



## **DRAKENSBERG AND ZULULAND MAMMAL AND BIRD EXTRAVAGANZA**

**10 - 18 APRIL 2020**



**Leopard** is one of our targets on this trip.

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the richest places for mammals and birds in South Africa. On this tour we first sample the impressive Drakensberg, which has lots of bird endemics and a lot of other attractions, before spending most of our time in mega-diverse Zululand, a true African wildlife paradise.

This tour can be combined with our **Kalahari Mammal Extravaganza, with optional 6-day Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park pre-trip 2020** (March 28 or April 2 – April 9 2020). You can join either tour independently, but we strongly recommend doing both. Doing both tours means you will sample two African habitats that are absolutely poles apart

*Please note that the detailed itinerary below cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.*

### **Itinerary (9 days/8 nights)**

#### **Day 1. Giants Castle Game Reserve**

We leave Durban after breakfast and drive to Giants Castle Game Reserve (about 3.5 hours) on the slopes of the impressive Drakensberg Escarpment, or “Barrier of Spears”, as the locals have named these imposing mountains. The vulture hide here can attract **Bearded Vulture** in winter, along with the more (locally) abundant **Cape Vulture** and **Jackal Buzzard**. The park is famous for San rock art. We’ll look for small mammals, and with luck we might also see some larger animals such as **Common Eland**. The Drakensberg is a World Heritage Site.

#### **Day 2. Giants Castle Game Reserve**

We spend a full day exploring Giants Castle Game Reserve, largely on foot.

#### **Day 3. Transfer to St Lucia**

We embark on a long but interesting drive through rolling hills to one of Africa’s most diverse areas for mammals and birds, Zululand. It takes at least half a day to do this drive. We eventually reach St Lucia village, where we’ll spend two nights. **Thick-tailed Greater Galagos** cry from the trees within the town at night, and the town is an absolute paradise for birds, with **Livingstone’s Turaco**, **Brown Scrub Robin**, **Lemon Dove**, **Rudd’s Apalis**, and a host of others quite possible within St Lucia itself.

#### **Day 4. St Lucia**

We leave early for the massive Lake St Lucia, part of the huge iSimangaliso Wetland Park, which is a mega-diverse region with lots of large animals such as **Leopard**, both **Black** and **White Rhinoceros**, and **Hippopotamus**, along with a host of smaller mammals and a huge diversity of birds, which can include such spectacular and uncommon species as **Southern Banded Snake Eagle** and **Green Twinspot**. We eventually reach Cape Vidal, which has whale lookout towers, from where we sometimes also see albatrosses. The forests here are inhabited by two monkey species, **Samango Monkey** and **Vervet Monkey**.

**Day 5. Mkhuze Game Reserve**

We drive to the nearby Mkhuze Game Reserve for two nights. This is one of Africa's most bird-rich parks, with over 400 species, even though the size of the reserve is tiny. But the greatest attraction for us is the mammal species that are common here but tough in most parks such as Kruger. These include **Nyala**, both **rhinoceros** species (but **Black Rhinoceros** is more often seen in Hluhluwe), the diminutive **Suni** antelope, **Leopard** (always needs luck, though), and loads more. Bird-wise we'll be in for an amazing treat and should find extremely localized species such as **Pink-throated Twinspot**, **Neergaard's Sunbird**, and a plethora of others. The spectacular **Pel's Fishing Owl** is occasionally seen.

**Day 6. Mkhuze Game Reserve**

We have a full day exploring amazing Mkhuze.

**Day 7. Hluhluwe Game Reserve**

We drive to the nearby Hluhluwe Game Reserve for two nights. This is a Big Five reserve with a host of smaller mammals and spectacular birdlife as well.

**Day 8. Hluhluwe Game Reserve**

We have a full day in one of South Africa's premier game parks, Hluhluwe.

**Day 9. Departure**

After some final game-viewing we'll drive back to Durban's King Shaka International Airport (about 4 hours) to catch our homebound flights.

<b>Duration:</b>	9 days
<b>Group size:</b>	4 – 8 (rarely 9)
<b>Date:</b> April	10 – 18 April 2020
<b>Start:</b>	Durban
<b>End:</b>	Durban
<b>Price:</b>	R53,904 per person sharing
<b>Single supplement:</b>	R6,451

**Price includes:**

Meals  
Accommodation  
Entrance fees  
Activities mentioned in the itinerary  
Guiding fees  
All transport while on tour

**Price excludes:**

Local and international flights  
Personal insurance  
Drinks  
Tips

Laundry

Personal expenses such as gifts