Malawi
Trip Report
12th to 28th September 2014

Bohm’s Bee-eater by Keith Valentine

Trip Report compiled by Tour Leader: Keith Valentine
Top 10 Birds:

1. Scarlet-tufted Sunbird
2. Pel’s Fishing Owl
3. Lesser Seedcracker
4. Thyolo Alethe
5. White-winged Apalis
6. Racket-tailed Roller
7. Blue Swallow
8. Bohm’s Flycatcher
9. Babbling Starling
10. Bohm’s Bee-eater/Yellow-throated Apalis

Top 5 Mammals:

1. African Civet
2. Four-toed Elephant Shrew
3. Sable Antelope
4. Bush Pig
5. Side-striped Jackal/Greater Galago/Roan Antelope/Blotched Genet

Trip Summary

This was our first ever fully comprehensive tour to Malawi and was quite simply a fantastic experience in all respects. For starters, many of the accommodations are of excellent quality and are also situated in prime birding locations with a large number of the area’s major birding targets found in close proximity. The food is generally very good and the stores and lodges are for the most part stocked with decent beer and a fair selection of South African wine. However, it is the habitat diversity that is largely what makes Malawi so good from a birding point of view. Even though it is a small country, this good variety of habitat, and infrastructure that allows access to these key zones, insures that the list of specials is long and attractive. Our tour was extremely successful in locating the vast majority of the region’s most wanted birds and highlights included Red-winged Francolin, White-backed Night Heron, African Cuckoo-Hawk, Western Banded Snake Eagle, Bat Hawk, Crowned Eagle, Ovambo and Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawks, Dickinson’s Kestrel, Denham’s Bustard, Long-toed Lapwing, African Skimmer, gorgeous Lilian’s Lovebird, Livingstone’s and Schalow’s Turacos, Green Malkoha, amazing Pel’s Fishing Owl, African Barred Owlet, Ruwenzori Nightjar, stunning Narina and Bar-tailed Trogons, uncommon Racket-tailed Roller, Böhm's Bee-eater, Pale-billed Hornbill, Whyte’s, Miombo Pied and Brown-
breasted Barbets, all six possible honeyguides including Pallid and Green-backed Honeybird, all eight woodpeckers including Speckle-throated and the localized Stierling’s, displaying African Broadbill, Black-fronted Bushshrike, Fulleborn’s Boubou, Souza’s Shrike, Rufous-bellied and Miombo Tits, Fischer’s Sparrow-Lark, Black-browed, Olive-headed and Grey-olive Greenbuls, Blue Swallow, Red-capped Crombec, dainty Livingstone’s Flycatcher, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Black-crested and Churring Cisticolas, endemic Yellow-throated, White-winged, Chapin’s and Black-headed Apalis, Stierling’s Wren-Warbler, Yellow-bellied and Southern Hyliotas, African Spotted Creeper, Miombo Blue-eared and the unique Babbling Starling, White-chested and Thyolo Alethe, Sharpe’s and East Coast Akalats, Olive-flanked Ground Robin, Collared Palm Thrush, Miombo Scrub Robin, Arnot’s and Boulder Chats, Miombo Rock Thrush, Böhms Flycatcher, beautiful Anchieta’s, Scarlet-tufted and Ludwig’s Double-collared Sunbirds, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Weaver, Bertram’s Weaver, outrageous Montane Widowbird, Orange-winged Pytilia, Green and Red-throated Twinspots, Red-faced Crimsonwing, Red-faced Crimsonwing, rare Lesser Seedcracker, Southern Citril, Reichard’s, Black-eared and Yellow-browed Seedeaters and Cabanis’s Bunting. Not a bad list by anyone’s standards!

Our Malawi adventure began on our arrival in Blantyre – although a few of us had already met at the airport in Johannesburg, one of our group was waiting for us in Malawi – and after quickly clearing customs and other formalities, we struck out to the nearby Zomba Plateau. We arrived in the area with just a little light left in the sky, enough to allow us some initial views of Livingstone’s Turaco and Black Saw-wing before we checked into our well-appointed hotel. The following morning we were up early and keen to get out into the small remnant patches of forest that dot the plateau. Fortunately some of the best forest on Zomba is really close to our hotel and through the day we didn’t have to venture very far to connect with all the region’s specials. The pre-breakfast walk actually began rather sluggishly with a bit of a wind blowing, though we did get to grips with Southern Citril, Placid Greenbul and a few other species such as Dark-backed Weaver, stunning Red-faced Crimson-wing and Black Cuckoo-shrike. The three major targets however for this site are Yellow-throated and White-winged Apalis and Thyolo Alethe. The latter species has become rare due to wide-scale destruction of its habitat, and is now widely regarded as rare in Malawi. The Yellow-throated Apalis is a recent split from Bar-throated and is the countries only endemic, while the White-winged Apalis is one of Africa’s most gorgeous species and is rare to boot, being confined to only a few localized sites in Tanzania’s Eastern Arc Mountains, and a few remnant forests in southern Malawi. Needless to say we were keen to get out there and start searching for these mega specials. Luck was on our side during our time on the
plateau and we quickly got to grips with two beautiful male White-winged Apalis that posed for extensive views and photos. A little later on the shout went out for Yellow-throated Apalis from one of our group members and within seconds we were all staring into the eyes of this gorgeous species. It was also a much celebrated bird as this was CG’s 9000th species!!! An incredible feat and we were all delighted to be able to share in the joy. We then made our way to a small stream that still had a few indigenous trees along the banks. Good birds were all around us and we enjoyed sightings of White-tailed Crested Flycatcher, Olive-headed Greenbul, White-eared Barbet, Cape Batis, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, White-starred Robin, Mountain Wagtail and Red-backed Mannikin; and then, together with a small flock, we were suddenly staring eye to eye with a Thyolo Alethe that gave us mind-blowing views! During the remainder of our time on Zomba we also added Pallid and Scaly-throated Honeyguides, Tambourine and Blue-spotted Doves, Square-tailed Drongo, Evergreen Forest Warbler, Singing and Wailing Cisticolas, African Yellow Warbler, Black-headed Apalis, Forest Double-collared and Variable Sunbirds, and Yellow-bellied Waxbill before dropping down into the drier lowlands and onto the incredible Liwonde NP. We did however have one last stop on the lower part of Zomba in an effort to pick up another range restricted species, namely Bertram’s Weaver. We got lucky with the weaver and had good views of the bird perched in some dense vegetation where it had a nest. We also had some lovely looks at a male Red-throated Twinspot in this area and a massive chameleon in the form of Meller’s Chameleon.

Liwonde National Park is bordered by the beautiful Shire River on its western border which in turn holds some excellent riverine vegetation and is quite simply a wildlife haven. The remainder of the reserve is dominated by mopane woodland, which holds a good variety of unique bird species and other wildlife as well. During our exploration of Liwonde we spent ample time in the entire reserve’s habitat and had incredible success with the area’s specials. The camp is idyllically set right on the banks of the Shire River and is surrounded by good woodland as well. Our visit was timed at the height of the dry season so many species were concentrated around the vicinity of the river and the camp was also a natural mecca. Here we enjoyed multiple sightings of Böhm’s Bee-eater and Collared Palm Thrush, while other interesting species included Livingstone’s Flycatcher, Green-capped Eremomela, Bearded Scrub Robin, Black-throated Wattle-eye and Cut-throat Finch. The Shire River in front of the lodge provided constant entertainment and a huge variety of water associated species were seen from this vantage point, including the uncommon White-backed Night Heron. We also did a boat trip on the river itself which produced a wonderful variety of
species. Birds of particular interest included Long-toed Lapwing, Black Heron, Saddle-billed Stork, African Skimmer, African Snipe and Rufous-winged Cisticola. We also took a walk on the opposite river bank where we found our target bird, a gorgeous Brown-breasted Barbet perched up high for excellent scope views. This species is extremely localised in Malawi and is always a good find. Our walk also produced wonderful views of Green Malkoha and a male Narina Trogon.

The general riverine belt near to the Shire produced excellent views of African Barred Owlet, Dickinson’s Kestrel, Western Banded Snake Eagle, Brown-necked and Brown-headed Parrots, Olive Bee-eater and both a Bat Hawk and African Hobby hunting one evening while we were enjoying sundowners. The dry mopane woodlands are also home to a plethora of good birds and through a combination of walks and game drives we had some excellent views of Speckle-throated Woodpecker, Arnot’s Chat, Retz’s Helmetshrike, Verreaux’s Eagle-Owl, African Scops Owls, Pearl-spotted Owlet, African Hawk- and Martial Eagles, Sterling’s Wren-Warbler, Lilian’s Lovebird, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Southern Ground Hornbill, Grey-headed Bushshrike and tiny Grey Penduline Tit. Night drives also yielded results and we enjoyed excellent views of Square-tailed and Fiery-necked Nightjars and a good variety of mammals, including some that are often tough to find; namely Bush Pig, African Civet, Southern Porcupine, Water and White-tailed Mongooses, Thick-tailed Galago (Bushbaby) and Large-spotted Genet. General game viewing in Liwonde is also pretty good and we had numerous views of grunting Hippopotamus, herds of African Elephant, Common Warthog, African Buffalo, Greater Kudu, Bushbuck, Common Waterbuck, Impala and Common Duiker, while also finding a few groups of stately Sable Antelope. One of Liwonde’s most prized species is Pel’s Fishing Owl, and this special bird was also high on our list of desirable targets. We searched far and wide in a variety of areas and finally on our last morning struck gold with a stunning view in a large fever tree stand downstream of the camp. We thought this was to be our last prize bird for Liwonde, however at the entrance/exit gate we finally got to grips with a pair of Racket-tailed Roller, a species we had also searched hard for since arriving in Liwonde, and which posed at length for some amazing views. A fitting finale indeed!

The south of Malawi had been extremely rewarding, so it was with much excitement that we began our journey northwards to the Dzalanyama woodlands. This area of miombo or *brachystegia* woodland is home to a huge variety of range-restricted species. Miombo Woodland is only found in a small band through south central Africa and most of this woodland is found in Zambia, with smaller patches in eastern Angola, Malawi, parts of Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Our time in Dzalanyama was extremely rewarding and birding the mixed species flocks proved to be much fun. We did however notice a
good number of species already breeding, which meant that general flock activity was a little lower than during the winter months when food is difficult to find and many species in these woodlands get into massive roving groups in an effort to find food. Top of the sightings list for this area was actually a bird not specifically associated with miombo but rather with the damp drainage lines known as dambos and their associated thickets. The species in question is the little-known and seldom-observed Lesser Seedcracker and we enjoyed some cracking views of this shy species on our final morning in the area. Most of the bird’s range falls within countries that are infrequently visited by birders and even then those that make the effort often return empty handed. This species was justifiably voted as bird of the trip for a few people. Other first class species included Souza’s Shrike, Böhm’s Flycatcher, the near endemic Stierling’s Woodpecker, Brown-backed and Green-backed Honeybirds, Black-eared and Reichard’s Seedeaters, Anchieta’s, Miombo Double-collared and Western Violet-backed Sunbirds, Red-capped Crombec, Miombo and Rufous-bellied Tits, African Spotted Creeper, Pale-billed Hornbill, Southern and Yellow-bellied Hyliotas, Miombo Scrub Robin and Miombo Rock Thrush. More general species that we recorded here included good looks at a pair of African Cuckoo-Hawk, perched views of the uncommon Ovambo Sparrowhawk, Peregrine Falcon, Broad-billed Roller, White-breasted Cuckooshrike, African Golden Oriole and Striped Pipit. We also took the time to hike up one of the nearby hills in the Dzalanyama range and had some good views of a pair of localized Boulder Chat, while areas of denser forest, locally known as Mushitu, along small streams in the area produced Schalow’s Turaco, White-tailed Blue Flycatcher and the scarce Grey-olive Greenbul.

Leaving the Dzalanyama woodlands behind, we continued our northward journey through Malawi to the Viphya Plateau. We did however make a few short stops on the drive, with our first being for a lovely group of Fischer’s Sparrow-Lark, and then later at a wetland where we added a couple of good birds such as Orange-breasted Waxbill and White-backed Duck to the ever-growing list. The Viphya Plateau has unfortunately not been reserved the same protection status as the Nyika Plateau, further north, and is dominated by extensive pine plantations. There are nevertheless a good few patches of native vegetation around and the area still holds an excellent variety of species. In our short time birding the area we had some excellent views of Bronzy Sunbird, Orange-winged Pytilia, Black-browed Greenbul, Chapin’s Apalis, Trilling Cisticola, Red-chested Cuckoo, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Miombo Rock Thrush, Miombo Blue-eared Starling and good numbers of Reichard’s Seedeater. Not a bad haul considering this stop was largely just to
break the long drive between Lilongwe and Nyika, which would be impossible to cover in a day.

The Nyika Plateau is simply incredible and enough good things cannot be written about the true spectacle of this amazing wilderness. Nyika National Park protects around 3,200 km² of rolling upland grasslands, upland forest and vast stands of miombo woodland, which in turn hold a veritable feast of unique and highly localized birds and other wildlife. During our time in Nyika National Park we explored all of these habitats and came away with an enviable collection of the region’s most prized species. Our lodge is set in superb habitat that overlooks a large drainage line and small dam, which are excellent places for Montane Widowbird, Yellow-browed Seedeater, Churring and Black-lored Cisticolas, Mountain Yellow Warbler, Yellow-crowned Canary and Ludwig’s Double-collared Sunbird. Other species seen in the area included Olive Woodpecker, African Olive Pigeon, Dusky Turtle Dove, Malachite Sunbird, Baglafecht Weaver and, in the early hours of the morning and evening, Ruwenzori Nightjar entertained us. For the latter species we did have to put in some hard hours to get a view: they would call incessantly, however getting one to come in and show itself proved to be a rather difficult task. Persistence, as it usually does, paid off when on our final morning we had fabulous views of a single bird perched at close range. Another major highlight was to be able to stand and watch up to 20 Blue Swallows together at times, feeding over the drainage line and dam below our lodge. A truly magnificent site and the only place left in the world where such a sighting is possible.

A few different forests were visited as well including the famous Chowo and Manyenjere Forests in neighbouring Zambia. We also visited a couple of forest sites on the Malawi side and all of these produced a wonderful variety of specials. Headline species included Sharpe’s Akalat, White-chested Alethe, Fulleborn’s Boubou and Olive-flanked Ground Robin, while other great birds in the form of Sharpe’s Greenbul, Moustached Tinkerbird, Waller’s Starling, Crowned Eagle, Lemon Dove, Bar-tailed Trogon, Crowned Hornbill, Black-fronted Bushshrike and Brown-headed Apalis also put on a show. From a mammal point of view we had a few encounters with the extremely localized and little-known Tanganyika Mountain Squirrel while exploring Manyenjere Forest, and some of us also had a brief sighting of a Chequered Elephant Shrew in Chowo Forest. Time was also taken to explore the extensive grasslands of Nyika where we enjoyed some breath-taking scenery and were delighted with the wildlife we found. Among the numerous highlights was locating a gorgeous pair of Scarlet-tufted Sunbird, a species that can be extremely difficult to find on Nyika and only occurs on a few isolated mountains in East Africa. We also had excellent views of Denham’s Bustard, Red-winged and Hildebrandt’s Francolins, Augur Buzzard, Common Quail, Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk, Lanner Falcon, Angola and Red-rumped Swallows, Lazy Cisticola and Rufous-naped Lark, while herds of Common Reedbuck,
Eland, Roan Antelope, Crawshay’s Zebra and a single Side-striped Jackal were also enjoyed. On our departure from the plateau we birded the drive down stopping at a few points along the way, which produced closer looks at Brown-headed Apalis and Brown Warbler in a large stand of *Acacia abyssinica* trees. Lower down in the miombo zone we added Cabanis’s Bunting, Whyte’s Barbet and had brilliant scope views of a perched Little Sparrowhawk.

Our next site was Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve, a rather remote and seldom-visited reserve in North-west Malawi. This reserve is most famously known among birders as the supreme spot anywhere on the planet to find Babbling Starling, a unique starling in its own genus that spends much of its time feeding on the ground. We had excellent views of a group of these smart looking birds while also getting very good looks at another of the region’s specials in the form of Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Weaver. Some of the group also had a Miombo Pied Barbet while other good species in the general Vwaza area included Miombo Blue-eared Starling, Böhm's Flycatcher, Wood Pipit, Orange-winged Pytilia, Arnot’s Chat, Miombo Scrub Robin, Stierling’s Wren-Warbler, Red-capped Crombec, Rufous-bellied Tit, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Bennett’s Woodpecker, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Meyer’s Parrot, Schalow’s Turaco and an African Hawk-Eagle with a chicken in its talons! A mammal highlight in this reserve was the Four-toed Elephant Shrew that we found during our wanderings, and although it moved quickly we all had decent views of this seldom-encountered species. From here we made our way east towards Lake Malawi and our final birding site.

The general Lake Malawi area is extremely birdy and even disturbed woodland and scrubby type habitat held a great variety of species, from Jameson’s Firefinch and Purple-crested Turaco to Eastern Golden Weaver and Purple-banded Sunbird. Our main goal however in this area was to find the localized East Coast Akalat, a fairly shy inhabitant of the remaining lowland forests in this vicinity. Our morning began well when we quickly located a single bird that was quietly singing back to us, though only a few of us managed to get onto the bird before it melted away in the undergrowth. Through the course of the morning we found another five akalats, with our final bird close to midday giving us the views we were all dreaming of from the start. A superb sighting indeed! During our wanderings we also came across a few other specials of these forests that included displaying African Broadbills, Green Twinspot and Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher.

Our final day was largely a travel day back down to Blantyre where we had a delicious final dinner before taking our departure flights home the following day.

And so ended a fantastic trip to this seldom-visited birding hotspot! Thanks to a great group of enthusiastic and fun participants as well as a superb ground operations team. I am very much looking forward to travelling with you all again!

**BIRDS (A total of 385 species recorded)**
**Guineafowl Numididae**

**Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*
A common African species that was seen on numerous occasions in the dry woodlands of Liwonde NP.

*NOTE:* The nominate *N. m. meleagris* (Helmeted Guineafowl) of East Africa, is sometimes regarded as distinct from the western *N. m. galeata* (West African Guineafowl) and the southern *N. m. mitrata* (Tufted Guineafowl.) Few authorities recognize these splits.

**Coqui Francolin** *Peliperdix coqui*
This small francolin prefers areas of tall grassland in woodland and was heard on 2 occasions during our wanderings in the Dzalanyama area.

**Red-winged Francolin** *Scleroptila levaillantii*
A good looking francolin which was seen extremely well on a couple of occasions on the Nyika Plateau. The race represented here is endemic to Nyika and is rather isolated from other populations in far western Zambia and South Africa.

*NOTE:* The subspecies represented here is *crawshayi*, which is endemic to northern Malawi.

**Hildebrant’s Francolin** *Pternistis hildebrandti*
Our drive into Nyika produced a small family group that were seen well as they foraged at the road verge.

**Red-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)** *Pternistis afer*
This is Malawi’s most widespread and commonly seen francolin. Our first sightings were in Liwonde NP, with a further sighting on our drive into Dzalanyama.

**Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*
A bird that is far more often seen in flight than on the ground. This species occurs at rather high density in the grasslands of the Nyika Plateau and we were fortunate to have some incredible views on multiple occasions of birds in flight and even on the ground.

**Ducks, Geese & Swans Anatidae**

**White-faced Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata*
We had good scope views of around 20 birds at a wetland near Kuzungu while our first sightings were on the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**White-backed Duck** *Thalassornis leuconotus*
An uncommon bird throughout its range and always a good find. We scored with great scope views of 3 birds at a large wetland near Kuzungu.

**Knob-billed (Comb) Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos*
Our only sightings of this distinctive duck species were of 3 birds flying upstream past our camp on The Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca*
An extremely widespread and common bird throughout its range. We had numerous sightings in Liwonde NP.
Yellow-billed Duck  
*Anas undulata*
Good views were had through the scope and in flight of this species at a large wetland near Kuzungu.

Red-billed Teal  
*Anas erythrorhyncha*
Only 2 birds were found during our boat excursion on the Shire River where we enjoyed close views.

**Grebes Podicipedidae**

Little Grebe  
*Tachybaptus ruficollis*
Our first encounter with this widespread species was on a wetland near Kuzungu while a pair on dam 1 at Nyika entertained us daily.

**Storks Ciconiidae**

Yellow-billed Stork  
*Mycteria ibis*
A beautiful stork that was seen wonderfully well and on many occasions during our time in Liwonde NP.

African Openbill  
*Anastomus lamelligerus*
Liwonde NP offered up excellent views on multiple occasions of this distinctive stork. We even enjoyed a sighting of one individual using its odd shaped bill to good effect on a snail it had found.

Saddle-billed Stork  
*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*
We had splendid views of this sparsely distributed species along the Shire River in Liwonde NP. These days they are almost entirely confined to large wilderness areas in national parks.

**Ibises, Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**

African Sacred Ibis  
*Threskiornis aethiopicus*
Commonly encountered along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**NOTE: The Malagasy T. e. bernieri and Aldabran T. e. abbotti are sometimes split off as Malagasy Sacred Ibis (T. bernieri)**

Hadada Ibis  
*Bostrychia hagedash*
A very common species in Liwonde NP.

Glossy Ibis  
*Plegadis falcinellus*
As with the previous two species Liwonde NP provided many sightings of this ibis.

African Spoonbill  
*Platalea alba*
Our only sighting was rather brief of one bird in flight while boating along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Herons, Bitterns Ardeidae**

White-backed Night Heron  
*Gorsachius leuconotus*
This species can be rather tricky to find and is never common. The quality of the sightings we enjoyed in Liwonde NP was simply unbeatable and was certainly one of the trip highlights.

Black-crowned Night Heron  
*Nycticorax nycticorax*
This is one of the world’s most widespread bird species and was sighted on numerous occasions in Liwonde NP.

Striated Heron  
*Butorides striata*
This is another widespread heron that was seen on a few occasions along the Shire River in Liwonde NP and then again along the edge of Lake Malawi at Makuzi Beach.

**NOTE: This species group is often treated as 3 species, the nominate Striated Heron, B. striata, Green Heron, B. virescens of North America and Lava Heron, B. sundevalli of the Galapagos.**

Squacco Heron  
*Ardeola ralloides*
Commonly recorded in Liwonde NP and again at a wetland site near Kuzungu.

**[Western] Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*

This cosmopolitan species was seen at scattered sights throughout Malawi.

*NOTE: This group is sometimes split into 2 species, the nominate Western Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret (E. coromanda).*

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

We recorded small numbers daily in Liwonde NP.

**Black-headed Heron** *Ardea melanoccephala*

We recorded small numbers throughout Malawi. They were also seen breeding in some of the villages we drive through.

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

Generally a scarce bird in Malawi however we had 2 very close sightings in Liwonde NP and then again at a wetland near Kuzungu.

*NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands A. p. bournei is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne’s Heron.*

**Great Egret** *Ardea alba*

Plentiful along the Shire River in Liwonde NP where we had multiple sightings on a daily basis. Also sighted near Kuzungu.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes split into Western Great Egret, A. alba of the Americas, Africa & Europe and Eastern Great Egret, A. modesta of East Asia and Australasia. This split is not recognized by IOC and Clements.*

**Intermediate Egret** *Egretta intermedia*

A total of 3 birds were found along the Shire River in Liwonde NP while a single bird was also sighted near Kuzungu at a wetland in the area.

**Black Heron** *Egretta ardesiaca*

Our only sighting was of a single bird in flight along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

A common species that was seen often in Liwonde NP.

*NOTE: Clements lumps Little and Madagascar’s Dimorphic (E. dimorpha) Egret into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.*

**Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta*

A classic African species that was seen almost daily in Liwonde NP with further sightings towards the end of the tour from Lake Malawi.

**Cormorants** *Phalacrocoracidae*

**Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant** *Microcarbo africanus*

Another common and widespread species which was found in good numbers in Liwonde NP and again near Kuzungu.

**White-breasted Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax lucidus*

Many sightings on the tour from Liwonde NP and again at Lake Malawi.

**Darters** *Anhingidae*

**[African] Darter** *Anhinga rufa*

We enjoyed some extraordinary numbers of this species along the Shire River in Liwonde NP. The gathering of such a large group seemed to be unusual and our local guide Samuel was particularly surprised.

*NOTE: The resident African form P. rufa is sometimes lumped with the Asian P. melanogaster and the enlarged species called Darter. Clements uses the latter treatment of lumping these forms.*
Ospreys Pandionidae

[Western] Osprey  
*Pandion haliaetus*

Another widespread world species that was seen well on 2 occasions in Liwonde NP.

*NOTE: Clements does not accept this split, it is lumped with Eastern Osprey*  
*P. cristatus*  
*as: Osprey*  
*P. haliaetus.*

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae

Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite  
*Elanus caeruleus*

Seen on only 2 occasions on the tour, firstly on our drive out of Dzalanyama and then again on the Nyika Plateau.

*NOTE: Most authorities have split this into three species*  
*Black-winged (E. caeruleus) of the Old World,*  
*Black-shouldered Kite (E. axillaris) of Australasia*  
*and White-tailed Kite (E. leucurus) of the New World.*

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene)  
*Polyboroides typus*

Our first sightings were in Liwonde NP with further views in some rubber plantations north of Chintche and finally on our drive towards Salima along the edge of Lake Malawi.

Palmnut Vulture  
*Gypohierax angolensis*

This attractive vulture was seen well in the Zomba area, at Liwonde NP and finally on our return drive along the edge of Lake Malawi.

African Cuckoo-Hawk  
*Aviceda cuculoides*

Generally a rather uncommon raptor of moist woodlands across Africa. We had very good flight views of 2 birds on one of our morning walks in the Dzalanyama woodlands.

White-backed Vulture  
*Gyps africanus*

Our only sightings of Africa’s most common and widespread vulture came from the Nyika Plateau where a total of 3 birds were recorded.

Brown Snake Eagle  
*Circaetus cinereus*

This large snake eagle was seen well on a few occasions in Liwonde NP and then again near Nyika and at Vwaza Marsh Game Reserve.

Western Banded Snake Eagle  
*Circaetus cinerascens*

We enjoyed some excellent sightings in Liwonde NP with our first looks coming from the Zomba Plateau.

Bateleur  
*Terathopius ecaudatus*

We enjoyed 2 sightings of this distinctive raptor in Liwonde NP with another good view coming from Vwaza Marsh GR.

Bat Hawk  
*Macheiramphus alcinus*

Always a good find on any tour. We had one at dusk coming out to hunt bats along the Shire River one evening.

Crowned Eagle  
*Stephanoaetus coronatus*

We enjoyed wonderful views of a single bird in flight, vocalizing above Chowo Forest in Nyika NP.

Martial Eagle  
*Polemaetus bellicosus*

Undoubtedly one of Africa’s largest and most majestic eagles. This species was seen perched up in a tall mopane on our drive out of Liwonde NP.

Long-crested Eagle  
*Lophaetus occipitalis*

Two sightings of this distinctive eagle were enjoyed on the Zomba Plateau.

Wahlberg’s Eagle  
*Aquila wahlbergi*

Singletons were sighted on 5 tours days at scattered localities throughout the country with our first sighting coming from Liwonde NP.

African Hawk-Eagle  
*Aquila spilogaster*

We enjoyed superb views of a pair in Liwonde NP and then another individual at Vwaza Marsh GR with a chicken in its talons.
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Lizard Buzzard
We had almost daily sightings of these attractive raptors at Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika.

Dark Chanting Goshawk
In Liwonde NP we had a single juvenile in the parks mopane woodlands.

African Goshawk
Seen only once on Zomba Plateau.

NOTE: The West African forms are sometimes separated as Red-chested Goshawk (A. tousseneli).

Shikra
We enjoyed regular sightings of this species in Liwonde NP and then again at Dzalanyama and Makuzi Beach.

NOTE: We recorded the Southern Shikra A. b. polyzonoides which some authorities consider distinct from Northern Shikra A. b. sphenurus. These forms may also be split from the Asian nominate A. b. radius and other Asian forms. Clements does not as yet recognize any of these splits.

Little Sparrowhawk
This species can be tricky to connect with and especially perched. Our first sighting was exceptional as we watched a single bird at length through the scope on the lower slopes of Nyika NP. We also had a second sighting in the Vwaza Marsh GR area.

Ovambo Sparrowhawk
A scarce species throughout its range that was seen very well perched in the broad-leaved woodlands of Dzalanyama.

Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk
Another uncommon species that was seen on three separate occasions on the Nyika Plateau. Our first two sightings were rather brief of birds in flight however our final views were very good as we saw it perched up in some low bracken and then in flight directly in front of our vehicle.

Black Sparrowhawk
Sightings of this large accipiter were had on the Zomba Plateau and again on Viphya Plateau.

African Marsh Harrier
A single bird was found on our drive to Makuzi Beach.

Yellow-billed (Black) Kite
Our first sighting was on the drive between Zomba and Liwonde while regular but small numbers were seen on the Nyika Plateau.

NOTE: This species is now accepted by most authorities. It has been split from Black Kite, M. migrans

African Fish Eagle
Many of these iconic African birds were enjoyed along the Shire River in Liwonde NP while additional views were also had towards the end of the tour at Makuzi Beach on Lake Malawi.

Augur Buzzard
This striking species was seen on a few occasions in Nyika NP.

Falcons Falconidae

Dickinson’s Kestrel
A highly desirable species that is fairly easy to find in Liwonde NP where we enjoyed a total of 7 birds over our four days in the area.

Eurasian Hobby
A single bird was seen in flight cruising past our lodge in Liwonde NP during a morning walk.

African Hobby
A single bird was seen on the Zomba Plateau by one of the group members while a second bird seen later on, while enjoying sundowners on the Shire River in Liwonde provided quick but decent views for most people.

Lanner Falcon

Rockjumper Birding Tours
We had a total of 3 birds involving 3 sightings while in Nyika NP.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*
This species was only sighted once on the tour in the late evening at Dzalanyama.

**Bustards Otididae**

**Denham’s Bustard** *Neotis denhami*
The extensive grasslands in Nyika NP provide superb habitat for this large bustard and we were thrilled with 3 sightings during our time in the area.

**Flufftails Sarothruridae**

**Red-chested Flufftail** *Sarothrura rufa*
This secretive species was heard calling at a dambo in the Dzalanyama woodlands however try as we might we could not lure any of them into view. We did however spend a lot of time in the general area of the dambo and one member of the group did get two sightings.

**Rails, Crakes & Coots Rallidae**

**Black Crake** *Amaurornis flavirostris*
Many great views were had at wetland situations in Liwonde NP.

**Allen’s Gallinule** *Porphyrio aleni*
This rather skulking species was seen briefly by a few members of the group on the Viphya Plateau during an early morning walk to a wetland in the area.

**Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata*
This widespread species was seen well at a wetland near Kazungu and again in Nyika NP.

**Stone-curlews, Thick-knees**

**Water Thick-knee** *Burhinus vermiculatus*
Commonly sighted along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Stilts, Avocets Recurvirostridae**

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*
The Shire River in Liwonde NP produced a total of 3 of these distinctive long-legged waders.

**Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avocetta*
Some members of the group had 2 birds flying past our lodge on the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Plovers Charadriidae**

**Long-toed Lapwing** *Vanellus crassirostris*
Always a decent find and we had a total of around 10 birds along the Shire River in Liwonde NP both on the deck and in flight.

**Blacksmith Lapwing** *Vanellus armatus*
Commonly sighted on every day while in Liwonde NP.

**African Wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus senegallus*
Liwonde NP gave us some good views of around 10 birds.

**Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris*
A single bird was seen by just a few members of the group while boating on the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Jacanas Jacanidae**
African Jacana  
*Actophilornis africanus*
Commonly found in Liwonde NP where it was a daily feature, we later had another sighting at a wetland near Kazungu.

**Sandpipers, Snipes  Scolopacidae**

*Sandpipers*

**African Snipe**  
*Gallinago nigripennis*
This was a fantastic find during our boat trip along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Common Greenshank**  
*Tringa nebularia*
This large wader was fairly regularly found along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Green Sandpiper**  
*Tringa ochropus*
A single bird was found at Dam 1 in front of our accommodations in Nyika NP.

**Wood Sandpiper**  
*Tringa glareola*
This widespread species was seen in Liwonde NP.

**Common Sandpiper**  
*Actitis hypoleucos*
Liwonde NP, Nyika and Makuzi Beach on Lake Malawi were all sites where this common species was found.

**Ruff**  
*Philomachus pugnax*
A single bird seen along the Shire River in Liwonde NP was a good find.

**Gulls, Terns  Laridae**

**African Skimmer**  
*Rynchops flavirostris*
This charismatic species was seen along the Shire River in Liwonde NP. Our sightings were mostly at dusk while enjoying sundowners at the edge of the river.

**Grey-headed Gull**  
*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*
Commonly sighted along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Gull-billed Tern**  
*Gelochelidon nilotica*
This species used to be fairly scarce in Malawi however these days it is a pretty common sighting along the Shire River in Liwonde NP. We enjoyed numerous sightings on a daily basis.

**Whiskered Tern**  
*Chlidonias hybrid*
Our only sighting was of 2 birds caught up in a mixed group of Gull-billed Tern along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**White-winged Tern**  
*Chlidonias leucopterus*
We had a number of sightings along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Pigeons, Doves  Columbidae**

**Rock Dove**  
*Columba livia*
Regularly encountered in most of the larger towns and cities.

**African Olive Pigeon**  
*Columba arquatrix*
Our initial views of this species was on the Zomba Plateau however it is far more numerous on the Nyika Plateau further north and we had multiple sightings at this site on a daily basis.

**Lemon Dove**  
*Columba larvata*
Sightings were typically rather brief however a few decent views were had in a couple of forest sites in Nyika NP.

**Dusky Turtle Dove**  
*Streptopelia lugens*
Nyika NP is the southern limit of this species range and we enjoyed a number of sightings during our time in the area.

**Mourning Collared Dove**  
*Streptopelia decipiens*
We had a few sightings in Liwonde NP.

**Red-eyed Dove**  
*Streptopelia semitorquata*  
Commonly encountered throughout Malawi.

**Ring-necked (Cape Turtle-) Dove**  
*Streptopelia capicola*  
Widespread and common throughout Malawi.

**Laughing (Palm) Dove**  
*Spilopelia senegalensis*  
Only recorded on a few occasions with sightings coming from Liwonde NP and outside Dzalanyama.

**Emerald-spotted Wood Dove**  
*Turtur chalcospilos*  
A common species that was encountered regularly throughout the country.

**Blue-spotted Wood Dove**  
*Turtur afer*  
The Zomba Plateau provided us with our first sighting when a bird was found feeding in a track. Later on we had very good views at Makuzi Beach.

**Tambourine Dove**  
*Turtur tympanistria*  
We recorded small numbers on the Zomba Plateau where we had some exceptional views of birds perched.

**African Green Pigeon**  
*Treron calvus*  
This attractive frugivore was seen at most forest sites throughout the trip. Our first views were had in Liwonde NP with further sightings at Dzalanyama, Viphya and Makuzi Beach.

**Parrots Psittacidae**

**Lilian’s Lovebird**  
*Agapornis lilianae*  
We enjoyed wonderful sightings this rather localized and range restricted species in Liwonde NP.

**Brown-necked Parrot**  
*Poicephalus gulielmi*  
Only a single bird was seen in flight during an early morning walk in Liwonde NP.

*NOTE: This complex and somewhat confusing species is sometimes split into three distinct species, Brown-necked Parrot *P. fuscicollis*, confined to West Africa, Cape Parrot *P. robustus*, which is then endemic to South Africa and the third being Grey-headed Parrot *P. suahelicus*, which is found in south-east Africa in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Southern Tanzania and is the species which we recorded. Clements only accepts one species the nominate *P. robustus*, which he calls Brown-necked Parrot! The IOC accepts *P. robustus* and *P. fuscicollis* as distinct species. Only Ryan & Sinclair accept all three splits at this stage.*

**Meyer’s Parrot**  
*Poicephalus meyeri*  
Fabulous views were had of this striking species in open, broad-leaved woodland near Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Brown-headed Parrot**  
*Poicephalus cryptoxanthus*  
Sightings were rather few and far between of this species as we only found 3 birds, all in flight, during out time exploring Liwonde NP.

**Turacos Musophagidae**

**Livingstone’ Turaco**  
*Tauraco livingstonii*  
This stunning species is only found in the south of Malawi and we had numerous good views during out time on the Zomba Plateau.

**Schalow’s Turaco**  
*Tauraco schalowi*  
This species replaces Livingstone’s in central and northern Malawi and we enjoyed multiple sightings at Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika.

**Purple-crested Turaco**  
*Tauraco porphyreolophus*  
Another striking species of turaco that was seen exceptionally well during out time at the idyllic Makuzi Beach.

**Grey Go-away-bird**  
*Corythaixoides concolor*
Liwonde NP and the woodland areas around Vwaza Marsh produced multiple sightings of this common species.

**Cuckoos Cuculidae**

**Burchell’s Coucal**  *Centropus burchelli*
The common coucal of Malawi which was found at Zomba, Liwonde NP and Dzalanyama.

**Green Malkoha (Yellowbill)**  *Ceuthmochares australis*
This skulking species can be tough to find in Malawi. We were however rather fortunate as we had incredible looks at a single bird during an early morning walk in riverine thickets in Liwonde NP. Later on we heard this species calling at a forest patch to the south of Nkhata Bay.

*NOTE: Yellowbill is sometimes split into two species, Green Malkoha (C. australis) occurring in southeastern Africa and Blue Malkoha (C. aereus) of Central and Western Africa. We observed the former form.*

**Klaas's Cuckoo**  *Chrysococcyx klaas*
This smart green cuckoo was seen well in Liwonde NP and again in the woodlands of Dzalanyama.

**African Emerald Cuckoo**  *Chrysococcyx cupreus*
This resplendent forest and forest edge species was only heard on the lower slopes of the Zomba Plateau.

**Red-chested Cuckoo**  *Cuculus solitarius*
We had good flight views of a single responsive bird in stunted miombo woodland on the Viphya Plateau.

**Owls Strigidae**

**African Scops Owl**  *Otus senegalensis*
We had superb views of a single bird that was found on its day roost in Liwonde NP after it was initially heard calling.

**Spotted Eagle-Owl**  *Bubo africanus*
This large owl was seen very well on a few occasions during our time on the Nyika Plateau.

**Verreaux’s Eagle Owl**  *Bubo lacteus*
A striking species with distinctive pink eye-lids. During an afternoon walk through Mopane Woodland in Liwonde NP we found a single bird on its day roost where we were afforded some memorable views.

**Pel’s Fishing Owl**  *Scotopelia peli*
Without a doubt one of the most desirable species to see on the tour. We tried a number of their usual haunts along the Shire River in Liwonde NP with no success however our final attempt eventually produced the goods with excellent views of this incredible species.

**African Wood Owl**  *Strix woodfordii*
We heard a female calling in the early evening at Dzalanyama.

**Pearl-spotted Owlet**  *Glaucidium perlatum*
We had wonderful scope views of a single bird in Vwaza Marsh GR with our initial sighting coming from Liwonde NP.

**African Barred Owlet**  *Glaucidium capense*
We had superb views of one on a day roost in a thicket in Liwonde NP. We then heard this species calling on a number of occasions thereafter.

**Nightjars Caprimulgidae**

**Fiery-necked Nightjar**  *Caprimulgus pectoralis*
We were afforded excellent views of this species during night drives in Liwonde NP with an additional sighting at Dzalanyama later on the tour.
Ruwenzori Nightjar  
*Caprimulgus ruwenzorii*

We spent a good number of hours trying for this species and while it was easy to hear calling we struggled to get them to show themselves. Eventually on our final morning attempt we had fantastic views of a single bird near our accommodation in Nyika NP.

**NOTE:** Some authorities have split this species into Ruwenzori Nightjar, *C. ruwenzorii* and Usambara Nightjar, *C. guttifer*. Both Clements and IOC lump this species with Ruwenzori Nightjar.

Square-tailed Nightjar  
*Caprimulgus fossi*

We enjoyed some wonderful sightings of this species during our time in Liwonde NP where they are common along the banks of the Shire River.

**Swifts  Apodidae**

African Palm Swift  
*Cypsiurus parvus*

Commonly recorded throughout Malawi.

Common Swift  
*Apus apus*

Just a single bird was found on top of the Zomba Plateau.

Little Swift  
*Apus affinis*

Seen at a number of localities during our time in Malawi.

White-rumped Swift  
*Apus caffer*

We enjoyed sightings of this summer visitor at Viphya and again at Makuzi Beach.

**Mousebirds  Coliidae**

Speckled Mousebird  
*Colius striatus*

We had numerous views throughout the country.

Red-faced Mousebird  
*Urocolius indicus*

Flocks of these social mousebirds were fairly common in Liwonde NP.

**Trogons  Trogonidae**

Narina Trogon  
*Apaloderma narina*

We had good but brief views of a single male that responded well to imitations of its call during an early morning walk in riverine forest in Liwonde NP.

Bar-tailed Trogon  
*Apaloderma vittatum*

A beautiful species that was found on a few occasions in forest patches on Nyika Plateau.

**Rollers  Coraciidae**

Racket-tailed Roller  
*Coracias spatulatus*

We tried very hard for this uncommon species in Liwonde NP and ultimately our perseverance lead to success as we found a stunning pair in mature Mopane Woodland on our drive out of the reserve.

Lilac-breasted Roller  
*Coracias caudatus*

Several of these stunning birds were found in Liwonde NP with further views in the Makuzi Beach area. One of Africa’s trademark birds!

**NOTE:** The Ethiopian *C. c. lorti* might be split as Blue-breasted Roller.

Broad-billed Roller  
*Eurystomus glaucurus*

We had great views of single birds on a daily basis in the woodlands of Dzalanyama.

**Kingfishers  Alcedinidae**

Grey-headed Kingfisher  
*Halcyon leucocephala*

Some members of the group had a single bird on our drive into Liwonde NP.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher  
*Halcyon albiventer*
We had a number of good sightings of which most were in Liwonde NP with additional views in the Makuzi Beach area.

**Striped Kingfisher**  
*Halcyon chelicuti*  
We enjoyed numerous sightings of this rather vocal, woodland kingfisher in Liwonde NP.

**Malachite Kingfisher**  
*Corythornis cristatus*  
Many of these brilliant river-dwelling kingfishers were found along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Giant Kingfisher**  
*Megaceryle maxima*  
We had great sightings of this large kingfisher during our time in Liwonde NP with further views at Makuzi Beach at the end of the tour.

**Pied Kingfisher**  
*Ceryle rudis*  
This widespread species was sighted commonly along the Shire River in Liwonde NP with further sightings at a wetland near Kazungu and again at Makuzi Beach.

### Bee-eaters  *Meropidae*

**Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**  
*Merops hirundineus*  
A small flock of 3 birds was seen on our drive into Liwonde NP.

**Little Bee-eater**  
*Merops pusillus*  
Seen almost daily throughout Malawi.

**Böhm's Bee-eater**  
*Merops boehmi*  
This stunning bee-eater is rather range restricted and thus a highly sought-after species. The Shire River and its associated riverine thickets provide perfect habitat for this species and we enjoyed multiple sightings during our time in Liwonde NP.

**Olive (Madagascar) Bee-eater**  
*Merops superciliosus*  
We had a good number of sightings of this migratory species during our time in the country with our first views coming from Liwonde NP. We later had sightings at Dzalanyama and near Makuzi Beach.

**European Bee-eater**  
*Merops apiaster*  
This summer visitor to the region was first found on our drive north to the Viphya Plateau. We later had a number of sightings in Nyika NP and towards Makuzi Beach.

### Hoopoes  *Upupidae*

**African (Eurasian) Hoopoe**  
*Upupa africana*  
We had daily sightings in Liwonde NP of this spectacular species with further views at Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh GR.

*NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognised by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar (U. marginalis) and Eurasian (U. eops). The white-winged African form is often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe (U. senegalensis) with the fourth species, the one we observed, being African Hoopoe (U. africana). However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African.*

**Green Wood Hoopoe**  
*Phoeniculus purpureus*  
Small groups of these beautiful birds were seen in Liwonde NP and again at Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Common Scimitarbill**  
*Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*  
This species is usually found singly or in pairs and in Malawi is a common resident. Numerous sightings were enjoyed in the woodlands of Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama and finally at Vwaza Marsh GR.

### Hornbills  *Bucerotidae*

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Rockjumper Birding Tours
Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*
A species which prefers tall woodland and forest and was sighted regularly in Liwonde and Nyika NP’s.

Pale-billed Hornbill *Tockus pallidirostris*
A broad-leaved woodland specialist that was seen well on a few occasions at Dzalanyama. They were regularly picked up giving their distinctive vocalization.

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*
A common species of dry woodland that was regularly found throughout Liwonde NP and then again at Makuzi Beach.

Southern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus rufirostris*
As with the previous species we had numerous sightings in Liwonde NP and Makuzi Beach. 

*NOTE: Some authorities split the Red-billed Hornbill complex into 5 full species, nominate Northern from northern Tanzania to Mali, Damara T. damarensis of northern Namibia and southern Angola, Southern T. rufirostris of southern and south-central Africa, Tanzanian T. ruahae of central Tanzania and Western T. kempi of Senegamibia. Clements does not recognize these splits.*

Trumpeter Hornbill *Bycanistes bucinator*
We had fantastic views of these impressive birds on a daily basis in Liwonde NP.

Ground Hornbills *Bucorvidae*

Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri*
This large and unmistakable species is now largely confined to wilderness areas that are protected from hunting. We had a few good sightings on the tour in Liwonde NP, near Dzalanyama and finally on our drive from Makuzi Beach to Blantyre.

African Barbets *Lybiidae*

White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis*
A rather scarce bird in Malawi that is largely confined to the Zomba Plateau. Here we had two good sightings of birds scoped in the top of some tall dead trees.

Whyte’s Barbet *Stactolaema whytii*
A localized species that is confined to miombo woodland. We searched long and hard for this species at a number of good sites without success, so we were all pretty ecstatic when a single bird was brilliantly found at distance along a small stream near the entrance to Nyika NP.

Moustached Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus leucomystax*
In Malawi this species is confined to the Nyika Plateau where we had some good views. Its call was one of the common background sounds in the montane forests in the area.

Yellow-rumped (Golden-rumped) Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus*
This widespread African species was only seen on a single occasion on the Zomba Plateau during our tour.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*
This dry woodland species was seen very well on a number of occasions with our first sightings coming from Dzalanyama. We later had further looks of birds in mixed feeding flocks near the entrance gate to Nyika NP and again at Vwaza Marsh GR.

Miombo Pied Barbet *Tricholaema leucomelas*
Brief views were had of a single bird by a few members of the group in some good woodland habitat near Vwaza Marsh GR.

Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus*
Usually more commonly encountered than what we experienced however good views were had of a vocal pair at Dzalanyama and then a single bird near Vwaza Marsh GR.
Brown-breasted Barbet  
Lybius melanopterus
We had superb views of one in riverine forest in Liwonde NP, which perched up for excellent scope views. This species is extremely localized in Malawi, being confined to Liwonde NP and only in thickets and riverine habitat along the Shire River.
Crested Barbet  
Trachyphonus vaillantii
A gorgeous multicoloured species that was seen very well in Liwonde NP and again in Vwaza Marsh GR.

Honeyguides  
Indicatoridae

Green-backed Honeybird  
Prodotiscus insignis
A generally uncommon species. We had some excellent views of a perched bird while exploring the woodlands of Dzalanyama.
Brown-backed Honeybird  
Prodotiscus regulus
Another uncommon honeyguide species that was found in our first flock, on our first morning in Dzalanyama, and not again. The bird did however give some good views.

Pallid Honeyguide  
Indicator meliphilus
Another rather thin on the ground honeyguide that was seen very well through the scope on the Zomba Plateau.

Lesser Honeyguide  
Indicator minor
This is one of the more common and widespread honeyguide species, which was seen a couple of times on our tour at Dzalanyama.

Scaly-throated Honeyguide  
Indicator variegatus
This species has a very distinctive call that was heard during our time at Dzalanyama. We had however already had excellent views on the Zomba Plateau of a bird that was initially located while calling.

Greater Honeyguide  
Indicator indicator
A total of five observations over five tour days with sightings at Liwonde, Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh.

Woodpeckers  
Picidae

Bennett’s Woodpecker  
Campethera bennetti
A single female was seen very well during our explorations of the dry woodland in Vwaza Marsh GR.

Speckle-throated Woodpecker  
Campethera scriptoricauda
This highly localized woodpecker can be tough to find in parts of its range. Liwonde NP is certainly one of the most accessible sites to find species and we were not to be disappointed with a number of good sightings in the extensive mopane woodlands that dominate the area.

Golden-tailed Woodpecker  
Campethera abingoni
Excellent views of this widespread species were enjoyed in Liwonde Np and at Dzalanyama.

Green-backed Woodpecker  
Campethera cailliautii
This small species was seen by most of the group at Makuzi Beach during an afternoon walk.

Cardinal Woodpecker  
Dendropicos fuscescens
Typically common and Malawi was no different with numerous sightings on a daily basis on the Zomba Plateau, in Liwonde NP and Vwaza Marsh GR.

Stierling’s Woodpecker  
Dendropicos stierlingi
A near endemic to Malawi where it is extremely localized and threatened by habitat destruction with Dzalanyama being the easiest site to try and locate it. We were fortunate during our time in the area.
to find a total of 6 birds over 2 days often associating with mixed flocks. Certainly up there as one of the more sought-after species on the tour.

Bearded Woodpecker  *Dendropicos namaquus*
Our only sighting of this large species was from Liwonde NP.

Olive Woodpecker  *Dendropicos griseocephalus*
A single bird was seen well and scoped during our first morning walk near our accommodations on the Nyika Plateau.

**Broadbills  Eurylaimidae**

**African Broadbill  *Smithornis capensis***
Another highlight of the trip was of a couple of males performing their circular display flight in lowland forest near Nkhata Bay. This is often a very tricky species to see.

**Wattle-eyes, Batis  Platysteiridae**

**Cape Batis  *Batis capensis***
Zomba Plateau and Nyika NP produced excellent views of these beautiful little birds.

**Chinspot Batis  *Batis molitor***
The woodland zones on the tour such as Liwonde, Dzalanyama, the lower slopes of Nyika and Vwaza Marsh all proved to be excellent locations for this widespread species.

**Black-throated Wattle-eye  *Platysteira peltata***
We enjoyed fabulous views of this species on five tour days with our first sightings coming from our lodge in Liwonde NP. We ended with more great views at Makuzi Beach on the edge of Lake Malawi.

**Helmetshrikes  Prionopidae**

**White-crested Helmetshrike  *Prionops plumatus***
Common in a variety of woodland zones through Malawi. Our first sightings were from Liwonde NP.

**Retz’s Helmetshrike  *Prionops retzi***
Always in far less numbers than the previous species however still fairly common in Malawi and we enjoyed small groups in Liwonde, Dzalanyama and near Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Bushshrikes  Malaconotidae**

**Grey-headed Bushshrike  *Malaconotus blanchoti***
This huge woodland bushshrike was seen well in Liwonde NP after it was initially located by call.

**Black-fronted Bushshrike  *Chlorophoneus nigrifrons***
A gorgeous species that was seen very well in Chowo Forest on the Nyika Plateau.

**Orange-breasted Bushshrike  *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus***
This attractive species with a very distinctive call was first seen in Liwonde NP with another sighting in Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Brown-crowned Tchagra  *Tchagra australis***
We had great views of a total of 3 birds during our exploration of the woodlands in Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Black-crowned Tchagra**  
*Tchagra senegalus*
This is the common and widespread tchagra through Malawi which was observed across much of the country from Liwonde and Dzalanyama to the lower slopes of Nyika.

**Black-backed Puffback**  
*Dryoscopus cubla*
Seen virtually daily in small numbers throughout the trip.

**Fulleborn’s Boubou**  
*Laniarius fueleborni*
In Malawi this species is confined to the northern plateau of Nyika where it occurs in the pristine montane forests in the area. It is always a shy species however we managed to find a very responsive pair in Chowo Forest during our first mornings birding.

**Tropical Boubou**  
*Laniarius major*
An exceptionally common and widespread bird across Malawi where it was encountered almost daily.

*NOTE: Some authorities like the IOC and Clements have split this into 3 species, Tropical Boubou, *L. aethiopicus* the species we recorded, Somali Boubou, *L. erlangeri* of Somalia, and Zanzibar Boubou, *L. sublacteus* of NE Tanzania and Zanzibar.*

**Brubru**  
*Nilaus afer*
This widespread species was seen well and often in mixed flocks through Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama and in the general Vwaza Marsh area.

*NOTE: This previously monotypic genus might be split 4 ways: Northern Brubru *N. afer*, Black-browed Brubru *N. nigritemporalis*, Angola Brubru *N. affinis* and Southern Brubru *N. brubru*. Clements nor the IOC currently recognize these splits.*

**Cuckooshrikes**  
*Campephagidae*

**White-breasted Cuckooshrike**  
*Coracina pectoralis*
The miombo woodlands of Dzalanyama produced fabulous views of this smart species on a daily basis.

**Black Cuckooshrike**  
*Campephaga flava*
Both sexes were recorded regularly on the tour with sightings coming from Zomba, Dzalanyama and Nyika.

**Shrikes**  
*Laniidae*

**Souza’s Shrike**  
*Lanius souzae*
This is one of the most prized species in areas where it occurs however we found them to be particularly numerous on this occasion with at least 12 birds seen over two days at Dzalanyama. One of the tour highlights and much enjoyed.

**Northern Fiscal**  
*Lanius humeralis*
The birds recorded in the mountainous regions of Zomba and on the Nyika and Viphya Plateaus were of this species.

**Southern Fiscal**  
*Lanius collaris*
A common bird in disturbed habitat where it was seen almost daily.

*NOTE: Common Fiscal has recently been split by IOC. Northern Fiscal, *L. humeralis* occurs in Sub-saharan Africa south to Southern Africa. Southern Fiscal, *L. collaris* is virtually restricted to Southern Africa. Clements does not accept this split.*

**Orioles**  
*Oriolidae*

**African Golden Oriole**  
*Oriolus auratus*
We enjoyed a number of sightings of this brilliantly golden oriole at Dzalanyama where they were often seen in mixed feeding flocks with other species.
Black-headed Oriole  
*Oriolus larvatus*
This widespread woodland species was observed on many tour days with sightings at Liwonde, Dzalanyama, Viphya, Nyika and Vwaza Marsh.

**Drangos Dicruridae**

Square-tailed Drongo  
*Dicrurus ludwigii*
Our only sightings of the small forest drongo were from the Zomba Plateau.

Fork-tailed Drongo  
*Dicrurus adsimilis*
This species was seen on many days and in good numbers throughout the trip.

*NOTE: The forest dwelling Velvet-mantled Drongo, D. modestus of East and West Africa is now split from Fork-tailed Drongo D. adsimilis.*

**Monarchs Monarchidae**

Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher  
*Trochocercus cyanomelas*
Our morning in the lowland forests near Nkhata Bay produced a total of 3 of these smart birds.

African Paradise Flycatcher  
*Terpsiphone viridis*
We enjoyed several sightings at Liwonde, Dzalanyama, Nyika and Makuzi Beach. A spectacular bird that is wonderfully common and widespread throughout Africa.

**Crows, Jays Corvidae**

Pied Crow  
*Corvus albus*
Regularly seen in small numbers throughout Malawi.

White-necked Raven  
*Corvus albicollis*
Our first views were on the Zomba Plateau with many further sightings on both Viphya and Nyika Plateaus. A bird that generally enjoys mountainous terrain and altitude.

**Fairy Flycatchers Stenostiridae**

White-tailed Blue Flycatcher  
*Elminia albicauda*
A lively species that often associates with feeding flocks. We had some very good views during our time in Dzalanyama and Nyika NP.

White-tailed Crested Flycatcher  
*Elminia albonotata*
A species confined to montane forests where it was seen very well on Zomba and Nyika Plateaus.

**Tits Paridae**

Southern Black Tit  
*Melaniparus niger*
A common woodland species of southern Africa. We had numerous views in Liwonde NP.

Rufous-bellied Tit  
*Melaniparus rufiventris*
A real miombo specialist that was seen in fairly good numbers on our two full days at Dzalanyama.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes split into two. The nominate Rufous-bellied Tit, P. rufiventris, which we recorded and Cinnamon-breasted Tit, P. pallidiventris. There are also another two distinct races under P. rufiventris being P. masukuensis and P. diligens. We recorded the former of these.*

Miombo Tit  
*Melaniparus griseiventris*
Another specialist of the miombo woodland belt. We enjoyed a total of around 7 birds over 2 days at Dzalanyama.

**Penduline Tits Remizidae**

Grey Penduline Tit  
*Anthoscopus caroli*
Our first views of this tiny species were on one of our woodland drives in Liwonde NP. Later on we
had views at Dzalanyama and again on our final days lunch stop en route from Makuzi Beach to Blantyre.

NOTE: The sub-species in Northern Tanzania/southern Kenya is sometimes split as Buff-bellied Penduline Tit, A. sharpei. IOC and Clements do not accept this split.

**Nicators Nicatoridae**

**Eastern Nicator**  
*Nicator gularis*

This species was heard only during our time in the lowland forest near Nkhata Bay.

**Larks Alaudidae**

**Rufous-naped Lark**  
*Mirafran africana*

Just two birds were found during our time in Nyika NP.  

NOTE: The Rufous-naped Lark is divided by Clements into twenty-three subspecies throughout most of Africa. Several of the northern forms have been proposed as full species including Sharpe’s Lark *M. sharpii* of Somalia and Malbrant’s Lark *M. malbranti* of Central Africa.

**Fischer’s Sparrow-Lark**  
*Eremopterix leucopareia*

Always a good find in Malawi. We enjoyed close views of three birds in some cultivated fields on our drive from Dzalanyama to Lilongwe.

**Bulbuls Pycnonotidae**

**Dark-capped (Black-eyed) Bulbul**  
*Pycnonotus tricolor*

Recorded daily at all locations visited in Malawi.  

NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognised as distinct species within the super-species Common Bulbul *P. barbatus*. The form that we saw in Malawi, *P. tricolor* has been split as Dark-capped Bulbul by some authorities. Clements does not recognize this split.

**Black-browed Greenbul**  
*Arizelocichla fusciceps*

A near endemic to Malawi which is readily seen on the Nyika Plateau. We enjoyed a number of good views at a variety of forests visited. Our first views however came from the Viphya Plateau to the south.  

NOTE: The Mountain Greenbul have recently been split into a number of species scattered in higher altitude forest patches across Africa. The birds we saw are near endemic to Malawi.

**Olive-headed Greenbul**  
*Arizelocichla olivaceiceps*

Another near endemic to Malawi that was seen in good numbers in the Zomba area.  

NOTE: Same as above.

**Little Greenbul**  
*Eurillas virens*

This is a common forest edge greenbul throughout most of tropical Africa and was seen a handful of times on the Zomba Plateau and in the lowland forests near Nkhata Bay.

**Sombre Greenbul**  
*Andropadus importunus*

Commonly seen and heard in Liwonde NP where they prefer riverine thickets. A common resident throughout the forested regions of Southern Africa.

**Yellow-bellied Greenbul**  
*Chlorocichla flaviventris*

This large noisy greenbul was seen well in Liwonde NP on a few occasions where like the previous species they prefer the thickets.

**Terrestrial Brownbul**  
*Phyllastrephus terrestris*

Good views of this ground dwelling species were had at our camp in Liwonde NP with further looks at Makuzi Beach.

**Grey-olive Greenbul**  
*Phyllastrephus cerviniventris*
A localized species through south central Africa that is generally infrequently recorded in Malawi. We had a number of good encounters however on this tour with our best views coming from Dzalanyama and Makuzi Beach.

**Placid Greenbul**  
*Phyllastrephus placidus*

The Zomba Plateau produced excellent views of this species on multiple occasions.  
**NOTE:** This species has fairly recently been split from Cabanis’s Greenbul, *P. cabanisi*, which occurs through central Africa.

**Sharpe’s Greenbul**  
*Phyllastrephus alfredi*

The splitting of this species from Yellow-streaked Greenbul has produced an extremely localized species that is largely confined to the Nyika Plateau in Malawi. Here it is common however and we had a number of good views during our time in the forests on the plateau.  
**NOTE:** This species is sometimes split as a separate species from the widespread Yellow-streaked Greenbul, *P. flavostriatus*. The IOC currently accepts this split making Sharpe’s Greenbul a localized species confined to northern Malawi and southern Tanzania.

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**Swallows, Martins  Hirundinidae**

**Black Saw-wing**  
*Psalidoprocne pristoptera*

Common through Malawi and seen at many forest sites throughout the country.  
**NOTE:** The “black” saw-wing complex, which occurs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, has recently been lumped into a single species by most authorities. The species we observed when split was known as Eastern Saw-wing *P. orientalis*.

**Grey-rumped Swallow**  
*Pseudhirundo griseopyga*

We had daily sightings of this species on the Nyika Plateau.

**Barn Swallow**  
*Hirundo rustica*

Our first sightings of this common summer visitor were had in Liwonde NP while the woodlands of Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika Plateaus and the Lake Malawi region produced this species as well.

**Angola Swallow**  
*Hirundo angolensis*

A localized species in Malawi which is largely confined to the Nyika Plateau. It does breed on the plateau and we had excellent views near their nesting area on the airstrip.

**Wire-tailed Swallow**  
*Hirundo smithii*

Commonly seen at many sites through Malawi.  
**NOTE:** This species complex is a possible split; with the African nominate form becoming African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow which would be *H. filifera*. IOC and Clements do not as yet recognize this split.

**Blue Swallow**  
*Hirundo atrocaerulea*

One of the undoubted trip highlights was seeing this highly threatened species in such good numbers on the Nyika Plateau. They breed here and Malawi and Nyika in particular is the last stronghold for this species.

**Rock Martin**  
*Pyonoprophe fuligula*

A widely distributed species that was seen a couple of times on the Zomba Plateau and again at our lunch stop on the Mozambique border with.

**Common House Martin**  
*Delichon urbicum*

A single bird was seen by a few members of the group at Makuzi Beach.

**Lesser Striped Swallow**  
*Cecropis abyssinica*

The back end of the trip was where we had a number of sightings especially in the lowland areas around Lake Malawi.

**Mosque Swallow**  
*Cecropis senegalensis*
This large swallow was seen very well and often in Liwonde NP.

**Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica*

The Nyika Plateau produced excellent looks at this widespread species. Malawi is about the southern limit of the birds regular distribution in Africa.

*NOTE: The IOC has recently split the West African form of the widespread Red-rumped Swallow C. daurica as a separate species, West African Swallow C. domicella.*

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**Crombecs, African warblers Macrorhynchidae**

**Long-billed Crombec** *Sylvietta rufescens*

This is the most widespread of the crombec species and where it occurs is usually a common resident. Our sightings in Malawi however were few and far between with only two birds being picked up in Liwonde NP.

**Red-capped Crombec** *Sylvietta ruficapilla*

This species is the miombo specialist and was seen well attending a nest at Dzalanyama with further views in the miombo zone of Nyika NP and Vwaza Marsh GR.

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**Yellow Flycatchers Erythrocercidae**

**Livingstone’s Flycatcher** *Erythrocercus livingstonei*

This dainty and rather lively flycatcher is rather localized in distribution and always a good find. We enjoyed some fabulous views of a feeding pair that were watched for at least 20 minutes near our camp in Liwonde NP.

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**Leaf warblers and allies Phylloscopidae**

**Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler** *Phylloscopus ruficapilla*

This brightly coloured member of what is often a rather plain genus was seen well on the Zomba Plateau on a couple of occasions associating with mixed feeding flocks.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

This newly arrived migrant was seen just a few times on the tour with the majority of those sightings coming from the Nyika Plateau.

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**Reed warblers and allies Acrocephalidae**

**Lesser Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*

We had good views of two birds along the Shire River in Liwonde NP with further views of another two at a wetland on the Viphya Plateau.

**African Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus baeticatus*

Our only sighting on the tour was of a single bird that was well seen during our morning walk near our lodge on the Viphya Plateau.

**African Yellow Warbler** *Iduna natalensis*

A species that possesses a wonderful voice and is often located by its call. We had great looks at a total of 4 birds in upland grassland on the Zomba Plateau with an additional view that came from Mozambique while having lunch on our drive up to Dzalanyama from Liwonde.

**Mountain Yellow Warbler** *Iduna similis*

Far more localized than the previous species but also possessing a wonderful call. We had a wonderful encounter with 3 birds on the Nyika Plateau.

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**Grassbirds and allies Locustellidae**

**Evergreen Forest Warbler** *Bradypterus lopezi*
Loud and vocal, this species can often be a serious skulker however patience and perseverance is often rewarded as was the case on this tour. Our initial views came from the Zomba Plateau where eventually some highly vocal birds gave some decent views. We also had a couple of other decent views near our lodge in Nyika NP.

**Red-faced Cisticola** (*Cisticola erythrops*)
Dzalanyama produced the first views while we later had better and closer looks near our accommodation on Lake Malawi.

*NOTE: Lepe Cisticola C. lepe is often split from the above species and is found widely in Angola. Neither Clements nor the IOC currently accepts this split.*

**Singing Cisticola** (*Cisticola cantans*)
We had good views on the Zomba Plateau where it prefers rank growth at the forest edge.

**Trilling Cisticola** (*Cisticola woosnami*)
An uncommon species in Malawi with a rather localized distribution in the country. It does however possess a distinctive call and we had some very good views of at least 2 birds during our brief morning exploration on the Viphya Plateau.

**Rattling Cisticola** (*Cisticola chiniana*)
This typically common species was only sighted on one occasion in Liwonde NP.

**Churring Cisticola** (*Cisticola njombe*)
An extremely localized species that’s entire distribution is largely centered on the Nyika Plateau in Malawi and the Kipingere Range in adjacent Tanzania. Once in these areas it is a common resident and we enjoyed multiple sightings during our time in Nyika NP.

**Wailing Cisticola** (*Cisticola lais*)
Seen on only 2 occasions during the tour, once on the Zomba Plateau and then again on the Nyika Plateau.

*NOTE: This species is often split from Lynes’s Cisticola C. distinctus which occurs in East Africa.*

**Rufous-winged Cisticola** (*Cisticola galactotes*)
A rather brightly coloured cisticola that was seen very well on at least 4 occasions along the edge of the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

*NOTE: Several authorities have split this widespread African species into 5 full species. Races include marginatus, haematocephala, luapula, nominate galactotes and lugubris. The race occurring in Malawi is the nominate and is split as Rufous-winged Cisticola.*

**Croaking Cisticola** (*Cisticola natalensis*)
Only heard on this particular tour at Dzalanyama and again on the edge of Lake Malawi.

**Zitting Cisticola** (*Cisticola juncidis*)
Our only sighting during the tour was from the grassy margins of a wetland near Kazungu.

**Wing-snapping Cisticola** (*Cisticola ayresii*)
A small cisticola that prefers upland grasslands, which was seen briefly by a few members of the group on the Nyika Plateau. A species which comes to life during the breeding season when there high pitched display calls fill the sky.

**Tawny-flanked Prinia** (*Prinia subflava*)
A common and widespread species through much of the country which was seen at almost every site on the tour.

**Red-winged Warbler** (*Heliolepis erythropeterus*)
A species preferring areas of rank growth in broad-leaved woodland that is widely distributed through Africa. At this time of year they seemed to be extremely skulking and unresponsive. Singles were seen briefly at Dzalanyama and in Nyika NP however views were always rather fleeting.

**Bar-throated Apalis** (*Apalis thoracica*)
Seen on a number of occasions on the Nyika Plateau. A species that comprises of as many as 19 distinctive subspecies through its range.

Yellow-throated Apalis (E)  
*Apalis falvigularis*

This is Malawi’s only endemic species and is a fairly recent split from the previous species. Our time spent on the Zomba Plateau produced many fabulous views of this striking apalis.

*NOTE: The above species is sometimes lumped in the Bar-throated Apalis complex.*

Yellow-breasted Apalis  
*Apalis flavida*

A common species through Malawi that was seen in good numbers from Liwonde to Dzalanyama and Zomba to Makuzi Beach.

**White-winged Apalis**  
*Apalis chariessa*

This is one of Malawi’s most prized species and we were very fortunate to have had cracking views of 2 birds on consecutive days while birding the Zomba Plateau.

Black-headed Apalis  
*Apalis melanocephala*

Small numbers were seen during our time on the Zomba Plateau.

Chapin’s Apalis  
*Apalis chapini*

Another localized apalis species that is confined to the Viphya and Nyika Plateaus in Malawi. Here we enjoyed some good views of singles on both plateaus.

Brown-headed Apalis  
*Apalis alticola*

Our initial views were from Manyenjere Forest on the Nyika Plateau however these were rather high in the canopy for the most part. Later on at a small forest patch on the drive off the plateau we had another responsive pair that showed very well at close range.

Green-backed Camaroptera  
*Camaroptera brachyuran*

We had good views during our time in Liwonde NP and again at Makuzi Beach.

Grey-backed Camaroptera  
*Camaroptera brevicaudata*

This species was only heard at Vwaza Marsh GR.

*NOTE: Most authorities now recognise the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms C. brevicaudata. There is however a lot of talk about these two species becoming one once again in the near future.*

Stierling’s Wren-Warbler  
*Calamonastes stierlingi*

This distinctive species prefers broad-leaved woodland areas and was seen well in places like Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh GR while our first views were from the mopane woodland in Liwonde NP.

Green-capped Eremomela  
*Eremomela scotops*

Excellent views were had a number of sites such as Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh GR.

Laughingthrushes  
*Leiothrichidae*

Arrow-marked Babbler  
*Turdoides jardeneli*

This species moves about in noisy groups and was found easily in Liwonde NP and Dzalanyama.

**Sylviid Babblers  
*Sylviidae***

Brown Warbler  
*Sylvia lugens*

This species is extremely habitat specific and prefers stands of *acacia abyssinica* at altitude. We had excellent views of a pair on the Nyika Plateau.

White-eyes  
*Zosteropidae*

African Yellow White-eye  
*Zosterops senegalensis*

Very common throughout Malawi and sighted on almost every day of the tour.
Hyliotas_Hyliotidae

Yellow-bellied Hyliota *Hyliota flavigaster*
The broad-leaved woodlands of Dzalanyama produced numerous good views of this striking leaf gleaner.

Southern (Mashona) Hyliota *Hyliota australis*
As with the previous species we had numerous good views in the woodlands of Dzalanyama.

Treecreepers_Certhiidae

African Spotted Creeper *Salpornis salvadori*
We had cracking views of one obliging individual in the woodlands of Dzalanyama.

NOTE: The IOC have recently split Spotted Creeper into two species, the African Spotted Creeper, *S. salvadori*, which we recorded and the Asian form as Indian Spotted Creeper, *S. spilonatus*.

Starlings_Sturnidae

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*
Highly nomadic and unpredictable in its occurrence, although they are generally a common species and we found a small group in Liwonde NP.

Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*
Very common in the mopane woodland zone in Liwonde NP, where we had daily views.

Miombo Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis elisabeth*
A species that is confined to the miombo woodland belt of south-central Africa. We had our best views near Vwaza Marsh GR with our first looks coming from the Viphya Plateau.

NOTE: The southern subspecies of Lesser Blue-eared Starling is sometimes split off as Miombo Blue-eared Starling, *L. elisabeth*. Birds from West Africa are still part of the nominate Lesser Blue-eared Starling, *L. chloropterus*.

Meves's Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii*
A dry country, long-tailed starling that is extremely numerous in mopane woodland. We had numerous good views in Liwonde NP.

Violet-backed (Plum-coloured) Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*
We enjoyed good sightings in Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama, Nyika NP and Vwaza Marsh GR. In good sunlight this species is simply gorgeous!

Waller's Starling *Onychognathus walleri*
We had sightings on a daily basis of small numbers in the forest zones on the Nyika Plateau.

Babbling Starling *Neocichla gutturalis*
This is one of the most sought-after species in the country and in Malawi is confined to the miombo woodland in the far northern parts of Vwaza Marsh GR. Here we had excellent views of a small group as we watched them foraging together with a general mixed flock for an extended period of time.

Oxpeckers_Buphagidae

Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*
Seen on a few occasions associating with large game in Liwonde NP.

Thrushes_Turdidae

Kurrichane Thrush *Turdus libonyana*
An exceptionally common and widespread bird through Malawi which was encountered on almost every day of the tour.

White-chested Alethe *Pseudalethe fuelleborni*
In Malawi this species is confined to high montane forests on the Nyika Plateau. They are typically rather shy and skulking and some of us were fortunate to find a single bird on entering Manyenjere Forest. Later on we managed to find another pair at a different forest on the Malawian side of Nyika.

**Thyolo Alethe** *Pseudaletia choloensis*

This bird is quite rightly regarded as one of the toughest species to find in the country, which has been made even more difficult due to severe loss of accessible habitat. Our only chance for this species was on the Zomba Plateau where we enjoyed some remarkable views of a single bird in a small area of remaining forest. One of the ultimate highlights of our tour.

### Chats, Old World Flycatchers _Muscicapidae_

**White-starred Robin** *Pogonocichla stellata*

This species is pretty common in montane forest areas and we enjoyed multiple good sightings on the Zomba and Nyika Plateaus.

**Sharpe’s Akalat** *Sheppardia sharpei*

This is an extremely range restricted species occurring in only Tanzania and Malawi. In the latter country it is only found in a few forest patches on the Nyika Plateau where we were extremely fortunate to have at least 2 good sightings of 3 birds during our time in Nyika NP.

**East Coast Akalat** *Sheppardia gunning*

Another range restricted akalat that was seen exceptionally well in the lowland forests near Nkhata Bay. As with most akalats they are rather skulking and shy however are quite common here. In total we found 6 birds over 5 different sightings during our mornings explorations.

**Olive-flanked Ground Robin** *Cossypha anomala*

This shy forest robin was seen well when a pair were observed calling and flicking about rather excitedly at an ant swarm in one of the beautiful forests on the Nyika Plateau.

**White-browed (Heuglin’s) Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini*

We had good views of this beautiful species at many different sites on the route beginning at Liwonde NP and ending at Makuzi Beach. There call was often one of the first to start the dawn chorus.

**Collared Palm Thrush** *Cichladusa arquata*

Wonderfully common in Liwonde NP where we had numerous close views.

**Miombo Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia barbata*

We had cracking views of this species on a few occasions in the Dzalanyama woodlands with further views again at Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Bearded Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia quadrivirgata*

Two birds were seen very well near our camp in Liwonde NP, one of which was observed calling from a prominent perch in the early morning.

**White-browed Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia leucophrys*

We had good views of two birds on consecutive days near our accommodations at Makuzi Beach.

NOTE: This widespread African complex is being reviewed for a 3-way split, the Southern African *E. leucophrys* group would remain as White-browed Scrub-Robin, the Central African (*E. zambesiana*) would become Red-backed Scrub-Robin and the Northern African (*E. leucoptera*) would become White-winged Scrub-Robin. Few authorities accept these splits.

**African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus*

Our first views of this widespread species were from Zomba while the plateaus of Viphya and Nyika gave many more sightings.

NOTE: Both Clements and the IOC recognize the split of African *S. torquata* and Common *S. rubicola* Stonechats.

**Familiar Chat** *Oenanthe familiaris*

This rock-loving species was first observed near a rock outcrop at Dzalanyama while further views were had on the lower slopes of the Nyika Plateau and near Vwaza Marsh GR.
Arnot’s Chat  
_Pentholaea arnotti_

A specialist of broad-leaved woodland with a particular liking of mopane woodland. We had excellent views in both Liwonde NP and Vwaza Marsh GR during the tour.

Boulder Chat  
_Pinarornis plumosus_

A highly localised species that reaches its northern limit along the Dzalanyama range in Malawi. We had to hike a short way up into the hills to get into prime habitat however on arrival we were treated to good looks at a pair of these large, peculiar chats.

Miombo Rock Thrush  
_Monticola angolensis_

The woodlands of Dzalanyama provided excellent views of these habitat specific rock thrushes while a single bird at the lodge on the Viphya Plateau was a bit of a surprise.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher  
_Diopttrornis fischeri_

A couple of sightings were had at each of the plateau sites of Nyika and Viphya.

Southern Black Flycatcher  
_Melaenornis pammelaina_

We had good views of this fairly common species at a number of sites on the route including Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama and the lower slopes of Nyika NP.

Pale Flycatcher  
_Bradornis pallidus_

Single birds were seen on two consecutive days in the Dzalanyama woodlands.

Ashy Flycatcher  
_Muscicapa caeruleascens_

Excellent close views were enjoyed of this species during our time in Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika NP.

African Dusky Flycatcher  
_Muscicapa adusta_

A very common species in Malawi which was recorded on 9 tour days. We had good views on the Zomba Plateau, Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika.

Böhms Flycatcher  
_Muscicapa boehmi_

A major target for the miombo woodland zone where we finally got some incredible views at Dzalanyama on our final afternoon. We later had another couple of birds in the Vwaza Marsh GR.

Grey Tit-Flycatcher  
_Myiodipna plumbeus_

A rather active species of flycatcher that was observed well on a few occasions during the tour. Our first views were from the Zomba Plateau with additional looks at Liwonde, Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Sunbirds Nectariniidae**

Anchieta’s Sunbird  
_Anthrepetes anchietae_

We enjoyed a number of close views during our time in Dzalanyama. This striking species was highly sought-after and another real highlight of the trip!

Western Violet-backed Sunbird  
_Anthrepetes longuemarei_

We had wonderful views of several daily in the Dzalanyama area.

Collared Sunbird  
_Hedydipna collaris_

A common species that was seen on a number of occasions on the Zomba Plateau and in Liwonde NP.

Olive Sunbird  
_Cyanomitra olivacea_

This a rather plain, drab species when compared to some of its other relations and is a common inhabitant of a variety of forest zones. We recorded a few at Zomba and again in the lowland forests near Nkhata Bay.

NOTE: The Olive Sunbird species complex is sometimes split into two full species, namely the nominate Eastern Olive-Sunbird _C. obscura_ and the form in East and West Africa, Western Olive Sunbird (_C. olivacea_). There has been a review of this split and several authorities are in doubt of the validity, which is based upon the presence, or lack there-of, of pectoral tufts in the females of the various subspecies within the complex.
Amethyst Sunbird  
*Chalcomitra amethystina*
Good numbers were seen as we arrived at the entrance to Liwonde NP while many additional sightings were had at Dzalanyama, Nyika, Vwaza Marsh and Makuzi Beach.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird  
*Chalcomitra senegalensis*
A stunning species especially when seen in good light and we had many sightings at places like Liwonde NP, Nyika’s lower slopes, Vwaza Marsh GR and Makuzi Beach.

Bronzy Sunbird  
*Nectarinia kilimensis*
We had superb views of this species on two occasions, once each of Viphya and Nyika Plateaus.

Malachite Sunbird  
*Nectarinia famosa*
Despite there being limited flowering plants on the Nyika Plateau we still had a few of these gorgeous sunbirds, including some spectacular males.

Scarlet-tufted Sunbird  
*Nectarinia johnstoni*
This is without a doubt one of Nyika’s most prized species and is also one of the more accessible sites to try and see it throughout its limited range. We enjoyed incredible views of a pair on an isolated mountain top on the Nyika Plateau. It was also voted as bird of the tour!

Miombo Double-collared Sunbird  
*Cinnyris manoensis*
A common species within its restricted habitat. We had excellent looks at Dzalanyama on each day we were there with another sighting in the miombo on the lower slopes of Nyika.

Ludwig’s Double-collared Sunbird  
*Cinnyris ludovicensis*
Several of this interesting double-collared sunbird were seen on the Nyika Plateau. Two isolated races of this species exist, the nominate from montane forests of Western Angola and *whytei* from montane Malawi and ne Zambia.

Forest Double-collared Sunbird  
*Cinnyris fuelleborni*
The Zomba Plateau was the area where we found this beautiful species. Usually quite plentiful, however with limited flowering plants around we only had a handful of sightings.

Purple-banded Sunbird  
*Cinnyris bifasciatus*
We enjoyed wonderful sightings in the gardens of Makuzi Beach at the end of the tour.

White-bellied Sunbird  
*Cinnyris talatala*
This widespread Southern African species was commonly encountered in the dry lowlands of Liwonde NP and then again en route to Nyika.

Variable Sunbird  
*Cinnyris venustus*
Zomba, Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika were all sites where this attractive sunbird were located.

**Old World Sparrows  Passeridae**

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver  
*Plocepasser mahali*
A very common inhabitant of the dry mopane woodlands in Liwonde NP where we had numerous sightings daily.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Weaver  
*Plocepasser rufoscapulatus*
An extremely localized species in Malawi and one of the real target specials in the Vwaza Marsh area. We enjoyed a good half dozen birds during our mornings birding at this site.

House Sparrow  
*Passer domesticus*
This introduced species was seen in small numbers at just a couple of sites in Malawi.

Northern Grey-headed Sparrow  
*Passer griseus*
This species is confined to the northern part of Malawi where we had views around the Vwaza Marsh and Rumphi area. Also seen at a few other towns in the north.

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow  
*Passer diffusus*
A species confined to Southern Africa where it is generally widespread and common. In Malawi we had sightings on a daily basis in Liwonde NP.

**Yellow-throated Petronia** *Gymnoris superciliaris*
Commonly sighted through Malawi at sites such as Liwonde NP, Dzalanyama, where it was particularly common, the lower slopes of Nyika and Vwaza Marsh GR.

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**Weavers, Widowbirds Ploceidae**

**Baglafecht Weaver** *Ploceus baglafecht*
In Malawi this species is only found on the Nyika Plateau although occurs widely throughout the rest of Africa. We had daily sightings of a pair in the vicinity of the lodge.

**Bertram’s Weaver** *Ploceus bertrandi*
This is an extremely localized species with most of the range falling in Malawi. We had some good views of a male at a nest on the Zomba Plateau with an additional two seen in flight and perched briefly while birding on the Viphya Plateau.

**Spectacled Weaver** *Ploceus ocularis*
A widespread species with a large range in Africa. We had good sightings at Zomba, Liwonde NP, Viphya and finally at Makuzi Beach.

**Eastern Golden Weaver** *Ploceus subaureus*
We had a good number nesting in the lodge grounds at Makuzi Beach.

**Holub’s Golden Weaver** *Ploceus xanthops*
We had daily views during our time in the Dzalanyama area and on the Viphya Plateau.

**Southern Brown-throated Weaver** *Ploceus xanthopterus*
Seen daily in Liwonde NP where they were still in non-breeding plumage.

**Lesser Masked Weaver** *Ploceus intermedius*
As with the previous species we had daily views in Liwonde NP however these were all in full breeding plumage.

**Village Weaver** *Ploceus cucullatus*
This is Africa’s commonest and most widespread weaver and we had numerous views in Liwonde NP, Viphya area, Vwaza Marsh GR and finally around Makuzi Beach.

**Dark-backed (Forest) Weaver** *Ploceus bicolor*
Zomba Plateau was the site where we had daily views of this striking species.

**Red-headed Weaver** *Anaplectes rubriceps*
A beautiful species and rather unusually patterned and coloured when compared to other weavers. We had excellent views at Liwonde, Dzalanyama and Vwaza Marsh GR.

**Black-winged Red Bishop** *Euplectes hordeaceus*
All of our sightings were of birds in non-breeding plumage at sites such as Dzalanyama and near Lake Malawi.

**Yellow Bishop** *Euplectes capensis*
This species was only seen by one of the group members on our drive between Zomba and Liwonde.

**Yellow-mantled Widowbird** *Euplectes macroura*
A single bird in non-breeding plumage was sighted on the Viphya Plateau.

**Montane Widowbird** *Euplectes psammocromius*
One of the highlights during our time spent on the Nyika Plateau was the daily sightings we enjoyed of this beautiful species. Many of the males were coming into full breeding plumage and were simply stunning to see.

**White-winged Widowbird** *Euplectes albonotatus*
A small flock in non-breeding plumage was seen in the grasslands and scrub adjacent to Lake Malawi.
Red-collared Widowbird  *Euplectes ardens*
A few large flocks were found again of birds all in non-breeding plumage. Sightings were had on the Viphya Plateau and again near Lake Malawi.

**Waxbills, Munias & Allies  Estrildidae**

Orange-winged Pytilia  *Pytilia afra*
A species which is usually associated strongly with broad-leaved miombo woodland however our first sighting was rather surprising when 4 birds were found feeding in the garden of our lodge on the Viphya Plateau! We later found another male in broad-leaved woodland near Vwaza Marsh GR.

Green-winged Pytilia  *Pytilia melba*
Our visit at the end of the dry season probably impacted on general sightings of this species which was eventually found on the second last day of the tour near Lake Malawi. Usually this species would be a fairly commonly encountered.

Cut-throat Finch  *Amadina fasciata*
A rare species in Malawi, which was seen very well during a morning walk near our camp in Liwonde NP. We later had another view at our lunch stop on our final day driving back to Blantyre.

Green Twinspot  *Mandingoa nitidula*
This species can be particularly scarce and tricky to find despite it being relatively widespread through much of Africa’s forest zone. The leader had a sighting of a male on Zomba however we all had decent views of a single male that was found in the lowland forests near Nkhata Bay.

Red-faced Crimsonwing  *Cryptospiza reichenovii*
In many countries this can often be a very difficult bird to observe however the Zomba Plateau must surely rank as the best place to come to grips with this gorgeous species. We had close on 10 birds during our two days in the area with another 2 birds found in Chowo Forest on the Nyika Plateau.

Lesser Seedcracker  *Pyrenestes minor*
A mega in every sense of the word, this species is rather localized in distribution and where it is found it is generally rare and seldom observed. We had some very good views of a single bird at the edge of a dambo at Dzalanyama. Undoubtedly one of the standout birds of our time in Malawi!

Red-throated Twinspot  *Hypargos niveoguttatus*
An exceptionally beautiful species that was seen well by most of the group during our birding on the lower slopes of the Zomba Plateau.

Red-billed Firefinch  *Lagonosticta senegala*
This was the common firefinch in Malawi where it was recorded daily in Liwonde NP and at Makuzi Beach.

African Firefinch  *Lagonosticta rubricata*
Our sightings were enjoyed at Dzalanyama and Nyika NP.

Jameson’s Firefinch  *Lagonosticta rhodopareia*
This species is generally rather uncommon throughout its range. We had some good views of a pair and then a single bird on 2 consecutive days near our lodge on the edge of Lake Malawi.

Blue Waxbill  *Uraeginthus angolensis*
A common species that was sighted regularly in Liwonde NP and again on our drive to Viphya, then north towards Nyika and finally at Makuzi Beach.

Yellow-bellied Waxbill  *Coccoopygia bocagei*
A couple of small groups were found on the Zomba Plateau with an additional sighting later on the Viphya Plateau.

**NOTE:** The isolated Angolan race is very distinctive and has recently been split from Yellow-bellied Waxbill, *C. quartinia*. Clements does not yet accept this split.

Common Waxbill  *Estrilda astrild*
A common species through Malawi that was encountered on the majority of the tour days.

**Orange-breasted (Zebra) Waxbill** *Amandava subflava*
This is a rather widespread species that is not encountered with any regularity on most birding tours. We had one sighting on this tour at a wetland near Kuzungu when a small flock was seen diving into some reeds a couple of times.

**Bronze Mannikin** *Lonchura cucullata*
A generally common species that was seen at a couple of scattered localities through Malawi.

**Red-backed Mannikin** *Lonchura nigriceps*
We enjoyed more views of this species than the previous one, which is unusual. Sites like Zomba, Dzalanyama, Viphya and Makuzi Beach all produced sightings of these pretty little mannikins. *Note: This complex is sometimes split two-ways, the southern and eastern Red-backed Mannikin L. nigriceps and the northern and western nominate Black-and-white Mannikin, L. bicolor. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.*

**Indigobirds, Whydahs  Viduidae**

**Village Indigobird** *Vidua chalybeate*
A single male seen in breeding plumage during our first afternoon game drive in Liwonde NP was a surprise as typically the birds are in non-breeding plumage at this time of the year.

**Pin-tailed Whydah** *Vidua macroura*
We had good views of a single bird in non-breeding plumage near our accommodations on Lake Malawi.

**Long-tailed Paradise Whydah** *Vidua paradisaea*
Small groups were seen on a few occasions on our drive into Liwonde NP.

**Wagtails, Pipits  Motacillidae**

**Mountain Wagtail** *Motacilla clara*
A beautiful species that was seen very well on the Zomba Plateau and again at Dzalanyama. This species is usually always associated with mountain streams.

**African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp*
Very common in Malawi where we enjoyed sightings almost everyday.

**African Pipit** *Anthus cinnamomeus*
Singles were seen at Zomba with further views on our drive to Viphya from Dzalanyama and then again on the Nyika Plateau where they were particularly common. *Note: African Pipit taxonomy is in rather disarray and much further research is required in the phylogeny of this grouping. Several forms which are considered subspecies are likely to become full species in their own right and several new forms are surely still to be described. The identification of two new species of pipits from an urban hockey field in Kimberley, South Africa, provides an excellent illustration regarding how little is know about African pipits and how little attention has been paid to them.*

**Wood Pipit** *Anthus nyassae*
This species was seen well on the Nyika Plateau and then again on the lower slopes of Nyika and finally in Vwaza Marsh GR. *Note: This species used to be considered a subspecies of Long-billed Pipit A. similis. The split has been accepted by all major authorities for around 20 years. There also appears to be little overlap in the ranges of the two species.*

**Striped Pipit** *Anthus lineiventris*
We had excellent views of one in the woodlands of Dzalanyama where the bird was first flushed off the ground and then seen perched motionless for an extended period of time.

**Finches  Fringillidae**

**Yellow-crowned Canary** *Serinus flavivertex*
A fairly common inhabitant of the higher reaches of Nyika, where we had daily sightings of groups around our lodge.

NOTE: The Cape Canary species complex has been split into two, the nominate southern group would remain as Cape Canary S. canicollis and the form which occurs in East Africa and Angola has become Yellow-crowned Canary (S. flavivertex.) Clements does recognise this split.

**Southern Citril** *Crithagra hyposticta*
Superb views were enjoyed on the high plateaus of Zomba, Viphya and Nyika.

NOTE: The African Citril complex has recently been split into 3 species. Southern Citril, C. hyposticta, which we recorded, Western Citril, C. frontalis and the nominate African Citril, C. citrinelloides.

**Yellow-fronted Canary** *Crithagra mozambica*
This is the common canary of Malawi and was seen almost daily through our tour.

**Brimstone Canary** *Crithagra sulphurata*
Dzalanyama was the spot for this species where we had sightings on a daily basis of typically 2 to 3 birds.

**Reichard’s Seedeater** *Crithagra reichardi*
The woodlands of Dzalanyama produced single birds on two consecutive days however our morning birding on the Viphya Plateau gave us numerous close views of this species.

**Black-eared Seedeater** *Crithagra mennelli*
Small groups were enjoyed at Dzalanyama.

**Yellow-browed Seedeater** *Crithagra wyhtii*
An uncommon species that has a very localized distribution on Nyika and then on a few of the Eastern Arc Mountains in Tanzania. We had some superb views of 2 birds on 2 consecutive days near our lodge on the Nyika Plateau.

NOTE: This species has recently been split from the widespread Streaky Seedeater, C. striolata.

### Buntings & Allies *Emberizidae*

**Cinnamon-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza tahapisi*
Our only sightings on this particular trip were in some woodland near Vwaza Marsh GR. A widespread species occurring through much of the continent.

NOTE: The IOC have recently split the West African form of this species into Gosling’s Bunting E. goslingi. This split is not recognized by Clements.

**Golden-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza flaviventris*
We had scattered sightings throughout the country at sites like Dzalanyama, Viphya and Nyika.

**Cabanis’s Bunting** *Emberiza cabanisi*
A pair was seen in the miombo woodland near the entrance gate to Nyika NP.

### MAMMALS (34 species)

#### Baboons & Monkeys *Cercopithecidae*

**Yellow Baboon** *Papio cynocephalus*
This is the most common and widespread primate in Malawi and was seen in all protected areas.

**Vervet Monkey** *Cercopithecus aethiops*
We had excellent sightings in Liwonde NP and again on the Viphya Plateau of this widespread species.

**Samango (Blue/Gentle) Monkey** *Cercopithecus mitis*
We found 2 on the Zomba Plateau that showed well.
**Bushbabies  Loridae**

**Thick-tailed Galago**  
*Galago crassicaudatus*  
We enjoyed some good views of this large galago (bushbaby) on each of our night drives in Liwonde NP.

**Elephant Shrews  Macroscelididae**

**Chequered Elephant Shrew**  
*Rhynchocyon cirnei*  
This species was only briefly seen by some of the group scuttling across the forest floor on the Nyika Plateau.

**Four-toed Elephant Shrew**  
*Petrodromus tetradactylus tordayi*  
While birding in Vwaza Marsh GR we came across one of these fleet of foot animals, which was seen rather well.

**Hares & Rabbits  Leporidae**

**Scrub Hare**  
*Lepus saxatilis*  
We had sightings of this common species on many of our night drives in Liwonde and Nyika NP’s.

**Squirrels  Scurididae**

**Smith’s Tree Squirrel**  
*Paraxerus cepapi*  
A common species that was sighted daily in Liwonde NP.

**Tanganyika Mountain Squirrel**  
*Parxerus Lucifer*  
A species that has a very small range and is little known. We had two animals while birding in Manyenjere Forest on the Zambian side of the Nyika Plateau.

**Mutable Sun Squirrel**  
*Heliosciurus mutablis*  
We had excellent views of two on the Zomba Plateau.

**Porcupines  Hystricidae**

**Cape Porcupine**  
*Hystrix africaeaustralis*  
During one of our night drives in Liwonde NP we had a brief encounter with one of these strange animals.

**Dogs & Allies  Canidae**

**Side-striped Jackal**  
*Canis adustus*  
We had an excellent sighting of this rather uncommon and infrequently seen jackal in Nyika NP.

**Mongooses  Herpestidae**

**Banded Mongoose**  
*Mungos mungo*  
We had a sighting of large group in Liwonde NP.

**Water (Marsh) Mongoose**  
*Atilax paludinosus*  
This species can often be tricky to find and is mostly nocturnal however Liwonde NP is an excellent place to find them and we had sightings on each of our 3 night drives in this reserve.

**White-tailed Mongoose**  
*Ichnuemia albicauda*  
As with the previous species they are largely nocturnal. We had excellent sightings of this beautiful and large mongoose on all of our night excursions in Liwonde NP.

**Genets & Civets  Viverridae**

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Rockjumper Birding Tours
Blotched (Large-spotted) Genet  *Genetta tigrina*
A stunning animal to see and we enjoyed some extraordinary sightings of this species during our Liwonde night drives.

African Civet  *Civettictis civetta*
This was one of our best mammal sightings in Liwonde NP and indeed of the entire tour. We had incredible sightings of a single civet that we watched for an extended period of time close to the Shire River. Voted number one mammal of the tour!

**Elephants  *Elephantidae***

African Elephant  *Loxodonta Africana*
One of Africa’s most iconic mammals. In Malawi they occur widely in Liwonde NP and we had numerous sightings during our time in the area.

**Horses  *Equidae***

Crawshay’s Zebra  *Equus crawshayi*
This unique zebra subspecies was found in Liwonde NP where they have been reintroduced and widely in Nyika NP which is one of their strongholds.

**Hippopotamuses  *Hippopotamidae***

Hippopotamus  *Hippopotamus amphibius*
Numerous sightings of these large water loving animals were had along the Shire River in Liwonde NP.

**Pigs  *Suidae***

Bushpig  *Potamochoerus larvatus*
Not a common animal by day and even at night they are infrequently recorded. We had a superb sighting of a single animal on one of our night drives in Liwonde NP.

Common Warthog  *Phacochoerus africanus*
Liwonde NP and Nyika NP both gave good views of these strange looking pigs.

**Bovids and Horned Ungulates  *Bovidae***

African Buffalo  *Syncerus caffer*
Our only sighting came from Liwonde NP of this extremely powerful species.

Eland  *Taurotragus oryx*
This is largest antelope in the world and we had some very good views of large herds in Nyika NP.

Greater Kudu  *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*
Excellent sightings of these spiral horn antelope were had in Liwonde NP.

Bushbuck  *Tragelaphus scriptus*
We had good sightings of these shy antelope whilst in Liwonde and Nyika NP’s.

Common Waterbuck  *Kobus ellipsiprymnus*
Easily identified by the white ring on its rump. We enjoyed good sightings on a daily basis while in Liwonde NP.

Common Reedbuck  *Redunca arundinum*
Nyika NP was the place where we had many sightings of this common species.

Roan Antelope  *Hippotragus equinus*
This gorgeous antelope was seen extremely well in Nyika NP. Generally uncommon and always a good find.
Sable Antelope  
*Hippotragus niger*  
This stately antelope was a much wanted species on the tour and we eventually had excellent views of a single bull followed by a few family groups on our drive out of Liwonde NP.

**Impala**  
*Aepyceros melampus*  
By far the most numerous antelope species we encountered during our visit to Liwonde NP.

**Klipspringer**  
*Oreotragus oreotragus*  
Two sightings were enjoyed of these rock dwelling antelope in Nyika NP.

**Red Duiker**  
*Cephalophus natalensis*  
A single animal was briefly seen scurrying through one of the montane forests on Nyika.

**Common Duiker**  
*Sylvicapra grimmia*  
We had a few views of this large duiker species in Liwonde and Nyika NP’s.

### REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

**Serrated Hinged Terrapin**  
*Pelusios sinuatus*  

**Rainbow Skink**  
*Mabuya quinquetaeniata*  

**Striped Skink**  
*Mabuya striata*  

**Rock Monitor**  
*Varanus exanthematicus*  

**Nile Monitor**  
*Varanus niloticus*  

**Southern Tree Agama**  
*Agama atricollis*  

**Meller’s Chameleon**  
*Chamaeleo melleri*  

**Nile Crocodile**  
*Crocodylus niloticus*