



## **NAMIBIA & BOTSWANA (WITH ZIMBABWE EXTENSION) TOUR REPORT 2023**

**12 - 27 / 31 October 2023**

BY JOHN MCLOUGHLIN

The tour started from the Hosea Kutako International Airport south of the capital Windhoek and returned there sixteen days later. In total the tour delivered 366 species, a greatly successful outing!

In addition, a total of thirty-nine mammal species were encountered most of which were observed in the National Parks at Etosha and along the Okavango River at the Mahangu Game Park. The post tour extension to the Bvumba Mountains of Zimbabwe, 28th to 31st October, produced an additional 62 species and two extra mammals.

Most of the group had arrived in Namibia on the previous day in readiness for the start of the tour. The River Crossing Lodge was our first base and after breakfast a mid-morning rendezvous took place at the international airport to collect Steve, Denzil, and Johann.

The first port of call was the Avis Dam located on the outskirts of the capital Windhoek. Here we took part in a small "twitch" as a Great Snipe had recently been found at this well-known wetland. The snipe was very showy and fed out in the open on the muddy shoreline. A broad selection of wildfowl was present including two Cape Shovelers and a sizeable flock of sixty Maccoa Ducks. Shorebirds included Wood Sandpipers, Little Stints, Greenshank and Ruff. Blacksmiths Lapwings were abundant here along with smaller numbers of Three-banded Plover. In the rocky scrub a pair of Ashy Tits were located, and we obtained good views of a pair of Rockrunners which we also saw later at our Lodge.

After lunch taken at the River Crossing Lodge our next stop was the Gammans water treatment works on the far side of the city. Here we were rewarded with a few more wetland species, these included South African Shelduck, Hottentot Teal, Red-billed Teal, and Egyptian Goose. Other common species included Purple Swamphen, Common Moorhen, Little Grebe, Red-knobbed Coot, African Sacred Ibis, Black-crowned Night Heron, Striated Heron, Squacco Heron, Little Egret, Western Cattle Egret, Black-headed Heron, Reed Cormorant and White-breasted Cormorant.

A pair of White-throated Swallows hawked over the water whilst the surrounding Acacia scrub held a pair of Dusky Sunbirds, a pair of Yellow Canaries and our first of many, Marico Flycatchers. African and Cape Wagtails fed on the fringes of the filter beds. A party of Damara Red-billed Hornbills were our first whilst a "fly by" flock of Monteiro's Hornbills crossed the road as we drove back.

Birding around our lodge was very productive to with Red-billed Spurfowl on the drive in whilst Rosy-faced Lovebirds nested in the roof. A pair of Short-toed Rock Thrush were in residence, and we also obtained good views of the gorgeous Crimson breasted Shrike. Small parties of Pale-winged Starlings overflew the lodge balcony as we experienced our first Namibian "sundowner."

Some early morning birding around the lodge preceded breakfast before setting off on our long journey to Walvis Bay. A singing Pririt Batis, Black-chested Prinia, Black-faced Waxbills, Southern Masked Weaver, Rockrunner, Kalahari Scrub-robin. Other common species seen around the lodge included Ring-necked Dove, Laughing Dove, Namaqua Dove, and many Grey Go-away Birds. White-backed Mousebirds were also seen along with Fork-tailed Drongos, Acacia Pied Barbets, African Grey Hornbill, Red-eyed Bulbuls and Rock Martins which were also numerous throughout the tour. The day's journey was taken along dirt roads into the Namib via the Spreetshoogte Pass in the Khomar Highlands. Along this route we encountered more Damara Red-billed Hornbills, Monteiro's Hornbills and our first Southern Yellow-billed Hornbills as well as Burchell's Starling and the abundant Cape Glossy Starlings. Several Pale Chanting Goshawks perched at the roadside whilst a pair of African Hawk Eagles circled overhead. Various stops along the way produced sightings of a lone Secretary Bird, Bearded Woodpecker, Groundscraper Thrush, African Cuckoo, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater and Purple Roller. A huge but empty Sociable Weaver nest was an indication that we were still in the grip of the dry season and the continuing drought. Common species that would soon become familiar to us included Black-throated Canary, White-browed Sparrow Weaver, Scaly-feathered Finch, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow and Lark-like Buntings.

We arrived at Namibgrens around midday and a stop to enjoy the views over the Namib also produced a few bird sightings. These included the striking Bokmakierie and a singing male Karoo Scrub Robin. However, we failed to obtain a response from the endemic Herrero Chat, although we would have better fortune with this species in a few days' time. We took a roadside picnic in the heat of the day as confiding Mountains Wheatears hopped around us. Continuing along our route the rutted dirt road stretched out into the distance as two huge Lappet faced Vultures drifted by. Greater Kestrels became a feature of the desert landscape here and a party of four Ruppell's Korhaans provided some relief as we sped along to our destination. Some Ostrich strolled across an area of flat stone desert, so we stopped to watch them and stumbled on a few distinctive Gray's Larks. In the shimmering distance we saw our first courser which proved to be Double-banded.

By late afternoon we finally landed in Walvis Bay and checked into the seafront Iris Boutique hotel. Here we had time to clean up and refresh before an excellent supper at the waterfront Anchors restaurant. Fur Seals loafed in the bay whilst 250 Kelp Gulls gathered to roost offshore.

We made an early morning start to the inland dunes at Rooibank to search for the elusive Dune Lark. There was no need to worry as we quickly came across not one but two pairs wandering around in the dunes. Reluctant to fly these sandy coloured larks move like clockwork toys amongst the dunes at a site which has always delivered well for this species. We spent some time with these birds and there were a good many photographic opportunities.

A large complex of lagoons can be found just inland of Walvis Bay which held an array of waterbirds including thousands of Greater and Lesser Flamingos. Scanning the pans, we came across of large flock of eighty odd Black-necked Grebes amongst an assortment of waterfowl. Returning to the coastal lagoons at Walvis Bay we scanned through the many waders which included Little Stint, Curlew Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstones, Sanderlings hundreds of Pied Avocets and Black-winged Stilts, Hartlaub's Gulls, Kelp (Cape) Gulls and a few Grey-headed Gulls. We took coffee and a light lunch at the Willi Probst (German) Bakery café in the centre of town.

In the afternoon we continued north towards Swakopmund in cool and overcast conditions which provided some relief from the heat of the previous day. Good sightings of Damara Terns, courtship feeding, many Chestnut-banded Plovers, and other species not seen in the morning, these included Common Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Whimbrel, Greater crested Tern, Sandwich Terns, Common and Caspian Terns. Thousands of Cape Cormorants covered the guano platforms along the coast and amongst them smaller numbers of the scarcer Crowned Cormorants. A tight flock of 18 African Black Oystercatchers were roosting nearby on the sandy beach. At our final stop on the outskirts of Swapokmund we found more Gray's Larks on the coastal desert strip. Whilst three strikingly pale morph Tatra Chats were called out and eventually showed well to our group.

After breakfasting we made sure we caught up with the localised, in Namibia, Orange River White-eye in town before setting off on our next adventure. A nearby park provided good views of the vocal White-eyes plus repeat views of the distinctive Cape Sparrow, Red-faced Mousebirds, and a few Common Waxbills for good measure.

Next stop was at a locality east of the famous bare granite peaks of Spitzkoppe where Herero Chat has been very reliable in the past. Not long after hiking towards the locality we heard the soft call of a distant chat and after a further climb up some broken granite boulders we eventually came across a pair of the chats which had evaded us at the Spreetshoogte Pass, once everyone had good views of one of the birds, we headed off towards our next base in the small town of Uis for lunch. Pausing on the way to admire more Ruppell's Korhaans and at another stop a fierce little Pearl-spotted Owlet. Other new species on the way included Karoo Chat and Chat Flycatcher.

In the heat of the day, we took lunch in the shelter of the aptly named Cactus Café on the outskirts of town. The midday temperatures were now touching 40 degrees C a bit of a contrast from the cool of the Atlantic Coast. We would experience this extreme heat daily until the end of the tour. Following a deserved siesta, we headed out and soon found one of our target birds of the area the Benguela Long-billed Lark. Continuing along a sandy track through the mountains we came across several Sabota Larks, Bokmakierie, Red-crested Korhaan and more Ruppell's Korhaans. We refuelled before dinner ready for our forthcoming long drive up towards the Angolan border at Ruacana.

After breakfast at the Elephant Lodge, we left with lunch packets and set off on the long journey to Ruacana. En route we passed through the villages of Kamanjab and various small communities of the Himba people, a nomadic people who inhabit the arid northwest of Namibia. Mammals started to appear along the roadside as we drove and these included an African Wildcat, for some, Southern (Angolan) Giraffe, Warthog, and plentiful Springbok. Mid-afternoon we eventually arrived at our next lodge at the river border with neighbouring Angola. Bird sightings on our journey had included two

Ludwig's Bustards, the first of the trip, a handful of Black chested Buzzards, several Pale-chanting Goshawks, and a lone Gabor Goshawk. We also encountered our first Meves's Long-tailed Starlings and White-tailed Shrikes along with species seen before including, Red-billed Spurfowl, Cape (Black) Crows, Crowned Lapwings, Purple Rollers, African Hoopoes, and an African Cuckoo. At the stop for the White-tailed Shrikes, it was good to also discover a pair of Carps Tits, Chat Flycatcher and a Kalahari Scrub Robin as well as the Southern White-crowned Shrike.

In the late afternoon we had a few new species to the west of Ruacana. A dozen Ruppell's Parrots fed in a roadside tree which also held several Scaly feathered Weavers and the first Willow Warbler of the trip. Plenty of hornbills to which included Monteiro's, Damara Red-billed and Southern Yellow-billed Hornbills. Back at the old camp the hot temperatures meant there was little bird activity so we settled into our new accommodation which would be home for the next two nights.

The day started long the banks of the river Kunene upstream from the border post turn off. Mature trees were full of weavers, mainly Chestnut, parties of noisy Violet Wood-Hoopoes, Hartlaub's and Bare-cheeked Babblers, several African Hoopoes, Purple Rollers, and a good dozen or so Olive Bee-eaters, a migrant breeder to NW Namibia. The main target bird here was the Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush, with a very localised distribution in Namibia here it is confined to the lower stretches of the Kunene River. They proved to be not too difficult to find although they preferred to remain in the tops of the tall riverside palms. White-tailed Shrikes were numerous as were Southern White-crowned Shrikes, Swamp Boubou, Ashy Flycatchers as well as singing White-browed Scrub Robin. All had views of a male Bennett's Woodpecker of the yellow-bellied Namibian subspecies capricorni.

Moving on late morning we found ourselves along a seemingly dry riverbed apart from a couple of small water seeps. These seeps attracted a regular run of small birds which were coming to drink. They included gorgeous Golden-breasted Buntings, Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, Lark-like Buntings, and Red-headed Weavers. Overhead in the shade of the tree canopy lurked Black-backed Puffbacks and a party of White-crested Helmetshrikes. Late morning was supposed to be the best time to connect with another visitor the beautiful Cinderella Waxbill. However, despite waiting for several hours in the shade of the riverside trees it was a no show on this day.

Time to head back south for the long drive to the Galton gate on the western perimeter of the famous Etosha National Park. Francis Galton was one of the first westerners to discover the huge salt pan that forms the heart of the current day national park, the other was Charles Andersson whose name adorns the southern entrance to Etosha. The year was 1851 whilst the original park was not established as a game reserve until 1907. Then it covered 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> of territory but today this has been much reduced to its current size of 22,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

At a roadside waterhole we saw a huge flock of Grey backed Sparrow Larks, and a tree full of Red Headed Finches. At another Namaqua Sandgrouse were coming to drink whilst in the shade of roadside bushes sat Spotted Thicknees and Red-crested Korhaans. Then we spotted our first Kori Bustard as it strolled along, simply immense! Passerines included Kalahari Scrub Robins, Ant-eating Chats and Chat Flycatchers.

Our first bout of serious mammal watching ensued as we watched a group of bull African Savannah Elephants at the close range at the rather infamous Olifantsrus waterhole. Other species included Southern (Angolan) Giraffe, Hartebeest, Blue Wildebeest, Mountain and Plains Zebras, Springbok, Gemsbok, Black-faced Impala whilst some saw some sleeping Lions. Late afternoon whilst watching at the Okaukeujo camp waterhole five Lions, including two males, came to drink which provided a special moment. As darkness fell the first of many Double-banded Sandgrouse flew in whilst Rufous cheeked Nightjars also appeared waterside. The nightjars were still around after dinner when a dozen or so Black Rhinos arrived to join the various Southern Giraffes, Savannah Elephants and Spotted Hyenas in the relative cool of the evening. The group stayed overnight at the Okaukeujo Camp our first of a three-night stay in Etosha.

At dawn Jupiter shone brightly in the western sky as a mother and calf Black Rhino visited the camp waterhole which was otherwise quiet apart from two nervous Black-backed Jackals. After breakfast we set off on a waterhole drive before returning to the camp for some much-needed shade over lunch. Just north of the camp we came across a Red-necked Falcon in a roadside nesting tree, Northern Black Korhaans became a regular sight as were Double banded Coursers, some very close to our vehicles. Sightings of more Namaqua Sandgrouse and Ludwig's Bustard followed whilst a pride of sleeping Lions could be made out under a bushy tree. Later at the Gemsbok (Oryx) Lake waterhole a splendid Secretary Bird was strutting around between the visiting elephants whilst a Black Rhino trotted by the cars on his way to the water! A pair of Rufous-eared Warblers showed well in the latter part of our morning. A major feature of which had been the Larks, several species included the ubiquitous Grey backed Sparrow Larks, some very confiding Pink-billed Larks alongside Red capped Larks seeking both water and shade at the waterholes. A marauding gang of Spring heeled Larks "mugged" a couple of Eastern Clapper Larks.

The afternoon was spent driving the back roads to our next camp at Halali when not far from camp our first Burchell's Coursers were found and posed for the cameras. Once checked in at Halali an exploration of the leafy grounds produced sightings of Violet Wood Hoopoes, Damara Red-billed Hornbills, African Grey Hornbill, a pair of Carps Tits and several Willow Warblers. As dusk fell Red-faced Francolins came out to feed amongst lodges as did several Southern White-crowned Shrikes. Later we tried for the distinctive White-faced Owl which has bred in the campground here. After an initial response it all went quiet. Meanwhile at the waterhole visitors included Spotted Hyenas, many Savannah Elephants and more Black Rhinos. Overnight at Halali Camp.

Another full day in Etosha as we made our way across the central section of the park. From the Halali Camp we travelled eastwards visiting several waterholes en route reaching the camp of Namutoni by lunchtime. Along the way we noticed that a "kill" had attracted a sizeable number of vultures. Amongst some thirty White-backed Vultures and a dozen Lappet-

faced Vultures a single White-headed Vulture poked its head up and rarer still an immature Egyptian Vulture which Steve had picked up earlier as it flew over as we drove along. Other new birds included Chestnut-backed Sparrow Larks, a Brown-crowned Tchagra showed well at one stop. Temperatures again reached 40 degrees C by midday, so a post lunch siesta was in order until late afternoon. We undertook the famous "Dik Dik" drive in the relative cool of the late afternoon which produced at least fifteen sightings of this diminutive gazelle. One of which was accompanied by a Swainson's Spurfowl which was also seeking the shade! Other species included Green-winged Pytilia, Emerald spotted Dove and both Blue and Violet-eared Waxbills, all regular visitors to the waterholes. Good numbers of Namaqua Sandgrouse were seen on the morning drive with over a hundred birds at one waterhole. After dinner we tried for nightbirds, and although the Red-cheeked Nightjars proved responsive the owls remained quiet. Overnight at the Namutoni Camp.

An unexpected Honey Badger and an enormous Eland bull were the highlights at the waterholes as we drove north out of camp. We succeeded in watching twenty or so Burchell's Sandgrouse coming in for an early morning drink. Small flocks of songbirds included Yellow Canaries, and both Black-faced and Violet-eared Waxbills. Our next destination was the King Nahale gate on the northeast side of Etosha. As we crossed the Andoni Plain the landscape changed dramatically as the bush melted away and we found ourselves amongst a vast area of open grassland.

Large herds of Zebra and Wildebeest provided an impressive sight as they criss-crossed the open plain heading towards the waterholes. Nearby a flock of seventeen elegant Blue Cranes fed in the shimmering grasslands providing one of the spectacles of the tour. South African Cliff Swallows joined the hirundines feeding over the waterhole. Amongst the many waders present were Kittlitz's Plovers but we could not locate any of the Caspian Plovers that had been present here in recent days.

By mid-morning we were departing Etosha after enjoying good views of a Desert Cisticola at the Nahale gate, our final bird in Etosha. Soon we were speeding along dirt roads on the way to Grootfontein before making a lunch stop at the welcoming Roy's Camp, a small diversion off the main highway to Rundu. Target here was the Black-faced Babbler which very conveniently could be watched outside the camp's kitchen door so good views were had. A short walk produced good numbers of Burchell's Starlings in the grounds and several thornveld species such as Black-chested Prinias, Grey-backed Camaroptera and another new bird the Yellow-breasted Apalis.

We broke the onward journey to take looks at a roadside Wahlberg's Eagle, our first Chinspot Batis as well as sightings of both Bearded and Cardinal Woodpeckers before arriving at the Hakusembe Riverside Lodge in the late afternoon. The lodge sits on the banks of the Okovango River, and the extensive grounds held a pair of Spotted Eagle Owls with at least one chick showing at the nest hole. On the river we picked out Rock Pratincole and several African Black Skimmers, African Pygmy Geese, Giant Kingfisher, and a party of Openbill Storks which were all new for the trip. A delicious meal was enjoyed outside on the restaurant deck before we retired to our comfortable lodges for the night.

As we departed the lodge next morning a Lilac breasted Roller posed for photos in the car park. A small group of Kittlitz's Plovers were spotted on the drive out to the main road, the B8. We headed east for two hours and stopped off in an area known as the "B8 woodlands". In essence tracts of Miombo Woodland still in decent condition. It was very dry in the woodland and bird activity was low, but we persisted and at the second stop Steve located our target, a female Souza's Shrike which gave excellent views. Other species here included African Hoopoe, Green Wood Hoopoe, European Bee-eaters which had been a feature of recent days. Both Black-collared and Crested Barbets, African Paradise Flycatchers, two pairs of Pale Flycatchers a pair of Southern Black Flycatchers and more sightings of the striking Chinspot Batis. A delightful selection of sunbirds to with Amethyst, Marico, Scarlet-chested and White-bellied all represented.

Our lunch stop was at the Popa Falls camp with the river providing some respite in the heat of the day. New birds came along thick and fast White fronted Bee-eater, Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Terrestrial Bulbul, Mosque Swallow, Kurrichane Thrush, Holub's Golden Weaver and Jameson's Firefinch. Continuing along the Caprivi we soon reached our next camp at the N'Dhovu Lodge. Here we were enjoyed great looks at Meyers Parrots and Greater Blue-eared Starlings. Across the river African Water Buffalo grazed alongside African Savannah Elephants whilst giant Common Hippopotamus lounged in the shallows, startling the unexpecting tourist with their verbal repertoire of grunts and bellows! A late afternoon walk produced close views of a pair of roosting White-backed Night Herons. African Wattled Lapwings were seen on a river island whilst perhaps the star birds were the gorgeous Southern Carmine Bee-eaters which nest in large colonies along the riverbank.

An early start to seek out birds before the heat of the day as we checked out remnant patches of Miombo Woodland. Green-capped and Burnt necked Eremomelas, a heard but not seen Rufous-bellied Tit, Collared Sunbirds, White-browed Robin Chat a flock of 14 Cut-throat Finches were very distinctive, Blue Waxbill, Violet-eared Waxbill and Golden-breasted Buntings.

It was short hop from our lodge to the entrance of the Mahangu National Park. Home to large numbers of African Elephants, Water Buffalos, Hippos, and Nile Crocodiles. The wetlands alongside the Okavango River were very productive one of the standout birds here was a family party of the critically endangered Wattled Crane. Long-toed Lapwing were present in good numbers alongside African Jacanas, Black Crane, Collared Pratincoles, 18 Marabou Storks, 2 Yellow-billed Storks, several Hadada Ibis, Glossy Ibis, and a couple of Goliath Heron. Many raptors included our first Osprey and African Marsh Harrier, African Cuckoo Hawks, two Brown Snake Eagles and good views of a juvenile Western Banded Snake Eagle, an uncommon sighting here. Lappet-faced and White-backed Vultures, both Martial and Wahlberg's Eagles also recorded plus African Goshawk, Shikra, and Little Sparrowhawk along with an abundance of African Fish Eagles. The habitat of mature riparian woodland and water obviously attracting a good range of potential prey species to the area.

These woodlands held Black headed Oriole, a few more Willow Warblers and the familiar form of a Spotted Flycatcher. The much sought after Pel's Fishing Owl used to be found here but nowadays one must travel over the border into Botswana

to encounter them. This we did as we crossed the border into Botswana on the far side of the park and very soon were heading to our next base, the Shakawe Lodge. Nestled in deep woodland along the banks of the Okavango River in Botswana.

Late afternoon birding around the lodge produced several new species such as African Green Pigeon, Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Dark-capped Bulbul, Lesser Striped Swallow, Long-billed Crombec, Hartlaub's Babbler, Collared Sunbird and Red-billed Firefinch.

An evening walk produced several African Wood Owls, after discovering a roosting bird in the late afternoon we found them to be abundant around the lodge grounds and in the adjacent forest. Two species of nightjar could be heard with Square-tailed Nightjars by the river and Fiery-necked Nightjars in the forest, we managed to see the latter species near the lodge gates.

All day was spent at the Shakawe River Lodge in Botswana much of which was spent on the river. A morning visit to a neighbouring ranch produced a great encounter with the Pel's Fishing Owl. A bird was located taking a late breakfast of fresh Catfish and it appeared rather unconcerned as it sat up high in a huge tree. A Golden-rumped Woodpecker landed close by as we disembarked our landing craft. African Fish Eagles sat out on high perches and at least thirty Yellow-billed Kites gathered near the water. Continuing along the river Coppery-tailed Coucals were in evidence and a pair of Hadada Ibis showed well by their nest in a tree overhanging the river. A small group of Southern Carmine Bee-eaters showed well from their riverside perches but there was no visible activity at their nest colony. Although further upstream a colony of White-fronted Bee-eaters were active at their nest holes. We spent time tracking down the elusive Greater Swamp Warbler and they proved almost impossible to see, well almost! In contrast a Chirping Cisticola sat out in the open for the group. Over the wide slow-moving river hawked Lesser Striped Swallows, Brown-throated Martins, Banded Martins, White-throated, Wire-tailed and Grey-rumped Swallows.

A break around lunchtime was productive with several species in front of the lodge which included a Lesser Honeyguide, our first for the trip. Many sunbirds in the grounds with Marico and White-bellied the most abundant. Along the riverbank we made regular sightings of Giant, Pied and Malachite Kingfishers and a Woodland Kingfisher showed well from the lodge veranda. In addition to the five species of Bee-eaters present we saw both Broad-billed and Lilac-breasted Rollers.

Late afternoon we took a boat trip downstream with many birds at the waterside and on river islands which included Knob-billed Duck, a pair of African Pygmy Geese, Water Thicknees, Long-toed Lapwings, African Skimmers, a flock of thirty Whiskered Terns, a Rufous-bellied Heron, Goliath Heron, Hamerkops, Black-winged Kite and African Marsh Harrier. At one point we stepped ashore to locate the Luapula Cisticola and stumbled on a small flock of Brown Firefinches as well as flushing an unidentified nightjar. At our next stop we again stepped ashore at an extensive area of water meadows. Our target here was the Slaty Egret a species that had so far eluded us, a bird was seen but only by Tommy as it flew from the riverside meadows. On the return journey the air was filled with Collared Pratincoles and as the light faded an African Marsh Owl crossed the boat. The dramatic sunset over the Okavango will be forever in the memory.

An early departure from Shakawe Lodge as Little Rush Warblers sang from the riverside at dawn. Sentinel Magpie Shrikes lined the roadside and just before the border a pair of Bradfield's Hornbills posed for the group. Back into Namibia with some extra paperwork at the border which included a Covid declaration form. We made it a slow drive through the National Park. The pair of Wattled Cranes with their full-grown juvenile remained but kept their distance. An African Spoonbill and seven Yellow-billed Storks joined the Marabou Storks out on the marshes. Plenty of waterfowl included 150 Spur-winged Geese and at five hundred White-faced Whistling Ducks. A Rufous-bellied Heron was still feeding where we had left it a couple of days previously.

Continuing the dry dirt road to Popa Falls for another shady lunch at the camp restaurant. This offered good views over the waterside trees and running water also meant birds! As ever Grey Go-away-birds were present along with Red-eyed Doves, Laughing and Emerald-spotted Wood Doves. Other visitors to the water were Blue Waxbills, Red-billed and Jameson's Firefinches. At further roadside stops on our journey we encountered several each of Southern Black Flycatchers and Southern Black Tits but despite trying hard no Rufous-bellied Tit.

It was a further six-hour drive to our next bed at the Wildacker Guest Farm situated well off the highway north of Grootfontein. We pulled up as the light was fading and it was still registering 37 C at dusk. As we gathered at the dining room a pair of African Barred Owls came into the trees overhanging the patio. In the background we could hear the now familiar song of the Fiery-necked Nightjar. The camp firepit was burning brightly outside which was surprisingly comfortable to sit by having enjoyed a splendid buffet dinner and a warm welcome from our hosts.

Breakfast time birding at the Wildacker Lodge was a busy affair with the African Barred Owls still around and joined in their tree by a gang of six inquisitive, Black-faced Babbler. Crested Francolins ran between the lodges and a variety of hornbills visited the bird feeders. A nearby drinking hole attracted hundreds of Ring-necked Doves and a good mix of species including many Golden-breasted Buntings, small numbers of Long-tailed Paradise Whydahs, both Black-throated and Yellow-fronted Canaries plus several Yellow-throated Petronias.

It was to be another long drive south and we arrived at lunchtime in the small town of Omaruru here we took a break before continuing to our final lodge of the trip at Erongo Wild. Small flocks of both Alpine and Common Swifts were passed on the journey and some also saw White-rumped Swift. The landscape changed as we travelled, and the bushlands were replaced with arable fields. A couple of Ostriches were a reminder of the Etosha Plains just a few days before.

By mid-afternoon we had arrived at Erongo nestled amongst the rugged peaks of granite hills. A spectacular place with a series of tented lodges tucked away on the hillside. Familiar species to be found here included the attractive Rosy-faced Lovebirds, Cape Buntings, Pirit Batis, Short-toed Rock Thrush, Monteiro's Hornbills, Namaqua Dove, Speckled Pigeon, and Rock Kestrels. One of the target birds here is the Hartlaub's Spurfowl but the birds remained quiet here during our stay.

although the camp guides had been seeing them on a regular basis. During our search we came across the distinctive Rockrunner, two pairs of Carp's Tit, Crimson Breasted Shrike, Rock Martins, Southern Yellow White-eyes, Cape Starlings, White-browed Scrub Robin, and Mountain Wheatears.

During dinner we called in a Freckled Nightjar which landed on the restaurant roof! The birds also gave an excellent fly by and later more were seen flying around the floodlit waterhole.

Breakfast was taken at the Erongo Wild Camp following an intensive but ultimately unproductive search for the Hartlaub's Spurfowl. All the while keeping an eye on the busy camp waterhole with Speckled Pigeon and many Rosy-faced Lovebirds amongst the visitors. We had good final views of the Barred Wren-warbler and the Rockrunner a lovely songster of these distinctive rocky regions. We then packed up and headed off towards Windhoek where we took a final lunch in town before departing for the airport ready for our next adventure.

Following the 16-day tour to Namibia and Botswana four of the group flew off to Harare via Johannesburg to take part in a four-day extension in the Bvumba Mountains. The so called "Misty Mountains" are in the south-east of the country close to the border with neighbouring Mozambique. The forests here are a hotspot for birders and holds a population of the localised Swynnerton's Robin. Other sought-after species include Robert's Warbler and the Chirinda Apalis, which are endemic to a small strip of Zimbabwe and parts of adjacent Mozambique. The surrounding lowlands still contains extensive tracts of Miombo Woodland. Specialist species here include the Miombo Rock Thrush, Miombo Tit, and the Eastern Miombo Sunbird all of which we saw during our stay.

We landed at the Robert Mugabe international airport around 8 AM and were met by our local guide Peter. After a few introductions we were soon on our way to the outskirts of Harare and on the A3 road to Mutare. We broke our journey at the Halfway House conveniently located between the capital and Mutare. A cooked breakfast and pots of tea were in order as we enjoyed the comfortable surroundings of this century old farmhouse. Birds in the garden included several migrant Willow Warblers and a flock of Red-winged Starlings. Continuing our onward journey, we finally arrived at the White Horse Inn in the early afternoon.

Keen to make the most of our stay and desperate to see more new birds our group soon gathered at the front of the hotel. The surrounding land contained a verdant patch of remnant evergreen forest. Literally the first bird we encountered was the Chirinda Apalis and the birds came thick and fast with Bar-throated Apalis, Olive, Variable and Amethyst Sunbirds, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Black-fronted Bushshrike, Livingstone's Turaco, Stripe-cheeked Greenbul, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Thick-billed Weaver and the fantail like Grey-Tit-Flycatcher. All this and we had barely moved from the car park! As the day ended, we retired for dinner and made plans for the following days.

Today we would visit the higher elevation forest on the mountain and the lower temperatures meant we could spend all day in the field. At breakfast we had looks at a cracking male Red-throated Twinspot and a Red-capped Robin Chat both on the hotel lawn. Higher up we concentrated in the older forest and soon saw the beautiful Orange Ground Thrush with one obligingly hopping across the road. Along a trail we crept after our next target Swynnerton's Robin. Little did we realise what a performance this species would put on. After stalking one slowly and carefully it suddenly decided to put on a show and ended up hopping around our feet just like a European Robin in British garden! Olive Thrushes appeared abundant in the woodland here and a couple of White Starred Robins also popped out of cover briefly. Other species back at the roadside included Cape Batis another Chirinda Apalis and a singing Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler.

Heading higher up the forest became more fragmented and dispersed with grassy clearings and stands of non-native Eucalyptus. Soon however we came across a pair of Robert's Warblers which were seen duetting close to the track. Much harder were the Barratt's Warblers which snuck about reluctant to give themselves away. Another elusive bird was the Red-faced Crimsonwing which also gave us the run-around, we would be back. Peter led us down another track and showed us a pair of Bronzy Sunbirds feeding in some gardens whilst a Sombre Greenbul sang close by. Heading over to a grassy clearing we were soon watching Singing Cisticola, a pair of Cape Grassbirds and an Olive Bushshrike which showed well on the forest edge. The same area of scrub also produced a confiding African Yellow Warbler and a singing Cape Robin-Chat.

Lunch was taken at the nearby Forest Hills Resort which overlooks neighbouring Mozambique. Here we picked up more birds in the extensive grounds. White necked Ravens cruised past, European Bee-eaters were on the move, African Dusky Flycatcher, Lemon Dove, White-tailed Crested Flycatchers, and best of all a male Eastern Miombo Sunbird which we were expecting to see in the woodlands at lower elevation. Back at the White Horse Inn in the late afternoon we again explored the grounds and came across three Green Twinspots, Silvery cheeked Hornbills and Black Saw-wing Swallows.

An all or nothing day planned in the Miombo woodlands that are scattered over a series of low hills between the lodge and Mutare. It had been very wet and windy overnight, and it was still drizzling at breakfast. Soon we were below the mists and embarking on a very productive exploration of the woodlands. After the dry heat of Namibia, it was refreshingly cool and surprisingly green with a fresh growth of grasses, flowering plants and even the odd orchid.

The birding was quick and relatively easy and African Spotted Creeper was our first prize. Moving on we tracked down a singing Miombo Rock Thrush being distracted on the way by Black-headed Oriole and party of Retz's Helmetshrikes. Cabanis's Buntings were in full song as was a lone Garden Warbler whilst there were more Eastern Miombo Sunbirds to view. We took a woodland walk into a small valley which was full of new birds Stierling's Wren-Warbler, Red-faced Crombec, Greater Honeyguide, Black Cuckooshrike, Brown-crowned Tchagra, several Yellow-mantled Widowbirds then a pair of Grey Waxbills but all to quickly they were gone.

Following them led us into an area close to the road and we could hear the distinctive call of the Miombo Tit, suddenly a small flock appeared passing quickly through the trees as we pursued them.

Flushed with success we headed into town and in the leafy suburbs found ourselves at a huge golf course. Scanning from the club house whilst Peter gained permissions, we quickly picked up a Whyte's Barbet. There was a pair and soon we were watching them in their nest hole in a huge Sycamore Fig tree. Job done we headed to a local hotel for lunch. The weather was still cloudy grey and overcast when we headed back up the Bvumba Mountain. We had decided to try again for the Red-faced Crimsonwing and returned to the spot where we had encountered one the previous day. It took a while but suddenly Peter indicated there was a bird up ahead, in fact there were two birds and very soon most of us had them in view. They quickly slunk away as before but Peter persisted obtaining views for those that had not connected with the initial views. So ended another successful day with splendid views of all the target birds plus six "write-ins" to add to our tally.

The return day and with the timing of international departures we had to depart the White Horse early with a packed breakfast. Arriving on time at the airport we all said our final goodbyes as we headed off to our different destinations.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g., it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

The species names and taxonomy used in the bird list follows Gill, F., Donsker, D., & Rasmussen, P.(Eds) **2023. IOC World Bird List (v13.2)** (this was the current version when the checklist for the tour report was created).

Where the subspecies seen is/are known, these are often given in parentheses at the end of the species comment.

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by symbol (H).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species only recorded on the extension are indicated with (Z).

## BIRDS

**Common Ostrich *Struthio camelus*** Most birds seen in the Namib Desert and Etosha.

**White-faced Whistling Duck** (W-f Duck) ***Dendrocygna viduata*** a count of 500 birds at Mahangu NP

**Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*** up to 150 birds at Mahangu NP

**Knob-billed Duck** (Comb D) ***Sarkidiornis melanotos*** Two sightings of four birds in the Okavango.

**Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*** Common throughout.

**South African Shelduck** ◊ ***Tadorna cana*** good numbers at wetlands near Windhoek and Walvis Bay

**African Pygmy Goose *Nettion auratus*** four birds on the Okavango at Rundu and pair at Shakawe.

**Cape Teal *Anas capensis*** present in small numbers at the Walvis Bay wetlands.

**Cape Shoveler** ◊ ***Anas smithii*** two birds on Avis Dam near Windhoek and two more at Walvis Bay.

**Red-billed Teal** (R-b Duck) ***Anas erythrorhynchos*** twenty on Avis Dam near Windhoek.

**Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota*** present in small numbers on the waters around Windhoek.

**Maccoa Duck *Oxyura maccoa*** a flock of at least sixty on Avis Dam.

**Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris*** Common and widespread.

**Crested Francolin *Dendroperdix sephaena*** several seen in the Caprivi and at Wildacker Camp.

**Red-billed Spurfowl** ◊ (R-b Francolin) ***Pternistis adspersus*** widespread

**Swainson's Spurfowl** ◊ (S Francolin) ***Pternistis swainsonii*** seen on the dik-dik drive in Etosha.

**Rufous-cheeked Nightjar *Caprimulgus rufigena*** present in good numbers at the Etosha waterholes.

**Fiery-necked Nightjar** *Caprimulgus pectoralis* seen well at Shakawe Lodge.

**Freckled Nightjar** *Caprimulgus tristigma* common at the Erongo Wild Camp.

**Square-tailed Nightjar** (Mozambique N, Gabon N) *Caprimulgus fossii* heard only at Shakawe.

**African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus* Common throughout.

**Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba* Small parties in the Windhoek area.

**Common Swift** (European S) *Apus apus* Seen in increasing numbers as the tour progressed.

**Bradfield's Swift** ♦ *Apus bradfieldi* A few seen in the vicinity of Windhoek airport.

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis* Very common throughout, a colony at Ruacana gas station.

**White-rumped Swift** *Apus caffer* a few roadside sightings

**Grey Go-away-bird** (Grey Lourie) *Crinifer concolor* seemingly everywhere.

**Purple-crested Turaco (Z)** *Gallirex porphyreolophus* A heard only at the Prince of Wales viewpoint.

**Livingstone's Turaco (Z)** *Tauraco livingstonii* Nice views in the grounds of the White Horse Inn.

**Kori Bustard** *Ardeotis kori* Common only in Etosha.

**Ludwig's Bustard** ♦ *Neotis ludwigii* Two birds on the long journey from Uis to Ruacana.

**Rüppell's Korhaan** ♦ *Eupodotis rueppellii* Seen well in the Namib a total of 20 individuals.

**Red-crested Korhaan** (Crested Bustard) *Lophotis ruficrista* A common bird in Etosha.

**Northern Black Korhaan** ♦ *Afrotis afraoides* Many good sightings in Etosha.

**Coppery-tailed Coucal** ♦ *Centropus cupreicaudus* Several birds seen, and heard, along the Okavango.

**White-browed Coucal** *Centropus superciliosus* A single bird at Ndhuvo Camp (N/L).

**Levaillant's Cuckoo** *Clamator levaillantii* Single birds heard at Mahangu and Shakawe Lodge.

**Red-chested Cuckoo (Z)** *Cuculus solitarius* A couple of returning birds in the Bvumba Mountains.

**African Cuckoo** *Cuculus gularis* Migrants were returning at several sites across Namibia.

**Namaqua Sandgrouse** ♦ *Pterocles namaqua* Common in the Namib and Etosha.

**Double-banded Sandgrouse** *Pterocles bicinctus* Several hundred visited the Okaukuejo waterhole.

**Burchell's Sandgrouse** ♦ *Pterocles burchelli* Good views in Etosha and again at Mahangu.

**Rock Dove** (Feral Pigeon) *Columba livia*

**Speckled Pigeon** (Rock P) *Columba guinea* Common throughout.

**Lemon Dove (Z)** *Columba larvata* An elusive dove of the Bvumba Mountains.

**Mourning Collared Dove** (African Mourning D) *Streptopelia decipiens* A few on the Kunene River.

**Red-eyed Dove** *Streptopelia semitorquata* Very common along the Okavango River.

**Ring-necked Dove** (Cape Turtle D) *Streptopelia capichola* Abundant throughout.

**Laughing Dove** (Palm D) *Spilopelia senegalensis* Common throughout.

**Emerald-spotted Wood Dove** (Green-spotted D) *Turtur chalcospilos* Common throughout.

**Tambourine Dove (Z)** *Turtur tympanistria* Seen at the Hillside Golf course in Mutare.

**Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* Common throughout.

**African Green Pigeon** *Treron calvus* Several pairs seen near Shakawe.

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus* Present at most wetland sites visited.

**Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata* Over a hundred birds at Avis Dam also present at Walvis Bay.



**African Swampphen** (A Purple S) *Porphyrio madagascariensis* On the river at Shakawe Lodge.

**Black Crake** *Amaurornis flavirostra* Common along the Okavango River.

**Wattled Crane** ♦ *Grus carunculata* A pair with a full-grown juvenile seen in the Mahangu Park.

**Blue Crane** *Grus paradisea* A flock of seventeen at the Andoni waterhole in Etosha.

**Little Grebe** (Dabchick) *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Plentiful wherever open water is found.

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis* A flock of 85 at the Walvis Bay lagoon.

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus roseus* Thousands at Walvis Bay.

**Lesser Flamingo** *Phoeniconaias minor* Thousands at Walvis Bay.

**Water Thick-knee** (W Dikkop) *Burhinus vermiculatus* Seen well on the Okavango River.

**Spotted Thick-knee** (S Dikkop) *Burhinus capensis* Regular sightings in Etosha.

**African Oystercatcher** ♦ (A Black O) *Haematopus moquini* A flock of 18 roosting birds in Walvis Bay.

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* Commonly seen throughout.

**Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* Large numbers at the Walvis Bay lagoon.

**Long-toed Lapwing** (L-t Plover) *Vanellus crassirostris* At least forty birds in the Mahangu Park.

**Blacksmith Lapwing** (B Plover) *Vanellus armatus* Very common at all wetlands.

**Crowned Lapwing** (C Plover) *Vanellus coronatus* Common throughout.

**African Wattled Lapwing** (A W Plover) *Vanellus senegallus* Three on the Okavango at Ndhovu.

**Grey Plover** (Black-bellied P) *Pluvialis squatarola* Good numbers in Walvis Bay.

**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* Present on the Walvis Bay lagoons.

**Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* Seen at Avis Dam, Walvis Bay and in Etosha.

**Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris* Common throughout.

**White-fronted Plover** *Charadrius marginatus* Seen well at the Walvis Bay lagoons.

**Chestnut-banded Plover** *Charadrius pallidus* Hundreds seen in Walvis Bay.

**African Jacana** *Actophilornis africanus* Many on the Okavango wetlands.

**Eurasian Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* On the shoreline from our Walvis Bay hotel.

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata* One flew west along the river at Ndhovu Lodge on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* Small numbers in Walvis Bay.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Large numbers feeding in Walvis Bay.

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* Seen frequently at all water bodies inland and on the coast.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea* Hundreds in Walvis Bay.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba* Small numbers in Walvis Bay

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* Abundant on the coastal wetlands

**Great Snipe** *Gallinago media* A rare Palearctic migrant seen at Avis Dam, Windhoek.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* A regular sighting at the Etosha waterholes.

**Common Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* A few birds on the Okavango wetlands.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola* Common at the Etosha waterholes

**Burchell's Courser** ♦ *Cursorius rufus* One good sighting of a pair in Etosha.

**Double-banded Courser** (Two-banded C) *Rhinoptilus africanus* Common only in Etosha.

**Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincole*** Abundant on the Okavango River wetlands.

**Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis*** A single on the river at the Hausembe River Lodge.

**African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris*** Seen along the Okavango River at N'Dhovu and Shakawe.

**Grey-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*** Five birds seen in Swakopmund.

**Hartlaub's Gull** ♦ *Chroicocephalus hartlaubii* Commonest gull along the coast.

**Cape Gull** ♦ *Larus vetula* Common along the coast.

**Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*** Good numbers in Walvis Bay.

**Greater Crested Tern (Swift T) *Thalasseus bergii*** Several on the lagoons in Walvis Bay.

**Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis*** Feeding offshore in Walvis Bay.

**Damara Tern** ♦ *Sternula balaenarum* Several sightings in Walvis Bay and at Swakopmund Pans.

**Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*** A few in Walvis Bay

**Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida*** A flock of thirty seen along the Okavango River at Shakawe.

**African Openbill (A. Open-billed Stork) *Anastomus lamelligerus*** Several seen on the Okavango River.

**Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer*** A dozen at an Etosha waterhole also at Mahangu.

**Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*** Seven birds seen in Mahangu Park.

**African Darter *Anhinga rufa*** **Seen at most wetlands.**

**Reed Cormorant (Long-tailed C) *Microcarbo africanus***

**Cape Cormorant** ♦ *Phalacrocorax capensis* Hundreds on the Walvis Bay guano platforms

**Crowned Cormorant** ♦ *Microcarbo coronatus* On the Walvis Bay guano platforms

**White-breasted Cormorant *Phalacrocorax lucidus*** Small numbers at the coastal wetlands.

**African Sacred Ibis (Sacred I) *Threskiornis aethiopicus*** A dozen at Gammans water works.

**Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*** A pair on a nest on the Okavango at Shakawe.

**Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*** Several on the Okavango river at Mahangu and Shakawe.

**African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*** A single bird at Mahangu Park.

**White-backed Night Heron** ♦ *Gorsachius leuconotus* A pair roosting at Mahangu Lodge.

**Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*** seen leaving their roost at Hakusembe.

**Striated Heron (Green-backed H) *Butorides striata*** Seen on the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*** Plentiful on the Okavango River.

**Rufous-bellied Heron** ♦ *Ardeola rufiventris* A feeding bird watched at the Mahangu Park.

**Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*** Common throughout.

**Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*** Common on the coast, rare elsewhere.

**Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*** Seen at several localities.

**Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*** Three seen at the Mahangu Park.

**Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*** Individuals seen on the Okavango River wetlands.

**Great Egret (Great White E) *Ardea alba*** Several along the Okavango.

**Slaty Egret** ♦ *Egretta vinaceigula* One seen in flight at the Okavango wetlands near Shakawe (N/L).

**Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*** On the Okavango wetlands and near Windhoek.

**Hamerkop *Scopus umbrette*** A familiar sight along inland waterways.

**Great White Pelican** (Eastern W P) *Pelecanus onocrotalus* Common on the lagoon at Walvis Bay.

**Secretarybird** *Sagittarius serpentarius* Singles seen with one at the Gemsbok waterhole in Etosha.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus* One seen along the Okavango at Mahangu Park.

**Black-winged Kite** (Black-shouldered K) *Elanus caeruleus*

**African Cuckoo-Hawk** *Aviceda cuculoides* Sightings at Popa Falls and in the Mahangu Park.

**Egyptian Vulture** *Neophron percnopterus* A juvenile joined in at a kill in Etosha on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**White-backed Vulture** (African W-b V) *Gyps africanus* Many birds seen in Etosha and Mahangu Park.

**White-headed Vulture** *Trigonoceps occipitalis* Birds seen in both Etosha and at Mahangu Parks.

**Lappet-faced Vulture** *Torgos tracheliotos* A dozen birds at a kill in Etosha on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Black-chested Snake Eagle** *Circaetus pectoralis* A common roadside bird in the northwest

**Brown Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinereus* Several seen during the tour.

**Western Banded Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinerascens* A juvenile seen in the Mahangu Park on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus* Seen in Etosha and the woodlands of the Northeast.

**Martial Eagle** *Polemaetus bellicosus* Several seen throughout the tour.

**Wahlberg's Eagle** *Hieraaetus wahlbergi* Two seen at Mahangu Park.

**Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax* Several seen in Etosha and along the road network.

**African Hawk-Eagle** *Aquila spilogaster* Two adults at the roadside on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Lizard Buzzard** *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* Two seen in the "B8 woodlands" east of Rundu.

**Gabar Goshawk** *Micronisus gabar* Two seen on separate nests and others flying by.

**Dark Chanting Goshawk** *Melierax metabates* Seen in the woodlands east of Rundu.

**Pale Chanting Goshawk** (Southern P C G) *Melierax canorus* Common except in the Northeast.

**African Goshawk** *Accipiter tachiro* Birds seen at Popa Falls and in Mahangu Park the next day.

**Shikra** (Little Banded Goshawk) *Accipiter badius* Singles seen in the Mahangu Park.

**Little Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter minullus* Singles seen at Mahangu Park and at Shakawe.

**African Marsh Harrier** *Circus ranivorus* Sightings only at the Mahangu Park.

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* One seen between Rundu and Popa on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius* Abundant along the Okavango at Shakawe.

**African Fish Eagle** *Haliaeetus vocifer* Seen in good numbers along the Okavango River.

**Common (Steppe) Buzzard (Z)** *Buteo (buteo) vulpinus* Seen on the journey to Mutare.

**Augur Buzzard (Z)** *Buteo augur* An immature at the Prince of Wales viewpoint.

**Pearl-spotted Owllet** (P-s Owl) *Glaucidium perlatum* Some magnificent views

**African Barred Owllet** (African B Owl) *Glaucidium capense* A pair at Wildacker Camp

**Marsh Owl** *Asio capensis* One seen on the Okavango near Shakawe Lodge.

**Spotted Eagle-Owl** *Bubo africanus* A pair nested in the grounds at Hakusembe River Lodge.

**Pel's Fishing Owl** ♦ *Scotopelia peli* A single bird in the riverine Woods near Shakawe.

**African Wood Owl** *Strix woodfordii* Several birds at Shakawe Lodge.

**White-backed Mousebird** ♦ *Colius colius* Common in the Namib and in Windhoek.

**Red-faced Mousebird *Urocolius indicus*** Common throughout seen well in Swakopmund.

**African Hoopoe *Upupa africana*** Widespread and common along the Kunene River.

**Green Wood Hoopoe** (Red-billed W H) ***Phoeniculus purpureus*** In woodlands east of Rundu.

**Violet Wood Hoopoe** ♢ (Southern V W H) ***Phoeniculus damarensis*** Seen along the Kunene River.

**Common Scimitarbill** (Greater S) ***Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*** A few sightings.

**Damara Red-billed Hornbill** ♢ (Damara H) ***Tockus damarensis*** Common in the northwest.

**Southern Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus rufirostris*** Common east of Etosha into the Okavango.

**Monteiro's Hornbill** ♢ ***Tockus monteiri*** Seen frequently from Windhoek to Huab and Erongo.

**Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill *Tockus leucomelas*** Frequent sightings throughout.

**Bradfield's Hornbill** ♢ ***Tockus bradfieldi*** Common in the woodlands at Wildacker Camp.

**African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*** Common throughout.

**Silvery-cheeked Hornbill (Z) *Bycanistes brevis*** In the grounds at the White Horse Inn.

**Purple Roller** (Rufous-crowned R) ***Coracias naevius*** Singletons scattered throughout.

**Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudatus*** Many sightings.

**Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*** A single pair at Shakawe.

**Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*** One near Ruacana on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Woodland Kingfisher *Halycon senegalensis*** One the riverside at Shakawe Lodge

**Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus*** On the Okavango at Shakawe.

**Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*** Sightings at Popa Falls and Shakawe.

**Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*** On the Okavango River at N'Dhovu Lodge.

**Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus*** Widespread sightings.

**Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus*** Common along the Okavango River.

**White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides*** A few colonies on the Okavango River.

**Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*** Two birds at Shakawe.

**Olive Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus*** A dozen birds by the River Kunene at Ruacana.

**European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*** Many returning birds in Etosha and the northeast.

**Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides*** Along the Okavango River, Popa to Shakawe.

**Whyte's Barbet** ♢ (Z) ***Stactolaema whytii*** A pair at a nest hole at the Hillside Golf course in Mutare.

**Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird (Z) *Pogoniulus bilineatus*** Present at the White Horse Inn grounds.

**Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird** (Y-f Tinker Barbet) ***Pogoniulus chrysoconus*** Encountered in the northeast.

**Acacia Pied Barbet** (Pied B) ***Tricholaema leucomelas*** Showed well at River Crossing Lodge.

**Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus*** A pair at Shakawe.

**Crested Barbet** (Levaillant's B) ***Trachyphonus vaillantii*** Seen at Shakawe Lodge.

**Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor*** One seen at Shakawe Lodge.

**Greater Honeyguide (Z) *Indicator indicator*** A calling bird in the Miombo woodlands east of Mutare.

**Bennett's Woodpecker** ♢ ***Campethera bennettii*** The subsp. *capricorni* seen along the Kunene River.

**Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni*** At Shakawe Lodge.

**Bearded Woodpecker *Dendropicus namaquus*** A couple of sightings on this tour.

**Cardinal Woodpecker** *Dendropicos fuscescens* Seen at several localities throughout.

**Rock Kestrel** *Falco rupicolus* A showy pair at Erongo Wild.

**Greater Kestrel** (White-eyed K) *Falco rupicoloides* Common in the Namib.

**Red-necked Falcon** ♦ *Falco chicquera* Very good views of four birds in Etosha.

**Lanner Falcon** *Falco biarmicus* A sighting between Rundu and Popa Falls.

**Meyer's Parrot** (Brown P) *Poicephalus meyeri* Common near Shakawe and the Mahangu Park.

**Rüppell's Parrot** ♦ *Poicephalus rueppellii* Seen well in the River Kunene area.

**Rosy-faced Lovebird** ♦ *Agapornis roseicollis* Common at Erongo and Kunene River.

**Cape Batis (Z)** *Batis capensis* Several sightings in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Chinspot Batis** *Batis molitor* Common in the woodlands of the northeast.

**Pirit Batis** ♦ *Batis pirit* Common from Windhoek and the western areas.

**White-tailed Shrike** ♦ *Lanioturdus torquatus* Good views of several from Uis to the Kunene River.

**Black-fronted Bushshrike (Z)** *Chlorophoneus nigrifrons* In the grounds of the White Horse Inn.

**Olive Bushshrike (Z)** *Chlorophoneus olivaceus* Showed well at forest edge in the Bvumba Mts.

**Orange-breasted Bushshrike** *Chlorophoneus sulfureopectus* Seen well at the Mahangu Park.

**Bokmakierie** ♦ *Telophorus zeylonus* Showed well at the Spreetshoogte Pass.

**Brown-crowned Tchagra** *Tchagra australis* Several seen.

**Black-crowned Tchagra** *Tchagra senegalus* One seen in the B8 Miombo woodlands.

**Black-backed Puffback** *Dryoscopus cubla* Common throughout.

**Swamp Boubou** ♦ *Laniarius bicolor* Abundant along the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Crimson-breasted Shrike** ♦ *Laniarius atrococcineus* Common throughout in suitable habitat.

**Brubru** *Nilaus afer* Common, more often heard than seen.

**White-crested Helmetshrike** *Prionops plumatus* A few family groups seen throughout.

**Retz's Helmetshrike (Z)** *Prionops retzii* A small group in the Miombo woodlands east of Mutare.

**Black Cuckooshrike (Z)** *Campephaga flava* Seen in the Miombo woodlands east of Mutare.

**Black-headed Oriole** (Eastern B-h O) *Oriolus larvatus* Showed well between Rundu and Popa Falls.

**Fork-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus adsimilis* Very common throughout.

**Square-tailed Drongo (Z)** *Dicrurus ludwigii* A common bird in the Bvumba Mountains.

**African Paradise Flycatcher** *Terpsiphone viridis* A few in the B8 woodlands and along the Okavango.

**Southern White-crowned Shrike** ♦ *Eurocephalus anguimans* Active in the Halali Camp, Etosha

**Magpie Shrike** *Urolestes melanoleucus* Common along Okavango floodplains.

**Souza's Shrike** ♦ *Lanius souzae* A single bird in the B8 woodlands east of Rundu.

**Southern Fiscal (S F Shrike)** *Lanius collaris* Common in the arid zones in the west.

**Cape Crow (C Rook, Black C)** *Corvus capensis* Pairs seen in Etosha and the desert.

**Pied Crow** *Corvus albus* Abundant throughout.

**White-necked Raven (Z)** *Corvus albicollis* Several seen in the Bvumba Mountains.

**White-tailed Crested Flycatcher (Z)** *Elminia albonata* Seen near the White Horse Inn.

**Miombo Tit** ♦ (Z) *Melaniparus griseiventris* A party of eight birds in the Miombo woodlands.

**Southern Black Tit** ♦ *Parus niger* Three pairs seen in the B8 Woodland east of Rundu.

**Carp's Tit** ♦ (C's Black T) *Parus carpi* Seen in pairs south of Ruacana and at Erongo Wild.

**Ashy Tit** ♦ (Ashy Grey T) *Parus cinerascens* A few individuals at localities near Windhoek.

**Spike-heeled Lark** ♦ *Chersomanes albofasciata* Common around the Etosha waterholes.

**Gray's Lark** ♦ *Ammomanopsis grayi* Several birds showed well inland and to the north of Walvis Bay.

**Benguela Long-billed Lark** ♦ *Certhilauda benguelensis* Very good views north of Uis.

**Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark (C-b Finchlark)** *Eremopterix leucotis* Many seen well in Etosha.

**Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark** ♦ (G-b Finchlark) *Eremopterix verticalis* Common throughout.

**Sabota Lark** ♦ *Calendulauda sabota* Abundant along the Namib Edge and across to Etosha.

**Fawn-coloured Lark** *Calendulauda africanoides* Seen on the outskirts of Ruacana.

**Dune Lark** ♦ *Calendulauda erythrochlamys* Excellent views of two pairs near Rooibank.

**Eastern Clapper Lark** ♦ *Mirafraga fasciolata* Several seen on Andoni plains in Etosha.

**Rufous-naped Lark** *Mirafraga africana* A single sighting in Etosha.

**Stark's Lark** ♦ *Spizocorys starki* Several along the roadside in the Namib and Etosha.

**Pink-billed Lark** ♦ *Spizocorys conirostris* Good views at the waterholes in Etosha.

**Red-capped Lark** *Calandrella cinerea* Abundant around the waterholes in Etosha.

**Sombre Greenbul (Z)** *Andropadus importunes* Singing birds in the forest edge at Bvumba Mts.

**Yellow-bellied Greenbul** *Chlorocichla flaviventris* Seen along the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Stripe-cheeked Greenbul** ♦ (Z) *Arizelocichla milanjensis* Showed well at the White Horse Inn.

**Terrestrial Brownbul** *Phyllastrephus terrestris* Seen at the Popa Falls Resort and N'Dhovu.

**Yellow-streaked Bulbul (Z)** *Phyllastrephus flavostriatus* Seen at the White Horse Inn gardens.

**African Red-eyed Bulbul** ♦ *Pycnonotus nigricans* Very common throughout except for northeast.

**Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor* Common only along the Okavango River.

**Black Saw-wing (Z)** *Psaldiprocne (pristoptera) orientalis* Seen daily in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta* A few seen along the Okavango near Shakawe.

**Brown-throated Martin** *Riparia paludicola* About a dozen seen along the Okavango River.

**Grey-rumped Swallow** *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* A handful on the Okavango at Shakawe.

**Rock Martin** *Pytonoprogne fuligala* Abundant in the west but absent from the northeast.

**Pearl-breasted Swallow** *Hirundo dimidiata* Seen at the roadside on the journey to Ruacana.

**White-throated Swallow** *Hirundo albigularis* A pair at the Gammams sewage works in Windhoek.

**Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii* Common along the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Barn Swallow (European S)** *Hirundo rustica* A few returning migrants seen throughout.

**Western House Martin** *Delichon urbicum* Two birds seen in the north.

**Red-breasted Swallow (Rufous-chested S)** *Cecropis semirufa* A few in Etosha and at Rundu.

**Mosque Swallow** *Cecropis senegalensis* A few sightings along the Caprivi Strip.

**Greater Striped Swallow** *Cecropis cucullate* Occasional pairs seen throughout the north.

**Lesser Striped Swallow** *Cecropis abyssinica* At least eight birds at Shakawe Lodge.

**South African Cliff Swallow** ♦ *Petrochelidon spilodera* Five at the Andoni waterhole in Etosha.

**Cape Grassbird (Z) *Sphenoeacus afer*** A pair in rough grasslands in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Rockrunner** ◊ *Achaetops pycnopygius* Several seen well at Avis Dam and Erongo Wild.

**Red-faced Crombec (Z) *Sylvietta whytii*** A family party in the Miombo woodlands.

**Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens*** Seen both singly and in pairs throughout.

**Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*** Plenty of sightings of this Palearctic migrant.

**Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler (Z) *Phylloscopus ruficapilla*** Singing birds in the Bvumba Mts.

**Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens*** Elusive inhabitant of papyrus beds at Shakawe.

**Lesser Swamp Warbler (Cape Reed W) *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*** Seen at Avis Dam.

**Common Reed Warbler (A R W) *Acrocephalus baeticatus*** Seen at Walvis Bay.

**African Yellow Warbler (Z) *Iduna natalensis*** One showed well in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Barratt's Warbler** ◊ (Z) *Bradypterus barratti* An extremely elusive pair in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Little Rush Warbler (African Sedge W) *Bradypterus baboecala*** Heard only at Shakawe.

**Singing Cisticola (Z) *Cisticola cantans*** In grasslands on the Bvumba Mountains.

**Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana*** Common in Etosha National Park.

**Chirping Cisticola** ◊ *Cisticola pipiens* A single bird showed well at Shakawe.

**Neddicky (Piping C) *Cisticola fulvicapilla*** Heard only but not seen in the woodlands of the northeast.

**Zitting Cisticola (Fan-tailed C) *Cisticola juncidis*** Common in suitable habitats in Etosha and Rundu.

**Desert Cisticola *Cisticola aridulus*** Common along the roadsides from Windhoek through to Etosha.

**Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*** Common from Rundu along the Okavango River eastwards.

**Black-chested Prinia** ◊ *Prinia flavicans* Very common from Windhoek and the Namib desert.

**Robert's Warbler** ◊ (Z) *Oreophilias robertsi* A noisy pair at higher elevation in the Bvumba Mts.

**Bar-throated Apalis (Z) *Apalis thoracica*** Several sightings near the White Horse Inn.

**Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida*** A pair showed at Roy's Camp near Grootfontein.

**Chirinda Apalis (Z) *Apalis chirindensis*** Readily found in the vicinity of the White Horse Inn.

**Rufous-eared Warbler** ◊ *Malcorus pectoralis* A single bird showed well in Etosha.

**Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brevicaudata*** Common throughout.

**Stierling's Wren-Warbler (Z) *Calamonastes stierlingi*** Two birds in the Miombo woodlands.

**Barred Wren-Warbler (African W-w) *Calamonastes fasciolatus*** Seen well at our first Lodge.

**Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis*** Common throughout.

**Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops*** A pair showed well near N'Dhovu Lodge.

**Burnt-necked Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis*** Two birds were seen at Gammans also at N'Dhovu.

**Garden Warbler (Z) *Sylvia borin*** A singing bird in the Miombo woodlands east of Mutare.

**Chestnut-vented Warbler *Sylvia subcaerulea*** Common throughout.

**Orange River White-eye** ◊ *Zosterops pallidus* Seen well in Swakopmund.

**Southern Yellow White-eye *Zosterops anderssoni*** Common in the woodlands of the northeast.

**Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii*** A few groups showed well along the Okavango River.

**Bare-cheeked Babbler** ◊ *Turdoides gymnogenys* A dozen seen in the Ruacana/Kunene River area.

**Southern Pied Babbler** ◊ *Turdoides bicolor* Several groups on the drive from Ruacana to Etosha.

**Hartlaub's Babbler** ◊ *Turdoides hartlaubii* Very common along the Okavango River.

**Black-faced Babbler** ◊ (B-lored B) *Turdoides melanops* Excellent views at Wildacker and Roy's Camp.

**African Spotted Creeper (Z)** *Salpornis Salvadori* A showy pair in the Miombo woodlands.

**Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea* Common throughout.

**Cape Starling (C Glossy S)** *Lamprotornis nitens* Very common throughout.

**Greater Blue-eared Starling** *Lamprotornis chalybaeus* Small numbers in the N'Dhovu camp area.

**Meves's Starling** ◊ *Lamprotornis mevesii* Common along the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Burchell's Starling** ◊ *Lamprotornis australis* Fairly common in scattered groups throughout.

**Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* A few birds seen in the northeast at Hakusembe.

**Red-winged Starling (Z)** *Onychognathus morio* Abundant in the lowlands.

**Pale-winged Starling** ◊ *Onychognathus naboroupp* Common from Windhoek westwards.

**Yellow-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus africanus* Only seen along the Kunene River.

**Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* Seen only near Shakawe and in Mahangu Park.

**Orange Ground Thrush (Z)** *Geokichla gurneyi* Good sightings in the higher elevations at Bvumba.

**Groundscraper Thrush** *Psophocichla litsitsirupa* Common throughout.

**Olive Thrush (Z)** *Turdus olivaceus* A common inhabitant of the forests in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Kurrichane Thrush** *Turdus libonyana* Common from Rundu eastwards in the B8 woodlands.

**Karoo Scrub Robin (Karoo R)** *Erythropygia coryphoeus* One near the lodge at Namibgrens.

**Kalahari Scrub Robin** ◊ (Kalahari R) *Erythropygia paena* Very common throughout.

**White-browed Scrub Robin (W-b Robin)** *Erythropygia leucophrys* At Roy's Camp and elsewhere.

**Pale Flycatcher (Mouse-coloured F, Pallid F)** *Bradornis pallidus* Two pairs east of Rundu.

**Chat Flycatcher** ◊ *Bradornis infuscatus* Common in the Eastern Namib desert and western Etosha.

**Grey Tit-Flycatcher (Z)** *Fraseria plumbea* A showy individual near the White Horse Inn.

**Ashy Flycatcher (Blue-grey F)** *Muscicapa caerulescens* Seen by the Kunene River and Shakawe.

**Southern Black Flycatcher** *Melaenornis pammelaina* Seen in the B8 woodlands east of Rundu.

**Herero Chat** ◊ *Namibornis herero* A pair present just east of Spitskoppe, a traditional site.

**Marico Flycatcher** *Bradornis mariquensis* Common throughout.

**African Dusky Flycatcher (Z)** *Muscicapa adusta* Several sightings in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata* A few returning migrants at the Okavango sites.

**Swynnerton's Robin** ◊ (Z) *Swynnertonia swynnertonii* Amazing views in the Bvumba Mountains.

**White-starred Robin (Z)** *Pognocichla heuglini* An elusive resident of the forest at Bvumba Mts.

**White-browed Robin-Chat** *Cossypha heuglini* Common along the Okavango River.

**Red-capped Robin-Chat (Z)** *Cossypha natalensis* Showed well in the garden of the White Horse Inn.

**Rufous-tailed Palm Thrush** ◊ *Cichladusa ruficauda* Several along the River Kunene near Ruacana.

**Cape Robin-Chat (Z)** *Dessonornis caffer* Found at the forest edge in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Short-toed Rock Thrush** ◊ *Monticola brevipes* Reasonably common in the arid west.

**Miombo Rock Thrush** ◊ (Z) *Monticola angolensis* a singing male in the Miombo woodlands.

**African Stonechat (Z)** *Saxicola torquatus* a family party in the Bvumba Mountains.



**Karoo Chat** ◊ *Emarginata schlegelii* Common near Spitskoppe and the Eastern Namib.

**Tractrac Chat** ◊ *Emarginata tractrac* Three pale morph, ssp. *albicans*, birds at Swakopmund.

**Ant-eating Chat** ◊ (Southern A-e C) *Myrmecocichla formicivora* Common throughout Etosha.

**Mountain Wheatear** *Myrmecocichla monticola* Common along the Namib and mountainous areas.

**Familiar Chat (Red-tailed C)** *Oenanthe familiaris* Common in the west.

**Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris* A few in the gardens at Shakawe River Lodge.

**Olive Sunbird (Z)** *Cyanomitra olivacea* Seen around the grounds of the White Horse Inn.

**Amethyst Sunbird** *Chalcomitra amethystina* Common in the woodlands in the northeast.

**Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis* Common throughout.

**Bronzy Sunbird (Z)** *Nectarinia kilimensis* A pair in gardens in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Eastern Miombo Sunbird** ◊ (Z) *Cinnyris manoensis* Showy males at Bvumba and in Miombo.

**Marico Sunbird** *Cinnyris mariquensis* Many seen at various localities.

**Variable Sunbird (Z)** *Cinnyris venustus* Showed well in the gardens at the White Horse Inn.

**White-bellied Sunbird** *Cinnyris talatala* Common in the north and northeast.

**Dusky Sunbird** ◊ *Cinnyris fuscus* Common from Windhoek to the Namib Desert.

**Yellow-throated Bush Sparrow** *Gymnoris superciliaris* Fairly common in the northeast

**Cape Sparrow** ◊ *Passer melanurus* Seen in Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Uis.

**Great Sparrow** *Passer motitensis* Common in the west and Etosha.

**Northern Grey-headed Sparrow (Z)** *Passer griseus* Seen in Mutare.

**Southern Grey-headed Sparrow** *Passer diffusus* Common throughout

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus* Common in most towns.

**Red-billed Buffalo Weaver** *Bubalornis niger* A few birds at the Natumi Camp in Etosha.

**White-browed Sparrow-Weaver** *Plocepasser mahali* Common throughout.

**Sociable Weaver** ◊ *Philetairus socius* Many empty nests in the southern Namib and Etosha.

**Scaly-feathered Weaver** ◊ (S-f Finch) *Sporopipes squamifrons* Very common in the northwest.

**Thick-billed Weaver (Z) (Grosbeak Weaver)** *Amblyospiza albifrons* Present at the White Horse Inn.

**Spectacled Weaver** *Ploceus ocularis* A couple seen at Shakawe River Lodge.

**Holub's Golden Weaver** *Ploceus xanthops* Seen along the Kunene and Okavango Rivers.

**Southern Brown-throated Weaver** *Ploceus xanthopterus* Seen only at Shakawe River Lodge.

**Southern Masked Weaver (Masked W)** *Ploceus velatus* Common in the west.

**Village Weaver** *Ploceus cucullatus* A few seen along the Okavango River and at Shakawe River Lodge.

**Chestnut Weaver** *Ploceus rubiginosus* Good numbers in non-breeding plumage near Kunene River.

**Red-headed Weaver** *Anaplectes rubriceps* Some nice males seen near Ruacana.

**Red-billed Quelea** *Quelea quelea* Very common at wetland sites throughout.

**Southern Red Bishop** *Euplectes orix* Many out of breeding plumage in the reeds at Avis Dam.

**Fan-tailed Widowbird** *Euplectes axillaris* A few birds seen near Shakawe along the river.

**Yellow-mantled Widowbird (Z)** *Euplectes macroura* Many birds in the Miombo woodlands.

**Red-faced Crimsonwing (Z)** *Cryptospiza reichenovii* After a sweat good views in the Bvumba Mts.

**Black-faced Waxbill** ♢ *Estrilda erythronotos* Seen well at the River Crossing Lodge, Windhoek.

**Common Waxbill** *Estrilda astrild* A common species in Namibia.

**Cut-throat Finch** *Amadina fasciata* A flock of fourteen at N'Dhovu Lodge.

**Red-headed Finch** ♢ *Amadina erythrocephala* Common along the Namib and in Etosha.

**Violet-eared Waxbill** ♢ *Uraeginthus granatinus* Seen well at many sites on the tour.

**Blue Waxbill (Blue-breasted Cordon-bleu)** *Uraeginthus angolensis* Common throughout.

**Grey Waxbill (Z)** *Estrilda perreini* A tricky bird to catch up with in the Miombo woodlands.

**Green-winged Pytilia (Melba Finch)** *Pytilia melba* Common throughout.

**Green Twinspot (Z)** *Mandingoa nitidula* Two birds foraging high in the trees at the White Horse Inn.

**Red-throated Twinspot** ♢ (Z) *Hypargos niveoguttatus* A single male at the White Horse Inn.

**Red-billed Firefinch** *Lagonosticta senegala* Present at Shakawe Lodge and at Popa Falls.

**Jameson's Firefinch** *Lagonosticta rhodopareia* Four birds seen at Popa Falls.

**Brown Firefinch** ♢ *Lagonosticta nitidula* A small flock seen along the Okavango near Shakawe.

**Pin-tailed Whydah (Z)** *Vidua macroura* Several seen in the Bvumba Mountains.

**Shaft-tailed Whydah** *Vidua regia* Several seen in the Mahangu Park.

**Long-tailed Paradise Whydah (Eastern P W)** *Vidua paradisaea* Visiting the waterhole at Wildacker.

**Cape Wagtail** *Motacilla capensis* Common throughout.

**African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp* Seen at Gammans and on the Okavango River.

**African Pipit (Grassveld P)** *Anthus cinnamomeus* Seen at various localities.

**Black-throated Canary** *Crithagra atrogularis* Very common throughout.

**Yellow-fronted Canary** *Crithagra mozambica* Fairly common in the woodlands of the northeast.

**Yellow Canary** ♢ *Crithagra flaviventris* Seen first at Gammans near Windhoek.

**Brimstone Canary (Z)** *Crithagra sulphurata* A few in mixed flocks in Mutare.

**White-throated Canary** ♢ *Crithagra albogularis* Seen at Namibgrens and the Namib.

**Lark-like Bunting** ♢ *Emberiza impetuani* Seen commonly on the way to the Namib and at Kunene.

**Cinnamon-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza tahapisi* Plenty at the water seeps near Ruacana.

**Cape Bunting** ♢ *Emberiza capensis* Seen at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

**Golden-breasted Bunting (African G-b B)** *Emberiza flaviventris* Common throughout.

**Cabanis's Bunting (Z)** *Emberiza cabanisi* Several in song in the Miombo woodlands.

## **Mammals in Namibia and Botswana**

**Rock Hyrax** *Procavia capensis* Abundant at Erongo Wild

**African Savannah Elephant** *Loxodonta africana* Many seen at close range in Etosha.

**African Wildcat** *Felis lybica* A chance roadside encounter on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Lion** *Panthera leo* Several sightings in Etosha including five visiting the Okaukuejo waterhole.

**Spotted Hyena** *Crocuta crocuta* Visited waterholes in Etosha both day and night.

**Yellow Mongoose** *Cynictis penicillata* Several roadside encounters in Etosha.

**Common Slender Mongoose** *Herpestes sanguineus* Another roadside sighting.

**Black-backed Jackal *Lupulella mesomelas*** A frequent visitor to the Etosha waterholes.

**Afro-Australian Fur Seal *Arctocephalus pusillus*** Several in Walvis Bay.

**Honey Badger *Mellivora capensis*** A daytime visitor to a waterhole north of Natumi Camp.

**Plains Zebra *Equus (quagga) burchelli*** Found in good numbers throughout Etosha.

**Mountain Zebra *Equus zebra*** Seen only on the west side of Etosha Phacochoerus africanus

**Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*** At least fifteen visited the Okaukuejo Waterhole.

**Common Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus*** numerous on the Adoni Plain in Etosha

**Southern (Angolan) Giraffe *Giraffa giraffa angolensis*** First seen in the northwest.

**Black-faced Impala *Aepyceros petersii*** Always some roadside in Etosha.

**Hartebeest *Alcelaphus buselaphus*** Plentiful in Etosha.

**Springbok *Antidorcas marsupialis*** The most abundant gazelle in Etosha and the Namib.

**Blue Wildebeest (Brindled Gnu) *Connochaetes taurinus*** Some sizeable herds in Etosha.

**Roan (R Antelope) *Hippotragus equinus*** A lone roan in the Mahangu Park.

**Sable (S Antelope) *Hippotragus niger*** Seven seen on our second visit to the Mahangu Park.

**Waterbuck (Common W) *Kobus ellopprymnus*** Common in the grounds at Shakawe Lodge.

**Red Lechwe (Lechwe) *Kobus leche*** Abundant on the floodplains in Mahangu Park.

**Damara Dik-Dik (Kirk's D-D) *Madoqua kirkii*** Fifteen seen on the Etosha "Dik Dik" trail.

**Gemsbok (Oryx) *Oryx gazelle*** This striking gazelle was seen best at the Etosha waterholes.

**Steenbok (Steinbok) *Raphicerus campestris*** Common throughout.

**Reedbuck (Common R) *Redunca arundinum*** Many seen on the floodplains in Mahangu Park.

**Northern Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*** Present at Shakawe, N'Dhovu and the Mahangu Park.

**Greater Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*** Abundant in Etosha.

**Bush Duiker *Sylvicapra grimmia*** Two seen near Erongo Wild.

**Cape Buffalo *Syncerus caffer*** Present in good numbers along the Okavango.

**Eland *Taurotragus oryx*** A magnificent bull rolled up at a waterhole near Natumi Camp in Etosha.

**Common Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius*** Many on the Okavango River at N'Dhovu.

**Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus aethiops*** Common along the Kunene and in the Mahangu Park.

**Samango (Syke's) Monkey (Z) *Cercopithecus albogularis***

**Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus*** Commonly seen throughout.

**Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis*** One seen near Spitskoppe

**Congo Rope Squirrel *Funisciurus congicus*** On the roadside from Uis to Ruacana

**Smith's Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus cepapi*** Seen in the Etosha campgrounds.

**South African Ground Squirrel (Cape Ground S) *Xerus inauris*** Common in Etosha.

**Large Sun Squirrel (Z) *Heliosciurus mutabilis***



*Violet Wood Hoopoes (image by John McLoughlin)*



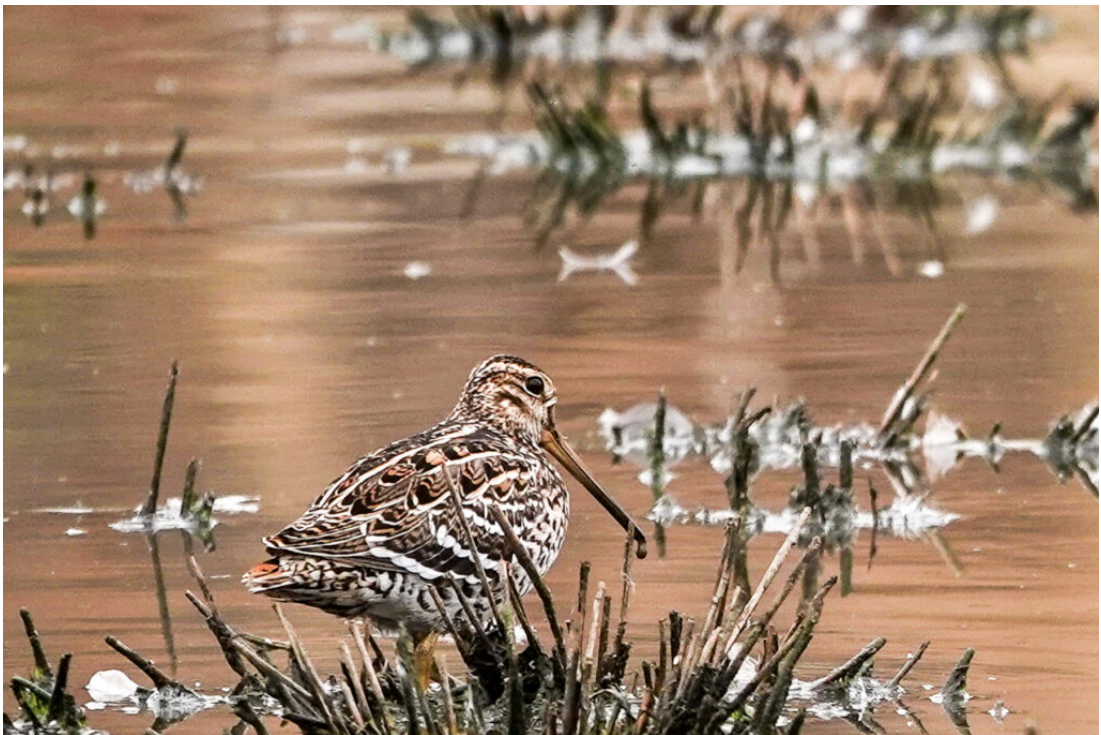
*Social Weaver nest in the Namib (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Spotted Eagle-Owl (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Black Rhino (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Great Snipe (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Damara Dikdik (image by John McLoughlin)*



*African Skimmer (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Greater Kestrel (image by John McLoughlin)*



*African Cuckoo-Hawk (image by John McLoughlin)*





*Northern Black Korhaan (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Pale Chanting Goshawk (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Springbok (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Palms along the Kunene River (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Lions at Okaukeujo (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Hartlaub's Babbler (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Groundscraper Thrush (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Yellow Mongoose (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Hadada Ibis (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Dune Larks (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Elephants in Etosha (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Short-toed Rock Thrush (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Plains Zebra (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Common Ostrich meets Elephant in Ethosa (image by John McLoughlin)*



*African Barred Owl (image by John McLoughlin)*





*Bronzy Sunbird (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Gemsbok (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Crowned Lapwing (image by John McLoughlin)*



*White-fronted Bee-eater (image by John McLoughlin)*



*The Namib at Spreetshoogte Pass (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Pel's Fishing Owl (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Okavango sunset (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Rockrunner at Avis Dam (image by John McLoughlin)*



*White-crested Helmetshrike (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Rüppell's Korhaans in the Namib (image by John McLoughlin)*



*Dune Lark (image by John McLoughlin)*