



Mountain Gorilla

Africa's Uganda: 10 Days of Birds, Wildlife, Gorillas and Chimpanzees

9 Nights/10 Days

Despite its small size (91,136 sq. mi) the equatorial African nation of Uganda boasts a staggering biodiversity. 20 species of primates are recorded within Uganda, among which are the closest living human relative; the Chimpanzee, as well as over half of the world's population of Mountain Gorillas. 1070 bird species occur in Uganda (more than half of all African species), and many of the most sought after African birds can be seen here.

Uganda is home to 60 protected areas, including ten national parks. These reserves are composed of diverse habitats that include the scenic shores of Lake Victoria, lush rain forests, Albertine Rift montane forests, semi-arid plains, dry savanna, and various swamps and rivers including the majestic Nile River.

We invite you to join us on this 10 day exploration of Uganda's biodiversity, beginning with Shoebills, Maribou Storks, and a plethora of avian species, while traversing several of Uganda's most spectacular reserves for chances at African Elephants, Giraffes, Zebras, Lions, Hyenas, Leopards, Gorillas, Chimpanzees, and so much more!

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrive Entebbe (EBB)
Day 2: Mabamba Wetlands to Lake Mburo
Day 3: Lake Mburo National Park
Day 4: Birding and travel to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest
Days 5 and 6: Gorilla Tracking
Day 7: Queen Elizabeth National Park
Day 8: Queen Elizabeth and Kibale National Parks
Day 9: Chimpanzee tracking Kibale National Park
Day 10: Departure from Entebbe (EBB)

9 Night/10 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrive in Uganda (EBB). Transfer to Hotel Boma for the night.

Meals: Dinner

Day 2, Birding safari through Mabamba Wetlands then travel to Lake Mburo:

Early breakfast, then out to nearby Mabamba Wetlands on the shores of Lake Victoria. This is one of the few remaining swamps in the country protected by the local communities – an extensive papyrus swamp with its labyrinth of channels and lagoons, classified as an Important Bird Area, and home to several pairs of Shoebills, Uganda's most famous avian resident. This charismatic monotypic species is certainly amongst the most sought-after birds in Africa, and we'll make



Rothschild's Giraffe

special efforts today to find it by paddling through the channels by boat. There will of course be a good selection of classic East African water birds, including Long-tailed Cormorant, Goliath Heron, African Open-billed, Saddle-billed, and Marabou Storks, Hammerkop, Yellow-billed Duck, African Fish-Eagle, African Marsh-Harrier, Purple Swampphen, Allen's Gallinule, African Jacana, Malachite, Giant, and Pied Kingfishers, Blue-headed Coucal, Blue-breasted Bee-eater, Crowned Hornbill, Angola and Rufous-chested Swallows, and more. Spotted-necked otters are also frequently seen here in Mabamba's waters.

In the afternoon we'll travel to our first of many national parks, Lake Mburo. This park has varied habitats from open Acacia woodlands, to a number of papyrus-lined lakes and swamps. We'll have this afternoon and the following day to cover several different habitats. Some of the many species we'll search for en

route to the park, around the woodland in the immediate vicinity of Rwonyo (at lake Mburo) and within the park include Black headed, Squacco, Rufous-bellied Herons, Hadada Ibis, Yellow-billed (Black) Kite, Spur-winged Goose, Comb Duck, Black-chested Snake-Eagle, Lizard Buzzard, Palm-nut and White-backed Vultures, Wahlberg's and Verreaux's Eagles, Crested Francolin, Crowned Crane, African Finfoot, Senegal, Crowned, Wattled, and Brown-chested Lapwings, White-browed Coucal, Speckled and Blue-naped Mousebirds, Woodland Kingfisher, Little Bee-eater, Lilac-breasted and Broad-billed Rollers, Green Wood-Hoopoe, Common Scimitarbill, African Grey, Spot-flanked Barbet, Nubian Woodpecker, Angola Swallow, African Pied Wagtail, African and Long-billed Pipits, Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike, Dark-capped Bulbul, Mariqua, Olive-bellied, and Red-chested Sunbirds, Black-headed, Northern Brown-throated, Village, Vieillot's Black, and Slender-billed

Weavers, Northern Grey-headed Sparrow, Bronze Mannikin, and Yellow-fronted Canary. If we are lucky, we will even see the nomadic Weyn's Weaver. We also have good chances this afternoon/evening for Zebra, Impala and Water Buck, with Baboons and Vervet Monkeys being very common at our lodge.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Rwakobo Rock Lodge*

Day 3, Lake Mburo National Park:

Lake Mburo National Park contains multiple habitats, and our time will be divided (driving and walking) between birding an extensive area of wetland, some forested areas, and open country with numerous mammals. No fewer than 300 different bird species have been recorded in the park, an indication of the high diversity present here.

The more open grassland north of the camp, particularly along the Zebra Track, is worth exploring for species such as Coqui Francolin, Red-necked Spurfowl, Black bellied Bustard, Temminck's Courser, and African Wattled Lapwing, and it is here where small numbers of the migratory Brown-chested Lapwing can be regularly observed. After dusk, we'll have the opportunity to do some spot lighting along the entrance road, which may produce some interesting nocturnal species, such as the African Scops Owl, Verreux's Eagle-Owl, and Black-shouldered, Fiery-necked, and Pennant-winged Nightjars. If it can be arranged, a night game drive may be possible.

Some additional species that we'll search for include, African Darter, Striated Heron, Spur-winged Goose, African Marsh Harrier, African Hawk-Eagle, Common Quails, Water Thick-knee, Red Faced Barbet, Rufous-naped and

Flappet Larks, Rufous-chested Swallow, Yellow-throated Long Claw, Black Cuckoo-Shrike, Singing, Long-tailed (or Tabora) and Siffling Cisticolas, White-winged Warblers, Lead-colored Flycatcher, African Penduline-Tit, Black-headed Oriole, Tropical Boubou, Southern Red Bishop, Brubru, and Red-headed, Little and Holub's Golden-Weavers. We'll check the swamps in the park for secretive papyrus specialties, such as the Papyrus Gonolek.

Mammals will be a large part of our visit to this park, and the many species we might see include the Buffalo, Eland, Hyena, Hippo, Klipspringer, Giraffe, Warthog, Porcupine, Dwarf Mongoose, Oribi, the shy Bushbuck, graceful Impalas, and Zebras, and perhaps one of the park's many Leopards.

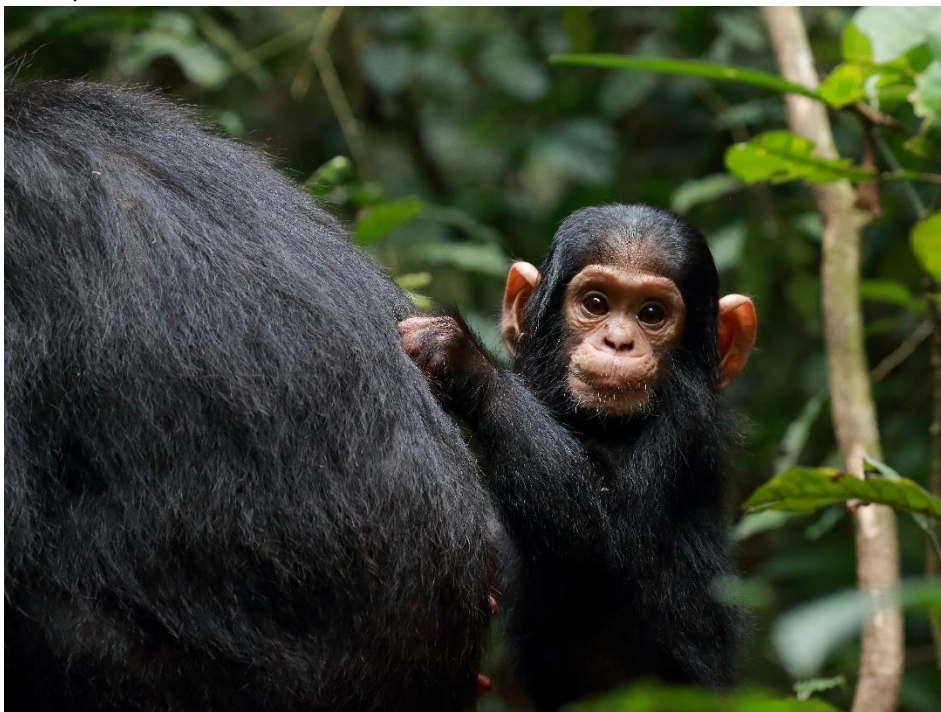
*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Rwakobo Rock Lodge*

Day 4, Birding our way to Bwindi:

The road out of Lake Mburo National Park is fantastic for birding. Our mission today will be getting to Bwindi to relax before tomorrow's big day, but along the way we will have chances of picking up a few new species. African Cuckoo-hawk, Conqui Francolin, Scaly Francolin, Lilac Breasted Roller, are likely to be spotted along the road.

Bwindi National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is home to approximately half of the world's endangered population (roughly 1,000 total) of Mountain Gorillas. In

Chimpanzee



addition, this vast reserve offers arguably the most productive montane forest birding in Africa and supports 23 of Uganda's 24 Albertine Rift endemic bird species.

Once part of a much larger forest that included the Virunga Volcanoes in neighboring Rwanda, Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is now an ecological island within a sea of human cultivation and therefore of big conservation importance.

We will arrive late in the afternoon in time for refreshing ourselves and dinner.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Haven Lodge*

Days 5 and 6, Gorilla Tracking:

On these two days we set off early with packed lunch, to the park headquarters for a briefing prior to Gorilla Tracking. Park rangers will decide which family group we are assigned to, and accompanied by trackers, rangers, and our guide, we will enter the forest in search of these majestic animals. Mountain Gorillas are proud, gentle animals and it is an unforgettable experience to encounter and even photograph them as they interact, oftentimes within just a few feet of visitors. It is a magical experience to stare in to the eyes of these gentle giants and to watch in awe as they play and go about their daily activities. It is indeed a "once in a lifetime" experience that you must not miss. Each encounter



African Elephants

is different and has its own rewards; we are likely to enjoy very close views of adults feeding, grooming and resting as the youngsters frolic and swing from vines in a delightfully playful display. Along the way, we will also look for other primates like the L' Hoest Monkey, Guerezza Colobus; Red tailed, and Blue monkeys. Other mammals in this cloud forest sanctuary include the Rwenzori Duiker, Yellow-back Duiker, Caruther's, Bohm's and Alexander Squirrels, and forest Elephants.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Gorilla Mist Camp*

Day 7, Travel to Queen Elizabeth National Park:

Today we'll start early for the 6-hour drive to Queen Elizabeth National park through the Ishasha sector of the park (popularly known for its tree climbing lions), while birding and watching for wildlife on

the way. The trip may produce species such as Grey capped Warbler, African Long Crested Eagle, Augur Buzzard, Mackinnon's Fiscal, Black headed waxbill, Black and white Manikin, Senegal Coucal, Red Chested Cuckoo, and others.

The Park which is named after the Queen of England who visited it in 1954 is the second largest national park in Uganda at 764 square miles. In terms of diversity this park ranks among the best wildlife and birding destinations in Uganda with over 610 bird species recorded, and a one-day record of 296 species. Keen birders will be treated to special birds of this park that include Harlequin Quail, Blue Quail, Small (Common) Buttonquail, African Crake, White winged Warbler, Martial Eagle, African Skimmer, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Papyrus Gonolek, Amur Falcon, Ovampo Sparrowhawk, Greater and Lesser Flamingo, Shoebill, Black Bee-eater, Caruthers's Cisticola, Terek Sandpiper, Secretary Bird, and



Shoebill

Temminck's Courser. Mammals here are plentiful and include African Elephant, Spotted Hyena, Leopard, Lion, Ugandan Kobs, Side-striped Jackal, Baboons, Chimpanzees, Bush and Water Bucks, Warthogs, and Giant Forest Hogs to mention but a few.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Mweya Safari Lodge*

Day 8, Kibale National Park and Chimpanzees:

This morning, we'll check out of our hotel, and then embark on a morning game drive of Queen Elizabeth National Park, a packed lunch, and then an afternoon boating tour of the Kazinga Channel.

The game drive takes us through a productive area of grassy plains, which support large flocks of a variety of stork species including the Spectacular Saddle-billed and Woolly-necked Storks. Other species include the Bateleur, Grey

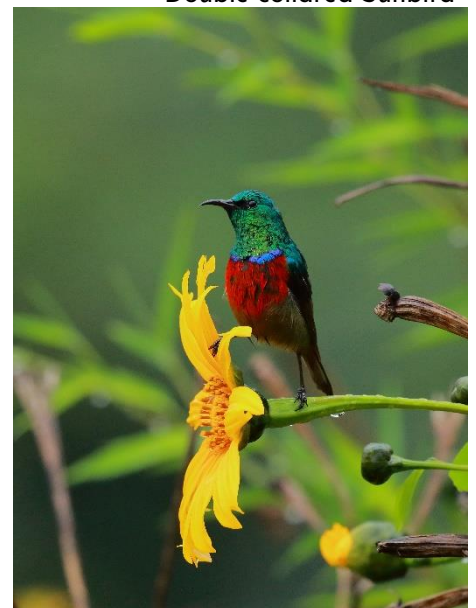
Kestrel, Lappet-faced, Ruppell's Griffon, White-backed and Palm-nut Vultures, African Crane, Black Coucal, Common Button, Harlequin and Black-rumped Quails, Red-necked Francolin, Rufous-naped and Flappet Larks. Mammals we'll look for include Elephant, Zebra, Uganda Kob, Lion, Warthog, Bush Buck, Deffassa Waterbuck, Spotted Hyena, Leopard and many others.

After lunch, we'll take a boat tour of the Kazinga Channel which is a natural magnet for herds of Elephant, Giant Forest Hog, Buffalo, Monitor Lizards, Nile Crocodiles and the abundant Hippopotamus. Birding here is excellent with great photographic opportunities. We might be blessed with congregations of African Skimmers, Great-white and Pink-backed Pelicans, Great and Long-tailed Cormorants, Open-billed Stork, African Skimmer, White-faced Whistling Duck, Marsh, Wood and Common Sandpipers, Malachite Kingfisher, African Jacana, African Wattled Plover, etc.

Later in the afternoon we will drive to Kibale Forest National Park, which is the absolute best destination for Chimpanzee tracking in East Africa. At least 1450 chimpanzees live in Kibale's forests and these represent Uganda's largest population of this endangered primate. The park also contains one of the loveliest and most varied tracts of all tropical forests in Uganda. Kibale, while composed of mid-elevation forest, is highest at the park's northern extreme at 1590m above sea level. The park also boasts 325 bird species, including 6 that are endemic to the Albertine rift region. If we are lucky, we may also see the African pitta, Green breasted Pitta, Black Bee eater, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Little Greenbul, Black eared Ground-thrush, Brown chested Alethe, Blue breasted Kingfisher, Abyssinian Ground Thrush, and the Crowned Eagle.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Chimpanzee Guest House*

Double-collared Sunbird



Day 9, Chimpanzee Tracking in the forest:

After an early breakfast we drive a few minutes to Kibale National Park visitor center for an important orientation from our guide, and then set out with high hopes of encountering one of the several family groups tolerant of people. Humans and Chimpanzees share a remarkable 98% of their DNA, making them our closest living relative. As such, tracking and observing these amazing primates can be an intimate experience as we see adults interact and care for one another as they move through their forest home, often with babies in tow, grooming, feeding, resting, and playing. In addition to Chimpanzees, Kibale is home to 12 other primates such as the rare L'hoest's monkey and East Africa's largest population of the threatened Red Colobus Monkey. Other primates here include the Guerezza Colobus, Blue monkey, Grey cheeked Mangabey, Red tailed monkey, Olive Baboon, Bushbabies and Pottos. Our tracking activity may last for up to several hours. If we do end our time with the Chimpanzees early enough, birding the adjacent Bigodi wetland is also productive with many riverine forest birds such as Speckle-breasted Woodpecker, Cabanis's Greenbul and Joyful Greenbul as well as White-spotted Fluff tail, Dusky and Olive Long tailed Cuckoo, Lesser Honeyguide, Blue-shouldered Robin Chat, White-chinned Prinia, Grey Apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera and White-collared Olive back.



Gray Crowned Crane

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Chimpanzee Guest House*

Day 10, Drive to Entebbe for evening departure out of EBB:

Today after breakfast, we'll begin our journey back to Entebbe with lunch on the way, arriving in time for check in at the airport and beginning our flights home.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Included in this itinerary:

In-country accommodations, ground transportation, tours, boat tours, chimpanzee permit, gorilla permit, meals, guide and entrance fees are included.

Not Included:

Personal items such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, gift shop, laundry, etc. are not included.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you.



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