

Birding Ecotours



NAMIBIA, BOTSWANA AND VICTORIA FALLS SET DEPARTURE TRIP REPORT

02-19 NOVEMBER 2024

By Dominic Rollinson



Watching African Skimmers skim-feeding was a sure trip highlight.

Overview

This southern African birding and wildlife safari covers the breadth of Namibia, taking in a large variety of habitats from the Namib Desert near Walvis Bay, in Namibia, to the subtropics of Victoria Falls, in Zimbabwe and Zambia. This diversity of habitats means we normally end up with an impressive bird list and this particular trip was no different and we happily recorded 396 bird species. Of course, it was not only about the quantity of species seen but also the quality, with many Namibian near-endemics and regional specials found. This is always an enjoyable and feel-good tour, with generally excellent infrastructure geared towards eco-tourism and high-quality accommodation (with tasty and varied meals) and easy access to areas with high diversities and abundances of birds and other wildlife.

Some of the standout bird species on this southern African birding tour included **Pel's Fishing Owl**, **Schalow's Turaco**, **White-backed Night Heron**, **Lesser Jacana**, **Southern Carmine Bee-eater** (at their breeding colony), **Pennant-winged Nightjar**, **Racket-tailed Roller**, **Southern Ground Hornbill**, **Martial Eagle**, **Red-necked Falcon** and **Kori Bustard**. While some of the near-endemics and regional specials included **Slaty Egret**, **Rüppell's Korhaan**, **Burchell's Sandgrouse**, **Damara Red-billed** and **Monteiro's Hornbills**, **Rüppell's Parrot**, **Souza's Shrike**, **Dune, Stark's** and **Pink-billed Larks**, **Pale-throated Greenbul**, **White-tailed Shrike**, **Herero Chat**, **Rufous-eared Warbler**, **Sharp-tailed Starling** and many others.



This Cheetah in Caprivi Game Park was a pleasant surprise.

As always, this tour included many fantastic sightings of large and charismatic megafauna including **Lion**, **Cheetah**, **African Elephant**, **Black Rhinoceros**, **Common Hippopotamus**, **Spotted Hyena**, **Cape** and **Bat-eared Foxes**, **Angolan Slender (Black) Mongoose**, **Giraffe**, and

(Hartmann's) **Mountain Zebra**. We recorded an impressive 49 species of mammals on this tour! A memorable predation event involving a **Bushveld Sengi** and **Horned Adder** was also certainly one of the highlights of the trip for many!

Detailed Report

Day 1, 2nd November 2024. Arrival and Walvis Bay birding

As some of the group had arrived the previous day in Namibia, we decided to make an early start and birded the Walvis Bay coast and salt works which, as always, proved highly productive with some lovely sightings of the masses of shorebirds which winter in the area. Some of the highlights included the likes of **Common Ringed, Chestnut-banded and White-fronted Plovers, Sanderling, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Bar-tailed Godwit** and the scarce **Marsh Sandpiper**. Terns were in high abundance too and we added **Common, Sandwich, Greater Crested, Black** and a single **Arctic Tern**. First prize, however, went to good looks at a single **Damara Tern** which is always high on the agenda at Walvis Bay. A single **Osprey** was a surprise, and we of course acquainted ourselves with the huge numbers of **Greater and Lesser Flamingos** and a few massive **Great White Pelicans**.



Lesser Flamingoes provided us with fantastic views in Walvis Bay (photo Nico Heyning).

After lunch I collected the last few tour participants, and we again enjoyed some more coastal birding in the late afternoon where we saw most of the common shorebirds listed above and further improved our looks at **Damara Tern** with a few close flybys. We finished the day

enjoying our dinner while overlooking the bay with both **Lesser** and **Greater Flamingos** adding more color to the scene.

Day 2, 3rd November 2024. Walvis Bay boat cruise and birding

This morning we headed out before sunrise to nearby Rooibank, to some low red sand dunes along the edge of the dry Kuiseb River to look for Dune Lark. Unfortunately, on our way to the parking spot I managed to get us properly stuck in some very soft sand. About 90 minutes later, with many rocks, bricks and logs laid onto the sand track and with deflated tyres, we managed to get the van out and just about made it back to our accommodation in time for breakfast. We decided the procedure was a carefully planned team bonding activity! The Dune Lark would have to wait until later.



A European Storm Petrel showing its clear white underwing flash (photo Nico Heyning).

After a rushed breakfast back at our lodge, we headed out for our Walvis Bay boat cruise which is always an enjoyable way to spend the morning. While out on the water we had looks at **Sooty Shearwater**, **White-chinned Petrel** and an unexpected **European Storm Petrel**. We couldn't have asked for better looks at the many massive **Great White Pelicans** and also enjoyed **Afro-Australian Fur Seals** cheekily hopping up onto our boat for a fish snack. We were excited to find a friendly group of **Common Bottle-nosed Dolphins** which kept us entertained with some impressive jumps clear out of the water while a group of around seven **Humpback Whales** also showed incredibly well. Masses of terns were seen (mostly **Common Terns**) with good numbers of **Black**, **Sandwich**, **Caspian** and **Greater Crested Terns** seen too. We finished the boat cruise with a tasty second breakfast spread, including oysters and champagne (for some).

Once back on dry land we picked up some lunch and made our way north through the picturesque town of Swakopmund which has some impressive German architecture. We stopped in the white sand plains north of town to look for Gray's Lark, but despite a concerted effort the birds would not show at their normally reliable stakeout. We then made a quick detour on our way back to Walvis Bay to see the impressive *Welwitschia mirabilis* plant – a gymnosperm which is restricted to the Namib Desert of Namibia and Angola. We found examples of both male and female plants in the area and even managed to find a few Welwitschia Bugs which are suspected to play a role in the plant's pollination. Amazingly, these plants are thought to often live to over 1,000 years old, sometimes as old as 2,000 years! In the area we also managed to find the pale Namib Desert form of **Tractrac Chat**.

After reuniting Ruth and Todd with their luggage at Walvis Bay airport, we headed back to Rooibank to have a proper attempt at finding **Dune Lark**. This species was, until recently, considered a Namibian endemic, however, with the lumping of Barlow's Lark (which occurs across the border into South Africa), it means Namibia has lost its only bird endemic species. After ensuring we avoided the sand track, we set out into the low red sand dunes. The larks took a little longer than usual, however, we eventually enjoyed good looks of a singing bird in the lovely late-afternoon light. We then returned to Walvis Bay after an eventful and fun first full day of the tour.



*We eventually managed good views of **Dune Lark** near Walvis Bay (photo Nico Heyning).*

Day 3, 4th November 2024. Walvis Bay to Erongo Mountains, Spitzkoppe birding en route

Today was an even earlier start as we wanted to get out into the Namib Desert before it heated up too much. After passing through Swakopmund we decided to have another go at Gray's Lark which unfortunately again proved unsuccessful. Saying goodbye to the Atlantic Ocean, our

destination was Spitzkoppe (meaning ‘sharp head’ in German) which is a group of granite inselbergs that rise out of the Namib Desert, reaching a height of 2,200 feet (670 meters) above the desert floor. Interestingly, the still photos used as backgrounds for the ‘Dawn of Man’ sequence in *2001: A Space Odyssey* were from the Spitzkoppe Mountains! As we made our way through the Namib Desert, we were happy to find a small group of the near-endemic **Rüppell’s Korhaan**.



Rüppell’s Korhaan was seen well in the Namib Desert (photo Nico Heyning).

We weren’t only visiting Spitzkoppe to enjoy the dramatic beauty of the area though and immediately upon our arrival we saw our target, **Herero Chat** (another Namibian near endemic). This species can often require a large amount of time and effort and so we were relieved to find it before we had even hopped out the van. While we were enjoying the chat a **Bushveld Sengi** (elephant shrew) shot out of some nearby bushes and when we found it again a few meters away it seemed to be on its way to dying and passed away in front of our eyes, which left us all perplexed as to what had caused its demise!

Our short stint at Spitzkoppe proved to be very productive with other additions to the list including **Mountain Chat**, **White-browed Sparrow-Weaver**, **Grey Go-away-bird**, **Gabar Goshawk**, **Black-chested Prinia**, **Chestnut-vented Warbler**, **Dusky Sunbird** and **White-throated Canary**. As we got back to the van, Kay decided to have another look at the sengi and was excited to find that it was busy being devoured by a **Horned Adder** which we watched for the next ten minutes! We put two and two together and realized that the elephant shrew must have been bitten just before we saw it, with the adder tracking it down while we were away birding. Certainly, an early trip highlight!

We then took the long and bumpy road to the Erongo Mountains, arriving in the early afternoon for a late lunch and some time off during the sweltering heat. Once it had cooled down, we took a walk around the picturesque granite outcrops in the area where we unsuccessfully looked for Hartlaub's Spurfowl and Rockrunner. We did, however, find **Southern Grey-headed Sparrow**, **Long-billed Crombec**, **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**, **Large Rock Martin** and many **Pale-winged Starlings**.



The **Horned Adder** slowly swallowing the **Bushveld Sengi** at Spitzkoppe.

Later that evening we enjoyed our checklist session while being distracted by calling **Freckled Nightjars**, some even perching on the roof of the restaurant.

Day 4, 5th November 2024. Erongo Mountains birding

We took advantage of the cooler temperatures in the early morning and met at sunrise and again continued our search for the spurfowl and Rockrunner in the granite koppies around our lodge. Yet again our efforts proved unsuccessful, however, we did find many other exciting species such as **African Hawk-Eagle**, **African Grey Hornbill**, **Crimson-breasted Shrike**, **Marico Sunbird** and **Grey-backed Camaroptera**. A young albino **Rock Hyrax** was an interesting observation, and we all wondered how long this highly visible creature would survive! Other new mammals included **Chacma Baboon** and a distant (Hartmann's) **Mountain Zebra**.

After a late and impressive breakfast spread, we headed out for a short drive through the Erongo Conservancy. As it was already late morning, the mercury had already begun to rise, however, we did manage to find **Monteiro's Hornbill**, **Swallow-tailed Bee-eater**, **White-tailed Shrike**, **Pirit Batis**, **Marico Flycatcher**, **Kalahari Scrub Robin** and **Short-toed Rock Thrush**. While

on our drive we also encountered some large animals including **South African Ground Squirrel, Springbok, Damara Dik-dik, Steenbok, Gemsbok, Greater Kudu** and **Giraffe**.



*This juvenile **African Hawk-Eagle** provided good looks in the Erongo Mountains.*

We then enjoyed a leisurely lunch and some downtime during the extreme midday heat. In the early afternoon we took a drive out to a nearby dry riverbed where we were after **Rüppell's Parrots** which are frequently found feeding in the trees here. As hoped for, the parrots were again around today and we eventually enjoyed looks at yet another Namibia near endemic. Other interesting birds seen in the dry riverbed included **African Hoopoe, Damara Red-billed Hornbill, White-tailed Shrike, Black-backed Puffback, Black-chested Prinia, Chestnut-vented Warbler, Cape Starling, Groundscraper Thrush** and **Kalahari Scrub Robin**.

That evening, during dinner, we watched good numbers of **Double-banded Sandgrouse** coming in to drink at the waterhole once darkness had fallen, with several vocal **Freckled Nightjars** around too. After dinner, we decided to head out for a quick night drive through the Erongo Conservancy which proved rather productive, with highlights including **African Savanna Hare, Southern African Springhare** and several **Damara Dik-diks**.

Day 5, 6th November 2024. Erongo Mountains to Etosha National Park

We again birded around the lodge for the morning where we again concentrated on Hartlaub's Spurfowl and **Rockrunner**. We eventually had to give up with the spurfowls after not hearing a peep from them, however, right at the last minute we managed to find a **Rockrunner** calling close to the lodge. Other bird species that kept us entertained during our walk included **Grey Go-away-bird, African Hawk-Eagle, White-tailed Shrike, Pirit Batis, Yellow-bellied**

Eremomela, Short-toed Rock Thrush and Dusky Sunbird. After another scrumptious breakfast we loaded up the van and started making our way northwards to Etosha National Park.

The drive was a longish one and didn't prove too eventful, however, we enjoyed our first sightings of **Purple Roller** (just north of Omaruru) as well as **White-rumped Swift** and **Greater Striped Swallow**.

We arrived in Etosha in the early afternoon and checked into our accommodation at Okaukuejo Camp (a former German fort built in 1901 – the watch tower is part of the remnants of the fort) and enjoyed some time off during the heat of the early afternoon. Later in the afternoon (when it should have cooled down a bit but had not) we enjoyed a drive east of camp along the edge of the massive and dry Etosha Pan. Highlights along this drive included many open plains birds such as **Common Ostrich, Double-banded Sandgrouse, Kori Bustard, Red-crested and Northern Black Korhaans, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Cape Crow, Stark's Lark, Chat Flycatcher** and **Great Sparrow**. While waiting at Gemsbokvlakte waterhole we were entertained by **Giraffe** and **Black Rhinoceros** which came down to drink as well as a couple **Black-backed Jackals** – a lovely way to finish the afternoon.



Kori Bustards are always plentiful in Etosha National Park.

Later that evening after dinner, we enjoyed some time at the waterhole (a definite highlight of camps in Etosha) where we found bathing **Black Rhinoceroses** as well as a few **Rufous-cheeked Nightjars** which were feeding on insects attracted by the floodlights. This particular waterhole must surely be the best publicly accessible spot to view **Black Rhinoceros** in all of Africa. Not only is it a reliable spot to see the rhinos but you can watch the animals, sometimes for hours on end, as they go about socializing, and even vocalizing!

Day 6, 7th November 2024. Central Etosha; birds and large game

This morning we enjoyed a private open-top game drive from Okaukuejo. We again made our way east of camp and enjoyed further great sightings. Avian highlights of the morning included **African Grey Hornbill, European Bee-eater, Greater Kestrel, Red-necked Falcon, Rufous-naped, Stark's and Red-capped Larks, Rufous-eared Warbler and Scaly Weaver**. While some of our mammalian highlights included **African Savanna Elephant, Black-backed Jackal, Banded Mongoose, Plains Zebra, Impala and Common Eland**.

We got back into Okaukuejo in the late morning and decided to head out for a walk around the rest camp, which proved productive. It was good to stretch our legs after the morning in the vehicle and enjoyed the likes of **Namaqua Dove, Little Grebe, Black-headed Heron, Purple Roller, Acacia Pied Barbet, Cardinal Woodpecker, Brubru, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Southern White-crowned Shrike, Spotted and Marico Flycatchers, Marico Sunbird, Sociable Weaver, Red-headed Finch, Shaft-tailed Whydah and Black-throated Canary**. We ate lunch and then took some time off, before meeting up again in the late afternoon for another drive. The afternoon was a bit quieter, however, we did manage to find **Namaqua Sandgrouse, Bateleur, Tawny Eagle, Red-necked Falcon, Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark, Spike-heeled, Stark's and Pink-billed Larks and Ant-eating Chat**. We searched for Pygmy Falcons which nest inside the many **Sociable Weavers** nests in the area but, despite a concerted effort, we could not find our primary target for the afternoon. After dinner, some of us again enjoyed looks at **Black Rhinos** at the waterhole.



Red-necked Falcons are usually seen well in Etosha – this trip was no exception.

Day 7, 8th November 2024. Central to eastern Etosha; birds and large game

We had an early breakfast this morning as we had a long drive ahead of us, through the eastern half of Etosha. The drive was only about 100 miles (160 kilometers), however, it invariably takes most of the day because we travel at low speeds with *many* birding and wildlife stops en route. As we slowly made our way through the park, we continued to add new birds with some of the morning's top birds including **Lanner Falcon**, **Desert Cisticola** and **Red-breasted Swallow**. It was, however, mammals that stole the show this morning with some incredible sightings of a single **Cape Fox** and a small family of **Bat-eared Foxes**.

In the late morning, we entered Halali Camp and immediately began our search for a few special bird targets. We were successful and soon found **Bare-cheeked Babblers** and **Violet Wood Hoopoes** which both showed very well for us. The camp is always very birdy and we managed to find **Namaqua Dove**, **Southern Yellow-billed** and **Southern Red-billed Hornbills**, **White-crested Helmetshrike**, **Red-backed Shrike** and **Golden-breasted Bunting**.



*Halali Camp in Etosha is an excellent place to see **Bare-cheeked Babbler**.*

After our time at Halali we continued our journey eastwards through the park, where we checked numerous water holes, finding the likes of **Three-banded Plover**, **Wood** and **Curlew Sandpipers**, **Ruff** and **Little Stint**. We eventually left Etosha in the late afternoon and made our way to our lovely lodge, close to the eastern boundary of the park. We mostly took it easy around our lodge for the remainder of the afternoon but did find **Carp's Tit** and **Pearl-spotted Owlet**.

Day 8, 9th November 2024. Eastern Etosha; birds and large animals

We had the exciting prospect of a full day in eastern Etosha today and, after an early breakfast, we made our way back into the park to Dik-dik Drive, near Namutoni Camp. Along this circular drive we added the likes of **Black-faced Babbler** (about the only area of Etosha where this species occurs), **White-browed Scrub Robin**, **White-bellied Sunbird**, **Red-billed Quelea**, **Red-headed Finch**, **Violet-eared** and **Blue Waxbills**, **Green-winged Pytilia** and **Shaft-tailed Whydah**. Afterwards we headed north of Namutoni towards the Andoni Plains. En route we added brief flybys of **Burchell's Sandgrouse** as well as **Common Scimitarbill**, **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, **Crimson-breasted Shrike** and **Barred Wren-Warbler**. The open areas of the Andoni Plains were a little on the quiet side, but we did still manage to add **Lappet-faced** and **White-backed Vultures**, **Bateleur**, **Eastern Clapper Lark**, **Buffy** and **African Pipits** and a massive male **Lion** which appeared to have an injured leg. The waterholes in the area yielded **South African Shelduck**, **Cape** and **Red-billed Teals** and **Ruff**. On our way back south to Namutoni we stopped at a couple of waterholes and enjoyed good, long looks at drinking **African Savanna Elephants** as well as **Greater Kudu** and **Hartebeest**.



*We were treated to scenes like this in Etosha. Here a **Black Rhinoceros** and a **Giraffe** compete for a waterhole.*

We then entered Namutoni Camp (another old German fort) and enjoyed a late lunch. After lunch, we took a walk across to the waterhole, which had a few interesting birds around such as **Allen's Gallinule** (an unusual record for Etosha), **Marsh Sandpiper** and **Marabou Stork**. Other quality birds seen around Namutoni included **African Cuckoo**, **Southern White-crowned Shrike**, **Red-faced Mousebird**, **Marico Sunbird**, **Red-billed Buffalo Weaver** and **Lesser Masked Weaver**.

We returned to our lovely lodge in the late afternoon and enjoyed the early afternoon at our leisure. A late afternoon walk did not produce too much different, although we did enjoy further looks at **Pearl-spotted Owlet** and **Emerald-spotted Wood Dove**.



*A trip to Etosha is never complete without a **Lion** sighting.*

Day 9, 10th November 2024. Etosha National Park to the Kavango East Region

We had another long drive ahead of us today and so, after an early morning walk around the lodge (adding **Carp's Tit**, **Chestnut Weaver**, **Black Cuckoo**, **Black-faced Waxbill** and **African Paradise Flycatcher**), we had our breakfast and loaded up the van. We made a big movement east today, which resulted in a big change in the habitat as we entered the lush Kavango East Region. Here tall woodlands dominate, and, in these woodlands, we came cross **Wahlberg's Eagle**, **Magpie Shrike** and **Fawn-colored Lark**.

In the early afternoon, we arrived at our lodge, which is ideally set along the edge of the Cubango River, overlooking Angola, and we took some time off after the long drive. Some late afternoon birding around the lodge grounds resulted in many new species, with the crème de la crème being the long-staying vagrant **Ross's Turaco** (well found by Tim). This species is extremely rare in Namibia, however, this lone bird has now been around the lodge grounds for the last couple of years and has entertained many twitchers and birders! The birding around the lodge grounds was, as usual, very productive and we added many new birds. Some of the highlights here included **Senegal Coucal**, **Red-chested Cuckoo**, **Common Swift**, **African Wattled Lapwing**, **African Openbill**, **Woodland Kingfisher**, **Meyer's Parrot**, **Swamp Boubou**, **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Arrow-marked Babbler**, **Kurrichane Thrush**, **White-browed Robin-Chat**, **Holub's Golden Weaver** and **Southern Brown-throated Weaver**.

Later that evening, after dinner, we popped out briefly and soon managed to find the calling **African Barred Owlet** which we had heard earlier.



African Barred Owlet was seen on a nocturnal walk (photo Nico Heyning).

Day 10, 11th November 2024. East through the Kavango East Region, into Botswana

We spent a couple of hours before breakfast, birding around the property, which was very bird-rich and we further added **Hartlaub's Babbler**, **Ashy Flycatcher** and **Red-eyed Dove** to our rapidly growing list. We made it back to the dining area just as the heavens opened and for the next 30 minutes or so we watched an almighty downpour.

After breakfast we loaded up the van and carried on eastwards. We stopped at the sewage works just outside of Rundu, where we quickly added **Red-knobbed Coot**, **African Swamphen** and **Lesser Swamp Warbler**. Over the next couple of hours, we enjoyed a couple birding stops in dense woodland along the way, which added the likes of **White-breasted Cuckooshrike** (brief flight views for some), **Tinkling Cisticola**, **Southern Black Flycatcher** and **Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow**.

We arrived at the Muhembo border crossing in the early afternoon which, as usual, was quick and painless and before we knew it, we were in Botswana and making our way towards the town of Shakawe. We were staying at Xaro Lodge, a lovely lodge on the edge of the Okavango Panhandle and soon caught the boat to our lodge. The boat ride to our lodge added our first looks at **African Skimmer**, **Collared Pratincole**, **Striated Heron**, **Purple Heron**, **Giant** and **Malachite Kingfishers**, **Broad-billed Roller** and **Chirping Cisticola**. After checking into our rooms, we enjoyed a quick walk around the property, which further yielded **Green Wood Hoopoe** and **Meves's Starling**.

We finished the day, with a drink in hand, overlooking the Kavango River as we watched flyover **Great White Egret, Purple Heron** and **White-faced Whistling Duck**. That night some of us heard the distant boom of **Pel's Fishing Owl**, hopefully a good omen for tomorrow's adventure!

Day 11, 12th November 2024. Okavango Panhandle boat cruise and birding

We started the morning with a walk around the tall riverine forest and woodland at the back of the property (with the lodge's guide, Tom) with our main target being a large ginger owl. It took some time but eventually Tom spotted a roosting **Pel's Fishing Owl** high up in a tree. We enjoyed prolonged views of this most-wanted owl, although it was quite obscured by thick vegetation. Other highlights of this walk included **Mourning Collared Dove, African Green Pigeon, Square-tailed Nightjar, Saddle-billed Stork, Little Sparrowhawk, African Barred Owlet, Greater Honeyguide, Meyer's Parrot** and **Broad-billed Roller**. Once back at the lodge we enjoyed observing some of the roosting bats in the area, including **Peter's Epauletted Fruit Bat** and **Mauritian Tomb Bat**.



Pel's Fishing Owl was a strong candidate for bird of the trip.

After our early morning walk, we enjoyed a quick sit-down breakfast before heading out on our first boat trip of the day. This morning we headed south along the panhandle, with the aim of making it to a nearby floodplain. En route to the floodplain we had some fine views of **Coppery-tailed Coucal, African Swamphen, Black Crake, Water Thick-knee, Long-toed Lapwing, African Skimmer, Goliath Heron, African Marsh Harrier** and **African Fish Eagle**. Along the way, we also had brief looks at a **Rufous-bellied Heron** as it flew by us. Arriving at the floodplain we took a walk out and eventually had good looks at **Slaty Egrets** feeding alongside **Black Herons** and **Yellow-billed Egrets**. The Okavango wetlands must represent one of the

most reliable places in the world to see **Slaty Egret**, a rather range-restricted species. While out on the floodplain, we also added **Plain-backed Pipit**, another new bird for our list. On our way back to the lodge, Tom picked out a roosting **White-backed Night Heron**, hidden deep in some riverside vegetation.

Later that afternoon, after a few hours off during the midday heat, we headed back out in the boat and this time made our way northwards along the main channel. Highlights of the afternoon included **African Pygmy Goose**, **Common Swift**, **African Snipe**, **European Honey Buzzard**, **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater**, **Greater Swamp Warbler**, **Southern Brown-throated Weaver** and **Fan-tailed Widowbird**. We again ended the day enjoying a drink on the banks of the Cubango River, while watching various herons and egrets flying by, including **Black-crowned Night Heron** and **African Sacred Ibis** which were both new trip birds.



Massive Goliath Herons were enjoyed along our Okavango boat cruises.

Day 12, 13th November 2024. Back into Namibia and birding the Mahango area

We again decided to take a walk in the woodland behind the lodge to try improve our views of **Pel's Fishing Owl** and see what else we might find here. This morning the owl proved more cooperative as it sat out on a more exposed perch, allowing us to improve our views and photos. Other nice additions this morning included **African Golden Oriole** and **Grey Tit-Flycatcher**, unfortunately the calling **Little Rush Warblers** would not show themselves though.

We bade our farewells to Xaro Lodge and made our way back through the Botswana-Namibia border, which again proved quick and easy. We took our time as we made our way back north through Mahangu Game Reserve and enjoyed large numbers of birds and animals out in the floodplain and in the surrounding woodlands. Some of our avian highlights for the couple of hours spent here included **White-browed Coucal**, **Wattled Crane** (as many as five birds!),

Long-toed Lapwing, Collared Pratincole, African Openbill, Marabou and Yellow-billed Storks, Little Bee-eater, Lesser Grey Shrike, Fawn-colored Lark, Burnt-necked Eremomela and Kurrichane Thrush. We were also entertained by large numbers of animals such as **African Savanna Elephant, Plains Zebra, Common Warthog, Common Hippopotamus** and several antelope species including **Tsessebe, Impala, Southern Lechwe, Southern Reedbuck and Southern Bushbuck.**

We arrived at our accommodation along the edge of the Cubango River (this time in Namibia) in the early afternoon and enjoyed some time off during the heat of the day. Once it had cooled down a bit, we boarded our private boat and enjoyed a relaxed trip along the Cubango River. One of our early stops was a **Southern Carmine Bee-eater** colony, where we spent a while enjoying eye-level views of these beautifully colored bee-eaters, with **Little and White-fronted Bee-eaters** also seen nearby. Other standout species on our boat cruise included **Knob-billed Duck, Rock Pratincole, African Skimmer, White-winged Tern, Striated Heron, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and Holub's Golden Weaver.** To finish the boat trip, we enjoyed sundowners on a small island overlooking Popa Falls, with a distant storm rumbling in the background.



*We enjoyed close-up views of a colony of **Southern Carmine Bee-eaters** along the Cubango River.*

Day 13, 14th November 2024. Birding the Mahangu area

This morning we had a very early start so that we could arrive in woodlands about 50 miles (70 kilometers) west of Divundu to look for a few scarce and localized targets; namely Souza's Shrike, Sharp-tailed Starling and Rufous-bellied Tit. We picked up the area's local guide and expert, Christoph, and made our way west and managed to arrive just after sunrise. After a quick bite to eat, we set off into the woodlands and quickly started finding interesting bird species such

as **Shikra**, **Grey-headed Kingfisher**, **Purple Roller**, **Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird**, **Brown-backed Honeybird**, **Chinspot Batis**, **Fawn-colored Lark**, **Tinkling Cisticola**, **Neddicky** (Piping Cisticola), **Southern Yellow White-eye**, **Pale** and **Southern Black Flycatchers** and **Yellow-fronted Canary**. After about 30 minutes we arrived at the **Souza's Shrike** territory and soon thereafter we found the bird in question and managed prolonged looks at this scarce resident.



Souza's Shrike was one of our targets in the woodlands west of Divundu.

We then moved to another nearby patch of woodland where we soon found **Sharp-tailed Starling** and also found a few attractive **Cut-throat Finches** while looking at the starling. After some work we eventually had prolonged and nearby views of a group of about six **Sharp-tailed Starlings** which were great to see. We spent some time birding the general area here and managed to further add **Diederik** and **African Cuckoos**, **Striped Kingfisher**, **Black-headed Oriole**, **African Paradise Flycatcher**, **Yellow-billed Oxpecker**, **Arnot's Chat** and **Golden-breasted Bunting**. Despite searching a few other areas for the Rufous-bellied Tit, we eventually had to accept fate and made our way back to our lodge for lunch.

We again took time off during the heat of the day, then headed out to a nearby floodplain which we birded for a couple of hours and managed to add a few new species. We had hoped to find **Temminck's Coursers** here and it did not take too long for a small group to show and provide us with good looks. Other highlights here included **Meyer's Parrot**, **White-throated**, **Lesser Striped** and **Mosque Swallows** as well as **Lesser Grey Shrike**. We spent some time scanning the river which further added **Water Thick-knee**, **Common Greenshank**, **African Skimmer** and **Collared Pratincole**.

Day 14, 15th November 2024. Transfer to Zambezi Region

We had a long drive ahead of us today, so started with a relaxed walk in the area surrounding the lodge. The birding was a little slow this morning, but we did eventually add **Brown-crowned Tchagra**, **Black-faced Waxbill**, **Village Indigobird** and drastically improved our views of **Bradfield's Hornbill**, with a confiding bird seen displaying nearby to us.

After breakfast, we loaded up the van and hit the long straight road to Katima Mulilo, as we continued on our way eastwards through the Zambezi Region. Excitingly, we drove through Caprivi Game Park for some of the journey and a couple of roadside stops added **Martial Eagle**, **Bateleur**, **Lizard Buzzard** and **Common Ostrich**, while the undoubted highlight was when Nico shouted out 'Cheetah' and we turned the van around to find a lone **Cheetah** sat just off the side of the road! We watched this regal animal for a while as it nonchalantly lay in the shade of a tree. We couldn't believe our luck/Nico's skill at spotting it and happily continued on our way east.

We arrived at our next lodge just outside Katima Mulilo, on the banks of the Zambezi River, in the early afternoon and boarded a boat to enjoy another private boat cruise. Our big target this afternoon was **African Finfoot**, which did not prove tricky to find, and over the course of the cruise we probably found five or six different individuals. Once finfoot was sorted, we moved onto other species and managed to further find **Schalow's Turaco**, **White-browed Coucal**, **White-crowned Lapwing**, **Greater Painted-snipe**, **African Skimmer**, **White-backed Night Heron**, **Giant** and **Brown-hooded Kingfishers**, **Pale-throated Greenbul** and **Holub's Golden Weaver**.



*We had relatively good views of **White-backed Night Heron** along the Zambezi River.*

After dinner (with **African Wood Owl** as nice distraction), the day was not yet done, as a few of us headed out on a night drive to look for various owls and nightjars. Our main target was the spectacular **Pennant-winged Nightjar** and an impressive male duly obliged for us and gave us fantastic looks as it flew leisurely by, with full pennants on display! While out in the woodlands, we managed to find **Fiery-necked Nightjar**, **African Scops Owl** and **Southern White-faced Owl**. A fitting end to another wonderful day's birding!

Day 15, 16th November 2024. Katima Mulilo birding

We had the full day to explore the exciting wetlands and woodlands of this incredibly bird-rich corner of Namibia and set out early to look for a pair of African Broadbills which had recently been seen nearby. Unfortunately, the broadbills were a no-show, but we did manage to find **Trumpeter Hornbill**, **Eastern Nicator** and **White-browed Coucal** in the general area, before the consistent drizzle got a bit much for us. On the way back to the lodge, we birded some nearby woodlands which held **Eurasian Golden Oriole** and a pair of showy **Grey-headed Bushshrikes**.

While enjoying breakfast we had our first looks at **Bronze Mannikin** and **Common Myna** (an invasive species in Namibia). Then we headed out again to see some nearby mature woodlands which often hold some good birds. These woodlands were a little on the quiet side this morning, but we did manage to find **African Golden Oriole**, **White-crested Helmetshrike** and **Woodland Kingfisher**. Another patch of woodlands was far more productive as we found **Klaas's Cuckoo**, **Little Bee-eater**, **Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird**, **Black-crowned Tchagra**, **Tropical Boubou** and a pair of **Brown Firefinches**.



Lesser Jacanas are seen reliably around Katima Mulilo.

With the temperature rising, we decided to go bird some nearby wetlands. This turned out to be a good idea, as we found an obliging pair of **Lesser Jacanas** alongside **Blue-billed Teal**, **Long-toed Lapwing**, **African Snipe**, **Marsh Sandpiper**, **Malachite Kingfisher** and **Fan-tailed Widowbird**. We were also excited to find a single **Wood Pipit** nearby, a rare bird in Namibia! A showy **Lilac-breasted Roller** was enjoyed by us all, and particularly by Ruth who had been hoping for a **Lilac-breasted Roller** in glorious morning light!

We took our usual downtime during the heat of the day, before heading out in the late afternoon to bird the Chobe River floodplain. The heat was rather oppressive this afternoon, which likely explained why the birding was a bit on the slow side. We did, however, manage to eke out a few good birds in the form of **Greater Blue-eared Starling**, **African Openbill** and **Dark Chanting Goshawk**. We tried a couple areas for Collared Palm Thrush but, in the end, we had to settle for a showy **Bearded Woodpecker** (with **Olive Woodpecker** also seen around the lodge that afternoon). That evening we enjoyed a tasty dinner followed by birthday cake to celebrate with Todd.



*It took a while, but we eventually had good looks at **Dark Chanting Goshawk**.*

Day 16, 17th November 2024. Katima Mulilo to Livingstone

We had the morning to bird around Katima Mulilo, before we headed into Zambia, and so we again birded the nearby woodlands to try for African Broadbill, which were again not around. The birding in the general area was, however, much better this morning and we managed to find **Crested Francolin**, **African Emerald Cuckoo**, **Black Sparrowhawk**, **Broad-billed Roller**, **Black Cuckooshrike** and **White-bellied Sunbird**. Some nearby riverine woodlands produced some fantastic views of several feeding **Schalow's Turacos**, along with **African Green Pigeon**, **Green Wood Hoopoe**, **Garden Warbler**, **Purple-banded Sunbird** and **Southern Black Tit**.

It was then time to load up the van and make our way further east towards Livingstone. We made the crossing into Zambia by going through Botswana and Chobe National Park. The park itself was rather quiet (heat of the day) but we did find **White-backed Vulture**, **Marabou Stork** (feeding in the local landfill) and **Tawny Eagle**. The Zambia border crossing took a while (as it always does, moving from counter to counter, with lots of paperwork to fill out) but we eventually made it into our beautiful lodge in the early afternoon.

This afternoon we boarded a boat for another Zambezi boat cruise, always a great way to end the day. While out on the water we enjoyed looks at some huge **Common Hippopotamus** and **Nile Crocodiles**, with some of the avian highlights including **White-crowned Lapwing**, **Rock Pratincole**, **Whiskered Tern**, **Yellow-billed Stork**, **White-breasted Cormorant**, **Goliath Heron**, **Pink-backed** and **Great White Pelicans**, **Osprey**, **Hooded Vulture** and **Ayres's Hawk-Eagle**. Watching two **African Savanna Elephants** coming down to drink in the late afternoon light was certainly another highlight. The cruise ended with an impressive sunset before we headed back to the lodge for another tasty dinner.



*We enjoyed an assortment of waterbirds on our Zambezi boat cruise including **Grey Heron**, **African Sacred Ibis** and **Pink-backed Pelican**.*

Day 17, 18th November 2024. Victoria Falls and Livingstone birding

Today was the final full day of the tour and we headed out early to some nearby miombo woodland to see if there were any last-minute list additions. The woodlands were quiet to begin with but things soon picked up, with **Racket-tailed Roller** (a displaying bird), **African Golden Oriole**, **Stierling's Wren-Warbler** and **Bearded Woodpecker** all seen. We were excited to have nice looks at both **Eurasian** and **African Hobbies** feeding overhead. The undoubted

highlight of the morning was hearing and seeing (well spotted by Nico, of course) a group of **Southern Ground Hornbills**. These huge terrestrial hornbills are always a crowd favorite!

Breakfast, on the deck overlooking the Zambezi River, was very pleasant and then it was time to head into the van and spend the morning at Victoria Falls. The falls themselves are generally more impressive from the Zimbabwean side and so, after negotiating the border (a much quicker process today), we enjoyed a couple hours walking around the falls area, admiring this World Heritage Site. One of the local names for the falls is Mosi-oa Tunya which means ‘the smoke that thunders’ and this name is certainly appropriate. We, of course, were looking out for birds while enjoying the falls and new birds here included **Bearded Scrub Robin**, **Red-throated Twinspot** and **Red-winged Starling**.

This afternoon (once back in Zambia) some went out on another sunset boat cruise, while a few of us took a leisurely walk around the lodge grounds, which produced **Natal Spurfowl**, **White-browed Coucal**, **Red-faced Cisticola**, **Bearded Scrub Robin** and **Collared Palm Thrush**. Later that evening we enjoyed our final dinner of the trip and reminisced on an enjoyable and successful trip through southern Africa.



Collared Palm Thrush showed well in the riparian forest on the edge of the Zambezi River.

Day 18, 19th November 2024. Livingstone birding and departure

To finish off the trip’s birding we took a leisurely stroll around the lodge grounds, which added more of yesterday afternoon’s birds, along with **Schalow’s Turaco**, **African Goshawk**, **Violet-backed Starling** and **Red-headed Weaver**.

We then enjoyed breakfast and most of us headed towards Livingstone Airport, saying goodbye to Angie and Larry (who had a couple nights at the lodge). Thanks everyone for a highly enjoyable and successful tour, I hope to travel with you all again soon!

Bird List – Following IOC (Version 14.2/August 2024)

Birds 'heard only' are marked with (H) after the common name, all other species were seen.

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following BirdLife International: CR = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened.

Common name	Scientific name
Ostriches (Struthionidae)	
Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>
Ducks, Geese, Swans (Anatidae)	
White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>
Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>
South African Shelduck	<i>Tadorna cana</i>
African Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus auritus</i>
Blue-billed Teal	<i>Spatula hottentota</i>
Cape Teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>
Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>
Guineafowl (Numididae)	
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Pheasants & Allies (Phasianidae)	
Crested Francolin	<i>Ortygornis sephaena</i>
Red-billed Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis adspersus</i>
Natal Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis natalensis</i>
Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>
Nightjars (Caprimulgidae)	
Rufous-cheeked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus rufigena</i>
Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>
Freckled Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus tristigma</i>
Square-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus fossii</i>
Pennant-winged Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus vexillarius</i>
Swifts (Apodidae)	
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Turacos (Musophagidae)	
Grey Go-away-bird	<i>Crinifer concolor</i>
Ross's Turaco	<i>Tauraco rossae</i>
Schalow's Turaco	<i>Tauraco schalowi</i>
Bustards (Otididae)	
Kori Bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>
Rüppell's Korhaan	<i>Heterotetrax rueppelii</i>
Red-crested Korhaan	<i>Lophotis ruficrista</i>
Northern Black Korhaan	<i>Afrotis afraoides</i>
Cuckoos (Cuculidae)	
Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>
Coppery-tailed Coucal	<i>Centropus cupreicaudus</i>
White-browed Coucal	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>
Levaillant's Cuckoo	<i>Clamator levaillantii</i>
Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>
Diederik Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>
Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>
African Emerald Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>
Black Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus clamosus</i>
Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>
African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>
Sandgrouse (Pteroclididae)	
Namaqua Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles namaqua</i>
Double-banded Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>
Burchell's Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles burchelli</i>
Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)	
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>
Mourning Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decipiens</i>
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>
Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>
Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>
Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>
African Green Pigeon	<i>Treron calvus</i>
Finfoots (Heliornithidae)	
African Finfoot	<i>Podica senegalensis</i>
Rails, Crakes & Coots (Rallidae)	

Common name	Scientific name
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>
Allen's Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio alleni</i>
African Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i>
Black Crake	<i>Zapornia flavirostra</i>
Cranes (Gruidae)	
Wattled Crane - VU	<i>Grus carunculata</i>
Blue Crane - VU	<i>Grus paradisea</i>
Grebes (Podicipedidae)	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Flamingos (Phoenicopteridae)	
Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>
Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>
Stone-curlews, Thick-knees (Burhinidae)	
Water Thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>
Oystercatchers (Haematopodidae)	
African Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>
Stilts, Avocets (Recurvirostridae)	
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>
Plovers (Charadriidae)	
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>
Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>
Long-toed Lapwing	<i>Vanellus crassirostris</i>
Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>
White-crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus albiceps</i>
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>
African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>
Chestnut-banded Plover	<i>Anarhynchus pallidus</i>
White-fronted Plover	<i>Anarhynchus marginatus</i>
Painted-snipes (Rostratulidae)	
Greater Painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>
Jacanas (Jacanidae)	
Lesser Jacana	<i>Microparra capensis</i>

Common name	Scientific name
African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>
Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacidae)	
Eurasian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>
African Snipe	<i>Gallinago nigripennis</i>
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>
Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>
Couriers, Pratincoles (Glareolidae)	
Double-banded Courser	<i>Rhinoptilus africanus</i>
Temminck's Courser	<i>Cursorius temminckii</i>
Rock Pratincole	<i>Glareola nuchalis</i>
Collared Pratincole	<i>Glareola pratincola</i>
Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Laridae)	
African Skimmer	<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>
Damara Tern	<i>Sternula balaenarum</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>
Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>
White-winged Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>
Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>
Hartlaub's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus hartlaubii</i>
Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>
Northern Storm Petrels (Hydrobatidae)	
European Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>
Petrels, Shearwaters, Diving Petrels (Procellariidae)	
White-chinned Petrel - VU	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Ardenna grisea</i>
Storks (Ciconiidae)	

Common name	Scientific name
African Openbill	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>
Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>
Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>
Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
Anhingas, Darters (Anhingidae)	
African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>
Cormorants, Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)	
Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>
Crowned Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo coronatus</i>
Cape Cormorant - EN	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>
White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>
Ibises, Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)	
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Hérons, Bitterns (Ardeidae)	
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Slaty Egret - VU	<i>Egretta vinaceigula</i>
Black Heron	<i>Egretta ardesiaca</i>
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
White-backed Night Heron	<i>Calherodius leuconotus</i>
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>
Rufous-bellied Heron	<i>Ardeola rufiventris</i>
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Yellow-billed Egret	<i>Ardea brachyrhyncha</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
Hamerkop (Scopidae)	
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>
Pelicans (Pelecanidae)	
Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
Pink-backed Pelican	<i>Pelecanus rufescens</i>
Ospreys (Pandionidae)	

Common name	Scientific name
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Kites, Hawks, Eagles (Accipitridae)	
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>
European Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
Hooded Vulture - CR	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>
White-backed Vulture - CR	<i>Gyps africanus</i>
Lappet-faced Vulture - EN	<i>Torgos tracheliotos</i>
Black-chested Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>
Bateleur - EN	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>
Martial Eagle - EN	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>
Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>
Ayres's Hawk-Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus ayresii</i>
Tawny Eagle - VU	<i>Aquila rapax</i>
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>
African Hawk-Eagle	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>
Lizard Buzzard	<i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>
Gabar Goshawk	<i>Micronisus gabar</i>
Dark Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax metabates</i>
Pale Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax canorus</i>
African Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>
Little Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter minullus</i>
Black Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>
Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>
African Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga vocifer</i>
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Barn Owls (Tytonidae)	
Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Owls (Strigidae)	
Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>
African Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>
African Scops Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>
Southern White-faced Owl	<i>Ptilopsis granti</i>
Pel's Fishing Owl	<i>Scotopelia peli</i>
African Wood Owl	<i>Strix woodfordii</i>
Mousebirds (Coliidae)	
Red-faced Mousebird	<i>Urocolius indicus</i>
Hoopoes (Upupidae)	

Common name	Scientific name
African Hoopoe	<i>Upupa africana</i>
Wood Hoopoes (Phoeniculidae)	
Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>
Violet Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus damarensis</i>
Common Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>
Ground Hornbills (Bucorvidae)	
Southern Ground Hornbill - VU	<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>
Hornbills (Bucerotidae)	
Damara Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus damarensis</i>
Southern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>
Monteiro's Hornbill	<i>Tockus monteiri</i>
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>
Bradfield's Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros bradfieldi</i>
African Grey Hornbill	<i>Lophoceros nasutus</i>
Trumpeter Hornbill	<i>Bycanistes bucinator</i>
Rollers (Coraciidae)	
Purple Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>
Racket-tailed Roller	<i>Coracias spatulatus</i>
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>
Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>
Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)	
Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>
Striped Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon chelicuti</i>
Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>
Malachite Kingfisher	<i>Corythornis cristatus</i>
Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>
Bee-eaters (Meropidae)	
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>
Little Bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>
White-fronted Bee-eater	<i>Merops bullockoides</i>
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	<i>Merops persicus</i>
European Bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	<i>Merops nubicoides</i>
African Barbets (Lybiidae)	
Crested Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>
Acacia Pied Barbet	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>
Black-collared Barbet	<i>Lybius torquatus</i>
Honeyguides (Indicatoridae)	
Brown-backed Honeybird	<i>Prodotiscus regulus</i>
Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>
Woodpeckers (Picidae)	
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>
Bearded Woodpecker	<i>Chloropicus namaquus</i>
Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>
Olive Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos griseocephalus</i>
Caracaras, Falcons (Falconidae)	
Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>
Greater Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>
Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>
Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
African Hobby	<i>Falco cuvierii</i>
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>
African & New World Parrots (Psittacidae)	
Meyer's Parrot	<i>Poicephalus meyeri</i>
Rüppell's Parrot	<i>Poicephalus rueppellii</i>
Old World Parrots (Psittaculidae)	
Rosy-faced Lovebird	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>
Wattle-eyes, Batises (Platysteiridae)	
Chinspot Batis	<i>Batis molitor</i>
Pirit Batis	<i>Batis pririt</i>
White-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanioturdus torquatus</i>
Bushshrikes (Malaconotidae)	
Grey-headed Bushshrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>
Orange-breasted Bushshrike	<i>Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus</i>
Brown-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra australis</i>
Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>
Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>
Tropical Boubou	<i>Laniarius major</i>
Swamp Boubou	<i>Laniarius bicolor</i>
Crimson-breasted Shrike	<i>Laniarius atrococcineus</i>
Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Vangas & Allies (Vangidae)	
White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>
Cuckooshrikes (Campephagidae)	
White-breasted Cuckooshrike	<i>Ceblepyris pectoralis</i>
Black Cuckooshrike	<i>Campephaga flava</i>
Figbirds, Old World Orioles, Piopios (Oriolidae)	
Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>
African Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>
Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>
Drongos (Dicruridae)	
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>
Monarchs (Monarchidae)	
African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>
Shrikes (Laniidae)	
Southern White-crowned Shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitimens</i>
Magpie Shrike	<i>Lanius melanoleucus</i>
Souza's Shrike	<i>Lanius souzae</i>
Southern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>
Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
Crows, Jays (Corvidae)	
Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>
Tits, Chickadees (Paridae)	
Southern Black Tit	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>
Carp's Tit	<i>Melaniparus carpi</i>
Nicator (Nicatoridae)	
Eastern Nicator	<i>Nicator gularis</i>
Larks (Alaudidae)	
Spike-heeled Lark	<i>Chersomanes albofasciata</i>
Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix verticalis</i>
Sabota Lark	<i>Calendulauda sabota</i>
Fawn-colored Lark	<i>Calendulauda africanoides</i>
Dune Lark	<i>Calendulauda erythrochlamys</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Eastern Clapper Lark	<i>Mirafra fasciolata</i>
Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Mirafra africana</i>
Stark's Lark	<i>Spizocorys starki</i>
Pink-billed Lark	<i>Spizocorys conirostris</i>
Red-capped Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>
Bulbuls (Pycnonotidae)	
Pale-throated Greenbul	<i>Atimastillas flavicollis</i>
Yellow-bellied Greenbul	<i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i>
Terrestrial Brownbul	<i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>
African Red-eyed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>
Dark-capped Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus tricolor</i>
Swallows, Martins (Hirundinidae)	
Banded Martin	<i>Neophedina cincta</i>
Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>
Large Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>
Pearl-breasted Swallow	<i>Hirundo dimidiata</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>
Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>
Greater Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis cucullata</i>
Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>
Red-breasted Swallow	<i>Cecropis semirufa</i>
Mosque Swallow	<i>Cecropis senegalensis</i>
Crombecs, African Warblers (Macrosphenidae)	
Rockrunner	<i>Achaetops pycnopygius</i>
Long-billed Crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>
Leaf Warblers (Phylloscopidae)	
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Reed Warblers & Allies (Acrocephalidae)	
Greater Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus rufescens</i>
Lesser Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>
Grassbirds & Allies (Locustellidae)	
Little Rush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>
Cisticolas & Allies (Cisticolidae)	
Red-faced Cisticola	<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>
Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>
Tinkling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola rufilatus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Chirping Cisticola	<i>Cisticola pipiens</i>
Neddicky	<i>Cisticola fulvicapilla</i>
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>
Desert Cisticola	<i>Cisticola aridulus</i>
Tawny-flanked Prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>
Black-chested Prinia	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>
Yellow-breasted Apalis	<i>Apalis flavida</i>
Rufous-eared Warbler	<i>Malcorus pectoralis</i>
Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>
Stierling's Wren-Warbler	<i>Calamonastes stierlingi</i>
Barred Wren-Warbler	<i>Calamonastes fasciolatus</i>
Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>
Burnt-necked Eremomela	<i>Eremomela usticollis</i>
Sylviid Babblers (Sylviidae)	
Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Chestnut-vented Warbler	<i>Curruca subcoerulea</i>
White-eyes (Zosteropidae)	
Orange River White-eye	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>
Southern Yellow White-eye	<i>Zosterops anderssoni</i>
Laughingthrushes & Allies (Leiothrichidae)	
Arrow-marked Babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>
Bare-cheeked Babbler	<i>Turdoides gymnogenys</i>
Southern Pied Babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>
Hartlaub's Babbler	<i>Turdoides hartlaubii</i>
Black-faced Babbler	<i>Turdoides melanops</i>
Starlings, Rhabdornises (Sturnidae)	
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>
Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>
Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>
Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>
Meves's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis mevesii</i>
Burchell's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>
Sharp-tailed Starling	<i>Lamprotornis acuticaudus</i>
Violet-backed Starling	<i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i>
Pale-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus nabouroup</i>
Oxpeckers (Buphagidae)	
Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>
Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Thrushes (Turdidae)	
Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Turdus litsitsirupa</i>
Kurrihane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>
Chats, Old World Flycatchers (Muscicapidae)	
Bearded Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas quadrivirgata</i>
Kalahari Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas paena</i>
White-browed Scrub Robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>
Pale Flycatcher	<i>Agricola pallidus</i>
Chat Flycatcher	<i>Agricola infuscatus</i>
Grey Tit-Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria plumbea</i>
Ashy Flycatcher	<i>Fraseria caerulescens</i>
Southern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>
Herero Chat	<i>Namibornis herero</i>
Marico Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
Collared Palm Thrush	<i>Cichladusa arquata</i>
Short-toed Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola brevipes</i>
Tractrac Chat	<i>Emarginata tractrac</i>
Ant-eating Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>
Mountain Wheatear	<i>Myrmecocichla monticola</i>
Arnot's Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla arnoti</i>
Familiar Chat	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>
Sunbirds (Nectariniidae)	
Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>
Amethyst Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>
Marico Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>
Purple-banded Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris bifasciatus</i>
White-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris talatala</i>
Dusky Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris fuscus</i>
Copper Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris cupreus</i>
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches (Passeridae)	
Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris superciliaris</i>
Cape Sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>
Great Sparrow	<i>Passer motitensis</i>
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Weavers, Widowbirds (Ploceidae)	
Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>

Common name	Scientific name
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>
Sociable Weaver	<i>Philetairus socius</i>
Scaly-feathered Weaver	<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>
Thick-billed Weaver	<i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>
Holub's Golden Weaver	<i>Ploceus xanthops</i>
Southern Brown-throated Weaver	<i>Ploceus xanthopterus</i>
Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>
Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>
Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>
Chestnut Weaver	<i>Ploceus rubiginosus</i>
Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>
Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>
Fan-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes axillaris</i>
Waxbills, Munias & Allies (Estrildidae)	
Bronze Mannikin	<i>Spermestes cucullata</i>
Black-faced Waxbill	<i>Brunhilda erythronotos</i>
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>
Cut-throat Finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>
Red-headed Finch	<i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>
Violet-eared Waxbill	<i>Granatina granatina</i>
Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>
Green-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>
Red-throated Twinspot	<i>Hypargos niveoguttatus</i>
Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>
Brown Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta nitidula</i>
Indigobirds, Whydahs (Viduidae)	
Village Indigobird	<i>Vidua chalybeata</i>
Shaft-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua regia</i>
Wagtails, Pipits (Motacillidae)	
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>
African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>
African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>
Wood Pipit	<i>Anthus nyassae</i>
Buffy Pipit	<i>Anthus vaalensis</i>
Plain-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>
Finches, Euphonias (Fringillidae)	
Black-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra atrogularis</i>
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>
White-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra albogularis</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Buntings (Emberizidae)	
Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>

Total seen	393
Total heard only	3
Total recorded	396

Mammal List – Following Mammalwatching.com (November 2024)

Common name	Scientific name
Sengis (Macroscelididae)	
Bushveld Sengi	<i>Elephantulus intufi</i>
Western Rock Sengi	<i>Elephantulus rupestris</i>
Elephants (Elephantidae)	
African Savanna Elephant - EN	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
Hyraxes (Procaviidae)	
Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>
Old World Monkeys (Cercopithecidae)	
Vervet Monkey	<i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>
Chacma Baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>
Galagos (Galagidae)	
Southern Lesser Galago	<i>Galago moholi</i>
Hares and Rabbits (Leporidae)	
African Savanna Hare	<i>Lepus microtis</i>
Smith's Red Rock Hare	<i>Pronolagus rupestris</i>
Squirrels (Sciuridae)	
South African Ground Squirrel	<i>Geosciurus inauris</i>
Damara Ground Squirrel	<i>Geosciurus princeps</i>
Springhares (Pedetidae)	
Southern African Springhare	<i>Pedetes capensis</i>
Old World Fruit Bats (Pteropodidae)	
Peters's Epauletted Fruit Bat	<i>Epomophorus crypturus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Sheath-tailed Bats (Emballonuridae)	
Mauritian Tomb Bat	<i>Taphozous mauritanus</i>
Eared Seals (Otariidae)	
Afro-Australian Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>
Canids (Canidae)	
Black-backed Jackal	<i>Lupulella mesomelas</i>
Bat-eared Fox	<i>Otocyon megalotis</i>
Cape Fox	<i>Vulpes chama</i>
Felids (Felidae)	
Cheetah - VU	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>
Lion - VU	<i>Panthera leo</i>
Mongoose (Herpestidae)	
Yellow Mongoose	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>
Angolan Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes flavescens</i>
Banded Mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>
Hyaenas (Hyaenidae)	
Spotted Hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>
Civets, Genets, and Oyans (Viverridae)	
Common Genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>
Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae)	
Black Rhinoceros - CR	<i>Diceros bicornis</i>
Equines (Equidae)	
Plains Zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>
Mountain Zebra - VU	<i>Equus zebra</i>
Bovids (Bovidae)	
Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>
Hartebeest	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>
Blue Wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>
Tsessebe	<i>Damaliscus lunatus</i>
Springbok	<i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>
Damara Dik-dik	<i>Madoqua damarensis</i>
Steenbok	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>
Bush Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>
Gemsbok	<i>Oryx gazella</i>
Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>
Southern Lechwe	<i>Kobus leche</i>
Southern Reedbuck	<i>Redunca arundinum</i>
Common Eland	<i>Tragelaphus oryx</i>
Greater Kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>
Southern Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>
Giraffes and Okapi (Giraffidae)	
Southern Giraffe	<i>Giraffa giraffa</i>
Suids (Suidae)	
Common Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>
Hippopotamuses (Hippopotamidae)	
Common Hippopotamus - VU	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>
Rorquals (Balaenopteridae)	
Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>
Oceanic Dolphins (Delphinidae)	
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
Total seen	48

Reptile List

Common name	Scientific name
Crocodiles (Crocodylidae)	
Nile Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>
Vipers (Viperidae)	
Horned Adder	<i>Bitis caudalis</i>
Dragons (Agamidae) - 1 / 578	
Namib Rock Agama	<i>Agama planiceps</i>
Typical Geckos (Gekkonidae)	
Common Namib Day Gecko	<i>Rhoptropus afer</i>
Plated Lizards (Gerrhosauridae)	
Black-lined Plated Lizard	<i>Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus</i>
Wall Lizards (Lacertidae)	

Namaqua Sand Lizard	<i>Pedioplanis namaquensis</i>
Wedge-snouted Desert Lizard	<i>Meroles cuneirostris</i>
Skinks (Scincidae)	
Ovambo Tree Skink	<i>Trachylepis binotata</i>
Wahlberg's Striped Skink	<i>Trachylepis wahlbergii</i>
Monitor Lizards (Varanidae)	
Nile Monitor	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>
African Mud Turtles (Pelomedusidae)	
Helmeted Turtle	<i>Pelomedusa subrufa</i>
Total seen	11