

An aerial photograph of a savanna landscape. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by a large, irregularly shaped pond with a dark, still surface. The surrounding terrain is a mix of dry, brownish-yellow grasslands and patches of dense, green forest. The background shows rolling hills and more forested areas under a hazy sky. The overall scene is a vast, open natural environment.

**Mammalwatching in Garamba National Park
Democratic Republic of Congo**

Mathias D'haen

Introduction

As a master student I am currently based in Garamba National Park to collect the data for my thesis on the local Kordofan giraffe population, a subspecies of the Northern giraffe (*G. camelopardalis antiquorum*), all this through my university in Czech republic (Czech University of life Sciences) and with help of the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) and its partners.

I am here for nearly a year now and apart for the research I've been trying to focus myself on getting a thorough understanding of what's flying, creeping and running around in the park – I will stick to mammals in this report.

As I've been living here it's difficult to give a day-to-day itinerary or even to give a breakdown of places to visit in the surrounding. The park's management, a joint venture of Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) and African Parks (AP) is making a huge progress in terms of securing and developing the area but real hotspots for naturalists haven't been established yet – for now species are to be found in equal densities everywhere in the park.

Therefore it makes sense that I limit myself to giving a breakdown of the species that I've seen so far and what more species could be expected based on historical records.

All photos and observations can also be found on: <https://observation.org/user/view/40842>

Location and Vegetation



1. Garamba NP being nestled in the northeastern corner of the DRC

Other than what most people think, the DRC is not only forest – Garamba, lying in DRC's north eastern corner on the border with South Sudan, is actually mostly savannah and being a part of the sudano-guinean savannah belt. The peripheries of the park consist of much denser vegetation – forests home to Bongo's and Chimpanzees.



2. Typical sparsely wooded savannah habitat in Garamba National Park



3. The more densely forested peripheries – home to bongo and chimpanzees

Visiting possibilities

Garamba has had its fair part of violence in the last 15 years, but the management is making huge progress and hoping to soon start accepting tourists with whom the uniqueness of the place can be shared.

Check <https://www.african-parks.org/the-parks/garamba/visit-the-park> for the last official news on possibilities to visit.

Observed species

- 1 **Lelwel Hartebeest** *Alcelaphus buselaphus lelwel*
Common.
- 2 **Blue duiker** *Cephalophus monticola aequatorialis*
Rarely seen.
- 3 **Red-flanked duiker** *Cephalophus rufilatus rubidior*
Common.
- 4 **Yellow-backed duiker** *Cephalophus silvicutor*
In the more densely vegetated parts of the park. Rarely seen but good densities in the adjacent peripheries of the park.
- 5 **Northern Giraffe** *Giraffa camelopardalis antiquorum*
Not too difficult to see but low densities and restricted to some parts of the park.
- 6 **Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibious*
Common.
- 7 **Roan antelope** *Hippotragus equinus bakeri*
Uncommon.
- 8 **Giant Forest hog** *Hylochoerus meinertzhageni*
Rarely seen but this is probably due to their secretive lifestyle.
- 9 **Waterbuck** *Kobus ellipsyprimnus defassa*
Common.
- 10 **Kob** *Kobus kob thomasi*
Common.
- 11 **Oribi** *Ourebia ourebi*
Common, though difficult to spot during wet season.
- 12 **Common warthog** *Phacochoerus africanus*
Common.
- 13 **Bohor reedbuck** *Redunca redunca cottoni*
Common, though difficult to spot during wet season.
- 14 **Bush duiker** *Sylvicapra grimmia roosevelti*
Common, though difficult to spot during wet season.
- 15 **African buffalo** *Syncerus caffer caffer*
Common.
- 16 **Bushbuck** *Tragelaphus scriptus*
Common.
- 17 **Sitatunga** *Tragelaphus spekei gratus*
Rarely seen, restricted to the papyrusmarshes in the more forested parts of the park.
- 18 **Marsh mongoose** *Atilax paludinosus*
Never seen, camera trap observations.
- 19 **Black-legged mongoose** *Bdeogale nigripes*
Rarely seen.
- 20 **Side-striped jackal** *Canis adustus*
Common.
- 21 **African Palm civet** *Nandinia binotata*
Common.
- 22 **Spotted hyaena** *Crocuta crocuta*
Common.
- 23 **Pousargues's mongoose** *Dologale dybowskyi*

Probably not uncommon but only a few observations as they have a very secretive lifestyle. The observations were only some of a handful of observations of this species in the last 50 years. Published article:
<http://nebula.wsimg.com/30b832300e2842a12b99724a1fc7c220?AccessKeyId=35E369A09ED705622D78&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

- 24 **Serval cat** *Felis serval*
Common but rarely seen.
- 25 **Blotched genet** *Genetta tigrina aequatorialis*
Common.
- 26 **Ichneumon (Egyptian) mongoose** *Herpestes Ichneumon*
Rarely seen, mostly camera trap.
- 27 **White tailed mongoose** *Ichneumon albicauda*
Common. Interestingly only melanistic animals are observed. Never has a normally collared animal been seen.
- 28 **Ratel (Honey badger)** *Mellivora capensis*
Uncommon.
- 29 **Lion** *Panthera leo*
Common.
- 30 **Leopard** *Panthera pardus*
Common but rarely seen.
- 31 **Yellow-winged bat** *Lavia frons*
Common.
- 32 **Dwarf epauletted fruit bat** *Micropteropus pusillus*
Common.
- 33 **Tomb bat** *Taphozous sudani*
Common.
- 34 **Uganda grass-hare** *Poelagus marjorita*
Common.
- 35 **Lesser elephant shrew** *Elephantulus* sp.
Common.
- 36 **Tree pangolin** *Phataginus tricuspis*
Uncommon. Extremely difficult to find. Only observation I did was a living confiscated animal.
- 37 **Tantalus monkey** *Cercopithecus aethiops tantalus*
Common.
- 38 **De Brazza's monkey** *Cercopithecus neglectus*
Common.
- 39 **Patas monkey** *Cercopithecus patas pyrrhonotus*
Uncommon.
- 40 **Guereza colobus** *Colobus guereza occidentalis*
Common.
- 41 **Chimpanzee** *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthi*
Uncommon. Only in the outermost and densest forests in the peripheries.
- 42 **Olive baboon** *Papio Anubis*
Common.
- 43 **Forest elephant** *Loxodonta cyclotis*
The park is believed to have hybrids between savannah and forest elephant. I've never seen the genetic evidence of this, nor have I experience with forest elephants but will add some photos so you can give me your opinion.
- 44 **Savannah elephant** *Loxodota africana*

- Idem Forest elephant.
- 45 **Giant pouched rat** *Cricetomys gambianus*
Uncommon.
- 46 **Gambian sun squirrel** *Heliosciurus gambianus*
Uncommon.
- 47 **Red-legged sun squirrel** *Heliosciurus rufobrachium*
Uncommon.
- 48 **Boehm's bush squirrel** *Paraxerus boehmi*
Common.
- 49 **Crested porcupine** *Hystrix cristata*
Common.
- 50 **Multimammate rat** *Mastomys coucha*
Common.
- 51 **Aardvark** *Orycteropus afer*
Low densities and a very elusive mammal to see but probably fairly good numbers in the park.



From left top in clockwise direction: Lions, Northern giraffe (Kordofan subspecies), Sitatunga (young male) and Roan antelope (adult male).



From left top in clockwise direction: Hybrid Elephant?, Red-flanked duiker, Palm civet, melanistic White-tailed mongoose, Pousargues' mongoose, Bushbuck

Species of historical specieslist that haven't been observed yet

- 1 **Red river hog** *Potamochoerus porcus*
 Uncommon but very difficult to see due to there elusive lifestyle.
- 2 **Giant eland (Derby's eland)** *Taurotragus derbianus gigas*
 Believed to be extinct.
- 3 **Bongo** *Tragelahus euryceros euryceros*
 Only to be found in the thickest forests in the park, this in combination with its elusive lifestyle makes it difficult to spot one.
- 4 **African clawless otter** *Aonyx capensis*
 One day...
- 5 **African civet** *Civettictis civetta*
- 6 **Golden cat** *Felis aurata*
 No observations in the last years – something for the cameratraps
- 7 **Wild cat** *Felis sylvestris rubida*
- 8 **Slender mongoose** *Herpestes sanguinea*
- 9 **Spot-necked otter** *Lutra maculicollis*
 See African clawless otter.
- 10 **Wild dog** *Lycaon pictus*
 Believed to be extinct.
- 11 **Banded mongoose** *Mungos mungo*
- 12 **Straw-coloured fruit bat** *Eidolon helvum*
- 13 **Singing fruit bat** *Epomops frangueti*
- 14 **Serotine bat** *Eptesicus garambae*
- 15 **Serotine bat** *Eptesicus minutus*
- 16 **Serotine bat** *Eptesicus rendalli*
- 17 **Butterfly bat** *Glauconycteris alboguttata*
- 18 **Leaf-nosed bat** *Hipposideros abae*
- 19 **Leaf-nosed bat** *Hipposideros beatus*
- 20 **Leaf-nosed bat** *Hipposideros caffer*
- 21 **Leaf-nosed bat** *Hipposideros cyclops*
- 22 **Leaf-nosed bat** *Hipposideros nanus*
- 23 **Moloney's flat-headed bat** *Mimetillus moloneyi*
- 24 **Collared fruit bat** *Myonycteris wroughtoni*
- 25 **Chauve-souris à queue bifurquée** *Nycteris arge*
- 26 **Slit-faced Bat** *Nycteris grandis*
- 27 **Slit-faced Bat** *Nycteris hispida*
- 28 **Slit-faced Bat** *Nycteris luteola*
- 29 **Slit-faced Bat** *Nycteris nana*
- 30 **Slit-faced Bat** *Nycteris thebaïca*
- 31 *Nyctinomus ansorgei*
- 32 **Giant Mastiff Bat** *Otomops martiensseni*
- 33 **Pipistrelles** *Pipistrellus culex*

34	Pipistrelles	<i>Pipistrellus</i>	<i>nanus</i>
35	Horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus</i>	<i>abae</i>
36	Horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus</i>	<i>alcyone</i>
37	Horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus</i>	<i>landeri</i>
38	Rousette bat	<i>Rousettus</i>	<i>sp</i>
39	Evening bat	<i>Scoteinus</i>	<i>schlieffenii (albiventer)</i>
40	House bat	<i>Scotophilus</i>	<i>nigrita</i>
41	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>(Mops) midas</i>
42	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>condylura</i>
43	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>faradjius</i>
44	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>major</i>
45	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>pumila</i>
46	Guano bat	<i>Tadarida</i>	<i>trevori</i>
47	Tomb bat	<i>Taphozous</i>	<i>mauritanus</i>
48	Tomb bat	<i>Taphozous</i>	<i>nudiventris</i>
49	Black-necked rock hyrax	<i>Procavia</i>	<i>johnstoni</i>
50	African hedgehog	<i>Atelerix</i>	<i>albiventris</i>
51	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>b. planiceps</i>
52	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>b. tephrogaster</i>
53	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>boydi</i>
54	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>caliginea</i>
55	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>f. sururae</i>
56	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>hildegardae</i>
57	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>jacksoni</i>
58	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>littoralis</i>
59	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>luna garambae</i>
60	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>nanilla</i>
61	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>pasha</i>
62	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>roosevelti</i>
63	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>suajhela</i>
64	White-toothed Shrew	<i>Crocidura</i>	<i>turba nilotica</i>
65	Giant otter shrew	<i>Potamogale</i>	<i>velox</i>
66	Climbing shrew	<i>Sylvisorex</i>	<i>granti</i>
67	Climbing shrew	<i>Sylvisorex</i>	<i>megalura</i>
68	Cape hare	<i>Lepus</i>	<i>capensis</i>
69	Scrub hare	<i>Lepus</i>	<i>saxatilis</i>
70	Chequered elephant shrew	<i>Rhynchocyon</i>	<i>cirnei</i>
71	White rhinoceros	<i>Ceratotherium</i>	<i>simum cottoni</i>
			<i>Extinct for more than 10 years now...</i>
72	Giant pangolin	<i>Smutsia</i>	<i>gigantean</i>
			<i>Should be around, difficult to spot</i>
73	Agile mangabey	<i>Cercocebus</i>	<i>agilis</i>

74	Red-tailed monkey	<i>Cercopithecus</i>	<i>ascanius</i>	
75	Dent's monkey	<i>Cercopithecus</i>	<i>mona denti</i>	
76	Demidoff's galago	<i>Galago</i>	<i>demidoffanomurus</i>	
77	Senegal galago	<i>Galago</i>	<i>senegalensis senegalensis</i>	
78	Central African red colobus	<i>Piliocolobus</i>	<i>oustaleti oustaleti</i>	
79	Bush rat	<i>Aethomys</i>	<i>hindei</i>	
80	Lord Derby's anomalure	<i>Anomalurus</i>	<i>derbianus</i>	
		<i>Extremely secretive, only to be found in the dense forests</i>		
81	Unstriped grass rat	<i>Arvicanthis</i>	<i>niloticus</i>	
82	Brush-tailed porcupine	<i>Atherurus</i>	<i>africanus</i>	
		<i>Shouldn't be too difficult. Need to spend more time in the dense forests.</i>		
83	Shaggy swamp rat	<i>Dasymys</i>	<i>incomtus</i>	
84	Climbing mice	<i>Dendromus</i>	<i>mesomelas</i>	
85	Climbing mice	<i>Dendromus</i>	<i>messorius</i>	
86	Climbing mice	<i>Dendromus</i>	<i>mystacalis</i>	
87	Striped ground squirrel	<i>Euxerus</i>	<i>erythropus</i>	
88	Common blesmol	<i>Fukomys</i>	<i>ochraceocinereus</i>	
89	Thoma's rope squirrel	<i>Funisciurus</i>	<i>anerythrus</i>	
90	African dormice	<i>Graphiurus</i>	<i>lorraineus</i>	
91	Zebra mice	<i>Lemniscomys</i>	<i>macculus</i>	
92	Zebra mice	<i>Lemniscomys</i>	<i>striatus</i>	
93	Brush-furred mice	<i>Lophuromys</i>	<i>sikapusi</i>	
94	Long-footed rat	<i>Malacomys</i>	<i>sp.</i>	
95	Pygmy mouse	<i>Mus</i>	<i>minutoides</i>	
96	Common mice	<i>Mus</i>	<i>sorella</i>	
97	Gray-bellied pygmy mouse	<i>Mus</i>	<i>triton</i>	
98	Mill rat	<i>Myiomyys</i>	<i>dybowski</i>	
99	Rusty-nosed rat	<i>Oenomys</i>	<i>hypoxanthus</i>	
100	Groove-toothed rat	<i>Otomys</i>	<i>tropicalis</i>	
101	Jackson's praomys, Jackson's soft-furred mouse			<i>Praomy</i>
		<i>jacksoni</i>		
102	African giant squirrel	<i>Protoxerus</i>	<i>stangeri</i>	
103	Fat mice	<i>Steatomys</i>	<i>opimus.</i>	
104	Savannah cane-rat	<i>Thryonomis</i>	<i>gregorianus</i>	
105	Marsh cane-rat	<i>Thryonomis</i>	<i>swinderianus</i>	
106	Uranomys mouse	<i>Uranomys</i>	<i>ruddi</i>	



From left top in clockwise direction: Black-legged mongoose, Yellow-backed duiker, Leopard, Ugandan grass-hare, Aardvark, Giant forest hog