

## BIRDING IN NIGERIA 14-28 October 2003

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Photos: Nick Athanas and Iain Campbell



*Highlight of the trip: the fabled Picathartes!*  
(I. Campbell)

such as *Walking with Dinosaurs*, Tony Disley (A bird artist; illustrator of *A Field Guide to the Birds of the Gambia and Senegal*), and Frank Day (an American diplomat working in the US Embassy).

This was effectively the first-ever international bird tour to Nigeria and we quickly attracted

You've probably never thought of Nigeria as a birding destination; neither had we until we met Phil Hall earlier this year on one of our Ecuador tours. Phil has lived in Nigeria for close to 30 years and is in charge of many of Nigeria's current conservation projects.

He wants to see Nigeria become a birding destination, and with that in mind he invited Iain Campbell and Nick Athanas over for a two week trip so we could get to know the country and investigate the possibility of running a tour there next year. While this was by no means a comprehensive tour of the whole country, we did visit many of the best areas and saw some fantastic birds.

Joining us for most of the trip were Nigel Marven (a producer and presenter of nature films



the attention of the media. In the first two days we were interviewed by a local TV station, a local radio station, and the BBC. Anna Borzello, Nigeria's BBC correspondent, traveled with us for part of the trip and produced a radio piece that aired near the end of our trip.

Nigerians are keen on attracting foreign tourists. After years of military dictators, the country finally has a democratically elected government. The

infrastructure has been improved and the internal air system is now quite reliable.

Overall the trip went quite smoothly, with no major delays or hassles. Nearly everyone we met was very friendly and helpful. Accommodation in a few places was very basic, but in other places it was excellent. Most of the roads were paved and in reasonably good condition. Food was good and plentiful, even in places with basic accommodation. We still plan to run a tour here in October 2004. If interested, please email us at [info@tropicalbirding.com](mailto:info@tropicalbirding.com) for information.

### TRIP SUMMARY

- 14 October: Evening arrival on BA flight from London Heathrow. Night Lagos.
- 15 October: Morning birding at the Lekki Conservation Center. Night Lagos.
- 16 October: Morning birding in Ikoyi, noon flight to Makurdi, drive to Obudu Cattle Ranch.
- 17 October: Full day at Obudu CR and Becheve Nature Reserve.
- 18 October: Morning birding at Obudu CR and Becheve Nature Reserve. Afternoon drive to Butatong.
- 19 October: Full day at Bashu. Evening drive back to Obudu CR.
- 20 October: Another day at Obudu CR and Becheve Nature Reserve.
- 21 October: Drive from Obudu to Agenebode. Night Weppa Farm.
- 22 October: Full day birding around Weppa. Night Weppa.
- 23 October: Morning birding at Weppa. Afternoon drive to Okomu NP. Night Okomu NP.
- 24 October: Full day in Okomu NP. Night Okomu NP.
- 25 October: Morning in Okomu, afternoon drive back to Lagos. Night Lagos.
- 26 October: Noon flight to Jos. Afternoon birding around Jos. Night at Ornithological

Research Institute.

**27 October:** Morning birding around the Institute. Afternoon flight back to Lagos. Night Lagos.

**28 October:** Morning birding in the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Late evening BA flight back to London.

Iain and I arrived in Lagos around 6PM after a long and tiring flight from Ecuador. The airport was reasonably modern and efficient - our visas were in order so we passed quickly through immigration and collected our bags without any hassles. Phil had arranged a driver to meet us and to take us to his flat in the suburb of Ikoyi, about a 45 minute drive through chaotic traffic.

Next morning we were up early, well rested after the journey. We weren't due to leave Lagos until the next day, so we spent the morning birding at the Lekki Conservation Centre. Unfortunately, this excellent reserve is quickly becoming an island in the rapidly expanding Lagos. However the birding was excellent and we saw a few species that we did not see elsewhere on the trip: **Swamp Greenbul, Carmelite Sunbird, Green-headed Sunbird, and Olive-bellied Sunbird**. After the morning heated up, we sat in on the annual general meeting of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation. Later in the evening, we received word that Nigel and Tony had had problems with their visas and would be delayed by a full day - That meant we would have to leave Lagos without them.

The following day, a fairly short mid-day flight took us to Makurdi in the steamy savannah of eastern Nigeria. We were met by Babatunde, Phil's stalwart driver of many years. He reputedly knows every road and town in Nigeria - and supposedly has a love interest in every one of them! He drove us east in his trusty Land Rover and after a few hours, mountains appeared in the distance. We were soon climbing up into the cool, fresh air of the Obudu plateau. Just before we arrived at the hotel we had to screech to a halt as a **Grayish Eagle-Owl** flew up from the road and landed in a nearby bush. Soon after, we



*Formerly the Obudu  
I. Campbell*

*Red-tailed Woodbird (I. Campbell)*



restricted range species found in that EBA.

The forest is severely fragmented and several of the species are considered endangered. With the help of a donation from Mr. A P Leventis, a Greek entrepreneur and philanthropist who grew up in Nigeria, a small 35 ha reserve has been created on the ranch property. It is hoped that more will be protected in the future. Still, this small reserve, called the Becheve Nature Reserve, contains all the EBA birds found on the plateau.

The forest (see photo above) is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. A good trail system passes through the forest and around the edge. There is also a tree platform where you may get better views of some of the canopy species. Phil is helping to train the reserve guards as bird guides, and they know most of the local birds and their vocalizations.

We spent several days birding around here. The first morning was sunny and pleasant, and was by far the most productive. During the other mornings we had to contend with thick fog which made visibility very difficult. Almost right outside our door we found nesting **Bannerman's Weavers**, while **Mackinnon's Shrikes** patrolled the hotel grounds. Small flocks of cute **Black-crowned Waxbills** were all over the place. While walking through the

reached our destination, Obudu Cattle Ranch.

This ranch was started back in the 40's by Scottish immigrants, and they later opened up a hotel that attracted Nigerians and ex-pats alike wanting to escape the heat of the humid lowlands. After years of neglect and mismanagement, the hotel was put under the management of Protea Hotels, a South African company. They have renovated it and turned it into a modern, well run operation, and an excellent base from which to bird the Obudu plateau. They have also renamed it the "Protea Hotel Ranch Resort".

The Obudu plateau is the westernmost spur of a mountain range found almost entirely in Cameroon. It is part of the Cameroon Mountains endemic bird area (EBA), and supports 18 of the 28

grassland and scrub along the edge of the reserve we found **Yellow-breasted Boubou**, **Western Tinkerbird**, **Blue-breasted Bee-eater**, **Cameroon Pigeon**, and **Mountain Sawwing**. **Bangwa Scrub-Warblers** were singing loudly but didn't want to come out. More treasures were waiting for us in the forest like **Gray Apalis**, **Pink-footed Puffback**, nesting **Brown-capped Weavers**, odd **Cameroon Olive-Greenbuls**, and a noisy party of the endangered **White-throated Mountain-Babbler**. In the afternoon we tried some different forest patches and found a few **Mountain Wagtails** and a pair of **Fuelleborn's Boubous** before the rain started.

Tony and Nigel arrived late the first evening and had to endure some good-natured ribbing over their visa problems. Frank and Anna also turned up in an gigantic white armoured American SUV that Iain started calling "The Space Shuttle" - a name that instantly stuck and was used for the rest of the trip. Next morning we had to contend with the fog but still saw a lot of the same birds plus a few new ones. Best of all was the pair of **Fernando Po Olivebacks** that put on a great show. We also found a **Cardinal Woodpecker**, which Phil said was a new bird for the reserve.

After lunch, we set off for Cross River National Park, where we spent the night in a village called Butatong. Accommodation was basic but acceptable, and the people were friendly and helpful. We got to bed fairly early to rest up for the Big Day: tomorrow we would be looking for **Picathartes!**



*Fernando Po Oliveback*  
(I. Campbell)



*Red-collared Widowbird (I. Campbell)*



*Cardinal Woodpecker*  
(N. Athanas)

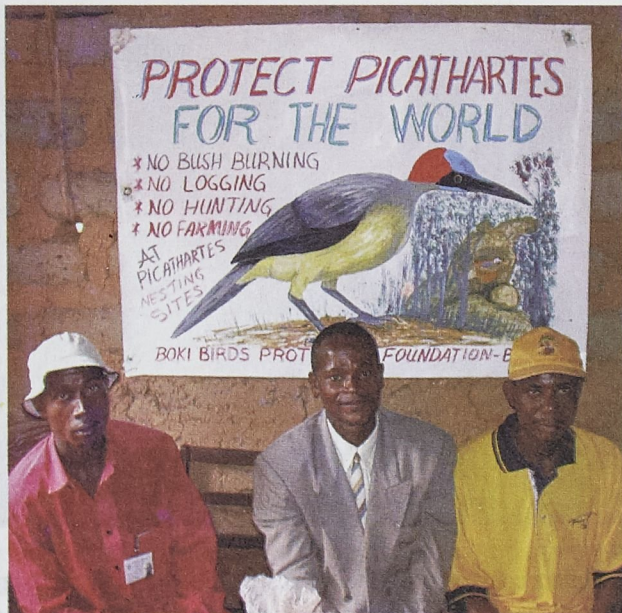


*African Stonechat* (N. Athanas)



Our destination was the village of Bashu - we could only drive part way because the last bridge has not yet been completed.

It should have taken us about an hour to get to this bridge, but the Space Shuttle had such difficulty on this muddy road that we had to leave it behind. Those of us that didn't fit into the Land Rover went the rest of the way on motorbikes.



We eventually arrived at the sorry-looking bridge about an hour later than expected. After crossing the bridge, we birded our way down a track to the village - the track was so productive that it took us all morning!

Bird parties were frequent and we saw terrific species like **Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill**, **Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill**, **Woodhouse's Antpecker**, **White-spotted Wattle-eye**, **Great Blue Turaco**, **Yellow-throated Tinkerbird**, and **Black Bee-eater**. However, we didn't want to linger too long because we wanted as much time as possible at the **Picathartes** nesting site. After a short stop in the village, we continued on for about an hour up a forest trail in the sweltering humidity. I regretted not having brought along any snacks as I ran out of energy about half way up and had to take it very slowly the rest of the way.

Anxiety quickly gave way to awe as we reached the hide and finally saw the marvellous beast! We watched a pair of **Gray-necked Rockfowl** over the course of several hours bringing food to their nest located high up on a vertical rock face. Everything about this bird is fantastic: the unique shape, the beautiful colours, the way it bounces from rock to rock on its long legs, or peers around checking if the coast is clear before coming into view. We all enjoyed the experience immensely and it was worth every effort to come out here.

We also felt a bit fortunate; one week earlier there had been four active nests. The other three had been apparently predated, by what we don't know. Local rangers blamed it on **Lizard Buzzards** but Phil thought that was unlikely. They probably weren't hunted; the birds used



to be hunted by local people- legend has it that feeding it to your child will make him strong, bright, and nimble. However, a foundation has been set up in the village of Bashu to protect the birds, and at least in this area it seems to have stopped the villagers from hunting them.

The villagers were friendly and obviously enjoyed the spectacle

of foreigners coming to see their birds. They offered us food, drink and business cards! It was a long walk back to the vehicles, so we all decided to go out on motorbikes to save some time, then drove back to the hotel at Obudu for a well-earned shower and hearty meal.

After another couple of hours of birding at Obudu, we set off for the long cross-country drive to Weppa, a large farm near the Niger River on the outskirts of the town of Agenebode. We stayed in guest houses on the farm and they were excellent: clean, comfortable, and air-conditioned. We had barely been there for ten minutes before a calling owl distracted us. We tracked it down just 30 meters from the door and had terrific views of a beautiful **Northern White-faced Owl**.

Weppa makes a great base from which to explore the surrounding Guinea savannah and the gallery forest along the Niger River. We spent a whole morning canoeing through a channel near the river, birding beautiful flooded forest. The main target here was the rare **Vermiculated Fishing-Owl**.

Phil knew a guide with terrific eyesight who was supposed to be an expert owl-spotter. Unfortunately he found no owls that morning, and seemed more interested in talking in a loud voice with his friend paddling in the stern and taking the canoe under ridiculously low branches.

Despite our irritating guide, we saw many great birds that morning, including **White-breasted Cuckoo-shrike**, **Beautiful Sunbird**, **White-browed Forest-Flycatcher**, **Yellow-throated Greenbul**, and lots of **kingfishers**.



During the heat of the day we took a boat ride out on the Niger River looking for **Egyptian Plovers** on the sandbanks.



*The high waters of the Niger River near Agenebode (N. Athanas)*

To our dismay, the water level was at its highest in years and there was not a sandbank or plover to be

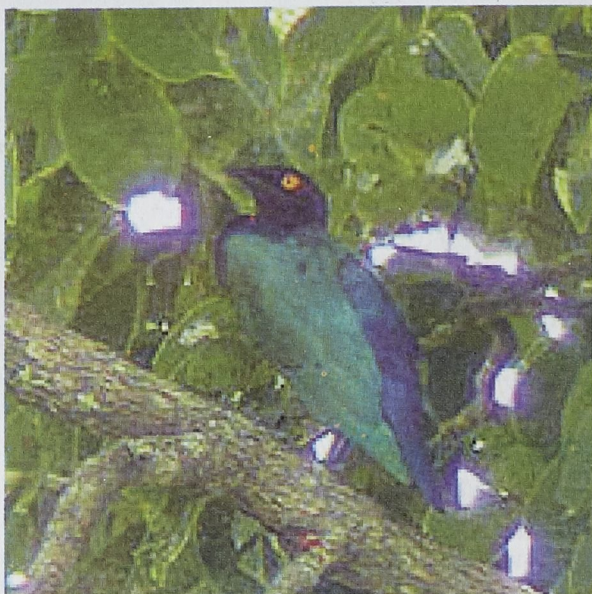
found! Nigel and I weren't ready to give up on the fishing-owl, so we set off again with Phil and our overconfident owl-spotter in the late afternoon. It was a magical ride through the beautiful forest as dusk settled upon us.

As it got dark, at least a mile from solid ground, we still had seen no owls. Our guide had failed us. With a last-ditch effort, I played my owl tape and the miracle happened: a **Vermiculated Fishing-Owl** sailed through the gathering darkness and landed on a branch only 30 meters away! It stayed there as we canoed right up to it, and even a puny flashlight with dying batteries was enough to reveal it in all its glory. It was a long ride back to the farm in total darkness, but we were entertained by **Black-shouldered** and **Long-tailed Nightjars**, as well as more of Nigel's jokes.

After more savannah birding near the farm the next morning, we packed up and set off for our next destination, Okomu National Park.

Okomu National Park is a critically important area; it protects one of the largest remaining patches of primary lowland rainforest in West Africa. The road was pretty muddy after some recent heavy rains and the Space Shuttle had some difficulty in a few places. The driver learned to take advantage of the vehicle's enormous momentum and just blasted his way through the tough sections. We arrived here shortly before dusk, but almost before we stepped out of the car we were seeing **Great Blue Turacos**, **White-thighed Hornbills**, **African Gray Parrots**, and a troop of the rare **White-throated Monkey**, endemic to Nigeria.

Unfortunately, the accommodation at the park is poor. The buildings are in a sorry state of disrepair and there is no running water in the bathrooms. The good news is that the state government is planning on building a proper lodge here, but even without it, intrepid birders would not mind staying a night or two here as the forest is truly spectacular. Despite the poor



*Purple Glossy-Starling (N. Athanas)*

lodging, the park staff were very friendly and went out of their way to make us more comfortable. They served up plenty of good food and drink. Iain was disappointed that they didn't have *iyam*, a local dish of yams pounded into a thick paste and served in a ball. You dip morsels of your pounded yam into a hot sauce and then eat it. One of the most common sauces is *Egusi*, prepared from green vegetables and ground melon seed.

There are two tree towers in Okomu that provide access to the high rainforest canopy. Access to the towers is up caged wooden ladders - not recommended for the acrophobic! Once you get up there the vista is unforgettable, and you

have splendid eye-level views of birds that would normally be difficult to see at all from the forest floor.

Within minutes of ascending, we had flybys of both **Yellow-casqued** and **Black-casqued Hornbills**, some of the most spectacular birds in Africa. Soon after, **African Gray Parrots** circled around giving their joyful calls. We had close-up views of **Little Green** and **Buff-throated Sunbirds**, **Red-rumped Tinkerbird**, **African Forest-Flycatcher**, and **Cassin's Honeyguide**. The towers are located on the edge of small ponds, and in the morning we also spotted several **Hartlaub's Ducks**, pretty blue-winged ducks found in rainforest.

In the afternoon, after the stifling heat had dropped a bit, we set off in different directions. I tried the second tower with Phil and Nigel but didn't see much, while Iain went off on his own in the forest and had the best luck, seeing **Forest Francolin** and **White-spotted Flufftail**, as well as glimpsing an intriguing but unidentified rail-bird.

We had one more morning to bird here before heading off to Lagos, and this time we stayed on the forest trails. It was rather slow but we saw a few new ones. Iain and I tracked down a singing **Pale-breasted Illadopsis** at dawn, and later in the morning we had all four **negrofinches** in one clearing. A mixed flock had **Gray Longbill**, **Buff-throated Apalis**, and some **greenbuls**.

It was a chaotic ride back to Lagos with some of the craziest traffic I've ever seen anywhere. Nigel and Tony had to go back to the UK the next morning and Frank and Anna had to return to their offices. We had a nice farewell dinner before parting ways.

Iain and I still had a few days left before we had to go back to Ecuador, and we made the most of them. Next morning we caught a flight up to the city of Jos,

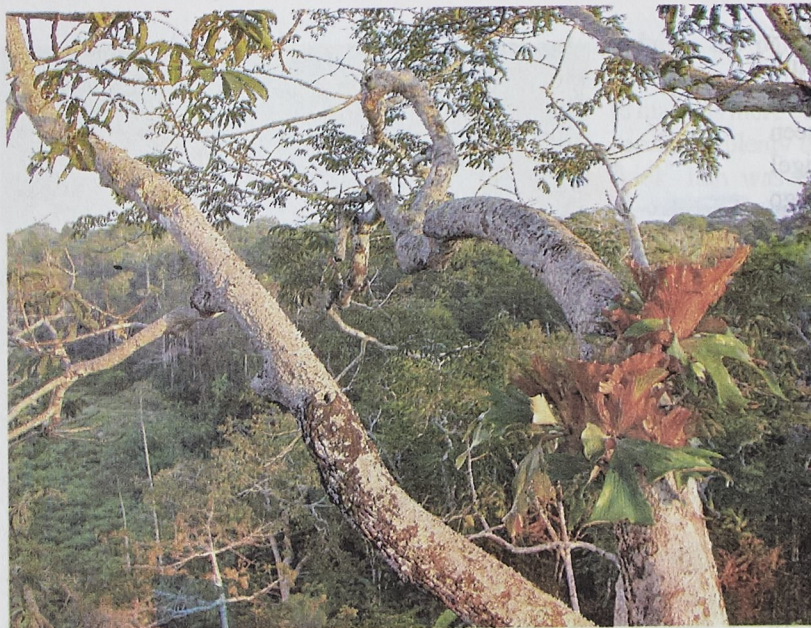
located on a 1200 m high plateau in central Nigeria. The cool, dry air was a welcome change from the sweltering rainforests of Okomu, and we both enjoyed our visit here. The savannah was dotted with rocky hillsides, and the scenery and birds were different from the other places in Nigeria we visited. Phil took us to the University of Jos Ornithological Research Institute.

Some of the brightest young biologists in Nigeria are working on Master's degrees here, and a few were terrific birders. We are trying to organize an exchange programme where we bring one of them over to Ecuador for six months to train as a guide.

We had an afternoon and a morning to bird around Jos - just enough to get a taste of the different avifauna. The plateau is home to two endemic species, the **Rock Firefinch** and the **Jos Plateau Indigobird**. The two species are closely tied together - the **indigobird** only parasitizes the **firefinch**! We were fortunate to see both species near the Institute. Other memorable birds we saw around here were **Stone Partridge**, **Mocking Cliff-Chat**, **Red-billed Hornbill**, **Violet Turaco**, **White-headed Barbet**, **Common Gonolek**, and **Oriole Warbler**. We sadly left Jos behind in the afternoon as we flew back to the teeming metropolis of Lagos.



*Gray Tit-Flycatcher & African Green Pigeon. Perhaps the stars of the next animated Disney film? (N. Athanas)*



*The view from the top of one of the tree towers (N. Athanas)*



*A Piping Hornbill in the tower tree (I. Campbell)*

On our final day in Nigeria we set off early for the city of Ibadan, two hours to the north and nearly as big as Lagos. On the edge of the city is the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) a research facility that attracts scientists from all over the world. Entering the gates is like passing into another world – you would think you were on the campus of a university in the US or Europe. Well-kept lawns and gardens line shady streets that pass between the modern buildings.

IITA protects about 1000 hectares of land. There is a 100 ha lake and a 300 ha reserve of mature secondary forest and regenerating farmland. The bird list is well over 300 and the birding is fairly easy.

The lake and nearby flooded fields support a wide variety of waterbirds, such as **herons**, **egrets**, **lapwings**, **stilts**, **jaçanas**, and even the **Great Painted-Snipe**, which we were fortunate to see. The forest provides a haven for a critically endangered bird endemic to Nigeria, the **Ibadan Malimbe**. Even here it is rarely seen. Iain and I had a glimpse of a **Malimbe** that may have been it, but sadly the look was too fleeting for us to be certain. **Red-vented**, **Red-headed**, and **Gray's Malimbés** are all here and we saw them in the same area. We were all a bit tired after the previous two weeks and our birding today was rather relaxed. In the forest we found **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**, **Naked-faced Barbet**, **Green Crombec**, and **Olive-green Camaroptera**. Around the lake, along with the aforementioned waterbirds, we saw **Yellow-billed Shrike** and **Senegal Thick-knee**. We had lunch and then drove back to Lagos where we bid Phil goodbye (and happy birthday!) and made our way through the clogged freeways to the airport. The lights of Lagos dwindled beneath us as we jetted north to London.



*Buff-throated Sunbird (N. Athanas)*

## BIRD LIST

The taxonomy and nomenclature follow: Clements, James F. 2000. *Birds of the World: A Checklist*. Fifth Edition. Vista, CA: Ibis Publishing Co. (H)=Heard only

**CORMORANTS (*Phalacrocoracidae*)**

Long-tailed Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax africanus*)

**HERONS, EGRETS, BITTERNs (*Ardeidae*)**

Gray Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)

Black-headed Heron (*Ardea melanocephala*)

Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)

Black Heron (*Egretta ardesiaca*)

Intermediate Egret (*Egretta intermedia*)

Western Reef-Heron (*Egretta gularis*) – Two seen in a pond on the grounds of the IITA. According to Phil they are very rare in Nigeria. A recent split from the next sp.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)

Striated Heron (*Butorides striatus*)

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

**HAMERKOP (*Scopidae*)**

Hamerkop (*Scopus umbretta*)

**STORKS (*Ciconiidae*)**

African Openbill (*Anastomus lamelligerus*) – Seen on two occasions soaring over the city of Lagos.

Woolly-necked Stork (*Ciconia episcopus*)

**DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS (*Anatidae*)**

White-faced Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna viduata*)

Hartlaub's Duck (*Pteronetta hartlaubii*) – Great views of this forest duck from the first tree tower in Okomu.

**OSPREY (*Pandionidae*)**

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

**HAWKS, EAGLES AND KITES (*Accipitridae*)**

European Honey-Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*)

Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*)

Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*)

Palm-nut Vulture (*Gypohierax angolensis*)

Hooded Vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*)

Western Marsh-Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)

Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*) – An unusual boreal migrant that we saw circling over the hills near the institute at Jos.

African Harrier-Hawk (*Polyboroides typus*) – AKA Gynogene. A beautiful raptor that we saw on numerous occasions.

Lizard Buzzard (*Kaupifalco monogrammicus*)

Shikra (*Accipiter badius*)

Black Goshawk (*Accipiter melanoleucus*)

Long-crested Eagle (*Lophaetus occipitalis*)

**FALCONS AND CARACARAS (*Falconidae*)**

Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Fox Kestrel (*Falco alopex*) – Several seen in the grasslands around Weppa.

Lanner Falcon (*Falco biarmicus*)

**PHEASANTS AND PARTRIDGES (*Phasianidae*)**

Forest Francolin (*Francolinus lathami*) – Iain managed to see this one when he went out on his own one afternoon at Okomu.

Double-spurred Francolin (*Francolinus bicalcaratus*)

Stone Partridge (*Ptilopachus petrosus*) – Great views on the rocks just behind the institute at Jos.

**GUINEAFOWL (*Numididae*)**

Crested Guineafowl (*Guttera pucherani*)

**RAILS, GALLINULES, COOTS (*Rallidae*)**

White-spotted Flufftail (*Sarothrura pulchra*) – Another one that Iain had the luck to see on his solo foray at Okomu.

African Crake (*Creccopsis egregia*) – Seen on several occasions crossing dirt tracks around Weppa and Butatong.

Black Crake (*Amaurornis flavirostris*) – A few seen in the flooded forest at Weppa and at IITA.

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

**JACANAS (*Jacaniidae*)**

African Jacana (*Actophilornis africanus*)

**PAINTED-SNIPES (*Rostratulidae*)**

Greater Painted-snipe (*Rostratula benghalensis*) – One seen briefly but well in a flooded field at IITA.

**AVOCETS AND STILTS (*Recurvirostridae*)**

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

**THICK-KNEES (*Burhinidae*)**

Senegal Thick-knee (*Burhinus senegalensis*) – Seen along the Niger River and at IITA.

**PLOVERS AND LAPWINGS (*Charadriidae*)**

Spur-winged Plover (*Vanellus spinosus*)

White-headed Lapwing (*Vanellus albiceps*)

Wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus senegallus*)

**SANDPIPERS AND ALLIES (*Scolopacidae*)**

Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

**PIGEONS AND DOVES (*Columbidae*)**

Rock Dove (*Columba livia*)

Speckled Pigeon (*Columba guinea*)

Cameroon Pigeon (*Columba sjostedti*) – Endemic to the Cameroon/Nigeria highlands. We saw a couple in the Becheve nature reserve.

Adamawa Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia hypopyrrha*) – A nice dove with a fairly restricted range. They were common around Jos.

Red-eyed Dove (*Streptopelia semitorquata*)

Vinaceous Dove (*Streptopelia vinacea*)

Laughing Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*)

Black-billed Wood-Dove (*Turtur abyssinicus*)

Blue-spotted Wood-Dove (*Turtur afer*)

Tambourine Dove (*Turtur tympanistria*)

Blue-headed Wood-Dove (*Turtur brehmeri*) (H)

African Green-Pigeon (*Treron calva*)

**PARROTS, MACAWS, ETC (*Psittacidae*)**

Rose-ringed Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

Red-headed Lovebird (*Agapornis pullarius*) – A nice surprise at Ikoyi park in Lagos. Terrific views of one at eye-level.

Gray Parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*) – A beautiful parrot, especially when you see it in the wild! Our best views came from the first tree tower at Okomu where a pair flew circles around us.

Senegal Parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*)

**TURACOS (*Musophagidae*)**

Great Blue Turaco (*Corythaeola cristata*) – An absolutely stunning bird that everyone agreed was one of the highlights of the trip. After a quick view in Bashu we saw them repeatedly in Okomu.

Guinea Turaco (*Tauraco persa*)

Violet Turaco (*Musophaga violacea*) – A nice pair scoped in the savannah around Jos.

Western Plantain-eater (*Crinifer piscator*) – A goofy-looking bird of savannah and light woodland.

**CUCKOOS (*Cuculidae*)**

Red-chested Cuckoo (*Cuculus solitarius*) – A juvenile seen at Weppa had us scratching our heads for a while...

Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo (*Cercococcyx olivinus*) – Only Phil managed to see this one properly - a shame since it is quite rare in Nigeria.

Klaas's Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx klaas*)

African Emerald Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*) (H)

Dideric Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx caprius*)

Yellowbill (*Ceuthmochares aereus*) – AKA Blue Malkoha. A pretty but sneaky bird; we saw it on a few occasions but always briefly.

Black Coucal (*Centropus grillii*) -

Senegal Coucal (*Centropus senegalensis*)

**BARN-OWLS (*Tytonidae*)**

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

**TYPICAL OWLS (*Strigidae*)**

Northern White-faced Owl (*Ptilopsis leucotis*) – A beautiful little owl that we all saw at close



range right near the house at Weppa.

Grayish Eagle-Owl (*Bubo cinerascens*) – We scared one off the road on the late drive up to the Obudu plateau. Fortunately it perched close to the road and we enjoyed a good view.

Vermiculated Fishing-Owl (*Scotopelia bouvieri*) – The main target in the flooded forest near Weppa. Almost missed it but in the end we taped it in close just as it was getting dark.

Pearl-spotted Owlet (*Glaucidium perlatum*)

#### **NIGHTJARS AND ALLIES (*Caprimulgidae*)**

Black-shouldered Nightjar (*Caprimulgus nigriscapularis*) – Also seen in the same spot as the fishing-owl.

Freckled Nightjar (*Caprimulgus tristigma*) – We saw one on a dirt road in our one evening at Jos.

Long-tailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgus climacurus*)

#### **SWIFTS (*Apodidae*)**

Mottled Spinetail (*Telacanthura ussheri*)

Sabine's Spinetail (*Rhaphidura sabini*) – Only Phil got it as he was leaving Bashu.

Cassin's Spinetail (*Neafrapus cassini*) – A swift of lowland rainforest. We saw it well from the first Okomu tower.

African Palm-Swift (*Cypsiurus parvus*)

Little Swift (*Apus affinis*)

#### **MOUSEBIRDS (*Coliidae*)**

Speckled Mousebird (*Colius striatus*)

#### **KINGFISHERS (*Alcedinidae*)**

Malachite Kingfisher (*Alcedo cristata*)

White-bellied Kingfisher (*Alcedo leucogaster*) – One tried its best not to be seen at the base of the second Okomu tree tower.

Chocolate-backed Kingfisher (*Halcyon badia*) (H)

Gray-headed Kingfisher (*Halcyon leucocephala*)

Woodland Kingfisher (*Halcyon senegalensis*)

Blue-breasted Kingfisher (*Halcyon malimbica*) – One seen nicely in the flooded forest near Weppa.

Giant Kingfisher (*Megaceryle maxima*) – Always a terrific bird to see. On this trip we only found it in the flooded forest near Weppa.

Pied Kingfisher (*Ceryle rudis*)

#### **BEE-EATERS (*Meropidae*)**

Black Bee-eater (*Merops gularis*) – One of Tony's favourites. We saw this striking bee-eater at Bashu and on the drive in to Okomu.

Red-throated Bee-eater (*Merops bulocki*) – A beautiful bird that was quite common around Jos.

Little Bee-eater (*Merops pusillus*)

Blue-breasted Bee-eater (*Merops variegatus*) – A few were present around the forest edge in the Becheve nature reserve.

White-throated Bee-eater (*Merops albicollis*)

#### **ROLLERS (*Coraciidae*)**

Blue-bellied Roller (*Coracias cyanogaster*) – Striking blue and white birds that we saw in the

savannah on the drive to Weppa and at Weppa itself.

Broad-billed Roller (*Eurystomus glaucurus*)

**WOODHOOPES AND SCIMITARBILLS (*Phoeniculidae*)**

Green Woodhoopoe (*Phoeniculus purpureus*)

**HORNBILLS (*Bucerotidae*)**

White-crested Hornbill (*Tockus albocristatus*) – Seen only by a few in the rainforests at Bashu and Okomu.

Black Dwarf Hornbill (*Tockus hartlaubi*) - Only Phil saw it at Okomu.

Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill (*Tockus camurus*) – Nice views at both Bashu and Okomu.

Red-billed Hornbill (*Tockus erythrorhynchus*) – A few at Jos. Some ornithologists advocate splitting this into five different species.

African Pied Hornbill (*Tockus fasciatus*)

African Gray Hornbill (*Tockus nasutus*)

Piping Hornbill (*Ceratogymna fistulator*)

Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill (*Ceratogymna subcylindricus*) – A pair flew over us on our walk into Bashu.

White-thighed Hornbill (*Ceratogymna albotibialis*) – Fairly common in the rainforest at Okomu.

Black-casqued Hornbill (*Ceratogymna atrata*) – We all liked this one - a giant hornbill almost a meter long with bizarre calls, that put on a show right outside the cabins at Okomu.

Yellow-casqued Hornbill (*Ceratogymna elata*) – Also fantastic but only seen in flight from the first Okomu tower.

**BARBETS (*Capitonidae*)**

Naked-faced Barbet (*Gymnobucco calvus*) – A dull barbet that we didn't see well until the last day at IITA.

Bristle-nosed Barbet (*Gymnobucco peli*) – We saw a small party on the walk into Bashu.

Speckled Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus scolopaceus*)

Western Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus coryphaeus*) – Several sightings of this cutie at the edge of the forest in the Becheve nature reserve.

Red-rumped Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus atroflavus*) - We saw a small family group from the first tree tower at Okomu.

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus subsulphureus*) – Pretty when seen up close, we saw one on the walk into Bashu.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus bilineatus*)

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird (*Pogoniulus chrysoconus*)

Yellow-spotted Barbet (*Buccanodon duchailui*) – A unique barbet of lowland rainforest - seen in both Bashu and Okomu.

Viellot's Barbet (*Lybius vieilloti*)

White-headed Barbet (*Lybius leucocephalus*) – A striking bird, unfortunately only seen by Nick and one of the staff of the institute at Jos.

**HONEYGUIDES (*Indicatoridae*)**

Greater Honeyguide (*Indicator indicator*)

Lesser Honeyguide (*Indicator minor*)

Cassin's Honeyguide (*Prodotiscus insignis*) – Iain and Nick saw it briefly before it shot off out of sight, from the first tree tower in Okomu.

#### **WOODPECKERS AND ALLIES (*Picidae*)**

Tullberg's Woodpecker (*Campethera tullbergi*) – Iain and Nick got it one afternoon in the forest at Becheve.

Cardinal Woodpecker (*Dendropicos fuscescens*) – We only saw it in the Becheve nature reserve - apparently it was the first record for the reserve.

Fire-bellied Woodpecker (*Dendropicos pyrrhogaster*) – A nice W African endemic that we saw well at IITA.

#### **LARKS (*Alaudidae*)**

Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*)

Sun Lark (*Galerida modesta*)

#### **SWALLOWS (*Hirundinidae*)**

Rock Martin (*Hirundo fuligula*)

Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Ethiopian Swallow (*Hirundo aethiopica*)

Mosque Swallow (*Hirundo senegalensis*)

Square-tailed Sawwing (*Psalidoprocne nitens*) – A single bird seen flying around above the village of Bashu.

Mountain Sawwing (*Psalidoprocne fuliginosa*) – A Cameroon Mountain endemic - seen at the Becheve nature reserve.

Petit's Sawwing (*Psalidoprocne petiti*) – A recent split from Black Sawwing. Also seen at Becheve, sometimes with the previous sp.

#### **WAGTAILS AND PIPITS (*Motacillidae*)**

African Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla aguimp*)

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)

Mountain Wagtail (*Motacilla clara*) – A few seen along streams on the Obudu plateau.

Yellow-throated Longclaw (*Macronyx croceus*)

Plain-backed Pipit (*Anthus leucophrys*)

African Pipit (*Anthus cinnamomeus*)

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)

#### **CUCKOO-SHRIKES (*Campephagidae*)**

White-breasted Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina pectoralis*)

Blue Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina azurea*) – A nice one seen right near the cabin at Okomu.

Gray Cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina caesia*) – Seen well on several occasions in the montane forest at Becheve nature reserve.

Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike (*Campephaga phoenicea*)

#### **BULBULS (*Pycnonotidae*)**

Common Bulbul (*Pycnonotus barbatus*)

Cameroon Mountain Greenbul (*Andropadus montanus*) – A dull olive bird, but it is a Cameroon Mountain endemic. This was one of several endemic greenbuls we saw in the forest at the Becheve nature reserve.

Little Greenbul (*Andropadus virens*)

Gray Greenbul (*Andropadus gracilis*)

Ansorge's Greenbul (*Andropadus ansorgei*)

Slender-billed Greenbul (*Andropadus gracilirostris*)

Western Mountain-Greenbul (*Andropadus tephrolaemus*) – Another Cameroon Mountain endemic.

Spotted Greenbul (*Ixonotus guttatus*)

Yellow-throated Greenbul (*Chlorocichla flavicollis*)

Swamp Greenbul (*Thescelocichla leucopleura*)

Leaf-love (*Phyllastrephus scandens*) – It certainly has one of the strangest names of the world's birds. No one could give a straight answer as to why it is called that. We saw a pair in the flooded forest at Weppa.

Cameroon Olive-Greenbul (*Phyllastrephus poensis*) – Another Cameroon Mountain endemic.

Gray-headed Greenbul (*Phyllastrephus poliocephalus*) – Another Cameroon Mountain endemic.

Icterine Greenbul (*Phyllastrephus icterinus*)

Green-tailed Bristlebill (*Bleda eximia*) – Only Iain saw it on the walk into Bashu.

Red-tailed Greenbul (*Criniger calurus*)

Eastern Bearded-Greenbul (*Criniger chloronotus*) – The common flock leader at Bashu. Its loud whistled call could be heard from a long distance.

#### **THRUSHES AND ALLIES (*Turdidae*)**

Crossley's Ground-Thrush (*Zoothera crossleyi*) (H)

African Thrush (*Turdus pelios*)

Fire-crested Alethe (*Alethe diademata*) (H)

#### **CISTICOLAS AND ALLIES (*Cisticolidae*)**

Red-faced Cisticola (*Cisticola erythrops*)

Singing Cisticola (*Cisticola cantans*)

Chubb's Cisticola (*Cisticola chubbi*) – One of the more distinctive cisticolas. They were common in the grasslands around the edge of the Becheve reserve. Also a Cameroon Mountain endemic.

Rock-loving Cisticola (*Cisticola aberrans*) – Appropriately named... We saw it on rocky hillsides at Jos.

Winding Cisticola (*Cisticola galactotes*)

Siffling Cisticola (*Cisticola brachypterus*)

Zitting Cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*)

Tawny-flanked Prinia (*Prinia subflava*)

Green Longtail (*Urolais epichlora*) – A Cameroon Mountain endemic. One of the scarcer birds at Becheve; only Tony and Nick saw it.

Buff-throated Apalis (*Apalis rufogularis*)

Gray Apalis (*Apalis cinerea*) – We saw quite a lot of these in the montane forest at Becheve nature reserve.

Oriole Warbler (*Hypergerus atriceps*) – Huge for a warbler, but very difficult to see as it sneaked through some thick bushes near the insitute at Jos.

Green-backed Camaroptera (*Camaroptera brachyura*)

Yellow-browed Camaroptera (*Camaroptera superciliaris*) (H)

Olive-green Camaroptera (*Camaroptera chloronota*) – A quick look at one in the forest at IITA.

#### **OLD WORLD WARBLERS (*Sylviidae*)**

Bangwa Scrub-Warbler (*Bradypterus bangwaensis*) – They were vocal but very difficult to see in the Becheve reserve. Nick was the only one who saw it when he went off alone one afternoon in the rain. A Cameroon Mountain endemic.

Moustached Grass-Warbler (*Melocichla mentalis*) – Tony saw it one afternoon at Weppa.

African Yellow Warbler (*Chloropeta natalensis*) – More like a flycatcher than a warbler...

Senegal Eremomela (*Eremomela pusilla*)

Green Crombec (*Sylvietta virens*)

Northern Crombec (*Sylvietta brachyura*) – Crombecs have such short tails that it looks as though they have none at all. It gives them a very "unbalanced" look. We saw this one in the savannah at Weppa.

Yellow Longbill (*Macrosphenus flavicans*) – A dull forest warbler that we found in one of the flocks at Bashu.

Gray Longbill (*Macrosphenus concolor*)

Green Hylia (*Hylia prasina*)

Black-capped Woodland-Warbler (*Phylloscopus herberti*) (H)

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

Fan-tailed Grassbird (*Schoenicola brevirostris*)

#### **OLD WORLD FLYCATCHERS (*Muscicapidae*)**

Pale Flycatcher (*Bradornis pallidus*)

Northern Black-Flycatcher (*Melaenornis edolioides*)

African Forest-Flycatcher (*Fraseria ocreata*) – Sometimes called Fraser's Forest Flycatcher; we saw several at close range from the first tower at Okomu.

White-browed Forest-Flycatcher (*Fraseria cinerascens*) – Those of us in the first canoe saw this distinctive flycatcher in the flooded forest at Weppa.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)

Gray Tit-Flycatcher (*Myioparus plumbeus*) – Rather dull but has a distinctive voice. We saw a few around Weppa.

European Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat (*Cossypha niveicapilla*)

Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*)

African Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*) – Very common up on the Obudu plateau. A very distinctive race, with the rufous restricted to a small patch on the breast.

Familiar Chat (*Cercomela familiaris*)

Northern Anteater-Chat (*Myrmecocichla aethiops*)

Mocking Cliff-Chat (*Thamnodia cinnamomeiventris*) – Beautiful inhabitants of the rocky hills around Jos. The white capped race found here is sometimes considered a distinct species, the White-crowned Cliff-Chat.

#### **WATTLE-EYES (*Platysteiridae*)**

Brown-throated Wattle-eye (*Platysteira cyanea*)

White-spotted Wattle-eye (*Platysteira tonsa*) – An attractive bird that we saw in one of the flocks along the walk into Bashu.

**MONARCH FLYCATCHERS (*Monarchidae*)**

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher (*Erythrocerus mccallii*) – A rather odd redstart-like flycatcher we found in one of the flocks in Bashu.

African Blue-Flycatcher (*Elminia longicauda*)

White-bellied Crested-Flycatcher (*Elminia albiventris*) – We found a pair near the base of the tree platform in the Becheve reserve.

Black-headed Paradise-Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone rufiventer*) – Sometimes called Red-bellied Paradise-Flycatcher.

African Paradise-Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone viridis*)

**ROCKFOWL (*Picathartidae*)**

Gray-necked Rockfowl (*Picathartes oreas*) – The main attraction of the tour! There are several sites in the area - with persistence anyone should be able to see it here during the nesting season.

**BABLERS (*Timaliidae*)**

Pale-breasted Illadopsis (*Illadopsis rufipennis*) – It took some time but Iain and Nick finally saw this skulker early one morning in Okomu.

Brown Illadopsis (*Illadopsis fulvescens*) (H)

Gray-chested Illadopsis (*Kakamega poliothorax*) (H)

White-throated Mountain-Babbler (*Kupeornis gilberti*) – One of the more distinctive (and most endangered) of the Cameroon Mountain endemics. They are still regular with mixed flocks in the Becheve nature reserve.

**CHICKADEES AND TITS (*Paridae*)**

White-shouldered Black-Tit (*Melaniparus guineensis*) – A recent split from White-winged Black-Tit - we saw one in the savannah near Weppa.

**PENDULINE TITS (*Remizidae*)**

Yellow Penduline-Tit (*Anthoscopus parvulus*) – Iain and Nick found one in the garden of the institute minutes before we left Jos.

**SUNBIRDS AND SPIDERHUNTERS (*Nectariniidae*)**

Scarlet-tufted Sunbird (*Deleornis fraseri*) – A very dull sunbird that Phil eventually figured out. Another good bird we saw on the way into Weppa.

Mouse-brown Sunbird (*Anthreptes gabonicus*)

Western Violet-backed Sunbird (*Anthreptes longuemarei*)

Little Green Sunbird (*Anthreptes seimundi*) – A sunbird that resides high in the canopy of lowland rainforest. With the aid of the canopy platform at Okomu we were able to see it well.

Collared Sunbird (*Hedydipna collaris*)

Green-headed Sunbird (*Cyanomitra verticalis*)

Cameroon Sunbird (*Cyanomitra oritis*) – A striking Cameroon Mountain endemic, we saw a few inside the forest in Becheve.

Buff-throated Sunbird (*Chalcomitra adalberti*)

Carmelite Sunbird (*Chalcomitra fuliginosa*) – Seen only at the Lekki nature centre in Lagos.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird (*Chalcomitra senegalensis*)

Olive-bellied Sunbird (*Cinnyris chloropygius*)

Northern Double-collared Sunbird (*Cinnyris preussi*) – A beautiful sunbird restricted to montane areas in east and west Africa. They were common around the forest edge at Becheve.

Beautiful Sunbird (*Cinnyris pulchellus*)

Orange-tufted Sunbird (*Cinnyris bouvieri*) – Quite common around the edge of the Becheve reserve - despite its name the orange tufts are really not that obvious.

Splendid Sunbird (*Cinnyris coccinigaster*) – A striking bird if seen in good light. We found it in more open habitats in several different sites.

Superb Sunbird (*Cinnyris superbus*)

Variable Sunbird (*Cinnyris venustus*)

Copper Sunbird (*Cinnyris cupreus*)

#### **WHITE-EYES (*Zosteropidae*)**

African Yellow White-eye (*Zosterops senegalensis*)

#### **ORIOLES (*Oriolidae*)**

African Golden Oriole (*Oriolus auratus*)

Western Black-headed Oriole (*Oriolus brachyrhynchus*)

Black-winged Oriole (*Oriolus nigripennis*) – Seen only in the montane forest at Becheve.

#### **SHRIKES (*Laniidae*)**

Mackinnon's Shrike (*Lanius mackinnoni*) – A pair frequented the tennis courts right outside the hotel on the Obudu plateau.

Yellow-billed Shrike (*Corvinella corvina*)

#### **BUSHSHRIKES AND ALLIES (*Malaconotidae*)**

Northern Puffback (*Dryoscopus gambensis*)

Pink-footed Puffback (*Dryoscopus angolensis*) – A montane forest bird, but found locally in other parts of Africa as well. Iain and Nick saw one in the forest at Becheve.

Marsh Tchagra (*Tchagra minuta*) – A skulking bushshrike that is often hard to see. Fortunately we found a cooperative individual in the grassland on the edge of the Becheve reserve.

Common Gonolek (*Laniarius barbarus*)

Yellow-breasted Boubou (*Laniarius atroflavus*) – Another striking Cameroon Mountain endemic, fairly common in forest edge on the Obudu plateau.

Fuelleborn's Boubou (*Laniarius fuelleborni*) – An all black boubou with a small & disjunct range in mountains in east and west Africa. This race (*poensis*) is sometimes treated as a separate species, Mountain Sooty Boubou.

Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike (*Telophorus sulfureopectus*) (H)

#### **HELMETSHRIKES AND ALLIES (*Prionopidae*)**

White Helmetshrike (*Prionops plumatus*)

#### **DRONGOS (*Dicruridae*)**

Square-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus ludwigii*)

Shining Drongo (*Dicrurus atripennis*)

Fork-tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*)

Velvet-mantled Drongo (*Dicrurus modestus*) – A recent split from the previous sp, we saw several on the walk into Bashu.

#### **CROWS AND JAYS (*Corvidae*)**

Piapiac (*Ptilostomus afer*)

Pied Crow (*Corvus albus*)

**STARLINGS (*Sturnidae*)**

Splendid Glossy-Starling (*Lamprotornis splendidus*)

Purple Glossy-Starling (*Lamprotornis purpureus*)

Long-tailed Glossy-Starling (*Lamprotornis caudatus*)

Purple-headed Glossy-Starling (*Lamprotornis purpureiceps*)

Chestnut-winged Starling (*Onychognathus fulgidus*)

Waller's Starling (*Onychognathus walleri*) – Two seen in flight at Jos.

Neumann's Starling (*Onychognathus neumanni*) – The common starling on the Obudu plateau.

Another species with an odd disjunct distribution, elsewhere occurring only in the mountains of east Africa.

**OLD WORLD SPARROWS (*Passeridae*)**

Gray-headed Sparrow (*Passer griseus*)

**WEAVERS AND ALLIES (*Ploceidae*)**

Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver (*Plocepasser superciliosus*)

Bannerman's Weaver (*Ploceus bannermani*) – A Cameroon Mountain endemic. It was quite common around the edge of the forest on the Obudu plateau.

Spectacled Weaver (*Ploceus ocularis*)

Black-necked Weaver (*Ploceus nigricollis*)

Black-billed Weaver (*Ploceus melanogaster*)

Heuglin's Masked-Weaver (*Ploceus heuglini*) – The pale eyes distinguished it from the next sp, both of which were found around the institute at Jos.

African Masked-Weaver (*Ploceus velatus*)

Village Weaver (*Ploceus cucullatus*)

Vieillot's Weaver (*Ploceus nigerrimus*)

Black-headed Weaver (*Ploceus melanocephalus*)

Yellow-mantled Weaver (*Ploceus tricolor*) – We saw this striking weaver in the lowland forest at Bashu and Okomu.

Maxwell's Black Weaver (*Ploceus albinucha*) – At least one seen in a mixed feeding flock in Okomu.

Forest Weaver (*Ploceus bicolor*)

Brown-capped Weaver (*Ploceus insignis*) – A scarce weaver of montane forest, we found an active nest inside the Becheve nature reserve.

Red-vented Malimbe (*Malimbus scutatus*) – A west African endemic, we saw them regularly around the edge of lowland forest.

Gray's Malimbe (*Malimbus nitens*)

Red-headed Malimbe (*Malimbus rubricollis*)

Red-headed Quelea (*Quelea erythrops*)

Black-winged Bishop (*Euplectes hordeaceus*)

Orange Bishop (*Euplectes franciscanus*) – Sometimes called Northern Red Bishop.

Yellow Bishop (*Euplectes capensis*) – Common in the grasslands on the Obudu plateau.

Yellow-shouldered Widowbird (*Euplectes macrourus*)



Red-collared Widowbird (*Euplectes ardens*) – Common in the grasslands on the Obudu plateau. This race lacks the red collar.

#### **WAXBILLS AND ALLIES (*Estrildidae*)**

Woodhouse's Antpecker (*Parmoptila woodhousei*) – A weird bird that we got in a mixed flock on the walk in to Bashu.

White-breasted Negrofinch (*Nigrita fusconota*) – In one clearing in Okomu we had all four negrofinches at the same time!

Chestnut-breasted Negrofinch (*Nigrita bicolor*)

Pale-fronted Negrofinch (*Nigrita luteifrons*)

Gray-headed Negrofinch (*Nigrita canicapilla*)

Fernando Po Oliveback (*Nesocharis shelleyi*) – One of the top birds of the trip - a pair came in and perched within metres in response to playback in the Becheve nature reserve. A Cameroon Mountains endemic.

Red-faced Pytilia (*Pytilia hypogrammica*) – Nick saw one when he lagged behind the group one morning in the savannah at Weppa.

Black-bellied Seedcracker (*Pyrenestes ostrinus*) – A few of us saw a pair of this striking species in a field at the start of the road to Bashu.

Red-billed Firefinch (*Lagonosticta senegala*)

Rock Firefinch (*Lagonosticta sanguinodorsalis*) – One of the four bird species endemic to Nigeria. We saw a few on our morning walk near the institute at Jos.

Red-checked Cordonbleu (*Uraeginthus bengalus*)

Orange-cheeked Waxbill (*Estrilda melpoda*)

Common Waxbill (*Estrilda astrild*)

Black-crowned Waxbill (*Estrilda nonnula*) – Flocks of these pretty little finches were common in the grasslands on the Obudu plateau.

Bronze Mannikin (*Lonchura cucullata*)

Black-and-white Mannikin (*Lonchura bicolor*)

#### **INDIGOBIRDS (*Viduidae*)**

Village Indigobird (*Vidua chalybeata*)

Jos Plateau Indigobird (*Vidua maryae*) – This Nigerian endemic parasitizes the Rock Firefinch. We saw one perched on a cactus right in front of the institute at Jos, giving its mimetic song.

Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*)

Long-tailed Paradise-Whydah (*Vidua interjecta*) – A spectacular bird that we only encountered in the savannah near Weppa.

#### **FINCHES, SISKINS, CROSSBILLS (*Fringillidae*)**

Oriole Finch (*Linurgus olivaceus*) – Quite common on the Obudu plateau.

Yellow-fronted Canary (*Serinus mozambicus*)

Thick-billed Seedeater (*Serinus burtoni*) – We only saw a few of these around the edge of the Becheve nature reserve.

#### **EMBERIZINE FINCHES (*Emberizidae*)**

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza tahapisi*)