

**Birds of Sabaki**  
**A Species List**

by  
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The Sabaki River Mouth lies 5km north of Malindi on the northern coast of Kenya and consists of areas of sandbanks, mudflats, saltmarsh, dunes, seasonal and permanent freshwater pools, mangroves and scrub and covers approximately 250ha. The area encompassed by this study extends from Mamburi to the north, the sea to the east, the opposite bank of the estuary to the south and the Sabaki bridge and Malindi-Garsen road to the west. The area is defined as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by BirdLife International in partnership with NatureKenya under the Important Bird Area programme due to its congregations of migratory and wintering wading birds, gulls and terns. The area is particularly important for five species and regularly contains 1% or more of their biogeographic populations, these are the Madagascar Pratincole, Sooty Gull, Saunders Tern and Lesser Crested Tern. Two regionally threatened species are also found, the Great Egret and African Skimmer (Bennun and Njoroge 1999).

The area is currently unprotected and the aims of this study were to produce an environmental management plan that defines what habitats are present, their location and to ascertain which bird species use them. This should give a better idea of which areas are important for their ornithological diversity and richness and their part in the ecosystem as a whole.

What follows is an annotated list of the 186 species of bird that have been recorded at the Sabaki River Mouth mostly during the duration of the project but with some additional records. This forms a component of the results of 14 months survey work on the river mouth with additional records added from previous observations. The species list follows the Check List of the Birds of Kenya (EANHS 1996). We are grateful to the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Nairobi, for their generous support which made this study possible.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific name</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	
Pink-backed Pelican	<i>P. rufescens</i>	
Red-footed Booby	<i>Sula sula</i>	Single bird, 1998
Long-tailed Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	One on 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2005
Lesser Frigatebird	<i>Fregata ariel</i>	Two on 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec (yet to be accepted by EARC)
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
Dimorphic Egret	<i>E. dimorpha</i>	
Black Heron	<i>E. ardesiaca</i>	
Common Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	
Madagascar Squacco Heron	<i>A. idae</i>	
Green-backed Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>	
Great Egret	<i>Casmerodius alba</i>	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	
Black-headed Heron	<i>A. melanocephala</i>	
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>	One on 15 <sup>th</sup> Apr. 2004
African Open-billed Stork	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>	
Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>	
Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>	
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	

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Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>	
White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	27 on 14 <sup>th</sup> April 04 – 2 on 12 June 04
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>	One on 15 <sup>th</sup> Apr.2004
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	
Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>	
Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>	10 on 15 <sup>th</sup> April 04
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	1 in April 2004
Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	
Black-chested Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>	One on 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb & 14 <sup>th</sup> Mar
Brown Snake Eagle	<i>C. cinereus</i>	
Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	
Montagu's Harrier	<i>C. pygargus</i>	One on 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan 05
Eurasian Marsh Harrier	<i>C. aeruginosus</i>	
African Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>	
Great Sparrowhawk	<i>A. melanoleucus</i>	
Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>	
African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	
Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>	One on 12 <sup>th</sup> November 04 over Kibokoni
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	One mobbing Black-chested Snake Eagle, Jan 07
Ayres' Hawk-Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus ayresii</i>	One on 19 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>	One on 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep 04
Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>	One on 19 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Saker Falcon	<i>Falco cherrug</i>	Jan 1999
Peregrine Falcon	<i>F. peregrinus</i>	
Red-necked Falcon	<i>F. chicquera</i>	
Crested Francolin	<i>Francolinus sephaena</i>	
Black Crane	<i>Amaurornis flavirostris</i>	
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	
Greater Painted-Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	
Crab-plover	<i>Dromas ardeola</i>	Two in October and November 04
Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Uncommon but when present are normally found on the beach near the river mouth
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>	
Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	
Madagascar Pratincole	<i>G. ocularis</i>	
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	
Kittlitz's Plover	<i>C. pecuarius</i>	
Three-banded Plover	<i>C. tricoloris</i>	
White-fronted Plover	<i>C. marginatus</i>	
Lesser Sandplover	<i>C. mongolus</i>	
Greater Sandplover	<i>C. leschenaultii</i>	
Caspian Plover	<i>C. asiaticus</i>	Probably 1 or 2 most years - one on 26 <sup>th</sup> Sept '04
Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	Regular most years
Grey Plover	<i>P. squatarola</i>	
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	First record for EA on 7-2-95; present for c.1 year
Spur-winged Plover	<i>V. spinosus</i>	

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Black-headed Plover	<i>V. tectus</i>	
Senegal Plover	<i>V. lugubris</i>	Three on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	
Long-toed Stint	<i>C. subminuta</i>	Vagrant
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>C. ferruginea</i>	
Sanderling	<i>C. alba</i>	
Broad-billed Sandpiper	<i>Limicola falcinellus</i>	
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	One on 17 <sup>th</sup> Apr & 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 04
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	
Eurasian Curlew	<i>N. arquata</i>	
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	
Common Greenshank	<i>T. nebularia</i>	
Green Sandpiper	<i>T. ochropus</i>	One on 26 <sup>th</sup> Sep 04
Wood Sandpiper	<i>T. glareola</i>	
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	
Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Single bird, Jan 2009
Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	One accepted record 7-2-95
Sooty Gull	<i>Larus hemprichii</i>	
Heuglin's Gull	<i>L. heuglini</i>	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>L. fuscus</i>	At least three birds with Finnish colour-rings have been sighted at Sabaki.
Grey-headed Gull	<i>L. cirrocephalus</i>	
Black-headed Gull	<i>L. ridibundus</i>	
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	
Caspian Tern	<i>S. caspia</i>	
Greater Crested Tern	<i>S. bergii</i>	
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>S. bengalensis</i>	
Roseate Tern	<i>S. dougallii</i>	
Common Tern	<i>S. hirundo</i>	
White-cheeked Tern	<i>S. repressa</i>	One in June
Saunders' Tern	<i>S. saundersi</i>	Night-time roosts of 30-40,000 of these among other terns have recently been discovered through our fieldwork.
White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	
Brown Noddy	<i>Anous stolidus</i>	Flock of c.40 present almost throughout from March-July 2006
African Skimmer	<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>	
African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>	
Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>	
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	
Ring-necked Dove	<i>S. capicola</i>	
Laughing Dove	<i>S. senegalensis</i>	
Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>	
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	
Yellowbill	<i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>	
White-browed Coucal	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>	
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>	
Slender-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus clarus</i>	
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>	
Blue-naped Mousebird	<i>Urocolius macrourus</i>	
Narina Trogon	<i>Apaloderma narina</i>	
Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>	One on 19 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Mangrove Kingfisher	<i>H. senegaloides</i>	
Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>	
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	
Eurasian Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	
Carmines Bee-eater	<i>M. nubicus</i>	
White-throated Bee-eater	<i>M. albicollis</i>	
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>	
Red-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus pusillus</i>	
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	
Barn Swallow	<i>H. rustica</i>	
Ethiopian Swallow	<i>H. aethiopica</i>	
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>H. abyssinica</i>	
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	
Golden Pipit	<i>Tmetothylacus tenellus</i>	
Grassland Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>	
Red-throated Pipit	<i>A. cervinus</i>	
Pangani Longclaw	<i>Macronyx aurantiigula</i>	To on 6 <sup>th</sup> of June 04
Zanzibar Sombre Greenbul	<i>Andropadus importunus</i>	
Northern Brownbul	<i>Phyllastrephus strepitans</i>	
Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	
Scaly Babbler	<i>Turdoides squamulatus</i>	
Rufous Chatterer	<i>T. rubiginosus</i>	
Red-capped Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha natalensis</i>	
White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>C. heuglini</i>	
Spotted Morning Thrush	<i>Cichladusa guttata</i>	
Rufous Bush Chat	<i>Cercotrichas galactotes</i>	
Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
Isabelline Wheatear	<i>O. isabellina</i>	
Common Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola saxatilis</i>	
Bare-eyed Thrush	<i>Turdus tephronotus</i>	
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	One on 10 <sup>th</sup> May 04
Pale Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis pallidus</i>	One in September and November 04
African Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i>	One on 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 04
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	One on 16 <sup>th</sup> April 04
Winding Cisticola	<i>Cisticola galactotes</i>	
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	
Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	
Abyssinian White-eye	<i>Zosterops abyssinicus</i>	One on 1 <sup>st</sup> Jan 05
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	
Black-headed Batis	<i>Batis minor</i>	

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Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	One on 6 <sup>th</sup> Apr 04
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>L. minor</i>	One on 14 <sup>th</sup> Apr 04
Long-tailed Fiscal	<i>L. cabanisi</i>	
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegala</i>	
Tropical Boubou	<i>Laniarius aethiopicus</i>	
Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>	
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	
Pied Crow	<i>C. albus</i>	
Black-bellied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis corruscus</i>	110 on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Rüppell's Long-tailed Starling	<i>L. purpuropterus</i>	
Superb Starling	<i>L. superbus</i>	Up to six in December 04 – January 05
Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>	Six on 12 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Magpie Starling	<i>Speculipastor bicolor</i>	
Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>	
Olive Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra olivacea</i>	
Amethyst Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>	One on 6 <sup>th</sup> June 04
Purple-banded Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris bifasciata</i>	
Violet-breasted Sunbird	<i>C. chalomelas</i>	Rare
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Six on 9 <sup>th</sup> Jan 05
Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>	Nine on 29 <sup>th</sup> May 04
Grosbeak Weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>	
Spectacled Weaver	<i>P. ocularis</i>	
African Golden Weaver	<i>P. subaureus</i>	Six in June
Golden Palm Weaver	<i>P. bojeri</i>	
Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>P. intermedius</i>	
Black-headed Weaver	<i>P. cucullatus</i>	
Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	
Fire-fronted Bishop	<i>Euplectes diadematus</i>	
Zanzibar Red Bishop	<i>E. nigroventris</i>	
Parasitic Weaver	<i>Anomalospiza imberbis</i>	
Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>	
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>	
Cut-throat Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>	One on 30 <sup>th</sup> Dec 04
Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>	
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>V. macroura</i>	
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Serinus mozambicus</i>	
Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer griseus gongonensis</i>	

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