Ornithological surveys in Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Ghana
(January 2005 and March 2011)

Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire & Robert J. Dowsett

A report prepared for the Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission, Accra


E-mail: Dowsett@aol.com
Ornithological surveys in Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Ghana
(January 2005 and March 2011)

by Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire & Robert J. Dowsett

Acknowledgements

For the 2005 visit we thank the then Executive Director of the Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission (Y. Ofori-Frimpong) and the Regional Director of IUCN (I. Thiaw) for inviting us to undertake this survey. Wildlife Division staff at Accra (especially Mike Adu-Nsiah and Kodjo Menka) and IUCN/WDSP advisors Peter Howard and Phil Marshall provided logistical help and supervision. In the field we were competently guided by Wildlife Guard Thompson Awini, and James Oppong (Biodiversity Monitoring Unit) was a helpful companion.

In 2011 the Executive Director Nana Kofi (Mike) Adu-Nsiah encouraged us to continue our work in Bomfobiri. We thank the reserve’s Manager James Puorideme for his welcome, and Wildlife Guards Asamoah, Obeng and Maripha for their guiding and local knowledge.

Summary

Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary covers 53 km² in the forest/savanna transition zone. Like the Afram plains to the north, the area has suffered from a general drying out of the climate and huge expanses of forest have been destroyed by fires — the last most severe being in 1983. The main remnant of rain forest is situated along the Ongwam river, while some patches of edaphic woodland and grassland grow on thin soils and around flat rock slabs. A footpath some 2.5 km long across wooded grassland leads to a small waterfall on the Boumfoum (or Bomfobiri) stream. This area has been highlighted in the popular Bradt Guide to Ghana (Briggs 1998 and subsequent editions until 2004) and various Wildlife Division reports as being a good place in the country to see the rare Rockfowl (Picathartes gymnocephalus); this turned out to be the result of confusion with Stone Partridge Ptilopachus petrosus and later editions of the Bradt Guide (cf. Briggs 2010) have made the correction, following our suggestion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary covers 53 km² in the forest/savanna transition zone. Like the Afram plains to the north, the area has suffered from a general drying out of the climate and huge expanses of forest have been destroyed by fires — the last most severe being in 1983. The main remnant of rain forest is situated along the Ongwam river (or stream), while some patches of edaphic woodland and grassland grow on thin soils and around flat rock slabs. A footpath some 2.5 km long across wooded grassland leads to a small waterfall on the Bomfobiri stream. This area has been highlighted in the popular Bradt Guide to Ghana (Briggs 1998 and subsequent editions until 2004) and various Wildlife Division reports as being a good place in the country to see the rare Rockfowl (Picathartes gymnocephalus); this turned out to be the result of confusion with Stone Partridge Ptilopachus petrosus and later editions of the Bradt Guide (cf. Briggs 2010) have made the correction, following our suggestion.

Our first visit to Bomfobiri was from 12-15 January 2005 and the second from 6-9 March 2011. On each
occasion we camped on the Ninai stream, near the Reserve’s boundary (6°56’N, 1°12’W). Apart from the footpath to the waterfalls, access into the reserve is difficult except just after bush fires. In January the tall, rank grassland had not yet burnt, and it took us twice as long (about 90 minutes) to reach the Ongwam forest than in March. Walking inside this forest is not easy, as a small footpath cut into the edge peters out after less than 1 km; it is also possible to explore some forest on a tributary. We reached the Ongwam area on two successive mornings on both visits and also explored some natural and derived savanna around our camp site, including the path to the waterfalls. A broader section of the Ongwam forest can be reached from another camp (Yiri-bontire), but is further away. We did not have the time to do this.

In all we recorded nearly 180 bird species; a few more species were reported by Clide Carter (in litt.) on a visit on 2-3 June 1995, and by Wildlife Guards, especially Asamoah and Thomas Kwati. The latter worked in Bomfobiri before moving to Owabi (where he is retired). Asamoah has worked in Bomfobiri since 1985 and is familiar with a number of birds, including their calls (e.g. of cuckoos and owls).

In mid-January 2005 strong Harmattan was blowing and the nights were rather cold. In March 2011 it was hot and humid, and we experienced two storms on the evening or night of 7 and 8. Sweat bees (Trigona sp.) were numerous in March, and made conditions difficult when we were stationary around the camp.

2. HABITAT CLASSIFICATION

Derived savanna grassland. The dominant vegetation type in Bomfobiri seems to be derived savanna, resulting from forest destroyed by extensive fires and some farming. Thus very tall grassland with some invasive *Chromolaena* and shrubs is dotted about with scattered, tall forest trees (especially *Antiaris toxicaria*, also *Bombax buonopozense*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Cola gigantea*...).

Edaphic grassland. Some dense grassland with *Ctenium*, *Loudetia* species among others occurs around flat rocky slabs; it is less extensive than derived savanna.

Woodland. Small patches of edaphic woodland occur here and there on thin soils. Main tall trees are *Daniellia oliveri*, followed by *Lophira lanceolata*, *Parkia biglobosa*, *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, *Terminalia laxiflora*, with the odd fig (*Ficus ingens*). Schmitt & Adu-Nsiah (1993) also mention another community dominated by *Detarium microcarpum*. Some transition woodland with *Afzelia africana*, *Anogeissus leiocarpus* and *Manilkara multinervis* grows at the ecotone between woodland and riparian thicket.

Riparian forest and thicket. Thin riparian or gallery forest and thicket line several streams in the reserve. The Ninai stream near the entrance has some water year-round; for part of the way the stream flows in a rocky crevice where the riparian vegetation is somewhat protected from fires. There are also some dry thickets away from streams, such as one immediately north of our camp site. This one is really impenetrable and is dominated by secondary species such as *Acacia adianthifolia*, *A. zygia* etc. 10-15 m high.

Dry semi-evergreen rain forest. The main remnant left in the reserve appears to be on the perennial Ongwam river, and this broad forest is “many miles long” (Wildlife Guards’ reports). The canopy is fairly tall, with emergents reaching at least 40 m. Many species have been recorded, including *Alstonia boonei*, *Antiaris toxicaria*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Celtis* spp., *Chrysophyllum perpulchrum*, *Cola gigantea*, *Cola millenti*, *Dracaena arborea*, *Entandrophragma* spp., *Homalium letestui*, *Klainedoxa gabonensis*, *Lannea welwitschii*, *Milicia excelsa*, *Myrianthus arboreus*, *Piptadeniastrom africanum*, *Pterygota macrocarpa*, *Pycnanthus angolensis*, *Sterculia* spp., *Terminalia superba*, *Triplochiton scleroxylon*. Lianes are numerous and include some vicious thorny *Acacia pentagona*; *Culcasia* spp. climb around tree trunks. *Raphia hookerii* is common along the river, also *Elaeis guineensis*.

Rocky hills. There is one main large rocky hill in the reserve; it could not be reached as the derived savanna
surrounding it was impenetrable. Small rocky ridges or flat rock slabs are scattered in other areas, in woodland and wooded grassland.

3. THE AVIFAUNA

3.1. References and past reports

Bomfobiri remained largely unexplored. A zoological survey by Sam (1994) includes a short list of 44 bird species. Unfortunately this list includes several highly improbable species, so that it is impossible to use it. Examples are species from dry savanna found only in the far north of the country such as Mourning Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* and White-rumped Seedeater *Serinus leucopygius*. The Pennant-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx vexillarius* is unlikely to occur this far west and has been frequently confused with the common Standard-winged Nightjar *M. longipennis*.

The widely used Bradt Guide to Ghana (Briggs 1998 and later editions until 2004) wrote that the reserve's speciality is the Bare-headed Rockfowl (= Yellow-headed Picathartes *Picathartes gymncephalus*), that one may encounter with luck somewhere along the footpath leading to the Boumfoum waterfalls. This seems to have been based on an error appearing in various Management Plans as well as botanical and faunal reports ((Schmitt & Adu-Nsiah 1993, Sam 1994). The footpath crosses some edaphic and derived wooded grassland and woodland, to reach thin riparian thickets around the falls. There is no suitable habitat in the reserve for this bird, which is never found in savanna, derived or not. The Ongwam forest does not appear to contain any rocks that might have been suitable for Rockfowl. It seems that there was confusion of names with the common Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus*.

Clide Carter (who has birded widely in Africa) visited Bomfobiri on 2-3 June 1995, and sent us a list of 51 species. From his list it is clear he did not approach the Ongwam forest but more probably the Boumfoum area. Wildlife Guards Thomas Kwati (now retired in Owabi) and Asamoah have a sound interest in birds and provided several records of interest.

3.2. Totals recorded

The annotated list below presents 194 species (our own total of 178 with another 16 species from other sources). No doubt the Ongwam forest would have been more productive if we could have camped on the spot, and visited the broader section beyond Yiribontire camp. Judging by the list of forest birds already recorded, a number of others, including forest bulbuls, Turdidae, flycatchers *sensu lato* and weavers could be expected. Some of the edaphic grassland gets flooded in the rains (there was still a little standing water in January), and a visit in the late rains could have produced a few more species. The potential list for the Reserve as a whole must be well over 200 species.

3.3. Ecological considerations

The savanna component is fairly poor, and as fragments of edaphic woodland are small, this is not expected to change much with further exploration. On the other hand the Ongwam forest was certainly much more extensive in the past. The lush derived savanna is suitable habitat for some species, especially Tchagra shrikes *Tchagra* spp., Palaearctic migrants such as Whinchats *Saxicola rubetra*, *Acrocephalus* warblers and Nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos*.

3.4. Biome-restricted species

**Sudanian.** Only seven species. They are all recorded in the coastal plains as well as in the north of the country: *Coracias cyanogaster*, *Eremomela pusilla*, *Hypergerus atriceps*, *Nectarinia coccinigaster*, *Pytilia hypogrammica*, *Lagonosticta rufopicta*, *L. rara*. 
Guineo-Congolian. This list of 45 species is no doubt incomplete: Bostrychia rara, Francolinus ahantensis, Sarothrura pulchra, Tauraco persa, Centropus leucogaster, Scotopelia ussheri, Eurystomus gularis, Tropicramus albocristatus, Tockus fasciatus, Bycanistes fistulator, B. subcylindricus, Ceratogymna elata, Pogoniulus scolopaceus, P. subsulphureus, Tricholaema hirsuta, Trachyphonus purpuratus, Indicator maculatus, Campethera nivosa, Thripias pyrhogaster, Andropadus gracilis, Baeopogon indicator, Chlorocichla simplex, Theseleocichla leucopleura, Pyrrhuridae scandens, Phyllastrephus albigularis, Bleda canicapillus, Nicator chloris, Stiphronyx erythrothorax, Sylvietta virens, Macrospheorus concolor, Hylia prasina, Camaroptera chloronota, Dyaphorophyia castanea, Terpsiphone rufiventris, Illadopsis fulvescens, I. puveli, Nectarinia adelberti, N. johannae, N. superba, Oriolus nigriceps, Dicrurus modestus, Malimbus nitens, M. rubricollis, Nigrita bicolor. Two other species occur if we follow the BirdLife classification (Caprimulgus pectoralis) nigriscapularis and Psalidoprocne obscura) but they are not true Guineo-Congolian species; the swallow breeds in Sudanian savanna and transition zones. The turaco Corythaëola cristata may be added as a Guineo-Congolian near-endemic.

3.5. Globally-threatened species

Two species are on the International Red List:

The Rufous Fishing Owl Scotopelia ussheri (Endangered) is present on the Ongwam river. This species remains very poorly known but appears more widespread in south-west Ghana than hitherto thought. Bomfobiri is at the northern limit of its range in Ghana.

The Yellow-casqued Hornbill Ceratogymna elata (Near Threatened) was observed in Ongwam forest on both visits. This large frugivorous hornbill may be subject to local movements and may not be present in the reserve permanently.

3.6. The biogeographical and conservation importance of Bomfobiri

Some records are of interest in a country-wide context. The presence of Rufous Fishing Owl in the Ongwam forest is particularly important. The large Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill is now the rarest of all hornbills in Ghana (and even West Africa); it is not on an endangered list because of its wide distribution reaching East Africa. The concentration of several large frugivorous birds (parrots, turacos, hornbills) in the Ongwam forest suggests that Bomfobiri has a refuge value in a part of the country generally devastated by fires. It also suggests that the hunting impact seems to be negligible for the moment. The Manager has confirmed that poaching is aimed essentially at large mammals and birds are not affected. Bomfobiri remains the only site in Ghana where we have observed the Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill, and the reserve is of great importance for the survival of this species in Ghana. The main threat to Bomfobiri habitats is in the form of late bush fires that will continue to eat into the remaining blocks of forest. The Ongwam forest in particular should receive better protection than it does at present. There is no early-burning policy in the park (it has been proposed but is virtually impossible to implement).

Some species of the forest transition zone are common, such as Puvel’s Illadopsis Illadopsis puveli, but Leaflove Pyrrhuridae scandens appears very local.

3.7. Breeding records

Red-eyed Dove Streptopelia semitorquata. One carrying nest-building material, 14 Jan.
African Green Pigeon Treron calvus. One carrying stick to nest, 9 Mar.
Long-tailed Nightjar Caprimulgus climacurus. Female flushed from a clutch of 2 eggs, 8 Mar, on bare earth in secondary grassland (previously burnt).
African Grey Hornbill Tockus nasutus. One taking food silently to tree hole, 8 Mar.
Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill Bycanistes subcylindricus. Male carrying a lizard (to a nest), 14 Jan.
Plain-backed Pipit Anthus leucophrys. One pair greatly alarmed, refusing to fly away more than a few metres, 9 Mar, suggests presence of nest.
Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis*. Female begging from male, thus at incubation stage, 6-7 Mar.


4. ANNOTATED SPECIES LIST

English names usually follow Borrow & Demey (2001, 2004). Abbreviations used: AM = intra-African migrant, PM = Palaearctic (Eurasian) migrant. Other species are considered to be resident. An * designates records from other sources than our personal observations.

White-backed Night Heron *Gorsachius leuconotus*. One was in thicket on the edge of the Ninai stream on the evening of 6 Mar, making rather a lot of noise, ending in the typical double croak. It flew off and did not come back on subsequent nights, perhaps disturbed by our presence.

Green-backed Heron *Butorides striata*. Edge of pools and streams.

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*. At pools and streams.

*Spot-breasted Ibis* *Bostrychia rara*. The bird and its calls are well known to Thomas Kwati and other guards, from the Ongwam river.

African Cuckoo Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides*. Two pairs displaying in flight (6h50), on the way to Ongwam forest, 7 Mar, and one singing at 16h20 of same day. One pair near Boumfoum waterfalls, 9 Mar.

Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*. Seen daily, riparian vegetation on the Boumfoum etc. and the Ongwam (*Raphia* is common). One adult in wing moult (Mar).


African Harrier Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus*. Common in forest and derived savanna.

African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro*. One singing in Ongwam forest at 10h20, 7 Mar; one hunting near Boumfoum waterfalls.

Shikra *Accipiter badius*. Savanna.

Lizard Buzzard *Kapifalco monogrammicus*. Savanna and thickets.

Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis*. AM. Savanna, on both visits.


*Crowned Eagle* *Stephanoaetus coronatus*. Well known (with its aerial displays) to Asamoah: present in a broader section of Ongwam forest, that can be reached from the Yiribontire camp.

Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus*. In derived savanna, noisy in Mar.

African Hobby *Falco cuvierii*. Hunting at edge of riparian thicket and in derived savanna.

Double-spurred Francolin *Francolinus bicalcaratus*. Common in any grassland (edaphic and derived) in Jan, but silent in Mar.

Ahanta Francolin *Francolinus ahantensis*. Common in derived savanna.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*. PM. One flushed in dense grassland around rocks, 14 Jan.

Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus*. Common in rocky grassland, thickets and woodland.

*Crested Guineafowl* *Guttera pucherani*. Reported by Wildlife Guards from Ongwam forest.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*. Widespread in rocky grassland, thickets and woodland.

White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra*. Several in rank undergrowth, in Ongwam forest, along forested tributaries, and even in thicket on the Ninai stream (singing Mar).

Black Crake *Amatorinus flavirostra*. One pair singing in Zingiberaceae thicket on the Ninai (Mar).

*African Finfoot* *Podica senegalensis*. Reliably reported by Wildlife Guards from the Ongwam stream, in forest.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*. PM. Edge of Ninai and Boumfoum streams, Jan & Mar.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*. PM. Edge of Ninai and Boumfoum streams (rocks), Jan & Mar.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*. Common: woodland, derived savanna and riparian forest.

Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer*. Common, all habitats. Hardly singing in Mar (not heard before the 8th).

Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria*. Common in Ongwam forest.
African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*. Widespread (all habitats).

Brown-necked Parrot *Poicephalus robustus*. Two plus five in riparian and Ongwam forest in Jan 2005; not observed in Mar 2011, but noted in Jun by C. Carter. This big parrot is subject to local movements.

Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi*. At least four in Ongwam forest (Jan) and heard in Mar.

Green Turaco *Tauraco persa*. Common in Ongwam forest and other riparian.

Great Blue Turaco *Corythaëola cristata*. Very noisy and conspicuous in Ongwam forest (also heard on a tributary); concentration of over a dozen birds in Jan 2005, still common in Mar 2011.

Western Grey Plantain-eater *Crinifer piscator*. Curiously not noted in Jan 2005. Two singles edge of thicket on 8 Mar 2011, one calling a little.

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*. AM. One singing briefly at night (20h20) on 6 Mar 2011. Gave two series of modulated whistles (of 2 and 5 notes, introduction to full song).

*Red-chested Cuckoo* *Cuculus solitarius*. Voice well known to Asamoah, from the bigger section of forest on the Ongwam.

*Black Cuckoo* *Cuculus clamosus*. Voice well known to Asamoah, from the bigger section of forest on the Ongwam.

Common (Eurasian Grey) Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*. PM. One seen on the edge of riparian thicket, 13 Jan.

*African Emerald Cuckoo* *Chrysococcyx cupreus*. Voice well known to Asamoah, from Ongwam forest.

Klaas’s Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*. One heard on 8 Mar, and also in Jun (C. Carter), but not in Jan.

Yellowbill (Green Coucal) *Ceuthmocharis aereus*. In Ongwam forest.

African Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*. AM. One flushed from dense grassland around rocks, 14 Jan.

Black-throated Coucal *Centropus leucogaster*. Calling in Ongwam forest.

Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*. In savanna grassland and woodland.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*. Heard on the boundary (Ninai camp).

White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis leucotis*. One singing in thicket, Mar (not heard in Jan).

Spotted (Greyish) Eagle Owl *Bubo africanus* (race *cinerascens*). One pair and a more distant male calling near our camp in Mar 2011. Not heard in Jan.

*Rufous Fishing Owl* *Scotopelia ussheri*. Well described to us by Thomas Kwati, who saw it on the Ongwam river.

*African Wood Owl* *Strix woodfordii*. Call well described by Wildlife Guards from Ongwam forest.

Black-shouldered Nightjar *Caprimulgus pectoralis nigriscapularis*. One heard distantly on 6 Mar. Voice well known to Wildlife Guards.

Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus*. AM?. A few in grassland and along road, singing more in Mar, when breeding.

*Standard-winged Nightjar* *Macrodipteryx longipennis*. AM. Distinctive species noted by Wildlife Guards (dry-season visitor).

African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus*. Several, savanna (Jan).

Common (European) Swift *Apus apus*. PM. Several dozen high up, 8-9 Mar.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*. Two or three pairs on the edge of the reserve, near a small rocky hill, 9 Mar.

*Shining-blue Kingfisher* *Alcedo quadribrachys*. Noted by Wildlife Guards on the Ongwam stream in forest.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*. On the Ninai and Boumfoüm streams.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ceyx pictus*. AM. No records in Jan, but singing in woodland, Mar. Also present in Jun (C. Carter), which indicates the species must breed locally.

Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halycon leucocephala*. AM. One in rocky, burnt woodland on the edge of the reserve, 6 Mar.

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halycon malimbica*. Common in Ongwam forest and tributaries.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halycon senegalensis*. One edge of riparian thicket, calling briefly (Jan, Mar). Also recorded in Jun (C. Carter), thus likely resident.

Striped Kingfisher *Halycon heliokelchii*. In woodland and derived grassland with dead trees.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*. On the Boumfoüm stream, Jan.

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*. AM. Small groups wintering in derived savanna, degraded forest, Jan & Mar.

*Abyssinian Roller* *Coracias abyssinicus*. AM. Reported by Thomas Kwati as a rare dry-season visitor.

Rufous-crowned Roller *Coracias naevius*. One record in woodland (Mar).

Blue-bellied Roller *Coracias cyanogaster*. One pair in derived savanna, edge of riparian forest, calling (Mar).

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*. AM. Two pairs in thin riparian and derived savanna (Jan). Noisy in Mar, including one pair repeatedly chasing a third bird away from their nesting tree.

Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis*. In Ongwam forest, both visits.

*Black Wood Hoopoe (Scimitarbill)* *Phoeniculus aterrimus*. Reported by C. Carter.

White-crested Hornbill *Tropicranus albocristatus*. In Ongwam forest.

African Pied Hornbill *Tockus fasciatus*. Widespread, any riparian vegetation and Ongwam forest.

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*. AM. Widespread in savanna, very noisy in Jan. Rather discreet in Mar (singing very little), with nesting in progress: one was taking food to a nest hole in a 40-m tall *Albizia*. No records in early Jun (C. Carter).

Piping Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator*. Mainly in Ongwam forest. Feeding on *Pycnanthus* fruit (Jan). Two pairs or family groups in Mar 2011.

Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill *Bycanistes subcylindricus*. Several pairs or singles seen on the approach to and in Ongwam forest. A male carrying a lizard (to nest), 14 Jan. Heard in two areas in Mar 2011.

Yellow-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna elata*. Several in Ongwam forest, feeding on *Pycnanthus* fruit (Jan 2005). Heard in Mar 2011.

Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus*. In Ongwam forest (Jan).

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus*. In riparian thicket and derived savanna.

Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*. In Ongwam forest.

Vieillot’s Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*. In woodland and derived savanna.

Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus*. Heard in Ongwam forest in Jan, not Mar.

Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosa*. In Ongwam forest, in a mixed party.

Fire-bellied Woodpecker *Thripia pyrrogaster*. Tapping loudly in canopy of Ongwam forest.

Grey Woodpecker *Mesopicos goertae*. In woodland and degraded riparian forest.

Fanti Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne obscura*. AM. One pair passing through the valley near Boumfoum waterfalls; one near a road bank (boundary), both on 9 Mar.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica*. AM? At least one pair along low rocks, in derived grassland (8 Mar). Could breed locally, also known to nest in villages nearby (e.g. nest-building in Kumahu on 6 Mar).

Preuss’s Cliff Swallow *Hirundo preussi*. AM? Some near Boumfoum waterfalls (Jan).

Barn (Eurasian) Swallow *Hirundo rustica*. PM. Small numbers in Jan; passing through in Mar.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*. One pair in edaphic grassland near rocks; one near a road bank (boundary), both on 9 Mar.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica*. AM? At least one pair along low rocks, in derived grassland (8 Mar). Could breed locally, also known to nest in villages nearby (e.g. nest-building in Kumahu on 6 Mar).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*. PM. A few in open wooded grassland, Jan & Mar.

Little Greenbul *Andropadus virens*. Widespread in riparian thickets and Ongwam forest.

Little Grey Greenbul *Andropadus gracilis*. In understorey of Ongwam forest (singing Jan).
Slender-billed Greenbul *Andropadus gracilirostris*. In canopy of Ongwam forest.
Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator*. In Ongwam forest (Jan).
Simple Leaflove *Chlorocichla simplex*. Widespread in thickets in derived savanna, and thin riparian forest on the Ninai stream.
Swamp Palm Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucopareia*. In Ongwam forest, near stream (where *Raphia* is common).
Leaflove *Pyrrhuris scandens*. Very local, and indeed not found in 2005. On 8 Mar 2011 one pair was singing in tall *Albizia* thicket north of our Ninai camp site. They came to tape playback. Apparently absent from rain forest on the Ongwam.

White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigularis*. In understorey of Ongwam forest.
Grey-headed Bristlebill *Bleda canicapillus*. In understorey of Ongwam forest and tributaries.
Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*. All wooded habitats.

Forest Robin *Stiphronus erythrosthorax*. Heard in Ongwam forest (Mar).

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*. PM. Several in thickets, *Chromolaena* and rank grass in derived savanna; in song early morning (Jan). On 8 Mar many were heard in the patch of tall *Albizia* thicket north of the Ninai stream.

Snowy-crowned Robin Chat *Cossypha niveicapilla*. AM. Several in thickets, edge of forest and rank grass (Jan). In Mar heard imitating Grey-headed Bristlebill and Sulphur-breasted Bush Shrike. Also recorded in Jun by C. Carter.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*. PM: Jan: several in derived savanna, perching on small bushes. Many in Mar (dozens over a couple of km), especially in freshly grown grass.

African Moustached Warbler *Melocichla mentalis*. Common in rank grass.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. PM: Jan: several in tall *Hyparrhenia* grass near stream.

Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. PM. Several in riparian thickets, some in song (Jan & Mar).

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. PM. Two singing and calling in low rank growth edge of riparian forest, 8 Mar.

Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis*. In rank growth in derived savanna.

Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*. PM. Several in thickets, both visits; never heard in song in Ghana.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*. PM. Quite common in Mar, several in song.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*. PM. Several in woodland and thickets, both visits; never heard in song in Ghana.

Green Hylia *Hyliia prasina*. In understorey of Ongwam forest.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*. PM. One singing in thickets near our camp, 6 Mar.

Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis*. In extensive edaphic grassland near rocks (unburnt grass, Jan). Not heard in Mar.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythropus*. Common in any rank grass, *Chromolaena* and other shrubs, not just riparian vegetation.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans*. In shrubby woodland, thickets edge of gully on the Ninai.

Green-backed (Senegal) Eremomela *Eremomela pusilla*. Woodland; one on flowers of an isolated *Bombax* (Jan).

Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. PM. Several in riparian thickets, some in song (Jan & Mar).

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. PM. Two singing and calling in low rank growth edge of riparian forest, 8 Mar.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythropus*. Common in any rank grass, *Chromolaena* and other shrubs, not just riparian vegetation.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans*. In shrubby woodland, thickets edge of gully on the Ninai.

Winding Cisticola *Cisticola galactotes*. In wet grassy hollows, still in song on Gulu; not heard in Mar.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*. In rank grass and thickets.

Singing Cisticola *Cisticola cantans*. In shrubby woodland, thickets edge of gully on the Ninai.

Grey-back Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*. Common, any thickets (in woodland or riparian situations).
Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota*. Heard in Ongwam forest (Mar).

Oriole-Warbler *Hypergerus atriceps*. Local: singing in evergreen gully on the Ninai stream in two places, including at camp (where heard in Mar).


Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*. PM. Several in woodland and edge of riparian thickets, both visits.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*. PM. Several in woodland and edge of riparian thickets, both visits.

Lead-coloured Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus*. In woodland and thickets, singing Jan, not Mar (seen only).

Black-and-white Flycatcher *Bias musicus*. One singing in emergents, Ongwam forest (Jan).

Senegal Batis *Batis senegalensis*. Common in woodland.

Chestnut Wattle-eye *Dyaphorophyia castanea*. In understorey of Ongwam forest (Jan).

Common Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*. In thin riparian forest or thickets on the Ninai and elsewhere.

Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer*. In Ongwam forest. One pair alarming as if young present (Jan).

Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens*. A party of 6 in Ongwam forest (Jan). Singing more in Mar. Puvel’s Illadopsis *Illadopsis puveli*. At least one singing in Ongwam forest (one song tape-recorded) in Jan. Far more vocal in Mar, when heard in several places, including in degraded forest before the Ongwam, and small patches in rocky gullies.

Collared Sunbird *Anthreptes collaris*. In Ongwam forest.

Olive Sunbird *Nectarinia olivacea*. In Ongwam forest.

Green-headed Sunbird *Nectarinia verticalis*. Common in woodland and thickets.

Buff-throated Sunbird *Nectarinia adelberti*. In canopy of Ongwam forest.

Variable (Yellow-bellied) Sunbird *Nectarinia venusta*. In riparian thickets and woodland. One on flowers of *Parkia biglobosa* (Mar).

Olive-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia chloropygia*. At forest edges near the Ongwam, in evergreen gully on the Ninai.

Copper (Coppery) Sunbird *Nectarinia cuprea*. In woodland and thickets; some feeding on *Chromolaena* flowers.

Splendid Sunbird *Nectarinia coccinigaster*. Common in woodland and forest edges.

Johanna’s Sunbird *Nectarinia johannae*. In canopy of Ongwam forest (Jan).

Superb Sunbird *Nectarinia superba*. In Ongwam forest (Mar).

Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis*. In riparian thickets and woodland.

Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis*. One heard in Ongwam forest (Mar).

Brubru *Nilaus afer*. Woodland, both visits (singing).

Northern Puffback *Dryoscopus gambensis*. In any tall thickets, riparian gully and forest edges.

Marsh Tchagra *Tchagra minutus*. In tall rank grass with shrubs (derived savanna).

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis*. In tall rank grass and thickets.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus*. Woodland and derived savanna.

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus*. In woodland with thickets; common in evergreen gully on the Ninai stream.


Velvet-mantled Dronto *Dicrurus (adsimilis) modestus*. In canopy of Ongwam forest.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus*. Near boundary (commensal).

Splendid Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus*. A pair in open, degraded forest (Jan); heard in Ongwam forest (Mar).

Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*. AM. Not noted in Jan, but at least three different pairs (males in song) in wooded grassland or woodland in Mar. Some perched on dead trees. Also recorded in Jun by C. Carter.


Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis*. Several in riparian thickets.

Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*. Some on both visits; visiting *Bombax* flowers (Jan).
Blue-billed Malimbe *Malimbus nitens*. In understory of Ongwam forest, in mixed party (Jan).

Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis*. In canopy of Ongwam forest (singing, Mar).

Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops*. Some in extensive edaphic grassland, near rocks (Jan); several flocks in Mar, in derived grassland (all in non-breeding dress). Noted as common in Jun (C. Carter), when in breeding dress.

Black-winged Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus*. Not noted in Jan, but a flock (non-breeding) coming to drink in Boumfoum pool, 9 Mar. Noted as very common in Jun by C. Carter, when breeding.

Northern Red Bishop *Euplectes franciscanus*. Flock in derived savanna, Jan.

Yellow-mantled Whydah (Widowbird) *Euplectes macroura*. Probably the main species of the genus in edaphic grassland. Non-breeding dress Jan & Mar, but already singing in Mar.

Grey-crowned Negrofinch *Nigrita canicapillus*. In Ongwam forest.

Chestnut-breasted Negrofinch *Nigrita bicolor*. In Ongwam forest (Jan, not heard in Mar).


Bar-breasted Firefinch *Lagonosticta rufopicta*. Several in thickets edge of stream (Ninai, Boumfoum).

Black-bellied Firefinch *Lagonosticta rara*. At least one pair edge of riparian gully (Jan). C. Carter found it “fairly common” in Jun.

Blue-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta rubricata*. Several in derived savanna (*Chromolaena*, and grass).

Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda*. In derived savanna.

Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cucullata*. Woodland and derived savanna.

*Black-and-white Mannikin* *Spermestes bicolor*. Reported by C. Carter.

Pin-tailed Widow (Whydah) *Vidua macroura*. Noted in Mar (not Jan) and Jun (C. Carter), in grassland.

Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus*. Widespread, woodland and thickets.

Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*. AM. A silent bird in short grassland near our camp site, 8 Mar, was presumably a wanderer.

5. LARGE MAMMALS

Two single Maxwell’s Duikers *Cephalophus maxwelli* (Mar) and a group of Campbell’s (Mona) Monkeys *Cercopithecus campbelli* (Jan) were seen in Ongwam forest, where we also noticed fresh tracks of Red River Hog *Potamochoerus porcus* and heard Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*. We saw fresh tracks of Buffalo *Syncerus caffer* in derived savanna (Mar). Other duikers reported by Wildlife Guards are Red-flanked *C. rufilatus* and Black *C. niger*, and also Royal Antelope *Neotragus pygmaeus*. In addition Spot-nosed Monkey *Cercopithecus petaurista*, Tree Hyrax *Dendrohyrax dorsalis* and Brush-tailed Porcupine *Atherurus africanus* are known from the Ongwam. There are no savanna antelopes as such, as Waterbuck *Kobus defassa* is considered extinct. Baboons *Papio anubis* occur around rocky hills; Crested Porcupine *Hystrix cristata* and Civet *Civettictis civetta* are widespread.

6. REFERENCES


