

## A Preliminary Checklists of Birds for the Fura and Furagosa Wildlife Community Based Conservation Area, in Mirab-Abaya District, Gamo Zone, Southern Ethiopia



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**ABSTRACT:** The field visit was conducted during February 2021 with the aim to prepare a primary bird checklist in Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation areas. Transect walk data collection method was employed. The record of bird list was presented in a descriptive statics. Thus, a total of 37 bird species were recorded during the survey time. Of the species recorded, 25 species were residents, 10 species Palearctic migrants and 2 Intra-African migrants. The survey suggests that further systematic studies of biodiversity are needed.

**KEY WORDS:** Migratory bird, Ecotourism, Conservation.

### INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia has a large variety of indigenous plant and animal species. As of (2014) Ethiopian biodiversity institute report, there were at least 284 species of mammals, 861 species of birds, 201 reptile species, 200 fish species, 63 amphibian species 1225 arthropod(324 butterfly) species and over 6,000 species of plants throughout the country. The birdlife in Ethiopia is exceptional in East Africa, high number of species recorded with high endemism. According to Leepage (2021), 873 species recorded from Ethiopian IBAs from which 19 species are endemic to the country. However, there is a distinct lack of adequate knowledge of avifauna assemblages and their distributions across different habitats (EWNHS 1996). Most of the biological resources particularly wildlife's are concentrated in protected areas (IUCN, 1994). However, Ethiopia efforts have increased in establishments of national parks, wildlife sanctuary and reserves to gain environmental and economic benefits but the value obtained from the protected areas is very low (Solomon & Dereje, 2015). The lakes in the Great Rift Valley region abound with numerous species of birds, and wild animals are found in every region (Taylor and Tudorancea, 2002). From the common wildlife species like the leopard, cheetah, lion, civet, African bush elephant, bushpig, gazelle, antelope, ibex, kudu, dik- dik, oribi, reedbuck, Somali wild ass, Grévy's zebra, hyena, baboon, and numerous species of monkey are widely distributed in the rift (BirdLife International, 2021). Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation area is part of the rift valley systems which the proposed community based conservation site comprises a distinctive habitat types and it is known for feeding and wintering grounds for many migratory birds.

Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation area is found in Mirab Abaya that is one of the woredas in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region of Ethiopia, Part of the Gamo Zone. Mirab Abaya is bordered on the east and south by Lake Abaya which separates it from the Oromia Region on the east and Arba Minch Zuria on the south, on the west by Chench, on the northwest by Borena, and on the north by the Wolayita Zone. It has an elevation of 1100 to 2900 ms above sea level & average annual rainfall and temperature between 800-1600ml and 24-30°C, respectively (Nigussie and Alemayehu, 2013; Direslgné *et al.*, 2016).

This community based wildlife area covers 25% of Abaya Lake and estimated over 5,691 ha area of land. The conservation area has around 11 unique islands and sticky mountains area and inhabits ample terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. Lake Abaya is part of the Main Ethiopian Rift is found in west side of this district town and east of the Guge Mountains range. The town of Arba Minch lies on its southwestern shore, and the southern shores are part of the Nechisar National Park. Just to the south is Lake

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Chamo; Savanna, known for its wildlife and birdlife, surrounds the lake, which is also fished by local people. This Lake is supplied by a major drainage system; the tributaries are the Bilate River from the north, the Gidabo and Gelana rivers from the east, and the Hare, Amessa and Basso rivers from the west (Direslgne *et al.*, 2016) . Adjacent to the lake there is agricultural field (banana farm) which is used to for local farmers as income and supplied for local market for users. The woodland surrounded all the rest is shown unique and very attractive scenic view when the area is looked from top to downwards (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Photo view of the part of Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation area.**

We conducted a primary field survey of birds in February 2021. Birds were recorded in a transect walk for the open wetland habitats and Abaya lake shoreline. In the woodland and agricultural field areas, slow-moving vehicle were employed to count birds along the habitats by rounding the area following the road paths. Active bird recording was conducted in the morning and afternoon two times field visit for each habitats for around six hours in 100 to 300 m sighting distance. The period of observation for each field work varied, based on the habitat types. Observations were aided by binoculars and photographs were taken for further identification of inconspicuous species.

The species checklist during the survey is provided in Appendix 1. According to Birdlife international(2001),*Aviceda cuculoides*, *Macheiramphus alcinus*, *Chelictinia riocourii*, *Gypaetus barbatus*, *Accipiter ovampensis*, *Francoelinus levillantii*, *Podica senegalensis*, *Schoutedenapus myoptilus*, *Coracina caesia* and *Serinus reichardi*, *Falco naumanni*, *Phoeniculus somaliensis*, *Lanius dorsalis*, *Cisticola bodessa*, *Mirafr albicauda*, *Myrmecocichla albifrons* and *Circus macrourus* were recorded during their prior survey. Additional 37 bird species were recorded from the Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation site during the six hours surveys (Appendix 1).

From the species recorded in the survey area, African pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus*, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultia*, Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Hottentot Teal *Spatula hottentota*, Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus alustris*, Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* and White-winged Black Tern *Chilodonia leucopetrus* were Palearctic Migrants. Intra-African Migrants like Abdim's stork *Ciconia abdimii* and Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* were also recorded.

The area supports populations of two Highland Biome species Ruppell's Robin-chat *Cossypha semirufa* and Wattled Ibis *Bostrychia Carunculata* and one Somali-Masai biome species Ruppell's Weaver *Ploceus*.

The presence of high number of species and globally importance species in Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation area makes it important as CBC and has potential as eco-tourism site. It is also suggested that further systematic studies are required to find inclusive species checklists. The existence of Nechisar national park and Arbaminch town in nearby

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the area are produces important site for ecotourism activities. Sound conservation systems should be given to conservation of this area for sustainable human use. Co-operating the local people to conserve the area as community based wildlife conservation area and proposing for ecotourism site from Gamo zone and local community empowerment and direct involvement in the conservation of the area are inspiring progress.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### Appendix 1. A Primary bird checklists of Fura and Furagosa community based wildlife conservation area in February 2021.

Species Name	Abaya lake shore	Wood-land	Farm-land
Abdim's stork <i>Ciconia abdimii</i>	x		x
African Fish Eagle <i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	x		
Africa Jacana <i>Actophilomis africanus</i>	x		
African Grey Hornbill <i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>		x	x
African Harrier-Hawk <i>Polyboroides typus</i>		x	x
African Mourning Dove <i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>		x	x
African pygmy Goose <i>Nettapus auritus</i>	x		
Black kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>		x	x
Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	x		
Blue-spotted Wood Dove <i>Turtur afer</i>		x	
Chestnut Sparrow <i>Passer emini</i>		x	x
Egyptian Goose <i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	x		x
Goliath Heron <i>Ardea goliath</i>	x		x
Great Carmmorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	x		
Great Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	x		x
Greater Blue-eared Starling <i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>		x	x
Greater Sand Plover <i>Charadrius leschenaultia</i>	x		
Grey headed Gull <i>Larus cirrocephalu</i>	x		
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	x		x

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Grey-headed Kingfisher <i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>		x	x
Hadada ibis <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>	x	x	x
Hammer kop <i>Scopus umbretta</i>	x		x
Hottentot Teal <i>Spatula hottentota</i>	x		
Intermediate egret <i>Egretta intermedia</i>	x		x
Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>		x	x
Lesser Jacana <i>Microparra capensis</i>	x		
Lesser Swamp Warbler <i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>	x		x
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	x		x
Little Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius dubius</i>	x		
Little Weaver <i>Ploceus luteolus</i>		x	x
Malachite Kingfisher <i>Alcedo cristata</i>	x		
Marabou Stork <i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>	x		x
Marsh Warbler <i>Acrocephalus alustris</i>		x	x
Mourning Collared-dove <i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>		x	x
Northern Carmine Bee-eater <i>Merops nubicus</i>		x	x
Pied Avocet <i>Recurvirostra avoetia</i>	x	x	x
Pied Kingfisher <i>Ceryle rudis</i>	x		x
Red-billed Hornbill <i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i>		x	x
Red-eyed Dove <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>		x	x
Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling <i>Lamprotornis purpuropterus</i>		x	x
Ruppell's Robin-chat <i>Cossypha semirufa</i>		x	x
Ruppell's Weaver <i>Ploceus galbula</i>		x	x
Sacred Ibis <i>Threskiomys aethiopicus</i>	x		x
Saddle-billed Stork <i>Ephippiorhynchus negalensis</i>	x		
Silver-cheeked Hornbill <i>Bycanistes brevis</i>		x	x
Slender-billed Starling <i>Onychognathus tenuirostris</i>		x	x
Speckled mousebird <i>Colius striatus</i>		x	x
Spur-winged Plover/Lawping <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	x		
Wattled Ibis <i>Bostrychia carunculata</i>	x		x
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	x		x
Whitebacked Duck <i>Thalassomis leuconotus</i>	x		
White-winged Black Tern <i>Chidonias leucopetrus</i>	x		
Yellow-billed stork <i>Mycteria ibis</i>	x		

x indicates that the species present in the area but without x the species absent in the above table.