



# ROCKJUMPER

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## Wildlife Tours

**Zululand and Desert Wonderland - with Van Harris and friends**  
**Rockjumper Wildlife Tours – September 15<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2017**

**(All photographs by Lee Gutteridge)**



*George, Kay, Rusty, Dianna, Deedee, Marsha, Van and Lee.*

### **Day 1 – 15<sup>th</sup> September**

I flew from Hoedspruit in Eastern South Africa to OR Tambo airport in time to meet Van and the group in Johannesburg. My plane was delayed by an hour so I was glad there was some time between the flight from Orlando and mine!

At around 5:30 PM I headed down to the arrivals hall to meet the group. Around an hour later, I saw George, who was wandering around looking for me! I had really expected Van to be in the lead of the group so I was really surprised. I recognised him immediately from our trip together a few years back in Northern Botswana! George then told me that Van had a case of 'missing luggage'!

Soon after the group appeared, and it was wonderful to reunite with Van and Kay with whom I had travelled before, and to meet the new members of our troupe. We headed off toward the entrance

of the City Lodge in the Airport, chatting along the way. When we arrived at the lifts to go up to the hotel we found a huge queue of people waiting for the elevator, as some type of conference group had also just arrived. After a small delay, we headed up into the hotel, and checked in, and arranged to meet for dinner a short while later.

Dinner was nice, and we all enjoyed chatting, catching up, and for me it was really great to meet the new friends with whom I would travel over the course of the next two weeks. It wasn't long before everyone chose to retire for the evening, and so we all headed towards our rooms for the night.

Grey-headed gulls were seen around the airport.

## **Day 2 – 16<sup>th</sup> September**

We met for a casual breakfast at 8:30, which gave everyone a bit of time to rest after the long flights, and the buffet was really great. There was a selection of fruit, pastries, yoghurts and cooked food, which everyone attacked with gusto. We planned for an 11:00 checkout and met in the lobby to go to the check in desk. On the way, we managed to get in a few minutes of shopping for some of the ladies, who wanted to look in the airport stores along the way. After a little bit of baggage repacking we were ready to go.

The flight to Durban was quite quick, with a few bumps during the time we were descending. A gentleman sat next to me commented that the “driver was not very good” ... but it was due to high winds coming in from the ocean. We found out an hour later that a cyclone had just come in shore from Port Edward! The winds were terrific, and if we had been just a little later we probably would have had to go to a different airport. The journey with Fever Tree Transfers was nice, with Stuart, our driver telling us stories of the landmarks along the way. We stopped along the way at Zamampilo Market, where we looked at the local crafts and saw awesome stacks of fresh pineapple, avocado, paw paw and other fruits, one of which I did not recognise!



*The small market where curios and local fruits are available.*

Forty-five minutes later we arrived at Zebra Hills, and met our guide, Keegan. We settled into our rooms, and headed for Dinner, which was a chicken dish served upstairs in the dining area. We met Brent, the camp manager, and filled ourselves up on malva pudding!

After dinner, we decided to try and go look for some wildlife on a night drive, but the wind was getting steadily stronger as we ate. The team hopped onto the viewer, a land cruiser with a canvas roof, and we headed into the darkness. The wind was amazing. It was by far the strongest I have ever experienced on a game drive, and I found that the large spot light in my hands was catching the wind and I could hardly focus on any one spot! The sand was being picked up from the road, and the trees were shaking around us, and after just a short while, and a single drenched and windblown impala we decided it was a safer option to head back to the lodge. At lodge, most people chose to retire, but Kay and George tried the TV to see what news we could gather of the storm. Several images were shown of fallen trees, collapsed roofs and other storm damage, which made us glad to be safe inside!

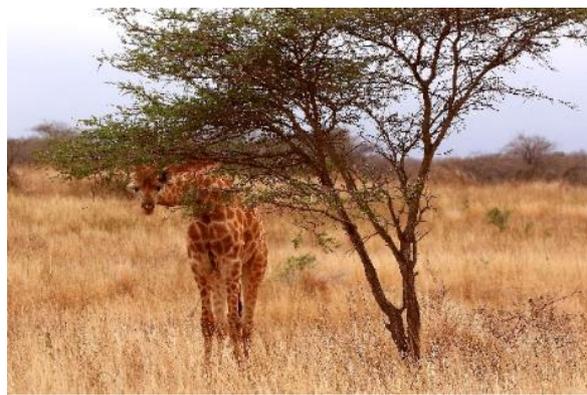
Our mammal list for the day was just our lone impala who was facing the raging winds of the storm!

Birds included:

1. Egyptian goose
2. Hadeda ibis
3. Western cattle egret
4. Grey heron
5. Woolly-necked stork
6. Yellow-billed kite
7. Ring-necked dove
8. African palm swift
9. Little swift
10. Pied crow
11. Common myna
12. House sparrow
13. Village weaver
14. Lesser masked-weaver
15. Cape wagtail

### Day 3 – 17<sup>th</sup> September

We woke up for coffee at 5:30 and then headed out for a drive. The power had been knocked out, and there was a huge tree across the driveway. We off-roaded through the garden and headed on our journey.



*The tree which blocked our driveway and our very first giraffe.*

After the fallen tree adventure, we started looking at the plant life along the road, and noticed that the knobthorn tree flowers were being consumed by both the giraffes and the smaller animals such as impala and kudu. We could tell this due to the flowers which were missing in a sort of top and bottom browse line. The first large mammals we saw were giraffes. At the same time there was an ostrich right beside us in the grass, but our focus was on a lovely giraffe female, who was feeding on an acacia tree in a clearing. She stood and stared at us for a while, and then moved slowly and gracefully away. We also discussed the feeding of game during the recent drought, and saw some of the old leaves of the sugarcane used for this purpose. African pipits and other birds such as ring-

necked doves were all around the area. A beautiful herd of impala was on the edge of a small dam, and they were attended by various birds, including Cape starlings. The one starling decided to sit on the head of a female, a most unusual sight.



*An impala with a cape starling on its head, and a nest building rattling cisticola with some wild cotton.*

The whole herd spooked at one point, and stood, staring into the distance, but we could see no sign of a predator. Vervet monkeys feeding on Boer bean flowers was another wonderful highlight. There was a whole troop, but they seemed really cold, and were huddling together in the trees. A very beautiful Burchell's coucal was seen in a short bush in some grassland too, and a rattling cisticola which had a beak full of wild cotton for lining its grass nest. The cisticola was great fun, as it kept getting the cotton snagged on the thorny bush, and losing and retrieving bits of its load. More giraffes we soon seen, along with impalas and nyalas, along a scenic river bed. The fever trees and the sycamore figs were a wonderful addition to the background, where the now-dry river bed flows after rain. We could see debris high up the trees, where it had been carried by flooding water. We had a wonderful view of a Verreaux's eagle-owl with its bright pink eyelids in the riparian woodland, and also a great sighting of a reddish coloured tawny eagle in a tree, and watched as it flew away. Along the road I spotted an old stone tool core, which is the piece of rock which was used to obtain the base material for stone tool manufacture. This is a characteristic of the middle stone ages, and could date back more than 30 000 years! We all looked at the expertly knapped stone, then dropped it back in the bush where it belongs.



*A browsing bull giraffe and a rufous morph tawny eagle.*

After a cup of hot coffee and some rusks we headed out again on our drive, and stopped off at a lovely dam, which had a resident pod of hippopotamus and some large crocodiles. The birdlife was also beautifully abundant, with non-breeding pin-tailed whydah and red-billed quelea, golden-breasted bunting, grey-headed sparrow, black-winged kite, yellow-billed kite, yellow-billed hornbills and many more species being seen.



*A hippo with a red-billed ox-pecker and a non-breeding eastern long-tailed paradise whydah male.*

A small flock of eastern long-tailed paradise whydah were also seen on one of the roads. These birds are absolutely stunning! Another interesting sight was the thorn of a balloon thorn acacia, which had been opened by a cardinal woodpecker to obtain the ants hiding within the specially swollen thorn. More herds of impala were seen as we headed home, and a wonderful demonstration of dominance behaviour in a pair of nyala bulls. This was not the entire dancing display, but rather a face to face walk, with the dominant animal displaying an erect white crest of fur. The females that he was protecting were soon out of sight, but the males seemed content to test each other for a while! Somehow a small mouse had died on the edge of the garden steps. Its identity is at this stage a mystery but I will try to search for a name over the next day or two. Many live ones were also seen of the same type.



*And nyala bull, and impala, a klaas's cuckoo and a very tall bull giraffe.*

After a good breakfast, we started looking out for some birds in the garden. Van and I found a few new birds for his list such as the Klaas's cuckoo and the Golden-tailed woodpecker. A purple-crested turaco also put in an appearance along with an African hoopoe who was nesting under the floor of a deck outside George and Kay's room. The busy adult was back and forth so many times it was amazing, carrying a load of food each time.

Then, after lunch, which was a chicken salad we headed out on an afternoon drive. Unfortunately, Marsha felt a little under the weather and chose to relax for the afternoon. We headed out into the

overcast bush, and travelled north for a little while. There had been a report of some lions in the area from the early morning so we thought we should go and try to find them, wherever they might be. We headed up an old municipal road, which leads to the Inyoni Community Village, and then turned down a hillside to a dam. The dam was dry, but still very muddy, and there were Egyptian geese standing on the muddy flats. We proceeded a little further along until we met another vehicle, who had just spotted one of the lions we came here to see. He was a huge, ginger-maned beast, with a huge body size and he was casually strolling up the hill away from us.



*Our first big male lion.*

After just a few metres he flopped down onto the ground and lay looking into the bush, giving us the occasional stare. We discussed lions and their behaviour for a few minutes and then we heard a deep noise. He was starting to roar! With a few quick shushes we got the vehicle silent and listened to the excitingly primal sounds of a male lion roaring in the African bush! It was wonderful, but he wasn't done yet! We had several opportunities to listen to him calling for his lost brother, as we were later to find! And then, after all the exertion, he flopped over on his side, seemingly spent.

We travelled onto another road into a hilly area, passing the wreck of an old car, which looked like a model from the 1950's. Trees and shrubs grew through the old rusted body.



*The rusty old car was quite a landmark, and the curious black rhino watches and listens from across the valley.*

The road dipped down into a deep valley, and was rocky and sparsely vegetated. At some point a large locust flew by us, so I tried to find it to show the group, and then Van spotted something on the opposite hillside. The large dark animal turned out to be a black rhinoceros. It stood, relaxed and still, on the opposite hill in full view. Fortunately, the rhino has fairly poor eyesight and we were probably not really noticed. We spent quite a lot of time watching this rare animal, and discussing its morphology and behaviours as we saw them. We also discussed its feeding habits and the 45-degree angle to its nipped twigs, as found in its dung. A wildebeest also made an appearance before we drove on, also on the opposite hill.



*The battle-weary lions who roared into our car.*

We headed along the stony trail to a sundowner spot overlooking a small valley, and set up to have a little drink and a safari snack of biltong and dry wors before we continued our journey. As we were getting ready to roll on with the drive a lion began to roar just below the rise in front of us, at a distance of a mere few hundred metres! We packed up and headed off to track down the lion. We drove down the hills into another valley, and searched the area we in which had seen the lion before, but we were out of luck. There was no sign of them at all. We headed on a few more metres down the trail, to a small dry river crossing and then suddenly we had another black rhino, right in front of us! He froze and stared at us, and we responded by quickly turning off the engine, but as we did he turned quickly and smashed through the dense bush along the river bed. A close call as with the black rhino you never really know if he will charge or run away. An exciting moment for us all I think! Then we followed the trail across the bed, up to a larger track, and then, we noticed a lion, a huge male, strolling into the road right in front of us! We had found him. A vehicle approached from the front, which he causally skirted around, and then we realised there was a second lion. The two brothers had reunited. They roared loudly, confrontationally communicating with another group of three lions, rumoured to be in the bush some miles ahead of us!

We followed them for quite some time, listening periodically to their roars, until the eventually settled on a small open patch of short grass. We parked in front of them, about 40 feet away, and watched them settle in and yawn, also noting the injured eye that one of them sported after a recent conflict with the other three males.



*Typical Zululand Rhino Reserve scenery and a warthog boar.*

We decided to head back to camp after a while, and let the sleeping lions lie, and headed straight back to a lovely dinner of brisket cooked on the fire. Apple crumble for dessert too, which went down incredibly well.

Mammals we saw today included:

1. Vervet monkey
2. Natal multi-mammate mouse
3. African lion
4. Black rhino
5. Common warthog
6. Impala
7. Hippopotamus
8. Common wildebeest
9. Nyala
10. Giraffe (southern)
11. Wahlberg's epauleted fruit-bat

Birds included:

1. Egyptian goose
2. Helmeted guineafowl
3. Crested francolin
4. Hadedda ibis
5. Black-winged kite
6. White-backed vulture
7. Brown snake eagle
8. Tawny eagle
9. Yellow-billed kite
10. Dark chanting goshawk
11. Three-banded plover
12. Ring-necked dove
13. Emerald-spotted wood-dove

14. Namaqua dove
15. Purple-crested turaco
16. Burchell's coucal
17. Klaas's cuckoo
18. Spotted eagle-owl
19. Verreaux's eagle-owl
20. Red-faced mousebird
21. Brown-hooded kingfisher
22. Little bee-eater
23. White-fronted bee-eater
24. African hoopoe
25. Green wood hoopoe
26. Common scimitarbill
27. Southern red-billed hornbill
28. Southern yellow-billed hornbill
29. Acacia pied barbet
30. Black-collared barbet
31. Crested barbet
32. Golden-tailed woodpecker
33. Cardinal woodpecker
34. Chinspot batis
35. Brown-crowned tchagra
36. Black-crowned tchagra
37. Southern white-crowned shrike
38. Black-headed oriole
39. Fork-tailed drongo
40. African paradise flycatcher

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| 41. Pied crow                             | 56. Purple-banded sunbird                                      |
| 42. Dark-capped bulbul                    | 57. Southern grey-headed sparrow                               |
| 43. Sombre greenbul (heard only)          | 58. Yellow-throated petronia                                   |
| 44. Black saw-wing                        | 59. Red-billed quelea  |
| 45. Lesser striped swallow                | 60. Green-winged pytilia                                       |
| 46. Long-billed crombec                   | 61. Jameson's firefinch  |
| 47. Rattling cisticola                    | 62. Blue waxbill   |
| 48. Green-backed camaroptera (heard only) | 63. Pin-tailed whydah  |
| 49. Yellow-bellied eremomela              | 64. Red-billed firefinch                                       |
| 50. Cape starling                         | 65. Eastern long-tailed paradise whydah (eclipse plumage only) |
| 51. Red-winged starling                   | 66. Yellow-throated longclaw                                   |
| 52. Red-billed oxpecker                   | 67. African pipit  |
| 53. Kurrichane thrush                     | 68. Striped pipit  |
| 54. Southern black flycatcher             | 69. Yellow-fronted canary                                      |
| 55. Scarlet-chested sunbird               | 70. Golden-breasted bunting                                    |

#### Day 4 – 18<sup>th</sup> September

We awoke to gloomy weather, but headed out bravely into the rain. The soft rain was not cold, so it was not too bad, with intermittent dryish spells. We selected roads which were suited to wet weather, and headed high into the nearby hills. A female ostrich was one of the first large creatures we saw, standing soaked and bedraggled, in the drenching rain. In our ponchos and under the canvass roof we were still comparatively dry. This would change however!



*Things got really damp on this drive!*

After some time, we passed a structure called half-lodge, where people occasionally stop for sundowner drinks or morning coffee. Up the hills we continued, and encountered many giraffes. One

individual, a female, was pulling down tree branches with her mouth, trying to snap them, in order to reach the leaves.



*The bedraggled ostrich, the red millipedes and a rain soaked orb web.*

We noticed the tree trunks were half dark and half-light, giving us an idea of the wind direction during the rain, and I also spotted some red millipedes, climbing the trunk of a drenched marula tree. They often climb to avoid wet ground, but these three could also have been a mating group trying to meet up, as there was a fourth, more hidden individual, hiding in a decayed branch nearby. A beautiful dew and rain drenched spider web was also seen alongside the road, amongst the beautifully dark pinkish grasses. The species of grass, known as a red grass, is a good grazing plant and also used in the thatching of roofs. We suggested keeping our eyes wide open for the larger grazers like white rhino.



*Some of the curious buffalo approaching our vehicle during the light rainstorm and a dark chanting goshawk (Adam mentioned that this is the most southern known population of this species).*

We passed a hide, and a very wet striped kingfisher, and continued along the road. I looked down next to the vehicle continually for tracks, and eventually saw something that looked really fresh. Buffalo tracks. And not just one of them, a whole herd! We started strategizing about where we would go to try and find the herd, when I noticed, way in the distance, large black shadows amongst the trees. We had found our buffaloes! We took a small two-track trail into the bush, heading

toward the large aggressive bovids, until we ended up really closed to them, a matter of 30 metres or so from the nearest cows. Some were very curious and walked closer, staring at us, as if trying to figure out what we were. The muddy tracks were all around us, cows stood with calves and young bulls curiously approached us. Eventually a large bull, with his massive boss (the meeting area of the horns on top of the head which looks like a sort of crash helmet) arrived to investigate the commotion. He gave us a cursory glance or two, from various angles around a fallen tree, and eventually headed back into thicker habitat, taking the young crowd of nosey buffaloes with him.



*The striped kingfisher looking really bedraggled in the rain, and a large buffalo cow.*

We headed back to the more rugged road on which we had been travelling earlier, and wandered down to a beautiful place with fever trees and lots of giraffe. We also startled a black-bellied bustard into a short flight as we drove by, and saw a really special bird for this region, the dark chanting-goshawk! It posed beautifully in the rain, and eventually took off. Along the way we also encountered Guinea fowl and some impalas. We then decided that we had had enough rain for one morning, and headed back to the lodge for a bite to eat. There was a general consensus at midday to have short rest, and then to head out at three again for the midday game drive. Marsha was still under the weather, and opted to rest in camp. Whilst we were still getting ready for the drive, a pair of lions walked by, and some of our crew were there to see this happen. I joined the team, and soon had a breakdown of what had happened, and then we heard a short, high pitched call of some sort, and then quickly, we all jumped on the cruiser and headed out to try and locate them.



*The lioness eats her share, whilst a young male sneaks away with the larger portion of the warthog to feed.*

We drove past our camp waterhole, with me on the trackers seat, to try and find the creatures who had walked by. We searched the roads and gullies, and the thick bush areas near the camp until we encountered three big old buffalo bulls. They soon left, but we kept up our lion-search.

Tracks were very hard to read after the rain, and the ground had become hard baked. I decided to come right back to the lodge and suggested to Keegan to look along the power line lane which heads to our camp. We headed up to the fence line of the camp and then, right under the powerline, Keegan spotted a big tawny cat! Awesome, we had them, and I also noticed the bright red colour of the faces of some of the lions...they were on a kill! This explained the high-pitched call, it was the sound of the death scream of a warthog!



*The gory, blood-soaked face of one of the young males, and a fat, overfed attempt to roll over!*

We drove closer, and got an amazing view of the lioness, and her two young sons. We hypothesized that the two seen by George and the team in the camp were probably the young guys, and that mom had been more surreptitious, sneaking through the bush in order to ambush a warthog! Wow, a big surprise. I figured we had better go and stir Marsha, so we handed over the sighting to Adam and his guests who were driving with Brent, and popped back to camp. Marsha seemed very pleased to have been collected, and soon felt a lot better. The lions were good tonic it seems.

We all headed out to continue our drive, and managed to hear on the radio about two cheetahs who had been briefly seen earlier by another guide. I suggested to the group that we should go and try to find these two beautiful needles in a haystack and we all agreed. But speed was important so we headed off right away. As is always the case when you want to go somewhere in a bit of a hurry, we soon started seeing more and more animals!



*One of the beautiful cheetah males which we saw near Manyoni Gate.*

Giraffes, wildebeests, impalas and nyalas all stood by the roadside as we gently but firmly passed by. Even a distant white rhino and her calf made a brief appearance but soon disappeared into the thick bush. Soon we were in the area where the cheetah had been seen. We were on the lookout for two males. I hopped into the trackers seat again and we resumed our search. We looked along the Manyoni village road, but did not see tracks (except of a caracal). We then moved back onto the main route. I kept my head down, looking for spoor, and then Keegan noticed movement on the road hundreds of yards ahead. Our cheetah. We had found them. I then saw a second individual, deep in the bush north of the road.

We followed the two boys for quite some time, until they eventually headed into an area where we could not follow them. One startled up a black-bellied bustard too as it joined its brother deeper in the bush. On the way home we saw zebra, kudu and a southern white-faced scops owl. We travelled through the thick bush of a riverine system, startling up some grumpy buffaloes, but were still marvelling at the cheetahs, a really unusual and wonderful animal added to our list of creatures for the day! We enjoyed a sundowner on the hill and then headed back to the camp for dinner, which was a beef pasta dish, with milk tart for dessert.



*George, Marsha and Dianna on safari.*

After dinner, we watched the waterhole in front of camp, hoping to see the lions from earlier in the day. They failed to make an appearance but a trio of spotted eagle-owls paraded before us, as did three big old buffalo bulls, who managed, just by the act of arriving, to quieten the raucous toads who were competing loudly for mates in the pond below.

New mammals for today included:

1. Cheetah
2. Slender mongoose
3. White rhinoceros
4. African buffalo
5. Greater kudu

New birds included:

1. Ostrich
2. Wahlberg's eagle

3. Black-bellied bustard
4. Common buttonquail
5. Crowned lapwing
6. Red-eyed dove
7. Southern white-faced scops-owl
8. Fiery-necked nightjar
9. Striped-kingfisher
10. Greater honeyguide (sound only)
11. Black-backed puffback
12. Southern boubou (call only)

13. Brubru (call only)
14. Southern back tit
15. Grey tit-flycatcher (call only)
16. Desert cisticola

17. Arrow-marked babbler
18. Wattled starling
19. African stonechat
20. White-bellied sunbird

### Day 5 – 19<sup>th</sup> September

This morning when we awoke it was lovely and clear. All the bad weather seemed to have moved along, retiring into distant memories. We decided in the morning to make an attempt to find some elephants, those landscape artists of the African bush. We headed out into a part of the reserve with which Keegan was less familiar. Climbing steep hills, and passing deep valleys, as we followed the trails of elephants. We took rocky roads, and river edged trails, even encountering the beautiful Natal (now red-capped) robin-chat briefly. Hillsides of aloes, huge kudu bulls and groups of impalas were the order of the day, with beautiful scenery at every turn.



*Aloes adorned the hillsides and large kudu bulls were commonly seen too.*

We crested a huge hill, along the edge of a recently burned field, and decided to stop to see the misty valley views below for a few moments. Then, with the engine turned off, we heard a loud SNAP! A tree being broken by an elephant in the valley below. We tried to find a point to view the elephant, who we could hear a mere few hundred feet away, but the thick bush thwarted all our efforts. We then decided to try and make for a distant road on the next hill with the hopes of looking back into this elusive herd.



*It's amazing how tough it can be to find an elephant!*

We got to the point, and Keegan and I headed off the vehicle on foot to investigate, when we were called back to the vehicle by the group. On the opposite hill was yet another herd of the big animals, and so our search was a success. We had wonderful views of the herd, with a massive bull in tow, climbing the slope and feeding on trees as young animals suckled, and nestled close to their mothers. We decided this was a great place for a cup of coffee, so we set up our table, there high on the mountain top and stood sipping filter coffee and watching the elephants feed in the distance. There was also sign (dung) of a wild dog on the road in front of the car and we observed beautiful copper dung beetles rolling balls of antelope dung to their burrows in the path before us.

We knew we had a long road back to the camp, so we decided to begin the journey home, over extremely rugged hills, testing the vehicle and the skills of our driver and guide Keegan, birding as we went and also noting aspects of the communities outside the game reserve, from our high vantage point. We saw school children in yellow shirts, herds of goats, the peculiar round houses of the ancestors in the individual kraals and even won friendly waves from some of the local people we saw.

Once we had returned to camp and filled up on some breakfast, we completed our checklists for the day and enjoyed a little time to rest.

Midday we completed our checklists for the previous day, and relaxed until lunch. After lunch we headed out on a short bushwalk, looking at birdlife, tracks and dung, wild plants and the like. It was a short but pleasant stroll, and a highlight was a sighting of a female scarlet-chested sunbird who was just killing a huge spider. These birds will collect spiders and the like when they are feeding their young, who need a high protein diet to grow.



*Out on our bushwalk, watching birds and looking at plant life.*

We headed back to camp for an early supper, at 5pm, and then prepared for a night drive in the Msunduze River area. Much of our road was in the river bed itself, and we travelled in the deep

sand, amongst the exposed rocks. High banks, eroded mountains and cliffs and massive fever trees and sycamore figs were all around us. It is a different experience searching for these night creatures, and can sometimes be a little quiet, but this evening we saw plenty of wonderful creatures. The first exciting moments were with a pair of thick-tailed bushbabies (also known as greater galago). They climbed into an open space on leafless branches, allowing us a good long look at their cat-like bodies and huge staring eyes. These harmless primates are extremely interesting to watch as they move slowly along the tree branches. After a while they moved into the canopy and out of our sight.

Then we went slowly past the nests of some crowned eagles, trying not to disturb these giant birds. Something grey and fast climbed up the bank ahead of us but it was hard to tell what it was so we kept on moving. This was also an area where a lioness apparently had her den with some brand-new cubs, but unfortunately, we did not see her.

We found several fiery-necked nightjars along the roads, and at one point we found two tiny chicks, busy fledging by all appearances, sitting happily right in the road. We looked at them for some time, with the nightjar mom or dad just up the road! Whilst we were sitting, we heard the ghostly calls of some spotted hyenas, and so we headed off to find them. Several bends and trails later, we surmounted a crest and drive smack bang into three large spotted predators. Fantastic, our hyenas were in sight. They sauntered around us, back and forth, until one of them took off down the road, followed by the other two just a moment later. We temporarily lost sight of them but eventually relocated them after trying a different trail. A real super predator, and a wonderful animal to add to our list indeed.

New mammals for today included:

1. African elephant
2. Thick-tailed greater galago
3. Spotted hyaena
4. Waterbuck

New birds for today included:

1. African scops owl (call only)
2. White-crested helmetshrike

3. Gorgeous bushshrike (call only)
4. Southern fiscal
5. Rufous-naped lark
6. Yellow-bellied greenbul (call only)
7. White-browed scrub robin
8. Lazy cisticola
9. Red-capped robin-chat
10. Spectacled weaver (heard only)

## **Day 6 – 20<sup>th</sup> September**

This morning we had a special drive planned with Adam Riley, who offered to take us on a birding trip. Having a world class birder on tour with us is a real privilege, so we took the best advantage we could of his expertise. We took a route down into the valley of the Msunduze again, with a focus on the forest birds. We saw scaly-throated honeyguide, Rudd's apalis, crowned eagle, crested guineafowl, square-tailed drongo and many other interesting species. We also added red duiker to our mammal list.



*A Rudd's apalis and a scaly-throated honeyguide were amongst our unusual birds from the morning.*



*Adam, Van and Dianna looking at birds.*

We returned to camp and had some breakfast, and then headed into the hills to a hide which sometimes has a little midday wildlife action. We saw four rhinos, as well as a visiting martial eagle and many small song birds which visited the water hole. After an hour and a half at the hide we headed to camp for another meal before heading on afternoon safari.



*At the hide in the hills above the camp.*

On afternoon drive we spent some time in a new area, and managed to find three large lazy male lions, who were sleeping in an open area. They were apparently the old dominant males, who had been a little displaced by the two new guys from the Kalahari. We left them to sleep, planning to return a little later. We had a nice sundowner and then headed past the dam with hippos and crocodiles before revisiting the lions. They were still laying, very relaxed in the same area, so we decided to head back to camp.

New mammals for today were:

1. Chacma baboon
2. Scrub hare
3. Natal red duiker
4. Steenbok
5. Common duiker
6. Bushbuck

New birds included:

1. Crested guineafowl
2. Yellow-billed stork
3. Striated (green-backed) heron
4. African harrier-hawk
5. Crowned eagle
6. Martial eagle
7. African goshawk
8. Water thick-knee

9. Common buzzard
10. African wattled lapwing
11. African green pigeon
12. Crowned hornbill
13. Trumpeter hornbill (call only)
14. Red-fronted tinkerbird
15. Scaly-throated honeyguide
16. Bearded woodpecker
17. Black cuckooshrike
18. Square-tailed drongo
19. Eastern nicator (call only)
20. Terrestrial brownbul (call only)
21. Rudd's apalis
22. Yellow-breasted apalis (heard only)
23. Bearded scrub robin
24. Grey sunbird
25. Cape rock thrush

### **Day 7 – 21<sup>st</sup> September**

This morning we headed out looking for lions which had roared all evening, and we were not disappointed. The tractor driver had spotted some lions at our camp water tower. We headed up to find them and the lions had moved, but we soon relocated them, and it turned out to be another

group we had not yet seen. This was a group of three lionesses, a mother and two grown daughters. They were fantastic, grimacing and stalking, and even climbing a tree.



*The adult female in a tree and the two younger females.*

We had a wonderful view of them and then headed off toward Bubesi dam (Bubesi means lion), where we saw another three lions; two young males and a female who is apparently known as brandy (due to the brand like mark on her flank). These were the same lions we saw on the warthog kill the other day.

We headed for camp a little earlier than usual, as we had to head out for our elephant interaction. The interaction was enjoyed by all, and we even had a bonus rhino and calf sighting on the way there!

The afternoon drive was our last at Zululand Rhino Reserve and Zebra Hills, so we chose to go and search for elephants in the far, far north of the reserve. We heard about a herd in the area, so we searched, and found some fresh tracks. We followed them for a short way, (with me perched on the trackers seat), and then waited to see what we could hear. A crash of a falling tree gave us direction. Then we headed along the road, hoping to find and intercepting trail. We did this several times until we located the herd, in thick bush.



*Elephants and a resting giraffe.*

I suggested that we do a sundowner drink just off the trajectory of the elephant herd, and wait for them to appear. It worked out perfectly because after our drinks, just as we packed the cooler box

away, the herd emerged onto the road. An amazing sight, 28 elephants, big bull, cows and babies, all crossed the road for us! What a reward.



*A common buzzard in flight and George enjoying the trackers seat during a sundowner stop!*

Then we headed home for lamb chops on the braai and a little bit of time around the camp fire before we headed to bed.



*A male tree agama sporting his blue headed breeding colours and a yellow-billed stork.*



*A brown-hooded kingfisher and a remarkable horned female kudu which we saw on drive.*



*Portraits of two of the male lions we saw (the one on the left was our very first lion seen on the trip) and the huge bull elephant from our interaction day.*

New birds today included:

1. Natal spurfowl
2. Spotted thick-knee
3. Cape white-eye
4. Marsh owl

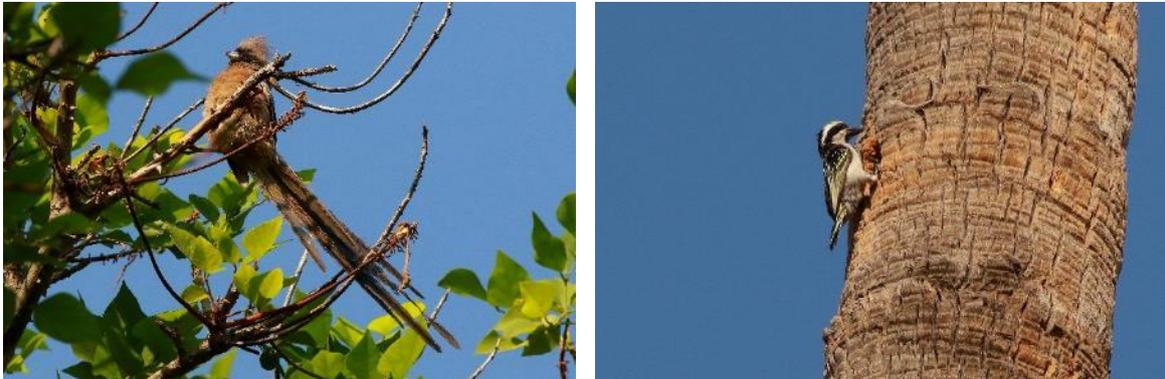
### **Day 8 – 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

Today was a travel day, beginning with a pick up by Stuart, and then a journey to King Shaka Airport, for a flight to Johannesburg. Then we had some lunch and queued to get onto our air Namibia flight to Windhoek. The flight was uneventful, and we were in plenty of time for the next leg of our journey, but, as sometimes happens, we ended up with a good old delay. The flight from Windhoek was several hours late, which resulted in a bit of a late arrival (around midnight) at Palmquell in Windhoek. We were checked in by the security man, a chap going by the name of Moses, and all headed off for a good night's rest.

A new bird for this travel day was the Spur-winged goose

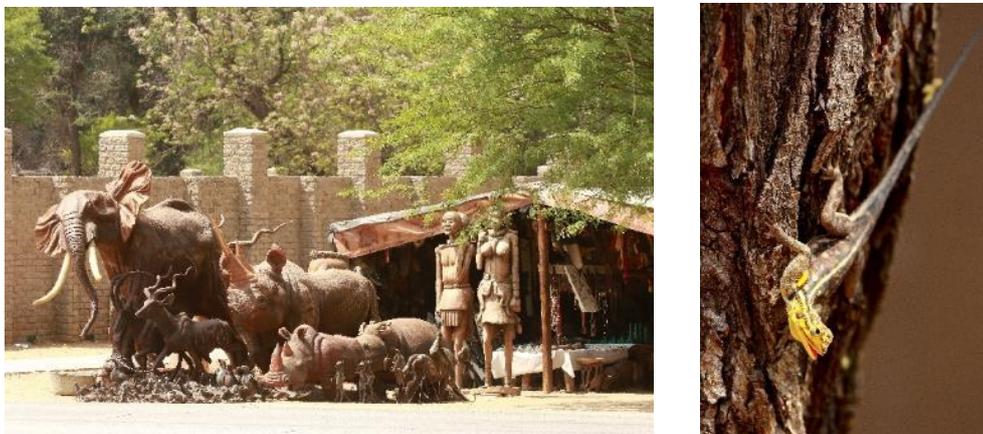
## Day 9 – 23<sup>rd</sup> September

This morning we waited for our transfer with Wild Dog, by having a relaxed breakfast at the lodge, with a friendly German hostess bustling around us and pouring good cups of coffee. A cold buffet with home baked bread, was followed by a hot meal. We did a little birding in the gardens as we waited.



*A white-backed mousebird and an acacia pied barbet at its nest hole.*

Ian arrived, our Wild Dog guide, and we loaded up our luggage to journey on. We headed west from Windhoek, via the market town of Okahandja, where there is an amazing craft market of wooden and beaded objects, horn and bone carvings and cloth and leather items galore. Unfortunately, the craft sellers were pretty pushy, but after a few minutes a status quo was achieved, and a few nice people were heavily supported by our group, who bought beaded jewellery, place mats, leather necklaces and several other items. During our lunch we also encountered an agama with a beautiful yellow head.



*The entrance to the curio market and the beautiful agama!*

The journey to Swakopmund was interesting, hot and dry. The landscape varied between rocky hills and mountains and flat barren landscapes. As we drove less and less trees were in evidence, and the journey gradually carried us into the depths of the Namib.

We dropped gently off the escarpment, and into the much cooler coastal belt, and watched for interesting birds and plants. At one point we stopped to look at some interesting Euphorbias, a highly toxic group of plants, characterised by succulent green stems and a copious milky latex.

Massive outcrops of rock typified the landscape, as here stone types such as marine granite prominences and dolerite ridges abound.



*A desolate landscape dotted with hardy, toxic euphorbias and the dry landscape.*



*A view of the incredible Moon Landscape region of the park.*

We then turned north into the Namib Naukluft National Park. We took a sort of short cut, to cross a point on the Swakop river. Swakop is a modification of a Nama word, meaning, very loosely translated (excuse the pun), Diarrhoea...This unusual reference is linked to observations by the early Nama people of the brown waters pushing far into the ocean, a murky, unpleasant flood into the oceans clear waters. However, this only happens on an irregular basis. One account from a local was that it happens on average every eight years. Keeping in mind that there is only a rainfall expected here of 0 to 50 millimetres a year, this comes as no surprise! We crossed the dry river bed, which had recently been graded, and then headed further north towards the moon landscapes. And wow! They were moon landscapes indeed. No plants, no obvious life, a barren landscape beyond belief. The rugged hillocks, dark layers of rock exposed by weather and wind, were absolutely beautiful. In one lonely valley we saw two acacia trees, way down in a tiny niche which has enough moisture to support just these two floral denizens. I felt almost sad for them. But they had taken up a niche, one

of the hardest imaginable, and at a distance looked like they were flourishing. Just another testament to the hardiness of nature.

From the Moon Landscape viewpoints, we moved further off into the desert, in search of an even more hardy plant, an icon of this arid thirstland, the ancient Welwitschia. Some individuals of these ancient plants, which are unbelievably, relatives of the cone bearing pines, date back to a time before the settlement by Europeans of the United States or Southern Africa...



*Another view of the moon landscape and an ancient welwitschia.*

The Welwitschia plants first appeared in the fossil record in the Devonian period, between 408 and 365 million years ago. Some living specimens have been estimated at 1500 years, although recent studies intimate a probable life span of double this time!

The plants were covered in bugs, and on the first plant we saw the red nymphs and yellow black-spotted adults abounded! This bug is known as the *Odontopus sexpunctatis*. They feed on the plant, but play absolutely no role, as far as is known, in the fertilisation of the plant. This is done, apparently, by wasps.

We then headed into another desert landscape, into the valley of the Welwitschia's, and saw tracks of ostriches, Korhaans and other creatures. Then, after a fairly full day we headed to our new lodgings at Atlantic Villa, but still managed to stop off at a wet land area with pied avocets and many other great birds.

Atlantic villa was a beautiful destination. Our rooms were wonderfully appointed, and the modern conveniences were much appreciated.

Then, in the evening we headed out for dinners at Kucki's pub and grill. We had a fantastic meal, and really headed home satisfied with the evenings fare.

New birds for the day included:

1. Red-billed teal
2. Black-chested snake eagle
3. Pale chanting goshawk
4. Kori bustard
5. Black-winged stilt
6. Pied avocet
7. Blacksmith lapwing
8. White-fronted plover
9. Harlaub's gull
10. Laughing dove
11. Grey go-away-bird
12. Rock dove
13. Great-spotted cuckoo
14. Bradfield's swift
15. White-rumped swift
16. White-backed mousebird

**Day 10 – 24<sup>th</sup> September**

This morning we awoke to a misty scene. The Atlantic mist which sustains life in this part of the world had rolled in for us to experience. The team from Charley's Desert Tours arrived to collect us after breakfast, for an experience in the Namib dunes, to see which creatures live there, and how they survive.

We drove a short distance to some small dunes near the town, where we began to explore, with a small team of desert guides walking off in different directions, to find some interesting creatures for us. One guide stayed with us to begin the discussions. In a few short minutes they had found a small translucent pinkish gecko, which they referred to as a palmato gecko. It is also called the web-footed gecko, or *Pachydactylus rangei*.



*A palmato gecko and a side-winding adder, buried in the sand.*

These little creatures bury themselves below the sand during the day to escape predation. They also located a side-winding, or Peringuey's adder. This little creature had buried itself in the sand, where it will wait for hapless lizards to wander by. All around us tracks of black-backed jackals and various mongooses criss-crossed the sand. Interesting spiders such as the white lady spider were also found. Plants such as the dollar bush and the Nara melon, with its robust spikey thorns were also featured. A demonstration by a guide with a big magnet was very interesting too, with particles of magnetite being picked up from the grey patches of sand by the magnet. The quantity was quite astounding. The blackish mineral could be seen across the dunes, in discoloured patches, and once our guide had collected enough of it he wrote the name, "Namib" on the sand!



*The magnet with the adhering magnetite, and the word "Namib" written in this dark metal.*

Another wonderful creature that we met was a tamed group of tractrac chats. These little pale birds flew into our group, perching close by, and even landing on the hands of some of our guests. Deedee

particularly seemed to be a much favoured perch! We then drove a little more on the dunes, and had some spectacular views of the arid desert dunes, where they meet the coast.



*A tractrac chat, Deedee with one on her hand, and Van enjoying the occasion*



*Marsha of the desert, and an aerial Deedee (the dark streaks on the dunes behind Deedee are areas of magnetite!).*

We then headed into town for a light lunch before travelling northwards to Cape Cross. This area at the beginning point of the Skeleton Coast National Park is well known for its huge seal colony. Hundreds of thousands of Cape fur seals call this place home. As we drove into the parking area we began to see jackals, and the smell of the seals was quite unbelievable, and not necessarily pleasant.

The pupping season had just begun, and the first tiny black seal pups could be seen. Thousands of seals lay everywhere, using every exposed rock and promontory. Walkways led over and around the seals, so we could move literally within inches of them. Thousands and thousands of Cape cormorants flew past us in flocks, and held Rusty captivated by their sheer volume. The noises and bleats of the seals were reminiscent of sheep, interspersed with growls and snarls from fighting and threatening females. There was a constant cacophony, and it was really quite an awesome sight to behold. We also found ruddy turnstones and lots of kelp gulls.

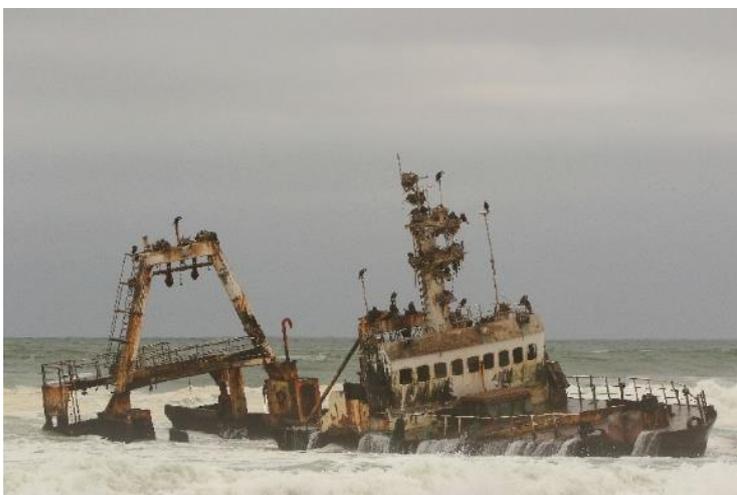


*The seal colony and a new-born pup.*

On our way home we stopped to look at a lichen field and at some of the interesting salt crystals mined locally which are for sale all along the side of the roads on little homemade tables. We also stopped off at the wreck of the Zeila, a ship which was wrecked here in August 2008. It had been sold for scrap by a Namibian fishing company based in Walvis bay, and was supposed to go to Bombay, India.



*Marsha, Deedee and Kay at the seal colony, and a ruddy turnstone.*



*The sunken ship and Kay at the edge of a salt prospecting excavation.*

We returned to Swakopmund and had a wonderful dinner at The Dome restaurant, and once again we had some very good meals.

Some new mammals for today included:

1. Black-backed jackal
2. Afro-Australian fur seal

New birds included:

1. Cape gannet

2. White-breasted cormorant
3. Cape cormorant
4. Ludwig's bustard
5. Ruddy turnstone
6. Kelp gull
7. House sparrow
8. Tractrac chat

### Day 11 – 25<sup>th</sup> of September

Today we travelled across the country towards the Etosha National Park. A light drizzling rain was falling as we packed, which persisted far inland. By the time we got close to the Spitzkoppe however, it had cleared up nicely. We made several stops looking for interesting endemic birds such as the Herero chat and the Ruppell's Parrot, but were disappointed. It was a long drive but eventually we arrived at the Andersson's gate of Etosha, and made our way towards Okaukeujo Camp.

On our way to the camp we saw elephant, springbok, sleepy lions, black-backed jackals, oryx, kudu and the endemic sub-species of black-faced impalas amongst others. The white calcrete terrain and dry, harsh bush was very interesting to see.



*Zebras at a waterhole, with thousands of red-billed queleas flying by.*

After checking in we headed for a kudu and lamb dinner and then spent some time at the world-famous waterhole in front of the camp, which is floodlit and frequented by the endangered desert black rhino. We saw several of them, and some elephants also arrived later in the evening. Everyone was exhausted from the long day of travel though, so it was a fairly early evening.

Some new mammals for the day included:

1. Acacia rat
2. Springbok
3. Gemsbok

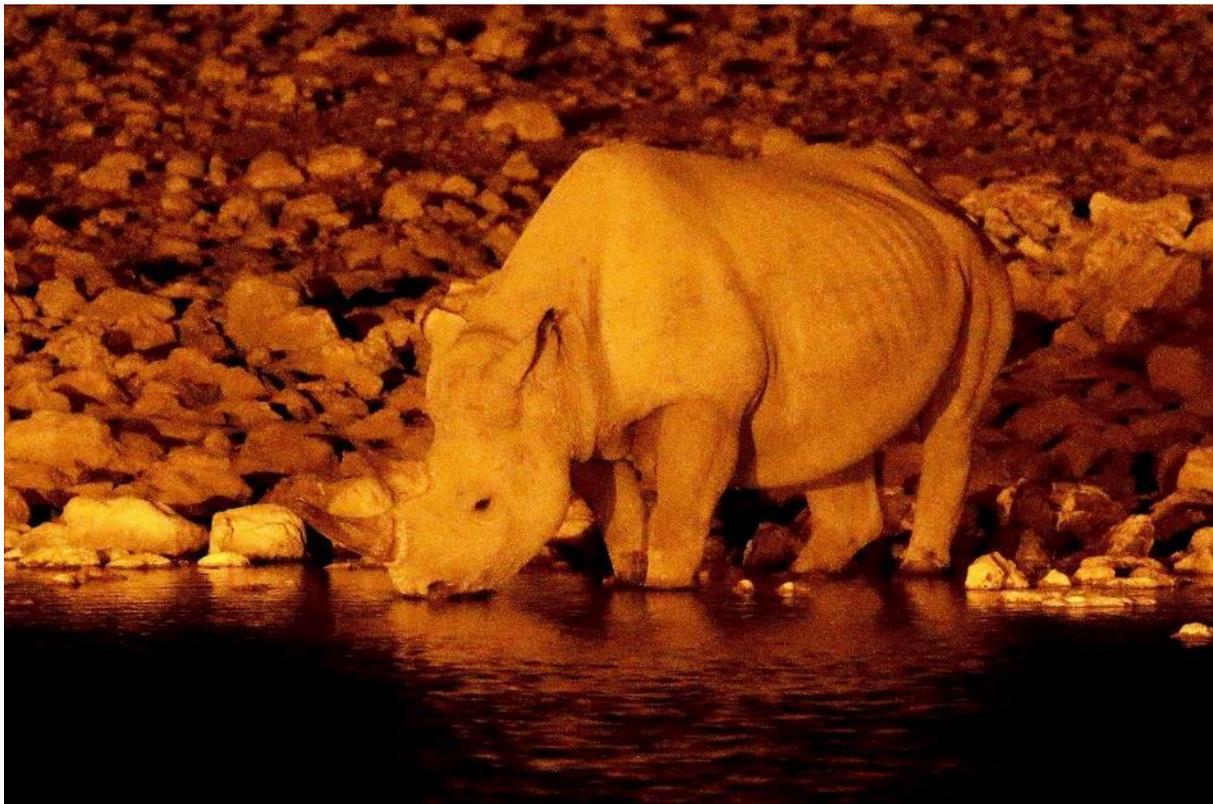
New birds included:

1. Namaqua sandgrouse
2. Western barn owl
3. Pearl-spotted owl
4. Alpine swift
5. Greater kestrel
6. Cape crow

7. Crimson-breasted shrike
8. African red-eyed bulbul
9. Rock martin
10. Red-breasted swallow
11. Chat flycatcher
12. Marico flycatcher
13. Karoo chat
14. Mountain wheatear
15. Great sparrow
16. White-browed sparrow weaver
17. Sociable weaver
18. Scaly-feathered finch
19. Yellow-canary

### Day 12 – 26<sup>th</sup> of September

We rose early, and headed out on a short drive to visit some waterholes. We saw kori bustards in good number, oryx, elephant herds, northern black korhaans, wildebeests, Namaqua sandgrouse, pale chanting goshawk and a western race (*subcoronatus*) common fiscal. The late morning was spent at the waterhole watching thousands of large mammals coming in to drink. Springbok and oryx walked into the water up to neck depth, and drank as they cooled in the middle of the



*A desert black rhino drinking at a waterhole at night.*



*A trio of Kori bustards and a male namaqua sand grouse.*



*Oryx drinking chest-deep in the water and a pearl-spotted owlet*

waterhole. Impala, wildebeest and hundreds of zebras milled around the edges of the pool with kudu bulls leading in herds of females from the surrounding dry bush. Around the camp the ground squirrels and crimson-breasted shrikes competed for our photographic attention.



*A gorgeous, male, green-winged pytilia and a ground squirrel.*

We then headed to Andersson's camp in the Ongava Reserve. We were to spend the evening there, and it was an absolutely beautiful place to be. We were made to feel very welcome, and the unique buildings and semi-tented structures were gorgeous. We had a wonderful lunch on arrival, and it

wasn't long before I joined Rusty and Dianna in the pool as the days heat was fantastic. In the afternoon we headed on drive with an Owambo guide called Shilongo. He was certainly a character, and he had a good sense of humour too. We saw three baby cheetahs at a very close distance, although the vegetation was a little thick.



*One of the baby cheetahs seen at Ongava.*

We had a really pleasant sundowner too, out in the bush and also got our first Monteiro's hornbill.



*Van, Rusty and Dianna at sundowners.*



*Marsha, Deedee and Kay, and then George and Kay together.*

After a delicious dinner some of us went down into the subterranean hide at the waterhole, and saw a red hartebeest bull who came in to drink, kneeling down to do so.

Some new mammals for the day included:

1. Southern African ground squirrel
2. Woodland dormouse
3. Yellow mongoose
4. Hartebeest (Khama or red)

3. Northern black korhaan
4. Double-banded sandgrouse
5. Monteiro's hornbill
6. African grey hornbill
7. Lanner falcon
8. Yellow-bellied eremomela (we finally saw one!)
9. Chestnut-vented tit-babbler (warbler)
10. Dusky sunbird
11. Black-faced waxbill

New birds included:

1. Black-headed heron
2. Gabar goshawk

### **Day 13 – 27<sup>th</sup> of September**

At sunrise we met in the hide again, and saw lots of black-faced impalas really close up. A herd of eland also appeared, which was wonderful to see. Thousands of red-billed queleas flocked to the water's edge along with violet-eared waxbills and red-headed finches. Two impalas decided to have a contest of strength, and one of the contenders actually only had one horn. Guineafowl arrived in good numbers too, and drank at the water's edge a few metres from our hide.



*A flock of queleas leaves the waterhole and an eland arrives at sunrise*

Around the breakfast area dusky sunbirds and pririt batises fed in the creeping vines and red-eyed bulbuls helped themselves to breakfast.



*A dusky sunbird singing, a pririt batis and a white-bellied sunbird male.*

After we had eaten we headed back into the park for the drive to the east, via Namutoni. On the way we saw huge white elephant cows and bulls, who had bathed in the calcrete dust. These ghostly beasts are an amazing sight, unique to Etosha. We skirted the salt pans, looking out at hundreds of zebra and wildebeest who were laying in the barren hot waste. Secretary birds patrolled the grasslands along with the kori bustards.



*An elephant cow, covered in calcrete, which gives her a white appearance and a black-backed jackal.*

We had a brief sighting of a distant cheetah as we drove, and then a second where a female cheetah had just killed a springbok. Her two half-grown cubs seemed more interested in the food than her though, as she appeared to want only shade. At Namutoni we had some lunch and visited the waterhole, where two large elephants were busy. One was in the reedbed eating, with an egret on his back, and the other was happily dust bathing some distance away. We headed towards Von Lindquist gate and our next destination, which was to be Mushara Lodge. As we exited the gate we saw a Blesbok feeding on a patch of grass beside the road. Mushara is a true oasis, with beautiful palms, a wonderful pool and extremely comfortable rooms. We were all very happy to escape the heat in our rooms. No one was interested in an afternoon birding session, so we all relaxed in our own ways. Van, Dianna and Rusty all headed for the pool, which I thought was a great idea. Van invited the whole team to enjoy sundowners with him at his wonderful villa, which was a real treat. Then afterwards, we met for a wonderful dinner and the team all headed for bed.



*The old German fort at Namutoni and a tall white termite mound.*

Some new mammals for the day included:

1. African tree squirrel (Smith's bush squirrel)
2. Banded mongoose
3. Common eland
4. Kirk's dikdik
5. Blesbok

New birds included:

1. Red-billed spurfowl
2. Secretarybird

3. Red-crested korhaan (bustard)
4. Pirit batis
5. Grey-backed camaroptera
6. Kalahari scrub robin
7. White-browed scrub robin (we finally saw it!)
8. Red-headed finch
9. Violet-eared waxbill
10. Streaky-headed seedeater
11. Lark-like bunting
12. Cinnamon-breasted bunting
13. Red-billed buffalo-weaver

### **Day 14 – 28<sup>th</sup> of September**

We took a nice morning walk around the camp, focussing on tracking and birds. We saw the trail of a spotted hyena and of oryx, giraffe and eland, as well as the diminutive dik-dik. We also saw some lovely birdlife, including a wonderful sighting of our first grey-backed camaroptera. We headed to breakfast and then continued our birding search around Vans villa. We saw a few more species there before everyone went off to relax. The group had decided against another day in the car, and chose to enjoy the luxury of the camp for the morning.



*A southern-yellowbilled hornbill and a crimson-breasted shrike in the gardens.*

After lunch we planned a three o'clock drive, and decided to go in search of Damara (also known as Kirk's) dikdik and some of the other animals we had not yet seen. We headed out in search of waterbirds too, as we had not had much luck with them so far, so our strategy was to head to all the nearby waterholes and finish up on dik-dik drive. Our strategy worked wonderfully, and we had an incredibly fruitful drive. We saw many new birds, spotted hyena, zebra, springbok, oryx, giraffe and of course we finally got our dik-diks. These tiny little antelope were everywhere on the aptly named dik-dik drive. We also saw many red-crested korhaans in the area.

We returned to camp at sunset when the park gates closed and had yet another wonderful supper, a boma dinner this time with eland, oryx, springbok and other game meat on the braai and wonderful salads and desserts.



*A zebra stares at a spotted hyena, a large elephant bull and a drinking black-faced impala ram drinks as queleas fly up around its face.*



*A tiny female dikdik with a hair tuft but no horns, and a tiny male.*



*A herd of elephant cows from our last drive, and our last sunset in Etosha National Park.*

New birds for the day included:

1. Cape shoveler
2. Little grebe
3. Grey-backed camaroptera
4. Marico sunbird
5. Wood sandpiper
6. Common moorhen
7. Ruff

### **Day 15 - 29<sup>th</sup> of September**

We rose early to breakfast, before loading up for our journey to Windhoek. We stopped for lunch on the way, and then carried on with our journey. We arrived in Windhoek in the late afternoon and went to our rooms at Palmquell to freshen up. We prepared ourselves for a dinner at seven at Joes pub and grill, a Windhoek landmark. We were duly collected and headed to Joes. It was a wonderfully eclectic place, with interesting decorations and good food. The atmosphere was also fantastic, a really great place to enjoy our last meal dinner as a team. The menu was fantastic, with an amazing array of food, including game, crocodile and all kinds of exotic sounding dishes.

Some new birds for the day were high speed glimpses of roadside perchers such as:

1. Lilac-breasted roller
2. Lesser-kestrel

### **Day 16 – 30<sup>th</sup> of September**

This morning we awoke very early for our flights back to South Africa, arriving at the Windhoek airport in the early morning darkness. Our flight was smooth to Johannesburg, but we all had extremely long waits in front of us for our next flights, so I invited the team to my family home in Johannesburg. Only Dianna and Rusty accepted the offer, and the rest opted to rest up at the airport for the time being. We had fun in my family home, with my children and my parents, but we left in plenty of time to head back to the airport for our respective journeys, to Atlanta and to New York.

And with that, we all headed home, the end of another wonderful adventure through Zululand and Namibia with Van Harris and his wonderful friends!



*An image of an oryx on the edge of the giant, seemingly endless, salt pan at Etosha.*

**Mammal list for the trip:**

1. Acacia rat
2. African buffalo
3. African elephant
4. African lion
5. African tree squirrel (Smith's bush squirrel)
6. Afro-Australian fur seal
7. Banded mongoose
8. Black rhino
9. Black-backed jackal
10. Black-faced impala (petersi subsp)
11. Blesbok
12. Bushbuck
13. Chacma baboon
14. Cheetah
15. Common (blue) wildebeest
16. Common duiker
17. Common eland
18. Common impala
19. Common warthog
20. Gemsbok (oryx)
21. Giraffe (Angolan subsp)
22. Giraffe (southern)
23. Greater kudu
24. Hartebeest (Khama or red)
25. Hippopotamus
26. Kirk's dikdik (Damara subsp)
27. Natal multi-mammate mouse
28. Natal red duiker
29. Nyala
30. Scrub hare
31. Slender mongoose
32. Southern African ground squirrel
33. Spotted hyaena
34. Springbok
35. Steenbok
36. Thick-tailed greater galago
37. Vervet monkey
38. Wahlberg's epauleted fruit-bat
39. Waterbuck
40. White rhinoceros
41. Woodland dormouse
42. Yellow mongoose

### Bird list for the trip:

1. Acacia pied barbet
2. African goshawk
3. African green pigeon
4. African grey hornbill
5. African harrier-hawk
6. African hoopoe
7. African palm swift
8. African paradise flycatcher
9. African pipit
10. African red-eyed bulbul
11. African scops owl (call only)
12. African stonechat
13. African wattled lapwing
14. Alpine swift
15. Arrow-marked babbler
16. Bearded scrub robin
17. Bearded woodpecker
18. Black cuckooshrike
19. Black saw-wing
20. Black-backed puffback
21. Black-bellied bustard
22. Black-chested snake eagle
23. Black-collared barbet
24. Black-crowned tchagra
25. Black-faced waxbill
26. Black-headed heron
27. Black-headed oriole
28. Blacksmith lapwing
29. Black-winged kite
30. Black-winged stilt
31. Blue waxbill
32. Bradfield's swift
33. Brown snake eagle
34. Brown-crowned tchagra
35. Brown-hooded kingfisher
36. Brubru (call only)
37. Burchell's coucal
38. Cape cormorant
39. Cape crow
40. Cape gannet
41. Cape rock thrush
42. Cape shoveler
43. Cape starling
44. Cape wagtail
45. Cape white-eye
46. Cardinal woodpecker
47. Chat flycatcher
48. Chestnut-vented tit-babbler (warbler)
49. Chinspot batis
50. Cinnamon-breasted bunting
51. Common buttonquail
52. Common buzzard
53. Common moorhen
54. Common myna
55. Common scimitarbill
56. Crested barbet
57. Crested francolin
58. Crested guineafowl
59. Crimson-breasted shrike
60. Crowned eagle
61. Crowned hornbill
62. Crowned lapwing
63. Dark chanting goshawk
64. Dark-capped bulbul
65. Desert cisticola
66. Double-banded sandgrouse
67. Dusky sunbird
68. Eastern long-tailed paradise whydah  
(eclipse plumage only)
69. Eastern nicator (call only)
70. Egyptian goose
71. Emerald-spotted wood-dove
72. Fiery-necked nightjar
73. Fork-tailed drongo
74. Gabar goshawk
75. Golden-breasted bunting
76. Golden-tailed woodpecker
77. Gorgeous bushshrike (call only)
78. Great sparrow
79. Greater honeyguide (sound only)
80. Greater kestrel
81. Great-spotted cuckoo
82. Green wood hoopoe
83. Green-backed camaroptera (heard  
only)
84. Green-winged pytilia
85. Grey go-away-bird
86. Grey heron
87. Grey sunbird
88. Grey tit-flycatcher (call only)
89. Grey-backed camaroptera
90. Grey-headed gull

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 91. Hadedda ibis               | 139. Red-billed spurfowl           |
| 92. Harlaub's gull             | 140. Red-billed teal               |
| 93. Helmeted guineafowl        | 141. Red-breasted swallow          |
| 94. House sparrow              | 142. Red-capped robin-chat         |
| 95. Jameson's firefinch        | 143. Red-crested korhaan           |
| 96. Kalahari scrub robin       | (bustard)                          |
| 97. Karoo chat                 | 144. Red-eyed dove                 |
| 98. Kelp gull                  | 145. Red-faced mousebird           |
| 99. Klaas's cuckoo             | 146. Red-fronted tinkerbird        |
| 100. Kori bustard              | 147. Red-headed finch              |
| 101. Kurrichane thrush         | 148. Red-winged starling           |
| 102. Lanner falcon             | 149. Ring-necked dove              |
| 103. Lark-like bunting         | 150. Rock dove                     |
| 104. Laughing dove             | 151. Rock martin                   |
| 105. Lazy cisticola            | 152. Rudd's apalis                 |
| 106. Lesser masked-weaver      | 153. Ruddy turnstone               |
| 107. Lesser striped swallow    | 154. Ruff                          |
| 108. Lesser-kestrel            | 155. Rufous-naped lark             |
| 109. Lilac-breasted roller     | 156. Scaly-feathered finch         |
| 110. Little bee-eater          | 157. Scaly-throated honeyguide     |
| 111. Little grebe              | 158. Scarlet-chested sunbird       |
| 112. Little swift              | 159. Secretarybird                 |
| 113. Long-billed crombec       | 160. Sociable weaver               |
| 114. Ludwig's bustard          | 161. Sombre greenbul (heard only)  |
| 115. Marico flycatcher         | 162. Southern back tit             |
| 116. Marico sunbird            | 163. Southern black flycatcher     |
| 117. Marsh owl                 | 164. Southern boubou (call only)   |
| 118. Martial eagle             | 165. Southern fiscal               |
| 119. Monteiro's hornbill       | 166. Southern grey-headed          |
| 120. Mountain wheatear         | sparrow                            |
| 121. Namaqua dove              | 167. Southern red-billed hornbill  |
| 122. Namaqua sandgrouse        | 168. Southern white-crowned        |
| 123. Natal spurfowl            | shrike                             |
| 124. Northern black korhaan    | 169. Southern white-faced scops-   |
| 125. Ostrich                   | owl                                |
| 126. Pale chanting goshawk     | 170. Southern yellow-billed        |
| 127. Pearl-spotted owlet       | hornbill                           |
| 128. Pied avocet               | 171. Spectacled weaver (heard      |
| 129. Pied crow                 | only)                              |
| 130. Pin-tailed whydah         | 172. Spotted eagle-owl             |
| 131. Pirit batis               | 173. Spotted thick-knee            |
| 132. Purple-banded sunbird     | 174. Spur-winged goose             |
| 133. Purple-crested turaco     | 175. Square-tailed drongo          |
| 134. Rattling cisticola        | 176. Streaky-headed seedeater      |
| 135. Red-billed buffalo-weaver | 177. Striated (green-backed) heron |
| 136. Red-billed firefinch      | 178. Striped pipit                 |
| 137. Red-billed oxpecker       | 179. Striped-kingfisher            |
| 138. Red-billed quelea         | 180. Tawny eagle                   |

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|------|----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|
| 181. | Terrestrial brownbul (call only) | 198. | White-browed sparrow weaver         |
| 182. | Three-banded plover              | 199. | White-crested helmetshrike          |
| 183. | Tractrac chat                    | 200. | White-fronted bee-eater             |
| 184. | Trumpeter hornbill (call only)   | 201. | White-fronted plover                |
| 185. | Verreaux's eagle-owl             | 202. | White-rumped swift                  |
| 186. | Village weaver                   | 203. | Wood sandpiper                      |
| 187. | Violet-eared waxbill             | 204. | Woolly-necked stork                 |
| 188. | Wahlberg's eagle                 | 205. | Yellow-bellied eremomela            |
| 189. | Water thick-knee                 | 206. | Yellow-bellied greenbul (call only) |
| 190. | Wattled starling                 | 207. | Yellow-billed kite                  |
| 191. | Western barn owl                 | 208. | Yellow-billed stork                 |
| 192. | Western cattle egret             | 209. | Yellow-breasted apalis (heard only) |
| 193. | White-backed mousebird           | 210. | Yellow-canary                       |
| 194. | White-backed vulture             | 211. | Yellow-fronted canary               |
| 195. | White-bellied sunbird            | 212. | Yellow-throated longclaw            |
| 196. | White-breasted cormorant         | 213. | Yellow-throated petronia            |
| 197. | White-browed scrub robin         |      |                                     |

#### **Our reptile list for the trip:**

1. African five-lined skink
2. Bushveld lizard
3. Etosha agama
4. House gecko
5. Leopard tortoise
6. Marsh terrapin
7. Namib rock agama
8. Nile crocodile
9. Palmetto (web-footed) gecko
10. Peringuey's (side-winding) adder
11. Southern tree agama
12. Turners thick-toed gecko
13. Variable skink
14. White-throated monitor