

In October, the rainy season begins in Uganda. It doesn't rain all day or for many days in a row like the rainy season in Japan. However, it is lightly cloudy all day long, and the sky can turn into clear skies, followed by sudden thunderstorms and heavy rain. Even if it rains heavily, it only lasts for a short time, so the wisdom of Kampala people is to take shelter under the eaves of buildings during the rain. Bodaboda (taxi motorcycles) also take a short break under the bridge or in front of the eaves of a gas station. The weather will improve after about an hour.

This month, I would like to do something a little different and introduce you to flora and fauna that can be seen normally in Kampala city but are rare in Japan.

Bird edition

Crested Crane

The national bird of Uganda. The flag of Uganda depicts a crowned crane with one leg raised. This symbolizes that the country will never stop moving forward. My eyes were wide open when I saw it near Entebbe on the outskirts of Kampala. When you look at it up close, it looks like a fairly large vine.



Crested crane taking



Quite big

Great Crested Plover

Before I was assigned to Uganda, I heard from an acquaintance who had been to Africa that it was possible to see birds with eye-catching colors. Immediately after I arrived in Uganda, this bird perched on the dining room window and peered inside. Did they think it was unusual that a new resident arrived? It reminded me of the “Blue Bird of Happiness” from the fairy tale. I noticed that they seemed to live in groups and had quite a number of companions. They have a quiet personality and hardly make any noise. With its appearance and nice coloring, I thought it was a very African bird.



Where it was standing in the morning



Caught the moment of flight

Africa Stork

This is a type of bird that looks a little scary. There is a golf course along Lake Victoria in Entebbe, and I saw them there as well. I also saw them eating fish caught in the lake. The problem I had was they were trying to hold the ball in their mouths and fly away. If you threaten them, they will fly away with the ball in their throat, so I heard that the trick is to approach them slowly and make them drop the ball.



At the golf course



Caught fish from Lake Victoria

Hadada Ibis

This bird flies around, making a loud noise every morning. Most of the time they travel in pairs, probably because they are good friends. They are pecking very enthusiastically at the ground in the garden, especially when the rain stops, so they may be eating pests. The feathers are green and appear to be emerald in color.



Act in a friendly pair



Pecks at the lawn enthusiastically

Plant edition

Jackfruit

It is a huge fruit that is commonly grown in the city. A large one is about the size of two soccer balls. It can be dangerous when it falls, so be careful when passing under these trees. When I was working in Malaysia, I once ate durian, which is famous for its strong aroma. I have not tried jackfruit yet, but I hope to have the chance someday.



Avocado

In Japan, most avocados are imported from Mexico, but they are also cultivated in Africa, and production has been increasing in recent years. Even in Kampala, trees here and there bear fruit. They are much larger than those distributed in Japan and have a richer flavor. In Uganda's climate, where rainy and dry seasons alternate, the trees grow during the rainy season, bear fruit during the dry season, and are ready for harvest.



Hanking Heliconia

It is considered a very valuable flower material in Ikebana. Since it is a tropical species, it is very common in Kampala. There are people who practice flower arranging here in Uganda as well. I think using this as a flower material requires some ingenuity due to its dynamic nature.

