Day 1 - 2 Dec

This amazing tour was planned to try and round up sightings of some of the prominent endemic mammals of Ethiopia, (of which we found no less than 14 during the tour) and was to be guided by Lee Gutteridge, a professional guide and wildlife author, based in South Africa's Kruger Park region, and the co-founder, with Adam Riley, of Tau Anthropological Safaris.
Four members of our group, Judy, Gary (Australians), Debbie and Larry (USA-Texas) joined Melaku Tesfa, our resident Ethiopian Guide, for an Addis Ababa tour today, taking in some sights and sounds of the city, with its vibrant and cosmopolitan population. Lee, Tim and the other four guests were flying in from their Tau Anthropological Safari’s trip to the Omo Valley…but that’s another world altogether! Lee and Melaku guided a trip together in the Ethiopian Omo Valley together last year, so, as it often is when old friends reunite, it was destined to be a good fun trip!

When Lee, Tim (RSA), Carol, Graeme (an Australian and a New Zealander respectively), Frankie and W.O. (USA-Miami) arrived at the Nexus they quickly settled in and got ready for supper at a very traditionally orientated restaurant. The evening was very pleasant, with interesting Ethiopian dishes, served with traditional Injera. Injera is severed across Ethiopia, and is a fermented pancake-like dish, made of a grain called teff. It is rich in protein and iron, and may be part of the secret of the highly efficient bodies of the Ethiopian long distance athletes. During our meal, ladies and men in traditional attire performed dances from different regions as entertainment for us. Then there was a surprise for Lee, as it was his birthday, and a lovely cake had been baked for him. Everyone enjoyed it thoroughly, and sampled some of the local beers, including a local Honey Mead, known as Tetch! This little chance to meet Larry, Debbie, Gary and Judy was great, and they appeared to be a great fun crown, and I was not to be disappointed! Then we headed off to our hotel, to recuperate from our previous trips and respective airplane flights, and to get ready for the journey ahead.

Day 2 - 3 Dec

We headed out at around 7AM to begin our wildlife adventure! We stopped off at a Crater Lake south of Addis for a coffee and birding session, and saw our first endemic Black-winged parakeet! Although this is a mammal journey, we all agreed to incorporate everything we saw, which included plant life, as Gary is an accomplished botanical author in his own right, having published books on orchids in Australia, and his home state of Victoria, and Larry also had a great interest in plant life. With Graeme being a pharmacist this also held appeal. The town where we halted, takes its name from the lake, Bishoftu (Debre Zeyet was the former name of Bishoftu during the time of Emperor Haile Selassie, as well as during the time of communist rule). The coffee shop was perched high up on the edge of the volcanoes rim, and the birding was great! Bishoftu is also the deepest Crater Lake in the area, at 32m deep.

Birds we saw here included:
- Red-eyed dove
- Laughing dove
- Abyssinian white-eye
- Fan-tailed raven
- Black-winged lovebird
- Sacred ibis
- Southern pochard
- Northern shoveller
- Blue-chested bee-eater (subsp. lafresnayii)
- Rock martin
- Swainson’s sparrow
- Mocking cliff chat
- Red-billed firefinch
- Little grebe
- Red-knobbed coot
- Speckled mousebird
- Pied crow
- Hooded vulture
- Black kite
- Hamerkop
- Black-winged stilt
- Osprey
A non-breeding Black-headed gull and the endemic Black-winged lovebird (male)

An interesting feature of Ethiopia is the presence of Bajaj (Indian tuktuks) everywhere as you go. The general rule of the road in this country is whoever has the biggest car goes first. It made me glad I was in a bus! We also saw a Kareyu herder along the roadside with his herd of camels, migrating to greener pastures, down through the Great Rift Valley. We would see many more of these fellows later on our trip, in the Nazareth region.

On the road we saw more birdlife, and stopped at several ponds and lakes along the way. Sightings included:

- Alpine swift
- Northern-carmine bee-eater
- Saddle-billed stork
- Black-tailed godwit
- Grey heron
- Red-billed oxpecker
- African fish-eagle
- Common greenshank
- Ruddy turnstone
- Spotted redshank
- Common redshank
- Black headed gull
- Caspian tern
- Grey wagtail
- White wagtail

Along the road we also encountered a group of Abyssinian ground-hornbills patrolling a recently harvested field, and climbing onto termite mounds. The blue-faced females and more red males were the source of much excitement! Everyone in the group had an avid interest in the birdlife, mammals, culture and history, so we really took our time traveling, enjoying all we saw. Traditional farming methods (left) are still practiced, as they have been for thousands of years. Threshing of teff, by means of rows of oxen or horses, lead in circles by a whip bearing, Ethiopian farmer is a common sight. Fields are ploughed with oxen, and mounds of hay line the roads.

Teff is a major crop here as it is used to make Injera, a traditional bread-like dish...more like a fermented pancake! At a traditional farm we stopped the bus to go in and see the farmers at work, with their rows of oxen circling and separating the seeds.

A few species of birds were in attendance:
- Chestnut sparrow
- Red-cheeked cordonbleu
- White-browed sparrow weaver
- Eurasian hoopoe
We stopped for some lunch en route, all eating pasta dishes. The pasta in Ethiopia is usually very good due to the repeated Italian influence of the past. We ordered and then went straight out birding in the garden, as many species were around, including mating African harrier-hawks! There was also a super relaxed male African paradise-flycatcher (left) in its stunning, long-tailed red and white plumage. Our list included:

- Beautiful sunbird
- Common bulbul (the white-vent subsp. schoanus)
- Baglafecht’s weaver
- African paradise-flycatcher
- Rüppell’s starling
- African harrier-hawk (mating pair)

We went to a local fish market at Lake Ziway to have a look around, and it was truly amazing. Great white pelicans in their hundreds stood patiently waiting for fish scraps. They walked fearlessly and casually between us, as did Marabou storks and the comparatively diminutive Hamerkop. We walked a promontory into the lake, surrounded by thorny, water-loving Ambach trees and water Lillie’s. The Ambach is much like a freshwater mangrove. Men washed tuk tuk’s and horses and carts in the water too.

Birds abounded, and the tameness was astounding, affording us many opportunities to take pictures. Five different kingfisher species were seen and much, much more:

- Hottentot teal
- African darter
- Great cormorant
- Long-tailed cormorant
- Woodland kingfisher
- African pygmy kingfisher
- Pied kingfisher
- Malachite kingfisher
- Giant kingfisher
- Great white pelican
- Marabou stork
- Hamerkop
- Wood sandpiper
- African jacana
- Black-headed gull (non-breeding)
- Black-winged lovebird
- White-faced ducks
- Egyptian goose
- Spur-winged goose
- Black heron
- Cattle egret
- Little egret
- Yellow wagtail (subsp. feldegg)
- Whiskered tern

We then travelled through a Rasta Farian village on the edge of the town of Shaashee Mane. (The name means the house of Shaashee. Shaashee was, according to legend, a woman who made great local beer!). The Rasta’s were given 500HA by Haile Selassie in the 1960’s and still live here today! Their green, yellow and red flags could be seen all over, as well as their round shaped churches, where they go to worship Ras Tafari Makonen, or Emperor Haile Selassie as he is also known.
Cattle, sheep, donkeys (more than 6 million at last count in Ethiopia) and other animals rule the roads here. So much live-stock is hard to imagine! Let’s just say you spend more time dodging cows than driving straight.

We arrived at our next home, the Africa United Lodge called Hotel Hawssa. It is on the edge of the Lake Awassa, and we were greeted on arrival by a troop of Guereza colobus monkeys (left). All white babies and the interesting, black and white adults lounged in the trees above us. Some were eating flowers from the Jacaranda trees. It is interesting to note that this primate is in fact thumbless! We had a relaxed afternoon, most of us photographing the colobus until the light began to fade. These monkeys weigh up to 23kg, and are about 75cm long. The species eats leaves and flowers, as we observed today. There may be several males in a troop, but when too many males are in a troop this causes dispersal. W.O. And Frankie did a little birding and saw beautiful White-browed robin-chats near the lake. Then we enjoyed a few beers together and a good dinner, of roast lamb. The end of another fine day.

Day 3 - 4 Dec

We were up at sunrise, and had a 06:30 coffee, we had ordered breakfast in advance, to be ready for us at 07:30. Then we headed to the lakeshore. We walked down the back path of the lodge, watching the sunbirds feed on the way, and searching the scrub carefully. Lee then saw what he thought was a Spotted creeper, down on the edge of the water, and got very excited! However W.O. Noticed that the beak was too short so we figured out that it was actually a Eurasian wryneck! Just goes to show, if you want to see something badly enough, your mind can play tricks on you. Well we all had a good laugh at that, but enjoyed the wryneck nonetheless, as it was very beautiful and highly photogenic. We also got to spend more time with the colobus monkey family around the lodge. Many other species were present though, including:

- African pygmy-goose
- African fish-eagle
- Great cormorant
- Long-tailed cormorant
- Marabou stork
- Black crake
- Black kite
- Lesser swamp warbler
- Ethiopian boubou
- Common bulbul
- Beautiful sunbird
- Scarlet-chested sunbird
- African jacana
- Little grebe
- African darter
- Malachite kingfisher
- Pied kingfisher
- White-browed robin-chat

A Eurasian wryneck, a juvenile male Beautiful sunbird and a male red-cheeked cordonbleu
Then we went to another fish market, where catches were being brought in, fishermen, birds and bystanders were present in great numbers. At the back of the market area fish were being cooked, in soups, deep fried and even served raw as a sort of sushi! An amazing array of birds was to be seen, with many of them on the water’s edge, hoping for scraps of fish. As boats came in people rushed in to try and buy fresh fish straight from the boatmen.

We also saw:

Marabou
Black-winged stilt
Black kite
Whiskered tern
Black-headed gulls
Great white pelicans
African fish-eagle
Black-winged lovebird
Goliath heron

Little egret
Hamerkop
Sacred ibis
Great cormorant
Red-cheeked cordonbleu
Swainson’s sparrow
Northern grey-headed sparrow

Boatmen coming in with their catch, in a rapidly bailed boat, and a local delicacy, fish-head stew

We departed back to our lodge to check out and then at 10:15 we headed toward the highlands, and hopefully Mountain nyalas, Simien wolf and the near-fabled Bale monkey! Many other interesting mammals were on our list for the area, but a great start was planned at the Head Quarters of the Bale Mountains National Park, called Dinsho. It is at an altitude of around 3200m ASL and about an hour’s drive from Goba, where we stay.

On the way we passed many farms, as most of this part of Ethiopia appears intensively cultivated. Many traditional huts line the roads, as well as mud-walled tin-roofed houses. Kraals (corrals) are everywhere, used at night for housing livestock. Fences of rows of planted Euphorbias or criss-crossed bamboo slats surround many of the houses. Eucalypts from Australia appear to be one of the dominant tree types, and are used in building, as scaffolding and for firewood. In every river there are women washing clothes, men washing their Tuktuks, children washing themselves!

We also stopped for a few leg stretches on the way. This was when we made an amazing discovery. We learned, that no matter where you stop in Ethiopia, no matter how abandoned it looks, if you stop, children will magically appear from behind twigs, under leaves and stones, from behind hay stacks and from behind innocent looking livestock. One goat or sheep can hide as many as 32 children. Honest. So in the words of Frankie Crain, one of our participants we suddenly had the quote of the trip:

"If you park it, they will come"
Everyone farms in these rural parts, and makes do with what they have, as there are virtually no shops at all, and little or no petrol stations along the way.

We saw a pair of endemic Thick-billed ravens (right) enroute, feeding with a Hooded vulture on a dead animal next to the road. They were courting, and one gently passed a brightly coloured flower to the other! 
We stopped for pasta at the Rose Hotel, not the best but sustenance nonetheless.

Then we continued our journey, climbing through farmlands, on winding roads. Overturned busses and trucks were a common sight! The precipitous highlands were beautiful, little Oromo tribes- children were all around. They were wrapped against the cold, often wearing rubber Wellington boots. We had parked and they had come! 
We stopped at a deep gorge, where women washed their clothing and children played. This was a known stake-out for Cape eagle-owl, specifically a subspecies of the Cape called dillonii. Some youths had figured out that this bird is special and made money from passing tourists by showing them where the owl was. We set up a spotting scope and had a great view of this uncommon bird, with its interesting barred breast markings.

Birds we saw en route included:
- Cape eagle-owl (Subsp. dillonii)
- Spot-breasted lapwing
- Blue-winged goose
- Green sandpiper
- Red-knobbed coot
- Rouget’s rail
- Alpine (Moorland) chat
- White-collared pigeon
- Groundscraper thrush

- Speckled pigeon
- Yellow-billed duck
- Fan-tailed raven
- Pied crow
- Cape crow
- Yellow wagtail
- Streaky seed eater
- Brown-rumped seedeater

Dinsho is a small forested area, reputed to be teeming with Mountain nyala, and we were not disappointed. We went for a walk with a local guide, who showed us many of these impressive endemic antelopes. Large bulls can reach weights of up to 300kg, and much like their small southern cousins, will thrash vegetation with their horns. Females are similar in colour to the males, and do not display the dimorphism of the southern species of nyala.
We also had excellent sightings of another endemic, the Menelik’s bushbuck, a much darker animal than the typical Common bushbuck. Photographic opportunities abounded and fun was had by all. Other mammals we saw here included the following:
Grey duiker
Bohor reedbuck
Guereza colobus

We headed up to our lodge, about 50 minutes away, in Goba. The Wabe Shebelle Hotel is well situated, below the main highlands of the Sanetti Plateau. Certainly not the plushest hotel we encountered, but it served its purpose! We had some supper and a few drinks before retiring for the night. We had a very stern, matronly waitress attend us for our stay, who did not do much smiling but was fairly efficient! The food was also very average here, but thankfully the wildlife more than made up for it!

Day 4 – 5 Dec

We got up early and met for a 06:30 breakfast, intending to depart by around 07:15. The plateau is very cold in the mornings, and encrusted with ice at this time of year, slowing the activities of the Giant root-rat (or mole-rat), which is the main prey of the Simien wolf. This makes both the rat and the wolf more or less late risers! However, everyone in our group is super keen so we focussed on birds as we rose up through the hills for a very full day of game viewing.
Birds on the way included:

- Tacazze sunbird
- African citril
- Wattled ibis
- Streaky seedeater
- Brown-rumped seedeater
- Rufous-breasted wryneck
- Moorland chat
- Pin-tailed whydah
- Abyssinian catbird
- White-cheeked turaco
- Mountain thrush
- Montane white-eye
- Rougets rail
- Groundscraper thrush
- Yellow-billed duck

Plant life was also interesting as we rose including huge *Hygenia abysinica* trees with their red sprays of flowers. The plateau was covered with Helichrsum plants and the iconic Giant lobelia. These tall plants are an amazing feature of this landscape. Birds such as the Augur buzzard use these as their perches, in the absence of trees. Flowers of many colours dotted the ground. Rocks covered in lichen of greys, oranges, yellows and greens were scattered everywhere. Many clear pools of water are seen too, typically with their own pair of endemic Blue-winged goose. The ground is spongy in many places, soaked with water.

As we climbed onto the plateau we saw:

- Moorland francolin
- Augur buzzard
- A Klipspringer was also seen as we ascended, and we were told by Melaku that this variety is horned in both the male and female, a trait I had never heard of before. However, recent books on ungulates describe these animals as a separate species of Klipspringer! So an unexpected endemic!

![An otherworldly place, the Bale Highlands national park, here W.O. photographs Giant lobelias](image)

Up on the Sanetti Plateau the otherworldly impression of the Bale continued. Many more lobelias were seen, and freshly turned mounds of soil indicated the presence of the Giant root-rats.

On the plateau we saw more birds:

- Lanner falcon
- Black-headed siskin
- Blue-winged goose
A Simien wolf, trotting across the Helichrysum scrub, and the endemic Blue-winged geese

Besides the Giant mole-rat (*Tachyoryctes macrocephalus*) we also saw plenty of Unstriped grass rat, (possibly *Arvicanthis abbyssinicus*). These creatures make up the primary prey of the Simien wolf, (mole-rats comprise up to 40% of the prey) a beautiful, long-legged dog, with beautiful red pelage, and wonderful white facial markings and legs. Our first pair of these dogs were spotted at great distance, foraging along a ridge, standing out amongst the white lichens and *Helichrysum*.

We watched for a while, as they moved, very surprised by how quickly they crossed the vast rocky landscape. After a while they disappeared below a ridge so we headed off.

Birds continued to pour in:
Wattled crane
Golden eagle
Lammergeier

We drove past Tulu Dintu, reputed to be the second highest mountain in Ethiopia, at 4377m. Melaku mentioned that Enatye in the Simien’s is actually higher and second in the country at 4436m! The tallest is Ras Dashen (locally known as Ras Dejen) at 4620m, also in the Simien’s.

Gary capturing a pic of a Bohor reedbuck, Debbie and Larry in action at Tuluke and an Unstriped grass rat emerges from its burrow for a moment

We stopped off at a view point, in rolling clouds. It is called Tuluke, and is at 3810 meters. This misty place had a surreal feel to it, and as the group explored in every direction I kept a keen eye, making sure no one got lost in the mist. Klipspringer tracks and Starck’s hare dung was everywhere.
In fact, a brief sighting of Starck’s hare was had by some of our group, Gary and Judy. Lots of wonderful plant life kept us busy too. Giant heath forests, the trunks of which were covered in moss were encountered on the way down towards Herena, it was a precipitous descent. Settlements and farming communities, of horse riding Oromo were next. Lots of spinach was for sale in the markets. Children dress warmly and brightly here, in contrast to the near-naked children of the Omo Valley. Many of them wear gum boots too!

The Chestnut-naped francolin was seen in good numbers as we descended but were very shy when it came to photography! We had lunch in the Herena Forest, at around 2500 meters ASL, after a brief search in the bamboo belt for the Bale monkey.

Then after some time watching colobus monkeys we prepared to head back onto the plateau. We opted for a walk up the track, looking and listening for the monkeys, but unfortunately they did not appear. So we climbed onto our bus and started the long and muddy drive back up the hill, but in less than 50m we encountered a small group of the range-restricted and endemic Bale monkeys, *(Cercopithecus djamondjamensis)*! The troop was large, I guess around 30 animals in all, and accompanying them was a lone hyrax! We had a fantastic sighting of these greenish monkeys, with their white and brown markings, as they crossed the road in front of us, and then posed for us in the bamboo thickets next to the road.

What incredible luck! Very few visitors get to see this recently described species and we certainly had more than our share!

Musical chairs for francolins was the order of the day on the way up, as everyone seemed to want to get a picture of the Chestnut-naped francolins which eluded us so well on the way up. The team moved from seat to seat, side to side as francolins were spotted, but they eluded us until we got back to Tuluke, and we saw a couple in a rock. They were distant but photographable!
In the Bale it is truly a case of 4 seasons in a day, with icy cold mornings, needing gloves and jackets, misty areas of mountain, warmth down in the forests and windy in-hospitable conditions on the cliff edges. You need to be able to peel off or add on layers as required!

Some of our additional bird species included:
Thekla lark
Ruddy shelduck
Pallid harrier (male)

Then on our way back we stopped to look at some Giant lobelias in the wonderful afternoon light. We all dispersed, cameras in hand, to see what we could find. Many of the group really wanted to get images of the rats and mole-rats, so these stops gave everyone the freedom to explore different possibilities. Anyway, I accompanied Larry on a walk along the road, and then heard a peculiar jackal-like call. "Wolf" I said. I headed straight toward the sound, and leapt up onto some large roadside rocks. I saw 3 wolves, one with a freshly caught mole-rat! The three of them were making their way through rocky ground with an amazing backdrop of Giant lobelias, straight toward us.

I looked down the road, at the distant bus, and could see they were not yet moving towards us, so irrespective of the fact that we were at over 4000m ASL I jumped down and started running! There was no way my other guests were going to miss this! Melaku saw me running, and quickly got the bus rolling up toward where Larry and I were, and soon I had everyone out of the bus for an on foot approach. There was one adult female and possibly two younger animals, which we got reasonably close to. The adult, with the root-rat firmly in her jaws trotted up toward us in beautiful afternoon light, giving us really good opportunities to take her picture and watch her movements. We spent a good few minutes walking with them, sharing a small page from their lives. A magic moment indeed!
As we departed across the Sanetti we found another new bird for the day: Spot-breasted lapwing

We headed down the road, past Oromo villages, grass and mud huts with smokey roofs were seen all along the hillsides as the residents prepared for yet another frozen night. Supper at the lodge was followed by a well-earned rest!

Day 5 – 6 Dec

On our way early, with a little less birding today, we found ourselves on the Sanetti Plateau sooner than anticipated. We stopped at a side road to explore a little, each of us wandering a little and enjoying the brisk air and amazing views. We also met an Oromo tribesman, who allowed us to take a picture of him, with his face wrapped in grey cloth against the cold. Birds included:

- Wattled ibis
- Blue-winged goose
- Ruddy shelduck
- Augur buzzard
- Common kestrel
- White-collared pigeon

We spent some time watching the comical Unstriped grass rat’s, continuing our group photographic mission, and looking at the fascinating plant life.

Larry waits patiently for an Unstriped grass rat, and the two morphs of Augur buzzard which we saw

Then we managed yet another Simien wolf sighting. He was right next to the road, and appeared to be stalking prey. We waited, breathlessly…and he leapt up and ran, straight over a rise. And gone! Larry chose to stay in the area and try photograph a mole-rat, so we left him, safely perched on his own private rock, in the desolate landscape.

A hunting wolf and a Thekla lark
Today there were much fewer trucks and only few busses, as yesterday things had been much busier. This may have been accountable for the comparatively distant sightings of wolf yesterday? While we drove we were very lucky and saw a black morph Augur buzzard, perched on a rock. I hopped out of the bus and walked with Graeme toward the bird. We managed to get fairly close to it. We went back up the dirt road to collect Larry, and bumped into a mating pair of Augur buzzard's, and while we were watching a second male flew in, displacing the first. The female did not seem to mind at all! Well, it wasn't more than a few minutes later, that another Simien wolf crossed the road in front of us. We were now thoroughly spoiled. The wolf moved gently along, investigating the scrubby moorland ahead, searching no doubt for its rodent prey.

However, we had saved the best for last! Not even ten minutes later another wolf, following a running Starck's hare, came toward our bus. The hare was leaping high, gambolling, much like a miniature, pronking springbok. Perhaps to show the wolf how fit and fast it was. Anyway, the wolf did not seem too interested in the hare, so its ruse must have paid off, and the wolf decided instead to approach our vehicle to within about 25m, affording us our very best view and photo opportunity yet. After letting us all take what sounded like a million pictures he trotted off, urinated on a bush and then left!

The wolf trots right past us, and the hare in its laying low posture

We walked over to the Starck's hare afterwards, getting a great opportunity to take some images. He lay still, using his camouflage to protect himself. This worked in our favour for a while, but eventually his nerve failed! These large hares are very furry indeed, (a function of its environment) and weigh up to 5kg and can be up to 60cm long. This one was somewhat smaller however. It laid dead still for quite a while as mentioned, hoping its camouflage would protect it, but eventually ran off when the curious herd of humans got too close.

More birds on the way down:
Wattled ibis
Chestnut-naped francolin

Hand sawing logs into planks is still done in these parts, and huge planks were being cut from an axe felled tree on the side of the road as we approached Angessa checkpoint, the exit point of the Bale NP to the north.

Birds in the farmland below Angessa included:
Mountain thrush
Yellow-billed kite
Black morph Augur buzzard
Common fiscal (female)
Thick-billed ravens
Hooded vulture
By now it was only lunch time, so we had a pre ordered meal waiting for us of (super) Garlic tomato soup. It was really awesome! Then for the afternoon we took another drive to Dinsko, in hopes of catching a glimpse of the nyala’s in good light.

At the HQ we had a nice uphill walk at high altitude which we were promised would be downhill! It was well worth the effort though, as we saw lots of nyala, male, female and young. We also saw:
Common warthog
Menelik’s bushbuck
Bohor reedbuck

And amazing birds:
Abyssinian Slaty flycatcher
Abyssinian catbird
White-backed black tit
Dusky turtle dove

We did a little tracking too and saw tracks of Mountain nyala, nose diggings of warthogs, regurgitated pellets of Abyssinian long-eared owl, dung of Common duiker, nyala and Serval. A little bit of a different aspect for the guests to enjoy!

Afterwards we headed back to our hotel for a good night’s rest.

**Day 6 – 7 Dec**

We departed at 08h00 after a filling breakfast, and headed past Dinsko to continue our journey. We saw many mammals en route:
Serval (x3)
Golden jackal
Bohor reedbuck
Olive baboon
Mountain nyala
Common warthog

Frankie directing traffic, W.O. stalking his quarry and Carol getting ready for the shot

The Serval were great fun, with fantastic viewing and a lot of excitement. Baboons posed, Rouget’s rails posed, Mountain nyala’s posed...and we all had a great time. We were all sad to leave the wet moors, but had to head off to the next adventure!

This would probably be a great area for an early morning drive, in the moorland below Dinsho, with its ponds full of waterbirds, which are complimented by interesting groups of quite relaxed mammals. This area was initially named the 'Rail Road' by Judy, a member of our group, due to the large number of beautifully marked, white-tail flicking Rouget’s rail individuals we saw, but this tar road was soon renamed Serval Street, after finding 3 individuals in such a short distance in the wonderful morning light!

A female nyala and one of the 3 Serval we saw

Birds included:
Black stork
Rouget’s rail
Lammergeier
African stonechat (a 1st year male)

White-collared pigeon
Red-knobbed coot
Yellow-billed duck
Woolly-necked stork
We passed some of the Great Rift Valley Lakes on the way, such as Lake Shala (the deepest at 256 metres), Lake Abiyata and Lake Langano, on the shores of which we would spend this evening at Bishangari Lodge, which is at around 1500 m ASL.

The dirt track we took to our lodge was better for the first 10km, but pretty rough for the last 10km. On the road to Bishangari we saw:
- Grey-backed fiscal
- White-browed sparrow-weaver

The whole way we passed Oromo people, the villages very different from those of the Omo, with wicker grain bins, roughly thatched houses and trees full of livestock fodder, stacked in their forks. Children were running alongside the car on the way to the lake, asking for sweeties or just saying hello. The last 10km of the road was pretty bad, but in spite of this it was very interesting to see the villages so close up.

Lots of grave yards were seen along the way, with Moslem emblems on top of them, painted in green, blue and yellow. Some had tombstones with horses painted on them, which apparently indicates a good horseman.

The rooms were wonderfully appointed, and well-spaced out. Each room was named after an animal or bird. The dining area and tree lounge were also very nicely placed. We prepared for a walk and headed out with Shaalloo, our bird guide. We wandered through mature forests, teeming with birds, and at one point Gary exclaimed that he could not believe that he had, in a single view, White-cheeked turaco, Double-toothed barbet and Yellow-fronted parrots! These three special species had all perched within a few feet of one another in a huge fig!

We saw several other special birds such as:
- Yellow-fronted parrot
- Blue-spotted wood-dove

Some Oromo people and their huts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black-headed batis (female)</td>
<td>Red-cheeked cordonbleu</td>
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<tr>
<td>White-cheeked turaco</td>
<td>Red-fronted tinkerbird</td>
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<td>Grey-backed camaroptera</td>
<td>Beautiful sunbird (eclipse male)</td>
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<td>Blue-breasted bee-eater</td>
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<td>Yellow-fronted parrot</td>
<td>Scaly francolin</td>
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<td>Blue-spotted wood-dove</td>
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<td>Pygmy kingfisher</td>
<td>African paradise-flycatcher</td>
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<td>Mountain thrush</td>
<td>Lesser honeyguide</td>
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<td>Silvery-cheeked hornbill</td>
<td>Abyssinian ground-hornbill</td>
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<td>Grey-headed woodpecker</td>
<td>Yellow wagtail (subsp. flava)</td>
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<td>Slender-billed starling</td>
<td>Northern wheatear</td>
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<td>Woodland kingfisher</td>
<td>Egyptian goose</td>
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<td>Lemon dove</td>
<td>Marabou stork</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common bulbul</td>
<td>Rüppell’s robin-chat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Double-toothed barbet</td>
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*Blue-breasted bee-eater, yellow-fronted parrot and a Blue-spotted wood-dove*

When we got back we had an ice cold drink, and a delicious dinner, and then headed back to our lovely rooms.

**Day 7 – 8 Dec**

Waking up at Lake Langano to a dawn chorus of Rüppell’s robin-chats, Scaly francolins, Ethiopian boubou’s and Blue-spotted wood-doves was wonderful. The grumbling call of the colobus and the raucous barks of Olive baboons could also be heard.

*Olive baboon, Hemprich’s hornbill and Brown-throated wattle-eye*

We headed out at 06:30 for our AM walk on the lake shore, past areas where the parrots come to ground to eat soil, obtaining their salts and other minerals in this way.

On this walk we saw:

- Pied wheatear
- African openbill
Marabou stork
Red-eyed dove
Yellow-fronted parrot
Grey-backed fiscal
Eurasian hoopoe
Wattled starlings
Rüppell’s starling
Baglafecht’s weaver
Northern red-billed hornbill
Greater honeyguide
Barn swallow
Northern grey-headed sparrow
Bare-faced go away bird
Black Scimitarbill
Mountain thrush
Eastern saw-wing
Northern black flycatcher
Violet-backed starling
Spectacled weaver

Red-headed weaver
Double-toothed barbet
Ethiopian boubou
Greater blue-eared glossy starling
Pygmy Kingfisher
Black cuckoo-shrike
Blue-spotted wood-dove
Fork-tailed drongo
Black-headed barbet
Hemphrich’s hornbill
Scaly francolin
Northern carmine bee-eater
Silvery-cheeked hornbill
Beautiful sunbird
Crested francolin
White-rumped babbler
Brown-throated wattle-eye
Namaqua dove
Common bulbul

I also heard a Scaly-throated honeyguide calling but unfortunately did not see it at all.

Then we headed out of the lodge up the twenty kilometres of dirt track, toward the asphalt road, heading up towards Nazareth (or Adamo). On the way we passed the Lake Ziway again and the huge internationally owned AQRoses greenhouses which Gary estimated to be at least 150 HA under cover! The various towns were as colourful as always with an interesting bank sign saying "Baankiiintaarnarshinaali Oromiiyaa"...what a mouthful. There is clearly a surplus of vowels in Ethiopia, and they were trying to help use them up!

We also saw many herds of camels grazing and browsing on various plants, including Prickly pears! In places there were pyramids of hay, many meters high, and we even noticed some tall white wind turbines at one stage. After Nazareth we also passed a huge lava field, where a volcano erupted less than 100 years ago!

Along the way we saw the round grass huts of Kareyu people who are nomads, and herd camels between pastures. They are a related tribe to the Oromo.
After driving along the Djibouti road for some time (100km or so) and dodging trucks and busses in true Ethiopian fashion we arrived at the Awash National Park.

W.O. was feeling pretty ill today so we headed straight to lodge for him to get some rest. The rest of us dumped bags and went straight out for an afternoon and evening drive! Our good luck continued and on the afternoon drive we saw several endemic mammals of the Horn of Africa, including the small, desert dwelling Abyssinian hare (Subsp. habysinica), the miniscule Salt's dikdik (Subsp. swaynei) and the beautiful 200kg Beisa oryx. The oryx were a definite target species for the trip. We then stopped for a desert sundowner, with a few cold drinks before continuing with our night drive.

Salt’s dikdik and a Beisa oryx

We drove for a while, after dark, with our flashlights poking out of the many large windows, scanning for signs of wildlife. We saw sleeping goshawks, sleeping passerines, running hares, still-standing dikdiks and then finally Lee spotted a big male leopard, approaching the road. He was very shy, but we managed to get three or four fairly substantial views of the big tom-cat before he finally crossed the road towards the Awash River! Not even 10 minutes later Gary called two Spotted hyenas on the other side of the car! No owls were found unfortunately but I think we had all seen enough for the evening. Melaku, our guide, had never seen a leopard here before in seven years of guiding in this region! Dinner was served around the fire, with the roar of the Awash Falls behind us.

Day 8 – 9 Dec

We got up for an AM drive, having our coffee at 06:00, while it was still dark. Just before we left it was light enough to see the falls. Just like a miniature Victoria Falls, divided by the low water supply into 3 separate channels! Whilst we were out we experienced sunrise on drive. This habitat is thorny dry scrub. Some areas which the guides like Melaku describe as Savannah are very open grassy Savannahs with stunted acacia. Although some areas seem to be much thicker they are also Savannah. We had a flashing glimpse of a Lesser kudu in fairly thick bush, enough to see his striped flanks and pink and brown ears.

There was also a hope to photograph a Salt’s dikdik by some of the group, so I warned them to be ready, as they usually flee when you stop the vehicle. The very next dikdik we saw stood like a super-model in perfect light, posing for us for many minutes. Just goes to show, the animals will make the rules, not us!
A male gazelle and some crocodiles in the Awash River

We also found a small, lightly marked Black-backed jackal, which seemed a little nervous at our presence but gave us ample time to watch him and take his picture.

We encountered several bull oryx, and then finally what we had been looking for. A large herd of at least 40 Beisa oryx and their calves, which were attended by dozens and dozens of Yellow wagtails. As the oryx walked or dug up the loose soil the wagtails would sweep in, collecting any exposed insects. Some females were sweeping their horns in the loose soil, and foot scraping. This display was a warning as many baby oryx were in attendance. The light was perfect for pictures, and certainly every camera on board was employed, as we were spoilt for choice of subject!

The endemic Soemmering’s gazelle (Subsp. butteri) was our next target, and we didn’t have to wait long before we saw 3 distant rams. They were very far away so we continued toward the Fentale Mountains, some still-active volcanoes, to the west of the area we now drove. We encountered another large heard of oryx, attended by a distant gazelle and a troop of Olive baboons, who had been involved in serious conflict over a breeding female. Two of the males had blood on their shoulders from possible bites by a more dominant male. We saw yawn threats and eyelid flashes as the injured males approached the swollen-bumbed princess of baboons and her dominant consort!

Birds were not a huge focus but we saw some good species including:
- Chestnut-backed sparrow-lark
- Somali fiscal
- Isabelline wheatear
- Northern white-crowned shrike
- White-headed buffalo-weaver
- Red-billed buffalo-weaver
- Dark chanting goshawk
- Montagu’s harrier (Male)
- Northern carmine bee-eater
- Helmeted guineafowl
- Red-cheeked cordonbleu
- Fork-tailed drongo
- Long-tailed paradise-whydah

After a while we encountered two Soemerings rams chasing each other toward the road, affording us our best view yet. The constant wagging of tails is a normal feature of this elegant creature. The males may have been chasing each other for some time, as one stood mouth agape as we watched him. We saw a beautiful fever tree in full bloom as we headed back to camp, the yellow flowers attended by dozens of butterflies. Frankie is a real butterfly fan and enjoyed this very much.

Once at camp we sat on a high deck to eat our 10 o’clock brunch and we saw two medium sized crocodiles on a flat rock in the Awash. Next we took a little down time, the first on this trip, as the early mornings and late evenings seem to be catching up with us!

The afternoon was begun with some birding along the Awash in the riverine forest. This afternoon we located some very relaxed birds, who provided outstanding photo opportunities:
While we were viewing the world’s most relaxed African orange-bellied parrot we encountered a large Nile crocodile which belly-flopped into the river with a huge noise! There were also Black and white colobus monkeys which chased off a lone Grivet monkey (left). We headed out on drive, revisiting many of our species from earlier in the day, and wandered up to a viewpoint at an abandoned hotel where various arms of the Great Rift Valley meet. The view was spectacular!

Due to the success of our previous night drive we decided to have another go at it. During the drive I managed to spot a chameleon, resulting in some excited photography.

In addition to this we saw some great mammals:
- African wild cat
- White-tailed mongoose
- Beisa oryx
- Spot hyena
- Two interesting birds were added to our nocturnal list too:
  - Star-spotted nightjar
  - Double-banded courser

**Day 9 – 10 Dec**

We met for breakfast at 06:30 and we had some interesting birds in camp:
- Eastern grey plantain-eater
- African fish-eagle
- Grey hornbill

On drive we saw:
- Beisa oryx
- Salt’s dikdik
- Warthog
- Olive baboon
Birds included:
Blue-breasted bee-eater
Red-cheeked cordonbleu
Isabelline wheatear
Pygmy falcons
Chestnut-backed sparrow-larks
Somali fiscal
Yellow wagtail
Kori bustard

Blue-patched bush-shrike
Northern carmine bee-eater
Superb starling
Eurasian hoopoe
White-browed sparrow-weaver
White-headed buffalo-weaver
Helmeted guineafowl
Northern white-headed shrike

When we left the park we saw the 'cattle prison' where any confiscated cattle are kept, with Afar tribesmen in their white robes negotiating the return of their cattle with the blue camouflaged, Kalashnikov bearing park rangers.

We also passed the huts of the Kareyu nomads as we drove. These simple grass huts are rounded in shape and easily identified.

On road:
White-backed vulture
Egyptian vulture
Hooded vulture

A Hamadryas or Sacred baboon on a Scoria field and a crocodile in Lake Baseka

We stopped off at Lake Baseka, which is unfortunately much polluted, but this did not seem to deter the bird life:
Egyptian vulture
White-backed vulture
Goliath heron
Grey heron

Squacco heron
Yellow-billed stork
Little egret
Marabou stork

Also on the 100 year old lava flow area near the Baseka we saw a troop of Sacred baboon, sitting out on the bare black scoria. The road from Awash was absolute chaos. Truck after truck, carrying containers from Djibouti lined the road. Some had crashed and were still laid in the middle of the road. Others had broken down on the steep hills. Others were so slow they might as well have been broken down! Eventually we got onto the new expressway at Nazareth, what a difference. No traffic at all. On the way we saw a huge wheel of birds:
White stork
We stopped at the Pyramid Hotel in Bishoftu, or Debre Zeyet, and had delicious pizzas for lunch. This hotel is nestled on the edge of a volcanic crater, and commands a beautiful view! Definitely worth a visit! The afternoon saw our arrival at the Nexus, and some time to freshen up before dinner.

Day 10 – 11 Dec

Our flight to Gondar was set to depart at 07:40 so we left the hotel in the pre-dawn darkness to be timeous for our flight, getting through the stringent security checks, and boarding the Air Ethiopia flight. After Gondar this flight will go on to Axum and Lalibela.

The northern city of Gondar is 2300m above Sea Level (ASL), and situated in the Amhara Regional State. The religious population is approximately 88% Ethiopian Orthodox Christian, 11% Moslem and 1% Catholic.

We visited the amazing castles, built during the 1600’s. The initial constructions were by King (Emperor) Fasilidus, during 1632 to 1667. Subsequently six other dynasties built here. We toured the amazing structures, reminiscent of the castles of Europe of the same era. This may have been due to Portuguese influence around this time.

Whilst we were wandering around looking at the castles, W.O. noticed a Hemphrich’s hornbill catching an agama off a small tree near one of the walls. This is apparently a common occurrence here in the gardens!
We then went to see Fasilidus’ Swimming Pool, it is a sort of miniature Ethiopian Angkor Wat, with amazing fig trees growing in all the walls. This is an important site for Timket, around January the 19th, the celebration of Jesus’ baptism, or the epiphany. This pool is flooded by a diverted river, over 500km away, once a year for this festival, which culminates in hundreds of boys and young men leaping into the pool.

Birds we saw at the swimming pool included:
- Grey woodpecker (sub. rhodeogaster)
- Abyssinian black-headed oriole
- Mocking cliff-chat
- Black-winged lovebird
- Black-billed barbet

After the pool we went to ‘Habesha Caffee’, for cold drinks, (and my first ever Ginger Tea). Then on to the Debre Berhan Selassie Church (priest Right). We had to wait a while whilst mass and a baptism were completed, so we did a little birding in the gardens around the church:
- Red-winged starling
- Common chiffchaff
- Montane white-eye
- Black kite
- Hooded vulture

An interesting sighting was that of a Hemphrich’s hornbill feeding chicks in a hole the wall above the doorway to the church grounds. This offered really good opportunities to listen to the vocalisations of the birds in the nest.

Interestingly this is the only one of many churches of the era in the town to have Survived Mahadist Sudanese attacks, and this is, according to the legends, due to a swarm of bees which flew down and attacked the marauding armies at the gates of the church!

We returned for a sundowner at lodge, (left) and took some lovely sunset shots as we viewed over the ancient Capitol of Ethiopia. Well, it was dinner and all in bed by 20:30, due to our early start and the general tiredness catching up with us all!

Day 11 – 12 Dec

Today we had breakfast at 07:30 and prepared to depart to the Simien Mountains up through winding hills, into amazing farmlands with farmers tossing straw into the wind from flat wicker baskets, getting rid of the dust in the high winds. Haystacks of different shapes dot the landscape, with Amhara ladies in their white robes and umbrellas open over their heads.

Birds on the way included:
- White-collared pigeons
- Black kite
- Groundscraper thrush

At the Head Quarters of the Simien Mountains National Park we collected two Kalashnikov bearing ‘scouts’ (left) and a local guide. The town where the head office is situated is called Debark. All the way up to the park we travelled through farming areas, bustling with intensive activity. Entering the park we were met with more of exactly the same. Farming seemed to diminish after a while.
however. Still, small towns still dotted the hillsides, and terraced slopes too. A peculiar approach to a National Park indeed, but we were not to be disappointed with the quantities of animals we had come to see in these high reaches. We arrived at our lodge, which appeared very comfortable. Then we prepared to head on out for our first experience here in the Simien’s.

Viewing Gelada is a wildlife experience like no other. There is constantly something happening. The plucking sound of grass being torn up is a staple accompaniment. Human-like vocalizations ring through the group every few moments. First one mumbles, then the rest take up the call. It really sounds like people talking away. They feed peacefully, ignoring the observer completely. You may as well not exist for all the attention they give you. Occasional interactions such as a juvenile approaching an adult female too closely result in several different types of reaction, such as the closing of the eyes to reveal the white eye-lids, a warning to stay away. Invariably in these cases the young offender moves off. Or in some instances, such as when a male is chased by numerous females, which we also saw, the male will turn to them and perform a lip-flip, or the ‘Gelada-smile’. This is said, in spite of the huge canines which are revealed, to be a submissive gesture. When a male is groomed by a female he may also do a ‘smile’, once she is done, which is preceded by a satisfied sounding vocalization. I can only guess he is saying "Thanks!"

Today we spent many hours in the warm sun, watching first a bachelor group of males, and then a group of harems with dominant males, females and youngsters of all possible ages.

Being surrounded by these interesting and unbelievably gentle creatures is a ‘wildlife must’, at least once in your travels. And then at sunset they make their way over the edge of the plateau, to rest in safety on the ledges of the precipitous cliffs.

An interesting new bird was seen by the group:
Erckel’s francolin

Day 12 – 13 Dec

This was to be a day of traveling up roads through the Simien’s, roads which are amazing, purely and simply from the perspective that they exist. Precipitous slopes drop away from the sides, and no one wants to look down. Our vehicle bounced and leapt along the boulder strewn road, which was like an obstacle course for busses. Troops of Gelada lined the roads, but for now we had a different target. We would drive for a couple of hours to the back-of-beyond, to a place called Chennek. This
is the haunt of the endemic Walia ibex, a large goat which inhabits some of the coldest and most steep cliffside’s on the continent.

Common bushbuck, Klipspringer and Black-backed jackals were also seen, as well as great birdlife:

- Lammergeier
- Verreaux’s eagle
- Thick-billed raven
- Lanner falcon
- Fan-tailed raven
- Augur buzzard

We eventually passed Chennek, and happened upon a flock of about 8 or 10 ibex, with a large ram, a small ram and some ewes and young lambs. They walked sure-footedly along the cliff-edge, occasionally disappearing over the side, and then popped up again. Their dark fur has a brownish glossy sheen, and their bearded faces seem quite relaxed. They allowed us within 10 meters of them as they fed and groomed.

We all managed to take great pictures of this peculiar and localized goat, and noted respectfully that this is the only place, on our whole planet, where it can be seen these days. What a privilege. We had a picnic way up on the cliff edges, and Larry managed to get a picture of an interesting little bird, which in spite of its drab appearance is very localised, and a must see for the region. The Ankober serin is as Gary put it, able to make a sparrow look glamorous, but we saw it none-the-less!

The afternoon was spent with another troop of Gelada, as we had much more of their behaviour and activities to see. We spent a lot of this afternoon observing, and I noticed less clicks as we sat amongst them. Everyone was pretty keen however to try and capture an image of the famous lip flip. I think everyone had about 20 images of this by the time we were done.
During this afternoon Gary and Judy headed out on a walk with a scout, and headed down to the cliff edges, where they found their own troop.

We all met up for dinner at the lodge, and sat with Marius Coetzee (from Oryx) and his guests, who were also up in the Highlands, sharing stories of our respective trips.

**Day 13 – 14 Dec**

We took an early AM drive to find Gelada, and sat with a troop for some time. As they ascended the hills, we took our bus and met them higher up, for a little while longer.

Unfortunately I was feeling under the weather, so I opted to stay in the bus, out of the cold, but I had a great view of everyone, developing and fine-tuning their techniques for getting into the troop of large reddish monkeys, and slowly moving with the troops. Then we took a short walk to the ledges from the 1st campsite looking for birds:

- Egyptian vulture
- Augur buzzard
- White-winged cliff chat
- Abyssinian woodpecker
- Northern black flycatcher

The afternoon activity was a gentle walk to the escarpment near the lodge, where everyone sat and relaxed in the last rays of the sun, much like the amazing Gelada we had come to see. Once the group began its ascent to the lodge a group of about a hundred Geladas arrived as if on cue. They
raced across the shaded slope as a group, and then halted in a sunbathed slope. Here they sat for a while, until the shade began to overtake them, and they continued to keep in the sun moving to keep warm, an interesting behaviour to see.

Gary photographing Gelada, a big male gets ready to retire for the night and Judy enjoys the view

I also took the time to look at some of the tracks and signs up in the mountains, and saw interesting spoor and scat. The substrate was not always conducive to good clear tracks, but it was worth looking around!

Ibex scat and Gelada spoor

Day 14 – 15 Dec

This was effectively to be our last day before the major travel home began. The drive from Simien’s was uneventful, if bumpy and we dropped off our 2 rifle-bearing scouts who had been ‘looking after us’ for the last few days, at the park Head Quarters in Debark. Along the road in a small homestead Melaku noticed a woman making traditional Injera, one of the favourite Ethiopian foods of our group. We stopped the bus and poured out eagerly to see this ancient cooking style. The lady was most gracious, and smiled a lot. Her braided hairstyle was of that specifically worn around Gondar.
We made an interesting stop at a small village called Felasha, which was formerly a Jewish refuge. Jewish people were not widely accepted in Ethiopia, which is predominantly a land of Orthodox Christians and Moslems, and during times of threat the Israelis sent in rescue missions to take them out of Ethiopia! At least three of these missions took place, via Sudan, Somalia and finally directly from Addis. As far as we could ascertain there are only two of these original Jewish Community members still living in Ethiopia! Both are apparently very elderly ladies, who chose to stay behind due to familial constraints.

We checked in at our hotel and prepared for a wonderful lunch at the ‘Four Sisters Restaurant’. This must be one of the best restaurants in Gondar, as the food was excellent. The name of the restaurant might come from the fact that the average portion of food served here could easily feed four. No, just kidding, there are four sisters, and we met them all!

The afternoon was leisurely, with some birding and sundowners for those who had the energy after this exhausting adventure. A nice dinner at 19:30 rounded off our final evening together.

**Day 15 – 16 Dec**

We met for breakfast at the dining room of the very comfortable Goha Hotel, before departing for our flight to Addis Ababa. We went to a restaurant called the ‘Mini Bole’ for a final coffee together and even found some Coke light, much to Frankie’s delight. This was to be our final time together, as from here we all left for our respective flights or overnight stops before departure. Fare well team, until our next journey together!

**Summarised species list for the tour**

**Mammal list**

\( \text{E} = \text{Horn of Africa endemics (15 of the 32 species!)} \)

1. Abyssinian hare (Subsp. *habyssinica*) - \( \text{E} \)
2. African wild cat
3. Bale monkey - \( \text{E} \)
4. Beisa oryx - \( \text{E} \)
5. Black and white (Guereza) colobus monkey
6. Black-backed jackal
7. Bohor reedbuck
8. Common bushbuck
9. Ethiopian hyrax - \( \text{E} \)
10. Gelada -E  
11. Giant mole-rat (root-rat) -E  
12. Golden jackal  
13. Grivet (locally known as Abyssinian vervet) monkey  
14. Ethiopian kipspringer -E  
15. Leopard  
16. Lesser kudu  
17. Menelik’s bushbuck -E  
18. Mountain nyala -E  
19. Olive baboon  
20. Sacred (Hamadryas) baboon  
21. Salt’s dikdik (Subsp. swaynei) -E  
22. Serval  
23. Simien wolf -E  
24. Slender mongoose  
25. Soemerings gazelle (Subsp. butterli) -E  
26. Spotted Hyena  
27. Starck’s hare -E  
28. Taterillus spp. gerbil  
29. Unstriped grass rat (Arvicanthis abbyssinicus) -E  
30. Walia ibex -E  
31. Common warthog  
32. White-tailed mongoose

Bird list

1. Abyssinian black-headed oriole  
2. Abyssinian cat-bird  
3. Abyssinian ground-hornbill  
4. Abyssinian Slaty flycatcher  
5. Abyssinian white-eye  
6. Abyssinian woodpecker  
7. African citril  
8. African darter  
9. African fish-eagle  
10. African harrier-hawk  
11. African jacana  
12. African openbill  
13. African orange-bellied parrot  
14. African paradise-flycatcher  
15. African pygmy kingfisher  
16. African pygmy-goose  
17. African stonechat (1st year male)  
18. Alpine chat  
19. Alpine swift  
20. Ankober serin  
21. Augur buzzard (both typical and dark morph)  
22. Baglafecht’s weaver  
23. Bare-faced go away bird  
24. Barn swallow  
25. Beautiful sunbird
26. Black crake
27. Black cuckooshrike
28. Black heron
29. Black kite
30. Black Scimitarbill
31. Black stork
32. Black-billed barbet
33. Black-headed batis
34. Black-headed gull
35. Black-headed siskin
36. Black-tailed godwit
37. Black-winged lovebird
38. Black-winged stilt
39. Blue-breasted bee-eater (subsp. lafresnayii)
40. Blue-naped mousebird
41. Blue-spotted wood-dove
42. Blue-winged goose
43. Brown-rumped seedeater
44. Brown-throated wattle-eye
45. Buff-bellied warbler
46. Cape crow
47. Cape eagle-owl (Subsp. dillonii)
48. Caspian tern
49. Cattle egret
50. Chestnut sparrow
51. Chestnut-backed sparrow-lark
52. Chestnut-naped francolin
53. Common bulbul (the white-vented subsp. schoanus)
54. Common chiffchaff
55. Common fiscal
56. Common greenshank
57. Common kestrel
58. Common redshank
59. Crested francolin
60. Dark chanting goshawk
61. Double-banded courser
62. Double-toothed barbet
63. Dusky turtle dove
64. Eastern saw-wing
65. Egyptian goose
66. Egyptian vulture
67. Erckel’s francolin
68. Ethiopian boubou
69. Eurasian hoopoe
70. Eurasian wryneck
71. Fan-tailed raven
72. Fork-tailed drongo
73. Giant kingfisher
74. Golden eagle
75. Goliath heron
76. Great cormorant
77. Great cormorant
78. Great white pelican
79. Greater blue-eared glossy starling
80. Greater honeyguide
81. Green sandpiper
82. Grey heron
83. Grey wagtail
84. Grey woodpecker (rhodeogaster)
85. Grey-backed camaroptera
86. Grey-backed fiscal
87. Groundscraper thrush
88. Hamerkop
89. Hamerkop
90. Helmeted guineafowl
91. Hemphrich’s hornbill
92. Hooded vulture
93. Hottentot teal
94. Isabelline wheatear
95. Kori bustard
96. Lammergeier
97. Lanner falcon
98. Laughing dove
99. Lemon dove
100. Lesser honeyguide
101. Lesser swamp warbler
102. Little egret
103. Little grebe
104. Long-tailed cormorant
105. Long-tailed paradise-whydah
106. Malachite kingfisher
107. Marabou stork
108. Mocking cliff chat
109. Montagu’s harrier
110. Montane white-eye
111. Moorland chat
112. Moorland francolin
113. Mountain thrush
114. Namaqua dove
115. Northern black flycatcher
116. Northern carmine bee-eater
117. Northern grey-headed sparrow
118. Northern puffback
119. Northern red-billed hornbill
120. Northern shoveller
121. Northern wheatear
122. Northern white-crowned shrike
123. Osprey
124. Pallid harrier
125. Pied crow
126. Pied kingfisher
127. Pied wheatear
128. Pin-tailed whydah
129. Pygmy falcon
130. Pygmy kingfisher
131. Red-billed buffalo-weaver
132. Red-billed firefinch
133. Red-billed oxpecker
134. Red-cheeked cordonbleu
135. Red-eyed dove
136. Red-fronted tinkerbird
137. Red-headed weaver
138. Red-knobbed coot
139. Red-winged starling
140. Rock martin
141. Rosy-patched bush-shrike
142. Rouget’s rail
143. Ruddy shelduck
144. Ruddy turnstone
145. Rüppell’s griffon-vulture
146. Rufous-breasted wryneck
147. Rüppell’s robin-chat
148. Rüppell’s starling
149. Sacred ibis
150. Saddle-billed stork
151. Scaly francolin
152. Scaly francolin
153. Scaly-throated honeyguide (H)
154. Scarlet-chested sunbird
155. Silvery-cheeked hornbill
156. Slender-billed starling
157. Somali fiscal
158. Southern pochard
159. Speckled mousebird
160. Speckled pigeon
161. Spectacled weaver
162. Spot-breasted lapwing
163. Spotted redshank
164. Spur-winged goose
165. Squacco heron
166. Star-spotted nightjar
167. Streaky seed-eater
168. Superb starling
169. Swainson’s sparrow
170. Tacazze sunbird
171. Thekla lark
172. Thick-billed raven
173. Verreaux’s eagle
174. Violet-backed starling
175. Water thick-knee
176. Wattled crane
177. Wattled ibis
178. Wattled starling
179. Whiskered tern
180. White stork
181. White wagtail
182. White-backed black tit
183. White-backed vulture
184. White-browed robin-chat
185. White-browed sparrow weaver
186. White-cheeked turaco
187. White-collared pigeon
188. White-faced duck
189. White-headed buffalo-weaver
190. White-rumped babbler
191. White-winged cliff chat
192. Wood sandpiper
193. Woodland kingfisher
194. Woolly-necked stork
195. Yellow wagtail (subsp. *feldegg*)
196. Yellow wagtail (subsp. *flava*)
197. Yellow wagtail (subsp. *thunbergi*)
198. Yellow-billed duck
199. Yellow-billed kite
200. Yellow-billed stork
201. Yellow-fronted parrot

**Reptiles**
1. Nile crocodile