

Tour Report South Africa's Wildlife of Land & Sea 9 – 19 August 2025

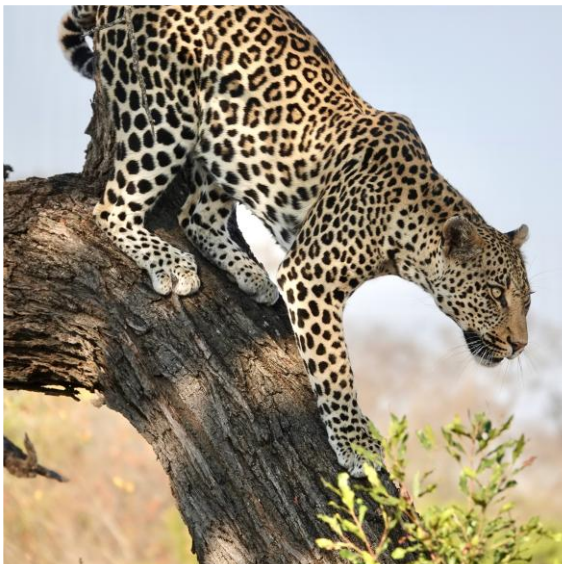
African penguin



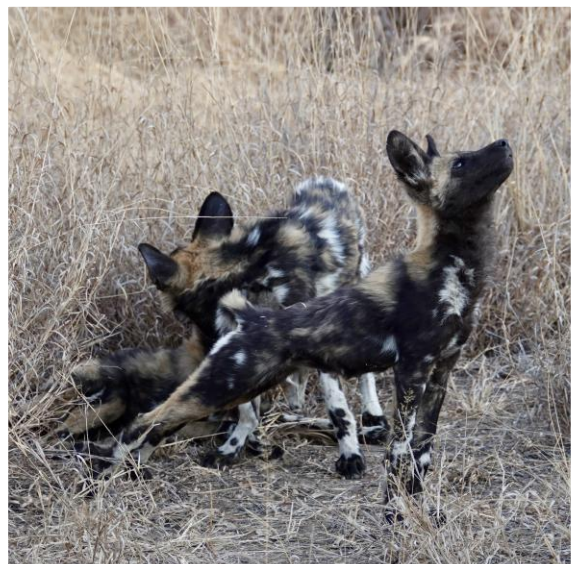
Southern right whale



Leopard



Wild dog



Compiled by Helen Bryon

Our inaugural group departure of South Africa's Wildlife of Land & Sea certainly proved to be a success. Travelling towards the tail end of the Southern Hemisphere winter, we flew into Cape Town and visited Betty's Bay to view African penguins before ensconcing ourselves in the heart of Hermanus at The Marine, a divine property overlooking Walker Bay. With direct access to the town's famous cliff top path, generally considered to offer some of the greatest land-based whale watching in the world, we sat amongst sunbirds, prinias and rock hyrax, as we gazed down on Southern rights below and across the bay. We took to the water every morning for a closer look at these migratory cetaceans who spend five months here breeding and giving birth. Apart from a wine pairing lunch at Creation Wines, afternoons were left deliberately free, facilitating the opportunity to relax or explore under our own steam.

We then flew directly to Hoedspruit, from where we transferred to Klaserie Private Nature Reserve in the Greater Kruger area, just 20 minutes away. Our base here was Baobab Ridge, a small, friendly lodge overlooking a waterhole frequented by elephants in particular. With our private guide and vehicle, we traversed the surrounding area on morning and afternoon game drives, searching for the Big Five as well as other predators, including wild dog and cheetah (the latter are considered occasional visitors through the area only). Spotted hyenas were the cause of much never-before-seen behaviour by the group, including being mobbed by black-backed jackals and wild dogs. We observed plain's game and other wildlife, and indulged in a little birding too. It is worth noting that we were exceptionally lucky with sightings, as wildlife is free to wander the entire Greater Kruger area at will.

All in all, this wonderful trip offered a relaxed pace in two contrasting areas of South Africa. With the potential to extend your trip in beautiful Cape Town beforehand and in Kruger National Park or at other private reserves afterwards, what is not to love? By flying back through Johannesburg, there is potential to branch out further afield too, visiting Victoria Falls, elsewhere in Zimbabwe or Zambia or even Namibia. Africa is your oyster!

Saturday 9 August 2025

Day 1:

With five clients already in Cape Town enjoying pre-trip extensions, Helen met up with the final member of the group at Heathrow airport in advance of their direct British Airways flight to the Mother City.

Sunday 10 August 2025

Day 2:

Arrive Cape Town, visit Betty's Bay en route to Hermanus

Weather: sunny and clear, clouding over late afternoon, 18°C

Arriving on time and into bright sunshine at 11.00 local time, we were met by Aaqilah, who escorted us to a minibus nearby where the group came together and we were transferred into the more than capable hands of our driver guide, Yusuf.

We set off for Betty's Bay, just an hour away, leaving the highway at Gordon's Bay and following the exquisitely beautiful ocean road, the Whale Coast Route, with the waters of False Bay glistening to our right. We arrived at Stony Point Penguin Colony and hit the ground running, as many of these utterly endearing creatures could be seen in burrows and under dense shrubs directly next to the parking lot.



Raring to go, we made a beeline for the beach directly in front of us, where more African penguins could be observed lying amongst washed-up flotsam, jetsam, and kelp. We were entranced. They snoozed, pink facial markings clearly visible, and all of a sudden, got up en masse as the tide edged ever closer to them. Standing up, they flapped their wings one after another, seemingly shaking off their slumber. Behind them, in the ocean and on rocks, we could see all manner of other avian life from Cape and white-breasted cormorants to Cape wagtails and white-fronted plovers.

We walked along, and through, a carpet of deep green succulents interspersed with purple and white osteospermums as well as beautiful arum lilies, before approaching a boardwalk where Egyptian geese hissed, African sacred ibis came in to land and water thick-knees power walked along exposed beaches. The terrain was mainly rocky, though, with cormorants, now including crowned and bank, lining the rocks that the ocean was thundering into time and time again. Some sat on nests, and many gular flapped to regulate their temperature. They squabbled endlessly, settling disputes generally by running each other off landing spots. It was pure comedy to watch!



Meanwhile, plump rock hyrax, as still as statues, sunned themselves on rocks or grassy banks, running away if we approached too quickly. We took our time, meandering along gently and taking in the plentiful pairs of penguins that were nesting, utilising small purpose-built, double-domed fibreglass constructions. We watched them rest, sleep and preen right literally right next to, if not within metres of our feet. They brayed, living up to their former name of 'Jackass penguin' bestowed due to their vocalisations resembling those made by donkeys.



An azure blue and turquoise-headed agama posed for photographs and the glorious, natural setting was simply a winner. With the wind in our hair and the sun on our face, we turned back, retraced our steps, and it was after 14.45 when we finally tore ourselves away and drove the last half hour into Hermanus. Passing a chacma baboon boldly walking down the roadside pavement in Kleinmond, we all agreed the afternoon had been a wonderful start to the trip.





First impressions were well and truly exceeded and smiles were wide when we reached our accommodation at The Marine. We marvelled at the views over Walker Bay directly in front of us. After sipping iced rooibos tea in the lounge, enhanced with honey and ginger, we were whisked to our elegant rooms, simply but beautifully furnished, all with sea views to boot. Deciding to settle in later, we crossed the lawn, dotted with common starlings, and set off on the cliff top trail or sat on benches to commence our cetacean search. One client spent the afternoon on her balcony, clocking up no less than four whale sightings! Well, you would, wouldn't you?!

We met up in the bar at 18.15 and shortly afterwards had a delicious dinner in the hotel's restaurant, The Pavilion. Climbing into our more than comfortable beds a few hours later, we drifted off into the land of nod. Our adventure had begun.

Monday 11 August 2025

Day 3:

Morning whale watch, afternoon at leisure

Weather: sunny and clear, clouding over mid-afternoon, 17°C

My word, Hermanus did itself proud this morning. I'm not sure our first experience on the water could have been much better. As we sat down for breakfast at 07.00, our view over stunning Walker Bay revealed a pinky purple sky, perfectly framed against the Overberg Mountains. While we tucked into the smorgasbord of buffet and a la carte options on offer (complete with Buck's Fizz and a Bloody Mary station no less), the dawn colours morphed into a clear, blue sky intermittently interspersed with clouds of stretched cotton wool.

Yusuf picked us up promptly at 08.15 as promised, and we drove the few kilometres required to reach Hermanus's New Harbour. We were welcomed warmly by the crew at Southern Right Charters, where we registered, signed an indemnity form, grabbed a coffee and were taken through an introductory and safety briefing by our guide, Jacques. Learning about Southern right whales and potentially Bryde's and humpbacks too, we set off at 09.00 with anticipation and excitement levels high, hoping to come across our first cetaceans sooner rather than later.



Our 18 metre long catamaran, Miroshca, complete with loos and multi-layered deck space, cut through the gentle but deep swell as we ventured in a south easterly direction across the bay in bright, glorious sunshine. We were wrapped up well against the elements and the cobwebs were certainly being blown away in the breeze. Half an hour later, we noticed the engines began to dwindle, and we scanned the ocean, hoping for a sighting. We got one with bells on! A mother and calf pair of Southern right whales appeared off the port side, let's say 30 metres or so off the bow.

No sooner had we registered them and their proximity when we heard an exhalation, even closer, off our starboard side. A humpback! Less frequently seen here as they are migrants through these waters, we couldn't quite believe our luck at two species in such proximity, let alone in such quick succession. We were lined up along the port side and remained there as the mother and calf Southern right pair were coming closer still. The calf was clearly inquisitive, and the mother appeared quite prepared to indulge her offspring. This was brilliant!



We watched as the calf rolled onto its back and rested its tail along its mother's back, revealing patches of pure white skin and even its belly button on its ventral side. Clearly visible, we could follow Mum's head, heavy with callosities, underwater before she rose to the surface to breathe. The resulting tall 'V' shaped blow temporarily distorted the clear air, and a rainbow emerged through the moving vapour. The calf dislodged itself, changed position, and turned 90 degrees to look back towards us. Over the course of the next 60 minutes, we watched this behaviour time and time again as Jacques provided numerous facts about these remarkable and mammoth animals.



The humpback had long since moved on, but we were completely absorbed and engaged in the Southern right whale pair. A Cape fur seal was spotted, and over time, it seemed determined to photo bomb every subsequent image we tried to capture! We all grinned at each other as we stood, leaning against the side bars, moving up and down with the wave sequence as the whales continued to rest on the surface very close by. Other Southern rights could be seen in the distance and glancing at our watches, we couldn't quite believe that it was 10.30 already. From the commentary, it became clear that we'd soon be leaving them be, giving us time to return to base, so we absorbed the moment, remaining on deck as long as it was possible to. When we picked up speed and departed the area, we were offered a ginger ale or Coke as we watched drone footage of our encounters this morning, and were advised that the video would be available to purchase afterwards.



Back on dry land shortly after 11.00, Yusuf transferred us smoothly home and we enjoyed a little downtime to go through photos and contemplate our first outing on the water. Rested, we met up again at 12.45 and walked the short distance along the cliff and down to our lunch spot, Bientang's Cave. Under umbrellas to ward off the sun, we sat close to shore on a rock cut platform and enjoyed catch of the day, calamari and Cape Malay curries served in mini potjie pots respectively. A pair of Cape rock-thrush joined us on the ascent back up afterwards and following the short stroll to Gearing's Point, we walked around town to get our bearings, with banks, pharmacies, restaurants and galleries being pointed out along the way.



Walking back to The Marine, we opted to enjoy the clement weather, perched on well-positioned benches overlooking the bay. We were surrounded by singing Southern double-collared sunbirds, Karoo prinias and Cape scrub-robins, to name but a few. We scanned for cetaceans and weren't disappointed to view two breaches as well as a mother calf pair lolling just offshore...Hermanus doesn't claim to offer the world's best whale watching from land for nothing! At the approach of dusk, a Cape Mongoose flew across our line of vision, vanishing into the bushes as quickly as it had appeared, and a lovely meal at a local restaurant, La Pentola,

finished off the day nicely. A number of us culminated our epicurean feast with flambéed strawberries. We were loving it here!

Tuesday 12 August 2025

Day 4:

Morning whale watch, lunch with wine pairing at Creation Wines

Weather: overcast, clearing to sunshine in the afternoon, 17°C

It was a breaching kind of morning! Heading out at 09.00 aboard Miroshca once again, we made our way towards some large breakers due east of Hermanus. Within just ten minutes, we found ourselves in the company of our first mother and calf pair of Southern right whales heading directly towards shore. Jacques advised that this is perfectly normal behaviour in order to take shelter and be safe from South Atlantic weather systems and swells, as well as from predators, namely and predominantly, orca. Although found along this coast, they rarely come into the bay, but if they did, it would be difficult for them to drown the calf in the four to six-metre shallows we found ourselves in close to the sand dune-lined beach.

The ocean couldn't have seemed more different to yesterday as the weak sunlight permeated through thin low cloud cover, which lent itself to a muted grey wonderland. The dark backs of whales shone through the soft tones as we gazed further along the coast and we could see one whale lobtailing. We continued towards another large adult and followed its progress underwater thanks to the fluke prints its tail generated. Aside from the odd breath at the surface, it largely remained out of sight, so we carried on, coming across another mother with her calf. Although there wasn't the curiosity evident in yesterday's youngster, they were clearly indifferent to our approach, remaining close by for half an hour or so, enabling us to watch their interactions in the opalescent atmosphere. A series of tail slaps later and we turned to re-position the catamaran. We faced the incoming waves head-on and to our port side, so did the whales. As the incoming wave reared up, we got perhaps the best view of their bulk yet as the receding water exposed the length and girth of the female in particular. She was a goliath. It was a tough choice. Try to photograph her or hold on tight as we traversed the wave crest. Sensibility prevailed, and as we braced with soft knees to descend the other side, we giggled with sheer delight. This was fun!

More whales surfaced, including two between us and another vessel, plus more beyond. Suddenly, there was a breach. As our adrenaline levels peaked, there was another one. Jacques encouraged us to keep our eyes exactly where they were and sure enough, we witnessed yet another. This was all happening to our starboard side, but not to be usurped, the youngster on our port side joined the show. Three breaches later, and we were all fairly high on life! Wow. Even the crew were ecstatic, and their enthusiasm was contagious.





Our time on the water flew by, and we reckoned we'd had encounters with ten or so whales plus a few Cape fur seals, too. It had been a fabulous yet very different morning from yesterday. We returned to port and had an hour back at The Marine to get ready for our lunch outing. At 12:30, full of expectation, we drove up the Hemel-en-Aarde (Heaven and Earth) valley, where our destination was Creation Wines. Little did we know, but we were about to experience what we termed a 'Creation Sensation'! Arriving in ridiculously scenic environs, the views of vines growing beneath Mount Babylon, marginally taller than

Table Mountain, were gorgeous. Walking through the statue and protea-filled gardens, a flock of sweet waxbills busied themselves on the lawn. Our junior sommelier, Amber, introduced herself and impressed us from the outset. Explaining how our wine pairing lunch would work, we could choose from an entirely plant-based menu or a 'regular' one; indeed, we could mix and match dishes between the two. We then set to work, making our way through a Viognier, Sauvignon Blanc and Sauvignon Blanc Semillon before tasting the reds. Pinot noir and Cabernet Sauvignon gave way to an ending consisting of Creation Elation (their sparkling offering) and finally a white port that was simply heavenly. Four hours later and we met back up with Yusuf, who delivered us home literally 60 minutes before the time of our dinner reservation at The Wine Glass! Needless to say, we rescheduled it for a little later, enabling us to walk the cliff top path once again in the hope of spotting whales, fur seals and birds before sundown. It had really been a superb day.



Wednesday 13 August 2025

Day 5:

Morning whale watch, afternoon at leisure
Weather: sunny and warm, 17°C

The day dawned crisp and clear and we set off on our last whale watch at 09.00 sharp. Sitting out on deck, we headed towards the breakers we were in yesterday.



Turning sharply out to sea 30 minutes later due to a blow being seen dead ahead, when the whale did not materialise after quite a few minutes, we turned around, faced the shore and noticed several more blows along the coastline. It was 09.40 and we were faced with a combination of solo adults and mother calf pairs as far as the eye could see. We held our position, staying with one pair for nigh on 40 minutes. We observed the female roll onto her back and support her baby as it rolled over her, paddle-like flippers held loftily in the air. A head lunge or two later, and then tails were raised, and as the sun shone down, the rollers pounded the sand dunes and we lapsed into a scene of

absolute serenity. Again, this whale watch was proving very different to the others as we contemplated our good fortune with the wildlife and the weather. It was glorious to be here.

Too soon, we left the ten or so whales in sight and headed home. The waves had picked up, and it was a little choppy, but exhilaratingly so, and we noticed our engines cut as we approached the harbour entrance. We were slowing too soon, so we scanned the water ahead to ascertain why. The reason became clear as a single Southern right surfaced and cut literally right across our bow. Pure and simple, this was a wonderful way in which to end our time on the water.



We were dropped at our hotel, gathered in the lounge to check in for our flight to Hoedspruit tomorrow, and then set



off on foot into town to find a lunch spot. Settling on Café 1904, we enjoyed a light meal and then set about the serious business of buying souvenirs. Soapstone whale tails, fridge magnets and ear-rings were purchased and we treated ourselves to an ice-cream as we strolled along the sunny cliff-top path home. A little downtime followed, enabling us to ready ourselves for departure, then we enjoyed the cliff top for the final time before dinner. A whale-watching boat could be seen out in the bay, complete with a whale to the left of it. It breached repeatedly, causing everyone to stop and appreciate the feat. Returning to La Pentola for another superb meal (who can resist a starter called 'Oysters & Bubbles?'), we all loved Hermanus.

Thursday 14 August 2025

Day 6:

Fly from Cape Town to Hoedspruit, and commence the Greater Kruger safari

Weather in Hoedspruit: warm and sunny, 28°C

The bush was calling, though. We had an early start, picking up breakfast boxes and setting off back for Cape Town at 06:00. We made good time and the sky shone pink behind us as we descended Sir Lowry's Pass, seeing the Mother City spread out before us. We were at the airport by 07:30, passing quickly through bag drop and security procedures, before finding a spot in which to relax before our flight. We took off on time at 10:30, almost flying the length of the Rainbow Nation, to descend bumpily over the Drakensberg Escarpment in order to land at Hoedspruit's Eastgate airport shortly before 13:00. Walking along the tarmac to the small terminal, the conspicuous pale green bark of fever trees lined our route and winter blooms of impala lilies were flowering gloriously. Gone were the days of the luggage train that Helen had talked of so fondly when she lived here, now replaced by a smart carousel. We met up with Nic, the General Manager of Baobab Ridge, who loaded us into a spacious nine-seater minibus for our transfer to the lodge. Just ten minutes later, having passed an elephant and a plain's zebra en route, we were queuing at Enkhulu Gate, the entry point for Klaserie, Umbabat and Timbavati Private Reserves.



Another ten minutes on the tar road later, with lilac-breasted rollers lining the telegraph wires, and we turned off into the bush passing blue wildebeest, southern giraffe, impala and a warthog. We were off! Indeed, there were elephants at the lodge waterhole to welcome us! Most of us went straight to lunch, a smorgasbord of bite-sized finger food including wraps, hummus, salad, and relish, after which we were shown to our enormous rooms for a quick turnaround before our first safari.

To the squawking of brown-headed parrots (we would get very used to them around the lodge!), we set off in our private vehicle at 15:30, with local naturalist guide, Devine, at the helm. Very experienced, we learnt that he'd started his career in Anti-Poaching and had guided at numerous reserves, including Manyuleti and



Madikwe. He soon began to point out wildlife, our first mammals being dwarf mongoose lapping up the late afternoon sun atop a termite mound. Birdlife was prolific, with Southern white-crowned shrike, Burchell's starling, magpie shrike and red-billed buffalo-weaver all making appearances. As we drove through the scrubby bush, wire fencing covered many marula tree trunks and Devine advised this was an attempt to deter elephants from ringbarking them, a process in which they tusk the bark to obtain inner nutrients, which can result in the tree dying. So far, unfortunately, it had been unsuccessful. Grasses competed with other trees, including bushwillows, magic

guarri, knobthorn, African weeping wattle and towering, flowering mountain aloe whose blossom provides winter nectar for a variety of sunbirds found here.

A pair of mating lions had been seen over the last few days and we made our way to their last known location, not far from the lodge. The female was nowhere to be seen, but the male, part of a coalition of five, was clearly exhausted, lying hidden in a clump of tall grass. We were able to get very close to him but despite our manoeuvring, he didn't lift his great head. He had obviously been very busy! We could see the outline of his profile and his stomach rose and fell with every heavy breath, but it seemed clear that he was unlikely to move much before nightfall, if at all. As such, we left him to his slumber and continued on our way.

Approaching a waterhole, we noticed grey go-away birds, southern grey-headed sparrow, three-banded plover and crowned lapwings. Once on the water's edge, hippos and a single crocodile could be seen, along with a pair of Egyptian geese with seven fluffy, adorable goslings. The hippos honked and blew bubbles, the colossal size of one male clearly visible on the surface. Waterbuck could be seen heading in our direction, but they were nervous, so we drove on, not wishing to influence their desire to drink, or not, as the case may be.

Elephants were visible beyond them, so we drove towards them, the distinctive backwards growing tusks on one female becoming a discussion point. Two little ones were with the small herd and one decided to try out its brave intimidation skills. We ooh'd and aah'd in appreciation as, with ears out, it tossed its head and squeal trumpeted, but far from being scared, we fell a little in love with him...especially after he lost his confidence and went running over to the safety of Mum!

A spotted hyena appeared in the road and we carefully pulled over, hoping it would pass directly by. It didn't, instead cutting across the bush only to walk into two young browsing elephants. We weren't sure who got the biggest fright but it was certainly the elephant who recovered first, chasing the hyena off on his way. Little bee-eaters flew around us, returning to the same perch time and time again, and as the sun lowered towards the horizon, we stopped for sundowners and, of course, obligatory G&Ts!

Once mobile again, dusk had fallen but we caught a fleeting glance of a common duiker and a flying kori bustard before complete darkness blanketed us, producing further sightings of spotted hyenas and our first scrub hare. As we approached camp, our last species was a cracker. Crouched by the side of the road was a Southern African wildcat. It sat obligingly in our spotlight, enabling us to capture its beguiling beauty on camera.



It had been a lovely drive and a gentle introduction to our home for the next four nights, but after dinner had been

served under the stars and next to a campfire, we gratefully fell into bed.

Friday 15 August 2025

Day 7:

Morning and afternoon safaris

Weather: mist first thing, clearing to sunshine, 30°C

Gathering for tea, coffee, and a selection of sweet treats shortly before drive, we set off at 06:00, wondering what the morning had in store for us. A few elephants were spotted, but they proved camera shy so we continued, passing hippos at a waterhole, distant plains zebra and impala too. Birding was fruitful as we added a pair of African hawk-eagles, a very obliging Burchell's coucal, Swainson's and Natal spurfowl, white-backed and white-headed vultures to our species list. More elephants followed, with one male walking right past our vehicle. Many of the roads were littered with elephant and spotted hyena tracks, and then we heard on the radio that a few vehicles were following fresh lion tracks. Our ears and senses pricked up accordingly.

As the sun rose, a cold mist descended and we all had a giggle when another radio communication suggested that we go looking for gorillas! We stumbled across our first steenbok, strangely chased off by a mob of crested francolin, and then, a slender mongoose. By now, we were in the area of the lion tracks, so Devine set off on foot with a tracker from another vehicle to try and find them. We waited by a small waterhole, sipping tea and coffee, when two kori bustards came down to drink in unison. We watched them contentedly and when Devine returned, he advised that he'd left the tracker still in the bush and summarised that our feline friends must be hunting due to the amount of ground they were covering.



We continued with our drive, coming across a small herd of inquisitive blue wildebeest who came close enough to have a good look at us while we took in their striking brindled coats, and then we stopped at the sound of gorgeous birdsong right next to the road. It took us quite a while to find the owner of the voice in the densely thorned vegetation, but we got there, finally identifying a white-browed scrub-robin as a tree squirrel busied itself below.

Once back at the lodge and following a delicious breakfast, the group went their separate ways. While some indulged in a little birdwatching from the lounge with Helen, clocking up blue waxbill, green-winged pytilia, Southern black tit, golden-breasted bunting, African firefinch and black-backed puffback, others went to unpack properly and settle into their rooms in daylight. Some walked around the lodge photographing banded mongoose and others gravitated towards the pool deck overlooking the waterhole, complete with lone terrapin, where a few elephants and a southern giraffe drank their fill as a small herd of impala passed behind them.

A pair of red-billed hornbills noisily reinforced their bond in an overhanging tree, and at 11.30, we and the two bulls remaining at the waterhole noticed a breeding herd approaching in the distance. They came steadily, slowly and surely, with the youngsters amidst them running at the last minute and rushing stomach deep into the cooling water. They flopped over, covering their little bodies as the other individuals scattered around the edge, drinking deeply. We listened as the sound of the water gushed from their trunks into their mouths, and heard their scraping skin as they used one leg to scratch the other.





We watched their interaction for over an hour and a half. Youngsters crashed into each other, rolling in the water and then the dirt. They also sought reassurance from calm adults, touching their tusks as trunks were laid tenderly and protectively across their backs, steering them towards the safety of others. Other individuals were chased and disciplined before our appreciative eyes. Observing the herd's antics was indeed a privilege and we watched in awe as they made us giggle, tugged at our heartstrings, and then disappeared as silently as they'd arrived.

Lunch was served between 13:00 – 15:00, whenever suited us, and we departed on our third vehicle safari at 15:30. No sooner had we left when we heard on the radio that two leopards were being viewed not far from us as the crow flies. We responded immediately and set off, coming across a huge herd of elephants, complete with some of the tiniest members of the family we'd ever seen. They were blocking the road and at any other time, we would have sat amongst them and enjoyed their company, but big cats were calling and thankfully, they were moved across our path relatively quickly.

We discussed the potential relationship of the leopards as we drove. Mother and cub, perhaps or mating pair? We heard it was a male and female, but as we entered the sighting, it became clear that we had two males lying in adjacent trees. What was this all about? There was grumbling between them, growling too, and we devised that the younger male must have killed the warthog, now stationary high above them, and that the larger male had chased him off it and was warning him to stay away. We positioned ourselves between the trees, but it was tricky to see them due to the branches. We moved forwards and backwards repeatedly, facilitating photography one row at a time where possible.

The younger male got up, stood for a while, and then slowly walked down the main sloping trunk of his tree in order to leap down to the ground below. Thereupon, he walked slightly away from us, crossed a drainage line, and flopped down into the grass. Our attention was now firmly on the larger individual high above us, but with a number of other vehicles waiting their turn, we couldn't hang around for too long.



Vowing to return later, we drove on, coming across a number of zebras causing a road block, and yet more elephants... they were out in force. We observed various feeding techniques and kept an ear on the radio as vehicles moved through the leopard sighting. Closer to 17:00, we returned to the leopards, approaching from another angle and driving through thick bush in order to try and improve our view.

The younger male was still lying in the grass, so we got as close as possible to the base of the tree where the larger individual was sleeping off his pinched kill. We turned off our engine and gazed up at him. He was huge. What followed next was an hour to ourselves in the company of this beyond handsome apex predator. He was lying side-saddle on a branch, which looked uncomfortable and we could see a slight bend as the branch moved in synchronicity with his laboured breathing. He stood up to watch a pale, single, spotted hyena sidle up to the base of the tree, which settled, then stood up, moved away, and called for backup. None came.



The leopard remained still. He looked up at the kill, licked his lips, and in one fluid movement, leapt higher into the tree to commence eating once more. We could hear the result of his powerful jaws on the bone he was crushing. We could hear him lick the skin to try and separate it from the meat. We could see chunks of sinew being stretched and gulped down once released from the muscles and tendons holding them in place. The hyena continued to wait patiently below for scraps, using its sense of smell to locate the odd fallen morsel.

The sun set and we produced a spotlight to help us watch both creatures as dusk fell. One more spotted hyena turned up, it too loitering at the base of the marula, and we stayed until after dark, leaving around 18:10. Inwardly, we toasted our good fortune at an absolutely incredible afternoon and we tried our luck with the younger male before departing. He was still stationary, sitting metres away from us in a ditch. My word, he was gorgeous. He got up, did a downward dog, then arched his back upwards in a luxurious stretch, and moved forward a metre or two, eyes fixed on his larger, more assertive rival. He sat back down. Perhaps it was a case of not biting off more than you can chew?



As we commenced our night drive home, a nightjar flew overhead while scrub hares dotted the road in front of us. We stopped to view a lesser bushbaby leaping acrobatically through a tightly branched tree, hiding its head regularly, then offering a tantalising glimpse of its huge, alluring eyes. A giraffe sat, resting in the grass, and then we pulled over to the side of the track to let yet another spotted hyena walk directly past us. We were home by 18:30, listening to the dulcet, yet incessant, tones of an African barred owlet as we washed down dinner with local wine or Savanna cider. We'd had a stonking first full day in the bush!

Saturday 16 August 2025

Day 8:

Morning and afternoon safaris

Weather: cloudy to start, clearing to bright sunshine, 26°C

Alarming helmeted guineafowl in the trees by our gate had us on high alert from the get-go this morning. We drove around our camp's perimeter fence, surrounded by elephants, to try and find out the cause of their concern, especially after we were advised on the radio that a leopard had been seen here last night. We had to stop due to a large female elephant squaring up to us on the road. Her ears were out, trying to intimidate us, but we sat quietly, and she lost interest, moving to feed and kick up clumps of grass that she wrapped her trunk around and tapped, to remove unnecessary dirt. Another dust bathed, one pushed a tree over, and one, strangely, knelt down on one hind knee and flapped its head from side to side.

Under cloudy skies, we continued on our way, viewing a brown snake eagle stationary in a dead tree and later, watching the sunrise through a marula tree, its branches held aloft over the savanna, soon to be laden with fruit once the rains arrive from November. A fleeting glimpse of a common duiker followed, but it was generally fairly quiet. That was all about to change.

On an open area in front of a treehouse camp, a spotted hyena approached an inlet to a waterhole and quenched its thirst. Another appeared perhaps a few hundred metres away and we set off for a closer look. As we did so, two black-backed jackals shot out of the bush and essentially began mobbing the unfortunate hyena. They continued to do so, nipping at its back legs and rump to the extent that the hyena had to sit



repeatedly to protect itself. Around and around in circles they moved, the jackals working in unison until their harassment paid off. The hyena ran, and the jackals trotted back in the direction from which they came, one clearly lactating. They had clearly been protecting their den site.

Buoyed by the interaction, we carried on, arriving at a waterhole in time to see a large male leopard walk along the edge, then ascend the dam wall and disappear down the other side. He was nonchalantly scent marking, scraping his feet in the soil and defecating in several spots as he went. We

tried to follow him but were unsuccessful in relocating him, so we stopped for tea and coffee in a large open area, passing a small group of four people on a walking safari with their trails guide.

As we re-boarded our vehicle, the same trails guide called to say she could hear impala alarm calling. We listened and immediately drove in the appropriate direction to try and find out why. Other vehicles had been following lion tracks and had caught sight of two highly mobile young lionesses so they well may be the culprits. We were very close to their location, so we sat up a little higher, straining our eyes and ears, hoping to pick them up. Suddenly, a young male materialised next to us. Yes! We followed him and one became two, and two became four as the two lionesses also appeared. They were in a high state of alert, staring ahead. We realised another walking safari was in the area and the male next to us began to vocalise and stamp his feet as he stared at them. Unsettled by humans on foot, four times he growled, the sound going right through us, before they all lay down and settled close by. Having followed them off the road, Devine now had to control the sighting, guide another vehicle into our location, navigate stumps, holes and broken trees, and hold the aerial so it wasn't in the way of photos. He did a sterling job!



We headed for home and enjoyed breakfast on the deck, starting with hot cinnamon rolls straight from the oven. Yum! We made our way to the waterhole in time to view a spotted hyena stroll up, walk straight in, submerge its backside and then walk off in the opposite direction. She, too, was lactating, so perhaps it was time to rejoin her pups as the sun was now high in the sky. At 12:15, four elephants arrived, drank heavily and mud bathed as yellow-fronted canaries, crowned lapwings and emerald-spotted wood doves flitted about conducting their daily business.

After lunch and a rest, Devine planned to find us a rhino. We sat back and enjoyed the ride as he drove us in warm sunshine to the area of the reserve he wished to check first. Briefly waylaid by long-billed cormorants, it was when we stopped to view fresh tracks for our target species that we noticed a white-backed vulture high above on its nest staring intently at the ground. We scanned the bush but could see nothing unusual, so we proceeded in the same direction as the rhinos. We intended to circuit the road to see if they'd come out of the block, but shortly after crossing a steep drainage line, we found a mother and perhaps a two to three-year-old calf standing in the road.



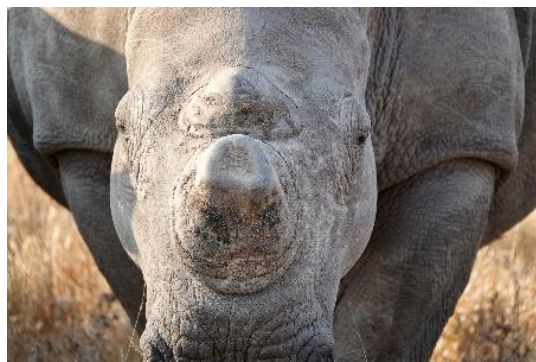
Behind them materialised a large bull that was immediately recognised and identified as a rather temperamental individual. Then a fourth, and finally a fifth profile appeared. We had another mother-calf pair and found ourselves in the thick of the crash.



obscuring our view of him.

The original two moved very close to our vehicle and stood silently contemplating us. Both red and yellow-billed oxpeckers skirted up and down their bodies, particularly favouring the back of the female's legs. Mum was clearly having difficulty keeping her eyes open, looking incredibly drowsy as her young charge grazed contentedly next to her. We repositioned to try and get a good look at the male with the other two nicely framed behind him. He stopped feeding, keeping his head low towards the grass, as he evaluated us. Eventually, he continued feeding, facing us with a clump of grass in his mouth before moving off behind a bush, thus

With the other female and older calf now before us, we were distracted by a high-pitched, muffled whimper as the calf tried to nurse. Mum ignored him. She didn't ignore the bull, however, and before we knew what was happening, she charged him, noisily. He snorted, his tail curled up on his back as he clumsily ran backwards to put a little distance between them. The calf began to cry again, repeatedly, until finally she acquiesced, and the calf literally knelt on all fours in order to suckle. This was a never-seen-before behaviour for the clients, so it was a special moment, and we were moved to silence.



The crash came together again, and now the two females got a little uppity with each other. They calmed down, though, and feeding resumed. The late afternoon light was magical, and all appeared tranquil, when out of nowhere came another charge! Rhino dynamics are clearly a little fickle. With bellows, much heavy breathing and noise, one female ran at the bull in an all-out charge, her calf rushing in next to her. Crikey, this was exciting. It was all over as soon as it began, and the mother and calf pair moved off into the bush. We followed and then realised that the others were coming up the road behind us, visible in the rear-view mirror. Having spent more than an

hour in their company and with the sun beginning to set, we let them be and made our way to a large open area for sundowners. Multiple bushbabies and a spotted hyena completed today's (rather marvellous) game viewing, after which we gathered in the boma for a braai under the Milky Way, once again being serenaded and as yet, still not seen an African barred owlet.

Sunday 17 August 2025

Day 9:

Morning and afternoon safaris

Weather: overcast with sunny spells, 26°C

A right old commotion just outside camp had kept quite a few of the group awake throughout the night. Spotted hyenas had been vocalising constantly and when Devine arrived at 05:45 to take our tea and coffee orders, he advised that he'd driven out into the open area between us and the staff village at 02:00 to investigate what the noise was all about. He'd come across two young male lions trying to fight off

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approximately 30 spotted hyenas who were after their blue wildebeest kill.

Needless to say, we boarded our vehicle quickly and hotfooted it over to the kill site around 400 metres away. Our progress was hindered by a steady stream of spotted hyenas crossing the road, complete with large scraps of meat in their formidable jaws. As the actual carcass was nowhere to be seen, we deduced that their contemporaries had already made light work of carrying away all remnants piece by piece prior to our arrival. Six or seven individuals remained, along with one black-backed jackal, and we watched as they stood head to tail with each other, lifted one back leg high and sniffed each other's genitalia. A recognised greeting technique, we also observed a large female slump down into the soil and younger hyenas come to sniff her, seemingly with deference.

The lions were nowhere to be seen, so we set off to search for them, hoping they hadn't gone far. They hadn't. We found them lying down one behind the other, their huge bellies distended to comedic proportions. They didn't lift their heads at our arrival, just casually opened their eyes and soon closed them again. As they were well and truly 'flat cat', we made our way back to the hyenas in time to catch one suckling, others grooming each other, and then a right old fracas between three individuals. Once again, being in the right place at the right time to not only watch wildlife, but to try to interpret behaviour was a winner.



We could hear vervet monkeys alarming, and we could see them leaping high through the branches of a distant tree. We therefore deduced that the male lions were on the move. Another vehicle picked them up, drinking from a nearby waterhole and at the same time, two female lions were spotted. All quite young, these were not the four we'd seen yesterday, but were identified as being a breakout group from a known super pride. We drove on, reaching a dam in time to watch baby Egyptian goslings startle a snoozing hippo as they almost swam into it! The male lions had returned to the spot from whence they had come, so we went to have a closer look at the females. They were

stunning. Not quite as full as the males, one of them moved towards the empty kill site, intently staring down the last remaining hyena. Two female giraffes kept moving towards her, aware that she'd lost the element of surprise, if, indeed, she had any desire to try for another meal.

It was approaching 08:00 am and having barely moved from the perimeter of the lodge all morning, we set our sights further afield to see what else the bush may have in store for us. Stopping to view the hidden hooked thorns on a sweet-thorn acacia, we disturbed a number of small LBJs in a tree. Checking them out, we added cut-throat finch and great sparrow to the species list, continuing past several wild cotton trees and then picking up on fresh white rhino tracks crossing the road. We drove on, searching for these behemoth animals, becoming sidetracked by tree squirrels and a Bennett's woodpecker. Shortly after 09:00 am, we could see our pool deck, with elephants at our waterhole in front of it. We were enjoying the change of perspective, looking towards the lodge, rather than the other way around, but found ourselves taking a left-hand turn on a road leading away from home. What was going on? Then it dawned on us. Ahead, we could see a raised viewing platform, complete with smiling, waving lodge staff on top of it. We were having a bush breakfast! Up the stairs we climbed, seeing our valley and the Drakensberg Mountains spread out dominating the westerly horizon. Although overcast, it was quite a scene.

Sated after fruit and yoghurt, a fry-up and muffins, we returned home and settled down by the waterhole. A greater honeyguide came to drink, but only Helen saw it so it didn't make the species list (we need two of the group to qualify each entry), unlike a bateleur soaring overhead a little later that was witnessed by the whole group. A spot of unseasonal rain fell, but it didn't last long and certainly deter us from our wait for potential wildlife that may pay us a visit. As the sky cleared, we admired the incredible iridescence of Burchell's starlings and two kori bustards walked slowly and deliberately past, as they do.



Following lunch, during which a Wahlberg's eagle circled above, we set off at 15:30 as usual, and just as one client asked Devine what his plan for the afternoon was, an announcement came over the radio that had us doing a U-turn and setting off in the opposite direction. Wild dogs! A vehicle had come across a pack currently resting near a waterhole 20 minutes or so away, and we didn't need to be asked if we wanted to try our luck. Aware they may get up and go at any moment, we crossed our fingers and held our thumbs (as is the South African way), finding ourselves at the relevant waterhole before we knew it. We could see a vehicle in the bush close by and watched terrapins sunning themselves on the banks while we waited for it to pull out.



As we entered the sighting, the smell hit us first. Puppies were dotted deep in the grass, just their ears and swishing tails occasionally visible. At our approach, they got up, performed downward dog stretches and then did long, feel-good back arches before moving a few metres and flopping down again. We could see a few accompanying adults as well as being absolutely gobsmacked (for want of a better word) at the presence of at least three hyenas literally metres from them. Devine explained that although unguarded pups would be incredibly vulnerable, with adults around, the hyenas were only interested in following the dogs for scraps should these

productive hunters make a kill.

Both species continued to rest in the warm African sun, occasionally getting up and repositioning as we did. We appeared to be in the company of five adult dogs and eleven pups who chattered amongst themselves while we soaked up the sighting. The adults moved intermittently, the pups always following suit, and at one point, when four of the adults got up, they almost stumbled upon one of the hyenas. All hell broke loose. Amidst the dust and a cacophony of vocalisations, the hyena got out of there as quickly as its legs would carry it. Yet again, we'd been in the right time at the right place to observe some incredible interspecific behaviour.

It was time for the pups to steal the show again, which they duly did when three of them grabbed a stick in their saw-like teeth and tugged on it in unison. As the golden afternoon light intensified, the dogs moved and we attempted to follow them off-road, with the spotted hyenas bringing up the rear. They settled briefly on a track, giving us superb photographic opportunities as six or seven pups grabbed a grass bale and pulled it like a rag doll between them. Around and around in tight circles they went, and we lapped it up. The assault on the senses as we watched, listened and smelt them was pretty wonderful. We'd spent an hour in their company, largely alone with no other vehicles present, and we thanked our lucky stars for that. For many clients, it was their best wild dog sighting ever. What more could we ask for? Not much...but it wasn't over yet.



As we pulled out of the sighting, impalas started literally flying ahead of us. They jumped, kicked out their back legs and covered more ground than we thought possible. They were already distant when we heard that the dogs were mobile. They must have seen them. We drove slowly, scouring the savanna to our left for signs of them catching up, but then heard that they'd settled again, clearly having given up the chase. Our adrenaline levels had certainly increased, though. What. An. Afternoon.

A little later, the sunset was a pink as the impala lilies that we stopped next to, and we tried to absorb what we'd just been privileged to witness. As dusk fell, a spotted hyena ambled past, and we disturbed a fiery-necked nightjar in the road as we started our night drive. We passed the area in which we'd left the four young lions earlier, and to the sound of honking hippos, they were still there, sleeping off their wildebeest kill with two lying on their backs, legs akimbo and letting it all hang out! We chatted animatedly about the afternoon's events over dinner and looked forward to our last drive tomorrow morning.

Monday 18 August 2025

Day 10:

Morning safari, fly from Hoedspruit via Johannesburg to London

Weather: clear with cloudy spells, 27°C

Lions were roaring when we finally spotted our resident African barred owlet shortly before departing on our final drive this morning. After, it proved to be a cat-tastic kind of day! Just outside the lodge, a spotted hyena lay right next to the road (the author realised that it was not a cat), barely stirring as we pulled up, said hello, and then drove on. Minutes later, we were next to a magnificent male lion, again, right next to the side of the road. He lazily stood up and set off in the direction of neighbouring Timbavati Private Game Reserve. It was almost a case of he called and we came. How obedient we were!

Turning back on ourselves, we approached a waterhole where a majestic elephant bull was slowly drinking, a scene steeped in timelessness which lulled us to silence. A steenbok fled and a massive hippo blew air into the atmosphere repeatedly, somewhat akin to its closest relative, the whale. It moved towards the elephant, as if to shoo him from his territory, and it worked as the elephant slowly and silently walked away.



Driving on, we reached the spot where we'd left the young lions last night. They were still there and were still breathtakingly beautiful. Two slept and two preened, licking their paws and yawning repeatedly. One of the females sneezed while a male impressively contorted his torso to lick his back just above his tail. He then stood up, pooped, and we hoped that this would be the prequel to them moving off. Our patience was rewarded as the females got up, greeted each other with a head rub and a tussle before ambling away. Being the only vehicle at the scene, we followed them, picking up on the sound of oxpeckers vocalising, possibly signifying the

presence of plains game ahead. Although the lions' bellies had reduced dramatically over the last 24 hours, they are opportunistic hunters, and you just never know what they may do.

The females took the bush route and the upright male walked ahead of us on the road, leaving the other stationary. He stopped, and needless to say, so did we. A minute or two later and with our attention forward, the other male suddenly came into view from behind, less than a metre from Helen's elbow, which was casually resting on the front passenger seat door. She grinned inanely as he walked past, so close she could have touched him. Wow, wow, wow! The lead male then reached the base of a tree, reached up for a glorious stretch and clawed the bark literally right in front of us. They all pressed on and we



drove ahead to try and catch them head-on as they walked towards us. We lost visual, though, eventually finding one female sitting down way ahead of us. Clearly, they had lost momentum as the morning heated up, so we left them to it and continued our drive.



20 minutes or so later and we found ourselves with yet more lions in a completely different part of the reserve. We could clearly see a large blond maned male asleep in the grass but our attention was caught by another sitting up further ahead. We proceeded towards him, parked up, and found him in the company of a female. No sooner had we settled down to enjoy their proximity when they got up and started mating not two metres from our vehicle. They were facing the rising sun, which illuminated their eyes wonderfully and it seemed that our lucky streak was well and truly continuing. After much grunting, it was soon over and they tumbled apart, growling,

and flopped down to rest.

We stayed with them as they repeated the sequence twice over. For the fourth attempt, they moved a little further from us, and at the fifth, she trotted away swiftly but he wasn't letting her go, matching her steps so closely, it looked as though he might tumble over her. The other male came closer, being watched intently by the loved-up pair, before lying down and returning to the land of nod once more. We decided to stay for one last copulation which took a while to happen. More rested before doing the deed, the vocalisations were incredible and it proved to be quite a spectacle.

Returning home, we passed two warthogs and two kori bustards close to the lodge. When we got back and processed our overall time here, we simply couldn't believe our luck. We'd been fortunate enough to experience something really special on every drive. We tucked into breakfast al fresco and prepared to check out. We then meandered over to the waterhole to do some last-minute birding and a proliferation of blue waxbills waved us off as we reluctantly set off for the airport. The bush wasn't done with us yet, though, as a leopard lay in a tree just off the side of the road and a martial eagle glided above this marvellous continent as they have done for centuries. Africa was waving us off in the best possible fashion, and if we were certain of one thing, it was that we would most definitely be back!

Tuesday 19 August 2025

Day 11:

Arrive UK

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Checklist for South Africa's Wildlife of Land & Sea



	Common Name	Scientific Name	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
	MAMMALS										
1	Rock hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
2	Chacma baboon	<i>Papio hamadryas ursinus</i>	✓								
3	Southern right whale	<i>Eubalaena australis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
4	Humpback whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>		✓							
5	Cape fur seal	<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>		✓	✓	✓					
6	Cape grey mongoose	<i>Galerella pulverulenta</i>		✓	✓	✓					
7	Plain's zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	
8	African elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Blue wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓
10	Southern giraffe	<i>Giraffa Camelopardalis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Hippopotamus	<i>Hippopotamus amphibious</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓
13	Warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>					✓				✓
14	Dwarf mongoose	<i>Helogale parvula</i>					✓				
15	Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓
16	Waterbuck	<i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>					✓				
17	Spotted hyena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Common duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>					✓		✓	✓	
19	Scrub hare	<i>Lepus saxtilis</i>					✓	✓		✓	
20	Southern African wild cat	<i>Felis silvestris cafra</i>					✓				
21	Steenbok	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>						✓		✓	✓
22	Slender mongoose	<i>Galerella sanguinea</i>						✓			
23	Tree squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>						✓	✓	✓	
24	Banded mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>						✓	✓	✓	
25	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardolis</i>						✓	✓		✓
26	Lesser bushbaby	<i>Galago moholi</i>						✓	✓		

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27	Black-backed jackal	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>							✓	✓	
28	White rhino	<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>							✓		
29	Vervet monkey	<i>Cercopithecus pygerythrus</i>								✓	✓
30	Wild dog	<i>Lycaon pictus</i>								✓	
	BIRDS										
1	Red-knobbed coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>	✓								
2	African penguin	<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>	✓								
3	Karoo scrub robin	<i>Cercotrichas coryphoeus</i>	✓								
4	White-fronted plover	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>	✓	✓							
5	Kelp gull	<i>Larus dominicanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
6	White-breasted cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
7	Cape wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>	✓	✓	✓						
8	Egyptian goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
9	Cape cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
10	African sacred ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	✓								
11	Water thick-knee	<i>Burhinus vermiculatus</i>	✓					✓			
12	Hartlaub's gull	<i>Chroicocephalus hartlaubii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
13	Crowned cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax coronatus</i>	✓								
14	Bank cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax neglectus</i>	✓								
15	African oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus moquini</i>	✓	✓							
16	Great egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓								
17	Yellow-billed egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	✓								
18	White-backed mousebird	<i>Colius colius</i>	✓								
19	Speckled mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>	✓								
20	Southern double-collared sunbird	<i>Cinnyris chalybeus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
21	Haded ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
22	Cape grassbird	<i>Sphenoecus afer</i>	✓								
23	Karoo prinia	<i>Prinia maculosa</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
24	Blacksmith lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Common starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
26	Cape weaver	<i>Ploceus capensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
27	Cape sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>		✓	✓						
28	Laughing dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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29	Common fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>		✓	✓	✓					
30	Rock dove	<i>Columba livia</i>		✓	✓	✓					
31	Cape rock-thrush	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>		✓	✓						
32	Cape sugarbird	<i>Promerops caffer</i>		✓							
33	Speckled pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>		✓		✓					
34	Cape robin-chat	<i>Cossypha caffra</i>		✓	✓	✓					
35	Bar-throated apalis	<i>Apalis thoracic a</i>		✓	✓	✓					
36	Pied crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>			✓						
37	Swee waxbill	<i>Coccopygia melanotis</i>			✓						
38	Red-winged starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>				✓	✓				
39	Red-eyed dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>				✓		✓			
40	Cape bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>				✓					
41	African grey hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>					✓		✓	✓	
42	Helmeted guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
43	Lilac-breasted roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	Brown-headed parrot	<i>Poicephalus cryptoxanthus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
45	Southern white-crowned shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitimens</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	
46	Burchell's starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
47	Southern red-billed hornbill	<i>Tockus rufirostris</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
48	Magpie shrike	<i>Corvinella melanoleuca</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
49	Southern yellow-billed hornbill	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
50	Red-billed buffalo weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>					✓	✓			✓
51	Crowned lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
52	Red-crested korhaan	<i>Lophotis ruficrista</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓
53	Three-banded plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	
54	Grey go-away bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
55	Southern grey-headed sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓
56	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
57	Cape turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
58	Crested francolin	<i>Dendroperdix sephaena</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
59	Little bee-eater	<i>Merops pusillus</i>					✓				
60	Grey-headed bushshrike	<i>Malaconotus blanchoti</i>					✓	✓		✓	
61	Emerald-spotted wood dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
62	Kori bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>					✓	✓		✓	✓

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63	Red-billed oxpecker	<i>Buphagus erythrorhynchus</i>						✓	✓	✓	
64	African hawk-eagle	<i>Aquila spilogaster</i>						✓	✓		
65	Fork-tailed drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
66	Burchell's coucal	<i>Centropus burchelli</i>						✓	✓		
67	White-backed vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>						✓	✓		
68	White-headed vulture	<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>						✓			
69	Natal spurfowl	<i>Pternistis natalensis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
70	Swainson's spurfowl	<i>Pternistis afer</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
71	Golden-breasted bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>						✓	✓	✓	
72	Red-headed weaver	<i>Anaplectes melanotis</i>						✓		✓	
73	Red-billed quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>						✓		✓	
74	White-browed scrub-robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>						✓			
75	Blue waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
76	Red-billed firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta senegala</i>						✓			
77	African firefinch	<i>Lagonosticta rubricata</i>						✓			
78	Southern black tit	<i>Parus niger</i>						✓	✓	✓	
79	Black-backed puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>						✓	✓	✓	
80	Green-winged pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>						✓		✓	
81	Cinnamon-breasted bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>						✓			
82	Arrow-marked babbler	<i>Turdoides jardineii</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
83	Cape glossy starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>						✓	✓	✓	
84	Green wood-hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>						✓			
85	Fiery-necked nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus pectoralis</i>						✓		✓	
86	Brown snake eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>							✓		
87	Yellow-fronted canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>							✓		
88	Alpine swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>							✓		
89	Brown-crowned tchagra	<i>Tchagra australia</i>							✓		
90	Long-billed crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>							✓		
91	Yellow-billed oxpecker	<i>Buphagus africanus</i>							✓	✓	
92	Cut-throat finch	<i>Amadina fasciata</i>								✓	
93	Greater sparrow	<i>Passer motitensis</i>								✓	
94	Bennett's woodpecker	<i>Campethera bennettii</i>								✓	
95	Tawny-flanked prinia	<i>Prinia subflava</i>								✓	
96	Bataleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>								✓	
97	Marico flycatcher	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>								✓	

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98	Crested barbet	<i>Trachphonus vaillatii</i>								✓	
99	African palm swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>								✓	✓
100	Southern masked weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>								✓	✓
101	Wahlberg's eagle	<i>Aquila wahlbergi</i>								✓	✓
102	African barred owlet	<i>Glaucidium capense</i>									✓
103	Chin-spot batis	<i>Batis molitor</i>									✓
104	Shaft-tailed whydah	<i>Vidua regia</i>									✓
105	Martial eagle	<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>									✓

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