



Ethiopia - October 2018

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General Informations

Ethiopia surprise us with being a country with very friendly and helpful people and great food and nature. When it comes to tourism the everything becomes much more expensive than travelling alone mainly because of the car hire. We payed about 10 times less travelling with public transport than with a tour company. Anyway, if you are travelling in national parks you will dependent on at least a driver since there is no company hiring a car without.

Cultural and historical tourism is big in Ethiopia but nature tourism not so much: From what we heard there are about 5 trained birding guides and they had to study in Kenia. To date, it is not possible to study mammals in University, there is only a bird course.

Bale Mountains

We travelled with Armaye from Armaye Tours (armynega@gmail.com) in Bale Mountains. Armaye grew up in Goba and lives in Dinsho. He therefore knows the region and many people well. Armaye was really interested, friendly, calm and very flexible. He tried hard to fulfil every wish we had. Unlike other companies we contacted, he really tried to plan a tailor-made tour with a good price.

Dinsho: We camped next to Dinsho Lodge which is closed now. Besides that there is a pension in town which is apparently not recommended. There are several places where you can eat, we had diner and breakfast there.

Haremma Forest: There are two accommodations there. Either you go to the Bale Mountains Lodge (360 \$ per person per night) or to the Haremma Cultural Lodge (10 \$ per hut per night). We stayed in the Haremma Cultural Lodge because the way from Goba is two and a half hours and we definitively wanted to do as many night drives there as possible. We had a comfy hut with a warm double bed. Yes there are no showers nor flush toilets, but we slept well and the food was great! The owner (Isa) cooked a great buffet around the campfire for us and otherwise there are places where you can eat in the village nearby. We were totally amazed by Haremma Forest and are certain that there are many secrets left to discover there.

Awash and Alledeghe

Next we booked with Action Tours which, unfortunately, we cannot recommend. Not because of the driver and the guide, they definitively did everything they could, but because of the manager and organisator. Our guide arrived thinking we were birders although we were very clear about the fact that we were mammal watchers and he didn't even receive a binocular or any other information for the trip. Another example is that he planned for us to stay three consecutive nights in Filwuha Camp and told the guide that there would be no need for a cook (the next shop is about 3 hours away).

Awash National Park: Is I think the oldest National Park of Ethiopia but doesn't feel like a National Park at all anymore. The Awash National Park is in between the territory of the Afar and the Kereyu. These two tribes are fighting for this land and they are doing this by putting as much cattle as possible into the National Park. This is of course bad for the wild animals because of food scarcity.

The area of Filwuha Camp seemed to be really nice still, maybe because it clearly belongs to the Afar. The only problem is that it is quiet far away from the Awash Falls Lodge (about 3 hours) and you would have to camp there and bring food supplies.

Alledegue: Is not yet a National Park but a quiet well protected reserve not far away from Awash. It is clearly in Afar land and they are therefore willing to take care of it. We stayed in Doho Lodge which was quiet far away from the park (1h). The Animalia Lodge, which is a lot closer, was unfortunately closed.




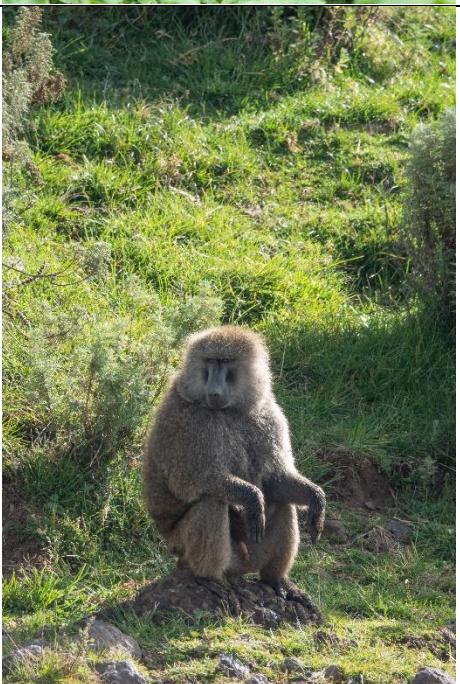
Debre Libanos


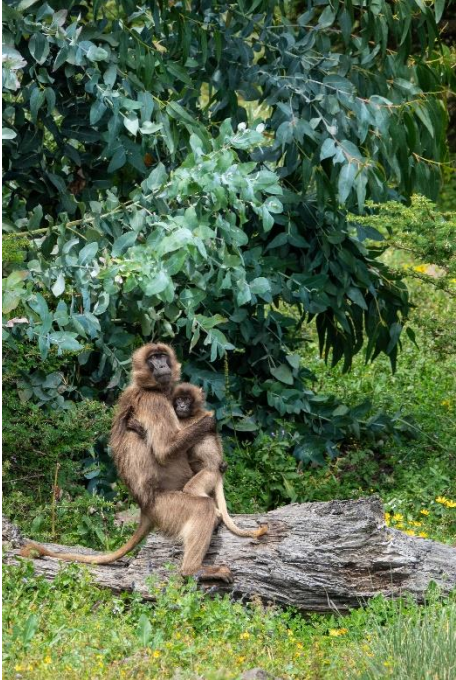


The Ethio-German Hotel is already closed, we therefore stayed in another hotel (called "Top View" in the past and now it has a different name with "View" in the end). It was basic but good, the food was good as well and the view is phenomenal. You can contact the administrator (ayalewmekonena@gmail.com) for bookings of further information.






Anyway, the Gelada Baboon appear to be coming up to the hotel grazing around it every day at about 10am. If they wouldn't be there they would be a bit further away down the road. The administrator is very helpful and would help you find them.




Mammals (seen or evidence found)





Seen, tracks / evidence.





<p>Ethiopian Rock Hyrax</p>	<p><i>Procavia habessinica</i></p>	<p>We saw one colony of them on the way from Dinsho to Sodota Camp in Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Grivet Monkey</p>	<p><i>Chlorocebus aethiops</i></p>	<p>Seen at the Awash Falls Lodge. Close encounter (grabbing our breakfast bread).</p>	
<p>Bale Mountains Vervet</p>	<p><i>Chlorocebus djamdjamensis</i></p>	<p>Sighting of one group eating Bambus in Harena Forest in Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Olive Baboon</p>	<p><i>Papio anubis</i></p>	<p>A couple of sightings in Gaysay Grassland and in Harena Forest in Bale Mountains. (30+ each)</p>	






<p>Hamadryas Baboon</p>	<p><i>Papio hamadryas</i></p>	<p>One sighting of a big group in Filwuha Camp in Awash NP.</p>	
<p>Gelada Baboon</p>	<p><i>Theropithecus gelada</i></p>	<p>Good view of a group in Debre Libanos. They seem to come and grass in the village surroundings everyday at some point in the late morning.</p>	
<p>Guereza Colobus</p>	<p><i>Colobus guereza</i></p>	<p>A couple (5+) of sightings of different groups in Harena Forest in Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Crested Porcupine</p>	<p><i>Hystrix cristata</i></p>	<p>One sighting at midnight in Filwuha Camp in Awash NP and a second sighting at night again in Alledeghe.</p>	






<p>Abyssinian Hare</p>	<p><i>Lepus habessinicus</i></p>	<p>50+ Individuals in Awash NP Alledegue.</p>	
<p>Ethiopian Highland Hare</p>	<p><i>Lepus starcki</i></p>	<p>One individual in Sodota Camp at dawn. Seven sightings more on Sanetti Plateau, Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Blick's grass rat</p>	<p><i>Arvicanthis blicki</i></p>	<p>Quiet common throughout the whole trekking from Dinsho to Sanetti Plateau.</p>	
<p>Unidentified mouse</p>		<p>We saw three individuals in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Unidentified gerbil</p>		<p>We saw two gerbils in Awash National Park.</p>	
<p>Black-clawed brush-furred Rat</p>	<p><i>Lophuromys melanonyx</i></p>	<p>We have seen at least 3 colonies on the way from Dinsho to Sodota, Bale Mountains.</p>	




<p>Giant Mole Rat</p>	<p><i>Tachyoryctes microcephalus</i></p>	<p>We saw about 6 individuals on Sanetti Plateau, Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>African Wild Cat</p>	<p><i>Felis lybica</i></p>	<p>One sighting in Awash National Park and 10+ sightings in Alledegue!!! All during night drives.</p>	
<p>Serval</p>	<p><i>Leptailurus serval</i></p>	<p>Two sightings of probably the same individual in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains.</p> <p>Our guide told us that unfortunately there has been 4 road kills in 2017 and that there are probably not many left. Let's hope they will recover and protect this area from road kills.</p>	
<p><i>Lion</i></p>	<p><i>Panthera leo</i></p>	<p>We heard to individuals all night long in Filwuha Camp and tried to see them early morning when they were really close but we only found fresh tracks.</p>	
<p>African Civet</p>	<p><i>Civettictis civetta</i></p>	<p>One sighting during a night drive in Harena Forest, Bale Mountains</p>	

Abyssinian genet	<i>Genetta abyssinica</i>	One sighting during a night drive in Alledegue (nearby Animalia Lodge)	
Common genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>	One sighting during a night drive in Awash National Park.	
Rusty-spotted genet	<i>Genetta maculata</i>	Not sure of this ID but seen in a night drive in Awash National Park.	
Egyptian mongoose	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>	Almost sure we had a (very) quick glimpse of one individual on a night drive in Awash National Park.	
Spotted hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	Seen five individuals on night drives in Harena Forest, Bale Mountains. 10+ individuals in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains. 7 individuals more in Awash National Park and two individuals more in Alledegue.	
Aardwolf	<i>Proteles cristata</i>	One sighting during a night drive in Awash National Park and one sighting in Alledegue on a night drive.	

<p>African golden wolf</p>	<p><i>Canis anthus</i></p>	<p>One individual crossing the road in Harena Forest, Bale Mountains.</p> <p>Several sightings in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains but probably the same individual.</p> <p>Three sightings in Awash National Park and about 20+ in Alledegue.</p>	
<p>Black-backed jackal</p>	<p><i>Canis mesomelas</i></p>	<p>One sighting during a night drive in Awash National Park.</p>	
<p>Ethiopian wolf</p>	<p><i>Canis simensis</i></p>	<p>A total of 19 sightings in Bale Mountains.</p> <p>We saw 4 individuals between Dinsho and Sodota, 5 individuals in the Sodota surroundings, 2 individuals in Wasema, 5 individuals between Wasema and Sanetti Plateau and finally 3 individuals on the Sanetti Plateau.</p>	
<p>Bat-eared fox</p>	<p><i>Otocyon megalotis</i></p>	<p>Six individuals in Awash National Park during night drives.</p> <p>We also saw five individuals in Alledegue also on a night drive.</p>	

Grevy's zebra	<i>Equus grevyi</i>	We had one sighting of four individuals in Alledegue far far far away.	
Common warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	10+ in Dinsho. 50+ individuals in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains. Three individuals in Awash National Park and two more in Alledegue.	
Giant forest hog	<i>Hylochoerus meinertzhageni</i>	We saw 7 individuals on night drives in Harena Forest, Bale Mountains.	
Bushpig	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>	One sighting of a group of about 5 individuals on a night drive in Harena Forest, Bale Mountains.	
Soemmerring's gazelle	<i>Nanger soemmerringii</i>	We saw six individuals in Awash National Park and 10+ individuals in Alledegue.	
Gerenuk	<i>Litocranius walleri</i>	10+ sightings in Alledegue.	

<p>Salt's dik-dik</p>	<p><i>Madoqua saltiana</i></p>	<p>20+ sightings in Awash National Park and 20+ in Alledegue.</p>	
<p>Klipspringer</p>	<p><i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i></p>	<p>One sighting of two individuals spotlighting at night in Wasema, Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Mountain Nyala</p>	<p><i>Tragelaphus buxtoni</i></p>	<p>10+ individuals in Dinsho. A group of about 10 individuals on the way from Dinsho to Sodota. 100+ individuals in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains.</p>	
<p>Lesser kudu</p>	<p><i>Tragelaphus imberbis</i></p>	<p>We saw 5 individuals in Awash National Park.</p>	
<p>Menelik's Bushbuck</p>	<p><i>Tragelaphus meneliki</i></p>	<p>10+ sightings in Dinsho and about 50+ in Harena Forest on night drives.</p>	

<p>Common duiker</p>	<p><i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i></p>	<p>50+ individuals in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains, mostly at night.</p>	
<p>Beisa Oryx</p>	<p><i>Oryx beisa</i></p>	<p>10+ individuals in Awash National Park and about 20+ in Alledegue.</p>	
<p>Waterbuck</p>	<p><i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i></p>	<p>We have spotted 6 individuals at Filwuha Camp, Awash National Park.</p>	
<p>Bohor reedbuck</p>	<p><i>Redunca redunca</i></p>	<p>One individual in Dinsho and 100+ in Gaysay Grassland, Bale Mountains.</p>	