



Ghana: Birds and Wildlife

Situated in the heart of West Africa, Ghana is a must-visit destination for any birding and wildlife enthusiast. This trip will provide a comprehensive overview of the country's 750+ bird species including the iconic White-necked Rockfowl and Egyptian Plover. With its fascinating culture, turbulent history, and incredible wildlife, Ghana will not disappoint.

Our Ghanaian travel partner leads the way in ethical, sustainable, and socially-conscious tourism in Africa. We'll visit a colony of White-necked Rockfowl that are being protected by a community-lead conservation program that thrives due to bird-based ecotourism.

Dates: 6 – 23 March 2024 (18 days)

Itinerary: [Map](#)

Cost: from \$3,750 (max 12 participants)

Potential Species: 350+

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ✿ Visit Mole National Park, Ankasa Conservation Area, and the world-famous Kakum NP canopy walkway.
- ✿ Learn how communities have harnessed ecotourism to fund sustainable development and habitat protection.
- ✿ See how traditional Kente cloth, Adinkra fabric, and shea butter are made at small village co-ops.
- ✿ Visit a recently discovered nesting colony of White-necked Rockfowl.
- ✿ Seek out 11 regionally endemic bird species and encounter classically African fauna, like elephant, antelope and primates.



This program will involve early mornings, moderate-to-high intensity birding, with some rough terrain.

Day 1: Wednesday 3/6/2024 Arrival in Ghana

You will be met upon your arrival at the Kotoka International airport in Accra, situated on the beautiful “Gold Coast”, Ghana’s former name during its time under British colonial rule. Your Tour Leader, Guide and Driver will offer you “Akwaaba” (welcome) and transport you to your hotel (approx. 1h), located close to Shai Hills Reserve. This evening the group will meet for a trip briefing and enjoy a welcome dinner at the hotel’s restaurant whilst acclimating to the environs of West Africa.

Accommodation: Alexis Hotel, Tema



Day 2: Thursday 3/7/2024 Shai Hills Reserve, Winneba Lagoon and transfer to Kakum NP

Our first morning we head for the savannah habitat of Shai Hills Reserve hoping to see a good selection of open grassland specialists to get our trip started, including **Northern Crombec, Yellow-fronted and Yellow-rumped Tinkerbirds, Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat, African Pygmy Kingfisher, Cardinal Woodpecker, Vieillot’s and Double-toothed Barbets, Mocking Cliff-Chat, Rock Martin, Red-shouldered Cuckooshrike, Violet Turaco, Senegal Parrot, Blue-bellied Roller, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Blackcap Illadopsis, Brown Babbler, Levillant’s Cuckoo, Copper and Splendid Sunbirds, White Helmetshrike, Croaking and Siffling Cisticolas, African Thrush, Lizard Buzzard, Lanner Falcon, Ahanta Spurfowl and Stone Partridge** to mention a few species on offer here.



Swallow-tailed Bee-eater © Derek Keats



White Helmetshrike © Bernard Dupont

After a wonderful morning at Shai Hills Reserve, we head to Winneba Lagoon where, depending on the water level, there is an abundance of birds to see. We hope to see **Black-winged Stilt, Senegal Thick-knee, Common Ringed and Black-bellied Plover, Spur-winged Lapwing, Black-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Common Greenshank, Spotted Redshank, Wood, Curlew, Marsh and Common Sandpipers, Collared Pratincole, Little Stint, Long-tailed Cormorant, Squacco, Gray, Purple, Striated and Black Herons, Little, Cattle, and Intermediate Egrets**. We will then set off towards Kakum National Park stopping for a slightly late lunch en route. Our accommodation will be close to the National Park, and we aim to arrive by early evening. On arrival we check in, relax, and enjoy our dinner and checklist in preparation for an early start in the morning.

Overnight: Rainforest Lodge, Jukwa

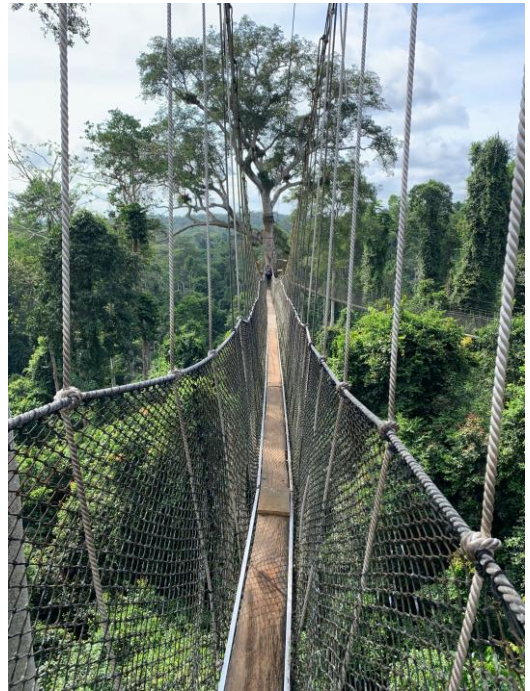


Day 3: Friday 3/8/2024 Kakum National Park and canopy walkway

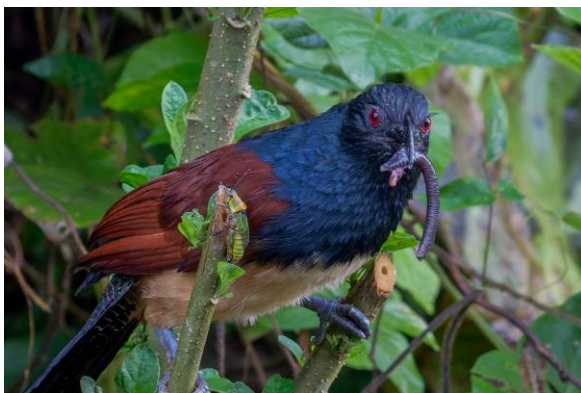
We’ll grab an early breakfast as we head for the world-famous canopy walkway at Kakum National Park, a 15-minute drive from our lodge. We aim to get to the walkway at first light, enabling us to spend the most critical birding hours 130 ft above the forest floor.

The 140 miles² Kakum NP protects secondary Upper Guinea semi-deciduous tropical rainforest (see more information at the end of the itinerary), and it is a wonderful and rare opportunity to be so close to the canopy of a beautiful forest like this.

Our main target species during our time on the canopy walkway are **Violet-backed Hylia**, **Chestnut-capped Flycatcher**, the Upper Guinea endemics **Sharpe's Apalis**^(NT), **Brown-Cheeked Hornbill**^(VU), and **Copper-tailed Starling**^(NT), **Blue Cuckooshrike**, **Little Green Woodpecker**, and **White-crested Hornbill**. Other species we hope to see include are **Blue-throated Brown**, **Collared**, and the beautiful **Buff-throated**^ **Sunbirds**, **Red-headed Malimbe**, **Rosy Bee-eater**, **White-breasted** and **Gray-headed Nigrita**, **Red-fronted** and **Gray**(EN) **Parrots**, **Western Black-headed**, and **Black-winged Orioles**, **Rufous-crowned Eremomela**, **Splendid** and **Chestnut-winged Starlings**, **Preuss's** and **Yellow-mantled Weavers**, **Green Hylia**, **Golden**, **Slender-billed**, and **Gray Greenbuls**, **African Green Pigeon**, **African Emerald Cuckoo**, **Blue-throated Roller**, **Black-throated Coucal**, **Yellow-throated**, and **Speckled Tinkerbirds**, **Naked-faced Barbet**, **Ussher's**^ and **Little Flycatchers**, **Cassin's Honeyguide** and **African Pied Hornbill** to mention a few.







Canopy Walkways of Kakum National Park © Toby Ross



Black-throated Coucal (with snake) © Toby Ross

The raptors we have a chance of seeing include, **Congo Serpent-Eagle**, **African Harrier-Hawk**, **Palm-nut Vulture**, **Cassin's Hawk-Eagle**, **European Honey-buzzard** and **Red-necked Buzzard**. Some of the more difficult but still possible species from the canopy include **Long-tailed Hawk**, **Black Dwarf Hornbill**, **Yellow-footed Honeyguide**^(NT) and **Black-collared Lovebird**.

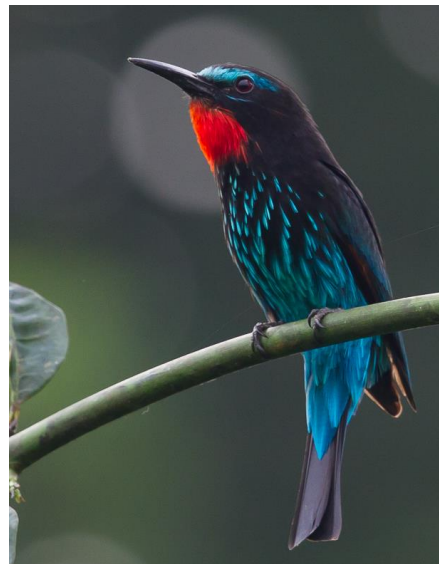
After a wonderful morning we return to the lodge to freshen up and enjoy lunch. During the heat of mid-afternoon, you will have the option of birding around the lodge's grounds, resting in your air-conditioned rooms, taking a dip in the pool, or you could choose to go on a cultural excursion to Cape Coast castle to learn about the region's dark slave history (recommended). We re-visit the canopy walkway in the late-afternoon/evening when our main targets will be the **Brown-cheeked**^(VU), **Black-casqued**, and **Yellow-casqued**^(VU) **Hornbills**, **Great Blue Turaco**, **Brown Nightjar**, and **Fraser's Eagle-Owl** amongst others. Our evening will be spent at the lodge's restaurant and bar discussing the day's sightings, adding to our checklist, and enjoying the atmosphere of our surroundings.

Overnight: Rainforest Lodge, Jukwa    

Day 4: Saturday 3/9/2024 Kakum National Park and Twifo Praso River

Another early start as we visit the Antwikwaa section of Kakum National Park, hoping to add some amazing birds to our growing list, including **Little**, and **Black Bee-eaters**, **Piping Hornbill**, **White-spotted Flufftail**, both **Cassin's** and **Sabine's Spinetails**, **Dideric Cuckoo**, **Buff-spotted Woodpecker**, **Viellot's Black** and **Black-necked Weavers**, **Gray Longbill**, **Western Nicator**, **Olive-bellied**, **Superb** and **Johanna's Sunbirds**, **Copper-tailed**^(NT) and **Violet-backed Starlings**, **Northern Yellow White-eye**, **Bronze Mannikin**, and **Orange-cheeked Waxbill**. The more difficult species include **Yellow-billed Barbet**, **Forest Penduline Tit**, and **Ayre's Hawk Eagle**.

We will then visit a river site for the beautiful **White-throated Blue Swallow**, **Preuss's Swallow**, **Rock Pratincole**, **White-headed Lapwing**, and if we're lucky, **African Finfoot** may make an appearance. In the afternoon we will concentrate our attention on the many trails within and surrounding the park, which should prove to be very productive. We hope to find **White-tailed Alethe**, **Red-tailed Bristlebill**, **Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill**, **Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo**, **Forest Scrub Robin**, **Yellow-billed Turaco**, **Melancholy Woodpecker**, and so many others. Once again, we will remain until dark trying for owls and nightjars before returning to our accommodation for our evening meal and checklist.



Black Bee-eater © Willie de Vries

Overnight: Rainforest Lodge, Jukwa    

Day 5: Sunday 3/10/2024 Kakum Forest and Ankasa Conservation Area

Today, we visit the Abrafo section of Kakum National Park, where we will focus our efforts on birds that utilize farmland scrub and forest habitat. We'll look for **Pale Flycatcher**, **Black-and-White-Mannikin**, **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, **Lowland Sooty Boubou**, **Red-faced Cisticola**, **Lesser Striped Swallow**, **Fanti Sawwing**, **Chestnut** and **Red-cheeked Wattle-eyes**, **Hairy-breasted Barbet**, **Fraser's** and **Little Green Sunbirds**, **Blue Malkoha** (Blue Yellowbill), **Swamp**, **Yellow-whiskered**, **Red-tailed**, and **Spotted Greenbuls**, **Northern Fiscal**, **Finsch's Flycatcher-Thrush**, **African Harrier-Hawk**, and the more sought-after and difficult species, **Red-billed Helmetshrike**, **Rufous-sided Broadbill**, **Chocolate-backed Kingfisher**.

We check out of our lodge after lunch and set off westwards to the Ankasa Conservation Area for what should prove to be a major highlight of our trip. At nearly 200 miles² of continuous wet evergreen rainforest, Ankasa is biologically the most diverse rainforest in Ghana. Protecting over 800 vascular plant species, ~650 species of butterfly, in addition to Forest Elephant, Bongo, Diana Monkey, Chimpanzee, several species of Pangolin and some of the most wanted West African bird species, Ankasa is a nature lovers paradise. We will arrive in the late afternoon and briefly settle in before heading out for an early evening of birding near the lodge where we hope to see **Fraser's** and **Akun Eagle-Owls**. Our guide will also be looking for the legendary **Nkulengu Rail** – first photographed in the wild in 2011. We'll finish the day as usual with a great meal and checklist review.

Overnight: Ankasa Reserve Lodge, Ankasa    

Days 6 + 7: Monday & Tuesday

3/11-12/2024

Ankasa Conservation Area



Nkulengu Rails © Lucas Lombardo

The Ankasa Conservation Area protects many rare and sought-after species and so we will dedicate three nights here. If we were unable to locate the **Nkulengu Rails** the previous evening, our guide will check first thing and alert the group before breakfast. After breakfast we set off deeper into lush forest with our main targets being the Upper Guinea endemics **Yellow-bearded Greenbul**^(VU), **Rufous-winged Illadopsis**^(NT) and **Green-tailed Bristlebill**^(NT), in addition to **Anson's**, **Icterine**^, and **Western-bearded Greenbuls**, **Pale-breasted Illadopsis**, **White-tailed Ant-Thrush**, **Shining Drongo**, **Cassin's Flycatcher**, **Yellow-spotted Barbet**, **White-throated Bee-eater**, **Chestnut-breasted Nigrita**, **Blue-headed Wood-Dove**, **Tiny Sunbird** and **Red-fronted Antpecker**(NT).

With the use of 4x4 Landrovers we will access remote trails within the park that lead to forest pools and wetlands where we will have chances of finding the enigmatic **African Pitta**, as well as **Western Crested Guinea-fowl** along the road. Our target birds for this part of the forest will also include **Hartlaub's Duck**, **Dwarf Bittern**, **African Finfoot**, **White-bellied**, **Blue-breasted** and **African Dwarf Kingfishers**. Forest raptors are always welcome, and we hope to see **Long-tailed Hawk** and **Congo Serpent-Eagle**. We will scan the sky for one of the largest raptors in Africa, the **Crowned Eagle**(NT), but also, **Square-tailed Sawwing**, **Black-casqued**, **Yellow-casqued**^(VU), and **Piping Hornbills**. There are some rare species here and if we're lucky we may see **White-breasted Guineafowl**^(VU), **White-crested Bittern**, **Gray-throated Rail**, **Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo**, **Blue-moustached Bee-eater**(NT), **Red-chested Owlet** and **Akun Eagle-Owl**. Our evening will be spent, reviewing our species list, enjoying good food and discussing the day's birding over a cold drink.



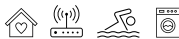
Hartlaub's Duck © Ashanti Tours

Overnight: Ankasa Reserve Lodge, Ankasa 

Day 8: Wednesday 3/13/2024 Ankasa Conservation Area and Brenu Akyinim

We'll spend a final morning exploring some new forest trails in areas of the park we've not visited yet. After lunch we'll freshen up before our departure as we set off back towards Kakum National Park with a stop along the coast. During the journey we will be targeting several species not seen in other parts of Ghana notably **Reichenbach's**, and **Carmelite Sunbirds**, **White-browed Forest-Flycatcher**, **Orange Weaver**, **African Pygmy Goose**, and **Little Grebe** to mention a few.

A visit to Brenu Akyinim and the coastal savannah plains will give us some special species we'll unlikely encounter at other locations on the trip including **Marsh Tchagra**, **Compact Weaver**, **Double-spurred Spurfowl**, **Oriole Warbler**, **Red-headed Quelea**, **Black-rumped Waxbill** and if we are lucky, **Red-faced Pytilia**, **Wilson's Indigobird** and **Wattled Lapwing**. We continue back towards Jukwa and return to our hotel of a few nights earlier to relax and reflect on another great day of birding.

Overnight: Rainforest Lodge, Jukwa 

Day 9: Thursday

3/14/2024

Abrafo Forest and Picathartes Nesting Site

Today, we will visit the nesting sites of renowned **White-necked Rockfowl** (VU) (aka Yellow-headed Picathartes). Before that though, we will have a full morning of birding in Abrafo Forest to enjoy, targeting any species we may have previously missed.

After a productive morning, we set off northwards stopping for lunch en route before arriving at a remote village close to a small Upper Guinea rainforest in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The place we will visit is a key nesting site for **White-necked Rockfowl** (VU), with more nests than any other location in Ghana. This iconic species has been assessed as Vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) due to its fragmented population and habitat destruction. Our visit to this nesting site helps in the conservation of the species by demonstrating that with preservation and stewardship of



White-necked Rockfowl © Toby Ross

suitable habitat, ecotourism dollars will follow. In order to support the conservation commitment of the village, the new guesthouse where we will stay was built and donated by our in-country travel partner, along with a small restaurant and school that provides access to education for 300 children. All proceeds from the accommodation, restaurant, and forest entrance fees go directly to the community fund, cementing the benefits of effective conservation of their natural resources. This project has also created employment opportunities for the surrounding communities by sponsoring 24 rangers that patrol the forest and stop illegal hunting and logging activities. Unfortunately, the forest is currently under an active timber concession, however our in-country partner is working toward having the area gazetted as a protected area at the national level.

After checking in to our rooms, we'll walk the trails to the Rockfowl nesting site and take seats on bamboo benches as we wait for the birds to return from their daily foraging excursions. As the afternoon fades the birds bound into the nesting area and pose as if standing on a stage, providing excellent photo opportunities. Once we've enjoyed good views of these magnificent birds, we'll leave them in peace and set off back through the forest to the village. This unique opportunity to stay within minutes of the Picathartes nesting site will allow us to look for these incredible birds again in the morning. Spending the night in a traditional Ghanaian village is sure to be a major highlight of this tour.

Overnight: Picathartes Guesthouse, Bonkro



Day 10: Friday**3/15/2024****Bonkro Forest and Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary**

After a slightly more relaxed breakfast, we venture back into the Picathartes Forest in search of bird species we have yet to see. These may include **White-crested** and **Black Dwarf Hornbills**, **Rufous-sided**



Long-tailed Pangolin © Ashanti Tours

Broadbill, **Fire-bellied Woodpecker**^, **Gray-headed Bristlebill**^, **Thick-billed Cuckoo**, **Green Woodhoopoe**, **Blue Cuckooshrike**, **Sharpe's Apalis**^(NT), **Black-and-White Shrike-flycatcher**, and **Gray-throated Tit-Flycatcher**. This is also the forest where the once thought extinct, extremely rare, and difficult to see **Ghana Cuckooshrike**^(VU) has been seen on the most occasions. Specialist mammal tours also spend quality time in this forest location as it has been the best place to see Long-tailed (Black-bellied)(VU) and Tree (White-bellied)(EN) Pangolins.

We'll get lunch back in the village and spend the heat of the day meeting with local communities of Bonkro and Breku which work with us in the conservation of the surrounding forest. Community leaders and our guide will explain the details of the initiatives that connect the local communities to the conservation of their environment. The talk will detail how the forest, wildlife and communities have benefitted from the Ashanti PECK project and highlight how environmentally-conscious ecotourism can directly support grassroots conservation efforts. After our talk one of the village families will take us to their nearby agricultural plots where we'll learn how they farm cocoa from planting to harvest, drying to selling. This is a great opportunity to learn about village life for families in this part of Ghana.

After a fascinating afternoon we'll head towards the city of Kumasi. En route, we'll head back into the forest at Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary for what remains of the afternoon and evening. Although we'll have another opportunity to visit this sanctuary again later in the trip, this is the final forest location before we head north tomorrow to the drier Guinea woodland and savannah habitat. Target species this afternoon include, **African Forest Flycatcher**, **Yellow-browed** and **Olive-green Camaroptera**, **Puvel's Illadopsis**, **Green Crombec**, **Kemp's Longbill**, **Black-capped Apalis**, **Blue-headed Crested-Flycatcher**, **West African** and **Red-cheeked Wattle-eyes**, and **Bronze-naped Pigeon** amongst others. Depending on which nocturnal species we've seen so far, we can also stay after dark looking for owls and nightjars. After checking into our hotel, we'll enjoy an evening meal, checklist review, and relax at the bar and restaurant.



Red-cheeked Wattle-eye © Ashanti Tours

Overnight: Royal Basin Hotel, Kumasi

Day 11: Saturday 3/16/2024 Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary and Traditional Crafts

A full morning of culture and history as we first visit the last material remains of the great Asante Empire, recognized as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. There are 10 active shrines/fetishes within the building complex, made from bamboo, timber, and mud with thatched roofs. The walls are designed with motifs that have traditional symbolic meanings connected to ancient Adinkra symbols that we will learn more about later today. This is also the birthplace of Nana Yaa Asantewaa, possibly the most important women in Ashanti history, a great female warrior who led the Ashantis in the 1901 war against the British.

We'll continue our journey through Ashanti history by visiting the traditional villages of Adanwomase and Ntonso. Adanwomase is the origin of Ghana's rich colorful Kente cloth. Quality time is dedicated here as we walk through the community, interacting with the locals whose families have been weaving Kente for generations, playing an important role in the history of this beautiful cloth. We'll learn about the history behind the many designs and see skilled weavers outside their homes still using traditional looms that have not changed in design for centuries. Former US President Bill Clinton has had a design named after him because the Ghanaians were so impressed with the respect he showed during his state visit when he was in office. This will be an ideal time to purchase quality Kente cloth at exceptionally low prices before we set off for Ntonso after lunch.



Kente Cloth © Contemporary African Art

Elder wearing Adinkra © Cynthia Samake



The ancient village of Ntonso, is where adinkra cloth and symbols originate. These traditional symbols all have meanings and are carved from dried calabash shells. The adinkra symbols are then printed onto traditional cloth using natural dyes made from the bark of certain local trees. Adinkra cloth has been adorned by the Ashanti's for more than 4 centuries and pre-dates Kente cloth. Even today most Ashanti's will wear adinkra cloth for funerals, festivals, and other important occasions. During our time here, we can make our own strip of adinkra cloth using symbols with personal significance.

After a wonderful day learning about local culture, we'll head once more for an early evening of birding at Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary. Staying late for nocturnal species would be good as this is a productive forest and among others we have a good chance to see **African Wood Owl**. After dark we'll return to the hotel for our evening meal, with time to add to our checklist.

Overnight: Royal Basin Hotel, Kumasi    

Day 12: Sunday 3/17/2024 Mole National Park

After an early breakfast we set off northwards towards Mole National Park. Today is mainly a travel day with multiple birding stops along the way. We can expect to see different species as we move toward drier broad-leaved Guinea woodland and savannah. Our guide will be keeping an eye open for the many raptors we hope to see during our journey which include **Beaudouin's Snake**-(VU) and **Long-crested Eagles**, **Grasshopper Buzzard**, **Yellow-billed Kite** and **Shikra**, amongst others during our regular leg-stretch stops.



African Scops-Owl © Derek Keats

We'll stop for lunch in Kintampo before continuing to Mole, Ghana's largest National Park, protecting an area of nearly 2,000 miles² of habitat, almost 100 species of mammal, and 330+ species of bird. Situated on an 800 ft-high escarpment, the hotel overlooks the park offering breathtaking views. From the hotel pool and terrace you can watch the African savannah elephants bathing in the two nearby watering holes which are also inhabited by Nile crocodiles. After dinner, we will set off for an evening of birding around the Mole Airstrip where we hope to see the incredible display of **Standard-winged Nightjars**. The airstrip is also productive for owls, and we will be looking for **Grayish Eagle-** and **African Scops-Owls** before we retire for the night.

Overnight: Mole Motel, Mole National Park



Day 13 + 14: Monday & Tuesday 3/18-19/2024 Mole National Park and Mognori

Mole NP is a nature lover's paradise; we will spend 2 full days immersing ourselves in the exceptional West African birds and mammals found in the park. We'll set off after breakfast driving deeper into the park looking for **Red-cheeked Cordonbleu, Scarlet-chested, Beautiful, Pygmy** and **Western Violet-backed Sunbirds, Lavender Waxbill, Familiar Chat, White-fronted Black-Chat, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-Weaver, Red-billed, Bar-breasted** and **Black-bellied Firefinch, Fine-spotted, African Gray, Golden-tailed** and **Brown-backed Woodpeckers, Long-tailed Glossy, Bronze-tailed, Lesser Blue-eared** and **Greater Blue-eared Starlings, Abyssinian Ground(VU), African Gray** and **Northern Red-billed Hornbills, White-throated Francolin, Brubru, Senegal Eremomela, Pin-tailed Whyda, Exclamatory** and **Togo Paradise-Whydas, Sahel Bush Sparrow, Little, Heuglin's Masked-, Village** and **Red-headed Weavers, Melodious** and **Willow Warblers, African, Black** and **Great Spotted Cuckoos, Fork-tailed** and **Common Square-tailed Drongos, Northern Puffback, White-shouldered Black-Tit, Rufous** and the more difficult **Dorst's Cisticolas**, and **Hadada Ibis**.



White-throated Francolin © Ashanti Tours



Western Violet-backed Sunbird © Francesco Veronesi



Red-cheeked Cordonbleu © Francesco Veronesi

On one of the afternoons, we will visit the nearby community of Mognori where a local guide will take us on a walking tour of the village. The villagers used to live inside what is now Mole National Park but they can now no longer use the resources found in the park to feed their families. As an alternative livelihood the community has developed a way to sustainably produce shea butter, a product that is used in cosmetics worldwide. The community's efforts aid wildlife conservation inside the park by reducing poaching pressure. We will also venture to nearby tobacco fields, visit the local chief and his family, and meet with the community's healer to learn which of the many local trees and plants are used in traditional medicine.

Mammals are in abundance in Mole NP and we hope to see Kob, Bushbuck, Waterbuck, Hartebeest, and the beautiful Roan Antelope, in addition to getting within a few feet of the continent's largest land mammal, the African Elephant. Green Vervet and Patas Monkeys will greet us in the bush as we enjoy our morning walks. During the heat of midday, we will take a siesta or relax by the pool after our lunch. We set off in mid-afternoon for more birding and stay after dark for nocturnal species.



African Elephants © Ashanti Tours

Birds we hope to see include **Yellow-breasted Apalis, Bearded Barbet, Swamp, African Blue, Gray Tit-, European Pied** and the sought-after **Gambaga Flycatchers, Giant, Shining Blue** and **Gray-headed Kingfishers.**



Gabar Goshawk © Lip Kee Yap

We'll also have the chance to see **Red-throated Bee-eater, Bruce's Green-Pigeon, Senegal Batis, White-crowned Robin-Chat, Flappet** and **Sun Larks, Sulphur-breasted** and **Gray-headed Bushshrikes, African Golden Oriole, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Abyssinian, Rufous-crowned** and **Broad-billed Rollers,** and **Black Scimitarbill.** Raptors are common in Mole, and we hope to see **Martial(EN), Booted,** and **Tawny(VU) Eagles, White-backed(CR)** and **White-headed(CR) Vultures, Gabar Goshawk** and **Dark Chanting-Goshawk, Eurasian Marsh-Harrier, African Fish-** and **Wahlberg's Eagles, Brown** and **Short-toed Snake-Eagles** to mention a few. Main target species not easily seen in other parts of the world include **Forbes's Plover, Pel's Fishing Owl, African Spotted Creeper** and **Rufous-rumped Lark.** Our evenings will be spent reviewing our checklists over dinner and enjoying the sounds of the park.

Overnight: Mole Motel, Mole National Park



Day 15: Wednesday 3/20/2024 Kumasi

After an early breakfast we set off from Mole NP heading back

southwards to Kumasi. En route, we take a detour to see the beautiful **Egyptian Plover** found along the White Volta River. Due to the importance of this species which has recently been placed in a family of its own we dedicate quality time enjoying and photographing it in flight and walking along the sandy banks of the river. On arrival in Kumasi, we check into our hotel, review our checklist and enjoy an evening meal.



Egyptian Plover © Ashanti Tours

Overnight: Royal Basin Resort, Kumasi








Klaas's Cuckoo © Derek Keats

Day 16: Thursday 3/21/2024

Bobiri Forest Reserve and Atewa Range

An early start as we head back again to Bobiri Forest Reserve for the last time and into Upper Guinea rainforest habitat where so many of Ghana's sought-after species are found. We will hope to see **Tit Hylia, Magpie Mannakin, Narina Trogon, Gray(EN) and Brown-necked Parrots, Golden-backed Weaver, African Piculet, Red-chested Owlet, Dusky Tit, Blue-headed Crested-Flycatcher**, and the much sought-after **Yellow-footed Honeyguide^{^(NT)}** among other species. We set off after a productive morning heading further south towards Atewa stopping for lunch along the way. We then head for the lower farmland bush at Atewa where we hope to see **Maxwell's Black and Grosbeak Weavers, Whistling Cisticola, Black-crowned Tchagra, Klaas's, and Yellow-throated Cuckoos.**

We'll also be on the lookout for **Black-headed Paradise-Flycatcher, Western Bluebill, Tessmann's Flycatcher** and if we're lucky **Baumann's Greenbul[^]** and **Bat Hawk** before we check into our nearby hotel for the evening to relax, reflect and enjoy our dinner.

Overnight: Nelsban Palace Hotel, New Tafo   




Day 17: Friday 3/22/2024 Atewa Range

Atewa Range Forest Reserve is internationally recognised as one of the highest priority ecosystems in West Africa for its high species diversity, high levels of endemism, and great hydrological importance. The area is also recognised as an Important Bird Area and contains critically endangered highland Upper Guinea rainforest habitat. Atewa forest is also a center of significant plant diversity with at least 1100 species. Butterfly diversity is also high with over 700 species. Because it protects so many rare species, we will dedicate a full day of birding here. The trails in this forest can be quite steep and so we will take our time and a packed lunch to minimise the walking and maximise our time birding. Target birds here will include **Purple-throated Cuckooshrike, Blue-moustached Bee-eater^(NT), West African (Bioko) Batis, African Hobby, Red-rumped Tinkerbird, African Goshawk, Brown-chested Alethe, Lowland Akalat, Crested Malimbe, Little and White-throated Greenbuls, Many-colored Bushshrike, Brown Illadopsis**, and the Upper Guinea endemics **Yellow-bearded Greenbul^{^(VU)}** and **Green-tailed Bristlebill^{^(NT)}**.

Sadly, the Atewa forest range is under severe threat as the Ghanaian govt. are considering allowing it to be mined for bauxite. Several NGO's that include our local travel partner, Ashanti Tours, are petitioning the govt. to establish Atewa as a National Park to preserve this beautiful habitat for future generations. Atewa protects some rare species of birds, and we hope to get good views of **Red-fronted Antpecker^(NT), Nimba Flycatcher^{^(VU)}** and **Crowned Eagle^(NT)** amongst others. After another great day of birding, we will return to our hotel for our evening meal and to reflect on another enjoyable and productive day in the field.



Blue-moustached Bee-eater © Willie de Vries

Overnight: Nelsban Palace Hotel, New Tafo   

Day 18: Saturday

3/23/2024

Atewa Range and Departure

Another early start as we set off back to the Atewa Range aiming to find species we still need or would like better views of. We then return to our hotel for lunch, freshen up and pack our bags before setting off for Accra. An amazing end to a wonderful tour as we enjoy an early evening meal and final checklist on our arrival in Accra. After our meal and final checklist, we transfer you to the airport for your departure.

LAND PRICE

\$3,750 per person, 12 people travelling
 \$3,900 per person, 10-11 people travelling
 \$4,150 per person, 8-9 people travelling

REGISTER

To reserve your place on this trip, please contact:
Toby Ross tobeross@gmail.com or (206) 552-3834
 A \$500 deposit is needed to secure your spot.

THE FINE PRINT

Price includes full-time guide, accommodation in standard rooms, all meals and non-alcoholic drinks, entrance fees and activities as outlined in this itinerary, private transportation (with A/C), arrival and departure transfers, and departure fees. There will be fresh drinking water, snacks and fruit in our transport at all times. The price does not include international flight, travel insurance, alcoholic drinks and gratuities.





Cost is based on double occupancy. Single rooms may be available for an additional cost of \$650pp. We will make every effort to match people who request to share with others seeking a roommate. The deadline for **final payment is November 30, 2023**. Deposits are refundable less \$100 cancellation fee up until the deadline. Cancellation after the deadline results in the forfeit of 100% of the trip fee.

UPPER GUINEA FOREST







The Upper Guinea forest of West Africa was identified as a global biodiversity hotspot over 20 years ago due to its exceptional concentrations of endemic species. The area encompasses all lowland forest ecosystems of West Africa and extends from southern Guinea into eastern Sierra Leone, through Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, southern Ghana and across southwestern Togo, however, much of this area is now tragically deforested. Although there are no bird species endemic to Ghana, there are 21 species restricted to this region, 18 of which we may be able to encounter during our trip.

CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

Your trip to Ghana will support conservation and sustainable development in several ways:

-  Employ expertly trained and knowledgeable Ghanaian guides.
-  Support local economies by creating a demand for high quality lodging, restaurants, and staff, demonstrating that birds and conservation do literally mean business.
-  Discover how Ashanti Tours, our travel partner, supports sustainable community development through construction of tourism infrastructure and education facilities, and employment through hiring community members as rangers who patrol critically important bird habitat.
-  Alight Tours will donate 3% of all profits from this trip to an in-country NGO that works to conserve birds, wildlife and the habitats they depend on.

KEY

-  Locally owned accommodation
-  Habitat around lodge suitable for birding
-  Our stay directly contributes to conservation and/or supports sustainable community initiatives
-  Internet available
-  Laundry service available
-  Swimming pool on site

^regional endemic – only found in the Upper Guinea forest ecoregion

NT – Near Threatened – IUCN classification: nearly threatened with extinction

VU – Vulnerable – IUCN classification: faces a high risk of extinction

EN – Endangered – IUCN classification: faces a very high risk of extinction

DD – Data Deficient – IUCN classification: there is insufficient information to make an assessment, often because there is little known about the species.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry requirements are often changing, especially in the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic. Alight Tours will monitor the requirements for entry and notify the group with updates and changes as they occur.

Presently, a passport is required for international travel and must be valid for at least six months after the date of entry. Ghana also requires a visa for all international travelers entering the country. Visas can be obtained for \$60 via mail through the Ghanaian Embassy in Washington DC and take 2-3 weeks to process. Travelers are also required to present proof of Covid 19 and Yellow Fever vaccinations on arrival.

This program is presented in partnership with Ashanti Africa Tours an eco-tourism travel company based in Cape Coast, Ghana.



White Helmetshrike © Derek Keats



Levaillant's Cuckoo © Lip Kee Yap



Top: Olive-bellied Sunbird © Francesco Veronesi



Bottom: Swallow-tailed Bee-eater © Bernard Dupont