

GHANA - Picathartes & Gold Coast Specialities 2012

3rd February to 15th February 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Either for rarity value, excellent views or simply a group favourite.

- Yellow-headed Picathartes
- Black-casqued Hornbill
- Black Dwarf Hornbill
- Rufous-sided Broadbill
- Black Bee-Eater
- Rosy Bee-Eater
- Blue-headed Bee-Eater
- Fraser's Eagle Owl
- Akun Eagle Owl
- Chocolate-backed Kingfisher
- White-bellied Kingfisher
- Buff-throated Sunbird
- Fraser's Sunbird
- Forest Robin
- Hartlaub's Duck
- Ussher's Flycatcher
- Violet Turaco
- Yellow-billed Turaco
- Red-billed Helmetshrike
- African Finfoot
- African Piculet
- Fire-bellied Woodpecker
- Honeyguide Greenbul
- Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike
- Blue Cuckoo-Shrike
- Marsh Tchagra
- Violet-backed Yliota

Leaders: Chris Townend & Robert Oteng-Appau

SUMMARY:

Ghana is fast becoming the new West African hotspot for some quality birding including many highly sought after species, in particular the **Yellow-headed Picathartes**.

This tour started in the south of the country and headed west along the coast to Ankasa Forest an area as yet visited by very few bird tour companies. Here we enjoyed some quality birds including **Hartlaub's Duck**, **African Finfoot**, **Akun Eagle Owl** and **White-bellied Kingfisher**. Without doubt one of the tour highlights was a visit to the canopy walkway suspended some 30 metres above the forest floor allowing eye-level views of some tricky canopy birds. Having exclusive early access to the walkway allowed us time to find many excellent sought-after species such as **Black-casqued Hornbill**, **White-crested Hornbill**, **Sharpe's Apalis**, **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**, **Yellow-billed Turaco** and **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher**. We then moved on to the breeding site of the **Yellow-headed Picathartes** where at this time of year, birds return to roost. It was here that we had outrageously close views of this strange and magical forest bird.

Then to the famed Atewa Ridge where we walked up to the ridge and had great views of **Rosy Bee-Eater** and **Blue-headed Bee-Eater** to name but a few. Finally, our last morning was spent at the Shai Hills watching savannah specialities like **White Helmetshrikes**, **Stone Partridge** and **Croaking Cisticolas** before we returned to the coast and the Sakumono Lagoon for waders, herons and egrets and got lucky with an **American Golden Plover**!



Perhaps unsurprisingly, Yellow-headed Picathartes was voted bird of the trip. This bird gave fantastic views, preening in full view just metres away from us.
(Photos: by tour participant Barry Wright)



Day 1 Friday 3rd February 2012

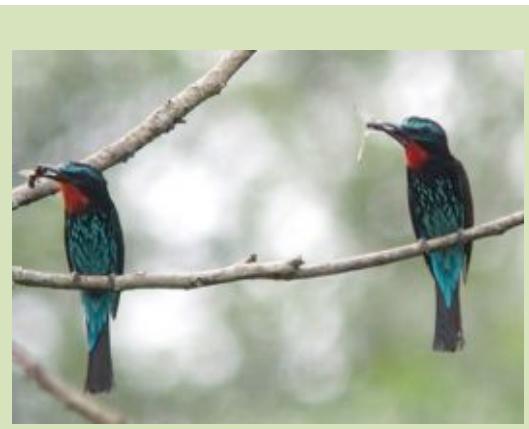
The group arrived into Accra somewhat later than planned, due to delayed flights, but everyone was pleased to finally be setting foot in Accra. Here they were met by Chris and Robert and it was just a short drive through the now quiet city to our comfortable beach side hotel for the night.

Day 2 Saturday 4th February Sakumono Lagoon & Winneba Plains

Due to the late arrival of the group, Chris decided to be kind and ease the group into a fairly relaxed start with a little birding around the hotel before breakfast. Here we quickly notched up a few dozen species, the most relevant of which was probably **Scarlet-chested Sunbird**, a sunbird found mostly in the South-Eastern edge of the country. It also allowed everyone to become accustomed with some of the commoner species which included our first **Grey-backed Camaroptera**, **African Thrush** and **Common Bulbul**. A brief look on the sea produced more familiar species in the form of a small number of **Arctic Skuas**.

After a pleasant breakfast overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, we headed east along the coast a little to Sakumono Lagoon, a designated RAMSAR site due to its international importance for water birds. It was a fairly leisurely morning as we sifted through many familiar European waders with numerous **Little Stints** and **Curlew Sandpipers**, **Wood Sandpipers** and **Greenshank**. Of more interest to us however were species such as **Senegal Thick-knee**, many smart looking **Collared Partincoles**, **Pied Kingfishers** and dark morph **Western Reef Egrets**. It was a beautiful morning as everyone acclimatized to the heat with the pleasant sea breeze behind us. A distant group of **Glossy Ibis** swirled above the reedbed in the distance and numerous **White-faced Whistling Ducks** flocked in the deeper water where Barry managed to pick out a **Eurasian Wigeon**, quite scarce this far south. A singing **Winding Cisticola** gave some great views in the short vegetation in front of us, as did a couple of very smart **Little Bee-Eaters** before we headed off to another side of the lagoon.

Here we enjoyed a small group of **Marsh Sandpipers**, but the star find was a **Pectoral Sandpiper**, found by Dara. Amazingly, this was Chris's third consecutive time he had come across this, now seemingly regular wader! Species around the lagoon edge included a couple of smart **Heuglin's Masked Weavers** showing off their black throats and pale yellow eyes, a group of very obliging **Yellow-billed Shrikes** and a **Yellow-crowned Gonolek** that called but refused to show itself properly! It was getting hot, so we decided to head on our journey west along the coast towards the Winneba Plains. A leisurely lunch break gave us time to relax and wait for the heat of the day to pass and allowed most



Black Bee-Eaters are fairly common in Ghana but always high on people's wish lists and these two birds performed impeccably at the gates of the Ankasa Forest. (Photo: Chris Townend)



Fraser's Eagle Owl is never an easy bird to find, but this bird in Kakum Forest performed exceptionally. (Photo: Chris Townend)



Rufous-sided Broadbill is always a key target species and we had many sightings including this handsome male in Ankasa Forest. (Photo: Chris Townend)

of the group to add another couple of Sunbirds to the list in the form of the aptly named **Splendid Sunbird** and **Copper Sunbirds**.

We arrived at the Winneba Plains in the late afternoon and birded the main track and surrounding area. A **Lizard Buzzard** perched on telegraph wires was a good start as we ventured out of the bus and was soon followed by some nice views of the unmistakable **Yellow-crowned Gonolek**. It typically tried to hide out of view, but with patience it gave good views in the end. A far more drab looking **Simple Leaflove** showed pretty well for the group in some nearby scrub and then a cracking **Red-winged Warbler** sat up and sang from the top of a bush allowing great views. A recently burnt area produced a flock of waxbills containing both **Orange-cheeked Waxbill** and **Black-rumped Waxbill** as well as a number of non-breeding male **Yellow-mantled Widowbirds**, complete with yellow shoulders. As we continued to venture off the track we picked up a few more grassland/savannah specialities with **Short-winged Cisticola**, **African Grey Hornbill**, **Black-crowned Tchagra**, **Bar-breasted Firefinch** and a nice **Green-headed Sunbird**. However, the biggest surprise was a rather brutish **African Moustached Warbler** seen by just Chris and Dara that sat right out on top of a bush allowing the lovely reddish crown and black malar stripe to be clearly seen. This species is fairly widespread across the south, but it was the first time Robert or Chris had seen one at this site. A **Black-necked Weaver** (of the *brachypterus* race) was also seen by a few. This form lacks a “black neck” and has a completely green back. As the evening light began to dim, we were treated to some excellent views of a small group of **Violet Turacos** and a **Red-necked Buzzard** flapped past before it was time to return to the bus and head for our accommodation at the famed Hans Cottage.

Day 3 Sunday 5th February Kakum Forest

Today was an exciting day, as it was our first visit to the famous Kakum canopy walkway, suspended some 30 metres above the forest floor and everyone was eager to witness this excellent birding site. After a short journey, we began to ascend the few stone steps in the gloom and continued through the forest before arriving at the walkway. Everyone took their time on the walkway, some taking to it like a duck to water and others taking a little longer to acclimatise to this sometimes unnerving environment! Due to the limited space on the viewing platforms, we divided into groups and remained in radio contact. Chris spent the first part of the morning on the third platform with the largest clear view of the forest beyond and we rotated with Robert’s group who remained on the second platform. Between us, we



Ankasa Resource Reserve is a high quality forest with many gems to be found, including the rare Akun Eagle Owl seen during our tour. (Photo Chris Townend)



The Blue-billed Malimbe is always a treat to see. Three other species of Malimbe can be found in Ghana: Crested, Red-vented and Red-headed Malimbés all of which were seen during the tour. (Photo Chris Townend)



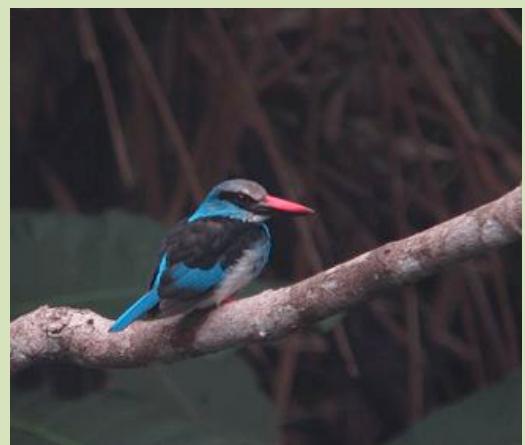
This female Rufous-sided Broadbill was seen very well in Ankasa. (Photo Chris Townend)

managed to all enjoy some excellent views of many canopy specials! The first highlight for many were the gentle giants of the forest as a group of six **Black-casqued Hornbills** sat in a fruiting tree allowing some great scope views to be had of both huge black-casqued males and ginger-headed females. The much commoner **African Pied Hornbills** were always on view with large groups passing overhead on one occasion. The constant calling of a **Yellow-billed Turaco** taunted us for much of the morning, but it eventually performed beautifully in front of the whole group, even allowing those beautiful scarlet flight feathers to be fully enjoyed. **African Green Pigeons** were a common site as they passed overhead, sometimes perching nearby and a raucous call alerted us to a couple of **African Grey Parrots**, as they typically whizzed overhead. Then, a call on the radio from Robert alerted us to a pair of the beautiful **Violet-backed Hyliota**, typically feeding in the very tops of the canopy along with a more familiar **Wood Warbler** soon to be heading on its northward migration to Europe. **Ussher's Flycatchers** hawked from the canopy tops sitting out prominently like dusky coloured martins and the common, but nonetheless stunning **Yellow-mantled Weavers** flitted around in front of us with noisy **Velvet-mantled Drongos**. The excitement continued with the bizarre calling of a **White-crested Hornbill** from the forest below. This shy bird gave some good but brief views to some of the group allowing its long black ribbon like tail and punk white crest to be seen, before it disappeared off into the forest tangles. Then two Upper Guinea Forest Endemics (UGFE), the brilliantly named **Fire-bellied Woodpecker** gave itself away as it gave its harsh and brief accelerating rattle and allowed some good scope views, but the **Little Green Woodpecker** was somewhat less sociable and showed only briefly before vanishing. A **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher** called its slightly mournful and repetitive whistle beneath us, but frustratingly also refused to show. However, perseverance prevailed and we continued to slowly add new birds to our pleasant morning whilst sipping coffee and enjoying our breakfast, some 30 metres above the forest floor! A **Blue-throated Roller** showed well to some and a **Blue Cuckoo-Shrike** sang out its loud and distinctive song and even perched in the trees directly above us and performed to the "ooohs" and "ahhhs" of its appreciative crowd below. The descending almost "dripping" song of a **Sabine's Puffback** was heard nearby and a nice black and white male flicked in the vine tangles and later the chestnut brown female appeared. Another UGFE, this time the **Hairy-breasted Barbet**, showed very well on a number of occasions and then no less than four **Preuss's Weavers**, or the more descriptive name of **Golden-backed Weaver** performed for all of us as they fed along the large canopy branches in an almost nuthatch like fashion. Today was our first introduction to Greenbuls and we notched up a few of the more showy species, with the distinctive and bright **Golden Greenbul** contrasting to the drab and somewhat slimline **Slender-billed Greenbul** both



Ghana has a total of 12 Kingfisher species that can be found including this brute of a Giant Kingfisher seen fishing at our accommodation in Kakum.

(Photo Chris Townend)



The more elusive Blue-breasted Kingfisher was also seen well during the tour, taking the Kingfisher tally to 8 species. (Photo Chris Townend)

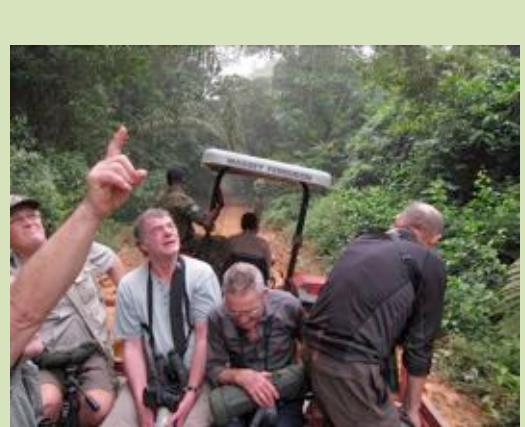


Woodland Kingfisher is a very common species but always a pleasure to see! (Photo Chris Townend)

feeding on fruits in the canopy. The highly distinctive and attractive **Honeyguide Greenbul** compete with black and white tail and pale iris showed very well whilst the more elusive **Yellow-whiskered Greenbul**s continually “rattled” from below. Malimbes were also a highlight of the morning with three of the four possible species seen between our groups. **Red-headed Malimbe** being far the commonest and with singles of **Red-vented Malimbe** and **Blue-billed Malimbe**. A single hawking **Rosy Bee-Eater** was an all too brief affair and the odd **Sabine’s Spinetail** drifted around in the harshly lit sky. Small groups of the gorgeous **Rufous-crowned Eremomelas** moved through the canopy and a **Finsch’s Flycatcher Thrush** sat out beautifully, as did a **Copper-tailed Glossy Starling** complete with pale iris - both Upper Guinea Forest Endemics. Commoner species seen throughout the morning included **Forest Chestnut-winged Starlings**, **Collared Sunbird**, **Black-winged Oriole** and the beautiful **Yellow-browed Camaroptera** bleeping from the forest tangles beneath us.

The heat of the day was beginning to make its presence known, as too were the noisy tourists(!), so we decided to call it a day and head down into the forest where we tried our luck on a forest trail. It was pretty quiet with little activity, but some of the group managed to get a view of **Yellow-whiskered Greenbul** as it typically remained in a thick vine tangle. However, a **Grey Longbill** sang out its cheerful and rapid warbling song above us and gave some pretty good views as it flitted between the vines above. A **Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill** teased us as its rather mournful trumpeting rang out from the direction of the canopy walkway from which we had just left. It seemed uninterested in responding, so we continued our walk along the forest trail, except for Barry who decided to lurk at the back and take a call of nature! A very fortuitous call of nature it was too, as he realised he was being watched by a **Black Dwarf Hornbill**! A quick shout from our forest ranger alerted the rest of us to the situation and luckily this fairly secretive hornbill stayed put. With a little perseverance and having to peer through a small window of forest cover, eventually everyone managed to get some sort of view of what many consider to be the hardest hornbill to see in Ghana. It was a great start to our Kakum experience and we soon ventured back to the cool air-conditioning of our bus taking a nice **Green Crombec** in en route. We returned to Hans Cottage where everyone took time to enjoy the busy weaver activity. A **Village Weaver** colony above the lake was a spectacle as birds were busy building nests and a few **Vieillot’s Black Weavers (Black and Chestnut Weavers)** were also present in smaller numbers. However, it was the stunning **Orange Weavers** that attracted most attention as a small colony allowed excellent photographic opportunities!

After a well needed lunch and some rest we headed back out to another area of Kakum Forest, or so we thought until a torrential downpour scuppered our birding plans! We sat it out, but the



Our visit to Ankasa Forest was a real adventure full of great birding as well as unique modes of travel!

(Photo Chris Townend)



Weavers are always an iconic bird of Africa and Village Weavers although very common are always fascinating to watch. Staying at Hans Cottage, watching the busy lives of weavers was a daily occurrence during our meal times.

(Photo Chris Townend)

weather was pretty determined not to abate. After finally easing we were not left with much daylight and bird activity was at an all time low and it still persisted to rain lightly. However, as dusk came the rain finally stopped and we waited for any sight or sound of nocturnal birds. It was pretty quiet and pretty dark so we decided to slowly head for the coach when Royston picked up an owl gliding overhead which landed in nearby trees. Chris quickly had the bird in the spotlight and soon everyone was enjoying scope views of the beautiful **Fraser's Eagle Owl**. A great end to the day!

Day 4 Monday 6th February Kakum Forest & Ankasa Forest Resource

It was another early start this morning and a return to the Kakum canopy walkway to try and find a few more canopy specialities. The groups were alternated from yesterday and we were on the walkway early with everyone a little more relaxed and feeling more confident as they ventured along the walkway! Chris took the lead as a calling **Rufous-sided Broadbill** could be heard from the forest below us, but we had no chance of seeing it and we continued to the third platform. We were in luck again as a group of at least four **Black-casqued Hornbills** were visible in nearby fruiting trees and allowing everyone to catch up with this beauty. Today was all about playing “catch up” on species that some missed yesterday and of course seeing totally new birds for the group as a whole and we didn’t do too badly! New species for today were two **Forest Wood-Hoopoes** and its closely related cousin the **White-headed Wood-Hoopoe** both of which performed well. The monotonous song of **Sharpe’s Apalis** finally materialised into more than just a song for some of the group as a bird showed amongst the canopy and a lucky few also enjoyed views of the velvety smooth **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher** as a bird sat on a branch below one of the platforms calling from its perch. **Western Black-headed Oriole** complete with white patch on primary coverts was also a new addition to the previously seen **Black-winged Oriole**. Yet again, it was a very pleasant affair as we sipped coffee, ate our omelette sandwiches and just took in the sights and the sounds of the forest. Before long the morning had vanished and we had to leave the canopy, sneaking in another new bird en route between platforms (for some) in the form of the distinctive **Spotted Greenbul**. We arrived back at the car park where a group of non-breeding male **Pin-tailed Whydahs** were feeding at close range and the now familiar **White-throated Bee-Eaters** buzzed around. Our driver, the ever cheerful Kwame was waiting for us and we headed back to our accommodation for a quick freshen up before our journey to Ankasa Forest.

The journey to Ankasa was fairly uneventful other than a stop en route by a river for the fairly drab, but nonetheless distinctive **Brown Sunbird**. We all enjoyed good views of a bird visiting a

ZOOTHERA GLOBAL BIRDING – GHANA FEBRUARY 2012



The beautiful Orange Weaver is a bit of a breeding speciality of Hans Cottage where we spent 4 nights.
(Photo Chris Townend)



The Vieillot's Black Weaver or better named "Black-and-Chestnut Weaver" is also a speciality of Hans Cottage.
(Photo Chris Townend)



Rock Agama is a very common reptile in Ghana with many stunning specimens.
(Photo Chris Townend)

nest and allowing the striking white markings around the eye to be seen. A good bird to see being restricted to a thin coastal strip in Ghana, favouring forested rivers and mangroves. Also seen here were our first noisy **Splendid Glossy Starlings** and a few waders along the river edge including **Wood and Curlew Sandpiper**. Before too long we found ourselves travelling down a track towards Ankasa where a brief stop by a small stream allowed some excellent views of **Lesser-Striped Swallows** and a single **Ethiopian Swallow** perched in a tree overhanging the stream. We then arrived at the entrance gate to Ankasa Resource Reserve and sharp-eyed Rob alerted us to the fact that two **Black Bee-Eaters** were already waiting to greet us and we all exited the bus to enjoy some great views. It was a great start to our Ankasa part of the trip and after having our fill of this always popular species, we boarded the bus once more and slowly headed down the track bordered by impressive forest. It had recently rained and a few puddles were present on the track so everyone was keeping a close eye ahead of the bus and before long Chris shouted “STOP!” He had picked up a beautiful **Blue-headed Wood Dove** in his bins some way ahead of us on the track. This is always a good bird to see, heard far more often than seen and it showed excellently, even allowing some scope views from inside the bus revealing the beautiful metallic green wing spots and powder blue head. We continued a little further and then ventured out of the bus where we slowly wandered along the main track. Here Barry picked up a pair of **Shrike Flycatchers** at the very top of a huge tree where a **Johanna’s Sunbird** was also enjoyed. However, the real treats were to come as the distinctive mechanical whirring of a **Rufous-sided Broadbill** was heard for the second time today and we were determined to see this one. Sure enough, after a little patience Robert located the bird sat on a branch just a little way inside the forest but sitting still long enough to allow some great scope views of this striking male. Then came the melodic song of a **Forest Robin** and we quietly left the main track to try and locate this forest beauty. After a little patience and some playback manoeuvring by Chris, a bird responded and Dara announced he could see the bird. It remained typically low to the forest floor but hopped up onto some dead wood allowing excellent views for some, but frustrations for others as vegetation blocked lines of sight – such is the fun of forest birding! Time, as always, was against us and we had a fair distance to travel to our accommodation, so we began to head back, but this time it was Robert who shouted “STOP!” For those that were looking ahead of the bus, two **White-breasted Guineafowl** ran across in front of the bus, blink and you would have missed them! With only Robert, Chris and Rob glimpsing them. We waited on the track inside the bus, in the hope that another bird might just cross the track, but it was not to be, and sadly, this very difficult species eluded most.

A **Broad-billed Roller** (cousin of the forest equivalent **Blue-throated Roller**) hawked for insects as we headed out of the



The Blue-throated Roller is the forest equivalent of the Broad-billed Roller, both of which were seen well during the tour. (Photo Chris Townend)



Yellow-billed Shrikes are typically sociable species and we saw this species well near Sakumono Lagoon. (Photo Chris Townend)



Swamp Palm Bulbul is a common but often tricky to see species. We had particularly good views below Atewa Ridge. (Photo Chris Townend)

forest and along the track to the main road and the sun soon disappeared.

A rather bumpy and dusty track towards our hotel was not the most comfortable, but a **Greyish Eagle Owl** sat right beside the road certainly relieved the discomfort as did a number of **Long-tailed Nightjars** dicing with death and flying up from the track as Kwame battled with the vibrating steering wheel!

It was soon home sweet home as we checked into our seafront hotel, enjoyed a pleasant dinner with the sound of the Atlantic Ocean and dreamt of what Ankasa may hold for tomorrow!

Day 5 Tuesday 7th February Ankasa Forest Resource

It was a very early start and most people sensibly slept as we travelled back to Ankasa Resource Reserve and we arrived in the morning gloom. Unfortunately, our organised plan of using a tractor and trailer to ferry us to the famous Ankasa Forest Pools was somewhat scuppered due to unexpected events of our designated tractor driver. So, Kwame again took us to the furthest point he could and like true Brits we didn't let it get us down and we began to walk. I should at this point perhaps say, some walked, whilst others "route marched" as it was ingrained from their military training! Anyway, the main thing was, we were on the road to the famous pools where we hoped a number of target species awaited us. Due to the time constraints and wanting to get to the pools as early as possible, we walked past a number of calling species such as **Forest Robins**, **Blackcap Illadopsis** and various **Greenbul**s and **Bristlebills**, but we soldiered on for 3Km or so(!) taking in a small flock of **Piping Hornbills** on the way. Our arrival at the pools was welcomed and we slowly approached the first of the pools after the inadvertent flushing of one of our key target species the **Hartlaub's Duck**! Just a couple of the group managed a view of this shy duck and we spent a little time carefully scanning the first pool. A **Blue-breasted Kingfisher** and **African Pygmy Kingfisher** were the main rewards, before we continued to the next set of pools. Here, again rather frustratingly a **Hartlaub's Duck** was seen only briefly before disappearing out of sight. We then rested at the final pool and enjoyed our coffee along with a rather obliging **Blue-billed Malimbe**. Other highlights whilst we relaxed at this spot included, **Olive-bellied Sunbird**, the large and fairly nondescript **Western Olive Sunbird** and the **Blue-throated Brown Sunbird**, a fairly showy **Green Hylia**, **Yellow-throated Tinkerbird** and a **Crested Malimbe** showed for a few of the group. We also enjoyed some good overhead views of both **Cassin's** and **Sabine's Spinetails** which allowed careful scrutiny of the features. Not so obliging were a **Yellow-billed Barbet** and the always skulking **Olive-Green Camaroptera** both of which were clearly heard but not seen!

It was beginning to get warm so we headed back towards the



African Pied Hornbill is a very common species in Ghana and was seen daily on our tour. (Photo Chris Townend)



The famous Kakum Canopy Walkway, suspended some 30M above the forest floor is a fantastic place to get good views of species like the huge Black-casqued Hornbill below. (Photos Chris Townend)



campsites area, checking the pools again en route, where an obliging **Dusky-blue Flycatcher** sat up and posed for us as it and called a dry short rattling note. A brief stop in an open area revealed a **Klaas's Cuckoo** and **Square-tailed Saw-wing** hawking. Once at the campsite and we decided to relax in the shade and enjoy our lunch. Here we were joined by both **Naked-faced** and **Bristle-nosed Barbets** showing well in a tree right beside our lunch spot. Barry decided to have a wander, too excited by what gems lurked in the forest and he returned with a sackful of Greenbuls with **Western Bearded, Red-tailed** and **Yellow-bearded Greenbuls** for his lone efforts.

Once everyone was feeling a little more re-charged, we ventured to the area which Barry had already visited and a number of the group caught up with **Red-tailed and Yellow-bearded Greenbuls** as well as a small group of **Icterine Greenbuls**. Greenbuls weren't everybody's cup of tea of course and what with a combination of the heat and the early start, it was taking its toll on a few of the group. Therefore, some decided to venture back to meet Kwame who took them back to the hotel where they took time out to relax and do some birding around the hotel grounds. Here they did well to find the highly localised **Reichenbach's Sunbird**.

The remaining members of the group continued birding the Ankasa Forest where as the heat began to disappear, so the bird activity increased and we slowly picked up some good views of **Yellow-whiskered Greenbul, Bioko Batis, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher and Lemon-bellied Crombec**. A **Western Bronze-naped Pigeon** called continuously from the thickest part of the canopy and just would not show and a **Black-casqued Hornbill** flew over one of the more open areas. However, probably the most frustrating moment was when a **Great Blue Turaco** started calling out its diagnostic mix of exploding high notes and deep guttural noises but was totally invisible due to our limited viewing area. As the last hour of light remained we loitered by a clearing where at dusk a **Black-throated Coucal** became very vocal from the densest of thickets and the beautiful sound of the mythical **Nkulengu Rail** rang out from deep within the forest. An **African Wood Owl** then called nearby and with a little patience we were rewarded with some excellent views in the spotlight before we slowly headed along the main track back to our bus. It was quite an experience walking in the forest at night with the constant screaming of **Western Tree Hyraxes** and buzzing of insects and the complete darkness. However, our ears were on high alert for the call of owls and one in particular, the very rare **Akun Eagle Owl** and we were in luck. A bird called high in the forest above and after a bit of mud sliding in the dark (no pain no gain!) everyone managed a view of the bird in Chris's spotlight. Happy with our finale, we ventured on our journey back to the hotel and a few hundred bumps and 10+ **Long-tailed Nightjars** later we were back for a quick meal and straight to bed - A great end to what was a very long day.



The Hairy-breasted Barbet is an Upper Guinea Forest endemic and was a regular feature of our visit to the Kakum Forest. (Photo Chris Townend)



A number of African Emerald Cuckoos were seen during the tour including both females (as above) and stunning yellow-fronted males. (Photo Chris Townend)

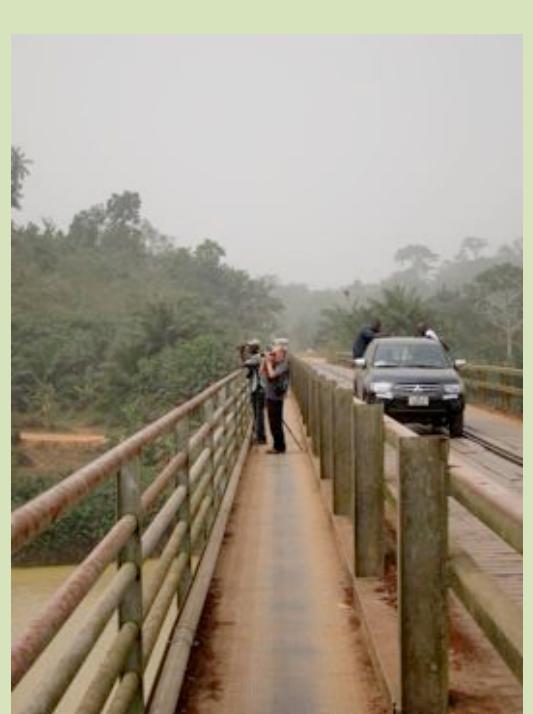


Sabine's Puffback was seen well from the Kakum canopy walkway, including both black & white males (as above) and chestnut females. (Photo Chris Townend)

Day 6 Wednesday 8th February Ankasa Forest & Sekondi Reservoir

Another early start this morning, but this time our tractor man was ready and waiting as we boarded the trailer and everyone was eager to crack open the coffees. However, in hindsight, it was probably not the best of ideas drinking scorching coffees in the back of a trailer that rocked from side to side as if we were sailing the high seas! It was a fast and furious morning as we were dropped off by a fallen tree that blocked our route and we left the rangers to deal with it whilst we once again headed for the forest pools. This time, with our earlier arrival, everyone managed some good views of **Hartlaub's Ducks** and we carefully checked every kingfisher as we were on high alert for Ghana's hardest kingfisher, the **White-bellied Kingfisher**. Pond one revealed the same as yesterday as both **Blue-breasted and African Pygmy Kingfishers** showed well. However, it was the last pond that came up trumps as a **White-spotted Flufftail** distracted Chris's focus and he tried to call the bird in a little closer. In the meantime, Barry had picked up a kingfisher mostly back on and he thought it looked a bit different. It wasn't until the bird turned and Chris exclaimed "It's a White-bellied" or words to that effect! Everyone managed to get some great views of this gleaming white-breasted beauty, and unfortunately the **White-spotted Flufftail** had lost interest. Further excitement soon followed as a few of the group managed to get onto a female **African Finfoot** just a few metres away from the kingfisher. It showed briefly to a lucky few before everyone took time out for breakfast. A raptor that Robert picked up very briefly was most probably a **Cassin's Hawk Eagle**, but frustratingly it failed to reappear. As always, time was of the essence today and we needed to head back to our tractor, who had managed to get passed the fallen tree and we boarded it once again as we slowly lumbered through the forest back to the entrance gates. Here we had one last opportunity to get to grips with a **Black Bee-Eater** that showed briefly and we then returned to our hotel. Once at the hotel, everyone managed to catch up with **Reichenbach's Sunbird** in the hotel garden before time for a shower.

We were soon on the road again and making our way back towards Kakum. Again we took a little time to stop at a couple of the small rivers. Here, we all had fantastic views of a beautiful male **Buff-throated Sunbird** feeding on vivid orange flowers, in contrast to more views of the drab but subtly beautiful **Brown Sunbird**, much to the pleasure of Rob who missed it the first time. Robert kept us well re-fuelled as the continuous conveyor belt of fresh pineapples worked its way back down the bus much to everyone's delight and Malcolm kept spirits high with tales of cricket heroes of the past interspersed with the odd "*Latinisms*" and "derivations" of course!



Birding from the bridge across the Pra River led us to find gems such as Rock Pratincole and White-throated Blue Swallow. (Photo Chris Townend)



White-throated Blue Swallow. (Photo Chris Townend)



Rock Pratincole of the race *liberiae* which has a chestnut nape. (Photo Chris Townend)

An afternoon stop at Sekondi Reservoir gave us a break from the forest birding and was defined by Robert as having some “guaranteed” specialities, but Chris felt nervous about the “G” word! The specialities failed to materialise, as on our arrival it became apparent that much of the habitat from the reservoir edge had recently been cut! This left a number of precarious sharp spikes that we had to negotiate, leaving the area open to potential casualties. We all survived, despite the twenty-one flesh wounds counted by Malcolm, but luckily his army training left him to continue birding with no real harm done! Highlights at the reservoir included a smart **Grey Kestrel**, large flocks of **Lesser-striped Swallows** and an assortment of waders, but sadly no hoped for **Shining Blue Kingfisher**. The Harmattan dust was clearly in the air forming a muggy haze above the reservoir and as we returned to the bus we could hear the cheers from the African Cup of Nations game in the distance before returning to Hans Cottage.

Day 7 Thursday 9th February Kakum Forest & Brenu Beach Road

Once again, by popular demand, we returned to the canopy walkway where we enjoyed a targeted morning slowly adding new species to our trip list or catching up with species missed by people and all whilst sipping the obligatory coffee sat in the now familiar forest canopy. It was to be a raptor morning as a **Red-chested Goshawk** soared above our platforms allowing good views, soon followed by the resident **Palm-nut Vulture**. The best raptor of the day however were two **Cassin's Hawk Eagles** seen soaring low over the forest clearing by the lucky few on the third platform. A hat-trick of Upper Guinea Forest Endemic woodpeckers was also a welcome addition also as good views of **Fire-bellied, Little Green and Gabon Woodpeckers** were had by most of the group. A group of **Maxwell's Black Weavers** was a new addition to the group list as they searched for food amongst the vine tangles and another duo of **Preuss's (Golden-backed) Weavers** were seen well again. A tail-less looking **Lemon-bellied Crombec** performed well in front of one of the platforms as it worked its way along a vine tangle. New sunbirds today were also well represented with both **Little Green Sunbird** and the very warbler-like **Fraser's (Scarlet-chested) Sunbird** being seen between our split groups on the various platforms. Our second dose of **Violet-backed Hyliotas** was very much welcomed as they lit up the canopy, in contrast to a small group of smart **Chestnut-capped Flycatchers** that flicked about in the low tangles for some of the group. Other highlights on the walkway this morning included, **African Emerald Cuckoo**, **Didric Cuckoo**, **Forest Wood-Hoopoe**, **White-headed Wood-**



Ussher's Flycatcher is an Upper Guinea Forest endemic. It has been likened to a hirundine and was seen well at both Kakum and Atewa. (Photo Chris Townend)



White-throated Bee-Eater is one of the commonest Bee-Eaters in Ghana and was seen daily. (Photo Chris Townend)

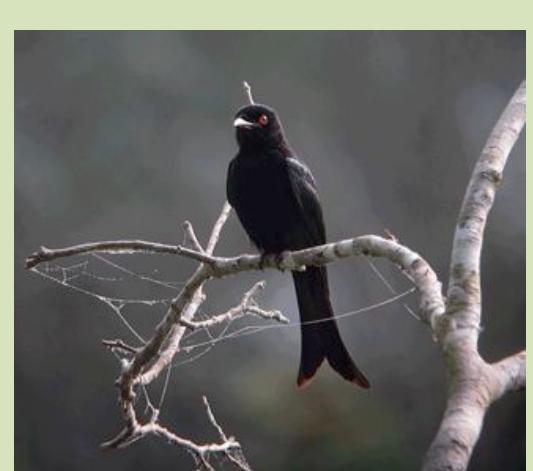


Copper-tailed Glossy Starling is an Upper Guinea Forest endemic and was seen well at a number of sites. (Photo Chris Townend)

Hoopoe, Blue Cuckoo-Shrike and a Red-tailed Greenbul that showed off its white beard as it tried its best to hide below us. Another afternoon at Hans Cottage for some relaxation and lunch allowed most of the group to catch up with the very smart **Giant Kingfisher** feeding around the ponds visible from the dining area. We then headed off to the famed Brenu Beach road. It was a good start to the Brenu Beach road as we took a wander along a dusty track and although it was still pretty hot we managed some great views of a perched **European Honey Buzzard**, a small group of feeding **Bar-breasted Firefinches**, **Yellow-crowned Gonolek** and a couple of **Red-winged Warblers** performed exceptionally well. However, we were keen to find some “new” birds (as always!) and so we ventured back into the bus to travel a little further along the main track when Robert suddenly stopped the bus after seeing a brief view of **African Crake** close to a roadside pool. We all jumped out and although the Crake seemed to have long departed into the grass, Chris managed to replace it with a fine **Greater Painted Snipe**! A little further down the road and we were watching our first **Double-spurred Francolins** and some good views of both **Black-crowned Tchagra** and **Green-headed Sunbird**. A small group of **Yellow-mantled Widowbirds** flushed from the grass and Malcolm and Robert watched a **Black-winged Bishop** briefly, before it too disappeared. We waited at the now, well known **Preuss's Cliff Swallow** roost before Chris called everyone up the road for a **Marsh Tchagra** that he found lurking in the roadside vegetation. With a little patience, some excellent views were had of both the fully black-capped male complete with rusty upperparts and the less striking female. There was no time to relax though, as the first of the **Preuss's Cliff Swallows** had already started gathering and as the light began to fade we were all treated to the aerial displays of 200+ birds coming in to roost just metres away with a spectacular backdrop of hunting **African Hobbies**! Happy with our evening we ventured back onto the bus and Royston did it once again, as he spotted another owl (he doesn't use Zeiss Night Owl bins for nothing!), this time a quite unexpected **Northern White-faced Owl** sitting out in the open! An excellent end to another day's birding in Ghana.

Day 8 Friday 10th February Bekampa Track, River Pra & Picathartes

This morning, we headed to another area of forest within the Kakum forest where we birded the Bekampa track. We arrived in darkness still, so decided to enjoy a welcome coffee before we started. Once refreshed, we alternated between walking and then driving a little so we could assess bird activity and keep in touch by radio with Malcolm whose foot was suffering a little after his route marching in Ankasa! As is often the case, bird activity was fairly quiet at first but a **Blue-spotted Wood-Dove** was a



Velvet-mantled Drongos (forest cousin of the Fork-tailed Drongo) performed very well whilst on the Kakum Canopy Walkway. (Photo Chris Townend)



The highlight of the tour: visiting the breeding site of the magical Yellow-headed Picathartes. (Photo Chris Townend)

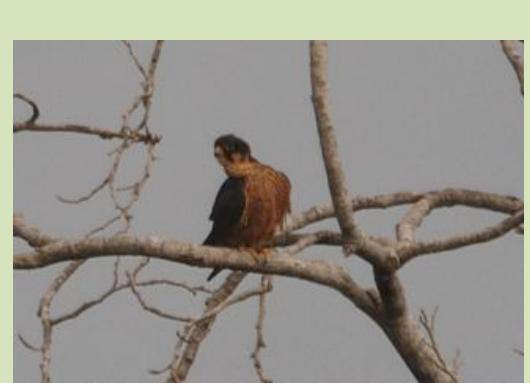


Arriving at Bonkro Village: the start of the Picathartes adventure!
(Photo Chris Townend)

welcome distraction as it posed on top of a nearby tree soon to be followed by a couple of vocal **Whistling Cisticolas** that also performed well. A determined lone effort by Barry got him a calling **Puvet's Illadopsis**, whilst the rest of the group enjoyed views of a group of **Black-and-White Mannakins** and a very smart male and female **Black-and-White Flycatcher**. A **Black-throated Coucal** called from a thicket, but it was only sharp-eyed Rob who managed to extract it from amongst the tangles for views. As we ventured further down the track a small group of **Violet-backed Starlings** flew across the track. Finally, we arrived at some more mature trees where a typically nervous, but at the same time inquisitive **White-crested Hornbill** showed through a hole in the canopy and a **Fanti Saw-wing** hawked over a clearing. However, the best two birds of the morning were unfortunately only seen by a lucky few. Firstly, an **Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo** seen in with a moving flock by Jeff and Mark and then a **Brown-cheeked Hornbill** seen high in the canopy by Rob. It wasn't a bad morning but as usual we were on a strict time schedule as today was Picathartes day! We headed back to Hans Cottage for our last time and just had enough time to have a quick shower before we headed to our next stop, the Pra river.

It was another fairly jovial bus journey as Malcolm continued to keep spirits high with his banter, despite having his ankle in ice! We arrived at the bustling town of Twifo Praso and took a short walk to the impressive bridge over the river and scanned for our target species as the locals passed by seeming quite used to visiting birders. It didn't take long as soon four **White-throated Blue Swallows** were hawking low over the river allowing perched scope views of the white throats. A short pan to the right and there were two **Rock Pratincoles** in the scope complete with rufous napes of this *liberiae* race. Despite some scanning, there appeared to be no sign of any **African Finfoot or White-crowned Lapwing** in the limited time available. So with our mission accomplished, we continued on our journey to the town of Assin Fosu where we enjoyed a leisurely lunch and levels of PPT (Pre Picathartes Tension) were in control!

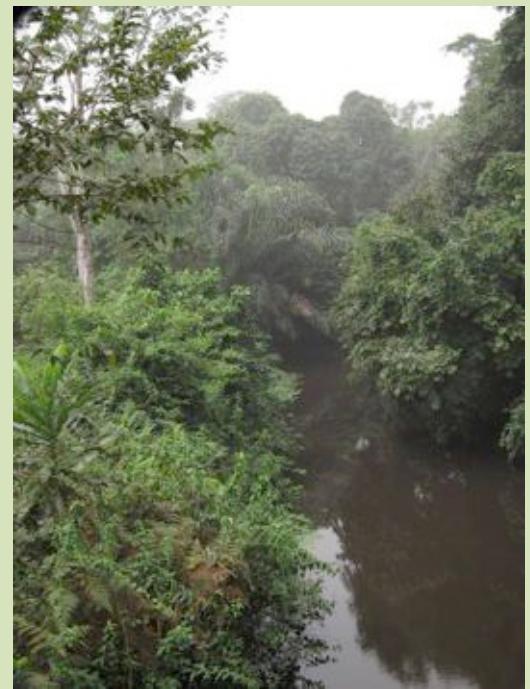
We were soon back on the bus and heading for the now well known village of Bonkro where we received the usual friendly welcome from the hordes of excited village children. We stepped out of the bus where we met our local village guides who were to escort us to the Picathartes site. It was a fairly hot and sweaty walk, but everyone took their time with Malcolm determined as ever to overcome his aching foot. Our guides led the way through the narrow trail and the atmosphere was one of both excitement and worry! Once at the site, it was just a final push up a steep bank to a rocky outcrop (the Picathartes nest site) which was to be our rather uncomfortable seat for the next couple of hours. Everyone behaved impeccably, remaining still and silent as we watched and waited. There was nothing for what seemed an eternity, other than some noisy screeching **Red-fronted Parrots**



African Hobby is a fairly common falcon in Ghana and we had good views of a number of birds. (Photo Chris Townend)



Grey Kestrel is a common falcon in Ghana and was seen almost daily. (Photo Chris Townend)



Ankasa Forest. (Photo Chris Townend)

that were not visible – ironically a species we had yet to catch up with! Then, there was a nudge and the news filtered quietly through the group that a **Yellow-headed Picathartes** had arrived! A glimpse here and a glimpse there and then a bird in view on the ground as it bounced around on the forest floor. Due to limited viewing and obscuring vegetation, some of the group had yet to get on a bird and it was just a matter of patience. Ten minutes passed and then a second bird briefly appeared and then what has to be the most outrageous views, as a bird just sat right out in the open and totally unobscured. Here it then preened for five minutes in front of everyone and the pressure was off! It was smiles all round and although we could have stayed until dark,

we needed to leave the birds in peace as the breeding site is also a roost site at this time of year. The return journey through the forest was a mere pleasure knowing that the Picathartes was under the belt and despite arriving back at the bus in darkness after a long day, no one cared and even Malcolm had numbed the pain from his foot with views that will remain in the grey matter for a very long time!

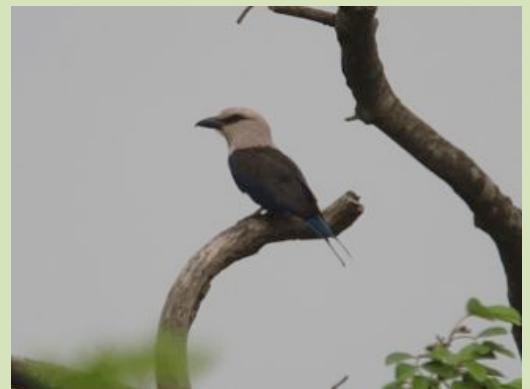
Day 9 Saturday 11th February Aboabo Forest & Bobiri Butterfly Reserve

This morning we were up early again and despite the early hour, everyone was still full of yesterday's Picathartes memories. Today we were visiting another section of the Kakum forest complex, Aboabo. This is a very easily accessible area with many good birds to be found here. One of the first birds of the morning was a **Black Cuckoo** of the red-throated form that gave some pretty good scope views as it continued to call. Then a **Long-tailed Hawk** was clearly heard calling nearby but unfortunately, it just taunted us and refused to show itself. Then Chris alerted everyone to a calling **African Piculet** and despite continually calling from what seemed to be the same spot, we all failed to pick it up. We persevered as it seemed to be close and then Christine casually announced that she had a bird that was probably nothing exciting; and Bingo, there was the Piculet! – Thanks Christine! The bird showed well to all of us and we continued walking the main track. More **White-crested Hornbills** continued to play hide and seek with us and a **Red-rumped Tinkerbird** took a little while to locate as it *pooped* out its song. Other new birds this morning included a group of **African Yellow White-eyes**, some good scope views of **Tit-Hylia** and a number of good views of **Cassin's Honeybirds**. There were more chances to see **Little Green Sunbird**, **Fraser's Sunbird**, **Superb Sunbird** and a small group of **Maxwell's Black Weavers** were very much appreciated. A **Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher** and **Red-tailed Bristlebill** were both only heard and Dara managed to jam into a **Red-cheeked Wattle-eye**. The heat was yet again starting to reduce bird activity, so we headed back to the bus and Ghana's second biggest city, Kumasi.

ZOOTHERA GLOBAL BIRDING – GHANA FEBRUARY 2012



These White Helmetshrikes of the long-crested nominate race performed well at the Shai Hills. (Photo Chris Townend)



Blue-bellied Roller is always a popular bird and we were treated to at least 7 birds at the Shai Hills. (Photo Chris Townend)



This Lead-coloured Flycatcher sang continuously from its perch in the Shai Hills. (Photo Chris Townend)

Once at our accommodation, people took time to relax and some joined Chris with a late evening visit to nearby Bobiri Butterfly Reserve, the main aim being night birds and possibly **Brown Nightjar**. It seemed luck was not on our side tonight, with all but a calling **African Wood Owl** and a **Latham's Forest Francolin** calling at dusk to show for our efforts.

Day 10 Sunday 12th February Bobiri Butterfly Reserve & Atewa Farmbush

This morning, we left our very comfortable accommodation in Kumasi and returned to Bobiri Forest. Activity seemed better this morning as we tried once again to target new species for the various group members. A **Red-vented Malimbe** was a welcome addition for most of the group having been seen only by a few of the group earlier in the week. A **Little Green Woodpecker** performed well much to Barry's delight who had missed it on the canopy walkway, but it was probably Robert's shout for **Red-billed Helmetshrike** that was most appreciated. This group of typically noisy individuals showed very well just overhead. Mark was very pleased, as he was in the right place at the right time as a superb **African Grey Parrot** cruised past him, untypically, quite low and the light was perfect! Other highlights at Bobiri included some good views of **Little Grey Greenbul**s, a **Sharpe's Apalis** that was most appreciated by Rob in particular and some good views of **Western Bronze-naped Pigeon** that appeared to be building a nest. Both **Naked-faced and Bristle-nosed Barbets** were also seen during the morning as well as more views of **Sabine's Puffback**. Of course it was not just about the new and difficult species as everyone enjoyed more views of some of the commoner species too, like **Blue-throated Roller**, **White-throated Bee-Eaters** and our good old friends the **African Pied Hornbills**.

Once again we boarded our bus and continued our journey in the heat of the day heading towards the famed Atewa ridge. The bus was yet again full of high spirits with an endless supply of pineapple, nuts and more stories of cricket heroes gone by, the twitching days of old and of course more Latin!

We checked into our hotel close to Atewa and then waited for the heat of the day to pass before venturing out to explore the lowland "farmbush" areas below Atewa ridge. On our way to explore the area, we passed a huge colony of **Straw-coloured Fruit Bats** that was quite an impressive spectacle as they slowly flapped around like something from Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" or should that be "The Bats"? The farmbush below Atewa can be surprisingly productive and so we ambled along a dirt track until dusk. Here we enjoyed some good views of a number



This Greater Painted Snipe was a good find along the Brenu Beach road.
(Photo Chris Townend)



Blue-headed Bee-Eater at Atewa is always a key bird to see and this West Africn sub-species "mentalis" is sometimes considered a separate species: " Blue-moustached Bee-Eater".
(Photo Chris Townend)



Birding at Ankasa Pools enjoying views of Blue-breasted Kingfisher.
(Photo Chris Townend)

of species that included some quite obliging **Didric Cuckoos**, a **Pale Flycatcher** and an even more obliging **Little Bee-Eater**. Mark found a **Northern Puffback**, the bush cousin of the **Sabines's Puffback**, and a noisy group of **Swamp Palm Bulbuls** included a bird that untypically sat up in full view. Further along the track we were treated to views of **Black-necked Weavers** and **Orange-cheeked Waxbills** and a very obliging **Red-fronted Parrot** that was feeding in the top of a fruiting tree. Once at the gate, that marked the start of the tomorrow's climb to the ridge, we had some views of **Ansorge's Greenbul**, **Western Nicator** and best of all a pair of **Grey-throated Flycatchers** that seemed to be nesting. We then decided to venture back to the ever smiling Kwame who then took us back to our hotel for a well earned meal and rest.

Day 11 Monday 13th February Atewa Ridge

Today was to be a very long day. In previous years it has been possible to take a 4X4 vehicle to the top of the Atewa ridge allowing more time on the ridge to focus on the specialities, but now access is denied for vehicles so we were left to do the 12Km round trip on foot. We took our time and slowly began to ascend the well worn track. The **Grey-throated Flycatcher** showed exceptionally well at the same spot as yesterday and we continued our route taking in **Chestnut Wattle-eye**, **Red-bellied Paradise-Flycatcher** and some singing **Honeyguide Greenbuls**. A group of at least six **Rosy Bee-Eaters** were a bit of a surprise as, luckily for us, they decided to float out quite low over the forest, just at a point where there was an opening. Unfortunately for Barry, a call of nature came at the worst possible time! A calling **Puvel's Illadopsis** seemed to be nearby so we all crept off the track into a fairly likely viewing area and with a little effort we were all rewarded with some pretty good views as the bird crept along on the forest floor. Happy with our haul we continued on our track upwards as we were keen to get to the top not too late for the main prize! Every now and again we had rests and bumped into the odd flock, but frustratingly most of these seemed too far back in the forest. Hot and sweating we arrived at the ridge top where a beaming Robert was waiting and everyone enjoyed some excellent views of what for many was the star of the show, the beautiful **Blue headed Bee-Eater**. This species seems pretty much confined to just the Atewa ridge in Ghana. The *mentalis* race here in West Africa is also considered a separate species by some authorities and is named "**Blue-moustached Bee-Eater**". Once everyone was happy with their Bee-Eater views, we continued on to the main ridge track where we took time to have a rest and some food whilst a vocal **African Crowned Eagle** called overhead but remained out of sight due to our position. We then spent the next few hours slowly birding the main trail and we slowly picked off some quality species. The very smart looking



American Golden Plover was a surprise at Sakumono Lagoon, though there have been a number of nearctic waders recorded here in recent years.
(Photo Chris Townend)



Pectoral Sandpiper was another addition to our nearctic wader list at Sakumono Lagoon. (Photo Chris Townend)



Black Bee-Eater is always a great bird and worthy of a second photo!
(Photo Chris Townend)

Black-capped Apalis sang from a vine in full view, **Ussher's Flycatchers** hawed for insects, and a **Little Green Woodpecker** gave itself away as it called from the trunk of a nearby tree. Further along the trail a **Brown-eared Woodpecker** showed well and a couple of **Shining Drongos** lurked in the foliage but giving some pretty good views in the end. A group of **Icterine Greenbuls** duly obliged in contrast to a very vocal but very shy **Grey-headed Bristlebill**. Other birds seen during the day included **White-breasted Negrofinch**, **Red-billed Helmetshrike**, **Chestnut-capped Flycatcher**, and a single **Dusky-crested Flycatcher** seen only by Barry. **Cameroon Sombre Greenbul** and **Ansorge's Greenbul**. **Bristle-nosed Barbet** and **Naked-faced Barbet** and **Fanti Saw-wings**.

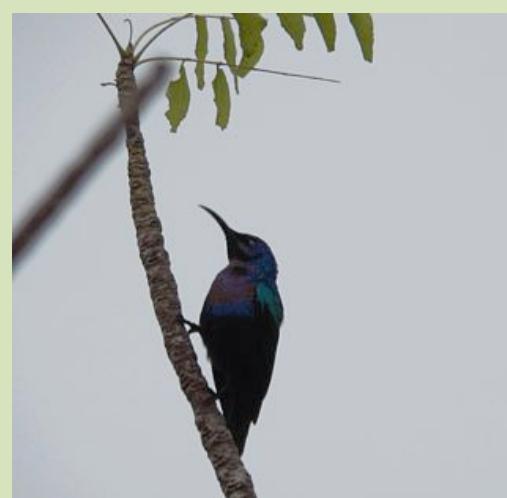
It was hard work at times, as forest birding often is in Ghana(!) but it was a good day and the walk back down the track was a little more relaxing than the hot, sweaty and fairly tiring trudge up! **Forest Robins** and **White-tailed Alethes** taunted us with their songs on our way down and despite our best efforts they just would not show.

Day 12 Tuesday 14th February Shai Hills & Sakumono Lagoon

It was yet another early start today as we headed to the Shai Hills and a very different habitat to the last few days. We arrived at the park gates early and had a coffee and breakfast before setting off into the park itself. It was a good start as we started notching up new species such as **Helmeted Guineafowl**, the heavyweight **Croaking Cisticola** and then Barry spotted a **Green Turaco** that showed well but briefly before moving into cover. An African **Hobby** posed on the top of a dead tree and then a **Lead-coloured Flycatcher** sang continuously on top of a nearby tree allowing this smart looking bird to be grilled. The first of a number of **Stone Partridge** could not be ignored as they shouted out their unmistakable call and then ventured out of cover to give excellent views. A couple of **Double-toothed Barbets** then showed off their crimson breasts and Barry got lucky with an **Oriole Warbler** just off the main track that then rather frustratingly vanished into cover, never to re-appear! We then returned to our bus and ventured along the track a little further and we saw a number of **Olive Baboons** and **Callithrix Monkeys** to add to our mammal tally. Then, the first of many **Blue-bellied Rollers** appeared soon to be followed by the less striking but nonetheless subtly impressive **Rufous-crowned Roller**. Another stop out of the bus then produced a group of posing **White Helmetshrikes** just as a shout of **Rosy Bee-Eater** came from Barry as three of these gorgeous Bee-Eaters flew overhead. Barry was made up and well deserved as he pulled these beauties back from yesterday! The flurry of activity continued as Mark found a **White-shouldered Black Tit** and this was soon followed by a cracking male **Red-shouldered Cuckoo**.



Shai Hills Resource Reserve, home to many Savannah specialities.
(Photo Chris Townend)



Splendid Sunbird at Shai Hills.
(Photo Chris Townend)



Robert & Chris on the canopy walkway

Shrike of the “orange” shouldered form. The morning temperatures were soon rising but we continued to see good birds, including exceptional numbers of **Croaking Cisticola** as well as both **Singing Cisticola** and a **Zitting Cisticola** that looked quite odd at first in the harsh light, but the identity was later resolved thanks to Barry’s photos! A number of **Red-necked Buzzards** were seen well and then a different raptor appeared above the ridge and eventually showed quite well showing itself to be a **Brown Snake Eagle**, a rare bird in the park, though a number of recent records have occurred in the last twelve months. With the ever increasing heat now upon us, we were keen to find another of our key targets and we were not disappointed as Christine pulled it out of the bag! This time, it was the cracking **Mocking Cliff Chat** and what a beauty it was!

We decided to retire to the shade and enjoyed a leisurely lunch before finally returning to the coast and one last look at Sakumono Lagoon. It was a good end to the tour as we once again, like on the first day, took our time just sifting through the mass of waders. Once again, there were surprisingly no **Black Herons** present (Sorry Jeff!), but the clear highlights were a **Pectoral Sandpiper** found by Barry that was presumably the same from our first day? This was soon followed by a bird that both Rob and Chris independently locked onto and it finally revealed itself to be an **American Golden Plover** - a great finale to the trip. Though it was not to be the final new species of the trip, as this went to a fleeting **Piapiac** that was seen whilst driving through Accra as we neared our hotel.

Once back at our excellent beachside hotel, we all had time to relax, shower and re-pack before a final meal together and reflect on the great birds we had seen as well as the laughs and of course the Latin we had all learned! It was then time for the always smiling Kwame to take us to the airport where we said our goodbyes to Robert and took our return flight back to the UK.

Chris Townend

BIRDLIST FOR GHANA 2012
326 Species Recorded
UGFE = Upper Guinea Forest Endemic

	SPECIES NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMENTS
1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Seen at Sakumono Lagoon
2	Long-tailed Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	Recorded at various sites
3	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	A relatively common bird in the right habitat
4	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Brenu Beach Road
5	Great Egret	<i>Egretta alba</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
6	Intermediate Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>	Sakumono Lagoon and Sekondi Res
7	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Seen only at Sakumono Lagoon
8	Western Reef-Egret	<i>Egretta gularis</i>	Sakumono Lagoon & Sekondi Res
9	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	A very common bird seen daily throughout the tour
10	Green-backed Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>	A fairly shy but common heron seen at a number of sites
11	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	A common heron in most wetland habitats
12	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	A group of 20+ birds seen at Sakumono Lagoon
13	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>	A single bird seen at Sakumono Lagoon
14	White-faced Whistling-Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	A common species seen mostly at Sakumono Lagoon
15	Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>	A single bird at Sakumono Lagoon was a good find on our first day
16	Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Three birds at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
17	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	A pair was seen at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day
18	Hartlaub's Duck	<i>Pteronetta hartlaubii</i>	A minimum of two birds seen on two consecutive days at Ankasa Pools
19	European Honey-Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	A fairly regular wintering species with single birds recorded on 4 days
20	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	Seen well on 2 days
21	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus parasitus</i>	A resident bird of prey, seen daily in all habitats
22	Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>	Recorded on 4 days mostly around Kakum
23	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	Ghana's commonest vulture was seen daily
24	Brown Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>	A single bird at Shai Hills was a significant bird. There have been recent records over last 12 months so it may become more regular at this site

25	Western Marsh-Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Seen on 3 days
26	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>	Always a favourite raptor and seen on 4 separate days
27	Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>	Seen well on the Winneba Plains
28	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	A common raptor seen on 3 days
29	Long-tailed Hawk	<i>Urotriorchis macrourus</i>	A disappointing miss, but frustratingly heard at Aboabo and Bobiri
30	Red-chested Goshawk	<i>Accipiter toussenelii</i>	Seen well from the canopy walkway and near our hotel at Kumasi
31	Red-necked Buzzard	<i>Buteo auguralis</i>	A common but attractive species
32	Cassin's Hawk-Eagle	<i>Spizaetus africanus</i>	Two birds showed well from the canopy walkway for some of the group
33	Crowned Eagle	<i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i>	Brief views of this unmistakable eagle only by Chris at Atewa, though heard by everyone!
34	Grey Kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>	A common but always impressive falcon
35	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	A fairly common species seen on 2 days A darker race <i>rufescens</i> race in Ghana
36	African Hobby	<i>Falco cuvierii</i>	This orange breasted beauty was seen on 5 days
37	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>	A single bird seen distantly at Sakumono Lagoon on our first day by Chris and Dara
38	Ahanta Francolin	<i>Pternistis ahantensis</i>	This UGFE was heard only in Atewa Farmbush
39	Double-spurred Francolin	<i>Pternistis bicalcaratus</i>	An easy species to see with good views along the Brenu Beach road
40	Latham's Forest Francolin	<i>Peliperdix lathami</i>	Heard only at Bobiri in the evening
41	Stone Partridge	<i>Ptilopachus petrosus</i>	Some excellent views of this sometimes tricky species at Shai Hills
42	White-breasted Guineafowl	<i>Agelastes meleagrides</i>	Two birds dashed in front of the bus at Ankasa. Blink and you missed it!
43	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	Seen at Shai Hills
44	White-spotted Flufftail	<i>Sarothrura pulchra</i>	Only heard at Ankasa
45	Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>	Seen by most at Hans Cottage
46	African Crake	<i>Crex egregia</i>	A bird seen only by Robert along the Brenu Beach Road
47	Nkulengu Rail	<i>Himantornis haematocephalus</i>	Heard from the Ankasa Forest at dusk
48	African Finfoot	<i>Podica senegalensis</i>	A brief but good sighting by some of the group at Ankasa
49	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	A common species throughout the tour
50	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Sakumono Lagoon & Sekondi Res
51	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
52	Senegal Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus senegalensis</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
53	Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
54	Rock Pratincole	<i>Glareola nuchalis</i>	Excellent views of this <i>liberiae</i> race on the Pra river
55	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>	This striking wader is a common species and was recorded on 2 days
56	Spur-winged Plover	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	Recorded on 3 days
57	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Sakumono Lagoon

58	American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>	A good find by Rob & Chris at Sakumono Lagoon on the last day
59	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
60	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Sakumono Lagoon and other sites
61	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
62	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Sakumono Lagoon and en route to Ankasa
63	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	A good find at Sakumono Lagoon by Dara on the first day and presumably the same bird by Barry on the last day
64	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
65	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
66	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
67	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
68	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	A very common wader recorded on numerous days
69	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Seen on 2 days
70	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Recorded on a number of days
71	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	This elegant wader was recorded only at Sakumono Lagoon
72	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Sakumono & Sekondi Res
73	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Recorded on a number of days
74	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	A small group recorded at Sakumono Lagoon
75	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	A single bird at Sekondi Res
76	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	A singleton at Sakumono Lagoon
77	Greater Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	A bird along the Breku Beach road was a good find
78	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Seen from our Accra Hotel on the first and last days
79	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
80	Royal Tern	<i>Sterna maxima</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
81	Sandwich Tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Sakumono Lagoon
82	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Recorded around habitation
83	Western Bronze-naped Pigeon	<i>Columba iriditorques</i>	Seen well on 2 days at Bobiri and Ankasa
84	Afep Pigeon	<i>Columba unicincta</i>	Four birds seen at Bobiri
85	African Green-Pigeon	<i>Treron calva</i>	Various groups seen in the forests
86	Black-billed Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur abyssinicus</i>	Just one seen on the Winneba Plains
87	Blue-spotted Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>	Recorded around the Kakum area
88	Blue-headed Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur brehmeri</i>	This stunning but shy dove was seen very well in Ankasa
89	Tambourine Dove	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>	Seen well in the forests
90	Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	A very common dove
91	Vinaceous Dove	<i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	A dove of more arid areas seen well on the Winneba Plains
92	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	The commonest dove, seen on every day of the tour
93	African Grey Parrot	<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>	Typically always flying over and seen at Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa
94	Red-fronted Parrot	<i>Poicephalus gulielmi</i>	Seemingly thin on the ground this year with sightings only at Atewa

95	Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>	This tiny but brightly coloured parrot was seen at Shai Hills
96	Violet Turaco	<i>Musophaga violacea</i>	This impressive bird was seen very well on the Winneba Plains
97	Great Blue Turaco	<i>Corythaeola cristata</i>	Frustratingly only heard at Ankasa due to the restricted view!
98	Yellow-billed Turaco	<i>Tauraco macrorhynchus</i>	This UGFE was seen very well mostly in Kakum and Ankasa
99	Green Turaco	<i>Tauraco persa</i>	This often tricky Turaco was seen briefly, but well at Shai Hills thanks to Barry
100	Western Grey Plantain-eater	<i>Crinifer piscator</i>	A very common species seen on numerous days
101	Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>	This streaky necked cuckoo was seen on 3 days
102	Didric Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	Seen well from the canopy walkway and at Atewa
103	African Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>	Seen well on a number of occasions in the forest
104	Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	A familiar sound in and around the forest edges and seen well at Ankasa
105	Black Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus clamosus</i>	A single bird was seen well at Aboabo
106	Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Cercococcyx olivinus</i>	This always highly elusive cuckoo was seen only by Mark & Jeff along the Bekampa track
107	Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>	Heard only at Kakum and Ankasa
108	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>	A familiar species well at numerous places
109	Black-throated Coucal	<i>Centropus leucogaster</i>	Heard on a number of occasions, but seen only by sharp-eyed Rob along the Bekampa track
110	Yellowbill	<i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>	This distinctive Coucal was seen very well on numerous days
111	Fraser's Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo poensis</i>	Always tricky, but we had fantastic views at dusk in the Kakum Forest area
112	Akun Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo locostictus</i>	A pair of very vocal birds were seen at dusk in Ankasa
113	Greyish Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo cinerascens</i>	Some excellent views were had of this impressive owl whilst driving back from Ankasa to our hotel near the coast
114	African Wood Owl	<i>Scotopelia peli</i>	Seen very well in Ankasa at dusk and another bird heard at Bobiri
115	Northern White-faced Owl	<i>Ptilopsis leiotis</i>	A great spot by Royston of a bird right out in the open close to the Brenu Beach road
116	Long-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>	An unmistakable species seen many times, particularly when returning to our hotel from Ankasa
117	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	A very common swift particularly

			around towns
118	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Seen on numerous occasions throughout the tour
119	African Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	A familiar sight recorded on numerous days
120	Mottled Spinetail	<i>Telacanthura ussheri</i>	A fairly easy Spinetail to see recorded on a number of occasions
121	Cassin's Spinetail	<i>Neafrapus cassini</i>	Good views were had in Kakum and Ankasa
122	Sabine's Spinetail	<i>Rhipidura sabini</i>	Good views were had in Kakum and Ankasa
123	Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>	Seen on numerous days
124	White-bellied Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo leucogaster</i>	Two birds seen very well at Ankasa
125	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Seen on numerous days
126	Chocolate-backed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon badia</i>	Most of the group saw a bird well at Kakum from the canopy walkway, with another seen briefly in Ankasa
127	Blue-breasted Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon malimbica</i>	An impressive Kingfisher, seen very well in Ankasa
128	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	A very common species often seen from the roadside
129	African Pygmy-Kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>	This cute miniature was seen well in Ankasa
130	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>	Seen very well at Hans Cottage
131	White-throated Bee-eater	<i>Merops albicollis</i>	Ghana's commonest Bee-Eater seen most days
132	Black Bee-eater	<i>Merops gularis</i>	This much wanted species was seen very well at Ankasa and Atewa
133	Rosy Bee-eater	<i>Merops malimbicus</i>	A good number of sightings with a singleton over Kakum, 6+ birds at Atewa and 3 birds over the Shai Hills
134	Blue-headed Bee-eater	<i>Merops muelleri</i>	At least 3 birds seen very well at Atewa, the only site in Ghana to see this beauty
135	Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>	Relatively common and recorded on a number of days
136	European Bee-Eater	<i>Meops apiaster</i>	Seen only at the Shai Hills
137	Blue-bellied Roller	<i>Coracias cyanogaster</i>	A cracking bird with at least 7 birds seen well at Shai Hills
138	Rufous-crowned Roller	<i>Coracias naevia</i>	At least 4 birds seen well at Shai Hills
139	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>	Recorded on 2 days
140	Blue-throated Roller	<i>Eurystomus gularis</i>	This forest equivalent of the above species was seen well at Ankasa, Kakum and Bobiri
141	Forest Wood-Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus castaneiceps</i>	Seen very well from the Kakum walkway
142	White-headed Wood-Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus bollei</i>	Seen very well from the Kakum walkway
143	Black-casqued Hornbill	<i>Ceratogymna atrata</i>	A good showing this year with up to 6 birds seen most days from Kakum walkway and a singleton at Ankasa
144	Brown-cheeked Hornbill	<i>Ceratogymna cylindricus</i>	Rob was the lucky one to see this UGFE along the Bekampa track

145	Piping Hornbill	<i>Ceratogymna fistulator</i>	Seen well around Kakum and Ankasa
146	Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill	<i>Tockus camurus</i>	A single bird teased us at Kakum as it called but we had too restricted a view
147	Back Dwarf Hornbill	<i>Tockus hartlaubi</i>	A great find by Barry in Kakum was seen well by all
148	African Pied-Hornbill	<i>Tockus fasciatus</i>	A very familiar sight and recorded most days
149	African Grey-Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>	Seen at Winneba Plains, near Kumasi and Shai Hills
150	White-crested Hornbill	<i>Tropicranus albocristatus</i>	Although a very timid species, everyone had plenty of opportunity to see this species well. With birds in Kakum and Aboabo
151	Red-rumped Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus atroflavus</i>	A very familiar “pooping” call from the forest and finally seen well at Aboabo
152	Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i>	Seen well at Atewa by some of the group
153	Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	A barbet of more arid savannah areas seen well at Shai Hills
154	Yellow-throated Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus subsulphureus</i>	Seen well mostly around Kakum. This sub-species lacks a yellow throat.
155	Speckled Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus scolopaceus</i>	A small but beautifully marked barbet seen on most days
156	Naked-faced Barbet	<i>Gymnobucco calvus</i>	Seen well with the best views at Ankasa and Atewa
157	Bristle-nosed Barbet	<i>Gymnobucco peli</i>	Scarcer than its shaven cousin and seen well with the best views at Ankasa and Atewa
158	Double-toothed Barbet	<i>Lybius bidentatus</i>	Two birds seen well at Shai Hills
159	Vieillot's Barbet	<i>Lybius vieilloti</i>	Recorded on 2 days and seen particularly well in the lowland farm bush near Atewa
160	Yellow-billed Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus purpuratus</i>	Heard only around Ankasa and Atewa
161	Hairy-breasted Barbet	<i>Tricholaema hirsuta</i>	This UGFE was recorded on a number of days and seen particularly well at Kakum from the walkway
162	Yellow-spotted Barbet	<i>Buccanodon duchaillui</i>	Frustratingly, this attractive barbet was only heard in Kakum and Atewa
163	Cassin's Honeyguide	<i>Prodotiscus insignis</i>	A distinctive species seen well at Bobiri and Atewa forests
164	African Piculet	<i>Sasia africana</i>	A calling bird at Aboabo seemed destined never to be seen until Christine plucked it out of the canopy for all to see!
165	Little Green Woodpecker	<i>Campetherina maculosa</i>	Good opportunities to see this UGFE at Kakum, Bobiri and Atewa
166	Grey Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos goertae</i>	Two birds were seen well on our first day
167	Fire-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos pyrrhogaster</i>	This UGFE was seen well at a number of sites. The canopy walkway was certainly the place to see it well
168	Gabon Woodpecker	<i>Denropicos lugubris</i>	This UGFE was seen well at Kakum and

			Atewa
169	Brown-eared Woodpecker	<i>Campethera caroli</i>	Birds seen well around Kakum and Atewa
170	Rufous-sided Broadbill	<i>Smithornis rufolateralis</i>	A male performed fantastically at Ankasa on our first evening at this site.
171	White-throated Blue Swallow	<i>Hirundo nigrita</i>	Four birds seen very well along the Pra River
172	Lesser Striped-Swallow	<i>Hirundo abyssinica</i>	A very common species recorded on most days
173	Ethiopian Swallow	<i>Hirundo aethiopica</i>	Some good views of this subtly marked swallow as we neared Ankasa Forest
174	Preuss's Cliff Swallow	<i>Hirundo preussi</i>	Good numbers of this martin-like swallow at Brenu Beach where 200+ birds came in to roost
175	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Recorded on most days
176	Rufous-chested Swallow	<i>Hirundo semirufa</i>	A single bird over the Winneba Plains on our first day was the only sighting
177	Square-tailed Sawwing	<i>Psalidoprocne nitens</i>	Recorded in Kakum and Atewa
178	Fanti Sawwing	<i>Psalidoprocne obscura</i>	A single bird seen along the Bekampa track
179	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	At least 3 birds seen at Shai Hills
180	Plain-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>	Seen only at Sakumono Lagoon on our first morning
181	Yellow-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>	This stunner was seen well at Sakumono Lagoon and Shai Hills
182	African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>	A common species recorded on most days
183	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Recorded at Sakumono and Sekondi
184	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	A very common species recorded daily
185	Little Greenbul	<i>Andropadus virens</i>	A very common sound and one of the easier species to see.
186	Little Grey Greenbul	<i>Andropadus gracilis</i>	More yellow than grey and seen well at Kakum and Atewa in particular.
187	Ansorge's Greenbul	<i>Andropadus ansorgei</i>	A bird was seen very well at the start of the gated track.
188	Cameroon Sombre Greenbul	<i>Andropadus curvirostris</i>	A bird was seen well at Atewa for most of the group.
189	Slender-billed Greenbul	<i>Andropadus gracilirostris</i>	One of the easier Greenbuls. A fairly "brown-looking" Greenbul with a distinctive whistle seen well most days
190	Yellow-whiskered Greenbul	<i>Andropadus latirostris</i>	Heard more often than seen with its monotonous rattling call, but seen well in Ankasa for most of the group
191	Honeyguide Greenbul	<i>Baeopogon indicator</i>	This distinctive Greenbul with its black and white tail was seen well from the walkway and at Atewa
192	Golden Greenbul	<i>Calyptocichla serina</i>	Probably the most distinctive of Greenbuls seen very well at various sites
193	Spotted Greenbul	<i>Ixonotus guttatus</i>	A couple of this distinctive species were seen by a two of the group from the canopy walkway
194	Simple Leaflove	<i>Chlorocichla simplex</i>	A fairly common but shy species seen best on the Winneba Plains

195	Swamp Palm Bulbul	<i>Thescelocichla leucopleura</i>	These noisy birds were seen well at Ankasa and Atewa
196	Icterine Greenbul	<i>Phyllastrephus icterinus</i>	This fairly easy to see Greenbul with its reddish tail was seen well at a number of sites
197	Red-tailed Greenbul	<i>Criniger calurus</i>	As with most Greenbuls, a tricky one to see but one bird in particular showed well on the canopy walkway showing off its puffy white throat
198	Western Bearded Greenbul	<i>Criniger barbatus</i>	This UGFE was seen well in Ankasa by Barry
199	Yellow-bearded Greenbul	<i>Criniger olivaceus</i>	This UGFE was seen by most of the group in Ankasa
200	Grey-headed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda canicapilla</i>	Often heard but this UGFE was seen briefly by some in Kakum on the trails
201	Green-tailed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda eximia</i>	This skulking UGFE was only heard in Ankasa and Atewa
202	Red-tailed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda syndactyla</i>	Frustratingly heard on a number of occasions, but never seen
203	Western Nicator	<i>Nicator chloris</i>	Heard frequently and finally seen well at Atewa
204	Forest Robin	<i>Stiphrornis erythrotorax</i>	A bird was seen very well by most of the group at Ankasa on our first evening
205	White-tailed Alethe	<i>Alethe diademata</i>	Frustratingly only heard in Ankasa and Atewa
206	Finsch's Flycatcher-Thrush	<i>Neocossyphus finschii</i>	This UGFE was seen at various sites but best views were from the canopy walkway
207	Mocking Cliff-Chat	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>	A cracking male performed well at Shai Hills thanks to Christine
208	African Thrush	<i>Turdus pelios</i>	Seen on our first and last days
209	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Good numbers seen mostly at Shai Hills and Winneba Plains
210	African Moustached Warbler	<i>Melocichla mentalis</i>	A bird showed very well to just Chris and Dara on the Winneba Plains
211	Rufous-crowned Eremomela	<i>Eremomela badiceps</i>	This attractive canopy feeder was seen very well from the canopy walkway in particular
212	Senegal Eremomela	<i>Eremomela pusilla</i>	Seen only on the Winneba Plains
213	Northern Crombec	<i>Sylvietta brachyura</i>	A single bird was seen at Shai Hills
214	Lemon-bellied Crombec	<i>Sylvietta denti</i>	This more canopy feeding Crombec was seen well from the walkway and also in Ankasa
215	Green Crombec	<i>Sylvietta virens</i>	This attractive bird with its cheery song was seen at various sites
216	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	A number of birds were seen feeding in the forests
217	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	The odd bird was recorded in the forests
218	Green Hylia	<i>Hylia prasina</i>	A very familiar call of the forest with its disyllabic call – seen at various sites
219	Violet-backed Hyliota	<i>Hyliota violacea</i>	Some good views whilst on the canopy walkway

220	Grey Longbill	<i>Macrosphenus concolor</i>	Some good views of this species were had at Kakum
221	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	A bird was seen very well at the Shai Hills
222	Short-winged Cisticola	<i>Cisticola brachypterus</i>	Good views were had of a bird on the ground at Winneba Plains
223	Winding Cisticola	<i>Cisticola galactotes</i>	A bird was seen and heard very well at Sakumono Lagoon
224	Whistling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lateralis</i>	Some good views were had along the Bekampa track
225	Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>	This highly distinctive Cisticola was seen well along the Brenu Beach road
226	Singing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cantans</i>	Seen at the Shai Hills and heard singing on the Winneba Plains, with its rather uninspiring song!
227	Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>	Large numbers seen very well at the Shai Hills
228	Red-winged Warbler	<i>Heliolais erythropygma</i>	Some excellent views of this attractive warbler on the Winneba Plains and along the Brenu Beach road
229	Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	A noisy and easy to see warbler found in open scrubby areas and seen well
230	Sharpe's Apalis	<i>Apalis sharpii</i>	Great views of this UGFE were had from the walkway and at Bobiri in particular
231	Black-capped Apalis	<i>Apalis nigriceps</i>	Two singing birds showed very well from the vine tangles at Atewa
232	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	Plenty of opportunities to see this attractive warbler
233	Olive-green Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera chloronota</i>	A real skulker and frustratingly only seen.
234	Yellow-browed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera superciliaris</i>	A real poser showed exceptionally well in Ankasa as it inflated its blue air sacs. Also seen well at Kakum
235	Oriole Warbler	<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>	Barry was the lucky person to see this beauty in Shai Hills
236	Pale Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pallidus</i>	Seen well below Atewa
237	Ussher's Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa ussheri</i>	This UGFE hirundine-like flycatcher was a daily species around Kakum and also seen in Ankasa and Atewa
238	Dusky Blue Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa comitata</i>	Some excellent views in Ankasa
239	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Two birds were seen on the 9 th Feb
240	Lead-coloured Flycatcher	<i>Myioparus plumbeus</i>	This very distinctive species with its striking black and white tail and flicking habit was seen well at Shai Hills
241	Grey-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myioparus griseigularis</i>	This normally skulking species showed very well at a nest site on our trek to Atewa ridge
242	European Pied-Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	One bird was seen at Atewa
243	African Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	Seen well at Atewa and Shai Hills
244	Red-bellied Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>	This highly distinctive and noisy species was seen well at various sites

245	Chestnut-capped Flycatcher	<i>Erythrocercus mccallii</i>	An almost tit-like flycatcher seen well at Atewa and Kakum
246	Dusky-crested Flycatcher	<i>Elminia nigromitrata</i>	A bird was seen by Barry only whilst at Atewa
247	Blue-headed Crested-Flycatcher	<i>Trochocercus nitens</i>	This elusive flycatcher was heard only at Bobiri and Atewa
248	Shrike-Flycatcher	<i>Bias flammulatus</i>	Two birds showed very well in Ankasa on our first visit
249	Black-and-white Flycatcher	<i>Bias musicus</i>	Always a treat to see this chunky and impressive flycatcher – seen best along the Bekampa track
250	Bioko Batis	<i>Batis occulta</i>	This is solely a forest bird and 2 birds showed well in Ankasa and a single bird was in Kakum
251	Chestnut Wattle-eye	<i>Dyaphorophyia castanea</i>	Good views were had at Kakum, Ankasa and Atewa
252	Common Wattle-eye	<i>Dyaphorophyia cyanea</i>	Heard at Shai Hills
253	Red-cheeked Wattle-eye	<i>Dyaphorophyia blissetti</i>	Dara was lucky to get onto this fast moving “bullet bird” at Aboabo
254	Brown Babbler	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>	Seen briefly on the Winneba Plains
255	Yellow-headed Picathartes	<i>Picathartes gymnocephalus</i>	The tour highlight! This UGFE performed exceptionally well with at least 2 birds near Assin Fosu
256	Puvel's Illadopsis	<i>Illadopsis puveli</i>	With perseverance, a bird showed well in the end to all the group at Atewa
257	Blackcap Illadopsis	<i>Illadopsis cleaveri</i>	Heard only at Ankasa
258	Pale-breasted Illadopsis	<i>Illadopsis rufipennis</i>	Heard only by some in Atewa
259	White-shouldered Tit	<i>Parus guineensis</i>	This distinctive and large tit, was seen well at Shai Hills
260	African Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops senegalensis</i>	Seen well at Aboabo and Bobiri
261	Tit-hylia	<i>Pholidornis rushiae</i>	This tiny but distinctive bird with its streaky head was seen well particularly at Aboabo and Atewa
262	Brown Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes abonicus</i>	This localised species confined to a thin coastal strip was seen very well en route to Ankasa
263	Little Green Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes seimundi</i>	This miniature version of Fraser's Sunbird was seen well from the canopy walkway in particular
264	Green Sunbird	<i>Anthreptes rectirostris</i>	Seen from the canopy walkway for a few of the group
265	Fraser's Sunbird	<i>Deleornis fraseri</i>	This very “warbler-like” sunbird was seen well in Kakum and Aboabo
266	Buff-throated Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra adelberti</i>	This UGFE is probably one of the most stunning and was seen on a number of occasions
267	Western Olive Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra olivacea</i>	A fairly common species of forest and gallery forest and seen on at least 4 days
268	Blue-throated Brown Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra cyanolaema</i>	A common forest canopy species seen well at a number of sites
269	Green-headed Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>	This smart looking species was seen well on the Winneba Plains and along the Brenu Beach road

270	Reichenbach's Sunbird	<i>Anabathmis reichenbachii</i>	This smart looking and very localised sunbird was seen well in our hotel garden near Ankasa
271	Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>	The most common sunbird, recorded on 10 days
272	Olive-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris chloropygius</i>	Seen well in Ankasa in particular
273	Tiny Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris minullus</i>	This species is very similar to Olive-bellied Sunbird. A bird was seen well by a few of the group in Kakum
274	Superb Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris superbus</i>	A very appropriate name for a great bird and seen well at a number of sites
275	Johanna's Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris johannae</i>	A male of this species was seen well in Ankasa on our first visit
276	Splendid Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris coccinigaster</i>	Seen very well throughout the tour, particularly en route to Winneba Plains and at Shai Hills
277	Copper Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris cupreus</i>	A common sunbird of open habitat recorded on at least 3 days
278	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>	A large and distinctive species seen only on our first day on the coast
279	Western Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus brachyrhynchus</i>	Recorded at various sites
280	Black-winged Oriole	<i>Oriolus nigripennis</i>	More numerous than the above species and seen at numerous sites
281	Yellow-billed Shrike	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>	A group of these sociable birds were seen near Sakumono Lagoon
282	Common Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	A common bird often seen from the bus when travelling
283	Northern Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus gambensis</i>	A fairly common species in suitable habitat and seen well below Atewa and at Shai Hills
284	Sabine's Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus sabini</i>	Some great views were had from the canopy walkway in particular and of both sexes
285	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegala</i>	A fairly common bird of the savannah habitat and seen well on the Winneba Plains, Brenu Beach road and Shai Hills
286	Marsh Tchagra	<i>Bocagia minuta</i>	Good views of male and female along the Brenu Beach road
287	Yellow-crowned Gonolek	<i>Laniarius barbarus</i>	This crimson stunner was heard more than seen, but seen well on the Winneba Plains and the Brenu Beach road
288	Red-billed Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops caniceps</i>	Great views were had of this UGFE with birds seen on 2 occasions at Bobiri and Atewa
289	White Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>	A group of these cracking birds were seen very well at Shai Hills

290	Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>	An “orange-shouldered” male was seen well at Shai Hills
291	Blue Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Coracina azurea</i>	This very attractive bird performed very well at a number of sites, particularly the canopy walkway
292	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	Seen only at Shai Hills
293	Velvet-mantled Drongo	<i>Dicrurus modestus</i>	This forest equivalent of the above species was seen very well at various sites
294	Shining Drongo	<i>Dicrurus atripennis</i>	Two birds showed well at Atewa
295	Piapiac	<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>	The last bird of the trip, seen in Accra near our hotel
296	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	A very common species recorded daily
297	Copper-tailed Glossy-Starling	<i>Lamprotornis cupreocauda</i>	This UGFE was seen well at various sites
298	Purple Glossy-Starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	A vivid and chunky starling was seen at Shai Hills
299	Splendid Glossy-Starling	<i>Lamprotornis splendidus</i>	A noisy and fairly common species recorded at various sites
300	Forest Chestnut-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus fulgidus</i>	A forest species recorded at various sites
301	Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	A small group of these impressive birds were seen only briefly in flight from the Bekampa track
302	Northern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus</i>	Very common particularly around habitation
303	Grosbeak Weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>	This chunky and distinctive weaver was seen by most below Atewa
304	Orange Weaver	<i>Ploceus aurantius</i>	An easy bird at Hans Cottage seen well
305	Heuglin's Masked-Weaver	<i>Ploceus heuglini</i>	Seen well near Sakumono Lagoon
306	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	The most common weaver recorded almost daily
307	Black-necked Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigricollis</i>	This sub-species lacks the black neck and has a plain green back. It was recorded on the Winneba Plains and below Atewa
308	Maxwell's Black Weaver	<i>Ploceus albinucha</i>	A distinctive almost “Jackdaw-like” Weaver and seen well at various sites
309	Vieillot's Black Weaver	<i>Ploceus nigerrimus</i>	Black-and-Chestnut Weaver is a better name and was easy to see at Hans Cottage in particular
310	Preuss's Weaver	<i>Ploceus preussi</i>	These highly distinctive birds fed in typical nuthatch-like fashion in full view from the canopy walkway
311	Yellow-mantled Weaver	<i>Ploceus tricolor</i>	A common but impressive weaver seen best from the canopy walkway
312	Blue-billed Malimbe	<i>Malimbus nitens</i>	Some good views were had at various sites throughout the tour
313	Crested Malimbe	<i>Malimbus malimbicus</i>	Seen well at Ankasa and Atewa
314	Red-headed Malimbe	<i>Malimbus rubricollis</i>	The commonest and largest of the Malimbes seen at various sites
315	Red-vented Malimbe	<i>Malimbus scutatus</i>	Seen best at Bobiri
316	Black-winged Bishop	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>	A bird was seen along the Brenu Beach road by Robert and Malcolm

317	Yellow-mantled Widowbird	<i>Euplectes macroura</i>	Non-breeding males and females were seen on the Winneba Plains and along the Brenu Beach road
318	Chestnut-breasted Negronfinch	<i>Nigrita bicolor</i>	An impressive bird recorded at various sites
319	Grey-headed Negronfinch	<i>Nigrita canicapilla</i>	A common sound of the forest and seen at various sites
320	White-breasted Negronfinch	<i>Nigrita fusconota</i>	Recorded at various sites
321	Bar-breasted Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rufopicta</i>	A common Firefinch recorded at various sites
322	Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	A common but impressive species seen at various sites
323	Black-rumped Waxbill	<i>Estrilda troglodytes</i>	A small group seen on the Winneba Plains
324	Black-and-white Mannikin	<i>Spermestes bicolor</i>	A small group was seen well along the Bekampa track
325	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullatus</i>	A common species seen at various sites
326	Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	A number of birds seen including distinctive non-breeding males

Other Species Recorded

Other Animals	Scientific Name
Western Tree Hyrax	<i>Dendrohyrax dorsalis</i>
Striped Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus erythropus</i>
Slender-tailed Squirrel	<i>Protoxerus aubinnii</i>
Green Squirrel	<i>Paraxerus poensis</i>
Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguinea</i>
Guinea (Olive)Baboon	<i>Papio papio</i>
Callithrix (Vervet) Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus sabaeus</i>
Lesser White-nosed Monkey	<i>Ceropithecus petaurista</i>
Mona (Lowe's) Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus mona</i>
Demidoff's Galago	<i>Galago demidoff</i>
Common Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>
Straw-coloured Fruit Bat	<i>Eidolon helvum</i>
Agama Lizard	<i>Agama agama</i>