

NAMBIA, OKAVANGO AND VICTORIA FALLS: CUSTOM TRIP REPORT

20 AUGUST - 9 SEPTEMBER 2018

By Dominic Rollinson



We had great views of White-tailed Shrike on this trip.



Overview

This 21-day trip of Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Zambia was a customized trip for Susan and Aileen from the Republic of Ireland, which started in Walvis Bay, Namibia, on 20 August 2018 and ended in Livingstone, Zambia, on 9 September 2018. On this trip we aimed to find as many species of birds as possible while also enjoying the many animals and amazing sceneries the countries had to offer. The trip involved some fairly intense birding; however, we also enjoyed many relaxing boat cruises, a hot air balloon flight over the Namib Desert, and Khoisan cave paintings.

A total of 360 bird species were seen (plus 9 species heard only), with some of the birding highlights including African Pygmy Goose, Orange River Francolin, Hartlaub's Spurfowl, Saddle-billed Stork, White-backed Night Heron, Rufous-bellied Heron, Secretarybird, Western banded Snake Eagle, Verreaux's Eagle, Augur Buzzard, Kori Bustard, Rüppell's Korhaan, African Finfoot, Wattled Crane, Burchell's and Double-banded Coursers, Rock Pratincole, African Skimmer, Schalow's Turaco, Pel's Fishing Owl, Southern Carmine Beeeater, Violet Wood Hoopoe, Damara Red-billed, Bradfield's, and Monteiro's Hornbills, Southern Ground Hornbill, Grey and Dickinson's Kestrels, Pygmy Falcon, Rüppell's Parrot, White-tailed Shrike, Dune and Gray's Larks, Rufous-eared Warbler, Black-faced, Barecheeked, and Hartlaub's Babblers, Short-toed Rock Thrush, Herero Chat, and Cinderella Waxbill.



Dune Lark performed well for us on this trip.

We also came across a number of rare and impressive mammal species such as Lesser Bushbaby, Congo Rope Squirrel, Lion, African Elephant, Black Rhinoceros, Hartmann's Mountain



Zebra, Roan Antelope, Sable Antelope, Sitatunga, Gemsbok, Damara Dik-dik, and Heaviside's Dolphin.

Detailed Report

Day 1, 20th August 2018. Arrival in Walvis Bay

I picked up Susan and Aileen from Walvis Bay's small yet quite smart airport late in the afternoon. We only had a couple of hours of daylight and therefore decided to head to nearby Rooibank, where we would target one of Namibia's only two endemic bird species, **Dune Lark**. The larks were not hard to find, and we soon had a few birds displaying near to us. Other species in the area included **Namaqua Dove**, **Bokmakierie**, **Southern Fiscal**, **African Red-eyed Bulbul**, and **Palewinged Starling**. On the way out of the area we stopped for some pictures of Rooibank's church in the desert, which in the gloomy light looked quite eerie. On our way into Walvis Bay we picked up **Lesser** and **Greater Flamingos** as well as **South African Shelduck**, which proved to be the only sighting of this species on the whole trip!

Day 2, 21st August 2018. Boat cruise and birding around Walvis Bay

Breakfast was enjoyed from our B&B patio, which overlooked Walvis Bay Lagoon, meaning we could tick **Caspian Tern**, **Great White Pelican**, and more flamingoes with almost no effort at all. As we were going to be reminded again and again on the trip, showing up for meals without binoculars was at your own risk!

After breakfast we headed out for our boat cruise around Walvis Bay Lagoon. Soon after starting we had **Great White Pelican** literally taking fish from our hands, as well as enjoying droves of **Cape Cormorants** (with a few **Crowned Cormorants**) and **Kelp Gulls**. **Greater Crested** and **Sandwich Terns** were seen throughout the trip, while the highlight of the trip was probably the small group of **Heaviside's Dolphins**, a Benguela Current endemic, which bow-rode for a good 20 minutes. We also stopped at a massive **Cape Fur Seal** colony, which had a few opportunistic **Black-backed Jackals** hanging around, before we made our way back into the harbor.

After the boat cruise we decided to head into the nearby desert to look for a unique and bizarre plant, *Welwitschia mirabilis*, as well as our first taste of desert birding. We found many Welwitschia plants (some even with cones!) as well as a number of new bird species, including **Tractrac Chat**, **Common Ostrich**, and our target bird for the afternoon, **Gray's Lark**, which successfully avoided becoming lunch for an opportunistic **Rock Kestrel**. On our way back to the B&B we also came across an impressive group of at least 20 **Lappet-faced Vultures**!

A quick walk along the promenade before dinner gave us our first looks at Common Whimbrel, Kittlitz's, Three-banded, and White-fronted Plovers, Common Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone, and Pied Avocet.





Gray's Lark before it was harassed by a hungry Rock Kestrel

Day 3, 22nd August 2018. Walvis Bay birding and south to the Solitaire area

After another scrumptious breakfast we headed to the saltworks just south of Walvis Bay to target a few waders and other coastal species. We didn't have any success with Damara Tern, our main target for the morning, which had probably still to arrive from its West African wintering grounds; however, we did manage thousands of Common Terns (with a few Arctic Terns among them), Cape Teal, Black-necked Grebe, Black-winged Stilt, Chestnut-banded Plover, Ruff, Curlew and Marsh Sandpipers, Little Stint, and Red-necked Phalarope.

Our next destination was Barchan Dune Retreat near Solitaire, which was to be our base for the next couple of days to be able to visit the red dunes of Sossusvlei and also for our hot air balloon ride over the Namib Desert. Driving through the desert we were lucky enough to find a large Namaqua Chameleon, which posed nicely for our cameras. We took most of the afternoon to do the drive, taking in the sights and sounds of the vast desert. New birds en route included Pale Chanting Goshawk, Northern Black Korhaan, Bradfield's Swift, Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark, Black-chested Prinia, Pririt Batis, Mountain Wheatear, and Karoo Chat. On arrival at Barchan Dune Retreat we saw Lark-like Bunting, Dusky Sunbird, Red-headed Finch, and White-throated Canary. An active Sociable Weaver nest nearby had a resident Pygmy Falcon, which provided us with great scope views. The friendly, resident Meerkat was enjoyed close to our accommodation. We went to sleep to the sound of Common Barking Geckos, which, despite a quick nocturnal search, would not reveal themselves.





Namaqua Chameleon, an unexpected surprise in the Namib Desert

Day 4, 23rd August 2018. Sossusvlei area

We had an early start to enjoy an impressive sunrise over the nearby mountains while waiting for the birdsongs to begin. Not surprisingly the birds were a little late to rise in the cold conditions; however, while wandering around the property we eventually found White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Sabota Lark, Rosy-faced Lovebird, Cape Bunting, Acacia Pied Barbet, Cape Starling, and Great Sparrow. We left for Sossusvlei around lunchtime so that we could enjoy the red dunes in the afternoon light. En route to Sossusvlei we encountered Martial Eagle, Greater Kestrel, Namaqua Sandgrouse, and more Common Ostriches. After driving through Sesriem we came across our target bird for the day, Burchell's Courser. A small group of them were seen on the seemingly desolate gravel plains with the red dunes as backdrop. Then we spent a couple of hours enjoying Dead Vlei in the afternoon light, the bright white sand of the dry pan contrasting with the bright red sand of the surrounding dunes, with hundreds of long-dead trees filling the pan, made for a picturesque view. On our drive back through the desert we found a very obliging Rüppell's Korhaan, which posed for our cameras.

Day 5, 24th August 2018. Sossusvlei area and north to Spitzkoppe

This morning was our highly-anticipated hot air balloon flight over the Namib Desert. We left Barchan early and arrived around sunrise at Solitaire, from where our balloon was leaving. The hour-long flight over the desert was incredible; we all really enjoyed seeing the desert from an entirely different perspective. Toward the end of the flight we were even lucky enough to see **Hartmann's Mountain Zebra**, **Common Warthog**, and **Rüppell's Korhaan**. Just before landing the wind picked up to 40 km per hour, which meant we had to do a controlled crash landing; thankfully we were all OK and then headed back to Barchan for breakfast.





Impressive views from our hot air balloon over the Namib Desert

We had a fairly long drive today to Spitzkoppe but still managed a few new birds on the drive, including **Black-chested Snake Eagle**, **Scaly-feathered Weaver**, and **White-throated Canary**. On the approach to Spitzkoppe, the Matterhorn of Africa, we stopped frequently to enjoy and photograph this massive, granitic feature. After checking into our accommodation at Spitzkoppen Lodge we had a stroll around the area and soon came across **Karoo Long-billed Lark**, **Red-billed Spurfowl**, **Bradfield's Swift**, and **Chat Flycatcher**, as well as a few new mammals such as **Rock Hyrax** and **Yellow Mongoose**. We enjoyed the amazing sunset from the deck of the lodge with a cold beer in hand – always a great way to end the day.

Day 6, 25th August 2018. Spitzkoppe to Erongo

Our big target today was Herero Chat, because Spitzkoppe was probably our only locality for this sought-after bird. While wandering around the low shrubs at the base of Spitzkoppe we found White-tailed Shrike, Augur Buzzard, White-backed Mousebird, Monteiro's Hornbill, Pririt Batis, Marico Flycatcher, and eventually after many hours of searching an obliging pair of Herero Chats.

Before lunch we had a guided tour of the many Khoisan cave paintings around Spitzkoppe. In these painting we could see the depiction of wildlife that previously used to roam the area.

After lunch we headed north to Erongo Wilderness Lodge. The habitat changed quite suddenly from open desert plains to tall bushveld. The habitat change resulted in a number of new species, including Lilac-breasted Roller, Ashy Tit, Chestnut-vented Warbler, and Green-winged Pytilia.

Erongo Wilderness Lodge is set among granite koppies, and there is some great birding to be had just sitting at the restaurant and waiting for the birds to come to you. In this way and strolling around the camp we found Chestnut Weaver, Black-throated Canary, Red-billed Spurfowl, and Monteiro's Hornbill, while Verreaux's Eagle and African Hawk-Eagle were seen



overhead. A few **Damara Dik-diks** and **Dassie Rats** were seen around the camp, with the best bird for the afternoon being a **Rockrunner** while we were busy with the day list! We enjoyed dinner on the deck overlooking the waterhole, with **Freckled Nightjars** and a **Common Genet** keeping us company.



Monteiro's Hornbill was seen at a number of localities in central Namibia.

Day 7, 26th August 2018. Erongo area and north to Kamanjab

We were up at sunrise the next morning, with Hartlaub's Spurfowl the big target. These birds did not take too long to find, and we soon had a pair calling from the top of a large koppie. Other birds around camp included African Grey Hornbill, Short-toed Rock Thrush, and White-tailed Shrike. We then moved into the plains and explored a dry river bed. We had a really productive hour here with Rüppell's Parrot, Violet Wood Hoopoe, Southern Pied Babbler, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Barred Wren-Warbler, Damara Red-billed Hornbill (Namibia's second endemic bird), Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Grey Go-away-bird, and Pearl-spotted Owlet. We had a decent drive ahead of us today north to Kamanjab, and so we set off soon after our late breakfast. On the drive we had more new birds such as Ovambo Sparrowhawk, Tawny Eagle, Black-winged Kite, Purple Roller, Shaft-tailed Whydah, Southern White-crowned Shrike, and Swallow-tailed Bee-eater.

A quick walk around the Oppi-Koppi Restcamp in the late afternoon produced Violet-eared and Black-faced Waxbills, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Pearl-spotted Owlet, and Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill.

Day 8, 27th August 2018. Kamanjab to Kunene River

A quick walk this morning before breakfast did not produce too much of interest besides **African Grey Hornbill.** However, we did see **Wattled Starling** and **Monteiro's Hornbill** from the breakfast table, which were nice surprises. From Kamanjab we headed north to Kunene River



Lodge, which is located in some great riparian vegetation along the Namibia/Angola border. On the drive we encountered some good raptors, including **Shikra** and **Gabar** and **Pale Chanting Goshawks**.

The afternoon's birding around the lodge in a new habitat saw us tick off many new trip birds, such as Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush, Bare-cheeked Babbler, Mourning Collared Dove, Swamp Boubou, Black-backed Puffback, Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Groundscraper Thrush, and Meves's Starling.

We ended the evening with sundowners on the deck overlooking the Kunene River, hoping for a feeding Grey Kestrel, but we had to settle with **Giant**, **Malachite**, and **Pied Kingfishers**, **Striated Heron**, and **Wire-tailed Swallows** for now. An obliging pair of **African Scops Owls** were seen just before retiring to bed.



We had amazing views of Malachite Kingfisher on this trip.

Day 9, 28th August 2018. Zebra Mountains and Kunene River

Today we started really early, as we were heading out with Peter Morgan to look for **Angolan Cave Chat**, which was discovered as a Namibian breeding resident as recently as 2012! We arrived in the Zebra Mountains just before sunrise and scurried up the hillside to wait in position for the birds to hopefully show themselves. Unfortunately the bird, although making it onto our 'heard only' list, would not show itself. Peter mentioned that they were strangely quiet this morning, which was unusual. The trip back, however, did produce great views of another Kunene special in the form of **Cinderella Waxbill**. We were able to watch a group of 15-20 birds coming to drink, along with **Violet-eared Waxbills**. Other good birds in the area included **Double-banded Sandgrouse**, **White-tailed Shrike**, **Golden-breasted Bunting**, **Red-headed Weaver**, **Yellow-billed Oxpecker**, **White-crested Helmetshrike**, and **African Hoopoe**.

The afternoon's birding was highly productive, and we were able to add **Red-billed Firefinch**, **Water Thick-knee**, **Bennett's** (of the distinctive *capricorni* subspecies) and **Bearded Woodpeckers**, **White-browed Coucal**, **Holub's Golden Weaver**, and what appeared to be a



hybrid Green/Violet Wood Hoopoe. Waiting for Grey Kestrel on the deck this evening still did not produce the goods.



Bennett's Woodpecker of the capricorni subspecies

Day 10, 29th August 2018. Kunene River and south to Hobatere Lodge

We did a fantastic sunrise boat cruise this morning along the Kunene River. The highlight of this trip was undoubtedly **Grey Kestrel**, which showed nicely, presumedly before heading off to hunt for the day. Other new species included **Black Crake**, **Lesser Swamp Warbler**, **African Pied Wagtail**, **Spectacled Weaver**, **African Darter**, and **Goliath Heron**.

After a late breakfast we headed south to Hobatere Lodge on the western edge of Etosha National Park. The afternoon's birding produced Verreaux's Eagle, Southern Red-billed Hornbill, White-tailed Shrike, Rüppell's Parrot, Red-billed Buffalo Weaver, and Bare-cheeked Babbler.

We enjoyed dinner while overlooking a nearby waterhole, which had hundreds of **Double-banded Sandgrouse**, which were being unsuccessfully hunted by a **Black-backed Jackal**, as well as **Gemsbok**, **Hartmann's Mountain Zebra**, **Greater Kudu**, and **Springbok**.

Day 11, 30th August 2018. Hobatere and Etosha National Park

A morning drive before breakfast yielded our target bird in the form of a pair of calling **Orange River Francolins**. While having breakfast we had brief views of a melanistic **Gabar Goshawk** and were further distracted by **Bare-cheeked Babbler** and **Rüppell's Parrot**.

Around mid-morning we left Hobatere and entered the world-renowned Etosha National Park via its western entrance. We had a long drive through the park to our accommodation at Okaukuejo Camp, where we were to be based for the next two nights. The drive through the park produced great views of **Double-banded Courser**, **Kalahari Scrub Robin**, **Fawn-colored Lark**, **Ant-**



eating Chat, Greater Kestrel, Secretarybird, Bateleur, Tawny Eagle, and Northern Black Korhaan.

After retiring to our rooms for a couple of hours to escape the midday heat we took a drive into the plains and enjoyed the sunset. This drive was really productive and produced more **Double-banded Coursers**, **Pink-billed**, **Red-capped**, **Eastern Clapper**, and **Spike-heeled Larks**, **Caspian Plover**, **Kori Bustard**, and a lone **Spotted Hyaena**. A stroll down to the floodlit waterhole at Okaukuejo after dark gave us good sightings of **Black Rhinoceros**, **African Elephant**, and **Giraffe**.

Day 12, 31st August 2018. Etosha National Park

Today we had the whole day in Etosha and spent much of the day exploring the large network of roads and many waterholes. The day started well with **Rufous-eared Warbler** east of Okaukuejo Camp, here at the northern limit of its range. On the plains we came across many **Common Ostriches**, **Kori Bustard**, **Northern Black Korhaan**, **Spotted Thick-knee** (surprisingly the only sighting of the trip!), more **Double-banded Coursers**, **Namaqua Sandgrouse**, **Desert Cisticola**, and a number of raptors including **Bateleur**, **African Hawk-Eagle**, **Greater Kestrel**, **Shikra**, and **Red-necked Falcon**. The waterholes were teaming with large numbers of both **Chestnut-backed** and **Grey-backed Sparrow-Larks**. We stopped for lunch at Halali Camp, and here we had good views of nesting **Violet Wood Hoopoes** as well as **Southern White-crowned Shrike** and **Red-headed Weaver**. On the afternoon drive we watched **Blue Wildebeest** kicking up dust, which made for amazing photographic opportunities in the golden light, as well as getting views of the endemic **Etosha Agama**.



Blue Wildebeest in the gorgeous late afternoon light in Etosha



Day 13, 1st September 2018. Etosha National Park

We had most of the day in the park today, as we were staying at Mokuti Lodge just outside of the park tonight, and so took our time as we slowly made our way east through the park. Good birds en route included Rufous-naped Lark, Rattling Cisticola, Red-breasted Swallow, African Harrier-Hawk, Cape Vulture, and Red-crested Korhaan. Lunch in the woodlands around Namutoni Camp provided a host of new species, including Common Scimitarbill, Marico Sunbird, and Lesser Masked Weaver, while the waterhole yielded Quailfinch, Red-necked Falcon, and African Reed Warbler. The change in habitat also meant that we enjoyed a few new mammals for the trip, including Common Eland and Black-faced Impala (considered a full species by some authorities).

A quick walk around Mokuti Lodge gave us **Carp's Tit**, many **Red-billed Spurfowls**, and also a new mammal in the form of **Smith's Bush Squirrel**.

Day 14, 2nd September 2018. Mokuti Lodge to Rundu

We once more were up early this morning, and it didn't take long to find our target species, **Blackfaced Babbler**, which was moving around in a small, noisy group. After breakfast we left camp and headed east to Hakusembe River Lodge near Rundu. En route we stopped to view the Hoba meteorite near Grootfontein, the world's heaviest meteorite. In this area we found **Southern Pied Babbler** as well as more **Violet-eared Waxbills**. Just north of Grootfontein we saw **Bradfield's Hornbill**, a species which occurs in low densities on this route.

As we arrived at Hakusembe River Lodge we were immediately confronted with a number of new species, here at their westernmost distribution, including Collared Pratincole, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Lesser Honeyguide, Magpie Shrike, Black-headed Oriole, Hartlaub's Babbler, African Yellow White-eye, Violet-backed Starling, and Southern Black Flycatcher.



We had great views of Coppery-tailed Coucal on our trip.



We did a sunset cruise along the Kavango River, which was a really enjoyable and relaxing experience with some great birds too, namely African Openbill, Yellow-billed Stork, White-faced Duck, Great Egret, African Wattled Lapwing, African Jacana, and Malachite Kingfisher. We also saw some impressive specimens of Nile Crocodile here.

Day 15, 3rd September 2018. Rundu to Mahangu Safari Lodge

We left Hakusembe early the next morning, as we wanted to bird the broad-leaved woodlands east of Rundu before it got too hot. On the drive out of Hakusembe we found our first **African Pipits** and **Yellow-crowned Bishops** of the trip. We arrived at a patch of fairly intact woodland before it had warmed up too much, and we spent the next couple of hours walking through it looking for bird parties. In these bird parties we found **Green-capped Eremomela**, **Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird**, **Green Wood Hoopoe**, **Striped Kingfisher**, **Chinspot Batis**, **Southern Black Tit**, **Tinkling Cisticola**, **Yellow-throated Petronia**, and **Pale Flycatcher**. Overhead we had our first views of the beautifully-colored **Southern Carmine Bee-eater** and brief views of noisy **Meyer's Parrots**

Mahangu Safari Lodge was our destination for the night, and the lush riparian vegetation along the edge of the Kavango River resulted in some great birds right in camp. While enjoying our lunch overlooking the river we soon saw **Intermediate Egret** and **Black**, **Squacco**, and **Goliath Herons**, as well as a pair of loud and excited **Giant Kingfishers**. In the surrounding riparian forest we enjoyed **White-browed Robin-Chat**, **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Orange-breasted Bushshrike**, and **Collared Sunbird**. A stroll into the nearby floodplain did not produce too much; however, we did see **Grey-rumped Swallow** and **Zitting Cisticola** as well as many drinking starlings. Unfortunately none of these flocks contained Sharp-tailed Starling, with most being **Greater Blue-eared Starlings**.

While enjoying sundowners and watching **African Skimmers** fly up and down the river we were distracted by a small group of **Brown Firefinches** as they fed right underneath the deck. Not a bad way to end the day!

Day 16, 4th September 2018. South into Botswana

After being up very early once more we headed into the floodplain again. The area was much more productive this morning with **Rufous-bellied Heron** showing well along with a distant pair of **Wattled Cranes**. **Bradfield's Hornbill** also gave us good views as it flew by.

After breakfast we made our way south toward the Botswana border. We stopped for a few hours of birding in Mahango Game Reserve, which was really great. We managed to find a number of new species around the floodplain, including **Long-toed Lapwing**, **Saddle-billed Stork**, and good numbers with better sightings of **Wattled Cranes**. We also had a few new antelope species in Mahango Game Reserve, namely **Bushbuck**, **Roan Antelope**, and **Southern Lechwe**.





We had good views of a small herd of **Roan Antelope** in Mahango Game Reserve.

The border crossing into Botswana was painless, and we soon arrived at Drotsky's Cabins in Shakawe for lunch. Lunch out on the lawn was a distracting affair, as we had birds all around us, such as White-fronted Bee-eater, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Hartlaub's Babbler, and White-browed Coucal.

The late afternoon was spent wandering around the property and enjoying views over the impressive Okavango swamps.

Day 17, 5th September 2018. Okavango Panhandle

Today was one of the highlights of the trip, as we had a morning and evening on a boat to ourselves with our driver. It did not take long before we had great views of **African Skimmer** on the sand banks and then great views of a pair of a shy, swamp-dwelling antelope known as **Sitatunga**. Amazingly we were to find seven of these seldom-seen animals on our morning trip! We spent a bit of time with groups of herons following the barbel run, when these larger predatory fish moved through the area, displacing other smaller fish species and sending the fish-eating bird species into a feeding frenzy. We had groups of over a hundred herons and egrets, including **Great**, **Little**, and **Intermediate Egrets** and **Grey**, **Purple**, **Black**, and **Squacco Herons**. Hiding in the reedbeds nearby we also found **Striated Heron** and **Little Bittern**.



The rare, swamp-dwelling antelope Sitatunga

There were also many waterfowl around, including **Red-billed Teal**, **White-faced Whistling** and **Knob-billed Ducks**, while a quieter bay provided a pair of **African Pygmy Geese**. Although **African Fish Eagles** were plentiful along the river, the prize for the best raptor was awarded to **Pel's Fishing Owl**, which provided great views at one of its known roost sites. We were also able to closely approach a small group of feeding **African Elephants** as they fed quietly on the river bank, and a few **South African Cliff Swallows** visited us briefly.

In the afternoon we headed out again on the boat, this time to try to get visuals of a few smaller, skulking species. We eventually managed decent views of both Little Rush and Greater Swamp Warblers and Chirping Cisticola. A few Southern Brown-throated and Holub's Golden Weavers were seen busily constructing their neat nests in the reedbeds. We had more great views of African Skimmer and African Fish Eagle this afternoon and enjoyed a great African sunset to cap off a really fun day.





African Fish Eagle was seen in good numbers in the Okavango swamps.

Day 18, 6th September 2018. Through the Caprivi Strip to Katima Mulilo

This morning we had a walk in the sand forest behind Drotsky's Cabins before breakfast. It was mostly quiet; however, we did have great views of **African Barred Owlet**. After breakfast we headed back into Namibia with a fairly long drive across the Caprivi Strip scheduled for the day. Driving back through Mahango Game Reserve we had good views of **Sable Antelope**, surely one of Africa's best-looking antelopes, as well as of **Dark Chanting Goshawk** and **Rock Pratincole** seen nearby. Driving through the Caprivi we were lucky enough to come across a **Dickinson's Kestrel**, which gave us a brief flyby.

We arrived at our accommodation in Katima Mulilo in the midafternoon, where we were quickly shown a roosting **African Wood Owl**. After we had settled in we had a stroll around the adjacent bushveld and soon added **Tropical Boubou**, **Black-crowned Tchagra**, **Crested Barbet**, and **Brown-hooded Kingfisher** to our list.

Later in the afternoon we did a boat cruise along the Zambezi River. Almost straight away after leaving the lodge we found one of our targets, a roosting **White-backed Night Heron**. We next hit Finfoot Alley, which, as expected, gave us great views of a number of **African Finfoots** as well as **Half-collared Kingfisher**. In the riparian vegetation along the river we had good views of **Schalow's Turaco**, **Trumpeter Hornbill**, and the red-bellied subspecies of **Olive Woodpecker**, which only just makes it into the Caprivi Strip.





You might not notice it at first, but there's an African Finfoot above those bright-red legs.

Day 19, 7th September 2018. Katima Mulilo to Livingstone

This morning we headed to a nearby pan, which provided a pair of **Hottentot Teal** but unfortunately no White-backed Duck, with **Senegal Coucal** and **Lizard Buzzard** seen nearby. Moving into the nearby broad-leaved woodlands we found one of our main targets for the morning, **Western Banded Snake Eagle**, which allowed us amazing scope views. We also found **Retz's Helmetshrike**, **Amethyst Sunbird**, **Grey-headed Bushshrike**, **Golden-tailed Woodpecker**, and surprisingly a single **Wood Pipit**.

Our next two nights were to be just about out of Livingstone, and so we crossed into Zambia at the Sesheke border post, and the border crossing, despite a bit of running back-and-forth, went relatively smoothly.

The long drive east to Livingstone was fairly uneventful, with the highlights being **Little Sparrowhawk** and a small group of the massive **Southern Ground Hornbills** working their way through the woodlands.

After arriving at Camp Nkwazi just outside of Livingstone it did not take long before we had found both **Collared Palm Thrush** and **Bearded Scrub Robin** hopping around in the undergrowth. In the late afternoon, after it had cooled down a bit, we headed into the nearby woodland, where we were hoping for a few miombo specials. Unfortunately things were dead quiet, and the best we could manage was **Yellow-throated Petronia** and **Kurrichane Thrush**.

Day 20, 8th September 2018. Livingstone and Victoria Falls

Today we headed across the border into Zimbabwe to enjoy the world-famous Victoria Falls. The border crossing was amazingly quick, and we were soon trekking through the lush rainforest, with the loud roar of the falls drowning out most bird calls. It was amazing to think that just a couple of weeks ago we were walking the barren and dry plains of the Namib Desert and now we were enjoying one of the world's most impressive waterfalls! We spent a while walking the various



paths around the falls and also managed to find a few new birds for the trip. **Red-winged Starling**, **Bronze Mannikin**, **White-crowned Lapwing**, and **Red-faced Cisticola** were all new, while we also got better views of **Schalow's Turaco**.

For our final afternoon we decided to do a boat cruise along the Zambezi River, and this turned out to be one of the more enjoyable boat cruises of the trip. We managed a good number of birds and mammals that were all very approachable from the boat. **Rock Pratincoles** provided us greatly improved views from before, **African Skimmers** cruised up and down the river, and **White-crowned Lapwings** were seen on the river banks. We saw small herds of **African Elephants**, **African Buffalo**, **Giraffe**, **Waterbuck**, and many **Hippopotamuses** as well as **Vervet Monkeys** and **Chacma Baboons**. We were treated to one final impressive African sunset before we were to catch our flights the next morning.



African Skimmers gave us a good send-off on our final evening.

Day 21, 9th September 2018. Livingstone and departure

With our flights out of Livingstone at around midday we were able to go for one last walk around Camp Nkwazi, followed by a hearty breakfast. We found **Grey Penduline Tit** and **Black Cuckooshrike** on our walk as well as brief views of **Village Weaver**. We then transferred to Livingstone, where we went our separate ways after a fantastic three weeks around this beautiful and diverse part of the world.



Bird List - Following IOC (8.2)

Birds 'heard only' are marked with (H) after the common name, all other species were seen.

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following BirdLife International: CE = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened. Southern Africa endemics are bolded.

Common name	Scientific name
Ostriches (Struthionidae)	
Common Ostrich	Struthio camelus
Ducks, Geese and Swans (Anat	
White-faced Whistling Duck	Dendrocygna viduata
Spur-winged Goose	Plectropterus gambensis
Knob-billed Duck	Sarkidiornis melanotos
Egyptian Goose	Alopochen aegyptiaca
South African Shelduck	Tadorna cana
African Pygmy Goose	Nettapus auritus
Hottentot Teal	Spatula hottentota
Cape Teal	Anas capensis
Red-billed Teal	Anas erythrorhyncha
Guineafowl (Numididae)	
Helmeted Guineafowl	Numida meleagris
Pheasants and allies (Phasianid	lae)
Orange River Francolin	Scleroptila gutturalis
Crested Francolin (H)	Dendroperdix sephaena
Hartlaub's Spurfowl	Pternistis hartlaubi
Red-billed Spurfowl	Pternistis adspersus
Red-necked Spurfowl (H)	Pternistis afer
Grebes (Podicipedidae)	
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis
Black-necked Grebe	Podiceps nigricollis
Flamingos (Phoenicopteridae)	
Greater Flamingo	Phoenicopterus roseus









Common name	Scientific name
Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres
Ruff	Calidris pugnax
Curlew Sandpiper - NT	Calidris ferruginea
Sanderling	Calidris alba
Little Stint	Calidris minuta
Red-necked Phalarope	Phalaropus lobatus
Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos
Marsh Sandpiper	Tringa stagnatilis
Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola
Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia
Coursers, Pratincoles (Glareoli	
Burchell's Courser	Cursorius rufus
Double-banded Courser	Rhinoptilus africanus
Collared Pratincole	Glareola pratincola
Rock Pratincole	Glareola nuchalis
Gulls, Terns and Skimmers (La	aridae)
African Skimmer - NT	Rynchops flavirostris
Grey-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus
Hartlaub's Gull	Chroicocephalus hartlaubii
Kelp Gull	Larus dominicanus
Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia
Greater Crested Tern	Thalasseus bergii
Sandwich Tern	Thalasseus sandvicensis
Common Tern	Sterna hirundo
Arctic Tern	Sterna paradisaea
Whiskered Tern	Chlidonias hybrida
Sandgrouse (Pteroclidae)	
Namaqua Sandgrouse	Pterocles namaqua
Double-banded Sandgrouse	Pterocles bicinctus
Discours Description (Call villa)	
Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)	Calamba linia
Rock Dove	Columba livia
Speckled Pigeon	Columba guinea
Mourning Collared Dove	Streptopelia decipiens
Red-eyed Dove	Streptopelia semitorquata
Ring-necked Dove	Streptopelia capicola







Common name

Acacia Pied Barbet

Lesser Honeyguide

Woodpeckers (Picidae)
Bennett's Woodpecker

Golden-tailed Woodpecker

Crested Barbet

Black-collared Barbet

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird

Honeyguides (Indicatoridae)

Scientific name

Lybius torquatus

Indicator minor

Campethera bennettii

Campethera abingoni

Pogoniulus chrysoconus

Tricholaema leucomelas

Trachyphonus vaillantii



Bushshrikes (Malaconotidae)

Common name

Bokmakierie

Grey-headed Bushshrike

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Black-crowned Tchagra

Black-backed Puffback

Tropical Boubou

Swamp Boubou

Orange-breasted Bushshrike

Scientific name

Malaconotus blanchoti

Telophorus zeylonus

Tchagra australis

Tchagra senegalus

Dryoscopus cubla

Laniarius major

Laniarius bicolor

Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus



Ammomanopsis grayi

Gray's Lark

Common name	Scientific name
Karoo Long-billed Lark	Certhilauda subcoronata
Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	Eremopterix leucotis
Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark	Eremopterix verticalis
Sabota Lark	Calendulauda sabota
Fawn-colored Lark	Calendulauda africanoides
Dune Lark	Calendulauda erythrochlamys
Eastern Clapper Lark	Mirafra fasciolata
Rufous-naped Lark	Mirafra africana
Pink-billed Lark	Spizocorys conirostris
Red-capped Lark	Calandrella cinerea
Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)	
African Red-eyed Bulbul	Pycnonotus nigricans
Dark-capped Bulbul	Pycnonotus tricolor
Yellow-bellied Greenbul	Chlorocichla flaviventris
Terrestrial Brownbul	Phyllastrephus terrestris
Swallows, Martins (Hirundinidae)
Grey-rumped Swallow	Pseudhirundo griseopyga
Brown-throated Martin	Riparia paludicola
Banded Martin	Riparia cincta
Wire-tailed Swallow	Hirundo smithii
Rock Martin	Ptyonoprogne fuligula
Lesser Striped Swallow	Cecropis abyssinica
Red-breasted Swallow	Cecropis semirufa
South African Cliff Swallow	Petrochelidon spilodera
Crombecs, African Warblers (Ma	ncrosphenidae)
Rockrunner	Achaetops pycnopygius
Long-billed Crombec	Sylvietta rufescens
Reed Warblers and allies (Acroce	phalidae)
Greater Swamp Warbler	Acrocephalus rufescens
Lesser Swamp Warbler	Acrocephalus gracilirostris
African Reed Warbler	Acrocephalus baeticatus
Grassbirds and allies (Locustellid	ae)
Little Rush Warbler	Bradypterus baboecala



Common name	Scientific name
Cisticolas and allies (Cisticolidae)	
Red-faced Cisticola	Cisticola erythrops
Rattling Cisticola	Cisticola chiniana
Tinkling Cisticola	Cisticola rufilatus
Luapula Cisticola (H)	Cisticola luapula
Chirping Cisticola	Cisticola pipiens
Zitting Cisticola	Cisticola juncidis
Desert Cisticola	Cisticola aridulus
Tawny-flanked Prinia	Prinia subflava
Black-chested Prinia	Prinia flavicans
Yellow-breasted Apalis	Apalis flavida
Rufous-eared Warbler	Malcorus pectoralis
Grey-backed Camaroptera	Camaroptera brevicaudata
Barred Wren-Warbler	Calamonastes fasciolatus
Yellow-bellied Eremomela	Eremomela icteropygialis
Green-capped Eremomela	Eremomela scotops
Burnt-necked Eremomela	Eremomela usticollis
Laughingthrushes & allies (Leiot	hrichidae)
Black-faced Babbler	Turdoides melanops
Arrow-marked Babbler	Turdoides jardineii
Hartlaub's Babbler	Turdoides hartlaubii
Southern Pied Babbler	Turdoides bicolor
Bare-cheeked Babbler	Turdoides gymnogenys
Sylviid Babblers (Sylviidae)	
Chestnut-vented Warbler	Sylvia subcoerulea
White-eyes (Zosteropidae)	
African Yellow White-eye	Zosterops senegalensis
Affican Tenow Winte-eye	Zosterops seneguensis
Starlings, Rhabdornis (Sturnidae	9)
Wattled Starling	Creatophora cinerea
Cape Starling	Lamprotornis nitens
Greater Blue-eared Starling	Lamprotornis chalybaeus
Meves's Starling	Lamprotornis mevesii
Burchell's Starling	Lamprotornis australis
Violet-backed Starling	Cinnyricinclus leucogaster
Red-winged Starling	Onychognathus morio



Common name	Scientific name
Pale-winged Starling	Onychognathus nabouroup
Oxpeckers (Buphagidae)	
Yellow-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus africanus
Red-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus erythrorynchus
Thurshag (Tandidae)	
Thrushes (Turdidae) Groundsgroper Thrush	Tundus litsitsimung
Groundscraper Thrush Kurrichane Thrush	Turdus litsitsirupa Turdus libonyana
Kurrenane Tiliusii	Turaus iibonyana
Chats, Old World Flycatchers	(Muscicapidae)
Bearded Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas quadrivirgata
Kalahari Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas paena
White-browed Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas leucophrys
Grey Tit-Flycatcher (H)	Myioparus plumbeus
Southern Black Flycatcher	Melaenornis pammelaina
Pale Flycatcher	Melaenornis pallidus
Chat Flycatcher	Melaenornis infuscatus
Marico Flycatcher	Melaenornis mariquensis
Ashy Flycatcher	Muscicapa caerulescens
Angolan Cave Chat (H)	Cossypha ansorgei
White-browed Robin-Chat	Cossypha heuglini
Collared Palm Thrush	Cichladusa arquata
Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush	Cichladusa ruficauda
Short-toed Rock Thrush	Monticola brevipes
African Stonechat	Saxicola torquatus
Karoo Chat	Emarginata schlegelii
Tractrac Chat	Emarginata tractrac
Ant-eating Chat	Myrmecocichla formicivora
Mountain Wheatear	Myrmecocichla monticola
Familiar Chat	Oenanthe familiaris
Herero Chat	Namibornis herero
Sunbirds (Nectariniidae)	
Collared Sunbird	Hedydipna collaris
Amethyst Sunbird	Chalcomitra amethystina
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	Chalcomitra senegalensis
Marico Sunbird	Cinnyris mariquensis
White-bellied Sunbird	Cinnyris talatala



Common name	Scientific name
Dusky Sunbird	Cinnyris fuscus
Old World Sparrows, Snowfincher	s (Passeridae)
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus
Great Sparrow	Passer motitensis
Cape Sparrow	Passer melanurus
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	Passer diffusus
Yellow-throated Petronia	Gymnoris superciliaris
W W I I I D I D	
Weavers, Widowbirds (Ploceidae)	D. 1
Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	Bubalornis niger
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	Plocepasser mahali
Sociable Weaver	Philetairus socius
Scaly-feathered Weaver	Sporopipes squamifrons
Thick-billed Weaver	Amblyospiza albifrons
Spectacled Weaver	Ploceus ocularis
Holub's Golden Weaver	Ploceus xanthops
Southern Brown-throated Weaver	Ploceus xanthopterus
Lesser Masked Weaver	Ploceus intermedius
Southern Masked Weaver	Ploceus velatus
Village Weaver	Ploceus cucullatus
Chestnut Weaver	Ploceus rubiginosus
Red-headed Weaver	Anaplectes rubriceps
Red-billed Quelea	Quelea quelea
Yellow-crowned Bishop	Euplectes afer
Southern Red Bishop	Euplectes orix
Fan-tailed Widowbird	Euplectes axillaris
White-winged Widowbird	Euplectes albonotatus
Waxbills, Munias and allies (Estri	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
Green-winged Pytilia	Pytilia melba
Red-headed Finch	Amadina erythrocephala
Cut-throat Finch	Amadina fasciata
Brown Firefinch	Lagonosticta nitidula
Red-billed Firefinch	Lagonosticta senegala
Jameson's Firefinch	Lagonosticta rhodopareia
Blue Waxbill	Uraeginthus angolensis
Violet-eared Waxbill	Uraeginthus granatinus
Cinderella Waxbill	Estrilda thomensis



Total seen	360
Total heard only	9
Total recorded	369

Mammal List

Common name	Scientific name
Dogs, Wolves, Foxes (Canidae)	
Black-backed Jackal	Canis mesomelas
Cats (Felidae)	





Common name	Scientific name
Hippopotamuses (Hippopotami	idae)
Hippopotamus	Hippopotamus amphibius
Hogs, Pigs (Suidae)	
Common Warthog	Phacochoerus africanus
Hyraxes (Procaviidae)	
Rock Hyrax	Procavia capensis
Rabbits, Hares (Leporidae)	7
Scrub Hare	Lepus saxatilis
Elephant Shrews (Macroscelidi	dae)
Bushveld Sengi	Elephantulus intufi
Western Rock Sengi	Elephantulus rupestris
Western Rock Sengi	Etephaniaius rupesiris
Horses, Asses, Zebras (Equidae	<u> </u>
Plains Zebra	Equus quagga
Hartmann's Mountain Zebra	Equus zebra hartmannae
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	24.00 2,00 1.00 1.00 1.00
Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae)	
Black Rhinoceros	Diceros bicornis
Old World Monkeys (Cercopith	necidae)
Vervet Monkey	Chlorocebus pygerythrus
Chacma Baboon	Papio ursinus
Bushbabies, Galagos (Galagida	
Southern Lesser Galago	Galago moholi
Flowbourte (Flowbook Class)	
Elephants (Elephantidae)	I I
African Elephant	Loxodonta africana
Dassie Rat (Petromuridae)	
Dassie Rat (1 etromuruae)	Petromus typicus
Dassic Nat	1 enomus typicus
Squirrels, Chipmunks, Marmot	ts. Prairie Dogs (Sciuridae)
Congo Rope Squirrel	Funisciurus congicus
Smith's Bush Squirrel	Paraxerus cepapi
South African Ground Squirrel	Xerus inauris
South Fifteen Offend Dyunion	2101000 010000100



Total seen	43
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Reptile List

Scientific Name
e)
Pelomedusa subrufa
1
Dispholidus typus
Trachylepis binotata
rrhosauridae)
Matobosaurus validus
Varanus albigularis
Varanus niloticus
1
Agama planiceps
Agama etoshae
Chamaeleo namaquensis
Pachydactylus turneri
Ptenopus garrulus
Crocodylus niloticus
11



