

Zambia's South Luangwa NP

Naturetrek Tour Report

9 - 18 November 2014



Porcupine by Mark Andrews



Spotted Hyena by Pete Heywood



Lion by Mark Andrews



Wild Dogs by Pete Heywood

Many thanks to Naturetrek client Mark Andrews for creating this trip report
Images Courtesy of Mark Andrews and Pete Heywood



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Tour participants: Sixteen Naturetrek clients, with local Naturalist guides

Introduction

So, how did a birder end up on a Naturetrek “bargain mammal tour” to Zambia? Like many birders, I also have a general interest in all wildlife, and having turned 50 last year I wanted to experience as much of the world as I could before age took its inevitable toll, or the wildlife disappeared through poaching and over-development; a safari was top of my to-do list. The Naturetrek trip was the best I could find price-wise, and at 10 days including travel fitted my availability better than a 14-day plus tour. Other appealing aspects included the low number of visitors to the country (the idea of joining a large circle of landrovers around each animal did not appeal), and the possibility of seeing Leopard.

Overview

Our base for the entire stay was Kafunta River Lodge, by the Luangwa River, on the outskirts of South Luangwa National Park. Accommodation was in wooden lodges, large and comfortable, with a netted bed in a combined lounge/bedroom, adjoining bathroom, and a veranda providing views across the floodplain towards the river (the lodges all had animal names – mine was Aardvark). Meals were taken in a roofed but largely open-plan dining area cum bar; immediately below this area was a large platform also used for dining, with a hide underneath the platform, all overlooking a lagoon which had been created by damming a tributary. The lagoon and surrounding area was illuminated by spotlights in the evening, so binoculars were part of the evening dress-code for many.

The daily itinerary involved a wake-up call at 5.15am, breakfast at 5:30 and a landrover game drive from 6am to around 10am, sometimes later. Brunch was served at 11.30, with free time until tea at 3.30, followed by the afternoon/night game drive at 4pm – the afternoon drive lasted until just before sunset, when a short break for a “sundowner” would be taken, followed by an hour or so night drive with spotlights, returning to the camp in time for a quick wash before dinner at 8pm. Post-meal was spent relaxing with a drink and looking over the lagoon; bed was usually around 10.30 (wildlife-dependent – see below!).

The game drives were ably led by Andrew and Martin, the camp’s resident naturalist guides; the landrovers were canopied but open-sided, with three rows of bench seats in each providing adequate viewing for all (the middle position was not ideal, but as not everyone went on every drive, it was OK overall). There was (just about) enough space for cameras to be spread out on the seats as well. The tracks were about as smooth to drive along as you’d expect; the soft sand in the river bed revealed different driving techniques from each guide, with the slower speed of one leading to a fairground-style 90-degree lurch from side to side!

With most of the group being largely indifferent to the smaller, duller birds at least, I did not feel inclined to shout out for the vehicle to stop every time I saw something I couldn’t identify; this was not a problem, as there was plenty to look at when we did stop, and I wasn’t after a long bird list for the sake of it. In any case, this *was* the mammals tour, and they were just as interesting to me. The guides were also much more focused on the mammals, but would always point out the birds that were of interest to all. A telescope would have been useful for identifying soaring raptors in particular, but would have pushed the hand luggage well over the weight limit. A checklist for birds and mammals has been prepared; no attempt has been made to estimate daily numbers of

each species, simply its occurrence each day. Furthermore, the list only reflects my own sightings, other than a few species I know I missed which have been listed separately and not allocated to any particular date.

Weather

Hot! The rains were late arriving this year, and we only saw a few short showers, plus one longer burst that necessitated the ponchos to be brought out from their box in the jeeps. As a result the shade temperatures reached the low 40's some days, and stayed around a sticky mid-20's at night; cloud cover in the afternoons often threatened but rarely delivered. The day of our departure coincided with the long-awaited change, with spectacular lightning displays from the light aircraft and a deluge at Lusaka leading to a personal umbrella escort for each passenger from terminal to plane.

Day 1

Sunday 9th November

In flight to Zambia

Day 2

Monday 10th November

The birding started before the aircraft even reached the terminal, with a small group of Southern Ground Hornbill seen alongside the runway. African Palm Swifts whizzed over the car park, and a few unidentified swallows flew by in the rapidly-fading light. Stepping off the plane felt like walking into an oven, and I had a feeling that my carefully-packed jumper and raincoat wouldn't see a great deal of use. On the drive to the camp, we were treated to our first Elephants and Hippos, both species also on view whilst I freshened-up in the shower! Scanning the floodlit area during dinner produced several Puku, Impala and Crocodile, with a few Buffalo appearing a little later, also a Large-spotted Genet slinking along a ditch. A couple of Yellow-billed Storks and a Grey Heron stood in the shallows, three Water Thick-knees were mostly heard but occasionally seen, and both Pennant-winged and Square-tailed Nightjar hawked over the lagoon, albeit rather briefly; bed by 10.30, with an early start tomorrow.

Day 3

Tuesday 11th November

The sound of a "cat" outside ensured I was wide awake and fully alert in an instant – unfortunately it was 4.50am and still dark outside! By 5am there was enough light to be able to scan the plains below the veranda of my lodge, and a soon-to-be-familiar list of birds and animals started to reveal themselves: White-crowned and Blacksmith Plover, Grey-crowned Crane, Squacco Heron, Wood Sandpiper, Saddle-billed Stork, Helmeted Guineafowl, Jacana, Sacred Ibis, African Pied Wagtail, African Spoonbill, Hadada Ibis, Lilac-breasted Roller and best of all, Carmine Bee-eater, were all seen before breakfast, with a couple of African Fish Eagle eyeing up the diners from their nearby perches, and larger creatures represented by Warthogs, Baboons, Elephants, Hippos and Crocodiles, as well as the ever-present Puku and Impala. The "cat" mystery was also soon resolved, when the camp's pet was seen on the neighbouring lodge's doorstep.

As we waited for the group to sort themselves out for our first game drive, an African Harrier-Hawk flew over the plain and landed on the far side of the lagoon, and a Greater Honeyguide was perched on the bush edge. Eventually leaving about 15 minutes late, a Bushbuck was found lurking deep in cover a few yards down the

track (subsequently being seen on just about every drive, in exactly the same spot), and soon-to-be-familiar bird species were seen for the first time – Tropical Boubou, Meves's Starling, Yellow-billed Kite, White-fronted Bee-eater, Black-winged Stilt, Black-headed Heron, Pied Kingfisher, Three-banded Plover and Wattled Starling all noted by the time we'd crossed the nearby river into the Park, and Little Bee-eater, Red-billed Hornbill, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Martial Eagle, Swainson's Francolin, Lilac-breasted Roller, Hooded Vulture and Bataleur seen soon thereafter. It didn't take long for Andrew to notice "something" a short way ahead; this turned out to be an adult female and two young female Lions, sheltering in the shade of a tree! What a superb start to our first drive! We spent a while with the Lions, watching them sleep and occasionally yawn and stretch, then carried on our way, soon meeting up with the other landrover for coffee. Returning to the Lions on our way back to camp, we discovered that we had narrowly missed seeing a (short) chase, witnessed by the others, and the Lions were now tucking in to a fresh Puku! It was incredible to be able to watch them dismember and eat the deer from a few metres away, and somewhat baffling to realise that they were totally unconcerned about our presence, apparently unable to differentiate between the vehicle and its occupants.

There was a useful period of free time between the drive and lunch, also between lunch and the afternoon drive, during which I took the opportunity to explore the camp on foot, including the bush area up to the road (maybe unwisely, as it transpired later in the week...). Several Giraffes and Elephants wandered across the plain to the lagoon for a drink, wash and brush-up, and birds seen around the lodges included a noisy group of White-crested Helmetshrikes, an African Paradise-Flycatcher, several Emerald-spotted Wood Doves, a Black-backed Puffback, Kurrichane Thrush, Broad-billed Roller and a rather distant but distinctive Whiskered Tern.

The drumroll announcing tea sounded promptly at 3.30, with the afternoon drive leaving on the dot of 4pm, kit now in bags and ready for action as we settled into the routine for the rest of the week. Two Bushbuck were together at this morning's site, and Kittlitz's Plover was a new species on the river bank. The three Lions were still on their kill, but surprisingly (for me at least) there were only a handful of Vultures in attendance, three Hooded and a couple of White-backed. Returning to the river a little further along we stopped at a viewpoint below which was a colony of Carmine Bee-eaters, and spent a while watching their comings and goings; several White-fronted Bee-eaters were amongst the group, a Lesser Honeyguide perched on a dead tree stump, and a couple of African Skimmer sped down the river without pausing. Driving steadily towards a likely spot for Leopards, we pulled over to watch a family group of Elephants wander past; a Southern Black Flycatcher hunted nearby, and Swainson's Spurfowl lurked deep in cover. Then word came in – Wild Dogs had been spotted but a fair distance away, did we want to try for them? No need to ask twice! Reaching speeds not seen before or subsequently, we caned it along the tracks (mercifully, the majority of the drive was along a fairly decent main track), not even slowing down for a small group of Kudu on a hillside; they would have to wait for another day. Journey's end was reached with enough daylight remaining to enable us to have a good look at four superb African Wild Dogs (one of which was sporting a radio-transmitter collar, but this did not detract from the experience at all), initially settled in grass/scrub, but soon wandering down into a dry river valley, making their way up the valley whilst we watched from in the valley itself at first, then following their progress from above by driving along the river bank. Our first sundowner was a celebration; day one, and I'd just seen my most-wanted mammal for the trip, as well as Lions earlier – what a day! Spotlighting on our way back to camp produced Southern Scrub Hare, Large-spotted Genet, a couple of Porcupine by the river and a Marsh Mongoose as we neared base, and a distant Hyena calling later in the evening rounded off our first full day.

Day 4

Wednesday 12th November

Still buzzing from yesterday, we set off with high hopes for the day, back across the river along a similar route to yesterday. Spur-winged Goose, several Lilian's Lovebirds and a Green-backed Heron were seen near or along the river, and the three Lions were patrolling the same general area as yesterday, with seven Giraffes nearby on high alert as a result. Continuing into the bush, a Senegal Coucal sat in an expanse of bare earth, and several Red-billed Buffalo Weavers were busy in and around their large basket-like nests. Both Brown and Western Banded Snake Eagles were seen nearby, also African Hoopoe, and a group of five Waterbucks made their way through a well-wooded area deep in cover. We eventually reached the area we were heading for yesterday afternoon, and before too long we were looking through scrub into a grassy clearing where a Leopard was resting! We all had reasonable views by moving around to look through gaps in the bushes, but were relieved when the Leopard started to move and wander into a slightly more open area, finally climbing into a tree and ending up quite well concealed again. This animal had a noticeable limp, and had apparently broken a leg recently, but was clearly now on the mend. Leaving the Leopard to rest, we headed back to camp, past a small group of Bushbuck, and spent a few minutes with a large party of Buffalo, maybe 50 or so, that soon charged into deep cover, disappearing remarkably easily for such large animals. A few interesting birds, notably Southern Ground Hornbill, both Yellow-billed and a single Black Kite, Black-backed Puffback, White-backed Vulture, Wire-tailed Swallow, Greater Blue-eared Starling and a Pied Crow were also seen on the return journey.

More "rest period" was devoted to looking for birds around the lodges, with Brown-hooded Kingfisher and Variable Sunbird before lunch, and a Hyena was heard whilst I was taking a shower! After lunch, a juvenile Steppe Eagle passed overhead, and time spent watching a well-placed sprinkler was well-rewarded by a succession of passerines visiting to drink and bathe, including Blue Waxbill, Red-billed Firefinch, Orange-winged Pytilia, Bronze Mannikin, Yellow-fronted Canary, Village Weaver, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow and Grey-headed Kingfisher. Other birds were around the same general area, with a Greater Honeyguide (a juvenile), a cracking male Amethyst Sunbird, White-browed Robin-Chat, Yellow-bellied Greenbul and Black-collared Barbet, also an African Harrier Hawk across the plain.

For a change, the afternoon drive started with a good bird sighting – a Buzzard-like mewing call was tracked down to a Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, seen well in a tree, flashing its distinctive pink eyelids. A little further on we came across the three Lions from earlier, loafing alongside the track and wandering between the landrovers at one point. We then checked in on this morning's Leopard, which was still present and correct, showing much better this evening as it wandered around and through the bush, and just like the Lions, passing within a few feet of the landrover. A few Waterbuck were seen nearby. After our sundowner we started the spotlighting, where a Spotted Hyena was the highlight – a Pennant-winged Nightjar near the river, and a Genet, also being seen. Later, a White-tailed Mongoose was seen during dinner.

Day 5

Thursday 13th November

Pre-drive birds by the lagoon included Intermediate Egret and African Spoonbill amongst the regulars. The drive itself was the first to be taken via the main Park entrance, which was a longer drive, made fairly quickly so not a great deal was seen en route. There was also the opportunity of a walking safari today which, as luck would have it, exactly half of us opted for. We collected an armed escort from a junction near to the entrance and entered

the Park over a bridge, where numerous Swifts (some debate over ID, but I believe all I saw were Little Swifts) hawked overhead and swooped below us.

The walk itself was fascinating; with Martin's knowledge and insight we were able to see all the small parts of the ecosystem we had previously driven past/over, and learn how everything interacted, to examine trails and droppings, and to hear about the "small five" – Elephant Shrew, Antlion (with a larva enticed from its conical sand trap with a small twig), Buffalo-Weaver, Rhinoceros Beetle and Leopard Tortoise. Large mammals understandably kept their distance, but a few new and interesting birds were seen, including large flocks of the destructive Red-billed Quelea, a Red-necked Falcon that briefly alighted in a nearby treetop, a close Bennett's Woodpecker, Common Scimitarbill, Green Wood Hoopoe, Red-backed Shrike, European Bee-eater, Laughing Dove, and fly-over White Pelican and Marabou Stork. I had to resist the temptation to hang back and search for birds at times; Martin and the armed guard headed our "convoy", we had strict instructions to keep close and in-line in case of danger, and I was all too aware that the last in line would be the ideal target for a Lion – I had no desire to end up on YouTube as a lesson in stupidity!

Back at camp, close inspection of the lagoon revealed the presence of a couple of Painted Snipe; these birds were probably around all week, occasionally showing well, but undoubtedly missed some days due to lack of effort. A Three-banded Plover was nearby, with Willow Warbler, Red-breasted and Wire-tailed Swallow, White-crested Helmetshrike, Amethyst Sunbird, African Hoopoe, Yellow Wagtail, Green-winged Pytilia and the usual suspects making the notebook.

The afternoon drive saw us returning to the main entrance, where closer scrutiny of the swifts by the bridge revealed a small number of White-rumped Swifts amongst the (presumed) Littles. Once in the Park proper, a brief view of a Leopard disappearing into cover led to a superb view almost immediately, as it crossed the road right in front of us – a magnificent beast with a long curly tail. The nearby Puku were not so thrilled, bouncing up and down in alarm. A useful tip was learned – if the game were on high alert and looking in a particular direction, follow their gaze to spot the Leopard. A short drive on led us to our first Zebra – a group of four – with three male Buffalo approaching close whilst we were watching, Giraffes in the same area, a few more Zebras with a youngster, and a brief fly-over Trumpeter Hornbill prior to our sundowner on a hillside overlooking the park.

Spotlighting met with success almost immediately, with a Spotted Hyena walking nonchalantly by at point-blank range, then minutes later we were watching a Leopard on a kill in a tree – stunning views, accompanied by the sound of bone-crunching as it devoured its meal. Dragging ourselves away, the spotlighting continued, with three Large-spotted Genet and a couple of Elephant Shrews seen and two different Verreaux's Eagle-Owls heard; as we approached camp, an African Civet was seen well, and a Sharpe's Grysbok sat motionless in the light until a flashgun went off! A superb evening, but not yet over. Post-meal, four Spotted Hyena wandered through the spotlight, but further scrutiny added nothing else and gradually everyone drifted off to bed, leaving just myself and Penny at the bar. Then the Elephants arrived! The novelty of a close Elephant behind the bar area soon wore off when we were told that one of the males was behaving erratically and we should keep to the back of the bar for our own safety. We watched as it wandered all over the dining area, pulling down large branches and even playing with the waste bins. Every time we thought it had left, it (or one of the other two) would appear and block our exit. Eventually, after about an hour, we were able to leave but only by being driven from the entrance back to our lodges, such was the risk. Despite the danger, I was delighted to see my one-and-only Pel's Fishing

Owl of the trip – it flew up to the tree over the dining area whilst we were stuck behind the bar. The inappropriateness of my delight did not go unnoticed!

Day 6

Friday 14th November

The lagoon held Pied Kingfisher, Painted Snipe, African Spoonbill and the regular brace of African Fish Eagles during our breakfast. Upon leaving the camp, a couple of Red-throated Twinspots perched up in front of us almost immediately, and a pride of five Lions, including two cubs, crossed the road in front of us a short way into the nearby mopane woodland, following a dry valley. A good selection of birds was seen during a more leisurely drive to the Park entrance this morning; a couple of Lesser Striped Swallows perched in a treetop, Cardinal Woodpecker, Brown-hooded Parrot, Barred Owlet and Southern Black Tit being the pick of the bunch. Close to the entrance we found a small group of Retz's Helmetshrikes, and a White-browed Coucal fed in a hollow alongside the road. Inside the Park proper, Zebra and Giraffe were noted, a rather impressive male Kudu and several Waterbuck, with birds including Marabou, Martial Eagle, Meyer's Parrot (tricky to see in the tree despite being brightly-coloured, and a relief having missed a few hitherto – logistically tricky as well, being in the top row on the wrong side, so having to balance half-hanging out and looking over the roof). Continuing to the river, a Wattled Plover (the only one of the trip) wandered along the edge of the high riverbank, and Spur-winged Goose, Three-banded Plover and Brown-throated Martin were the main bird interest here. Heading back to the entrance, a couple of Woodland Kingfisher added a splash of colour to a picturesque lake, and by the bridge itself were two Open-billed Storks in a treetop, and I was finally happy that a couple of swifts were indeed Horus Swift (interestingly, there were very few Little Swifts around today). Finally, a few Red-headed Weavers were seen on the return journey.

Back at camp, an African Golden Oriole and a Yellow-bellied Greenbul were in a large tree close to my lodge, and post-lunch entertainment was provided by a Meller's Mongoose, identified by its relatively slim and long-legged shape, making its way across the plain.

For the evening drive we returned to the original entry point of the nearby river crossing. A Souza's Shrike was a nice find on the opposite side of the river. Buffalo were soon spotted leaving the riverbank and heading towards the bush, and we spent considerable time watching a large group feeding and moving slowly past us – whereas most animals gave no indication that they were aware of our presence, the Buffalo always seemed to be "checking us out" even though we knew their eyesight was poor, so they couldn't be really... Dragging ourselves away, a Slender Mongoose sprinted close past and away, looking just like a giant Stoat, with similar proportions and a black tip to the tail. On to the night drive following a brief sundowner, and a much-wanted bird, Three-banded Courser, was soon found, with at least five seen in total, also a couple of Water Thick-knee in the same area. Also seen on the drive was a White-tailed Mongoose, and the inevitable Large-spotted Genet. Returning to the camp, we proved that it really "ain't over 'til it's over", with a Greater Galago (Bushbaby) in a tall tree on the edge of the camp, all big eyes and broad fluffy tail, then a Leopard was spotted a few yards from the end Lodge! The Leopard crept away through the undergrowth and presumably left across the plain. Even this wasn't the final act of the evening; a frantic knocking and "come, quick" from the nightwatchman as I was drying myself after a quick shower, and with just a towel wrapped around my waist I was watching a small party of Lions (a female and two or three youngsters) walk past the lodge and into the undergrowth where I'd been happily birding over the past few days! Later, a Marsh Mongoose was seen in the floodlights, and the miscreant

Elephants returned to wreak more havoc outside the lodge, pulling down large branches in their hunt for mangoes.

Day 7

Saturday 15th November

Being a light sleeper can be a blessing and a curse, but on balance I was pleased to awaken to the sound of a Square-tailed Nightjar singing just outside the lodge, and 4.30am isn't *that* early. The usual Fish Eagle chorus started soon thereafter; Southern Ground Hornbills were viewable from the breakfast platform, as was an Abdim's Stork, the first of the trip, rather distant but noticeably different to Black Stork. Heading off towards the river crossing on the morning drive, I was pleased to spot a Temminck's Courser on the open plains, not a species I was expecting at all – an African Hobby was all-too-brief as it sped away over the treetops, 100+ Lillian's Lovebirds bedecked a couple of riverside trees, and Senegal Coucal, Red-necked Spurfowl and Southern Masked Weaver were all seen before the river crossing. On the mammal front, a group of at least 15 Banded Mongoose entertained as they made their way through the scrubby bushes. Just inside the Park, a small group of Wattled Starling and single Lesser Grey Shrike and Collared Barbet were seen, also a female Kudu along the edge of the forest, and a Blue-headed Agama sat close to the jeep at one stop-off. Whilst watching the comings-and-goings at a waterhole (mostly Elephants, Warthogs, Puku and Impala, as well as various passerines) a Purple-crested Turaco was a bonus, drinking from a small puddle. Whilst circling the adjacent scrub in the jeep, a Leopard was spotted several times, but views were mostly brief and through cover. Returning to the open area back past the waterhole for our coffee break, a White-headed Vulture was flushed from carrion, accompanied by two White-backed Vultures, and a few Zebra grazed nearby. Incredibly, the tree selected to provide shade for our break had already been "bagged" – by a Spotted Hyena! We were able to approach very close, with the Hyena barely reacting to our presence, occasionally lifting its head and "grinning" with teeth that seemed a tad too large for its mouth, like it was trying on someone else's dentures.

Heading back to camp, a couple of Collared Palm Thrush (a species I'd missed a day or so ago) were on a dirt mound within the main compound, and Meyer's Parrots were in the trees above. Post-lunch birds seen during a hot and sweaty amble around the grounds included Yellow-bellied Greenbul, a dapper African Paradise Flycatcher, Swallow-tailed and European Bee-eaters (the latter in a large flock high overhead), several Lesser Masked Weaver (actually an obvious overlooked ID, present all week but previously ignored), a fly-over Wahlberg's Eagle and a head-scratcher which was eventually nailed as a Terrestrial Brownbul.

The afternoon drive got off to a good start for me – I'd managed to miss several Grey Go-away-Birds by being on the wrong jeep, so I asked if anyone saw one, to let me know. It took about five seconds! Four birds were eventually seen. Heading into the mopane woodland "on a mission", Mosque Swallow and Southern Black Tit were seen prior to finding one of our targets, a smart Arnott's Chat (but no sign of our other quarry, Racket-tailed Roller). Continuing on our journey to the Park, White-browed Coucal and Retz's Helmetshrike were seen along the approach road to the bridge, and inside the Park we tracked down an adult and a small juvenile Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, separated by 100 yards or so. A Woodland Kingfisher, a group of four Kudu, several Buffalo and a fleeting Slender Mongoose were seen en-route to our sundowner spot overlooking the river, from where we watched an African Skimmer "skimming" in the rapidly-fading light, and a Giant Kingfisher silhouetted on part-submerged logs.

The night drive involved a “loop” back to camp via the river crossing (having entered over the bridge). First one, then a small family group of Spotted Hyena appeared, with three youngsters including one very small individual. The mother was suckling the larger infants, who continually pushed their tiny sibling away; once they had finished, the mother proceeded to sit upright to avoid suckling the “runt”. A little further on, a Fiery-necked Nightjar sat motionless just off-track, single Marsh Mongoose and Four-toed Elephant Shrew were seen, as well as four Genets, and a couple of Porcupines scurried along the riverbank below a small cliff.

Post-dinner, a White-tailed Mongoose wandered across the floodlit plains, and the reward for those of us on a late-night vigil/extended drink came at about 11.20pm when a Honey Badger was found by Pete W; a much-wanted but not-really-expected mammal tick for me, it wandered along the “usual” approach route, the dry part of the river bed, up to the lagoon. Returning to the lodge I was greeted by a small bat flying around inside – I left it to its own devices, being too tired to attempt an ID.

Day 8

Sunday 16th November

Our last full day, and my first “lie-in” as I awoke with a start to full daylight! A quick breakfast and away, with Temminck’s Courser in the same spot as yesterday, but a little closer, and Wattled Starling in the same area, also a couple of separate groups of Banded Mongoose, Senegal Coucal and a single Abdim’s Stork by the river, then a flock of 50 or more, presumably having dropped in at dusk yesterday. Continuing to the main wooded area, a Crowned Hornbill was the first new bird of the day, with Giraffe and Zebra in small numbers and a few Red-billed Buffalo-Weavers, Meyer’s Parrots and a single Red-backed Shrike. We soon reached the waterhole area and searched the nearby scrub and trees, then bingo! A Leopard, snoozing on a tree branch, with its kill, a Puku, draped over another branch. We spent considerable time with this magnificent beast, the photographers filling several memory cards, as it rested, stretched and yawned just a few yards away. Eventually the Leopard took a short stroll along the branch and leapt to a higher resting point, so we left it in peace and carried on to our coffee break. A Black Coucal flew between treetops during our stop, and Southern Ground Hornbills wandered past.

A penultimate wander round the lodges added Icterine Warbler and Grey-backed Camaroptera to the trip list; White-browed Robin-Chat, Spotted Flycatcher, Yellow Wagtail, Mosque Swallow and European Bee-eater also made the notebook.

The afternoon drive accessed the Park via the river, where a handful of White-fronted Plover were spotted for the first time, amongst similar numbers of Kittlitz’s Plovers, feeding along the river’s edge, and a few European Swallows headed downstream past the Carmine Bee-eater cliff colony, with a Martial Eagle overhead. The same Leopard was still resting in the tree, with rather less of its kill remaining, and an Orange-bellied Bushshrike called unseen whilst the photographers had another bumper session with the big cat. A riverside sundowner stop provided a handy vantage point from which to see a small flock of Knob-billed (Comb) Duck, the only ones of the trip, and African Skimmer, Spur-winged Goose and African Spoonbill were noted, as were the ubiquitous Hippos and Crocs. Spotlighting on a somewhat shorter return than usual produced the inevitable Genet sighting, of an individual scampering into the bush, as well as two Spotted Hyena, a White-tailed Mongoose and a Four-toed Elephant Shrew, plus Square-tailed Nightjar over the plains approaching the river, and Porcupine once again below the cliff edge along the river bank.

Returning to the lodge for a pre-dinner shower, last night's bat was found clinging to the window netting by the veranda doors, and photos enabled the ID to be clinched as Schlieffen's Twilight Bat (thanks to a post on Birdforum – cheers Rafael) and for the beast to be shown proudly to my neighbours. After-dinner entertainment included both White-tailed and Marsh Mongoose seen in the floodlights, a female Lion and two cubs headed from the river through the far end of the lodges, and three Buffalo came down to the lagoon for a drink.

Day 9

Monday 17th November

Although this was our last day, the morning schedule was unchanged, so we set off at 6am as usual. A few Three-banded Plovers were by the river, and Wattled Starling and Senegal Coucal were noted on the plains near the crossing-point. We returned for another look at yesterday's Leopard, which was still present and correct but not so well-positioned for anyone apart from the front row of the jeep, so I had a look around for birds instead and found my only White-bellied Sunbird of the trip, which was a nice bonus. Several Red-backed Shrikes presumably reflected an overnight arrival (viewing from the second jeep would have been somewhat easier – four of the six canopy supports sheared off simultaneously early on in the drive, whilst we were still following the same route, and we all had to help to manhandle the roof off and leave it for collection later!). Other birds seen included Western Banded Snake Eagle, African Hoopoe seen well, Common Waxbill and Spotted Flycatcher, with “firsts for trip” being Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Collared Sunbird and Tawny Eagle. Several Zebras were seen, and a small group of Kudu. A Shikra circled over the camp several times on our return, the last new bird added today, and an African Harrier-Hawk patrolled the far edge of the plain. Finally, a “kill” on the nearby riverbank attracted well over 100 vultures, by far the largest gathering of the week, and included at least two Marabou Storks, as well as White-backed, White-headed and Hooded Vultures (and probably Lappet-faced as well, although not definitely “clinched”).

Packed and ready (but reluctant) to leave after a slightly-early tea had been taken at 2.30pm, we headed off to the airport mid-afternoon, stopping off at a textile factory en-route to look at local craftwork and to buy gifts and soft furnishings (or to sit in the jeep and reflect upon a superb holiday, in the case of yours truly). The return flights were on-time and largely uneventful, although we all had to shuffle to the front of the plane for the first leg so as to counterbalance a certain Simon King's 24+ crates of camera equipment, as it turned out!

Day 10

Tuesday 18th November

Return to UK.

Summary

Whilst the above report serves as a personal diary of various highlights from the trip, including several Leopard sightings, some at point-blank range, Wild Dogs, Lions and Honey Badger, Pel's Fishing and Verreaux's Eagle-Owls, Three-banded and Temminck's Coursers, and the checklist shows that we saw 33 species of mammal and 171 species of birds during our stay, it does little to convey the magnificence of a landscape full of wildlife, from dawn to dusk, and beyond. The near-constant presence of Puku, Impala, Hippos, Elephants, Crocodiles, Giraffes, Warthogs, monkeys and baboons, Carmine Bee-eaters, storks, plovers, vultures and so on meant there was always something to look at and enjoy. The trip was a truly awesome experience, with great company, and one I would honestly describe as excellent value for money – given the chance, I'd be back like a shot!

Species Lists

Mammals (✓=recorded but not counted)

	Common name	Scientific name	November							
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus aethiopicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Thornicroft's Giraffe	<i>Giraffe camelopardalis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Bushbuck	<i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Greater Kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Common Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	
7	Puku	<i>Kobus vardoni</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Cape Buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer caffer</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Burchell's Zebra	<i>Equus burchelli</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	African Elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	S. African Crested Porcupine	<i>Hystrix africae-australis</i>		✓				✓	✓	
13	Tree Squirrel	<i>Paraxerus sp.</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Southern Scrub Hare	<i>Lepus saxatilis</i>		✓			✓	✓		
15	African Wild (Hunting) Dog	<i>Lycaon pictus</i>		✓						
16	Honey Badger (Ratel)	<i>Mellivora capensis</i>						✓		
17	African Civet	<i>Viverra civetta</i>				✓				
18	Large-spotted Genet	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
19	Slender Mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>					✓	✓		
20	Banded Mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>						✓	✓	
21	White-tailed Mongoose	<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	
22	Bushy-tailed Mongoose	<i>Bdeogale crassicauda</i>								
23	Meller's Mongoose	<i>Rhynchogale melleri</i>					✓			
24	Marsh Mongoose	<i>Atilax Paludinosus</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	
25	Spotted Hyena	<i>Crocota crocuta</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	
26	Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	
27	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	Yellow Baboon	<i>Papio cynocephalus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	Vervet Monkey	<i>Cercopithecus aethiops</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30	Four-toed Elephant Shrew	<i>Petrodromus tetradactylus</i>				✓		✓	✓	
31	Sharpe's Grysbok	<i>Raphicerus sharpei</i>				✓				
32	Greater (Galago) Bushbaby	<i>Otolemur crassicaudatus</i>					✓			
33	Schlieffen's Twilight Bat	<i>Nycticeinops schlieffeni</i>						✓	✓	

Birds

1	Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Red-necked Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis afer</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓
3	Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓	
4	Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Knob-billed Duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>							✓	
6	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Yellow-billed Stork	<i>Mycteria ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	African Openbill	<i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>					✓			
9	Abdim's Stork	<i>Ciconia abdimii</i>						✓	✓	
10	Saddle-billed Stork	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Marabou Stork	<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>				✓	✓			✓
12	African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	November							
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
13	Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>				✓				
15	African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
16	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>			✓		✓			
17	Squacco Heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		✓	✓					
19	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>		✓		✓				
23	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		✓			✓	✓		
24	Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>				✓				
26	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>			✓					
27	Yellow-billed Kite	<i>Milvus aegyptius</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	African Fish Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus vocifer</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	Hooded Vulture	<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30	White-backed Vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	White-headed Vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>						✓		✓
32	Brown Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>		✓	✓	✓				
33	Western Banded Snake Eagle	<i>Circaetus cinerascens</i>			✓					✓
34	Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
35	African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>		✓	✓					✓
36	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>								✓
37	Tawny Eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>								✓
38	Steppe Eagle	<i>Aquila nipalensis</i>			✓					
39	Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>						✓		
40	Martial Eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
41	Red-necked Falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>				✓				
42	African Hobby	<i>Falco cuvierii</i>						✓		
43	Grey Crowned Crane	<i>Balearica regulorum</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	Water Thick-Knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
45	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
46	Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
47	White-crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus albiceps</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
48	African Wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus senegallus</i>					✓			
49	Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>		✓					✓	
50	Three-banded Plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>		✓		✓	✓			✓
51	White-fronted Plover	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>							✓	
52	Greater Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>				✓	✓		✓	
53	African Jacana	<i>Actophilomis africanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
54	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
55	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>		✓	✓				✓	✓
56	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
57	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
58	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>		✓	✓		✓			
59	Temminck's Courser	<i>Cursorius temminckii</i>						✓	✓	
60	Three-banded Courser	<i>Rhinoptilus cinctus</i>					✓			
61	African Skimmer	<i>Rynchops flavirostris</i>		✓				✓	✓	
62	Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>		✓						
63	Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Common name	Scientific name	November							
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
64	Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>				✓	✓			
65	Emerald-spotted Wood Dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	Lilian's Lovebird	<i>Agapornis lilianae</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
67	Brown-necked Parrot	<i>Poicephalus fuscicollis</i>					✓			
68	Meyer's Parrot	<i>Poicephalus meyeri</i>					✓	✓	✓	
69	Purple-crested Turaco	<i>Tauraco porphyreolophus</i>						✓		
70	Grey Go-away-Bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>						✓		
71	Senegal Coucal	<i>Centropus senegalensis</i>			✓			✓	✓	✓
72	White-browed Coucal	<i>Centropus superciliosus</i>					✓	✓		
73	Black Coucal	<i>Centropus grillii</i>							✓	
74	Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>			✓	✓		✓		
75	Pel's Fishing Owl	<i>Scotopelia peli</i>				✓				
76	African Barred Owlet	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>					✓			
77	Fiery-necked Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>						✓		
78	Square-tailed Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus fossii</i>	✓					✓	✓	
79	Pennant-winged Nightjar	<i>Macrodipteryx vexillarius</i>	✓		✓					
80	African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
81	Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>				✓	✓			
82	Horus Swift	<i>Apus horus</i>					✓			
83	White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>				✓	✓			
84	Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
85	Broad-billed Roller	<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
86	Grey-headed Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>			✓					
87	Brown-hooded Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon albiventris</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
88	Woodland Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>					✓	✓		
89	Giant Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle maxima</i>						✓		
90	Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
91	Swallow-tailed Bee-Eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>		✓						✓
92	Little Bee-Eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
93	White-fronted Bee-Eater	<i>Merops bullockoides</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
94	European Bee-Eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
95	Southern Carmine Bee-Eater	<i>Merops nubicoides</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
96	African Hoopoe	<i>Upupa africana</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
97	Green Wood Hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>				✓	✓	✓		
98	Common Scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>				✓				
99	Crowned Hornbill	<i>Tockus alboterminatus</i>							✓	
100	African Grey Hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
101	Red-billed Hornbill	<i>Tockus erythrorhynchus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
102	Trumpeter Hornbill	<i>Bycanistes bucinator</i>				✓				
103	Southern Ground Hornbill	<i>Bucorvus leadbeateri</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
104	Black-collared Barbet	<i>Lybius torquatus</i>			✓			✓		
105	Lesser Honeyguide	<i>Indicator minor</i>		✓						
106	Greater Honeyguide	<i>Indicator indicator</i>			✓					
107	Bennett's Woodpecker	<i>Campethera bennettii</i>				✓				
108	Golden-tailed Woodpecker	<i>Campethera abingoni</i>								✓
109	Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>					✓			
110	White-crested Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
111	Retz's Helmetshrike	<i>Prionops retzii</i>					✓		✓	
112	Orange-breasted Bush Shrike	<i>Telophorus sulfureopectus</i>							✓	
113	Black-crowned Tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegalus</i>						✓		
114	Black-backed Puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>		✓	✓	✓				

	Common name	Scientific name	November							
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
115	Tropical Boubou	<i>Laniarius major</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
116	Souza's Shrike	<i>Lanius souzae</i>					✓			
117	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>				✓			✓	✓
118	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>						✓		
119	African Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus auratus</i>					✓			
120	Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
121	African Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>		✓		✓		✓		
122	Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>			✓					
123	Southern Black Tit	<i>Parus niger</i>					✓	✓		
124	Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
125	Yellow-bellied Greenbul	<i>Chlorocichla flaviventris</i>			✓		✓	✓		
126	Terrestrial Brownbul	<i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>						✓		
127	Brown-throated Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>					✓	✓		
128	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓					✓	✓
129	White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>		✓	✓	✓				
130	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
131	Lesser Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis abyssinica</i>					✓			
132	Red-breasted Swallow	<i>Cecropis semirufa</i>				✓				
133	Mosque Swallow	<i>Cecropis senegalensis</i>						✓	✓	
134	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>				✓				✓
135	Icterine Warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>							✓	
136	Grey-backed Camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>							✓	
137	Wattled Starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>		✓				✓	✓	✓
138	Greater Blue-eared Starling	<i>Lamprotornis chalybaeus</i>			✓					
139	Meves's Starling	<i>Lamprotornis mevesii</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
140	Yellow-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
141	Red-billed Oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
142	Kurrichane Thrush	<i>Turdus libonyana</i>		✓						
143	White-browed Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha heuglini</i>			✓			✓	✓	
144	Collared Palm Thrush	<i>Cichladusa arquata</i>						✓		
145	Arnot's Chat	<i>Pentholaea arnoti</i>						✓		
146	Southern Black Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis pammelaina</i>		✓		✓				
147	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>			✓	✓			✓	✓
148	Collared Sunbird	<i>Hedydipna collaris</i>								✓
149	Amethyst Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>			✓					
150	White-bellied Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris talatala</i>								✓
151	Variable Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris venustus</i>			✓			✓	✓	✓
152	White-browed Sparrow-Weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
153	Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
154	Red-billed Buffalo Weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>			✓	✓			✓	
155	Lesser Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus intermedius</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
156	Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>						✓		
157	Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
158	Red-headed Weaver	<i>Anaplectes rubriceps</i>					✓			
159	Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
160	Orange-winged Pytilia	<i>Pytilia afra</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
161	Red-throated Twinspot	<i>Hypargos niveoguttatus</i>					✓			
162	Red-billed Firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
163	Blue Waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
164	Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>			✓					✓
165	Bronze Mannikin	<i>Lonchura cucullata</i>			✓	✓		✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	November							
			10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
166	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>				✓	✓		✓	
167	African Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla aguimp</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
168	Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Also recorded by the group:

Little Sparrowhawk , *Accipiter minullus*

Double-banded Sandgrouse , *Pterocles bicinctus*

Malachite Kingfisher , *Corythornis cristatus*

Rattling Cisticola , *Cisticola chiniana*

Ground Squirrel , *Xerus inauris*

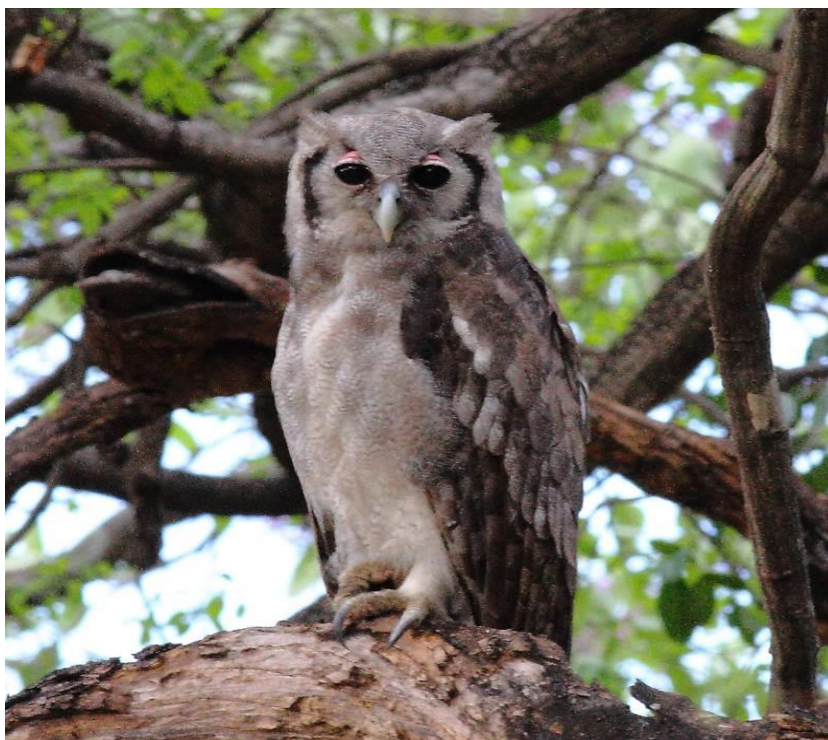
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Verreaux's Eagle Owl by Mark Andrews