

ETHIOPIA (12th-20th Jan 2026)



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Birding and mammal watching tours in Eastern Poland

Three of us from Poland (Tomek Tumiel, Piotrek Świętochowski & me, Oliwier Myka) decided to continue to explore Eastern Africa & after our successful self-drive trip in Kenya in January 2024 we chose Ethiopia.

This time we used a local tour operator, Armaye Tours. They were nice, solid & quite cheap. Armaye send with us a good guy, Ermi, who was our driver & guide. The only disadvantage is that we were agreed with Armaye to use their binoculars (which you can not bring to Ethiopia) – it turned out that those were two pairs of shitty binos to share amongst all of us incl. Ermi. Anyway, we recommend Armaye Tours.

The plan was to fly to (& back) Addis Abeba & then spend 8 days (7 nights) exploring:

- Awash NP & Aledoghi Reserve (2 nights, camping in the village nearby A1 road)
- Bale Mountains (2 nights, camping in Sodota Campsite)
- Hareenna Forest (2 nights, camping near Bale Mountain Lodge)
- Debre Lebanos & Addis Abeba (1 night, finally hotel & running water after 6 nights & inbound flight)
- After midnight on 20th January we had flight back to Poland.

We like tough conditions so the trip was super fun. Overall we have observed 34 mammal species in 8 days. Saw more than we expected & amongst mammals were surprised by:

- a total of 5 Serval Cats seen really easily at Gaysay & on the way from Gaysay to Sodota. Afternoons seem very good for them there (look at the pic from front page!).
- a total of 4 Aardwolfs seen on one nightdrive (!) in Aledoghi.
- 2 different Aardvarks seen in Aledoghi + glimpse of Caracal while observing one of them.

We only missed Giant Forest Hog in Hareenna forest – actually if I have choice again I would have shorten our stay there (hard conditions for spotlighting) for one additional night in Aledoghi. We have not seen Klipspringer either but they seem rare in Bale Mountains now.

Below a list of the species with pictures made by me. Camera was only optical equipment I was allowed to have (no thermal imager, no binoculars, no scope...). However they didn't check us properly on arrival & if I have binoculars under my jacket it would go through customs easily.

walking Serval Cat & barking Ethiopian Wolf video: <https://youtu.be/VZ5fJiQihU>

Contact details if needed: oliwier@wildlifeguide.pl



1. **Olive Baboon**
Common in Awash.



2. **Salt's Dik Dik**
A few individuals seen in Awash (especially) & Aledeghi.



3 & 4. Beisa Oryx & Soemering's Gazelle

Oryx seen both in Awash & Aledoghi, Gazelle only in Aledoghi, including this impressive herd of ca. 100 Oryx & ca. 50 Gazelles.



5. Crested Porcupine

Six individuals seen during night drives in Aledoghi, one in Harena Forest.



6. African Golden Wolf
Quite common in Aledoghi.



7. Warthog

A few individuals seen in Aledoghi & Gaysay grasslands.



8. Gravy's Zebra

Three individuals seen in Aledoghi. Super shy.



9. Gerenuk

Nine individuals in total seen in Aledoghi. Only in the afternoons.



10. Bat-eared Fox

Quite common during night drives in Aledoghi.



11. Abyssinian Hare

Quite common during night drives in Aledoghi.



12. Aardvark

Two (different) individuals seen during 2nd night drive in Aledoghi. Nice surprise.



13. Caracal

One individual seen during 2nd night drive in Aledoghi. Nice surprise.



14. African Wild Cat

One individual seen during 2nd night drive in Aledeghi.



15. Aardwolf

Four individuals (!) seen during 2nd night drive in Aledeghi. Plus one in the daytime near the den (?) – more or less around 9.35 N, 40.37 E - on a previous day.



16. Hamadryas Baboon

A troop seen on travel day near Aledeghi, on the way to Bale Mountains.



17. Serval Cat

Five individuals (!) seen during more or less 4 hrs in total on Gaysay Grasslands & vicinity, incl. three in the daytime. Highlight of the trip!



18. Common Duiker

One individual seen on the way to Sodota Campsite to Bale Mountains.



19. Giant Mole Rat
Common around Sodota Campsite.



20 & 21. Mountain Nyala & Bohor Reedbuck
Common at Gaysay Grasslands.



22. Spotted Hyena

One individual seen at Gaysay Grasslands + two briefly at Aledoghi.



23. Marsh Mongoose

One individual seen on the way to Sodota Campsite to Bale Mountains
(7°01'02.9"N 39°43'27.5"E).



24. Ethiopian Wolf

A few individuals seen in Bale Mountains.



25. Rock Hyrax

One individual seen near Sodota Campsite.



26. Ethiopian Highland Hare

Three individuals seen near Sodota Campsite



27. African Civet

One individual seen in Harennu Forest.



28. Bushpig

Quite common in Harennu Forest.



29. Menelik's Bushbuck

One individual seen in Harennna Forest.



30. Black & White Colobus Monkey

Quite common in Harennna Forest.



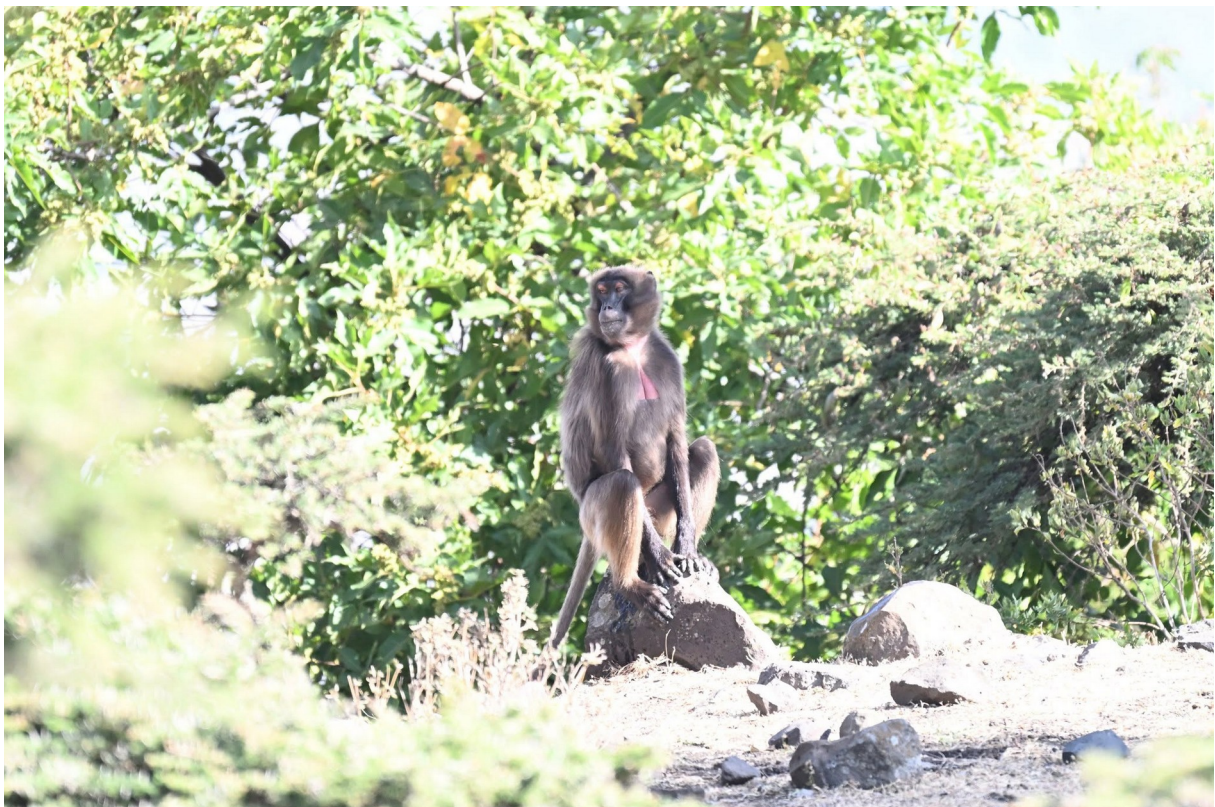
31. Bale Monkey

A troop of seven individuals seen in Hareenna Forest.



32. White-tailed Mongoose

One individual seen in Harena Forest.



33. Gelada

A few individuals seen in Debre Lebanos.



34. Vervet Monkey

One individual seen stealing food somewhere on the way near Addis Abeba.