

Western Caprivi by Rolf Wiesler

The Elusive Five

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the beach, or should I say birding I'm back and still not out of the birding closet!

Karin convinced me that it would be good for my health to take a "relaxing" trip to Western Caprivi. The trip was anything but relaxing with Karin getting numerous lifers and me adding to my photo total, bringing it to 603.

While we (me walking slowly and carefully after our experience of mine fields in Mozambique) were walking through an overgrown field our leader, Graham Snow, screamed, pointed and started running. The first thing you (ok I) thought of was a swarm of bees wasps terrorists!!!! but no, apparently a bird, not any bird but an African Hobby. Last time I saw Graham move so quickly was when he did the river dance with a snake in the Kgalagadi.

As we did not have an adequate sighting we could not tick this bird, but did realise that Graham had not seen one before. A few days later were driving in the Bwabweta National Park one of our party, Andre, noticed an African Hobby sitting in a tree above the vehicle.

Now this is where the fun comes in, Karin and Andre could see the bird, and I could photograph it out of my window, but Graham could not see it from his seat.

Karin shouting "there it is, my word". I'm taking photo's and Graham shouting "where, where, I can't see it, I can only see branches!" It then flew to a tree where we could all see it and even put a scope on it.

Oh yes, on a personal note, I know that I stated that the Pel's is a myth and that I have seen more photos of the Loch Ness monster than the Pel's well ok, they do exist and I want to apologise to all the people that followed my example and tore the pictures out of their bird books. To obtain a signed replacement picture please send R50-00 to

I managed to take photographs of what I call the elusive five - the photos are not great, but all the birds are special and difficult to see.