Rwanda
Gorillas & Albertine Rift Endemics II
28th April to 4th May 2018 (7 days)
Trip Report

Mountain Gorilla by Adam Riley

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader: André Bernon
Tour Summary

Our time in Rwanda started in the capital city, Kigali. We were set to tour the fantastic and ancient Nyungwe Forest in the south and then make our way up north to Volcanoes National Park. Nyungwe was fantastic, with superb scenery over Lake Kivu and some mouth-watering Albertine Rift endemics. A cultural tour in Kigali was a highlight too. Visiting the Genocide Museum was a real eye-opener to what this splendid country has gone through. We also had a magnificent time with a Eastern Gorilla family that consisted of fourteen individuals! A superb way to end our time in Rwanda.

We arrived in Kigali this evening, ready for our early start the next day. A quick breakfast was most enjoyable before making our way south, through the very clean city – Africa’s cleanest, in fact. A lot of rain had fallen recently, which created a lot of surface water, landing us sightings of Giant Kingfisher, the monotypic Hamerkop, Yellow-billed Stork, African Openbill and African Spoonbill. We ventured further south and started to realise why Rwanda is nicknamed the “country of a thousand hills”. We started to gain elevation as we neared Nyungwe, ticking off Ruaha Chat and Scarce Swift en route. We arrived at our splendid lodge, overlooking Lake Kivu and the Congo. We spent two full days in this glorious forest – which is one of the oldest forests in Africa, dating back to the last Ice Age. We spent many hours walking through this forest and managed to pick out most of the Albertine Rift Endemics and many other specials. These included Red-throated Alethe hopping around at our feet, Ruwenzori Turaco, Stripe-breasted Tit, Ruwenzori Double-collared, Regal, Purple-breasted and Blue-headed Sunbirds, White-bellied Robin-Chat, Archer’s Ground Robin, Ruwenzori Nightjar, Handsome Francolin, the outrageously-coloured Doherty’s Bushshrike, Black-faced Prinia, Strange Weaver, Luhder’s Bushshrike, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, White-tailed Crested Flycatcher and Olive-breasted and Cabanis’s Greenbuls. We even had a surprise sighting of some Chimpanzees, as well as L’Hoest’s Monkeys!

Our time here had unfortunately come to an end, as we retraced our steps to Kigali. En route we had a superb sighting of Bat Hawks with a chick on the nest! We had a great Indian dinner this evening before retreating to our hotel for some much-needed rest.

Dawn broke as we leisurely woke and checked out to go and explore the wonderful Kigali. Our first stop was
visiting the Genocide Museum and Memorial. This was a really special visit, as we took the time to understand the trauma that this beautiful country had gone through. At least a quarter of a million people’s remains are buried here, and it was an eye-opener coming to terms with what had actually happened. Over one million people lost their lives in just one-hundred days! After paying our respects, we then took a drive through “new” Kigali, where we saw some of the new plans for the city. A quick visit to a world-famous art gallery was also memorable. We then had a great lunch at the original “Hotel Rwanda” after which the Hollywood movie was based. We then made our way north-west to Volcanoes National Park. The last great memory for the day was visiting a cultural village. Here, poachers had been transformed into guardians, which was a great project to support.

We woke early to some good weather for our Mountain Gorilla track! It was a bucket-list tick seeing a family group, of which we saw 14! Spending some time with and also getting close to these majestic beings was a great way to end this extension to Rwanda!

Annotated List of species recorded
Note: Number in brackets ( ) indicate number of days on the tour the species was recorded.
List powered through the report generator of our partner iGoTerra.

**Birds (119 in total: 117 seen, 2 heard)**

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Gill, F and D Donsker (Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird List (v 7.3).

**Status codes:**
- E = Endemic
- NE = Near-endemic
- I = Introduced

**IUCN codes:**
- CR = Critically endangered
- EN = Endangered
- VU = Vulnerable
- EW = Extinct in the Wild
- NT = Near Threatened
- DD = Data Deficient

**Handsome Francolin**
*Pternistis nobilis*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 2.5.
We had extreme close-up looks whilst leaving Nyungwe!

**Yellow-billed Stork**
*Mycteria ibis*
(2) Kigali 2.5 and Kigali 3.5.

**African Openbill**
*Anastomus lamelligerus*
(1) Kigali 29.4.

**African Sacred Ibis**
*Threskiornis aethiopicus*
(2) Kigali 29.4 and Kigali 2.5.

**Storks Ciconiidae**

**Ibises and Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**
## Trip Report – RBL Rwanda - Gorillas & Albertine Rift Endemics II 2018

### Rockjumper Birding Tours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hadada Ibis</strong></td>
<td>(3) Kigali 29.4, Kigali 2.5 and Kigali 3.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>African Spoonbill</strong></td>
<td>(3) Kigali 29.4, Kigali 2.5 and Kigali 3.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Heron, Egrets, and Bitterns Ardeidae</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Western Cattle Egret</strong></td>
<td>(1) Kigali 2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Black-headed Heron</strong></td>
<td>(1) Kigali 2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Great Egret</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 29.4.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hamerkop Scopidae</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hamerkop</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hawks, Eagles, and Kites Accipitridae</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>African Harrier-Hawk</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hooded Vulture (EN)</strong></td>
<td>(2) en route 2.5 and en route 3.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bat Hawk</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Long-crested Eagle</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gabar Goshawk</strong></td>
<td>(1) Kigali 29.4.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Black Sparrowhawk</strong></td>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow-billed Kite</strong></td>
<td>(3) en route 29.4, en route 2.5 and en route 3.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Augur Buzzard</strong></td>
<td>Observed 4 day(s) in total.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pigeons and Doves Columbidae</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rock Dove</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Speckled Pigeon</strong></td>
<td>(1) observed 3.5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red-eyed Dove</strong></td>
<td>(3) en route 29.4, en route 2.5 and en route 3.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>African Green Pigeon</strong></td>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Turacos Musophagidae</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great Blue Turaco</strong></td>
<td>(4) Observed Nyungwe Forest 29-2.5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Bostrychia hagedash nilotica**

**Platalea alba**

**Ardea melanocephala**

**Ardea alba melanorhynchos**

**Bubulcus ibis**

**Scopus umbretta umbretta**

**Polyboroides typus typus**

**Necrosyrtes monachus**

**Macheiramphus alcinus**

**Lophaetus occipitalis**

**Micronisus gabar**

**Accipiter melanoleucus melanoleucus**

**Milvus aegyptius parasitus**

**Buteo augur**

**Columba livia**

**Columba guinea guinea**

**Streptopelia semitorquata**

**Treron calvus salvadorii**

**Corythaëola cristata**
Black-billed Turaco
(3) Up to 1 Nyungwe Forest 29-1.5.
Ruwenzori Turaco
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.
Ross's Turaco
(1) Kigali 2.5.

Cuckoos Cuculidae
Blue-headed Coucal
(1) Nyungwe Forest 2.5.
Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

Nightjars and Allies Caprimulgidae
Ruwenzori Nightjar
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.
We had a quick fly-by of a single bird.

Swifts Apodidae
Scarce Swift
(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.
Little Swift
(1) en route 29.4.

Mousebirds Coliidae
Speckled Mousebird
Observed 3 day(s) in total.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae
Giant Kingfisher
(1) Kigali 29.4.
Pied Kingfisher
(1) en route 2.5.

Bee-eaters Meropidae
Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

African Barbets Lybiidae
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.
Soaking views at our feet!

Falcons and Caracaras Falconidae
Common Kestrel
(1) Kigali 3.5.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wattle-eyes and Batises <em>Platysteiridae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruwenzori Batis</td>
<td><em>Batis diops</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Nyungwe Forest 29.4, Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinspot Batis</td>
<td><em>Batis molitor</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bushshrikes and Allies <em>Malaconotidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many-colored Bushshrike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Nyungwe Forest 1.5 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doherty's Bushshrike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had insane looks at this bright coloured skulker!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Puffback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Observed Nyungwe Forest 29-2.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Sooty Boubou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lühder's Bushshrike</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical Boubou</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cuckoo-shrikes <em>Campephagidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grey Cuckooshrike</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shrikes <em>Laniidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mackinnon's Shrike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) observed 4.5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Fiscal</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old World Orioles <em>Oriolidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Oriole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monarch Flycatchers <em>Monarchidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Paradise Flycatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crows, Jays, and Magpies <em>Corvidae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pied Crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observed 3 day(s) in total.</td>
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<tr>
<td>White-necked Raven</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observed 5 day(s) in total.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fairy Flycatchers <em>Stenostiridae</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White-tailed Blue Flycatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chickadees and Tits *Paridae*

**Stripe-breasted Tit**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**Bulbuls *Pycnonotidae***

**Dark-capped Bulbul**
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

**Olive-breasted Greenbul**
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

**Yellow-whiskered Greenbul**
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Cabanis's Greenbul**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Yellow-streaked Greenbul**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Swallows *Hirundinidae***

**Black Saw-wing**
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

**Angolan Swallow**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.

**Rock Martin**
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and observed 3.5.

**Crombecs, African warblers *Macrosphenidae***

**White-browed Crombec**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Bush-Warblers and Allies *Cettiidae***

**Neumann's Warbler**
(1) 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Grauer's Warbler**
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 1.5.
We saw this skulker extremely well.

**Uncertain *Incertae Sedis 1***

**Grauer's Swamp Warbler**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

**Cinnamon Bracken Warbler**
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

**Leaf-Warblers *Phylloscopidae***

**Red-faced Woodland Warbler**
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

**Grassbirds and Allies *Locustellidae***

**Grauer's Swamp Warbler (EN)**
(1) Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

**Cinnamon Bracken Warbler**
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.
**Cisticolas and Allies Cisticolidae**

**Chubb's Cisticola**
*Cisticola chubbi chubbi*
(5) Up to 1 Nyungwe Forest 29-2.5 and observed 3.5.

**Black-faced Prinia**
*Prinia melanops*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

**Ruwenzori Apalis**
*Oreolais ruwenzorii*
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Mountain Masked Apalis**
*Apalis personata personata*
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 29-1.5.

**Black-throated Apalis**
*Apalis jacksoni jacksoni*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Chestnut-throated Apalis**
*Apalis porphyroplaema*
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Grey-backed Camaroptera**
*Camaroptera brevicaudata tincta*
(1) 1 heard Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**Laughingthrushes Leiothrichidae**

**Black-lored Babbler**
*Turdoides sharpei*
(1) en route 2.5.

**Old World Warblers Sylviidae**

**Ruwenzori Hill Babbler**
*Pseudoalcippe atriceps*
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

**Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies Zosteropidae**

**African Yellow White-eye**
*Zosterops senegalensis*
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

**Starlings Sturnidae**

**Waller's Starling**
*Onychognathus walleri elgonensis*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**Thrushes and Allies Turdidae**

**Abyssinian Thrush**
*Turdus abyssinicus bambusicola*
Observed 3 day(s) in total.

**Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae**

**White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher**
*Melaenornis fischeri toruensis*
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

**Yellow-eyed Black Flycatcher**
*Melaenornis ardesiacus*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**African Dusky Flycatcher**
*Muscicapa adusta pumila*
Observed 3 day(s) in total.

**Red-throated Alethe**
*Pseudalethe poliophrys poliophrys*
(3) Up to 1 Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

We had the most insane experience when two different birds came hopping up to our feet!

**White-bellied Robin-Chat**
*Cossyphecula roberti rufescientior*
(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.
We got lucky with a pair on our first afternoon drive into the forest.

**Archer's Ground Robin**  
*Cossypha archeri archeri*  
(2) I heard Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

We found a pair of birds on our way out on the last morning!

**White-browed Robin-Chat**  
*Cossypha heuglini*  
(1) Kigali 3.5.

**White-starred Robin**  
*Pogonocichla stellata ruwenzorii*  
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

**Equatorial Akalat**  
*Sheppardia aequatorialis aequatorialis*  
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**African Stonechat**  
*Saxicola torquatus axillaris*  
(2) Nyungwe Forest 29.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Ruaha Chat**  
*Myrmecocichla collaris*  
(2) en route 29.4 and en route 2.5.

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**Sunbirds and Spiderhunters Nectariniidae**

**Collared Sunbird**  
*Hedydipna collaris garguensis*  
(2) Nyungwe Forest 1.5 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

**Blue-headed Sunbird**  
*Cyanomitra alinae*  
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.  
We had a male bird within meters of us!

**Scarlet-chested Sunbird**  
*Chalcomitra senegalensis*  
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**Purple-breasted Sunbird**  
*Nectarinia purpureiventris*  
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Bronzy Sunbird**  
*Nectarinia kilimensis kilimensis*  
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

**Ruwenzori Double-collared Sunbird**  
*Cinnyris stuhlmanni*  
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.

**Northern Double-collared Sunbird**  
*Cinnyris reichenowi reichenowi*  
Observed 4 day(s) in total.

**Regal Sunbird**  
*Cinnyris regius regius*  
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 29-1.5.  
Refreshingly common.

**Variable Sunbird**  
*Cinnyris venustus igneiventris*  
Observed 5 day(s) in total.

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**Old World Sparrows Passeridae**

**House Sparrow**  
*Passer domesticus*  
(1) en route 3.5.

**Northern Grey-headed Sparrow**  
*Passer griseus ugandae*  
(2) Kigali 2.5 and Kigali 3.5.

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**Weavers and Allies Ploceidae**

**Baglafecht Weaver**  
*Ploceus baglafecht stuhlmanni*  
(2) Kigali 29.4 and Kigali 3.5.

**Strange Weaver**  
*Ploceus alienus*  
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.
### Black-billed Weaver
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.  
*Ploceus melanogaster*

### Holub's Golden Weaver
(1) en route 2.5.  
*Ploceus xanthops*

### Village Weaver
(1) en route 2.5.  
*Ploceus cucullatus*

### Dark-backed Weaver
(1) Nyungwe Forest 30.4.  
*Ploceus bicolor*

### Fan-tailed Widowbird
(1) en route 2.5.  
*Euplectes axillaris*

#### Waxbills and Allies *Estrildidae*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red-faced Crimsonwing</strong></td>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.</td>
<td><em>Cryptospiza reichenovii</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dusky Crimsonwing</strong></td>
<td>(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.</td>
<td><em>Cryptospiza jacksoni</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red-billed Firefinch</strong></td>
<td>(2) en route 2.5 and en route 3.5.</td>
<td><em>Lagonosticta senegala ruberrima</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
<td><em>Uraeginthus bengalus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow-bellied Waxbill</strong></td>
<td>(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.</td>
<td><em>Coccopygia quartinia kilimensis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black-crowned Waxbill</strong></td>
<td>(3) Nyungwe Forest 29.4, Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.</td>
<td><em>Estrilda nonnula nonnula</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Wagtails and Pipits *Motacillidae*

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Common Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Pied Wagtail</strong></td>
<td>(2) Kigali 29.4 and Kigali 3.5.</td>
<td><em>Motacilla aguimp vidua</em></td>
</tr>
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#### Finches, Euphonias *Fringillidae*

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Citril</strong></td>
<td>(2) en route 2.5 and en route 3.5.</td>
<td><em>Crithagra frontalis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow-fronted Canary</strong></td>
<td>(1) en route 2.5.</td>
<td><em>Crithagra mozambica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Streaky Seedeater</strong></td>
<td>Observed 4 day(s) in total.</td>
<td><em>Crithagra striolata graueri</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mammals (8 in total: 8 seen)

**Status codes:**  
E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, I = Introduced  
**IUCN codes:**  
CR = Critically endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, EW = Extinct in the Wild, NT = Near Threatened, DD = Data Deficient

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<tr>
<td><strong>L’Hoest's Monkey</strong></td>
<td>(4) Observed Nyungwe Forest 29-2.5.</td>
<td><em>Cercopithecus lhoesti</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vervet</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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(1) en route 3.5.  
**Olive Baboon**  
Papio anubis
(1) en route 29.4.

**Gorilla, Chimpanzees, Orangutan Hominidae**

Eastern gorilla  
Gorilla beringei beringei
(1) observed 4.5.  
We had an amazing experience with a large family of 14!

Chimpanzee  
Pan troglodytes
(1) Nyungwe Forest 29.4.

**Squirrels Sciuridae**

Carruther's Mountain Squirrel  
Funisciurus carruthersi
(2) Nyungwe Forest 30.4 and Nyungwe Forest 2.5.

Ruwenzori Sun Squirrel  
Heliosciurus ruwenzorii
(1) Nyungwe Forest 1.5.

Boehm's Bush Squirrel  
Paraxerus boehmi
(3) Observed Nyungwe Forest 30-2.5.

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