



The Wattled Crane

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Hello Birders,

I had originally planned to sit down and produce this newsletter last Sunday afternoon, however, I am suffering from an addiction to which I cannot shake when the temptation arises, which, it turns out – arose last Sunday afternoon! Hence the power of my binoculars surpassed the sense of duty, coupled with the fact that waiting a few more days surely wouldn't harm any of you!

A mere birding walk I am strong enough to resist – but the chance to find a bogey bird – I cannot! The bird in question is Bocage's Akalat – a not uncommon bird in the right spot, and I have recently been told of a few I must follow up on. I'm currently in Ndola, and this is well within Akalat territory – if you can only find the right habitat. This said habitat is well within a 30min drive out of town, not that there is any evidence they have been found here. The closest known site is Nsoke Game Park – and I have spent a few hours there over two days some months back unsuccessfully.

So it was I spent Sunday afternoon in a forested patch of the Kafubu River some 30km downstream of Ndola. I did not see any Akalats, but did pick up some great birds with Squaretailed Drongo, Half-collared Kingfisher, Little Greenbul and a glimpse of Otter! An Atlass card was also completed, so it was an afternoon well spent! A sunny sky and time off work both happened only at that chance, so I had to take it!

Nevertheless, the task is complete – and you have an interesting set of articles below to read through – so enjoy! Thanks to all the contributors, without you we wouldn't have this newsletter!

Yours in Birding

Damian Newmarch

Birds of Zambia: A Review

Alastair Newton

One only has to follow for a couple of weeks one or other of the dedicated WhatsApp groups or, of course, the BWZ Facebook page and/or *The Wattled Crane* to realise that there is a great deal going on around birding in Zambia. However, I am sure I am not alone in firmly believing that the single most important event this year — and arguably for many years — has been the launch of ‘our’ own App, *Birds of Zambia*.

That it has been some time coming is a reflection of the amount of hard work and expertise which the authors — Derek Solomon, Frank Willems and Rory McDougall — put in to its preparation. So, at this point, I am going to take the liberty on behalf of the entire Zambia birding community of most sincerely thanking them, as well as the other contributors (among whom I would like to single out Sarah Solomon who was responsible for data development and production), for their Herculean and groundbreaking efforts.¹

And there is no question other than that the App has been well worth waiting for.

I have personally spent a good many hours field testing the OS version; and I am indebted to the Head of Ornithology at the Livingstone Museum, Maggie Mwale, for allowing me to join her doing likewise with the Android version at the ‘Livingstone Lagoons’ a few days ago — as well as to other Android users who have kindly sent me their comments.

On the downside, a handful of minor technical glitches have (inevitably, in my view) come to light since the App was launched. But the development team has been very quick responding to these, once they have been reported, by launching an appropriate ‘patch’. So, please don’t hesitate to speak up if you come across a problem.

This being said, these glitches have in no way detracted from general delight in, and enthusiasm over, the App. The clear consensus is that it is:

- Easy to use — indeed, very similar to the Sasol App with which many of us are very familiar;
- Highly informative while being very ‘efficient’ in terms of the amount of text, not least because of the detail in the very helpful maps and bar charts; and,

¹ For a full list of contributors please go to ‘Introduction’ on the main menu and then click on ‘Credits’ on the top bar.

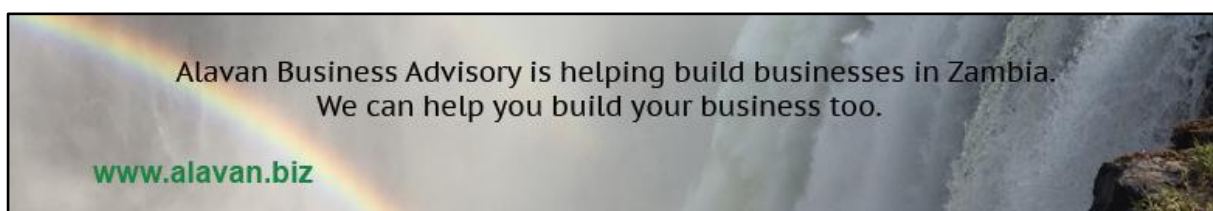
- Well illustrated, many of the photos being of high quality.

On this latter point, I must admit to a personal preference for drawings over photos. BUT I firmly believe that the authors have taken absolutely the correct approach in this case given the cost of commissioned artwork relative to photos. Keeping the price per unit down for what is, let's be honest, a low income country where demand is not going to be huge has, rightly, been the priority here. To put this in context, Roberts, Sasol and the Birds of East Africa App are all more expensive than the £19.99/\$19.99 price tag on the Zambia App (though, to be fair, Newman's, bought from the Apple UK App store, is £1.00 cheaper). Probably an even better comparison is the artwork-based App for another developing country, ie India, which costs nearly twice as much.

Another plus, in my view, is the use of the latest IOC names. I guess many of us struggle with what sometimes seems to be a constant stream of name changes, albeit that these are (generally!) for good reasons. Nevertheless, we should, in my view, all welcome and take on board measures aimed at standardisation and taxonomic accuracy. By offering the IOC-approved name and the 'old' one, the Zambia App is very helpful in this respect.

I would also like to add a personal view which is, I think, supported by comments I have received from others. Put Roberts to one side for now as it is, strictly, more than a field guide given the amount of written information included in the App; taking Sasol and the Birds of East Africa Apps, — as well as ones I use fairly regularly in Australia, India and the UK — I have to say that; all round, I find the Zambia App to be a significantly superior product. Lessons learnt from other Apps, no doubt; but we should consider ourselves to be particularly well served.

Having discussed some of the detail of the App, I also want to step back for a moment to consider the wider context, which reinforces my belief about how well served we are with the Zambia App. Seen from our perspective here in Zambia, that we needed our own App appeared self-evident. Situated at what I regularly refer to as a 'crossroads' as far as African birdlife is concerned, short of Sinclair and Ryan one has needed three field guides to ensure comprehensive coverage of the country. However, it is also worth keeping in mind that, even before the launch of the Zambia App, we were already well served with Apps in relative terms, ie three comprehensive ones for Southern Africa and one for East Africa whereas most countries and regions worldwide, including prime birding ones, have no App at all as quick scrutiny of an App store will readily underline.



In his 2017 *The Birder's Guide to Africa*, Michael Mills rightly referred to Zambia as “*the underbirded country at the interface of Southern and Central Africa*” (to which I would personally add Eastern). Nearly three years later — and despite the profile-raising that our involvement in the Global Big Day should be giving us — we remain far below our potential when it comes to bringing birders to the country. Offering a comprehensive guide to the sheer richness of species to be found within Zambia's borders, the App is a potentially a very important step towards rectifying this. But reviews such as this will only do so much to promote Zambia as a birding destination.

We should, therefore, all be taking every opportunity personally to promote the App, especially by word of mouth, to the wider birding world. Just a few minutes spent scrolling through it should be a Damascene eye-opener to birders who dismiss our importance (as many do) simply because we have few endemics.

The authors and developers have done their bit and done it exceptionally well. Now it is up to us!



Southern Black Tit coming out of its nest hole.

Zambia Trip October 2019

Abigail Church

Editors Note: Abigail kindly shared this article with us. It was originally shared through the Kenyan Bird Net, and came across Mwape Sichilongo's desk, who must also be thanked for passing it on to us!

Day 1 – Lilayi Lodge, Lusaka, 12th October

Arriving in Lusaka mid-afternoon on Kenya Airways was straightforward and soon we were driving through seemingly endless low-rise suburbs. The capital has a grid pattern of streets that extends well beyond the centre and as it darkened we felt as if we would never get to Lilayi!

The following morning, I opened the door of our banda to a pair of charmingly busy Red-throated Twinspots shuffling through the dry leaf matter – and instantly I was inspired to bird. A Schalow's Turaco was calling and Helmeted Guineafowl were foraging too. We walked for an hour or so in the dry forest, Lilayi is a game ranch into which have been introduced many herbivores; southern giraffe, Leichtenstein's hartebeest, klipspringer, blue wildebeest, tsessebe, sable and roan antelope but no dangerous game – and there are many easy walking paths that guests are free to explore. There wasn't time to complete a full protocol card but below are what we did see in an hour or so.

Red-headed Weaver
Common Bulbul
Red-throated Twinspot
Schalow's Turaco
Fiery-necked Nightjar
Black-collared Barbet
White-crested Helmetshrike
Blue Waxbill

Lizard Buzzard
Cape Turtle Dove
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove
Grey Heron
Helmeted Guineafowl
Black-backed Puffback
Southern Masked Weaver
Tawny-flanked Prinia



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Days 2 - 5 – Chongwe River House, Lower Zambezi (Western end), 13th – 15th October.

We flew from Lilayi's own airstrip southeast to the western end of Lower Zambezi National Park. It was sad to see how much of the area between Lusaka and the Zambezi Valley had been deforested by charcoal burners. The valley itself though is breathtaking with Africa's fourth major river snaking east in a slow and lazy way, in places wide and in others divided into braided channels with low sandy islands tapered at either end. The terrain varies from *Faidherbia* woodland to dry bush. It was the end of the dry season and so much of the wildlife was concentrated on the riverbanks and in the shade of the forest.

Chongwe River House is located on the Chongwe which is a tiny river flowing properly only in the wet season when it rains on the escarpment above. At this time of year it just back floods from the Zambezi about 500m from the junction. Water birds were fun, many of course identical to those in Kenya. It was interesting to see that the European Bee-Eaters had already made their way down that far. We walked, canoed and went out onto the Zambezi by boat and had superb opportunities to bird throughout. I loved watching the Black Heron fishing – you just cannot help but smile each time he puts up his umbrella, concentrating so hard. Highlights for me included a pair of noisy Burnt-necked Eremomelas flitting around in the canopy of a couple of *Faidherbia albida* on the banks of the Zambezi, and getting dizzy trying to focus on Livingstone's Flycatcher – a terrifically enigmatic little bird – which simply wouldn't sit still!

The *Faidherbia* forest was a particularly interesting area, busy with White-crested Helmet Shrikes, Meve's Starlings and within which elephant shambled their way through picking up any fallen seeds on their way to the river to drink.

Purple-crested Turaco
Meyer's Parrot
Hamerkop
Glossy Ibis
Three-banded Plover
Lesser Masked Weaver
White-bellied Sunbird
Bearded Scrub Robin
Long-billed Crombec
Yellow-bellied Greenbul
Southern Red-billed Hornbill
Ashy Flycatcher
White-browed Coucal
Brown-crowned Tchagra
Southern Black Flycatcher
Collared Palm Thrush
Laughing Dove

Tawny-flanked Prinia
Southern Masked Weaver
White-crowned Plover
Arrow-marked Babbler
Lilian's Lovebird
Greater Honeyguide
Kurrichane Thrush
Black-headed Oriole
Bennett's Woodpecker
Broad-billed Roller
Icterine Warbler
Goliath Heron
Brubru
Burnt-necked Eremomela
African Hoopoe
Western Cattle Egret
Long-toed Plover

Hooded Vulture
Namaqua Dove
Red-headed Weaver
Blacksmith Plover
Common Scimitarbill
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater
Chin-spot Batis
Purple Heron
White-crested Helmetshrike
Crowned Hornbill
Tropical Boubou
Meves's Starling
Red-throated Twinspot
African Firefinch
Cape Turtle Dove
Livingstone's Flycatcher
Common Drongo
Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike
White-fronted Bee-eater
Red-faced Mousebird
Trumpeter Hornbill
Black-winged Stilt
Wire-tailed Swallow
Southern Ground Hornbill
Great White Egret
Bateleur
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove
Saddle-billed Stork
African Fish Eagle
Striated Heron
Great Cormorant
African Pied Wagtail
Martial Eagle
Marsh Sandpiper
African Open-billed Stork
Black Heron
African Jacana
Egyptian Goose
Spur-winged Goose
Collared Pratincole
Grey Heron
Sacred Ibis
Green Wood Hoopoe
Helmeted Guineafowl

Little Bee-eater
Brown-hooded Kingfisher
Terrestrial Brownbul
Yellow-breasted Apalis
Blue Waxbill
Crested Guineafowl
Pied Kingfisher
Spectacled Weaver
Black Kite (resident)
Hadedra
Cardinal Woodpecker
Common Sandpiper
Marabou Stork
Mosque Swallow
African Paradise Flycatcher
Holub's Golden Weaver
Black Crake
Squacco Heron
Red-billed Oxpecker
European Bee-eater
Wood Sandpiper
Common Greenshank
Common Sandpiper
Ruff
Lilac-breasted Roller
Grey-backed Camaroptera
African Darter
Water Thick-knee
Red-eyed Dove
Southern Carmine Bee-eater
Yellow-billed Stork
African Skimmer
Dark-capped Bulbul
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver
Grey Go-away-bird
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow
Water Thick-knee
Malachite Kingfisher
Bohm's Spinetail
Little Egret
African Palm Swift
Giant Kingfisher
Fiery-necked Nightjar

Days 6 - 9 – Amanzi, Lower Zambezi (Eastern end), 16th – 19th October.

We transferred downstream to Amanzi by boat to the far eastern end of Lower Zambezi NP. This camp had a somewhat different feel being situated on a channel of the main river. The area was especially productive for carnivores at night and we saw leopard and lion on every night drive – one notable evening we found two male leopard squabbling over a kill, one remained in the tree whilst the larger of the two grabbed a fallen morsel and headed off with it grumbling. Then a third male appeared and climbed up to try and steal a bite but was seen off by the victor in the tree. As he descended a pair of hyena arrived and there was a snarling stand off before the leopard slunk away.

We had a really superb sighting here of a pair White-backed Night Herons which were nesting in tangled mass of vegetation by the river. I feel that this is one of those birds whose picture in bird books doesn't do it justice, it is almost spooky-looking with large dark eyes and a way of standing so still you can barely see it.

We spent one whole day exploring the Zambezi downstream boating through the Mapata Gorge – where the river narrows to perhaps just 25m wide in places and therefore flowing very fast and deep. Between the two camps and the gorge we must have navigated over 75km of the Zambezi and came to within about 5km of the border with Mozambique. On the way back we spent probably an hour beneath a noisy Southern Carmine Bee-eater colony – what a treat!

Brown-hooded Kingfisher
Black-headed Oriole
Arrow-marked Babbler
Black-backed Puffback
Grey-backed Camaroptera
Scarlet-chested Sunbird
Saddle-billed Stork
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver
African Fish Eagle
Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike
African Firefinch
Malachite Kingfisher
Southern Ground Hornbill
Martial Eagle
Dark-capped Bulbul
Brown-crowned Tchagra
Violet-backed Starling
Greater Honeyguide
Wattled Starling
Reed Cormorant
Bearded Woodpecker

White-crowned Plover
Retz's Helmetshrike
White-winged Black Tern
Crowned Hornbill
Rufous-bellied Heron
African Paradise Flycatcher
Lesser Masked Weaver
Great White Egret
Bohm's Spinetail
Helmeted Guineafowl
Cape Starling
Green Sandpiper
Chin-spot Batis
Hadedda
Western Cattle Egret
Purple-crested Turaco
Cardinal Woodpecker
Senegal Coucal
African Open-billed Stork
African Spoonbill
Common Sandpiper

Three-banded Plover
 Water Thick-knee
 Black-winged Stilt
 African Jacana
 Yellow-billed Stork
 Ashy Flycatcher
 Little Bee-eater
 Bateleur
 Wire-tailed Swallow
 Laughing Dove
 Goliath Heron
 Hamerkop
 Namaqua Dove
 Tropical Boubou
 African Pied Wagtail
 African Palm Swift
 Willow Warbler
 Southern Carmine Bee-eater
 White-fronted Bee-eater
 Terrestrial Brownbul
 Bennett's Woodpecker
 White-fronted Plover
 Blacksmith Plover
 Glossy Ibis
 Spur-winged Goose
 Reed Cormorant
 Grey Heron
 Egyptian Goose
 Red-billed Oxpecker
 Pied Kingfisher
 Little Egret
 Green Wood Hoopoe
 African Harrier-Hawk
 Grey Go-away-bird
 Common Drongo
 Yellow-bellied Greenbul

Rattling Cisticola
 Broad-billed Roller
 Tawny-flanked Prinia
 Black-crowned Tchagra
 Common Scimitarbill
 Squacco Heron
 African Hoopoe
 White-backed Night Heron
 Meyer's Parrot
 Swainson's Spurfowl
 Emerald-spotted Wood Dove
 Blue Waxbill
 Black Crake
 Ruff
 European Bee-eater
 Southern Grey-headed Sparrow
 African Grey Hornbill
 Red-winged Starling
 White-crested Helmetshrike
 Crested Guineafowl
 Southern Red-billed Hornbill
 Natal Spurfowl
 Cape Turtle Dove
 White-browed Coucal
 Meves's Starling
 Marabou Stork
 Common Greenshank
 Great Cormorant (ssp)
 Red-faced Mousebird
 Red-headed Weaver
 Sacred Ibis
 Red-eyed Dove
 Lilac-breasted Roller
 Grey-headed Bushshrike
 Double-banded Sandgrouse



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Days 10 - 15 – Bushcamps Trail, South Luangwa, 19th – 24th October.

The Luangwa River rises on the border of Zambia and Tanzania and flows south, down a broad valley to meet the Zambezi on the border with Mozambique. We had six days in South Luangwa in a private concession held by Bushcamps Co. where they have built six small camps designed for walking safaris. This beautiful park has a different feel to Lower Zambezi, there is some *Mopane* and other open plains with ox-bows and lagoons fringed with large Jackalberry and Natal Mahogany trees. There are no giraffe in the Zambezi Valley, but here in the Luangwa there is a sub-species known as Thornicroft's giraffe.

Given that the camps were mostly walking distance apart, the area was surprisingly diverse. The Luangwa River was broad and in places had high sandy banks with many Southern Carmine Bee-eater colonies. White-fronted Bee-eaters were numerous too as were the Little and we had a couple of sightings of the Swallow-tailed. We glimpsed a Bat Hawk one evening hunting along the sand banks. A Dickenson's Kestrel was nesting in a hollow palm. There were many Southern Ground Hornbill family groups too.

We had a superb sighting of Western Banded Snake Eagle at a waterhole and a Shikra drank as the former perched above. In another *Mopane* area we saw both Golden-breasted and Cinnamon-breasted Buntings. Another superb sighting was of a pair of Orange-winged Pyillias in a tall *Mopane*.

The most amusing though, was one evening when we were enjoying sundowners at Kuyenda. We were trying to figure out the nightjar calls and our guide, Suzyo, mentioned that occasionally he had seen the Pennant-winged in the area. James suggested that I play the call. As I did one of our guests commented "I don't know how any bird could hear that sound". As soon as he finished speaking, whoosh – one flew right over my head and fluttered to the ground some way off!

Grey-headed Kingfisher	Black Cuckoo
African Hawk-Eagle	Spur-winged Goose
Collared Pratincole	Black-collared Barbet
Jameson's Firefinch	Gabon Nightjar
Sacred Ibis	White-browed Sparrow-Weaver
Little Stint	Shikra
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	Greater Honeyguide
Green-winged Pytilia	Lilian's Lovebird
European Bee-eater	African Pied Wagtail
Copper Sunbird	Giant Kingfisher
Three-banded Plover	Tropical Boubou
Tawny Eagle	White-crested Helmetshrike
Red-chested Cuckoo	Common Sandpiper

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow
African Green Pigeon
Red-faced Mousebird
Arrow-marked Babbler
Retz's Helmetshrike
Bateleur
Dickinson's Kestrel
White-fronted Bee-eater
Black-headed Oriole
Spotted Flycatcher
Pied Kingfisher
African Goshawk
Striated Heron
Hadedda
Collared Sunbird
Yellow-breasted Apalis
White-fronted Plover
Pennant-winged Nightjar
African Hoopoe
Lizard Buzzard
Swainson's Spurfowl
White-browed Coucal
Rattling Cisticola
Hamerkop
Black-backed Puffback
Yellow-bellied Greenbul
Black Kite (resident)
Southern Ground Hornbill
African Palm Swift
Glossy Ibis
Broad-billed Roller
White-crowned Plover
Horus Swift
Blacksmith Plover
Scarlet-chested Sunbird
Grey Crowned Crane
Trumpeter Hornbill
Golden-breasted Bunting
African Grey Hornbill
Red-billed Oxpecker
Egyptian Goose
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting
Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike
Helmeted Guineafowl
Green Wood Hoopoe
Plain Martin
Common Greenshank
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl
Ashy Flycatcher

Lilac-breasted Roller
Bat Hawk
Grey-backed Camaroptera
Lesser Masked Weaver
Common Scimitarbill
Great White Egret
Yellow-fronted Canary
Double-banded Sandgrouse
Grey Go-away-bird
Variable Sunbird
Black-headed Heron
Holub's Golden Weaver
Brubru
Common Drongo
Blue Waxbill
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove
Grey-headed Bushshrike
Wood Sandpiper
African Scops Owl
African Paradise Flycatcher
White-browed Robin-Chat
Crowned Hornbill
African Darter
Southern Masked Weaver
Cape Turtle Dove
Chin-spot Batis
White-backed Vulture
Yellow-billed Stork
African Jacana
Water Thick-knee
Namaqua Dove
Brown-crowned Tchagra
Western Banded Snake Eagle
Crowned Plover
Dark-capped Bulbul
Yellow-throated Longclaw
Black-throated Wattle-eye
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater
Martial Eagle
Eastern Nicator
Saddle-billed Stork
Terrestrial Brownbul
Knob-billed Duck
Meyer's Parrot
Black-winged Stilt
African Spoonbill
Little Bee-eater
Collared Palm Thrush
Red-headed Weaver

Cape Robin-Chat
Kurrichane Thrush
Laughing Dove
Brown-hooded Kingfisher
Southern Red-billed Hornbill
African Fish Eagle
Grey Heron
Wire-tailed Swallow
Red-billed Quelea

Yellow-billed Oxpecker
Green Sandpiper
Gabar Goshawk
Hooded Vulture
White-bellied Sunbird
Meves's Starling
Brown Snake Eagle
Black Heron

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Days 14 - 18 – Mwaleshi, North Luangwa, 25th – 27th October

Our final destination was Mwaleshi, a tiny camp on the Mwaleshi River, a tributary of the Luangwa. Only 500 people visit North Luangwa NP each year and it is really only suitable for walking. There were some broad open plains and we had lion and leopard sightings on foot each day. Puku and Impala grazed the plains along with Crawshay's Zebra and Cookson's Wildebeest. We watched a family of Saddle-billed Storks displaying – three youngsters and their parents stretching their wings and extending their necks calling.

The season here is short, June – November. The camp is built again each year after the rains, the rooms were simple grass huts with mud floors. Shelves and screens all built from reeds and I couldn't see a single nail in the entire construction.

We had a range of sunbirds again here with the Copper being the highlight for me. It was strange how through the entire trip we hadn't seen an Ostrich or any bustards at all, and very few vultures – just a couple of White-backed and Hooded. Every morning we woke here to the call of the African Barred Owlet.

African Barred Owlet
African Scops Owl
Swainson's Spurfowl
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver
Meves's Starling

Black-collared Barbet
Southern Red-billed Hornbill
Crowned Plover
Laughing Dove
Wahlberg's Eagle

Pin-tailed Whydah
Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike
Egyptian Goose
Collared Sunbird
Copper Sunbird
Tawny-flanked Prinia
Rattling Cisticola
Lilian's Lovebird
Dark-capped Bulbul
Black Kite (resident)
Jameson's Firefinch
Broad-billed Roller
African Grey Hornbill
Senegal Coucal
Holub's Golden Weaver
Squacco Heron
Bateleur
Striated Heron
Pied Kingfisher
African Palm Swift
Brown Snake Eagle
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow
Marabou Stork
Scarlet-chested Sunbird
Yellow-billed Oxpecker
Yellow-billed Stork
African Spoonbill
Great White Egret
Black-headed Heron
Greater Honeyguide
African Fish Eagle
African Jacana
Greater Painted-snipe
Black Crake
Black-crowned Night Heron
African Paradise Flycatcher
Grey Crowned Crane
Blacksmith Plover
Martial Eagle
White-browed Coucal
Spur-winged Goose
Common Scimitarbill

Black-backed Puffback
Wood Sandpiper
Yellow-bellied Greenbul
Spotted Flycatcher
African Hawk-Eagle
Green Wood Hoopoe
Cape Turtle Dove
White-fronted Bee-eater
White-crowned Plover
Green Sandpiper
Hooded Vulture
African Pied Wagtail
African Harrier-Hawk
Southern Carmine Bee-eater
White-browed Coucal
Southern Ground Hornbill
Tropical Boubou
Sacred Ibis
Common Sandpiper
Grey Go-away-bird
Common Drongo
White-fronted Plover
Helmeted Guineafowl
Grey-headed Kingfisher
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl
White-crested Helmetshrike
Red-billed Buffalo Weaver
Lilac-breasted Roller
Natal Spurfowl
Saddle-billed Stork
Common Greenshank
Western Banded Snake Eagle
Arrow-marked Babbler
Blue Waxbill
Water Thick-knee
Three-banded Plover
Wire-tailed Swallow
Red-billed Oxpecker
Grey Heron
Bohm's Spinetail
Hadeda
Little Bee-eater

Day 19 – Lilayi Lodge, Lusaka, 28th October.

We had longer to explore Lilayi on our way back through Lusaka at the end of the trip. The sable antelope put on a good show and we also spotted a Lizard Buzzard. We walked through a burnt area of woodland and were treated to a number of Bronze-winged Coursers beautifully camouflaged against the charred earth.

European Bee-eater
Red-throated Twinspot
Lizard Buzzard
Natal Spurfowl
Common Bulbul
Helmeted Guineafowl
Cape Turtle Dove
Fiery-necked Nightjar
Blue Waxbill
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove
Tawny-flanked Prinia
Barn Swallow
Terrestrial Brownbul
Bronze-winged Courser
Grey Heron
White-browed Robin-Chat
Kurrichane Thrush
White-crested Helmetshrike



An in depth into Chilwa - Lukanga Swamp

By Clara Nanja and Francis Ng'ona

The Lukanga swamp has three entry points; Waya in Kapiri Mposhi District, Chiyuni in Chibombo district and Chilwa in Ngabwe district. This article will highlight the marvel of Chilwa from the November weevil monitoring trip. While Chilwa consists of both the mainland and an island (Chilwa Island), both of these areas have a good population of people dependent on fishing mainly with a bit of agriculture and livestock practices. The visit to Chilwa was for the purpose of monitoring the weevils to ascertain how they are feeding and spreading within the swamp and to assess how the mass rearing sites are being maintained.



Wattled Cranes at Chilwa, Lukanga Swamps

The team was amazed at how the weevil monitors in this area are so attached to the nurturing of the weevils as well as weevil monitoring even when project staff are not on site. The weevil monitor at whose house the weevils are has learnt the art and has developed a sense of

ownership of the project in this area. He conducts awareness to community members that show interest and visit his house to see the weevils. He replenishes the mass rearing troughs with water and fresh *Salvinia* routinely.

The team visited the mass rearing sites and found well-nourished weevils in clean water, all dead *Salvinia* debris cleaned out from the bottom of the troughs before proceeding to monitor the weevils on the two release points in the swamp. The weevils were released 6 months ago and it is amazing how clear water surface is being restored and a pair of the iconic Wattled Crane was seen performing courtship dances near there release sites – such an achievement. Six months from release, the weevils have spread up to an average of 62.5m. Record breaking, for the first time, the team drove onto the island. This was only possible because the water levels had rescinded due to the low rainfall received last rain season. On the island, our mission was to deliver two fiber glass

mass rearing troughs, train more weevil monitors and conduct an awareness raising with all 11 traditional leaders on the island and introduce weevils into the swamp. The troughs were well delivered, fitted and in good condition for use. Weevils were placed in the troughs to kick start the process of mass rearing on the island. Two more weevil monitors were trained making of total of 5 monitors in Chilwa with a total of 6 troughs now on both the mainland and island.

The traditional leaders meeting was the crowning of the visit. 15 traditional and the area councilor attended the awareness raising meeting. The enthusiasm and interest in the project and its activities was overwhelming. They further indicated the need to expand on awareness raising campaigns by working closely with the local fisheries committees (which we can domesticate to Site Support Groups) and the area fisheries officer even as they also pledged to mainstream the project information



Traditional Leaders in a meeting with BWZ office

into their community meeting often. After the meeting, all the attendants went ahead into the swamp to witness the release of weevils introduced onto a point that was named, “Manjimela”, after one of the traditional leaders. They are now eagerly waiting to see gunshots, browning and finally, clear open water and are hopeful for an improved biodiversity and fish stocks once *Salvinia molesta* has been controlled.

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Chaplin's Barbet nesting in *Ficus thonningii* tree

Claire van Eeden

The first photo is of the nest sight I saw along with some friends on the 7.11.2019 at Mushingashi Conservancy. We had stopped to look at something different and I happened to see the hole in the tree and the next minute a barbets head stuck out! The other two photos are of the adult barbet that stayed quite close to the nest and the chick had hatched. These were taken on the 04.12.2019.



Editor's Note:

This appears to be the first record of the head colouration of the juveniles, a dull black colour.

In addition – this species almost exclusively nests in *Ficus sycamorus* – so this record of a different *Ficus* species is interesting.

Do you do ‘Cornell-speak’?

Alastair Newton

I guess most of us who have participated in a Global Big Day (and/or looked to upload data on the eBird website at other times) have struggled not only with American spellings (eg ‘gray’ for ‘grey’) and what I at least regard as a somewhat excessive use of hyphens, but also with Cornell’s use of species names with which we are not familiar. Certainly, I was called on for help several times as participants looked to log data from the most recent GBD.

This caused me to recall one of the most useful things which happened to me when I first moved to Paris in 1992. One of my then colleagues gave me a list of the English name for various fish species and the French equivalent. Needless to say, it being France, this had nothing to do with angling and everything to do with ordering one’s dinner!

I made extensive use of this until I had the equivalents off pat. So, I reckoned a few weeks ago that it might be helpful if I were to produce a list of the bird names we commonly use and the Cornell equivalent similarly to help others.

No sooner had I started work on this than along came the Birds of Zambia App, which uses the latest IOC names (see separate article). It clearly made sense to add those in too — and, of course, to include the scientific name (or names in some cases).

Despite the fact that the authors of the App have, very helpfully, included alternate names, including scientific names, this proved to be somewhat more complicated and time consuming than I had expected. However, here is a first crack at such a list, which I shall look to grow over time as I come across more relevant species.

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The 'common' (i.e. 'our') names in the first two columns are based primarily on Sasol. So, I should apologise here and now to those of you who live in the northeast of the country in particular where East African names may be the 'common' usage ones where there is a difference.

I am not claiming that the list is comprehensive; indeed, I am sure it is not. And I dare say there may be the odd error (which you are very welcome to point out to me please). But I hope it is at least of some use, not only for GBDs (and I shall circulate the spreadsheet itself to Team Leaders before the next GBD) but more generally.

Finally, you should all be turning to your 2020 diaries and year planners by now. So, please block out Saturday 2 May which should be the next GBD. We have second in Africa and a top 20 slot globally to defend, if not improve on!

Please see the separate attachment that came with the newsletter for the list.



Erratum on Photo credit:

In the previous newsletter the article erroneously left out the photographer's credit. These images were provided by Gabriel Jamie for the article, and taken by him.



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Please use Calibri (Body) 12 point font with multiple spacing at 1.15 (0 before and 10 after).

Headings in bold at 16 point and the author in italics at 11 point, both centred.

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