

African Waterfowl Census

Report for Uganda

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***Nature*Uganda**

**Prepared By
Dianah Nalwanga Wabwire
Research & Monitoring Coordinator**

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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 2013 African waterfowl censuses

Participants for these counts are volunteers mainly interested in birding. They include NU staff and membership plus the Uganda Wildlife Authority rangers/guides. Counts in the

Western region were led by Dianah Nalwanga, as the team leader, assisted by Phionah Mwesige, Lillian Twanza, Keneth Sseguya, Muhumuza Jameson, Peter Achoroi, Robert Ntegeka, Basil Alidria and Nelson Natwijuka. Counts in the sites in the central region were led by Deo Muhumuza and Kasasa Hannington assisted by Michael Opige, Geoffrey Akule, Phionah Mwesige and Keneth Seguya. The Eastern counts were led by Dianah Nalwanga, assisted by Lydia Tushabe. In MFNP, the team comprised of Wellborn Ojara, Michael Opige, and George Khaphu.

1.5 Results from the survey

1.5.1 Site accounts

In the January 2013 waterfowl census, 59,231 individuals belonging to 84 species were recorded in the 20 sites surveyed. The site that recorded the highest number of birds was Lutembe Bay with 37,858 individuals followed by Kibimba Rice Scheme with 4,567 individuals and then Kazinga Channel with 4,018 individuals. The site with the highest number of species was Kazinga Channel (43), followed by Kibimba Rice Scheme (38), and then Murchison Falls Nile Delta (31), and Makanaga bay (30) as shown in the table 1 below.

1.5.2 Species accounts

Among the 84 species recorded from the 20 sites surveyed during the January counts, the White-winged Tern had the highest number of individuals (39,665), with Lutembe bay accounting for 93% of these individuals. This was followed by the Long-tailed Cormorant (1,995) with Nakiwogo bay accounting for 64% of these individuals. The Pied Kingfisher (1,979) followed with 69% of these being recorded along Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth National Park (Table 2).

The most common species were the Pied Kingfisher, Common Sandpiper and African Jacana all recorded in 70% of the 20 sites, followed by the Spur-winded Plover recorded in 65% of the sites and then the Cattle Egret, Black Crake and Grey Heron all recorded in 60% of the sites (Table 2).

Notable sightings for this count include the Dwarf Bittern on Kazinga Channel (1), Sanderling, a rarely recorded species on Kikorongo Crater (2) and Kasenyi Crater (3), Painted Snipe (1) in Doho rice Scheme, and Common Snipe (1) on Mabamba Bay. The other species that were recorded and their respective numbers in the sites surveyed are shown in the Table 2 below.

Table 1: Number of bird species and individuals recorded for sites surveyed in January 2013 waterfowl counts

Site	Individuals	Species
Western Region		
Bagusa Crater	37	4
Kasenyi Crater	82	14
Kashaka Landing Site	169	28
Katwe Salt Lake	255	3
Kazinga Channel	4,018	43
Kikorongo Swamp	103	28
Maseche Crater	163	5
Munyanyange Crater	654	13
Nshenyi Crater	691	10
Lake Mbuo	334	17
Kaku Swamp	760	28
Eastern Region		
Doho Rice Scheme	860	24
Kibimba Rice Scheme	4,567	38
Lake Bisina	576	24
Lake Opeta	329	17
Northern Region		
Murchison Falls A. Nile	1,973	31
Central Region		
Lutembe Bay	37,858	26
Mabamba Bay	208	22
Makanaga Bay	2,124	30
Nakiwogo Bay	3,470	24
Total	59,231	84

Table 2: Results from the Waterfowl census showing sites and species recorded in January 2013

Species Name	Br. No.	Bagusa Crater	Doho Rice Scheme	Kaku Swamp	Kasenyi Crater	Kashaka Landing Site	Katwe Salt Lake	Kazinga Channel	Kibimba Rice Scheme	Kikorongo Swamp	Lake Bisina	Lake Mburo	Lake Opeta	Lutembe Bay	Mabamba Bay	Makanaga Bay	Maseche Crater	Munyanyange Crater	Murchison Falls A. Nile	Nakiwogo Bay	Nshenyi Crater	Grand Total	Sites
Little Grebe	4	28																				28	1
Great White Pelican	11							12														12	1
Pink-backed Pelican	12			15		2		7	2	11	8	8						28		20		101	9
Long-tailed Cormorant	17		9	5				62	57		205		65	49	5	51			201	1286		1995	11
Greater Cormorant	18							281						3		2			12			298	4
African Darter	19								1							1			76			78	3
Little Bittern	23							3				2										5	2
Dwarf Bittern	24							1														1	1
Grey Heron	25		1	3		2		32	15	2	4		1		2			1	22	20		105	12
Goliath Heron	26							5	1	2	4		1		1				14			28	7
Black-headed Heron	27		3	4				1	130	3	6	1										148	7
Purple Heron	28		4					2	25	2	12		16		13	2		2	21			99	10
Common Squacco Heron	30		1	10		3		73	9	9	40		27	13		27			26			238	11
Cattle Egret	32		66	4	2	1		17		1	3		17				3		108	6	66	294	12
Green-backed Heron	33							17			5	18										40	3
Great Egret	34					2		12	4	1	1								10	136		166	7
Little Egret	36		7	6		12		63	44		2			6					8	294		442	9
Yellow-billed Egret	38					1		1	842						1	2			26			873	6

White-backed Night Heron	39									2									2	1			
Black-crowned Night Heron	40															7			7	1			
Hamerkop	42				4		83	5	1		24			2				1	120	7			
African Open-billed Stork	43		651	24				570	1	3		31	3		1			4		1288	9		
Abdim's Stork	44							38												38	1		
White Stork	45							77												77	1		
Saddle-billed Stork	48			2		1		2	1	1										7	5		
Marabou Stork	49					5		2	2									4		13	4		
Yellow-billed Stork	50			18		1		15		2			23			2				61	6		
Hadada Ibis	51			1				10	91	1		4		2				63		172	7		
Glossy Ibis	53												2							2	1		
Sacred Ibis	54			5		1		23	183			1				25	93	15	24	33	403	10	
African Spoonbill	55				1	3		6	69												79	4	
Lesser Flamingo	57														2	361					363	2	
Fulvous Whistling Duck	59		2	63				643										65			773	4	
White-faced Whistling Duck	60		9	108				230		182		4		5	20			90	26		674	9	
Egyptian Goose	61					30		191		2				1		26	33	37	72	4	396	9	
Red-billed Teal	66			15																	15	1	
Hottentot Teal	67											3									3	1	
Yellow-billed Duck	72			27										46	104					88		265	4
Spur-winged Goose	79			3				22						2	6			43		6	82	6	
Knob-billed Duck	80			10				128				54		1	1			8			202	6	
Palm-nut Vulture	84																		2		2	1	
Eurasian Marsh Harrier	92		17					10	1	1		2									31	5	
African Marsh	95		1										4	5	1					2		13	5

Harrier																										
African Fish Eagle	137				1		32		4		69		10		2		1	28	2		149	9				
Grey Crowned Crane	194			342				35	2				3						6			388	5			
Greater Sandplover															11							11	1			
purple Swamphen			2	5											2	1						14	5			
Temminck's Courser					23																	23	1			
Common Moorhen	199			32				9						2								43	3			
Black Crake	201		5	8		1		58	8	1	7	7	4		2	2					30		133	12		
African Finfoot	216												3										3	1		
African Jacana	225		5	32		2		26	78	31	14	1	18	27	59	295					88	16		692	14	
Lesser Jacana	226										8		11		3									22	3	
Painted Snipe	227		2																					2	1	
Little Ringed Plover	231				4			2	341															347	3	
Ringed Plover	233														79									79	1	
Kittlitz's Plover	238				8	46		5											2					61	4	
Long-toed Plover	245		2	9					14	3	7		3	23	23	13					20			117	10	
Wattled Plover	248		1	4																				5	2	
Spur-winged Plover	249	1	2	1	2	6	3	67		3	2					14		5	73	28				207	13	
Common Sandpiper	252				1	6	17	65	847	6	7	5		27	4	2					18	238	42	1285	14	
Spotted Redshank	255			2																					2	1
Wood Sandpiper	256		12			4		14	1	1	4			90		4							5	135	9	
Common Greenshank	257					1		11						11		9									32	4
Marsh Sandpiper	259		8					5	5						4										22	4
Common Snipe	262															1									1	1
Sanderling	267				3					2															5	2
Curlew Sandpiper	270					4																			4	1

Little Stint	272				1	4		7	10	1						1					24	6	
Black-tailed Godwit	278												5								5	1	
Ruff	279	5			2	4							34							86	131	5	
Black-winged Stilt	282	3	36		2			28		4			62		5	107	49		56	355	707	11	
Senegal Thick-knee	289																	11			11	1	
Water Thick-knee	290				2	8		195				6						10	16		237	6	
Grey-headed Gull	306							104							13		7		316		440	4	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	307												18								18	1	
Whiskered Tern	317														3						3	1	
White-winged Tern	318				30		235	115					59	37170		1503		70		720	93	39995	9
Gull-billed Tern	320					12		379			40			182		7						620	5
African skimmer	331							510											426			936	2
Giant Kingfisher	464											1										1	1
Pied Kingfisher	465		3	2	1			1372	10	4	7	151	13	6	12	15			295	88		1979	14
Malachite Kingfisher	466		11			2		102	3	1	4	31		2	16	6			59			237	11
Grey-headed Kingfisher	473																		63			63	1
Individuals		37	860	760	82	169	255	4,018	4,567	103	576	334	329	37,858	208	2,124	163	654	1,973	3,470	691	59,231	
Species		4	24	28	14	28	3	43	38	28	24	17	17	26	22	30	5	13	31	24	10	84	