

TROPICAL BIRDING

SOUTH AFRICA

6th-22nd August, 2022

Tour leaders Charley Hesse & Ken Behrens

Report & photos (unless otherwise stated) by Charley Hesse



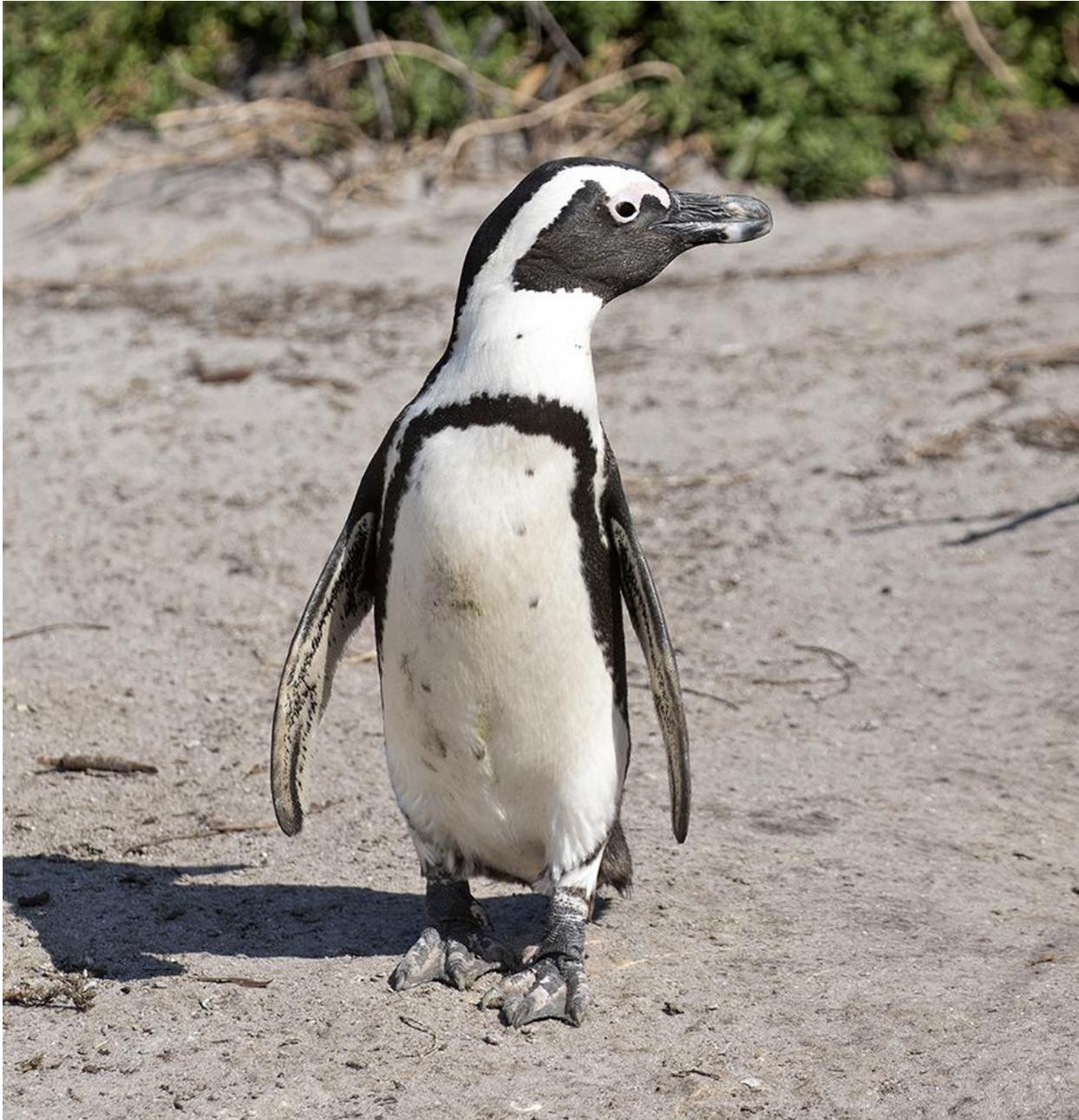
This was a South Africa tour with a difference. While still seeing the vast majority of the available wildlife, we stayed in some remarkable lodges, enjoyed fantastic food, scenery and wines to maximize the group's enjoyment. On this itinerary, we added a couple of days to give a more relaxed pace and finished in a small private lodge in Madikwe Game Reserve where we were the only guests. We utilized our specialist knowledge of habitats to give participants a more in depth understanding of the vastly different places we visited, including various types of fynbos, agricultural lands, afro-montane forests, the karoo, the thornveld, Afromontane grasslands and even wetlands. The quality of sightings was first class, and the breeding season of the Cape endemic birds was in full swing. We particularly enjoyed the fantastic flight displays of some of the larks. Scenery was a big part of the tour, and some of the coastal roads around Cape Town, the sweeping hills of the Overberg, the snowy Swartberg Pass, dramatic mountains of the karoo and the wild koppies and hills of Madikwe were highlights. We saved the best till last and the first safari for most people didn't disappoint, with incredible Lion, Cheetah, African Wild Dog and Brown Hyaena sightings.

7th August – Rooi Els & Betty's Bay



The endemic Cape Rockjumper gave quite a show.

We were starting our birding at Rooi Els on the other side of False Bay from Cape Town. It was over an hour to get there even though it was Sunday. When we arrived, we started seeing birds even before we were out of the vehicles. There were Protea bushes all the way along the sides of the entrance roads and those with flowers had attendant **Cape Sugarbirds**. We parked and gathered our things for our walk. Our main target was the spectacular **Cape Rockjumper** but we started with **Alpine & African Swifts** flying across the cliff faces and a large pair of **White-necked Ravens** soaring above. We had another endemic, the colorful **Orange-breasted Sunbird** which came in close. We also had several **Red-winged Starlings** flying overhead, **Cape Buntings** hopping between the rocks and also an attractive male **Sentinel Rock-Thrush** perched by the side of the track. We walked some way before finding our target **Cape Rockjumper** which dutifully wowed the whole group. Mission accomplished we drove the short way to Pringle Bay and a small shopping center called the 'Pringle Mingle' where we enjoyed a coffee on the balcony and saw **Cape Francolin** walking around on a nearby lawn.



African Penguins never fail to charm.

Onto our next site which was the Stoney Point penguin colony in the quaint little town of Betty's Bay. We had barely got out of the car before we saw our first **African Penguins**. They charmed us with their antics but we also enjoyed the **Crowned, White-breasted, Cape** and **Bank Cormorants** at the colony. The latter, quite a rarity. We had a pair of **Egyptian Geese** with fluffy goslings, a large V of **African Sacred Ibis** flying over, and finally our other major target. We heard **African Oystercatchers** calling on the other side of rocks and after a while they then flew down the coast, circled back and landed nearby. We rushed over there for better views and some photos. We had a delicious seafood lunch in the seaside town of Kleinmond before starting the long drive back to Cape Town.

8th August – West Coast National Park



Cape Clapper Lark doing its incredible flight display.

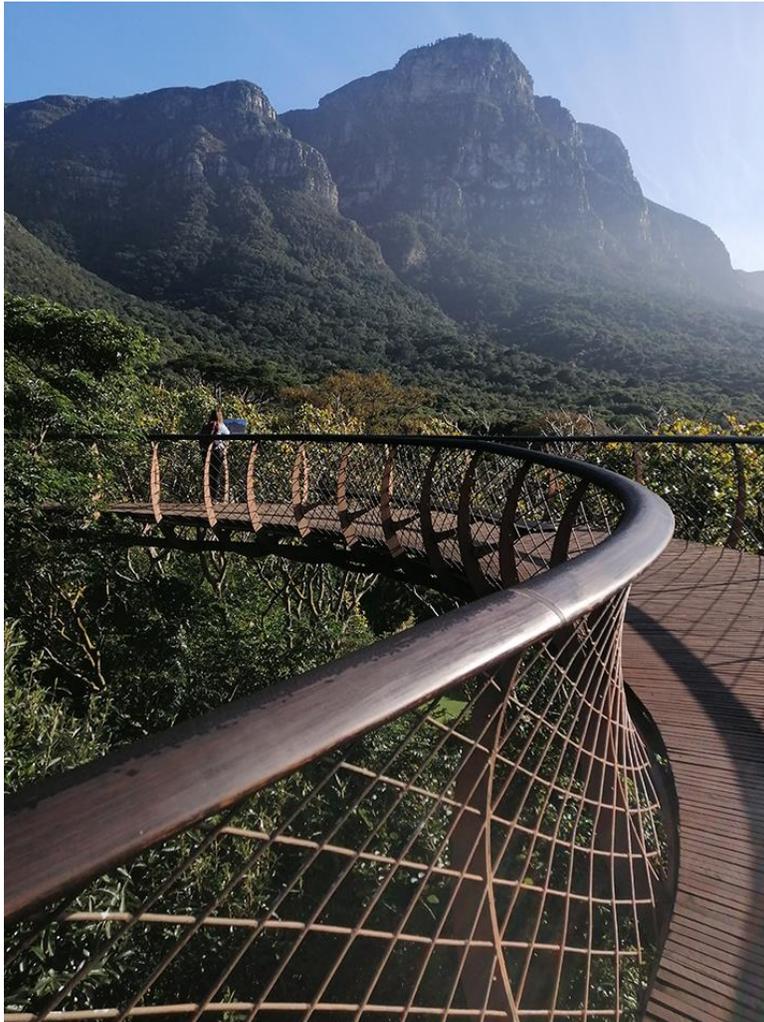
Today we were heading to the fantastic West Coast national park. It was a straight shot north of Cape Town, and we were soon out of the city and driving through the open coastal Fynbos habitat. Ken spotted a covey of the endemic **Gray-winged Francolin** and we also flushed up the spectacular **Black Bustard**. We were on the lookout for the endemic **Cape Clapper Lark** which was conspicuous in its absence, but we did see our first **Pearl-breasted Swallow** on a fence and a gorgeous male **Malachite Sunbird**. We continued our drive and saw quite a few different raptors along the road, with **Jackal Buzzard**, **Rock Kestrel** & **Black-winged Kite**. While Ken bought the tickets, we did some birding at the gate of the West Coast National Park and saw **Cape Bulbul**, **Cape Robinchat**, **Southern Double-collared Sunbird** and had a big flock of **Pied Starlings** fly over. Driving slowly through the beautiful reserve with the windows open, we heard a **Cape Clapper Lark** and stopped. We tried the call and had one fly right in and display in front of us. Next, we drove to Abramskraal where there is a pond with a blind. Along the entrance road, we had amazing views of **Southern Black Korhaan** and **South African Shelducks** in flight.



Seeing African Rail this well was a first for both guides.

On the pond we saw **Cape Shoveler**, **Cape Teal**; and in the waterside reeds and bushes **Cape Crombec**, **Cape Weaver**, **Yellow Bishop**, **Little Rush Warbler** and **Yellow Canary**. Nearby we saw beautiful pairs of **Bokmakeries** and **Orange-throated Longclaw** displaying. The highlight though, were the **African Rails** which showed amazingly well. Normally incredibly secretive birds, these ones were stood out in the open posing for photos. We drove on to Geelbek and on the way saw our first **Karoo Scrub-Robin**. We walked down to the blinds looking over Langebaan Lagoon where we had numerous **Greater & Lesser Flamingos**. From the blind, we scoped some distant **Common Ostriches**, **African Oystercatcher** and **African Fish Eagle**. Other shorebirds like **Pied Avocet**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Kittlitz's Plover** and **Common Greenshank** were also present. Unfortunately, the restaurant at Geelbek, which had been closed during the whole pandemic was only opening tomorrow, so we had to drive out the north exit for lunch. On the way we saw our first **Black Harrier**, plus **Cape Grassbird** and **White-throated Canary**. After a nice lunch of seafood in the town of Langebaan, we started the long drive back to Cape town with a few birds on the way including a flock of **Great White Pelicans**.

9th August – Kirstenbosch & Cape Point



The Boomslang Boardwalk in front of Table Mountain.

Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens only opens at 8:30am which meant that we had a later than usual breakfast. When we got to the gardens, we joined the long line of people to get it but even as we lined up, we managed to spot a new bird for the trip; a **Rameron Pigeon** perched on top of a tree nearby. Today was a national holiday; national women's day and it was going to be busy. There were several birding groups there and we had to make sure we didn't lose or gain any extra members to our group. Soon after getting into the gardens, we found a particularly productive spot where we saw **Sombre Greenbul**, some Introduced **Bronze Munias**, several **Olive Thrushes**, **African Dusky Flycatcher**, **Pin-tailed Whydah** and of course many **Southern Double-collared Sunbirds**. We entered a small, forested area called the Dell, where we picked up a charming pair of **Cape Batises** before walking up into the Cycad section to take a look at the interesting prehistoric plants. We walked up to look at a pair of **Spotted Eagle-Owls** perched in their regular trees and also had a pair of **Forest Buzzards** soaring over the gardens. We walked across to the aerial boardwalk called the Boomslang, named after the venomous tree snake.



Red-winged Starling on an Aloe at Cape point.

After getting back to the entrance, we gave everybody some time in the gift shop before setting off for lunch. Everywhere was busy today but a local friend suggested the lovely outdoor shopping center in the charming town of Nordhoek. In the afternoon, we drove down to Cape Point Nature reserve. Soon after entering, we spotted a small herd of **Common Eland** which we drove down a side road to get a better look at. We drove all the way to the parking lot at the end of the peninsular, and from there took a walk up to the lighthouse. The views were breath-taking, and so was the climb. A couple from our group chose the easy way up by using the funicular tram. We had a few nice sightings: A pair of **White-necked Ravens** sailed over, we had Red-winged Starlings perching on the Aloes, several **Cape Gannets** and **Great Crested Terns** out at sea, nesting **Cape Cormorants** on the cliffs and coming down, a nice **Cape Grassbird** perched up. Back at the vehicle, I set off with my folks, but Ken was delayed as somebody had forgotten something. As luck would have it, they ended up seeing a **Peregrine Falcon** flying by while they were waiting, and also saw **Cape Mountain Zebra** on their drive out. A great day was topped off with another delicious dinner near our hotel.

10th August – Strandfontein to Overberg



African Marsh Harrier in flight at Stranfontein sewage works.

Sadly, it was time to leave Cape Town, but we had time for 1 last site, the Strandfontein water treatment plant. We had beautiful weather the whole time in Cape Town, but a front had come in, so it was cloudy and rainy. Luckily Strandfontein can be birded from the vehicle. After a short drive we arrived and straight off we added several birds: Some handsome male **Sothorn Pochards** with their glossy purple heads, **Great Crested Tern** resting on a wooden pole over the water, and a glossy blue and purple **African Swamphen**. In the reed beds bordering the roads, we saw **Levaillant's Cisticola**, singing **Lesser Swamp Warblers** and a female **African Marsh harrier** flying by. On one of the ponds, we had a dozen or so **Eared Grebes** and many **Plain Martins** flying over the water. Looking up at the neighbouring garbage dump we saw hundreds of **Kelp Gulls**. The final pond was the best and here we saw **Black-winged Stilt** on the edge of the water, some **Red-billed Ducks** which flew in, a pair of the nomadic **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** and lastly a **Purple Heron** flying by. Our time was up so we went back to the lodge to pick up our bags and set off east along the N2 highway.



Blue Cranes displaying in the Overberg.

We drove up and over Sir Lowry's Pass and saw a couple of naughty **Chacma Baboons** stalking the parking lot. We stopped for lunch at an amazing deli and bakery before continuing on to the Overberg area. The Overberg has beautiful rolling hills full of bright yellow Oil Seed Rape flowers at this time of year. On one side is the wild coastline, and the other the steep mountain range. We took a drive through the agricultural fields and picked up many new birds for our trip, including **Red-capped Lark**, **Cape Crow**, a dapper male **African Stonechat** and **Black-headed Heron**. Ken was scanning some fields a few hundred meters away and called on the walkie-talkie to tell us that a huge **Denham's Bustard** was flying our way. We looked up to see this huge bird sailing by. We also had our first **Cloud Cisticolas** calling high up in the clouds. We continued on, picking up our first **African Spoonbill** on a small pond, had several **Speckled Mousebirds** flying across the road and perching on the fence, a very smart **Capped Wheatear** and the endemic **Large-billed Lark**. The sighting of the day though was a flock of over 100 **Blue Cranes** displaying nearby. The grace and elegance of South Africa's national bird is almost incomparable. Our lodgings were very an old, converted country house and rather splendid. Dinner was some hearty home-cooked food.

11th August – De Hoop Nature Reserve



Intruding on a private moment. Bontebok.

After breakfast we started our drive down to the De Hoop Nature Reserve where we would be spending the day. The agricultural fields were as packed with birds as yesterday and we had to separate the chaff from the wheat. We had to stop to admire some more **Blue Cranes**, but also took a quick look at **Rock Kestrel**, **Capped Wheater** and our first **Red-billed Queleas** of the trip. Ken's vehicle had seen **Agulhas Lark** yesterday and my vehicle gripped back that target and also picked up a roadside covey of **Grey-winged Francolins**. We were trying to limit stops but it was difficult with so many good birds and we got great pics of a pair of **Bokmakeries** perched on a post, carrying nesting material. We arrived at the entrance to the reserve and soon started seeing some cool mammals with numerous **Eland** and **Bontebok**. We added our first **African Hoopoe** and several **African Swifts** flying overhead. We headed straight to the campground set in an unusual woodland of Milkwood trees. The big target here was the localized **Southern Tchagra**, but we also had great views of **Southern Boubou**, **Fiscal Flycatcher** and **Bar-throated Apalis**. On the Vlei, or wetland, below, we saw numerous waterbirds, including **Great Crested** and **Eared Grebes**, **African Darter** and a bit later, a **Caspian Tern**.



Bokmakierie & Capped Wheatear



Southern Right Whale slapping its tail on the surface of the water.

We strolled over to the restaurant where we gave our lunch order and then jumped back in the vehicles for a drive to the Koppie Eileen section of the parks where there were some beautiful white sand dunes overlooking a sea full of **Southern Right Whales**. One individual did repeated tail slaps on the water. Some particularly friendly birds in the parking lot included a **Cape Bunting** that seemed to want to come with us and actually hopped inside one of the vehicles. On the drive back to the restaurant we added the uncommon mammal, **Grey Rhebok** but failed to see our target **Cape Mountain Zebra**. Lunch was fantastic but we had to hustle as we still had another site we wanted to visit outside of the park. As luck would have it we picked up our zebras on the way out. Ken had told us of an interesting local reserve called Haarwegskloof Renosterveld Reserve that protected one of the last remaining areas of this rare habitat in the area. We had a fascinating botanical visit but also picked up **Denham's Bustard**, **Large-billed Lark** and **Black Harrier**. A fantastic day was topped off when the manageress of our lodge showed us a **Barn Owl** that had flown inside one of the buildings.

12th August – Bontebok to Wilderness



Olive Woodpecker posed beautifully for photos.

Whilst putting the luggage in the vehicles before breakfast, I noticed one of the tires was flat. This would have been a fairly simple operation but it had rained overnight and the ground was so soft that the jack kept disappearing into the earth. It was changed soon enough, and Ken and I wolfed down a quick breakfast before saying goodbye to our hosts and setting off for the nearby Bontebok national park, our birding site for the morning. We had a fairly long drive today which afforded us only a couple of hours in the park, but luckily it was South Africa's smallest national park, set up to protect its namesake. Leaving the lodge, we had our first **Hamerkop** of the trip; an unusual looking bird with a very uniquely shaped head. After buying our tickets at park office, we set off on the loop drive which first passed along the river. There was a small viewpoint where we scanned the river and found **Spur-winged Goose, Cape Shoveler, Yellow-billed & Red-billed Ducks** and **Three-banded Plover**. We were looking for **African Black Duck** and finally had a pair flying quickly by. Next, we checked out the forest patch there. It was raining, but we still got a few nice birds, including some close **Olive Woodpeckers, Southern Boubou**, our first **Streaky-headed Seedeater, Bar-throated Apalis**, the beautiful **Greater Double-collared Sunbird** and a **Fiscal Flycatcher**. We continued along the loop where we picked up some common birds like **Southern Double-collared & Malachite Sunbirds, Red-headed & Cloud Cisticolas**, and **Common Waxbill**, plus a few more exciting ones like **Denham's Bustard, Black Harrier** and the Agulhas form of **Cape Clapper Lark**, which is considered by some as a separate species.



Knysna Turaco showing its beautiful red feathers in flight.

We passed a huge dead tree with several **Black-headed Herons** and **Black-winged Kites** on it. Toward the end of the loop, we passed an area full of beautiful tubular pink flowers where we saw **Gray-winged & Cape Francolins** and the endemic **Cape Grassbird**. Our time was up and after a quick bathroom stop, we hit the road and had a 2-hour drive to lunch. The rolling hills flattened out somewhat as we passed out of the Overberg and into the Garden Route and we saw a few raptors along the way like **Black Harrier** and **Forest Buzzard**. We had lunch at a fantastic restaurant next to a distillery and many tried some of the local gins with lunch. From there to Wilderness was short drive and we went straight out for some introductory birding. We stopped by the national park camp site called Ebb-and-flow where we did some birding from the bridge. Here we had a few water birds like **African Darter**, **Long-tailed** and **Cape Cormorant**, the latter very unusual on a river. We also had a **Half-collared Kingfisher** fly under the bridge, the toughest of the kingfishers here. Then came a real piece of luck; a movement in a riverside yellowwood tree turned out to be the spectacular **Knysna Turaco** which was feeding on the fruits of that tree. It was at close range and everybody got killer views of this beautiful bird. Birding the forest edge here, we also picked up **Southern Boubou**, **Green-backed Camaroptera**, **African Dusky Flycatcher** and a beautiful **Greater Double-collared Sunbird** before we went to check in at the hotel, stopping quickly to see **African Oystercatcher** in the river mouth. The lodge was fantastic and the views of the ocean from the spacious rooms was something else. A great day topped off with a delicious dinner at a local restaurant.

13th August – Wilderness National Park



Chorister Robin-chat in a denizen of Afro-montane forest.

We started our full day of birding in the Wilderness area just outside the lodge where an **Olive Bushshrike** was singing, and unlike the one we tried yesterday, this one was very responsive and showed well. We had time for a short birding session before breakfast and decided to target the tricky endemic **Knysna Warbler** down on the Beach Road. We heard it almost as soon as we stepped out of the vehicles, but the hard part was getting a look at this mega skulker. With considerable effort we all ended up with some sort of views plus incidental **Speckled Mousebirds** and a **Cape Robin-Chat**. We were hitting trails after breakfast so thought we would save some time and go and purchase our tickets now. Driving to the Ebb-and-flow camp ground, we had a rather fine **Bushbuck** male and also saw **Fork-tailed Drongo**, **Fiscal Flycatcher** and a female **Amethyst Sunbird**. The breakfast room at the lodge was closed for refurbishment so we had to visit the best restaurant in town again. What a bind. We stumbled upon a lucky **Brown-hooded Kingfisher** just by the parking lot. After brekkie, we drove up to 'Big Tree', a nice patch of Afro-montane forest with a huge Outeniqua Yellowwood tree near the entrance. One of the trip participants spotted a pair of **Spotted Thick-knees** in the parking lot which was a good start. We moved into the forest where the birding was a bit more challenging although we did find a rather tame **Chorister Robin-Chat** straight away.



Narina Trogon was named after the naturalist Levaillant's local mistress.

We had a fairly productive time here and picked up **African Black-headed Oriole**, **Black-backed Puffback**, **African Crested-Flycatcher**, **Terrestrial Brownbul** and **Collared Sunbird** before Ken and I heard a major target, **Narina Trogon**. Tracking down this rather shy bird required a bit of bushwhacking, but we all got good views only to find a splendid male perched out in the open just by the Big Tree afterwards. One extra bonus on the way out was another shy bird, the **Lemon Dove**. After a lovely lunch at an Italian place, we drove to the Brown-hooded Kingfisher trail looking for Knysna Woodpecker, one of the most difficult endemics. We didn't hear a peep out of it but did improve on our views of **Knysna Warbler**. Next it was on to the Malachite Hide with our first **Vervet Monkey** on the way. We parked and walked along the boardwalk to the blind, flushing a tiny **Malachite Kingfisher** in a quick blur of blue. From the blind itself, we scanned the water birds to find the rare **White-backed Duck**, great views of **Great Crested Grebe** and a distant **African Fish-Eagle**. In the reedbeds we also had good views of **Levaillant's Cisticola**. Back at the parking lot we saw both **Forest & Brimstone Canaries**. Our time was almost up for the day, but we did squeeze in a short walk along the Half-collared Kingfisher trail where we came upon a very tame pair of **Lemon Doves** and our first **Yellow-throated Woodland-Warbler**. It was back to our favourite restaurant for dinner, which was a delicious and jovial affair, to top off a great day of birding.

14th August – Wilderness to Karoo NP



What the Protea Canary lacks in looks, it makes up for in mystique.

We left Wilderness early, passed through the town of George with its quaint speed traps, up and over the Outeniqua Pass and into the Klein Karoo. Even though it was raining, it was much drier habitat than where we had been, but not as dry as where we were going. We had a few birds in flight along the way, like **Cape Crow** and **African Spoonbill**, but we tried to make good time to get to our main birding location, the base of the Swartberg Pass. By the time we had got there, the rain had eased off, but it was still very cold. We were looking for 2 specific endemic birds: **Victorin's Warbler** & **Protea Canary**. We tried the call with no luck, but we did see several **Cape Sugarbirds** and **Orange-breasted Sunbirds**. I took a walk along the road, checking the Protea trees for the canary and one popped out. I called everybody over, and we got great looks at this tough endemic. We were ready to give up on the **Victorin's Warbler** but kept on trying on the way back to the car. All of a sudden, one started calling up in the valley and we stood on the bridge playing it. It didn't come in, so we walked up a little bit and tried again. Still nothing. We decided to leave it and try further up the road when one burst into its funny rhythmic tune. After some effort we all got some sort of view, but it certainly was a sneaky little chap. It got colder and colder as we went higher and at the top of the pass, there was even a little bit of snow. We quickly jumped back in and started down the other side which was visibly drier and the scenery equally spectacular. There was a huge canyon with remarkable geology. Lower down, it warmed up a bit and we got out at a place covered in beautiful **Cape Aloes**. Here we saw **White-backed Mousebird**, **Cape White-eye** plus many **Malachite Sunbirds** visiting the flowers.



Cape Aloe was in full bloom coming down from the Swartberg pass



The brown Karoo Bustard is often a tough bird to spot.

It started to flatten out coming out of the canyon, and we had another stop where we saw a **Booted Eagle** soaring over, a small flock of **Red-faced Mousebirds** flying by, the smart black and white **Pirit Batis**, the tiny **Fairy Flycatcher** and a skulking **Chestnut-vented Warbler**. We had lunch of tasty home-cooked food in the small town of Prince Albert before continuing our drive towards Karoo National Park. We turned onto a gravel road and enjoyed several productive stops along it. We picked up the rather drab **Chat Flycatcher** and **Black-throated Canary** just out of town; and on a rocky hillside found our first **Karoo Long-billed Lark** and a **Sickle-winged Chat** perched briefly on a fence post. A **Namaqua Dove** shot by at speed, and we found a beautiful **Pale Chanting-Goshawk** perched close to the road, which flushed up and landed on a distant ridgeline where we were able to scope it. Further on, Ken spotted a small group of **Southern Penduline-Tits** by the side of the road and we stopped to check them out, also picking up **Yellow-bellied Eremomela**, and the endemic **Namaqua Warbler**. We drove over a bridge where we saw a pair of **South African Shelducks** and a **Three-banded Plover**, and finally drove by a very green irrigated field where Deb picked out a pair of brown **Karoo Bustards** quite close that stood out quite nicely. We were trying to make time, but the birds wouldn't let up. Next, we had a flock of **Wattled Starlings**, and once on the highway, we stopped to take a look at a huge **Verreaux's Eagle** soaring by the side of the road. On inspection of a photo somebody took, we saw that it was carrying a Yellow Mongoose in its talons! We reached the national park, got our entry permits and drove the short distance to reception finding our last bird of the day, a **Spike-heeled Lark** on the way. We quickly checked into our rooms and met for an early dinner as some of us were going on a 7pm night drive on which they had a few interesting sightings, including numerous **Cape** and **Scrub Hares**, **Common Eland** and **Mountain Reedbuck**. The latter new for the trip.

15th August – Karoo National Park



Black-headed Canary are bloom nomads and we saw big numbers in Karoo NP.

After breakfast we started our exploration of Karoo national park. We decided to try the long loop that went up a steep valley to the plateau above. Not far from camp at the base of the road, there was a waterhole that was new since my last visit. There were plenty of birds coming in for a morning drink and we spent a very productive time picking up several new species, including **Black-fronted Bulbul**, several **Pale-winged Starlings**, **Black-throated**, **White-throated** and our target **Black-headed Canary** (a Karoo endemic), plus **Cape & Lark-like Buntings**. It was a steep but paved road up with an impressive stone wall on the bottom side. We reached the top and spotted **Mountain Wheatear** and the uncommon **Yellow-tufted Pipit** sat on some boulders. As it flattened out, we added our first **Layard's Warbler** and **Dusky Sunbird**. A short distance along, we reached the Rooivalle viewpoint. Since the introduction of lions in the park, the places you can get out of the vehicle are restricted, but this was one of them. Looking across the valley to the steep red cliffs on the other side, we spotted a family of **Klipspringers** and several **Cape Hyraxes** or dassies on the other side. In the distance, a family of **Ground Woodpeckers** and even further, a perched **Verreaux's Eagle**, a huge raptor that preys on the dassies. Bathroom stops were very limited from here on, so we made sure to water the bushes before we set off. On the plateau, we had a nice **Pale Chanting-Goshawk**, several displaying **Karoo Long-billed Larks**, the chocolate-colored **Southern Anteater-Chat**, **Karoo Chat**, **Red-headed Cisticola** and the karoo specialist **Rufous-eared Warbler**. The normally uncommon **Sickle-winged Chat** was all over the place here and we also picked up our first **Short-toed Rock-Thrush**.



Ground Woodpeckers in a tree. Did nobody tell them that they are supposed to perch on rocks.



Double-banded Courser is well camouflaged in the dry Karoo landscape.

Mammals were also good up here and we saw **Kudu**, **Red Hartebeest** and **Cape Mountain Zebra**. Having made so many stops, it became clear that we weren't going to make it around the long loop, so instead turned back and enjoyed better views of many of the birds we had already seen, including some **Ground Woodpeckers** perched in a tree close to the road. Back down at the waterhole, a beautiful pair **South African Shelducks** posed nicely for us. Back at the main camp we went straight to lunch and enjoyed the warm sunshine outside along with several birds in the garden, like **Karoo Thrush**, **Cape Robin-Chat**, **Southern Masked-Weaver** and **Cape Sparrow**. We had some downtime after lunch but there was lots of bird activity outside the rooms and some of us saw **Pirit Batis**, **White-necked Raven**, **Yellow-bellied Eremomela**, **Familiar Chat** and **Nicholson's Pipit**. In the afternoon, we drove the lower Lammetjieslegte Loop in the hope of one or 2 new birds. We started off with another attractive **Rufous-eared Warbler** and other birds seen included several **Common Ostrich**, **Namaqua Dove**, **Pale Chanting-Goshawk**, a close **Fairy Flycatcher**, **Sabota Lark**, **Wattled & Pale-winged Starlings**, and a beautiful male **Short-toed Rock-Thrush**. The birding highlight of the afternoon though was a pair of **Double-banded Coursers** which posed beautifully. We saw several mammals too, including the beautiful **Gemsbok**, which was new for the trip. Our last port of call was the waterhole from this morning that we thought we would check one more time for sandgrouse. It was fairly quiet although we did see an unusual 5 **Verreaux's Eagles** soaring in the distance. Another great day in the Karoo.

16th August – Karoo NP to the winelands

Common Ostriches are built for speed.

Today was mainly a travel day with a long drive back to Cape Town. After saying our goodbyes to the friendly staff at Karoo National Park, we set off and drove the short distance out of the park with a few sightings on the way, like **Common Ostrich**, **Namaqua Dove**, **Pale-winged Starling** and **Southern Anteater-Chat**. It was a 4 hour drive to lunch and we had a couple of service area breaks, one of which sold great coffees and red cappuccinos, and even gave us a new trip bird, the **Little Swift**. It was interesting looking out at the window at the ever-changing scenery and the odd raptor or corvid, like **Jackal Buzzard**, **Rock Kestrel**, **Black Harrier** or **White-necked Raven**. Getting closer to Cape Town we even picked up a pair of **Blue Cranes**. We stopped for lunch at a farm stall where we had a nice, hearty lunch before driving the last hour to our lodge. After a quick check in we took everybody over to the wine estate next door where people were able to take part in a nice wine tasting. Another delicious dinner brought the evening to a close and the promise of travelling to the other side of the country tomorrow.

17th August – Cape Town to Madikwe Game Reserve



The beautiful Lilac-breasted Roller always ranks highly.

Today was going to be another long travelling day. Our flight turned out to be almost an hour late departing, which was a bit of a blow as we had a long drive and would probably be arriving a little late at Madikwe. We got out of the airport as quickly as possible and got on our way to Madikwe Game Reserve which was about a 4-hour drive. We still saw quite a bit of new stuff with some common wire birds like **Lilac-breasted Roller**, **Magpie Shrike**, and **Cape Starling**. After a quick bathroom stop, we continued and started picking up a few more interesting species, like **Lesser Striped Swallow**, **White-crowned Shrike**, and **Gray Go-away-bird**. We also picked up a few soaring raptors including **Brown Snake-Eagle** and **White-backed Vulture**. We took a short cut which passed a few private game farms and saw a few mammals like **Kudu** and beautiful male **Sable Antelope**. We continued adding more birds, with **Swainson's Francolin**, **Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill**, and **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**. Normally the gate closed at 6pm but the lodge keep it open a little longer. There were some noisy **White-browed Sparrow-Weavers** chatting in their nesting colony by the gate as we filled in the required paperwork. One of the lodge vehicles arrived at the gate to guide us in which was good as it was quite a convoluted route. We had an absolutely stunning, deep red sunset and it was almost dark by the time we arrived. Attested to by a **Freckled Nightjar** flushing off the road. We received a warm welcome by the lodge staff and were shown to our beautiful rooms before we enjoyed a delicious meal.

18th August – Madikwe Game Reserve



Greater Honeyguide was an unexpected surprise.

After a delicious breakfast we boarded the 2 safari vehicles in front of the lodge for the first of our game drives here in the park. With everything here new, we stopped at almost every single bird, so progress was slow. We had an amazing selection of birds feeding on the bare earth, including **Sabota Lark**, **Piping Cisticola**, **Golden-breasted Bunting**, **Yellow-fronted Canary**, **Southern Cordonbleu**, **Violet-eared Waxbill** and **Green-winged Pytilia**. There were also numerous birds perched in the bushes, like **Pied Barbet**, **Chinspot Batis**, **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, **Crimson-breasted Gonolek**, **Arrow-marked & Southern Pied Babblers**; and more perched up in the dead trees, with **Gabar Goshawk**, a pair of **Pearl-spotted Owlets**, **Southern Yellow-billed** and **Red-billed Hornbills**, and **Lilac-breasted Roller**. Some other birding highlights of the morning were an **African Hoopoe** at a nest cavity, a beautifully-patterned **Red-crested Bustard**, a **Greater Honeyguide** on the ground, feeding on termites and a pair **Burchell's Starlings** flying by. The other vehicle contacted us on the walkie-talkies and told us where there was a large herd of **Cape Buffalos**. This required some driving off road, but we got close and watched them with their attendant **Red-billed Oxpeckers**.



Our first of several Lion sightings

We continued through some open grassy areas where we saw numerous **Chestnut-backed Sparrowlarks**, a **Rufous-naped Lark**, plus many **Southern Anteater Chats** and **Scaly Wavers**, and even flushed a **Small Buttonquail**. We took a break from birding and met up with the other vehicle for a morning coffee and shared our best sightings with each other. In the distance we could see 2 huge **African Elephants**, and Ken even spotted a couple of **White Rhinos**. We set off on 2 different routes to try and get better looks at the rhinos. One vehicle found them quickly, but the other took a while to find the spot. By the time we got there, they had also found a pride of **Lions** under the trees which we looked at for a while before a mother and calf **White Rhino** walked into view. We also enjoyed views of a close **Ashy Tit**. It was time to return to the lodge for lunch, and on the drive back we saw **Rufous-crowned Roller** and **Greater Kestrel**. At 3:30pm we began our afternoon game drive, but really felt that there was no way that it was going to live up to the morning. It started very well with a **Spotted Thick-knee** sat under a tree. We drove some way to a more open savanna that looked perfect for **Kori Bustard**, and sure enough we found one there. We also had several **Red-crested Bustards** and the other vehicle even flushed up a **White-quilled Bustard**. On the other end of the size spectrum, we also found another first, a non-breeding-plumaged **Shaft-tailed Whydah**.



African Wild Dogs have made a come back at Madikwe.

We saw many of the same species as this morning including a close **Pale Chanting Goshawk** that posed beautifully for photos. We also had our first **African Gray Hornbill** in flight. We had several good sightings of **White Rhinos** before stopping for our sundowners. The spot wasn't picked at random but close to a **African Wild Dog** sighting and the driver thought that there was a chance that a pack might come our way. When we finished our drinks, the drivers told us to get into the cars quickly and sped off. We hared along the fence line not knowing exactly what was going on. It soon became clear when we saw another couple of vehicles watching a pack of dogs. We were able to take our turn and got amazing views of these rare animals. They left that spot and started running along the fence line directly towards our group's second vehicle and they too had great views. We followed them for a while and even saw the lead dog running up to a large bull **Kudu**, which then started to run. The dogs thought better of it and our driver told us that they prefer to tackle prey without horns. It had been a totally unexpected and amazing sighting. It was after dusk and we had to get back to the lodge. A little bit of incidental spotlighting on the way back produced amazing views of **Fiery-necked Nightjar**, **Southern White-faced Owl** and a flushed **Spotted Eagle-Owl**. What an incredible day.

19th August – Madikwe Game Reserve



African Cuckoo-Hawk was a real surprise at Madikwe.

Unfortunately a cold front had come in and it was a good deal cooler than yesterday. We did see plenty of birds included common things like **Crimson-breasted Gonolek**, **Kalahari Scrub-Robin** and **Chestnut-vented Warbler**, but also a surprise **African Cuckoo-Hawk**. We drove towards a watering hold and there were large numbers of birds in the surrounding bushes, with numerous **Red-billed Queleas**, **Southern Gray-headed Sparrows** and a single **Great Sparrow**, the latter which was new for the trip. On the pond itself, we had **Golden-breasted Bunting** and several **Quailfinches**, also new. We drove through an open grassy plain that looked perfect for Secretarybird, but all we saw were **Chestnut-backed Sparrowlarks** and **Desert Cisticolas**, and all we felt was the icy wind penetrating our blankets. We stopped for coffee, rusks and muffins. Standing still in the warm sunshine with our hot drinks felt wonderful. The drivers heard over the airwaves that some lions had been sighted. We set off in different directions, and on the way, our vehicle checked out another waterhole that was almost dry, but for a tiny puddle in the middle of the mud. It drew in a surprising variety of small birds, including **Southern Cordonbleu**, **Green-winged Pytilia**, **Jameson's Firefinch** and a non-breeding **Eastern Paradise Whydah**, the latter also new for our lists. We met up with the other vehicle at the 2 male **Lions** which were resting on the road. They were sitting up and seemed alert and pretty soon started roaring. It seemed that they had come into the territory of 2 other male lions, one of which had killed the brother of one of these guys. He was out for revenge according to our driver and was laying down the gauntlet by roaring in another males territory.



Lions roaring, shook us to the core.



A Cheetah scanning its surroundings.

It seemed rather mellow dramatic but certainly made for a good story. The males roared and yawned then got up to amble along the road. It was a great sighting. Then we got more garbled messages on the walkie talkie. I couldn't make them out and our drivers seemed motivated and half an hour later we were watching a female **Cheetah**. It had been seen earlier and then lost, but one of our drivers managed to refind it. It was sitting peacefully under a tree when we arrived, but after a while decided to get up a take a stroll. It worked its way through the bush, and along the edge of the airstrip where it half climbed onto a mound for a look around. It was a great sighting and finally we just let it continue its walk accompanied by another vehicle that had arrived. The limit on the number of vehicles at sightings and the cooperation of drivers in sharing information really was paying dividends. After another delicious lunch and a rest, we headed out again. We stopped at a particularly productive spot where we saw **Crested & Pied Barbets** and **Burnt-neck Eremomela** among many others. We made our way to a large waterhole. Here we saw plenty of small birds coming to drink, including **Cinnamon-breasted Bunting**, plus several waterbirds like **South African Shelduck**, **Black-headed Heron** and **Three-banded Plover**. We drove to the base of a koppie for sundowners and snacks that had been laid out in advance. We went back to the dam at sunset to enjoy some more wonderful sightings, including a family of **White Rhinos**, a large herd of **Cape Buffalos**, a family of **Swainson's Francolins** and almost 50 **African Elephants** which charmed us with their antics. A **Spotted Eagle Owl** perched up on dead trees with a bright orange sunset behind it was a fitting final sighting for another amazing day.

20th August – Madikwe Game Reserve



Brown Hyaena was voted mammal of the trip.

There were a lot of birds in front of the lodge after breakfast when we gathered for our morning game drive. We heard a **Mariqua Sunbird** and we tried to entice it in by whistling **Pearl-spotted Owlet** calls. It worked a treat and not only did we get great views of the sunbirds but had a pair of owlets come in as well. Our drivers had recommended a different dam where we might find some different birds. We drove quite a way through the familiar dry habitat and then down into a valley with a big cliff face and caves leading into it. This place had a very different feel to it with several large rock fig trees with their roots draping over the rocks and their evergreen leaves. Ken's vehicles spotted a pair of **Mocking Cliff-Chats**, hopping around the top of the cliff face. Then came a big surprise. I thought I heard the driver say "**Brown Hyaena**". I didn't think I could have heard him correctly so got him to repeat it. One by one, the clients casually said things like, "Oh yeah, there it is". A feeling of panic crept into my chest. I urged the driver to give clearer instructions but still I couldn't see it. After a few horrible seconds, I finally managed to spot the animal which I had never seen before and which was one of my most wanted mammals to see in Africa. We had great close-up views of this MEGA animal and some nice pics. It trundled off with its weird shape and awkward gait. Next, the other driver spotted a pup sunbathing in the entrance to its cave. What a find! Truly amazing.



White-throated Robin-Chat was unusually common around the lodge.

A short distance on, we got out and did some birding in this fascinating environment. We managed to see **Tawny-flanked Prinia**, which was strangely rare and seemed to be on the edge of its distribution here, also some nice **Black-faced Waxbills**. We continued our drive and picked up a **Short-toed Rock-Thrush**, close to the vehicle. We had a morning coffee stop at the base of a rocky koppie during which we had **Martial Eagle** and **White-backed Vulture** flying over. We finally made it to the dam and it was worth it as we picked up a number of new birds. The most obvious was the huge **Goliath Heron** which was wading through the aquatic vegetation nearby. Scanning the back of the water, we also picked up **Spur-winged Goose**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Little Stint** and several species of swallows including **South African Swallows** which were feeding by dipping down to pick off insects from the surface. I saw a **Lanner Falcon** fly in at the back, and a short time later saw it picking off a bird and flying off with it. Very dramatic! On the way back I managed to relocate it and got some close photos. We passed by another waterhole on the way back where we saw a mass of **African Elephants** and also a dark morph **Gabar Goshawk**. What a morning it had been. Just before going out again in the afternoon, we had nice views of **White-throated Robin-Chat**, **Kurrichane Thrush** and **Arrow-marked Babblers** around the lodge. It was our final game drive and we saw many of our old favourite birds and mammals, just adding 1 new bird during our sundowner stop, **Red-billed Firefinches**. We asked the drivers to get back to camp by sunset as we wanted to check the waterhole for **Double-banded Sandgrouse**. On cue, they dropped in and Deb spotted them for us. Another magical day.

21st August – Madikwe to Johannesburg



Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike showing off its bright colors.

Because we had seen so much on our game drives, we felt that it would be nice to finish with a short bird walk on the grounds of the lodge. We started our birding on the deck looking over the waterhole. There were a lot of birds coming down to drink but also a lot of activity in general. We got the francolin hatrnick, with **Swainson's, Natal & Crested Francolins**, plus loads of other good birds, including **Common Scimitarbill, Golden-tailed Woodpecker**, the brightly-colored **Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike, White-throated Robin-Chat** and more **Golden-breasted Buntings** than one could shake a stick at. We set off on a short walk along the entrance road where we picked up the cute **Little Bee-eater, Crested Barbet** that looked like a toddler that had colored it in with a box of crayons, **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, the sartorial **Crimson-breasted Shrike**, the 'first responder' **Burnt-neck Eremomela** and a few **Jameson's Firefinches**. We enjoyed our final breakfast served by the very friendly staff who we bid a sad farewell to afterwards. On the drive out, we had a juvenile **Gambar Goshawk** right next to the vehicles plus some **White-browed Sparrow-Weavers**. It was nice to be back on the paved road and we had a couple of short stops for **Magpie & White-crowned Shrikes, Burchell's Starling** and **African Gray Hornbill**. We refueled with diesel and red cappuccinos at a highway rest stop and even picked up a new bird for the trip, a **Common Mynah**, and just getting back into Johannesburg we had one last bird that was new for most people, **Gray-hooded Gull**. In the evening we met up for our final checklist, shared our favorite moments from the trip, and worked out the all important bird and mammal of the trip.

22nd August – Rietvlei Nature Reserve



Rufous-necked Wryneck was our final new bird of the trip.

As a final encore, Ken and I took those that could make it for some final birding to the Rietvlei Nature Reserve which was about 30 minutes away. We got a bit of a shock when we got to the main entrance only to find it closed for the morning to allow construction. We were however able to enter the other side, normally frequented by anglers. We all got out and started scanning the dam. There were plenty of birds around but we only had a couple of hours and wanted to concentrate on picking up a few new species. We had a quick flyby of **African Black Duck** which we had only seen briefly before. We had good numbers of **Long-tailed Widowbirds**. These were in non-breeding plumage, but the males kept their black wings and red and yellow shoulder patches. We saw a rather nice **Black Crake** which showed very well on the edge of the reedbed and we battled with a **Little Rush-Warbler** for those that had missed it previously. The biggest surprise here though was a sub-adult **Ovambo Sparrowhawk** perched high up on a dead tree on the other side of the lake. This is a very rare bird indeed. This was quickly followed by a **Black Goshawk** which flew by. We drove along a bit further and found our first **Common Bulbuls** and even picked up a nice **Cardinal Woodpecker** by the side of the road. In what little time we had left, we drove around the lake to check the trees on the other side. We were trying for **Rufous-necked Wryneck** which is normally pretty responsive. In the meantime, we saw some eastern race **Cape White-eyes** with their yellow rather than gray bellies. The wryneck finally showed and sat out nicely for scope views. It was time to leave and our final birds were some Ostriches which we saw in the distance. We drove the 30 minutes back to the hotel and said our final goodbyes after a truly memorable tour.

BIRDS OF THE TRIP

1. KNYSNA TURACO
2. LILAC-BREASTED ROLLER
3. BLUE CRANE
4. CAPE CLAPPER LARK
5. AFRICAN PENGUIN

MAMMALS OF THE TRIP

1. BROWN HYAENA
2. CHEETAH
3. LION

BIRD LIST

View the **eBird** trip report here, with photos & locations:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/70625>

Ostriches (Struthionidae)

Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus*

Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl (Anatidae)

Fulvous Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor*

White-backed Duck *Thalassornis leuconotus*

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana* **Endemic**

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*

Cape Shoveler *Spatula smithii* **Endemic**

African Black Duck *Anas sparsa*

Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>
Cape Teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>
Red-billed Duck	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Southern Pochard	<i>Netta erythrophthalma</i>

Guineafowl (Numididae)

Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
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Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies (Phasianidae)

Crested Francolin	<i>Ortygornis sephaena</i>	
Gray-winged Francolin	<i>Scleroptila afra</i>	Endemic
Cape Francolin	<i>Pternistis capensis</i>	Endemic
Natal Francolin	<i>Pternistis natalensis</i>	
Swainson's Francolin	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>	

Flamingos (Phoenicopteridae)

Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopus roseus</i>
Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>

Grebes (Podicipedidae)

Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>

Pigeons and Doves (Columbidae)

Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
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Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>
Rameron Pigeon	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>
Lemon Dove	<i>Columba larvata</i>
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>

Sandgrouse (Pteroclididae)

Double-banded Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>
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Bustards (Otididae)

Kori Bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>	
Denham's Bustard	<i>Neotis denhami</i>	
Karoo Bustard	<i>Eupodotis vigorsii</i>	Endemic
Red-crested Bustard	<i>Eupodotis ruficrista</i>	
Black Bustard	<i>Eupodotis afra</i>	Endemic
White-quilled Bustard	<i>Eupodotis afroaoides</i>	Endemic

Turacos (Musophagidae)

Knysna Turaco	<i>Tauraco corythaix</i>	Endemic
Gray Go-away-bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>	

Cuckoos (Cuculidae)

Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>
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Nightjars and Allies (Caprimulgidae)

Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>	
Freckled Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus tristigma</i>	heard only

Swifts (Apodidae)

Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	
African Swift	<i>Apus barbatus</i>	
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	
African Palm-Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	

Rails, Gallinules, and Coots (Rallidae)

African Rail	<i>Rallus caerulescens</i>	
Eurasian Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>	
African Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>	
Black Crake	<i>Zapornia flavirostra</i>	

Cranes (Gruidae)

Blue Crane	<i>Anthropoides paradiseus</i>	Endemic
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Thick-knees (Burhinidae)

Spotted Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>	
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Stilts and Avocets (Recurvirostridae)

Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	

Oystercatchers (Haematopodidae)

African Oystercatcher *Haematopus moquini* **Endemic**

Plovers and Lapwings (Charadriidae)

Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus*

Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus*

Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus*

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

Sandpipers and Allies (Scolopacidae)

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Buttonquail (Turnicidae)

Small Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticus*

Pratincoles and Coursers (Glareolidae)

Double-banded Courser *Smutornis africanus*

Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers (Laridae)

Gray-hooded Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*

Hartlaub's Gull *Chroicocephalus hartlaubii* **Endemic**

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Great Crested Tern *Thalasseus bergii*

Penguins (Spheniscidae)

African Penguin *Spheniscus demersus* **Endemic**

Boobies and Gannets (Sulidae)

Cape Gannet *Morus capensis* **Breeding endemic**

Anhingas (Anhingidae)

African Darter *Anhinga rufa*

Cormorants and Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)

Long-tailed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus*

Crowned Cormorant *Microcarbo coronatus* **Endemic**

Bank Cormorant *Phalacrocorax neglectus* **Endemic**

Cape Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capensis* **Breeding endemic**

Great (White-breasted) Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Pelicans (Pelecanidae)

Great White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

Hamerkop (Scopidae)

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*

Hérons, Egrets, and Bitterns (Ardeidae)

Gray Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>

Ibises and Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)

Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>

Hawks, Eagles, and Kites (Accipitridae)

Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	
African Cuckoo-Hawk	<i>Aviceda cuculoides</i>	
White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>	
Cape Griffon	<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>	Endemic
Black-chested Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>	
Brown Snake-Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>	
Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>	
Booted Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>	
Pale Chanting-Goshawk	<i>Melierax canorus</i>	
Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>	
African Marsh-Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>	

Black Harrier	<i>Circus maurus</i>	Endemic
Little Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter minullus</i>	
Ovambo Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter ovampensis</i>	
Black Goshawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>	
African Fish-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	
Forest Buzzard	<i>Buteo trizonatus</i>	Endemic
Jackal Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>	Endemic

Barn-Owls (Tytonidae)

Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	
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Owls (Strigidae)

Southern White-faced Owl	<i>Ptilopsis granti</i>	
Spotted Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	
Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	

Mousebirds (Coliidae)

Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>	
White-backed Mousebird	<i>Colius colius</i>	Endemic
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>	

Trogon (Trogonidae)

Narina Trogon	<i>Apaloderma narina</i>	
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Hoopoes (Upupidae)

Eurasian (African) Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	
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Woodhoopoes and Scimitarbills (Phoeniculidae)

Green Woodhoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>
Common Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>

Hornbills (Bucerotidae)

African Gray Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>
Southern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>

Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)

Half-collared Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo semitorquata</i>
Malechite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>

Bee-eaters (Meropidae)

Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>

Rollers (Coraciidae)

Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>
Rufous-crowned Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>

African Barbets (Lybiidae)

Crested Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>
Pied Barbet	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>

Honeyguides (Indicatoridae)

Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>
Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>

Woodpeckers (Picidae)

Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Chloropicus fuscescens</i>	
Olive Woodpecker	<i>Chloropicus griseocephalus</i>	
Ground Woodpecker	<i>Geocolaptes olivaceus</i>	Endemic
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>	

Falcons and Caracaras (Falconidae)

Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>
Greater Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>

Old World Orioles (Oriolidae)

African Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>
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Wattle-eyes and Batises (Platysteiridae)

Cape Batis	<i>Batis capensis</i>
Chinspot Batis	<i>Batis molitor</i>
Pririt Batis	<i>Batis pririt</i>

Bushshrikes and Allies (Malaconotidae)

Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
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Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>	
Brown-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra australis</i>	
Southern Tchagra	<i>Tchagra tchagra</i>	Endemic
Southern Boubou	<i>Laniarius ferrugineus</i>	Endemic
Crimson-breasted Gonolek	<i>Laniarius atrococcineus</i>	
Bokmakierie	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>	
Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike	<i>Telophorus sulfureopectus</i>	
Olive Bushshrike	<i>Telophorus olivaceus</i>	

Drongos (Dicuridae)

Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	
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Monarch Flycatchers (Monarchidae)

African Crested-Flycatcher	<i>Trochocercus cyanomelas</i>	
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Shrikes (Laniidae)

Magpie Shrike	<i>Lanius melanoleucus</i>	
Southern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	
White-crowned Shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitimens</i>	

Crows, Jays, and Magpies (Corvidae)

Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>	
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	
White-necked Raven	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>	

Rockjumpers (Chaetopidae)

Cape Rockjumper *Chaetops frenatus* **Endemic**

Fairy Flycatchers (Stenostiridae)

Fairy Flycatcher *Stenostira scita* **Endemic**

Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice (Paridae)

Southern Black-Tit *Melaniparus niger*

Ashy Tit *Melaniparus cinerascens*

Penduline-Tits (Remizidae)

Southern Penduline-Tit *Anthoscopus minutus*

Larks (Alaudidae)

Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata*

Karoo Long-billed Lark *Certhilauda subcoronata* **Endemic**

Agulhas Lark *Certhilauda brevirostris* **Endemic**

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*

Sabota Lark *Calendulauda sabota*

Cape Clapper Lark *Mirafra apiata* **Endemic**

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra Africana*

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea*

Large-billed Lark *Galerida magnirostris* **Endemic**

African Warblers (Macrosphenidae)

Cape Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens*

Cape Grassbird	<i>Sphenoeacus afer</i>	Endemic
Victorin's Warbler	<i>Cryptillas victorine</i>	Endemic

Cisticolas and Allies (Cisticolidae)

Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>	
Burnt-neck Eremomela	<i>Eremomela usticollis</i>	
Namaqua Warbler	<i>Phragmacia substriata</i>	Endemic
Barred Wren-Warbler	<i>Calamonastes fasciolatus</i>	
Green-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	
Bar-throated Apalis	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>	
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	
Black-chested Prinia	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>	
Karoo Prinia	<i>Prinia maculosa</i>	Endemic
Rufous-eared Warbler	<i>Malcorus pectoralis</i>	Endemic
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>	
Red-headed Cisticola	<i>Cisticola subruficapilla</i>	
Levaillant's Cisticola	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>	
Piping Cisticola	<i>Cisticola fulvicapilla</i>	
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	
Desert Cisticola	<i>Cisticola aridulus</i>	
Cloud Cisticola	<i>Cisticola textrix</i>	

Reed Warblers and Allies (Acrocephalidae)

Lesser Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>	
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Grassbirds and Allies (Locustellidae)

Knysna Warbler	<i>Bradypterus sylvaticus</i>	Endemic
Little Rush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>	

Swallows (Hirundinidae)

Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>	
Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>	
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>	
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	
Pearl-breasted Swallow	<i>Hirundo dimidiata</i>	
Greater Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis cucullata</i>	
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>	
Rufous-chested Swallow	<i>Cecropis semirufa</i>	
South African Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon spilodera</i>	Breeding endemic

Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)

Sombre Greenbul	<i>Andropadus importunus</i>	
Terrestrial Brownbul	<i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>	
Common (Dark-capped) Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	
Black-fronted Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>	
Cape Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>	Endemic

Leaf Warblers (Phylloscopidae)

Yellow-throated Woodland-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus ruficapilla</i>	
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Sylviid Warblers, Parrotbills, and Allies (Sylviidae)

Layard's Warbler	<i>Curruca layardi</i>	Endemic
Chestnut-vented Warbler	<i>Curruca subcoerulea</i>	

White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies (Zosteropidae)

Cape White-eye	<i>Zosterops virens</i>	Endemic
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Laughingthrushes and Allies (Leiothrichidae)

Arrow-marked Babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>	
Southern Pied Babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>	Endemic

Oxpeckers (Buphagidae)

Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>	
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Starlings (Sturnidae)

European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	
Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	
Pale-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus naboroupp</i>	
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>	
Burchell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>	
African Pied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis bicolor</i>	Endemic
Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	

Thrushes and Allies (Turdidae)

Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Psophocichla litsitsirupa</i>	
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Kurrichane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>	
Olive Thrush	<i>Turdus olivaceus</i>	Endemic
Karoo Thrush	<i>Turdus smithi</i>	Endemic

Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)

African Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>	
Mariqua Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>	
Chat Flycatcher	<i>Agricola infuscatus</i>	
Gray Tit-Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria plumbea</i>	
Fiscal Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis silens</i>	Endemic
Karoo Scrub-Robin	<i>Cercotrichas coryphoeus</i>	Endemic
Kalahari Scrub-Robin	<i>Cercotrichas paena</i>	
Red-backed Scrub-Robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>	
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>	
White-throated Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha humeralis</i>	Endemic
Chorister Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha dichroa</i>	Endemic
Short-toed Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola brevipes</i>	
Sentinel Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola exploratory</i>	Endemic
Cape Rock-Thrush	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>	
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	
Sickle-winged Chat	<i>Emarginata sinuate</i>	Endemic
Karoo Chat	<i>Emarginata schlegelii</i>	
Mocking Cliff-Chat	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>	
Southern Anteater-Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivore</i>	Endemic
Mountain Wheatear	<i>Myrmecocichla monticola</i>	
Capped Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>	

Familiar Chat *Oenanthe familiaris*

Sugarbirds (Promeropidae)

Cape Sugarbird *Promerops cafer* **Endemic**

Sunbirds and Spiderhunters (Nectariniidae)

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*

Orange-breasted Sunbird *Anthobaphes violacea* **Endemic**

Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystina*

Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa*

Southern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris chalybeus* **Endemic**

Greater Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris afer* **Endemic**

Mariqua Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis*

White-breasted Sunbird *Cinnyris talatala*

Dusky Sunbird *Cinnyris fuscus*

Weavers and Allies (Ploceidae)

Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver *Bubalornis niger*

Scaly Weaver *Sporopipes squamifrons*

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali*

Cape Weaver *Ploceus capensis* **Endemic**

Southern Masked-Weaver *Ploceus velatus*

Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*

Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix*

Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis*

Long-tailed Widowbird *Euplectes progne*

Waxbills and Allies (Estrildidae)

Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cucullata*

Black-faced Waxbill *Brunhilda erythronotos*

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Quailfinch *Ortygospiza atricollis*

Violet-eared Waxbill *Granatina granatina*

Southern Cordonbleu *Uraeginthus angolensis*

Green-winged Pytilia *Pytilia melba*

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*

Jameson's Firefinch *Lagonosticta rhodopareia*

Indigobirds (Viduidae)

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

Eastern Paradise-Whydah *Vidua paradisaea*

Shaft-tailed Whydah *Vidua regia*

Old World Sparrows (Passeridae)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Great Rufous Sparrow *Passer motitensis*

Cape Sparrow *Passer melanurus*

Southern Gray-headed Sparrow *Passer diffusus*

Wagtails and Pipits (Motacillidae)

Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis*

African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>	
African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>	
Nicholson's Pipit	<i>Anthus nicholsoni</i>	
Yellow-tufted Pipit	<i>Anthus crenatus</i>	Endemic
Orange-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>	Endemic

Finches, Euphonias, and Allies (Fringillidae)

Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>	
Forest Canary	<i>Crithagra scotops</i>	Endemic
Black-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra atrogularis</i>	
Brimstone Canary	<i>Crithagra sulphurata</i>	
Yellow Canary	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>	
White-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra albogularis</i>	
Protea Canary	<i>Crithagra leucoptera</i>	Endemic
Streaky-headed Seedeater	<i>Crithagra gularis</i>	
Cape Canary	<i>Serinus canicollis</i>	Endemic
Black-headed Canary	<i>Serinus alario</i>	Endemic

Old World Buntings (Emberizidae)

Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>	
Cape Bunting	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>	
Lark-like Bunting	<i>Emberiza impetuani</i>	
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>	

iNaturalist

Please check iNaturalist for photos & locations for the following species

https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?d1=2022-08-06&d2=2022-08-22&place_id=any&subview=map&user_id=charleyhesse&verifiable=any

MAMMALS

Old World Monkeys (Cercopithecidae)

Southern Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus ursinus*

Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops*

Hares and Rabbits (Lagomorpha)

Cape Hare *Lepus capensis*

Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis*

Squirrels (Sciuridae)

Tree Squirrel *Paraxerus cepapi*

Muridae: Rats & Mice

Four-striped Grass Mouse *Rhabdomys pumilio*

Foxes, Jackals and Wild Dogs (Canidae)

Black-backed Jackal *Canis mesomelas*

African Wild Dog *Lycaon pictus*

Mongoose (Herpestidae)

Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo*

Cape Grey Mongoose	<i>Galerella pulverulenta</i>
Common Slender Mongoose	<i>Galerella sanguinea</i>
Common Dwarf Mongoose	<i>Helogale parvula</i>
Yellow Mongoose	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>

Hyaenas (Hyaenidae)

Brown Hyena	<i>Parahyaena brunnea</i>
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Cats (Felidae)

Cheetah	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>
Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>

Elephants (Elephantidae)

African Savanna Elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
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Hyraxes (Procaviidae)

Rock Dassie	<i>Procavia capensis</i>
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Horses (Equidae)

Cape Mountain Zebra	<i>Equus z. zebra</i>
Plains Zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>

Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae)

Southern White Rhinoceros	<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>
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Pigs and Hogs (Suidae)

Common Warthog *Phacochoerus aethiopicus*

Hippopotamuses (Hippopotamidae)

Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius*

Giraffes (Giraffidae)

Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*

Bovids (Bovidae)

African (Cape) Buffalo *Syncerus caffer*

Common Eland *Taurotragus oryx*

Greater Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*

Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*

Gemsbok *Oryx gazella*

Mountain Reedbuck *Redunca fulvorufula*

Grey Rhebok *Pelea capreolus*

Blue (Common) Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus*

Red Haartebeest *Alcelaphus buselaphus*

Bontebok *Damaliscus p. pygargus*

Impala *Aepyceros melampus*

Springbok *Antidorcas marsupialis*

Klipspringer *Oreotragus oreotragus*

Steenbok *Raphicerus campestris*

Common (Bush) Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia*

Sea Lions (Otariidae)

Cape Fur Seal *Arctocephalus p. pusillus*

Whales (Balaenidae)

Southern Right Whale *Eubalaena australis*

Whales (Balaenopteridae)

Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*

Delphinidae: Dolphins

Long-finned Pilot-Whale *Globicephala melas*

REPTILES**Agamas (Agamidae)**

Southern Rock Agama *Agama atra*

Geckos (Geckonidae)

Cape Dwarf Gecko *Lygodactylus capensis*

Moreau's Tropical House Gecko *Hemidactylus mabouia*

Girdled Lizards (Cordylidae)

Cape Girdled Lizard *Cordylus cordylus*

Monitors (Varanidae)

Rock Monitor *Varanus albigularis*

Skinks (Scincidae)

Cape Skink *Mabuya capensis*

Striped Skink *Mabuya striata*

Chameleons (Chamaeleonidae)

Flap-necked Chameleon *Chamaeleo dilapsis*

Tortoises (Testudinidae)

Leopard Tortoise *Geochelone pardalis*

Angulate Tortoise *Chersina angulata*

African Side-necked Turtles (Pelomedusidae)

Marsh Terrapin *Pelomedusa subrufa*