I met my guide Ebou Barry on our arrival at our hotel, the Bakotu at Koto Beach. Ebou provided us with an itinerary that covered our fourteen day holiday and the next day we began visiting the sites on the Itinerary. I am someone who has combined his growing interest in birds with my other hobby of photography. I am much more interested in studying the birds through their behaviour and the images I obtain rather than ticking off lists. That said we saw a huge number of birds and I took some 12,000 photographs on the trip. Ebou proved to be a great and knowledgeable guide. He was able to see and identify birds at incredible distances and guide us to them. He was able to spot birds from the moving vehicle and stopped to allow me to take some very good photos.

Ebou had to be patient with me at times when I initially failed to see the birds hidden up in the tree canopies, this usually occurred with owls and Ebou proved very skilful at pointing me and my lens in the right direction to capture the images!

There was still a lot of water on the land and a few species evaded us but Ebou was able to find all the ‘special’ birds taking us to them when other birders and their guides were still searching. We managed to see and photograph most of the birds on the list below and in particular the elusive African Finfoot which although not very rare is incredibly difficult to see as it lurks at the water’s edge beneath the overhanging mangroves. We managed to capture this image on our boat trip in the Gambia River at Georgetown.
Other Target birds were the White-backed Night Heron, Egyptian Plover, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, brown-necked Parrot, Exclamatory Whydah Martial Eagle, Bateleur, Western Bluebill and the rare Beadouin’s snake eagle. We managed to see all of these and photographed all but the western bluebill. I have attached a few images below-

The whole trip was fantastic but in addition to the river trips two moments stand out for me, the nesting colony of red throated bee-eaters at the sand quarry –
And the wonderful canoe trip on the river at Marakissa where I was able to ‘silently get up very close to some spectacular birds –

Two months on from the trip I am still working through my photographs of this remarkable trip and plan to return perhaps later in the spring to discover more of the wonderful birds of Gambia and will certainly use the services of Ebou Barry again! There is one bird I missed and hope to photograph on my return, the male African Paradise Flycatcher with its long tail but there are so many different species of birds in the Gambia that I am sure I will not be disappointed!

A word of warning to those going for the first time. There are many ‘chancers’ with a pair of binoculars and little knowledge who will offer to guide you, they hang around the birding hotspots touting for business. Stick to registered guides of the Gambian Birding Association who have the knowledge to make your trip memorable. I will be using Ebou Barry again for his great expertise and the warm friendship that blossomed on this trip. I can fully recommend his services, he can be contacted at Bird Tours Gambia -

www.birdtoursgambia.com
email eboubarry@yahoo.co.uk
**15th November Abuko national park, from 07.30am/12.00 mid-day**

- Violet Turaco
- Green Turaco
- Giant Kingfisher
- Ahanta Francolin
- African Goshawk
- Western Bluebill
- Snowy Crowned Robin chat
- African Jacana
- Black Headed heron
- Squacco Heron
- Black Crowned Night Heron
- Palm Nut Vulture
- African paradise flycatcher
- Red bellied Paradise flycatcher
- Common wattle eye
- Hammerkop
- Buff spotted wood pecker

**Photographed**

**Photographed**

**seen**

**seen**

**Photographed**

**Photographed**

**seen**

**Photographed**

**Photographed**

**Photographed (Female)**

**Photographed (male and female)**

**seen**

**Photographed**

**seen**

---

**15 November From 16.30/19.00 Kotu Creek, Rice field and lily ponds.**
Giant kingfisher seen (photographed at Marakissa later)
Blue breasted kingfisher Photographed
Malachite Kingfisher Photographed
Woodland kingfisher Photographed
Wattled plover Photographed
Spur winged plover Photographed
Grey plover Photographed
Ringed plover seen
Red shank Photographed
Green shank Photographed
Whimbrel Photographed
Senegal Thicknee Photographed
Wire tailed swallow Photographed
Red chested swallow Photographed
Long tailed comorant Photographed
Hammerkop Photographed
Little bee-eater Photographed
Village weaver Photographed
Laughing dove Photographed
African mourning Dove Photographed
Red Eyed Dove Photographed
Vivacious Dove Photographed
House sparrow seen
Grey headed sparrow Photographed
Red billed fire finch Photographed (male & Female)
Bronze manikin Photographed
Village indigo Photographed
Western grey plantain eater Photographed
Red billed horn bill Photographed
Grey hornbill Photographed
Hadada ibis Photographed
Osprey Photographed
Black Crane Photographed
Black Egret (umbrella bird) Photographed
Wood sandpiper seen
White Faced whistling duck Photographed
Whimbrel Photographed

16th November from 07.30am /12.00 Brufut Woods
Verreaux’s Eagle owl
Northern white faced scoops owl
Long Tailed Nightjar
Swallow tailed Bee Eater
Grey woodpecker
Fine spotted wood pecker
White billed buffalo weaver
Northern Red Bishop
Yellow frontal Tinkerbird
Pearl spotted owlet
Black necked weaver
Red cheeked cordon blue
Fork tailed Drongo
African Green pigeon
African pygmy kingfisher
Oranged cheeked waxbill
Greater honey guide
Kiass’s cuckoo
Blue spotted wood Dove
Black billed wood Dove
Copper sunbird
Variable sunbird
Beautiful sunbird
Long tailed glossy starling
Purple glossy starling

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16th November  Afternoon Tanji Fishing Village

Caspian tern
Lesser crested tern
Yellow legged gull
Royal tern
Lesser black backed gull
Osprey
Turnstone
Bar tailed Godwit
Sanderling
Pink backed pelican
Sandwich tern
Kelp gull
Little ringed plover
Red-billed Firefinch

Photographed
Photographed
seen
seen
seen
not seen
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Photographed
Photographed
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Photographed
Photographed
seen
Photographed
Photographed
17th November from 07.30am /18.00 whole day birding at Mandinaba, Farasutu forest, Bonto forest, Pirang Shrimp Ponds

Wahlberg’s Eagle
Long Crested Eagle
Lizard Buzzard
Shikra
Grey Headed Kingfisher
White Backed night heron
African Wood OWL
White faced scoops owl
Greyish Eagle OWL
African spoon bill
Yellow billed stork
Greater flamingo
Lesser flamingo
White crowned robin chat
Snowy crowned robin chat
Black necked weaver
Spotted honey guide
Lesser honey guide
Greater honey guide
Black rumped waxbill
Yellow white eye
African pied hornbill
Yellow bill
Verreaux’s eagle owl
Black winged bishop
Green Crombec
Northern Crombec
Buff spotted wood pecker
Sulphur breasted bush shrike
African thrush
Pied kingfisher

Not seen
Photographed
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Dark chanting Goshawk
Dunlin
Sanderling
Curlew
Curlew sandpiper
Pink backed pelican
Little stint
Red knot
African Darter
Western Reef Heron
Grey Heron
Caspian tern
Gull billed tern
Black Tern
Red rumped swallow
White spotted fufail
Marsh harrier
Crested Lark
Quail Finch
Yellow crowned Bishop
Slender billed gull
Grey headed gull
Green Turaco
African pygmy kingfisher
Green headed sunbird
Green hylia
Red Shoulderd cuckoo shrike
Bronze tailed glossy starling
Splendid glossy starling
African harrier hawk
Leviellant's cuckoo
Double spurr francolin
Blue bellied roller
Abyssinian roller
Black-rumped Waxbill
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Photographed
Photographed

18th November  Koto Bridge and the sewage ponds and golf course to nature trail and cycle track
Pied Kingfisher Photographed
Malachite Kingfisher Photographed
Red-rumped swallow Photographed
Wire-tailed Swallow Photographed
Black-winged Stilt Photographed
Black-headed Lapwing Photographed
Spur-winged Lapwing Photographed
Little egret Photographed
Purple Glossy Starling Photographed
Long-tailed Glossy starling Photographed
Senegal Coucal Photographed
Laughing dove Photographed
Yellow-billed Kite Photographed
Squacco Heron Photographed
Blue-bellied Roller Photographed
Bronze Manikin Photographed
Beautiful Sunbird Photographed
Abyssinian Roller Photographed
Western reef heron Photographed
Whimbrel Photographed
Long-tailed Cormorant Photographed
Little grebe Photographed

Brown necked parrot Photographed
Pearl spotted owlet Photographed
Senegal parrot Photographed
Mottle spine tail swift seen

19th November from 07.00am pick up from our hotel to Tendaba camp
birding on the way
20th November after breakfast boat trip into the river Gambia At 11.30am after the river trip drive to Georgetown through the north bank road staying at the baobolong river camp.
Goliath Heron not seen
Blue Flycatcher not seen
Brown sunbird seen
Blue breasted kingfisher Photographed
Malachite kingfisher Photographed
Great white egret Photographed
Intermediate egret Photographed
Little egret Photographed
White throated Bee Eater Photographed
Blue Cheeked Bee Eater Photographed
European Bee Eater Photographed
Wooly Necked stork not seen
Montagues harrier Photographed
Yellow billed stork Photographed
White backed night heron Photographed
Brown Snake Eagle Photographed
Western Banded Snake Eagle Not seen
African Hawk Eagle seen
Abyssinian Ground Hornbill not seen
Exclamatory Paradise Whydah Photographed
Chest nut crowned sparrow weaver seen
Bruce's Green pigeon Photographed
White bellied bustard not seen
Savile's Bustard not seen
Red Throated Bee Eater Photographed
Martial Eagle Photographed
Little Green Bee Eater Photographed
Northern Ant Eater Chat Photographed
Egyptian Plover Photographed

21st November visited the Bansang sand quarry and the site for the Egyptian Plover.
After lunch At The Camp From 15.30/19.00 We went with a boat Into the Fresh water RIVER, Birds seen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Finfoot</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Fish Eagle</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swamp Flycatcher</td>
<td>Seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shining Blue Kingfisher</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodland kingfisher</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malachite kingfisher</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grey headed kingfisher</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Breasted Kingfisher</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European turtle Dove</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African pygmy Goose</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Crake</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squaco Heron</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow crowned gonolek</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow throated leaflove</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriole Warbler</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Crowned Night Heron</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green backed night Heron</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitethroat</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm-nut Vulture</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**22\textsuperscript{nd} November – Wassu stone circle**

- Pied Wagtail
- Verreaux’s Eagle owl
- Northern Carmine Bee-eater
- Common Rock Thrush
- White-faced Vulture
- Maribou Stork
- Northern Anteater Chat

**23rd November revisited Abuko and the Crocodile pond Banjul**

- Male Red-bellied African Paradise Flycatcher
- Female Red-bellied African paradise Flycatcher
- Female African Paradise flycatcher
- Beautiful Sunbird
- Black-cap babbler
- Western Plantain eater
24th November Marakissa

Giant Kingfisher Photographed
White-breasted Cuckoo-Shrike seen
Greater Honeyguide seen
Spotted Honeyguide not seen
African Jacana Photographed
Black Crane Photographed
Painted snipe Photographed
Long-crested eagle Photographed
Red-necked falcon Photographed
Osprey Photographed
Senegal Thicknee Photographed
Wood sandpiper Photographed
Pink-backed pelican Photographed
Malachite Kingfisher Photographed
Yellow-billed Bush Shrike Photographed
African Darter Photographed
Scoops Owl Photographed

25th November Tujereng Woods

Osprey Photographed
White shouldered black tit seen
Senegal Batis Photographed
Brown Backed Wood pecker Photographed
Yellow penduline tit Photographed
Black Scimitar-bill not seen
Variable sunbird Photographed
Black crowned tchagra
Pied winged swallow
Yellow-crowned Gonolek
Willow Warbler
Bearded barbet
White-fronted Black Chat
Little Bee-eaters
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird
Saturday 26th November Koto Bridge, viewing platform Baktou Hotel and cycle Track ponds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird Type</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osprey</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Egret (umbrella bird)</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great White Egret</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Crake</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hadaba Ibis</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Hornbill</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speckled Pigeon</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Winged Stilt</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Plantain eaters</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abyssinian Roller</td>
<td>Photographed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28th Return Home 37 degrees Centigrade in Banjul, -2 at Gatwick