

CAMEROON

Wednesday 4th March – Saturday 21st March 2009 (18 days)

Leader: Nik Borrow

Group Size Limit: 10

Wednesday 10th March – Saturday 27th March 2010 (18 days)

Leader: Nik Borrow

Group Size Limit: 10



Quail-Plovers (Nik Borrow)

Cameroon, lying a little north of the Equator, straddles the geographical dividing line between West and Central Africa. This marvellous country, immortalized for all wildlife enthusiasts by Gerald Durrell's memorable account of his zoo collecting expedition 'The Bafut Beagles', offers the most exciting birding in West Africa. Nearly 900 species have been recorded from the country, far more than from any other comparable area in West Africa, and at least 25 endemic or near-endemic species (depending on the vagaries of modern taxonomy) grace this impressive total. Cameroon's avian treasure house stems directly from a wealth of habitats combined with the long isolation of its southwestern highlands from other upland areas in Africa. The northern panhandle of Cameroon extends deep into the Sahel, the semi-desert zone immediately south of the Sahara, reaching as far as the shores of Lake Chad, while in the south, where the country abuts the Gulf of Guinea and the Congo basin, the climate is equatorial and the natural vegetation is primary rainforest and humid montane forest. Not only is Cameroon a land of natural diversity, but also a country with a rich cultural tradition dating back many centuries. From the heraldic carved designs of the palaces of the Fons in the Bamenda Highlands to the vivid colours of the dresses of

the market traders, the vigorously executed handicrafts and the rhythm of the local music, Cameroon is a constant reminder of the vibrancy of West African culture. With the richest avifauna of any West African country, Cameroon has become a classic destination and one that any birder who has visited other regions of Africa will be tempted to explore. During our journey through this splendid country we shall sample all of its major habitats. After pausing briefly in Douala, the commercial capital, we shall head for northernmost Cameroon and Waza National Park where Clapperton's Francolins scurry away from the roadsides and herds of African Elephant, Roan Antelope and Giraffe may be found along with the impressive Arabian Bustard. Other specialities in this superb area include the strange Quail-plover, the spectacular Black Crowned Crane, Cricket Warbler, River Prinia and Sennar Penduline Tit. After exploring the arid savanna, bushland and marshes of this fine reserve we will gradually move southwards into greener, more wooded terrain. First we will visit Bénoué National Park, where the attractive riverine woodland provides sanctuary for species such as Adamawa Turtle Dove, Violet Turaco, Bearded Barbet, White-cheeked Oliveback and the marvellous Oriole Warbler (or Moho). The sandy riverbeds are home to the exquisite Egyptian

Plover. Finally we climb onto the verdant Adamawa Plateau with its mosaic of woodland, rivers and grassland. Here we will stay at a ranch overlooking a pretty crater-lake that is one of the few known localities for the rare Bamenda Apalis and where the evening roosting flights of thousands of egrets and starlings (including the localized White-collared Starling) are truly spectacular. Other specialities include Brown-chested Lapwing, Spotted Thrush Babbler and Dybowski's Twin-spot. After a short stop in the capital Yaoundé, where we shall hope to find a good selection of forest birds and in particular hunt out two Central African greenbuls, Yellow-necked Greenbul and Yellow-throated Nicator, we will head northwest until we reach the intensively cultivated Bamenda Highlands in the formerly British sector of the country. Here some rare endemic birds, including the beautiful Bannerman's Turaco, Mountain Robin Chat, Banded Wattle-eye, Yellow-breasted Boubou, Bangwa Forest Warbler and Bannerman's Weaver, cling to a precarious existence in the remaining patches of forest. Finally we will visit Mount Cameroon. Rising straight from the ocean to 4070m, this isolated peak (an active volcano) holds many montane specialities including Mountain Saw-wing, White-tailed Warbler and Mount Cameroon Speirops.

Nik Borrow has travelled very extensively in western Africa, including Cameroon, spending several years in the field while tour leading for Birdquest and also while researching his definitive *Birds*

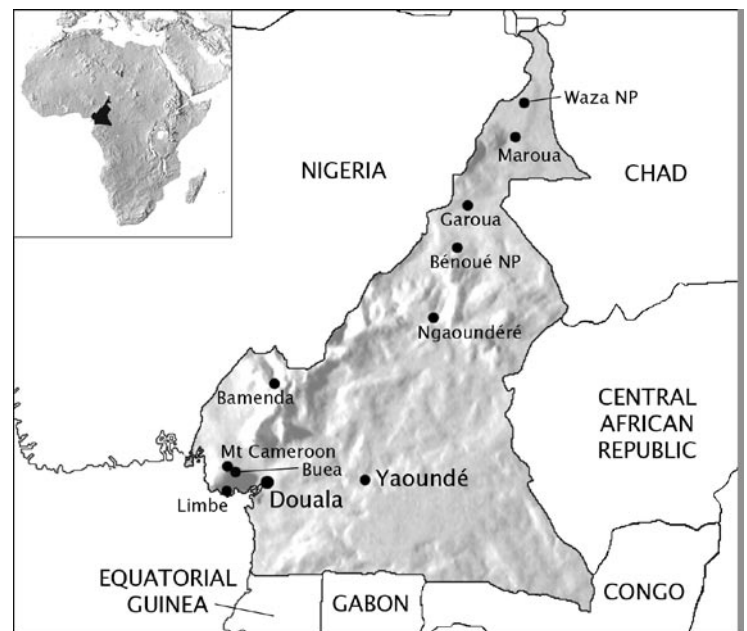
of Western Africa. Birdquest has operated tours to Cameroon since 1990.

Itinerary

Day 1 Morning flight from London bound for Douala, the commercial capital of Cameroon, arriving in the late afternoon for an overnight stay.

Day 2 This morning we shall take a flight to Maroua in northern Cameroon. As we leave the aircraft we shall be struck by a wave of dry heat, so very different from the humid air of Douala, for we are now well and truly in the Sahel. Cattle Egrets, Yellow-billed Kites and Pied Crows are perhaps the first birds that we shall see at Garoua, but we should keep a watch for Grey-backed Fiscal and the town is also home to Hooded Vulture, Shikra, Speckled Pigeon, Laughing Dove, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Piapiac and Northern Grey-headed Sparrow. From here we will drive north through the Sahelian landscape to Waza National Park for a three nights stay, seeing a number of species typical of the dry, open habitat of northern Cameroon. Black-shouldered Kite, Dark Chanting Goshawk and Grasshopper Buzzard are roadside raptors and Chestnut-bellied Starlings are common. This afternoon we will begin our exploration of Waza.

Days 3-4 Waza National Park is situated in the northern panhandle of Cameroon, south of Lake Chad and well within the 'inundation zone' of this vast but shallow lake, and is a complete contrast to Bénoué. During the rainy season much of





Banded Wattle-eye (Nik Borrow)

the reserve floods, but at this time of year the water levels have dropped and access to most areas becomes practicable. Part of the reserve is acacia savanna, the remainder grassland and vast areas of dried out swamp. The numerous small waterholes teem with waterbirds and also attract many dry-country species desperate for water in this hot and harsh environment. The scenery is enlivened by the presence of the barren Waza Rocks, huge inselbergs that tower above the surrounding plains. Birdlife is abundant and the richest of any area in the entire Sahel, the band of arid country extending right across Africa from Senegal to Ethiopia. This is one of the easiest places in the world to see the stately Arabian Bustard but even here they can remain surprisingly elusive. Coveys of Clapperton's Francolins scurry for cover and huge flocks of Helmeted Guineafowl scuttle to and from the waterholes where, contrary to the situation in much of the tropics, the middle of the day can be a productive time. Our attention will be focussed on these many waterholes where flocks of Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse, and African Mourning, Vinaceous, African Collared, European Turtle, Laughing, Namaqua and Black-billed Wood Doves and huge swirling flocks of Red-billed Queleas, Northern Red Bishops and Bush Petronias come down to drink. Many raptors are attracted to these small oases: flocks of vultures pass the heat of the day loafing by the pools and we should see Lappet-faced, White-headed, Rüppell's Griffon, African White-backed and Egyptian Vultures. The delightful Red-necked Falcon and the much larger Lanner Falcon are usually in attendance,

the latter making frequent attempts to decimate the dove population, while the surrounding trees provide look-outs for African Fish, Martial, Wahlberg's and Tawny Eagles. As water becomes scarcer so those birds that rely on it become more concentrated around the rapidly evaporating pools. Large numbers of Black Crowned Cranes are a feature of the wetlands and we should also find the unassuming, restricted-range River Prinia. Other birds of the floodplain include Pink-backed Pelican, Squacco, Grey and Black-headed Herons, Great, Intermediate and Little Egrets, Marabou, Woolly-necked, Saddle-billed, Yellow-billed, White and African Openbill Storks, Sacred Ibis, White-faced Whistling Duck, Spur-winged Goose, Knob-billed Duck, Garganey, Greater Painted-snipe, Black-winged Stilt, Spur-winged Lapwing, Little Stint, Ruff, Marsh, Common, Green and Wood Sandpipers, Common Greenshank, African Palm and Little Swifts, West African (split from Red-rumped), Ethiopian and Barn Swallows, Common Sand Martin (or Bank Swallow), and Blue-headed and White Wagtails. In the more open areas, groups of huge Abyssinian Ground Hornbills stalk the grasslands in search of locusts and we should find Common Ostrich, White-bellied Bustard and perhaps the bizarre Secretary Bird. The drier areas hold Black-headed Lapwings, superb Northern Carmine and Little Green Bee-eaters, Northern Anteater Chats (which favour the termite mounds as lookout posts), Northern Wheatears and countless Chestnut-backed Sparrow Larks. Overhead we may see the graceful African Swallow-tailed Kite, Short-toed Eagle, Bateleur,

Gabar Goshawk, Western Marsh, Pallid and Montagu's Harriers, and Common Kestrel. In the more vegetated areas of acacia bush we will look for Spotted Thick-knee, Barn Owl, Greyish Eagle Owl (split from Spotted), Abyssinian Roller, Little Bee-eater, Eurasian and Central African Hoopoes, African Grey and Northern Red-billed Hornbills, Green and Black Wood-hoopoes, Common Bulbul, African Scrub Robin (split from Rufous-tailed), Tawny-flanked Prinia, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Northern Crombec, Sennar Penduline Tit, Fork-tailed Drongo, Pygmy and Beautiful Sunbirds, Greater Blue-eared and Long-tailed Glossy Starlings, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, White-billed Buffalo Weaver, Vitelline Masked and Village Weavers, Speckle-fronted and Little Weavers, African Silverbill, Cut-throat, Green-winged Pytilia, Red-billed Firefinch, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, Black-rumped Waxbill, Village Indigobird, Sahel Paradise Whydah, Yellow-fronted Canary and White-rumped Seed-eater. Among the Palearctic migrant passerines wintering here are Common Redstart, Common and Lesser Whitethroats, Eastern Olivaceous, Subalpine and Western Bonelli's Warblers, and Masked and Woodchat Shrikes. We will also search some dry deciduous woodland that holds Yellow-crowned Gonolek and occasionally the uncommon Little Grey Woodpecker, while in patches of dry and over-grazed scrub we may well find Blue-naped Mousebird, Singing Bush Lark, Crested Lark, Red-pate Cisticola, Black Scrub Robin with its long, cocked tail, Chestnut-crowned Sparrow Weaver and, with some diligent searching, Cricket Warbler (a species first discovered in Cameroon by Birdquest in 1995). With luck we will also find Savile's Bustard or the attractive Sudan Golden Sparrow. A particular effort will be made to search for the rare and secretive Quail-plover, a nomadic ally of the buttonquails, which occurs in dry grassland. If we are fortunate we will flush one from under our feet, when its lark-like flight action and striking wing pattern will become immediately apparent. Waza has a fine collection of large mammals, indeed an outstanding one by West African standards, and we will be on the lookout for Common Warthog, African Elephant, Giraffe, Topi, Roan Antelope, Kob, Red-fronted Gazelle, Common Jackal, Patas Monkey and, if we are lucky, Lion.

Day 5 This morning we will explore some rocky inselbergs that are home to Fox Kestrel, Stone Partridge, Rock-loving Cisticola, White-crowned Cliff

Chat (split from Cliff Chat), Lavender Waxbill, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting and, if we are lucky, Rock Firefinch (a species first discovered in Cameroon by Birdquest in 2005). Later we will drive south to Garoua, a town situated on the Bénoué River which flows westwards to join the mighty Niger, for an overnight stay.

Day 6 We will try and arrange an excursion to look for Chad Firefinch this morning, provided local conditions allow, and will then continue southwards to Bénoué National Park for a two nights stay. We should arrive at the idyllically situated Campement de Bufflé Noir in time for lunch and in the afternoon we shall begin our exploration of the park.

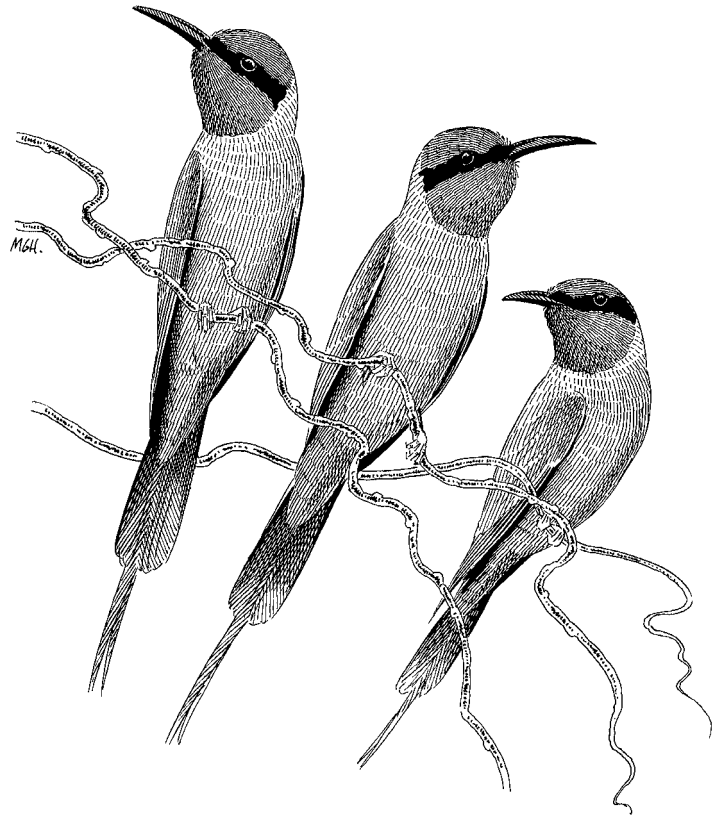
Day 7 Bénoué National Park lies within the Northern Guinea Savanna belt and the typical habitat consists of low, rocky hills covered in open broad-leaved woodland and dissected by small watercourses. The highly localized Adamawa Turtle Dove is one of the prized birds here. Its movements are not well known and numbers fluctuate, but we will be making a special effort to find it. Along the river-bed below the lodge we will look for White-headed Lapwings with their pendulous yellow wattles and, of course, the unique Egyptian Plover as it performs its strange backward 'hop-jumps' whilst searching for food. Other birds found along the watercourses include Striated (or Green-backed) Heron, Hadada Ibis, Hamerkop, Senegal Thick-knee, African Wattled Lapwing, Three-banded Plover, Giant, Pied and Malachite Kingfishers, Wire-tailed, Grey-rumped, Lesser Striped and Preuss's Cliff Swallows, African Pied Wagtail and Swamp Flycatcher. In the tangled riverine vegetation we will be looking hard for, Yellow-throated Leaflove, White-crowned Robin Chat, the delightful Red-winged Grey Warbler, Tropical Boubou, the gorgeous Black-headed Gonolek, White-cheeked Oliveback and the most unusual Oriole Warbler (or Moho). Some of the best birding is in the lodge gardens where fruiting trees attract many species including Bruce's Green Pigeon, the colourful Violet Turaco, Western Grey Plantain-eater and Bearded and Vieillot's Barbets. The woodland or scrubby areas hold Long-crested Eagle, Brown, Beaudouin's and Western Banded Snake Eagles, Red-necked Buzzard, African Hawk Eagle, Grey Kestrel, Double-spurred Francolin, Red-eyed Dove, Senegal Parrot, Senegal Coucal, White-crested Turaco, Pearl-spotted

Owlet, White-rumped Swift, Striped Kingfisher, Red-throated Bee-eater, Rufous-crowned and Blue-bellied Rollers, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Fine-spotted, Brown-backed and Grey Woodpeckers, White-fronted Black Chat, Familiar Chat, African Thrush, Red-faced, Singing, Dorst's, Croaking, Short-winged, and Rufous Cisticolas, Red-winged Warbler, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Senegal Eremomela, Lead-coloured, Northern Black and African Blue Flycatchers, African Paradise Flycatcher, Common Wattle-eye, Senegal Batis, Brown Babbler, White-shouldered Black Tit, the localized Spotted Creeper, Scarlet-chested, Variable and Western Violet-backed Sunbirds, Yellow White-eye, Brubru, Northern Puffback, Black-crowned Tchagra, White Helmet-shrike, Purple Glossy Starling, Black-headed Weaver, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Bar-breasted and Black-bellied Firefinches, Bronze Mannikin and Cabanis's Bunting. If we are fortunate we will find two or three of the more uncommon birds of the area, which include White-throated Francolin, the beautiful Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Yellow Penduline Tit, Heuglin's Masked Weaver, Black-faced Firefinch, West African Seedeater (split from Streaky-headed) and Brown-rumped Bunting. Even the rare and localized Emin's Shrike has been discovered here in recent years, although we would count ourselves very lucky if we found this elusive species. As dusk falls we may see Four-banded Sandgrouse winging their way to drink or the extraordinary Bat Hawk hunting over the gardens, while at night we should be able to locate an African Scops Owl. There is even a slim chance of locating the huge Pel's Fishing Owl. Large mammals are less in evidence in the thick cover here than at Waza, but there are some differences in the fauna of the two reserves and here at Bénoué we may well find Hippopotamus, Bushbuck, Waterbuck, Kongoni (or Hartebeest), Olive Baboon, Tantalus Monkey and Guereza Colobus.

Day 8 After some early morning birding at Bénoué we will continue southwards and ascend the dramatic escarpment that divides the Adamawa Plateau from the lowlands of the Bénoué Plain, continuing to Ngaoundaba near the town of Ngaoundéré for a three nights stay. On the way we will visit a rich freshwater lake where, if water levels are right, we may find Long-tailed Cormorant, Purple Heron, Glossy Ibis, African Pygmy Goose, Black Crake, African Jacana, Collared Pratincole and Yellow-throated

Longclaw. Yellow-billed Duck occurs here at the westernmost edge of its range and we may even find Lesser Jacana and Marsh Widowbird.

Days 9-10 The rich grassy uplands of the Adamawa Plateau provide excellent birding. Our accommodation at Ngaoundaba overlooks a volcanic crater-lake frequented by African Water Rail, Common Moorhen and Winding Cisticola and surrounded by lush gallery forest. In the evenings there is a magical atmosphere as the air is filled with the sound of rushing wings as thousands of starlings and flight after flight of egrets come in to roost on an island covered in palms. At the same time small numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons are leaving to feed in the surrounding countryside. However, our main priorities are to find the very localized endemic Bamenda Apalis, (which we first discovered at this locality in 1990), the restricted range White-collared Starling and the beautiful Dybowski's and Brown Twinspots. There is also a good chance of finding the secretive Spotted Thrush Babbler and, if we are lucky, the pretty Schlegel's Francolin or Brown-chested Lapwing. Starlings are much in evidence and we can expect to see Violet-backed, Bronze-tailed Glossy, Lesser Blue-eared and Splendid Glossy Starlings. We even recorded the first sightings of Wattled Starlings for West Africa here in 1990. In the strips of gallery forest we will look for Scaly Francolin, the shy White-spotted Flufftail (easier heard than seen), Tambourine Dove, Red-headed Lovebird, the spectacular Ross's Turaco, African and Klaas's Cuckoos, Yellowbill (this form being renamed Blue Yellowbill or Blue Malkoha when the eastern form is treated as distinct), Speckled Mousebird, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Double-toothed Barbet, Greater, Lesser and Willcocks's Honeyguides, Green-backed and Cardinal Woodpeckers, Little Greenbul, African Leaflove, Dark-capped Bulbul, Grey-winged and Snowy-crowned Robin Chats, Greater Swamp Warbler, European Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, Blackcap Babbler, Green-headed, Copper and Splendid Sunbirds, Square-tailed Drongo and Spectacled Weaver. Nearby areas of open grassland and forest-savanna mosaic hold a variety of different species including Lizard Buzzard, Eurasian Hobby, Temminck's Courser, African Green Pigeon, Broad-billed Roller, Sun Lark, Petit's Saw-wing (split from Black), Mosque Swallow, Plain-backed and Tree Pipits, Whinchat, Heuglin's Wheatear, Sooty Chat,



Northern Carmine Bee-eaters (Michael Hodgson)

African Moustached and Willow Warblers, Whistling Cisticola, Pale Flycatcher, Black-headed Batis, Red-shouldered and White-breasted Cuckoo-shrikes, Yellow-bellied Hylia, Common Fiscal, Yellow-billed Shrike, Marsh Tchagra, Sulphur-breasted and Grey-headed Bush-shrikes, African Golden and Eurasian Golden Orioles, Blue-billed Firefinch, Red-headed Quelea, Yellow-mantled Widowbird and, if we are lucky, Yellow-winged Pytilia. At this season we may see the first Abdim's Storks migrating northwards. At night we may find Northern White-faced Owl or Black-shouldered Nightjar, while there is even a chance of encountering the spectacular Standard-winged and Pennant-winged Nightjars.

Day 11 After a final morning on the Adamawa Plateau we will catch an afternoon flight to Yaoundé for a two nights stay.

Day 12 The ever-growing capital city of Yaoundé is set amongst rolling hills within the forest zone. There is not much to recommend this sprawling city to the traveller, but for the birder some interesting species can be found within easy reach of the centre. We will be looking for two species in particular, as both

Yellow-necked Greenbul and the attractive and noisy yet secretive Yellow-throated Nicator may be found here. Today will also provide us with a broad selection of the more common forest birds to be found in Cameroon. As our time in this habitat is limited we shall grab whatever is on offer, but we should be on the lookout for Palm-nut Vulture, African Harrier Hawk, Blue-spotted Wood Dove, Grey Parrot, African Emerald and Didric Cuckoos, Blue-headed Coucal, Mottled, Sabine's and Cassin's Spinetails, Woodland and African Pygmy Kingfishers, White-throated Bee-eater, African Pied and Piping Hornbills, Grey-throated, Naked-faced, Bristle-nosed, Yellow-spotted and Yellow-billed Barbets, Speckled, Red-rumped, Yellow-throated and Yellow-rumped Tinkerbirds, Square-tailed Saw-wing, Rufous-chested Swallow, Spotted, Ansorge's, Slender-billed and Honeyguide Greenbuls, Swamp Palm Bulbul, Simple Leaflove, Banded Prinia, Masked, Buff-throated and Black-capped Apalises, Olive-green and Yellow-browed Camaropteras, Green Crombec, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Green Hylia, Green, Western Olive, Green-throated, Olive-bellied and Superb Sunbirds, Black-shouldered and Pink-footed Puffbacks, Narrow-tailed and Forest

Chestnut-winged Starlings, Black-necked, Preuss's Golden-backed and Vieillot's Black Weavers, Grey-crowned, Chestnut-breasted and White-breasted Negrosfinches, Common, Black-headed and Black-crowned Waxbills, and Black-and-white Mannikin. Of course there may always be an odd surprise or two!

Day 13 Today we will drive along the border of the forest zone to the Bamenda Highlands, where the climate is pleasantly cooler, and the Anglophone town of Bamenda for a two nights stay. Along the way we cross the Sanaga River where we should see Rock Pratincole and White-throated Blue Swallow. At another stop we stand a chance of Brown-backed Scrub Robin.

Day 14 During our stay in the Bamenda region we will visit remnants of the montane forest which once covered these highlands in search of the endemic specialities of the area: the extremely localized and endangered Bannerman's Turaco, the striking Banded Wattle-eye and Bannerman's Weaver. If we are in luck we will also encounter Green-breasted Bush-Shrike. A bird with an interesting story here is the endemic Bangwa Forest Warbler that was historically misidentified as Cinnamon Bracken Warbler before being re-identified as Evergreen Forest Warbler and then finally split as the present species! These are some of Cameroon's most endangered birds as a direct result of the intense pressure being put on the forest by the growing human population. Much of the land has been cultivated and woodland has been reduced to small areas such as the Bamenda Highlands Forest Project at Kilum Mountain. Other

birds restricted to the Cameroon highlands and the Obudu and Mambilla Plateaus in neighbouring Nigeria which we should find include Cameroon Montane and Western Mountain Greenbuls, Mountain Robin Chat, Green Longtail, Cameroon Sunbird, the glorious Yellow-breasted Boubou and perhaps Shelley's Oliveback. At a small crater-lake we may find African Black Duck and in the surrounding countryside we can also expect a variety of other montane forest birds and species of wider distribution. Species to look out for include Little Grebe, Black Sparrowhawk, Green Turaco, African Black and Mottled Swifts, Blue-breasted Bee-eater, White-headed Wood-hoopoe, Western Green Tinkerbird, Thick-billed Honeyguide, Elliot's Woodpecker, Red-rumped Swallow, Rock Martin, Mountain Wagtail, Bannerman's Pipit (split from Long-billed), Cameroon Pipit (split from Grassland), Grey Cuckoo-shrike, African Stonechat, African Yellow and Garden Warblers, Stout and Pectoral-patch Cisticolas, Brown-backed Cisticola (split from Chubb's), White-chinned Prinia, Black-collared Apalis, Grey Apalis, African Dusky Flycatcher, White-bellied Crested Flycatcher, African Hill Babbler (here of the distinctive form that has historically been split as Ruwenzori Hill Babbler), White-bellied Tit, Northern Double-collared and Orange-tufted Sunbirds, Forest White-eye (split from Yellow), Black-winged Oriole, Mackinnon's Shrike, Neumann's (split from Red-winged) Starling, Baglafaecht, Black-billed and Brown-capped Weavers, Red-faced Crimsonwing, Yellow Bishop, Red-collared Widowbird, Pin-tailed Whydah, Thick-billed Seed-eater and Oriole Finch.

Day 15 After some final birding in the Bamenda region we shall drive to Buea in the shadow of Mount Cameroon for a two nights stay.

Day 16 Today we will explore Mount Cameroon. Rising straight from the ocean to 4070m, this isolated massif, which is by far the highest mountain in West Africa, holds a wealth of montane specialities. Long isolated from other highland areas in Africa, Mount Cameroon and its associated highlands have developed a remarkable endemic avifauna without parallel in the region. The montane forest extends to about 2000m, after which it gives way to ornithologically rather uninteresting grasslands. Frequently clouds are draped across the flanks of the mountain, lending a rather mysterious air to the dimmer recesses of the forest, but when they clear one can enjoy magnificent views of the great peak high above, green ridges on all sides and, far below, the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. We will already have seen the majority of the possible species, which means that we will be concentrating on a few restricted-range specialities such as Cameroon Olive Pigeon, Mountain Saw-wing, Cameroon Olive Greenbul, Grey-chested Illadopsis, the local form of the Evergreen Forest Warbler (sometimes split as Cameroon Scrub Warbler), White-tailed Warbler and the enigmatic Mount Cameroon Speirops. We will walk up the famous 'Guinness Track', named after the famous annual race up the mountain and back, in order to reach the open grassy areas above the tree-line where African Stonechat, Yellow Bishop and the rather weird-looking speirops are most likely to be found. The walk will initially take us through open cultivation and stunted and very degraded woodland where we should also find Brown-backed Cisticola (split from Chubb's). Red-necked Buzzards soar overhead and inside the forest we will look for species such as Yellow-billed Turaco, African Hill Babbler, Northern Double-collared Sunbird, Brown-capped Weaver, Oriole Finch, Thick-billed Seed-eater and Red-faced Crimson-wing amongst the moss-festooned branches, whilst other tree-top birds include Forest Chestnut-winged and Waller's Starlings.

Day 17 This morning we shall drive to Limbe on the Atlantic coast and enjoy a relaxing visit to the Botanical Gardens. The well-maintained grounds hold an interesting selection of species,

many of which we will already be familiar with. In particular we shall be looking for Rufous-vented Paradise Flycatcher and a trio of typically West African coastal sunbirds, namely Brown, Carmelite and Reichenbach's Sunbirds. Western Reef Egrets and Cassin's Flycatchers can be found along the river that runs through the garden, while Chattering Cisticolas sing from the rank vegetation and normally furtive Western Bluebills can be very easy to see. If we are fortunate we will find Pale-fronted Negrosfinch, On occasion Royal Terns can be seen out to sea. After a good lunch we will drive to Douala in time for a late evening flight bound for London. We will stop along the way at a pond that often holds a few Hartlaub's Ducks.

Day 18 Morning arrival at London.

Accommodation & Road Transport:

The hotels/lodges are of normal Birdquest standard throughout, but some are at the simpler end of the scale (and in need of maintenance) and water and electricity supplies can be erratic. Road transport is by small coach and the roads are reasonable.

Walking: The walking effort is mostly easy, but there are several longer walks in very hot conditions in the north and a long uphill walk (in a much cooler climate) on Mount Cameroon.

Climate: In the north it will be hot or very hot, dry and sunny. Overcast conditions can occur but rain is unlikely. In the Bamenda Highlands and on Mount Cameroon it will be decidedly cooler with a chance of rain, while on the coast it will be hot and humid.

Bird Photography: Opportunities are quite good overall.

Tour Price: 2009: £3940, €5122, \$7486 London/London (or £3090, €4017, \$5871 Douala/Douala).

Tour Price: 2010 (provisional): £4100, €5330, \$7790 London/London (or £3210, €4173, \$6099 Douala/Douala). Based on 5 or more participants.

Single Room Supplement: £320, €416, \$608.

Basic Deposit: £450, €585, \$855.

Supplementary Deposit (for those arranging international air travel through us, due 12 months prior to departure): £800, €1040, \$1520.



Bannerman's Turaco (Nik Borrow)