

# Birdfinders in Ghana

16<sup>th</sup> February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007

Compiled by Keith Valentine



Blue-moustached Bee-eater by Keith Valentine

**Tour Participants:** Lorraine Rollefson  
Gerry Rollefson  
Daniel Lien  
Leif Lien  
Barry Smithson

**Tour Leader:** Keith Valentine

**Top 10 Birds:**  
(As voted by participants)

1. Black Bee-eater
2. Standard-winged Nightjar
3. Northern Carmine Bee-eater
4. Blue-moustached Bee-eater
5. African Piculet
6. Great Blue Turaco
7. Little Bee-eater

8. African Blue Flycatcher
9. Chocolate-backed Kingfisher
10. Beautiful Sunbird



Red-throated Bee-eater by Keith Valentine

### **Tour summary**

This classic tour combining the best rainforest sites, national parks and seldom-explored northern regions gave us an incredible overview of the excellent birding that Ghana has to offer. This trip was highly successful, we located nearly 400 species of birds including many of the Upper Guinea endemics and West Africa specialties, and together with a great group of people, we enjoyed a brilliant African birding adventure.

After spending a night in Accra our first morning birding was taken at the nearby Shai Hills, a conservancy that is used mainly for scientific studies into all aspects of wildlife. These woodland and grassland habitats were productive and we easily got to grips with a number of widespread species as well as a few specials that included the noisy Stone Partridge, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Senegal Parrot, Guinea Turaco, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Vieillot's and Double-toothed Barbet, Grey Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Greenbul, Melodious Warbler, Snowy-crowned Robin-chat, Blackcap Babbler, Yellow-billed Shrike, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, White Helmetshrike and Piapiac. Towards midday we made our way to the Volta River where our main target, the White-throated Blue Swallow showed well. We also had lovely views of Brown Sunbird on the banks of the river where we enjoyed a stop for lunch. Sakumo Lagoon gave us a whole host of waders, Western Yellow Wagtail and Black-faced Quailfinch.

The following day was mostly a travel day as we struck out for the rainforest zone. A few stops were made en-route, the best of which was the Densu Delta where we located feeding Black Heron, Collared Pratincole, Spur-winged Lapwing, Spotted Redshank, Temminck's Stint and a host of terns.

The fabulous Kakum National Park was simply brilliant. From the spectacular views of birds from the canopy walkway to the brilliant trails in the Aboabo and Antwikwaa sections, Kakum gave us her best! Many hours were spent reveling in the

flocks of birds around the canopy walkway and highlights included Red-chested Goshawk, Cassin's Hawk-eagle, African Hobby, Great Blue and Yellow-billed Turacos, brilliant, scoped Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo, excellent Brown Nightjar seen in the spotlight, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, low flying Rosy Bee-eaters, Forest Woodhoopoe, impressive Black-casqued Hornbill, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, Hairy-breasted and Yellow-billed Barbet, Willcock's Honeyguide, Little Green and Fire-bellied Woodpecker, Blue Cuckooshrike, Finsch's Flycatcher-thrush, Sharpe's Apalis, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Violet-backed Hyliota, Ussher's Flycatcher, African Shrike-flycatcher, Chestnut Wattle-eye, Chestnut-capped Flycatcher, the diminutive Tit-hylia, Sabine's Puffback, Red-billed Helmetshrike and Maxwell's Black Weaver. The secondary forest of Antwikwaa gave us brilliant perched African Cuckoo-hawk, views of the secretive White-spotted Flufftail, the scarce Brown-necked Parrot, cracking Black Bee-eater, Piping Hornbill, the stunning Buff-throated Sunbird, Narrow-tailed Starling and the very uncommon Preuss's Weaver. The Aboabo section of Kakum was as usual a highlight as we located the little-known Upper Guinea race of African Piculet twice. Other specials were Western Bronze-naped Pigeon, rarely seen Black-throated Coucal, Sabine's and Cassin's Spinetails, Blue-throated Roller, White-headed Woodhoopoe, Melancholy Woodpecker, African Forest-flycatcher and Tiny Sunbird. The trails in Kakum National Park gave us awesome Rufous-sided Broadbill, Forest Robin, Dusky Crested-flycatcher, Blue-billed Malimbe and Western Bluebill. An afternoon visit to the Cape Coast Castle was an eye opener as we learned about the terrible slave trade in West Africa.

On our drive north we made a short stop at the Bobiri Butterfly Reserve and picked up Blue-headed Wood-dove, the outrageous White-crested Hornbill, Shining Drongo and Red-vented Malimbe.

Continuing north our next destination was Mole National Park. The drive up saw us locate a number of roadside birds that

included Short-toed Snake-eagle, Grasshopper Buzzard, Blue-bellied and Broad-billed Roller. Mole protects extensive tracts of Guinea savanna and woodland and is home to a large variety of birds and mammals. One of the undoubted birding highlights of the trip was finding a spectacular male Standard-winged Nightjar that performed many display flights for us just after sunset. We explored much of the



reserve on foot, morning and afternoon walks produced excellent views of African Hobby, Senegal Thick-knee, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Red-throated Bee-eater, Bearded Barbet, Greater Honeyguide, Brown-backed Woodpecker, White-breasted Cuckooshrike, Rufous and Dorst's Cisticola, Moustached Grass-warbler, Swamp Flycatcher and Grey Tit-flycatcher, White-crowned Robin-chat, Senegal Batis, White-shouldered Black-tit, the seldom-recorded Spotted Creeper, Red-winged Pytilia, Bar-breasted and Black-faced Firefinches, delicate Lavender Waxbills and Cabanis's Bunting. The accommodations at Mole are well situated and the grounds and view point gave us Saddle-billed Stork, White-backed Vulture, African Hawk-eagle, spectacular Violet Turaco, Greyish Eagle-Owl, Freckled Nightjar and Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver. An afternoon was spent at a nearby site where we found Red-headed Lovebird,

Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, the stunning Oriole Warbler, Cassin's Flycatcher and Square-tailed Drongo. Mammals recorded at Mole included the striking Yellow-winged Bat, Guinea Baboon, Callithrix and Patas Monkey, Warthog, Bushbuck, Kob, Waterbuck and African Elephant.

The seldom visited far northern region of Bolgatanga gave us a number of interesting birds. Sites visited included Tono Dam and the surrounding dry Acacia woodlands where we found Spur-winged Goose, Comb Duck, Garganey, Northern Shoveler, Common and Ferruginous Pochard,



Grasshopper Buzzard, Dark Chanting-goshawk, Gabar Goshawk, Rufous-crowned Roller, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-lark, Red-winged Prinia and Speckle-fronted Weaver. Elsewhere we located Fox Kestrel, White-bellied Bustard, Sun Lark, Dorst's Cisticola, Northern Crombec and Chestnut-bellied Starling. A night drive produced brilliant Four-banded Sandgrouse, Plain and Long-tailed Nightjar and an unexpected Four-toed Hedgehog.

Our last site on the trip was the Atewa Forest, clad over much of the hills near the town of Nkawkaw this forest added some exciting bird species to the trip total. Birding here is always tricky and the forest is rather quiet however locating a flock or two can provide for much excitement. Cracking birds here included Blue-spotted Wood-dove, the superb Blue-moustached Bee-eater that was observed at close range, Buff-spotted Woodpecker, the rare Green-tailed Bristlebill, Black-capped Apalis, Olive-green Camaroptera, Grey Longbill, Dusky-blue Flycatcher, brilliant views of a pair of the very scarce Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat and the gorgeous Johanna's Sunbird.

**Photographs:** Violet Turaco, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver by Keith Valentine

## Annotated List of Bird Species recorded

*Nomenclature and taxonomy follows J. F. Clements Birds of the World: A Checklist 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2000) Ibis Publishing Company, with current updates.*

### Cormorants & Shags *Phalacrocoracidae*

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Great (White-breasted) Cormorant</b>                                      | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>     |
| A very uncommon species in Ghana. A pair of birds was seen at Sakumo Lagoon. |                                |
| <b>Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant</b>  | <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i> |
| Seen in fair numbers at wetlands throughout the country.                     |                                |

### Anhingas & Darters *Anhingidae*

**African Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

A single bird was seen on our drive between Mole NP and Bolgatanga.

**Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns *Ardeidae*****Grey Heron***Ardea cinerea*

A well-known, widespread heron, recorded in small numbers throughout Ghana.

**Black-headed Heron***Ardea melanocephala*

Single birds were sighted at Mole NP and also on our drive from Mole NP to Bolgatanga.

**Purple Heron***Ardea purpurea*

Our first sighting was a couple of birds seen at Lily Lake outside Cape Coast with further sightings at various widespread localities.

**Great Egret***Ardea alba*

This familiar species was seen at a pond near Cape Coast and at the Brimsu Reservoir.

*NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.*

**Black Heron***Egretta ardesiaca*

Uncommon in Ghana. A single bird was observed performing its unique canopy feeding technique at the Densu Delta.

**Intermediate Egret***Ardea intermedia*

A single bird was noted at the Densu Delta.

**Little Egret***Egretta garzetta*

Common at various locations throughout.

**Western Reef-heron***Egretta gularis*

Commonly seen at coastal sites in the south. Most individuals were of the dark morph.

**Squacco Heron***Ardeola ralloides*

A couple of birds were seen at the Densu Delta, a single at Sakumo Lagoon and at least 10 on a large pan to the north of the White Volta on our drive to Bolgatanga.

**Cattle Egret***Bubulcus ibis*

Ubiquitous, conspicuous and seen on every day of the tour.

*NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret E. coromanda. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.*

**Striated (Green-backed) Heron***Butorides striatus*

This species was recorded in small numbers at most wetlands countrywide.

*NOTE: This species group is treated by Clements as 2 species, the nominate Striated Heron and B. virescens Green Heron of North America but he lumped B. sundevalli Lava Heron of the Galapagos. Other authorities lump all three forms into a single species, called Green-backed Heron (as per Handbook of Birds of the World.)*

**Black-crowned Night-heron***Nycticorax nycticorax*

We had numerous sightings of birds at Hans Cottage and Mole NP.

**Hamerkop *Scopidae*****Hamerkop***Scopus umbretta*

This bizarre bird, forming a monotypic family endemic to the Afrotropics, was found to be fairly common in the north of Ghana with several seen in Mole NP and the Tono Dam area.

## Storks *Ciconiidae*

### **Woolly-necked Stork**

*Ciconia episcopus*

At least 10 birds were sighted in Mole NP.

### **Saddle-billed Stork**

*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*

One female of this thoroughly impressive species was seen at Mole NP.

## Ibises & Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*

### **Hadada Ibis**

*Bostrychia hagedash*

Up to 5 were seen daily in Mole NP.

## Swans, Geese & Ducks *Anatidae*

### **White-faced Whistling-duck**

*Dendrocygna viduata*

Birds were noted at Sakumo Lagoon, Brimsu Reservoir and at Tono Dam.

### **Spur-winged Goose**

*Plectropterus gambensis*

At least 10 birds were seen at Tono Dam in the far north of the country.

### **Comb (Knob-billed) Duck**

*Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Uncommon in Ghana. We found 3 birds in a large mixed duck flock on Tono Dam.

### **Garganey**

*Anas querquedula*

At Tono Dam we found at least 10 birds, half of which were males in full breeding plumage.

### **Northern Shoveler**

*Anas clypeata*

A single male in full breeding plumage was found at Tono Dam.

### **Ferruginous Pochard**

*Aythya nyroca*

This species is an extremely rare vagrant to Ghana with only two records to date. A single bird was observed together with a large mixed group of ducks at Tono dam in the far north of the country. The only records are Dec 1966 and Mar 1974.

### **Common Pochard**

*Aythya ferina*

This species is another extremely rare vagrant to the region. We found a single bird at Tono Dam together with a large group of mixed duck species. This species has only been seen once in Ghana before. The only record was Jan 1986.

## Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures *Accipitridae*

### **African Cuckoo-hawk**

*Aviceda cuculoides*

This beautiful raptor was sighted in the forest zone at Antwikwaa when a pair was seen perched at close range.

### **Black-shouldered Kite**

*Elanus caeruleus*

Small numbers recorded occasionally in open habitats throughout.

### **Black [Yellow-billed] Kite**

*Milvus [migrans] aegyptius*

Good numbers were noted throughout the country.

*NOTE: Many authorities treat the resident African subspecies of this raptor as a separate species, Yellow-billed Kite M. aegyptius. We recorded both races in Ghana.*

### **Palm-nut Vulture**

*Gypohierax angolensis*

We had good views of a couple of birds at Kakum NP and also at Mole NP.

### **Hooded Vulture**

*Necrosyrtes monachus*

The common vulture around human habitation, with large numbers recorded on every day of the trip.

- White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus*  
The common vulture in savanna areas, we recorded this species in Mole NP.
- Short-toed Snake-eagle** *Circaetus gallicus*  
A single bird was seen from the roadside in our journey north to Mole NP from Kumasi.
- Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus*  
The “tightrope-walker” of the raptor world is a handsome species that we found in small numbers in Mole NP.
- Congo Serpent-eagle** *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*  
This rare species was heard at the Antwikwaa section of Kakum NP.
- Western Marsh-Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*  
This species was regularly encountered at wetland localities throughout the country.
- African Harrier-hawk (Gymnogene)** *Polyboroides typus*  
This species was seen regularly in the forested south of the country.
- Lizard Buzzard** *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*  
Single individuals of this unusual bird were seen in the Guinea woodlands around and in Mole NP.
- Dark Chanting-goshawk** *Melierax metabates*  
First found near Mole NP, we had additional sightings on the drive from Mole to Bolgatanga and at Tono Dam.
- Gabar Goshawk** *Micronisus gabar*  
A single bird was seen in the dry acacia woodland around Tono Dam.
- Red-chested Goshawk** *Accipiter toussenelii*  
This forest *Accipiter* was seen only once at forest edge near the Kakum NP headquarters in the early morning.  
*NOTE: Most authorities consider this species to be a West African form of African Goshawk A. tachiro.*
- Shikra (Little Banded Goshawk)** *Accipiter badius*  
Not an uncommon raptor in dry country sites. We enjoyed sightings at Mole NP.  
*NOTE: We recorded the Northern Shikra A. b. sphenurus, which some authorities consider distinct from the southern African Southern Shikra A. b. polyzonoides. These forms may also be split from the Asian nominate A. b. badius and other Asian forms. Clements does not as yet recognize any of these splits.*
- Black Goshawk** *Accipiter melanoleucus*  
A single bird was seen in flight at the Antwikwaa section of Kakum NP.
- Grasshopper Buzzard** *Butastur rufipennis*  
This stunning species was seen regularly in the far north of the country around Bolgatanga and Tono Dam
- Red-necked Buzzard** *Buteo auguralis*  
Our first sighting was a perched bird at the Winneba Plains. We later saw birds at Kakum NP and Mole NP.
- Wahlberg’s Eagle** *Aquila wahlbergi*  
A single bird at the Shai Hills Resource Reserve was our only sighting on the tour.
- African Hawk-eagle** *Aquila spilogaster*  
Very good views were had of this raptor when a pair was sighted in Mole NP.
- Ayres’s Hawk-eagle** *Aquila ayresii*  
A single bird was sighted at forest edge in Kakum NP.
- Cassin’s Hawk-eagle** *Spizaetus africanus*  
A couple of pairs were seen over forest in Kakum NP and again at Atewa Forest.

## Falcons & Caracaras *Falconidae*

### **Eurasian Kestrel**

*Falco tinnunculus*

A couple of birds were seen around Tono Dam in the far north.

### **Fox Kestrel**

*Falco alopex*

We had cracking views of this fairly scarce species just north of Bolgatanga.

### **Grey Kestrel**

*Falco ardosiaceus*

This species was commonly in the southern areas of the country.

### **African Hobby**

*Falco cuvierii*

We had superb views of a bird in flight around a waterhole in Mole NP after our initial brief sightings at Kakum.

### **Lanner Falcon**

*Falco biarmicus*

Birds were sighted at Tono Dam, Mole NP and between Kumasi and Mole NP.

### **Peregrine Falcon**

*Falco peregrinus*

A pair was seen on our drive south of Bolgatanga.

## Pheasants & Partridges *Phasianidae*

### **Forest Francolin**

*Fringillus lathami*

This scarce species was heard a couple of times in Kakum NP, however it could not be coaxed into view.

### **Ahanta Francolin**

*Fringillus ahantensis*

This is an incredibly difficult bird to see. We heard this species calling at Atewa.

### **Double-spurred Francolin**

*Fringillus bicalcaratus*

Small numbers were seen daily in Mole NP with the first sightings being at Shai Hills.

### **Stone Partridge**

*Ptilopachus petrosus*

Good views were had of 3 birds at Shai Hills and later we had another 3 in Mole NP.

## Guineafowl *Numididae*

### **Helmeted Guineafowl**

*Numida meleagris*

Commonly observed in the Mole 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 – the form we recorded in Ghana) and the southern N. m. mitrata (Tufted Guineafowl.) Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.*

## Rails, Gallinules & Coots *Rallidae*

### **White-spotted Flufftail**

*Sarothrura pulchra*

This secretive, forest rallid's hooting call was heard in several forests and we managed to tape one into view at Antwikwaa in Kakum NP.

### **Nkulengu Rail**

*Himantornis haematopus*

This is an incredibly difficult bird to see and we heard its crazy call one morning near the Kakum NP headquarters.

### **Black Crake**

*Crex egregia*

4 birds were seen at a small lake outside Cape Coast and more were seen in Mole NP.

### **African Swamphen**

*Porphyrio porphyrio*

A couple of birds were found at Lily Lake outside Cape Coast on our drive to Kakum NP.

### **Common Moorhen**

*Gallinula chloropus*

A couple of birds were seen at the Densu Delta.

## **Bustards *Otididae***

### **White-bellied Bustard**

*Eupodotis senegalensis*

We found a pair of these good-looking birds near Bolgatanga.

## **Jacanas *Jacanidae***

### **African Jacana**

*Actophilornis africanus*

A widespread and characteristic wader, conspicuous in wetlands throughout the tour.

## **Painted-snipes *Rostratulidae***

### **Greater Painted-snipe**

*Rostratula benghalensis*

A great-looking bird that we were fortunate to locate. We had 4 birds at a wetland near Bolgatanga. Incredibly the birds were standing out in full view while it was a blazing 40 degrees at midday.

## **Stilts & Avocets *Recurvirostridae***

### **Black-winged Stilt**

*Himantopus himantopus*

Common on the shores of large water bodies, especially the Densu Delta and Sakumo Lagoon.

## **Thick-knees *Burhinidae***

### **Senegal Thick-knee**

*Burhinus senegalensis*

Many were located in the Mole area.

### **Spotted Thick-knee**

*Burhinus capensis*

A couple of birds were seen near Bolgatanga in the far north.

## **Couriers & Pratincoles *Glareolidae***

### **Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole**

*Glareola pratincola*

We enjoyed a great sighting of 30+ birds at the Densu Delta and a single just south of Bolgatanga at a wetland there.

## **Plovers & Lapwings *Charadriidae***

### **Spur-winged Lapwing**

*Vanellus spinosus*

Birds were seen in the far north around Tono Dam, Bolgatanga and at the small wetland outside Cape Coast.

### **Wattled Lapwing**

*Vanellus senegallus*

This grassland-dwelling lapwing was found in small numbers in the far north of the country.

### **Black-bellied (Grey) Plover**

*Pluvialis squatarola*

Numbers of roughly 15 birds were noted at Sakumo Lagoon and at the Densu Delta.

### **Common Ringed Plover**

*Charadrius hiaticula*

Small numbers were found at Sakumo Lagoon and at the Densu Delta.

**Kittlitz's Plover***Charadrius pecuarius*

Small numbers were seen at Sakumo Lagoon.

**Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae****Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus*

Small numbers were seen at the Densu Delta and Sakumo Lagoon.

**Spotted Redshank***Tringa erythropus*

A total of 4 birds were encountered at the Densu Delta.

**Common Redshank***Tringa totanus*

5 birds were seen at the Densu Delta.

**Marsh Sandpiper***Tringa stagnatilis*

Birds were found at the Densu Delta and Sakumo Lagoon.

**Common Greenshank***Tringa nebularia*

Encountered in good number at the Densu Delta, Sakumo Lagoon and other wetlands throughout.

**Green Sandpiper***Tringa ochropus*

A single bird was found at Mole NP and again at a wetland south of Bolgatanga.

**Wood Sandpiper***Tringa glareola*

Small numbers of this species were seen throughout.

**Common Sandpiper***Actitis hypoleucos*

A common migrant that was seen at most water bodies throughout Ghana.

**Ruddy Turnstone***Arenaria interpres*

A single was located at the Densu Delta.

**Sanderling***Calidris alba*

Large groups were noted at Sakumo Lagoon and the Densu Delta.

**Little Stint***Calidris minuta*

Small numbers of this species were seen at Sakumo Lagoon and the Densu Delta.

**Temminck's Stint***Calidris temminckii*

We had good close views of a single bird at the Densu Delta.

**Curlew Sandpiper***Calidris ferruginea*

Birds were found at Sakumo Lagoon and at Densu Delta.

**Ruff***Philomachus pugnax*

A total of 3 birds were found at Sakumo Lagoon.

**Terns Sternidae****Gull-billed Tern***Sterna nilotica*

Good numbers of around 20 birds were seen at the Densu Delta.

**Sandwich Tern***Sterna sandvicensis*

Large numbers were observed at Sakumo Lagoon and also from the Densu Delta.

**Royal Tern***Sterna maxima*

Fair numbers were seen at the Densu Delta and Sakumo Lagoon.

**Common Tern***Sterna hirundo*

A single bird was observed at the Densu Delta.

**Black Tern***Chlidonias niger*

We found 20 birds at the Densu Delta.

## Sandgrouses Pteroclididae

### **Four-banded Sandgrouse**

*Pterocles flavirostris*

Our site near Bolgatanga is definitely one of the best places to see this species and we had good views of at least 8 birds with many more around.

## Doves & Pigeons Collumbidae

### **Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)**

*Columba livia*

Common in Accra and other large towns throughout the country.

### **Speckled Pigeon**

*Columba guinea*

This species was regularly seen only in the far north of Ghana.

### **Western Bronze-naped Pigeon**

*Columba iriditorques*

A single bird was found perched in forest in the Aboabo section of Kakum NP.

### **Red-eyed Dove**

*Streptopelia semitorquata*

A fairly common widespread species seen throughout Ghana.

### **Vinaceous Dove**

*Streptopelia vinacea*

This richly marked dove was common in the drier areas with peak numbers in the Mole NP and Tono Dam areas.

### **Laughing (Palm) Dove**

*Streptopelia senegalensis*

A widespread, familiar species recorded in good numbers throughout Ghana and recorded on many days of the tour.

### **Black-billed Wood-dove**

*Turtur abyssinicus*

The common wood-dove of the dry, northern savanna especially in Mole NP and Tono Dam.

### **Blue-spotted Wood-dove**

*Turtur afer*

A single bird was seen and many more heard calling at Kakum NP and Atewa Forest.

### **Tambourine Dove**

*Turtur tympanistria*

This was sighted in Kakum NP on every day while we were there.

### **Blue-headed Wood-dove**

*Turtur brehmeri*

We had good flight views of a bird continuously responding to tape playback at the Bobiri Butterfly Reserve near Kumasi.

### **Namaqua Dove**

*Oena capensis*

Regularly seen in the Tono Dam, Bolgatanga area in the far north of the country.

### **Bruce's Green-pigeon**

*Treron waalia*

We enjoyed views of several flocks in the Mole NP area and at Tono Dam.

### **African Green-pigeon**

*Treron calva*

Another common pigeon in Ghana, their distinctive lime-green bodies were frequently seen perched atop larger trees.

## Parrots, Macaws & Allies Psittacidae

### **Rose-ringed Parakeet**

*Psittacula krameri*

A few birds were noted at Shai Hills.

### **Red-headed Lovebird**

*Agapornis pullarius*

The woodland outside Mole NP gave us good scope views of a couple of birds.

### **Grey Parrot**

*Psittacus erithacus*

Two groups were seen in flight at Kakum NP.

### **Brown-necked Parrot**

*Poicephalus robustus*

We found 2 birds at the Antwikwaa section of Kakum NP.

**Senegal Parrot***Poicephalus senegalus*

A parrot of drier savanna and woodland that was commonly encountered in good numbers at Shai Hills and Mole NP.

**Turacos *Musophagidae*****Great Blue Turaco***Corythaeola cristata*

A breath-taking species that was encountered at close range on the Kakum walkway.

**Guinea (Green) Turaco***Tauraco persa*

This species of forest edge and secondary growth was seen at Shai Hills.

**Yellow-billed (Verreaux's) Turaco***Tauraco macrorhynchus*

A commonly heard turaco of the interior forests, we had a number of birds at the Kakum walkway.

**Violet Turaco***Musophaga violacea*

Another stellar turaco, our first sighting was of one at Shai Hills with our best sightings coming from Mole NP.

**Western Plantain-eater***Crinifer piscator*

This floppy-winged bird with a maniacal call was seen throughout Ghana, our first sighting was near Accra.

**Cuckoos *Cuculidae*****Jacobin Cuckoo***Clamator jacobinus*

This species was reported from the Kakum canopy walkway. This species was not seen by the leader.

**Levaillant's Cuckoo***Clamator levaillantii*

We had excellent views at Kakum NP and Atewa Forest.

**Red-chested Cuckoo***Cuculus solitarius*

This species was heard calling from forest at Atewa.

**Black Cuckoo***Cuculus clamosus*

This is an elusive cuckoo, and we enjoyed good views at Kakum NP on three occasions.

**Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo***Cercococcyx olivinus*

This species can be very difficult to see. We had amazing scope views of a single bird from the canopy Kakum canopy walkway.

**Klaas's Cuckoo***Chrysococcyx klaas*

This brood parasite favouring the cup nests of woodland birds was heard many times and seen at Kakum NP.

**African Emerald Cuckoo***Chrysococcyx cupreus*

Generally shy and less common than its congeners, we saw a couple of stunning males from the canopy walkway in Kakum NP.

**Dideric Cuckoo***Chrysococcyx caprius*

This widespread African bird was seen at Atewa forest.

**Blue Malkoha (Yellowbill)***Ceuthmochares aereus*

This peculiar, malkoha-like cuckoo was heard on many occasions and seen well at Aboabo, the Kakum walkway and Atewa Forest.

**Black-throated Coucal***Centropus leucogaster*

A seldom seen species. We enjoyed a good but brief view along the road at the Aboabo section of the Kakum NP.

**Senegal Coucal***Centropus senegalensis*

The most commonly encountered coucal that was seen or heard on virtually every day of the trip.

## Typical Owls *Strigidae*

### **Northern White-faced Owl**

*Ptilopsis leucotis*

This species was only heard at Mole.

### **Greyish Eagle-owl**

*Bubo cinerascens*

A pair was breeding right at the Mole Motel and we had great views of a perched bird on a day roost and one on the nest.

### **Fraser's Eagle-owl**

*Bubo poensis*

This species was unfortunately only heard during the early hours of the morning at Kakum NP. The bird could not be coaxed into view.

### **Pearl-spotted Owlet**

*Glaucidium perlatum*

A single bird was seen in Mole NP.

## Nightjars & Allies *Caprimulgidae*

### **Brown Nightjar**

*Caprimulgus binotatus*

We had amazing views of a single bird feeding from just below the canopy walkway after sunset. This aberrant rainforest nightjar was discovered in Ghana in 1851 and since then, only recorded at one other site in the 1970s.

### **Plain Nightjar**

*Caprimulgus inomatus*

A single bird was found near Bolgatanga.

### **Freckled Nightjar**

*Caprimulgus tristigma*

We found a single bird at the Mole Hotel.

### **Long-tailed Nightjar**

*Caprimulgus climacurus*

A single bird was observed on our night drive near Bolgatanga.

### **Standard-winged Nightjar**

*Macrodypterix longipennis*

This is one of Africa's most special and exotic species and was certainly one of the mega highlights on the tour. We enjoyed an amazing sighting of a couple of males in full display at Mole.

## Swifts *Apodidae*

### **Mottled Spinetail**

*Telacanthura ussheri*

10 birds were seen at close range at the Brimsu Reservoir.

### **Sabine's Spinetail**

*Rhaphidura sabini*

We had small numbers of this species at Aboabo, Kakum NP.

### **Cassin's Spinetail**

*Neafrapus cassini*

This unstable-looking species, with exceptionally broad wings and short tail was seen at Aboabo and Antwikwaa, Kakum NP.

### **African Palm-swift**

*Cypsiurus parvus*

Plentiful around palms throughout Ghana.

*NOTE: The nominate African form of the Palm-Swift is considered to be distinct from the Malagasy form C. p. gracilis by some authorities. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.*

### **Common Swift**

*Apus apus*

This species was seen daily flying above forest at Kakum NP.

### **Little Swift**

*Apus affinis*

The common urban swift seen on virtually every day of the tour.

## **Kingfishers *Alcedinidae***

### **Malachite Kingfisher**

*Alcedo cristata*

The common, small kingfisher of aquatic habitats, we found small numbers at various water bodies throughout the country.

### **African Pygmy-kingfisher**

*Ispidina picta*

This beautiful little bird was well seen at Shai Hills and Antwikwaa.

### **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher**

*Halcyon badia*

We enjoyed a great sighting of this beautiful but tricky to locate canopy Kingfisher of lowland forest when we found a single bird from the Kakum canopy walkway after it was initially heard calling.

### **Grey-headed Kingfisher**

*Halcyon leucocephala*

A couple of birds were seen at Mole NP where we enjoyed good views.

### **Woodland Kingfisher**

*Halcyon senegalensis*

One of the characteristic sounds of moist African savanna, this bird was encountered in all areas. They are especially common in secondary growth and cultivated areas.

### **Blue-breasted Kingfisher**

*Halcyon malimbica*

This forest equivalent of the Woodland Kingfisher was brilliantly seen in Mole NP on consecutive days.

### **Striped Kingfisher**

*Halcyon chelicuti*

Rather drabber than its spectacular cousins, this small, terrestrial kingfisher was only heard at Mole NP.

### **Giant Kingfisher**

*Megaceryle maxima*

The goliath of the kingfisher world, we had a single bird at Brimsu Reservoir.

### **Pied Kingfisher**

*Ceryle rudis*

The world's commonest kingfisher was seen in large numbers in wetlands throughout Ghana.

## **Bee-eaters *Meropidae***

### **Black Bee-eater**

*Merops gularis*

This truly magnificent forest bee-eater, surely one of the world's finest, was seen at Antwikwaa, Kakum NP.

### **Blue-moustached Bee-eater**

*Merops muelleri*

This species is outrageously beautiful and very scarce. We had brilliant views of four birds high up in Atewa Forest.

### **Red-throated Bee-eater**

*Merops bullocki*

The northern equivalent of the more familiar White-fronted Bee-eater and every bit as beautiful, up to 100 were seen in Mole NP.

### **Little Bee-eater**

*Merops pusillus*

This species was well seen from the bridge crossing the White Volta River and again at Tono Dam.

### **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**

*Merops hirundineus*

Another good-looking species. We found 5 birds at the Shai Hills Resource Reserve.

### **White-throated Bee-eater**

*Merops albicollis*

This is by far the most common species of bee-eater and we located them regularly countrywide.

### **Rosy Bee-eater**

*Merops malimbicus*

This beautiful migrant was very well seen at the Kakum canopy walkway and at other areas around Kakum NP.

### **Northern Carmine Bee-eater**

*Merops nubicus*

Another magnificent bee-eater, we found a pair of birds on the drive from Bolgatanga to Kumasi.

## Rollers *Coraciidae*

### **Abyssinian Roller**

*Coracias abyssinica*

Common and regularly recorded throughout the northern region.

### **Rufous-crowned Roller**

*Coracias naevia*

Four birds were seen in the Tono Dam/Bolgatanga area.

### **Blue-bellied Roller**

*Coracias cyanogaster*

This stunning roller was seen in open woodland en route from Kumasi to Mole NP.

### **Broad-billed Roller**

*Eurystomus glaucurus*

We had a single bird on the drive from Kumasi to Mole NP.

### **Blue-throated Roller**

*Eurystomus gularis*

Replaces Broad-billed Roller in closed forest environments and recorded in Kakum NP at Aboabo and again at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

## Hoopoes *upupidae*

### **Eurasian Hoopoe**

*Upupa epops*

A couple of birds were located near Bolgatanga.

## Woodhoopoes *Phoeniculidae*

### **Green Woodhoopoe**

*Phoeniculus purpureus*

A single group was encountered in Mole NP.

### **White-headed Woodhoopoe**

*Phoeniculus bollei*

A characterful forest bird, a single was seen at Aboabo.

### **Forest Woodhoopoe**

*Phoeniculus castaneiceps*

This is a relatively scarce bird throughout its range and we located two groups of birds, one while on the Kakum canopy walkway and the other at Aboabo.

## Hornbills *Bucerotidae*

### **White-crested Hornbill**

*Tockus albocristatus*

We had a great encounter with this odd-looking hornbill at the Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

### **Northern Red-billed Hornbill**

*Tockus erythrorhynchus*

Small numbers of this species were seen around Tono Dam.

### **African Pied Hornbill**

*Tockus fasciatus*

This species is very common throughout forested and farmbush areas in southern Ghana.

### **African Grey Hornbill**

*Tockus nasutus*

The common savanna hornbill in Ghana, with small numbers seen in Shai Hills and Mole NP.

### **Piping Hornbill**

*Ceratogymna fistulator*

A group of 3 birds were well seen in the Antwikwaa section of Kakum NP.

### **Brown-cheeked Hornbill**

*Ceratogymna cylindricus*

This species was heard from the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Black-casqued Hornbill**

*Ceratogymna atrata*

We had wonderful views of a group of four birds from the Kakum canopy walkway. This and the next species are both declining in Ghana as forest continues to become more fragmented and what was once a numerous species is now becoming a mega.

**Yellow-casqued Hornbill** *Ceratogymna elata*

This species was heard calling from the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Barbets *Capitonidae***

**Naked-faced Barbet** *Gymnobucco calvus*

We had several encounters of small numbers in the Kakum area.

**Bristle-nosed Barbet** *Gymnobucco peli*

Generally a scarcer bird than the preceding species. Encounters were had at Antwikwaa and Aboabo in the Kakum area with an additional sighting of a large nesting colony in a dead tree at Atewa Forest.

**Speckled Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus scolopaceus*

A scruffy, ubiquitous bird in forests and forest edge in Ghana, where it's purring call is one of the common background sounds. We obtained good views in Kakum NP and at the Atewa Forest.

**Red-rumped Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus atroflavus*

This species was seen from the Kakum walkway and at Antwikwaa.

**Yellow-throated Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus subsulphureus*

This bird was heard fairly often in Kakum NP and a single bird was observed from the canopy.

**Yellow (Golden) -rumped Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus bilineatus*

This species was heard at Atewa Forest.

**Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

A savanna species seen at Shai Hills, Mole NP and the Tono Dam area.

**Yellow-spotted Barbet** *Buccanodon duchaillui*

This species was heard several times in Kakum NP.

**Hairy-breasted Barbet** *Tricholaema hirsuta*

This forest barbet was seen incredibly well from the canopy in Kakum NP and again at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

**Viillot's Barbet** *Lybius vieilloti*

A bird of more open woodland recorded on a couple of occasions in the north after our first sighting at Shai Hills.

**Double-toothed Barbet** *Lybius bidentatus*

This bird was found at the Shai Hills when 3 were located.

**Bearded Barbet** *Lybius dubius*

We enjoyed great sightings of several in Mole NP and in the Tono Dam area.

**Yellow-billed Barbet** *Trachyphonus purpuratus*

This is an elusive forest barbet and we were lucky to get good views of one from the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Honeyguides *Indicatoridae***

**Greater Honeyguide** *Indicator indicator*

We obtained great views of this species in Mole NP.

**Lesser Honeyguide** *Indicator minor*

Good views were had of 2 birds in Mole NP.

**Willcock's Honeyguide** *Indicator willcocksii*

Generally a scarce species. We enjoyed a single bird at the Kakum canopy walkway.

## Woodpeckers & Allies *Picidae*

### **African Piculet**

*Sasia africana*

This species is extremely rare and almost unknown from Ghana and is also a separate subspecies. We found a single bird at Aboabo, Kakum NP and later another pair in the same location a little further down the trail. The birds were easily located by their distinctive call.

### **Little Green Woodpecker**

*Campethera maculosa*

This is an uncommon species and we did well to get views 3 occasions, at Aboabo, Antwikwaa and from the trails below the Kakum canopy.

### **Buff-spotted Woodpecker**

*Campethera nivosa*

A pair of birds was encountered in a mixed feeding flock at Atewa.

### **Cardinal Woodpecker**

*Dendropicos fuscescens*

We found a couple of birds at the Shai Hills Resource Reserve.

### **Melancholy Woodpecker**

*Dendropicos lugubris*

Singles were noted at Aboabo and again at Atewa Forest.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped in Gabon Woodpecker D. gabonensis.*

### **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**

*Dendropicos pyrrhogaster*

We had excellent views of a pair on the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Grey Woodpecker**

*Dendropicos goertae*

Birds were well seen in woodland at Mole NP and Shai Hills.

### **Brown-backed Woodpecker**

*Dendropicos obsoletus*

A single of these diminutive, dry country woodpeckers were seen well at Mole NP and again near Bolgatanga.

## Broadbills *Eurylaimidae*

### **Rufous-sided Broadbill**

*Smithornis rufolateralis*

We enjoyed a cracking sighting of this species on one of the forest trails below the Kakum canopy walkway.

## Larks *Alaudidae*

### **Flappet Lark**

*Mirafrra rufocinnamomea*

We had good views of a couple at Shai Hills.

### **Chestnut-backed Sparrow-lark**

*Eremopterix leucotis*

Good numbers were found around Tono Dam.

### **Sun Lark**

*Galerida modesta*

We enjoyed several sightings of these birds near Bolgatanga.

## Swallows *Hirundinidae*

### **Barn Swallow**

*Hirundo rustica*

A very common migrant species that was recorded on almost every day.

*NOTE: This cosmopolitan species complex is likely to be split based on the Old World nominate form and its congeners which would become Eurasian Swallow H. rustica and the New World Barn Swallow H. erythrogaster. Further splitting within the group may also be done e.g. the distinctive H. r. savignii, which breeds in the Nile Valley and would be named Egyptian Swallow. We only recorded representatives of the Palaearctic migrant Barn/Eurasian Swallow. Clements does not as yet recognize any of these splits.*

**Red-chested Swallow***Hirundo lucida*

Good numbers of around 20 birds were seen at close range at the Larabanga Mosque outside Mole NP.

**Ethiopian Swallow***Hirundo aethiopica*

We enjoyed sightings around Tono Dam.

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

Several birds were seen in Mole NP and also at Tono Dam.

*NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form which would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow which would be H. filifera. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.*

**White-throated Blue Swallow***Hirundo nigrita*

This is a very beautiful and sought-after species. We were blessed with views of a single bird over the Volta River.

**Lesser Striped-swallow***Cecropis abyssinica*

A widespread African swallow that was seen at many localities throughout.

**Mosque Swallow***Cecropis senegalensis*

A pair was seen on our drive to Aboabo.

**Preuss's (Cliff-) Swallow***Hirundo preussi*

This species was seen at a small village near Kakum NP and again at the Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

**Common House-martin***Delichon urbica*

We located 2 birds at Tono Dam.

**Fanti Sawwing***Psalidoprocne obscura*

We enjoyed good views of 3 birds from the Kakum canopy walkway.

**Wagtails & Pipits *Motacillidae*****African Pied Wagtail***Motacilla aguimp*

A common and familiar African bird that we found on many days.

**Yellow Wagtail***Motacilla flava*

Singles were seen at a couple of sites in the south with our first sighting coming from Sakumo Lagoon.

**Yellow-throated Longclaw***Macronyx croceus*

This species was heard at Sakumo Lagoon.

**Plain-backed Pipit***Anthus leucophrys*

We found a single bird near the Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

*NOTE: A. l. goodsoni of central and SW Kenya may be split off from the nominate group A. leucophrys. The Ghanaian races we recorded would probably remain within the nominate complex. Clements does not recognize this split.*

**Tree Pipit***Anthus trivialis*

A single bird was seen at Mole NP.

**Cuckoo-shrikes *Campephagidae*****White-breasted Cuckooshrike***Coracina pectoralis*

A pair of birds was seen in a mixed species flock in Mole NP.

**Blue Cuckooshrike***Coracina azurea*

We enjoyed good views from the Kakum canopy walkway. One of West Africa's most beautiful forest birds.

**Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike***Campephaga phoenicea*

Our only sighting was of one outside Mole NP.

## Bulbuls *Pycnonotidae*

### **Common Bulbul**

*Pycnonotus barbatus*

A ubiquitous species and one of the few birds to be recorded on almost every day of the trip, with high daily tallies.

*NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognized as distinct species within the super-species. The form that we saw in Ghana, P. b. inornatus may be split as White-vented Bulbul, Clements does not recognize this split.*

### **Little Greenbul**

*Andropadus virens*

This, the commonest forest edge greenbul was heard/seen on numerous occasions at all forest sites.

### **Plain Greenbul**

*Andropadus curvirostris*

Singles were seen at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve and at Atewa Forest.

### **Slender-billed Greenbul**

*Andropadus gracilirostris*

This common greenbul of forest canopy was regularly seen in Kakum NP and at Atewa Forest.

### **Yellow-whiskered Greenbul**

*Andropadus latirostris*

This species was heard calling on numerous occasions.

### **Golden (Serine) Greenbul**

*Calyptocichla serina*

We had a couple of birds at Aboabo. An uncommon and unique greenbul, the only one sporting a pink bill.

### **Honeyguide Greenbul**

*Baeopogon indicator*

We had a couple of birds from the Kakum canopy walkway. Its distinctive call was also heard many times in the Kakum area and at Atewa.

### **Simple Greenbul**

*Chlorochicla simplex*

A secondary growth species; 2 birds were seen at Aboabo in Kakum NP and at Atewa.

### **Yellow-throated Greenbul**

*Chlorochicla flavicollis*

We found 2 in secondary bush at the Shai Hills.

### **Swamp (~Palm) Greenbul**

*Thescelocichla leucopleura*

This large noisy greenbul was seen at Kakum NP. This species has a strong association with palms in forested areas.

### **Icterine Greenbul**

*Phyllastrephus icterinus*

We had a mixed flock containing 1 of these birds in the understorey in Kakum NP and saw another 2 at Atewa Forest.

### **Red-tailed Bristlebill**

*Bleda syndactylus*

We heard this species on several occasions in Kakum NP and at Atewa Forest.

### **Green-tailed Bristlebill**

*Bleda eximius*

This species is a very uncommon Upper Guinea specialty and we were fortunate to find a single, very vocal bird in a huge mixed flock at Atewa Forest.

### **Grey-headed Bristlebill**

*Bleda canicapillus*

A tricky species to get a good look at as it does not sit still for very long and prefers thickets at the edge of forest rather than the interior. We had a great encounter with a very vocal bird at Antwikwaa, Kakum NP.

### **Western (Yellow-spotted/Common) Nicator**

*Nicator chloris*

This vociferous songster was seen at Kakum NP.

### **Western Bearded-greenbul**

*Criniger barbatus*

This is another difficult forest understorey species, which was only heard at Kakum NP and at Atewa Forest.

## Thrushes & Allies *Turdidae*

### **Finsch's Flycatcher-thrush**

*Neocossyphus finschii*

This Upper Guinea specialty was found at the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **African Thrush**

*Turdus pelios*

We obtained a sighting of this species at Shai Hills and many more at Mole NP.

### **White-tailed (Fire-crested) Alethe**

*Alethe diademata*

This elusive, ant-swarm attending species was only heard at Kakum and Atewa forests.

*NOTE: The East African form is sometimes split from the nominate White-tailed Alethe of West Africa (which we recorded in Ghana), becoming A. castanea.*

## Cisticolas & Allies *Cisticolidae*

### **Red-faced Cisticola**

*Cisticola erythrops*

This moist grassland and swamp dwelling cisticola was seen in the scrubby forest in the Atewa area.

### **Singing Cisticola**

*Cisticola lateralis*

We encountered this species at Mole NP.

### **Dorst's Cisticola**

*Cisticola dorsti*

We found these little known and recently described birds at Mole and near Bolgatanga.

### **Winding Cisticola**

*Cisticola galactotes*

At least 15 of these wetland cisticolas were seen at the Densu Delta.

*NOTE: This widespread African species complex has been proposed for multi-species splitting and the Ghanaian form C. g. amphilecta is likely to remain within the nominate grouping.*

### **Croaking Cisticola**

*Cisticola natalensis*

We found 5 of these large cisticolas at the Densu Delta where they were easily located by their distinctive croaking call.

### **Siffling (Short-winged) Cisticola**

*Cisticola brachypterus*

A very plain and non-descript species, we found a single bird in woodland in Mole NP.

### **Rufous Cisticola**

*Cisticola rufus*

A species of well-developed broad-leaved woodland, we located a couple of pairs in Mole NP.

### **Zitting (Fan-tailed) Cisticola**

*Cisticola juncidis*

The world's most widespread Cisticola, a couple were seen at Sakumo Lagoon.

### **Tawny-flanked Prinia**

*Prinia subflava*

Another noisy and familiar African warbler, we recorded this species in small numbers at Mole NP, Atewa and Tono Dam.

### **Red-winged Prinia (Warbler)**

*Heliolais erythroptera*

This attractive species was seen well in woodland at Tono Dam.

### **Black-capped Apalis**

*Apalis nigriceps*

A beautifully marked, canopy Apalis. We had great views of 2 pairs at Atewa Forest.

### **Yellow-breasted Apalis**

*Apalis flavida*

This is a strangely rare bird in Ghana. We were lucky to get 2 birds at close range in Mole NP.

### **Sharpe's Apalis**

*Apalis sharpii*

A forest species and Upper Guinea specialty that was seen very well on the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Oriole Warbler**

*Hypergerus atriceps*

This is a beautiful and very unique species in its own genus. We had good views of 2 birds while at Mole NP.

### **Green-backed (Grey-backed) Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brachyura*

The bleating calls of this common bird were heard in moist wooded habitat throughout Ghana, with sightings from most localities countrywide.

*NOTE: Most authorities now recognize the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms C. brevicaudata. We encountered the grey-backed form in Ghana. Clements still lumps these two groups.*

**Yellow-browed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera superciliaris*

This handsome warbler was seen in Kakum NP.

**Olive-green Camaroptera** *Camaroptera chloronota*

Another skulking camaroptera, its piercing calls were heard at all forest sites and it was seen at Atewa Forest.

### Old World Warblers *Sylviidae*

**Moustached Grass-warbler** *Melocichla mentalis*

A couple of birds were well seen in woodland along a watercourse in Mole NP.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus mentalis*

A migrant from further north we had a single bird at the Tono Dam.

**Melodious Warbler** *Hippolais polyglotta*

A summer visitor from further north. A single bird was found at Shai Hills.

**Senegal Eremomela** *Eremomela pusilla*

A common species recorded in woodlands throughout Ghana. We first recorded this species at Shai Hills and had additional sightings in Mole NP and Tono Dam.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes lumped into the East African E. pusilla (Green-backed Eremomela.) The enlarged species is called Green-backed Eremomela.*

**Rufous-crowned Eremomela** *Eremomela badiceps*

A fairly common forest canopy species, we enjoyed close views from the canopy walkway.

**Green Crombec** *Sylvietta virens*

The commonest and most widespread forest crombec, though small and inconspicuous (except by call). We saw this species once in the Kakum area and again at Atewa.

**Northern Crombec** *Sylvietta brachyura*

The crombec of dry *Acacia* woodland, seen very well near Bolgatanga.

**Kemp's Longbill** *Macrosphenus kempii*

This rare and highly elusive warbler was heard on several occasions at Kakum NP.

**Grey Longbill** *Macrosphenus concolor*

This is another secretive species, seen well from the Kakum canopy walkway and again at Atewa Forest.

**Green Hylia** *Hylia prasina*

Its "HEE-lia!" call was one of the common background sounds at all the forest sites on the tour, with our sightings being confined to Kakum NP and Atewa.

**Violet-backed Hylia** *Hylia violacea*

A beautiful canopy dweller usually found in mixed species flocks and restricted to West Africa. Two birds were seen well from the canopy walkway and we then found a further 3 at Atewa Forest.

### Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

**Pale Flycatcher** *Bradornis pallidus*

Several were seen daily in Mole NP and at Tono Dam.

**Northern Black-flycatcher** *Melaenornis edolioides*

This is a common species in Mole NP.

**African Forest-flycatcher***Fraseria ocreata*

Our only sightings were of four birds from the Aboabo section of Kakum NP.

**Spotted Flycatcher***Muscicapa striata*

While at Shai Hills we located three birds in the open woodland.

**Ussher's Flycatcher***Muscicapa ussheri*

A swallow-like bird often seen perched on dead snags high above the forest canopy, small numbers seen at Kakum NP.

**Swamp Flycatcher***Muscicapa aquatica*

A couple of birds were seen along a watercourse below the escarpment in Mole NP. The birds in the west differ markedly from the birds in the east and even differ in habitat preferences.

**Dusky-blue Flycatcher***Muscicapa comitata*

Two birds were found at Atewa.

**Cassin's Flycatcher***Muscicapa cassini*

A pair and juvenile were located outside Mole NP.

**Grey-throated Tit-flycatcher***Myioparus griseigularis*

This species was unfortunately only heard at Aboabo.

**Grey Tit-flycatcher***Myioparus plumbeus*

We had a bunch of sightings of this rather delicate species in woodland throughout Mole NP.

**Forest Robin***Stiphrornis erythrothorax*

We had an amazing sighting of this rather shy bird as we watched one perched for what seemed like an eternity in thick forest below the Kakum canopy walkway.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes split into four species Western Forest Robin, S.erythrothorax is the one we observed.*

**European Pied Flycatcher***Ficedula hypoleuca*

Seen on numerous occasions in woodland at Mole NP and Tono Dam.

**Blue-shouldered Robin-chat***Cossypha cyanocampter*

This is a very rare species, especially in the west of its range. We enjoyed an amazing sighting of a pair that were seen at close in secondary thickets at the base of the Atewa Range.

**Snowy-crowned Robin-chat***Cossypha niveicapilla*

This beautiful species is fairly shy and we only had sightings at Shai Hills.

**White-crowned Robin-chat***Cossypha niveicapilla*

This huge species of Robin-chat was seen along a watercourse in Mole NP.

**Whinchat***Saxicola rubetra*

Two birds were found on the Winneba Plains.

**Wattle-eyes *Platysteiridae*****African Shrike-flycatcher***Megabyas flammulatus*

We had good views of a single of these striking birds from the Kakum canopy walkway.

**Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher***Bias musicus*

This is a great looking species with a very distinctive flight. We enjoyed great sightings of 2 birds at Atewa Forest, and another two at our accommodation in Kumasi.

**Brown-throated (Common) Wattle-eye***Platysteira cyanea*

This is a fairly commonly heard bird in much of Ghana; we had good views of at Shai Hills and Mole NP.

**Chestnut Wattle-eye***Platysteira castanea*

Some of the group had great views of a pair from the Kakum canopy walkway with a female in Atewa Forest.

**Senegal Batis***Batis senegalensis*

This attractive species was seen in small numbers in Mole NP.

## Monarch Flycatchers *Monarchidae*

### **Chestnut-capped Flycatcher**

*Erythrocercus mccallii*

A snappy-looking, sprightly flycatcher recorded in small groups at Kakum NP, with superb close encounters from the canopy walkway and Atewa Forest.

### **African Blue Flycatcher**

*Elminia longicauda*

This stunning species of moist woodland is a rather active species that is often seen outrageously fanning its tail in various directions. A total of 3 birds were enjoyed along a watercourse in Mole NP.

### **Dusky Crested-flycatcher**

*Elminia nigromitrata*

A single bird was seen in forest under storey below the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Black-headed (Red-bellied) Paradise-flycatcher**

*Terpsiphone rufiventer*

Common in all forests but none-the-less a wonderful-looking bird. We enjoyed them on numerous occasions especially at Atewa Forest.

## Babblers *Timaliidae*

### **Blackcap Babbler**

*Turdoides reinwardtii*

This species is generally quite shy and skulking. Our first views were of a pair in woodland in Shai Hills with a further, very good, sighting outside Mole NP where a group of 3 birds came in to drink.

### **Brown Babbler**

*Turdoides plebejus*

This species was heard calling at Mole NP.

## Chickadees & Tits *Paridae*

### **White-shouldered Black-tit**

*Melaniparus guineensis*

We had good daily sightings in Mole NP of this noisy species.

## Creepers *Certhiidae*

### **Spotted Creeper**

*Salpornis spilonotus*

A very scarce species in Ghana and we were fortunate to locate a brilliant pair in tall woodland below the escarpment in Mole NP.

## Penduline Tits *Remizidae*

### **Tit-hylia**

*Pholidornis rushiae*

This delightful little bird was seen from the Kakum canopy walkway, Aboabo and again at Antwikwaa. This is one of Africa's smallest birds!

## Sunbirds & Spiderhunters *Nectariniidae*

### **Scarlet-tufted (Fraser's) Sunbird**

*Deleornis fraseri*

Uncommon in forests in the south favouring tangled vines. We found this species on forest trails in Kakum NP, Antwikwaa and at Atewa Forest.

*NOTE: The species is sometimes lumped with the East African Grey-headed Sunbird D. axillarus.*

### **Mouse-brown Sunbird**

*Anthreptes gabonicus*

This species is infrequently recorded in Ghana and we were fortunate to encounter at least four birds along the Volta River.

**Seimund's (Little Green) Sunbird** *Anthreptes seimundi*

A couple of these small non-descript sunbirds were seen in Kakum NP.

**Green Sunbird** *Anthreptes rectirostris*

We found a single bird in a mixed flock at a flowering tree in Atewa Forest.

*NOTE: This species is sometimes split into two forms, the Eastern Gray-chinned Sunbird A. tephrolaemus and the nominate Western Yellow-chinned Sunbird (we recorded the latter form in Ghana.)*

**Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris*

The commonest forest sunbird in Ghana, recorded on all forest excursions.

**Pygmy Sunbird** *Hedydipna platura*

This species was easily seen at Mole NP and surrounds.

**Green-headed Sunbird** *Cyanomitra verticalis*

Single birds were found at Shai Hills and again at Hans Cottage.

**Blue-throated Brown Sunbird** *Cyanomitra cyanoaema*

This species was regularly recorded at Kakum NP and Atewa forest.

**Olive Sunbird** *Cyanomitra obscura*

Commonly heard calling, we found birds at Kakum NP.

**Buff-throated Sunbird** *Chalcomitra adelberti*

This stunning sunbird is restricted to West Africa. We enjoyed great views of 10 birds in the Antwikwaa section of Kakum NP and also at Atewa.

**Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis* This is a common bird in northern Ghana where we recorded up to 20 daily in Mole NP.

**Olive-bellied Sunbird** *Cinnyris chloropygius*

A forest edge species that was seen a number of times throughout Kakum NP.

**Tiny Sunbird** *Cinnyris minullus*

A diminutive canopy-dwelling double-collared sunbird that was seen at Aboabo. Further sightings were enjoyed at Atewa.

**Beautiful Sunbird** *Cinnyris pulchellus*

This exquisite sunbird is common only in the drier northern savanna and was seen regularly in Mole NP and the Tono Dam area.

**Splendid Sunbird** *Cinnyris coccinigastrus*

This stunning bird was seen well at Shai Hills and at Atewa Forest.

**Johanna's Sunbird** *Cinnyris johannae*

An uncommon species throughout much of its range. We had great views of a male at Atewa forest.

**Superb Sunbird** *Cinnyris superbus*

This is another stunning sunbird, seen well in Kakum NP.

**Copper Sunbird** *Cinnyris cupreus*

A single bird was seen at Shai Hills while further sightings of at least 20 birds were noted around Hans Cottage.

### White-eyes Zosteropidae

**African Yellow White-eye** *Zosterops senegalensis*

The only white-eye in Ghana and we had small numbers in Mole NP.

## Old World Orioles *Oriolidae*

### **African Golden Oriole**

*Oriolus auratus*

We found two birds in broadleaved woodland near Mole NP.

### **Black-winged Oriole**

*Oriolus nigripennis*

Small numbers of this forest edge species were seen on most days at Kakum NP and again at Atewa Forest.

## Shrikes *Laniidae*

### **Common Fiscal**

*Lanius collaris*

A widespread species of scrub and farmlands in southern Ghana.

### **Woodchat Shrike**

*Lanius senator*

A couple of birds in open habitat below the escarpment in Mole NP was the only sighting of them on the tour.

### **Yellow-billed Shrike**

*Corvinella corvina*

Our first sighting was of several near Shai Hills. Thereafter we found small numbers daily in Mole NP.

## Bushshrikes & Allies *Malaconotidae*

### **Brubru**

*Nilaus afer*

A species of broadleaved woodland. We located them on a number of occasions in Mole NP.

### **Northern Puffback**

*Dryoscopus gambensis*

We had a single bird at Shai Hills with many more in Mole NP.

### **Sabine's Puffback**

*Dryoscopus sabini*

We enjoyed very good views of this species from the Kakum canopy walkway.

### **Black-crowned Tchagra**

*Tchagra senegala*

The most widely distributed tchagra, seen at Shai Hills and Mole NP.

*NOTE: Moroccan Tchagra T. s. cucullata of north-west Africa may be split from the nominate form which we recorded in Ghana. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.*

### **Yellow-crowned Gonolek**

*Laniarius barbarus*

A brilliantly coloured bush-shrike that was first seen near Shai Hills and later we enjoyed excellent views in Mole NP.

### **Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike**

*Telophorus sulfureopectus*

This good-looking species is not quite as shy as some of the other members in the group and we located singles in Shai Hills and Mole NP.

### **Grey-headed Bushshrike**

*Malaconotus blanchoti*

This species was only heard calling in Mole NP.

## Helmetshrikes & Allies *Prionopidae*

### **White Helmetshrike**

*Prionops plumatus*

This extravagant species was thoroughly enjoyed when a group was encountered at Shai Hills.

### **Red-billed Helmetshrike**

*Prionops caniceps*

We had excellent looks at this species from the Kakum canopy walkway and again at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve when a flock was located.

## Drongos *Dicruridae*

### **Square-tailed Drongo**

*Dicrurus ludwigii*

We found a single bird in riverine woodland outside Mole NP.

### **Shining Drongo**

*Dicrurus atripennis*

We found 2 of these noisy critters in forest at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

### **Fork-tailed Drongo**

*Dicrurus adsimilis*

Seen daily in small numbers in Shai Hills, Mole NP and the Bolgatanga area.

### **Velvet-mantled Drongo**

*Dicrurus modestus*

This recently split forest equivalent of the Fork-tailed Drongo was found to be common at all forest sites. Birds were very conspicuous around the canopy walkway.

*NOTE: Older versions of Clements lump this species within Fork-tailed Drongo D. adsimilis but the split has been recognized in recent Clements updates.*

## Crows, Jays & Magpies *Corvidae*

### **Piapiac**

*Ptilostomus afer*

Good numbers of birds were found in the Shai Hills area.

### **Pied Crow**

*Corvus albus*

A common and familiar crow, recorded in good numbers on every day.

## Starlings *Sturnidae*

### **Lesser Blue-eared Starling**

*Lamprotornis chloropterus*

A single bird was seen at Shai Hills.

### **Splendid Starling**

*Lamprotornis splendidus*

This spectacular, large starling was seen once when a group were located near the Brimsu Reservoir.

### **Purple Starling**

*Lamprotornis purpureus*

Our first sighting was at Shai Hills with further views at Mole NP and in the Bolgatanga area.

### **Long-tailed Glossy-starling**

*Lamprotornis caudatus*

Small numbers located at Mole NP, one of the most impressive of Africa's long tailed starlings. We enjoyed further encounters in the far North.

### **Chestnut-bellied Starling**

*Lamprotornis pulcher*

We enjoyed sightings of 5 birds near Bolgatanga.

### **Violet-backed Starling**

*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

This stunning bird was seen from Kakum canopy walkway.

### **(Forest) Chestnut-winged Starling**

*Onychognathus fulgidus*

Small numbers were seen regularly, especially from the walkway in Kakum NP and at Atewa Forest.

### **Narrow-tailed Starling**

*Poeoptera lugubris*

A scarce species in Ghana. We were fortunate to have good views from the Kakum canopy walkway and at Antwikwaa.

## Old World Sparrows *Passeridae*

### **House Sparrow**

*Passer domesticus*

This species is not native to Ghana and was reported at the coastal town of Cape Coast. This species was not seen by the leader.

**Northern Grey-headed Sparrow***Passer griseus*

Ghana's commonest sparrow and plentiful throughout the country.

*NOTE: The Gray-headed Sparrow complex P. griseus has been split into five full species with the Ghanaian form being retaining in the nominate grouping with the same nomenclature.*

**Bush Petronia***Petronia dentata*

This species was very common in the north of the country, and we located many at Mole NP and around Tono Dam.

**Weavers & Allies Ploceidae****Speckle-fronted Weaver***Sporopipes frontalis*

We had a single sighting of a pair at Tono Dam, an attractive Sahelian bird at the very edge of its range.

**Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver***Plocepasser superciliosus*

We had regular encounters with this species at Mole NP.

**Little Weaver***Ploceus luteolus*

This is a dry-country woodland weaver that was seen once below the escarpment in Mole NP.

**Black-necked Weaver***Ploceus nigricollis*

This species was found at Antwikwaa and Atewa Forests.

**Village Weaver***Ploceus cucullatus*

One of Ghana's most conspicuous birds, with large colonies found in many places.

*NOTE: This widespread African complex is also a candidate for multi-species splitting and the nominate subspecies which we recorded in Ghana will remain within the nominate Village Weaver P. cucullatus group. These splits are not as yet recognized by Clements.*

**Vieillot's (Black) Weaver***Ploceus nigerrimus*

Flocks of this beautiful species were noted at many localities in the south of Ghana.

*NOTE: The distinctive West African form of this weaver is sometimes split off as Black-and-chestnut Weaver P. castaneofuscus.*

**Yellow-mantled Weaver***Ploceus tricolor*

This forest canopy species was encountered in small numbers daily in Kakum NP and also seen at Atewa Forest.

**Maxwell's Black Weaver***Ploceus albinucha*

Great views of 20 birds were had from the Kakum canopy walkway on consecutive days.

**Preuss' Weaver***Ploceus preussi*

This beautiful species of weaver is generally uncommon throughout its range and has a unique habit of feeding like a creeper along branches. We enjoyed fabulous views of a single bird at Antwikwaa after our first looks at the Kakum canopy walkway.

**Red-vented Malimbe***Malimbus scutatus*

We had excellent views of 3 of these beautiful weavers at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

**Blue-billed Malimbe***Malimbus nitens*

This understorey Malimbe was found in a single feeding flock at Kakum NP.

**Crested Malimbe***Malimbus malimbicus*

We found a pair of birds in Kakum NP and a further pair at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

**Red-headed Malimbe***Malimbus rubricollis*

This numerous and conspicuous malimbe was recorded daily at Kakum NP and Atewa Forest.

**Red-billed Quelea***Quelea quelea*

Five birds in non-breeding plumage were seen in the far north of the country.

**Black-winged (Red) Bishop***Euplectes hordeaceus*

This species was seen at the Winneba Plains in non-breeding dress.

**Northern Red Bishop***Euplectes franciscanus*

Large numbers in non-breeding dress were encountered in the far north around Tono Dam.

**Yellow-mantled Widowbird***Euplectes macrourus*

We had 15 birds in non-breeding plumage at Bobiri Butterfly Reserve.

*NOTE: This species is an excellent candidate for a two-way split, the Ghanaian nominates E. m. macrourus would be called Yellow-mantled Widowbird and the eastern E. m. macrocercus would acquire the common name of Yellow-shouldered Widowbird.*

**Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae****White-breasted Nigrita***Nigrita fusconota*

We had a couple of sightings in Kakum NP.

**Grey-headed Nigrita***Nigrita canicapilla*

The commonest nigrita and seen in all forests visited. Its sad whistled song was a constant background sound.

**Red-winged Pytilia***Pytilia phoenicoptera*

We enjoyed excellent views of this species in mixed feeding flocks of estrildids in woodland in Mole NP.

**Western Bluebill***Spermophaga haematina*

This seldom observed forest seedeater was seen near the park entrance of Kakum NP.

**Bar-breasted Firefinch***Lagonosticta rufopicta*

We found at least 7 birds in woodland in Mole NP.

**Red-billed Firefinch***Lagonosticta senegala*

Common at Mole NP where many were recorded daily from the escarpment area.

**African Firefinch***Lagonosticta rubricate*

Our only sighting of this species was of a pair seen at Hans Cottage.

**Black-faced Firefinch***Lagonosticta larvata*

At least five birds were encountered daily of this rather uncommon species at Mole NP.

**Red-cheeked Cordonbleu***Uraeginthus bengalus*

This common bird of savanna was seen throughout northern Ghana.

**Lavender Waxbill***Estrilda caerulescens*

We located a single group of 8 birds on one of our walks in Mole NP.

**Orange-cheeked Waxbill***Estrilda melpoda*

This common and widespread species was seen in scrubby habitat throughout.

**Black-rumped Waxbill***Estrilda troglodytes*

Common near Bolgatanga and Tono Dam.

**Black-faced Quailfinch***Ortygospiza atricollis*

We found three at Sakumo Lagoon.

**Bronze Mannikin***Lonchura cucullata*

This is a ubiquitous species in scrub throughout Ghana. We found them on many days.

**Black-and-white Mannikin***Lonchura bicolor*

Small numbers were seen at forest edge in Kakum NP.

*NOTE: This complex may be split two-ways, the southern and eastern Brown-backed Mannikin L. nigriceps and the northern and western nominate group, which would remain as Black-and-white Mannikin. The latter is the form we recorded in Ghana. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.*

### Indigobirds *Viduidae*

**Pin-tailed Whydah**

*Vidua macroura*

This familiar bird, which parasitises small seedeaters, was seen on many occasions throughout the country.

**Exclamatory Paradise-whydah**

*Vidua interjecta*

A single bird of probably this species was seen in non-breeding plumage at Mole NP.

### Siskins, Crossbills & Allies *Fringillidae*

**Yellow-fronted Canary**

*Serinus mozambicus*

This species was common in the dry north at Mole NP and Tono Dam.

### Buntings *Emberizidae*

**Cinnamon-breasted (Rock) Bunting**

*Emberiza tahapisi*

A couple of birds were well seen below the escarpment in Mole NP.

**Cabanis's Bunting**

*Emberiza cabanisi*

We had superb views of 2 birds in Mole NP in the woodland below the escarpment.

### **List of Mammal Species recorded**

*Taxonomy and nomenclature follows that of BirdArea/BirdBase software with taxonomic differences to 'The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals' by Jonathan Kingdon, Academic Press, 1997 highlighted.*

#### Hares *Leporidae*

**Scrub Hare**

*Lepus victoriae*

#### Squirrels *Sciuridae*

**Striped Ground Squirrel**

*Xerus erythropus*

**Gambian Sun Squirrel**

*Heliosciurus gambianus*

**Red-legged Sun Squirrel**

*Heliosciurus rufobrachium*

#### Mongoosees *Herpestidae*

**Slender Mongoose**

*Herpestes sanguinea*

#### Hedgehogs *Erinaceidae*

**Four-toed Hedgehog**

*Erinaceus albiventris*

#### Fruit Bats *Pteropodidae*

**Straw-colored Fruit Bat**

*Eidolon helvum*

#### Large-winged Bats *Megadermatidae*

**Yellow-winged Bat**

*Lavia frons*

**Cheek-Pouch Monkeys *Cercopithecidae***

<b>Guinea (Olive) Baboon</b>	<i>Papio papio</i>
<b>Callithrix [Vervet] Monkey</b>	<i>Cercopithecus [aethiops] sabaesus</i>
<b>Patas Monkey</b>	<i>Erythrocebus patas</i>

**Pigs *Suidae***

<b>Common Warthog</b>	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>
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**Bovids & Horned Ungulates *Bovidae***

<b>Bushbuck</b>	<i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>
<b>Waterbuck</b>	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>
<b>Kob</b>	<i>Kobus kob</i>

**Elephants *Elephantidae***

<b>African Elephant</b>	<i>Loxodonta africana-</i>
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