

# Itinerary for Pearl of Africa – Uganda

*No class in 2012 – Stay tuned for 2013*

## Textbook – Uganda’s Great Rift Valley by Andrew Roberts

**6 graduate semester hour’s credit available from Colorado School of Mines**

**Cost: \$3,500 without tuition, \$3,750 with tuition. Includes ground transportation, lodging, park passes, guides, game drives, rafting, all tips, visa, chimpanzee and gorilla permits (Does not include airfare)**

**Day 1 - July 19, 2011- Tuesday** - Depart US -

**Day 2 - July 20, 2011 - Wednesday**– Arrive in Uganda late evening. Meet our guides at Entebbe Airport for transfer to Lubowa. Stay the night in Lubowa at White Crest Guest House.

**Day 3 – July 21, 2011 – Thursday** - 8am - Breakfast at White Crest Lodge - Early morning birds watch tour between Lubowa and Entebbe There are 1061 species of birds in Uganda with 41 species being endemic and 25 threatened species. - Spend the day in Lubowa. Orientation on the culture and customs of Uganda and distribution of class materials. - An afternoon visit to the beautiful campus of the International IB School in Lubowa – Class time for jigsaw reports - shop at Quality Shopping center for needed supplies – dinner at Quality Shopping center.

**Day 4 – July 22, 2011 – Friday** - Visit the Victory Primary School in Kampala – Spend the afternoon in the capital city of Uganda, Kampala. Kampala is the heart of Uganda’s cultural and intellectual life. Do a driving tour of Kampala - Have lunch while watching the Marabou Storks fly around the center of the city at the Indian Restaurant located on the top of Nawab Shopping Center in downtown Kampala. - Meet our drivers and return to White Crest Guest House to spend the night and to pack for an early departure the next morning.

**Day 5 – July 23, 2011 – Saturday** – 5:00 am Breakfast at White Crest Lodge - Be ready to go at 5:30 -Transfer to Murchison Falls National Park in 4X4 mini-busses. Visit Zziwa Rhino Sanctuary in the morning hours while discussing the decline of the once prolific wildlife during the years of Idi Amin. Lunch in Masindi’s New Court Hotel. Continue study of the Uganda Wildlife Authority’s program of the past 20 years to increase the levels of wildlife to pre – Amin levels. Overnight at Red Chilli Rest Camp on the delta across the river.

**Day 6 – July 24, 2011 –Sunday**– 6 am morning game drive on North bank of the Nile River to view some of the 76 mammal species that have been recorded in Murchison Falls. The mammal group includes 20 prides of lions, herds of elephants, and a substantial population of Rothschild’s giraffes. Also to be seen are kob, hartebeest, bushbucks, warhogs, buffalo, monkeys, chimpanzees plus many others species. 460 different species of birds have been identified in the park with 53 species of raptors recorded. Have lunch at Para Safari Lodge across the Nile River. Take an afternoon boat ride on the River Nile while viewing hundreds of hippo’s and crocodiles. Leave the boat and hike to the beautiful Murchison Falls. Spend the night at Red Chili Rest Camp in bandas – have dinner at the Rest Camp.

**Day 7 - July 25, 2011 –Monday** - Breakfast at Rest Camp –Transfer to Kibale Forest National Forest which has the greatest variety and concentration of primates of any forest in East Africa. 60 mammal species are

present in this forest plus 335 bird species, including 4 species not recorded in any other national park. We will spend the night at Chimp Nest Guesthouse. Dinner at guesthouse.

**Day 8 – July 26, 2011- Tuesday** - Breakfast at Guesthouse - Morning visit to Kibale Forest for Chimpanzees walk. Afternoon walk in Bigodi Wetland Sanctuary with 40 species of birds plus abundant butterflies and other wildlife that include the sitatunga antelope, a variety of mongoose, the red colobus monkey, black and white colobus and grey-cheeked mangabey. Visit with KAFRED Community Group and a local women's group. Dinner and overnight at Chimp Nest Guesthouse.

**Day 9 – July 27, 2011 – Wednesday** - Breakfast at Guesthouse - Depart early morning for Bwindi, Arriving in Bwindi by late afternoon, we check in to the Buhoma Community Rest Camp where safari tents and cabins are perched on platforms overlooking the famed Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. This forest reserve was first gazetted in 1942 and upgraded to national park status in 1992. One of Africa's most ancient rainforests, Bwindi is now recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Overnight at Buhoma Community Campsite bandas.

**Day 10, July 28, 2011- Thursday** – Breakfast, lunch and dinner at the campground -We are in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, one of the most biologically diverse rain forests in Africa located on the Eastern edge of the Albertine Rift Valley - For some, today may be one of the most thrilling days in their life as they set off in small groups of 8 to view one of the most endangered primates on earth – the legendary mountain gorilla. More than half of the world's mountain gorilla population is in Bwindi. There is an estimated 340 individuals living in 15 troops including many gorilla babies.

The Bwindi Impenetrable Forest served as a 'refugia' during the last great ice age, so while few forests in Africa are more than 12,000 years old, Bwindi has been a living forest community for at least 25,000 years. This has resulted in astonishing biodiversity: 310 species of butterfly, 88 moths, 51 reptiles, 200 trees, and an astonishing 350 species of birds, many unique in the world. Of the 120 species of mammals found in this forest, 10 are primates. It is the only forest in the world that supports both chimpanzee and mountain gorillas. - Bird watchers will delight in the 350 species of birds recorded in Bwindi with 14 species recorded nowhere else in Uganda. There is also 310 different species of butterflies here.

Following our full day exploration of Africa's greatest forest, we will have time to visit with local villagers and meet with the Batwa Pygmies – Bwindi's former forest dwellers that have cohabitated with the gorillas and chimps for millennium. Overnight: Buhoma Community Rest Camp, Bwindi National Park.

**Day 11, July 29, 2011 - Friday** -It's a cool morning at this high elevation as we prepare to depart after breakfast. Today we are in search of the famous tree climbing lions of Ishasha, the extreme southern savannahs of Queen Elizabeth National Park where huge fig trees serve as mid-day lounges for the King of Beasts to climb up on big branches to beat the heat.

Ishasha is a true wilderness, as we soon learn while checking in to our remote safari camp for the night; it offers an experience found almost nowhere else in Africa. With only seven tents, guests are able to enjoy the feeling of exclusivity in pristine surroundings. Each tent has two beds, and its own en suite bathroom. Ntungwe River Lodge is situated beside the Ntungwe River where hippos, elephant and leopard are often spotted, but it is the surrounding savannah lands where the action really is. Our evening game drive should reveal huge herds of Uganda kob, topi, elephants, baboon, crested cranes and hopefully, the more elusive leopards, hyenas and lions. After a delicious dinner, we will head off to sleep to the sounds of Africa by night – lions roaring in the distance, hippos grunting from the river pools and hyenas crying out on a hunt. This is the Africa others only dream of. Overnight: Ntungwe River Camp, Q.E. National Park

**Day 12, July 30, 2011 - Saturday** – If we haven't spotted the tree-climbing lions, there's one last opportunity to do so as we transfer to Lake Mburo National Park. Along the way we have a chance to stop and view Kyambura Gorge where chimpanzees live in a 100m deep gorge carved by the Kyambura River. Looking down

on this wooded gorge and the surrounding elevated savannah lands, it is easy to picture a similar gorge in nearby Tanzania where Dr. Leakey found the earliest evidence of our ancestors as they evolved from forest dwelling apes to savannah hunting hominoids.

In the late afternoon we shall check in at Mihingo Lodge where we can the afternoon heat in the comfort of a fabulous swimming pool.

An evening game walk is possible with an armed Ugandan Wildlife Authority Ranger walking slowly through the savannah dotted with acacia trees. We should encounter an abundance of animals – Burchell's zebra, Cape buffalo and a great variety of antelope. Back at our lodge we will enjoy dinner while watching wildlife congregate at a nearby salt lick, and later share tales of our Safari adventure around a campfire under the star-studded African sky.

**Day 13, July 31, 2011- Sunday** - We'll be used to the habit of waking before dawn to take full advantage of early game drives which offer the best chances of catching nocturnal animals, hyena, leopard and lions, returning from their nightly hunts. After a sunrise breakfast, we set off by safari vehicle on a game drive across the savannah as we head back to Kampala for dinner – and lodging at White Crest Lodge.

**Day 14, August 1, 2011 - Monday** - Breakfast at White Crest - Early departure for a day in Jinja of white water rafting on the beautiful Nile River starting at Bujagali Falls. View the Nile's headwaters in Jinja. Lunch provided by Adrift Rafting Company. Back to Lubowa to spend the night at White Crest Guesthouse. Dinner at Quality Shopping Mall in Lubowa .

**Day 15, August 2, 2011 –Tuesday** - Breakfast at Whitecrest - Morning to debrief – relax – proceed to Kampala Craft Market for shopping and a visit to an open air market. Lunch in Kampala – Late afternoon visit to Lake Victoria where we will visit Gorretti's Pizzeria before our transfer to **Entebbe Airport for a late night flight home.**

**Day 16, August 3, 2011 – Wednesday** - Arrive in the United States.