BIRDS RECORDED ON LOLLDAIGA HILLS RANCH 5TH-8TH NOVEMBER 2017

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From 5th-8th November the above observers conducted a quite intensive bird survey of Lolldaiga Ranch. It was as always a wonderful experience, and all the better with the hospitality of Robert and Harry Wells who went out of their way to make us feel at home. Tom’s excellent organisation was skilfully orchestrated. Although there had been very heavy rain before our arrival, at night whilst we were there and again during the days after we left, and whilst the most incredible storms were raging all around us, how he managed to avoid us getting wet inside the open-sided vehicle for five days is amazing, but the incredible truth is that it never rained on us!!!

This is a list of our findings on Lolldaiga Hills Ranch, as an encouragement for others to visit this beautiful and bird-rich place; also there are many special mammals.

Full checklists containing all records of Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Butterflies and Plants can be found on the Lolldaiga Hills web site.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*

Fairly widespread.

Shelley’s Francolin *Francolinus shelleyi*

Calling from the area around and just below the main housing.

Crested Francolin *Francolinus sephaena*

Fairly widespread.

Hildebrandt’s Francolin *Francolinus hildebrandti*

Along the road below the main housing.

Yellow-necked Spurfowl *Francolinus leucoscepus*

Only in the northern lowland.

Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Up to three on all visits to Valley Dam.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Very widespread and common.

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulate*

Common on lower southern dams.

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha*

On lower southern dams but numerous on Valley Dam in particular.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Only seen on the lower southern dams.

Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Three individual sightings in lower southern area.

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*

One on a Valley Dam was the only bird recorded.

Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*

Widespread and common.

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*

Several on Valley Dam and nearby marsh areas, and flying up valley from the main house.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Not very numerous in the southern lowlands.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

A few individuals met with, particularly Valley Dam.

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*

Several widespread birds seen.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba*

A couple in Valley Dam and nearby swamps.

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*

Several met with in southern lowlands.

Reed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus*

A few on small dams, and three pairs nesting on one of the south-western boundary dams.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

One adult on Valley Dam.

Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

One palearctic nominate flying over near Valley Dam, and one *rufescens* resident race near the southern border, which was vocalising.

Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor*

One adult perched near the main housing and a superb perched adult towards the southern boundary.

Eurasian Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Only a couple of birds seen on the southern lowlands.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

One male over the Timau River wasprobably Palearctic.

Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius*

One seen near Valley Dam and a pair along the western boundary.

White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus*

Common and widespread sightings.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

Just one bird seen in the northern lowlands.

Harrier sp *Circus sp (*prob *pallidus)*

A “ring-tail” which disappeared behind scrub before it was identified near the northern gate, was the only harrier seen.

African Harrier Hawk *Polyboroides typus*

A few widespread birds.

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*

Seen just below the main housing to the south.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Only a few birds seen in several areas.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

One superb adult gliding down the valley in the early morning, just south and below the main housing.

Augur Buzzard *Buteo augur*

Widespread and seen frequently.

Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*

Just two migrating birds seen.

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*

Several widespread birds encountered.

Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*

Only a few birds seen migrating over.

African Hawk Eagle *Aquila spilogaster*

Three individuals seen in the northern lowlands.

Kori Bustard *Ardeotis kori*

Only three birds sighted in the northern lowlands.

White-bellied Bustard *Eupodotis senegalensis*

A pair in the northern lowlands.

Buff-crested Bustard *Lophotis* *gindiana*

A few (more heard) in the northern lowlands.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

A few scattered on various vegetated dams.

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*

Two on Valley Dam.

Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum*

Scattered pairs encountered.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Seven on Valley Dam.

Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus*

Common and widespread.

Black-winged Plover *Vanellus melanopterus*

One group of five near Valley Dam were the only birds recorded.

Crowned Plover *Vanellus coronatus*

Common and widespread.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

Present on most dams.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Three birds on Valley Dam.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Five birds on Valley Dam.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Encountered on several dams.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Scattered records from several dams and marsh areas.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Twenty on Valley Dam.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A few birds on several dams.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

One reeve on Valley Dam.

Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea*

Only seen a few times.

Dusky Turtle Dove *Streptopelia lugens*

Common in the higher areas.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*

Very common and widespread.

Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola*

Very common and widespread.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos*

Common and widespread.

African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*

Only a few birds encountered.

Meyer’s Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri*

Common and widespread.

White-bellied Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides leucogaster*

Common and widespread.

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitaries*

Only a couple of birds met with.

Klaas’s Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*

A few around and below the main housing area.

Diederik Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius*

Fairly common and widespread.

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus*

Several seen but not numerous.

Verreaux’s Eagle Owl *Bubo lacteus*

One bird on a lowland northern dam.

Montane Nightjar *Caprimulgus poliocephalus*

Noisy around the main housing area.

Freckled Nightjar *Caprimulgus tristigma*

One calling around the main housing area.

African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus*

Common and widespread.

Common Swift *Apus apus*

Only small numbers seen.

African Black Swift *Apus barbatus*

A party met with near the Timau River.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*

Common around the main housing area.

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*

A few widespread birds seen.

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus*

Common and widespread.

Rufous-crowned Roller *Coracias naevius*

Just a couple of birds seen in the northern lowlands.

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus*

Common and widespread, particularly in Cedars.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

A pair on a dam near the western boundary.

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

Surprisingly few seen.

Eurasian Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Widespread but not numerous.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

The resident race was commonly encountered, and the nominate Palearctic seen twice.

Violet Wood-hoopoe *Phoeniculus damarensis*

It appears that whilst this seems the commoner bird, Green may also be present on Lolldaiga. Photographs of any Wood-Hoopoes are encouraged. Fairly widespread but not commonly seen.

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

Quite common and widespread.

Abyssinian Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus minor*

A few in the northern lowlands.

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*

Just a couple seen in the western lowlands.

Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus*

Common in the northern lowlands.

Von der Decken’s Hornbill *Tockus deckeni*

Just two seen in the northern lowlands.

Red-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus pusillus*

Common and widespread.

Red-fronted Barbet *Tricholaema diademata*

Common and widespread.

Red-and-yellow Barbet *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*

A few in the northern lowlands.

D’Arnaud’s Barbet *Trachyphonus darnaudii*

Common in the northern lower areas.

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*

One bird along the Timau River was the only Honeyguide recorded.

Red-throated Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis*

A few noisy birds below the main housing area and near Valley Dam.

Nubian Woodpecker *Campethera nubica*

Commonest woodpecker and widespread.

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*

Several seen but not commonly.

Bearded Woodpecker *Dendropicos namaquus*

One bird found by the dams north of the main housing.

African Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae*

Fairly frequent and widespread.

Chin-spot Batis *Batis molitor*

Common and widespread.

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti*

A few below the main housing area and in the northern lowlands.

Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus*

Frequent and widespread.

Rosy-patched Bushshrike *Rhodophoneus cruentus*

Several in the northern lowlands.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis*

Common and widespread.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus*

Fairly common and widespread.

Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis*

Only encountered along the Timau River.

Slate-coloured Boubou *Laniarius funebris*

Common and widespread.

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus*

Common and widespread.

Brubru *Nilaus afer*

A few widespread birds encountered.

Black Cuckooshrike *Campephaga flava*

Fairly frequent in the Cedars.

Northern White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus rueppelli*

A few in the lower areas to the north, but not common.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*

A surprise find was an immature at the north gate.

Taita Fiscal *Lanius dorsalis*

A few in the northern lowlands.

Common Fiscal *Lanius collaris*

Common and widespread.

Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus*

Numerous and widespread, particularly in the Cedars.

Common Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*

Frequent and widespread.

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*

Widespread and fairly common.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus*

Only the occasional bird met with.

Fan-tailed Raven *Corvus rhipidurus*

A few in the northern lowlands and one flying over the main housing area.

White-bellied Tit *Parus albiventris*

Common and widespread.

Black Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne pristoptera*

Common and widespread.

Plain Martin *Riparia paludicola*

Common on Valley Dam.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Several on Valley Dam.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Common and widespread.

Angola Swallow *Hirundo angolensis*

A few nesting on the bridge at the Timau Gate.

Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*

Common and widespread.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum*

Fairly common and widespread.

Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis*

Only met with at Valley Dam and the main housing area.

Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*

Resident race *emini*, common and widespread. East Africa’s third record of the Palearctic race *rufula*, found, photographed and videoed at Valley Dam.

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra Africana*

Common and widespread in grassy areas.

Fawn-coloured Lark *Mirafra africanoides*

Fairly common and widespread.

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea*

Frequent in the southern grassy lowlands.

Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana*

Common and widespread.

Boran Cisticola *Cisticola bodessa*

Probably the most numerous resident, found wherever slopes or rocky hillsides and very noisy.

Stout Cisticola *Cisticola robustus*

Frequent in grassy areas below the main housing and in the southern lowlands.

Siffling Cisticola *Cisticola brachypterus* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

First bird seen and heard just below the main housing area, followed by birds near the offices in the south and along the western border.

Pectoral-patch Cisticola *Cisticola brunnescens*

Common wherever rank grassland.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*

Common and widespread.

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida*

Common and widespread.

Grey-capped Warbler *Eminia lepida*

Numerous wherever evergreen scrub and woodland.

Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*

Common and widespread.

Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*

Common and widespread.

Fan-tailed Grassbird *Schoenicola brevirostris* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

Found and photographed just below the main housing on the southern slopes. Encountered displaying in the same spot every day.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The only birds encountered were a couple at Valley Dam. No other migrant warblers present apart from a couple of Blackcap along the Timau River.

Red-faced Crombec *Sylvietta whytii*

Common and widespread.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Two birds along the Timau River.

Brown Parisoma *Parisoma lugens*

Frequent and widespread, particularly in Cedars.

Banded Parisoma *Parisoma boehmi*

Fairly frequent in northern lowlands.

Rufous Chatterer *Turdoides rubiginosa*

Fairly common and widespread.

Black-lored Babbler *Turdoides sharpei*

The Mt Kenya endemic race *vepres* is common and widespread in evergreen woodlands and scrub, but not the northern lowlands.

Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus*

Common and widespread, often present with T. s *vepres.*

African Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis*

Fairly frequent in rich habitat.

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*

Very few encountered.

Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

Abundant but not in the dry lowlands to the north.

Golden-breasted Starling *Lamprotornis regius* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

One bird seen by NH and TK near the northern gate.

Superb Starling *Lamprotornis superbus*

Common and widespread.

Hildebrandt’s Starling *Lamprotornis hildebrandti*

Common and widespread.

Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

Only a few birds seen in the highland areas.

Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio*

Fairly common and widespread.

Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*

Common and widespread.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus*

A few on giraffe in the southern lowlands.

African Thrush *Turdus pelios*

Present around the main housing together with Olive Thrush.

Olive Thrush *Turdus olivaceous*

Fairly frequent in broad-leaved wooded areas.

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

One bird along the Timau River.

Cape Robin Chat *Cossypha caffra*

Fairly common in the broad-leaved scrub.

White-browed Robin Chat *Cossypha heuglini*

Common and widespread.

White-browed Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys*

Only met with in the southern lowlands.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*

Fairly common in the northern lowland areas.

Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe Oenanthe*

Fairly frequent in the northern lowlands.

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*

A couple of birds in the northern lowlands.

Northern Anteater Chat *Myrmecocichla aethiops*

Common in the southern lowlands.

Common Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*

Two birds in the northern lowlands.

Little Rock Thrush *Monticola* *rufocinereus*

Widespread but only three birds met with.

White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher *Melaenornis fischeri*

Common in the broad-leaved woodlands.

Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina*

A few found usually near dams.

Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus*

Common and widespread in the broad-leaved woodlands.

African Grey Flycatcher *Bradornis microrhynchus*

A few in the dry northern lowlands.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*

Three birds along the Timau River.

Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystine*

Common and widespread.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

Common and widespread.

Bronze Sunbird *Nectarinia kilimensis*

Fairly frequent in the broad-leaved woodlands.

Northern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris reichenowi*

Only seen along the Timau River.

Marico Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis*

Widespread and fairly frequent.

Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus*

Common and throughout.

Grey-capped Social Weaver *Pseudonigrita arnaudi*

Common and nesting in the grassy northern acacia woodlands and the southern grasslands.

Black-capped Social Weaver *Pseudonigrita cabanisi*

Breeding in the same area in the northern lowlands at one dam.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

One bird at the Timau Gate entrance.

Kenya Rufous Sparrow *Passer rufocinctus*

Common and widespread.

Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus*

The Parrot-billed Sparrow was fairly widespread but not common.

Chestnut Sparrow *Passer eminibey*

A few in the dry northern lowlands.

Yellow-spotted Petronia *Petronia pyrgita*

Fairly common and widespread throughout.

Baglafecht Weaver *Ploceus Baglafecht*

Common in the broad-leaved woodlands.

Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis*

Frequent in the broad-leaved woodlands.

Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus vitellinus*

Only encountered close to dams on the northern side.

Speke’s Weaver *Ploceus spekei*

Very common throughout.

Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes melanotis*

The occasional birds encountered but not common.

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*

Only small numbers met with.

Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis*

Several seen along the Timau River.

Jackson’s Widowbird *Euplectes jacksoni*

A few in the southern grasslands.

Crimson-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda rhodopyga*

The only birds were a couple along the Timau River.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

A few on the southern lowlands.

Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus*

Common and widespread.

Purple Grenadier *Granatina ianthinogaster*

Common and widespread.

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*

Common and widespread but not in the acacia lowlands.

Cut-throat Finch *Amadina fasciata*

At least three birds around the offices in the south.

African Quailfinch *Ortygospiza fuscocrissa*

Abundant in the southern grasslands.

Grey-headed Silverbill *Odontospiza griseicapilla*

Small parties seen twice in the southern lowlands.

Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cucullatus*

Only met with in the southern grasslands.

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

Common throughout.

Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeate*

A few around the offices in the south.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Apart from the odd bird flying over they were fairly frequent with the cattle in the south.

Mountain Wagtail *Motacilla clara*

A pair on the Timau River.

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

Fairly frequent and widespread.

Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus*

Fairly frequent and widespread.

Grassland Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus*

Common and widespread.

Long-billed Pipit *Anthus similis* NEW FOR LOLLDAIGA

Several on the slopes below the main housing area.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*

Common and widespread.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Met with several times below the main housing area.

Bush Pipit *Anthus caffer*

One in grassy acacia scrub in the northern lowlands.

African Citril *Crithagra citrinelloides*

Common and widespread.

Reichenow’s Seedeater *Crithagra reichenowi*

Abundant and widespread.

Brimstone Canary *Crithagra sulphurata*

Common and widespread.

Streaky Seedeater *Crithagra striolata*

Common and widespread though avoiding the dry north lowlands.

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*

Only a very few birds seen.

Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris*

Fairly frequent and widespread in broad-leaved woodland.

Best to all

Brian

KEY TO MONTAGE

All in species blocks;

Left and top Palearctic Red-rumped Swallow *rufula.*

Bottom Centre Immature Lesser Grey Shrike.

We are not used to seeing this plumage in East Africa, as on southern passage they go down the west, and when heading north come up the east, but already in adult plumage.

Top Right the first Eurasian Rock Thrush for the season.

Middle Far Right Adult Sooty Falcon showing extraordinary long primaries.

Inner Far Right Adult rufous Long-legged Buzzard.

This was early morning in dull light flying down the valley, and the images are from a video taken of it. In spite of the quality all of the diagnostic features for this plumage of Long-legged Buzzard are here; Firstly size although this might not be appreciated here with no comparison, it is only a few inches short of the length of a Tawny Eagle which is 29” and a Long-legged Buzzard 26”, whilst a Common Buzzard is just 20”. What can be appreciated in the images are the long wings, which are markedly raised with very upswept primary tips more like that of an eagle than the flat winged Common Buzzard. From below the features are all whitish head, down to the chest whilst belly very contrastingly darker chestnut. The wings have a very distinctive solid blackish carpal patch contrasting against the pale underwing coverts; this is dark in Common Buzzard with little contrast with carpal patch. The base of the black-tipped primaries are pure white and fairly unmarked giving a very distinctive white patch. The secondaries are heavily barred which highlights the primary patch further, Common Buzzard primary bases and secondaries show no contrast at all. From above the upperparts are sandy-rufous, if it is a dark morph it will be dark above but then it will also be dark below not white and rufous. The tail is all cinnamon, darker at the tip and becoming progressively paler toward the base where it is almost whitish, and the tail is longer than that of Common Buzzard. The build of the bird, and the size is far more suggestive of an eagle than a buzzard.