Birding in São Tomé and Príncipe

20 January to 3 February 2018

Trip report

By Erling Krabbe and Paulo Paixão
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Itinerary
20/1  Arrival São Tomé city
21/1  São Tomé City, Morro Peixe, Praia dos Tamarindos, Monte Café
22/1  Flight to Príncipe. Boat trip from Santo António to Praia Seca. Camping Obo Natural Park, Príncipe
23/1  Camping Obo Natural Park, Príncipe
24/1  Obo Natural Park, return boat trip via Jockey Cap to Santo António, Príncipe
25/1  Bom Bom island resort and walk Biosphere Reserve to airport, Santo António, Príncipe
26/1  Santo António, return flight to São Tomé, drive to Mucumbli Lodge, scenic route along north coast road to Santa Catarina and west coast of São Tomé
27/1  Drive from São Tomé city to Monte Carmo, camping at Monte Carmo
28/1  Camping at Monte Carmo
29/1  Camping at Monte Carmo
30/1  Monte Carmo, drive return to São Tomé city
31/1  Drive from São Tomé city to Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden, walk to Lagoa Amélia. Camping Bom Sucesso Botanical garden.
1/2   Camping at Bom Sucesso, jungle walk to Lagoa Amélia, via antenna mountain.
2/2   Jungle walk to Lagoa Amélia, return to São Tomé city via Casa Museu Almada Negreiros.
3/2   Praia dos Tamarindos and São Tomé city. Return flight evening to Lisbon.
Introduction
By Paulo Paixão

São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) is a fascinating island nation in the Gulf of Guinea, safe, with friendly people, great scenery and rich bird fauna comprising all but two of the Gulf of Guinea islands endemic birds. According to the IOC Bird List, there are 27 endemic bird species in São Tomé and Príncipe, 17 of which present only in the island of São Tomé, 8 only in Príncipe and two in both islands. Moreover, one species endemic to the Gulf of Guinea islands occurs in both STP islands. Given the high level of endemism STP is dubbed ‘Galapagos of Africa’. However, it is quite a challenge to see all the birds, not easy at all. Whilst most species are widespread and found daily in the right habitat, some are rare, cryptic and localised in remote areas with bad access that requires camping in the wild, doing long treks and climbing steep ridges, valley sides and forest paths with a local guide. There are walking trails and the guides use machetes to clear them wide, but the ground is slippery and covered by thick roots and loose volcanic stones. Adding to this, one must be prepared for hot and very humid weather and periods of intense rainfall. Most of the rain, over 10 meters annually, falls on the side lying in the path of the prevailing winds from the southwest. By contrast, the capital city and the northern savannah of São Tomé lying in the rain-shadow get less than one metre.

Invited by a Portuguese friend who is now living in STP, PP made plans for a birding trip there and mentioned it to EK. STP had been on EK’s travel list for many years, so he decided to join. We scheduled the trip for one year later during the small dry season (gravânito) in late January.

During two weeks, we visited the two main islands in STP and landed at Boné de Jóquei (Jockey Cap a.k.a. Caroço) islet, 1 mile off Príncipe south coast. We had also planned a boat trip to the Tinhosas islands, which lie around 10 miles southwest of Príncipe, to see the major seabird colony of the eastern tropical Atlantic. Unfortunately, miscommunication in one case and delays in another proved to be too much for us and compromised this expedition. We did not find three endemics (the recently found and still not described Príncipe Scops Owl, the inconspicuous Príncipe White-eye and the São Tomé Grosbeak, one of the least observed birds in the world). Nevertheless, our birding trip was very rewarding overall, we had great fun and feel that the final balance is positive. We came out with a long bird list and managed to get good photos of most of the species.

Thanks to our friend José Palas (Zé) jpalas@sapo.pt +239 987 11 94 we also learned a lot about the country and its people, mountains and beaches, tourism, economy, business and investments, politics, international development cooperation, history, the old ‘roças’ plantations, coffee and cocoa production and much more. It is never too much to thank Zé for his hospitality (room, breakfast, dinner and washed clothes) in the capital city of São Tomé, for driving us to birding hotspots all over the island of São Tomé and for the social programme with his friends. Zé is a successful entrepreneur, has good connections in São Tomé, is aware of the birding potential of the country and can assist visiting birders with planning and logistics.

We hired birding guides to find the most difficult species in remote areas. Otherwise, we birded without guides and found the other species on our own.

Planning the trip to Príncipe was a challenge because our contact Bikegila does not have email, only phone +239 225 10 03 (home) and +239 996 81 15 (mobile). Anyway, Bikegila was able to organize the camping expedition to the south of Príncipe, including transfer by boat. He knows the territory very well and could find some forest birds for us, in particular the Príncipe Thrush. He also knows the site for the Príncipe Scops Owl and has seen it. We left the sound equipment in the island of São Tomé, but thanks to Bikegila we managed to borrow a smartphone from his daughter and the Príncipe Scops Owl calls from the NGO.
Príncipe Trust. Bikegila guiding fees was 50 € per day and 30 € for the porter. We also paid him the food for the expedition and 200 € to chart the boat to go to the start of a forest trail in the south of the island and to bring us back from there two days later, including landing at Boné de Jóquei islet. Since the weather is unpredictable on Príncipe and can be very wet, we thought that one night should not be enough to find the birds and decided to reserve two nights for camping in the south.

António Alberto antonioalberto26@hotmail.com +239 995 61 62 was our guide for six days in the island São Tomé and he organized our two camping expeditions for the most difficult endemics: three nights at Monte Carmo next to some old ruins in the forest edge close to the oil palm plantation and two nights under a shelter at Bom Sucesso botanical garden. These sites are convenient in the sense that they offer better protection from the rain than at higher elevation in the middle of the forest. However, the stronghold for the difficult endemics is higher and deeper in primary forest at least one hour away from the camping places. Every day we had to walk uphill and back down again. Although Monte Carmo is one of the best places for the endemics that is not too far away, the birds were absent (Grosbeak), scarce and shy (Ibis and Short-tail) or very localized (Fiscal). If bird population trends do not improve, birders will have to focus on the southwestern forests to find some endemic species of this island. António knows very well the mountains and has a long experience in monitoring endemic birds. He is reliable and works hard to find the birds, although sometimes he is a bit too optimistic considering that a number of species are difficult to find. He is business-minded, has initiative, listens to his clients and is building a reputation with foreign birders. He should still set up a website to promote his business. Because he is interested in a broad range of issues in addition to birding, we spent good time talking also about conservation, entrepreneurship, politics and football. António charged 150 € per day for guiding fees, porter and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner).

Guides work in pairs with a porter; they cook the meals. We drank water from streams. It is essential to bring your own tent, tarpaulin for shelter and playback system (sound player or smartphone and speaker). Because the weather is hot and humid, wet clothes may take days to dry, or do not dry at all unless placed in the midday sun.

We are grateful to Philippe Verbelen, who discovered the Príncipe Scops Owl, for providing useful information about birding in Príncipe.

We booked early a TAP flight from Lisbon to São Tomé for 470 € and made separate bookings for discount connecting flights from Brussels (PP) and Copenhagen (EK). Unfortunately, TAP changed the São Tomé booking three months before the trip, rescheduling the outbound and inbound flights one day before the original dates. As a result, we had to incur in expenses to make new bookings for our connecting flights.

Between the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe we booked return flights with STP Airways for 198 €.

No visa is required for Portuguese (PP) and Danish (EK) nationals for up to 15 days tourist visits to STP.

Diary
By Erling Krabbe

Saturday 20. January 2018
With great expectations, we closed in at São Tomé late afternoon by plane from Lisbon with TAP. From the air we spotted a lush green and mountainous island, fringed by volcanic cliff coastline with scattered bays of sandy beaches. Stepping out of the plane we were hit by the extremely hot and humid, tropical climate - almost like being in a steambath!
In the airport, Paulo’s long time Lisbon hometown friend José Palas was waiting to welcome us. José lives and works in São Tomé, and had invited us to stay at his place in the city during our birding visit. His place turned out to be a lovely villa with a garden, placed near the beach boulevard. We got settled in his guest room, and finished a long travel day relaxing in a seafood restaurant nearby for dinner.

**Sunday 21. January 2018**

Early morning birding on our first birding day in São Tomé. Paulo and I took a stroll around the green villa area of José’s place. São Tomé Prinia was a common garden bird, and our first endemic. Other common garden and city birds were Laughing Dove, Yellow-fronted Canary, Bronze Mannikin, African Palm Swift, Little Swift and Yellow-billed Kites. To our surprise, a White-tailed Tropicbird flew over, but we soon learned, that this was not an unusual sight along the coast, even in the city.

José took us on a drive to the north coast, Morro Peixe and the beach Praia dos Tamarindos, where we wished to explore the savannah birds. This part of the island, including São Tomé city, is rather dry, with an annual rainfall less than a meter. It is sheltered by the mountains, where the rainfall is 10 meters annually. So there is a huge difference in precipitation within São Tomé. We walked along the road heading northwards from Guadalupe to the coast. The grassland was lush and green, full of nest building birds in breeding plumages: Black-winged Red Bishop, Golden-backed Bishop, Southern Masked Weaver, White-winged Widow Bird, Pin-tailed Whydah, Common Waxbill, Blue Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin and Red-headed Quelea. From the scattered trees Island Bronze-naped Pigeons were calling, and we saw our first São Tomé Malachite Kingfisher and the endemic Black-capped Speirops. At the beach, a muddy lagoon with a bit of mangrove hosted a few waders such as Whimbrel, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper. We followed a track through the grassland, where we were lucky to flush several Harlequin Quail. Along the beach, Reef Herons and White-tailed Tropicbirds flew by. The sunlight was really strong, so a broadrimmed hat and sunscreen was a necessity.

Past midday, we went for lunch with José to a reputed restaurant called Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, at Monte Café in the forested hills west of São Tomé city, the birthplace of a famous Portuguese modernist painter and writer. During lunch we enjoyed good views of several São Tomé Green Pigeons and Príncipe
Seedeaters at eye level, feeding in a fruiting safú (*Dacryodes edulis*) tree just next to the restaurant. São Tomé Spinetails flew over, and in the valley below we spotted São Tomé Thrush, São Tomé Paradise Flycatcher, Newton’s Sunbird, Lemon Dove, Chestnut-winged Starling, Black-capped Speirops and Island Bronze-naped Pigeon.

![São Tomé Green Pigeon at Monte Café. Photo: Erling Krabbe](image)

We finished our day with a brief visit to a waterfall nearby, to the Bom Sucesso botanical garden and to the nearby large Nova Moca coffee farm, where the staff and friends of José showed us the coffee and cocoa production process. As the night fell on, African Straw-coloured Fruit Bats crossed the sky.

**Monday 22. January 2018**

Morning flight to Príncipe at 9 a.m., where our local guide Bikegila was waiting for us at the airport. Príncipe is a small island with only 6,000 inhabitants, and most of it is wilderness, impenetrable jungle, steep inaccessible mountains and beautiful sand beaches. The entire island of Príncipe, its islets and Tinhosas islands form a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The capital is the picturesque town of Santo António at a sheltered harbour bay and river mouth.

![Our plane from São Tomé has arrived in Príncipe](image)  
![Scenic view to the Príncipe mountains. Photos: Erling Krabbe](image)
We spent some time driving around to solve the problem of having forgotten our tape recorder in São Tomé. Bikegila helped us solve this, by borrowing his daughter’s smartphone, into which we could download the call of Príncipe Scops Owl, with good help from the local marine turtle conservation NGO Fundação Príncipe Trust office in town. We bought very basic food supply to bring along for the next three days, and sailed off at 12:20 p.m. along the east coast for our coming jungle expedition to the south of the island. (see front cover photo). The sea was a bit rough at times, but it soon calmed down when we closed in at the scenic Praia Seca bay at the southeast corner of the island. We enjoyed Brown Boobies, Reef Herons and flying fish during the boat ride. In Praia Seca there is a small settlement of fishermen families.

Bikegila and our porter showed the way through the jungle, to the place where the yet to be described Príncipe Scops Owl had been discovered by Martim Melo in 2009 by call, and photographed not until 2016 by Philippe Verbelen. The 2½ hours trek was really sweaty and hot in the beginning, climbing the hill from the beach, but it soon became easier, since we could follow an old, abandoned forest track most of the way to our destination. Bird diversity in the forest was very poor – however, the lovely and endemic Dohrn’s Thrush Babbler was a character bird, and its musical call could be heard from almost anywhere. Only other birds were Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Lemon Dove, Island Bronze-naped Pigeon, and a lot of very noisy Timneh Parrots.
We got organized at the camp site in the afternoon, and a fire for cooking was soon in place. A small river nearby served as a cooling bath after a long walk. Dinner was delicious spaghetti and canned pork. At dusk we were ready to listen for the Príncipe Scops Owl. However, it turned out that the trees right above the camp was a night roost for Timneh Parrots. The noise from these birds was a cacophony of nuisance, and it went on for hours before they became silent. Parrots have many voices, also whistles, and several times we thought we might have heard a calling scops owl, but it always turned out to be a “papagaio”.

When things finally became quiet, we walked up to a nearby hill in the forest, where a team from Birdfinders with Bikegila a week before had taped in a Príncipe Scops Owl. We tried as well with our humble smartphone to play the call, but no answer, and no show of the owl. At 9 p.m. a torrential rain started, and it went on the whole night and only ceased at 10 a.m. next day. A long and wet night, but we managed to keep dry in the tent.
Tuesday 23. January 2018
When the rain had stopped at about 10 a.m., we ventured out and explored the forest in the surroundings of the camp. A group of the endemic Príncipe Starling showed well, as well as Mona Monkeys in the canopy. Bikegila took us to a place in the forest he knew of as a territory for the very rare and endemic Príncipe Thrush. And he proved right – at exactly the spot a very tame and curious Príncipe Thrush was hopping around in the forest floor, at a few meters distance. Success! Well done, Bikegila!
The Príncipe Thrush is a critically endangered species, only found in the south of Príncipe, where the world population is considered to be fewer than 250 individuals. The species was discovered in 1901, and after an absence of records since the 1920s, it was rediscovered in 1997.

At dusk we tried again for the Príncipe Scops Owl. The weather was good, and the parrots behaved a bit better this time but unfortunately, there was no sign or sound of the owl.

**Wednesday 24. January 2018**
No rain during the night. We closed the camp, and got ready to head back to the fishermen village and the boat ride back to Santo António. The forest walk was easy but, disappointingly also more or less empty with birds. We arrived at Praia Seca around noon, and our boat was already waiting there with the crew. We spent some time birding around the settlement and along a little stream. A pair of Príncipe Malachite Kingfishers showed well, as did three Príncipe Speirops, another endemic species. We found broken shells of turtle eggs next to holes in the sand and wondered if this damage was caused by the roaming feral pigs and dogs from the village.

During our boat ride back to Santo António we made a stopover at the island of Ilhéu Caroço ("Jockey Cap") off south Príncipe, close to Praia Seca. We disembarked on a ledge and moved around a cliff to go looking for the endemic subspecies of Príncipe Seedeater. The islet is only 0.4 km$^2$, so this seedeater subspecies is probably one of the most range-restricted taxa in the world. The slopes were very steep, with loose soil, and the seedeaters are found in palm trees on the slopes. Luckily, Bikegila soon spotted a pair, and we enjoyed prolonged views of these very confident birds. A number of Brown Boobies were roosting on rocks around the islet, and high up along the cliff sides of the island, nesting White-tailed Tropicbirds were soaring.
Back in Santo António at 2:30 p.m., we checked in at Residencial Apresentação, a small but pleasant guest house at the riverside in the centre of town, where we were met by a very friendly and helpful owner. We hung all our camping gear outside to get dried by the hot afternoon sun, and went for a small birding walk to farmland along the forest edge south out the river in Santo António. This place was quite birdy, as we could see African Green Pigeon, Timneh Parrots, Olive Sunbird, Príncipe Speirops, Príncipe and Splendid Starlings, Príncipe Weaver, Príncipe Malachite Kingfishers in the city river and, surprisingly, a Squacco Heron in an abandoned rice paddy. House Swifts and African Palm Swifts flew in numbers over the old, colonial town buildings. We went for dinner in a restaurant locally known as ‘Casa da Toinha’, well hidden away on an open terrace upstairs in a dark family house, but they served excellent seafood and delightfully cold beer.
Thursday 25. January 2018
We had planned to leave very early for a 6 hours boat trip with Bikegila and the boat crew to Tinhosas islands to visit the seabird colony. But due to some delay and misunderstandings we decided to call it off, and instead chose to go birding at Bom Bom resort, a beautifully situated hotel at the north coast, to look for our still missing Príncipe endemics.

We got a lift to Bom Bom, and explored the resort gardens and the jungle trail on the small Bom Bom islet. We spent most of the day in the area, including a walk along the road all the way back to the airport through the forested area in the north of Príncipe. In the Bom Bom hotel garden the endemic Príncipe Sunbird showed well, a new bird to us. Paulo watched and photographed a Príncipe Malachite Kingfisher diving several times in the swimming pool. And of course we could not resist to the charm of a tame Timneh Parrot that lives in the resort grounds. The road walk produced the scarce, local subspecies of Príncipe Seedeater, African Emerald Cuckoo, Dohrn’s Thrush-Babbler, Príncipe Speirops, Príncipe Weaver, Blue-breasted Kingfisher, Príncipe Malachite Kingfisher, African Green Pigeon and Olive Sunbird. By then, we had lost hope to find the Príncipe White-eye. Now, our only possible endemic taxon still missing was the Príncipe Velvet-mantled Drongo. A bird we had expected to be rather easy but turned out to be really hard.

Back in Santo António, Paulo went back to the same forest edge area as the day before, while I, after a short nap, found a different place with a logging trail into the forest, just at the edge of town. Fortunately, this place proved to be rewarding, since a pair of drongos could be seen at their nest site.

Friday 26. January 2018
Our last morning in Príncipe, before the return flight to São Tomé at 10:20 a.m. We got up early and went straight to the Príncipe Velvet-mantled Drongo site at 06:30 a.m., to make sure that both of us could get this hard bird on our trip list. Luck was on our side, since within a short while the birds showed up, and before 09.00 we had seen five different birds. Paulo got distant pictures but was happy with that. Bird activity at dawn in the forest was lively, including Príncipe Sunbirds, Dohrn’s Thrush-babbler, Príncipe Weaver, African Green Pigeons and Olive Sunbird. In the mudflats at the river mouth a large flock of gorgeous looking Splendid Starling came down to feed.

The flight back to São Tomé only took half an hour, and here José again had come to fetch us. We quickly got installed in our guest room and went on a sightseeing drive together along the north and west coast the rest of the day, and only came back after dark – actually much later than planned because our car broke down at dusk on the way back. We went for lunch at the beautiful Mucumbli Lodge at a hill with seaside views, but could hardly make it into the restaurant due to a torrential, tropical shower. However, it was soon over, and it quickly became warm and sunny again. Around the lodge we saw Red-headed Lovebird, Blue Waxbill, São Tomé Thrush, Newton’s Sunbird, São Tomé Paradise Flycatcher and Whitetailed Tropic-birds along the coastline. Paulo went around the gardens to get more pictures and met a NGO staff carrying an injured Hawksbill sea turtle that had been caught in fishing gear, seized at the harbour and handed over to this NGO for healing and release at the beach.

Further along the coast, we made a stop at the historical beach site Anambó, which was the place the Portuguese seafarers went on land for the first time in São Tomé, in 1465. There, Paulo finally managed to take a picture of Red-headed Lovebird.

We continued through the very poor village of Santa Catarina, a depressing experience, and followed the road to its very end, before inaccessible forest takes over. Reed Cormorants could be seen at rivers, and São Tomé Spinetails were hunting insects above the trees. As dusk, many fruit bats flew over the ocean.
Saturday 27. January 2018

We got up at 6 o’clock to get ready for our second jungle expedition – this time to Monte Carmo in the south of São Tomé. The two main target birds here are the São Tomé Ibis, and the São Tomé Fiscal. Once again, José did us a huge favour to take us the long way down there by car. First, we picked up our guide António (Toni) and the porter Dimas in the city centre, and off we went. António had the food and cooking gear ready for the next four days in the field.

At Monte Carmo the road only took us to a river, that we had to cross by foot, and we said farewell to José, and started a very hot and humid walk through an oil palm plantation with our full backpacks in the midday heat and sun. We crossed another couple of streams on the way, looking for stepping-stones. On the last one Paulo lost his balance and stepped back from the bank to the water, fortunately resulting in nothing more serious than wet boots for the next few days. After an hour or more we finally reached the primary forest, which also marked the border of the Obo Natural Park. Just inside the forest there was a house in ruins – an obvious place to put our tents up under the roof shelter. Small day-active bats flew around our heads, and a small snake slid out from the ruin next to our tent with a full-grown gecko as prey in its gape. Welcome to the tropics!

Toni soon had a tasty lunch salad with bread ready and when finished, we walked uphill for our first Monte Carmo adventure. Toni was very sharp with voices in the jungle, and after a while he had heard the sound of an ibis taking off from the ground somewhere inside the jungle. And soon after, we were looking at 2+2+1 incredible São Tomé Ibises, perched on branches and looking down at us. Unbelievable!
São Tomé Orioles seemed to be a rather common bird, as did the handsome São Tomé Weaver. With its nuthatch foraging behaviour it reminds me of the Bar-winged Weaver on the African mainland. At 3.30-4 p.m. it started to rain, and we just made it back to the camp ruin in time before a huge and long lasting shower broke out. After dark, when things were quieting down a bit, a São Tomé Scops Owl was calling near the camp.

Sunday 28. January 2018
After the rain last night everything was wet, and life in the forest woke up late. So did we. We spent the whole day with Toni guiding us around the forest, most of the time far away from any trail. It was impressive to see how well he knew the terrain. Birding was a bit difficult, since several species were not very cooperative. Especially the much-wanted São Tomé Shorttail was tough. It is an extremely skulky bird that stays on the ground most of the time, and always hides in dense thicket. Toni spotted one in a gully, and I was lucky to catch a glimpse of it, but Paulo missed it. Another tough bird was São Tomé Olive Pigeon. We localized a calling bird at its song post in the canopy of a very tall tree. But we never managed to see the bird. We did not find any ibises this day, but got good views of the beautiful, endemic Giant Weaver - the biggest weaver in the World. Other nice birds were São Tomé Thrush, Newton’s Sunbird, São Tomé Weaver, São Tomé Oriole and São Tomé Green Pigeon. By late afternoon we were rewarded with great sightings of gorgeous African Emerald Cuckoo singing while holding a caterpillar in its beak.

Monday 29. January 2018
The big Fiscal shrike day. Our destination for today was the ridge of the mountain, and to reach it as early as possible given that the shrike is usually more active before 11. The high level montane forest is the habitat of the very rare São Tomé Fiscal. We started out at 07:15 a.m., which was acceptable, and reached the upper campsites place at 09:00. The weather was fine until 01:30 p.m., when the first raindrops appeared from the sky. During our ascent, all of us were lucky to get good views of two pairs of São Tome
Shorttail, but to Paulo’s disappointment no picture. His ambition was to get good photos of all the birds we saw during our trip.

We reached the ridge around 10:00. The montane forest was low and covered by moss and epiphytes. It did not take long before several São Tomé Fiscals showed along the trail, and we had great views of these beautiful and confident birds. We estimated two pairs and a singleton, a total of five birds, within a stretch of a few hundred meters.

Another great endemic we encountered in the mountain forest was three individuals of the magnificent Giant Sunbird – the biggest sunbird of the world. On the way down the mountain, we were lucky to find another São Tomé Ibis, bringing our total number of observed birds up to six. Back at the camp at 5 p.m., it was time for a refreshing bath in the river, and a good cup of coffee with milk and sugar at the fireside, while Toni and our porter were preparing our evening meal. What a day!

**Tuesday 30. January 2018**

Our last day in Monte Carmo. It was a fine and sunny morning, and Toni and Paulo decided to give the Shorttail another try in the forest. I myself had had enough of mud, so instead I spent the morning birding at the forest edge of the oil palm plantation.

No luck with the shorttail, but Paulo managed to frame a few shots of Giant Sunbirds. Later we all packed down the camp and walked slowly back through the plantation to the river crossing, to meet José and his car. During our walk, we found a big, black cobra, dead and with its head chopped off. The snakes thrive on the rats that are attracted to all the fatty oil palm fruits, when the clusters are cut and lay on the ground. At
the river gallery, we immediately felt that this was good spot to look for Giant Weaver and other birds, and convinced Toni to spend some time there. While a local worker climbed a palm tree to fresh the morning palm juice (that quickly turns into palm wine), a colourful male Giant Weaver showed very well.

José was a bit delayed, so we spent time by the river, enjoying Striated Heron with a young one, São Tomé Malachite Kingfisher and Reed Cormorants. Back in São Tomé in the evening, we went for dinner at a seaside restaurant with a bunch of José’s wonderful, local friends and business partners.

Wednesday 31. January 2018
We got ready for our last camping expedition during our trip. This time our target was two nights at the Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso area, in the mountains southwest of São Tomé city. Lagoa Amélia is an ancient volcanic crater, now filled in and overgrown, situated in high altitude (app. 1400 m.) rain forest within the Obo Natural Park. A walk along a slippery jungle trail from Jardim Botânico do Bom Sucesso to the crater is a rather popular tourist activity in the island. It can be done in a couple of hours each way. From a birding point of view the crater itself is not especially interesting, but so is the mountain forest surrounding it.

As usual, José took us by car to Bom Sucesso early morning, and we picked up António on the way in his home town Monte Café at 8 a.m. In Bom Sucesso, we left our luggage at the small café there, and went birding immediately. Even if it was not the plan from the beginning, we made it all the way to the crater, and birding was good on the way. Toni knew of a day roost site for São Tomé Scops Owl in some very dense, old bamboo thicket along the trail. At first, we did not find the bird there but on the way back we
tried again at the same spot and luck was on our side. A lovely, small scops owl appeared on a bamboo stick, looking curiously down at us!

In the farmland valley below the forest we heard the deep call from São Tomé Olive Pigeon, and soon discovered the bird far away at a song post on a tall, free standing tree next to the forest edge. Two great endemic birds were under the belt. Two other São Tomé Olive pigeons crossed the valley.

During our walk, we also managed to find Lemon Dove, female and young Giant Weavers and a pair of São Tomé Paradise Flycatchers holding territory right on the path, having as neighbours the usual São Tomé Prinias. We also had good views of São Tomé Oriole, Newton’s Sunbird, Black-capped Speirops, Island Bronze-naped Pigeon, Chestnut-winged Starling, São Tomé Weaver, Príncipe Seedeater, São Tomé Green Pigeon, São Tomé Spinetail, São Tomé Thrush and African Emerald Cuckoo. We also found butterfly net traps at a forest clearing near the Lagoa Amélia ridge.

Back in Bom Sucesso in the afternoon, Toni served a home-prepared lunch of tuna in rice with sauce. We were allowed by the botanical garden staff to put up our tents in an open, sheltered garage. I went for a short walk along a downhill dirt road, and was lucky to find a small flock of our second last endemic to see, the São Tomé White-eye. Poor Paulo was exhausted due to stomach trouble, so I had a struggle dragging him down to the place. The friendly staff allowed us to use the restaurant kitchen after closing time, so Toni prepared dinner, and we went to bed early.

Thursday 1. February 2018

Now it was my turn getting stomach trouble. I had a terrible night without much sleep. Paulo, for his part, was fresh again.

We got up at 06:30 to a misty morning, but soon the sun broke through, and it became a fine day. Today was the day for the big expedition, climbing no less than three ridges. Our main target was the São Tomé Grosbeak, our last possible endemic. We started out at the road bend in Bom Sucesso where I saw the white-eyes the evening before, and luckily the birds were still there. We had decent views, as well as of a Giant Sunbird. Walking uphill through farmland, we could hear a distant call from a Red-necked Spurfowl. Our first target was to climb the antenna mountain, then to cross over towards the crater ridge. This implied a very steep downhill, then steeply up again to a second ridge, then down again, and finally up again to the back side of the crater ridge, which was the spot where the grosbeak had been seen earlier. I was stomach sick and exhausted, but we all made it, and were back in the camp at 01:30 p.m. No sign or sound of the grosbeak anywhere. Perhaps we had been too optimistic about our chances, since this is by far the most difficult of the endemic birds in São Tomé, and is seen only by very few groups. However, it has been recorded at the places we visited at Lagoa Amélia.
On the way back, Paulo stayed behind for another photo session of close-up pictures of São Tomé Paradise Flycatcher. Then, on a steep and muddy descent he slipped and broke his flash. Myself, after lunch back in the camp, I had to deliver all my stomach content back to mother nature, and crashed for three hours in the tent. But this was good, since I immediately felt well again, and the rest of the trip as well. Meanwhile Paulo found another mixed flock of speirops and white-eyes and got pictures of São Tomé White-eye in action.

Friday 2. February 2018
Our last morning in Bom Sucesso. We got up at 06:30 to a beautiful morning and decided to give the grosbeak a last try. From 07:30 to 12:30 we did the crater trail again, and tried the “grosbeak site” again, at the backside of the ridge. Playback and patient waiting, but no grosbeak. So, we had to give it up, but at least we had tried as much as we possibly could. A large, stunning butterfly, Blue Diadem (Hypolimnas salmacis ssp. thomensis) flew in and landed just next to us while waiting –something to enjoy.

Back in the camp in Bom Sucesso, we packed down our gear. Past midday we walked with our backpacks along the road down to Monte Café and said farewell to our excellent guide and companion António at his place. Paulo and I decided to take lunch at the pleasant Casa Museu Almada Negreiros restaurant, where we had been to before. A nice English/French couple gave us a lift back to São Tomé city afterwards.
At home, José had prepared a farewell dinner for us and friends, eight in all. José is a great cook, and we all eight enjoyed his delicious food and tasty red wine.

Saturday 3. February 2018
Our last day in São Tomé. Paulo, José and a group of friends decided to go to the beach, while I preferred to explore city life and the museum. The museum is placed at the sea side – an old fortress – and gives a really interesting story of the Portuguese history in the island. The rooms are full of old colonial items and furniture, and from the roof terrace there is a good view of the harbour, seaside and the old city. I also visited the market place, very crowded and with all sorts of fruit, meat, fish, vegetables and second-hand clothes for sale. The city centre still has its original, colonial buildings.

Paulo with friends enjoyed their day at the Praia dos Tamarindos near Morro Peixe. Birding was good, with Common Moorhen as new for the trip, close up shots of Red-headed Quelea, and otherwise more or less the same as our first visit, including Harlequin Quail.

At 6 p.m. José took us to the airport, and we said farewell and thanked him for a wonderful stay and for his incredible hospitality during our two weeks adventure.
Bird list São Tomé and Príncipe 20 January to 3 February 2018

By Erling Krabbe and Paulo Paixão

Taxonomy follows IOC world bird list, version 8.1 (Jan 25, 2018)

1. **Red-necked Spurfowl** (*Pternistis afer*)
   São Tomé: 1/2 1 heard early morning in farmland, Bom Sucesso.

2. **Harlequin Quail** (*Coturnix delegorguei histrionica*) (subspecies endemic to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 4 flushed, 1 heard in grassland savannah along road track, Praia dos Tamarindos.
   3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.

3. **White-tailed Tropicbird** (*Phaethon lepturus ascensionis*)
   São Tomé: 21/1 1 flying over São Tomé city, 2 Praia dos Tamarindos. 26/1 2 along northwest coast.
   27/1 3 Monte Carmo.
   Príncipe: 24/1 30 at nest sites on Jockey Cap island, off Príncipe.

4. **São Tomé Ibis** (*Bostrychia bocagei*) (*Endemic São Tomé*)
   São Tomé: 27/1 5 seen Monte Carmo (two pairs and a singleton). 29/1 1 seen Monte Carmo.
   Note: World population estimated in 2013 at 70–400 individuals.

5. **Striated Heron** (*Butorides striata atricapilla*)
   São Tomé: 30/1 2 Monte Carmo river (adult feeding fledgling)

6. **Squacco Heron** (*Ardeola ralloides*)
   Príncipe: 24/1 in non-breeding plumage, rice paddy at Santo António. A scarce migrant.

7. **Western Cattle Egret** (*Bubulcus ibis*)
   São Tomé: 20/1 14 airport, 21/1 1 Praia dos Tamarindos, 1 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 10 along northwest coast. 30/1 20 along road Monte Carmo – São Tomé city. 31/1 1 Bom Sucesso. 1/1 3 Bom Sucesso.
   Príncipe: 24/1 1 Santo António. 25/1 15 at nesting colony on south east coast of jungle island of Bom Bom island Resort, 5 at airport. 26/1 1 Santo António.

8. **Western Reef Heron** (*Egretta gularis gularis*)
   São Tomé: 21/1 3 along coast, Praia dos Tamarindos. 26/1 2 along northwest coast. 3/2 3 São Tomé city, 2 Praia dos Tamarindos.
   Príncipe: 22/1 1 dark phase, along east coast. 24/1 1 along east coast, 3 Santo António harbour.
   25/1 10 at nesting colony on south east coast of jungle island of Bom Bom island Resort.

9. **Brown Booby** (*Sula leucogaster leucogaster*)
   Príncipe: 22/1 5 at sea along east coast. 24/1 15 Jockey Cap island, off Príncipe.

10. **Reed Cormorant** (*Microcarbo africanus africanus*)
    São Tomé: 26/1 northwest coast, at river outlet south of Santa Catarina, at end of road. 27/1 1 at river near Monte Carmo. 30/1 1 Monte Carmo river, 1 along road Monte Carmo – São Tomé city.

11. **Yellow-billed Kite** (*Milvus aegyptius parasitus*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 2 São Tomé city, 100 Morro Peixe grasslands, 2 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 22/1 8 São Tomé airport. 26/1 35 along northwest coast. 27/1 5 Monte Carmo. 28/1 3 Monte Carmo oil plantation. 29/1 1 Monte Carmo. 31/1 10 Monte Carmo. 31/1 4 Lagoa Amélia crater lake, 3 Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 8 Bom Sucesso. 2/2 1 Bom Sucesso. 3/2 6 São Tomé city, 1 heard Praia dos Tamarindos.
**Príncipe:** 22/1 10 Santo António. 24/1 4 Santo António. 25/1 10 Bom Bom island resort. 26/1 1 Santo António.

12. **Common Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus meridionalis*)
    São Tomé: 3/2 2 in mangrove lagoon, Praia dos Tamarindos.

13. **Whimbre** (*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 5 mangrove lagoon, Praia dos Tamarindos. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.
    **Príncipe:** 24/1 1 along east coast, 1 Santo António harbour. 25/1 1 harbour Santo António, 1 Bom Bom island resort. 26/1 1 Santo António harbour.

14. **Common Sandpiper** (*Actitis hypoleucos*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 2 mangrove lagoon, Praia dos Tamarindos. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.

15. **Wood Sandpiper** (*Tringa glareola*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 1 mangrove lagoon, Praia dos Tamarindos. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.

16. **Common Greenshank** (*Tringa nebularia*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 1 mangrove lagoon, Praia dos Tamarindos. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.
    **Príncipe:** 25/1 1 harbour Santo António.

17. **Rock Dove** (*Columba livia var. domestica*)
    São Tomé: Widespread in urban areas.
    **Príncipe:** 24/1 4 Santo António

18. **São Tomé Olive Pigeon** (*Columba thomensis*) (*Endemic São Tomé*)
    São Tomé: 28/1 1 heard Monte Carmo from high canopy. 31/1 3 Bom Sucesso farmland (2 flying over, 1 male on song post on top of a high, free standing tree at forest edge. Song and display flight).

19. **Island Bronze-naped Pigeon** (*Columba malherbii*) (*Endemic São Tomé, Príncipe and Annobon*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 9 seen and heard, Morro Peixe grasslands, 6 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 3 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 20 along northwestcoast. 27/1 2 heard Monte Carmo. 29/1 12 Monte Carmo. 30/1 2 Monte Carmo. 31/1 6 Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 6 Lagoa Amélia. 2/2 2 heard Lagoa Amélia. 3/2 2 Praia dos Tamarindos.
    **Príncipe:** 23/1 1 heard in forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park, 24/1 5 seen same place, 3 Santo António. 25/1 20 north Príncipe, 5 Santo António. 26/1 8 Santo António forest.

20. **Lemon Dove** (*Columba larvata*)
    *Columba larvata principalis* (endemic subspecies to Príncipe): **Príncipe:** 22/1 2 forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park, 24/1 1 flushed from forest floor, forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park.
    *Columba larvata simplex* (endemic subspecies to São Tomé). **São Tomé:** 21/1 2 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 26/1 10 along northwestcoast. 27/1 3 Monte Carmo. 28/1 9 Monte Carmo (5 heard, 4 seen). 29/1 6 Monte Carmo. 30/1 1 heard Monte Carmo. 31/1 4 Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 5 Lagoa Amélia. 2/2 7 Lagoa Amélia (3 seen, 4 heard).

21. **Laughing Dove** (*Spilopelia senegalensis senegalensis*)
    São Tomé: 21/1 12 São Tomé city, 65 Morro Peixe grasslands. 26/1 8 along northwestcoast. 30/1 Monte Carmo farmland. 31/1 2 Bom Sucesso. 1/2 3 Bom Sucesso. 2/2 1 Bom Sucesso. 3/2 4 São Tomé city. 3/2 20 Praia dos Tamarindos.
    **Príncipe:** 25/1 1 airport area. 26/1 1 Santo António.
22. **African Green Pigeon** (*Treron calvus virescens*) (Subspecies endemic to Príncipe)
   *Príncipe*: 24/1 4 Santo António. 25/1 15 Santo António, 5 Bom Bom island resort. 26/1 18 Santo António forest.

23. **São Tomé Green Pigeon** (*Treron sanctithomae*) (Endemic São Tomé)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 3 in fruiting tree, Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 26/1 4 along northwest coast. 28/1 1 Monte Carmo. 30/1 1 Monte Carmo. 31/1 12 Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 20 Lagoa Amélia.

24. **African Emerald Cuckoo** (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*)
   *Príncipe*: 25/1 2 heard along forest road, north Príncipe.
   *São Tomé*: 28/1 2 Monte Carmo, seen and heard calling. 29/1 2 heard Monte Carmo. 30/1 2 heard Monte Carmo. 1/2 3 heard Lagoa Amélia. 2/2 1 heard Lagoa Amélia.

25. **São Tomé Scops Owl** (*Otus hartlaubi*) (Endemic São Tomé)
   *São Tomé*: 27/1 1 heard at night, campsite in Monte Carmo. 28/1 same place. 29/1 12 same place. 31/1 1 seen at day roost in dense bamboo thicket, along trail to Lagoa Amélia.

26. **São Tomé Spinetail** (*Zoonavena thomensis*) (Endemic to São Tomé and Príncipe)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 25 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 22/1 8 São Tomé airport. 26/1 40 along northwest coast. 27/1 10 Monte Carmo. 28/1 10 Monte Carmo. 30/1 25 Monte Carmo. 31/1 30 Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 25 Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 4 Bom Sucesso.

27. **African Palm Swift** (*Cypsiurus parvus brachypterus*)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 1 São Tomé city, 25 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 22/1 8 São Tomé airport. 26/1 40 along northwest coast. 31/1 6 Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 10 Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 2 Bom Sucesso, 5 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 3/2 8 São Tomé city, 10 Praia dos Tamarindos.
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 40 Santo António. 24/1 30 Santo António. 25/1 80 north Príncipe.

28. **Little Swift** (*Apus affinis bannermani*) (Endemic subspecies to islands of Gulf of Guinea)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 1 São Tomé city, 30 Morro Peixe grasslands. 26/1 80 along northwest coast. 30/1 10 Monte Carmo. 1/2 20 Bom Sucesso farmland. 3/2 4 Praia dos Tamarindos.
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 10 Praia Seca fishing village, Obo Natural Park, 24/1 4 same place, 12 Santo António. 25/1 150 Santo António and north Príncipe.

29. **Blue-breasted Kingfisher** (*Halcyon malimbica dryas*) (Endemic subspecies to Príncipe)
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 and 23/1 2 forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park, 24/1 2 same place, 1 in Praia Seca fishing village, Obo Natural Park. 25/1 3 north Príncipe.

30. **Malachite Kingfisher** (*Corythornis cristatus*)
   *Corythornis cristatus nais* (Endemic subspecies to Príncipe). *Príncipe*: 24/1 2 at freshwater stream, Praia Seca fishing village, Obo Natural Park, 2 at city river, Santo António. 25/1 7 north Príncipe and Santo António. 26/1 1 Santo António river.
   *Corythornis cristatus thomensis* (Endemic subspecies to São Tomé) *São Tomé*: 21/1 1 on roadside wire, Morro Peixe grasslands. 30/1 2 Monte Carmo river. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.

31. **Timneh Parrot** (*Psittacus timneh princeps*) (Endemic subspecies to Príncipe)
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 2 Santo António, 35 at night roost at our campsite, forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park. 23/1 35 at night roost at our campsite, forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park. 24/1 4 Santo António. 25/1 30 Bom Bom island resort, north Príncipe and Santo António. 26/1 10 Santo António forest.
NOTE: According to IOC 8.1 we saw *P. timneh princeps*, being recognized as a split subspecies, endemic to Príncipe. Genetically distinct and more closely related to Timneh Parrot than to Grey Parrot *P. erithacus* with which it has traditionally been placed and is similar to in appearance. Príncipe has two genetic populations, this taxon and *erithacus*, later colonizers. Melo & O’Ryan, 2007. Still considered by HBW Alive a ssp. of Grey Parrot *P. erithacus princeps*, but we choose to follow IOC.

32. Red-headed Lovebird (*Agapornis pullarius pullarius*)
*São Tomé*: 26/1 2 Mucumbí Lodge, 2 flying into fruit tree at Anambó historical site.

33. São Tomé Fiscal (*Lanius newtoni*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 29/1 5 Monte Carmo in high altitude forest. Ridge top above upper campsite. Close encounters of 2 pairs and a singleton. Seemed very confident. Song and alarm call heard as well.
**Note**: World population estimated in 2013 to be less than 111 individuals, but according to recent monitoring probably higher.

34. São Tomé Oriole (*Oriolus crassirostris*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 27/1 5 Monte Carmo. 28/1 6 Monte Carmo (4 heard, 2 seen). 29/1 6 Monte Carmo (5 heard, 1 seen). 30/1 4 Monte Carmo. 31/10 8 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 8 (2 seen and 6 heard) Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia. 2/8 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia.

35. Velvet-mantled Drongo (*Dicrurus modestus modestus*) (subspecies endemic to Príncipe)
*Príncipe*: 25/1 1 at forest edge, Santo António south of river. 26/1 5 (2 at nest) same place.
**Note**: We realized this was a very hard bird to find in Príncipe. We did not see any during our 3 days forest expedition to the south of the island. And we looked in vain for the whole day at Bom Bom island resort and north Príncipe, while walking all the way from Bom Bom to the airport through forest. Only at our last birding site, in Santo Antonio city itself, at the edge of the forest, south of the river, we were lucky to find several birds, among which a pair at the nest. To find this place: coordinates 1.6375, 7.4248.

36. São Tomé Paradise Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone atrochalybeia*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 21/1 2 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 1 at waterfall, Monte Café, 3 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 1 along northwest coast. 27/1 4 Monte Carmo. 28/1 6 Monte Carmo. 29/1 10 Monte Carmo. 30/1 8 Monte Carmo. 31/10 6 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso. 1/2 6 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 5 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 3/2 2 Praia dos Tamarindos.

37. São Tomé Prinia (*Prinia molleri*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 21/1 2 São Tomé city, 20 Morro Peixe grasslands, 3 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 2 along northwest coast. 27/1 2 Monte Carmo. 28/1 1 Monte Carmo. 29/1 1 heard Monte Carmo. 30/1 4 Monte Carmo. 31/1 6 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 12 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 15 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 3/2 3 São Tomé city, 4 Praia dos Tamarindos.

38. Dohrn’s Thrush-Babbler (*Horizorhinus dohrni*) (Endemic Príncipe)
*Príncipe*: 22/1 10 in forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park, 23/1 8 do., 24/1 6 do. 25/1 25/1 15 north Príncipe. 26/1 2 Santo António forest.

39. Príncipe Speirops (*Zosterops leucophaeus*) (Endemic Príncipe)
*Príncipe*: 24/1 3 at Praia Seca fishing village, Obo Natural Park, 4 Santo António. 25/1 25 north Príncipe.

40. Black-capped Speirops (*Zosterops lugubris*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 21/1 1 in grassland savannah along road track, Praia dos Tamarindos, 10 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 10 at waterfall. Monte Café. 27/1 3 Monte Carmo. 28/1 3 Monte Carmo. 29/1 3 Monte Carmo. 30/1 4 Monte Carmo. 31/10 25 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 10 Bom Sucesso. 2/2 25 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia, 1 heard Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café.

41. São Tomé White-eye (*Zosterops feae*) (Endemic São Tomé)
*São Tomé*: 31/10 10 Bom Sucesso. 1/2 12 Bom Sucesso.
42. **Splendid Starling** (*Lamprotornis splendidus*)
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 2 Santo António. 24/1 10 Santo António. 25/1 40 Santo António. 26/1 25 Santo António riverbank.

43. **Príncipe Starling** (*Lamprotornis ornatus*) (**Endemic Príncipe**)
   *Príncipe*: 23/1 5 at our campsite, forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park. 24/1 5 same place, 6 Santo António. 26/1 1 Santo António rivermouth bank.

44. **Chestnut-winged Starling** (*Onychognathus fulgidus fulgidus*) (subspecies endemic to São Tomé)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 4 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 26/1 1 along northwest coast. 28/1 3 Monte Carmo. 30/1 6 Monte Carmo. 31/10 3 Bom Sucesso. 1/2 1 Lagoa Amélia. 2/2 5 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café.

45. **São Tomé Thrush** (*Turdus olivaceofuscus*) (**Endemic São Tomé**)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 1 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 3 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 2 along northwest coast. 27/1 3 Monte Carmo. 28/1 12 Monte Carmo. 29/1 15 Monte Carmo. 30/1 3 Monte Carmo. 31/1 8 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 3 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 2 Lagoa Amélia.

46. **Príncipe Thrush** (*Turdus xanthorhynchus*) (**Endemic Príncipe**)
   *Príncipe*: 23/1 1 very confident, in forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park.

47. **Príncipe Sunbird** (*Anabathmis hartlaubii*) (**Endemic Príncipe**)
   *Príncipe*: 25/1 4 Bom Bom island resort garden and north Príncipe, 4 Santo António. 26/1 2 Santo António forest.

48. **Newton’s Sunbird** (*Anabathmis newtonii*) (**Endemic São Tomé**)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 3 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 2 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 2 along northwest coast. 27/1 4 Monte Carmo. 29/1 6 Monte Carmo. 30/1 2 Monte Carmo. 1/2 10 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 5 Lagoa Amélia and Bom Sucesso farmland.

49. **Giant Sunbird** (*Dreptes thomensis*) (**Endemic São Tomé**)
   *São Tomé*: 29/1 3 Monte Carmo in high altitude forest. 30/1 1 Monte Carmo. 1/2 1 Bom Sucesso. World’s biggest sunbird.

50. **Olive Sunbird** (*Cyanomitra olivacea obscura*) (endemic subspecies to Príncipe & Bioko)
   *Príncipe*: 24/1 1 Santo António. 25/1 2 north Príncipe

51. **Príncipe Weaver** (*Ploceus princeps*) (**Endemic Príncipe**)
   *Príncipe*: 22/1 1 Santo António. 24/1 30 Santo António. 25/1 40 north Príncipe and Santo António. 26/1 35 Santo António forest.

52. **Southern Masked Weaver** (*Ploceus velatus*) (introduced to São Tomé)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 75 at Morro Peixe grasslands, at nesting colonies, 2 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 1 along northwest coast. 31/10 20 Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 30 Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 20 Bom Sucesso farmland. 3/2 3 Praia dos Tamarindos.

53. **Giant Weaver** (*Ploceus grandis*) (**Endemic São Tomé**)
   *São Tomé*: 28/1 1 Monte Carmo. 29/1 2 Monte Carmo. 30/1 8 Monte Carmo. 31/10 2 Lagoa Amélia. A pair in mating display. 1/2 2 do. Same pair.
   World’s biggest weaver.

54. **São Tomé Weaver** (*Ploceus sanctithomae*) (**Endemic São Tomé**)
55. **Red-headed Quelea** (*Quelea erythrops*)
   São Tomé: 21/1 1 male, breeding plumage, Praia dos Tamarindos. 3/2 1 Praia dos Tamarindos.

56. **Black-winged Red Bishop** (*Euplectes hordeaceus*)
   São Tomé: 21/1 37 Morro Peixe grasslands. In breeding plumage. 3/2 8 Praia dos Tamarindos.

57. **Golden-backed Bishop** (*Euplectes aureus*) (An Angolan endemic, introduced to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 42 Morro Peixe grasslands. Breeding plumage and nest building. 3/2 2 Praia dos Tamarindos.

58. **White-winged Widowbird** (*Euplectes albonotatus asymmetrurus*) (introduced to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 50 Morro Peixe grasslands. Breeding plumage. 26/1 1 along northwest coast. 3/2 10 Praia dos Tamarindos.

59. **Blue Waxbill** (*Uraeginthus angolensis angolensis*) (introduced to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 15 Morro Peixe grasslands. 26/1 10 Mucumbli Lodge, 10 along northwest coast. 3/2 4 São Tomé city, 2 Praia dos Tamarindos.

60. **Common Waxbill** (*Estrilda astrild jagoensis*) (introduced to São Tomé and Príncipe)
   São Tomé: 21/1 50 Morro Peixe grasslands, 75 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 15 along northwest coast. 27/1 20 Monte Carmo. 30/1 15 Monte Carmo. 31/10 40 Bom Sucesso farmland. 1/2 100 Bom Sucesso farmland. 2/2 40 Bom Sucesso farmland. 3/2 30 Praia dos Tamarindos.
   Príncipe: 24/1 10 Santo António. 25/1 2 Santo António.

61. **Bronze Mannikin** (*Lonchura cucullata cucullata*)
   São Tomé: 21/1 3 São Tomé city, 4 Praia dos Tamarindos. 26/1 20 along northwest coast. 3/2 4 airport area.
   Príncipe: 25/1 100 airport area.

62. **Pin-tailed Whydah** (*Vidua macroura*) (introduced to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 13 Morro Peixe grasslands. Breeding plumage. 22/1 8 São Tomé airport. 26/1 1 along northwest coast. 3/2 6 Praia dos Tamarindos.

63. **São Tomé Shorttail** (*Amaurocichla bocagii*) (Endemic São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 28/1 1 seen and heard, Monte Carmo. 29/1 4 Monte Carmo, good views of 2 pairs.

64. **Príncipe Seedeater** (*Crithagra rufobrunnea*) (Endemic to São Tomé and Príncipe, 3 endemic subspecies)
   **C. r. rufobrunnea**: Príncipe: 25/1 6 in north Príncipe, 3 Santo António forest.
   **C. r. fradei**: Príncipe: 24/1 2 in palm trees, island of Jockey Cap (Ilhéu Caroço off s Príncipe).
   **C. r. thomensis**: São Tomé: 21/1 6 in fruiting tree, Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café, 6 Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden. 26/1 2 along northwest coast. 29/1 3 Monte Carmo. 30/1 6 Monte Carmo. 31/10 10 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia. 1/2 12 Bom Sucesso and Lagoa Amélia. 2/2 2 Bom Sucesso.

65. **Yellow-fronted Canary** (*Serinus mozambicus*) (introduced to São Tomé)
   São Tomé: 21/1 8 São Tomé city. 26/1 3 along northwest coast. 2/2 3 Casa Museu Almada Negreiros, Monte Café. 3/2 3 São Tomé city, 10 Praia dos Tamarindos.
Mammals
1) Mona Monkey (*Cercopithecus mona*)
   *Príncipe*: 23/1 6 in forest area near Neves Ferreira, Obo Natural Park, 24/1 4 do.
   *São Tomé*: Heard Monte Carmo and Lagoa Amélia
   NOTE: The Mona Monkey is introduced to São Tomé and Príncipe.
2) Rat sp. (*Rattus rattus/norvegicus*)
   *São Tomé*: 1 1/2 Bom Sucesso.
3) Noack's Roundleaf Bat (*Hipposideros ruber*)
   *São Tomé*: 27/1 common Monte Carmo. Active in daylight, flying low above ground in the shady jungle. 28/1 30 Monte Carmo.
4) African Straw-coloured Fruit-bat (*Eidolon helvum*)
   *São Tomé*: 21/1 3 Monte Café. 26/1 30 flying at dusk over the sea, north coast.

Reptiles
1) Hawksbill Sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) *São Tomé*: 26/1 1 at Mucumbli Lodge. We met an NGO staff carrying an injured animal, that had been caught in fishing gear, seized at the harbour and handed over to this NGO for healing and release at the beach.
2) Striped House Snake (*Boaedon lineatus*) *São Tomé*: 27/1 1 preying a lizard, camp ruin building, Monte Carmo
3) São Tomé Cobra (*Naja peroescobari*): *São Tomé*: 28/1 1 juvenile, Monte Carmo, 30/1 1 full grown, dead Monte Carmo oil plantation.
4) Lizard sp. 2 Monte Carmo 28/1
5) São Tomé Skink (*Trachylepis thomensis*), *São Tomé*: 21/1 2 at Morro Peixe grasslands and walls.
6) Skink sp. 1 Monte Carmo 28/1

Butterflies

*Blue Diadem, Hypolimnas salmacis ssp. thomensis, female. Lagoa Amélia, São Tomé 2 February 2018.*
**Blue Diadem, male. Monte Carmo 30. January 2018**

**Jodutta Acraea, Acraea jodutta. Bom Succeso 30 January 2018**

**Citrus Swallowtail, Papilio demodocus (Esper, 1798). Bom Sucesso Botanical Garden, São Tomé 1 February 2018.**

*Butterfly photos: Photographer Erling Krabbe*

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