

# Malawi 2023

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27th Jan – 13th Feb 2023



Böhme's Bee-eater *Merops boehmi*

Malawi the country that calls itself the “warm heart of Africa” is probably best known for its name giving lake Malawi, formerly Nyassa. Stunning biodiversity underwater in the form of Cichlids has evolved in the area and draws many tourists to the shore of the lake. We however managed to spend 17 full days in the country without ever seeing the lake. Nevertheless, we had a fantastic trip and were rewarded with a lot of stunning terrestrial and avian wildlife. Although Malawi is one of the least travelled destinations in the wider region and one of the poorest countries in the world it has a lot to offer for any travelling birder. Large tracts of Miombo forests as well as unique afro-montane forests hold prolific birdlife that can hardly be found outside of Malawi. January – February is an excellent time for birding here, as the breeding season begins to wrap up, but still with good amounts of activity. For some species, this late in the breeding season means established territories and chicks, so they can be harder to find. During our 17 days in Malawi, we managed to spot 350 bird species, more than 30 species of mammal and a true wealth of butterflies and other critters.

## Planning

We planned our trip around our target species and chose accommodations and birding areas accordingly. Usually, we read a lot of trip reports from other independent birders but for Malawi we had a hard time finding any good, comprehensive and recent reports. Many of the reports have passed 10 years of age or stem from tour companies and are therefore not independent. The report by Sjef Öllers from 2013 ([https://www.cloudbirders.com/be4/download?filename=OLLERS\\_Malawi\\_11\\_2013.pdf](https://www.cloudbirders.com/be4/download?filename=OLLERS_Malawi_11_2013.pdf)) gave us some valuable insights and the infamous blog of the Gallardy's (<https://budgetbirders.com/category/overlanding-africa/malawi/>) was also very helpful.

Apart from those our planning revolved around a lot of record checking on eBird, studying the site guides in the Southern African Birdfinder (old but gold) and scrutinizing google maps satellite imagery for places to stay. We did not dig into available guides as Malawi is not a classic guided destination. There are very few local guides at all and most of them work in the upmarket lodges and do not have comprehensive knowledge of all the birdlife in the country. There seem to be one or two good guides that are used by the big tour companies, but Malawi works just fine without guides (except for Liwonde NP where a guide is partially mandatory).



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## *1.1 Visa*

For most nationalities Malawi offers a Visa on arrival which we could purchase hassle free at the airport in Lilongwe upon arrival. The counter does however only accept MWK the local currency for the payment of the Visa which means you have to proceed to an ATM or Money exchange first and then come back to pay or you pay a slightly higher conversion fee and hand them Euros or Dollars. Apart from that Malawi also offers an e-Visa which can be arranged here: <https://evisa.gov.mw/>

## *1.2 Flights*

There were no direct flights available from Europe and Dan went from the UK via Addis Abeba to Lilongwe with Ethiopian Airlines and Max flew Kenyan from Germany to Nairobi and then on to Lilongwe. Both of us had long stopovers in Nairobi and Addis respectively and the availability of flights was generally limited.

## *1.3 Language*

The official language is English however Chichewa is the language spoken by most people. Car rental agencies, personnel in National Parks and accommodations spoke English and we did not have any language issues while we were there.

## *1.4 Accommodation*

At key sites there is accommodation available and most of the places also allow camping which saved us a lot of money at Mvuu. We camped at Dzalanyama and also at Liwonde NP as well as Luwawa Forest Lodge. In all other places we stayed in rooms, sometimes arriving late and leaving early. We made reservations prior to our stays with Mvuu Camp, Luwawa Forest Lodge and Dzalanyama Forest Lodge. The rest of our schedule was kept somewhat flexible, and we also used that flexibility and made some changes on tour. We tried to keep the budget low whilst not using super run-down places and at Mvuu Camp we had a couple of luxurious days. You can keep costs a little lower than we did by camping slightly more. Camp sites were usually available at all key sites and sometimes even included some infrastructure. The prices for camping ranged from 12 \$ to 40 \$ at Mvuu.





*Don't worry! If you don't have a mattress, you can get a new one close to the car hire.*

### *1.5 Transport*

We rented an old Nissan Patrol from “ambassador car hire” for 80 \$ a day with 150km free mileage per day. The mileage was just enough and is added up each day, meaning if you don't use your miles on a day, you can use those on another day. I think we ended up 50km's short of our allowance. Excess miles would have been charged rather steeply at 0.50 \$ per km. The guy at ambassador car hire was polite and helpful but there was also something strange about

him. We also contacted other car rental agencies and the offers diverged only minimally so we settled with ambassador. Upon arrival at the airport, we were picked up by ambassador and brought to their location where the car was already waiting. The car was fine except for the tires being somewhat run down already. I asked if they could change the tires, but they only had one spare tire to replace the most worn one. This took quite a while, but we used the time to stock up on groceries in a nearby supermarket. The car itself did not cause us any troubles during the trip. When we returned the car ambassador wanted to charge us for scratches (we did add some major scratches to an already very scratchy car), they said they would get an offer in to fix the scratches and send us an invoice. Knowing they would not fix the scratches and produce some expensive fake offer I argued with them, and we finally settled on a one-time payment of around 50 €. All in all, we would rent there again, also given the lack of proper alternatives.

The roads in Malawi are generally okay, most highways are tarmacked and have little potholes. Roads away from the few main highways are unsealed and sometimes very bumpy and only allow very slow traveling. In very rainy months some roads might be impassable. Many roads require a 4x4 and not just that but also one with high clearance. We rented a Nissan Patrol which was fine. The ascend towards Ruo Gorge and to Chelinda had a few tricky sections, if you have some experience with driving in Africa you should be fine.

## *1.6 Food*

Upon arrival in Lilongwe, we loaded our car with large amounts of oats, nuts and raisins which formed our staple breakfast with milk made from milk powder. The lodges also provided proper meals and in the case of Mvuu excellent ones. We mostly ate at the lodges in the evenings and sometimes had roadside stops at small restaurants in the larger cities. Lunch was however also skipped often when we were in the field, or we only ate bars or something else we had brought. Make sure to always buy enough bottled water when stopping at grocery stores as you will have long periods without access to shops selling bottled water.

## *1.7 Money*

The local currency is Malawi Kwacha (MWK) at the time of writing the conversion rate is 1159 MWK for 1 €. We paid with local currency almost everywhere except for places that allowed credit cards. Be sure to carry enough Kwachas as local ATMs, even in the capital, only provide small amounts (ranging from 100 – 300 €) and can be hard to find outside of larger towns. You can save a lot of time by not having to go to an ATM every second day. Sometimes the ATMs would not work at all or only accept one out of the four cards we brought. I suggest you might hop into a physical bank in Lilongwe when, just after the car rental and get enough cash for half your trip.

## 1.8 Literature

There is no stand-alone book available for the birds of Malawi. A really good option is to carry the Sasol “Birds of southern Africa” as your main field guide and use the Sasol “Birds of Africa South of the Sahara” for the species not covered in the former. The latter is a little larger but still okay to carry. Furthermore, it is always a good idea to prepare yourself with eBird and the birds of the world website to familiarise with the species. I also strongly recommend getting a copy of the “Southern African Birdfinder” by Cohen, Spottiswood & Rossouw (2006). It may be old but so are many of the forests and species assemblages.

## 1.9 Tapes

Most of the species can be found on the Merlin Bird ID App, some require direct downloads via Xeno Canto. It is wise to download multiple calls and songs for key species and check which recordings are best. Xeno Canto often has better recordings available than the Merlin App. We also used a hybrid approach and had tapes from both resources.



## Itinerary

The itinerary was crafted in a way that allowed us to see the most of our target species and can be adjusted to your needs, depending on your personal target species. We stayed much longer at Liwonde NP than is required to see Speckle-throated Woodpecker, Böhm’s Bee-eater or Dickinson’s Kestrel, because Max wanted to complete his African Rollers with Racket-tailed Roller and it took us 3 days to finally find one. Additionally, we invested a lot of time into finding Bronze-winged Courser which is very widespread but scarce and mostly unreliable. We also decided not to go to Mount Thyolo for Green-headed Oriole as it can also be seen in coastal



Kenya. In hindsight we made one planning mistake by not visiting the Babbling-Starling site in the morning and we encourage anyone who wants to see it to go in the morning as we searched in vain for it on one afternoon. We also experienced first-hand how rare and difficult to find Olive-headed Weaver is. It is still a miracle to us how Gallardy found one the first day, while being sick. This is probably the species we allocated the most searching time for on the whole trip, but we never found one. Although Dzalanyama is the classic site for it we found suitable habitat with much more lichen close by the Forestry College and in Chimaliro Forest, both sites have previous records. There are a few decisions to be made when planning your trip and I want to elaborate on this one: Which mountains do you visit in the south? Mounts Thyolo Zomba and Mulanje all have different subsets of species, but all have their own specials as well. Mount Thyolo is the only site for Green-headed Oriole and Green Barbet, while Mt. Mulanje harbours Stripe-cheeked Greenbul, Spotted Ground Thrush and better odds for the two Apalises. The Zomba Plateau should not be missed as it is the best site for Malawi’s only endemic Yellow-throated Apalis. We decided to visit Mt. Mulanje instead of Mt. Thyolo, because the overall habitat seems more pristine there and the scenery and chance to explore lesser-known areas were more to our taste. However, Mount Thyolo is more easily accessed. There is also the possibility to visit all areas if time is not a constraint. If you are only after the extremely range restricted species and plan to visit Tanzania’s south as well as Zambia at some point you might be able to do a 12 – 13-day itinerary, similar to what Gallardy did. That would mean more driving than birding, but it is doable.

Mulanje	Thyolo	Zomba
Yellow-throated Apalis	Thyolo Alethe	White-winged Apalis
Thyolo Alethe	Green-headed Oriole	Yellow-throated Apalis
Spotted Ground Thrush	Green-Barbet?	Bertram’s Weaver
	(May be extinct here)	
Orange Ground Thrush		Black-browed Greenbul
White-winged Apalis (rare)		
Olive-flanked Ground Robin		
Stripe-cheeked Greenbul		

<b>Day 1</b> 27.01.2023	<b>AM</b>	Arrival at Lilongwe Dzalanyama	Logistics and drive to Dzalanyama, arrival late at night.
	<b>PM</b>		
<b>Day 2</b> 28.01.2023	<b>AM</b>	Dzalanyama	Full day birding the forest and the dambos
	<b>PM</b>	Dzalanyama	
<b>Day 3</b> 29.01.2023	<b>AM</b>	Dzalanyama	Full day birding the forest and dambos
	<b>PM</b>	Dzalanyama	
<b>Day 4</b> 30.01.2023	<b>AM</b>	Dzalanyama	Early morning birding the forest at Dzalanyama. Then to Blantyre. Short birding stop at the Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife
	<b>PM</b>	Blantyre	
<b>Day 5</b> 31.01.2023	<b>AM</b>	Mount Mulanje	Morning birding Ruo Gorge on Mt. Mulanje. Afternoon short stop at Likhubula before heading to Zomba town.
	<b>PM</b>	Zomba	
<b>Day 6</b> 01.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Zomba	First part of the day on the Mountain. The afternoon was spent around the lodge recovering.
	<b>PM</b>	Zomba	
<b>Day 7</b> 02.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Zomba	We left Zomba early for Liwonde NP. Arriving at Mvuu Camp at 9:30 AM. The rest of the day was spent birding the Lodge grounds and with a game drive and a night drive afterwards.
	<b>PM</b>	Liwonde NP	
<b>Day 8</b> 03.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Liwonde NP	Morning birding in gallery forest, thereafter a long game drive.
	<b>PM</b>		
<b>Day 9</b> 04.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Liwonde NP	Full day game drive and birding including a night drive.
	<b>PM</b>		

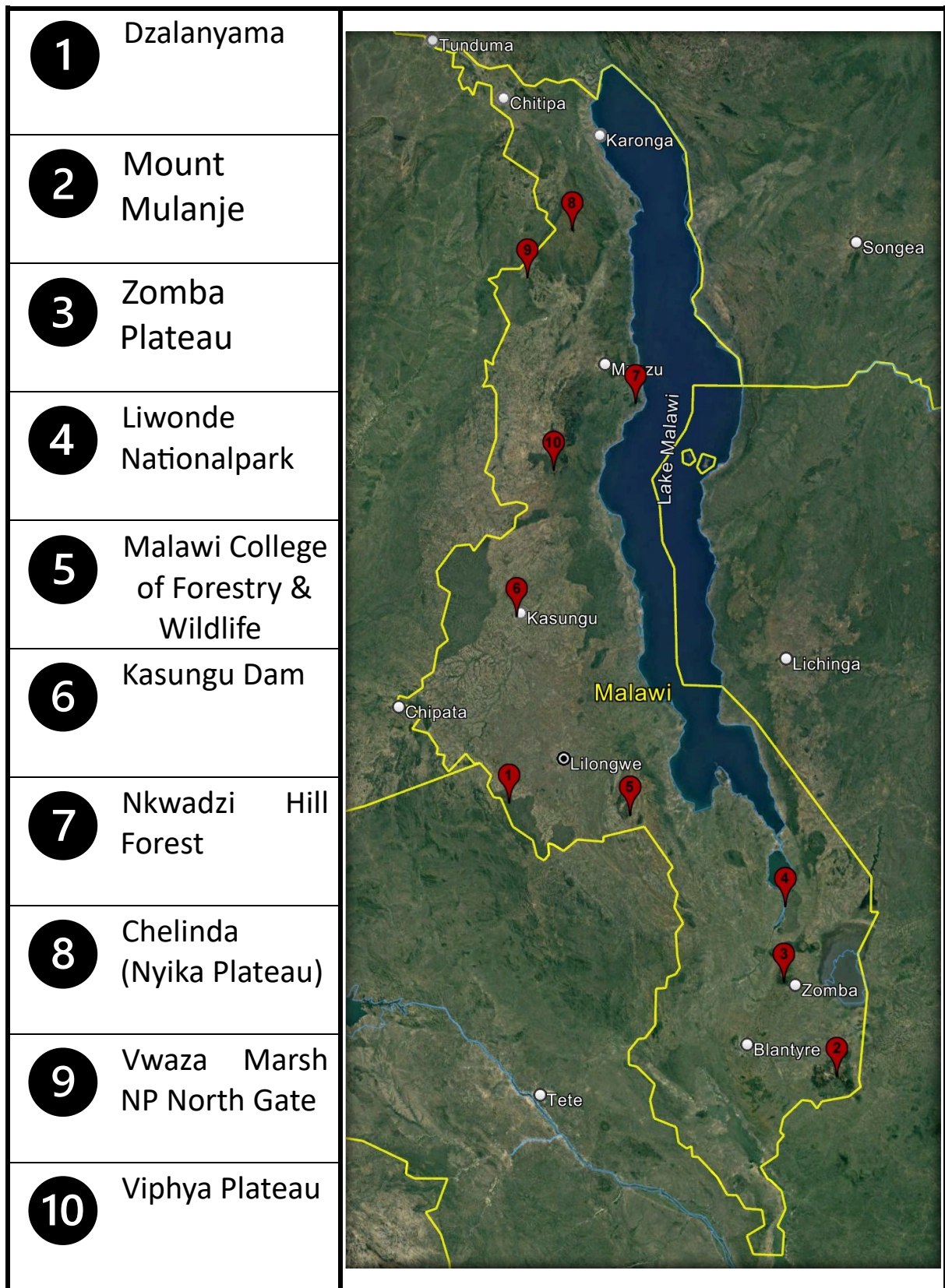
Schedule Part 1



<b>Day 10</b> 05.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Liwonde NP	One last game drive in the morning. Leaving by late morning towards Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife again. Birded there for a couple of hours before driving to Lilongwe for the night.
	<b>PM</b>	Lilongwe	
<b>Day 11</b> 06.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Lilongwe	A long driving day. Started early in Lilongwe and made a short stop at Kasungu Reservoir and used some of the afternoon at Mzuzu to bird the East Coast Akalat Site
	<b>PM</b>	Mzuzu	
<b>Day 12</b> 07.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Mzuzu	Leaving Mzuzu early and reached Telinka Gate of Nyika NP by 9:00 am. Spend the rest of the day in the NP ascending to Chelinda.
	<b>PM</b>	Chelinda	
<b>Day 13</b> 08.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Chelinda	Full day birding Nyika Plateau. Birded the higher elevations in the morning the afternoon around the lodge grounds.
	<b>PM</b>		
<b>Day 14</b> 09.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Chelinda	Birded Manyenjere Forest in Zambia and then slowly descended towards the north gate of Vwaza Marsh NP where we birded for 1.5h before heading to Rhumpi.
	<b>PM</b>	Rhumpi	
<b>Day 15</b> 10.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Rhumpi	Started early and briefly visited the main entrance of Vwaza Marsh NP then drove to Luwawa Forest Lodge
	<b>PM</b>	Luwawa Forest Lodge	
<b>Day 16</b> 11.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Luwawa Forest Lodge	Full day birding the surrounds of Luwawa Forest Lodge
	<b>PM</b>		
<b>Day 17</b> 12.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Luwawa Forest Lodge	We birded the area around the lodge and made a stop a Chimaliro Forest Reserve before departing to Lilongwe
	<b>PM</b>	Lilongwe	
<b>Day 18</b> 13.02.2023	<b>AM</b>	Flights home	
	<b>PM</b>		

Schedule Part 2





## Target Species

Malawi is a superb destination to see specialist species that require Miombo woodland as their habitat. Many of the Miombo specialists also occur in other countries, however many require pristine Miombo or larger tracts of these *Brachystegia* woodlands. It is possible to see a lot of species in Zambia, Mozambique, or Tanzania, although Malawi is probably the most accessible and holds the largest array. Miombo specialists that are accessible in Tanzania are often very hard to find in Zambia and vice versa. Such examples include Böhm's Flycatcher, Souza's Shrike which are easy in Zambia or Lesser Seedcracker, Stierling's Woodpecker or Speckle-throated Woodpecker which are absent from Zambia and found in Tanzania. Malawi has them all! Furthermore, Malawi has a lot of species that can hardly be found outside of its boundaries like Olive-headed Weaver, the endemic Yellow-throated Apalis or the range restricted Thyolo Alethe. Long story short, you cannot miss out on Malawi if you love African birds!

The target species were determined by studying range maps from various sources as well as eBird data and personal life lists. This means that some wide-ranging species that are easy to miss elsewhere (e.g., Bronze-winged Courser) also appear on our target list.



Thyolo Alethe *Chamaetylas choloensis*





## *Site Directory*

This section can be used during your trip to get quick overviews of target species and logistics on site. Each site has information about key species, our own experiences there and a separate logistics paragraph.



## Dzalanyama

Probably the first site you will see in Malawi and one of the best Miombo woodlands in the world. The forest is used in a sustainable fashion whereby cutting of branches is allowed but not cutting the trees. However, the extent to which branches are being cut seems not so sustainable. The climax of this woodland type is medium sized, slightly wider spaced trees covered in Old Man's Beard Lichen. The understory is often grassy or very only poorly vegetated at all. The forests here are interspersed with dambos, that can become quite wet in the rainy season and hold an array of unique species. The birding in Miombo is all about finding mixed species flocks and can be very quiet in between flocks. Even though Malawi still has large tracts of Miombo this may be the only true Miombo site you will visit. Thus, the target list is pretty long and at least two full days are recommended.

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
Olive-headed Weaver	Green-backed Honeybird	Miombo Tit
Stierling's Woodpecker	Pale-billed Hornbill	Shelley's Sunbird
Boulder Chat	Striped Pipit	Miombo Pied Barbet
Lesser Seedcracker	Wood Pipit	Hildebrandt's Spurfowl
Anchieta's Sunbird	Orange-winged Pytilia	Whyte's Barbet
Reichard's Seedeater	Little spotted Woodpecker	
Böhm's Flycatcher	Southern Hylota	
Souza's Shrike	Yellow-bellied Hylota	
Eastern Miombo Sunbird	Spotted Creeper	
	Miombo Scrub Robin	
	Rufous-bellied Tit	
	Retz's Helmetshrike	
	Miombo Rock Thrush	
	Red-capped Crombec	
	Miombo Wren-Warbler	
	Stierling's Wren-Warbler	

The first good bird we encountered on our way to the forest was a **Fiery-necked Nightjar** that sat on the road posing for nice images. The real birding however started the following morning at the lodge grounds from where any birding starts in Dzalanyama. The small stream just beside the campground has **Mountain Wagtails**

which were among the first birds we have seen. After the stream crossing, we meandered the forest without seeing anything for about 20 minutes until we picked up single **Eastern Miombo Sunbirds** and **Black-eared Seedeaters**. Shortly after we heard the calls of Hornbills and quickly tracked down a family group of **Pale-billed**

**Hornbills.** Mixed species flocks only form somewhat late around mid-morning in this forest which means early mornings are not the best for Miombo specials. With that in mind our game plan was to check the dambos early morning and try to find **Lesser Seedcracker**. We first circumnavigated the closer larger dambo (-14.260327, 33.454818) without success. As rains started to form, we decided to slowly head back to camp. A good decision as we encountered our first flock right after entering the forest from the dambo. Birds were spread out over an area that is larger than you would expect, maybe one or two hectares, the flocks are not as dense as flocks can be in thick tropical foliage. The first flock members we laid our eyes on were **Miombo Scrub Robin, Miombo Rock Thrush, Eastern Miombo Sunbird, Souza's Shrike**. Soon after we also found a single **Anchieta's Sunbird** in the canopy, a big target and a stunning bird for sure! It should stay the only individual we would see on the trip. Another really good bird that sadly only showed very briefly after tracking down it's call was a **Miombo Pied Barbet**, also a trip only and somewhat unexpected. After that first success we waited out the shower and ventured out again, still with **Lesser Seedcracker** on our minds. Checkin dambo after dambo we eventually encountered two very red-tailed and red-rumped fire finches flying by, which we quickly realised weren't Firefinches at all. They were **Lesser Seedcrackers!** With the location where they landed in mind, we made our way through the thick vegetation and waited for a couple of moments until the two birds emerged from the shrubbery and gave us a couple of seconds to marvel at them. It seems they favour wetter areas with

somewhat taller shrubs instead of plain grass. Make sure to check this area for them: -14.261278, 33.457558

With one localised species of the forest in the bag we went back to following flocks around and managed to spot our first **Stierling's Woodpeckers, Retz's Helmetshrike, Rufous-bellied Tit, Green-capped Eremomela, White-breasted Cuckooshrike** and **Wood Pipit**.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S127345363>



Pale-billed Hornbill *Lophoceros pallidirostris*

The second day about flocks and the localised Boulder Chats. The Chats were very straightforward and after scrutinizing some satellite imagery for nice rocks we found a very territorial pair here: -14.262937, 33.473625

Other good birds found in flocks were: **African Creeper, Böhm's Flycatcher, Green-backed Honeybird, Red-throated Twinspot**, several more encounters with **Stierling's Woodpeckers** and **Souza's Shrikes, Little Spotted Woodpecker**, both **Hyliotas, Striped Pipit** and two unidentified Stierling's / Miombo Wren-Warblers that would not call or sing. No luck with Olive-headed Weaver despite of checking endless lichen covered trunks for nuthatch like movements. We also attempted to find

Shelley's Sunbird in the small village where Gallardy saw one, but we only lured in **Eastern Miombo Sunbirds.**

The morning of the third day we managed to add our only **Reichard's Seedeater** to the list. This is one of the species where the ID first seems challenging, and you begin to

see Reichard's in Black-eared and only realise you have a real Reichard's when you see one. When you have doubts keep searching.



## Logistics

Getting to Dzalanyama Forest Reserve is not as straightforward as one might think. We had to turn around several times and try other roads as some were so overgrown or so deeply under water that they were impassable. It is best to drive from Lilongwe to the west on the M12 until you turn in here: -14.028083, 33.495205 from where you will go here: -14.103792, 33.496729 and make a left (turn south east) until here: -14.137479, 33.510505 where you turn right to the south and follow the road to this point: -14.182428, 33.480686 now you need to go south again. Follow the road through the next two villages and when you reach this grassy plain: -14.214358, 33.475653 you have done everything right and can take your last right turn here: -14.221535, 33.474898 and enter the forest on this road. You can park your car at the lodge and explore the area on foot from there.

You can stay either at the lodge or camp there. Apart from that there seems to be no accommodation close by. You could theoretically do day trips from Lilongwe but would need 2h for going there and for coming back.

The Lodge serves food, but you will need to notify someone in advance, and they may not have many choices. Snacks and sufficient water should be brought yourself. We payed 10 \$ pppn for camping.





## Malawi College of Forestry & Wildlife

This area conveniently sits close to the M1 which you will use to travel from Lilongwe to the south. Massive Inselbergs tower the landscape here and are home to Vincent's Bunting, which is sometimes considered a subspecies of Cape Bunting.

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
Olive-headed Weaver	Whyte's Barbet	Souza's Shrike
Vincent's Bunting	Mocking Cliff Chat	Boulder Chat
Miombo Tit	Striped Pipit	Orange-winged Pytilia
	African Spotted Creeper	

We initially planned this as a short stop for **Vincent's Bunting** and upon arriving at the site we quickly made our way uphill to the rockier more boulder strewn area. Knowing Cape Buntings from previous visits to Southern Africa we knew it should not be hard to find one. We tried for about an hour in the boulder rich area before calling it off, because we still had to drive all the way to Blantyre, and we were running late. On our descend we suddenly encountered a flock in the Miombo, we immediately got to see a **Spotted Creeper**, **Miombo Rock Thrush**, **Green-capped Eremomela**, **African Golden Oriole** and soon after spotted a **Mocking Cliff Chat** which would remain the only member of its species for the entire trip. A few minutes with the flock passed and we found a **Striped Pipit** and the highlights of the day **Whyte's Barbet**, a confiding family of three birds perched in the canopy of the not so tall Miombo. This flock made us think different about the place and we began dreaming about Olive-headed Weaver again.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S127377970>

We decided to come back here on our way north after the southern Malawi loop and allocated 3,5h stopover to our second visit. This time we walked a different route via the eastern side of the Inselberg where the Miombo seemed had the greatest lichen cover. It did not take long until we encountered our first new bird **Miombo Tit**. Some more searching revealed a small flock of 5 **Grey Penduline Tits**, a couple of more common Miombo species like **Red-faced Crombec**, **Collared Flycatcher** and **Eastern Miombo Sunbird**. We climbed the Inselberg from the north-eastern side: - 14.313773, 34.264685 , where you have the easiest access to a small plateau. We found another **Mocking Cliff Chat**, some **Red-winged Starlings** and suddenly saw suspicious movement in the boulders. Soon after we laid our eyes on **Vincent's Bunting** and about 10 minutes later, we had seen 5 different Individuals. It is not rare, but you will have to check the north-eastern side of the Inselberg for it.



## Logistics

If you want to use this site as a stopover, simply make a turn from the M1 here: -14.350172, 34.236805 and follow the road until you reach the base of the hill -14.321045, 34.263843 , the first time we parked our car on the road between the junction and the college and on our second visit we parked it on the college grounds and asked someone to look for it. If you want to stay for longer there is accommodation available in Kanzela Lodge: -14.320040, 34.263678 food is probably best brought yourselves, as we do not know whether they serve food or not. On our second visit we tried to circumnavigate the Inselberg but returned here: -14.312030, 34.259645 , because there is a small cliff. With enough time you can certainly wander farther and maybe also check the next Inselbergs to the northwest which also seem to have very promising Miombo stands. From the turnoff of the M1 you can reach Kanzela Lodge within 10 minutes.



Cape Bunting (Vincent's) *Emberiza capensis vincenti*

## Mount Mulanje

**Malawi's highest peak situated slightly more than an hour drive from Blantyre. The mountain has very different habitats scattered around it with the afro-montane Forests of Ruo Gorge being the most interesting to visiting birders.**

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
Thyolo Alethe	White-winged Apalis	Spotted Ground Thrush
Yellow-throated Apalis	Black-headed Apalis	Orange Ground Thrush
Stripe-cheeked Greenbul	Pale Batis (not Ruo Gorge)	Lemon Dove
	Olive-flanked Ground Robin	

Soon after we decided to not torture our car any further, we started walking from here:

-15.977949, 35.653833 and immediately saw very nice **Jameson's Firefinch** behind the stream. Soon after entering the forest, I told Dan quote "Thyolo Alethe is the most important here, but Spotted Ground Thrush would be awesome" and he replied "I see it", he indeed saw a **Thyolo Alethe** perched on a small rock right next to the road. It was a juvenile bird and quite confiding, the adults were however much more skulking in the foliage behind. There was an ant swarm crossing the road which must have lured the birds in. Sometimes you get lucky. Further up the road in the area with the pipes we started to see more birds including the target **Stripe-cheeked Greenbul**, along with a few **Yellow-throated Woodland Warblers** and **Yellow-streaked Greenbuls**. We followed the path all the way to the small Dam which looked very inviting for a small swim.



The best species were **White-winged Apalis**, **Livingstone's Turaco**, **Black-headed Apalis**, **White-starred Robin** and **Red-faced Crimsonwing**. We did endure some rain along the way and birding was mostly slow. We did however encounter our first primates of the trip, Blue Monkeys.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S127340928>

We then decided to make a quick visit to the north-western side of Mount Mulanje where nice birding seems possible around Likhubula Forest Lodge. Before we can comment on the birding, we need to mention that this area is famous for a waterfall and somewhat more touristy. We entered the access road towards the small reserve there and had to pay a small entrance fee. Just after passing a small gate there were around 30 guys trying to sell their guidance or some curios. These guys were a harassment on legs, I have never seen a group of men try to sell their stuff so viciously. They would not leave us alone, blocking the car. We then started to slowly drive and by that drive the guys away from the path and the car until we could accelerate a little more. At least 3 of the guys who wanted to sell their guidance also accelerated and managed to somewhat keep up with the car on the bad road. They followed us all the way to the parking of Likhubula House. The harassment continued there until we settled on a "leave us alone" fee. We have been to Africa many times and we are pretty laid back, but these guys were so annoying we did not enjoy our stay there at all. We wandered the degraded forest a bit until we found our hoped-for **Pale Batis**. The way back to the car also had 3 very showy **Crowned Hornbill**, which was indeed something we enjoyed.





Crowned Hornbill *Lophoceros nasutus*

## Logistics

Ruo Gorge can be accessed via Lujeri Estate. You need to make your way from the main road to this entrance point: -16.036226, 35.652236 where a guard and a barrier mark the borders of the Lujeri Tea Estate. In order to get there, you will need to take this turn from the main road M2: -16.070932, 35.651428 and continue along the east side of the village until you reach this crossing: -16.062430, 35.651249 where you turn right (north). From there onwards you follow the larger road towards the gate.

Having reached the tea estate you need to make sure to stay on the western side of the river and use the estate roads until you reach the starting point here: -15.977927, 35.653777 The last bit from here -15.990048, 35.655882 to the starting point must be driven on the smaller roads as the large path that is easily visible on satellite imagery is really bad and requires even more clearance. We took about an hour from the M2 turnoff to the starting point, but we took wrong turns a few times.

We made a day visit and spent the previous night in Blantyre with plenty of accommodation options. It is possible to stay at Lujeri Tea Estate or in the Likhubula area.

For the Likhubula area you would probably want to do things different from us. Due to the harassment at the gate, we took a wrong turn and ended up parking at CCAP Likhubula House. What you should do is turn left immediately after the gate: -15.939584, 35.498366 (turn north here). On the upper road you should lose the guys quickly and have more peace and reach more and better habitat. Our stay was a farce, but you can certainly have a good time there.



## Zomba Plateau

This rolling plateau is visited by most birders for extremely good chances of seeing Bertram's Weaver and good chances to see White-winged and Yellow-throated Apalis. The plateau was heavily deforested in the past and only small pockets of native forest remain. These areas are partially accessible via the road winding up from Zomba town.

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
White-winged Apalis	Black-browed Greenbul	Thyolo Alethe
Yellow-throated Apalis	Forest Double-collared Sunbird	Lemon Dove
Olive-headed Greenbul (if you didn't visit Mt. Thyolo)	Black-headed Apalis	

Our birding approach differed a bit from the classic as we had seen White-winged Apalis before. Usually people see Yellow-throated Apalis on Mts. Mulanje or Thyolo and miss White-winged Apalis. For us it was vice versa so we ventured up to the plateau where **Yellow-throated Apalis** can be found and after some taping we found a single bird in a roadside forest patch: -15.361505, 35.307425 , this patch also held a small flock with **Olive-headed, Little, Placid- and Yellow-streaked Greenbuls, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird** and **Black-headed Apalis**. A pair of **White-eared Barbet** was not joining the flock as well as the present **Evergreen Forest Warblers** singing from the lower quarters. If you still miss Thyolo Alethe you should probably visit the forest patches around Sunbird Kuchawe as they

seem the most extensive. After the first stop at the roadside forest patch, we wanted to try forest fragments close to Chagwa Dam, but soon gave in to the bad road leading up there. We parked our car on the roadside here: -15.344864, 35.300045 and walked from there until this point: -15.343450, 35.309431 . On that stretch we found many Estrildid's, with **Yellow-bellied Waxbills** being highlights for Waxbill loving Dan and **Bertram's Weaver** also showing nicely. The degraded habitats and pine plantations had a very limited set of species, but we managed to see **Willow Warblers** singing, interestingly some individuals where void of colour and could have been ssp. *yakutiensis*. We also heard **Hildebrandt's Spurfowl** in the area.



## Logistics

Going to Zomba town is straightforward and there are many accommodation options available. We can recommend Pakachere Backpackers & Creative Center, they have really good food and seem to be a small hub for independent travellers and we met a few westerners here. The birding happens on the plateau and all roads are tarmacked until you are on the plateau. The site for White-winged Apalis can also easily be reached via tarmacked roads and lies here along the Old Naisi Road: -15.370466, 35.325298

If you plan to spend the whole day on the plateau you should bring food or eat in at Sunbird Kuchawe, otherwise there is good food available in town. The drive up to the plateau does not take long and you should plan 15 – 20 minutes.



**Malawi's greatest big game park and a prime Mopane Forest location that encompasses a 30km long stretch of Shire river and offers superb bird and game watching. The park can be accessed from the south through Liwonde town or from the west when staying at Mvuu. Among the multitude of species occurring in the park Böhm's Bee-eater, Dickinson's Kestrel and Pel's Fishing Owl stand out, as well as Brown-breasted Barbet, Speckle-throated Woodpecker and Bronze-winged Courser if you are a dedicated lister. Truly royal is also the majestic Sable Antelope.**

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
Böhm's Bee-eater	Livingstone's Flycatcher	Bronze-winged Courser
Racket-tailed Roller	Grey-headed Parrot	
Speckle-throated Woodpecker	Brown-headed Parrot	
Lilian's Lovebird	Arnot's Chat	
	Pel's Fishing Owl	
	Brown-breasted Barbet	
	Dickinson's Kestrel	

We arrived at the Mvuu pier by mid-morning after starting early at Zomba. Personnel at the pier was already awaiting us and the boat with our assigned guide Justin was also waiting. The lodge will assign a personal guide to you who will be with you on game drives, walks or other activities. In previous email contact I told the lodge we were bird watchers and interested in seeing rather difficult species, so they made sure to assign Justin to us who is very knowledgeable about Liwonde's birdlife and can help you find all your targets. In the moment of our arrival at the pier we spotted the first confiding Böhm's Bee-eater, one of many easily seen in the lodge grounds. An absolutely mouthwatering species and one of the Max's main wishes. The whole area around the pier is good for Pel's Fishing Owl, which prefers the palm trees as a roost. Soon after our arrival at the lodge we pitched our

tents and made a plan for the coming days. We saw 50 species in our two hours in the lodge grounds including **Livingstone's Flycatcher, Böhm's Bee-eater, Lilian's Lovebird, Black Cuckooshrike, Collared Palm Thrush, Yellow-bellied Greenbul and Black-throated Wattle-eye.** A little later we me Justin again for our first game drive. We ventured to the south of camp in an area close to Shire River, which was open Fever Tree savannah and Justin quickly showed us an **African Barred Owl** and two **Dickinson's Kestrel.** In the afternoon we managed to see 73 species and even some rarely sighted at Mvuu like **European Nightjar,** a juvenile **Greater Honeyguide** (visit African Cuckoos website and read about brood parasites!) or **White Stork.** The highlight of the game drive was the return to the lodge when it was already dark. We spotted a very showy **African Scops Owl,** two **African**



**Barred Owl, Square-tailed** and **European Nightjar**.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S127499544>



African Barred Owlet *Glaucidium capense*

The next morning started with a short walk around the lodge grounds with **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Green-winged Pytilia** and **Cardinal Woodpecker** as new additions to our growing Mvuu list. Just before 8:00 am we embarked on a small boat ride on the river where we saw a family of **White-backed Night Heron**, **Allen's Gallinule**, a **Gull-billed Tern**, **Giant Kingfisher**, a **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** and lots of **Southern Brown-throated Weavers**. Our destination was the other side of the river where we searched for Triple-B as Justin says (Brown-breasted Barbet) and **Pel's Fishing Owl**. We searched for quite a while until without much success but then Dan spotted a **Dwarf Bittern** perching in the open, a

turning point as we found **Brown-breasted Barbet** soon after. Other birds seen during the search for the Owl were Purple-crested Turaco, African Emerald Cuckoo, Palm-nut Vulture, Little -, Böhm's- and **European Bee-eaters**, **African Golden Oriole**, a lone **Sedge Warbler**, the common **Meves's Starlings** and many more. The Owl however was not to be found, yet. We went back to the boat to check out another area a little further upstream where we found the beast hiding in a thicket with a big Crocodile, the Owl was not a fan of our presence and went away relatively quickly but gave us good views in the process. Happily, we went back to the lodge for lunch, on the way there we had fantastic views of a juvenile **Broad-billed Roller**. The afternoon of our first full day (which felt like the second because we arrived early the day before) was spent on a game drive, this time a little less searching for Racket-tailed Roller and a bit more focus on Sable Antelopes. We ventured much farther inland than yesterday, and the rich Mopane woodland greeted us with **Annot's Chat**, **Speckle-throated Woodpecker**, **Brown-necked Parrot (Grey-headed)** and **Lilac-breasted Roller** which fooled us into believing for a split second. We did also see Sable, even though they quickly disappeared in the lush greenery. By the end of the second day, we had seen most of our bird targets only missing the eagerly awaited Racket-tailed Roller and Bronze-winged Courser as well as Brown-headed Parrot.



Pel's Fishing Owl *Scotopelia peli*



The third day started with rain looming and half an hour into the morning game drive the skies opened, and we had an hour of rain in the bush. That did not stop us at all, and we found four **Black Stork** posing nicely for photos and also saw a missing target **Brown-necked Parrot** plus rather rarely observed **Eurasian Golden Orioles**. Make sure to check flyby Parrots for yellow underwings as the ID of distant Parrots can be challenging. Except for a small lunch break at the lodge we were on game drives all day long and had our first **Trumpeter Hornbills** and a **Martial Eagle** as highlights. The real highlight however was seen on the night drive, beginning with a Serval at nightfall and a mother White-tailed Mongoose with her baby. We were repeatedly joking about seeing **Bronze-winged Courser** as we had tried for that the two nights before without any success when suddenly a pair of these elusive birds appeared on the track in front of us. They showed very nicely, and we were absolutely

thrilled. The night could not have been better, only for us to find more and more and more. We also spotted several Genets and Civets as the nights before but this time also a Marsh Mongoose and even better a Meller's Mongoose! What a night drive! Absolutely recommended!

With this fabulous last night at Mvuu we were ready to leave the next morning and had accepted our fate with the **Racket-tailed Roller**. We decided to give it one last try as our schedule allowed to squeeze one last game drive in and about an hour into the drive, we finally spotted our Liwonde Enigma. A family of three birds sat in a small opening in the Mopane and allowed prolonged views. The completion of Max's African Rollers was perfect.



Bronze-winged Courser *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus*

## Logistics

We can only comment on exploring Liwonde NP via Mvuu Camp, which is easy and an excellent experience. It is possible to camp at the lodge for 40 \$ pppn, which includes a camp hand but excludes any activities and meals. Mvuu is certainly not a budget option and if you want to keep costs to a minimum and are ready to sacrifice a few target species for it you might want to visit Liwonde from the south or not at all. We spent three nights camping and one night in a chalet. We also spent a lot of money on activities as you cannot leave the lodge grounds without a guard or guide, so you basically have to do game drives which are 80 \$ for 3h. The length of the drives can be adjusted though, and we bargained fair extra costs for much longer outings. Seeing Pel's Fishing Owl and Brown-breasted Barbet is also near impossible without a boat and a guide. Meals were always three courses of excellent food and a real luxurious vibe in the bush and came at 20 \$ each if I recall correctly. When accessing Liwonde via Mvuu, you will be forwarded a proper description of how to get to the pier at Shire River from the M3.

From Zomba we took about 3 hours including fuel and ATM stops along the way.





Livingstone's Flycatcher *Erythrocerus livingstonii*



Racket-tailed Roller *Coracias spatulatus*





Dickinson's Kestrel *Falco dickinsoni*

### *Kasungu Dam*

A very short stopover on the way north. This site requires a scope. We easily found **Lesser Jacana**, **Lesser Moorhen**, **Southern Pochard** and a few **Red-knobbed Coot** and **Allen's Gallinule**. We were there by the end of the rainy season and water levels were decent. This might differ tremendously throughout the year. We parked on the shoulder of the highway and scanned the lake from there. -13.063117, 33.482866

### Nkwadzi Hill Forest

This forest is mainly visited for **East Coast Akalat**, we only made a short stop there for 1.5h and had a hard time due to rain and virtually no bird activity. We did however manage to find our target twice. Our first attempt took rather long and only Dan saw the bird chiefly moving in thick undergrowth. We called it off and went back to the car, when we decided to give it one more try at a promising small path next to the road (-11.689121,34.255541). It did not take long until we had an individual answering our tape, but it took a moment for us to realise that the very faint song we could hear was much closer than we thought it would be. It seemed very distant, but the bird was singing very silently, very close by. Other species that are possible but hardly found anywhere else on the itinerary are Eastern Nicator, Green Malkoha and Green-backed Woodpecker.

## *Nyika National Park*

This vast National Park in northern Malawi differs a lot from the other sites visited. Rolling hills cover miles and miles in the border area with Zambia, interspersed by a few afro montane forest fragments with a unique fauna. The park is accessible from the south through Thazima Gate (-10.834973, 33.590591). The gate lies on an altitude of 1600m and the entrance road towards Chelinda is a climb of 700m until you reach Chelinda on 2300m. Although the park has a lot to offer it is not so frequently visited and you can explore it peacefully. Most of the birding takes place in the upper reaches and in the forest fragments, while a few targets are found lower down.

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
Montane Widowbird	Striped Flufftail	Miombo Pied Barbet
White-chested Alethe	Brown-headed Apalis	Lemon Dove
Sharpe's Akalat	Blue Swallow	Oriole Finch
Scarlet-tufted Sunbird	Brown Parisoma	Fan-tailed Grassbird
Chapin's Apalis	Fülleborn's Boubou	
Ludwigs (Whyte's) Double-collared Sunbird	Moustached Tinkerbird	
Black-browed Greenbul	Black-lored Cisticola	
Malawi Batis	Churring Cisticola	
Whyte's Francolin	Red-winged Francolin	
	Montane Nightjar	
	Black-backed Barbet	
	Olive-flanked Ground Robin	
	Yellow-browed Seedeater	







Spotted Eagle Owl *Bubo africanus*

There are several different key sites within Nyika National Park, the first lies just beyond Thazima Gate where **Black-backed Barbet** is somewhat reliable. The staff at the gate will not let you walk to the spot on your own, but they will quickly find a ranger to accompany you. The site is about a kilometre from the gate close by a small stream at -10.835701, 33.602913 we saw a pair after a couple of minutes searching. If you walk on the northern side of the pine plantation you will be a little bit faster and also see some Miombo species on the way. We saw **Stierling's Wren Warbler**, **Pale Batis**, **Collared Flycatcher** and **Cabanis's Bunting** and around 20 additional more common species in an hour. If you want to see **Black-backed Barbet** this is more or less a must as we are not aware of any reliable alternative sites on a classic Malawi itinerary. When we arrived back at the gate we started our drive up through the Miombo zone and transitional habitat where Miombo becomes interspersed with montane grassland. The first birding stop

on our way up was in an area mentioned by the "Southern African Birdfinder" which lies 20.3 km from Thazima Gate. The site is characterised by a beautiful stand of *Acacia abyssinica* which immediately adds a different feel to the landscape. Our main targets there were **Brown-headed Apalis** and **Brown Parisoma**, both of which we found rather easily. The Apalis reacted very well to our tape. We spent around 45 mins at the site walking a couple of hundred metres and recorded other good species like **Green-headed Sunbird**, **Bertram's Weaver**, **Fülleborn's Boubou**, **Mountain Yellow Warbler** and **White-headed Saw-wing**.

So far so good, we continued further uphill leaving the Miombo behind and planned our next birding stop at Chowo Forest, which has an eBird Hotspot and is also mentioned in various other resources. The forest lies directly adjacent to the main road and holds an array of montane forest species that reach their southern limits in the Nyika area. When we arrived at the site, we looked for a path leading into the forest but did not find any. The forest lies in a small depression with rather steep slopes,

and accessing it was far harder than we expected. We eventually descended through thick vegetation to the edge of the forest. Navigating inside the forest was tough as you will have to fight your way through tangles and other vegetation obstacles. There are simply no paths there anymore and the staff at Chelinda Lodge also told us that the trails there do not exist anymore, and that Elephants sometimes stay in the forest, which can get dangerous. Even though Chowo forest would have been a nice addition to our itinerary it was only a small extra as most target species can also be found in other forest fragments and you need to go to Manyenjere Forest on the Zambian side anyway if you want to see Sharpe's Akalat. The Akalat and White-chested Alethe are two species that are mostly found in the larger forest fragments, other species like **Chapin's Apalis**, **Black-browed Greenbul**, **Olive-flanked Ground Robin** or **Malawi Batis** are also found in smaller fragments, and we saw them here: -10.584675, 33.730823

If you bring enough time, you can probably also find a White-chested Alethe in one of the other fragments along the S103 between the M9 and Chelinda.

We arrived at Chelinda around 3pm and birded the surrounding areas until nightfall. One of our main objectives was to find a spot for Striped Flufftail for the next day. On this endeavour we managed to see a couple of **Montane Widowbirds**, **Blue Swallows** and **Yellow-browed Seedeater**. The highlights however were the beautiful Roan Antelope that roam the area around the lodge. The National Park is sadly almost void of larger animals apart from the area around the lodge where poachers rarely venture. All other parts are heavily

poached, and we did not see any large mammal apart from two Klippspringer which can hide in the rocky areas.

The next morning, we birded chiefly around Chelinda Lodge as it was foggy and rainy and saw **Black-lored Cisticola**, **Giant Kingfisher**, **Blue Swallow**, **Red-faced Crimsonwing**, **Yellow-browed Seedeater**, many **White-eyed Slaty Flycatchers** and heard a **Common Quail** calling. The antelopes in the area are not shy and we had nice views of Eland. By 8 am the fog cleared, and we drove towards a site for Scarlet-tufted Sunbird and had good observations of **Red-winged Francolin**, **Denham's Bustard**, **Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk** and the *latistriatus* subspecies of **African Pipit**, which is sometimes also referred to as **Jackson's Pipit**.



African Pipit (Jackson's)  
*Anthus cinnamomeus jacksoni*



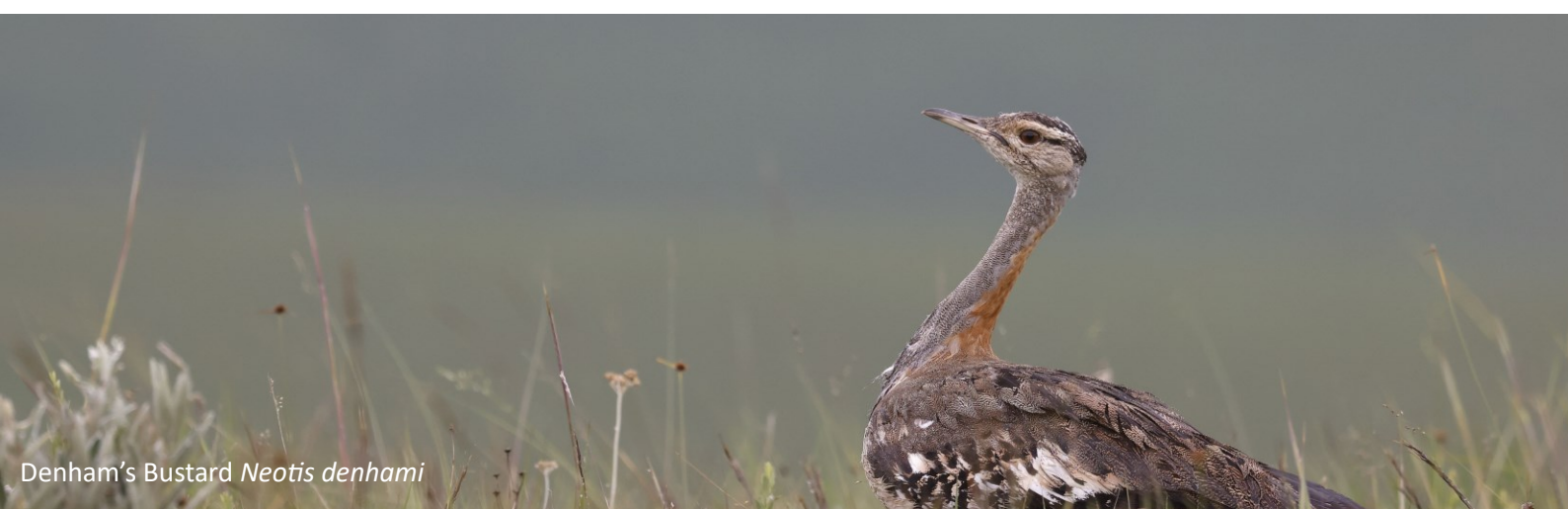
At the site called Chelinda rocks we searched the Proteas for flowers but found only 3 flowers on all of the hilltop. There is a different species of Protea up there and we were quickly losing hope to see a Scarlet-tufted Sunbird, as there were simply no flowers. Still, we waited for an hour sitting in front of the few flowers left before we decided to try another area which had an old sighting on eBird. The neighbouring hilltop seemed our last resort, but we did not know if the road there was passable, so we decided to walk to the stream crossing first to examine if the drive is possible. We started to descend westwards when we found another kind of Protea with many more stands and many more flowers. We soon found a good-looking Sunbird and after a small chase it was clear that we had seen a **Malachite Sunbird**. Soon after another individual appeared and after close examination, we were certain to see a male **Scarlet-tufted Sunbird**. We had been on the right hill the whole time, but the birds were feeding on the more common type of Protea that can also be found lower down.

The hilltop is here: -10.665846, 33.865444 and the proteas with **Scarlet-tufted Sunbird** were on the slope to the west.

In the afternoon we birded around the lodge again but did not add any new species. The hours before dusk we tried a small bracken covered slope where Gallardy had seen a Striped Flufftail after

putting in 10 hours of search. We had no luck, as we were seemingly too late in the season with only one **Red-chested Flufftail** calling in the distance. On our way back to the lodge we had an encounter with a **Montane Nightjar** and ended the day observing frogs.

Due to some logistical issues, we shortened our stay at Nyika by one day and started our last day by going west towards the Zambian Resthouse. We stopped at a few forest fragments along the way before we reached the Resthouse, where a ranger is stationed who can guide you towards Manyanjere Forest. After a longer than expected drive, we reached this remote site and started birding around -10.587582, 33.655020 where we also saw a few Bush Pig. The birding was slow, but we were happy to see Black-and-Red Bush Squirrel a local endemic. We birded for two hours without seeing much, a few **Malawi Batis**, calling **Bar-tailed Trogon** and a single **Chapin's Apalis** were all we could find. We then changed our approach and sat down to watch a small opening in the forest where **Sharpe's Akalat** had been calling. Only Dan managed to see the Akalat but soon after a showy **Olive-flanked Ground Robin** appeared and a **White-chested Alethe** gave short but good views. White-chested Alethe is much larger than Thyolo Alethe! On the forest edge we also saw a calling **Moustached Tinkerbird** before we left the Zambia again.



## Logistics

Coming from Mzuzu we started at 6:30 and took about 2,5h to Thazima Gate. The road is nice until the turnoff from the M1 and then becomes an okay dirt road until the point where the S104 branches off to the west. From there to the gate the road is rather bad but not a disaster. From the gate we birded our way up and arrived at Chelinda by 3 pm. The road up was okay, with a few challenging spots that require high clearance and some driving skills. At Chelinda we initially planned to camp but then decided to take a room as it was very wet and damp in the area and the campsite did not have any infrastructure at all. It is also not possible to order food at the lodge if you do not have a room. All food is brought up to the lodge on demand, so only when there are guests, they will have food to serve. We were lucky that there had been guests the night before and the chef still had something left for us. When we arrived at Chelinda our tank was almost half empty which was a major issue as there was not much fuel left for game drives. The fuel in the tank had to last for the drive to the Sunbird site, the drive to Manyenjere Forest and the whole descent to Thazima Gate and on to the next fuel station in Rumphi. If you plan to do game drives in the area or stay longer than two days, you need to have a vehicle with an extra-long-range tank (ours "only" fit 75 liters) or Jerry Cans. In the end we managed the most important sites and the way back to Rumphi via the Babbling Starling site but would have loved to explore Nyika more. The road to the Sunbird Spot was okay but we were advised against going beyond that site as it seemingly becomes bad thereafter. The road to the Zambian Resthouse was also fine. The Resthouse is at: -10.572138, 33.702887

For the road to Manyenjere Forest I would like to quote from Dan's Blog: *"The road to Mulnajere forest was an absolute joke, so overgrown, our car became incredibly scratched and at one point myself and the ranger had to leave the vehicle in order to ensure it didn't go tumbling down the hillside."*



Scarlet-tufted Sunbird *Nectarinia johnstoni*



## Vwaza Marsh National Park

Adjacent to Nyika National Park, Vwaza is a lowland park with well-developed woodland. It is a not much visited park, despite Elephant's and other large mammals surviving there. Most birders come for two bird species: White-winged Babbling Starling and Chestnut-backed Weaver, both of which require very tall Miombo to survive.

Key Targets		Good Targets	Possible Targets
White-winged Starling	Babbling	Pallid Honeyguide	Miombo Pied Barbet
Chestnut-backed Weaver	Sparrow-	Racket-tailed Roller	Dickinson's Kestrel
		Grey-headed Parrot	
		Böhm's Flycatcher	
		Broad-tailed Paradise Whydah	

The site for White-winged Babbling Starling is at the northern entrance of the park (Kayuwi Gate) and we went there after descending from Nyika. The entrance seems not to be used or only very very rarely and there was no staff there when we arrived. After a few minutes someone came running from the village and collected an entrance fee and opened the wire gate for us. We were told that Elephants and other large mammals rarely come close to the fence and that walking there was safe. So, we did walk to the east where the tallest and most promising trees were. We encountered a small Honeyguide

which proved to be a **Lesser Honeyguide** after examination of the photos. Apart from that we did not see much as it was 4 pm and hot. If you want to see the Key Targets, we advise to bring sufficient fuel and spend an extra day at Nyika so that you can descend early on your last morning to be at Kayuwi Gate by 9 am. We also explored the area around the main gate on the next morning, but among the 40 species seen in 2 hours nothing was rare. The park certainly has great potential and many super interesting species, but sadly the infrastructure is too bad to explore it.



Moustached Grass Warbler *Melocichla mentalis*

## Logistics

Vwaza Marsh is a challenge once you have passed the gates. The northern Kayuwi Gate is theoretically connected to the Main Gate in the south-east via the D35. The road from Kayuwi to the south was however becoming bad after only one kilometre and we assume it gets worse or impassable further on. The entrance from the Main Gate starts better but the track (S105) leading west is narrow, and the vegetation penetrates in from the sides. We only followed it for a short distance until we reached a very difficult spot (maybe passable in a Landcruiser) where we decided to turn. We do not usually have issues with bad roads but there was simply no point following it any further as we could use our time very well in other areas. Additionally, horseflies were an absolute pest in the area when we visited. The roads towards the gates are okay with the stretch from the turnoff S104 / D35 leading to Kayuwi Gate being rather bad. The tallest trees that looked promising for White-winged Babbling Starling are here: - 10.883110, 33.523172

### *Viphya Plateau & Luwawa Forest Lodge*

**Strategically well situated the area is the perfect stopover to cut the drive between north and south into half. The birding is pretty good, and it offers chances for some very elusive and rarely seen species. The habitats range widely from small remnants of montane forest to pine plantations and Miombo. At Luwawa there is also a Dam and some marshy areas.**

Key Targets	Good Targets	Possible Targets
African Rail	Forest Sunbird Fülleborn's Boubou Black-browed Greenbul Bertram's Weaver	Double-collared Blue Swallow African Grass Owl Whyte's Barbet

We arrived at Luwawa Forest Lodge by late afternoon and after setting up camp we birded the marsh at the Dam for a little while. We connected with **African Rail** very rapidly but seeing the beasts was a different story. In the end they would torture Dan for around 6h before he saw a head of one of the birds for 1 sec. Dedication that was, Max got a little luckier

and saw a complete bird for 2 sec. much earlier. The marsh was nice, and we frequently saw **African Marsh Harrier, Eurasian Hobby, Little Rush Warbler, Burchell's Coucal, African Stonechat and Schalow's Turaco**. Around sundown around 200 **Red-collared Widowbirds** came one by one into the marsh to roost which was quite a spectacle.



On our penultimate day in Malawi, we woke up to heavy rains which led to a slow first hour in the lodge gardens before we headed out to the marsh. The species we encountered were mostly the same as the day before, but Dan was still on his rail quest. The lodge gardens held the biggest surprise of the morning in a **Garden Warbler** and a **Blackcap**. Our southernmost Blackcap ever. After lunch we had to wait out another downpour before venturing out again. We got somewhat lost on the way to a patch of afro-montane forest which led to the discovery of a **Red-tailed / Isabelline Shrike**, a young bird which was sat in the middle of a cleared area on a burned trunk. Sadly, the identification to species level is almost impossible on first winter birds, so we couldn't pin it down as a definitive country first. There seemingly was a prior record of an *isabellinus* from the African Bird Club. A Red-tailed Shrike would be a country first though. We tried to relocate the bird for a short while in order to take better images but did not succeed. We spent the rest of the day wandering around the surrounds and found our only **Whinchat** of the trip, a confiding **Whyte's Barbet**, **Moustached Grass Warbler**, **Miombo Rock Thrush**, **Bertram's Weaver** and a raft of 300 **Abdim's Stork**. After dark we made a little tour around the nearby Dambos, spotlighting suitable areas for African Grass Owl. Our target was not encountered but Dan saw a distant **Pennant-winged Nightjar**.

The last morning on our way to Lilongwe we made two birding stops in promising Miombo. The first stop was in an area called Perekezi Forest Reserve, not too far from

Luwawa Forest Lodge. We surprisingly found two **African Wood Owls** in broad daylight, because they were mobbed by a few passerines. With **African Golden Oriole**, **Crowned Hornbill**, **Brubru**, **Schalow's Turaco**, **Red-capped Crombec**, **Green-capped Eremomela** and **Cape Robin Chat** we found some rather common species. In total we saw 31 species in almost three hours. The second stop was much better and at Chimaliro Forest Reserve we found a superb mixed species flock which contained many Miombo targets such as **Whyte's Barbet**, **White-breasted Cuckooshrike**, **Miombo Tit**, **Rufous-bellied Tit**, **Stierling's Wren Warbler**, **African Spotted Creeper** and **Miombo Scrub Robin** among more wide-ranging species like **Bearded-** and **Golden-tailed Woodpecker** or **Green Wood Hoopoe**. In Chimaliro Forest Reserve we had really high hopes for Olive-headed Weaver, as the habitat seemed promising and we found a really good flock, but sadly it stayed the biggest dip of an otherwise amazing trip.



## *Logistics*

Luwawa Forest Lodge can easily be found on the internet and is the starting point for a walk to the Dam and the adjacent marsh. They have infrastructure for campers, including showers and toilets, and offer rooms. Food is available and delicious and can be served according to your schedule and needs. We had a good time camping there and found it comfortable to watch birds from the veranda.





## Complete Species List

Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, Butterflies & Dragonflies



## Birds

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
	<b><u>Anatidae</u></b>	
1	<b>White-faced Whistling Duck</b> singles and small groups were seen on Shire River and at Vwaza Marsh and Kasungu Dam	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
2	<b>Knob-billed Duck</b> a single bird was seen on Shire River	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>
3	<b>Egyptian Goose</b> one bird in Shire River and 5 birds at Lake Kazuni in Vwaza Marsh	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
4	<b>Spur-winged Goose</b> daily in Liwonde NP	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>
5	<b>Yellow-billed Duck</b> three birds at Chelinda	<i>Anas undulata</i>
6	<b>Red-billed Teal</b> a single on Kasungu Dam	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
7	<b>Southern Pochard</b> 30 on Kasungu Dam	<i>Netta erythrophthalma</i>
	<b><u>Numididae</u></b>	
8	<b>Helmeted Guineafowl</b> daily in Liwonde NP and 2 in Vwaza Marsh	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
	<b><u>Phasianidae</u></b>	
9	<b>Red-winged Francolin</b> twice at Nyika NP	<i>Scleroptila levaillantii</i>
10	<b>Common Quail</b> Common in Nyika NP	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
11	<b>Hildebrandt's Spurfowl</b> flushed twice at Dzalanyama and heard calling at Zomba	<i>Pternistis hildebrandti</i>
12	<b>Red-necked Spurfowl</b> seen at Liwonde NP, including roosting birds at night, and at Vwaza Marsh	<i>Pternistis afer</i>
	<b><u>Columbidae</u></b>	
13	<b>Rock Dove</b> in cities	<i>Columba livia</i>
14	<b>African Olive Pigeon</b> a single at Zomba plateau and common around Luwawa Forest Lodge	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>
15	<b>Mourning Collared Dove</b> 4 at Dzalanyama, common at Liwonde	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>



16	<b>Red-eyed Dove</b> Common in open woodland	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
17	<b>Ring-necked Dove</b> Common in open woodland	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
18	<b>Laughing Dove</b> one at Liwonde and one at Vwaza	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>
19	<b>Emerald-spotted Wood Dove</b> Common in woodland	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>
20	<b>Blue-spotted Wood Dove</b> two birds at Luwawa Forest Lodge	<i>Turtur afer</i>
21	<b>Tambourine Dove</b> One at Zomba and one at Liwonde	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>
22	<b>African Green Pigeon</b> twice at Dzalanyama	<i>Treron calvus</i>
	<b><u>Otididae</u></b>	
23	<b>Denham's Bustard</b> twice in higher reaches of Nyika	<i>Neotis denhami</i>
	<b><u>Musophagidae</u></b>	
24	<b>Livingstone's Turaco</b> at Zomba and Ruo Gorge	<i>Tauraco livingstonii</i>
25	<b>Schalow's Turaco</b> singles and pairs at Dzalanyama and Luwawa Forest Lodge	<i>Tauraco schalowi</i>
26	<b>Purple-crested Turaco</b> singles at Liwonde and Vwaza	<i>Tauraco porphyreolophus</i>
27	<b>Grey Go-away-bird</b> one bird at Liwonde NP	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>
	<b><u>Cuculidae</u></b>	
28	<b>White-browed/Burchell's Coucal</b> common	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>
29	<b>Jacobin Cuckoo</b> a single at roadside west of Liwonde	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
30	<b>African Emerald Cuckoo</b> daily around Mvuu Lodge	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>
31	<b>Red-chested Cuckoo</b> Common	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>
32	<b>African Cuckoo</b> three singles at Liwonde	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>
	<b><u>Caprimulgidae</u></b>	
33	<b>European Nightjar</b> one bird at Liwonde NP	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>
34	<b>Fiery-necked Nightjar</b> a single on the road to Dzalanyama	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>
35	<b>Montane Nightjar</b>	<i>Caprimulgus poliocephalus</i>

36	one bird at Chelinda <b>Square-tailed Nightjar</b> common at night in Liwonde	<i>Caprimulgus fossii</i>
	<b><u>Apodidae</u></b>	
37	<b>Scarce Swift</b> three birds at Likhubula, maybe others overlooked	<i>Schoutedenapus myoptilus</i>
38	<b>Common Swift</b> small groups at different sites	<i>Apus apus</i>
39	<b>African Palm Swift</b> common at Liwonde and Vwaza	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
	<b><u>Sarothruridae</u></b>	
40	<b>Red-chested Flufftail</b> one bird around Chelinda and several at Luwawa	<i>Sarothrura rufa</i>
	<b><u>Rallidae</u></b>	
41	<b>African Rail</b> several at Luwawa	<i>Rallus caerulescens</i>
42	<b>Lesser Moorhen</b> at least 4 birds at Kasungu Dam	<i>Paragallinula angulata</i>
43	<b>Red-knobbed Coot</b> 27 at Kasungu Dam and 2 at Chelinda	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
44	<b>Allen's Gallinule</b> good views at Shire River and Kasungu Dam	<i>Porphyrio alleni</i>
45	<b>Black Crake</b> singles at Shire River and Luwawa	<i>Zapornia flavirostris</i>
	<b><u>Burhinidae</u></b>	
46	<b>Water Thick-knee</b> at Liwonde and Vwaza	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>
	<b><u>Charadriidae</u></b>	
47	<b>Crowned Lapwing</b> 7 birds on road to Dzalanyama and 5 at Liwonde	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
48	<b>African Wattled Lapwing</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
	<b><u>Jacanidae</u></b>	
49	<b>Lesser Jacana</b> 3 seen at Kasungu Dam	<i>Microparra capensis</i>
50	<b>African Jacana</b> daily at Liwonde, also at Kasungu Dam and Vwaza	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>
	<b><u>Scolopacidae</u></b>	
51	<b>Common Sandpiper</b>	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>



daily at Liwonde and at Vwaza

**Glareolidae**

- 52 **Bronze-winged Courser** *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus*  
two birds at night in Liwonde

**Laridae**

- 53 **Grey-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*  
daily on Shire River
- 54 **Australian/Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*  
one bird flying by on Shire River

**Ciconiidae**

- 55 **African Openbill** *Anastomus lamelligerus*  
daily at Liwonde
- 56 **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*  
to encounters at Liwonde
- 57 **Abdim's Stork** *Ciconia abdimii*  
flocks from the roadside north of Mzuzu and large flock around Luwawa
- 58 **African Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia microscelis*  
2 at Liwonde
- 59 **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*  
large flock with 150 on passage at Dzalanyama and 6 birds migrating at Liwonde
- 60 **Saddle-billed Stork** *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*  
one encounter with two individuals on Shire River
- 61 **Marabou Stork** *Leptoptilos crumenifer*  
twice at Liwonde

**Anhingidae**

- 62 **African Darter** *Anhinga rufa*  
singles at Liwonde and Kasungu Dam

**Phalacrocoracidae**

- 63 **Reed Cormorant** *Microcarbo africanus*  
two singles at Shire River
- 64 **Great/White-breasted Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*  
daily at Liwonde

**Scopidae**

- 65 **Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta*  
daily at Liwonde

**Ardeidae**

- 66 **Dwarf Bittern** *Ixobrychus sturmii*  
one bird at Shire River

67	<b>Grey Heron</b> twice at Liwonde	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
68	<b>Black-headed Heron</b> singles at Liwonde, Luwawa and Kasungu Dam	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
69	<b>Goliath Heron</b> one at Shire River	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
70	<b>Great Egret</b> singles at Liwonde	<i>Ardea alba</i>
71	<b>Little/Dimorphic Egret</b> two at Liwonde and one at Vwaza	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
72	<b>Western/Eastern Cattle Egret</b> daily at Liwonde , most numerous heron overall, and one at Kasungu Dam	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
73	<b>Striated Heron</b> two times at Liwonde	<i>Butorides striata</i>
74	<b>White-backed Night Heron</b> a family at Mvuu	<i>Gorsachius leuconotus</i>
	<b><u>Threskiornithidae</u></b>	
75	<b>Hadada Ibis</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
	<b><u>Pandionidae</u></b>	
76	<b>Osprey</b> singles on Shire River	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
	<b><u>Accipitridae</u></b>	
77	<b>Black-winged Kite</b> singles at Nyika and one at Luwawa	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
78	<b>African Harrier-Hawk</b> three singles at Liwonde and one bird at Nyika	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>
79	<b>Palm-nut Vulture</b> daily at Liwonde and once at Vwaza	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>
80	<b>White-backed Vulture</b> few birds at Liwonde and a single at Nyika	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
81	<b>Bateleur</b> three singles at Liwonde	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>
82	<b>Brown Snake Eagle</b> only one bird at Ruo Gorge	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>
83	<b>Martial Eagle</b> one at Dzalanyama and one juvenile at Liwonde	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>
84	<b>Long-crested Eagle</b> one at Luwawa and one on the roadside	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>
85	<b>Lesser Spotted Eagle</b> daily at Dzalanyama, probably on passage or stopover, one Liwonde, three at Vwaza	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>
86	<b>Wahlberg's Eagle</b> one at Dzalanyama and one at Chimaliro Forest Reserve	<i>Hieraetus wahlbergi</i>
87	<b>Ayres's Hawk-Eagle</b>	<i>Hieraetus ayresii</i>



88	one at Dzalanyama <b>African Hawk-Eagle</b> regular encounter at Dzalanyama	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>
89	<b>Lizard Buzzard</b> only one at roadside close to Rumphu	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
90	<b>African Marsh Harrier</b> at Luwawa Marsh	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
91	<b>Pallid Harrier</b> singles at Nyika	<i>Circus macrourus</i>
92	<b>Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk</b> singles at Nyika	<i>Accipiter rufiventris</i>
93	<b>Black Sparrowhawk</b> one at Luwawa	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>
94	<b>Black/Yellow-billed Kite</b> surprisingly only one bird at Dzalanyama, maybe more	<i>Milvus migrans</i> undocumented at roadside
95	<b>African Fish Eagle</b> one at Zomba and daily along Shire River	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>
96	<b>Common Buzzard</b> singles in Miombo	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
97	<b>Augur Buzzard</b> one at Dzalanyama	<i>Buteo augur</i>
<b><u>Tytonidae</u></b>		
98	<b>Western/American/Eastern Barn Owl</b> one on the road from Nyika to Rumphu	<i>Tyto alba</i>
<b><u>Strigidae</u></b>		
99	<b>African/Annabon Scops Owl</b> one at night in Liwonde	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>
100	<b>Spotted Eagle-Owl</b> one individual observed twice at roadside in Nyika	<i>Bubo africanus</i>
101	<b>Pel's Fishing Owl</b> one at Liwonde	<i>Scotopelia peli</i>
102	<b>African Barred Owlet</b> common at Liwonde at night	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>
103	<b>African Wood Owl</b> a pair at Perekezi Forest Reserve and around Luwawa	<i>Strix woodfordii</i>
<b><u>Coliidae</u></b>		
104	<b>Speckled Mousebird</b> singles and small groups at different sites	<i>Colius striatus</i>
105	<b>Red-faced Mousebird</b> a pair at Liwonde	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>
<b><u>Trogonidae</u></b>		
106	<b>Bar-tailed Trogon</b>	<i>Apaloderma vittatum</i>

two birds in forest fragment at Nyika and at Manyenjere

107	<b><u>Upupidae</u></b> <b>Eurasian/African Hoopoe</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Upupa epops</i>
108	<b><u>Phoeniculidae</u></b> <b>Green Wood Hoopoe</b> several in dry woodland	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>
109	<b>Common Scimitarbill</b> singles in dry woodland	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>
110	<b><u>Bucerotidae</u></b> <b>Crowned Hornbill</b> three at Lukhubula, singles at Liwonde	<i>Lophoceros alboterminatus</i>
111	<b>African Grey Hornbill</b> Daily at Liwonde and at Vwaza	<i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>
112	<b>Pale-billed Hornbill</b> only at Dzalanyama	<i>Lophoceros pallidirostris</i>
113	<b>Southern Red-billed Hornbill</b> Daily at Liwonde and at Vwaza	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>
114	<b>Trumpeter Hornbill</b> one encounter with two individuals in Liwonde	<i>Bycanistes bucinator</i>
115	<b><u>Alcedinidae</u></b> <b>Malachite Kingfisher</b> common at Shire River and a single at Luwawa	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>
116	<b>African Pygmy Kingfisher</b> one at Dzalanyama, one Liwonde and one at Nkwadzi Hill Forest	<i>Ispidina picta</i>
117	<b>Grey-headed Kingfisher</b> only one bird at Dzalanyama, around the Boulder Chat site	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>
118	<b>Woodland Kingfisher</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>
119	<b>Brown-hooded Kingfisher</b> Daily at Liwonde and Luwawa	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>
120	<b>Striped Kingfisher</b> twice at Liwonde	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>
121	<b>Giant Kingfisher</b> one at Liwonde and one at Nyika	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>
122	<b>Pied Kingfisher</b> only at major wetlands	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
123	<b><u>Meropidae</u></b> <b>Little Bee-eater</b> daily at Liwonde and once at Dzalanyama	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
124	<b>Böhm's Bee-eater</b>	<i>Merops boehmi</i>

125	Common around Mvuu <b>Blue-cheeked Bee-eater</b> one single and twice two individuals at Liwonde	<i>Merops persicus</i>
126	<b>European Bee-eater</b> Many encounters anywhere except for Nyika, probably on passage	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
127	<b>Southern Carmine Bee-eater</b> only once along Shire River	<i>Merops nubicooides</i>
	<b><u>Coraciidae</u></b>	
128	<b>Lilac-breasted Roller</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>
129	<b>Racket-tailed Roller</b> after 3 days of search a family at Liwonde	<i>Coracias spatulatus</i>
130	<b>Broad-billed Roller</b> daily at Liwonde	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>
	<b><u>Lybiidae</u></b>	
131	<b>Crested Barbet</b> once at Liwonde	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>
132	<b>White-eared Barbet</b> at Ruo Gorge and Zomba	<i>Stactolaema leucotis</i>
133	<b>Whyte's Barbet</b> at Forestry College, Luwawa and at Chimaliro Forest Reserve	<i>Stactolaema whytii</i>
134	<b>Yellow-rumped/White-chested Tinkerbird</b> twice at Luwawa once at Zomba	<i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i>
135	<b>Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird</b> singles in dry woodland	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>
136	<b>Moustached Tinkerbird</b> one at Manyenjere Forest	<i>Pogoniulus leucomystax</i>
137	<b>Miombo Pied Barbet</b> short encounter with one bird at Dzalanyama	<i>Tricholaema frontata</i>
138	<b>Black-collared Barbet</b> at Thazima Gate of Nyika NP and two birds at Vwaza	<i>Lybius torquatus</i>
139	<b>Brown-breasted Barbet</b> two birds at Liwonde	<i>Lybius melanopterus</i>
140	<b>Black-backed Barbet</b> a pair around Thazima Gate	<i>Lybius minor</i>
	<b><u>Indicatoridae</u></b>	
141	<b>Green-backed Honeybird</b> one bird at Dzalanyama	<i>Prodotiscus zambesiae</i>
142	<b>Lesser Honeyguide</b> one at north gate of Vwaza, unidentified honeyguides likely this species	<i>Indicator minor</i>
143	<b>Greater Honeyguide</b> a nice juvenile at Liwonde	<i>Indicator indicator</i>

**Picidae**



144	<b>Cardinal Woodpecker</b> singles in dry woodland	<i>Chloropicus fuscescens</i>
145	<b>Bearded Woodpecker</b> one at Liwonde and one at Chimaliro Forest	<i>Chloropicus namaquus</i>
146	<b>Stierling's Woodpecker</b> singles and pairs at Dzalanyama	<i>Chloropicus stierlingi</i>
147	<b>Olive Woodpecker</b> one bird in forest fragment at Nyika	<i>Chloropicus griseocephalus</i>
148	<b>Little Spotted Woodpecker</b> two singles at Dzalanyama	<i>Campethera cailliautii</i>
149	<b>Speckle-throated Woodpecker</b> three encounters at Liwonde	<i>Campethera scriptoricauda</i>
150	<b>Golden-tailed Woodpecker</b> one at Chimaliro Forest	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>
	<b><u>Falconidae</u></b>	
151	<b>Dickinson's Kestrel</b> two birds at Liwonde	<i>Falco dickinsoni</i>
152	<b>Amur Falcon</b> at least one at Dzalanyama	<i>Falco amurensis</i>
153	<b>Eurasian Hobby</b> singles at Dzalanyama, Nyika and Vwaza and a roosting party of 20 at Luwawa	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
154	<b>Lanner Falcon</b> one at Forestry College	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
	<b><u>Psittaculidae</u></b>	
155	<b>Lilian's Lovebird</b> pairs and small groups at Liwonde	<i>Agapornis lilianae</i>
156	<b>Brown-necked Parrot</b> thrice at Liwonde	<i>Poicephalus fuscicollis</i>
157	<b>Meyer's Parrot</b> once at Vwaza	<i>Poicephalus meyeri</i>
158	<b>Brown-headed Parrot</b> two singles at Liwonde	<i>Poicephalus cryptoxanthus</i>
	<b><u>Camephagidae</u></b>	
159	<b>White-breasted Cuckooshrike</b> singles at Dzalanyama and Chimaliro Forest	<i>Coracina pectoralis</i>
160	<b>Black Cuckooshrike</b> singles in dry woodland	<i>Campephaga flava</i>
	<b><u>Oriolidae</u></b>	
161	<b>Eurasian Golden Oriole</b> two birds at Liwonde	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
162	<b>African Golden Oriole</b> singles in Miombo	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>

163	<b>Black-headed Oriole</b> several at Dzalanyama, singles at Forestry College, Liwonde and Perekezi	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>
	<b><u>Platysteridae</u></b>	
164	<b>Black-throated Wattle-eye</b> singles at Liwonde	<i>Platysteira peltata</i>
165	<b>Malawi Batis</b> twice at Nyika NP and at Manyenjere	<i>Batis dimorpha</i>
166	<b>Chinspot Batis</b> common in dry woodland	<i>Batis molitor</i>
167	<b>Pale Batis</b> one at Likhubula and two at Thazima Gate	<i>Batis soror</i>
	<b><u>Vangidae</u></b>	
168	<b>White-crested Helmetshrike</b> common at Dzalanyama and less numerous at Liwonde	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>
169	<b>Retz's Helmetshrike</b> groups at Dzalanyama	<i>Prionops retzii</i>
	<b><u>Malaconotidae</u></b>	
170	<b>Brubru</b> twice at Dzalanyama, a single at Perekezi	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
171	<b>Black-backed Puffback</b> common in woodland	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>
172	<b>Black-crowned Tchagra</b> singles in dry woodland	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>
173	<b>Tropical Boubou</b> singles here and there	<i>Laniarius major</i>
174	<b>Fülleborn's Boubou</b> once at Nyika and at Luwawa	<i>Laniarius fülleborni</i>
175	<b>Black-fronted Bushshrike</b> two birds at Ruo Gorge	<i>Telophorus nigrifrons</i>
176	<b>Grey-headed Bushshrike</b> one at Dzalanyama	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>
	<b><u>Dicruridae</u></b>	
177	<b>Common Square-tailed Drongo</b> common at Ruo Gorge and one in moister woodland in Liwonde	<i>Dicrurus ludwigii</i>
178	<b>Fork-tailed Drongo</b> common in dry woodland	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
	<b><u>Monarchidae</u></b>	
179	<b>African Paradise Flycatcher</b> common at Dzalanyama, a single at Perekezi	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>
	<b><u>Laniidae</u></b>	
180	<b>Red-backed Shrike</b>	<i>Lanius collurio</i>

181	few singles at Liwonde and one bird at Luwawa <b>Northern Fiscal</b> singles at Nyika and Luwawa	<i>Lanius humeralis</i>
182	<b>Souza's Shrike</b> pairs and small groups at Dzalanyama	<i>Lanius souzae</i>
	<b><u>Corvidae</u></b>	
183	<b>Pied Crow</b> around habitations, hardly any in natural settings	<i>Corvus albus</i>
184	<b>White-necked Raven</b> common at Nyika, five individuals at Forestry College	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>
	<b><u>Hylotiidae</u></b>	
185	<b>Yellow-bellied Hyliota</b> several at Dzalanyama	<i>Hyliota flavigaster</i>
186	<b>Southern Hyliota</b> several at Dzalanyama	<i>Hyliota australis</i>
	<b><u>Stenostiridae</u></b>	
187	<b>White-tailed Blue Flycatcher</b> two at Dzalanyama, one at Forestry College, two Thazima Gate, 1 Nyika	<i>Elminia albicauda</i>
188	<b>White-tailed Crested Flycatcher</b> one each at Nyika, Luwawa and Perekezi	<i>Elminia albonotata</i>
	<b><u>Paridae</u></b>	
189	<b>Rufous-bellied/Cinnamon-breasted Tit</b> a few at Dzalanyama and three at Chimaliro Forest	<i>Melaniparus rufiventris</i>
190	<b>Southern Black Tit</b> twice at Liwonde	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>
191	<b>Miombo Tit</b> a few at Forestry College and one at Chimaliro	<i>Melaniparus griseiventris</i>
192	<b>Grey Penduline Tit</b> one group at Forestry College	<i>Anthoscopus caroli</i>
	<b><u>Alaudidae</u></b>	
193	<b>Rufous-naped Lark</b> singles at Nyika	<i>Mirafraga africana</i>
	<b><u>Macrosphenidae</u></b>	
194	<b>Red-capped Crombec</b> singles in Miombo	<i>Sylvietta ruficapilla</i>
195	<b>Red-faced Crombec</b> three at Likhubula and one at Forestry College	<i>Sylvietta whytii</i>
196	<b>Moustached Grass Warbler</b> twice in Luwawa area	<i>Melocichla mentalis</i>



<b><u>Cisticolidae</u></b>		
197	<b>Yellow-bellied Eremomela</b> one each at Dzalanyama, Forestry College and Chimaliro	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>
198	<b>Green-capped Eremomela</b> common in Miombo	<i>Eremomela scotops</i>
199	<b>Stierling's Wren-Warbler</b> singles in Miombo, some unidentified	<i>Calamonastes stierlingi</i>
200	<b>Green-backed/Hartert's/Grey-backed Camaroptera</b> singles in various places	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>
201	<b>Bar-throated Apalis</b> a pair at Forestry College, one Chelinda, two Nyika, 1 Luwawa	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>
202	<b>Yellow-throated Apalis</b> two birds at Zomba	<i>Apalis flavigularis</i>
203	<b>White-winged Apalis</b> a pair in Ruo Gorge	<i>Apalis chariessa</i>
204	<b>Yellow-breasted/Brown-tailed Apalis</b> daily at Liwonde and once at Ruo Gorge	<i>Apalis flavida</i>
205	<b>Chapin's Apalis</b> in forest fragments at Nyika and Manyenjere	<i>Apalis chapini</i>
206	<b>Black-headed Apalis</b> two at Ruo Gorge and one at Zomba	<i>Apalis melanocephala</i>
207	<b>Brown-headed Apalis</b> two birds in Nyika	<i>Apalis alticola</i>
208	<b>Tawny-flanked Prinia</b> singles at Dzalanyama, Luwawa and Nyika	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
209	<b>Red-winged Prinia</b> pairs at Forestry College and Luwawa	<i>Prinia erythroptera</i>
210	<b>Red-faced Cisticola</b> a pair in Dambo at Dzalanyama	<i>Cisticola erythroptera</i>
211	<b>Singing Cisticola</b> seen at Zomba and Luwawa	<i>Cisticola cantans</i>
212	<b>Trilling Cisticola</b> one at Luwawa	<i>Cisticola woosnami</i>
213	<b>Black-lored Cisticola</b> pairs and families at various sites withing Nyika	<i>Cisticola nigriloris</i>
214	<b>Rattling Cisticola</b> thrice at Liwonde and two birds at Zomba	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>
215	<b>Churring Cisticola</b> common at Nyika	<i>Cisticola njombe</i>
216	<b>Croaking Cisticola</b> one at Nyika	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>
217	<b>Neddicky</b> a few at Dzalanyama	<i>Cisticola fulvicapilla</i>
218	<b>Short-winged Cisticola</b> two at Luwawa	<i>Cisticola brachypterus</i>
219	<b>Zitting Cisticola</b>	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>

	one at Dambo in Dzalanyama and one at Kasungu Dam	
220	<b>Wing-snapping Cisticola</b> four birds at Nyika	<i>Cisticola ayresii</i>
	<b><u>Acrocephalidae</u></b>	
221	<b>African Yellow Warbler</b> singles at Luwawa and Zomba	<i>Iduna natalensis</i>
222	<b>Mountain Yellow Warbler</b> two birds at Nyika	<i>Iduna similis</i>
223	<b>Sedge Warbler</b> one bird on shores of Shire River	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
224	<b>Lesser Swamp Warbler</b> two birds at Luwawa	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>
	<b><u>Locustellidae</u></b>	
225	<b>Fan-tailed Grassbird</b> one around Luwawa and one in grasslands around Manyenjere Forest	<i>Catriscus brevirostris</i>
226	<b>Evergreen Forest Warbler</b> common in forest fragments at Zomba	<i>Bradypterus lopezi</i>
227	<b>Cinnamon Bracken Warbler</b> common in Nyika	<i>Bradypterus cinnamomeus</i>
228	<b>Little Rush Warbler</b> common at Luwawa	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>
	<b><u>Hirundinidae</u></b>	
229	<b>Pale Crag Martin/Rock Martin</b> group of 4 at Forestry College	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>
230	<b>Barn Swallow</b> surprisingly very few seen and only at Liwonde	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
231	<b>Wire-tailed Swallow</b> daily at Liwonde and Vwaza	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
232	<b>Blue Swallow</b> several birds around Chelinda and a single at Luwawa	<i>Hirundo atrocaerulea</i>
233	<b>Common/Siberian House Martin</b> 5 at Vwaza	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
234	<b>White-headed Saw-wing</b> 5 birds at Nyika	<i>Psalidoprocne albiceps</i>
235	<b>Black Saw-wing</b> several Dzalanyama and Ruo Gorge, singles Forestry College, Luwawa, Vwaza, Nyika	<i>Psalidoprocne pristoptera</i>
	<b><u>Pycnonotidae</u></b>	
236	<b>Black-browed Greenbul</b> 3 at Nyika, one at Luwawa, 4 at Manyenjere	<i>Arizelocichla fusciceps</i>
237	<b>Stripe-cheeked/Olive-headed Greenbul</b> 7 Stripe cheeked at Ruo Gorge and 2 Olive-headed at Zomba	<i>Arizelocichla milanjensis</i>
238	<b>Yellow-bellied Greenbul</b> singles at Mvuu Camp in Liwonde	<i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i>

239	<b>Little Greenbul</b> three birds at Zomba	<i>Eurillas virens</i>
240	<b>Terrestrial Brownbul</b> one bird at Mvuu in Liwonde	<i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>
241	<b>Placid Greenbul</b> Placid common at Ruo Gorge and also two birds at Zomba	<i>Phyllastrephus cabanisi</i>
242	<b>Yellow-streaked Greenbul</b> Yellow-streaked common at Ruo Gorge and a single at Zomba	<i>Phyllastrephus flavostriatus</i>
243	<b>Dark-capped Bulbul</b> common away from wet forest	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>
	<b><u>Phylloscopidae</u></b>	
244	<b>Willow Warbler</b> several throughout with an interesting presumed <i>yakutiensis</i> ssp. at Zomba	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
245	<b>Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler</b> only seen at Ruo Gorge, where common	<i>Phylloscopus ruficapilla</i>
	<b><u>Scotoceridae</u></b>	
246	<b>Livingstone's Flycatcher</b> singles and pairs at Mvuu	<i>Erythrocerus livingstonei</i>
	<b><u>Sylviidae</u></b>	
247	<b>Eurasian Blackcap</b> singles at Nyika and one at Luwawa	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
248	<b>Garden Warbler</b> one bird at Luwawa	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
249	<b>Brown Parisoma</b> a single bird in Nyika	<i>Curruca lugens</i>
	<b><u>Zosteropidae</u></b>	
250	<b>Southern Yellow White-eye</b> singles throughout	<i>Zosterops anderssoni</i>
	<b><u>Leiothrichidae</u></b>	
251	<b>Arrow-marked Babbler</b> groups at Dzalanyama and three birds at Nyika	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>
	<b><u>Certhiidae</u></b>	
252	<b>African Spotted Creeper</b> several at Dzalanyama, singles at Forestry College and Chimaliro Forest	<i>Salpornis salvadori</i>
	<b><u>Buphagidae</u></b>	
253	<b>Red-billed Oxpecker</b> daily at Liwonde, rather few	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>
254	<b>Yellow-billed Oxpecker</b> one bird around Eland at Chelinda	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>



	<b><u>Sturnidae</u></b>	
255	<b>Violet-backed Starling</b> singles seen at Liwonde	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>
256	<b>Red-winged Starling</b> around Inselberg at Forestry College	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>
257	<b>Meves's Starling</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Lamprotornis mevesii</i>
	<b><u>Turdidae</u></b>	
258	<b>Kurrichane Thrush</b> uncommon in Miombo, singles seen in several places	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>
	<b><u>Musciapidae</u></b>	
259	<b>African Dusky Flycatcher</b> singles in several places	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>
260	<b>Spotted/Mediterranean Flycatcher</b> singles throughout	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
261	<b>Böhm's Flycatcher</b> a pair at Dzalanyama	<i>Bradornis boehmi</i>
262	<b>Grey Tit-Flycatcher</b> singles at Dzalanyama, Ruo Gorge and Zomba	<i>Fraseria plumbea</i>
263	<b>Southern Black Flycatcher</b> singles in Miombo	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>
264	<b>White-eyed Slaty Flycatcher</b> common in upland	<i>Melaenornis fischeri</i>
265	<b>Bearded Scrub Robin</b> one bird at Liwonde NP	<i>Cercotrichas quadrivirgata</i>
266	<b>Miombo Scrub Robin</b> singles in Dzalanyama and Chimaliro	<i>Cercotrichas barbata</i>
267	<b>White-browed Scrub Robin</b> one around Ruo Gorge and one at Perekezi	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>
268	<b>Olive-flanked Ground Robin</b> singles in forest fragments at Nyika	<i>Cossypha anomala</i>
269	<b>Cape Robin-Chat</b> one bird each at Zomba, Nyika, Perekezi	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>
270	<b>White-browed Robin-Chat</b> one at Dzalanyama and one Liwonde	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
271	<b>Collared Palm Thrush</b> common at Liwonde and one at Vwaza	<i>Cichladusa arquata</i>
272	<b>White-starred Robin</b> 2 birds each at Ruo Gorge and Nyika	<i>Pogonocichla stellata</i>
273	<b>Thyolo Alethe</b> a family at Ruo Gorge	<i>Chamaetylas choloensis</i>
274	<b>White-chested Alethe</b> one bird seen at Manyenjere Forest, Zambia	<i>Chamaetylas fuelleborni</i>
275	<b>Sharpe's Akalat</b> one bird seen at Manyenjere Forest, Zambia	<i>Sheppardia sharpei</i>

276	<b>East Coast Akalat</b> two birds at Nkwadzi Hill Forest	<i>Sheppardia gunningi</i>
277	<b>Collared Flycatcher</b> many seen in Miombo	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>
278	<b>Miombo Rock Thrush</b> singles in Miombo, also degraded Miombo	<i>Monticola angolensis</i>
279	<b>Whinchat</b> one bird at Luwawa	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
280	<b>African/Madagascar Stonechat</b> common in upland	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>
281	<b>Mocking/White-crowned Cliff Chat</b> single seen at Forestry College	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>
282	<b>Arnot's Chat</b> twice at Liwonde	<i>Myrmecocichla arnotti</i>
283	<b>Familiar Chat</b> singles at Dzalanyama and Forestry College	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>
284	<b>Boulder Chat</b> a pair at Dzalanyama	<i>Pinarornis plumosus</i>
	<b><u>Nectariniidae</u></b>	
285	<b>Anchieta's Sunbird</b> one bird at Dzalanyama	<i>Anthreptes anchietae</i>
286	<b>Western Violet-backed Sunbird</b> singles at Dzalanyama and one at Chimaliro	<i>Anthreptes longuemarei</i>
287	<b>Collared Sunbird</b> singles in various places, common at Ruo Gorge	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>
288	<b>Green-headed Sunbird</b> one at Nyika	<i>Cyanomitra verticalis</i>
289	<b>Olive Sunbird</b> one at Zomba and one at Ruo Gorge	<i>Cyanomitra olivacea</i>
290	<b>Amethyst Sunbird</b> singles at Dzalanyama, one each at Zomba, Nyika and Perekezi	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>
291	<b>Scarlet-chested Sunbird</b> only one at Liwonde	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>
292	<b>Bronzy Sunbird</b> singles at Luwawa	<i>Nectarinia kilimensis</i>
293	<b>Malachite Sunbird</b> twice at Nyika NP	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>
294	<b>Scarlet-tufted Sunbird</b> three birds at Nyika	<i>Nectarinia johnstoni</i>
295	<b>Eastern Miombo Sunbird</b> singles only in good Miombo	<i>Cinnyris manoensis</i>
296	<b>Forest Double-collared Sunbird</b> singles at Zomba, Luwawa and Perekezi	<i>Cinnyris fuelleborni</i>
297	<b>Variable Sunbird</b> singles at Luwawa, one at Zomba and thrice at Perekezi	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>
298	<b>Copper Sunbird</b>	<i>Cinnyris cupreus</i>

two birds at Luwawa

**Ploceidae**

299	<b>White-browed Sparrow-Weaver</b> abundant in Liwonde	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>
300	<b>Red-headed Weaver</b> singles at Dzalanyama, one Liwonde and four birds Chimaliro	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>
301	<b>Bertram's Weaver</b> one Zomba, two Nyika, two Luwawa	<i>Ploceus bertrandi</i>
302	<b>Baglafaecht Weaver</b> three at Nyika	<i>Ploceus baglafaecht</i>
303	<b>Spectacled Weaver (Black-throated)</b> singles throughout	<i>Ploceus ocularis</i>
304	<b>Holub's Golden Weaver</b> one each at Dzalanyama, Vwaza and Luwawa	<i>Ploceus xanthops</i>
305	<b>Southern Brown-throated Weaver</b> common along Shire River	<i>Ploceus xanthopterus</i>
306	<b>Lesser Masked Weaver</b> singles along Shire River and at Lake Kazuni in Vwaza, two birds at Zomba	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>
307	<b>Village Weaver</b> three birds at Vwaza	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>
308	<b>Dark-backed Weaver</b> four at Ruo Gorge	<i>Ploceus bicolor</i>
309	<b>Southern Red Bishop</b> singles along roadside in Vwaza area	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
310	<b>Black-winged Red Bishop</b> few at Vwaza	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>
311	<b>Yellow Bishop</b> sometimes along roadside, also at Luwawa	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>
312	<b>Yellow-mantled Widowbird</b> two birds at Dambo in Dzalanyama	<i>Euplectes macroura</i>
313	<b>Red-collared Widowbird</b> two at Nyika and hundreds around Luwawa	<i>Euplectes ardens</i>
314	<b>Montane Widowbird</b> few around Chelinda	<i>Euplectes psammacromius</i>
315	<b>Thick-billed Weaver</b> twice at Luwawa	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>
<b><u>Estrildidae</u></b>		
316	<b>Bronze Mannikin</b> common throughout	<i>Spermestes cucullata</i>
317	<b>Black-and-white Mannikin</b> two at Thazima Gate of Nyika NP	<i>Spermestes bicolor</i>
318	<b>Yellow-bellied Waxbill</b> common in upland	<i>Coccyzygia quartinia</i>
319	<b>Red-faced Crimsonwing</b> a family at Ruo Gorge and around Chelinda	<i>Cryptospiza reichenovii</i>



320	<b>Common Waxbill</b> singles and small groups throughout except Nyika and hundreds around Luwawa	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
321	<b>Blue Waxbill</b> common in dry lowlands	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>
322	<b>Lesser Seedcracker</b> a pair at Dzalanyama Dambo	<i>Pyrenestes minor</i>
323	<b>Green-winged Pytilia</b> two at Mvuu	<i>Pytilia melba</i>
324	<b>Red-throated Twinspot</b> a single at Dzalanyama and two birds at Luwawa	<i>Hypargos niveoguttatus</i>
325	<b>Red-billed Firefinch</b> only two at Liwonde	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>
326	<b>African Firefinch</b> one each at Ruo Gorge and Zomba, three at Luwawa	<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>
327	<b>Jameson's Firefinch</b> twice at Dzalanyama and once before Ruo Gorge	<i>Lagonosticta rhodopareia</i>
	<b><u>Viduidae</u></b>	
328	<b>Pin-tailed Whydah</b> common in upland	<i>Vidua macroura</i>
329	<b>Long-tailed Paradise Whydah</b> a few at roadside in Vwaza area	<i>Vidua paradisaea</i>
330	<b>Village Indigobird</b> one at Liwonde	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>
	<b><u>Passeridae</u></b>	
331	<b>House Sparrow</b> only around habitations	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
332	<b>Northern Grey-headed Sparrow</b> few at Nyika and Vwaza	<i>Passer griseus</i>
333	<b>Southern Grey-headed Sparrow</b> abundant in Liwonde	<i>Passer diffusus</i>
334	<b>Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow</b> twice at Dzalanyama	<i>Gymnoris superciliaris</i>
	<b><u>Motacillidae</u></b>	
335	<b>Mountain Wagtail</b> a pair at Dzalanyama and a single bird at Ruo Gorge	<i>Motacilla clara</i>
336	<b>African Pied Wagtail</b> common along Shire River, Luwawa Dam and Vwaza's Lake Kazuni	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
337	<b>African Pipit</b> a few at Liwone and ssp. <i>latistriatus</i> at Nyika	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>
338	<b>Wood Pipit</b> two birds at Dzalanyama	<i>Anthus nyassae</i>
339	<b>Striped Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus lineiventris</i>

340	once at Dzalanyama and twice at Forestry College <b>Tree Pipit</b>	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
341	one each at Nyika, Luwawa and Perekezi <b>Yellow-throated Longclaw</b> one in dambo at Dzalanyama and one at Liwonde	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>
	<b><u>Fringillidae</u></b>	
342	<b>Yellow-fronted Canary</b> singles throughout	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>
343	<b>Southern Citril</b> singles in upland	<i>Crithagra hyposticta</i>
344	<b>Brimstone Canary</b> twice at Luwawa	<i>Crithagra sulphurata</i>
345	<b>Yellow-browed Seedeater</b> singles and pairs at Nyika	<i>Crithagra whytii</i>
346	<b>Black-eared Seedeater</b> few at Dzalanyama	<i>Crithagra mennelli</i>
347	<b>Reichard's Seedeater</b> one individual at Dzalanyama	<i>Crithagra reichardi</i>
348	<b>Yellow-crowned Canary</b> 30 birds at Nyika	<i>Serinus flavivertex</i>
	<b><u>Emberizidae</u></b>	
349	<b>Cabanis's Bunting</b> singles in Miombo	<i>Emberiza cabanisi</i>
350	<b>Golden-breasted Bunting</b> singles in Dzalanyama	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>
351	<b>Vincent's Bunting</b> not rare at the Inselberg at Forestry College	<i>Emberiza vincenti</i>
	<b><u>Unidentified / Unidentifiable</u></b>	
	<b>Red-tailed/Isabelline Shrike</b> one bird, maybe a country first at Luwawa	<i>Lanius phoenicuroides/isabellinus</i>
	<b>Miombo/Stierling's Wren-Warbler</b> no definitive Miombo Wren Warbler, maybe overlooked	<i>Calamonastes undosus/stierlingi</i>



**A Country first?**

Malawi 2023 | Max Baumgarten & Daniel Branch





Whyte's Barbet *Stactolaema whytii*



Yellow-bellied Greenbul *Chlorocichla flaviventris*



Forest Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris fuelleborni*



Meve's Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii*





Retz's Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii*



Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus stormii*



Red-winged Francolin *Scleroptila levaillantii*



Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*



# Mammals

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
1	<b>Southern Bushbuck</b> few within National Parks	<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>
2	<b>Striped Eland</b> common around Chelinda	<i>Tragelaphus oryx livingstonii</i>
3	<b>Waterbuck</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>
4	<b>Sable Antelope</b> a few in Liwonde	<i>Hippotragus niger</i>
5	<b>Roan Antelope</b> common around Chelinda	<i>Hippotragus equinus</i>
6	<b>Lichtenstein's Hartebeest</b> one encounter with a herd in Liwonde	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus liechtensteinii</i>
7	<b>Impala</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>
8	<b>Southern Reedbuck</b> common around Chelinda	<i>Redunca arundinum</i>
9	<b>Greater Kudu</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>
10	<b>Klipspringer</b> two close by Chowo Forest	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>
11	<b>Bush Duiker</b> one at Nyika	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>
12	<b>Common Hippopotamus</b> in Shire River	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>
13	<b>African Buffalo</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>
14	<b>Common Warthog</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>
15	<b>Bushpig</b> <b>one encounter at Liwonde and one at Nyika</b>	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>
16	<b>Bush Hyrax</b> seen around Chelinda	<i>Heterohyrax brucei</i>
17	<b>Savannah Elephant</b> very few at Liwonde	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
18	<b>Crawshay's Zebra</b> common around Chelinda	<i>Equus quagga crawshayi</i>
19	<b>Rusty-spotted Genet</b> good numbers at Liwonde, also seen at Luwawa	<i>Genetta maculata</i>
20	<b>African Civet</b> seen several times at Liwonde	<i>Civettictis civetta</i>
21	<b>Serval</b>	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>

	one at Liwonde	
22	<b>Side-striped Jackal</b> a family often seen around Mvuu	<i>Lupulella adusta</i>
23	<b>Marsh Mongoose</b> one at Liwonde	<i>Atilax paludinosus</i>
24	<b>White-tailed Mongoose</b> mother with baby at Liwonde	<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>
25	<b>Meller's Mongoose</b> one at Liwonde	<i>Rhynchogale melleri</i>
26	<b>Blue Monkey</b> seen at Ruo Gorge and Nyika	<i>Cercopithecus mitis</i>
27	<b>Yellow Baboon</b> common in Liwonde	<i>Papio cynocephalus</i>
28	<b>Vervet Monkey</b> a few at Mvuu	<i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>
29	<b>Black-and-red Bush Squirrel</b> a few at Manyenjere	<i>Paraxerus lucifer</i>
30	<b>Smith's Bush Squirrel</b> seen at Liwonde	<i>Praxerus cepapi</i>
31	<b>Mutable Sun Squirrel</b> one at Dzalanyama	<i>Heliosciurus mutabilis</i>
32	<b>African Savannah Hare</b> once in Liwonde	<i>Lepus victoriae</i>
33	<b>Smith's Red Rock Hare</b> seen chiefly around Chowo Forest Rocks	<i>Pronolagus rupestris</i>





## Reptiles

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
1	Variable Skink	<i>Trachylepis varia</i>
2	Mitchell's Flat Lizard	<i>Platysaurus mitchelli</i>
3	Common Dwarf Gecko	<i>Lygodactylus capensis</i>
4	Rainbow Skink	<i>Trachylepis margaritifera</i>
5	Serrated Hinged Terrapin	<i>Pelusios sinuatus</i>
6	Tropical House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus mabouia</i>
7	Nile Monitor	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>
8	Flap-necked Chameleon	<i>Chamaeleo dilepis</i>
9	Turner's Thick-toed Gecko	<i>Chondrodactylus truneri</i>
10	Angulate Dwarf Gecko	<i>Lygodactylus angularis</i>
11	African Striped Skink	<i>Trachylepis striata</i>
12	Nile Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>
13	Fischer's Thick-toed Gecko	<i>Chondrodactylus laevigatus</i>



## Amphibians

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
1	<b>Common Squeaker</b>	<i>Arthroleptis stenodactylus</i>
2	<b>Powder's Rain Frog</b>	<i>Breviceps poweri</i>
3		<i>Phrynobatrachus parvulus</i>
4	<b>Anchieta's Ridged Frog</b>	<i>Ptychadena anchietae</i>
5	<b>Guttural Toad</b>	<i>Sclerophrys gutturalis</i>
6	<b>Common River Frog</b>	<i>Amietia delelandii</i>
7	<b>Longnose Reed Frog Complex</b>	<i>Hyperolius nasutus complex</i>
8	<b>Variable Reed Frog</b>	<i>Hyperolius pictus</i>

## Butterflies

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
1	<b>Common Leopard</b>	<i>Phalanta phalanta</i>
2	<b>Natal Acraea</b>	<i>Stephenia natalica</i>
3	<b>Veined Swordtail</b>	<i>Graphium leonidas</i>
4	<b>African Joker</b>	<i>Byblia anvatara</i>
5	<b>Kiriakoff's Sailer</b>	<i>Neptis kirkiakoffi</i>
6	<b>Common Mother-of-Pearl</b>	<i>Protogoniomorpha parhassus</i>
7	<b>Round-spotted Elf</b>	<i>Eretis herewardi</i>

8	<b>Mimic</b>	<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i>
9	<b>Plain Tiger Butterfly</b>	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>
10	<b>Guineafowl</b>	<i>Hamanumida daedalus</i>
11	<b>Yellow Pansy</b>	<i>Junonia hierta</i>
12	<b>Natal Pansy</b>	<i>Junonia natalica</i>
13	<b>Dark Blue Pansy</b>	<i>Junonia oenone</i>
14	<b>Eastern Dotted Border</b>	<i>Mylothris agathina</i>
15	<b>Pea Blue</b>	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>
16	<b>Pioneer White</b>	<i>Belenois aurota</i>
17	<b>Blue Spangled Charaxes</b>	<i>Charaxes guderiana</i>
18	<b>Polka Dot</b>	<i>Pardopsis punctatissima</i>
19	<b>Gaudy Commodore</b>	<i>Precis octavia</i>
20	<b>Chief</b>	<i>Amauris echeria</i>
21	<b>Bushveld Purple Tip</b>	<i>Colotis ione</i>
22	<b>Naval Pansy</b>	<i>Junonia touhilimasa</i>
23	<b>White Pie</b>	<i>Tuxentius calice</i>
24	<b>Narrow Green-banded Swallowtail</b>	<i>Papilio nireus</i>
25	<b>African Migrant</b>	<i>Catopsilia florella</i>
26	<b>Common Hairstreak</b>	<i>Hypolycaena philippus</i>
27	<b>African Caper</b>	<i>Belenois creona</i>
28	<b>Common Bush Brown</b>	<i>Bicyclus safitza</i>
29	<b>Apple-green Swallowtail</b>	<i>Papilio phorcas</i>
30	<b>Large Striped Swordtail</b>	<i>Graphium antheus</i>
31	<b>False Chief</b>	<i>Pseudacraea lucretia</i>



32	<b>Common Smoky Blue</b>	<i>Euchrysops malathana</i>
33	<b>Paler Commodore</b>	<i>Precis cuama</i>
34	<b>Brown Playboy</b>	<i>Deudorix antalus</i>
35	<b>Spotted Hairtail</b>	<i>Anthene larydas</i>
36	<b>African Pansy</b>	<i>Junonia artaxia</i>
37	<b>Common Bellboy</b>	<i>Zenonia zeno</i>
38	<b>Grizzled Bush Brown</b>	<i>Bicyclus ena</i>
39	<b>Dry-leaf Commodore</b>	<i>Precis tugela</i>
40	<b>Lunulate Hairtail</b>	<i>Anthene lunulata</i>
41	<b>Common Ciliate Blue</b>	<i>Anthene definita</i>
42	<b>Autumnleaf Vagrant</b>	<i>Afrodryas leda</i>
43	<b>White-speckled Elfin</b>	<i>Sarangesa astrigera</i>
44		<i>Sevenia rosa</i>
45		<i>Uranotauma poggei</i>
46	<b>Nomad Dart</b>	<i>Andronymus neander</i>
47	<b>Cupreous Blue</b>	<i>Eicochrysops messapus</i>
48	<b>Orange Small Fox</b>	<i>Teniorhinus harona</i>
49		<i>Catuna sikorana</i>
50	<b>Marsh Patroller</b>	<i>Brakefieldia perspicua</i>
51	<b>Eastern Bush Kite Swallowtail</b>	<i>Papilio pelodurus</i>
52	<b>Eastern Yellow-banded Evening Brown</b>	<i>Gonophodes diversa</i>
53	<b>Triumphant Amber</b>	<i>Telchinia goetzei</i>
54	<b>Darker Commodore</b>	<i>Precis antilope</i>

## Dragonflies

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	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
1	<b>Red Groundling</b>	<i>Brachythemis lacustris</i>
2	<b>Southern Banded Groundling</b>	<i>Brachythemis leucosticta</i>
3	<b>Rock Scarlet</b>	<i>Crocothemis divisa</i>
4	<b>Granite Scarlet</b>	<i>Crocothemis saxicolor</i>
5	<b>Barbet Percher</b>	<i>Diplacodes luminans</i>
6	<b>Tigertail</b>	<i>Ictinogomphus ferox</i>
7	<b>Striped Longlegs</b>	<i>Notogomphus zernyi</i>
8	<b>Bottletail</b>	<i>Olpogastra lugubris</i>
9	<b>Guinea Skimmer</b>	<i>Orthrerum guineense</i>

### Damselflies

<b>Glistening Demoiselle</b>	<i>Phaon iridipennis</i>
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## Others

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<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Scientific Name</i>
Grasshopper according to iNaturalist expert the first ever photo of a living specimen	<i>Dioncomena bulla</i>
<b>African Freshwater Crab sp.</b>	<i>Potamonautidae sp.</i>
<b>Flag Mantis</b>	<i>Polyspilota aeruginosa</i>



