Focus on top birds
✓ boat trip for Shoebill
✓ 3 mornings for Green-breasted-Pitta
✓ best time for African Green Broadbill
✓ Red-collared mountain Babbler in Rwanda
✓ chance for Chimpanzee and Mountain Gorilla
✓ 6 participants in a safari 4x4 vehicle
✓ includes transfers, drinks and tips

Tour leader: Michael Mills
Michael’s incredible focus, dedication and ability to locate and show Africa's toughest birds is probably unequalled on the continent. He has led dozens of tours across Africa and his experience in locating birds on just the softest of calls or briefest of views impresses those who travelled with him.

Dates 2019
Rwanda: 1 - 6 July
Uganda Specials: 6 - 16 July
Murchison & Budongo: 17 - 21 July

6 participants only
Rwanda Uganda Murchison
£1980 £4375 £1870
£410 single £575 single £400 single

Book online
Visit www.birdingafrica.com
Deposit (£110) by credit card
Email info@birdingafrica.com
Itinerary

Our Uganda Highlights tour starts with a visit to the primary forests of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park for some great forest birding afoot and for those who wish, stand eye-in-eye with mountain gorillas. We’ll stay three nights at the park’s high-altitude Ruhija/Ruhiza to explore the famous Mubwindi Swamp and the highly productive rainforest sie of The Neck.

Queen Elizabeth National Park lies just north of Bwindi. We’ll stay two nights, offering us savanna birding and game-watching as we sample the diverse habitats of this big park.

Just further north of QENP lies Kibale National Park, with its mid-altitude rainforest and savanna. We’ll stay three nights here to allow 3 mornings to try for the elusive Green-breasted Pitta, which should be displaying at this time of year. Other specials include Black Bee-eater. We’ll encounter many butterflies and primates and those who wish, can track chimpanzee - we highly recommend it.

As we descend eastwards to Entebbe, we reach the dense Papyrus swamps of Lake Victoria, where we’ll take a boat trip to find the enigmatic Shoebill.

Our Budongo and Murchison Falls tour combines fantastic primary forest birding, savanna game drives and a boat trip on the Nile to Murchison falls. Budongo, and its famous Royal Mile, is one of Central Africa’s richest forests. Murchison, on the banks of the mighty Nile, offers superb savanna birds such as Pennant-winged Nightjar, plus a chance of Pel’s Fishing Owl.

Our Rwanda tour includes four nights in the incomparable Nyungwe National Park for Albertine Rift endemics, primates and amazing scenery. For a preview, please have a look at our latest article on birding in Rwanda.

Note: these three tours can be joined back-to-back, with nights in Kigali or Entebbe included in the tour cost.

Focus

We have designed this tour to have the best chances to see some of the most desired birds of Africa: Red-collared Mountain Babbler (in Rwanda), African Green Broadbill, Green-breasted Pitta, Shoebill, a suite of Albertine Rift endemics and more.

For many of the tricky species, this tour offers multiple opportunities to see them, which maximizes our chances of success. As we avoid the temptation of rushing around for the biggest list, we focus on the birds that are unique or typical to the area. Being in some of Africa’s best birding area, we will still pay attention to all the available species (within reason) and see a huge diversity.

Let us know if you have target birds or want to know more about the species we might encounter. A species list will be handed out to you as part of your tour booklet and is available beforehand upon request.

This is a dedicated birding and wildlife tour with early starts and lots of time in the field. While we will focus on finding the special birds, we are likely to have some great sightings of mammals, primates, flowers and butterflies, of which Uganda has a mind-boggling diversity.
# Birding Africa Itinerary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Birding Africa Itinerary</th>
<th>Night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Rwanda tour starts early morning at 6 a.m. in Kigali</em>: drive Kigali to Nyungwe.</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
<td>Nyungwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nyungwe to Kigali. <em>Rwanda tour ends this evening in Kigali</em>. <em>Uganda Specials tour starts this evening in Kigali</em> with the night’s accommodation.</td>
<td><strong>End of Rwanda tour / Kigali</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Drive from Kigali to Kabale, Bunyonyi and to Bwindi Ruhija.</td>
<td>Ruhija, Bwindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Full day Ruhija down African Green Broadbill trail (note: this trail quite strenuous)</td>
<td>Ruhija, Bwindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Second day Ruhija, possibly African Green Broadbill trail, optional gorilla trek for some.</td>
<td>Ruhija, Bwindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Birding The Neck and to Queen Elizabeth National Park.</td>
<td>QENP (border of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>via Ishasha through Queen Elizabeth National Park</td>
<td>QENP (border of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To Kibale Forest</td>
<td>Kibale or nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kibale Forest: First Green-breasted Pitta morning</td>
<td>Kibale or nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kibale Forest: Second Green-breasted Pitta morning</td>
<td>Kibale or nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kibale Forest: Third Green-breasted Pitta morning, To Kampala or nearby.</td>
<td>Kampala or nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Shoebill boat trip and return to Entebbe. <strong>The Uganda Specials tour ends this evening upon arrival in Entebbe.</strong></td>
<td><strong>End of Uganda Specials tour</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>The Uganda Budongo and Murchison Extension Tour starts early morning at 6 a.m in Entebbe</em>: Drive from Entebbe to Masindi, birding en-route</td>
<td>Masindi area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Birding the Budongo Forest and associated areas</td>
<td>Masindi area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masindi or Budongo area in the morning, birding en route to Murchison Falls NP</td>
<td>Murchison Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Full day in Murchison Falls NP</td>
<td>Murchison Falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Return from Murchison Falls area to Entebbe, birding en-route. <strong>The Uganda Murchison Tour ends this evening upon arrival in Entebbe.</strong></td>
<td><strong>End of tour</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Planning your flight

**Rwanda tour**: starts at 6 am in Kigali and ends at 6 pm in Kigali (fly out from 8 pm).

**Uganda Specials tour**: starts in the evening in Kigali (anytime) and ends in Entebbe (fly out from 11 pm).

**Uganda Murchison tour**: starts at 6 am in Entebbe and ends at 8pm in Entebbe (fly out from 11 pm).
Introduction

Uganda, a tiny country straddling the equator, is one of the birding gems of the continent. With over 1000 species having been recorded here, it has the highest concentration of birds in Africa and is the most accessible place to see the legendary Shoebill, one of the world’s most bizarre birds.

The misty peaks and fern-laden forests of the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda’s best birding hotspot, are an apt setting to search for a host of exciting Albertine Rift endemics. It is even suggested that at least one undescribed species might yet lurk in the park! Furthermore, these mountains offer what is probably one of the greatest wildlife experiences on earth: the opportunity to come face to face with one of our closest relatives, the Mountain Gorilla, in its natural habitat. We’ll also search for Shoebills on small boats in a papyrus swamp, giving us an excellent chance of a close encounter with this extraordinary bird.

Offering 24 of the 26 Albertine Rift endemics recorded in Uganda, Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, spans an ecotone from Buhoma’s lowlands to Ruhija’s highlands. At Buhoma, pitta-like Short-tailed Warblers and Kivu Ground Thrushes skulk in the mossy undergrowth. African Grey Parrots fly overhead and groups of Chimpanzees shriek from deep in the forest. At Ruhija (also spelled Ruhiiza), the cloud-swathed Virunga volcanoes (of Diana Fossey fame) loom in the distance. Here we’ll search for the near mythical African Green Broadbill and Grauer’s Rush Warbler. It is even suggested that at least one undescribed species might even be lurking in the park!

We also run an extension tour to Murchison Falls, Budongo and Mabira Forests. This tour is run after the Specials tour and allows you the flexibility either to sneak away for a short Uganda break or to enjoy a longer visit.

In Rwanda we focus on the Albertine Rift endemics at Nyungwe, as an extension of our Uganda Specials Tour.

The Nyungwe Forest is the largest block of Afromontane forest on the continent and an excellent network of trails allows excellent chances for Albertine Rift endemics such as Red-collared Babbler, Purple-breasted Sunbird, Kungwe Apalis, Rwenzori Turaco, Dusky Crimsonwing and more (see our article).

Uganda Specials Tour

Mist-forest-clad mountains, vast swamps and great lakes create the backdrop to some of Africa’s most productive and exciting birding. A scholarly view identifies the Albertine Rift mountains as among the continent’s richest Endemic Bird Areas; what this means to me and you is that the region is packed with rare, localised and exciting birds, the key species we’ll be looking for on our Uganda and Rwanda tours.

Shoebill and Lake Victoria swamps

The dense Papyrus-matted shores of Lake Victoria are one of the best areas to search for Africa’s most prehistoric looking bird, Shoebill. We will access the densely vegetated channels by dugout canoe, itself a fun experience. The semi-forested landscape and swampy vegetation of the surrounding area is highly productive, and we can expect to notch up a good list of species while we search for Shoebill. Highlights may include Red-chested Sunbird, hulky Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill, Splendid Starling, African Pied Hornbill, Broad-billed Roller, Western Grey Plantain-eater, Slender-billed Weaver, Swamp Flycatcher, Carruther’s Cisticola and Great Blue Turaco. There is also an outside chance of Lesser Jacana.
Kibale National Park

The mid-altitude forests of Kibale National Park have recently become the most reliable site for one of Africa’s most colourful birds, the rarely-seen Green-breasted Pitta. Our tour is scheduled to coincide with the period of greatest pitta activity, and we’ll allow ourselves three full mornings searching for this tricky beauty.

The surrounding forests are very productive, and if we’re lucky we’ll quickly connect with the pitta and then focus on finding the great array of other forest species. Localised specialties include Lowland Masked Apalis, Joyful Greenbul and, if we’re very lucky, White-naped Pigeon. Other highlights may include Brown Illadopsis, Red-chested Owlet, Dusky Tit, Black Bee-eater, Afep Pigeon, Black-billed Turaco, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, Speckled Tinkerbird, Yellow-throated Tinkerbird, Yellow-spotted Barbet, Yellow-crested Woodpecker, Western Nicator, a host of greenbul, Fraser’s Rufous Thrush, Green Hylia, White-chinned Prinia, Buff-throated Apalis, Scaly-breasted Illadopsis, Superb Sunbird, Red-headed Malimbe and Dusky-blue Flycatcher.

Kibale National Park has the highest diversity of primates of any forest in the world. We may encounter species such as Black-and-white Colobus, Red Colobus, Blue Monkey and Uganda or Grey-cheeked Mangabey.

Of particular excitement, however is that Kibale is one of the best spots in Uganda to see Chimpanzees. The park is home to several chimpanzee communities, which we can encounter while birding. Some chimpanzees are habituated and you may join the park’s rangers on an optional “chimpanzee tracking” activity, which allows you one hour with our closest relatives (note they may be on the move!).

Queen Elizabeth National Park

The open country habitat in “QE” provides a good change from the forest, with opportunities to look for open country animals such as Uganda Kob and African Elephant, and birds such as White-backed Vultures, Martial Eagle, Black-bellied Bustard, Red-necked Spur-fowl, Banded Martin, Rüppell’s Glossy Starling and Red-chested Sunbird.

We’ve also had many Leopard sightings here, so watch out at the edge of the riverine thickets. Ironically, it is the Lions here that are famous for tree-climbing and we’ll look out for them too, especially in Ishasha in the south.

Closer to the centre of the park, we may also find a fine array of wetland species - from Goliath Heron, Yellow-billed Stork and Sacred Ibis to Water Thick-knee, Plain Martin and the peculiar African Skimmer - while the fringing vegetation is also home to the gaudy Papyrus Gonolek.

Snorting Hippos and other mammals to watch for include African Elephant and African Buffalo. Look out for Vervet Monkeys in the flat-topped Acacias, Olive Baboon on the roads below and African Fish-Eagles overhead, Unusual and a real treat here is the Giant Forest Hog - in fact, Queen Elizabeth National Park is the best place in Africa to see this giant species.
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

Bwindi’s steep mountain slopes are tangled in rich forest growth, home to many Albertine Rift endemics. This is also where we can track some of the last remaining Eastern or Mountain Gorillas.

A top target is the unusual African Green Broadbill. A full-day hike to Mabwindi Swamp will afford us the best possible opportunity of seeing this species, and our trip coincides with the period when the nesting site may be known.

Another local specialty at the swamp is Grauer’s Rush Warbler, which skulks around in the reedbeds, and if we’re very lucky we may spot Dwarf Honeyguide.

Other local specialties we’ll be hoping to see include Dusky Crimsonwing, Cinnamon Bracken Warbler, White-headed Woodhoopoe, Ruwenzori Apalis, Mountain Masked Apalis, Grauer’s Warbler, Red-throated Alethe, Red-faced Woodland Warbler, Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher, Ruwenzori Blue-headed Sunbird, Bar-tailed Trogon, Black-faced Rufous Warbler, Banded Prinia, Chubb’s Cisticola, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Mountain Buzzard, Handsome Francolin, Ruwenzori Nightjar, Grey-throated Barbet, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, White-starred Robin, Archer’s Robin-Chat, Grey Apalis, Chestnut-throated Apalis, Ruwenzori Batis, Stripe-breasted Tit, Mountain Black Boubou, Pink-footed Puffback, Montane Oriole, Sharpe’s Starling, Strange Weaver, Regal Sunbird, Doherty’s Bushshrike and Red-faced Woodland Warbler.

We will make a stop on the shores of Lake Bunyoni, which hold Papyrus Yellow Warbler and White-winged Swamp Warbler.

Rwanda Tour

Our Rwanda trip focusses on Africa’s largest contiguous block of montane forest, best accessed at Nyungwe National Park. We’ll have almost four full days to explore these little-birded forests. Even richer than Bwindi in local specialties, we’ll be searching for Red-collared Mountain Babbler, Ruwenzori Turaco, Stuhlman’s Double-collared Sunbird, the exquisite Purple-breasted Sunbird, Neumann’s Short-tailed Warbler and Kungwe Apalis, and will have the chance of catching up with just about any of specialties from Bwindi that we may have missed. If we’re really lucky we may even encounter Shelley’s Crimsonwing or Albertine Owlet, two species only a handful of birders have seen before.
Murchison and Budongo Tour

A whole new suite of species awaits us in this lowland area of moist savannas, woodlands and tropical forests.

From Entebbe we make our way northwest to Masindi, gateway to the mid-altitude forest of Budongo Forest, one of the richest Central African rainforests.

At Busingiro and along the famous Royal Mile we’ll search for specialties such as **Ituri Batis, Jameson’s Wattle-eye, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, African Dwarf Kingfisher, White-thighed Hornbill, Blue-throated Roller, Forest Robin, Fire-crested Alethe, Red-tailed Ant-thrush, Lemon-bellied Crombec, Grey Longbill, Yellow Longbill, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Yellow-browed Camaroptera, Black-capped Apalis, African Shrike Flycatcher and Velvet-mantled Drongo.** Perhaps the most sought-after bird here is **Nahan’s Francolin,** a tricky understory species. Chimpanzees can often be heard shrieking from the depths of the forest, while Guereza Colobus and Blue Monkey may cross our path.

Murchison Falls National Park is set on the banks of the mighty Nile river. Here the forests give way to broad-leaved woodland and palm savanna, hosting more open-country species.

A cruise up the Nile river will bring us to see the dramatic Murchison Falls from below. Hippos line the banks in places and **Shoebill** may show up in the Papyrus swamps.

As we bird our way through the savanna, we may encounter some mammals such as African elephant, the elegant **Rotschild’s Giraffe,** Oribi and **Patas Monkey.**

Bird specialities here include **Rock Pratincole, Pennant-winged Nightjar, Red-throated Bee-eater, Spotted Morning Thrush, Silverbird, Bar-breasted Firefinch, Long-toed Lapwing, Piapiac, Abyssinian Ground Hornbill, Black-billed Barbet, Heuglin’s Francolin** and if we are lucky Pel’s Fishing Owl. Our previous trips have turned up surprises such as **Emin’s Shrike, Ring-necked Francolin** and **Red-winged Pytilia.**

Finally, it’s time to head back to Entebbe, with a short stop en route for a chance at **Puvel’s Illadopsis.**
Practical details

Group size

6 participants only. Most of the trails are quite broad.

Vehicles

Transport is by 4x4 safari vehicle with a driver experienced in birding tours. Everyone has a window seat.

Walking

Easy, slow and stopping often along rather broad forest trails and roads. Tracking gorillas can be quite tough and tracking chimpanzees can be quite fast-paced. These do require one to be fit. The gorilla terrain can be steep and sturdy walking boots are advised. Otherwise, comfy walking shoes are adequate.

In Uganda the hike down to the African Green Broadbill marsh is quite tough and does require one to be fit, although we do it very slowly over the whole day, and there will be someone to walk back slowly with you if you feel it is too tough, or you want to make an early start back. Two of the half-day walks in Nyungwe are also on narrow trails and require a level of fitness, but we expect everyone should be able to handle them fine.

Accommodation

We stay in comfortable accommodation, as close as possible to the best birding areas. Although in Central Africa hot water and electricity can be intermittent, all rooms provide hot showers and private facilities.

Meals are generally Western-style with an African flavour. Please advise if you are vegetarian and what foods you enjoy, so that we can cater for you. As water is not safe to drink, we supply free bottled water in the vehicle that you can take to your rooms in the evening.
Optional Gorilla and chimpanzee tracking

Please confirm with us whether or not you would like to track chimpanzee or gorilla. Tracking permits are strictly limited in number and sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Uganda Wildlife Service only issues permits that are paid in full.

Gorilla and chimpanzee tracking permits are not included in the tour cost.

If you think you might want to see gorillas but are unsure, then we can recommend it!

The gorilla tracking permit currently costs $625 (this is 600 + 25 local booking fee).

(In Rwanda, the permit has already risen to $1500. Uganda is expected to follow but hopefully in later years).

We recommend hiring a porter; they charge about US$20 cash.

We stand an excellent chance of seeing chimpanzees while birding in Kibale forest (we have had a 100% success rate over the last four years). However, it is possible to do chimpanzee tracking with the parks staff for $125 (this is 115 + 10 local booking fee).

Tracking gorillas can be quite tough as the terrain can be steep. Tracking chimpanzees can be quite fast-paced as the chimpanzees can be on the move.
Included
✓ boat trips
✓ Birding Africa tour leader and local guides
✓ entry fees and activities as per itinerary
✓ accommodation and all meals
✓ airport transfers
✓ bottled water in the vehicle
✓ soft drinks
✓ tips

Booklet and checklist
Birding Africa provides:
1. this tour leaflet with detailed itinerary
2. the tour information pack, emailed to you.
3. the tour booklet with checklists, on the tour.

Questions?
Please email info@birdingafrica.com

How to book
1. Complete our online form.
2. Secure your booking deposit by credit card on our 3D-secure site (ZAR2000 or about £110.)
3. Settle the balance by bank transfer 150 days before the tour.
   We will email you a reminder and the banking details.