

BIRDING IN THE PEARL OF AFRICA

19 nights/ 20 days



Day 1: Arrival and overnight in Entebbe

You will be met on arrival by your driver / guide who will warmly receive and welcome you. You will be transferred to your hotel in Entebbe. **Dinner and overnight stay at A) Airport Guest House (B&B)**

Upgrade to B) Boma Guest House, C) Serena Lake Victoria Hotel.

Day 2: Birding tour to Mabamba Wetland, and Mpanga Forest

After an early breakfast, we commence our trip by driving to the Mabamba Swamp, 50km west of Kampala, the capital of Uganda. Stop en route at Mpigi Swamp for papyrus rarities. Open your eyes for a White-winged Warbler, Papyrus Gonolek, Yellow-backed Weaver, Northern Brown-throated Weaver, Blue-headed Coucal, and other swamp specialties. At the swamp, most of the birding is done on a canoe, paddled by our local site guides. Look out for the Shoebill both in the sky and down on the marsh. Also watch out for the Swamp Flycatcher, African Purple Swamp hen, African Water Rail, Common Moorhen, Lesser Jacana, African Jacana, African After an early breakfast drive and go for Mabamba Swamp for the rare African Shoebill, you will then connect to **Mpanga forest** a stunning patch of remnant, medium altitude evergreen and swamp forest. Look out for Blue breasted kingfisher, Weyn's weaver, White spotted flufftail, Blue shouldered robin chat, Grey parrot, Lemon Dove, Black billed turaco, Fire crested alethe, Snowy headed robin chat, Dusky long

tailed cuckoo, Hair breasted barbet, Woodland wabler, olive greenbul, Sooty boubou, Fiery necked nightjar, and you not surprised to meet the shy bush pig, Pygmy Goose, White-faced Whistling-duck, Squacco Heron, Blue-breasted Bee-eater, Winding Cisticola, Goliath Heron and Black Crake. **Dinner and overnight stay at A) Airport Guest House (B&B) Upgrade to B) Boma Guest House, C) Serena Lake Victoria Hotel.**

Day 3: Transfer to Lake Mburo National Park. (5-6 Hours)

You will have a supplement of the scenic beauty as you drive to Uganda's smallest park en route Stop by the Equator for photo shot. Continue to Mbarara the country home of the Ankole long horned cattle. Where you will enjoy scenery of vast plains reaching in time for lunch after which you will do a boat ride in the afternoon. Watch out for mammal of the area and water life animals. **Dinner and overnight at A) Eagles nest, (B, L, D) Upgrade to B) Mantana Tented Camp, C) Mihingo Lodge**

Day 4: Whole day birding and game drive in the park

Today, we begin very early with a game drive on the various tracks found within the park. You have chances of viewing large herds of mammals like Impalas, Elands, Topi and Buffaloes. The bird population here is also rich hence birders will have chances of Green-backed Woodpecker, Brown-chested Plover, Southern Ground Hornbill, Spot-flanked, Yellow-billed Ox pecker, Northern Brown-throated Weaver, Red-faced and Black-collared Barbets. Later in the afternoon, we have a boat trip where you will have good views of hippos yawning and splashing in the water. Also of interest here is the African Fin foot, White-winged Warbler, Papyrus Yellow Warbler, Carruthers Cisticola, and Papyrus Gonolek. **Dinner and overnight at A) Eagles nest, (B, L, D) Upgrade to B) Mantana Tented Camp, C) Mihingo Lodge**

Day 5: Birding to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (5-6Hours)

Today, we shall spend most of the day driving to Bwindi. Bwindi Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is home to approximately half of the world's endangered population of Mountain Gorillas. Forest birding in Bwindi ranks as one of the best bird watching experiences in Uganda and Africa as well, having been voted as the number one birding hot spot in Africa. It is home to over 23 highly-localized Albertine Rift endemics. Once part of a much larger forest that included the Virunga Volcanoes in neighboring Rwanda, Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is now an ecological island within a sea of human cultivation and therefore of big conservation importance. Buhoma lies in the valley of the Munyaga River at 5100ft and is bordered with steep, forested hills. Excellent forest birding and the prospect of sightings of numerous rare and localized Albertine Rift endemics makes this a true birding paradise. **Dinner and overnight at Buhoma community Bandas (B,L,D) Upgrade to B) Engagi Lodge, C) Mahoganyssprings.**

Day 6: Whole day birding in the forest

On this day, we set out for a whole day birding in the forest. Special birds you have chances of seeing include Black-faced Rufous Warbler, Grauer's Warbler, Banded Prinia, Black-faced Apalis, Black-throated Apalis, Mountain Masked Apalis, Red-throated Alethe, Yellow-eyed Black-Flycatcher, Ashy Flycatcher, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, Chapin's Flycatcher, Chin-spot

Batis, Rwenzori Batis, Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher, White-bellied Crested-flycatcher, Pale-breasted Illadopsis, Mountain Illadopsis, African Hill-Babbler, Dusky Tit, Blue-throated Brown Sunbird, Blue-headed Sunbird, Northern Double-collared Sunbird, Grey-headed Sunbird, Mackinnon's Fiscal, Sooty Boubou, Pink-footed Puff back, Doherty's Bush-shrike, White-naped Raven, Montane Oriole, African Golden Oriole, Stuhlmann's Starling, Narrow-tailed Starling, Waller's Starling, Strange Weaver, Brown-capped Weaver, Black-billed Weaver, Dusky Crimsonwing, Yellow-bellied Waxbill, Magpie Mannikin, Yellow-crowned Canary, Thick-billed Seedeater, Streaky Seedeater, African Green Broadbill, Shelly's Crimsonwing, Oriole Finch, Mountain Buzzard, Ayre's Hawk-eagle, Handsome Francolin, Black-billed Turaco, Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo, African Wood-Owl, Rwenzori Nightjar, Scarce Swift, Bar-tailed Trogon, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, Black Bee-eater, (Western) Bronze-naped Pigeon, Red-chested Owlet, Tullberg's Woodpecker, Elliot's Woodpecker, African Broadbill, Western Green Tinker bird, African Green Broadbill, Lagden's Bush Shrike, Petit's Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Cuckoo-shrike, Archer's Ground Robin, Toro Olive-Greenbul, Ansorge's Greenbul, Equatorial Akalat, White-bellied Robin-chat, Olive Thrush, White-tailed Ant-Thrush, Grauer's Rush-warbler, Short-tailed Warbler, Neumann's Warbler and Red faced Woodland-Warbler. **Dinner and overnight at Buhoma Community Bandas (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Engagi lodge, C) Mahogany springs.

Day 7: Gorilla Tracking – Gorilla Tracking in Bwindi

This morning, after breakfast, we shall assemble at the park offices for briefing prior to this historic event. Gorilla tracking is a very captivating activity; it involves walking in the wilderness in search of these great but gentle apes. It can be a physically challenging activity, therefore ensure physical fitness. Eight people are permitted per group per day. It can last from 2 to 8 hours in a day. On occasions the Gorillas prove elusive but often can be found within an hour by the tracker guides. Gorilla tracking itself is wonderful experience; staring in to the eyes of these gentle giants; watching them in awe as they play and go about their daily activities. It is indeed a "once in a lifetime" experience that you must never miss each time you visit Uganda. Each encounter is different and has its own rewards, but you are likely to enjoy the close view of adults feeding, grooming and resting as the youngsters frolic and swing from vines in a delightfully playful display. **Dinner and overnight at Buhoma Community Bandas (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Engagi Lodge, C) Mahogany springs.

Day 8: Birding Safari to Queen Elizabeth National Park (7-8 Hours)

Today, we shall start early after breakfast and drive to Queen Elizabeth National Park is named after the Queen of England who visited it in 1954 is the second largest national park in Uganda. In terms of diversity this park ranks among the best birding destinations in Uganda with over 610 species recorded, and a one day record of 296 species. Hard-core birders will be treated to special birds of this park that include Harlequin Quail, Blue Quail, Small (Common) Buttonquail, African Crake, White-winged Warbler, Martial Eagle, African Skimmer, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Papyrus Gonolek, Amur Falcon, Ovampo Sparrowhawk, Lowland Akalat, Greater and Lesser Flamingo, Shoebill, Black Bee-eater, Caruthers's Cisticola, Terek Sandpiper, Secretary Bird, and Temminck's Courser. Mammals include African Elephant, Spotted Hyena, Leopard, Lion, Ugandan Kobs, Side-striped Jackal,

Baboons, Chimpanzees, Bush and Water Bucks, Warthogs, Giant Forest Hogs to mention but a few. **Dinner and overnight at Simba Safari Camp (B, L, D)**
Upgrade to B) Ihamba Safari Lodge, C) Mweya Safari Lodge.

Day 9: Kyambura Gorge and Lake Katwe in birding.

After an early breakfast head to the lake shores of Katwe as you are searching for more birds from where you will go to the valley of apes in Kyambura.

The Kyambura Gorge experience is more than discovering chimpanzees in their natural environment: it teaches visitors about the ecosystems of Kyambura Gorge's atmospheric "underground" rainforest, including vegetation types; bird identification and behavior; and chimp and monkey ecology. You can also find red-tailed monkey, black-and-white colobus, baboons and vervet monkeys. The gorge is also known for its variety of bird species including various falcons, the blue-headed bee-eater and the African Finfoot. **Dinner and overnight at A) Simba safari camp (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Ihamba Safari Lodge, C) Mweya Safari Lodge.

Day 10: Whole day birding and game drive in the park, Boat trip on Kazinga Channel

After breakfast we set out for a whole day game drive as we continue bird watching in the park. Later in the afternoon you have an exciting boat cruise on the Kazinga channel. This is a narrow neck of water that connects Lakes George and Edward, with excellent photographic opportunities for waterside birds and abundant Hippopotamus. Amongst the birds you are likely to encounter are the African Skimmer, Striated Heron, African Spoonbill, Water Thick-knee, Three-banded Plover, Marsh Green, Wood and Common Sandpiper, Gray-headed Gull, Plain Martin Lesser Swamp-Warbler and Yellow-billed Ox pecker. **Dinner and overnight at A) Simba Safari Camp (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Ihamba Safari Lodge, C) Mweya Safari Lodge.

Day 11: Birding Safari to Maramagambo Forest, Transfer to Kibale National Park (4-5 Hours)

After an early breakfast, we head for Maramagambo forest. A few specialties at Maramagambo forest include the Yellow-bellied and Jameson's Wattle-eyes, Black Bee-eater, White-tailed and Red-tailed Ant-Thrush, Brown and Grey-chested Illadopsis, Shinning Blue Kingfisher, Brown-eared Woodpeckers, Narina Trogon, Least Honey guide, Grey Greenbul, Brown-chested Alethe, and the African Fin foot. The trail through the forest leads past a bat cave, which is rather impressive, and if we are lucky we may come across a Python that lives in the cave and feasts on the bats. Later in the afternoon, we drive to Kibale Forest National Park. **Dinner and overnight A) Kibale Forest Camp (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Primate Lodge standard, C) Primate Lodge Luxury.

Day 12: Chimp tracking and birding Safari in the forest

On this day, we set off for the towering forest very early, driving towards the Park's visitor center for briefing and thereafter, chimp tracking. The activity may last from a few hours to several hours. Birding in the afternoon along the main road may be productive. Depending on the weather predictions, birding in Bigodi wetland is also productive with riverine forest birds. Kibale National Park is a good site for a number of birds that are hard to find elsewhere including Speckle-breasted Woodpecker, Cabanis's Greenbul and Joyful Greenbul

as well as White-spotted Fluff tail, Dusky and Olive Long tailed Cuckoo, Lesser Honey guide, Blue-shouldered Robin Chat, White-chinned Prinia, Grey Apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera and White-collared Olive back. **Dinner and overnight Kibale Forest Camp (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Primate Lodge standard, C) Primate Lodge Luxury.

Day 13: Whole day birding in the forest

After breakfast, we have another chance for birding in the forest. The results of the previous day will help us to choose either birding Sebitoli Section or birding Kanyanchu area. **Dinner and overnight Kibale Forest Camp (B,L,D)**

Upgrade to B) Primate Lodge standard, C) Primate Lodge Luxury.

Day 14: Birding Safari to Budongo forest (6-7 Hours)

Take a long drive to Budongo arriving in Budongo area late in the afternoon. If time allows there may be chances for birding along the way at Busingiro Section of Budongo forest. Budongo forest is the largest natural forest area in East Africa. We can expect to find a wide range of other bird species such as the crested guinea fowl sporting their punk "hairdos", White Crested Turacco, Chestnut Crowned Eremomela, Yellow and Gray Longbills, Olive-bellied Crombec, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Little Green Sunbird, and Red-headed Blue Bill among others. There are also many other special birds with a West African origin: White-thighed Hornbill, Green-breasted Pitta, Rufous-sided Broadbill, Blue-breasted, Dwarf & Chocolate-backed Kingfishers, Yellow-crested & Brown-eared Woodpeckers, Yellow Bill, Western Black-headed Oriole, Yellow-spotted, Hairy-breasted & Yellow-billed Barbets, Green Hylia, Buff-throated, Black-throated & Black-capped Apalises, Black-eared Ground-Thrush, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, the elusive Lemon-bellied Crombec, Crested & Red-headed Malimbe and also various forest starlings among others. We will also be in a prime area for a wide range of primates such as Blue & Red-tailed Monkeys and Black and white Colobus - and if lucky Chimpanzees. There is also a wide variety of butterfly species in the forest. Budongo forest has recorded over 200 butterfly species hence you will also be in for a treat as we look out for these butterflies. **Dinner and overnight Fort Murchison lodge (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) Budongo Eco Lodge, C) Paraa Safari Lodge

Day 15: Whole Day Bird Watching on a Game drive

We have an early morning breakfast then go birding on a game drive, we take the best trucks and to the delta, we bird. We carry packed lunch with us so we will waste no moment if we are to see a bigger number of savanna birds along with other wildlife. Among the many species you should expect include; The Secretary Bird, The Giant, Pied, Malachite, Stripped, Chestnut-bellied, Blue-breasted, Woodland and the African Pygmy Kingfishers, House Martin, African Rock Martin, Lesser Stripped Swallow, Ethiopian Swallow, Angola Swallow, Red-rumped Swallow, Rufous-chested Swallow, Nightingale, Rock Thrush, Pied Wheatear, Whinchat, Common Redstart, White-fronted Black Chat, Sooty Chat, Isabelline Wheatear, to mention but a few. **Dinner and overnight Fort Murchison**

Upgrade to B) Budongo Eco Lodge, C) Paraa Safari Lodge.

16: Bird Uganda on a Nature Walk and a Launch Cruise

Wake up early, bird on foot with a game ranger for the early and late morning active birds. We get back to the hotel for lunch then take a launch cruise to the bottom of the falls. Here, your list shall include; The Shoebill Stork, Little Grebe, Great White and the Pink-backed Pelicans, Red-knobbed Coot, African Water Rail, Allen's Gallinule, Black Crake, African Crake, Black-crowned Crane, Southern Pochard, The Egyptian, African Pygmy, and the Spur-winged Gooses, Storks like; the Saddle-billed, Open-billed, Abdim's, White, Yellow-billed, Marabou, and the Woolly-necked, the Little and Dwarf Bitterns, Night Heron, Black Heron, Goliath Heron, Purple Heron, Green Backed Heron, Common Squacco Heron, Great White Egret, Cormorants, the African and Eurasian Spoonbills, the Lesser Flamingo, Lesser Jacana, African Finfoot, Painted Snipe, Wattled Plover the list is very long. **Dinner and overnight at Fort Murchison (B,L,D)**

Upgrade to B) Budongo Eco Lodge, C) Paraa Safari Lodge.

Day 17: Whole day birding in the Royal Mile

A short bird watching drive from the Hotel at dawn will take us to one of the best of Uganda's bird watching spots, the Royal Mile. This is Uganda's historically known leisure spot for the traditional King, hence the name Royal Mile. Here the forest has been cut back a few meters along the sides of the main trail, which makes it a particularly good viewing area in this excellent forest.

Uganda Special Bird species in Budongo include White-thighed and Black-and-white-casqued Hornbills, Yellow-spotted and Yellow billed Barbets, Western Black-headed Oriole, along with Red-tailed and Blue Monkeys. Overhead, Sabine's and sometimes Cassin's Spine tails soar over the clearings. As we walk quietly along the trail, Red-tailed Ant-Thrushes skulk in the shadows, as do Red-tailed Bristle bill, Scaly-breasted, Pale-breasted and Brown Illadopsis. Greenbuls are always a challenge and include Cameroon Sombre, Slender-billed, Honey guide and Spotted Greenbul, whilst other regular species are Speckled Tinker bird, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Green Crombec, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Buff-throated Apalis, and both White-breasted and Grey-headed Negro finches. Lower down we should see Chocolate-backed and African Dwarf Kingfishers. White-spotted Fluff tails and the elusive Nahan's Francolin, believed to be one of the most handsome of all Ugandan birds. Other possibilities here are Great Sparrowhawk, Cassin's Hawk-eagle, Crested Guinea fowl, Tambourine Dove, Grey Parrot, African Emerald and Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoos, Yellow bill, White-throated Bee-eater, Yellow-throated Tinker bird, Yellow-spotted Barbet, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Dusky Tit, Western Nicator, Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat, Forest Robin, Black-throated and Black-capped Apalis, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Brown-crowned Eremomela, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Sabine's and Cassin's Spine tails, Wilcock's Honey guide, Yellow and Grey Long bills, Jameson's Wattle-eye, Blue-throated Brown and Little Green Sunbirds, Rufous Flycatcher Thrush, Yellow-mantled Weaver, Red-headed Malimbe, the Uganda Woodland Warbler and the Ituri Batis.

Dinner and overnight Fort Murchison (B, L, D)

Upgrade to B) Budongo Eco Lodge, C) Paraa Safari Lodge.

Day 18-Birdig to Jinja Transfer to Jinja through the Ziiwa (8-9 Hours)

You will wake up early and start your journey to the adventure city of Uganda Jinja. You will have a stopover at Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary for white rhino tracking. Founded in 1998, Rhino Fund Uganda works to reintroduce black and white rhinos into Uganda. They run a breeding program, as well as working to educate communities on these endangered giants,

the problem of poaching and the need for environmental conservation. In the Rhino Sanctuary you will have a safari-hike to the rhinos which will give you the opportunity to view them at close range. After having lunch, continue to Uganda's largest national park. Proceed to Jinja arriving in the evening for your **Dinner and overnight stay at A) 2friends Guest House (B,L,D)**

Upgrade to B) The Haven, C) Wild Waters Lodge

Day 19: Jinja, Rafting and source of the Nile and birding in Mabira

You will be picked from your hotel head to Jinja for a full day of adventure as you raft the white waters of the Nile starting at the Source of the Nile. Enjoy the beautiful scenery and thundering rapids of the White Nile and do not forget to watch the incredible birdlife as you drift quietly between the rapids of this mighty river. If you prefer a more peaceful experience can also decide to go for a wonderful river journey instead of choosing the wildest rapids, we drift swiftly between beautiful forested islands, bounce down smaller rapids and explore the least known channels. Later in the evening return to hotel for a short birding experience and for Dinner and overnight stay at **A) 2friends Guest House (B, L, D)**

Upgrade to B) The Haven, C) Wild Waters Lodge

Day 20: Birding in Mabira transfer to Kampala and to the Airport.

Birding in the biggest forest reserve which is also closest to the city center introduces you to 315 bird record with 74 of the 144 species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome that occur in Uganda. On trails like the Red-tailed Monkey, Turaco and the Buttress trails will ease life for you in your search for Nahan's Francolin which is an IUCN Red list' endangered species, Cassin's Hawk-eagle, White-spotted Flufftail, Afep Pigeon, Grey Parrot, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, Black-shouldered Nightjar, Sabine's Spinetail, Cassin's Spinetail, Blue-throated Roller, African Dwarf-kingfisher, White-bellied Kingfisher, Forest Woodhoopoe, African Pied Hornbill, Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill, Speckled Tinkerbird, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, Yellow-spotted Barbet, Hairy-breasted Barbet, Yellow-billed Barbet, just to mention but a few. Find out some of the 312 species of trees including the Warbhugia Ugandensis which has medicinal properties and known to cure over forty ailments and the vulnerable prunus Africana are also here and in the afternoon having been enriched with an experience of a lifetime and unforgettable memories, you will say goodbye to the Pearl of Africa and you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back home

End of safari

Included in the price:

Ground transport per private 4WD safari vehicle

English speaking driver/guide

Accommodation in places mentioned in the itinerary, based on a twin/double room

Meals as described in the itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)

Bottled mineral water in the safari vehicle

Entrance fees and ranger fees for national parks

Activities and excursions mentioned in the program

AMREF Flying Doctor Insurance

VAT for upcountry hotels and lodges

Exclusions:

International flight

Chimpanzee Trekking Permits

Gorilla Trekking Permits

Visa (USD \$100)

Meals and drinks not mentioned above

Items of personal nature

Tips

Note: The given rates are subject to change. Accommodation and activities can only be guaranteed after confirmation and payment of the requested deposit. The final price will be dependent on the facilities available at the time of booking. We can always offer suitable alternatives should any of the facilities not be available. Some of the budget facilities based on are basic and non-self-contained. Please refer to our booking terms and conditions for more information and our website.

We wish you a pleasant safari with



Rakesh Kanii

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