

BURUNDI

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African Hill Babbler *Pseudoalcippe abyssinica*. (ILLUSTRATION: NIK BORROW)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Burundi is a small (27,834 km²), landlocked country located in eastern Africa, on the eastern arm of the western Albertine Rift Valley. It is bordered by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) and Lake Tanganyika to the west, Rwanda in the north and Tanzania to the east and south. It stretches 232 km from north to south between latitudes 02°45'S and 04°28'S, and 203 km from west to east between longitudes 28°50'E and 30°54'E.

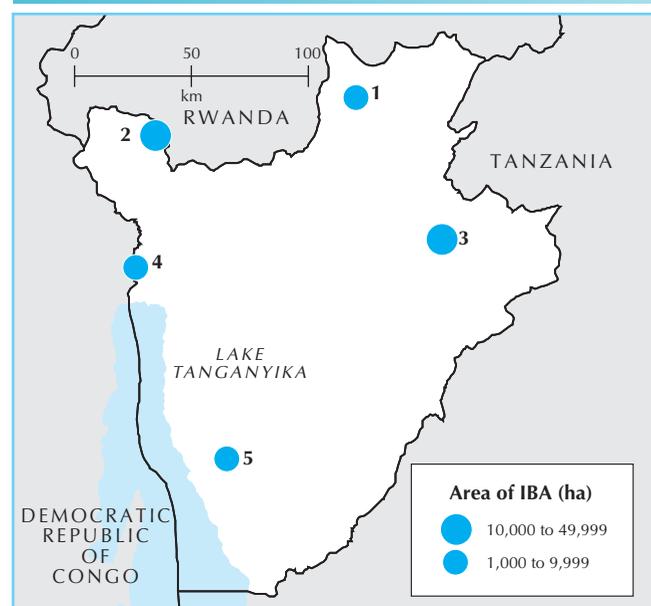
Burundi is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa, with over 300 inhabitants/km² in some areas. The population was estimated to be 5.9 million during the mid-1990s. With an annual growth-rate of 3.2% per annum, the population is predicted to reach 13.7 million by 2020. The capital is Bujumbura, located in the west of the country, at the north-eastern tip of Lake Tanganyika. Administratively, the country is divided into 15 provinces.

Down the western side of the country lies the mountains which form the Congo–Nile divide. They consist of a series of elongated ridges and include many massifs above 2,500 m as well as the highest peaks in the country (Mont Teza, 2,665 m and Mont Heha, 2,670 m). Westwards, the land descends steeply some 1,500 m to meet, in the south, Lake Tanganyika or, further north, the Rusizi river, which forms the international frontier with DR Congo. The Rusizi and the northern margins of Lake Tanganyika lie in the narrow Imbo plain at altitudes of between 774–950 m, and are the lowest-lying part of the country. The eastern slopes of the Congo–Nile massif merge into the Central Plateau at around 2,100 m. The Central Plateau covers the whole of the centre of the country and, generally, slopes from west to east and from north to south. The average altitude of the plateau is c.1,450 m. Steep slopes on the plateau are frequently eroded due to intense agricultural development. Valley bottoms are often marshy, and extensive peatbogs are found along the Akanyaru river and its tributaries. The south-eastern edge of the Central Plateau is marked by another area of higher ground. This chain of hills, which joins the mountains of the Congo–Nile divide in the extreme south-west of the country,

falls away steeply south-eastwards to the Kumoso depression, through which flows the Malagarazi river marking the border with Tanzania. Finally, there is another area of lowland in the Bweru and Bugesera regions in the extreme north of Burundi, which lies between 1,000–1,500 m. Much of these lowlands are occupied by Lakes Cohoha and Rweru and papyrus *Cyperus papyrus* is the most notable feature of the vegetation.

The considerable variations in topography, soil and climate are responsible for the large number of vegetation-types. Natural vegetation comprises mostly a mosaic of East African evergreen

Map 1. Location and size of Important Bird Areas in Burundi.



			5 IBAs covering 1,018 km ²					
IBA code	Site name	Administrative region	Criteria (see p. 11; for A2/3 codes, see Tables 2/3)					
			A1	A2	A3	A4i	A4j	
BI001	Rwihinda Lake Managed Nature Reserve	Kirundo	✓			✓		
BI002	Kibira National Park	Bubanza, Cibitoke, Kayanza, Muramvya	✓	✓		✓		
BI003	Ruvubu National Park	Cankuzo, Muyinga, Karuzi, Ruyigi	✓		✓		✓	
BI004	Rusizi National Park	Bubanza, Bujumbura						✓
BI005	Bururi Forest Nature Reserve	Bururi	✓	✓		✓		
Total number of IBAs qualifying:			4	2	1	2	2	1

bushland and secondary *Acacia* wooded grassland in the east and south-east, while the western parts are covered by Afromontane communities with transitional rainforest on the western mountain-slopes, overlooking the Rusizi and Lake Tanganyika. The Imbo region is occupied by *Hyphaene–Acacia* woodland in the Rusizi plain and *Brachystegia* woodlands along the lake shore. *Brachystegia–Julbernardia* (miombo) woodland occurs along the south-eastern border of the country. The Bugesera region in the north was dominated by *Acacia–Combretum* woodlands, while *Brachystegia* woodlands occurred in the eastern Kumoso depression. The natural vegetation of these areas is, however, disappearing quickly due to high pressure for agricultural land. Levels of plant endemism are unknown but, given the transitional nature of the vegetation, are unlikely to be high.

Climate is much modified by altitude. In general, there is a short dry season from December to January, relatively heavy rains from February to May, followed by a long dry season between June and September and substantial rainfall between October and December. The amount of rainfall varies considerably from region to region but is generally in the range 500–2,000 mm per annum; the mean at Bujumbura is c.960 mm. Precipitation in the western mountains is higher (average 1,375 mm annually) but is lower over the eastern plateaus, between c.1,100–1,250 mm per year. Mean annual

temperatures on the plateau are around 21°C, reaching 33°C during the main dry season. Temperatures can fall to 6°C in some areas and frosts occur on the highest and most exposed peaks.

It is estimated that between a third and a half of Burundi was originally covered in montane forest, mostly along the western highlands. These forests have been relentlessly attacked by man for timber and for land for agriculture. Two major montane forest blocks remain; Bururi in the south and Kibira in the north. Kibira is contiguous with Nyungwe forest in Rwanda. One small patch (800 ha) of lower-altitude, closed forest survives at Kigwena, along the banks of Lake Tanganyika. This is one of the easternmost patches of Guineo–Congolese rainforest and thus is of special interest.

Burundi possesses extensive wetlands. The total area of marshland is more than 120,000 ha, almost 5% of the area of the country (Debonnet 1991). However, a large part of this has already been drained for agriculture. There are also a number of small lakes in the mountains as well as four substantial ones, including Lake Tanganyika, about 8% of the surface of which occurs in Burundi. Lake Tanganyika, the second-deepest lake in the world, contains an exceptional fauna, with more than 300 species of fish, 90% of which are endemic. *Phragmites* swamps are found in the Rusizi valley at the northern end of Lake Tanganyika. Swamps of papyrus *Cyperus papyrus* also occur here but are common in the north and east of the country.

The economy of Burundi is mainly based on subsistence agriculture. Maize, cassava, bananas, sorghum and beans are the principal food-crops. Coffee is the main agricultural export product. The land is also heavily grazed by livestock. Hillside farming, inherently erodible soils and frequent heavy rains have combined to create some of the worst soil-erosion problems in the world. As in many countries in Africa, reforestation efforts have mainly involved *Eucalyptus* and *Pinus* spp. Burundi has been characterized by internal conflicts and political instability during the last decade.

ORNITHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

The number of bird species recorded from Burundi is 596, of which 439 are known or presumed to be resident and 109 are regular seasonal migrants. A number of additional species have been reported, but no accounts have been published. The avifauna includes 13 species of global conservation concern. Six of these are non-breeding migrants, one, *Phoenicopterus minor* (NT), from elsewhere in the Afrotropics, four from the Palearctic, *Circus macrourus* (NT), *Falco naumanni* (VU), *Gallinago media* (NT) and *Glareola nordmanni* (NT), while the sixth, *Ardeola idea* (NT), is a visitor from Madagascar. The breeding species include *Lybius rubrifacies* (NT), four Albertine Rift endemics, *Kupeornis rufocinctus* (NT), *Apalis argentea* (VU), *Bradypterus graueri* (VU) and *Cryptospiza shelleyi* (VU) and two species of papyrus swamps, *Laniarius mufumbiri* (NT) and *Chloropeta gracilirostris* (VU). In addition, *Balaeniceps rex* (NT) and *Grus carunculatus* (VU) are reported to have occurred in the past in swamps in the Malagarazi river valley along the border with Tanzania but, as a result of increasing human pressures, it is likely that they no longer do so.

There are no bird species endemic to Burundi, but the montane forests and associated habitats hold 23 of the 37 species of Albertine Rift mounyains Endemic Bird Area (EBA 106). In addition, *Lybius rubrifacies* is also a restricted-range species whose distribution defines the 'Dry woodlands west of Lake Victoria' Secondary Area (s057). Parts of four biome-restricted assemblages occur in Rwanda. A very small element of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome (A05) is found

Table 2. The occurrence of restricted-range species at Important Bird Areas in Burundi. Sites that meet the A2 criterion are highlighted in **bold**. Species of global conservation concern are highlighted in **bold blue**.

106 – Albertine Rift mountains Endemic Bird Area (23 species in Burundi; two sites meet the A2 criterion)		
IBA code:	002	005
<i>Francolinus nobilis</i>	✓	
<i>Musophaga johnstoni</i>	✓	
<i>Caprimulgus ruwenzorii</i>	✓	✓
<i>Zoothera tanganjicae</i>	✓	✓
<i>Alethe poliophrys</i>	✓	✓
<i>Cossypha archeri</i>	✓	
<i>Kupeornis rufocinctus</i>	✓	
<i>Apalis ruwenzorii</i>	✓	✓
<i>Apalis personata</i>	✓	
<i>Apalis argentea</i>	✓	✓
<i>Bradypterus graueri</i>	✓	
<i>Graueria vittata</i>	✓	
<i>Hemitesia neumanni</i>	✓	
<i>Phylloscopus laetus</i>	✓	✓
<i>Melaenornis ardesiacus</i>	✓	
<i>Batis diops</i>	✓	✓
<i>Parus fasciiventer</i>	✓	
<i>Nectarinia alinae</i>	✓	✓
<i>Nectarinia regia</i>	✓	✓
<i>Nectarinia purpureiventris</i>	✓	✓
<i>Cryptospiza jacksoni</i>	✓	✓
<i>Cryptospiza shelleyi</i>	✓	
<i>Ploceus alienus</i>	✓	✓
Number of species recorded:	23	12
s057 – Dry woodlands west of Lake Victoria Secondary Area (one site meets the A2 criterion)		
IBA code:		003
<i>Lybius rubrifacies</i>		✓

at lower altitudes in forest remaining in the west, with eight species occurring in Burundi out of the 278 species restricted to this biome (although two of these species may, as a result of habitat loss, no longer occur). The east of the country falls within the Lake Victoria Basin biome (A06) and 11 of its 12 species occur nationally. The montane forests of the Congo–Nile watershed hold 66 species of the Afrotropical Highlands biome (A07); the presence of a number of other species has yet to be confirmed. Finally, some elements of the

Zambezian biome reach the northern limits of their distribution in Burundi and nine of this biome's 67 characteristic species have been recorded in the country although, again, the continued presence of one of these is uncertain, as a result of habitat destruction.

Wetlands in Burundi include large areas of papyrus and all the African bird species that are endemic to such swamps occur. Most remaining significant areas of wetland are now in protected areas such as Rusizi and Ruvubu National Parks.

Table 3. The occurrence of biome-restricted species at Important Bird Areas in Burundi. Sites that meet the A3 criterion are highlighted in bold. Species of global conservation concern are highlighted in bold blue. Any other species with a restricted range are highlighted in blue.

A05 – Guinea–Congo Forests biome (eight species in Burundi; no sites meet the A3 criterion)					
IBA code:	001	002	003	004	005
<i>Spizaetus africanus</i>		✓			
<i>Sarothrura pulchra</i>		✓	✓		
<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>		✓			
<i>Ceratogymna subcylindricus</i>		✓			✓
<i>Trachyphonus purpuratus</i>		?			
<i>Illadopsis fulvescens</i>		?			
<i>Nectarinia rubescens</i>			V		
<i>Ploceus nigerrimus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of species recorded:	1	5	2	1	2
? Probably extinct due to habitat loss V Vagrant					
A06 – Lake Victoria Basin biome (11 species in Burundi; two sites meet the A3 criterion)					
IBA code:	001	002	003	004	005
<i>Francolinus streptophorus</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Lybius rubrifacies</i>	?		✓		
<i>Laniarius mufumbiri</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Turdoides sharpei</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Cisticola carruthersi</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Bradypterus carpalis</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Chloropeta gracilirostris</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Nectarinia erythrocerca</i>	✓		✓	✓	
<i>Serinus koliensis</i>			✓		
<i>Nesocharis ansorgei</i>	?		✓		
<i>Ploceus castanops</i>	✓		✓		
Number of species recorded:	8	1	11	2	1
A07 – Afrotropical Highlands biome (66 species in Burundi; two sites meet the A3 criterion)					
IBA code:	001	002	003	004	005
<i>Buteo oreophilus</i>		✓			V
<i>Francolinus nobilis</i>		✓			
<i>Streptopelia lugens</i>		✓			✓
<i>Musophaga johnstoni</i>		✓			
<i>Caprimulgus ruwenzorii</i>		✓			✓
<i>Schoutedenapus myoptilus</i>		✓			✓
<i>Apaloderma vittatum</i>		✓			
<i>Merops oreobates</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<i>Campethera tullbergi</i>		✓			✓
<i>Coracina caesia</i>		✓			✓
<i>Andropadus masukuensis</i>		✓			✓
<i>Andropadus nigriceps</i>		✓			✓
<i>Laniarius poensis</i>		✓			✓
<i>Telophorus doherityi</i>		✓			✓
<i>Zoothera tanganjicae</i>		✓			✓
<i>Alethe poliophrys</i>		✓			✓
<i>Pogonocichla stellata</i>		✓			✓
<i>Sheppardia aequatorialis</i>		✓			✓
<i>Cossypha roberti</i>		✓			
<i>Cossypha archeri</i>		✓			
<i>Illadopsis pyrrhoptera</i>	✓		✓		✓
<i>Pseudoalcippe abyssinica</i>	✓				✓
<i>Kakamega poliothorax</i>	✓				✓
<i>Kupeornis rufocinctus</i>	✓				
<i>Cisticola chubbi</i>	✓		✓		✓
<i>Apalis ruwenzorii</i>	✓				✓
<i>Apalis personata</i>	✓				
A07 – Afrotropical Highlands biome ... continued (66 species in Burundi; two sites meet the A3 criterion)					
IBA code:	001	002	003	004	005
<i>Apalis argentea</i>		✓			✓
<i>Apalis porphyrolaema</i>		✓			✓
<i>Bradypterus graueri</i>		✓			
<i>Bradypterus cinnamomeus</i>		✓			✓
<i>Chloropeta similis</i>		✓			✓
<i>Graueria vittata</i>		✓			
<i>Sylvietta leucophrys</i>		✓			✓
<i>Hemitesia neumanni</i>		✓			
<i>Phylloscopus laetus</i>		✓			✓
<i>Dioptrornis fischeri</i>	✓		✓		✓
<i>Melaenornis ardesiacus</i>	✓				
<i>Batis diops</i>	✓				✓
<i>Trochocercus albiventris</i>	✓				
<i>Trochocercus albonotatus</i>	✓				✓
<i>Parus fasciiventer</i>	✓				
<i>Nectarinia alinae</i>	✓				✓
<i>Nectarinia preussi</i>	✓				✓
<i>Nectarinia regia</i>	✓				✓
<i>Nectarinia purpureiventris</i>	✓				✓
<i>Nectarinia kilimensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Serinus frontalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Serinus striolatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Serinus burtoni</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Linurgus olivaceus</i>	✓				
<i>Cryptospiza reichenovii</i>	✓				✓
<i>Cryptospiza salvadorii</i>	✓				
<i>Cryptospiza jacksoni</i>	✓				✓
<i>Cryptospiza shelleyi</i>	✓				
<i>Euschistospiza cinereovinacea</i>	✓				✓
<i>Estrilda melanotis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<i>Ploceus baglafecht</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Ploceus melanogaster</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Ploceus alienus</i>	✓				✓
<i>Ploceus insignis</i>	✓				
<i>Poeoptera stuhlmanni</i>	✓				✓
<i>Onychognathus walleri</i>	✓				✓
<i>Onychognathus tenuirostris</i>	✓				✓
<i>Cinnyricinclus sharpii</i>	✓				✓
<i>Oriolus percivali</i>	✓				✓
Number of species recorded:	5	66	10	3	48
V Vagrant					
A10 – Zambezian biome (nine species in Burundi; one site meets the A3 criterion)					
IBA code:	001	002	003	004	005
<i>Lybius minor</i>			✓		
<i>Monticola angolensis</i>			✓		
<i>Cercotrichas barbata</i>					
<i>Myrmecocichla arnotti</i>	✓		✓		
<i>Turdoides hartlaubi</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Cisticola pipiens</i>				✓	
<i>Calamonastes undosus</i>	?				
<i>Parus rufiventris</i>				✓	
<i>Vidua obtusa</i>				✓	
Number of species recorded:	2	1	6	2	1
? Possibly currently extinct due to habitat loss					

CONSERVATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROTECTED-AREA SYSTEM

Burundi is one of the few African countries not to have had a system of National Parks established during the colonial era, although the rapid conversion of forests to agricultural land led to virtually all remaining forests being set aside as official reserves by the colonial Belgian authorities in 1933. Indeed, until 1980 there was no protected-area legislation. Since then, however, the situation has changed and eight new protected areas have been declared, bringing the total to 13. The protected-area system currently covers just over 5% of the country.

In March 1980, the Institut National pour la Conservation de la Nature (INCN) (National Institute for the Conservation of Nature), now the Institut National pour l'Environnement et la Conservation de la Nature (INECN), was created. INECN is part of the Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de l'Environnement (Ministry of Land Planning and Environment) and is responsible for the management of National Parks, Nature Reserves and Natural Monuments. Its other responsibilities are to organize scientific studies for biodiversity assessment and conservation, to ensure the sustainable use of tourist sites, in collaboration with the National Office of Tourism, to train technicians in nature conservation, to make proposals for new protected areas and to organize public conservation-education activities.

There are five categories of protected areas:

- Parc national (National Park) and Réserve naturelle (Nature Reserve)—relevant legislation is Law No. 1/6 of 3 March 1980, concerning the establishment of National Parks and Nature Reserves. Regulations are the same for both categories. Activities prohibited include hunting, habitation in the proximity of a National Park and exploitation of land within 1 km of a park. Activities for which prior permission is necessary include entry for visitors, felling of trees (under supervision of a forester), capture of animals for scientific purposes and fishing.
- Réserve forestière (Forest Reserve)—relevant legislation is Law No. 1/02 of March 1989 concerning the Forest Code. This provides for the establishment of réserves forestières (Forest Reserves) and forêts de protection (Protection Forests), administered by the Service Forestier (Forest Service of the Forest Department of the Ministry of Land Planning and Environment). The objectives of the reserves are to maintain soil on mountains and slopes, to prevent erosion and to maintain the ecological equilibrium for the benefit of the population and for the conservation of plant or animal species recognized to be in danger of disappearance.
- Forêt de Protection (Protection Forest)—relevant legislation is Law No. 1/02 of March 1989 concerning the Forest Code. Activities prohibited are the same as those for Forest Reserves, with the addition of a prohibition of any changes to the soil which could compromise the conservation or protection of the forested area.
- Monument naturel (Natural Monument)—relevant legislation is Law No. 1/6 of 3 March 1980 concerning the establishment of National Parks and Nature Reserves. It applies to relatively small sites of particular scenic, tourism or biodiversity importance, such as waterfalls. Regulations are the same as for National Parks and Forest Reserves.

SITE ACCOUNTS

Rwihinda Lake Managed Nature Reserve	BI001
Admin region Kirundo	
Coordinates 02°33'S 30°04'E	A1, A3 (A06)
Area 8,000 ha Altitude c.1,400 m	Nature Reserve

Site description

Located in the north of Burundi, immediately north of the town of Kirundo close to the Rwandan border, Lake Rwihinda, known in the past as Lac aux Oiseaux (Bird Lake), lies a little way upstream of the Akanyaru wetlands (RW005), to the north-west. The area of the lake

INTERNATIONAL MEASURES RELEVANT TO THE CONSERVATION OF SITES

Burundi has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Convention on Climate Change, the Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Heritage Convention, and participates in UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme. To date, no sites have been inscribed. Regionally, Burundi is a signatory to the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

OVERVIEW OF THE INVENTORY

Five Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are identified in this inventory, covering 1,018 km² or c.3.7% of the surface area of the country (Map 1, Table 1). Of these sites, three are National Parks and two are Forest or Nature Reserves. Two are montane forests and two are wetlands, while Ruvubu National Park is a mixture of savanna woodland and wetland. Four sites qualify under the A1 criterion, for their species of global conservation concern, and two do so under A2 for the Albertine Rift mountains Endemic Bird Area (EBA 106) which hold all 23 of the restricted-range species of this EBA confirmed from Burundi (Table 2). Two sites have been selected for the Lake Victoria Basin biome (A06) which hold all 11 species on the national list (Table 3). The two sites selected for the Afrotropical Highlands biome (A07) hold all the species of this biome confirmed for Burundi, while six of the nine species of the Zambezian biome (A10) recorded nationally are found at the single site selected (Table 3).

No sites have been selected for the Guinea–Congo Forests biome (A05), but five of the eight species known from Burundi occur at Kibira (BI002) while a further two used to do so (Table 3). Further surveys are needed of Kigwena and Rumonge Nature Reserves in Bururi province, both of which contain forest as low as 800 m, and it is possible they will be found to hold more species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome than the 3–4 currently known. In addition, Rumonge Forest Reserve, which extends up to 1,900 m, may also be found to hold more species of the Afrotropical Highlands biome.

There are other potential sites in Burundi worthy of further surveys and conservation attention. These include Monge montane forest in Bujumbura province, wooded savanna near Vyanda in Bururi province, the flood-plains and valleys of the Malagarazi and Kanyaru rivers and the northern lakes in Kirundo province.

COMMENTS ON THE INVENTORY

This inventory has been compiled using data from literature and from field observations by one of us (J-PVw). Additional, up-to-date information is, however, required for all sites.

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is 425 ha, but the total protected area has been extended to cover 8,000 ha.

Birds

See Box and Table 3 for key species. In the past, this site held large numbers of breeding *Phalacrocorax carbo*, *Anhinga rufa*, *Egretta ardesiaca*, *Ardea melanocephala* and *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Large numbers are rarely observed today, however, due to decreasing water-levels, fishing and agriculture. There are records of *Ardeola idea*, *Circus macrourus*, *Falco naumanni* and *Gallinago media*. In addition, one species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome, five of the Afrotropical Highlands

biome and two of the Zambezi biome have been recorded, while a third, *Calamonastes undosus*, used to do so, but is now possibly extinct locally due to habitat loss (see Table 3). Indeed, the current status of a number of species at Rwihinda is uncertain.

Key species

A1	<i>Laniarius mufumbiri</i>	<i>Chloropeta gracilirostris</i>
A3 (A06)	Lake Victoria Basin biome: Eight of the 11 species of this biome that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 3.	

Other threatened/endemic wildlife

None known to BirdLife International.

Conservation issues

The lake is surrounded by human settlements and pressures upon it from fishing and the demand for agricultural land are extremely high.

Further reading

Bider (1973), Debonnet (1991), Verschuren (1977).

Kibira National Park

B1002

Admin region Bubanza, Cibitoke, Kayanza, Muramvya
Coordinates 02°42'S 29°18'E A1, A2 (106), A3 (A07)
Area 37,870 ha **Altitude** 1,600–2,666 m National Park

Site description

Located in north-western Burundi, Kibira National Park lies along the north-south-oriented mountains of Congo-Nile divide. It extends from the border with Rwanda almost as far south as the town of Muramvya. Kibira is contiguous with Nyungwe forest in Rwanda (RW007) and, with it, forms a montane forest block of some 130,000 ha. Most of the remaining primary forest is found on the wetter, western mountain slopes. It is estimated that not more than 16% consists of primary evergreen forest. Dominant tree species include *Symphonia globulifera*, *Newtonia buchananii*, *Albizia gummifera* and *Entandrophragma excelsum*. There are also areas of montane bog and bamboo, *Arundinaria alpina*. Annual rainfall varies from 1,400 mm to 2,000 mm.

Birds

See Box and Tables 2 and 3 for key species. The forest holds many of the Albertine Rift endemics. In addition, five species of the Guinea-Congo Forests biome occur while a further two, *Trachyphonus purpuratus* and *Illadopsis fulvescens*, used to do so, but are now thought to be locally extinct. One species each of the Lake Victoria Basin and Zambezi biomes have also been recorded (see Table 3). Kibira has been less well studied than the contiguous Nyungwe forest, but is certainly the most important site in Burundi for the conservation of montane-forest birds.

Key species

A1	<i>Zoothera tanganjicae</i>	<i>Bradypterus graueri</i>
	<i>Kupeornis rufoincinctus</i>	<i>Cryptospiza shelleyi</i>
	<i>Apalis argentea</i>	
A2 (106)	Albertine Rift mountains EBA: All 23 species of this EBA that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 2.	
A3 (A07)	Afrotropical Highlands biome: All 66 species of this biome that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 3.	

Other threatened/endemic wildlife

Several species of primate occur, including *Pan troglodytes* (EN), *Colobus angolensis ruwenzorii* (VU), *Cercopithecus lhoesti* (LR/nt) and *C. mitis kandti* (EN), while the presence of *C. hamlyni* (LR/nt) is unconfirmed.

Conservation issues

Kibira has been legally protected since 1933, while active conservation effort, as elsewhere in Burundi, dates from 1980. Historically, the forest was used as royal hunting and burial grounds and some areas of Kibira retain almost magical qualities to local people and remain out of bounds. Despite this and its status as a National Park, there is much pressure on parts of the forest as a result of felling of trees and cutting of bamboo, fire and poaching, etc.

Further reading

Debonnet (1991), Wilson (1990).

Ruvubu National Park

B1003

Admin region Cankuzo, Muyinga, Karuzi, Ruyigi
Coordinates 03°06'S 30°24'E A1, A2 (s057), A3 (A06, A10)
Area 43,630 ha **Altitude** 1,350–1,830 m National Park

Site description

Located in north-eastern Burundi, the park extends south-westwards from the border with Tanzania along a 65 km stretch of the valley of the Ruvubu river. The south-western boundary of the park lies some 20 km to the east of the town of Gitega. The Ruvubu river valley comprises a series of meanders flanked by swamp vegetation, gallery forest and, further inland, savanna woodland. The latter comprises *Hyparrhenia* grassland with *Brachystegia*, *Julbernardia*, *Combretum* and *Terminalia* spp. and *Acacia seyal* plus *Pericopsis* and *Parinari* spp. on hillsides. Riverine forest lines the Ruvubu, interspersed with areas of *Cyperus papyrus* and *Phoenix reclinata*. There are also areas of flood-plain grassland, while papyrus swamps with sparse *Syzygium* occur along the drainage lines of the smaller valleys. On the high ridge which forms the southern boundary of the park, *Protea* sp. is common. The vegetation of the park includes Zambezi elements at the northern limits of their distribution. The rain season extends from October to May.

Birds

See Box and Tables 2 and 3 for key species. More than 200 bird species have been recorded, including *Ardeola idae*, *Circus macrourus*, *Falco naumanni* and *Gallinago media*. Large numbers of waterbirds occur with counts of over 1,000 *Pelecanus onocrotalus* and large numbers of *Mycteria ibis*. Other species recorded include *Neotis denhami*. In addition, three species of the Guinea-Congo Forests biome and 10 of the Afrotropical Highlands biome have also been recorded (see Table 3).

Key species

A1	<i>Lybius rubrifacies</i>	<i>Chloropeta gracilirostris</i>
	<i>Laniarius mufumbiri</i>	
A2 (s057)	Dry woodlands west of Lake Victoria Secondary Area: <i>Lybius rubrifacies</i> has been recorded at this site.	
A3 (A06)	Lake Victoria Basin biome: All 11 species of this biome that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 3.	
A3 (A10)	Zambezi biome: Six of the nine species of this biome that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 3.	

Other threatened/endemic wildlife

Mammals of global conservation concern include *Panthera leo* (VU) and *Tragelaphus spekii* (LR/nt).

Conservation issues

The park was established in 1980, when 3,000 families were relocated at a cost of about US\$500,000. The park seeks to conserve habitat which used to cover much of north-eastern Burundi. Illegal traditional hunting still exists, but has little serious impact.

Further reading

Debonnet (1991).

Rusizi National Park

B1004

Admin region Babanza, Bujumbura
Coordinates 03°12'S 29°14'E A4i
Area 9,000 ha **Altitude** 780–1,000 m National Park

Site description

Rusizi National Park is located north-west of Bujumbura against the international frontier with DR Congo. It is made up of two parts; a strip of flood-plain about 2 km wide and 35 km long beside the east bank of the Rusizi river and, to the south, a smaller area comprising the delta of the Rusizi at the point where it enters Lake Tanganyika. The two parts are separated by the main Bujumbura-Uvira road. The delta is a mixture of islands and channels covered locally by *Phragmites* and papyrus. An important feature of the northern part of the reserve are the stands of the fire-resistant palm *Hyphaene benguellensis ventricosa*. Other dominant species are *Acacia albida*, *Balanites aegyptiaca* and *Euphorbia candelabrum*. There are several ponds of varying size in the northern section.

■ Birds

See Box for key species. The site supports a wide diversity of waterbirds, particularly migrant species. *Ardeola idae*, *Phoenicopterus minor*, *Circus macrourus*, *Falco naumanni*, *Gallinago media* and *Glareola nordmanni* have all been recorded. In addition to those listed below, other counts include 300 *Phoenicopterus minor*, 200 *Plegadis falcinellus* and 2,000 *Dendrocygna viduata*. In addition, one species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome, two of the Lake Victoria Basin biome, three of the Afrotropical Highlands biome and two of the Zambezi biome have also been recorded (see Table 3).

Key species

A4i	Breeding (pairs)	Non-breeding
<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	—	4,000
<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>	—	500

■ Other threatened/endemic wildlife

The ungulate *Tragelaphus speki* (LR/nt) has been recorded.

■ Conservation issues

Fires sweep the area during the dry season, June–September. Despite the intense human pressures on the area, it has remained in relatively good condition, especially in the north.

■ Further reading

Debonnet (1991), Verschuren (1977), Wilson (1990).

Bururi Forest Nature Reserve

Admin region Bururi

Coordinates 03°56'S 29°35'E

Area 3,300 ha Altitude 1,900–2,307 m

BI005

A1, A2 (106), A3 (A07)

Nature Reserve

■ Site description

Bururi Forest is situated on the extreme southern edge of the Congo–

Nile divide and is a small patch of forest lying immediately west of the town of Bururi in south-western Burundi. Although the reserve is 3,300 ha, the remaining semi-evergreen forest covers only some 1,600 ha. At least 93 tree species occur, with *Strombosia* and *Myrianthus* spp. dominant and *Tabernaemontana*, *Newtonia* and *Entandrophragma* spp. also common. The area is situated at a biogeographic crossroads such that, in addition to holding many plant and animal species of the montane forests of the Congo–Nile divide, it contains elements associated with the Zambezi region to the south, the drier savanna areas of the east and even the lowland evergreen forests of DR Congo. Annual rainfall varies from 1,200 mm to 2,400 mm.

■ Birds

See Box and Tables 2 and 3 for key species. A total of 87 bird species have been recorded, including *Apalis argentea*, common in some parts. Bururi is also the type-locality for *Alethe poliocephala vandeweghei*. In addition, two species of the Guinea–Congo Forests biome, one of the Lake Victoria Basin biome and one of the Zambezi biome have been recorded (see Table 3).

Key species

A1	<i>Zoothera tangerjicae</i>	<i>Apalis argentea</i>
A2 (106)	Albertine Rift mountains EBA: 12 of the 23 species of this EBA that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 2.	
A3 (A07)	Afrotropical Highlands biome: 48 of the 66 species of this biome that occur in Burundi have been recorded at this site; see Table 3.	

■ Other threatened/endemic wildlife

There is a population of some 30 *Pan troglodytes* (EN).

■ Conservation issues

Threats include demands for agricultural land and hunting of bushmeat.

■ Further reading

Debonnet (1991), Wilson (1990).

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