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# South Africa

7<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (19 days)



Dwarf Bittern, Southern Bald Ibis, Speckled Petrel and Pink-throated Twinspot by Markus Lilje

**Tour leader** – Markus Lilje

## Tour summary

*South Africa – one of the countries with the highest biodiversity on earth 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 all the resident species that are provided with a home in this diversity of areas we could also watch large numbers of Palaeartic and intra-African migrant species that use this area as a temporary home during the southern summer.*



A pan on the outskirts of Johannesburg was a great place to start and we were able to rack up some tricky species like White-backed and Maccoa Duck along with many more widespread water- and grassland birds. Long-tailed Widowbird, Yellow-crowned Bishop and Amur Falcon kept us entertained as we drove north and into drier woodland to the north. Crimson-breasted Shrike, Kalahari Scrub Robin, Shaft-tailed Whydah, Scaly Weaver and Southern Pied Babbler were some of the western species that we managed to find on their eastern boundary near Rust-de-Winter. Two special birds in this area were Dwarf Bittern – following good rains and Thrush Nightingale, a rare bird in South Africa. On the way to the Kruger National Park we were lucky to see our only flock of Abdim's Stork and the very special Taita Falcon.

The world-famous Kruger NP, as it so often does, produced the goods- great mammals and birds were the order of the day. Southern Ground Hornbill was one of the most anticipated birds which we managed to find on the first afternoon, a few of the other colourful highlights were Woodland Kingfisher, Violet-backed Starling and Southern Carmine Bee-eater, while the camps proved great with Bennett's Woodpecker, Grey-headed Bushshrike, African Scops-Owl, Purple-crested Turaco and Trumpeter Hornbill. We were very lucky indeed with many great mammal sightings as well: including Lion, Leopard, White Rhino, Elephant and African Buffalo, Giraffe and many others.

Next we moved on to the high-lying grassland biome, harbouring many of the regions endemics, most of which we were fortunate to find. Botha's, Rudd's and Pink-billed Lark, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Blue and Grey Crowned Crane, Secretarybird, Blue and Barrow's Korhaan and Southern Bald Ibis were some of the targets that were seen well. The Suricate or Meerkat proved to be one of the highlights of the tour for many participants when we found a few groups of this social mongoose in these high-lying grasslands.

The well-known birder's reserve of Mkuze was our next destination; again it lived up to its name with the two top voted birds of the tour being recorded here: Pink-throated Twinspot and Crowned Eagle. Green-winged Pytilia, Four-coloured Bushshrike, Pink-backed Pelican, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Red-fronted Tinkerbird and two stunning Spotted Eagle-Owl were some of the other good birds at Mkuze. A waterhole in the Sandforest was also interesting as it produced a procession of animals as they came down to quench their thirst.

On the way to the coastal town of St. Lucia we found the endemic Lemon-breasted Canary as well as the stunning Scarlet-chested Sunbird. This area provides a great mosaic of habitats, giving chances to see forest, grassland and estuarine species within minutes of each other. In St. Lucia itself we had some more special birds, including Livingstone's Turaco, Green Malkoha, African Yellow White-eye and African Broadbill in forest and Brown-throated and Yellow Weaver, Southern Banded Snake Eagle and Woolly-necked Stork along the estuary. The swimming pool at our accommodation in this hot and humid area also proved too inviting to resist for many.

An early morning in the Dlinza forest proved very productive with great views of African Emerald Cuckoo, Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon, Grey Cuckooshrike, endemic Spotted Ground-Thrush and the spectacular Narina Trogon! Mtunzini was not to be outdone and produced the great little Black-throated Wattle-eye. On our trip to Hilton we then managed to find Forest Buzzard, Dark-capped Yellow-Warbler and White-necked Raven after enjoying some great scenery as we moved away from the coast and into the Midlands.

In the Hilton area we had a morning around the Karkloof where we saw Cape and Fan-tailed Grassbird, Bar-throated Apalis, Drakensberg Prinia and African Olive Pigeon. Blue Swallow could



be watched over its ever-shrinking grassland habitat in the Richmond area, while the forest of Xumeni produced Grey Waxbill and the skulking Barratt's Warbler. We then drove further to the foot of the Drakensberg where we were to spend two nights in the Underberg area.

A real highlight of the tour proved to be our day up the Sani Pass – early on we already saw Horus and Black Swift before we had great views of the uncommon and sought-after endemic Bush Blackcap. As we moved up the pass we had numerous views of Gurney's Sugarbird and Ground Woodpecker as the scenery became more breath-taking. Nearing the top of the pass we then found two of the days other main targets: Drakensberg Rockjumper and Siskin. As we drove further on the plateau, trying to stay ahead of the storm clouds, we added Large-billed Lark, Mountain Pipit, Layard's Tit-babbler, Grey Tit and the exquisite Fairy Warbler in the Karoo-like scrub at almost 3000m altitude. On the way down we realised what a deluge we had managed to avoid on the Pass as the mountains were covered with streams that had not been there hours before; we even had to wait for over an hour for the water to subside and then for the road to be made driveable again before we could get to the bottom of the Pass!

Fiscal Flycatcher was the last new species we could add in the east before we boarded our plane in Durban and headed for the very different Cape. Our first stop was the famous Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden where we were greeted by a pair of Cape Spurfowl. Later we managed great views of Sweet Waxbill and Orange-breasted Sunbird having their Red-hot Poker lunch, while the Cape Sugarbird made us work very hard before we found 2 in the Protea Garden.

Our day around the False Bay area produced Cape Rockjumper after much work, Cape Siskin at Cape Point and the very interesting and relaxed Jackass Penguins – going about their business as if nobody was there, watching their every move. At Boulders we could also watch African Oystercatcher, while at Kommetjie we found all 4 salt-water Cormorants: Bank, Crowned, Cape and White-breasted alongside Kelp and Hartlaub's Gull as well as Swift and Sandwich Tern.

Pelagic sea birding tours off Cape Point are acknowledged as one of the best places in the world to do this. While summer is not the most productive season in this area we were very lucky, recording 4 species of Albatross (counting two Yellow-nosed species), the critically endangered Spectacled Petrel, 4 Skua species, Wilson's and European Storm Petrel and Manx and Great Shearwater amongst others. To add to this we had very good weather with very little wind, small waves and sunshine. Some participants were still up to going to the Strandfontein Sewage Works where we had Hottentot Teal and Great White Pelican among large numbers of Cape Teal and Cape Shoveler.

Driving up the West Coast we moved into drier Fynbos where we saw Karoo Scrub Robin, Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler, Cape Penduline-Tit and Southern Black Korhaan. The mud- and sandflats in this area support thousands of shorebirds in the summer months and we spotted Red Knot, Common Ringed and Kittlitz's Plover, Whimbrel and Ruddy Turnstone among others. Capped Wheatear and Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark were two species that kept us checking all the fences as we drove inland towards Ceres.

The last full day of the tour was spent in and around the Tanqua Karoo, where we had a few more endemic species to find. Some of the birds we were able to find included Karoo Eremomela, Karoo Lark, Rufous-eared Warbler, Pririt Batis and White-throated Canary. A bird we had spent much time on with no success then promptly waited for us at the side of the road when we finally had Grey-winged Francolin on the Theronsberg Pass. The last morning then also produced another tricky endemic: Protea Canary near Ceres.



## BIRD LIST (476 species)

*Nomenclature and taxonomy follows Frank Gill & Minturn Wright Birds of the World: Recommended English Names (2006) Princeton University Press, with updates to October 2007. With notes where Clements differs or Clements names in parenthesis.*

E = Endemic, NE = Near-endemic, BE = Breeding-endemic

### Ostriches Struthionidae

**Common Ostrich** *Struthio camelus*  
Wild Ostriches were seen well in the Kruger and in West Coast National Parks.

### Guineafowl Numididae

**Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*  
Recorded on most days during the tour, especially in the Western Cape.  
**Crested Guineafowl** *Guttera pucherani*  
We saw one flock of this beautiful bird in Mkuze GR, with a total of around 20 birds.

### Pheasants, Fowl & Allies Phasianidae

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

**Grey-winged Francolin** *Scleroptila afra*  
After much searching a group of 9 were seen on the road near Ceres.  
**Red-winged Francolin** *Scleroptila levaillantii*  
3 birds were seen very well on the edge of the road near Wakkerstroom.  
**Crested Francolin** *Dendroperdix sephaena*  
This lovely francolin was seen quite frequently in the Zaagkuilsdrift area as well as in Kruger NP.  
**Cape Spurfowl (Francolin)** *Pternistis capensis*  
First recorded in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden, later also in the West Coast NP where it was common, we had more sightings in the Ceres area.  
**Natal Spurfowl (Francolin) (NE)** *Pternistis natalensis*  
Commonly recorded during the first third of the tour; we had highest numbers in Kruger.  
**Red-necked Spurfowl (Francolin)** *Pternistes afer*  
One bird seen by one participant in Xumeni forest.  
**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 Francolin in the east.

### Ducks & Geese Anatidae

**White-faced Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata*  
This attractive duck was seen during most days of the first half of the tour around small waterbodies.  
**Fulvous Whistling-Duck** *Dendrocygna bicolor*  
6 birds were seen on the first day where they were swimming on a pan near the airport.  
**White-backed Duck** *Thalassornis leuconotus*  
We observed 4 birds at the same location as above.  
**Spur-winged Goose** *Plectropterus gambensis*  
Small numbers were seen on many days throughout the tour, highest numbers in Mkuze.  
**Knob-billed Duck** *Sarkidiornis melanotos*  
Disappointingly we only had flight views of two birds in the Zaagkuilsdrift area.  
*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*

This South African endemic was first seen near the town of Wakkerstroom, with more sightings in the Western Cape.

**Cape Teal***Anas capensis*

Recorded in large numbers at the Strandveld Sewage Works in the Western Cape.

**African Black Duck***Anas sparsa*

We were fortunate to have a pair flying past at Wakkerstroom, while great views were had from the road near Piet Retief a day later.

**Mallard***Anas platyrhynchos*

Some participants saw two birds of this naturalised escapee in Cape Town.

**Yellow-billed Duck***Anas undulata*

Commonly recorded at wetlands throughout the tour.

**Cape Shoveler (NE)***Anas smithii*

We recorded good numbers at Strandveld, with small numbers in Johannesburg, Wakkerstroom and in West Coast NP.

**Red-billed Teal (Duck)***Anas erythrorhyncha*

Highest numbers were recorded at the Strandveld Sewage Works, smaller numbers in Gauteng and near Ceres.

**Hottentot Teal***Anas hottentota*

We were fortunate to find three birds at Strandveld in the Western Cape.

**Southern Pochard***Netta erythrophthalma*

We had sightings of one or two birds around Johannesburg, Zaagkuilsdrift and Strandfontein.

**Maccoa Duck***Oxyura maccoa*

Good numbers were seen near the airport in Johannesburg, one male also seen at Strandfontein.

**Penguins Spheniscidae****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****Yellow-nosed Albatross***Thalassarche chlororhynchos*

We had five of the Indian Ocean form and two of the Atlantic Ocean form on our pelagic out of Simon's Town. Some authors split these two forms into 2 species; usually they are treated as races only.

**Black-browed Albatross***Thalassarche melanophrys*

Around a dozen of these birds were seen at close quarters on our pelagic trip.

**Shy Albatross***Thalassarche cauta*

This species was recorded in good numbers on our pelagic tour.

**Petrels & Shearwaters Procellariidae****Northern Giant Petrel***Macronectes halli*

2 of these birds were seen in flight around our boat on the pelagic.

*Note: Clements calls this bird Hall's Giant Petrel*

**White-chinned Petrel***Procellaria aequinoctialis*

Seen in large numbers on the pelagic tour.

**Spectacled Petrel***Procellaria conspicillata*

4 of these critically endangered birds were seen well by all – one of the top birds of the trip.

*Note: Clements treats this bird as a race of White-chinned Petrel*

**Cory's Shearwater***Calonectris diomedea*

We had around 40 of these birds on our pelagic.

**Manx Shearwater***Puffinus puffinus*

We had one bird on our pelagic – an uncommon bird around Southern Africa.

**Sooty Shearwater***Puffinus griseus*

Seen in high numbers on our pelagic.

**Great Shearwater***Puffinus gravis*

We had about thirty birds on our pelagic, some at very close quarters.

**Storm Petrels Hydrobatidae****Wilson's Storm Petrel***Oceanites oceanicus*

Around ten of these tiny seabirds were seen around trawlers on our pelagic.

**European Storm Petrel***Hydrobates pelagicus*

A dozen were seen well, showing the white flash under their wings on the pelagic trip.

**Grebes Podicipedidae****Little Grebe***Tachybaptus ruficollis*

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

**Great Crested Grebe***Podiceps cristatus*

A pan near the Johannesburg Airport had around 6 birds, more seen at Strandfontein in the Cape.

**Flamingos Phoenicopteridae****Greater Flamingo***Phoenicopterus roseus*

We had about 80 birds at Strandfontein in the Cape.

**Storks Ciconidae****Yellow-billed Stork***Mycteria ibis*

Highest numbers were observed at Mkuze as well as at Lake St Lucia.

**Abdim's Stork***Ciconia abdimii*

A flock of around 40 birds was seen circling above agricultural lands near the Abel Erasmus Pass.

**Woolly-necked Stork***Ciconia episcopus*

Single birds were seen in and near Kruger, with another bird at the St Lucia mouth.

**White Stork***Ciconia ciconia*

Highest numbers of this migrant species were recorded near Nelspruit on the way to Wakkerstroom.

**Saddle-billed Stork***Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*

3 birds were seen in the Kruger NP, another pair was seen very far away at Catalina Bay, St. Lucia.

**Marabou Stork***Leptoptilos crumeniferus*

A dozen birds were seen in the central and southern Kruger during our tour.

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

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

**Southern Bald Ibis (E)***Geronticus calvus*

We had very good numbers in the Wakkerstroom district, with more sightings up Sani Pass and near Underberg. Our first birds were seen near the Abel Erasmus Pass, on the Mpumalanga escarpment.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird Bald Ibis*

**Hadada Ibis***Bostrychia hagedash*

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

**Glossy Ibis***Plegadis falcinellus*

Greatest numbers were seen around Johannesburg, more sightings in Wakkerstroom and in the Western Cape.

**African Spoonbill***Platalea alba*

Our first sighting was of a single bird in the Wakkerstroom area, with more at Mkuze and St. Lucia.

**Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns Ardeidae****Dwarf Bittern***Ixobrychus minutus*

Stunning views of the smallest heron were had on an Acacia in the Zaagkuilsdrift area.



**Black-crowned Night-Heron***Nycticorax nycticorax*

Surprisingly common on the tour: seen at Zaagkuilsdrift, Wakkerstroom, Kommetjie and Strandfontein.

**Striated Heron***Butorides striata*

This species was first seen in the Zaagkuilsdrift area and then later recorded in Kruger.

**Squacco Heron***Ardeola ralloides*

A dozen birds were seen well near the airport at Johannesburg.

**Cattle Egret***Bubulcus ibis*

Commonly seen throughout the tour on almost every day.

**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.

**Goliath Heron***Ardea goliath*

The world's largest heron was seen at Zaagkuilsdrift and in the Kruger NP.

**Purple Heron***Ardea purpurea*

Seen at a few aquatic habitats during the tour, Kruger and St. Lucia provided good views.

**Great Egret***Ardea alba*

We had numerous sightings of these widespread birds- including at Nsumo Pan, Mkhuze GR and around Wakkerstroom.

**Yellow-billed (Intermediate) Egret***Egretta intermedia*

Recorded on two consecutive days during the tour around Wakkerstroom, a single bird also in Johannesburg.

**Black Heron***Egretta ardesiaca*

We had a total of three birds at the Wakkerstroom wetlands on two days.

**Little Egret***Egretta garzetta*

Largest numbers of this species were recorded at Kommetjie in the early morning.

**Hamerkop Scopidae****Hamerkop***Scopus umbretta*

This bizarre looking species was recorded on most days of the first half of our tour.

**Pelicans Pelecanidae****Great White Pelican***Pelecanus onocrotalus*

First recorded at Strandfontein, more seen the following day, on the way towards West Coast NP.

**Pink-backed Pelican***Pelecanus rufescens*

We had wonderful views of this species at Nsumo Pan in Mkuze Game Reserve.

**Cormorants Phalacrocoracidae****Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant***Phalacrocorax africanus*

The most common Cormorant on the inland waterbodies, widespread with up to 40 birds seen around Wakkerstroom.

**Crowned Cormorant***Phalacrocorax coronatus*

Recorded during our pelagic tour and at other locations around the peninsula, we had a total of seven birds.

**Bank Cormorant***Phalacrocorax neglectus*

We had a total of around 14 birds on our pelagic trip and at Kommetjie.

**White-breasted Cormorant***Phalacrocorax lucidus*

While a few were recorded in the east, the really big numbers occurred around the Cape Peninsula.

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

**Cape Cormorant***Leucocarbo capensis*

The most common coastal cormorant, we had hundreds of birds on our pelagic and around the peninsula.

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

**Anhingas Anhingidae**

**Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

Good numbers at our Johannesburg pan, later at Wakkerstroom, Mkuze and Strandfontein, amongst others.

**Falcons Falconidae****Lesser Kestrel***Falco naumanni*

We had a single bird in the Rust-de-Winter area, 2 in the Kruger and a group of 5 birds in Ceres area.

**Common (Eurasian) Kestrel***Falco tinnunculus*

Surprisingly we only saw this bird on the Cape section of the trip: Cape Point, West Coast NP and the Tanqua Karoo.

**Greater Kestrel***Falco rupicoloides*

Two single birds were seen on the edge of their range at Wakkerstroom, 3 more in the Tanqua Karoo.

**Amur Falcon***Falco amurensis*

Recorded at various localities during the tour with peak numbers in excess of 100 around Zaagkuilsdrift, Wakkerstroom and the Underberg districts.

**Eurasian Hobby***Falco subbuteo*

A single bird was seen at the closed mouth of the St. Lucia Estuary, we it sat on the sand for a while.

**Lanner Falcon***Falco biarmicus*

We had a great view of a young bird on our last full day of the trip in the Tanqua Karoo area.

**Peregrine Falcon***Falco peregrinus*

One bird was seen perched near Wakkerstroom; another gave great flight views near Rooi Els.

**Taita Falcon***Falco fasciinucha*

We enjoyed scope views of one of these tiny and rarely seen falcons on Abel Erasmus Pass, where it was perched atop a high cliff.

**Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae****Secretarybird***Sagittarius serpentarius*

Our only sighting was of a single bird in the grasslands outside the town of Wakkerstroom.

**Osprey***Pandion haliaetus*

We had a single bird at the Nsumo Pan, Mkuze, as well as at West Coast National Park.

**Black-winged (shouldered) Kite***Elanus caeruleus*

Recorded on most days during the tour, one of the most widespread small raptors on the tour.

**Black Kite***Milvus migrans*

Recorded on more than half of the days of the tour, highest numbers in the Kwazulu-Natal midlands.

**African Fish Eagle***Haliaeetus vocifer*

We had views of these great birds in Kruger, Mkuze, St. Lucia and at the West Coast NP.

**Hooded Vulture***Necrosyrtes monachus*

We had a single bird near Satara in the Kruger NP where it flew above lions we were looking at.

**White-backed Vulture***Gyps africanus*

This, the regions most widespread and numerous vulture, was seen in the Kruger NP and Mkuze GR.

**Cape Vulture (Griffon) (BE)***Gyps coprotheres*

We had very distant sightings of a bird from the South African Border Post on the Sani Pass.

**White-headed Vulture***Aegyptius occipitalis*

3 birds were seen circling over the Sabie River in the Kruger National Park.

*Note: Clements places this bird under its own genus as Trigoiceps occipitalis*

**Lappet-faced Vulture***Aegyptius tracheliotus*

2 birds were seen circling the same thermal as the White-headed Vulture above.

*Note: Clements places this bird under its own genus as Torgos tracheliotus*

**Black-chested (breasted) Snake Eagle***Circaetus pectoralis*

Only seen on our second day, when we had good views of a single bird flying.

**Brown Snake Eagle***Circaetus cinereus*

Our best sighting of this species was of one bird in Kruger NP, more were seen at Zaagkuilsdrift.

**Southern Banded (Fasciated) Snake Eagle***Circaetus fasciolatus*

One bird was seen on two consecutive days at the closed St. Lucia Estuary mouth.



- Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus*  
This stunning Eagle was seen very well in the Kruger National Park.
- African Marsh Harrier** *Circus ranivorus*  
We enjoyed sightings of this bird at the Wakkerstroom marsh, as well as at Midmar dam and Strandfontein.
- Black Harrier** *Circus maurus*  
Our first sightings were of single birds at Wakkerstroom and in the West Coast NP, the best views were of flying and sitting birds in the Tanqua Karoo.
- African Harrier-Hawk** *Polyboroides typus*  
We enjoyed two sightings of this species, near Wakkerstroom and other at our Underberg accommodation.
- Dark Chanting Goshawk** *Melierax metabates*  
A single bird was seen at a distance on the first day of the trip, near Rust-de-Winter.
- Pale Chanting Goshawk (NE)** *Melierax canorus*  
We first had numerous sightings on the day we had in the Tanqua Karoo.
- Gabar Goshawk** *Micronisus gabar*  
On sub-adult was seen quickly in Mkuze Game Reserve.  
*Note: Clements places this species in the genus Melierax*
- African Goshawk** *Accipiter tachiro*  
One bird seen in flight by one participant in Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens.
- Black Sparrowhawk (Goshawk)** *Accipiter melanoleucus*  
A single bird was seen flying over the St. Lucia Estuary, another in the Dlinza forest.
- Common (Eurasian) Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*  
A summer migrant to the region, we recorded them regularly on tour, most common around West Coast NP.
- Forest Buzzard (E)** *Buteo trizonatus*  
We had a single bird on our day between St. Lucia and Hilton, near the town of Greytown.  
*Note: Clements lumps this species with the Mountain Buzzard B. oreophilus of east Africa*
- Jackal Buzzard (E)** *Buteo rufofuscus*  
This endemic was first seen in the Wakkerstroom district, followed by further sightings in the KZN midlands and on the Sani Pass, as well as in the Western Cape.
- Lesser Spotted Eagle** *Aquila pomarina*  
A single bird was seen in flight near the Satara Camp in the Kruger NP.
- Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax*  
Single birds were seen on the first two days in the Kruger NP.
- Wahlberg's Eagle** *Aquila wahlbergi*  
A number of birds were seen in Kruger and a single was perching in the Sand Forest in Mkuze.
- African Hawk-Eagle** *Hieraaetus spilogaster*  
Uncommon in the south of its range, we were fortunate to have good views of two birds near Zaagkuilsdrift.  
*Note: Clements places this species in the genus Aquila*
- Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*  
We had one bird in flight on our day in the vast Tanqua Karoo.  
*Note: Clements places this species in the genus Aquila*
- Long-crested Eagle** *Lophaetus occipitalis*  
We enjoyed a number of sightings of this regal bird, the first outside White River, with the bulk of the sightings being along the roads on telephone poles in Kwazulu-Natal.
- Crowned (Hawk-) Eagle** *Stephanoaetus coronatus*  
One great bird was seen well, perched in a dead tree in Mkuze – another tour highlight.

### Bustards Otididae

- Kori Bustard** *Ardeotis kori*  
Two birds were seen in the Kruger in tough, long-grass conditions, one was eventually seen very well.
- Denham's (Stanley) Bustard** *Neotis denhami*  
This bustard was found in the grasslands in the Wakkerstroom district on two days.
- Barrow's Korhaan** *Eupodotis barrowii*  
After long searching for calling birds, one was spotted and seen by all near Wakkerstroom.  
*Note: Clements lumps this species under White-bellied Bustard as Eupodotis senegalensis from further north in Africa*



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

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

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

We had 3 birds in the West Coast National Park.

*Note: Clements places this species under the genus Eupodotis*

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

These birds were heard near Zaagkuilsdrift, before one was glimpsed at a distance by some participants.

**Black-bellied Bustard***Eupodotis melanogaster*

Excellent views were obtained of a single bird near Wakkerstroom.

**Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae****Black Crake***Amaurornis flavirostra*

This very striking rail was recorded in the central Kruger National Park.

**African Swamphen***Porphyrio madagascariensis*

A number of these stunning birds were seen at wetland sites near Johannesburg, Wakkerstroom and Strandfontein.

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

**Common Moorhen***Gallinula chloropus*

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

**Red-knobbed Coot***Fulica cristata*

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

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

This exceptionally beautiful crane was seen in the Wakkerstroom and Underberg areas.

**Blue Crane (E)***Anthropoides paradisea*

This elegant Crane, South Africa's national bird, was encountered in the grasslands around the Wakkerstroom district.

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

We encountered this species in the Kruger NP and at St. Lucia.

**Spotted Thick-knee***Burhinus capensis*

The first bird was seen near Wakkerstroom, more were seen later during our night drive in Mkuze GR.

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

We recorded good numbers at coastal sites of False Bay and Kommetjie in the Western Cape.

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

First recorded in Mkuze GR, we later had good numbers, especially in the Western Cape.

**Pied Avocet***Recurvirostra avosetta*

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

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

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

**White-crowned (headed) Lapwing***Vanellus albiceps*

3 birds were seen by all on sandbanks in the Sabie River.

**Senegal Lapwing***Vanellus lugubris*

We had 8 birds near the Orpen gate in the Kruger NP.



**Crowned Lapwing***Vanellus coronatus*

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

**African Wattled Lapwing***Vanellus senegallus*

This striking lapwing was encountered in the Wakkerstroom area and in Mkuze.

**Grey (Black-bellied) Plover***Pluvialis squatarola*

Four birds seen at St Lucia and at least 25 in the West Coast NP.

**Common Ringed Plover***Charadrius hiaticula*

We encountered a few birds at the St. Lucia Estuary, with further sightings at West Coast NP.

**Kittlitz's Plover***Charadrius pecuarius*

About a dozen birds were around the saltmarshes of the West Coast NP.

**Three-banded Plover***Charadrius tricollaris*

A widespread freshwater plover which we recorded in the Kruger NP.

**White-fronted Plover***Charadrius marginatus*

First encountered in the St Lucia area, we had more sightings at Kommetjie.

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

It was quite common during the first part of the tour, seen in Zaagkuilsdrift, Kruger NP and at the Nsumo Pan, Mkuze.

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

We had good views of a total of seven birds in the wetlands at Wakkerstroom.

**Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus*

The first two were seen on the rocks at Kommetjie, dozens later in the West Coast NP.

**Common Greenshank***Tringa nebularia*

Small numbers were encountered at most wetlands around the country, highest numbers in West Coast NP.

**Wood Sandpiper***Tringa glareola*

Singletons were seen at freshwater locations in eastern SA, in Kruger, Mkuze and the Wakkerstroom area.

**Common Sandpiper***Actitis hypoleucos*

We found this species at Kruger NP and Wakkerstroom.

**Ruddy Turnstone***Arenaria interpres*

We had about fifteen in the West Coast NP.

**Red Knot***Calidris canutus*

We had small numbers from a hide in the West Coast NP.

**Sanderling***Calidris alba*

We encountered about fifty birds in the West Coast NP, the first 3 were seen at St. Lucia.

**Little Stint***Calidris minuta*

We had large numbers, approaching three hundred, in the West Coast NP, the first birds again at St. Lucia.

**Curlew Sandpiper***Calidris ferruginea*

5 birds of this wader species were seen at the St. Lucia Estuary, with huge numbers in the West Coast NP.

**Ruff***Philomachus pugnax*

We had small numbers of birds at Kruger NP, Mkuze and St Lucia.

**Coursers & Pratincoles Glareolidae****Black-winged Pratincole***Glareola nordmanni*

We found 25 birds in a ploughed land in the grasslands near Ermelo, north of Wakkerstroom.

**Gulls & Terns Laridae****Kelp Gull***Larus dominicanus*

Commonly recorded in big numbers in coastal areas of the Western Cape.

**Grey-hooded (headed) Gull***Larus cirrocephalus*

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

**Hartlaub's Gull (E)** *Larus hartlaubii*

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

**Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*

Recorded on our pelagic trip, where we recorded upwards of 30 birds.

**Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*

First recorded in St Lucia, where we had about 10 birds, 2 more seen in False Bay.

*Note: Clements places this species under the genus Hydroprogne*

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

20 birds were seen at a roost with Swift Tern at Kommetjie.

*Note: Clements places this species under the genus Thalasseus*

**Swift (Great Crested) Tern** *Sterna bergii*

Large numbers were found on the pelagic and particularly in the harbour at False Bay.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Interestingly, very few of these birds were around – one flock of 40 at Strandfontein was the largest number.

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus*

This species frequents inland water bodies around the country, 30 birds were seen near Ermelo, north of Wakkerstroom, on a pan where they were breeding.

**White-winged Tern** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

About 10 birds were seen as they cruised over the Nsumo Pan in Mkuze Game Reserve.

### Skuas Stercorariidae

**Subantarctic (Brown) Skua** *Stercorarius antarcticus*

We had about 15 on our pelagic tour, some giving great views as they cruised above our boat.

**Pomarine Skua (Jaeger)** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

2 birds were seen, showing their bulkier size and slower wingbeats.

**Parasitic Jaeger** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Around 10 birds were seen, mainly nearer to the shore, some chasing and robbing Swift Tern of their catch.

**Long-tailed Jaeger** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Two were seen very well on our pelagic trip.

### Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

**Namaqua Sandgrouse** *Pterocles namaqua*

We were very lucky to have 4 birds flying low over our breakfast spot in the Tanqua Karoo.

### 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 and the Western Cape.

**African Olive (Rameron) Pigeon** *Columba arquatrix*

We enjoyed our first great sighting in the Karkloof, more were seen near the Underberg area.

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

4 birds were seen briefly sitting and flying around the Dlinza Forest treetops.

**Lemon Dove** *Columba larvata*

We had views of this secretive forest dweller in the forest in St Lucia and Eshowe's 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, seen on all but one day of the tour.

**Ring-necked Dove** *Streptopelia capicola*

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

**Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*



Another of the most widespread and commonly encountered birds of the tour.

**Emerald-spotted Wood Dove** *Turtur chalcospilos*

A woodland species, it was seen regularly in the Kruger NP and in Mkhuzo GR.

**Tambourine Dove** *Turtur tympanistria*

This fairly elusive forest species was seen in flight twice on the tour, most participants saw the brown upperparts on the road to Xumeni Forest.

**Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis*

Seen very well when we had a bird perched near Zaagkuilsdrift, another flew past in West Coast NP.

**African Green Pigeon** *Treron calva*

A very colourful pigeon, it was seen at Satara in Kruger first, other sighting in Skukuza and St. Lucia.

### Parrots & Allies Psittacidae

**Brown-headed Parrot** *Poicephalus cryptoxanthus*

We had a great view of 3 birds as we arrived in Satara in the 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 them calling.

**Knysna Turaco (E)** *Tauraco corythaix*

We had a single one of these colourful birds in the Dlinza Forest, only seen in flight on a few occasions.

**Purple-crested Turaco** *Tauraco porphyreolophus*

This species was recorded beautifully at Kruger as well as in Mkuze GR.

**Grey Go-away-bird** *Corythaixoides concolor*

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

### Cuckoos Cuculidae

**Burchell's Coucal** *Centropus burchellii*

First seen in the Kruger NP where it was encountered a number of times, also in Mkuze and in Kirstenbosch.

*Note: Clements lumps this species with Neumann's and White-browed Coucal as C. superciliosus*

**Green Malkoha (Yellowbill)** *Ceuthmochares aereus*

This extremely tricky forest bird was seen quite well by most participants in the St. Lucia forests where we had one bird.

**Levaillant's Cuckoo** *Clamator levaillantii*

One bird gave extended views on the Zaagkuilsdrift road, we were extremely lucky to see two more pairs of this uncommon Cuckoo in the Kruger NP.

**Jacobin (Pied) Cuckoo** *Clamator jacobinus*

Two birds showed well on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.

**Dideric Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx caprius*

A bird that parasitizes weavers, it was seen in the Rust-de-Winter area and in Kruger.

**Klaas's Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx klaas*

This species was seen in Kruger, where we had two male birds in Satara Restcamp during a short walk.

**African Emerald Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx klaas*

At least 3 birds seen in all their splendour in the Dlinza forest.

### Typical Owls Strigidae

**African Scops Owl** *Otus senegalensis*

We had one bird on 3 consecutive days, at a day roost in Kruger NP.

**Spotted Eagle-Owl** *Bubo africanus*

After a lot of searching, this species was seen at Mkhuzo GR where we were treated to great extended views.

**Verreaux's Eagle-Owl** *Bubo lacteus*

One bird was seen before sunset on our sunset drive in Kruger NP.



### Nightjars Caprimulgidae

**European (Eurasian) Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

2 females were seen in Kruger NP and Mkuze on the respective nightdrives.

**Fiery-necked Nightjar** *Caprimulgus pectoralis*

Larger numbers of this, the most widespread nightjar of the region were seen on the same drives as above.

### Swifts Apodidae

**African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus*

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

**Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba*

Some participants saw one bird on the way to the Kruger NP on day 2.

**African Black Swift** *Apus barbatus*

A small flock of these birds was seen on our day excursion up the beautiful Sani Pass.

*Note: Clements just calls this African Swift*

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis*

The most common resident swift of the region, it was seen regularly throughout the tour.

**Horus Swift** *Apus horus*

A few birds were seen at Wakkerstroom, while our trip up the Sani Pass also produced a few of these birds.

**White-rumped Swift** *Apus caffer*

This species rivalled the numbers of Little Swift and was even more commonly encountered than its smaller relative in the Cape.

### Mousebirds Coliidae

**Speckled Mousebird** *Colius striatus*

This common mousebird was recorded at several localities throughout the tour, first in the Kruger NP.

**White-backed Mousebird (E)** *Colius colius*

We had small numbers of these birds in Kirstenbosch, the West Coast NP and near the Tanqua Karoo.

**Red-faced Mousebird** *Urocolius indicus*

The most commonly encountered of the Mousebirds – and endemic African bird order! We had good sightings of this bushveld species in the Rust-de-Winter area, Kruger, Mkhuzi GR and the Tanqua Karoo.

### Trogons Trogonidae

**Narina Trogon** *Apaloderma narina*

We were fortunate to see this spectacular bird in the Dlinza Forest, when it started calling as we were about to leave.

### Rollers Coraciidae

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

Two birds were seen in the Kruger National Park.

**Lilac-breasted Roller** *Coracias caudata*

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

**European Roller** *Coracias garrulus*

This Palearctic migrant was recorded in large numbers in Kruger NP, sections of Mkuze and at Cape Vidal.

**Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomus glaucurus*

We had 3 birds in flight in Mkhuzi GR, one perched in a dead tree near Cape Vidal.

### Kingfishers Alcedinidae

**Brown-hooded Kingfisher** *Halcyon albiventris*

A woodland kingfisher, it was recorded in Kruger NP, Mkuze and at Cape Vidal.

**Striped Kingfisher** *Halcyon chelicuti*

Quite a few of these sometimes scarce birds were seen in and around the Mkuze Game Reserve.



**Woodland Kingfisher***Halcyon senegalensis*

We had several sightings of this gorgeous kingfisher in the Rust-de-Winter area and in the Kruger NP.

**Malachite Kingfisher***Alcedo cristata*

We encountered this little gem of a kingfisher in Kruger and at Wakkerstroom.

**Giant Kingfisher***Megaceryle maxima*

This huge Kingfisher species was recorded in Kruger, Mkuze and at a farm dam near Underberg.

**Pied Kingfisher***Ceryle rudis*

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

**Bee-eaters Meropidae****Little Bee-eater***Merops pusillus*

We had a total of 5 birds on two days in the Kruger NP.

**White-fronted Bee-eater***Merops bullockoides*

An extremely colourful bee-eater, it was recorded at Kruger NP and near Mkuze.

**Blue-cheeked Bee-eater***Merops persicus*

This species was commonly recorded around St Lucia and at Nsumo Pan, Mkuze.

**European Bee-eater***Merops apiaster*

This species, a summer visitor to our region, was found on several days during the first week of the tour.

**Southern Carmine Bee-eater***Merops nubicoides*

We had several sightings of numerous birds sporting their stunning plumage in the Kruger NP.

**Hoopoes Upupidae****African Hoopoe***Upupa africana*

Recorded first in the Rust-de-Winter area, also Kruger, Mkuze and the West Coast NP.

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

**Woodhoopoes Phoeniculidae****Green Wood Hoopoe***Phoeniculus purpureus*

This very attractive bird was surprisingly uncommon and was recorded in Kruger and Mkuze GR.

**Common Scimitarbill***Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

Seen very well in small numbers in Kruger and Mkuze.

**Hornbills Bucerotidae****Crowned Hornbill***Tockus alboterminatus*

Three birds were seen well in Mkuze; later another 6 were sighted in the forest of St. Lucia.

**African Grey Hornbill***Tockus nasutus*

A bird that inhabits the drier woodland areas of our region, it was seen in the Kruger NP.

**Red-billed Hornbill***Tockus erythrorhynchus*

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 the Rust-de-Winter area and in good numbers in Kruger NP.

**Trumpeter Hornbill***Ceratogymna bucinator*

The first 2 birds were seen very well in Skukuza; later huge numbers presented themselves and were heard around St Lucia.

*Note: Clements places this species under the genus Ceratogymna*

**Ground Hornbills Bucorvidae****Southern Ground Hornbill***Bucorvus leadbeateri*

We had two sightings in Kruger, totalling six birds.

**Barbets Capitonidae****White-eared Barbet***Stactolaema leucotis*

We had a dozen of these social birds on both days that we had in St. Lucia.

**Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus bilineatus*

We had 4 birds in the coastal forests of St. Lucia, many more were heard.

**Red-fronted Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus pusillus*

A few birds were recorded eventually, after much frustration and chasing after calls in Mkhuzo GR.

**Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

A single bird seen well in Skukuza camp, Kruger NP.

**Acacia Pied Barbet (NE)** *Tricholaema leucomelas*

We had single birds in Zaagkuilsdrift, Mkuze and at Skittery Kloof, Tanqua Karoo.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird Pied Barbet*

**Black-collared Barbet** *Lybius torquatus*

We had small 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 in Wakkerstroom.

### Honeyguides Indicatoridae

**Lesser Honeyguide** *Indicator minor*

This parasitic species was seen well, if quickly at Tshokwane, Kruger National Park.

**Scaly-throated Honeyguide** *Indicator variegates*

One bird was seen quickly in St. Lucia, another was seen in the Dlinza Forest.

### Woodpeckers Picidae

**Red-throated (Rufous-necked) Wryneck** *Jynx ruficollis*

2 single birds were seen calling in treetops, in the town of Wakkerstroom

**Bennett's Woodpecker** *Campethera bennettii*

Two birds were seen well at the Satara camp, Kruger NP on two different days.

**Golden-tailed Woodpecker** *Campethera abingoni*

Single birds were seen in the Kruger, Mkuze and St. Lucia.

**Ground Woodpecker (E)** *Geocolaptes olivaceus*

The first birds were seen at a distance in Wakkerstroom, numerous birds were then seen at close quarters on the Sani Pass and in Lesotho.

**Cardinal Woodpecker** *Dendropicos fuscescens*

This very small woodpecker species was found in Kruger and Mkhuzo GR.

**Olive Woodpecker** *Dendropicos griseocephalus*

We found a number of these forest woodpeckers in Dlinza Forest and the Karkloof area.

### Broadbills Eurylaimidae

**African Broadbill** *Platysteira peltata*

One bird was seen well in forests of St. Lucia.

### Wattle-eyes and Batises Platysteiridae

**Cape Batis (E)** *Batis capensis*

The first 4 birds were seen Dlinza forest; more were seen on the next day in a patch of Karkloof forest.

**Woodward's Batis** *Batis fratrum*

An uncommon species with a highly restricted range, we had disappointingly brief views in St Lucia.

**Chinspot Batis** *Batis molitor*

Our first birds were seen in Kruger with further sightings in Mkhuzo GR.

**Pririt Batis (NE)** *Batis pririt*

We saw a single male bird, early on our day in the Tanqua Karoo.

**Black-throated Wattle-eye** *Platysteira peltata*

One bird was seen in forest in the little town of Mtunzini.



### Bushshrikes & Helmetshrikes Malaconotidae

#### **White-crested Helmetshrike**

*Prionops plumatus*

We had a flock of six in the central Kruger NP.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird White Helmetshrike*

#### **Grey-headed Bushshrike**

*Chlorophoneus olivaceus*

The best views were had in Satara camp, Kruger NP, where we watched a pair on one day, another individual stole an egg out of the nest of a Laughing Dove.

#### **Orange (Suphur)-breasted Bushshrike**

*Telophorus sulfureopectus*

A single bird was seen well in the Kruger NP.

#### **Four-coloured Bushshrike**

*Chlorophoneus quadricolor*

A number of these shy birds were glimpsed in the Sandforest of Mkuze 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 in Wakkerstroom, the Underberg district and the Western Cape.

#### **Brown-crowned Tchagra**

*Tchagra australis*

A single bird was seen well at the entrance gate to Mkuze GR.

#### **Black-crowned Tchagra**

*Tchagra senegala*

This species was found in Kruger NP, where we had good views of a single bird.

#### **Black-backed Puffback**

*Dryoscopus cubla*

Commonly recorded in eastern South Africa during our tour.

#### **Southern Boubou (E)**

*Laniarius ferrugineus*

This very vocal species was first seen on the way up the Sani Pass.

#### **Crimson-breasted Shrike (Gonolek) (NE)**

*Laniarius atrococcineus*

We had two singletons on the Zaagkuilsdrift Road – what a phenomenal splash of colour.

#### **Brubru**

*Nilaus afer*

This interesting Shrike was seen well on two days in the Kruger NP.

### Cuckooshrikes Campephagidae

#### **Grey Cuckooshrike**

*Coracina caesia*

A number of these birds could be watched for extended periods in the canopy of the Dlinza Forest.

#### **Black Cuckooshrike**

*Campephaga flava*

A pair was seen at both Mkuze and in the Dlinza Forest.

### Shrikes Laniidae

#### **Magpie Shrike**

*Urolestes melanoleuca*

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

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

#### **Southern White-crowned Shrike**

*Eurocephalus anguitimens*

We had a few birds on telephone wires in the Rust-de-Winter area.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird White-crowned Shrike*

#### **Red-backed Shrike**

*Lanius collurio*

We had many sightings of this common and widespread migrant species during the first half of the tour.

#### **Lesser Grey Shrike**

*Lanius minor*

Found mainly in the Rust-de-Winter area with smaller numbers in the Kruger NP.

#### **Common Fiscal**

*Lanius collaris*

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

### Orioles Oriolidae

#### **Eurasian Golden Oriole**

*Oriolus oriolus*

We had sightings of single birds in Kruger NP and Mkuze GR.

#### **(African) Black-headed Oriole**

*Oriolus larvatus*



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

### Drongos Dicruridae

**Square-tailed Drongo**

*Dicrurus ludwigii*

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

**Fork-tailed Drongo**

*Dicrurus adsimilis*

Recorded regularly at most sites that we visited in eastern South Africa.

### Monarch Flycatchers Monarchidae

**Blue-mantled (African) Crested Flycatcher**

*Trochocercus cyanomelas*

A single bird was seen during our early morning birding session in the mistbelt forest of Karkloof.

**African Paradise Flycatcher**

*Terpsiphone viridis*

Recorded at various localities during the tour, our best sighting was in Kruger NP.

### Crows, Jays & Magpies Corvidae

**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, while most sightings were in the Western Cape.

**White-necked Raven**

*Corvus albicollis*

We enjoyed good views of this species around Hilton, Underberg and in the Western Cape.

### Rockjumpers Chaetopidae

**Cape (Rufous) Rockjumper (E)**

*Chaetops frenatus*

After much searching we had a group of 5 birds in the Rooi Els area of the Western Cape.

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

*Chaetops aurantius*

We enjoyed several sightings of this smart bird on our day up Sani Pass.

### Tits Paridae

**Southern Black-Tit (NE)**

*Parus niger*

A bird we encountered quite regularly in bushveld habitats during the tour, particularly around Mkuze.

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

**Grey Tit (E)**

*Parus afer*

We had 2 birds in Lesotho on our day up Sani Pass, another showed well in West Coast NP.

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

### Penduline Tits Remizidae

**Cape (Southern) Penduline Tit**

*Anthoscopus minutus*

We had two flocks of this tiny bird, one in West Coast NP, the other in the Tanqua Karoo.

### Swallows & Martins Hirundinidae

**Black Saw-wing**

*Psalidoprocne pristopectera*

Birds were seen near Wakkerstroom, St. Lucia and the forests of the Karkloof area.

**Grey-rumped Swallow**

*Pseudhirundo griseopyga*

We were lucky to find a large flock of these Swallows over a river near Wakkerstroom.

**Brown-throated (Plain) Martin**

*Riparia paludicola*

The best views of these birds were had in West Coast NP and at Strandfontein Sewage Works.

**Banded Martin**

*Riparia cincta*

Many birds were recorded in and around Wakkerstroom, where they were seen around grasslands.

**Barn Swallow**

*Hirundo rustica*

An extremely common bird during the summer months, we saw them on every day during the tour.

**White-throated Swallow**

*Hirundo albigularis*



An attractive swallow, we had peak numbers of this species in the Wakkerstroom area.

**Wire-tailed Swallow***Hirundo smithii*

Recorded in reasonable numbers in Kruger NP.

**Blue Swallow***Hirundo atrocaerulea*

Three of these critically endangered birds could be watched for an extended period, seen cruising over their ever-shrinking grassland habitat in the Richmond area.

**Pearl-breasted Swallow***Hirundo dimidiata*

A few of these small Swallows were seen flying near the Strandfontein area.

**Rock Martin***Hirundo fuligula*

This species was seen at Abel Erasmus Pass, Cape of Good Hope and the West Coast NP.

**Common House Martin***Delichon urbicum*

We had 2 birds near Johannesburg, 2 more later near Wakkerstroom.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird House-Martin*

**Greater Striped Swallow (BE)***Cecropis cucullata*

An intra-African migrant, seen at most high altitude sites in the east including good numbers in the Wakkerstroom area, as well as in the Western Cape.

**Lesser Striped Swallow***Cecropis abyssinica*

Recorded at lower elevations in eastern South Africa, with highest numbers around Mkhuze and St Lucia.

**Red-breasted (Rufous-chested) Swallow***Cecropis semirufa*

We had good views of many birds with the highest numbers occurring around the Kruger National Park.

**Mosque Swallow***Cecropis senegalensis*

2 birds were seen perched at close quarters in Kruger NP.

**South African Cliff Swallow (BE)***Petrochelidon spilodera*

Good numbers seen around Wakkerstroom around grasslands on all 3 days in the area.

*Note: Clements just calls this bird South African Swallow*

### Larks Alaudidae

**Rufous-naped Lark***Mirafra africana*

Small numbers were seen in grassland habitats during the tour, most common around Zaagkuilsdrift.

**Sabota Lark***Mirafra sabota*

A single bird was seen and heard in the Satara area of the Kruger NP.

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

**Rudd's Lark (E)***Heteromirafra ruddi*

We had good 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 single bird sitting on a rock near Wakkerstroom.

**Karoo Lark***Certhilauda albescens*

2 pairs of birds were seen perched and in flight in the southern area of the Tanqua Karoo.

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

**Spike-heeled Lark (NE)***Chersomanes albofasciata*

At least fifteen of these larks were found in short grassland patches in the Wakkerstroom area. We later had about 5 birds in the Tanqua Karoo.

**Red-capped Lark***Calandrella cinerea*

Good numbers were recorded on numerous days: around Wakkerstroom, Sani Pass and in the Tanqua Karoo.

**Pink-billed Lark***Spizocorys conirostris*

One bird was seen stunningly well near the road, north of Wakkerstroom.

**Botha's Lark***Spizocorys fringillaris*

Most of the 15 birds seen near Wakkerstroom were in flight, finally was gave great views on the ground.

**Large-billed Lark (E)***Galerida magnirostris*

3 of these endemic larks were seen well in Lesotho during our day excursion up Sani Pass. We later had good views again in the Tanqua Karoo and near the West Coast NP.

**Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark***Eremopterix verticalis*

A few of these birds were seen around agricultural lands, east of the West Coast NP.



### Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

- 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, at the Cape Point area and West Coast NP.
- Wailing Cisticola** *Cisticola lais*  
A denizen of rocky hillsides, we found a few birds near the Blue Swallow site.
- 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 one pair just north of Lower Sabie in Kruger and another 3 near Cape Vidal.
- Neddicky (Piping Cisticola)** *Cisticola fulvicapillus*  
This species was seen at numerous locations: Kruger NP, Cape Vidal, Rooi Els and West Coast NP.
- Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*  
Regularly recorded in grasslands near Rust-de-Winter and near Wakkerstroom.
- Cloud Cisticola** *Cisticola textrix*  
Heard and eventually seen at great distance by some near Wakkerstroom.
- Wing-snapping Cisticola** *Cisticola ayresii*  
One bird was seen well on the Zaagkuilsdrift road, more seen later in the Wakkerstroom area.
- Rufous-eared Warbler (E)** *Malcorus pectoralis*  
We had excellent views of some of the ten birds we spotted in the Tanqua Karoo.
- Tawny-flanked Prinia** *Prinia subflava*  
This widespread Prinia was seen at many eastern locations during the first twelve days.
- Karoo Prinia (E)** *Prinia maculosa*  
We had a small flock on our day up Sani Pass, with numerous sightings later in the Western Cape.
- Drakensberg Prinia (E)** *Prinia hypoxantha*  
4 birds were seen near Wakkerstroom, more later near the base of the Sani Pass.
- Namaqua Warbler (Prinia) (E)** *Phragmacia substriata*  
While very vocal, this species remained hidden for a while before we managed good views of 2 birds in reeds at Karooport.  
*Note: Clements has still kept this bird in the genus Prinia*
- Bar-throated Apalis** *Apalis thoracica*  
We enjoyed good, but quick sightings of this species in the Karkloof and again in the West Coast NP.
- Rudd's Apalis (E)** *Apalis ruddi*  
This range-restricted endemic was found in Mkhuze GR and then again in the coastal forest around St Lucia.
- Yellow-breasted Apalis** *Apalis flavida*  
We enjoyed two sightings of this bird in Mkhuze GR and St Lucia.
- Green-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brachyura*  
A dweller of thick undergrowth, we had sightings in Kruger NP, Mkhuze GR and in the Karkloof.
- Fairy Warbler (Flycatcher) (E)** *Stenostira scita*  
We had wonderful looks at one, first in Lesotho, later in the Tanqua Karoo.

### Bulbuls Pycnonotidae

- Cape Bulbul (E)** *Pycnonotus capensis*  
Seen daily in the Western Cape during the last 6 days.
- 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 Kruger NP.
- Yellow-bellied Greenbul** *Chlorocichla flaviventris*



Good numbers were seen in Mkhuze GR, St. Lucia and Cape Vidal.

**Terrestrial Brownbul** *Phyllastrephus terrestris*

Fairly common in the tangled undergrowth of forests and thickets, our first view was in Skukuza, with more in Mkuze and later in St. Lucia.

**Eastern Nicator**

*Nicator gularis*

A particularly elusive bird that was glimpsed by some participants on a few occasions in Mkuze.

### Old World Warblers Sylviidae

**Fan-tailed Grassbird**

*Schoenicola brevirostris*

A single bird seen quite well in thick ferns and grass tufts in the Karkloof area.

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

*Bradypterus baboecala*

This skulking inhabitant of dense reedbeds showed well at a wetland near the town of Wakkerstroom.

**Barratt's Warbler (African Scrub-Warbler) (E)**

*Bradypterus barratti*

We had good views of this species in scrub on our day visit up Sani Pass; some also had it in Xumeni Forest.

**Cape Grassbird (E)**

*Sphenoeacus afer*

First seen in the Karkloof near Hilton, then *en route* to Sani Pass, with further views in the Western Cape.

**Lesser Swamp Warbler**

*Acrocephalus gracilirostris*

A single bird was seen from the Zaagkuilsdrift road on the second morning.

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

*Chloropeta natalensis*

A single bird was seen at the flower patch near Hermannsburg, another in the Karkloof.

**Yellow-throated Woodland (Wood)-Warbler**

*Phylloscopus ruficapilla*

Our visit to a small patch of indigenous forest in the Karkloof rewarded us with views of this tiny warbler.

**Willow Warbler**

*Phylloscopus trochilus*

Recorded at a number of woodland locations, notably in Mkhuze GR, where we had the highest numbers.

**Yellow-bellied Eremomela**

*Eremomela icteropygialis*

A small group of these little birds was seen well in Mkuze GR.

**Karoo (Yellow-rumped) Eremomela (E)**

*Eremomela gregalis*

We had a small flock of 4 birds in the Tanqua Karoo, where they crossed the road in front of us before landing and moving around very low scrub.

**Burnt-neck Eremomela**

*Eremomela usticollis*

Small groups were seen well on two consecutive days in a Camp of the Kruger NP.

**Long-billed (Cape) Crombec**

*Sylvietta rufescens*

We found this almost tail-less bird in Mkhuze GR after first good views were had in the Kruger NP.

**Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler (Rufous-vented Warbler) (NE)**

*Parisoma subcaeruleum*

We had three birds in the West Coast NP, another on the following day in the Tanqua Karoo.

**Layard's Tit-babbler (Warbler) (E)**

*Parisoma layardi*

We had two birds on our day excursion up Sani Pass.

### Babblers Timaliidae

**Arrow-marked Babbler**

*Turdoides jardineii*

Our best sighting was of a family of these noisy babblers in a Kruger NP camp, seen on the first 5 days.

**Southern Pied Babbler**

*Turdoides bicolor*

5 birds were seen in dry woodland on our morning on the Zaagkuilsdrift road

**Bush Blackcap**

*Lioptilus nigricapillus*

Seen at the foot of Sani Pass, where we had a total of around six birds.

### Sugarbirds Promeropidae

**Cape Sugarbird (E)**

*Promerops cafer*

Disappointingly, only recorded around stands of *Protea* in Kirstenbosch, where we had 2 birds.

**Gurney's Sugarbird (E)**

*Promerops gurneyi*

Very good numbers – around 20 were seen, when we were going up the Sani Pass.



### White-eyes Zosteropidae

**Cape White-eye (E)**

*Zosterops pallidus*

We had many encounters with this common species, particularly during the middle parts of the tour.

**African Yellow White-eye**

*Zosterops senegalensis*

4 of these birds were seen at very close quarters in forest in St. Lucia.

### 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*

Huge numbers were recorded in Zaagkuilsdrift, smaller flocks in Kruger and in the West Coast NP.

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

*Lamprotornis nitens*

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

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

*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

Restricted to the Lowveld in South Africa, we recorded small numbers of these flashy birds in Kruger NP.

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

*Lamprotornis australis*

We observed this large, colourful starling daily in the Kruger NP and near Rust-de-Winter.

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

*Lamprotornis corruscus*

Mkhuze Game Reserve produced the first sighting and St. Lucia produced great views of this species.

**Violet-backed Starling**

*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

This absolutely gorgeous summer visitor to South Africa was most often recorded in Kruger NP.

**(African) Pied Starling (E)**

*Spreo bicolor*

Good numbers of this endemic were seen in the Wakkerstroom grasslands and in the Western Cape.

**Red-winged Starling**

*Onychognathus morio*

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

**Pale-winged Starling**

*Onychognathus naboroupp*

A few flocks of this species were seen at its South-western limit: the edge of the Tanqua Karoo.

**Red-billed Oxpecker**

*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*

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

### Thrushes & Allies Turdidae

**Spotted Ground Thrush**

*Zoothera guttata*

A single bird was found and seen well in the forest interior of the magical Dlinza Forest in Eshowe.

**Groundscraper Thrush**

*Psophocichla litsitsirupa*

We had six birds near Rust-de-Winter and a further two in Kruger NP.

**Kurriichane Thrush**

*Turdus libonyanus*

Three single birds were seen in the Kruger NP, as well as in Mkhuze NP.

**Olive Thrush**

*Turdus olivaceus*

We found small numbers around our accommodation in Underberg.

**Karoo Thrush**

*Turdus smithii*

We found small numbers around our accommodation in Underberg.

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

### Old World Flycatchers Muscipidae

**Thrush Nightingale**

*Luscinia luscinia*

A single bird was heard and seen by some in its Buffalo Thorn tree on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.

**Cape Robin-Chat (E)**

*Cossypha caffra*

First seen in our Wakkerstroom garden, it was later fairly common in the Western Cape region.

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

*Cossypha humeralis*

We had a sighting of two pairs of birds singing on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.



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<b>White-browed Robin-Chat</b>	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>
A single bird was seen very well after we worked hard to find it.	
<b>Karoo Scrub Robin</b>	<i>Cercotrichas coryphaeus</i>
We had several sightings in the West Coast NP and around the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Red-capped Robin-Chat</b>	<i>Cossypha natalensis</i>
We had great views of this orange bird around forests of St. Lucia and Cape Vidal.	
<b>Chorister Robin-Chat</b>	<i>Cossypha dichroa</i>
Disappointingly, only one bird was seen by some participants in the Karkloof.	
<b>Bearded Scrub Robin</b>	<i>Cercotrichas quadrivirgata</i>
We had eight birds in total across 3 days in the Mkuze GR.	
<b>White-browed (Red-backed) Scrub Robin</b>	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>
Recorded in Zaagkuilsdrift and in Mkuze where we had calling birds.	
<b>Kalahari Scrub Robin</b>	<i>Cercotrichas paena</i>
Great views were had of these western woodland birds on both days on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.	
<b>Eurasian (African) Stonechat</b>	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>
A common bird in South Africa, we had many sightings during the tour in Wakkerstroom and KwaZulu Natal Midlands.	
<b>Buff-streaked (Bush) Chat (E)</b>	<i>Saxicola bifasciata</i>
We enjoyed good views of a male in the Wakkerstroom area, others also in that area and near Underberg.	
<b>Capped Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>
We had a few sightings on our drive from West Coast NP to Ceres in the Western Cape.	
<b>Mountain Wheatear</b>	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>
We had half a dozen birds in both Lesotho and the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Sickle-winged Chat (E)</b>	<i>Cercomela sinuata</i>
Many of this endemic were seen well in Lesotho during our day visit up the Sani Pass.	
<b>Karoo Chat (E)</b>	<i>Cercomela schlegelii</i>
We had good numbers of around 20 birds in the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Tractrac Chat (E)</b>	<i>Cercomela tractrac</i>
We saw at least four birds of this compact little Chat on our day in the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Familiar Chat</b>	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>
We had sightings on two days in the Western Cape: at Rooi Els and in the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Ant-eating (Southern Ant-eater-) Chat (E)</b>	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>
We had very good numbers in the Wakkerstroom district, 2 were also seen in the Tanqua Karoo.	
<b>Mocking Cliff Chat</b>	<i>Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris</i>
We had good views of a small group during our crossing of the Abel Erasmus Pass.	
<b>Cape Rock Thrush (E)</b>	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>
We found 3 birds on our drive through the Abel Erasmus Pass, 2 more were seen at Rooi Els.	
<b>Sentinel Rock Thrush (E)</b>	<i>Monticola explorator</i>
This good-looking bird was seen well in the Wakkerstroom area and also on top of the Sani Pass.	
<b>Southern Black Flycatcher</b>	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>
We had 5 birds in Mkuze GR, 2 further birds showed at Cape Vidal.	
<b>Pale Flycatcher</b>	<i>Bradornis pallidus</i>
Good numbers were seen on two consecutive days in Mkuze GR.	
<b>Marico (Mariqua) Flycatcher</b>	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>
We had a total of 5 birds on the Zaagkuilsdrift road near Rust-de-Winter.	
<b>Fiscal Flycatcher</b>	<i>Sigelus silens</i>
A single male seen on two consecutive days – the first on the way to the Durban airport.	
<b>Spotted Flycatcher</b>	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
A common summer visitor to the region; it was encountered in small numbers in Rust-de-Winter, Kruger NP and Mkuze GR.	
<b>African Dusky Flycatcher</b>	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>
A flycatcher of forest and woodland, we had sightings in and around the Karkloof and in Kirstenbosch.	
<b>Grey Tit-Flycatcher</b>	<i>Myioparus plumbeus</i>

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A single bird showed very well in the Satara Camp, Kruger NP.

### Sunbirds Nectariniidae

- Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris*  
We had sightings of this tiny jewel of a bird in Skukuza, Mkhuze and in St. Lucia.
- 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 very well and at close quarters on all three days around the St. Lucia area.
- Grey Sunbird** *Cyanomitra veroxii*  
A single bird was seen in the forest in St. Lucia.
- Amethyst Sunbird** *Chalcomitra amethystine*  
The first bird was seen in Wakkerstroom, more seen later around the KZN midlands.
- Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis*  
One stunning male seen at our lunch stop near the town of Hluhluwe, where it fed on a Wild Banana.
- Malachite Sunbird** *Nectarinia famosa*  
We enjoyed good views of this stunning bird in the Wakkerstroom area and many up on the Sani Pass.
- Southern Double-collared Sunbird (E)** *Cinnyris chalybeus*  
Commonly seen at a few locations in the Western Cape, the first male was spotted in the Karkloof.
- Greater Double-collared Sunbird (E)** *Cinnyris afra*  
Three birds were seen during the tour – one each in Wakkerstroom, Dlinza Forest and going up Sani Pass.
- Marico (Mariqua) Sunbird** *Cinnyris mariquensis*  
About 6 birds were seen around the Satara Camp in Kruger NP.
- Purple-banded Sunbird** *Cinnyris bifasciatus*  
We had two male birds in the town of Mkuze, where we could watch them for a while.
- White-bellied (breasted) Sunbird** *Cinnyris talatala*  
We had good sightings in Kruger and Mkhuze GR.

### Old World Sparrows Passeridae

- White-browed Sparrow-Weaver** *Plocepasser mahali*  
We found several birds near their nests on the Zaagkuilsdrift road.
- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*  
This species was regularly recorded in urban centres around South Africa.
- Great (Rufous) Sparrow** *Passer motitensis*  
2 birds were seen well on the first day from the Zaagkuilsdrift road
- Cape Sparrow (NE)** *Passer melanurus*  
Recorded in the Rust-de-Winter and Wakkerstroom districts, up Sani Pass and in the Western Cape.
- Southern Grey-headed Sparrow (NE)** *Passer diffusus*  
Peak numbers were seen in Kruger during the tour, but recorded throughout the first half of the tour.
- Yellow-throated Petronia** *Gymnornis superciliaris*  
We had good views of a few birds on two days in Mkhuze GR.  
*Note: Clements places this bird in the genus Petronia*

### Weavers & Allies Ploceidae

- Red-billed Buffalo Weaver** *Bubalornis niger*  
We had sightings around breeding sites in Kruger, totalling almost thirty birds.
- Scaly-feathered (Scaly) Weaver (NE)** *Sporopipes squamifrons*  
We found these diminutive birds in the dry *Acacia* woodland near Rust-de-Winter.
- Thick-billed (Grosbeak) Weaver** *Amblyospiza albifrons*  
We had a singleton in Kruger NP; much larger groups were seen in and around St. Lucia forests.
- Spectacled Weaver** *Ploceus ocularis*  
This species was recorded in the Kruger NP and in the coastal forests of St. Lucia.
- Cape Weaver (E)** *Ploceus capensis*



We found this endemic weaver in Wakkerstroom, up the Sani Pass and in the West Coast NP.

**Yellow (African Golden-) Weaver** *Ploceus subaureus*

This bird is confined to the east coast littoral belt and we had several at a colony in St Lucia on two days.

**African (Holub's) Golden Weaver** *Ploceus xanthops*

A single male was seen very well near its nest on the bank of the Nsumo Pan, Mkuze GR.

**Southern Brown-throated Weaver** *Ploceus xanthopterus*

Also a single male seen stunningly well at the St.Lucia estuary.

**Lesser Masked Weaver** *Ploceus intermedius*

We had good numbers of this bird in the Satara area of the Kruger National park.

**Southern Masked Weaver** *Ploceus velatus*

Recorded in the highveld region near Rust-de-Winter, Wakkerstroom and in the KZN midlands.

**Village Weaver** *Ploceus cucullatus*

This species was recorded at a colony in the Karkloof.

**Dark-backed (Forest) Weaver** *Ploceus bicolor*

We had our first sighting in Mkuze GR with further sightings at St. Lucia and in the Dlinza forest.

**Red-billed Quelea** *Quelea quelea*

Seen in very large numbers in the Kruger National Park.

**Yellow-crowned Bishop** *Euplectes afer*

This over-sized bumblebee look-alike was found in the highveld grasslands and in the Wakkerstroom area.

**Southern Red Bishop** *Euplectes orix*

Recorded at most wetland sites throughout the first part of the tour.

**Yellow Bishop** *Euplectes capensis*

This species was seen three times on the tour, namely in Wakkerstroom, on the Sani Pass and in West Coast National Park.

**Fan-tailed Widowbird** *Euplectes axillaries*

Recorded at various long-grass areas on the tour, including Mkuze, Wakkerstroom and the KZN midlands.

**White-winged Widowbird** *Euplectes albonotatus*

Peak numbers of around 25 birds were found on the first 2 days near Rust-de-Winter.

**Red-collared Widowbird** *Euplectes ardens*

Good numbers were noted, mainly in the grasslands of the Kwa-Zulu Natal Midlands and up Sani Pass.

**Long-tailed Widowbird** *Euplectes progne*

Common in most high altitude grassland areas where this amazing bird was seen showing off its phenomenal tail; seen around Johannesburg, Wakkerstroom and the KwaZulu Natal Midlands.

### Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

**Green-winged Pytilia** *Pytilia melba*

Stunning little bird that was seen in Kruger and in Mkuze GR.

**Pink-throated Twinspot** *Hypargos margaritatus*

About 4 of these exquisite little birds were seen well by all in the Mkuze Sandforest, voted one of the top two birds of the trip by most participants.

**Red-billed Firefinch** *Lagonostica senegala*

A group of 5 birds was seen during our time spent walking through the Satara Camp in Kruger.

**African Firefinch** *Lagonostica rubricate*

2 birds were seen at the Blue Swallow site around the Richmond grasslands.

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

This species was commonly recorded in the Kruger NP and Mkuze GR.

**Grey (Black-tailed) Waxbill** *Estrilda perreini*

Seen by some on the edge of the Xumeni forest in the KZN midlands.

**Sweet Waxbill (E)** *Estrilda melanotis*

A very beautiful endemic Estrilid, we had amazing views of 2 very relaxed groups in Kirstenbosch Gardens.

*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 the tour.



**African Quail-Finch***Ortygospiza fuscocrissa*

This very difficult bird was seen very well where they came to drink, north of Wakkerstroom.

**Bronze Mannikin***Lonchura cucullata*

Seen at a number of places during the first two-thirds of the tour, many around St. Lucia.

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

**Red-backed Mannikin***Lonchura nigriceps*

Great little birds that were seen well in Mkuze as well as at Cape Vidal.

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

**Indigobirds & Whydahs Viduidae****Village Indigobird***Vidua chalybeata*

A number of males were seen in the Kruger NP.

**Dusky (Variable) Indigobird***Vidua funereal*

A few birds were seen, often on phone lines in the Mkuze and KZN Midland areas.

**Pin-tailed Whydah***Vidua macroura*

This aggressive little brood parasite was encountered regularly throughout the eastern part of the tour.

**Shaft-tailed Whydah***Vidua regia*

We found 4 males sporting their smart and interesting breeding plumage near Rust-de-Winter.

**Long-tailed (Eastern) Paradise Whydah***Vidua paradisaea*

We had several birds, including males in breeding plumage in the Rust-de-Winter area, Kruger and Mkuze.

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

Regularly recorded in small numbers at most wetland locations during the tour.

**African Pied Wagtail***Motacilla aguimp*

Recorded at low altitude and coastal waterbodies areas throughout the eastern section of the tour.

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

This species was seen in Johannesburg and commonly around the Wakkerstroom area.

**Yellow-throated Longclaw***Macronyx croceus*

Peak numbers were seen in the Wakkerstroom area, others in Kruger NP.

**African Pipit***Anthus cinnamomeus*

This common species was only seen in huge numbers around Wakkerstroom, more in the Western Cape.

**Mountain Pipit***Anthus hoeschi*

A few birds were seen in the alpine grasslands of Lesotho during our day visit up Sani Pass.

**Plain-backed Pipit***Anthus leucophrys*

We had a single bird on the road in the Kruger National Park.

**Yellow-breasted Pipit (E)***Hemimacronyx chloris*

Great views were had of this species in drab plumage near the town of Wakkerstroom.

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

**Finches Fringillidae****Cape Canary***Serinus canicollis*

Typically encountered at higher altitudes in the east, we had small flocks in Wakkerstroom and on Sani Pass.

**Forest Canary***Crithagra scotops*

A few birds were seen well on the edge of the Xumeni Forest.

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

**Black-throated Canary***Crithagra atrogularis*

We had a small flock of four in the Rust-de-Winter area.

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

**Lemon-breasted Canary (Seedeater) (NE)***Crithagra citrinipectus*

Discovered in 1960, we were very fortunate to find a few birds in palm-grassland habitat near Hluhluwe.

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

**Yellow-fronted Canary***Crithagra mozambica*

This good-looking canary was seen on a number of days during the eastern portion of the tour.

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

**Yellow Canary (NE)**

*Crithagra flaviventris*

About 20 birds were observed in Lesotho on our day up Sani Pass, more sightings in West Coast NP.

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

**Brimstone Canary**

*Crithagra sulphurata*

Single birds were seen at the base on the Sani Pass and again on Bain's Kloof Pass in the Cape.

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

**White-throated Canary (NE)**

*Crithagra albogularis*

We found about 20 birds on our day in the Tanqua Karoo.

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

**Streaky-headed Seedeater (NE)**

*Crithagra gularis*

We found this species in the rocky hillsides covered with scrubby vegetation on the way up Sani Pass.

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

**Protea Canary**

*Crithagra leucoptera*

A pair of these difficult endemics was seen very well on our last morning, near the town of Ceres.

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

**Cape Siskin (E)**

*Crithagra totta*

We had a small group of 3 birds near the old lighthouse at Cape Point.

*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*

### Buntings Emberizidae

**Cinnamon-breasted Bunting**

*Emberiza tahapisi*

3 birds were seen well in the central area of the Kruger NP.

**Cape Bunting**

*Emberiza capensis*

Good numbers were found along the way up Sani Pass, with numerous sightings in the mountainous areas of the Western Cape.

**Golden-breasted Bunting**

*Emberiza flaviventris*

Seen on three days of the tour, in the Kruger NP and in the Mkhuze Game Reserve.

### 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.*

### Bats Pteropodidae

**Peter's Epauletted Fruit-Bat**

*Epomophorus crypturus*

Many of these bats were seen at their day-roosts in the Skukuza Camp, Kruger NP.

**Mauritian Tomb Bat**

*Taphozous mauritanus*

A single one of these bats was seen on a Marula tree in Satara Camp Kruger NP

### Cheek-Pouch Monkeys Cercopithecidae

**Chacma Baboon**

*Papio ursinus*

We had a count of 100 on one day in the Kruger NP, other sightings in Mkuze GR, Sani Pass and the Western Cape.

**Vervet Monkey**

*Cercopithecus aethiops*

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

**Samango (Blue) Monkey**

*Cercopithecus mitis*

We had 25 individuals in the trees of Cape Vidal, an uncommon and localised species in South Africa.



### Bushbabies Loridae

**Thick-tailed Bushbaby** *Galago crassicaudatus*  
We had good views of one of these nocturnal primates in a fever tree, Mkuze GR.

### Hares & Rabbits Leporidae

**Scrub Hare** *Lepus saxatilis*  
We had good views of several on the trip. Our first was found in the Kruger NP with many in Mkuze GR.  
**Cape Hare** *Lepus capensis*  
We had one at a distance in the West Coast National Park.

### 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 several of these animals in the Rust-de-Winter area and the Kruger NP.

### Rats & Mice Cricetidae & Muridae

**Striped Mouse** *Rhabdomys pumilio*  
We had a number of these smart rodents during the western portion of our tour.  
**Sloggett's Ice Rat** *Otomys sloggetti*  
Good numbers of these cute creatures were found in Lesotho during our day visit up the Sani Pass.  
**Grey Squirrel** *Sciurus carolinensis*  
Two of these introduced and aggressive invaders were seen in Kirstenbosch.

### Dogs & Allies Canidae

**Black-backed Jackal** *Canis mesomelas*  
We had a few in the Zaagkuilsdrift area, another was seen well in the Kruger NP.  
**Bat-eared Fox** *Otocyon megalotis*  
A single one of these termite-eaters was spotted on the edge of a fallow field outside Ceres.

### Mongoose Herpestidae

**Slender Mongoose** *Galerella sanguinea*  
This rather distinctive mongoose with a black-tipped tail was seen near Rust-de-Winter, Kruger and Mkuze.  
**Banded Mongoose** *Mungos mungo*  
We were rewarded a good sighting of ten of these little mammals in Skukuza, Kruger NP.  
**Yellow Mongoose** *Cynictis penicillata*  
Around 8 of these mongoose, sporting a white tail-tip, were seen in Wakkerstroom grasslands.  
**Suricate (Meerkat)** *Suricata suricatta*  
A family of ten of these wonderful critters were found in the grasslands near the town of Wakkerstroom.  
**Small Grey Mongoose** *Galerella pulverulenta*  
One individual was seen at the Strandfontein Sewage Works, another near the town of Ceres.

### Cats Felidae

**Serval** *Felis serval*  
One of these scarce cats crossed the road ahead of us as we left St. Lucia for the Dlinza Forest.  
**Lion** *Panthera leo*  
We had three separate sightings during our time in Kruger. The best sightings were of a Lioness on a rock and 3 Lions east of Satara.  
**Leopard** *Panthera pardus*



This spectacular cat completed our 'Big 5' in one day in the Kruger! Seen in classic fashion – lying at a distance in a Marula tree.

### Hyraxes Procaviidae

**Rock Hyrax (Dassie)** *Procavia capensis*

We saw these strange-looking animals in the Wakkerstroom area.

### Elephants Elephantidae

**African Elephant** *Loxodonta africana*

We had a total of about 120 in the Kruger NP. A single bull was seen in Mkuze.

### Zebras Equidae

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

This species was recorded in good numbers during 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 found several in Mkuze GR.

### Hippopotamuses Hippopotamidae

**Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibius*

We saw good numbers of these massive beasts during our tour, the highest count at the estuary in 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 seen at most reserves with high numbers of 30 a day in Kruger NP.

### Bovids & Horned Ungulates Bovidae

**African (Cape) Buffalo** *Syncerus caffer*

Good numbers of these powerful creatures were seen at close quarters in the Kruger NP.

**Greater Kudu** *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*

These magnificent antelope were recorded in Kruger, Mkuze GR and Cape Vidal.

**Nyala** *Tragelaphus angasii*

We had several sightings of this striking antelope in Mkuze GR.

**Bushbuck** *Tragelaphus scriptus*

Small numbers were seen in St. Lucia and Cape Vidal.

**Common Waterbuck** *Kobus ellipsiprymnus*

This stunning antelope was seen well in Kruger NP, Mkuze and Cape Vidal.

**Common Reedbuck** *Redunca arundinum*

Several were seen, most in Cape Vidal after we had a good look at a male in the Kruger NP.

**Grey Rhebok** *Pelea capreolus*

We had a distant scoped view of 4 animals near the town of Wakkerstroom.

**Black Wildebeest** *Connochaetes gnou*

Around 20 animals could be watched in the Midmar game reserve.

**Blue Wildebeest** *Connochaetes taurinus*

This mammal was frequently encountered in all game reserves in the east.

**Red Hartebeest** *Alcelaphus buselaphus*



Our only sighting was of a few small herds in the Midmar Game Reserve.

**Blesbok** *Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi*

We saw many in the high elevation grasslands around Wakkerstroom and the Kwa-Zulu Natal midlands.

**Impala** *Aepyceros melampus*

Easily the most common antelope in the game reserves of the east.

**Suni** *Neotragus moschatus*

We had two sightings of this small forest-dweller in Mkhuzi GR, the smallest antelope in southern Africa.

**Klipspringer** *Oreotragus oreotragus*

A pair of these very interesting antelopes showed near Rooi Els.

**Steenbok** *Raphicerus campestris*

These dainty antelope were observed in Zaagkuilsdrift, the Kruger NP, Mkuze and West Coast NP.

**Blue Duiker** *Cephalophus monticola*

3 animals were seen in the Dlinza forest in Eshowe.

**Red Duiker** *Cephalophus natalensis*

This richly coloured antelope was found in the coastal forests of St. Lucia and Cape Vidal as well as at Mkuze.

**Common (Grey) Duiker** *Sylvicapra grimmia*

This, the most widespread duiker in South Africa, was seen in small numbers in Kruger, Mkuze, Cape Vidal and the West Coast NP.

### Seals Otariidae

**Cape Fur Seal** *Arctocephalus pusillus*

We had numerous sightings of these mammals on our pelagic, both in-shore and out at sea.

### Dolphins Delphinidae

**Common Dolphin** *Delphinus delphis*

We had great views of a good numerous sightings of these mammals on our pelagic, both in-shore and out at sea.

### REPTILE SPECIES LIST (14 species)

**Leopard Tortoise** *Geochelone pardalis*

We only saw one tiny animal as it was crossing the road in Kruger.

**Angulate Tortoise (E)** *Chersina angulata*

Two individuals were seen along the road in the West Coast NP.

**Bell's Hinged Tortoise (E)** *Kinixys belliana*

We had one individual on the edge of the town of St. Lucia.

**Marsh Terrapin** *Pelomedusa subrufa*

We found a few of these creatures in Mkhuzi.

**Serrated Hinged Terrapin** *Pelusios sinuatus*

We had one on our second day in the Kruger NP.

**Rainbow Skink** *Mabuya quinquetaeniata*

We had a few of these colourful lizards on rocks in the Kruger NP.

**Striped Skink** *Mabuya striata*

A few of these widespread skinks were seen near Rust-de-Winter and around Mkuze.

**Black Girdled Lizard (E)** *Cordylus niger*

We had numerous sightings of this range-restricted lizard near the Cape Point.

**Drakensberg Crag Lizard (E)** *Pseudocordylus melanotus*

We enjoyed good views of this interesting species in Lesotho.

**Nile Monitor** *Varanus niloticus*

Two of these animals were seen well in the Kruger NP.

**Southern Tree Agama** *Acanthocercus atricollis*

We had 2 females in the Rust-de-Winter area, another in the Satara camp, Kruger NP.



**Moreau's Tropical House Gecko***Hemidactylus mabouia*

Frequently seen around the chalets in Mkhuze GR, especially in the evenings.

**Cape Dwarf Gecko***Lygodactylus capensis*

A single small Gecko was seen at breakfast in the Skukuza Camp in Kruger NP.

**Nile Crocodile***Crocodylus niloticus*

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

**AMPHIBIAN SPECIES LIST (3 species)****Eastern Olive Toad***Bufo garmani*

Many heard and a few seen at our accommodation in St. Lucia.

**Red Toad***Schizmaderma carens*

We had views of this fairly common amphibian at our Rust-de-Winter accommodation.

**African Bullfrog***Pyxicephalus edulis*

We had one that was being beaten to a pulp by a hungry Southern Ground Hornbill – our first of the tour in the Kruger.

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