

ORNITHOLIDAYS TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA
The Cape, Flowers & Penguins

06 - 24 September 2011



Leader: Mariana Delport

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A Personal Diary

Day 1: Wednesday 7th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

The group met at Cape Town International Airport on a beautiful warm spring mid-morning. The weather forecast for the next few days mentioned rainy weather to come, so we departed for the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens straight away. Although it was quite hot we had a great walk in the gardens and soon we ticked off **Malachite Sunbird**, **Southern Double-collared Sunbird**, **Olive Thrush**, **Cape White-eye**, **Cape Canary** and **Cape Robin-Chat**, but no Cape Sugarbird and only Anne had a fleeting sighting of Orange-breasted Sunbird. The resident **Spotted Eagle-Owl** obviously attracted a lot of attention. The female owl was sitting on a nest so we stayed clear of her. The male was sitting on a nearby branch and we had excellent sightings of him. No wonder it was named the bird of the day!

After lunch at the garden's tea room restaurant and some further birding in the gardens we left for Noordhoek. Instead of checking in at Afton Grove, our comfortable guest house for the next three nights, I drove on to Kommetjie, a small coastal town with a small beach in the shape of a bowl, hence the Afrikaans name Kommetjie. We wasted no time in finding all four marine cormorant species (**Cape**, **Bank**, **White-breasted** and **Crowned**). We also had good sightings of **African Black Oystercatcher**, **Swift Tern**, and my first sighting this season of **Greater Striped Swallow**. After a successful day's birding we left for Afton Grove, and enjoyed a lovely meal at The Toad before settling in for the night.

Daily Total: 45

Birds of the day: Spotted Eagle-Owl and Swift Tern

Day 2: Thursday 8th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

The weather has changed overnight and a howling wind was blowing. When we went to breakfast a few drops of rain had also fallen. I realised that today was not a good day to go to Cape Point and we were very thankful that we have been to Kirstenbosch the day before. After a very good breakfast we left for Rooiels via the very scenic coastal road around False Bay. I hoped that the rain would take a while to get to Rooiels, which is usually the case. However, when we got to Rooiels a gale force wind was blowing there too, but no rain as yet. We walked down the track quite easily with the wind behind us. Our main target was to find the very elusive Cape Rockjumper but in this strong wind it was pure luck to see any bird. However, we recorded **Rock Martin** and a pair of **Red-winged Starlings**, and heard Ground Woodpecker and Victorin's Warbler but could not locate them in the gale. We walked further down the track, where I usually find the Cape Rockjumpers but could not find them. I realised that the rain was coming closer over the ocean so we turned back towards where the car was parked. Now we were walking into the wind – five steps forward and one back – and before we could reach the car the rain came, driven into our faces by the wind. Fortunately we didn't get too wet, but we welcomed the safety of the car. On the way out we were fortunate to see two **Cape Sugarbirds**, half-hidden in a *Protea* shrub.

We thought that we would settle for an indoor lunch at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens, but when we got there it was not raining so we decided to walk into the garden in search of Victorin's Warbler, which we heard calling but we could not locate this serious skulker of a bird. We did find a beautiful male **Orange-breasted Sunbird** instead as a consolation prize. After a lovely lunch we decided to drive on to the wheat lands in the hope of seeing Blue Cranes, Denham's Bustard and LBJ's, but this was not to be our lucky day. When I pressed the unlock button on the car nothing happened. Fortunately I could unlock the car with the key, but when I turned the key in the ignition there was no reaction. I had inadvertently left the car's lights on and, unlike my own car and most modern cars, this one did not warn me to switch off the lights. I called the AA for roadside assistance and sent the others back to the restaurant to have some coffee. After 45 minutes the AA has not arrived yet, but I saw the garden's small truck driving in and it crossed my mind that they might be able to help me. I ran to the ticket office and explained to the lady behind the counter that our car's battery was flat. Without a word she reached under the counter, handed a set of jump leads to me and called the workers. According to her this was something that happened very regularly, hence her keeping a set of jump leads under the counter. The garden workers brought their truck right up to our car and within

minutes the engine was running. Very relieved we drove on, heading for the farmlands.

Soon after turning off onto the Karweiderskraal road we saw the first **Blue Cranes**, as well as **Cape Canary**, **Malachite Sunbird**, **Cape Sparrow**, **Jackal Buzzard** and several **Fork-tailed Drongos**. Amazingly the wind was not nearly as strong as along the coast and the birds were quite willing to show themselves. After turning off onto the gravel road we saw more Blue Cranes. Other birds added to our day's list include **African Pipit**, **Red-capped Lark**, **Large-billed Lark**, **Common Waxbill** and **Capped Wheatear**. At one stage I saw a single Denham's Bustard flying up but unfortunately, at the same time, two Egyptian Geese also flew up and I was the only one to see the bustard. I could have cried! We turned around to try to find the bustard but it had disappeared. At that point Mike saw an animal and I saw an owl fluttering around in the same area. The animal was a Steenbok, which is a very neat small rufous-coloured antelope. The Steenbok ran away and the owl settled on a branch of a fallen, dead tree, across the ravine from us. I focussed my scope on the owl in the hope that it might be a Cape Eagle-Owl, but it proved to be a **Spotted Eagle-Owl**. We also saw hundreds of **Red Bishops** along the road, the males all in their stunning red and black breeding plumage. It was getting late and we had a long drive back to Afton Grove, where we only arrived at 18h30. We only had time to drop our gear in our rooms and get ourselves tidy before having a lovely traditional dinner of Smoorsnoek (stir-fried smoked fish with onions) as a starter and Bobotie with yellow rice and veggies as a main course, and Malva pudding to finish off a very good Cape-style meal. Despite the weather we went to bed knowing that we had a great day birding-wise.

Daily Total: 55.

Birds of the day: Blue Crane, African Fish Eagle, Capped Wheatear.

Day 3: Friday 9th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

The weather had not cleared yet, so I decided to go to the Strandfontein Waste Water Treatment Works first. It is such a large exposed area that it is best driving around the pond and birdwatching from the car, so we would not get soaked should it rain. This was a good decision as we had several showers but fortunately water birds do not mind the showers, and we had great sightings of **Cape Teal**, **Yellow-billed Duck**, **Red-billed Teal**, **Maccoa Duck**, **Southern Pochard** and **Cape Shoveler**, all on the first pond after we had entered the works. There were also lots of **Black-necked** and **Little Grebes** on the same pond. We continued driving around the ponds, but had no sightings of Purple Swamphen and African Marsh Harrier, which are normally seen regularly. A little further on, we had great sightings of **Greater Flamingo**, **Pied Avocet** and **Great White Pelican** – always a favourite. On one of the furthest ponds we found a pair of **White-backed Ducks** – not a common bird in the Western Cape. Another pleasant surprise was a ram and ewe Cape Grysbok on the outskirts of the works. These small antelopes are generally very shy and mostly forage at night. Therefore it was very special seeing them in broad daylight, and they were not shy at all, although we kept our distance. Although we could not see any young I was wondering whether the ewe had not perhaps given birth very recently and did not want to run away, thus deserting the baby antelope. We first saw the ram only. Then the ewe appeared from the dense shrubbery, soon to disappear and re-appear again. This sighting certainly made my day!

We drove back to Baden Powell Drive and on to the breeding colony of **African Penguin** at Boulders Beach. The African Penguin numbers have declined dramatically in recent years and their status has been changed to "endangered" as a result. Looking at the penguins at Boulders Beach one cannot help but wondering how long we will still be privileged to see them here, as there is an obvious decline in their numbers. Therefore it was quite endearing to watch a penguin feeding her two very eager youngsters by regurgitating food. It was fascinating to see the two youngsters bonding with their mother, one on her left and one on her right, each with a flipper over the mother's back. After a very good lunch at Boulders Restaurant we proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve. It was still heavily clouded but after we left Strandfontein we were fortunate in not having any further rain delays. It was however very windy in the reserve, causing the birds to take shelter rather than expose themselves to the gale. Finally we managed to see a male **Cape Sugarbird**, displaying his very long tail beautifully. We also saw a male **Orange-breasted Sunbird**. I heard a **Cape Grassbird** calling but only Anne got onto it. We then drove to Cape Point and took the funicular up to its landing about 30 metres below the old lighthouse. **Cape Siskin**, yet another special bird for the area, is known to be found in this area towards the view point, and it did not take too long before Mike and I found one. **Cape Bunting** was seen in the same area, and a **Peregrine Falcon** was seen perched on the 30 metre sampling tower of the Global Atmospheric Watch station.

We then drove down to the Cape of Good Hope, where the group were surprised to see **Ostriches** on the beach. This is a rather unusual place to see Ostriches, but in the Western Cape we have become used to seeing them in this habitat, even surfing on occasion! There were also a couple of endemic Bontebok in the same area. At the Cape of Good Hope, the south-westernmost tip of Africa, there was a big male Cape Fur Seal on the rocks, displacing the usual flock of Cape and White-breasted Cormorants, and a small herd of Eland grazing on the mountain slope. We then left for the Olifantsbos section of the park, where we found a single Cape Mountain Zebra grazing with a small herd of Bontebok. Both these species were saved from extinction when farmers in the Southern and Eastern Cape realised that they had to start breeding programmes to save these beautiful animals. These breeding programmes proved to be very successful, and both species are preserved in national parks, the Bontebok National Park in the Southern Cape and the Mountain Zebra National Park in the Eastern Cape. More herds of Bontebok as well as Eland were seen, as well as a single Grey Rhebok. Today was a day for mammals rather than birds! We arrived at Afton Grove just in time for a quick visit to our rooms before going to dinner. Needless to say, we were quite tired after a long day and very interesting sightings. After a delicious dinner, and compiling our day's bird list, we retired to our rooms to pack as we had to move to our next venue after breakfast tomorrow morning.

Daily Total: 75

Birds of the day: African Penguin, Spotted Thick-knee, White-backed Duck.

Day 4: Saturday 10th September 2011 ~ Glenfinnan

After another delicious breakfast we had to say good-bye to our wonderful hosts at Afton Grove, Chris and Louise Spengler. It was still heavily overcast and slightly windy and we drove via the very scenic Chapman's Peak Drive and stopped at the view point overlooking Hout Bay, where we enjoyed the beautiful views. We also watched **Red-winged Starlings** collecting mud to build their nests. Down in the bay was at least one Southern Right Whale to be seen. These whales migrate north from Antarctica every year in July and stay until November, when most of them migrate back to where they came from. They usually give birth in August and mate again three weeks later.

We then continued our journey via the scenic Atlantic Seaboard and skirted past the city centre to get onto the West Coast Road, going north. Some seven km out of the City I stopped at the first pond after crossing the Diep River bridge. We were hoping to find Purple Swamphen but there was no sign of it. The male **Red Bishops** had started turning into their bright red feathers, contrasting sharply with their black chests and bellies. We also saw two **Great Crested Grebes**, some **Little Grebes**, **Cape Shoveler** and **Cape Wagtail**. We drove on to the Dolphin Ponds, split in two by the road running directly alongside the shoreline. A variety of waterfowl can usually be seen here and fairly soon we found a **Purple Swamphen** which everybody enjoyed watching. These ponds usually support a number of African Spoonbill, but they were not present today. A number of **Red-knobbed Coots** were breeding and there were lots of **Hartlaub's Gulls**, one of the most abundant endemics in the region. On the way back to the car we first went down to the beach for a view (and photographs) of Table Mountain with Table Bay at its "feet". Then I drove further to Blouberg Beach for some more pictures of Table Mountain with waves splashing against the rocks in the foreground. There was also an **African Black Oystercatcher** and a **Crowned Cormorant** on the rocks.

Back on the R27 (West Coast road) we drove on for a good distance, until we got to the Yzerfontein / Darling crossing. It looked like it was raining at the Gypsum mine where we wanted to search for Chestnut-banded Plover, so I decided to go onto the Darling Hills road first. Very soon after turning onto this road I heard **Southern Black Korhaan** calling twice, and one flew over giving us only a fleeting sighting. Some **Blue Cranes** also came flying over, a **Bokmakierie** was showing well and so was a **Common Fiscal**. A short distance further, at the farm dam, we found **Blacksmith Lapwing** with one youngster, several **Crowned Lapwing**, also with young chicks and a **Capped Wheatear** posing beautifully on the wire fence. More Blue Cranes flew low over the road in front of us. There were lots of **Red-capped** and **Large-billed Larks** in the lucerne fields a bit further on. An **African Hoopoe** also flew over. We drove on for some distance and stopped at a dense stand of Typha reeds, divided in two by the road cutting through, where there were several weaver nests in the reeds. Two **Pearl-breasted Swallows** landed on the wire fence close to us before flying up and circling around our car to land on the fence again. It appeared as if they were trying to tell us that this was their territory. This was quite endearing to watch and the cameras clicked for photographs which were quite easy to get. I tried to find the two Secretary Birds that were reported in this

area, but they were nowhere to be seen. As we drove further we saw a **Jackal Buzzard** and an **African Marsh Harrier** as a consolation prize. Lunch was enjoyed at the Marmalade Cat restaurant in Darling, where they serve a buffet lunch during the flower season, which is delicious and helps in getting us onto the road again without unnecessary delays.

Our next stop was the Tienie Versveld Flower Reserve. A howling wind was blowing here, which must have blown all the nasty insects away. However, the wind made it rather difficult to pick up the faint call of Cloud Cisticola that breed here in spring. I tried to find one dropping down to its nest, but unfortunately they outsmarted me. The diversity of flowers attracted a lot of attention and lots of pictures were taken. Two **Red-billed Teal** were on the small dam amongst the flowers. We then drove on and across the West Coast Road to the Gypsum Mine about five km down the road. The salt pans support some shorebirds, the biggest of which being the small Chestnut-banded Plovers. The mine manager is very friendly towards birders wanting to see these little beauties and always allows us to go onto the pans. The mud flats can be very slippery, so one has to be very careful. Fortunately it didn't take us very long to find a **Chestnut-banded Plover**. Mike spotted a very good looking one, the best view that I've ever had. It was sitting, facing us, with the light just beautifully highlighting the thin chestnut band on the chest. We went back to the vehicle and dashed up the road to the farm stall for some coffee before they closed at 17h00. When we got there, they were already busy closing up. Disappointedly I said "Let's go", but the owner took me aside and said that they would make us coffee to take away. At the same time as we got there, a 60 seater bus stopped outside and the passengers were pouring into the farm stall as well. Fortunately we were there first, and we got our take-away coffee, which was very welcome after the cold wind in our faces.

We left for the town Langebaan and checked into Glenfinnan, our guest house for the next two nights. We received a very warm welcome from Kay and Jim, our hosts, who showed us to our rooms. We settled in, did the bird list and left for Froggies, a very homely restaurant where the owner cooks delicious meals. After a most enjoyable dinner we left for our warm beds and a well-deserved good night's sleep.

Daily Total: 75

Birds of the day: African Hoopoe, Chestnut-banded Plover

Day 5: Sunday 11th September 2011 ~ Glenfinnan

Before breakfast I had already heard a **Southern Black Korhaan** calling from the open field adjacent to the guest house. I called to the others and all of us peeped over the garden wall, getting glimpses of the bird but hoping to get better sightings in the park. After an early breakfast we left for the West Coast National Park, which is conveniently close to the guest house. The weather initially looked a bit doubtful, but eventually cleared sufficiently for the flowers to open up. We entered the park at the northern gate and drove slowly into the park, stopping from time to time to look for birds. Most of the flowers were still closed at this time of the day. A little distance into the park I stopped at a low-lying area at the foot of a hill to look at a Grey Rhebok a little distance away. Not only did we see the antelope, but also a good, although distant view of a male Southern Black Korhaan. While looking at the korhaan, a Cape Gysbok also walked into our view. Very happy with our first sightings we continued further into the park. We could only get glimpses of a **Chestnut-vented Tit-Babbler** before we got to the Geelbek hide. There were mainly **Kittlitz's Plovers** in the salt marshes before we got to the hide. It was full moon the previous day and the signs of flooding over the boardwalk at spring high tide was evident. During spring tide, combined with windy conditions, it is always difficult to get the timing of the tides for the optimal wader viewing right. According to my calculations the water should have been coming closer to the hide by the time we got there, but it was still too far out to allow for anything but distant scope-views of the waders. We managed to identify **Common Whimbrel**, more **Kittlitz's Plovers**, **White-fronted Plover**, **Bar-tailed Godwit** and some



Curlew Sandpipers, and that was all to be seen. Rather disappointed we drove to the visitor centre and restaurant for a cup of tea. We had a packed lunch and enough to drink for the day, so we set off for the flower section of the park. Not that there are only flowers to be seen! On the way we saw **White-throated** and **Yellow Canaries** and **Pied Starling**. At one stage I stopped for Mike to find something in the car's boot. At that point Anne and I had very good views of a **Wattled Starling**. We reached the Postberg section of the park, which belongs to a consortium of private people but is being managed on their behalf by the Parks Board. In return, the Park may open that section to the public only from 1 August to 30 September every year. These two months the previously cultivated land is covered in wild flowers, and together with the wildlife, are a huge attraction. We decided to drive to the Tsaaarsbank picnic site on the coast first. At the turn-off to Tsaaarsbank fields of spring flowers in all colours awaited us. We couldn't stop taking pictures, and so did all the other tourists who came to admire the floral abundance. At the picnic site there are huge boulders alongside a long sandy beach. The force of the breakers on the rocks always creates spectacular sprays as a backdrop, and today was no exception. I'm always amazed that the cormorants and African Black Oystercatchers manage to stay on the rocks and not get washed off. Today there was an ill-looking **White-breasted Cormorant** as well as a **Crowned Cormorant** and several **African Black Oystercatchers**. We had our picnic lunch right there, while watching the spectacular foam sprays over the boulders.

After lunch we drove into the Postberg section. On our right in a field of flowers, mostly orange, yellow and white, we saw a large herd of Eland and some **Ostriches**. A little further on there were some Blue Wildebeest and two Bat-eared Foxes trotted through the flowers. **Bokmakierie** was heard calling and we had lovely sightings of them. **Cape Sparrows** were abundant in one spot. A little further on there were some Springbok and Cape Mountain Zebra. We drove to the top of the boulder strewn hill and look-out point. On the way I noticed that the flowers had already gone past their best. From the top of the hill we had beautiful views down onto the azure Langebaan lagoon. **Cape Buntings** and **Familiar Chats** were seen on the boulders. Down towards Plankiesbaai the fields were once again covered in flowers, this time mostly pink *Senecio elegans*, white *Dimorphoteca pluvialis* with splashes of yellow *Senecio*. In the lower fields there were fewer animals, but saw Bontebok, another large herd of Eland and another pair of Bat-eared Foxes. Birds seen included **Black Harrier**, **Crowned Lapwing**, **Cape Francolin**, **Bar-throated Apalis**, **Large-billed Lark** and lots of **Yellow-billed Kites** in a feeding frenzy at a termite emergence. We drove back into the main section of the park and saw two more **Black Harriers**. We looked out for Grey-winged Francolin but could not find any. At the Abrahamskraal fresh water pond, the only one in the park, there were lots of **White-backed Mousebirds** and more **Yellow Canaries**. From the hide we saw several **Red-knobbed Coots** and **Little Grebes** with chicks. An **African Marsh Harrier** quartered the reed beds. As we walked back to the car I suddenly saw white flashes – another **Black Harrier** hunting for prey. On the way back to Langebaan I turned off towards the Zeeberg hide, still looking for Grey-winged Francolins, but we could not find any. Numerous **Southern Double-collared Sunbirds** were busily sipping nectar from the many Wild Sages. Birding at the hide was also disappointing, with only a number of **Greater Flamingo**, some **African Black Oystercatchers**, another **Common Whimbrel**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Little** and **Sandwich Terns** and a large flock of **White-fronted Plover** to be seen. By the time that we left the park it was already 18:00. After a delicious dinner at the Farmhouse Hotel we retired to our rooms.

Daily Total: 68

Birds of the day: Kitlitz's Plover, White-fronted Plover

Day 6: Monday 12th September 2011 ~ Lamberts Bay Hotel

After breakfast we packed the car, said fond goodbye's to our hosts, Jim and Kay, and left for the quarry outside Langebaan. This is a known breeding site for a pair of **Verreaux's Eagle**. As we approached the quarry I could already see the familiar dark figure perched on top of a tree. When we got closer I focussed my scope on the nest. The chick had not fledged yet, although it seemed to be fully feathered. It was turning its head from time to time, probably checking whether food was on the way. Only one adult was present, perched on top of the tree. The other parent was probably hunting to keep the ever hungry chick fed. Very happy to see this magnificent bird, we left and drove past the iron ore processing plant to another quarry site, this time a working quarry. Between clouds of dust when one of the lorries drove past with its load of stone, we searched for LBJ's in the low shrubby vegetation. I played the call of the **Cape Long-billed Lark**. It didn't take long before one came flying towards us and landed on a shrub, just too far away to take a good picture of it, but close enough that we could see its extremely long de-curved bill – a very unusual bill for a seed-eater. It was the right spot for larks, with displaying **Karoo** and **Cape Clapper Larks** as well as a **Large-billed Lark**. Very happy with this wonderful display of larks we left for Mauritz Bay to look for

terns. Unfortunately it was low tide and the terns were far off on the opposite side of the very rocky beach, so we had to walk to get reasonably close to the terns. The view in my scope confirmed **Antarctic Terns** being present amongst the **Common** and **Swift Terns**. Many of the Antarctic Terns had already changed into their breeding colours with their blood red bills and legs, entirely black caps and very grey plumage, separated by a narrow white cheek stripe.

We left for Velddrif where we had a very good lunch at the hotel's restaurant. After lunch we tried to birdwatch from the hide, but three young people were doing research on Yellow-billed Ducks and occupied the best spot in the hide. After looking at a number of **Bar-tailed Godwit** and **Little Egret** we decided to leave. I drove to Bokkom Street, an alley along the Berg River where mullet is dried on wire lines under shade nets. The dried fish (Bokkom) are then skinned and deboned and the dry strips of fish packed and sold to the public – a delicacy to many people (including myself as I grew up eating Bokkoms on toast with apricot jam!), but foreigners do not necessarily appreciate the rather smelly dried fish – it's an acquired taste, as they say. While driving along the river we saw **Pied Kingfisher** and the ever present **Great White Pelicans** looking for a free meal of mullet accidentally falling back into the water. These big birds are always very popular subjects to photograph.

We left Velddrif and drove north towards Eland's Bay. Road works necessitated driving a long detour along the service road of the iron ore train, but eventually we were back on track again. Just before Eland's Bay we tried to look for birds on the Verlorenvlei wetland, which was very difficult as one cannot pull off the road. As we had already seen all the birds that one can usually see from the railway service road north of Eland's Bay I decided to take the alternative route, which is longer in distance but a faster drive. This road eventually met the gravel road from the railway service road, so the last part of the journey to Lambert's Bay was a rather bumpy one. We checked into the hotel and settled into our comfortable rooms before we met to do the bird list for the day. Impressed with a good day's sightings we enjoyed a very good dinner in the hotel and settled in for a good night's sleep.

Daily Total: 87

Birds of the day: Pale Chanting Goshawk, African Darter

Day 7: Tuesday 13th September 2011 ~ Lamberts Bay Hotel

After breakfast we walked to the small offshore island that is connected to the mainland by an accessible breakwater. More than 15,000 **Cape Gannets** were congregated on the island, and what a sight it is to see all the gannets and hear them calling. Very strategically, hundreds of Cape Fur Seals were basking in the sun on the rocks just beyond the Cape Gannets, while probably thousands more seals were fishing and swimming in the ocean just beyond. A few years ago the seals took out a number of gannets and the rest of the colony fled. They were eventually lured back to the island by putting decoy gannets on nests on the island. This exercise was very successful, but the nature conservation authorities have to keep a constant watch to prevent this happening again. Some of the gannets had already laid eggs and the rest would follow soon (the peak breeding season starts in September). We left the island and walked back towards the mainland. A **White-fronted Plover** was hopping after insects on rocks on the sea side. Lots of **Cape Cormorants** and a few **Crowned Cormorants** were breeding on posts with artificial breeding platforms, while others were still carrying nesting material to the platforms. In recent years the cormorants have breed on the fishing boats that were lying, unused, in the harbour. The fishing industry had collapsed and the boats were not going out to sea any longer. **Swift Terns** were the only terns present as the migrant terns had not arrived yet.

Leaving Lambert's Bay, we then drove towards Clanwilliam and turned into the farm of Mr Arend de Waal, a very friendly farmer who welcomes nature loving visitors to his farm. He farms wheat and sheep. The wheat is planted on broad strips of ploughed land interspersed with equally broad strips of natural vegetation. These strips of natural vegetation host a wealth of birds, small antelopes, flowers and other wild life. I drove down the farm's access road, and soon heard the call of a **Southern Black Korhaan**. I soon determined that the Korhaan was about 50 metres from us in one of the strips of natural vegetation. The shrubs were just taller than the Korhaan, making it invisible to us. I walked slowly towards where I heard the call coming from, with the others following a few steps behind me. I was about a metre from the bird when it flew up with a loud cackle, flying low their heads – a magnificent sighting! We drove on very slowly, stopping occasionally to watch displaying **Cape Clapper and Karoo Larks, Large-billed Larks, Ant-eating Chat, Karoo Chat, Chestnut-vented Tit-Babbler** and four more Southern Black Korhaans. The flowers in these

strips of natural vegetation were also beautiful. On the way to Clanwilliam I pointed out the plantations of our indigenous Rooibos Tea, an indigenous shrub of the Pea family that is very habitat specific and does not grow in cultivation anywhere else. By the time that we reached Clanwilliam it was lunchtime. I stopped at Emile's where we had a very good lunch. Quite appropriately they also served a Rooibos milkshake which was delicious! The group said that they missed having tea breaks during the day. I always take a tea basket on tours, but as we had to fly back to Cape Town from Upington I did not bring a tea basket as I cannot take it on a flight. I decided that I would make a plan with getting the tea goodies back to Cape Town, so we set off to the supermarket and bought a flask and everything else that we needed for our daily tea break, including a packet of typical South African rusks.

Then we left for the Protea Seed-eater site on the Paleisheuvel road. As we approached the turn-off onto the N7 highway I saw an **African Fish Eagle** in a tree top just below the wall of the Clanwilliam Dam. I pulled off and we walked a bit closer to have good views of this iconic bird of Africa. Then we drove the short distance to the rocky gateway to farms further inland. The *Fynbos* vegetation is host to, amongst others, the Protea Seed-eater, a bird endemic to *Fynbos*. We walked up and down the dusty road jumping out of the way every time a vehicle was heard approaching us. There was not the slightest call of the seed-eater however, not even a response to my playing its call! After spending some time searching for this bird we decided to call it a day and left for Lambert's Bay. The bird list for the day was impressive, and after a good dinner we retired to our rooms.

Daily Total: 82.

Birds of the day: Cape Gannet, African Fish Eagle, Southern Black Korhaan.

Day 8: Wednesday 14th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

We left Lambert's Bay after breakfast and drove in the direction of Clanwilliam. After some distance Mike called out excitedly that he had seen a Hamerkop on the roof of a farm house. I made a U-turn and stopped at the farm house, which was situated close to the road. Upon closer inspection it appeared to be a pair of **African Hoopoe**. A very good sighting, and the shape was right, but too small for a Hamerkop! While watching them, Anne saw our first **European Bee-eaters**. These birds must have just arrived after their long flight from the northern hemisphere. A little distance further on we stopped at rocky outcrop next to the road, where we looked for Rock Hyrax. The entire rocky outcrop was littered with prostrate Aloe plants (*Aloe perfoliata*). We drove to on Clanwilliam where we stopped at a farm stall to buy rusks and dried fruit to nibble on while driving the long distances ahead. Before heading north, I drove into the beautiful Cederberg mountains with its magnificent rock formations in russets and blacks.

On the way up Anne saw a raptor soaring over the mountain. I immediately saw that it was a **Verreaux's Eagle** and we wondered where the mate was. A while later the mate joined the first eagle in riding the thermals. We also had our first **Booted Eagle** (a pale form which is more common in the Western Cape). There was also a single **Greater Striped Swallow** – another early arrival. At the summit of the mountain pass (the Pakhuis Pass) we stopped to enjoy the views and the fresh mountain air. A **Familiar Chat** kept us company and a **Southern Double-collared Sunbird** was seen flitting about amongst some *Fynbos* flowers – the last *Fynbos* on our tour as we were moving into the Succulent Karoo Biome now. On the way down we stopped to look at some *Protea* flowers and found a **Cape Sugarbird** on one of the flowers. With the change in habitat we would be leaving the Cape Sugarbirds behind, too. Lunch was had at Vanrhynsdorp. After lunch we drove further north, and I first took a brief turn-off where sign-posted Douche-The-Glim. This unusual name refers to the fields of shining white quartz stones camouflaging the tiny succulent plants amongst them. These small succulents, also called Stone Plants, become dormant in these semi-desert conditions and only become visible during May / June every year when flowering after good rains had fallen. Back on the main road I took the turn-off onto the Soutfontein road. Very soon we saw several **Namaqua Doves**, a pair of **Grey Tits** and a very obliging **Rufous-eared Warbler**. We returned to the N7 and drove further north, observing several **Cape Crows**. We stopped at Bitterfontein for coffee and a comfort stop, and then headed straight for Kamieskroon as it was getting late. It was clear that the main flower season was over as there were only two other couples with us in the hotel. The food was lovely and a warm and comfortable bed very welcome after a long day on the road.

Daily Total: 59.

Birds of the day: Verreaux's Eagle, Booted Eagle, Rufous-eared Warbler, Namaqua Dove.

Day 9: Thursday 15th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

After breakfast we left for the Namaqua National Park. We drove slowly, looking for birds. Unlike the flat, semi-desert habitat that we had driven through yesterday, the area around Kamieskroon is mountainous with massive granite boulders and green shrubs and small trees in-between. After a short distance's driving we saw a **Karoo Chat** on a shrub. A **Malachite Sunbird** was searching for nectar and also hawking insects. I stopped at a spot where I usually see Meerkat (Suricate), but unfortunately they were not here today. Instead, there were Rock Hyraxes (Dassies) on the rocks. It is hard to believe that this small furry animal, about the size of a fully-grown house cat, is the elephant's closest living relative! A little further on we saw some larks in an open field. **Karoo Lark** was singing and doing his hovering display flight. A little distance away a **Cape Clapper Lark** was doing his display flight, initially with lots of wing-clapping, ending in a long descending whistle when he drops down onto a shrub. Next was a pair of **Verreaux's Eagles**, soaring slowly along the rocky ridge. We sat watching them until they landed on the rocks, some distance from us. We had very good sightings of them, and eventually drove on with them still sitting there. This was followed by a **Booted Eagle**. A little further on I stopped at a dam where there are usually good sightings. Today there was not much going on. I was about to drive on when my eye caught something that I couldn't make out whether it was a bird or part of the broken off tree trunk. I moved forward slowly and saw that it was indeed a raptor. My initial thought was that it was the Booted Eagle that we saw earlier, but something just didn't match. After much discussion and repositioning to have better views I realised that it was a juvenile **African Harrier-Hawk**. This was confirmed when it flew a short distance into another tree and hung onto a branch in typical Harrier-Hawk fashion. Only then could we see the bare facial skin.

When we finally entered the park all aspirations of finding birds vanished. We jumped out of the car and started photographing fields of flowers. We drove along the circular route and stopped on the rocky hill, with lovely views over the park and the beautiful mountains in the distance. After having a welcome cup of tea and rusks at the picnic tables we started investigating all the nooks and crevices, photographing flowers, insects and an interesting lizard. A small number of Red Hartebeest came running past us, as if something had scared them from where they had been grazing. A little further along the route we found a single Springbok amongst the orange flowers. We completed the circular drive and stopped at the small coffee shop for a light lunch. Then we left the park and drove back slowly towards Kamieskroon, with a detour to where the town was originally founded. The ruins of the original church are still visible. We found **Karoo** and **Sickle-winged Chats** as well as a **Lark-like Bunting** and a beautiful male **Southern-Double-collared Sunbird**. The sunbird was in full breeding colours, displaying his bright yellow shoulder patches beautifully. Lots of **Malachite Sunbirds** were also present. After another good meal we retired to our rooms, very satisfied with another successful day out in the veld.

Daily Total: 46.

Birds of the day: African Harrier-Hawk, Verreaux's Eagle, Malachite Sunbird.

Day 10: Friday 16th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

My favourite route in this part of Namaqualand is the dirt road over the Kamiesberg (mountain) and down the Studer Pass to Garies. Not many people know about this route, or they shy away from driving the mountain road when it's wet. I organised a packed lunch from the hotel, and after breakfast we set off with more than enough food and drink for the day. Just out of town we searched the stand of *Acacia karoo* (Sweet Thorn) trees for possible Pririt Batis but could not find any. A pair of **Bokmakeries** and their two youngsters entertained us for a while. When we drove on I noticed a farmer letting a flock of sheep from his farm onto the road. It is always fascinating to watch the sheepdogs herding the sheep. We followed them for a while, stopping frequently to check for birds. I realised that the farmer was moving his sheep all the way to the escarpment and that could take a very long time, so I moved closer and asked whether we could pass them. The granite boulders, interspersed with shrubs and succulents, are always beautiful and birding is usually interesting. However, every time we stopped to search for birds I could hear the flock of sheep getting closer, and we had to move on again. At one stage a flock of **Damara Canaries** came flying past and disappeared amongst the rocks and shrubs, only showing fleeting sightings of themselves. We would have loved having better views of them. We reached the plateau and drove in a southerly direction. Soon I realised that the birds were going to come second to the flowers today. We stopped at a deserted farmhouse where we watched lots of Rock Hyraxes feeding or just basking in the sun. Mike saw a Rock Hyrax disappearing through a broken window of the farm house, soon to be followed by a **Mountain Wheatear**, which was

rather strange! There were also several **Cape Crows** in the area.

Further along the road we came across another flock of **Damara Canaries**, with much better views than earlier. We also saw a beautiful **Jackal Buzzard**, but otherwise very few birds on the mountain. At one stage Mike shouted “Stop! bustard / korhaan”, which I did very promptly. Only the head was showing initially as it was standing in tall dense vegetation. I drove forward very slowly until we had better views of the bird – a **Ludwig’s Bustard** and a great sighting indeed. We stopped frequently, jumping out of the car to get the best shots of fields of colourful flowers. Birding was rather poor, with only one more new bird, a **Namaqua Sandgrouse** added to our list. At the bottom of the Studer Pass we got to a pond where there had been some **Yellow-billed Ducks** and **Red-knobbed Coot**, and at another pond we saw **South African Shelduck**, more **Red-knobbed Coots** and the most beautiful sighting of a **Three-banded Plover**. We finally got to the junction with the N7 highway and drove the 40-odd kilometres back to Kamieskroon and our hotel. After a delicious dinner Mike and Ann went to see a slideshow of pictures of Namaqualand flowers. Another exciting day had come to an end.

Daily Total: 47.

Birds of the day: Damara Canary, Ludwig’s Bustard, Namaqua Sandgrouse.

Day 11: Saturday 17th September 2011 ~ Okiep Country House

After breakfast we packed the car and said goodbye to Helmut and Maryna Kohrs, our friendly hosts at the Kamieskroon Hotel. We were heading for the Kamiesberg again, this time to go north once we reached the summit. Just out of town we stopped at the stand of *Acacia karoo* again. I was trying to get Mike and Ann to see the **Karoo Thrush** that kept on disappearing amongst the weeds under the trees. Unfortunately they only had fleeting views of the thrush. We drove up the mountain pass, stopping in places to search for birds. A mixed flock of **Black-headed** and **Damara Canaries** flew in and settled amongst the low shrubs, feeding busily. It was great seeing both canaries together. We also saw a **Pied Barbet** which is always a nice bird to see. We reached the top of the pass and turned off at the first road signposted Springbok. After some distance I stopped at a farm house to enquire about the conditions of the road ahead. The farmer and his wife, Gert and Annemarie, were both outside and invited us into their beautiful house for coffee or tea. While Annemarie boiled the water we could use the bathroom, which was far more convenient than hiding behind a bush. We had a good time drinking coffee and tea with rusks and truly South African hospitality. They gave some advice on the condition of the road ahead before we set off to continue our journey.

The vegetation gradually changed from *Fynbos*, with typical *Fynbos* birds like **Cape Robin-Chat**, **Malachite Sunbird** and **Southern Double-collared Sunbird**, to arid semi-desert conditions with rocky outcrops and birds such as **Mountain Wheatear**, **Lark-like Bunting**, lots more **Black-headed** and **Damara Canaries**, **Ant-eating**, **Sickle-winged**, **Tractrac** and **Familiar Chats**, **Capped Wheatear**, a new one for the trip- **Yellow Canary**, a dark form **Booted Eagle**, **Rock Kestrel** and two sightings of **Pale Chanting Goshawk**. Some distance beyond Gamoep we stopped for coffee and noticed that millions of small black grasshoppers (locusts) were marching across the road – very bad news for the farmers grazing their sheep and goats, and the vegetation in a semi-desert habitat in general. What amazed me was that there was not a single bird feeding on these grasshoppers. We reached Springbok and drove to O’Kiep, a small mining town about 5km north of Springbok, where we checked into the O’Kiep Country Lodge. We compiled our bird list – a mere 47 species but not bad for the very arid area that we had driven through. After a delicious buffet dinner we retired to our rooms. From somewhere nearby came the thumping sounds of a disco, which we just hoped would not keep us awake for the whole night, and fortunately didn’t.

Daily Total: 47

Birds of the day: Black-headed Canary, Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark, Booted Eagle (dark form).

Day 12: Sunday 18th September 2011 ~ Okiep Country House

All meals at the O’Kiep Country House are served in a buffet style, with the result that one eats far too much! After a very good breakfast we left for the Goegap Nature Reserve. Unlike the information on the brochure and other literature had indicated (an opening time of 08h00 and 09h00 respectively) the reserve had already opened at 07h30! We drove past the airfield and entered the gate. From a distance we could see a herd of Oryx against the slope on the right. There were several Springbok amongst them. Then I heard the plaintive call of the **Karoo Eremomela** and after a little searching I found one not very far away. Everybody

had very good views of this lovely small bird, which was also joined by several other **Karoo Eremomelas** as well as two **Rufous-eared Warblers**. **Capped Wheatears** were especially abundant throughout the day. Good sightings were also had of **Grey Tit** and lots of **Mountain Wheatears**. After checking in at the visitor centre we walked towards the rocky “koppie” behind the visitor centre in the hope of finding Cinnamon-breasted Warbler and Ground Woodpecker, but to no avail. At the entrance to the garden adjacent to the visitor centre a huge Southern Rock Agama was positioned in the sun. The cameras clicked non-stop. Later in the day we found another Rock Agama, blending in with the rock so well that you could hardly recognize it. We walked to the Quiver Tree rock garden where found two young **Common Fiscals** in a Quiver Tree (*Aloe dichotoma*) being fed by their parents. There were also **Cape Glossy Starling**, **Cape Weaver** and **Malachite Sunbird**. We then drove the tourist route in the park, stopping frequently to admire and photograph the last remains of some beautiful flowers that were still in bloom. The scenery was breathtaking with all the rocky hills.

I mentioned that one can expect to see Whistling Rats in the park, and before long Mike shouted “Stop”. He had seen a small animal disappearing in a hole. I reversed to the spot and we did not have to wait a long time before a Brant’s Whistling Rat appeared. We had great views of this very cute animal and the cameras clicked all the time. Later in the day we also saw Springbok and Hartman’s Mountain Zebra. At an elevated flat rocky area I stopped and got out to see if I could find any more lizards. Instead, I found and photographed a butterfly (*Phasis clavum* – Namaqua Arrowhead). A new one for me! We enjoyed photographing the beautiful scenery – rocky outcrops with brightly coloured flowers, interspersed with sandy valleys. On the way we also had beautiful views of **Jackal Buzzard**. Everybody agreed that the visit to Goegap was one of the highlights of the tour.

We left the Goegap Nature Reserve and drove out for a short distance on the road to Pofadder in the hope of finding more raptors. Only a **Rock Kestrel** was seen perched on a telephone post. Before dinner we compiled our bird list for the day. Although we have not seen particularly many birds, and only one new bird species, we had a great time enjoying the scenery, birds, mammals, reptiles, flowers and a single butterfly.

Daily Total: 37.

Birds of the day: Karoo Eremomela, Capped Wheatear, Jackal Buzzard.

Day 13: Monday 19th September 2011 ~ Augrabies

We got up early to pack and leave for the Augrabies National Park just after breakfast. I noticed that it appeared to be still dark outside, so I pulled the curtains away and saw that it was overcast. The buffet breakfast was excellent, and after breakfast I started carrying our luggage to the car. At this stage it started drizzling lightly, although it was not particularly cold. The drizzling continued for the first 50km of our route and then it started clearing. It was actually wonderful to see this dry, arid land getting wet with rain. The vegetation looked good in some areas and heavily overgrazed in other areas. We waited in anticipation to see the first **Greater Kestrel** on the telephone posts. About 60 km from Springbok we started seeing them, some sitting on nests on the posts, others just sitting on bare posts. There were considerably fewer **Greater Kestrels** on the posts than usual and one wonders whether this has anything to do with climate change. At the turnoff to the Gamsberg Mine (and our destination to look for Red Lark) I came to an abrupt halt. There was a relatively small Sociable Weaver’s nest on the top of telephone post, and low and behold, a female **Pygmy Falcon** was sitting, half hidden behind the nest. This small falcon, about the size of a Common Fiscal, just stockier, is so unlike any other raptor that I know of. They typically use one chamber of the Sociable Weaver’s nest as a breeding or roosting site. In return, they protect the little Sociable Weavers from being harassed by small snakes. We had barely started driving further down the dirt road when I came to an abrupt halt again. This time a **Northern Black Korhaan** flew up from where it was half-hidden amongst some scrub. It flew over our car, making a huge noise. After seeing the Southern Black Korhaan a few times, it was a very exciting seeing its northern cousin. We drove further and turned off onto the road that leads to the Koa dunes, a series of parallel red sand dunes crossing the dirt road. We were hoping to find Red Lark in the dunes. It took us some time to first find a **Fawn-coloured Lark** and some beautiful **Spike-heeled Larks**. Just as we were about to give up, we found a **Red Lark**. Unfortunately it flew off very quickly and there was no chance of photographing it but we all had good views of this lovely lark.

We returned to the tar road and found a **Karoo Long-billed Lark** on the way too. Our next turn-off was at Pofadder. We drove the few kilometres of dirt road to a drinking trough where we hoped to find Sclater’s

Lark. Unfortunately today was not our lucky day for Sclater's Lark, but a new sighting for the tour was a **Black-throated Canary**. Lots of **Yellow Canaries** and **Lark-like Buntings** also came to drink water at the trough. Further on the way to Augrabies we found a **Chat Flycatcher** on a telephone line. Mike was very excited about this one as he has not seen this flycatcher before. We also saw several more Sociable Weaver nests with very busy little **Sociable Weavers** flying in and out, chatting all the time. It's always very fascinating watching their activities. Other sightings include **Southern Grey-headed Sparrow** and **Scaly-feathered Finch**. We finally reached the Augrabies National Park and checked into our very comfortable cottages. As usual, we completed our check lists of birds and other species seen before we went for a very good dinner at the restaurant. Altogether, we had a very good day with several new birds.

Daily Total: 47.

Birds of the day: Pygmy Falcon, Greater Kestrel.

Day 14: Tuesday 20th September 2011 ~ Augrabies

We met in front of my chalet at 07h00 for a pre-breakfast birding walk. Before we could even start walking I heard a parrot-like call. It did not take me very long to locate a **Rosy-faced Lovebird** in a nearby tree. It flew up and over our heads, and fortunately landed in another nearby tree. We had very good views of the lovebird before it flew off and out of sight. A very exciting start of our birding day! We walked into the caravan park where birding is always very good. The caravan park borders on a small, mostly dry and densely vegetated riverbed. There are lots of large trees, providing shade to the campers and an excellent habitat for a variety of birds. A bird party consisting of **Red-eyed Bulbuls**, **Southern Masked Weavers**, **Pale-winged Starlings** and **Laughing Doves** were feeding on the lawns. A pair of **Pied Barbets** were calling from a tree and a family of Rock Hyraxes were enjoying the early morning sunshine. Several **Orange River White-eyes** were gleaning aphids from the trees. We walked on and I suddenly could hear the knocking sound of a woodpecker. We could not locate it in the canopy of a tree until it flew off. A little further we found two Ground Squirrels sitting on a heap of sand with their tails spread out on the sand. They also enjoyed the early morning sunshine warming up the crisp air. A **Common Scimitarbill** showed up, a new sighting for the trip. We walked to the waterfall and found that the two viewing platforms closest to the waterfall had been closed down as they had been so badly damaged during the severe floods about six months before. Unfortunately we could not get closer to the waterfall, but we had a good view from slightly further downstream. There were several Augrabies Flat Lizards on the rocks. The males are very colourful while the females are very dull. I decided to look for **Black-chested Prinia** which is usually in the vicinity, and it wasn't long before we found one with only a bit of a black smudge line on the chest. A while later we found one with its yellow belly and black chest band.

At 10h00 we went to the restaurant for a late breakfast after which we got into the car and drove out into the park. The water was running over the low-water bridge but I could manage to get across without any problems. Where the trees and reeds opened up beyond the river we saw two **Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters** hawking insects and landing on a branch of a tree. A little distance further I heard **Karoo Long-billed Lark** calling, which we soon located. We drove to the Ararat view point in the hope of finding Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, but had no luck with this difficult to find bird. In fact, birding was very poor and we did not even see any water birds down in the canyon. We drove further to the Oranjekom view point where we had beautiful views into the canyon. Not long after we arrived there, a pair of **Verreaux's Eagles** came soaring over and made spectacular acrobatic dives into the canyon. They kept us in awe for a long time. After the eagles had disappeared beyond the rocky hills we drove on and down a small mountain pass over the Swartrante (black rocky ridges and outcrops) to Echo Corner. The scenery is just spectacular in this area and we took lots of pictures. I picked up a nest of a second pair of Verreaux's Eagles on the rocky cliffs on the opposite side of the river. The first pair of eagles came soaring over while we could still see the other pair at their nest. We tried again for the Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, but once again with no luck. We decided to return to the camp and saw a pair of Klipspringer (small antelope) on the rocky ridges. It was very interesting to see that each Klipspringer was attended by a **Pale-winged Starling**, apparently picking ticks from their ears and other parts of their faces – something that I have never seen before. On our way I also noted how many skeletons of dead Quiver Trees (*Aloe dichotoma*) were standing there. Several years ago scientists had found that the dying Quiver Trees was actually the first sign of climate change in South Africa. On our way we had several more bird sightings, amongst others a **Sabota Lark** which was a new bird for our list. We got back at the camp and had a very good dinner at 19h00. Afterwards we did our bird list, with several new bird species ticking our list over to more than 200 species. Very satisfied after a great day, we retired to bed for a

well-deserved night's sleep.

Daily Total: 60.

Birds of the day: Orange River White-eye, Verreaux's Eagle, Common Scimitar-bill.

Day 15: Wednesday 21st September 2011 ~ Augrabies

After breakfast we drove the long veld drive extension into the park, beyond where we turned back to the camp yesterday. At the first reed beds shortly after we have left the camp site I heard the elusive **Namaqua Warbler** calling and it didn't take us very long to see it. Everybody had very good sightings, although the bird was very actively moving about. We also first heard, and then saw **African Marsh Warbler**. We drove further, and were very surprised not to see any bee-eaters in their usual spot. The larks did not disappoint us though, with good sightings of **Sabota, Karoo** and **Karoo Long-billed Larks**, the latter calling with their familiar long, descending whistles all the time. We drove past all the turn-off roads to the viewpoints that we had been to yesterday and continued to the point where it was sign-posted "4X4 vehicles only". As our car was not suitable we turned back on the same track, not too disappointed though, as there were very few birds and other wild life on the remote road. The only animals seen were a small herd of Eland. The most exciting birds were firstly a pair of **Double-banded Sandgrouse**, sitting very quietly close to the road. We all had wonderful opportunities to photograph them. A **Crested Barbet** flew past and showed up again, with good views to all. A **Shaft-tailed Whydah** also made a brief appearance – another new bird for the trip. There were also lots of **Lark-like Buntings, Namaqua, Cape Turtle** and **Laughing Doves** and more than one sighting of **Common Waxbill**. We turned down to the Echo Corner view point and found a beautiful pair of **Pirit Batis** flitting about in a small tree. I tried once again to call out the Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, but to no avail. I heard Long-billed Crombec calling but could not locate it. A **Verreaux's Eagle** came soaring over the canyon. We had a brief sighting of a Klipspringer again. A **Pale Chanting Goshawk** was watching us from the highest tip of a rocky outcrop. It looked so small, we initially thought it was a dove. We drove on to the next look-out point, Oranjekom, and as we approached the viewing platform I saw the silhouette of another **Verreaux's Eagle** on a rock, high up. The picnic site has a magnificent view over the canyon, and we sat down for our packed picnic lunch, consisting of very good chicken mayonnaise sandwiches, tomatoes, a snack bar for each and fruit juice. While eating we watched the aerial display flights of the pair of **Verreaux's Eagles**, briefly joined by an **African Fish Eagle**.

We drove back towards the camp and, lo and behold, we found a pair of **Namaqua Sandgrouse**. Although we were very close to them they did not move, giving us wonderful opportunities to photograph them. Then Mike saw the tiny chick, so well camouflaged that it was no wonder we haven't seen it earlier. Now we understood why the parents didn't fly off when we got so close to them. Back at the camp we saw both **Pied** and **Crested Barbets** together in the same tree just behind the cottage. Unfortunately both flew off just as Mike aimed at them with his camera. At about 17h00 we joined up again and walked to the waterfall for some pictures. At 19h00 we went to dinner. Then it was time to pack before we went to sleep.

Daily Total: 52.

Birds of the day: Double-banded Sandgrouse, Namaqua Sandgrouse plus chick, Crested Barbet.

Day 16: Thursday 22nd September 2011 ~ Three Gables

After coffee and rusks we packed the car and then started walking in the camp site to look for some elusive birds. Mike was also trying to find a Crested Barbet, which he could not photograph when we saw it previously. Many of the usual **Red-eyed Bulbuls, Cape Sparrows, Southern Masked Weavers** and **Pale-winged Starlings** were present, and unlike previous mornings there were also lots of **Southern Grey-headed Sparrows** present. Then I heard the call of the **Crested Barbet** as well as the tapping of a woodpecker at the same time. Mike said that he'd preferred to get the Crested Barbet first, and after playing its call briefly it flew in and landed right in front of us. Any birder's dream! Mike got absolutely beautiful pictures. Then we started searching for the woodpecker, which had chosen to be in the biggest tree with the most leaves, branches and twigs. We walked around the tree, searching everywhere we could see, but with no luck, despite the fact that he was tapping all the time. We did not know which woodpecker, so I decided to play the Golden-tailed Woodpecker's call. Within seconds a **Golden-tailed Woodpecker** flew out of the tree and landed in another tree close by. We found it easily but struggled a bit to identify it as it was amongst a lot of twigs. Finally we managed to see the characteristic red malar stripe and we could see the spotted back and heavily streaked front. Mike's pictures confirmed that it was the **Golden-tailed Woodpecker**. As

on the previous mornings, **African Hoopoe** were once again very accommodating and everybody got pictures of these striking birds. The large family of Rock Hyrax's and Vervet Monkeys were also present. After checking out and having a late breakfast we left for a short veld drive in the hope of finding the Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters again. Just before we got to the turn-off to the game area I heard the **Brubru**'s call. As Anne has not seen it yet I stopped promptly and as I got out of the car saw it immediately. Everybody had excellent views of this smart bird that was calling all the time that we were looking at it. Our drive into the game area yielded only one **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**, which was not very accommodating.

We then drove to the Moon Rock and Mike and I decided to walk to the top. What magnificent views of a seemingly moon landscape! Then it was time to leave for Upington. I stopped at the farm stall shortly after entering Keimoes, where Mike bought Rooibos tea to take home and I bought koeksisters to have with our coffee. Just outside Keimoes we stopped at a roadside shaded table, where we had coffee, koeksisters and rusks before continuing our journey. Shortly before we got to Upington I turned off to Kanoneiland where we hoped to find South African Cliff-Swallows. There were none of these present, but we saw **African Black Duck, Egyptian Goose, Three-banded Plover** and **African Pied Wagtail** – two new birds for the trip! In Upington we crossed the bridge to Die Eiland resort where we found that a festival of some kind was in full swing and many cars were also going down this street, either because it was time to go home or people going to the festival. While crossing the bridge we only saw a few **Little Swifts** flying to and fro. I parked the car in the shade of a Eucalyptus tree and we walked back to the bridge. There were a few **South African Cliff-Swallows** coming and going under the bridge. This small group grew rapidly to a good 200 birds, seemingly carrying food to young birds in their nests. We stood mesmerized looking at all the swallows tirelessly carrying food – a really magnificent sight.

It was time to check in at the Three Gables Guest House where we received a warm welcome from Lana, our host for the tour's last night in South Africa. We did the bird list, to which we could add five more species. After an excellent meal of salad, delicious steaks, done to perfection, vegetables and a lemon curd desert, we retired to our rooms to sort out our packing strategies as everybody feared that he or she will have to pay in as we were all "over-weight".

Daily Total: 59.

Birds of the day: Crested Barbet, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, South African Cliff-Swallows.

Day 17: Friday 23rd September 2011 ~ Departure

As our flight to Cape Town departed at 11h30 so we had breakfast at 07h30, packed the vehicle and left for Upington Airport. Our first stop was on the outskirts of town to see a **White-browed Sparrow-Weaver**, a new one for the trip. We took the road to the airport but continued beyond the turn-off in the hope of finding some more new birds such as Secretary Bird or korhaans or bustards. We did not get quite what we hoped for, but Mike spotted a head showing above the tall and fairly dense grass. It was a **Northern Black Korhaan** that disappeared shortly. While looking at the korhaan we saw a small bird with a pink bill on the fence wire – a **Pink-billed Lark**! Our last new bird for the trip. Further sightings on this road included lots of **Red-billed Queleas, Scaly-feathered Finch, Sociable Weaver** and **Pygmy Falcon**. It was also interesting to see lots of decommissioned aircrafts standing parked in the veld. They are systematically being broken down, hopefully to have the parts recycled or re-used. The warm, dry air of this part of the world is ideal to prevent rust and preserve electronic parts. My fellow passenger on the flight (a farmer of the area) told me that the Upington Airport is earning a handsome amount for keeping these aeroplanes.

After a slightly bumpy flight in a strong headwind we landed at the Cape Town International Airport. As we approached the airport I could see the traditional "table cloth" on Table Mountain and my hopes of going up the mountain by cable car shrunk. Unbelievably, when we walked out of the terminal building the clouds had vanished and a quick phone call confirmed that the cable car was running. A 25 km drive took us to the lower cable station and despite long queues at the ticket office we were on our way up soon. An icy wind met us at the mountain top and my hopes of adding Neddicky to our list vanished in the wind. We went straight for the restaurant to have coffee and cake for old time sake. Then we walked a circular trail on the mountain top, admiring the views on Camps Bay, the mountain chain towards Hout Bay, Kommetjie, Cape Point, Simon's Town, Muizenberg, False Bay, Stellenbosch, Paarl, the Cape Flats in-between and Blouberg Beach from where we took pictures of Table Mountain nearly two weeks ago. The City Bowl was lying at our feet as we descended the mountain. The drive back to the airport was slow in heavy afternoon traffic, but

we arrived safely in time for the departure flight. Fond good-byes were said, with promises of coming back for the Birds and Wine tour one day. A great trip with lots of memories ended far too soon!

Daily Total: 38

Birds of the day: White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Pygmy Falcon.

Trip Total: 217.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all for being such pleasant company and for your assistance in finding birds and mammals. I hope to see you all back again on another Ornitholidays trip to a different part of beautiful South Africa.

Photo Credits: Mariana Delport.

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July 2012

Itinerary & Weather

Day 1: Wednesday 7th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

Route: Cape Town International Airport to Kirstenbosch and Kommetjie and on to Afton Grove, Noordhoek.

Distance: 64.5 km.

Weather: A perfect warm, windless, sunny Spring day in Cape Town.

Temperature range: 12 - 27°C.

Day 2: Thursday 8th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

Route: Noordhoek to Rooi Els and on to Betty's Bay and Kleinmond and back to Noordhoek.

Distance: 265.6 km.

Weather: Gale force North Westerly wind with intermittent rain.

Temperature range: 10 - 20°C.

Day 3: Friday 9th September 2011 ~ Afton Grove

Route: Noordhoek to Strandfontein, Boulder's Beach and Cape Point.

Distance: 162.4 km.

Weather: Overcast with occasional showers and sunny periods.

Temperature range: 14 - 16°C.

Day 4: Saturday 10th September 2011 ~ Glenfinnan

Route: Noordhoek to Langebaan via Blobergstrand.

Distance: 205 km.

Weather: Cloudy and windy all day with occasional sunshine.

Temperature range: 12 - 15°C.

Day 5: Sunday 11th September 2011 ~ Glenfinnan

Route: drives in West Coast National Park.

Distance: 113.7 km.

Weather: Initially clear skies, becoming partly cloudy later, with a cold wind.

Temperature range: 12 - 14°C.

Day 6: Monday 12th September 2011 ~ Lamberts Bay Hotel

Route: Langebaan to Lambert's Bay via Veldrift.

Distance: 193.2 km.

Weather: Cloudy with occasional sunshine. Cool breeze.

Temperature range: 12 - 14°C.

Day 7: Tuesday 13th September 2011 ~ Lamberts Bay Hotel

Route: Lambert's Bay to Clanwilliam and back.

Distance: 150.3 km.

Weather: Overcast with cold breeze. Clearing and sunny late afternoon.

Temperature range: 13 - 14°C.

Day 8: Wednesday 14th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

Route: Lambert's Bay to Kamieskroon via Vanrhynsdorp.

Distance: 384.3 km.

Weather: Sunny and warm initially. From north of Vanrhynsdorp a cold wind was blowing.

Temperature range: 14 - 21°C.

Day 9: Thursday 15th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

Route: Kamieskroon to Namaqua National Park and back.

Distance: 68 km.

Weather: Cold initially, warming up, but the chilly breeze became stronger later in the day.

Temperature range: 8 - 21°C.

Day 10: Friday 16th September 2011 ~ Kamieskroon

Route: district roads in the Kamieskroon region.

Distance: 128.4 km.

Weather: Crisp wind, becoming stronger. Eventually warm with only mild to no wind.

Temperature range: 10 - 27°C.

Day 11: Saturday 17th September 2011 ~ Okiep Country House

Route: Kamieskroon to Okiep near Springbok.

Distance: 166.6 km.

Weather: Warm to hot and sunny with light wind.

Temperature range: 12 - 30°C.

Day 12: Sunday 18th September 2011 ~ Okiep Country House

Route: Full day in Goegap Nature Reserve.

Distance: 81.9 km.

Weather: Sunny with a cold wind.

Temperature range: 9 - 22°C.

Day 13: Monday 19th September 2011 ~ Augrabies

Route: Springbok to Augrabies National Park via via to Red Lark and Sclaters Lark spots.

Distance: 370 km.

Weather: Cold and drizzly initially, clearing later.

Temperature range: 6 - 22°C.

Day 14: Tuesday 20th September 2011 ~ Augrabies

Route: Drives in the National Park.

Distance: 37.5 km.

Weather: Crisp in the morning, sunny and warm later in the day.

Temperature range: 6 - 27°C.

Day 15: Wednesday 21st September 2011 ~ Augrabies

Route: Drives in the National Park.

Distance: 48.9 km.

Weather: Cold initially, becoming warm to hot, with light wind.

Temperature range: 8 - 28°C.

Day 16: Thursday 22nd September 2011 ~ Three Gables

Route: Augrabies to Upington.

Distance: 157.7 km.

Weather: Warm to hot and sunny.

Temperature range: 8 - 30°C.

Day 17: Friday 23rd September 2011 ~ Departure

Route: Upington to Cape Town flight, and a drive to Table Mountain in Cape Town.

Distance: 75 km (by road!).

Weather: Warm in Upington; partly cloudy but clearing in Cape Town, with a cold wind on Table Mountain.

Temperature range: 8 - 22°C.

Temperature Range: 6 - 30°C.

CHECKLIST OF BIRDS SEEN DURING THE TOUR

Bold = Endemic to South Africa

SPECIES	No of days recorded	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Common Ostrich	8	<i>Struthio camelus</i>
African Penguin	1	<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>
Great Crested Grebe	3	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Black-necked Grebe	1	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Little Grebe	6	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Great White Pelican	4	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
Cape Gannet	2	<i>Morus capensis</i>
White-breasted Cormorant	7	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>
Cape Cormorant	5	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>
Bank Cormorant	2	<i>Phalacrocorax neglectus</i>
Reed Cormorant	5	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>
Crowned Cormorant	3	<i>Phalacrocorax coronatus</i>
African Darter	4	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>
Grey Heron	7	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Black-headed Heron	5	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Goliath Heron	1	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
Purple Heron	1	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Little Egret	5	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Cattle Egret	9	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Hamerkop	2	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>
White Stork	1	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
African Sacred Ibis	10	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Glossy Ibis	4	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Hadedda Ibis	14	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
African Spoonbill	2	<i>Platalea alba</i>
Greater Flamingo	3	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
Lesser Flamingo	2	<i>Phoenicopterus minor</i>
White-backed Duck	1	<i>Thalassornis leuconotus</i>
Egyptian Goose	11	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>
South African Shelduck	4	<i>Tadorna cana</i>
Yellow-billed Duck	7	<i>Anas undulata</i>
African Black Duck	1	<i>Anas sparsa</i>
Mallard	2	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Cape Teal	4	<i>Anas capensis</i>
Red-billed Teal	4	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Cape Shoveler	5	<i>Anas smithii</i>
Southern Pochard	1	<i>Netta erythrophthalma</i>
Spur-winged Goose	8	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>
Maccoa Duck	1	<i>Oxyura maccoa</i>
Yellow-billed Kite	8	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>
Black-winged (-shouldered) Kite	4	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
Verreaux's Eagle	5	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>
Booted Eagle	4	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>
African Fish Eagle	4	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>
Steppe Buzzard	2	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Jackal Buzzard	8	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>
Black Sparrowhawk	3	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>
Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk	4	<i>Melierax canorus</i>
African Marsh-Harrier	2	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
Black Harrier	2	<i>Circus maurus</i>
African Harrier-Hawk	3	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>
Peregrine Falcon	1	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Lanner Falcon	1	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
Rock Kestrel	14	<i>Falco rupicolis</i>
Greater Kestrel	1	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>
Pygmy Falcon	2	<i>Polihierax semitorquatus</i>

Cape Francolin	8	<i>Pternistes capensis</i>
Helmeted Guineafowl	8	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Blue Crane	2	<i>Anthropoides paradiseus</i>
African Purple Swamphen	1	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>
Common Moorhen	6	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot	7	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Ludwig's Bustard	1	<i>Neotis ludwigii</i>
Southern Black Korhaan	4	<i>Eupodotis afra</i>
Northern Black Korhaan	2	<i>Eupodotis afraoides</i>
African Black Oystercatcher	6	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>
White-fronted Plover	3	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>
Chestnut-banded Plover	1	<i>Charadrius pallidus</i>
Kittlitz's Plover	1	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>
Three-banded Plover	7	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
Grey Plover	1	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Crowned Lapwing	2	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
Blacksmith Lapwing	11	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	1	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Common Greenshank	2	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	1	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	2	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
Common Whimbrel	1	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Pied Avocet	3	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Black-winged Stilt	6	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Spotted Thick-knee	1	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>
Cape Gull	8	<i>Larus vetula</i>
Hartlaub's Gull	8	<i>Larus hartlaubii</i>
Caspian Tern	1	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Swift Tern	5	<i>Sterna bergii</i>
Sandwich Tern	1	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
Common Tern	1	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Little Tern	1	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
Antarctic Tern	1	<i>Sterna vittata</i>
Namaqua Sandgrouse	3	<i>Pterocles namaqua</i>
Double-banded Sandgrouse	1	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>
Rock Dove	7	<i>Columba livia</i>
Speckled Pigeon	15	<i>Columba guinea</i>
Red-eyed Dove	5	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
Cape Turtle-Dove	14	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	10	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>
Namaqua Dove	10	<i>Oena capensis</i>
Rosy-faced Lovebird	1	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>
Spotted Eagle-Owl	2	<i>Bubo africanus</i>
African Black Swift	1	<i>Apus barbatus</i>
White-rumped Swift	6	<i>Apus caffer</i>
Little Swift	11	<i>Apus affinis</i>
Alpine Swift	7	<i>Apus melba</i>
Speckled Mousebird	1	<i>Colius striatus</i>
White-backed Mousebird	11	<i>Colius colius</i>
Pied Kingfisher	2	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Malachite Kingfisher	1	<i>Alcedo cristata</i>
European Bee-eater	1	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	2	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>
African Hoopoe	7	<i>Upupa africana</i>
Common Scimitarbill	1	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>
Acacia Pied Barbet	7	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>
Crested Barbet	2	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	1	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>
Cape Clapper Lark	3	<i>Mirafra apiata</i>
Fawn-coloured Lark	1	<i>Mirafra africanoides</i>
Sabota Lark	2	<i>Mirafra sabota</i>
Cape Long-billed Lark	1	<i>Certhilauda curvirostris</i>
Karoo Long-billed Lark	4	<i>Certhilauda subcoronata</i>

Karoo Lark	5	<i>Certhilauda albescens</i>
Red Lark	1	<i>Certhilauda burra</i>
Spike-heeled Lark	1	<i>Chersomanes albofasciata</i>
Red-capped Lark	5	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>
Pink-billed Lark	1	<i>Spizocorys conirostris</i>
Large-billed Lark	10	<i>Galerida magnirostris</i>
Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark	2	<i>Eremopterix verticalis</i>
White-throated Swallow	10	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>
Pearl-breasted Swallow	1	<i>Hirundo dimidiata</i>
Greater Striped Swallow	3	<i>Hirundo cucullata</i>
South African Cliff-Swallow	1	<i>Hirundo spilodera</i>
Rock Martin	13	<i>Hirundo fuligula</i>
Brown-throated Martin	6	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Banded Martin	1	<i>Riparia cincta</i>
Fork-tailed Drongo	1	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
Cape Crow	3	<i>Corvus capensis</i>
Pied Crow	14	<i>Corvus albus</i>
White-necked Raven	3	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>
Grey Tit	3	<i>Parus afer</i>
Cape Bulbul	11	<i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>
African Red-eyed Bulbul	5	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>
Sombre Greenbul	2	<i>Andropadus importunus</i>
Olive Thrush	1	<i>Turdus olivaceus</i>
Karoo Thrush	4	<i>Turdus smithi</i>
Mountain Wheatear	8	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>
Capped Wheatear	6	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>
Familiar Chat	10	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>
Tractrac Chat	1	<i>Cercomela tractrac</i>
Sickle-winged Chat	2	<i>Cercomela sinuata</i>
Karoo Chat	5	<i>Cercomela schlegelii</i>
Ant-eating Chat	6	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>
African Stonechat	6	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>
Cape Robin-Chat	12	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>
Karoo Scrub-Robin	11	<i>Erythropygia coryphaeus</i>
Chestnut-vented Tit-Babbler	2	<i>Parisoma subcaeruleum</i>
African Reed-Warbler	3	<i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i>
Lesser Swamp-Warbler	4	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>
Little Rush-Warbler	1	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>
Bar-throated Apalis	2	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>
Long-billed Crombec	2	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>
Karoo Eremomela	1	<i>Eremomela gregalis</i>
Cape Grassbird	2	<i>Sphenoecacus afer</i>
Zitting Cisticola	1	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Grey-backed Cisticola	7	<i>Cisticola subruficapillus</i>
Levaillant's Cisticola	5	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>
Black-chested Prinia	4	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>
Karoo Prinia	15	<i>Prinia maculosa</i>
Namaqua Warbler	2	<i>Phragmacia substriata</i>
Rufous-eared Warbler	5	<i>Malcorus pectoralis</i>
African Dusky Flycatcher	2	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>
Chat Flycatcher	4	<i>Melaenornis infuscatus</i>
Fiscal Flycatcher	3	<i>Sigelus silens</i>
Cape Batis	1	<i>Batis capensis</i>
Pirit Batis	3	<i>Batis pririt</i>
African Pied Wagtail	1	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
Cape Wagtail	15	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>
African Pipit	3	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>
Long-billed Pipit	1	<i>Anthus similis</i>
Common Fiscal	13	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
Brubru	2	<i>Nilaus afer</i>
Bokmakierie	11	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>
Common Starling	6	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Pied Starling	5	<i>Spreo bicolor</i>

Wattled Starling	1	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>
Cape Glossy Starling	5	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>
Red-winged Starling	5	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>
Pale-winged Starling	7	<i>Onychognathus nabouroup</i>
Cape Sugarbird	3	<i>Promerops cafer</i>
Malachite Sunbird	9	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>
Orange-breasted Sunbird	3	<i>Nectarinia violacea</i>
Southern Double-collared Sunbird	9	<i>Nectarinia chalybea</i>
Dusky Sunbird	4	<i>Nectarinia fusca</i>
Cape White-eye	6	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>
Orange River White-eye	4	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	1	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>
Sociable Weaver	5	<i>Philetairus socius</i>
House Sparrow	13	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Cape Sparrow	16	<i>Passer melanurus</i>
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	3	<i>Passer diffusus</i>
Scaly-feathered Finch	3	<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>
Cape Weaver	10	<i>Ploceus capensis</i>
Southern Masked-Weaver	10	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>
Red-billed Quelea	2	<i>Quelea quelea</i>
Southern Red Bishop	7	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
Yellow Bishop	9	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>
Common Waxbill	5	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
Pin-tailed Whydah	2	<i>Vidua macroura</i>
Shaft-tailed Whydah	3	<i>Vidua regia</i>
Black-throated Canary	1	<i>Serinus atrogularis</i>
Cape Canary	4	<i>Serinus canicollis</i>
Cape Siskin	1	<i>Pseudochloroptila totta</i>
Black-headed Canary	1	<i>Serinus alario</i>
Damara Canary	2	<i>Alario leucolaemus</i>
Brimstone Canary	1	<i>Serinus sulphuratus</i>
Yellow Canary	9	<i>Serinus flaviventris</i>
White-throated Canary	9	<i>Serinus albogularis</i>
Cape Bunting	11	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>
Lark-like Bunting	7	<i>Emberiza impetuani</i>



Ludwig's Bustard

MAMMALS

Baboon, Chacma	5	<i>Papio ursinus</i>
Bontebok	2	<i>Damaliscus dorcas dorcas</i>
Bushrat Karoo	1	<i>Otomys unisukatus</i>
Dassie, Rock (Hyrax)	11	<i>Procavia capensis</i>
Eland	4	<i>Taurotragus oryx</i>
Fox, Bat-eared	1	<i>Otocyon megalotis</i>
Gemsbok (Oryx)	2	<i>Oryx gazella</i>
Grysbok, Cape	2	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>
Hare, Scrub	1	<i>Lepus saxatilis</i>
Hartebeest, Red	3	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>
Klipspringer	2	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>
Mongoose, Large Grey	1	<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>
Mongoose, Small Grey	3	<i>Galerella purverulenta</i>
Mongoose, Yellow	5	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>
Monkey, Vervet	2	<i>Cercopithecus aethiops</i>
Mouse, Striped	1	<i>Rhabdomys pumilio</i>
Rat, Brant's Whistling	1	<i>Parotomys brantsii</i>
Rhebok, Grey	2	<i>Palea capreolus</i>
Seal, Cape Fur	2	<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>
Springbok	9	<i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>
Squirrel, Ground	3	<i>Xerus inauris</i>
Steenbok	5	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>
Suricate (Meerkat)	3	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>
Whale, Southern Right	2	<i>Balaena glacialis</i>
Wildebeest, Blue	1	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>
Zebra, Cape Mountain	1	<i>Equus zebra zebra</i>
Zebra, Hartmann's Mountain	2	<i>Equus zebra hartmannae</i>
Blesbok	1	

This list represents those birds and other animals seen by party members of this tour.

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Cape Grysbok



African Penguins



Three-banded Plover



Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark



Ostrich chick



Large-billed Lark



Spotted Thick-knee



Rufous-eared Warbler



Pearl-breasted Swallow