

Appendix 2: Itineraries

Full length Ethiopian trip for the person who wants to see everything.

- KEY: → **Route** gives a very brief description of the route.
→ **Roads** gives a brief, generalized description of the road.
- Excellent tar** - no obstructions to be expected, can drive at the speed limit.
 - Good tar** - generally no limit on the speed, but occasional potholes or other obstructions may occur which require you to slow down to walking pace to navigate, so an average speed of 80 km/h is usually possible.
 - Poor tar** - regular potholes, many of which cannot be avoided, so an average speed of 50 km/h is usually possible.
 - Bad tar** - in places, potholes so bad that driving next to the road is necessary - if possible. An average speed of 30 km is usually possible.
 - Good gravel** - well graded, with a surface that actually is predominantly gravel. Occasional bad sections require one to drive carefully. An average speed of 60 km/h is usually possible.
 - Medium gravel** - well made, but composed of rock, so very wearing on the tyres, springs & driver so an average speed of 40 km/h is usually the maximum achievable, but the slower the better.
 - Poor gravel** - Not only is the road made of rock, but is quite rough, requiring many areas to be taken at walking pace, so an average speed of 20-30 km/h is to be expected.
 - Bad gravel** - The type of road that has never been maintained. All the drivers concentration must be spent finding the best route to avoid rocks, potholes, etc. Exceedingly tiring to drive, and an average speed of 20 km/h is the upper limit.
 - Disaster area** - Seriously consider walking. This requires low gears in low ratio, and very careful selection of the route, as bouncing the wheels up steps of lava, rock, etc is normal. An average speed of 5 to 8 km/h is to be expected, but remember that that is an average!
 - Off-road driving** - I didn't try any, but can be expected to be worse than any of the above - so basically forget it!
- **Birding** gives a very brief indication of the species that are likely to be of interest to the southern African birder that might occur.
- **Acc.** gives an indication of whether you should camp (preferred) or would need to stay in a hotel. It is not always easy to camp in the bush, partly due to the topography and the population density of Ethiopia.
- **Location** gives the name of the hotel / campsite. There are only 3 "official" campsites that I found in the whole of Ethiopia (Lake Langano, Awash & Nechisar), with only the first having ANY facilities. Otherwise, many "government" hotels permit you to camp in their grounds at between 10% and 30% of the cheapest room rate, but do provide access to toilet & whatever shower facilities are available to other guests (which are often minimal anyway).

Information in red italics indicates that I did not travel to these areas, or - in the case of hotels - did not even see it.

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|---|--|-------------|--|
| 1 | Johannesburg through Beit Bridge to Harare / Chinhoyi (Zimbabwe). | 1140 km - excellent tar | Nil (no time). | Stay / Camp | Harare/Orange Grove Motel, Chinhoyi. |
| 2 | Harare, through Chirundu, Lusaka to Mkushi (Zambia). | 810 km - excellent tar | Chapin's Barbet with minor 10 km diversion. Good Miombo woodland around campsite, including African Thrush. | Camp | Forest Inn, Mkushi. |
| 3 | Mkushi to Shiwa Ngandu (Zambia). | 440 km - good tar 40 km poor gravel | Pale-billed Hornbill, Miombo Pied Barbet, White-headed Saw-wing, Böhm's Flycatcher & Miombo Grey Tit. Anchieta's Barbet & Bar-winged Weaver possible on track to Shiwa Ngandu. | Camp | Kapishya campsite, Shiwa Ngandu. |
| 4 | Shiwa Ngandu through Nakonde to Iringa (Tanzania). | 40 km - poor tar 290 km - good tar 520 km - excellent tar | Not much time for birding, but Bare-faced Go-Away Bird may be seen while driving, and the campsite should produce Ross's Turaco. | Camp | Riverside campsite, Iringa. |
| 5 | Iringa through Morogoro to Arusha (Tanzania) DON'T take the "direct route" - it will take 2 days. | 918 km - excellent tar | Not much time for birding, but Ashy Starling should be seen while driving, and possibly Grasshopper Buzzard & Taveta Golden Weaver. | Camp | Masai campsite, Arusha. |
| 6 | Arusha through Namanga, Nairobi to Isiolo (Kenya). Make arrangements for the "convoy" the next morning. | 110 km - excellent tar 410 km - bad tar | Not much time for birding, but Eastern Chanting Goshawk, Red-rumped Swallow, Pied & Mourning Wheatears, Northern Ant-eating Chat, White-headed Buffalo-Weaver & Purple Grenadier should be seen. | Stay | Bomen Hotel, Isiolo. |
| 7 | Leave at 06:00, and drive to Marsabit (Kenya). Expect to arrive approx. 16:00. | 260 km - bad gravel | A variety of arid bush species including Vulturine Guineafowl may be seen en route, but little will be seen at Marsabit (unless pay entrance fee of US \$20). | Camp | Campsite #2, Marsabit NP. |
| 8 | Leave Marsabit at 06:00, and expect to arrive at Moyale (Ethiopia) at 15:00. There is no reasonable accommodation (or banks) for several hundred km. Can pay for hotel in Kenya Shillings at Moyale. | 250 km - bad gravel | A variety of larks (especially Williams & Masked) to be found ± 25 km from Marsabit, and other species can be found including D'Arnaud's Barbet, Eastern Yellow-billed Hornbill, Pied Wheatear, Yellow-vented Eremomela, Rüppell's Long-tailed Glossy Starling & Magpie Starling. | Stay | Bekele Mola Hotel, Moyale (Ethiopian side) |
| 9 | Drive to Lake Awasa, birding Mega-Yavello area <i>en route</i> . | 530 km - good tar | Even before Mega you are into the endemics, with Stresemann's Bush Crow, White-crowned Starling & White-tailed Swallow. Concentrate on Mega to Yavello stretch. Other species will include Orange-bellied Parrot, Black-billed Wood-hoopoe, Spotted Palm-Thrush, Grey Wren-Warbler, Northern Black Flycatcher, African Grey Flycatcher, Long-tailed Shrike, Northern White-crowned Shrike, Shelley's Starling, Golden-breasted Starling, White-headed Buffalo Weaver, Speckle-fronted Weaver, Baglafaecht Weaver & Brown-rumped Bunting. | Camp | Wabe Shabele #2 Hotel, Awasa. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|--|---|------|-----------------------------------|
| 10 | Bird Lake Awasa hotel grounds in morning, drive to Lake Langano in mid afternoon. | 70 km - bad tar | Bird the hotel grounds and the lakeside walk at Awasa, with Black-winged Lovebird, Nubian & Grey Woodpeckers, Bruce's Green Pigeon, Common Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Lesser Whitethroat, White-breasted White-eye, Northern Puffback Shrike, Thick-billed Raven, Splendid Glossy Starling & African Citril present. Leave no earlier than early afternoon since this is the best "lowland humid forest" area on the trip, and many species can be seen here that might not be found elsewhere. | Camp | Bekele Mola Hotel, Lake Langano. |
| 11 | No driving. | | A good spot for a large variety of migrants and Rift Valley birds, including Yellow-necked Francolin, African Collared Dove, White-bellied Go-Away Bird, Blue-naped Mousebird, Carmine Bee-eater, Red-fronted Barbet, Banded Barbet, Red-winged Bush-Lark, Nightingale, Irania, Whinchat, Isabelline Wheatear, Mountain Rock-Thrush, African Thrush, Ashy & Stout Cisticolas, Buff-bellied Warbler, Northern Crombec, Grey-headed Batis, Rufous Chatterer, Mouse-coloured Penduline Tit, Three-streaked Tchagra, Slate-coloured Boubou, Black-capped Social Weaver, Rüppell's Weaver, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu, & Ortolan Bunting. Spend time in the bush between the hotel and the cliffs to the north. Also look for Black-headed Gull, White Wagtail and Ethiopian Cliff Swallow near the lake. | Camp | Bekele Mola Hotel, Lake Langano. |
| 12 | Bird Abiata-Shala NP, and then to northern Lake Langano hotel. | 50 km - poor gravel | Additional species to be found, with many water-birds such as Lesser Golden Plover, Temminck's Stint, Redshank, Great Black-headed Gull & Gull-billed Tern. Also White-winged Black Tit & Woodchat Shrike. The campsite area has huge Yellow & Grey Wagtail roost nearby. | Camp | Wabe Shabele Hotel, Lake Langano. |
| 13 | Leave early to Lake Ziway, thence to Addis Ababa. | 120 km - poor tar 130 km - good tar | Lake Ziway is supposed to be excellent for water-birds. There are also several small ponds & lakes near to Awash River. Look for Garganey, Common Snipe & Little Ringed Plover. | Stay | Addis Ababa. |
| 14 | Leave on road to Nekempte, pass Gefersa Reservoir, then turn left after another ±5 km to reach the Menagesha-Suba National Forest, continuing south to join Jima road and return to Addis Ababa. | 30 km - poor tar 40 km - medium gravel 30 km - poor gravel 30 km - poor tar | Addis Ababa has Wattled Ibis, White-collared Pigeon, Rüppell's Robin-chat, Abyssinian Flycatcher & Brown-rumped Seedeater within the city. Gefersa Reservoir has a Blue-winged Goose, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Wattled Ibis, White-collared Pigeon, Dusky Turtle Dove, Mourning, Red-breasted Wheatear & Fawn-breasted Waxbill. The Menagesha-Suba forest has Yellow-fronted Parrots (evenings only). White-fronted Black Chat & White-billed Buffalo Weaver will also be found in the area. | Stay | Addis Ababa. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|--|--|------|---|
| 15 | Leave on road to Bahir Dar, passing through Solulta plain to Muka Turi, where turn right towards Jemmu Valley. Descend to bridge over river. | 80 km - good tar 80 km - good gravel 15 km - disaster area | Solulta plains will provide many species including Rouget's Rail, White-winged Flufftail, Red-chested Swallow, Red-throated Pipit, Abyssinian Longclaw & Black-headed Siskin. The top of the Jemmu valley escarpment may produce Erckel's Francolin, Crag Martin, Black-eared Wheatear, Rüppell's Black Chat, White-winged Cliff-Chat, Little & Blue Rock Thrushes & White-billed Starling. | Camp | In bush near bridge, Jemmu Valley. |
| 16 | No driving, except possibly to base of escarpment. | | Harwood's Francolin the special, but large variety of good species to be found, including Erckel's Francolin, Stone Partridge, Senegal Thick-knee, Spur-winged Plover, Black Redstart, Silverbird, Masked Shrike, Fire-crowned Bishop, Northern Red Bishop, Black-bellied Firefinch, Warbling Silverbill, White-throated & Streaky Seedeaters. Well worth spending a full day walking around the valley. | Camp | In bush near bridge, Jemmu valley. |
| 17 | Leave Jemmu after early-morning birding session, and return up escarpment, turning left to Debre Birhan on new road. From Debre Birhan continue to Ankober, and then on to Melka Ghebdu. Return to Debre Birhan. (If time allows, it is < 2 hours to reach Addis). | 15 km - disaster area 100 km - good gravel 50 km - medium gravel 50 km - medium gravel (130 km - good tar) | Common Crane, Red-capped Lark, Black-headed Siskin & other highland grassland species to be found along road. Ankober Serin near Ankober Serin and Yellow-throated Serin at Melka Ghebdu are the targets at these localities, but many other species are to be found in these areas. | Stay | Helen Hotel, Debre Birhan; (Addis Ababa - if time allows). |
| 18 | There is time to return to Ankober or Melka Ghebdu if the weather was poor the previous day, else return to Addis Ababa (no road direct to Awash), the south to Nazret and Awash NP. | (130 km - good tar) 250 km - good tar | Little is likely to be found until reaching Lake Beseka at western end of Awash NP. Supposed to have good water-birds. If get to Awash early, spend day birding south of the main road. The riverine forest round at the campsite is a productive birding area, with plenty of Palearctic warblers including Olivaceous & Upcher's warblers, Speke's Weaver. Spend sunset at Lodge looking for Ethiopian Cliff Swallow, so can spotlight on way back to campsite, hoping to find Star-spotted & Nubian Nightjars & Little Owl. | Camp | Awash NP. |
| 19 | Leave early for Fantalle Crater, continue round to hot springs and back to campsite. | 40 km - poor gravel 15 km - disaster area 40 km - poor gravel | Arrange for compulsory guard / guide the day before. It takes nearly 3 hours to get to the crater rim, so leave as early as possible, and go directly there. Look for Rüppell's Vulture, Black-billed Barbet, Tawny Pipit, Sombre Rock-Chat, Boran Cisticola, Scarlet-chested & Shining Sunbird, Somali Chestnut-winged Starling, Yellow-throated Serin near crater, and Gillett's Lark at base. Spotlight session in evening. | Camp | Awash NP. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|---|---|---|-------|--|
| 20 | Bird southern portion of park & gorge. | 50 km - good gravel | Spending another day in the southern portion of the park (or returning to Fantalle if missed species) will undoubtedly still produce new species. Should find species such as Arabian Bustard, Swallow-tailed Kite, Hartlaub's Bustard, European Turtle Dove, Abyssinian Roller, Chestnut-headed Sparrow-Lark Ethiopian Swallow, Menetries Warbler, Black-headed Batis, Fulvous Chatterer & Red-tailed & Great Grey Shrikes . Spotlight session in evening. | Camp | Awash NP. |
| 21 | Spend the early morning in Awash before driving through Yangudi-Rassa NP, turning right at Mille towards Djibouti, camping at a large petrol station with basic facilities. | 350 km - good tar | The drive through these arid bush areas should start to produce more species, including Arabian Bustard & Rosy-patched Shrike. Larks & chats become more common. | Camp? | Total Garage a few km before Logia. This is a bit out of the way, so camping in the bush may be a better option. |
| 22 | Leave early, and cross the border as soon as possible, passing Dikhil and continuing to Djibouti city. | 70 km - good tar 20 km - medium gravel 100 km - bad gravel 50 km - bad tar 50 km - poor tar 50 km - good tar | Keep an eye out for Spotted & Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse on first section of road (100 km) after the border which will take 4 hours to get through. Thereafter, species such as Hoopoe Lark, Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark & Black Scrub-Robin are to be found. The road into Djibouti city could produce Arabian Golden Sparrow, and the harbour will produce wide variety of gulls (Hemprich's, White-eyed, Slender-billed & Herring), terns (White-cheeked, Little & Saunders) and waders (Crab Plover, European Oystercatcher, Greater Sand Plover, Dunlin, etc), as well as Western Reef-Egret & Eurasian Spoonbill. | Stay | Menelik Hotel, Djibouti city. |
| 23 | Wait until 09:00 to apply for return visa to Ethiopia, then return 70 km to the large archway, where turn right towards Obock. Continue round Gulf of Tadjoura, turning left just before Tadjoura town. Drive along deteriorating tar road for a few km before small sign to Dittilou Tourist camp. | 50 km - good tar 20 km - bad tar 100 km - good tar 13 km - disaster area | Revisit the harbour (depending on the tides), and then drive around the gulf. On the tarred road around the gulf, a huge variety of larks (Singing, Hoopoe, Bimaculated, Desert, Greater Short-toed & Black-crowned Sparrow-Lark) and wheatears (White-crowned Black, Red-tailed & Desert) will be found. Find time to get down to the sea-shore to find Kentish Plover. The road to Dittilou should produce Yellow-breasted Barbet, Orphean & Red Sea warblers. Listen in the evening for the different races of Scops Owl. | Camp | Dittilou tourist camp. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|---|--|---|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 24 | Bird morning in Dittilou and gravel road in morning, visit Lake Assal, and drive to Djibouti city and harbour (timed to low tide if in the afternoon) | 13 km - disaster area 100 km - good tar 30 km - bad tar 50 km - good tar | You should be woken by the call of the Djibouti Francolin, and Rüppell's Weaver nest in the camp. European Redstart (both races) occur, while Bonelli's Eagle is supposed to. Spend time searching the bush on the track from Dittilou. It is also worth spending some time on the short road to Dorale on the outskirts of Djibouti city, which passes through a small patch of bush, where Black-tailed Rock-Chat, Graceful Prinia, Pale Rock-Sparrow & Arabian Golden Sparrow occur. | Stay | Menelik Hotel, Djibouti city. |
| 25 | Wait until 09:00 to collect return visa to Ethiopia, then depart immediately for Dikhil and the border. | 50 km - good tar 50 km - poor tar 100 km - bad tar 100 km - bad gravel 20 km - medium gravel 70 km - good tar | The reverse of day 22. | Camp | Total Garage a few km beyond Logia. |
| 26 | Leave early, and continue east from Mille to Dese (contrary to many maps, this is almost all gravel road). Turn off at Heyk to the right to the lake. Return to Heyk, and continue north to Weldiya. Here turn westwards towards Bahir Dar on the new "Chinese Road", passing the old road at Dilbe, and continue for ±50 km to new road to Lalibela. | 50 km - good tar 420 km-medium gravel | On the road to Dese, there is an area where birds of prey are common, including Long-legged Buzzard. Lake Heyk may have many water-birds, including Tufted Duck & Pochard. To the north of Dese, Greater Spotted Eagle, Clapperton's Francolin, Blue-headed Coucal, Pectoral-patch Cisticola, Bush Petronia, occur. | Camp / Stay | Seven Olives Hotel, Lalibela. |
| 27 | No driving. | | Visit the monolithic churches of Lalibela, relax. Look out for Abyssinian Flycatcher in hotel grounds, and White-winged Chat, Rüppell's Black-Chat, Tacazzae Sunbird & White-billed Starling around churches. | Camp / Stay | Seven Olives Hotel, Lalibela. |
| 28 | Drive to nearby cave-churches. | 70 km - medium gravel | Don't forget to bird the roads to the churches, as White-throated Serins not uncommon. | Camp/ Stay | Seven Olives Hotel, Lalibela. |
| 29 | Leave early, returning to the Chinese Road, and continue west towards Bahir Dar. Turn right towards Gonder, and turn right when tar is reached, passing Gonder and on to Debark. Stop at the NP tourist centre to find a guard and then drive up into the Mountains. | 420 km-medium gravel except near Gonder where 15 km bad tar | Little time for birding except for Lake Tana floodplain, where Saker Falcon & Song Thrush should be looked for. | Camp | Sankober camp, Simien Mountains. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|--|--|----------------|--|
| 30 | Spend morning around Sankober camp, before driving to waterfall, and on to Chenek. Return later in day. | 80 km - medium gravel | A variety of species to be looked for, including Erckel's Francolin, Abyssinian Woodpecker, Abyssinian Catbird, Red-billed Chough & Fan-tailed Raven, . If lucky, may see Walia Ibex (population may be as low as 50 individuals). | Camp | Sankober camp, Simien Mountains. |
| 31 | Leave Simien quite early, and return to Debarq, <i>before continuing north to Axum.</i> | 20 km - medium gravel <i>310 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>No info</i> | <i>Axum.</i> |
| 32 | <i>No driving ???</i> | | <i>No info.</i> | <i>No info</i> | <i>Axum.</i> |
| 33 | <i>Leave Axum quite early</i> to reach Gonder by late afternoon. | <i>310 km - ? poor gravel</i> 75 km - medium gravel | <i>No info.</i> | <i>No info</i> | <i>Gonder.</i> |
| 34 | After visiting Royal Enclosure, drive south to Bahir Dar. | 190 km-medium gravel | Not much at Gonder, but a variety of birds in the flooded cultivation along the road, especially towards Bahir Dar, where Common & Black-crowned Cranes occur. | Camp | Tana Hotel, Bahir Dar. |
| 35 | Driving in vicinity of Bahir Dar, visiting local monasteries, and Blue Nile Falls. | 80 km - medium gravel | Yellow-fronted Parrot, White White-cheeked Turaco, Western Grey Plantain-eater, occur in the hotel grounds, which is probably the best area to bird in the area. Little else is likely to be found, other than the track to the Blue Nile Falls.. | Camp | Tana Hotel, Bahir Dar. |
| 36 | Leave Bahir Dar early, and take the main road towards Addis Ababa. Turn right at Bure towards Nekempte. | 420 km-medium gravel | Spent as much time as possible birding the escarpments down to the main rivers - especially the Nile & Anger rivers, where Stone Partridge can be found. | Stay | Wolega Ethiopia Hotel , Nekempte. |
| 37 | Leave Nekempte early, leaving the town on the Bedele road. At Bedele, turn right towards Metu and Gambela. | 400 km-medium gravel | A wide variety of species can be found in the highlands, including European Sparrowhawk & Abyssinian Hornbill. The mid-altitude forests hold "Lineated" Pytilia & Crimson-rumped Waxbill. The escarpment down to the lowlands should produce Black-faced Firefinch, Foxy Cisticola & Chestnut-crowned Sparrow-weaver. The lowlands are home to a wide range of soudian species including Four-banded Sandgrouse, Black-billed Wood Dove, Vinaceous Dove, Basra Reed-Warbler, Red-pate Cisticola, Brown Babbler, Sahel Whydah & Sudan Golden Sparrow. | Stay | Ethiopia Hotel, Gambela. |
| 38 | Explore the environs, possibly driving south to Gog. Further information needed for this area. | 100 km - bad gravel | Shoebill, Red-necked Buzzard, Egyptian Plover are possible. | Stay | Ethiopia Hotel, Gambela. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|--|---|-------------|--|
| 39 | <i>Details of this area were not ascertained in advance, although I believe it is now possible to drive to Omo NP from the north. (sensible people fly in on an organized safari). One can probably reach Mizan Teferi in a day.</i> | <i>350 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>???</i> | <i>Mizan Teferi.</i> |
| 40 | <i>Continue through Maji to Omo NP.</i> | <i>250 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Omo NP.</i> |
| 41 | <i>Drive within NP.</i> | | <i>No info, but White-crowned & Snowy-headed Robin-Chats & White-headed, Scaly & Dusky Babblers should be possible</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Omo NP.</i> |
| 42 | <i>Leave the park after a morning birding session? returning through Maji and camping near Shishinda?</i> | <i>150 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>???</i> | <i>Shishinda.</i> |
| 43 | <i>Continue eastwards, reaching Jima.</i> | <i>250 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>Stay</i> | <i>Ghibe Hotel, Jima.</i> |
| 44 | From Jima, leave early, continuing on the road to Addis Ababa until reaching Welkite, and turn south to Sodo, Arba Minch and then Nechisar NP. | 190 km - good tar 200 km-medium gravel 130 km - good tar 10 km - bad gravel | More western highland species possible, including Rouget's Rail. Otherwise there will not be much time for birding. | Camp | Official campsite, Nechisar NP. |
| 45 | Explore Nechisar NP. | 80 km - bad gravel | During the day, Black Wood-hoopoe, White-tailed Bush-Lark, Rufous Scrub-Robin are possible, while at night a variety of nightjars can be found, including Nechisar, Plain, Dusky, Donaldson-Smith's, Slender-tailed, & Standard-winged. | Camp | Official campsite, Nechisar NP. |
| 46 | <i>Return to Nechisar NP, then south to Konso, and east through Turmi to Fejeje This trip may take two days each way.</i> | <i>280 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info, although Heuglin's Bustard, Star-spotted Nightjar & Somali Sparrow occur in the area.</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Fejeje.</i> |
| 47 | <i>Return from Fejeje to Nechisar NP.</i> | <i>280 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>No info.</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Official campsite, Nechisar NP.</i> |
| 48 | From Nechisar, return to Arba Minch, Sodo, then east to Shashamene, and then south-east to Wondo Genet. | 10 km - bad gravel 260 km - good tar 30 km - poor gravel | Little new likely on the journey, but Yellow-fronted Parrot & Black-headed Forest Oriole occur in the hotel grounds. | Camp | Wabe Shebele Hotel, Wondo Genet. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|--|--|--|-------------|--|
| 49 | The hotel environs, and nearby forest. | | Walk up into the forest above the hotel, and around the hot-springs, which should also provide White-cheeked Turaco, Double-toothed Barbet, Black Saw-wing, Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike, Abyssinian Ground-Thrush, Brown Woodland Warbler, African Yellow Warbler, Brown Parisoma, Ethiopian Hill-Babbler, Slender-billed Starling, Sharpe's Starling & Ethiopian Crimson-wing. | Camp | Wabe Shebele Hotel, Wondo Genet. |
| 50 | Leave the hotel, and return to Shashamene, then turning east towards Goba, passing through Kofele and Dinsho. | 160 km-medium gravel | Stop for the Long-eared Owl at Kofele (you will have 40 guides within seconds), and thereafter Spot-breasted Plover can be found. At Dinsho, Abyssinian Longclaw, Abyssinian Ground-Thrush, Ethiopian Catbird and White-backed Black Tit occur. | Camp | <i>Bale Mountains NP HQ, Dinsho.</i> |
| 51 | From Dinsho, continue east through Robe and Goro to Sof Omar. Backtrack to Goba. | 129 km-medium gravel 3 km - bad gravel 3 km - bad gravel 110 km-medium gravel | Abyssinian Scimitarbill, Brown-tailed Rock-Chat, Northern Grey Tit, Salvadori's Seedeater can be found in the valley (or above) at Sof Omar. Time will probably allow an excursion up to the Sanetti Plateau, but don't stay there! | Camp | Wabe Shabele Hotel, Goba. |
| 52 | Leave early to drive up to the top of Sanetti plateau, before continuing across the plateau and down to the Harrena forest to the south, where camp in clearing in the forest. | 100 km-medium gravel | Blue-winged Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Golden Eagle, Moorland & Chestnut-naped Francolins, Wattled Crane, Rouget's Rail, Thekla Lark, Black Saw-wing, Moorland Chat, White-backed Black Tit, Red-billed Chough, Black-headed Siskin all occur. | Camp | <i>Bush clearing, Harrena Forest.</i> |
| 53 | Return back up to the plateau, and down through Goba, and west to Shashamene, then south to Lake Awasa. The road from Meslo (Mena) to the River Genale is not passable. | 260 km-medium gravel | Returning along a route previously travelled. | Camp | Wabe Shabele #2 Hotel, Awasa. |
| 54 | Leave early from Lake Awasa south for approx. 50 km, before turning southeast towards Kibre Mengist. 100 km further on, turn north towards the River Genale. Find the wadi 3 km to the south, then return back south, and on to Negele | 50 km - poor tar <i>210 km - ? poor gravel</i> 90 km - medium gravel | No info on this road until the to the turnoff north. At the Genale river, find Adem Dube (if he doesn't find you first), who will guide you to the best areas for Ruspoli's Turaco. Look out for Black-faced Sandgrouse, Bare-eyed Thrush, Scaly Babbler, Somali Fiscal, Grey-backed Fiscal on the remainder of the road to Negele. | Camp | In bush approx. 13 km south of Negele. |
| 55 | <i>Before leaving Negele, check the security situation. From Negele drive through Filtu to Bokol Manyo.</i> | <i>300 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>See next.</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Bokol Manyo.</i> |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|-----|---|---|---|-------------|---|
| 56 | <i>Bird around Bokol Manyo.</i> | | <i>The following are possible: Donaldson-Smith's Nightjar, Somali Bee-eater, Red-and-Yellow Barbet, Degodi Lark, Philippa's Short-billed Crombec, Banded Prinia, Taita Fiscal, Scaly Chatterer, Brown-necked Raven & Red-naped Bush-Shrike.</i> | <i>Camp</i> | <i>Bokol Manyo.</i> |
| 57 | <i>Return from Bokol Manyo to Negele.</i> | <i>300 km - ? poor gravel</i> | <i>See previous.</i> | Camp | In bush approx. 13 km south of Negele. |
| 58 | From Negele, turn west after 13 km towards Melka Ghuba, crossing the river. After that, continue towards Yavello, and then turn south to Moyale. | 250 km - good gravel 220 km - good tar | By leaving the campsite at dawn, you should have a good chance of Sidamo Lark & Somali Short-toed Lark nearby, where Tiny Cisticola & Pygmy Batis also occur. Near to Melka Ghuba look for African White-winged Dove, Somali Long-billed Crombec, Smaller Black-bellied Sunbird, Pringle's Puffback & Jubaland Weaver. Further on the Yavello endemics appear, including White-tailed Swallow, Stresemann's Bush Crow & White-crowned Starling. | Stay | Bekele Mola Hotel, Moyale (Ethiopian side). |
| 59 | Cross the border after the immigration & customs post opens (approx. 09:00), and drive through to Marsabit. | 250 km - bad gravel | Same as trip north. | Camp | Campsite #2, Marsabit NP. |
| 60 | Leave Marsabit early in the morning to reach Isiolo by early afternoon, and continue up towards Mount Kenya, to camp at the Timau River Lodge, Mt Kenya | 260 km - bad gravel | Same as trip north. | Camp | Timau River Lodge, Mt Kenya. |
| 61 | Continue towards Nairobi, and then on to Arusha. | 410 km - bad tar 110 km - excellent tar | Same as trip north. | Camp | Masai campsite, Arusha. |
| 62 | Arusha to Riverside campsite, Iringa. | 918 km - excellent tar | Same as trip north. | Camp | Riverside campsite, Iringa. |
| 63 | Riverside campsite to Shiwa Ngandu. | 520 km - excellent tar 290 km - good tar 40 km - poor tar | Same as trip north. | Camp | Kapishya campsite, Shiwa Ngandu. |
| 64 | Shiwa Ngandu to Lusaka and towards Chirundu, but turning west just before towards Siavonga on the Kariba Dam. | 40 km poor gravel 440 km - good tar | Same as trip north. | Camp | Eagle's Nest, Siavonga. |

| Day | Route | Roads | Birding | Acc. | Location |
|------------|---|-------------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|
| 65 | Early morning, drive back 25 km towards Lusaka, and stop at a small bridge over the river, then back-track to the Kariba border, and cross into Zimbabwe, driving on to Harare. | 810 km - excellent tar | Angola Pitta & Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo can be found at the bridge. | Camp | Harare. |
| 66 | Drive from Harare to Johannesburg. | 1140 km - excellent tar | Same as trip north. | | Johannesburg. |

Optional extra routes

Eritrea

On day 29, rather than heading west towards Lake Tana, continue north to Adrigat, Asmera and Massawa. Return via Asmera and then to Axum, through Simien to Gonder.

Additional distance: 1000 km

Additional time: 4 days (or 6 days if Dahlak Islands included)

Additional species: No Endemics, but more likely to see many of the Palearctic migrants and other "northern" species such as Little Green Bee-eater, Ring-necked Parakeet, etc. Also a second chance at seabirds, especially if you can get to the Dahlak islands, where you may find White-collared Kingfisher, et al.

Sudan

On day 34 spend whole day at Gonder, and spend the next day driving what is probably a very bad road to the Sudanese border. My original plan was to then drive to Gedaref, and up north through Kassala to Erkowit, Suakin and Port Sudan. From there, if practical to go west to Atbara, and then south down the Nile to Khartoum. It may be possible to visit a wide variety of Nilotic historical sites both north and south of Atbara which are said to be comparable to the Egyptian sites - but without the tourists or infrastructure. Alternatively to retrace my route to Gedaref, then west to Khartoum. Spend a couple of days birding there before return to Gedaref and Gonder.

Additional distance: between 2800 a& 3200 km

Additional time: between 10 and 14 days

Additional species: Endemic: Cinnamon Weaver. Many Palearctic migrants not found in Ethiopia could be found around Port Sudan, as well as a variety of desert species around Khartoum – approximately 50 species possible

Optional short-cuts:

Skip Omo NP

On day 39, leave from Gambela back east to Bedele, then further east to Jima. Rejoin the trip at the start of day 44.

Distance saving: 560 km

Time saving: 4 days

Lost species: No endemics. Will miss approximately 5-10 species which are only found here within Ethiopia.

Skip Gambela NP and west

On day 36, leave early and drive straight through to Addis Ababa, spending any spare time birding around the Nile valley. The next day, continue south through Debre Zeit to Shashamene, then east to Sodo and then south to Arba Minch and Nechisar NP. Rejoin the trip at the start of day 45.

Distance saving: 1400 km

Time saving: 7 days

Lost species: No endemics. Will miss all the soudian lowland species of the west African avifauna – approximately 10-30 species.

Skip Fejeje

Simply skip days 46 & 47.

Distance saving: 540 km

Time saving: 2 days

Lost species: No endemics. 3 species are supposedly easier to find here than elsewhere.

Skip Bokol Manyo

Simply skip days 55, 56 & 57

Distance saving: 600 km

Time saving: 3 days

Lost species: Endemics: 1 – Degodi Lark. Many other specials of the area also missed – approximately 10-20 species in total.

Skip Djibouti

On day 21, continue as per plan through the Yangudi-Rassa NP, but turn left at Mille and camp at Lake Heyk. Continue on the next day to Lalibela. Rejoin the trip at the start of day 27.

Distance saving: 1200 km

Time saving: 4 days

Lost species: Endemics: 1 - Djibouti Francolin. However, many desert species & all coastal species – approximately 40 species in total – will be missed.

Skip historical sites

This assumes that you will bird Jemmu Valley and Sanetti Plateau intensively & successfully, as all bird species from this area can be seen in the central and south. On this basis, the Simien Mountains are a long drive, and the only endemic to the area is the Walia Ibex.

On day 17, do not return to Addis Ababa, but continue north-east to camp at the Total garage near Logia, rejoining the trip at the start of day 22. Continue through the Djibouti route, returning to the Total garage on day 25. Continue to Mille, but turn left towards Awash NP, and spend the three days (days 18 to 20) in Awash NP. Then, leaving Awash NP early in the morning, drive to Addis Ababa and then continue to Nekempte, rejoining the trip at the start of day 36.

Distance saving: 1100 km

Time saving: 14 days

Lost species: Endemics: none. However, many opportunities for seeing highland species will be missed, but no species need be missed.

Short trips on good roads

This section is a bit of a contradiction in terms. This report is based on taking your own vehicle. Since the two currently open roads (from Kenya and from Djibouti if you ship the vehicle in by sea) are in a very bad state, you can't get into Ethiopia. Unless, of course, you fly your vehicle in – but then why not fly in a 4x4? Anyway, this will be based on short trips (staying in hotels) from Addis Ababa.

Day trips from Addis Ababa

(1) Gefersa Reservoir & Menagesha-Suba Forest Reserve

It only takes around 1 hour to drive out to Gefersa Reservoir, leaving Addis Ababa on the Nekempte road. You can walk around the northern edge of the reservoir, and expect to find Blue-winged Goose, Wattled Ibis & White-collared Pigeon. The waterfowl is predominantly composed of Egyptian Geese with some Yellow-billed Duck. On the three occasions I passed here, it had very few other species, and those seen on one visit weren't there for the next, so I guess it really is pot-luck. Continue along the road to the west for a further 5 or so km, and turn left at the signpost to the Forestry College. This road is a bit potholed but quite easy to drive, and will take you south to a turning to the left just after the college. This will take about an hour. The road to the park HQ is OK, as is the road up to the mountain – although it is quite steep. If you were stay till dusk (or camp here), you should find Yellow-fronted Parrots coming in to roost. On your return, it is an easier road to turn left and continue south to join the Jima road for your return to Addis Ababa, another hours drive.

(2) Solulta Plain & Jemmu escarpment

See the description of Saturday 11th December above. Do not attempt to drive down the escarpment, but return the same way you came..

(3) Ankober & Melka Ghebdu

When I travelled it, the road from the Jemmu escarpment to Debre Birhan was a very good gravel road, and not likely to damage an ordinary car travelling at reasonable speeds of around 30 to 40 km/h. This would mean the journey would take around 3 hours. For the remainder of the information, see the latter part of Sunday 12th December, and the first section of Monday 13th December.

Alternatively, this would make a relatively easy day trip from Addis Ababa.

(4) Gibe Valley

The tarred road from Addis Ababa to the Gibe Valley is approximately 160 km. The first 20 km from Addis Ababa is badly potholed, while last 10 km from Welkite to the valley is excellent tar. I did not travel the intervening road, but I expect that the vast majority would be excellent tar. The valley is reputed to hold some of the western and soudian species, as this is the eastern extremity that they can find the right habitat. I did not bird this area, so I cannot confirm this. However, this is the best chance to see soudian species without travelling to Gambela in the west. This should be an easy day trip.

(5) Debre Markos & Nile Valley

Although I did not travel along this road, it is supposedly tar all the way, so should be a viable day trip. Similar birds as can be found on the Jemmu escarpment can be expected.

Week-end trip to North-eastern Rift Valley

(1) Awash NP

The road to Awash NP is excellent tar, except for an area of road-works over Lake Beseka. The track into the park is suitable for any car, whether you stay in the caravans at the Lodge, or at the campsite. Any car can travel around the southern part of the park. However, the northern portion cannot be accessed without a more rugged vehicle. Don't think of driving up to the Fantalle Crater. For most details, see Tuesday 14th December and Wednesday 15th December above.

Two-week trip to Southern Rift Valley (or several smaller trips)

(1) Lake Langano

Although the whole road from Addis Ababa is tarred, the quality of the road decreases, such that the final section should not be taken at more than 30 km/h. You could stay at either of the two hotels and/or campsites on the lake. There is plenty of areas to bird on foot in the vicinity of either hotel. The Abiata-Shala NP is not for cars.

This venue would be an excellent week-end trip, leaving mid-afternoon on Friday and returning on Sunday evening. It could be also include a visit to Lake Ziway - see details on Monday 6th December to Wednesday 8th December.

Alternatively, it could be used as a stop-over on the way to Goba and the Bale Mountains.

(2) Goba, Sof Omar & Bale Mountains

The road is reasonable gravel, but should be taken at a reasonable speed. I would be a comfortable drive to make in a day from Lake Langano and reach the government hotel in Goba, where it is also possible to camp.

From there, a day trip to the Sof Omar valley is quite practical, so long as no attempt is made to drive down into the valley. Another easy day trip would be from Goba up to the Sanetti plateau, though care should be exercised on the road down to the Harrena Forest. The road should be quite passable in the dry, but wet conditions could make it treacherous in a car.

For further details, see Thursday 6th & Friday 7th January. After spending three nights at Goba, either return to Lake Langano, or follow this itinerary further. Spending time at Dinsho on the way in or out would also be productive.

(3) Wondo Genet

This is a good place to stay after visiting Goba, and is reached by returning to Shashamene, and then driving south-east on a rough gravel road for 20 km. In this case, stay 2 nights at the hotel (camping possible), spending time in the forest above the hotel, and in the hotel grounds.

Alternatively, it is approximately a 3 hour drive from Lake Langano.

For further details, see Wednesday 5th January.

(4) Negele area

From Wondo Genet, return to Shashamene, and drive 70 km south, before turning right onto a gravel road of unknown condition. It is thought that the road should be in reasonable condition, but care should be exercised. After 208 km, the village of Bitata will be reached. Turn left towards the Genale River. This road is suitable for a car travelling quite slowly. After approximately 30 km the Genale River is reached. Back-track a few km, and follow the details given on Saturday 8th January. If the drive from Shashamene is slow, continue to overnight at Negele, and return the following day - it should take less than 2 hours to reach the river from Negele.

Continue south from Negele to the Sidamo Lark site, which is a very passable gravel road.

From here turn left towards Melka Ghuba and Yavello. This road is a surprising good road, since it has just been regraded - how long it will last in this condition is unknown. For details see Sunday 9th January. Details of where to stay in Yavello are not known. From here, it is possible to drive to Awasa, Wondo Genet or Lake Langano in a day.

(5) Yavello – Mega area

Yavello can be reached in a day from Negele, Lake Awasa, Wondo Genet or Awasa. From Yavello, it is worth driving both south and east, which will give an excellent chance of finding the localized endemics. See some details on Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th December and Sunday 9th January.

(6) Lake Awasa

This area is well worth visiting as an alternative stop-over on the way north from Yavello. See details on Sunday 5th & Monday 6th December.

A very good bird-watching trip for those who have not visited East Africa before can be achieved by driving south from Addis Ababa through Lake Ziway to Lake Langano, then Wondo Genet, on to Lake Awasa, and back to Addis Ababa. Covered in 7 days, a wide range of habitats can be covered.

Driving south from Wondo Genet to Yavello, staying overnight, and returning to Lake Awasa would not require a tougher vehicle, and would cover the southern endemics. This would extend the trip to around 9 days.

The more adventurous, with a reliable and strong vehicle, could include the Negele portion of the route. This would make it into a 12 day trip.

Flying

Lalibela, Bahir Dar, Gonder & Axum all have regular supposedly cheap flights – but I have no information on these. All three would allow access to historical sites and some birding from a standard tourist “package” without renting a vehicle – although this would be beneficial in Lalibela.