









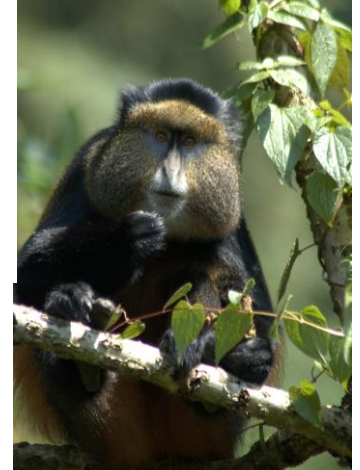
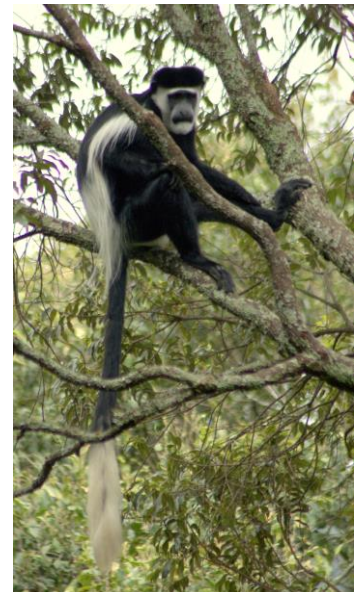
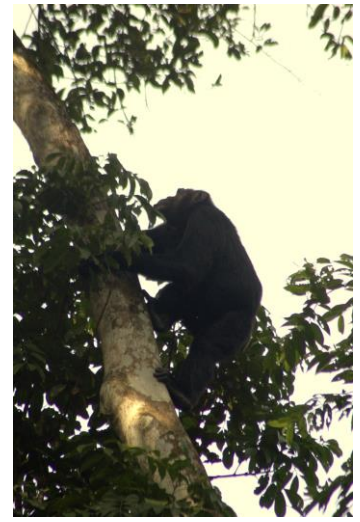


The Ultimate Primate Tour

Destination: Uganda & Rwanda **Duration:** 12 Days **Dates:** 7th – 18th August

-  Seeing a total of 13 different species of primates throughout the tour
-  Tracking the 27 member strong Kahungye group of gorillas in Bwindi
-  Enjoying spectacular views out over the Congo Rainforest and Virunga Mountains
-  Tracking down our closest cousins in the wonderful setting of Kibale Forest
-  Cruising the Kazinga Channel with hundreds of buffalo, hippos and elephants
-  Getting to around 2m away from a large beautiful feeding male golden monkey
-  Spotlighting 3 different species of nocturnal primates in remote Sebitoli
-  Observing over 180 different species of birds including stunning turacos
-  Watching a young gorilla lying relaxed on a branch plucking leaves effortlessly
-  Watching 3 very young lion cubs suckling from their protective mother



Tour Leader / Guides

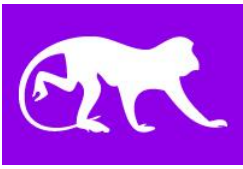
Martin Royle (Royle Safaris Tour Leader)
 Ronnie (Local Guide & Driver)
 Vincent (Sebitoli Forest Spotlighting Guide)
 Steven & Maureen (Kihingami Wetlands Community Guides)
 Joffrey & Harriet (Kibale Briefing and Tracking Guides)
 Julius & Bernard (Bigodi Swamp Community Guides)
 Robert & Jen (QENP Ranger & Kazinga Boat Guide)
 John, Mandy & Eddie (Bwindi Gorilla Tracking Guides & Porters)
 Emanyne (Volcanoes NP Golden Monkey Guides)

Participants

Mr. Iain Nicholson
 Mrs. Caroline Nicholson
 Mr. Jamie Nicholson
 Miss. Rebecca Nicholson

Overview

Day 1:	Sebitoli
Days 2-3:	Kibale NP
Days 4-6:	QENP
Days 7-8:	Bwindi NP
Day 9:	Volcans NP
Days 10-11:	Kigale



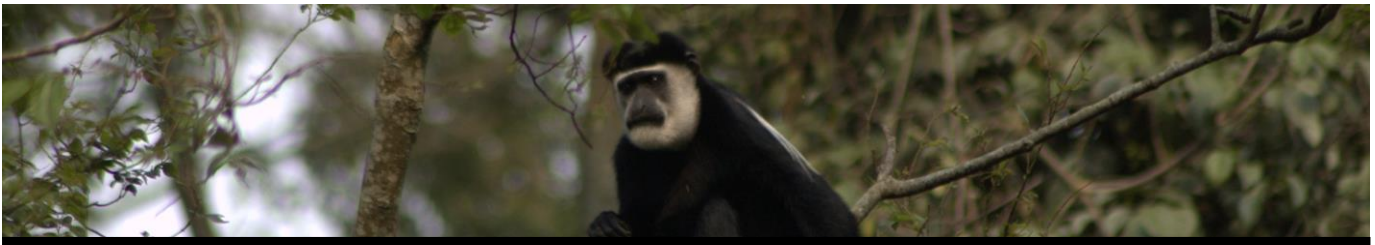
Day by Day Breakdown

Overview

There are very groups of animals that capture the imagination and tug on our heart strings in the same way that primates do. From tiny, solitary and nocturnal bush-babies to the colourful and endemic lemurs of Madagascar the world of the primate is a varied and special one. But we can go a step further with primates and it maybe a step backwards, towards our very early ancestors and possibly to a time when humans and early hominids faced the same challenges as the present day great apes do in the forests of central Africa. It is a widely known and accepted fact that chimpanzees are our closest living cousins (depending on what book or article you read we share 90 – 99% of our DNA with them). But not many people realise just how human like their societies and personalities really are. It seems the more we find out about chimps and their 'darker' side the more we see ourselves as a species reflected in them. From tool use to make sponges, hammers, anvils, straws and even spears to their varied use of sound, facial expressions and body language; as well as from their strong friendship bonds and the forming of coalitions to the horrific acts of kidnapping, rape, murder, torture and cannibalism; chimps share not just the better sides of human nature but many of our more barbaric traits too. But living almost alongside this highly intelligent and complex social animal lives an even larger relative of ours. Albeit an older relative and one with their own strict social system and intricate system of sounds, body language and social rank. This huge primate (the largest of them all) is almost completely vegetarian (excluding the odd ant here and there) and they are often dubbed gentle giants. I am of course talking about the wonderful mountain gorillas. There are only 4 places in the world were this species can be seen and only 2 where sightings are assured and it is currently safe to visit. One of these national parks is the aptly named Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda and the second the very famous former home of primatologist Dian Fossey, Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda. Around 80% of the mountain gorilla population resides in these two national parks; and it is one family harem of mountain gorillas in Bwindi that will make up the main event for this tour. The habituated groups of gorillas in Bwindi and Volcanoes are all very well known and the group that you will be tracking is the large (27 members) Kahungye group. This is one of the latest groups to be habituated and so some of the younger individuals and especially the blackbacks (adolescent males) are still quite curious so great interactions and behaviours should be your reward for the hard trek through the impossibly steep and crazily thick Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.

Spending time around and observing both chimpanzees and mountain gorillas at close quarters will allow you a very special insight into the key differences between the two species. But we will not content ourselves with these two primate species, we will also search out up to 11 further species of diurnal primates and 3 species of smaller and more elusive nocturnal primates. With some luck a huge total of 16 species of primates can be reached; surely making Uganda and Rwanda the ultimate destination for anyone interested or fascinated by primates.

In addition to the forests and mountains of Kibale, Bwindi and Volcanoes National Parks we will also be spending time in the wonderful savannah ecosystem of Queen Elizabeth National Park, here 4 of the Big Five will be waiting for us with some luck (only the heavily poached rhino is missing from this jewel of African parks).. By visiting both Uganda and then Rwanda we will be travelling through a great variety of ecosystems. From lowland tropical rainforest and Afro-montane forest to bamboo forest and open savannah. It is this range of habitats that will hopefully bring us into contact with one of the greatest diversities of primates anywhere in the world.

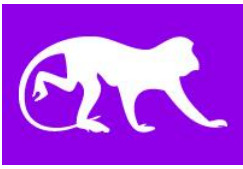


Day 1 **Sebitoli Sector of Kibale NP**

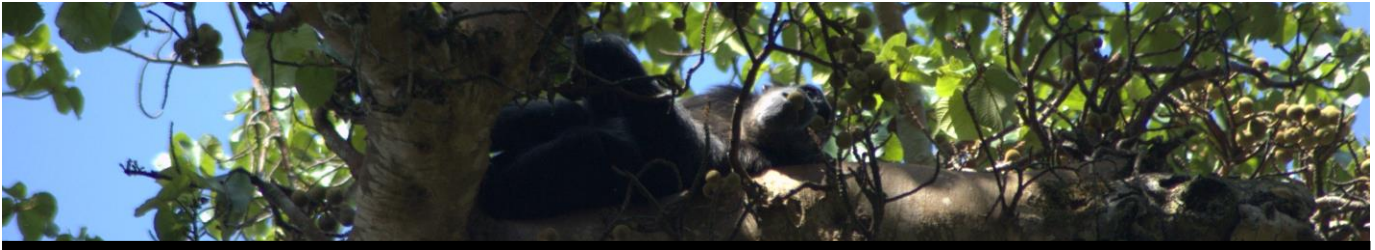
Arrival & Spotighting

This morning the Nicholson family were met and collected from the Lake Victoria Hotel in Entebbe by their zoologist escort (Martin Royle) and their local guide and driver (Ronnie). From there we began the journey across almost the entire width of the country towards Kibale Forest National Park in the west. This park is a very special lowland rainforest where both tropical rainforest and Afro-montane forest can be found. Established as a national park 1993 after 60 years of protection (at some level or another) since it was first gazetted for preservation in 1933.

This park is home to 13 different species of primates and has one of the highest densities of primates anywhere in the world. Whilst most people visit Kibale Forest to track the amazing chimpanzees we will divert our attention for this first night and instead visit the seldom visited Sebitoli Sector of the park. The majority of visitors here are birders and the wealth of birdlife is staggering. But we are here on a mission to see some of the smallest and least understood of all of Africa's primates. So on arrival we were shown to our cabins (as very few people visit here the accommodation is comfortable but basic) before having a walk around the grounds. With no time at all we had



come across a mixed feeding group of monkeys. Large groups of both Ugandan red colobus and eastern black and white colobus were feeding heavily of new leaves above the Nicholson's cabin with 3 or 4 smaller red-tailed monkeys staying further back in the canopy, taking advantage of their smaller size and picking leaves that the heavier colobuses couldn't collect on thin branches. We could have watched the 30 or so monkeys or the 3 species for hours as they continued to feed in the trees that skirted the park, but a cold beer and dinner called. This was important as the real reason for our visit to Sebitoli was to be revealed after dinner. After the sunset and darkness enveloped the forest we headed out with the help of Vincent and Martin's high powered spotlight to see if any of the 3 species of nocturnal primates could be spotted. This is very rarely done but the handful of people (including prosimian researchers) that have done this here have recorded good numbers of various primates, so things were looking very good when after about 2 minutes (and before we had even left camp) we spotted 4 pottos. This slow moving large eyed primate resembles a cuscus or koala long before a monkey. No tail and very deliberate movements among the branches make the potto one of the strangest primates in Africa's forests. But we were not finished with the pottos, as we continued and delved into the forest it wasn't long before Martin spotted what looked like a small bushbaby at first, run across a tangled mat of vines over the pathway. This was later identified as a giant pouched rat; before we did find one of the forest's cutest creatures. The Senegal's galago (bushbaby), this is the largest of Kibales's galagos and we stopped to watch the large eyes scan the trees for insects before leaving it alone and carrying on our search for a very special little primate. This was of course the mouse-sized and very agile Demidoff's dwarf galago. We were very fortunate and saw 3 of these little bushbabies as they jumped from branch to branch in a never ending search for food. After around 45 minutes of spotlighting in the forest we reached camp once again and with the help of a night cap we headed to bed to be fresh for a couple of walks tomorrow.

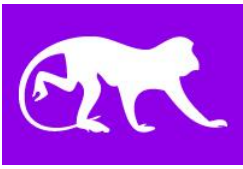


Day 2 **Kihingami & Kibale NP**

Wildlife Watching & Chimpanzee Tracking

Today we split our time between visiting a small community run conservation project based around the Kihingami River and its wetland area. The local people have been encouraged to leave this area untouched and free from cultivation so that the natural vegetation can attract back birds and mammals and in turn tourists, who can help to fund projects and other humanitarian needs in the local community. Projects like this are too rare for my liking and at Royle Safaris we try our best to experience as many as possible. So in the morning we met our local guide Steven and his apprentice Maureen and headed into the sanctuary. Unfortunately there was not a great lot to see, bird wise the great blue and Ross's turaco were the most impressive species. We need gain an appreciation for the pressure facing natural forest and wetlands, this region of Uganda is the second largest tea growing district and the vast tea plantations were beginning to encroach on the already small sanctuary. We then left here and travelled the short distance to Fort Portal and arranged a packed lunch. From here we moved to the Kanyachu research and tourist station in Kibale Forest. The reason for this and the focus of this afternoon would be one primate in particular that has made Kibale a stand out destination in global wildlife watching. This is the chimpanzee, our closest living relative and an animal that almost seems to hold a mirror up to us, as they are so similar in social interactions with one another and many of their behaviours. There are around 1,450 living in the forest and one troop in particular the Kanyawara group (which means Lion's Hill group) is around 150 strong. This troop has been habituated since 1993 and from 2001 onwards people have been able to track the troop (either for an hour in the morning or afternoon or a full day from when they wake until they build their nests for the night). After a briefing at the Kanyachu station we were allocated our guide (Harriet) and we began the walk into the forest, due to the rules of 6 people per tracking group and the group sizes of the other people we were split, with Caroline opting for another group (we would all meet up again later inside the forest), this decision came with an unexpected perk, as she was driven to the start point for tracking the chimps, whilst the rest of us began the quick march to get to the last known location of the chimps before the moved too far away or it got too late.

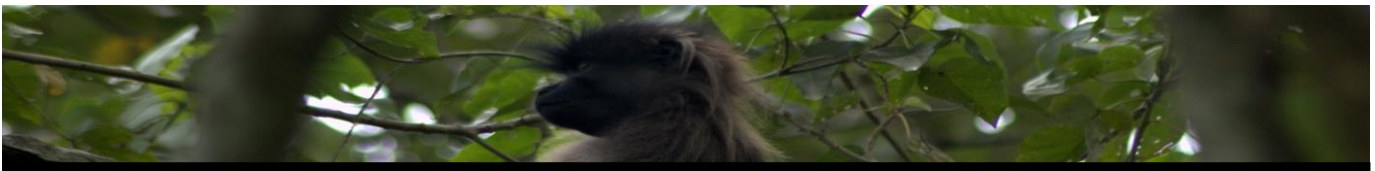
The large community of chimps in this group spend the night close together but due to the size of the community their nests can be spread out over a couple of hundred square meters. Once they are awake they split up into much smaller groups and forage throughout the forest in search of fruiting trees. This reduces competition amongst the individuals and the chimps here spend a far larger percentage of their time on their own or in pairs as do some other communities. The females are much less social and more solitary than the males and as a rule they are more difficult to get close to when tracking them. Despite their food competition there is an interesting behaviour called the food call that males make on finding a large body of fruit. Females hardly ever make this call and tend to keep the food for themselves. It is believed that the males benefit from sharing food as it shows the females that this individual is capable of finding food and would therefore make a good mate. It also solidifies male-male bonds, which are critical to the ambitions of individual chimps as they vie for top spot and the best mating rites. The



females rarely make this call as the females are usually unrelated individuals and they are all competing with one another for the best males in the group as well as the most food so that they are in ideal breeding condition, or have enough food during lactation and for their young infants.

The complex socio-ecology of chimpanzees is far too deep for me to attempt to explain it now, but you can be sure that the individuals in the group display close friendships, form coalitions, lie to and cheat each other, females give out sexual favours to males they may want support from in the future and they even form close bonds with individual males and will go behind the back of the alpha male during oestrous to mate with the less dominate male. Their triadic friendships and coalitions are key in males gaining upper hands on others and challenging dominant chimps and they even seem to plan future possible interactions between other individuals and pick and choose sides based on these future social interactions. The knowledge chimps seem to possess of other individual's personalities and social rankings is incredible and some chimps have been know to accept being second or third in command for an interim period whilst knowing that the leader they support will not last long (maybe he is too forceful or not benevolent enough) and when the community makes moves against him the lower ranked chimp is in the perfect place to launch a coup and gain dominance. If this sounds too far fetched for animals and more like a scene from *Planet of the Apes* I can assure you that long term studies both in the wild and captivity have shown events like this to be more common occurrences than to be purely produced by random chance.

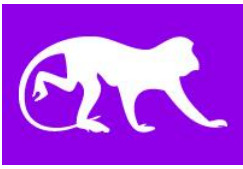
As we followed and watched the chimps today day some of these behaviours were exhibited (with many events being very subtle and hard to decipher over a short period of time) but you would need a whole lifetime to fully appreciate everything. A great book explaining some of the complex intricacies of chimpanzee society and how closely it mirrors our own political systems is the 25 year old '*Chimpanzee Politics*' by Frans de Waal – this book is such a hit and draws upon the comparisons between human and chimp societies that it is recommended to first term congressman before taking office in the US. Below is a summary of what we saw as we searched for the chimps. We were walking for around 1 hour in the forest before we heard the loud wraghs and pant-hoots of an excited group of chimps. We walked in the general direction of the calls and with the help of the other trackers over the radio and Harriet's expert knowledge of the forest we cam across Caroline and her group as well as a old male chimp called Nganja (around 18-20 years old due to his grizzled back and rump). He was sat perched high on an exposed branch at first, moving into the canopy after a few minutes where 2 juveniles (aged between 7-12 as they still had very pink faces) were already feeding on tender leaves and the occasional fruit. Nganja commenced to feed on the freshest leaves and shoots in impossibly think branches, every time he moved the branches seemed to threaten snapping but he knows the weight-bearing capacity of the branches better than the most skilled of tree surgeons. We stood an watched the 3 chimps feeding in the canopy for around another 40 minutes before a rustling on the ground alerted us to a female with baby approaching quickly, once she noticed the crowd of people she rushed up the tree and after very loud greeting pant-hoots and screams she joined the 3 chimps and fed. We continued to watch the group of 5 chimps feeding and resting high in the trees for another 15-20 minutes (along with a very noisy pair of mating black and white casqued hornbills) before the Nganja came lower down (around 12ft) posed perfectly for some close observations and photographs. The reason the chimps were particularly hard to see today is that there is a lack of fruiting trees (particularly figs) at the moment and so the chimps split into smaller sub-groups than usual for foraging to reduce feeding competition when they do find a food source, they also call less as to not attract too much attention. All 5 of the chimps then climbed down and left the area, this area was full of fresh night nests so presumably this small group had not travelled at all today and instead other members of the community had left them earlier in the day. We tried our best to keep up with the speedy chimps and eventually found them near the road and the usual starting point for chimp tracking. They seem to like nesting around here and as we prepared to leave them they were beginning to settle in trees that looked comfortable enough to start making a nest. On returning to the camp we had a refreshing beer, enjoyed the wonderful meal and reflected on a long, hard day of trekking but a day fully justified by the acceptance and ambiguity of our wild cousins on their own patch.



Day 3 **Bigodi Wetlands Sanctuary**

Wildlife Watching

Today we headed into the small community based project of Bogodi Wetlands, this is run in a very similar way to Khinigami with all the guides being trained from the local community and all the proceeds helping to preserve the swamp and its wildlife as well as providing the Bogodi community with a valuable income. On arriving at the starting point we met Julius who briefed us and then introduced us to Bernard who would be our guide. Then immediately Bernard spotting the tiny and beautifully coloured African pygmy kingfisher as well as an African ground thrush. What a great start, considering that the African pygmy kingfisher is not a common bird here. Then shortly after this we were in the midst of a huge breeding aggregation of metallic green beetles, their iridescent greens and reds shining like hundreds of little jewels in the bushes. We continued on and came across the first a many small groups of Ugandan mangabeys foraging in the trees. This species was recently split from the grey-cheeked mangabey and is Uganda's 'newest' species. In the same tree Jamie spotting a red-tailed monkey also picking the tenderest new



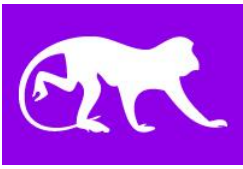
leaves. These leaves are easier to digest without any of the toxins, tannins and other nasty chemicals that older leaves acquire over time. Most of the walk through Bigodi takes you on the fringe of the wetlands, where agriculture meets the wild and from mangabey and turacos on one side to cocoa, coffee, corn, sogam and dozens of other crops on the other side. As we continued the birdlife was prolific with numerous species allowing great views, birds such as great blue turaco, speckled mousebird, red-bellied paradise-flycatcher, red-headed bluebill, gymnogene and grosbeak weavers help to make this such a diverse and amazing place to visit. But the morning walk had two obvious highlights, first was the large troop of olive baboons (showing why this community project is so valuable); they had just raided some corn from the nearby field and were feeding above our heads in low down branches all around us. The benefit of having this project is that the farmers are compensated for their losses and now no longer go out and trap, maim and kill the baboons. The other fantastic sighting was of a large male Ugandan red colobus sitting 6ft off the ground just 10ft off the path. We stood and watched as he ate his fill and his small group of females and juveniles played and foraged in the trees behind him.

With a new species of primate (Ugandan mangabey), numerous bird species and some great sightings we left Bigodi feeling very chuffed with the results of the 3 hour walk. Before arriving back at the information centre we visited the Bigodi Orphans Craft Shop, here the local orphans (most through HIV) are encouraged to weave papyrus baskets and bowls as well as carve little models to help fund their school fees. Then when we got back to the information centre Ronnie had surprised us by arranging a local style lunch with a couple of other tourists in the nearby village. This was a great treat and the local food went down very well after a hot long walk. The young man who served us (Imanye) was such a good host and made us all feel very welcome as we dug into matoke, ugali and g-nuts. Once we had eaten all we could we headed back to the lodge to relax for the rest of the afternoon / evening. Whilst here we were treated to a local dance performance by some of the Bigodi orphans. Starting with the Ugandan national anthem and a welcome dance they continued to show us some traditional dances such as the chimpanzee dance (showcasing the chimps flexibility with fast shakes and fluid limbs) and the gorilla dance (which highlights the gorillas energy with lots of high jumping and stomping). Following on from this were some heart warming poems written and read by the children all about conservation, they even performed a nice little play about not killing baboons and learning that they are more valuable alive than dead; it was both funny and poignant and a very apt way to get the message across that conservation is helping more than just the wildlife and that everyone should be encouraged to protect whatever they can. After this came the finale and a request from us in the audience for a repeat of the chimpanzee dance, but this time with some added participants. Caroline complete with grass skirt and Jamie with leg shaker joined in the dance like pros...well almost. What a great end to a fantastic day and after dinner our beds beckoned for a well deserved nights sleep.



Day 4 **Queen Elizabeth National Park** *Travelling & Wildlife Watching*

This morning we left the Kibale Forest Camp and started the journey south to one of the largest national parks in all of Uganda, Queen Elizabeth National Park. Along the way we stopped to see some of the various crops grown here from tea, mangos, sogam, corn, a variety of bananas, potatoes, cabbages, peanuts and many others. We also drove through the stunning Crater Lake region, seeing many of these lakes which sit in the crater left by an ancient volcanic eruption that blew the triangular cone from the summit of the volcano leaving a perfect crater that has since been filled by millennia of rainfall. It is because of a succession of volcanic eruptions here that there is fertile enough soil to grow almost anything throughout the highlands of Uganda. As we continued to Kasese where we would have a brief bank and internet stop we caught a glimpse of the impressive and continually snow covered Ruwenzori mountains as they were blocked by mostly clouds (as they so often are). The rest of the drive was very uneventful with only a stop at the Equator for some pictures, the Equator also marks the start of Queen Elizabeth National Park. Our camp was a further half an hour drive and along the way we saw Ugandan kob, defassa waterbuck, warthogs and buffalo as well as black-headed weavers, hammerkops and white-rumped swifts. Then crossing the Kazinga Channel close to our camp we saw dozens of pied kingfishers lining up on the power lines and some marabou storks waiting in the fishing village, all eager for some fish dinner either catching it themselves (like the kingfishers) or scavenging scraps from the fishermen (such as the marabou storks). When we arrived at the bush camp we were shown to our cabins (from which a small group of hippos could be seen), had a late lunch and were briefed on the protocol for the camp. Namely that this is an unfenced camp that receives night time visits from hippos, buffalo, hyenas and other dangerous wildlife. This added to the thrill of this very nice camp and prepared us perfectly for our afternoon game drive. We entered the park on the Lake George side of the Kazinga Channel (east side) and used Kazegi Gate, the first hour or so was pretty uneventful by Queen Elizabeth standards, just hundreds of the richly coloured Ugandan kob intermixed with warthogs, buffalo and waterbuck. It wasn't until later on that we heard of a lion being spotted in the area this morning so we decided to stay around here and see if we could see the lion before we had to leave. As we were driving around here we saw a saddle-billed stork killing a snake (our



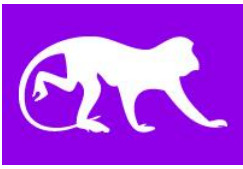
only kill on safari) before Martin spotted a collared lioness approaching from behind some scrub close to where a lion was seen this morning. As we watched the lioness through binoculars we noticed the tips of little ears and as we moved closer to three little cubs came into view. There were very young as the female has not yet rejoined the pride after giving birth, the cubs were tiny and they suckled from here as she lay down and went out of view behind the long grass. All in all not a bad first game drive and it was due to get better as we left the park at sunset Jamie spotted a blotched genet crossing the road and then when we were on the driveway to our bush camp we saw two hippos grazing and then a very rare giant forest hog just around the corner from our camp. We showered in our private outdoor showers and reconvened for dinner in the restaurant tent and chatted endlessly about the great sightings, buffalo, lions, hippos and giant forest hog; what a great start. We were then escorted back to our cabins to rest in preparation for a full day safari of Ishasha tomorrow.



Day 5 **Kazinga Channel, QENP**

Wildlife Watching

Well today started very early, in fact at around 03:00am the sounds of hippos wandering around the camp was a very good reminder of the need to stay inside during the night and also why camp escorts are needed for all nocturnal movements. But when we did wake and start the day at a far more respectable time we breakfasted and headed straight back into the park via the Kazegi Gate. The game drive this morning was mainly concerned with trying to locate a leopard on his way back to a daytime hideaway or possible a pride of lions as they begin an early morning hunt. However we were fruitless in this endeavour, instead we saw two pairs of male elephants; part of the same bachelor group and communicating over the 500m distance with specially adapted seismic infrasound. This newly discovered form of communication allows the elephants to detect and coordinate with each other over vast distances without producing any noise that is audible to human ears. As well as the elephants we saw plenty of Ugandan kob (although far less than last evening), warthogs, buffalo and waterbuck. These 4 species make up the vast majority of the parks biomass and are responsible for shaping the environment, whether it is from elephants tearing down trees, kobs creating well trodden and dead lekking grounds on once fertile grassland, buffalo expanding and creating wallowing holes in drying up water sources, waterbuck that keep the aquatic vegetation all nice and trimmed around permanent water bodies or warthog that plough and till the land in their ceaseless rooting for vegetation and grass. But in addition to these wonderful and charismatic mammal species we also saw many of the bird species that call Queen Elizabeth National Park home. Hunting grey kestrels patrolling the red-necked spurfowl fledglings and loud African wattled lapwings, crowned lapwings and Senegal lapwings running and calling whenever we approach in an attempt to lead you (a likely predator) away from their hidden eggs lying on the bare ground. The complex and intriguing world of birds is often overlooked by non-birders but as on all Royle Safaris tours we try and balance the mammal watching by enjoying the varied and wonderful array of birdlife. Some of the beautiful, large, conspicuous and impressive species that we saw this morning include palm nut vultures, white-browed coucals, long-crested eagles, grey-backed shrikes, helmeted guineafowl, Verraux's eagle owl, pink-backed pelicans and African fire-finches. On the return to the camp we rested and lunched before departing for the amazing Kazinga Channel launch trip in the afternoon. To get the jetty where the boats left from we would enter the park on the opposite side of the highway that dissects the park and use the Myewa Gate. This side of the park is famous for its elephants, being more bushveld than savannah the environment here is far more suited the elephants that can strip the bark from acacia trees and the antelopes tend to stick to the more open savannah habitats of the eastern and southern sections of the park. On the 2 hour journey to the jetty we were on the lookout for elephants and they didn't disappoint when an 8-9 year old ran across the road to join a small group of around 8 elephants feeding next to the road. We sat and watched for a few minutes before continuing to Myewa Lodge, this was the first lodge built inside Queen Elizabeth National Park in 1952 when the park was opened and it also marks the starting point for the boat safaris. As we waited to board the boat we looked around the small information centre and made our way down to the jetty. We could already see a large herd of buffalo and some hippos on the far side of the channel and couldn't wait to get going. The trip was incredible, we started by crossing the channel and heading directly to the buffalo herd. Here around 100 buffalo were intermixed with hippos, the buffalo commandeering the muddy shallows whilst the hippos lay almost totally submerged in the slightly deeper water just beyond the reed beds. Almost hidden amongst these tangled mass of black and grey bodies was a 2.5m long Nile crocodile and hundreds of birds. The first colony we saw was of the impressive African skimmer; this large relative of the terns has a lower mandible which extends beyond the upper and its trailed just below the surface of the water as the bird skims across the water at speed. Whenever the lower mandible hits an object the beak shut tight and the skimmer jerks upwards, hopefully the object was a fish and the skimmer is fed, however plenty of skimmers have broken and mangled lower mandibles from encounters with rocks and branches. Also here were yellow-billed storks, grey-headed gulls, pied kingfishers (that lined the entire stretch of channel in huge numbers), African jacanas, hammerkops, African spoonbills as well as a good sized population of the African fish eagle. This very regal looking species marries a



brilliant white head and chest with deep red-brown (mahogany-esque) back and wings. We were not fortunate to see one hunt but their ability to sometimes dive up to 1m below the surface is a sight to behold, also when carrying a fish back to their roost or nest they always orientate the fish head first and carry it facing forward with the direction of flight to make them aerodynamic. Another interesting facet of fish eagle's lives is that they mate for life and will not take another mate if their partner dies, instead they spend the rest of their lives alone and some people say their piercing 4 or 5 note whistling calls sound all the more mournful after a passing (I am not sure about that myself but the deep bonds needed for life-long mating could illicit emotional reaction when those bonds are severed). Continuing on we came to small groups of female buffalo with their calves as well as lone or pairs of large males. These 'losers' was cast aside from the breeding herds and forced to live on the fringes and never breed again. As well as the constant presence of buffalo and pied kingfishers, hippos were fairly common in patches along the shoreline; their eyes, ears and nostrils often the only side of the 2-3 ton bulk hiding just below the surface. It is the ability for hippos to disappear and reappear so suddenly that contributes to them being the most dangerous animal in all of Africa, killing more people each year than lions, leopards, buffalo, rhinos, crocodiles and elephants put together! We also came across malachite kingfishers and an African pygmy kingfisher as well as many African wattled lapwings, common sandpipers and even a couple of large Nile monitors. A little further along and we came to a large great cormorant colony, here the very efficient fish catching cormorants were constantly mobbed by much large marabou storks, pink-backed pelicans and yellow-billed storks whenever they brought a fish back to eat. The only other sightings of note were a couple of other crocodiles (one 1.5m long and one tiny 30cm hatchling basking on a beach and fallen tree respectively); and a small bachelor group of elephants drinking and strutting at the mouth of the channel as it fed into the enormous Lake Edward. This marks the end of the 14km Kazinga Channel that naturally carries water from Lake Edward in the south-west to Lake George in the north-east before this water continues on to Lake Victoria (completing the British Royale Family tree) and heading north down the mighty Nile to the Mediterranean Sea. This completed the trip and we arrived back at the jetty where we started to the journey back to camp and a much needed sundowner overlooking the Kazinga Channel.

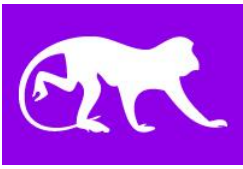


Day 6 **Ishasha Section, QE NP**

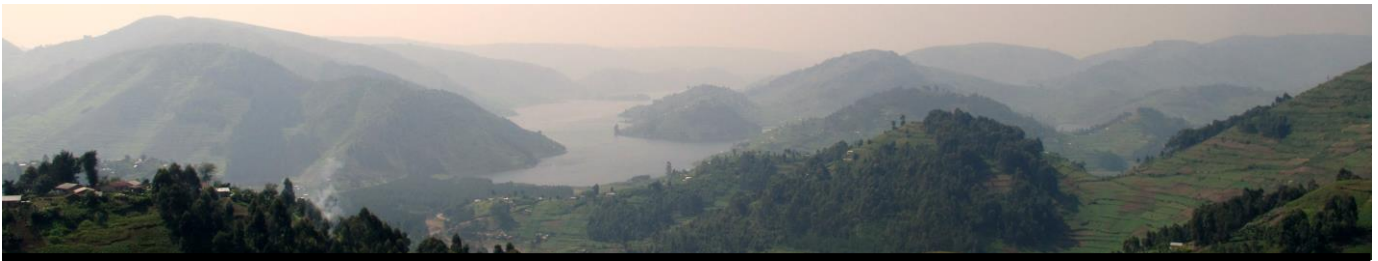
Wildlife Watching

Today we decided to try and find the famous tree-climbing lions of Ishasha which lies in the far southern section of Queen Elizabeth National Park. But once again the day started very early with 3 hippos feeding right outside Martin's and Iain & Caroline's cabins, if this wasn't enough to disturb your sleep just half an hour after the hippos moved on a small clan of spotted hyenas were whooping and laughing in the small lawn next door to Martin's cabin. But I suppose it is these encounters that make staying in open camps far more rewarding than large lodge complexes.

When we started the journey south to Ishasha (72km away) we began by spotting the usual suspects in Queen Elizabeth National Park such as Ugandan kob, defassa waterbuck, elephants, olive baboons and waterbuck but as we reached the Maramagambo Forest we encountered a gabor sparrowhawk, eastern black and white colobus, red-tailed monkeys and a real treat, a small feeding group of blue monkeys. When we finally reached Ishasha we familiarised ourselves with the figgy trees preferred by the lions as their branches are large and are usually horizontal for long sections and its bark is very small and forgiving when lying on it. Also in Ishasha there is a new antelope, not found on the other side of the Maramagambo Forest, this is the ochre and chestnut coloured topi. Driving around the figgy trees where the lions are usually found we saw plenty of kob, waterbuck, warthogs, buffalo and topi as well as some elephants and lots of birds. One of the most conspicuous species of birds we saw (that was seldom seen on the northern section of the park) where African white-backed vultures. The presence of more trees and lions here is a very good reason for the high numbers of vultures (lappet-faced vultures as well) found here. We followed a couple of soaring flocks of vultures and one particular aggregation perched in acacia trees as if waiting for feeding lions or hyenas to leave a kill. But we couldn't find the reason for their massing, unless there were just resting and waiting for the thermals to begin and take them high into the sky. The day was quite chilly and overcast, this was also a factor in us not finding any of the lions as they are more likely to be active and not resting in their usual haunts as the temperature was very comfortable. Ronnie later told us that this was the third time in a row (in the last 3 months) where he has failed to find the tree-climbing lions in trees. Whether this is an anomaly or change in the lions behaviour remains to be seen. But it now seems that the Kazegi Gate is the best place in Uganda to see lions. After this fruitless search we went to a small camp site on the banks of the 10m wide Ishasha River, the opposite bank being the war-torn and unfortunately too dangerous to visit Democratic Republic of Congo. The only guardians of the border being the 30 or so hippos fighting and yawning in the muddy waters in between. The opposite side is actually one of Africa's largest national parks, the huge 3,000km² Virungas National Park, the park stretches south and borders Bwindi, Mgahina and Volcanoes National Parks of Uganda and Rwanda. Home to



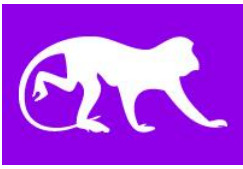
lions, elephants, leopards, buffalo, mountain gorillas, chimpanzees and hundreds of other species this park should be a well visited safari destination instead of ravaged by poachers and the bushmeat trade. We spent a further hour or so in Ishasha but no lions were spotted by us (or anyone else that Ronnie spoke to), so as the lighting flashes to the west and the heavy clouds loomed large we made our way back to Kagezi where lions had been spotted this morning. Along the way we had brilliant views of the Ruwenzori Mountains including the twin peaks marking the highest summits of the chain. We also saw a large herd of elephants near the road that contained two 1 year old babies and a host of other youngsters aged between 2 and 12 years old. As we entered the park Ronnie recruited our ranger from the previous days Robert and drove direct to the spot where the lions had been seen this morning. However despite intensive searching of the whole area we only spotted the usual mammal species as well as many palm nut vultures, long-crested eagles, tawny eagles, red-necked spurfowl, pin-tailed wydahs and even a black-bellied bustard, but no lions. So as we headed back down the main road towards the gate and the main highway little did we know but our mammal sightings were far from over as Iain spotted four banded mongooses as they briefly raced across some grass before diving into a thick bush. As we were watching these highly social and intelligent mongooses Martin spotted a pair of Egyptian mongooses crossing the road around 80m ahead of us. So when the banded mongooses had disappeared we raced up the road and got some pictures as this larger species of mongoose (complete with very elongated tail terminating in a black tuft of hair) stopped and stared at us before also diving into the bushes. What a fantastic day in Queen Elizabeth National Park, today we added topi, blue monkeys, banded and Egyptian mongooses to our mammal list as well as having brilliant views of fighting hippos, elephant calves and many species of raptor. As we were due to make the long drive south from Queen Elizabeth National Park to Kisoro (and the home of Uganda's mountain gorillas) tomorrow we were pleased to hear that Ronnie had arranged with Robert that if any lions, leopards or hyenas were spotted in the morning then we would be allowed to enter the park one last time and see if we could also find them. So with crossed fingers and the comforting knowledge that lions or no lions we would be heading towards the pinnacle of this tour tomorrow and the day when we would be tracking the endangered and iconic mountain gorillas of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park was only around the corner now.



Day 7 **Kisoro**

Travelling

Today we had the possibility that we could try one last time for lions in Queen Elizabeth National Park (depending on whether any had been seen already this morning). So when Ronnie made the call and he began driving in the opposite direction to Kisoro we knew we were in luck. As we entered the park Ronnie was driving direct to where the lions were still being seen when Martin and Rebecca simultaneously shouted lion, walking from behind a bush was a lioness heading towards us and a small distance behind her was her 18 month old male cub. They lay down around 50m away from the road and we stayed with them for a little while before heading to the other lion location where a male was still in sight. This male was in the company of the same female as we saw on the first safari into Queen Elizabeth and her three cubs were occasionally visible underneath a large bush. The male lying on his back, legs in the air with a fat belly was a great sighting and evidence of a successful hunt last night or early this morning. However time was pressing (with a very long drive ahead of us) and the fact that these lions were more distant than the previous two we spotted made up our minds to head back, see if the lioness and cub were closer to the road on our way back to the highway. They were a little closer and we got a great view of the cub cheek rubbing his mother and trying to entice her into some kind of play but she was not having any of it. So we left and drove steadily south, first leaving Queen Elizabeth National Park and climbing high to get an impressive view out over the savannah, Lakes George and Edward as well as the Kyambura Gorge where chimpanzees can be found. Most of the rest of the drive was fairly uneventful, the usual ensemble of pied crows, grey-headed sparrows, black-headed weavers, lesser-masked weavers and barn swallows and black kites were ever present but with nothing of exceptional note to comment on. We stopped to purchase some fresh bananas before lunch at a pleasant roadside café. We also briefly stopped at the viewpoint high above Lake Bunyonyi and a view that is dubbed the 'Switzerland of Africa' before carrying on towards Kisoro. But first we had to pass through the busy city of Kabale and on leaving Kabale we began to be treated to fleeting views of Mt. Muhabura (4,127m – 13,540ft) as we wound our way up and down hillsides. It wasn't until we began our descent towards Kisoro that great views of Mt. Muhabura, Mt. Gahinga (3,474m – 11,397ft) and Mt. Sabyinyo (3,634m – 11,922ft) dominated the horizon. The near perfect triangular silhouette of Mt. Muhabura is an incredible view, this is the second largest volcano in the Virungas. Its name means 'direction shower' as it can be seen from many miles away in all directions people know which direction to travel in relative to Mt. Muhabura. Mt. Gahinga looks like the stunted younger brother of Mt. Muhabura and seems to be missing its triangular cap and then further west is Mt. Sabyinyo which means 'old man's teeth', so called for its

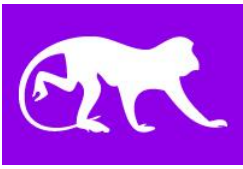


jagged many peaked summit. These are 3 of the 8 Virunga volcanoes and the only 3 that lie in part of Uganda a further 3 lie in Rwanda (in total of part) and the 2 completely in the DR Congo. Another nice part of the drive was travelling through the dense bamboo forests of Matuga Forest Reserve. This prime gorilla habitat is devoid of the great ape and is now separated from Bwindi and the gorilla population by a highway and a impassable 1km wide expanse of agricultural land, but there are tentative plans to reintroduce a family or two into this forest. I hope that this is achieved as it will lead to an increase in gorilla numbers (by decreasing feeding competition which seems to be the only natural limiting factor in gorilla populations) and also will help to decrease the problems associated with inbreeding over time. We then passed by the increasing DR Congolese refugee camp on the outskirts of Kisoro before checking into the wonderful Traveller's Rest Hotel, established in the 1950's by Walter Baumgartel (the father of mountain gorilla tourism) and old haunts of preeminent gorilla biologists Dr. George Schaller and Dian Fossey throughout the 1950's, 60's, 70's and 80's. On arrival we were entertained by the wonderfully energetic and dedicated Apollo and his team of Kisoro orphaned girls with great dancing and singing in the hotel gardens. It was so good that Iain took a turn on the drums whilst Rebecca and Jamie clapped along to the beat with the rest of the 'cheering department' as Apollo calls them. Iain was so enthused by his musical expertise that he nearly purchased the drum from Apollo. Instead souvenirs came in the form of exquisite Congolese art that the manager Jennifer collects and then sells. These skilfully carved and intricate masks, statues, boxes and other pieces decorated the hotel and everyone took home a mask to remind them of the day they walked amongst the gorillas in the mist. The rest of evening was dedicated to a briefing about the gorilla tracking and the excitement and expectations slowly began to build. Tomorrow would be an early start 05:00am so an early night was the order of the day.

Day 8 Bwindi Impenetrable Forest NP

Gorilla Tracking

Today is the day of gorilla tracking and to get to the Rushaga starting point (for the Kahungye group) we started early. The drive north to the southern most tip of Bwindi was spectacular with the incredible mists rolling in from the forested and agricultural hillsides. Once the sun rose high enough to illuminate the valleys we spotted some grey-crowned cranes feeding on sogam close to the road. We briefly stopped for some pictures before heading to the Rushaga. This is the newest of the starting points for gorilla tracking and up until very recently there was only a couple of gorilla groups that could be tracked from here. The latest to undergo full habituation is the Kahungye group (although the larger Shongi group has since split with one of the young silverbacks recruiting a few adult females with the potential for this starting a new group. A group with members that are already habituated from years being in the Shongi group). The Kahungye group was first opened up to tourism in September 2011 so you are one of the first people to see this group which is 27 members strong. This is one of the largest habituated groups in the world and now the largest in Bwindi (after the split in the previous 38 strong Shongi group). On arriving at the park gate we walked the short rise to the headquarters, completed the necessary paperwork and then had the briefing from the very friendly John. Here the rules and some basic information were imparted before the bags were packed, porters (Eddie and Mandy) were organised and the trek began. The first hour or so was confined to the easy to follow roads as you were taken up and up gradually until you came to an old colonial logging outpost, erected by the British at some time in the first half of the 20th Century. Then just when a few people in the group may have been beginning to think that this is easy, I wonder what people mean when they say it is very hard this gorilla tracking lark. Well the guides then took a right angle turn and headed straight off the side of the road and into the aptly named impenetrable forest and down the impossibly steep slopes towards the distant valley floor. Because of the steep climbs and descents, mass of tangled vines, roots, bushes, nettles, trees and other vegetation making walking very difficult, distance can be very deceptive. A 500m descent can take an hour and an equal climb can feel like you have summated a mountain when you reach your destination. But with the help of the brilliant Eddie and Mandy and useful walking poles you managed to get to the bottom of the valley where the trackers were waiting. Each morning a small band of trackers head out to where the gorillas were last seen the day before (the location of their night nests), as gorillas very rarely if ever move around at night you are able to easily track them from this starting point. So once the trackers have located the night nests they follow the unmistakable pathway (especially when 27 gorillas have been moving) of flatten vegetation, half eaten and left over branches, leaves and vines and of course their 3 lobed horse-like dung. Once they locate the gorillas a radio message is given to the guide (in our case John) and he travels in the a bee-line to the trackers, then once you reach close to the gorillas the trackers announce your arrival with soft two-toned belch vocalisations that alert and comfort the gorillas to your presence. After leaving your bags and walking poles with the porters you were allowed to start the very short rise up the other side of the valley to where the gorillas were feeding. Remaining mostly hidden in the very dense vegetation it was hard to interpret the exact numbers and composition of the group (as this is a very new group the photographs of each individual are still be taken and so the photo-ID card for the Kahungye group is not yet available, making identification of the individual gorillas very difficult. However below is a brief summary of some of the sightings and encounters as you entered the secretive and peaceful world of the Bwindi mountain gorillas for an hour or so. Firstly as the guides were approaching the group making their belch vocalisations the silverback gave a brief wragh call and charged a short distance, this is very common behaviour for the silverback on any group when they are interrupted from their breakfast by a loud, smelly, brightly coloured group of pink apes. This initial charge is interpreted as showing us who is boss as opposed to genuine aggression or fear. If the silverback was genuinely frightened then he would either engage in conflict or run away with the rest of the group in tow. The fact the



habituated groups remain, play, feed and sometime even interact with people are all signs that we are treated as a benign part of their rich and varied environment. Shortly after finding the group everyone was treated to great views to one of the youngsters in the group (approximate age of 2-3 years old) lying on his back along a branch, casually grasping and bringing leaves and vines closer to him to munch on like there is not a worry in the world. The blissful world of the gorillas in enchanting and the setting in the dense Bwindi forest is truly one of the most magical experiences in the natural world. Jamie had views (and took good pictures) of a male (his back being hidden it is impossible to tell how old he was) and judging by his domed head and massive size he would be approaching 15 years old at least. Then there were brief views of females and unsexed youngsters periodically throughout the hour. Most of the views came in the form of black faces staring back through the dense mat of vegetation as they selected the best nettles, gallium vines and other leaves to eat. The near constant need to feed dictates gorilla live like nothing else and by dividing their time up between resting (40%), feeding (30%) and travelling (30%) they are kept busy doing not a lot. As no more than 3 or 4 gorillas were ever visible at the same time it was difficult to gauge the number of different gorillas seen, however Iain estimated that between 8-10 individuals were seen and many more hidden as they moved around in the background. Certainly there were many more gorillas invisible in the undergrowth than could be seen and this led the guides and trackers to be reluctant to clear away more pathways with their pangas so that better views could be achieved. They feared chopping the vegetation and either hitting a gorilla or scaring one and promoting a fight or flight reaction from the silverback (both of which would quickly end the encounter and would seriously jeopardise the trust the gorillas have in humans accrued over years of habituation. So after around an hour in the presence of this amazing group of gorillas you moved slightly up the valley for lunch. Here having lunch in the Bwindi forest is a great experience and a great way to end the gorilla tracking; well kind of end as there was still the walk back to road where Martin and Ronnie were waiting to take you back to the hotel for some rest. During the drive back to Kisoro the mist had cleared completely and the stunning blue sky spread out over the rolling hills and the great view of Lake Malehe which slowly and through a tiny stream drained into the even more massive Lake Mutanda, if these views were not spectacular enough the clouds had clear so much that unobstructed views of Mts. Muhabura, Gahinga and Sabyinyo rose crystal clear in the sky ahead of us. Tomorrow we would be on the opposite side of these volcanoes and in Rwanda, but for now a brief introduction into the volcanic geology of the Virungas was the only activity for the afternoon, a nice cold beer, good hearty meal and then bed was more than sufficient to cap off the day.

Day 9 **Ruhengeri**

Travelling

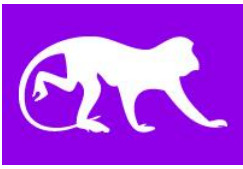
Today was left very relaxed as we have no idea how the gorilla trekking will effect legs the day after, so after a late start to the day and a comfortable breakfast the rest of the morning was left for packing, exploring Kisoro and just relaxing in the pretty gardens of Travellers Rest Hotel. Then after lunch Ronnie arrived and we loaded up the vehicle and made the short trip to the border at Cyanika. The formalities were straight forward and not too time consuming which is always nice at any immigration office. Then once into Rwanda we crossed over the road to drive on the right hand side and away we went to the burgeoning town of Ruhengeri. This was once the go to place whenever Dian Fossey or any of the Karisoke Research Station's team needed to make a phone call, check mail or buy anything other than basic foodstuffs and locally produced products. Now the town is dominated by hostels, hotels, lodges and resorts all geared up towards providing accommodation to gorilla and golden monkey trackers in the Volcanoes National Park. After checking into the hotel we relaxed and gathered our energy for the early start and golden monkey tracking tomorrow morning. It is not hard to get motivated as the imposing figures of Mt. Muhabura, Gahinga and Sabyinyo stand as if to attention directly in front of our balconies. A little further to the south-west and just obstructed by clouds are the famous peaks of Mt. Karisimbi and Mt. Visoke. It was in the saddle region in between these two peaks that Dian Fossey established the Karisoke (named after 'Karis' and 'soke' from the names of the two volcanoes). Hopefully we would see these tomorrow and complete the 5 volcanoes observable from the Ugandan and Rwandan side of the Western Rift Valley.



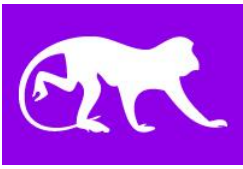
Day 10 **Volcanoes National Park**

Golden Monkey Tracking

Today we started early, leaving the hotel at around 06:15am and heading the Kinigi Headquarters (for the Volcanoes National Park). The morning was glorious, with hardly a cloud in the sky and certainly do sign of the rain that can blight this region throughout the year. The clear skies also shows incredible views of Mts. Muhabura,



Gahinga and Sabyinyo as well as Karisimbi, Visoke and even Mikeno in the distance. This tall and very jagged volcano is mostly in DR Congo and seldom seen from Rwanda due to the ever present mist and cloud cover here. When we arrived at the headquarters we were met by the very loud, charismatic and enchanting drumming and dancing of the Sacola Traditional Dance Group. Complete with lions' mane headdresses and a fantastic drum beat they entertained the growing crowd of would be gorilla, golden monkey trackers and volcano explorers as the Rwandan park officials divided the groups up based on fitness. Once we had been grouped along with 5 more people (including an American woman who was a member of the gorilla trek we took in Bwindi a couple of days before) we were briefed by the very funny and flavourful Emanyé. We then climbed back into our vehicles and headed the short drive to the golden monkey starting point. This very special primate is one of the 'newest' to science. For a long time the golden monkey was a member of the huge species complex of blue monkeys. However recent genetic evidence has suggested a split and the golden monkey (*Cercopithecus kandti*) is now distinct from the more widespread blue monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*). It is amazing to think that the two species that physically and behaviourally are so different were thought of as the same for so long. As it happens this recent reclassification of the golden monkey has been great for the species as they are now afforded special protection as they number fewer than 5,000 globally and are only known from a couple of locations. Most of them located in Volcanoes National Park, they are specialist folivores and love the fresh bamboo shoots. In Volcanoes National Park two of the troops here have been habituated so that you are able to get a lot closer than usual to this usually very skittish monkey. The area that the monkeys use is the lowland bamboo forests and the best way to get there is by walking for around 30 minutes through the agricultural land before entering the park via the Kagaragara gate and straight into the thick bamboo forest. Whilst walking up to the park boundary our guide came well and truly into his own (actually one of the best guides I have seen anywhere in the world). Stopping every now and again to let everyone catch up and have a couple of jokes, before telling the group and the pyrethrum grown here (as a natural alternative to the harmful DDT of the 1950's-70's. As well as explaining the reason why so many non-native eucalyptus trees are grown in Uganda and Rwanda. These trees are utilised for medicinal purposes, charcoal and timber. There was even a brief moment where Emanyé threatened to burst into song with Jamie and give us a rendition of Guns n' Roses classic 'Welcome to the Jungle'! Once we entered the forest it was only another 10 minutes before we arrived at a clearing bathed in sunlight where some of the 150 strong Kabatwa group of golden monkeys were feeding. The Kabatwa group has been habituated since 2000 and they have been having tourists since 2003. This meant that they are well versed to humans and completely ignore us as we walk amongst them and watch them feed and interact with each other. Throughout the hour long experience there was not the threat of any rain, which is lucky as the rain (which is very frequent here) postpones all golden monkey activity and they retreat to dense vegetation and in affect disappear. For the first 30 minutes or so we watched and tried to get close to a few dozen different monkeys scattered amongst the clearing. For the most part they were females and youngsters and it was fantastic to watch from very close quarters as they ate, jumped, foraged, fought, mated and played around us. This group is around 150 strong and it seemed like the entire bamboo forest was alive with monkeys at times. There are 4 adult males in this group and the social structure of golden monkeys is similar to baboons; where one overlord uses several related males to help protect sections of the group. The majority of the individuals are females and their offspring of various ages. We only saw one of the males well and he was the overlord. In fact the sighting was so good that we stopped and watched the male as he fed and relaxed sunbathing in the open only 2m away from us. He remained on a great open tree around 1m off the ground for about 30 minutes. Like baboons the dominant male secretes a pheromone which suppresses the development of other males second sexual characteristics (such as large size, enormous testes and enlarged canines) and means that there is usually just one fully mature male in a society. Once this male dies or leaves the group for an extended amount of time the pheromone is no longer produced and the other males develop. The first male to develop then starts to produce the pheromone and suppresses the other males' development. This marked one of the best wildlife encounters of the whole trip and a great way to end the wildlife side of the tour before we would drive to Kigali this afternoon. Once we had walked back through the plantations to the road, Ronnie drove us back to the hotel in Kigali for lunch. After lunch we began the journey east to the capital Kigali. The drive was uneventful with the stunning views of hill after hill guiding the way to the capital. It is little wonder why Rwanda (and the hotel we would be staying at) and called the 'land of a thousand hills' and 'Hotel of a thousand hills' respectively, when you stare out of the window in any direction and see rolling hills stretching out as far as the eye can see. After a couple of hours the sight of the city began to appear, the large conurbation sprawling in all directions from the central hills (the city is said to be built on 7 hills – very much like Rome) now marked with high rise government buildings and hotels. We briefly stopped at a supermarket before arriving at the stunning Hotel Mille des Collines. This famous hotel is the very real location where over 1,000 Tutsis were hidden and protected by the Hutu manager, Paul Rusesabagina, during the atrocities of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994. Looking at the city and hotel now and speaking to the friendly people that live here (many of which lived through the genocide and almost all of which had a family member killed, tortured, mutilated, raped or victim to some other abuse) it is impossible to believe that over 1 million people were butchered with machetes in the streets of Kigali only 18 years ago. The country is moving on and with a philosophy of never forgetting the lost ones, learning from past mistakes and embracing a single identity of being Rwandan, the rest of the world can take a leaf out of the Rwandan people's book when it comes to solidarity and resilience in the face of unimaginable horrors. As we ate our dinner looking out over the Kigali night sky, the hundreds of shining lights made a perfect backdrop to end a great day.



Day 11 **Kigali**

Genocide Memorial Visit

This morning marks the last full day of the tour and after the huge breakfast with the great views of Kigali from the Panorama Restaurant in the hotel we were taken to the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre. The Rwanda Genocide Memorial Centre is a very good if not hard-hitting museum explaining the build up and aftermath of the 1994 genocide as well as describing the atrocities which occurred during the 100 days of bloodshed that culminated in over 1 million people murdered, a further 1 million left mutilated, raped and tortured and countless hundreds of thousands left homeless or orphaned. It also acts as the final resting place of 250,000 genocide victims. Their photographs lining the walls of the museum. Whilst very difficult to comprehend and very emotional to see it is a very important place to visit, especially when you consider that this acts as a reminder to the brutality that humans are capable of and why we should learn from our past and not allow this to repeat itself. What is probably most amazing is how quickly the country and population have recovered, all this happened in 1994 and the speed of recovery is awe-inspiring. Rwanda is now on the up and along with Uganda shares a bright future in terms of conservation, tourism and economic growth. There are still lots of problems, HIV, malaria, a fast growing population and relatively high levels of illiteracy and unemployment all still hinder these countries full development. However with the recent reestablishment of the East Africa Community between Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi the idea is to strengthen as one and there are even plans for a single currency (the East African Shilling) to be introduced in 2015. So the future may indeed be very bright for these two pearls of the African continent. After returning to the hotel in the afternoon the rest of the day we free time before we all met up again for our last evening meal of the tour. After tonight Martin would be heading back to Entebbe and the Nicholson's would remain in Kigali for one more night before heading back home. All in all the tour has been a great success with a record number of primates for any Royle Safaris tour of Africa and a great mammal and bird total, all future tours here have a lot to live up to.

Species List

The Ultimate Primate Tour / Jun 2012

Mammals (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Duiker Species?	<i>Cephalophus</i> spp.
2	Red-tailed monkey	<i>Cercopithecus ascanius</i>
3	Golden monkey	<i>Cercopithecus kandti</i>
4	Blue monkey	<i>Cercopithecus mitis</i>
5	Tantalus monkey	<i>Chlorocebus tantalus</i>
6	Eastern black and white colobus	<i>Colobus guereza</i>
7	Giant pouched rat	<i>Cricetomys emini</i>
8	Spotted hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>
9	Topi	<i>Damaliscus korrigum</i>
10	Senegal galago	<i>Galago senegalensis</i>
11	Demidoff's dwarf galago	<i>Galagoides demidovii</i>
12	Genet Species?	<i>Genetta</i> spp.
13	Blotched genet	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>
14	Mountain gorilla	<i>Gorilla beringei</i>
15	Red-legged sun squirrel	<i>Heliosciurus rufobrachium</i>
16	Egyptain mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>
17	Common hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>
18	Sooty roundleaf bat	<i>Hipposideros fuliginosus</i>
19	Giant forest hog	<i>Hylochoerus meinertzhageni</i>
20	Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>
21	Ugandan kob	<i>Kobus kob</i>
22	Serval	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>
23	Ugandan mangabey	<i>Lophocebus ugandae</i>
24	African bush elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
25	Guinea multimammate mouse	<i>Mastomys erytholeucus</i>
26	Banded mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>
27	Schlieffen's twilight bat	<i>Nycticeinops schlieffeni</i>
28	Common chimpanzee	<i>Pan troglodytes</i>
29	Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>

AUGUST											
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30	Olive baboon	<i>Papio anubis</i>
31	Smith's bush squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>
32	Creek groove-toothed swamp rat	<i>Pelomys fallax</i>
33	Potto	<i>Perodicticus potto</i>
34	Common warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>
35	Tiny pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nanulus</i>
36	Ugandan red colobus	<i>Procolobus tephrosceles</i>
37	African buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>
38	Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>
39	Hidegarde's broad-headed mouse	<i>Zelotomys hildegardeae</i>

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			~95	~300	~100	100+							
				1									
					1								

Birds (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Common sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
2	African jacana	<i>Actophilornis africana</i>
3	Malachite kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>
4	Egyptian goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
5	Black crane	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>
6	Grosbeak weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>
7	Red-headed weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubiceps</i>
8	Yellow-billed duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>
9	Slender-billed greenbul	<i>Andropadus gracilirostris</i>
10	Yellow-whiskered greenbul	<i>Andropadus latirostris</i>
11	Yellow-throated greenbul	<i>Andropadus nigriceps</i>
12	Red-throated pipit	<i>Anthus cervinus</i>
13	Grassland pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>
14	Little swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
15	White-rumped swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>
16	Tawny eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
17	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
18	Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
19	Black-headed heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
20	Squacco heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>

AUGUST											
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59	Common house martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
60	Bearded woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos namaquus</i>
61	Fork-tailed drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
62	Black-winged kite	<i>Elanus axillaris</i>
63	Saddle-billed stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
64	White-browed scrub-robin	<i>Erythropygia leucophrys</i>
65	Crimson-rumped waxbill	<i>Estrilda rhodopyga</i>
66	Red-collared widowbird	<i>Euplectes ardens</i>
67	Southern red bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
68	Grey kestrel	<i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>
69	Gull-billed tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
70	Crested guineafowl	<i>Guttera pucherani</i>
71	Palm-nut vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>
72	African white-backed vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
73	Woodland kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>
74	African fish eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>
75	Collared sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>
76	Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
77	Wire-tailed swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
78	African pygmy kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>
79	Lizard buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
80	African firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rubicata</i>
81	Red-billed firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>
82	Greater blue-eared glossy starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>
83	Purple-headed starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpureiceps</i>
84	Ruppell's long-tailed starling	<i>Lamprotornis purpuropterus</i>
85	Black-headed gonolek	<i>Laniarius erythrogaster</i>
86	Long-tailed fiscal	<i>Lanius cabanisi</i>
87	Common fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
88	Red-backed fiscal	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
89	Grey-backed fiscal	<i>Lanius tephronotus</i>
90	Marabou stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>
91	Black-bellied bustard	<i>Lissotis melanogaster</i>
92	Black and white mannikin	<i>Lonchura bicolor</i>
93	Bronze mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>
94	Long-crested eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>
95	Yellow-throated longclaw	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>
96	White-eyed slaty flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis fischeri</i>

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173	Blue-spotted wood-dove	<i>Turtur afer</i>
174	Tambourine dove	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>
175	Blue-naped mousebird	<i>Urocolius macrourus</i>
176	Crowned lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
177	Long-toed lapwing	<i>Vanellus craddirostris</i>
178	Senegal lapwing	<i>Vanellus lugubris</i>
179	African wattled lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
180	Spur-winged lapwing	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>
181	Pin-tailed whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>

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Reptiles (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Southern tree agama	<i>Acanthocercus atricollis</i>
2	Jackson's forest lizard	<i>Adolfus jacksoni</i>
3	Four-lined forest gecko	<i>Cnemaspis quattuorseriatus</i>
4	Nile crocodile	<i>Crocodylus niloctus</i>
5	Common house gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>
6	Tropical house gecko	<i>Hemidactylus mabouia</i>
7	Brown house snake	<i>Lamprophis fuliginosus</i>
8	Cape wolf snake	<i>Lycophidion capense</i>
9	Forest dwarf gecko	<i>Lygodactylus gutturalis</i>
10	Speckled-lipped skink	<i>Trachylepis maculilabris</i>
11	Variable skink	<i>Trachylepis varia</i>
12	Nile monitor	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>

AUGUST											
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Amphibians (* = heard or signs only)

	Common Name	Binominal Name
1	Kisolto toad	<i>Bufo kisolensis</i>
2	Common reed frog	<i>Hyperolius viridiflavus</i>
3	Natal puddle frog	<i>Phrynobatrachus natalensis</i>

AUGUST											
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