

## 18 Days Kenya Birding



**Day 1:** Arrive in Nairobi and transferred to your hotel for a three-night stay in the city, which boasts the largest bird list of any city on earth!

**Days 2-3:** Nairobi. We visit Nairobi NP before beginning our exploration of the Great Rift Valley lakes. Highlights may include Von der Decken's Hornbill, Common Ostrich, Black-headed Heron, Marabou Stork, Egyptian Goose, Black-shouldered Kite, African White-backed Vulture, Augur Buzzard, Tawny Eagle, Helmeted Guineafowl, the beautiful

Grey Crowned Crane, White-bellied Bustard, Ring-necked Dove, White-browed Coucal, Rufous-naped Lark, Red-rumped Swallow, Rock Martin and the multicolored Red-and-yellow Barbet, or our first flamingos among many wintering Palearctic shorebirds on Lake Magadi.

**Days 4-5:** Mt. Kenya. Heading for the country's highest summit, our journey to Mt. Kenya could yield Silvery-cheeked Hornbill, Hartlaub's Turaco, Rueppell's Robin-Chat, Mountain Yellow Warbler, and Yellow-crowned Canary. The lodge's waterhole attracts many mammals including African Buffalo. We'll spend the early mornings searching for White-starred Robin, Abyssinian Crimson-wing, African Crowned Eagle, African Emerald Cuckoo, and Moustached Green Tinkerbird. A shaded riverside trail may reveal Crowned Hornbill, Mountain Wagtail, and up to eight species of sunbirds, including the stunning Tacazze Sunbird.

**Day 6:** Aberdare Mountains. In the morning, we bird the Solio Plains, where we hope to find Temminck's Courser, Jackson's Widowbird, Black-bellied Bustard, and various other grassland species. In the afternoon, we head for the Aberdares Mountains, where we overnight.

**Day 7:** Aberdares to Lake Nakuru. Today we explore the alpine moorland above the treeline, perhaps encountering Jackson's Francolins as we climb up into the highest accessible Lobelia-covered plains in Kenya. Our targets here include Alpine Chat and, with luck, we'll find the specialized and beautiful Scarlet-tufted Malachite Sunbird. In the afternoon we drop down into the Rift Valley to Lake Nakuru where we overnight.

**Day 8-9:** Lake Nakuru to Lake Baringo. We will awaken to vast flocks of flamingos, pelicans, and other waterbirds. The surrounding woodland holds Narina Trogon, Red-throated Wryneck, Arrow-marked Babbler, and African Firefinch. Later after lunch we drive to Lake Baringo, rich in arid-zone birds, where we search for Hunter's Sunbird, Heuglin's Courser, Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse, and Northern White-faced Scops-Owl. At dusk, we should see Slender-tailed Nightjars gliding along the hippo-covered shore. We spend two nights at Lake Baringo.

**Day 10:** Lake Baringo to Kakamega forest. Today exemplifies birding in Kenya. We begin in the sub-desert and end up in the most eastern tract of lowland equatorial rainforest in Africa. First we visit the cliffs near Baringo, scanning for Fan-tailed Raven, Hemprich's Hornbill, Mocking Cliff-Chat, and Bristle-crowned Starling. Later we explore the Kerio Valley, where we search rocky, scrubby hillsides for Green-

backed Eremomela, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Brown Parrot, White-crested Turaco, Pearl-spotted Owllet, and Black-headed Gonolek. Late in the day we arrive at Kakamega for a three-night stay.

**Days 11-12:** Kakamega Forest. Kakamega is full of birds and is justly famous as one of Kenya's birding meccas. Many of Kenya's fantastic forest birds are available only here. These include dapper Equatorial Akalats, comical Great Blue Turacos, and sensational Blue-headed Bee-eaters among other beauties like White-chinned and Banded Prinias, Jameson's and Yellow-bellied Wattle-eyes, Bocage's and Luehder's Bushshrikes, Black-billed and Vieillot's Weavers, Gray-headed Negrofinch, Red-headed Malimbe, and Red-headed Bluebill.

**Day 13:** Lake Victoria to Maasai Mara. Today we head to Lake Victoria, searching for swamp specialties such as Blue-headed Coucal, Swamp Flycatcher, and the striking Papyrus Gonolek. Rice paddies may produce African Openbill, Southern Red Bishop, and Zebra Waxbill. In the afternoon, we head south to the Maasai Mara National Reserve for a three-night stay.

**Day 14-15:** Maasai Mara. The Mara, the northern portion of the magnificent Serengeti system, offers spectacular vistas over flat-topped acacia and grassy plains riddled with ungulates and other animals. We'll spend the days in the western part of the reserve looking for East Africa's famous Lions, Leopards, Cheetahs, African Elephants, gazelles, and other wildlife. However, birding does not take a back seat, and we should be rewarded with views of many large raptors and vultures that gather at the kills, as well as storks, Kori Bustard, Southern Ground-Hornbill, and other species that suffer from disturbance outside these large protected areas. Other highlights may include Rufous-bellied Heron, Saddle-billed Stork, Temminck's Courser, Sooty Chat, and Schalow's Turaco. Last day depart Maasai Mara after breakfast to venture into Lake Naivasha, another Rift Valley gem, for an overnight stay.

**Day 16:** Naivasha. We will spend the early morning and afternoon at Lake Naivasha, sifting through vast flocks of waterbirds, and birding productive lakeside woodland. Some of the species expected to see includes the African Fish-eagle, Giant, Pied Kingfishers, Goliath, Purple Herons, Great, Intermediate Egrets, Wood-hoopoes, Bitterns, Lesser swamp, Little-rush Warblers, Squacco Herons, Coots, Grebes, Sandpipers among others.

**Day 17:** Nairobi. Today we return to Nairobi for a final night, searching for the endangered Sharpe's Longclaw and other grassland specialties as well as waterbirds en route.

**Day 18:** Departure. Today we fly out on our international departures.

