



**SUBTROPICAL SOUTH AFRICA BIRDING TOUR:  
COMPREHENSIVE EASTERN SOUTH AFRICA - TRIP REPORT**

**01 – 18 February 2025**

**By Joshua Olszewski**



*The magnificent **Southern Ground Hornbill** was one of the highlights from our time in Kruger  
(photo Helen Walker)!*

### Overview

South Africa is home to an impressive diversity of bird species thanks to its diversity of habitats. From semidesert to high mountains, forests to grasslands and savanna, this range of biomes, along with its position at the southern tip of the continent, are what make South Africa a hotspot for biodiversity and endemism. On this 18-day tour, we explored the eastern side of this varied country. Being warmer, wetter and more tropical than the west, the predominant habitats across the region are savanna, high-altitude grassland, montane forest and coastal lowland forest, interspersed with various wetlands, rivers and other aquatic habitats.

Of the over 800 bird species that occur in South Africa, roughly 450 were seen on this tour, including special endemics and near-endemics like **Blue Crane, Southern Bald Ibis, Drakensberg Rockjumper, Gurney's Sugarbird, Rudd's Lark, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Ground Woodpecker, Buff-streaked Chat, Cape and Sentinel Rock Thrushes, Knysna Turaco, Woodward's Batis, Brown and Karoo Scrub Robins, Sweet Waxbill, Forest, White-throated, Black-headed and Yellow Canaries, Crimson-breasted Shrike and Southern Pied Babbler**. Other notable species encountered along the way included **African Broadbill, Narina Trogon, Swamp Nightjar, Southern Ground Hornbill, Kori and Denham's Bustards, Lesser Moorhen, African and Striped Crakes, Allen's Gallinule, Coqui Francolin, African Skimmer, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Secretarybird, Eastern Nicator, Gorgeous Bushshrike, Retz's Helmetshrike** and various hornbills, kingfishers, bee-eaters, weavers, sunbirds and raptors.



*The uncommon **Allen's Gallinule** performed well for us on this tour (photo Helen Walker).*

A detailed daily account can be read below, and the full bird and mammal lists are located at the end of the report.

### Detailed Report

#### **Day 1, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025. Morning birding near Durban, transfer to Pennington**

We started out doing some light birding at a coastal reserve on the outskirts of Durban, Umhlanga Lagoon Nature Reserve. This protected patch of coastal forest and thicket accustomed us to some of the regular bush species we were to see throughout the tour. Among these were **Red-eyed Dove**, **Diederik Cuckoo**, **Speckled Mousebird**, **Little Bee-eater**, **Brown-hooded Kingfisher**, **Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird**, **Cardinal** and **Golden-tailed Woodpecker**, **Southern Boubou**, **Square-tailed Drongo**, **Southern Black Tit**, **Green-backed Camaroptera**, **Bar-throated** and **Yellow-breasted Apalises**, **Sombre** and **Yellow-bellied Greenbuls**, **Cape White-eye**, **Bronze Mannikin**, **Red-capped Robin-Chat**, **Collared**, **Grey** and **Purple-banded Sunbirds** and **Spectacled Weaver**.



*The cute **Little Bee-eater** added a splash of color to the start of the tour.*

The reedy riverbeds alongside the forest also delivered some good birds like **Rufous-winged Cisticola**, **Lesser Swamp** and **Little Rush Warblers**, **Southern Red Bishop**, **Common Waxbill**, **Tawny-flanked Prinia**, **Southern Red Bishop** and **Eastern Golden** and **Southern Brown-throated Weavers**. Where the reeds gave way to open shoreline, **African Pied Wagtail**, **Hadada Ibis** and **Grey** and **Goliath Herons** foraged. Our top finds at this reserve had to be a pair of **Black-throated Wattle-eyes** and a hyperactive **Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher**.

After a productive first stop, we headed south from Durban along the coast towards our first base at Pennington. We stopped en route at the Illovo River Mouth, which delivered our first few waterbirds such as **Spur-winged** and **Egyptian Geese**, **Kelp Gull**, **Common Tern**, **Great**

**Cormorant, Common Ringed Plover, Blacksmith Lapwing and African Woolly-necked Stork.** Other firsts from this site included **Cape Wagtail, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Lesser Striped Swallow and Yellow-billed Kite.**

We arrived at our accommodation in Umdoni Park Golf Estate in the late afternoon, after which we took a short stroll around the property's patches of forest between the fairways. This got us **Natal Spurfowl, Olive Sunbird, Black Saw-wing, Common Buzzard** our first swifts (**African Palm, Little and White-rumped Swifts**) and two turaco species: **Purple-crested Turaco** and the endemic **Knysna Turaco**. Afterwards we headed over to the restaurant where we enjoyed dinner with a view while a distant **Crowned Eagle** sat perched on a telephone pole!

### **Day 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025. Birding at Umdoni Park, transfer to Sani Pass**

We started today with another walk around the forests on the property. In spite of the intermittent rain and dim light, we managed to scrape out a few noteworthy specials like **Lemon Dove, Brown Scrub Robin** (near-endemic), **Narina Trogon, Green Malkoha** (heard only) and **Dark-backed Weaver**. We then left Umdoni Park, being seen off by a pair of **Hamerkops** near the entrance gate before heading inland towards the Drakensberg Mountains. Not far from the coast, the habitat changed dramatically from warm, humid forests to cool, temperate grasslands on rolling hills interspersed with planted sugarcane.

Around mid-morning, we called in at the Buddhist Retreat Center near the village of Ixopo. This is one of South Africa's last known breeding sites for the Vulnerable **Blue Swallow** and, after a bit of patience, we were treated to five of these elegant swallows singing and cruising over the stunning grassy valley below us. The supporting cast for the swallows was nothing to laugh at either, and included **Fan-tailed** and **Red-collared Widowbirds, Yellow Bishop, Alpine and African Black Swifts, Cape Grassbird, Neddicky, Wailing, Levillant's and Rock-loving Cisticolas, Cape Robin-Chat, Willow Warbler, African Firefinch, Yellow-fronted Canary, African Dusky Flycatcher** and the scarce **Fan-tailed Grassbird**.

Leaving Ixopo behind, we carried on northwards with plenty of roadside birding to keep us entertained along the way. **Long-crested Eagle** and **Common and Jackal Buzzards** were prevalent on the roadside telephone poles, while a group of **Cape Vultures** gliding overhead was a great find! A small dam near the town of Underberg hosted **Little Grebe, Red-knobbed Coot, Grey Crowned Crane, White-backed Duck** and the endemic **South African Shelduck**. We arrived at the picturesque Sani Valley Lodge, our base for the next two nights, around lunchtime. Taking a moment to relax and enjoy the lodge grounds, with the chalets set on the edge of a beautiful lake at the foothills of the Drakensberg Mountains. **African Fish Eagle, Bokmakierie, African Stonechat, Zitting Cisticola, Cape Canary and Cape Longclaw** were some of the new species added around the lodge during the afternoon.

Before dinner we took a drive up the first section of the Sani Pass Road, stopping to bird one or two sections of riverine thickets near the roadside. This delivered **Red-throated Wryneck, Giant Kingfisher, White-throated and Greater Striped Swallows, Cape Rock Thrush, Pin-tailed Whydah,** the strange **Bush Blackcap, African Yellow Warbler, Fork-tailed Drongo and Cape Weaver**. With a healthy haul of species, we returned to the lodge for dinner, eagerly anticipating tomorrow's intrepid day of birding that awaited us.





*Cape Rock Thrush is common in the lower slopes of Sani Pass.*

### Day 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025. Full day birding on Sani Pass

The whole day was dedicated to birding the famous Sani Pass, one of the most iconic roads in South Africa. This 20-kilometer mountain pass ascends the imposing Drakensberg Mountains and follows the Mkhomazana River into the mountain kingdom of Lesotho. With a 4,300-foot (1,300 meter) height different between the bottom and top of the pass, this route provides the ideal scenario to appreciate the altitudinally varied niches that different species occupy here.

We were fetched from our lodge at dawn by a local driver in a 4x4 vehicle (necessary for further up the pass) and started off birding the lower reaches of the pass. Here, the grassy hillslopes are separated by valleys lined with woody *Ouhout* thickets: the favored habitat of species like **Bush Blackcap**, **African Yellow Warbler** and **Drakensberg Prinia**. The thickets and alien forests around Mkhomazana Cottages delivered **Red-chested Cuckoo**, **Fiscal Flycatcher**, **Olive Woodpecker**, **Amethyst** and **Greater Double-collared Sunbirds**, **Southern Boubou**, **Black Saw-wing** and the adorable **Swee Waxbill**. Further up the pass, the grassy hillslopes became studded with large boulders and *Protea* trees. On the latter, we found both **Malachite Sunbird** and **Gurney's Sugarbird** (one of southern Africa's two endemic families). The boulders, on the other hand, were the dwelling place of **Buff-streaked Chat** and **Ground Woodpecker**, both usually seen in family groups. **Bokmakierie**, **Wailing Cisticola**, **Cape Grassbird**, **Cape Bunting**, **Cape Sparrow**, **Greater Double-collared Sunbird** and **Cape Rock Thrush** were all seen on this first section of the pass before reaching the South African Border Post.

Once we had passed through border control, the road immediately changed from smooth tar to a nearly impassable gravel track. It was here where the need for a 4x4 vehicle became apparent. As we trudged up the road, we continued birding and added **Horus Swift**, **Drakensberg Prinia**, **Streaky-headed Seedeater** and a couple of cooperative **Barratt's Warblers**. The latter is usually

quite a secretive skulker so we appreciated getting eyes onto them so easily. We also got onto a dazzling **Fairy Flycatcher** along the ascent, a bird which is more typical of the scrubby, karroid plains beyond the top of the pass. Scanning the skies as we went revealed flocks of **Alpine** and **African Black Swifts** circling over the cliff line, along with **Greater Striped Swallow**, **Large Rock Martin**, **White-necked Raven**, **Cape Crow** and a single **Bearded Vulture**. A few mammals seen along the slope included **Rock Hyrax**, troops of **Chacma Baboon** and a small herd of the endemic **Grey Rhebok**.

At one of the last, and most treacherous switchbacks just below the summit, we stopped briefly to admire the view when a male **Drakensberg Rockjumper** popped out at eye-level alongside the car! This was followed by a few **Drakensberg Siskins** flitting along the rocky road verges. Both of these are high-altitude specialists, mostly found above 6,600 feet (2,000 meters). At this point we reached the Lesotho Border Post at the top of the pass and, after going through border control once again, we noticed just how different the habitat up here was from the slopes lower down. The grass had been replaced by low, alpine scrub, and the terrain was very flat and gravelly in comparison.

This scrubby habitat is more reminiscent of the arid, semi-desert that you find in western South Africa known as the “Karoo”, and this is reflected in the birdlife that occurs here. As a result, the ranges of several Karoo specials extend into Lesotho, of which **Large-billed Lark**, **Sickle-winged Chat** and **Karoo Prinia** are fairly common. We first started seeing these in the fields just past the border post, along with **Southern Bald Ibis** and **Mountain Pipit**. The pipit is also a high-altitude special like the siskin and rockjumper, thus we were pleased to have completed the trifecta by mid-morning!

We continued to have flyovers from both **Cape** and **Bearded Vultures** throughout the morning, while finding less common Karoo specials such as **Karoo Scrub Robin**, **Grey Tit** and **Yellow, Black-headed** and **White-throated Canaries**. The gorgeous **Sentinel Rock Thrush** was present on most rocky outcrops along this road, along with groups of **Ground Woodpeckers** and, to a lesser extent, **Drakensberg Rockjumpers**. With the final additions of **Brown-throated Martin** and **Pied Starling**, we headed back towards the border post, stopping to have lunch at the aptly named “Highest Pub in Africa”. Unfortunately, the clouds over the valley disguised the view, but we still enjoyed having lunch with **Drakensberg Rockjumpers** and cute **Sloggett’s Vlei Rats** scurrying around in front of the viewing deck. We then completed the journey back down the pass into South Africa, with the only new sighting being a family of **Rock Hyraxes** attempting to catch the last of the afternoon sunshine, now visible through the clouds.

#### Day 4, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Birding near Underberg, transfer to Eshowe

We had a long drive ahead of us today with minimal birding time, so we started early at a spot near our lodge for some farmland birding. The grasslands and fallow fields along the Pevensy Road were very birdy in the golden hour, with not much new being added apart from **Long-tailed Widowbird**, **Yellow-billed Duck**, **Pale-crowned Cisticola**, **Common Quail** (heard only) and a cooperative **Quailfinch** on the road in front of us! After enjoying some **African Olive Pigeons** in the gum trees at the start of the road, we were heading off towards Eshowe.



*Pale-crowned Cisticola* was seen near Underberg.

We stopped around midday at a spot near Pietermaritzburg where a vagrant White-throated Bee-eater had recently been seen. It unfortunately did not avail itself, but we had much good birding to make up for it. The Acacia thickets along the road delivered **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Neddicky**, **Marsh Warbler**, **Bar-throated Apalis**, **White-bellied Sunbird**, **Village** and **Spectacled Weavers**, **Sombre Greenbul** and the beautiful **Orange-breasted Bushshrike**, while flocks of large birds were surveying the adjacent cow farm. These were mostly **Yellow-billed Kites** and **White Storks**, but in and amongst them was a **Booted Eagle**, a **Long-crested Eagle** and even an out-of-range **Abdim's Stork**.

We then made one last stop at Monteseel, a quiet town set atop a grassy plateau overlooking a spectacular series of valleys and hills. Albeit a brief stop, we still managed to score great views of **Wahlberg's Eagle** and **Lanner Falcon** soaring past us at eye level, as well as **Cape Rock Thrush**, **Buff-streaked Chat** and **Mocking Cliff Chat** on the cliffs below. We then completed the journey north of Durban along the coast to the town of Eshowe, nestled in the hills of southern Zululand. Due to the relentless heat, we decided to relax for the rest of the day and save ourselves for an exciting day of birding tomorrow.

#### Day 5, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Guided birding at Eshowe, Mtunzini and Ongoye

With another early start, we drove from Eshowe down the hills to the coastal town of Mtunzini, where we met our local guide, Junior. With his expertise, we first stopped at a patch of lush grassland near Emoyeni which delivered the nomadic **Black Coucal**, along with **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater**, **Rufous-winged Cisticola**, **Yellow-throated Longclaw** and **Common Reed Warbler**. Passing these fields and rounding the adjacent *Eucalyptus* plantation, we came upon a small, lily-covered dam that was home to several **African Pygmy Geese** and a breeding colony of **Red-**

**headed Quelea** in the surrounding reedbeds. We also managed to flush a **Swamp Nightjar** from the grassland near the dam, while a family of **Palm-nut Vultures** occupied the few *Raffia* palms standing around the dam. **White-backed Duck**, **Thick-billed Weaver** and **Scarlet-chested Sunbird** were also seen in the vicinity.



*White-backed Ducks can be found in lily-covered pans in Zululand.*

We then turned our attention toward Ongoye Forest, picking up our first **Burchell's Coucal** along the way. This large, isolated patch of Afromontane forest supports an endemic subspecies of **Green Barbet** (previously split as "Woodward's Barbet"), distinguished from the northern populations by its yellow ear coverts. Junior quickly got us onto a breeding pair of these special barbets near the staff buildings, along with **Cape Batis**, **Black-bellied Starling** and a skittish **Grey-headed Bushshrike**. Two non-avian highlights from this forest came in the form of a **Green Mamba** curled up in a tree (expertly spotted by Junior) and a troop of **Blue Monkeys** missioning through the forest canopy.

Unfortunately from this point on, the heat became rather unbearable, and we did not do much more birding as a result. However, one or two more roadside stops did add on a few interesting species, namely **Black-crowned Tchagra**, **Trumpeter Hornbill**, **White-eared Barbet** and a nesting **Collared Sunbird**. We then said goodbye to our guide in Mtunzini and decided to cut our losses and rest up back at the lodge. Fortunately, tomorrow would have different weather in store for us.

#### **Day 6, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Morning birding at Dlinza, transfer to St Lucia**

We awoke this morning to drizzle and grey skies, all too typical for Eshowe. Nevertheless, we dashed out before breakfast to the nearby Dlinza Forest. This is a much smaller forest patch than Ongoye, but is equally as bird-rich and located on the slope south of Eshowe town, thus a very



convenient spot for some pre-breakfast birding. Despite the inclement weather, we accumulated an impressive list over the two hours that we were here, including **Lemon Dove**, **African Olive** and **African Green Pigeon**, **Trumpeter Hornbill**, **Purple-crested Turaco**, **White-eared Barbet**, **Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird**, **Grey Cuckooshrike**, **Cape Batis**, **Square-tailed Drongo**, **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Olive Thrush**, **Chorister Robin-Chat**, **Olive Sunbird** and, best of all, **Spotted Ground Thrush**. The latter is one of two main targets here, the other being **Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon** which we only heard.

After returning to the lodge for breakfast, we packed our things and made our way north to the holiday town of St Lucia, situated at the mouth of the immense St Lucia Estuary. The bridge over the narrow section of the estuary just before town gave us great views of nesting **Thick-billed**, **Eastern Golden**, **Lesser Masked** and **Southern Brown-throated Weavers**, as well as **Lesser Swamp Warbler** and **Little Swift**. As we arrived at our lodging in St Lucia, a torrential downpour ensued which left us cabin-bound for most of the afternoon, only letting up in the late afternoon. We then decided to go for a walk along the iGwalagwala trail that runs through pristine coastal forest between the town and the estuary. This didn't yield much besides some distant singing **Livingstone's Turaco** and a massive flock of **Southern Crested Guineafowl** near our lodge.

#### Day 7, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Eastern Shores, Isimangaliso Wetland Park

With yesterday's rain continuing into the early ours of today, we decided to have a later start to the morning while it remained darker for longer. When the showers ceased, we made our break to the gates of Eastern Shores: a section of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park. This reserve incorporates the eastern shoreline of the St Lucia Estuary (also known as "Lake St Lucia") and consists mostly of lush green savanna and marshes with pockets of coastal dune forest.

The latter are rich in birdlife, with the forest trails around Mission Rocks delivering **Ashy Flycatcher**, **Emerald-spotted Wood Dove**, **Black-collared Barbet**, **Violet-backed Starling**, **Black-backed Puffback**, **Eastern Nicator** (heard), **Rudd's Apalis**, a showy **Green Malkoha** and the stunning **Livingstone's Turaco** among the usual suspects. The grasslands were less species-rich, but still productive with **Rufous-naped Lark**, **Yellow-throated Longclaw**, **Fan-tailed Widowbird**, **Rattling**, **Zitting** and **Croaking Cisticola**, **Red-breasted** and **Barn Swallow** and **Blue-cheeked** and **European Bee-eaters**, all present in good numbers. The latter two were constantly hawking insects or sitting on telephone wires alongside a few **European Rollers** and **Brown-hooded Kingfishers**.

The multitude of marshes and wetlands throughout this park were home to expected waterbirds like **White-faced Whistling Duck**, **White-backed Duck**, **Spur-winged Goose**, **Reed Cormorant**, **Little Grebe**, **Black Crake**, **African Jacana**, **Three-banded Plover**, **African Wattled Lapwing**, **Malachite Kingfisher** and **Rufous-winged Cisticola**, with less expected sightings being an **African Pygmy Kingfisher** and two **African Crakes** sauntering out into the road! We also enjoyed the odd **Collared Pratincole**, a pair of **African Cuckoo-Hawks** gliding past the car, a flyover **African Harrier-Hawk** and two **Lemon-breasted Canaries** in the grassland above Mission Rocks.

We also saw many **Red-billed Oxpeckers** adorning the herds of game around the reserve. Although not on the same level as Kruger, this park still hosts a plethora of large mammals including **Plains Zebra**, **Waterbuck**, **Greater Kudu**, **Blue Wildebeest**, **Natal Red Duiker**,

**Southern Bushbuck, Cape Buffalo, Common Warthog and Common Hippopotamus**, all of which proved to be common.

With all this excitement bringing us to midday, we made our way out of the park and into town for lunch, which turned out to be well-timed as the downpour started. This lasted for the rest of the day, only relinquishing after we'd had dinner and turned in for the evening. This did allow us to hear an **African Wood Owl** and a **Buff-spotted Flufftail** just before turning in for the night.



*Blue-cheeked Bee-eater were seen in good numbers around St Lucia.*

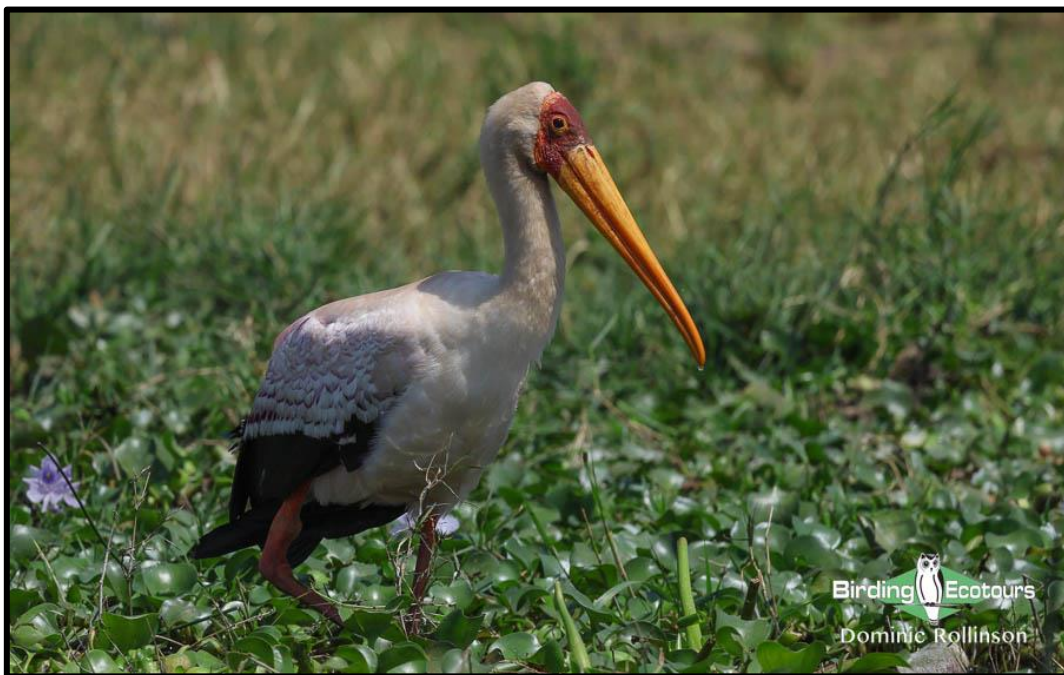
#### **Day 8, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Birding near St Lucia, transfer to Hluhluwe via Western Shores**

Seeing blue sky this morning, we were encouraged to head out for another pre-breakfast foray to the Bhangazi Horse Safari Center, near the gate to Eastern Shores. This was not before getting distracted by six **Crowned Hornbills** hopping along the shopping carts outside the town grocery store! At the Horse Safaris, a large lily-covered pan delivered a **Lesser Moorhen**, a **Wood Sandpiper** and lots of **Black Crakes** among the expected waterbirds, while the surrounding forest was alive with the calls of many afore-mentioned species. The best find here had to be a pair of **Woodward's Batises**, but more **Livingstone's Turacos**, **Terrestrial Brownbuls**, **Rudd's Apalises** and a **Red-capped Robin-Chat** were also noteworthy.

We picked up a soaring **European Honey Buzzard** and two **African Woolly-necked Storks** heading back to town. We enjoyed breakfast at the lodge while being serenaded by more **Livingstone's Turacos** and **Green Malkohas** calling from the nearby forest. After this, we packed up our things, left the guesthouse and made our way down to the beach. In spite of the heat, we committed to the three-kilometer walk down to the estuary mouth from the parking area. This got us a significant boost to our trip list with a host of shorebirds, including **Water Thick-knee**, **African Oystercatcher**, **Common and Curlew Sandpiper**, **Common Greenshank**, **Little Stint**,

**Sanderling**, six plover species (**Grey**, **Common Ringed**, **Tibetan Sand**, **Greater Sand**, **Kittlitz's** and **White-fronted Plovers**), **Grey-headed Gull**, six tern species (**Caspian**, **Common**, **Little**, **Sandwich**, **Lesser Crested** and **Greater Crested Terns**) and the same three **African Skimmers** that had been hanging around the mouth since December.

With some final **Yellow-billed Storks** and an **African Spoonbill**, we were back in the van and heading north towards Hluhluwe. However, we decided to detour through the Western Shores section of Isimangaliso Park, rather than taking the highway up to Hluhluwe. This allowed us to have more birding time in transit, seeing many species we had seen in Eastern Shores with the additions of **African Fish Eagle**, **Black-chested Snake Eagle**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Sand Martin**, **African Swamphen** and **Osprey**. We also saw a lot of the same mammals that we saw yesterday as well as our first **Southern Giraffes**.



*Yellow-billed Storks are fairly common in the wetlands of St Lucia.*

We then left Western Shores, adding **Wahlberg's Eagle** and two **Broad-billed Rollers** before joining the main road heading north. Just before reaching our lodge, a magnificent **Brown Snake Eagle** perched on a telephone pole provided a worthy distraction, as did a flock of 500 odd **Red-billed Queleas** feeding on seeding grasses. A sneaky **Gorgeous Bushshrike** provided some brief visuals around our chalets at twilight, with the calls of **African Barred Owlet** and **Fiery-necked Nightjar** adding a nice final touch to a great day of Zululand birding.

#### **Day 9, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Sand forest and waterbirding north of Hluhluwe**

We were once again greeted by ominous cloudy weather today, with a faint sliver of sunrise beckoning us to head out early. We first attempted to dash across to the nearby False Bay Park but



had a few distractions trying to cover the short distance between our lodge and the park gate. First was a male **Black-bellied Bustard** standing proudly in a grassy fallow field, with multiple **Scarlet-chested Sunbirds** in the surrounding trees. Next were **Pink-throated Twinspots** that were calling from a thicket close to the road but would remain unseen. Then, two **Striped Kingfishers** duetting on a dead tree alongside both a **Cardinal** and a **Golden-tailed Woodpecker**. Finally, a noisy group of **Broad-billed Rollers** on a telephone line outside the park gate.



*Golden-tailed Woodpeckers are commonly heard and seen in Zululand.*

Having finally made it into False Bay Park, we proceeded down the reserve road that cuts through pristine sand forest (somewhere between tall coastal forest and thick woodland) on Lake St Lucia's western shore. The first animals we saw in the park were not birds but **Nyala**, strutting their stuff and foraging in the forest clearings near the road. We then startled an **African Cuckoo-Hawk** that was perched near the roadside, before stopping to bird the forest before the campsite. Here, we managed to sneak up on a displaying **African Broadbill** emitting its incredible wing sonations, while its mate sat calmy nearby. Groups of **Southern Yellow White-eyes** and a pugnacious **Southern Red-fronted Tinkerbird** were very entertaining. In contrast, **African Paradise Flycatcher** and **Bearded Scrub Robin** proved to be stubborn but eventually showed well. Other notable mentions from here were **Red-capped Robin-Chat**, **Woodward's Batis**, **Red-chested Cuckoo**, **Purple-crested Turaco** and **Terrestrial Brownbul**.

Once we had left False Bay Park, we got back onto the main tarred road and headed north. While we were driving, we spotted some lapwings on the lawns alongside the Zulu Croc Farm. These turned out to be **Senegal Lapwings** mixed in with the more common **Crowned Lapwing**. We carried on north of our lodge, crossing the Mzinene River and onto the Nibela Peninsula, which juts out into Lake St Lucia from the north. We had an unfortunate case of getting stuck in the mud



here due to the heavy rains, but luckily it was not too serious and we managed to get in some good birding while in the area.



*African Broadbill was seen doing its bizarre display.*

We picked up **Pink-backed Pelican**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Cape Shoveler**, **Blue-billed Teal**, **Malachite Kingfisher**, **Common Greenshank**, **Wood Sandpiper** and **Sand Martin** before heading back to the lodge for lunch. We enjoyed seeing the resident **Wire-tailed Swallows** doing laps around the restaurant, while we also managed to get visuals of an **Eastern Nicator** singing above our chalets when we returned home. The last interesting finds of the day were a **Grey Waxbill** lining an old **Dark-backed Weaver** nest near the carpark and a **Thick-tailed Greater Galago** yowling above the chalets after dark.

#### **Day 10, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Zululand birding to Mkhuze, transfer to Wakkerstroom**

We had a more relaxed morning today and started off with a meander around the lodge grounds. Set amidst pristine sand forest, the vicinity of the lodge is quite birdy, and in less than an hour we had amassed a good number of forest species, highlights including **Eastern Nicator**, **Southern Red-fronted Tinkerbird**, **Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher**, **Grey Tit-Flycatcher**, **Grey Sunbird**, **Rudd's** and **Yellow-breasted Apalises** and **Olive Bushshrike** (heard). We then left our lodge and made our first stop along in some nearby sand forest. The forest here delivered much of the same species, along with another **European Honey Buzzard** and a calling **African Emerald Cuckoo** (heard).

Our next stop was Mpempe Pan, a large seasonal pan nestled among the villages around Giba, surrounded by short overgrazed fields. Here, we once again found lapwings, mostly a mix of

**Crowned** and **Black-winged Lapwings** with a single **Senegal Lapwing**. **African Pipits** also dotted the plains while the pan itself was overflowing and teeming with waterbirds. Hundreds of shorebirds, mostly **Ruff** and **Wood Sandpiper**, covered the shoreline, while **Barn Swallows** and **Sand** and **Banded Martins** filled the air. A flying flock of 80 **Great White Pelicans** was also quite spectacular. After some final additions like **Kittlitz's Plover**, **Black Crake**, **Glossy Ibis**, **African Darter** and **Purple Heron**, we journeyed onwards to another large pan called Muzi Pan.



*We found **Senegal Lapwings** in open fields near Lake St Lucia.*

Being even larger than Mpempe, one usually needs a lot of time to do justice to this site. However, although we couldn't linger, we still found a number of great species like **African Pygmy Goose**, **Rufous-winged Cisticola**, **Southern Brown-throated** and **Eastern Golden Weavers**, **Pied Kingfisher**, **Great Reed Warbler**, **Squacco Heron**, **Little Bittern**, **Great Egret**, **Whiskered Tern** and **Allen's Gallinule**: another elusive, nomadic, African rallid!

Finishing up with Muzi, we kept moving and eventually arrived at the western gate of Mkhuze Game Reserve. Being our first exposure to open savanna woodland, we began to see birds more typical of that niche such as **White-backed Vulture**, **Bateleur**, **Lilac-breasted Roller**, **Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill**, **Golden-breasted Bunting**, **White-browed Scrub Robin**, **Long-billed Crombec**, **Sabota** and **Flappet Larks**, **Cape Starling** and **Red-backed Shrike**. However, we would not be spending much time here as we still had to finish the five hour drive up to the highlands of Wakkerstroom for our next two nights. So we called it around lunch time and set off, leaving the warm humid lowlands and venturing into the cool, high-lying grasslands once again. Being greeted by two **Black Sparrowhawks** flying past was a stylish way to end the day!

**Day 11, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Full day of birding the Wakkerstroom grasslands**

Leaving the guesthouse at dawn, we made our way towards Wakkerstroom town, stopping briefly on the bridge over the Wakkerstroom wetland for a few waterbirds. Among these, **White-rumped Swift** and **Little Rush Warbler** were new while **Grey Crowned Crane** and **Southern Bald Ibis** were notable. In town, we met up with our local guide, David, who would be taking us on a full day excursion, birding the grassland around Wakkerstroom. Despite the cool temperatures, these grasslands are extremely busy with birdlife, particularly now in summer. Throughout the day, wherever we went in the grassland, there was always a plethora of birds on show!

The first spot David took us to was the top of a large hill above the village of Groenvlei. We managed to access the farm on top of the hill and drive through the lush green fields to its highest point. We then spent around two hours wandering around the meadow here. Within minutes we had our first target: **Yellow-breasted Pipit**. We managed to find a handful of these attractive and threatened pipits displaying over the meadow, with one eventually landing within three meters of us! The next, and arguably rarer target special to fall was **Rudd's Lark**. This oblong lark is Endangered, scarce and carefully monitored around Wakkerstroom by guides like David, so it was a real treat to see one of these precious birds in the flesh.

While searching for these two megas, we had plenty of other grassland birds to keep us sated. Among these were **Spike-heeled** and **Red-capped Larks**, **Cape Longclaw**, **African Pipit**, **Cape Canary**, **Southern Masked Weaver**, **Wing-snapping Cisticola** and soaring groups of **Southern Bald Ibis**. The slopes of the hill were very rocky, and this boulder-strewn habitat delivered birds like **Cape Bunting**, **Mountain Chat**, and **Nicholson's** and **African Rock Pipits**. Small groups of **Horus Swifts** were also seen circling around quarries and erosion gullies in the hillside.

Traveling between Wakkerstroom and Groenvlei, we got a taste of just how busy the grasslands can be. Seedeaters like **Common Waxbill**, **Cape Canary**, **Cape** and **Southern Masked Weaver**, **Southern Red** and **Yellow-crowned Bishop**, **Fan-tailed Widowbird** and the regal **Long-tailed Widowbird** were abundant, and there was a near-permanent presence of hirundines in the air: **Barn**, **White-throated**, **Greater Striped** and **South African Cliff Swallow**, **Brown-throated** and **Banded Martin** along with the odd **Red-breasted Swallow** or **Western House Martin**.

A few sizable dams and small wetlands added to the pandemonium with species like **Levaillant's** and **Pale-crowned Cisticolas**, **Common Reed Warbler**, **Common Waxbill**, **Cape Wagtail**, **Red-knobbed Coot**, **Reed Cormorant**, **Little Grebe**, **Purple Heron**, **Grey Crowned Crane**, **Whiskered Tern**, **Three-banded Plover**, **Giant Kingfisher**, **Red-billed Teal** and large groups of **South African Shelduck**. We also found a male **Cuckoo-finch** singing on a fencepost next to one such dam. Other common species in the grasslands around Groenvlei included **Ant-eating Chat**, **Cape Longclaw**, **Pied Starling**, **African Stonechat** and **Black-headed Heron**.

After Groenvlei, we returned to town, picking up **Red-throated Wryneck**, **African Yellow Warbler** and a pair of showy **Eastern Long-billed Larks** on the way. We then headed north of town along the gravel road towards Amersfoort. Even by midday, the birdlife was still prolific in the grasslands (probably thanks to the cloud cover), and we added **Black-winged Kite**, **Common** and **Jackal Buzzard**, **Cape Crow**, **Spur-winged Goose**, **Cape Shoveler**, **Blue Crane**, **Blue Korhaan** (heard), **African Marsh Harrier**, **Zitting Cisticola** and **Great Cormorant** to the day list. There was also an unusual abundance of **Denham's Bustards** on this day, with us seeing no less than 30 individuals! Stopping over a culvert with a colony of **South African Cliff Swallows** was also quite special, and gave us the chance to properly study their features. Near the start of



this road was a warren that was home to groups of **Meerkats**, **South African Ground Squirrels** and **Yellow Mongooses**, all of which were enjoying being outside their burrows now that the rain had stopped.



*Denham's Bustards were surprisingly numerous in the grasslands around Wakkerstroom.*

Approaching another small town called Daggakraal, we stopped atop a hill above the town. Meandering around the fields here turned some great birds like **Eastern Clapper Lark**, **Pink-billed Lark** and **Cloud Cisticola**. A few **Amur Falcons** and a single **Lanner Falcon** flew past while we had our lunch here, enjoying a field of six **Denham's Bustards** on a nearby hill. East of Daggakraal, we found a pair of **Secretarybirds** hunting close to the road, and even saw one of them kicking at potential prey.

We then headed back towards Wakkerstroom, noticing increasing numbers of **Amur Falcons** and making a quick detour to a nearby valley riddled with Ouhout thickets. This boosted the day list with a few thicket-loving species like **Bush Blackcap**, **Red-collared Widowbird**, **Streaky-headed Seedeater**, **Drakensberg Prinia**, **Southern Boubou** and **Rock-loving Cisticola**. Feeling both satisfied and spent from a full day out in the field, we returned to Wakkerstroom, bid farewell to our guide and arrived back at our guesthouse just in time for a wonderful, homecooked dinner.

#### **Day 12, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Morning birding around Wakkerstroom, transfer to Kruger**

We ventured out for about two hours to see what else we could find in the grasslands. This didn't add much new, but we did manage to finally get eyes on a pair of distant **Blue Korhaans**, sharing a field with ten **Denham's Bustards** and about 40 **Blue Cranes**! We also visited the wetland



briefly which now hosted a contingent of **White-backed Ducks**, but nothing else out of the ordinary.

Returning to the guesthouse to pack up, we made our way out of Wakkerstroom and started on the long journey north towards Kruger National Park. This was the longest drive of the tour (six hours) so we were sure to incorporate roadside birding stops as we went. Seeing hundreds of **Amur Falcons** coating the telephone lines near Volksrust was quite special, while scanning a large dam near Breyten revealed **Maccoa Duck** and **Great Crested Grebe** among expected waterbirds. Other notable birds seen in transit between Wakkerstroom and Kruger included **Yellow-billed Egret**, **Purple Heron**, **Long-crested Eagle**, **South African Cliff Swallow**, **South African Shelduck**, **African Swamphen**, **African Harrier-Hawk** and **Ant-eating Chat**.



*Amur Falcon were seen in good numbers around Wakkerstroom.*

We arrived at Malelane Gate, Kruger's southernmost gate, at lunchtime and birded the bridge over the Crocodile River before entering the park. **African Openbill**, **Water Thick-knee**, **African Jacana**, **Little Heron**, **African Wattled Lapwing** and **Pied and Giant Kingfishers**, hunted along the river while **African Fish Eagle**, **Wahlberg's Eagle** and **White-backed Vulture** flew overhead. Upon entering the park, Kruger immediately started impressing, as we were treated to three sightings of **Lions** sitting on the road in quick succession, followed by a **White Rhinoceros** with a calf! This was aside from the birds that were also coming in hot and fast!

It took us the entire afternoon to drive from Malelane to Skukuza with all the distractions, but we were treated to a huge assortment of savanna species. This included new trip additions such as **Magpie Shrike**, **Southern Yellow-billed**, **Southern Red-billed** and **African Grey Hornbills**, **Red-billed Buffalo Weaver**, **Red-headed Weaver**, **Swainson's Spurfowl**, **Coqui Francolin** and **Crested Francolins**, **Hooded Vulture**, **Saddle-billed Stork**, **Southern Carmine Bee-eater**,

Woodland Kingfisher, Burchell's Starling, Grey Go-away-bird, Brown-headed Parrot, Stierling's Wren-Warbler, Green Wood Hoopoe, Arrow-marked Babbler, Bearded Woodpecker, Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow, White-winged Widowbird and Common Cuckoo.



*The colorful **White-fronted Bee-eater** was seen in Kruger National Park (photo Helen Walker).*

### Day 13, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Kruger birding – Skukuza to Tshokwane

We had two full days, armed with a safari driver and an open-top safari vehicle, in which to explore southern Kruger. Our first day saw us heading north of Skukuza camp to Tshokwane Picnic Site. The rolling plains of mixed woodland and savanna really do extend for as far as the eye can see in this park. The bush here was truly alive with birds, most of which we had seen already, but with a steady trickle of new ones like **Black-headed Oriole**, **Blue Waxbill**, **Greater Honeyguide**, **Brubru**, **Chinspot Batis**, **Brubru**, **White-crested Helmetshrike**, **White-fronted Bee-eater**, **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, **Greater Blue-eared Starling**, **Red-crested Korhaan**, **Village Indigobird**, **Common Scimitarbill**, **Garden Warbler** and **Burnt-necked Eremomela**. Cuckoos seem to proliferate here in summer, with **Jacobin**, **Diederik** and **Red-chested Cuckoos** being the most common and **Levaillant's**, **Klaas's** and **Black Cuckoos** present in smaller numbers. Along this road, we finally got decent views of **Gorgeous Bushshrike**, which had evaded most of the group in Zululand. We also found a lone **Knob-billed Duck** at Manzimahledam, while the grassy waterhole at Leeupan hosted several, rather confiding, **Lesser Moorhens**.

Arriving at Tshokwane around mid-morning, we sat down for brunch at the outdoor deli, noticing the **Greater Blue-eared** and **Cape Starlings** that were looking for a chance to steal table scraps. The **Laughing**, **Ring-necked** and **Mourning Collared Doves** were doing the same, but in a more civilized manner on the ground. A **Marabou Stork** was seen kettling with **African Openbills**,

**Bateleurs** and a **Yellow-billed Kite**. We also managed to induce a small-bird mobbing party with the help of some Pearl-spotted Owlet playback, which delivered **Kurrichane Thrush**, **Southern Grey-headed Sparrow** and a gorgeous **White-throated Robin-Chat** (near-endemic). As we were leaving Tshokwane, we stumbled upon a male **Leopard** moving stealthily toward some **Impala**. Although we never saw any hunt come out of it, it was still such a privilege to lay eyes on this exquisite cat!



*Kruger National Park must rank as one of the best places to find **Leopard** (photo Helen Walker).*

Returning to Skukuza in the heat of the day, not much new was added besides **Marico Sunbird** and various raptors. Kruger is a haven for large birds of prey, with **Wahlberg's** and **Tawny Eagles**, **Bateleur** and **White-backed** and **Hooded Vultures** being particularly common. We also found singletons of **Lesser Spotted** and **Martial Eagles**, **Brown Snake Eagle**, **White-headed Vulture** and **African Harrier-Hawk** while driving today. We got back to Skukuza just in time for lunch and a short siesta, with a short foray out toward Lake Panic in the late afternoon. New woodland species seen near the lake included **Black Cuckooshrike**, **Purple Indigobird**, **Red-faced Mousebird**, **Retz's Helmetshrike** and **Lizard Buzzard**, while the hide over the lake gave us stunning views of many previously seen waterbirds (including an **African Jacana** on eggs!).

#### **Day 14, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Kruger birding – Skukuza to Lower Sabie**

On our second day in Kruger, we ventured south instead of north, along the Sabie River. The first new birds picked up today were the tiny **Grey Penduline Tit** and two **Yellow-billed Oxpeckers** (rare in southern Kruger) on a **Southern Giraffe**. A pair of stately **African Hawk-Eagles** perched in a dead tree was the next standout sighting, followed by a trio of **Southern Ground Hornbills** leisurely strolling down the road in front of us! The air seemed to be full of raptors, and we



frequently came across groups of 20 or so **Lesser Spotted Eagles** moving by. Hundreds of **Western House Martins** were doing the same in some areas. Before we reached our lunch stop at Lower Sabie Camp, we'd added **Crested Barbet**, **White-crowned Lapwing**, **Long-tailed Paradise Whydah**, **Mosque Swallow**, **Southern Black Flycatcher**, **Black Stork**, **White-browed Robin-Chat**, **Acacia Pied Barbet**, **Mosque Swallow** and a half-hidden pair of **Verreaux's Eagle-Owls** in a massive Nyala tree.



*Bennett's Woodpecker was seen near Skukuza Camp (photo Helen Walker).*

Once we were at Lower Sabie, we enjoyed a great meal overlooking the river while **Cape Buffalo** wallowed in the water upstream from camp. The journey back to Skukuza got us **Bennett's Woodpecker** and **Green-winged Pytilia** coming into an owl-mobbing frenzy, along with two aggressive **White-throated Robin-Chats** that were constantly fanning their tails at each other. We heard a **Pearl-spotted Owlet** calling in the distance, but it would not grace us with a visual. It was also a treat to see many groups of **Southern Carmine Bee-eaters** roosting close to the road and showing off their rosy-pink plumage. After having more sightings of scarcer species like **Black Stork**, **Purple Indigobird**, **African Hawk-Eagle**, **Red-crested Korhaan**, **Brown-headed Parrot**, **White-headed Vulture**, **Brown Snake Eagle**, **Levaillant's Cuckoo** and **Red-billed Firefinch**, it brought our Kruger total to 190 odd species in two days!

#### **Day 15, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Kruger morning birding, transfer to Mount Sheba**

Another day, another pre-breakfast dash-out! Roaming around close to Skukuza this morning gave us our last real fix of Kruger savanna, with notable species including **Gorgeous Bushshrike**, **Acacia Pied** and **Crested Barbets**, **Retz's** and **White-crested Helmetshrikes**, **Burnt-necked Eremomela**, **Common Scimitarbill**, **Stierling's Wren-Warbler**, **Martial** and **Lesser Spotted**



**Eagles, Grey Tit-Flycatcher and Golden-breasted Bunting.** Once back at camp, we enjoyed a relaxed breakfast overlooking the river with great birds to distract us such as **Village Indigobird, Ashy Flycatcher, Red-faced Cisticola, White-browed Robin-Chat and Black-collared Barbet.** Then it was back to the chalets to pack up and leave Kruger behind.

We exited out of Paul Kruger Gate, noting another **Brown Snake Eagle**, more **Southern Carmine Bee-eaters** and **Brown-headed Parrots** and a single **Purple Roller** as we left. Once we were out of the park, it wasn't long before we were ascending over the mountains of the Escarpment, moving into cooler, more temperate climes once again. Our next base, Mount Sheba, was a patch of montane forest nestled on the slopes of one of the major mountains of the Mpumalanga Escarpment. The vegetation, and in turn the wildlife, was therefore similar to that of the Drakensberg or Wakkerstroom. **White-necked Ravens** soared over the mountains and **Cape Longclaws, African Stonechats, Cape Crows, Wailing Cisticolas** and **Drakensberg Prinias** moved around in the grassland patches on top of them. Two interesting antelope seen here were a single **Oribi** and a herd of **Bontebok** (endemic).

From atop the mountain, we then descended into the gloomy, forested valley below, in which the lodge was concealed. Long hanging clouds remained but we decided to still go for a short walk into the forest to see what we could find with the last hours of light. This only lasted about an hour before the rain started, but we managed to pick out **Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Olive Woodpecker, Olive Thrush** and **Orange Ground Thrush** (heard). Our last bit of entertainment came from a brazen **Blue Monkey** raiding another guest's car!

#### **Day 16, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Birding at Mount Sheba, transfer to Dinokeng**

This morning the weather was still dreary and even mistier than yesterday. So we decided to start off with breakfast and see if the weather would clear up slightly. That it did, and once we were done with our food, we went up into the forest yet again. The same forest species from yesterday were still around (as were the **Blue Monkeys**!) along with **Southern Double-collared Sunbird, Bar-throated Apalis, Sombre Greenbul, African Olive Pigeon, African Firefinch** and an adult **White-starred Robin** feeding a fledgling. With a few new ones in the bag, we were once again on the road, stopping briefly in the grassland atop the mountain to check for any additional species. Here we found **Sweet Waxbill, Forest Canary, Streaky-headed Seedeater, Bokmakierie, Cape Grassbird, Wing-snapping Cisticola** and **Long-crested Eagle** in addition to yesterday's species.

Departing from Mount Sheba, we faced the last long drive of the tour towards Dinokeng Game Reserve, north of Johannesburg. Dinokeng is set in mixed savanna woodland, similar to Kruger, but with a slight influence from the Kalahari making it drier. The journey there wasn't too fruitful from a birding point of view, apart from some **Amur Falcons** and **South African Cliff Swallows** around eMalahleni. We arrived at Dinokeng in the evening, just in time for the **Spotted Thick-knees** to start calling at dusk. We notched up a few birds on the lodge grounds before it got dark, including **Levaillant's Cuckoo, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Groundscraper Thrush** and **Grey Go-away-bird**, then settled down to enjoy our last base of the tour.

#### **Day 17, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Birding the Zaagkuilsdrift road and Dinokeng**

Yet another drizzly morning greeted us. With plans to bird the famous Zaagkuilsdrift road today, we made an early start and left at dawn to reach the eastern end of the road in good birding time.

This 20-kilometer dirt road runs parallel to the Pienaaers River floodplain, straight through a medley of Acacia scrub, fallow fields and dense thickets. The birdlife here strongly reflects the influence from the Kalahari over this area with species like **Chestnut-vented Warbler**, **Scaly-feathered Weaver**, **Black-chested Prinia**, **Grey-backed Camaroptera**, **White-browed Sparrow-Weaver**, **Cape Penduline Tit**, **Marico Flycatcher** striking **Southern Pied Babblers** and the vivid **Crimson-breasted Shrike**. These species are more typical further west, with this road being as far east as they occur.



*The strikingly colored **Crimson-breasted Shrike**.*

Aside from the Kalahari specials mentioned above, this road delivered most of the open savanna species we had seen in Kruger such as **Sabota Lark**, **Burnt-necked Eremomela**, **Magpie Shrike** and **White-winged Widowbird**. It is also a fantastic spot for migrant warblers and we found lots of **Marsh** and **Willow Warblers**, **Common Whitethroats** and one or two **Icterine Warblers**. Other Palearctic migrants we found here in good numbers were **European Bee-eater** and **Red-backed** and **Lesser Grey Shrikes**. The delightful **Pearl-spotted Owlet** finally made a showing here!

Unfortunately, the excessive rains had made most of the road impassable past the 6-kilometer mark. With time to spare, we decided to drive around to the other end of the road through the sprawling villages just south of the road. The main channel opens out into an expansive floodplain at this end of the road, near the village called Kgomo-kgomo. With this in mind, we completed the drive around to the west end in less than half an hour, stopping en route for a male **Shaft-tailed Whydah** displaying near the road.

At the bridge over the floodplain next to Kgomo-kgomo, we were greeted with a scene out of the Okavango Delta: Grassy marshes and lily-covered channels stretching out in every direction. Here

we found large numbers of **Lesser Moorhen** walking around on the waterlilies, some even with chicks! A male **Allen's Gallinule** also showed exceptionally well and never once retreated into vegetation for the hour that we were there! **Red-breasted, White-throated** and **Pearl-breasted Swallows** careened over the floodplain along with **Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters**, while **Goliath, Purple** and **Squacco Herons** hunted in the channels. A massive swirling flock of **Black-winged Pratincoles** would regularly move overhead when they weren't resting on the adjacent shoreline. Large numbers of **Glossy Ibis** and **Yellow-billed Stork** were also present while **Sedge Warblers** skulked about in the flooded marshes. **Fulvous Whistling Ducks** and **Marsh Sandpipers** also gave the occasional flyby.

Perhaps the best find of all came from one of the smaller channels a few meters down the gravel road. This channel, known as the Plat River, was flooded and completely covered with grass. Through one small gap in the blades, we managed to get brief glimpses of a female **Striped Crake**. This is one of Africa's trickiest breeding birds to see, so this was indeed a special sighting! Feeling very successful after this find, we were eager to get back to the lodge for lunch and reflect on what an amazing tour this had been! Later in the afternoon, one last stroll around the lodge grounds delivered a female **Cut-throat Finch** as one last bonus.

#### **Day 18, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Dinokeng and De Tweedespruit, transfer to OR Tambo Airport**

For our last morning of tour, we took a short drive around Dinokeng before breakfast. **Icterine Warbler, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Brubru, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Southern Red-billed Hornbill** and **Black-chested Prinia** were the most noteworthy finds of the foray, as well as a family of **Black-backed Jackals** playing beside their burrow.

With breakfast done, we departed from Dinokeng and started heading towards Johannesburg, getting great views of a perched **Black-chested Snake Eagle** on the way. We did make one final birding stop in the sandy, broad-leaved woodlands near De Tweedespruit, where we picked up some localized species not usually seen on this tour. These were **Tinkling Cisticola, Green-capped Eremomela** and **Fawn-colored Lark**, along with a **Brown-backed Honeybird** for good measure. We then headed straight to Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport, where the tour concluded.

Many thanks to the tour participants for making this a fun and memorable trip, and for sticking it out when the weather didn't play along!

**Bird List - Following IOC Version 15.1 (February 2025)**

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 the IUCN Red List:

CR = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable.

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Ostriches (Struthionidae)</b>	
Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>
<b>Ducks, Geese, Swans (Anatidae)</b>	
White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
Fulvous Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i>
White-backed Duck	<i>Thalassornis leuconotus</i>
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>
Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
South African Shelduck	<i>Tadorna cana</i>
African Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus auritus</i>
Blue-billed Teal	<i>Spatula hottentota</i>
Cape Shoveler	<i>Spatula smithii</i>
Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>
Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Maccoa Duck	<i>Oxyura maccoa</i>
<b>Guineafowl (Numididae)</b>	
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Southern Crested Guineafowl	<i>Guttera edouardi</i>
<b>Pheasants &amp; Allies (Phasianidae)</b>	
Crested Francolin	<i>Ortygornis sephaena</i>
Coqui Francolin	<i>Campocolinus coqui</i>
Common Quail (H)	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
Natal Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis natalensis</i>
Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>
<b>Nightjars (Caprimulgidae)</b>	
Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
Swamp Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus natalensis</i>
<b>Swifts (Apodidae)</b>	
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>
African Black Swift	<i>Apus barbatus</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Horus Swift	<i>Apus horus</i>
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>
<b>Turacos (Musophagidae)</b>	
Grey Go-away-bird	<i>Crinifer concolor</i>
Purple-crested Turaco	<i>Gallirex porphyreolophus</i>
Livingstone's Turaco	<i>Tauraco livingstonii</i>
Knysna Turaco	<i>Tauraco corythaix</i>
<b>Bustards (Otididae)</b>	
Kori Bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>
Denham's Bustard	<i>Neotis denhami</i>
Blue Korhaan	<i>Eupodotis caerulescens</i>
Red-crested Korhaan	<i>Lophotis ruficrista</i>
Black-bellied Bustard	<i>Lissotis melanogaster</i>
<b>Cuckoos (Cuculidae)</b>	
Burchell's Coucal	<i>Centropus burchellii</i>
Black Coucal	<i>Centropus grillii</i>
Green Malkoha	<i>Ceuthmochares australis</i>
Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>
Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>
Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>
African Emerald Cuckoo (H)	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>
Black Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus clamosus</i>
Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>
Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
<b>Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)</b>	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
African Olive Pigeon	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>
Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon (H)	<i>Columba delegorguei</i>
Lemon Dove	<i>Columba larvata</i>
Mourning Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>
Tambourine Dove	<i>Turtur tympanistria</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>
<b>Flufftails &amp; Forest Rails (Scolothruridae)</b>	
Buff-spotted Flufftail (H)	<i>Scolothrura elegans</i>
<b>Rails, Crakes &amp; Coots (Rallidae)</b>	
African Rail (H)	<i>Rallus caerulescens</i>
African Crake	<i>Creccopsis egregia</i>
Lesser Moorhen	<i>Paragallinula angulata</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Allen's Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio alleni</i>
African Swamphe	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>
Black Crake	<i>Zapornia flavirostra</i>
Striped Crake	<i>Aenigmatolimnas marginalis</i>
<b>Cranes (Gruidae)</b>	
Grey Crowned Crane - EN	<i>Balearica regulorum</i>
Blue Crane - VU	<i>Grus paradisea</i>
<b>Grebes (Podicipedidae)</b>	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
<b>Stone-curlews, Thick-knees (Burhinidae)</b>	
Spotted Thick-knee (H)	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Oystercatchers (Haematopodidae)</b>	
African Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>
<b>Stilts, Avocets (Recurvirostridae)</b>	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
<b>Plovers (Charadriidae)</b>	
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>
White-crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus albiceps</i>
Senegal Lapwing	<i>Vanellus lugubris</i>
Black-winged Lapwing	<i>Vanellus melanopterus</i>
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
Tibetan Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i>
Greater Sand Plover	<i>Anarhynchus leschenaultii</i>
Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Anarhynchus pecuarius</i>
White-fronted Plover	<i>Anarhynchus marginatus</i>
<b>Jacanas (Jacanidae)</b>	
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>
<b>Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacidae)</b>	
African Snipe	<i>Gallinago nigripennis</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
<b>Coursers, Pratincoles (Glareolidae)</b>	
Black-winged Pratincole	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i>
Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Laridae)</b>	
African Skimmer	<i>Rhynchops flavirostris</i>
Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>
Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>
<b>Storks (Ciconiidae)</b>	
African Openbill	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>
Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>
Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>
Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
African Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia microscelis</i>
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
<b>Anhingas, Darters (Anhingidae)</b>	
African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>
<b>Cormorants, Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)</b>	
Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
<b>Ibises, Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)</b>	
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Southern Bald Ibis - VU	<i>Geronticus calvus</i>
Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>
<b>Hérons, Bitterns (Ardeidae)</b>	
Little Bittern	<i>Botaurus minutus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Little Heron	<i>Butorides atricapilla</i>
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Yellow-billed Egret	<i>Ardea brachyrhyncha</i>
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
<b>Hamerkop (Scopidae)</b>	
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>
<b>Pelicans (Pelicanidae)</b>	
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotatus</i>
Pink-backed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>
<b>Secretarybird (Sagittariidae)</b>	
Secretarybird - EN	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>
<b>Ospreys (Pandionidae)</b>	
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
<b>Kites, Hawks, Eagles (Accipitridae)</b>	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>
Palm-nut Vulture	<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>
Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>
African Cuckoo-Hawk	<i>Aviceda cuculoides</i>
European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
White-headed Vulture - CR	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>
Hooded Vulture - CR	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>
White-backed Vulture - CR	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
Cape Vulture - VU	<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>
Black-chested Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>
Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>
Bateleur - EN	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Crowned Eagle	<i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i>
Martial Eagle - EN	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>
Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>
Lesser Spotted Eagle	<i>Clanga pomarina</i>
Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
Tawny Eagle - VU	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
African Hawk-Eagle	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>
Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Astur melanoleucus</i>
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>
African Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga vocifer</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Jackal Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>
<b>Owls (Strigidae)</b>	
Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatus</i>
African Barred Owlet (H)	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Ketupa lactea</i>
African Wood Owl	<i>Strix woodfordii</i>
<b>Mousebirds (Coliidae)</b>	
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>
White-backed Mousebird	<i>Colius colius</i>
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>
<b>Trogon (Trogonidae)</b>	
Narina Trogon	<i>Apaloderma narina</i>
<b>Hoopoes (Upupidae)</b>	
Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
<b>Wood Hoopoes (Phoeniculidae)</b>	
Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>
Common Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>
<b>Ground Hornbills (Bucorvidae)</b>	
Southern Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Hornbills (Bucerotidae)</b>	
Southern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus rufigrostris</i>
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>
Crowned Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros alboterminatus</i>
African Grey Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>
Trumpeter Hornbill	<i>Bycanistes bucinator</i>
<b>Rollers (Coraciidae)</b>	
Purple Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>
European Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>
Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>
<b>Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)</b>	
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>
Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>
Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>
African Pygmy Kingfisher	<i>Ispidina picta</i>
Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>
Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
<b>Bee-eaters (Meropidae)</b>	
Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
White-fronted Bee-eater	<i>Merops bullockoides</i>
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	<i>Merops nubicoides</i>
<b>African Barbets (Lybiidae)</b>	
Crested Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>
Green Barbet	<i>Stactolaema olivacea</i>
White-eared Barbet	<i>Stactolaema leucotis</i>
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i>
Southern Red-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus pusillus</i>
Acacia Pied Barbet	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>
Black-collared Barbet	<i>Lybius torquatus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Honeyguides (Indicatoridae)</b>	
Brown-backed Honeybird	<i>Prodotiscus regulus</i>
Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>
<b>Woodpeckers (Picidae)</b>	
Red-throated Wryneck	<i>Jynx ruficollis</i>
Ground Woodpecker	<i>Geocolaptes olivaceus</i>
Bennett's Woodpecker	<i>Campethera bennettii</i>
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>
Bearded Woodpecker	<i>Chloropicus namaquus</i>
Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>
Olive Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos griseocephalus</i>
<b>Caracaras, Falcons (Falconidae)</b>	
Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
<b>African &amp; New World Parrots (Psittacidae)</b>	
Brown-headed Parrot	<i>Poicephalus cryptoxanthus</i>
<b>African &amp; Green Broadbills (Calyptomenidae)</b>	
African Broadbill	<i>Smithornis capensis</i>
<b>Wattle-eyes, Batises (Platysteiridae)</b>	
Cape Batis	<i>Batis capensis</i>
Woodwards' Batis	<i>Batis fratum</i>
Chinspot Batis	<i>Batis molitor</i>
Black-throated Wattle-eye	<i>Platysteira peltata</i>
<b>Bushshrikes (Malaconotidae)</b>	
Grey-headed Bushshrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>
Olive Bushshrike (H)	<i>Chlorophoneus olivaceus</i>
Orange-breasted Bushshrike	<i>Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus</i>
Gorgeous Bushshrike	<i>Telophorus viridis</i>
Bokmakierie	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>
Brown-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra australis</i>
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>
Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>
Southern Boubou	<i>Laniarius ferrugineus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Crimson-breasted Shrike	<i>Laniarius atrococcineus</i>
Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
<b>Vangas &amp; Allies (Vangidae)</b>	
White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>
Retz's Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops retzii</i>
<b>Cuckooshrikes (Campephagidae)</b>	
Grey Cuckooshrike	<i>Ceblepyris caesius</i>
Black Cuckooshrike	<i>Campephaga flava</i>
<b>Figbirds, Old World Orioles, Piopios (Oriolidae)</b>	
Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>
<b>Drongos (Dicruridae)</b>	
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
Square-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus ludwigii</i>
<b>Monarchs (Monarchidae)</b>	
Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher	<i>Trochocercus cyanomelas</i>
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>
<b>Shrikes (Laniidae)</b>	
Magpie Shrike	<i>Lanius melanoleucus</i>
Southern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
<b>Crows, Jays (Corvidae)</b>	
Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
White-necked Raven	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>
<b>Rockjumpers (Chaetopidae)</b>	
Drakensberg Rockjumper	<i>Chaetops aurantius</i>
<b>Fairy Flycatchers (Stenostiridae)</b>	
Fairy Flycatcher	<i>Stenostira scita</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Tits, Chickadees (Paridae)</b>	
Southern Black Tit	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>
Grey Tit	<i>Melaniparus afer</i>
<b>Penduline Tits (Remizidae)</b>	
Grey Penduline Tit	<i>Anthoscopus caroli</i>
Cape Penduline Tit	<i>Anthoscopus minutus</i>
<b>Nicators (Nicatoridae)</b>	
Eastern Nicator	<i>Nicator gularis</i>
<b>Larks (Alaudidae)</b>	
Spike-heeled Lark	<i>Chersomanes albofasciata</i>
Eastern Long-billed Lark	<i>Certhilauda semitorquata</i>
Sabota Lark	<i>Calendulauda sabota</i>
Fawn-coloured Lark	<i>Calendulauda africanoides</i>
Rudd's Lark - EN	<i>Heteromiraфра ruddi</i>
Flappet Lark	<i>Amiraфра rufocinnamomea</i>
Eastern Clapper Lark	<i>Corypha fasciolata</i>
Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Corypha africana</i>
Pink-billed Lark	<i>Spizocorys conirostris</i>
Red-capped Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>
<b>Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)</b>	
Sombre Greenbul	<i>Andropadus importunus</i>
Yellow-bellied Greenbul	<i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i>
Terrestrial Brownbul	<i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>
Yellow-streaked Greenbul	<i>Phyllastrephus flavostriatus</i>
Dark-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus tricolor</i>
<b>Swallows, Martins (Hirundinidae)</b>	
Black Saw-wing	<i>Psalidoprocne pristoptera</i>
Banded Martin	<i>Neophedina cincta</i>
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Large Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>
Blue Swallow - VU	<i>Hirundo atrocaerulea</i>
Pearl-breasted Swallow	<i>Hirundo dimidiata</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
Western House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Greater Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis cucullata</i>
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>
Red-breasted Swallow	<i>Cecropis semirufa</i>
Mosque Swallow	<i>Cecropis senegalensis</i>
South African Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon spilodera</i>
<b>Crombecs, African Warblers (Macrosphenidae)</b>	
Cape Grassbird	<i>Sphenoeacus afer</i>
Long-billed Crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>
<b>Leaf Warblers (Phylloscopidae)</b>	
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus ruficapilla</i>
<b>Reed Warblers &amp; Allies (Acrocephalidae)</b>	
Lesser Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>
Common Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>
Marsh Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus palustris</i>
African Yellow Warbler	<i>Iduna natalensis</i>
Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>
<b>Grassbirds &amp; Allies (Locustellidae)</b>	
Fan-tailed Grassbird	<i>Catriscus brevirostris</i>
Barratt's Warbler	<i>Bradypterus barratti</i>
Little Rush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>
<b>Cisticolas &amp; Allies (Cisticolidae)</b>	
Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>
Rock-loving Cisticola	<i>Cisticola aberrans</i>
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>
Tinkling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola rufilatus</i>
Wailing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lais</i>
Rufous-winged Cisticola	<i>Cisticola galactotes</i>
Levaillant's Cisticola	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Croaking Cisticola	<i>Cisticola natalensis</i>
Neddicky	<i>Cisticola fulvicapilla</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Cloud Cisticola	<i>Cisticola textrix</i>
Pale-crowned Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cinnamomeus</i>
Wing-snapping Cisticola	<i>Cisticola ayresii</i>
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
Black-chested Prinia	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>
Karoo Prinia	<i>Prinia maculosa</i>
Drakensberg Prinia	<i>Prinia hypoxantha</i>
Bar-throated Apalis	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>
Rudd's Apalis	<i>Apalis ruddi</i>
Yellow-breasted Apalis	<i>Apalis flavida</i>
Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>
Green-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>
Stierling's Wren-Warbler	<i>Calamonastes stierlingi</i>
Barred Wren-Warbler	<i>Calamonastes fasciolatus</i>
Green-capped Eremomela	<i>Eremomela scotops</i>
Burnt-necked Eremomela	<i>Eremomela usticollis</i>
<b>Sylviid Babblers (Sylviidae)</b>	
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Bush Blackcap - VU	<i>Sylvia nigricapillus</i>
Chestnut-vented Warbler	<i>Curruca subcoerulea</i>
Common Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>
<b>White-eyes (Zosteropidae)</b>	
Cape White-eye	<i>Zosterops virens</i>
Southern Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops anderssoni</i>
<b>Laughingthrushes &amp; Allies (Leiothrichidae)</b>	
Arrow-marked Babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>
Southern Pied Babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>
<b>Sugarbirds (Promeropidae)</b>	
Gurney's Sugarbird	<i>Promerops gurneyi</i>
<b>Starlings, Rhabdornises (Sturnidae)</b>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>
Black-bellied Starling	<i>Notopholia corusca</i>
Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>
Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>
Burchell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>
Pied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis bicolor</i>
Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>
<b>Oxpeckers (Buphagidae)</b>	
Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>
Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>
<b>Thrushes (Turdidae)</b>	
Spotted Ground Thrush - VU	<i>Geokichla guttata</i>
Orange Ground Thrush (H)	<i>Geokichla gurneyi</i>
Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Turdus litsitsirupa</i>
Olive Thrush	<i>Turdus olivaceus</i>
Kurrichane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>
<b>Chats, Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)</b>	
Karoo Scrub Robin	<i>Tychaemon coryphaeus</i>
Brown Scrub Robin	<i>Tychaemon signata</i>
Bearded Scrub Robin	<i>Tychaemon quadrivirgata</i>
White-browed Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>
Grey Tit-Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria plumbea</i>
Ashy Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria caerulescens</i>
Southern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>
Fiscal Flycatcher	<i>Sigelus silens</i>
Marico Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>
African Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
White-starred Robin	<i>Pogonocichla stellata</i>
White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
Chorister Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha dichroa</i>
Red-capped Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha natalensis</i>
White-throated Robin-Chat	<i>Dessonornis humeralis</i>
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Dessonornis caffer</i>
Sentinel Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola explorator</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
Cape Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>
Buff-streaked Chat	<i>Campicoloides bifasciatus</i>
Sickle-winged Chat	<i>Emarginata sinuata</i>
Mocking Cliff Chat	<i>Thamnolea cinnamomeiventris</i>
Ant-eating Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>
Mountain Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla monticola</i>
Familiar Chat	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>
<b>Sunbirds (Nectariniidae)</b>	
Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>
Olive Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra olivacea</i>
Grey Sunbird	<i>Cyanomitra veroxii</i>
Amethyst Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>
Malachite Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>
Southern Double-collared Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris chalybeus</i>
Greater Double-collared Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris afer</i>
Marico Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>
Purple-banded Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris bifasciatus</i>
White-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris talatala</i>
<b>Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches (Passeridae)</b>	
Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris superciliaris</i>
Cape Sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
<b>Weavers, Widowbirds (Ploceidae)</b>	
Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>
Scaly-feathered Weaver	<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>
Thick-billed Weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>
Spectacled Weaver	<i>Ploceus ocularis</i>
Cape Weaver	<i>Ploceus capensis</i>
Eastern Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus subaureus</i>
Southern Brown-throated Weaver	<i>Ploceus xanthopterus</i>
Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>
Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>
Dark-backed Weaver	<i>Ploceus bicolor</i>
Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>
Red-headed Quelea	<i>Quelea erythrops</i>
Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>
Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
Yellow Bishop	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>
Fan-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes axillaris</i>
White-winged Widowbird	<i>Euplectes albonotatus</i>
Red-collared Widowbird	<i>Euplectes ardens</i>
Long-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes progne</i>
<b>Waxbills, Munias &amp; Allies (Estrildidae)</b>	
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullata</i>
Black-and-white Mannikin	<i>Spermestes bicolor</i>
Sweet Waxbill	<i>Coccygia melanotis</i>
Grey Waxbill	<i>Glaucostrelda perreini</i>
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
Quailfinch	<i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i>
Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>
Green-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>
Pink-throated Twinspot (H)	<i>Hypargos margaritatus</i>
Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>
African Firefinch	<i>Lagonostica rubricata</i>
<b>Indigobirds, Whydahs (Viduidae)</b>	
Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>
Purple Indigobird	<i>Vidua purpurascens</i>
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>
Shaft-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua regia</i>
Long-tailed Paradise Whydah	<i>Vidua paradisaea</i>
Cuckoo-finch	<i>Anomalospiza imberbis</i>
<b>Wagtails, Pipits (Motacillidae)</b>	
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>
African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
Cape Longclaw	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>
Yellow-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>
Mountain Pipit	<i>Anthus hoeschi</i>
Nicholson's Pipit	<i>Anthus nicholsoni</i>
African Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus crenatus</i>
Yellow-breasted Pipit - VU	<i>Anthus chloris</i>
<b>Finches, Euphonias (Fringillidae)</b>	
Forest Canary	<i>Crithagra scotops</i>
Black-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra atrogularis</i>
Lemon-breasted Canary	<i>Crithagra citrinipectus</i>
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>
Drakensberg Siskin	<i>Crithagra symonsi</i>
Yellow Canary	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>
Streaky-headed Seedeater	<i>Crithagra gularis</i>
White-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra albogularis</i>
Cape Canary	<i>Serinus canicollis</i>
Black-headed Canary	<i>Serinus alario</i>
<b>Buntings (Emberizidae)</b>	
Cape Bunting	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>
Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza impetuani</i>

<b>Species seen:</b>	<b>447</b>
Species heard:	10
Total recorded:	457

### Mammal List

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following the

IUCN Red List:

EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable.

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Elephants (Elephantidae)</b>	
African Savanna Elephant - EN	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
<b>Hyraxes (Procaviidae)</b>	
Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>
<b>Old World Monkeys (Cercopithecidae)</b>	
Blue Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus mitis</i>
Vervet Monkey	<i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>
Chacma Baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>
<b>Bushbabies (Galagidae)</b>	
Thick-tailed Greater Galago	<i>Otolemur crassicaudatus</i>
<b>Squirrels and Relatives (Sciuridae)</b>	
Smith's Bush Squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>
Red Bush Squirrel	<i>Paraxerus palliatus</i>
South African Ground Squirrel	<i>Geosciurus inauris</i>
<b>Old World Mice, Rats and Gerbils (Muridae)</b>	
Sloggett's Vlei Rat	<i>Otomys sloggetti</i>
<b>Bats (Chiroptera)</b>	
Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus wahlbergi</i>
<b>Mustelids (Mustelidae)</b>	
Spotted-necked Otter	<i>Hydrictis maculicollis</i>
<b>Canids (Canidae)</b>	
Black-backed Jackal	<i>Lupulella mesomelas</i>
<b>Felids (Felidae)</b>	
Lion - VU	<i>Panthera leo</i>



Common Name	Scientific Name
Leopard - VU	<i>Panthera pardus</i>
<b>Mongoose and Fossa (Herpestidae)</b>	
Yellow Mongoose	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>
Common Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>
Common Dwarf Mongoose	<i>Helogale parvula</i>
Banded Mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>
Meerkat	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>
<b>Hyaenas (Hyaenidae)</b>	
Spotted Hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>
<b>Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae)</b>	
White Rhinoceros	<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>
<b>Equines (Equidae)</b>	
Plains Zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>
<b>Bovids (Bovidae)</b>	
Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>
Blue Wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>
Bontebok	<i>Damaliscus pygargus</i>
Oribi	<i>Ourebia ourebi</i>
Steenbok	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>
Natal Red Duiker	<i>Cephalophus natalensis</i>
Blue Duiker	<i>Philantomba monticola</i>
Bush Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>
Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>
Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>
Rhebok	<i>Pelea capreolus</i>
Southern Reedbuck	<i>Redunca arundinum</i>
Cape Buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>
Nyala	<i>Tragelaphus angasii</i>
Greater Kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>
Southern Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>
<b>Giraffes and Okapis (Giraffidae)</b>	
Southern Giraffe	<i>Giraffa giraffa</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
<b>Suids (Suidae)</b>	
Common Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>
<b>Hippopotamuses (Hippopotamidae)</b>	
Common Hippopotamus - VU	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>
<b>Species seen:</b>	<b>42</b>
Total recorded:	40