



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

South African Mega

20th September to 13th October 2007



Drakensberg Rockjumper on Sani Pass by Thomas Schall

Tour Leader: David Hoddinott

Trip Report compiled by David Hoddinott

Tour Summary

Our trip total of 521 species in 24 days reflects the immense birding potential of South Africa. Whilst the focus of the tour was certainly the rich assemblage of Southern African endemics, we did not neglect the amazing diversity of mammals. Participants were treated to an amazing 149 out of a possible 155 endemics, near-endemics and breeding-endemics on our route, with other highlights including stunning views of all 3 Cranes, 8 Southern African Bustards, 7 species of Woodpecker, all 6 Bushshrikes and all 16 Swallows. Some of the mammalian highlights included an incredible 72 species (without visiting Kruger National Park!), rare Black-footed Cat, fantastic Aardvark, superb views of Leopard and Striped Weasel. For more highlights and a detailed trip report read on



After leaving a bustling Johannesburg we headed south-east to Kimberley, (situated in the Northern Cape Province) the start of a wonderful twenty-four day Mega endemic birding tour. Our first full day was mainly a travel day but comfort stops along the route produced several smart birds such as African Pied Starling, Southern Red Bishop and the magnificent Northern Black Korhaan. Shortly before reaching Kimberley we were treated to the stunning sight of thousands of Flamingo's at Kamfer's Dam. Our night drive in the area produced Rufous-cheeked Nightjar, many dancing Spinghare and a magnificent Aardvark. What a way to end our first day!

Up bright and early the following morning we spent some time birding around our lodge which produced many endemics including White-backed Mousebird, Acacia Pied Barbet, gaudy Crimson-breasted Shrike, Black-chested Prinia, tiny Fairy Warbler, splendid male Short-toed Rock-Thrush, Red-headed Finch and localized Orange River White-eye. Today we travelled to Brandvlei, the heart of Bushmanland, first making a stop at the site where Kimberley Pipit was discovered in 2002, to our delight after only a few minutes we were rewarded with scope views of this localized species. Shortly after leaving Kimberley we found several impressive Ludwig's Bustard and nearing Brandvlei many Karoo Korhaan and small flocks of the highly nomadic Black-eared Sparrow-Lark.

Despite the very hot and arid conditions in Brandvlei we found numerous specials including the lovely Namaqua Sandgrouse, huge Marial Eagle, Grey Tit, a host of larks including Red and Stark's, Tractrac Chat and the colonial Sociable Weaver at its enormous nest. A splendid night drive produced Zorilla and Cape Fox.

Travelling further west towards Port Nolloth we found a host of raptors including the diminutive Pygmy Falcon, Greater Kestrel, Pale Chanting Goshawk and Jackal Buzzard. Other highlights were the smart Pririt Batis, dainty Cape Penduline Tit, Pale-winged Starling and Lark-like Bunting. The highlight of this day however was seeing the highly elusive Sclater's Lark - after waiting patiently at a waterhole for what seemed like an eternity, and with only a few minutes to go before we had to depart, suddenly there it was and we were treated to great scope views of this highly sought after species.

Moving on to the Atlantic coastal town of Port Nolloth (near the Namibian border) we added all three pelagic cormorants, Cape, Bank and the scarce Crowned. This area is known for two endemic larks restricted to the coastal scrub and both targets were located by mid morning. The Goegap Reserve outside Springbok was a sea of flowers and greenery after plentiful winter rains. All our target birds in the area fell quickly but we particularly enjoyed close confiding views



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of Cinnamon-breasted Warbler that ran across and sat on a boulder in front of us and the elusive Karoo Eremomela and Damara Canary.

Moving on to Calvinia we picked up the unusual Ground Woodpecker, Namaqua Warbler, Gray-backed Sparrow-Lark and Black-headed Canary. Travelling towards Langebaan we stopped for a spectacular Black Harrier and at a nearby gorge we found the endemic Protea Canary followed by Chestnut-banded Plover at a local saltworks.

Our next stop was the West Coast National Park, an area protecting coastal grassland and scrub as well as lagoons and tidal marshes. We had an excellent morning's birding here seeing Ostrich with chicks, endemic Grey-winged Francolin and Southern Black Korhaan.

Our stay on the Cape Peninsula was very enjoyable with excellent accommodation and a variety of restaurants producing delicious seafood meals and wonderful Cape wines. Here we had several targets to chase and after some careful planning we scored well with excellent looks at Cape Rockjumper, Victorin's Warbler, Cape Sugarbird, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk and even the ultra-skulking Knysna Warbler showed well for all to see! Due to inclement weather we were not able to do a pelagic, however some sea-watching off Cape Point produced Yellow-nosed Albatross and White-chinned Petrel. A visit to the Jackass Penguin colony was a highlight for everyone.



Thereafter we enjoyed a short stay in the De Hoop area that produced the endemic Knysna Woodpecker as well as Stanley Bustard, Cape Vulture, Agulhas Clapper Lark and the elegant Blue Crane (South Africa's national bird). A real treat though was watching a pair of Verreaux's Eagle hunting and we witnessed them catching an adult Helmeted Guineafowl.

We then made our way to the coastal city of Durban for our eastern leg of the tour. Arriving late afternoon in Durban (KwaZulu/Natal Province) we drove straight to our hotel in Hilton unpacked and then headed to Midmar Game Reserve for a night drive. Two new mammal ticks were noted during the remaining daylight hours, the scarce but elegant Black Wildebeest was seen running in herds across the plains and the tiny grassland specialist and the Oribi (a scarce grassland antelope) was eventually sighted. After dark we watched a Spotted Eagle-Owl perched on a fence.

A pre-breakfast trip to a nearby mistbelt forest patch produced stunning views of a male Buff-spotted Flufftail, obliging African Goshawk, Olive Bushshrike, secretive Barratt's Warbler, sought after Bush Blackcap and beautiful White-starred Robin. Our visit to the Karkloof, a range of forested hills produced several key birds including Forest Buzzard, all three Cranes, confiding Lemon Dove, magnificent Knysna Turaco, stunning Narina Trogon, ventriloquial Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Orange Ground Thrush and elusive Green Twinspot.

A day visit up the Sani Pass into Lesotho was a highlight and included the striking Drakensberg Rockjumper, Southern Bald Ibis and great looks at several different Lammergeier. A night drive near Underberg produced a magnificent Cape Eagle-Owl.

En route to Eshowe we stopped off at another beautiful forest that produced the rare Cape Parrot, moving on to some rolling mistbelt grasslands, a site for the rare and endangered Blue Swallow, a short search revealed great sightings of this stunning species.

At Eshowe we spent an enjoyable couple of hours in the canopy tower at Dhlinda Forest seeing such gems as Purple-crested Turaco, raucous Trumpeter Hornbills, a dazzling Emerald Cuckoo and White-eared Barbet. A forest trail produced the cryptic Spotted Ground-Thrush and tiny Blue Duiker. A mid morning visit to the remote Ngoye Forest gave us excellent looks at the range restricted Green (Woodward's) Barbet as well as Yellow-streaked Greenbul. A short drive from here and we were watching another range restricted species, the Palmnut Vulture. This strikingly plumaged



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black and white bird was seen perched on its favourite feeding tree, the Raphia Palm.

A visit to St.Lucia was memorable with great sightings of many specials including Woodward's Batis, Brown Scrub-Robin, Saddle-billed Stork, Southern Banded Snake-Eagle, Livingstone's Turaco, Crowned Hornbill, Four-colored Bushshrike, Rudd's Apalis and an unexpected Striped Pipit. En route to Mkhuze we were very fortunate to find a pair of the localized Lemon-breasted Canary.

Our days at Mkhuze were bird-filled and the highlights were many and included African Pygmy Goose, displaying Black-bellied Bustard, African Cuckoo-Hawk, magnificent Crowned Eagle perched right next to the road, White-throated Robin-Chat, delightfully marked Pink-throated Twinspot, the scarce Neergaard's Sunbird, crepuscular African Broadbill and huge Lappet-faced Vulture. A quick visit to Pongola Game Reserve produced superb views of calling Shelley's Francolin, striking female Bennett's Woodpecker and Red-billed Buffalo Weaver.

We then drove up to the high altitude grasslands around Wakkerstroom well-known for its many rare and range restricted species. Walking the grasslands and driving the roads we eventually found most of the specials. These included several sightings of the smart Blue Bustard, Barrow's (White-bellied) Korhaan, Coqui Francolin, Secretarybird, the rare and endangered Rudd's Lark, Pink-billed Lark, Yellow-breasted and African Rock Pipit. We also enjoyed superb scope views of Spot-necked Otter and a night drive produced great views of Grass and Marsh Owl as well as the rare Black-footed Cat and Striped Weasel.



The last few days of our tour were based at Polokwane in Northern Province. En route from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane we found Barred Wren-Warbler, Southern Pied Babbler, Cut-throat Finch, Magpie Shrike and Southern White-crowned Shrike. Polokwane Game Reserve produced the goods and the highlights included a pair of African Hawk-Eagle, endemic Short-clawed Lark, Groundscraper Thrush, Great Sparrow, and stunning Violet-eared Waxbill. Whilst birding around the forested slopes of Magoebaskloof we found Brown-backed Honeybird, stunning Black-fronted Bushshrike and enjoyed lunch while watching a magnificent Bat Hawk.

En Route from Polokwane to Johannesburg we found nesting Red-headed Weaver and then the tension mounted as we neared the site for the rarest breeding bird in South Africa - the Taita Falcon. Shouts of joy rung the air as this small falcon was spotted and we enjoyed excellent scope views of this rare species.

This ended a highly successful and enjoyable Mega South Africa tour, what a trip!

Photos by David Hoddinott: Southern Black Korhaan, African Fish-Eagle, Drakensberg, Black-winged Lapwing and Bat Hawk.

BIRD SPECIES LIST (521 species)

E = Endemic, **NE** = Near-endemic, **BE** = Breeding-endemic. According to species in Southern Africa. **ESA** = Endemic to South Africa.

Ostrich Struthionidae

Ostrich

Struthio camelus

We had wonderful sightings of a pair with tiny chicks in West Coast NP.

NOTE: some authorities regard the subspecies S. c. molybdophanes of dry East Africa as a distinct species: Somali Ostrich. The form we observed would remain with the nominate Common Ostrich S. camelus. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Guineafowl Numididae

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Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Recorded on most days of the tour being especially common in Eastern South Africa.

NOTE: The nominate *N. m. meleagris* Helmeted Guineafowl, is sometimes regarded as distinct from the western (*N. m. galeata*) West African Guineafowl and the southern, which we recorded, (*N. m. mitrata*) Tufted Guineafowl. Clements does not as yet recognise these splits.

Crested Guineafowl

Guttera pucherani

We recorded up to a dozen birds daily in Mkhuze GR

NOTE: The West African form is sometimes split off as Western Crested Guineafowl (*G. edouardi*). Clements does not accept this split.

Pheasants & Partridges Phasianidae

Coqui Francolin

Peliperdix coqui

After an extensive search we were finally rewarded with fantastic views of a pair near Wakkerstroom.

Grey-winged Francolin (ESA)

Scleroptila afra

We had wonderful views of three near West Coast NP and a further pair in Wakkerstroom.

Red-winged Francolin

Scleroptila levaillantii

After almost dipping this species we had good flight views of one near Wakkerstroom.

Shelley's Francolin

Scleroptila shelleyi

We had stunning views of one calling (its wonderful call saying "I'll drink your beer") in Pongola NR, a difficult and seldom seen species.

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

We enjoyed several sightings including good views of two in Pongola NR and later again in Polokwane GR

NOTE: The subspecies *F.s.rovuma* of Coastal SE Africa is sometimes considered by authorities to be a separate species, Kirk's Francolin. This split is not currently accepted by Clements.

Cape Spurfowl (NE)

Pternistis capensis

We enjoyed numerous sightings in West Coast NP.

Natal Spurfowl (NE)

Pternistis natalensis

We had brief views of one in Dhlizha Forest.

Red-necked Spurfowl

Pternistis afer

We found one in Midmar GR and another at Xumeni Forest, a scarce species in South Africa.

Swainson's Spurfowl (NE)

Pternistis swainsonii

First seen in the Wakkerstroom area with further sightings in Polokwane GR.

Common Quail

Coturnix coturnix

We enjoyed good views of three near Wakkerstroom.

Swans, Geese & Ducks Anatidae

White-faced Whistling-Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

Seen at both Muzi Pan and Pongola Reserve.

White-backed Duck

Thalassornis leuconotus

A dozen birds were seen in the Karkloof. A scarce species in SA.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout South Africa, with peak numbers of eighty at Muzi Pan.

Knob-billed Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

A pair was seen flying in Mkhuze GR.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout South Africa.

South African Shelduck (NE)

Tadorna cana

This attractive species was recorded at several sites in the Cape Province including seven near Springbok.

African Pygmy Goose

Nettapus auritus

Seven of these attractive birds were seen well at Muzi Pan.

Cape Teal

Anas capensis

Seen at several sites including peak numbers of fifty at Strandfontein.

African Black Duck

Anas sparsa

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A pair of these shy duck's was seen near Sani Pass with further sightings at Wakkerstroom.

Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata*

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout South Africa, with highest numbers of fifty at Wakkerstroom.

Cape Shoveler (NE) *Anas smithii*

This near endemic was encountered at several wetlands including peak numbers of two hundred at Strandfontein.

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha*

Recorded at many wetlands throughout the tour.

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota*

Ten were seen at a roadside dam near Himeville and a further five at Muzi Pan.

Southern Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma*

Forty were seen at Strandfontein and thirty en route from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Maccoa Duck *Oxyura maccoa*

A dozen of these "stiff tails" were seen at Strandfontein and a further eight during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Penguins Spheniscidae

Jackass (African) Penguin (NE) *Spheniscus demersus*

About one hundred birds were seen at the Boulders colony on the Cape Peninsula, one of the many highlights of the trip!

Albatrosses Diomedidae

[Atlantic] Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos*

We had distant views of one during sea-watching off the Cape Peninsula.

NOTE: Some authorities split the Yellow-nosed Albatross into the Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross T. chlororhynchos, the nominate form, and the Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross T. carteri. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Shearwaters and Petrels Procellariidae

White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis*

We had reasonable views of six during sea-watching off the Cape Peninsula.

NOTE: The circumpolar White-chinned Petrel (P.a.aequinoctialis) is regarded by many authorities as a separate species from the endangered Spectacled Petrel (P.a.conspicillata), which breeds only on the Inaccessible Islands. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe (Dabchick) *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Seen regularly at wetlands throughout the tour.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

We had good views of several at Strandfontein and a further six in De Hoop NR.

Eared (Black-necked) Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Seen at several sites including peak numbers of two hundred at Strandfontein.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*

Seen on our first day at Kamfer's Dam where up to one hundred were seen and a further three hundred and fifty during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

NOTE: The Greater Flamingo (P. roseus) and the Caribbean Flamingo (P. ruber) are now considered monotypic species according to Clements.

Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor*

Several thousand birds were seen together at Kamfers Dam near Kimberley.

Storks Ciconidae

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Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>
One was seen at Ensumo Pan and a further eight birds at Muzi Pan.	
Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>
We enjoyed several sightings in the St.Lucia area.	
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
A flock of ten was seen during the drive from Calvinia to Langebaan.	
Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>
We had great scope views of a pair with chick at Lake St.Lucia.	
Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumeniferus</i>
We recorded this rather vulgar looking species at Pongola NR.	

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae

Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout South Africa.	
<i>NOTE: The Malagasy T. e. bernieri and Aldabran T. e. abbotti are sometimes split off as Madagascar White Ibis (T. bernieri)</i>	
Southern Bald Ibis (ESA)	<i>Geronticus calvus</i>
We had excellent looks at this impressive species in Lesotho and again at Wakkerstroom.	
Hadada Ibis (Hadedada)	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>
This noisy bird was recorded nearly daily at all locations throughout eastern South Africa.	
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
Small numbers were seen at Strandfontein with further sightings at Muzi Pan.	
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>
Recorded at several wetlands throughout South Africa including ten at Muzi Pan.	

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae

Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
First recorded at Strandfontein with a further sighting at De Hoop NR and finally one at Wakkerstroom.	
Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>
We had good views of one at Ensumo Pan, Mkhuze GR.	
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>
Commonly recorded throughout South Africa.	
<i>NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret (E. coromanda). This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.</i>	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Seen at wetland habitats throughout the tour.	
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>
This is typically a grassland species where grasshoppers, one of its favourite foods, can be found.	
Commonly recorded throughout South Africa.	
Goliath Heron	<i>Ardea goliath</i>
Several were seen at Ensumo Pan, Mkhuze GR and at Muzi Pan.	
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
Several sightings including peak numbers of six during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.	
<i>NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands A. p. bournei is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne's Heron.</i>	
Great (White) Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Commonly seen at wetlands in KwaZulu Natal.	
<i>NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.</i>	
Yellow-billed (Intermediate) Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>
A single bird was recorded at Muzi Pan.	
<i>NOTE: This group may be split into 3 species, the Africa Yellow-billed Egret (E. brachyrhyncha) (the form we recorded), Plumed Egret (E. plumifera) and the nominate Intermediate Egret. This split is as yet not recognised by Clements.</i>	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Recorded at wetlands throughout the tour.	

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NOTE: Clements lumps Little, Western Reef (E. gularis) and Madagascar's Dimorphic (E. dimorpha) Egret into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.

Hamerkop Scopidae

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

This unusual bird, placed in its own family, was first seen during the drive from Brandvlei to Port Nolloth with further sighting in Eastern South Africa.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

We encountered small numbers at West Coast NP, Strandfontein and Muzi Pan.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens

We had great scope views of two at Ensumo Pan, Mkhuze GR.

Boobies and Gannets Sulidae

Cape Gannet (BE)

Morus capensis

Up to one hundred were seen during our sea watching off the Cape Peninsula.

Cormorants & Shags Phalacrocoracidae

Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

Recorded on many days at almost all wetlands sites in eastern South Africa.

Crowned Cormorant (NE)

Phalacrocorax coronatus

Our first sighting was of eight birds at Port Nolloth with a further sighting of a single bird at Boulders.

Bank Cormorant (NE)

Phalacrocorax neglectus

Up to fifty were seen at Port Nolloth.

White-breasted (Great) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax lucidus

This common species was seen at most wetland sites on tour, both at the coast and inland.

NOTE: The white-breasted African subspecies of the widely distributed Great Cormorant P. carbo is sometimes considered a different species: P. lucidus.

Cape Cormorant (BE)

Phalacrocorax capensis

This is the common saltwater cormorant around the Cape and we saw up to a thousand birds roosting on rocks along the coast at Port Nolloth.

Anhinga & Darter Anhingidae

(African) Darter

Anhinga melanogaster (rufa)

Small numbers were seen at scattered wetlands throughout South Africa with peak numbers of six at Ensumo Pan.

NOTE: The resident African form P. rufa is sometimes lumped with the Asian P. melanogaster and the enlarged species called Darter. Clements uses the latter treatment of lumping these forms.

Falcons & Caracaras Falconidae

Pygmy Falcon

Polyhierax semitorquatus

We had a great sighting of one near Kenhardt.

Common (Eurasian/Rock) Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

Frequently recorded in Western South Africa.

NOTE: Clements has not split the distinctive Rock Kestrel F.t.rupicolis we observed, which he lumps as a subspecies of the Eurasian Kestrel. Many authorities accept this split.

Greater Kestrel

Falco rupicoloides

Regularly encountered around Brandvlei, Port Nolloth and Springbok.

Lanner Falcon

Falco biarmicus

We enjoyed our first sighting of this powerful *Falco* near Brandvlei with further sightings at Port Nolloth.

Taita Falcon

Falco fasciinucha

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We enjoyed excellent scope views of this rare raptor during the drive from Polokwane to Johannesburg.

Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae

Secretarybird

Sagittarius serpentarius

We were ecstatic to have a superb sighting in grassland at De Hoop NR with a further sighting of a pair at Wakkerstroom. This amazing bird is by no means a guaranteed sighting on any trip in Southern Africa and always a lucky find.

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

One was seen briefly in De Hoop NR.

African Cuckoo-Hawk

Aviceda cuculoides

We had brief views of one near Cape Vidal and a superb sighting of a juvenile in Mkhuze GR.

Bat Hawk

Macheiramphus alcinus

We enjoyed excellent scope views of one in Magoebaskloof.

Black-winged Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Seen throughout South Africa on virtually every day of the tour.

NOTE: Clements has split the two species Black-winged Kite (Elanus caeruleus) of the Old World and White-tailed Kite (Elanus leucurus) of the New World. This split is not universally accepted.

Black (Yellow-billed) Kite

Milvus migrans

Recorded on most days at most sites throughout the tour. We saw particularly good numbers in Zululand often in excess of ten birds daily.

NOTE: This locally breeding form of the Black Kite M. migrans is considered by most authorities as a distinct species, Yellow-billed Kite M. parasitus.

African Fish-Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

The call of this familiar species is the signature sound of the African wild. Our first sighting was of a bird at Strandfontein with many more sightings in Eastern South Africa.

Palmnut Vulture

Gypohierax angolensis

A single of these stunning birds was found in the Ralphia Palms at Mtunzini.

Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier)

Gypaetus barbatus

We were fortunate to see at least six different individuals of these world-class raptors at Sani Pass.

(African) White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

Up to ten were seen sitting on pylons en route to Kimberley and several seen nesting in Mkhuze GR.

Cape Vulture (Griffon) (BE)

Gyps coprotheres

We had wonderful views of thirty-one in De Hoop NR and a further fifteen in the Drakensberg Mountain range.

Lappet-faced Vulture

Aegyptius tracheliotus

We had good views of two in Mkhuze Game Reserve.

Black-chested Snake-Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

Our first sighting was in the Brandvlei area with a further sighting at Mkhuze GR.

Southern Banded Snake Eagle (Fasciated)

Circaetus fasciolatus

Two of these scarce raptors were seen exceptionally well near Cape Vidal.

Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

Two birds were seen well in Mkhuze GR. One of the world's most beautiful raptors!

African Marsh-Harrier

Circus ranivorus

Our first sighting was of three in the West Coast NP with a further sighting of an incredible nine at Wakkerstroom.

Black Harrier (NE)

Circus maurus

This spectacular raptor was first recorded during the drive from Port Nolloth to Springbok with further sightings in the West Coast NP at De Hoop.

African Harrier-Hawk

Polyboroides typus

We enjoyed good views of several including two near St. Lucia.

(Southern) Pale Chanting Goshawk (NE)

Melierax canorus

We had many sightings throughout the dry Western areas of South Africa, including peak numbers of twenty en route from Kimberley to Brandvlei.

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Gabar Goshawk

Micronisus gabar

We had a good sighting of one in Mkhuze GR.

African Goshawk

Accipiter tachiro

One was seen displaying above our lodge near Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and later we enjoyed crippling views of one in Doreen Clark NR.

NOTE: The West African forms are sometimes separated as Red-chested Goshawk (A. tousseneli).

Little Sparrowhawk

Accipiter minullus

We had brief views of one in the Hella-Hella valley.

Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk

Accipiter rufiventris

This is a rather uncommon raptor in South Africa and we were lucky to get fantastic views of a pair flying in Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Black Sparrowhawk

Accipiter melanoleucas

This very powerful forest dwelling *Accipiter* was observed on several occasions including one in West Coast NP.

Lizard Buzzard

Kaupifalco monogrammicus

We enjoyed a sighting of this handsome raptor in Mkhuze Game Reserve.

Common Buzzard

Buteo buteo

We had good views of three in the Wakkerstroom area.

Forest Buzzard (ESA)

Buteo trizonatus

We had brief views of one near Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and another in the Karkloof.

Jackal Buzzard (NE)

Buteo rufofuscus

First recorded en route from Brandvlei to Port Nolloth and encountered regularly thereafter.

Verreaux's Eagle

Aquila verreauxii

Our first sighting was of three en route from Brandvlei to Port Nolloth with a further sighting during the drive from Calvinia to Langebaan and finally amazing views of a pair hunting and catching a Helmeted Guineafowl near De Hoop NR.

Wahlberg's Eagle

Aquila wahlbergi

We found several birds including two sitting on nests at Mkhuze Game Reserve.

African Hawk-Eagle

Hieraaetus spilogaster

We had good views of a pair in Polokwane Game Reserve.

Booted Eagle

Hieraaetus pennatus

We had great views of one in Springbok.

Martial Eagle

Polemaetus bellicosus

We had wonderful views of one near Kenhardt and another in Mkhuze GR.

Long-crested Eagle

Lophaetus occipitalis

We enjoyed many sightings of this regal bird with the bulk of the sightings coming from the Kwazulu-Natal Midlands.

Crowned Eagle

Stephanoaetus coronatus

We had good views of one in Mkhuze GR.

Bustards Otididae

Ludwig's Bustard

Neotus ludwigi

We had numerous excellent sightings, first recorded during the drive from Kimberley to Brandvlei, with peak numbers of twenty during the drive from Springbok to Calvinia.

Denham's (Stanley) Bustard

Neotis denhami

Eight of these wonderful birds were seen in the De Hoop NR and a further one near Wakkerstroom.

Barrow's Korhaan (ESA)

Eupodotis barrowii

Four birds were seen well in the Wakkerstroom area.

Blue Korhaan (ESA)

Eupodotis caerulescens

We saw up to four of these striking birds very well in the Wakkerstroom area.

Karoo Korhaan (NE)

Eupodotis vigorsii

We had an amazing twenty-one during the drive from Kimberley to Brandvlei.

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Red-crested Korhaan

Lophotis ruficrista

We heard one calling near Polokwane.

Southern Black Korhaan (ESA)

Afrotis afra

We had great views of one in West Coast NP. Certainly one of the world's most striking bustards.

*NOTE: Although formally lumped, Clements has now split the two forms; the localized Black Bustard of the SW Cape and the more widespread White-quilled Bustard *E. afroides*.*

Northern Black Korhaan (NE)

Afrotis afroides

We enjoyed regular sightings of this species in display flights around the Kimberley and Brandvlei areas.

Black-bellied Bustard (Korhaan)

Lissotis melanogaster

We had great sightings of one calling in Mkhuze GR with further sightings of one displaying near Wakkerstroom.

Flufftails Sarothruridae

Buff-spotted Flufftail

Sarothrura elegans

We had fantastic views of a male in Doreen Clark NR.

Red-chested Flufftail

Sarothrura rufa

A bird more often heard than seen. One was heard calling at Wakkerstroom marsh.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

African (~Water/Cape) Rail

Rallus caerulescens

We had superb views of two near Underberg.

Baillon's Crake

Porzana pusilla

We heard one calling in dense reeds in Wakkerstroom.

African Swamphen

Porphyrio madagascariensis

Several sightings including good views of a couple daily in Wakkerstroom.

*NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognised as distinct species. The form we recorded would then become African Swamphen (*P. madagascariensis*.) Other forms to be recognised may include Indian Swamphen (*P. poliocephalus*.) Philippine Swamphen (*P. pulverulentus*) and Eastern Swamphen (*P. melanotus*).*

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

A common bird, encountered at several wetland sites throughout the tour.

Red-knobbed Coot

Fulica cristata

As with the above species, good numbers were seen throughout the tour.

Cranes Gruidae

Grey Crowned Crane

Balearica regulorum

This exceptionally beautiful crane is also the regions' most frequently encountered. We had small flocks in the Natal Midlands and Drakensberg areas.

*NOTE: This southern form is sometimes lumped with Black Crowned Crane *B. pavonina* of West Africa.*

Blue Crane (E)

Anthropoides paradisea

We had good numbers of this wonderfully elegant bird. Peak numbers of eighty were seen in the De Hoop area. The national bird of South Africa.

Wattled Crane

Grus carunculata

We had wonderful views of a pair with chick in the grasslands of Karkloof.

Buttonquail Turnicidae

Kurrichane Buttonquail

Turnix sylvaticus

We had brief views of one during the drive from Dhlizha to Ngoye.

Thick-knees Burhinidae

Water Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus vermiculatus

Our first sighting was of a pair in De Hoop NR with a further sighting in Mkhuze GR.

Spotted Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus capensis

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We had great sightings of several including two en route from Johannesburg to Kimberley and a further two in West Coast NP.

Oystercatchers Haematopidae

African (Black) Oystercatcher (NE) *Haematopus moquini*

With a population of only 4800 it is fortunate that this species is commonly seen in most of the Western Cape. We encountered small numbers at a variety of coastal sites on the Cape Peninsula.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Small numbers were encountered fairly regularly on wetlands in both the east and west with our highest number of thirty at Muzi Pan.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Up to one hundred were seen at Strandfontein.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus*

Recorded almost daily at nearly all wetlands throughout South Africa.

Senegal Lapwing *Vanellus lugubris*

We had wonderful views of a pair with chicks in Mkhuzo GR and a further sighting of two near Muzi Pan.

Black-winged Lapwing *Vanellus melanopterus*

A flock of adults with chicks was seen in Midmar GR.

Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus*

Recorded at scattered sites throughout the tour.

African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus*

We encountered small numbers in the Wakkerstroom area.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

At least ten were seen in West Coast NP.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

We enjoyed good sightings of several at Muzi pan.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*

First seen in West Coast NP and peak numbers of twenty-five seen at Muzi Pan.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

A widespread and fairly common species. We enjoyed several sightings including one in De Hoop NR.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*

Peak numbers of twenty were seen on the beach at Port Nolloth.

Chestnut-banded Plover *Charadrius pallidus*

We had good views of three at Velddrift.

Jacanas Jacanidae

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus*

Commonly encountered gracing wetlands in the east. We had our highest number of twenty at Muzi Pan.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

African (Ethiopian) Snipe *Gallinago nigripennis*

We had good views of four at the Wakkerstroom wetland.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A flock of ten was seen in West Coast NP.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

We had good views of thirty in West Coast NP.

Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

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A single bird was seen in West Coast NP with a further sighting of one at Umlalazi NR.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

We had good views of three at Muzi Pan.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Ten were seen in West Coast NP with a further eight seen at Umlalazi NR.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

We observed small numbers at Darvill Bird Sanctuary and a further ten at Wakkerstroom.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

We found four at Umlalazi NR and a further two at Muzi Pan.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Four recorded at Port Nolloth and a further six in West Coast NP.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus*

Two were seen in the West Coast NP.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Thirty were seen in West Coast NP.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Up to twenty were seen in the West Coast NP with a further sighting of twenty at Muzi Pan.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Recorded in large numbers in West Coast NP and at Muzi Pan.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Small numbers seen at scattered sites including thirty at Muzi Pan.

Couriers & Pratincoles Glareolidae

Double-banded Courser *Rhinoptilus africanus*

We had good views of one during our night drive near Kimberley.

Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

A flock of twelve was seen at Muzi Pan.

Skuas & Gulls Laridae

Kelp Gull (NE) *Larus dominicanus*

Commonly recorded along the southern and Western Coast of South Africa. We estimated conservative counts of five hundred along the Cape Town coast.

NOTE: Recent work suggests that the Kelp Gull complex L. dominicanus may be split into as many as four species, the form we saw would become Cape Gull L. vetula which breeds in South Africa.

Grey-hooded Gull *Larus cirrocephalus*

Twenty en route from Johannesburg to Kimberley and ten at Muzi Pan.

Hartlaub's Gull (NE) *Larus hartlaubii*

Good numbers were seen daily around the Cape Peninsula.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

A count of sixty-six was made in West Coast NP with small numbers seen elsewhere.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Small numbers were recorded in West Coast NP and at Strandfontein.

Swift Tern *Sterna bergii*

Up to twenty were seen in West Coast NP with a further forty seen at Strandfontein.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Up to twenty were seen in West Coast NP.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*

Ten were seen at Ensumo Pan.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

A flock of thirty was seen at Ensumo Pan.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

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Namaqua Sandgrouse (NE)

Pterocles namaqua

Small numbers were seen daily around Brandvlei and Calvinia.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae

Common Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)

Columba livia

Common in urban centres throughout.

Speckled (Rock) Pigeon

Columba guinea

Commonly recorded in urban centres in the Cape and Highveld.

African Olive Pigeon

Columba arquatrix

We had good views of several at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and several others in Xumeni Forest.

Lemon Dove

Columba larvata

We had great views of three in the Karkloof. This shy bird is seldom seen well and we were lucky to get such good views.

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

Widespread and common in South Africa. Peak numbers of thirty were seen in Underberg.

Ring-necked Dove (Cape Turtle-Dove)

Streptopelia capicola

Widespread and common throughout Southern Africa, found in more open and drier country than the previous species.

Laughing (Palm) Dove

Streptopelia senegalensis

Commonly encountered at most locations on tour.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove

Turtur chalcospilos

Recorded in small numbers in Mkhuze GR.

Tambourine Dove

Turtur tympanistria

We had good views of one in Mkhuze GR.

Namaqua Dove

Oena capensis

Small numbers recorded daily in more open and drier country in Western SA.

African Green Pigeon

Treron calvus

We enjoyed good looks at several birds at Dhlinda Forest and St. Lucia.

Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

We had good views of one near Durban during the drive from Darvill to Eshowe.

Cape Parrot (ESA)

Poicephalus robustus

Six of these rare birds were seen at Xumeni Forest.

NOTE: This nominate brown-necked Podocarpus forest form of the Cape Parrot has been split off from the more widespread grey-headed savannah form (P. suahelicus), and is now considered to be one of the most endangered birds in Africa with a declining population of less than 600 individuals.

Brown-headed Parrot

Poicephalus cryptoxanthus

Two were seen (leader only) briefly flying over the Mkhuze River.

Turacos Musophagidae

Livingstone's Turaco

Tauraco livingstonii

We had great views of three of these smart birds in the dune forest at St Lucia.

Knysna Turaco (ESA)

Tauraco corythaix

We had great views of four in the Karkloof and a further one at Magoebaskloof.

Note: This species used to be lumped under the Green Turaco (T. persa), now split into four full species the others being Knysna Turaco T. corythaix, Livingstone's Turaco (T. livingstonii) and Schalow's Turaco (T. schalowi).

Purple-crested Turaco

Tauraco porphyreolophus

This attractive species was first seen at Dhlinda with further sightings in Mkhuze GR.

Grey Go-away-bird

Corythaixoides concolor

This species was first seen at Pongola NR with further sightings in Polokwane GR.

Cuckoos Cuculidae

Burchell's Coucal

Centropus burchelli

We had good views of several during the drive from Dhlinda Forest to Ngoye Forest.

*NOTE: Clements does not recognise the widely accepted split of the southern dark-browed Burchell's Coucal *C. burchelli* from the northerly White-browed Coucal *C. superciliosus*.*

Green Malkoha (Yellowbill)

Ceuthmochares aereus

Some of us had brief views of one in Ngoye Forest.

Dideric Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx caprius

We had great views of two males at Hella Hella.

Klaas's Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx klaas

We had wonderful views of a male in Doreen Clark NR.

African Emerald Cuckoo

Chrysococcyx cupreus

We had great views of two males in Dhlinda Forest.

Black Cuckoo

Cuculus clamosus

We had good views of one in St. Lucia.

Red-chested Cuckoo

Cuculus solitarius

We had great scope views of one near Underberg.

Old World Owls Tytonidae

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

We had wonderful views of a single bird during our night drive near Kimberley and another was seen in the early morning near Underberg.

Grass Owl

Tyto capensis

We had fantastic views of two at dusk at the Wakkerstroom marsh.

Typical Owls Strigidae

Cape Eagle-Owl

Bubo capensis

We had wonderful views of one during our night drive near Underberg.

Spotted Eagle-Owl

Bubo africanus

We had great views of three during our night drive near De Hoop NR.

*NOTE: Clements splits the northern, dark-eyed form Greyish Eagle-Owl (*B.cinerascens*) from the more southerly yellow-eyed Spotted Eagle-Owl *B. africanus*. This split is not widely accepted.*

African Wood Owl

Strix woodfordii

A single bird was seen very well in Eshowe.

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

One of these smart birds was seen in Mkhuze GR.

Marsh Owl

Asio capensis

Two birds were seen at dusk at the Wakkerstroom marsh.

Nightjars & Allies Caprimulgidae

Rufous-cheeked Nightjar

Caprimulgus rufigena

We had brief views of one during our night drive near Kimberley.

Fiery-necked Nightjar

Caprimulgus pectoralis

One was seen at De Hoop NR.

Swifts Apodidae

African Palm Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

Recorded at widely scattered sites throughout the tour.

Alpine Swift

Tachymarptis melba

First recorded at Kimberley with scattered sightings elsewhere.

Common Swift

Apus apus

Up to twenty were seen during the drive from St.Lucia to Mkhuze GR.

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African Black Swift

Apus barbatus

Recorded at scattered sites throughout the tour.

NOTE: The Fernando Po Swift (A.sladeniae) is often separated by authorities as a distinctive species from the much more widespread Black Swift (Apus barbatus) which we observed several times during our tour. Clements does not currently recognize this split.

Bradfield's Swift (NE)

Apus bradfieldi

We had wonderful views of ten near Port Nolloth.

Little Swift

Apus affinis

Recorded at widely scattered sites throughout the tour

Horus Swift

Apus horus

Two were seen at De Hoop and a further two at Ngoye Forest.

White-rumped Swift

Apus caffer

A summer breeding visitor seen at scattered sites throughout the tour.

Mousebirds Coliidae

Speckled Mousebird

Colius striatus

Recorded almost daily on the eastern leg of the tour.

White-backed Mousebird (NE)

Colius colius

First recorded in the Kimberley area, with further sightings at Calvinia.

Red-faced Mousebird

Urocolius indicus

We had good sightings of this classic bushveld species in Mkhuzé GR.

Trogons Trogonidae

Narina Trogon

Apaloderma narina

We had wonderful views of a male in the Karkloof, a pair in Dhlínza Forest and finally an obliging male in Mkhuzé GR.

Rollers Coraciidae

Lilac-breasted Roller

Coracias caudatus

This absolutely beautiful bird was first seen near Kimberley with further sightings in Mkhuzé GR.

NOTE: The Ethiopian C. c. lorti might be split as Blue-breasted Roller.

Broad-billed Roller

Eurystomus glaucurus

This recently arrived inter-African migrant was seen at Mkhuzé GR.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Brown-hooded Kingfisher

Halcyon albiventris

Small numbers were seen at St.Lucia and Mkhuzé GR.

Striped Kingfisher

Halcyon chelicuti

We found one in Mkhuzé GR.

African Pygmy Kingfisher

Ispidina picta

We had good views of one at St.Lucia.

Malachite Kingfisher

Alcedo cristata

We encountered this candescent little gem near Sani Pass and again en route from Dhlínza to Ngoye.

Half-collared Kingfisher

Alcedo semitorquata

We had good but brief views of one near Sani Pass.

Giant Kingfisher

Megaceryle maxima

Singles were seen at St. Lucia and Mkhuzé GR.

Pied Kingfisher

Ceryle rudis

This, the world's most widespread kingfisher, is common throughout South Africa. Peak numbers of six were seen at Umlalazi NR.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

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Little Bee-eater

Merops pusillus

We had good views of one in Mkhuze GR and another near Polokwane.

European Bee-eater

Merops apiaster

Small numbers were seen daily in the Brandvlei and Calvinia areas and a final sighting of twenty in Polokwane.

Hoopoes Upupidae

African Hoopoe

Upupa africana

This stunning bird was recorded at scattered sites throughout the tour. Peak numbers of four were seen in De Hoop NR.

*NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognised by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar (*U. marginalis*) and Eurasian *U. epops*. The white-winged African form is often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe (*U. senegalensis*) with the fourth species, the one we observed, being African Hoopoe (*U. africana*). However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African.*

Woodhoopoes Phoeniculidae

Green (Red-billed) Woodhoopoe

Phoeniculus purpureus

Flocks of these cackling beauties were seen in Mkhuze GR.

Common (Greater) Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

First seen near Kimberley with further sightings in Mkhuze GR.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Crowned Hornbill

Tockus alboterminatus

We had wonderful views of three at St.Lucia.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill (NE)

Tockus leucomelas

Recorded in small numbers in Mkhuze and Polokwane GR's.

Trumpeter Hornbill

Bycanistes bucinator

This odd sounding Hornbill, resembling something of a wailing baby, was seen at St.Lucia and Mkhuze GR.

Barbets Ramphastidae

White-eared Barbet

Stactolaema leucotis

Several were seen at Dhlinza Forest and St Lucia.

Green (Woodward's) Barbet

Stactolaema olivacea

We enjoyed excellent looks at a pair in Ngoye Forest. Extremely localised in Southern Africa.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus bilineatus

Several were seen in Dhlinza Forest and at St Lucia.

Red-fronted Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus pusillus

A very vocal bird of the eastern region, we saw a single bird at Ngoye Forest and another in Mkhuze GR.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird

Pogoniulus chrysoconus

We heard one calling during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Acacia Pied Barbet (NE)

Tricholaema leucomelas

Recorded at Kimberley, Brandvlei and Springbok.

Black-collared Barbet

Lybius torquatus

Small numbers were seen daily at St Lucia and Mkhuze GR.

Crested Barbet

Trachyphonus vaillantii

A very brightly patterned and rather handsome Barbet, we saw two at our lodge near Hilton and a further one in Mkhuze GR.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae

Brown-backed Honeybird

Prodotiscus regulus

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We had good views of two in display flight at Magoebaskloof. A scarce species in this area.

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*

One was seen in De Hoop NR and another in Dhlinda Forest.

NOTE: The Thick-billed Honeyguide (I. conirostris) of West and Central Africa forms a superspecies with the more widespread Lesser Honeyguide (I. minor), which we observed during our tour. This taxonomic split is recognized by Clements.

Scaly-throated Honeyguide *Indicator variegatus*

We had excellent scope looks of one in the Karkloof.

Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator*

We had fantastic views of two in Mkhuzi GR. This is the only honey guide that actually guides interested parties to honey.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

Red-throated Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis*

We enjoyed great views of a pair in the garden at our lodge near Hilton and a further one at Sani Pass.

Bennett's Woodpecker *Campethera bennettii*

We had stunning scope views of a female near Pongola Nature Reserve.

Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni*

After hearing this species on several occasions we were finally rewarded with good views of one in Mkhuzi.

Knysna Woodpecker (ESA) *Campethera notata*

We had stunning views of one in De Hoop NR.

Ground Woodpecker (ESA) *Geocolaptes olivaceus*

Excellent views were had of this stunning endemic at Cape Point and Sani Pass.

Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens*

Seen at scattered sites throughout the tour.

Olive Woodpecker *Dendropicos griseocephalus*

We had good views of two in Doreen Clark NR.

Broadbills Eurylaimidae

African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis*

After much effort some of us had wonderful views of one in Mkhuzi GR.

Wattle-eyes and Batises Platysteiridae

Cape Batis (E) *Batis capensis*

Small numbers of this endearing little bird were noted in most forested habitats. We enjoyed good sightings at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

NOTE: Cape Batis is divided by Clements into seven subspecies, two of which are regarded by African authorities as separate species, Malawi Batis B. dimorpha and Reichenow's Batis B. reichenowi.

Woodward's Batis *Batis fratrum*

This scarce batis was found calling at St Lucia and we enjoyed excellent views of a stunning male.

Chin-spot Batis *Batis molitor*

Seen in Mkhuzi and Polokwane GR's.

Pririt Batis (NE) *Batis pririt*

This dry country species was seen well near Brandvlei.

Bushshrikes & Allies Malaconotidae

White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus*

We had wonderful views of eight in Mkhuzi GR.

Retz's Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii*

A flock of six were seen at Kumasinga Hide in Mkhuzi GR.

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti*

We enjoyed great views of a pair of this lovely species in Mkhuzi GR.

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Black-fronted Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus nigrifrons

After an extensive search we had great views of one at Magoebaskloof.

Olive Bushshrike (E)

Chlorophoneus olivaceus

We had wonderful views of two in Doreen Clark NR.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus

This critter is a regular inhabitant of the bushveld biome. We had several sightings in Mkhuze GR.

Four-colored Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus quadricolor

This candescent gem is incredibly difficult to see well but we eventually had good looks at a superb male in St Lucia. Far more often heard than seen.

NOTE: This species is currently lumped by Clements with Perrin's Bush-Shrike (T.q.viridis) of N Angola to S Congo and NW Zambia. Most authorities regard these birds as separate species.

Bokmakierie (NE)

Telophorus zeylonus

This very beautiful Bush Shrike was first seen in Brandvlei with many further sightings.

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

We had good views of two in Mkhuze GR.

Southern Tchagra (ESA)

Tchagra tchagra

Up to five birds were watched displaying at De Hoop NR.

Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegalus

A single bird was seen at Mkhuze GR.

NOTE: Moroccan Tchagra T. s. cucullata of northwest Africa may be split from the nominate form which we recorded in South Africa. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Black-backed Puffback

Dryoscopus cubla

This is a fairly common shrike and we had several sightings in wooded habitat throughout the east.

Southern Boubou (E)

Laniarius ferrugineus

This very conspicuous songster was first seen at Cape Point with further sightings in the Natal Midlands.

Crimson-breasted Shrike

Laniarius atrococcineus

We were captivated by two of these strikingly plumaged birds near our lodge in Kimberley with a further sighting at Polokwane Reserve.

Brubru

Nilaus afer

We found one in Kimberley and a further three in Mkhuze GR. This is a signature bushveld species that often associates with flocks.

NOTE: This previously monotypic genus might be split 4 ways: Northern Brubru N. afer, Black-browed Brubru (N. nigritemporalis), Angola Brubru (N. affinis) and Southern Brubru (N. brubru). Only the Southern Brubru occurs in South Africa. Clements does not as yet recognise these splits.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae

Grey Cuckooshrike

Coracina caesia

Seen very well in the Karkloof and Dhlinda forests.

Black Cuckoo-shrike

Campephaga flava

Our first sighting was of one at Hella Hella with further sightings in Mkhuze GR.

Shrikes Laniidae

Magpie (Long-tailed) Shrike

Urolestes melanoleucus

This wonderfully clad bird sports an elegant tail and is refreshingly vocal and was seen during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Southern White-crowned Shrike

Eurocephalus anguitimens

We had good views of five during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Common Fiscal (Shrike)

Lanius collaris

This is a common bird throughout South Africa and was seen on almost every day of the tour.

NOTE: The form L. marwitsi is sometimes split off as Uhehe Fiscal occurring in East Africa.

Old World Orioles Oriolidae

Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

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We had several sightings in the KwaZulu Natal midlands.

Drongos Dicruridae

Square-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus ludwigii

We had good views of two in St. Lucia.

Fork-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus adsimilis

We recorded this species almost daily at most sites visited in eastern South Africa.

NOTE: Older versions of Clements lump the forest dwelling Velvet-mantled Drongo (D. modestus) of East and West Africa within Fork-tailed Drongo D. adsimilis but the split has been recognized in recent Clements updates as well as by most other authorities.

Monarch Flycatchers Monarchidae

Blue-mantled (African) Crested Flycatcher

Trochocercus cyanomelas

This very restless species was observed once in Doreen Clark NR and again in Ngoye Forest.

African Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone viridis

Seen in small numbers on several occasions in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands.

NOTE: The northern races of this widespread African species which includes the nominate form are likely to be separated from the southern races which would become Grey-headed Paradise-Flycatcher (T. plumbeiceps). Beside plumage and distributional differences, only the northern forms display polymorphism in males. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

House Crow

Corvus splendens

Several of these introduced birds were seen at Cape Town International Airport.

Cape (Black) Crow

Corvus capensis

First recorded near Brandvlei and seen almost daily thereafter.

Pied Crow

Corvus albus

Seen at most sites throughout the tour our first birds were seen en route to Kimberley.

White-necked Raven

Corvus albicollis

A Corvid that prefers mountainous areas, was first recorded near Calvinia. Our highest totals were of six around Sani Pass.

Rockjumpers Chaetopidae

Cape Rockjumper (ESA)

Chaetops frenatus

We enjoyed excellent looks as this attractive endemic bounced around on boulders in the Hottentots Holland mountains.

Drakensberg Rock-jumper (ESA)

Chaetops aurantius

Easier to see than its congener, this is a remarkable attractive bird! We had three birds on that wonderful day up Sani Pass.

Tits Paridae

Southern Black Tit (NE)

Parus niger

Several sightings including peak numbers of four in Mkhuze GR.

Ashy Tit

Parus cinerascens

We had good sightings of two in Polokwane GR.

Grey Tit (E)

Parus afer

We had good views of one in Springbok and another near Calvinia.

Penduline Tits Remizidae

Grey (African) Penduline Tit

Anthoscopus caroli

One of the smallest birds on the continent, we found a pair in Mkhuze GR.

Cape (Southern) Penduline Tit

Anthoscopus minutus

We enjoyed excellent scope views of a pair near Port Nolloth.

Swallows & Martins Hirundinidae

Black Saw-wing (Swallow)

Psalidoprocne pristoptera

We enjoyed sightings at De Hoop NR, Karkloof and Muzi Pan.

NOTE: The sawwing complex, which occurs throughout Africa, has recently been lumped into a single species by Clements. The exception is the Fanti Sawwing (P.obscura), which occurs from Senegambia to E Nigeria and SW Cameroon.

Grey-rumped Swallow

Pseudhirundo griseopyga

We had good views of one during the drive from Dhlinda Forest to Ngoye Forest.

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin

Riparia paludicola

We encountered small numbers throughout the tour.

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia

Two were seen during the drive from St.Lucia to Mkhuzi GR.

Banded Martin

Riparia cincta

Small numbers were seen at Wakkerstroom.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Up to two hundred were seen in Mkhuzi GR with scattered sightings elsewhere.

White-throated Swallow

Hirundo albigularis

A very smart looking swallow indeed, three seen daily at Wakkerstroom with scattered sightings elsewhere.

Wire-tailed Swallow

Hirundo smithii

Another very handsome bird, our first sighting was of one en route from Johannesburg to Kimberley with a further sighting at St.Lucia.

NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form that would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow that would be H. filifera. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Blue Swallow

Hirundo atrocaerulea

After a nervous wait we were finally rewarded with stunning views of a pair near Richmond.

Pearl-breasted Swallow

Hirundo dimidiata

We had good looks at three in the De Hoop area.

Rock Martin

Ptyonoprogne fuligula

The bulk of our sightings came from the Cape where small numbers were observed in rocky habitats. Peak numbers of ten were seen in Calvinia.

NOTE: This confusing polytypic complex is being reviewed for multi-species splitting. Within the African populations, three potential species exist. The southern African nominate form P. f. fuligula would remain as Rock Martin and the more northern populations would become Red-throated Rock Martin (P. pusilla). Palearctic birds would become Pale Crag Martin (P. obsoleta). Clements does not as yet recognise any of these splits.

Common House Martin

Delichon urbicum

We had good views of a flock of ten at Sani Pass.

Greater Striped-Swallow (BE)

Cecropis cucullata

An intra-African migrant, seen at most high altitude grassland sites in the east and at lower altitudes in the Western Cape was first recorded near Johannesburg on the first day of the tour.

Lesser Striped-Swallow

Cecropis abyssinica

Recorded daily at all lower elevation locations visited in eastern South Africa, with highest numbers of twenty recorded at Hella Hella.

Red-breasted (Rufous-chested) Swallow

Cecropis semirufa

We had great sightings of this massive swallow in the Mkhuzi and Polokwane areas.

South African Cliff Swallow (BE)

Petrochelidon spilodera

First seen en route to Kimberley with further sightings at Wakkerstroom.

Larks Alaudidae

Melodious Lark

Mirafra cheniana

A single bird was seen in display flight in Polokwane GR.

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafra africana

We found three during the drive from Eshowe to Ngoye.

NOTE: The Rufous-naped Lark is divided by Clements into twenty-three subspecies throughout most of Africa. We observed both M.a.africana in S. Natal.

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Flappet Lark

Mirafra rufocinnamomea

We enjoyed good views of one displaying in Mkhuze GR.

[Cape] Clapper Lark

Mirafra apiata

We enjoyed excellent views of two during the drive from Calvinia to West Coast NP.

NOTE: This species may be split into as many as three species, Cape Clapper Lark, M.apiata the one we observed, Eastern Clapper Lark, M.fasciolata and Agulhas Clapper Lark, M.marjoriae. These splits are not yet widely accepted.

[Agulhas] Clapper Lark (ESA)

Mirafra marjoriae

We enjoyed great views of three displaying in De Hoop NR.

NOTE: See above species.

Fawn-colored Lark

Mirafra africanoides

One was seen during the drive from Calvinia to West Coast NP with a further sighting of one in Polokwane

Sabota Lark (NE) *Mirafra sabota*

Small numbers were seen in Mkhuze and Polokwane GR's. We observed three of the thick-billed western form during the drive from Kimberley to Brandvlei.

NOTE: Some authorities consider the thickbilled form, Bradfield's Lark M. bradfieldi of Western Southern Africa a separate species. This is not widely accepted.

Rudd's Lark (ESA)

Heteromirafra ruddi

We had great luck with this exceptionally localised endemic. After a lengthy search we were finally rewarded with a great sighting of one at Wakkerstroom.

Karoo Long-billed Lark

Certhilauda subcoronata

We enjoyed good sightings of several in the Brandvlei area.

Eastern Long-billed Lark (ESA) *Certhilauda semitorquata*

We were lucky to find two on a hill in Wakkerstroom.

Cape Long-billed Lark (ESA)

Certhilauda curvirostris

Four were seen exceptionally well near Port Nolloth.

Agulhas Long-billed Lark (ESA)

Certhilauda brevirostris

Three were seen in the De Hoop area.

Short-clawed Lark

Certhilauda chuana

We had great looks of three of this scarce species at Polokwane GR.

Karoo Lark (ESA)

Certhilauda albescens

At least eight were seen in the Port Nolloth area.

Barlow's Lark (NE)

Certhilauda barlowi

We enjoyed good views of three at Port Nolloth.

Red Lark

Certhilauda burra

Three of these scarce birds were seen very well at Brandvlei.

Spike-heeled Lark (NE)

Chersomanes albofasciata

Good numbers were seen in the Brandvlei area with further sightings at Wakkerstroom.

NOTE: The Tanzanian isolate C. a. beesleyi is considered a separate species by some authorities, Beesley's Lark

Red-capped Lark

Calandrella cinerea

The most commonly recorded lark on the tour, first recorded near Kimberley.

NOTE: The African Red-capped Lark complex (C. cinerea) was lumped within the Greater Short-toed Lark complex (C. brachydactyla) but is now considered distinct by most authorities. Several distinctive groupings have now been split off from Red-capped Lark, including Blanford's Lark of Ethiopia (C. blanfordi).

Pink-billed Lark

Spizocorys conirostris

We had a great sighting of two birds in the Wakkerstroom area.

Sclater's Lark

Spizocorys scalteri

After an extensive search we were rewarded with great sightings of two near Pofadder.

Stark's Lark

Eremalauda starki

Small flocks were seen near Brandvlei.

Large-billed (Southern Thick-billed) Lark (ESA) *Galerida magnirostris*

Seen at several localities including peak numbers of ten near De Hoop NR.

Black-eared Sparrow-Lark

Eremopterix australis

We enjoyed good looks at small flocks in the Brandvlei area.

Grey-backed Sparrow-lark

Eremopterix verticalis

We recorded small numbers in the Calvinia area.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Red-faced Cisticola

Cisticola erythrops

One was seen well during the drive from Dhlinda Forest to Ngoye Forest.

NOTE: Lepe Cisticola (C.e.lepe) found in Angola is often regarded as a separate species from Red-faced Cisticola. This split is not accepted by Clements.

Lazy Cisticola

Cisticola aberrans

We had good views of two near Xumeni Forest.

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chiniana

First recorded at St Lucia with further sightings at Mkhuze GR.

Red-headed (Grey-backed) Cisticola (NE)

Cisticola subruficapilla

The common cisticola in the Western Cape, we had our highest day count of fifteen birds on our day at Rooi Els.

Wailing Cisticola

Cisticola lais

A denizen of rocky hillsides, we saw four during our day up Sani Pass.

NOTE: This species is often split from Lynes Cisticola C. l. distincta, which occurs in East Africa.

Rufous-winged Cisticola

Cisticola galactotes

One was recorded at the St Lucia estuary.

NOTE: This species is often split from Winding Cisticola, C.marginatus.

Levaillant's (Tinkling) Cisticola

Cisticola tinniens

A common cisticola recorded at many wetland locations throughout South Africa. We had good views at Langebaan, the West Coast NP and around Pietermaritzburg.

Croaking Cisticola

Cisticola natalensis

We had wonderful views of two near Ngoye Forest.

Neddicky (Piping Cisticola)

Cisticola fulvicapilla

We had wonderful sightings of two at Rooi Els.

Zitting Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

We found two near Ngoye Forest.

Cloud Cisticola

Cisticola textrix

Two were seen well at Tienie Versveld NR.

Pale-crowned Cisticola

Cisticola cinnamomeus

One was seen well at Ngoye Forest.

Rufous-eared Warbler (E)

Malcorus pectoralis

We had excellent looks at several of these beautiful birds in the Port Nolloth area.

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

This feisty little warbler was recorded near Xumeni Forest.

Black-chested Prinia

Prinia flavicans

First recorded at Kimberley with further sighting near Brandvlei.

Karoo Prinia (E)

Prinia maculosa

This replaces the above species in the Western Cape and small numbers were noted on all but one day in that region.

NOTE: This species used to be lumped with Drakensberg Prinia (P hypoxantha) as Spotted Prinia but is now considered a separate species by most authorities including Clements.

Drakensberg Prinia (ESA)

Prinia hypoxantha

Small numbers were seen in the Karkloof and at Sani Pass.

NOTE: Refer above Karoo Prinia.

Namaqua Warbler (Prinia) (E)

Phragmacia substriata

Good views of one bird were had near Calvinia.

Bar-throated Apalis

Apalis thoracica

We enjoyed sightings at Paleisheuvel and at De Hoop Nature Reserve.

NOTE: Forms of Bar-throated Apalis are split by some African authorities as Namuli Apalis (A. lynesi), which is endemic to Mt. Namuli in N. Mozambique, Taita Apalis (A. fuscigularis) found only in the Taita Hills of SE Kenya, and Yellow-throated Apalis (A. flavigularis), which is endemic to S. Malawi. There is likely to be further splitting of this group.

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Rudd's Apalis (E)

Apalis ruddi

This range-restricted endemic is fairly common in Maputaland. We had great views of two at St. Lucia and a further one in Mkhuze GR.

Yellow-breasted Apalis

Apalis flavida

We enjoyed several sightings around St Lucia and Mkhuze.

NOTE: This widespread polytypic African species is likely to be split into three or more species. Clements does not as yet recognise any split. The form we recorded would remain in the nominate grouping.

Green-backed Camaroptera (Bleating Warbler) *Camaroptera brachyura*

A dweller of thick undergrowth, we had several sightings in Zululand.

*NOTE: Most authorities now recognise the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms *C. brevicaudata*. We encountered the green-backed form in South Africa. Clements still lumps these two groups.*

Barred Wren-Warbler

Calamonastes fasciolatus

We had wonderful views of one en route from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Cinnamon-breasted Warbler

Euryptila subcinnamomea

We had excellent close looks at this often unobtrusive endemic near Springbok.

Family Uncertain Incertae sedis

Fairy Warbler (NE)

Stenostira scita

Our first sighting was of one in Kimberley with a further sighting of one at Nieuwoudville waterfall.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

African Red-eyed Bulbul

Pycnonotus nigricans

First seen at Kimberley with further sightings at Brandvlei and Springbok.

Cape Bulbul (ESA)

Pycnonotus capensis

We saw this species daily in the Western Cape. Peak numbers of a dozen were seen on the Cape Peninsula.

Dark-capped (Common, Black-eyed) Bulbul

Pycnonotus tricolor

Recorded daily at virtually all locations visited in eastern Southern Africa with daily tallies occasionally in excess of twenty birds.

*NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognised as distinct species within the super-species Common Bulbul *P. barbatus*. The form that we saw in South Africa, *P. tricolor* has been split as Dark-capped Bulbul by some authorities. Clements does not recognize this split.*

Sombre Greenbul (Bulbul)

Andropadus importunus

A bird that is far more often heard than seen and encountered over much of the country. We enjoyed great views of one in Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Yellow-bellied Greenbul (Bulbul)

Chlorocichla flaviventris

First seen at Ngoye Forest with further sighting in St Lucia.

Terrestrial Brownbul (Bulbul)

Phyllastrephus terrestris

Seen at Doreen Clark NR, Dhlinda and St. Lucia.

Yellow-streaked Greenbul

Phyllastrephus flavostriatus

First seen at Ngoye Forest with further sightings at Magoebaskloof.

Family Uncertain Incertae sedis

Eastern Nicator

Nicator gularis

We had wonderful views of one in Mkhuze GR.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae

Victorin's Warbler (ESA)

Cryptillas victorini

We all had close looks at this attractive endemic at Rooi Els.

Little Rush Warbler

Bradypterus baboecala

This is a skulking tenant of reedbeds that seldom shows itself well. We had superb sightings of six birds in West Coast NP.

Knysna Warbler (ESA)

Bradypterus sylvaticus

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After an extensive search we were treated to fantastic views of this mega-skulker near Kirstenbosch.

Barratt's Warbler (NE) *Bradypterus barratti*

A confiding individual showed well in Doreen Clark NR.

Cape Grassbird (E) *Sphenoeacus afer*

Small numbers of these lovely warblers were seen at several sites including West Coast NP and Sani Pass.

Lesser Swamp (Cape Reed) Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*

First seen at Kamfer's Dam with scattered sightings elsewhere.

African Reed (Marsh) Warbler *Acrocephalus baeticatus*

First seen at Kamfer's Dam with a further sighting near Calvinia.

NOTE: Clements currently recognizes six subspecies of A.baeticatus. The confusing taxonomy of this species is still under debate, particularly in regards to A.b.cinnamomeus (Cinnamon Reed Warbler) and A.b.avicenniae (Mangrove Reed Warbler).

Dark-capped (African) Yellow Warbler *Chloropeta natalensis*

We had great views of two birds during our time in the grasslands of the Karkloof and saw a further one at Sani Pass.

Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler *Phylloscopus ruficapilla*

Undoubtedly one of the most striking birds in its genus, we saw one in Doreen Clark NR.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

We heard one in Mkhuze GR.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis*

We enjoyed two sightings in the Brandvlei area.

Karoo (Yellow-rumped) Eremomela *Eremomela gregalis*

After a lengthy search we were finally rewarded with great views of a singing bird near Springbok.

Burnt-neck Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis*

We had good views of two near Mkhuze GR.

Cape (Long-billed) Crombec (Sylvietta) *Sylvietta rufescens*

Small numbers were seen in Brandvlei and Port Nolloth with a further sighting in Mkhuze GR.

Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler (NE) *Parisoma subcaeruleum*

Up to six were seen in the Kimberley area and a further three in Polokwane GR.

Layard's Tit-babbler (E) *Parisoma layardi*

Three birds were seen in the Springbok area.

Babblers Timaliidae

Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii*

We saw a flock of five in Polokwane Reserve.

Southern Pied Babbler *Turdoides bicolor*

We had great scope views of three during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Bush Blackcap (ESA) *Lioptilus nigricapillus*

We had superb views of two in Doreen Clark NR.

Sugarbirds Promeropidae

Cape Sugarbird (ESA) *Promerops cafer*

We had wonderful views of several in Kirstenbosch and Harold Porter Botanical Gardens.

Gurney's Sugarbird (E) *Promerops gurneyi*

We enjoyed stunning close views of four of these magnificent and unique nectivores on *Proteas* at Sani Pass.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

Cape (Pale) White-eye (E) *Zosterops pallidus*

We had many encounters in Eastern South Africa with peak numbers of eighty during our time in the forests of Doreen Clark and Karkloof.

NOTE: This species has recently been split into a further species, Orange River White-eye Z.capensis, which occurs in Western Southern Africa, and further splitting may still occur.

Orange River White-eye (E) *Zosterops capensis*

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Several were seen in Kimberley.

NOTE: Refer to previous species.

Starlings Sturnidae

Common (Indian) Myna

Acridotheres tristis

Commonly seen around urban centres in the east. Introduced to Durban in 1900.

Common (European) Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

Another attractive but none the less unwanted alien. Our first birds were seen in the Northern Cape where it is very common. It was introduced in the late 1800s.

Wattled Starling

Creatophora cinerea

Several sightings including ten seen near Calvinia and eight in Mkhuzé GR.

Cape (Glossy) Starling (NE)

Lamprotornis nitens

One of the more widespread species, first recorded at Kimberley.

Burchell's (Glossy) Starling (NE)

Lamprotornis australis

This large starling was only recorded at Pongola where we found four birds.

Black-bellied (Glossy) Starling

Lamprotornis corruscus

This species seldom strays far inland; we had occasional sightings at Dhlínza, St Lucia and Mkhuzé.

Violet-backed Starling

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

We had good views of five in Mkhuzé GR.

(African) Pied Starling (ESA)

Spreo bicolor

Good numbers of this common endemic were seen throughout the tour. Our first sighting was on our first day near Johannesburg.

Red-winged Starling

Onychognathus morio

Recorded at most sites throughout South Africa, often in association with man. Our first birds were seen at Calvinia with further sightings in the Natal Midlands and Wakkerstroom.

Pale-winged Starling (NE)

Onychognathus nabouroup

A bird of mountainous areas we recorded small numbers near Port Nolloth and Springbok.

Red-billed Oxpecker

Buphagus erythrorhynchus

A species that can be found feeding on ticks and other parasites associated with mammals. We recorded small numbers daily at Mkhuzé.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

Orange Ground Thrush

Zoothera gurneyi

We had stunning views of two of these elusive and rather handsome birds in the Karkloof Forest.

Spotted Ground Thrush

Zoothera guttata

We had wonderful views of two in Dhlínza Forest.

Groundscraper Thrush

Psophocichla litsipsirupa

One bird was found on our day in the Karkloof.

Kurrichane Thrush

Turdus libonyanus

We saw eight in Mkhuzé GR and a further one in Polokwane GR.

(Southern) Olive Thrush

Turdus olivaceus

We enjoyed several sightings in the KwaZulu Natal Midlands including six in the Karkloof.

NOTE: This polytypic species complex may be split into many as ten different species, and several are already generally accepted eg Taita Thrush (*T. helleri*). The main north/south split is likely to be in Tanzania with the northern birds becoming Northern Olive Thrush (*T. abyssinicus*) and the nominate form being called Southern Olive Thrush. Karoo Thrush (*T. smithi*) occurring in Western South Africa has recently been split from the nominate group. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Karoo Thrush

Turdus smithi

A single bird was seen in Johannesburg with several other sightings at Brandvlei.

Old World Flycatchers Muscipidae

White-starred Robin

Pogonocichla stellata

We had wonderful views of two at Doreen Clark NR and a further three at Magoebaskloof.

Cape Robin-Chat

Cossypha caffra

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A fairly common garden species; we had sightings in Kimberley, Western Cape and the KZN Midlands.

White-throated Robin-Chat *Cossypha humeralis*

We had wonderful views of one in Mkhuze GR.

White-browed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini*

One was seen briefly at the Mkhuze River.

Red-capped (Natal) Robin-Chat *Cossypha natalensis*

Several of these stunning birds were seen at St Lucia and Mkhuze.

Chorister Robin-Chat (ESA) *Cossypha dichroa*

We had excellent views of two in the Karkloof and a further two at Dhlinda Forest.

(Eastern) Bearded Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas quadrivirgata*

We had cracking views of two in Mkhuze GR.

Brown Scrub Robin (NE) *Cercotrichas signata*

Two were seen well at St Lucia.

White-browed (Red-backed) Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas leucophrys*

Small numbers were seen daily in Mkhuze GR.

NOTE: This widespread African complex is being reviewed for a 3-way split, the Southern African C. l. leucophrys group would remain as White-browed Scrub-Robin, the Central African (C. l. zambesiana) would become Red-backed Scrub-Robin and the Northern African (C. l. leucoptera) would become White-winged Scrub-Robin. Clements does not as yet recognise these splits.

Kalahari Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas paena*

Two were seen near Kimberley with further sightings at Polokwane GR.

Karoo Scrub-Robin (E) *Cercotrichas coryphaeus*

Seen in small numbers throughout the Cape Province.

Eurasian Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*

Commonly seen throughout with sightings in the Northern Cape, the Midlands and Wakkerstroom.

NOTE: Clements recognises the split of African (S. torquata) and Common (S. rubicola) Stonechats (the latter a Palearctic species), which is not followed by all authorities. Further splitting may occur in both groups including the highland Ethiopian form (S. t. albofasciata) that may become Ethiopian Stonechat.

Buff-streaked Chat (Wheatear) (ESA) *Saxicola bifasciata*

This stunning endemic was seen at Karkloof, Sani Pass and Wakkerstroom.

Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata*

Commonly recorded around Springbok, Calvinia and the wheatlands of Langebaan.

Mountain Wheatear (Chat) (NE) *Oenanthe monticola*

Another attractive species that was commonly seen around rocky areas in the Northern Cape.

Sickle-winged Chat (E) *Cercomela sinuata*

First seen around Port Nolloth with further sightings at Sani Pass.

Karoo Chat (E) *Cercomela schlegelii*

We enjoyed good views of several in the Brandvlei area.

Tractrac Chat (E) *Cercomela tractrac*

Recorded in both the Brandvlei and Port Nolloth areas.

Familiar Chat *Cercomela familiaris*

A widespread species recorded at Brandvlei, Port Nolloth, the Cape Peninsular, De Hoop and Sani Pass.

(Southern) Ant-eating Chat (E) *Myrmecocichla formicivora*

An attractive species with prominent white wings and a dark body was commonly seen in the Cape Province.

Mocking Cliff Chat *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris*

A male was seen briefly at the Taita Falcon site.

Cape Rock Thrush (ESA) *Monticola rupestris*

We had a wonderful pair at Rooi Els and a further two at Sani Pass.

Sentinel Rock Thrush (ESA) *Monticola explorator*

Four recorded on our day up Sani Pass.

Short-toed Rock Thrush *Monticola brevipes*

We had great views of two in the Kimberley area.

Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina*

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Recorded at St Lucia, Cape Vidal and Mkhuze

Pale (Mouse-coloured) Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus*

Several birds were seen in Mkhuze GR.

Chat Flycatcher *Bradornis infuscatus*

An arid country bird recorded around Kimberley, Brandvlei and Port Nolloth.

Marico Flycatcher *Bradornis mariquensis*

Two birds were seen in the Polokwane area.

Fiscal Flycatcher *Sigelus silens*

First seen around Kimberley with further sightings at De Hoop and Polokwane.

Ashy (Blue-grey) Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens*

First seen at Ngoye Forest with further sightings at St Lucia.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*

A flycatcher of forest and woodland, single birds seen at many sites including Kirstenbosch and Karkloof.

Grey Tit-Flycatcher (Fan-tailed/Lead-coloured) *Myioparus plumbeus*

We found several in Mkhuze GR. This rather endearing species is often observed actively fanning its tail.

Sunbirds & Spiderhunters Nectariniidae

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*

Small numbers were seen at Dhlinda Forest and Mkhuze GR.

Orange-breasted Sunbird (ESA) *Anthobaphes violacea*

This attractive species was commonly recorded on the Cape Peninsula.

Eastern Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea*

We found one in Doreen Clark NR and another in St Lucia.

NOTE: The Olive Sunbird species complex has been split into two full species by Clements and some other authorities, namely the nominate Eastern Olive-Sunbird C. olivacea and the form in East and West Africa, Western Olive Sunbird (C. obscura). There has been a review of this split and several authorities are in doubt of the validity, which is based upon the presence, or lack thereof, of pectoral tufts in the females of the various subspecies within the complex.

Grey (Mouse-colored) Sunbird *Cyanomitra veroxii*

We enjoyed wonderful views of this coastal forest species at Ngoye Forest.

Amethyst (African Black) Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystina*

This stunning sunbird was seen near Underberg and Karkloof.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

We had great sightings of this breathtaking beauty in the Hluhluwe area.

Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa*

This stunning species was seen in the Cape Province as well as the KwaZulu/Natal Midlands and Sani Pass

Southern Double-collared Sunbird (E) *Cinnyris chalybeus*

First recorded at Port Nolloth with further sightings throughout the Cape Peninsula.

Neergaard's Sunbird (E) *Cinnyris neergaardi*

We got very lucky with this elusive species managing to find a stunning male in Mkhuze GR.

Greater Double-collared Sunbird (ESA) *Cinnyris afer*

We enjoyed a wonderful sighting of five on the lower slopes of Sani Pass.

NOTE: Disjunct populations of Ludwig's Double-collared Sunbird (C. ludovicensis) occurring in Malawi and Angola and Rwenzori Double-collared Sunbird (C. stuhlmanni) of the Albertine Rift are sometimes lumped with Greater Double-collared Sunbird (C. afer). A further unnamed form from NE Zambia still requires allocation. Clements currently recognizes this species (C. afer) as separate and distinct, found only in the Cape Province east to the great Fish River.

Marico Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis*

We found two in the Polokwane area.

NOTE: Some authorities split this complex into 2 full species. The C. m. suahelicus which occurs in East Africa would become Swahili Sunbird as opposed to the nominate form which would remain as Mariqua Sunbird. Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Purple-banded Sunbird *Cinnyris bifasciatus*

We found two birds in St Lucia and Mkhuze.

NOTE: The form N. e. tsavoensis of Kenya is sometimes split off as Tsavo Purple-banded Sunbird.

White-breasted (White-bellied) Sunbird *Cinnyris talatala*

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Recorded at Kimberley, St.Lucia and Mkhuze.

Dusky Sunbird

Cinnyris fuscus

This dry country species was recorded at Springbok.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver

Plocepasser mahali

Recorded at Kimberley and Polokwane. Their scruffy nests are easily noticeable.

Sociable Weaver

Philetairus socius

One cannot help notice the large colonial nests often attached to telephone lines in the most arid of areas. We first recorded this species en route from Kimberley to Brandvlei with further sightings en route from Brandvlei to Kenhardt.

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Widespread and common in urban areas throughout South Africa.

Great Sparrow

Passer motitensis

We had wonderful views of several in Polokwane GR.

Cape Sparrow (NE)

Passer melanurus

Certainly our smartest sparrow, first seen in Johannesburg and commonly recorded throughout the Cape and at Sani Pass.

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow (NE)

Passer diffusus

Seen commonly at St.Lucia and Polokwane GR.

NOTE: The Grey-headed Sparrow complex P. griseus has been split into five full species with the South African form being given the name P. diffusus.

Yellow-throated Petronia (Sparrow)

Gymnoris superciliaris

Recorded in small numbers in Mkhuze GR.

Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver

Bubalornis niger

We had wonderful views of three in Pongola NR and a further one near Polokwane.

Scaly-feathered Weaver

Sporopipes squamifrons

First recorded around Brandvlei with further sightings near Polokwane.

Thick-billed Weaver

Amblyospiza albifrons

We had great views of eight in St.Lucia.

Spectacled Weaver

Ploceus ocularis

We enjoyed good sightings in the St.Lucia area.

Cape Weaver (ESA)

Ploceus capensis

This fairly common endemic was first recorded at Springbok with further sightings throughout the Cape Province, Sani Pass and Wakkerstroom.

Yellow (African Golden) Weaver

Ploceus subaureus

Small numbers were seen daily at St.Lucia, Mkhuze GR and Muzi Pan.

Southern Brown-throated Weaver

Ploceus xanthopterus

After an extensive search we were rewarded with a superb male at Muzi Pan.

Lesser Masked Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

Good numbers were recorded in Mkhuze GR.

Southern Masked Weaver

Ploceus velatus

A commonly recorded species in Kimberley and Polokwane.

NOTE: African Masked Weaver P. velatus is sometimes split into the nominate Southern Masked Weaver which we recorded and the more northerly occurring Vitelline Masked-Weaver P. vitellinus.

Village (Spotted-backed) Weaver

Ploceus cucullatus

Commonly recorded daily in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands.

Dark-backed (Forest) Weaver

Ploceus bicolor

We had our first sighting at Dhlinda Forest with further sightings at St Lucia and Mkhuze.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes melanotis

We enjoyed wonderful views of fifteen during the drive from Polokwane to Johannesburg.

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Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

Small flocks were seen in Karkloof and Wakkerstroom.

Southern Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

Recorded at several sites throughout the tour.

Yellow Bishop (Yellow-rumped Widow)

Euplectes capensis

This species, humorously resembling a large bumblebee, was seen at several sites with peak numbers of ten at Rooi Els.

Fan-tailed (Red-shouldered) Widowbird

Euplectes axillaris

This *Euplectes* is regularly encountered in the grasslands of the east. Small numbers were seen at Darvill and Eshowe.

Red-collared Widowbird

Euplectes ardens

We enjoyed good views of six in the Karkloof.

Long-tailed Widowbird

Euplectes progne

First recorded at Midmar with further sightings of up to one hundred daily at Wakkerstroom.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

We marveled at two of these brightly coloured critters in Mkhuze GR.

Red-headed Finch

Amadina erythrocephala

We had wonderful views of a male at our lodge near Kimberley.

Cut-throat Finch

Amadina fasciata

We had superb views of a flock of fourteen en route to Polokwane.

Green Twinspot

Mandingoa nitidula

We had good scope views of one in the Karkloof.

Pink-throated Twinspot (E)

Hypargos margaritatus

We enjoyed these fantastically patterned birds in Mkhuze GR. This species is very localised being entirely restricted to sand forest in north-eastern South Africa and adjacent Mozambique.

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*

We had wonderful views of four near Polokwane.

African (Blue-billed) Firefinch

Lagonosticta rubricata

We found two at St.Lucia and one at Magoebaskloof.

Blue Waxbill

Uraeginthus angolensis

Small flocks of these smart birds were seen in Mkhuze and Polokwane GR's.

Violet-eared Waxbill

Uraeginthus granatinus

Five of these stunning seed-eaters were seen in Polokwane GR.

Swee Waxbill (Black-faced Swee) (ESA)

Estrilda melanotis

These are absolutely gorgeous little waxbills and we were lucky to see a flock of eight at Harold Porter Botanical Gardens.

NOTE: Yellow-bellied Waxbill (East African Swee) Estrilda quartinia is sometimes lumped with the South African Swee Waxbill E. melanotis.

Common Waxbill

Estrilda astrild

A waxbill often associated with wetlands. Seen at scattered localities including small flocks in Midmar GR and Karkloof.

African Quailfinch

Ortygospiza fuscocrissa

Several heard calling near Wakkerstroom.

NOTE: This species complex might be split into two, the South African form would remain African Quailfinch and the highland Ethiopian isolate would become Ethiopian Quailfinch (O. fuscocrissa.)

Bronze Mannikin (Munia)

Lonchura cucullata

Small numbers were seen at Dhlinza and St Lucia.

Red-backed Mannikin (Munia)

Lonchura nigriceps

Ten birds flew past us at the canopy tower in Dhlinza Forest.

Indigobirds Viduidae

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Pin-tailed Whydah

Vidua macroura

Small numbers of this aggressive little brood parasite were encountered at several sites including peak numbers of ten in Wakkerstroom.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae

Cape Wagtail

Motacilla capensis

Regularly recorded at most wetland locations throughout South Africa.

Mountain Wagtail

Motacilla clara

We were lucky to find a pair at Debengeni Falls, Magoebaskloof.

African Pied Wagtail

Motacilla aguimp

First seen en route from Dhlinda Forest to Ngoye Forest with further sightings in St Lucia.

Cape (Orange-throated) Longclaw (E)

Macronyx capensis

Recorded at higher elevation grasslands. Up to ten were seen daily in the Wakkerstroom area.

Yellow-throated Longclaw

Macronyx croceus

Recorded at lower elevation grassland locations, our first sightings were near Ngoye with further sightings near St.Lucia.

African (Grassveld) Pipit

Anthus cinnamomeus

Regularly recorded at most grassland locations throughout Southern Africa.

NOTE: African pipit taxonomy is in disarray and much further research is required in the phylogeny of this grouping. Several forms which are considered subspecies are likely to become full species in their own right and several new forms are surely still to be described. The identification of two new species of pipits from an urban hockey field in Kimberley, South Africa, provides an excellent illustration regarding how little is known about African pipits and how little attention has been paid to them.

Long-billed Pipit

Anthus similis

We enjoyed good views of one en route from Calvinia to Langebaan.

Plain-backed Pipit

Anthus leucophrys

We had good views of two near Sani Pass and a further two near St.Lucia.

Striped Pipit

Anthus lineiventris

We had wonderful views of one near Cape Vidal.

African Rock Pipit (ESA)

Anthus crenatus

We had wonderful scope views of one near Wakkerstroom.

Kimberley Pipit (ESA)

Anthus pseudosimilis

We were very fortunate to find two of these very localised birds in the Kimberley area.

Yellow-breasted Pipit (ESA)

Anthus chloris

Excellent scope looks were had of this rare grassland endemic at Wakkerstroom.

Finches & Allies Fringillidae

Common Chaffinch

Fringilla coelebs

We had good views of two near Kirstenbosch.

Cape (Yellow-crowned) Canary (NE)

Serinus canicollis

Typically encountered at higher elevation sites in the east, we had small flocks in the south-western Cape and Natal Midlands.

NOTE: This species complex might be split into two, the nominate southern group would remain as Cape Canary and the form which occurs in East Africa would become Yellow-crowned Canary (S. flavivertex.) Clements does not as yet recognise this split.

Forest Canary (ESA)

Crithagra scotops

This uncommon endemic was seen very well in Kirstenbosch with a further sighting in Karkloof.

Black-throated Canary

Crithagra atrogularis

Up to ten were seen daily in the Kimberley area.

Lemon-breasted Canary

Crithagra citrinipecta

We had wonderful views of two near Hluhluwe.

Yellow-fronted (Yellow-eyed) Canary

Crithagra mozambica

This is a common bird at lower elevations in both urban and wild areas in the east.

Yellow Canary (NE)

Crithagra flaviventris

Recorded widely throughout the Cape Province.

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Brimstone Canary

Crithagra sulphurata

Four birds were recorded at De Hoop.

White-throated Canary (NE)

Crithagra albogularis

Recorded around Brandvlei, Calvinia and Langebaan.

Streaky-headed Seedeater (NE)

Crithagra gularis

Several were seen well in the Underberg area.

Protea Canary (ESA)

Crithagra leucoptera

One of these scarce and elusive seedeaters was found at a gorge near Clanwilliam.

Cape Siskin (ESA)

Crithagra totta

We found six of these elusive birds in Cape Point NP.

Drakensberg Siskin (ESA)

Crithagra symonsi

We had at least twenty birds on our explorations at the top of Sani Pass in the mountain Kingdom of Lesotho.

Black-headed Canary

Crithagra alario

We had good views of thirty near Calvinia.

Damara Canary

Crithagra leucolaema

We enjoyed good views of two near Springbok.

NOTE: Clements splits this species from Black-headed Canary. This split is not widely accepted.

Buntings Emberizidae

Lark-like Bunting

Emberiza impetuani

Recorded in the arid western areas of South Africa where our first birds were seen near Brandvlei.

Cape Bunting

Emberiza capensis

A fairly common species recorded throughout the tour in rocky habitats. First recorded en route from Port Nolloth to Springbok.

NOTE: Clements has recently elevated the former Cape Bunting subspecies E.c.vincenti of central Malawi to E Zambia to full species status, Vincent's Bunting (E.vincenti).

Golden-breasted Bunting

Emberiza flaviventris

Small numbers of this brilliantly plumaged bird were seen in acacia bushveld at Mkhuze GR.

MAMMAL SPECIES LIST (72 species)

Note: Names and taxonomical order of the land mammals follow that of 'The Kingdom Field Guide to African Mammals'; additional names are given in parenthesis and are likely to appear other popular field guides.

Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Chacma Baboon

Papio ursinus

This species is fairly common in wilder parts of Southern Africa, occasionally encountered close to human habitation. We saw our first group en route from Calvinia to Langebaan.

Vervet Monkey

Cercopithecus aethiops

Common and seen at most localities in eastern South Africa with good numbers in all game reserves.

Samango (Blue) Monkey

Cercopithecus mitis

This scarce forest primate was seen very well in the Karkloof.

Galagos Loridae

Greater Galago

Galago crassicaudatus

We had wonderful views of two during our time at St.Lucia.

Slit-faced Bats Mycteridae

Egyptian Slit-faced Bat

Nycteris thebaica

We had incredible views of thirty-one in Kumasinga Hide in Mkhuze GR.

Elephant Shrews Macroscelidea

Rock Elephant Shrew

Elephantulus myurus

We had great scope views of one during the drive from Wakkerstroom to Polokwane.

Hares & Rabbits Leporidae

Cape Hare

Lepus capensis

We saw one in West Coast NP.

Scrub Hare

Lepus saxatilis

We had good views of several on the trip including six on our night drive at Kimberley.

Smith's Red Rock Hare

Pronolagus rupestris

After an extensive search we finally saw one during our night drive near Kimberley.

Squirrels Sciuridae

South African Ground Squirrel

Geosciurus inauris

We had great sightings of up to ten in the Kimberley area.

Red Forest Squirrel

Paraxerus palliatus

Up to three were seen at St.Lucia.

Grey Squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis

These exotic squirrels were seen near Kirstenbosch in the Cape.

Spring Hares Pedetidae

Spring Hare

Pedetes capensis

Up to twenty of these endearing mammals were seen during our night drive near Kimberley.

Porcupines Hystricidae

Porcupine

Hystrix africaeausustralis

We found one of these nocturnal creatures during a night drive at Calvinia and another during a night drive in Wakkerstroom.

Dassie Rat Petromuridae

Dassie Rat

Petromus typicus

We had wonderful views of two near Springbok.

Rat-like Rodents Muroidea

Brant's Whistling Rat

Parotomys brantsii

Up to one hundred were seen in the Port Nolloth area.

Striped Mouse

Rhabdomys pumilio

Two were seen at Port Nolloth.

Sloggett's Ice Rat

Otomys sloggetti

We had at least twenty of these engaging rodents around Sani Top Hotel and on the barren plains in Lesotho.

Vlei Rat

Otomys laminatus

One was seen briefly during our time at the Wakkerstroom wetland.

Dogs & Allies Canidae

Black-backed Jackal

Canis mesomelas

Our first sighting was of one during the nightdrive at Kimberley and a further one was seen near Underberg

Cape Fox

Vulpes chama

We had great views of one during our night drive in Brandvlei.

Bat-eared Fox

Otocyon megalotis

One of these cuddly critters was seen in the Brandvlei area.

Mustelids Mustelidae

- Zorilla (Striped Polecat)** *Ictonyx striatus*
One was seen during our night drive in Brandvlei.
- Striped Weasel** *Poecilogale albinucha*
We had wonderful views of one during our night drive near Wakkerstroom.
- Spot-necked Otter** *Lutra maculicollis*
We had wonderful scope views of two at Wakkerstroom.

Mongoose Herpestriidae

- Slender Mongoose** *Galerella sanguinea*
One was seen en route from Johannesburg to Kimberley with scattered sightings elsewhere.
- Small Grey Mongoose** *Herpestes pulverulenta*
One was seen briefly at Strandfontein.
- Banded Mongoose** *Mungos mungo*
We had wonderful views of a group of eighteen in St.Lucia.
- Water Mongoose** *Atilax paludinosus*
One was seen during a night drive near Underberg.
- White-tailed Mongoose** *Ichneumia albicauda*
We had good views of one during our night drive at Wakkerstroom.
- Yellow Mongoose** *Cynictis penicillata*
We enjoyed several sightings at Kimberley, Springbok and Wakkerstroom.
- Suricate (Meerkat)** *Suricata suricatta*
Six of these delightful creatures were seen near Port Nolloth.

Hyaenas Hyaenidae

- Spotted Hyaena** *Crocuta crocuta*
We had great views of three during our night drive at Mkhuze GR.

Genets & Civets Viverridae

- Blotched Genet** *Genetta tigrina*
One was seen briefly during our night drive in Wakkerstroom.
- Small-spotted Genet** *Genetta genetta*
One was seen during our nightdrive at Mkhuze GR.

Cats Felidae

- Black-footed Cat** *Felis nigripes*
We were extremely fortunate to find one during our night drive near Wakkerstroom.
- Leopard** *Panthera pardus*
We had wonderful views of one in Mkhuze GR.

Aardvark Orycteropodidae

- Aardvark** *Orycteropus afer*
We had good views of one during our night drive near Kimberley.

Hyraxes Procavidae

- Rock Hyrax (Dassie)** *Procavia capensis*
An animal of rocky terrain our first sighting was at Brandvlei with further sightings at Springbok.

Zebras Equidae

- Common (Burchell's/Plains) Zebra** *Equus quagga*

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The unmistakable striped horse of the African savannah, we enjoyed sightings at Kimberley and Mkhuze.

Cape Mountain Zebra

Equus zebra zebra

We had great views of several in De Hoop NR.

Rhinoceroses Rhinocerotidae

Square-lipped (White) Rhinoceros

Ceratotherium simum

We had excellent sightings of two at Cape Vidal and a further five at Pongola NR.

Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibius

Recorded at St Lucia and Mkhuze GR.

Pigs Suidae

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

We enjoyed sightings of several in Cape Vidal and Mkhuze.

Giraffes Giraffidae

Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

Good close looks at eighteen in Mkhuze GR.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

Twenty were seen during our time in De Hoop NR and a further one in Polokwane GR.

Greater Kudu

Tragelaphus strepsiceros

These magnificent antelope were seen at Cape Vidal and Mkhuze GR.

Nyala

Tragelaphus angasii

This striking antelope is endemic to this part of KwaZulu Natal and Southern Mozambique. We had plentiful sightings in Mkhuze GR.

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

We had good views of several at Cape Vidal.

Roan antelope

Hippotragus equinus

We had great views of seven near Kimberley.

Gemsbok (Southern Oryx)

Oryx gazella

Up to seventy of these stunning antelope were seen in Goegap NR near Springbok.

Common Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

This large and oddly marked antelope was seen at Cape Vidal and Mkhuze.

Mountain Reedbuck

Redunca fulvorufula

We had wonderful views of seven near Wakkerstroom.

Southern (Common) Reedbuck

Redunca arundinum

Recorded at Cape Vidal and Wakkerstroom.

Grey Rhebok

Pelea capreolus

We had good looks at these slender antelope in the grasslands around De Hoop.

Black Wildebeest

Connochaetes gnou

We had a herd of at least fifty in the grasslands of Midmar GR.

Blue Wildebeest (Brindled Gnu)

Connochaetes taurinus

This mammal was frequently encountered in Mkhuze and Polokwane GR's.

Red Hartebeest

Alcelaphus buselaphus

Recorded at Kimberley, Midmar and Polokwane GR's.

Blesbok

Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi

Small numbers were seen in Midmar GR and at Wakkerstroom.

Bontebok

Damaliscus dorcas pygargus

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Thirty were seen in the De Hoop area.

Tsessebe *Damaliscus lunatus*

Small numbers were seen in Pongola NR and Polokwane GR. The fastest antelope.

Impala *Aepyceros melampus*

Commonly encountered in Mkhuze and Polokwane GR's.

Springbok *Antidorcas marsupialis*

This attractive gazelle was seen frequently in grassland habitats in the Cape Province.

Cape Grysbok *Raphicerus melanotis*

We had a wonderful sighting of this rare mammal during our night drive near De Hoop NR.

Klipspringer *Oreotragus oreotragus*

We enjoyed a wonderful sighting near Springbok.

Steenbok *Raphicerus campestris*

These dainty antelope, famed for their habit of burying their dung, were observed at Kimberley, Brandvlei and Calvinia.

Oribi *Ourebia ourebi*

Three of these scarce grassland antelope were seen at Midmar and a further two near Wakkerstroom.

Blue Duiker *Cephalophus monticola*

We were fortunate to find two at Dhlizha Forest.

Red Duiker *Cephalophus natalensis*

This stunning dwarf antelope, a rich chestnut in colour, was seen on several occasions at St.Lucia.

Bush (Common/Grey) Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia*

This, the commonest duiker in South Africa, was seen at many sites including peak numbers of eight during the drive from the Karkloof to Underberg.

Fur Seals Otariidae

Cape Fur Seal *Arctocephalus pusillus*

This cold-water dweller was seen in the icy waters off the Cape Peninsula.

Whales Balaenidae

Southern Right Whale *Eubalaena australis*

We had amazing views of up to fourteen off the Cape Peninsula, some only a few metres from shore.

REPTILE SPECIES LIST

Leopard Tortoise *Geochelone pardalis*

We had great views of two in Mkhuze GR.

Angulate Tortoise *Chersina angulata*

At least three were seen in West Coast NP and a further one in De Hoop NR.

Marsh Terrapin *Pelomedusa subrufa*

We had good views of several in Mkhuze GR.

Puffadder *Bitis arietans*

We had wonderful views of a stunning adult in De Hoop NR.

Brown House Snake *Lamprophis fuliginosus*

We found one near Langebaan.

Striped Skink *Mabuya striata*

One was seen in Underberg and another at St.Lucia.

Rock Monitor *Varanus exanthematicus*

We found one during the drive from Kimberley to Brandvlei.

Southern Rock Agama *Agama atra*

Small numbers were seen in the Port Nolloth and Springbok area.

Southern Tree Agama *Agama atricollis*

Two were seen near Springbok and a further two in Cape Point NR.

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Moreau's Tropical House Gecko

Several were seen in St.Lucia.

Hemidactylus mabouia

Nile Crocodile

We had great views of eight at St.Lucia.

Crocodylus niloticus

AMPHIBIAN SPECIES LIST

Olive Toad

We had good views of two in Mkhuze GR.

Bufo garmani

Guttural Toad

One was seen in Hilton and another in Mkhuze GR.

Bufo gutturalis

Cape River Frog

We had great views of eight in Harold Porter Botanical Gardens.

Rana fuscigula

Rockjumper Birding Tours
Worldwide Birding Adventures
PO Box 13972, Cascades, 3202, South Africa
Tel: +27 33 394 0225
Fax: +27 88 033 394 0225
Email: info@rockjumper.co.za
Alternative Email: rockjumperbirding@yahoo.com
Website: www.rockjumper.co.za