

MEGA Ghana

West African Birding Expedition 2018



13 Nights and 14 Days

October 20 to November 2 , 2018

GROUP SIZE : 6

Beautiful Ghana offers best of West African rainforest and Savannah birding with most guaranteed sighting of many highly sought after species such as White-necked Rock-fowl , Egyptian Plover, Great Blue Turaco etc. Ghana is home for 12 of the 15 West African Upper Guinea endemic specie. It is a safe, friendly and hassle free destination with developed infrastructure amongst many West African nations. Our 13 nights 14 days non stop birding and bird photography expedition will cover important coastal lagoons, grassland Savannahs, scanning for canopy species from a fabulous walkway , further exploring upper guinea rainforest moving northwards through the broad leafed guinea woodland - our Ghana tour offers a thorough coverage of all the core West-African habitats.

Day 1 (20 October 2017) “ **Akwaaba**” (welcome) to Ghana

On arrival in Accra , the capital city of Ghana , you will be transferred to the hotel for some rest and to prepare for your 14 days long marathon birding expedition .

Depending on your time of arrival, you can enjoy your early evening meal whilst acclimatising yourself to West Africa.

Accommodation- Alexis Hotel (Tema) or Similar

Day 2 (Oct 21) Birding in Shai Hills - Kalakpa forest

Your birding in Ghana will kick start today morning with a visit to the open grassland savannah of Shai Hills hoping to see and photograph Northern Crombec, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Snowy-crowned Robin Chat, African Pigmy Kingfisher, Cardinal Woodpecker, Vielliots and Double-toothed Barbets, White-crowned Cliff Chat, Rock Martin, Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike, Violet Turaco, Senegal Parrot, Senegal Batis, Blue-bellied Roller, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Oriole Warbler, Black-cap and Brown Babblers, Copper and Splendid Sunbirds, White-crested



Helmet-shrike, Croaking and Short-winged Cisticolas, African Thrush, Red-necked and Lizard Buzzards, Lanner Falcon, Green Wood- hoopoe and Stone Partridge etc . After a wonderful morning we head for more familiar birding at the Kalakpa forest where we will record Capuchin babbler, Red cheeked wattle eye, Thick billed cuckoo, African moustached warbler, Brown necked parrot, Green turaco, Violet turaco, Bauman`s greenbul, Striped kingfisher, White throated francolin, African cuckoo hawk, Grey woodpecker just to mention few.

As we finish our afternoon session , We set off to Kakum National Park through the capital city Accra to a grassland reserve where, we hope to find singing and short- winged cisticolas, splendid and copper sunbirds, flappet lark, red-winged warbler, yellow-mantled widowbird, black- necked weaver, black-crowned tchagra, plain-backed pipit, black-shouldered and yellow- billed kites, western grey plantain-eater, grey kestrel, lizard buzzard, blue-spotted wood-dove and black-bellied bustard to mention just a few.

Accommodation : Hans Cottage Hotel



Day 3-4 (Oct 22-23) Kakum National Park (canopy walkway) and Surroundings

After an early breakfast we will set off for the world famous canopy walkway at Kakum National Park . A wonderful World of amazing canopy species awaits you out there . We aim to get to Kakum before the first light enabling us to spend the most critical bird viewing hours on the canopy walk way which is about 40 meters above the forest floor , searching for many mouth watering species .

Our main target species while on the canopy walkway are Violet- backed Hyliota, Chestnut-capped Flycatcher, Sharpe's Apalis, Brown- cheeked Hornbill , copper-tailed Glossy Starling, Bioko Batis, Red cheeked wattle eye, Blue Cuckooshrike, Little Green Woodpecker and the White-crested Hornbill. Other species we hope to see include Blue-throated Brown, Green, Collard, Johanna's and the beautiful Buff-throated Sunbirds, Red-headed and Crested Malimbos, Rosy Bee-eater,



White-breasted and Grey- crowned Negrofinch, Red-fronted and African Grey Parrots, Yellowbill, Western Black- headed and Black Winged Orioles, Rufous-crowned Eremomela, Splendid Glossy and Forest Chestnut-winged Starlings, Preuss's Golden-backed and Yellow-mantled Weavers, Green Hylia, Golden, Slender-billed and Little Grey Greenbuls, African Green Pigeon, Yellow-billed Turaco, Emerald Cuckoo, Blue- throated Roller, Yellow-throated, Red-rumped and Speckled Tinkerbirds, Hairy- breasted and Naked-faced Barbets, Ussher's and Little Grey Flycatchers, Cassins Honeybird and African Pied Hornbill to mention a few. The raptors we have a chance to see are Congo Serpent Eagle, African Harrier Hawk, Palm Nut Vulture, Cassins Hawk Eagle, European Honey and Red-necked Buzzards. Some of the more difficult but still possible species from the canopy include Long-tailed Hawk, Black Dwarf Hornbill, Yellow-

footed Honeyguide and Black-collard Lovebird etc .

Accommodation- Hans Cottage hotel



Day 5-6 (Oct 24-25) Birding Nsuta Forest - Ankasa Reserve

Our birding location for the days is an excellent forest about an hour's drive from our guesthouse, a secondary semi deciduous forest home for many quality species that will enhance our list and overall experience. Species we hope to see and photograph here include Olive, Blue-throated Brown and Little Green Sunbirds, Yellow-spotted, Bristle-nosed, Hairy-breasted and Naked-faced Barbets, Blue-throated Roller, Western Black-headed and Black-winged Orioles, Buff-spotted and Little Green Woodpeckers, Usshers and the much sought after Tessmann's Flycatcher, Square-tailed Saw-wing, Grays and Crested Malimbos, Green Crombec, Green and Tit Hylia, African Piculet, Emerald and Yellow-throated Cuckoo's, Red-billed Helmet shrike, Rufous-sided Broadbill, Black Dwarf Hornbill and Great-blue Turaco etc .

We will have two productive days of birding and photography in Nsuta Area and we will be covering a lot in this two days. We are sure that your life list will gain impressive additions during our stay in this beautiful reserve.

Accommodation- D & A Lodge

Days 7 (Oct 26) Birding Ankasa Reserve

The key target for the day will be Nkulengu Rail and we will be going all out to locate this rare species in the early morning hours. We will be searching for many upper guinea endemics such as Yellow-bearded Greenbul, Rufous-winged Illadopsis and Green-tailed Bristlebill Red-tailed and Western-bearded Greenbul's, Pale-breasted and Blackcap Illadopsis, Forest Robin, White-tailed Ant Thrush, White-tailed Alethe, Shinning Drongo, Cassin's Flycatcher, Yellow-spotted Barbet, White-throated Bee-eater, Chestnut-breasted Negrofinch, Blue-headed Wood Dove, Western Bronze-naped Pigeon, Yellow-billed and Great Blue Turaco's, Black-capped Apalis, Grey-headed Bristlebill, Tiny Sunbird ,Red-fronted Antpecker etc during our stay over here .



Our target birds for Ankasa reserve in general include Hartlaubs Duck, Dwarf Bittern, African Finfoot, Shining Blue Kingfisher, White-bellied, Blue-breasted and Dwarf Kingfishers. Forest raptors are always welcome and we hope to see Long-tailed Hawk and Congo Serpent Eagle in this forest zones. We will be regularly scanning the sky for Crown Eagle, Square-tailed and Fanti Saw-wings, Black and Yellow Casqued Hornbills in addition to Black Dwarf and Piping Hornbills. And if we have all the luck in the world we may see White-breasted Guinea fowl, White-crested Tiger Heron, Grey-throated Rail, Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo, Forest Scrub Robin, Red-chested Owlet and Akun Eagle Owlet during our "birding sorties" in this reserves etc .

Accommodation- Camping / Village Resort (Ankasa Reserve)

Day 8 (Oct 27) Ankasa - Picathartes - Kumasi

We will have few hours of early morning birding before we travel to Kumasi . It is a 5-6 hours long drive and we may stop for birding on the way.



Today is the Day !! We will be visiting the nesting site for Yellow-headed Picathartes (White-necked rock fowl) in the evening. Please make sure that you are carrying enough memory cards for your camera. All of the known nesting sites for the Yellow-headed Picathartes are in forest reserves and not in protected areas. The nesting area is located on a hilly area and you will be walking through the forest for 2.5 KMs to the spot which is not very demanding expect few short but steep climbs. It will be hard to contain our excitements as these legendary prehistoric looking birds hop and jump on the rocks whilst preening themselves just meters from our eyes giving photographers amongst you , a busy time .

Day 9 (Oct 28) Oपुरo Forest - (Egyptian Plover Site) (5 hours drive)

It is again a very important birding site . We will be visiting a well known habitat for the much sought after Egyptian plover - a family by itself on our way to Mole National Park in the afternoon. In our morning birding excursion, we will scan the forest carefully for species that we have missed out in other areas and also to have a second look at Fierily breasted bush shrike, Long tailed hawk, Black and white flycatcher, Capuchin babbler, Superb sunbird, Green turaco, Bearded barbet, Lesser Moore-hen, Grey headed bristle bill etc .

Accommodation- Mole Hotel (Kumasi)

Day 10 -11 (Oct 29-30) Mole National Park

After an early breakfast we set off for an interesting forest in a transitional zone between the southern wetter forests and northern drier woodland habitats where we find many quality species. It will be one of the most difficult birding sorties you may take in this tour , but you will be happy with these walks when you get to see many regional specialities within close ranges . Species possible to see here are Bruce's green Pigeons, Standard winged nightjar, White Helmet-shrike, Sulphur breasted bush-shrike, Martial eagle, Long crested eagle, White fronted black chat, Denhams bustard, Northern carmine bee-eater, Tawny eagle, African fish eagle, Forbes plover, Four banded sandgrouse, African Scops owl, Saddle billed stork, Exclamatory paradise whydah, Abyssinian ground hornbill, etc

Mole is Ghana's largest National Park protecting an area of 4847 square kilometres of habitat, almost 100 species of mammal and 330+ species of birds. It is a very important birding area in Ghana and we will be covering the National park in detail.

The park offers breathtaking landscape views as well. So please make sure that you are carrying a wide-angle lens in camera bag . We will spend the evening looking for nightjars and Owls.

Accommodation- Mole Motel (Mole National Park)

Day 12 (Oct 31) - Bobiri butterfly sanctuary (6 hours drive)

A final mornings birding at Mole where we aim to pick up species still needed and to also get better views of birds we only had glimpses in previous days . Birds we could add before leaving Mole include Woodchat Shrike, Northern Red Bishop, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Yellow-crowned Gonolek, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Senegal Parrot, Black-billed Wood and Vinaceous Doves, Woolly-necked, Saddle-billed and Black Storks, Yellow-throated Leaflove and Red-headed Lovebird etc to before we set off to Kumasi.



Accommodation- Excelsa lodge

Day 13 - (Nov 1) Bobiri butterfly sanctuary - Atewa forest

After an early breakfast we set off to Bobiri for many significant forest species like Narina trogon, African grey parrot, Long tailed hawk, Narrow tailed starling, Tit-hylia, Forest wood hoopoe, Black sparrow hawk, Peregrine falcon, Red billed helmet-shrike, Western nicator, Blue spotted wood dove, Dusky tit, African cuckoo hawk, Black throated coucal , Little grey flycatcher, Velvet mantled-drongo just to mention a few.

Accommodation - Royal Bluemich hotel

Day 14 (Nov 2) Atewa Range - Accra - Sakumono lagoon

An early start as we head back into the Upper Guinea Rainforest habitat where so many of Ghana's sought after special species are found. This morning we hope to see Tit and Green Hylia, Magpie Mannakin, Narina's Trogon, Red-billed Dwarf and Black Dwarf Hornbills, African Grey and Brown-necked Parrots, Purple-throated Cuckoo-shrike, Black-throated Coucal, Golden-backed Weaver, African Piculet, Red-chested Owlet, Dusky Tit, Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Barbet, Grey-headed and Red-tailed Bristlebills and the much sought after Yellow-footed Honeyguide etc amongst other species.

We will slowly travel further south towards Atewa stopping for lunch en-route. After noon we will search for Black-necked, Maxwells Black, Compact and Grosbeak Weavers, Whistling Cisticola, Black-crowned and Marsh Tchagras, Emerald, Klaas's, Levallants and Yellow-throated Cuckoos, Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, Western Bluebill, Tessmann's Flycatcher and if we are lucky Baumann's Greenbul before heading to Accra

Depending on the time of arrival in Accra and if time permits we shall visit Sakumono lagoon to rap up our incredible birding expedition. At this site we will search for Residential and Migratory shore birds like Collared pratincole, Kittlitz`s plover, Black heron, Great, Intermediate, Grey, Purple, Little and Cattle Egrets, Purple swamphen, Northern pintail, African wattled, Spur winged lapwing, Black crowned night heron, Senegal thick etc

After a delicious dinner, we will head towards the International Airport to say good bye and catch your flight back home.

Departure (Night)



(Mammals you may see during the trip)

Common wathog, Western tree hyrax, Cusimanse, African dwarf crocodile, Bushbuck, Nile crocodile, Striped ground squirrel, Red legged sun squirrel, Slender tailed squirrel, Fire footed rope squirrel, Kintampo rope squirrel, African giant squirrel, Green bush squirrel, Potto, Demidoff`s galago, Senegal galago, Green monkey, Patas monkey, Olive colobus, Olive baboon, Lewis (Mona) monkey, Lesser white nosed monkey, Callithrix (Vervet) monkey, Straw collared fruit bat, Yellow winged bat, African savannah (scrub) hare, African palm civet Panther (Blotched) Genet, Nile water monitor

THIS IS AN INDICATIVE ITINERARY ONLY . YOUR GUIDE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE ITINERARY IF HE FEELS TO DO SO FOR BETTER TOUR RESULT AND EXPERIENCE .

SUMMARY

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| Tour Starting Date | : October 20 , 2018 (Accra International Airport) |
| Tour Ending Date | : November 2 , 2018 (Accra International Airport) |
| Expected Climate | : Humid , Sunny |
| <u>Group Size</u> | : 6 |
| Tour Pace | : Moderate |
| Accommodation | : Basic but comfortable |
| Food | : Local and continental |
| Photography opp | : Excellent |

Tour Price : USD 2325 Per Participant in twin-share
Single Supplement : USD 175

Included : All ground transportation in comfortable air-conditioned vehicle, Accommodation and meals as per the plan , water , Guide fees

Excluded : Airfare | additional menu | beverages | porter services | Tips | insurance | laundry etc .

Photo courtesy : Sabu Kinattukara

This Tour will be operated in association with Adventure Birding Tours with local guides

TOUR MAP

