

# South Africa

Kruger & Drakensberg

Mon 5th– Sat 17th Feb 2018

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*Impala and Red-billed Oxpeckers © Callan Cohen. BirdingAfrica*

**Report compiled by tour leader:  
Joe Grosel**

**South Africa | Kruger & Drakensberg****Tour Leader:** Joe Grosel**With:** Luise Addison, Judy & Peter Farren, Andy & Sue Mendus, Kath & Nigel Oram**Tuesday 06 Feb**

All the tour participants met up at the airport in Johannesburg at 10h30 and we soon set off for the Golden Gate Highlands National Park in the Free State Province. Travelling south along the main N3 motorway a lunch stop was made near the town of Villiers. Some birds seen in the gardens surrounding the parking lot included **Southern Masked Weaver, Speckled Pigeon, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Southern Red Bishop and Cape Wagtail**. Approximately 60km further down the N3 we turned off onto a secondary road where the travelling speed was reduced, allowing for good roadside birding in the adjacent farmlands. At a farm dam near the town of Warden, we spotted **Red-knobbed Coot, Spur-winged Goose, Greater Flamingo, Black-headed Heron, Cape Longclaw** and beautiful **Yellow-crowned Bishops** performing their 'bumblebee' display flights. Near the town of Clarens we had **White and Abdim's Stork, Common Buzzard** (the first of many) and **Lanner Falcon**. After travelling through the attractive grasslands and sandstone hills of the Clarens region we entered the Golden Gate National Park. Here we were greeted by the first large mammals of the tour, a herd of **Red Hartebeest**. Once settled into our accommodation in the Golden Gate Hotel there was time for a quick walk around the grounds which produced some fine birds in the form of **Ground Woodpecker, African Pied Starling, Red-throated Wryneck, Cape Weaver, Crested Barbet, White-throated and Greater-striped Swallow, Red-winged Starling, Cape White-eye and Cape Robin-Chat**.

**Wednesday 07 Feb**

After enjoying an early breakfast we took a drive along some of the loop roads in the park seeing some attractive mammals with **Blesbok, Plains Zebra, Springbok, Black-backed Jackal, Grey Rhebok, Red Hartebeest and Black Wildebeest** the most notable. Despite some typically inclement 'highlands weather' some good birds were seen on this excursion, including **Red-collared Widowbird, African Black Swift, Levillant's and Wing-snapping Cisticola, Southern Fiscal, Jackal Buzzard and Buff-streaked Chat**. At a spot appropriately named Protea Corner, we took a walk to the edge of a wooded ravine overlooking some rocky habitat and a large grove of *Protea caffra* and *P. roupelliae*, flushing a **Common Buttonquail** in the process. Good views of male **Malachite Sunbirds, Cape Rock Thrush and Wailing Cisticola** were enjoyed before the target bird eventually showed up, the localised **Gurney's Sugarbird**. In the grounds of an open-air Basotho museum we had good looks at **Fiscal Flycatcher, African Red-eyed Bulbul, Southern Boubou and Speckled Mousebird**. On the way back to the hotel we spotted a stunning **Black Harrier** foraging over the grassy slopes and a **Bearded Vulture** soaring overhead while **Little Bittern, Reed Cormorant and Yellow-billed duck** were seen at a small dam. While enjoying a light lunch and the attractive vistas from the hotel's upper restaurant we were also briefly entertained by a pair of **Verreaux's Eagle** flying along the large sandstone buttresses. During our afternoon excursion we popped into the vulture 'restaurant' hide where there were **Black-backed Jackal, Cape Crow and White-necked Raven** scavenging at a carcass that was put out earlier in the day. Other species seen at this site were **Yellow Bishop, Ant-eating Chat, Mountain Wheatear** and a covey of **Red-winged Francolin** briefly seen by a few as they rapidly flew over a rise. By this time the wind had picked up considerably so it was decided to find a sheltered, wooded area to look for a few more localised passerines. The decision was justified when we had great views of firstly **Drakensberg Prinia** and then a fine **Bush Blackcap**. Satisfied, we returned to the hotel to wind down with a relaxed dinner and fine wine.

**Thursday 08 Feb**

Today's full program required an early breakfast before setting off for the Wakkerstroom region with a whole lot of other activities scheduled en-route. Firstly we headed up into the higher altitudes of the Drakensberg Mountain Range which saw us travelling eastward through the green grasslands and hills of the Golden Gate Park and then via the densely populated area of Qwaqwa. On the way up to the Witsieshoek Conservancy we had literally hundreds of **Amur Falcons** on the wires and the odd **Black-winged Kite**. At the end of a rather jarring road we got to the base of the Sentinel Peak (unfortunately shrouded by dense cloud) where we set out on a walk to locate one of the true Drakensberg specials. At an altitude of close to 3000masl we took things easy

but it didn't take long before we were enjoying close-up views of a pair of **Drakensberg Rockjumpers**. Other species seen in the misty conditions were **Rock Hyrax, Drakensberg Crag Lizards, Rock Kestrel, Cape Canary** and **Familiar Chat**. Then it was back down to slightly lower altitudes as we continued the drive to Wakkerstroom via Harrismith. At the hamlet of Verkykerskop we took a slight detour to enjoy lunch at the impressive Witkoppen Reserve and lodge. The owner accompanied us on a short drive during which we saw large numbers of mammals and some nice birds including **Eastern Long-billed Lark, Bokmakierie, South African Cliff Swallow, Banded Martin, Common Waxbill, Pin-tailed Whydah** and many **Common, Alpine** and **White-rumped Swift**. Good looks at **Denham's Bustard, Secretarybird** and **Southern Bald Ibis** were also enjoyed in the Verkykerskop area. A very large storm that had made its way through the area made travelling on the unpaved roads rather challenging, before we had the luxury of good tarred surfaces for the remainder of the day's journey. Wakkerstroom and the charming Wetlands B&B were reached by early evening.

### Friday 9 Feb

We were met by local Wakkerstroom bird guide Lucky Ngwenya for an early excursion along the farm roads south of Wakkerstroom. Some of the significant birds seen along this loop were **Red-capped Lark, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Grey-crowned** and **Blue Cranes, Red-billed Quelea, Cape Sparrow, Diderick Cuckoo** and many displaying **Long-tailed Widowbirds**. At a small wetland along the route there were **White-backed Duck** and **Whiskered Tern**. After a delicious breakfast at the B&B, during which we watched **Village Weaver, Red-eyed, Laughing** and **Ring-necked Dove** (seen on every day of the tour) at the bird feeders, Lucky directed us to some of his choice birding spots to the north of Wakkerstroom. Along the road to the town of Amersfoort we had **African Pipit** (dozens) along with **Fan-tailed Widowbird, Denham's Bustard, Black-winged** and **Crowned Lapwing, Spike-heeled Lark** and **Zitting Cisticola** to name but a few. At the large rural settlement of Daggakraal Lucky found a pair of the highly localised **Botha's Lark** and further on at the Fickland Pan the critically endangered **Rudd's Lark**. Our picnic lunch at the pan was rudely interrupted by a passing shower but when it did clear we scanned the water body, picking out **Maccoa Duck, Southern Pochard, Red-billed Teal, Cape Shoveler, Great Crested Grebe** and **African Spoonbill**, while a stunning male **Pallid Harrier** also made an appearance. Other significant species seen at this site and along the route back to Wakkerstroom were **Common Quail, Pale-crowned Cisticola, Eastern Clapper Lark** and **Namaqua Dove**. Back in Wakkerstroom, an hour or so spent on the bridge over the local wetland produced sightings of **African Swamphen, South African Shelduck, Hottentot Teal, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Malachite Kingfisher, Lesser Swamp-Warbler, Little Rush Warbler** and **African Marsh Harrier**. Mammal highlights of the day were **Yellow Mongoose, Meerkat** and a family of the seldom seen **Spot-necked Otter**. The day ended with a meal at the 'Metamorphosis' Bistro in the village.

### Saturday 10 Feb

The day started off with a drive to the Slang (Snake) River and the Zaaihoek Dam situated south-west of Wakkerstroom. This outing produced **Mocking Cliff-Chat, Brown-throated Martin, African Wattled Lapwing, Drakensberg Prinia, Giant Kingfisher, Cape Bunting, Cape Grassbird, Horus Swift, African Black Duck** and a single **Red-footed Falcon** amidst hundreds of **Amurs**. Back at the Wetlands B&B there were several birds seen in the garden during and after breakfast. These included **African Hoopoe, Red-throated Wryneck, Olive Thrush, Black-throated Canary, Crested Barbet, Streaky-headed Seedeater** and **Amethyst Sunbird**. Then it was back on the road as we started the lengthy journey to Kruger, travelling via the towns of Ermelo, Carolina, Machadodorp and Bombela. During a stop near Machadodorp to have our packed lunch, **Thick-billed Weaver, Lesser-striped Swallow** and **Bronze Mannikin** were added to the trip list. Kruger's Malelane Gate was reached by late afternoon and the long journey was soon forgotten as the group patrolled the high-water bridge over the Crocodile River (Kruger's southern boundary) and started seeing some exciting mammals, reptiles and birds. There were **Hippo, Bushbuck** and **Waterbuck** while some rather large **Nile Crocodiles** were menacingly lying about in the shallows. The Crocodile River bird parade included **Water Thick-knee, White-faced Whistling Duck, Grey and Goliath Heron, Little Swift, Wood Sandpiper, Great Cormorant, Wire-tailed Swallow, Black Crake, Black-winged Stilt, African Pied Wagtail, Three-banded Plover** and **Pied Kingfisher**. Once through the gate, we had a short (12km) drive to our camp for the night at Berg-en-Dal. On this stretch we had good close-up views of **Impala** (by far the most numerous of Kruger's larger mammals) and

**Cape Buffalo** while a few of Kruger's widespread but iconic birds such as **Magpie Shrike, Lilac-breasted Roller, Southern Red-billed and Yellow-billed Hornbill, Blue Waxbill, Grey Go-away-bird and Swainson's Spurfowl** were also seen. Not to be outdone by these residents some of the common Palaearctic migrants such as **Spotted Flycatcher, Red-backed Shrike and European Roller** also showed themselves. Berg-en-Dal Camp was reached just before the official gate closing time of 18h30.

### Sunday 11 Feb

A dawn departure from Berg-en-Dal to the Skukuza Camp via the main tarred road produced many great mammal sightings of species such as **African Elephant, White Rhino**, a large clan of **Spotted Hyena, Warthog, Giraffe, Zebra, Blue Wildebeest, Greater Kudu, Vervet Monkey, Grey Duiker and Dwarf and Slender Mongoose**. Noteworthy bird species seen en-route to Skukuza were **African Grey Hornbill, Yellow-throated Longclaw, Red-billed Oxpecker, Cape, Greater Blue-eared, Wattled and Burchell's Starling, Wahlberg's and Martial Eagle, Arrow-marked Babbler, Red-billed Buffalo Weaver, Natal Spurfowl, Red-crested Korhaan and Crested Francolin**. Skukuza was reached in time for a hearty brunch after which a short walk in the gardens produced **African Paradise-Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Kite, African Green Pigeon, Violet-backed Starling, Village Indigobird** and its host **Red-billed Firefinch**. An hour or so spent at the 'Lake Panic' bird hide outside Skukuza gave the photographers in the group some great photo opportunities with the likes of **Squacco and Striated Heron, Malachite Kingfisher, Black Crake, Tawny-flanked Prinia and African Jacana** all showing well within a few meters of the hide. Then it was back to Skukuza to check in and enjoy a much-needed siesta. The day was rounded off with a leisurely drive along a few loops south of Skukuza during which some 'lazy' **lion** and not so lazy **Jacobin and Levallant's Cuckoo, Red-faced Mousebird, White-crested Helmet-Shrike, Green-winged Pytilia and Pearl-spotted Owlet** were seen.

### Monday 12 Feb

Another early start as we headed out to do a pre-breakfast drive to the west of Skukuza. Some prominent birds seen on this drive were **Southern Ground Hornbill, White-backed Vulture, Bateleur, Brown Snake Eagle, Little Bee-eater, Woodland Kingfisher, Lesser Masked-Weaver, Black-crowned Tchagra and White-browed Scrub Robin**. From the top of a large granite outcrop we picked up **Black-backed Puffback, White-bellied Sunbird, Jameson's Firefinch, Rattling Cisticola, Chinspot Batis, Long-billed Crombec and Southern Black Tit**. Then it was back to Skukuza for breakfast before heading back out for the drive to our next camp, Satara. The route taken was along the very productive Sabie River to the Lower Sabie Camp for a break and a snack and then northward over the Nkumbe Hills and onto the basalt plains in which Satara is located. The Sabie River and surrounds produced good sightings in the form of **African Openbill, Marabou, Woolly-necked and Yellow-billed Stork, Southern Carmine Bee-eater, White-crowned Lapwing, African Fish Eagle, Kittlitz's Plover, Knob-billed Duck, Great Egret and Hamerkop**. As for the mammals, there were many **Elephant** herds, good numbers of **African Buffalo, Giraffe and Impala**. We had a glimpse of two **African Wild Dog** before they disappeared into the shady undergrowth but had more time with a troop of **Chacma Baboons** who were enjoying a feast of Marula fruit while the young ones playfully harassed a group of **Banded Mongoose**. The drive north from Lower Sabie was a hot one and the bush was severely parched due to the poor rainfall of the past few months and relentless high temperatures. Despite the hot and dry conditions we still managed to see good numbers of **Elephant, Zebra, Kudu, Steenbok and Wildebeest** and had a good sighting of a **Lioness** in a dry riverbed. Interesting birds seen on the way to Satara were **Secretarybird, Senegal Lapwing, White-winged Widowbird, Purple Roller and African Hawk-Eagle** (juvenile). Satara was reached by late afternoon and after a short rest and an early dinner we boarded an open safari vehicle for a night drive. Unfortunately, very windy conditions kept the nocturnal birds hidden apart from a **Marsh Owl** who did bother to make an appearance. Exciting mammals seen on this nocturnal excursion included **Spotted Hyena, African Porcupine, Scrub Hare, Black-backed Jackal** and a beautiful **Serval**.

### Tuesday 13 Feb

The morning was spent taking an easy drive north to the Olifants River where we had breakfast at the lofty Olifants Camp with its delightful views of the river below and the seemingly endless bushveld beyond. Some good birds were seen during this excursion including **Cape, Lappet-faced and White-headed Vulture, Common Ostrich, Brown-hooded Kingfisher, Sabota and Dusky Lark, Black-headed Oriole, Kori Bustard,**

**Lesser Grey Shrike, Saddle-billed Stork** and a **Tawny Eagle** feeding on a **Natal Spurfowl** while being pestered by a group of **Southern Ground Hornbill**. A welcome siesta was enjoyed by the group before doing a late afternoon drive. Highlights of this outing to the Lebombo Mountains along the eastern reaches of the park was a pride of **Lion** resting in the shade of a Lala Palm grove and a very affectionate pair of **Cheetah** going through their pre-mating rituals in preparation for 'Valentine's Day'. Back at camp, some of the group watched large numbers of **Double-banded Sandgrouse** coming in for an evening drink at the camp waterhole.

### Wednesday 14 Feb

Another early excursion, this time to the broad-leaved woodland habitats to the south-west of Satara produced sightings of **Bennett's** and **Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Great-spotted Cuckoo, Green Woodhoopoe, Burnt-necked Eremomela** and **Green Sandpiper** seen at a muddy waterhole called Nsemane. A stop at the Muzandzeni Picnic Site for a snack and a stretch gave us a lovely birding treat in the form of a roosting **African Scops Owl** barely two meters away. After breakfast at Satara we packed up and had a short walk through the camp adding **Yellow-fronted Canary, Marico Sunbird, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Emerald-spotted Wood Dove, Willow Warbler, Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike, Brown-headed Parrot** and **Brubru** to the bird list. The park was exited via the Orpen gate, but not before we had superb views of a pack of 17 **African Wild Dog** right next to the road. The dogs were extremely relaxed, lying up in the shade of some low Acacia bushes with two **Hooded Vultures** in close attendance. After leaving the park we briefly headed up into the Limpopo Province, stopping off at the Moholoholo Ya Mati tea garden on the banks of the Blyde River for lunch. A walk around the beautiful gardens at this spot produced good looks at both **Yellow-fronted** and **Yellow-rumped Tinkerbirds** along with **Ashy Flycatcher, Scarlet-chested Sunbird** and **Black-collared Barbet**. On the way up the eastern Escarpment we stopped off along the spectacular Abel Erasmus Pass where local guide Michael Kumako pointed out the resident **Taita Falcon**. What a pleasure it was to get superb views of one of the World's rarest raptors against the dramatic backdrop of the northern Drakensberg landscape. The last leg of the day's journey took us through more mountain scenery before reaching the Mount Sheba Hotel situated amongst Afro-montane forest and grassland habitats.

### Thursday 15 Feb

An early morning walk into a forest patch adjacent to the hotel gave us **Cape Batis, Olive Woodpecker, Terrestrial Brownbul, Grey Cuckooshrike, Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Greater Double-collared Sunbird, Yellow-streaked Greenbul** and a delightful **Knysna Turaco**. Back at the hotel we were entertained by a troop of **Blue Monkeys** before sitting down for yet another hearty breakfast. This was followed by a scenic road trip along the aptly-named Panorama Route. We made brief visits to the touristy towns of Pilgrims Rest and Graskop before taking in the dramatic views of the Blyde River Canyon. After some clambering through the rocky terrain we were rewarded with great looks at **Cape Bunting** and **Lazy Cisticola** and a few colourful lizards in the form of **Rainbow Rock-Skink, Variable Skink, Common Flat Lizard** and **Yellow-lined Plated Lizard**. Drinks were taken at the very picturesque Blyde River Canyon Resort before returning to Mount Sheba via the town of Orichstad where **White-fronted Bee-eaters, Long-tailed Paradise-Whydah** and **Palm Swifts** were seen. After a great final dinner we headed into the dark forest for a bit of 'owling' and were very lucky to get fantastic views of a pair of **African Wood Owls**.

### Friday 16 Feb

A final early morning forest excursion was a quiet affair, although we did see **Dusky Flycatcher, Southern Double-collared Sunbird, White-starred Robin** and **Chorister Robin-Chat**. Once packed up, we headed along the bumpy track that leads out to the main road and started the drive back to Johannesburg via the towns of Dullstroom and Witbank. A few 'new' birds were seen en-route, namely **Groundscraper Thrush, African Darter** and **Long-crested Eagle**. After a lunch stop near the town of Middleburg we took on the final leg of the journey through the eastern outskirts and suburbs of the greater Johannesburg area before reaching the OR Tambo Airport in the late afternoon.

**Annotated List of Species**  
(A total of 326 birds and 45 mammals).

- Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus***  
seen well in central KNP
- White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata***  
classic tropical ducks seen in KNP
- White-backed Duck *Thalassornis leuconotus***  
seen on pans around Wakkerstroom
- Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis***  
seen in the Golden Gate Park and around Wakkerstroom
- Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos***  
seen in the KNP
- Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca***  
seen almost daily
- South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana***  
fairly common in the Wakkerstroom area
- African Black Duck *Anas sparsa***  
Seen well near Wakkerstroom
- Yellow-billed Duck *Anas undulata***  
common in the Drakensberg and WK areas
- Cape Shoveler *Anas smithii***  
seen on pans around Wakkerstroom
- Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha***  
seen on a pan near Wakkerstroom
- Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota***  
seen at the Wakkerstroom wetlands
- Southern Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma***  
seen in wetlands around Wakkerstroom
- Maccoa Duck *Oxyura maccoa***  
several seen at Fickland Pan near Wakkerstroom
- Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris***  
iconic African bird virtually seen on every day
- Coqui Francolin *Peliperdix coqui***  
heard in the KNP
- Red-winged Francolin *Scleroptila levaillantii***  
a flushed covey briefly seen by some in Golden Gate
- Crested Francolin *Dendroperdix sephaena***  
common in Kruger
- Natal Spurfowl *Pternistis natalensis***  
common in Kruger
- Swainson's Spurfowl *Pternistis swainsonii***  
very common in Kruger
- Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix***  
a pair flushed while walking at Fickland Pan
- Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus***  
two birds seen at a farm dam near Warden
- Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis***  
several seen in Kruger
- African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus***  
a few seen in the KNP
- Black Stork *Ciconia nigra***  
seen well in KNP
- Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii***  
seen in a field near Clarens
- Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus***  
seen in the KNP
- White Stork *Ciconia ciconia***  
many seen around Wakkerstroom and in the KNP

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

a few good sightings in KNP

**Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer***

seen in the KNP

**African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus***

common throughout the highlands

**Southern Bald Ibis *Geronticus calvus***

seen very well in the highlands

**Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash***

seen and heard almost daily

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus***

seen around Wakkerstroom

**African Spoonbill *Platalea alba***

seen on several occasions

**Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus***

a single bird seen flying over a dam in Golden Gate

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

seen at the Wakkerstroom wetlands

**Striated Heron *Butorides striata***

small numbers in Kruger

**Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides***

seen well from a bird hide in Kruger

**Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis***

common and widespread throughout

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea***

small numbers on wetlands throughout

**Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala***

common in the Drakensberg and WK areas

**Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath***

seen well in KNP

**Great Egret *Ardea alba***

encountered on two occasions in the KNP

**Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia***

seen near Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom

**Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca***

seen by some on entering Benoni (Johannesburg)

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta***

seen on a few occasions

**Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta***

African icon mostly seen in KNP

**Reed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus***

small numbers on wetlands throughout

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

seen around Wakkerstroom

**African Darter *Anhinga rufa***

a single bird seen near Dullstroom

**Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius***

excellent sightings in the KNP

**Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus***

seen in the Drakensberg and WK areas

**African Harrier-Hawk *Polyboroides typus***

a single bird in flight - seen by some in the KNP

**Bearded Vulture *Gypaetus barbatus***

a single bird soaring over the Golden Gate Park

**Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus***

seen well in Kruger

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

good numbers in Kruger

**Cape Vulture *Gyps coprotheres***

small numbers in the Kruger

- White-headed Vulture *Trigonoceps occipitalis***  
seen on flight in the KNP
- Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos***  
massive bird seen in Kruger
- Brown Snake Eagle *Circaetus cinereus***  
seen in the KNP
- Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus***  
common in Kruger
- Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus***  
great sighting in the KNP
- Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis***  
distinctive raptor seen near Dullstroom
- Wahlberg's Eagle *Hieraaetus wahlbergi***  
seen well in Kruger
- Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus***  
a bird seen hunting francolin in the KNP
- Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax***  
several seen very well in Kruger
- Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii***  
a pair seen well in the Golden Gate Park
- African Hawk-Eagle *Aquila spilogaster***  
a juvenile seen by some in the KNP
- Black Sparrowhawk *Accipiter melanoleucus***  
seen at the Slang River near Wakkerstroom
- African Marsh Harrier *Circus ranivorus***  
seen over the marshes of Wakkerstroom
- Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus***  
a great sighting of this bird at Fickland Pan
- Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius***  
common in Kruger
- African Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer***  
great views in Kruger on numerous days
- [Steppe Buzzard] *Buteo [buteo] vulpinus***  
numerous sightings throughout
- Forest Buzzard *Buteo trizonatus***  
a single bird seen near Machadodorp
- Jackal Buzzard *Buteo rufofuscus***  
fairly common in higher-lying areas throughout
- Kori Bustard *Ardeotis kori***  
seen very well in the KNP
- Denham's Bustard *Neotis denhami***  
great views near Verkykerskop
- Red-crested Korhaan *Lophotis ruficrista***  
seen very well in KNP
- African Rail *Rallus caerulescens***  
heard only at the Wakkerstroom wetland
- Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra***  
seen very well in KNP
- African Swamphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis***  
seen in the Wakkerstroom marshes
- Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***  
several sightings in unland wetlands
- Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata***  
common in the Drakensberg and WK areas
- Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum***  
good sightings near Wakkerstroom
- Blue Crane *Grus paradisea***  
several seen in the WK area
- Common Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticus***  
a bird was flushed on a walk in Golden Gate



- Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus***  
seen very well in Kruger
- Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus***  
seen in KNP
- Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus***  
common near water throughout
- White-crowned Lapwing *Vanellus albiceps***  
seen near Lower Sabie in the KNP
- Senegal Lapwing *Vanellus lugubris***  
seen well in the KNP
- Black-winged Lapwing *Vanellus melanopterus***  
several birds seen north of Wakkerstroom
- Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus***  
small numbers in dry grassland throughout
- African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus***  
a few seen in the highlands
- Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius***  
seen near Lower Sabie in the KNP
- Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris***  
small numbers on wetlands in the KNP
- African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus***  
a few seen well in KNP
- Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***  
seen in the KNP
- Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***  
a single bird seen near Satara Camp in the KNP
- Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***  
widespread in the KNP
- Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***  
small numbers in KNP
- Ruff *Philomachus pugnax***  
seen at a waterhole in southern KNP
- Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola***  
seen on the Olifants River in the KNP
- Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida***  
several breeding birds seen at highland pans
- Double-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicinctus***  
many birds seen at a waterhole after sunset
- Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia***  
small numbers in a few towns
- Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea***  
common in higher-lying areas throughout
- African Olive Pigeon *Columba arquatrix***  
heard at the Mount Sheba Hotel
- Mourning Collared Dove *Streptopelia decipiens***  
common around Satara Camp in Kruger
- Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata***  
common in the eastern localities
- Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola***  
common and widespread throughout
- Laughing Dove *Spilopelia senegalensis***  
common and widespread throughout
- Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos***  
seen in the KNP
- Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis***  
seen well near Wakkerstroom
- African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus***  
seen at Skukuza Camp in the KNP
- Knysna Turaco *Tauraco corythaix***  
seen well at Mount Sheba Hotel

- Purple-crested Turaco *Tauraco porphyreolophus***  
heard only at the Moholoholo Tea Garden
- Grey Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides concolor***  
common in Kruger
- Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius***  
seen well in the KNP
- Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii***  
seen in Kruger
- Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus***  
a single sighting in Kruger
- Diederik Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius***  
seen very well on several occasions
- Western Barn Owl *Tyto alba***  
a bird seen at its roost at the Lower Sabie restaurant
- African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis***  
excellent close-up views in Kruger
- African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii***  
excellent views at Mount Sheba Hotel
- Pearl-spotted Owlet *Glaucidium perlatum***  
seen briefly and heard in the KNP
- Marsh Owl *Asio capensis***  
seen well on the night drive in Kruger
- African Palm Swift *Cypsiurus parvus***  
seen well in the town of Lydenberg
- Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba***  
flocks in the highlands
- Common Swift *Apus apus***  
loose flocks in several locations
- African Black Swift *Apus barbatus***  
widespread in the highlands
- Little Swift *Apus affinis***  
common near bridges and in towns
- Horus Swift *Apus horus***  
a small flock seen at a road cutting near Wakkerstroom
- White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer***  
common throughout, mainly Kruger
- Speckled Mousebird *Colius striatus***  
widespread throughout
- Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus***  
seen in the KNP
- Purple Roller *Coracias naevius***  
seen in KNP
- Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus***  
a common beautiful bird in Kruger
- European Roller *Coracias garrulus***  
hundreds in the Lowveld
- Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris***  
seen in the KNP
- Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis***  
common summer visitor in Kruger
- Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus***  
seen very well on a few occasions
- Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima***  
great close-up views in Kruger
- Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis***  
seen in WK and Kruger
- Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus***  
seen in KNP
- White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides***  
seen well near Orichstad

- European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster***  
seen almost daily
- Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides***  
seen very well in Kruger
- African Hoopoe *Upupa africana***  
seen well in several localities
- Green Wood Hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus***  
brief views of a flock flying in the KNP
- Southern Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri***  
great views in Kruger
- Southern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus rufirostris***  
common in Kruger
- Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill *Tockus leucomelas***  
common in Kruger
- African Grey Hornbill *Lophoceros nasutus***  
seen in Kruger
- Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus bilineatus***  
seen outside Kruger near Klaserie
- Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus chrysoconus***  
seen outside Kruger near Klaserie
- Acacia Pied Barbet *Tricholaema leucomelas***  
seen well in Satara Camp, KNP
- Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus***  
seen near Klaserie and Blyde River Canyon
- Crested Barbet *Trachyphonus vaillantii***  
seen well in KNP
- Red-throated Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis***  
great views in Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom
- Bennett's Woodpecker *Campethera bennettii***  
seen well in the KNP
- Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni***  
seen in the KNP
- Ground Woodpecker *Geocolaptes olivaceus***  
multiple sightings near Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom
- Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscescens***  
seen in the KNP
- Olive Woodpecker *Dendropicos griseocephalus***  
seen by some in the Mount Sheba forest
- Rock Kestrel *Falco rupicolus***  
seen near Verkykerskop
- Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus***  
a single bird seen outside Wakkerstroom
- Amur Falcon *Falco amurensis***  
abundant throughout the highlands
- Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus***  
seen on two occasions - Golden Gate and Kruger
- Taita Falcon *Falco fasciinucha***  
greaty scope views on the Abel Erasmus Pass
- Brown-headed Parrot *Poicephalus cryptoxanthus***  
seen well in Kruger
- Chinspot Batis *Batis molitor***  
seen well in Kruger
- White-crested Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus***  
seen in Kruger
- Retz's Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii***  
seen from a bird hide in Kruger
- Olive Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus olivaceus***  
heard at Mount Sheba
- Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus***  
great views in Satara Camp KNP

- Bokmakierie *Telophorus zeylonus***  
seen at Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom
- Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis***  
seen in Kruger
- Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegalus***  
seen well in Kruger
- Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla***  
seen well in Kruger
- Southern Boubou *Laniarius ferrugineus***  
seen well in Golden Gate Park
- Brubru *Nilaus afer***  
seen well in Satara camp in Kruger
- Grey Cuckooshrike *Coracina caesia***  
seen well Mt Sheba
- Magpie Shrike *Urolestes melanoleucus***  
common in Kruger
- Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio***  
very common throughout the KNP
- Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor***  
several seen north of Satara, KNP
- Southern Fiscal *Lanius collaris***  
common everywhere except Kruger
- Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus***  
good sightings in Kruger
- Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis***  
common in Kruger
- African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis***  
seen well in Kruger
- Cape Crow *Corvus capensis***  
common in the highlands
- Pied Crow *Corvus albus***  
seen near Lydenburg
- White-necked Raven *Corvus albicollis***  
seen in the Drakensberg
- Drakensberg Rockjumper *Chaetops aurantius***  
great views in the Drakensberg
- Southern Black Tit *Melaniparus niger***  
seen well in Kruger
- Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata***  
seen near Wakkerstroom
- Eastern Long-billed Lark *Certhilauda semitorquata***  
seen at Verkykerskop and near Wakkerstroom
- Dusky Lark *Pinarocorys nigricans***  
great views of this migratory lark in Kruger
- Sabota Lark *Calendulauda sabota***  
fairly common in KNP
- Rudd's Lark *Heteromira fra ruddi***  
a single bird seen at Fickland Pan near Wakkerstroom
- Eastern Clapper Lark *Mira fra fasciolata***  
seen near Wakkerstroom
- Rufous-naped Lark *Mira fra africana***  
heard in the KNP
- Botha's Lark *Spizocorys fringillaris***  
seen in the village of Daggakraal near Wakkerstroom
- Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea***  
good views near Wakkerstroom
- African Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus nigricans***  
seen well in Golden Gate
- Dark-capped Bulbul *Pycnonotus tricolor***  
common, especially in Kruger

- Sombre Greenbul *Andropadus importunus***  
seen at Mount Sheba
- Terrestrial Brownbul *Phyllastrephus terrestris***  
seen at Mount Sheba
- Yellow-streaked Greenbul *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus***  
seen at Mount Sheba
- Brown-throated Martin *Riparia paludicola***  
a few at the Slang River near Wakkerstroom
- Banded Martin *Riparia cincta***  
fairly common in Golden Gate and WK
- Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica***  
very common throughout
- White-throated Swallow *Hirundo albigularis***  
common near streams and wetlands in the highlands
- Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii***  
common along rivers in KNP
- Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula***  
small number at rocky cliffs in the highlands
- Common House Martin *Delichon urbicum***  
seen near wakkerstroom and Mount Sheba
- Greater Striped Swallow *Cecropis cucullata***  
common in higher-lying areas
- Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica***  
seen well in Kruger
- South African Cliff Swallow *Petrochelidon spilodera***  
widespread in the highlands, esp near bridges
- Cape Grassbird *Sphenoeacus afer***  
seen at the Slang River near Wakkerstroom
- Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens***  
seen well in Kruger
- Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus***  
seen on several occasions in KNP
- Lesser Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris***  
seen well at the Wakkerstroom wetland
- African Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus baeticatus***  
seen at the Wakkerstroom marsh
- Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala***  
seen well in WK
- Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops***  
heard in the KNP
- Lazy Cisticola *Cisticola aberrans***  
seen well at Blyde River Canyon
- Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana***  
common in Kruger
- Wailing Cisticola *Cisticola lais***  
seen at Golden Gate
- Levaillant's Cisticola *Cisticola tinniens***  
regular in highland wetlands
- Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis***  
seen in Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom
- Cloud Cisticola *Cisticola textrix***  
heard in Golden Gate
- Pale-crowned Cisticola *Cisticola cinnamomeus***  
seen well near WK
- Wing-snapping Cisticola *Cisticola ayresii***  
seen near Wakkerstroom
- Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava***  
common in KNP
- Drakensberg Prinia *Prinia hypoxantha***  
seen in Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom

- Bar-throated Apalis** *Apalis thoracica*  
seen well Mount Sheba
- Yellow-breasted Apalis** *Apalis flavida*  
seen well in Kruger
- Green-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brachyura*  
heard only at Mount Sheba
- Grey-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brevicaudata*  
seen in KNP
- Stierling's Wren-Warbler** *Calamonastes stierlingi*  
heard only in the KNP
- Burnt-necked Eremomela** *Eremomela usticollis*  
a small flock in KNP
- Arrow-marked Babbler** *Turdoides jardineii*  
seen in Kruger
- Bush Blackcap** *Lioptilus nigricapillus*  
seen very well at Golden Gate
- Cape White-eye** *Zosterops virens*  
quite common throughout
- Gurney's Sugarbird** *Promerops gurneyi*  
seen on flowering Proteas in Golden Gate
- Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*  
common in highland towns
- Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*  
seen in Wakkerstroom
- Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea*  
seen in central KNP
- Cape Starling** *Lamprotornis nitens*  
common in Kruger
- Greater Blue-eared Starling** *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*  
good sightings in Kruger
- Burchell's Starling** *Lamprotornis australis*  
fairly common in Kruger
- Pied Starling** *Lamprotornis bicolor*  
very common in the highlands, often on road edges
- Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*  
a few sightings in the KNP
- Red-winged Starling** *Onychognathus morio*  
common throughout
- Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorynchus*  
common in the KNP
- Orange Ground Thrush** *Geokichla gurneyi*  
heard only, at Mount Sheba
- Groundscraper Thrush** *Turdus litsitsirupa*  
seen outside the town of Belfast
- Kurrichane Thrush** *Turdus libonyana*  
briefly seen by some outside Kruger near Klaserie
- Olive Thrush** *Turdus olivaceus*  
seen well at Golden Gate and Wakkerstroom
- White-browed Scrub Robin** *Cercotrichas leucophrys*  
seen in Kruger
- Fiscal Flycatcher** *Melaenornis silens*  
seen well at Golden Gate National Park
- Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*  
seen in the KNP
- Ashy Flycatcher** *Muscicapa caerulescens*  
seen in Skukuza Camp, KNP
- African Dusky Flycatcher** *Muscicapa adusta*  
seen well at Mount Sheba
- Cape Robin-Chat** *Cossypha caffra*  
common in thickets throughout the highlands

- White-browed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini***  
seen well in Kruger
- Chorister Robin-Chat *Cossypha dichroa***  
good views in Mount Sheba Hotel gardens
- White-starred Robin *Pogonocichla stellata***  
seen well in the Mount Sheba forest
- Cape Rock Thrush *Monticola rupestris***  
seen well in highland rocky terrain
- African Stonechat *Saxicola torquatus***  
common in the highlands
- Buff-streaked Chat *Campicoloides bifasciatus***  
handsome endemic seen at GG and WK
- Mocking Cliff Chat *Thamnolaea cinnamomeiventris***  
seen near Wakkerstroom and in the KNP
- Ant-eating Chat *Myrmecocichla formicivora***  
quite common in highland grasslands
- Mountain Wheatear *Myrmecocichla monticola***  
scattered sightings in high ground rocky areas
- Familiar Chat *Oenanthe familiaris***  
fairly common in the highlands
- Amethyst Sunbird *Chalcomitra amethystina***  
seen in Wakkerstroom
- Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Chalcomitra senegalensis***  
seen well at the Moholoholo Tea Garden
- Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa***  
many good views in Golden Gate and WK
- Southern Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris chalybeus***  
seen in the forests of Mount Sheba
- Greater Double-collared Sunbird *Cinnyris afer***  
seen in the Mount Sheba Hotel grounds
- Marico Sunbird *Cinnyris mariquensis***  
seen well in KNP
- White-bellied Sunbird *Cinnyris talatala***  
seen in the KNP
- White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Plocepasser mahali***  
seen en-route to Golden Gate and in Orichstad
- House Sparrow *Passer domesticus***  
common near human habitation throughout, even in KNP
- Cape Sparrow *Passer melanurus***  
fairly common in highlands
- Southern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer diffusus***  
widespread in small numbers, esp. KNP
- Red-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis niger***  
common in Kruger with many large nests seen
- Thick-billed Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons***  
seen in Wakkerstroom and en-route to Kruger
- Spectacled Weaver *Ploceus ocularis***  
seen in Lower Sabie Camp, KNP
- Cape Weaver *Ploceus capensis***  
common in highlands
- Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius***  
seen in the KNP
- Southern Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus***  
fairly common throughout
- Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus***  
common in the KNP and seen well in Wakkerstroom
- Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea***  
common throughout
- Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer***  
common over grassy pans in the highlands

- Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix***  
common throughout the highland areas
- Yellow Bishop *Euplectes capensis***  
seen in Golden Gate
- Fan-tailed Widowbird *Euplectes axillaris***  
seen at GG and Wakkerstroom
- White-winged Widowbird *Euplectes albonotatus***  
seen in Kruger
- Red-collared Widowbird *Euplectes ardens***  
common in the highland areas
- Long-tailed Widowbird *Euplectes progne***  
spectacular displays in the upland grasslands
- Green-winged Pytilia *Pytilia melba***  
some good looks at this beauty in Kruger
- Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala***  
seen well in the KNP
- Jameson's Firefinch *Lagonosticta rhodopareia***  
seen well in the KNP
- Blue Waxbill *Uraeginthus angolensis***  
common in Kruger
- Violet-eared Waxbill *Uraeginthus granatinus***  
seen south of Skukuza Camp, KNP
- Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild***  
seen near Verkykerskop
- Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata***  
seen en-route to Kruger
- Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata***  
seen very well in Skukuza Camp, KNP
- Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura***  
common pretty parasite was seen well
- Long-tailed Paradise Whydah *Vidua paradisaea***  
seen well near Orichstad
- Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis***  
quite common in highland gardens
- African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp***  
seen along the rivers in Kruger
- Cape Longclaw *Macronyx capensis***  
this smart bird at times very common in highland grasslands
- Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus***  
seen very well in southern Kruger
- African Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus***  
very common in highland grasslands
- Yellow-breasted Pipit *Anthus chloris***  
female birds seen near Wakkerstroom
- Black-throated Canary *Crithagra atrogularis***  
Seen near Wakkerstroom
- Yellow-fronted Canary *Crithagra mozambica***  
seen in Kruger
- Streaky-headed Seedeater *Crithagra gularis***  
seen in Wakkerstroom
- Cape Canary *Serinus canicollis***  
common in the highlands
- Cinnamon-breasted Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi***  
seen by some in Kruger
- Cape Bunting *Emberiza capensis***  
seen in Wakkerstroom and at the Blyde River Canyon



**Mammals**

Rock Hyrax *Procavia capensis*  
African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*  
Wahlberg's Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus wahlbergi*  
Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus*  
Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops*  
Blue Monkey *Cercopithecus mitis*  
Thick-tailed Greater Galago *Otolemur crassicaudatus*  
Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis*  
Smith's Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus cepapi*  
Porcupine *Hystrix africaeaustralis*  
Black-backed Jackal *Canis mesomelas*  
African Wild Dog *Lycaon pictus*  
Spot-necked Otter *Lutra maculicollis*  
Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo*  
Yellow Mongoose *Ichneumia albicauda*  
Slender Mongoose *Galerella sanguinea*  
Dwarf Mongoose *Helogale parvula*  
Meerkat *Suricata suricatta*  
Spotted Hyena *Crocuta crocuta*  
Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus*  
Lion *Panthera leo*  
Serval *Felis serval*  
Plains Zebra *Equus quagga*  
White Rhino *Ceratotherium simum*  
Common Warthog *Phacochoerus aethiopicus*  
Common Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius*  
Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*  
African Buffalo *Syncerus caffer*  
Cape Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*  
Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*  
Nyala *Tragelaphus angasii*  
Grey Rhebok *Pelea capreolus*  
Waterbuck *Kobus ellipsiprymnus*  
Reedbuck *Redunca fulvorufula*  
Mountain Reedbuck *Redunca arundinum*  
Black Wildebeest *Connochaetes gnou*  
Blue Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus*  
Red Hartebeest *Alcelaphus buselaphus*  
Blesbok *Damaliscus phillipsi*  
Impala *Aepyceros melampus*  
Springbok *Antidorcas marsupialis*  
Klipspringer *Oreotragus oreotragus*  
European Fallow Deer *Cervus dama*  
Steenbok *Raphicerus campestris*  
Common Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia*