicus*) – 2 at Mole, then 6 at the dry savanna near Sapeliga, with lovely views, I liked the one riding on the sheep's back. Incredible rich colours.

#### *Coraciidae (Rollers)*

- ABYSSINIAN ROLLER** (*Coracias abyssinicus*) – Small numbers of this beautiful bird from Mole and the far north. A shame I accidentally deleted my video!
- RUFIOUS-CROWNED ROLLER** (*Coracias naevius*) – Just two singles from Shai Hills then Tono Dam, it is always quite scarce.
- BLUE-BELLIED ROLLER** (*Coracias cyanogaster*) – Just one at Shai Hills, then we drove past 2 near Kintampo, all we saw on the tour. [E]
- BROAD-BILLED ROLLER** (*Eurystomus glaucurus*) – 3 day records with 1 near Kakum and one or 2 at Mole being all.
- BLUE-THROATED ROLLER** (*Eurystomus gularis*) – 2 at Kakum was it this trip.

#### *Lybiidae (African Barbets)*

- YELLOW-BILLED BARBET** (*Trachyphonus purpuratus*) – Seen very well from Kakum Walkway and heard at Ankasa.
- BRISTLE-NOSED BARBET** (*Gymnobucco peli*) – Good views from Nsuta, the only place we saw them this trip.
- NAKED-FACED BARBET** (*Gymnobucco calvus*) – A tall dead nesting tree at Atewa was a good place to get nice looks at this species, which was also seen at Kakum.
- SPECKLED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus scolopaceus*) – Seen at Nsuta, Kakum and Atewa.
- RED-RUMPED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus atroflavus*) – Seen poorly at Ebekawopa then much better at Bobiri where a bird was quite responsive, this species is more often heard than seen.
- YELLOW-THROATED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus subsulphureus chrysopygus*) – Heard at several sites and one seen at Kakum, this race does not have a Yellow-throat and the song is a 4-note series repeated.
- YELLOW-RUMPED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus bilineatus*) – Seen nicely along Ebekawopa farmbrush road and at Stingless Bee Road.
- YELLOW-FRONTED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus chrysoconus*) – Heard at Shai Hills and seen in Mole.
- YELLOW-SPOTTED BARBET** (*Buccanodon duchaillui*) – One calling well and seen along the main track at Ankasa.
- HAIRY-BREADED BARBET (HAIRY-BREADED)** (*Tricholaema hirsuta hirsuta*) – Good views from Kakum.
- VIEILLOT'S BARBET** (*Lybius vieillotii*) – 3 at Shai Hills and one near Sapeliga. [E]
- DOUBLE-TOOTHED BARBET** (*Lybius bidentatus*) – Lovely views at Shai Hills, the red on the wing coverts helped tell it from Bearded if it was sideways on, also seen at Winneba.
- BEARDED BARBET** (*Lybius dubius*) – Very nice looks at Shai Hills, seeing the black chest band and no red on the wing coverts, then 3 in a fig at Tongo Hills.

#### *Indicatoridae (Honeyguides)*

- CASSIN'S HONEYGUIDE** (*Prodotiscus insignis*) – One of this tiny, thin-billed species was seen at Stingless Bee Road; usually called Honeybirds now as they are not parasitic like honeyguides.
- LEAST HONEYGUIDE** (*Indicator exilis exilis*) – The honeyguide we saw at Nsuta had a pronounced eye-ring and some streaks on the mantle, and both James and Philip think it was Least Honeyguide. It did look different and I'd go along with that, but honeyguide identification and taxonomy remains vexatious.
- LESSER HONEYGUIDE** (*Indicator minor*) – Ah yes, talking of controversial honeyguides, this one calling at Bobiri was for some years identified as Least and figured as such on many checklists, but has now been rebranded as a Lesser due to its greyish head and some possible call variation.....
- GREATER HONEYGUIDE** (*Indicator indicator*) – Heard at Shai Hills. [\*]

#### *Picidae (Woodpeckers)*

- AFRICAN PICULET** (*Sasia africana*) – This tiny bird was an excellent find at Nsuta and showed quite well.
- FINE-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*Campethera punctuligera*) – 2 obliging birds in the woodlands along the Brugbani loop, new for most people.
- GOLDEN-TAILED WOODPECKER (STREAK-BACKED)** (*Campethera abingoni chrysurus*) – One calling right by the waterhole overlook at Mole was the first I've seen there, and we had another later the same day along Saltlick loop.
- BUFF-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*Campethera nivosa nivosa*) – Heard at Kakum, then 2 along Stingless Bee Road before one at Atewa, none showing unduly well.
- BROWN-EARED WOODPECKER** (*Campethera caroli*) – A single flew through and was seen briefly near the pond at Ankasa, one of the much less common species.
- CARDINAL WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos fuscescens lafresnayi*) – Heard at Winneba, then a fine male at Mognori in Mole; we had not actually seen one on the tour for several years!
- MELANCHOLY WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos lugubris*) – Seen at Kakum and then at Stingless Bee Road, now a split from Gabon Woodpecker and thus new for most. [E]
- FIRE-BELLIED WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos pyrrhogaster*) – Heard drumming a lot at Kakum and finally seen at Ebekawopa. [E]
- AFRICAN GRAY WOODPECKER (GRAY)** (*Dendropicos goertae goertae*) – One at Mole airstrip and heard at the viewpoint a couple of days later.
- BROWN-BACKED WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicos obsoletus obsoletus*) – One at Mole airstrip, a good site for this uncommon species.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).*

**LESSER KESTREL** (*Falco naumanni*) – A single female at Mole airstrip after heavy overnight rain, identified by the slender build and the pale claws, and confirmed by those who know about such things from Joanne's photos. New for Phil in Ghana.

**EURASIAN KESTREL (RUFESCENT)** (*Falco tinnunculus rufescens*) – 4 day records from the Accra area and Brenu Beach, this is the dark local resident taxon.

**FOX KESTREL** (*Falco alopex*) – A good view of one from Tongo hills, the usual site for it.

**GRAY KESTREL** (*Falco ardosiaceus*) – Two at Shai Hills and singles from near Kakum, Mole and Atewa.

**RED-FOOTED FALCON** (*Falco vespertinus*) – A great find was a flock of 18 sat on a dead tree up in north Mole, after the heavy rain overnight; there were at least 7 adult males, and one female type had yellowy looking legs but can only be this species. It was another first for Ghana for Phil, and is a rare migrant here. A pity a noisy beeping camera spooked them off, I must ask folks to disable that irritating feature in future.....

**LANNER FALCON** (*Falco biarmicus*) – Five records of singles starting at Shai Hills.

**PEREGRINE FALCON** (*Falco peregrinus*) – [A probable flew over us at Bobiri, unfortunately rather fast]

*Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots).*

**ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET** (*Psittacula krameri*) – Just 2 at Sakumono were bizarrely the only ones we saw all trip, we usually get it in Mole and not in the south at all.

*Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots).*

**RED-FRONTED PARROT** (*Poicephalus gulielmi*) – Four day records with up to 4 birds, best seen at Kakum and then Atewa.

**SENEGAL PARROT** (*Poicephalus senegalus*) – 2 at Sakumono then 12 at Shai Hills, with an amazing brightly coloured golden flavistic variant, it looked like a Sun Conure in colour above. It was with a normal plumage bird, probably its mate. I was not aware of such forms existing, especially in the wild, I posted a shaky video to the IBC. James had not seen one like this before either, probably worth a fortune to a parrot-fancier.

*Calyptomenidae (African and Green Broadbills).*

**RUFOUS-SIDED BROADBILL** (*Smithornis rufolateralis*) – One seen nicely by most at Ankasa, and heard several times.

*Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises).*

**BROWN-THROATED WATTLE-EYE** (*Platysteira cyanea*) – A male at Shai Hills and heard at Mole.

**WEST AFRICAN WATTLE-EYE** (*Platysteira hormophora*) – A female briefly at Kakum and another was seen by most there; this is a split from what was Chestnut Wattle-eye. [E]

**RED-CHEEKED WATTLE-EYE** (*Platysteira blissetti*) – Great looks at responsive birds at Atewa, this is a hard one to see well though we hear it at several sites. [E]

**SENEGAL BATIS** (*Batis senegalensis*) – Seen at Shai Hills and then Mole. [E]

*Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies).*

**WHITE HELMETSHRIKE (LONG-CRESTED)** (*Prionops plumatus plumatus*) – A good trip for this species, with 10 at Shai Hills, then a couple of groups up at Mole.

**RED-BILLED HELMETSHRIKE** (*Prionops caniceps*) – Three from Kakum were the only sighting.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE SHRIKE-FLYCATCHER** (*Bias musicus musicus*) – A male was at Ebekawopa, then we had two males at Abrafo farmbrush, a very striking species. I'd like to revert to the old name of Vanga Flycatcher, especially as the bird has now been reclassified amongst the Vangidae.

*Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies).*

**BRUBRU** (*Nilaus afer afer*) – Seen in Mole where we heard the purring call.

**NORTHERN PUFFBACK** (*Dryoscopus gambensis gambensis*) – Also seen in Mole.

**SABINE'S PUFFBACK** (*Dryoscopus sabini*) – Good looks from Kakum and then Ebekawopa, a West African endemic. [E]

**MARSH TCHAGRA (MARSH)** (*Tchagra minutus minutus*) – A great male along the roadside at Brenu Beach; I should have had my camera!

**BLACK-CROWNED TCHAGRA (BLACK-CROWNED)** (*Tchagra senegalus senegalus*) – A frequent voice, and seen well at Winneba, Mole and Atewa.

**BROWN-CROWNED TCHAGRA** (*Tchagra australis ussheri*) – Nice looks at this uncommon tchagra along the Ebekawopa farmbrush road.

**YELLOW-CROWNED GONOLEK** (*Laniarius barbarus*) – Spectacular and vocal, and seen well on many days, starting at Sakumono.

**SULPHUR-BREASTED BUSHSHRIKE** (*Telophorus sulfureopectus*) – One fine bird at Mole.

*Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes).*

**RED-SHOULDERED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Campephaga phoenicea*) – 4 sightings of males, the first at Winneba then 3 from Mole.

**PURPLE-THROATED CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Campephaga quiscalina*) – Heard at Ebekawopa but stayed out of sight. [\*]

**BLUE CUCKOOSHRIKE** (*Cyanograucalus azureus*) – One from Ankasa, then a really good sighting of a lovely blue one at Kakum; it is seldom you get to see the colour so well.

*Laniidae (Shrikes).*

**NORTHERN FISCAL** (*Lanius humeralis*) – Small numbers in the south.

**YELLOW-BILLED SHRIKE** (*Corvinella corvina*) – 3 at Sakumono and a couple of brief sightings in the north.

*Oriolidae (Old World Orioles).*

**AFRICAN GOLDEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus auratus*) – Two along the Mognori Road, very bright yellow in colour.

**WESTERN BLACK-HEADED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus brachyrhynchus*) – One seen well at Ankasa.

**BLACK-WINGED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus nigripennis*) – Seen at Kakum and then Bobiri. [E]

*Dicruridae (Drongos).*

**SQUARE-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus ludwigii*) – One elusive bird along the Mognori River.

**SHINING DRONGO** (*Dicrurus atripennis*) – A couple of good sightings from Ankasa of this forest drongo. [E]



**FORK-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) – 3 at S Shai Hills and again Tono Dam, scarce this trip. This will be Northern Fork-tailed Drongo when it gets split into 4 species.

**VELVET-MANTLED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus modestus*) – Widespread in the forest areas and nesting at Kakum.

*Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)*

**BLUE-HEADED CRESTED-FLYCATCHER** (*Trochocercus nitens*) – Heard at Ankasa and Atewa, and Phil saw one briefly at the former site.

**BLACK-HEADED PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (RED-BELLIED)** (*Terpsiphone rufiventer nigriceps*) – Seen nicely at Kakum.

**AFRICAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER** (*Terpsiphone viridis ferreti*) – Seen at Shai Hills then from Mole.

*Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)*

**PIAPIAC** (*Ptilostomus afer*) – A few sightings of this odd corvid from Shai Hills and Mole.

**PIED CROW** (*Corvus albus*) – Widespread throughout, a very large corvid.

*Picathartidae (Rockfowl)*

**WHITE-NECKED ROCKFOWL** (*Picathartes gymnocephalus*) – Wonderful views after a 90 minute wait, the first fluttered and hopped right by then sat for ages on a thick vine, with another later, then 2 more seen on the way out. A great and memorable experience of a fantastic bird. [E]

*Nicatoridae (Nicators)*

**WESTERN NICATOR** (*Nicator chloris*) – Heard at various forest sites and finally seen well on the last day at Atewa, now an endemic African family too.

*Alaudidae (Larks)*

**FLAPPET LARK** (*Mirafra rufocinnamomea*) – Seen at Shai Hills.

**SINGING BUSHLARK** (*Mirafra cantillans*) – Two at Tono Dam showed well, the white outer tail is distinctive. It is a rare bird in Ghana and we found the first for the country here back in 2013.

**SUN LARK** (*Galerida modesta*) – Lovely views at the laterite plains on the Brugbani loop; a very good tick.

*Hirundinidae (Swallows)*

**ROCK MARTIN** (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*) – 4 at Tongo Hills.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Small numbers, except for a flock of about 200 perched up after a storm at Atewa one morning.

**RED-CHESTED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo lucida lucida*) – Good looks at this species at Larabanga and then Sapeliga. [E]

**ETHIOPIAN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo aethiopica aethiopica*) – Just small numbers from Winneba and Brenu Beach, then at Twifo Praso.

**WHITE-THROATED BLUE SWALLOW** (*Hirundo nigrita*) – The usual site at the Pra River came good, and we had nice looks at 4 of this richly coloured, diminutive swallow.

**WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo smithii smithii*) – Small numbers from Mole and then at Nasia pond.

**LESSER STRIPED-SWALLOW** (*Cecropis abyssinica*) – A rather lovely species, seen on 5 days with great views from Mole.

**RUFIOUS-CHESTED SWALLOW** (*Cecropis semirufa gordonii*) – One at Ebekawopa and then 2 at Atewa, a large species.

**MOSQUE SWALLOW** (*Cecropis senegalensis*) – Just 2 at Jukwa farm bush, perhaps the largest of the regular type swallows.

**PREUSS'S SWALLOW** (*Petrochelidon preussi*) – These like to nest in road culverts, and we had good looks at them mixed with Little Swifts at a site near Twifo Praso. [E]

**COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN** (*Delichon urbicum*) – A small flock of 20 at Mole NP was unexpected, hawking below the viewpoint.

**SQUARE-TAILED SAWWING** (*Psalidoprocne nitens*) – Just 3 at Ankasa, a tiny dark forest swallow. [E]

**FANTI SAWWING** (*Psalidoprocne obscura*) – Seen on two days at Ebekawopa and Kakum, the juveniles have short straight tails. [E]

*Stenostiridae (Fairy Flycatchers)*

**AFRICAN BLUE FLYCATCHER** (*Elminia longicauda*) – Great views at the Samole loop, a very attractive bird.

*Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)*

**WHITE-SHOULDERED BLACK-TIT** (*Melaniparus guineensis*) – 2 at Shai Hills and one in Mole, even seeing the yellow eyes.

*Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)*

**FOREST PENDULINE-TIT** (*Anthoscopus flavifrons*) – 2 at Kakum were the only sighting.

*Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)*

**SLENDER-BILLED GREENBUL** (*Stelgidillas gracilirostris*) – Seen at Ankasa, Kakum and Atewa.

**GOLDEN GREENBUL** (*Calyptocichla serinus*) – Good looks from Ankasa and Kakum on two days. [E]

**RED-TAILED BRISTLEBILL** (*Bleda syndactylus*) – Heard at Kakum and Ebekawopa. [\*]

**GREEN-TAILED BRISTLEBILL** (*Bleda eximius*) – Heard at Kakum. [E\*]

**GRAY-HEADED BRISTLEBILL** (*Bleda canicapillus*) – Heard at Ebekawopa and Kakum and I think a few folks saw it in a thicket at the former site. [E]

**SIMPLE GREENBUL** (*Chlorocichla simplex*) – Seen at Stingless Bee Road, Ebekawopa and Atewa.

**HONEYGUIDE GREENBUL** (*Baeopogon indicator*) – Good views from Kakum.

**YELLOW-THROATED GREENBUL** (*Atimastillas flavicollis*) – Two seen in Mole NP on the Samole loop.

**SPOTTED GREENBUL** (*Ixonotus guttatus*) – Quick looks from Nsuta where a flock of 6 flew across the track.

**SWAMP GREENBUL** (*Thescelocichla leucopleura*) – Just 3 at Nsuta, elusive this trip.

**RED-TAILED GREENBUL** (*Criniger calurus*) – Astonishingly I think we only saw it at Ankasa, usually it's one of the common forest greenbuls.

**WESTERN BEARDED-GREENBUL** (*Criniger barbatus*) – Seen at Ankasa and Kakum, quite a striking bird. [E]

**YELLOW-BEARDED GREENBUL** (*Criniger olivaceus*) – One at Ankasa, a good pick-up of a tricky species. [E]

**ANSORGE'S GREENBUL** (*Eurillas ansorgei*) – 3 from Ankasa, a small species.

**PLAIN GREENBUL** (*Eurillas curvirostris*) – Some folks saw this briefly at Atewa.

**YELLOW-WHISKERED GREENBUL** (*Eurillas latirostris*) – One from Ankasa.

**LITTLE GREENBUL** (*Eurillas virens*) – Heard at most forest sites but always hard to see well.

**ICTERINE GREENBUL** (*Phyllastrephus icterinus*) – Good views on two days from Ankasa, one of the more distinctive species.

**WHITE-THROATED GREENBUL** (*Phyllastrephus albigularis*) – We got this on the last morning at Ankasa, the final addition to the triplist, well done, James, for taping it in!

**COMMON BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus barbatus*) – Seen almost every day of the trip.

*Macrosphenidae (African Warblers)*

**GREEN CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta virens flaviventris*) – One from Nsuta, and heard at Ebekawopa.

**LEMON-BELLIED CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta denti hardyi*) – Two at Atewa; this taxon has a very different call to the eastern birds in Uganda.

**NORTHERN CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta brachyura brachyura*) – Great looks from Shai Hills, Mole and Tono Dam.

**MOUSTACHED GRASS-WARBLER** (*Melocichla mentalis mentalis*) – Two seen nicely on the Samole loop in Mole NP.

**KEMP'S LONGBILL** (*Macrosphenus kempii*) – Heard at Atewa, and finally nailed on the last morning, very tricky but eventually showed nicely. [E]

**GRAY LONGBILL** (*Macrosphenus concolor*) – Common by voice in the forest zones, and seen at Bobiri.

**GREEN HYLIA** (*Hylia prasina*) – Also common by voice in the forests and seen at Kakum and Bobiri. It is uncertain quite where this species belongs and it might be a new family at some point.

**TIT-HYLIA** (*Pholidornis rufiae ussheri*) – Seen at Ankasa, Ebekawopa and finally much better at Atewa, it's another species of uncertain taxonomic affinity.

*Scotocercidae (Bush Warblers and Allies)*

**CHESTNUT-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** (*Erythrocerus mccallii*) – This was heard at Kakum but stayed far away. [\*]

*Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)*

**WOOD WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) – One of this declining migrant at Shai Hills, and two from Mognori in Mole.

*Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and Allies)*

**MELODIOUS WARBLER** (*Hippolais polyglotta*) – A good trip for this migrant, seen at Winneba, Mole and Tono Dam.

**GREATER SWAMP WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus rufescens rufescens*) – I had seen from the map that this species should be at Sakumono, and sure enough, tape playing got a response and I think some folks saw it briefly. It was a new Ghana bird for Phil. [\*]

*Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)*

**LITTLE RUSH-WARBLER** (*Bradypterus baboecala*) – Heard at Sakumono where we found it for the first time just last year. [\*]

*Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)*

**BLACK-CAPPED APALIS (BLACK-CAPPED)** (*Apalis nigriceps nigriceps*) – Heard at Atewa. [\*]

**YELLOW-BREASTED APALIS (YELLOW-BREASTED)** (*Apalis flavida caniceps*) – Seen in Mole on two days.

**SHARPE'S APALIS** (*Apalis sharpii*) – Heard at all the tall forest sites but hard to see, most got views in Kakum. [E]

**GREEN-BACKED CAMAROPTERA (GRAY-BACKED)** (*Camaroptera brachyura brevicaudata*) – Commonly heard and seen at Shai Hills and Mole, also Nasia Pond.

**YELLOW-BROWED CAMAROPTERA** (*Camaroptera superciliaris*) – A striking and vocal bird, we saw it at Ankasa and then again at Kakum.

**OLIVE-GREEN CAMAROPTERA** (*Camaroptera chloronota*) – Heard at all the tall forest sites, it has remarkable long piping song that can go on for minutes, and we got one to show at Atewa on the last day.

**RED-FACED CISTICOLA (RED-FACED)** (*Cisticola erythrops erythrops*) – Seen at Ebekawopa and Atewa.

**SINGING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola cantans swanzii*) – Seen at Stingless Bee Road, Mole NP and Nasia Pond.

**WHISTLING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola lateralis lateralis*) – One seen well at Winneba.

**ROCK-LOVING CISTICOLA (ROCK-LOVING)** (*Cisticola aberrans admiralis*) – Troublesome initially, but then came good; I even got a photo at Tongo Hills, the only site we have for it!

**DORST'S CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola guinea*) – A big surprise, for some years I'd been nagging James about this species which I thought should be in Mole, and this year he produced a singing one at the airstrip. A new Ghana bird for me.

**WINDING CISTICOLA (WINDING)** (*Cisticola galactotes amphilectus*) – One from Sakumono and one at Nasia Pond.

**CROAKING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola natalensis strangei*) – A couple of nice views at Sakumono.

**SIFFLING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola brachypterus brachypterus*) – Seen at Shai Hills and then Nasia Pond, also known as Shortwing Cisticola.

**RUFOUS CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola rufus*) – Good looks at the airstrip in Mole.

**ZITTING CISTICOLA (AFRICAN)** (*Cisticola juncidis uropygialis*) – A single from Tono Dam.

**BLACK-BACKED CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola eximius*) – Unexpectedly good looks from the bridge at Nasia; normally we have to get down the embankment and flog around the edge of the pond in the baking heat, so this was great.

**ORIOLE WARBLER** (*Hypergerus atriceps*) – Heard at Brenu Beach, and then seen well at the Samole loop in Mole.

**TAWNY-FLANKED PRINIA** (*Prinia subflava*) – Ones and twos at various drier sites starting at Winneba.

**RED-WINGED PRINIA** (*Prinia erythroptera erythroptera*) – Two at Winneba showed well, and it was heard at Brenu Beach.

**SENEGAL EREMOMELA** (*Eremomela pusilla*) – 8 at Shai Hills, on a good morning for them, and also seen in Mole and at Sapeliga.

**RUFOUS-CROWNED EREMOMELA** (*Eremomela badiceps fantiensis*) – One from Kakum and a great group of 3 huddling together as they went to roost at Atewa, photo on the Smugmug page.

*Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)*

**AFRICAN YELLOW WHITE-EYE (AFRICAN YELLOW)** (*Zosterops senegalensis senegalensis*) – Small numbers as ever, starting at Rainforest Lodge.

*Pellorineidae (Ground Babblers and Allies)*

**BROWN ILLADOPSIS (BROWN)** (*Illadopsis fulvescens gularis*) – Heard at Kakum and Ebekawopa, and then 2 seen at Atewa.

**PALE-BREASTED ILLADOPSIS (PALE-BREASTED)** (*Illadopsis rufipennis extrema*) – One seen briefly at Ankasa.

**BLACKCAP ILLADOPSIS (WESTERN)** (*Illadopsis cleaveri cleaveri*) – One calling well at Ebekawopa, it suddenly launched up and out so all we got was a glimpse; still a species I need to see properly. [E]

**RUFIOUS-WINGED ILLADOPSIS** (*Illadopsis rufescens*) – Great looks from the loop trail at Ankasa after protracted efforts. [E]

**PUVEL'S ILLADOPSIS** (*Illadopsis puveli puveli*) – This one was calling close by and showed briefly at Ebekawopa; it was a good trip for Illadopsis, shame most look much the same!

*Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)*

**BLACKCAP BABBLER** (*Turdoides reinwardtii*) – 3 were very vocal at Shai Hills and showed briefly, and heard again at Mole. [E]

**BROWN BABBLER** (*Turdoides plebejus*) – Good looks at small flocks of 7 and then 6 at Shai Hills and Mole.

*Hylotiidae (Hyliotas)*

**YELLOW-BELLIED HYLIOTA** (*Hyliota flavigaster*) – Two along the Mognori Road were a good find of a scarce bird, now part of an endemic African family too.

**VIOLET-BACKED HYLIOTA** (*Hyliota violacea nehrkorni*) – 2 at Kakum showed quite well.

*Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)*

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa striata*) – 2 at Shai Hills and one at Atewa farm bush.

**SWAMP FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa aquatica aquatica*) – One at Mole waterhole, this nominate race lacks the clear breast band of the Uganda birds.

**CASSIN'S FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa cassini*) – Seen on the river at Ankasa where a pair had a spotted juvenile with them.

**USSHER'S FLYCATCHER** (*Bradornis ussheri*) – 2 at Nsuta and then 2 from Kakum. [E]

**DUSKY-BLUE FLYCATCHER** (*Bradornis comitatus aximensis*) – Seen at Ebekawopa and then from Atewa.

**PALE FLYCATCHER** (*Agricola pallidus*) – Singles from Mole and then Tono Dam.

**AFRICAN FOREST-FLYCATCHER (WESTERN)** (*Fraseria ocreata prospora*) – Good views of 2 from Atewa.

**GRAY-THROATED TIT-FLYCATCHER** (*Fraseria griseigularis*) – Heard at Ankasa and Kakum, then finally seen nicely at Atewa, it is some years since I actually saw this skulking species.

**GRAY TIT-FLYCATCHER** (*Fraseria plumbea*) – Two singles from Mole NP.

**TESSMANN'S FLYCATCHER** (*Fraseria tessmanni*) – Two at Nsuta were calling nicely; the tape recording is on XC and the IBC as this is a rare bird and very little known. [E]

**NORTHERN BLACK-FLYCATCHER** (*Melaenornis edolioides edolioides*) – 3 at Shai Hills then small numbers from Mole.

**FIRE-CRESTED ALETHE (WHITE-TAILED)** (*Alethe diademata diademata*) – This skulker was heard at Nsuta and Kakum, and seen briefly at Stingless Bee Road then Atewa. Usually split as White-tailed Alethe. [E]

**AFRICAN SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Cercotrichas minor minor*) – A nice view of one in the dry thorn scrub at Sapeliga; this is not split by the IOC, where it is regarded as part of Rufous Bush-Robin.

**BLUE-SHOULDERED ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha cyanocampter*) – Heard along Stingless Bee Road, but as ever an arch-skulker. [\*]

**SNOWY-CROWNED ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha niveicapilla*) – Nice views of 2 at Winneba.

**WHITE-CROWNED ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha albicapillus*) – Calling nicely along the Samole loop and showed briefly.

**FOREST ROBIN (WESTERN)** (*Stiphornis erythrothorax erythrothorax*) – Singing well and seen nicely by most after various efforts at Ankasa. The taxonomy of this group is debatable and up to 5 species have been recognized, the PSC people claiming 3 from Ghana alone.

**EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula hypoleuca*) – 3 females from Mole NP.

**WHINCHAT** (*Saxicola rubetra*) – Three at Winneba included a very well-marked male, then there was one at Mole.

**MOCKING CLIFF-CHAT** (*Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris coronata*) – Seen by two folks at the Sayu cave site at Shai Hills, then a fine pair at Tongo Hills. This race is split by the IOC as White-crowned Cliff-Chat.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**FINSCH'S FLYCATCHER-THRUSH** (*Neocossyphus finschii*) – One seen at Kakum, and heard at Atewa. [E]

**WHITE-TAILED ANT-THRUSH** (*Neocossyphus poensis*) – Heard at Ankasa and a couple of folks saw one at Atewa.

**AFRICAN THRUSH** (*Turdus pelios*) – Good views by the Erata Hotel and at Shai Hills, then again at Mole.

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**VIOLET-BACKED STARLING** (*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster leucogaster*) – A fine male at Shai Hills, then a few more at Mole. Also known as Amethyst or Plum-coloured Starling, much better more appropriate names.

**NARROW-TAILED STARLING** (*Poeoptera lugubris*) – A rapid flyby of 4 at Atewa late one afternoon, only seen by a couple of us.

**LONG-TAILED GLOSSY STARLING** (*Lamprotornis caudatus*) – We had a few sightings from Mole and then at Sapeliga and Tono Dam. By no means a common species, and a spectacular one.

**SPLENDID STARLING** (*Lamprotornis splendidus*) – Very scarce this trip, some saw it near Accra and it was seen again at Atewa.

**CHESTNUT-BELLIED STARLING** (*Lamprotornis pulcher*) – A northern special, seen nicely at Sapeliga where there was a nest, then just 2 at Tono Dam, always a good site for them.

**GREATER BLUE-EARED STARLING** (*Lamprotornis chalybaeus chalybaeus*) – One en route to Sapeliga was the only sighting.

**PURPLE STARLING** (*Lamprotornis purpureus*) – Seen well at Sakumono, Shai Hills and Winneba, with a single from Mole.

**BRONZE-TAILED STARLING** (*Lamprotornis chalcurus chalcurus*) – The birds flying over at Tono Dam were this species, but a better view would have been nice.

*Buphagidae (Oxpeckers)*

**YELLOW-BILLED OXPECKER** (*Buphagus africanus africanus*) – 3 on African Buffalo in Mole were unexpected, then 2 near Larabanga and 2 at Sapeliga. Another endemic African family.

*Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)*

**FRASER'S SUNBIRD** (*Deleornis fraseri*) – Three singles from Kakum and Ebekawopa, an odd straight-billed species.

**MOUSE-BROWN SUNBIRD** (*Anthreptes gabonicus*) – 3 at the river en route to Ankasa, our usual site for it.

**WESTERN VIOLET-BACKED SUNBIRD (NORTHERN)** (*Anthreptes longuemarei longuemarei*) – One at Mognori in Mole was a surprise, not a species we often see on the tour.

**SEIMUND'S SUNBIRD** (*Anthreptes seimundi kruensis*) – A small rather nondescript species formerly called Little Green Sunbird, we saw it at Kakum, Nsuta and Bobiri.

**GREEN SUNBIRD (YELLOW-THROATED)** (*Anthreptes rectirostris rectirostris*) – Two from Atewa.

**COLLARED SUNBIRD** (*Hedydipna collaris subcollaris*) – The common small sunbird, with five day records from Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa.

**PYGMY SUNBIRD** (*Hedydipna platura*) – Just one from Mole, then 2 at Tono Dam.

**REICHENBACH'S SUNBIRD** (*Anabathmis reichenbachii*) – Good views of this very local species in the coconuts as we came out from Ankasa. [E]

**GREEN-HEADED SUNBIRD (GREEN-HEADED)** (*Cyanomitra verticalis verticalis*) – Singles from Ebekawopa and Stingless Bee Road.

**BLUE-THROATED BROWN SUNBIRD** (*Cyanomitra cyanolaema magnirostrata*) – A large quite vocal species that calls like a Mountain Peltops, we saw them at Ebekawopa and Atewa.

**OLIVE SUNBIRD** (*Cyanomitra olivacea guineensis*) – Quite often heard in the rainforest zone, and seen at Ebekawopa and Bobiri. Common but hard to see!

**BUFF-THROATED SUNBIRD** (*Chalcomitra adelberti adelberti*) – A male at the Ebi River was unexpected, then seen at Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa.

**SCARLET-CHESTED SUNBIRD** (*Chalcomitra senegalensis senegalensis*) – Seen in Mole NP, a beautiful bird.

**OLIVE-BELLIED SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris chloropygius kempii*) – Just 2 at Ebekawopa farmbrush this trip.

**TINY SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris minullus*) – One from Nsuta, then another at Kakum later.

**BEAUTIFUL SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris pulchellus*) – Seen very nicely in Mole, but only small numbers, also at Tono Dam.

**SPLENDID SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris coccinigastrus*) – This gorgeous bird was seen at Shai Hills, Winneba and Stingless Bee Road. [E]

**JOHANNA'S SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris johannae fasciatus*) – Seen twice in Kakum, then one at Atewa, another West African special.

**SUPERB SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris superbus ashantiensis*) – A female at Ankasa, and a male at Atewa, large and long-billed.

**COPPER SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris cupreus cupreus*) – Four day records starting at Shai Hills, then at Winneba and Mole.

*Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**AFRICAN PIED WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla aguimp*) – Five day records of ones and twos in towns, they always seem very local in Ghana.

**PLAIN-BACKED PIPIT** (*Anthus leucophrys*) – Seen at Shai Hills and then Winneba where they were carrying food for the young.

**YELLOW-THROATED LONGCLAW** (*Macronyx croceus*) – 3 from Shai Hills were the only sighting of the tour.

*Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)*

**GOSLING'S BUNTING** (*Emberiza goslingi*) – Two at Tongo Hills and one at Tono Dam, a split from Cinnamon-breasted Bunting. [E]

**BROWN-RUMPED BUNTING** (*Emberiza affinis*) – A fine singing male at Mole airstrip, a good site for this local species.

*Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)*

**YELLOW-FRONTED CANARY** (*Crithagra mozambica*) – Two at Shai Hills, a few by Mole Lodge, then a scattering from the north starting at Nasia Pond.

**STREAKY-HEADED SEEDEATER (WEST AFRICAN)** (*Crithagra gularis canicapilla*) – Two along the Mognori Road were a good find, split by the IOC as West African Seedeater.

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**NORTHERN GRAY-HEADED SPARROW** (*Passer griseus*) – Widespread in small numbers in the drier country and seen most days of the tour.

**BUSH PETRONIA** (*Petronia dentata*) – Up to 10 in Mole by the Lodge, and one from Nasia Pond.

*Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)*

**WHITE-BILLED BUFFALO-WEAVER** (*Bubalornis albirostris*) – This seems to be colonizing the north as we had 7 near Sapeliga and saw a nest colony there, it used to be hard to find.

**SPECKLE-FRONTED WEAVER** (*Sporopipes frontalis frontalis*) – Singles in the dry bush near Sapeliga and at Tono Dam were a good find.

**CHESTNUT-CROWNED SPARROW-WEAVER** (*Plocepasser superciliosus*) – Seen very well by Mole Lodge and on the Samole loop, an uncommon species.

**RED-VENTED MALIMBE** (*Malimbus scutatus*) – Four seen well at Kakum, an Upper Guinea endemic too. [E]

**CRESTED MALIMBE** (*Malimbus malimbicus*) – Heard at Ankasa, then one from Atewa, an uncommon species.

**RED-HEADED MALIMBE** (*Malimbus rubricollis*) – Four day records from Nsuta, Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa, max. 3 birds.

**RED-HEADED WEAVER** (*Anaplectes rubriceps*) – A fine male in Mole on the Brugbani loop was a good find of a species we seldom see on the tour.

**LITTLE WEAVER** (*Ploceus luteolus*) – Small numbers from Mole as usual.

**BLACK-NECKED WEAVER (OLIVE-BACKED)** (*Ploceus nigricollis brachypterus*) – Seen at Ebekawopa and Stingless Bee Road, this West African race is now split by HBW/BirdLife as Olive-backed Weaver.

**ORANGE WEAVER** (*Ploceus aurantius aurantius*) – 2 males at the swamp near Takoradi, and 4 at Ebi River.

**VIEILLOT'S WEAVER (CHESTNUT-AND-BLACK)** (*Ploceus nigerrimus castaneofuscus*) – Six day records, this very distinctive West African race was seen at Takoradi swamp, Kakum, Ankasa, Bobiri and Atewa, with several large nesting colonies. I am surprised this has not yet been split, as it's so unlike the all black East African birds.

**VILLAGE WEAVER (BLACK-HEADED)** (*Ploceus cucullatus cucullatus*) – The default weaver, widespread in small numbers even in the north. This race has a quite distinctive male plumage with chestnut on the back, and I am sure several species will be split out eventually.

**BLACK-HEADED WEAVER** (*Ploceus melanocephalus capitalis*) – Five day records of non-breeding birds, seen in Mole and in the north, the rather rusty buff chest is a useful character.

**YELLOW-MANTLED WEAVER** (*Ploceus tricolor*) – 2 at Kakum and one at Bobiri, a subtle and attractive species

**MAXWELL'S BLACK WEAVER (WHITE-NAPED)** (*Ploceus albinucha albinucha*) – Just two day records of singles, from Kakum, then at Atewa, seeing the white eye and even the pale nape on that one.

- PREUSS'S WEAVER** (*Ploceus preussi*) – Two at Bobiri were a great find of what is a very scarce species. [E]
- COMPACT WEAVER** (*Pachyphantes superciliosus*) – Two fine non-breeding birds were in the wet swamp at Asiakwa after a heavy storm, a good addition to the trip.
- RED-HEADED QUELEA** (*Quelea erythroptus*) – 5 along the Ebekawopa Road, none in breeding dress yet.
- RED-BILLED QUELEA** (*Quelea quelea*) – A few sightings of up to 15 at Mole, Nasia and Tono Dam.
- BLACK-WINGED BISHOP** (*Euplectes hordeaceus*) – Up to 10 non-breeding birds in Mole, then a nearly full dress male at Atewa along with some non-breeders too.
- YELLOW-MANTLED WIDOWBIRD (YELLOW-MANTLED)** (*Euplectes macroura macroura*) – Seen at Winneba, Brenu Beach and Jukwa, none in full breeding dress yet.

*Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)*

- GRAY-HEADED NIGRITA** (*Nigrita canicapillus*) – Very vocal at all the forest sites, and seen well at Kakum and Atewa.
- CHESTNUT-BREADED NIGRITA** (*Nigrita bicolor*) – Just one from Ankasa.
- WHITE-BREADED NIGRITA** (*Nigrita fusconotus*) – Unusually scarce, only seen at Kakum once and by some at Atewa.
- LAVENDER WAXBILL** (*Estrilda caerulescens*) – Two at Mole one day, and seen by some the next too.
- ORANGE-CHEEKED WAXBILL** (*Estrilda melpoda*) – The best were along Stingless Bee Road, also seen at Nasia and Atewa.
- BLACK-RUMPED WAXBILL** (*Estrilda troglodytes*) – Ten at Tono Dam were the only sighting.
- WESTERN BLUEBILL** (*Spermophaga haematina*) – One was seen by most along Stingless Bee Road, it is always elusive. [E]
- RED-CHEEKED CORDONBLEU** (*Uraeginthus bengalus*) – Small numbers at Mole and Tono Dam.
- RED-WINGED PYTILIA** (*Pytilia phoenicoptera*) – Two sightings in Mole, a hard species to get on the tour.
- RED-BILLED FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta senegala*) – Small numbers from Mole and Nasia.
- BAR-BREADED FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta rufopicta*) – The first were at Brenu Beach, then at Rainforest Lodge and in Mole.
- BLACK-FACED FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta larvata*) – Good views of 2 in Mole after hearing it at Haraba pond in Mole the day before.
- BLACK-BELLIED FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta rara forbesi*) – One in Mole at Saltlick loop, another elusive species it was good to get.
- AFRICAN FIREFINCH** (*Lagonosticta rubricata*) – Just a single at Jukwa farmbrush.
- BLACK-FACED QUAILFINCH** (*Ortygospiza atricollis atricollis*) – Seen at Nasia on both visits, where very vocal, and we got scope looks at them on the ground where they are amazingly hard to see. Sadly all 3 quailfinch species have been lumped by the IOC.
- BRONZE MANNIKIN** (*Spermestes cucullata*) – Widespread in the more open country.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE MANNIKIN** (*Spermestes bicolor*) – Three day records of a few from Ebekawopa, Stingless Bee Road and Atewa.
- MAGPIE MANNIKIN** (*Spermestes fringilloides*) – Five brief flybys along the Ebekawopa Road was the only sighting, though they were nesting in the drainpipe at Ashanti HQ and flew off as we arrived!
- AFRICAN SILVERBILL** (*Euodice cantans*) – Five at Tono Dam were the only sighting.

*Viduidae (Indigobirds)*

- PIN-TAILED WHYDAH** (*Vidua macroura*) – Very few, with a couple of good plumaged males only.
- WILSON'S INDIGOBIRD** (*Vidua wilsoni*) – I think James and few folks saw one on Day 13? Usually in non-breeding dress at this time so very hard/impossible to identify.

**MAMMALS**

- STRAW-COLORED FRUIT BAT** (*Eidolon helvum*) – Oddly only 4 seen in Kumasi where we usually see hundreds, even though we came in at dusk. Maybe they have moved away this year as they do follow fruiting events?
- GAMBIAN EPAULETED FRUIT BAT** (*Epomophorus gambianus*) – The little colony is still in the shady trees at the lunch time hotel in Tamale, it is one strange looking beast.
- YELLOW-WINGED BAT** (*Lavia frons*) – 2 along the Saltlick Loop were a nice addition.
- TOMB BAT SP.** (*Taphozous* sp.) – The vocal bats in the rock cleft at Sayu Cave in Shai Hills are apparently Egyptian Tomb-Bat, they look rather whitish beneath.
- SENEGAL BUSHBABY** (*Galago senegalensis*) – 2 were spotlit and showed bright eyeshine as we were after White-faced Scops on the Larabanga Road; a good trip mammal though it cost us the owl sighting!
- PRINCE DEMIDOFF'S BUSHBABY** (*Galago demidoffi*) – Heard at Kakum as we came out at dusk. [\*]
- LESSER WHITE-NOSED GUENON** (*Cercopithecus petaurista*) – Three seen from the Kakum Walkway, and calling well. [E]
- GUENON SP.** (*Cercopithecus campbelli*) – Known as Lowes Monkey, we saw and heard 3 from the Kakum Walkway late one afternoon.
- GREEN MONKEY** (*Cercopithecus sabaeus*) – This is the vervet-type monkey with the yellowish tail that we saw at Mole NP, also known as Callitrix Monkey.
- GUENON SP.** (*Cercopithecus tantalus*) – The pale Vervets that we see at Shai Hills are this one, called the Tantalus Monkey these days.
- OLIVE BABOON** (*Papio anubis*) – Common at Shai Hills where they have unfortunately learned to beg for bread from the passing cars. Also a few in Mole.
- FOREST GIANT SQUIRREL** (*Protoxerus stangeri*) – One seen in Ankasa on the loop trail.
- KINTAMBO ROPE SQUIRREL** (*Funisciurus substriatus*) – Two at the Mognori bridge area, a hard species to see and quite localised. [E]
- FIRE-FOOTED ROPE SQUIRREL** (*Funisciurus pyrropus*) – One was seen briefly along Stingless Bee Road.
- GAMBIAN SUN SQUIRREL** (*Heliosciurus gambianus*) – Two seen at Kakum.
- RED-LEGGED SUN SQUIRREL** (*Heliosciurus rufobrachium*) – 3 at Shai Hills.
- PEL'S FLYING SQUIRREL** (*Anomalurus peli*) – Seen at the Kakum Walkway, with one in a cleft in the trunk at dusk. This animal is not actually a squirrel but an Anomalure, and in its own family the Anomaluridae. [E]
- COMMON CUSIMANSE** (*Crossarchus obscurus*) – One car load saw this scamper across at Ankasa, a bit of a bogey mammal for me, as I have yet to see it.

**AFRICAN ELEPHANT** (*Loxodonta africana*) – Great at Mole this year, we had 9 in the waterhole then 2 huge animals near the park HQ later, one aged 45 years and with a single tusk. Next day we saw 5, then 7 on the final morning, always a great treat to see this wonderful creature.

**WESTERN TREE HYRAX** (*Dendrohyrax dorsalis*) – Once again heard only, at Kakum. I still have yet to see this species here. [\*]

**WARTHOG** (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) – Small numbers of these endearingly ugly beasts were seen at Mole as usual.

**BUSHBUCK** (*Tragelaphus scriptus*) – Just a handful from Mole, though one female was browsing right by us at the viewpoint at the lodge one morning.

**AFRICAN BUFFALO** (*Syncerus caffer*) – A group of about 12 were in the dense forest at Mole, the first time I have seen the species here, and nice to see oxpeckers on them too.

**DEFASSA WATERBUCK** (*Kobus defassa*) – Just a single then 2 next day of this handsome antelope at Mole, again far fewer than normal this year.

**KOB** (*Kobus kob*) – One at Shai Hills, and small numbers at Mole.

#### Herps

**RED-HEADED ROCK AGAMA** (*Agama agama*) – Seen on most days.

**NILE CROCODILE** (*Crocodylus niloticus*) – Up to 10 in the waterhole below Mole Lookout.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The favorite birds among our Ghana group this year were varied as might be expected, but Picathartes (Rockfowl) came out on top as always. Egyptian Plover was a bit of an also-ran, but not so for Hartlaub's Duck, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, Standard-winged Nightjar, White-crested Hornbill, Violet Turaco and Spot-breasted Ibis (Phil's favourite). There were some difficult choices amongst so many great birds, plus wonderful close-ups of elephants at Ankasa as well.

### BUTTERFLIES

This list covers a few of the butterflies seen on our Ghana tour. They were identified mainly by Philip, our local butterfly expert, and also by using Torben Larsen's excellent two-volume book, "Butterflies of West Africa" (Apollo Books, 2005). The Ghana butterfly list is over 1000 species (many with wonderful names too, see below!). Bobiri alone has 423+, with Atewa similar, so this is a great tour if you like butterflies as well as birds.

CITRUS SWALLOWTAIL (*Papilio demodocus*)—Kakum

MOCKER SWALLOWTAIL (*Papilio dardanus*)

BROAD-BANDED GREEN SWALLOWTAIL (*Papilio chrapkowskoides*)

YELLOW GLIDER (*Cymothoe egesta*) Atewa, a spectacular species of the forest edge.

WHITE-BANDED CASTOR (*Ariadne albifascia*) Seen at Bobiri

AFRICAN LEAF BUTTERFLY (*Precis tugela*)

PURPLE ORANGE-TIP (*Colotis ione*) Shai Hills

COMMON TIGER (*Danaus chrysippus*)— This common butterfly is the West African equivalent of the Monarch. Seen in most places, most days, though never in large numbers.

BLUE TIGER (*Tirumala petiverana*) Seen at Antikwaa.

AFRICAN EMIGRANT (*Catopsilia florella*)—This common species is the only large, completely white butterfly in Ghana, and we saw it from Accra to Bolgatanga, though it was never numerous.

COMMON GRASS YELLOW (*Eurema hecabe*)—Another widespread species, this was the small, low-flying yellow with the black forewing tips.

FOREST GRASS YELLOW (*Eurema senegalensis*) Common in the forests

UNIFORM BUSH BROWN (*Bicyclis uniformis*)

FOREST MOTHER-OF-PEARL (*Protophormia parhassus*)—I think this butterfly wins the longest name contest. It is another spectacular species, a large, whitish butterfly with the angular wings that would perch up about eye-level or above along the forest trails. Larsen says that wrapping a white handkerchief around a pebble and tossing it up in the air can lure them down to investigate.

DARK BLUE PANSY (*Junonia oenone*)—This is the handsome butterfly with the bold purplish blue patches in the hindwing that perched for us in multiple roadside locales. This genus of butterflies is closely related to the American Buckeyes.

YELLOW PANSY (*Eudaemonia argus*) was the spectacular very long tailed silk moth we saw at Kalakaua, a very odd looking creature indeed. hierta) Seen at Mole

WESTERN FAIRY PLAYBOY (*Paradeudorix eleala*)—This was the "Playboy" on the road at Bobiri, with the brilliant blue upperside. BLUE DIADEM (*Hypolimnas salmacis*)—A large, beautiful butterfly seen in multiple locations.

GUINEAFOWL (*Hamanumida daedalus*) Just like its avian namesake, spotted with white.

EUDAEMONIA ARGUS was the spectacular, very long-tailed silk moth we saw at Ankasa, a very odd-looking creature indeed.

## Recommendations

I recommend the xeno-canto (XC) website which is a fantastic archive of bird sounds of most of the species in the world, freely downloadable. I usually publish significant cuts from my tours here as it is a valuable research tool for anyone interested.

The Internet Bird Collection (IBC) run by Lynx Edicions (of Handbook of Birds of the World) is another wonderful free access site, you just have to register, and can then view thousands of videos, photos and sound recordings, with many of them from my tours. Again, it is an invaluable research site.

I also recommend the IOC World Checklist of Birds, a free access downloadable Excel file of all the world's species which is updated every 4 months or so. This is the one I use for my own checklists as it is the most current and has a progressive outlook on taxonomy and names. You can find them at [worldbirdnames.org](http://worldbirdnames.org) or google IOC (but NOT the olympics stuff!)

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**Totals for the tour: 420 bird taxa and 25 mammal taxa**