

Birdlist Senegal/Guinea-Bissau 08/11 – 07/12/2019

Introduction

This report is based on a 1 month trip to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau on which I was joined by my wife Veronique Sylva. Only part of the trip was bird watching. Interesting sites visited in Guinea-Bissau were Buba/Lagoa de Cufada as well as PN Cantanhez and Cap Skirring/Diembering in the Casamance/Senegal.

Climate

When visiting the country the weather was generally fine, hot and sunny during the day with temperatures up to 34 degrees. It only rained a few times for a couple of hours (in Buba and Cap Skirring).

Visa

For German citizens it was not necessary to obtain a visa for Senegal. A stay for up to 90 days was granted without visa. For Guinea-Bissau a visa was required but easily received within 15 minutes for 20.000 CFA at their embassy in Ziguinchor.

How to get there

I flew with Air Maroc via Casablanca to Dakar, where my wife was already waiting for me. After 3 lazy days on a beach near the airport we continued to Ziguinchor by plane (Air Senegal, 45 minutes, 65 Euro p.p.). On our way back to Dakar we used a 7 seater (7 place) from Ziguinchor (10 hours!!!), crossing the land borders of Gambia.

Getting around

Generally we used public transport to get around those countries. This was an easy and cheap way to travel. To bird around Buba and for the trip to Cantanhez we hired a 4x4.

Money

In Senegal and Guinea-Bissau 1 Euro was worth about 665 CFA (West African CFA Franc). In Dakar, Ziguinchor, Cap Skirring and Bissau city it was possible to withdraw cash from ATM`s without any problems.

Language

In Senegal most people speak French, only some understand English. In Guinea-Bissau they speak Portuguese. If you don't speak this language try to get along with English, French or Spanish. We often found people who speak one of those languages. As my wife understands several African languages we had no communication problems.

Safety

We always felt totally safe in both countries.

People

We found the people to be friendly, helpful, relaxed and honest throughout and never had any problems with anybody.

Food

In both countries meals usually consisted of variations of either fish, chicken or beef with rice. As a result of once being a Portuguese colony, the food in Guinea-Bissau is influenced by the Portuguese cuisine.

Accommodation

In both countries we usually stayed in small or middle-class hotels. We paid between 15.000 and 45.000 CFA in Senegal and between 10.000 and 30.000 CFA in Guinea-Bissau. Sometimes this price included breakfast and/or aircon.

Books/Reports

As a field guide I had Birds of Western Africa (Princeton – Nik Borrow and Ron Demey) with me. Reports I used were from Hendriks (Northern Senegal 2016), Moning (Gambia and Senegal 2014) and Sjöstedt/Jansson (Gambia 2015). I did not find a satisfying report for Guinea-Bissau. For Senegal I bought a Bradt Travel Guide. For Guinea-Bissau I used "Reise Know-How" (German), as well as Lonely Planet "West Africa".

I found some information about birding hotspots of GB as well as a checklist on the homepage of the African Birdclub.

Our Guides, Bookings

It was generally difficult to organize a trip to Guinea-Bissau due to lack of useful information. We more or less just knew about some places worth visiting and had some contact numbers found in the internet as well as with the help of Hamilton Monteiro, the African Birdclub Representative of GB, and started calling when we had arrived in Bissau city.

Augusto Mitambe came to our hotel and contacted a guide in Buba for us and helped us organize our visit in Buba and Cantanhez. He also gave us all prices for guidance, transport etc.

Hamilton Monteiro: cotchicotchi@yahoo.com.br (speaks Portuguese)

Augusto Mitambe: phone: 00245 966528789 (speaks English)

Itinerary

- 08/11/2019 Flight with Air Maroc from Frankfurt to Dakar via Casablanca (500 Euro)
- 09/11/2019 Arrival at 1am. Together with my wife Veronique to pre-booked KYOU Guesthouse in Toubab Dialaw, not very far from the airport. Directly at the beach, simple but friendly. 15.000 CFA.
- 10/11/2019 Toubab Dialaw
- 11/11/2019 Flight with Air Senegal/Transair to Ziguinchor. Excellent and very friendly Hotel Le Flamboyant (33600 CFA - 50 Euro).
- 12/11/2019 Obtaining the visa for Guinea-Bissau at the local embassy within 15 minutes for 20.000 CFA. Tasty food at restaurant Saveur du Sud nearby!
- 13/11/2019 Taxi to Gare Routiere (Busstation). 8 Place to Bissau (4 hours) incl. easy border crossing (bit unfriendly on the Bissau side). Cheap, good enough and extremely friendly Hotel Tartaruga in the historic quarter (30.000 CFA incl. breakfast). I meet Augusto at the hotel, who helps me to organize my birdwatching trip.
- 14/11/2019 7 Place to Buba, 4 hours. Pre-booked Pensao Bela Vista (17.500 CFA incl. breakfast). Meals available in simple restaurants in the village only. I meet guide Ibrahima and plan the tour with him.
- 15/11/2019 Landrover with driver and Ibrahima to Lagoa de Cufada. Boat tour on the lake. Very scenic but few interesting birds. Afterwards birdwatching in forest nearby.
- 16/11/2019 Half day birding in the forest, rather frustrating.
- 17/11/2019 Birding in woodland close to Buba. 10 am drive to Cantanhez, 4 hours. Night at a mission (10.000 CFA). Tasty dinner at the NP restaurant.
- 18/11/2019 Morning and afternoon birding with good guide Zega. Some good birds and our first Chimpanzees. Lunch and dinner at the NP's restaurant.
- 19/11/2019 We get up at 4:45am to be at the sleeping tree before the Chimpanzees wake up. Observations of several individuals in their nests and later doing first morning activities! Drive back towards Buba. We get off at a junction 30 minutes before Buba and catch public transport to Bissau. Hotel Tartaruga as before. Dinner at restaurant Kalliste.
- 20/11/2019 Lazy day with some sightseeing. Cathedral, fort, harbor, old quarter.
- 21/11/2019 Visit of a huge market along the main street in Bissau. Dinner at cozy restaurant Oasis.

- 22/11/2019 Taxi to bus terminal. 8 Place to Ziguinchor (3 hours) and directly onwards to Cap Skirring (1 hour). Hotel Le Pelican (20.000 CFA – spacious room, clean, quiet, situated directly at the beautiful beach.
- 23-28/11/19 Cap Skirring.
- 28/11/2019 Taxi to Diembering, 9km. On sandy track towards Camparmente La Casa. Last 300m on foot. 4x4 required to reach the Camp. Simple but nice and friendly camp (room 20.000 CFA) in a garden setting. Meals on request. Owner Massimo does Italian meals if ordered half day in advance.
- 29/11/2019 Morning birding nearby and walk along the beach. At 1pm my friend Solomon Jallow arrives from Gambia. Afternoon birding through fields and woodland to the “Ecoparc”. Good lunch in Diembering village.
- 30/11/2019 Morning in the forest of the “Ecoparc”. First observation of Capuchin Babbler. Afternoon drive to Cap Skirring. Hotel Le Pelican again. Great dinner at Chez Vivi in Cap Skirring.
- 01/12/2019 Ecoparc. Excellent views of several Capuchin Babblers.
- 02/12/2019 Solomon drives us back to Ziguinchor before he returns to Gambia. Hotel Flamboyant like before.
- 03-/12/2019 Short night. To the garage before first light to get a place on a 7 Place to Dakar. 8 tiring hours until we reach the capital. Unfriendly Gambian immigration staff – have to pay 5000 CFA entrance fee, which is a rip off! Hotel Faidherbe (45.000 CFA) in Plateau.
- 04-06/12/19 Dakar. Half day trip to historically interesting and pretty Goree Island. Good lunch and dinner at Restaurant Farid.

Buba/Lagoa de Cufada:

After a 4 hours drive from Bissau in a 7 Place, we reached Buba and took a taxi to the pre-booked Pensao Bela Vista (17500 CFA for a small bungalow), which was almost fully occupied by a candidate for the soon to come presidential elections and his staff. Never before was I guarded so well as at this accommodation - by police, military and secret police, who treated us very friendly though!! We met our bird guide Ibrahima (who was a nice guy, but not really a bird specialist), who helped us find transport to Cantanhez and organized some birding for us around here. As Bela Vista does serve only breakfast we had to walk to Buba and search for food each day. There are some very basic options, but usually there was only one meal available, and no choice. But was good and cheap.

Did a trip by 4x4 to Lagoa de Cufada (1) where a boatman with a piroge already awaited us and paddled us around on the very scenic and peaceful Lagoa. Unfortunately no special birds could be encountered there. Afterwards we did some rather frustrating birdwatching in the forest (2) nearby.

On the second morning we birded another forest (2), but again it was rather quiet birdwise.

On the third day we were supposed to head for Cantanhez early, but due to car problems and delay of several hours we birded some time nearby Buba (3), which we found more productive than the proper forests. Coming from the village we turned left at the roundabout, walked for a km or so and took some side paths to the left. Saw our only Turati`s Boubou there.

Prices:	Guide Ibrahima	5000 CFA/day
	Entrance fee	10.000 CFA/day p.p.
	Piroge	5000 CFA
	Boat man	2500 CFA

Some birds:

1	Western Marsh Harrier	1
f	Stone Partridge	2
f	African Jacana	1
1	African Grey Hornbill	3
f	African Pied Hornbill	3
1	Spotted Honeyguide	2
1	Wryneck	3
2	Grey Woodpecker	2
2	Red-winged Warbler	3
f	Grey-backed Camaroptera	3
f	Senegal Eremomela	3
f	Northern Black Flycatcher	2
2	Ussher`s Flycatcher	2

- f Brown Babbler 2
- f Blackcap Babbler 3
- 2 Northern Puffback 3
- 1 Turati`s Boubou 3**
- 1 Pin-tailed Whydah 3
- f Village Indigobird 3





PN Cantanhez:

At 10am we started our journey to Jembereng, the gate to Cantanhez NP. It took us 4 hours on partly very bad and narrow tracks to get there. As our pre-booked bungalows were not vacant they moved us to the protestant/evangelic Mission, which was a very quiet place to stay. Charged us 10.000 CFA per night and took the same for our guide and driver. Organized tours, guidance and meals with Aboubakar (chef Eco-Cantanhez), the man in charge. Spent 2 mornings and one afternoon birdwatching and observing Chimpanzees in the attractive forests nearby with knowledgeable guide Zega. Cantanhez holds a healthy population of Chimpanzees and we were lucky to observe them twice! Birding was also good, but slow. Activity stopped rather early in the mornings, so it's wise to start really early. To watch the Chimpanzees waking up, we already had to be near their sleeping trees in the dark, before dawn!

Prices: car/Land Rover	100.000 CFA for 5 days
Guide Ibrahima	5000 CFA day
Guide Zega	5000 CFA day
Entrance and observation fee	10.000 CFA per person/day
Meals cooked by Aboubakars wife	3500 CFA each p.p. (tasty, but expensive. Almost the triple price)

Birds:

- 2 African Harrier Hawk
- 1 Red-thighed Sparrowhawk**
- 2 Ahanta Francolin**
- 15 African Green Pigeon
- 1 Great Blue Turaco
- 1 Levillant`s Cuckoo
- 2 Yellowbill
- 1 Shining Blue Kingfisher
- f Blue-breasted Kingfisher
- fc African Pied Hornbill
- 5 Piping Hornbill**
- 2 Yellow-casqued Hornbill**

- 1 Buff-spotted Woodpecker
- 2 Little Greenbul
- 1 Leaflove
- 3 Western Nicator**
- 2 White-tailed Alethe**
- f Senegal Eremomela
- f Northern Black Flycatcher
- 2 Splendid Sunbird
- f Fork-tailed Drongo
- 1 Yellow-mantled Widowbird
- 2 Pin-tailed Whydah





rough road to Cantanhez

Zega, Veronique and Ibrahima at Cantanhez

Cap Skirring:

We spent 10 lazy days at lovely and comfortable Hotel Le Pelican (20000 CFA) right on the beach. This would also work as a good base to do more birding, but we only drove to the "Ecoparc" once and birded a bit around our hotel. There are some simple restaurants right on the beach and various restaurants to be found at Cap Skirring village, which can easily be reached by walking or by grabbing a local shared taxi (that`s what we did). The beach is probably the most beautiful one in Senegal.

Birds:

- fc Osprey
- 1 Red-necked Buzzard**
- f Sanderling
- fc Western Grey Plantain-eater
- f Bearded Barbet
- f Blackcap Babbler
- f African/Blue-billed Firefinch

Diembering/Ecoparc:

In Diembering we stayed at the simple Camparmente La Casa (20000 CFA) which is situated in a nice garden setting. There you can order meals, too. The friendly owner Massimo does Italian dishes on request as well. To get there on sandy tracks you need a 4x4 or a car with high clearance or alternatively you walk - just 15 minutes from Diembering village. There my good friend Solomon Jallow from Gambia joined me to spend a few days birding together.

From our accommodation we walked around the fields and bushland and onwards to the "Ecoparc" which consists of a small forest. Had excellent looks at our target species Capuchin Babbler!! We found out, that we could have stayed cheaply at the "Ecoparc" in a nice bungalow as well. Later we visited the "Ecoparc" one more time, however from Cap Skirring which is just a short drive away (about 10 km). The beach nearby Diembering is ok, but cannot compare to Cap Skirring.

Some birds:

- f Pink-backed Pelican
- f Palm-nut Vulture
- 1 Black-shouldered Kite

2 Lanner Falcon
2 Ahanta Francolin
fc Senegal Parrot
2 Didric Cuckoo
f Senegal Coucal
1 Malachite Kingfisher
1 European Bee-eater
f White-throated Bee-eater
f Western Red-billed Hornbill
f African Pied Hornbill
f Bearded Barbet
1 Buff-spotted Woodpecker
2 Crested Lark
f Wire-tailed Swallow
1 Plain-backed Pipit
2 Little Greenbul
f Grey-backed Camaroptera
f Western Olivaceous Warbler
f Melodious Warbler
1 Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher
6 Capuchin Babbler/Phyllanthus atripennis
f Brown Babbler
f Blackcap Babbler
f Olive Sunbird
f Collared Sunbird
fc Variable Sunbird
f Beautiful Sunbird

- 2 Splendid Sunbird
- fc Piapiac
- f Purple Glossy Starling
- 2 Yellow-billed Oxpecker
- 2 Bush Petronia
- fc Orange-cheeked Waxbill
- f Village Indigobird

Total List:

1: Toubab Dialaw 2: Ziguinchor 3: Buba/Lagoa de Cufada 4: Cantanhez
5: Cap Skirring 6: Diembering/Ecoparc 7: Roadside

- 1 Little Grebe / *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 6
- fc Pink-backed Pelican / *Pelecanus rufescens* 4 5 6 7
- c White-breasted Cormorant (Great) / *Phalacrocorax (carbo) lucidus*
- f Long-tailed Cormorant / *Phalacrocorax africanus*
- f African Darter / *Anhinga rufa*
- f Green-backed Heron / *Butorides striata* 6
- fc Squacco Heron / *Ardeola ralloides* 3 6
- Cattle Egret / *Bubulcus ibis*
- Western Reef Egret / *Egretta gularis* 7
- Little Egret / *Egretta garzetta*
- Great Egret / *Ardea alba*
- Grey Heron / *Ardea cinerea*
- 1 Black Heron / *Egretta ardesiaca* 7
- f Hadada Ibis / *Bostrychia hagedash*
- f Woolly-necked Stork / *Ciconia episcopus*
- c Yellow-billed Stork / *Mycteria ibis*

c Osprey / *Pandion haliaetus* 5 6

f Palm-nut Vulture / *Gypohierax angolensis* 3 6

c Hooded Vulture / *Necrosyrtes monachus*

1 Black-shouldered Kite / *Elanus caeruleus* 6

c Yellow-billed Kite / *Milvus parasitus*

1 Western Marsh Harrier / *Circus aeruginosus* 3

2 African Harrier Hawk / *Polyboroides typus* 4

1 Red-thighed Sparrowhawk / *Accipiter erythropus* 4

1 Red-necked Buzzard / *Buteo auguralis* 5

2 Lanner Falcon / *Falco biarmicus* 6

f Stone Partridge / *Ptilopachus petrosus* 3

4 Ahanta Francolin / *Pternistis achantensis* 4 6

2 Double-spurred Francolin / *Pternistis bicalcaratus* 6

2 White-spotted Flufftail / *Sarothrura pulchra* (heard) 4 6

f African Jacana / *Actophilornis africanus* 3 7

fc Black-winged Stint / *Himantopus himantopus* 7

f Spur-winged Plover / *Vanellus spinosus* 6 7

f Whimbrel / *Numenius phaeopus* 7

f Sanderling / *Calidris alba* 5

Grey hooded Gull / *Larus cirrocephalus*

Lesser Black-backed Gull / *Larus fuscus*

Caspian Tern / *Sterna caspia*

15 African Green Pigeon / *Treron calvus* 4

Namaqua Dove / *Oena capensis*

Laughing Dove / *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Red-eyed Dove / *Streptopelia semitorquata*

African Mourning Dove / *Streptopelia decipiens*

Vinaceous Dove / *Streptopelia vinacea*

Blue-spotted Wood Dove / *Tourtelette amethystina*

Black-billed Wood Dove / *Tourtelette abyssinicus*

fc Senegal Parrot / *Poicephalus senegalus* 6

f Rose-ringed Parakeet / *Psittacula krameri* 1 3 6

1 Great Blue Turaco / *Corythaeola cristata* 4

c Western Grey Plantain-eater / *Crinifer piscator* 5 6

1 Levaillant`s Cuckoo / *Clamator levaillantii* 4

2 Didric Cuckoo / *chrysococcyx caprius* 6

2 Yellowbill / *Ceuthmochares aereus* 4

f Senegal Coucal / *Centropus senegalensis* 6

1 Black-throated Coucal / *Centropus leucogaster* heard 4

f African Palm Swift / *Cypsiurus parvus*

f Little Swift / *Apus affinis* 6

1 Malachite Kingfisher / *Corythornis cristatus* 6

1 Shining Blue Kingfisher / *Alcedo quadribrachys* 4

f Blue-breasted Kingfisher / *Halcyon malimbica* 4

fc Pied Kingfisher / *Ceryle rudis* 6

1 European Bee-eater / *Merops apiaster* 6

f White-throated Bee-eater / *Merops albicollis* 6

fc Abyssinian Roller / *Coracias abyssinicus* 5 6

fc Broad-billed Roller / *Eurystomus glaucurus*

fc Western Red-billed Hornbill / *Tockus kempii* 6

1 African Grey Hornbill / *Tockus nasutus* 3

fc African Pied Hornbill / *Tockus fasciatus* 3 4 6

5 Piping Hornbill / *Bycanistes fistulator* 4

2 Yellow-casqued Hornbill / *Ceratogymna elata* 4

f Bearded Barbet / *Pogonornis dubius* 5 6

1 Spotted Honeyguide / *Indicator maculatus* 3

1 Wryneck / *Jynx torquilla* 3

2 Buff-spotted Woodpecker / *Campethera nivosa* 4 6

2 Grey Woodpecker / *Mespicos goertae* 3

2 Crested Lark / *Galerida cristata* 6

f Wire-tailed Swallow / *Hirundo smithii* 6

1 Yellow Wagtail / *Montacilla flava* 6

1 Plain-backed Pipit / *Anthus leucophrys* 6

4 Little Greenbul / *Eurillas virens* 4 6

1 Leaflove / *Phyllastrephus scandens* 4

c Common Bulbul / *Pycnonotus barbatus*

3 Western Nicator / *Nicator chloris* 4

2 White-tailed Alethe / *Alethe diademata* 4

1 Snowy-crowned Robin Chat / *cosypha niveicapilla* heard

f Tawny-flanked Prinia / *Prinia subflava*

2 Red-winged Warbler / *Heliolais erythropterus* 3 ?

f Grey-backed Camaroptera / *Camaroptera brachyura* 3 6

f Senegal Eremomela / *Eremomela pusilla* 3 4

f Western Olivaceous Warbler / *Iduna/Hippolais opaca* 6

f Melodious Warbler / *Hippolais polyglotta* 6

f Willow Warbler/Common Chiffchaff / *Phylloscopus trochilus/collybita*

f Northern Black Flycatcher / *Melaenornis edolioides* 3 4

2 Ussher`s Flycatcher / *Muscicapa ussheri* 3

1 Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher / *Terpsiphone rufiventer* 6

f Paradise Flycatcher spec.

6 Capuchin Babbler / *Phyllanthus atripennis* 6

fc Brown Babbler / *Turdoises plebejus* 3 6

f Blackcap Babbler / *Turdoises reinwardtii* 3 5 6

f Olive Sunbird / *Cyanomitra olivacea* 6

f Collared Sunbird / *Anthodiaeta collaris* 3 6

1 Green-headed Sunbird / *Cyanomitra verticalis* ???

fc Variable Sunbird / *Cinnyris venustus* 6

fc Beautiful Sunbird / *Cinnyris pulchellus* 3 4 5 6

4 Splendid Sunbird / *Cinnyris coccinigastrus* 4 6

f Yellow-billed Shrike / *Corvinella corvina*

2 Northern Puffback / *Dryoscopus gambensis* 3

1 Turati`s Boubou / *Laniarius turati* 3

fc Yellow-crowned Gonolek / *Laniarius barbarus* 5 6

f Fork-tailed Drongo / *Dicrurus adsimilis* 4

fc Piapiac / *Ptilostomus afer* 6

c Pied Crow / *Corvus albus*

f Purple Glossy Starling / *Lamprotornis purpureus* 6

f Greater Blue-eared Starling / *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* 6

f Lesser Blue-eared Starling / *Lamprotornis chloropterus* 5 6

fc Long-tailed Glossy Starling / *Lamprotornis caudatus* 6

2 Yellow-billed Oxpecker / *Buphagus africanus* 6

Northern Grey-headed Starling / *Passer griseus*

House Sparrow / *Passer domesticus*

2 Bush Petronia / *Gymnoris dentata* 6

c Village Weaver / *Ploceus cucullatus*

f Black-winged Red Bishop / *Euplectes hordeaceus*

1 Yellow-mantled Widowbird / *Euplectes macroura* 4

fc Orange-cheeked Waxbill / *Estrilda melpoda* 6

fc Lavender Waxbill / *Estrilda caerulescens* 3 5 6
 fc Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu / *Uraeginthus bengalus* 5 6
 c Red-billed Firefinch / *Lagonosticta senegala*
 f African/Blue-billed Firefinch / *Lagonosticta rubricata* 5
 fc Bronze Mannikin / *Spermestes cucullata* 5 6
 3 Pin-tailed Whydah / *Vidua macroura* 3 4
 fc Village Indigobird / *Vidua chalybeata* 3 5 6

10 lifer f : few fc : fairly common c: common

f Campbell`s Mona Monkey / Campbellmeerkatze / *Cercopithecus campbelli*
 f Western Red Colobus / Roter Stummelaffe / *Philiocolobus badius temminckii* 4
 7 Chimpanzee / Schimpanse / *Pan troglodytes verus* 4
 2 Banded Mongoose / Mungos mungo 3
1 Graceful Chameleon / *Chamaeleo gracilis* 3

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