

BIRDING AFRICA 2011 ANGOLA EXPEDITION

Report by Michael Mills

Birding Africa's first comprehensive Angola Expedition follows three previous Birding Africa tours to Angola that focussed primarily on the endemic-rich central scarp forests. Since our last trip back in 2006, travel conditions and personal knowledge of key birding sites has greatly improved, making it possible to visit all key birding sites to search for all endemics in just 19 days. Our trip commenced in Windhoek and we visited, in sequence, northern Namibia, the Lubango area, the Benguela area, Mount Moco and surrounds, Kumbira and adjacent escarpment areas, Kissama National Park, the Northern Scarp Forests in Kwanza Norte province, the area north of Kalandula, and Mussulo Bay. Participants flew back from Luanda to Johannesburg at the end of the tour.

This expedition differs from all our other trips in that it was a full-on camping trip. Our professional camping outfitters looked after us very well over the 19 days, providing hot water showers every night, large spacious tents and comfortable mattresses and stretchers for sleeping on, and three excellent meals a day (including large quantities of meat up to Day 19!). Logistically the trip went, on the whole, very smoothly. Some vehicle problems at the beginning of the trip caused a few delays, but thanks to our extensive previous experience of travelling in Angola we managed to reshuffle our itinerary slightly and easily managed to make up all lost time, while vehicles problems were sorted out with the least amount of hassle and very little loss of birding time. With all this excellent support we could focus entirely on finding all our key bird targets.

Over the 19 days of birding we notched up a superb list of species, making this expedition the most successful birding trip to Angola to date. Every participant enjoyed outstanding views of every single Angolan endemic bird, plus local specials such as Bocage's Sunbird, Brazza's Martin, Black-and-rufous Swallow, Anchieta's Barbet, Bocage's Weaver, Bannerman's Sunbird, White-headed Robin-Chat and Cinderella Waxbill. While our focus was very much on the endemics and specials, we amassed a respectable total of 535 species. Here is a full list of species recorded, with details of the best sightings for each family:

FULL ANGOLA BIRDS EXPEDITION LIST

H = Heard only, LO = Leader only, NL = Not seen/heard by leader, N = Namibia only

Ostriches Family Struthionidae

Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus* (N, NL)

Guineafowl Family Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* has been hunted to near-extinction throughout much of Angola, although healthy populations still exist in Kissama National Park, where we saw many. We also heard Crested Guineafowl *Guttera pucherani* along the central scarp.

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Family Phasianidae

With two difficult-to-see endemics in the group, francolins were among the most important birds of our Angola trip. We worked hard on seeing the key species, and were greatly rewarded for our efforts. The undoubted highlight was outstanding views of Swierstra's Francolin *Pternistis swierstrai* in the Angolan highlands, where a male sat crowing right out in the open for all to enjoy. This is the second time this Endangered endemic has been seen on a Birding Africa tour. Grey-striped Francolin *Pternistis griseostriatus* proved more tricky, with several failed attempts along the central scarp being remedied with prolonged views of a pair creeping along a track at Kissama National Park, pausing every now and again to reply to the knife-blade whistles of our guide. Two further memorable sightings were watching a pair of Hartlaub's Spurfowl *Pternistis hartlaubi* near Benguela, perched on their rock-top call site only 20 metres away and giving their unusual antiphonal calls, and, after a long and winding march, having excellent flight views of Finsch's Francolin *Scleroptila finschi* as they burst from our feet and glided down the valley below us in the Mount Moco area.

Other species we recorded were Orange River Francolin *Scleroptila levaillantoides* (H), Red-billed Spurfowl *Pternistis adspersus* (N), Red-necked Spurfowl *Pternistis afer* (common around Kissama NP), Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* (one flushed in the Angolan highlands; there are few records from the country) and Blue Quail *Excalfactoria adansonii* (NL, one flushed by Clide near Mount Moco).

Ducks, Geese & Swans Family Anatidae

Ducks and geese were particularly poorly presented on the trip. In Angola we saw a single Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* on the Lucala River, two Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* near the Cunene River and a handful of Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* near Luanda. In Namibia we enjoyed a sighting of a pair of South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana* near Kamanjab.

Grebes Family Podicipedidae

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* (N)

Flamingos Family Phoenicopteridae

We saw Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* at Mussulo Bay near Luanda.

Storks Family Ciconiidae

Storks were few and far between; we saw a single juvenile Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* at Mussulo Bay, good numbers of African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus* near the Cunene River and a single Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* between Wako Kungo and Quibala.

Ibises, Spoonbills Family Threskiornithidae

We saw African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* at Luanda and African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* at Mussulo Bay and Lobito.

Hérons, Bitterns Family Ardeidae

We recorded a wide variety of herons, although no unusual species. These were Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*, Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Striated Heron *Butorides striata*, Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*, Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* (NL), Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*, Great Egret *Ardea alba*, Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* and Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*.

Hamerkop Family Scopidae

We spotted several Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*, especially in the south of the country.

Pelicans Family Pelecanidae

Travelling north of Luanda we found a large flock of Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, and at Lobito a single Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* was drifting on the salt ponds.

Cormorants, shags Family Phalacrocoracidae

We saw Reed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus* on a few occasions.

Anhingas, darters Family Anhingidae

We saw African Darter *Anhinga rufa* along the Kwanza and Lucala Rivers.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Family Accipitridae

We recorded a wide range of raptor species, and did particularly well on eagles, although less so on accipiters. Highlights included two excellent sightings of perched African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides* near Mount Moco, many sightings of Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*, particularly along the coastal plain, no less than four Western Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinerascens*, including one perched bird, African Marsh Harrier *Circus ranivorus* at Mount Moco and the Lucala River, Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis* on six days, a single Verreaux's Eagle

Aquila verreauxii soaring along Serra Njelo above Kumbira (the most northerly Angolan record), a pale-phase Ayres's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresii* circling between Lubango and Lobito (the most southerly record for Angola), a soaring Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* near Mount Moco, African Hawk-Eagle *Aquila spilogaster* in the far south of the country, and a displaying Crowned Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus* over Kumbira forest.

Other species recorded were Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*, Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*, African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* (only at Kissama NP), Black-chested Snake Eagle *Circaetus pectoralis*, Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus*, Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*, African Harrier-Hawk *Polyboroides typus*, Pale Chanting Goshawk *Melierax canorus* (N), Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*, African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro*, Black Sparrowhawk *Accipiter melanoleucus*, Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*, Augur Buzzard *Buteo augur* (at Mount Moco), Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* (N), Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraaetus wahlbergi* and Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis*.

Falcons Family Falconidae

Mountainous areas were best for falcons, with Rock Kestrel *Falco rupicolus*, Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* and Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* seen. We observed Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus* on a few occasions, the best sighting of a perched bird near Gabela.

Bustards Family Otidae

Some people saw Kori Bustard *Ardeotis kori* (NL) in Namibia and we all saw a few Red-crested Korhaan *Lophotis ruficrista* in northern Namibia and southern Angola.

Flufftails Family Sarothruridae

We heard White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra* at Kalandula and Red-chested Flufftail *Sarothrura rufa* (NL) at Mount Moco.

Rails, Crakes & Coots Family Rallidae

Our trip coincided with the end of the dry season, which meant that there were few rallids around. We recorded African Rail *Rallus caerulescens* (H), Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* (H), Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* (N) and Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata* (N).

Buttonquail Family Turnicidae

We enjoyed flushed views of Common Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticus* on several occasions in Angola.

Stone-curlews, Thick-knees Family Burhinidae

We heard both Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus* (at Mussulo Bay) and Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis* (in southern Angola).

Stilts, Avocets Family Recurvirostridae

We saw Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* at Lobito.

Plovers Family Charadriidae

We saw a couple of Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus* in Namibia, Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus* in southern Angola and African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus* near Mount Moco. On the mudflats at Mussulo Bay we found several Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* in near-breeding-plumage, a few Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* (NL) and many White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*. Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* (N).

Jacanas Family Jacanidae

We saw African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* on the Longa River floodplain.

Sandpipers, Snipes Family Scolopacidae

Good numbers of waders were present on Mussulo Bay, including Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*, Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*, Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, Sanderling *Calidris alba*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta* and Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*. We also saw Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* and Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* in Angola.

Courasers, Pratincoles Family Glareolidae

We enjoyed at least three excellent sightings of Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii* in the Angolan highlands, mostly near Mount Moco, and saw a single Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* at Mussulo Bay.

Gulls, Terns & Skimmers Family Laridae

Good numbers of larids were present at Mussulo Bay, in increasing order of abundance: 1 Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*, 2 Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*, 3-5 Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, 5-10 Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*, 10-20 Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* and many Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus*. We also recorded Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus* (NL) at Lobito.

Sandgrouse Family Pteroclididae

The only sandgrouse seen in Angola were a couple of Namaqua Sandgrouse *Pterocles namaqua* near Benguela. We also saw Burchell's Sandgrouse *Pterocles burchelli* in Namibia.

Pigeons, Doves Family Columbidae

Although a wide range of dove and pigeon species were seen, few are worthy of particular mention. The three most interesting sightings were Afep Pigeon *Columba unicincta* (NL) at Kalandula, African Olive Pigeon *Columba arquatrix* at Mount Moco and good views of a female Western Bronze-naped Pigeon *Columba iriditorques* in the northern scarp forests. We also heard Lemon Dove *Columba larvata* in the northern scarp forests, only the fourth record for the country and the first from this region.

Other species recorded were Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*, Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea*, Mourning Collared Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* (H), Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*, Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola*, Laughing Dove *Stigmatopelia senegalensis*, Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos*, Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer*, Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistris*, Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* and African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*.

Parrots Family Psittacidae

We enjoyed excellent perched views of Rosy-faced Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis* in the far south of Angola, perched views of Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi* in the northern scarp forests and perched Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri* at Kalandula. Some lucky observers were quick enough to see Rueppell's Parrot *Poicephalus rueppellii* in flight in far southern Angola.

Turacos Family Musophagidae

At least two participants completed their family sightings with the endemic Red-crested Turaco *Tauraco erythrolophus*, first seen at Kumbira forest. We also saw Great Blue Turaco *Corythaëola cristata* in the northern scarp forest, Schalow's Turaco *Tauraco schalowi* at Mount Moco, Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae* at Kalandula and many Grey Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides concolor*.

Cuckoos Family Cuculidae

We heard the deep booming call of Gabon Coucal *Centropus anselli* every day during our stay in the central and northern scarp forests, with at least one close non-sighting before finally, and completely unexpectedly, one of these large, secretive coucals took flight across a wide tarred road while we were walking along it, giving reasonable flight views. Other coucals seen were Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*, Coppery-tailed Coucal *Centropus cupreicaudus* at Mount Moco and White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus*. We saw Blue Malkoha *Ceuthmochares aereus* at Kumbira.

The tour was too early in the season for much cuckoo activity, although we did hear either Levillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levillantii* or Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* calling at night at Kalandula, see Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* and a female African Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus*, hear Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx olivinus*, Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus* and Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius*, and African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* was regular in the Kalandula area.

Barn Owls Family Tytonidae

We heard Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba* on several occasions and saw some near Lubango.

Owls Family Strigidae

We recorded an impressive range of owl species during the tour. The highlight was excellent daytime views of an angry African Barred Owlet *Glaucidium capense*. We also had good night-time views of African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis* at Kalandula, some people were sharp enough to spot the well-concealed Southern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis granti* being mobbed by a party of Black-faced Babblers in far southern Angola, we had a few day-time sightings of Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum*, and Gerry saw Marsh Owl *Asio capensis* over the grasslands at Mount Moco. We also heard Spotted Eagle-Owl *Bubo africanus* at Mount Moco, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl *Bubo lacteus* at Kumbira and African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* at several localities.

Nightjars Family Caprimulgidae

We only saw one nightjar during our trip, but it was a spectacular one; at Kalandula we enjoyed superb views of a male Pennant-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx vexillarius* doing its display flight around us, finally landing just a few metres away. One of the most frustrating birds of the trip was Ruwenzori Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruwenzorii*, which we heard twice at Mount Moco but failed to see. Other nightjars we heard were Rufous-cheeked Nightjar *Caprimulgus rufigena*, Fiery-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus pectoralis*, Freckled Nightjar *Caprimulgus tristigma* (NL) and Square-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* (NL).

Swifts Family Apodidae

Our Angola expedition was an excellent and fascinating one for swifts. One of the greatest surprises was hearing and then seeing a small flock of Scarce Swift *Schoutedenapus myoptilus* flying low over the forest at Mount Moco; the species is known from Angola based on a single specimen collected at this locality in 1931! Near Benguela we enjoyed excellent views of some low flying Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri* among the baobab trees, and further north along the coastal plain, a trio of the unusual Boehm's Spinetail *Neafrapus boehmi*. Bradfield's Swift *Apus bradfieldi* was common around Lubango and joined by Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba*, and a colony of the normal white-rumped Horus Swift *Apus horus* were active at Mount Moco. We also

saw African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus*, Little Swift *Apus affinis* and White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*

Then there are three other species of swift of particular note and interest. The first seen were a flock of dark black swifts around the top of Mount Moco that looked and called like African Black Swift *Apus barbatus*. The only swift collected from this area is the little-known and controversial Fernando Po Swift *Apus sladeniae* (African Black Swift is known only from the north-east of Angola) which was most likely what we saw. Then there were the large black swifts at Kumbira Forest that call like Little Swift, probably an undescribed species for which I have published recordings, and seen them at three different localities in Angola, and also in Malawi. This species may be more widespread in Africa's mountains, and I tentatively call it "Kumbira" Swift. Finally, there are the large brown swifts of the coastal plain, which we saw on the Longa River and near Luanda. These are the swifts that are known to breed in Luanda and have been erroneously suggested to be Fernando Po Swift. I currently suspect that these are Loanda Swift *Apus toulsoni*, which is conspecific with *fuscobrunneus*, a distinct swift treated by A A de Rosa Pinto as a near relative of Common Swift *Apus apus*, and not Horus Swift, as is now invariably done in the literature.

Mousebirds Family Coliidae

This was a great trip for mousebirds, with White-backed Mousebird *Colius colius* seen in Windhoek while packing our vehicles, Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* at Kalandula and Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus* seen on many occasions. The undoubted highlight, however, was the endemic Red-backed Mousebird *Colius castanotus*, which was first seen near Benguela, and then several times more, mostly along the coastal plain in thickets.

Trogon Family Trogonidae

We saw Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* at Kalandula.

Rollers Family Coraciidae

We commonly saw both Purple Roller *Coracias naevius* and Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus* in the arid savannas, and several Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* in the Kalandula area.

Kingfishers Family Alcedinidae

Kingfishers were not particularly abundant during the trip, although we did see Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*, hear Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris*, see Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*, hear Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica*, and see Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*, African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta*, Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristata*, Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* and Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*.

Bee-eaters Family Meropidae

Among the bee-eaters recorded, several sightings of Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis* in the northern scarp forests are the standout record. We also saw Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*, Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*, Blue-breasted Bee-eater *Merops variegates* around wetlands in the highlands, White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides* and flocks of European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* over the northern scarp forests.

Hoopoes Family Upupidae

African Hoopoe *Upupa africana*

Wood Hoopoes Family Phoeniculidae

We saw Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* in northern Namibia, Black Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus aterrimus* at Kissama National Park and Kalandula and Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* in far southern Angola.

Hornbills Family Bucerotidae

A few sought after hornbills were recorded on the trip. The first of these - Monteiro's Hornbill *Tockus monteiri* and Damara Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus damarensisi* - were seen in northern Namibia and again in southern Angola. Next was flocks of Piping Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator* and Black-casqued Wattled Hornbill *Ceratogymna atrata* (22 in one flock!) in the northern scarp forests, and finally we called in a distant Pale-billed Hornbill *Tockus pallidirostris* at Kalandula for close-up scope views.

Other species we recorded are Trumpeter Hornbill *Bycanistes bucinator* (H), Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*, African Pied Hornbill *Tockus fasciatus*, African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus* and Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill *Tockus leucomelas*. Examples of the latter where observed in Kissama NP, representing the *elegans* subspecies, which appears to have quite a distinctive tail pattern although responded strongly to playback of nominate subspecies calls.

African barbets Family Lybiidae

The two trickiest barbets seen on this trip were the sought after Anchieta's Barbet *Stactolaema anchietae*, seen at least five times, and the impressive Black-backed Barbet *Lybius minor*. We had excellent views of the nominate subspecies at Mount Moco and Kumbira, and very distant views of the *macclouni* subspecies at Kalandula. The richest area for barbets was the northern scarp forests, where we saw Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus*, Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus*, Red-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus atroflavus*, not previously know from this far south, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus* and Yellow-billed Barbet *Trachyphonus*

purpuratus. We also recorded Western Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus coryphaeus*, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*, Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsute*, Acacia Pied Barbet *Tricholaema leucomelas* and Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus*.

Honeyguides Family Indicatoridae

Honeyguides were rather disappointing on the trip, with surprisingly few species on call sites. We had brief views at Mount Moco of what was probably a Green-backed Honeybird *Prodotiscus zambesiae*, enjoyed excellent views of Brown-backed Honeybird *Prodotiscus regulus* at Kumbira, where it is a rare bird, saw briefly what was probably Least Honeyguide *Indicator exilis* in the northern scarp forests, saw a single Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* near Mount Moco and heard Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* between Lubango and Lobito.

Woodpeckers Family Picidae

Probably the most exciting member of the woodpecker family that we recorded was Red-throated Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis* at Mount Moco. Other species were Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni* (including some of the strange spotted subspecies in northern Namibia and as far as central Angola), Green-backed Woodpecker *Campethera cailliautii*, Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosa*, Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*, Bearded Woodpecker *Dendropicos namaquus*, Yellow-crested Woodpecker *Dendropicos xantholophus* (H) and Olive Woodpecker *Dendropicos griseocephalus*.

Broadbills Family Eurylaimidae

We enjoyed excellent views of African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis* in the northern scarp forests, where they were common.

Wattle-eyes, Batises Family Platysteiridae

This endemic African family was very well represented on the trip. The most desired species were Margaret's Batis *Batis margaritae*, of which we had clear and close-up views of a pair at Mount Moco (the type locality for the species), the endemic White-fronted Wattle-eye *Platysteira albifrons*, of which we found a confiding pair in thickets on the coastal plain of central Angola, the near-endemic Angola Batis *Batis minulla*, of which we saw several at Kumbira, the over-sized White-tailed "Shrike" *Lanioturdus torquatus*, seen well in Namibia and again in Angola, and the striking Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye *Platysteira concreta*, a pair of which was seen at Kumbira.

Other species that we observed were Black-and-white Shrike-flycatcher *Bias musicus* in the northern scarp forests, Chinspot Batis *Batis molitor* near Mount Moco, Pirit Batis *Batis pririt* in Namibia and near Benguela, Black-throated Wattle-eye *Platysteira peltata*, first seen at Mount Moco, and Chestnut Wattle-eye *Platysteira castanea* in the northern scarp forests.

Helmetshrikes Family Prionopidae

One of the most sought-after birds of the entire trip was the Endangered and endemic Gabela Helmetshrike *Prionops gabela*, possibly the most threatened Angolan bird. We were lucky to quickly track down a trio of these elegant birds in dry forest on the coastal plain, and enjoyed prolonged views of them through the scope, feeding mostly in baobab trees. This certainly was Clide's highlight, completing the family for him!

During the trip we also enjoyed sightings of White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus* and Retz's Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii*.

Bushshrikes Family Malaconotidae

The bushshrikes are another high-priority family in Angola, with three endemics. The first of these to fall was the skulking Gabela Bushshrike *Laniarius amboimensis*. Initially we heard them calling from the dense undergrowth at Kumbira without obtaining good views, but on our second attempt we found a much more confiding pair and everyone enjoyed excellent views of this distinctive species. Shortly thereafter we heard the mournful call of Monteiro's Bushshrike *Malaconotus monteiri*. Initially our views were distant and in the scope, but we repositioned ourselves and soon had one of these large-billed, pale-spectacled birds circling around us, giving exceptional views. The final endemic required a bit more driving, but we found several Braun's Bushshrike *Laniarius brauni* in the northern scarp forests, one individual willing to show off its bright orange breast and all finer plumage details.

Another quartet of bushshrikes that we encountered deserve special mention. We enjoyed uncharacteristically good views of Many-colored Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus multicolour* in the northern scarp forests, excellent views of Gorgeous/Perrin's Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus viridis* at Mount Moco, many sightings of Swamp Boubou *Laniarius bicolor* along the coastal plain, and a female Marsh Tchagra *Bocagia minuta*, the subspecies here sometimes split as Anchieta's Tchagra, in tall grass at the foot of Mount Moco. It is also worth mentioning the unusual *affinis* subspecies of Brubru *Nilaus afer* that we saw near Mount Moco, of which both sexes lack any rufous, the male has a short white eyebrow ending just above the eye, and the female is well streaked on the breast.

Other species recorded were Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* (H), Bocage's Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus bocagei* in the northern scarp forests, Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus*, Bokmakierie *Telophorus zeylonus* (H) near Benguela, Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis*, Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus*, Pink-footed Puffback *Dryoscopus angolensis* in the northern scarp forests, Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla*, Tropical Boubou *Laniarius major* and Crimson-breasted Shrike *Laniarius atrococcineus* in both Namibia and Angola.

Cuckooshrikes Family Campephagidae

We saw White-breasted Cuckooshrike *Coracina pectoralis* near Mount Moco and again at Kalandula, Black Cuckooshrike *Campephaga flava* at Kalandula and Petit's Cuckooshrike *Campephaga petiti* at Kumbira. We also heard Purple-throated Cuckooshrike *Campephaga quiscalina* at Kumbira.

Shrikes Family Laniidae

We saw Magpie Shrike *Urolestes melanoleucus* in far southern Angola, Southern White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus anguimans* along the coastal plain and Common Fiscal *Lanius collaris* in the inland plateau.

Orioles Family Oriolidae

We saw African Golden Oriole *Oriolus auratus* a few times in the miombo woodlands on the plateau, Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus* first at Kumbira, and Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis* was common in the northern scarp forests.

Drongos Family Dicruridae

We saw several Square-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus ludwigii* in the northern scarp forests and at Kalandula, and Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* in all savanna areas visited.

Monarchs Family Monarchidae

We saw a striking male Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher *Trochocercus nitens* at Kumbira and African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* at various localities.

Crows, Jays Family Corvidae

We saw Cape Crow *Corvus capensis* (N) and Pied Crow *Corvus albus*.

Fairy Flycatchers Family Stenostiridae

In the scarp forests we commonly saw African Blue Flycatcher *Elminia longicauda*, and at Mount Moco it was replaced by White-tailed Blue Flycatcher *Elminia albicauda*.

Tits Family Paridae

We saw White-winged Black Tit *Parus leucomelas* near Mount Moco, Carp's Tit *Parus carpi* at various localities along the coast, from Ruacana to Kissama National Park, and a noisy party of Dusky Tit *Parus funereus* in the forest at Kumbira.

Penduline Tits Family Remizidae

We had close-up views of a single, singing Grey Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus caroli* in far southern Angola, and Cape Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus minutus* in northern Namibia and again in the Benguela, where the species is near the northern tip of its distribution.

Nicators Family Nicatoridae

The localised Yellow-throated Nicator *Nicator vireo* was very common in the scarp forests, although was not easy to see. We had several good sightings at Kumbira.

Larks Family Alaudidae

The stand-out lark in Angola is the localised and near-endemic Angola Lark *Mirafra angolensis*, which we first saw on a spotlighting session at Mount Moco and later enjoyed at very close range during the day.

Other larks recorded were Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana*, Flappet Lark *Mirafra rufocinnamomea* (H), Fawn-colored Lark *Calendulauda africanoides*, the large-billed form of Sabota Lark *Calendulauda sabota* in northern Namibia, sometimes called Bradfield's Lark, Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea* and Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix verticalis* (N).

Bulbuls Family Pycnonotidae

Bulbul highlights included many sightings of Falkenstein's Greenbul *Chlorocichla falkensteini*, a species hard to see outside of Angola, good sightings of the near-endemic Pale-olive Greenbul *Phyllastrephus fulviventris*, first near Benguela and later at Kumbira, and some excellent sightings of beautiful Black-collared Bulbul *Neolestes torquatus* in the Mount Moco area.

Other bulbuls we recorded were African Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus nigricans*, Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor*, Slender-billed Greenbul *Stelgidillas gracilirostris*, Little Greenbul *Eurillas virens*, Plain Greenbul *Eurillas curvirostris* (H), Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Eurillas latirostris*, Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator*, Yellow-bellied Greenbul *Chlorocichla flaviventris*, Yellow-throated Leaflove *Atimastillas flavicollis*, Cabanis's Greenbul *Phyllastrephus cabanisi* and Red-tailed Bristlebill *Bleda syndactylus*.

Swallows, martins Family Hirundinidae

Swallows were among the best-represented groups on the trip, with 13 species recorded in total, of which 12 were seen in the highland areas. Top among these were the little-known Brazza's Martin *Phedina brazzae*, a species I discovered in the Angolan highlands in 2005. Our first sighting was rather distantly and unsatisfactory, the second better as a single bird was watched in the scopes as it sang from its grass perch, but only seen from behind, and finally the species was seen superbly in flight, with the fine streaking on the breast visible for all. Probably the most attractive swallow seen was the smart Black-and-rufous Swallow *Hirundo nigrorufa*, watched in excellent light and at close range as they hunted over the grasslands near Mount Moco. And the third

species worthy of special mention is Red-throated Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon rufigula*, of which a couple of large colonies were watched around their breeding sites.

Other species seen were Black Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne pristoptera*, Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga*, Banded Martin *Riparia cincta*, Angola Swallow *Hirundo angolensis*, White-throated Swallow *Hirundo albigularis*, Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*, Pearl-breasted Swallow *Hirundo dimidiata*, Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*, Greater Striped Swallow *Cecropis cucullata*, Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* and Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis*.

Crombecs, African warblers Family Macrosphenidae

Certainly the most sought-after species of this family was the endemic and Endangered Pulitzer's Longbill *Macrosphenus pulitzeri*. The first birds recorded at Kumbira were initially highly responsive, but soon lost interest before everyone could get on to them. To the contrary the second pair seen came in silently but gave excellent views for the whole group, although they were not easy to spot in their dense tangles. The rather striking Rockrunner *Achaetops pycnopygius* was seen well in the Lubango area.

Other members of this rather varied family seen were Moustached Grass Warbler *Melocichla mentalis*, Yellow Longbill *Macrosphenus flavicans* in the northern scarp forests, the short-billed, white bellied, rufous-flanked *ansorgei* subspecies of Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens* and Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens*.

Cettia bush warblers and allies Family Cettiidae

We had great views of Green Hylia *Hylia prasina* at Kumbira

Reed warblers and allies Family Acrocephalidae

We saw Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens* near the Lucala River, and heard Lesser Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* here too. At Mount Moco we added Dark-capped Yellow Warbler *Iduna natalensis* to our lists, with several birds seen well on the forest edge.

Grassbirds and allies Family Locustellidae

We recorded Fan-tailed Grassbird *Schoenicola brevirostris* at a couple of scattered localities, with sightings at the Lucala River and Mount Moco. The two *Bradypterus* were typically skulking, and were only heard: Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala* on the Lucala River and Evergreen Forest Warbler *Bradypterus lopezi* at Mount Moco.

Cisticolas and allies Family Cisticolidae

This group of mostly-African warblers was very well represented on the trip, with no less than 33 species seen, including several sought-after specials. Among these were three unexciting

endemics and near-endemics: Bubbling Cisticola *Cisticola bulliens*, first seen near Benguela, Hartert's Camaroptera *Camaroptera harterti* at Kumbira and the unconvincing "Lepe" Cisticola *Cisticola lepe*, first at Mount Moco. Probably the most unusual cisticola seen the endemic *bailunduensis* subspecies of Rock-loving Cisticola *Cisticola emini*, with its unusual calls, small size and habit of feeding inside the forest! This could certainly be a distinctive species, making it a must-see in Angola!

We also saw several other localised species in this family, with Tinkling Cisticola *Cisticola rufilatus* and Wailing Cisticola *Cisticola lais* near Lubango, Chirping Cisticola *Cisticola pipiens* in the marshes of the inland plateau, Lowland Masked Apalis *Apalis binotata* in the northern scarp forests, Brown-headed Apalis *Apalis alticola* at Kalandula, Miombo Wren-Warbler *Calamonastes undosus* in the miombo woodlands of the plateau, Barred Wren-Warbler *Calamonastes fasciolatus* in the arid south, and the striking little Black-necked Eremomela *Eremomela atricollis* and Salvadori's Eremomela *Eremomela salvadorii* near Mount Moco.

Other species that we recorded were Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis* at Kalandula, Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana*, Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis* at Mount Moco, Short-winged Cisticola *Cisticola brachypterus*, Neddicky Cisticola *Cisticola fulvicapilla*, Desert Cisticola *Cisticola aridulus*, Wing-snapping Cisticola *Cisticola ayresii*, Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*, Black-chested Prinia *Prinia flavicans* as far north as near Benguela, the endemic *heinrichi* subspecies of Banded Prinia *Prinia bairdii* in the northern scarp forests, White-chinned Prinia *Schistolais leucopogon* at Kalandula, Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida*, the smart Black-throated Apalis *Apalis jacksoni*, Buff-throated Apalis *Apalis rufogularis*, Grey Apalis *Apalis cinerea*, Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata*, Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis*, Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops*, Burnt-necked Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis* in the far south of Angola and Rufous-crowned Eremomela *Eremomela badiceps* in the northern scarp forests.

Ground-Babblers Family Pellorneidae

We first saw Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens* at Kumbira.

Laughingthrushes Family Leiothrichidae

We did well on *Turdoides* babblers: we saw Southern Pied Babbler *Turdoides bicolor* in Namibia on our drive up, followed by an unexpected sighting of a group of Black-faced Babbler *Turdoides melanops* mobbing a Southern White-faced Owl in southern Angola, then Hartlaub's Babbler *Turdoides hartlaubii* (H) a bit further north, the localised Bare-cheeked Babbler *Turdoides gymnogynys* near Benguela, and finally Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii* at Kalandula.

Sylviid Babblers Family Sylviidae

We enjoyed close-up views of endemic *ansorgei* subspecies of African Hill Babbler *Pseudoalcippe abyssinica* at Mount Moco, and saw, in northern Angola and southern Namibia, several Chestnut-vented Parisoma *Sylvia subcaerulea*.

White-eyes Family Zosteropidae

The only white-eye in Angola is African Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis* which we saw at several localities.

Hyliotas Family Hylotiidae

The forest hyliotas of the central scarp of Angola are currently regarded as Southern Hyliota *Hyliota australis*, although these may prove to be specifically distinct and related to those in southern Cameroon. We saw several of these birds at Kumbira. Yellow-bellied Hyliota *Hyliota flavigaster* presented us with several excellent sightings, good enough to see the blue sheen on the male's upperparts.

Treecreepers Family Certhiidae

Some people saw Spotted Creeper *Salpornis spilonotus* at Mount Moco.

Starlings Family Sturnidae

By far the most sought-after starling that we saw was Sharp-tailed Starling *Lamprotornis acuticaudus*, regular in the miombo woodlands of the plateau, especially at Kalandula. Other noteworthy species were Meves's Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii* in the far south of Angola, Chestnut-winged Starling *Onychognathus fulgidus* in the northern scarp forest, which gave excellent perched views, and the arid country Pale-winged Starling *Onychognathus naboroupe*, which we saw at our fuel stop at Porto Amboim, previously only recorded as far north as Sumbe, about 100 km to the south.

Other species seen were Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* (N), Cape Starling *Lamprotornis nitens*, Splendid Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus*, Burchell's Starling *Lamprotornis australis*, Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* and many lovely Narrow-tailed Starling *Poeoptera lugubris* in the northern scarp forests.

Oxpeckers Family Buphagidae

We saw Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* in far southern Angola.

Thrushes Family Turdidae

The standout sighting among the thrushes was outstanding views of Fraser's Rufous Thrush *Stizorhina fraseri* in the northern scarp forests. Here some people also managed to see White-tailed Ant-thrush *Neocossyphus poensis*. Other species recorded were Groundscraper Thrush

Psophocichla litsitsirupa, African Thrush *Turdus pelios*, Kurrichane Thrush *Turdus libonyana* and Brown-chested Alethe *Pseudaethe poliocephala* (H).

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Family Muscicapidae

This large family of birds holds some of Angola's best and most desirable species. Right at the top of this list are the striking White-headed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heinrichi*, which, after testing our patience, gave excellent sightings at Kalandula, and the unusual Angola Cave Chat *Xenocopsychus ansorgei*, which we watched feeding on rocky mountain slopes near Lubango. Following closely on their heels are the Endangered endemic Gabela Akalat *Sheppardia gabela*, a very confiding pair watched at close quarters at Kumbira, the endemic Angola Slaty Flycatcher *Dioptrornis brunneus* seen several times in the Angolan highlands, the beautiful Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush *Cichladusa ruficauda*, which we encountered several times along the coast, and Forest Scrub Robin *Erythropygia leucosticta*, which we saw exceptionally well at Kumbira. Also of note were Bocage's Akalat *Sheppardia bocagei*, seen by some people at Mount Moco, Short-toed Rock Thrush *Monticola brevipes*, first seen in northern Namibia, Miombo Rock Thrush *Monticola angolensis* at Mount Moco, Miombo Scrub Robin *Erythropygia barbata* in the woodlands of the plateau, Brown-backed Scrub Robin *Erythropygia hartlaubi*, unexpectedly seen at the northern scarp forests, Kalahari Scrub Robin *Erythropygia paena* seen in far southern Angola, and the highland endemic *nigricauda* subspecies of Mountain Wheatear *Oenanthe monticola*, which we saw at Mount Moco. The latter makes quite different calls from its more southern relatives and may prove to be a distinctive species.

Other species observed were Grey-winged Robin-Chat *Cossypha polioptera*, White-browed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini*, Red-capped Robin-Chat *Cossypha natalensis* (NL), White-browed Scrub Robin *Erythropygia leucophrys*, African Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*, Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata*, Familiar Chat *Cercomela familiaris*, Ant-eating Chat *Myrmecocichla formicivora* (N), Sooty Chat *Myrmecocichla nigra*, Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina*, Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus*, Chat Flycatcher *Bradornis infuscatus*, Marico Flycatcher *Bradornis mariquensis*, Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens*, African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta* (H), Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata*, Sooty Flycatcher *Muscicapa infuscata* and Grey Tit-Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus*.

Sunbirds Family Nectariniidae

Sunbirds were another well-represented family with some highly sought-after species seen during the trip. Top of the list was the near-endemic Bocage's Sunbird *Nectarinia bocagii*, a species poorly illustrated in available field guides. We found several of these beautiful, purple-glossed, long-tailed sunbirds along dambos in the Mount Moco area, giving us the opportunity to study them in detail. The endemic *gadowi* subspecies of Bronzy Sunbird *Nectarinia kilimensis* instead has a greeny-bronze gloss and we saw this taxon at Mount Moco. The Angolan highlands are home to

two other special sunbirds, both first seen near Lubango. These are the endemic, orange-chested Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris ludovicensis* (assuming that the *whytei* subspecies of northern Malawi is not conspecific) and localised Oustalet's Sunbird *Cinnyris oustaleti*, probably more common here than elsewhere in its range. And the Kalandula area was home to two more specials, the delightful Anchieta's Sunbird *Anthreptes anchietae* and local Bannerman's Sunbird *Cyanomitra bannermani*, both seen well here.

Other species seen were Miombo Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris manoensis* in the plateau miombo woodlands, Carmelite Sunbird *Chalcomitra fuliginosa* on the central scarp, Dusky Sunbird *Cinnyris fuscus* in northern Namibia and near Benguela, Western Violet-backed Sunbird *Anthreptes longuemarei*, Little Green Sunbird *Anthreptes seimundi*, Grey-chinned Sunbird *Anthreptes rectirostris*, Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*, Green-headed Sunbird *Cyanomitra verticalis*, Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Cyanomitra cyanolaema*, Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea*, Green-throated Sunbird *Chalcomitra rubescens*, Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystine*, Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*, Olive-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris chloropygius*, Marico Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis*, Purple-banded Sunbird *Cinnyris bifasciatus*, Superb Sunbird *Cinnyris superbus*, White-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris talatala*, Variable Sunbird *Cinnyris venustus* and Copper Sunbird *Cinnyris cupreus*.

Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches Family Passeridae

We didn't see any particularly exciting sparrows during the trip, the best species being Great Sparrow *Passer motitensis* in northern Namibia. Other species recorded were White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali*, House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* (H, based on range), Southern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer diffusus* and Yellow-throated Petronia *Gymnoris superciliaris*.

Weavers, Widowbirds Family Ploceidae

The undoubted highlight in this family was watching several bright-plumaged male Bocage's Weaver *Ploceus temporalis* displaying at their nest sites in the Angolan highlands, a species very hard to see outside of Angola. Other highlights were seeing non-breeding Chestnut Weaver *Ploceus rubiginosus* on the coastal plain near Porto Amboim/Sumbe, well north of the previously-known range, two sightings of the local Yellow-mantled Weaver *Ploceus tricolor* in the northern scarp forests, some non-breeding Compact Weaver *Ploceus superciliosus* at Kalandula, flocks of Red-headed Quelea *Quelea erythrops* at Kalandula, several non-breeding Golden-backed Bishop *Euplectes aureus* along the central scarp, and a single, male Marsh Widowbird *Euplectes hartlaubi* in the Angolan highlands.

Other species seen were Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger*, Scaly-feathered Weaver *Sporopipes squamifrons*, Thick-billed Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons*, Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis*, Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis*, Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus*

xanthops, Southern Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus*, Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*, Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus*, Dark-backed Weaver *Ploceus bicolor*, Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis*, Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps*, Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*, Black-winged Red Bishop *Euplectes hordeaceus* (probable), Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis*, Yellow-mantled Widowbird *Euplectes macroura*, White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus* and Red-collared Widowbird *Euplectes ardens*.

Waxbills, Munias & Allies Family Estrildidae

The greatest surprise of the trip came from this family. While birding in the northern scarp forests we found a flock of five small, short-tailed olivebacks. We had great views of a female sitting on some bare tangles and preening, but unfortunately the male (if there was one) got away without being seen. Based on what we saw we are confident that they were either Shelley's Oliveback *Nesocharis shelleyi*, currently a Cameroon Mountains endemic, or a new species to science! Another surprise was, for the lucky few watching the right swallow, having four Locust Finch *Paludipasser locustella* fly past for good flight views, although we failed to relocate them on the ground.

We saw many other sought-after species in this family too. Dusky Twinspot *Euschistospiza cinereovinacea* was harder than expected, and despite being common at Mount Moco it took us some time to all get good views, but eventually we managed. We also enjoyed exceptional sightings of the near-endemic Cinderella Waxbill *Estrilda thomensis* (seen in Namibia and Angola), with seven birds giving prolonged and close-up views as they fed and preened in a thicket. We saw the endemic Angolan Waxbill *Coccopygia bocagei* well at Mount Moco. We scoped Chestnut-breasted Nigrita *Nigrita bicolor* feeding in a large fruiting tree in the northern scarp forests. We saw the endemic Landana Firefinch *Lagonosticta landanae*, probably best treated as a subspecies of African/Blue-billed Firefinch, at Kumbira. The northern scarp forests and Kalandula produced two good sightings of Grey Waxbill *Estrilda perreini*. We saw flocks of Fawn-breasted Waxbill *Estrilda paludicola* throughout the highlands, and we watched African Quail-Finch *Ortygospiza fuscocrissa* drinking.

Other species recorded were White-breasted Nigrita *Nigrita fusconotus*, Grey-headed Nigrita *Nigrita canicapillus*, Green-winged Pytilia *Pytilia melba*, Red-headed Finch *Amadina erythrocephala*, Green Twinspot *Mandingoa nitidula* (H), Red-faced Crimsonwing *Cryptospiza reichenovii* (H), Red-headed Bluebill *Spermophaga ruficapilla*, Brown Twinspot *Clytospiza monteiri* (flight views only), Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*, Brown Firefinch *Lagonosticta nitidula*, Jameson's Firefinch *Lagonosticta rhodopareia*, Blue Waxbill *Uraeginthus angolensis*, Violet-eared Waxbill *Uraeginthus granatinus*, Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda*, Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*, Black-faced Waxbill *Estrilda erythronotos*, Orange-breasted Waxbill *Amandava subflava*, Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* and Black-and-white Mannikin *Lonchura bicolor*.

Indigobirds, Whydahs Family Viduidae

The uncontested highlight here was two sightings of full breeding plumage male Broad-tailed Paradise Whydah *Vidua obtusa* in the plateau miombo woodlands. We also saw non-breeding Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*, Shaft-tailed Whydah *Vidua regia* (still singing!) and Long-tailed Paradise Whydah *Vidua paradisaea*.

Wagtails, Pipits Family Motacillidae

Probably the most disappointing family of the trip, with no unusual species seen. We recorded African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*, African Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus*, Buffy Pipit *Anthus vaalensis*, Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* and, best of all, Striped Pipit *Anthus lineiventris*.

Finches Family Fringillidae

The local Black-faced Canary *Crithagra capistrata* was the best species seen, with several good sightings at scattered localities. Also of interest was the endemic *huilensis* subspecies of Yellow-crowned Canary *Serinus flavivertex* seen well at Mount Moco. Other species seen were Black-throated Canary *Crithagra atrogularis*, Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica*, Yellow Canary *Crithagra flaviventris*, Brimstone Canary *Crithagra sulphurata* and White-throated Canary *Crithagra albogularis* seen near Benguela, right at the northern tip of its range.

Buntings, New World Sparrows & Allies Family Emberizidae

Cinnamon-breasted Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi* was common around Mount Moco, and we saw Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* at several localities and a smart pair of Cabanis's Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi* at Kalandula.

MAMMALS

Mammals were few and far between in Angola, although highlights were the distinctive blackish race of Blue Monkey, and African Wild Cat near Lubango and great views of Thick-tailed Bushbaby on the central scarp.