

Akagera National Park



Further Links

- Fantastic birdwatching
- Personal game viewing - few tourists
- Rwanda's best national park

Situation

Eastern Rwanda, bordering Tanzania.

Activities

Game viewing and bush walks (walks only if staying at the Game Lodge). Boat trips available on Lake Ihema booked in advance.

Akagera National Park is warm and low lying in contrast to most of the rest of Rwanda. It sits on the Tanzanian border to the East and is named after the river which forms this boundary.

There are rolling plains with acacia woodlands and grasses dotted with Euphorbia Candelabra forests. There is a low chain of mountains to the west and there are many lakes throughout the park which, mixed with papyrus swamps feed water to the main Akagera River.

Although sometimes referred to as Rwanda's version of an East African reserve, it cannot be compared to the likes of the Serengeti plains. It was badly affected by poaching and the former northern part of the park was claimed by refugees in the 90s. However, large animals such as elephant and buffalo still live here and the lakes are home to some of the biggest concentrations of hippo in Africa. There are crocodiles and small numbers of lion, hyena, leopard and black rhino (the latter's presence being seen very rarely). Rhino along with giraffe have been introduced here. Smaller predators include mongoose, genet, civet, serval and jackal. Warthogs, bushpigs and giant forest hogs are found in Akagera. Various varieties of antelope live here and it's a birders paradise too - combining this region with Nyungwe Forest would be a birdwatchers dream trip!

The nice thing about game viewing in Akagera is that you can go for hours not seeing any other vehicles. It's a scenic place and offers a range of different vegetation and habitat zones.

The boundaries of the park today cover around 90,000ha which stretches for about 60km along the Tanzanian border and is only about 30km wide east to west.

