

# Foreword

## Simon Espley



Birds of Uganda is a visual celebration second to none, of Uganda's splendid avian jewels. Packed with 900 images of 280 species this wonderful book is a superb companion to your field guide as you head out into the diverse birding habitats in search of Uganda's more than 1,000 bird species. It's also a great way to show beginner birders and casual observers what the bird that flashed past really looks like – sometimes the plates in bird guides don't do justice to the real thing.

Uganda is my favorite birding safari destination – the sheer diversity and bright colors just boggle the mind – from that prehistoric ballerina the shoebill stork to the flashy great blue turaco and the incredibly elusive Shelley's crimsonwing, this place just keeps me coming back again and again.

My first birding safari in Uganda kicked off at the Botanical Gardens in Entebbe, shortly after my flight touched down. I was initially overwhelmed at the diversity of bird species on offer right there, in the middle of the city. So many sunbird and hornbill species, plantain-eaters, turacos, grey parrots and even the sought-after orange weaver, and lets not get started on the waterfowl and the calls emanating from the papyrus beds along the lake shore. Since then I have been back to Uganda many times and traversed diverse habitats in search primarily of avian candy. Of course Uganda is also a paradise for primates and most of the savannah wildlife species on offer in many African countries – but for me it's all about the birds.

Quentin and Sherry have invested so much energy and passion into this book, and the result is plain to see – it's easy to read and logically laid out – and listing the species in multiple languages is genius. Every tourist to this great country should buy this book.

I'll be back to Uganda many times more, I am sure - clutching my copy of Birds of Uganda.

Simon Espley is a seasoned African traveller – walking, driving, boating, biking, horse riding and flying his way in pursuit of true wilderness and elusive birds. In his spare time he rehabilitates birds for release back into the wild, tries to live sustainably and is increasingly interested in the true cost and journey of food. He is a chartered accountant and director of Africa Geographic Holdings.

