



## **SOUTH AFRICA: GAUTENG AND LIMPOPO CUSTOM TOUR**

### **TRIP REPORT 2 - 5 AUGUST 2017**

**By Wian van Zyl**



©Wian v. Zyl/Birding Ecotours

Bar-throated Apalis

## Itinerary

Date	Itinerary	Overnight
2 August	Birding Zaagkuilsdrift	Zenzele River Lodge
3 August	Birding Wilge River Valley	Zenzele River Lodge
4 August	Birding Borakalalo Park	Afrique Boutique Hotel
5 August	Birding Marievale and Walter Sisulu	Afrique Boutique Hotel

## Overview

With this being a short private trip, we managed to connect with most of the special target birds in the respective areas. The aim of the trip was photography, so our overall total of bird species reflects that. In general, everyone enjoyed the trip thoroughly and produced some great shots of the target birds.

### Day 1, 2 August 2017. Arrival. transfer to Zenzele River Lodge, birding Zaagkuilsdrift

The tour started with a pickup at the airport in Johannesburg around 9:00 a.m. We grabbed a coffee to go and immediately made our way north out of the city to Zaagkuilsdrift. En route we saw **Blacksmith Lapwing, House Sparrow, Western Cattle Egret, and Cape Wagtail**. We soon reached the dirt road leading to Zaagkuilsdrift, on which we recorded a plethora of hovering **Black-winged Kites, Magpie Shrike, Marico Flycatcher, and Ring-necked Dove**. As we continued along the dirt road we connected with **African Stonechat, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Blue Waxbill, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Swainson's Spurfowl, Helmeted Guineafowl, and African Wattled Lapwing**, as well as **African Grey, Southern Red-billed, and Southern Yellow-billed Hornbills**. After enjoying views of Giraffe and Blesbok we eventually turned around to make our way to our accommodations for lunch. En route we managed to get looks at **Southern Red Bishop, Southern Masked Weaver, Black-faced Waxbill, Fork-tailed Drongo, Black-headed Heron, and a truly spectacular Secretarybird**.



©Wian v. Zyl/Birding Ecotours

Swainson's Spurfowl

After checking in and having lunch we decided to walk around the lodge and focus on birds. We managed to get great views of **Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Crested Barbet, Black-headed Oriole, Black Crake, Green Wood Hoopoe, Arrow-marked Babbler,** and **White-crested Helmetshrike.** We had **Pearl-spotted Owlet** calling briefly and managed to locate it in the canopy above us. We continued birding in the gardens as it turned out to be very productive, further adding **Southern Boubou, African Fish Eagle, Groundscraper Thrush, Dark-capped Bulbul, Natal Spurfowl,** and **Crested Francolin** to our list before the day's end.

### **Day 2, 3 August 2017. Birding the Wilge River Valley**

We started the day with an early-morning game drive, mainly in search of some mammal photographic opportunities. Waterbuck, Impala, Greater Kudu, Common Warthog, Common Duiker, Blue Wildebeest, and Nyala were all spotted and provided a good start to the day. After breakfast we set off for the Wilge River Valley and managed to see **Maggie Shrike, Fork-tailed Drongo, Pied Crow, Black-winged Kite,** and **Common Ostrich** en route. As soon as we entered the valley area we managed to connect with **Little and White-fronted Bee-eaters, Chinspot Batis, Fiscal Flycatcher, Tawny-flanked Prinia,** and **Natal Spurfowl.** Further into the valley we eventually stopped at a big group of **Red-billed Queleas,** and while looking at them we also saw **Bronze Mannikin, Rock Kestrel, Cape Robin-Chat, Southern Red Bishop,** and **Southern Boubou.** On our way back to the lodge we managed to get good views of **Crowned Lapwing, Pied Starling,** and **Yellow-fronted Canary** and a not-so-decent view of **Brown-crowned Tchagra.**



Fork-tailed Drongo

### **Day 3, 4 August 2017. Birding Borakalalo National Park**

With an early start to the day we set out for Borakalalo National Park with the aim of getting there as soon as possible. En route we briefly stopped for **Maggie Shrike, Lilac-breasted Roller, Crowned Lapwing, Pied Crow,** and **Grey Go-away-bird.** After investigating a Barn Owl (which was sadly killed by a car) we entered the park and had our packed breakfast at the water's edge. Here we recorded **Grey Heron, Hadada Ibis, Crested Francolin, Red-knobbed Coot, Grey-headed Gull, Whiskered Tern,**

and many more. We followed the track along the riverine forest and soon connected with **Brown-hooded** and **Pied Kingfishers**, **African Fish Eagle**, **Bearded Woodpecker**, **African Grey Hornbill**, and **Hamerkop**. We further managed to get great views of **African Jacana**, **Little Grebe**, **White-breasted** and **Reed Cormorants**, **Goliath Heron**, and **African Spoonbill**. Back at the picnic site we had lunch, and before leaving the park we managed to further record **Blue Waxbill**, **Golden-breasted Bunting**, **Southern Red-billed** and **Southern Yellow-billed Hornbills**, **Squacco Heron**, and **Blacksmith Lapwing**.



African Fish Eagle

#### Day 4, 5 August 2017. Marievale Bird Sanctuary and Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden

The order of today was Marievale Bird Sanctuary. We made our way straight there, leaving the hotel early. We immediately connected with **Spur-winged Goose**, **African Stonechat**, **Speckled Pigeon**, **Hadada Ibis**, **Common Myna**, and **Southern Masked Weaver**. Then we decided to head to one of the hides immediately after entering the gate, so we didn't spend too much time with birds en route because we wanted to take advantage of the great morning light. We did, however, record **African Wattled Lapwing**, **African Pipit**, **Swainson's Spurfowl**, **Black-winged Kite**, **Cape Longclaw**, and a group of female **Pin-tailed Whydahs** en route. At the first hide we had great views of **Red-knobbed Coot**, **Egyptian Goose**, **Lesser Swamp Warbler**, **Blacksmith Lapwing**, and **Grey Heron**. The highlights at the remainder of our stay at Marievale included **Hottentot Teal**, **Grey-headed Gull**, **Cape Shoveler**, **Little Grebe**, **African Rail**, **Malachite Kingfisher**, **African Snipe**, **Common Moorhen**, **African Marsh Harrier**, and **Yellow-fronted Canary**. We were left with disappointment at not being able to locate any Marsh Owls, because the area where we usually find them was burned to the ground.

So we immediately made our way to the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden, where we recorded **African Wattled Lapwing**, **Helmeted Guineafowl**, **Southern Boubou**, and **White-bellied, Amethyst**, and **Greater Double-collared Sunbirds**. We also had great views of a soaring **Verreaux's Eagle** and of **Kurrichane** and **Karoo Thrushes**, **Cape Robin-Chat**, **Cape Weaver**, **Southern Boubou**, **African Black Duck**, and **Yellow-fronted Canary** before leaving the gardens.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, we had a great trip with a total of 141 birds, which is a good total considering that we focused mainly on photography and spent a lot of time with almost each new bird we found. The weather played along really well, and the August winds didn't seem to have too great an effect on our birding.

## GAUTENG AND LIMPOPO CUSTOM TOUR BIRD LIST AUGUST 2017

Common Name	Scientific Name	Trip
	<b>STRUTHIONIFORMES</b>	
<b>Ostriches</b>	<b>Struthionidae</b>	
Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	1
	<b>ANSERIFORMES</b>	
<b>Ducks, Geese and Swans</b>	<b>Anatidae</b>	
White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	1
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>	1
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	1
Hottentot Teal	<i>Spatula hottentota</i>	1
Cape Shoveler	<i>Spatula smithii</i>	1
African Black Duck	<i>Anas sparsa</i>	1
Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>	1
	<b>GALLIFORMES</b>	
<b>Guineafowl</b>	<b>Numididae</b>	
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	1
<b>Pheasants and allies</b>	<b>Phasianidae</b>	
Crested Francolin	<i>Dendroperdix sephaena</i>	1
Natal Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis natalensis</i>	1
Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>	1
	<b>PODICIPEDIFORMES</b>	
<b>Grebes</b>	<b>Podicipedidae</b>	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	1
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	1
	<b>PHOENICOPTERIFORMES</b>	
<b>Flamingos</b>	<b>Phoenicopteridae</b>	
Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>	1
	<b>CICONIIFORMES</b>	
<b>Storks</b>	<b>Ciconiidae</b>	
Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>	1
	<b>PELECANIFORMES</b>	
<b>Ibises, Spoonbills</b>	<b>Threskiornithidae</b>	
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	1
Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>	1
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	1
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>	1
<b>Herons, Bitterns</b>	<b>Ardeidae</b>	
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	1

Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	1
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>	1
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>	1
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	1
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	1
<b>Hamerkop</b>	<b>Scopidae</b>	
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>	1
	<b>SULIFORMES</b>	
<b>Cormorants, Shags</b>	<b>Phalacrocoracidae</b>	
Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>	1
White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>	1
<b>Anhingas, Darters</b>	<b>Anhingidae</b>	
African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>	1
	<b>ACCIPITRIFORMES</b>	
<b>Secretarybird</b>	<b>Sagittariidae</b>	
Secretarybird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>	1
<b>Kites, Hawks and Eagles</b>	<b>Accipitridae</b>	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	1
Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>	1
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>	1
Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>	1
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>	1
African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>	1
	<b>OTIDIFORMES</b>	
<b>Bustards</b>	<b>Otididae</b>	
Black-bellied Bustard	<i>Lissotis melanogaster</i>	1
	<b>GRUIFORMES</b>	
<b>Rails, Crakes and Coots</b>	<b>Rallidae</b>	
African Rail	<i>Rallus caerulescens</i>	1
Black Crake	<i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>	1
African Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>	1
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	1
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>	1
	<b>CHARADRIIFORMES</b>	
<b>Stone-curlews, Thick-knees</b>	<b>Burhinidae</b>	
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>	1
<b>Stilts, Avocets</b>	<b>Recurvirostridae</b>	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	1
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	1
<b>Plovers</b>	<b>Charadriidae</b>	

Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>	1
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>	1
African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>	1
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>	1
<b>Jacanas</b>	<b>Jacanidae</b>	
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	1
<b>Sandpipers, Snipes</b>	<b>Scolopacidae</b>	
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	1
<b>Gulls, Terns and Skimmers</b>	<b>Laridae</b>	
Grey-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus</i>	1
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>	1
	<b>COLUMBIFORMES</b>	
<b>Pigeons, Doves</b>	<b>Columbidae</b>	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	1
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	1
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	1
Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>	1
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>	1
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>	1
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	1
	<b>MUSOPHAGIFORMES</b>	
<b>Turacos</b>	<b>Musophagidae</b>	
Grey Go-away-bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>	1
	<b>CUCULIFORMES</b>	
<b>Cuckoos</b>	<b>Cuculidae</b>	
Burchell's Coucal	<i>Centropus burchellii</i>	1
	<b>STRIGIFORMES</b>	
<b>Owls</b>	<b>Strigidae</b>	
Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	1
	<b>CAPRIMULGIFORMES</b>	
<b>Nightjars</b>	<b>Caprimulgidae</b>	
Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>	1
	<b>APODIFORMES</b>	
<b>Swifts</b>	<b>Apodidae</b>	
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	1
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	1
	<b>COLIIFORMES</b>	
<b>Mousebirds</b>	<b>Coliidae</b>	
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>	1
<b>Rollers</b>	<b>Coraciidae</b>	
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>	1

**Kingfishers**

Brown-hooded Kingfisher

Malachite Kingfisher

Pied Kingfisher

**Bee-eaters**

Little Bee-eater

White-fronted Bee-eater

**Hoopoes**

African Hoopoe

**Wood Hoopoes**

Green Wood Hoopoe

**Hornbills**

Southern Red-billed Hornbill

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill

African Grey Hornbill

**African Barbets**

Acacia Pied Barbet

Black-collared Barbet

Crested Barbet

**Honeyguides**

Brown-backed Honeybird

**Woodpeckers**

Golden-tailed Woodpecker

Bearded Woodpecker

Cardinal Woodpecker

**Caracaras, Falcons**

Rock Kestrel

**Wattle-eyes, Batises**

Chinspot Batis

**Helmetshrikes**

White-crested Helmetshrike

**Bushshrikes**

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Black-backed Puffback

Southern Boubou

Crimson-breasted Shrike

**Shrikes****Alcedinidae***Halcyon albiventris* 1*Corythornis cristatus* 1*Ceryle rudis* 1**Meropidae***Merops pusillus* 1*Merops bullockoides* 1**BUCEROTIFORMES****Upupidae***Upupa africana* 1**Phoeniculidae***Phoeniculus purpureus* 1**Bucerotidae***Tockus rufirostris* 1*Tockus leucomelas* 1*Lophoceros nasutus* 1**PICIFORMES****Lybiidae***Tricholaema leucomelas* 1*Lybius torquatus* 1*Trachyphonus vaillantii* 1**Indicatoridae***Prodotiscus regulus* 1**Picidae***Campethera abingoni* 1*Chloropicus namaquus* 1*Dendropicos fuscescens* 1**FALCONIFORMES****Falconidae***Falco rupicolus* 1**PASSERIFORMES****Platysteiridae***Batis molitor* 1**Prionopidae***Prionops plumatus* 1**Malaconotidae***Tchagra australis* 1*Dryoscopus cubla* 1*Laniarius ferrugineus* 1*Laniarius atrococcineus* 1**Laniidae**



Magpie Shrike	<i>Urolestes melanoleucus</i>	1
Southern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	1
<b>Figbirds, Orioles</b>	<b>Oriolidae</b>	
Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>	1
<b>Drongos</b>	<b>Dicruridae</b>	
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	1
<b>Crows, Jays</b>	<b>Corvidae</b>	
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	1
<b>Fairy Flycatchers</b>	<b>Stenostiridae</b>	
Fairy Flycatcher	<i>Stenostira scita</i>	1
<b>Tits, Chickadees</b>	<b>Paridae</b>	
Southern Black Tit	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>	1
<b>Bulbuls</b>	<b>Pycnonotidae</b>	
Dark-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus tricolor</i>	1
<b>Swallows, Martins</b>	<b>Hirundinidae</b>	
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>	1
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>	1
<b>Grassbirds and allies</b>	<b>Locustellidae</b>	
Little Rush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>	1
<b>Cisticolas and allies</b>	<b>Cisticolidae</b>	
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>	1
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	1
Cloud Cisticola	<i>Cisticola textrix</i>	1
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>	1
<b>Laughingthrushes</b>	<b>Leiothrichidae</b>	
Arrow-marked Babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>	1
Southern Pied Babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>	1
<b>White-eyes</b>	<b>Zosteropidae</b>	
Cape White-eye	<i>Zosterops virens</i>	1
<b>Starlings, Rhabdornis</b>	<b>Sturnidae</b>	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	1
Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	1
Burchell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>	1
Pied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis bicolor</i>	1
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>	1
<b>Thrushes</b>	<b>Turdidae</b>	
Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Turdus litsitsirupa</i>	1
Kurrichane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>	1
Karoo Thrush	<i>Turdus smithi</i>	1
<b>Chats, Old World Flycatchers</b>	<b>Muscicapidae</b>	
Marico Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis mariquensis</i>	1

Fiscal Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis silens</i>	1
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>	1
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>	1
Familiar Chat	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>	1
<b>Sunbirds</b>	<b>Nectariniidae</b>	
White-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris talatala</i>	1
<b>Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches</b>	<b>Passeridae</b>	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	1
Cape Sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>	1
<b>Weavers, Widowbirds</b>	<b>Ploceidae</b>	
Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>	1
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>	1
<b>Waxbills, Munias and allies</b>	<b>Estrildidae</b>	
African Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>	1
Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>	1
Black-faced Waxbill	<i>Estrilda erythronotos</i>	1
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>	1
<b>Indigobirds, Whydahs</b>	<b>Viduidae</b>	
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	1
<b>Wagtails, Pipits</b>	<b>Motacillidae</b>	
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>	1
Cape Longclaw	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>	1
African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>	1
<b>Finches</b>	<b>Fringillidae</b>	
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>	1
Yellow Canary	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>	1
<b>Buntings, New World Sparrows</b>	<b>Emberizidae</b>	
Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>141</b>