



Yellow-breasted Pipit showed very well indeed! All pictures taken by Julien Mazenauer.

ULTIMATE SOUTH AFRICA

8 NOVEMBER – 1 DECEMBER 2019

LEADER: JULIEN MAZENAUER

Our 2019 Ultimate South Africa tour was certainly was a huge success and delivered a very high percentage of the potential targets in this outstanding destination! The degree of endemism hosted by the region is much higher than what would be expected for a temperate climate. Top highlights included both the iconic Cape and Drakensberg Rockjumpers, both the unique Gurney's and Cape Sugarbirds, comical African Penguin at their colonies, glorious Southern Bald Ibises, rare Cape Parrots, splendid Knysna Turacos, scarce Knysna Woodpecker and strange Ground Woodpeckers, the lipstick-on Bush Blackcap, superb Orange Ground Thrushes and endangered Spotted Ground Thrushes, endemic Victorin's Warbler, declining Knysna Warblers (even posing for pictures!), secretive Cinnamon-breasted Warblers, cute Fairy Flycatchers and Rufous-eared Warblers, a unique experience with a displaying male African Broadbill, colourful Crimson-breasted Shrikes, Gorgeous Bushshrikes and Olive Bushshrikes, Southern Tchagras, an excellent selection of Sunbirds, including the endemic Orange-breasted and localised Neergaard's Sunbirds, displaying Long-tailed Widowbirds, scarce Protea Canaries, fantastically showy Pink-throated Twinspots and excellent sightings of both Cape and Drakensberg Siskins.

Additionally, a pelagic trip added marine diversity with four species of albatross including both Indian and Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, both Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, Brown Skua, Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers, European and Wilson's Storm Petrels. No less than 9 great species of bustards were seen, 25 lark species including the seldom-recorded Sclater's Lark, the nomadic Monotonous Lark (a write-in nonetheless!) and endangered Rudd's and Botha's Larks, 14 cisticolas including nice Pale-crowned Cisticolas and 3 splendid cranes included a trio of Wattled Cranes seen from our dining room. And last but not least, our final morning in this superb country brought us views of both Red-chested and Buff-spotted Flufftails, two rarely-seen species, who even posed for pictures! All-in-all, we recorded an impressive total of 541 bird species (of which only 3 heard onlys). But it was not all about the birds, as we recorded 56 mammal species including the unique Aardvark, Caracal and Aardwolf!



Sugarbirds, here a Gurney's Sugarbird photographed at Sani pass, are charismatic birds and firm favorites of our tours to South Africa

The tour assembled in the evening at our lovely homestay near Cape Town, where one of the very first birds of the trip was a tame African Wood Owl, sitting quietly only 3 meters above our heads in the garden at Noordhoek! After dinner, we watched the same owl feeding on a freshly caught Brimstone Canary! We set off early next morning, admired two fluffy chicks and an adult Spotted Eagle-Owl by our accomodation, then spent 30 minutes on a nearby rocky fynbos pass. We immediatly scoped several Cape Siskins, many Southern Double-collared, two pairs of Orange-breasted and a male Malachite Sunbirds, our first Cape Sugarbird, Karoo Prinias, Neddickys, Grey-backed Cisticolas, Cape Robin-Chats and Brimstone Canaries. A Black Sparrowhawk was also seen in flight. Not a bad start! Next on was the spectacular Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden, where we were greeted by a whole set of new species. The gardens were literally filled with birds, with Bronze Mannikins, Common and Swee Waxbills being the first to be found. A magnificent Klaas's Cuckoo showed nearly at eye-level, and an impressive male Cape Sugarbird delighted us at close range. Sombre Greenbuls and Cape Bulbuls were plentiful, Olive Pigeons flew past, Lemon Doves were seen twice, Forest and Cape Canaries were seen well, and adult Africna Harrier-Hawk crossed the sky above us, as did a Peregrine Falcon and a Rock Kestrel, a Southern Boubou was seen catching a stick insect and we ended the morning with yet another endemic Orange-breasted Sunbird showing very well. A short detour to a small pond gave us close views at two White-backed Ducks followed by a delicious seafood lunch. After that, checking some roadside pools proved rewarding, with Maccoa Ducks, Southern Pochard and some commoner species like Little, Black-necked and Great Crested Grebes being added to our ever-growing bird list. The lovely Strandfontein Sewage Works were next on our itinerary, where we soon were surrounded by waterfowls and waders. A large set of ducks were recorded, including Cape Shovelers and Teals, Red-billed and Hottentot Teals, Yellow-billed and more Maccoa Ducks, Southern Pochards, Spur-

winged Geese and many South African Shelducks. On the wader front, African (Black) Oystercatchers were seen and a whole set of migrant waders delighted us, with many Curlew Sandpipers and Little Stints, Common Ringed Plovers and Ruffs. A surprise came in the form of 2 Terek Sandpipers which showed well, a bit of a rarity down there! Little Rush and Lesser Swamp Warblers were both sighted, while Cape Weavers and African Pipits appeared nearby. A few Sandwich Terns were roosting amongst the hundreds of Hartlaub's and a few Grey-headed Gulls. Pleased with our success, we retreated to our accommodation and prepared for an early start on the following day.



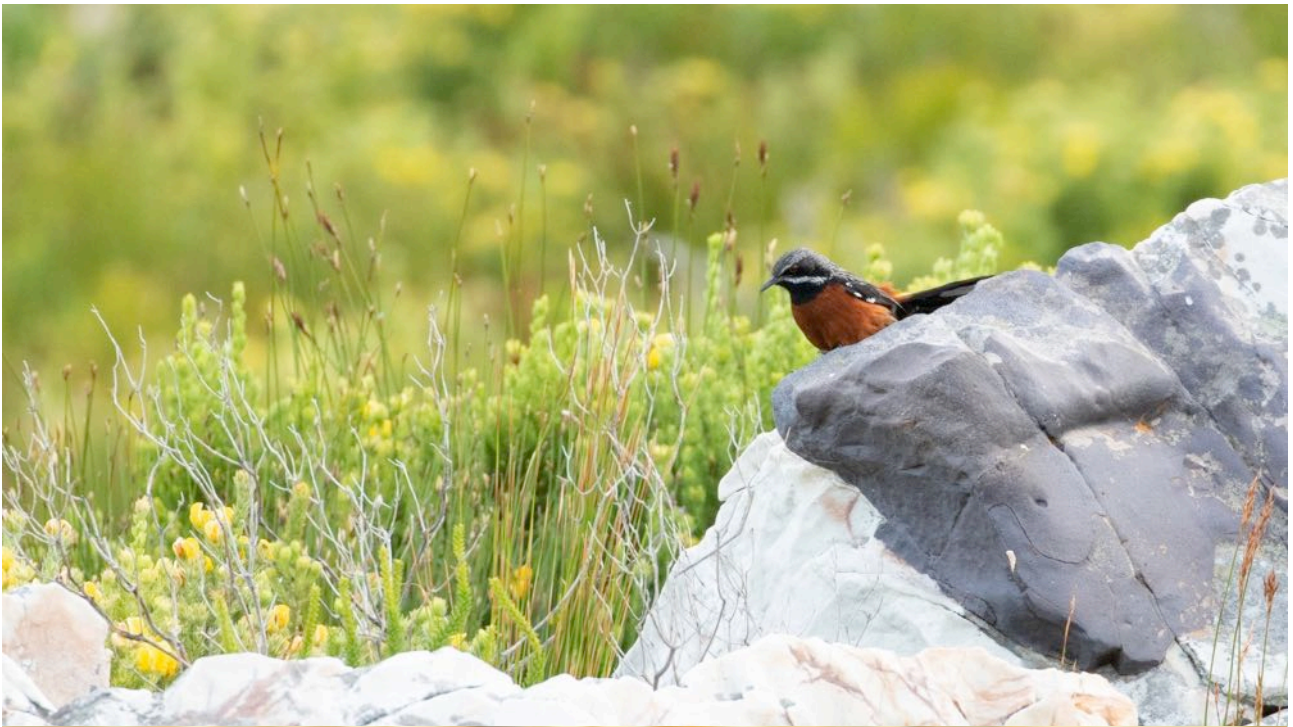
Spotted Eagle-Owl (above) and African Wood Owl were seen near our accommodation on our first day.

Leaving with a packed breakfast to avoid the peak hours around Cape Town, we drove to Rooiels, where we would be looking for some of the most wanted species of this tour. On the way, our first stop for Victorin's Warbler drew a blank as gale-force wind was blowing the bushes away (the wind would blow very strongly

the whole day, producing interesting birding conditions!). We arrived on time at Rooiels and soon started our exploration of the site. The wind was so strong it was even hard to stand up! We nevertheless managed to get gripping views of at least 5 Cape Rockjumpers, including 3 males fighting for a female! A major highlight of this tour for sure. Cape Siskins, Cape Rock Thrushes, Yellow Bishops, African Black Swifts, Grey-backed Cisticolas, Neddickys and Cape Grassbirds also showed decently. Some kilometres further we at last connected with a tame pair of Ground Woodpeckers, giving reasonable views to say the least. Retracing our steps, we could hear at least 5 different Victorin's Warbler singing from high up the slope, unfortunately inaccessible for us. Harold Porter Botanical Garden didn't produce anything special, but we saw our first Cape Batises, some African Paradise Flycatchers, Sombre Greenbuls, Yellow Bishops, Olive Thrush, and more! After lunch, we visited the famous Betty's Bay African Penguin colony, a major attraction and amazing spectacle with hundreds of moulting African Penguins and all four cormorant species together, namely Crowned, Cape, Bank and White-breasted, allowing great comparison. We retraced our steps towards Cape Town and stopped again several times to look for Victorin's Warbler, still in the blowing wind. On our very last stop, we at last heard close a Victorin's Warbler, which proved to be the least cooperative individual ever but at least everyone got a reasonable look at this endemic after an hour wait! Back in Noordhoek we enjoyed once again the local breeding Spotted Eagle-Owls before retreating to our accommodation and going out again for a fabulous dinner at Jakes'.



Two fabulous Cape endemics: Orange-breasted Sunbird (right) and Cape Sugarbird.



Another two Cape endemics: the mythical Cape Rockjumper (above) and the scarce Cape Siskin.

Our pelagic trip off Simonstown being postponed to Monday, we left Cape Town very early and drove to the Grootvadersbosch, east from Swellendam. Entering the Alguhas plains, we were greeted by numerous Blue Cranes, Helmeted Guineafowls and Cape Spurfwls. Upon arrival, the wind was still blowing the trees away, making birding challenging once again! Bird activity was very low throughout (incredibly low compared to other previous visits!) but we nevertheless had an enjoyable morning and found all major targets the forest had to offer. A female Olive Bushshrike showed well just after the parking (and just after glimpsing a unobtrusive male), Red-chested Cuckoo made an appearance, and Greater Double-collared Sunbirds were plentiful. After spending a while in better forest, we heard our first Knysna Warbler. That bird proved remarkably mobile, and we never came close enough to get a view. Further down the trail, another bird started singing, but that one was much more cooperative and after trying hard the whole group got an unbelievable sighting of the bird, singing from an open perch one meter above ground! Great! Apart from that

warbler, there was really not much to see nor hear in the unusually quiet forest, but we got views at a Grey Cuckooshrike pair, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Bar-throated Apalis and a nice calling Narina Trogon. A Forest Buzzard was heard calling and then glimpsed through the canopy, and we tried further for our last important bird of the morning. Suddenly, the prized Knysna Woodpecker flew quietly above us and finally showed well to everyone, hence completing our target list for the area. A delicious organic lunch was had at Suurbraak, interrupted by a Brown-hooded Kingfisher, a surprising flock of Horus Swifts, Common House Martin, White-throated and Greater Striped Swallows. It was then time to retrace our steps back to Cape Town, not before having an introductory drive through the Agulhas plains, during which nothing very special but common birds were noted.



The ultra skulker Knysna Warbler (above) gave itself up after a long battle! And the secretive Knysna Woodpecker.

Today we would take part to a pelagic trip off Cape Point, organised by Trevor Hardaker from Zest for Birds. We assembled at Simonstown and were soon on our way out on the ocean, sailing past Boulder's beach and

its hundreds of African Penguins and a few Bank Cormorants. When passing Cape Point, there wasn't much to see for an hour, except a few flocks of migrating Sabine's Gulls, a few Parasitic and one Pomarine Jaeger. As soon as we entered open sea, White-chinned Petrels and Sooty Shearwaters started appearing, but we had to wait to reach the continental shelf to see more interesting stuff. We didn't find any trawlers today so we started chumming, which attracted a great variety of seabirds, including many Shy Albatrosses, smaller numbers of Black-browed Albatrosses, a few Indian Yellow-nosed Albatrosses and a single Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross. Great Shearwater made regular appearances, as did European and Wilson's Storm Petrels, Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, Manx Shearwater, Brown Skuas, more Parasitic Jaegers and Sabine's Gulls and a lone Arctic Tern. Too soon it was already time to head back to shore, and upon arrival we bid farewell to our captain and Trevor and thanked them for this amazing seabirding session! We then drove straight to Swellendam.



Atlantic (above) and Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross.



Shy Albatross (above), Great Shearwater (right) and Brown Skua.

We woke up early next morning and started exploring the Agulhas grasslands, where the larks were at first not cooperative but in the end we all got great views of Agulhas Long-billed Lark and 'Agulhas' Cape Clapper Lark, both species very vocal and displaying. Denham's Bustards were seen a few times, including one close male, and in a riverbed we found our first Acacia Pied Barbet, Jacobin and Diederik Cuckoos. Cape Weavers and Southern Masked Weavers were numerous, as were Red-capped and Large-billed Larks. Karoo Korhaan and Burchell's Coucal refused to show, so we headed towards the famous De Hoop reserve. Upon arrival, we directly located a Grey-winged Francolin and after a few minutes the prized Southern Tchagra, showing exceptionally well! Two Giant Kingfishers were also observed, as well as a Water Thick Knee, Red-faced Mousebirds, White-throated and Yellow Canaries, plus a whole set of waders. After lunch, we drove to a nearby Damara Tern colony, which were very cooperative and where we also observed White-fronted Plovers. It was then time to head to our next destination for the night, Wellington! After a delicious dinner, we got brief views of an uncooperative Fiery-necked Nightjar in the garden.



The endemic Southern Tchagra (showing unusually very well!) and an incubating Damara Tern near De Hoop.

With a packed breakfast in the boot, we departed early from Wellington and headed towards the west coast. Our first visited site of the morning was the famous Darling Road, and within ten minutes we discovered a splendid displaying male Southern Black Korhaan and the uncommon 'West Coast' Cape Clapper Lark. Breakfast was interrupted by Bokmakieries, Karoo Scrub Robins and a fabulous Black Harrier (which cruised straight overhead!). After that very good start, we headed north and stopped at a wildflower reserve near the main road. Cloud Cisticolas were numerous there and we admired their atmospheric flight display at length. Our first Cape Longclaws also gave great views as well as some nice Capped Wheatears. We didn't have to drive for 100 meters in West Coast National Park to find our first dainty Cape Penduline Tits, which allowed walk-away views near the car! Another Black Harrier cruised past and we walked to a bird hide over a small wetland. After a bit of a wait, African Rails and Black Crakes came out of the reeds, yet another Black Harrier made an appearance, African Spoonbills flew in but the activity quickly decreased so we drove to the

national park's restaurant. We quickly made a detour to the Geelbek bird hide, allowing us great studies of a large set of waders, including Kittlitz's and Three-banded Plovers, Marsh Sandpiper, Little Stints, Curlew Sandpipers, Sanderlings, Ruddy Turnstones, Eurasian Curlews, Bar-tailed Godwits and many more. After lunch, we drove out of the park and went straight north towards Veldriff. One the way, our stake-out produced 4 most-wanted Ludwig's Bustards, here out of their usual range probably due to the atrociously dry conditions in the Karoo. At Veldriff, we quickly located a distant Chestnut-banded Plover, allowing us to drive back to Langebaan to enjoy the local pair of Verreaux's Eagle at length and a party of smart Grey-winged Francolin, much improving our views of the species.



Two endemics: a displaying Southern Black Korhaan at dawn (above) and a calling Grey-winged Francolin.

We left Langebaan after an early delicious breakfast and drove nearby to a patch of grassland, where we soon found a nice Cape Long-billed Lark. On the way to Veldriff, we improved our views of Ludwig's Bustard

and surprisingly found a Secretarybird sharing the same field! The drive to Clanwilliam was uneventful, but as we arrived in the Kranspoortvlei we soon discovered a small flock of the localised Protea Canary, giving great views. A pair of Verreaux's Eagle was flying nearby, and we also saw Layard's Warbler, Fairy Flycatchers and many others. After lunch, we drove to Calvinia, stopping regularly en-route and getting excellent birds like yet another Ludwig's Bustard, Grey Tit (good to catch-up on this one after missing it along the west coast), more Layard's Warblers, brief Black-headed Canaries and our first Karoo Chats and Mountain Wheatears. Before reaching Calvinia, a random stop was productive with great views of Karoo Lark, two Karoo Eremomelas and several Greater Kestrels including juveniles at nest.



The Cape Long-billed Lark and its tremendous bill (above) and the rare and localised Protea Canary. We left Calvinia before dawn towards Brandvlei, where we would spend the day scouring different dirt roads. We ate our packed breakfast somewhere on the way and were directly greeted by a Pale Chanting Goshawk, Spike-heeled and Karoo Long-billed Larks, nice Rufous-eared Warblers, Chat Flycatchers, Karoo

and Familiar Chats. Our first birding stop east of Brantvlei yielded more Namaqua Warblers, Pririt Batis, Dusky Sunbird, at last our first Chestnut-vented Warbler, European Bee-eaters, Orange River White-eyes and African Reed Warblers. Further in the desert, a second stop was as productive, with three more Ludwig's Bustard at a decent range, two stunning displaying 'brown' Red Larks, small flocks of Namaqua Sandgrouses (one individual hit a power line and then the ground, but flew off again as we approached!) and more Karoo Long-billed Larks. On the way to a small dam, we flushed a male Northern Black Korhaan, scoped a Double-banded Courser on a flat plain and found at last our first Karoo Korhaans, after hearing no less than eight individuals! By the water reservoir a few sheperds were working, so not much was in view initially, but as soon as they left, the Holy Grail of the Karoo appeared, as one and then two excellent Sclater's Lark flew in to drink! Delighted with this sight, we continued scoping goodies with one Stark's Lark showing a few times, many Lark-like Buntings, Yellow and White-throated Canaries, more Namaqua Sandgrouses, 'Bradfield's' Sabota Lark and Tractrac Chats. All targets in the bag before 10am! We then slowly drove back to Brandvlei, improving our views of several species, and had lunch at the famous Windpomp. Part of the afternoon was spent on another dirt track, where not much new was added except Yellow-bellied Eremomelas. On the way back to Calvinia, we stopped to admire the breeding South African Cliff Swallows and headed back to the accommodation for a well-deserve rest.



Karoo Lark (left) and one of many Ludwig's Bustards.

We left early next morning towards Springbok via Kamieskroon. But a first stop near Nieuwoudtville was surprisingly good with at least 15 Ludwig's Bustards and one Southern Black Korhaan spread over a small plain. Moving north, we stopped at a spectacular pass, where after half-an-hour of search we located a pair of the difficult Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, what a relief! Black-headed Canaries of the nominate form were also around, a Booted Eagle flew past, two Verreaux's Eagle gave an outstanding performance and the boulders were dotted with Mountain Wheatears. A Southern Oryx was also seen close to the car. We arrived on time at Springbok for lunch, but realizing that the Goegap Nature Reserve was closed for the weekend we decided to head towards Aggenys to look for desert specialities. There wasn't much going on in the extreme heat of the afternoon, but we still found many Namaqua Sandgrouses sheltering in shrubs by the roadside, yet another Verreaux's Eagle in the middle of the desert and about 20 of the nomadic Stark's Lark in the shade of several posts. Deciding that this heat was enough for us, we headed back for some rest in town, and after a great dinner at the local steak house set off for a night drive. Not much was happening during the first 30 minutes, but we started spotting mammals with a group of Hartmann's Mountain Zebras and a Black-backed Jackal. On the way back to Springbok we hit the jackpot, with an amazing Aardwolf feeding close to the road, a much wanted African mammal and lifer for most of the group including the leader!



A sublime adult Verreaux's Eagle and the secretive Cinnamon-breasted Warbler.

With a packed breakfast, we headed this morning towards Port Nolloth for some more larking! Upon arrival, it didn't take long before we first located two Cape Long-billed Larks, and then a rather shy Barlow's Lark, which didn't show for too long. It took one more hour to find a whole Barlow's Lark family group, which showed extremely well for a careful examination. A Tractrac Chat was also nearby, and with such a success we decided to continue further north to Alexanderbaai. We reached the Orange River mouth and started scanning the waders, not finding anything special but many Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stints, Eurasian Curlew and more. Amongst the terns, two non-breeding plumaged Little Terns were found, which represents and unusual record for the area. They were latter also seen flying over Namibia and could well be the first documented Little Terns for the country! About 20 Damara Terns were also present, with large numbers of Greater Crested, Common and Sandwich Terns. We headed back to Port Nolloth for an amazing seafood lunch and visited the nearby sewage works, not finding anything special but a male Maccoa Duck and more waders and gulls. On our way back to Springbok, we quickly stopped at a roadside pool and got granted good looks at a nice male and a few females 'Damara' Black-headed Canaries, a good Nicholson's Pipit (recently split from Long-billed), more Karoo Thrushes and European Bee-eaters. Back at Springbok, we enjoyed the end of the afternoon at the guesthouse and prepared ourselves for the longest driving day of tomorrow!



Adult (left) and juvenile Barlow's Larks.

Today was a marathon, with a drive of over 900 kilometers and some very good birds en-route. We departed early from Springbok and arrived right at dawn in the Koa Dunes near Pofadder, to find a singing Fawn-coloured Lark close to the track. Few minutes latter, a pair of 'red' Red Larks appeared at the same place and started singing and feeding – a great sight! Scaly-feathered Weavers and Sociable Weavers were also around, as were about 50 Grey-backed Sparrowlarks (no Black-eared Sparrowlarks could be found unfortunately). We moved on to Pofadder, only to find empty water pools and nothing exceptional, except

maybe three showy Karoo Korhaan, many Lark-like Buntings and Karoo Long-billed Larks. We decided to start the drive to Augrabies as we were running out of time, but few kilometres after we left Pofadder I spotted a Black-eared Sparrowlark amongst a very large flock of Grey-backed, which unfortunately took off and was never to be found again! A few hours latter we were reaching Augrabies Falls National Park, which was expectedly quiet in the heat of the day, but we still found some nice birds like Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Brubru, African Fish Eagle, Black Storks, African Palm and Bradfield's Swifts and many Pale-winged Starling. We left Augrabies and drove to Marrick Game Reserve, a drive pretty eventful with some new birds for us like Red-crested Korhaan, a well-studied and photographed Buffy Pipit, our first White-browed Sparrow-Weaver and several more. On arrival, there was still a bit of light left for us to get a nice Kalahari Scrub Robin, Chestnut-vented Warbler (at last for the whole group!), Black-throated Canaries and an Ashy Tit.



A Fawn-colored Lark singing its heart out (above) and a 'red' Red Lark in Koa Dunes early morning.



Karoo Korhaans (above) and Red-crested Korhaan.

The morning was spent birding different kind of habitats in Marrick Game Farm. We started early in the light savannah directly near the lodge, and recorded many new species for us like Cardinal Woodpecker, the near-endemic Ashy Tit, Shaft-tailed Whydah, Violet-eared and Black-cheeked Waxbills, Golden-breasted and Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, Common Scimitarbills, hundreds of Red-headed Finches, Scaly-feathered Weavers and Grey-backed Sparrowlark, a skulking Brown-crowned Tchagra, a Gabar Goshawk having just caught a finch, many Lark-like Buntings, White-bellied Sunbirds, Southern Grey-headed Sparrows, African Hoopoes and many more. We scoured the vast pan and scored Double-banded Coursers, the local Blue Crane pairs, a fantastic Secretarybird, stunning Northern Black Korhaan, a single Eastern Clapper Lark, many Spike-heeled Larks. By a waterhole, many Quailfinches including nice males were seen, as well as another Buffy Pipit, but the elusive Pink-billed Lark never showed.



Double-banded Courser, a massive Sociable Weaver nest and three impressive White Rhinoceroses.

After lunch, we decided to explore the nearby Mokala National Park, which was a good move! By a huge Sociable Weaver nest a Pygmy Falcon was noted, a male Short-toed Rock Thrush seen at close range, a brief Green-winged Pytilia and a distant White-backed Vulture. On the way out, three huge White Rhinoceroses closed the game of this fantastic afternoon. Back at Marrick, we went on a night drive which

turned out to be one of the tour's highlight! First off were 4 different (!) Aardwolves, followed by a surprise in the form of a showy Caracal, which we followed during his hunt for some minutes, allowing stunning views! We looked hard for the Aardvark, and we were about to give up when our spotter discovered a distant individual in the spotlight. We took a shortcut and found it again closer, giving reasonable views but it disappeared quickly in the night. What a weird creature! On the way back we ultimately spotted a Striped Polecat and a Smith's Red Rock Rabbit. Also present were many funny Springhares, Bat-eared Foxes, Black-backed Jackals and at least five Spotted Eagle-Owls. What a night drive!



Finding a Caracal in Marrick Game Farm was quite a treat! Aardwolf (right) and the extraordinary Aardvark were appreciated too!

The following morning saw up driving to Kimberley and unsuccessfully trying to lure into view the hoped-for Orange River Francolin, which did not ever answer our calls. But we did connect with many Northern Black Korhaans and new species for us like Red-breasted Swallows and Swainson's Sparrowfowls. Instead of driving straight to Johannesburg, we took a more birdy road and stopped for an hour near Dealesville, where many Melodious Larks were found displaying and showing well, as well as two Chestnut-backed Sparrowlarks and many Rufous-naped and Eastern Clapper Larks. Larking at its best! Further north, we were greeted by some massive thunderstorms and arrived on time at our accommodation for a well-deserved rest after this marathon transit.



The endemic Melodious Lark (above) can be hard to find. On the other hand, Rufous-naped Lark is common and conspicuous.

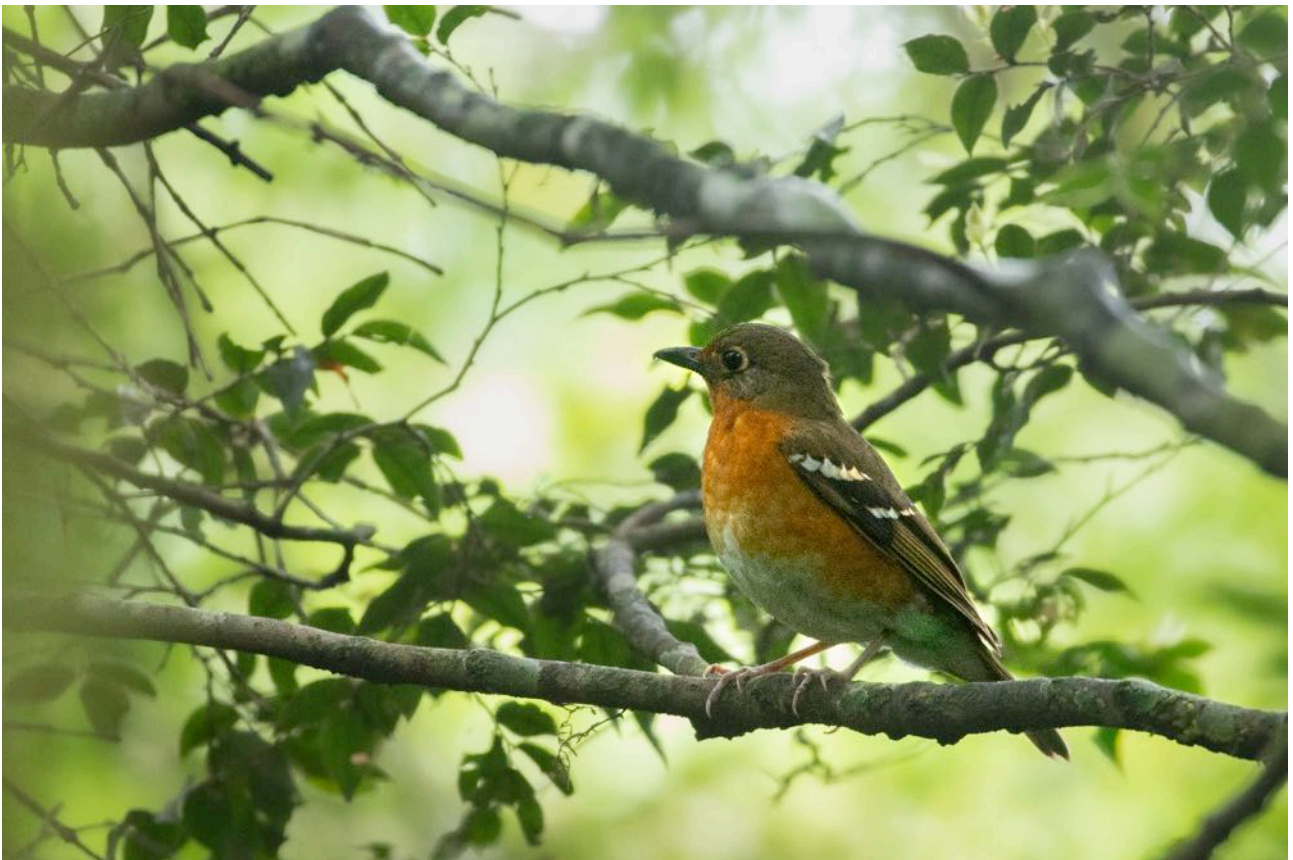
Following morning began as the last one had – trying to lure in view a pair of Orange River Francolin at Suikerbosrand! They came close, but stayed into cover, never to show themselves. After struggling two hours with these birds we decided we had better things to do and moved to the acacia woodland north of Pretoria, which proved to be very productive! As soon as we arrived, new birds started to appear and we saw White-throated Robin-Chats, Black Cuckooshrikes, many Crested and Black-collared Barbets, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, White-browed Scrub Robins, a gorgeous Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Levillant's, Black and Diederik Cuckoos, Marico and White-bellied Sunbirds, our first of many Kurrichane Thrushes and Yellow-fronted Canaries, Grosbeak Weavers, Red-collared Widowbirds and many more. Moving to a different type of woodland was good, but in the heat of the day we didn't add much except many Magpie Shrikes, a single Lesser Grey Shrike, Red-backed Shrikes, many Rattling Cisticolas, Swainson's Francolins, Yellow-crowned Bishops, Brown Snake Eagle, Southern Red-billed and African Grey Hornbills and some more. We arrived at

Polokwane for a very late lunch, which turned-out to be productive as some feeders were attracting Cut-throat Finches, Red-headed Finches and some hybrids between the twos! After lunch, we arrived at the local game reserve just to learn that it was closed owing to bad weather. We nevertheless explored the area around the parking just before yet another massive shower and got great views of a Natal Spurfowl covey, many Red-backed Shrikes and Willow Warblers, Chinspot Batis and Pale Flycatchers. Just before the storm, two Marabou Storks flew over, as did a few Cape Vultures trying to escape the rain. We drove to our next accommodation, Kurisa Moya, where we spent the last minutes of daylight in the forest seeing Common Square-tailed Drongo, Chorister Robin-Chat and a lovely pair of Green Twinspot. African Wood Owl was calling behind our rooms and we called it a day after a delicious dinner cooked by Grace!



Levillant's Cuckoo (above) and Natal Spurfowl showed well between Pretoria and Polokwane.

An early start was necessary today in order to explore different sites in the lush afro-montane forest of Magoabaskloof. Local guide Paul Nkhumane joined us for the whole day and we set off towards the Woodbush forest reserve. The first birds seen were surprisingly cooperative Cape Parrots, preening themselves in the early morning after a rainy night, allowing perfect and close scope studies. The reserve was alive with birds and we soon nailed our target list, with great views of Orange Ground Thrush, Knysna Turaco, Black-fronted Bushshrike, stunning African Emerald Cuckoos, Red-chested Cuckoos, many Yellow-streaked Greenbills, Olive Woodpeckers, Chorister Robin-Chats, Olive Bushshrikes, Grey Cuckooshrikes, White-starred Robin, Greater Double-collared Sunbirds and some more. Moving a bit further, it didn't take long to get prolonged views of the endemic Brown Scrub Robin, with a few males being very vocal and showy. Barratt's Warbler skulked intensely in the thickets, a Broad-billed Roller was hunting from an exposed perch, Common Square-tailed Drongos were numerous, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher and Olive Thrushes were seen a few times. We decided to go lower in elevation and wait at an exposed site, where we soon were scoping an adult Crowned Eagle. A Long-crested Eagle also flew past, as did a Little Sparrowhawk. At the picturesque Debengeni waterfalls, an incubating pair of Mountain Wagtails was seen but not much else. As we got nearer to Tzaneen, a Forest Buzzard was spotted on a roadside perch, giving great views. Paul took us to another stake-out and we were soon adding many more new birds, including Holub's Golden Weavers, Red-faced Cisticola, the localised Magpie Mannikin (joined by Bronze Mannikins), Yellow-breasted Apalises, Violet-backed Starling, Scarlet-chested Sunbird and Yellow-bellied Greenbull. We then made it to the Bat Hawk nesting site, where a fabulous adult was visible and enjoyed at length, a unique opportunity and experience! Back at Tzaneen, a last stop before lunch yielded more Red-faced Cisticolas, Little Bee-eaters, Spectacled and Grosbeak Weavers, White-browed Robin-Chat and Collared Sunbird. Purple-crested Turacos were also heard but out of reach. After lunch, we drove to Mamabolo grasslands, where the localised endemic Short-clawed Lark performed immediately. Except for a wintering Spotted Flycatcher, nothing else was in view so we headed back to Kurisa Moya. On the way, we got brief views of a Bearded Scrub Robin pair and heard a Red-capped Robin-Chat, before enjoying close views of African Firefinches and about twenty Lemon Doves at the nearby bird hide, ending a very successful and long day out in field.



A superb Orange Ground Thrush.



Clockwise from top left: Cape Parrot, Black-fronted Bushshrike, a nice Knysna Turaco and the secretive Brown Scrub Robin



Short-clawed Lark, a range-restricted Southern African endemic

A pre-breakfast outing didn't produce much, but we added Red-backed Mannikin to our ever-growing bird list. We bid farewell to Lisa and Kurisa Moya and took a detour road to reach Tzaneen as the main route was

closed for a race. This dirt road was quite productive, with additions like Yellow-throated Longclaw, Red-billed Firefinches, Black-crowned Tchagra, Brown-hooded Kingfishers, Grey-rumped Swallows, Wahlberg's Eagle, Black-backed Puffback, Bearded Scrub Robins, Grosbeak Weavers and Purple-crested Turacos. We drove straight to the Abel Erasmus pass for the famous Taita Falcon, just to learn that the pair and their chick have not been recorded for a couple of days! The most plausible explanation is that they've been forced to leave by the local Peregrine Falcon pair (with whom aggressive interactions had been witnessed the week before), who also had their juveniles fledging at the time. We waited and waited, just to see at least 4 Peregrine Falcons playing in the wind above the cliffs, one Lanner passing by, several Rock Kestrels, a few Cape Vultures, an adult Crowned Eagle and an African Harrier-Hawk, but as predicted no sign of the most-wanted Taita Falcon. The drive to Wakkerstroom was uneventful but we did add Gurney's Sugarbird near Dullstroom and arrived early evening at Forellenhof Guesthouse.



Red-backed Mannikin (left), Sweet Waxbill and a pair of striking and endangered Grey Crowned Crane.



We had a full day to explore all the possible sites around Wakkerstroom, which we did with my friend and local guide Lucky. Early morning, the wetland was full of birdlife with Little Bitterns, Squacco Herons, Intermediate Egret, African Marsh Harrier, African Rails, Black Crakes, Little Rush, Lesser Swamp and African Reed Warbler. We visited the nearby hill and soon found a very confident Yellow-breasted Pipit, showing exceedingly well just in front of us! Eastern Long-billed Larks sang and also showed well. We went

a bit further, just to find a pair of Red-winged Francolin feeding quietly by the roadside, with a few Pale-crowned Cisticolas displaying overhead! A Denham's Bustard was also spotted at the same location – a great start of the day! We then drove to Dirkiesdorp, picking up en-route Black-bellied Bustard, and soon found a pair of excellent 'Barrow's' White-bellied Bustard. Our picnic breakfast was interrupted by White-winged Widowbird, Orange-breasted Waxbills and many South African Cliff Swallows. Next port of call was Daggakraal, where we quickly found our main target, namely the endangered Botha's Lark, surrounded by shepherds and cattle! At least six Blue Korhaans were also noted on the way. Before lunch, we finally visited the Fickland pan, where after almost two hours of research we at last found a singing male Rudd's Lark, who gave us a hard time! Excellent views were had, so we drove back to Wakkerstroom for a good lunch, pleased by our successful morning. After that, we visited another area, where first Southern Bald Ibis, Grey-crowned Cranes and Wailing Cisticolas showed, and after a bit of a search, African Rock Pipit just by the roadside. Excellent! Some additional birding at a nearby forest patch didn't add much except for two Diederik Cuckoos, Black-collared Barbet and Drakensberg Prinias. Dusk fell, so we went on owling on different patches of grassland, but didn't connect with any of our night bird targets. A Spotted Eagle Owl was found, and a large covey of Grey-winged Francolins just at dusk. We called it a day, drove Lucky back home and had a relaxing evening at our comfortable guesthouse.

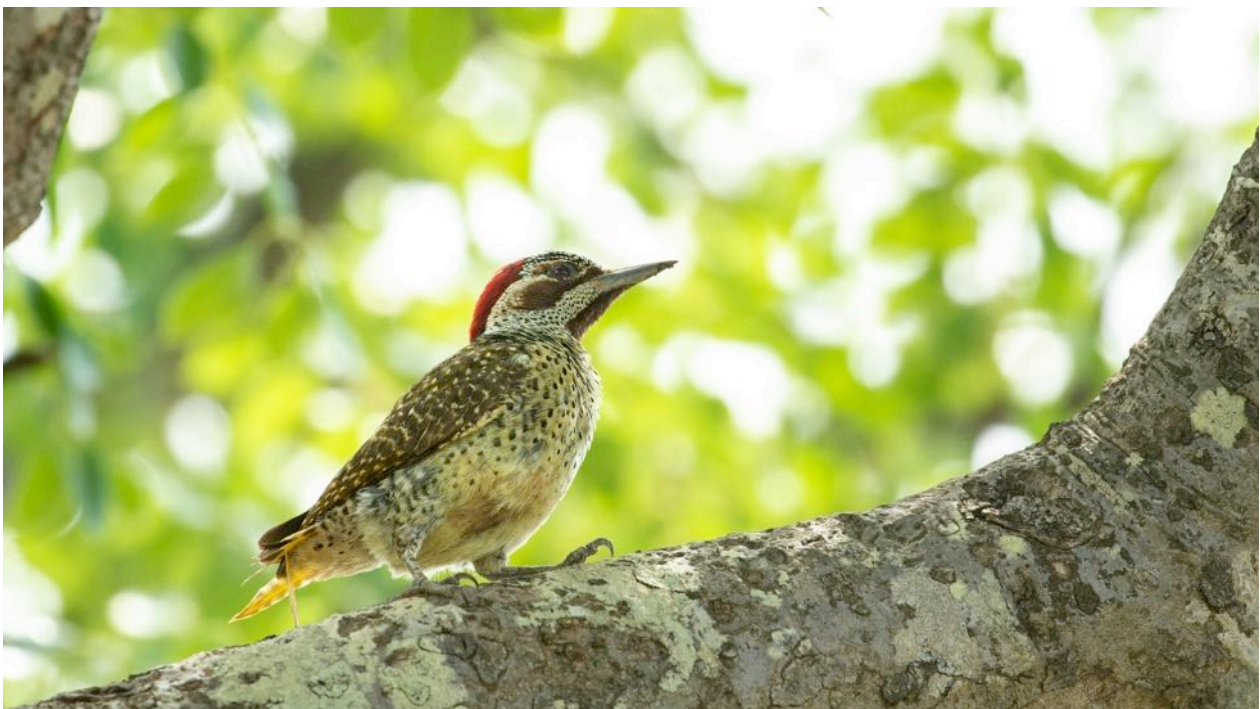


Three special birds: the endangered Botha's (top left) and Rudd's Larks, and endemic African Rock Pipit (below)!



Meerkats are always much appreciated!

After a great cooked breakfast at Forellenhof guesthouse, we drove straight to Pongola Game Reserve via Piet Retief. We spent a couple of hours driving around, not finding much, but a Bennett's Woodpecker was a welcome addition. Also seen were Martial Eagle, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Burchell's Starling, Chinspot Batis, Purple-banded Sunbird, Crowned, Southern Yellow-billed and Southern Red-billed Hornbills, Goliath Heron and nine big White Rhinos! We arrived in time for lunch at our classy resort in Mkuze. The garden was alive with birds, with Trumpeter Hornbills and Purple-crested Turacos visiting a huge fruiting fig tree, an active Yellow Weaver colony, Purple-banded and Collared Sunbirds and a Little Sparrowhawk. A drive at different sites around Mkuze in the afternoon wasn't too productive, but we at last got views of a Burchell's Coucal, saw our first White-fronted Bee-eaters, Striped Kingfishers, Black-bellied Starlings, a party of Water Thick-knees and some commoner birds. We returned to our accommodation and prepared for a very early start next morning.



This female Bennett's Woodpecker was an excellent find near Pongola Game Reserve!

Mkuze Game Reserve proved once again to be an absolute jewel and provided us with wonderful sightings throughout the day. We entered when the gates opened at 05:00 and soon started our exploration. The top highlight of the morning is an African Broadbill displaying 10 meters from our car from over 30 minutes, but after a long and hard search! Both male and female Pink-throated Twinspot obliged, giving excellent photographic opportunities. The skulker Gorgeous Bushshrike couldn't resist our calls and showed exceedingly well. Amongst the numerous Purple-banded, Marico and White-bellied Sunbirds, a few Neergaard's Sunbirds were detected and photographed and the near-endemic Rudd's Apalis proved to be common. The morning also provided sightings of Trumpeter and a few Crowned Hornbills, several punk-looking Crested Guineafowls, some obliging Crested Francolins, African Openbill, Woolly-necked Storks, Pink-backed Pelicans, Goliath Heron, White-crested Helmetshrikes, a few shy Eastern Nicator, Northern Masked Weavers, Dark-backed Weavers, Diederik, Black and Red-chested Cuckoos, Wahlberg's and Tawny Eagles, Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow, Green-winged Pytilias, Blue-cheeked, European and Little Bee-eaters, Woodland, Striped and Brown-hooded Kingfishers, Black Cuckooshrikes and many many more. At lunch, a Little Sparrowhawk was spotted roosting under the canopy and a large familial flock of Green Wood Hoopoes appeared nearby. We then explored a different areas, finding many birds, with highlights such as African Cuckoo-Hawk, Long-tailed Paradise Wydah, Red-billed Firefinch, many White-backed Vultures and Black-bellied Starlings. We waited for dusk and soon had a splendid Fiery-necked Nightjar calling three meters from us! Nothing else was heard so we headed back to the resort for a great dinner, celebrating our successful day in the game reserve!



Gorgeous Bushshrike is an absolute gem and showed insanely well at Mkuze!

We decided to spend the morning in Mkuze Game Reserve again and had our picnic breakfast near the entrance. Our first Mocking Cliff Chat showed, as well as a brief African Pygmy Kingfisher. The reserve delivered once again its lot of good birds, with goodies like Lizard Buzzard, Lappet-faced Vulture, Brown Snake Eagle, Long-tailed Paradise Whydah, Crested Guineafowls and many more. But the best find of the morning were two displaying Monotonous Larks, a very rare bird in the area (and a write-in for Birdquest in South Africa!). Content with our success, we returned to town for lunch and headed towards St Lucia. On the way, we stopped near Hluhluwe to admire a flock of near-endemic Lemon-breasted Canaries. We checked-in at our guesthouse St Lucia and spent the end of the afternoon exploring some trails in the forest. Woodward's Batis obliged immediately, but Livingstone Turacos proved extremely elusive and only gave brief views. Red-capped Robin-Chats were numerous, as were Grey and Olive Sunbirds, Crested Guineafowls, Common Square-tailed Drongos, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbirds, White-eared Barbets and

migrating Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters. At dusk, three nice Swamp Nightjars obliged few feet away so we retreated to our seafood restaurant for a fantastic dinner!



The show this male African Broadbill (above) offered us was a massive highlight of this tour! Pink-throated Twinspot (below) can be difficult to see, but this male showed insanely well for long minutes!



The morning began early in the forest near our accommodation, where Livingstone Turaco obliged at last and where a Green Malkoha miraculously posed atop a tree in front of us, giving enough time for everyone to enjoy it. The drizzle stopped so we moved northwards and had our packed breakfast just after having seen another showy Livingstone Turaco and a Croaking Cisticola. We entered the park just at the opening and soon had two large White Rhinoceroses feeding on the roadside and an impressive Martial Eagle very close, feeding on its prey. Further on, a surprising African Pygmy Kingfisher was spotted on a power line, far

away from any tree or bush! At Cape Vidal, bird activity was very low so we decided to leave the site and head towards Eshowe. On the way, we stopped at the bridge and observed a weaving Southern Brown-throated Weaver. We stopped at Mtunzini and got good views of two Palm-nut Vultures. Further to Eshowe, a brief halt at a roadside wetland proved amazingly productive, with great looks at ten African Pygmy Geese, about fifty (!) White-backed Ducks and a welcomed Lesser Moorhen. We arrived in Eshowe in time for a late lunch and went directly to Dlinza forest after having checked-in. A Spotted Ground Thrush was seen near the trail almost immediately, but didn't stay long enough for everybody to connect with it. Another one further down the trail acted the same, so we would have to come back the following day! Other species noted in Dlinza included Chorister Robin-Chat, African Emerald Cuckoos and a Blue Duiker.



The endemic Woodward's Batis (above). Getting such views of Swamp Nightjar was unexpected!

The whole following morning was spent in Dlinza forest. Needless to say, that thrush gave us a hard time! Three hours of walking before breakfast did not reveal anything (except a distant singing individual), so we hit the trails again soon after our picnic. After over four hours of scouting, I at last located one individual feeding quietly on the side of the trail, and that one gave long enough views for everyone to see it, what a relief! At the same place, a feeding flock appeared and Scaly-throated Honeyguide, African Emerald, Red-chested and Black Cuckoos were also seen. Chorister Robin-Chat, Tambourine Doves, Olive Thrushes and many more were also recorded in the forest. It was then time for the long drive from Eshowe to Himeville near the Sani Pass, but we payed a visit to the Highover Reserve on the way. Shannone kindly let us walk the grasslands of their propriety, enabling us to get excellent views of up to four Blue Swallows! A Fan-tailed Warbler and Wailing Cisticolas were also welcomed. Red-capped Robin-Chat, Tambourine Doves, Cape Vultures, White-necked Ravens and Black-headed Orioles were also seen nearby. We then drove straight to Himeville, where we checked-in at our luxurious guest farm.



This Spotted Ground Thrush gave us such a hard time! We achieved good views in the end.

This morning, we were picked up by Aldo and Peter, who would be our drivers and guide for the whole day up the Sani Pass. We woke up early, but as I got out of my room I spotted three Wattled Cranes in the nearest field to our accommodation! What a start! By a nearby bridge, African Yellow Warblers showed well, and a nice Half-collared Kingfisher was seen flying up river, a bit too fast for everybody to connect with it. We made a couple of strategical stops on the way to the South African border post. The first one delivered three Red-throated Wrynecks on the same tree, the second an excellent Red-necked Spurfowl and a third a very showy Bush Blackcap! At the border post, a bunch of flowering aloes were attracting several perfect Gurney's Sugarbirds, a species having been difficult to get this year due to the lack of any significant rain in the region and hence the non-flowering of its beloved proteas. Our next target was perhaps one of the most inconspicuous species of southern Africa. We walked through a recently burnt area, and much to our surprise found immediately two Short-tailed Pipits! With the most difficult bird of the day in the bag, we drove up to the top, getting Barratt's Warblers, Drakensberg Siskins and Prinias. Near the summit, we located three Drakensberg Rockjumpers, who were actually building a nest for their second brood. After enjoying all these nice birds for half-an-hour, we crossed the border into Lesotho and started birding again. Sicklewinged Chats and Sentinel Rock Thrushes were plentiful as usual and Mountain Pipit showed in a record time as we did not even had to look for it that it appeared in front of our cars, giving walk-away views and allowing us to enjoy all its subtle characters. Before lunch, we finally drove further in Lesotho and observed a Lammergeier nesting on a cliff face, as well as numerous Cape Vultures. An excellent picnic lunch was had (thanks Aldo!) and we drove back into South Africa, not before having a coffee at the former highest pub in

Africa! We stopped a couple of times on the way down, not finding anything significant, but a last shot in the grasslands gave us great looks at a Pale-crowned Cisticola on the deck. Pleased with our success, we retreated to our cosy guest farm where we had an extraordinary last dinner.



Drakensberg Rockjumpers (above) were building their nest. The enigmatic Mountain Pipit (right) and the stunning Gurney's Sugarbird.



Bush Blackcap is classified as a Sylvia warbler but is definitely more Bulbul-like!

Those brave enough to get out in the mist and rain opted for half-an-hour of flufftailing at the nearby reserve. Upon arrival, the weather looked just perfect: damp and drizzling. After strategically positioning ourselves, it did not take long for a fantastic male Red-chested Flufftail to show off its nice stripes and red breast! It even posed for record shots to be taken. Visiting afterwards a series of pristine grasslands produced no less than four Wattled Cranes, several displaying Pale-crowned Cisticolas but nothing else new for us. It was then time for a gigantic breakfast, before driving slowly back to Durban, where this tour had to end early afternoon. We made a short stop at the good Marutswa forest, but the fog prevented any productive birding, exception for the three Cape Parrots that bravely flew past in the clouds! Golden-breasted Bunting, Lemon Dove and African Olive Pigeon were seen, Lazy Cisticola heard distantly. A short stop at Midmar dam didn't produce anything. We had a last minute information from my friend Rich, advising us to visit a nearby forest reserve for a very special bird. Upon arrival, the site was stucked in a dense fog, ideal conditions for what we were looking for! We entered the forest, played a few calls. Nothing reacted, so we found a nesting African Paradise Flycatcher, two White-starred Robin (seen well, at last!), Knysna and Purple-crested Turacos. We were starting to give up, but the corner of my eye caught a movement in the dense undergrowth, and here was the male Buff-spotted Flufftail, which after some repositioning showed well to everybody, an ultimate way to finish this tour! The tour then ended at Durban airport.



Record shots of the two stars of the final day: Red-chested Flufftail (left) and Buff-spotted Flufftail!

A huge thanks to all participants for making this tour such an enjoyable one!



A nice male Diederic Cuckoo.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

The species names and taxonomy used in the report follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). **2019. IOC World Bird List (v 9.1)**. This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. The online checklist, available to download at the above website, includes all relevant taxonomic notes. The website also includes a useful section outlining recent taxonomic decisions and upcoming proposals.

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g.: it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus* Seen at De Hoop and West Coast NP.

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Many seen throughout.

Crested Guineafowl ◊ *Guttera pucherani* Seen at Mkuze.

Grey-winged Francolin ◊ *Scleroptila afra* Several seen at De Hoop and along the West Coast.

Red-winged Francolin ◊ (Redwing F) *Scleroptila levaillantii* Two seen well at Wakkerstroom.

Orange River Francolin ◊ *Scleroptila gutturalis* (H) A pair heard at Suikerbosrand.

Crested Francolin *Dendroperdix sephaena* Seen at Mkuze.

Cape Spurfowl ◊ (C Francolin) *Pternistis capensis* Many seen around the Cape.

Natal Spurfowl ◊ (N Francolin) *Pternistis natalensis* A covey near Polokwane.

Red-necked Spurfowl (R-n Francolin) *Pternistis afer* One at Sani Pass.

Swainson's Spurfowl ◊ (S Francolin) *Pternistis swainsonii* Seen several times, first near to Kimberley.

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix* Seen at Wakkerstroom, heard at many different places.

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* Seen a few times.

White-backed Duck *Thalassornis leuconotus* Seen several times, including an impressive total of 50 near Eshowe.

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* Many seen.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca* Many seen.



A beautiful Crested Spurfowl (above), Crested Francolin (right) and Red-necked Spurfowl.

South African Shelduck ♦ *Tadorna cana* Seen a few times, first near Cape Town.

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* About 10 near Eshowe.

Hottentot Teal *Spatula hottentota* Seen at Strandfontein.

Cape Shoveler ♦ *Spatula smithii* Seen regularly, first at Strandfontein.

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata* Seen many times.

Cape Teal *Anas capensis* Seen many times.

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* Seen many times.

Southern Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma* Seen several times, first near Cape Town.

Maccoa Duck *Oxyura maccoa* Seen several times, first near Cape Town.

Fiery-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus pectoralis* A fantastic sighting at Mkuze.

Swamp Nightjar (Natal N) *Caprimulgus natalensis* A fantastic sighting at St Lucia.

African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* Seen many times in the east.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* Seen several times.

Common Swift (European S) *Apus apus* A couple seen well and heard along the West Coast.

African Black Swift *Apus barbatus* Seen well at different places including Rooiels.



A cooperative Fiery-necked Nightjar at Mkuze and Livingstone's Turaco near St Lucia.

Bradfield's Swift ♦ *Apus bradfieldi* Seen well a few times near to Kimberley.

Little Swift *Apus affinis* Many seen throughout.

Horus Swift *Apus horus* Several seen and photographed near Swellendam, a surprise.

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer* Many seen throughout.

Livingstone's Turaco ♦ (L Lourie) *Tauraco livingstonii* Several seen near to St Lucia.

Knysna Turaco ♦ (K Lourie) *Tauraco corythaix* Seen well a few times, including Magoebaskloof and Highover.

Purple-crested Turaco (P-c Lourie) *Tauraco porphyreolophus* Many in the east.

Grey Go-away-bird (G Lourie) *Corythaixoides concolor* A few north of pretoria

Ludwig's Bustard ◇ *Neotis ludwigii* Surprisingly common this year with more than 20 individual sighted.
Denham's Bustard *Neotis denhami* Seen near to Swellendam and Wakkerstroom.
White-bellied Bustard ◇ (Barrow's B) *Eupodotis [senegalensis] barrowii* Seen near to Wakkerstroom.
Blue Korhaan ◇ *Eupodotis caerulescens* Seen well near to Wakkerstroom.
Karoo Korhaan ◇ *Eupodotis vigorsii* Seen near to Brandvlei and Pufadder.
Red-crested Korhaan *Lophotis ruficrista* Several at Marrick and near to Kimberley.
Southern Black Korhaan ◇ *Afrotis afra* Seen along the West Coast and near to Calvinia.
Northern Black Korhaan ◇ *Afrotis afroides* Many seen in the center, mainly near to Kimberley.
Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster* One at Wakkerstroom.



Dark phase Jacobin Cuckoo (above), Diederik (left) and Klaas's Cuckoos.

Burchell's Coucal ◇ *Centropus burchellii* Several in the east, heard elsewhere.
Green Malkoha (G Coucal, Yellowbill) *Ceuthmochares australis* Seen very well at St Lucia.
Levaillant's Cuckoo (Striped C) *Clamator levaillantii* Fantastic sighting north of Pretoria.
Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus* Seen well in the Agulhas plains.
Diederik Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius* Seen many times throughout.
Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas* Seen several times, more often heard.
African Emerald Cuckoo (Emerald C) *Chrysococcyx cupreus* Seen at Magoebaskloof, heard elsewhere.
Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus* Seen a few times, often heard.

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* Many seen and heard throughout.
Namaqua Sandgrouse ◊ *Pterocles namaqua* Seen a few times in the Karoo.
Rock Dove (introduced) (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia* Common in towns.
Speckled Pigeon (Rock P) *Columba guinea* Many seen throughout.
African Olive Pigeon (Rameron P) *Columba arquatrix* Seen in forested areas throughout.
Lemon Dove (Cinnamon D) *Columba larvata* Seen a few times, maximum 20 at Kurisa Moya.
Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* Seen throughout.
Ring-necked Dove (Cape Turtle D) *Streptopelia capicola* Seen throughout. The voice of African savannas!
Laughing Dove (Palm D) *Spilopelia senegalensis* Many seen.
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* Many seen in the east.
Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistria* Seen at Eshowe, Highover and Mkuze.
Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* Good numbers throughout.
African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus* A few seen at St Lucia and Mkuze.
Buff-spotted Flufftail ◊ *Sarothrura elegans* A fabulous male at Hilton.
Red-chested Flufftail *Sarothrura rufa* A splendid male at Himeville. Heard at Wakkerstroom.
African Rail (A Water R) *Rallus caerulescens* Seen a few times, first at West Coast NP.
Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra* Seen a few times, first at West Coast NP.
African Swamphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis* Many seen.
Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Many seen.
Lesser Moorhen *Paragallinula angulata* One near Eshowe – a write-in !
Red-knobbed Coot (Crested C) *Fulica cristata* Many seen.
Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum* A couple at Wakkerstroom, many near to Himeville.
Wattled Crane ◊ *Grus carunculata* At least 4 near to Himeville.
Blue Crane ◊ *Grus paradisea* Many in the Agulhas grasslands and at Wakkerstroom, fewer elsewhere.
Little Grebe (Dabchick) *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Many seen.
Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* A few near to Cape Town.
Black-necked Grebe (Eared G) *Podiceps nigricollis* Good numbers at Strandfontein.



Part of a flock of about 50 White-backed Ducks (left) and a Lesser Moorhen, scarce species in South Africa and write-in.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* Many seen.
Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor* Many seen.
Water Thick-knee (W Dikkop) *Burhinus vermiculatus* Seen at De Hoop and Mkuze.
Spotted Thick-knee (S Dikkop) *Burhinus capensis* Seen at Marrick Game Farm.
African Oystercatcher ◊ *Haematopus moquini* Good numbers around Cape Town.
Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* Many seen.
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* Several along the West Coast and at De Hoop.
Blacksmith Lapwing (B Plover) *Vanellus armatus* Many seen throughout.
Black-winged Lapwing (B-w Plover) *Vanellus melanopterus* Seen at Wakkerstroom.
Crowned Lapwing (C Plover) *Vanellus coronatus* Regularly seen throughout.
African Wattled Lapwing (W Plover) *Vanellus senegallus* A few seen, first at Suikerbosrand.

Grey Plover (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* Many at West Coast NP.



Northern Giant Petrel (above), Sabine's Gull (left) and an immature Black-browed Albatross.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* Seen at Strandfontein and West Coast NP.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* A few seen throughout, first at West Coast NP.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* Several seen throughout.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus* Several along the West Coast.

Chestnut-banded Plover *Charadrius pallidus* One near Veldriff.

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* Many seen in the east.

Whimbrel (Eurasian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] phaeopus* Many at West Coast NP.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* A few at West Coast NP and Alexanderbaai.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* A few at West Coast NP.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* A few along the west coast.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax* Seen at Strandfontein and along the west coast.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* Many at West Coast NP.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* A few at West Coast NP.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* Many at West Coast NP.

African Snipe (Ethiopian S) *Gallinago nigripennis* Seen a few times, first at West Coast NP.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* Two at Strandfontein were a welcomed bonus!

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* Seen a few times.
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* One at West Coast NP.
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Seen a few times.
Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* Seen a few times.
Double-banded Courser *Rhinoptilus africanus* Seen in the Karoo and at Marrick Game Farm.
Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* Good numbers during the pelagic off Simonstown.
Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus* Small numbers seen throughout.
Hartlaub's Gull ◊ *Chroicocephalus hartlaubii* Many seen, mostly near Cape Town.
Kelp Gull (Cape G) *Larus [dominicanus] vetula* Many seen, mostly near Cape Town.
Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* Several seen, including about 70 at Veldruff.
Greater Crested Tern (Swift T) *Thalasseus bergii* Many seen off Simonstown.
Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* Good numbers near to Cape Town and Alexanderbaai.
Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* Two at the Orange River mouth - apparently the first documented record for Namibia!



A Sooty Shearwater taking off.

Damara Tern ◊ *Sternula balaenarum* About 10 near to Struisbaai and 20 at the Orange River mouth.
Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Many near to Cape Town and at sea.
Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* At least one at sea off Simonstown.
Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* Many seen throughout.
Brown Skua (Subantarctic S) *Stercorarius antarcticus* Two or three off Simonstown.
Pomarine Jaeger (P Jaeger) *Stercorarius pomarinus* A trio off Simonstown.
Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) *Stercorarius parasiticus* Good numbers off Simonstown.
African Penguin ◊ (Jackass P) *Spheniscus demersus* Hundreds at their colonies at Rooiels and Stony Point.
Wilson's Storm Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* A few at sea off Simonstown.
Black-browed Albatross *Thalassarche melanophris* A few at sea off Simonstown.
Shy Albatross (White-capped A) *Thalassarche [cauta] steadi* Dozens at sea off Simonstown.
Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross ◊ *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* A few at sea off Simonstown.
Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross ◊ *Thalassarche carteri* A few at sea off Simonstown.
European Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* A few at sea off Simonstown.
Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus* One at sea off Simonstown.
Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes halli* A few at sea off Simonstown.
White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis* Many off Simonstown.
Sooty Shearwater *Ardenna grisea* Many off Simonstown.

Great Shearwater *Ardenna gravis* A dozen off Simonstown.
Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* Two off Simonstown.
Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* A few in the east, first at Mkuze.
African Openbill (A Open-billed Stork) *Anastomus lamelligerus* About 30 at Mkuze.
Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* Seen a few times.
Woolly-necked Stork (African Woollyneck) *Ciconia [episcopus] microscelis* Many near Eshowe.
White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* Seen a few times, including in Lesotho.
Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer* A few near to Polokwane.
Cape Gannet ◊ *Morus capensis* Good numbers at sea off Simonstown.
Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus* Many seen.
Crowned Cormorant ◊ *Microcarbo coronatus* Several along the coast at Rooiels.
Bank Cormorant ◊ *Phalacrocorax neglectus* Several at Rooiels.
White-breasted Cormorant *Phalacrocorax lucidus* Many seen.
Cape Cormorant ◊ *Phalacrocorax capensis* Many seen around Cape Town and Rooiels.
African Darter *Anhinga rufa* Regularly seen throughout.
African Sacred Ibis (Sacred I) *Threskiornis aethiopicus* Many seen.



Secretarybird at Marrick, with Roan Antelope and Bontebok at the back.

Southern Bald Ibis ◊ *Geronticus calvus* Seen near to Wakkerstroom.
Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* Many seen.
Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* Several seen, first at Strandfontein.
African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* Regularly recorded.
Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* Seen at Wakkerstroom and Himeville.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* Seen at De Hoop and Wakkerstroom.
Striated Heron (Green-backed) *Butorides striata* One at Mkuze.
Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* Several in the east.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Many seen.
Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* Good numbers recorded.
Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* Good numbers recorded.
Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* Seen at Mokala NP, Phongolo reserve and Mkuze.
Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* Seen a few times.
Great Egret *Ardea alba* Seen a few times.
Intermediate Egret (Yellow-billed E) *Ardea [intermedia] brachyrhyncha* Seen a few times.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Seen many times.
Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* Seen a few times, first at De Hoop.
Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Seen a few times, first at Stradnfontein.
Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* A dozen at Mkuze.
Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius* Seen near to Veldruff and Wakkerstroom.
Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* One at Mkuze.
Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Many seen throughout.
African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus* Seen several times, first at Cape Town.
Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis* Two seen at Mtunzini.
Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier) *Gypaetus barbatus* One adult on nest at Sani pass.
European Honey Buzzard (Honey B) *Pernis apivorus* (LO) 1 at Magoebaskloof.
African Cuckoo-Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides* One seen at Mkuze.
White-backed Vulture (African W-b V) *Gyps africanus* Many at Mkuze.
Cape Vulture ♦ *Gyps coprotheres* Several at De Hoop, Dullstroom and Sani pass.
Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos* One seen at Mkuze.
Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus* Seen twice.
Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* Several recorded at Mkuze.
Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus* One seen at nest near to Tzaneen.



Bat Hawk seen at a traditional site near Tzaneen.

Crowned Eagle (African C E) *Stephanoaetus coronatus* Seen at Magoebaskloof and Abel Erasmus pass.
Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* Seen one at Phongolo and another at very close range at St Lucia.
Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* A few seen in Magoebaskloof area.
Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraaetus wahlbergi* A few seen at Mkuze.
Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* A few seen in the west.
Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* A few seen at Mkuze.
Verreaux's Eagle (Black E) *Aquila verreauxii* Several pairs seen, first one near Langebaan.
Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* A distant individual at Mkuze.
Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar* A fly-by at Kimberley.
Pale Chanting Goshawk (Southern P C G) *Melierax canorus* Many in the Karoo.
African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro* Many seen, mostly displaying high above forested areas.
Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus* Several seen, first at Mkuze.



A huge Martial Eagle seen at close range near St Lucia and a nice Narina Trogon.

- Black Sparrowhawk (Great S) *Accipiter melanoleucus*** Several seen near to Cape Town.
- African Marsh Harrier *Circus ranivorus*** A few seen at Wakkerstroom.
- Black Harrier** ♦ *Circus maurus* Fantastic views of a few along the west coast.
- Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius*** Many seen.
- African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*** A few seen, first near to Swellendam.
- Common Buzzard (Steppe B) *Buteo [buteo] vulpinus*** Recorded regularly throughout.
- Forest Buzzard** ♦ *Buteo trizonatus* An individual perched on a roadside post near Tzaneen.
- Jackal Buzzard** ♦ *Buteo rufofuscus* Recorded regularly throughout.
- Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba*** A roosting bird during day time at Marrick Game Reserve.
- Spotted Eagle-Owl *Bubo africanus*** Several seen, including a pair with two fluffy chicks at Noordhoek.
- African Wood Owl (Wood O) *Strix woodfordii*** One seen at Noordhoek, heard at Magoesbaskloof.

Pearl-spotted Owllet (P-s Owl) *Glaucidium perlatum* A trio seen at Phongolo.

Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus* Many seen.

White-backed Mousebird ◊ *Colius colius* Many seen in the west.

Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus* Many seen, mostly in the east, but also at De Hoop.

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* Seen a few times nicely, first one at Grootvadersbosch.

African Hoopoe *Upupa africana* Regularly recorded.

Green Wood Hoopoe (Red-billed W) *Phoeniculus purpureus* Recorded at Mkuze and Himeville.

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* Several flocks in Himeville.

Southern Red-billed Hornbill ◊ *Tockus rufirostris* Seen a few times, first at Phongolo.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill ◊ *Tockus leucomelas* Seen a few times, first near to Kimberley.

Crowned Hornbill *Lophoceros alboterminatus* Seen at Mkuze and Eshowe.



Crowned Hornbill at Mkuze.

African Grey Hornbill (Grey H) *Lophoceros nasutus* One seen near to Kimberley.

Trumpeter Hornbill *Bycanistes bucinator* Several impressive ones at Mkuze, St Lucia and Eshowe.

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus* A few seen in the east.

Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* A few seen, first at Magoebaskloof.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris* Many recorded, first at Suurbraak.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* A few seen at Mkuze, heard elsewhere.

Woodland Kingfisher (S) *Halcyon senegalensis* Seen at Phongolo and Mkuze.

African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* Seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.

Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus* Recorded several times, first at Strandfontein.

Half-collared Kingfisher *Alcedo semitorquata* A fly-by near to Himeville.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima* A duo at De Hoop.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Seen a few times.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus* Seen at Augrabies and Marrick Game Reserve.

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* Commonly encountered in the east, mostly at Mkuze and St Lucia.

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides* A dozen near to Mkuze.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater (S) *Merops persicus* Many migrants seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.



Trumpeter Hornbill and African Pygmy Kingfisher.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* Recorded regularly throughout.

White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis* Good numbers at St Lucia and Eshowe.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird (Golden-r Tinker Barbet) *Pogoniulus bilineatus* Many at St Lucia.

Red-fronted Tinkerbird (R-f Tinker Barbet) *Pogoniulus pusillus* Seen at Mkuze.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird (Y-f Tinker Barbet) *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* Seen near to Pretoria.

Acacia Pied Barbet *Tricholaema leucomelas* Seen many times, first near to Swellendam.

Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus* Commonly heard and seen in the east.

Crested Barbet *Trachyphonus vaillantii* Commonly heard and seen in the east.



A striking Crested Barbet from Mkuze (above) and the only Ground Woodpeckers of the tour.

- Brown-backed Honeybird** *Prodotiscus regulus* Seen at Tzaneen and Sani pass.
- Lesser Honeyguide** *Indicator minor* Seen a few times, including Grootvadersbosch and Magoebaskloof.
- Scaly-throated Honeyguide** *Indicator variegatus* One at Eshowe.
- Greater Honeyguide** *Indicator indicator* Two seen at Mkuze.
- Red-throated Wryneck** *Jynx ruficollis* Seen at Sani pass and near to Hilton.
- Bennett's Woodpecker** *Campethera bennettii* One seen at Phongolo.
- Golden-tailed Woodpecker** *Campethera abingoni* Commonly seen and heard, first at Marrick.
- Knysna Woodpecker** ◊ *Campethera notata* One seen at Grootvadersbosch.
- Ground Woodpecker** ◊ *Geocolaptes olivaceus* Seen once at Rooiels.
- Cardinal Woodpecker** *Dendropicus fuscescens* Seen a few times, mostly in the east.
- Olive Woodpecker** *Dendropicus griseocephalus* Seen at Magoebaskloof and Eshowe.

Pygmy Falcon *Polihierax semitorquatus* One male near a Sociable Weaver colony at Mokala NP.

Lesser Kestrel (S) *Falco naumanni* A dozen on wires east of Kimberley.

Rock Kestrel *Falco rupicolus* Seen throughout.

Greater Kestrel (White-eyed K) *Falco rupicoloides* Several seen in the Karoo and one near to Kimberley.

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* Seen a few times, first at Kirstenbosch.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* Seen a few times, first in Cape Town.

Cape Parrot ♦ *Poicephalus robustus* About a dozen at Magoebaskloof and three at Marutswa.

African Broadbill ♦ *Smithornis capensis* One of the tour's highlight – a fantastic male displaying at Mkuze.

Cape Batis ♦ *Batis capensis* Seen many times, first at Harold Porter botanical garden.

Woodward's Batis ♦ *Batis fratrum* A pair at St Lucia.

Chinspot Batis *Batis molitor* Good numbers at Phongolo and Mkuze.

Pririt Batis ♦ *Batis pririt* Seen at Brandvlei.

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* (H) Heard at Mkuze.

Black-fronted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus nigrifrons* Several seen well at Magoebaskloof.

Olive Bushshrike ♦ *Chlorophoneus olivaceus* Seen well at Grootvadersbosch, heard elsewhere.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Seen well at Pretoria, heard elsewhere.

Gorgeous Bushshrike (Four-coloured B) *Telophorus [viridis] quadricolor* Seen well at Mkuze.

Bokmakierie ♦ *Telophorus zeylonus* Seen many times, mostly in the west. First near to Swellendam.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis* Seen near to Kimberley.

Southern Tchagra ♦ *Tchagra tchagra* Several showed well at De Hoop.

Black-crowned Tchagra (B-headed T) *Tchagra senegalus* Seen a few times in the east, first north of Pretoria.

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla* Seen many times in the east.



African Paradise Flycatcher at nest (left) and Orange-breasted Bushshrike.

Southern Boubou ♦ *Laniarius ferrugineus* Many seen throughout.

Crimson-breasted Shrike ♦ *Laniarius atrococcineus* A splendid male at Marrick.

Brubru *Nilaus afer* Seen a few times, first at Augrabies.

White-crested Helmetshrike (White H) *Prionops plumatus* Seen a few times, mostly at Mkuze.

Grey Cuckooshrike *Cebalepyris caesius* Seen at Grootvadersbosch, Magoebaskloof and Eshowe.

Black Cuckooshrike *Campephaga flava* Seen north of Pretoria and at Mkuze.

Magpie Shrike (African L-t S) *Urolestes melanoleucus* About 20 seen north of Pretoria.

Red-backed Shrike (S) *Lanius collurio* Many seen in the east, mostly at Mkuze.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor* One bird north of Pretoria.

Southern Fiscal *Lanius collaris* Many seen throughout (less so in the east).

Black-headed Oriole (Eastern B-h O) *Oriolus larvatus* Seen a few times at Mkuze and Highover.

Common Square-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus ludwigii* Seen at Magoebaskloof and St Lucia.

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* Seen many times.

Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher (Blue-m F) *Trochocercus cyanomelas* Seen several times in forested areas.

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* Several seen, first at Kirstenbosch.

Cape Crow (C Rook) *Corvus capensis* Many seen throughout.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* Many seen throughout.

White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis* Seen regularly, first in Cape Town.

Cape Rockjumper ◊ *Chaetops frenatus* Seen very well at Rooiels, including 3 males chasing a female.

Drakensberg Rockjumper ◊ (Orange-breasted R) *Chaetops aurantius* A trio at Sani pass, building a nest.

Fairy Flycatcher ◊ *Stenostira scita* Seen well near to Clanwilliam and Springbok.

Southern Black Tit ◊ *Melaniparus niger* Seen several times, first at Phongolo.

Ashy Tit ◊ *Melaniparus cinerascens* Seen well at Marrick.

Grey Tit (Southern G T) *Melaniparus afer* Seen near to Calvinia and Springbok.

Cape Penduline Tit ◊ *Anthoscopus minutus* A party at West Coast NP.



Cape Penduline Tit (left) and Ashy Tit, two southern african endemics.

Eastern Nicator (Yellow-spotted N) *Nicator gularis* A few seen at Mkuze, more heard at St Lucia.

Spike-heeled Lark ◊ *Chersomanes albofasciata* Many seen, from Brandvlei to Wakkerstroom.

Short-clawed Lark ◊ *Certhilauda chuana* A pair near to Kurisa Moya.

Karoo Long-billed Lark ◊ *Certhilauda subcoronata* Several in the Karoo around Brandvlei.

Eastern Long-billed Lark ◊ *Certhilauda semitorquata* Several at Wakkerstroom.

Cape Long-billed Lark ◊ *Certhilauda curvirostris* Seen near to Langebaan and Port Nolloth.

Agulhas Long-billed Lark ◊ *Certhilauda brevisrostris* Several in the Agulhas plains.

Black-eared Sparrow-Lark ◊ (B-e Finchlark) *Eremopterix australis* (LO) Only one briefly near to Pufadder.

Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark ◊ (G-b Finchlark) *Eremopterix verticalis* Hundreds east of Pufadder.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis* Two seen north of Dealesville.

Sabota Lark ◊ *Calendulauda sabota* Seen at Brandvlei and many in the east, mostly at Mkuze.

Fawn-colored Lark *Calendulauda africanoides* Several in the Koa dunes near to Pufadder.

Karoo Lark ◊ *Calendulauda albescens* Seen near to Calvinia.

Red Lark ◊ *Calendulauda burra* “brown” morph seen at Brandvlei, “red” in the Koa dunes.

Barlow's Lark ◊ *Calendulauda barlowi* A full family seen at Port Nolloth.

Rudd's Lark ◊ *Heteromirafra ruddi* One at Wakkerstroom after hours of research.

Eastern Clapper Lark ◊ *Mirafra fasciolata* Many seen east of Kimberley and Marrick.

Cape Clapper Lark ◊ *Mirafra apiata* Two seen along the west coast.

Cape Clapper Lark ◊ (Agulhas C L) *Mirafra [apiata] marjoriae* Seen in the Agulhas plains.

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* Many seen and heard in the east.

Monotonous Lark *Mirafra passerina* Two displaying males in Mkuze were a welcomed bonus – a write-in !

Melodious Lark ◊ *Mirafra cheniana* About 10 seen and heard north of Dealesville.

Sclater's Lark ◊ *Spizocorys sclateri* A trio near to Brandvlei.

Stark's Lark ◊ *Spizocorys starki* One seen near to Brandvlei and about 30 east of Springbok.

Botha's Lark ◊ *Spizocorys fringillaris* One bird at Daggakraal, near to Wakkerstroom.

Large-billed Lark ◊ (Southern Thick-b L) *Galerida magnirostris* Seen many times, first near to Swellendam.

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.



Agulhas Long-billed Lark (above), Monotonous Lark (left) and Cape Clapper Lark (nominate)

- African Red-eyed Bulbul** ◊ *Pycnonotus nigricans* Many seen at Springbok and Augrabies.
- Cape Bulbul** ◊ *Pycnonotus capensis* Many in Cape Town and surroundings.
- Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor* Many seen in the east.
- Sombre Greenbul (S Bulbul)** *Andropadus importunus* Seen and heard many times in all forested areas.
- Yellow-bellied Greenbul** *Chlorocichla flaviventris* Seen at Tzaneen, Mkuze and St Lucia.
- Terrestrial Brownbul (T Bulbul)** *Phyllastrephus terrestris* Seen at Magoebaskloof, Mkuze, St Lucia and Eshowe.
- Yellow-streaked Greenbul** *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus* Several at Magoebaskloof.
- Black Saw-wing** *Psalidoprocne pristopectera* Seen many times, first at Rooiels.
- Grey-rumped Swallow** *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* Seen near to Tzaneen.
- Brown-throated Martin (Plain M)** *Riparia paludicola* Seen many times, first at Strandfontein.
- Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta* Seen a few times, first near to Kimberley.
- Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Many seen.
- White-throated Swallow** *Hirundo albigularis* Many seen.
- Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii* Several at Mkuze and St Lucia.
- Blue Swallow** ◊ *Hirundo atrocaerulea* Three birds including a nice male at Highover.
- Pearl-breasted Swallow** *Hirundo dimidiata* Seen a few times, first near to Swellendam.
- Rock Martin (African R M)** *Ptyonoprogne fuligula* Many seen.
- Common House Martin** *Delichon urbicum* Few migrants seen, first at Suurbraak.

Greater Striped Swallow *Cecropis cucullata* Many seen, mostly around Cape Town.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica* Many seen, mostly in the east. First at De Hoop.



Greater Striped (left) and Lesser Striped Swallows.

Red-breasted Swallow *Cecropis semirufa* Good numbers in the east, first at Kimberley.

South African Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon spilodera* Many seen, first near to Calvinia. Hundreds at Kimberley.

Cape Grassbird *Sphenoeacus afer* Seen and heard several times including Rooiels and Sani pass.

Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens* Seen and heard regularly, mostly in the east. First near to Clanwilliam.

Victorin's Warbler *Cryptillas victorini* Seen near to Rooiels.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* Seen several times, good numbers at Polokwane.

Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler (Y-t Warbler) *Phylloscopus ruficapilla* Seen at Grootvadersbosch.



Blue Swallow (left) and Fan-tailed Grassbird.

Lesser Swamp Warbler (Cape Reed W) *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* Seen a few times, first at Strandfontein.

African Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus baeticatus* Seen many times, first at De Hoop.

African Yellow Warbler (Dark-capped Y W) *Iduna natalensis* Seen at Sani pass.

Fan-tailed Grassbird *Catriscus brevirostris* A single at Highover.

Knysna Warbler *Bradypterus sylvaticus* A few heard and one seen very well at Grootvadersbosch.

Barratt's Warbler *Bradypterus barratti* Seen at Magoebaskloof and Sani pass.

Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala* Seen several times, first at Strandfontein.

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops* Several seen near to Tzaneen.

Lazy Cisticola *Cisticola aberrans* (H) Heard only at Marutswa.

Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana* Huge numbers in the east at Mkuze and St Lucia.



Pale-crowned (left) and Levallant's Cisticolas.

Grey-backed Cisticola ◊ *Cisticola subruficapilla* Several seen and heard in the west, first near Noordhoek.

Wailing Cisticola ◊ *Cisticola lais* Seen at Wakkerstroom and Sani pass.

Rufous-winged Cisticola *Cisticola galactotes* Several seen near to Eshowe.

Levallant's Cisticola (Tinkling C) *Cisticola tinniens* Many seen and heard, first at Strandfontein.

Croaking Cisticola *Cisticola natalensis* Seen at St Lucia.

Neddicky (Piping C) *Cisticola fulvicapilla* Several seen and heard in the west and the east.

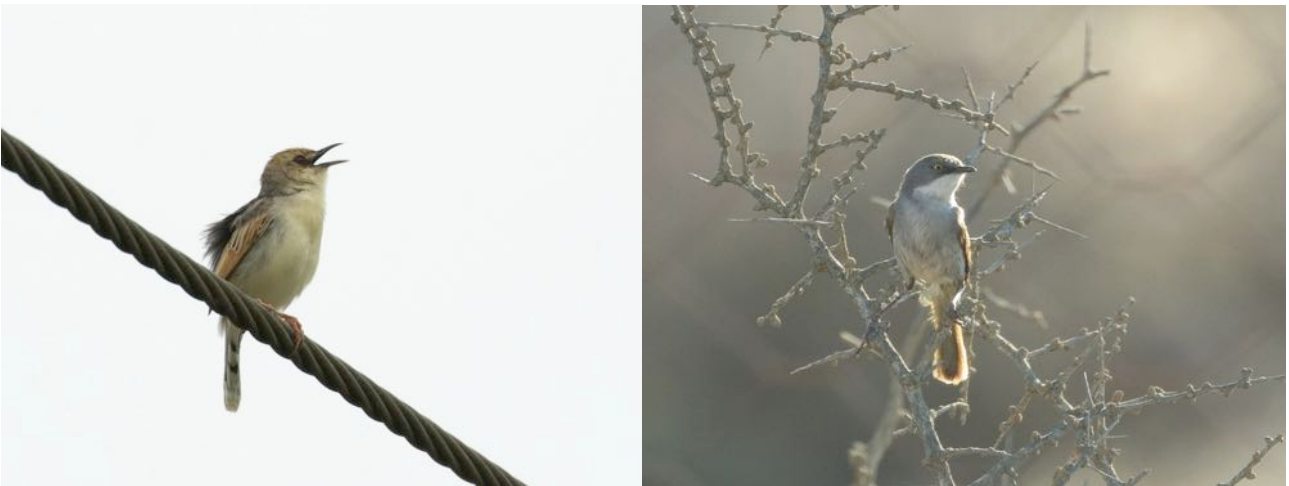
Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed C) *Cisticola juncidis* Seen and heard many times, first at Strandfontein.

Desert Cisticola *Cisticola aridulus* A few seen at Marrick.

Cloud Cisticola ◊ (Tink-tink C) *Cisticola textrix* Streaked "Cape" form seen at Darling, others at Wakkerstroom.

Pale-crowned Cisticola ◊ *Cisticola cinnamomeus* Seen at Wakkerstroom and near to Himeville.

Wing-snapping Cisticola *Cisticola ayresii* Seen at Wakkerstroom.



Rufous-winged Cisticola (left) and Karoo Eremomela.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava* Many in the east, first near to Pretoria.

Black-chested Prinia ◊ *Prinia flavicans* Many seen near to Brandvlei and in the Kimberley area.

Karoo Prinia ◊ (Spotted P) *Prinia maculosa* Many seen, mostly around Cape Town and the Karoo.

Drakensberg Prinia ◊ *Prinia hypoxantha* Seen well at Sani pass and Wakkerstroom.

Namaqua Warbler ◊ (N Prinia) *Phragmacia substriata* Seen near to Calvinia, Brandvlei and Augrabies.

Bar-throated Apalis *Apalis thoracica* Many seen and heard, first at Harold Porter.

Rudd's Apalis ◊ *Apalis ruddi* Many seen and heard at Mkuze and St Lucia.

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida* Several seen in the east, first at Tzaneen.

Rufous-eared Warbler ◊ *Malcorus pectoralis* Several seen near to Brandvlei, heard elsewhere.

Green-backed Camaroptera (G-b Bleating Warbler) *Camaroptera brachyura* Seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.

Cinnamon-breasted Warbler ◊ *Euryptila subcinnamomea* A pair in Kamieskroon hills.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis* A few seen at Brandvlei and Kimberley.

Karoo Eremomela ◊ *Eremomela gregalis* Seen well near to Calvinia.

Burnt-necked Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis* Seen well north of Pretoria.

Bush Blackcap ◊ *Lioptilus nigricapillus* A very showy individual at Sani pass.

Chestnut-vented Warbler (C-v Titbabbler) *Sylvia subcoerulea* First seen at Brandvlei, more seen at Marrick.

Layard's Warbler ◊ *Sylvia layardi* Seen near to Clanwilliam and Calvinia.

Orange River White-eye ◊ *Zosterops pallidus* Seen at Brandvlei and Augrabies.

Cape White-eye ◊ *Zosterops virens* Many seen in the west and the east.

Cape Sugarbird ◊ *Promerops cafer* Several seen at Kirstenbosch and Rooiels.

Gurney's Sugarbird ◊ *Promerops gurneyi* First seen at Dullstroom, then much better views at Sani pass.

Common Myna (introduced) (Indian M) *Acridotheres tristis* Commonly seen in all eastern cities.

Common Starling (introduced) (European S) *Sturnus vulgaris* Many seen throughout.

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* Only seen at Marrick, a flock of two dozens.

Black-bellied Starling (B-b Glossy S) *Notopholia corusca* Seen at Mkuze, St Lucia and Eshowe.

Cape Starling (C Glossy S) *Lamprotornis nitens* Seen near to Pretoria, Mkuze, St Lucia and Durban.

Burchell's Starling *Lamprotornis australis* A few seen at Phongolo.

Pied Starling ◊ (African P S) *Lamprotornis bicolor* Several seen throughout, first at Swellendam.

Violet-backed Starling (Amethyst S) *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* Many in the east, first at Tzaneen.



The ultimate Violet-backed Starling!

Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio* Many seen, mostly around Cape Town.

Pale-winged Starling ◊ *Onychognathus naboroupp* Seen at Springbok and Augrabies.

Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* Seen near to Kimberley, Pretoria and Mkuze.

Orange Ground Thrush ◊ (Orange T) *Geokichla gurneyi* Seen well at Magoebaskloof.

Spotted Ground Thrush ◊ (Spotted T) *Geokichla guttata* At least two seen, after much research, at Eshowe.

Kurrichane Thrush *Turdus libonyana* Several in the east, first one near to Pretoria.

Olive Thrush *Turdus olivaceus* Many seen, mostly around Cape Town and the Sani pass.

Karoo Thrush ◊ *Turdus smithi* Seen a few times, at Springbok and Augrabies.

Karoo Scrub Robin ◊ (K Robin) *Cercotrichas coryphoeus* Several seen in the west, first near to Swellendam.

Bearded Scrub Robin (Eastern B R) *Cercotrichas quadrivirgata* Seen well at Magoebaskloof.

Kalahari Scrub Robin ◊ (K Robin) *Cercotrichas paena* Several seen well at Marrick.

White-browed Scrub Robin (W-b Robin) *Cercotrichas leucophrys* Often encountered in the east, mostly at Mkuze.

Brown Scrub Robin ◊ (B Robin) *Cercotrichas signata* At least 3 seen well at Magoebaskloof.



Chorister Robin-Chat (left) and Kalahari Scrub Robin.

- Southern Black Flycatcher** *Melaenornis pammelaina* Seen a few times in the east, first near to Tzaneen.
- Pale Flycatcher (Mouse-coloured F)** *Melaenornis pallidus* Seen a few times in the east, first north of Pretoria.
- Chat Flycatcher** ◊ *Melaenornis infuscatus* Several seen in the Karoo, around Brandvlei mostly.
- Marico Flycatcher** ◊ *Melaenornis mariquensis* Seen a few times in the east, first near to Kimberley.
- Fiscal Flycatcher** ◊ *Melaenornis silens* Several seen, first near to Rooiels.
- Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata* Seen in good numbers, from Augrabies to Mkuze.
- African Dusky Flycatcher** *Muscicapa adusta* Seen many times, first at Kirstenbosch.
- Cape Robin-Chat (Cape Robin)** *Cossypha caffra* Many seen, first at Noordhoek.
- White-throated Robin-Chat (African W-t Robin)** *Cossypha humeralis* Seen north of Pretoria.
- White-browed Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini* Seen well at Tzaneen.
- Red-capped Robin-Chat (Natal R)** *Cossypha natalensis* Seen well at St Lucia, heard elsewhere.
- Chorister Robin-Chat (C Robin)** *Cossypha dichroa* Many seen at Magoebaskloof and Eshowe.
- White-starred Robin (Starred R)** *Pogonocichla stellata* Seen at Magoebaskloof and Eshowe.
- Cape Rock Thrush** ◊ *Monticola rupestris* Seen a few times, first at Rooiels.
- Sentinel Rock Thrush** ◊ *Monticola explorator* Seen at Wakkerstroom and up the Sani pass.
- Short-toed Rock Thrush** ◊ *Monticola brevipes* Two at Mokala NP.
- African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.
- Buff-streaked Chat** ◊ *Campicoloides bifasciatus* Seen at Wakkerstroom and Sani pass.
- Sickle-winged Chat** ◊ *Emarginata sinuata* Seen in the Karoo and at Sani pass.
- Karoo Chat** ◊ *Emarginata schlegelii* Many seen in the Karoo.
- Tractrac Chat** ◊ *Emarginata tractrac* A few seen near to Brandvlei and Port Nolloth.
- Mocking Cliff Chat (Mocking Chat, Cliff Chat)** *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris* One at Mkuze.
- Ant-eating Chat** ◊ *Myrmecocichla formicivora* Many seen in the Karoo and near to Kimberley.
- Mountain Wheatear (M Chat)** *Myrmecocichla monticola* Several seen, first near to Calvinia.
- Capped Wheatear** *Oenanthe pileata* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.
- Familiar Chat (Red-tailed C)** *Oenanthe familiaris* Many seen, first in Cape Town.
- Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris* Several seen, mostly at Magoebaskloof and St Lucia.
- Orange-breasted Sunbird** ◊ *Anthobaphes violacea* A few seen at Rooiels and Noordhoek.
- Olive Sunbird** *Cyanomitra olivacea* Several seen at Mkuze, St Lucia and Eshowe.
- Grey Sunbird (Mouse-coloured S)** *Cyanomitra veroxii* Several seen at St Lucia.
- Amethyst Sunbird (African Black S)** *Chalcomitra amethystina* Several seen at Rooiels and Sani pass.
- Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Several seen at Tzaneen, Phongolo and Mkuze.



Karoo Scrub Robin (above), Sentinel Rock Thrush (left) and a juvenile Tractrac Chat.

- Malachite Sunbird** *Nectarinia famosa* Many seen around Cape Town and Sani pass.
- Southern Double-collared Sunbird** ◊ (Lesser D-c S) *Cinnyris chalybeus* Many seen around Cape Town.
- Neergaard's Sunbird** ◊ *Cinnyris neergaardi* A few seen well at Mkuze.
- Greater Double-collared Sunbird** ◊ *Cinnyris afer* Many seen at Grootvadersbosch and Magoebaskloof.
- Marico Sunbird** *Cinnyris mariquensis* Several in the east, first near to Pretoria.
- Purple-banded Sunbird** *Cinnyris bifasciatus* Several seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.
- White-bellied Sunbird** *Cinnyris talatala* Many seen, first at Marrick.
- Dusky Sunbird** ◊ *Cinnyris fuscus* Seen at Brandvlei, Springbok and Augrabies.
- House Sparrow (introduced)** *Passer domesticus* Commonly seen in cities.
- Cape Sparrow** ◊ *Passer melanurus* Many seen throughout.
- Southern Grey-headed Sparrow** *Passer diffusus* Many seen, mostly in the east.
- Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow (African Y-t W)** *Gymnoris superciliaris* Several at Mkuze.
- Red-billed Buffalo Weaver** *Bubalornis niger* Seen near the Abel Erasmus pass and Mkuze.
- White-browed Sparrow-Weaver** *Plocepasser mahali* Many seen in the east, first near to Kimberley.
- Sociable Weaver** ◊ *Philetairus socius* Good numbers near their impressive nests between Springbok Kimberley.
- Scaly-feathered Weaver** ◊ *Sporopipes squamifrons* Many seen between Pufadder and Kimberley.
- Thick-billed Weaver (Grosbeak W)** *Amblyospiza albifrons* Several seen, first near to Pretoria.



Southern Brown-throated Weaver (left) and Greater Double-collared Sunbird.

Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis* Several seen at Tzaneen and Mkuze.

Cape Weaver ◊ *Ploceus capensis* Many seen, biggest numbers around Cape Town.

Eastern Golden Weaver (Golden W) *Ploceus subaureus* Good numbers at Mkuze, St Lucia and Highover.

Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops* A few at Tzaneen.

Southern Brown-throated Weaver ◊ *Ploceus xanthopterus* Many at their colony at St Lucia.

Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius* Several at Mkuze.

Southern Masked Weaver (Masked W) *Ploceus velatus* Many seen, mostly around Cape Town and Wakkerstroom.

Village Weaver (Spotted-backed W) *Ploceus cucullatus* Several in the east, first near to Pretoria.

Dark-backed Weaver (Forest W) *Ploceus bicolor* Seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* Many seen, hundreds at Wakkerstroom.

Yellow-crowned Bishop (Golden B) *Euplectes afer* Two seen north of Pretoria.

Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix* Many seen, hundreds in Agulhas grasslands and Wakkerstroom.

Yellow Bishop (Yellow-rumped Widow) *Euplectes capensis* Many seen, dozens in Agulhas grasslands.



Red-headed Finch (left) and a female Cut-throat Finch.

Fan-tailed Widowbird (Red-shouldered Widow) *Euplectes axillaris* Many seen, dozens at Wakkerstroom.

White-winged Widowbird (W-w Widow) *Euplectes albonotatus* Three singles at Wakkerstroom.

Red-collared Widowbird (R-c Widow) *Euplectes ardens* Seen many times, first north of Pretoria.

Long-tailed Widowbird (L-t Widow) *Euplectes progne* Many seen, first between Tzaneen and Dullstroom.

Green-winged Pytilia (Melba Finch) *Pytilia melba* Seen at Marrick, Mokala NP and Mkuze.

Red-headed Finch ◊ *Amadina erythrocephala* Hundreds at Marrick and Polokwane.

Cut-throat Finch *Amadina fasciata* One at a feeder in Polokwane.

Green Twinspot (G-backed T) *Mandingoa nitidula* Seen at Magoebaskloof.

Pink-throated Twinspot ◊ *Hypargos margaritatus* Excellent views at Mkuze of both males and females.



Female Pink-throated Twinspot (above) and a male African Firefinch.

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* Seen well near to Tzaneen and Mkuze.

African Firefinch (Blue-billed F) *Lagonosticta rubricata* Seen well at Magoebaskloof and Eshowe.

Blue Waxbill *Uraeginthus angolensis* Many seen near to Pretoria and at Mkuze.

Violet-eared Waxbill ◊ *Uraeginthus granatinus* Males and females at Marrick.

Swee Waxbill ◊ *Coccygia melanotis* Seen well near to Cape Town and Magoebaskloof.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* Many seen, first at Kirstenbosch.

Black-faced Waxbill *Estrilda erythronotos* Seen well at Marrick and Pretoria.

Orange-breasted Waxbill (Zebra W) *Amandava subflava* Brief views at Suikerbosrand and Wakkerstroom.



An impressive male Long-tailed Paradise Whydah (left) and a nice Cape Longclaw.

- Quailfinch** *Ortygospiza atricollis* Many seen at Marrick, heard elsewhere.
- Bronze Mannikin** *Lonchura cucullata* Seen several times, first at Kirstenbosch.
- Red-backed Mannikin** *Lonchura nigriceps* A dozen at Kurisa Moya.
- Magpie Mannikin** *Lonchura fringilloides* Several at Tzaneen.
- Pin-tailed Whydah** *Vidua macroura* Many seen, first in Cape Town.
- Shaft-tailed Whydah** *Vidua regia* Males and females at Marrick.
- Long-tailed Paradise Whydah (Eastern P W)** *Vidua paradisaea* Nice males at Mkuze.
- Cape Wagtail** *Motacilla capensis* Many seen throughout.
- Mountain Wagtail (Long-tailed W)** *Motacilla clara* A pair at nest near to Magoebaskloof.
- African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp* Seen a few times in the east, mostly at Mkuze.
- Cape Longclaw** ◊ (Orange-throated L) *Macronyx capensis* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.

Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus* Seen near to Tzaneen and Mkuze.
African Pipit (Grassveld P) *Anthus cinnamomeus* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.
Mountain Pipit ◊ *Anthus hoeschi* One seen very well at Sani pass near Lesotho.
Nicholson's Pipit *Anthus nicholsoni* Seen well near to Springbok.
Buffy Pipit *Anthus vaalensis* Two seen well near to Kimberley.
African Rock Pipit ◊ (Yellow-tufted P) *Anthus crenatus* Seen well at Wakkerstroom.
Short-tailed Pipit *Anthus brachyurus* Two seen at Sani pass.
Yellow-breasted Pipit ◊ *Anthus chloris* Males seen exceedingly well at Wakkerstroom.



Check the claws of this Yellow-throated Longclaw!

Common Chaffinch (introduced) *Fringilla coelebs* Several in Cape Town and Noordhoek.
Forest Canary ◊ *Crithagra scotops* Many seen in Cape Town, Grootvadersbosch and Magoebaskloof.
Black-throated Canary *Crithagra atrogularis* Seen well at Mkuze and Kimberley.
Lemon-breasted Canary ◊ *Crithagra citrinpectus* A few individuals near to Hluhluwe.
Yellow-fronted Canary (Y-eyed C) *Crithagra mozambica* Many seen in the east.
Cape Siskin ◊ *Crithagra totta* Seen well at Noordhoek and Rooiels.
Drakensberg Siskin ◊ *Crithagra symonsi* Several at Sani pass.
Yellow Canary ◊ *Crithagra flaviventris* Many seen, especially in the Karoo.
Brimstone Canary (Bully C) *Crithagra sulphurata* Several seen in Noordhoek and around Cape Town.
Streaky-headed Seedeater ◊ (S-h Canary) *Crithagra gularis* Seen near to Clanwilliam and Sani pass.
White-throated Canary ◊ *Crithagra albogularis* Many in the Karoo.
Protea Canary ◊ (P Seedeater) *Crithagra leucoptera* Three birds near to Clanwilliam.
Cape Canary *Serinus canicollis* Seen many times, first at Noordhoek.
Black-headed Canary ◊ (Damara C) *Serinus [alario] leucolaemus* Nice male near to Springbok.
Black-headed Canary ◊ *Serinus [alario] alario* Seen near to Calvinia and Brandvlei.
Lark-like Bunting ◊ *Emberiza impetuani* Many near to Brandvlei and Marrick.
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting (C-b Rock Bunting) *Emberiza tahapisi* Seen several times, first at Marrick.
Cape Bunting ◊ *Emberiza capensis* Many seen, first in Cape Town.
Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* Several seen, first at Marrick.



Two southern african endemics: Lemon-breasted Canary (left) and Drakensberg Siskin.

MAMMALS

Aardvark *Orycteropus afer* One fabulous individual at Marrick.

Rock Hyrax (Cape D, Cape R Hyrax) *Procavia capensis* Many seen.

Blue Monkey (Diademmed Guenon) *Cercopithecus mitis* Seen at Magoebaskloof and St Lucia.



Blue Monkey.

Vervet (V Monkey) *Chlorocebus pygerythrus* Many seen.

Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus* Many seen.

Cape Hare *Lepus capensis* Seen at Marrick.

Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis* Seen at Marrick.

Smith's Red Rock Hare (S R R Rabbit) *Pronolagus rupestris* Two at Marrick.

Spring Hare *Pedetes capensis* Many at Marrick.

Cape Porcupine *Hystrix africaeaustralis* About 10 at Marrick.

Highveld Gerbil *Gerbilliscus brantsii* Seen at Marrick

Cape Short-eared Gerbil *Desmodillus auricularis* Seen at Marrick

Sloggett's Vlei Rat (Ice Rat) *Otomys sloggetti* Several at Sani pass.
Bush Vlei Rat (Karoo Bush R) *Otomys unisulcatus* Seen near to Brandvlei.
Four-striped Grass Mouse (Four-striped Grass Mouse) *Rhabdomys pumilio* Seen in Cape Town.
Red Bush Squirrel (Red S) *Paraxerus palliatus* Seen at St Lucia.
Eastern Gray Squirrel (introduced) *Sciurus carolinensis* Seen near to Cape Town.
South African Ground Squirrel (Cape Ground S) *Xerus inauris* Seen at Marrick.
Caracal *Caracal caracal* One at Marrick – a big surprise and write-in!



Two nocturnal mammals seen at Marrick: Smith's Red Rock Hare (left) and an amazing Springhare.

Yellow Mongoose (Bushy-tailed Meerkat) *Cynictis penicillata* Seen several times, mostly at Wakkerstroom.
Cape Grey Mongoose (Small G M) *Herpestes pulverulentus* Several seen, first near to Swellendam.
Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguineus* Seen at Augrabies.
Meerkat (Meerkat) *Suricata suricatta* Many seen at Wakkerstroom.
Aardwolf *Proteles cristata* One near to Springbok and at least four at Marrick!
Black-backed Jackal *Canis mesomelas* Seen near to Springbok and Marrick.
Bat-eared Fox *Otocyon megalotis* Several seen at Marrick.
Zorilla (Zorilla) *Ictonyx striatus* One at Marrick.
Afro-Australian Fur Seal (Afro-Australian F S) *Arctocephalus pusillus* Many around Cape Town.
Plains Zebra (Burchell's Z) *Equus [quagga] burchellii* Seen a few times.
Mountain Zebra *Equus zebra* Seen a few times in the Karoo.
White Rhinoceros (Square-lipped R) *Ceratotherium simum* About 20 seen during the tour !
Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus* Several at Marrick and Mkuze.
Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* Seen at Phongolo and Mkuze.
Impala *Aepyceros melampus* Many at Mkuze, several elsewhere.
Hartebeest (Hartebeeste) *Alcelaphus buselaphus* Seen a few times in the east.
Springbok *Antidorcas marsupialis* Seen several times in the Karoo.
Natal Red Duiker *Cephalophus natalensis* Seen at St Lucia.
Black Wildebeest (White-tailed Gnu) *Connochaetes gnou* Seen at Mokala NP.
Common Wildebeest (Brindled Gnu) *Connochaetes taurinus* Seen at Mkuze.
Blesbok (Blesbok) *Damaliscus [pygargus] phillipsi* Seen near to Kimberley.
Blesbok (Bontebok) *Damaliscus [pygargus] pygargus* Seen at De Hoop, introduced elsewhere.
Sable Antelope (S Antelope) *Hippotragus niger* Introduced ones near to Kimberley.
Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus* Seen at Phongolo.
Gemsbok (Oryx) *Oryx gazella* Seen in the Karoo.
Grey Rhebok (Vaal R) *Pelea capreolus* One at Sani pass.
Blue Duiker *Philantomba monticola* Several at Eshowe.
Steenbok (Steinbok) *Raphicerus campestris* Seen a few times near to Kimberley.
Southern Reedbuck (Common R) *Redunca arundinum* Seen a few times.
Mountain Reedbuck *Redunca fulvorufula* Seen at Wakkerstroom.
Common Duiker (Grey Duiker) *Sylvicapra grimmia* Many seen, first near to Swellendam.

African Buffalo (Cape Buffalo) *Syncerus caffer* Seen a few times, including St Lucia.

Nyala *Tragelaphus angasii* Many at Mkuze.

Common Eland *Tragelaphus oryx* Seen a few times, first at Mokala NP.

Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus* Seen at Mkuze and St Lucia.

Greater Kudu (Greater Kudu) *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* Several seen, first near to Kimberley.

Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis* Seen at Mokala NP and Mkuze.



A large bull Eland (above) and a dehorned White Rhinoceros, an emergency measure to try to save the last rhinos...



Visiting an African Penguin colony is always a highlight of this tour!



The endemic and endangered Black Harrier was seen at close range several times. The widespread and common Helmeted Guineafowl (below) is nonetheless a spectacular bird!

