



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Eastern South Africa & Western Cape Extension

25th July – 12th August 2009 (19 days)



Trip report compiled by tour leader Markus Lilje

Top 10 birds for the eastern section, as voted for by participants:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Taita Falcon | 4. Southern Bald Ibis | 8. Bearded Vulture |
| 2. Knysna Turaco | 5. Ground Woodpecker | 9. Marsh Owl |
| 3. Drakensberg
Rockjumper | 6. Blue Crane | 10. Narina Trogon |
| | 7. Half-collared Kingfisher | |

Top 5 mammals for the eastern section, as voted for by participants:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. African Elephant | 4. White Rhino |
| 2. Thick-tailed Bushbaby | 5. Cape Fox |
| 3. African Wild Cat | |

Top 5 birds and 3 mammals for the Western Cape Extension, as voted for by participants:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Karoo Korhaan | 1. Klipspringer |
| 2. Verreauxs' Eagle | 2. Bush Karoo Rat |
| 3. Fairy Warbler | 3. Southern Right Whale |
| 4. Northern Royal Albatross | |
| 5. Pintado Petrel | |

Tour Summary

With one of the highest levels of biodiversity on earth, South Africa has a lot to offer. On this short tour we covered many of the range of possible biomes, from highveld grasslands of the interior, dry Acacia woodland in the north, moister woodland on the eastern lowveld and coastal plain, grassland and forests within the mistbelt of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and higher Maloti Mountains to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans and Fynbos and Karoo areas of the Western Cape. Over and above many of the range of resident bird species that we managed to observe in this diversity of areas, we could also watch many of the large number of mammals that make these regions their home. While the tour took place during the winter months in South Africa and the migrants were not around and some species were not in their breeding plumage, the more sparse vegetation and drier areas allowed us a great opportunity to observe many species more easily than would be possible during the more lush summer months.



A pan on the outskirts of Johannesburg is always a great place to start and we were able to rack up some of the more widespread water- and grassland birds. The first afternoon of the tour was special as it was our only chance to see many of the dry-country species that don't occur further east and to this end we were very successful. Crimson-breasted Shrike, Northern Black Korhaan, Kalahari Scrub Robin, Southern Pied Babbler, Scaly Weaver, Temminck's Courser, Black-faced and Violet-cheeked Waxbills and White-browed Sparrow-weaver were some of the species that we managed to find. The Marsh Owl that is quite crepuscular in winter, gave some incredible close flight views in the same area. On the way to the Kruger National Park we were fortunate to see a pair of the rare Taita Falcon as they called and soared overhead and then gave prolonged scope views where they perched on the cliffs – this turned out to be the bird of the trip for a number of the guests.

The Kruger National Park produced some great birding and mammal highlights. A few of the highlights included Southern Ground Hornbill, 4 species of stork, including the stunning Saddle-billed, the unusual Hamerkop, Grey-headed Bushshrike, African Scops-Owl, Crested Barbet and Bennett's Woodpecker. Numerous raptors were also a feature: close views of the majestic Martial Eagle, 4 vulture species, the striking Bateleur and a variety of others. We were very lucky indeed with many great mammal sightings, which included Lion feeding on a buffalo, African Wild Cat, White Rhino, African Elephant and African Buffalo, Giraffe, the nocturnal Small-spotted Genet and African Civet as well as many others.



Next, we moved on to the high-lying grassland biome, harbouring many of the regions endemics. Blue and Barrow's Korhaans, Southern Bald Ibis, Botha's, Rudd's and Pink-billed Larks, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Blue and Grey Crowned Crane, Red- and Grey-winged Francolins and the majestic Secretarybird were some of the targets that were seen well. The Suricate or Meerkat and its Yellow Mongoose relative were very common in the short winter grass and were certainly highlights of the tour for many participants. On a night drive we managed to get good views of Striped Polecat and Springhare – great additions to the fast-growing mammal list.



A small private lodge near Hluhluwe was our next destination; again this region provided some great highlights, both in and outside Mkuze Game Reserve. These included the Pink-throated Twinspot, Fiery-necked Nightjar, African Wood Owl, Pink-backed Pelican and Red-fronted Tinkerbird. A waterhole in the Sandforest was also fascinating as it produced a procession of animals coming down to quench their thirst – started off by a huge male White Rhino! Here we were treated to close views of Common Warthog, Nyala and other animals drinking.

Next on our itinerary was a two-night stay in the coastal town of St. Lucia. On the way there we spent a rainy day in the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve, where we added a number of new species in beautiful hilly surroundings. The St. Lucia area comprises a great mosaic of habitats, providing an opportunity to see forest, grassland and estuarine species within minutes of each other. In St. Lucia itself we had some special birds, including Livingstone's Turaco, Trumpeter Hornbill, White-eared Barbet, Senegal Lapwing, Brown Scrub Robin and Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher.

An early morning in Eshowe's Dlinza forest proved fruitful with great views of Grey Cuckooshrike, a Green Malkoha warming its back in the sun, Spotted Ground Thrush African Emerald Cuckoo and great close views of the spectacular Narina Trogon! In the Hilton area of the Kwazulu-Natal midlands we had a morning around the Karkloof where we saw Bush Blackcap, Bar-throated Apalis, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler and African Olive Pigeon in the forest. The croplands also provided great excitement when we found 9 Wattled Crane as well as the elusive Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk. On the way to the foot of the Drakensberg we visited the small Marutswa Forest where we found Knysna Turaco and Olive Thrush, while some were fortunate to get a glimpse of the endemic Orange Ground Thrush. We then headed on to the Underberg area where we spent the following two nights.



A major highlight of the tour was our day trip up the Sani Pass. Although the day began with cool and misty weather it turned out to be great as we slowly moved up the pass. We started off very well with a pair of Denham's Bustard on a freshly burnt patch of grassland and then had great views of the popular Gurney's Sugarbird and Ground Woodpecker in the *Protea* belt higher up. Nearing the top of the pass, as the corners got ever tighter and more slippery on the slowly melting ice, we found another of the day's main targets: the Drakensberg Rockjumper.

Driving further onto the plateau that was covered with a layer of snow in Lesotho, we added Drakensberg Siskin, Large-billed Lark and Sickie-winged Chat in the Karoo-like scrub at almost 3000m altitude. The great Bearded Vulture also put in an appearance when it flew overhead during our lunchtime when the adults changed shifts on their nest. The final morning on the eastern leg of this tour was finished off with a second visit to the Marutswa forest on the way to the airport in Durban.

At this point we bid farewell to 3 of the group and made our way down to begin the Western Cape leg of the tour. The extension started off with a bang in the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden where we were able to find a few of the cape endemic birds in these wonderfully lush surroundings. This included Cape Sugarbird, Cape Spurfowl, Karoo Prinia and a surprising Forest Buzzard overhead. On the next day we were fortunate to have some great weather which allowed us to go out on the pelagic trip that is all but a guaranteed departure. What a day it turned out to be with an incredible number of birds out over the continental shelf. One of the highlights was seeing 6 species of albatross: Shy, hundreds of Black-browed, both Yellow-nosed and both Royal

Albatrosses, the latter two of which are rare in southern African waters. Thousands of Cape Petrels were constantly around us as we followed the trawlers and scanned for any unusual species. Other memorable sightings included the uncommon Southern Fulmar, tiny Wilson's Storm Petrel, both Giant Petrels and the other more common species. As we made our way into and out of the harbour we also managed to get good views of all 4 marine cormorants of the region – Cape, Crowned and Bank being endemic to southern Africa. At Boulders Beach the very interesting and relaxed Jackass Penguins were going about their daily business, oblivious to the gawking human spectators. Further exploration of the False Bay area, produced the only Verreaux's Eagle, Cape Rockjumper, Ground Woodpecker, Orange-breasted Sunbird and Sentinel Rock Thrush. The Strandfontein Sewage Works and other coastal sites produced Maccoa Duck, Cape Teal and numerous other ducks and water-associated birds alongside African Oystercatcher, Hartlaub's Gull and Swift Tern. We finished off a beautifully scenic and worthwhile few days around the peninsula with Cape Siskin – one of the less predictable of the fynbos endemics.



Driving up the West Coast we moved into drier Fynbos habitats where we saw Karoo Scrub Robin, Black Harrier, Chestnut-vented Warbler and the striking Southern Black Korhaan. The mud- and sandflats in the Langebaan Lagoon support thousands of shorebirds in the summer months and we could still find good numbers of overwintering Eurasian Curlew, Whimbrel, Kittlitz's Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit and Ruddy Turnstone among others. A surprising highlight was seeing a number of both Greater and Lesser Sand Plovers – both uncommon to rare in the subregion – in a flock of White-fronted Plover. Capped Wheatear, Blue Crane and a number of other species kept us entertained as we made our way inland towards Ceres.

The last full day of the tour was spent in and around the Tanqua Karoo with its very low, dry and hardy shrubs, where we had several target endemic species to locate. Some of the birds we were able to find included the large Ludwig's Bustard, endemic Karoo Korhaan with its amazing croaking call (which completed our incredible suite of all 10 possible bustard species), the tricky and sought-after Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, Karoo Eremomela, Grey Tit, Fairy Warbler, Karoo Lark, Rufous-eared Warbler, Pirit Batis and Black-headed Canary. This day is always a very interesting way to finish off the tour with a real bang and a load of new range-restricted species. Overall a very enjoyable time was had and we managed to find a high number of species of birds and other animals for the winter period.

BIRD LIST (460 species)

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Frank Gill & Minturn Wright Birds of the World: Recommended English Names (2006) Princeton University Press, Version 2.1 generated on 2009-05-12. Notes are provided where Clements differs, alternatively Clements names are in parenthesis.

Key: E: regional endemic, NE: regional near-endemic

Ostriches Struthionidae

Common Ostrich

Struthio camelus

Wild Ostriches were well seen in Kruger National Park (NP) on all three days and again in West Coast NP.

Note: Clements lumps this species with Somali Ostrich S. molybdophanes as Ostrich S. camelus.

Guineafowl Numididae

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

Recorded on most days during the tour, particularly common during the first week and in the Cape.

Crested Guineafowl

Guttera pucherani

We saw a flock of these beautiful birds at Hilltop camp, Hluhluwe, where we enjoy great views of these comical birds.

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae

Note: Clements places all the below species in the Francolinus genus

Grey-winged Francolin

Scleroptila afra

We had good views of this often scarce and difficult endemic on 2 days near Wakkerstroom.

Red-winged Francolin

Scleroptila levaillantii

This species was seen exceptionally well near Wakkerstroom, 7 birds were recorded.

Crested Francolin

Dendroperdix sephaena

This lovely francolin was seen quite frequently during the first 5 days.

Cape Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis capensis

First recorded in Kirstenbosch, later it was very common in West Coast NP.

Natal Spurfowl (Francolin) (NE)

Pternistis natalensis

Commonly recorded during the eastern portion of the tour; we had highest numbers in Kruger.

Red-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)

Pternistis afer

A single bird was seen calling at dusk near the Marutswa forest, Bulwer.

Swainson's Spurfowl (Francolin) (NE)

Pternistis swainsonii

This species was seen in the Rust-de-Winter area, Kruger NP and in Wakkerstroom; the most commonly recorded gamebird in the east, where it is common in grassland and open woodland.

Ducks & Geese Anatidae

White-faced Whistling Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

This attractive duck was seen in good numbers at our Rust-de-Winter accommodation, smaller numbers were recorded on other days in the east.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

Good numbers of this large bi-coloured Goose were seen on a number of days throughout the tour.

Knob-billed Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

A number of these birds were seen at a farm dam on the tour's first afternoon, 4 later in Mkuze.

Note: Clements lumps this species with Comb Duck S. sylvicola of South America calling it Comb Duck

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiacus

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout the tour.

South African Shelduck (E)

Tadorna cana

A pair of this South African endemic was first seen in Wakkerstroom, more later in the Tanqua Karoo.

Cape Teal

Anas capensis

Recorded very well at the Strandfontein Sewage Works, smaller numbers elsewhere in the Western Cape.

African Black Duck

Anas sparsa

We were fortunate to find a pair in a river in Lesotho, where they were seen on a rock in an icy stream.

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

A single drake was seen at the Strandfontein Sewage works, unfortunately this introduced species interbreeds with the local Yellow-billed Duck.

Yellow-billed Duck

Anas undulata

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout the tour, best views in Wakkerstroom.

Cape Shoveler (NE)

Anas smithii

First seen well in Wakkerstroom, more were seen later on various Cape waterbodies.

Red-billed Teal (Duck)

Anas erythrorhynchos

A was seen in Mkuze on the eastern portion of the tour, they were more numerous in the Cape.

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

We were fortunate to find a pair of these tiny ducks at a Johannesburg wetland, again in Wakkerstroom.

Southern Pochard

Netta erythrophthalma

We had a few birds on a dam near Underberg, later more birds were seen at Strandfontein.

Maccoa Duck

Oxyura maccoa

3 birds were seen well at Strandfontein Sewage Works.

Penguins Spheniscidae

African (Jackass) Penguin

Spheniscus demersus

We were able to watch these often comical birds in good numbers and at very close quarters at Boulders Beach, as well as on our pelagic out of Simon's Town.

Albatrosses Diomedidae

Southern Royal Albatross

Diomedea epomophora

This species is recorded even less frequently than the above species in this area, we were lucky to get good views of a single bird.

Note: Some authorities have yet to split this specie, Clements lumps them as Royal Albatross D. epomophora.

Northern Royal Albatross

Diomedea sanfordi

We recorded 3 of these huge birds on the pelagic out of Cape Town. This is an uncommon bird off the South African coastline.

Black-browed Albatross

Thelassarche melanophrys

Hundreds of these elegant birds were seen exceptionally well, mainly near the continental shelf on the pelagic trip.

Shy Albatross

Thelassarche cauta

Far outnumbered, we nonetheless had dozens of these widespread albatross on the pelagic out of Cape Town.

Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross

Thalassarche chlororhynchos

We recorded a single one of these lovely birds on the pelagic out of Cape Town.

Note: Clements doesn't accept the split of Yellow-nosed Albatross and treats it as a single species T. chlororhynchos.

Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross

Thalassarche carteri

We had great views of 2 of this albatross species on the pelagic day off Cape Town, see note above.

Petrels & Shearwaters Procellariidae

Southern Giant Petrel

Macronectes giganteus

Around a dozen of these birds were seen around our boat, particularly impressive was a pure white individual, rare in South African waters.

Note: Clements calls this bird Antarctic Giant Petrel

Northern Giant Petrel

Macronectes halli

About six of these birds were seen, some quite well and close around our boat on the pelagic.

Southern Fulmar

Fulmarus glacialisoides

A single bird was seen exceptionally well on the pelagic, yet another uncommon bird off Cape Town.

Cape Petrel

Daption capense

Good numbers, impossible to estimate, but over 1000 seen on the pelagic.

White-chinned Petrel

Procellaria aequinoctialis

More than 300 were seen on the pelagic tour.

Sooty Shearwater

Puffinus griseus

Similar numbers of this widespread species as the above, all seen on the pelagic.

Storm Petrels Hydrobatidae

Wilson's Storm Petrel

Oceanites oceanicus

Around 10 of these tiny seabirds were seen trailing trawlers on our pelagic.

Grebes Podicipedidae

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Small numbers of this rather common bird were seen at several wetlands throughout the tour.

Black-necked Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

We recorded 3 large rafts of these birds in Strandfontein and around 50 on a dam in the Tanqua Karoo.

Note: Clement's calls these birds Eared Grebe.

Flamingos Phoenicopteridae

Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopus roseus

We had a few birds near Johannesburg airport, many hundred at Strandfontein and in West Coast NP.

Storks Ciconidae

Yellow-billed Stork

Mycteria ibis

Good numbers were observed in the Kruger NP, near the Lower Sabie camp.

African Openbill*Anastomus lamelligerus*

A few birds of these interesting birds were located at Nsumo pan, Mkuze Game Reserve (GR).

Black Stork*Ciconia nigra*

This scarce bird, seen on 2 consecutive days in Kruger NP, the best view of a sub-adult near Lower Sabie.

Woolly-necked Stork*Ciconia episcopus*

The first bird was seen in Hluhluwe GR, more were seen around St. Lucia and Mtunzini areas.

White Stork*Ciconia ciconia*

A single overwintering individual was seen circling near Nelspruit, en Route to Wakkerstroom.

Saddle-billed Stork*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*

This stunning, large Stork was seen well on 3 days in the Kruger, its main stronghold in South Africa. A single individual put in a appearance at St. Lucia.

Marabou Stork*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*

A number of birds were seen in the Kruger NP, around Satara and Skukuza during our tour.

Ibises & Spoonbills Threskiornithidae**African Sacred Ibis***Threskiornis aethiopicus*

Fairly common at wetlands throughout the tour, particularly during the second half.

Note:

Southern Bald Ibis (E)*Geronticus calvus*

We had very good views and numbers of this sought-after endemic in the Wakkerstroom district on 3 days.

Note: Clements just calls this bird Bald Ibis

Hadada Ibis*Bostrychia hagedash*

This noisy bird was recorded on every day throughout the tour.

Glossy Ibis*Plegadis falcinellus*

Surprisingly this bird was only recorded on a single day – mainly around Strandfontein Sewage Works.

African Spoonbill*Platalea alba*

Most sightings were shared between Wakkerstroom and the Mkuze, smaller numbers elsewhere.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae**Black-crowned Night Heron***Nycticorax nycticorax*

A few individuals were seen on the tour, one at Zaagkuilsdrift and 3 in Wakkerstroom.

Striated Heron*Butorides striata*

Another globally widespread bird, single birds in Kruger NP and Hluhluwe GR.

Squacco Heron*Ardeola ralloides*

This species was seen for the first time near Johannesburg and again near Mkuze GR.

Western Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

Commonly seen throughout the tour on almost every day.

Note: Clements does not accept this split and lumps this with Eastern Cattle Egret as one species: Cattle Egret B. ibis.

Grey Heron*Ardea cinerea*

This very widespread species was recorded at most wetland localities during the tour.

Black-headed Heron*Ardea melanocephala*

This grassland species was commonly recorded throughout the tour, particularly on burnt grassland.

Goliath Heron*Ardea goliath*

A pair of the world's largest heron was seen well in the Kruger NP, again in Mkuze and St. Lucia.

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Seen at a few aquatic habitats during the tour, notably good views in Wakkerstroom.

Western Great Egret*Ardea alba*

We had numerous sightings of these widespread birds on the eastern portion of our tour- including at Nsumo Pan, Mkuze GR and in highest numbers around Wakkerstroom.

Note: Clements does not accept this split and lumps this with Eastern Great Egret as one species: Cattle Egret A. alba.

Intermediate Egret*Egretta intermedia*

Recorded on two consecutive days during the tour, around the Karkloof and near Underberg.

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

This very widespread bird was recorded in largest numbers around Mkuze and later the West Coast NP.

Hamerkop Scopidae**Hamerkop***Scopus umbretta*

This bizarre looking species was recorded in Kruger, near Wakkerstroom and near Cape Point.

Pelicans Pelecanidae

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

First recorded at Mkuze, where we saw around 20, another small group was seen in West Coast NP.

Pink-backed Pelican

Pelecanus rufescens

We had good views of these birds at Nsumo Pan in Mkuze GR, where they have a breeding colony.

Gannets Sulidae

Cape Gannet

Morus capensis

We were fortunate to get good views of these birds off the St. Lucia beach on the eastern section. In the Cape we many very close views as they flew past our pelagic boat.

Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae

Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

The most common Cormorant on the inland waterbodies, widespread with many birds seen around Wakkerstroom.

Crowned Cormorant

Phalacrocorax coronatus

A few birds were seen with other cormorant species around False Bay, from the boat and from land.

Bank Cormorant

Phalacrocorax neglectus

This is the most tricky of the endemic marine cormorants of southern Africa – seen well on the pelagic.

White-breasted (Great) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax lucidus

Largest numbers were recorded at a breeding colony in Mkuze GR, widespread in small numbers.

Note: Clements treats this sub-Saharan bird as a race of the Great Cormorant P. carbo

Cape Cormorant

Leucocarbo capensis

The most common coastal cormorant in the Cape, we had hundreds of birds near the Cape of Good Hope.

Note: Clements places this bird within the Phalacrocorax genus as P. capensis

Anhingas Anhingidae

African Darter

Anhinga rufa

Single birds seen on a number of days, more seen well at Nsumo pan, Mkuze GR.

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.

Secretarybird Sagittariidae

Secretarybird

Sagittarius serpentarius

After distant flight views on the first afternoon, we were lucky to enjoy great views of 4 more of these tall, majestic birds striding through the grassland around the Wakkerstroom area.

Ospreys Pandionidae

Western Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

We had a single bird at the Mkuze GR, where it was seen well in flight, unusual sighting in winter.

Note: Clements does not accept this split, it is lumped with Eastern Osprey P. cristatus as: Osprey P. haliaetus.

Kites, Hawks & Eagles Accipitridae

Black-winged(shouldered) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

Recorded on many days during the tour, highest numbers during the first 2 days, uncommon in the Cape.

Black Kite

Milvus migrans

A single bird was seen by some over the highway near Mtunzini, an early arriving individual.

Note: This bird may in future again be split as Yellow-billed Kite M. aegyptius

African Fish Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

We had best views of these great birds on numerous occasions, mainly in Kruger NP and the Mkuze area.

Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier)

Gypaetus barbatus

After waiting for a while we had lovely views of a pair on their nest site in Lesotho as they changed over their positions on the nest. Flight views of these majestic birds were enjoyed by all.

- Hooded Vulture** *Necrosyrtes monachus*
We had a number of good views of these small vultures during our time in the Kruger NP.
- White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus*
This, the regions most widespread and numerous vulture, was seen well in Kruger NP and Mkuze GR.
- Cape Vulture (Griffon) (BE)** *Gyps coprotheres*
Two sightings of this regional endemic were enjoyed: at the Abel Erasmus Pass and in Lesotho.
- White-headed Vulture** *Aegyptius occipitalis*
We were fortunate to see both an adult and a juvenile bird, this species' numbers are declining rapidly in most areas. Our sighting was at an unseen kill in Kruger NP.
Note: Clements places this bird under its own genus as Trigoceps occipitalis
- Lappet-faced Vulture** *Aegyptius tracheliotus*
These huge birds were seen well on two consecutive days in the Kruger NP.
Note: Clements places this bird under its own genus as Torgos tracheliotus
- Black-chested (breasted) Snake Eagle** *Circaetus pectoralis*
Unfortunately only some guests saw this smart bird, a juvenile in Mkuze GR and an adult outside Eshowe.
- Brown Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinereus*
We had a number of good sightings of this species, including a number of good views in Kruger NP.
- Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus*
This stunning short-tailed Eagle was seen particularly well in flight and perched in the Kruger NP.
- African Marsh Harrier** *Circus ranivorus*
3 birds were seen at both Wakkerstroom and later in and around West Coast NP.
- Black Harrier** *Circus maurus*
Really good views of this particularly smart endemic were had, first in West Coast NP, also in the Karoo.
- African Harrier-Hawk** *Polyboroides typus*
2 birds were seen on our first full day in the Kruger NP.
- Pale Chanting Goshawk (NE)** *Melierax canorus*
Around a dozen of these birds were seen very well on the day we went birding in the Tanqua Karoo.
- Gabar Goshawk** *Micronisus gabar*
One of the highlights of the first day was great views of a melanistic bird feeding on a mouse within 15m of the vehicle. Two grey morph birds were seen in Kruger, south of Olifants.
Note: Clements places this species in the genus Melierax
- African Goshawk** *Accipiter tachiro*
Usually a tricky species – during the tour we had good views after following a calling bird in Skukuza, more good views around Hluhluwe, St. Lucia and Dlinza forest.
- Little Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter minullus*
Exceptionally close views were had of a single bird near our Hluhluwe area accommodation, another was seen flying over the Dlinza forest from the Aerial Boardwalk's tower.
- Rufous-breasted (cheded) Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter melanoleucus*
A single bird was seen flying in the Karkloof, better views were had during its two other short flying stints.
- Black Sparrowhawk (Goshawk)** *Accipiter melanoleucus*
Another accipiter we did very well with: best views over the coastal forest of St. Lucia.
- Lizard Buzzard** *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*
This species was scoped as we left Kruger at Phabeni, where it was heard calling.
- Forest (Mountain) Buzzard (E)** *Buteo trizonatus*
A single bird was seen flying over the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens..
- Jackal Buzzard (E)** *Buteo rufofuscus*
This lovely endemic was seen on around half of the days during the tour. Good views on the Sani Pass.
- Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax*
Single birds were seen on 2 days in the Kruger NP, one of the large resident eagles of the country.
- Verreaux's Eagle** *Aquila verreauxii*
A pair of these wonderful birds was seen in flight (and chased by ravens and kestrels) over the Hottentots Holland mountains and perched near Rooi Els. These majestic birds were a highlight of the extension.
- Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*
We had a lovely pale-morph bird in flight on our day in the vast open Tanqua Karoo. .
Note: Clements places this species in the genus Aquila
- Martial Eagle** *Polemaetus bellicosus*
This huge eagle was seen well in central and southern Kruger. Both juvenile and adult birds were recorded.

Long-crested Eagle*Lophaetus occipitalis*

Another lovely bird that is fairly common in the KZN midlands, where we had up to 4 on a single day.

Crowned (Hawk-) Eagle*Stephanoaetus coronatus*

After a single bird disappeared too quickly in Mkuze GR, everyone had stunning views of a soaring pair of these powerful birds over the St. Lucia lagoon and forest.

Falcons Falconidae**Rock (Eurasian) Kestrel***Falco rupicolus*

Our first bird was seen north of Wakkerstroom, more were enjoyed around the Sani Pass. They were later common during the Tour's Cape section.

Greater Kestrel*Falco rupicoloides*

A single distant bird was seen circling *en Route* to the Kruger, an hour after we left our accommodation near Rust-de-Winter. During the Cape section another 2 were seen well in the Tanqua Karoo.

Lanner Falcon*Falco biarmicus*

We had great views of 2 birds perched and in flight around the Howick falls. More single birds were seen on a number of other days during both sections of the tour.

Taita Falcon*Falco fasciinucha*

After waiting for no more than a few minutes this bird was seen first in flight and then perched on the spectacular cliffs of the Abel Erasmus Pass. Wonderful scope views were had by everyone and the birds was voted as the top bird for the eastern section. These tiny, sought-after and rarely seen falcons on the have become well known and are the only easily accessible individuals of their species.

Bustards Otididae**Kori Bustard***Ardeotis kori*

8 of these huge birds were seen very well over two days in the more open areas of the Kruger NP.

Ludwig's Bustard*Neotis ludwigii*

This fast-declining species was seen very well in the Tanqua Karoo, first in flight and then scoped when it was walking through the tough karoo bushes.

Denham's (Stanley) Bustard*Neotis denhami*

A newly burnt area produced ideal conditions for this species near Underberg – 9 in total, 2 very close.

Barrow's Korhaan (White-bellied Bustard)*Eupodotis barrowii*

After trying for this tricky species for a while, we were rewarded with scope views of 3 birds in a field in the Wakkerstroom area.

Note: Clements lumps this species under White-bellied Bustard as Eupodotis senegalensis from further north in Africa

Blue Korhaan (Bustard) (E)*Eupodotis caerulescens*

We recorded several of these stunning bustards during our time in the Wakkerstroom area.

Karoo Korhaan (Bustard) (E)*Eupodotis vigorsii*

4 of these regional endemics were seen very well after we followed up their call and eventually had great views of them in flight and close views on the ground. This bird completed our incredible suite of 10 possible bustards on the tour – the only place on earth where this is possible.

Red-crested Korhaan (Bustard) (NE)*Lophotis ruficrista*

We had fantastic views of single birds on two days in the Kruger NP, where they are often easily overlooked.

Southern Black Korhaan (Bustard) (E)*Afrotis afra*

We had a lovely male in the West Coast National Park, where it obliged with extended flight views.

Note: Clements places this species under the genus Eupodotis

Northern Black Korhaan (White-quilled Bustard) (NE) Afrotis afroides

This species was seen well in flight on the Zaagkuilsdrift road - the only site where it is possible on the route.

Black-bellied Bustard*Eupodotis melanogaster*

Excellent views were obtained of a bird in flight. It flushed from the edge of Nsumo pan in Mkuze and flew over a part of the pan – very unusual views indeed.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae**African Rail***Rallus caerulescens*

Amazingly, we had fantastic views of around half a dozen skulking birds on the Wakkerstroom wetlands.

Black Crake*Amaurornis flavirostra*

A number of these stunning birds were seen at wetland sites in Zaagkuilsdrift and Kruger NP.

African Swamphen*Porphyrio madagascariensis*

This very striking rallid was recorded in good numbers in Wakkerstroom, one in Mkuze GR.

Note: Clements lumps this species under Purple Swamphen P. porphyrio

Common Moorhen*Gallinula chloropus*

A fairly common bird, encountered in some numbers at several wetland sites throughout the tour.

Red-knobbed Coot*Fulica cristata*

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

Cranes Gruidae**Grey Crowned Crane***Balearica regulorum*

This exceptionally beautiful crane was seen well near Lydenburg and in larger numbers near Wakkerstroom and in the Karkloof.

Blue Crane (E)*Anthropoides paradisea*

This elegant Crane, South Africa's national bird, was encountered near Wakkerstroom and in the wheat-fields of the western Cape.

Wattled Crane*Grus carunculata*

This exceptionally beautiful and now rare crane was seen in the Karkloof area, where 9 were recorded.

Thick-knees Burhinidae**Water Thick-knee***Burhinus vermiculatus*

We encountered this species on 2 days we spent in the Kruger NP.

Spotted Thick-knee*Burhinus capensis*

A pair of these nocturnal birds was seen resting in an open area in West Coast NP.

Oystercatchers Haematopidae**African Oystercatcher (E)***Haematopus moquini*

We recorded 2 pairs of these stunning birds on the Cape section of the tour – one pair was seen at close range on the beach near Strandfontein.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae**Black-winged Stilt***Himantopus himantopus*

We had numerous good views of this very wide-spread species throughout the tour.

Pied Avocet*Recurvirostra avosetta*

We had views of many of these pied waders at the Strandfontein Sewage Works.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae**Blacksmith Lapwing (Plover)***Vanellus armatus*

This common species was recorded on many days of the tour.

White-crowned (headed) Lapwing*Vanellus albiceps*

Single birds were seen on consecutive days in Kruger – on the Olifants and Sabie rivers.

Senegal Lapwing*Vanellus lugubris*

We had 5 birds on burnt grassland outside the St. Lucia village.

Crowned Lapwing*Vanellus coronatus*

Good numbers of these birds were seen in drier, open areas, mainly during the first week of the tour.

African Wattled Lapwing*Vanellus senegallus*

This lovely lapwing was encountered on the first day of the tour, the Wakkerstroom and St. Lucia areas produced further sightings.

Kittlitz's Plover*Charadrius pecuarius*

The first bird was seen well, just after we left Mkuze, more sightings in West Coast NP and the Karoo.

Three-banded Plover*Charadrius tricollaris*

A widespread freshwater plover which we recorded frequently during the tour.

White-fronted Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

Only encountered on two days: good numbers in both St. Lucia area and West Coast NP.

Greater Sand Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

One of the big surprises of the tour, together with the below species. Around 3 of these normally very scarce summer visitors were found wintering in West Coast NP.

Lesser Sand Plover*Charadrius marginatus*

This species is extremely uncommon in South Africa, even in summer. We were very lucky to find 5 in a mixed flock of around 50 plovers. One individual was even sporting almost complete breeding plumage.

Jacanas Jacanidae**African Jacana***Actophilornis africanus*

The lovely long-toed lillytrotter was recorded in Kruger NP and at the Nsumo Pan, Mkuze.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae**African Snipe***Gallinago nigripennis*

We had great views of a large number of individuals in the wetlands at Wakkerstroom.

Bar-tailed Godwit*Limosa lapponica*

About 4 of these birds were busy in sandflats in the West Coast NP, overwintering in small numbers.

Whimbrel*Numenius phaeopus*

Another of many birds that were seen well in the West Coast NP, around 40 overwintering birds.

Eurasian Curlew*Numenius arquata*

6 of these large, uncommon migrants were found over-wintering in the West Coast NP.

Marsh Sandpiper*Tringa stagnatilis*

A single bird was seen in flight in front of a hide in West Coast NP.

Common Greenshank*Tringa nebularia*

Large numbers for winter: around 50 birds seen in West Coast NP.

Ruddy Turnstone*Arenaria interpres*

We had 5 birds in the West Coast NP.

Curlew Sandpiper*Calidris ferruginea*

Surprisingly the small waders were virtually absent, only 12 in West Coast NP.

Courasers & Pratincoles Glareolidae**Temminck's Courser (E)***Cursorius temminckii*

Around 10 birds were seen in 3 groups on recently burned grassland near our first night's accommodation.

Collared Pratincole*Glareola pratincola*

We had views at Muzi pans of a good number of birds in the fast-descending dusk.

Gulls & Terns Laridae**Grey-hooded (headed) Gull***Larus cirrocephalus*

These birds were first seen in Johannesburg, later more were seen at the St. Lucia Estuary and Strandfontein.

Hartlaub's Gull (E)*Larus hartlaubii*

This endemic gull was seen in all coastal areas of the Western Cape.

Kelp Gull*Larus dominicanus*

Commonly recorded in big numbers in coastal areas of the Western Cape, first recorded at St. Lucia.

Caspian Tern*Hydroprogne Sterna caspia*

First recorded in St. Lucia, more were seen later at Strandfontein and West Coast NP.

Swift (Great Crested) Tern*Thalasseus bergii*

Birds were seen around the estuary at St. Lucia as well as in big numbers around the Western Cape.

Sandwich Tern*Thalasseus sandvicensis*

A single bird was seen from the second hide we visited in West Coast NP.

Whiskered Tern*Chlidonias hybridus*

This species frequents inland water bodies around the country and was recorded in Mkuze GR.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae**Double-banded Sandgrouse***Pterocles bicinctus*

We were fortunate to see these stunning birds as they crouched near the side of the road in the Kruger NP.

Doves & Pigeons Columbidae**Common (Rock) Pigeon***Columba livia*

This very successful city coloniser was recorded at various towns throughout the country.

Speckled Pigeon*Columba guinea*

This large species was most common in Wakkerstroom, on the Sani Pass and around the Western Cape.

African Olive (Rameron) Pigeon*Columba arquatrix*

We enjoyed our first sightings in the Karkloof, more were seen near the Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden.

Eastern Bronze-naped (Delegorgue's) Pigeon*Columba delegorguei*

2 birds were seen briefly in flight over the Dlinza forest from the boardwalk tower.

Lemon Dove*Columba larvata*

This shy bird is seldom seen well, we had looks in the dune forest of St Lucia and again in the Dlinza forest.

Mourning Collared (African Mourning) Dove*Streptopelia decipiens*

We had excellent views of several birds in the Satara camp and at Tshokwane within the Kruger NP.

Red-eyed Dove*Streptopelia semitorquata*

Another widespread and common bird in South Africa that was seen on all but a few days of the tour.

Ring-necked Dove*Streptopelia capicola*

This widespread and common species was observed on every day of the tour.

Laughing Dove*Streptopelia senegalensis*

Another of the most widespread and commonly encountered birds of the tour, not recorded on a few days.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove*Turtur chalcospilos*

A woodland species, it took a few days before everyone got good views, big numbers later in Mkhuzo GR.

Tambourine Dove*Turtur tympanistris*

This fairly elusive forest species was seen around the northern KZN reserves a few times, mainly in flight.

Namaqua Dove*Oena capensis*

Seen very well in the ground in central Kruger and again in the Tanqua Karoo.

African Green Pigeon*Treron calva*

A very colourful pigeon, best views of close birds were enjoyed in Lower Sabie in Kruger NP.

Parrots & Allies Psittacidae**Brown-headed Parrot***Poicephalus cryptoxanthus*

We had great, close-up views of these savannah parrots during our days around the Satara and Lower Sabie areas of Kruger NP.

Turacos Musophagidae**Livingstone's Turaco***Tauraco livingstonii*

We had great views of this lovely species in the forest at St. Lucia where we saw 4 birds.

Knysna Turaco (E)*Tauraco corythaix*

A very silent bird was seen very well in Marutswa forest, with some help from another Rockjumper group.

Purple-crested Turaco*Tauraco porphyreolophus*

This species was recorded in Kruger as well as in Mkuze GR and around Hluhluwe.

Grey Go-away-bird*Corythaixoides concolor*

A very vocal bird, it was seen in the Rust-de-Winter area and in Kruger NP during the first five days.

Cuckoos Cuculidae**White-browed Coucal***Centropus supersilosus*

First seen in the Kruger NP, later in Mkuze and Hluhluwe Game Reserves.

Green Malkoha (Yellowbill)*Ceuthmochares aereus*

This extremely tricky forest bird was seen very well for extended periods as it sunned itself in the canopy.

African Emerald Cuckoo*Chrysococcyx klaas*

We were lucky to get good views of this scarce overwinterer from the boardwalk tower in Dlinza forest.

Typical Owls Strigidae**African Scops Owl***Otus senegalensis*

We had one and 2 birds on consecutive days, at a day roost in Kruger NP.

Cape Eagle-Owl*Bubo capensis*

This scarce owl of mountainous areas can often prove to be extremely elusive but we enjoyed really good views on telephone poles during a short nightdrive in the Underberg area.

Spotted Eagle-Owl*Bubo africanus*

After a lot of searching, this species was seen at very close range in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden.

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl*Bubo lacteus*

This widespread owl was recorded on two consecutive days – best views on a nightdrive in Kruger NP.

African Wood Owl*Strix woodfordii*

A pair of these lovely birds were heard around our camp throughout the night and were seen very well just before dawn – all at our little lodge in the Hluhluwe area.

Southern White-faced Owl*Ptilopsis granti*

Unfortunately this stunning little owl was only seen by one guest, another was missed on the nightdrive

Pearl-spotted Owlet*Glaucidium perlatum*

We had one bird on the tour's first 2 days, luckily they are quite often diurnal in winter particularly.

Marsh Owl*Asio capensis*

Another owl that is mainly diurnal in winter – around 10 were seen on the firsts afternoon, including one that came very close while we were out walking in the thorny woodland.

Nightjars & Allies Caprimulgidae**Fiery-necked Nightjar***Caprimulgus pectoralis*

We had spectacular views of a bird near Hluhluwe, also heard in the western Cape.

Swifts Apodidae**African Palm Swift***Cypsiurus parvus*

This delicate, long-tailed swift was recorded at several localities during the first half of the tour.

Alpine Swift*Tachymarptis melba*

This huge swift was seen very well in Kruger NP, where they were flying around over the Olifants river.

Little Swift*Apus affinis*

The most common resident swift of the region, it was seen in good numbers during the eastern portion.

Mousebirds Coliidae**Speckled Mousebird***Colius striatus*

This common mousebird was recorded at several localities throughout the tour, first near Zaagkuilsdrift.

White-backed Mousebird (E)*Colius colius*

We finally recorded good numbers of these birds on the windy and rainy day around West Coast NP.

Red-faced Mousebird*Urocolius indicus*

This fairly common bird was seen well in Kruger, Mkuze GR and St. Lucia.

Trogons Trogonidae**Narina Trogon***Apaloderma narina*

We were fortunate to see this spectacular bird in the Dlinza Forest, great scope views could be enjoyed.

Rollers Coraciidae**Purple (Rufous-crowned) Roller***Coracias naevia*

This bird was seen quite well on three consecutive days in Kruger NP.

Lilac-breasted Roller*Coracias caudata*

A delightful bird to see, this bird was found quite commonly throughout the first week of the tour.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae**Brown-hooded Kingfisher***Halcyon albiventris*

A woodland kingfisher, it was fairly common in the east with highest numbers in Mkuze GR.

Striped Kingfisher*Halcyon chelicuti*

Another small woodland kingfisher – we had a very brief sighting of a single bird in Mkuze GR.

Malachite Kingfisher*Alcedo cristata*

We encountered this little gem in Kruger NP and again in Mkuze GR.

Half-colored Kingfisher*Alcedo semitorquata*

This stunning and uncommon bird was seen and scoped very well at a wetland in Wakkerstroom.

Giant Kingfisher*Megaceryle maxima*

This huge Kingfisher species was recorded on 4 consecutive days in Kruger NP.

Pied Kingfisher*Ceryle rudis*

The world's most widespread kingfisher was found at many water bodies during the first half of the tour.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

Another stunning little bird that was seen well in Kruger as well as Mkuze GR.

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*

After recording the first individuals just north of Pretoria, we had more good views in Kruger NP.

Hoopoes Upupidae

African (Eurasian) Hoopoe *Upupa africana*

Recorded first in the Kruger, more later in Mkuze and in the West Coast NP.

Note: Clements lumps this species with Eurasian Hoopoe as Upupa epops

Woodhoopoes Phoeniculidae

Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*

Small groups of these often noisy birds were seen on 3 days in the Kruger NP.

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

This smaller and less obtrusive species was seen well in the Kruger and Hluhluwe GR.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Crowned Hornbill *Tockus alboterminatus*

Best views were had in the Skukuza camp in Kruger and again in the St. Lucia area.

African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*

A bird that inhabits the drier woodland areas of our region, seen north of Pretoria and in the Kruger NP.

Southern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus rufirostris*

We observed these birds in quite good numbers in the Rust-de-Winter area and the Kruger NP.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill (NE) *Tockus leucomelas*

Seen daily in good numbers in similar areas as the above species.

Trumpeter Hornbill *Ceratogymna bucinator*

The first birds were seen near the Hilltop camp of Hluhluwe GR. More were seen later around St. Lucia and the Dlinza forest in Eshowe.

Note: Clements places this species under the genus Ceratogymna

Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae

Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri*

These strange and very sought-after giants were seen well within minutes of entering the Kruger NP. The birds were seen very well at close quarters as they scanned the woodland for anything edible.

Barbets Capitonidae

White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis*

2 birds were seen in Mkuze GR, later there were huge numbers in fig trees around St. Lucia.

Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus*

We saw birds well in the woodlands and forests of Mkuze, Hluhluwe and St. Lucia.

Red-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus pusillus*

We had views of birds in Mkuze GR and again in Hluhluwe GR.

Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

A single bird seen well during a short walk in Skukuza camp Kruger NP.

Acacia Pied Barbet (NE) *Tricholaema leucomelas*

Single birds were seen in Kruger and again in Mkuze GR.

Note: Clements just calls this bird Pied Barbet

Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus*

We had good numbers of this duetting species in Kruger, Mkuze and at St. Lucia.

Crested Barbet *Trachyphonus vaillantii*

This brightly patterned Barbet was seen well in the Kruger NP and other sites during the first week, again in Mkuze and Hluhluwe.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae

Brown-backed Honeybird

Prodotiscus regulus

A single bird was seen well in the Dlinza forest, Eshowe from the boardwalk tower.

Lesser Honeyguide

Indicator minor

This parasitic species was seen well in the little village of Mtunzini.

Scaly-throated Honeyguide

Indicator variegates

One bird was seen very well after a lot of frustrating searching with the bird calling at very close quarters on the Gwalagwala trail in St. Lucia.

Woodpeckers Picidae

Red-throated (Rufous-necked) Wryneck

Jynx ruficollis

3 birds were seen in and around the town of Wakkerstroom, where they showed on both days.

Bennett's Woodpecker

Campethera bennettii

Great views of a single bird were enjoyed by all at the Tshokwane picnic site.

Golden-tailed Woodpecker

Campethera abingoni

Single birds were seen in Mkuze GR and St. Lucia .

Ground Woodpecker (E)

Geocolaptes olivaceus

The first bird was seen well during a morning in Wakkerstroom, numerous birds were then seen on the Sani Pass and in Lesotho. This proved to be a very popular bird on the tour and one of the major targets.

Cardinal Woodpecker

Dendropicos fuscescens

This very small woodpecker species was found on a number of days in Kruger and Mkuze GR.

Bearded Woodpecker

Dendropicos namaquus

This, the region's largest woodpecker, was seen very well in Satara camp in Kruger.

Olive Woodpecker

Dendropicos griseocephalus

We recorded a single individual of these forest woodpeckers in St. Lucia area, 2 more in Dlinza forest.

Wattle-eyes and Batises Platysteiridae

Cape Batis (NE)

Batis capensis

The first birds were seen in Hilltop camp, Hluhluwe GR, more later in Dlinza forest, Maroutswa and Kirstenbosch.

Woodward's Batis (E)

Batis fratrum

4 birds were eventually seen very well on the iGwalagwala trail in St. Lucia, what a little beauty.

Chinspot Batis

Batis molitor

Our first birds were seen at the entrance to Kruger with further sightings in Kruger and then Mkuze and Hluhluwe GR.

Pririt Batis (NE)

Batis pririt

3 birds were seen during the day we spent in the Tanqua Karoo area.

Helmetsrikes Prionopidae

White-crested Helmetshrike

Prionops plumatus

We had a few of these co-operatively breeding birds in and around Kruger NP.

Note: Clements just calls this bird White Helmetshrike

Bushshrikes Malaconotidae

Grey-headed Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus olivaceus

This great bird was seen very well, catching and feeding on a skink in Lower Sabie, Kruger NP.

Orange (Suphur)-breasted Bushshrike

Telophorus sulfureopectus

A single bird was seen well in the campsite of Mkuze GR, more in Hluhluwe and St. Lucia.

Four-coloured Bushshrike

Chlorophoneus quadricolor

A number of these shy birds were glimpsed in the Hluhluwe GR..

Note: Clements lumps this bird with Gorgeous Bushshrike as Telephorus viridis

Bokmakierie (NE)

Telophorus zeylonus

This very beautiful bushshrike was seen on a number of occasions near Wakkerstroom, Sani Pass and in the Western Cape.

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

Best views were had of 2 birds in the open woodlands of the Zaagkuilsdrift area.

Black-crowned Tchagra*Tchagra senegala*

This species was seen on 2 days during the tour – first in Kruger and again in Mkuze GR.

Black-backed Puffback*Dryoscopus cubla*

Commonly recorded in the denser parts of eastern South Africa during our tour, first recorded in Kruger.

Southern Boubou (E)*Laniarius ferrugineus*

This very vocal species was first seen en Route to Kruger, with numerous other sightings during the second half of the eastern South Africa section.

Crimson-breasted Shrike (Gonolek) (NE)*Laniarius atrococcineus*

A phenomenal splash of colour, these birds gave awe-inspiring views around our Rust-de-Winter location, where we had them in astounding numbers in the more open winter woodland.

Brubru*Nilaus afer*

This interesting shrike was seen well in Kruger and again near Mkuze GR.

Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae**Grey Cuckooshrike***Coracina caesia*

A few of these birds could be watched in the canopy of the Dlinza Forest, brief views of another in Maroutswa forest.

Black Cuckooshrike*Campephaga flava*

A male was seen very well in St. Lucia and we scoped a female from the Dlinza boardwalk..

Shrikes Laniidae**Magpie Shrike***Urolestes melanoleuca*

This striking species was seen in good numbers in the woodlands of Rust-de-Winter and in Kruger NP.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Corvinella

Southern White-crowned Shrike*Eurocaphalus anguitimens*

A few of these very impressive birds were seen on the first 2 days of the tour.

Common Fiscal*Lanius collaris*

This is a common bird throughout South Africa and was seen on most days of the tour.

Orioles Oriolidae**(African) Black-headed Oriole***Oriolus larvatus*

Recorded fairly regularly in the Kruger, Mkuze GR, St. Lucia and the Karkloof.

Drongos Dicruridae**Square-tailed Drongo***Dicrurus ludwigii*

A drongo that inhabits forested areas, we saw them in Mkuze, St Lucia and Dlinza Forests.

Fork-tailed Drongo*Dicrurus adsimilis*

Recorded on all days but two and at most sites that we visited in eastern South Africa.

Monarch Flycatchers Monarchidae**Blue-mantled (African) Crested Flycatcher***Trochocercus cyanomelas*

3 stunning birds were seen during our early morning birding session in the forest of St. Lucia.

African Paradise Flycatcher*Terpsiphone viridis*

The first overwintering bird was seen in riverine thicket along the Sabie river in Kruger, more seen in Mkuze and Hluhluwe.

Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae**House Crow***Corvus splendens*

These aggressive, introduced birds have made the area around the Cape Town airport their home, we also had some driving through Durban.

Cape Crow*Corvus capensis*

We mainly had sightings in higher-lying areas around Wakkerstroom and Underberg areas.

Pied Crow*Corvus albus*

Seen *en route* to Kruger and many other sites, while highest numbers were recorded in the Western Cape.

White-necked Raven*Corvus albicollis*

We enjoyed good views of this species near Underberg and particularly around the Western Cape.

Rockjumpers Chaetopidae

Cape (Rufous) Rockjumper (E) *Chaetops frenatus*

After much searching in tricky windy conditions we were rewarded with good views of a small group on the rocky slopes in the Rooi Els area of the Western Cape.

Drakensberg (Orange-breasted) Rockjumper (E) *Chaetops aurantius*

We enjoyed several spectacular sightings of this smart bird, sometimes surrounded by snow on our day up the scenically spectacular Sani Pass.

Fairy Flycatchers Stenostiridae

Fairy Warbler (Flycatcher) (E) *Stenostira scita*

We had a few glimpses of this endearing target bird, before we had great extended looks at a few of these little beauties, all in the Tanqua Karoo.

Tits Paridae

Southern Black Tit (NE) *Parus niger*

A bird we encountered on a number of occasions in bushveld habitats during the first 10 days of the tour.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Melaniparus

Grey Tit (E) *Parus afer*

A single bird was seen very well in the low shrubs of the Tanqua Karoo, another lovely endemic.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Melaniparus

Penduline Tits Remizidae

Grey (African) Penduline Tit *Anthoscopus minutus*

We had around 8 of these tiny birds on a walk in the often productive Lower Sabie camp where they were feeding in a Sycamore Fig.

Nicators Nicatoridae

Eastern Nicator *Nicator gularis*

A particularly elusive bird that was seen after some searching in Mkuze and Hluhluwe GRs.

Larks Alaudidae

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafraga africana*

A single bird was seen well while calling on the second day of the tour, east of the Rust-de-Winter area.

Flappet Lark (NE) *Mirafraga rufocinnamomea*

A few birds were seen in low open shrubland around our lodge near Mkuze.

Eastern Clapper Lark (NE) *Mirafraga fasciolata*

A single bird was seen in roadside grassland near Rust-de-Winter, another in flight north of Wakkerstroom.

Sabota Lark (NE) *Mirafraga sabota*

Birds were seen well in the Satara area of the Kruger NP.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Calendulauda

Rudd's Lark (E) *Heteromirafraga ruddi*

We had flight views of this localised and endangered endemic in short grassland near Wakkerstroom.

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

We had good views of a pair of these distinctive birds feeding along the roadside near Wakkerstroom.

Karoo Lark (E) *Certhilauda albescens*

Around 10 of these endemics were seen on the day we spent in the Tanqua Karoo.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Calendulauda

Spike-heeled Lark (NE) *Chersomanes albofasciata*

This unusual lark was first seen east of Rust-de-Winter, great views were then enjoyed around Wakkerstroom and then of the differently coloured birds in the Tanqua Karoo.

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea*

Good numbers were recorded around Wakkerstroom and in the Tanqua Karoo, smaller numbers elsewhere.

Pink-billed Lark (NE) *Spizocorys conirostris*

This species was seen well, where it came to drink near the road, north of Wakkerstroom in a few flocks.

- Botha's Lark (E)** *Spizocorys fringillaris*
5 birds were seen very well north of Wakkerstroom, one of very few places where this localised birds can reliably be looked for.
- Large-billed Lark (E)** *Galerida magnirostris*
4 of these endemic larks were seen in Lesotho, around a dozen were recorded on the Tanqua Karoo day.
- Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark** *Eremopterix leucotis*
Two or three large flocks of these birds were seen in the central Kruger, some while feeding on the ground.
- Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark (NE)** *Eremopterix verticalis*
A few of these birds were seen in the very open dry gravel plains of the Tanqua Karoo area.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

- Cape Bulbul (E)** *Pycnonotus capensis*
Seen daily during the Western Cape leg of the tour.
- Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor*
Recorded on every day at virtually all locations visited in eastern Southern Africa.
Note: Clements lumps this bird with Common, Somali and Dodson's Bulbul as Common Bulbul P. barbatus
- Sombre Greenbul** *Andropadus importunus*
A species that is far more often heard than seen, we encountered the bird commonly at most of the Zululand Game Reserves with our first sighting being in Hluhluwe GR, also in the Kirstenbosch gardens.
- Yellow-bellied Greenbul** *Chlorocichla flaviventris*
Good numbers were seen in Mkhuzi GR, St. Lucia and St. Lucia.
- Terrestrial Brownbul** *Phyllastrephus terrestris*
Fairly common in the tangled undergrowth of forests and thickets, seen first at our lodge near Mkuze, then in Mkuze, St. Lucia and Dlinza.

Swallows & Martins Hirundinidae

- Black Saw-wing** *Psalidoprocne pristoptera*
Birds were seen well near our Mkuze accommodation, later also in St. Lucia.
- Grey-rumped Swallow** *Pseudhirundo griseopyga*
We were treated to really good views of around 6 birds on both days we had in the central Kruger NP.
- Brown-throated (Plain) Martin** *Riparia paludicola*
This species was seen quite frequently throughout the tour at wetland sites.
- Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta*
A single bird surprised us with brief views over a wheatfield in the western Cape, south of West Coast NP.
- White-throated Swallow** *Hirundo albigularis*
A single bird was seen at Strandfontein, we were lucky to record it so early in the year.
- Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii*
Recorded in reasonable numbers in Kruger NP.
- Rock Martin** *Hirundo fuligula*
This species was seen around Wakkerstroom, on the Sani Pass and around the Cape Peninsula.
- Lesser Striped Swallow** *Cecropis abyssinica*
Recorded at lower elevations in eastern South Africa, with highest numbers in Kruger, Mkhuzi and St Lucia.
- Red-breasted (Rufous-chested) Swallow** *Cecropis semirufa*
We had brief views of a single bird outside Mkuze GR, back early from further north in Africa.

Leaf Warblers & Allies Phylloscopidae

- Yellow-throated Woodland (Wood)-Warbler** *Phylloscopus ruficapilla*
Our visit to a small patch of indigenous forest in the Karkloof rewarded us with fantastic views of this lovely tiny warbler.

Reed Warblers & Allies Acrocephalidae

- Lesser Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*
A single bird was seen at a dam on the Zaagkuilsdrift road, another at Strandfontein Sewage Works.

Grassbirds & Allies Megaluridae

- Little Rush Warbler (African Bush-Warbler)** *Bradypterus baboecala*

This skulking inhabitant of dense reedbeds showed well at the Strandfontein Sewage Works.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

- Red-faced Cisticola** *Cisticola erythrops*
This plain bird was seen very well in tall reeds in front of the Skukuza camp, Kruger NP.
- Lazy Cisticola** *Cisticola aberrans*
Another plain Cisticola that was seen well in rocky grasslands near the town of Wakkerstroom.
- Rattling Cisticola** *Cisticola chinianus*
This noisy and conspicuous species was recorded almost daily at bushveld locations during the tour.
- Grey-backed (Red-headed) Cisticola (NE)** *Cisticola subruficapilla*
We had several birds near Rooi Els, around the Cape Point area and in West Coast NP.
- Wailing Cisticola** *Cisticola lais*
A denizen of rocky hillsides, we found a few birds near Wakkerstroom and again on the Sani Pass.
- Rufous-winged Cisticola (NE)** *Cisticola galactotes*
A range-restricted species of tall reeds, we succeeded in obtaining good views of this bird near St. Lucia.
Note: Clements lumps this species with 4 others under the name Winding Cisticola C. galactotes
- Levaillant's (Tinkling) Cisticola** *Cisticola tinniens*
A widespread Cisticola recorded at a number of wetland locations throughout our tour.
- Croaking Cisticola** *Cisticola natalensis*
We had around 8 birds in open grassland savannah in southern Kruger NP.
- Neddicky (Piping Cisticola)** *Cisticola fulvicapillus*
This species was seen only once – on the second day of the trip, along the roadside east of Rust-de-Winter.
- Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*
This very widespread Cisticola was recorded in low shrubs near our Mkuze area accommodation.
- Wing-snapping Cisticola** *Cisticola ayresii*
A few of these tiny birds were seen well at close quarters in grassland around Wakkerstroom.
- Rufous-eared Warbler (E)** *Malcorus pectoralis*
We had excellent views of half a dozen of these exquisitely marked birds in the Tanqua Karoo.
- Tawny-flanked Prinia** *Prinia subflava*
This widespread prinia was seen at most locations during the eastern section of the tour.
- Black-chested Prinia** *Prinia flavicans*
Around 4 birds were seen well near the Zaagkuilsdrift road on day 1 of the tour.
- Karoo Prinia (E)** *Prinia maculosa*
Many sightings were enjoyed on every day in the Western Cape, where they were especially common in Kirstenbosch, where they were one of the most common species.
- Drakensberg Prinia (E)** *Prinia hypoxantha*
A few birds were seen near Wakkerstroom, more later in the Karkloof and at the base of the Sani Pass.
- Namaqua Warbler (Prinia) (E)** *Phragmacia substriata*
While very vocal, this species remained hidden for a while before most participants managed good if brief views of 2 birds in reeds at Karooport at the southern end of the Tanqua Karoo.
Note: Clements has still kept this bird in the genus Prinia.
- Bar-throated Apalis** *Apalis thoracica*
We enjoyed the best views of this lovely species in the Karkloof after first recording it in Dlinza forest.
- Rudd's Apalis (E)** *Apalis ruddi*
A pair of these birds was observed feeding in the canopy, first in Mkuze and another pair later in St. Lucia.
- Yellow-breasted Apalis** *Apalis flavida*
We enjoyed sightings of this bird on 6 days of the trip. First seen in Kruger, while it was later more common around the Mkuze and St. Lucia areas.
- Green-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brachyura*
A dweller of thick undergrowth, we had most sightings of this confiding species around St. Lucia.
- Cinnamon-breasted Warbler (E)** *Euryptila subcinnamomea*
This very tricky species was seen very well where it called from bushes and rocks, before flying over us and feeding in its characteristic way on rocky slopes on the edge of the Tanqua Karoo.
- Yellow-bellied Eremomela** *Eremomela icteropygialis*
A pair of these birds was seen well after some effort in the Tanqua Karoo. These birds represent the very pale western race that show very little yellow on the underparts.
- Karoo (Yellow-rumped) Eremomela (E)** *Eremomela gregalis*

At least 2 of these often tricky endemics were seen while building a nest in the very low vegetation of the Eierkop area of the southern Tanqua Karoo.

Burnt-necked Eremomela*Eremomela usticollis*

A pair of these birds was very well observed at the Orpen entrance gate to the Kruger NP.

Family uncertain Incertidae Sedis**Cape Grassbird (E)***Sphenoeacus afer*

This lovely endemic was first seen near the town of Wakkerstroom before everyone had good views on the Sani Pass and the Cape Peninsula.

Long-billed (Cape) Crombec*Sylvietta rufescens*

We found this almost tail-less bird around most woodland locations in eastern South Africa.

Babblers Timaliidae**Arrow-marked Babbler***Turdoides jardineii*

A number of sightings were had on every day we spent in Kruger NP, great views in Olifants camp.

Southern Pied Babbler*Turdoides bicolor*

A bird for which we only had a small chance on a single day. We found half a dozen of these strikingly marked babblers at the eastern end of their range on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.

Bush Blackcap (E)*Lioptilus nigricapillus*

We had great views of 3 of these sought-after endemics in the Karkloof mist-belt forest.

Sylviid Babblers Sylviidae**Chestnut-vented Warbler (NE)***Parisoma subcaeruleum*

We had a few birds on the first day: Zaagkuilsdrift road and another 4 birds in the Tanqua Karoo.

Layard's Warbler (E)*Parisoma layardi*

A few birds were recorded in the Tanqua Karoo, where we had around 6.

White-eyes Zosteropidae**Cape White-eye (E)***Zosterops capensis*

First birds were seen at our first night's accommodation, many more were seen throughout the tour and it was recorded on just more than half of the days during the tour.

NOTE: Clements lumps this species with the Orange River White-eye Z. pallidus as Cape White-eye Z. pallidus.

African Yellow White-eye*Zosterops senegalensis*

A single bird that bizarrely lacked an eye-ring, was seen very well in Mkuze GR.

Sugarbirds & Allies Promeropidae**Cape Sugarbird (E)***Promerops cafer*

We had good numbers of these long-tailed fynbos endemics in Kirstenbosch and other parts of the Cape Peninsula, particularly near Cape Point. Some posed for photos on proteas in the gardens.

Gurney's Sugarbird (E)*Promerops gurneyi*

A bird that can be tricky on the Sani Pass in winter – we had 3 birds, some of which were seen very well.

Starlings Sturnidae**Common Myna***Acridotheres tristis*

A species that was introduced to Durban in 1900 was common around urban centres of eastern South Africa.

Common (European) Starling*Sturnus vulgaris*

Another introduced species, this one common in urban centres in the Western Cape, also in Wakkerstroom.

Wattled Starling*Creatophora cinerea*

Birds in non-breeding plumage were seen well associated with larger mammals in Kruger, a few were seen later in West Coast NP.

Black-bellied (Glossy-) Starling*Lamprotornis corruscus*

This dark forest species was seen very well from the boardwalk tower in Dlinza forest in Eshowe.

Cape (Glossy-) Starling (NE)*Lamprotornis nitens*

Recorded regularly in the east with the largest numbers seen in Kruger and around Mkuze GR.

Greater Blue-eared (Glossy-) Starling*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

On the route this bird is restricted to the Lowveld in South Africa, we recorded small numbers of these flashy birds in Kruger NP, at close quarters during breakfast in Tshokwane.

Burchell's (Glossy-) Starling (NE) *Lamprotornis australis*

We observed this large iridescent starling daily in the Kruger NP, large numbers just south of Olifants.

(African) Pied Starling (E) *Spreo bicolor*

Incredible numbers of this endemic were seen in the Wakkerstroom grasslands and reedbeds. In the Western Cape we recorded them near Ceres and West Coast NP.

Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio*

Recorded regularly throughout the tour with highest numbers at Cape Point.

Oxpeckers Buphagidae

Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*

This bird was seen in the Kruger NP and Hluhluwe GR, attending herds of herbivores.

Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

Orange Ground Thrush *Zoothera gurneyi*

A bird was glimpsed briefly in the Maroutswa forest by some participants. Unfortunately a lot of effort did not yield better views.

Spotted Ground Thrush *Zoothera guttata*

A few charismatic birds were found and seen well, first in St. Lucia and later in the Dlinza Forest, Eshowe.

Groundscraper Thrush *Psophocichla litsitsirupa*

2 birds were seen on each of the first 2 days, near Rust-de-Winter and in Kruger NP.

Kurrichane Thrush *Turdus libonyanus*

Highest numbers were seen in Mkuze GR with a few individuals seen on 2 days in Kruger.

Olive Thrush *Turdus olivaceus*

We found small numbers around our Dlinza and Maroutswa forests, great views later in Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens.

Karoo Thrush (E) *Turdus smithii*

We found around 4 birds in the garden in Wakkerstroom.

Note: Clements still lumps the above 2 species under the Olive Thrush T. olivaceus

Chats, Old World Flycatchers Muscicapidae

White-starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata*

Glimpsed by a few participants in the undergrowth of Dlinza forest in Eshowe.

Cape Robin-Chat (E) *Cossypha caffra*

First seen around our Wakkerstroom garden, highest numbers were recorded in Kirstenbosch and other fynbos sites around the Western Cape.

White-throated Robin-Chat (E) *Cossypha humeralis*

We had a sighting of this bird in our garden near Zaagkuilsdrift, more were seen around the Mkuze GR.

White-browed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini*

2 birds were seen well in the Lower Sabie camp in Kruger NP.

Red-capped Robin-Chat *Cossypha natalensis*

Around 20 of these birds were seen during the day we spent around St. Lucia, also recorded in Kruger, Mkuze and Hluhluwe reserves.

Chorister Robin-Chat (E) *Cossypha dichroa*

This often difficult bird was eventually seen quiet well in Dlinza and then Maroutswa forests.

Bearded Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas quadrivirgata*

A good place for this bird was around Mkuze GR and Hluhlu produced more sightings.

Brown Scrub Robin (E) *Cercotrichas signata*

Great views could be enjoyed by all on the walk in the St. Lucia forest after we heard this endemic calling.

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

Recorded in Zaagkuilsdrift on the first day in highest numbers. Kruger and later in Mkuze and Hluhluwe GRs produced further sightings.

Kalahari Scrub Robin (NE) *Cercotrichas paena*

Great views were had of these western woodland birds on our first day, seen on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.

Karoo Scrub Robin (E) *Cercotrichas coryphaeus*

We had several close sightings in the West Coast NP and around the Tanqua Karoo.

African Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus*

A common bird in South Africa, we had sightings during the tour in Wakkerstroom and KwaZulu Natal Midlands as well as later in the Western Cape. Seen on all but three days.

Buff-streaked (Bush) Chat (E) *Saxicola bifasciata*

We enjoyed views of this endemic on rocky slopes around Wakkerstroom and again on the Sani Pass.

Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata*

We had distant views of this bird on the first day. Better sightings were enjoyed later, particularly numerous in the wheatbelt between West Coast NP and Ceres and on the following day in the Tanqua Karoo.

Mountain Wheatear *Oenanthe monticola*

We had half a dozen birds in Wakkerstroom and a further two as we entered the Tanqua Karoo.

Sickle-winged Chat (E) *Cercomela sinuata*

After much searching we found 2 birds in Lesotho and had 6 birds in the Tanqua on the extension.

Karoo Chat (E) *Cercomela schlegelii*

We had good numbers of around 20 birds in the Tanqua Karoo.

Tractrac Chat (E) *Cercomela tractrac*

We saw at least 15 of these compact little chats on our day in the Tanqua Karoo.

Familiar Chat *Cercomela familiaris*

Half a dozen birds were seen around the Cape Peninsula and Rooi Els, as well as in the Tanqua Karoo.

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

We had the highest numbers in the Wakkerstroom district, some were also seen in the Tanqua Karoo.

Mocking Cliff Chat *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris*

A single bird was seen for a few seconds by some participants at the Abel Erasmus pass.

Cape Rock Thrush (E) *Monticola rupestris*

Another endemic species that was seen well near Wakkerstroom, the Howick falls and on the Sani Pass.

Sentinel Rock Thrush (E) *Monticola explorator*

This good-looking bird was seen well and in good numbers in the Wakkerstroom area, on the Sani Pass and in Rooi Els in the Western Cape.

Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina*

We had birds at a number of locations around Kruger and the Zululand reserves.

Pale Flycatcher *Bradornis pallidus*

A single bird was seen very well at close quarters at the Mkuze campsite.

Marico (Mariqua) Flycatcher *Bradornis mariquensis*

We had a large number of birds on the Zaagkuilsdrift road on the first afternoon, 4 more in Kruger.

Fiscal Flycatcher *Sigelus silens*

A pair was seen very well en Route to Kruger along the roadside, another good sighting was at Rooi Els.

Ashy Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens*

A flycatcher of forest and woodland, we had sightings in Lower Sabie and Skukuza camps in Kruger and later around St. Lucia.

African Dusky Flycatcher *Muscicapa adusta*

This bird was recorded quite widely, first seen well in Lower Sabie, highest numbers in St. Lucia.

Grey Tit-Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus*

We enjoyed prolonged views of these active canopy feeders around Mantuma camp in Mkuze GR.

Sunbirds Nectariniidae

Collared Sunbird *Hedydipna collaris*

We had sightings of this tiny jewel of a bird in Olifants camp in Kruger and many more sightings later in Mkuze and St. Lucia areas.

Orange-breasted Sunbird (E) *Anthobaphes violacea*

We had numerous sightings, including several stunning males, around flowering plants in the Western Cape.

(Eastern) Olive Sunbird *Cyanomitra olivacea*

Seen well on three days around Hluhluwe, St. Lucia and Dlinza forest.

Grey (Mouse-coloured) Sunbird *Cyanomitra veronii*

We did well to record this bird on two days: Mkuze and around the Hluhluwe entrance gate.

Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystine*

The first birds were seen at Hilltop Camp in Hluhluwe and again in the Eshowe and Karkloof areas.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

One stunning male seen at our lunch stop in Olifants camp, highest numbers seen later in Hluhluwe GR.

Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa*

A brief glimpse was had of a female near Wakkerstroom before we had some amazing sightings later in the Cape around West Coast NP and the Tanqua Karoo.

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

The first birds were seen in the Dlinza and Karkloof forests. Commonly seen at a few locations in the Western Cape, particularly Kirstenbosch and the West Coast NP.

Greater Double-collared Sunbird (E) *Cinnyris afra*

This stunning little bird was seen in Dlinza forest and on the Sani Pass day.

Marico (Mariqua) Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis*

This dark sunbird was seen well on the first day of the tour and again in the Kruger NP.

Purple-banded Sunbird *Cinnyris bifasciatus*

Mkuze and St. Lucia produced very good sightings of these east coast birds.

White-bellied (breasted) Sunbird *Cinnyris talatala*

We encountered his tiny sunbird on a number of occasions during our stay in Kruger and the Zululand area.

Dusky Sunbird *Cinnyris fuscus*

2 male birds were seen well in the Tanqua Karoo on the extension's penultimate day.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali*

We found around a dozen birds on the Zaagkuilsdrift road on day one.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

This species was regularly recorded in urban centres around South Africa.

Great (Rufous) Sparrow *Passer motitensis*

4 of these brighter, large sparrows were seen well on the first day, not possible to see elsewhere on our route.

Cape Sparrow (NE) *Passer melanurus*

Recorded in the Rust-de-Winter area, Wakkerstroom, Lesotho and in the Western Cape.

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow (NE) *Passer diffusus*

Recorded throughout the first half of the tour, at numerous scattered localities.

Yellow-throated Petronia *Gymnornis superciliaris*

We had good views of a few birds in Mkuze GR.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Petronia

Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger*

We had sightings of this species in Kruger NP, particularly in the Satara camp.

Scaly-feathered (Scaly) Weaver (NE) *Sporopipes squamifrons*

We found these diminutive birds in the dry *Acacia* woodland near Rust-de-Winter on the first afternoon.

Thick-billed (Grosbeak) Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons*

A single bird was seen in Johannesburg, before we had a number of sightings in St. Lucia.

Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis*

Great views were enjoyed in Skukuza camp, Mkuze and Hluhluwe reserves.

Cape Weaver (E) *Ploceus capensis*

A few of these birds were seen in the gardens and reedbeds around Wakkerstroom, with more seen in the Western Cape.

Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius*

We had small numbers of these in non-breeding plumage in Kruger NP and in Mkuze GR.

Southern Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus*

Recorded at many locations in the highveld region, also Wakkerstroom, in the KZN midlands and the Tanqua Karoo in the Western Cape.

Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*

This species was recorded in St. Lucia before we had a spectacular breeding colony in full display action on the way from Durban to Hilton that was enjoyed by everyone.

Dark-backed (Forest) Weaver *Ploceus bicolor*

Small numbers were seen in Mkuze GR, St. Lucia and Dlinza forest.

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*

Seen in small flocks in the Kruger National Park and KZN midlands.

Southern Red Bishop*Euplectes orix*

These birds were not yet sporting breeding plumage in Zaagkuilsdrift and Wakkerstroom. Full-breeding birds were then seen in the Western Cape on the way to West Coast NP.

Yellow Bishop*Euplectes capensis*

Small numbers of birds were seen in non-breeding plumage in Wakkerstroom and on the Sani Pass. Breeding plumage individuals were then seen in and around West Coast NP.

Fan-tailed Widowbird*Euplectes axillaries*

Recorded in long-grass areas on the tour at Wakkerstroom.

White-winged Widowbird*Euplectes albonotatus*

A number of birds were seen in non-breeding plumage in Kruger and a single bird later in Mkuze.

Long-tailed Widowbird*Euplectes progne*

Common in high altitude grassland where this bird was unfortunately seen in non-breeding plumage only.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae**Green-winged Pytilia***Pytilia melba*

Stunning little bird that was seen in good numbers in the dry woodlands on day 1, Kruger and Mkuze also produced single birds.

Red-headed Finch*Amadina erythrocephala*

Another seedeater that was only seen in the drier woodland on day 1, where we had a single male.

Green Twinspot*Maningoa nitidula*

A single one of these tricky birds was seen well in a campsite in the St. Lucia area on a walk.

Pink-throated Twinspot (E)*Hypargos margaritatus*

After a lot of searching most participants eventually had good views of these stunning regional endemics in Mkuze GR. This always ends up as one of the tour's highlights if it is seen well.

Red-billed Firefinch*Lagonostica senegala*

A widespread bird that was seen well on 3 days in Kruger and briefly in Mkuze GR.

African Firefinch*Lagonostica rubricate*

Unfortunately only some participants were able to get brief views of these dark seedeaters in Hluhluwe.

Jameson's Firefinch*Lagonostica rhodopareia*

3 birds were seen well on day 1, before we had around a dozen during the day we spent in Mkuze GR.

Blue Waxbill (Blue-breasted Cordonbleu)*Uraeginthus angolensis*

This species was commonly recorded around Rust-de-Winter, the Kruger NP, Mkuze and Hluhluwe GRs.

Violet-eared Waxbill*Uraeginthus granatinus*

We saw a single male bird briefly in dry woodland on the first afternoon around Zaagkuilsdrift.

Sweet Waxbill (E)*Estrilda melanotis*

A very beautiful endemic waxbill, we had great views along the road that passes through the Karkloof forest.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus *Coccygia*

Common Waxbill*Estrilda astrild*

We had small flocks of this common species at various wetland sites on both segments of the tour.

Black-faced (cheeked) Waxbill*Estrilda erythronotos*

Another stunning estrildid of which we had 2 pairs coming to drink at a trough near the Zaagkuilsdrift road.

Bronze Mannikin*Lonchura cucullata*

First birds were seen in southern Kruger before we had more good sightings in the Mkuze, Hluhluwe and St. Lucia areas.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus *Spermestes*

Red-backed (Black-and-white) Mannikin*Lonchura nigriceps*

These little birds were first seen at the feeder in our St. Lucia garden and later in the Karkloof forest.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus *Spermestes* and lumps it with *Black-and-white Mannikin S. bicolor*

Indigobirds & Whydahs Viduidae**Pin-tailed Whydah***Vidua macroura*

Non-breeding individuals were seen on the first day and around the Wakkerstroom area.

Shaft-tailed Whydah*Vidua regia*

We had good views of these birds in non-breeding plumage just east of our Rust-de-Winter accommodation.

Wagtails & Pipits Motacillidae**Cape Wagtail***Motacilla capensis*

Regularly recorded in small numbers at most locations associated with fresh water during the tour.

African Pied Wagtail*Motacilla aguimp*

Recorded at low altitude and coastal waterbodies in Kruger, Mkuze, St. Lucia and surrounding areas.

Cape (Orange-throated) Longclaw (E)*Macronyx capensis*

This species was first seen after leaving our first accommodation, en route to Kruger and was later common around Wakkerstroom. A single bird recorded in West Coast NP.

Yellow-throated Longclaw*Macronyx croceus*

First birds were seen in Kruger NP, better views were enjoyed around Mkuze and Hluhluwe areas.

African Pipit*Anthus cinnamomeus*

This common species was seen in big numbers around Kruger, Wakkerstroom and a few other locations.

Long-billed Pipit*Anthus similis*

One bird was seen well in the rocky grasslands adjacent to the Sani Pass road on the way up to Lesotho.

Plain-backed Pipit*Anthus leucophrys*

A pair of these birds was seen near Wakkerstroom and again from Hilltop camp in Hluhluwe GR.

Striped Pipit*Anthus lineiventris*

Good but brief views on a rock at the Taita Falcon site for some participants before it dropped out of sight.

Bush(veld) Pipit*Anthus caffer*

Great views of this very elusive species on the edge of the road in southern Kruger NP on our way out.

Yellow-breasted Pipit (E)*Hemimacronyx chloris*

We were very fortunate to find 2 non-breeding birds in the grasslands near Wakkerstroom – this sought-after grassland endemic can be rather tricky to find in winter.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Hemimacronyx

Finches Fringillidae

Cape Canary (E)*Serinus canicollis*

Typically encountered at higher altitudes in the east as well as at numerous sites in the Western Cape.

Forest Canary (E)*Crithagra scotops*

A few birds were seen well on the edge of the forest patch in the Karkloof.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Black-throated Canary*Crithagra atrogularis*

We had a small flock of these seedeaters on the way to the Kruger on the second day, a few more were seen near Wakkerstroom.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Yellow-fronted Canary*Crithagra mozambica*

This good-looking and common canary was seen on most days we had in the eastern portion of South Africa.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Yellow Canary (NE)*Crithagra flaviventris*

Observed during the Cape section of our trip where we had a good number around West Coast NP and in the Tanqua Karoo.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Brimstone Canary*Crithagra sulphurata*

4 birds were seen well on the way to the Cape Point area, north of False Bay.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

White-throated Canary (NE)*Crithagra albogularis*

We found these birds on our days in the West Coast NP and in good numbers in the Tanqua Karoo area.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Streaky-headed Seedeater (NE)*Crithagra gularis*

Unfortunately we only managed brief views for most participants on the way up the Sani Pass.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Serinus

Cape Siskin (E)*Crithagra totta*

After much searching we found a pair of these erratic fynbos endemics in a small reserve called Jonkersdam north of the Cape Point reserve.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Pseudochloroptila

Drakensberg Siskin (E)*Crithagra symonsi*

Good numbers of this endemic siskin were seen during our day visit up the magnificent Sani Pass.

Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Pseudochloroptila

Black-headed Canary (E)*Crithagra alario*

This rather difficult and skittish bird was seen in the Tanqua Karoo, where they come further south after good rains.

Buntings Emberizidae

Lark-like Bunting

Emberiza impetuani

2 birds were seen in the Tanqua Karoo, where they become increasingly common with an increase in rainfall.

Cape Bunting

Emberiza capensis

The first 2 birds were seen near Wakkerstroom, before we had good sightings on the Sani Pass and on 3 days during the Cape extension.

Golden-breasted Bunting

Emberiza flaviventris

Seen in scattered locations in the east: Zaagkuilsdrift, Kruger, Mkuze and finally in Hluhluwe GR.

MAMMAL SPECIES LIST (49 species)

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

Elephant-shrews Macroscelidae

Smith's Rock Elephant Shrew

Elephantulus rupestris

Brief views were had by one or two participants in rocky terrain south of the Tanqua Karoo.

Bats Pteropodidae

Peter's Epauletted Fruit-Bat

Epomophorus crypturus

A few bats were seen under a thatched roof in the Skukuza Camp, Kruger NP.

Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit-Bat

Epomophorus wahlbergi

Around 6 bats were seen hanging in the canopy near the Nsumo pan, Mkuze GR.

Mauritian Tomb Bat

Taphozous mauritanus

A few of these bats showing their snow-white belly were seen quite well during our Kruger Nightdrive.

Baboons and Monkeys Cercopithecidae

Chacma Baboon

Papio ursinus

We frequently encountered these powerful primates in the Kruger NP, other sightings in Mkuze GR, Hluhluwe GR, the Sani Pass and around the peninsula in the Western Cape.

Vervet Monkey

Cercopithecus aethiops

A common species, it was seen at most localities in eastern South Africa, good numbers in many reserves.

Samango (Blue) Monkey

Cercopithecus mitis

This much less common and endangered species was encountered in Hilltop Camp, Hluhluwe GR. Some participants had views of another one in the Marutswa Forest.

Bushbabies Loridae

Thick-tailed Bushbaby

Galago crassicaudatus

We had good and very close views of around 5 of these nocturnal primates, where they were habituated to humans and being fed at our lodge near Mkuze. Others were seen in Kruger NP.

Hares & Rabbits Leporidae

Scrub Hare

Lepus saxatilis

Around 8 of these animals were seen very well on the nightdrive we did from Kruger.

Cape Hare

Lepus capensis

This species normally occurs in more open terrain, we saw a number of them in Wakkerstroom grasslands.

Squirrels Sciuridae

Red Forest Squirrel

Paraxerus palliates

While birding in the dune forests around St. Lucia we found a few of these richly coloured mammals.

Tree Squirrel

Paraxerus cepapi

We recorded most of these animals around the camps in Kruger NP.

Rats & Mice Cricetidae & Muridae

Springhare

Pedetes capensis

A species of drier, sandy areas that comes out well after sunset. We had good views near Wakkerstroom.

Striped Mouse

Rhabdomys pumilio

We had a single mouse in Kirstenbosch and around 10 later in the Tanqua Karoo.

Karoo Bush Rat

Otomys pumilio

These large rodents were seen in the Tanqua Karoo area, where they were quite confiding.

Sloggett's Ice Rat

Otomys sloggetti

Good numbers of these creatures were found in Lesotho during our day visit up the Sani Pass.

Dogs & Allies Canidae

Black-backed Jackal

Canis mesomelas

A total of 4 of these smaller carnivores and scavengers were seen during our time in Kruger NP.

Cape Fox

Vulpes chama

We were really lucky to chance a sighting of around 3 of these of these great mammals. They were out and about around their likely den site in a maize field east of our Rust-de-Winter accommodation.

Mustelids Mustellidae

Striped Polecat

Ictonyx striatus

This uncommon nocturnal animal was seen quite well during a short spotlighting trip outside Wakkerstroom.

Mongoose Herpestidae

Slender Mongoose

Herpestes sanguinea

This rather distinctive mongoose with a black-tipped tail was seen in Kruger and Wakkerstroom.

Dwarf Mongoose

Helogale parvula

We had some really good sightings of these tiny predators on 3 days in Kruger NP.

Small Grey Mongoose

Galerella pulverulenta

One individual was seen in Kirstenbosch, others on the Cape Peninsula.

Banded Mongoose

Mungos mungo

We had around half a dozen in a group in Olifants Camp, Kruger NP.

Yellow Mongoose

Cynictis penicillata

Incredible numbers of these mongoose were seen on the very short grasslands around Wakkerstroom.

Suricate (Meerkat)

Suricata suricatta

A family of these wonderful and now famous animals was seen near Lydenburg, before we had huge numbers of this social mongoose during our day around Wakkerstroom.

Hyaenas Hyaenidae

Spotted Hyaena

Crocuta crocuta

At a den site in Kruger we had a number of these predators, including some very young ones. Another gave us more great views on the following morning, south of Satara.

Genets & Civets Viverridae

Small-spotted Genet

Genetta genetta

On our night drive in Kruger we were fortunate to see one of these nocturnal mammals.

Large-spotted Genet

Genetta tigrina

We had a good an extended sighting of one near our Underberg accommodation during our Nighdrive.

African Civet

Civettictis civetta

We had incredible views of 3 of these lovely omnivores during our Kruger Nightdrive.

Cats Felidae

African Wild Cat

Felis sylvestris

2 individuals were seen very well during our Kruger Nightdrive, incredibly we then had another cat in the snow in Lesotho during the Sani Pass day trip.

Lion

Panthera leo

We had around 10 animals during the sunset drive in Kruger. 7 feeding on a buffalo kill and another 3 cubs sitting on very exposed rocks a little later.

Hyraxes Procavidae

Rock Hyrax (Dassie)

Procavia capensis

We glimpsed 3 near Wakkerstroom before getting good views on the Sani Pass and in the Cape.

Elephants Elephantidae

African Elephant

Loxodonta africana

We had very good views of these behemoths on every day in the Kruger as well as around 30 in Hluhluwe.

Zebras Equidae

Common (Burchell's/Plains) Zebra

Equus quagga

This species was recorded in good numbers during first half of the tour, especially in the Kruger NP.

Rhinoceroses Rhinocerotidae

White (Square-lipped) Rhinoceros

Ceratotherium simum

Our first sightings were in the Kruger NP after which we had a single huge bull drinking at close quarters in Mkuze GR at the fantastic Kumasinga hide.

Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamus amphibius

We saw good numbers of these massive vegetarians during our tour, the Olifants river in Kruger produced the highest numbers. Others were seen around Mkuze GR and St. Lucia.

Pigs Suidae

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

Regularly recorded throughout the tour at most reserves in the east.

Giraffes Giraffidae

Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

These strange-looking animals were common in Kruger NP, others seen in Hluhluwe.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

African (Cape) Buffalo

Syncerus caffer

Good numbers of these powerful creatures were seen every day in the Kruger NP.

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

4 of these magnificent antelope were recorded on the decent down Sani Pass, later we had a herd of around 40 very distant animals in West Coast NP.

Greater Kudu

Tragelaphus strepsiceros

These magnificent antelope were recorded in Kruger and Mkuze Reserves.

Nyala

Tragelaphus angasii

We had several sightings of this striking antelope in Mkuze and Hluhluwe Game Reserves.

Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

These were seen in the Kruger, Hluhluwe and St. Lucia areas, where they inhabit dense woodland or forest.

Sable

Hippotragus niger

These very smart antelope were seen on a huge breeding farm, west of the town of Lydenburg.

Common Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

This stunning, longer-haired antelope was seen well in Kruger NP and Hluhluwe.

Mountain Reedbuck

Redunca fulvorufula

3 were seen in open grassland at a distance as we drove east of Wakkerstroom.

Common Reedbuck

Redunca arundinum

4 were seen in the Kruger NP, north of Satara, others in Karkloof grasslands and near Sani Pass.

Grey Rhebok

Pelea capreolus

A few were seen in the high mountains near Lydenburg and later on the Sani Pass and in the Karoo hills.

Blue Wildebeest*Connochaetes taurinus*

This mammal was very common in central Kruger, where we had a number of herds.

Blesbok*Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi*

We saw many in the high elevation grasslands around Wakkerstroom, most of these are captive populations on relatively small farms and reserves.

Impala*Aepyceros melampus*

Easily the most common antelope in the game reserves of the east: Kruger, Mkuze, Hluhluwe and St. Lucia.

Springbok*Antidorcas marsupialis*

A number of these – South Africa's national mammal were seen on farms during day in the Tanqua Karoo.

Suni*Neotragus moschatus*

This tiny antelope was glimpsed dashing through the bushes near the Kumasinga hide in Mkuze GR.

Klipspringer*Oreotragus oreotragus*

While leaving the Tanqua Karoo, we were lucky to see a pair on the top of a rocky slope.

Steenbok*Raphicerus campestris*

These dainty antelope were observed frequently in the Kruger NP and in Wakkerstroom area, as well as in the Western Cape's Tanqua Karoo and West Coast NP.

Oribi*Ourebia ourebia*

A single antelope was seen by all in tall grass east of Wakkerstroom.

Blue Duiker*Cephalophus monticola*

A few of the tiny animals were seen in the deep shadows of the Dlinza forest in Eshowe.

Red Duiker*Cephalophus natalensis*

This richly coloured antelope was found in the coastal forests of Mkuze and around St. Lucia.

Common (Grey) Duiker*Sylvicapra grimmia*

This, the most widespread duiker in Africa was seen in small numbers in a number of different locations.

Seals Otariidae**Cape Fur Seal***Arctocephalus pusillus*

We had numerous sightings of these mammals on our way around the False Bay coastline during the pelagic as well as driving around the coastal roads.

Pleated Whales Balaenopteridae**Humpback Whale***Megaptera novaeangliae*

We had distant views of a few of these cetaceans in False Bay.

Southern Right Whale*Eubalaena australis*

We had good views of a few of these behemoths close in-shore.

REPTILE SPECIES LIST (14 species)**Marsh Terrapin***Pelomedusa subrufa*

We found a few of these creatures in Kruger and Mkuze GR, where they were warming up on land.

Bell's Hinged Tortoise*Kinixys belliana*

A single animal was seen in the rain as we left our accommodation to drive the Hluhluwe GR

Mozambique Spitting Cobra*Naja mossambica*

This venomous species was seen very well, where it was rolled up in a tree hole.

Spotted Bush Snake*Philothamnus semivariatus*

A great sighting of one warming up on a, aloe leaf in Olifants camp, Kruger NP.

Rainbow Skink*Mabuya quinquetaeniata*

We had a big female with pale blue tail at a picnic site along the Sabie river in Kruger NP.

Striped Skink*Mabuya striata*

A few of these widespread skinks were seen in Kruger and Mkuze GR.

Giant Plated Lizard*Gerrhosaurus validus*

We had a single one of these large animals in Kruger NP.

Nile Monitor*Varanus niloticus*

2 were seen well in Kruger NP, another later in the midlands.

Southern Rock Agama*Agama atra*

One of these big-headed lizards was seen near Cape Point.

Southern Tree Agama

Agama atricollis

We had a single one of these lizards during our time in the Kruger NP.

Flap-neck Chameleon

Chameleo dilepis

These very strange animals are often easiest to find at night as we did during the night drive in Kruger.

Moreau's Tropical House Gecko

Hemidactylus mabouia

A few of these very widespread lizards were seen by some participants around our accommodation in warmer areas.

Cape Dwarf Gecko

Lygodactylus capensis

A single small diurnal gecko was seen in Kruger and again in Mkuze GR.

Nile Crocodile

Crocodylus niloticus

Many were seen in the Kruger NP, particularly along the Sabie River, more in St. Lucia.

AMPHIBIAN & FISH SPECIES LIST

Common Platanna

Xenopus laevis

Our only amphibian was this species – also called African Clawed Toad, seen in Kruger NP.

Tigerfish

Hydrocynus vittatus

A few of this species – well known for being a tough fighter – were seen very well in the Sabie river.

Catfish sp.

A large individual was seen well as it surfaced near the Tigerfish in the Sabie river.

Mozambique Tilapia

Oreochromis mossambicus

Another species that was seen well seen in the Sabie river, they included some colourful males.

All photographs by Markus Lilje during this tour: Drakenberg Rockjumper at Sani Top, melanistic Gabar Goshawk, Brown-headed Parrot, Thick-tailed Bushbaby, Cape Sugarbird and Black-browed Albatross.

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