



Field Guides Tour Report

Namibia & Botswana II 2018

Oct 30, 2018 to Nov 18, 2018

Joe Grosel

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Rosy-faced Lovebirds were some of the first birds we saw in Namibia. We had wonderful looks at these colorful and charming little parrots at several locations, including the Erongo Wilderness Lodge. Photo by guide Joe Grosel.

Our November 2018 Namibia and Botswana tour followed the established 18-day itinerary which incorporates an extraordinary assemblage of contrasting habitats. These included the Namib Desert's magnificent red dunes, the coastal region around Walvis Bay with its cold but very prolific Benguela current, the towering granite inselbergs of the Spitzkoppe and Erongo hills, the 'Great White' Etosha Pan with its numerous strategic waterholes supporting large concentrations of game, the tranquillity of Botswana's papyrus-lined Okavango River and the beautiful wilderness of the Okavango Delta.

After a relatively short flight from Johannesburg, the tour started in earnest in Namibia's capital, Windhoek. No birding tour would be complete without at least one visit to a sewage works, and so we kicked off this tour on a first afternoon at the Gammams water purification works, which provided some good water and 'bushveld' birds. South African Shelduck, Hottentot Teal, Red-billed Duck, Southern Pochard, Red-knobbed Coot, African Gallinule, Common and Wood sandpipers, Great Cormorant, and a lone African Jacana were just some of the aquatic species seen. In the surrounding Acacia woodland there were Gray Go-away-birds, Rufous-vented Warbler, Pied Barbet, Cardinal Woodpecker, Brubru, Burnt-neck Eremomela, Yellow Canary, Cape Sparrow, Mariqua Flycatcher, and Scarlet-chested and Mariqua sunbirds, while in the reed beds we spotted Southern Red Bishop, African Reed Warbler, and Lesser and Southern masked-weavers. On the way back to our lodgings we had good sightings of Rosy-faced Lovebirds and the near-endemic Bradfield's Swift.

The following day there was time for a quick walk around a hotel resort on the outskirts of Windhoek, where the likes of Crimson-breasted Gonolek, Bearded Woodpecker, Pririt Batis, Cape Crombec, Groundscraper Thrush, White-breasted Sunbird, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Black-faced and Violet-eared waxbills, and Black-chested Prinia were quickly notched up before we set off on a lengthy drive to the Namib Desert. The route via the Khomas Hochland and the Remhoogte Pass was very scenic and geologically spectacular. Several birding stops were made along the way, during which we encountered Tawny Eagle, Pygmy Falcon, Lesser Honeyguide, Cape Crow, Pale-chanting Goshawk, Chat Flycatcher, Dusky Sunbird, and Pale-winged Starling. At two seasonal pans at the edge of the desert there were Great White Pelican, Cape Teal, Pied Avocet, and Black-winged Stilt, while deeper into the Namib we had our first looks at Social Weavers and their impressive 'haystack' nests in large 'Camel-thorn' trees.

A day trip into the Sossusvlei area of the Naukluft National Park with its massive red dunes and spectacular desert vistas was one of the highlights of the tour for many. The main target bird here is Dune Lark, and after a short walk through some low hammock dunes we managed to get some great looks at this Namib endemic. Other significant birds seen here were Ludwig's and Rueppell's bustards, Common Ostrich, Greater Kestrel, Lappet-faced Vulture, and Ashy Tit. The iconic image of majestic Southern Oryx Antelope against the backdrop of red dunes was enjoyed, as were other large mammals in the form of Blue Wildebeest, Southern Giraffe, and Springbok. A late-afternoon walk near our lodge produced a few good dry-country birds in the form of Namaqua Sandgrouse, Red-necked Falcon, Gray-backed Sparrowlark, Stark's Lark, Tractrac Chat, and Rufous-eared Warbler.

The next stop on our itinerary was the town of Walvis Bay on Namibia's desert-flanked coastline. The cool air blowing off the cold Benguela current was quite a contrast after experiencing the baking hot plains of the Namib. Once we'd settled into our guesthouse, we took a drive along Walvis Bay's famous lagoon and through the local salt works ponds ending off on the Atlantic seaboard. The lagoon and salt works produced great numbers of Palearctic migrant shorebirds with Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, and Common Greenshank being the most numerous. Thousands of Lesser and Greater flamingos added some color to the scene, while the diminutive and localized Chestnut-banded Plover and Damara Terns put in a special appearance. Other birds worth mentioning for the Walvis Bay area included Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Hartlaub's and Kelp gulls, Caspian, Common, Great Crested and Sandwich terns, White-fronted Plover, Eared Grebe, and an unexpected Parasitic Jaeger flying over the breakers near Paaltjies beach.

The next morning we had to first track down the resident Orange River White-eyes before heading north via the 'Victorian' town of Swakopmund and then inland for three nights in the Erongo Mountains, first a two-night stay in the south and then a single night in the north. Just north of Swakopmund we found the range-restricted Gray's Lark in the seemingly barren white gravel plains that this species calls home. En route to Erongo, we stopped off at the Spitzkoppe Reserve, where a picnic lunch was enjoyed in the company of Mountain Wheatears, Pale-winged Starlings, Monteiro's Hornbill, Cape Bunting, a handsome Bokmakierie, and a very pregnant Damara Ground Squirrel. During our post-lunch walk amidst the towering granite outcrops of Spitzkoppe we picked up another Namibia speciality, the much sought-after Herero Chat, along with Karoo Long-billed Lark and a very confiding Layard's Warbler. The Erongo granite hills gave us several more near-endemics in Rockrunner, White-tailed Shrike, and Hartlaub's Francolin, along with some interesting small mammals in Dassie Rat, Rock Hyrax, and three Elephant Shrew (Sengi) species, namely Round-eared, Bushveld, and Western Rock. Walks in two large, dry river beds produced Violet Woodhoopoe, Short-toed Rock-Thrush, White-crowned Shrike, Damara Red-billed Hornbill, Rueppell's Parrot, Southern Pied Babbler, and Burchell's Starling.

Our next port of call was the world-famous Etosha National Park, where we spent three nights (Okaukuejo camp for one night and Halali camp for two). In this wildlife haven we enjoyed no fewer than seven Lion sightings, many Elephant sightings, at least 20 Black Rhinos, three Cheetahs, several Spotted Hyenas, and numerous Black-backed Jackals. The park was extremely dry, so the waterholes were particularly busy with hordes of Gemsbok (Oryx), Springbok, Common Zebra, Blue Wildebeest, Giraffe, and Red Hartebeest. As usual, a large variety of birds was seen in Etosha. In the karroo-like habitats to the north of Okaukuejo Camp there was a plethora of larks including Spike-heeled, Sabota, Red-capped, Pink-billed, and Stark's, along with Double-banded Courser, White-quilled Bustard, Capped Wheatear, and Southern Anteater-Chat. The large, open grassy plains on the southern edge of the Etosha Pan held Kori Bustard, Ostrich, Secretary-bird, Desert and Zitting cisticolas, Spotted Thick-knee, Crowned Lapwing, and a pair of stately Blue Cranes at one of the smaller waterholes. Birding in the wooded camp compounds is always productive, and in the two camps visited we notched up many good species including Violet Woodhoopoe, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Pearl-spotted Owllet, Red-billed and Swainson's francolins, Southern Red-billed, Southern Yellow-billed, and Gray hornbills, Common Scimitarbill, Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver, Red-headed Weaver, and Southern Cordonbleu. Raptors in Etosha were well represented with many Pale-chanting Goshawks, Greater Kestrel, Black-shouldered Kite, a good number of Lappet-faced and White-backed vultures, Bateleur, and Tawny Eagle.

The final leg of the Namibian section of the tour was spent in the far-north of the country at a lodge on the banks of the Kavango River overlooking the country of Angola. An afternoon walk to a floodplain and pan outside our lodge provided some exceptional birding with no fewer than 20 Lesser Jacana dodging their larger African cousins while African Pygmy Geese, Rufous-bellied Heron, Wattled Lapwing, Red-winged Pratincole, African Snipe, and Coppery-tailed Coucal also gave us excellent views during the 'golden hour.'

Our last morning in Namibia included a lengthy drive eastwards through the Caprivi and a visit to the Mahango National Park before entering into Botswana. A quick birding stop in some teak woodland along the Caprivi road produced Chinspot Batis, Green Woodhoopoe, Meyer's Parrot, and brief views of the seldom-seen Sharp-tailed Starling. Despite it being very hot, the Mahango Park was as productive as ever with several sightings of Elephant breeding herds and a good variety of antelope including Lechwe, Roan, Tsessebe (Topi), Southern Reedbuck, and the impressive Sable Antelope. Birdlife along the floodplain in Mahango was just as varied, with African Fish-Eagle, Yellow-billed Stork, Spur-winged Goose, Wattled Crane, and African Spoonbill being the highlights.

The Botswana stage of the tour began with a two-night stay at the beautiful Xaro riverside lodge in the Okavango 'panhandle.' Most of our birding here was done from a very comfortable boat, allowing us to negotiate the myriad waterways and channels lined with papyrus and dense riparian thicket. Top birds seen on the boat cruises were the impressive Goliath Heron, colorful White-fronted, Blue-cheeked, and Little bee-eaters, the secretive White-backed Night-Heron, a nice variety of kingfishers including Malachite, Pied, and the noisy Giant, and some papyrus skulkers in the form of Greater and Lesser swamp-warblers and Chirping Cisticola. Walks within the lodge grounds and beyond gave us many more special birds with Black Cuckooshrike, African Wood-Owl, Meves's and Violet-backed starlings, Crested and Black-collared barbets, Broad-billed Roller, Gabon Boubou, Hartlaub's Babbler, Southern Brown-throated Weaver, Holub's Golden-Weaver, White-browed Robin-Chat, Mourning Collared-Dove, and Sulphur-breasted Bushshrike being the most notable. One of the highlights of the tour was seeing a pair of the very special Pel's Fishing-Owl in a dense riparian forest after having to work our way past a group of bull elephants that had moved through our lodge a few hours earlier.

Our final destination of the tour was the Macatoo Camp, situated in the north-western part of the Okavango Delta and reached by private charter plane. We had three nights at this lovely tented camp, situated on the edge of a floodplain channel and where there is wildlife literally on our doorstep, as several members of our group discovered. Due to the very dry conditions in the delta, only a few of the floodplains had water in them, so most of our birding and game viewing was done from the back of a very comfy 4x4 safari vehicle. We had morning and afternoon excursions seeing fantastic wildlife. Mammal highlights were lion prides on zebra and buffalo kills, countless elephant sightings, noisy 'pods' of Hippopotamus, a beautiful Caracal, Cape Buffalo (many bulls and a large breeding herd), a wide variety of antelope, and a stunning male Leopard using our game drive vehicle as cover while stalking two Warthogs. From a birding point of view, the favorites in the Macatoo concession were Slaty Egret (at least 20 birds seen), numerous Lilac-breasted and Rufous-crowned rollers, African Barred Owllet, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Greater Honeyguide, the full suite of southern-African egrets, Red-billed and Yellow-billed oxpeckers, Rufous-naped Lark, Hooded and White-headed vultures, Bennett's Woodpecker, Southern Ground-Hornbill, Square-tailed Nightjar, Striped and Woodland kingfishers, and Rufous-chested Swallow. Four reptile species seen that are worth mentioning were some very large Nile Crocodiles, Water Monitor Lizards, a very dusty Leopard Tortoise, and a young African Rock Python.

On the final morning of the tour we took another charter aircraft which flew us over a large section of the delta before landing in the town of Maun, from where we boarded a commercial flight back to Johannesburg.

Thanks must go to our local guides, Vernon in Namibia, and Thomas and Thabo in Botswana, and to all the lodge staff throughout the tour for making it a very special visit to great African countries.

--Joe Grosel

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Struthionidae (Ostriches).

COMMON OSTRICH (*Struthio camelus*) – Seen well in the Namib-Naukluft Park, Etosha and Macatoo in Botswana

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl).

WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna viduata*) – Multiple sightings in the north of Namibia and in the Okavango

EGYPTIAN GOOSE (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) – Common throughout except in the Namib

SOUTH AFRICAN SHELDUCK (*Tadorna cana*) – Good looks on the first afternoon in Windhoek

SPUR-WINGED GOOSE (*Plectropterus gambensis*) – Fairly common in Mahango and the Okavango Delta

AFRICAN PYGMY-GOOSE (*Nettapus auritus*) – First seen near Rundu (Namibia) and then several sightings in the Okavango

HOTTENTOT TEAL (*Spatula hottentota*) – Only seen once, on the first afternoon at the Windhoek sewage ponds

CAPE TEAL (*Anas capensis*) – Seen in two pans on the edge of the desert and then regularly in Etosha

RED-BILLED DUCK (*Anas erythrorhyncha*) – Fairly common in most wetlands and waterholes in Namibia

SOUTHERN POCHARD (*Netta erythrophthalma*) – Seen at the Windhoek sewage ponds and again at a pan near Hakusembe Lodge

Numididae (Guinea fowl).

HELMETED GUINEAFOWL (*Numida meleagris*) – Numerous sightings of large flocks in Etosha

Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies).

HARTLAUB'S FRANCOLIN (*Pternistis hartlaubi*) – A covey vocalised then showed well at Erongo Wilderness Lodge

RED-BILLED FRANCOLIN (*Pternistis adspersus*) – The most frequently seen francolin species of the tour

SWAINSON'S FRANCOLIN (*Pternistis swainsonii*) – First seen in Halali Camp, Etosha then fairly common around Macatoo

CRESTED FRANCOLIN (*Dendroperdix sephaena*) – Three good sightings around Macatoo (Okavango Delta)

Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos).

GREATER FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) – Thousands in the Walvis Bay area

LESSER FLAMINGO (*Phoeniconaias minor*) – Thousands in the Walvis Bay area

Podicipedidae (Grebes).

LITTLE GREBE (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Seen at the Windhoek sewage ponds and in most of Etosha's large waterholes

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – Large numbers seen at distance near the Walvis Bay salt works

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) – Seen in most large towns in Namibia

SPECKLED PIGEON (*Columba guinea*) – Fairly common around the Namib lodges, Walvis Bay and the Erongo Hills

MOURNING COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decipiens*) – Good looks at this dove at Xaro Lodge, Okavango 'pan handle'

RED-EYED DOVE (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) – Regular sightings in the north of Namibia

RING-NECKED DOVE (*Streptopelia capicola*) – Very common and seen almost daily

LAUGHING DOVE (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Another common dove species practically seen on each day of the tour

EMERALD-SPOTTED WOOD-DOVE (*Turtur chalcospilos*) – First encountered in the far east of Etosha then common in the Okavango

NAMAQUA DOVE (*Oena capensis*) – Many sightings of this lovely little dove in Namibia

AFRICAN GREEN-PIGEON (*Treron calvus*) – A few sightings in the Okavango

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse).

NAMAQUA SANDGROUSE (*Pterocles namaqua*) – Good numbers coming into drink in the Namib and then closer looks in Etosha

DOUBLE-BANDED SANDGROUSE (*Pterocles bicinctus*) – Hundreds coming in to drink after sunset at Halali Camp waterhole

Otididae (Bustards).

KORI BUSTARD (*Ardeotis kori*) – Good sightings of this impressive bustard in Etosha

LUDWIG'S BUSTARD (*Neotis ludwigii*) – A few pairs seen near Sossusvlei

RUEPPELL'S BUSTARD (*Eupodotis rueppellii*) – Several pairs seen on the edge of the Namib

RED-CRESTED BUSTARD (*Eupodotis ruficrista*) – Heard only at Hohenstein Lodge in the Erongo region

WHITE-QUILLED BUSTARD (*Eupodotis afroaoides*) – First seen on the Namib's edge then fairly regularly in Etosha

Musophagidae (Turacos).

GRAY GO-AWAY-BIRD (*Corythaixoides concolor*) – Common in most Acacia woodland throughout Namibia and Botswana

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

- SENEGAL COUCAL** (*Centropus senegalensis*) – Seen well by some on consecutive days at the Hakusembe Lodge, Kavango
COPPERY-TAILED COUCAL (*Centropus cupreicaudus*) – Good sightings of this large Coucal along the Kavango River and in the Okavango
WHITE-BROWED COUCAL (*Centropus superciliosus*) – Heard by some at Xaro Lodge, Okavango
BLACK CUCKOO (*Cuculus clamosus*) – Repeated sightings of a flying bird at Xaro Lodge, Okavango
AFRICAN CUCKOO (*Cuculus gularis*) – Great looks at a waterhole in Etosha

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies).

- RUFOUS-CHEEKED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus rufigena*) – Seen and heard at the Okaukuejo and Halali waterholes after dark
FIERY-NECKED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus pectoralis*) – Brief views and often heard at Macatoo, Okavango
SWAMP NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus natalensis*) – Heard only from a dry floodplain near Macatoo Camp
FRECKLED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus tristigma*) – Fantastic looks at this rock-dwelling species at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge
SQUARE-TAILED NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus fossii*) – Seen very well sitting in the road near the Macatoo Camp

Apodidae (Swifts).

- ALPINE SWIFT** (*Apus melba*) – Several sightings in the Erongo Hills
BRADFIELD'S SWIFT (*Apus bradfieldi*) – A few in Windhoek, then hundreds coming into roost at the Namib Desert Lodge
LITTLE SWIFT (*Apus affinis*) – Fairly common throughout
WHITE-RUMPED SWIFT (*Apus caffer*) – Seen by some over the Arabbusch Hotel grounds in Windhoek
AFRICAN PALM-SWIFT (*Cypsiurus parvus*) – Common wherever there were tall palm trees

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots).

- EURASIAN MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – First seen at the Windhoek sewage works and then at several Etosha waterholes
RED-KNOBBED COOT (*Fulica cristata*) – First seen at the Windhoek sewage works and then again in Etosha
AFRICAN SWAMPHEN (*Porphyrio madagascariensis*) – Only seen at the Windhoek sewage ponds on the first afternoon
BLACK CRAKE (*Zapornia flavirostra*) – Good sightings of this species in the Okavango

Gruidae (Cranes).

- BLUE CRANE** (*Anthropoides paradiseus*) – A great sighting of a pair of these majestic birds at a Waterhole in Etosha
WATTLED CRANE (*Bugeranus carunculatus*) – Seen in the Mahango Park in Namibia and then fairly common in the Okavango

Burhinidae (Thick-knees).

- WATER THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus vermiculatus*) – Great looks from the boat near Xaro Lodge
SPOTTED THICK-KNEE (*Burhinus capensis*) – Seen well in Etosha

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets).

- BLACK-WINGED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Very common around the Walvis Bay salt works and also in the Okavango
PIED AVOCET (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) – Large numbers seen around the Walvis Bay lagoon and salt works

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers).

- AFRICAN OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus moquini*) – At least six birds seen foraging on the rocks north of Walvis Bay

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings).

- BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Small numbers seen during low tide at the Walvis Bay lagoon
LONG-TOED LAPWING (*Vanellus crassirostris*) – Good sightings in the Okavango pan handle and near Macatoo
BLACKSMITH LAPWING (*Vanellus armatus*) – Very common, particularly in the north of Namibia and in the Okavango
CROWNED LAPWING (*Vanellus coronatus*) – Numerous sightings, particularly in Etosha
WATTLED LAPWING (*Vanellus senegallus*) – Good looks at this large lapwing outside Hakusembe Lodge, Rundu
KITTLITZ'S PLOVER (*Charadrius pecuarius*) – A single sighting of about 20 birds at a waterhole before leaving Etosha
COMMON RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Seen at low tide in the Walvis Bay lagoon
THREE-BANDED PLOVER (*Charadrius tricollaris*) – Fairly widespread in the north of Namibia and Botswana
WHITE-FRONTED PLOVER (*Charadrius marginatus*) – Numerous sightings along the coast
CHESTNUT-BANDED PLOVER (*Charadrius pallidus*) – This 'cute' little plover was particularly common at the Walvis Bay salt works

Jacaniidae (Jacanas).

- LESSER JACANA** (*Microparra capensis*) – About 20 birds seen at a isolated pool in the floodplain behind Hakusembe
AFRICAN JACANA (*Actophilornis africanus*) – One seen at the Windhoek sewage works and then very common in the Okavango

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies).

- WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – Small numbers seen near Walvis Bay
BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*) – Good scope views of this Palearctic migrant in the Walvis Bay lagoon
RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – Good numbers around the Walvis Bay lagoon and salt works
RUFF (*Calidris pugnax*) – Scattered sightings of small flocks throughout
CURLEW SANDPIPER (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Large concentrations seen around Walvis Bay
SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Good numbers around the Walvis Bay lagoon and salt works
LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*) – Good numbers around the Walvis Bay lagoon and salt works
AFRICAN SNIPE (*Gallinago nigripennis*) – Seen well near Hakusembe Lodge and again in the Okavango
COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Sightings at the Windhoek sewage ponds and again in Walvis Bay
COMMON GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*) – Seen in both coastal and fresh water habitats throughout

MARSH SANDPIPER (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – Not common but found at Walvis Bay and at a waterhole in Etosha
WOOD SANDPIPER (*Tringa glareola*) – The most common fresh-water shorebird encountered on this tour

Turnicidae (Buttonquail)

SMALL BUTTONQUAIL (*Turnix sylvaticus*) – Flushed out of its grassy habitat on a few occasions in the Macatoo area

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

TEMMINCK'S COURSER (*Cursorius temminckii*) – A pair seen on the road east of Halali Camp, Etosha

DOUBLE-BANDED COURSER (*Smutornis africanus*) – Relatively common in the limestone areas of Etosha

COLLARED PRATINCOLE (*Glareola pratincola*) – Seen on a number of occasions along the Okavango River and in the delta

ROCK PRATINCOLE (*Glareola nuchalis*) – Good scope views of a pair sitting on rocks in the Okavango River near Divundu

Stercorariidae (Skuas and Jaegers)

PARASITIC JAEGER (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) – A single bird seen flying over the breakers at Paaltjies Beach, Walvis bay

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

HARTLAUB'S GULL (*Chroicocephalus hartlaubii*) – Very common along Namibia's coastline

KELP GULL (VETULA) (*Larus dominicanus vetula*) – Good numbers seen around Walvis Bay and Swakopmund

DAMARA TERN (*Sternula balaenarum*) – Good views of these small terns foraging along the Walvis Bay salt works

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – Seen well at the Walvis Bay lagoon

WHISKERED TERN (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Two or three birds were seen flying along the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Good numbers around Walvis Bay

GREAT CRESTED TERN (*Thalasseus bergii*) – Fairly common around Walvis Bay and Swakopmund

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – Small numbers seen around Walvis Bay

AFRICAN SKIMMER (*Rynchops flavirostris*) – Great sightings of adults, juveniles and chicks on the Okavango River near Xaro

Ciconiidae (Storks)

AFRICAN OPENBILL (*Anastomus lamelligerus*) – Large numbers foraging for marsh snails in the Macatoo area of the delta

SADDLE-BILLED STORK (*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*) – Excellent views of this handsome stork in the Okavango Delta

MARABOU STORK (*Leptoptilos crumenifer*) – Good sightings at carcasses in the Macatoo area

YELLOW-BILLED STORK (*Mycteria ibis*) – Fairly common around Xaro and Macatoo in the Okavango

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

AFRICAN DARTER (*Anhinga rufa rufa*) – First seen at Windhoek sewage plant then numerous sightings in the Okavango

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

LONG-TAILED CORMORANT (*Microcarbo africanus*) – First seen at Windhoek sewage plant then numerous sightings in the Okavango

CROWNED CORMORANT (*Microcarbo coronatus*) – Several birds seen on guano platforms north of Walvis Bay

GREAT CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Good sightings at the Windhoek sewage plant and then again near Walvis Bay

CAPE CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax capensis*) – Large numbers seen around Walvis Bay

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

GREAT WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – Two seen on a pan on the desert fringe then again in Walvis Bay and the Okavango

Scopidae (Hamerkop)

HAMERKOP (*Scopus umbretta*) – Many good sightings along the Okavango River and in the delta

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

LITTLE BITTERN (*Ixobrychus minutus*) – Seen in the papyrus beds opposite Xaro Lodge

GRAY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*) – Seen at the Walvis Bay lagoon and the quite common in the Okavango region

BLACK-HEADED HERON (*Ardea melanocephala*) – Scattered sightings throughout the tour

GOLIATH HERON (*Ardea goliath*) – Great views from the boat on the Okavango main channel near Xaro Lodge

PURPLE HERON (*Ardea purpurea*) – Several sightings along the Okavango River near Xaro

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Quite common in the Okavango River and delta

INTERMEDIATE EGRET (*Ardea intermedia*) – Quite common in the Okavango River and delta

LITTLE EGRET (*Egretta garzetta*) – Quite common in the Okavango River and delta

SLATY EGRET (*Egretta vinaceigula*) – Several great sightings in the Okavango of this localised species

BLACK HERON (*Egretta ardesiaca*) – The 'umbrella bird' was seen well on a floodplain near Xaro Lodge

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Quite common around Windhoek, in Etosha and the Okavango River and delta

SQUACCO HERON (*Ardeola ralloides*) – Good numbers in the Okavango

RUFIOUS-BELLIED HERON (*Ardeola rufiventris*) – A number of sightings at pools in the floodplains around Macatoo

STRIATED HERON (*Butorides striata*) – Several good looks in the Okavango region

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Seen in the Okavango near Xaro Lodge and across the channel at Macatoo camp

WHITE-BACKED NIGHT-HERON (*Gorsachius leuconotus*) – Several glimpses of these very secretive birds outside Xaro Lodge

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

GLOSSY IBIS (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – Small numbers seen in the eastern region of the Macatoo concession

SACRED IBIS (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) – Several sightings in the Okavango

HADADA IBIS (*Bostrychia hagedash*) – Seen at the Windhoek sewage works and heard again near Xaro Lodge

AFRICAN SPOONBILL (*Platalea alba*) – Seen in the Mahango Park in Namibia and again in flight near Xaro Lodge

Sagittariidae (Secretarybird)

SECRETARYBIRD (*Sagittarius serpentarius*) – Great views of this monotypic raptor in Etosha

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

BLACK-WINGED KITE (*Elanus caeruleus*) – Seen near Windhoek, in Etosha and again in the Okavango

AFRICAN HARRIER-HAWK (*Polyboroides typus*) – One sighting at Drotsky's Lodge on the Okavango River

WHITE-HEADED VULTURE (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*) – Two juvenile birds seen at carcasses in the Macatoo area

LAPPET-FACED VULTURE (*Torgos tracheliotos*) – Seen in the desert near Sossusvlei and again in Etosha and the Okavango

HOODED VULTURE (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) – Good sightings of this small vulture around Macatoo

WHITE-BACKED VULTURE (*Gyps africanus*) – The most common vulture species seen. Many at an elephant carcass near Macatoo

BATELEUR (*Terathopius ecaudatus*) – Good looks at this handsome raptor in Etosha and in the Okavango

BLACK-BREASTED SNAKE-EAGLE (*Circaetus pectoralis*) – Several sightings - near Solitaire (Namib fringe), in Etosha and on the Okavango River

BROWN SNAKE-EAGLE (*Circaetus cinereus*) – First seen on the outskirts of Windhoek and then again near Macatoo camp

MARTIAL EAGLE (*Polemaetus bellicosus*) – A single sighting of a juvenile bird near the town of Outjo (Namibia)

WAHLBERG'S EAGLE (*Hieraetus wahlbergi*) – A few scattered sightings with the best from the deck of Hakusembe Lodge

TAWNY EAGLE (*Aquila rapax*) – Seen on a number of occasions in Namibia and Botswana

AFRICAN HAWK-EAGLE (*Aquila spilogaster*) – Two brief looks at birds on the hunt near Macatoo Camp

PALE CHANTING-GOSHAWK (*Melierax canorus*) – Quite common in the open, arid areas of Namibia, particularly in Etosha

GABAR GOSHAWK (*Micronisus gabar*) – Seen at Hohenstein Lodge in the Erongo region

AFRICAN MARSH-HARRIER (*Circus ranivorus*) – Several sightings of birds on the wing along the Okavango River

MONTAGU'S HARRIER (*Circus pygargus*) – Great looks at a bird on the wing at the edge of the Etosha Pan

LITTLE SPARROWHAWK (*Accipiter minullus*) – A single sighting of a bird in flight at the Halali Camp, Etosha

BLACK KITE (YELLOW-BILLED) (*Milvus migrans parasitus*) – Common in the Okavango region. We even saw one snatch a fish out of the water

AFRICAN FISH-EAGLE (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) – Many sightings in the Okavango of this stunning eagle

AUGUR BUZZARD (*Buteo augur*) – A very good sighting of a soaring bird near the Spitzkoppe Reserve

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – A few seen around the floodlit waterholes in Etosha and another roosting near Xaro

Strigidae (Owls)

AFRICAN SCOPS-OWL (*Otus senegalensis*) – Unfortunately only heard near Macatoo

VERREAUX'S EAGLE-OWL (*Bubo lacteus*) – A good sighting after dark near Macatoo Camp

PEL'S FISHING-OWL (*Scotopelia peli*) – Fantastic views of a pair (roosting and in flight) near Xaro Lodge

PEARL-SPOTTED OWLET (*Glaucidium perlatum*) – Several sightings throughout with the best at Hohenstein Lodge where they were breeding

AFRICAN BARRED OWLET (*Glaucidium capense*) – Great daylight views outside Macatoo Camp

AFRICAN WOOD-OWL (*Strix woodfordii*) – A lovely sighting of a bird roosting in the Xaro Lodge grounds

MARSH OWL (*Asio capensis*) – Excellent views of a bird flying then perching in the road near Macatoo Camp

Coliidae (Mousebirds)

WHITE-BACKED MOUSEBIRD (*Colius colius*) – Fairly common in Windhoek and on the desert fringe

RED-FACED MOUSEBIRD (*Urocolius indicus*) – Sightings in a number of locations

Upupidae (Hoopoes)

EURASIAN HOOPOE (AFRICAN) (*Upupa epops africana*) – Almost seen daily in the north of Namibia and in Botswana

Phoeniculidae (Woodhoopoes and Scimitarbills)

GREEN WOODHOOPOE (*Phoeniculus purpureus*) – Good looks in the Macatoo concession

VIOLET WOODHOOPOE (VIOLET) (*Phoeniculus damarensis damarensis*) – First seen in the Khan and Omaruru riverbeds and again in the Halali camp grounds

COMMON SCIMITARBILL (*Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*) – Seen well in the Erongo Hills, in Etosha and near Macatoo

Bucorvidae (Ground-Hornbills)

SOUTHERN GROUND-HORNBILL (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*) – Good looks at these strange birds near Macatoo Camp

Bucerotidae (Hornbills)

AFRICAN GRAY HORNBILL (*Lophoceros nasutus*) – Common in Etosha, the Caprivi and Botswana

SOUTHERN YELLOW-BILLED HORNBILL (*Tockus leucomelas*) – Common in Etosha, the Caprivi and Botswana

MONTEIRO'S HORNBILL (*Tockus monteiri*) – Several good sightings in Namibia, particularly at Spitzkoppe Reserve

SOUTHERN RED-BILLED HORNBILL (*Tockus rufirostris*) – Common in the north-east of Namibia and in Botswana

DAMARA RED-BILLED HORNBILL (*Tockus damarensis*) – Good views in the Khan Riverbed

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

MALACHITE KINGFISHER (*Corythornis cristatus*) – Several sightings along the Okavango River near Xaro

AFRICAN PYGMY-KINGFISHER (*Ispidina picta*) – Seen by one participant in the grounds of Drotsky's Lodge on the Okavango River

WOODLAND KINGFISHER (*Halcyon senegalensis*) – Seen in the Hakusembe Lodge grounds and again near Macatoo, Botswana

STRIPED KINGFISHER (*Halcyon chelicuti*) – Quite common in the Macatoo concession

GIANT KINGFISHER (*Megaceryle maxima*) – Great, close-up views of this species on the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge
PIED KINGFISHER (*Ceryle rudis*) – Many good sightings of this common Kingfisher in the Okavango

Meropidae (Bee-eaters)

WHITE-FRONTED BEE-EATER (*Merops bullockoides*) – Quite common along the Okavango River
LITTLE BEE-EATER (*Merops pusillus*) – Many good sightings of this bee-eater in the north of Namibia and in Botswana
SWALLOW-TAILED BEE-EATER (*Merops hirundineus*) – Several sightings throughout Namibia
BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER (*Merops persicus*) – Seen well along the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge
EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*) – Scattered sightings throughout the tour
SOUTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER (*Merops nubicoides*) – Excellent views of this beauty near the town of Shakawe in Botswana

Coraciidae (Rollers)

LILAC-BREASTED ROLLER (*Coracias caudatus*) – This favourite of many was seen well on several occasions, particularly around Macatoo
RUFIOUS-CROWNED ROLLER (*Coracias naevius*) – A number of sightings in both Namibia and Botswana
BROAD-BILLED ROLLER (*Eurystomus glaucurus*) – Great looks at this intra-African migrant along the Okavango river and in the delta

Lybiidae (African Barbets)

CRESTED BARBET (*Trachyphonus vaillantii*) – Common around both Xaro and Macatoo Lodges
PIED BARBET (*Tricholaema leucomelas*) – Seen well in Windhoek and again in Etosha
BLACK-COLLARED BARBET (*Lybius torquatus*) – Seen around both Xaro and Macatoo Lodges

Indicatoridae (Honeyguides)

LESSER HONEYGUIDE (*Indicator minor*) – First seen at the edge of the desert and again near Macatoo Camp
GREATER HONEYGUIDE (*Indicator indicator*) – Good looks at a sub-adult bird in the Macatoo concession

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

CARDINAL WOODPECKER (*Chloropicus fuscescens*) – This small woodpecker was seen in several localities throughout the tour
BEARDED WOODPECKER (*Chloropicus namaquus*) – Good looks in the Arabbusch Hotel grounds (Windhoek) and again in the Okavango
BENNETT'S WOODPECKER (*Campethera bennettii*) – Nice views of a pair near Macatoo Camp
GOLDEN-TAILED WOODPECKER (*Campethera abingoni*) – Seen at the Mashara Outpost near Etosha and again near Macatoo

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

PYGMY FALCON (*Polihierax semitorquatus*) – Two pairs seen at the edge of the desert in the Solitaire region
ROCK KESTREL (*Falco rupicolus*) – Several seen in flight and perched on roadside poles on the desert fringe
GREATER KESTREL (*Falco rupicoloides*) – Great looks in Etosha with a pair feeding a small snake to the nestlings
DICKINSON'S KESTREL (*Falco dickinsoni*) – At least five individuals seen in the Macatoo concession
RED-NECKED FALCON (*Falco chicquera*) – Seen well near Namib Desert Lodge with a few more singletons in Etosha
LANNER FALCON (*Falco biarmicus*) – A single sighting of a bird on the ground north of Okaukuejo camp in Etosha

Psittaculidae (Old World Parrots)

ROSY-FACED LOVEBIRD (*Agapornis roseicollis*) – Many great views of these little parrots particularly at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge

Psittacidae (New World and African Parrots)

MEYER'S PARROT (*Poicephalus meyeri*) – Seen in the Caprivi, at Xaro Lodge and at Macatoo
RUEPPELL'S PARROT (*Poicephalus rueppellii*) – After a good search we got these in the Khan and Omaruru Riverbeds, and again at Uris.

Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises)

WHITE-TAILED SHRIKE (*Lanioturdus torquatus*) – These peculiar shrikes were seen in the Spitzkoppe Reserve and again in Erongo
CHINSPOT BATIS (*Batis molitor*) – We had good looks at a pair along the Rundu - Divundu road
PRIRIT BATIS (*Batis pririt*) – Seen well in the Arabbusch Hotel grounds and then several sightings in the Erongo region

Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

WHITE HELMETSHRIKE (*Prionops plumatus*) – A small flock was seen well in the grounds of Halali Camp, Etosha

Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)

BRUBRU (*Nilaus afer*) – We fine views of a bird in the Arabbusch Hotel grounds
BLACK-BACKED PUFFBACK (*Dryoscopus cubla*) – Several sightings in the north of Namibia and in the Okavango
BLACK-CROWNED TCHAGRA (*Tchagra senegalus*) – At least two sightings in the Macatoo concession
BROWN-CROWNED TCHAGRA (*Tchagra australis*) – Fairly common in Etosha and within the Okavango region
GABON BOUBOU (*Laniarius bicolor*) – Heard and seen virtually every day of our stay in the Okavango region
CRIMSON-BREASTED GONOLEK (*Laniarius atrococcineus*) – This beauty showed well in a number of locations both in Namibia and Botswana
BOKMAKIERIE (*Telophorus zeylonus*) – A very confiding pair interrupted our picnic lunch in the Spitzkoppe Reserve
SULPHUR-BREASTED BUSHSHRIKE (*Telophorus sulfureopectus*) – A single bird seen very well while we were doing a walk near Xaro Lodge
GRAY-HEADED BUSHSHRIKE (*Malaconotus blanchoti*) – Heard only, by some at Macatoo Camp

Campephagidae (Cuckooshrikes)

BLACK CUCKOOSHRIKE (*Campephaga flava*) – We had two sightings of this species at Hakusembe Lodge and at Xaro Lodge

Laniidae (Shrikes)

RED-BACKED SHRIKE (*Lanius collurio*) – Several sightings of both females and males in the Macatoo area
LESSER GRAY SHRIKE (*Lanius minor*) – At least ten sightings of this species in the Okavango region

SOUTHERN FISCAL (SOUTHERN) (*Lanius collaris subcoronatus*) – We had great looks at the white-browed form of this species at Spitzkoppe and in Etosha

WHITE-CROWNED SHRIKE (*Eurocephalus anguitimens*) – A few sightings, mainly in Etosha

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

AFRICAN BLACK-HEADED ORIOLE (*Oriolus larvatus*) – One bird was seen well during a walk near Macatoo Camp

Dicruridae (Drongos)

FORK-TAILED DRONGO (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) – Seen all over the region except for the desert

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

AFRICAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER (*Terpsiphone viridis*) – We had several sightings, particular in the Okavango region

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

CAPE CROW (*Corvus capensis*) – These 'all black' crows were fairly common on the Namib desert edge and in Etosha

PIED CROW (*Corvus albus*) – Seen often on the Namib fringe and in Etosha

Alaudidae (Larks)

SPIKE-HEELED LARK (*Chersomanes albofasciata*) – A few family groups seen in Etosha

GRAY'S LARK (*Ammomanopsis grayi*) – After a good search we got onto a few near the Swakopmund salt works

KAROO LONG-BILLED LARK (*Certhilauda subcoronata*) – We had reasonable looks at a male in the Spitzkoppe Reserve

CHESTNUT-BACKED SPARROW-LARK (*Eremopterix leucotis*) – Large flocks were seen to the east of Halali Camp, Etosha

GRAY-BACKED SPARROW-LARK (*Eremopterix verticalis*) – Very common around waterholes in Etosha

SABOTA LARK (BRADFIELD'S) (*Calendulauda sabota naevia*) – We had several on the desert edge and in Etosha

DUNE LARK (*Calendulauda erythrochlamys*) – Great sightings of at least three birds in the low dunes near Sossusvlei

RUFOUS-NAPED LARK (*Mirafraga africana*) – A few males were seen singing from the tops of bushes to the east of Macatoo

RED-CAPPED LARK (*Calandrella cinerea*) – Fairly common in Etosha

STARK'S LARK (*Spizocorys starki*) – A few seen near the Namib Desert Lodge and then again in Etosha

PINK-BILLED LARK (*Spizocorys conirostris*) – We had reasonable looks at a few north of Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PLAIN MARTIN (*Riparia paludicola*) – These little martins were fairly common along the Okavango River

BANK SWALLOW (*Riparia riparia*) – One was seen by a few in group at the veterinary checkpoint south of Rundu

BANDED MARTIN (*Riparia cincta*) – We had several birds foraging over grassland in the Okavango region

ROCK MARTIN (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*) – A very common martin in the hills of Erongo and even around lodges in the desert

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – There were good numbers in Etosha and the Okavango

WHITE-THROATED SWALLOW (*Hirundo albicularis*) – A few were seen at the Windhoek sewage works and again on the Okavango River

WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW (*Hirundo smithii*) – This small swallow was a regular along the Okavango River

PEARL-BREASTED SWALLOW (*Hirundo dimidiata*) – We had good sightings of at least two pairs at Hohenstein Lodge and at Macatoo

GREATER STRIPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis cucullata*) – Seen at Arabbusch Hotel on the outskirts of Windhoek

LESSER STRIPED SWALLOW (*Cecropis abyssinica*) – Seen well at Xaro Lodge and again near Macatoo

RUFOUS-CHESTED SWALLOW (*Cecropis semirufa*) – Several pairs were seen around Hakusembe and Macatoo

MOSQUE SWALLOW (*Cecropis senegalensis*) – One sighting of a bird flying over the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

SOUTHERN BLACK-TIT (*Melaniparus niger*) – We saw a pair in the Caprivi woodlands and another in the Macatoo area

CARP'S TIT (*Melaniparus carpi*) – Good views of a pair in Halali Camp, Etosha and at Uris Lodge

ASHY TIT (*Melaniparus cinerascens*) – One bird in a dry riverbed at Sossusvlei and then a few at Hohenstein Lodge

Remizidae (Penduline-Tits)

SOUTHERN PENDULINE-TIT (*Anthoscopus minutus*) – A small flock seen at Hohenstein Lodge

Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)

YELLOW-BELLIED GREENBUL (*Chlorocichla flaviventris*) – First seen at Hakusembe Lodge and again at Xaro Lodge

TERRESTRIAL BROWNBUL (*Phyllastrephus terrestris*) – A flock of about five was seen during a walk near Xaro Camp

COMMON BULBUL (DARK-CAPPED) (*Pycnonotus barbatus tricolor*) – Very common in the north east of Namibia and in the Okavango

BLACK-FRONTED BULBUL (*Pycnonotus nigricans*) – Seen in most localities over the first 12 days of the tour

Macrosphenidae (African Warblers)

CAPE CROMBEC (*Sylvietta rufescens*) – Individuals and pairs seen in Windhoek, Etosha and during our lunch stop at Mashara

ROCKRUNNER (*Achaetops pycnopygius*) – This regional endemic was seen at Hohenstein and again at the Erongo Wilderness Lodge

Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)

WILLOW WARBLER (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – Seen in Windhoek and also in Halali Camp and at Macatoo

Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and Allies)

AFRICAN REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus baeticatus*) – Good views of at least three birds at the Windhoek sewage ponds

LESSER SWAMP WARBLER (*Acrocephalus gracilirostris*) – Seen from the boat in the Okavango River near Xaro Lodge

GREATER SWAMP WARBLER (*Acrocephalus rufescens*) – At least three of these skulkers were seen in the papyrus beds near Xaro Lodge

Locustellidae (Grassbirds and Allies)

LITTLE RUSH-WARBLER (*Bradypterus baboecala*) – Heard only in the bulrushes near Xaro Lodge

Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)

YELLOW-BELLIED EREMOMELA (*Eremomela icteropygialis*) – Individuals seen here and there but mainly in the Erongo region

BURNT-NECK EREMOMELA (*Eremomela usticollis*) – Seen well on the first afternoon in Windhoek

BARRED WREN-WARBLER (*Calamonastes fasciolatus*) – We had great views of a male while on a walk at Hohenstein Lodge

GREEN-BACKED CAMAROPTERA (GRAY-BACKED) (*Camaroptera brachyura brevicaudata*) – Individuals seen at Uris Lodge and at Macatoo Camp

YELLOW-BREASTED APALIS (*Apalis flavida*) – A pair seen well in Halali Camp and at Xaro Lodge

TAWNY-FLANKED PRINIA (*Prinia subflava*) – Fairly common in the Okavango area

BLACK-CHESTED PRINIA (*Prinia flavicans*) – Seen on several occasions in Etosha

RUFIOUS-EARED WARBLER (*Malcorus pectoralis*) – Seen while on a walk near the Namib Desert Lodge

RATTLING CISTICOLA (*Cisticola chiniana*) – The common Cisticola in the 'bush country' of Botswana

CHIRPING CISTICOLA (*Cisticola pipiens*) – Good looks at this papyrus specialty on the river near Xaro Lodge

ZITTING CISTICOLA (*Cisticola juncidis*) – Fairly common in the tall grassland patches of Etosha and the Okavango Delta

DESERT CISTICOLA (*Cisticola aridulus*) – At least two birds seen in dry grassland in Etosha

Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers)

LAYARD'S WARBLER (*Sylvia layardi*) – A single bird seen very well at the Spitzkoppe Reserve

RUFIOUS-VENTED WARBLER (*Sylvia subcaerulea*) – Seen on a number of occasions throughout the Namibian leg of this tour

Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas, and Allies)

ORANGE RIVER WHITE-EYE (*Zosterops pallidus*) – After a good search we finally got a few in the suburbs of Walvis Bay

Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)

HARTLAUB'S BABBLER (*Turdoides hartlaubii*) – Quite common in the riparian sections of the Okavango

BLACK-FACED BABBLER (*Turdoides melanops*) – Excellent views of at least four birds foraging on the lawn at Mashara Outpost

SOUTHERN PIED-BABBLER (*Turdoides bicolor*) – Strangely, only individuals seen in the Omaruru riverbed and in the Macatoo Camp

ARROW-MARKED BABBLER (*Turdoides jardineii*) – Seen well in the Xaro Lodge gardens

Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*) – Individuals seen at Hakusembe and at Xaro

MARIQUA FLYCATCHER (*Bradornis mariquensis*) – Quite common in the dry Acacia country in both Namibia and Botswana

CHAT FLYCATCHER (*Agricola infuscatus*) – Seen on a few occasions on the Namib desert edge and in Etosha

ASHY FLYCATCHER (*Fraseria caerulescens*) – Two pairs seen at Xaro Lodge and again near Macatoo

HERERO CHAT (*Melaenornis herero*) – This sought-after bird was seen very well in the Spitzkoppe Reserve

SOUTHERN BLACK-FLYCATCHER (*Melaenornis pammelaina*) – A few sightings in the Macatoo area

KALAHARI SCRUB-ROBIN (*Cercotrichas paena*) – A pair was seen well at Hohenstein Lodge

RED-BACKED SCRUB-ROBIN (*Cercotrichas leucophrys*) – A few individuals seen at Halali Camp, Uris Lodge and in the Macatoo concession

WHITE-BROWED ROBIN-CHAT (*Cossypha heuglini*) – Xaro Lodge has a few resident birds in the gardens that were seen well by all

SHORT-TOED ROCK-THRUSH (*Monticola brevipes*) – A beautiful male was seen on the rocks at Erongo Wilderness Lodge

SOUTHERN ANTEATER-CHAT (*Myrmecocichla formicivora*) – Several sightings in Etosha

TRACTRAC CHAT (*Cercomela tractrac*) – A few birds seen near Namib Desert Lodge and a pair of very pale birds near Swakopmund

FAMILIAR CHAT (*Cercomela familiaris*) – Seen on a few occasions on the Namib desert edge

MOUNTAIN WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe monticola*) – We had good looks at this variable species on the Namib Desert edge

CAPPED WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe pileata*) – At least two birds seen in dry grassland in Etosha

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

GROUNDSCRAPER THRUSH (*Psophocichla litsitsirupa*) – This attractive thrush was seen on a number of occasions on the lawns of lodges

KURRICHANE THRUSH (*Turdus libonyana*) – Seen well at Hakusembe Lodge

Sturnidae (Starlings)

WATTLED STARLING (*Creatophora cinerea*) – Large numbers seen at the Windhoek sewage works and again in Etosha

VIOLET-BACKED STARLING (*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*) – At least four of these 'stunners' were seen in the gardens of Drotsky's Lodge - Okavango

PALE-WINGED STARLING (*Onychognathus naboroupp*) – Fairly common on the desert fringe and into the Erongo Hills

BURCHELL'S STARLING (*Lamprotornis australis*) – Several sightings of this large starling, first in the Khan Riverbed and common in the north

MEVES'S STARLING (*Lamprotornis mevesii*) – Seen well at Xaro Lodge and again in the Macatoo concession

SHARP-TAILED STARLING (*Lamprotornis acuticaudus*) – A single bird seen by some in the teak woodlands along the Rundu-Divundu road

GREATER BLUE-EARED STARLING (*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*) – A pair was seen to the east of Macatoo Camp in the delta

CAPE STARLING (*Lamprotornis nitens*) – Multiple sightings throughout the tour

Buphagidae (Oxpeckers)

RED-BILLED OXPECKER (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*) – Good numbers in the Okavango

YELLOW-BILLED OXPECKER (*Buphagus africanus*) – Excellent sightings in the Okavango delta, particularly on buffalo and giraffe

Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)

COLLARED SUNBIRD (*Hedydipna collaris*) – Heard only, at Drotsky's cabins

AMETHYST SUNBIRD (*Chalcomitra amethystina*) – At least two sightings in the north of Namibia and once at Drotsky's near Xaro Lodge
SCARLET-CHESTED SUNBIRD (*Chalcomitra senegalensis*) – Seen well at the Arabbusch Hotel in Windhoek
MARIQUA SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris mariquensis*) – Good views at the Windhoek sewage works and at Hohenstein Lodge in the Erongo Hills
WHITE-BREASTED SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris talatala*) – Seen in Windhoek and also in Halali Camp and at Macatoo
DUSKY SUNBIRD (*Cinnyris fuscus*) – Several sightings in the arid regions over the first five days of the tour

Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)

CAPE WAGTAIL (*Motacilla capensis*) – Seen well in and around Windhoek and along the lagoon in Walvis Bay
AFRICAN PIED WAGTAIL (*Motacilla aguimp*) – Good looks at Hakusembe and Xaro Lodges
AFRICAN PIPIT (*Anthus cinnamomeus*) – A few sightings in Etosha and on a dry floodplain near Hakusembe Lodge
BUFFY PIPIT (*Anthus vaalensis*) – At least three sightings in the Macatoo safari concession

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

BLACK-THROATED CANARY (*Crithagra atrogularis*) – Several sightings in Windhoek, at Hohenstein Lodge and in Etosha
YELLOW CANARY (*Crithagra flaviventris*) – Only seen once in the Acacia scrub at the Windhoek sewage ponds
WHITE-THROATED CANARY (*Crithagra albogularis*) – Usually common but we only had one sighting near Erongo Wilderness Lodge

Emberizidae (Old World Buntings)

GOLDEN-BREASTED BUNTING (*Emberiza flaviventris*) – First seen Hohenstein then at several waterholes in Etosha
CAPE BUNTING (*Emberiza capensis*) – Two very tame birds came in while we were having our picnic lunch at Spitzkoppe
LARK-LIKE BUNTING (*Emberiza impetuani*) – Abundant around the water feature at Hohenstein Lodge
CINNAMON-BREASTED BUNTING (*Emberiza tahapisi*) – We had good looks at this bunting in Halali Camp, Etosha

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) – Very common and seen in virtually every town and lodge visited on tour
GREAT RUFIOUS SPARROW (*Passer motitensis*) – Several good sightings at Hohenstein Lodge and in Etosha
CAPE SPARROW (*Passer melanurus*) – Fairly common on the desert fringe and into the Erongo Hills
SOUTHERN GRAY-HEADED SPARROW (*Passer diffusus*) – Seen in Windhoek and several times in Etosha
YELLOW-THROATED PETRONIA (*Gymnornis supercilialis*) – At least three pairs seen in the Macatoo concession

Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)

RED-BILLED BUFFALO-WEAVER (*Bubalornis niger*) – Seen at various locations including Hohenstein, Etosha, Xaro and Macatoo
SCALY WEAVER (*Sporopipes squamifrons*) – These adorable little finches were often encountered on the desert fringes and in Etosha
WHITE-BROWED SPARROW-WEAVER (*Plocepasser mahali*) – Frequently encountered around Windhoek, the Namib fringe, Erongo and Etosha
SOCIABLE WEAVER (*Philetairus socius*) – Good numbers seen at Namib Desert Lodge and in the Okaukuejo Camp in Etosha
RED-HEADED WEAVER (*Anaplectes rubriceps*) – Males in breeding plumage seen well in Halali Camp, Etosha
SPECTACLED WEAVER (*Ploceus ocularis*) – Seen only once in the gardens of Xaro Lodge
HOLUB'S GOLDEN-WEAVER (*Ploceus xanthops*) – Several sightings at Xaro Lodge and surrounds
SOUTHERN BROWN-THROATED WEAVER (*Ploceus xanthopterus*) – Good views of at least 4 males around the grounds of Xaro Lodge
LESSER MASKED-WEAVER (*Ploceus intermedius*) – Seen in Windhoek and again at Uris Lodge
SOUTHERN MASKED-WEAVER (*Ploceus velatus*) – The most widespread and commonly seen weaver species on tour
CHESTNUT WEAVER (*Ploceus rubiginosus*) – A few non-breeding birds seen in the grounds of Uris Lodge
RED-BILLED QUELEA (*Quelea quelea*) – A few seen in Windhoek and the hundreds in and around Etosha
SOUTHERN RED BISHOP (*Euplectes orix*) – A few males in eclipse plumage were seen at the Windhoek sewage works
FAN-TAILED WIDOWBIRD (*Euplectes axillaris*) – About 30 birds (males in partial breeding plumage) seen at a floodplain near Xaro Lodge

Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)

COMMON WAXBILL (*Estrilda astrild*) – Small flocks seen in Walvis Bay and also near Macatoo Camp
BLACK-FACED WAXBILL (*Estrilda erythronotos*) – Nice views at Arabbusch Hotel (Windhoek) and at Hohenstein Lodge
SOUTHERN CORDONBLEU (*Uraeginthus angolensis*) – Fairly common around Windhoek, in the Erongo Hills and in Etosha
VIOLET-EARED WAXBILL (*Granatina granatina*) – These little beauties were seen at Hohenstein and several times in Etosha
GREEN-WINGED PYTILIA (*Pytilia melba*) – Good views of birds coming in to drink at Hohenstein Lodge's water feature
RED-BILLED FIREFINCH (*Lagonosticta senegala*) – Small groups seen well at Macatoo
BROWN FIREFINCH (*Lagonosticta nitidula*) – A few were seen in the gardens of Drotsky's Lodge near Xaro
JAMESON'S FIREFINCH (*Lagonosticta rhodopareia*) – Several good looks at these little finches in the Macatoo concession
RED-HEADED FINCH (*Amadina erythrocephala*) – Quite common at Hohenstein Lodge and again seen in Etosha

Viduidae (Indigobirds)

PIN-TAILED WHYDAH (*Vidua macroura*) – Several males in partial breeding plumage were seen near a pan in the Macatoo area
EASTERN PARADISE-WHYDAH (*Vidua paradisaea*) – A few males in eclipse plumage were seen at Uris Lodge
SHAFT-TAILED WHYDAH (*Vidua regia*) – Non-breeding birds were seen in Windhoek, Hohenstein, Etosha and Erongo

MAMMALS

ROUND-EARED ELEPHANT SHREW (*Macroscelides proboscideus*) – An individual seen at the Hohenstein Lodge in the Erongo Hills
WESTERN ROCK SENGI (*Elephantulus rupestris*) – Seen foraging along the granite boulders of the Erongo Wilderness Lodge
BUSHVELD SENGI (*Elephantulus intufi*) – Several seen foraging under shrubs in the Hohenstein Lodge grounds
PETERS' EPAULETED FRUIT BAT (*Epomophorus crypturus*) – A single bat was seen by some roosting under a tent awning in Macatoo Camp

MAURITIAN TOMB BAT (*Taphozous mauritanus*) – A female with young seen roosting under a roof at Xaro Lodge
MOHOLI BUSHBABY (*Galago moholi*) – All we had was eye shine in the spotlight one evening in Macatoo
BLACK-FACED VERVET MONKEY (*Cercopithecus aethiops*) – Several troops seen around Xaro Lodge and at Macatoo Camp
CHACMA BABOON (*Papio ursinus*) – Fairly common and widespread seen in various localities throughout the tour
SCRUB HARE (*Lepus saxatilis*) – Good views of about three individuals seen lying up during the day in Etosha
CAPE GROUND SQUIRREL (*Xerus inaurius*) – Small groups seen well in Windhoek, near Solitaire and in Etosha
DAMARA GROUND SQUIRREL (*Xerus princeps*) – About three very confiding individuals seen in the Spitzkoppe Reserve
TREE SQUIRREL (*Paraxerus cepapi*) – Commonly seen in the woodlands around Halali (Etosha) and in the Okavango
DASSIE RAT (*Petromus typicus*) – Good sightings of these localised rodents at Hohenstein Lodge and Erongo Wilderness
BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – A small group of about eight seen in the breakers north of Walvis Bay
BLACK-BACKED JACKAL (*Canis mesomelas*) – Seen on the beach at Walvis Bay and quite common in Etosha
COMMON (SMALL-SPOTTED) GENET (*Genetta genetta*) – Seen by two participants at night in Halali Camp, Etosha
SLENDER MONGOOSE (*Herpestes sanguineus*) – At least two sightings of this species crossing the road near Hohenstein and at Macatoo
BANDED MONGOOSE (*Mungos mungo*) – A troop seen near Macatoo camp in the Okavango Delta
YELLOW MONGOOSE (*Cynictis penicillata*) – Several sightings in Etosha
SPOTTED HYAENA (*Crocuta crocuta*) – Small groups and individuals seen in Etosha and in the Macatoo concession
CARACAL (*Felis caracal*) – One seen at night at a floodlit waterhole at Erongo Wilderness and another in daylight in Macatoo
LEOPARD (*Panthera pardus*) – Fantastic views of a large male stalking Warthog near our vehicle at Macatoo
LION (*Panthera leo*) – At least seven sightings in Etosha and another four sightings at Macatoo
CHEETAH (*Acinonyx jubatus*) – A mother with two sub-adult cubs at their Springbok kill near Halali Camp in Etosha
CAPE (AUSTRALIAN) FUR SEAL (*Arctocephalus pusillus*) – A few sightings of swimming seals near Walvis Bay and Swakopmund
AFRICAN ELEPHANT (*Loxodonta africana*) – Several sightings in Etosha and then many lone bulls and large breeding herds at Macatoo
ROCK HYRAX (*Procavia capensis*) – Good looks at these strange mammals at Erongo Wilderness Lodge
MOUNTAIN ZEBRA (*Equus zebra*) – About 40 animals of the Hartmann's sub-species seen near Solitaire in the Namib
BURCHELL'S ZEBRA (*Equus burchelli*) – Very common in Etosha but less so at Macatoo
BLACK RHINOCEROS (*Diceros bicornis*) – Good sightings at night at the waterholes but also two good daytime sightings in Etosha
WARTHOG (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) – Seen well in Etosha and several good views at Macatoo
HIPPOTAMUS (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) – Mostly seen in the Okavango River system and then in isolated pools at Macatoo
COMMON GIRAFFE (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) – Many sightings - Hohenstein, Etosha and Macatoo
BUSHBUCK (*Tragelaphus scriptus*) – The 'Chobe or Harnessed' subspecies seen well at Xaro and Macatoo
GREATER KUDU (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) – Many small breeding herds and some magnificent bulls seen in Etosha and at Macatoo
AFRICAN BUFFALO (*Syncerus caffer*) – Both bulls and breeding herds seen well at Macatoo
LECHWE (*Kobus leche*) – Small herds and bachelor groups seen in Mahango Park and at Macatoo
REEDBUCK (*Redunca arundinum*) – Individuals and pairs seen in Mahango and Macatoo
ROAN ANTELOPE (*Hippotragus equinus*) – A small herd of this long-eared antelope was seen in the Mahango Park
SABLE ANTELOPE (*Hippotragus niger*) – A breeding herd of about 15 was seen in Mahango
GEMSBOK (*Oryx gazella*) – This beautiful antelope was seen in the Sossusvlei area and was quite common in Etosha
TOPI (*Damaliscus lunatus*) – Small herds with newborn calves were seen in Mahango and Macatoo
HARTEBEEST (KONGONI) (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*) – The first mammal seen in Namibia near the Windhoek airport and again in Etosha
BLUE WILDEBEEST (*Connochaetes taurinus*) – Seen at Hohenstein Lodge, in Etosha and at Macatoo
KLIPSPRINGER (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) – A pair seen in the Spitzkoppe Reserve
STEENBOK (*Raphicerus campestris*) – Several sightings of this little antelope in Etosha and Macatoo
KIRK'S DIK-DIK (*Modoqua kirki*) – A pair of these diminutive antelope was seen well near Namutoni Camp in Etosha
IMPALA (*Aepyceros malampus*) – The black-faced morph was common in Etosha as was the normal version in Botswana
SPRINGBOK (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) – Seen on the edge of the Namib and very common in Etosha

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 362 bird taxa and 49 mammal taxa