

# 12-day West Coast, Tanqua Karoo, Wilderness, and Cape Peninsula Custom Tour 31 March – 10 April 2017

By Wian van Zyl



Knysna Turaco – Turaco corythaix

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Date	Location	Overnight
30-Mar-17	Cape Town	Fernwood Manor (Cape Town)
31-Mar-17	West Coast	Mountain Mist (Aurora)
1-Apr-17	Tanqua Karoo	Sothemba Lodge (Tanqua Karoo)
2-Apr-17	Tanqua Karoo	Sothemba Lodge (Tanqua Karoo)
3-Apr-17	Tanqua Karoo	Mudlark Riverfront Lodge (Infanta)
4-Apr-17	Agulhas Plains	Mudlark Riverfront Lodge (Infanta)
5-Apr-17	Agulhas Plains	Kingfisher Country House (Wilderness)
6-Apr-17	Wilderness	Kingfisher Country House (Wilderness)
7-Apr-17	Wilderness	Simon' s Town Quayside Hotel (Simon's Town)
8-Apr-17	Simon's Town	Simon' s Town Quayside Hotel (Simon's Town)
9-Apr-17	Simon's Town	Simon' s Town Quayside Hotel (Simon's Town)
10-Apr-17	Simon's Town	Departure

#### Itinerary

## Overview

This tour started along the west coast of South Africa, where the ocean and beaches meet the world-famous Fynbos plant kingdom. Here in the endemic-rich Western Cape Province of South Africa there is a lot of interesting and marvelous birding to be had. As we broke off from the west coast we made way for the interior of the province known as the Tanqua Karoo. Here the semi-arid landscape provides a surprising amount of birds and small mammals one wouldn't expect in an area such as this. From the Tanqua Karoo we saw ourselves heading toward South Africa's south coast, where we connected with some marvelous cranes, bustards, and larks. We managed to fit in some forest birding further north along the east coast, where we got robins, turacos, flycatchers, and kingfishers. We backtracked to Cape Town, where a scheduled pelagic trip was cancelled due to bad weather predicted for the whole weekend, so we substituted our pelagic hours with some great Cape Peninsula birding.

## **Day 1: Cape Town Birding**

The day started with a pickup at Cape Town harbor, as the clients arrived from a cruise ship. They had left Argentina 23 days prior to this tour. We headed straight for Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, which is a very well-known birding destination among South African birders. We started with immediate views of Sombre Greenbul, Cape Bulbul, Cape Canary, and Cape White-eve. It warmed up quite early in the morning, but we managed some really great species as we navigated the garden. We soon found Olive Thrush, Cape Robin-Chat, Southern Double-collard Sunbird, and African Dusky Flycatcher. We continued along to the Treetop Canopy Walkway, where we connected, after quite a bit of effort, with Lemon Dove. As we entered the walkway we moved at eye level with the forest canopy and managed to get spectacular views of a roosting Spotted Eagle-Owl a mere three feet from where we were standing, just preening and relaxing. We managed to call out Chinspot Batis, both male and female, and decided to head up further into the garden after exiting the walkway. As soon as we arrived at a protea garden we managed to find, quite easily, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Malachite Sunbird (female, we're yet to see a male), and Black Saw-Wings swooping overhead. After a further walk through the garden we managed Cape Spurfowl, Brimstone Canary, and Red-winged Starling, and constantly noticed Pied Crows soaring overhead.





Rock hyrax – *Procavia capensis* 

After we left Kirstenbosch we headed for the Strandfontein Sewage Works, part of the False Bay Ecology Park, after lunch. We immediately connected with **Barn Swallow**, **Western Cattle Egret**, and **Cape Weaver**. After scanning through the first pool of water we added **Cape Teal**, **Yellow-billed Duck**, **Southern Pochard**, **Red-knobbed Coot**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Cape Shoveler**, and **Common Moorhen** to the list. Working our way through the multitude of pools in Strandfontein we further managed **Blacksmith Lapwing**, **Lesser Swamp Warbler**, **Little Grebe**, and **Red-billed** and **Hottentot Teal**, as well as **African Swamphen** and a quick glimpse of **Pied Kingfisher**. After a scan through some waders we only found **Cape Wagtail** and **Little Stint**. But heading to another pool we further recorded **Caspian**, **Sandwich**, **White-winged**, and **Swift Terns**. Within the tern roost we also recorded **Kelp**, **Hartlaub's**, and **Grey-headed Gulls**, **Marsh Sandpiper**, **Great White Pelican**, **Lesser Flamingo**, and **Pied Avocet**. Along the embankment we further noticed **White Stork**, **Spur-winged Goose**, and **Ruff**, as well as **Wood Sandpiper**. All in all a productive day with 83 species recorded.

## Day 2: West Coast National Park to Aurora

We started the day out bright and early, leaving the guest house in Cape Town at 6:00. Our goal for the day was some West Coast birding en route to our next destination, Mountain Mist Guesthouse in the Cederberg Mountains. Before entering the West Coast National Park we turned off to the east on a gravel road marked "Darling Hills" and soon connected with **Capped Wheatear**, **Red-capped Lark**, **Cape Sparrow**, **Wattled** and **Pied Starling**, and a very vocal **Bokmakierie**. We decided to continue for a while along the road in hope of seeing **Blue Crane**, which we soon connected with up-close, feeding in a harvested field.





Blue Crane– Anthropoides paradiseus

Watching them calling, displaying, and flying, we stood breathless as we were mesmerized by the sheer beauty and majesty of these magnificent creatures. Finally we turned around and continued to the West Coast National Park. En route, perched on the power line poles, we saw **Black-winged Kite** and **Common** and **Jackal Buzzards**. Not long after we entered the park we got our first glimpse of **Black Harrier**, which swooped down right in front of us, pulling away only at the last moment. Soon after our first harrier we managed to get optics on **Cape Spurfowl**, **Grey-winged Francolin**, and **Chestnut-vented Warbler**, as well as **Southern Fiscal**.

At Abraham's Kraal, the only accessible fresh water in the park, we were greeted by the likes of **Yellow Canary**, **Karoo Scrub Robin**, and a puffed-up **Southern Black Korhaan**. Upon walking to the hide we had great views of **African Spoonbill**, **African Sacred Ibis**, **Yellowbilled Duck**, **Cape Shoveler**, and **Red-knobbed Coot**. Once in the hide itself we saw **Lesser Swamp Warbler**, **Little Grebe**, **Cape Bunting**, **White-throated Canary**, and **Yellow Bishop**. The highlight of our time spent in the hide goes, hands down, to an **African Rail** emerging into an open patch of reeds for a few good enough seconds to allow us to get our binoculars pointed at it and enjoy the splendor or this long-billed rallid. En route to our next hide we had great views of another **Black Harrier** flying low overhead to our right and were able to see the coloration and patterning perfectly.

Our second and third hides in the park produced a healthy variety of waders with the likes of **Curlew** and **Marsh Sandpipers**, **Common Greenshank**, **Ruddy Turnstone**, **Little Stint**, **Sanderling**, **Grey** and **White-fronted Plovers** and feeding **Lesser Flamingos**.

Then we entered Langebaan to visit the famous Verreaux's Eagle spot at their roost in the quarry above the town. Without any disappointment the eagles showed, and we got some breathtaking views of these huge black predators of the sky. After some good views of Rock Martin and Rock Kestrel we made our way straight to the Velddrif area to hunt down Chestnut-banded Plover, which we found with relative ease in the salt pans outside Velddrif. Here we also recorded Red-necked Phalarope. As we drove on toward Mountain Mist we recorded African Darter, Great White Pelican, Lesser Flamingo, Reed



**Cormorant, Hartlaub's** and **Grey-headed Gulls**, and **Cape Cormorant**. On a gravel road heading to Aurora we connected with **African Stonechat** and some more canaries. We stopped to look for a calling **Large-billed Lark** but could not find it, but on the upside we managed to get magnificent views of **Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark** drinking at a water trough next to the road, a very fortunate find for an unintended stop. We worked our way up the mountain as the road curved left and right, soon after gaining some altitude we got **Cape Sugarbird**, **Familiar Chat** and **Cape Rock-Thrush** before we got to the guest house. With the last little light at the guest house we managed to get **Protea Canary**, **Malachite Sunbird** and very bad low-light views of **Cape Siskin**. We ended the day with 107 species.

#### Day 3: Mountain Mist – Tanqua Karoo

We started the day bright and early, before the sun came up, with a warm cup of tea. As soon as there was enough light outside to make out what's going on around us, we walked up the road in the fresh morning mountain air in high hopes of getting some good species. We got **Cape Bunting** very early and constantly saw **Cape Sugarbird** and **Malachite Sunbird**. After some time we had great views of **Cape Siskin**, making everyone on tour happy that we could tick it on our trip list. Continuing up the hill we didn't see much; it was pretty cold with the clouds hugging the escarpment and dropping down into the valley. As we walked back to the guest house we had spectacular views of **Southern Double Collared Sunbird** as well as **Orange-breasted Sunbird**, while looking at a **Cape Robin-Chat** on an exposed rock, preening itself. As we got back to the guest house garden we got magnificent views of a male **Cape Weaver** preening himself while looking at **Protea Canaries** feeding on the lawn. After some views of **Cape Rock Thrush** and **Red-winged Starling** we collected our luggage while looking at **Grey-winged Francolin**.

We then made our way down the mountain to get to the Tanqua Karoo. Navigating a pass we saw **Cape Siskin**, **Rock Martin**, **Verreaux's Eagle**, and **Rock Kestrel**. After a hearty brunch in the tiny town of Aurora we made our way towards the Tanqua Karoo, recording **South African Shelduck**, **Black-winged Stilt**, **Jackal Buzzard**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Capped Wheatear**, **Namaqua Dove**, and **African Pipit** en route. Once we hit the Tanqua Karoo we connected with **Pale Chanting Goshawk** and **Familiar Chat** almost instantly. It was a pretty hot day, and the rest of the birding was fairly slow and hard work, as birding in the Karoo can frequently be. After a good amount of futile attempts we dipped on Cinnamonbreasted Warbler and Fairy Flycatcher but managed to record **Mountain Wheatear**, **Pririt Batis**, and **Streaky-headed Seedeater**. The day ended with 66 species, including a few new ones added to the list.

#### Day 4: Full day Tanqua Birding

Today started with us climbing out the hill behind Sothemba lodge in search of the ever "rock-skulking" **Cinnamon-breasted Warbler**. We unfortunately did not get to see it and after quite some time decided to head out as to not miss out on other Karoo specials. Before we left the valley we had close up views of **Mountain Wheatear** and **Familiar Chat**. As soon as we got into the vast openness of the Karoo we soon connected with **Yellow Canary**, **Black-chested Snake-Eagle**, **Pale Chanting Goshawk**, **Karoo Chat** and **Karoo Prinia**. We stopped among some acacia thickets and managed to call out **Pririt Batis**, **Namaqua Warbler** and **Fairy Flycatcher**. We stopped at a vegetated area close to a dry stream and got spectacular views of **Karoo Eremomela**. We continued along the road and at one point got **Rufous-eared Warbler**, **Karoo Lark** and, finally, **Large-billed Lark** in the same area.







Large-billed Lark – Galerida magnirostris

After a short drive we connected with quite a few **Short-clawed Larks** and managed to sit with them for a while. As we came around a bend we got a pair of **Karoo Korhaan** right next to the road, slowly making their way away from us. After a good drive, during which we tried to help a broken-down vehicle, we reached Tanqua Karoo National Park. We spent time looking for Ludwig's Bustard to no avail but managed to get **Namaqua Sandgrouse** and very-close views of **Red-faced Mousebird**. On our way back to the lodge, birding as we drove, we saw **South African Shelduck**, **Three-banded Plover**, **Rock** and **Brown-throated Martin**, and **Karoo Scrub Robin**. Today was a windy and hot day, and, all things considered, the birds that did show themselves provided some good sightings. We ended the day with 46 species and a few mammals to add to our lists, as we also saw gemsbok, springbok, and steenbok.

# Day 5: Tanqua Karoo to Agulhas Plains

Today saw us spending the better not quite two hours, as the day started, looking for Cinnamon-breasted Warbler. Sadly we never managed to locate an individual, not even a reply on playback. Bur we had **Red-chested Flufftail** calling from the valley floor in the riverbed. As soon as we left the valley to leave the Karoo behind and focus on the Agulhas Plains we saw **Karoo Chat**, **Pale Chanting Goshawk**, and **Fairy Flycatcher**. En route to Agulhas we recorded **White Stork**, **African Sacred Ibis**, **Hadada Ibis**, **White-necked Raven**, and **Rock** and **Brown-throated Martins**. As soon as we got into the rolling hills of Agulhas we connected with **Jackal Buzzard**, **African Fish Eagle**, **Blue Crane**, **Secretarybird**, and a glimpse of **Denham's Bustard** flying overhead. Continued on our drive we soon got **Cape Vultures**, feeing on what seemed to be a sheep carcass, **Karoo Korhaan**, and **Hamerkop**. As soon as we arrived at the lodge and checked in we had a walk around the garden to see what we could find and quickly managed **Cape Weaver**, **Cape Robin-Chat**, **Fiscal Flycatcher**, **Red-eyed Dove**, and a very curious **Bar-throated Apalis**. We had a drive for the rest of our daylight birding hours and managed to get a closer and more decent view of **Denham's Bustard** and had reasonable looks at **Long-billed** and



African Pipit, while Capped Wheatear kept us entertained. We had quite a bit of traveling behind us today, but surprisingly we managed to record 74 species for the day, as well as springbok, bontebok, and yellow mongoose for the mammal list.



Karoo Korhaan – Eupodotis vigorsii

## Day 6: De Hoop- and De Mond Nature Reserves

Today saw us leaving our lodge at the break of dawn, aiming for De Hoop Nature Reserve first. En route we recorded a few groups of **Denham's Bustard** and managed to get pretty close views of them; there were groups of **Blue Crane** scattered everywhere, and we also saw **Fork-tailed Drongo**, **African Spoonbill**, **Black-winged Stilt**, and **Crowned Lapwing**. Before reaching the reserve we had great views of two bat-eared foxes running around and foraging in the field, **Forest Buzzard** perched on a power line pole, and a calling **Cape Grassbird**. Once we were inside the reserve we tried really hard to connect with Cape Clapper Lark, but to no avail. Winding down the road before reaching the restaurant we were soon entertained by **Speckled** and **Red-faced Mousebirds** and **Southern Boubou** feeding in the huge fig trees. We tried for **Southern Tchagra** around the camping area and got a feeding adult with a fair amount of ease. After some great photos of **Great Crested Grebe** we walked towards the chalets in search of Knysna Woodpecker, but after a hard try and over an hour of searching we had to give up empty-handed.

We then left De Hoop to head for De Mond Nature Reserve. En route we encountered **Agulhas Long-billed Lark, Rock Kestrel, Black-winged Kite**, and **Yellow-billed Ducks** feeding in an open field. After paying a visit to the southernmost tip of Africa, where we saw **African Oystercatcher**, we entered De Mond and nearly immediately had spectacular views of **Knysna Woodpecker** hopping from snag to snag in a tree above us. From the boardwalk that meanders along the estuary the tide was slightly pulled back and the exposed mud flats offered **Grey**, **Common Ringed**, and **White-fronted Plovers**, **Whimbrel**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Little Egret**, and a flying **Caspian Tern**. We scanned the beach on the opposite side and further recorded **Sandwich**- and **Swift Terns**.

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Southern Tchagra – Tchagra tchagra

Before entering the lodge on our way back we got great, though crepuscular views of **Spotted Eagle-Owl**, ending a day of great birding with a total of 81 species for the day and fun times. We also managed to get good views of bontebok, yellow mongoose, and springbok.

# **Day 7: Agulhas Plains to Wilderness**

Having recorded all the specials we were targeting in the area, we decided to leave the Agulhas Plains at daybreak to make our way to Wilderness in the Garden Route National Park for some forest birding. As we left and drove through the fields we recorded **Blue Crane**, **Denham's Bustard**, **Karoo Korhaan**, **Agulhas Long-billed Lark**, and **Bokmakierie**. While crossing the Breede River on a pontoon for the second time we observed **African Black Duck** as the pontoon was hauled, by hand, across the river to the other side. After having had a flat tire yesterday we made our way to the nearest town to get it fixed, as we had no spare. But unfortunately en route we managed to somehow get another flat and were stuck without being able to move anywhere. While we were waiting for help we recorded **Cape Grassbird**, **Yellow Bishop**, **Cape Weaver**, and **Agulhas Long-billed** and **Red-capped Larks**. Soon we were on the road again, in high hopes of what Wilderness had to offer.

As soon as we checked in at the Kingfisher Country House we recorded **Greater Double-collared**, **Southern Double-collared**, **Amethyst**, and **Grey Sunbirds** at the feeders, with **Swee** and **Common Waxbills** and **Forest Canary** feeding at the seed trays. While watching these birds we noticed **Chorister Robin-Chat** running by and **Olive Thrush** coming in to investigate what all the commotion was about. **Fork-tailed Drongos** came right in close for something to eat, and **Helmeted Guineafowls** were busy on the lawn.

We then headed for the "Half-collared Kingfisher" forest trail to see what we could find, and here we recorded **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Cape Batis**, **Sombre Greenbul**, and some very vocal **Knysna Turacos** in the canopy above us. But the beautifully sunny and windless day quickly turned into a dark grey mass of wind and rain in the distance, and the birding slowed down. But at the Rondevlei bird hide we were able to further record **Common Moorhen**, **Red-knobbed Coot**, **African Darter**, **Great Crested** and **Little Grebes**, **African Snipe**, **Little Stint**, and **Pied Kingfisher**. The day ended off well when we got really close to a few



really nice species, recording 83 species amidst all the tire trouble and travel delays. We also managed to record a few more springbok, bontebok, and yellow and large grey mongooses.



Southern Double-collared Sunbird (male) - Cinnyris chalybeus

#### Day 8: Full day Wilderness Birding

Cold temperatures, misty rain, and a slight breeze made birding really tough as we started out around the guest house's gardens and the surrounding roads. We still managed to find Chorister Robin-Chat, Forest Canary, Knysna Turaco, Sombre Greenbul, and Greater Double-collared Sunbird while we walked, crawled, and crept up onto birds, but we found it very difficult to get decent views. Eventually we managed to pick up Olive Thrush, Cape Batis, Speckled Mousebird, Brimstone Canary, and Cape Spurfowl.

After a hearty breakfast we immediately headed for "The Big Tree", which is an over-800years-old Outeniqua Yellowwood. We connected with **Brown-hooded Kingfisher** and **Black-bellied Starling** en route. There is a magnificent indigenous forest surrounding the tree, and usually the birding there is spectacular. But once again, due to bad weather we really struggled getting what we wanted. We finally managed to get a great look at **Grey Cuckooshrike**, a far-off glimpse at **Olive Woodpecker**, and short bursts of Narina Trogon at least three times but sadly nothing good enough to make it a "tickable" species.

After a lengthy walk in the forest without great success we decided to head to another forest section, where we recorded **Lemon Dove**, **Chorister Robin-Chat**, **Blue-mantle Crested Flycatcher**, **African Paradise Flycatcher**, and **Green Wood Hoopoe**. We spent the rest of the day in the forest, looking for anything of interest, and eventually managed to record **Malachite** and **Giant Kingfishers**, **Collared Sunbird** once more, and a very amazing sighting of a pair of **African Wood Owls** perched above us as the sun went down, just before we exited the forest. With a bad-weather day we nevertheless recorded 61 species, which was quite good considering the conditions we had to bird in.

#### **Day 9: Wilderness to Cape Town**

With a long travel day ahead we decided to be out before sunrise for an early birding session before breakfast. We left for Victoria Bay to try to track down Knysna Warbler and



White-starred Robin. After spending quite a bit of time searching and calling we managed to get a few quick views of the robin, but no Knysna Warblers were anywhere to be found. Sp we made our way to once more to the "Half Collared Kingfisher" trail to see what we could track down. Upon entering the forest we got views of Terrestrial Brownbul, Cape White-eye, Olive Thrush, and Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher. We tried calling out Knysna Warbler, but to no avail, and went for the river crossing to get to an open clearing, where we recorded Knysna Turaco, Reed Cormorant, Lemon Dove, and Bar-throated Apalis. After crossing the river to the other side of the trail we recorded Cape Batis, Fork-tailed Drongo, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, African Dusky Flycatcher, and Sombre Greenbul. We headed straight back for breakfast and in the way had great views of Chorister Robin-Chat, Forest Canary, Cape Weaver, Knysna Turaco (again), and Cape Spurfowl.



Bar-throated Apalis – Apalis thoracica

Later we left Wilderness to head back to Cape Town for our last few days, which were supposed to include a pelagic trip. But unfortunately it got canceled due to the Western Cape's very unpredictable weather. En route to Cape Town we managed to record African Sacred Ibis, Blue Crane, Jackal Buzzard, Rock Kestrel, Black-winged Kite, and Redwinged Starling. The wind was at gale force by the time we arrived in Simon's Town, and we only managed to record Kelp and Hartlaub's Gulls, Grey Heron, and Cape Cormorant. We decided to have a relaxed few hours before sunset, as the wind was going to hinder any productive birding. We ended the day with 60 species, which is good considering that close to six hours of our day was spent driving to Cape Town.

## Day 10: Cape Town – Rooiels – Sir Lowry's Pass

With some bad wind predicted for the day we went out to see what we could find and started off with a small village on the Cape Peninsula, called Rooiels, which is quite a reliable spot for Cape Rockjumper. Without sadly any luck on the rockjumper we were nevertheless entertained by **Orange-breasted** and **Southern Double-collared Sunbird**, **Karoo Prinia**, **Rock Kestrel**, **Cape Rock Thrush**, **Rock Martin**, **Fiscal Flycatcher**, and **Red-winged** 

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Starling, while Kelp and Hartlaub's Gulls flew by on the ocean side of the burnt mountain village. After a few hours without luck we went to Stony Point to have a look at African Penguins, Cape, Bank, White-breasted, and Crowned Cormorants. Here we also saw Cape Wagtail and Egyptian Geese. We decided to head along to Sir Lowry's Pass, which is another spot known to harbor Cape Rockjumper.

Upon arriving at Sir Lowry's Pass we managed to get a very showy Victorin's Warbler, while a few White-necked Ravens were soaring overhead. We hiked up the hillside in hope of bumping into Ground Woodpecker and the rockjumper. As soon as we got to the top and scanned one last time, sure enough a male Cape Rockjumper was showing beautifully and gave us a great, lengthy sighting as he jumped from boulder to boulder, looking for something to eat and not paying us any attention. On our way down we got views of Peregrine Falcon flying by and of Jackal Buzzard, and just before leaving found a Striped Flufftail responding to playback, but we couldn't manage a visual of the bird. Other records throughout the day included African Sacred Ibis, Red-winged Starling, Greater Crested and Sandwich Terns, Little Egret, Hottentot Teal, and Cape Teal. We also had great views of klipspringer as well as a few rock hyraxes running around in between the penguins. We recorded 53 species for the day, which we were quite happy with, as the wind and weather hindered any expectations of great totals.

## Day 11: Cape Peninsula Birding

Today was more of a clean-up day than anything else. We focused mainly on three species and we managed to get most of the birds found on the peninsula. We started heading to the De Hel hiking trail before day break with the very difficult task of finding **Knysna Warbler**. This species only is vocal from around August and is usually found fiddling around in the leaf litter among the thickest of thickets on the forest floor. It is basically impossible to track it down when they're not calling. Unfortunately we dipped on these guys, even though we were in a pretty reliable spot for them; the time of year was just wrong. We did manage to get **Cape Robin-Chat**, **African Goshawk**, **Southern Double-collared Sunbird**, **African Dusky Flycatcher**, and **Sombre Greenbul**.

The second species we were targeting for the day was Ground Woodpecker. These birds are quite challenging to find on the Cape Peninsula, even in their known breeding sights. En route to Rooiels, to go find these woodpeckers, we managed to see **Black-winged Kite, Rock Kestrel, Rock Martin, Cape Wagtail**, and **Cape Rock Thrush**. At the Rooiels site itself we managed **Cape Siskin, Cape Rockjumper** (finally!), and **Karoo Prinia**. The woodpecker, however, eluded us.

Our third main target for the day was Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, which had only been seen by one of the clients at Wilderness. For this species we went to Harold Porter National Botanical Garden. Here we recorded **Cape Batis**, **Lemon Dove**, **Cape Bulbul**, **Familiar Chat**, and **Cape White-eye**. Unfortunately we didn't manage any Blue-mantel Crested Flycatcher, as it is more common this far south in the summer months.

We ended the day on the Cape of Good Hope in a last few attempts to look for Ground Woodpecker but never got to see it. But here we further recorded **Kelp** and **Hartlaub's Gulls**, **Cape** and **White-breasted Cormorants**, **Bokmakierie**, **Caspian** and **Greater Crested Terns**, **Red-winged Starling**, **Speckled Pigeon**, and **Southern Fiscal** before ending the day back at our hotel in Simon's Town. We managed to record 43 species for the day, while mainly having focused on a select few species. We also got to see klipspringer, Southern African vlei rat, and rock hyrax.





Cape Siskin - Crithagra totta

## Day 12: Departure

We only needed to be at Cape Town International Airport around 11:00. This gave us some time to head toward Cape Point's gate to look for Ground Woodpecker. We never managed to see the woodpecker but recorded **Cape Grassbird**, **Grey-backed Cisticola**, **Karoo Prinia**, **Southern Boubou**, **White-necked Raven**, **Pied Crow**, **Black-headed Heron** flying overhead, **Speckled Pigeon**, and **Cape Wagtail** at the entrance gate. It was extremely cold and misty, which hindered good visibility. After a few hours we made our way back to the hotel for breakfast before loading the luggage and heading to the airport for our flights.



Caspian Tern (non-breeding) – Hydroprogne caspia

In conclusion, it was a successful trip, when one considers that we managed to find 220 species in total, of which three were heard only, and 59 of the 220 were either country endemics or regional-endemics. The weather was good some days and bad on others, and we faced some technical difficulties as the trip went by (two flat tires). We managed to get great bird species and dipped on others and were quite disappointed by the cancellation of the

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pelagic trip, but one can't control the weather. I'm confident that we would have gotten very close to 300 species (or even have surpassed that) if we had a few better-weather days and if the pelagic hadn't been cancelled. We also recorded 21 mammal species, which isn't half bad, as the Western Cape doesn't offer the great number of larger mammals that one would get in the eastern parts of South Africa. So another trip ended into the Western Cape, which often offers tough but very rewarding birding.

WESTERN CAP	PE BIRD LIST MARCH/APRIL 2017	
В	old = country endemic	
Status: NT = Near-three	eatened, VU = Vulnerable, EN = Endangere	d
Common Name (IOC 7.01)	Scientific Name (IOC 7.01)	Trip
	STRUTHIONIFORMES:	
Ostriches	Struthionidae	
Common Ostrich	Struthio camelus	1
	ANSERIFORMES:	
Ducks, Geese and Swans	Anatidae	
Egyptian Goose	Alopochen aegyptiaca	1
Spur-winged Goose	Plectropterus gambensis	1
South African Shelduck	Tadorna cana	1
African Black Duck	Anas sparsa	1
Yellow-billed Duck	Anas undulata	1
Southern Pochard	Netta erythrophthalma	1
Cape Shoveler	Anas smithii	1
Cape Teal	Anas capensis	1
Hottentot Teal	Anas hottentota	1
Red-billed Teal	Anas erythrorhyncha	1
	GALLIFORMES:	
Guineafowl	Numididae	
Helmeted Guineafowl	Numida meleagris	1
Pheasants and allies	Phasianidae	
Grey-winged Francolin	Scleroptila afra	1
Cape Spurfowl	Pternistis capensis	1
	SPHENISCIFORMES:	
Penguins	<u>Spheniscidae</u>	
African Penguin (EN)	Spheniscus demersus	1
	<b>PODICIPEDIFORMES:</b>	
Grebes	<b>Podicipedidae</b>	
Black-necked Grebe	Podiceps nigricollis	1
Great Crested Grebe	Podiceps cristatus	1
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	1
	<b>PHOENICOPTERIFORMES:</b>	



<u>Flamingos</u>	<b>Phoenicopteridae</b>	
Greater Flamingo	Phoenicopterus roseus	1
Lesser Flamingo (NT)	Phoeniconaias minor	1
	CICONIIFORMES:	
<u>Storks</u>	Ciconiidae	
White Stork	Ciconia ciconia	1
	PELECANIFORMES:	
Ibises, Spoonbills	Threskiornithidae	
African Sacred Ibis	Threskiornis aethiopicus	1
Glossy Ibis	Plegadis falcinellus	1
Hadeda Ibis	Bostrychia hagedash	1
African Spoonbill	Platalea alba	1
Herons, Bitterns	Ardeidae	
Black-headed Heron	Ardea melanocephala	1
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	1
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	1
Western Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	1
Intermediate Egret	Ardea intermedia	1
Hamerkop	<u>Scopidae</u>	
Hamerkop	Scopus umbretta	1
Pelicans	Pelecanidae	
Great White Pelican	Pelecanus onocrotalus	1
	SULIFORMES:	
Gannets, Boobies	Sulidae	
Cape Gannet (VU)	Morus capensis	1
· · ·	SULIFORMES:	
Cormorants, Shags	<b>Phalacrocoracidae</b>	
Bank Cormorant (EN)	Phalacrocorax neglectus	1
Cape Cormorant (EN)	Phalacrocorax capensis	1
Crowned Cormorant (NT)	Microcarbo coronatus	1
Reed Cormorant	Microcarbo africanus	1
White-breasted Cormorant	Phalacrocorax lucidus	1
Anhingas, Darters	Anhingidae	
African Darter	Anhinga rufa	1
	ACCIPITRIFORMES:	
<u>Secretarybird</u>	<u>Sagittariidae</u>	
Secretarybird (VU)	Sagittarius serpentarius	1
Kites, Hawks and Eagles	Accipitridae	
Cape Vulture (EN)	Gyps coprotheres	1
African Fish Eagle	Haliaeetus vocifer	1
Verreaux's Eagle	Aquila verreauxii	1
Black-chested Snake Eagle	Circaetus pectoralis	1



Jackal Buzzard	Buteo rufofuscus	1
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo	1
Forest Buzzard	Buteo trizonatus	1
African Marsh Harrier	Circus ranivorus	1
Black Harrier (VU)	Circus maurus	1
Black-shouldered Kite	Elanus caeruleus	1
Pale Chanting Goshawk	Melierax canorus	1
African Goshawk	Accipiter tachiro	1
	OTIDIFORMES:	
<b>Bustards</b>	Otididae	
Denham's Bustard (NT)	Neotis denhami	1
Southern Black Korhaan (VU)	Afrotis afra	1
Karoo Korhaan	Eupodotis vigorsii	1
	GRUIFORMES:	
<u>Flufftails</u>	<b>Sarothruridae</b>	
Red-chested Flufftail	Sarothrura rufa	Н
Striped Flufftail	Sarothrura affinis	Н
	GRUIFORMES:	
Rails, Crakes and Coots	<b>Rallidae</b>	
Red-knobbed Coot	Fulica cristata	1
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	1
Black Crake	Amaurornis flavirostra	1
African Rail	Rallus caerulescens	1
African Swamphen	Porphyrio madagascariensis	1
Cranes	Gruidae	
Blue Crane (VU)	Anthropoides paradiseus	1
	<b>CHARADRIIFORMES:</b>	
<u>Oystercatchers</u>	Haematopodidae	
African Oystercatcher (NT)	Haematopus moquini	1
<u>Stilts, Avocets</u>	<b>Recurvirostridae</b>	
Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta	1
Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	1
<u>Plovers</u>	<b>Charadriidae</b>	
Blacksmith Lapwing	Vanellus armatus	1
Crowned Lapwing	Vanellus coronatus	1
Grey Plover	Pluvialis squatarola	1
Chestnut-banded Plover (NT)	Charadrius pallidus	1
Kittlitz's Plover	Charadrius pecuarius	1
White-fronted Plover	Charadrius marginatus	1
Common Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula	1
Three-banded Plover	Charadrius tricollaris	1
Sandpipers, Snipes	<u>Scolopacidae</u>	



African Snipe	Gallinago nigripennis	1
Whimbrel	Numenius phaeopus	1
Bar-tailed Godwit (NT)	Limosa lapponica	1
Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia	1
Marsh Sandpiper	Tringa stagnatilis	1
Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola	1
Ruff	Philomachus pugnax	1
Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres	1
Sanderling	Calidris alba	1
Curlew Sandpiper (NT)	Calidris ferruginea	1
Little Stint	Calidris minuta	1
Red-necked Phalarope	Phalaropus lobatus	1
<u>Gulls, Terns and Skimmers</u>	<u>Laridae</u>	
Kelp Gull	Larus dominicanus	1
Grey-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus	1
Hartlaub's Gull	Chroicocephalus hartlaubii	1
Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia	1
Sandwich Tern	Thalasseus sandvicensis	1
Greater Crested Tern	Thalasseus bergii	1
White-winged Tern	Chlidonias leucopterus	1
	PTEROCLIFORMES:	
<u>Sandgrouse</u>	<b>Pteroclidae</b>	
Namaqua Sandgrouse	Pterocles namaqua	1
	<b>COLUMBIFORMES:</b>	
Pigeons, Doves	<u>Columbidae</u>	
Lemon Dove	Columba larvata	1
Rock Dove	Columba livia	1
Speckled Pigeon	Columba guinea	1
Ring-necked Dove	Streptopelia capicola	1
Laughing Dove	Spilopelia senegalensis	1
Red-eyed Dove	Streptopelia semitorquata	1
Namaqua Dove	Oena capensis	1
	MUSOPHAGIFORMES:	
Turacos	Musophagidae	
Knysna Turaco	Tauraco corythaix	1
	STRIGIFORMES:	
Owls	<u>Strigidae</u>	
African Wood Owl	Strix woodfordii	1
Spotted Eagle-Owl	Bubo africanus	1
	APODIFORMES:	
Swifts	Apodidae	



Alpine Swift	Tachymarptis melba	1
Little Swift	Apus affinis	1
White-rumped Swift	Apus caffer	1
<del>_</del>	COLIIFORMES:	
Mousebirds	Coliidae	
Red-faced Mousebird	Urocolius indicus	1
Speckled Mousebird	Colius striatus	1
White-backed Mousebird	Colius colius	1
	CORACIIFORMES:	
Kingfishers	Alcedinidae	
Giant Kingfisher	Megaceryle maxima	1
Malachite Kingfisher	Corythornis cristatus	1
Pied Kingfisher	Ceryle rudis	1
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	Halcyon albiventris	1
	<b>BUCEROTIFORMES:</b>	
Hoopoes	<u>Upupidae</u>	
African Hoopoe	Upupa africana	1
Wood Hoopoes	Phoeniculidae	
Green Wood Hoopoe	Phoeniculus purpureus	1
	PICIFORMES:	
Honeyguides	Indicatoridae	
Lesser Honeyguide	Indicator minor	1
Scaly-throated Honeyguide	Indicator variegatus	1
Woodpeckers	Picidae	
Knysna Woodpecker (NT)	Campethera notata	1
Olive Woodpecker	Dendropicos griseocephalus	1
	FALCONIFORMES:	
Caracaras, Falcons	<b>Falconidae</b>	
Lanner Falcon	Falco biarmicus	1
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	1
Rock Kestrel	Falco rupicolus	1
	PASSERIFORMES:	
Wattle-eyes, Batises	<u>Platysteiridae</u>	
Cape Batis	Batis capensis	1
Pririt Batis	Batis pririt	1
Bushshrikes	Malaconotidae	
Southern Boubou	Laniarius ferrugineus	1
Bokmakierie	Telophorus zeylonus	1
Southern Tchagra	Tchagra tchagra	1
Black-backed Puffback	Dryoscopus cubla	1
Cuckooshrikes	Campephagidae	
Grey Cuckooshrike	Coracina caesia	1



Shrikes	Laniidae	
Southern Fiscal	Lanius collaris	1
Figbirds, Orioles	Oriolidae	
Black-headed Oriole	Oriolus larvatus	1
Drongos	Dicruridae	
Fork-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus adsimilis	1
Monarchs	Monarchidae	
African Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone viridis	1
Blue-mantled Crested-Flycatcher	Trochocercus cyanomelas	1
Crows, Jays	Corvidae	
Cape Crow	Corvus capensis	1
Pied Crow	Corvus albus	1
White-necked Raven	Corvus albicollis	1
<u>Rockjumpers</u>	<u>Chaetopidae</u>	
Cape Rockjumper	Chaetops frenatus	1
Fairy Flycatchers	<u>Stenostiridae</u>	
Fairy Flycatcher	Stenostira scita	1
Larks	Alaudidae	
Large-billed Lark	Galerida magnirostris	1
Red-capped Lark	Calandrella cinerea	1
Spike-heeled Lark	Chersomanes albofasciata	1
Karoo Lark	Calendulauda albescens	1
Agulhas Long-billed Lark	Certhilauda brevirostris	1
Bulbuls	<b>Pycnonotidae</b>	
Terrestrial Brownbul	Phyllastrephus terrestris	1
Cape Bulbul	Pycnonotus capensis	1
Sombre Greenbul	Andropadus importunus	1
Swallows, Martins	Hirundinidae	
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	1
White-throated Swallow	Hirundo albigularis	1
Greater Striped Swallow	Cecropis cucullata	1
Black Saw-wing	Psalidoprocne pristoptera	1
Banded Martin	Riparia cincta	1
Brown-throated Martin	Riparia paludicola	1
Rock Martin	Ptyonoprogne fuligula	1
Crombecs, African Warblers	Macrosphenidae	
Cape Grassbird	Sphenoeacus afer	1
Victorin's Warbler	Cryptillas victorini	1
Long-billed Crombec	Sylvietta rufescens	1
Leaf Warblers and allies	Phylloscopidae	
Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler	Phylloscopus ruficapilla	1
<b>Reed Warblers and allies</b>	Acrocephalidae	



Lesser Swamp Warbler	Acrocephalus gracilirostris	1
Grassbirds and allies	<b>Locustellidae</b>	
Little Rush Warbler	Bradypterus baboecala	Н
Cisticolas and allies	<b><u>Cisticolidae</u></b>	
Cloud Cisticola	Cisticola textrix	1
Levaillant's Cisticola	Cisticola tinniens	1
Grey-backed Cisticola	Cisticola subruficapilla	1
Karoo Prinia	Prinia maculosa	1
Bar-throated Apalis	Apalis thoracica	1
Rufous-eared Warbler	Malcorus pectoralis	1
Green-backed Camaroptera	Camaroptera brachyura	1
Karoo Eremomela	Eremomela gregalis	1
Namaqua Warbler	Phragmacia substriata	1
Sylviid Babblers	Sylviidae	
Chestnut-vented Warbler	Sylvia senegalensis	1
White-eyes	Zosteropidae	
Cape White-eye	Zosterops virens	1
<u>Sugarbirds</u>	<b>Promeropidae</b>	
Cape Sugarbird	Promerops cafer	1
Starlings, Rhabdornis	<u>Sturnidae</u>	
Black-bellied Starling	Notopholia corrusca	1
Pied Starling	Lamprotornis bicolor	1
Red-winged Starling	Onychognathus morio	1
Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	1
Wattled Starling	Creatophora cinerea	1
Thrushes	<b>Turdidae</b>	
Olive Thrush	Turdus olivaceus	1
<u>Chats, Old World Flycatchers</u>	<b>Muscicapidae</b>	
Cape Rock Thrush	Monticola rupestris	1
Familiar Chat	Oenanthe familiaris	1
Karoo Chat	Emarginata schlegelii	1
Tractrac Chat	Emarginata tractrac	1
Mountain Wheatear	Myrmecocichla monticola	1
Capped Wheatear	Oenanthe pileata	1
African Stonechat	Saxicola torquatus	1
Karoo Scrub Robin	Erythropygia coryphoeus	1
Cape Robin-Chat	Cossypha caffra	1
Chorister Robin-Chat	Cossypha dichroa	1
White-starred Robin	Pogonocichla stellata	1
Fiscal Flycatcher	Melaenornis silens	1
African Dusky Flycatcher	Muscicapa adusta	1
<u>Sunbirds</u>	Nectariniidae	



Malachite Sunbird	Nectarinia famosa	1
Orange-breasted Sunbird	Anthobaphes violacea	1
Amethyst Sunbird	Chalcomitra amethystina	1
Grey Sunbird	Cyanomitra veroxii	1
Greater Double-collared Sunbird	Cinnyris afer	1
Southern Double-collared Sunbird	Cinnyris chalybeus	1
Collared Sunbird	Hedydipna collaris	1
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches	Passeridae	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	1
Cape Sparrow	Passer melanurus	1
Weavers, Widowbirds	Ploceidae	
Cape Weaver	Ploceus capensis	1
Southern Masked Weaver	Ploceus velatus	1
Southern Red Bishop	Euplectes orix	1
Yellow Bishop	Euplectes capensis	1
Waxbills, Munias and allies	Estrildidae	
Common Waxbill	Estrilda astrild	1
Swee Waxbill	Coccopygia melanotis	1
Wagtails, Pipits	Motacillidae	
Cape Wagtail	Motacilla capensis	1
African Pipit	Anthus cinnamomeus	1
Long-billed Pipit	Anthus similis	1
<u>Finches</u>	Fringillidae	
Brimstone Canary	Crithagra sulphurata	1
White-throated Canary	Crithagra albogularis	1
Protea Canary	Crithagra leucoptera	1
Streaky-headed Seedeater	Crithagra gularis	1
Cape Canary	Serinus canicollis	1
Forest Canary	Crithagra scotops	1
Yellow Canary	Crithagra flaviventris	1
Cape Siskin	Crithagra totta	1
Buntings, New World Sparrows	Emberizidae	
Cape Bunting	Emberiza capensis	1
TOTAL		217

WESTERN CAPE MAMMAL LIST MARCH/APRIL 2017		
Common Name	Scientific Name	Trip
	MACROSCELIDEA	
	Macroscelididae	
Cape rock sengi	Elephantulus edwardii	1



	RODENTIA	
	Muridae	
Four-striped field mouse	Rhabdomys pumilio	1
Southern African vlei rat	Otomys irroratus	1
	LAGOMORPHA	
	Leporidae	
Scrub hare	Lepus saxatilis	1
Smith's red rock hare	Pronolagus rupestris	1
	HYRACOIDEA	
	Procavidae	
Rock hyrax	Procavia capensis	1
	PERISSODACTYLA	
	Equidae	
Cape mountain zebra	Equus zebra zebra	1
	CETARTIODACTYLA	
	Bovidae	
Red hartebeest	Alcelaphus buselaphus caama	1
Bontebok	Damaliscus pygargus pygargus	1
Springbok	Antidorcas marsupialis	1
Klipspringer	Oreotragus oreotragus	1
Steenbok	Raphicerus campestris	1
Gemsbok	Oryx gazella	1
Common eland	Tragelaphus oryx	1
Southern reedbuck	Redunca arundinum	1
	CARNIVORA	
	Canidae	
Bat-eared fox	Otocyon megalotis	1
Black-backed jackal	Canis mesomelas	1
	Herpestidae	
Yellow mongoose	Cynictis penicillata	1
Egyptian mongoose	Herpestes ichneumon	1
Water mongoose	Atilax paludinosus	1
	PRIMATES	
	Cercopithecidae	
Chacma baboon	Papio ursinus	1
Vervet monkey	Cercopithecus pygerythrus	1
TOTAL		22

