

NAMIBIA & Botswana:

FROM THE NAMIB TO THE OKAVANGO A Tropical Birding Set Departure

> October 6-21, 2017 Guide: Ken Behrens

All photos taken by Ken Behrens

TOUR SUMMARY

Our Namibia and northern Botswana tour has long been one of our most popular, and for good reason. The Namib escarpment and desert hold a suite of endemic birds that is shared only with adjacent Angola. These include the croaking Rueppell's Bustard, taxonomic oddity Rockrunner, boldly pied White-tailed Shrike, and cryptic Dune Lark. Farther north and east, the Okavango system holds a great wealth of birds, including two of the continent's most wanted species: White-backed Night-Heron and Pel's Fishing-Owl. There is no better spot in Africa for these scarce and shy birds. Although they expect the special birds, birders are often also surprised by this tour's richness of mammals. Etosha National Park is one of Africa's great parks, and is at its best during the late dry season timing of this tour. The spectacle of thousands of big mammals crowding together for precious mouthfuls of water while trying to avoid the big predators that await in ambush, ranks among Earth's great natural spectacles. And Etosha is just one of several sites on this trip that always have lots of mammals. But the real thing that makes tours in Namibia and Botswana special is not the specific birds and mammals that these countries hold, but rather a magical quality to the landscapes of this part of the world. It's hard to explain what it's like to travel through these vast, wild, and largely "empty" countries, but every visitor comes away



with a special experience. Indeed, the landscape itself seems to be the most fascinating "character" encountered on this tour, and memories of sunset in the Namib Desert or the endless papyrus swamps of the Okavango, are likely to stay with you for a lifetime. To put it another way, I often tell people that "you would have to actively hate nature not to enjoy a tour in Namibia"! Sure, there are some tours which mainly appeal to keen birders with a specific set of targets in mind, but this is not one of them... with enchanting landscapes, excellent infrastructure, and a formidable lineup of marquee creatures, Namibia and Botswana are nearly impossible not to love, whether you're a die-hard lister or a casual naturalist.

On this tour, we recorded 364 species of birds, including nearly all of the Namibian nearendemics, plus Pel's Fishing-Owl, Bat Hawk, White-backed Night-Heron, African Skimmer, Orange River Francolin, and Souza's Shrike. We also racked up 48 species of mammals including Lion, Leopard, Honey Badger, and Black Rhino. We didn't neglect reptiles and amphibians either, and identified 14 species, including Water Monitor and some huge Nile Crocodiles.



A daytime Honey Badger was one of our top mammal sightings.

Our tour started in small and tranquil Windhoek, which is a surprisingly birdy city, situated where the Kalahari meets the Namib Escarpment. Dry scrub held species like Monteiro's Hornbill, Brubru, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Violet-eared Waxbill, Kalahari Scrub-Robin, Pin-tailed and Shaft-tailed Whydahs, and Crimson-breasted Shrike, Namibia's national bird. On a small rock escarpment, we found a Rockrunner, a special species that can be hard to find.





A Layard's Warbler in glorious early morning light at scenically spectacular Spreetzhoogte Pass.

From the central highlands, we struck southwest across the escarpment and towards the Namib Desert. Along the way, we took in some spectacular landscapes that are almost empty of any evidence of humans. The top bird of this part of the tour was Herero Chat. We enjoyed long views of a pair at only a few yards' distance. Other birds on the way down into the Namib included Karoo Scrub-Robin, Chat Flycatcher, Bokmakierie, Layard's Warbler, White-

throated Canary, and several Southern Pale Chanting-Goshawks.

Below Spreetzhoogte Pass, we entered the Namib Desert proper, a vast plain that just gets drier as you approach the coast. Here we marveled at the stark landscapes, and the sight of desert-adapted creatures like Springbok, Southern Oryx, Burchell's Courser, and Rueppell's Korhaan (Bustard). Stopping at an area of red sand dunes, we eventually found a Dune Lark, and

enjoyed lengthy views as it engaged in an odd feeding behavior, jumping up to snatch something from the low-hanging limbs of a small bush. At the end of a long drive, we finally arrived in the coastal town of Swakopmund, a strangely incongruous place that is cool and dry despite being on the coast, quite the opposite of the

average coastal city!

We enjoyed a full day of



Dune Lark is Namibia's only "political" endemic bird.



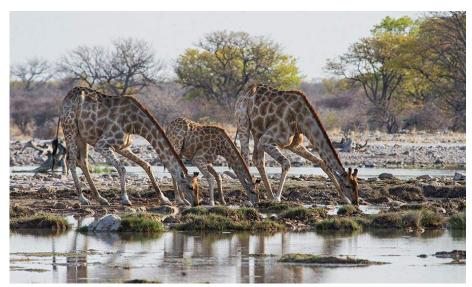
exploring the Namib coastline, a bizarre mix of sand dunes, gravel plains, and productive wetlands. The Walvis Bay was teeming with flamingoes and other waterbirds, including a good selection of recently-arrived migrant shorebirds. Cape Fur Seals bodysurfed in the huge waves, while Cape Gannets flew by close to the shore and Kelp and Hartlaub's Gulls milled about. Thousands of Cape Cormorants nested on a guano platform, and scanning through them also turned up Great (White-breasted), Crowned, and Bank Cormorants. On both of our nights in Swakopmund, we enjoyed excellent seafood dinners in this charming seaside town. As usual, the locally caught Kingklip fish was fabulous!



A nesting colony of Cape Cormorants between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Leaving the coast, we struck back inland, to search out the remaining Namibian escarpment endemics. Our first stop was the iconic mountain of Spitzkoppe, where we spotted a few new mammals: Short-eared Elephant-Shrew, Black Mongoose, and Klipspringer. Here we also saw our first Ludwig's Bustard, a rather nomadic species that seemed to be just returning to the area. The Erongo Mountains are the richest area for Namibia near-endemics, so our time there was highly productive. Along dry riverbeds, we located Violet Woodhoopoe, Rueppell's Parrot, and Damara Red-billed Hornbill.





Etosha supports large numbers of big mammals, which are concentrated around waterholes late in the dry season.

Having virtually cleaned up on the Namibian near-endemics, our next destination was Etosha National Park, one of Africa's great parks. Here we soaked in the spectacle of vast numbers of big mammals crowded around the waterholes that provide the only source of water at this time of the year, late in the drv season. We also enjoyed a fantastic Leopard

sighting within minutes of first entering the park. Much later, came our first sight of a big male Lion, lounging next to a water hole. Another excellent predator sighting was a Honey Badger that Judy spotted roving about the plains on our first morning in the park. Despite being dry and dusty, there

are plenty of birds in Etosha as well. Kori and Ludwig's Bustards, Secretarybird, Double-banded Courser, Northern Black Korhaan, and various larks including Pink-billed, and both Chestnut-backed and Gray-backed Sparrowlarks, walked across the dry plains. Huge flocks of birds like Red-headed Finch, and Great and Southern Gray-headed Sparrows, circulated around the waterholes, hunted by various raptors. As we moved east in the park, we passed from the open plains around Okakuejo through vast Mopane woodland, with species like White Helmetshrike and Bare-cheeked



White Helmetshrike in Mopane woodland in Halali Camp.



Babbler, before finally enjoying the dense mixed woodland around Namutoni, where there were species like Damara Dik-dik, Gray Go-away-bird, and Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver.

A long drive took us through vast flatlands, into a part of Namibia that is much more like typical Africa than the vast cattle ranches and anachronistic villages of central Namibia. Here we settled into our lodge on the banks of the Kavango River, a perfect place to begin exploring the Okavango, a much richer ecosystem than those elsewhere in Namibia, albeit with endemism. lower The riverside woodlands were pumping with birds, most of which were new for us,



White-backed Night-Heron: a huge pair of eyes with wings attached!

including beauties like Violet-backed Starling, Crested Francolin, and Gabon (Swamp) Boubou.

Away from the river are vast tracts of broadleaved woodland, which has a completely different character and largely distinct avifauna. Our sightings here included Tinkling Cisticola, Miombo Wren-Warbler, Green-capped Eremomela, and Ovambo Sparrowhawk. On an afternoon



Southern Carmine Bee-eater at a breeding colony.

boat trip, we explored the reedbeds and sand bars of the river itself. finding African Skimmer, Rock Pratincoles with tiny fuzzball babies, White-backed Night-Heron, and dozens of other species of waterbirds. The main object of this boat trip, and indeed our visit to this part of Namibia, is to visit a Southern Carmine Bee-eater



colony. Although it's not well publicized, these bee-eater colonies along the Kavango and Zambezi Rivers certainly rank among Africa's great natural spectacles. There are hundreds of brilliant carmine-and-turquoise birds, forming a swirl of color and a hypnotic murmur of quiet calls. As the sun sets over the river to the west, the colors of the birds and the rich yellowish sand into which they dig their nests just become richer and more spectacular, until we reluctantly tear ourselves away for the boat ride back to the lodge.

We spent a morning exploring the Mahango Reserve, which lies on the border with Botswana. Unfortunately, this reserve wasn't quite as good as it normally is, due to abnormally low water levels, and a recent die-off of Hippos. Nonetheless our time in Mahango was well worthwhile, with highlights, ranging from a feisty African Barred Owlet, to a lone Sable, one of Africa's rarest and most beautiful antelope. The unusually dry Kavango Plain was not as birdy as normal, but still held Marabou Stork and Long-toed Lapwing, while raptors and vultures circled overhead. There are always startling numbers of new mammals in Mahango as well, such as Red Lechwe, Southern Reedbuck, and Tsessebee. After a picnic lunch in a shady glade, we crossed into Botswana for the second half of our exploration of the Okavango system.



An African Barred Owlet at Mahango Game Reserve.

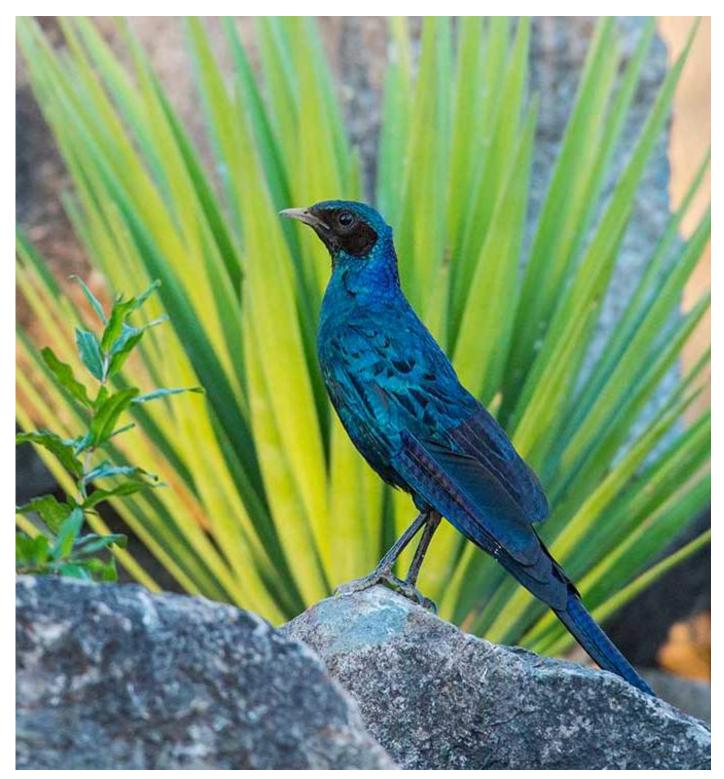
By way of boat trips and easy walks, we sought out new species in the Okavango "Panhandle" of northern Botswana. Chief among these was one of Africa's top birds, the Pel's Fishing-Owl, which we located on our first morning. Nearby floodplains and sandbars held species like Comb Duck, Water Thickknee, and African Skimmer. Perhaps as a result of the unusually dry conditions, hundreds of Burchell's Sandgrouse were

descending to drink from the river, where they were mobbed by nesting skimmers – a bizarre and unforgettable sight.

Our journey back to Windhoek from the "Panhandle" was long, but was broken up by a few new bird sightings, namely an immature Black-chested Snake-Eagle and a couple of White-



throated Swallows. On our final night we enjoyed a tasty dinner and looked back on the myriad great sightings we had enjoyed in our 16 days in southwestern Africa.



Burchell's Starling is intricately marked and mesmerizingly iridescent when seen well.



ITINERARY



Rock Pratincole on one of our boat rides on the Kavango River.



PHOTO GALLERY

Follows tour's chronology



On a walk on the Namibgrens Farm, we saw White-tailed Shrike (left) and Pearl-breasted Swallow (right).



In the vastnesses of the Namib Desert, we saw many Rueppell's Bustards.



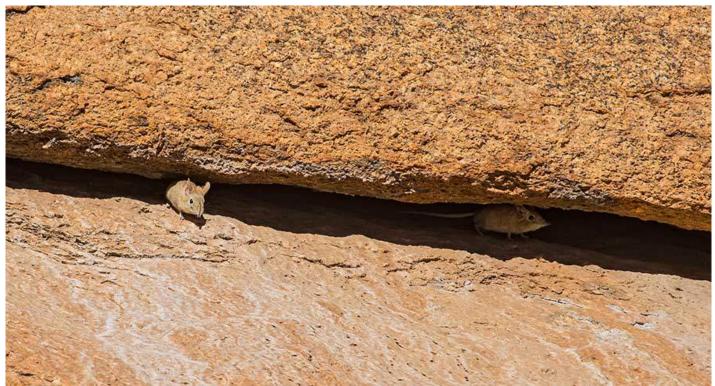


One morning, we drove 60 kilometers through the Namib Desert, and saw only a single vertebrate, which thankfully was our target bird, the Gray's Lark.



The Tractrac Chats of the Namib Desert are extremely pale.





Western Rock Sengis at Spitzkoppe.



At a lodge near Omaruru, we enjoyed seeing dozens of Damara Red-billed Hornbills, a memorable spectacle, especially considering the scarcity of this species. I suspect that it is nowhere more common.





Southern Gray-headed Sparrow (left) and Pearl-spotted Owlet (right): prey and predator!



Ring-necked or Cape Turtle Dove is one of Namibia's most common birds. Its endless calls, variously translated as "drink water," "drink lager," and "work harder," can be heard almost everywhere.





Several times, we encountered huge flocks of Red-billed Quelea, one of Earth's most common birds.



In Etosha, we had a flock of the scarce Caspian Plover, just arrived from their wintering grounds on the steppes of Asia.





A couple of very different Etosha characters: Black-throated Canary (left) and Greater Kudu (right).



The Namaqua Dove is a common but exquisite little dove.



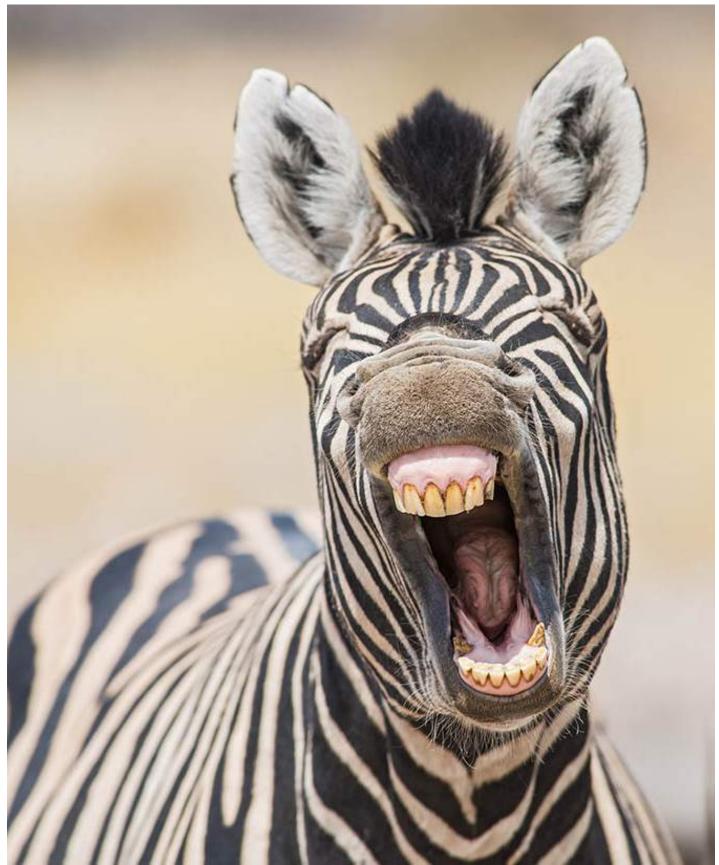


Three amigos: a trio of juvenile Red-necked Falcons.



Prize sightings in Etosha: a lone Bare-cheeked Babbler (left) and a recently arrived European Bee-eater (right).





A Burchell's Common Zebra giving a horsey yawn.





A Greater Kestrel guards its nest containing its young chicks.



Lark-like Buntings (left) can be very common in Etosha. Red-billed Francolin (right) is also a fairly common species.





A Kori Bustard in display mode on the plains around Namutoni.



Lions had killed this Zebra during the night, and Spotted Hyaena, Black-backed Jackal, and White-backed Vultures were feasting on the scraps the next morning.





Burchell's Common Zebra.





Red-breasted Swallow, a hefty grassland-dwelling swallow.



Giraffe reflections.





Splashes of color in the dry brush: Violet-eared Waxbill (left) and Rufous-crowned Roller (right).



A towering flock of Ostrich.





Springbok is perhaps the most common of Etosha's antelope.



Giraffe family having a drink.





Violet Woodhoopoe is a Namibian near-endemic.



Southern Oryx or Gemsbok, a beauty by any standard.





Collared Pratincole is quite an elegant creature.



Two flavors of cormorant along the Kavango: Long-tailed (left) and Great or White-breasted (right).





From the river, we approached to within a few feet of this Plain-backed Pipit.



Spur-winged Goose, quite a hefty bird.



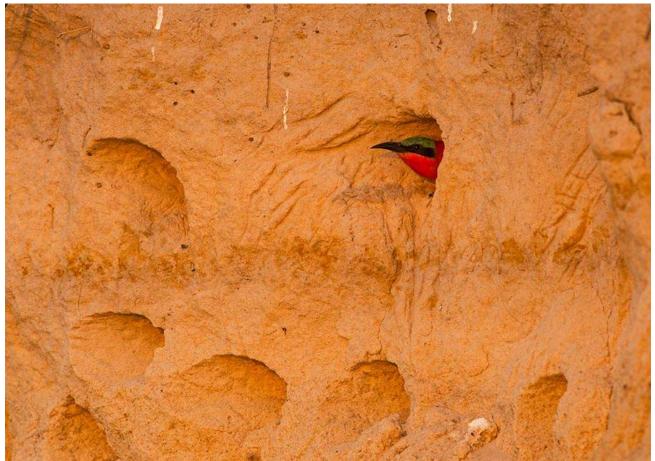


Giant Kingfisher certainly lives up to its name.



This Rock Pratincole was sheltering two recently hatched and incredibly cryptic chicks.





The deep burrows of Southern Carmine Bee-eaters.



Mosque Swallows often nest in baobab trees.





As always, Mahango Reserve was great for mammals like Roan antelope.



Greater Swamp Warbler (left) in the papyrus and Retz's Helmetshrikes (right) in the forest of the Okavango.





Violet-backed Starling has to count among Africa's best-looking birds.



We had a wonderful Narina Trogon sighting on our last morning in Botswana.





It was a special treat to see an African Elephant cavorting in the Kavango River.



Hundreds of Burchell's Sandgrouse drinking from the Kavango was quite a spectacle.





The rare and elusive Souza's Shrike was a fine ending to our time in northern Namibia and Botswana.



BIRD LIST

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow *The Clements Checklist of the Birds of the World*, including updates through 2017.

Common Ostrich	Struthio camelus
Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)	
White-faced (Whistling-) Duck	Dendrocygna viduata
Comb (Knob-billed) Duck ()	Sarkidiornis melanotos
Egyptian Goose	Alopochen aegyptiaca
South African Shelduck	Tadorna cana
Spur-winged Goose	Plectropterus gambensis
Yellow-billed Duck	Anas undulata
Cape Shoveler	Anas smithii
Red-billed Duck (Teal)	Anas erythrorhyncha
Cape Teal Maccoa Duck	Anas capensis Oxyura maccoa
	Oxyula maccoa
Numididae (Guineafowl)	
Helmeted Guineafowl	Numida meleagris
Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)	
Crested Francolin	Francolinus sephaena
Orange River Francolin	Francolinus levaillantoides
Red-billed Francolin (Spurfowl)	Francolinus adspersus
Swainson's Francolin	Francolinus swainsonii
Podicipedidae (Grebes)	
Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis
Eared (Black-necked) Grebe	Podiceps nigricollis
	Policeps nighcoms
Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)	
Greater Flamingo	Phoenicopterus roseus
Lesser Flamingo	Phoenicopterus minor
Ciconiidae (Storks)	
African Openbill (©)	Anastomus lamelligerus
Marabou Stork	Leptoptilos crumeniferus
Yellow-billed Stork ()	Mycteria ibis
Sulidae (Boobies and Gannets)	
Cape Gannet	Morus capensis
Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)	
Great (White-breasted) Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo (lucidus)
Cape Cormorant	Phalacrocorax capensis
Bank Cormorant	Phalacrocorax neglectus
Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant	Phalacrocorax africanus
Crowned Cormorant	Phalacrocorax coronatus



African Darter	Anhinga rufa	
Pelecanidae (Pelicans)		
Great White Pelican	Pelecanus onocrotalus	
Scopidae (Hamerkop)		
Hamerkop	Scopus umbretta	
Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)		
Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea	
Black-headed Heron	Ardea melanocephala	
Goliath Heron	Ardea goliath	
Purple Heron	Ardea purpurea	
Great (White) Egret	Ardea alba	
Intermediate (Yellow-billed) Egret	Mesophoyx intermedia	
Little Egret	Egretta garzetta	
Cattle Egret	Bubulcus ibis	
Squacco Heron	Ardeola ralloides	
Rufous-bellied Heron	Ardeola rufiventris	
Striated (Green-backed) Heron	Butorides striata	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Nycticorax nycticorax	
White-backed Night-Heron	Gorsachius leuconotus	
Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)		
Glossy Ibis	Plegadis falcinellus	
(African) Sacred Ibis	Threskiornis aethiopicus	
Hadeda Ibis	Bostrychia hagedash	
Sagittariidae (Secretary-bird)		
Secretarybird	Sagittarius serpentarius	
Pandionidae (Osprey)	Cagnanas scipentanas	
Osprey	Pandion haliaetus	
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)		
Black-shouldered Kite	Elanus caeruleus	
Black (Yellow-billed) Kite (+)	Milvus migrans (aegyptius)	
African Fish-Eagle	Haliaeetus vocifer	
Hooded Vulture	Necrosyrtes monachus	
White-backed Vulture	Gyps africanus	
Lappet-faced Vulture	Torgos tracheliotos	
Black-breasted (-chested) Snake-Eagle	Circaetus pectoralis	
Brown Snake-Eagle	Circaetus cinereus	
Bat Hawk	Macheiramphus alcinus	
Bateleur	Terathopius ecaudatus	
African Marsh-Harrier	Circus ranivorus	
African Harrier Hawk (Gymnogene)	Polyboroides typus	
Dark Chanting-Goshawk	Melierax metabates	
Southern Pale Chanting-Goshawk	Melierax canorus	
Gabar Goshawk	Melierax gabar	
Shikra	Accipiter badius	
Little Sparrowhawk	Accipiter minullus	



Ovambo Sparrowhawk	Accipiter ovampensis
Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo
Augur Buzzard	Buteo augur
Tawny Eagle	Aquila rapax
African Hawk-Eagle	Aquila spilogaster
Wahlberg's Eagle 🗯	Aquila wahlbergi
Booted Eagle + o	Hieraaetus pennatus
Martial Eagle	Polemaetus bellicosus
Otididae (Bustards)	
Kori Bustard	Ardeotis kori
	Neotis ludwigii
Ludwig's Bustard	Eupodotis rueppellii
Rueppell's Bustard (Korhaan)	Eupodotis rueppenn Eupodotis ruficrista
Red-crested Bustard (Korhaan)	
White-quilled Bustard (Northern Black Korhaan)	Eupodotis afraoides
Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)	
African Rail	Rallus caerulescens
Black Crake	Amaurornis flavirostra
African (Purple) Swamphen	Porphyrio madgascariensis
Eurasian (Common) Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus
Red-knobbed Coot	Fulica cristata
Burhinidae (Thick-knees)	
Spotted Thick-knee	Burhinus capensis
Water Thick-knee	Burhinus vermiculatus
Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)	
Black-winged Stilt	Himantopus himantopus
Pied Avocet	Recurvirostra avosetta
Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)	
Long-toed Lapwing	Vanellus crassirostris
Blacksmith Lapwing	Vanellus armatus
Crowned Lapwing	Vanellus coronatus
(African) Wattled Lapwing	Vanellus senegallus
Black-bellied (Grey) Plover +	Pluvialis squatarola
Caspian Plover	Charadrius asiaticus
Kittlitz's Plover	Charadrius pecuarius
Common Ringed Plover +	Charadrius hiaticula
Three-banded Plover	Charadrius tricollaris
White-fronted Plover	Charadrius marginatus
Chestnut-banded Plover	Charadrius pallidus
Rostratulidae (Painted-Snipes)	
Greater Painted-Snipe	Rostratula benghalensis
Jacanidae (Jacanas)	
African Jacana	Actophilornis africana
Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)	
Common Sandpiper +	Tringa hypoleucos



Marsh Sandpiper +	Tringa stagnatilis
Wood Sandpiper +	Tringa glareola
Whimbrel +	Numenius phaeopus
Ruddy Turnstone +	Arenaria interpres
Sanderling +	Calidris alba
Little Stint +	Calidris minuta
Curlew Sandpiper +	Calidris ferruginea
Ruff +	Philomachus pugnax
African Snipe	Gallinago nigripennis
Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)	
Burchell's Courser	Cursorius rufus
Temminck's Courser	Cursorius temminckii
Double-banded Courser	Rhinoptilus africanus
Collared Pratincole +	Glareola pratincola
Rock Pratincole o	Glareola nuchalis
Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)	
	Chroiopponholus airropponholus
Grey-hooded (-headed) Gull Hartlaub's Gull	Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus
	Chroicocephalus hartlaubii Larus dominicanus
Kelp Gull Damara Tern (✿)	Sterna balaenarum
Caspian Tern	
White-winged Tern +	Hydroprogne caspia Chlidonias leucopterus
Common Tern +	Sterna hirundo
Great Crested (Swift) Tern	Thalasseus bergii
Sandwich Tern +	Thalasseus sandvicensis
African Skimmer ()	Rynchops flavirostris
Pteroclidae (Sandgrouse)	
Namaqua Sandgrouse	Pterocles namaqua
Double-banded Sandgrouse	Pterocles bicinctus
Burchell's Sandgrouse	Pterocles burchelli
Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)	
Rock Pigeon	Columba livia
Speckled Pigeon	Columba guinea
Mourning Collared- (African Mourning) Dove	Streptopelia decipiens
Red-eyed Dove	Streptopelia semitorquata
Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove	Streptopelia capicola
Laughing Dove	Streptopelia senegalensis
Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove	Turtur chalcospilos
Namaqua Dove	Oena capensis
African Green-Pigeon	Treron calva
Musophagidae (Turacos)	
Grey Go-away Bird	Corythaixoides concolor
Cuculidae (Cuckoos)	
Black Cuckoo	Cuculus clamosus
African Cuckoo o	Cuculus gularis
Coppery-tailed Coucal	Centropus cupreicaudus
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Senegal Coucal	Centropus senegalensis	G
Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)		
Barn Owl	Tyto alba	Н
Strigidae (Owls)		
	Otuc come nationale	
African Scops-Owl	Otus senegalensis	_
Pel's Fishing-Owl	Scotopelia peli	_
Pearl-spotted Owlet	Glaucidium perlatum	_
African Barred Owlet	Glaucidium capense	_
African Wood-Owl	Strix woodfordi	
Marsh Owl	Asio capensis	
Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)		
Rufous-cheeked Nightjar 💿	Caprimulgus rufigena	
Fiery-necked Nightjar (o)	Caprimulgus pectoralis	
Square-tailed Nightjar	Caprimulgus fossii	
Apodidae (Swifts)		
Alpine Swift	Apus melba	
Common Swift	Apus apus	
Bradfield's Swift	Apus bradfieldi	
Little Swift	Apus affinis	
White-rumped Swift (:)	Apus caffer	
African Palm-Swift	Cypsiurus parvus	
	Oypsialas parvas	
Coliidae (Mousebirds)		
White-backed Mousebird	Colius colius	
Red-faced Mousebird	Urocolius indicus	
Trogonidae (Trogons)		
Narina Trogon	Apaloderma narina	
Upupidae (Hoopoes)		
Eurasian (African) Hoopoe	Upupa epops (africana)	
Phoeniculidae (Woodhoopoes and Scimitar-bills)		
Green Woodhoopoe	Phoeniculus purpureus	
Violet Woodhoopoe	Phoeniculus damarensis	
Common Scimitar-bill	Rhinopomastus cyanomelas	
	Rimopomastus cyanomeias	
Bucerotidae (Hornbills)		
Monteiro's Hornbill	Tockus monteiri	
Southern Red-billed Hornbill	Tockus rufirostris	_
Damara Red-billed Hornbill	Tockus damarensis	_
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	Tockus leucomelas	_
Bradfield's Hornbill	Tockus bradfieldi	_
African Gray Hornbill	Tockus nasutus	
Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)		
Malachite Kingfisher	Corythornis cristata	
Grey-headed Kingfisher o	Halcyon leucocephala	
Brown-hooded Kingfisher	Halcyon albiventris	
Giant Kingfisher	Megaceryle maxima	



Pied Kingfisher	Ceryle rudis	
Meropidae (Bee-eaters)		
White-fronted Bee-eater	Merops bullockoides	
Little Bee-eater	Merops pusillus	
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	Merops hirundinaceus	
European Bee-eater	Merops apiaster	
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	Merops aplaster Merops nubicoides	
	Merops hubicoides	
Coraciidae (Rollers)		
Lilac-breasted Roller	Coracias caudatus	
Rufous-crowned (Purple) Roller	Coracias naevius	
Broad-billed Roller	Eurystomus glaucurus	G
Lybiidae (African Barbets)		
Crested Barbet	Trachyphonus vaillantii	
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird	Pogoniulus chrysoconus	
(Acacia) Pied Barbet	Tricholaema leucomelas	
Black-collared Barbet	Lybius torquatus	
Picidae (Woodpeckers)		
Bennett's Woodpecker	Campethera bennettii	
Golden-tailed Woodpecker	Campethera abingoni	
Cardinal Woodpecker	Dendropicos fuscescens	Н
Bearded Woodpecker	Dendropicos namaquus	
Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)	q	
African Pygmy Falcon	Polihierax semitorquatus	
Eurasian (Rock) Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus (rupicolus)	
Greater Kestrel Red-necked Falcon	Falco rupicoloides	
Lanner Falcon	Falco chicquera Falco biarmicus	
	Faico Diannicus	
Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)		
Rosy-faced Lovebird	Agapornis roseicollis	
Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)		
Meyer's Parrot	Poicephalus meyeri	
Ruppell's Parrot	Poicephalus rueppellii	
Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises)		
White-tailed Shrike	Lanioturdus torquatus	
Chinspot Batis	Batis molitor	
Pririt Batis	Batis pririt	
Vangidae (Vangas and Helmetshrikes)		
White (-crested) Helmetshrike	Prionops plumatus	
Retz's Helmetshrike	Prionops retzii	
Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)		
Brubru	Nilaus afer	
Black-backed Puffback	Dryoscopus cubla	
Brown-crowned Tchagra	Tchagra australis	
Gabon (Swamp) Boubou	Laniarius bicolor	



Crimson-breasted Gonolek (Shrike)	Laniarius atrococcineus
Bokmakierie	Telophorus zeylonus
Sulphur- (Orange-)breasted Bushshrike	Telophorus sulfureopectus
Laniidae (Shrikes)	
Southern (Common) Fiscal	Lanius collaris
Souza's Shrike	Lanius souzae
Magpie Shrike	Corvinella melanoleuca
(Southern) White-crowned Shrike	Eurocephalus anguitimens
Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)	
African Black-headed Oriole	Oriolus larvatus
Dicruridae (Drongos)	
Fork-tailed Drongo	Dicrurus adsimilis
Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)	
African Paradise-Flycatcher 💿	Terpsiphone viridis
Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)	
Cape Crow	Corvus capensis
Pied Crow	Corvus albus
Alaudidae (Larks)	
Spike-heeled Lark	Chersomanes albofasciata
Gray's Lark	Ammomanopsis grayi
Karoo Long-billed Lark	Certhilauda subcoronata
Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark	Eremopterix leucotis
Grey-backed Sparrowlark	Eremopterix verticalis
Sabota Lark	Calendulauda sabota
Fawn-colored Lark	Calendulauda africanoides
Dune Lark	Calendulauda erythrochlamys
Red-capped Lark	Calandrella cinerea
Stark's Lark	Spizocorys starki
Pink-billed Lark	Spizocorys conirostris
Hirundinidae (Swallows)	
Plain (Brown-throated) Martin	Riparia paludicola
Banded Martin (o)	Riparia cincta
Rock Martin	Hirundo fuligula
Barn Swallow +	Hirundo rustica
White-throated Swallow o	Hirundo albigularis
Wire-tailed Swallow	Hirundo smithii
Pearl-breasted Swallow (•)	Hirundo dimidiata
Greater Striped-Swallow	Cecropsis cucullata
Lesser Striped-Swallow	Cecropsis abyssinica
Rufous-chested (-breasted) Swallow o	Cecropsis semirufa
Mosque Swallow	Cecropsis senegalensis
South African (Cliff) Swallow o	Petrochelidon spilodera
Grey-rumped Swallow	Pseudihirundo griseopyga
Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)	
Southern Black Tit	Melaninarus niger
	Melaniparus niger



Carp's Black Tit	Melaniparus carpi	G
Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)		
Yellow-bellied Greenbul	Chlorocichla flaviventris	
Terrestrial Brownbul	Phyllastrephus terrestris	
Black-fronted (African Red-eyed) Bulbul	Pycnonotus nigricans	
Common (Dark-capped) Bulbul	Pycnonotus barbatus (tricolor)	
Macrosphenidae (African Warblers)		
Cape (Long-billed) Crombec	Sylvietta rufescens	
Rockrunner	Achaetops pycnopygius	
Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)		L.
Willow Warbler	Phylloscopus trochilus	
Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)		
Greater Swamp-Warbler	Acrocephalus rufescens	
Lesser Swamp-Warbler	Acrocephalus gracilirostris	
Little Rush Warbler	Bradypterus baboecala	
Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)	Dradyptorae Sabeebala	
	Applie flouide	
Yellow-breasted Apalis (Gray-) Green-backed Camaroptera	Apalis flavida Camaroptera brachyura	
Miombo Wren-Warbler	Calamonastes undosus	
	Calamonastes undosus Cisticola chiniana	
Rattling Cisticola Gray (Tinkling) Cisticola	Cisticola cimilaria Cisticola rufilatus	
Winding (Luapula) Cisticola	Cisticola rumatus Cisticola galactotes (luapula)	
Chirping Cisticola	Cisticola galactoles (luapula)	
Desert Cisticola	Cisticola aridulus	
Tawny-flanked Prinia	Prinia subflava	
Black-chested Prinia	Prinia flavicans	
Yellow-bellied Eremomela	Eremomela icteropygialis	
Greencap Eremomela	Eremomela scotops	
Burnt-neck Eremomela	Eremomela usticollis	
Sylviidae (Old World Warblers)		
Layard's Warbler (Tit-Babbler)	Sylvia layardi	
Rufous-vented Warbler (Chestnut-vented Tit-Bab.)	Sylvia subcaeruleum	
Zosteropidae (Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies)		
African Yellow White-eye	Zosterops senegalensis	
Orange River White-eye	Zosterops pallidus	
Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes)		
Hartlaub's Babbler	Turdoides hartlaubii	
Southern Pied Babbler	Turdoides hanadbii	
Arrow-marked Babbler	Turdoides jardineii	
Bare-cheeked Babbler	Turdoides gymnogenys	
Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)		
	Bradornis mariquancia	
Mariqua (Marico) Flycatcher Pale Flycatcher	Bradornis mariquensis Agricola pallidus	
Chat Flycatcher	Agricola palildus	
Chat Pycalcher	Ayricola Illiuscalus	



Gray Tit-Flycatcher	Fraseria plumbeus	Н
Ashy Flycatcher	Fraseria caerulescens	
Herero Chat	Namibornis herero	
Southern Black Flycatcher	Melaenornis pammelaina	
Karoo Scrub-Robin	Cercotrichas coryphaeus	
Kalahari Scrub-Robin	Cercotrichas paena	
Red-backed (White-browed) Scrub-Robin	Cercotrichas leucophrys	
White-browed Robin-Chat	Cossypha heuglini	
Short-toed Rock-Thrush	Monticola brevipes	
(African) Stonechat	Saxicola torquatus	
Southern Anteater-Chat	Myrmecocichla formicivora	
Karoo Chat	Cercomela schlegelii	
Tractrac Chat	Cercomela tractrac	
Familiar Chat	Cercomela familiaris	
Mountain Wheatear	Oenanthe monticola	
Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)		
Groundscraper Thrush	Psophocichla litsipsirupa	
Kurrichane Thrush	Turdus libonyanus	
Sturnidae (Starlings)		
Wattled Starling	Creatophora cinerea	
Violet-backed Starling (Amethyst; Plum-coloured) o	Cinnyricinclus leucogaster	
Pale-winged Starling	Onychognathus nabouroup	
Burchell's Starling	Lamprotornis australis	
Meve's Starling	Lamprotornis mevesii	
Greater Blue-eared Starling	Lamprotornis chalybaeus	
Cape Glossy Starling	Lamprotornis nitens	
Buphagidae (Oxpeckers)		
Red-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus erythrorhynchus	
Yellow-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus africanus	
Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)		
Collared Sunbird	Hedidypna collaris	
Amethyst Sunbird	Chalcomitra amethystina	
Scarlet-chested Sunbird	Chalcomitra senegalensis	
Mariqua (Marico) Sunbird	Cinnyris mariquensis	
Purple-banded Sunbird	Cinnyris bifasciatus	
White-breasted (-bellied) Sunbird	Cinniris talatala	
Dusky Sunbird	Cinnyris fusca	
Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)		
Cape Wagtail	Motacilla capensis	
African Pied Wagtail	Motacilla aguimp	
African (Grassveld) Pipit	Anthus cinnamomeus	
Long-billed Pipit	Anthus similis	
Plain-backed Pipit	Anthus leucophrys	
Emberizidae (Buntings, Sparrows and Allies)		
Lark-like Bunting	Emberiza impetuani	
Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	Emberiza tahapisi	



Cape Bunting	Emberiza capensis	
Golden-breasted Bunting	Emberiza flaviventris	
Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)		1
Yellow-fronted Canary	Serinus mozambicus	
Black-throated Canary	Serinus atrogularis	
Yellow Canary	Serinus davogularis	
White-throated Canary	Serinus albogularis	
Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)		
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus	
Great Rufous Sparrow	Passer motitensis	
Cape Sparrow	Passer melanurus	
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	Passer diffusus	
Yellow-throated Petronia	Petronia superciliaris	
Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)		
	Dub damaia ninan	
Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver	Bubalornis niger	
Scaly Weaver (Scaly-feathered Finch)	Sporopipes squamifrons	
White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	Plocepasser mahali	
Social (Sociable) Weaver	Philetairus socius	
Red-headed Weaver	Anaplectes rubriceps	
Spectacled Weaver	Ploceus ocularis	
Holub's Golden Weaver	Ploceus xanthops	
Southern Brown-throated Weaver	Ploceus xanthopterus	
Lesser Masked Weaver	Ploceus intermedius	
Southern Masked-Weaver	Ploceus velatus	
Village Weaver	Ploceus cucullatus	
Chestnut Weaver	Ploceus rubiginosus	
Red-billed Quelea	Quelea quelea	
(Southern) Red Bishop	Euplectes orix	
Yellow-crowned Bishop	Euplectes afer	
Fan-tailed Widowbird	Euplectes axillaris	
Grosbeak (Thick-billed) Weaver	Amblyospiza albifrons	
Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)		1
Common Waxbill	Estrilda astrild	
Black-cheeked (-faced) Waxbill	Estrilda erythronotos	
Blue-breasted Cordonbleu (Blue Waxbill)	Uraeginthus angolensis	
Violet-eared Waxbill	Uraeginthus granatina	
Green-winged Pytilia	Pytilia melba	
Brown Firefinch	Lagonosticta nitidula	
Jameson's Firefinch	Lagonosticta rhodopareia	
Red-headed Finch	Amadina erythrocephala	
African Quailfinch	Ortygospiza atricollis	
Viduidae (Whydahs)		
Pin-tailed Whydah	Vidua macroura	
Eastern (Long-tailed) Paradise-Whydah	Vidua paradisaea	
Shaft-tailed Whydah	Vidua regia	



Southern Africa and Namibia / Angola shared endemics in **bold** Near-endemics in *italics* + = boreal migrant

- \circ = intra-African migrant
- () = partial migrant



Kalahari Scrub-Robin, a lanky member of the Old World flycatcher family.



MAMMAL LIST

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow *The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals* (2003) by Jonathan Kingdon.

Leaf-nosed Bat	Hipposideros sp.	
Four-striped Grass Mouse (Striped Mouse)	Rhabdomys pumilio	
Dassie Rat	Petromus typicus	
Cape Fur Seal	Actophilornis pusillus	
Heaviside Dolphin	Cephalorhynchus heavisidii	
Chacma Baboon	Papio ursinus	
Vervet Monkey	Cercopithecus aethiops	
South African Ground Squirrel	Geosciurus inauris	
Smith's Bush Squirrel (Tree Squirrel)	Paraxerus cepapi	
African Savanna Hare	Lepus microtis	
Black-backed Jackal	Canis mesomelas	
Spotted Hyaena	Crocuta crocuta	
Lion	Panthera leo	
Leopard	Panthera pardus	
Cape Rock Hyrax	Procavia capensis	
Western Rock Sengi	Elephantulus rupestris	
(African) Elephant	Loxodonta africana	
Giraffe	Camelopardus giraffa giraffa	
Burchell's Common Zebra	Equus quagga burchelli	
Hartmann's Mountain Zebra	Equus hartmannae	
Hippopotamus	Hippopotamus amphibious	
Grass (White) Rhino	Ceratotherium simus	
Browse (Black) Rhino	Diceros bicornis	
Warthog	Phacochoerus africanus	
Bushbuck	Tragelaphus scriptus	
Greater Kudu	Tragelaphus strepsiceros	
Gemsbok (Southern Oryx)	Oryx gazella	
Springbok	Antidorcas marsupialis	
Roan (Antelope)	Hippotragus equines	
Sable (Antelope)	Hippotragus hippotragus	
(Red) Lechwe	Kobus lechwe lechwe	
Steinbuck	Raphicerus campestris	
Klipspringer	Oreotragus oreotragus	
Tsessebe	Damaliscus lunatus	
Damara Dikdik	Madoqua kirkii damarensis	
Southern Reedbuck	Redunca arundinum	
Common Waterbuck	Kobus ellipsiprymnus	
Black-faced Impala	Aepyceros melampus petersi	
Impala	Aepyceros melampus melampus	
Kongoni / Red Hartebeest (Khama)	Alcelaphus buselaphus caama	
Blue Wildebeest (Brindled Gnu)	Connochaetes taurinus	
Slender Mongoose	Herpestes sanguinea	
Black Mongoose	Herpestes (sanguinea) nigrata	NL



Banded Mongoose	Mungos mungo
Yellow Mongoose	Cynictis penicillata
Dwarf Mongoose	Helogale parvula
Suricate (Meerkat)	Suricata suricatta
Ratel (Honey Badger)	Mellivora cepensis

NL = Not seen by guide



Damara Dik-dik is a rather goofy looking miniature antelope.



REPTILE & AMPHIBIAN LIST

Taxonomy and nomenclature based on *Field Guide to Snakes and Other Reptiles of Southern Africa* (1998) by Bill Branch, with some updates.

Ovambo Tree Skink	Trachylepis binotata	
Striped Skink	Trachylepis striata	
Variegated Skink	Trachylepis variegata	
Bushveld Lizard	Heliobolus lugubris	
Wedge-snouted Desert Lizard	Meroles cuneirostris	
Namaqua Sand Lizard	Pedioplanis namaquensis	
Water Monitor	Varanus niloticus	
Ground Agama	Agama aculeata	
Etosha Agama	Agama etoshae	
Namibian Rock Agama	Agama planiceps	
Cape Dwarf Gecko	Lygodactylus capensis	
Turner's Thick-toed Gecko	Pachydactylus turneri	
Nile Crocodile	Crocodylus niloticus	
Western Olive Toad	Amietophrynus poweri	Н



Namibia has stunning scenery, especially along the Namib Escarpment.

