Our Budget Kenya tour highlights some of Africa’s most iconic and famous wildlife reserves. Our tour begins with an exploration of Mount Kenya, shrouded in montane forest – it is Africa’s second highest peak. Leaving the cool forests, we descend to the nutrient rich Lake Nakuru, with its inexhaustible numbers of Lesser Flamingo. We then traverse the dry woodlands of Lake Baringo, home to the Jackson’s Hornbill and Somali Sparrow, while the famous Kakamega forest adds a West African rain forest element with such highlights as Blue-headed Bee-eater and Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye being notable targets. From there, we head south towards the vast plains of what is arguably one of the most fabulous game reserves in the world, the justifiably famous Maasai Mara! This tour offers incomparable wildlife and birding in the space of just two weeks!
THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

THE ITINERARY

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TOUR MAP:
Day 1: Arrival in Nairobi. Following your arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, just outside of Kenya’s bustling capital, you will be transferred to our hotel where you will be met by your Rockjumper tour leader. We will then meet for a welcome dinner, to discuss our exciting forthcoming adventure.

Day 2: Thika to Mt. Kenya. We will depart Nairobi after an early breakfast, travelling north towards the small settlement of Thika. It was near here that Richard Leakey discovered the remains of Turkana Boy, the most complete early human skeleton (attributed to *Homo erectus*) ever found. We will have some time to visit the excellent museum, which displays many of the sub-fossils and artifacts that surround his important discovery, but will also use this as our first birding stop. Here we may find our first African Green Pigeons, Brown-hooded Kingfisher, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, White-headed Barbet, Rüppell's Robin-Chats Black-throated Wattle-eye and jewel-like Green-headed Sunbird. Nearer the confluence of the Thika and Chania Rivers, we may be fortunate to spot an African Black Duck, the glowing Purple-crested Turaco, Mountain Wagtail, localised Grey-olive Greenbul and even the elusive African Finfoot.

Thereafter we will proceed towards Mt. Kenya National Park, where we expect to arrive in the mid to late afternoon. En route, there is a distinct possibility of sighting Speckled Mousebird, Red-fronted Tinkerbird, Spot-flanked Barbet, Lesser Striped Swallow, Capped Wheatear, Abyssinian Thrush, African Pipit, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Red-faced Crombec, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, African Paradise Flycatcher, Collared and Variable Sunbirds, Abyssinian White-eye, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Spectacled Weaver, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Streaky Seed-eater and African Citril.

Day 3: Mt. Kenya. Today we will have a full day to bird the slopes of Mount Kenya, as we ascend though montane forest towards the Meteorological Station. If the weather is clear, we shall awaken to views of the snow-capped summit of Mount Kenya (5199m) – Africa’s second highest peak after Mount Kilimanjaro. Birds that we will be targeting on the forested slopes here include Black Sparrowhawk, the magnificent Crowned Eagle, Jackson’s Francolin, African Olive and Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeons, Red-fronted Parrot, bullet-like Scarce Swift, Crowned and Silvery-cheeked Hornbills, beautiful Bar-tailed Trogon, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, Moustached and Yellow-rumped Tinkerbirds, Abyssinian Ground Thrush, Black Saw-wing, Yellow-whiskered,
Slender-billed and Olive-breasted Greenbuls, Moorland Chat, White-starred Robin, Cape Robin-Chat, skulking Cinnamon Bracken Warbler, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Hunter’s Cisticola, Chestnut-throated, Grey and Black-throated Apalises, White-browed Crombec, White-bellied Tit, Grey Cuckoo-shrike, Waller’s Starling, Eastern Double-collared Sunbird, Brown-capped Weaver, Yellow-bellied and Black-headed Waxbills, the secretive Abyssinian Crimsonwing, Thick-billed Seedeater, Yellow-crowned Canary and, if we are very lucky, Oriole Finch. Mammals we may see include the beautiful Blue (Sykes’s) Monkey and Guereza. At night we should hear the eerie screams of the Tree Hyrax.

**Day 4: Mt. Kenya to Nakuru.** After a morning bird walk, we will depart for Lake Nakuru National Park. The journey will take several hours to complete, largely because of the number of important stops along the way. First, we will visit a regular roost site for the rare and impressive Cape Eagle-Owl. The subspecies here, mackinderi, is larger in size than the nominate race and is sometimes split off as distinct species. Further along, we will also visit the impressive Thompson Falls. In the surrounding scrub and secondary forest, we may encounter White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, African Paradise Flycatcher, Collared and Variable Sunbirds, African Green Pigeon, and Purple-crested Turaco, while the delightful Mountain Wagtail is sometimes seen at the river’s edge. Thereafter, we will drop down the eastern rim of the Great Rift Valley and arrive in Lake Nakuru National Park in time for an evening game drive. Mammals on offer in the reserve include African Buffalo, Burchell’s Zebra, glamorous ‘Rothschild’s’ Giraffe, White and Black Rhinoceroses, several antelope species, and both Lion and Leopard.

**Day 5: Lake Nakuru National Park.** Lake Nakuru was initially declared as a national park because of its vast flamingo population. The alkaline levels of the lake itself vary and this, along with other accompanying changes in algal biomass, causes considerable variation in the flamingo population. However, when present, the vast numbers of Lesser Flamingo form an almost impenetrable “pink wall” along the entire shore. Besides the flamingos, other waterbirds abound and we can expect to find good numbers of Great White Pelican, cormorants, egrets, ibis, ducks, African Spoonbill, the regal African Fish Eagle, and noisy groups of Pied Kingfisher. The surrounding dryland areas also support Black-headed Lapwing, Coqui and Hildebrandt’s Francolins, White-fronted Bee-eater, Green Wood Hoopoe, Red-throated Wryneck, Red-rumped and
Mosque Swallows, Mocking Cliff Chat, Little Rock Thrush, Arrow-marked Babbler, the scarce Grey-crested Helmetshrike, Rüppell’s Starling, and Speke’s Weaver.

After what should be a most unforgettable morning, we will slowly make our way towards Lake Baringo. Set in dry rocky country to the North of Lake Nakuru, Lake Baringo is one of only two fresh-water lakes in the Kenyan segment of the Great Rift Valley.

Day 6 & 7: Lake Baringo and surrounds.
We have a full day to explore the lake edge and the surrounding dry thornveld, where an impressive 470 odd species are on offer. We will focus our birding efforts on the beautiful grounds at the Country Club, the surrounding shoreline, and the impressive Baringo Cliffs. Key birds that we will be searching for include Verreaux’s and Greyish Eagle-Owls, Northern White-faced Owl, Hemprich’s and Jackson’s Hornbills, African Black and Nyanza Swifts, Mocking Cliff Chat, quirky Bristle-crowned Starlings, Red-fronted Apalis, Abyssinian White-eye, Fan-tailed Raven, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Black-throated Barbet, Pygmy Batis, the aptly named Beautiful Sunbird, Little, Village, Golden-backed and Northern Masked Weavers, and both Yellow-crowned and Northern Red Bishops.

Day 8: Lake Baringo to Kakamega Forest. After breakfast and a spot of morning birding, we head towards the famous Kakamega Forest. This is essentially a travel day on which we only expect to arrive at Kakamega Forest in the late afternoon. Following a quick rest break, we may have the opportunity to bird the grounds of our accommodation in the early evening.

Day 9: Kakamega Forest. Today we will enjoy a full day of birding at Kakamega Forest, in search of several Central and West African specials. Our targets here will include Crowned Eagle, Western Banded Snake Eagle, African Goshawk, the shy and extremely secretive White-spotted Flufftail, noisy Grey Parrots, the giant Great Blue and Black-billed Turacos, African Emerald and Black Cuckoos, Green Malkoha, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, Black-and-white-

Day 10: Kakamega Forest to Lake Naivasha. After an early morning bird walk, we depart for Lake Naivasha where we expect to arrive in time for an early lunch. The afternoon will be spent birding the lake edge and the surrounding woodlands where we should see Southern Pochard, Black and Goliath Herons, Saddle-billed Stork, African Snipe, Three-banded Plover, Long-toed Lapwing, White-fronted Bee-eater, Northern Pied and Black-lored Babblers, Red-fronted and White-headed Barbets, Brown-backed Honeybird, Anteater Chat, Banded Martin, Grey-rumped Swallow, the lovely Grey-capped Warbler, White-winged Widowbird, and Brimstone Canary.

Day 11: Lake Naivasha to Masai Mara. Today we depart for the world famous Maasai Mara, enjoying lunch en route and the Yellow-billed Barbet by Markus Lilje
As we head southwards, the countryside will become notably drier and considerably less undulating. En route, we should also encounter our first tall and proud Maasai Cattle-herders. We will arrive in the Maasai Mara in time to enjoy our first birding and big game safari.

**Day 12 & 13: Maasai Mara.** The Mara, as it is affectionately called, is Kenya’s most well-known reserve boasts one of Africa’s most astonishing big game populations. Unfenced – it is bounded to the east by the Ngama Hills, to the west by the Oloololo or Siria Escarpment, and to the south by the vast Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. Famously, the Mara constitutes the very northerly end of the Great Migration; that unrivalled primeval surge of wildebeest, zebra and antelope that sweeps in from Tanzania’s Serengeti to Kenya’s Maasai Mara as the rainfall affects the quality of grasses across these vast plains. Although we will not experience the migration at this time of year, we can still expect to see first class numbers of Africa’s big game. The impressive black-maned Mara Lions are possibly the stars of the show, however, Cheetah, Leopard, Spotted Hyena and other top predators are also present in good numbers. Other animals we can expect to see include African Elephant, African Buffalo, Maasai Giraffe, Plains Zebra, Hippopotamus, Impala, Waterbuck, Topi, Hartebeest (traditionally known as Kongoni), Grant’s and Thompson’s Gazelles, endearing Banded Mongoose, and the comical and familiar Common Warthog.

Not only is this a great place in which to find game, but the wide golden-green savannas, dotted with *Acacia* trees, make it ideal for photography. The Mara is ravishingly beautiful and offers long, undisturbed views and utterly dramatic panoramas. As for the birding opportunities – the Mara is world-renowned, providing an almost unparalleled opportunities to see Rufous-bellied Heron, Temminck’s Courser, Scaly Francolin, Black Coucal, Schalow’s Turaco, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, D’Arnaud's Barbet (sometimes referred to as the subspecies Usambaro Barbet), Green-backed and African Grey Woodpecker, Flappet and White-tailed Larks, Rosy-throated Longclaw, Long-billed Pipit, Sooty Chat, Northern Black Flycatcher, Trilling, Stout, Croaking and Long-tailed Cisticolas, Green-capped Eremomela, Yellow-bellied Hylia, Red-throated Tit, Swahili Sparrow and Yellow Bishop.
We will also have leisure to head across the plains to Siana Springs, on the eastern edge of the National Reserve. We will certainly enjoy further big game and bird sightings en route. This section of the park will give us better chances of finding several dryland species including the Double-banded Courser, Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, Spotted Eagle-Owl, African Black Swift, Athi Short-toed Lark, Grey-capped Social Weaver and Magpie Shrike.

**Day 14: Masai Mara to Nairobi, and Depart.** After breakfast we will depart on a final morning game drive before making our way out of this vast wilderness and reluctantly back to Nairobi. Along the way, we will stop at the Manguo Ponds, a seasonal wetland that fills when there have been sufficient rains. This site supports a good selection of duck species including Hottentot Teal, White-backed and Maccoa Duck and a variety of waders. We plan to arrive at Nairobi International Airport in the late afternoon where the tour will conclude.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**
Tour dates, prices, single supplement rates, approximate flight costs and spaces available for this tour are displayed on our website. Please see under IMPORTANT NOTES below.

This includes:
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 14;
- Private transportation (4x4 stretch land cruisers);
- All accommodation in budget, but comfortable hotels;
- Drinking water for the duration of the tour;
- Reserve entrance fees;
- Extra activities as mentioned in the itinerary; and
- All guiding services
The tour fee does not include:

- ANY airfares (see above);
- Visa fees;
- Personal travel/ Medical insurance;
- Optional excursions not mentioned in the itinerary;
- Beverages;
- Any tips and gratuities; and
- Telephone calls, laundry or other items of a personal nature.

**Single Supplement:** The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

a) Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is however fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.

b) Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration a small party supplement will have to be charged.

c) Furthermore, these costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader/s at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

**Tipping:** As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If, therefore, you feel that he/they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them.

**Special Notes:**

- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kgs (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg’s (18lb) for hand luggage.
- In order to cover the variety of sites in this large country, we will have to cover a lot of ground. Our vehicle is a comfortable safari landcruiser.
- We will be visiting a number of national parks and reserves where there are good numbers of big game, for our safety we are naturally confined to the vehicles while on game drives.
- We will be birding in some parts of this beautiful land that are far away from medical facilities.

**ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:**

This tour does not include any airfares. The tour will begin in the evening of day 1 with a welcome dinner. As this is an arrival day, you are welcome to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi in the early afternoon of day 14.
The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

**FLIGHTS:**
Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi (IATA: NBO) is the main port of entry/departure for this tour. KLM offers the most reliable and regular routes for North America and European travellers via Amsterdam to this airport. These flights however often arrive in the evening necessitating arrival the night before the tour start date. This will give one time to recover from the rigors of international flight travel before the tour starts. British Airways and Virgin Atlantic also offer daily flights from London to Nairobi and return, and would probably be more reliable than the Kenya Airways who offer regular flights from London to Nairobi. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

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