



HARTLEY'S SAFARIS

FINDING YOUR AFRICA



Uganda

Murchison Falls National Park
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
Queen Elizabeth National Park
Lake Victoria
Rwenzories
Lake Mburo National Park
Kampala



INTRODUCTION

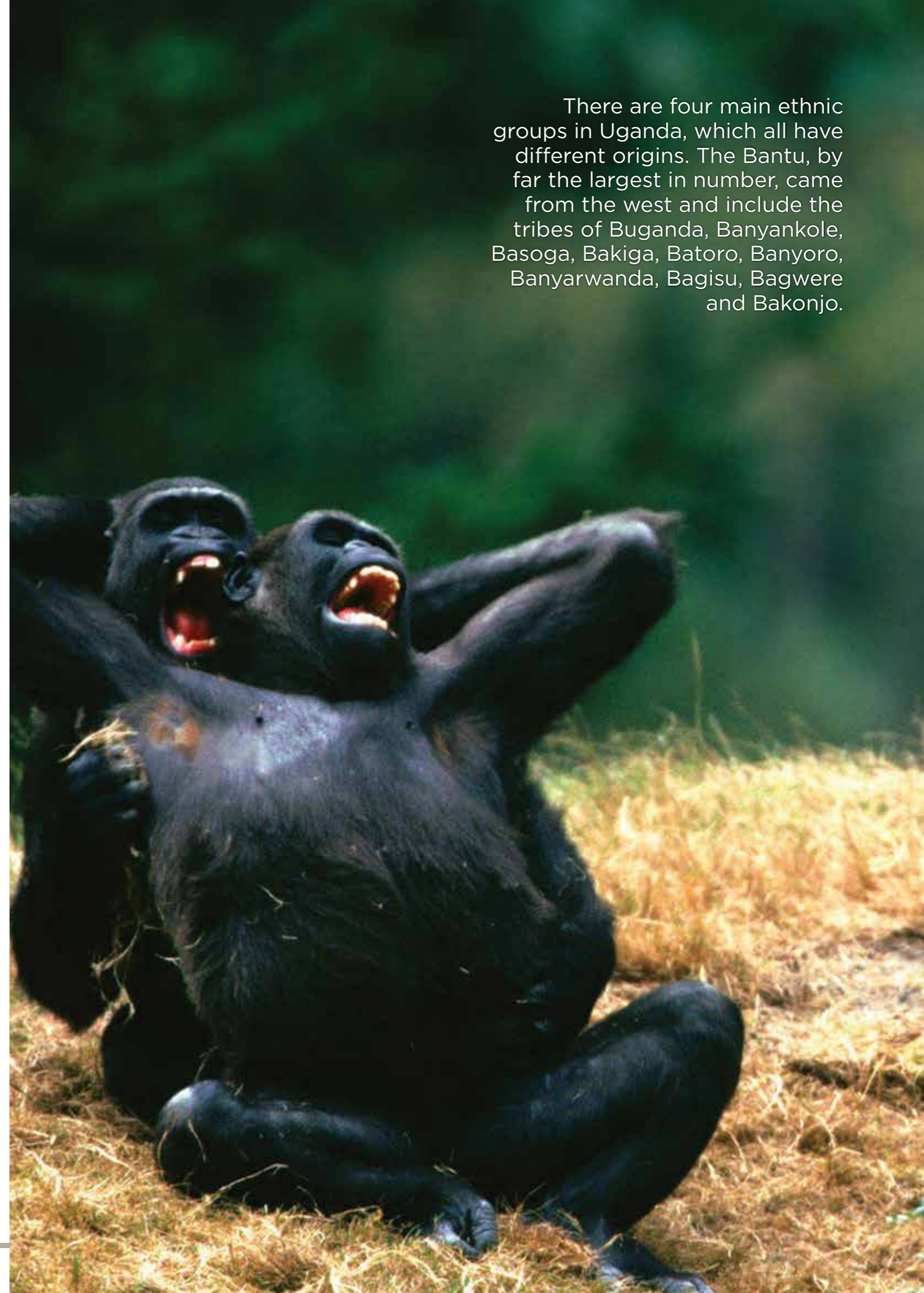
Uganda offers a fascinating mosaic of landscapes ranging from thick forests and plains studded with crater lakes, to verdant mountains and valleys. Although roughly the size of the United Kingdom more than 1,000 species of birds have been recorded here (compared to a total of just over 550 for the UK).

One of Uganda's most outstanding features is its forests, lakes and mountains. Most of the country is high above sea level and it is watched over by three mountainous areas - the Rwenzoris, Mount Elgon and the Virunga Mountains.

Uganda has a number of national parks and game reserves. The rain forests of Mgahinga and Bwindi are the natural habitat of some of the last surviving mountain gorillas in the world, and the Kibale Forest contains the highest density per square mile of primates in the world, including chimpanzees. Queen Elizabeth National Park, with its wide-open plains, lakes and ancient volcanic craters offers visitors a chance to see a wide spectrum of African game.

Murchison Falls National Park, bisected by the Nile, the world's longest river, offers the chance to see the rare Shoebill Stork and game cruises by boat are rewarded with sightings of Nile crocodile, hippo and a host of plains game that come down to the water's edge to drink. The park is named after the Murchison Falls where the entire Nile River is forced through a gap in the rock only six metres wide.

The Nile rises in Lake Victoria, Africa's largest lake, which plays a key role in Uganda's economy, both a source of fish and through tourism and trade. The lake is shared between Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Other large lakes in the country include Lakes Albert and Edward.



There are four main ethnic groups in Uganda, which all have different origins. The Bantu, by far the largest in number, came from the west and include the tribes of Buganda, Banyankole, Basoga, Bakiga, Batoro, Banyoro, Banyarwanda, Bagisu, Bagwere and Bakonjo.



HISTORY

Archaeological research shows that early humans lived in Uganda at least 50,000 years ago. Humans thrived in the area which offered fertile soils, abundant water and wildlife.

People from both West and North Africa began moving into the area some 2,400 years ago, slowly establishing agriculture and cattle based societies. The first migrations were mainly undertaken by Bantu speaking people from further west but before long they were joined by Nilotic speaking people from further north.

Towards the end of the 15th century Nilotic speaking immigrants began establishing the Buganda Kingdom. This was followed by the establishment of the Toro, Ankole and Bunyaro Kingdoms. By 1800 the Buganda Empire had grown to be the most powerful in the region. Slave traders began exploiting what is today Uganda, in the early to mid-1800s. The area later also became a focal point for European explorers anxious to pinpoint the source of the Nile and learn about Lake Victoria. There was also considerable interest in ivory. Missionaries and business people soon followed in the footsteps of the explorers and by 1894 Uganda had become a British Protectorate.

The country achieved independence in 1962. In 1971, army Chief Idi Amin took power in a coup and ran a brutal campaign of repression. Uganda invaded Tanzania in 1978 and there was further conflict in 1979 which led to Amin being deposed. Another coup took place in 1985. Uganda has held several elections since then.

PEOPLE, CULTURE AND ECONOMY

There are almost 60 different tribes in Uganda, a reflection of the country's multicultural history. Consequently Uganda is a multilingual country but English is spoken, particularly in the cities. As is to be expected there are many different cultural ceremonies and most Ugandans retain strong links

to their traditional roots. One of the most important cultural sites in Uganda is the Kasumbi Tombs near Kampala. Four Kings of the Buganda Kingdom are buried here. Many people rely on subsistence farming or fishing and Lake Victoria and the other lakes and rivers in the country are an important source of fish and building material such as papyrus and other reeds.

Commercial agricultural operations employ more people than any other economic sector and coffee accounts for the bulk of Uganda's exports. Uganda is the largest exporter of coffee in Africa. Some cotton, tea and other crops are also exported. Uganda has a small mining industry.

UGANDA IN BRIEF

- Capital City: Kampala
- Area: 241,038 sq. km (93,065 sq. miles)
- Population: 33.6 million
- Time zone: GMT +3
- Currency: Shilling (UGX)
- Electricity: 220V
- Geography: Plateau with a rim of mountains. Heart of the African Great Lakes region.
- Language: English



WHEN TO GO

Uganda has a pleasant tropical climate, with little year round fluctuation in temperatures which range from a maximum of 25°C to 30°C during the day and a minimum of 12°C to 18°C at night. Bird watching is good all year round with a large variety of resident species found throughout the country. These are also supplemented by a large number of migrants between November and April.

December to March: summer months, warm, dry days, possible brief rain showers, good game viewing, wildlife concentrated around rivers and waterholes, easier gorilla trekking.

April to June: daytime temperature falls slightly, bulk of the annual rain falls, heavy rain can sometimes render wildlife areas temporarily inaccessible.

July to September: coolest time of the year, mostly dry, short sharp showers followed by sunshine, best game viewing, wildlife concentrated around rivers and waterholes, easier gorilla trekking.

October to November: short rains fall.

CLIMATE

Entebbe	Temp °C		Rainfall
	Min	Max	mm
Jan	16	26	90
Feb	17	26	96
Mar	17	26	177
Apr	17	25	274
May	17	27	258
Jun	17	25	102
Jul	16	25	67
Aug	16	25	83
Sep	16	26	80
Oct	17	26	111
Nov	17	26	162
Dec	17	26	119

Kampala	Temp °C		Rainfall
	Min	Max	mm
Jan	22	28	58
Feb	22	28	61
Mar	22	27	122
Apr	21	26	179
May	20	25	132
Jun	20	25	66
Jul	20	25	53
Aug	20	25	88
Sep	20	26	101
Oct	21	27	118
Nov	21	27	139
Dec	21	27	94







HIGHLIGHTS

MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK

Murchison Falls National Park offers a rich diversity of habitats for the visitor to explore, including the Nile (the White Nile) - and the surrounding papyrus swamps, forests and riverine woodlands, as well as open grasslands dotted with tall Borassus palm. The Falls themselves are spectacular, with the Nile bursting through a six metre (20 feet) wide gap and plummeting nearly 40 metres (130 feet) over the sheer rock face.

The park boasts over 374 species of birds, including amongst many others the shoebill stork. There is an abundance of animal life to be seen - buffalo, elephants, Jackson's hartebeest, oribis, Uganda kob, lions, leopard, hyena, reedbuck and bush buck. On the Nile at the foot of the Falls, hippos and crocodiles are always present. The forest is also home to Uganda's largest population of chimpanzees. There are also several other species of primate to be seen on game drives and boat cruises as well as on walks in the Budongo and Rabongo forests.



QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

The Queen Elizabeth protected area encompasses a wide variety of habitats ranging from savannah and wetlands to riverine and lowland forest. In this diverse ecosystem, water dominates the landscape, with 250km of shoreline along Lake Rudolf and Lake George.

The lakes the Kazinga Channel and the Ishasha River provide a rich habitat for both mammals and birds, offering excellent wildlife viewing and spectacular scenery and landscapes.

Although heavily poached in the past conservation efforts have restored much of the game and elephant, buffalo, Uganda kob, a variety of antelope, baboons and chimpanzees and the famous tree-climbing lions are common sights. There are also over 500 different species of bird to be found here, making it an excellent destination for birding. The Park covers about 1,978 sq. km (764 sq. mile).



BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK

Bwindi is one of the most biologically diverse areas on earth and is recognized by UNESCO (United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization) as a World Heritage Site. The park is home to about half the world's population of the endangered mountain gorilla. About 600 of these magnificent animals remain.

The 331 sq km (128 sq mile) pocket of forest that once stretched from the Virunga Volcanoes in the south to the Rwenzori Mountains in the north contains over 113 species of mammals (including a herd of the rare forest elephant), 200 species of butterfly, over 360 species of birds and a prodigious 324 tree varieties (10 of which are endemic to the park). In addition to this broad diversity, Bwindi is home to seven species of primates, attracting the attention of international conservation efforts.



LAKE VICTORIA

Lake Victoria is the largest lake in Africa and also the second widest freshwater body in the world. Its extensive surface belongs to three countries - the northern half to Uganda, the southern half to Tanzania, and part of the north eastern sector to Kenya. The lake occupies a wide depression near the equator, between the East and West Great Rift Valleys.

The lake shore is highly indented, and there are many isles in the lake, some of which, especially the Sesse Group, are known for their beautiful landscape. Abundant prehistoric remains found around the lake indicate the development of agriculture by early humans. There are a number of coastal towns such as Kisumu (Kenya), Entebbe (Uganda), Bukoba, Muwanza and Musoma (Tanzania), connected with each other by ship routes and also to the cities of the Indian Ocean coast by railways. A dam constructed in 1954 at Owen Falls on the Victoria Nile supplies electricity and water for various uses in Uganda and Kenya.



OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

For a unique holiday experience, there are few better ways to discover the real heart and soul of a country than to travel away from the traditional tourist destinations and go 'off the beaten track'. With the wealth of experience we have gained through our many years creating luxury safari holidays to Africa, Hartley's Safaris offer an extensive portfolio of experiences that allow you to embrace the true spirit and adventure of this magnificent country in a safe and secure manner.

RWENZORI MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

The park covers some 100,000 hectares (240,000 acres) and includes the 5,109 metre (16,859 feet) high Mount Margherita. It is the third highest mountain in Africa. The park contains glaciers and lakes as well as many unusual species of plants including giant heather, bamboo and other Afro-montane species. Elephants occur in the forests as do a number of antelope. Of the 217 species of bird recorded in the park 17 are endemic to the region. The Rwenzories were once known as the "Mountains of the Moon".



LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK

Lake Mbuoro National Park is one of Uganda's smaller parks where the landscape consists mainly of savannah and acacia woodland. There are five lakes within the park boundaries which account for 20% of the parks surface area and of which Lake Mbuoro is the largest. The park attracts a particularly diverse array of water birds.

The rest of the park is covered with acacia savannah and is notable for supporting a wide variety of antelope. It is the only place where the impala still occurs in Uganda and it is one of the best places to see eland, Africa's largest antelope. Large herds of buffalo and zebra are common. Hippo and crocodile are common in all the lakes.



KAMPALA

Kampala is the capital city of Uganda. It is located in the South Central part of the country close to the shores of Lake Victoria. Kampala, with a population of approximately one and a half million, is by far the largest city in Uganda. Attractions include the Uganda Museum, the Kasubi Tombs - where the remains of the Kings of Buganda are buried, the Nommo Art Gallery, the National Theatre, the Rubaga and Namirembe Cathedrals and the Parliament of Uganda.

The Owino market is one of the largest in this region of Africa and a huge variety of items are available - fresh fish from Lake Victoria, artwork, second hand clothes and an amazing array of African foods.



Uganda's National Parks offer excellent safaris and fantastic birding opportunities. Two of the best parks include Queen Elizabeth National Park and Murchison Falls National Park.



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