

Tanzania

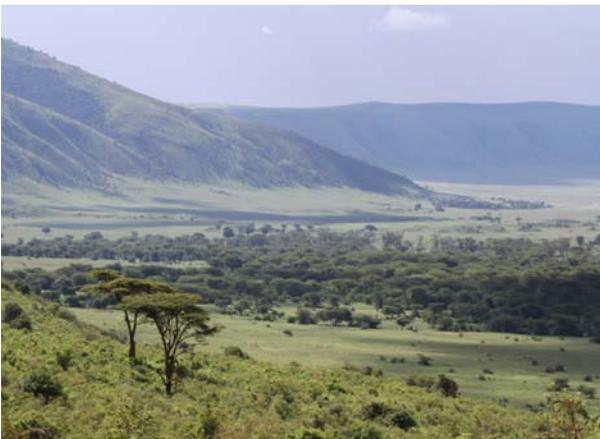
Birds & Big Cats

Sun 6th – Thu 17th May 2012



(Trip photos, clockwise from top left): The classic portrait of a **Cheetah** • Majestic in flight, a pair of **Grey Crowned Cranes** take to the air • A brief pause in the **Zebra** migration • On the look-out for monkeys, this very handsome **Crowned Eagle** was much appreciated • An adult **Three-banded Courser** with its chick try to hide in the vegetation • A rather showy **Hildebrandt's Starling** shows off its bright plumage © all photos by tour leaders Callan Cohen & Deirdre Vrancken

report compiled by tour leaders
Callan Cohen & Deirdre Vrancken



(Trip photos, clockwise from top left): A pair of diminutive **Pygmy Falcons** – the female with the chestnut back • Full-on, the vibrant 'frontage' of a **Scarlet-chested Sunbird** • A trio of mischievous **Lion cubs** • The range-restricted and vulnerable **Karamoja Apalis** • One of many fine views, this the **Crater Rim of Ngorongoro** • A highlight of the tour were two amorous **Leopards** that performed for some time right by the vehicle © all photos by tour leaders Callan Cohen & Deirdre Vrancken

Trip Diary

Tour Leader: Callan Cohen and Deirdre Vrancken

with John & Mary Andrews, Aubrey & Barbara Barnett, Mark & Alice Cohen, Judith Kertland, Betty Power and Alastair & Janice White

The tour started with a day flight to Arusha in Tanzania. It was just too dark to see the peaks when the plane dropped low over Mt Kilimanjaro and landed near Arusha. Our lodge was just a short drive away, set in acacia savanna and directly in between the peaks of Kilimanjaro and Meru.

Arusha National Park protects the lush montane forests on the slopes of Mt Meru and we spent the next day exploring this area. The vast Mt Meru volcano with its jagged peaks and cloud-swirled summits loomed overhead. The roads through the forest passed through montane forest, dripping with lichens, ferns and epiphytic orchids, which alternated with open patches and streams. A myriad of butterflies, such as Green-banded and Mocker Swallowtails, Soldier Pansies and Green-veined Emperors, scattered off the road edges as we approached. Bird highlights included great views of Crowned Eagle (Africa's giant, monkey-eating eagle), the bright red-and-green Narina Trogon, Hartlaub's Turaco, African Moustached Warbler, the giant Silvery-cheeked Hornbill, the noisy Trilling Cisticola, Yellow Bishop, Augur Buzzard, Collared Sunbird, Wire-tailed Swallow and the local Taveta Golden Weaver. A group of the rare Abbott's Starling in the top of a dead tree was a good find! In the late afternoon, we visited nearby lakes which were filled with Greater and Lesser Flamingoes which glowed pink in the late afternoon light, and also here was Cape Teal, White-fronted Bee-eater and Pangani Longclaw.

The mammals were superb too. At a lush swamp, we saw our first Cape Buffalo, Plains Zebra, Giraffe and Common Waterbuck (with the white toilet-seat buttocks), all attended by Red-billed Oxpeckers! Beautiful Sykes's Monkey sat in the forest trees overhead, while shaggy Guereza Colobus Monkey swung between lichen-festooned trees, their fluffy white tails swaying along like ghosts in the forest. Some carried fully white newborns. Harvey's Red Duiker scuttled off through the undergrowth. The tiny Kirk's Dik-dik and Bushbuck were also seen. It was a lot to take in on our first day and such is the diversity of East Africa's Rift Valley forests and plains.

The following morning we opted for some garden birding before and after breakfast. The garden and nearby plains were bursting with birds and the lifers flowed quickly, some highlights being Spotted Palm Thrush, White-browed Robin-Chat, Blue-naped Mousebird, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, White-bellied Bustard and White-winged Widowbird.

The baobab-studded savanna of the Tarangire National Park and shores of Lake Manyara were the focus of our next two-night stay. We stayed in a superb camp on the edge of Lake Manyara for two nights, overlooking the shoreline and surrounding plains, and did a full day trip into Tarangire. We had wonderful views of herds of African Elephants as they moved among the giant baobab trees. Small herds of Impala were common. More raptors, such as African White-backed Vulture, Bateleur, Tawny Eagle and the tiny African Pygmy Falcon, were seen and the game drives were packed with a diversity of African woodland species – as well as the endemic Ashy Starling, Rufous-tailed Weaver and Yellow-collared Lovebird. Cardinal Queleas and White-winged Widowbirds buzzed in the green grasslands. Black-faced Sandgrouse were seen on the edge of the track, and Double-banded Coursers were another highlight. We also saw our first Ostrich here.

Our lodge offered splendid views through palm savanna, onto the shores of Lake Manyara and the escarpment above. From the expansive grounds, we watched Bohor Reedbuck whistle as it jumped through the reeds, Plains Zebra drink from the waterhole, Impala and Blue Wildebeest rock as they chase each other in rut. During our open-air meals, we were entertained by the impressive Collared Pratincole, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu and Scarlet-chested Sunbird. Also near here was Bare-faced Go-away-bird, Crowned Lapwing, Fisher's Sparrow-lark, Yellow-billed Stork, Knob-billed Duck, African

Mourning Dove, Spotted Palm-thrush, Grey-headed Kingfisher, the very blue Woodland Kingfisher and Village Indigobird (a brood parasite of Red-billed Firefinch).

Next, we headed up via the Lake Manyara escarpment - stopping en route to admire the scenery and scan the huge heronry that bustled with Yellow-billed and Marabou Storks, Black-headed Heron and Pink-backed Pelican. Our picnic lunch was in the misty Ngorongoro crater mountains, where a Marabou Stork watched our every move (mirrored by Deirdre)! We continued through the cool of the Ngorongoro crater rim (where we would spend our last two nights of the tour) and dropped down to the vast Serengeti and its short grass plains. Here are the nutritious grazing grounds for the migrating herds of Blue Wildebeest at this time of year. We would stay one night in Ngorongoro Conservation Area at Ndotu and three nights in Central Serengeti, to maximize our chances of catching the huge migrating herds and a diversity of birds.

Dropping off the edge of the crater mountains and entering the short grass plains we watched the most incredible scenery unfold. The sun lit up the dry lands of the Gol Mountains up ahead, and below it stretched the timeless Olduvai Gorge. Maasai herders were cloaked in their characteristic red shawls. Once we passed the current Maasai grazing lands, wildlife came streaming in: our first herds of thousands of Thomson's Gazelle, Grant's Gazelle, Plains Zebra, Golden Jackal, and more - but where were the wildebeest? Secretarybird and the endemic Grey-breasted Spurfowl were here too. Capped Wheatear, Fisher's Sparrow-Lark, Rufous-naped & Red-capped Larks and African Pipits were common on the short-grass plains – with the world's largest flying bird: Kori Bustard.

Common Genet entertained us in the lodge grounds after dinner. Lions were roaring during the night to give a taste of what was to come in the morning: an exceptional sighting of a large pride of 15 of these big cats. This included a male who roared right next to our vehicle – we could feel the vibrations going straight through us! There were also lots of young cubs with the females playing together in the early morning light. What a sight! A Three-banded Courser with a chick stood nearby, very camouflaged. A saline lake held more flamingoes, Kittlitz's Plover, Three-banded Plover, Chestnut-banded Plover, and some migrant waders including Ruff and Greenshank. Bat-eared Foxes basked in the sun at their den, and a coalition of three Cheetah males allowed a close approach as they yawned, showing their sharp canines, stretched at length and trotted in a single file towards a herd of wildebeest. There was no other vehicle in sight!

Once we headed northwards into the central Serengeti, the wildebeest migration began to unfold right in front of us. The smaller groups, which we had seen on the plains, amassed into huge columns. We climbed to the top of a small kopje and were greeted with the jaw-dropping sight of hundreds of thousands of wildebeest from horizon to horizon. Our next three nights would be at a lodge in the central Serengeti and we did forays from here to fully explore the area. The accommodation was fantastic with more than enough food to deal with. We would typically head out early after breakfast, have a picnic lunch in the field, and return for some time off in the late afternoon. A beautiful pool refreshed us in the warm afternoon and nocturnal wildlife (such as Yellow-winged Bats) entertained us before dinner.

On the granite rocks of the kopjes, blue-and-purple Mwanza Flat-headed Agamas tussled for dominance and Tawny Eagles soared over just above eye level. The vultures of the Serengeti were superb and included the giant Lappet-faced, White-headed, White-backed, Hooded and Rüppell's. Martial Eagle and Secretarybird were regulars. Amongst the greatest highlights was finding two Leopard courting! We watched them for ages, as the female kept glancing slowly past the male. The female paused right next to us and called. The male ran down the tree and both showed us a spectacular Leopard flirting scene, heads touching and tails curling around each others. We also had a great experience watching tree climbing Lions. And of course the herds of Elephants too.

We had wonderful views of a suite of localised species that are not often seen, such as Grey-breasted Spurfowl and Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill. Grey-crested Helmetshrikes flew like butterflies back and forth overhead and perched in the treetops around us. Colourful stunners such as Fischer's

Lovebirds and Meyer's Parrots were common. Green Woodhoopoe, showed brilliantly as it fed from a log nearby with the shiny Rüppell's Long-tailed Starling. More specials included the perky Karamoja Apalis and glossy Steel-blue Whydahs. More focused birding bouts brought about Von der Decken's Hornbills, Nubian Woodpecker, Red-throated Tit, Brubru, Pearl-spotted Owlet, African Grey Flycatcher, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Cardinal Woodpecker, Red-faced Crombec, Arrow-marked Babblers, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Beautiful Sunbird, Hildebrandt's Starling, Abyssinian Scimitarbill and Bare-faced Go-away-bird, among many more.

Near Seronera, a pod of Hippotamus wallowed - one even rolling over completely - and crocodile eyes popped up above the water. Rock and Bush Hyrax (or "dassies") soaked up the sun on the kopjes. Dwarf Mongoose dashed across the road and Banded Mongoose scouted from atop their termite mound. When time had come to head out south, we encountered a large group of 1000s of Blue Wildebeest on the move. And from the top of a nearby hill, we watched thousands more coming from the south. Here we also had some excellent focused birding: Silverbird, Superb and Hildebrandt's Starling and Black-faced Waxbill all posed obligingly.

Heading back east, we stopped at Olduvai Gorge (sometimes spelled "Oldupai" to more accurately reflect the Masai word for wild sisal after which the area is named), which was interesting for its role in understanding human evolution, but also entertained with Black Bishops and Variable Sunbirds. Taita Fiscals sat on the greenthorn trees nearby.

Our next destination was the iconic Ngorongoro Crater, where our two nights in our crater-edge hotel were perfect to explore the grassy caldera below and the ridge forests and grasslands. You'll need to see the Photo Gallery to believe the views from the restaurant and rooms (not to mention the Schalow's Turaco in the garden!). The crater teemed with wildlife and despite the high expectations, it did not disappoint. Lazy Lions stretching next to the vehicle (as always, we had a vehicle with an open roof for great viewing); majestic bull elephants framed by the crater cliff walls and thousands of pink Lesser Flamingo; vultures flapping off the kill; Kori Bustard sunning themselves; Black-bellied Bustard creeping through the fields of yellow and pinks flowers; Spotted Hyenas and Golden Jackals; the highlights could go on.

Jackon's Widowbird displayed in the grasslands and we also saw African Spoonbill, Cape Teal, Grey-headed Gull, Whiskered Tern, Red-billed Teal, White-necked Raven, Blacksmith Plover, Glossy Ibis, Grey Crowned Crane dancing and flying overhead, close Plains Zebra drinking, Red-collared Widowbird (with the red collar and long tail), and Fan-tailed Widowbird (with the red shoulders and short tail). Not to forget the Black Rhinoceros! Eastern Double-collared Sunbird, Mountain Thrush, White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher, Cape Robin-chat and Streaky Seedeater all showed in the hotel garden!

After two nights here, our journey back homewards towards Arusha took us back down along the Lake Manyara escarpment, where we celebrated our final lunch overlooking the lake (with Bushbuck and Straw-tailed Whydahs nearby).

Deirdre Vrancken & Callan Cohen

[Full annotated bird and mammal lists follow below. We also identified many species of reptile, butterfly, dragonfly, flora and others, many of which we discussed at our evening listing sessions. Although there are no formal lists of these below, if you have photographs that are unidentified, please let Callan know and he will do his best to fill in the gaps.]

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS

(A total of 347 species recorded by the group)

Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus* The world's largest bird was first seen in Tarangire NP and after then it was common in the Serengeti.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Common and widespread and seen almost every day.

Coqui Francolin *Peliperdix coqui* Good views in the Serengeti plains

Shelley's Francolin *Scleroptila shelleyi* Heard Ngorongoro Crater

Crested Francolin *Dendroperdix sephaena* Small numbers in bush country and seen well Tarangire

Hildebrandt's Francolin *Pternistis hildebrandti* Seen well ANP (Arusha NP) and Ngorongoro

Yellow-necked Spurfowl *Pternistis leucoscepus* Common in Tarangire and seen well

Grey-breasted Spurfowl *Pternistis rufopictus* This special common in the Seronera and Ndotu areas.

Red-necked Spurfowl *Pternistis afer* Seen very well in Tarangire

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* One seen by some en route to Tarangire

Harlequin Quail *Coturnix delegorguei* Many flushed at Ndotu

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* Seen well in ANP

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* Seen ANP and crater

Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* Fantastic views Tarangire

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Common and widespread

Cape Teal *Anas capensis* Seen ANP and in the Ndotu lakes

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* Seen well in the crater

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* Seen ANP

Southern Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma* Seen well ANP

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Seen ANP

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* Large numbers on many alkaline lakes

Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* Large numbers on many alkaline lakes

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* Incredible views at their colony near Lake Manyara

African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus* Seen at Lake Manyara

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* Seen on the Serengeti plains among the wildebeest!

Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* Seen Manyara and the crater

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer* Common, esp Serengeti and Manyara colony

African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* Excellent views ANP and more later

Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* Heard ANP

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* Seen crater and Manyara

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Heard flying over at dusk, Manyara

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Quite common

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Small numbers at many places from ANP onwards

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* Quite common in grassy fields and towns

- Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath* Great views with a crocodile in the Serengeti
- Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta* Quite good number at Manyara and Nduu, yet not recorded in previous two years
- Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta* Small numbers at wetlands, often near their giant nests
- Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Seen near Lake Manyara
- Pink-backed Pelican** *Pelecanus rufescens* Seen near Lake Manyara; superb views of them breeding in heronry
- Secretarybird** *Sagittarius serpentarius* Fantastic views of a number in the Serengeti and Nduu
- Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus* Small numbers along roadsides, especially Nduu
- African Fish Eagle** *Haliaeetus vocifer* First seen in ANP and a number of times near water after that. Amazing views on a weir in SNP
- Hooded Vulture** *Necrosyrtes monachus* A number seen in the central Serengeti (also one Tarangire)
- White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus* The common vulture in the parks
- Rüppell's Vulture** *Gyps rueppellii* Smaller numbers of this cliff-nesting species in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro
- White-headed Vulture** *Trigonoceps occipitalis* Fantastic views Nduu
- Lappet-faced Vulture** *Torgos tracheliotos* Many seen from Tarangire to the Serengeti
- Black-chested Snake Eagle** *Circaetus pectoralis* Great views near Manyara and at least six more
- Brown Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinereus* Seen well Tarangire and in the Serengeti. A very strange plumage near Lake Manyara!
- Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* Wonderfully common in the big parks!
- African Harrier-hawk** *Polyboroides typus* Great views Manyara and attacking a roller nest in the Serengeti
- Dark Chanting Goshawk** *Melierax metabates* Small numbers in the Serengeti
- Eastern Chanting Goshawk** *Melierax poliopterus* Seen at Nduu
- Gabar Goshawk** *Micronisus gabar* Small numbers throughout, seen well Nduu
- Ovambo Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter ovampensis* One of this scarce species in ANP
- Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter rufiventris* Seen flying past our crater lodge
- Augur Buzzard** *Buteo augur* Common in areas with cliffs and seen very well
- Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax* Common in the big parks and seen most days
- Martial Eagle** *Polemaetus bellicosus* Good views of a juv in the Serengeti
- Long-crested Eagle** *Lophaetus occipitalis* A few around Nduu
- Crowned Eagle** *Stephanoaetus coronatus* Incredible extended views on a low perch in ANP!!!
- Pygmy Falcon** *Polihierax semitorquatus* Great views Tarangire and a number of times in the Serengeti
- Greater Kestrel** *Falco rupicoloides* A few seen on the Serengeti plains
- Grey Kestrel** *Falco ardosiaceus* Seen near Manyara
- Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus* Seen very well in the crater
- Kori Bustard** *Ardeotis kori* Fantastic views of the world's heaviest flying bird in the Serengeti and crater

- White-bellied Bustard** *Eupodotis senegalensis* Seen near the airport and the Serengeti
- Hartlaub's Bustard** *Lissotis hartlaubii* Seen near the airport, ANP and by some in the crater
- African Crane** *Crex egregia* Seen on the edge of the road in the Serengeti
- Black Crane** *Amaurornis flavirostra* Good views in the Serengeti
- Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata* Seen ANP
- Grey Crowned Crane** *Balearica regulorum* Great views ANP and crater
- Common Buttonquail** *Turnix sylvaticus* One flushed along the edge of the road near the airport!
- Spotted Thick-knee** *Burhinus capensis* Seen near Nduvu
- Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* Seen ANP onwards at many waterbodies
- Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* Seen Manyara and Nduvu
- Blacksmith Lapwing** *Vanellus armatus* Common around wetlands
- Crowned Lapwing** *Vanellus coronatus* Very common on dry grassy plains
- Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* Seen Nduvu
- Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* This distinctive plover seen in the crater and Nduvu
- Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris* Small numbers of this smart bird at fresh water wetlands
- Chestnut-banded Plover** *Charadrius pallidus* Great views of this special plover at Nduvu
- African Jacana** *Actophilornis africanus* Seen in ANP and the crater
- Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* Seen Lake Manyara
- Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* Seen Lake Manyara and Nduvu
- Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* Seen Manyara
- Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* Seen Lake Manyara and Nduvu
- Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* Seen Nduvu
- Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* Seen Nduvu
- Double-banded Courser** *Rhinoptilus africanus* Commonly seen!
- Three-banded Courser** *Rhinoptilus cinctus* Great views Nduvu with chicks (after lion pride)
- Bronze-winged Courser** *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* Great views Tarangire
- Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola* Seen Manyara
- Grey-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus* Seen Manyara and Nduvu
- Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* Big numbers on the plains near Nduvu near the wildebeest herds
- Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybrida* Seen crater and Manyara
- Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus* Seen well near Manyara and the Nduvu plains
- Yellow-throated Sandgrouse** *Pterocles gutturalis* Good views on the Serengeti plains
- Black-faced Sandgrouse** *Pterocles decoratus* Great views Tarangire
- Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia* Seen at the airport
- Speckled Pigeon** *Columba guinea* Small numbers throughout, often in rocky places or towns
- African Olive Pigeon** *Columba arquatrix* This fruit eater seen in the crater rim forests
- Dusky Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia lugens* Common in open areas on the crater rim, including our hotel

Mourning Collared Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* Quite common in acacia woodland from Tarangire to Ndutu, and the airport

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* Seen near ANP, and Karatu

Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola* Very common!

Laughing Dove *Stigmatopelia senegalensis* Very common!

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* Seen ANP and a few places afterwards

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* Seen ANP

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* Seen ANP and a few places afterwards

Fischer's Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri* Common Serengeti and Ndutu!

Yellow-collared Lovebird *Agapornis personatus* Common Tarangire and Manyara

Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri* Great views Tarangire, also central Serengeti

Red-bellied Parrot *Poicephalus rufiventris* Seen Tarangire

Schalow's Turaco *Tauraco schalowi* Great views at our crater hotel!

Hartlaub's Turaco *Tauraco hartlaubi* Great views ANP

Bare-faced Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides personatus* Great views Tarangire and central Serengeti

White-bellied Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides leucogaster* Seen around the airport

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus* Widespread in small numbers throughout

Black Coucal *Centropus grillii* Seen well in the central Serengeti while stuck on a stream crossing!

Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii* Seen Serengeti

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* Seen Tarangire

Diederik Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius* Seen near the airport and many other places

Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* Seen ANP

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* Characteristic call heard ANP

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* Seen Serengeti

Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba* Seen by some in the evening at our airport lodge

Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum* Small numbers seen from Tarangire onwards; often mobbed by small birds

Slender-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus clarus* Heard around Lake Manyara at dusk

Scarce Swift *Schoutedenapus myoptilus* Good views ANP. The nest has never been found!

Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri* Seen Tarangire

African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* This slender swift quite common around palms in a few places including Lake Manyara and the Serengeti

Mottled Swift *Tachymarptis aequatorialis* Widespread over the Serengeti and crater; seen very well

Nyanza Swift *Apus niansae* Seen well ANP

Little Swift *Apus affinis* Very common especially around buildings where they nest

Horus Swift *Apus horus* Common in the river gully at ANP and a few in the Serengeti

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer* Common around lodges where they breed in the mud nests of evicted Lesser Striped Swallows

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* Very common!

Blue-naped Mousebird *Urocolius macrourus* Small numbers in acacia throughout, seen well near airport

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* Fantastic views ANP!

Purple [Rufous-crowned] Roller *Coracias naevius* Just one in the Serengeti

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus* Very common, luckily for the photographers!

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Seen Tarangire and Serengeti

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris* Seen ANP by some

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* Seen Tarangire

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* Seen Manyara

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* Seen by Alastair at Seronera

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* Very pleasantly common

Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates* Seen in ANP and the crater forest

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus* Seen Nduu. Other flocks too high to say whether this or Olive

Olive Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus* Seen Manyara (and above)

African Hoopoe *Upupa africana* Widespread and seen well many times

Green Woodhoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* Scattered sightings from Nduu to Serengeti

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* Seen Serengeti

Abyssinian Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus minor* Scattered sightings from Tarangire to Nduu

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus* Seen from the car near Arusha

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus* Widespread in bush country

Northern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* Quite common in Tarangire

Tanzanian Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus ruahae* This special hornbill in the vicinity of our Serengeti lodge

Von der Decken's Hornbill *Tockus deckeni* Small numbers from Tarangire onwards

Silvery-cheeked Hornbill *Bycanistes brevis* Great views ANP

Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri* Great views Tarangire

White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis* Great views ANP

Moustached Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus leucomystax* Heard crater forests

Red-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus pusillus* Heard Tarangire

Red-fronted Barbet *Tricholaema diademata* Seen Serengeti (Naabi)

Spot-flanked Barbet *Tricholaema lacrymosa* Seen ANP

Red-and-yellow Barbet *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus* Seen Tarangire

Usambiro Barbet *Trachyphonus [darnaudii] usambiro* Fantastic views in the Serengeti. Sometimes considered a subspecies of D'Arnaud's.

D'Arnaud's Barbet *Trachyphonus darnaudii* Seen Manyara and Tarangire

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* Seen ANP

Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* Heard Serengeti

Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica* Seen airport lodge and a number of places after then

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens* Seen Ndutu

Bearded Woodpecker *Dendropicos namaquus* Seen Ndutu

Eastern Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos spodocephalus* Small numbers seen well, esp Ndutu. Sometimes called African Grey-headed Woodpecker, and sometimes lumped with African Grey Woodpecker.

Chinspot Batis *Batis molitor* Seen near ANP and Serengeti

Black-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira peltata* Heard ANP near the Crowned Eagle

Grey-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops poliophus* Great views in the central Serengeti

Black-fronted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus nigrifrons* One in ANP seen by some

Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Heard a few places but not seen

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis* Widespread in small numbers

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla* Seen ANP

Slate-coloured Boubou *Laniarius funebris* Quite common in the Serengeti

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major* Seen in the crater forests

Brubru *Nilaus afer* Seen Tarangire and the Serengeti

Black Cuckooshrike *Campephaga flava* Seen Serengeti

Magpie Shrike *Urolestes melanoleucus* Groups quite common from Tarangire onwards

Northern White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus ruppelli* Groups quite common from Tarangire onwards

Grey-backed Fiscal *Lanius excubitoroides* Family groups common in the Serengeti

Long-tailed Fiscal *Lanius cabanisi* Common at the airport and Tarangire

Taita Fiscal *Lanius dorsalis* Small numbers near Olduvai

Northern Fiscal *Lanius humeralis* Common from ANP onwards. A recent split from Common Fiscal.

African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* 1 in Tarangire

Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus* Seen ANP

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* Small numbers throughout bush country

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* Seen ANP and a few other times

Cape Crow *Corvus capensis* Small numbers west of the crater

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* Common on roadsides through towns and farms

White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis* Common along the crater rim

Grey [African] Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus caroli* Seen a few times in the Serengeti

White-tailed Lark *Mirafra albicauda* Seen a few times in display above black-cotton soils in the Serengeti

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* Abundant, many in grasslands on most days

Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* Small numbers in the Serengeti

Foxy Lark *Calendulauda atropex* Small numbers in the Serengeti, and Tarangire

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea* Very common on low grassy plains and road edges in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro

Short-tailed Lark *Pseudalaemon fremantlii* Seen in dusty grasslands near Olduvai

- Fischer's Sparrow-Lark** *Eremopterix leucopareia* Abundant in grasslands and bare ground throughout
- Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor* Common and widespread
- Little Greenbul** *Eurillas virens* Heard ANP
- White-headed Saw-wing** *Psalidoprocne albiceps* Seen on the crater rim
- Black Saw-wing** *Psalidoprocne pristoptera* Common ANP and the crater rim
- Grey-rumped Swallow** *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* Seen in the crater
- Brown-throated [Plain] Martin** *Riparia paludicola* Quite common around wetlands
- Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia* Seen at our airport lodge
- Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta* A few in the Serengeti and common in the crater
- Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Small numbers widespread
- Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii* Common near water, excellent views in ANP
- Rock Martin** *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* Quite common near cliffs and buildings, esp crater
- Lesser Striped Swallow** *Cecropis abyssinica* Quite common around our lodges where they are making their long mud nests
- Red-breasted Swallow** *Cecropis semirufa* Small numbers in the central Serengeti
- Mosque Swallow** *Cecropis senegalensis* Seen well Tarangire and small numbers Serengeti and crater
- Red-rumped Swallow** *Cecropis daurica* Seen widely from ANP onwards and very common crater
- Moustached Grass Warbler** *Melocichla mentalis* Amazing views ANP!
- Red-faced Crombec** *Sylvietta whytii* Small numbers of this tail-less bird widespread!
- Lesser Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* Heard in the crater
- Dark-capped Yellow Warbler** *Iduna natalensis* Heard ANP
- Fan-tailed Grassbird [Broad-tailed Warbler]** *Schoenicola brevirostris* Great views ANP
- Little Rush Warbler** *Bradypterus baboecala* Heard in the crater
- Singing Cisticola** *Cisticola cantans* Great views ANP
- Trilling Cisticola** *Cisticola woosnami* Great views ANP
- Rattling Cisticola** *Cisticola chiniana* Very common and noisy in bush country!
- Winding Cisticola** *Cisticola marginatus* Common on wetland edges, esp Tarangire and crater
- Short-winged Cisticola** *Cisticola brachypterus* Seen well in ANP
- Long-tailed Cisticola** *Cisticola angusticauda* Seen well in the central Serengeti
- Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis* Seen and heard Tarangire and Serengeti
- Desert Cisticola** *Cisticola aridulus* Seen near the airport
- Pectoral-patch Cisticola** *Cisticola brunnescens* Amazingly common in the crater!
- Tawny-flanked Prinia** *Prinia subflava* Seen well ANP
- Buff-bellied Warbler** *Phyllolais pulchella* Seen at Naabi
- Yellow-breasted Apalis** *Apalis flavida* This little warbler seen in ANP
- Black-headed Apalis** *Apalis melanocephala* Seen in ANP
- Karamoja Apalis** *Apalis karamojae* Phenomenal views our our regular spot in the Serengeti

- Brown-headed Apalis** *Apalis alticola* Heard at the crater forest gate
- Grey-capped Warbler** *Eminia lepida* Heard in the Serengeti along the river
- Grey-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brevicaudata* Small numbers throughout but quite skulking
- Black-lored Babbler** *Turdoides sharpei* Common Ndutu to Serengeti
- Arrow-marked Babbler** *Turdoides jardineii* Seen around our lodge in the Serengeti
- Northern Pied Babbler** *Turdoides hypoleuca* Seen Tarangire
- Banded Parisoma** *Sylvia boehmi* Small numbers heard in the canopy of acacias
- Montane White-eye** *Zosterops poliogastrus* Seen ANP and crater forests
- Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea* Very common, and lots with the migrating wildebeest
- Rueppell's Starling** *Lamprotornis purpuroptera* Common in the central Serengeti
- Superb Starling** *Lamprotornis superbus* This beautiful species is abundant throughout!
- Hildebrandt's Starling** *Lamprotornis hildebrandti* Quite common in denser woodlands than Superb and seen Serengeti and Ndutu
- Ashy Starling** *Lamprotornis unicolor* Very common Tarangire!
- Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Seen ANP
- Red-winged Starling** *Onychognathus morio* Seen near the airport and crater rim
- Waller's Starling** *Onychognathus walleri* Seen ANP
- Abbott's Starling** *Poeoptera femoralis* Fantastic views ANP
- Yellow-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus africanus* Seen very well in ANP
- Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* Common, esp Serengeti
- Abyssinian [Mountain] Thrush** *Turdus abyssinicus* Seen crater hotel
- Cape Robin-Chat** *Cossypha caffra* Seen ANP and the crater rim
- White-browed Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini* Heard crater rim
- Spotted Palm Thrush** *Cichladusa guttata* Seen near the airport and Manyara
- White-browed Scrub Robin** *Erythropygia leucophrys* Seen Tarangire and Serengeti
- African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus* Seen well ANP and crater rim
- Capped Wheatear** *Oenanthe pileata* Very common on the open plains of the Serengeti
- Abyssinian [Schalow's] Wheatear** *Oenanthe lugubris* Great views in the crater
- Anteater Chat** *Myrmecocichla aethiops* Great views in the crater
- White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher** *Dioptrornis fischeri* Seen ANP and crater forests
- African Grey Flycatcher** *Bradornis microrhynchus* Family groups in dry acacia country, from Tarangire onwards
- Silverbird** *Empidonis semipartitus* Great views in the Serengeti and Ndutu, and also seen Tarangire and Lake Manyara
- Ashy Flycatcher** *Muscicapa caeruleascens* Seen well ANP
- African Dusky Flycatcher** *Muscicapa adusta* Good views of this dumpy flycatcher in ANP
- Eastern Violet-backed Sunbird** *Anthreptes orientalis* Seen at our lunch stop en route to Manyara
- Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris* Seen ANP and crater forests

Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystina* Seen ANP

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis* This striking sunbird was common, often in lodge grounds!

Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa* Seen on the crater rim

Golden-winged Sunbird *Drepanorhynchus reichenowi* A female on the crater rim

Eastern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris mediocris* Seen well in the crater forests and our crater lodge

Beautiful Sunbird *Cinnyris pulchellus* Small numbers in dry bush such as near Manyara

Marico Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis* Small numbers in the Serengeti

Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus* Common in dry bush, mainly seen around the airport, ANP

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali* One at Ndutu

Rufous-tailed Weaver *Histurgops ruficauda* This endemic very common from Tarangire onwards

Grey-capped Social Weaver *Pseudonigrita arnaudi* Very common in the Serengeti

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* Common around the airport, Ndutu, Olduvai, etc

Kenya Sparrow *Passer rufocinctus* Seen Serengeti and crater

Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* Common east of the rift, eg Arusha, Tarangire

Swahili Sparrow *Passer suahelicus* Common Serengeti and Ndutu

Chestnut Sparrow *Passer eminibey* Seen Manyara and Serengeti

Yellow-spotted Petronia *Gymnoris pyrgita* Seen Serengeti

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger* Very common!

White-headed Buffalo Weaver *Dinemellia dinemelli* Very common!

Speckle-fronted Weaver *Sporopipes frontalis* Very common in dry country!

Thick-billed Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons* Seen ANP and in the crater

Baglafaecht Weaver *Ploceus baglafaecht* Seen well on the crater rim and ANP

Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis* Seen in the Serengeti

Taveta Weaver *Ploceus castaneiceps* Great views of this local species in ANP

Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius* Seen ANP and Serengeti

Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus* Small numbers throughout

Speke's Weaver *Ploceus spekei* Seen very well in the crater!

Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus* Seen Serengeti

Chestnut Weaver *Ploceus rubiginosus* Flock at lunch on the second day en route to Manyara

Cardinal Quelea *Quelea cardinalis* Seen in the Serengeti

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* Common around the airport and Manyara

Black Bishop *Euplectes gierowii* Great views Tarangire. Also lunch on second day near Manyara

Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* Seen Manyara, Ndutu, etc

Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis* Seen ANP and crater

Fan-tailed Widowbird *Euplectes axillaris* Seen Serengeti and crater

White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus* Common, seen from Tarangire onwards

- Red-collared Widowbird** *Euplectes ardens* Common on crater rim in breeding plumage
- Jackson's Widowbird** *Euplectes jacksoni* Great views of the males dancing Masaai-style in the crater!
- Green-winged Pytilia** *Pytilia melba* Seen Serengeti
- Red-billed Firefinch** *Lagonosticta senegalensis* Small numbers from the airport onwards
- Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu** *Uraeginthus bengalus* Small numbers of this smart bird from the airport onwards
- Blue-capped Cordon-bleu** *Uraeginthus cyanocephalus* Small numbers in the Serengeti and Tarangire
- Purple Grenadier** *Uraeginthus ianthinogaster* Seen well near our Serengeti lodge
- Yellow-bellied Waxbill** *Coccygia quartinia* Heard around our crater lodge
- Crimson-rumped Waxbill** *Estrilda rhodopyga* Seen at the airport
- Common Waxbill** *Estrilda astrild* Seen ANP
- Black-faced Waxbill** *Estrilda erythronotos* Seen in the Serengeti
- African Quailfinch** *Ortygospiza fusco-crissa* Common in the Serengeti and tricky to see well
- Bronze Mannikin** *Lonchura cucullata* Heard Serengeti
- Red-backed Mannikin** *Lonchura nigriceps* Seen ANP
- Village Indigobird** *Vidua chalybeata* Great views Manyara
- Pin-tailed Whydah** *Vidua macroura* Males in breeding plumage Ndutu and elsewhere
- Steel-blue Whydah** *Vidua hypocherina* Great views of this local species in the Serengeti
- Straw-tailed Whydah** *Vidua fischeri* Great views Olduvai
- Long-tailed Paradise Whydah** *Vidua paradisaea* Great views of a male in display at our lunch stop near Manyara
- African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp* Low numbers at a few places
- Yellow-throated Longclaw** *Macronyx croceus* Seen Serengeti
- Pangani Longclaw** *Macronyx aurantiigula* Seen well near the airport
- Rosy-throated Longclaw** *Macronyx ameliae* Seen well Serengeti and crater
- African Pipit** *Anthus cinnamomeus* Very common on open plains
- Long-billed Pipit** *Anthus similis* Seen crater descent
- Plain-backed Pipit** *Anthus leucophrys* Seen on the Serengeti plains
- Yellow-crowned Canary** *Serinus flavivertex* Seen on crater rim
- Southern Citril** *Crithagra hyposticta* Seen in crater
- Reichenow's Seedeater** *Crithagra reichenowi* Common airport
- White-bellied Canary** *Crithagra dorsostriata* Common Ndutu and Serengeti
- Streaky Seedeater** *Crithagra striolata* Seen on crater rim
- Thick-billed Seedeater** *Crithagra burtoni* Seen in crater forest
- Cinnamon-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza tahapisi* Serengeti lodge

MAMMALS

(49 species)

Ochre Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus ochraceus* Several seen during our picnic lunch in Tarangire National Park and during our lunch on the Manyara escarpment.

African Grass Rat *Arvicanthus niloticus* At our lodge at Ndotu, a few of these gregarious rodents ran across the path into the ground cover.

Zebra Mouse / Griselda's Striped Grass Mouse *Lemniscomys Griselda* At Naabi Gate, several of these rodents were seen eating grass seeds. They usually excavate their burrows in these densely grassed patches.

Acacia Rat / Pencil-tailed tree Rat *Thallomys paedulcus* On our nightwalk at our Serengeti lodge grounds, we spotted one high up in an Acacia tree, at first sight looking like a Lesser Galago.

Common Genet *Genetta genetta* A regular visitor at Ndotu Lodge.

Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* A wonderful sighting in the Serengeti plains near Ndotu where three males were found resting in the grass. They then got up and walked in a line, passing so close to our vehicles, in the direction of a small herd of wildebeest. En route they rubbed their cheeks and body against a tree - presumably scent-marking their territory.

Leopard *Panthera pardus* A female called to a male that sat in a tree. They ran to each other and flirted, purred and ran right next to us for more than 20 minutes right in the open! A once-in-a-lifetime sighting!

Lion *Panthera leo* After spotting lots of lion spoor in Ndotu, the next morning we were surrounded by 16 lions including four males and seven wobbly cubs! One of the males stood up and nearly roared our ears out - our bones trembled and mouths opened wide. The next day, a male with a beautifully dense mane came to lie against the cool of our vehicle, next to a freshly gaping buffalo carcass. Shortly after, five females climbed up a tree almost hanging over us. And we were amused by a pride that was resting in the Ngorongoro Crater - one of the females had her belly full and four paws up in the air!

Common Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguineus* In the Central Serengeti, one was seen on a river bank near a crocodile stalking a Grey Heron.

Egyptian Mongoose *Herpestes ichneumon* At Tarangire National Park, one swiftly crossed the road between our two vehicles. Its long tail tapers into a black tuft.

Dwarf Mongoose *Helogale parvula* We first saw these cute caramel-coloured mongoose in the central Serengeti at the Seronera picnic site - one nearly disappeared into a watering hose!

Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo* At Arusha National Park, a group of about 15 Banded Mongoose seemed to be associated with a group of warthog - they were running around together. A group of about 20 was seen in Tarangire National Park. Another two groups were seen at Serengeti, especially well at the Seronera picnic site, where they ran almost in between our legs. Another large group of about 20 was seen on our way out of the Serengeti.

White-tailed Mongoose *Ichneumia albicauda* Three seen after dinner at our Serengeti Lodge

Spotted Hyena *Crocuta crocuta* Two distant Spotted Hyena were first seen by some of us near Ndotu. Three were seen on our way southwards through the Serengeti, before reaching Naabi Hill. And more than 10 were seen in the Ngorongoro Crater - where two endearing furry cubs were resting next to our vehicle.

Bat-eared Fox *Otocyon megalotis* On a sunny morning near Ndotu, we found two Bat-eared Foxes, with their bat-like ears sticking out above their curled up bodies.

Golden Jackal *Canis aureus* In the Ngorongoro Conservation Area near Ndotu, we watched about two adults and five cubs lit by the golden afternoon light. Another was seen the next morning near Ndotu. And at least another four were seen in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Black-backed Jackal *Canis mesomelas* Two were seen during our morning outing near Ndotu under a large Acacia tree. A second pair was seen in the central Serengeti, close to our Seronera picnic spot. A third pair was seen on our way out of the Serengeti and a fourth pair in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Yellow-winged Bat *Lavia frons* A few brief flushings and some hanging at Serengeti and Ndotu.

Lesser Galago *Galago senegalensis* As we parked into our Serengeti Lodge, we saw one through our open rooftop!

Guereza Colobus *Colobus guereza* We saw three groups in Arusha National Park, counting to more than 20 of these black-and-white monkeys. Apart from their dangling white fluffy tails, their white beards and swollen bellies makes them look like a monk!

Olive Baboon *Papio anubis* They encountered us almost daily and entertained us particularly well. At Arusha National Park we watched at least three large groups, counting to more than 100 individuals. The first group seemed to be foraging for bulbs near Little Serengeti. At Ngorongoro Conservation Area gate we apprehensively watched baboons rule the road, and our car! Alistair performed a brave move chasing a young female from our rooftop! We saw other resident groups in the central Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Crater.

Blue Monkey *Cercopithecus mitis* We watched small groups feeding on foliage in the forest of Lake Manyara National Park. Others hurriedly crossed the road at the Ngorongoro Conservation Area gate.

Sykes's Monkey *Cercopithecus albogularis* We enjoyed excellent, close-up views of these white-throated monkeys, eating leaves and caterpillars in the bushed and forested habitats of Arusha National Park.

Vervet Monkey *Chlorocebus pygerythrus* At the gate of Tarangire National Park, one ventured onto the roof of our vehicle. In Serengeti NP, we watched a male strategically sitting high up in a large Fever Tree. And we saw several in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* Very common throughout.

Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibious* Common on waterbodies and seen in all parks but Tarangire. We saw some amazing hippo pools, especially in Serengeti National Park where one pool was more than 80 hippos strong!

Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis* Seen in all parks on this trip. Common throughout, with beautiful herds seen at Serengeti National Park.

Grant's Gazelle *Gazella granti* We admired several groups of 10 to 100s of this elegant antelope in the Ngorongoro Conservation area and about 50 in the Ngorongoro crater.

Thomson's Gazelle *Gazella thomsonii* Vast numbers seen near Lake Manyara, in the southern Serengeti, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and the crater.

Steenbok *Raphicerus campestris* We watched an endearing pair on the Ndutu plains.

Kirk's Dik-dik *Madoqua kirkii* Small numbers in bush country throughout, including one scent-marking at Tarangire National Park and very habituated ones at night among our Serengeti accommodation.

African Buffalo *Syncerus caffer* We saw large herds in Arusha National Park and the Ngorongoro crater and a scattering of huge bulls packed with mud in the Serengeti woodlands.

Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus* We watched about 20 in Arusha N.P., where a pair made a beautiful scene as they stood in the setting sun, their reflection mirrored by a pool in Little Serengeti.

Common Eland *Taurotragus oryx* We saw large groups in the migrating herds in the southern Serengeti; in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and in the crater.

Bohor Reedbuck *Redunca redunca* From the comfort of our lodge's pool deck, we watched this beautiful antelope run (and heard it whistle!). The scene was beautiful, set in tall grassland, golden-lit by the setting sun, Lake Manyara reflecting and the escarpment rising in the distance. We also saw a single one as we drove into the central Serengeti.

Common or Ellipsen Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus ellipsiprymnus* One was seen in Serengeti and another in the Ngorongoro conservation area.

Defassa Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus defassa* A small group seen around Ndutu. (Since 2006 this is considered a different subspecies from the Common Waterbuck.)

Blue Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus* Maybe half a million seen on the short grass plains of Ngorongoro Conservation Area and southern Serengeti, several hundreds seen from our lodge near Lake Manyara, and hundreds in the crater.

Coke's Hartebeest (Kongoni) *Alcelaphus buselaphus cokii* We saw small groups every day in the Serengeti, Ngorongoro Conservation Area plains and crater.

Topi *Damaliscus lunatus topi* A scattering seen in the Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area plains.

Impala *Aepyceros melampus* These small antelope like the edge between woodland and grassland. We saw large bachelor groups and harems in Tarangire National Park, near Lake Manyara, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, the Serengeti plains and at Ndutu.

Blue Duiker *Cephalophus monticola* Seen twice in Arusha NP.

Harvey's Duiker *Cephalophus harveyi* About four in the forest understory in Arusha National Park.

Bush Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia* Two seen in Tarangire National Park.

Common Zebra *Equus burchellii* Seen daily. In Southern Serengeti and Ngorongoro Conservation Area in groups of hundreds to tens of thousands among wildebeest. In smaller harems and bachelor groups elsewhere - including a rough and fierce group of stallions fighting each other in the Ngorongoro Crater.

Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* We saw a female and calf, and three more black rhinoceros in the crater.

Rock Hyrax *Procavia johnstoni* These rodent-like animals are close relatives of the elephant! At Seronera, we watched them up-close, basking lazily on the rocks or clipping the grass (head held sideways, using their molars!).

Yellow-spotted Hyrax *Heterohyrax brucei* We saw these more slender-built hyraxes up-close at our Seronera picnic spot, feeding on leaves or resting in a fork of an Acacia tree.

African Elephant *Loxodonta Africana* At Tarangire National Park, we watched a bachelor group with hour-glass shaped heads and enormous shoulders - testimony of their old age. We were mesmerised watching two family herds, including some very young babies running, some mud- and dust-bathing and others scratching themselves against a towering tree trunk. We saw two large bulls well concealed in the woodlands of Ndutu. We spotted a few other gentle giants roaming the plains below Naabi Hill, in landscape carpeted by migratory animals. We also saw family herd at the base of Naabi Hill. Finally, we saw sixty or so elephant bulls roam the Ngorongoro Crater floor - an impressive sight set in vast fields of yellow-flowers and against a stark blue-grey crater wall. And from the comfort of our lodge's deck, we spotted a family herd on the crater floor - an unusual sighting!