

African Waterfowl Census

Report for Uganda

July 2012



***Nature*Uganda**

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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 July 2012 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, Richard Ssemmanda, Andrew Opeto, Agnes Nakidde, Robert Adaruku, Peter

Achoroi and Robert Ntegeka. Counts in the sites in the central region were led by Dianah Nalwanga and Raymond Katebaka, assisted by Michael Opige, Geoffrey Akule, Phionah Mwesige, Henry Kizito, Shammim Nabbanja, Maurine Nalwanga, Aidah and Keneth Seguya. The Eastern counts were led by Dianah Nalwanga, assisted by Phionah Mwesige, Geoffrey Akule and Imran Ejotre. In MFNP, the team comprised of Michael Opige, Michael Kibuuka, Taban Bruhan and Geoge Khaphu.

1.5 Results from the survey

1.5.1 Site accounts

In the July 2012 waterfowl census, 117,352 individuals belonging to 84 species were recorded in the 20 sites surveyed. The site that recorded the highest number of birds was Musambwa Islands with 99,330 individuals followed by Kibimba Rice Scheme with 3,610 individuals and then Kazinga Channel with 3,075 individuals. The highest number of species was recorded in Kibimba Rice Scheme and Murchison Falls- Albert Nile (39). This was followed by 36 species in Kazinga Channel and Lutembe Bay, and then Makanaga bay followed with 32 species as shown in the table 1 below.

1.5.2 Species accounts

Among the 84 species recorded from the 20 sites surveyed during the July counts, the Grey-headed Gull had the highest number of individuals (90,544), with Musambwa Islands accounting for 99% of these individuals. This was followed by the Long-tailed Cormorant (9,548) still with Musambwa Islands accounting for 88% of these individuals. The Pied Kingfisher (2,230) followed with 70% of these being recorded along Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth National Park (Table 2).

The most common species were the Pied Kingfisher, Cattle Egret and Spur-winged Plover all recorded in 70% of the 20 sites, followed by the Long-tailed Cormorant and Little Egret recorded in 65% of the sites and then the African Jacana recorded in 60% of the sites (Table 2).

Notable sightings for this count include the Great Snipe, Rufous-bellied Heron and African Water Rail, all recorded on Lake Mburo, White Stork-a Palearctic Migrant recorded in Kibimba Rice Scheme, Common Snipe recorded on Makanaga Bay and the Red-billed Teal recorded in the Kaku swamp. 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 July 2012 waterfowl counts

Sites	Individuals	Species
Western Region		
Bagusa Crater	72	5
Kasenyi Crater	75	10
Kashaka Landing Site	199	15
Kazinga Channel	3,075	36
Kikorongo Crater	163	22
Maseche Crater	950	7
Munyanyange Crater	2,014	12
Nshenyi Crater	212	5
Kaku Swamp	350	28
Lake Mbuoro	255	26
Musambwa Islands	99,330	16
Northern Region		
Murchison Falls Albert Nile	1,436	39
Eastern Region		
Doho Rice Scheme	146	16
Kibimba Rice Scheme	3,610	39
Lake Bisina	86	14
Lake Opeta	36	11
Central Region		
Lutembe Bay	1,471	36
Mabamba Bay	303	17
Makanaga Bay	1,506	32
Nakiwogo Bay	2,063	23
Total	117,352	84

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

BR. NO.	Species Name	Bagusa Crater	Doho Rice Scheme	Kaku Swamp	Kasenyi Crater	Kashaka Landing Site	Kazinga Channel	Kibimba Rice Scheme	Kikorongo Crater	Lake Bisina	Lake Mburo	Lake Opeta	Lutembe Bay	Mabamba Bay	Makanaga Bay	Maseche Crater	Munyanyange Crater	Murchison Falls A. Nile	Musambwa Islands	Nakiwogo Bay	Nshenyi Crater	Individuals	Sites
4	Little Grebe						1												7		73	81	3
11	Great White Pelican												2						7			9	2
12	Pink-backed Pelican			1		78	9	2	8		6										2	106	7
17	Long-tailed Cormorant		15	21			41	57	3	12		2	128	5	133			1	8420	710		9548	13
18	Greater Cormorant						444	9					9		4				483	80		1029	6
19	African Darter							2										117				119	2
23	Little Bittern						1	7			1							3				12	4
25	Grey Heron						11	17	4	5			5					21	3	25		91	8
26	Goliath Heron						4		1		1							18				24	4
27	Black-headed Heron		30	1			2	168	5	1			3		1			6		1		218	10
28	Purple Heron		3	1				36	7	5		1		6	2			16				77	9
29	Madagascar Squacco Heron		1							3			1									5	3
30	Common Squacco Heron		5	2			19	52	1	10	4	8	1		29			3				134	11
31	Rufous-bellied Heron										1											1	1
32	Cattle Egret	17	28	9			30	13	39	1			5			295	125	127	40	12	122	863	14
33	Green-backed Heron							18		3	14							11				46	4
34	Great Egret					1	27	8	4				1					10		1		52	7
35	Black Heron						2											4				6	2
36	Little Egret	36	7	14		8	21	151	4		1		38		10			9	183	347		829	13
38	Yellow-billed Egret							1627										13				1640	2
39	White-backed Night Heron										2											2	1

40	Black-crowned Night Heron									14										14	1			
41	Shoebill							1				1	2			1					5	4		
42	Hamerkop		2	1		13	50	11	2		26		9	2			2				118	10		
43	African Open-billed Stork		3	25				110					5		3			1	2	1		150	8	
45	White Stork							8														8	1	
46	Woolly-necked Stork							3														3	1	
48	Saddle-billed Stork												6	1	1		1	3				12	5	
49	Marabou Stork				4	8	9	2									48					71	5	
50	Yellow-billed Stork						5	1									3					9	3	
51	Hadada Ibis			6			50	176			6						71				1	310	6	
53	Glossy Ibis												18		12						13		43	3
54	Sacred Ibis	9		15		14	20	156					3			96	86	5	200	9		613	11	
55	African Spoonbill						1		1													2	2	
56	Eurasian Spoonbill							5														5	1	
57	Lesser Flamingo	2			37											450	1030					1519	4	
59	Fulvous Whistling Duck			2				21							12							35	3	
60	White-faced Whistling Duck		6	87				5	2		5		5	91			26			79		306	9	
61	Egyptian Goose					2	232		23		2		4		15	2	251	57	10	62		660	11	
66	Red-billed Teal			3																		3	1	
72	Yellow-billed Duck			43							4		39	27	68					83		264	6	
79	Spur-winged Goose			2									2		13			72		2		91	5	
80	Knob-billed Duck			17				84			3	2		10						8		124	6	
92	Eurasian Marsh Harrier			1									1	1								3	3	
95	African Marsh Harrier			1										4	2							7	3	
137	African Fish Eagle			4		1	49		3				5	1	8			36		6		113	9	
144	Osprey																	3				3	1	
194	Grey Crowned Crane		1	27		1		42									21					92	5	
199	Common Moorhen			5				1						2						5		13	4	

201	Black Crake		10	5		2	75	17		11	22	2			3			31	5			183	11
208	African Water Rail										2											2	1
215	Red-knobbed Coot									1												1	1
216	African Finfoot										5											5	1
225	African Jacana		6	34			40	56	16		6	5	6	49	289			83		16		606	12
226	Lesser Jacana			2				3				5			2							12	4
233	Ringed Plover				5																	5	1
238	Kittlitz's Plover				6	26	1		3								7					43	5
245	Long-toed Plover			8				14	7	20		3	31	9	21			17				130	9
246	Senegal Plover						22															22	1
248	Wattled Plover			2			11		1		8											22	4
249	Spur-winged Plover		3		6	5	114	22	23				21		6	3	202	33	4	24	2	468	14
252	Common Sandpiper		25		2		2	340	3		3		11	2	9			2	3			402	11
256	Slender-billed Gull												394									394	1
256	Wood Sandpiper				1			78			2		17									98	4
257	Common Greenshank										1											1	1
259	Marsh Sandpiper							190														190	1
262	Common Snipe														4							4	1
263	Great Snipe										1											1	1
272	Little Stint												4		1							5	2
282	Black-winged Stilt	8			5	17							10			103	202				14	359	7
283	Pied Avocet																46					46	1
289	Senegal Thick-knee																	20				20	1
290	Water Thick-knee				5	21	80		1		12						1	6				126	7
298	Rock Pratincole																	6				6	1
300	Common Pratincole						57															57	1
306	Grey-headed Gull						10						386		115			89955	78			90544	5
307	Lesser Black-backed Gull												2									2	1
314	Black-headed Gull												1		2							3	2
318	White-winged Tern						1	87				1	241	176	603					435		1544	7

320	Gull-billed Tern						4						3		27		15					49	4
331	African skimmer						3										135		4			142	3
464	Giant Kingfisher										2						4					6	2
465	Pied Kingfisher			11	4		1567	3	4	11	94		52	4	2	1		409	3	65		2230	14
466	Malachite Kingfisher		1			2	60	8			15	1	5	8	6			30				136	10
	Individuals	72	146	350	75	199	3,075	3,610	163	86	255	36	1,471	303	1,506	950	2,014	1,436	99,330	2,063	212	117,352	20
	Species	5	16	28	10	15	36	39	22	14	26	11	36	17	32	7	12	39	16	23	5	84	