



Rockjumper Birding Tours

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Namibia, Botswana & Zambia

13th – 30th October 2007



Tour leaders: Richard White & Markus Lilje

Trip report compiled by Tour Leader Markus Lilje

Trip Summary

All but two of the tour participants were already in Windhoek on the morning of the 13th, so we decided to start our Namibia adventure with a trip to the Avis dam for an introduction to some special Namibian birds. We were rewarded with great views of Rockrunner after following its call and finding it perched on a rock and warbling away, the overcast weather meant that a pair of Pearlspotted Owlets were quite active and attracted a number of mobbing species, providing good views. We had fantastic views of Crimson-breasted Shrike, Scarlet-chested and Marico Sunbird, Short-toed Rockthrush, South African Shelduck, Whitebacked Mousebird, Greater Scimitarbill and African Fish and Brown Snake Eagles. We were then joined by the remaining two participants, had a good lunch in Windhoek with Bradfield's Swift flying overhead and were soon on the way to the Gammams Water Works, on the capital's outskirts. Some great birds that were seen here were Pearl-breasted Swallow, Acacia Pied Barbet, Little Bittern, Black-crowned Night Heron, hundreds of Wattled Starling and a variety of waders and waterbirds. We celebrated a good start to the tour with dinner at Joe's Beerhouse where a variety of exotic dishes like Gemsbok and Crocodile were

enjoyed.

We headed out early the next morning to Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve, west of Windhoek, where we were greeted by a good variety of mammals including the localized Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, Giraffe, Red Hartebeest and Blue Wildebeest. Walking through the very dry reserve gave us chances to see Red-billed Spurfowl, Brubru, Pirit Batis, Southern Pochard, African Hawk-eagle and the first colourful Lilac-breasted Roller and Namibian Rock Agama. Driving south-west over the Khomas Hochland we could enjoy great scenery and our first good views of Pale Chanting Goshawk, Karoo Chat, Chat Flycatcher, great Sociable Weavers and their phenomenally huge nests, a troop of Baboons as well as a very cooperative Yellow Mongoose – a great mammal number 400 for Kurt. Charles, our driver, also conjured up a great filling lunch under a Camel Thorn en route. At the Namibgrens Guesthouse enjoyed a rest and afternoon walk where we found Karoo Scrub Robin, Dusky Sunbird, Mountain Wheatear and our first Rosy-faced Lovebirds.

An early morning walk around the rocky slopes produced White-tailed Shrike, good views of Gabar Goshawk, Common Kestrel, White-throated Canary and flocks of Rosy-faced Lovebird as well as a



rock-loving Dassie Rat. After breakfast we started heading east and could enjoy great views of the surrounding semi-desert as we dived over the edge of the Khomas Hochland and down the very steep Spreetshoogte Pass. Along the long and arid road we had views of Kudu, Klipspringer, Eland and Springbok while the birding also proved productive, producing great Rüppell's Korhaan, Common Ostrich, Namaqua Sandgrouse, Tractrac Chat, an

uncooperative Double-banded Courser, many species of Lark including Stark's, Fawn-coloured and Spike-heeled and after much searching the special Gray's Lark on the very desolate, open namib plains. As soon as we neared the coast the weather suddenly cooled dramatically before we could enjoy closing off the day with dinner in the Raft where a variety of fine seafood was enjoyed.

Day four started with a trip to the Rooibank dunes where a pair of the stunning and restricted Dune Lark gave us great views and allowed great extended scoped views. The rest of the morning was spent sifting through the many shorebirds and others on the Walvis Bay Lagoon – proving almost overwhelming for some. We saw thousands of Greater Flamingo creating a pink wash across the lagoon and clouds of Cape Cormorant and Common Tern as well as a great raft of Black-necked Grebe. Waders in the form of Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Pied Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Grey and White-fronted Plovers, Common Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Curlew Sandpiper and Ruff littered the exposed mudflats of the lagoon. Specials seen during the morning included many Chestnut-banded Plover, about 7 Red-necked Phalarope, which Nigel found for us, and one Terek Sandpiper. Large numbers of terns and gulls included Sandwich, Swift, Caspian and the very special Damara Tern and Hartlaub's, Kelp and Grey-headed Gull. Our lunch on the beach was preceded by an unusually productive bit of seewatching and we were treated to a great show in and just behind the Atlantic Ocean breakers: Cape Fur Seals surfing, Heaviside's and Bottlenosed Dolphins and an almost endless stream of Cape Gannets, Cape Cormorants, White-chinned Petrels, Sooty Shearwaters and even the occasional Parasitic Jaeger chasing other birds for food scraps. During the afternoon some opted for a shopping excursion while others continued scanning the many waders.



Our earliest start of the trip got us to the spectacular Spitzkoppe inselbergs just after sunrise, what a

treat to watch the gradually changing colours of this rock massif. The early start was soon very unexpectedly rewarded with a good view of a very unexpected Leopard. After some searching in the dry scrub around the base of the imposing granite for our main target of the day, the very sought-after Herero Chat gave us extended and open views. Other birds here included our first Monteiro's Hornbill, Layard's Titbabbler, Brown-crowned Tchagra and the multi-coloured Green-winged Pytilia. Then it was off again through the everchanging landscape to the Erongo Mountains: exposed volcanic rock peaks that were created over 100 million years ago. En route we stopped to have good looks at Tawny and the majestic Martial Eagles and had lunch in the dry Khan riverbed where we were hoping for Rüppel's Parrot. We were very lucky to find this near-endemic after just a few minutes in the scorching sun and were further rewarded for our sweat with the sometimes-split Damara Red-billed Hornbill as well as Red-billed Woodhoopoe and Burchell's Starling. That evening at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge we were lucky enough to find Small-spotted Genets and Freckled Nightjar on the boulders and a special Marbled Rubber Frog in the pool!

Before daybreak some went on a search for the often difficult Hartlaub's Spurfowl, this is the time when they are most vocal and easiest to find - Bob managed to spot them, high on the rocks, even before they broke into their morning cries, thanks Bob! Other birds here were Carp's Black Tit, Black- and White-throated Canary, White-tailed Shrike, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, and distant



views of soaring Verreaux's Eagle. The lodge then provided many participants with one of the most memorable experiences of the tour - a huge variety of creatures around the water. The resident Dassie rats had to share this supply with many Rosy-faced Lovebird, Great Sparrow, Cape Bunting, Monteiro's and African Grey Hornbill, Green-winged Pytilia, Pale-winged Starling which all had to look out for the hungry localized form of Slender Mongoose which is a very dark, almost black colour in this region (sometimes split as Black Mongoose). We then packed up and moved on towards the world famous Etosha National Park where the next 5 nights were spent. On the way in we already had stunning views of Barn Owl - very well spotted by Ethan - and Red-crested Korhaan as well as the very special Burchell's Courser running

on the open plains. At the waterhole at Okaukuejo we were treated to an array of birds and animals throughout our stay, including many Grey-backed Sparrow-lark, Red-capped and the occasional Pink-billed Lark, African Pipit, Pygmy Falcon, Steppe Buzzard, Kori Bustard, Rufous-cheeked Nightjar, Spotted Thick-knee and Crowned Lapwing. The most impressive mammals visiting the waterhole were 10 Black Rhino and a busy herd of Elephant, drinking and then dusting themselves.

Some were at the always-active waterhole early and were fortunate to see Spotted Hyaena pursued by Blackbacked Jackal, along with the more common visitors. On a short drive before breakfast we saw Burchell's Courser, Tawny Eagle, Northern Black Korhaan, an African Wild Cat and a group of foraging Banded Mongoose amongst others. The Okaukuejo waterhole was unbelievable during the late morning with hundreds of Springbok, Plains Zebra, Gemsbok, Wildebeest as well as the occasional Elephant, Black-backed Jackal and Red Hartebeest in attendance. Hundreds of Namaqua Sandgrouse came to drink and one was snatched out of the air by a Peregrine Falcon. Other birds included many Larklike Bunting, Stark's, Red-capped and Pink-billed Lark, Red-headed Finch, Namaqua Dove and Great Sparrow. In the afternoon we had a very productive excursion, which included two separate Lion sightings, 6 Ludwig's Bustards, Anteater Chat, Fawn-coloured Lark, Pale Chanting Goshawk, great Double-banded Courser, Greater Kestrel, Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and our only Eastern Clapper Lark. In the evening the waterhole had hundreds of drinking Double-banded Sandgrouse as well as 8 more Black Rhino.

A relaxed morning walk around the camp was great for Ashy Tit, Pearl-spotted Owlet which had made itself at home in the Sociable Weaver nest, Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Black-throated Canary and Rufous-vented Titbabbler. Then it was off to the Halali camp further east and into the very different Mopane woodland in that region. On this route we had distant Lion sightings and could enjoy close views of a very relaxed Cape Fox relaxing in his den during the heat of the day. We also had a Cheetah with two almost adult cubs cooling down in the shade of an *Acacia*, while being watched with interest by some Wildebeest nearby. While lunch was being prepared we added two overheating Southern White-faced Owl, Southern White-crowned Shrike and White-crested Helmetshrike to our fast-growing list. On an afternoon drive we were fortunate to see a fantastic herd of 33 Elephant coming for a drink at a nearby waterhole and we could watch them for extended periods of drinking, swimming, splashing and playing before they split up and left the waterhole in a number of groups. Around here we also had great views of drinking African Cuckoo and Bateleur, Ground-scraper Thrush and Black-faced Waxbill. Shortly before dinner we managed to find African Scops Owl, after having found another big target bird, the Violet Woodhoopoe earlier in dwindling light, and were lucky to find Verreux's Eagle Owl drinking at the waterhole later. The Halali waterhole also produced Black Rhino, Elephant, Scrub Hare, African Wild Cat and Commerson's Leaf-nosed Bat while we found two Honey Badger in the camp itself.



We scoured the camp for the localized Bare-cheeked Babbler, a very range-restricted species of northern Namibia and Angola, which we were unfortunately unable to locate, we were however rewarded with good views of some general woodland species as well as great close-up views of the tiny and fantastically camouflaged African Scops Owl. Soon we were off again to our last Camp in Etosha: Namutoni, which is sited around an old German fort that now hosts the restaurant. On arrival we spent a few quality minutes at a little birdbath where we had close views of Blue, Violet-eared and Black-faced Waxbill as well as *Acacia* Pied Barbet, Green-winged Pytilia, Chestnut-vented Titbabbler and Black-throated Canary. Some time was spent relaxing in the midday heat around the pool before we took a drive around Fisher's Pan in the afternoon. Here we had views of Capped Wheatear, graceful Blue Crane, Red-billed Spurfowl, Red-faced Mousebird and Barred Wren Warbler as well as many Gemsbok and Springbok and a large male Lion that came very close and gave us great views before again disappearing into the bush. Some had good views of House Martin and a flock of non-breeding Chestnut Weaver from the fort before we were treated to hundreds of thousands of Red-billed Quelea flying into the reedbeds for the night, surely one of the more remarkable experiences of our tour.



On our last full day around Etosha we headed north where we saw Black Rhino in the scrub and had Secretarybird, Desert Cisticola and Banded Martin on the Andoni Plains. Just outside the park we had some great birding with 45 of the scarce Caspian Plover, many Kittlitz's and a few Chestnut-banded Plover and an Osprey catching a fish on the fourth attempt! Pink-billed Lark and another group of Burchell's Courser were found on the dry plains while Bateleur, Black-chested Snake Eagle and African Spoonbills flew overhead. In the afternoon we could add Golden-breasted Bunting, Meyer's Parrot and another Lion to those already listed and could watch interesting Jackal interactions culminating in a short but intensive fight between rivals. We could once again be enthralled by the Quelea show which was greatly improved by the attendance of an elegant and fast-flying Red-necked Falcon in the diminishing light.

Before our final meal in Etosha we drove a loop south of Namutoni in the hope of finding a few new woodland species. While we didn't manage to find the Black-faced Babbler here we saw Southern Black Tit, Yellow-breasted Apalis and Crested Francolin and had close views of the diminutive Kirk's Dik-dik. Now it was goodbye to the dry and often scenically spectacular areas of western Namibia and into the lush and moister woodland of the Northeast for the rest of the trip. At our lunch break on the way to Rundu we located the resident Black-faced Babbler family after some searching and everyone was able to get a good view of these noisy near-endemics. We enjoyed some great birding just outside Rundu where we saw our first Greater Painted Snipe, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Sacred Ibis, White-faced Duck, Southern Brown-throated Weaver, Little Bee-eater and our only Temminck's Courser and Hottentot Teal of the tour. After a tasty meal on the banks of the Kavango river we found the vocal Mozambique and Fiery-necked Nightjar on a walk in very bright moonlit conditions.

We didn't get very far on the morning 'walk' – everything happened around us as we were able to see Hartlaub's Babbler, African Golden Weaver, Lesser Jacana, Grey-rumped Swallow, Jacobin Cuckoo, Lesser Honeyguide, Kurrichane Thrush, Luapula Cisticola on the Angolan bank of the river and Yellow-bellied Greenbul without walking very far – a clear sign of having arrived in a new region. We then drove into the western edge of the Caprivi strip and on into Botswana after finding Red-headed Weaver and the spectacular Violet-backed Starling. After a lunch break in the lush gardens of Drotsky's Cabins where we unsuccessfully tried to find Pel's Fishing Owl and saw nesting African Paradise Flycatcher and Blackcollared Barbet we were transferred downriver to Xaro Lodge for the next 2 nights. The short boat trip on this famous river proved spectacular, offering specials such as African Skimmer, Little Bittern, Chirping Cisticola, breeding Carmine Bee-eater, Long-toed Lapwing and Black Heron. On a short walk around the camp we saw Broad-billed Roller, White-browed Robin-Chat, the localized and difficult Greater Swamp Warbler and we found a pair of very responsive African Wood Owl after dinner with an almost full moon in the background.

An early morning walk proved very rewarding with the highlight being views of the highly sought-after Pel's Fishing Owl. We also had amazingly close views of a Western Banded Snake Eagle which let us walk a few metres below its perch. Other birds were African Barred Owlet, Black Cuckoo and Brown Firefinch. After breakfast we then headed out on the boat for a few hours to search for other Okavango specials and were lucky to find 2 Slaty Egret, White-backed and Black-crowned Night Heron, African Marsh Harrier, Collared Pratincole, African Wattled Lapwing, Black Crane, Black, Purple, Goliath and Squacco Heron as well as Giant, Pied and Malachite Kingfisher and African Skimmer among other more widespread species. In the afternoon we were off again after enjoying a breeding Yellow-billed Oxpecker and we headed through some great little lily covered channels where we found African Pygmy Goose, Goliath Heron, many African Darter and a large flock of White-faced Duck as well as a monster Nile Crocodile that convinced everyone that thoughts of swimming here were certainly not be entertained. We ended our day on the Okavango with another great sunset over the water as we headed back to our riverbank lodge.



We had another short walk around the camp, finding all 4 possible Woodpeckers, African Green Pigeon and Black Cuckooshrike. We were then transferred back up the river to where our bus was waiting to take us up to the Mahango Game Reserve. Before entering the reserve we crossed over the border back into Namibia and were welcomed by Klaas's Cuckoo and Mosque Swallow. We then drove through Mahango and had good sightings of Sable, Roan, Red Lechwe, Common

Reedbuck and Impala and a large had views. Along and on the floodplain we had our first Arrow-marked Babbler parties, Wattled Crane, distant flying Rufous-bellied Heron and Spurwinged Goose. After a break for lunch at the lodge where we saw Mourning Collared Dove and Greater Blue-eared Starling, we managed to find Rock Pratincole on some exposed rocks before heading back to Mahango. On arrival the first thing we saw was a small flock of the elusive Green-capped Eremomela, which gave us good close views before flying off. We had a great close encounter with two unhappy Elephants that wanted to be granted the right of way, before we enjoyed great views of a Roan herd – one of the scarcer of the antelopes - and better views of Wattled Crane due to less heat haze than during the hotter hours.

After our last night along the Kavango River we headed out early to get into the Caprivi before the heat of the day. This paid off quite quickly as we added Dickinson's Kestrel, Amur Falcon, Bradfield's Hornbill, Lesser Grey Shrike, Arnot's Chat, Wood Pipit, Spotted, Southern Black and Pale Flycatcher and Dark Chanting Goshawk. We were very fortunate to once again have a cloud-covered sky, allowing us the opportunity to bird successfully for much longer than we had expected. After a lunch-break in the eastern Caprivi we were able to find Swainson's Spurfowl, Cut-throat Finch, Long-tailed Paradise Whydah and Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark. The sandtrack to our lodge proved too difficult but our getting stuck was compensated with good views of Fan-tailed Widowbird and Marsh Owl – our ninth and last owl! Somewhat belatedly we could then relax in our lodging on the banks of the mighty Zambezi.

This morning was one of the most memorable of all, we started off with a juvenile Black Coucal, then added Rufous-naped Lark, Black-crowned Tchagra and Senegal Coucal. We were then fortunate enough to watch what is probably the largest Carmine Bee-eater colony in the world – up to 5000 birds fill the air with their calls and astounding colours! For many participants this ranked



as one of the most memorable experiences of the whole tour, as the trees and sloped riverbank turned red with birds as they landed. The action did not stop here however – after good rains in the preceding year there was great flooded grassland habitat – inhabited by flocks of African Openbill, Marabou Stork, numbers of Great, Intermediate and Slaty Egret, Rufous-bellied, Black-headed and Squacco Heron as well as African Pygmy Goose. Around the fringes there was just as much going on and the highlights were spectacular Rosy-throated Longclaw, Black-bellied Bustard and Plain-

backed Pipit. After some time off during the hot lunch hours during which we found good Copper, Marico and Collared Sunbird, we headed out again, braving the soft sand – the rewards were astounding! We started off with a Burchell's Sandgrouse on open sandy grassland after a few minutes as we headed north towards denser riverine woodland along the Zambezi. The next hour or two produced very little, but we added a pair of Buffy Pipit walking around a pan the surrounding *Terminalia* savannah. Near Katima Mulilo we then tried for Schalow's Turaco which we were able to coax across the river after a while and it then allowed us some great and close views of its almost comical face and green body colour, one of our main and most colourful targets in this area. Ashy Flycatcher was the next to show, followed shortly by White-browed Coucal which was very uncooperative and refused to come out of its dense hiding place, where it was very tough to see, even from only 3 meters away. We then sat down with a drink overlooking an arm of the Zambezi to celebrate an astonishing day – this didn't last long as a diminutive African Hobby was very well spotted by Sara. This bird was sitting directly opposite us on a dead tree in riverine woodland, before it gave us great views of its very fast flight as it went after its insect prey, great views of a very difficult bird! We were not given any recovery time after that excitement when 'African Finfoot' was called by Richard and all the excitement was back again, by this time attracting a small

crowd that found us more entertaining than their other bar activities. This shy bird let us get good views as it slowly made it's way up the river and all present could enjoy this sought-after bird. A day to remember indeed!

On this, our second-last day we spent much time scouring the camp for the Shelley's Sunbird, the target remained hidden and we had to give up the search. Then it was on to the border, first we stopped in Katima Mulilo for some shopping and were lucky to have great views of a very relaxed Lizard Buzzard. The Border crossing went very well and we were on the road soon in the third and last of the countries we were to visit on this trip: Zambia. This part of the tour was quite uneventful, although we saw a number of Purple Roller, a Hooded Vulture soaring above and an unexpected group of Giraffe, just before we arrived in Livingstone. In the late afternoon we headed to the Victoria Falls, which were very dry, but spectacular nonetheless. New birds here were Red-faced Cisticola, Red-winged Starling, Natal Spurfowl, impressive Trumpeter Hornbill and tropical Boubou.

On the morning of the last day we decided on one more excursion. After being greeted by a group of Elephant at the gate to our lodge we found the Collared Palm Thrush and then drove to the nearby water works. This proved to be another few hours very well spent and we found remarkably confident African Rail, many Black Crake, a few Greater Painted Snipe, a special Allen's Galinule, African Swampphen and African Pygmy Goose as well as a pair of stunning Red-necked Falcon. Back at the lodge we got our last new bird for the trip when a juvenile African Harrier-Hawk landed in one of the palms. All that was left to do was the final goodbyes and we left each other with some great memories of this multi-faceted region.

Annotated List of Birds

Total of 408 Species

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows the IOC List of Please cite: Gill, F. and M.Wright. 2006. Birds of the World: Recommended English Names. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press

Ostrich *Struthionidae*

Common Ostrich

Struthio camelus

This species was first seen on the Namib Desert gravel plains en route to Walvis Bay. Thereafter, it was seen in good numbers in Etosha National Park.

*NOTE: This is now often considered a distinct species from Somali Ostrich *S. molybdophanes* of dry East Africa.*

Guineafowl *Numididae*

Helmeted Guineafowl

Numida meleagris

One of the most common species for the trip, it was regularly recorded at many sites throughout Namibia.

*NOTE: The nominate East African *N. m. meleagris* (Helmeted Guineafowl is sometimes regarded as distinct from the western *N. m. galeata* (West African Guineafowl) and the southern *N. m. mitrata* (Tufted Guineafowl – the form which we recorded.).*

Pheasants, Fowl & Allies *Phasianidae*

Crested Francolin

Francolinus sephaena

The first record was a pair just south of Namutoni on the Dik-dik loop.

Hartlaub's Francolin

Francolinus hartlaubi

We had early morning views of a small covey on top of a hill in the Erongo Mountains.

Red-billed Francolin*Francolinus adspersus*

This attractive species was recorded regularly throughout the trip, especially during the latter half.

Natal Spurfowl*Pternistis natalensis*

Seen well on the penultimate day at the Victoria falls.

Swainson's Spurfowl*Francolinus swainsonii*

Seen in more grassy habitat on the last few days in the eastern Caprivi .

Ducks, Geese, Swans Anatidae**White-faced Whistling Duck***Dendrocygna viduata*

First seen at Rundu Treatment Works and then in the afternoon on the Okavango River.

Spur-winged Goose*Plectropterus gambensis*

Our first record came from the floodplains of Mahango Game Reserve.

Comb Duck*Sarkidiornis melanotos*

Encountered on the grassy pans near our lodge on the Zambezi.

Egyptian Goose*Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Most common on the first day at Avis dam, but also seen on a number of other days.

South African Shelduck*Tadorna cana*

A loose flock of 16 of these southern African endemics was busy on the Avis dam.

African Pygmy-goose*Nettapus auritus*

We observed two of these exquisite birds in the Okavango Panhandle near Xaro Lodge and saw them again at Kalizo Lodge and in Livingstone.

Cape Teal*Anas capensis*

This Teal was recorded first at the salt pans around Walvis Bay, also seen in Etosha.

Cape Shoveler*Anas smithii*

Some saw this bird in flight at the Water works in Windhoek.

Red-billed Teal*Anas erythrorhyncha*

Large numbers at the Windhoek water works and throughout the tour.

Hottentot Teal*Anas hottentota*

This species was seen on the visit to the Rundu Treatment Works.

Southern Pochard*Netta erythrophthalma*

This attractive duck was recorded on the dam at Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve.

Penguins Spheniscidae**Jackass Penguin***Spheniscus demersus*

A few individuals were seen offshore from the beach just south of Walvis Bay.

Petrels, Shearwaters Procellariidae**White-chinned Petrel***Procellaria aequinoctialis*

Quite large numbers of these pelagic birds from the beach at Paaltjies, Walvis Bay.

Sooty Shearwater*Puffinus griseus*

As above also quite a few of these birds which are great to see from solid ground.

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

First recorded at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, this grebe was also seen in a number of other fresh water localities.

Black-necked (Eared) Grebe*Podiceps nigricollis*

A large flotilla of over 100 of these birds was seen in Walvis Bay.

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

Huge flocks of these gorgeous birds were seen at Walvis Bay, turning the horizon pink.

NOTE: New World Caribbean Flamingo *P. ruber* has now been split from Old World Greater Flamingo *P. roseus*.

Lesser Flamingo*Phoenicopterus minor*

A small flock of these birds could be seen in Walvis bay.

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

Recorded regularly on the last few days, first records were on the Okavango River.

African Openbill*Anastomus lamelligerus*

Small numbers of this peculiar looking species were recorded in the Okavango, while we had larger flocks in the eastern Caprivi region.

Marabou Stork*Leptoptilos crumeniferus*

A few seen around Okaukuejo and good numbers near Kalizo Lodge.

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

First seen at the Rundu Water Works and then at more localities during the last days.

Hadeda Ibis*Bostrychia hagedash*

Low numbers were recorded along the Okavango River.

Glossy Ibis*Plegadis falcinellus*

This species was seen only once at the Kalizo Pans and then flying over Livingstone Water Works.

African Spoonbill*Platalea alba*

Two flew over us just north of the Andoni plains, Etosha and two more in eastern Caprivi.

Hérons, Bitterns *Ardeidae***Little Bittern***Ixobrychus minutus*

Great views of one bird at the Gammams Waterworks in Windhoek and some flying over the Okavango River.

White-backed Night Heron*Gorsachius leuconotus*

Good views of a single bird were had on a boat cruise in the Okavango Panhandle.

Black-crowned Night Heron*Nycticorax nycticorax*

Birds were recorded at the Gammams Waterworks and on the Okavango River.

Striated (Green-backed) Heron*Butorides striatus*

Small numbers of this attractive heron were recorded almost daily along the Okavango and Zambezi Rivers.

Squacco Heron*Ardeola ralloides*

It was recorded in great numbers on the Okavango River, also at Gammams, Livingstone and near Katima Mulilo.

Rufous-bellied Heron*Ardeola rufiventris*

This uncommon and richly-colored species was seen very well on the ans near Kalizo Lodge.

Cattle Egret*Bubulcus ibis*

2 birds visited the Okaukuejo waterhole and more were seen throughout the tour.

NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret *E. coromanda*.

Grey Heron*Ardea cinerea*

A few birds recorded around Windhoek and Walvis Bay.

Black-headed Heron*Ardea melanocephala*

Two birds at the Gammams Waterworks, a few other at scattered freshwater locations.

Goliath Heron*Ardea purpurea*

Three or four of these, the worlds largest herons were recorded along the Okavango waterways.

Purple Heron*Ardea purpurea*

This heron was common around the Okavango panhandle with birds constantly flying over.

NOTE: The Cape Verde Islands *A. p. bournei* is sometimes split off as Cape Verde Purple Heron or Bourne's Heron.

Great Egret*Ardea albus*

This elegant egret was mainly seen around the water on the last week of the tour, highest numbers on the Kalizo pans.

NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World *A. a. egretta* which would become American Egret

Yellow-billed Egret*Egretta intermedia*

A good number of them were active in ideal habitat in the eastern Caprivi and one at the Livingstone Waterworks.

Black Heron*Egretta ardesiaca*

A number of these often difficult birds on sandbars in the Okavango panhandle.

Slaty Egret*Egretta vinaceigula*

Very good views were had of this very tough and highly sought after bird, first on the Okavango and later among many other herons near Kalizo.

Little Egret*Egretta garzetta*

A few individuals were seen at Walvis Bay Lagoon, large groups in the Okavango and other freshwater areas.

NOTE: Clements lumps Little, Western Reef *E. gularis* and Madagascar's Dimorphic *E. dimorpha* Egret into a single species. This treatment is not widely accepted.

Hamerkop Scopidae**Hamerkop***Scopus umbretta*

We spotted this species on the first day near Windhoek and later on every day of the final week.

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

This huge bird was observed in the Walvis Bay, one juvenile on the Mahango floodplain.

Gannets, Boobies Sulidae**Cape Gannet***Morus capensis*

Quite a few groups flying past our Walvis beach lookout at Paaltjies.

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

This species was encountered firstly at Daan Viljoen and then later seen in good numbers from Rundu and the Okavango region.

White-breasted Cormorant*Phalacrocorax lucidus*

Recorded at Avis Dam, the Zambezi River bridge and the Walvis Bay areas.

NOTE: The white-breasted African species is sometimes considered a subspecies of the widely distributed Great Cormorant *P. carbo*.

Cape Cormorant*Phalacrocorax capensis*

Large numbers were seen in the Walvis Bay area.

Anhinga & Darter Anhingidae**Darter***Anhinga melanogaster*

First seen at Rundu, it was most common on the Okavango River in Botswana.

NOTE: The resident African form *P. rufa* is sometimes lumped with the Asian *P. melanogaster* and the enlarged species called Darter.

Falcons & Kestrels *Falconidae*

- Pygmy Falcon** *Polihierax semitorquatus*
We only had brief views of this diminutive falcon in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha.
- Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*
This species was regularly recorded in Central Namibia, during the first half of the tour up to Etosha National Park.
- Greater Kestrel** *Falco rupicoloides*
Our best sightings of this kestrel were in the Namib desert and Andoni plains of the Etosha NP.
- Dickinson's Kestrel** *Falco dickinsoni*
One or two distant birds in the western Caprivi strip.
- Red-necked Falcon** *Falco chicquera*
We had one of these elegant raptors hunting Queleas at Namutoni and great views of two in Livingstone.
- Amur Falcon** *Falco amurensis*
One female of this migrant species was recorded in the Caprivi strip in the early morning.
- African Hobby** *Falco cuvierii*
Spectacular views of this highly sought-after bird were had near Katima Mulilo where it put on a flying and hunting display after giving us the chance for great scoped views of it's perch.
- Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus*
Two flying birds in Etosha and a perched bird in the Caprivi.
- Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*
An individual bird was recorded at the waterhole in Okaukuejo where it caught and devoured a Namaqua Sandgrouse in Etosha National Park.

Kites, Hawks, Eagles & Vultures *Accipitridae*

- Secretary-bird** *Sagittarius serpentarius*
One pair marching through the Andoni plains.
- Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*
Recorded just north of the Andoni plains where it successfully fished for a while.
- Black-winged Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*
This widespread raptor was only seen a few times, including at Gammams.
- Black [Yellow-billed] Kite** *Milvus [migrans] aegyptius*
Many encounters with this bird during the last week of this tour.
NOTE: This species is usually lumped with Black Kite, *M. migrans*.
- African Fish Eagle** *Haliaeetus vocifer*
Recorded often during our stay on the Okavango River in Botswana and at Avis dam where we had great fly-bys and Daan Viljoen .
- Hooded Vulture** *Nycrosyrtes monachus*
One bird flying over our lunch on the way to Livingstone in Zambia.
- White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus*
Recorded in quite good number in Etosha and also in Mahango Game Reserve.
- White-headed Vulture** *Aegyptius occipitalis*
A few were recorded flying over in the Mahango Game Reserve.
- Lappet-faced Vulture** *Torgos tracheliotus*
This globally threatened species, was seen on a few occasions in the Etosha NP.
- Black-chested Snake-Eagle** *Circaetus pectoralis*
Our initial sighting was as we were leaving the Spitzkoppe area, followed by further sightings throughout the tour.

NOTE: This resident Central and Southern African species is regarded by some authorities to be a form of Short-toed Eagle *C. gallicus*.

Brown Snake-Eagle*Circaetus cinereus*

Great views of a single bird in flight over Avis dam.

Western Banded Snake Eagle*Circaetus cinerascens*

Spectacular and very close views of one on a walk around Xaro Lodge.

Bateleur*Terathopius ecaudatus*

This attractive raptor, which typifies the African bushveld, was first recorded in Etosha National Park and was also seen on numerous occasions in the Caprivi strip.

African Marsh-Harrier*Circus ranivorus*

Small numbers were seen quartering over reedbeds in the Okavango Panhandle.

African Harrier-Hawk*Polyboroides typus*

One juvenile landed in a palm as we were about to depart for Livingstone airport.

Dark Chanting Goshawk*Melierax metabates*

One sighting of a juvenile in the Caprivi area.

Pale Chanting Goshawk*Melierax canorus*

This was one of the most commonly recorded raptors, during the first half of our trip in the drier regions. It was seen almost daily in central and northern Namibia, until we reached the Caprivi.

Gabar Goshawk*Micronisus gabar*

A pair was very obliging at Namibgrens and we had a number of other sightings, especially in the Etosha NP.

Shikra*Accipiter badius*

Seen on a number of occasions around Okaukuejo and Halali in Etosha.

Little Sparrowhawk*Accipiter minullus*

One juvenile seen in open country in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Lizard Buzzard*Kaupifalco monogrammicus*

A very relaxed individual allowed extended views of this great little buzzard

Common Buzzard*Buteo buteo*

Recorded on a number of occasions during the tour, Etosha and Mahango are two examples.

Augur Buzzard*Buteo augur*

Two single birds were seen around our Lodge in the Erongo mountains.

Tawny Eagle*Aquila rapax*

These large eagles were recorded en route to Etosha National Park, in the park and in the Caprivi.

NOTE: The nominate African Tawny Eagle *A. r. rapax* may be split from the Asian Tawny Eagle *A. r. vindhiana*.

Verreaux's Eagle*Aquila verreauxii*

Formerly known as Black Eagle, this majestic species was only seen in the Erongo by some.

Wahlberg's Eagle*Aquila wahlbergi*

First seen from the Okavango river in Botswana and then on 3 more occasions over the next week.

African Hawk-Eagle*Hieraaetus spilogaster*

We had a pair both in Daan Viljoen and near the Namibgrens Guesthouse.

Martial Eagle*Polemaetus bellicosus*

A single bird was seen on the way to the Erongos and more sightings were enjoyed over the next days in Etosha.

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

This, the heaviest of all flying birds, was first seen around Okaukuejo and was recorded daily in Etosha National Park.

Ludwig's Bustard*Neotis ludwigii*

We had about 6 birds around a waterhole at Okondeka, north of Okaukuejo in Etosha..

Rueppell's Korhaan*Eupodotis rueppelli*

Small groups of this attractive bustard species, which is almost entirely restricted to Namibia, were observed between Windhoek and Walvis Bay, one sighting also at the Spitzkoppe.

Red-crested Korhaan *Eupodotis ruficristata*

This species was first seen south of Okaukuejo and also near Namutoni in the Etosha

NOTE: The southern Red-crested Korhaan E. ruficristata used to be lumped with the East African Buff-crested Bustard E. gindiana and the western Savile's Bustard E. savilei. All three of these species are now generally recognized.

Northern Black Korhaan *Afrotis afraoides*

We had numerous sightings of this striking bird almost daily in Etosha National Park.

Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster*

We had a sighting of two birds in the grasslands near Kalizo Lodge.

Rails, Crakes & Coots *Rallidae*

African Rail *Rallus caerulescens*

These secretive rails responded vociferously to playback before coming into the open and giving great views at the Livingstone Settling Ponds.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostris*

This common waterside bird was recorded at Gammams and daily during the final week of the tour.

African Swamphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis*

This large, colorful gallinule was recorded at Gammams and at the Livingstone Settling ponds.

NOTE: This cosmopolitan species is currently in taxonomic review and several forms are expected to be recognized as distinct species. The form we recorded would then become African Swamphen P. madagascariensis. Other forms to be recognized may include Indian Swamphen P. poliocephalus, Philippine Swamphen P. pulverulentus and Eastern Swamphen P. melanotus.

Allen's Gallinule *Porphyrio alleni*

We recorded this difficult species at the Livingstone settling ponds.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

This common and widespread species was recorded at several freshwater locations in Namibia, most commonly at Gammams waterworks.

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*

This species was seen in a large flock at Gammams and then at the Daan Viljoen dam

Finfoots *Heliornithidae*

African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis*

One of these very sought after and elusive birds ended off an amazing hour near Katima Mulilo when it slowly swam up the Zambezi.

Cranes *Gruidae*

Blue Crane *Grus paradiseus*

A pair of this endemic crane species was seen very well close to Namutoni camp in Etosha National Park, this represents a small and very isolated population, hundreds of kilometers north of all others.

Wattled Crane *Grus carunculata*

A few of these huge birds was observed on the floodplains in the Mahango Game Reserve, on our visit to the reserve.

Stone-curlews, Thick-knees *Burhinidae*

Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus*

Seen on some of the sandbanks along the Okavango River.

Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis*

Recorded mainly around the Okaukuejo waterhole, when they came to drink at night.

Stilts & Avocets *Recurvirostridae*

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Recorded first at Walvis Bay and then during the last week of the tour.

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

This species was recorded in the Walvis Bay lagoon and north of the Andoni gate, Etosha.

Plovers & Lapwings Charadriidae

Long-toed Lapwing *Vanellus crassirostris*

This very attractive wetland species was recorded daily on the Okavango River and on the Mahango floodplain.

Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus*

One of the almost constant companions around fresh water, recorded on most days.

White-crowned Lapwing *Vanellus albiceps*

These sandbar specialists were recorded in the grounds at Kalizo Lodge and along the Zambezi River.

Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus*

This common dry west species was seen often during our stay in the Etosha National Park.

African Wattled Lapwing *Vanellus senegallus*

A single bird was seen during the upstream boat cruises on the Okavango River.

Grey (Black-bellied) Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

This non-breeding migrant was recorded in the Walvis Bay area on our tour.

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A few birds were seen in the Walvis Bay lagoon on our tour.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*

First observed at Walvis Bay and then in large numbers north of the Andoni gate of Etosha.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

Seen in small numbers during the tour in suitable habitat, mainly at Gammams.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*

This species was recorded in the Walvis Bay area with further near Andoni and on the Zambezi.

Chestnut-banded Plover *Charadrius pallidus*

These attractive waders, with their neat chestnut breast band, were seen in the Walvis Bay lagoon, where the bulk of the world population is restricted, also seen near Andoni gate, Etosha.

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus*

45 of these dryland plovers were seen well north of the Andoni plains.

Painted-Snipes Rostratulidae

Greater Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*

A single bird was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works while we had three of these very popular birds on the Zambezi and at Livingstone.

Jacanas Jacanidae

Lesser Jacana *Microparra capensis*

Another very special bird, first spotted on the Angolan bank of the Okavango near Rundu, one also seen near Kalizo Lodge.

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus*

Many of these peculiar 'lillytrotters' were seen, mainly during the wetter second half of our tour.

Sandpipers, Snipes Scolopacidae

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A number of birds were seen on the mudflats of Walvis Bay lagoon.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

As above, a few seen on the mudflats at Walvis Bay .

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Recorded in the salt pans of Walvis Bay and later on the Okavango river.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

First seen at Walvis Bay, we also had sightings in Etosha and freshwater bodies during the last week.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Recorded at a number of freshwater bodies during our tour.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus*

One of these scarce birds on the mudflats in Walvis Bay lagoon.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

The first sighting was at Gammams in Windoek, also seen along the Okavango river.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Recorded during our day in the Walvis Bay area.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Good numbers of this active shorebird were seen in the Walvis Bay area.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

A number were seen in the Walvis Bay area, in Etosha and on the Zambezi river.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Large numbers of these shorebirds were only recorded on the mudflats of Walvis Bay.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Recorded at most wetland areas throughout the trip.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

About 7 birds were seen near the Saltworks in Walvis Bay on the way out to Paaltjies.

Couriers & Pratincoles *Glareolidae*

Burchell's Courser *Cursorius rufus*

We were fortunate to have three separate sightings of these erratic and unpredictable birds around Etosha, best views around Okaukuejo.

Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii*

One of these slimly-built couriers was seen at the Rundu waterworks.

Double-banded Courser *Cursorius smutsornis*

Relatively common in Etosha National Park in small numbers, also one seen in the Namib.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*

Good views of a few birds on the Okavango boat trips and over the Mahango floodplains.

Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis*

A single bird was seen near Mahango and two near the Victoria Falls.

Gulls, Terns, Skimmers *Laridae*

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*

Seen in the Walvis Bay area.

*NOTE: Recent work suggests that the Kelp Gull complex *L. dominicanus* may be split into as many as four species. The African form we observed has been proposed as Cape Gull *L. vetula*.*

Grey-hooded Gull *Larus cirrocephalus*

3 birds were seen on the Walvis Bay lagoon and 2 more later from the Kalizo Lodge.

Hartlaub's Gull *Larus hartlaubii*

This southern African endemic was seen in the Walvis Bay area.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

We had good views of small numbers of this large tern species in the Walvis Bay area.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

A single bird was roosting with other species on the edge of the Walvis Bay lagoon.

Swift Tern *Sterna bergii*

Recorded in small numbers in the Walvis Bay area.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Large numbers were seen in the Walvis Bay area.

Damara Tern *Sterna balaenarum*

We had good views of this tiny tern in flight and roosting beside other terns in Walvis Bay.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*

Some birds were seen on the Okavango from the boat, another at Kalizo Lodge.

African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris*

A good number of these very unusual birds were still on the Okavango and Zambezi sandbanks.

Skuas *Stercorariidae*

Parasitic Jaeger *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A few of these aggressive scavengers were seen in action off the coast of Walvis Bay at Paaltjies.

Sandgrouse *Pteroclididae*

Namaqua Sandgrouse *Pterocles namaqua*

Our first records were on the desert plains of the Namib while we had spectacular numbers drinking at Okaukuejo later on.

Double-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicinctus*

Large numbers were observed at dusk flying in to drink at the waterhole in Okaukuejo in Etosha National Park.

Burchell's Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicinctus*

This uncommonly seen species was found in the short grasslands, not far from Kalizo Lodge.

Doves & Pigeons *Collumbidae*

Common Pigeon *Columba livia*

This exotic species was seen in small numbers around human settlement as everywhere on earth.

Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea*

Recorded at a number of locations during the first week, great views at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Mourning Collared Dove *Streptopelia decipiens*

This dove with its delightful call was seen around Mahangu Safari Lodge and Kalizo Lodge.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*

Recorded daily for the last week of the tour, as we entered moister and riverine woodland.

Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola*

This common species was recorded on every day throughout the tour.

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*

It was also seen on every day in small numbers during the tour.

Emerald-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur chalcospilos*

It was recorded in the woodland around Xaro Lodge, also later around Katima Mulilo.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*

This long-tailed dove was seen first at Gammams and was numerous in the Etosha National Park.

African Green Pigeon *Treron calva*

A number of birds were seen in the riverine vegetation on the Okavango River, especially in the vicinity of fruiting fig trees at Xaro Lodge.

Cockatoos, Parrots *Psittacidae*

Rosy-faced Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis*

We were very lucky with these stunning little parrots, seeing them in good numbers and at close quarters around Namibians and the Erongos.

Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri*

Seen near Namutoni and for the next week of the tour they were heard and seen in small numbers.

Rueppell's Parrot *Poicephalus rueppellii*

Good scope views were had of a single bird in the very hot Khan riverbed.

Turacos *Musophagidae*

Schalow's Turaco *Tauraco schalowi*

Our only encounter with this stunning species was when we looked for it along the Zambezi river near Katima Mulilo. This bird was then very obliging and gave great looks.

Grey Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides concolor*

A common dry west species, it was first recorded in Windhoek and was thereafter seen regularly throughout the tour in Namibia and Botswana.

Cuckoos *Cuculidae*

Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*

This species was seen around the Kalizo Lodge area.

Coppery-tailed Coucal *Centropus cupreicaudus*

We enjoyed a number of sightings of this large coucal at the Rundu waterworks, near Xaro Lodge and throughout the Caprivi area.

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus*

A very uncooperative individual refused to move from his very dense perch a few metres above our heads near Katima Mulilo.

Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*

A single juvenile bird was seen very well in a grassy vlei near Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Jacobin Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*

A bird crossed from Angola to N'kwazi Lodge on the Okavango, another was seen in Livingstone.

Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*

Two birds were seen well at the Namibian Mahango Borderpost.

Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus*

First we had brief views of birds in flight at Xaro Lodge and then at Mahango Safari Lodge.

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis*

Excellent, close-up views were had on three occasions in Etosha and later in the Caprivi strip.

Owls *Tytonidae*

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Well spotted south of Okaukuejo Camp, were we then had fantastic views at quite close range.

Typical Owls *Strigidae*

African Scops Owl *Otus senegalensis*

We had close-up views of this miniscule bird at night in the Halali Camp and then displaying its astounding camouflage the next day.

Southern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis granti*

We were surprised to find two birds over our lunch set-up and had great views of these overheating birds in the trees of the Halali Camp.

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl *Bubo lacteus*

Another Halali owl, this one drinking at the waterhole at night.

Pel's Fishing-Owl *Scotopelia peli*

One of the most wanted birds of the trip, we had a few views of the same bird around Xaro Lodge.

African Wood-Owl*Strix woodfordii*

Beautiful views of a pair were had around Xaro Lodge in the Okavango Panhandle.

Pearl-spotted Owllet*Glaucidium perlatum*

Seen on the first morning at the Avis dam and on a number of other days, memorable was the nest in the Sociable Weaver nest in Okaukuejo.

African Barred Owllet*Glaucidium capense*

This special owllet was recorded during our stay at Xaro Lodge in the Okavango Delta.

NOTE: The form we saw, G c ngamiense is sometimes split as Ngami Owllet.

Marsh Owl*Asio capensis*

One owl flew over while the bus was being dug from its temporary sandy grave at Kalizo Lodge.

Nightjars Caprimulgidae**Rufous-cheeked Nightjar***Caprimulgus rufigena*

Our sightings were at the waterhole in Okaukuejo Camp.

Fiery-necked Nightjar*Caprimulgus pectoralis*

A bird was seen well by spotlight on a night walk at N'Kwazi Lodge, along the Okavango River.

Freckled Nightjar*Caprimulgus tristigma*

We obtained good views of a bird at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Square-tailed (Mozambique) Nightjar*Caprimulgus fossii*

We also had views of this species during the walk at N'kwazi Lodge.

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

Recorded on our first day in Windhoek, and on most other days of our trip.

NOTE: The nominate African form of the Palm Swift is considered to be distinct from the Malagasy form C. p. gracilis by some authorities.

Alpine Swift*Tachymarptis melba*

This, the largest swift, was seen on the first three days of the trip.

Common Swift*Apus apus*

Two birds were seen around Okaukuejo in Etosha National Park.

Bradfield's Swift*Apus bradfieldi*

This large brown swift was seen around Windhoek and west on the first three days of the tour.

Little Swift*Apus affinis*

This widespread swift was recorded in the Windhoek and some later locations like Okaukuejo.

White-rumped Swift*Apus caffer*

Seen in small numbers during most sections of the tour, including around Kalizo Lodge.

Mousebirds Coliidae**White-backed Mousebird***Colius colius*

Seen first at Tamboti Guest House in Windhoek, also at Avis dam and Namibgrens.

Red-faced Mousebird*Urocolius indicus*

Recorded in the Namutoni campgrounds and throughout the latter half of the tour.

Rollers Coraciidae**Purple Roller***Coracias naevia*

Two birds were seen near Namutoni in Etosha, on our route through Zambia a few more were seen.

Lilac-breasted Roller*Coracias caudata*

This was the most common roller on the trip with sightings throughout the tour.

Broad-billed Roller*Eurystomus glaucurus*

This species was found near Xaro Lodge and seen very well in the Waterfront garden in Livingstone.

Kingfishers *Alcedinidae*

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris*

One bird was seen along the Zambezi river near Katima Mulilo.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*

This kingfisher was recorded in the broadleaved woodland in the Caprivi.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*

This jewel of a bird was seen frequently along the Okavango River.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*

This impressive kingfisher was seen around the Xaro and Kalizo lodges.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

Recorded at most water bodies during the last week of the tour, with highest numbers being along the waterways of the Okavango.

Bee-eaters *Meropidae*

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*

First recorded around Windhoek and then in Etosha, Mahango and the Caprivi.

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

First recorded at Rundu waterworks and frequently during the last week.

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*

This beautiful species was seen daily along the Okavango River in Botswana and at Kalizo Lodge.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Recorded during much of the tour, usually flocks flying high over us, some perched in Etosha.

Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides*

Fantastic views were had of the nesting colonies along the banks of the Okavango River, and then the largest colony on the Zambezi filling the air with colour and calls.

Hoopoes *Upupidae*

African Hoopoe *Upupa africana*

This unique bird was recorded throughout our tour, first good view in Okaukuejo Camp.

NOTE: The Hoopoe complex has had a confusing taxonomic history, with one to four species being recognized by various authorities. Clements splits the group into two forms, Madagascar U. marginalis and Eurasian U. epops. The white-winged African forms are often split by other authorities as West African Hoopoe U. senegalensis with the fourth species being African Hoopoe U. africana. However, the most generally accepted treatment is that of three species, Madagascar, Eurasian and African.

Woodhoopoes *Phoeniculidae*

Green Wood-hoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus*

Recorded in the woodlands in the Okavango Panhandle and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Violet Wood-hoopoe *Phoeniculus damarensis*

We had good and very close views of a family group on both days around Halali.

NOTE: Some authors have lumped the two populations of this form, the nominate in Namibia and Angola, with the Kenyan P. d. granti. The latter form is often split as Grant's Woodhoopoe.

Common Scimitar-bill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

Birds seen at Avis dam, Daan Viljoen, Etosha and a few other sites.

Hornbills *Bucerotidae*

Bradfield's Hornbill *Tockus bradfieldi*

This localized hornbill was seen flying overhead in the Caprivi where we later had good scope views.

African Grey Hornbill*Tockus nasutus*

This widespread species was recorded regularly throughout the tour, from our stay in the Erongos.

Monteiro's Hornbill*Tockus monteiri*

This Namibian near-endemic was first seen at the Spitzkoppe, then also in the Erongo Mountains.

Red-billed Hornbill*Tockus erythrorhynchus*

This hornbill was recorded in Etosha National Park and the Caprivi.

NOTE: Red-billed Hornbill has recently been split into several species, the nominate T. erythrorhynchus which we observed and Damara Hornbill T. damarensis which occurs in Western Namibia.

[Damara (Red-billed) Hornbill]*Tockus damarensis*

The only time we saw this bird in its pure form: dark eye, white head was in the dry Khan River.

NOTE: Red-billed Hornbill has recently been split into several species including the nominate T. erythrorhynchus and Damara Hornbill T. damarensis of Namibia. Some authors don't recognize these splits.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill*Tockus leucomelas*

This bird was most commonly recorded in Etosha NP during our tour.

Trumpeter Hornbill*Ceratogymna bucinator*

This species was recorded once in the Livingstone area, at the Victoria Falls.

Barbets Capitonidae**Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird***Pogoniulus chrysoconus*

This bird was seen in the woodlands behind Xaro Lodge.

Acacia Pied Barbet*Tricholaema leucomelas*

First seen around the Gammams waterworks then also in the Erongo Mountains and Etosha.

Black-collared Barbet*Lybius torquatus*

Drotsky's Cabins produced our first sighting of this species, later also at Xaro and Kalizo Lodges.

Crested Barbet*Trachyphonus vaillantii*

It was first seen in the woodland of the gardens of the Xaro Lodge.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae**Lesser Honeyguide***Indicator minor*

A few birds were very active in the gardens of N'kwazi Lodge, also seen at Kalizo Lodge.

Greater Honeyguide*Indicator indicator*

This bird was seen near the grounds at Xaro Lodge and seen well in the woodland east of Rundu.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae**Bennett's Woodpecker***Campethera bennettii*

Our only sighting of this uncommon woodpecker was in the woodland around Xaro Lodge.

Golden-tailed Woodpecker*Campethera abingoni*

This bird was first seen in the Roy's Camp, later also at Xaro Lodge and the Caprivi Strip.

Cardinal Woodpecker*Dendropicos fuscescens*

This widespread African woodpecker was seen in Okaukuejo, later also at Xaro and in the Caprivi.

Bearded Woodpecker*Dendropicos namaquus*

All records of the trips largest woodpecker were on all days near Xaro Lodge in the Okavango.

Wattle-eyes, Batises Platysteiridae**Chinspot Batis***Batis molitor*

Our first sighting was near Rundu while we had later views in the Caprivi strip.

Pirit Batis*Batis pririt*

This attractive dry country species was first seen at Avis dam and during the first half of the tour.

White-tailed Shrike*Lanioturdus torquatus*

One of Namibia's star birds and a near-endemic, we had a sighting at Namibgrens and then around Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Bush-shrikes & Allies *Malaconotidae*

White-crested Helmetshrike

Prionops plumatus

Seen in the Mopane woodland in Halali in Etosha National Park and in some other locations in Okavango and Caprivi areas.

NOTE: This species is being considered for a 3-way split. P. p. cristatus would become Curly-crested Helmetshrike, P. p. poliocephalus would become Southern Helmetshrike (the form we recorded) and the nominate P. p. plumatus would become Straight-crested Helmetshrike.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike

Telophorus sulfureopectus

Another stunner, it was observed a few times in woodland around Xaro Lodge and in the Caprivi.

Bokmakierie

Telophorus zeylonus

This beautiful arid-area bushshrike only gave a very brief glimpse near the Namibgrens Guesthouse.

Brown-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra australis

This shrike was encountered in small numbers at the Spitzkoppe, the Erongos and in the Caprivi.

Black-crowned Tchagra

Tchagra senegalus

A pair was seen well near the Kalizo Lodge.

Black-backed Puffback

Dryoscopus cubla

Another woodland shrike, first seen at Namutoni and then more often in moister habitat further east.

Tropical Boubou

Laniarius aethiopicus

A pair of these birds were seen in the afternoon in the thicket around the Victoria Falls.

Swamp Boubou

Laniarius bicolor

First observed in the Rundu area, we had further sightings in riverine habitat for the rest of the trip.

Crimson-breasted Shrike

Laniarius atrococcineus

This gorgeous bird was first seen at Avis dam with further sightings from Etosha and other dry areas.

Brubru

Nilaus afer

This shrike was seen often, great views in Daan Viljoen and in the Etosha NP.

NOTE: This previously monotypic genus might be split 4 ways: Northern Brubru N. afer, Black-browed Brubru N. nigritemporalis, Angola Brubru N. affinis and Southern Brubru N. brubru. Only the Southern Brubru occurs in Southern Africa.

Cuckooshrikes *Campephagidae*

Black Cuckooshrike

Campephaga flava

One male was seen well in the tree tops on the last morning walk near Xaro lodge

Shrikes *Laniidae*

Magpie Shrike

Corvinella melanoleuca

This species was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works and more often around Kalizo Lodge.

Southern White-crowned Shrike

Eurocephalus anguitimens

Plentiful in the Halali Camp, one other sighting at the eastern gate of Etosha.

Lesser Grey Shrike

Lanius minor

We saw 2 of these Palaearctic migrants, one in the western Caprivi, also in Zambia at our lunch stop.

Common Fiscal

Lanius collaris

Observed regularly during the first half of the tour.

NOTE: The form L.c. marwitzii, occurring in East Africa is sometimes split off as Uhehe Fiscal.

Figbirds, Orioles *Oriolidae*

Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

A single bird was seen in the Teak woodlands in the Caprivi strip.

Drongos *Dicruridae*

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*

This widespread species was recorded on almost every day throughout the tour.

Monarch Flycatchers *Monarchidae*

African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*

This great little flycatcher was quite common during the last days of our tour in the denser riverine woodland. One was breeding at Drotsky's Cabins along the Okavango.

Crows, Jays & Magpies *Corvidae*

Cape Crow *Corvus capensis*

This species was very common in Etosha National Park.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus*

Recorded often in Etosha and later in the eastern Caprivi and Zambia.

Tits *Paridae*

Carp's Black Tit *Parus carpi*

A Namibian near-endemic, some were seen well in the Erongos, one was seen later in Halali Camp.

Southern Black-Tit *Parus niger*

We had a few of these noisy birds in the Caprivi strip.

Ashy Tit *Melaniparus cinerascens*

These noisy little birds were seen very well in the tall Acacia trees at Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha NP.

Swallows, Martins *Hirundinidae*

Grey-rumped Swallow *Hirundo griseopyga*

Observed a few times flying over the Okavango at N'kwazi Lodge and south-east of Katima Mulilo.

Brown-throated (Plain) Martin *Riparia paludicola*

This species was seen at Gammams and in good numbers over the Okavango and Zambezi rivers.

Sand Martin (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia*

Birds seen at scattered locations in Etosha and along the Okavango river.

Banded Martin *Riparia cincta*

Seen in Etosha NP on the Andoni plains and along the Okavango River.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Seen daily throughout the final two-thirds of the tour.

White-throated Swallow *Hirundo albigularis*

Two locations were found with this bird: many at Gammams in Windhoek, some at N'kwazi Lodge.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*

A few birds seen over the Okavango and Zambezi rivers.

NOTE: This species complex is likely to be split based on the African nominate form that would become African Wire-tailed Swallow and the Asian Wire-tailed Swallow that would be H. filifera.

Pearl-breasted Swallow *Hirundo dimidiata*

This uncommon species was only encountered at the Windhoek Settling Ponds.

Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*

Recorded almost daily for the first half of the trip and then again at Kalizo Lodge.

NOTE: This confusing polytypic complex is being reviewed for multi-species splitting. Within African populations, 3 potential species exist. The southern African nominate form H. f. fuligula remains Rock Martin, northern populations would become Red-throated Rock Martin H. pusilla. Palearctic birds become Pale Crag Martin H. obsolete.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbica*

This species was seen at Avis dam by some and well around Etosha waterholes.

Greater Striped-Swallow *Cecropis cucullata*

Seen on the first two days around Windhoek: Avis dam, Gammams waterworks and at Daan Viljoen.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica*

Recorded in the eastern part of our tour, near Mahango and especially well at the Kalizo Lodge.

Red-breasted Swallow *Cecropis semirufa*

This large hirundine was only seen once: over the Okaukuejo waterhole.

Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis*

First seen at the Namibian Border at Mahango, then also in the Caprivi further east.

Larks *Alaudidae*

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana*

One bird recorded close to the Kalizo Lodge.

Clapper Lark *Mirafra apiata*

One bird eventually seen well, north of Okaukuejo.

Fawn-colored Lark *Mirafra africanoides*

This species was spotted west of the Spreetshoogte pass and was seen very well north of Okaukuejo.

NOTE: The Ethiopian subspecies M. a. macdonaldi is sometimes considered to belong to a distinct species; Abyssinian Lark M. alopex.

Sabota Lark *Mirafra sabota*

This was our most common lark for the trip and it was recorded throughout Namibia, until we reached the Rundu area.

NOTE: Some authorities consider the thickbilled form, Bradfield's Lark M. bradfieldi of Namibia a separate species. This is not widely accepted.

Dune Lark *Certhilauda erythrochlamys*

We obtained great views of a pair of these ochre-colored Namibian endemics, in the Kuiseb Riverbed at Rooibank, just outside Walvis Bay.

Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata*

This social lark was encountered at the Tropic of Capricorn and around the Okaukuejo area.

NOTE: The Tanzanian isolate C. a. beesleyi is considered a separate species by some authorities.

Gray's Lark *Ammomanopsis grayi*

This scarce desert lark, true to form, was found in very inhospitable terrain en route to Walvis Bay.

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea*

This distinctive species was first seen at the Okaukuejo waterhole, then throughout the Etosha.

NOTE: The African Red-capped Lark complex C. cinerea, was lumped within the Greater Short-toed Lark complex C. brachydactyla but is now considered distinct by most authorities. Several distinctive groupings have now been split off from Red-capped Lark, including Blanford's Lark of Ethiopia C. blanfordi.

Pink-billed Lark *Spizocorys conirostris*

A few birds came to the Okaukuejo waterhole, others were seen north of the Andoni plains, Etosha.

Stark's Lark *Eremalauda starki*

We obtained many sightings of this species in the desert on the way to Walvis Bay and in Etosha.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*

One flock was recorded along the road west of Katima Mulilo.

Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix verticalis*

This nomadic species was found in huge numbers around Etosha, notably the Okaukuejo waterhole.

Cisticolas & Allies *Cisticolidae*

Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrope*

One bird gave prolonged views at the Victoria Falls.

Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana*

We encountered many of these birds, especially during the second half of the tour.

Luapula Cisticola*Cisticola [galactotes] luapula*

This recently split species was seen on the Angolan bank of the Okavango from the N'kwazi Lodge.

NOTE: The Okavango-Zambian race of the widespread Winding Cisticola C. galactotes, has recently been accorded full species status as Luapula Cisticola C. luapula. Clements does not recognize this split.

Chirping Cisticola*Cisticola pipiens*

A fairly secretive cisticola seen in reedbeds along the Okavango River on the way to Xaro Lodge.

Neddicky (Piping Cisticola)*Cisticola fulvicapilla*

First seen at Xaro Lodge, later also in the Caprivi.

Zitting Cisticola*Cisticola juncidis*

Recorded in the grasslands around Kalizo Lodge.

Desert Cisticola*Cisticola aridulus*

Another of the small cisticolas, this was seen on a few occasions in the Etosha NP.

Tawny-flanked Prinia*Prinia subflava*

Seen along the Okavango river near Xaro Lodge and on every day of the last week of the tour.

Black-chested Prinia*Prinia flavicans*

A dry country species, it was observed regularly during the whole tour.

Yellow-breasted Apalis*Apalis flavida*

Seen first just south of the Namutoni Camp and then on a few occasions around the western Caprivi.

Grey-backed Camaroptera*Camaroptera brevicaudata*

Erongo Wilderness Lodge produced our initial encounter with this small warbler, thereafter it was seen fairly regularly, especially around Xaro Lodge and the western Caprivi.

NOTE: Most authorities now recognize the nominate green-backed forms of this widespread African warbler as distinct from the grey-backed forms C. brevicaudata. We encountered the grey-backed forms during our tour.

Barred Wren-Warbler*Calamonastes fasciolatus*

We saw this delightful species on two days north of Namutoni, Etosha.

Bulbuls Pycnonotidae**African Red-eyed Bulbul***Pycnonotus nigricans*

This Bulbul species was recorded often from Windhoek to before Rundu and again at Mahango.

Dark-capped Bulbul*Pycnonotus [barbatus] tricolor*

This abundant eastern species was recorded daily from N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu.

NOTE: Another very confusing polytypic species complex. Several Asian and African forms have already been recognized as distinct species within the super-species Common Bulbul P. barbatus. The form that we saw in Southern Africa, P. tricolor has been split as Dark-capped Bulbul by some authorities.

Yellow-bellied Greenbul*Chlorocichla flaviventris*

A few birds were seen in the N'Kwazi Lodge garden, also around Katima Mulilo.

Terrestrial Brownbul*Phyllastrephus terrestris*

Typically an undergrowth skulker, we had great views in the Kalizo Lodge gardens.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae**Little Rush Warbler***Bradypterus baboecala*

Recorded from the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge.

Rockrunner*Aetops pycnopygius*

This localized Namibian near-endemic with its liquid call, was first observed at the Avis dam in Windhoek, we later had sightings around Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Greater Swamp-Warbler*Acrocephalus rufescens*

A very secretive papyrus warbler, we had a number of fleeting views in the Okavango Panhandle.

Lesser Swamp Warbler*Acrocephalus gracilirostris*

First observed at the Rundu Treatment Works, it was also seen near Livingstone.

African Reed Warbler*Acrocephalus baeticatus*

This secretive species was seen in the reeds around the Gammams waterworks near Windhoek.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

This out of range palearctic migrant was spotted in a garden in Walvis Bay.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

One very yellow individual gave great views in the Caprivi area.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

This little Palaearctic migrant was seen very often, particularly on the final half of the trip.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis*

Found at Erongo Wilderness Lodge on a few occasions in the Etosha NP.

Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops*

We obtained good views of this difficult and stunning little bird in small groups in Mahango and twice along the Caprivi strip.

Burnt-necked Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis*

A few birds seen on three occasions, with the best views being at the Avis dam.

Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens*

This short-tailed species was seen in Etosha and around the Caprivi area on a number of occasions.

Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler *Parisoma subcaeruleum*

Commonly recorded from the first day, this species was seen very often in Etosha amongst others.

Layard's Tit-Babbler *Parisoma layardi*

Good views of two of these birds were had in the woodland at the base of Spitzkoppe.

Babblers, Parrotbills *Timaliidae*

Black-faced Babbler *Turdoides melanops*

We had views of these birds at Roy's Camp, between Namutoni in Etosha and Rundu.

Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii*

This noisy species was first seen in Mahango Game Reserve and later around the Kalico Lodge.

Hartlaub's Babbler *Turdoides hartlaubii*

They were seen regularly at most sites from Rundu to Shakawe in the riverine vegetation.

Southern Pied Babbler *Turdoides bicolor*

We saw a flock of these striking birds north of Namutoni Camp and near Drotsky's Cabins.

White-eyes *Zosteropidae*

African Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis*

This widespread bird was seen on a number of occasions, especially during our stay in the western part of the Caprivi and in the Okavango.

Starlings *Sturnidae*

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*

This nomadic species was observed in huge numbers at the Gammams waterworks, later also around the Caprivi strip.

Cape Starling *Lamprotornis nitens*

This stunning iridescent bird was seen well on most days of the tour.

Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*

Only recorded around the grounds of the Mahango Safari Lodge on the Okavango river.

Meves's Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii*

Regularly recorded along the Okavango River, the Caprivi and the Zambezi River.

Burchell's Starling *Lamprotornis australis*

A regular species for the latter two-thirds of the tour, with sightings starting before Etosha.

Violet-backed Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

We had one female at the Rundu waterworks and the stunning males at Mahango Game Reserve.

- Red-winged Starling** *Onychognathus morio*
Observed on the second last day around Victoria Falls.
- Pale-winged Starling** *Onychognathus naborourop*
Our first sightings were in Windhoek, followed by great views in the Erongo Mountains.
- Yellow-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus africanus*
A single bird was seen at its nest in the Xaro Lodge garden.
- Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*
A few birds were seen at Rundu Settling Ponds and later in the Caprivi strip.

Thrushes *Turdidae*

- Groundscraper Thrush** *Psophocichla litsipsirupa*
This boldly-marked species was first along Avis dam and later frequently in Etosha NP.
NOTE: Ethiopian Thrush P. l. simensis is considered a distinct species by several authorities.
- Kurrichane Thrush** *Turdus libonyanus*
A woodland thrush, it was seen well at Xaro Lodge.

Chats, Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

- White-browed Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini*
The riverine vegetation during the last week of the tour provided the perfect habitat for the bird.
- Collared Palm Thrush** *Cichladusa arquata*
A few birds were seen in the gardens around The Waterfront in Livingstone.
- White-browed Scrub-Robin** *Cercotrichas leucophrys*
North of Namutoni, Mahango and the Caprivi all provided sightings of this great little bird.
NOTE: This widespread African complex is being reviewed for a 3-way split, the Southern African C. l. leucophrys group would remain as White-browed Scrub-Robin, the Central African C. l. zambesiana would become Red-backed Scrub-Robin and the Northern African C. l. leucoptera would become White-winged Scrub-Robin.
- Kalahari Scrub-Robin** *Cercotrichas paena*
Recorded on the first day at Avis dam, we had the best views just north of Namutoni, Etosha.
- Karoo Scrub-Robin** *Cercotrichas coryphaeus*
Around the Namibgrens Guesthouse we had a few sightings, here at the extreme northern limit of its range which is limited to the countries of South Africa and Namibia.
- Herero Chat** *Namibornis herero*
We spent a little time searching for this bird, before finding it and getting great views around the base of the Spitzkoppe .
- Eurasian Stonechat** *Saxicola torquatus*
This attractive species was seen a few times on a boat cruise in the Okavango Panhandle.
NOTE: Clements recognizes the split of African S. torquata and Common S. rubicola Stonechats (the latter a Palaearctic species), which is not followed by all authorities. Further splitting may occur in both groups including the highland Ethiopian form S. t. albofasciata that may become Ethiopian Stonechat.
- Capped Wheatear** *Oenanthe pileata*
Recorded once just north of Namutoni in Etosha National Park.
- Mountain Wheatear** *Oenanthe monticola*
This endemic was often recorded in rocky areas during the first part of the tour.
- Karoo Chat** *Cercomela schlegelii*
One was seen sitting on a fence just south of the Namibgrens Guesthouse.
- Tractrac Chat** *Cercomela tractrac*
Recorded on the drive to Walvis Bay near the very isolated town of Solitaire, again on the fence.
- Familiar Chat** *Cercomela familiaris*
This bird was recorded at a number of locations during the first part of the trip.
- Anteating Chat** *Myrmecocichla formicivora*
Observed to the north of the Okaukuejo camp and further east in the Etosha National Park.

Arnot's Chat*Myrmecocichla arnotti*

We spotted a few of these handsome birds in the woodland along the Caprivi Strip. It is an uncommon species and one of the most targeted species for this area.

Short-toed Rock Thrush*Monticola brevipes*

Avis dam produced our first sightings of this attractive species, with further sightings on the drive to Walvis Bay, at Erongo Wilderness Lodge and in Etosha.

NOTE: The South African isolate *M. b. pretoriae* is sometimes split as Pretoria Rock Thrush.

Southern Black Flycatcher*Melaenornis pammelaina*

A pair of these birds was seen in the woodland of the Caprivi strip.

Pale Flycatcher*Bradornis pallidus*

Our only sighting was in the woodlands of the Caprivi.

Chat Flycatcher*Bradornis infuscatus*

Seen in the Central Highlands on the way to the Namibgrens Guesthouse.

Marico Flycatcher*Bradornis mariquensis*

This dry country flycatcher was recorded quite frequently, mainly in Etosha National Park.

Spotted Flycatcher*Muscicapa striata*

A number of these little migrants were seen in the Caprivi strip.

Ashy Flycatcher*Muscicapa caerulescens*

A good visual was had of a single bird along the Zambezi river, near Katima Mulilo.

African Dusky Flycatcher*Muscicapa adusta*

One bird was seen on a walk in the woodland behind Xaro Lodge in the Okavango Panhandle.

Sunbirds Nectariniidae**Collared Sunbird***Hedidipna collaris*

This colorful sunbird was seen quite often in the Albizia at the Kalizo Lodge.

Amethyst Sunbird*Chalcomitra amethystina*

Recorded in the western Caprivi strip as well as at Kalizo Lodge on one occasion.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird*Chalcomitra senegalensis*

Seen brilliantly at Avis dam and Daan Viljoen as well as in the Caprivi area.

Marico Sunbird*Cinnyris mariquensis*

Seen at the Avis dam, Etosha and many at the Kalizo Lodge, Zambezi river.

NOTE: Some authorities split this complex into 2 full species. The *C. m. suahelicus* which occurs in East Africa would become Swahili Sunbird as opposed to the nominate form which would remain as Mariqua Sunbird.

Purple-banded Sunbird*Cinnyris bifasciatus*

The riverine forest/woodland around Xaro Lodge produced these birds on both our days there.

White-bellied Sunbird*Cinnyris talatala*

Seen quite frequently during our time in the Caprivi area, particularly Kalizo Lodge.

Dusky Sunbird*Cinnyris fusca*

A common dry country species, it was recorded on our second day in Daan Viljoen and often after that until the eastern Etosha National Park.

Copper Sunbird*Cinnyris cupreus*

Seen well by most at the Kalizo Lodge.

Old World Sparrows Passeridae**White-browed Sparrow-weaver***Plocepasser mahali*

A very commonly encountered species throughout the tour, good close-up views in Daan Viljoen.

Sociable Weaver*Philetairus socius*

This amazing architect and builder was seen at Solitaire and in Etosha National Park on most days.

House Sparrow*Passer domesticus*

Recorded quite often during the first few days in built-up areas.

Great Sparrow*Passer motitensis*

First recorded at Avis dam and quite frequently during the first half of the trip.

NOTE: Some authorities including Clements split this African sparrow into five species. Shelley's Rufous Sparrow P. shelleyi occurs largely in Ethiopia, Great Rufous Sparrow P. motitensis occurs in Southern Africa, Kenya Rufous Sparrow P. rufocinctus occurs in East Africa, Kordofan Rufous Sparrow P. cordofanicus occurs in Sudan and Socotra Sparrow is endemic to Socotra.

Cape Sparrow

Passer melanurus

This colourful sparrow was seen in Solitaire, Walvis Bay and in Etosha.

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow

Passer diffusus

Observed frequently throughout, mainly in Etosha National Park.

NOTE: The Grey-headed Sparrow complex P. griseus has been split into five full species with the most southerly African form being classified as P. diffuses.

Yellow-throated Petronia

Gymnoris superciliaris

A few birds were quite active in the Caprivi strip, where we were able to get good scoped views.

Weavers, Widowbirds Ploceidae

Red-billed Buffalo-weaver

Bubalornis niger

This species was seen well in the Etosha National Park.

Scaly-feathered Weaver

Sporopipes squamifrons

This cute little bird was seen by most participants in Etosha National Park.

Spectacled Weaver

Ploceus ocularis

This species was observed on walks around Xaro Lodge in the Okavango panhandle.

African Golden Weaver

Ploceus xanthops

Regularly recorded in riverine vegetation on the Okavango and Zambezi rivers.

Southern Brown-throated Weaver

Ploceus xanthopterus

This species was seen quite regularly during the last week of the tour, first sighting in Rundu.

Lesser Masked Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

Recorded at Namutoni, Etosha by one participant.

Southern Masked Weaver

Ploceus velatus

This yellow bird was first observed in the Windhoek area, thereafter encountered on a regular basis.

Chestnut Weaver

Ploceus rubiginosus

Non-breeding individuals of this species were seen at Namutoni, Etosha NP.

Red-headed Weaver

Anaplectes rubriceps

A few of these birds were seen around the northern area of Mahango Game Reserve.

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

Memorable views were had of this species in the Namutoni Camp when tens of thousands came in to roost in the reedbeds.

Fan-tailed Widowbird

Euplectes axillaries

Recorded at the Rundu settling ponds and on the Okavango River.

Waxbills, Munias & Allies Estrildidae

Green-winged Pytilia

Pytilia melba

A stunning species observed at Erongo Wilderness Lodge, Etosha and in the Caprivi strip.

Red-headed Finch

Amadina erythrocephala

This species was seen at Avis dam and very well in the Etosha National Park.

Cut-throat Finch

Amadina fasciata

A few of these great little birds were seen in a mixed flock along the road, eastern Caprivi.

Brown Firefinch

Lagonosticta nitidula

A localized species, we managed to get good views at the Xaro and Kalizo Lodges.

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

Rundu Treatment Works produced the first view of this species, followed by views at Kalizo Lodge.

Blue Waxbill

Uraeginthus angolensis

Observed at Avis dam and later commonly from Namutoni eastwards.

Violet-eared Waxbill *Uraeginthus granatina*

This beautiful, dry country bird was first encountered at the Erongo Mountains, later on in Etosha we enjoyed stunning close views of them drinking.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Recorded at Gammams, Daan Viljoen, Walvis Bay and at Kalizo Lodge.

Black-faced Waxbill *Estrilda erythronotos*

Another beautiful dry-country seedeater, first seen at the Spitzkoppe and later on also in Namutoni.

Orange-breasted Waxbill *Amadava subflava*

Disappointing views of this colourful bird, a small flock in flight only, at Kalizo Lodge.

Indigobirds, Whydahs *Viduidae*

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

A few birds in non-breeding plumage at the Gammams waterworks, again in Livingstone.

Shaft-tailed Whydah *Vidua regia*

This attractive species was observed only in non-breeding plumage at scattered sites throughout the tour, among others at the Avis dam.

Long-tailed Paradise Whydah *Vidua paradisaea*

A few seen, again only in non-breeding plumage along the road in the eastern Caprivi.

Wagtails, Pipits *Motacillidae*

Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis*

Seen at Avis dam and close to other freshwater bodies, especially during the first days of the tour, also on the Okavango and in Livingstone.

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

Several of these striking birds recorded at Xaro Lodge, Okavango River and during the final week.

Rosy-throated Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae*

Three of these lovely and sought-after birds were seen on the moist grassland near Kalizo Lodge.

African Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus*

First recorded around the Gammams waterworks, Windhoek, it was most common in Etosha NP.

NOTE: African pipit taxonomy is in rather a disarray and much further research is required in the phylogeny of this grouping. Several forms which are considered subspecies are likely to become full species in their own rights and several new forms are surely still to be described.

Wood Pipit *Anthus nyassae*

Two pairs of these interesting pipits were seen along the road in the Caprivi strip.

Buffy Pipit *Anthus vaalensis*

Two birds seen in short grassland, just east of Katima Mulilo.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*

One of these birds was seen during our stay at Kalizo Lodge, on a burnt patch of grassland wetlands.

True Finches *Fringillidae*

Black-throated Canary *Serinus atrogularis*

This was the most commonly recorded canary throughout the tour, especially in the Etosha.

*NOTE: This species complex is sometimes split with the South African form remaining in the Black-throated Canary group as opposed to Reichenow's or Kenya Yellow-rumped Seed-eater *S. reichenowi*. Several endemic Ethiopian forms are sometimes lumped into the nominate *S. atrogularis* group including Yellow-throated Seed-eater *S. flavigula*, Salvadori's Seed-eater *S. xantholaemus* and Yellow-rumped Seed-eater *S. xanthopygius*.*

Yellow-fronted Canary *Serinus mozambicus*

A few little groups seen on the day we drove through the the woodland of the Caprivi Strip.

Yellow Canary *Serinus flaviventris*

This dry-country species was observed on a few drives in western Etosha NP.

White-throated Canary*Serinus albogularis*

Another dry-country canary, it was seen at Namibgrens Guesthouse, Spitzkoppe and the Erongos.

Buntings *Emberizidae***Lark-like Bunting***Emberiza impetuani*

Hundreds of these birds were seen in the Etosha, particularly around the waterhole at Okaukuejo.

Cinnamon-breasted (Rock) Bunting*Emberiza tahapisi*

Observed a few times in Etosha, best views were had to the north of Okaukuejo.

Cape Bunting*Emberiza capensis*

Birds seen very well at the watering point at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Golden-breasted Bunting*Emberiza flaviventris*

Recorded a few times in Etosha National Park and then also along the Caprivi strip.

MAMMALS

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

Commerson's Leaf-nosed Bat*Hipposideros commersoni*

Seen in Halali, under a thatched roof and at Roy's Camp.

Mauritian Tomb-bat*Taphozous mauritanus*

One individual roosting in the camp along the Zambezi river.

Western Rock Elephant Shrew*Elephantulus rupestris*

One seen by some at the Erongo Lodge

Scrub Hare*Lepus saxatilis*

A few were seen in Etosha and Roy's camp.

South African Ground Squirrel*Xerus inauris*

These delightful creatures were seen on the second day en route to Walvis Bay and later in the Okaukuejo area and camp in Etosha.

Smith's Bush (Tree) Squirrel*Paraxerus cepapi*

First recorded in Halali Camp in Etosha, they were later seen in the Okavango Panhandle.

Cape Porcupine*Hystrix africaeaustralis*

Kurt had one at Erongo in the evening.

Dassie Rat*Petromus typicus*

We saw this species – the only member of the Petromuridae family, very well at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Wild cat*Felis sylvestris*

The first one at Erongo and a number of great sightings later in Etosha.

Lion*Panthera leo*

Numerous sightings in Etosha, totaling about 24 animals over 4 days, with highlights being close views and drinking males.

Leopard*Panthera pardus*

We were very lucky to get a very good, close view of one at the base of the Spitzkoppe.

Cheetah*Acinonyx jubatus*

Another very difficult animal on this route: mother with two older cubs between Halali and Namutoni.

Small-spotted Genet*Genetta genetta*

Three seen in the evening from our dinner table at the Erongo Lodge

Slender Mongoose*Herpestes sanguinea*

A few places along the route, the best being the restricted black form at the Spitzkoppe and at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Banded Mongoose*Mungos mungo*

A family party was found in the Okaukuejo and later in and around the Namutoni camp of Etosha.

Yellow Mongoose*Cynictus penicillata*

The best view was had just south of the Namibgrens Guesthouse

Spotted Hyena*Crocuta crocuta*

This super predator/scavenger was seen on two mornings at the Okaukuejo waterhole in Etosha National Park.

Cape Fox*Vulpes chama*

A resting individual in its den and a pair in the open grassland, both sightings in Etosha.

Black-backed Jackal*Canis mesomelas*

Seen throughout Etosha National Park, where they are plentiful.

South African Fur Seal*Arctocephalus pusillus*

A few of these aquatic mammals were seen surfing and looking at us from the beach at paaltjies, Walvis Bay.

Honey Badger*Mellivora capensis*

Two seen in Halali camp in the evening

Hamadryas (Chacma) Baboon*Papio hamadryas*

Small troops of these baboons were seen during mainly the first part of the tour.

Vervet Monkey*Cercopithecus aethiops*

This delightful monkey was found in a number of places, most time was spent with them at the Victoria falls.

Bottlenosed Dolphin*Tursiops truncates*

A small school quite close to shore in Walvis Bay.

Heaviside's Dolphin*Cephalorhynchus heavisidii*

Distant views behind the breakers at Walvis Bay.

Common Warthog*Phacochoerus africanus*

Seen in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve by some and later in Etosha National Park and Mahango.

Hippopotamus*Hippopotamus amphibious*

Recorded in the Okavango River on the boat trips and in Mahango and the Zambezi.

Giraffe*Giraffa camelopardalis*

First seen at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and regularly in Etosha National Park.

Springbok*Antidorcas marsupialis*

Seen in the Namib area on the first days with huge numbers in Etosha National Park.

Steenbok*Raphicerus campestris*

First encountered en route to Walvis Bay, small numbers also seen in Etosha National Park.

Kirk's Dik-Dik*Madoqua kirkii*

A few seen in the Erongos while we had great views near Namutoni around the Dik-dik drive.

Klipspringer*Oreotragus oreotragus*

We were lucky to see two of these antelope near Namibgrens Guesthouse, en route to Walvis Bay.

Greater Kudu*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*

Seen at a variety of locations, including a memorable fence crossing on the Khomas Hochland.

Eland*Taurotragus oryx*

A few of these massive animals - the largest antelope in the world, were recorded in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and en route to Walvis Bay.

Common Bushbuck*Tragelaphus scriptus*

We had brief glimpses of these animals at Xaro Lodge.

Common Reedbuck*Redunca arundinum*

Recorded on the floodplain of the Okavango River in the Mahangu Game Reserve.

Red Lechwe*Kobus leche*

Small numbers were seen on the floodplains of the Okavango River in Mahango Game Reserve.

Roan Antelope *Hippotragus equinus*

A small herd of this pretty antelope was seen in the *Terminalia* scrub in Mahango Game Reserve.

Sable Antelope *Hippotragus niger*

A herd and one individual seen at a distance in Mahango Game Reserve

Gemsbok *Oryx gazelle*

First seen in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and regularly in Etosha National Park.

Hartebeest *Alcelaphus buselaphus*

We found this species at a few places in Etosha National Park.

Blue Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus*

Initially found at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, it was then seen daily during our stay in Etosha National Park and in Mahango Game Reserve.

Topi (Tsessebe) *Damaliscus lunatus*

It was good to see some of these uncommon animals on the floodplains in Mahango Game Reserve.

[Black-faced Impala] *Aepyceros melampus petersi*

In Etosha National Park we saw good numbers of the Black-faced Impala, which is a localized subspecies of this widespread species of the African savanna.

Impala *Aepyceros melampus melampus*

Mahango Game Reserve produced good numbers of this antelope.

Bush (Grey) Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia*

One fleeting glimpse north of Namutoni

Burchell's Zebra *Equus burchellii*

Seen every day in Etosha National Park in good numbers.

Hartmann's Mountain Zebra *Equus zebra zebra*

A few small herds seen well in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and some distant animals in the Namib.

Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*

On our first night in Etosha, ten animals came down to the waterhole in Okaukuejo Camp to drink, eight on the second night. Some interesting interaction with an Elephant was witnessed at Halali and one animal was seen during the day north of Namutoni.

Rock Hyrax *Procavia capensis*

High numbers recorded at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*

One of the highlights of the trip was watching a breeding herd of approximately 18 of these creatures bathe and play at a waterhole east of Namutoni. They ended the show by crossing the road close to our vehicle.

List of Reptiles and Amphibians

Namibia Rock Agama *Agama planiceps*

Western Rock Skink *Mabuya sulcata*

Namaqua Sand Lizard *Pedioplanis namaquensis*

Striped Skink *Mabuya striata*

Chobe Dwarf Gecko *Lygodactylus chobiensis*

African Flat Gecko *Afroedura africana*

Turner's Thick-toed Gecko *Pachydactylus turneri*

Ovambo Tree skink *Mabuya binotata*

Cape Rough-scaled Lizard *Ichnotropis capensis*

Variable Skink *Mabuya varia*

Nile Monitor *Varanus niloticus*

Nile Crocodile *Crocodylus niloticus*

Leopard Tortoise *Geochelone pardalis*
Marsh Terrapin *Pelomedusa subrufa*
Marbled Rubber Frog *Phrynomantis annectens*
Painted Reed Frog *Hyperolius marmoratus*
Western Olive Toad *Bufo [garmani] poweri*
Foam Nest Frog *Chiromantis xerampelina*

Photo Credits: All photos by Markus Lilje on the October 2007 tour.

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