

Bird observation in the Ogaden Region
Somali Regional State, / Ethiopia
A Contribution to the Identification of Important Bird Areas

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Introduction

The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS) published in 1996 the first issue of Important Bird Areas in Ethiopia, following the 1995 commencement of the IBA project of BirdLife International.

Data to identify and nominate IBAs were available and supplemented by field surveys for many parts of Ethiopia except for the Somali Regional State and the Ogaden region in particular.

In order not to leave this large and ornithologically very interesting part of the country unconsidered, data from decades ago and some scattered information had to be used.

End of 2002 the authors started in order of Al Wabra Wildlife Preservation(AWWP), Qatar the implementation of a wildlife awareness and conservation project in the heart of the remote and in many aspects inaccessible Ogaden region.

Although the extensive field work and awareness work concentrated on critically endangered antelopes and other larger ungulates, bird life was recorded throughout the surveys whenever possible.

Now, the EWNHS intends to update the first IBA inventory and the herewith presented data compilation shall provide an improved base for this project, regarding the Ogaden region and the Somali Regional State as a whole.

Acknowledgement

We honestly thank Sheikh Saoud Bin Mohamed Bin Ali al Thani, AWWP, for his commitment and generous financial support. Without his untiring efforts to preserve the natural heritage of Ethiopia the knowledge about the precious wildlife of the Ogaden region would be still veiled.

We also thank the Naturschutzbund (NABU) Germany for strengthening contacts to EWNHS, financing the participation on bird observation workshops in Ethiopia and supporting the continuing compilation of avian data.

Our thanks go also to the numerous people of the Ogaden region and the staff of the Somali Regional State Wildlife Department who helped to collect the data.

General Information

Although agreed upon among biologists worldwide as perhaps the most interesting part of the Horn of Africa, very little has been done in the Ogaden regarding research and surveillance of biodiversity. The reasons are political unrest during the last three to four decades, flare-up of armed clan conflicts, poor infrastructure and reluctant support on federal level.

The Ogaden region or in geographical terms the "Ogaden basin" is the eastern low lying part of the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia, stretching from the foothills of the Bale and Ahmar Mountains in the East and North up to the circumference of the Somali border.

The landscape slopes gently down from 1.660 m asl at Jigjiiga in the North to about 200 m asl at the Shabelle River valley in the South.

The main part of the Eastern landscape has an altitude between 400 m and 500 m asl.

Three main geological facies shape the topography. Precambrian strongly folded ancient basement rocks (both limestone and sandstone) around the Shabelle River valley and Mesozoic-Jurassic and Cretaceous, weakly folded sediments in the central part. In both parts gypsum can be found in large layers at or close to the surface. Finally, in the most eastern triangle Tertiary-Palaeocene deposits are found.

Also basaltic outcrops placed like inselbergs can be found between Kebri Dehar and Warder as well as North of Warder. Areas covered with spherical basalt stones, so-called "bombs" are evidence of ancient volcanic activity.

All of the area belongs to an arid climate where evaporation exceeds precipitation. Mean annual rainfall is about 470mm; mean average temperature is 27°C with a mean maximum of about 35°C. The area knows two rains seasons, GU season with heavy rain in late April to June and DEYR season with more scattered rain in October to November.

Altitude and climatic parameters are combined as the agro-climatic zone called "Kolla".

The only permanent water course is the Shabelle River in the South. The major seasonal river is the Fafen, collecting the discharge of numerous temporary tributaries on its path from North to South.

The economy of local communities depend mostly on transhumant pastoralism (camel, sheep, goats and cattle), some rain fed cultivation along seasonal rivers, gardening around larger towns, and some irrigated crop and fruit cultivation along the Shabelle River.

The prevailing vegetation belongs to the *Acacia-Commiphora-Boswellia* thornbush savannah, a typical plant association of semi-arid to arid conditions at the Horn of Africa. It is directly related to the Somali flora with well more than 1.200 species out of more than 120 families. The Somali flora is very rich in comparison with other arid areas in Africa and several hundred species are found nowhere else in the World.

The scientific importance of the region can also be seen from some results of the authors.

The Silver Dikdik (*Madoqua piacentinii*) for example was known only from coastal areas of Somalia and is now confirmed for the Ogaden (see Table 2).

In May 2006 a botanical survey was carried out with the assistance of Prof. Mats Thulin from the University of Uppsala, Sweden which yielded in 15 new plant species and about 40 first time records for Ethiopia (THULIN in preparation). Some more species, known only from single herbarium specimens could be confirmed, too.

Methodology

As mentioned above, field work focused on observation of ungulate species in this area. Recording was usually done by first following hints of local people, next tracing footprints and stalking for animals. Once an area with numerous tracks was found, point observations mainly from tree tops were conducted. This method gave a good opportunity to also identify smaller, bush dwelling birds feeding nearby or in the canopy of the observation tree.

Additionally, regular transect or road counts from a slow moving vehicle were conducted. With this method conspicuous larger birds like ostrich, bustards, fowls or birds of prey could be recorded.

Mist netting was never applied. Hence, many of the more cryptic living small birds or those species difficult to identify on a distance by handy binoculars (i.e. warblers, cisticolas and so forth) are underrepresented in the records.

Observation Area

The bulk of records were collected in the Qorahey Zone of the Somali Regional State, particularly in the area between Kebri Dehar and Shilabo, which turned out to be the easiest accessible and peaceful area for most of the ungulate surveys.

Less frequent records were gathered from adjacent areas like the Warder district up to the Somali border, the River Shabelle valley, its confining rock cliffs and water catchment area to the North, the road stretch from Jigjiiga to Kebri Dehar and the Nogob area, west of the line Kebri Dehar – Danaan.

Since the vegetation cover and structure is quite similar over vast parts of the Ogaden, it seems possible to transfer records as valid to these neighbouring areas.

In the remarks column of the bird list (Table 1) some areas with specific bird observations are repeatedly mentioned. These areas are shown in Figure 1 and 2.



Figure 1: Overview map

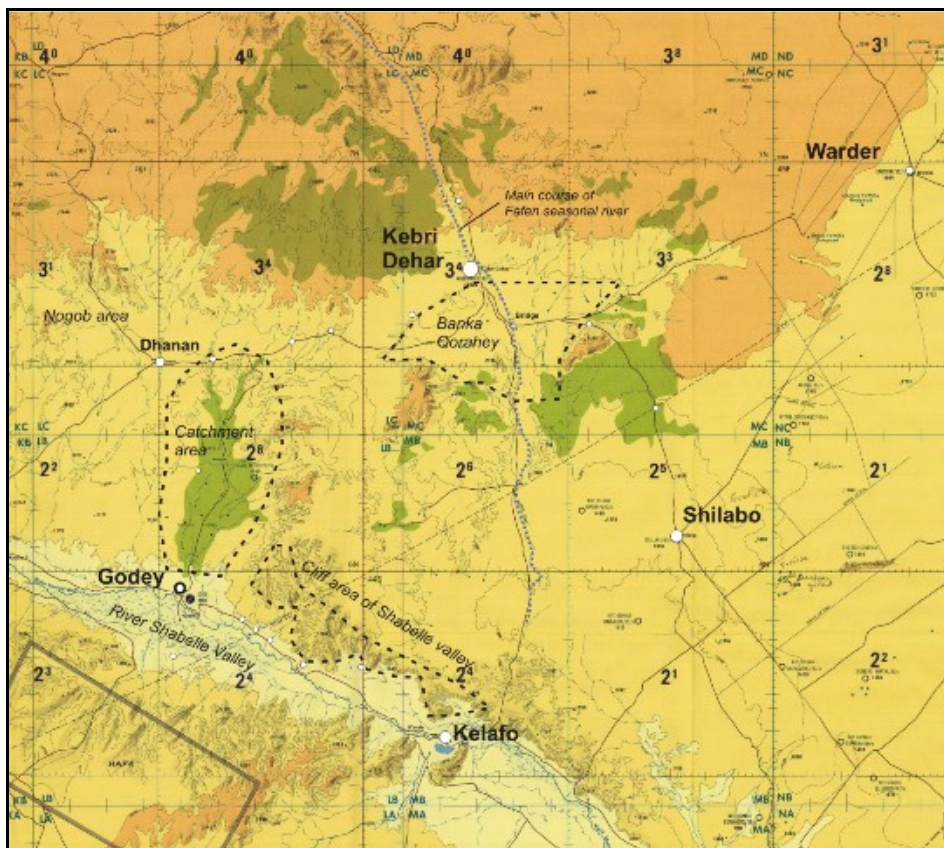


Figure 2: Main Survey Area, sector magnification from Fig. 1

Results

In Table 1 the 300 bird species so far identified in the field are listed. The following comments explain the table entries.

Column 1 and 2: Scientific and English names

Scientific names are given according to AVIBASE – THE WORLD BIRD DATA BASE of BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL. Synonyms found in URBAN & BROWN (1971) or V. PERLO (1995) are given in parentheses. The same scheme applies for English names.

Bird families are ordered according to Avibase differing slightly from the order of URBAN & BROWN (1971).

In case a particular subspecies might be relevant for the observation area but could not be clearly identified, the name of the most likely subspecies is added with a question mark.

Shaded scientific names indicate an entry in the Red List of endangered species. The actual status is then mentioned in the remarks column.

Somali names are omitted although several were collected from the local society. Except of large and conspicuous species, birds are of little concern for nomads and villagers and are not specifically named. Often just one name is used for a whole group of similar looking species and hence vernacular Somali names are so far not very meaningful.

Column 3: Checklist of the Birds of Ethiopia

Records are compared with entries in the checklist of URBAN & BROWN (1971). Unlike the Avibase checklist this reference differentiates seven geographical regions in Ethiopia and is thus preferred. Species allocated to SE Ethiopia and recorded below an altitude of 1.000 m are regarded valid for the Ogaden part of the Somali Regional State. The symbols in the column read as follows:

- ⊙ = mentioned for SE Ethiopia or referred to as “throughout the country” and hence valid for the observed area
- = only mentioned for other parts of Ethiopia
- * = not mentioned in URBAN & BROWN but in the AVIBASE checklist
- = not mentioned in either of the above references

Shaded cells in this column indicate Somali-Massai biome species.

Column 4 and 5: Observation Frequency

The observation frequency classification is adopted from B. v. Perlo (1995) which is considered a very widely used field guide to East African birds. The distribution maps differentiate between Ethiopian regions and can even be taken as a complement to other used checklists.

The columns compare observation frequencies given in the field guide with own estimates based on numerous field notes. Information about species' status is given as follows:

| Status | Chance of seeing species |
|---------------|--|
| C = Common | 60 – 100 %; nearly on every field day |
| F = Frequent | 10 – 60 %; at least once a week with intensive observation |
| U = Uncommon | < 10 %; observable only if deliberately searched for at suitable habitats or records are strongly season dependent |
| R = Rare | Negligible; usually a matter of luck or if several suitable conditions match |
| ? | status for the Ogaden not clear |
| - | not indicated in v. Perlo for the Ogaden region |

However, observation frequencies should not equate with population status. To some extent this may be valid for conspicuous birds also recordable by voice or footprints (*i.e.* Ostriches). For mainly nocturnal or cryptic small birds, the population status might be higher than observation frequency implies.

Column 6: Seasonality

This column indicates whether the appearance or the observation frequency of bird species show a significant or at least recognisable seasonal dependency. This of course applies for all true migratory species. Palaearctic migrants are thus mainly seen in the months November to March. Movements of inner-African migrants may be influenced by shifting conditions in parts of their distribution range and they appear in larger numbers in the Ogaden only during a particular time of the year.

Other species may aggregate at certain places in times of suitable conditions or specific habitat offers. Storks, waders or water dependent birds in general may flock at flooded plains or temporary large water ponds during the two rainy seasons from April to June (GU Season) and October to November (DEYR Season). Others may appear in larger numbers if particular food sources are accidentally abundant.

The column entries try to reflect this seasonality in different terms. If “all seasons” is given, the species can be seen definitely throughout the year. If a cell remains blank no specific statements are appropriate; the species may or may not be found throughout the year. The next column then gives some more explanations.

Column 7: Remarks

Almost self-explaining, noteworthy comments are given here.

Table 1: Compilation of Bird Records in Qorahey Zone / Ogaden and adjacent areas

| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|---|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Struthionidae | | | | | | |
| Struthio camelus molibdophanus | Ostrich | ☉ | - | F | all seasons | in open areas as well as in denser bush land, traces can be found at each bush walk |
| Podicipedidae | | | | | | |
| Tachybaptus (Podiceps) ruficollis | Little Grebe | ☉ | C | F | mainly rainy season | in larger ponds during the rainy season quite common; however, very little depressions or ponds are water logged throughout the year |
| Pelecanidae | | | | | | |
| Pelecanus rufescens | Pink-backed Pelican | ☉ | C | U | only rainy season | to be seen at permanent large ponds and during the rainy season also at large waterlogged depressions |
| Phalacrocoracidae | | | | | | |
| Phalacrocorax carbo | Great Cormorant | ☉ | C | U | mainly rainy season and river sides | at the Shabelle river as the only permanent river quite frequent; else occasionally at larger water stagnations |
| Phalacrocorax africanus | Long-tailed Cormorant | ☉ | F | U | mainly rainy season and river sides | at the Shabelle river as the only permanent river quite frequent; else occasionally at larger water stagnations |
| Anhingidae | | | | | | |
| Anhinga rufa | African Darter | ☉ | C | U | mainly rainy season | to be seen at permanent large ponds; during the rainy season also at large waterlogged depressions |
| Ardeidae | | | | | | |
| Egretta garzetta | Little Egret | ☉ | F | U | mainly rainy season | along the Shabelle river usually be seen; during and after the rains seen on vegetated plains and at waterlogged areas |
| Bubulcus (Ardeola) ibis | Cattle Egret | ☉ | C | C | mainly rainy season | along the Shabelle river usually be seen; during and after the rains seen in large groups on vegetated plains |
| Butorides striatus | Green-backed Heron | ☉ | C | R | perhaps seasonal outside permanent rivers | seen only at the Shabelle river and the seasonally flooded Fafen river |
| Ardeola ralloides | Squacco Heron | ☉ | ? | U | mainly rainy season | along the Shabelle river usually be seen; during and after the rains seen at waterlogged places |
| Ardea melanocephala | Black-headed Heron | ☉ | C | C | throughout the year | even in dry season observable in bush land, often be spotted perching on termite mounts |
| Scopidae | | | | | | |
| Scopus umbretta | Hamerkop | ☉ | C | F | only rainy season | seen at waterlogged places and small seasonal rivers |
| Ciconiidae | | | | | | |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> | White Stork | ☉ | C | C | Palearctic migrant | From November to March to be seen in large groups at permanent waters and on vegetated plains. Aggregations may reach up to 500 individuals and more |
| <i>Ciconia abdimii</i> | Abdim's Stork | ○ | F | C | only rainy season, intra-African migrant | during and after the rains seen in huge numbers at almost each open plain |
| <i>Leptoptilus crumeniferus</i> | Marabou | ☉ | C | C | throughout the year | very common close to all kind of settlements; in the bush quite uncommon but appears quickly at carrion |
| <i>Mycteria (Ibis) ibis</i> | Yellow-billed Stork | ☉ | U | F | mainly rainy season | at the Shabelle river common, in other parts mainly at waterlogged places or vegetated plains, often associated with other storks |
| <i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i> | African open-billed Stork | ○ | ? | R | only rainy season intra-African migrant | along the Shabelle river more frequent at swampy areas, in other parts only if rains were long and heavy causing temporary swamp areas; hence mainly at the water catchments area towards the Shabelle valley |
| Threskiornithidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i> | Hadada Ibis | ☉ | U | U | | at the Shabelle river more frequent, in other parts accidentally at waterlogged places |
| <i>Threskiornis aethiopica</i> | Sacred Ibis | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | very common close to larger settlements, in the open bush mainly at moist places after the rains |
| <i>Platalea alba</i> | African Spoonbill | ☉ | F | U | mainly rainy season | at the Shabelle river more common, in other parts only at waterlogged places and nearby vegetated plains, often associated with other storks |
| Phoenicopteridae | | | | | | |
| <i>Phoenicopus ruber</i> | Greater Flamingo | ○ | - | F | seasonal, intra-African migrant | at Jigjiiga dam quite regularly seen; in other parts only during heavy rains at shallow water stagnations |
| Anatidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i> | White-faced whistling Duck | ☉ | F | F | rainy season | at permanent ponds or long lasting waterlogged depressions |
| <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> | Egyptian Goose | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | at permanent ponds often in huge numbers i.e. Jigjiiga dam |
| <i>Sarkidiornis melanotus</i> | Knob-billed Guck | ☉ | F | U | | so far seen only at permanent ponds in moderate numbers |
| <i>Nettapus auritus</i> | African Pygmy Goose | ☉ | U | U | | so far seen only at permanent ponds in small numbers |
| <i>Aythya fuligula</i> | Tufted Duck | ☉ | - | R | | only seen at permanent pond near Jigjiiga |
| <i>Anas erythrorhynchos</i> | Red-billed Teal | ☉ | F | U | | only to be seen at permanent ponds |
| <i>Anas clypeata</i> | Northern Shoveler | ☉ | F | U | Palearctic migrant | only seen at permanent pond near Jigjiiga |

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|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|---|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Accipitridae | | | | | | |
| Elanus caeruleus | Black-shouldered Kite | ☉ | F | U | all seasons | |
| Chelictinia riocourii | Scissor-tailed Kite | ○ | - | U | mainly rain season, intra-African migrant | can be seen rarely throughout the year but more sightings are after the rains on open plains |
| Milvus migrans | Black Kite | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | mostly associated with larger settlements |
| Haliaeetus vocifer | African Fish Eagle | ☉ | U | F | all seasons | seen only but regularly at the Shabelle river |
| Neophron percnopterus | Egyptian Vulture | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | often one of the first vultures appearing at carrion |
| Necrosyrtes monachus | Hooded Vulture | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | frequently near small settlements, very common at carrion |
| Terathopus ecaudatus | Bateleur | ☉ | C | F | all seasons | throughout the region |
| Circaetus gallicus pectoralis | Short-toed Snake Eagle | ○ | U | C | all seasons | |
| Gyps africanus | African white-backed Vulture | ☉ | F | C | all seasons | soaring birds can be seen at the cliffs of the Shabelle valley, in other parts only seen at carrion |
| Aegypius (Torgos) tracheliotus | Lappet-faced Vulture | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | repeatedly seen at carrion in more hilly areas, perhaps less common in lower areas to the East. VULNERABLE |
| Aegypius (Trogoniceps) occipitalis | White-headed Vulture | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | only seen at carrion in all parts of the observed area |
| Circus macrourus | Pallid Harrier | ☉ | C | U | Palaeartic migrant | NEAR THREATENED |
| Circus pygargus | Montagu's Harrier | ☉ | F | U | only rainy season | to be seen on vegetated plains |
| Micronisus (Melierax) gabar | Gabar Goshawk | ☉ | F | C | all seasons | |
| Melierax metabates | Dark Chanting Goshawk | ○ | F | U | all seasons | very few observations but confirmed occurrence |
| Melierax canorus | Eastern Chanting Goshawk | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | the most frequent goshawk in the area |
| Accipiter tachiro | African Goshawk | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | mostly along wooded river beds but occasionally also in denser bush land |
| Accipiter badius | Shikra | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | |
| Butastur rufipennis | Grasshopper Buzzard | ○ | F | U | African migrant | accidentally seen on open plains |
| Kaupifalco monogrammicus | Lizard Buzzard | ☉ | - | U | | three sightings so far but well known from Southern and Central Somalia, hence regular occurrence is very likely |
| Buteo rufofuscus | Augur Buzzard | ○ | - | F | | mainly seen at cliffs north of the Shabelle valley |
| Aquila rapax | Tawny Eagle | ☉ | F | C | all seasons | the most frequent smaller eagle |
| Aquila wahlbergi | Wahlberg's Eagle | ○ | - | R | | be seen at hill sides of the Shabelle valley |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Hieraaetus pennatus | Booted Eagle | ☉ | U | U | Palaeartic migrant | |
| Hieraaetus spilogaster (fascialis) | African Hawk Eagle | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | |
| Polemaetus bellicosus | Martial Eagle | ☉ | U | U | all seasons | occasionally be seen throughout the observation area |
| Stephanoaetus coronatus | Crowned Eagle | ○ | U | U | all seasons | near the Shabelle river |
| Sagittariidae | | | | | | |
| Sagittarius serpentarius | Secretary Bird | ☉ | - | U | all seasons | |
| Falconidae | | | | | | |
| Polihierax semitorquatus | African Pygmy Falcon | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | bee seen very frequently throughout the region |
| Falco tinnunculus | Common Kestrel | ☉ | C | F | Palaeartic migrant | seen near wooded edges of Shabelle river steep ridges and inselbergs |
| Falco subbuteo | Hobby | ☉ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | |
| Falco peregrinus | Peregrine | ○ | U | R | Palaeartic migrant | seen hunting near cliffs in open bush land, subspecies not clearly identified |
| Phasianidae | | | | | | |
| Francolinus sephaena spilogaster | Crested Francolin | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | |
| Francolinus leucoscepus infuscatus? | Yellow-necked Spur Fowl | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | visible and even more audible almost everywhere, the most frequent francolin |
| Coturnix coturnix | Common Quail | ☉ | C | F | all seasons (African migrant) | observation frequency drops in the dry season, less frequent in areas with gravelled soils; ssp. africana unclear |
| Coturnix delegorguei | Harlequin Quail | ☉ | F | F | all seasons (African migrant) | observation frequency drops in the dry season, less frequent in areas with gravelled soils |
| Numididae | | | | | | |
| Acryllium vulturinum | Vulturine Guinea Fowl | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | regularly seen in flocks of up to 50 to 100 individuals |
| Numida meleagris somaliensis | Helmeted Guinea Fowl | ☉ | C | F | all seasons | in some areas less frequent than vulturine guinea fowl but sometimes both species appear in mixed groups |
| Gruidae | | | | | | |
| Grus grus | Common Crane | ○ | U | R | Palaeartic migrant | seen once at Jigjiiga pond |
| Rallidae | | | | | | |
| Amaurornis flavirostris (Limnocorax flavirostra) | Black Crake | ☉ | C | U | rainy season | be seen at swampy places near the Shabelle river, else only during the rainy season at waterlogged places with densely wooded margins |
| Fulica cristata | Red-knobbed Coot | ☉ | - | C | all season | at larger permanent ponds, i.e. at Jigjiiga in large numbers |

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|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Otididae | | | | | | |
| <i>Eupodotis hartlaubii</i> | Hartlaub's Bustard | ☉ | - | C | all seasons | very frequently to be seen and heard in all bush land; separation from <i>E. melanogaster</i> by habitat only |
| <i>Neotis heuglini</i> | Heuglin's Bustard | ☉ | U | U | all seasons | open to moderately dense bush land |
| <i>Eupodotis ruficrista</i> | Buff-crested Bustard | ☉ | C | F | all seasons | |
| <i>Eupodotis senegalensis</i> | White-bellied Bustard | ☉ | F | F | all seasons | ssp. <i>E. s. canicollis</i> not confirmed |
| <i>Eupodotis humilis</i> | Little brown Bustard | - * | F | F | all seasons | obviously prefers areas with soft sandy soils interspersed with gravelled areas, observed throughout the area. NEAR-THREATENED |
| <i>Ardeotis kori</i> | Kori Bustard | ☉ | U to - | U | all seasons | mainly on larger plains in the southern parts near Shabelle valley |
| Recurvirostridae | | | | | | |
| <i>Himantopus himantopus</i> | Common Stilt | ☉ | C | C | Palaeartic migrant | seen at permanent ponds near Jigjiiga but obviously disperses accidentally to more southerly waterlogged areas |
| Burhinidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Burhinus senegalensis</i> | Senegal Thicknee | ☉ | C | F | all seasons | seen at night on open plains or near well wooded margins |
| <i>Burhinus capensis</i> ssp. <i>maculosus</i> ? | Spotted Thicknee | ☉ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | The occurrence of the two thicknee species are confirmed by road victims at night |
| Glareolidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Cursorius rufus</i> (after HAYMAN, 1986) or <i>C. somaliensis</i> (after Howard & Moore, 2003) | Burchell's Courser or Somali Courser | - | ? | F | all seasons | Two cream coloured cursor species were differentiated during a survey with NABU in May 1999; <i>C. cursor</i> seems the more frequent courser occurring throughout the region. Species status among these similar looking coursers still in discussion, hence these observations are still questionable |
| <i>Cursorius cursor</i> ssp. <i>littoralis</i> ? | Cream-coloured Courser | ☉ | - | R | African migrant | |
| <i>Cursorius temminckii</i> | Temminck's Courser | ☉ | - | U | all seasons | |
| <i>Cursorius africanus</i> ssp. <i>hartingi</i> | Two-banded Courser | ☉ | F | U | all seasons | |
| <i>Cursorius cinctus</i> | Three-banded (Heuglin's) Courser | ☉ | F | U | all seasons | |
| <i>Glareola pratincola</i> | Common Pratincole | ☉ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | seen occasionally on open plains, higher numbers seen till May on plains in the Shabelle valley |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Charadriidae | | | | | | |
| Charadrius dubius | Little ringed Plover | ☉ | F | F | Palaeartic migrant | only seen at water pond near Jigjiiga |
| Vanellus tectus | Black-headed Lapwing | ☉ | F | U | | much lees frequent than V. spinosus but still seen occasionally |
| Vanellus spinosus | Spur-winged Lapwing | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | seen on open plains even far from water places |
| Vanellus coronatus | Crowned Lapwing | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | the most frequent lapwing throughout the region |
| Scolopacidae | | | | | | |
| Calidris minuta | Little Stint | ☉ | C | F | Palaeartic migrant | only seen at pond near Jigjiiga |
| Calidris temminckii | Temminck's Stint | ☉ | C | F | Palaeartic migrant | only seen at pond near Jigjiiga |
| Calidris ferruginea | Curlew Sandpiper | ☉ | C | F | Palaeartic migrant | seen at Jigjiiga and Shabelle river |
| Numenius arquata | Eurasian Curlew | ☉ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | rarely seen in Shabelle valley but observations underrepresented |
| Tringa totanus | Redshank | ☉ | U | U | | only seen at Jigjiiga dam |
| Tringa erythropus | Spotted Redshank | ☉ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | rarely seen in Shabelle valley but observations underrepresented |
| Actitis (Tringa) hypoleucos | Common Sandpiper | ☉ | C | F | Palaeartic migrant | regularly seen at pond near Jigjiiga |
| Pteroclididae | | | | | | |
| Pterocles exustus | Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse | ☉ | C | C | | regularly in huge flocks around Shilabo |
| Pterocles decoratus | Black-faced Sandgrouse | ☉ | F | F | | at water places like Shilabo often associated with Pt. exustus |
| Pterocles lichtensteinii | Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse | ☉ | F | U | | occasionally around livestock watering places with muddy soil |
| Columbidae | | | | | | |
| Columba guinea | Speckled pigeon | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | everywhere near settlements, in the bush comparatively rare |
| Treron waalia | Bruce's Green Dove | ☉ | F | U | | seen North of Warder but rarely in Qorahey zone |
| Oena capensis | Namaqua Dove | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | |
| Turtur chalcospilos | Emerald-spotted Wood Dove | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | |
| Streptopelia semitorquata | Red-eyed Dove | ☉ | C | F | | mainly northwest of Qorahey zone |
| Streptopelia decipiens | African Mourning Dove | ☉ | - | C | | often in very large flocks near water cisterns |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| <i>Streptopelia roseogrisea</i> | African Collared Dove | ○ | - | U | November to March | seasonally seen near settlements |
| <i>Streptopelia capicola</i> ssp. <i>capicola</i> ? | Ring-necked Dove | ⊙ | C | C | | very frequent in yards and close to settlements |
| <i>Streptopelia turtur</i> | Western Turtle Dove | ⊙ | - | F | DEYR season | seen in settlements and towns |
| <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> | Laughing Dove | ⊙ | C | C | | mainly near settlements but also quite common in the bush |
| Psittacidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Poicephalus rufiventris</i> ssp. <i>pallidus</i> ? | African orange-bellied Parrot | ⊙ | F | C | | Frequently flocking in bush with prominent trees (often <i>Delonix spec.</i>) |
| Musophagidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Crinifer zonurus</i> | Eastern Gray Plantain-eater | ○ | - | U | | seen only along the Shabelle river between Godey and Kelafo |
| <i>Corythaixoides leucogaster</i> | White-bellied Go-away-bird | ⊙ | C | C | | everywhere in the region with moderate to dense bush |
| Cuculidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Oxylophus (Clamator) jacobinus</i> | Pied Cuckoo | ⊙ | F | F | African migrant | |
| <i>Oxylophus (Clamator) levaillantii</i> | Levaillant's Cuckoo | ⊙ | - | R | African migrant | Shabelle river valley with riverine forests |
| <i>Clamator glandarius</i> | Great Spotted Cuckoo | ⊙ | - | R | African migrant | sometimes along the Fafen river |
| <i>Centropus superciliosus</i> | White-browed Coucal | ⊙ | F | U | | mainly in or close to thickets around seasonal water ponds |
| <i>Cuculus canorus</i> | Eurasian Cuckoo | ⊙ | F | U | Palaeartic migrant | in remnants of riverine forests along Fafen and Shabelle river |
| <i>Cuculus gularis</i> (<i>C. canorus gularis</i>) | African Cuckoo | ⊙ | U | F | African migrant | visibility poor but calls quite often to hear |
| <i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i> | Klaas' Cuckoo | ⊙ | F | U | | mainly Shabelle river valley |
| <i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i> | Dideric Cuckoo | ⊙ | U | U | African migrant | in remnants of riverine forests along Fafen and Shabelle river but seen also rarely in the dry bush |
| Strigidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Otus scops</i> or <i>O. senegalensis</i> ? | Common Scops-Owl or African Scops-Owl | ⊙ | C | F | | status of the two species unclear due to little voice records |
| <i>Otus leucotis</i> | White-faced Scops- | ⊙ | F | R | | only a few observations in dense bush areas |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
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| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | Owl | | | | | |
| Glaucidium perlatum | Pearl-spotted Owllet | ⊙ | C | C | | builds nests in termite mounts and can be seen during the day perching on top |
| Athene noctua ssp. somaliensis | Little Owl | ⊙ | F | F | | |
| Bubo lacteus | Verreaux's Eagle-Owl | ⊙ | F | U | | Seen only twice in bush with densely branched tall trees (i.e. Terminalia spec.) |
| Bubo africanus | Spotted Eagle-Owl | ⊙ | F | U | | observation frequency perhaps underestimated |
| Caprimulgidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Night jars are underrepresented in the records concerning species identification</i> | | | | | | |
| Caprimulgus species | Nightjars | | | F | | species not clearly identified so far, but night jars are very common in the bush |
| Apodidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Swifts are underrepresented in the records concerning species identification</i> | | | | | | |
| Apus affinis | Little Swift | ⊙ | F | F | | Around rocky hills and outcrops particularly at the edge of the Shabelle river valley. The diversity of swift species is not properly recorded so far |
| Coliidae | | | | | | |
| Urocolius (Colius) macrourus ssp. pulcher? | Blue-napped Mousebird | ⊙ | C | C | | in bush land as well as near settlements |
| Colius striatus ssp. hilgerti? | Speckled Mousebird | ⊙ | C | F | | more frequent near settlements than U. macrourus |
| Alcedinidae and Meropidae | | | | | | |
| Halcyon chelicuti | Striped Kingfisher | ⊙ | F | R | | |
| Halcyon leucocephala | Gray-headed Kingfisher | ⊙ | F | C | African migrant | every day in the bush visible |
| Halcyon senegalensis | Woodland Kingfisher | ⊙ | - | R | | along Fafen and Shabelle river |
| Ceyx picta | African Pygmy Kingfisher | ⊙ | F | F | | at temporary rivers during rainy season often to see |
| Corythornis (Alcedo) cristata | Malachite Kingfisher | ⊙ | F | C | | at water ponds with overhanging branches regularly to see |
| Ceryle rudis | Pied Kingfisher | ⊙ | C | F | in rainy seasons | at large and longer lasting water ponds |
| Merops pusillus ssp. cyanostictus? | Little Bee-eater | ⊙ | C | C | | the most frequent bee eater in the area |
| Merops nubicus | Carmine Bee-eater | ⊙ | F | C-F | season dependency | at the Shabelle river valley quite common, appears in the |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | | | | | | central Ogaden mostly at rainy season |
| <i>Merops revoolii</i> | Somali Bee-eater | ☉ | F | U | | |
| <i>Merops albicollis</i> | White-throated Bee-eater | ☉ | F | F | | mainly flocking at water pools after the rain, else rarely seen |
| <i>Merops orientalis</i> | Little green Bee-eater | ○ | - | R | African migrant | only two or three times observed |
| Coraciidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Coracias naevia</i> | Rufous-crowned Roller | ☉ | F | F | | The roller species which is seen most in open bush land |
| <i>Coracias garrulus</i> | Eurasian Roller | ☉ | C | F | Palearctic migrant / DER season | repeatedly seen in loosely assembled groups passing the area |
| <i>Coracias caudata</i> | Lilac-breasted Roller | ☉ | C | U | African migrant | |
| <i>Coracias abyssinica</i> | Abyssinian Roller | ☉ | F | U | African migrant | |
| Phoeniculidae and Upupidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Phoeniculus somaliensis</i> (Ph. <i>purpureus somaliensis</i>) ssp. <i>abyssinicus</i> ? | Black-billed Woodhoopoe | - | F | F | | Individuals best to be spotted by patient point observation |
| <i>Phoeniculus minor</i> ssp. <i>minor</i> ? | Abyssinian Scimitar-bill | ☉ | F | F | | |
| <i>Phoeniculus (Rhinopomastus) aterrimus</i> | Black Woodhoopoe | ○ | - | R | | differentiated from Ph. <i>cyanomelas</i> by more straight bill |
| <i>Phoeniculus (Rhinopomastus) cyanomelas</i> | Scimitar-bill | - | - | R | | At the Shabelle valley between Godey and Kelafo, one observation also at Fafen river; strongly curved bill used for identification. In AVIBASE mentioned for Somalia, hence very likely to occur in the Ogaden |
| <i>Upupa epos senegalensis</i> | Hoopoe | ☉ | C | C | all seasons | everywhere in the bush throughout the year |
| Bucerotidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Tockus nasatus</i> | African Gray Hornbill | ☉ | C | U | | |
| <i>Tockus flavirostris</i> | Eastern Yellow-billed Hornbill | ☉ | F | F | | |
| <i>Tockus deckeni</i> | Von der Decken's hornbill | ☉ | C | F | | less frequent than Jackson's hornbill |
| <i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i> | Red-billed hornbill | ☉ | C | C | | One of the true character species of the Ogaden bush land |
| <i>Tockus hemprichii</i> | Hemprich's hornbill | ☉ | U | R | | in bushed areas on rocky slopes and hillsides |

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| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|----------------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Bucorvus abyssinicus | Abyssinian Ground-Hornbill | ☉ | F | U | seasonal aggregation | best seen on open plains hunting grasshoppers after the rains |
| Capitonidae | | | | | | |
| Pogoniulus pusillus ssp. uropygialis | Red-fronted Tinkerbird | ☉ | F | U | | only seen during extensive point observation |
| Trachyphonus margaritatus ssp. somalicus | Yellow-breasted Barbet | ☉ | C | F | | more in open, sparsely bushed areas, often perches on termite mounds |
| Trachyphonus darnaudii ssp. böhmi | D'Arnaud's Barbet | ☉ | F | F | | at least in Qorahey zone less frequent than known from similar areas in Somalia |
| Trachyphonus erythrocephalus | Red-and-yellow Barbet | ☉ | F | F | | of all Trachyphonus species the most frequently seen species |
| Tricholaema diademata (Lybius leucomelas) | Red-fronted Barbet | ☉ | F | U | | |
| Tricholaema melanocephala (Lybius melanocephalus) | Black-throated Barbet | ☉ | F | U | | best seen around shallow depressions where dense thickets can form |
| Indicatoridae | | | | | | |
| Indicator indicator | Greater Honeyguide | ☉ | F | F | | Dense to medium dense bush with taller trees |
| Indicator minor | Lesser Honeyguide | ☉ | F | F | | see I. indicator |
| Picidae | | | | | | |
| Campethera nubica ssp. pallida? | Nubian Woodpecker | ☉ | F | C | | can be seen at any day in the field |
| Dendropicos fuscescens | Cardinal Woodpecker | ☉ | C | C | | can be seen at any day in the field |
| Dendropicos (Mesopicus) goertae ssp. spodocephalus | Gray Woodpecker | ☉ | F | C | | less frequent than other two woodpecker species; taxonomic allocation unclear |
| Alaudidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Larks are underrepresented in the field records</i> | | | | | | |
| Galerida cristata ssp. somaliensis? | Crested Lark | ☉ | C | F | | mostly seen on open plains like Banka Qorahey south of Kebri Dehar |
| Galerida malabarica ssp. huriensis | Thekla Lark | ☉ | F | F | | Crested and Thekla Lark often confused due to short observation time, hence frequency not precise. However, both species occur in the region |
| Eremopterix signata | Chestnut-headed Sparrow-Lark | ☉ | F | F | somewhat seasonal | although all Eremopterix species appear to be present throughout the year they are more frequently seen in flocks on open plains during the dry seasons |
| Eremopterix nigreiceps ssp. | Black-crowned | ☉ | | | | |

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| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| melanauchen? | Lark | | | | | |
| Eremopterix leucotis | Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark | ○ | - | | | |
| Hirundinidae | | | | | | |
| Hirundo aethiopica | Ethiopian Swallow | ⊙ | C | F | | mainly be seen around larger settlements and small towns |
| Hirundo rustica | Barn Swallow | ○ | C | C | Palaeartic migrant | in DER season often at water ponds and shallow water stagnations |
| Hirundo abyssinica | Lesser Striped-Swallow | ○ | C | F | | along the Fafen river regularly seen particularly if some water filled pools are left |
| Riparia riparia | Common Sand-Martin | ⊙ | F | U | | only seen in the Shabelle river valley |
| Delichon urbica | Western House-Martin | ○ | C | C | | see H. rustica |
| Motacillidae | | | | | | |
| Tmetothylacus tenellus | Golden Pipit | ⊙ | F | F | | easy to see in areas with scattered bush but may occur almost everywhere |
| Motacilla aguimp | African Pied Wagtail | ○ | - | U | | in the area of a large water catchments leading to Shabelle river observable, elsewhere rare |
| Motacilla alba | Pied Wagtail | ○ | F | C | Palaeartic migrant | at watering places with some sandy areas, often close to livestock |
| Motacilla flava | Yellow Wagtail | ⊙ | C | C | Palaeartic migrant | along small seasonal rivers in DER season |
| Pycnonotidae | | | | | | |
| Pycnonotus barbatus | Common Bulbul | ⊙ | C | C | | everywhere in the bush and within settlements |
| Turdidae | | | | | | |
| Turdus olivaceus | Olive Thrush | ○ | - | R | | seen in settlements and small townships with some decoration trees |
| Muscicapidae | | | | | | |
| Oenanthe isabellina | Isabelline Wheatear | ⊙ | C | C | | on open plains a very conspicuous small bird |
| Oenanthe oenanthe | Northern Wheatear | ○ | C | C | Palaeartic migrant | on open plains and rocky, sparsely bushed areas during the DER season |
| Oenanthe pleschanka | Pied Wheatear | ○ | F | C | Palaeartic migrant | easily seen during DER season on open plains and sparsely bushed areas |
| Oenanthe phillipsi | Somali Wheatear | ⊙ | F | F | | more attached to rocky ridges and outcrops than other wheatears |
| Saxicola torquata | Common | ○ | C | R | Palaeartic migrant | so far a single observation between Kebri Dehar and |

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|--|---|---|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | Stonechat | | | | | Jigjiiga |
| <i>Cichladusa guttata</i> | Spotted Morning-Thrush | ○ | C | F | | along the Fafen river in Qorahey Zone and northwards |
| <i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i> | White-browed Scrub-Robin | ⊙ | C | C | | in all kind of bush, often also within villages |
| <i>Muscicapa striata</i> | Spotted Flycatcher | ○ | F | C | Palaeartic migrant | quite often seen during DER-Season in well bushed areas |
| <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i> | Pied Flycatcher | ○ | U | R | | in DER season rarely seen at the wooded parts of Fafen river |
| <i>Bradornis pallidus</i> | Pallid Flycatcher | ○ | - | F | | B. pallidus not mentioned by v. Perlo for the Ogaden, but both species occur and could be differentiated by point observation from tree tops |
| <i>Bradornis microrhynchus</i> | Gray Flycatcher | ⊙ | C | | | |
| Platysteiridae | | | | | | |
| <i>Batis orientalis</i> | Gray-headed Batis | ⊙ | C | C | | sitting quietly in branched trees gave good possibility to differentiate the two similar looking Batis species |
| <i>Batis perkeo</i> | Pygmy Batis | ⊙ | F | F | | |
| Monarchidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Terpsiphone viridis</i> | African Paradise-Monarch | ⊙ | - | U | African migrant | true seasonality not clear but occurs in Qorahey zone; the totally white form is dominant |
| Sylviidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Hippolais pallida</i> | Olivaceous Warbler | ○ | - | R | Palaeartic migrant | |
| <i>Sylvietta whytii</i> | Red-faced Sylvietta | ○ | - | U | | |
| <i>Sylvietta philippae</i> | Somali Short-billed Sylvietta (Crombec) | - | - | R | | in an undisturbed observation session features to differentiate from <i>S. isabellina</i> were clearly seen DATA DEFICIENT ACC. TO AVIBASE |
| <i>Sylvietta isabellina</i> | Somali Long-billed Sylvietta (Crombec) | ⊙ | F | C | | often seen when observing from tree tops |
| <i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i> ssp. <i>griseoflava</i> ? | Yellow-bellied Eremomela | ⊙ | F | U | | <i>E. flavicrissalis</i> may also occur but could not be differentiated so far |
| Cisticolidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Cisticola</i> species | | Cisticola species have been seen in the region but needs more expertise for proper identification. In Qorahey Zone Cisticolas are perhaps rare or absent due to lack of habitat requirements. | | | | |
| <i>Prinia somalica</i> | Pale Prinia | ○ | F | C | | seen almost everyday in the bush |
| <i>Spiloptila (Urohipis) rufifrons</i> ssp. <i>smithii</i> | Red-fronted (faced) Warbler | ⊙ | F | F | | regularly seen during patient point observation |
| <i>Apalis flavida</i> | Yellow-breasted Apalis | ⊙ | C | U | | occasionally seen during point observation from tree tops |

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| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| Timaliidae | | | | | | |
| Turdoides rubiginosus ssp. sharpii | Rufous Chatterer | ☉ | F | F | | in bushed areas almost everywhere |
| Turdoides leucopygius sp. smithii | White-rumped Babbler | ☉ | C | C | | while continuously singing and calling easy to find and observe |
| Paridae and Remizidae | | | | | | |
| Parus thruppi (Parus afer thruppi) | Northern Grey Tit | ☉ | F | F | | throughout the area observable |
| Anthoscopus (Remiz) musculus | Mouse-coloured Penduline Tit | ☉ | U | U | | throughout the area but preferable on well-bushed rocky ridges |
| Zosteropidae | | | | | | |
| Zosterops abyssinica ssp. jubaensis? | Abyssinian White-eye | ☉ | C | C | | even in dry bush land particularly on flowering acacias |
| Nectariniidae | | | | | | |
| Nectarinia venusta ssp. albiventris | Variable Sunbird | ☉ | C | C | | almost everywhere; the most common sunbird |
| Anthreptes collaris | Collared Sunbird | ○ | - | R | | Only a few observations of both species but differentiated by accompanying female |
| Anthreptes metallicus | Northern Pygmy Sunbird | ☉ | - | R | | |
| Anthreptes orientalis | Eastern Violet-backed Sunbird | ☉ | F | U | | |
| Nectarinia mariquensis | Maricco Sunbird | ☉ | C | R | | Clearly not as common in the area as mentioned by v. Perlo |
| Nectarinia senegalensis | Scarlet-chested Sunbird | ○ | - | U | | Besides N. venusta the most common two sunbirds; foraging close to observation points in flowering trees made differentiation reliable |
| Nectarinia hunteri | Hunter's Sunbird | ☉ | F | C | | |
| Oriolidae | | | | | | |
| Oriolus larvatus | African Black-headed Oriole | ○ | C | F | | along the Shabelle quite frequent but also seen at the Fafen river in Qorahey zone |
| Oriolus oriolus | Eurasian Golden Oriole | ☉ | F | R | Palaeartic migrant | During DER season in tall trees along seasonal rivers |
| Malaconotidae | | | | | | |
| Rhodophoneus cruentus ssp. hilgerti? | Rosy-patched Bushshrike | ☉ | F | U | | not seen very often but everywhere in the region |
| Nilaus afer | Brubru | ☉ | C | C | | often very conspicuous by its call |
| Dryoscopus pringlii | Pringle's Puffback | ☉ | U | R | | few observations, decision to differentiate from potential D. |

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|---|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | | | | | | gabensis due to habitat |
| Tchagra senegala | Black-crowned Tchagra | ☉ | C | F | | often very conspicuous by its call |
| Malaconotus blanchoti ssp. approximans? | Grey-headed Bushshrike | ☉ | F | F | | only seen along the Shabelle river |
| Laniarius ruficeps | Red-napped Bushshrike | ☉ | U | U | | accidental observations in bush land of Qorahey zone |
| Laniarius aethiopicus | Tropical Boubou | ☉ | C | C | | Both boubous are seen in Qorahey zone along well-wooded seasonal rivers |
| Laniarius funebris | Slate-coloured Boubou | ☉ | C | R | | |
| Laniidae and Prionopidae | | | | | | |
| Lanius collurio | Red-backed Shrike | ☉ | C | C | Palaeartic migrant | in DER-season well distributed in the region |
| Lanius isabellinus (L. coll. isabellinus) | Red-tailed Shrike | ☉ | U | R | Palaeartic migrant | two records so far from Qorahey zone |
| Lanius nubicus | Nubian Shrike | ○ | F | R | Palaeartic migrant | all migratory Lanius species only seen in DER season from Nov. to March and except of collurio only accidental records |
| Lanius senator | Woodchat Shrike | ○ | F | R | Palaeartic migrant | |
| Lanius excubitoroides | Great Grey Shrike | ○ | F | R | Palaeartic migrant | |
| Lanius somalicus | Somali Fiscal | ☉ | F | C | | sightings of this two species not always differentiated to species level, hence frequency combined |
| Lanius dorsalis | Taita Fiscal | ○ | C | | | |
| Lanius minor | Lesser Grey-backed Shrike | ○ | - | U | | |
| Lanius collaris | Common Fiscal | ○ | F | F | | |
| Prionops plumata ssp. vinaceigularis | White (crested) Helmetshrike | ☉ | F | C | | in well-wooded depressions and thickets quite regularly seen always in small flocks |
| Eurocephalus rueppelli | White-rumped Helmetshrike (White-crowned Shrike) | ☉ | C | C | | almost everywhere in the bush often in small flocks |
| Corvidae | | | | | | |
| Corvus ruficollis ssp. edithae | Brown-necked Raven | ☉ | F | F | | particularly around towns like Shilabo or Godey |
| Corvus albus | Pied Crow | ☉ | C | C | | mostly seen around towns but rarely seen in the bush far from settlements |
| Corvus rhipidurus | Fan-tailed Raven | ☉ | C | C | | large assembling often near small settlements |
| Corvus capensis | African Rook | ○ | C | ? | | record questionable, but a slender billed raven seen at cliffs near the Shabelle river valley, that means below |

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------|--|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | | | | | | 1.800 m |
| Dicruridae | | | | | | |
| Dicrurus adsimilis | African drongo | ⊙ | C | C | | very conspicuous in flight and while perching, seen every day |
| Dicrurus ludwigii | Square-tailed drongo | - | - | ? | | still not clear but some sightings point to this species |
| Sturnidae | | | | | | |
| Onychgnathus salvadori | Bristle-crowned Starling | ⊙ | F | U | | only a few records but also from plain bush areas in a distance to cliffs and ravines |
| Onychgnathus blythii | Somali Chestnut-winged Starling | ⊙ | - | R | | Rarely seen and species not fully clear but the most likely red-winged starling in this area |
| Lamprotornis chalybeus | Greater Blue-eared Starling | ⊙ | C | C | | almost everywhere and quite numerous in town entering gardens and compounds |
| Lamprotornis purpuropterus | Rueppell's Long-tailed Starling | ○ | - | F | | in the bush a quite common long-tailed glossy starling |
| Buphagus erythrorhynchus | Red-billed Oxpecker | ⊙ | C | C | | with larger camel herds always some individuals can be found |
| Spreo shelleyi | Shelley's Starling | ⊙ | C | C | | not as close to human settlements as S. superbus |
| Spreo superbus | Superb Starling | ⊙ | C | C | | always to be seen around settlements |
| Spreo albicapillus | White-crowned Starling | ⊙ | C | C | | the most numerous starling in the bush and near settlements, often occurring in flocks up to hundred individuals |
| Speculipastor bicolor | Magpie Starling | ⊙ | F | U | | repeated sightings but not as numerous as other starlings |
| Cinnyricinclus leucogaster | Violet-backed Starling | ⊙ | F | U | African migrant | less frequent in the dry bush than in other parts of its range |
| Cosmopsarus regius | Golden-breasted Starling | ⊙ | F | C | | moderate seasonality in occurring in larger flocks during the rains, else more individually moving |
| Creatophora cinerea | Wattled Starling | ⊙ | C | C | African migrant | present throughout the year but seasonally in large groups throughout the area |
| Passeridae | | | | | | |
| Passer griseus | Grey-headed Sparrow | ○ | - | C | | quite common in the bush and around settlements |
| Passer motitensis (iagoensis) | Rufous Sparrow | ⊙ | F | U | | in towns and settlements sometimes in mixed flocks with P. castanopterus |
| Passer castanopterus | Somali Sparrow | ⊙ | U | C | | almost everywhere in the bush |
| Plocepasser donaldsoni | Donaldson-Smith's | ○ | U | U | | near Shabelle valley and northwards along the catchment |

Wilhelmi, Kaariye - Bird Observation in Ogaden

| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | Sparrow-Weaver | | | | | area more frequent, in Qorahey Zone rare |
| Ploceidae | | | | | | |
| Plocepasser mahali | White-browed Sparrow-Weaver | ○ | - | U | | in Qorahey zone and adjacent areas accidentally be seen |
| Bubalornis niger | Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver | ⊙ | F | F | | along rivers with some agriculture more frequent than in the bush |
| Dinemellia dinemellia | White-headed Buffalo-Weaver | ○ | - | C | | the most numerous heavy built weaver, can be considered as a representative species of the area |
| Ploceus cucullatus | Black-headed Weaver | ○ | - | C | | in the rainy seasons small colonies can be found at water ponds |
| Ploceus spekei | Speke's Weaver | ⊙ | F | F | | as with P. cucullatus; occurs below 1.200 m |
| Ploceus galbula | Chestnut Weaver | ⊙ | F | U | | found more close to a few agricultural areas along the Fafen river and near Danaan |
| Ploceus baglafaecht ssp. emini | Baglafaecht Weaver | ⊙ | C | U | | rarely seen in the bush but often near or inside towns with permanent water like Jigjiiga |
| Euplectes axillaris | Fan-tailed Widowbird | ○ | - | R | | seen only on one trip along the Shabelle river towards Kelafo |
| Euplectes franciscanus ssp. pusillus | Northern Red Bishop | ⊙ | C | C | | seen in the bush only during the rains but in towns like Jigjiiga always |
| Quelea quelea | Red-billed Quelea | ⊙ | C | C | | In the dry bush quite rare and just in small flocks. At Danaan regularly occurring in large numbers but not comparable to the huge amounts in other crop growing areas of East Africa |
| Viduidae | | | | | | |
| Vidua macroura | Pin-tailed Whydah | ⊙ | C | F | | |
| Vidua hypocherina | Steel-blue Whydah | ⊙ | F | U | | only accidental records |
| Vidua fisheri | Straw-tailed Whydah | ⊙ | F | U | | only accidental records |
| Vidua paradisaea | Acacia Paradise-Whydah | ○ | - | R | | |
| Estrildidae | | | | | | |
| Pytilia melba | Green-winged Pytilia | ⊙ | F | C | | with some patience can be found almost every day in the bush |
| Pytilia afra | Orange winged Pytilia | ⊙ | C | C | | see P. melba |
| Laganosticta senegala | Red-billed Firefinch | ⊙ | C | C | | moves often in small groups through the bush, regularly |

Wilhelmi, Kaariye - Bird Observation in Ogaden

| Scientific Name | English name | Checklist Birds of Ethiopia | Observation Frequency | | Seasonality | Remarks |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|---|
| | | | B. v. Perlo | Ogaden | | |
| | | | | | | seen within towns |
| <i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i> | Red-cheeked Cordonbleu | ☉ | C | U | | only recorded along wooded river sides and in larger towns |
| <i>Estrilda charmosyna</i> (<i>E. erythronotus charmosyna</i>) | Black-cheeked Waxbill | ☉ | U | U | | mostly along river beds and in towns, few records from the bush |
| <i>Estrilda rhodopyga</i> | Crimson-rumped Waxbill | ☉ | C | F | | like the other waxbills and small finches often to be seen in fencing hedges along farms |
| <i>Uraeginthus ianthinogaster</i> | Purple Grenadier | ☉ | | | | like the other waxbills and small finches often to be seen in fencing hedges along farms or within villages |
| <i>Lonchura cantans</i> (<i>malabarica</i>) | African Silverbill | ☉ | F | C | | often in great numbers seen in town gardens or wherever taller grass is growing along seasonal rivers |
| <i>Amadina fasciata</i> | Cut-throat | ☉ | F | F | | |
| Emberizidae and Fringillidae | | | | | | |
| <i>Emberiza poliopleura</i> | Somali Golden-breasted Bunting | ☉ | - | C | | very common in the bush throughout the area |
| <i>Serinus citrinelloides</i> | African Citril | ○ | - | R | | perhaps more frequent than recorded but unlike males, females can be mistaken with <i>S. canicollis</i> |
| <i>Serinus canicollis</i> | Yellow-crowned Canary | ☉ | F | U | | are in the bush but sighting are possible in larger towns or along wooded seasonal rivers |
| <i>Serinus dorsostriatus</i> | White-bellied Serin | ☉ | C | F | | more in dry bush land than above mentioned <i>Serinus</i> species |
| <i>Serinus donaldsoni</i> | Grosbeak Serin | ☉ | F | R | | like <i>S. dorsostriatus</i> |
| <i>Serinus striolatus</i> | Streaky Serin | ○ | F | R | | may expand further to East than shown in v. Perlo or Checklist |

Discussion of bird records

As mentioned previously, the prime field work focused on larger mammals than on birds. Hence, some groups are definitely underrepresented. There is no doubt that many others remained unobserved or have just been overlooked.

Bird groups with a higher likelihood to occur with significantly more species according to v. Perlo and the Avibase checklists for Ethiopia and Somalia are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Strigidae (Owls) | potentially 9 | identified 6 |
| Caprimulgidae (Nightjars) | potentially 8 | identified 0 |
| Apodidae (Swifts) | potentially 7 | identified 1 |
| Alaudidae (Larks) | potentially 16 | identified 5 |
| Anthus sp. (Pipits) | potentially 7 | identified 1 |
| Turdinae (Chats, Wheatears) | potentially 17 | identified 7 |
| Sylviinae (Cisticolas) | potentially 10 | identified 1 |
| Nectaridae (Sunbirds) | potentially 12 | identified 7 |
| Ploceidae (Weavers, Sparrows) | potentially 24 | identified 15 |

Only a few species in table 1 are not mentioned either in the Ethiopian checklist of URBAN & BROWN or in BART V. PERLO. This reflects again the lack of knowledge and the scattered information available for this region rather than showing a new spectacular observation.

The records confirmed 60 species of the Somali-Massai biome out of 100 mentioned for Ethiopia, indicating a well composed and almost intact bird community. Since the overall conditions appear still favourable regarding habitat requirements of most of the missing species, it seems very likely that they also occur.

As with the flora, the species diversity of the Ogaden shows a high congruence with Somali bird communities, except, of course, sea birds and shore dwelling species.

Bird communities differ in diversity and species frequency according to habitat structure and niche offer and some food specialists might be restricted to certain trees, shrubs or herbs occurring only in a restricted range. Hence, the Ogaden bird community is most probably not evenly distributed throughout the area.

So far, the surveyed area can be divided in three zones regarding major habitat requirements for birds (the altitude differs not very much and hence seems no criterion for differentiation).

1) The red sand area East of Kebri Dehar up to the Somali border. Here Acacia trees dominate the incense trees, the canopy is often closed, dense and multi-branched. The cover of herbs and grasses is rich during the rains. This zone also bears the typical tall termite mounds frequently used by birds depending on nest holes. This comprises the major part of the landscape

2) The hilly limestone–rock area with gravelled soils. Here *Commiphora*, *Boswellia* and *Euphorbia* species are more dominant; the soil is often bare with scattered dwarf shrubs. This area stretches North and West of Kebri Dehar, and southwards to the Shabelle valley.

3) The banks of water courses, like the Shabelle, the Fafen and other larger seasonal rivers. This zone differs in bearing more dense vegetation with fig trees, *Ziziphus*, *Balanites* and *Tamarix* species. The vegetation period is due to a better water supply prolonged and in the shade of trees muddy places can persist quite long.

The zones can be partly identified on the satellite imageries of Figure 2 and 3.

The three zones may represent the general distribution range for the recorded birds inasmuch as they depend on or prefer the described structures As an example, the

Little Brown Bustard, recorded in zone 1 and 2 can thus be expected almost throughout the whole region.

The vast area of the Ogaden hosts also numerous palaeartic migratory species, some of them in large numbers like the European White Stork. The Ogaden is thus also a conservation issue for endangered species of the Northern Hemisphere.

Other wildlife

Very little records about other wildlife was available for the last two or three decades from this area.

Now, due to the extensive surveillance work the knowledge on prevailing wildlife can be updated or confirmed.

However, complete lists as well as population estimates are not subject of this article. Thus, a brief compilation of species emphasizing some remarkable findings shall give an impression of the areas wildlife diversity.

| Table 2: Wildlife records of the Ogaden region and the Qorahey Zone in particular | | |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| Scientific name | English name | Remarks |
| Ungulates | | |
| Orycteropus afer | Aardvark | detected only by footprints and burrows but quite numerous |
| Phacochoerus aeth. delamerei | Desert warthog | plenty but zoologists were unaware of this population |
| Tragelaphus imberbis | Lesser Kudu | viable numbers |
| Tragelaphus strepsiceros | Greater Kudu | still present in low numbers |
| Madoqua saltiana phillipsi | Salt's or Phillip's Dikdik | plenty |
| Madoqua guentheri | Guenther's Dikdik | plenty |
| Madoqua piacentinii | Silver Dikdik | viable numbers, not recorded previously for the Ogaden and Ethiopia respectively. |
| Gazella soemmerringi | Soemmerring's Gazelle | seriously depleted, only fragments of previous numbers left |
| Ammodorcas clarkei | Dibatag | restricted in range and definitely vulnerable |
| Litocranius walleri | Gerenuk | viable numbers |
| Oryx beisa | Beisa Oryx | seriously depleted, only fragments of previous numbers left |
| Primates | | |
| Papio hamadryas | Sacred Baboon | in mountainous areas adjacent to Qorahey Zone |
| Papio anubis | Olive Baboon | mainly Shabelle river area |
| Cercopithecus pygerythrus | Vervet Monkey | tall trees along river beds |
| Galago gallarum | Somali Galago | nocturnal, but repeatedly seen |
| Insectivores | | |
| Elephantulus sp. | Lesser Elephant Shrew | |
| Hares and Rodents | | |
| Lepus capensis | Cape hare | |
| Xerus rutilus | Ground Squirrel | plenty |
| Pectinator spekei | Pectinator | common at hill sides and rocky outcrops |
| Hystrix cristata | Crested Porcupine | numerous |
| Heterocephalus glaber | Naked Mole-rat | plenty |

| Carnivores | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| Canis aureus | Common Jackal | numerous |
| Canis mesomelas | Black-backed Jackal | numerous |
| Otocyon megalotis | Bat-eared Fox | viable numbers |
| Mellivora capensis | Ratel | viable numbers |
| Herpestidae | Mongoose | five species present |
| Hyena hyena | Striped Hyaena | viable numbers |
| Crocuta crocuta | Spotted Hyaena | numerous but seriously hunted as vermin |
| Proteles cristata | Aardwolf | nocturnal, a few life observations and some road kills |
| Genetta genetta | Common Genet | |
| Civettictis civetta | African Civet | |
| Felis caracal | Caracal | viable numbers |
| Panthera leo | Lion | viable numbers, pursued as vermin |
| Panthera pardus | Leopard | no direct records but people assure the occurrence in mountainous areas around Degeh Bur and to the West. |
| Acinonyx jubatus | Cheetah | quite common but seriously pursued as vermin; young are frequently collected for profitable sale which rarely works |

The Desert Warthog and the Silver Dikdik can be highlighted as very interesting findings among the larger mammals.

The population status of the warthog species was thought to be critical since it was known only from small isolated pockets in Northern Somalia and Northern Kenya.

The distribution range of the Silver Dikdik was thought to be restricted to coastal areas of Somalia. The records from Ogaden indicate that they may occur also throughout Central Somalia.

Other vertebrates like reptiles and amphibians are also abundant in numbers and species diversity. It is very likely that among these groups are still species new to science.

However, it has to be stated that all those carnivores considered as vermin to livestock as well as all larger game animals are under severe hunting pressure. Particularly antelopes of open plains are often arbitrary targets of military forces. Warthogs, not a game because of religious taboo, are killed and used as poisoned bits for hyenas.

Comments on Important bird areas

Previously identified IBA

The first edition of the Important Bird Areas of Ethiopia mentions three areas which match category one, two or three (or all of them) of the Global Categories and Criteria to identify IBAs.

These areas are in brief:

| Name | IBA-Nr. | Co-ordinates | Categories | Status |
|----------------------|---------|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Bogol Manyo-Dolo | 021 | N 04°31' E 41°32' | 1 and 2 | Area not delimited, unprotected |
| Lower Shabelle River | 048 | N 05°06'-05°36' E 44°08'-45°10' | 1, 2, and 3 | Area not delimited, unprotected |
| Warder | (048) | (N 06°58' E 45°20') | 1, 2, and 3 | Area not delimited, unprotected |

Bogol Manyo-Doolo is given as a spot co-coordinate of Bogol Manyo town but is described as the area from 30 km Northwest of Bogol Manyo to Doolo town, about 100 km to the Southwest just at the Somali border.

Bird species of particular concern are:

Category 1 Globally threatened species

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Degodi Lark | Mirafraga degodiensis | Category 1,2 |
| White-winged Dove | Streptopelia reichenowi | Category 1,2 |
| Somali Short-billed Crombec | Sylvietta phillipae | Category 1 |
| Jubaland Weaver | Ploceus dichrocephalus | Category 2 |

28 Somali-Massai biome species are recorded so far.

Lower Shabelle River is given with co-ordinates outlining roughly the Shabelle river as the Northern margin from Kelafo to Ferfer at the Ethiopian-Somali border and the area of the river's southerly tributaries. The co-ordinates thus comprise an area of about 6.200 km².

Warder is, according to the IBA numbering, combined with the Lower Shabelle River, but no co-ordinates are given. The co-ordinates in the table above are taken from the map and put in parentheses. Warder lies about 200 km Northeast of Kelafo.

It is not clear whether the whole area between the Lower Shabelle River and Warder is considered as an extended IBA or whether a so far unlimited area around Warder shall be taken as IBA. Only the mentioned records of Little Brown Bustard and the high percentage of Somali-Massai biome species are a clue to accept the whole area as an IBA, totalling to an area size of about 21.000 km².

Bird species of particular concern are:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Little Brown Bustard | Eupodotis humilis | Category 1 |
| White-winged Dove | Streptopelia reichenowi | Category 1,2 |
| Somali Short-billed Crombec | Sylvietta phillipae | Category 1 |
| White-winged Dove | Streptopelia reichenowi | Category 2 |
| 47 Somali-Massai species | | Category 3 |
| Bulo Burti Boubou | Laniarius liberatus | potential occurrence |

Contributions and Suggestions for IBA update

Bogol-Manyo – Doolo area

Except of a short visit the authors haven't worked in this area and are hence not familiar with this part of the Somali region.

However, from this trip and due to comparisons with the vegetation structure in Qorahey Zone and the central Ogaden in general, it appears very likely that more than the recorded 28 bird species of the Somali-Massai biome occur in this area. It might be justified to apply also Category 3 "Biome restricted assemblage" to this area.

Regarding other wildlife the occurrence of Giraffe was mentioned repeatedly by the local society. Gerenuk and Lesser Kudu appeared to be still quite numerous while other ungulates including Dikdiks are much less than in the central Ogaden.

Shabelle River Valley

In the most Eastern part of Ethiopia the Shabelle River represents the only permanent watercourse crossing in its far South a vast terrain of semi-arid to arid Acacia-Commiphora bush land with a North-South extension of almost 570 km.

The river banks still carry fragments of riverine gallery forests adding to the habitat diversity of an else dry landscape. During the rains the Shabelle forms large flood plains along its course from Godey to Kelafo and further to Mustahil near the Somali border.

The river itself, the flooded areas during the DEYR and GU season (sometimes heavy rains in the Ethiopian highlands can cause an out-seasonal flooding) and extended water catchment areas may serve as step stones for all migratory birds depending on water logged areas. At least these arguments predestine the river valley as an important aggregation area for those species. Seasonal records in the central Ogaden region on storks, waders and the like (refer to Table 1) as well as observations near Jigjiiga (see below) in the North demonstrate the significance as a step-stone area.

The Little Brown Bustard is definitely present in the area north of the river valley and was recorded with high constancy in the catchment area from Danaan to Godey.

With the Lappet-faced vulture another threatened species is present in the area.

No direct records are collected for Short-billed Sylvieta, but habitat comparisons from areas of confirmed occurrence yield no strong argument why this species shall not also occur here.

The assumption that the river valley is a potential habitat for the little known Bulo Burti Shrike can be confirmed. In 1999 the authors carried out a survey along the Shabelle river from Imi to Mustahil in order to search for this species and to identify habitat preconditions for its presence. Although the bird itself could not be detected, suitable habitats are definitely present (WILHELMI was involved in 1988 to collect the only known individual near Bulo Burti).

Other aspects of conservational concern are the specific botany of this area. The northern edge of the Shabelle River valley consists of limestone and gypsum hills with a very specific flora. Low lying limestone and gypsum plateaus also stretch to the south of Kelafo.

During the botanical survey in May 2006, i.e. *Boswellia ogadensis*, so far only known from Kelafo, could be recorded almost half the way up to Godey. Other species, including first records for Ethiopia and several new species, mainly from the group of *Euphorbiaceae* add to the botanical importance of this area (THULIN, in preparation).

IBA criteria do not point out or recommend a particular size or delineation for an Important Bird Area.

From a future management point of view it seems however appropriate to provide a somewhat clear demarcation of an Important Bird Area.

Figure 3 shows a suggestion outlined on satellite imagery for the **IBA Lower Shabelle Valley** based on recent findings.

It covers the river valley from Godey to Mustahil, the main northerly water catchment area and the area of gypsum hills and slopes following the valley. There is no strong reason to exclude the river stretch from Kelafo to Godey. Although there was extensive irrigation farming around Godey, these perimeters are now mostly abandoned or fallow and used as seasonal pastures. Large assemblies of storks and waders can be found here.



Figure 3: Proposed borders for the IBA “Shabelle Valley”. Co-ordinates of numbered flags see text.

There might be also some arguments to include further stretches of the river valley up to Imi town. But the value of this river part can be influenced in near future by the hydroelectric power plant pending for operation. This may have a significant impact on the river habitats at least from Imi to Godey.

IBA Global Criteria for the proposed IBA “Lower Shabelle Valley”:

Category 1: Globally threatened species

Little Brown Bustard – Near threatened

Short billed Sylvieta – Data deficient

Lappet-faced vulture – Vulnerable

Category 2: Restricted range species

Not reconfirmed but overall data give no strong reason to reject.

White winged Dove

Bule Burti Boubou

Category 3: Biome-restricted assemblage

At least 50 % of total Ethiopian Somali-Massai biome assemblage

Category 4 iv: Congregations of migratory birds at bottleneck sites

Validation of this criterion shall be set regionally.

Additional biodiversity conservation issues

Specific botanical diversity on limestone and gypsum soils with occurrence of obviously range restricted rare and newly discovered plant species.

Co-ordinates for area corners in Figure 3:

1) N 06°30' E 43°30'

2) N 06°30' E 43°45'

3) N 06°04' E 43°45'

4) N 05°30' E 44°40'

5) N 05°06' E 44°40'

6) N 05°45' E 43°30'

Area corners may be shifted to some extent to follow topographically clear landmarks.

Anticipated threats

It is difficult to estimate the magnitude of potential threats to habitats and bird communities caused by the way of living of local communities and by future infrastructure development. However, the following threats can be stated and somehow ranked in the order of a potential impact dimension.

- Operation of the dam and hydroelectric power plant upstream the Shabelle river.
- Resumption of large scale irrigation farming along the river
- Clearing of gallery forest remnants
- Bush clearing for fuel, construction and fodder

Warder area

The area around Warder is characterised by deep red sand soils interspersed by basaltic outcrops, limestone ridges with gravelled soils and some gypsum plateaus.

At a first glance the vegetation looks very uniform appearing as a vast area of *Acacia-Commiphora* bush land. But soil conditions, topography and the impact of livestock keeping formed on a finer scale a patchy vegetation mosaic of dense to almost impenetrable thickets, open bush land, areas with scattered trees, or plains with just a cover of herbs and grasses.

These conditions apply for almost the whole area from a line drawn through Kebri Dehar down to the Shabelle and up to the Somali border in the North and East.

The Warder area as an IBA was nominated because of the presence of three threatened species and the high proportion of Somali-Massai biome species.

The compiled records now show that the Little Brown Bustard as well as the Short-billed Crombec occur throughout the surveyed area and there is little reason to doubt that they also occur in similar habitats up to the Somali border.

As a consequence, the application of relevant IBA criteria will embrace almost the entire Qorahey and Warder Zone of the Somali Region, an area of about 70.000 km².

Again, such a huge area is extremely difficult to handle if it comes to realisable conservation measures in the future.

The authors thus suggest a defined section which might be considered as an IBA core area, whereas the IBA criteria are still valid for the entire surrounding area.

As a working title **IBA “Central Qorahey Zone”** is proposed.

Within this area all Somali-Massai biome species of Table 1 are recorded, as well as almost all mammals listed in Table 2. The site shows comparatively low livestock pressure resulting in still large sectors of almost pristine bush land. The vegetation shows a higher diversity regarding species and structures than areas to the East and West and hence offers an ample variety of habitats including seasonal river stretches and ponds. About eight new plant species including a locally prevailing *Acacia* species were found here during the May 2006 survey (THULIN et.al. *in preparation*).

The margins of the proposed area are shown in Figure 4.

While the Shabelle IBA covers to a wider extent limestone and gypsum areas, the Qorahey IBA will contain mostly habitats of the deep red sand area, typical for the major part of the Qorahey and Warder Zone. It also includes little disturbed parts of the Fafen seasonal river and its flood plains, totalling to an area size of about 2.800 km².



Figure 4: Proposed area of IBA “Central Qorahey Zone”

Almost the same boundary was proposed as a future conservation area to Wildlife Conservation Society, U.S. which may help to bundle future conservation efforts.

IBA Global Criteria for the proposed IBA “Central Qorahey Zone”:

Category 1: Globally threatened species

Little Brown Bustard – Near threatened

Short billed Sylvieta – Data deficient

Lappet-faced vulture – Vulnerable

Pallied Harrier – Near threatened; small numbers overwinter in the area

Category 2: Restricted range species

Not reconfirmed but overall data give no strong reason to reject.

White winged Dove

Category 3: Biome-restricted assemblage

At least 60 % of total Ethiopian Somali-Massai biome assemblage

Additional biodiversity conservation issues

Specific botanical diversity on limestone, gypsum, and red sand soils with occurrence of obviously range restricted rare and newly discovered plant species.

Occurrence of endangered or threatened antelopes. Assemblage of Somali-Massai biome mammals and other vertebrates.

Co-ordinates for area corners in Figure 4:

1) N 06°35' E 44°20'

2) N 06°15' E 44°22'

3) N 06°15' E 44°45'

4) N 06°23' E 44°57'

5) N 06°33' E 45°05'

6) N 06°45' E 44°58'

7) N 06°46' E 44°51'

8) N 06°36' E 44°29'

The demarcation follows roads and easy to identify topographical features.

Anticipated threats

It is difficult to estimate the magnitude of potential threats to habitats and bird communities caused by the way of living of local communities and by future infrastructure development. However, the following threats can be stated and somehow ranked in the order of a potential impact dimension.

- Rehabilitation and operation of Calub Gas Station near Shilabo
- Bush clearing for fuel, construction and fodder

- Increasing livestock pressure
- Poaching

Jigjiiga Dam and Reservoir

The site recommended here for conservation considerations is perhaps not sufficient to count as an IBA but may fit as a Secondary Area (SA) to protect or support migratory water birds.

The site consists of a man-made reservoir originally planned for irrigation and is located about 6 km Northeast of Jigjiiga. It is surrounded by farmland and several nearby settlements and hence easy to reach.

Repeated visits during DEYR season revealed that the reservoir is used by huge numbers of palaeartic waders and storks as either a transition place on their way further to the South or as over-wintering quarter. In 2003 a small group of Eurasian Cranes were recorded for two days.

In February 2006 about 1.000 White Storks gathered at the reservoir searching for food on the muddy banks. White Storks appear also on plains in the Qorahey Zone if the rain conditions are favourable.

Further investigations, particularly counting of small waders to determine thresholds, may be needed to appraise the significance of the site.

There are a few other larger natural ponds along a side road from Jigjiiga to Kebri Dehar, but never larger aggregations of waders have been seen at these places.

This suggests that the reservoir is an important step stone if not a “bottle neck” for migratory birds.

Figure 5 shows the location of the reservoir.



Figure 5: Location of Dam and Reservoir near Jigjiiga

To some extent the reservoir can be compared with Chelekleka Lake near Debre Zeit although numbers and diversity of waterbirds may not reach the figures of Chelekleka and the surrounding as well as aquatic vegetation is not as rich.

Conservation Criteria for “Jigjiiga Dam and Reservoir”

Category 4: Congregations

The site is believed to hold several thousand waterbirds seasonally.

Twenty waterbird species including palaeartic migrants recorded at this site.

Whether the threshold for the full application of category 4 is fulfilled has to be proved by further surveys.

Co-ordinates:

N 09°23'

E 42°50'

Area size: about 25 ha

Anticipated threats

- Reservoir regularly used for washing of vehicles, especially trucks – hence ongoing water pollution. Since the reservoir is not used for irrigation there is little water exchange and washout of pollutants.
- The area is used for military training (i.e. hand grenade practicing) creating disturbance and additional pollution (waste, ammo residuals etc.).
- Hunting of waterbirds especially Egyptian Geese.
- Watering point for livestock
- Impact of artificial fertilizers and pesticides from adjacent farms might be still negligible but can increase with promotion of high yielding crop varieties.
- Realization of originally planned irrigation.

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