

Namibia's Etosha Pan & Skeleton Coast

Naturetrek Tour Report

30 October - 15 November 2017



Black Rhinoceros by Rachel Oakley



Black-winged Kite by Simon Shore



Shovel-snouted Lizard by Simon Shore



Crimson-breasted Shrike by Rachel Oakley

Report compiled by Rob Mileto
Images courtesy of Rob Mileto, Rachel Oakley & Simon Shore



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Together with 12 Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Monday 30th October

London Heathrow to Johannesburg

We all met up in Terminal 2 for our uneventful overnight flight to Johannesburg.

Day 2

Tuesday 31st October

Johannesburg to River Crossing Lodge (near Windhoek)

Bleary eyed, we had time for a quick coffee in Johannesburg airport terminal building. After this welcome refreshment, a further short flight over the Kalahari, speckled with unfeasibly fluffy clouds, brought us to Windhoek. Here we met our local guides, Gerhard and Jeremiah and were soon aboard our extended Land Cruisers that were to be our transport and 'hides' for the next two weeks.

Then we were off on the short drive to a nearby lodge, and soon picking up handfuls of new birds and mammals like Chacma Baboon, Warthog, Cape Startling and Rock Martin. On arrival we had a quick break before a briefing on what to expect and watch out for. We also had some lunch, accompanied by Southern Masked Weaver, Short-toed Rock Thrush and Familiar Chat in the adjacent garden. Some serious thunder and lightning ensued whilst we had a little siesta, but it had brightened up by the time we set off for a bird walk in the late afternoon. As we strolled around the environs of the lodge, three species of swift (Common, Little and African Palm Swifts) wheeled above our heads. In the trees and bushes were Cape Bunting, White-backed Mousebird, Long-billed Crombec, Carp's Tit and Pirit Batis, whilst a Rock Kestrel stooped dramatically out of the sky.

The checklist (that was to become standard pre-dinner entertainment) was followed by supper and then an early night for most.

Day 3

Wednesday 1st November

River Crossing Lodge to Namib-Naukluft Desert Lodge (via Solitaire)

Not too early, we had breakfast with Rock Martin and then it was time to pack the luggage and hit the road. However, we only got about 500 metres down the track to the river crossing. The river was running due to the rain; a rare sight in Namibia which has no permanent rivers within its borders. Here, birds were plentiful and it was hard to know where to look! Within some 15 minutes we had seen, amongst others, Black-chested Prinia, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Black-faced Waxbill, Fork-tailed Drongo, Red-billed Buffalo Weaver, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Red-billed Quelea, and a superb Crimson-breasted Shrike – quite an overload for our first morning, and there was more to come...

After navigating through the streets of Windhoek, we left the tarmac and were soon seeing more new and lovely birds including Common Ostrich, Red-billed Spurfowl, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Black-winged Kite, Purple Roller, Anteater Chat and four species of hornbill: Yellow-billed, Red-billed, Monterio's and African Grey Hornbills. There were also a few mammals. Chacma Baboon, Springbok and Yellow Mongoose were all pretty

much to be expected... but the young Leopard that dashed across the road and then spent a few key seconds pacing up and down, trying to find a way through the wire fencing, was a very much unexpected treat!

Near Namib Grens, a “dam” (as small reservoirs are locally termed) afforded us decent views of South African Shelduck, African Spoonbill, Blacksmith Lapwing and a flotilla of half a dozen synchronised fishing Great White Pelicans.

When we approached the impossibly scenic Spreetshoogte Pass, it was good to stretch our legs and at least try to capture the majesty of the landscape on our memory cards. On the descent, some Klipspringers were good enough to pose for us. We arrived at the tiny and enigmatic oasis of Solitaire for a late lunch, and a little walk around allowed us to discover Damara Ground Squirrel, Marico Flycatcher, Cape Starling, Pied Crow and Red-faced Mousebird.

From Solitaire it was just a short drive to the Namib-Naukluft Desert Lodge. Here we had time for a break before a short evening walk in the desert. A nearby small tree held a huge Sociable Weaver nest, and beneath this many Knobbly Darkling Beetles (locally called Tok-toky beetles) were attracted by the droppings. Pale-winged Starling flew over regularly, but the fly over by a pair of Ludwig's Bustard during the subsequent checklist was a fantastic treat! The stunning sunset and hundreds of Sociable Weavers coming in to a small pool to drink were further distractions from the checklist, but we finished in good time for the barbeque dinner under the stars.

Day 4

Thursday 2nd November

Namib-Naukluft Desert Lodge; Sesriem; Kulala Desert Camp & Dune 1.

Today was mostly hot and sunny. At a relatively late and leisurely breakfast, the water in a little bird bath and scraps put out attracted numerous Sociable Weavers, but also Damara Ground Squirrel and a pair of Ruppell's Korhaan – usually a tricky bird to spot! In the distance Blue Wildebeest, Springbok and Gemsbok grazed in the relative cool of the morning, and before it became seriously hot we set off for Sesriem Canyon. En route we managed to spot Pale Chanting Goshawk, Greater Kestrel, a dinky Yellow-bellied Eremomela and, for some Ludwig's Bustard, for others Bokmakierie (but sadly not both for anyone).

Carved by the Tsauchab River, the canyon is some 30 metres (100 feet) deep. The name Sesriem is Afrikaans and means "six belts", given by settlers on the Dorsland Trek who had to attach together six belts (made of Gemsbok hides) in order to reach buckets down into the canyon to scoop up water. After scrambling down and into this impressive geomorphological feature, we came across a Rock Kestrel and Speckled Pigeons, but the top spot must be the roosting Barn Owl staring down at us. One of the benefits of a canyon is shade, so it was quite a shock to emerge back into the scorching sunshine and more than enough of a prompt to seek cold drinks and/or ice cream from the nearby service station! From there it was a short drive to Kulala Desert Camp and lunch overlooking the dunes, a lonely Ostrich and a Black-backed Jackal.

After a nice relaxing post lunch rest, there was tea and apple pie available in the late afternoon and we set off around 4.30pm to the inventively named Dune 1. This scenic spot is a favourite haunt of the endemic Dune Lark and, after just a few minutes of searching, we found one. Ok, it was a bit dull and brown, but it was also full of character and this one pretty much ran around and under our legs. Also to be seen in the sands were Desert Dune Ants, resplendent in their pied livery, and Shovel-snouted Lizards, forever famous from the scene in

Planet Earth II where it lifts opposite legs to rest its feet from the hot sand. There was also lots of dung and tracks, Gemsbok, Springbok, Darkling Beetles and more larks too.

We strolled back to the vehicles to discover sundowner drinks and snacks had been arranged on a table complete with starched white tablecloth! It was most decadent... and a Dune Lark liked it too, sprinting under the table and around our feet, no doubt looking for dropped crumbs. On the return trip, many photographs were taken in the soft light of a pink sunset.

Day 5

Friday 3rd November

Kulala to Walvis Bay via Deadvlei, Sossusvlei and the dunes

We were up before sunrise and set off promptly in order to see the giant 300 metre dunes at their best – in the light of sunrise – and we were not disappointed with many many photographs being taken. Not too long after sunrise, we were striding across the sand towards Deadvlei, with its eerie long-dead acacias. Most opted for the scenic route in; up a nearby dune crest and then crashing down its steep, orange face and into the contrasting white clay of the ex-lake bed.

Returning to the vehicles, we then drove the short distance to the more famous, but perhaps less visually impressive, Sossusvlei. Here we had a small but satisfying second breakfast in the company of Cape Sparrows. As we left we chanced upon a (harmless) Sand Snake, looking to all the world like a dead twig, but given away when it moved.

It was then off northwards and into the ever-changing landscape, painted in dark but glittering hues of mica schists, vibrant oranges of sandstones, and subtle tans of limestones and dolomites. En route, there were sparring Gemsbok and tiny baby Gemsbok, close up Blue Wildebeest, rather distant Hartmann's Mountain Zebra, a Black-chested Snake Eagle, both Lappet-faced and White-backed Vultures feasting on an unknown dead beast, and more cold drinks to drink and ice cream to scoff!

Lunch was at the "Rostock Ritz", which doubles as a Meerkat rescue centre, so it was fun to see these now famous mongoose relatives up close.

Driving on, we stopped for obligatory photographs at the Tropic of Capricorn – where we discovered that, spookily, four of the fifteen of us shared the same birthday. Much debate then followed as to how rare this actually was and how you might calculate the probability. The answer seemed to be that the calculation was probably very complicated and the probability was likely to be very small!

Just before we descended from the plateau, we briefly stopped again to take in the marvellous view and get up close to some Quiver Trees. These 'trees' are actually giant aloes, so have no actual wood. They are thought to be named from the practice of San people who hollowed out the tubular branches to form quivers for their arrows. We also searched in the dirt to find garnets.

We then travelled on to reach the outskirts of Walvis Bay in the late afternoon, where a quick stop at the sewage works and then the promenade gave us our first view of flamingoes, terns and waders.

Day 6

Saturday 4th November

Walvis Bay Lagoon, the ocean and the salt-pans

Post breakfast, most of us started the day with a 'pelagic' boat trip to the open ocean beyond Walvis Bay lagoon. Almost as soon as we set off, we were joined on board by Great White Pelicans, Kelp Gull and even a Brown Fur Seal!... all looking for an easy meal of the fish being fed to them.

On the wrecks and in the lagoon there were many Cape and a scattering of White-breasted Cormorants, as well as the rather dashing Hartlaub's Gull. As we approached the sandy spit that encloses the bay, a few waders could be seen dashing up and down the surf. These were Sanderling and nearby were Ruddy Turnstones and some very smart African Black Oystercatchers. From here we headed straight for the open sea whilst the wind was still modest. We were soon boating through 'comic' terns: most, if not all, appeared to be Common Terns rather than Arctic Terns. It was frustratingly quiet wildlife-wise but eventually, with patience, we did see Sooty Shearwater, White-chinned Petrel and Cape Gannet, and got quite close and personal to a handful of African Penguins. We celebrated these with local oysters and other snacks, washed down with some tasty sparkling wine. On our return there was the opportunity to feed fish to a very athletic young Fur Seal that managed to leap one-and-a-half metres out of the ocean to take fish from the hand... and the boat was still motoring forward!

A waterside lunch was followed by a slow drive to and around the local commercial salt-pans, which included bright pink ones. Lots of birds were seen, with highlights including Pied Avocet, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Bar-tailed Godwit, Little Stint, Sanderling, White-fronted, Grey and Common Ringed Plovers, and Caspian, Swift, Common, Sandwich and the endemic Damara Terns. However, birds of the day were probably the hundreds, if not thousands of Greater and Lesser Flamingoes that splashed colour over the waterfront.

Day 7

Sunday 5th November

Walvis Bay & Swakopmund (scenic flight for some)

We had, for this trip, a veritable lie-in until 7.30am! Breakfast was followed by either a leisurely trip to the Swakopmund, via the Esplanade/waterfront, sewage works, Swakop River and the 'Martin Luther'; or some opted for a scenic flight.

Those on the scenic flight later told tales of the dramatic dunes around Sossusvlei, the coastal wrecks and the isolated diamond mine camps – much of it seen at no more than a few hundred feet! - close enough to identify gulls on the beach as Kelp Gulls, as well as spotting Black-backed Jackals and Brown Fur Seals.

Those on the leisurely drive first enjoyed a whole host of wading birds from the Esplanade. As well as the usual suspects from the previous day, there were also many Chestnut-banded Plovers and Curlew Sandpipers. It was then off to the less-than-fragrant sewage works, where top spots were Black-winged Stilt, Blacksmith Lapwing, Cape Teal and Cape Shoveler. We then took the back road to Swakopmund and where it crosses the Swakop River, there are small pools. Here were a few Kittlitz's and Three-banded Plovers and several Ruff. From here we moved on to see the 'Martin Luther' steam locomotive, abandoned in the desert to stand, having sunk into the ground and lacking spare parts and water to run it.

After a very fine buffet lunch, there was then some leisure time for sightseeing (colonial German architecture), souvenir shopping (lots of African-themed curios), the museum (which as well as having the usual collection of stuffed and pinned creatures, held a miscellany of all sorts of local memorabilia, including a reconstructed colonial home interior, Emil Kiewittand's apothecary shop and an informative display on the Rössing Mine), or the aquarium (complete with rays you can 'pet' and a tunnel where sharks and a plethora of other fish swim above you).

We met up at the seafront restaurant at 4pm and, as luck would have it, that was also the time a pod of some six Bottlenose Dolphins decided to visit the small bay right in front of it! Some of the swimmers and canoeists didn't seem to have even noticed their presence... at least until some did little leaps out of the water! It was then time to visit the nearby local salt-pans where we got close to some really pink Lesser Flamingoes, African Black Oystercatcher and hundreds of terns (mostly Swift and Sandwich Terns). Here too was a pair of White-fronted Plover with three tiny balls of fluff as chicks. Nearby there were also Black-necked Grebes, some still sporting there superb breeding plumage. We then returned to 'Swakop' for dinner in a pub – which was lovely, if a touch too cosy, as our table for 15 was crammed into a corner.

Day 8

Monday 6th November

Walvis Bay to Damaraland Adventure Camp (via lichen fields, Cape Cross and wreck of the Seal)

We had an early morning walk along the Esplanade, but it was high tide, so only terns were to be seen. After breakfast we set off... and then promptly returned to pick up our picnic lunches! Then the long drive along the Skeleton Coast to Damaraland began in earnest. After a quick coffee and comfort break in Henties Bay, the first proper stop was for atmospheric photographs of the wreck of the Zeila. Stranded on 25 August 2008, it is now clothed in cormorants, cormorant nests and cormorant guano, and is one of the dozens of skeletal wrecks that give the Skeleton Coast its name.

Just before lunch we stopped at Cape Cross. As well as supporting two memorial crosses, there was a large colony of Brown Fur Seals, and Black-backed Jackals prowling for unguarded seal pups. This was a nasal as well as an audio and visual sensation! Nearby we stopped to take a look at an area of what are known as lichen fields, where the oranges, greys and greens of these fungi/algae amalgams encrust the rocks and stones, surviving primarily on moisture and nutrients in the frequent mists and fogs rather than rainfall. There were three main groups: crustose, foliose and fruticose, depending on their growth form.

The skull and cross-bones on the gate marked our entrance into the National Park. That and the Pied Crows in attendance made it feel somewhat ominous! Our picnic lunch was taken scenically on the coast in view of another wreck, the South West Seal, now largely reduced to sand blasted fragments of wood and rusted iron.

Post lunch, there were many kilometres of the seeming nothingness of the gravel plains. However, there was clearly some life as we saw Greater Kestrels. Turning inland, we headed up onto the plateau. In this rocky desert, what is claimed to be one of the world's longest living plant (2,000+ years), the Welwitschia makes its home. We wandered amongst several individuals with their short, thick, woody trunks and strap-like leaves that continuously grow from the base. Also present were Welwitschia bugs that seem to be the main pollinators of this ancient species.

At sunset a scattering of Gemsbok and our first Giraffe seemed to welcome us as we approached Damaraland Adventure Camp, nestled amongst massive sandstone boulders. We had this tiny camp to ourselves and after showering and changing, we enjoyed a fine dinner followed by some stargazing. With no light pollution we could easily pick out the Milky Way and the constellations of Sagittarius and Capricorn.

Day 9

Tuesday 7th November

Around Damaraland Adventure Camp & the Huab River

Sunrise was stunning and, leaving behind the Bokmakierie, Mountain Wheatear and endemic Benguela Long-billed Lark in camp, we were out in search of the desert-adapted Elephant. They generally hang out in the Huab riverbed and the more lush vegetation here attracts a wide variety of birds. We enjoyed fine views of Red-billed Spurfowl, Ruppell's Parrot and some splendid Rosy-faced Lovebirds. We soon picked up on signs of Elephant and, following their prints and plops, we soon came across one of the old bulls daintily picking out tasty pods from the Ana/Winterthorn trees. We watched him for a good long while before heading further along the riverbed, where we stopped under some large old trees for tea/coffee and biscuits, watched by Chacma Baboon and White-faced Mousebird.

Refreshed, we went in search of more Elephants and were rewarded with a breeding herd of about seven individuals, including a tiny little youngster maybe less than a month old. When we first came across him, he was fast asleep at his mother's feet. However, she was hungry and soon kicked him awake as she set off to forage. Steenbok were also very obliging, posing for photographs only a few metres from us, but you had to be a good deal quicker to get a photograph of the Slender Mongoose that flashed past. Not to be outdone, the birds put on a fine show with Crimson-breasted Shrike and Olive Bee-eater putting in a flashy appearance, as well as a Yellow-billed Hornbill (affectionately known as "banana bill") eating some red, plump and luscious-looking mustard bush fruits. We tried them later and they were very mustardy!

A lovely lunch was enjoyed back at the camp, this time watched by an unfeasibly coloured Namib Rock Agama. This was followed by a restful siesta during the main heat of the day. At 4.30pm hot drinks, biscuits and fudge were on offer. By 5pm it was just about cool enough for a stroll in the incredibly scenic Damaraland landscape. It is nigh on impossible to put into words the variety and beauty of what we saw as the sun inclined towards the eastern horizon. The angled light brought the varied geology and topology, carved by wind and sand, to life. The greys, browns and oranges in a myriad of shades and shapes were punctuated with the whites, green-greys and occasional vivid greens of the desert plants (including Damara milk-bush, Myrrh tree and Bushman's candle) that eke a living on the parched soils. We climbed a small rocky outcrop to drink in the view. Other than us, there was not a sign of other human life to be seen in the seemingly endless landscape. The rocks nearby were oddly rounded, but none of us were enough of a geologist to suggest a likely reason, so we made up our own – clearly they were fossil dinosaur eggs and droppings!

As we strolled back, dung and prints showed that Brown Hyena, Gemsbok and Ostrich had all passed near our camp. Dinner was preceded by a spoken menu in the local Damara-Nama click language.

Day 10

Wednesday 8th November

Damaraland Adventure Camp to Etosha Safarihoek Lodge, via Twyfelfontein

We had breakfast with the sunrise before packing up and heading for Twyfelfontein. The shortest route was via the river bed and so we took in some Bare-cheeked Babblers, Groundscraper Thrush and Double-banded Coursers on the way. Twyfelfontein (Afrikaans for uncertain spring) has been inhabited for 6,000 years, first by hunter-gatherers and later by Khoikhoi herders. Both ethnic groups used it as a place of worship and a site to conduct shamanist rituals. In the process of these rituals, at least 2,500 items of rock carvings (petroglyphs) have been created, as well as a few rock paintings. This is one of the largest concentrations of rock petroglyphs in Africa, and we took a short walk to view some of the most famous and accessible engravings on the rocks, depicting various local creatures and waterholes, as well as some more obscure carvings like the “Lion Man”. In addition to the culture, here too there were mammals in the form of a Dassie Rat, and birds with excellent, if a touch distant, views of Verreaux’s Eagle.

Lunch was at “Oppi-Koppi” in Kamanjab. There was some decent wildlife there such as Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Southern Masked Weaver, Rosy-faced Lovebird and those blue and red Namib Rock Agama again. This was just as well since we had a long wait and a farcical system of numbered makalani nuts for our orders, which became utterly confusing as each number seemed linked to certain waitresses and only they could deal with that number!

Eventually it was time to hit the road again and en route to the Etosha Safarihoek Lodge, there was much to see, including Black-chested Snake Eagle, Violet-eared Waxbill, Kori Bustard, Red-crested and Northern Black Korhaans, and a dinky perched Pigmy Falcon. The lodge itself was gorgeous, but with an annoying lack of running water due to a dodgy water pump.

Day 11

Thursday 9th November

Etosha Safarihoek

Today the weather was thunderous before being hot and sunny. The silver lining to the water shortage was that an additional game drive was negotiated. Hence, after a buffet breakfast with Red-billed Quelea, Short-toed Rock Thrush and White-tailed Shrike spotted from the veranda, it was off into the wilds in the lodge vehicles.

There were mammals in profusion, with some of them new for the trip like Eland, Red Hartebeest, Common Waterbuck, South African Ground Squirrel and Scrub Hare. However, the top new spot was surely the two Black Rhinoceros that we found and managed to approach to within some 30 metres, with the dramatic thunderous dark skies making a fantastic back drop for photographs. In comparison, the lovely Kalahari Scrub Robin and Capped Wheatear that were also new for the trip rather paled into insignificance!

Around 10am we arrived at a large and rather luxurious two story hide overlooking a water hole. It came complete with comfy seats, power points, flush toilets and, perhaps most importantly, hot drinks and biscuits (ok – these had been sorted by our local guides... but still). We supped and scoffed as we watched processions of Red-billed Quelea murmurations swoop down to the water’s edge, bolt a quick sip of stagnant water and then swoop off again – it was quite mesmeric. Other bird species were also coming down to drink but in smaller numbers and in a less dramatic fashion. These included Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Great Sparrow, some vivid

Violet-eared Waxbills, Lark-like Bunting, Chestnut and Grey-backed Sparrow-Larks, and Shaft-tailed Whydah (sadly not in breeding plumage). We learned why all the small birds were so skittish when drinking when a Lanner Falcon shot past in search of a small bird snack – though this time it went hungry.

We were on the upper floor, but a shriek from the ground floor alerted us to the presence of something shriek-worthy... in fact it turned out to be three things that might bring forth such a sound of concern in many people. One was a Vinegar Beetle, a fairly fearsome-looking three-centimetre ground beetle scuttling around on its long gangly legs. One was a Scorpion with its menacing hooked tail, terminating in a dangerous sting. However, the real nightmare was surely the saucer-sized monster of a Sun Spider (Solifuge) that runs randomly around, fangs first, at an alarming speed (giving it the nickname of the Kalahari Ferrari).

We retired for lunch and a siesta back at the lodge, but were down at the hide again in the late afternoon. It was pretty much the same bird species coming down to drink, but the sheer melee of them was so entertaining, and, into the bargain, some colourful Golden-breasted Bunting and Yellow Canary put in an appearance. It was also good to see Springbok, Gemsbok and Waterbuck slaking their thirst.

After an early dinner it was time for a night drive. By the light of powerful spotlights we spotted a tree full of Helmeted Guineafowl right next to the lodge at the start of the drive, and a tree full of Red-billed Quelea marked the end of the drive. In between, it was good to see Rufous-cheeked Nightjar (identified from photographs), Spotted Thick-knees, a Solifuge (in its natural environment, rather than trapped in a hide) and South African Spring Hare, which was perhaps everyone's favourite. This large rodent looks like an unlikely paring between a wallaby and a goofy guinea pig with big ears, and hops around like it's on a pogo stick.

Day 12

Friday 10th November

Etosha Safarihoek Lodge to Halali Rest Camp, via Okaukuejo

After breakfast, we packed the vehicles and set off for the day. We headed in the direction of Anderson's Gate to the Etosha National Park. It was not too far and we were kept entertained by the likes of Kori Bustard and Crowned Lapwing.

At the gate we made a short stop at a school to hand over a box of pens, and then it was into the park itself and immediately into large numbers of Zebras, Wildebeest and a host of lovely birds like Black-winged Kite, Bateleur, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Cardinal Woodpecker and Lesser Grey Shrike.

We arrived at the Okaukuejo Rest Camp late in the morning. After a quick shop and toilet break, we climbed the tower to get a view over the surroundings. It was another stunning Namibian vista – wilderness dotted with animals and the great white expanse of the Etosha Pan itself. The plan was to have a quick birding walk to the waterhole some 500 metres away. It was a good plan but not a quick walk as it took an hour! There was so much to see! Firstly, we spent a fair deal of time trying to hunt down a Crimson-breasted Shrike for a photograph but it just would not keep still! Then it was photograph (or just watch) time for the pair of African Hoopoe that were feeding on the manicured lawns; they were much more obliging but equally time consuming. Competing with the Hoopoes for attention was an African Cuckoo that called and called but proved, at least at first, impossible to spot. Eventually though, we did track it down and it posed beautifully for us, at least for a short while. Throw in Southern White-crowned Shrike, Acacia Pied Barbet, Brubru, Rock Martin and cute tame Ground Squirrels into

the mix and you can understand why it took so long to get to the waterhole. Once there, we enjoyed our picnic lunches watching Gemsbok quench their thirst and Sociable Weavers feast on our crumbs.

We had a quick coffee back at the restaurant by the tower and then set off for the afternoon's entertainment. This largely comprised visiting a number of waterholes and seeing what we could see. What we saw was a plethora of waterbirds including African Jacana, Red-billed Teal, Red-knobbed Coot, Little Grebe, Black-headed Heron, Common Greenshank and Kittlitz's Plover. We also saw some rather lovely land birds such as Pigmy Falcon, Burchell's Courser, Green-winged Pytilia and three Red-necked Falcons sitting on the same fallen branch right next to the vehicles. A pair of Blue Cranes were an unexpected added treat. Mammals were mostly the ones we had already seen. We narrowly missed seeing Cheetah despite some frantic searching, but we did see some lovely Red Hartebeest close up, a dinky (Kirk's) Dik-dik and a whole family of Yellow Mongoose.

We arrived at Halali Rest Camp with ample time for a shower and to freshen up before a buffet dinner, followed by a stroll to the floodlit waterhole. Almost immediately upon our arrival a Spotted Hyena emerged from the shadows and took a long gulping drink before disappearing off again. For the next half an hour or so there was little to see other than regular fly pasts by (Western) Barn Owl, which also shrieked its eerie call, and nightjar, but who knows which species? Then, virtually silently, a dark squat shadow passed amongst us as we sat and then shuffled off into nearby bushes. It was hard to be sure what it was in the dark of the seating area... so we followed it, phone torch in hand... and there it was, a Honey Badger, busily scratching itself against a protruding rock and happy for us to approach within just a metre or so! Grooming over, it shuffled off, tail in the air, down the hide access path with us following. When it reached the first dustbin, it quickly upturned this and rooted around in the mess it had made for anything vaguely edible. It found something and munched it for a while with us looking on, until it was done, and then it shuffled off and disappeared – what a treat!

Day 13

Saturday 11th November

Halali to Mokuti

After breakfast we travelled east through the park, popping into waterholes as we went. At these, mammals were quite scarce since the heavy thunderstorms of the previous day had left plenty of puddles to drink from as an alternative. Hence it was mostly the birds we were looking at. New ones included Swainson's Spurfowl, Red-breasted Swallow, Zitting Cisticola and Rufous-naped Lark. However, a special mention goes to a pair of Secretarybird that were wandering about stamping on food, and a fly over by a pair of White-headed Vultures - a rare sight these days.

The morning for mammals was quality, not quantity. There was a whole gang of Banded Mongoose that passed by, a pair of mating Lions, although they were partly hidden, and a Cheetah! - the fastest land mammal - a mother and two well-grown cubs. They were strolling along the edge of some scrub, looking out over the grasslands for likely-looking prey. We followed them for some 15 minutes but there was nothing really that they could chase down, so we left them resting and waiting under a shady bush.

Congo Rope Squirrel (introduced), Bontebok and Warthogs were our welcoming party at Mokuti camp, where we went straight in to a delicious lunch (not literally!) After a restful post-lunch break, we headed out again at 4pm and stopped by Klien Namutoni waterhole. This was awash with birds. Now that we were all well versed in waders from Walvis Bay (and elsewhere), we picked out Little Stint, Ruff, Marsh and Wood Sandpipers, and

Three-banded and Kittlitz's Plovers for ourselves! On the nearby savannah were Ostrich with obscenely fluffy chicks, and the smart Temminck's Courser. Some of us also saw a distant 'Cheetah', but there was a lot of discussion as to if this was actually a log, a pile of elephant dung, a deceased herbivore, or a rock.... we never did find out!

Day 14

Sunday 12th November

Around Namutoni (Fischer's Pan)

It is undoubtedly a myth that bats regularly get tangled in human hair. Yet, at breakfast, a White-bellied House Bat swooped down and bounced off one of our heads! It managed not to get tangled in hair, but it was close!

Trundling down the track to the park gate in the vehicles we spotted Crested Francolin, Emerald-spotted Wood Dove and Common Duiker, all of which were new for the trip. Once in the park, a resplendent male (Greater) Kudu with a full three spirals in its horns was just asking to be photographed.

As we slowly drove around Fischer's Pan, we saw our first and only 'kill' of the trip. A Pale Chanting Goshawk dropped off its tree perch and onto an unfortunate rodent before promptly flying away with it, bare tail dangling. At Twee Palm waterhole there were a couple of seriously well-hidden Lions but nothing to entice them out. What was probably a Cheetah was glimpsed at distance by a couple of the group, but we couldn't re-find it, so we carried on with the circumnavigation of the pan.

We stopped to spot things on a very regular basis. Such things were mostly birds like Brown Snake Eagle, Kalahari Scrub Robin, Jacobin Cuckoo, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, the intricately-patterned Burchell's Sandgrouse and a mean-looking Lappet-faced Vulture. However, they also included fresh Aardvark holes, towering termite mounds and the delicate pale pink flowers of the Trumpet Thorn. At one point the endemic and reasonably colourful Etosha Agama climbed up to sit next to an Ant-eating Chat. Giraffe, Zebra and a group of Ostrich parading across the seemingly endless horizon provided us with a classic African scene.

After lunch back at Mokuti, some rested whilst others visited the reptile park there. In the heat of the day, many of the snakes were just coiled up under rocks and logs, but it was intriguing to learn from the information panels how quickly and in what manner you would die should you ever be bitten.

On the late afternoon drive, there was a Grey-backed Cameroptera at the park gate. Nearby, a fierce-looking Martial Eagle was our 200th trip bird (hurray!). At Klein Namutoni waterhole, a massive bull Elephant standing knee-deep in the water backed by splay-legged Giraffe drinking was a fitting finale to our time in the Etosha National Park.

Now it was getting dark and so sadly time to make our way back to camp. On the way there was still enough light to pick out another fearsome Martial Eagle and better views of the shy Common Duiker than we had obtained the previous day.

Day 15

Monday 13th November

Mokuti to Waterberg Rest Camp (via Lake Otjikoto)

An early morning bird walk began with yet another stunning Crimson-breasted Shrike. The well watered gardens of the camp meant the bird life was prolific and, amongst others, it was a treat to see Grey Go-away Birds, Yellow-bellied Bulbul and Marico Sunbird. Star bird though was probably the Pearl-spotted Owl that put in an appearance just before we returned to the building for breakfast.

Leaving Mokuti (and spotting a glorious Blue Waxbill as we left), we headed south and around mid-morning we stopped at Lake Otjikoto. This is the smaller of only two permanent natural lakes in Namibia. It is a doline or sinkhole lake that was created by a collapsing karst cave. The permanent water is a magnet for thirsty creatures and the fish population present feeds Little Grebes and Pied Kingfishers, both of which we saw, along with Spotted Flycatcher, Shaft-tailed Whydah (some mostly in breeding plumage) and a glimpsed African Paradise Flycatcher. There was also some history here in the form of a derelict steam engine and pumps. These have a plaque that suggests they were built or imported by “Fenti” in 1905. They were probably used to pump water from Lake Otjikoto to the town of Tsumeb. The Python Vine (or Tree) present is also worthy of a quick mention – squatting on its tuberous swollen base, its branches entwined an adjacent tree and have been known to “strangle” them until they die – hence the name.

In Otjiwarongo we went to the Casa Forno for lunch. Renowned from previous years for its huge pizzas, they had perhaps realised how much food waste they were generating and were offering more modest portions. Even so, there was still plenty that ended up being donated to the chap guarding our vehicles outside the venue.

After lunch, the drive down to our final camp (Waterberg) was punctuated with roadside Warthogs, Baboons, a pair of Tawny Eagles, Lesser Striped Swallow and Jacobin Cuckoo. We arrived in the late afternoon to find we had been housed randomly in cabins spread all over the camp.

There was time for a shower and to freshen up before a walk around the camp grounds. The Dik-dik here are used to people and happy to be approached to within a metre or two, allowing us some excellent views. We strolled to a viewpoint and looked out over miles and miles of trees and bushes... and then a movement caught our eye... two small orange, black and white birds flitting to and fro collecting nest material – Rockrunners! This near-endemic species is usually shy and retiring and sneaks around inaccessible bouldery slopes, yet here it was in plain sight... albeit that they never kept still!

At the restaurant, we ordered our last Rock or Malawi Shandys (soda water, lemonade and Angostura bitters for the former, the soda water is swapped for ginger ale in the latter) that had become the staple refreshing drinks on the trip, and had some food. We then retired to the bar to communally tick off the last checklist for the trip and give many and heartfelt thanks to our two local guides, Gerhard and Jeremiah.

Day 16

Tuesday 14th November

Waterberg to Johannesburg (via Otjiwa and Windhoek)

A bird walk to breakfast was rather quiet. However, we did spot a couple of stunning Verreaux's Eagles against the sheer sandstone cliffs that towered over the camp, glowing a warming brick-red in the soft morning light.

There were also Dik-diks dashing about, heedless of our presence and for rather unfathomable reasons: fighting, attracting lady Did-diks or just joyous with life – who could be sure?

The trainee chef made a complete hash of the omelettes, but otherwise breakfast was an unremarkable affair. Some chose to walk down to the reception and were rewarded with African Hoopoe. Heading off, we stopped soon after to marvel at (and photograph) a three-metre tall, deep brown-red termite mound. This remarkable structure was constructed out of a mixture of soil, termite saliva and dung. Although the mound appears solid, the structure is incredibly porous. Its walls are filled with tiny holes that allow outside air to enter and permeate. There is nearly as much of it below ground as above.

Since we were in no particular hurry, we took the opportunity of popping into Otjiva, a safari lodge and grounds just off the road to Windhoek. They have a large dam (reservoir) that they kindly allowed us to drive around. This proved a great place to add some final bird species to our list including Squacco Heron, African Darter, Whiskered Tern, White-faced Whistling Duck and even an African Fish Eagle. We also saw some mammal 'old friends' like Impala and Common Waterbuck. There was even time for a quick coffee and toilet stop in Okahandja and then later, lunch at the Trans Namib Hotel, complete with a visit by a Striped-bellied Sand Snake!

Arriving at the airport, we bade our fond farewells to our two excellent local guides and boarded our flight to Johannesburg, where coffee and snacks were enjoyed before boarding our overnight flight home – except for Rob that is, he was off on a busman's holiday to Kenya.

Day 17

Wednesday 15th November

London Heathrow

We arrived at London Heathrow Airport on time, bade each other fond farewells and made our ways home, full of memories of over 200 bird and 40 (native) mammal species seen on our 3,200 (or so) kilometre tour of the lovely place that is Namibia.

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Species Lists

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November															
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
1	Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>		4		✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
2	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	12	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Crested Francolin	<i>Peliperdix sephaena</i>												1	2	✓		
4	Red-billed Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis adspersus</i>	H	16						✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>		2										10				
6	White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>															30	
7	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>		1								✓	✓	✓			✓	
8	South African Shelduck	<i>Tadorna cana</i>		6														
9	Cape Teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>						14						2		1		
10	Cape Shoveler	<i>Spatula smithii</i>						1						1	1			
11	Red-billed Teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>									6		✓	✓	✓		✓	
12	African Penguin	<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>					3											
13	White-chinned Petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>					2											
14	Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>					6											
15	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		1									✓	✓	✓	✓		
16	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>						4										
17	Greater Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>				40	✓	✓	✓									
18	Lesser Flamingo	<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>				100		✓										
19	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>		1													2	
20	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>															2	
21	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>											6			4		
22	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		1			✓	✓	✓								✓	
23	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>										1	2					
24	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>											1					
25	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>					11	1										
26	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>		8			✓	✓										
27	Cape Gannet	<i>Morus capensis</i>					5	✓	✓									
28	White-breasted Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>						14	✓								✓	
29	Cape Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>					100s	✓	✓									

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
30	African Darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>															2
31	Secretarybird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>												2	1		
32	Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>		2									✓	✓		✓	
33	African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>															1
34	White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>			4	✓							✓	✓	✓		
35	White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>												2			
36	Black-chested Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>		1		✓				✓			✓				
37	Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>											1		✓		
38	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>											1	✓	✓		
39	Pale Chanting Goshawk	<i>Melierax canorus</i>		5	✓	✓						✓		✓	✓	✓	
40	Steppe Buzzard	<i>Buteo vulpinus</i>										1	✓			✓	✓
41	Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>														2	
42	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>											2		1		
43	Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>										2					2
44	African Hawk Eagle	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>														2	✓
45	Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>														1	
46	Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>													2		
47	Pygmy Falcon	<i>Polihierax semitorquatus</i>										1		1			
48	Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>	1	✓	✓									✓			✓
49	Greater Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>			1	✓			✓			✓					
50	Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>											5				
51	Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>										1	✓		✓		
52	Kori Bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>										1		✓	✓	✓	✓
53	Ludwig's Bustard	<i>Neotis ludwigii</i>		2	5												
54	Ruppell's Korhaan	<i>Eupodotis rueppellii</i>			4				✓			✓					
55	Red-crested Korhaan	<i>Eupodotis ruficrista</i>										1			1		
56	Northern Black Korhaan	<i>Eupodotis afroides</i>										2	✓	✓	✓	✓	
57	Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>												4	2		✓
58	Blue Crane	<i>Grus paradisea</i>												4	3	✓	
59	Spotted Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>										2					
60	African Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>					41	✓									
61	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>						14									

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
62	Pied Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>					31	✓	✓								
63	Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>		2				✓					✓	✓	✓		✓
64	Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>								2	✓	✓	✓		✓		
65	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>				6	✓	✓	✓								
66	Common Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				4	✓	✓					✓				
67	Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>						2					✓	✓	✓		✓
68	Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>						1					✓	✓	✓		✓
69	White-fronted Plover	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>					11	✓	✓								
70	Chestnut-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius pallidus</i>						40									
71	African Jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>											2				
72	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>				4		✓									
73	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>				12	✓	✓									
74	Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>												1	✓		
75	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>					7	✓					✓		✓		✓
76	Common Sandpiper	<i>Tringa hypoleucos</i>					2										
77	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>						2					✓	✓	✓		✓
78	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>				2	✓	✓									
79	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>				10	✓	✓	✓								
80	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>					40	✓						✓			✓
81	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>				2		✓									
82	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>						3					✓	✓	✓		✓
83	Temminck's Courser	<i>Cursorius temminckii</i>				4								1			
84	Burchell's Courser	<i>Cursorius rufus</i>											4				
85	Double-banded Courser	<i>Rhinoptilus africanus</i>									2		✓		✓		
86	Hartlaub's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus hartlaubii</i>				12	✓	✓	✓								
87	Kelp Gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>				1	✓	✓	✓								
88	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>					1	11									
89	Swift Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>						30	✓								
90	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>					12	✓	✓								
91	Damara Tern	<i>Sternula balaenarum</i>					1										
92	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>					1	✓	✓								
93	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>															4

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November															
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
94	Namaqua Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles namaqua</i>			12	✓				✓		✓	✓					
95	Double-banded Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>										✓						
96	Burchell's Sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles burchelli</i>												4				
97	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>						✓										
98	Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>		2	✓	✓		✓										
99	Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>		2	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
100	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>			4							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
101	Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>												1	✓			
102	Namaqua Dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>		3							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
103	Rosy-faced Lovebird	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>								3	✓							
104	Ruppell's Parrot	<i>Poicephalus rueppellii</i>								3						1		
105	Grey Go-away-Bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>	4	✓						✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
106	Jacobin Cuckoo	<i>Clamator jacobinus</i>												2	✓	✓		
107	African Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>											✓					
108	Western Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>			✓								✓					
109	African Scops Owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>									H							
110	Pearl-spotted Owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>														1		
111	Rufous-cheeked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus rufigena</i>										1						
112	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	19	✓				✓						✓	✓	✓		
113	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>								10			✓		✓	✓		
114	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	14	✓						✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
115	Bradfield's Swift	<i>Apus bradfieldi</i>											2					
116	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	10	✓													✓	
117	White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>															2	
118	White-backed Mousebird	<i>Colius colius</i>		2						✓	✓							
119	Purple Roller	<i>Coracias naevius</i>		2						✓	✓			✓			✓	
120	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>														1		
121	Swallow-tailed Bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>		2										✓	✓	✓		
122	Olive Bee-eater	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>								1								
123	African Hoopoe	<i>Upupa africana</i>									1		✓	✓			✓	
124	Common Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>								1	✓			✓				
125	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>		3						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
126	Monteiro's Hornbill	<i>Tockus monteiri</i>		10							✓						
127	Southern Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>		2										✓	✓	✓	
128	Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>		2							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
129	Acacia Pied Barbet	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>		1								✓		✓			
130	Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>											1	1			
131	Bearded Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos namaquus</i>													1		
132	Pririt Batis	<i>Batis pririt</i>	1	✓							✓						
133	White-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanioturdus torquatus</i>										3	3				
134	White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>													2		
135	Bokmakierie	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>			1						✓	✓					
136	Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>															
137	Crimson-breasted Shrike	<i>Laniarius atrococcineus</i>		2							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
138	Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>									H			3			H
139	Southern White-crowned Shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitimens</i>												3			
140	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>												1		✓	
141	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>												4	✓	✓	✓
142	Common Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>				1						✓		✓			
143	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>		4							✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
144	African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>													2	✓	✓
145	Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>			4	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓		
146	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>		16	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
147	Carp's Tit	<i>Parus carpi</i>	4														
148	Ashy Tit	<i>Parus cinerascens</i>		1													
149	Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Mirafr africana</i>													1		
150	Sabota Lark	<i>Mirafr sabota</i>											1	✓	✓	✓	
151	Dune Lark	<i>Calendulauda erythrochlamys</i>			5												
152	Benguela Long-billed Lark	<i>Certhilauda benguelensis</i>									3	1					
153	Red-capped Lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>														4	
154	Stark's Lark	<i>Spizocorys starki</i>								?			1				
155	Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>											3			✓	
156	Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix verticalis</i>										12	✓				
157	Yellow-bellied Greenbul	<i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i>															2

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
158	African Red-eyed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>		6	✓					✓		✓	✓			✓	
159	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		1				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
160	Rock Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>	6	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
161	Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>														6	
162	Red-breasted Swallow	<i>Cecropis semirufa</i>												2	✓	✓	
163	Rockrunner	<i>Achaetops pycnopygius</i>														2	
164	Long-billed Crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>	1	✓													
165	Rattling Cisticola	<i>Cisticola chiniana</i>		4								✓					
166	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>												2	✓		
167	Black-chested Prinia	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>		2								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
168	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>													1		
169	Yellow-bellied Eremomela	<i>Eremomela icteropygialis</i>			1												
170	Southern Pied Babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>									6						
171	Bare-cheeked Babbler	<i>Turdoides gymnogenys</i>									3						
172	Chestnut-vented Warbler (Titbabbler)	<i>Sylvia subcaerulea</i>		2		✓											
173	Orange River White-Eye	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>						1									
174	Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>	11								✓			✓			
175	Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	5	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
176	Pale-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus nabouroup</i>		6	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓						
177	Groundscraper Thrush	<i>Psophocichla litsitsirupa</i>									1	✓	✓			✓	✓
178	Kalahari Scrub Robin	<i>Erythropygia paena</i>										1			✓	✓	
179	Capped Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>										1	✓				
180	Mountain Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>		2	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓							
181	Familiar Chat	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>	4							✓		✓	✓				
182	Ant-eating Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>				3									✓		
183	Short-toed Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola brevipes</i>	1	✓								✓	✓				
184	Chat Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis infuscatus</i>									✓						
185	Marico Flycatcher	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>		2											✓		✓
186	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>													1	✓	
187	Scarlet-chested Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra senegalensis</i>		4													
188	Marico Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>														2	
189	Dusky Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris fuscus</i>	1		✓	✓				✓			✓				

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November															
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
190	White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>		16					✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		
191	Sociable Weaver	<i>Philetairus socius</i>		100s	✓	✓							✓					
192	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										
193	Great Sparrow	<i>Passer motitensis</i>										40						
194	Cape Sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>		1	✓	✓		✓		✓								
195	Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>									40	✓				✓		
196	Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>		10														
197	Scaly-feathered Weaver	<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>									3	✓	✓		✓			
198	Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>														2		
199	Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>	14	✓							✓		✓			✓	✓	
200	Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>		1														
201	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>		100s				✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		
202	Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>				3							✓					
203	Green-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>										2	✓			✓		
204	Red-headed Finch	<i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>		12								✓						
205	Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>									1				✓	✓		
206	Violet-eared Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus granatinus</i>		1							✓	✓	✓			✓		
207	Black-faced Waxbill	<i>Estrilda erythronotos</i>		4								✓						
208	Shaft-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua regia</i>										41			✓	✓		
209	Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>	3	✓			✓	✓	✓								✓	
210	African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>										1	✓	✓	✓			
211	Yellow Canary	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>										1			✓			
212	White-throated Canary	<i>Crithagra albogularis</i>									3	✓						
213	Lark-like Bunting	<i>Emberiza impetuani</i>									4	✓						
214	Cinnamon-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>										2						
215	Cape Bunting	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>	1							✓								
216	Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>										4				✓		
Mammals																		
1	White-bellied House Bat	<i>Scotoecus albigula</i>													3	✓		
2	Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>				4												
3	African Bush Elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>								8					3			
4	Chacma Baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>	41	✓		✓				✓	✓					✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
5	Scrub Hare	<i>Lepus saxatilis</i>										1		1			
6	Cheetah	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>												3			
7	Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>												2	1		
8	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>		1													
9	Yellow Mongoose	<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>		2									8				
10	Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>								1				1			1
11	Banded Mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>												40	✓	✓	✓
12	(Meerkat)	<i>Suricata suricatta</i>				✓											
13	Spotted Hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>											1				
14	Black-backed Jackal	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>			2	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Brown Fur Seal	<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>					100s		1000s								
16	Honey Badger	<i>Mellivora capensis</i>												1			
17	Plains Zebra	<i>Equus burchelli</i>										14	✓	✓	✓		
18	Hartmann's Mountain Zebra	<i>Equus zebra hartmannae</i>				15											
19	Black Rhinoceros	<i>Diceros bicornis</i>									2	2					
20	Common Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	2	✓								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Common Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>													1	✓	
22	Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>							11		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
23	Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>											2	✓	✓		✓
24	Red Hartebeest	<i>Alcelaphus caama</i>										2	✓	✓			✓
25	Blue Wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>			20	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
26	Springbok	<i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>		40	✓	✓			✓		✓				✓		✓
27	Kirk's Dikdik	<i>Madoqua kirkii</i>											1		✓	✓	✓
28	Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>		5										2			
29	Steenbok	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>								4	✓	✓			✓		
30	Common Eland	<i>Taurotragus oryx</i>										6					
31	Greater Kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>	1	✓						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
32	(Bontebok)	<i>Damaliscus pygargus</i>														6	✓
33	Gemsbok	<i>Oryx gazella</i>			42	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
34	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>						6									
35	South African Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus inauris</i>										1	✓				
36	Damara Ground Squirrel	<i>Xerus princeps</i>		20	✓												

	Common name	Scientific name	October/November														
			31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
37	Smith's Bush Squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>									1		✓				
38	Congo Rope Squirrel	<i>Funisciurus congicus</i>												4	✓	✓	
39	South African Spring Hare	<i>Pedetes capensis</i>										3					
40	Dassie Rat	<i>Petromus typicus</i>		2	✓						✓						
41	Three-striped Mouse	<i>Rhabdomys sp</i>											1				

Reptiles & Amphibians

Shovel-snouted Lizard, *Meroles anchietae*

Turner's Thick-tailed Gecko, *Pachydactylus turneri*

Namib Rock Agama, *Agama planiceps*

Leopard Tortoise, *Stigmochelys pardalis*

Common Barking Gecko, *Ptenopus garrulous*

Striped-bellied Sand Snake, *Psammophis subtaeniatus*

Common Namib Day Gecko, *Rhoptropus afer*

A Helmeted Terrapin, *Pelomedusa sp*

Ovambo Tree Skink, *Trachylepis binotata*

Reticulated Desert Lizard, *Meroles reticulatus*

Etosha Agama, *Agama etoshae*

Others fauna

A Desert Locust, *Schistocerca gregaria*?

A Knobbly Darkling Beetle, *Physadesmia sp*

Welwitschia Bug, *Probergrothius angolensis*

A Scorpion, *Opisthothamus sp*

A Dung Beetle, *Pachysoma sp*

Spider-hunting Wasp, family *Pompilidae*

A Striped Darkling Beetle, *Stenocara sp*

A Solifuge, *Solifugae*

A Giant Millipede, *Archispirostreptus sp?*

Namib Desert Dune Ant, *Camponotus detritus*

Lion's Mane Jellyfish, *Cyanea capillata*

A Vinegar Beetle, *Anthia sp?*

A Carpenter Bee, *Xylocopa sp*

Flora

Welwitschia, *Welwitschia mirabilis*

Quiver Tree, *Aloidendron dichotoma*


Damarland by Simon Shore



Blue Crane by Rachel Oakley