

African Waterfowl Census Report for Uganda

January 2012



June 2012

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1.1 Introduction

Uganda as a country is strategically located to cover a high diversity of habitats suitable for all kinds of birds. This includes among others the forests, woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and open waters. The diversity of habitats makes Uganda one of the richest countries in terms of bird species compared to its size in Africa. The wetlands and open waters are good places for feeding, breeding and roosting of the water birds. It is estimated that over 200 species of birds in the country are migrants. Currently, *Nature* Uganda has established 28 sites where regular monitoring of water birds is done every January and July.

1.2 Objectives of the surveys

The survey is designed to strengthen the water bird monitoring program and produce a detailed analysis of habitats, trends and migratory bird patterns in Uganda during January and July of every year.

Specifically the surveys are aimed at accomplishing the following;

- Providing a clear description of migratory bird patterns, including resting and breeding sites, within Uganda.
- Conducting bird surveys every year in January and July, in all sites monitored within Uganda. These surveys estimate bird numbers using total counts and provide opportunities for trend analyses.
- Providing a platform for training to young enthusiastic individuals in water bird monitoring and improving the skills of the experienced participants.

1.3 Survey procedures

Attempts are always made to follow the same routes as the previous counts. Therefore the methods and modes of counts are often maintained. The counts on relatively open water are carried out on boats moving close to the shores at a relatively slow speed. Counts on wetlands and smaller crater lakes are done on foot moving round the site. Motorable and open areas are sometimes done in slow moving vehicles with several stopovers. Difficult areas to move through are done by standing at a single strategic point and then telescopes are used to scan the area. Efforts are made to ensure that total counts of all the water birds in the target sites are made. Data recording sheets are provided to all the teams.

1.4 Participants for January 2012 African waterfowl censuses

Due to limited funds some of the counts were not done for this period in the Eastern, Central and Southern regions of the country. The South Western region had Richard Ssemmanda, as the team leader, assisted by Phionah Mwesige, Deo Muhumuza, Andrew Opeto, Peter Achoroi and Robert Adaruku. Only two sites were done in the central region by one team led by Deo Muhumuza assisted by Phionah Mwesige and Sandra Sayuni. In MFNP, the team comprised of Wellborn Ojara, Michael Opige, and Geoge Khaphu.

1.5 Results from the survey

1.5.1 Site accounts

In the January 2012 waterfowl census, 24,920 individuals belonging to 84 species were recorded in the 16 sites surveyed. The site that recorded the highest number of birds was Nakiwogo Bay with 8,931 individuals followed by Lutembe bay with 7,073 individuals and then Kazinga Channel with 2,755 individuals. These accounted for 75% of all the individuals recorded during the month. The site with the highest number of

species was Murchison Falls Nile Delta (47), followed by Kazinga Channel (43), and then Kaku swamp (31) and Lutembe bay (31) as shown in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of bird species and individuals recorded for sites surveyed in January 2012 waterfowl counts

Site Name	No. Individuals	No. Species
Bagusa Crater Lake	698	8
Kaku Swamp	450	31
Kasenyei Crater Lake	26	4
Kashaka Landing Site	249	21
Kazinga Channel	2,755	43
Kikorongo-Shoebill Swamp	282	24
Lake Bisina	989	17
Lake Mburo	319	13
Lake Opeta	75	12
Lutembe Bay	7,073	31
Maseche Crater Lake	161	4
Munyanyange Crater Lake	517	16
Murchison Falls Nile Delta	2,326	47
Nakiwogo Bay	8,931	9
Nshenyi Crater Lake	69	7
Total Number	24,920	84

1.5.2 Species accounts

Among the 84 species recorded from the 16 sites surveyed during the January counts, the Long-tailed Cormorant had the highest number of individuals with 6,580 recorded from 10 sites and the number in Nakiwogo bay accounting for 94% of these individuals. This was followed by the Grey-headed Gull with 4,105 individuals 96% of them from Lutembe Bay and then the White-winged Tern with 2,461 individuals.

Notable sightings for this count include the African Snipe (4) recorded on Lutembe bay, Rock Pratincole (2), Senegal Thick-knee (10) and Little Bittern (1) in MF, Gargarney (6) and Red-knobbed Coot (31) in Kaku swamp. The other species that were recorded and their respective numbers in the sites surveyed are shown in the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Results from the Waterfowl census showing sites and species recorded in January 2012

Atlas no.	Species Name	Kaku	Kasenyei	Kashaka Landing Site	Kazinga Channel	Kikorongo Shoebill Swamp	Lake Bagusa	Lake Bisina	Lake Mburo	Lake Nsenyi	Lake Opeta	Lutembe	Maseche	MFNP River Delta	Munyanyange Crater	Nakiwogo	Individuals	Sites
4	Little Grebe	7								20							27	3
12	Pink-backed Pelican	40			11												51	3
17	Long-tailed Cormorant	27			16	4		96	1		31	17		220		6,168	6,580	10
18	Greater Cormorant				446									8		336	790	4
19	African Darter								1					65			66	3
23	Little Bittern													1			1	2
25	Grey Heron	10		1	19	6		12			5	2		22	3		80	10
26	Goliath Heron				8	1		1						9			19	5
27	Black-headed Heron	2			1	2											5	4
28	Purple Heron							6			7	1		33			47	5
30	Common Squacco Heron	9			15	4		37	3		6	30		105			209	9
32	Cattle Egret	17			21	3	14	17				36	1	95		79	283	10
33	Green-backed Heron	1							10		1			2			14	5
34	Great Egret	6															6	2
35	Black Heron				1												1	2
36	Little Egret	2		3	38	1						32		12	6	837	931	9
38	Yellow-billed Egret			2	10	1		1						25			39	6
41	Shoebill													1			1	2
42	Hamerkop			9	53	1			4					1			68	6
43	African Open-billed Stork	74						247			2	7		3			333	6
48	Saddle-billed Stork	2				1								4			7	4
49	Marabou Stork	11		1	7									4			23	5
50	Yellow-billed Stork			4	10									2			16	4
51	Hadada Ibis	16		2	17									54			89	5
53	Glossy Ibis											19		13			32	3
54	Sacred Ibis	8		2	66					4			24	13	4		121	8
55	African Spoonbill				2												2	2
57	Lesser Flamingo						100						13				113	3
59	Fulvous Whistling Duck							2						20			22	3

Atlas no.	Species Name	Kaku	Kasenyi	Kashaka Landing Site	Kazinga Channel	Kikorongo Shoebill Swamp	Lake Bagusa	Lake Bisina	Lake Mburo	Lake Nsenyi	Lake Opeta	Lutembe	Maseche	MFNP River Delta	Munyanyange Crater	Nakiwogo	Individuals	Sites
60	White-faced Whistling Duck					98		152			4			69			323	5
61	Egyptian Goose			10	91	61								69			231	5
69	Garganey	6															6	2
72	Yellow-billed Duck											15				33	48	3
79	Spur-winged Goose	10												166			176	3
80	Knob-billed Duck				3	5								2			10	4
84	Palm-nut Vulture													1			1	2
92	Eurasian Marsh Harrier													1			1	2
95	African Marsh Harrier				1				2								3	3
137	African Fish Eagle			1	23		2		43					23			92	6
144	Osprey													3			3	2
194	Grey Crowned Crane	57		83										10			150	4
199	Common Moorhen	20															20	2
201	Black Crake	4			15			17						61			97	5
215	Red-knobbed Coot	31															31	2
216	African Finfoot								6								6	2
225	African Jacana	11			12	13		36		8	4			186			270	8
226	Lesser Jacana							6		1							7	3
230	Caspian Plover														25		25	2
231	Little Ringed Plover			1								41					42	3
233	Ringed Plover				20							124		4			148	4
238	Kittlitz's Plover		3	5	14	4									35		61	6
239	Three-banded Plover	1															1	2
245	Long-toed Plover	39				3		12		2	3	30		31			120	8
248	Wattled Plover	8			5	2									4		19	5
249	Spur-winged Plover		6	6	80	9	3							44	5		153	8
252	Common Sandpiper	15	16	6	25	14			4	29				54			163	9
253	Eurasian Curlew											3					3	2

Atlas no.	Species Name	Kaku	Kasenyi	Kashaka Landing Site	Kazinga Channel	Kikorongo Shoebill Swamp	Lake Bagusa	Lake Bisina	Lake Mbuuro	Lake Nsenyi	Lake Opeta	Lutembe	Maseche	MFNP River Delta	Munyanyange Crater	Nakiwogo	Individuals	Sites
255	Spotted Redshank											20					20	2
256	Slender-billed Gull											5					5	2
256	Wood Sandpiper	1		26	11	3	4			9		22		37		21	134	10
257	Common Greenshank				5							9		2	1		17	5
258	Green Sandpiper								5			1					6	3
259	Marsh Sandpiper			7	7	3									12		29	5
262	Common Snipe	3															3	2
264	African Snipe											4					4	2
270	Curlew Sandpiper											18					18	2
272	Little Stint		1	21	17	1	4					67			259		370	8
278	Black-tailed Godwit				1							40		1			42	4
279	Ruff				1	37	95			1		218			92		444	7
282	Black-winged Stilt	7		51	4		476					109	123	5	5	87	867	10
283	Pied Avocet														23		23	2
289	Senegal Thick-knee													10			10	2
290	Water Thick-knee			4	57										2		63	4
298	Rock Pratincole													2			2	2
306	Grey-headed Gull				183							3,922					4,105	3
307	Lesser Black-backed Gull				90							4					94	3
314	Black-headed Gull											33					33	2
318	White-winged Tern				5			334		4	6	783		3		1,326	2,461	8
320	Gull-billed Tern				78							1,443					1,521	3
331	African skimmer				552									600			1,152	3
464	Giant Kingfisher								2					2			4	3
465	Pied Kingfisher	3		4	702	5		8	224			14		155		44	1,159	10
466	Malachite Kingfisher	2			12			5	14		1			41			75	7
473	Grey-headed Kingfisher													73			73	2