ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Kenya

Highlights Tour I

6th October to 20th October 2023 (15 days)



Golden-breasted Startling by Ignacio Yufera

Kenya is well regarded as one of the finest safari destinations on the planet, and rightly so. Our 2-week Kenya Highlights tour traverses a wide range of habitat from coastal forest and woodlands, acacia savanna and central African rainforest to papyrus swamps and rolling grassy savanna as we target a mouth-watering array of Kenya's most special birds. The game viewing will also be a significant

highlight as we explore famous Kenyan game reserves such as Tsavo West, Tsavo East and the Maasai Mara.

Our tour begins with an exploration of Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. Here we will endeavor to find some of the rarest birds in Africa, including the diminutive Sokoke Scops Owl, Sokoke Pipit, Fischer's Turaco, Amani Sunbird and Clarke's Weaver. We then travel through both Tsavo East and West Parks, offering excellent game viewing and a huge bird list. We will also take time to visit the isolated Taita Hills, with its critically endangered species. For the second week of our Kenya tour, we head across to western Kenya where our first site will be the famous Kakamega Forest. Here a plethora of forest specials await, with the gorgeous Blue-headed Bee-eater, Turner's Eremomela, Chapin's Flycatcher, Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat and Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye being notable targets. After exploring the papyrus swamps and moist woodlands along Lake Victoria for the striking Papyrus Gonolek, Papyrus Canary and numerous other wetland specialties, we finally enter the plains to visit arguably the most famous game reserve in the world, the fabulous Maasai Mara!

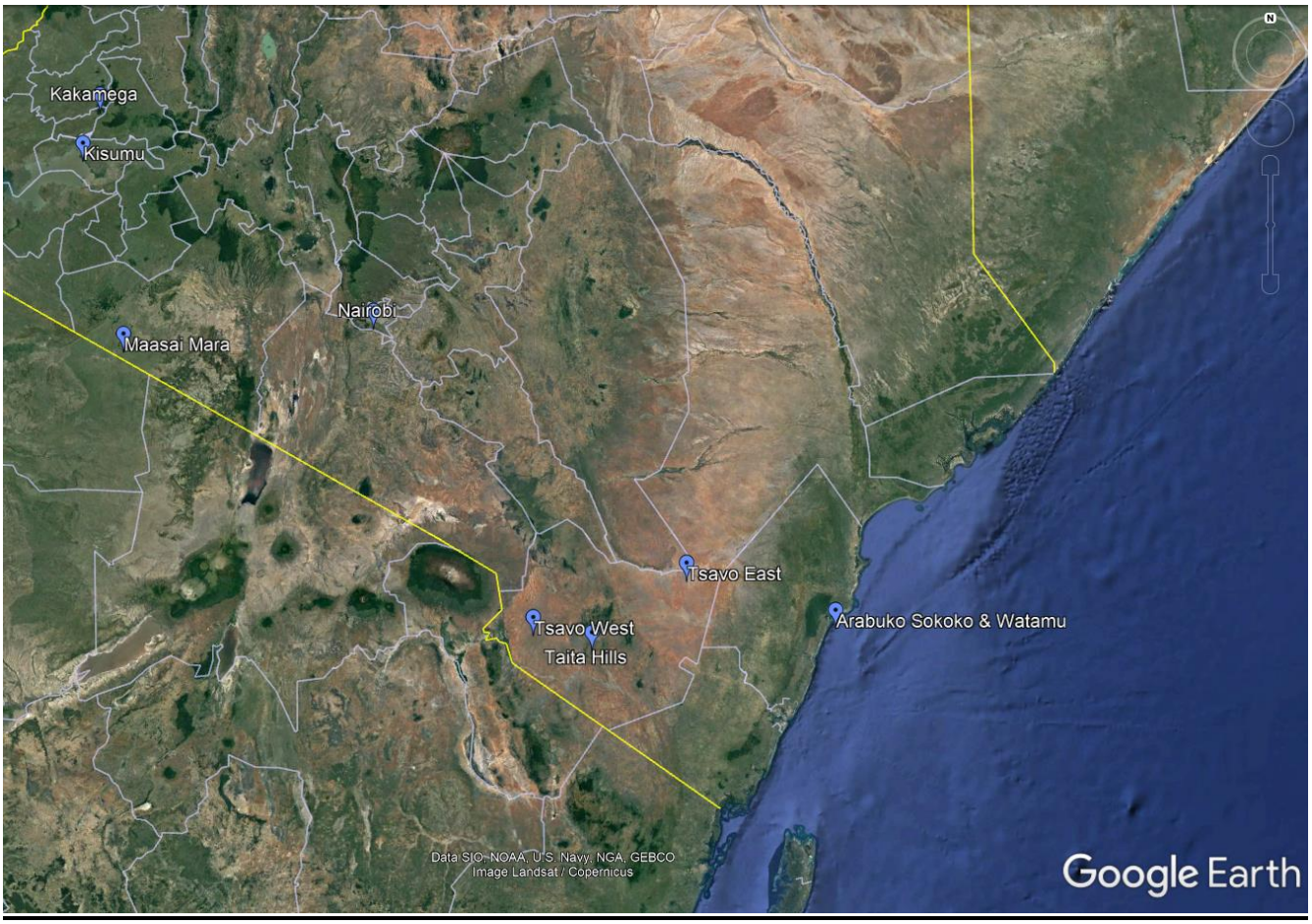
Join us for what promises to be an extraordinary tour offering an incredible diversity of wildlife, superb scenery, wonderful lodges and tented camps, and super-friendly tribal people!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE…

THE ITINERARY

Day 1	**Arrival in Nairobi, flight to Malindi and drive to Watamu Bay**
Days 2 & 3	**Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, Sabaki River Mouth & Mida Creek**
Day 4	**Watamu Bay to Tsavo East National Park**
Day 5	**Tsavo East National Park**
Day 6	**Tsavo East to Tsavo West via the Taita Hills**
Day 7	**Tsavo West**
Day 8	**Tsavo West NP to Nairobi**
Day 9	**Nairobi to Kakamega Forest**
Day 10	**Kakamega Forest**
Day 11	**Kakamega Forest to Kisumu**
Day 12	**Kisumu to Maasai Mara**
Day 13 & 14	**Maasai Mara**
Day 15	**Maasai Mara to Nairobi and departure**

TOUR MAP:


Kakamega
Kisumu
Nairobi
Maasai Mara
Tsavo East
Tsavo West
Taita Hills
Arabuko Sokoko & Watamu
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Google Earth

THE TOUR IN DETAIL…



Sokoke Scops Owl by Rich Lindie

Day 1: Arrival in Nairobi, flight to Malindi and drive to Watamu Bay. After arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, you will be met by your Rockjumper leader at the domestic departures' terminal. From here we will board an internal flight to the coastal town of Malindi, where we will meet-up with our local driver/guide and continue onwards to Watamu Bay and our gateway to the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. This protected reserve covers 420 square kilometers of coastal forest consisting of *Brachystegia* woodland, dense *Cynometra* forest and *Afzelia* lowland forest that supports some of East Africa's rarest and most range-restricted species. Birding in the forest in generally slow and challenging with virtually all species occurring at extremely low densities. However, with patience and perseverance, we'll undoubtedly find an impressive selection of spectacular and extremely special birds.

Days 2 & 3: Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, Sabaki River Mouth & Mida Creek. Over the next two days we have opportunities to visit several sites in and around Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. While exploring the network of trails in the forest, we'll watch for mixed bird flocks (bird parties). Some of the species found in these aggregations may include Green Malkoha, the very rare and erratic Thick-billed Cuckoo, Fischer's Turaco, Narina Trogon, Mombasa Woodpecker, Scaly-throated and Pallid Honeyguides, Sombre, Fischer's and Lowland Tiny Greenbuls, the delightful Little Yellow Flycatcher, Black-headed Apalis, Eastern Nicator, Bearded Scrub Robin, Red-tailed Rufous Thrush, Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, Pale and Forest Batis, Retz's and Chestnut-fronted Helmetshrikes, the attractive Gorgeous Bushshrike and the uncommon Plain-backed Sunbirds. Dead trees are favorite perches of many bird species and definitely worth checking for Green Tinkerbird, White-eared and Green Barbets, and raptors including Southern Banded Snake Eagle, Ayres's Hawk-Eagle and Black and Little Sparrowhawks. Flocks of strange Böhm's Spinetail and Ethiopian Swallow may be



Fischer's Turaco by Glen Valentine



Chestnut-fronted Helmetshrike by Glen Valentine

seen winging their way over the forest while the scarce Forbe's-Watson's Swift is another species to watch out for. Along the forest edge we may find the beautiful Red-throated Twinspot and flocks of Red-backed Mannikin feeding amongst the grass seeds. The rare and near-endemic Sokoke Pipit creeps across the forest floor and are hard to see amongst the leaf-litter. The delicate East Coast Akalat is another shy understory skulker and other key species include the endemic and little-known Clarke's Weaver, almost totally restricted to this site, the extremely localized Amani Sunbird, Scaly Babbler and Eastern Black-headed Batis. Our local guide keeps track of day roosts of the near endemic Sokoke Scops Owl and seeing a pair of these charming little fellows is undoubtedly one of the highlights of birding in this forest. Both brown and red morphs occur and pairs often consist of each of these totally different looking birds. If we don't find the owls at home we will stay after dark and wait for them to call. The evening sounds are exciting, and we may encounter African Wood Owl, African Barred Owlet (the disjunctive local form sometimes split off as Sheffler's Owlet), Fiery-necked Nightjar and several species of bats and galagos.

We will likely also take some time to visit the Arabuko Swamp situated in the northern part of the Reserve that has been a fairly reliable site for the localised Malindi Pipit over the past few years. Water levels fluctuate considerably at the swamp and when wet, specials like White-backed Duck, African Pygmy Goose, Coastal Cisticola, Zanzibar Red-Bishop, Black Coucal and Dwarf Bittern can be found here. However, if the swamp is dry, the only specialty likely to be found here is the Malindi Pipit.

Mida Creek is probably most famous as one of the best locations to see Crab-plover. This unique species, placed in its own monotypic family, is usually seen here in good numbers while many other waders are often present as well.

Mammals we hope to see include Blue Monkey, the diminutive Blue Duiker and the giant Golden-rumped Elephant-Shrew, a truly impressive creature. Our next port of call will be the Sabaki River mouth, an excellent birding site where we will be looking for Sooty, Lesser Black-



Golden Palm Weaver by Glen Valentine



Black-faced Sandgrouse by Glen Valentine

backed and Grey-headed Gulls, Greater Crested, Lesser Crested, Sandwich, Roseate and Saunders's Terns, Eurasian Curlew, Eurasian Whimbrel, Terek Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Greater and Lesser Sand Plovers, Pink-backed Pelican and a variety of other waders. If the area has had a fair bit of rain, the surrounding reedbeds and tall grass and sedges might support Coastal Cisticola, Golden Palm Weaver, Zanzibar Red and very occasionally Fire-fronted Bishops, while the nearby grazed grasslands support the range restricted Malindi Pipit. Other species that occasionally turn up in the surrounding Sabaki woodlands, scrub and thickets include Eastern Black-headed Batis, Scaly Babbler, Dodson's Bulbul, Basra Reed Warbler and the little-known Violet-breasted Sunbird.

The extensive grounds of our very comfortable resort accommodation in Watamu Bay can also be quite productive and here we'll likely find nesting Golden Palm and Eastern Golden Weavers and Malachite Kingfisher.

Day 4: Watamu Bay to Tsavo East National Park. Depending on what we've managed to see over the past two days, we might spend a few final hours this morning birding the woodland and forest of Arabuko-Sokoke in search of any species we might still need.

Thereafter, we'll depart with lunch boxes for Tsavo East National Park. Checking large Baobab trees along the way could produce sightings of both Broad-billed Roller and occasionally Brown-headed Parrot. If we still need Zanzibar Red Bishop or Coastal Cisticolas, we'll stop at the Jilore Swamp at the norther edge of Arabuko-Sokoke Reserve. This area is also great for Spotted Palm Thrush, Golden Palm Weaver, Northern Carmine Bee-eater and Scaly Babbler. Our journey passes through extensive, arid acacia savanna that offers excellent birding, as well as a chance to see Swahili women in their traditional regalia. The gorgeous



Golden Pipit by Glen Valentine



Vulturine Guineafowls by Glen Valentine

Golden-breasted, Shelley's, Magpie and Fischer's Starlings, Tsavo Sunbird, Steel-blue and Straw-tailed Whydahs and a number of raptors such as Black-chested and Brown Snake Eagles, African Hawk-Eagle, Eastern Chanting Goshawk, migrating Steppe and Lesser Spotted Eagles, the majestic Bateleur, miniscule Pygmy Falcon, migratory Grasshopper Buzzard and Eurasian Hobby will all be looked for along the way to the National Park.

Our accommodation tonight will be in the Voi area on the south-western edge of Tsavo East where species such as Western Barn Owl and Nubian and Slender-tailed Nightjars are sometimes seen.



Gerenuk by Glen Valentine

Day 5: Tsavo East National Park.
We have a full day to explore the massive Tsavo East National Park. Out day will be full of both bird and mammal highlights as we search for Egyptian, Hooded, White-headed, White-backed, Rüppell's and Lappet-faced Vultures, Blue-cheeked, Kori, Buff-crested and White-bellied Bustards, Black-faced and Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, Somali Courser, the brilliant Golden Pipit, Somali Ostrich, Black-headed Lapwing, Olive and Somali Bee-eaters, Lilac-breasted, Purple and



Lesser Kudu by Glen Valentine

European Rollers, Abyssinian Scimitarbill, Northern Red-billed and Von der Decken's Hornbills, Nubian, Bearded and Cardinal Woodpeckers, Greater and Lesser Honeyguides, D'Arnaud's and Red-and-yellow Barbets, Eastern Olivaceous and Barred Warblers, Pink-breasted, Red-winged, Foxy and Flappet Larks, Chestnut-headed and Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Larks, Rosy-patched Bushshrike, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, Yellow-necked Spurfowl, Blue-naped Mousebird, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Slate-colored Boubou, Red-tailed Shrike, Red-fronted and Pale Prinias, Grey Wren-Warbler, Pied Wheatear, roving family groups of Vulturine Guineafowl and the stunning Eastern Violet-backed Sunbird among many other incredible dry-country birds.

Mammal highlights could include Lion, Cheetah, Plains Zebra, the strange-looking Gerenuk, regal Grant's Gazelle, tiny Kirk's Dikdik, African Buffalo, the specialized Lesser Kudu, huge Common Eland, Waterbuck, Impala, Warthog and Giraffe. The Tsavo complex is home to the largest population of African Elephant in Kenya (said to number over 7000), a small population of Black Rhinoceros and even an introduced population of the critically endangered Hirola.

Day 6: Tsavo East to Tsavo West via the Taita Hills. After an early breakfast, we depart Voi and Tsavo East for the Taita Hills. This is a beautiful area and extremely fertile but has suffered massively at the hands of man with most of the native forests cut down. These hills famously harbor three highly endangered endemics, namely Taita Thrush, Taita Apalis and Taita White-eye. Recent research has found the Apalis to be the species most at risk of extinction as it appears to be completely absent from the largest extant patch of forest in the Taita Range. The entire world population may be less than 100 breeding pairs! Ngangao forest, the patch we visit, holds some of the last pairs of this rare species. The thrush, while shy occurs in reasonable numbers but is never easy to



Taita Thrush by Glen Valentine



Black-bellied Sunbird by Glen Valentine

find while the white-eye is the most numerous. Other species that we will be on the lookout for include Augur Buzzard, Mottled and Alpine Swifts, White-necked Raven, Stripe-faced and Placid Greenbuls, Evergreen Forest Warbler, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Striped Pipit, Singing Cisticola and White-starred Robin.

After our morning's birding and a picnic lunch at the forest-edge, we'll depart the Taita Hills for Tsavo West National Park. Entering the Reserve in the late afternoon, we'll make our way through the immensely bird and mammal-rich Park to our superb accommodations in the west of the Reserve.

Day 7: Tsavo West. Our lodge is situated inside Tsavo West National Park and we can expect to enjoy some superb birding around the grounds of the lodge. At certain times of the year, the lights of the hotel attract large numbers of Palearctic passerines during their nocturnal migration. We will look out for Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin, White-throated Robin, Common and Thrush Nightingales, Common Whitethroat, Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush, Lesser Grey, Red-backed, Red-tailed and Isabelline Shrikes and a bevy of warblers that might include Marsh, Olive-tree, Barred, River, Upcher's and the little-known Basra Reed.

Traversing the arid acacia savanna that dominates Tsavo West National Park, we'll target a number of special, arid-country species such as the rare and localised Friedmann's Lark, Tiny and Ashy Cisticolas, Pygmy and Eastern Black-headed Batis, Rufous and the rare and secretive Scaly Chatterers, White-bellied and Acacia Tits, Mouse-colored Penduline Tit, Hunter's, Black-bellied, Eastern Violet-backed and the localised Tsavo Sunbirds, Long-tailed and Taita Fiscals, Pringle's Puffback, Three-streaked Tchagra, the rare and skulking Red-naped Bushshrike, Golden-breasted and Magpie Starlings, Chestnut and Parrot-billed Sparrows, Black-cheeked Waxbill, African and Grey-headed Silverbills, Slate-colored Boubous, Rosy-patched



Cheetahs on an Impala kill by Glen Valentine



Three-streaked Tchagra by Glen Valentine

Bushshrike, Somali Bunting, Bare-eyed Thrush, Black-capped Social Weaver, Chestnut Weaver, D'Arnaud's, Red-and-yellow and Spot-flanked Barbets, the nomadic Golden Pipit, Pale White-eye, Blue-capped Cordon-bleu and the stunning Purple Grenadier.

Other likely possibilities include Common Ostrich, Martial, Verreaux's, Tawny and Long-crested Eagles, Crested Francolin, Yellow-necked Spurfowl, Harlequin Quail, Black-bellied and Hartlaub's Bustards, Southern Ground Hornbill, White-bellied Go-away-bird, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Northern Crombec, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Tawny-flanked and Pale Prinias, African Grey, Pale and Spotted Flycatchers, Chinspot Batis, Amethyst, Beautiful and Variable Sunbirds, Tropical Boubou, Brubru, Black-backed Puffback, Black-crowned Tchagras, Orange-breasted and Grey-headed Bushshrikes, Northern White-crowned Shrike, White-crested Helmetshrike, Black-headed, African Golden and Eurasian Golden Orioles, both Yellow-billed and Red-billed Oxpeckers perched atop large mammals like Giraffe and Buffalo, the brilliant Greater Blue-eared, Violet-backed and Superb Starlings, Yellow-spotted Bush Sparrow, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, White-headed and Red-billed Buffalo Weavers, Lesser and Vitelline Masked, Spectacled, Baglafecht, Black-necked and Red-headed Weavers, Green-winged Pytilia, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Jameson's Firefinch, Crimson-rumped Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin, Long-tailed Paradise and Straw-tailed Whydahs and Cinnamon-breasted Bunting.

Over 60 species of mammals occur in the park, including the scarce and elusive Lesser Kudu and African Wild Dog, while Lion, Spotted Hyena, Yellow-spotted Hyrax, Banded and Dwarf Mongooses, Beisa Oryx and Coke's Hartebeest are more likely. We will certainly be treated to an exceptional African birding and big game experience today!

Tonight, we have a chance for a few species of nightjar with scarce species such as Sombre and Donaldson-Smith's being possible together with Eurasian.



Lazing Leopard by Clayton Burne

Day 8: Tsavo West NP to Nairobi. This morning we will depart Tsavo West,



Lühder's Bushshrike by Markus Lilje

continuing to look for any species that we may not yet have seen. After exiting the Reserve, we then head for Nairobi. The afternoon will consist mostly of travel; however, we do pass through upland grasslands with open savanna. This area supports a good population of cisticolas and widowbirds including Pectoral-patch, Zitting, Desert, Tiny, Croaking and Ashy Cisticolas and Red-collared, White-winged and Jackson's Widowbirds and we'll keep our eyes peeled for these as we drive.

If we arrive at our accommodations on the outskirts of the Nairobi with daylight to spare, we can do some late afternoon birding around our lodge grounds, which may produce new species like Abyssinian Thrush, Dusky Turtle Dove, Garden Warbler, Northern Yellow White-eye and Bronzy Sunbird.

Day 9: Nairobi to Kakamega Forest. After breakfast, we will begin our drive west to the famous Kakamega Forest. This is a fairly long drive and will take us most of the day. Improvised birding stops along the way have produced some excellent highland species in the past and we'll certainly watch out for Mountain Buzzard and Black Sparrowhawk, as well as the incredible Golden-winged and Eastern Double-collared Sunbirds, Eurasian Blackcap, White-browed Crombec, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Cinnamon Bracken Warbler, Streaky Seedeater, African Citril, Yellow-crowned Canary, Kikuyu White-eye and African Hill Babbler at the Rift Valley Escarpment.



Guereza by Markus Lilje

We expect to arrive at Kakamega Forest in the late afternoon and we will bird the grounds of the peaceful Rondo Retreat Centre. Kakamega Forest is one of Africa's most famous birding forests and it supports numerous species that can only be found in Central or West Africa. Fabulous, introductory garden birds we are likely to encounter this afternoon include the striking White-headed Saw-wing, Brown-capped, Dark-backed, Vieillot's Black and Baglafecht Weavers, nesting Grey-throated Barbets, chattery Joyful Greenbul and Yellow-throated Leaflove, African Blue Flycatcher, the impressive Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill, Mackinnon's Shrike, Stuhlmann's Starling, Chubb's Cisticola, Northern Double-collared Sunbird and the dazzling African Emerald Cuckoo,

Day 10: Kakamega Forest. Today will undoubtedly be an incredible day's birding and one of the most memorable of the



Black-faced Rufous Warbler by Daniel Danckwerts

entire trip! The birding at Kakamega is five-star and we'll be mesmerized by the bounty of spectacular, new species throughout the day. Birding our way along the wide, open trails through Kakamega's magnificent primary forest, we'll be searching for target species like the giant Great Blue and Black-billed Turacos, Grey Parrot (now rare in Kakamega), Blue Malkoha, White-headed Wood Hoopoe, the incredibly beautiful but scarce and unobtrusive Blue-headed Bee-eater, Yellow-billed, Yellow-spotted and Hairy-breasted Barbets, Thick-billed and Least Honeyguides, Cassin's Honeybird, Brown-eared, Buff-spotted and Yellow-crested Woodpeckers, African Broadbill, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Petit's Cuckooshrike, Pink-footed Puffback, Lühder's and Bocage's Bushshrikes, African Shrike-flycatcher, Brown-throated, Chestnut, Jameson's and Yellow-bellied Wattle-eyes (the last two mentioned species are absolute stunners!), a bevy of greenbuls including Kakamega, Ansorge's, Cabanis's, Slender-billed, Honeyguide, Plain, Yellow-whiskered, Little Grey and the rare Toro Olive Greenbuls, Buff-throated and Black-throated Apalis, Green Hylia, Uganda Woodland Warbler (much easier to find here than in Uganda!), very localized Turner's Eremomela, Dusky Tit, White-breasted and Grey-headed Nigritas, Red-headed Bluebill, Black-crowned Waxbill, the scarce and unobtrusive Black-billed Weaver, Red-headed Malimbe, Bar-tailed Trogon and Olive Sunbird.

Understory skulkers include White-spotted Flufftail, Blue-shouldered and Grey-winged Robin-Chats, beautiful but rare and shy Grey-chested Babbler, Scaly-breasted and more rarely Pale-breasted, Mountain and Brown Illadopsis, White-chinned and Black-faced Prinias and the musical and attractive Black-faced Rufous Warbler. If we're fortunate to encounter an ant swarm we'll watch out unobtrusive ground-dwellers like White-tailed Rufous Thrush, Brown-chested Alethe, Equatorial Akalat and Red-tailed Bristlebill that are attracted to these ant gatherings.

A grassy clearing at the forest edge sometimes yields Crowned Eagle and African Goshawk in display flight in the late morning when temperatures rise, as well as Yellow-mantled Widowbirds buzzing over the rank grass, Stout Cisticolas calling and displaying, Fan-tailed Grassbird, Yellow-throated Longclaw and the two prize species here: the stunning and patchily-distributed Orange-tufted Sunbird and the rare and ultra-elusive Blue Quail.



Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat by Glen Valentine

Mammals we might find include the long-tailed Blue and Red-tailed Monkeys and regal Guereza Colobus.



Papyrus Gonolek by Glen Valentine

Day 11: Kakamega to Kisumu. We will have most of the morning for further exploration of Kakamega in search of any species we may still be missing before we continue southwards to Kisumu, at the edge of Lake Victoria. This afternoon we will visit Hippo Point where a bounty of new and exciting species awaits us. Nesting weavers of various types will grab our attention and include Northern Brown-throated, Slender-billed, Black-headed, Village and Golden-backed. Swamp Flycatchers and Red-chested Sunbirds perch at the papyrus-edge and we'll also watch out for Black-headed Gonolek, the uncommon Papyrus Canary, Winding Cisticola and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Double-toothed Barbet and Eastern Plantain-eater in the surrounding trees.

Day 12: Kisumu to the Maasai Mara. This morning we'll board a motorized boat into the Dunga Swamp to search for the area's papyrus specialties and other noteworthy wetland inhabitants. Papyrus targets are the rare Papyrus Yellow Warbler, stunning Papyrus Gonolek, Carruthers's Cisticola, the localized White-winged, Greater Swamp and Highland Rush Warblers and the scarce Papyrus Canary, while other interesting species we might find include Little Bittern, Western Reef and Purple Herons, Blue-headed Coucal, Woolly-necked Stork, African Openbill, Sacred and Glossy Ibis, African Jacana, Gull-billed Tern, African Reed, Sedge and Lesser Swamp Warblers and if we're extremely lucky, Allen's Gallinule or Lesser Moorhen.



Mara Lions by David Hoddinott

Thereafter, we'll depart for the world famous Maasai Mara. We plan to arrive in the Maasai Mara in time to enjoy a birding and big game safari *en route* to our lodge. As we head southwards, the countryside becomes drier and

less undulating and we'll begin to come across the tall and proud Maasai cattle-herders.



Jackson's Widowbird by Cuan Rush

Days 13 & 14: Maasai Mara. The Mara, as it is affectionately called, is Kenya's most well-known reserve, and it boasts an astonishing amount of game. Unfenced, it is bounded in the east by the Ngama Hills, in the west by the Oloololo or Siria Escarpment and to the south by the vast Serengeti National Park in Tanzania. Famously, the Mara is the northerly end of the Great Migration, that unrivalled primeval surge of wildebeest, zebra and antelope that sweeps in from Tanzania's Serengeti to Kenya's Maasai Mara as the Tanzanian grass starts to fail. Although we will not experience the migration at this time of year, we can still expect to see first class African big game and incredible numbers of mammals. The impressive black-maned Mara Lions are possibly the stars of the show, however, Cheetah, Leopard, Spotted Hyaena, Black-backed Jackal and Serval are present in good numbers. Other mammals we can expect to see include Maasai Giraffe, Hippopotamus, Impala, Waterbuck, Topi, Coke's Hartebeest, Grant's and Thomson's Gazelles, Common Eland, Bohor Reedbuck, Banded and Egyptian Mongooses, Common Warthog and massive herds of African Elephant, African Buffalo, Plains Zebra and Common Wildebeest.

Not only is this a great place in which to find game, but also the wide golden-green savannas, dotted with *Acacia* trees, make it ideal for photography. The Mara is ravishingly beautiful and offers long, undisturbed views and utterly dramatic panoramas. As for the birding, the Mara is also world-renowned, and we will have time in the western and eastern sections of the reserve, both of which support different habitats and therefore markedly different species. New species we may find in the western Mara (Mara Triangle) include Rufous-bellied Heron, Long-toed and African Wattled Lapwing, Black Coucal, Scaly Francolin, Schalow's Turaco, White-tailed, Flappet and Melodious Larks, Rosy-throated Longclaw, Sooty and Anteater Chats, Pallid, Montague's and Western Marsh Harriers, Greater, Common and Lesser Kestrels, Amur Falcon on passage, Northern Black Flycatcher, Trilling, Stout, Croaking, Desert, Pectoral-patch and occasionally even the rare Black-backed Cisticolas,



Rosy-throated Longclaw by Glen Valentine

Jackson's Widowbird, Cardinal Quelea, Black-lored Babbler, Green-capped Eremomela, Red-faced Crombec, Grey-backed Fiscal and Yellow Bishop.



Red-throated Tit by Glen Valentine

We will also spend some time in the eastern section of the Mara which gives access to drier plains where Temminck's and Double-banded Coursers, the uncommon and nomadic Yellow-throated Sandgrouse and Athi Short-toed Lark, Black-winged Lapwing and Fischer's Sparrow-Lark are often encountered and also provides access to tall, dense acacia woodland where we hope to find the range-restricted Red-throated and White-bellied Tits, Usambiro and Red-fronted Barbets, Red-fronted Tinkerbird, Purple Roller, Eastern Grey Woodpecker, the gorgeous Silverbird, Grey-capped Social Weaver, Hildebrandt's Starling, Long-tailed Cisticola, Swahili Sparrow, Magpie Shrike, Common Scimitarbill, Golden-breasted Bunting, Buff-bellied Warbler, Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Southern Ground Hornbill and Speckle-fronted Weaver. If we are extremely fortunate, we might even encounter a flock of the rare and extremely localized Grey-crested Helmetshrike.

Day 15: Maasai Mara to Nairobi and departure. After breakfast and some early morning birding around our lodge grounds where we might find the lovely Grey-capped Warbler, Marico and Beautiful Sunbirds, African Pygmy Kingfisher and Little Weaver, we will depart on a final morning game drive before making our way out of this vast wilderness and back to Nairobi Airport for our flights home.



Typical 4x4 birding and game viewing Toyota Landcruiser.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

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

This includes:

- All meals from lunch on day 1 to dinner on day 15;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- Ground transportation in safari-style 4x4 Landcruisers;
- Reserve Entrance Fees;
- Gratuities for local guides and services; and
- All guiding services.

The tour fee does not include:

- **ANY** airfares (see above);
- Visa fees;
- Optional excursions not mentioned in the itinerary;
- Beverages;
- Special gratuities; and
- Telephone calls, laundry or other items of a personal nature.

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

IMPORTANT NOTES:

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

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

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

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

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

Special Notes:

- Although this Kenya tour does not require a high level of fitness, participants should be in good general health as much of the forest birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time. There will be a few lengthy drives and many of the days will be long with early starts. Should you have any physical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure.
- The vehicles used are comfortable stretched Landcruiser 4X4's with open roof-hatches. In areas with large, dangerous game, we will be confined to the vehicles.
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kgs (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg's (18lb) for hand luggage.
- Accommodation throughout the trip is of a generally high standard and the hotels and resorts that we make use of range from comfortable to rather luxurious. There is no camping on this trip.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include **any** airfares. The tour will depart from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi (IATA: NBO) on the **morning** of day 1 of the tour and it is advised that you arrive the day before the tour starts. The tour will conclude in the **early evening** of day 15 in Nairobi.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

FLIGHTS:

Nairobi International Airport, Nairobi (IATA: NBO), in Kenya is the main port of arrival and exit for this tour. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**