

ORNITHOLIDAYS' TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA
KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland and Lake Chrissie Birding Tour

3rd – 18th November 2006



Dlinza Forest Boardwalk

Leader: Peter Lawson (on behalf of Ornitholidays)

Tour Summary

Tour Participants:

Iain Elliot
David Elliot
Mary Yale

Ground Operators:

Lawson's Birding Tours
PO Box 16849
West Acres, Nelspruit
South Africa 1211
www.lawsons.co.za

Photo acknowledgements:

Peter Lawson

Total Distance Travelled:

1933 kilometres

Temperature Range:

13° - 35° Celsius

Total Birds Seen:

299

Total Birds Heard Only:

12

Total Mammals Seen:

31

Birds of the Trip:

Plain-backed Sunbird
Spotted Ground-Thrush
Woodward's Batis

Trip Report Compiled By:

Peter Lawson (Tour Leader) on behalf of Ornitholidays

Note:

The species mentioned in the report are only some of the species seen at each locality. Please refer to detailed checklists at end of the report for all species seen on this specific tour.

Trip Breakdown

Day 1: Friday 3rd November 2006 ~ Leave London

Route: Depart Heathrow Airport for Johannesburg International Airport

Day 2: Saturday 4th November 2006 ~ Eshowe

Route: Arrive Johannesburg, Transfer to Durban Airport, Drive to Eshowe

Distance: 180 kms

Weather: Overcast, cool, light wind

Temperature range: 22°C

Day 3: Sunday 5th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

Route: Dlinza Forest, Eshowe via Mtunzini and Richards Bay to Hilltop, Hluhluwe Game Reserve

Distance: 240 kms

Weather: Windy, overcast, cold with drizzle at times

Temperature range: 16° - 22°C

Day 4: Monday 6th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

Route: Hluhluwe Game Reserve all day with drives in different directions and walks at picnic areas

Distance: 77 kms

Weather: Cold, windy, overcast. Clearing at sunset

Temperature range: 13° - 20°C

Day 5: Tuesday 7th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

Route: Hluhluwe Game Reserve – drives and Forest Walk at Hilltop

Distance: 74 kms

Weather: Clear, cool, only slight breeze at times

Temperature range: 14° - 24°C

Day 6: Wednesday 8th November 2006 ~ Rocktail Bay

Route: Hilltop, Hluhluwe, Ilala Weavers, Muzi Pans, Rocktail Bay

Distance: ±175 kms

Weather: Fine but breezy

Temperature range: 14° - 26° C

Day 7: Thursday 9th November 2006 ~ Rocktail Bay

Route: Rocktail Bay including drive to coastal grasslands

Distance: 25 kms

Weather: Sunny and warm to hot. Breezy at times

Temperature range: 15° - 30° C

Day 8: Friday 10th November ~ Tembe Elephant Park

Route: Rocktail Bay to Tembe Elephant Park

Distance: 75 kms

Weather: Sunny to hot. Cloudy and cooler later with some rain during the night

Temperature range: 19° - 34° C

Day 9: Saturday 11th November 2006 ~ Tembe Elephant Park

Route: Tembe Elephant Park all day with game drives
Distance: ±25 kms
Weather: Cool and overcast early morning. Clearing later, hot and humid
Temperature range: 22 ° - 35° C

Day 10: Sunday 12th November 2006 ~ Tembe Elephant Park

Route: Early drive to Ndumo Game Reserve where we spent the day
Distance: 135 kms
Weather: Cool and overcast with very slight drizzle at times
Temperature range: 19° - 23° C

Day 11: Monday 13th November 2006 ~ Swaziland

Route: Tembe Elephant Park to Swaziland, Mountain Inn, Mbabane
Distance: 235 kms
Weather: Rain from the early hours, clearing in afternoon
Temperature range: 21° - 24° C

Day 12: Tuesday 14th November 2006 ~ Swaziland

Route: Mountain Inn to Malolotje Nature Reserve – drives all day in reserve and return to Mountain Inn
Distance: 98 kms
Weather: Superb day, clear skies, no wind
Temperature range: 16° - 28° C

Day 13: Wednesday 15th November 2006 ~ Chrissiesmeer

Route: Mountain Inn to Ngwenya Border Post and to Florence Guest House, Lake Chrissie. Afternoon drive on district roads
Distance: 192 kms
Weather: Fine and warm
Temperature range: 20° - 26°C

Day 14: Thursday 16th November 2006 ~ Chrissiesmeer

Route: Various farm roads in the Lake Chrissie district
Distance: 72 kms
Weather: Foggy and misty in the early morning but clearing later. Cloudy in the afternoon
Temperature range: 14° - 27°C

Day 15: Friday 17th November 2006 ~ Departure

Route: Lake Chrissie to Johannesburg Airport with a deviation to Nigel and Marievale Bird Sanctuary
Distance: 330 kms
Weather: Intermittent rain and clear weather throughout the day
Temperature range: 16° - 24° C

Day 16: Saturday 18th November 2006 ~ Arrive London, Heathrow

Trip Report

Saturday 4th November 2006 ~ Eshowe

The overnight SAA flight from London, Heathrow arrived at Johannesburg International Airport in the morning. The group expected Peter Lawson to meet and greet which was a misunderstanding and a phone call to Lawson's office quickly clarified the situation and the group boarded the transfer flight to Durban, where everyone subsequently met.

At Durban airport, luggage was loaded into the vehicle and we drove straight to Eshowe Bed and Breakfast. The first bird seen was the inevitable House Crow not far from the airport.

We drove north/east through rolling hills of green sugar cane on the N2 motorway. Roadside birding included Yellow-billed Kite, Common Mynah, Cattle Egret, Black-headed Heron, Barn Swallow and Little Swift at numerous bridges that we crossed.

Our destination was reached late afternoon and we checked into our comfortable rooms. We strolled around the grounds but the weather was not conducive to good birding and was rather dull. A few nice birds were seen though for the start of our list.

Garden birds included Black-bellied Starling, Olive and Greater Double-collared Sunbird, Red-capped Robin-Chat, Lesser Striped Swallow, Cape Wagtail and a few others.

Dinner on our first evening was at the Village Sports Club and it was excellent. We were the only guests so the service was good too. It was then early to bed, after hearing a distant African Wood-Owl.

Bird of the Day: Greater Double-collared Sunbird

Daily Total: 21

Trip Total: 21

Sunday 5th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

We woke early and at 6am went to Dlinza Forest. The weather was not good and it was very windy and chilly. It was also dark in the forest and therefore difficult to find birds. We were shown a Spotted Ground-Thrush nest and saw the bird on it with difficulty – beautifully camouflaged. We also saw Chorister Robin-Chat on its nest in a hollow tree, but it was also not easy to see as the bird was very shy and we had to view it from a distance. Trumpeter Hornbills were present and some White-eared Barbets were feeding off a fruiting forest tree.

Back to breakfast in the leader's chalet, we then packed and left Eshowe Bed and Breakfast. We detoured at Mtunzini to look for Palmnut Vultures but it was not easy in a strong wind. Eventually we found a pair perched and in flight and were able to scope them. This bird only occurs here and at one other destination along the coast, so we were very lucky.

Our next deviation was to Richard's Bay. There is a new hide at Thula Pan, which is excellent, but the strong wind drove most birds to the far end of the pan. A good find was \pm 30 Pygmy Geese in a single flock. There was also Squacco Heron, Little Egret, Woolly-necked Stork, African Fish Eagle and a number of Little Terns in front of the hide, close up views of African Jacana, Grey-headed Gull and more. The track to the hide was alive with passerines feeding on seeding grasses and an abundance of insects. There were brightly coloured Red Bishops, Village and Southern Masked Weavers, Bronze Mannikins, Yellow-fronted Canaries and both Klaas's and Diderik Cuckoos. We spent some time along this track as just about everything we saw was new for the log. The result was that lunch was missed, but we did have coffee and home-made rusks and nobody minded as the birding was good. The rusks were followed by peppermints for dessert and everyone was happy.

Hluhluwe Game Reserve was entered at the northern Memorial Gate and we noted that there had not been much rain in these parts and waterholes were mostly dry. As we drove slowly to Hilltop, where we would be staying for three nights, we encountered a herd of Buffalo with attendant Red-billed Oxpeckers, a very close and enormous White Rhinoceros bull, some good looking Nyala antelope, Warthogs, Burchell's Zebra and our first of many Impala.

Birds were not so plentiful but we did have a nice Black Cuckoo which responded to call-up, Rattling Cisticola, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Cape Glossy Starling, Red-collared Widowbirds and a few more.

Our spacious chalets were superb and so was the buffet dinner we had in the restaurant later. It made up for the sparse lunch. The log was updated in the lounge afterwards.

Bird of the Day: Spotted Ground-Thrush

Daily Total: 63

Trip Total: 83

Monday 6th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

Our morning drive at 6am was cold and windy. Difficult birding conditions resulted, but raptors showed well. We saw Martial Eagle and White-backed Vultures and plenty of Yellow-billed Kites playing on the breeze and we found a Grey Sunbird on its nest. The Hluhluwe River was not flowing and there were only a few pools. Waterbirds were not plentiful but we saw Goliath Heron, Great Egret, a pair of Hamerkop near their enormous nests and Three-banded Plover. On a loop road, where we were the only visitors, we came across a White Rhinoceros pair with a tiny calf. They grazed happily and ignored our presence.

We returned to Hilltop for breakfast, which was followed by a drive to a different area. The picnic site we visited was good, with Red-capped Robin-Chat showing well. Spectacled Weaver, Cardinal and Golden-tailed Woodpeckers and others – all of this in spite of a very strong wind. A family of beautiful Nyala came down to drink at a small pool in the otherwise dry river.

We returned for lunch and rest until 3.30pm, before our final drive of the day. It was good with a number of new birds for our list. Our final stop was at a different picnic site where we saw White-necked Ravens and a pair of Peregrine Falcon chasing a Lanner Falcon, which eventually sat on the cliff to be scoped. Most unusual and very impressive to see both of these falcons together. Obviously competing for nesting territory.

Another good find elsewhere on the drive was a perched African Crowned Eagle being mobbed by a Wahlberg's Eagle. This was shortly before a Red Duiker ran across the road. The eagle headed in the same direction and we wondered if there was a kill. The bush was too dense to see but we heard nothing.

In spite of the windy conditions we had a good day with both birds and mammals and of particular note were a brilliant blue Malachite Kingfisher on the Hluhluwe River, a lovely pair of Little Bee-eaters hawking insects, Crowned Hornbill perched up for us, a Red-fronted Tinkerbird that came to look at my poor whistling imitations of its monotonous call and the only Red-faced Cisticola of the day.

Bird of the Day: African Crowned Eagle

Daily Total: 71

Trip Total: 156

Tuesday 7th November 2006 ~ Hluhluwe

We started with a 6am drive in perfect weather this time. Birds were perched up everywhere for us and were plentiful. Good sightings included Gorgeous and Orange-breasted Bush-shrikes. A Buffy Pipit was a good find as it is a vagrant to this area. It gave us a good view and was close enough to clearly see the diagnostic pink lower mandible. Our first elephant was also seen before breakfast.

A walk in the forest within the camp after breakfast was profitable. Birds were plentiful and we had a stunning sighting of an African Emerald Cuckoo. It remained hidden at first whilst calling 'dear Georgie' from a leafy tree, but then came out to look at us in response to 'pishing'. Samango Monkey was a new mammal.

Our walk was followed by a rest period until 3pm and then we drove towards Umfolozi and got to grips with Purple-crested Turaco at last. Also Blue Waxbill, which was missed earlier.

Other new birds included Black-bellied Bustard, Sabota Lark, Tawny Eagle, Red-chested Cuckoo seen at last, Red-breasted Swallow, Brown-crowned Tchagra and many more.

On return to camp, a stop at the picnic area visited yesterday produced two Southern Bald Ibis on the cliff and the yesterday's Peregrine Falcon made a brief appearance. Once again the log was updated after dinner and we walked back to our chalets in the moonlight.

Bird of the Day: African Emerald Cuckoo

Daily Total: 74

Trip Total: 183

Wednesday 8th November 2006 ~ Rocktail Bay

Breakfast at Hilltop at 7:00 followed by a walk in the Mbhombwe Forest Trail again. We found our target bird at the beginning of the walk, a fine male Narina Trogon, perched up close for a stunning sighting.

We packed and departed with a slow drive through the park to Memorial Gate. New birds were found whilst still in the reserve and it thus took a long time to get back to the gate. These were Lesser Honeyguide, Olive Bush-Shrike, Black-crowned Tchagra, Speckled Mousebird, a fine Jackal Buzzard perched up for us and some nice mammals as well, including six White Rhino relaxing at a dry waterhole, together with a herd of buffalo.

Ilala Weavers near the town of Hluhluwe was our lunch stop. Birds came to a bird bath whilst we were having toasted sandwiches and these included Lesser Masked Weaver, Village Weaver, Spectacled Weaver and Bronze Mannikins.

Driving towards Muzi Pan (a natural lake), a fine Bateleur flew in front of us and a good find was a Lizard Buzzard on telephone wires that necessitated a u-turn. Iain was particularly pleased with this sighting. Muzi Pan had low water-level but plenty of birds, including Collared Pratincole, Spurwing Geese, Pink-backed Pelicans, Hottentot Teal, Red-billed Teal, Black-winged Stilt and various shorebirds, plus a Black-chested Snake Eagle. An interesting find that excited me more than the guests was two Gull-billed Terns. Not only is this a rare vagrant to South Africa but we also had one at Ndumo on the previous Ornitholidays Tour which is not very far from Muzi Pan. This one caused quite a 'twitch' and people came from all over the country to see it.

We arrived at the Cashew Nut Factory dead on pick-up time at 16:00 and met Mbongeni who took us on a rough ride on sandy tracks to Rocktail Bay. We saw Red-billed Firefinch and African Marsh Harrier on the way. On arrival we had time for a first, short visit to the excellent small hide in the camp, situated in a forest clearing, very close to a small spring. A fine male Tambourine Dove was at the water, plus Red-capped Robin-Chats. It was almost dark by now but we all silently agreed this would be the place to spend time at during the rest of our stay.

We met up with other guests and had dinner al fresco with them at a very long table. Electricity at this remote but lovely lodge is by solar power and thus lighting is on the dull side. However we found a quiet corner in the bar that had sufficient light to update the log.

Bird of the Day: Lizard Buzzard

Daily Total: 96

Trip Total: 175

Thursday 9th November 2006 ~ Rocktail Bay

A 6am walk in the dune forest was rather frustrating as birds were calling but remained out of sight. We returned for breakfast on the deck where a pair of Dark-backed Weavers made an appearance.

Later we drove into the coastal grasslands in an open Landrover with Mbongeni. We searched for Rosy-throated Longclaw and found two birds at close range in a field of ground orchids. Cape Longclaw was in the same field and not far away we found Yellow-throated Longclaw – full house, in a stunning locality. Another excellent prize was the rare Short-tailed Pipit which sat up for a scope view. This small pipit is seldom seen and it was incredible that this one gave us such a perfect sighting.

Much of the rest of the day was spent in the camp hide. It was excellent with plenty of activity. In total we saw 15 bird species, 3 mammals and 2 reptiles from the hide (see separate list).

In the late afternoon we walked over the boardwalk, which crosses a huge vegetated dune, to view the beautiful pristine beach. No people, buildings or even footprints for miles in both directions. Just hundreds of Ghost Crabs.

Mary decided to go on a turtle drive in the evening with the research team. It was a long night, returning in the early hours, but she not only saw both Loggerhead and Leatherback Turtles, but also two new birds for the list, Fiery-necked Nightjar and White-fronted Plover. Iain and David elected to rather have an early night to be fresh for another walk before breakfast in the dune forest.

Birds and Wildlife seen at Rocktail Bay Hide

Birds

- Dark-capped Bulbul
- Yellow-bellied Greenbul
- Terrestrial Brownbul
- Tambourine Dove
- Lemon Dove
- Grey Sunbird
- Eastern Olive Sunbird
- Red-capped Robin-Chat
- Blue-mantled Flycatcher
- White-eared Barbet
- Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird
- Yellow White-eye
- Green-backed Cameroptera
- White-bellied Sunbird
- Dark-backed Weaver

Mammals

- Tonga Red Squirrel
- Vervet Monkey
- Red Duiker

Reptiles

- Common Striped Skink
- Boomslang (Tree Snake)

Bird of the Day: Rosy-throated Longclaw

Daily Total: 43

Trip Total: 189

Friday 10th November ~ Tembe Elephant Park

We went for an early morning walk before breakfast in the forest accompanied by Mbongeni. Mary did not come as she had got back to camp in the very early hours after the turtle drive. We had a successful mornings birding this time with target birds well seen – Woodward's Batis, Rudd's Apalis, Brown Scrub-Robin, Green Malkoha but Livingstone's Turaco played hard to get and we only had a fly past. Before our departure we went to the hide for a final look and were rewarded with a Lemon Dove, normally a shy bird of the rain forest at higher altitude.

Mbongeni drove us to collect our van at the Cashew Nut plantation where there was a dead female Buff-spotted Flufftail. It had probably been hit by a car in the night. Sadly, untickable but we were able to examine it. On the slow drive through the sparsely populated rural area and grasslands, we had a good find, being a European Honey Buzzard, a scarce migrant to South Africa.

We loaded luggage in our own vehicle and we drove in hot weather to Tembe and deviated on the way to look in Llala Palm fields for Lemon-breasted Canaries, but they were probably in deep shade on a very hot midday. We dipped on this one.

Our arrival at Tembe was at 1pm and we were greeted by singing staff and a pair of Crested Guineafowl.

Vushi was our guide at Tembe, he was excellent. He took us on a bumpy Landcruiser drive in the bush with heaps of beautiful Nyala, plus our first of many, Tembe elephants. These elephants have huge tusks. Tembe

was proclaimed as a nature reserve mainly to protect the last remaining elephant herd in KwaZulu-Natal. Early hunting parties had destroyed them elsewhere. There are now about 160 in the reserve, which also protects an endangered habitat – Sand Forest.

The return drive was after dark and the spotlight focused on a pair of African Wood Owls for us. African Broadbill called, but could not be located in the dark. Before dark a mixed feeding flock (bird party) produced Black Cuckooshrike, Grey Penduline Tit, Common Scimitarbill, Southern Black Tit, Black-backed Puffback and a number of other passerines. Later we had a lovely White-throated Robin-Chat.

The bird log was updated after dinner to background singing by a group from the local community, entertaining the other guests. We stole away to a relatively quiet corner before the singing started.

Bird of the Day: Woodward's Batis

Daily Total: 61

Trip Total: 201

Saturday 11th November 2006 ~ Tembe Elephant Park

We met at 5:30 and went on an early morning drive to some lovely Sand Forest. Mary stayed in bed as she set her alarm incorrectly. We got a very close response from an African Broadbill when we played its call, but were sadly unable to locate it in the dense forest and a very brief fleeting glimpse only was had as it flew across the track.

We did have good response from a Plain-backed Sunbird though. Tembe is the only place in South Africa where this bird occurs and it is rare and difficult to locate. We had a good view (a lifer for the leader). Whilst in the forest we heard Thick-billed Cuckoo calling loudly and it came flying over for a good view. Another good find.

Broad-billed Roller also showed well and so did a Scaly-throated Honeyguide when we called it up. Another good bird on the afternoon drive was Grey Tit-Flycatcher and during the lunch break we called up an Eastern Nicator in the camp. It responded quietly and was expertly picked up by Mary. Later we had a second one. This species, although very vocal, is notoriously difficult to locate and usually does not respond to playback.

Later we went on another bumpy drive with Vusi in his old Landcruiser. The hide overlooking a waterhole was not very productive. It produced one elephant, some Nyala and Impala, Woolly-necked Stork, Wood Sandpiper and a few others. We went to another waterhole that had many Nyala coming down to drink, plus a couple of Bushbuck, whilst we sipped our sundowner, Castle Lagers. There were numbers of Spurwing Geese and many Hadedda Ibis as well.

Bird of the Day: Plain-backed Sunbird

Daily Total: 44

Trip Total: 207

Sunday 12th November 2006 ~ Tembe Elephant Park

Most of the day was spent at Ndumo Game Reserve and we had an excellent days birding. We slowly drove on gravel roads through the reserve and spent a good part of the morning in the Empasini hide on Nyamiti Pan – a natural lake. Viewing from the hide was excellent and there were large numbers of waterbirds, plus a pod of hippo and many large crocodiles.

New birds for the list from the hide included Yellow-billed Stork, African Purple Swamphen, Common Ringed Plover, Kittlitz's Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Pied Avocet, Caspian Tern, Lesser Swamp Warbler, Brown-throated, Thickbilled and Golden Weavers.

New birds elsewhere in this lovely reserve included African Cuckoo Hawk, Common Sandpiper, Water Thick-knee, African Green Pigeon, Jacobin Cuckoo, Bearded Scrub-Robin, Spotted Flycatcher, Pale Flycatcher, Bushveld Pipit, Scarlet-chested Sunbird. We worked hard for Pink-throated Twinspot but only had a couple of fleeting glimpses. Mammals included Banded Mongoose, Common Reedbuck, Burchell's Zebra, Giraffe, lots of Warthog and more.

On returning to Tembe, there were 12 Nyala feeding around my tent and then a large bull elephant visited whilst I was having a shower in my open-air bush shower. Rather disconcerting having a huge pachyderm watching from close range, particularly when stark naked!

Bird of the Day: African Cuckoo-Hawk

Daily Total: 95

Trip Total: 230

Monday 13th November 2006 ~ Swaziland

We had intended to visit the Sand Forest early to look for African Broadbill, at first light. We got up at 4.30 but the rain started and we aborted an open vehicle drive. We packed early and had breakfast with the rain coming down in buckets. Our departure was in the same weather, but it had stopped raining by the time we reached the Golela Border Post and entered Swaziland.

Our drive continued over kilometres of very muddy deviations due to major roadworks, but we eventually reached our lunch stop at Riverside near Big Bend, only to discover the restaurant was closed for a conference. We ended up with toasted cheese and ham sandwiches in the bar.

Our drive continued through scenic rural Swaziland, with a few tricky and badly signposted turns as we passed through Manzini. We eventually arrived at Mountain Inn, Mbabane in time for a walk in the grounds and neighbourhood after checking in to our spacious rooms. New birds on our walk were White-rumped Swifts, a surprise Karoo Thrush (apparently out of range but also seen on the previous tour), Cape Weaver, Cape Canary and some delightful little Sweet Waxbills. A flowering Jacaranda tree in the carpark was full of nesting Village Weavers amongst blue flowers and some Amethyst Sunbirds.

Dinner was in Friar's Tuck restaurant and it was pretty good too. We did the log updating in the lounge afterwards and it was early to bed in anticipation of exciting birding tomorrow.

Bird of the Day: Sweet Waxbill

Daily Total: 44

Trip Total: 237

Tuesday 14th November 2006 ~ Swaziland

We awoke to a beautiful day, had an early breakfast and after seeing a Kurrichane Thrush in the garden, departed for Malolotje Nature Reserve in the Swaziland highlands. After negotiating some major motorway construction deviations, we were soon there and saw our first Blesbok from the entrance gate. Shortly before though, a roadside stop was made to scan a pond in the reserve. This proved to be productive and we saw Little Grebe, Reed Cormorant, Black-headed Heron, Hamerkop, Spur-winged Goose, Red-knobbed Coot, African Wattled Lapwing and a stunning little Malachite Kingfisher. There were also Greater Striped Swallows, Banded Martins and Levillant's Cisticola in the adjoining grasslands.

Malolotje is a beautiful reserve, with superb mountain scenery, massive granite boulders and heaps of wildflowers. Our major target bird was the rare and critically endangered Blue Swallow. Just a few pairs breed in this reserve.

We drove along rough tracks and walked through the grasslands in all the likely spots but no Blue Swallows. At one stage a Black Saw-wing flew past and for a moment we thought it was our bird. There was plenty to see besides and we came across Cape Rock Thrush, lots of bizarre Long-tailed Widowbirds, Fantailed Widowbird, Wing-snapping Cisticola, Cape Grassbird, Plain-backed Pipit, Cape Longclaw, Buff-streaked Chat and lots more. Then suddenly David shouted 'Blue Swallow' and a male with long tail streamers flew past the front of the van and disappeared down the valley. Iain in the rear seat missed it and was devastated (especially as he had earlier informed me this bird was the major reason for his joining the tour). We drove down the valley and ate our picnic lunch whilst scanning the slopes and eventually another flew by rapidly. Iain saw it this time but could not get the blue colour as it was in silhouette. Frustrating to say the least and I was ready to tear out the little bit of hair I have. Eventually though we all had a good sighting and could now relax. Iain was delighted.

Other new birds for us on this excellent day in perfect weather were Bokmakierie, Yellow Bishop, a Secretarybird that flew over and landed on the opposite hillside, a Small Buttonquail that ran across the

track and was then flushed by me for a good flight view, Dark-capped Yellow Warbler, Drakensberg Prinia and a fleeting glimpse of the scarce Broad-tailed Warbler that refused to come out of cover a second time, but called softly, tantalisingly close.

Mammals included plenty of Blesbok with young, Rock Hyrax, Grey Rhebok and some Warthogs, looking out of place in open grasslands.

Bird of the Day: Blue Swallow

Daily Total: 63

Trip Total: 257

Wednesday 15th November 2006 ~ Chrissiesmeer

We departed from Mountain Inn and drove to Ngwenya border post (Oshoek on the South African side). On the way we deviated slightly to visit a glassworks where exquisite ornaments are hand made from re-cycled glass. A few Christmas gifts were purchased.

Our arrival at Florence Guest House was early and our rooms were not yet ready, but Arné is a wonderful hostess and she sat us down in the garden with a glass of litchi juice whilst the staff prepared rooms for us.

We then drove into the small village of Lake Chrissie and had Veal Schnitzel and fresh salads for lunch at a new coffee shop that had only just opened. It was delicious and the hostess was intent on looking after us well. We were probably the first customers.

The afternoon was spent driving on farm district roads looking for birds and visiting many of the 270 lakes of various sizes in the area. It is no wonder that South Africa's lake district is known as the 'frog capital of Mpumalanga'.

Birding was good and apart from hundreds of bright Red Bishops feeding on the roadside and dozens of Long-tailed Widowbirds perched on fences and displaying for the many females, there were many waterbirds. We saw Yellow-billed Egret for the first time, Squacco Heron, Goliath Heron, White-breasted Cormorant, African Sacred Ibis, African Spoonbill, hundreds of Egyptian Geese and Yellow-billed Duck, Hottentot and Red-billed Teal, Cape Shoveler and others. One lake (Lake Bhanager) had some Greater Flamingo, Cape Teal and waders such as Common Ringed Plover, Kittlitz's Plover, African Snipe and Ruff.

Another had African Jacana, Black-winged Stilt, Grey-headed Gull and African Purple Swamphen. There was also White-winged Terns and Whiskered Tern in full breeding plumage. Swainson's Spurfowl was (believe it or not) the first francolin for the trip.

African Harrier Hawk was almost voted as bird of the day, it gave us a splendid show as it slowly flew past us. Iain even had it in the scope and saw all the diagnostic features.

Back at the Florence Guest House, we had a most delicious dinner and met other guests from South Africa and Texas. It was an enjoyable evening.

Bird of the Day: Long-tailed Widowbird

Daily Total: 90

Trip Total: 274

Thursday 16th November 2006 ~ Chrissiesmeer

We woke up to foggy weather (possibly also 'froggy' weather in this area) but nevertheless drove out on the Breyton Road before breakfast. We had our first good look at Speckled Pigeons. Rock Kestrel was new for us and another first, unbelievably at long last we caught up with Laughing Dove, one of the commonest birds in South Africa. Must be a new record that we were only seeing them on the second last day of the trip. Another new bird for the list was Spike-heeled Lark. A family party gave us a good show at close range. Little Rush Warbler, Pied Starlings and African Quailfinch were also new. The latter were true to form and played hide and seek with us on the road verge. Back at the farm for breakfast and a Red-throated Wryneck gave us a good show. During breakfast we watched a female Malachite Sunbird feeding just outside the window.

Later we drove to various lakes again and added Southern Pochard and Great Crested Grebe to the list.

Mary spotted a Red-winged Francolin feeding in the grass and we had a good sighting. Well seen by Mary from the rear of the vehicle.

Lunch was at the local coffee shop again and this time it was Cottage Pie and salad. Excellent again and so was our dinner that Arné gave us at Florence. Just as well we only had a short stay as we could have ended up looking like the amphibians Lake Chrissie is famous for.

Bird of the Day: Red-throated Wryneck

Daily Total: 87

Trip Total: 285

Friday 17th November 2006 ~ Departure

We left after an early breakfast as the idea was to spend some time at Marievale Bird Sanctuary, near Nigel, on the way to the airport. We had not gone far when South African Cliff Swallows were seen flying from under a low bridge. A u-turn gave us an excellent sighting as this breeding endemic flew around and under the bridge where they were obviously nesting. This addition to the list gave us 14 Hirundines out of a possible 15 for the itinerary. We dipped on Common House Martin.

A stop was made near Bethal at a lake on a farm with plenty of waterbirds and shorebirds but nothing new was added. As we drove through Bethal a Eurasian Starling flew from a school sportsfield. This bird was introduced to Cape Town in the 1930's and has now spread north as far as the Johannesburg area.

Marievale is an excellent wetland reserve on an extinct gold mine. There had been a lot of rain in recent months which had made water levels a little high for the best birding but we did add a few new ones for the list. There was African Darter, Fulvous Duck, African Reed Warbler, White-winged Widowbird in adjoining grassland and bird of the day was Black Heron of which we saw quite a few, some demonstrating their unique umbrella fishing technique. Also on the fringe we picked up two early migrants, not often seen on the highveld – Red-backed Shrike and Lesser Grey Shrike. A new mammal was also seen – Water Mongoose. This mongoose species is not often encountered, so it was a good find.

We arrived at the airport early and spent a bit of time doing the final log over a cup of coffee before fond farewells.

Footnote: The only bird seen every day was Barn Swallow. The extremely common Dark-capped Bulbul was surprisingly missing on the final day. (Must be another record).

Bird of the Day: Black Heron

Daily Total: 84

Trip Total: 299

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Iain, David and Mary for a super tour. I enjoyed it as much as you did. Iain and David are great birders with heaps of enthusiasm. Mary is a wizard at spotting and has a lot of patience. I hope to be with you on another Ornitholidays Tour to a different region in lovely South Africa in the not too distant future.

Checklist of Birds Seen

No of Days Recorded Number = how many days species were sighted

H = the species was heard only

Abundance Scale (maximum for one day)

1 = 1 – 4

2 = 5 – 9

3 = 10 – 99

4 = 100 – 999

(E) = Endemic to South Africa, (NE) = Near Endemic to South Africa

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | Number of Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| 6 | Great Crested Grebe | 2 | 2 | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i> |
| 8 | Little Grebe | 2 | 5 | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> |
| 50 | Pink-backed Pelican | 2 | 1 | <i>Pelecanus Rufescens</i> |
| 55 | White-breasted Cormorant | 2 | 4 | <i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i> |
| 58 | Reed Cormorant | 3 | 5 | <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i> |
| 60 | African Darter | 1 | 1 | <i>Anhinga rufa</i> |
| 62 | Grey Heron | 2 | 5 | <i>Ardea cinerea</i> |
| 63 | Black-headed Heron | 2 | 6 | <i>Ardea melanoleuca</i> |
| 64 | Goliath Heron | 1 | 4 | <i>Ardea goliath</i> |
| 66 | Great Egret | 1 | 3 | <i>Casmerodius albus</i> |
| 67 | Little Egret | 2 | 2 | <i>Egretta garzetta</i> |
| 68 | Yellow-billed Egret | 1 | 3 | <i>Egretta intermedia</i> |
| 69 | Black Heron | 2 | 1 | <i>Egretta ardesiaca</i> |
| 71 | Cattle Egret | 3 | 9 | <i>Bubulcus ibis</i> |
| 72 | Squacco Heron | 2 | 4 | <i>Ardeola ralloides</i> |
| 81 | Hamerkop | 1 | 3 | <i>Scopus umbretta</i> |
| 86 | Woolly-necked Stork | 1 | 4 | <i>Ciconia episcopus</i> |
| 87 | African Open bill | 1 | 1 | <i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i> |
| 90 | Yellow-billed Stork | 1 | 1 | <i>Mycteria ibis</i> |
| 91 | African Sacred Ibis | 1 | 4 | <i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i> |
| 92 | Southern Bald Ibis (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Geronticus calvus</i> |
| 93 | Glossy Ibis | 3 | 4 | <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i> |
| 94 | Hadedda Ibis | 2 | 12 | <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i> |
| 95 | African Spoonbill | 3 | 5 | <i>Platalea alba</i> |
| 96 | Greater Flamingo | 2 | 2 | <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i> |
| 99 | White-faced Duck | 2 | 2 | <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i> |
| 100 | Fulvous Duck | 1 | 1 | <i>Dendrocygna bicolor</i> |
| 102 | Egyptian Goose | 3 | 7 | <i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i> |
| 104 | Yellow-billed Duck | 4 | 5 | <i>Anas undulata</i> |
| 107 | Cape Teal | 2 | 2 | <i>Anas capensis</i> |
| 107 | Hottentot Teal | 2 | 5 | <i>Anas hottentota</i> |
| 108 | Red-billed Teal | 3 | 6 | <i>Anas erythrorhynchos</i> |
| 112 | Cape Shoveler (E) | 2 | 3 | <i>Anas smithii</i> |
| 113 | Southern Pochard | 1 | 1 | <i>Netta erythropteralis</i> |
| 114 | African Pygmy -Goose | 3 | 1 | <i>Nettion auritus</i> |
| 116 | Spur-winged Goose | 3 | 6 | <i>Plectropterus gambensis</i> |
| 118 | Secretarybird | 1 | 1 | <i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i> |
| 123 | White-backed Vulture | 2 | 4 | <i>Gyps africanus</i> |
| 125 | White-headed Vulture | 1 | 1 | <i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i> |
| 126b | Yellow-billed Kite | 2 | 9 | <i>Milvus aegyptius</i> |
| 127 | Black-shouldered Kite | 2 | 4 | <i>Elanus caeruleus</i> |
| 128 | African Cuckoo Hawk | 1 | 1 | <i>Aviceda cuculoides</i> |
| 130 | European Honey -Buzzard | 1 | 1 | <i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | NUMBER OF Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 132 | Tawny Eagle | 1 | 1 | <i>Aquila rapax</i> |
| 135 | Wahlberg's Eagle | 1 | 5 | <i>Aquila wahlbergi</i> |
| 140 | Martial Eagle | 1 | 2 | <i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i> |
| 141 | African Crowned Eagle | 1 | 3 | <i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i> |
| 143 | Black-chested Snake -Eagle | 1 | 2 | <i>Circaetus gallicus</i> |
| 146 | Bateleur | 1 | 2 | <i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i> |
| 147 | Palm-Nut Vulture | 1 | 1 | <i>Gypohierax angolensis</i> |
| 148 | African Fish Eagle | 1 | 3 | <i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i> |
| 149 | Steppe Buzzard | 2 | 10 | <i>Buteo buteo</i> |
| 152 | Jackal Buzzard (E) | 1 | 3 | <i>Buteo rufofuscus</i> |
| 154 | Lizard Buzzard | 1 | 1 | <i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i> |
| 158 | Black Sparrowhawk | 1 | 1 | <i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i> |
| 160 | African Goshawk | 1 | 2 | <i>Accipiter tachiro</i> |
| 165 | African Marsh-Harrier | 1 | 1 | <i>Circus ranivorus</i> |
| 169 | African Harrier-Hawk | 1 | 2 | <i>Polyboroides typus</i> |
| 171 | Peregrine Falcon | 1 | 2 | <i>Falco peregrinus</i> |
| 172 | Lanner Falcon | 1 | 1 | <i>Falco biarmicus</i> |
| 181 | Rock Kestrel | 1 | 1 | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> |
| 188 | Coqui Francolin | | H | <i>Peliperdix coqui</i> |
| 192 | Red-winged Francolin | 1 | 1 | <i>Scleroptila levaillantii</i> |
| 199 | Swainson's Spur-fowl (NE) | 1 | 3 | <i>Pternistes swainsonii</i> |
| 200 | Common Quail | | H | <i>Coturnix coturnix</i> |
| 203 | Helmeted Guinea-fowl | 3 | 7 | <i>Numida meleagris</i> |
| 204 | Crested Guinea-fowl | 2 | 4 | <i>Guttera pucherani</i> |
| 205 | Small Button-quail | 1 | 1 | <i>Turnix sylvatica</i> |
| 210 | African Rail | | H | <i>Rallus caerulescens</i> |
| 213 | Black Crake | | H | <i>Amaurornis flavirostris</i> |
| 223 | African Purple Swamp hen | 1 | 3 | <i>Porphyrio madagascariensis</i> |
| 226 | Common Moor hen | 3 | 4 | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> |
| 228 | Red-knobbed Coot | 3 | 5 | <i>Fulica cristata</i> |
| 238 | Black-bellied Bustard | 1 | 2 | <i>Eupodotis melanogaster</i> |
| 240 | African Jacana | 2 | 4 | <i>Actophilornis africanus</i> |
| 245 | Common Ringed Plover | 1 | 3 | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> |
| 246 | White-fronted Plover | 1 | 1 | <i>Charadrius marginatus</i> |
| 248 | Kittlitz's Plover | 1 | 2 | <i>Charadrius pecuarius</i> |
| 249 | Three-banded Plover | 1 | 5 | <i>Charadrius tricollaris</i> |
| 255 | Crowned Lapwing | 1 | 2 | <i>Vanellus coronatus</i> |
| 258 | Blacksmith Lapwing | 2 | 6 | <i>Vanellus armatus</i> |
| 260 | African Wattled Lapwing | 1 | 2 | <i>Vanellus senegalensis</i> |
| 264 | Common Sandpiper | 1 | 1 | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> |
| 266 | Wood Sandpiper | 2 | 4 | <i>Tringa glareola</i> |
| 269 | Marsh Sandpiper | 3 | 2 | <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i> |
| 270 | Common Greenshank | 2 | 3 | <i>Tringa nebularia</i> |
| 272 | Curlew Sandpiper | 3 | 1 | <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> |
| 274 | Little Stint | 2 | 3 | <i>Calidris minuta</i> |
| 284 | Ruff | 3 | 4 | <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> |
| 286 | African Snipe | 2 | 3 | <i>Gallinago nigripennis</i> |
| 294 | Pied Avocet | 2 | 2 | <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> |
| 295 | Black-winged Stilt | 2 | 5 | <i>Himantopus himantopus</i> |
| 298 | Water Thick-Knee | 1 | 1 | <i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i> |
| 304 | Collared Pratincole | 2 | 1 | <i>Glareola pratincola</i> |
| 315 | Grey-headed Gull | 1 | 2 | <i>Larus cirrocephalus</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | NUMBER OF Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 321 | Gull-billed Tern | 1 | 1 | <i>Gelocheli don nilotica</i> |
| 322 | Caspian Tern | 1 | 2 | <i>Hydropr ogne caspia</i> |
| 335 | Little Tern | 2 | 1 | <i>Sterna albifrons</i> |
| 338 | Whiskered Tern | 2 | 5 | <i>Chlidonias hybri dus</i> |
| 339 | White-winged Te rn | 1 | 1 | <i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i> |
| 348 | Rock Dove | 2 | 4 | <i>Columba livia</i> |
| 349 | Speckled Pigeon | 2 | 3 | <i>Columba guinea</i> |
| 352 | Red-eyed Dove | 2 | 13 | <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i> |
| 354 | Cape Turtle-Dove | 3 | 7 | <i>Streptopelia capicola</i> |
| 355 | Laughing Dove | 2 | 2 | <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i> |
| 358 | Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove | 2 | 5 | <i>Turtur chalcospilus</i> |
| 359 | Tambourine Dove | 1 | 3 | <i>Turtur tympanistris</i> |
| 360 | Lemon Dove | 1 | 1 | <i>Aplopelia larvata</i> |
| 361 | African Green-Pigeon | 1 | 1 | <i>Treron calva</i> |
| 370b | Livingstone's Turaco | 1 | 1 | <i>Tauraco livingstonii</i> |
| 371 | Purple-crested Turaco | 1 | 1 | <i>Tauraco porphyreolophus</i> |
| 377 | Red-chested Cuckoo | 1 | 3 | <i>Cuculus solitarius</i> |
| 378 | Black Cuckoo | 1 | 1 | <i>Cuculus clamorus</i> |
| 382 | Jacobin Cuckoo | 1 | 1 | <i>Clamator jacobinus</i> |
| 383 | Thick-billed Cuckoo | 1 | 1 | <i>Pachyococyx audeberti</i> |
| 384 | African Emerald Cuckoo | 1 | 1 | <i>Chrysococyx cupreus</i> |
| 385 | Klaas's Cuckoo | 1 | 1 | <i>Chrysococyx klaas</i> |
| 386 | Diderick Cuckoo | 1 | 5 | <i>Chrysococyx caprius</i> |
| 387 | Green Malkoha | 1 | 1 | <i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i> |
| 391a | Burchell's Coucal (NE) | | H | <i>Centropus burchellii</i> |
| 394 | African Wood-Owl | 1 | 1 | <i>Strix woodfordii</i> |
| 405 | Fiery-necked Nightjar | 1 | 1 | <i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i> |
| 415 | White-rumped Swift | 2 | 4 | <i>Apus caffer</i> |
| 417 | Little Swift | 3 | 7 | <i>Apus affinis</i> |
| 421 | African Palm Swift | 2 | 4 | <i>Cypsiurus parvus</i> |
| 424 | Speckled Mousebird | 1 | 2 | <i>Colius striatus</i> |
| 426 | Red-faced Mousebird | 2 | 2 | <i>Urocolius indicus</i> |
| 427 | Narina Trogon | 1 | 1 | <i>Apaloderma narina</i> |
| 428 | Pied Kingfisher | 1 | 5 | <i>Ceryle rudis</i> |
| 431 | Malachite Kingfisher | 1 | 3 | <i>Alcedo cristata</i> |
| 435 | Brown-hooded Kingfisher | 2 | 6 | <i>Halcyon albiventris</i> |
| 438 | European Bee-eater | 2 | 2 | <i>Merops apiaster</i> |
| 444 | Little Bee-eater | 1 | 4 | <i>Merops pusillus</i> |
| 447 | Lilac-breasted Roller | 1 | 2 | <i>Coracias caudata</i> |
| 450 | Broad-billed Roller | 1 | 1 | <i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i> |
| 451 | African Hoopoe | 1 | 6 | <i>Upupa africana</i> |
| 452 | Green Wood-Hoopoe | 1 | 2 | <i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i> |
| 454 | Common Scimitarbill | 1 | 3 | <i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i> |
| 455 | Trumpeter Hornbill | 1 | 2 | <i>Bycanistes bucinator</i> |
| 460 | Crowned Hornbill | 1 | 6 | <i>Tockus albiterminatus</i> |
| 464 | Black-collared Barbet | 1 | 2 | <i>Lybius torquatus</i> |
| 466 | White-eared Barbet | 1 | 2 | <i>Stactolaema leucotis</i> |
| 469 | Red-fronted Tinkerbird | 1 | 2 | <i>Pogoniulus pusillus</i> |
| 471 | Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird | 2 | 2 | <i>Pogoniulus bilineatus</i> |
| 473 | Crested Barbet | | H | <i>Trachyphonus vailantii</i> |
| 474 | Greater Honeyguide | | H | <i>Indicator indicator</i> |
| 475 | Scaly-throated Honeyguide | 1 | 2 | <i>Indicator variegatus</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | NUMBER OF Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|------|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 476 | Lesser Honeyguide | 1 | 1 | <i>Indicator minor</i> |
| 483 | Golden-tailed Woodpecker | 1 | 2 | <i>Campet hera a bingoni</i> |
| 486 | Cardinal Woodpecker | 1 | 3 | <i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i> |
| 489 | Red-throated W r yneck | 1 | 2 | <i>Jynx ruficollis</i> |
| 490 | African Broadbi ll | | H | <i>Smithornis cape nsis</i> |
| 494 | Rufous-naped La rk | 1 | 6 | <i>Mirafra africana</i> |
| 495c | Eastern C lapper Lark (E) | | H | <i>Mirafra fasciolata</i> |
| 498 | Sabota Lark (NE) | 1 | 1 | <i>Mirafra sabota</i> |
| 506 | Spike-heeled Lark | 1 | 1 | <i>Chersoma nes albofasciata</i> |
| 518 | Barn Swallow | 4 | 14 | <i>Hirun do rustica</i> |
| 520 | White-throated Swallow | 1 | 3 | <i>Hirun do albigularis</i> |
| 521 | Blue Swallow | 1 | 1 | <i>Hirun do atrocaerulea</i> |
| 522 | Wire-tailed Swal low | 1 | 3 | <i>Hirun do smithii</i> |
| 524 | Red-breasted Swallow | 1 | 2 | <i>Hirun do semiru fa</i> |
| 526 | Greater St riped Swal low (E) | 2 | 4 | <i>Hirun do cuc ullata</i> |
| 527 | Lesser Str iped Swal low | 2 | 10 | <i>Hirun do abyssinica</i> |
| 528 | South Af rican Cliff-Swallow (E) | 2 | 1 | <i>Hirun do spilodera</i> |
| 529 | Rock Mart in | 1 | 2 | <i>Hirun do fuligula</i> |
| 531 | Grey-rumped Swal low | 1 | 1 | <i>Pseudhirundo griseopyga</i> |
| 532 | Sand Ma rtin | 2 | 2 | <i>Riparia riparia</i> |
| 533 | Brown-throated Mart in | 3 | 3 | <i>Riparia paludicola</i> |
| 534 | Banded Ma rtin | 2 | 3 | <i>Riparia cincta</i> |
| 536 | Black Saw -wing | 2 | 4 | <i>Psali dproc ne holomelas</i> |
| 538 | Black Cuckooshr ike | 1 | 1 | <i>Campe phaga flava</i> |
| 541 | Fork-tailed Drongo | 2 | 7 | <i>Dicrurus a dsimilis</i> |
| 542 | Square-tailed Drongo | 2 | 6 | <i>Dicrurus lu dwigii</i> |
| 545 | Black-headed Or iole | 1 | 5 | <i>Oriolus larvatus</i> |
| 548 | Pied Crow | 2 | 9 | <i>Corvus al bus</i> |
| 549 | House Crow | 1 | 1 | <i>Corvus sple ndens</i> |
| 550 | White-necked Rav en | 1 | 5 | <i>Corvus al bicollis</i> |
| 554 | Southern Black T it | 1 | 5 | <i>Parus niger</i> |
| 558 | Grey Pendu line Tit | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthosco pus caroli</i> |
| 568 | Dark-capped Bul bul | 3 | 13 | <i>Pycno notus barbatus</i> |
| 569 | Terrestrial Brownbul | 2 | 3 | <i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i> |
| 572 | Sombre G reenbul | 2 | 4 | <i>Androp adus importunus</i> |
| 574 | Yellow-bellied Greenbul | 1 | 3 | <i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i> |
| 575 | Eastern N icator | 1 | 1 | <i>Nicator gularis</i> |
| 576 | Kurrichane Th rush | 1 | 4 | <i>Turdus libonyana</i> |
| 577 | Karoo Th rush (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Turdus smithi</i> |
| 578 | Spotted Grou nd-Thrush | 1 | 1 | <i>Zoothera guttata</i> |
| 580 | Groundscraper Thrush | 1 | 1 | <i>Turdus litsitsirupa</i> |
| 581 | Cape Ro ck-Thrush (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Monticola rupestris</i> |
| 588 | Buff-streaked Chat (E) | 2 | 1 | <i>Oenanthe bifasciata</i> |
| 595 | Ant-eating Chat (E) | 2 | 2 | <i>Myrmecocichla f ormivor a</i> |
| 596 | African Stonechat | 2 | 4 | <i>Saxico la torquata</i> |
| 598 | Chorister Robin-Chat (E) | 1 | 2 | <i>Cossyph a dichroa</i> |
| 599 | White-browed Rob in-Chat | | H | <i>Cossyph a heuglini</i> |
| 600 | Red-capped Robin-Chat | 2 | 7 | <i>Cossyph a natalensis</i> |
| 601 | Cape Robin-Chat | 1 | 3 | <i>Cossyph a caffr a</i> |
| 602 | White-throated Robin -Chat (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Cossyph a humeralis</i> |
| 613 | White-browed Scr ub-Robin | 1 | 2 | <i>Erythro pygia leuc ophrys</i> |
| 616 | Brown Scr u b-Robin (E) | 1 | 2 | <i>Erythro pygia signata</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | NUMBER OF Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 617 | Bearded Scrub-Robin | 1 | 1 | <i>Erythro pygia quadrivir gata</i> |
| 631 | African Reed -Warbler | 1 | 1 | <i>Acrocephal us baet icatus</i> |
| 635 | Lesser Swamp-Warbler | 2 | 2 | <i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i> |
| 637 | Dark-capped Yel low Warbler | 1 | 1 | <i>Chlor opeta natalensis</i> |
| 638 | Little Rush- Warbler | 1 | 1 | <i>Bradypterus b aboecala</i> |
| 642 | Broad-tailed Wa rbler | 1 | 1 | <i>Schoenicola brevirostris</i> |
| 645 | Bar-throated Apal is | 1 | 1 | <i>Apalis thoracica</i> |
| 648 | Yellow-breasted Apal is | 1 | 4 | <i>Apalis flavida</i> |
| 649 | Rudd's A palis (E) | 1 | 2 | <i>Apalis ru ddi</i> |
| 651 | Long-billed Crombec | 1 | 1 | <i>Sylvietta r ufescens</i> |
| 657a | Green-backed Camaroptera | 1 | 3 | <i>Camar optera brachyura</i> |
| 661 | Cape Grassb ird (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Spheno eacus afer</i> |
| 664 | Zitting Cisticola | 2 | 4 | <i>Cisticol a juncidis</i> |
| 666 | Cloud Cisticola | | H | <i>Cisticol a textris</i> |
| 667 | Wing-snap ping Cisticola | 3 | 2 | <i>Cisticol a ayresii</i> |
| 668 | Pale-crowned C isticola (NE) | | H | <i>Cisticol a brunnescens</i> |
| 670 | Wailing Cisticola | 3 | 1 | <i>Cisticol a lais</i> |
| 672 | Rattling Cisticola | 3 | 8 | <i>Cisticol a chiniana</i> |
| 674 | Red-faced Cisticola | 1 | 1 | <i>Cisticol a erythro ps</i> |
| 677 | Levaillant's Cisticola | 2 | 4 | <i>Cisticol a tinniens</i> |
| 678 | Croak ing Cisticola | 2 | 5 | <i>Cisticol a natalensis</i> |
| 681 | Neddick y | 1 | 2 | <i>Cisticol a fulvicapillus</i> |
| 683 | Tawny-flanked Prinia | 1 | 7 | <i>Prini a subflava</i> |
| 686b | Drakensberg Pr inia (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Prini a hyp oxantha</i> |
| 689 | Spotted Flycat cher | 1 | 2 | <i>Muscica pa striat a</i> |
| 693 | Grey Tit-Flycatcher | 1 | 1 | <i>Myioparus plumbeus</i> |
| 694 | Southern Black Flycat cher | 1 | 5 | <i>Melae nornis pammelai na</i> |
| 696 | Pale Flycat cher | 1 | 1 | <i>Melae nornis pallidus</i> |
| 700 | Cape Batis (E) | 1 | 3 | <i>Batis capensis</i> |
| 704 | Woodwar d's Batis | 1 | 1 | <i>Batis fratrum</i> |
| 708 | Blue-mantled Flycat cher | 1 | 2 | <i>Trochocercus cyanomel as</i> |
| 710 | African Paradise Flycatcher | 1 | 4 | <i>Terpsip hone viridis</i> |
| 711 | African Pied Wagtail | 1 | 5 | <i>Motacilla aguimp</i> |
| 713 | Cape Wagtail | 2 | 8 | <i>Motacilla capensis</i> |
| 716 | African Pipit | 2 | 5 | <i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i> |
| 718 | Plain-backed Pipit | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthus leucophrys</i> |
| 719 | Buffy Pipit | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthus va alensis</i> |
| 723 | Bushveld Pipit | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthus caffer</i> |
| 724 | Short-tailed Pip it | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthus brachyurus</i> |
| 727 | Cape Long claw (E) | 2 | 5 | <i>Macronyx cape nsis</i> |
| 728 | Yellow-throated Longclaw | 1 | 8 | <i>Macronyx croceus</i> |
| 730 | Rosy-throated Longclaw | 1 | 1 | <i>Macronyx ameli ae</i> |
| 731 | Lesser G rey Shrike | 1 | 1 | <i>Lanius mi nor</i> |
| 732 | Common Fiscal | 3 | 10 | <i>Lanius collaris</i> |
| 733 | Red-backed Shr ike | 1 | 1 | <i>Lanius collurio</i> |
| 736 | Southern Boubou (E) | 1 | 3 | <i>Laniari us ferru gineus</i> |
| 740 | Black-backed Puffba ck | 2 | 8 | <i>Dryoscop us cubla</i> |
| 741 | Brubru | | H | <i>Nilaus afer</i> |
| 743 | Brown-crowned Tchagra | 1 | 1 | <i>Tcha gra australis</i> |
| 744 | Black-crowned Tchagra | 1 | 2 | <i>Tcha gra sene gala</i> |
| 746 | Bokmakierie (E) | 1 | 3 | <i>Telophorus zeylo nus</i> |
| 747 | Gorgeous Bush-Shrike | 1 | 1 | <i>Telophorus quadri color</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | NUMBER OF Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 748 | Orange-breasted Bush -Shrike | 1 | 2 | <i>Telophorus sulfureopectus</i> |
| 750 | Olive Bush -Shrike | 1 | 1 | <i>Telophorus olivaceus</i> |
| 751 | Grey-headed Bush-Shrike | 1 | 3 | <i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i> |
| 754 | Retz's Helmet-Shrike | | H | <i>Prionops retzii</i> |
| | Eurasian Starling | 1 | 1 | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> |
| 758 | Common My na | 2 | 8 | <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> |
| 759 | Pied Starling (E) | 2 | 2 | <i>Spreo bicolor</i> |
| 761 | Violet-backed Starling | 2 | 4 | <i>Cinnyricinclus leucogaster</i> |
| 764 | Cape Glossy Starling | 2 | 7 | <i>Lamprotornis nitens</i> |
| 768 | Black-bellied Starling | 2 | 7 | <i>Lamprotornis corruscus</i> |
| 769 | Red-winged Starling | 2 | 7 | <i>Onychognathus morio</i> |
| 772 | Red-billed Oxpecker | 2 | 5 | <i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i> |
| 775 | Malachite Sunbird | 1 | 1 | <i>Nectarinia famosa</i> |
| 780 | Purple-banded Sunbird | 1 | 2 | <i>Nectarinia bifasciata</i> |
| 785 | Greater Double-collared Sunbird (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Nectarinia afra</i> |
| 787 | White-bellied Sunbird | 1 | 1 | <i>Nectarinia talatala</i> |
| 789 | Grey Sunbird | 1 | 3 | <i>Nectarinia veroxii</i> |
| 790 | Eastern Olive Sunbird | 2 | 5 | <i>Nectarinia olivacea</i> |
| 791 | Scarlet-chested Sunbird | 1 | 1 | <i>Nectarinia senegalensis</i> |
| 792 | Amethyst Sunbird | 1 | 3 | <i>Nectarinia amethystina</i> |
| 793 | Collared Sunbird | 1 | 2 | <i>Anthreptes collaris</i> |
| 794 | Plain-backed Sunbird | 1 | 1 | <i>Anthreptes reichenowi</i> |
| 796 | Cape White-eye (E) | 2 | 3 | <i>Zosterops pallidus</i> |
| 797 | African Yellow White-eye | 1 | 1 | <i>Zosterops senegalensis</i> |
| 801 | House Sparrow | 2 | 8 | <i>Passer domesticus</i> |
| 803 | Cape Sparrow (NE) | 1 | 3 | <i>Passer melanurus</i> |
| 804 | Southern Grey-headed Sparrow | 1 | 6 | <i>Passer diffusus</i> |
| 805 | Yellow-throated Petronia | 1 | 6 | <i>Petronia superciliosa</i> |
| 807 | Thick-billed Weaver | 2 | 1 | <i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i> |
| 808 | Dark-backed Weaver | 1 | 3 | <i>Ploceus bicolor</i> |
| 810 | Spectacled Weaver | 1 | 2 | <i>Ploceus ocularis</i> |
| 811 | Village Weaver | 3 | 8 | <i>Ploceus cucullatus</i> |
| 813 | Cape Weaver (E) | 3 | 4 | <i>Ploceus capensis</i> |
| 814 | Southern Masked-Weaver | 3 | 6 | <i>Ploceus velatus</i> |
| 815 | Lesser Masked-Weaver | 2 | 5 | <i>Ploceus intermedius</i> |
| 816 | Golden Weaver | 1 | 1 | <i>Ploceus xanthops</i> |
| 817 | Yellow Weaver | 1 | 2 | <i>Ploceus subaureus</i> |
| 818 | Southern Brown-throated Weaver | 3 | 1 | <i>Ploceus xanthopterus</i> |
| 821 | Red-billed Quelea | 2 | 3 | <i>Quelea quelea</i> |
| 824 | Southern Red Bishop | 3 | 6 | <i>Euplectes orix</i> |
| 826 | Yellow-crowned Bishop | 2 | 3 | <i>Euplectes afer</i> |
| 827 | Yellow Bishop | 1 | 1 | <i>Euplectes capensis</i> |
| 828 | Fan-tailed Widowbird | 2 | 9 | <i>Euplectes axillaris</i> |
| 829 | White-winged Widowbird | 1 | 1 | <i>Euplectes albonotatus</i> |
| 831 | Red-collared Widowbird | 3 | 5 | <i>Euplectes ardens</i> |
| 832 | Long-tailed Widowbird | 3 | 4 | <i>Euplectes progne</i> |
| 838 | Pink-throated Tinspot (E) | 1 | 1 | <i>Hypargos margaritatus</i> |
| 840 | African Firefinch | 1 | 3 | <i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i> |
| 842 | Red-billed Firefinch | 1 | 1 | <i>Lagonosticta senegalensis</i> |
| 844 | Blue Waxbill | 2 | 2 | <i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i> |
| 846 | Common Waxbill | 3 | 7 | <i>Estrilda astrild</i> |
| 850 | Sweet Waxbill (E) | 2 | 1 | <i>Estrilda melanotis</i> |

| | COMMON NAME | Abundance Scale | Number of Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 852 | African Quailfinch | 1 | 1 | <i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i> |
| 857 | Bronze Mannikin | 3 | 5 | <i>Spermestes cucullatus</i> |
| 860 | Pin-tailed Whydah | 1 | 10 | <i>Vidua macroura</i> |
| 864 | Dusky Indigobird | 1 | 3 | <i>Vidua funerea</i> |
| 869 | Yellow-fronted Canary | 3 | 9 | <i>Serinus mozambicus</i> |
| 870 | Black-throated Canary | 2 | 3 | <i>Serinus atrogularis</i> |
| 872 | Cape Canary | 3 | 5 | <i>Serinus canicollis</i> |
| 877 | Brimstone Canary | 1 | 2 | <i>Serinus sulphuratus</i> |
| 878 | Yellow Canary | 1 | 2 | <i>Serinus flaviventris</i> |
| 884 | Golden-breasted Bunting | 1 | 1 | <i>Emberiza flaviventris</i> |
| TOTAL BIRDS SEEN | | 299 | | |

Checklist of Mammals Seen

| COMMON NAME | Number of Days Seen | SCIENTIFIC NAME |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Baboon, Chacma | 2 | <i>Papio ursinus</i> |
| Blesbok | 4 | <i>Damaliscus dorcas phillipsi</i> |
| Buffalo | 4 | <i>Syncerus caffer</i> |
| Bushbaby, Thick-tailed | 1 | <i>Otolemur crassicaudatus</i> |
| Bushbuck | 3 | <i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i> |
| Cat, African Wild | 1 | <i>Felis lybica</i> |
| Dassie, Rock (Hyrax) | 2 | <i>Procavia capensis</i> |
| Duiker, Common | 4 | <i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i> |
| Duiker, Red | 4 | <i>Cephalophus natalensis</i> |
| African Elephant | 3 | <i>Loxodonta africana</i> |
| Giraffe, Southern | 3 | <i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i> |
| Hippopotamus | 1 | <i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i> |
| Impala | 8 | <i>Aepyceros melampus</i> |
| Kudu, Greater | 2 | <i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i> |
| Mongoose, Banded | 1 | <i>Mungos mungo</i> |
| Mongoose, Slender | 3 | <i>Galerella sanguinea</i> |
| Mongoose, Water | 1 | <i>Atilax paludinosus</i> |
| Mongoose, Yellow | 3 | <i>Cynictis penicillata</i> |
| Monkey, Samango | 2 | <i>Cercopithecus mitis</i> |
| Monkey, Vervet | 3 | <i>Cercopithecus aethiops</i> |
| Nyala | 8 | <i>Tragelaphus angasii</i> |
| Reedbuck, Common | 2 | <i>Redunca arundinum</i> |
| Rhebok, Grey | 1 | <i>Pelea capreolus</i> |
| Rhinoceros, White | 4 | <i>Ceratotherium simum</i> |
| Squirrel, Red | 2 | <i>Paraxerus palliatus</i> |
| Suni | 1 | <i>Neotragus moschatus</i> |
| Suricate (Meerkat) | 1 | <i>Suricata suricatta</i> |
| Warthog | 8 | <i>Phacochoerus aethiopicus</i> |
| Waterbuck, Common | 1 | <i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i> |
| Wildebeest, Blue | 4 | <i>Connochaetes taurinus</i> |
| Zebra, Burchell's | 5 | <i>Equus burchelli</i> |
| TOTAL MAMMALS SEEN | 31 | |

Checklist of Reptiles Seen

Boomslang
 Nile Crocodile
 Leopard Tortoise
 Striped Skink
 Dwarf Gecko
 Loggerhead Turtle
 Leatherback Turtle
 Drakensberg Crag lizard