

WESTERN CAPE AND SUBTROPICAL SOUTH AFRICA CUSTOM TOUR TRIP REPORT

11 - 25 MARCH 2017

By Dylan Vasapolli



A pair of displaying Grey Crowned Cranes (Balearica regulorum) left us breathless.



Overview

This was a private two-week tour designed around a small list of possible target species. The two focus areas would be the Western Cape region along with the eastern half of South Africa. As mentioned, this tour was built around specific species, and these species received the bulk of our efforts, with often more common/widespread species not being tried for. The tour began in Cape Town, where we spent a few days exploring the False Bay area and the West Coast before flying to Durban. Here we continued northwards through KwaZulu-Natal, eventually progressing to the high-lying grasslands of Wakkerstroom. The famous Kruger National Park was next on the list, from where, after having our fill, we transferred to Dullstroom and eventually onwards to Johannesburg, where the tour ended. In our efforts attempting to find as many of the possible targets as possible we accumulated a high total of 409 bird species for the trip (19 of them heard only), and this would have been much higher had we tried for all possible common/widespread species. Our mammal list too conveyed all our field time, with a total of 50 exactly.

Day 1, March 11. Arrival in Cape Town

With the tour due to begin in Cape Town, I awoke to some rather unfortunate news from our guests, Roland and Beate, that their flight had been cancelled and they would only arrive either late this evening or the following morning. After much stress on their end it turned out to be the following morning, when they eventually arrived in Cape Town.

Day 2, March 12. Arrival in Cape Town and False Bay birding

After Roland and Beate's marathon journey to get to Cape Town, I collected them a little after 9:00 a.m., only to find their checked bags hadn't made it. After a few calls in this regard to set up alerts we hit the road for Rooiels to try and catch up on lost time. It was a spectacularly windy day (so much so that they had even cancelled the Argus Cycle Tour earlier in the morning), and we set about birding Rooiels in these trying conditions. There was a bit of life around, and among others we eked out Karoo Prinia, Cape Sugarbird, Cape Weaver, Cape Rock Thrush, Familiar Chat, a number of Sunbirds including Orange-breasted, Malachite, and Southern Double-collared, and a few of the rather tricky Cape Siskin. On the coast we enjoyed African Oystercatcher along with a number of Kelp Gulls and Cape Cormorants. Our main target, Cape Rockjumper, sadly was nowhere to be found. We tried for quite a while before cutting our losses and heading to Sir Lowry's Pass. Sir Lowry's Pass is legendary, not only on the birding side but also for harboring incredibly strong winds at times – and it was with some trepidation that we headed there on a day like today. The lower part of the slope wasn't too bad; however, as we headed up we felt the full force of the wind. We began searching around and soon discovered that not much was moving. We walked further along, and after quite some time eventually found an area completely devoid of wind. We gave the rockjumper a quick go, and almost immediately had a response. It took another painful 15 minutes, however, until we were eventually able to locate one, a male Cape Rockjumper sitting atop one of the peaks. We spent a bit of time watching it move around until we resumed the hunt for another target, Victorin's Warbler. As these things go, we ran into another rockjumper on our way down from the top. The warbler is a difficult bird at the best of times, but with some luck we soon had a bird calling from just off the path – it would be tricky to lay eyes on it, though, with the wind constantly blowing the bushes around. After a bit of patience, however, we were rewarded with some brief views as it moved through a clearing. With the sun going down we called it a day and had a good dinner en route to our accommodation. During the day the airline had managed to locate the bags, and they were waiting for us upon our arrival.





The endemic Cape Rockjumper was seen after a long search.

Day 3, March 13. West Coast birding

We set off pre-dawn for the West Coast, where we would spend the day, and arrived at the gates to the West Coast National Park just after opening. We immediately began birding and slowly worked our way through the park, stopping regularly to investigate, along with spending some time at the Abrahamskraal waterhole and at Tsaarsbank at the coast. The park was kind to us, and among many others we enjoyed Common Ostrich, Black Harrier, Jackal Buzzard, Cape Spurfowl, African Rail, Black Crake, African Snipe, Whitebacked Mousebird, Pearl-breasted Swallow, Bokmakierie, numerous groups of Cape Penduline Tits, Karoo Lark, Long-billed Crombec, Cape Grassbird, Chestnut-vented Warbler, Wattled Starling, Yellow and White-throated Canaries, and Cape Bunting. The coast delivered a surprise group of African Penguins offshore along with Cape Gannet, Crowned Cormorant, and more African Oystercatchers. Some persistent scanning delivered a few Cape fur seals moving between the swells. Mammals were showing well, and we enjoyed a number of common eland along with steenbok, greater kudu, four-striped grass mouse, and some excellent views of Cape grey mongoose. Following a good lunch at the Geelbek restaurant we continued to the north of the park, successfully finding Southern Black Korhaan. We had stopped to scan yet another open area, and this one had a stunning male walking around between the small bushes. Some further searching revealed a number of other individuals in the immediate vicinity. A quick jaunt down to the Seeberg hide proved fruitful with a pair of showy Karoo Larks, good numbers of both Greater and Lesser Flamingos, along with Little, Caspian, Sandwich, Common, and Greater Crested Terns, numbers of Bar-tailed Godwits, Grey Plover, Whimbrel, and Ruddy Turnstone.

We made good time heading to the farmlands north of Vredenburg, where we began searching for a few more larks. Sadly, being quite exposed here, the wind impacted us quite a bit and certainly made birding tricky. After a bit of patience, spending roughly 20 minutes listening to a **Cape Long-billed Lark** calling from a valley below, we were rewarded with some great views of this species. Numbers of **Red-capped Larks** kept us on our toes, and we eventually managed to track down a **Large-billed Lark**. **Sickle-winged Chat, Capped Wheatear, African Pipit**, and **Cape Canary** were also evident. With this stint having been successful, we set off to look for our last target, Cape Clapper Lark. A **Secretarybird** walking next to the road was a welcomed surprise and worth a quick u-turn. We spent the remainder of the afternoon birding a few different sites, but, no matter what we did, we sadly



couldn't get the bird. A few other species kept us company, however, and included **Pied Starling, Bokmakierie, Karoo Scrub Robin, Grey-backed Cisticola, Cape Robin-Chat**, and the often disregarded **Cape Sparrow**. Before long the sun was setting, and we headed for dinner before arriving back at our accommodation a bit later, after a long but excellent day out!

Day 4, March 14. Transfer to Eshowe

We had a 'leisurely' start to the morning with a good breakfast before departing to the airport to catch our morning flight to Durban. We arrived in Durban with all our belongings and quickly collected our rental car before setting off on our way northwards eventually to Eshowe, where we would spend two nights. Our primary target on the way was Southern Tchagra, and I knew a few sites around Ballito that we were to search. Sadly, over the midday period birding is always tricky, but we set out to do our best. The first site we visited was under construction, but there was still a bit of habitat around to search. There was not too much activity here, and we called it after a bit of a search and headed onward to another site. Nestled between sugar cane fields this area, in comparison, was bustling with life, and we enjoyed the likes of Little Bee-eater, Brimstone Canary, Southern Red Bishop, Blackcollared Barbet, Rufous-winged and Rattling Cisticolas, African Reed Warbler, and Speckled Mousebird, among others. Things were looking good; but no matter how much or where we searched, we simply couldn't find the tchagra. We had all but given up and had just started the walk back to the car, from where we'd continue onward to yet another area, when, as so typically happens, a bird began calling from right on top of us. We quickly back-tracked and gave the bird a quick round of playback. We had some views of Southern Tchagra moving between the thickets and flying from bush to bush. Success! We continued our way northward, arriving at our lodge in Eshowe in the afternoon. Beate opted for a relaxing afternoon, while Roland and I headed off to a nearby area to search for Gorgeous Bushshrike. It was a warm afternoon, and activity was definitely subdued with only a few species moving around, namely Southern Black Tit, Violet-backed Starling, Rattling Cisticola, Acacia Pied Barbet, and a few of the elegant Red-breasted Swallows. We eventually picked up a Gorgeous Bushshrike calling in the valley far below, but the bird was too far away. We continued walking along the road and tried another area. Here we were rewarded with an immediate response from several birds and set off to try and see them. We had the birds calling all around us; however, it was very thick scrub, which would make seeing the birds difficult. We managed to find an opening in the vegetation and got into position. A quick round of playback, and we had a Gorgeous Bushshrike come in quickly and give us some brief and rather poor views as it hopped through the gap and continued on its way. The bird stuck around, however, and we spent some time working it, trying to get better views. But, try as we might, we were only rewarded with poor views as it moved about through the thick scrub. Before long the sun had all but run out, and we set off back to our lodge, where we enjoyed an excellent dinner.

Day 5, March 15. Ongoye and Eshowe birding

We set off early in order to be in Ongoye Forest at dawn, where we would spend our morning. We stepped into a forest bustling with bird calls, and in no time we were enjoying many Black-bellied Starlings, Black-backed Puffback, Yellow-bellied, Sombre, and Yellow-streaked Greenbuls (the latter heard only), Terrestrial Brownbul, and Collared Sunbird. A soft, melodic call revealed Brown Scrub Robin, and we had great looks at a pair of these birds. The louder notes of Chorister Robin-Chat soon started, and we had great looks at this attractive bird too. Lemon and Tambourine Doves along with African Emerald Cuckoo called from the depths and went unseen. We had information on an active



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nesting site for the localized Green Barbet, but after lots of time waiting for an appearance we were still to see the bird. We headed off to another part of the forest to try for other individuals. Here we had far more success; however, the views left us wanting more, as we just had flight views through the canopy. We tried a different tactic on the outside of the forest and were well rewarded with some good perched views (finally) of a pair of **Green Barbets**. The surrounding areas had **Croaking** and **Zitting Cisticolas**, **Jackal Buzzard**, and **Pin-tailed Whydah**. During the morning we were also successful in seeing the localized 'Ongoye' subspecies of red squirrel. After a good morning we headed back to Eshowe, where we arrived shortly before lunch. Here we relaxed for a while, enjoying the likes of **Woollynecked Stork**, **Purple-crested Turaco**, and **Trumpeter Hornbill** in the garden before heading off for lunch in town.



The stunning Chorister Robin-Chat showed well.

We also paid a visit to the Eshowe Butterfly Dome before continuing to Dlinza Forest, where we spent the remainder of the afternoon in search of a few more of our target species. It was a warm afternoon, and activity was subdued, making it hard work in the forest. Not long after entering I noticed some movement just off the path, and it turned out to be our main target, **Spotted Ground Thrush**. We quickly noticed it had a beak full of worms and quietly watched it moving around. Eventually our patience was rewarded, and we watched it flying up from the ground and alight on a 'dark spot' in a bush. Looking through our binoculars confirmed that this was its nest, and we were also able to see at least four small heads stick up, each wanting the food. What a great sighting! We left the birds in peace and continued to the tower. A common duiker also finally showed itself, moving slowly on the forest floor. At the tower we enjoyed a bit of activity, including Red-chested Cuckoo, Cape Batis, Squaretailed Drongo, White-eared Barbet, a few good sightings of the scarce Eastern Bronzenaped Pigeon, and an excellent fly-by of Black Sparrowhawk. We headed back down to the trail below but found the going difficult with the now-heavy wind. We stopped in a clearing and had a group of Red-backed Mannikins fly by, followed by a Green Twinspot, before Roland locked at a bird feeding in one of the large trees. As it hopped, large white retrices confirmed it as a type of honeyguide, and we had some good looks when it alighted, revealing it to be a Brown-backed Honeybird – another difficult species, and somewhat out of place here at the forest edge. We ran into more Spotted Ground Thrushes along the trail before having to call it a day and make our way out of the forest before closing.



Day 6, March 16. Eshowe to St Lucia

Today we transferred up the coast to St Lucia, where we would be for the next few nights. But with a few possible targets still outstanding around Eshowe, we headed back to Dlinza Forest for the morning stint. The forest was deadly quiet, but some persistence eventually gave us some brief views of Olive Woodpecker, while Olive Bushshrike too started calling in the distance. We headed off after the bushshrike, but, try as we might, we just couldn't lure it in to get a view. We tracked down another individual and had some brief views before it moved off. Then we followed some excited calls and were rewarded with a bird party and a lot of activity. We worked the area for a bit, enjoying the likes of Dark-backed Weaver, Cape Batis, Black-backed Puffback, White-eared Barbet, Square-tailed Drongo, African Paradise Flycatcher, Olive and Golden-tailed Woodpeckers, Green Malkoha, and another Olive Bushshrike that provided some better views before we had to head back for breakfast. Other species seen during the morning included further Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeons and Spotted Ground Thrushes, along with more good looks at the dainty common duiker. Following breakfast, we set off for St Lucia, where we arrived shortly after midday. Some notable species en route included European Honey Buzzard and Dusky Indigobird. We checked into our superb accommodation before collecting lunch and heading to the eastern shores of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

We made our way to Cape Vidal and returned during the evening, arriving at the entrance gate just before closing. The various wetlands produced White-faced Whistling Duck, African Jacana, African Fish Eagle, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Burchell's Coucal, Croaking Cisticola, and Yellow-throated Longclaw, while Broad-billed and European Rollers, Amur Falcon, and Black-chested Snake Eagle, patrolled the edges. The more wooded areas held exciting species such as Livingstone's Turaco, African Green Pigeon, Crowned Hornbill, and a large group of Crested Guineafowl. A quick search around Cape Vidal produced our target, Grey Waxbill, and we watched the bird ferrying grass into a dense thicket – presumably to a nest.



We managed to find a number of scarce Grey Waxbills.

Mammals were well represented in the park too, and we enjoyed African buffalo, Natal red duiker, blue wildebeest, bushbuck, the elegant greater kudu, and common warthog, along with vervet and samango monkeys. Our evening drive out of the park was good, producing a great sighting of rusty-spotted (South African large-spotted) genet and greater galago (thick-tailed bushbaby), along with a few unidentified nightjars on the road (which sadly always



flushed before we could even get close) and a calling **Fiery-necked Nightjar**. We arrived at the gate just before closing and enjoyed a great dinner in town, after which we went on a brief search for the resident hippos and had some great looks at a few individuals feeding on the grass, out of the water.

Day 7, March 17. St Lucia and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

We began the morning birding the famous iGwalagwala Trail around the town. Activity was good throughout the morning, and we enjoyed a productive few hours. Highlights included a displaying African Goshawk and Little Sparrowhawk on the raptor front, along with the usual array of forest specials: Woodward's Batis played hide and seek, but eventually gave up and showed well, Rudd's Apalis was a regular feature on the trail, a small group of the exquisite Pink-throated Twinspot showed well, sunbirds were well represented with Collared, Olive, Grey, Amethyst, and Scarlet-chested Sunbirds all being seen, but perhaps one of the more difficult forest species stuck out - Buff-spotted Flufftail. This was one of our 'big' targets here, and we had tried a few times already throughout the morning and hadn't even had a response, when we arrived at another good site, where we placed the speaker in a clearing, backed off, and again began the slow work of trying to call one of these jewels in. Not much later Roland picked up on some movement, and a Buff-spotted Flufftail quickly walked by and disappeared into the scrub. Other highlights included a feeding party of over six Livingstone's Turacos along with Lesser Honeyguide, Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, Brown Scrub Robin, Red-capped Robin-Chat, and Red-backed Mannikin. Numerous Natal red duikers were also evident this morning on the trail. Following an excellent breakfast we took some time off over the midday period before setting out in the early afternoon for the western shores of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

It was very slow initially, with it still being very warm outside, and besides a great sighting of two (adult + juvenile) Black-bellied Bustards there was not much to speak of. This all changed, however, when we reached a drainage line, and a typical canary song revealed the sought-after Lemon-breasted Canary. We only had distant views for a while before we located some birds much closer to us and enjoyed excellent views of this species. As we progressed onward the area seemed to be inundated with them, and we came across them regularly. We enjoyed numerous raptors and had regular sightings of Black-chested and Brown Snake Eagles along with Martial Eagle and African Fish Eagle. We also started seeing some different mammals; these included waterbuck, common reedbuck, plains zebra, nyala, the unique giraffe, and a stunning white rhino. The rhino, sadly, was in a ditch, and our views were limited to the top half of the animal, but it's always great coming across these beasts! We had a good dose of wetland birding here as well and enjoyed great looks at a feeding group of Pink-backed Pelicans and Yellow-billed Storks, along with Western Osprey, African Spoonbill, Red-billed Teal, White-breasted Cormorant, Wood Sandpiper, and Malachite Kingfisher, while Sand and Brown-throated Martins graced the skies above. Some thickets around one of the viewpoints looked promising, and just as we got out of the car we heard one of our targets, Eastern Nicator. Sadly, the bird was calling very erratically, and we were unable to locate it, despite trying for a while. A Gorgeous Bushshrike soon started calling, and we changed our focus to this species and finally had some great looks at this colorful bird. With the light running out we made our way back to the gate, again timing it to arrive just before closing. After a few very spooky nightiars once more we finally located one individual that sat still long enough for us to get a proper look, and we were in for a treat, as it was a stunning Swamp Nightjar - another sought-after and localized species. Numbers of both Spotted and Water Thick-knees littered the road, before some eye-shine in a tree brought us to a stop. It turned out to be a Cape genet slowly moving through a tree. We arrived at the exit on schedule and quickly headed back to town. Roland



departed on a night drive shortly after, while Beate and I headed for dinner. We enjoyed a good dinner, while Roland enjoyed a productive night drive, encountering a stunning leopard along with spotted hyena.



We had great looks at Swamp Nightjar.

Day 8, March 18. St Lucia to Hluhluwe

We birded the iGwalagwala Trail around town once again this morning, looking for a few of our outstanding targets. We enjoyed a similar suite of species to the previous morning, with additions being Green Malkoha, a confiding feeding group of Grey Waxbills, Scalythroated Honeyguide, Eastern Golden Weaver, a large group of Crested Guineafowl, and a very surprising Mangrove Kingfisher. We were at the river's edge, and even though it was rather early in the year for these winter migrants to be present here, we thought it worth a quick attempt. Within moments of playing the call, a bird flew in, and after a quick shuffle to get a view we confirmed that it was a **Mangrove Kingfisher**. The bird remained perched for a while, complete with a large crab in its beak, before we eventually left it, still quietly sitting. Following a hearty breakfast we set off into the Western Shores of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, from where we'd work our way up to Hluhluwe. The park was quiet, but we did well with a nesting Saddle-billed Stork along with Goliath Heron, European Honey Buzzard, Martial Eagle, African Wattled Lapwing, Collared Pratincoles, Lesser Honeyguide, Banded Martin, Red-billed Oxpecker, and only a few of the large numbers of Lemon-breasted Canaries we had seen the previous day. We also enjoyed a similar suite of mammals, with the addition of a very large herd of African buffalos drinking at one of the

We continued the short distance to Hluhluwe and had lunch at a Wimpy upon arrival in town. We checked into our accommodation and spent a bit of time relaxing during the now rather extreme heat. Roland and I headed out a bit later in the afternoon to try and track down Rosythroated Longclaw nearby. We arrived on site and immediately set about walking a grassy pan. A few Temminck's Courses feeding on the edge of the pan were a good start, as were numbers of Amur Falcons hovering above the pan. There was not too much to speak of as we covered a large part of the pan, until we ran into a small group of Senegal Lapwings. From here we changed direction, and almost immediately I flushed up our target - Rosythroated Longclaw. After connecting with Roland we proceeded slowly through the grass, trying to locate it on the ground. Sadly, this didn't work, and we ended up flushing it before we got onto the bird. We tried once more, with the same result, and let the bird be.



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Successful, we continued back to the car, and with about an hour of light left popped into the False Bay section of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. It seemed as though we had just missed the late afternoon activity, as the area was very quiet, except some vocal **Bearded Scrub Robins** and **Grey Tit-Flycatchers**. We stayed until closing before making our way back to our accommodation, where we enjoyed a good meal.

Day 9, March 19. Hluhluwe to Wakkerstroom

We set off for False Bay in the morning, sadly with rainy, windy weather. After we arrived the heavens opened, and we had breakfast while waiting it out. After the rain stopped we set about a walk around, which was, oddly, exceptionally slow. In between bouts of rain we were able to eke out Emerald-spotted Wood Dove, Chinspot Batis, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Southern Black Tit, Red-faced Mousebird, Rudd's Apalis, Purple-banded Sunbird, Great White Pelican, Caspian Tern, and White-fronted Plover. We eventually decided to cut our losses and make the long journey to Wakkerstroom to give ourselves a head start there. We made good progress en route, and, following an early lunch stop in Piet Retief, arrived in the area with high hopes. We set out birding some of the back roads and did well, with Swainson's Spurfowl, Southern Bald Ibis, Hamerkop, Brown Snake Eagle, Jackal Buzzard, Rock Kestrel, Cape Crow, South African Cliff Swallow, Buff-streaked and Ant-eating Chats, Cape Grassbird, Mountain Wheatear, Pied Starling, and a few of the exceptional Widowbirds, being represented by Long-tailed, Red-collared and Fan-tailed. We arrived at our first stakeout for Bush Blackcap, and, not deterred by the strong wind blowing, began our search. After a bit of time I picked up some movement in a clearing, and 'jumped' as a Bush Blackcap hopped into view. I quickly tried to get Roland and Beate onto it, but, frustratingly, the bird didn't hang around. We worked the area for a while longer, before eventually conceding a 'preliminary' defeat (as we'd bird another area, and then return later in the afternoon). We were searching for Barratt's Warbler, another notorious skulker, and we picked up a calling individual soon after getting out of the car. After some careful maneuvering we got some rather poor views before the bird called our bluff. We continued on, searching for another individual, and after quite a search eventually found the 'right' bird - a responsive individual that hopped out into the open right in front of us and hopped across a large clearing, in plain view, giving us some good views of this reclusive species.



The skulking Barratt's Warbler showed well.



We then resumed our search for **Bush Blackcap** and were rewarded with some brief views near to where I had seen it earlier in the day. Southern Boubou, Bar-throated Apalis, Fiscal Flycatcher, Drakensberg Prinia, and Streaky-headed Seedeater kept us company. We continued onward, heading into the high hills now, where we began searching for Ground Woodpecker, among others. Here we enjoyed very showy Buff-streaked Chats along with Eastern Long-billed Lark, before some Cape Longclaws flew up, being chased by a dainty Yellow-breasted Pipit. We enjoyed some good flight views but lost track of where it landed. We searched for a little while, but were unable to locate it again. While scanning for the woodpecker, a large bird flew through my binocular view - Denham's Bustard, another of our targets. We quickly crested the hill and found that the bird had landed in a field. We enjoyed some good, but distant views of this large, elegant bustard. Some further scanning in the same field revealed two additional bustards. With the light about to run out we quickly headed over to a nearby site, where we would give the Ground Woodpecker another go. We arrived on site, and after a round of playback, had a response from down in the valley. I picked up the bird, and quickly rushed to get the scope on it, before it moved away. Fortunately the bird stuck around for a while, and we were able to enjoy some good, but distant scope views of this unique woodpecker.

Day 10, March 20. Wakkerstroom birding

Following the incredible start to our Wakkerstroom birding yesterday we met up with David, one of the local guides of the area, and set out for the morning. It was an excellent morning, and we enjoyed repeated, and much closer, views of Denham's Bustard, while a young Yellow-breasted Pipit fed confidingly on the road edge. Rounding a nearby bend revealed the resident pair of Sentinel Rock Thrush, and a surprise find up in the hills was a pair of Blue Cranes with a youngster in tow. We continued on our way, searching for the scarce endemic Botha's Lark, and were halted by further Denham's Bustards along with a showy covey of Grey-winged Francolins. We began searching a few different sites for the lark, but failed each time. Red-capped, Spike-heeled and Eastern Long-billed Larks kept us company, however. A group of Blue Korhaans was seen, giving their strange, croaking call in a valley, before pressing onward to another area. We finally struck gold when we ran into Botha's Lark sitting in the road in front of us. We quickly halted, slowly got out of the car, and enjoyed some excellent views of this nomadic lark as it began preening, relatively unperturbed by our presence.



After a bit of a search we finally found Botha's Lark.



With one of our lark targets out of the way, we began our search for Rudd's Lark – another one of the highly-localized and prized endemics of the area. A stunning Black Harrier welcomed us as we arrived at the spot. We immediately began walking the field, and in no time had Rudd's Lark moving through some low grass in front us. It offered us great views as it quickly moved through the grass, before, as is typical for this species, it vanished into thin air. We continued a short way and found another individual before returning to the vehicle.

We drove back to town after a highly successful morning, having enjoyed Secretarybird, Common Quail, Red-throated Wryneck, numbers of Southern Bald Ibis, a dapper pair of Grey Crowned Cranes, and Quailfinch, along with some mammals, namely a few yellow mongooses and a large group of meerkats. Then we had some free time to relax before regrouping for lunch a bit later.

Following lunch we headed out for the afternoon, and, with all of our target species under our belt, set out to try and find some of the species for Beate, who had opted for an easy morning. We were successful with both Blue and Grey Crowned Cranes and, after a bit of a search, meerkat. We attempted to try and get some closer views of Ground Woodpecker, but sadly were unsuccessful. Sentinel Rock Thrush, Denham's Bustard and Eastern Long-billed Lark obliged quite well before we called it a day.

Following a great dinner we set out on a night drive to see if we could find any of the scarcer mammals. Unfortunately, the tall grass seriously impacted us and made it difficult to see most areas away from the immediate vicinity of the road. We kept at it for a few hours before eventually making our way back to town. It was pretty quiet, but we were able to find a common duiker, along with many scrub hares, and, quite surprisingly, large numbers of spring hares.

Day 11, March 21. Wakkerstroom to Kruger National Park

Following yesterday's success birding in the Wakkerstroom area we took it easy and met for a reasonably late breakfast, departing for the famous Kruger National Park directly afterwards. We were waylaid on our journey by an incredible sighting of a pair of Grey Crowned Cranes, displaying and jumping around, right next to the road – leaving us all rather awestruck. We made good ground, and following our lunch in Nelspruit we arrived at the gate to Kruger in the early afternoon. We had a few notable sightings en route, including Southern Bald Ibis, African Harrier-Hawk, Amur Falcon, and Long-tailed Widowbird. We had a warm welcome to the park with our first herd of African elephants, a lazing white rhino, and a good view of a pod of hippos all within the first few hundred meters. We slowly made our way to Skukuza, where we would be based for the next three nights. Activity was rather subdued, but in no time at all we were enjoying characteristic bushveld species such as Lilac-breasted Roller, Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill, Grey Go-away-bird, Magpie Shrike, Burchell's Starling, and Blue Waxbill. A stop at a waterhole proved productive with incredible views of two white rhinos drinking and a wealth of birdlife, including Longtailed Paradise Whydah, Woodland Kingfisher, Bearded Woodpecker, Common Scimitarbill, Purple Roller, Jacobin Cuckoo, Bateleur, Lappet-faced and White-backed Vultures, and an odd sighting of a family of Southern Ground Hornbills perched within a large, dense tree, often providing only glimpses of red and black through the leaves. Before arriving at camp we ran into one last spell of activity, including Brown-headed Parrot, Southern Carmine Bee-eater, Violet-backed Starling, Black-headed Oriole, Mocking Cliff Chat, and our first White-winged Widowbird. We enjoyed a number of other mammals during the drive as well, including our first impala, a pair of dainty klipspringers, African buffalo, greater kudu, common warthog, and slender mongoose. We met up with



Roland's sister and partner, who were in Kruger busy with a research project and who would join us for the next few days. Before heading off to dinner we enjoyed great looks at a thick-tailed greater galago wandering around a low tree. Following dinner the group went on a night drive, and we were rewarded with lion and a brief view of African civet.

Day 12, March 22. Kruger National Park

With a few bird species in mind we decided to target the western side of southern Kruger for the morning and set off just after the gate opened. A clan of spotted hyenas, complete with youngsters, right next to the road was a good start, and we slowly started adding up the birds. First up was Saddle-billed Stork flying by, along with White-backed Vulture, African Green Pigeon, Levaillant's Cuckoo, White-crested Helmetshrike, Long-billed Crombec, Yellow-bellied and Burnt-necked Eremomelas, Arrow-marked Babbler, White-browed Scrub Robin, Marico Sunbird, and Golden-breasted Bunting. We were soon made aware of a nearby leopard sighting by another vehicle and headed off quickly to see if we could locate it as well. Trying to ignore the birds as best as possible and getting to the area before the leopard moved off was tricky and was further complicated when a pride of lions strolled into view and lay down next to the road, only a few hundred meters away from the cars further up the road, where the leopard undoubtedly was. We watched the lions for a bit, completely by ourselves, before joining the melee up front. Upon arrival we learned that the leopard was no longer in view and was moving through the grass parallel to the road. All of the cars thinned out, and we continued on, slowly, and struck gold when we spotted the leopard moving through the tall grass and trees not far off the road. We followed this beautiful cat for a while, before it gradually made its way closer and closer to the road, getting ready to cross. The leopard crossed the road directly in front of us and wandered away into the bush on the other side, leaving us all elated! With smiles brimming, we continued on our way and enjoyed some further good birding before arriving at Pretoriuskop camp, where we enjoyed a good brunch! This spell of birding held a few gems and included species such as Black Cuckooshrike, Dark Chanting and Gabar Goshawks, Pale Flycatcher, Greencapped Eremomela, Purple Indigobird, Yellow-throated Petronia, Groundscraper Thrush, Purple-crested Turaco, Striped Kingfisher, and Green Wood Hoopoe.



The Leopard shortly before crossing the road

We made our way back to Skukuza, stopping for two vocal **Stierling's Wren-Warblers** that showed well on the side of the road, where we'd relax for a while, before resuming our tour



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in the late afternoon. Other notable animal sightings in the morning period included African elephant, African buffalo, dwarf and slender mongooses, giraffe, and Smith's bush (tree) squirrel.

The afternoon was divided into brief spells at Lake Panic, the Skukuza Golf Course, and along one of the Sabie River loop roads. The activity was again a bit subdued in the afternoon, but we enjoyed a flushed pair of Common Buttonquails, Marabou Stork, Water Thick-knee, African Jacana, Little Bee-eater, Brown-headed Parrot, Marsh Warbler, Greater Blue-eared Starling, Red-collared Widowbird, Village Indigobird, African Pied Wagtail, and a pair of Striated Herons that were under siege from a African Goshawk. All the commotion and noise resulting from this brought in an inquisitive African Harrier-Hawk. We had a traditional braai to round off the day, linking up with another Birding Ecotours group who were in camp, with Roland departing on the night drive a bit later.

Day 13, March 23. Kruger National Park

We were up early again and departed camp just after opening, this time heading south towards Lower Sabie. A large clan of spotted hyenas, over 10 individuals, stole the attention early on, while Roland recounted his successful night drive – netting a group of African wild dogs, along with lion and African wildcat. The activity was quite slow this morning, and we picked up species here and there. Hooded Vulture, Saddle-billed Stork, Goliath Heron, White-crowned Lapwing, a surprise Namaqua Dove, Black-collared Barbet, Brownheaded Parrot, White-crested Helmetshrike, Village Indigobird, and African Firefinch were first up. A few dams proved fruitful with Little Grebe, Malachite Kingfisher, Blackwinged Stilt, Common Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, African Spoonbill, Lesser Masked Weaver, and Red-billed Buffalo Weaver, along with large Nile crocodiles and many hippos.



The exquisite White-crowned Lapwing showed well.

We arrived at Lower Sabie for an early brunch and enjoyed our meal with the wonderful view of the river from the restaurant. Following this we set out on a quick walk around the camp, but there was not too much moving around due to the extreme heat. We persisted, and it paid off when I heard the soft, but distinctive song of the rare **River Warbler**. This is a highly sought-after species, famous for its skulking nature and the fact that it remains one of the most difficult species to actually see. What was more surprising, however, was the fact that it was calling in the heat of the late morning. We got ourselves into a good position to see the



thicket it was calling within, and after some patience we were rewarded with some great views of this special bird. We counted ourselves lucky, as we all had good, clear views of the bird as it moved slowly along some branches and even sat still to preen for a while!

Feeling newly invigorated we set out on a loop eventually taking us back to camp. We now passed through much more open, grassier areas and enjoyed a different suite of species, including Lesser Grey Shrike, Fan-tailed Widowbird (a first for me in Kruger), a Common Buttonguail with two tiny chicks, numerous calling Harlequin Quails, including one that flushed up from the edge of the road, Sabota Lark, Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark, Burnt-necked Eremomela, good numbers of Wattled Starlings, Red-billed Quelea, and a few Lappet-faced Vultures. We took some time off in the afternoon and met up later in the afternoon, where we enjoyed a gin and tonic (or two) in the research camp, toasting to the good time we'd had in Kruger. Following a good dinner we climbed onboard the trucks for another night drive. It was a little on the slow side, with the standout being a sighting of a few lions. Spotted Eagle Owl was seen, while African Scops Owl remained heard only. A quick walk around the camp after returning revealed a few goodies, including Wahlberg's epauletted fruit bat, painted reed frog, and common river frog.

Day 14, March 24. Kruger National Park to Dullstroom

With our bags packed we departed camp bright and early to make the most of our last morning in the park before continuing on eventually to Dullstroom, where we would spend the night. Our progress was slow heading out of the park, as we were waylaid by many sightings, the tops of which went to a Secretarybird, a group of Southern Ground Hornbills (once again perched in a tree – this time a large, dead tree providing excellent views), a few Cape Vultures, a dapper White-bellied Sunbird, and what was certainly the highlight, a small pack (~5) of African wild dogs that came running down the road, clearly on a mission – an excellent way to depart the Kruger!



African wild dog on the move

We picked up the necessary curios on our way out and had a late breakfast in Hazyview, and then we started tackling the forests of Mt. Sheba. We arrived to absolute silence in the forest as we set about tracking down Orange Ground Thrush in the short of time we had. We slowly walked around, but the forest remained deathly quiet. After some time the only birds we had seen were a Lemon Dove crossing the road, along with a male Greater Double-collared **Sunbird**, and with strong rain clouds now threatening, and not a peep of the thrush, we called



it in the forest and continued onward. With a slight dilemma of the fuel tank showing as empty, we headed off to track down the nearest petrol station, which saw us backtracking slightly. I couldn't quite fathom that this had happened so quickly, and true enough, as we were driving back the fuel gauge started picking up, confirming that the steep slope we were parked on at Mt. Sheba had forced the remaining fuel into a far corner of the tank. Fortunately this turned out to be a non-issue, and we arrived in our first birding area outside Dullstroom in some ominous-looking weather.

The resident Gurney's Sugarbirds were right where they were meant to be and offered us some excellent views before we continued onto the De Berg Road. The road was in a terrible state, and we slowly made our way along, scanning regularly and hoping for a few of the mammals of the area. Fortunately the rain held off, but the wind added a large degree of cold to the afternoon and kept most things out of sight. We worked the area hard, coming up with a number of Denham's Bustards, a lone Wattled Crane, Cape Vulture, and Eastern Long-billed Lark on the birding side, while the mammals kept hidden for the most part. Besides the common blesbok we eventually found a small group of grey rhebok and a blackbacked jackal.

We retired to town, and enjoyed our last dinner of the tour. Roland and I soon set out on another night drive. It was slow going for the most part, and we found only the same mammals we had seen during the day. But after having all but given up, and while having our last scan in a field before rejoining the main road Roland locked onto an eye-shine and, quickly following up through the binoculars, we realized that it was a stunning serval. We watched the cat for a while, and it slowly walked through the tall grass before disappearing from sight.

Day 15, March 25. Departure

Following our great end to the night drive last night, Roland and I met early this morning and set out to try and track down a few more mammals, with all our bird targets around here having being seen. We were greeted with dense fog this morning, but fortunately, it opened up a bit the further we went, although it never truly cleared. After arriving in Verloren Vallei Nature Reserve we set out on a walk, not letting the wet grass deter us. It was slow for the most part, but thorough scanning revealed a number of blesbok and grey rhebok and a few black-backed jackals, but nothing else. Red-winged and Grey-winged Francolins called throughout the morning, with us eventually managing to locate a small covey of Redwingeds, while Eastern Long-billed Lark, Mountain Wheatear, Cape Longclaw, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting and Yellow-breasted Pipit were regularly encountered. As it so often happens, a last scan from the car before calling it quits and heading back for breakfast revealed something in the distance we weren't quite sure about. A quick scan through the scope failed to find it, but we did strike it lucky and found an oribi. We watched it for a while before eventually losing it and heading back for breakfast. We enjoyed a good, hearty meal before finishing packing for the upcoming departure. We had a bit of spare time before we needed to be at the airport, so we headed out to track down Melodious Lark. With some recent information in hand, we arrived on site and began our search. We didn't have much time before a large storm brewing not far away would hit us, but after a quick search we managed to find the bird. We made it to the car just in time as the first drops of rain started falling. This brought an end to the trip, so we made our way to the airport where Roland and Beate would catch an evening flight home.

I would like to thank Roland and Beate for the excellent trip we had, the good fun shared, and the brilliant birding and mammals we enjoyed! The highlights were too many, but some of



the standouts were the absolutely incredible birding we enjoyed around Wakkerstroom along with the African wild dog and many cats seen on the trip, with our stunning leopard sighting being the highlight for all. I look forward to the next one!

BIRD LIST - SOUTH AFRICA -MARCH 2017

Bold = Country endemic

Status: NT = Near-threatened, VU = Vulnerable, EN = Endangered, CR =

Critically Endangered		
Common name (IOC 7.3)	Scientific name (IUC 7.3)	Trip
	STRUTHIONIFORMES	
Ostriches	Struthionidae	
Common Ostrich	Struthio camelus	1
	ANSERIFORMES	
Ducks, Geese and Swans	<u>Anatidae</u>	
White-faced Whistling Duck	Dendrocygna viduata	1
Spur-winged Goose	Plectropterus gambensis	1
Egyptian Goose	Alopochen aegyptiaca	1
South African Shelduck	Tadorna cana	1
Cape Teal	Anas capensis	1
Yellow-billed Duck	Anas undulata	1
Cape Shoveler	Anas smithii	1
Red-billed Teal	Anas erythrorhyncha	1
	GALLIFORMES	
<u>Guineafowl</u>	<u>Numididae</u>	
Helmeted Guineafowl	Numida meleagris	1
Crested Guineafowl	Guttera pucherani	1
Pheasants and allies	<u>Phasianidae</u>	
Grey-winged Francolin	Scleroptila afra	1
Red-winged Francolin	Scleroptila levaillantii	1
Crested Francolin	Dendroperdix sephaena	1
Cape Spurfowl	Pternistis capensis	1
Natal Spurfowl	Pternistis natalensis	1
Swainson's Spurfowl	Pternistis swainsonii	1
Common Quail	Coturnix coturnix	1
Harlequin Quail	Coturnix delegorguei	1
	SPHENISCIFORMES	
<u>Penguins</u>	Spheniscidae	
African Penguin - EN	Spheniscus demersus	1
	PODICIPEDIFORMES	
Grebes	<u>Podicipedidae</u>	
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis	1
	PHOENICOPTERIFORMES	



Flamingos	Phoenicopteridae	
Greater Flamingo	Phoenicopterus roseus	1
Lesser Flamingo - NT	Phoeniconaias minor	1
	CICONIIFORMES	
<u>Storks</u>	<u>Ciconiidae</u>	
Yellow-billed Stork	Mycteria ibis	1
Woolly-necked Stork - VU	Ciconia episcopus	1
White Stork	Ciconia ciconia	1
Saddle-billed Stork	Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis	1
Marabou Stork	Leptoptilos crumenifer	1
	PELECANIFORMES	
Ibises, Spoonbills	Threskiornithidae	
African Sacred Ibis	Threskiornis aethiopicus	1
Southern Bald Ibis - VU	Geronticus calvus	1
Hadada Ibis	Bostrychia hagedash	1
African Spoonbill	Platalea alba	1
Herons, Bitterns	<u>Ardeidae</u>	
Striated Heron	Butorides striata	1
Western Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	1
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	1
Black-headed Heron	Ardea melanocephala	1
Goliath Heron	Ardea goliath	1
Purple Heron	Ardea purpurea	1
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	1
Hamerkop	Scopidae	
Hamerkop	Scopus umbretta	1
Pelicans	Pelecanidae	
Great White Pelican	Pelecanus onocrotalus	1
Pink-backed Pelican	Pelecanus rufescens	1
	SULIFORMES	
Gannets, Boobies	Sulidae	
Cape Gannet - VU	Morus capensis	1
Cormorants, Shags	Phalacrocoracidae	
Reed Cormorant	Microcarbo africanus	1
Crowned Cormorant - NT	Microcarbo coronatus	1
White-breasted Cormorant	Phalacrocorax lucidus	1
Cape Cormorant - EN	Phalacrocorax capensis	1
Anhingas, Darters	<u>Anhingidae</u>	
African Darter	Anhinga rufa	1
	ACCIPITRIFORMES	
Secretarybird	<u>Sagittariidae</u>	
Secretarybird - VU	Sagittarius serpentarius	1



Ospreys	Pandionidae	
Western Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	1
Kites, Hawks and Eagles	Accipitridae	
Black-winged Kite	Elanus caeruleus	1
African Harrier-Hawk	Polyboroides typus	1
European Honey Buzzard	Pernis apivorus	1
Hooded Vulture - CR	Necrosyrtes monachus	1
White-backed Vulture - CR	Gyps africanus	1
Cape Vulture - EN	Gyps coprotheres	1
Lappet-faced Vulture - EN	Torgos tracheliotos	1
Black-chested Snake Eagle	Circaetus pectoralis	1
Brown Snake Eagle	Circaetus cinereus	1
Bateleur - NT	Terathopius ecaudatus	1
Crowned Eagle - NT	Stephanoaetus coronatus	Н
Martial Eagle - VU	Polemaetus bellicosus	1
Long-crested Eagle	Lophaetus occipitalis	1
Wahlberg's Eagle	Hieraaetus wahlbergi	1
Tawny Eagle	Aquila rapax	1
Gabar Goshawk	Micronisus gabar	1
Dark Chanting Goshawk	Melierax metabates	1
African Goshawk	Accipiter tachiro	1
Little Sparrowhawk	Accipiter minullus	1
Black Sparrowhawk	Accipiter melanoleucus	1
Western Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus	1
African Marsh Harrier	Circus ranivorus	1
Black Harrier - VU	Circus maurus	1
African Fish Eagle	Haliaeetus vocifer	1
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo	1
Jackal Buzzard	Buteo rufofuscus	1
	OTIDIFORMES	
Bustards	<u>Otididae</u>	
Denham's Bustard - NT	Neotis denhami	1
Blue Korhaan - NT	Eupodotis caerulescens	1
Southern Black Korhaan - VU	Afrotis afra	1
Black-bellied Bustard	Lissotis melanogaster	1
	GRUIFORMES	
<u>Flufftails</u>	<u>Sarothruridae</u>	
Buff-spotted Flufftail	Sarothrura elegans	1
Rails, Crakes and Coots	Rallidae	
African Rail	Rallus caerulescens	1
Black Crake	Amaurornis flavirostra	1
Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus	1



Red-knobbed Coot	Fulica cristata	1
Cranes	Gruidae	
Grey Crowned Crane - EN	Balearica regulorum	1
Blue Crane - VU	Grus paradisea	1
Wattled Crane - VU	Grus carunculata	1
	CHARADRIIFORMES	
Buttonquail	Turnicidae	
Common Buttonquail	Turnix sylvaticus	1
Stone-curlews, Thick-knees	Burhinidae	
Water Thick-knee	Burhinus vermiculatus	1
Spotted Thick-knee	Burhinus capensis	1
<u>Oystercatchers</u>	<u>Haematopodidae</u>	
African Oystercatcher - NT	Haematopus moquini	1
Stilts, Avocets	Recurvirostridae	
Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus	1
Plovers	<u>Charadriidae</u>	
Blacksmith Lapwing	Vanellus armatus	1
White-crowned Lapwing	Vanellus albiceps	1
Senegal Lapwing	Vanellus lugubris	1
Crowned Lapwing	Vanellus coronatus	1
African Wattled Lapwing	Vanellus senegallus	1
Grey Plover	Pluvialis squatarola	1
Common Ringed Plover	Charadrius hiaticula	1
Three-banded Plover	Charadrius tricollaris	1
White-fronted Plover	Charadrius marginatus	1
<u>Jacanas</u>	<u>Jacanidae</u>	
African Jacana	Actophilornis africanus	1
Sandpipers, Snipes	<u>Scolopacidae</u>	
African Snipe	Gallinago nigripennis	1
Bar-tailed Godwit - NT	Limosa lapponica	1
Whimbrel - NT	Numenius phaeopus	1
Common Greenshank	Tringa nebularia	1
Wood Sandpiper	Tringa glareola	1
Common Sandpiper	Actitis hypoleucos	1
Ruddy Turnstone	Arenaria interpres	1
Sanderling	Calidris alba	1
Little Stint	Calidris minuta	1
Coursers, Pratincoles	<u>Glareolidae</u>	
Temminck's Courser	Cursorius temminckii	1
Collared Pratincole	Glareola pratincola	1
Gulls, Terns and Skimmers	<u>Laridae</u>	
Grey-headed Gull	Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus	1



Hartlaub's Gull	Chroicocephalus hartlaubii	1
Kelp Gull	Larus dominicanus	1
Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia	1
Greater Crested Tern	Thalasseus bergii	1
Sandwich Tern	Thalasseus sandvicensis	1
Little Tern	Sternula albifrons	1
Common Tern	Sterna hirundo	1
	COLUMBIFORMES	
Pigeons, Doves	<u>Columbidae</u>	
Rock Dove	Columba livia	1
Speckled Pigeon	Columba guinea	1
African Olive Pigeon	Columba arquatrix	1
Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon	Columba delegorguei	1
Lemon Dove	Columba larvata	Н
Red-eyed Dove	Streptopelia semitorquata	1
Ring-necked Dove	Streptopelia capicola	1
Laughing Dove	Spilopelia senegalensis	1
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	Turtur chalcospilos	1
Tambourine Dove	Turtur tympanistria	Н
Namaqua Dove	Oena capensis	1
African Green Pigeon	Treron calvus	1
	MUSOPHAGIFORMES	
<u>Turacos</u>	Musophagidae	
Livingstone's Turaco	Tauraco livingstonii	1
Purple-crested Turaco	Tauraco porphyreolophus	1
Grey Go-away-bird	Corythaixoides concolor	1
	CUCULIFORMES	
Cuckoos	Cuculidae	
Burchell's Coucal	Centropus burchellii	1
Green Malkoha	Ceuthmochares australis	1
Levaillant's Cuckoo	Clamator levaillantii	1
Jacobin Cuckoo	Clamator jacobinus	1
Diederik Cuckoo	Chrysococcyx caprius	1
African Emerald Cuckoo	Chrysococcyx cupreus	Н
Red-chested Cuckoo	Cuculus solitarius	1
	STRIGIFORMES:	
Owls	Strigidae	
African Scops Owl	Otus senegalensis	Н
Spotted Eagle-Owl	Bubo africanus	1
Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	Bubo lacteus	1
African Wood Owl	Strix woodfordii	Н
1	CAPRIMULGIFORMES	1



Nightjars	<u>Caprimulgidae</u>	
Fiery-necked Nightjar	Caprimulgus pectoralis	Н
Swamp Nightjar	Caprimulgus natalensis	1
	APODIFORMES	
<u>Swifts</u>	<u>Apodidae</u>	
African Palm Swift	Cypsiurus parvus	1
Little Swift	Apus affinis	1
Horus Swift	Apus horus	1
White-rumped Swift	Apus caffer	1
	COLIIFORMES	
<u>Mousebirds</u>	<u>Coliidae</u>	
Speckled Mousebird	Colius striatus	1
White-backed Mousebird	Colius colius	1
Red-faced Mousebird	Urocolius indicus	1
	CORACIIFORMES	
Rollers	<u>Coraciidae</u>	
Purple Roller	Coracias naevius	1
Lilac-breasted Roller	Coracias caudatus	1
European Roller	Coracias garrulus	1
Broad-billed Roller	Eurystomus glaucurus	1
<u>Kingfishers</u>	<u>Alcedinidae</u>	
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	Halcyon albiventris	1
Striped Kingfisher	Halcyon chelicuti	1
Woodland Kingfisher	Halcyon senegalensis	1
Mangrove Kingfisher	Halcyon senegaloides	1
Malachite Kingfisher	Corythornis cristatus	1
Pied Kingfisher	Ceryle rudis	1
<u>Bee-eaters</u>	Meropidae	
Little Bee-eater	Merops pusillus	1
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	Merops persicus	1
European Bee-eater	Merops apiaster	1
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	Merops nubicoides	1
	BUCEROTIFORMES	
Hoopoes	<u>Upupidae</u>	
African Hoopoe	Upupa africana	1
Wood Hoopoes	Phoeniculidae	
Green Wood Hoopoe	Phoeniculus purpureus	1
Common Scimitarbill	Rhinopomastus cyanomelas	1
Ground Hornbills	Bucorvidae	
Southern Ground Hornbill - VU	Bucorvus leadbeateri	1
<u>Hornbills</u>	Bucerotidae	
Southern Red-billed Hornbill	Tockus rufirostris	1



Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	Tockus leucomelas	1
Crowned Hornbill	Lophoceros alboterminatus	1
African Grey Hornbill	Lophoceros nasutus	1
Trumpeter Hornbill	Bycanistes bucinator	1
1	PICIFORMES	
African Barbets	Lybiidae	
White-eared Barbet	Stactolaema leucotis	1
Green Barbet	Stactolaema olivacea	1
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird	Pogoniulus bilineatus	1
Red-fronted Tinkerbird	Pogoniulus pusillus	Н
Acacia Pied Barbet	Tricholaema leucomelas	1
Black-collared Barbet	Lybius torquatus	1
Crested Barbet	Trachyphonus vaillantii	1
<u>Honeyguides</u>	<u>Indicatoridae</u>	
Brown-backed Honeybird	Prodotiscus regulus	1
Lesser Honeyguide	Indicator minor	1
Scaly-throated Honeyguide	Indicator variegatus	1
Woodpeckers	<u>Picidae</u>	
Red-throated Wryneck	Jynx ruficollis	1
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	Campethera abingoni	1
Ground Woodpecker	Geocolaptes olivaceus	1
Bearded Woodpecker	Chloropicus namaquus	1
Cardinal Woodpecker	Dendropicos fuscescens	1
Olive Woodpecker	Dendropicos griseocephalus	1
	FALCONIFORMES	
Caracaras, Falcons	<u>Falconidae</u>	
Rock Kestrel	Falco rupicolus	1
Amur Falcon	Falco amurensis	1
Eurasian Hobby	Falco subbuteo	1
Lanner Falcon	Falco biarmicus	1
	PSITTACIFORMES	
African & New World Parrots	<u>Psittacidae</u>	
Brown-headed Parrot	Poicephalus cryptoxanthus	1
	PASSERIFORMES	
Wattle-eyes, Batises	<u>Platysteiridae</u>	
Cape Batis	Batis capensis	1
Woodward's Batis	Batis fratrum	1
Chinspot Batis	Batis molitor	1
<u>Helmetshrikes</u>	<u>Prionopidae</u>	
White-crested Helmetshrike	Prionops plumatus	1
<u>Bushshrikes</u>	<u>Malaconotidae</u>	
Grey-headed Bushshrike	Malaconotus blanchoti	Н



Olive Bushshrike	Chlorophoneus olivaceus	1
Orange-breasted Bushshrike	Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus	1
Gorgeous Bushshrike	Telophorus viridis	1
Bokmakierie	Telophorus zeylonus	1
Southern Tchagra	Tchagra tchagra	1
Black-crowned Tchagra	Tchagra senegalus	1
Black-backed Puffback	Dryoscopus cubla	1
Southern Boubou	Laniarius ferrugineus	1
Cuckooshrikes	Campephagidae	
Grey Cuckooshrike	Coracina caesia	Н
Black Cuckooshrike	Campephaga flava	1
Shrikes	Laniidae	
Magpie Shrike	Urolestes melanoleucus	1
Southern White-crowned Shrike	Eurocephalus anguitimens	1
Red-backed Shrike	Lanius collurio	1
Lesser Grey Shrike	Lanius minor	1
Southern Fiscal	Lanius collaris	1
Figbirds, Orioles	<u>Oriolidae</u>	
Black-headed Oriole	Oriolus larvatus	1
Drongos	<u>Dicruridae</u>	
Square-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus ludwigii	1
Fork-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus adsimilis	1
Monarchs	Monarchidae	
Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher	Trochocercus cyanomelas	1
African Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone viridis	1
Crows, Jays	Corvidae	
Cape Crow	Corvus capensis	1
Pied Crow	Corvus albus	1
White-necked Raven	Corvus albicollis	1
Rockjumpers	Chaetopidae	
Cape Rockjumper	Chaetops frenatus	1
Tits, Chickadees	Paridae	
Southern Black Tit	Melaniparus niger	1
Penduline Tits	Remizidae	
Cape Penduline Tit	Anthoscopus minutus	1
Nicators	<u>Nicatoridae</u>	
Eastern Nicator	Nicator gularis	Н
<u>Larks</u>	Alaudidae	
Spike-heeled Lark	Chersomanes albofasciata	1
Eastern Long-billed Lark	Certhilauda semitorquata	1
Cape Long-billed Lark	Certhilauda curvirostris	1
Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	Eremopterix leucotis	1



Sabota Lark	Calendulauda sabota	1
Karoo Lark	Calendulauda albescens	1
Rudd's Lark - VU	Heteromirafra ruddi	1
Rufous-naped Lark	Mirafra africana	1
Melodious Lark - NT	Mirafra cheniana	1
Botha's Lark - EN	Spizocorys fringillaris	1
Large-billed Lark	Galerida magnirostris	1
Red-capped Lark	Calandrella cinerea	1
Bulbuls	Pycnonotidae	
Cape Bulbul	Pycnonotus capensis	1
Dark-capped Bulbul	Pycnonotus tricolor	1
Sombre Greenbul	Andropadus importunus	1
Yellow-bellied Greenbul	Chlorocichla flaviventris	1
Terrestrial Brownbul	Phyllastrephus terrestris	1
Yellow-streaked Greenbul	Phyllastrephus flavostriatus	Н
Swallows, Martins	<u>Hirundinidae</u>	
Black Saw-wing	Psalidoprocne pristoptera	1
Brown-throated Martin	Riparia paludicola	1
Sand Martin	Riparia riparia	1
Banded Martin	Riparia cincta	1
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica	1
White-throated Swallow	Hirundo albigularis	1
Wire-tailed Swallow	Hirundo smithii	1
Pearl-breasted Swallow	Hirundo dimidiata	1
Rock Martin	Ptyonoprogne fuligula	1
Greater Striped Swallow	Cecropis cucullata	1
Lesser Striped Swallow	Cecropis abyssinica	1
Red-breasted Swallow	Cecropis semirufa	1
South African Cliff Swallow	Petrochelidon spilodera	1
Crombecs, African Warblers	Macrosphenidae	
Cape Grassbird	Sphenoeacus afer	1
Long-billed Crombec	Sylvietta rufescens	1
Victorin's Warbler	Cryptillas victorini	1
Leaf Warblers and allies	Phylloscopidae	
Willow Warbler	Phylloscopus trochilus	1
Reed Warblers and allies	<u>Acrocephalidae</u>	
Lesser Swamp Warbler	Acrocephalus gracilirostris	1
African Reed Warbler	Acrocephalus baeticatus	1
Marsh Warbler	Acrocephalus palustris	1
Grassbirds and allies	<u>Locustellidae</u>	
River Warbler	Locustella fluviatilis	1
Barratt's Warbler	Bradypterus barratti	1



Cisticolas and allies	<u>Cisticolidae</u>	
Red-faced Cisticola	Cisticola erythrops	Н
Lazy Cisticola	Cisticola aberrans	Н
Rattling Cisticola	Cisticola chiniana	1
Grey-backed Cisticola	Cisticola subruficapilla	1
Wailing Cisticola	Cisticola lais	1
Rufous-winged Cisticola	Cisticola galactotes	1
Levaillant's Cisticola	Cisticola tinniens	1
Croaking Cisticola	Cisticola natalensis	1
Neddicky	Cisticola fulvicapilla	1
Zitting Cisticola	Cisticola juncidis	1
Desert Cisticola	Cisticola aridulus	1
Wing-snapping Cisticola	Cisticola ayresii	1
Tawny-flanked Prinia	Prinia subflava	1
Karoo Prinia	Prinia maculosa	1
Drakensberg Prinia	Prinia hypoxantha	1
Bar-throated Apalis	Apalis thoracica	1
Rudd's Apalis	Apalis ruddi	1
Yellow-breasted Apalis	Apalis flavida	1
Green-backed Camaroptera	Camaroptera brachyura	1
Stierling's Wren-Warbler	Calamonastes stierlingi	1
Yellow-bellied Eremomela	Eremomela icteropygialis	1
Green-capped Eremomela	Eremomela scotops	1
Burnt-necked Eremomela	Eremomela usticollis	1
Laughingthrushes	Leiothrichidae	
Arrow-marked Babbler	Turdoides jardineii	1
Sylviid Babblers	<u>Sylviidae</u>	
Bush Blackcap - NT	Lioptilus nigricapillus	1
Chestnut-vented Warbler	Sylvia subcoerulea	1
White-eyes	Zosteropidae	
Cape White-eye	Zosterops virens	1
Sugarbirds	Promeropidae	
Cape Sugarbird	Promerops cafer	1
Gurney's Sugarbird	Promerops gurneyi	1
Starlings, Rhabdornis	<u>Sturnidae</u>	
Common Myna	Acridotheres tristis	1
Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris	1
Wattled Starling	Creatophora cinerea	1
Black-bellied Starling	Notopholia corrusca	1
Cape Starling	Lamprotornis nitens	1
Greater Blue-eared Starling	Lamprotornis chalybaeus	1
Burchell's Starling	Lamprotornis australis	1



Pied Starling	Lamprotornis bicolor	1
Violet-backed Starling	Cinnyricinclus leucogaster	1
Red-winged Starling	Onychognathus morio	1
Oxpeckers	Buphagidae	
Red-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus erythrorynchus	1
Thrushes	Turdidae	
Spotted Ground Thrush - EN	Geokichla guttata	1
Groundscraper Thrush	Turdus litsitsirupa	1
Olive Thrush	Turdus olivaceus	1
Chats, Old World Flycatchers	<u>Muscicapidae</u>	
Karoo Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas coryphoeus	1
Bearded Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas quadrivirgata	Н
White-browed Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas leucophrys	1
Brown Scrub Robin	Cercotrichas signata	1
Grey Tit-Flycatcher	Myioparus plumbeus	Н
Southern Black Flycatcher	Melaenornis pammelaina	1
Pale Flycatcher	Melaenornis pallidus	1
Fiscal Flycatcher	Melaenornis silens	1
Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata	1
Ashy Flycatcher	Muscicapa caerulescens	1
African Dusky Flycatcher	Muscicapa adusta	1
Cape Robin-Chat	Cossypha caffra	1
White-browed Robin-Chat	Cossypha heuglini	Н
Red-capped Robin-Chat	Cossypha natalensis	1
Chorister Robin-Chat	Cossypha dichroa	1
Cape Rock Thrush	Monticola rupestris	1
Sentinel Rock Thrush	Monticola explorator	1
African Stonechat	Saxicola torquatus	1
Buff-streaked Chat	Campicoloides bifasciatus	1
Sickle-winged Chat	Emarginata sinuata	1
Mocking Cliff Chat	Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris	1
Ant-eating Chat	Myrmecocichla formicivora	1
Mountain Wheatear	Myrmecocichla monticola	1
Capped Wheatear	Oenanthe pileata	1
Familiar Chat	Oenanthe familiaris	1
<u>Sunbirds</u>	<u>Nectariniidae</u>	
Collared Sunbird	Hedydipna collaris	1
Orange-breasted Sunbird	Anthobaphes violacea	1
Olive Sunbird	Cyanomitra olivacea	1
Grey Sunbird	Cyanomitra veroxii	1
Amethyst Sunbird	Chalcomitra amethystina	1
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	Chalcomitra senegalensis	1



Malachite Sunbird	Nectarinia famosa	1
Southern Double-collared Sunbird	Cinnyris chalybeus	1
Greater Double-collared Sunbird	Cinnyris afer	1
Marico Sunbird	Cinnyris mariquensis	1
Purple-banded Sunbird	Cinnyris bifasciatus	1
White-bellied Sunbird	Cinnyris talatala	1
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches	Passeridae	1
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	1
Cape Sparrow	Passer melanurus	1
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	Passer diffusus	1
Yellow-throated Petronia	Gymnoris superciliaris	1
Weavers, Widowbirds	Ploceidae	1
Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	Bubalornis niger	1
Thick-billed Weaver	Amblyospiza albifrons	1
Spectacled Weaver	Ploceus ocularis	1
Cape Weaver	Ploceus capensis	1
Eastern Golden Weaver	Ploceus subaureus	1
Lesser Masked Weaver	Ploceus intermedius	1
Southern Masked Weaver	Ploceus velatus	1
Village Weaver	Ploceus cucullatus	1
Dark-backed Weaver	Ploceus bicolor	1
Red-billed Quelea	Quelea quelea	1
Yellow-crowned Bishop	Euplectes afer	Н
Southern Red Bishop	Euplectes orix	1
Fan-tailed Widowbird	Euplectes axillaris	1
White-winged Widowbird	Euplectes albonotatus	1
Red-collared Widowbird	Euplectes ardens	1
Long-tailed Widowbird	Euplectes progne	1
Waxbills, Munias and allies	Estrildidae	
Red-headed Finch	Amadina erythrocephala	Н
Green Twinspot	Mandingoa nitidula	1
Pink-throated Twinspot	Hypargos margaritatus	1
Red-billed Firefinch	Lagonosticta senegala	1
African Firefinch	Lagonosticta rubricata	1
Blue Waxbill	Uraeginthus angolensis	1
Grey Waxbill	Estrilda perreini	1
Common Waxbill	Estrilda astrild	1
Quailfinch	Ortygospiza atricollis	1
Bronze Mannikin	Lonchura cucullata	1
Red-backed Mannikin	Lonchura nigriceps	1
Indigobirds, Whydahs	Viduidae	
Village Indigobird	Vidua chalybeata	1



Purple Indigobird	Vidua purpurascens	1
Dusky Indigobird	Vidua funerea	1
Pin-tailed Whydah	Vidua macroura	1
Long-tailed Paradise Whydah	Vidua paradisaea	1
Wagtails, Pipits	Motacillidae	
Cape Wagtail	Motacilla capensis	1
African Pied Wagtail	Motacilla aguimp	1
Cape Longclaw	Macronyx capensis	1
Yellow-throated Longclaw	Macronyx croceus	1
Rosy-throated Longclaw	Macronyx ameliae	1
African Pipit	Anthus cinnamomeus	1
Long-billed Pipit	Anthus similis	1
Yellow-breasted Pipit - VU	Anthus chloris	1
<u>Finches</u>	Fringillidae	
Black-throated Canary	Crithagra atrogularis	1
Lemon-breasted Canary	Crithagra citrinipectus	1
Yellow-fronted Canary	Crithagra mozambica	1
Cape Siskin	Crithagra totta	1
Yellow Canary	Crithagra flaviventris	1
Brimstone Canary	Crithagra sulphurata	1
Streaky-headed Seedeater	Crithagra gularis	1
White-throated Canary	Crithagra albogularis	1
Cape Canary	Serinus canicollis	1
Buntings, New World Sparrows	Emberizidae	
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	Emberiza tahapisi	1
Cape Bunting	Emberiza capensis	1
Golden-breasted Bunting	Emberiza flaviventris	1
TOTAL		390

MAMMAL LIST - SOUTH AFRICA - MARCH 2017 **Common Name Scientific Name** Trip **CHIROPTERA** Pteropodidae Wahlberg's epauletted fruit bat Epomophorus wahlbergi 1 **RODENTIA** Muridae Four-striped grass mouse Rhabdomys pumilio Sciuridae 1 Red bush squirrel (Ongoye) Paraxerus palliatus ornatus 1 Smith's bush squirrel Paraxerus cepapi Pedetidae



Springhare	Pedetes capensis	1
	LAGOMORPHA	
	Leporidae	
Scrub hare	Lepus saxatilis	1
	PROBOSCIDEA	
	Elephantidae	
African elephant	Loxodonta africana	1
	PERISSODACTYLA	
	Equidae	
Burchell's zebra	Equus quagga burchelli	1
	Rhinocerotidae	
White rhinoceros	Ceratotherium simum	1
	CETARTIODACTYLA	
	Hippopotamidae	
Hippopotamus	Hippopotamus amphibius	1
11 1	Suidae	
Common warthog	Phacochoerus africanus	1
Common warmog	Giraffidae	
Giraffe	Giraffa camelopardalis	1
	Bovidae	
Blue wildebeest	Connochaetes taurinus taurinus	1
Oribi	Ourebia ourebi	1
Blesbok	Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi	1
Blue duiker	Philantomba monticola	1
Natal red duiker	Cephalophus natalensis	1
Common duiker	Sylvicapra grimmia	1
Springbok	Antidorcas marsupialis	1
Klipspringer	Oreotragus oreotragus	1
Steenbok	Raphicerus campestris	1
Impala	Aepyceros melampus	1
Grey rhebok	Pelea capreolus	1
African buffalo	Syncerus caffer	1
Greater kudu	Tragelaphus strepsiceros	1
Nyala	Tragelaphus angasii	1
Bushbuck	Tragelaphus scriptus	1
Common eland	Tragelaphus oryx	1
Southern reedbuck	Redunca arundinum	1
Waterbuck	Kobus ellipsiprymnus	1
THE TOTAL TO	CARNIVORA	
	Hyaenidae	
Spotted hyena	Crocuta crocuta	1
-	Felidae	



Leopard	Panthera pardus	1
Lion	Panthera leo	1
African wildcat	Felis silvestris lybica	1
Serval	Leptailurus serval	1
	Canidae	
African wild dog	Lycaon pictus	1
Black-backed jackal	Canis mesomelas	1
	Viverridae	
African Civet	Civettictis civetta	1
Cape Genet	Genetta tigrina	1
	Herpestidae	
Meerkat	Suricata suricatta	1
Yellow mongoose	Cynictis penicillata	1
Slender mongoose	Herpestes sanguineus	1
Cape grey mongoose	Herpestes pulverulentus	1
Banded mongoose	Mungos mungo	1
Common dwarf mongoose	Helogale parvula	1
	Otariidae	
Cape fur seal	Arctocephalus pusillus pusillus	1
	PRIMATES	
	Galagidae	
Thick-tailed greater galago	Otolemur crassicaudatus	1
	Cercopithecidae	
Chacma baboon	Papio ursinus	1
Vervet monkey	Chlorocebus pygerythrus	1
Samango monkey	Cercopithecus mitis labiatus	1
TOTAL		50

