



NAMIBIA & the OKAVANGO PANHANDLE

TRIP REPORT

7th – 23rd December 2006



Tour leader & trip report compiled by - Cuan Rush

**Tour participants - David & Amanda Mason
Pat & Judy Hayes**

Trip Summary

After arrival at Hosea Kutako International Airport, we transferred directly to our accommodation, Tamboti Guest House in the capital city of Namibia, Windhoek. We managed to pick-up White-backed Mousebird and a beautiful Scarlet-chested Sunbird male at the guest house before heading out to Daan Viljoen which lies to the west of Windhoek. Before we entered the reserve we had sightings of Monteiro's Hornbill and Rufous-crowned Roller, two attractive species. Daan Viljoen, situated in the rolling hills of the Khomas Hochland, is a great little reserve for birding and mammal viewing and it did not disappoint. Some of the more exciting birds seen during the afternoon there were Short-toed Rock-Thrush, Barred Camaroptera, Kalahari Scrub-Robin, Pririt Batis, Brown-crowned Tchagra, Pale-winged Starling, Rufous Sparrow and Violet-eared Waxbill. Our game drive through the rocky hillsides dotted with Acacias trees and scrub was excellent and we had great views of most of the larger mammals in the reserve including comical Chacma Baboons, the Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, Giraffe, Greater Kudu, Eland, Gemsbok (*Oryx*) and Blue Wildebeest. The afternoon went so well, that we had to race for the exit gate in order to make it before closing time. We left the reserve and went back to the guest house to freshen up for a scrumptious dinner at the famous Joe's Beerhouse.

A long day awaited us, so we enjoyed an early breakfast at Tamboti and then headed out towards Walvis Bay. Shortly after hitting the dirt track we descended into a deep dry river valley and we were extremely fortunate to encounter a covey of the highly sought-after near-endemic Orange River Francolin. We marveled at the unsurpassed views we had of at least six of these francolins close to the road as they called to each other completely out in the open. This site also produced other specials, namely: Damara Rock-jumper (Rockrunner) and Crimson-breasted Goney. The rest of the journey through the Khomas Hochland was also quite productive and we added South African Shelduck, Black Cuckoo, Damara Hornbill, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Gray-back Sparrow-Lark, Groundscraper Thrush, Desert Cisticola, Rufous-vented Warbler, Southern Anteater-Chat and Black-cheeked Waxbill.



Spreetshoogte Pass, the gateway to desolation and endless plains, produced the goods yet again on this tour. Firstly, at the top of the pass, we had fairly brief but good views of the White-tailed Shrike. Then, as we neared the bottom of the pass, we struck gold. Herero Chat, a near-endemic to Namibia and probably the most desired bird in the country, perched out in the open for us and we watched a pair calling at close range!!! After this success, we had lunch before venturing out into the desert. The rest of the afternoon was long and fairly tiring but the birds did not stop coming. Ostrich, Pale Chanting-Goshawk, Augur Buzzard, Ludwig's and Rueppell's Bustard (great birds!), Namaqua Sandgrouse, Stark's and the near-endemic Gray's Lark, Tractrac Chat, Cape Crow, Red-headed Finch and White-throated Canary are but a few of the species seen during the rest of the

day. Interesting mammals for the day (new for the trip) were South African Ground Squirrel, a family of Meerkat and Springbok.

This morning we opted for a lie-in and a later start to compensate for the long day on the road the day before. So, after breakfast we descended on the Walvis Bay lagoon in search of waders and seabirds. The lagoon was alive with activity and colour. Thousands of Greater Flamingo created a pink wash across the water while Common and Great Crested Tern and Hartlaub's Gull filled the skies. Waders in the form of Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Pied Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Black-bellied and White-fronted Plover, Common Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Curlew Sandpiper and Ruff littered the exposed mudflats of the lagoon. Specials seen during the morning included Chestnut-banded Plover, over 25 Red-necked Phalarope, the breeding endemic Damara

Tern and 2 American Golden-Plover. The Golden-Plovers are a mega-rarity for southern Africa and were an awesome pick-up. We also had smaller numbers of Arctic, Caspian and White-winged Tern and a brief sighting of jaeger but it was too distant to get a positive ID. The afternoon was spent in Swakopmund and at the salt-works near Mile 4 north of the coastal town. Sorting through the Greater Flamingos we finally found a few Lesser Flamingos. The guano platforms nearby were teeming with Cape Cormorants and we were unable to find any Bank Cormorants amongst these masses. Late in the afternoon we scoured the shoreline near Mile 4 for African Oystercatcher but to no avail. Other birds seen during the day were Kittlitz's Plover, Cape Wagtail, Orange River White-eye and Common Waxbill. The Raft was our dinner venue for the night and a great meal was had by all.

We made an early start to the day and headed out to Rooibank and the dry Kuiseb Riverbed south of Walvis Bay in search of the ochre-coloured Dune Lark. The scrubby dunes were alive with Gray-backed Sparrow-Lark and Cape Sparrow and it took us many passes up and down the dunes to eventually find a single Dune Lark. However, the riverbed also produced Eurasian (African) Hoopoe, Black-chested Prinia, the endemic Bokmakierie and the pretty Yellow Canary. Then it was back to the hotel for breakfast, followed by another visit to Swakopmund. We made several stops between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund in search of Bank Cormorant and African Oystercatcher. These birds did not materialize, but we did find Gray Heron, Crowned Cormorant, a very approachable Damara Tern and a few Cape Fur Seals.



After lunch we braved the heat and barrenness of the Welwitschia Plains to admire the plains' namesake. The plants were in attendance as usual but the conditions and harsh bumpy track were not conducive to good birding. However, we did see Red-capped Lark, the desert form of Tractrac Chat, Zitting Cisticola and a substantial herd of Springbok in the area. It is difficult to imagine how any living creature survives out there on that rocky lunar landscape! On the way back to town we stopped at a causeway over the Swakop River and were surprised to find some water in the riverbed. Here we observed Cape Teal, good numbers of Kittlitz's Plover, Three-banded and Blacksmith Plover, Sanderling and Pied Avocet. Thereafter, we made our way back to the hotel to get ready for dinner.

After a fairly late breakfast, we left the coast behind us and continued onward to the famous Spitzkoppe. En route we made a quick stop just outside Swakopmund at the Swakop River mouth and had scope views of Cape Shoveler, our only one for the whole trip. Spitzkoppe, also known as the "Matterhorn of Namibia", which are giant granite inselbergs that rise-up out of the flat desert floor, was our next stop. We arrived during the heat of the day but our picnic site in the small community reserve around the mountain was well shaded by a large Camelthorn Tree. Here we had a few gate-crashers to our luncheon in the form of Mountain Wheatear, Pale-winged Starling, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver and a bold Four-striped Mouse. This allowed for some close-up views of these birds and a few good photographic opportunities. At this site we also had the beautiful Rosy-faced Lovebird, the attractive Acacia Pied Barbet and one of the endemic targets for the area, Layard's Warbler. Stomachs full, we continued on to the ancient Erongo Mountains. These mountains are exposed volcanic rock and were created over 100 million years ago. Not far from our destination for the night we made a stop at the dry Khan River. Unfortunately, the stop was not very productive due to the heat; however, we did find Burchell's Starling and had good views of a pair of Damara Hornbill. Thereafter, it was onto Erongo Wilderness Lodge which is nestled in the magnificent Erongo Mountains. Not long after arrival, we were treated to absolutely amazing close-up views of a roosting family of Freckled Nightjars. It was incredible to see how well camouflaged the birds were, they literally blended into the rock substrate they were roosting on. The rest of the

afternoon was spent relaxing around the lodge.

We made a pre-dawn start to the day in search of the elusive and very special near-endemic Hartlaub's Francolin. Just as dawn was breaking we had fairly distant and dim views of a pair calling at the top of the ridge. Other birds that were around in the area during our morning walk included Pearl-spotted Owlet, Red-backed Scrub-Robin, Pririt Batis, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Familiar Chat, Carp's Tit, White-tailed Shrike, Violet-backed Starling, Green-winged Pytilia and Black-cheeked Waxbill. Then it was time for breakfast and some relaxing as we watched an endless stream of birds come in to drink just in front of the dinning area. After breakfast we packed up and headed for the world famous Etosha National Park. En route we took a shortcut on a dirt track and were rewarded with some good sightings of raptors which included Black-shouldered and Yellow-billed Kite, Brown and Black-breasted Snake-Eagle and Wahlberg's and Tawny Eagle. We also stopped in at Tandala Ridge in search of Hartlaub's Francolin and Bare-cheeked Babbler. The babblers were found fairly easily but the francolins proved extremely tough and we were frustrated by their close calls but could not get any visuals. The road from Tandala to Etosha was very wet due to some heavy thunderstorms and we had to take it slow. Not long after entering Etosha through Andersson gate we were fortunate to find a pair of Spotted Eagle-Owl close to the road. Mammals seen en route to Okaukuejo were Springbok, Black-faced Impala, Gemsbok, Burchell's Zebra, Giraffe, Banded Mongoose and Black-backed Jackal. We also spent some time at the waterhole after dinner and picked up Black Rhinoceros and Spotted Hyena.

Before breakfast we left the camp to explore the open grasslands and gravel plains north of Okaukuejo. We were fortunate to see a stunning Red-necked Falcon and a few Lanner Falcons. Secretary-bird, Kori Bustard, Double-banded Courser, both Gray-backed and Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark, Red-capped, Spike-heeled and Pink-billed Lark, Capped Wheatear, Shaft-tailed Whydah and Scaly Weaver were a few of the other species recorded on the morning's drive.



Probably the best sighting of the morning though, was two Lappet-faced Vultures feeding on a zebra carcass not far from the road's edge. After breakfast we spent a couple of hours birding the camps' grounds and this proved quite fruitful. The camp and waterhole produced great sightings of African Cuckoo, Cardinal Woodpecker, and an immature Gray-headed Kingfisher, Ashy Tit, Brubru, Crimson-breasted Goney and a huge flock of Red-billed Quelea. We then rested through the heat of an Etosha day until mid-afternoon when we headed out on another game drive. In the low scrubby vegetation we

found one of our target birds for the area, Rufous-eared Warbler. This small population in northern Namibia represents an isolated distribution in Etosha. Greater Kestrel, Red-crested Bustard, Rufous-naped Lark and Desert Cisticola were also seen on our game drive. On the mammal front we recorded Burchell's Zebra, Springbok, Giraffe, Gemsbok, Blue Wildebeest, Yellow Mongoose and Scrub Hare. The highlights of the evening spent at the Okaukuejo waterhole included hundreds of Double-banded Sandgrouse flying in to drink, brief views of a Pygmy Falcon and hunting Gabar Goshawk. We also had sightings of Water Thick-knee, Barn Owl, Rufous-cheeked Nightjar, Tree Rat, African Elephant and Black Rhinoceros.

Today we were continuing on to Halali Camp in central Etosha. So, it was another early start for a game drive before breakfast. The more notable species that we encountered were a group of 3 Ludwig Bustards, Southern Anteater Chat and Kalahari Scrub-Robin. Shortly before leaving Okaukuejo camp we visited the waterhole for the last time. There were animals everywhere – the black-and-white patterns of the Burchell's Zebra dominated proceedings as they mingled around drinking and shouting out to the morning. Another spectacular site was a small herd of Greater Kudu bulls coming in from the bush to quench their thirst. The scene was so amazing that we

literally had to drag ourselves away to leave the camp. En route to Halali we observed some Giraffe drinking at another waterhole just off the road, the usual mix of other game species and a herd of Red Hartebeest. In the *Mopane* woodland mid-way to Halali we found a noisy flock of White Helmet-Shrike, Southern White-crowned Shrike and Golden-breasted Bunting. We also added some Red-billed Duck to our waterfowl list and our first Bateleur for the trip. Arriving at Halali, we ate lunch and then checked into our chalets. A short walk in the camp grounds during the heat of the day produced a roosting Southern White-faced Owl, a pair of Carp's Tit and the striking Groundscraper Thrush. Unbeknown to us, we were to have an excellent afternoon game drive, despite starting off slowly. We headed further east from the Halali camp to a usually productive waterhole and were rewarded with some great sightings. The highlight (animal-wise) was a breeding herd of African Elephant drinking, feeding, mud-bathing etc...and when they left the waterhole we were perfectly positioned for a close encounter. Truly an awe-inspiring moment! While watching the elephants we spotted our first Dwarf Bittern and Comb Duck for the trip. Then, a short stint in some woodland allowed us to find a pair of Bronze-winged Courser very close to the road. Dusk was fast-approaching and we raced back to camp but not before recording an immature African Hawk-Eagle drinking at a roadside puddle. That night the waterhole at the camp produced a hunting Red-footed Falcon and we also searched the camp for African Scops-Owl and eventually located this tiny bird low down in a Mopane tree and enjoyed great views.

We birded the camp and surrounds in the early morning and found Pearl-spotted Owlet, Rufous-crowned Roller, Familiar Chat and Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver. Heading out after breakfast further east towards Namutoni, the northern-most camp, we notched-up some great birds. These included a soaring Martial Eagle, a flock of Bare-cheeked Babbler (one of the main specials in Etosha), Mosque Swallow, Secretary-bird, and an adult Gray-headed Kingfisher and shortly before arriving at Namutoni we had fantastic views of a pair of endemic Blue Crane resting in the shade of an Acacia tree close to the road. The cranes in this area represent a small isolated population in northern Namibia with the majority of the population being confined entirely to South Africa. The area around Namutoni is very scenic and when we were there it was lovely and green. On our afternoon drive we went north of Namutoni camp and circled around the seasonal Fischer's Pan. Double-banded Courser, Crested Francolin, Black-winged Stilt, Ruff, a single Pied Cuckoo, Red-billed Hornbill, a flock of Southern Pied-Babbler and Blue-breasted Cordonbleu were all on the menu. Mammal highlight were 3 lionesses relaxing in the scrub near to the road and a large herd of at least 100 Oryx in the short grasslands. Upon our return to camp, we made an obligatory stop at the waterhole and for good reason. We had a hunting Red-necked Falcon in the fading light, Water Thick-knee coming out to feed at the water's edge and a lioness strolled in for a drink as she bellowed out that mighty roar into the near darkness. A fitting end to a great day in Etosha!



Before breakfast, an early morning drive found us heading north towards the Andoni Plains. African Harrier-hawk, African Golden Oriole, European Roller, Fawn-coloured Lark, Rufous-vented Warbler, Mariqua Sunbird, Black-cheeked Waxbill and Yellow Canary were some of the species encountered on the morning drive. Mammals seen were Spotted Hyena walking along the dirt track next to our vehicle, the diminutive Steenbok and small numbers of Giraffe. Before leaving the incredible Etosha National Park, we took a drive on the circular Dik-dik Drive. The main aim of this drive was to find the tiny Damara Dik-dik which we did with flying colours, having sightings of at least 10 animals. Other mammals seen included Elephant, Warthog, Greater Kudu and Black-faced Impala. Birds recorded on the drive were White-backed Vulture, Tawny Eagle and Lilac-breasted Roller. Unfortunately, we only had brief views of another target bird, Black-faced Babbler, as we were leaving Etosha. We tried to rectify this at Mokuti Lodge just outside the Von Lindquist

Gate but to no avail. Instead, we had an amazing sighting of a beautiful Dwarf Bittern on the grass lawns of the lodge. Other birds seen during the short visit included Black-backed Puffback, a male White-bellied Sunbird and breeding plumage Eastern Paradise Whydahs. We then continued on our way towards Rundu, some 400km of hard tar road to negotiate. Just north of Grootfontein we were delayed slightly by a blow-out to one of the vehicle's rear tyres. Thankfully, the rest of the journey proceeded without any hiccups and the further north we ventured, the taller the vegetation became with stunning Teak woodlands dominating the area near Rundu. Arriving at the rustic N'Kwazi Lodge in the early evening we managed to add Hartlaub's Babbler and Village Indigobird to our list. The lodge is situated on the banks of the majestic Okavango River and we enjoyed our ice-cold beers as we watched another stunning African sunset!

Rundu Treatment Works was the first birding site for the day and it was alive with birds. The settling ponds and reedbeds at the treatment works gave us Black-crowned Night-Heron, Hottentot Teal, Southern Pochard, Baillon's Crake, Purple Swampphen, Marsh Sandpiper, Senegal Coucal, Malachite, Pied, Giant and Woodland Kingfisher, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Magpie Shrike, Swamp Boubou, Burchell's Starling, Southern Red Bishop, Shaft-tailed Whydah and Red-billed Firefinch. We also scoped a distant Osprey that was perched on a dead tree in the middle of the vast reedbeds. A really productive morning! During breakfast at the lodge we found Striated Heron and Lesser Jacana on the river. From N'Kwazi Lodge we continued to head eastwards through the Teak woodlands on towards Mahango Game Reserve. The good birding for the day did not stop and en route we sighted Dark Chanting Goshawk, Dideric Cuckoo, African Black-headed Oriole, Striped Kingfisher, Pale Flycatcher, Meves' Glossy-Starling, Wood Pipit and Scarlet-chested Sunbird. Close to Divundu we picked-up our first Southern Carmine Bee-eaters for the trip. These stunningly coloured birds are almost magical to look upon! After checking in to our chalets near Mahango



Game Reserve and enjoying a light lunch, African Mourning Dove, Black-collared Barbet, Ashy Flycatcher, White-browed Robin-Chat, Purple-banded Sunbird and Holub's Golden-Weaver were spotted in the lodge grounds. Later that afternoon we embarked on an optional boat cruise up the Okavango and it turned out to be an awesome choice. The sudden rise in the water level of the Okavango River had forced some of its inhabitants to concentrate on the remaining sandbanks. This resulted in us observing a huge flock of 400 Collared Pratincole both on the sandbank and in flight. We were also fortunate to find a solitary Rock Pratincole flitting from remaining sandbanks to almost submerged rocks in the river. Other Okavango specials seen on our river cruise were Slaty Egret carrying nesting material, Rufous-bellied Heron, White-backed Night-Heron, Long-toed Lapwing, African Skimmer, Coppery-tailed Coucal and both Winding and Chirping Cisticola. What a splendid ending to one of the best birding days of the tour.

Our destination for the day was Xaro Lodge south of Shakawe village in northern Botswana. We would spend two nights in this paradise alongside the Okavango River. En route we took the scenic riverside drive through Mahango Game Reserve which traverses moist grassland, wetlands, open plains, woodland and riparian vegetation. A flock of Woolly-necked Stork was seen briefly on the floodplains before they took flight followed by a sighting of the enigmatic African Fish Eagle. The thickets produced White-browed Scrub Robin and White-browed Coucal, while the riverine forest held Broad-billed Roller. Temminck's Courser was seen on the main dirt track in the reserve and a pair of Wattled Crane was scoped from a picnic site. Some of the larger antelope seen in Mahango were Red Lechwe, Roan Antelope and Impala. An African Cuckoo-Hawk was spotted near to the first border post on the Namibian side and it gave good views before flying away. After clearing customs and immigration we set-off into Botswana, but not before bumping into a flock of Arrow-marked Babbler. The riverine forest near Drotsky's Cabins gave us our first views of Emerald-

spotted Wood-Dove. The bird was not shy and it showed off its sparkling green wing-spots very well as the bird wandered into patches of sunlight. A siesta during the hottest part of the day was greatly appreciated by all before gearing up for the final birding of the day. Typical of life on the Okavango, we ventured out on a boat trip in the late afternoon to explore the quiet backwaters and lily-covered channels of the river. We were rewarded with sightings of African Openbill, White-backed Night Heron, Little Bittern, African Pygmy Goose, African Marsh Harrier, White-fronted Bee-eater, Brown-throated Martin, African Stonechat, Greater Swamp-Warbler and Southern Brown-throated Weaver. Shortly before dusk, on the way back to the lodge we came across a flock of Whiskered Tern foraging over the river.

Our schedule allowed for a full days exploration of the Okavango Panhandle near our lodge. This meant an early start to search for one of the MEGAS of the riverine forest in the area, Pel's Fishing-Owl. The woodland around the lodge was good to us and before long we had added African Green-Pigeon, African Wood Owl, Crested Barbet, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Great Reed-Warbler, Sulphur-breasted Bush-shrike, Violet-backed Starling, Yellow-breasted Apalis and Collared Sunbird to our bulging bird list. Before breakfast we eventually located a pair of the elusive Pel's and managed to squeeze off a few photographs of the birds, semi-hidden in the canopy of a Mangosteen tree. After scouring the woodland and riverine forest we boarded our boat for another river cruise. Our only Hadada Ibis was recorded for the trip, Little Sparrowhawk was seen on several occasions, bee-eaters were everywhere and African Snipe and Yellow Wagtail were seen on the flooded grasslands. Some of the other species found on the morning boat trip were the brilliantly-coloured Wire-tailed Swallow and the attractive Yellow-billed Oxpecker with bi-coloured yellow bill and red tip. Lunch beckoned and was thoroughly enjoyed by our group. Thereafter, while the others rested, David and I went for a short walk through the riverine forest behind the lodge. We found an African Barred Owlet which showed well for a long period and had great views of an adult Little Sparrowhawk perched in a large Jackal-berry tree. Nearer to the lodge, the localized and very pretty, Brown Firefinch was seen foraging on the ground. Very good going for the hottest part of the day! We headed downstream for our afternoon boat session and found Allen's Gallinule, the only new species for our trip list.



On our last morning in the Panhandle, David and I walked the woodland near the lodge for the final time. This proved to be fruitful, as we found some good birds including Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Red-faced Mousebird, Green Woodhoopoe, Terrestrial Brownbul, Kurrichane Thrush, Red-billed Oxpecker and Retz's Helmet-Shrike. We then consumed a sumptuous breakfast before heading upstream to Drotsky's Cabins where our vehicle awaited us. A short walk in and around the grounds at Drotsky's gave us a flying African Goshawk, roosting Barn Owl, the stunning Narina Trogon and the intra-African migrant African Paradise-Flycatcher. We crossed back into Namibia and headed directly for Mahangu Safari Lodge. It was a sweltering day and the birding was fairly quiet, but we did manage to spot a Dusky Lark on the main dirt track. As usual we relaxed for most of the early afternoon by sitting on the viewing deck and gazing out over the Okavango River. Some of the birds recorded during, what I like to call 'perfect birding conditions', were a single Saddle-billed Stork, our only Yellow-billed Duck for the trip and Southern Black Tit along with most of the birds seen on the first visit to Mahangu. Our last boat ride on the Okavango River was also very relaxing, but did not produce as many specials as the original trip. Nonetheless, we found perched Lesser-striped Swallow in the reedbeds, the lonely Rock Pratincole, Black Crake and the richly-coloured African Jacana. A sundowner on the river ended yet another fascinating day.

While most of the group had a sleep-in, David and I ventured out into the grasslands behind the lodge and found some good birds. Rufous-naped Lark called from the grassland, Meyer's Parrot

screached from the riverside trees, a Bradfield's Hornbill saluted us with a fly-over while Coppery-tailed Coucal was ever-present. However, we were made to work for good views of Black Coucal, a denizen of rank vlei areas, which after some coercing responded to playback. Another bird that kept us on our toes was the attractive African Quailfinch. We flushed this species many times from the short grassland, waited for them to land and then tracked them, but somehow the small birds blended into the surroundings extremely well. Just as we thought we were going to step on them, they flushed and the cycle repeated itself. Eventually, we managed to get fairly decent views of a pair on the ground and satisfied with our efforts returned to the lodge for breakfast. Today's travel day would take us back to N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu, so after our morning meal we left the Mahango area and re-traced our footsteps from a few days ago. The journey was fairly uneventful but did produce a flock of Abdim's Stork in a cultivated field next to the main highway. We also had a pair of Rufous-chested Swallow at the same location as the storks. At the lodge, we found Yellow-bellied Greenbul in the gardens and had awesome views of Black Cuckoo which responded very well to tape playback. We decided to spend the late afternoon birding the Rundu Treatment Works again, as it had been so productive on the first visit. The usual waders and waterfowl were available, but we also recorded birds worth a mention, namely: Black Heron, Eurasian Hobby, Lesser Moorhen, Allen's Gallinule, Greater Painted Snipe, Three-banded Plover and a large flock of the 'bumble-bee look-alikes' Yellow-crowned Bishop. Heading back to N'Kwazi Lodge for the night, we observed a massive flock of Comb Duck foraging in a recently ploughed field at the roadside. Quite a spectacle to end the days birding.

The second last day of the tour was a travel day to the rugged Waterberg Plateau National Park south of Rundu. The first half of the journey was on good tar road and past by easily. We only added Southern Black Flycatcher at the veterinary checkpoint and a Brown Snake-Eagle further on down the road. Then it was onto some good gravel tracks through cattle farms north-east of the Waterberg. The only stopping we did in this section was to open the gates of each farm we passed through and for a fly-over Bradfield's Hornbill. All of a sudden, the dirt track's condition changed and we had to deal with an extremely slippery and muddy road for about 50km. We successfully negotiated this obstacle with a few nerve-racking moments and peak concentration and also managed to find a nesting colony of Chestnut Weavers in breeding plumage. The camp at Waterberg is nestled into the base of the harsh, red-coloured cliffs and it is full of birds. So, after a short break, we walked around in search of the specials of the area. We found good numbers of the beautiful Red-billed Francolin, a pair of the endemic Rueppell's Parrot, Rufous-crowned Roller, and Mariqua Sunbird and spent a good few minutes photographing a pair of very confiding Pearl-spotted Owlet. The cliffs are ideal for flying swifts and we had a large mixed flock which included Alpine, Bradfield's, Little and Common Swift. We were also treated to great views of the dark race of Dwarf Mongoose. The family was moving



through camp in search of food and went from bungalow to bungalow looking for tidbits. That night we went to sleep to the barking calls of Chacma Baboon and the 'kow-kow' shouts of Freckled Nightjar.

The final morning of the tour began with a pre-breakfast walk on the lower slopes of the Waterberg Plateau. It was pretty quiet, but we still found Rosy-faced Lovebird, Acacia Pied Barbet, White-browed Scrub-robin, Gray-backed Camaroptera and Green-winged Pytilia. We also came across some extremely fresh Leopard tracks which made us wonder if we were being watched from the dense bush around us! Other birds seen closer to the camp were Gabar Goshawk, Common Scimitar-bill, Burnt-neck Eremomela and Violet-eared Waxbill. Just outside the restaurant was a mixed breeding colony of Lesser and Southern Masked-Weavers. Two male Lesser Masked-Weavers got into a brawl and flew into one of the restaurant's windows and were promptly stunned.

We rescued them and took them to a shady spot to recover from their testosterone-filled battle. We were fortunate to see a pair of Verreaux's Eagle soaring above the cliff face just before we departed from the Waterberg. Heading back to Windhoek we were amazed by the large flocks of Yellow-billed Kite near to the road and we suspected a termite emergence had created this stir. Our Namibian adventure ended, where it had all begun, in the capital city, Windhoek. After final farewells we went our separate ways and headed home filled with good memories.

Annotated List of Birds

Nomenclature and taxonomy follows J. F. Clements Birds of the World: A Checklist 5th Edition (2000) Ibis Publishing Company, with updates to July 2005.

TOTAL OF 379 SPECIES

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: The subspecies S. c. molybdophanes of dry East Africa is regarded by some authorities as a distinct species; Somali Ostrich. The form we observed would remain with the nominate Common Ostrich S. camelus. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Grebes *Podicipedidae*

Little Grebe (Dabchick)

Tachybaptus ruficollis

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

Eared (Black-necked) Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

A large flotilla of over 100 of these birds was seen in Walvis Bay, on the way out to Paaltjies.

Pelicans *Pelecanidae*

Great (Eastern) White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

Small flocks of this beautiful bird were observed in the Walvis Bay area.

Cormorants *Phalacrocoracidae*

Great (White-breasted) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax [carbo] lucidus

Recorded at Daan Viljoen and the Walvis Bay/Swakopmund areas.

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

Cape Cormorant

Phalacrocorax capensis

Large numbers were seen daily in the Walvis Bay and Swakopmund area.

Reed (Long-tailed) Cormorant

Phalacrocorax africanus

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

Crowned Cormorant

Phalacrocorax coronatus

A few pairs were seen on the beach opposite the guano platforms between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Anhinga & Darter *Anhingidae*

(African) Darter

Anhinga [melanogaster] rufa

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. Clements uses the latter treatment of lumping these forms.

Hérons, Egrets & Bitterns *Ardeidae*

Gray Heron

Ardea cinerea

Recorded daily in the Walvis Bay/Swakopmund area.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

This heron was recorded at most sites along the Okavango River in Namibia and Botswana.

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

Great (White) Egret

Ardea albus

This elegant egret was seen on the floodplains in Mahango Game Reserve and then at various sites along the Okavango River.

NOTE: The nominate Old World Great Egret may be split from the New World A. a. egretta which would become American Egret. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.

Slaty Egret

Egretta vinaceigula

Crippling views of this highly sought-after species were had during a boat ride on the Okavango River. The bird was observed for a good few minutes as it gathered nest material close to the river.

Black Heron (Egret)

Egretta ardesiaca

A fly-over sighting of this bird was had at the Rundu Treatment works.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

A few individuals were seen at Walvis Bay Lagoon with further sightings in the Caprivi and the Okavango Panhandle.

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.

(Common) Squacco Heron

Ardeola ralloides

It was recorded in small numbers on the Okavango River in the Caprivi Strip and in Botswana.

Rufous-bellied Heron

Ardeola rufiventris

This uncommon and richly-colored species was seen very well during boat trips on the Okavango River near Mahango and Shakawe.

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

It was seen at Walvis Bay Lagoon and Swakopmund and later in larger roosts in the Okavango Panhandle.

NOTE: This group may be split into 2 species, the nominate Common Cattle Egret and the Asian/Australasian Eastern Cattle Egret E. coromanda. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.

Striated (Green-backed) Heron

Butorides striatus

Small numbers of this attractive heron were recorded almost daily along the Okavango River in the Caprivi and the Okavango Panhandle.

Black-crowned Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

Birds were recorded at the Rundu Treatment Works and in the Okavango Panhandle.

White-backed Night Heron

Gorsachius leuconotus

Good views of a pair of birds were had on a boat cruise in the Okavango near Mahangu Safari Lodge and other sightings in the Okavango Panhandle.

Little Bittern

Ixobrychus minutus

A couple of single birds were flushed from the reedbeds during boat trips in the Okavango Delta.

Dwarf Bittern

Ixobrychus sturmi

Three sightings of single birds were at Etosha National Park, Mokuti Lodge and N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu.

Hamerkop *Scopidae*

Hamerkop

Scopus umbretta

We spotted this species on the first day near Windhoek and then later it was seen in the Okavango Panhandle.

Storks *Ciconidae*

African Open-bill

Anastomus lamelligerus

Small numbers of this peculiar looking species were recorded in the Caprivi region and in the Okavango Panhandle.

Abdim's Stork

Ciconia abdimii

A fair sized flock was seen feeding in a fallow field en route from Divundu to Rundu.

Woolly-necked Stork

Ciconia episcopus

Approximately 15 birds were seen briefly in Mahango Game Reserve.

Saddle-billed Stork

Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis

We only had a fly-by of a juvenile bird seen from the deck at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Marabou Stork

Leptoptilos crumeniferus

A good-sized flock was recorded in flight in the Khomas Hochland region with further sightings in Etosha National Park.

Ibises & Spoonbills *Threskiornithidae*

Hadada (Hadedda) Ibis

Bostrychia hagedash

This species was seen only once in the Okavango Panhandle.

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

Low numbers were recorded along the Okavango River.

Flamingos *Phoenicopteridae*

Greater Flamingo

Phoenicopus ruber

Huge flocks of these gorgeous birds were seen at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund. Also, a single bird was seen flying near the Okaukuejo in Etosha National Park.

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

Lesser Flamingo

Phoenicopus minor

Surprisingly, low numbers of this species were had at Mile 4 near Swakopmund.

Geese & Ducks *Anatidae*

White-faced (Whistling) Duck

Dendrocygna viduata

First seen at Mahangu Safari Lodge and then on the Okavango River, it was also found at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiacus

It was commonly encountered throughout the tour in Namibia.

South African Shelduck

Tadorna cana

This endemic species to southern Africa was recorded on a farm dam in the Khomas Hochland region, waterholes in Etosha and at Rundu Treatment Works.

Spur-winged Goose

Plectropterus gambensis

Our first record came from the Rundu area; it was seen on the floodplains of Mahango Game Reserve and on the Okavango River.

Comb Duck

Sarkidiornis melanotos

First encountered near Halali in Etosha National Park, it was also seen at Mahangu Safari Lodge with very large flocks feeding on cultivated lands in the Rundu area.

African Pygmy-goose

Nettapus auritus

We observed several of these exquisite birds in the Okavango Panhandle near Xaro Lodge.

Cape Teal

Anas capensis

A pretty teal, it was recorded at the salt pans around Walvis Bay and Swakopmund, and later at Rundu Treatment Works.

Red-billed Duck (Teal)

Anas erythrorhyncha

Recorded in Etosha National Park and Rundu Treatment Works.

Hottentot Teal

Anas hottentota

This species was seen on both visits to the Rundu Treatment Works.

Cape Shoveler

Anas smithii

It was found only at the mouth of the Swakop River just outside the town of Swakopmund.

Southern Pochard

Netta erythrophthalma

This attractive duck was recorded on both visits to the Rundu Treatment Works.

Osprey Pandionidae

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Recorded at the Rundu Treatment Works on our first visit.

Hawks, Kites, Eagles & Vultures Accipitridae

African Cuckoo Hawk

Aviceda cuculoides

Good views of this raptor were had in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Black-shouldered (-winged) Kite

Elanus caeruleus

This widespread raptor was seen throughout the trip except during our stay in Walvis Bay.

Black (Yellow-billed) Kite

Milvus [migrans] aegyptius

First seen near Etosha National Park we had very large flocks en route from the Waterberg to Windhoek.

NOTE: This species is usually lumped with Black Kite, M.migrans.

African Fish-Eagle

Haliaeetus vocifer

Recorded daily during our stay on the Okavango River in Namibia and Botswana.

(African) White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus

First encountered in the Khomas Hochland region, it was then seen in good numbers in Etosha National Park and commonly recorded in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Lappet-faced Vulture

Torgos tracheliotus

This globally threatened species was first seen over the Central Highlands with an excellent sighting of two birds feeding on a zebra carcass in Etosha National Park near Okaukuejo.

Black-breasted (-ched) Snake-Eagle

Circaetus pectoralis

Our initial sighting was in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, with further sightings en route to Etosha and within the park.

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

Single birds seen en route from the Erongos to Etosha and outside Rundu.

Bateleur

Terathopius ecaudatus

This attractive raptor, which so typifies the African bushveld, was first recorded in Etosha National Park and it became more common as we traveled north and east into Botswana, and along the Caprivi Strip.

African Marsh-Harrier *Circus ranivorus*

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

African Harrier-Hawk (Gymnogene) *Polyboroides typus*

Recorded north of Namutoni in Etosha National Park and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Dark Chanting Goshawk *Melierax metabates*

A few sightings of this elegant raptor were had between Rundu and Divundu in northern Namibia.

(Southern) Pale Chanting Goshawk *Melierax canorus*

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

Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*

Probably the most vocal Accipiter of the dry west, it was seen in Etosha National Park, Rundu Treatment Works and the Waterberg.

African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro*

A single bird was seen flying over Drotsky's Cabins in the Okavango Panhandle.

Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus*

Several recorded on the Okavango River during boat trips and also seen very well in the woodlands behind Xaro Lodge.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Recorded regularly during the tour.

Augur Buzzard *Buteo augur*

A single bird was seen near the Kuiseb River Pass en route to Walvis Bay.

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax*

These large eagles were recorded en route to Etosha National Park, in the park, near Mahangu Safari Lodge and near Rundu.

NOTE: The nominate African Tawny Eagle A. r. rapax may be split from the Asian Tawny Eagle A. r. vindhiana. This split is as yet not recognized by Clements.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi*

First seen en route from the Erongos to Etosha, we had other sightings in the Mahango area, Caprivi and Waterberg.

African Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster*

We had a single immature bird in the Halali area of Etosha National Park.

Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus*

A single bird was seen in the Namutoni area of Etosha.

Secretary-bird Sagittariidae

Secretary-bird *Sagittarius serpentarius*

Recorded almost daily during our stay in Etosha National Park.

Falcons & Kestrels Falconidae

Pygmy Falcon *Polihierax semitorquatus*

Unusually, we only had brief views of this diminutive falcon in the Okaukuejo camp at Etosha.

Eurasian (Common/Rock) Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

This species was regularly recorded in Central Namibia, during the first week of the tour up to Etosha National Park.

Greater Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides*

Our best sightings of this kestrel were in Etosha National Park.

Red-necked Falcon

Falco chicquera

We found this handsome raptor in Etosha National Park.

Red-footed Falcon

Falco vespertinus

This migrant species was recorded at dusk feeding on the wing at the waterhole in Halali camp.

Eurasian (European) Hobby

Falco subbuteo

This uncommon visitor was recorded on the Okavango River at Mahangu Safari Lodge and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Lanner Falcon

Falco biarmicus

Regularly recorded in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha, it was also found at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

An individual bird was recorded near Namutoni in Etosha National Park.

Francolins & Allies Phasianidae

Crested Francolin

Fracolinus [Peliperdix] sephaena

Great views were had of a bird calling from a tree north of Namutoni camp.

Orange River Francolin

Fracolinus [Scleroptila] levaillantoides

Amazing views of a covey of these near-endemic francolins were had just south of Windhoek en route to Walvis Bay.

Hartlaub's Francolin

Fracolinus hartlaubi

We had early morning views of a pair on top of a ridge in the Erongo Mountains. Later on during the trip, we heard this species at Tandala Ridge and the Waterberg plateau.

Red-billed Francolin

Fracolinus adspersus

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

Swainson's Francolin (Spurfowl)

Fracolinus swainsonii

First heard in Etosha National Park, it was later seen behind Mahangu Safari Lodge.

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.) Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Cranes Gruidae

Blue Crane

Grus [Anthropoides] paradisea

A pair of this endemic crane species was seen very well close to Namutoni camp in Etosha National Park.

Wattled Crane

Grus carunculatus

A pair of these regal birds was observed on the floodplains in the Mahango Game Reserve, on our first visit to the reserve.

Rails, Gallinules & Coots Rallidae

Black Crake

Amaurornis flavirostris

This common waterside bird was recorded in the Caprivi area, and Okavango Panhandle.

Baillon's Crake

Porzana pusilla

This secretive species was seen at Rundu Treatment Works.

(African) Purple Swamphen

Porphyrio [porphyrio] madagascariensis

This large, colorful gallinule was recorded in the Okavango Panhandle and the Rundu Treatment Works.

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 (Lesser) Gallinule

Porphyrio alleni

We recorded this species in the Okavango Panhandle and the Rundu Treatment Works.

Common Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

This common and widespread species was recorded at several freshwater locations in Namibia.

Lesser Moorhen

Gallinula angulata

Birds seen near Xaro Lodge and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Red-knobbed Coot

Fulica cristata

This species was seen at a couple of inland water bodies in Namibia.

Bustards Otididae

Kori Bustard

Ardeotis kori

This, the heaviest of all flying birds in the world, was first seen en route to the Tandala Ridge and then recorded daily in Etosha National Park.

Ludwig's Bustard

Neotis ludwigii

Our first sighting was near Solitaire en route to Walvis Bay with another good sighting of three birds in Etosha National Park.

Rueppell's Bustard (Korhaan)

Eupodotis rueppelli

Small groups of this attractive bustard species, which is almost entirely restricted to Namibia, were observed on the drive from the Spreetshoogte to Walvis Bay.

Red-crested Bustard (Korhaan)

Eupodotis ruficristata

This species was first heard in the Khomas Hochland region and then seen in small numbers in Etosha National Park.

NOTE: The southern Red-crested Bustard 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 recognized by Clements.

White-quilled Bustard (Northern Black Korhaan) *Eupodotis afroaoides*

We had many sightings of this spunky bird daily in Etosha National Park.

Jacanas Jacanidae

Lesser Jacana

Microparra capensis

First spotted while enjoying breakfast at N'Kwazi Lodge, we also recorded a few of these delicate birds on the Okavango River in Botswana.

African Jacana

Actophilornis africanus

First observed at the waterhole in Namutoni camp, it was then found in suitable habitat in the Caprivi region and Okavango Panhandle.

Painted-Snipes Rostratulidae

Greater Painted-Snipe

Rostratula benghalensis

A fabulous male was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works on our second visit.

Stilts & Avocets Recurvirostridae

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

Recorded first at Walvis Bay, Etosha and Rundu Treatment Works.

Pied Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

This species was only recorded in the Walvis Bay lagoon and Swakopmund.

Thick-knees *Burhinidae*

Water Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus vermiculatus

Seen at the waterhole at Okaukuejo and Namutoni camp in Etosha, it was also recorded along the Okavango River.

Spotted Thick-knee (Dikkop)

Burhinus capensis

Recorded on most days during our stay in Etosha National Park, we also found this bird in Mahango Game Reserve.

Courasers & Pratincoles *Glareolidae*

Temminck's Courser

Cursorius temminckii

This slimly-built courser was only seen in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Double-banded Courser

Cursorius smutsornis

Relatively common in Etosha National Park in small numbers.

Bronze-winged Courser

Rhinoptilus chalcopterus

A fabulous sighting was had of a pair in *Mopane* woodland near Halali camp in Etosha.

Collared (Red-winged) Pratincole

Glareola pratincola

The most memorable sighting was of a large flock (approx. 400 birds) on the Okavango River near Mahangu Safari Lodge. The birds were gathering on the remaining sandbanks in the river before migrating.

Rock Pratincole

Glareola nuchalis

A single bird was seen during a boat ride on Okavango River near Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Plovers & Lapwings *Charadriidae*

Long-toed Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus crassirostris

This very attractive wetland species was recorded daily on the Okavango River from Mahangu Safari Lodge in Namibia to Xaro Lodge in Botswana.

Blacksmith Plover (Lapwing)

Vanellus armatus

Recorded at nearly all fresh water bodies throughout Namibia and Botswana on almost every day.

Crowned Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus coronatus

This common dry west species was seen during our stay in the Etosha National Park and on a day visit to Mahango Game Reserve.

Wattled Lapwing (Plover)

Vanellus senegallus

A few of pairs were seen during boat cruises on the Okavango River from Mahangu Safari Lodge and Xaro Lodge.

American Golden-Plover

Pluvialis dominica

Two birds were recorded in the Walvis Bay lagoon. This represents one of just a handful of records for this species in southern Africa.

Black-bellied (Grey) Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

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

Common Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

Seen only in the Walvis Bay lagoon on our tour.

Kittlitz's Plover

Charadrius pecuarius

First observed at Walvis Bay and then later on in good numbers in the dry riverbed of the Swakop River.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*

Seen in small numbers during the tour in suitable habitat.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*

This species was recorded daily in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area with further sightings at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Chestnut-banded Plover *Charadrius pallidus*

These attractive waders, with their neat chestnut breast band, were seen in the Walvis Bay lagoon. The bulk of the world population is restricted to this area.

Sandpipers & Allies Scolopacidae

African Snipe *Gallinago nigripennis*

A few birds recorded on the floodplains of the Okavango River near Xaro and Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

A couple of birds were seen on the mud flats of Walvis Bay lagoon.

(Common) Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

As above, a few seen on the mud flats on Walvis Bay lagoon and along the coastal strip, between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Three birds were seen at Mile 4 Saltworks north of Swakopmund.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*

Recorded on the mudflats of Walvis Bay lagoon and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

First seen at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund area, we also had sightings in Etosha and Rundu Treatment Works.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Recorded at most freshwater bodies during our tour.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Seen at a number of wetland areas, with the first sighting at Daan Viljoen.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Recorded daily during our stay in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

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

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Small numbers seen in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

This shorebird was only recorded on the mudflats of Walvis Bay-Swakopmund.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Recorded at most wetland areas throughout the trip.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

At least 25 birds were seen near the Saltworks in Walvis Bay on the way out to Paaltjies.

Gulls Laridae

(Cape) Gull *Larus [dominicanus] vetula*

Seen daily in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund 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.

Hartlaub's Gull

Larus hartlaubii

As for the above species, it was seen daily in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area.

Terns Sternidae

Caspian Tern

Sterna caspia

We had good views of small numbers of this large tern species in the Walvis Bay/Swakopmund area on our first day in the area.

Sandwich Tern

Sterna sandvicensis

A few birds were observed in the Walvis Bay lagoon and Swakopmund area.

Great Crested (Swift) Tern

Sterna bergii

Commonly recorded in small numbers in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area.

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

Large numbers were seen in the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund area.

Arctic Tern

Sterna paradisaea

A single bird was found in Walvis Bay on the first day in the area.

Damara Tern

Sterna balaenarum

We had excellent views of this attractive, breeding-endemic tern standing on the beach along the coast between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Whiskered Tern

Chlidonias hybridus

Good-sized flocks of 25+ birds were recorded on both evenings during boat trips on the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge. We also saw a single bird at the Rundu Treatment Works.

White-winged Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus

A small flock was seen on our first day in Walvis Bay.

Skimmers Rynchopidae

African Skimmer

Rynchops flavirostris

A pair of these beautiful birds was seen on the Okavango River near Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Sandgrouse Pteroclididae

Namaqua Sandgrouse

Pterocles namaqua

Our first records were from the Khomas Hochland region near Spreetshoogte and then later a fly-over en route from Swakopmund to Spitzkoppe.

Double-banded Sandgrouse

Pterocles bicinctus

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

Doves & Pigeons Collumbidae

Rock (Feral) Pigeon

Columba livia

This exotic species was seen in small numbers around human settlement, especially in Windhoek and Walvis Bay.

Speckled (Rock) Pigeon

Columba guinea

Recorded at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and Windhoek and then later in the Erongo Mountains.

African Mourning Dove

Streptopelia decipiens

This dove with its delightful call was seen around Mahangu Safari Lodge on the Okavango River.

Red-eyed Dove

Streptopelia semitorquata

Recorded daily from Mahangu Safari Lodge until the end of the tour, bar the last day.

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove

Streptopelia capicola

This common species was recorded almost every day, throughout the tour.

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*

It was seen almost daily in small numbers during the tour.

Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove *Turtur chalcospilos*

First seen at Drotsky's Cabins upon arrival, thereafter, it was recorded in the woodland around Xaro Lodge.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*

This long-tailed dove was seen first at Rooibank outside Walvis Bay, it was then particularly common in Etosha National Park.

African Green-Pigeon *Treron calva*

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

Parrots & Allies *Psittacidae*

Rosy-faced Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis*

A pair was observed at Spitzkoppe, followed by good numbers in the Erongo Mountains and a few at Waterberg Plateau National Park.

Meyer's (Brown) Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri*

Seen in the riverine forest at Mahangu Safari Lodge and also in small numbers daily in the Okavango Panhandle.

Rueppell's Parrot *Poicephalus rueppellii*

Good views were had of a pair in the Waterberg Plateau National Park.

Turacos *Musophagidae*

Gray Go-away-bird *Corythaixoides concolor*

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

Cuckoos *Cuculidae*

Pied (Jacobin) Cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*

A few birds were seen in Etosha National Park, Mahangu Safari Lodge, Mahango Game Reserve, Xaro Lodge and Waterberg.

Levaillant's (Striped) Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii*

A single bird was seen briefly near the town of Outjo en route to Etosha National Park.

Black Cuckoo *Cuculus clamosus*

First we had brief views of bird in flight in the Khomas Hochland region, followed by great views of a pair at N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu.

Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

The teak woodlands just outside Rundu produced a single bird of this species.

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis*

Excellent, close-up views were had of a bird in Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha National Park.

Dideric Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius*

Recorded in Etosha NP, N'Kwazi Lodge and Xaro Lodge.

Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*

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

Coppery-tailed Coucal *Centropus cupreicaudus*

We enjoyed a number of sightings of this large coucal at Mahangu Safari Lodge and Xaro Lodge on the Okavango River.

Senegal Coucal

Centropus senegalensis

This species was seen at Rundu Treatment Works, Mahango Game Reserve, Xaro Lodge and the Waterberg.

White-browed Coucal

Centropus superciliosus

Recorded at Rundu Treatment Works and Mahango Game Reserve.

Barn Owls Tytonidae

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

First seen at the waterhole at Okaukuejo Camp, we later had a sighting of a roosting bird on a cliff face near Halali and also a pair at Drotsky's Cabins.

Typical Owls Strigidae

African Scops-Owl

Otus senegalensis

We had close-up views of a bird at night in the grounds of Halali Camp after tracking it down.

Southern White-faced Owl

Ptilopsis granti

We surprised a roosting owl and obtained lovely views of the bird in the trees of Halali Camp.

Spotted Eagle-Owl

Bubo africanus

Shortly after entering Etosha, we had a good sighting of a pair roosting near to the road.

Pel's Fishing-Owl

Scotopelia peli

One of the most wanted birds of the trip and we had two separate sightings of these amazing birds in the Okavango Panhandle.

African Wood-Owl

Strix woodfordii

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

Pearl-spotted Owlet

Glaucidium perlatum

Seen first in the Erongos, we had further sightings in Etosha National Park and brilliant views in the Waterberg.

African Barred Owlet

Glaucidium capense

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

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

Nightjars & Allies Caprimulgidae

Rufous-cheeked Nightjar

Caprimulgus rufigena

Our sighting of this species was of hunting birds at the waterhole in Okaukuejo Camp.

Freckled Nightjar

Caprimulgus tristigma

We obtained spectacular views of a pair and two youngsters roosting at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Swifts Apodidae

African Palm-Swift

Cypsiurus parvus

Recorded on our first day in Windhoek, it was seen on a number of occasions during the 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. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Alpine Swift

Tachymarptis melba

This, the largest known swift, was seen once in the Erongo Mountains and in good numbers in the Waterberg.

Common Swift

Apus apus

Highest numbers were recorded on the plains in Etosha National Park.

Bradfield's Swift

Apus bradfieldi

This large brown swift was seen in Windhoek on the first two days of the tour and then again in the Waterberg Plateau NP.

Little Swift *Apus affinis*

This common urban swift was recorded in the Windhoek & Walvis Bay area, and then again in the Waterberg Plateau NP.

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*

Seen during the first four days during our tour, namely in the Windhoek area and over Swakop River.

Mousebirds Coliidae

White-backed Mousebird *Colius colius*

Seen first at Tamboti Guest House in Windhoek, we had further sightings en route to Walvis Bay and at Rooibank.

Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus*

Recorded in the woodlands behind Xaro Lodge and at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Trogon Trogonidae

Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina*

A single male was observed in the riverine forest near Drotsky's Cabins.

Kingfishers Alcedinidae

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*

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

Gray-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*

An immature was seen in the camp grounds of Okaukuejo in Etosha and an adult en route to Namutoni.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*

A very vocal and colorful species, it was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works, Xaro Lodge and N'Kwazi Lodge.

Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti*

This kingfisher was recorded in the teak woodland en route to Mahangu Safari Lodge from Rundu.

Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*

This impressive kingfisher was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works and Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*

Recorded at most water bodies from Mahangu Safari Lodge onwards, with highest count being along the waterways in the Okavango.

Bee-eaters Meropidae

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*

This beautiful species was seen daily along the Okavango River in Botswana.

Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*

First recorded at N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu, and thereafter readily recorded every day along the Okavango River.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*

First recorded in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and seen at various sites all along the trip, but not along the Caprivi or in Botswana.

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Recorded during the first half of our tour at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, the Khomas Hochland region and Etosha NP.

Southern Carmine Bee-eater

Merops nubicoides

Fantastic views were had of the nesting colonies along the banks of the Okavango River.

Rollers Coraciidae

European Roller

Coracias garrulus

Recorded only once during the tour near Namutoni in Etosha NP.

Lilac-breasted Roller

Coracias caudata

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

NOTE: The Ethiopian C. c. lorti might be split as Blue-breasted Roller.

Rufous-crowned (Purple) Roller

Coracias naevia

Another beautiful bird it was recorded near Daan Viljoen, Etosha National Park and in the Waterberg.

Broad-billed Roller

Eurystomus glaucurus

This species was found in Mahango Game Reserve, Shakawe area and at Xaro Lodge.

Hoopoes Upupidae

Eurasian (African) Hoopoe

Upupa [epops] africana

This unique bird was recorded throughout our tour.

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

Unfortunately, I was the only person in the group to see this species in the Waterberg Plateau NP.

NOTE: Clements has 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 (Greater) Scimitar-bill

Rhinopomastus cyanomelas

Birds seen at Daan Viljoen, Khomas Hochland, Tandala Ridge and the Waterberg.

Hornbills Bucerotidae

Monteiro's Hornbill

Tockus monteiri

This Namibian near-endemic was first seen at Daan Viljoen GR, Khomas Hochland, the Erongo Mountains and the Waterberg.

Red-billed Hornbill

Tockus erythrorhynchus

This approachable hornbill was recorded in Etosha National Park and the Waterberg.

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

(Damara Hornbill)

Tockus [erythrorhynchus] damarensis

This hornbill with a dark eye was first seen in the Khomas Hochland region, and later at Spitzkoppe, Etosha and after leaving the Waterberg.

NOTE: Red-billed Hornbill has recently been split into two species including the nominate T. erythrorhynchus and Damara Hornbill T. damarensis of Namibia.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill

Tockus leucomelas

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

Bradfield's Hornbill

Tockus bradfieldi

This localized hornbill was seen flying overhead behind Mahangu Safari Lodge and again en route to the Waterberg.

African Gray Hornbill

Tockus nasutus

This widespread species was recorded on a regular basis throughout the tour except during our stay in Walvis Bay/Swakopmund area.

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 base of the Spitzkoppe, it was also found in the Erongo Mountains, Etosha and the Waterberg.

Black-collared Barbet

Lybius torquatus

Mahangu Safari Lodge produced our first sighting of this species, followed by another sighting at Drotsky's Cabins.

Crested Barbet

Trachyphonus vaillantii

It was seen in the woodland behind Xaro Lodge on both days in the Panhandle.

Honeyguides Indicatoridae

Lesser Honeyguide

Indicator minor

This species was heard in the Okavango Panhandle.

Woodpeckers & Allies Picidae

Golden-tailed Woodpecker

Campethera abingoni

First recorded in the Khomas Hochland region, our lodge in the Okavango Panhandle produced a number of sightings of this species.

Cardinal Woodpecker

Dendropicos fuscescens

Surprisingly, this widespread African woodpecker, was only seen once during the tour at Okaukuejo camp in Etosha.

Larks Alaudidae

Rufous-naped Lark

Mirafra africana

Recorded in Etosha NP and Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Fawn-colored Lark

Calendulauda africanoides

This species was spotted north of Namutoni Camp in Etosha National Park.

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

Sabota Lark

Calendulauda 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

Calendulauda erythrochlamys

We obtained fair views of this ochre-colored Namibian endemic, in the Kuiseb Riverbed at Rooibank, just outside Walvis Bay.

Dusky Lark *Pinarocorys nigricans*

A single bird was found along the roadside in Mahango Game Reserve.

Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata*

This social lark was commonly encountered in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha National Park and we obtained superb close-range views of this bird.

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

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*

Recorded on the plains north of the Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha.

Gray-backed Sparrow-Lark *Eremopterix verticalis*

A nomadic species that we first found on the gravel plains en route to Walvis Bay and then common at Rooibank and in Etosha National Park.

Gray's Lark *Ammomanopsis grayi*

This desert lark was true to form and we found a few in the most inhospitable area en route to Walvis Bay.

Red-capped Lark *Calandrella cinerea*

This distinctive species was first seen on the Welwitschia Plains near Swakopmund and then regularly encountered in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha National Park.

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 pair of birds were observed on the scrubby, gravel plains north of Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha.

Stark's Lark *Spizocorys starki*

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

Swallows *Hirundinidae*

Plain (Brown-throated) Martin *Riparia paludicola*

This species was seen in the Okavango Panhandle near Shakawe.

Banded Martin *Riparia cincta*

Seen in Etosha NP at Fischer's Pan and then in the Okavango Panhandle area.

Bank Swallow (Sand Martin) *Riparia riparia*

Birds recorded at Fischer's Pan in Etosha and along the Okavango River in the Panhandle.

Rock Martin *Ptyonoprogne fuligula*

Recorded almost daily for the first week of the trip and then seen again in the Waterberg area.

NOTE: This confusing polytypic complex is being reviewed for multi-species splitting. Within the African populations, three potential species exist. The southern African nominate form H. f. fuligula would remain as Rock Martin and the more northern populations would become Red-throated Rock Martin H. pusilla. Palearctic birds would become Pale Crag Martin H. obsolete. Clements does not as yet recognize any of these splits

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Seen almost daily throughout the tour in Namibia and Botswana.

White-throated Swallow *Hirundo albigularis*

Two sightings were had of this bird, namely at Rundu Treatment Works and near Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii*

A pair was seen upstream from Xaro Lodge on the Okavango River.

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. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Greater Striped-Swallow *Cecropis cucullata*

Recorded on the first and last days of the tour at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and in the Waterberg.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Cecropis abyssinica*

Seen on the Okavango River and in the Waterberg.

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

This large hirundine was seen en route from Rundu to Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Mosque Swallow *Cecropis senegalensis*

First seen in the Namutoni area in Etosha, it was also observed at N'Kwazi Lodge, Divundu and Mahangu SL.

(Common-) House-Martin *Delichon urbica*

This species was seen at Tandala Ridge and in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha.

Wagtails & Pipits *Motacillidae*

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

Several of these striking birds were recorded on the Okavango River at Mahangu SL and Xaro Lodge.

Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis*

Seen at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and in the Walvis Bay area.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Two birds were seen from the boat on the Okavango River upstream from Shakawe.

African (Grassveld) Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus*

First recorded around the Windhoek area, it was most common in Etosha National Park.

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. The identification of two new species of pipits from an urban hockey field in Kimberley, South Africa, provides an excellent illustration regarding how little is known about African pipits and how little attention has been paid to them.

Bulbuls *Pycnonotidae*

(Dark-capped Bulbul) *Pycnonotus [barbatus] tricolor*

This abundant eastern species was recorded daily from N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu, apart from the final day.

*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. Clements does not recognize this split.*

Black-fronted (African Red-eyed) Bulbul *Pycnonotus nigricans*

This western congener of the Dark-capped Bulbul was recorded at all sites from Windhoek (except Walvis Bay/Swakopmund), all the way through to the Rundu area, from where it is replaced by the previous species. It was also found in the Waterberg.

Yellow-bellied Greenbul *Chlorocichla flaviventris*

A pair was seen in the woodland at N'Kwazi Lodge near Rundu.

Terrestrial Brownbul *Phyllastrephus terrestris*

Typically an undergrowth skulker, we had sightings of these noisy birds at Xaro Lodge and Drotsky's Cabins in the Okavango Panhandle.

Thrushes & Allies *Turdidae*

Short-toed Rock Thrush *Monticola brevipes*

Daan Viljoen Game Reserve produced our first sightings of this attractive species, with further sightings on the drive to Walvis Bay and at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

*NOTE: The South African isolate *M. b. pretoriae* may be split as Transvaal Rock Thrush.*

Groundscraper Thrush

Psophocichla litsipsirupa

This boldly-marked species was first found in roadside woodland in the Khomas Hochland region and then at Halali and Namutoni camps in Etosha, and also in the Waterberg.

NOTE: Ethiopian Thrush P. l. simensis is considered a distinct species by several authorities. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Kurrichane Thrush

Turdus libonyanus

A woodland thrush, it was seen well at Xaro Lodge.

Cisticolas & Allies Cisticolidae

Rattling Cisticola

Cisticola chiniana

We encountered our first specimen at Daan Viljoen, followed by daily sightings in Etosha and Mahango Game Reserve.

Winding (Luapula) Cisticola

Cisticola [galactotes] luapula

This recently split species was seen in the rank vegetation in Mahango area.

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 as yet recognize this split.

Chirping Cisticola

Cisticola pipiens

A fairly secretive papyrus-dwelling cisticola, it was seen in reedbeds along the Okavango River near Mahangu SL and Xaro Lodge.

Zitting (Fan-tailed) Cisticola

Cisticola juncidis

Recorded at a number of sites, it was however, more often heard than seen.

Desert Cisticola

Cisticola aridulus

Another of the small cisticolas, this was first seen en route to Walvis Bay and then in Etosha.

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Prinia subflava

Seen in Mahango Game Reserve and in the Okavango Panhandle.

Black-chested Prinia

Prinia flavicans

A dry country species, it was observed regularly during the first half of our tour.

Rufous-eared Warbler

Malcorus pectoralis

This species has a highly localized distribution in Namibia and we had a good sighting in Etosha National Park.

Yellow-breasted Apalis

Apalis flavida

Only one bird seen in the woodland near Xaro Lodge.

(Gray-backed Camaroptera)

Camaroptera [brachyura] brevicaudata

Erongo Wilderness Lodge produced our initial encounter with this small warbler and thereafter it was seen fairly regularly throughout the trip, especially in Etosha and the Okavango Panhandle.

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. Clements still lumps these two groups.

Barred Camaroptera (Wren-Warbler)

Calamonastes fasciolatus

We saw this delightful species at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and in the Namutoni area of Etosha.

Old World Warblers Sylviidae

African Bush-Warbler (Little Rush Warbler)

Bradypterus baboecala

Recorded from the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge.

Sedge Warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

A few birds were seen on both visits to the Rundu Treatment Works and a single bird at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

African Reed- (Marsh) Warbler

Acrocephalus baeticatus

This secretive species was seen in the reeds around the dam in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and on the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge.

- Greater Swamp-Warbler** *Acrocephalus rufescens*
 Another secretive papyrus warbler, we had decent views in the Okavango Panhandle.
- Lesser Swamp- (Cape Reed) Warbler** *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*
 First observed at the Rundu Treatment Works, it was also seen near Xaro Lodge.
- Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*
 This little Palearctic migrant was seen in Okaukuejo and Halali camps and the woodland behind Xaro Lodge.
- Yellow-bellied Eremomela** *Eremomela icteropygialis*
 Found at Erongo Wilderness Lodge and Okaukuejo in Etosha.
- Burnt-necked Eremomela** *Eremomela usticollis*
 A few birds seen on our morning walk in Waterberg Plateau National Park.
- Cape (Long-billed) Crombec** *Sylvietta rufescens*
 This short-tailed species was seen en route to the Spitzkoppe and at Halali camp in Etosha.
- Layard's Warbler (Tit-Babbler)** *Parisoma layardi*
 Good views of this bird were had in the Acacia woodland, at the base of Spitzkoppe.
- Rufous-vented Warbler (Chestnut-vented Titbabbler)** *Parisoma subcaeruleum*
 Commonly recorded from the first day, this bubbly species was last seen in Etosha.

Old World Flycatchers *Muscicapidae*

- Pale (Pallid/Mouse-colored) Flycatcher** *Bradornis pallidus*
 Our only sighting was in the Teak woodlands en route from Rundu to Divundu.
- Chat Flycatcher** *Bradornis infuscatus*
 Seen in the Central Highlands on the way to the coast, it was most common en route to Spitzkoppe from Walvis Bay and in Etosha.
- Mariqua (Marico) Flycatcher** *Bradornis mariquensis*
 This dry country flycatcher was recorded frequently in Etosha National Park.
- Southern Black-Flycatcher** *Melaenornis pammelaina*
 A singleton was recorded at the checkpoint en route from N'Kwazi Lodge to the Waterberg.
- Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*
 This species was observed at most camps in Etosha National Park.
- Ashy (Blue-grey) Flycatcher** *Muscicapa caerulescens*
 Mahangu Safari Lodge produced sightings of this species for the trip.
- White-browed (Heuglin's) Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini*
 The riverine vegetation at Mahangu Safari Lodge produced sightings of this species for the trip.
- Red-backed (White-browed) Scrub-Robin** *Cercotrichas leucophrys*
 Erongo Wilderness Lodge, Tandala Ridge, Mahango Game Reserve and the Waterberg all produced sightings of this commonly recorded species.
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. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.
- Kalahari Scrub-Robin** *Cercotrichas paena*
 Recorded on the first day at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, we also had sightings of this species in Etosha.
- Herero Chat** *Namibornis herero*
 Spreetshoogte Pass gave us an excellent sighting of a calling pair. This lovely bird is regarded as one of Namibia's toughest endemics to find.
- African (Common) Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*
 This attractive species was seen on a boat cruises in the Okavango Panhandle.

NOTE: Clements recognizes the split of African *S. torquata* and Common *S. rubicola* Stonechats (the latter a Palearctic 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.

Mountain Wheatear (Chat) *Oenanthe monticola*

This endemic was recorded in rocky areas in Daan Viljoen on our first day, Spreetshoogte Pass and Spitzkoppe.

Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata*

Recorded in the Khomas Hochland region and in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha National Park.

Tractrac Chat *Cercomela tractrac*

First recorded on the drive to Walvis Bay near the very isolated town of Solitaire, it was later seen on the Welwitschia Plains and en route to Spitzkoppe.

Familiar Chat *Cercomela familiaris*

Fairly commonly recorded during the first part of the trip.

Southern Anteater-Chat *Myrmecocichla formicivora*

First observed on the drive from Windhoek to Walvis Bay, it was later more common on the plains north of Okaukuejo and in the Fischer's Pan area of Etosha.

Wattle-eyes and Batises *Platysteiridae*

Pririt Batis *Batis pririt*

This attractive dry country species was first seen at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and then recorded in the Erongo Mountains.

White-tailed Shrike *Lanioturdus torquatus*

One of Namibia's star birds and a near-endemic, we had a sighting at Spreetshoogte Pass and then around Erongo Wilderness Lodge, where they are a common garden bird.

Monarch Flycatchers *Monarchidae*

African Paradise-Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*

Recorded in the riverine forest at Mahangu SL and Drotsky's Cabins and around the camp in the Waterberg.

Babblers *Timaliidae*

Damara Rock-jumper (Rockrunner) *Aetops pycnopygius*

This localized Namibian near-endemic with its liquid notes, was first observed south of Windhoek, followed by sightings around Erongo Wilderness Lodge and in the Waterberg Plateau NP.

Black-lored (-faced) Babbler *Turdoides melanops*

We had brief views of these birds upon leaving Namutoni Camp. This species is ranked up there with some of Namibia's toughest specials.

White-rumped (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 in Etosha NP.

Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii*

This noisy species was first seen at the Botswana border post at Muhembo and then again at Xaro Lodge in the Okavango Panhandle.

Bare-cheeked Babbler *Turdoides gymnogenys*

This highly sought-after species was recorded at Tandala Ridge and in the woodland east of Namutoni camp in Etosha.

Tits *Paridae*

Southern Black-Tit

Melaniparus (Parus) niger

We had only one record of this species, of a pair at Mahango Safari Lodge.

Carp's Tit

Melaniparus carpi

A Namibian near-endemic, it was first seen at Erongo Wilderness Lodge and then in Halali Camp in Etosha and in the Waterberg.

Ashy Tit

Melaniparus cinerascens

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

Sunbirds Nectariniidae

Collared Sunbird

Anthreptes collaris

This colorful sunbird was seen in the Okavango Panhandle at Xaro Lodge and Drotsky's Cabins.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird

Nectarinia senegalensis

We picked up this stunning bird at Tamboti Guest House, Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and near Rundu.

Mariqua (Marico) Sunbird

Nectarinia mariquensis

Seen at Namutoni campsite and in the Waterberg Plateau NP.

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. Clements does not as yet recognize this split.

Purple-banded Sunbird

Cinnyris bifasciatus

The riverine forest/woodland around Mahangu Safari Lodge produced these birds on both our stays there.

White-breasted (White-bellied) Sunbird

Nectarinia talatala

First seen in the gardens of Mokuti Lodge and then again on the last day of the tour at the Waterberg.

Dusky Sunbird

Nectarinia fusca

A common dry country species, it was recorded on our second day at the Spreetshoogte Pass en route to Walvis Bay and frequently at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

White-eyes Zosteropidae

Orange River White-eye

Zosterops pallidus

Our only white-eye for the trip, it was recorded at Rooibank south of Walvis Bay and in the Casuarina trees in the suburbs of the town itself.

Orioles Oriolidae

African Golden Oriole

Oriolus auratus

Birds were observed in the Namutoni area of Etosha and in the woodland at Xaro Lodge.

African (Eastern) Black-headed Oriole

Oriolus larvatus

A single bird was seen in the Teak woodlands between Rundu and Divundu.

Shrikes Laniidae

Red-backed Shrike

Lanius collurio

Recorded at various sites throughout the tour.

Lesser Gray Shrike

Lanius minor

We saw good numbers of these Palearctic migrants during the first half of our tour.

Common Fiscal (Shrike)

Lanius collaris

Observed regularly during the first half of the tour.

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

Magpie (African Long-tailed) Shrike *Corvinella melanoleuca*

This species was seen on both visits to the Rundu Treatment Works and also recorded in the Shakawe area in Botswana.

(Southern) White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus anguitimens*

Regularly observed in Etosha National Park, it was particularly plentiful in Halali Camp and in the surrounding Mopane woodland.

Bush-shrikes & Allies *Malaconotidae*

Brubru *Nilaus afer*

This shrike was seen in Okaukuejo Camp in 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. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla*

Another woodland shrike; it was first seen at Mokuti Lodge and then later at Xaro Lodge and in the Waterberg.

Brown-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra australis*

This shrike was encountered regularly from the first day at sites including Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, the Erongos, Etosha, Xaro Lodge and the Waterberg.

Gabon (Swamp) Boubou *Laniarius bicolor*

First observed in the Rundu area, we had further sightings from riverine habitat for the rest of the trip until we headed south for the Waterberg.

Crimson-breasted Gonolek (Shrike) *Laniarius atrococcineus*

This gorgeous bird was first seen in the Khomas Hochland area with further sightings from Etosha and Mahango area.

Bokmakierie *Telophorus zeylonus*

This beautiful near-endemic bushshrike was seen in the riverine scrub of the Kuiseb riverbed at Rooibank.

Sulphur (Orange) –breasted Bush-shrike *Telophorus sulfureopectus*

Another beautiful bird, it was observed in the woodlands at Xaro Lodge.

Helmetshrikes & Allies *Prionopidae*

White (-crested) Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus*

Seen in the Mopane woodland between Okaukuejo and Halali in Etosha National Park and in the Teak woodland between Rundu and Divundu.

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. Clements does not as yet recognize these splits.

Retz's (Red-billed) Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii*

A small group of three birds was observed in the riverine woodland in the Okavango Panhandle.

Drongos *Dicruridae*

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*

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

NOTE: Older versions of Clements lump the forest dwelling Velvet-mantled Drongo *D. modestus* of East and West Africa within Fork-tailed Drongo *D. adsimilis* but the split has been recognized in recent Clements updates as well as by most other authorities.

Crows, Jays & Magpies *Corvidae*

- Cape (Black) Crow** *Corvus capensis*
 This species was recorded en route to Walvis Bay in the grassy plains and in Etosha National Park.
- Pied Crow** *Corvus albus*
 Recorded near Spitzkoppe and in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha.

Starlings *Sturnidae*

- Cape (Red-shouldered) Glossy-Starling** *Lamprotornis nitens*
 It was commonly recorded at most sites throughout the tour apart from the Caprivi Strip and the Okavango Panhandle.
- Greater Blue-eared Glossy-Starling** *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*
 First recorded in the small town of Divundu, it was also seen in the Mahango area.
- Meves' (Long-tailed) Glossy-Starling** *Lamprotornis mevesii*
 Regularly recorded along the Okavango River especially in the Shakawe area.
- Burchell's Glossy-Starling** *Lamprotornis australis*
 A regular species for the second half of the tour, with sightings starting in the Rundu area.
- Violet-backed (Plum-colored) Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*
 Erongo Wilderness Lodge produced our first sightings of this stunner, and thereafter it was recorded on a fairly regular basis.
- Pale-winged Starling** *Onychognathus naboroupp*
 Our first sightings were at Daan Viljoen followed by amazing close-ups at our picnic site at Spitzkoppe and further views in the Waterberg.
- Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*
 A few birds were seen at Xaro Lodge and on the Caprivi Strip.
- Yellow-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus africanus*
 A single bird was seen grooming cattle in the floodplains of the Okavango River in the Shakawe area.

Old World Sparrows *Passeridae*

- House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*
 This introduced species was seen only in the Windhoek and Walvis Bay/Swakopmund area on the first few days of the tour.
- Rufous (Great) Sparrow** *Passer motitensis*
 First recorded at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, it was then seen at various locations including Spitzkoppe, Erongos and Etosha.
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*
 Observed in the Windhoek and Walvis Bay/Swakopmund area.
- Southern Gray-headed Sparrow** *Passer diffusus*
 First observed in the Windhoek area, thereafter regularly encountered at many sites visited in Namibia and Botswana.
NOTE: The Gray-headed Sparrow complex P. griseus has been split into five full species with the most southerly African form being classified as P. diffusus and this species was given the very confusing common name of Cape Sparrow but this has recently been changed to the more sensible Southern Gray-headed Sparrow!.

Weavers & Allies *Ploceidae*

Red-billed Buffalo-weaver

Bubalornis niger

This species was seen well in the Halali and Namutoni areas of Etosha National Park and in the Waterberg.

Scaly Weaver (Scaly-feathered Finch)

Sporopipes squamifrons

This cute little bird was first recorded on a daily basis in Etosha National Park.

White-browed Sparrow-weaver

Plocepasser mahali

A very commonly encountered species throughout the tour, it was nevertheless an interesting bird to observe.

Social (Sociable) Weaver

Philetairus socius

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

Lesser Masked-Weaver

Ploceus intermedius

Recorded at the Waterberg Plateau National Park.

Holub's Golden-Weaver

Ploceus xanthops

Regularly recorded in riverine vegetation on the Okavango River.

Southern Brown-throated Weaver

Ploceus xanthopterus

This species was seen in riverine vegetation on the Okavango River in the Shakawe area.

African (Southern) Masked -Weaver

Ploceus velatus

First observed in the Windhoek area, it was thereafter encountered on a regular basis.

Village (Spotted-backed) Weaver

Ploceus cucullatus

A few birds were seen during our stay at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

NOTE: African Masked Weaver P. velatus complex is sometimes split into the nominate Southern Masked Weaver which we recorded and the more northerly occurring Vitelline Masked-Weaver P. vitellinus. Clements has recently accepted this split.

Chestnut Weaver

Ploceus rubiginosus

Females of this species were seen at Tandala Ridge followed by great views of breeding males near the Waterberg Plateau NP.

Red-billed Quelea

Quelea quelea

This pest species was seen in very large numbers in Etosha NP.

(Southern) Red Bishop

Euplectes orix

Seen in the reedbeds at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Yellow-crowned (Golden) Bishop

Euplectes afer

A good-sized flock of breeding males and females was seen at the Rundu Treatment Works.

Fan-tailed Widowbird

Euplectes axillaries

Recorded on the Okavango River in the Mahangu SL and Xaro Lodge areas.

Grosbeak (Thick-billed) Weaver

Amblyospiza albifrons

Strangely enough, we only had a single bird on the tour in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Waxbills & Allies Estrildidae

Green-winged Pytilia (Melba Finch)

Pytilia melba

A stunning species observed at Erongo Wilderness Lodge, Tandala Ridge, Mahango Game Reserve and the Waterberg.

Brown Firefinch

Lagonosticta nitidula

A localized species, we managed to get good views at Mahangu Safari Lodge and Xaro Lodge.

Red-billed Firefinch

Lagonosticta senegala

Rundu Treatment Works produced the first views of this species, followed by sightings at Xaro and N'Kwazi Lodge.

Blue-breasted Cordonbleu (Blue Waxbill)

Uraeginthus angolensis

Observed in Namutoni Camp in Etosha, and thereafter regularly encountered in small numbers at all sites for the rest of the tour.

Violet-eared Waxbill

Uraeginthus granatina

This beautiful, dry country bird was first encountered at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve near Windhoek and thereafter recorded in small numbers at most sites except in the Caprivi Strip and in Botswana.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*

Recorded at Walvis Bay and Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Black-cheeked (-faced) Waxbill *Estrilda erythronotos*

Another beautiful dry-country seedeater, it was found in good numbers in the Khomas Hochland region, Erongo Wilderness Lodge and then later in Etosha.

African Quailfinch *Ortygospiza fuscocrissa*

Fairly good views of this species were had by David and I on a grassy vlei near Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Red-headed Finch *Amadina erythrocephala*

This species was seen at the Spreetshoogte Pass and in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha National Park.

Indigobirds *Viduidae*

Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata*

Recorded at N'Kwazi Lodge and Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Shaft-tailed Whydah *Vidua regia*

This attractive species was observed in suitable habitat throughout the tour.

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

A pair was seen in the Mahango Game Reserve.

True Finches *Fringillidae*

Black-throated Canary *Serinus atrogularis*

This was the most commonly recorded canary throughout the tour.

NOTE: This species complex is sometimes split with the South African form remaining in the Black-throated Seed-eater 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. Clements now accepts all these splits.

Yellow Canary *Serinus flaviventris*

This dry-country species was observed on a morning drive north of Namutoni Camp in Etosha.

White-throated Canary *Serinus albogularis*

Another dry-country canary, it was seen at the Spreetshoogte Pass and later picked up at Spitzkoppe.

Buntings *Emberizidae*

Lark-like Bunting *Emberiza impetuani*

Good numbers of this species were picked up in the Spreetshoogte area on the way to Walvis Bay, with further sightings at Spitzkoppe and at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Cinnamon-breasted (Rock) Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*

Observed a few times at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Cape Bunting *Emberiza capensis*

Birds seen at Spreetshoogte Pass and then at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris*

Recorded near Okaukuejo and in Halali Camp in Etosha National Park, it was later seen in the Teak woodlands outside Rundu.

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.

Baboons & Monkeys *Cercopithecidae*

Chacma Baboon

Papio ursinus

Small troops of this baboon were seen during the tour, with highest numbers in Daan Viljoen and the Waterberg.

Hares & Rabbits *Leporidae*

Scrub Hare

Lepus saxatilis

A few were seen in Etosha National Park.

Squirrels *Sciuridae*

South African Ground Squirrel

Xerus inauris

These delightful creatures were seen on the second day en route to Walvis Bay, with good numbers 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 from the Okavango Panhandle.

Dassie Rat *Petromuridae*

Dassie Rat

Petromus typicus

We saw this species very well at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Rats & Mice *Cricetidae & Muridae*

Four-striped Grass Mouse

Rhabdomys pumilio

Seen at our picnic site in the Spitzkoppe Community Reserve.

Tree Rat

Thallomys paedulus

A single animal was observed in a large Acacia tree in Okaukuejo camp. These creatures are nocturnal and arboreal species which live their entire life in one tree.

Dogs & Allies *Canidae*

Black-backed Jackal

Canis mesomelas

Seen throughout Etosha National Park, where they are plentiful.

Mongoose *Herpestidae*

Banded Mongoose

Mungos mungo

A family party was found in the Okaukuejo area of Etosha.

Yellow Mongoose

Cynictus penicillata

Seen a few times during the first half of the trip, with high numbers in Etosha National Park.

Dwarf Mongoose *Helogale parvula*

A family party of 10 was seen in the camp at Waterberg Plateau National Park, taking food from one of the guests at a chalet.

Suricate (Meerkat) *Suricata suricatta*

This cute species was only seen in the grasslands en route to Walvis Bay.

Hyaenas Hyaenidae

Spotted Hyena *Crocuta crocuta*

This super predator/scavenger was seen on a number of occasions in Etosha National Park with a great sighting north of Namutoni camp.

Cats Felidae

Lion *Panthera leo*

We saw lions on three days in Etosha National Park, with the highlight being a female roaring and drinking at the waterhole in Namutoni camp.

Hyraxes Procaviidae

Rock Hyrax *Procavia capensis*

Seen first at Daan Viljoen, with high numbers recorded at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Elephants Elephantidae

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.

Zebras Equidae

Burchell's Zebra *Equus burchellii*

Seen every day in Etosha National Park in good numbers.

Hartmann's Mountain Zebra *Equus zebra zebra*

A herd of nine animals were seen well in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve.

Rhinoceroses Rhinocerotidae

Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*

On our first night in Etosha, four animals came down to the waterhole in Okaukuejo Camp to drink. These animals repeated this activity the following night.

Hippopotomuses Hippopotamidae

Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibious*

Recorded in the Okavango River with highest numbers of 15+ at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Pigs *Suidae*

Common Warthog

Phacochoerus africanus

Seen in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, Etosha National Park and Mahango Game Reserve.

Giraffes *Giraffidae*

Giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

First seen at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and regularly in Etosha National Park, it was also recorded in Mahango Game Reserve.

Bovids & Horned Ungulates *Bovidae*

Springbok

Antidorcas marsupialis

Seen on most days during the first week of the trip, with good numbers in Etosha National Park.

Steenbok

Raphicerus campestris

First encountered en route to Walvis Bay, it was then seen fairly regularly in Etosha National Park.

Damara (Kirk's) Dik-Dik

Madoqua kirkii

Good numbers (10+) of these antelope were seen on the Dik-dik drive south of Namutoni Camp in Etosha National Park.

Klipspringer

Oreotragus oreotragus

I was fortunate to see a few of these antelope when out on the afternoon reconnaissance walk I did on my own after we arrived at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

Greater Kudu

Tragelaphus strepsiceros

These magnificent animals were found in Daan Viljoen, with good numbers in Etosha and in Mahango Game Reserve.

Eland

Taurotragus oryx

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

Common Bushbuck

Tragelaphus scriptus

We had brief glimpses of these animals at Xaro Lodge and a sighting from the boat at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Southern (Common) Reedbuck

Redunca arundinum

Recorded on the banks of the Okavango River during our stay at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Common Waterbuck

Kobus ellipsiprymnus

This beautiful antelope was recorded from Mahangu Safari Lodge during a boat cruise.

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.

Gemsbok

Oryx gazelle

First seen in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, it was also seen en route to Walvis Bay and regularly in Etosha National Park with a very large herd in the Fischer's Pan area north of Namutoni.

Hartebeest

Alcelaphus buselaphus

We found this species at Tandala Ridge during a lunch stop.

Blue Wildebeest

Connochaetes taurinus

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

Impala

Aepyceros melampus melampus

Mahango Game Reserve produced good numbers of this antelope.

Fur Seals Otariidae

South African Fur Seal

Arctocephalus pusillus

A few of these aquatic mammals were seen along the coast between Walvis Bay & Swakopmund.

Photo Credits (in order of appearance)

Halali sunset, Etosha National Park by Cuan Rush

Herero Chat, Damara Tern, Lappet-faced Vultures, Bare-cheeked Babbler and Rock Pratincole by David Mason

African Barred Owlet and Pearl-spotted Owlet by Cuan Rush

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