



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

GHANA

COMPREHENSIVE

Rockfowl & Upper Guinea Specials

1st to 19th December 2012 (19 days)



White-necked Rockfowl by Adam Riley

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader Keith Valentine

Trip Summary

Our record breaking comprehensive trip total of 463 species in 19 days reflects just how good the birding in Ghana is. Whilst the focus of the tour was certainly the rich assemblage of Upper Guinea specialties, we did not neglect the interesting diversity of mammals. Participants were treated to an incredible variety of Upper Guinea endemics together with a superb suite of near-endemics and rare, elusive, localized and stunning species. These included the secretive and rarely seen Ahanta Francolin, Spot-breasted Ibis, Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, Congo Serpent Eagle, the scarce Long-tailed Hawk, splendid Fox Kestrel, Forbes's Plover, the stunning Egyptian Plover, Four-banded Sandgrouse, Black-throated Coucal, Akun Eagle-Owl, Red-chested Owlet, Black-shouldered, Plain and incredible Standard-winged Nightjars, Black Spinetail, Narina Trogon, Blue-bellied Roller, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Blue-moustached, Black and Rosy Bee-eaters, Forest Wood Hoopoe, African Piculet, Little Green, Fire-bellied and Melancholy Woodpeckers, Fernando Po Batis, Red-cheeked Wattle-eye, Red-billed Helmetshrike, magnificent White-necked Rockfowl, Forest Penduline Tit, Green-tailed Bristlebill, White-bibbed Swallow, Sharpe's Apalis, Oriole Warbler, both Violet-backed and Yellow-bellied Hylionas, Copper-tailed Starling, White-fronted Black Chat, Nimba Flycatcher, Buff-throated and Johanna's Sunbirds, Maxwell's and Preuss's Weavers, Yellow-winged and Red-winged Pytilias, Black-bellied Seedcracker in the scope, Lavender Waxbill, Magpie Mannikin and Exclamatory and Togo Paradise Whydahs, amongst many others. Some of the mammalian highlights included fantastic views of Lowe's and Lesser White-nosed Monkey, 7 different squirrel species, Pel's Scaly-tailed Squirrel (*Anomalure*), Giant Rat, Brush-tailed Porcupine and African Elephant.

Our trip started off with an early morning visit to the fabulous Shai Hills Resources Reserve just to the north of Accra. Some of the highlights included a covey of very vocal Stone Partridge, Grey Kestrel,



Blue-bellied Roller by Keith Valentine

Black-bellied Bustard, Senegal Parrot, stunning Violet Turaco, Levaillant's Cuckoo, Blue-bellied Roller, African Pygmy Kingfisher, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Vieillot's, Bearded and Double-toothed Barbets, smart male Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, White-shouldered Black Tit, a variety of cisticolas that included Singing, Croaking, Short-winged and the scarce Dorst's, White-crowned Cliff Chats, Black-faced Quailfinch on the ground, and a small group of rare Yellow-winged Pytilia. Leaving Shai Hills we travelled north to the Volta River where a few stops produced good scope views of a pair of African Pygmy Goose and some perched White-bibbed Swallows. In the late afternoon we then made our way to Ho for a two night stay.

Our time in Kalakpa produced a few good birds, but on the whole was rather quiet and tough going. We had to work hard for our birds and with a bit of rain about it meant that a few of the trails were under water and impassable; yet nevertheless persistence did pay off with a few specialties being found at the end of the day. We started brightly with a small mixed flock that produced wonderful views of Yellow-bellied Hylionas. We later got to grips with a singing Moustached Grass Warbler, Striped Kingfisher and Whistling Cisticola before entering the forest proper. We birded the gallery forest at length, which produced sightings of Guinea Turaco, Swamp Palm Bulbul, White-throated Greenbul,



Chestnut Wattle-eye, Western Nicator and a pair of Western Violet-backed Sunbird. Further birding in the woodland areas gave us White-crested Helmetshrike, Red-tailed Leaflove, Red-winged Warbler, Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Copper, Splendid and Green-headed Sunbirds, African Golden Oriole, Lesser Blue-eared Starling and Compact Weaver. Our night excursion was successful as we got superb looks at African Scops Owl and Long-tailed Nightjar.

Next we headed back to Accra where we spent a pleasant evening and the following morning birding the fabulous Sakamono Lagoon. As usual it was rather busy and careful scanning produced a number of interesting species, including Garganey, Black and Western Reef Herons, Glossy Ibis, Western Marsh Harrier, Pied Avocet, numerous waders such as Spotted Redshank, Black-tailed Godwit and Marsh Sandpiper. Other sightings included the lovely Collared Pratincole, Royal Tern, Winding Cisticola, Yellow-throated Longclaw and Plain-backed Pipit. En route to Kakum National Park we stopped at a variety of different sites and interesting species seen included Common Redshank, White-fronted Plover, Gull-billed Tern and further good views of African Pygmy Goose.



Rosy Bee-eater by Ingrid Porter

Kakum National Park is rightfully regarded as one of Africa's finest forest reserves and is also one of the most well-known due to its spectacular canopy walkway. We spent time birding on the walkway which, to put it mildly, was one of the greatest 6 hours of birding most of us had ever done! Time was also spent birding other areas of Kakum that gave a different spread of birds, and during our time in this area we really amassed a huge number of first class birds. Specials during our first morning on the canopy walkway included such delights as Congo Serpent Eagle, Blue Cuckooshrike, Violet-backed Hylia, Fire-bellied and Melancholy Woodpeckers, the rare Forest Penduline Tit, brilliantly scoped Blue-throated Roller, Red-fronted Parrot, close Lemon-bellied Crombec, Fernando Po Batis, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Chestnut-capped and Ussher's Flycatchers, the miniscule Tit Hylia, Blue Malkoha, Tiny, Little Green, Superb, Johanna's, Grey-chinned and Blue-throated Brown Sunbirds, African Emerald Cuckoo, Sabine's and Cassin's Spinetails, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Sabine's Puffback, Black-winged Oriole, Chestnut-winged Starling, White-breasted, Chestnut-breasted and Grey-headed Nigritas, Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher, Red-headed and Crested Malimbos and Yellow-mantled Weaver. Simply incredible!!! In the afternoon we then found the spectacular White-crested Hornbill and a lovely troop of primates, which included both Lowes's and Lesser White-nosed Monkey's, before a huge rain storm washed out the remainder of the day.



Orange Weaver by Keith Valentine



The rest of our time in the Kakum area was similarly successful and between another four different sites in this wonderful reserve we racked up a mouth-watering list of species. Specials included incredible fly over Spot-breasted Ibis in the late evening, scope views of a perched Long-tailed Hawk, African Cuckoo-Hawk, White-spotted Flufftail, Rock Pratincole, Olive Long-tailed and Black Cuckoos, Black-shouldered Nightjar, Mottled Spinetail and scarce Black Spinetail, brilliant Black and Rosy Bee-eaters, Forest Woodhoopoe, Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill, Naked-faced, Yellow-spotted and Hairy-breasted Barbets, tiny African Piculet, Little Green Woodpecker, Black-and-white Shrike-Flycatcher, restless Red-cheeked Wattle-eye, Red-billed Helmetshrike, Shining Drongo, Western Bearded and Red-tailed Greenbuls, Fanti Saw-wing, Preuss's Cliff Swallow, Sharpe's Apalis, Yellow-browed and Olive-green Camaropteras, secretive Kemp's and Grey Longbills, Copper-tailed Starling, Finsch's Rufous Thrush, Fraser's Forest and Dusky-blue Flycatchers, Fraser's Sunbird and the gorgeous Buff-throated Sunbird, uncommon Preuss's and Orange Weavers, and Red-vented and Blue-billed Malimbos.



Grasshopper Buzzard by Ingrid Porter

Our next destination was Bonkro and a site for the highly sought-after White-necked Rockfowl, where we were treated to fabulous views of three birds. This must certainly rate as one of Africa's top birds!!!

Mole National Park and its broadleaved woodlands were next on the agenda and it was a great feeling to head into new habitat having got so many great forest zone species under the belt. A wonderful combination of mixed woodlands, the odd boval, grasslands and gallery forest give Mole an excellent spread of species and we were exceptionally fortunate with the specialties that we managed to score during our time here. One of Mole's most prized birds is the elusive Oriole Warbler and we managed to get very good views of an undistracted, feeding bird during our first morning. Other good species seen in this zone were Red-throated Bee-eater, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Grey-headed Bushshrike, White-breasted Cuckooshrike, African Blue Flycatcher, Bronze-tailed Starling, Swamp Flycatcher and Beautiful Sunbird. The waterhole below our camp was also productive and the marshy habitat was perfect for a few waders and other goodies such as Common Snipe, Greater Painted Snipe, Saddle-billed Stork and Senegal Thick-knee. Another gallery forest site just outside the park was also productive and highlights in this area included amazing views of the very scarce and difficult Ahanta Francolin, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, White-crowned Robin-Chat, Square-tailed Drongo, Yellow-throated Leaflove and Brown Babbler. We were also rather successful with the variety of raptors that we found and White-headed Vulture, Western Banded Snake Eagle, Bateleur, Shikra, Red-necked Buzzard and Martial Eagle stood out. Much of our time was also spent exploring the park's extensive woodlands, which proved to



**Red-throated Bee-eater by
Keith Valentine**



be an excellent move as we picked up specials that included Forbes's Plover, Bruce's Green Pigeon, African Cuckoo, Pearl-spotted Owlet, surprise Plain Nightjar, Black Scimitarbill, Abyssinian Ground Hornbill, Fine-spotted and Brown-backed Woodpeckers, Sun Lark, Melodious Warbler, Rufous Cisticola, Spotted Creeper, White-fronted Black Chat, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Red-headed Weaver, Red-winged Pytilia, Lavender Waxbill, Wilson's Indigobird, magnificent Exclamatory Paradise Whydah, Tree Pipit, West African Seed-eater and Brown-rumped Bunting. Our night excursions were also productive and we enjoyed excellent views of an extraordinary male Standard-winged Nightjar and a few Greyish Eagle-Owls.

We then continued further north right up towards the Burkina Faso border. Roadside stops produced some excellent birds such as a male Montagu's Harrier, Red-chested and Ethiopian Swallows, and some interesting *ploceus* and *euplectes* in the form of Black-headed and Heuglin's Masked Weavers, Northern Red and Yellow-crowned Bishops, and Black-rumped Waxbill.

The next morning we were up early and enjoyed a good morning's birding around Tono Dam, where we picked Four-banded Sandgrouse, Red-necked and Lanner Falcons, Spotted Thick-knee, another incredible pair of Standard-winged Nightjars, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Black-capped Babbler, Western Olivaceous Warbler, Little Weaver, Chestnut-bellied Starling and Orange-breasted Waxbill, to name just some of the more interesting species. In the afternoon we then struck out for the White Volta where our target bird, the impressive Egyptian Plover, put on a great show. Unfortunately a single bird was also spotted trapped in a web of fishing string. We then employed the help of one of the locals who went out across the river and managed to quickly untangle the poor bird, bringing it back to us for some amazing close up studies. We also managed some good views of Green Sandpiper, Black-headed Lapwing, Yellow-billed Oxpecker and White-billed Buffalo Weaver while we were out in this part of the country.



Standard-winged Nightjar (female) by Keith Valentine



Examining the Egyptian Plover by Rick Miller

The next morning we began our long drive south back to Kumasi but not before a short morning foray into the boulder-strewn Tongo Hills near Bolgatanga, which produced the handsome Fox Kestrel, Rock-loving Cisticola, male Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark, brief Blue Rock Thrush and Cinnamon-breasted Bunting. The drive south was not short of entertainment however as cracking species just kept popping up and we particularly enjoyed the views we had of Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, White-rumped Seed-eater, West African Swallow and the thin-on-the-ground Togo Paradise Whydah in full breeding dress!



The fabulous Bobiri Butterfly and Forest Reserve was our penultimate destination on the tour and we certainly enjoyed a fabulous morning's birding. We made a very early start in our quest for finding rare owls and came up trumps with a highly responsive Akun Eagle-Owl and a bonus in the form of two Pel's Anomalures. Additional highlights included some excellent views of male and female Purple-throated Cuckooshrike, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Maxwell's Black Weaver, a large Bristle-nosed Barbet colony, both Grey and Brown-necked Parrots, scarce Black Dwarf Hornbill, African Piculet, Little Green Woodpecker, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Tit Hylia building a nest, Ashy Flycatcher, Fraser's Sunbird and a flock of nomadic Magpie Mannikin.

Our final destination was the incredible Atewa Forest. Undoubtedly one of the highlight days of the entire tour was the full day we spent here, and the sheer quality of the species encountered was simply phenomenal. We constantly kept coming up with incredible birds right from the base of the range to the top and back down again; it was an extremely memorable day. For sheer rarity the pair of Nimba Flycatcher that we got to observe for 10 minutes or so must take first prize; however other gems like Red-chested Owlet, Blue-moustached Bee-eater, Little Grey Flycatcher and Black-bellied Seedcracker all in the scope were highly appreciated. We also enjoyed a bountiful of other great birds such as Cassin's Hawk-Eagle, Black-capped Apalis, superbly perched Western Bronze-naped Pigeon, Thick-billed Honeyguide, shy Forest Scrub-Robin, Green-tailed and Red-tailed Bristlebills, brief Western Bluebill, skulking Black-throated Coucal, Puvel's Illadopsis, White-tailed Alethe, Narina Trogon, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, African Shrike-flycatcher and Western Oriole. The farm bush on the final morning also gave us cracking views of Blue-headed Coucal, African Hobby (our record breaking 461st bird), Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-whiskered Greenbul, Grey-headed Bristlebill and Western Nicator.



Blue-moustached Bee-eater by Ingrid Porter

From Atewa we then travelled back to Accra in order to catch our return flights home – but before arriving in Accra, one last stop at a roadside wetland produced a good Allen's Gallinule and a few Thick-billed Weavers. This was undoubtedly a most memorable trip and would not have been possible without such a wonderful group of enthusiastic participants and an excellent ground operations team. Thank you very much to everyone!

Annotated List of Birds recorded

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows the IOC 3.1 List of: Gill, F. and Wright, M. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. Brackets indicate Clements [omissions] and (changes)

Total species recorded: 463 (445 seen and 18 heard)

E = Upper Guinea Endemic, NE = Upper Guinea Near Endemic.



Guineafowl Numididae**Helmeted Guineafowl***Numida meleagris*

Commonly seen in Mole NP.

NOTE: The nominate *N. m. meleagris* (Helmeted Guineafowl) of East Africa, is sometimes regarded as distinct from the western *N. m. galeata* (West African Guineafowl – the form we recorded in Ghana) and the southern *N. m. mitrata* (Tufted Guineafowl.) Few authorities recognize these splits.

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae**Stone Partridge***Ptilopachus petrosus*

Heard on numerous occasions and seen on the first day at Shai hills and subsequently again in Mole NP.

Forest Francolin*Peliperdix lathamii*

We heard this species at Brimsu Reservoir in the early evening and again in the early morning at Bobiri, a secretive and seldom seen species.

Ahanta Francolin (NE)*Pternistis achantensis*

This is usually a particularly difficult species to see. We all however enjoyed good views of one in Mole NP.

Double-spurred Francolin*Pternistis bicalcaratus*

Several were seen at Kalakpa and Shai Hills however our best sightings were in Mole NP where small numbers were seen daily.

Note: Clements places this in the genus *Francolinus*

Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae**White-faced Whistling Duck***Dendrocygna viduata*

We had good views at Sakamono Lagoon and in Mole NP.

African Pygmy Goose*Nettapus auritus*

We had superb scope views of a pair at an Oxbow Lake near the Volta River and then further sightings at a small pond before Cape Coast and again at Brimsu.

Garganey*Anas querquedula*

We had decent scope views of two birds at Sakamono Lagoon.

Grebes Podicipedidae**Little Grebe***Tachybaptus ruficollis*

We had a single bird at Sakamono Lagoon

Storks Ciconiidae**Woolly-necked Stork***Ciconia episcopus*

We had good sightings daily in Mole NP.

Saddle-billed Stork*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*

This magnificent bird was seen in Mole NP, where we had excellent views at the wetland below camp.

Marabou Stork*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*

A scarce bird in Ghana that we sighted in Mole NP on two consecutive days.

Ibises, Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**Spot-breasted Ibis***Bostrychia rara*

An extremely difficult and seldom observed lowland forest species. We were extremely fortunate to first hear one calling and then have the bird fly directly over our heads at dusk while waiting at a forest clearing in the Abrafo section of Kakum NP.

Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*

We had daily sightings in Mole NP.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*

A single bird was seen well at Sakamono Lagoon.

Herons, Bitterns Ardeidae

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Seen in the evening flying over our accommodation in the Kakum area and again in Mole NP.

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*

Single birds were sighted at Shai Hills, Kakum and again at Mole.

NOTE: This species group is often treated as 3 species, the nominate Striated Heron, B. striata, Green Heron, B. virescens of North America and Lava Heron, B. sundevalli of the Galapagos.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*

Seen in small numbers at several sites such as the Volta River, ponds en route to Kakum and in Mole NP.

[Western] Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Seen on almost everyday of the tour – especially prevalent in the drier northern parts of Ghana.

NOTE: This group is split by the IOC into 2 species, the nominate Western Cattle Egret, B. ibis and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret E. coromandus. Clements does not accept this split.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Recorded at most wetland localities on tour – highest numbers were at Sakamono Lagoon.

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*

Small numbers were seen in the grasslands in the north, particularly where recent burning had taken place.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

Singles were sighted at Brimsu Reservoir and Mole NP.

NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands A. p. bournei is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne's Heron.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Seen easily at Sakamono Lagoon and again at wetlands on the way to Mole NP.

NOTE: Occasionally this species is split into two, the Western Great Egret, A. alba of the Americas, Africa & Europe and Eastern Great Egret, A. modesta of East Asia and Australasia. This split is not widely accepted.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia*

We had good scope views at Sakamono Lagoon and on the White Volta.

Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca*

We found a good number of these unique birds at Sakamono Lagoon.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

We had regular encounters with this bird at most wetlands – highest numbers were at Sakamono.

NOTE: Clements lumps Little, Western Reef E. gularis and Madagascar's Dimorphic Egret E. dimorpha into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.

Western Reef Heron *Egretta gularis*

Recorded at Sakamono Lagoon, where we had good scope views.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*

We had numerous sightings in Mole NP.



Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae

Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus*

Small numbers were seen at several wetlands such as along the Volta River, Brimsu Reservoir and peak numbers at Sakamono Lagoon.

Kites, Hawks, Eagles Accipitridae

African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides*

We had a fabulous four sightings during the tour with memorable sightings at Brimsu Reservoir, Antwikwaa, Mole NP and Bobiri.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

All of our sightings of this species were in the general Kakum area.

Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Seen at scattered localities from coastal sites such as Winneba Plains and further north in the Bolgatanga area.

NOTE: This species is sometimes split into Black-winged Kite, E. caeruleus of Africa and Asia, White-tailed Kite, E. leucurus of the Americas and Black-shouldered Kite, E. axillaris of Australasia. Both Clements and the IOC accept these splits.

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*

One of the most common birds of the tour, seen on virtually every day

NOTE: Some authorities, such as the IOC, treat the resident African subspecies of this raptor as a separate species, Yellow-billed Kite M. aegyptius. This is not accepted by Clements.

African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*

We heard this species calling on a few occasions around the waterhole at Mole NP below our camp.

Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*

We had numerous views of this species around the country.

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*

Another very common bird, we had almost daily sightings where they were most commonly encountered in towns and cities.

White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*

Only seen in Mole NP however this species is fairly common in this reserve.

White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis*

We enjoyed some good views of this distinctive species in flight on two consecutive days in Mole NP.

Beudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus beaudouini*

We had an excellent close sighting of one en route from Bolgatanga to Kumasi.

Western Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens*

We found this uncommon species in Mole NP where a responsive individual was first seen in flight before after much persistence we finally had it perched.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

A bird that is mostly seen in larger parks and reserves, we had daily sightings in Mole NP.

Congo Serpent Eagle *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*

We had good flight views of a single bird from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Western Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

We had quite a few sightings in the north of the country however our best views were around Sakamono Lagoon where we even had birds perched in the scope.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus*

One male was seen extremely well on our drive from Mole NP to Bolgatanga.



African Harrier-Hawk*Polyboroides typus*

Common and seen well in Kakum NP particularly from the canopy walkway, Mole NP and Bobiri.

Dark Chanting Goshawk*Melierax metabates*

Small numbers were seen daily in the far north around Tono Dam and Bolgatanga however our first sightings were in Mole NP and on the drive north to Bolgatanga.

Gabar Goshawk*Micronisus gabar*

A single bird was found on the first day at Shai Hills.

Shikra*Accipiter badius*

We recorded this common species at many sites including Shai Hills, Accra and Mole NP where we got our best views.

NOTE: We recorded the Northern Shikra A. b. sphenurus that some authorities consider distinct from the southern African Southern Shikra A. b. polyzonoides. These forms may also be split from the Asian nominate A. b. badius and other Asian forms. Neither Clements nor the IOC recognizes any of these splits.

Black Sparrowhawk*Accipiter melanoleucus*

This species was heard calling at Abo-Abo.

Long-tailed Hawk*Urotriorchus macrourus*

This is always one of the most highly sought-after forest raptors and is always an excellent find. We initially had one calling in the Abrafo section of Kakum however the bird would just not show itself. Our luck however as soon to change as at Abo-Abo we had excellent scope views of this species.

Lizard Buzzard*Kaupifalco monogrammicus*

A common raptor during the first five days of our tour with singles subsequently seen in Mole NP.

Grasshopper Buzzard*Butastur rufipennis*

First seen on our way to Mole NP, with further sightings in the national park and again near Bolgatanga and at Tono Dam.

Red-necked Buzzard*Buteo auguralis*

Seen at Shai Hills, Kakum NP and surrounds and finally in Mole NP.

Cassin's Hawk-Eagle*Hieraaetus ayresii*

We had some decent looks on our walk up to the top of the Atewa Range when a single bird was seen circling over our heads through gaps in the forest canopy. Our first views were fairly distant while at Bobiri.

Martial Eagle*Polemaetus bellicosus*

A scarce bird in Ghana however we had excellent views of a single bird just below our camp in Mole NP. The bird had clearly just recently finished a meal and had an extremely full crop.

Falcons Falconidae**Common (Eurasian) Kestrel***Falco tinnunculus*

Small numbers were seen near Shai Hills, Kalakpa, south of Kakum and in the Mole area.

NOTE: Some authorities including the IOC split this species into Common Kestrel, F. tinnunculus which we observed and occurs in East and West Africa and Rock Kestrel, F. rupicolus, which occurs in Southern Africa. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Fox Kestrel*Falco alopex*

We enjoyed some decent scope views of four in the Tongo Hills.

Grey Kestrel*Falco ardosiaceus*

We enjoyed wonderful sightings throughout the tour.

Red-necked Falcon*Falco chicquera*

An uncommon species that we eventually scoped quite well up at Tono Dam after it was initially seen chasing another individual.



African Hobby*Falco cuvierii*

This was one of the last new species seen in Ghana when we had a single bird in flight above the Atewa farm bush.

Lanner Falcon*Falco biarmicus*

Pairs of this large falcon were sighted near Cape Coast and again in the Tono Dam area.

Bustards Otididae**Black-bellied Bustard***Eupodotis senegalensis*

We flushed a single bird out of grassland in Shai Hills which resulted in some decent flight views.

Flufftails Sarothruridae**White-spotted Flufftail***Sarothrura pulchra*

A single bird at Antwikwaa gave some very good looks. This is one of the easier flufftails to find and see however they still require good eyes to see well as they hide in the dark areas of the forest.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae**Black Crake***Amaurornis flavirostra*

Our first sighting was at a small wetland just before Cape Coast with further views had at the wetland below our camp in Mole NP.

African Swamphen*Porphyrio madagascariensis*

We found this species at Sakamono Lagoon.

NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognized as distinct species. The form we recorded would then become African Swamphen (P. madagascariensis.) Other forms to be recognized may include Indian Swamphen (P. poliocephalus,) Philippine Swamphen (P. pulverulentus) and Eastern Swamphen (P. melanotus). Clements does not as yet accept any of these splits. The IOC accepts African Swamphen P. madagascariensis and Purple Swamphen P. porphyrio.

Allen's Gallinule*Porphyrio alleni*

This is an extremely scarce species in Ghana which was seen very well at a small roadside wetland on the way back to Accra.

Common Moorhen*Gallinula chloropus*

We found a few birds at a wetland en route to Kakum NP.

NOTE: The IOC has recently split the Old World Common Moorhen (G. chloropus) from the New World Common Gallinule (G. galeata). This split is not currently widely accepted.

Thick-knees Burhinidae**Senegal Thick-knee***Burhinus senegalensis*

Good numbers were found at Sakamono Lagoon and again in Mole NP.

Spotted Thick-knee*Burhinus capensis*

Our best sighting of this species was up at Tono Dam where a pair was flushed.

Stilts, Avocets Recurvirostridae**Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus*

We had a number of good close views of these long-legged waders at Sakamono Lagoon.

Pied Avocet*Recurvirostra avosetta*

A single bird was found at Sakamono Lagoon. A scarce species in Ghana.

Plovers Charadriidae

Spur-winged Lapwing*Vanellus spinosus*

A few birds were seen at Sakamono Lagoon with many more found up at Mole NP and along the White Volta.

Black-headed Lapwing*Vanellus tectus*

We had superb views of a single bird to the east of Bolgatanga close to the White Volta.

[African] Wattled Lapwing*Vanellus senegallus*

Recorded in small numbers at Mole NP with many more seen along the White Volta.

Grey (Black-bellied) Plover*Pluvialis squatarola*

A few were seen at Sakamono Lagoon with a good number more seen at the Muni-Pormadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Common Ringed Plover*Charadrius hiaticula*

We had superb sightings at Sakamono Lagoon further sightings at Muni-Pormadzi Ramsar site near Winneba and a single along the White Volta. .

Forbes's Plover*Charadrius forbesi*

We were particularly fortunate to find six of these scarce birds at a boval in Mole NP.

White-fronted Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

This species occurs in small numbers along the Ghanaian coast and we were fortunate to find this species at the Muni-Pormadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Egyptian Plover Pluvianidae**Egyptian Plover***Pluvianus aegyptius*

This magnificent bird was seen very well on the White Volta where we found around eight different birds.

Painted Snipes Rostratulidae**Greater Painted Snipe***Rostratula benghalensis*

We enjoyed two great sightings of this species, firstly at Mole NP and then again in flight when two birds were flushed in the Tono Dam area.

Jacanas Jacanidae**African Jacana***Actophilornis africanus*

We saw these 'lily-trotters' at most waterbodies with floating vegetation.

Sandpipers, Snipes Scolopacidae**Common Snipe***Gallinago gallinago*

We flushed a number of these snipes at the wetland below our lodge in Mole NP.

Black-tailed Godwit*Limosa limosa*

We had some very good views in the scope and in flight of around 20 birds at Sakamono Lagoon. We later had a few more at Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Whimbrel*Numenius phaeopus*

We found a few at Sakamono Lagoon and a further bunch at Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Spotted Redshank*Tringa erythropus*

We had some very close views of this good looking species at Sakamono Lagoon.

Common Redshank*Tringa totanus*

Our best looks at this species were in the scope at the Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site.



Marsh Sandpiper*Tringa stagnatilis*

We had excellent views of two birds at Sakamono Lagoon.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

We found a number at Sakamono Lagoon, at Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site and again along the Volta River to the east of Bolgatanga.

Green Sandpiper*Tringa ochropus*

A single bird was seen at quite a distance in the scope at Mole NP before we had excellent views of a bird at a small pan near the White Volta to the east of Bolgatanga.

Wood Sandpiper*Tringa glareola*

We found good numbers at Sakamono Lagoon, again at Mole NP and at pans near the Volta River east of Bolgatanga.

Common Sandpiper*Actitis hypoleucos*

We had sightings at most wetland localities on tour.

Sanderling*Calidris alba*

Good numbers were found at the Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Little Stint*Calidris minuta*

Good numbers were found at both Sakamono Lagoon and the Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site.

Curlew Sandpiper*Calidris ferruginea*

We had good numbers at the same sites as the previous species.

Ruff*Philomachus pugnax*

Decent views were had at Sakamono Lagoon and again along the White Volta to the east of Bolgatanga.

Coursers, Pratincoles Glareolidae**Collared Pratincole***Glareola pratincola*

We found good numbers at Sakamono Lagoon and a single bird on the White Volta to the east of Bolgatanga.

Rock Pratincole*Glareola nuchalis*

A beautiful species and here in the west of the range sporting a chestnut collar when compared to the white collars of birds in the east and south of the range. We found a couple of birds on the Pra River near Twifo Praso.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Laridae**Gull-billed Tern***Gelochelidon nilotica*

We found a couple of birds in flight at the Muni-Parmadzi Ramsar site near Winneba.

Royal Tern*Thalasseus maximus*

We enjoyed good views at Sakamono Lagoon and further views at sea off of Cape Coast.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae**Four-banded Sandgrouse***Pterocles quadricinctus*

Always a good species to find and a seasonal visitor to the area. We found a pair while walking a good patch of dry country below Tono Dam.

Pigeons, Doves Columbidae**Common (Rock) Pigeon***Columba livia*

Recorded at many urban centres throughout the country.



Speckled Pigeon*Columba guinea*

Were commonly recorded in the far north of the country of the distinctive pale-rumped race *guinea*

Afep Pigeon*Columba unicincta*

We heard this species calling at Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary.

[Western] Bronze-naped Pigeon*Columba iriditorques*

We enjoyed some brilliant scope views of this often difficult to see species when we managed to lure a single bird out to perch in the open on our walk down from the top of Atewa.

Mourning Collared Dove*Streptopelia decipiens*

We had some good views of a few birds near Tono Dam where they were initially picked out calling.

Red-eyed Dove*Streptopelia semitorquata*

This large dove was seen on many days of the tour.

Vinaceous Dove*Streptopelia vinacea*

Our first sighting was at Shai Hills, with more sightings at Kalakpa and then daily in the north.

Laughing Dove*Spilopelia senegalensis*

Another very common bird, seen on many days of the tour

Black-billed Wood Dove*Turtur abyssinicus*

Daily sightings in Mole NP and near Tono Dam with our first views coming from Shai Hills.

Blue-spotted Wood Dove*Turtur afer*

We had a few views of this species in the Kakum area and then again at Atewa.

Tambourine Dove*Turtur tympanistria*

First seen in the Kakum area, we had further sightings at Atewa.

Blue-headed Wood Dove*Turtur brehmeri*

This lowland forest species is far more often heard than seen, which was unfortunately the case on our tour.

Namaqua Dove*Oena capensis*

We had a good sighting of this sometimes numerous species on the drive from Bolgatanga to Kumasi.

Bruce's Green Pigeon*Treron waalia*

Some fairly large numbers were seen very well in Mole NP.

African Green Pigeon*Treron calvus*

This was a common bird at all the forested sites in Ghana.

Parrots Psittacidae**Rose-ringed Parakeet***Psittacula krameri*

Up to fifty were seen daily in Mole NP.

Grey Parrot*Psittacus erithacus*

Small numbers were seen in Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary only. Unfortunately this species numbers continue to drop and sightings are no longer a guarantee at any of the countries forest sites.

[Brown-necked Parrot]*Poicephalus fuscicollis*

We initially heard this species at Kalakpa before getting a decent sighting of a pair in flight at Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary. A rather scarce parrot and always a treat to see.

Note: This complex and somewhat confusing species is sometimes split into three distinct species, Brown-necked Parrot P. fuscicollis, confined to West Africa and is the species which we recorded, Cape Parrot P. robustus, which is then endemic to South Africa and the third being Grey-headed Parrot P. suahelicus, which is found in south-east Africa in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Southern Tanzania. Clements only accepts one species the nominate P. robustus, which he calls Brown-necked Parrot! The IOC accepts P. robustus and P. fuscicollis as distinct species. Only Ryan & Sinclair accept all three splits at this stage.

Red-fronted Parrot*Poicephalus gulielmi*

We had a few sightings of this species in Kakum NP and gain at Bobiri.

Senegal Parrot*Poicephalus senegalus*

Recorded at most savanna sites, with our highest counts taking place in Mole NP

Turacos Musophagidae**Guinea Turaco***Tauraco persa*

We had a number of these birds in the gallery forest at Kalakpa.

NOTE: This species used to be lumped under the Green Turaco (T. persa), now split into four full species the others being Knysna Turaco (T. corythaix), Livingstone's Turaco (T. livingstonii) and Schalow's Turaco (T. schalowi).

Yellow-billed Turaco*Tauraco macrorhynchus*

A noisy species which was widely heard at a number of forest areas. We had views of this species from the canopy walkway.

Violet Turaco*Musophaga violacea*

This stunning species was seen at Shai Hills and in Mole NP, including wonderful scope views.

Western Plantain-eater*Crinifer piscator*

Seen on many days of the tour, especially in the north of the country.

Cuckoos Cuculidae**Black-throated Coucal***Centropus leucogaster*

A tricky species to see in forest tangles. We had some decent views of a single bird feeding in dense tangles on our walk up to the top of Atewa.

NOTE: Some authorities split this species into Black-throated Coucal, C. leucogaster that we heard and occurs in West Africa and Neumann's Coucal, C. neumanni that occurs in Central Africa. Neither Clements or the IOC accept this split.

Senegal Coucal*Centropus senegalensis*

A common species, seen at Shai Hills, Kalakpa, farm bush in the Kakum area, Mole NP and Tono Dam

Blue-headed Coucal*Centropus monachus*

Three birds were seen very well in the Atewa farm bush after we had initially heard them calling at other sites such as Kakum.

Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill)*Ceuthmochares aereus*

This is a common species in the forests of Ghana and we saw them in Kakum NP and Atewa.

NOTE: Some authorities such as the IOC split this species into Green Malkoha, C. australis that occurs in East and Southern Africa and Blue Malkoha, C. aereus that we observed and occurs in West and Central Africa. Clements does not as yet accept this split.

Great Spotted Cuckoo*Clamator glandarius*

We had magnificent views of one at Tono Dam, which responded extremely well to its call.

Levaillant's Cuckoo*Clamator levaillantii*

We had superb views of a pair at Shai Hills with another single bird seen at Mole NP.

Thick-billed Cuckoo*Pachycoccyx audeberti*

This species was only heard at Kalakpa. An elusive species that seems to occur at a very low density throughout its range.

Dideric Cuckoo*Chrysococcyx caprius*

Singles were seen at Antwikwaa, Abo-Abo and finally at Bobiri.

Klaas's Cuckoo*Chrysococcyx klaas*

We had numerous views of this species across the country in a variety of habitats.

African Emerald Cuckoo*Chrysococcyx cupreus*

Far more often heard than seen, we had good scope views of a splendid male from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.



Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo*Cercococcyx olivinus*

As with the previous species we heard them a number of times however seeing this bird is always tricky. We did have a pair calling extremely close to us one evening at Abrafo Forest and some people did get brief perched and flight views.

Black Cuckoo*Cuculus clamosus*

We had two sightings of this species at Antwikwaa, with one perched in the scope and the other in flight over our heads. The West African race *gabonensis* is very distinctive and has a red chest with barring below when compared to the all black birds further east and south in the range.

Red-chested Cuckoo*Cuculus solitarius*

We heard this species calling at Bonkro Forest and again at Atewa Forest.

African Cuckoo*Cuculus gularis*

We had an excellent sighting of this species which was scoped at length in Mole NP.

Owls Strigidae**African Scops Owl***Otus senegalensis*

We had superb views of one at Kalakpa during our night walk at this reserve.

Northern White-faced Owl*Ptilopsis leucotis*

This species was first heard in Mole NP however we could not lure the bird in for a view. Later on while at our hotel in Kumasi we were blown away to find a single bird during an early breakfast.

NOTE: Some authorities still lump Southern White-faced Owl P. granti with this species. The two species do not overlap in range and are usually split these days. Both Clements and the IOC accept the two species as being valid.

Greyish Eagle-Owl*Bubo cinerascens*

We observed a total of four birds on two consecutive night drives in Mole NP.

NOTE: At one stage this species was lumped with Spotted Eagle-Owl B. africanus, which occurs in Southern Africa. All leading authorities now accept both birds as species in their own right.

Akun Eagle-Owl*Bubo leucostictus*

We had an amazing encounter with a pair of birds at Bobiri Forest. A site that before a few months ago was not known to hold this species. This species on the whole is very rarely seen.

African Wood Owl*Strix woodfordii*

We heard this species calling in gallery forest at Kalakpa.

Pearl-spotted Owlet*Glaucidium perlatum*

We enjoyed several sightings in Mole NP.

Red-chested Owlet*Glaucidium tephronotum*

We had magnificent scope views of one at Atewa. Another tough to find owl.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae**Black-shouldered Nightjar***Caprimulgus nigriscapularis*

We had good views of two at Brimsu Reservoir.

Plain Nightjar*Caprimulgus inornatus*

We had superb views of the cinnamon form of this species during the day in Mole NP. What an encounter!

Freckled Nightjar*Caprimulgus tristigma*

This species was heard and seen at Shai Hills on the very first evening.

Long-tailed Nightjar*Caprimulgus climacurus*

We had great views of this species at a number of different localities that included Shai Hills, Kalakpa, Brimsu and in Mole NP.

Standard-winged Nightjar*Macrodipteryx longipennis*

Without a doubt one of the most sought-after of all nightjars! The breeding male of this species is something to see and we were not to be disappointed as we located a male in full breeding plumage in Mole NP and then also had views of a female in the same reserve at night. Up at Tono Dam we were then blown away as we flushed a male with full standards and watched it flying and perched at length before eventually getting very close to a female bird as well.

Swifts Apodidae

Mottled Spinetail

Telacanthura ussheri

We had a superb sighting of one while visiting Cape Coast Castle that was hanging around with a large group of Little Swifts.

Black Spinetail

Telacanthura melanopygia

We had great views of one of these large, rare spinetails at Abo-abo.

Sabine's Spinetail

Rhaphidura sabini

We had excellent sightings of a small group from the Kakum canopy walkway and then further views at Abo-abo.

Cassin's Spinetail

Neafrapus cassini

Another stunning spinetail which was initially seen by some from the canopy walkway, we later had an additional sighting at Antwikwaa.

African Palm Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

Seen almost daily throughout the trip

Common Swift

Apus apus

Up to fifty were seen daily over the forest in Kakum NP.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

Seen at many bridges in the country! Our sightings included some really large flocks.

Trogon Trogonidae

Narina Trogon

Apaloderma narina

We had some very good but brief views of a single calling male at Atewa.

Rollers Coraciidae

Purple (Rufous-crowned) Roller

Coracias naevius

We observed this species on numerous occasions in northern Ghana.

Abyssinian Roller

Coracias abyssinicus

We had daily sightings of this stunner in the north of the country however our first sighting was in the woodlands at Kalakpa.

Blue-bellied Roller

Coracias cyanogaster

We had great looks at Shai Hills, Kalakpa and Mole NP. A real West African specialty.

Blue-throated Roller

Eurystomus gularis

We had two great sightings of this species in Kakum NP. First from the canopy walkway and then at Abo-abo.

Broad-billed Roller

Eurystomus glaucurus

We had good sightings at Kalakpa, Mole NP and Tono Dam.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Chocolate-backed Kingfisher

Halcyon badia



Always a tough species to see although its call easily gives it away. After much searching William eventually picked out this great bird at the top of a huge forest tree where we had decent scope views.

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*

We had daily sightings of small numbers in Mole NP.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*

We had two sightings of pairs at Kalakpa and in Mole NP.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica*

We had wonderful views of several in Mole NP with an additional sighting at Atewa.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*

A common species seen in small numbers at a wide range of localities.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta*

We had sightings of this little gem at Shai Hills, Kakum, Mole and Atewa.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*

We saw this brightly coloured species in Mole NP.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*

We enjoyed wonderful views of this large species at Brimsu Reservoir it another seen in Mole NP.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

This, the world's most widespread kingfisher, was seen at various wetlands on tour.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Blue-moustached (Blue-headed) Bee-eater *Merops mentalis*

We had cracking views of this beauty in Atewa Forest. What a gem!!!

Note: This is a recent split from Blue-headed Bee-eater, M. muelleri. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis*

Another stunning species and we had magnificent views at Antwikwaa with a further pair sighted on our decent of the Atewa range.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*

This is a particularly scarce bird in Ghana that generally prefers dry woodlands. We found a single bird at Shai Hills which showed particularly well for an extended period of time.

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

A pair was seen very well on the drive between Abo-abo and Bonkro Forest.

Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki*

We found large numbers (100+ at a nesting colony) of this stunning bird in Mole NP.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*

An intra-African migrant, prevalent only during the dry season in Ghana, seen at all forested sites in the south of the country and in good numbers.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

A large flock were seen and heard calling at Shai Hills.

Rosy Bee-eater *Merops malimbicus*

We had an incredible sighting of around 60+ birds perched and in flight near Abrafo Forest in the Kakum Forest bloc.

Wood Hoopoes Phoeniculidae

Forest Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus castaneiceps*

We had great scope views of a pair at Abrafo Forest.

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*



We had good sightings at Kalakpa and in Mole NP.

Black Scimitarbill

Rhinopomastus aterrimus

We enjoyed good views of several in Mole NP.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

African Pied Hornbill

Tockus fasciatus

A common inhabitant of forest and forest edge, recorded on many days of the tour.

African Grey Hornbill

Tockus nasutus

First seen in Shai Hills, with more at Kalakpa and daily sightings in the north

Northern Red-billed Hornbill

Tockus erythrorhynchus

We saw this bird well in Mole NP and again in higher numbers near Tono Dam.

NOTE: This species is sometimes split into five species, Northern Red-billed Hornbill, T.erythrorhynchus which we observed, Damara Red-billed Hornbill, T.damarensis of N. Namibia, Southern Red-billed Hornbill, T.rufirostris of Southern Africa, Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill, T.ruahae – endemic to Tanzania and Western Red-billed Hornbill, T.kempi of Senegambia. Clements does not as yet accept these splits, the IOC however does.

Black Dwarf Hornbill

Tockus hartlaubi

We had great views of this rare species in Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary when a pair was scoped at length.

Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill

Tockus camurus

We enjoyed good views of two at Abrafo Forest including extended views of one bird that had caught, what looked to be, a large Praying Mantis.

White-crested Hornbill

Tropicranus albocristatus

This funky-looking hornbill was seen extremely well from the Kakum Canopy Walkway and then again at Abo-abo by some of the group.

Note: Clements places this in the genus Tockus

Piping Hornbill

Bycanistes fistulator

Seen very well in the Kakum area and again at Bobiri.

Brown-cheeked Hornbill (E)

Bycanistes cylindricus

Unfortunately this species was only heard calling at some distance.

Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae

Abyssinian Ground Hornbill

Bucorvus abyssinicus

We had fantastic views of three in Mole NP.

African Barbets Lybiidae

Bristle-nosed Barbet

Gymnobucco peli

A nesting colony was observed at length at Bobiri.

Naked-faced Barbet

Gymnobucco calvus

Very similar in appearance to the previous species, we had sightings in Kakum NP and Atewa.

Speckled Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus scolopaceus

Our first sightings were in Kakum NP with further sightings at Atewa.

Red-rumped Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus atroflavus

We had good views of one from the canopy walkway and another sighting at Atewa.

Yellow-throated Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus subsulphureus

We had brilliant views from the canopy walkway.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus bilineatus

We had good views of one at Kalakpa.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus chrysoconus



A number were seen very well in Shai Hills with further good views in Mole NP.

Yellow-spotted Barbet *Buccanodon duchaillui*

We had good scope views of one at Antwikwaa.

Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*

Small numbers were seen at Antwikwaa, Abo-abo and Atewa.

NOTE: Ryan & Sinclair split the eastern form of this species as Streaky-throated Barbet (T. flavipunctata). This is however not widely accepted by other authorities.

Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*

A fairly common bird of savanna, we had good sightings at Shai Hills and at Tono Dam. A surprise was however encountering this species at Antwikwaa in the Kakum Forest bloc.

Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus*

We had great views of this superb looking species at Shai Hills.

Bearded Barbet *Lybius dubius*

Our first sighting was of a single bird at Shai Hills with further views in Mole NP and again at Tono Dam.

Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus purpuratus*

After initially hearing this species on numerous occasions we finally had a view at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae

Willcocks's Honeyguide *Indicator willcocksii*

We had this species calling at extremely close range from the Kakum canopy tower.

Least Honeyguide *Indicator exilis*

We heard this species calling from its regular calling post at Bobiri.

Thick-billed Honeyguide *Indicator conirostris*

A scarce forest honeyguide that we had superb views of at close range on our walk up to the top of the Atewa range.

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*

We had good views in Mole NP.

Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator*

We had a few good sightings in Mole NP. This is the only species known to actually guide mammals to a beehive.

Woodpeckers Picidae

African Piculet *Sasia africana*

We enjoyed a couple of great encounters with this tiny species at Abo-abo and then again at Bobiri.

Fine-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera punctuligera*

We had good views of two in Mole NP.

Little Green Woodpecker (NE) *Campethera maculosa*

We had superb scope views of singles at Abo-abo and then very nicely at Bobiri.

Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosa*

We had a few sightings of this elusive forest woodpecker at Atewa.

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*

We found a pair which showed well at Kalakpa and then a single bird in Mole NP.

Melancholy Woodpecker (NE) *Dendropicos lugubris*

We enjoyed a superb sightings of this species in the Kakum area and then again at Atewa.



Note: Both Clements and the IOC split Gabon Woodpecker into Gabon (*D. gabonensis*) and Melancholy (*D. lugubris*) Woodpeckers. Following this view, Melancholy Woodpecker would become an Upper Guinea Endemic.

Fire-bellied Woodpecker (NE) *Dendropicos pyrrhogaster*

We had a great sighting of a pair from the Kakum canopy walkway and then further views at Bobiri and Atewa.

African Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae*

We enjoyed good views of pairs in Mole NP.

NOTE: The IOC and Clements both consider this species and Eastern Grey Woodpecker *D. spodocephalus* to be distinct species.

Brown-backed Woodpecker *Picoides obsoletus*

We had fantastic views of this low density species in Mole NP on two occasions.

Broadbills Eurylaimidae

Rufous-sided Broadbill *Smithornis rufolateralis*

This species was unfortunately only heard calling during our tour.

Wattle-eyes and Batises Platysteiridae

African Shrike-flycatcher *Megabyas flammulatus*

We had wonderful views of a pair at Atewa where the female showed particularly well.

Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher *Bias musicus*

We found a good looking male at Antwikwaa that was calling repeatedly.

Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis*

First seen at Shai Hills, with further sightings in Mole NP

Fernando Po Batis *Batis poensis*

We had superb views of this species from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

NOTE: Clements considers this species and West African Batis *B. occulta* to be two valid species. The IOC does not accept this split.

Brown-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*

We had good views of several in Shai Hills, at the Volta River and in Mole NP.

West African (Chestnut) Wattle-eye *Platysteira hormophora*

Seen in small numbers at Kalakpa and then again at Bobiri and Atewa where they showed better.

NOTE: This species has recently been split by the IOC into West African Wattle-eye, *P. hormophora* and Chestnut Wattle-eye, *P. castanea* of Central and East Africa. This is not a commonly accepted view at this stage.

Red-cheeked Wattle-eye (NE) *Platysteira blissetti*

This is always an extremely tricky and furtive species to get onto. We heard them on a few occasions however only one participant had very good views of a perched bird near Abrafo Forest.

Helmetshrikes Prionopidae

White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus*

We had good views of flocks at Kalakpa and then further flocks in Mole NP.

NOTE: This species is being considered for a 3-way split. *P. p. cristatus*, the form we recorded, would become Curly-crested Helmetshrike, *P. p. poliocephalus* would become Southern Helmetshrike and the nominate *P. p. plumatus*, would become Straight-crested Helmetshrike. Clements and the IOC do not as yet recognize these splits.

Red-billed (Chestnut-bellied) Helmetshrike (NE) *Prionops caniceps*

We found a vocal flock which circled us while birding at Antwikwaa.

Bushshrikes Malaconotidae

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti*



We had excellent views of this low density species in Mole NP.

Many-coloured Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus multicolour*

This seldom encountered species was unfortunately only heard up at the top of Atewa.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus*

We had stunning views of a pair at Kalakpa and a further two in Mole NP.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis*

We had excellent views of one in the farm bush at the base of the Atewa range.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus*

We heard this species on numerous occasions and had good sightings of a pair at Shai Hills.

Sabine's Puffback *Dryoscopus sabinus*

We had a very good view of a male from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis*

We had a brief view at Shai Hills before getting some great looks in Mole NP.

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major*

We heard this species calling at Shai Hills.

NOTE: Some authorities like the IOC and Clements have split this into 3 species, Tropical Boubou, L.aethiopicus the one we heard, Somali Boubou, L.erlangeri of Somalia, and Zanzibar Boubou, L.sublacteus of NE Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Yellow-crowned (Common) Gonolek *Laniarius barbarus*

This outrageously colourful bird was seen exceptionally well in Mole NP with a few sightings also enjoyed by some at Shai Hills and around our accommodations in Accra.

Brubru *Nilaus afer*

A single bird was found at Shai Hills while another pair was seen in Mole NP.

NOTE: This previously monotypic genus might be split 4 ways: Northern Brubru N. afer, Black-browed Brubru N. nigritemporalis, Angola Brubru N. affinis and Southern Brubru N. brubru. Clements nor the IOC recognize these splits.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae

White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Coracina pectoralis*

This can be an extremely tough bird to find however we enjoyed at least 6 sightings during our time in Mole NP, which must border on some sort of record!

Blue Cuckooshrike *Coracina azurea*

This stunning species was seen particularly well on the canopy walkway.

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike *Campephaga phoenicea*

Our first sighting was in Shai Hills where we enjoyed a wonderful male. Thereafter we had good views in Mole NP. Another good-looking bird!

Purple-throated Cuckooshrike *Campephaga quiscalina*

We found an amazing 5 individuals during our morning walk at Bobiri comprising of both males and females which were also scoped. A scarce bird in Ghana and a great sighting!

Shrikes Laniidae

Yellow-billed Shrike *Corvinella corvina*

A common species of open savanna, seen well in Shai Hills, Kalakpa and Mole NP.

Northern Fiscal *Lanius collaris*

Most common in the general Kakum area and again towards Atewa where they prefer areas of farm bush.

Note: The IOC have recently split Common Fiscal into two separate species, Southern Fiscal L. collaris and Northern Fiscal L. humeralis which we observed. This not widely accepted.



Figbirds, Orioles Oriolidae**African Golden Oriole***Oriolus auratus*

We observed several at Kalakpa with further daily sightings in Mole NP.

Western (Black-headed) Oriole*Oriolus brachyrhynchus*

We had good views of two at Atewa.

Black-winged Oriole*Oriolus nigripennis*

Very similar in appearance to the previous species however lacking the white wing spot, it was seen from the Kakum canopy walkway and in Bobiri Forest.

Drongos Dicruridae**Square-tailed Drongo***Dicrurus ludwigii*

We had fantastic views of four in gallery forest in Mole NP.

Shining Drongo*Dicrurus atripennis*

We had good views of 2 birds at Abrafo Forest with further looks at Atewa.

Fork-tailed Drongo*Dicrurus adsimilis*

One was seen in Shai Hills, followed by daily sightings in Mole NP and around Bolgatanga.

Velvet-mantled Drongo*Dicrurus modestus*

This bird was commonly seen in all forested localities on tour.

NOTE: Most authorities split this species from Fork-tailed Drongo *D. adsimilis*.

Monarchs Monarchidae**Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher***Trochocercus nitens*

We had brief views of one at Abrafo Forest and then later had better views on our final day at Atewa.

Red-bellied (Black-headed) Paradise Flycatcher*Terpsiphone rufiventer*

A fairly common bird of the forest interior, with sightings at Kalakpa, Abrafo Forest, Bobiri and Atewa.

African Paradise Flycatcher*Terpsiphone viridis*

We had a single sighting in Kalakpa and small numbers in Mole NP and Tono Dam.

Crows, Jays Corvidae**Piapiac***Ptilostomus afer*

We saw a few flocks near Kalakpa and Shai Hills and then another group at the White Volta in the far north.

Pied Crow*Corvus albus*

One of the most common birds of the tour, with large numbers on most days

Rockfowl Picathartidae**White-necked Rockfowl (E)***Picathartes gymnocephalus*

Undoubtedly the highlight of the tour! We had very good sightings of three birds bounding through the undergrowth and over boulders in Bonkro Forest.

Fairy Flycatchers Stenostiridae**African Blue Flycatcher***Elminia longicauda*

We had good views daily in Mole NP.



Tits, Chickadees Paridae

White-shouldered Black Tit

Parus guineensis

We had brief sightings in Shai Hills and Kalakpa with further views in Mole NP.

NOTE: Most authorities split this complex into 2 full species. The nominate dark-eyed M. l. leucomelas remains White-winged Black-Tit and the more northern and western yellow-eyed M. l. guineensis (the form we recorded in Ghana) becomes White-shouldered Black-Tit. Clements has recently recognized this split.

Penduline Tits Remizidae

Forest Penduline Tit

Anthoscopus flavifrons

An extremely tough bird to find and one that is seldom recorded on birding tours. We had decent views of a single bird from the Kakum Canopy Walkway. Some people even had it in the scope.

Nicators Nicatoridae

Western (Yellow-spotted) Nicator

Nicator chloris

We had decent views of one at Kalakpa with further great looks on our final day birding the farm bush at Atewa.

Larks Alaudidae

Flappet Lark

Mirafra rufocinnamomea

Some of the group found this species on the first day of the tour at Shai Hills.

Sun Lark

Galerida modesta

We had some very good views in Mole NP with further looks at Tono Dam.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark

Eremopterix leucotis

We recorded a stunning male at Tongo Hills.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

Common Bulbul

Pycnonotus barbatus

As its name implies, this species was common throughout and seen every day.

NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognized as distinct species within the super-species.

Slender-billed Greenbul

Stelgidillas gracilirostris

We found small numbers daily in Kakum NP, Bobiri and Atewa Forests.

Little Greenbul

Eurillas virens

Far more often heard than seen, this skulker was seen once at Antwikwaa and then again in the farm bush at Atewa.

Little Grey Greenbul

Eurillas gracilis

We had good views on two occasions in Kakum NP with an additional sighting at Bobiri.

Note: Clements calls this Gray Greenbul.

Plain Greenbul

Eurillas curvirostris

We found a single bird on the Kakum Canopy Walkway which showed very well. We also had another view at Bonkro Forest.

Yellow-whiskered Greenbul (Bulbul)

Eurillas latirostris

A species which can be difficult to see, we saw a single bird at Atewa.

Golden Greenbul

Calyptocichla serina

This species as unfortunately heard only.

Honeyguide Greenbul

Baeopogon indicator



A good-looking greenbul with a beautiful call, we had good sightings in Kakum NP.

Spotted Greenbul *Ixonotus guttatus*

A small flock was sighted briefly from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Simple Greenbul *Chlorocichla simplex*

A bird that favours the forest edge. We had good sightings at Brimsu, Kakum and Atewa.

Yellow-throated Leaflove (Greenbul) *Chlorocichla flavicollis*

We had good views of a single bird in gallery forest in Mole NP.

Swamp [Palm] Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucopleura*

This noisy species was first seen briefly in Kalakpa with further better sightings at Antwikwaa and Atewa.

Red-tailed Leaflove *Pyrrhurus scandens*

These normally shy birds were true to their typical behaviour offering only fleeting views in woodland at Kalakpa.

Icterine Greenbul *Phyllastrephus icterinus*

We had superb views of this species in a small flock at the top of Atewa.

White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigularis*

We had good views of this rather uncommon species at Kalakpa.

Red-tailed (Common) Bristlebill *Bleda syndactylus*

An often shy and furtive species which was seen very well by a few members of the group on our walk up to the top of the Atewa Range.

Green-tailed Bristlebill (E) *Bleda eximius*

Another shy species that was seen quite well by a few members of the group at the top of Atewa.

Grey-headed Bristlebill *Bleda canicapillus*

After hearing this species on numerous occasions we finally had a view of one in the Atewa farm bush.

Western Bearded Greenbul (NE) *Criniger barbatus*

Two birds offered a few opportunities for views in a mixed flock in Abrafo Forest.

Red-tailed Greenbul *Criniger calurus*

Several were seen in Kakum NP and a few more in Atewa Forest.

Swallows, Martins Hirundinidae

Square-tailed Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne nitens*

We found a single bird at Abo-abo Forest while one member of our group also had a sighting on the walk down from Atewa.

Fanti Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne obscura*

We had superb views of several in the Kakum area including some wonderful scope views of perched birds.

Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudirundo griseopyga*

A very uncommon species in northern Ghana, which we recorded in quite impressive numbers over the waterhole in Mole NP below our camp.

Sand Martin (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia*

A few of these martins were found in amongst the large group of Grey-rumped Swallows we found in Mole NP.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

A common migrant, which was sighted regularly throughout the country.

NOTE: This cosmopolitan species complex may be split based on the Old World nominate form and its congeners which would become Eurasian Swallow H. rustica and the New World Barn Swallow H. erythrogaster. Further splitting within the group may also be done e.g. the distinctive H. r. savignii, which breeds in the Nile Valley and would be named Egyptian



Swallow. We only recorded representatives of the Palearctic migrant Barn/Eurasian Swallow. Clements nor the IOC recognize any of these splits as yet.

Red-chested Swallow *Hirundo lucida*

We had our first sightings of this species in Mole NP with additional views at Larabanga and finally up at the Tongo Hills as well.

Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica*

We found small numbers in the Accra area, around Shai Hills in the Mole zone and then again perched up at Larabanga.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*

We had good regular sightings in Mole NP.

NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form which would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow which would be H. filifera. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

White-bibbed (White-throated Blue) Swallow *Hirundo nigrita*

We found four birds on the Volta River and a further pair at Twifo Praso which gave excellent views. A large river specialist of the lowland rainforest zone in Central and West Africa.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

A few birds were sighted in amongst mixed groups of hirundines in Mole NP.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica*

We observed this species on two days in the general Kakum area.

West African Swallow *Cecropis domicella*

A single bird was found perched briefly at Larabanga with another view in the north of the country whilst stopped at a nearby village.

NOTE: The IOC has recently split the West African form of the widespread Red-rumped Swallow C. daurica as a separate species, West African Swallow C. domicella. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Preuss's [Cliff] Swallow *Petrochelidon preussi*

We had excellent close views of this species perched and in flight at a breeding colony on the drive between Abo-abo and Bonkro Forest.

Cettia Bush Warblers & Allies Cettiidae

Chestnut-capped Flycatcher *Erythrocercus mccallii*

We had good views of a small group on the canopy walkway.

Green Hylia *Hylia prasina*

Commonly heard calling with sightings at Abo-abo, Bobiri and then very well with chicks at Atewa.

Tit Hylia *Pholidornis rushiae*

We had superb views of a pair on the canopy walkway, with a further view of Africa's smallest bird nest building at Bobiri.

Leaf Warblers & Allies Phylloscopidae

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

We had good views across the country in all habitats.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

A single bird was seen well from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Reed Warblers & Allies Acrocephalidae

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

We found a single bird at the waterhole below Mole NP and a further bird at a roadside stop on the drive up to Bolgatanga.



Western Olivaceous Warbler*Iduna opaca*

We had great views of two near Tono Dam.

NOTE: Clements and the IOC have split Olivaceous Warbler into two species namely *H. pallida*, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler and *H. opaca*, Western Olivaceous Warbler.

Melodious Warbler*Hippolais polyglotta*

We found several in Mole NP and again in the vicinity of Tono Dam.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae**Red-faced Cisticola***Cisticola erythropus*

After hearing this species at numerous sites we finally got views just outside of Mole NP.

Singing Cisticola*Cisticola cantans*

We had good views of singles at Shai Hills and then again at Kalakpa.

Whistling Cisticola*Cisticola lateralis*

We had great scope views of birds at Kalakpa and further views at Atewa.

Rock-loving Cisticola*Cisticola emini*

We had fantastic views of two birds in the Tongo Hills.

NOTE: The IOC split the subspecies (*C. emini*) as Rock-loving Cisticola from the southern Lazy Cisticola (*C. aberrans*), which remains the nominate.

Winding Cisticola*Cisticola marginatus*

We had sightings of two birds at Sakamono Lagoon.

NOTE: Several authorities have split this widespread African species into 5 full species. Races include *marginatus*, *haematocephala*, *luapula*, *nominate galactotes* and *lugubris*. The race occurring in Cameroon is *marginatus* and is split as Winding Cisticola. Clements does not recognize any of these races as full species however the IOC accepts them all.

Croaking Cisticola*Cisticola natalensis*

We enjoyed good views of this heavy billed cisticola at Shai Hills.

Dorst's Cisticola*Cisticola dorsti*

A single bird was found at Shai Hills where we got to watch it at length. Always a very good bird to find on the route.

Short-winged (Siffling) Cisticola*Cisticola brachypterus*

We had excellent views on numerous occasions at Shai Hills and Kalakpa.

Rufous Cisticola*Cisticola rufus*

A broad-leaved woodland specialist which was seen very well in Mole NP.

Zitting Cisticola*Cisticola juncidis*

We found this species at Sakamono Lagoon.

Tawny-flanked Prinia*Prinia subflava*

Fairly common in rank vegetation, we had numerous sightings throughout the tour, especially in the north of the country.

Red-winged Warbler*Heliolais erythropterus*

We enjoyed superb views of one at Kalakpa and two in Mole NP.

Yellow-breasted Apalis*Apalis flavida*

A rather scarce species in Ghana, we had good views of two in Mole NP.

Black-capped Apalis*Apalis nigriceps*

We had superb views of this good looking species at the top of Atewa Forest.

Sharpe's Apalis (E)*Apalis sharpii*

We had a pair of these upper guinea endemic apalis at Abrafo Forest with a few others heard in other areas.

Oriole Warbler*Hypergerus atriceps*

A real specialty of the Mole area which we had magnificent views of while in Mole NP.

Grey-backed Camaroptera*Camaroptera brevicauda*

A common species of dense shrubbery everywhere, we had sightings at a number of forest sites.

NOTE: Most authorities now recognize the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms C. brevicaudata. We encountered the grey-backed form in Cameroon. Clements however lumps these two groups.

Yellow-browed Camaroptera*Camaroptera superciliaris*

Far more often heard than seen, we had good views at Antwikwaa and Aboabo.

Olive-green Camaroptera*Camaroptera chloronota*

We had good views of a single highly vocal bird at Antwikwaa.

Senegal Eremomela*Eremomela pusilla*

Common in the savanna areas, we had many sightings at Shai Hills, Kalakpa, Mole NP and Tono Dam area.

NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into the East African E. pusilla (Green-backed Eremomela.) The enlarged species is called Green-backed Eremomela.

Rufous-crowned Eremomela*Eremomela badiceps*

We had good views of several from the Kakum canopy walkway.

Family Uncertain Incertae Sedis**Moustached Grass Warbler***Melocichla mentalis*

A large warbler which was seen very well during the early morning at Kalakpa and then a vocal pair in the evening at Mole NP.

Kemp's Longbill (NE)*Macrosphenus kempii*

Always a rather shy species that never seems to stop moving. One was seen briefly at Abo-abo.

Grey Longbill*Macrosphenus concolor*

We had great views of one at Abo-abo with additional sightings at Bobiri and again on a number of occasions at Atewa.

Northern Crombec*Sylvietta brachyura*

We had decent views of two at Shai Hills and further sightings in Mole NP and around Tono Dam.

Green Crombec*Sylvietta virens*

Heard on many occasions and seen at Brimsu and Atewa.

Lemon-bellied Crombec*Sylvietta denti*

Always a good bird to find as it tends to occur mostly in the canopy of lowland rainforest. We had a brilliant sighting of one that was nest building on the canopy walkway.

Babblers & Parrotbills Timaliidae**Blackcap Illadopsis***Illadopsis cleaveri*

We heard this species calling while in the top of Atewa.

Puvel's Illadopsis*Illadopsis puveli*

We had cracking views of one at Atewa. This bird was calling non stop and did not want to keep quiet!

Brown Illadopsis*Illadopsis fulvescens*

We only heard this species at Kalakpa and then again at Abrafo Forest.

Blackcap Babbler*Turdoides reinwardtii*

Another rather shy species which was found at Shai Hills, Mole and then finally good views for everyone at Tono Dam.

Brown Babbler*Turdoides plebejus*

Another species that can be a little on the shy side which we found at Shai Hills and then gain in Mole NP.

Sylviid Babblers Sylviidae

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

A single bird was seen well at Shai Hills.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

African Yellow White-eye

Zosterops senegalensis

Small numbers were seen at Antwikwaa, Mole NP and at Atewa.

NOTE: The birds in the forests of Mt. Cameroon and forested Cameroon are sometimes split off as Forest White-eye, *Z.stenocricotus*. This split is however not widely accepted.

Hyliotas Hyliotidae

Yellow-bellied Hyliota

Hyliota flavigaster

We had excellent views of a pair in a mixed species flock at Kalakpa.

Violet-backed Hyliota

Hyliota violacea

We had stunning views from the Kakum canopy walkway with a further sighting of two at Antwikwaa.

Starlings Sturnidae

Copper-tailed (Glossy) Starling (E)

Hylopsar cupreocauda

We had this species in the scope on a few occasions at Abrafo Forest and again at Abo-abo.

Lesser Blue-eared (Glossy) Starling

Lamprotornis chloropterus

We had good views of this species at Shai Hills and then again at Kalakpa.

NOTE: The IOC splits the nominate *L. chloropterus*, which we recorded in Cameroon from the southern Miombo Blue-eared Starling, *L. elisabeth*.

Bronze-tailed Starling

Lamprotornis chalcurus

A rather uncommon starling of the broad-leaved woodland zone. We had great views of three in Mole NP and a single bird up at Tono Dam.

Splendid (Glossy) Starling

Lamprotornis splendidus

This large glossy starling was seen at all the forested sites, with excellent numbers in the Kakum area.

Purple (Glossy) Starling

Lamprotornis purpureus

Small numbers were seen at woodland sites such as Kalakpa, Mole NP and Tono Dam.

Long-tailed Glossy Starling

Lamprotornis caudatus

A spectacular species that was commonly seen in Mole and around Bolgatanga and Tono Dam

Chestnut-bellied Starling

Lamprotornis pulcher

After a bit of searching we finally had great looks at a small group of five birds at Tono Dam.

Violet-backed Starling

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

We saw this species on just a few occasions, first at the Kakum Canopy Walkway and then again at Abrafo Forest.

Chestnut-winged Starling

Onychognathus fulgidus

We had great views while biding on the Kakum Walkway with further scope views at Abo-abo.

Oxpeckers Buphagidae

Yellow-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus africanus



The dry farm country near the White Volta produced a sighting of two of these interesting birds that were associating with a large herd of cattle.

Thrushes Turdidae

White-tailed Rufous Thrush

Neocossyphus poensis

A shy species that was sighted just briefly by some of the group at the top of Atewa where the bird was associated with a mixed feeding flock.

Finsch's Rufous Thrush (NE)

Stizorhina finschii

We had good scope views of this species at Antwikwaa.

Note: Clements calls this Finsch's Flycatcher-Thrush (Neocossyphus finschii)

African Thrush

Turdus pelios

Generally a common species. First seen in Shai Hills and further sightings in Mole NP and Atewa.

White-tailed Alethe

Alethe diademata

A single bird was found calling and flitting across the trail very actively while birding on our walk p to the top of the Atewa Range.

Note: Some authorities such as the IOC split Fire-crested Alethe into Fire-crested (A. castanea) and White-tailed (A. diademata) Alethes. Clements does not follow this view.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

Forest Robin

Stiphornis erythrothorax

Strangely scarce this year with very few encounters or opportunities for viewing. At the end of the day we just heard this species once at Kalakpa.

NOTE: Forest Robin is sometimes split into 5 species. Western Forest Robin, S.erythrothorax of West Africa, which we observed, Olive-backed Forest Robin, L.pyrrholaemus of SW Gabon, Gabon Forest Robin, S.gabonensis of Gabon & Cameroon, Eastern Forest Robin, S.xanthogaster of Central Africa and Sangha Forest Robin, S.sanghensis of Central African Republic. These splits are currently not accepted by Clements or the IOC.

Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat

Cossypha cyanocampter

A single bird was heard calling from farm bush close to Abrafo Forest.

Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat

Cossypha niveicapilla

Seen on quite a few occasions with views at Shai Hills, Mole NP and up at Tono Dam.

White-crowned Robin-Chat

Cossypha albicapilla

We struggled for a while to find this species however our persistence eventually brought us excellent views of a single bird at the Mognori River near Mole NP.

Forest Scrub-Robin

Erythropygia leucosticta

A very tough bird to find and one that is also highly localized. Some of us got views of a calling bird as we tracked it for quite a while on the top of Atewa.

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

A single bird was sighted at Shai Hills on the first day of the trip.

Familiar Chat

Cercomela familiaris

Seen on a few occasions around our accommodations in Mole NP.

White-fronted Black Chat

Pentholaea albifrons

We had fantastic views of two single birds on two of our days in Mole NP. A scarce bird!

White-crowned Cliff Chat

Thamnolaea coronata

We had good but distant views of a pair on two consecutive days at Shai Hills.

Note: Clements lumps this with Mocking Cliff Chat (T. cinnamomeiventris), calling it as such.

Blue Rock Thrush

Monticola solitarius

A single male was sighted briefly in the Tongo Hills.



Fraser's Forest Flycatcher*Fraseria ocreata*

We had great scope views of one at Antwikwaa, another at Abo-abo and finally at Atewa Forest we had our last sighting of this good forest species.

Nimba Flycatcher*Melaenornis annamarulae*

One of Africa's true mega birds and a species that was only recently discovered to occur in Ghana. Very few people have ever seen this species to boot. Luck was on our side when we had the opportunity to watch a pair of these rare birds for over ten minutes at the top of Atewa.

Northern Black Flycatcher*Melaenornis edolioides*

First seen at Shai Hills with further views in Mole NP.

Pale Flycatcher*Bradornis pallidus*

Another flycatcher of broad-leaved woodland and we had good sightings at Kalakpa, Mole and Atewa.

Spotted Flycatcher*Muscicapa striata*

This non-breeding visitor was found regularly at Shai Hills, Kalakpa, near Abrafo Forest, Tono Dam and Atewa.

Ashy Flycatcher*Muscicapa caerulescens*

We watched a single bird feeding on an insect of sorts at the reception area of Bobiri Forest.

Swamp Flycatcher*Muscicapa olivascens*

In West Africa this species is often associated with watercourses in the broad-leaved woodland zone as opposed to papyrus swamps in the east. We had good views in Mole NP.

Little Grey Flycatcher*Muscicapa epulata*

A scarce flycatcher of the lowland forest zone in West Africa. We were extremely fortunate to have brilliant scope views of a pair while birding on the top of Atewa.

Dusky-blue Flycatcher*Muscicapa comitata*

Singles were seen well at Antwikwaa, Abo-abo, Bobiri and Atewa.

Ussher's Flycatcher (E)*Muscicapa ussheri*

This upper guinea endemic likes to perch on conspicuous branches and snags in lowland rainforest. We had good views from the Kakum Canopy Walkway and then again at Abo-abo.

Grey-throated Tit-Flycatcher*Myioparus griseigularis*

A single bird was found in dense tangles from the Kakum Walkway.

Grey Tit-Flycatcher*Myioparus plumbeus*

We had brief views of one in Shai Hills and another at Kalakpa before having far better looks in Mole NP.

European Pied Flycatcher*Ficedula hypoleuca*

A common non-breeding visitor to Ghana where we had numerous sightings especially in Mole NP.

Sunbirds Nectariniidae**Fraser's (Scarlet-tufted) Sunbird***Deleornis fraseri*

This warbler-like sunbird was first seen Abrafo Forest in Kakum NP with further, better views at Bobiri and Atewa.

NOTE: The species is sometimes lumped with the East African Grey-headed Sunbird D. axillaris. The IOC and Clements consider the two species to be valid.

Mangrove Sunbird*Anthreptes gabonicus*

We had superb views of two at a short stop along the Volta River.

Western Violet-backed Sunbird*Anthreptes longuemarei*

An uncommon woodland species that was seen well when a pair was located in a mixed feeding flock at Kalakpa.

Little Green Sunbird*Anthreptes seimundi*

We had some excellent sightings of a breeding pair from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Grey-chinned (Green) Sunbird *Anthreptes rectirostris*

We had excellent scope views of a male from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes split into two forms, the Eastern Grey-chinned Sunbird *A. tephrolaemus* and the nominate Western Yellow-chinned Sunbird, which is the race we observed.*

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*

Common in all the forests, where we had numerous sightings.

Pygmy Sunbird *Hedydipna platura*

We had several great sightings in Mole NP with further sightings around Tono Dam.

Green-headed Sunbird *Cyanomitra verticalis*

Singles were sighted at Kalakpa and Mole NP.

Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanoaema*

We enjoyed several sightings in Kakum NP, Bobiri and at Atewa Forest.

(Western) Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea*

A common species of the forested zones of Ghana and was seen on numerous occasions.

Note: Some authorities including Clements split this species into two species. This split is however not widely recognized.

Buff-throated Sunbird (NE) *Chalcomitra adalberti*

Seen on quite a few occasions in the Kakum area, Bobiri and Atewa however most of these were of females. Our most memorable sightings of the male was at Antwikwaa where we got to watch this stunner for an extended period in the scope.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

A beautiful species of the dry zone and we had several sightings in Mole NP and near Tono Dam.

Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius*

This species of forest edge was seen in Kakum NP, Bobiri and at Atewa.

Tiny Sunbird *Cinnyris minullus*

We had decent scope views of a male from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Beautiful Sunbird *Cinnyris pulchellus*

A couple were seen in Mole NP.

Splendid Sunbird *Cinnyris coccinogastrus*

Sightings of this incredible species were enjoyed at Shai Hills and Kalakpa.

Johanna's Sunbird *Cinnyris johannae*

An uncommon species in general. We enjoyed magnificent views of both a male and female from the canopy walkway.

Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus*

We had good views of several in the Kakum area and then again at Bobiri and Atewa Forests.

Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus*

Brilliant looks were had of this localized species in Ghana when we found a pair at a lunch stop between Kumasi and Mole NP.

Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus*

We had some good views at Kalakpa and then again in the same area as the previous species.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser superciliosus*

Small numbers were seen daily in Mole NP.

[Northern] Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus*

A common species which is often seen in towns, we had almost daily sightings.



NOTE: This species has over the last decade gone through multi-species splitting. All forms that now include Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Swainson's Sparrow, Parrot-billed Sparrow, Swahili Sparrow and the species we observed Northern Grey-headed Sparrow used to be simply known as Grey-headed Sparrow.

Bush Petronia*Gymnoris dentata*

A very common species in and around Mole and Bolgatanga, where we had many sightings.

Weavers, Widowbirds Ploceidae**White-billed Buffalo Weaver***Bubalornis albirostris*

We had great views of more than fifty birds at a nesting colony near Bolgatanga.

Thick-billed (Grosbeak) Weaver*Amblyospiza albifrons*

We had excellent scope views of both males and females at a roadside pond between Atewa and Accra on our final day.

Little Weaver*Ploceus luteolus*

We had small numbers in the Mole area and then again near Tono Dam.

Black-necked Weaver*Ploceus nigricollis*

A common and widespread species that was found on a number of occasions across the country.

Orange Weaver*Ploceus aurantius*

We had fantastic views at our accommodations to the south of Kakum NP.

Heuglin's Masked Weaver*Ploceus heuglini*

Always a good species to find but especially when in non-breeding plumage as they were at this time of year. We had excellent looks at a single bird feeding amongst a group of other non-breeding weavers and bishops at a roadside wetland between Mole and Bolgatanga.

Vitelline Masked Weaver*Ploceus vitellinus*

A single bird in non-breeding plumage was found in the woodland at Mole NP.

Village Weaver*Ploceus cucullatus*

A common weaver, seen on most days in the south of the country.

Vieillot's Black Weaver*Ploceus nigerrimus*

A striking bird, seen in the Kakum NP area and then again at Atewa.

NOTE: Some authorities occasionally split the distinctive West African subspecies off as Black-and-chestnut Weaver. This is however not recognized by either the IOC or Clements.

Black-headed Weaver*Ploceus melanocephalus*

We had excellent views of this species including a male coming out of breeding plumage at a roadside wetland between Mole and Bolgatanga.

Yellow-mantled Weaver*Ploceus tricolor*

This tri-coloured weaver was seen well in Kakum NP, Bobiri and Atewa.

Maxwell's Black Weaver*Ploceus albinucha*

A single bird was sighted at Abrafo Forest before we all had superb looks at Bobiri and then again at Atewa associating with mixed flocks.

Compact Weaver*Ploceus superciliosus*

A rather thin on the ground bird in Ghana which we were fortunate to see well on two occasions, firstly at Kalakpa and then again at Atewa.

Preuss's Weaver*Ploceus preussi*

We had great views of this highly sought-after species when a pair was found at Antwikwaa.

Red-vented Malimbe*Malimbus scutatus*

We had at least six birds in total during our memorable morning at Abo-abo.

Blue-billed (Gray's) Malimbe*Malimbus nitens*

This species always associates with mixed feeding flocks where it enjoys feeding in dense tangled areas. We had a few sightings in the Kakum area and then again at Bobiri and Atewa.

Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis*

The most common of the malimbos, seen regularly in Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa.

Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus*

Another understory malimbe which we found at Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa.

Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes melanotis*

We had good views of a single male in Mole NP.

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*

Strangely just a single bird was found on tour at a roadside stop between Mole and Bolgatanga.

Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*

We found two birds at a roadside wetland between Mole and Bolgatanga. We were extremely fortunate that they were showing some partial remnants of breeding plumage which aided in the identification.

Black-winged [Red] Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus*

We saw two birds at Atewa that showed very well and were still mostly in full breeding plumage.

Northern Red (Orange) Bishop *Euplectes franciscanus*

Seen only in non-breeding plumage in Mole NP and again at the roadside wetland mentioned above.

Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macrourus*

This species was seen in pretty decent breeding plumage at Shai Hills, Kalakpa and Mole NP.

Waxbills, Munias & Allies Estrildidae

White-breasted Nigrita (Negrofinch) *Nigrita fusconotus*

We had several sightings from the Kakum Walkway.

Chestnut-breasted Nigrita (Negrofinch) *Nigrita bicolor*

Small numbers were seen daily at various points in Kakum NP.

Grey-headed Nigrita (Negrofinch) *Nigrita canicapillus*

We had numerous sightings from the canopy walkway, Bobiri and Atewa Forests.

Red-winged Pytilia *Pytilia phoenicoptera*

This is always a good bird to find and we were fortunate to have excellent scope views in Mole NP of a pair.

Yellow-winged Pytilia *Pytilia hypogrammica*

A very scarce species which typically occurs at even lower density to the previous species. We had memorable sightings of at least 6 birds at Shai Hills.

Black-bellied Seedcracker *Pyrenestes ostrinus*

We had superb scope views of this species at Atewa. Simply incredible!

Western Bluebill *Spermophaga haematina*

Seen rather briefly in the farm bush at Atewa.

Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta*

We found this species in small numbers at our accommodations in Ho and then again in Mole NP.

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*

We had a number of sightings in Mole NP and in the Tono area.

African Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata*

A single bird was seen well at Kalakpa.

Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus*

A common bird in the north of the country, where we had daily sightings.

Lavender Waxbill *Estrilda caerulescens*



A delicate bird with a beautiful soft plumage. We had just brief views on two occasions first in Mole NP and then again at the Tongo Hills.

Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda*

This stunning waxbill was seen at on several occasions in Kakum NP and again at Atewa.

Black-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda troglodytes*

Seen on a few occasions in the general Bolgatanga/Tono Dam area with ur first views coming from a roadside wetland south of Bolgatanga.

Black-faced Quail-Finch *Ortygospiza atricollis*

Incredible scope views were enjoyed of a single bird in the road at Shai Hills.

NOTE: At one stage this species was lumped as one with African Quailfinch O. fuscostris.

Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata*

A common species in woodland and forest edge alike, seen on most days of the tour

Note: Clements places this in the genus Spermestes.

Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor*

Seen in small numbers in Kakum NP and in the Atewa farm bush.

Note: Clements places this in the genus Spermestes.

Magpie Mannikin *Lonchura fringilloides*

An elusive and highly nomadic species which we had great views of as they were found feeding in seeding bamboo at Bobiri.

Indigobirds, Whydahs Viduidae

Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata*

We had good views of one in Mole NP and again in he Bolgatanga area.

Wilson's Indigobird *Vidua wilsoni*

We had good views daily in Mole NP.

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

Up to forty were seen in Mole NP.

Exclamatory Paradise Whydah *Vidua interjecta*

We had good views of two males in full breeding plumage in Mole NP.

Togo Paradise Whydah *Vidua togoensis*

We were extremely lucky to see one on our drive between Bolgatanga and Kumasi. Great care is required to separate this from the previous species and we had excellent scope views for an extended period and got to watch the bird in flight on a few occasions as well.

Wagtails, Pipits Motacillidae

Western Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

We had good views at Sakamono Lagoon and a single at the White Volta.

NOTE: This species has recently been split from Eastern Yellow Wagtail M. tschutschensis. Subspecies of M. tschutschensis include simillima, taivana & macronyx. Those subspecies that have been retained in M. flava are flavissima, flava, beema, thunbergi, plexa, iberiae, cinereocapilla, pygmaea, feldegg, lutea & leucocephala. This has been accepted by the IOC.

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

Seen at a variety of wetland/river locations around the country.

Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus*

We enjoyed good scope views of this species at Sakamono Lagoon.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*

We had excellent views at Sakamono Lagoon.



Tree Pipit*Anthus trivialis*

Shai Hills and Mole NP produced good sightings of this non-breeding visitor from Europe.

Finches Fringillidae**White-rumped Seedeater***Crithagra leucopygia*

Two of these rather non-descript birds were seen very well at a small village to the south of Bolgatanga.

Yellow-fronted Canary*Crithagra mozambica*

Small numbers were seen daily in Mole NP.

West African Seed-eater*Crithagra canicapilla*

A scarce species of the broad-leaved woodland belt through West Africa. We had decent looks at a single bird in a mixed flock in Mole NP.

NOTE: The IOC has split this species from the Southern Africa near endemic Streaky-headed Seedeater C. gularis. Clements does not accept this split at this stage.

Buntings & Allies Emberizidae**Cinnamon-breasted Bunting***Emberiza tahapisi*

We found good numbers in the Tongo Hills.

Brown-rumped Bunting*Emberiza affinis*

An excellent species to find in the broad-leaved woodland zone in Mole NP. We had a single bird that showed very well in a mixed flock.

Annotated List of Mammals recorded (29 species)

Note: Names and taxonomical order of the land mammals follow that of 'The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals'; additional names are given in parenthesis and are likely to appear in other popular field guides.

Cheek-pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae**Olive Baboon***Papio papio*

We had great views at Shai Hills and in Mole NP.

Lowe's [Mona] Monkey*Cercopithecus [mona] lowei*

The Kakum Canopy Walkway gave us some excellent views of this beautiful primate.

Lesser White-nosed Monkey*Cercopithecus petaurista*

We had great views from the canopy walkway in Kakum NP.

Callithrix [Vervet] Monkey*Cercopithecus [aethiops] sabaenus*

We had great views of several at Shai Hills with further views in Mole NP.

Patas Monkey*Erythrocebus patas*

We enjoyed excellent sightings of this largely terrestrial monkey in Mole NP.

Galagos Galagonidae**Demidoff's Galago***Galago demidoffi*

We heard this species calling at Abrafo Forest and at Bobiri.

Fruit Bats Pteropodidae**Straw-coloured Fruit Bat***Eidolon helvum*

A large colony was observed near Atewa Forest where we enjoyed some excellent views.

Dwarf Epualetted Fruit Bat*Micropteropus pusillus*

We enjoyed a wonderful sighting of this small fruit bat at a day roost in the Bolgatanga area.

Large-winged Bats Megadermatidae

Yellow-winged Bat

Lavia frons

This beautiful bat was found during the day in a shady area of gallery forest in Mole NP.

Hares Leporidae

African Savanna (Scrub) Hare

Lepus victoriae (saxatilis)

We had good sightings of this species in Mole NP during our night excursions.

Porcupines

African Brush-tailed Porcupine

Atherurus africanus

A very rare sighting especially during the day. The most likely way to ever see this species is at a roadside stall as bush meat. Some of us had excellent views however of one during the day in the gallery forest at Kalakpa.

Squirrels Sciuridae

Striped Ground Squirrel

Xerus erythropus

First seen briefly on the Winneba Plains we then had better looks in Mole NP.

Fire-footed Rope Squirrel

Funisciurus anerythrus

We had brief sightings of one in Bobiri.

Kintampo Rope Squirrel

Funisciurus substriatus

A species associated with gallery forest which was seen well on a few occasions in Mole NP.

Gambian Sun Squirrel

Heliosciurus gambianus

We had good views of one from the Kakum Canopy Walkway.

Red-legged Sun Squirrel

Heliosciurus rufobrachium

Singles were seen well from the canopy walkway and in Bobiri Forest.

Slender-tailed Squirrel

Protoxerus aubinnii

A rather uncommon species that was sighted on our drive from Abo-abo to Bonkro Forest.

Green Bush Squirrel

Paraxerus poensis

We saw this species well from the canopy walkway.

Anomalures Anomaluridae

Beecroft's Anomalure

Anomalurus

We heard this species just after dark at Kalakpa.

Pel's Scaly-tailed Squirrel (Anomalure)

Anomalurus pelii

This incredible African flying squirrel was seen brilliantly during our pre-dawn excursion in Bobiri Forest. This is a rather rare Upper Guinea Endemic Anomalure. What an amazing sighting!

Pouched Rats Cricetomyinae

Gambian Giant (Pouched) Rat

Cricetomys gambianus

We had brief views of one in Mole NP.

Cane Rats Thryonomyidae

Greater Cane Rat

Thryonomys swinderianus



This large species was sighted just briefly at the side of the road near Bonkro Forest.

Pigs Suidae

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

We had wonderful views of several daily in Mole NP.

Horned Ungulates Bovidae

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

Up to five were seen daily in Mole NP.

Kob

Kobus kob

Good numbers were seen daily in Mole NP.

Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

A large herd were seen well from our camp in Mole NP on two consecutive mornings.

Hyraxes Procavidae

(Black-headed) Rock Hyrax

Procavia capensis

We had great scope views of this species in the Tongo Hills.

Western Tree Hyrax

Dendrohyrax dorsalis

We heard this species loud call at night in Kalakpa and Kakum.

Elephants Elephantidae

African Elephant

Loxodonta africana

We had great views of one large bull in Mole NP.

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