

Birds of the East Usambara Mountains

Birds are perhaps the best known animal group in the East Usambaras. The famous ornithologist, Reginald Moreau, resided in Amani in the 1920-40s and is largely responsible for the knowledge on birds of these mountains. His findings included discoveries of new species, one of which has been named in his honor (long-billed tailorbird, *Orthotomus moreaui*). He was followed by Simon Stuart who investigated the ecology of forest birds in the Amani-Sigi area from 1979-1981. Other bird researchers have also greatly enriched our understanding of bird life in these vastly rich mountains.

At present there are over 350 species recorded from lowland and montane habitats, covering the entire span of mountain ranges that form the East Usambaras (Nilo and Mtai to Amani and Magoroto). For comparison, Finland has 330 times more area than the East Usambaras and yet only 400 species of birds.

Of these bird species, 12 are on the globally threatened bird list and are therefore one of the Amani Nature Reserve's primary foci for future conservation efforts. Four very rare forest species occur here and are therefore very much sought after by visiting birders: long-billed tailorbird, Sokoke scops owl *Otus ireneae*, Usambara eagle-owl *Bubo vosseleri*, and Tanzanian weaver *Ploceus nicolli*.



Posterby: N.J.Cordeiro

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African broadbill
Smithornis capensis
Photo: V. Pohjonen



Red-headed bluebill
Spermophaga ruficapilla
Photo: V. Pohjonen



Green-backed twinspot
Mandigoa nitidula
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Tambourine dove
Turtur tympanistria
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Red-capped robin chat
Cossypha natalensis
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Yellow-throated warbler
Phylloscopus ruficapilla
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



White-chested alethe
Alethe fuellebornii
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Yellow-streaked greenbul
Phyllastrephus flavostriatus
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Collared sunbird
Anthreptes collaris
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Shelley's greenbul
Andropadus masukuensis
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Striped-cheek greenbul
Andropadus milanjensis
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Olive sunbird
Nectarinia olivacea
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Tropical boubou
Laniarius aethiopicus
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



African paradise flycatcher
Terpsiphone viridis
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Square-tailed drongo
Dicrurus ludwigii
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



White-eared barbet
Stactolaema leucotis
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Scaly francolin
Francolinus squamatus
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



African goshawk
Accipiter tachiro
Photo: N.J. Cordeiro



Brown-hooded kingfisher
Halcyon albiventris
Photo: V. Pohjonen



Retz's helmet shrike
Prionops retzii
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