

Appendix Three

Larger Animals of Wetland Systems



GroundTruth
Water, Wetlands and
Environmental Engineering



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APPENDIX THREE

LARGER ANIMALS OF WETLAND SYSTEMS.

For details of websites that you might find useful please refer to:

Section E: Appendix **USEFUL EXPLANATIONS, E-REFERENCES & APPENDIXES**

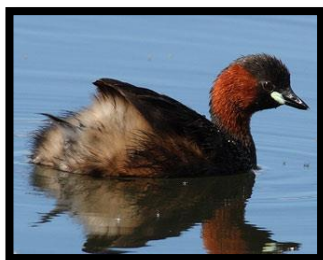
Birds of Wetland Systems

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Egyptian Goose</u> <u>(<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>)</u></p>	<p>This species is adapted to living in wetlands because it has webbed feet for swimming and water resistant feathers (as do many other geese and ducks). It is a common bird and is often spotted both in the water and on land.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Grey Heron</u> <u>(<i>Ardea cinerea</i>)</u></p>	<p>This species is perfectly adapted to wetland environments because it wades in shallow water and feeds on frogs, crabs, fish and other small animals. It is often seen standing very still while hunting or wading through shallow water.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Pied Kingfisher</u> <u>(<i>Ceryle rudis</i>)</u></p>	<p>This species is well adapted to most fresh water environments as it feeds on small fish and large crustaceans. It is known for its distinctive diving action when catching its prey.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Red-Knobbed Coot</u> <u>(<i>Fulica cristata</i>)</u></p>	<p>This species is very territorial. Although it spends most of its time on the water it also occupies nesting spots in the reeds. It has lobed toes which allow it to walk on muddy banks.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Red Bishop</u> <u>(<i>Euplectes orix</i>)</u></p>	<p>Wetlands are important to this species because it breeds in the reeds of wetlands and is extremely distinctive because it is so bright in colour during this time. Red bishops live in flocks so it is uncommon to see one on its own.</p>



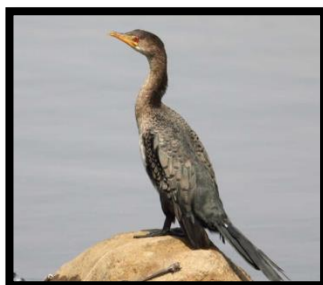
Great White Egret
(*Ardea alba*)

This species breeds in trees close to reed beds or large wetlands. It feeds on fish, frogs and small mammals. Its long legs are adapted well to a wetland environment as they allow the bird to walk through the water with ease.



Little Grebe (Dabchick)
(*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

This species spends a lot of its time feeding on small fish and invertebrates in open water but is very skilled at hiding in the reeds. It is unmistakable as it resembles a very small duck.



Reed Cormorant
(*Microcarbo africanus*)

The Reed Cormorant is also known as the Long-Tailed Cormorant. This species is a lot smaller than the well-known White Breasted Cormorant and not as distinctive. It may have slight colour variations but its size and behaviour make it easy to identify. It will often be seen with its wings held out to dry (this is typical Cormorant behaviour). It breeds in freshwater wetlands.



Little Bittern
(*Ixobrychus minutus*)

This species is part of the heron family but is very small. It is a relatively uncommon wading bird, the juvenile is more heavily streaked than the adults. This bird feeds mostly on water insects. Little Bitterns occur mostly in thick vegetation on the edges of freshwater wetlands.



Hamerkop
(*Scopus Umbretta*)

This species is not necessarily classified as a water bird but it requires a habitat with water availability at all times which makes wetlands the perfect environment for it. It feeds mostly on amphibians and nests in trees or cliffs near water.



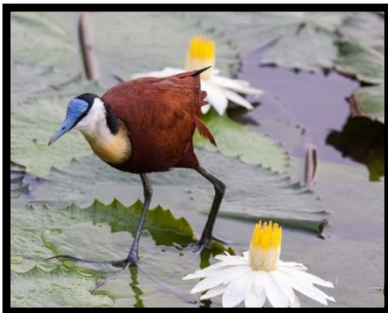
African Fish Eagle
(*Haliaeetus vocifer*)

This Iconic African species is found at all types of water bodies and its most preferred materials for nest building are bulrush and papyrus so wetlands are an ideal habitat for this bird. They feed on fish.



African Black Crane
(*Amaurornis flavirostra*)





This species is most suited to a wetland environment although it does occur on the edges of rivers and dams as well. Its' diet consists mainly of water insects, molluscs, crustaceans and the seeds of wetland plants.



African Jacana
(*Actophilornis africanus*)

This species prefers wetlands because there are floating plants for it to walk on, this is where an African Jacana spends most of its' time.

Reptiles of Wetland Systems

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Common Brown Water Snake</u> (<i>Lycodonomorphus rufulus</i>)</p>	<p>This snake is a very skilled swimmer. It feeds on tadpoles, small fish and rodents.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Marsh Terrapin</u> (<i>Pelomedusa subrufa</i>)</p>	<p>The Marsh Terrapin (also known as the African Helmeted Turtle) inhabits any wet environment. It feeds on water vegetation, insects and frogs. They are often seen sunning themselves on rocks in the water.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Water Leguaan</u> (<i>Varanus niloticus</i>)</p>	<p>Wetlands are perfectly suited to this species because it lives a semi-aquatic life. This species will eat anything available but they have special appetite for crocodile eggs.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Green Water Snake</u> (<i>Philothamnus hoplogaster</i>)</p>	<p>This snake feeds on frogs, fish and lizards. The Green Water Snake occurs where there are reeds.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Black Water Snake</u> (<i>Lycodonomorphus laevis</i>)</p>	<p>The Black Water Snake (also known as the Dusky Bellied Water Snake) has a very bad temper. They occur in wetlands and moist savanna and they feed on frogs and fish.</p>



Serrated Hinged Terrapin
(*Pelusios sinuatus*)

This terrapin secretes a nasty smelling odour when it feels threatened. It eats snails, insects and water plants.

Mammals of Wetland Systems



Greater Cane Rat
(*Thryonomys swinderianus*)

The Greater Cane Rat is one of the largest rodents in South Africa. They occur in grasslands but also marshy areas and reed beds.



Southern African Vlei Rat
(*Otomys irroratus*)

As the name suggests, this rat inhabits damp vleis. They live in the grass on the edge of wetlands and feed on the grass.



African Water Rat
(*Colomys goslingi*)

This rat eats mostly crustaceans, it spends most of its time in shallow water with its muzzle under water waiting and watching for food.



Swamp Musk Shrew
(*Crociodura mariquensis*)

This species occurs in marshy environments and feeds mostly on snails and termites. Because shrews are so small they are very hard to see in amongst the grass.



Cape Clawless Otter
(*Aonyx capensis*)

This otter occurs near water bodies, with particular preference to reed beds. It feeds on crustaceans and small fish. They are very well adapted to water because they are streamlined and have webbed feet.



Water/Marsh Mongoose
(*Atilax paludinosus*)

This is a large mongoose that lives in semi-aquatic environments and feeds on small water animals. It also has non-retractable claws which make it easy to catch prey.



Common Reedbuck
(*Redunca arundinum*)

As the name suggests, Common Reedbuck inhabit environments where there are reeds/long grass, wet grassland is optimum. They are grazers and a nearby or permanent water source is a necessity for this species.



Serval Cat
(*Leptailurus serval*)

This species is a solitary animal. Although Serval Cats are not wetland animals, they should be noted because their habitat needs to include a water source and they often prey on animals that do inhabit wetlands. So it is not uncommon to see one in or near a wetland.