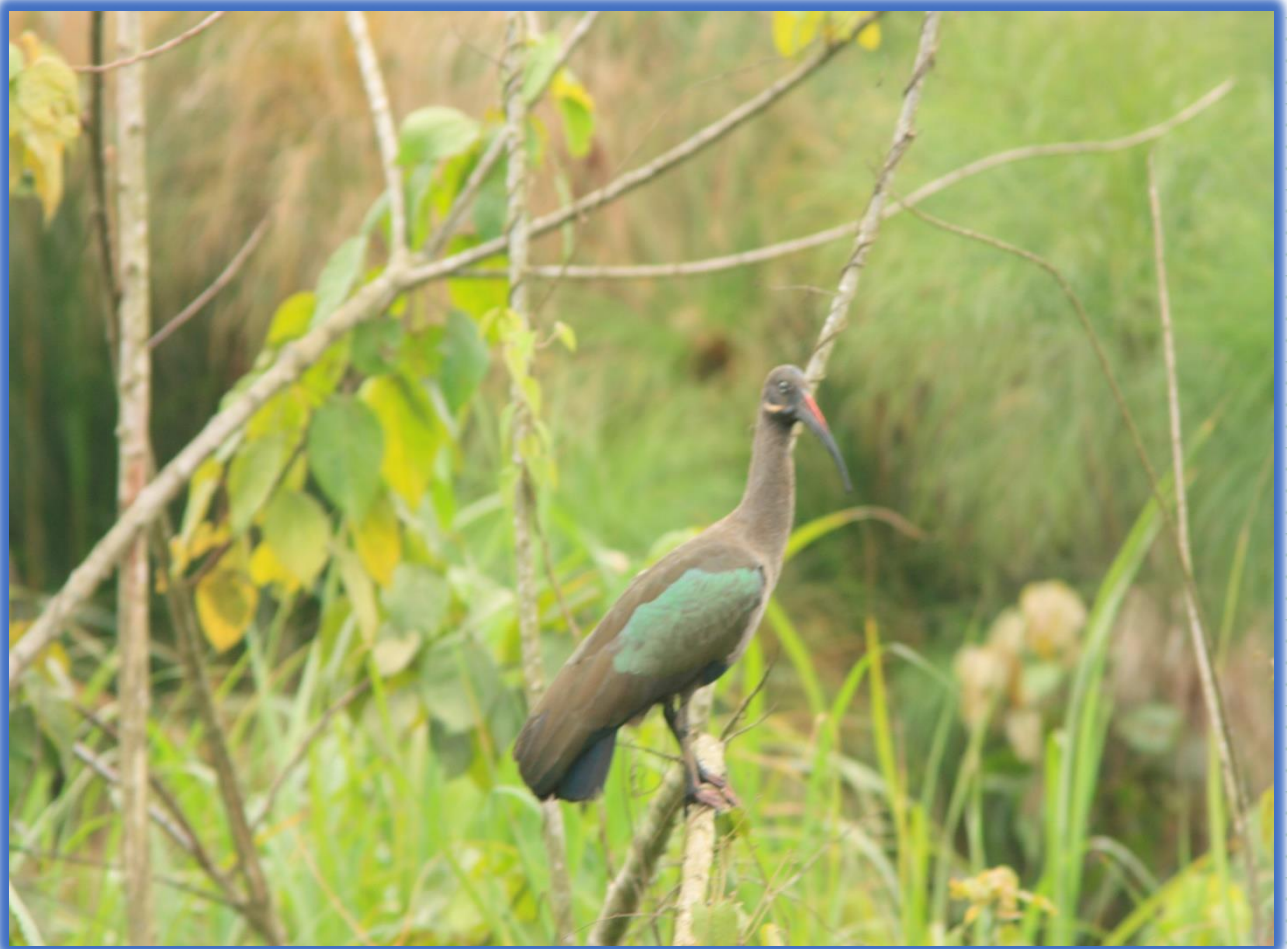


BETHANY LAND INSTITUTE PILOT STUDY BRIEF



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I. Introduction



In its historic summit of 2015, the United Nations launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to drive sustainable development of life on a healthy planet. To achieve the SDGs and tackle the adverse effects of climate change, conservation of biodiversity is of paramount priority. To achieve this, the United Nations through goal 17 calls for partnerships for the goals to be achieved through concerted efforts across the board.

The government of Uganda through the Uganda Wildlife Authority renders a deliberate effort to conserve the country's natural heritage and ecosystems through implementing diverse strategies including community participation, conservation education and most importantly collaborative management to conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity hotspots. It is in on this premise that Avian Conservation Uganda Society undertakes such collaborative action.

Avian Conservation Uganda Society is an organization started with a mission to promote the understanding, appreciation and conservation for birds in Uganda. To that effect, Avian conservation Uganda society collaborates with conservationists to identify, study and advocate for the conservation of birds, habitats, bird life and other ecological assets of Uganda in order to sustain life on a healthy planet.

Avian Conservation Uganda Society aims to build strategic partnerships with government agencies, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and conservation enthusiasts to edge closer to saving the scarily endangered biodiversity fast deteriorating due to unchecked dangerous human activity, climate change and other factors.

II. Why Birds?

Birds make a wide-range of contributions to the environment and healthy enjoyable life on the planet. Foremost, birds provide an artistic beauty, songs and colour to our world. It is partly for this reason bird watching has become a popular leisure for many tourists across the world. Additionally, bird watching has become a sustainable economic activity for travel companies on the globe.

Human-bird interaction is as old as time itself. In Biblical times, it was a bird that informed Noah it was safe to land his ark. Birds have been an important part of cultural progression across societies since antiquity. These societies have legends and myths surrounding birds which have contributed to the development of sophisticated cultures. Birds are a source of food, decorative material, writing material and many other uses.

Most significantly, birds are a decisive indicator of the ecological state of the environment. By implication, birds can be used to detect changes in the environment through studying the patterns of their natural behavior. Birds are important pollination agents that contribute massively to vegetation and crop growth. Birds also control pests when they eat insects dangerous to farm crops.

It is therefore of utmost necessity that bird life is protected and conserved so as to achieve sustainable development of life on a healthy planet.

III. Pilot Study



i. Study Area

The study area for Avian Conservation Uganda society on 9/4/2022 was Bethany Land Institute in Bombo, Luwero district in Central Uganda. Bethany Land Institute has a rich ecosystem on its location with several wells, a natural forest and farm fields that support a healthy bird population of over 100 species of savannah and forest birds.

The area is abundantly rich in other ecosystem enablers including insects, snakes, primates, amphibians and other flora and fauna. The team attributed the rich ecosystem to a well-drained natural forest which is under expansion through Bethany Land Institute’s reforestation effort to become a beacon of conservation and environmental preservation.

ii. Conservation Effort



Bethany Land Institute (<https://bethanylandinstitute.org/>) is leading conservation efforts in Luweero district, Central Uganda following Pope Francis’ Laudato Si encyclical “on care for our common home” where the Pope called for “swift and unified global action” against environmental degradation, climate change and irresponsible development.

Bethany Land Institute rests on 240+ acres of land near the Kampala-Gulu highway (location: <https://goo.gl/maps/pihesgSdFj3RcKA7>). The institute has a forest that represents a commendable effort to encourage reforestation and community-based ecological education.

The reforested area of natural forest is a habitat for many bird species, primates, butterflies and other diverse flora and fauna. The tree nursery at the institute provides free saplings to the local community to plant trees with the goal of reaching a million trees planted by 2030. This reforestation is vital in restoring and conserving the bird habitat and therefore encouraging a thriving bird life.

iii. Observed Birds in the Pilot Study



The list below is not exhaustive of all bird species present in the area. Avian Conservation Uganda Society calls for more studies, research, monitoring and more tours to discover and exhaust all bird species present at Bethany Land Institute site.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. African Black-headed Oriole | 16. Black-chested Snake-Eagle | 31. Fork-tailed Drongo |
| 2. African Blue Flycatcher | 17. Black-crowned Tchagra | 32. Golden-backed weaver |
| 3. African Green-Pigeon | 18. Black-crowned Waxbill | 33. Gray-backed Fiscal |
| 4. African Harrier-Hawk | 19. Black-headed Heron | 34. Gray-capped warbler |
| 5. African openbill | 20. Black-necked Weaver | 35. Great Blue Turaco |
| 6. African Pied crow | 21. Broad-billed Roller | 36. Green Woodhoopoe |
| 7. African Pipit | 22. Bronze Mannikin | 37. Green-backed Camaroptera |
| 8. African Pygmy Kingfisher | 23. Brown Twinspot | 38. Grosbeak weaver |
| 9. African thrush | 24. Brown-throated Wattle-eye | 39. Hadada Ibis |
| 10. Black Bishop | 25. Cattle Egret | 40. Holub's Golden weaver |
| 11. Black Cuckoo | 26. Common bulbul (Dark-capped) | 41. Lesser-Masked-Weaver |
| 12. Black Cuckooshrike | 27. Compact weaver | 42. Little Greenbul |
| 13. Black-and-white Casqued Hornbill | 28. Crowned hornbill | 43. Lizard Buzzard |
| 14. Black-and-white mannikin | 29. Eastern Plantain-Eater | 44. Long-crested Eagle |
| 15. Black-billed Turaco | 30. Eurasian Kestrel | 45. Mackinnon's Shrike |
| | | 46. Martial Eagle |

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 47. Meyer's parrot | 63. Red-headed
Lovebird | 78. White-headed
Sawwing |
| 48. Narina Trogon | 64. Ruppel's starling | 79. Winding Cisticola |
| 49. Northern Black-
Flycatcher | 65. Scarlet-chested
Sunbird | 80. Woodland
Kingfisher |
| 50. Northern Gray-
headed Sparrow | 66. Speckled
Mousebird | 81. Yellow-fronted
Canary |
| 51. Nubian
Woodpecker | 67. Spectacled Weaver | 82. Yellow-fronted
Tinkerbird |
| 52. Olive-bellied
Sunbird | 68. Splendid Starling | 83. Yellow-rumped
Tinkerbird |
| 53. Orange Tufted
Sunbird | 69. Spotted flycatcher | 84. Yellow-throated
Greenbul |
| 54. Palm-nut Vulture | 70. Sulphur-breasted
Bushshrike | |
| 55. Piapiac | 71. Tawny-flanked
Prinia | |
| 56. Pin-tailed Whydah | 72. Tropical Boubou | |
| 57. Purple starling | 73. Verreaux's Eagle-
Owl | |
| 58. Red-billed Firefinch | 74. Vieillot's Weaver | |
| 59. Red-cheeked
Cordonblue | 75. Village Weaver | |
| 60. Red-Chested
Sunbird | 76. White-browed
Robin-Chat | |
| 61. Red-eyed dove | 77. White-chinned
Prinia | |
| 62. Red-faced Cisticola | | |



IV. Tourism and Impact



Tourism is a major incentive for conservation. The economic returns tourism offers to tourism hotspots supports conservation efforts and Bethany Land Institute isn't be an exception. Bird species continue to decline with constant environmental degradation, habitat destruction and other factors.

Opening up tourism opportunities at conservation sites that trickle down to local communities to encourage tourism earnings goes a long way to motivate conservation efforts for bird habitat restoration and preservation.

V. Recommendations.



- Carry out capacity building of Bethany Land Institute site guides through provision of birding educative and monitoring material such as guide books, binoculars and others.
- Foster a relationship between Avian Conservation Uganda society and Bethany Land Institute to collaborate on habitat conservation, restoration and management.
- Sensitizing the local community about the benefits of participate in conservation efforts and practicing eco-friendly agricultural activities.
- Undertake extensive research and monitoring to support a data-driven approach to conservation of the area's avian life.
- Construct eco-friendly pathways and prepare trails and route plans for future visitors to take full advantage of the area's biodiversity.
- Provide clear guidelines for visitors to the institute to minimize possible littering, degradation of conserved areas.
- Use of water dispensers in place of water bottles to minimize plastic use in the conserved area.
- Plant more natural trees and increase the size of the forest to restore bird habitat.