**NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK 8th APRIL 2019**

Dear All,

Nigel Hunter and myself met up with Jeffrey James at the Main Gate to Nairobi National Park on his annual visit back to Kenya. Although 6.40am there were hardly any people queuing and we were soon through the gate. No recent rain, a pleasantly cool start but it was to be another hot dry and dusty day.

We had Nightingales on the way down, but it was otherwise very quiet. Little was on offer at Ivory Burning Site, but a pair of Spotted Thick-knees were on the Nagalomon Drift. A Garden Warbler was singing, as was a Zanzibar Greenbul. The exiting Mokoyeti River was bone dry, and the Dam itself very quiet. A party of six Black Storks flew off together as if they had just left a roost and flew southwards, a few African Spoonbills were displaying and trumpeting, and a few of the seven Darters were nest building. Palearctic waders were absent, there was an adult African Jacana, a Fish Eagle sat in a tree on the island whilst on the Causeway was a lone female Violet-backed Starling.

Taking the back road to Hyena Dam, extremely quiet with the first of three Augur Buzzards, an African Hoopoe is fairly unusual here, the first of two Turkestan Shrikes and first of ten Red-backed Shrikes. The water-level on Hyena Dam had fallen there were a couple of Yellow-billed Storks, three African Spoonbills, the days only Crowned Crane, six Long-toed Plovers, twenty Black-winged Stilts, a Common Greenshank, two Green, fifteen Wood and three Common Sandpipers, and three Little Stint. Taking the road along the Mokoyeti there was a perched adult Black Stork and an immature flying over towards the southwest, the first of seven Black-winged Kites, two Eurasian Rollers and a Pangani Longclaw further north than normally. On the nearly dry oxbow we found the young Goliath Heron with a Great Egret and a couple more Yellow-billed Storks, and as we arrived back at Nagalomon Dam another Black Stork was flying around.

Setting off for Kingfisher, a Common Cuckoo flew over, there were a number of Parasitic Weavers in the reed bed below Impala Lookout, and had the first of five Spotted Flycatchers. Apart from another Black Stork flying around and a Brown Parisoma nothing much was to be had at Kingfisher. In the acacias before the old burnt area we found a Barred Warbler, and further up the road a Northern Wheatear and yet another Black Stork was flying around. On the road to Ololo was the first of just two Whinchats, and a few Speckled Weavers, but the river was almost non-existent. There was a Nightingale and an Acrocephalus scolding from cover, and the Secretarybird was on its nest, whilst below it was another Pangani Longclaw and a Common Whitethroat.

Rhino Circuit provided a few woodland birds including nine Violet Woodhoopoes, Red-throated Tits and a couple of Willow Warblers. Sitting on a fallen tree was the attractive sight of five Black Storks. The Pipeline graced us with single Northern and Isabelline Wheatears, whilst on the river side were six Chestnut Sparrows and fifteen thirsty Grey-headed Silverbills. The water was dropping at Athi Dam, but it was attracting a few birds, a couple of Red-billed Teal, thirty Yellow-billed Storks, an Open-billed, two Whites and two hundred Marabou Storks. Also fifteen African Spoonbills, ten roosting Black-crowned Night-Herons, a Pink-backed Pelican, two Secretarybirds coming in to drink, five Spotted Thick-knees, four Black-winged Stilts, a Ringed Plover, five Kittlitz’s Plovers, three Common Greenshank, fifteen Wood and four Common Sandpipers and eight Little Stints. Banded Parisomas were in the acacias but that was all the activity there was there. Our lunch on the Causeway fared better as in and around the big Acacia mellifera were a Eurasian Reed Warbler, Olivaceous Warbler and two Willow Warblers plus the busy Spotted Flycatcher that lives there. Near the dry Vulture Drinking Ponds at the top of Athi Basin there was a Shelley’s Francolin sheltering from the sun under a bush, and an attractive family of four Short-tailed Larks.

The final two new birds for the day were at Langata Dam with a small party of Eurasian Bee-eaters and the days only Yellow Wagtail which was a female flava type.

It was not an ornithologically bountiful day although there was were some good species and we finished up exiting Langata Gate with 174 species. The frequency of Black Stork sightings was very confusing, there was a minimum of six as they were together, but there could have been a maximum of fifteen.