Cornell’s Adult University
Tanzania: An African Birding and Wildlife Safari

January 22–February 2, 2013
Irby Lovette, Cornell Faculty Leader

Itinerary

Tuesday, 1/22/13
Depart from North America

Wednesday, 1/23/13
Arrival in Arusha

Transfer with group to your lodge
You will be met at the airport and transferred to your comfortable lodge.

Snack at the lodge
Enjoy a light snack at the lodge.

Accommodations: Mount Meru Hotel
Meals included: Snack

Thursday, 1/24/13
Arusha … where we will begin and end our study tour

What was once a sleepy outpost town has turned into a small thriving city, with a population of 300,000 and more than one million in its greater region.

Arusha has been called the “Geneva of Africa” for its verdant mountain backdrop and its global status as host to international peace treaties, conferences, and organizations. At some 4,500 feet above sea level, Arusha is set beside the southern slopes of Mount Meru (14,980 feet) and surrounded by coffee farms, fields of bananas, and small rural communities. The city, which only recently got its first traffic light, has grown significantly in the last decade.

Safari briefing
Your lead guides and Cornell faculty leader, Irby Lovette, will brief you on our itinerary and review expectations for your safari, giving you a taste of what’s to come.
Visit to Arusha National Park
Arusha National Park is situated just outside the growing town’s busy center. Its diverse landscapes and abundant wildlife often draw comparison to its larger counterparts in northern Tanzania: Tanzania’s second tallest mountain, Mount Meru (14,980 feet), is an ancient extinct volcano that is sometimes referred to as Mount Kilimanjaro’s “little cousin.” Ngurdoto Crater teems with wildlife, including buffalo, elephant, giraffe, and bushbuck, and is nicknamed “Little Ngorongoro.” A small swath of grassland is named “Little Serengeti.”

Arusha National Park has unique assets, such as the exquisite colobus monkey, which makes its home in the lush forest canopy. There are also hundreds of bird species and great numbers of flamingo, which can often be seen at the Momella Lakes.

Welcome dinner
Enjoy a welcome dinner and the full Tanzanian hospitality that comes with it.

Accommodations: Mount Meru Hotel
Meals included: Breakfast, boxed lunch, dinner

Friday, 1/25/13
Arusha to Serengeti National Park

Fly from the busy town of Arusha to the quiet, open plains of the Serengeti. Upon landing in the Serengeti, you will be greeted by your naturalist guide and begin your safari adventure. The word “Serengeti” derives from the Maasai “Siringet” and has been artistically translated as “the land that flows on forever.” Serengeti National Park covers thousands of miles of pristine land and offers not only expansive vistas but the largest migration of mammals on Earth, including 1.5 million wildebeest.

Flight from Arusha to the central Serengeti

Afternoon wildlife viewing in the Serengeti
Spend an afternoon viewing wildlife in the Serengeti. The big cats often spend these hours lying drowsily about the plains and up in the trees while many antelope and other animals continue to graze.

Relax at your camp
Once you return from wildlife viewing, take time to sit by the fire and relax.

Accommodations: Serengeti Nyumba at Ndutu
Meals included: Breakfast, boxed lunch, dinner

Saturday, 1/26/13
Serengeti National Park

The variety and quantity of animals on these plains is incredible: impala, topi, crocodile, hippo, giraffe, spotted hyena, wildebeest, lion, ostrich, and more. In addition, there are a number of bird species that occur only in western Serengeti, including the dark-chanting goshawk, grey-backed shrike, and, in the western corridor, the colorful black-headed gondolek, eastern grey plantain eater, and the exceedingly rare Karamoja apalis.

Morning wildlife and bird viewing in the Serengeti
Traverse the plains of the Serengeti just after dawn and through the morning hours. Look for herds of wildebeest, zebra, giraffe, impala, eland, topi, and more out on the savanna.

Lunch at your camp

Afternoon wildlife and bird viewing in the Serengeti
Spend an afternoon viewing wildlife in the Serengeti.

Evening at your camp
Enjoy time at your camp in the Serengeti this evening.

Accommodations: Serengeti Nyumba at Ndutu
Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Sunday, 1/27/13

**Serengeti National Park**

Most of us know about the “Great Migration” from nature programs on television. Often misunderstood, the migration is a perpetual, year-round process involving over one million wildebeest and 200,000 zebra who roam the plains quietly, in search of food and water. While some antelope and hyena may follow the herds, other animals remain in their territories or have separate migratory patterns. The migration’s most dramatic moments often occur when large numbers of wildebeest and zebra make river crossings, during which they must elude predators in a fight for survival. All safari-goers are sure to see plenty of wildebeest and zebra while in Tanzania.

**Optional Serengeti balloon excursion (additional fee/optional)**

Those with advance reservations will have the opportunity to balloon across the plains during one of your mornings in the Serengeti. A pre-dawn wake-up call leaves you time to drive to the balloon launch site in order to catch the most dramatic light. Then take to the skies just as the sun rises. Glide over the plains and acacia treetops, taking in spectacular views of the Seronera River Valley and the surrounding plains. After your descent, enjoy a champagne breakfast right in the midst of the Serengeti wilderness.

**Full day of wildlife and bird viewing in the Serengeti**

Go on a wildlife viewing drive in the Serengeti for a full day. Your expert guide will point out wildlife that few others could hope to spot, whether a leopard well-concealed in the trees or a lion deep in the savannah grasses.

**Lunch at your camp**

**More wildlife and bird viewing throughout the afternoon.**

**Enjoy your camp in the evening**

**Accommodations:** Serengeti Nyumba at Ndutu
**Meals included:** Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Monday, 1/28/13

**Serengeti National Park to Ngorongoro Highlands**

As you go from the Serengeti to the Ngorongoro Highlands, you cross grasslands abundant in dramatic granite outcrops called kopjes. The grasslands eventually lead into the wide-open, treeless plains that are so emblematic of the Serengeti. The wooded knolls around Naabi Hill Gate mark your departure from the park, and then it’s on to the desert-like bush country.

You will visit one of the world’s greatest prehistoric archeological sites, Olduvai Gorge, where archeologists have been making fossil discoveries for nearly a century. Your drive concludes in the highlands and at Gibb’s Farm, a historic coffee estate and eco-lodge. **This afternoon, you will take a light hike into the montane forest where olive thrush, dusky flycatcher, grey-capped warbler, grey-headed negro finch, cinnamon-chested bee-eaters, Schalow’s turaco, and the delightful white-tailed blue-flycatcher reside.**

**Visit Olduvai Gorge**

Make an extended stop at Olduvai Gorge, a deep ravine and site of fossilized remains of animals and hominids that date as far back as two million years. A lecture and museum tour are included.

**Gibb’s Farm afternoon tea on the verandah**

With a view of the coffee farms and forests that surround Gibb’s Farm, take in the accompanying aromas and sounds as you have afternoon tea on the verandah.

**Accommodations:** Gibb’s Farm—Cottage Room
**Meals included:** Breakfast, boxed lunch, dinner
Tuesday, 1/29/13  
**Ngorongoro Highlands**  
Today visit Lake Manyara National Park, which is home to spectacular wildlife where you can spot elephants, African buffalos, lions, leopards, giraffes, and baboons. **At the lake, watch for hippos and an array of birds, including hundreds of thousands of flamingos, huge flocks of pelicans, storks, ducks, terns, gulls, herons, egrets, ibises, and shorebirds.** The woodlands and the grassy plains support coursers, such as pratincoles, pipits, and swallows.

**Gibb’s Farm dawn chorus of local birdlife**  
Rise early to take in the delightful chorus of songbirds from your verandah: the twee-wee trill of the yellow-throated long claw, the bell-like boo-boo of the tropical boubou, and the soft warble of the scarlet-chested sunbird. You will be served coffee or tea and a light snack.

**Gibb’s breakfast**  
Breakfast at Gibb’s is a great way to start the day. Enjoy local fruits, homemade yogurts, fresh cheeses, and made-to-order breakfasts with omelettes or pancakes. Everything is prepared with the freshest ingredients.

**Visit to Lake Manyara National Park**  
Tucked alongside the Rift Valley escarpment, Lake Manyara National Park takes its name from a shallow freshwater lake that covers nearly 80 of the park's 127 square miles. Huge mahogany and fig trees forest the hilly area near the park gate, where baboons and blue monkeys often spend their days. Manyara is also known for its tree-climbing lions and leopards, but it takes a sharp eye to spot them.

**Gibb’s Farm optional afternoon activities**  
You may choose to spend the afternoon relaxing on the verandah with tea or taking advantage of optional activities: a farm or garden tour, mountain biking, bird watching, coffee roasting, and more.

**Accommodations:** Gibb’s Farm—Cottage Room  
**Meals included:** Breakfast, boxed lunch, dinner

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Wednesday, 1/30/13  
**Ngorongoro Highlands**  
**Spend a day exploring the remarkable crater floor, which lies an astounding 2,000 feet below the crater rim.** Look for massive bull elephants roaming the plains, hippos wallowing in their shallow pools, ostriches running across the savannah, and much, much more.

**Full day of wildlife viewing in Ngorongoro Crater**  
Descend into the Ngorongoro Crater, where you are likely to find an abundance of wildlife and birds. Over a full day of wildlife and bird viewing follows.

**Bush lunch**  
Enjoy lunch at a scenic picnic spot on the crater floor.

**Accommodations:** Gibb’s Farm—Cottage Room  
**Meals included:** Breakfast, lunch, dinner

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Thursday, 1/31/13  
**Ngorongoro Highlands to Tarangire National Park**  
**Depart the Ngorongoro Highlands and head toward Tarangire National Park.** **As you travel down a winding road, you are rewarded with expansive vistas of the surrounding plains.** Traveling farther south, you will arrive at Tarangire National Park. **Often overlooked, Tarangire astonishes many with its massive herds of elephants, distinctive winding riverine landscapes, and swampy flood plains full of wildlife.**
Lunch at your camp
You will have lunch at your camp in Tarangire.

Afternoon wildlife viewing in Tarangire National Park
Explore the banks of the Tarangire River, where large families of elephants often gather. You’ll also spend time exploring the baobab-studded plains and the miombo woodlands, where you’ll find baboons and vervet monkeys.

Enjoy your nyumba

Accommodations: Tarangire Nyumba
Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Friday, 2/1/13
Tarangire National Park

Enjoy your final day of wildlife viewing in Tarangire. Often known as one of the best birding destinations in East Africa, you will also observe some of the nearly 490 bird species in the park.

Full day of wildlife viewing in Tarangire National Park
Go on a full day wildlife viewing drive through baobab-covered Tarangire National Park, which has a diversity of wildlife. Besides its own migration of wildebeest, zebra, elephant, gazelle, and antelope, Tarangire attracts over 550 species of birds and some rarer mammals, such as the African wild dog.

Lunch at your nyumba
You will have lunch at your nyumba in Tarangire.

Farewell dinner
Enjoy a celebratory and sumptuous farewell dinner at camp.

Accommodations: Tarangire Nyumba
Meals Included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Saturday, 2/2/13
Depart
Depart Tarangire for Arusha, where, after a day of leisurely activities, you will catch your departing flight.

Morning wildlife viewing as you depart Tarangire
Enjoy one last morning of wildlife viewing in Tarangire as you make your way out of the park.

Lunch at River House
While in Arusha, enjoy lunch at River House. After lunch, you may wish to visit the property’s Shanga workshop, which employs disabled artisans to create necklaces and other items from fabric and recycled materials.

Stop at Cultural Heritage Center
A shopping mainstay in Arusha, the Cultural Heritage Center attracts many travelers each year with its abundance of wooden carvings, artifacts, apparel, and crafts. The center also has Tanzanite and other gemstones for sale. While the center caters mostly to tourists, it also has wonderful cultural displays and a separate wing that displays some of the finest African art in Tanzania.

Day room in Arusha
Enjoy a day room at Mount Meru Hotel, resting up and readying yourself for your departure.

Snack at Mount Meru Hotel
Enjoy a light snack at the lodge.

Transfer as a group to the airport
Begin return trip to North America (arriving Sunday, 2/3/13)

Accommodations: Day room at Mount Meru Hotel
Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, snack

ACCOMMODATIONS

Mount Meru Hotel
An Arusha mainstay near the busy downtown area, the Mount Meru Hotel sits on a 15-acre garden and provides comfortable, modern accommodations. Amenities include cable TV in all rooms, internet access, currency exchange facilities, concierge, massage services, babysitting on request, playground for children, outdoor swimming pool, sun bed, a volleyball court, and a nearby golf course. The Themi Grill serves both international and African cuisine.

Serengeti Nyumba at Ndutu
Serengeti Nyumba at Ndutu will give you access to the short grass plains that characterize this part of the park. Seasonal wildlife migrations bring 1.5 million wildebeest to this area for their three-month-long calving season, and you'll be ideally positioned for easy drives into the heart of the action each day.

Tents are spacious and comfortable without being excessive or leaving a heavy footprint on the landscape. You’ll have cozy beds and fine linens as well as private bathrooms that are adjacent to each tent. Eco-friendly touches include ingenious pump-flush toilets and safari-style gravity-fed showers. Large picture windows allow cool breezes to waft through your room, while their fine mesh covering keeps bugs at bay.

An experienced camp chef will prepare all your meals from scratch using the best local ingredients. You’ll dine on fresh breads, homemade soups, healthy salads, a variety of delicious entrees, and delectable desserts. The dining tent is also a wonderful place to unwind at the end of a busy day. Watch the sunset with a cool drink or chat with other travelers about the day’s events.

Gibb’s Farm
Gibb’s Farm artfully blends nature, culture and eco-friendly amenities to provide what is sure to be a relaxing and memorable stay. Its newly updated cottages blur the line between indoor and outdoor living space, giving each guest unhindered access to one of the estate’s most stunning assets: its lush gardens. A gracious and attentive staff enhances the experience, offering cultural and historical insight and making sure all your needs are met.

Tarangire Nyumba
Thomson’s Tarangire Nyumba is set in a scenic, private location close to the Tarangire River and with easy access to seasonal and resident wildlife. Here you will experience exceptional service from the friendly staff, eat gourmet meals prepared from fresh, local ingredients, and enjoy the privilege of sharing the landscape with the wildlife.

Solar lighting, proper beds with fine linens, and private, en-suite bathrooms with safari shower and self-contained, pump-flush toilet make your spacious tented accommodations a welcoming retreat after a day on safari.
TRIP DETAILS

Inclusions
• Accommodations based on double occupancy
• Meals as noted in itinerary, inclusive of restaurant staff tips
• All park fees
• Complete preparation materials, including helpful tips, packing list, trip expectations, tipping guidelines, etc.
• Access to a personal safari consultant by phone or e-mail, five days a week
• Full-color, 120-page safari journal
• Safari briefings throughout your trip
• Services of Thomson Safaris guides and drivers
• Services of Thomson Nyumba staff, including chef and wait staff
• Land transportation in a customized, four-wheel-drive Land Rover Defender
• Unlimited mileage in Thomson vehicles
• Guaranteed window seating in Thomson vehicles
• Scenic internal flight(s) as noted in itinerary
• Guided walks with a naturalist, when available
• Complimentary bottled drinking water throughout your safari
• Keep-fit kit at each Nyumba Camp
• Airport transfers as noted in itinerary
• Baggage handling
• Tips for guides, drivers, and camp staff
• Bush lunch
• Beer, wine, spirits, and soda at dinners and soda at lunches

Exclusions
* International round-trip flight to Tanzania
* Airline-imposed fuel surcharges
* Airline-imposed seat assignment and checked baggage fees
* Travel insurance
* Fees for passport, visa, or immunizations
* Meals and expenses en route to Tanzania
* Beer, wine, spirits, and soft drinks
* Laundry, phone, internet, and items of a personal nature