



*Field Guides Tour Report*

**Namibia & Botswana 2014**

Feb 25, 2014 to Mar 16, 2014

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*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*The beauty of Namibia's Sossuvlei, home to the world's tallest dunes. (Photo by participant Daphne Gemmill)*

As we touched down in Windhoek for our 2014 Namibia and Botswana tour, we knew things would be different. Instead of a barren semi-arid landscape, we headed towards town with four-foot-high grass all along the roadside. There were similar scenes throughout much of the tour, and far more actual rainfall than we've ever had before. So, how did this effect the birding? Well, as on all trips you always miss a few, but we more than made up for that with an exceptional number of African birds being in their finest breeding plumage. A few nomadic desert birds were missing, but the numbers of woodland species and especially the cuckoos were higher than ever before.

During our first afternoon in Windhoek the Red Bishops were truly impressive, showing their striking red and black plumage against the deep green reeds of the local sewage works. Yes, like it or not, this is always a good place to begin, producing a nice selection of waterbirds (including our first Hamerkop), and a variety of other mainly bush birds, including Gray Go-away-bird, a stunning Dideric Cuckoo, the rather locally distributed Bradfield's Swift, White-backed Mousebird, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Pied Barbet, Pearl-breasted Swallow, Black-chested Prinia, Mariqua Sunbird, and Blue-breasted Cordonbleu.

After a night in Windhoek, we then headed to the Sossuvlei and Namib Naukluft Desert area, where the world's highest sand dunes stood not above the usual stark gravel plains, but over a far-reaching sea of grass. Despite the unusual conditions, many of the arid-country birds showed well, and all of us got great views of the endemic Dune Lark. Other highlights in this area were Ostrich, Secretary-bird, numerous Pale Chanting-Goshawks, Ludwig's, Rueppell's, and White-quilled bustards, Double-banded Courser, Namaqua Sandgrouse, Rufous-crowned Roller, Pririt Batis, Crimson-breasted Gonolek, Karoo Long-billed Lark, Tractrac Chat, Mountain Wheatear, Pale-winged Starling, and flocks of Social Weavers (at their massive haystack nests). We were now also seeing our first mammals, with thirteen Bat-eared Foxes feeding on termites in the daytime a particular treat, but also Yellow Mongoose, Mountain Zebra, and hundreds of Gemsbok and Springbok attracted here by the unusual abundance of grass.

Our next stop was at the coast in the Walvis Bay and Swakopmund area. Here, during a fabulous first afternoon we enjoyed uncountable thousands of flamingos, cormorants, and migrant shorebirds -- many only a few meters away. Three hundred and fifty Pied Avocets closely packed together were particularly impressive, but so were about 70 Chestnut-banded Plovers, and thousands of Curlew Sandpipers -- many showing signs of breeding plumage, as did the Black-bellied Plovers and Ruddy Turnstones. Another highlight was the very localized Damara Tern, but for most of us, best of all was just the sheer number of birds.

We then headed inland to a new area for our tour, a series of rugged ridges and acacia bush near Usakos. Our main target was one of the hardest endemics -- Herero Chat -- and we were all lucky enough to see at least one (of two) early on our first morning. We then spent two nights at a lovely tented camp in the nearby Erongo Mountains where in the surrounding granite hills, woodland, and acacia-lined dry river beds we added Hartlaub's Francolin, African, Black, and Pied cuckoos, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Freckled Nightjar, Violet Woodhoopoe, Monteiro's, Damara Red-billed and African Gray hornbills, Rosy-faced Lovebird (dozens at our lodge feeder) Rueppell's Parrot (becoming increasingly uncommon), White-tailed Shrike (just striking), Carp's Tit, Rockrunner (one of the most interesting near-endemics), and the handsome Short-toed Rock-Thrush. We added a few mammals to our list too, with Kirk's Dikdik (the cutest), Dassie Rat (the strangest), Roxy Hyrax (the most numerous), but most unexpected of all was a mother and young Leopard, sitting right along the main highway near Kalkfeld!

Continuing still further north we then enjoyed three days in the Etosha area where, unfortunately, because of an abundance of food, many mammals had

dispersed. However, we still managed to find a mother Cheetah together with her half-grown young one, an African Wild Cat, two Black Rhino, three White Rhino, Common Giraffe, scattered herds of Burchell's Zebra, Hartebeest and Blue Wildebeest, and thousands of Springbok.

The birding highlights included Red-billed and Swainson's francolins, a large flock of Abdim's Storks, three species of vultures, Bateleur, Tawny Eagle, the huge Kori Bustard, Temminck's Courser, Lilac-breasted Roller, Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill, Spike-heeled, Sabota, Pink-billed and Dusky larks,

Desert Cisticola, Bare-cheeked Babbler, Violet-eared Waxbill, and Eastern Paradise-Whydah.

A third drive, still further north, took us the Okavango River, which in this area acts as the Angola-Namibia border. As it's a very different habitat we were immediately seeing new birds, with just a few of the most memorable ones being African Pygmy-goose, African Openbill, Rufous-bellied Heron, African Jacana, Coppery-tailed Coucal, Woodland and Giant kingfishers, Bennett's Woodpecker, Gabon Boubou, Magpie Shrike, Hartlaub's Babbler, and Red-billed Oxpecker.

It was then time for us to head east and south into Botswana and the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta. Along the way we passed through the Mahango reserve, where Goliath Heron, Martial Eagle, and Southern Carmine Bee-eater were just three of the highlights before we took a boat downriver to the rather isolated Xaro Lodge. During two nights here we saw many new birds right around the camp, However, our main target -- in fact for some of us, the main target of the whole trip -- was the magnificent Pel's Fishing-Owl, and we all had fabulous day time views!

The final part of our tour was to take a charter plane deep in to the delta for a three-night stay at the renowned Stanley's Camp. Here we took daily drives in a specially adapted Toyota Landcruiser, traversing water channels as we passed from one sandy island to another. Running clear water, beautiful palms, stands of mopane trees, and a big sky are what make this area so special. But of course there's also the wildlife, and it was just fabulous to be out there watching Saddle-billed Stork, Dwarf Bittern, almost-endemic Slaty Egrets, almost-tame African Fish-Eagles, Wattled Cranes, a large flock of Common Pratincoles, Double-banded Sandgrouse, African Barred Owllet, Southern Ground-Hornbill, Dickinson's Kestrel, White Helmetshrike, Meve's and Burchell's glossy-starlings, and Yellow-billed Oxpecker. Our mammal experiences included a close Common Genet (spot-lit after dark), a Spotted Hyaena (right at our camp), a resting Leopard (lounging in a tree), five Lions (including a big maned male), five close big bull Elephants (remember the mock charge), plus all the other creatures that make this such a memorable place -- Zebra, Warthog, Giraffe, Bushbuck, Reedbuck, Topi, Wildebeest, and Impala, to mention but a few.

Enjoy a review of our sightings below!

--Terry

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#### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

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

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## BIRDS

### Struthionidae (Ostrich)

**OSTRICH** (*Struthio camelus*) – About 20 in the Sossusvlei area, and another 20 at Etosha.

### Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

**WHITE-FACED WHISTLING-DUCK** (*Dendrocygna viduata*) – Two at Mahango, and 4 near Stanley's Camp.

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE** (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*) – Widespread at a variety of wetlands throughout the tour; in all we saw about 220.

**SOUTH AFRICAN SHELDUCK** (*Tadorna cana*) – Sixty at the Windhoek Sewage Works, and 40 at Guisis.

**SPUR-WINGED GOOSE** (*Plectropterus gambensis*) – Two at Mahango, 1 at Xaro, and about a dozen in the Stanley's Camp area.

**AFRICAN PYGMY-GOOSE** (*Nettapus auritus*) – Great looks at this beautiful little duck at Hakusembe, and at many pools in the Okavango.

**YELLOW-BILLED DUCK** (*Anas undulata*) – Two near Stanley's Camp.

**CAPE SHOVELER** (*Anas smithii*) – One at Guisis, and 2 at Etosha.

**RED-BILLED DUCK** (*Anas erythrorhyncha*) – Small numbers at a variety of wetlands; in all we saw about 20.

**HOTTENTOT TEAL** (*Anas hottentota*) – One at Windhoek Sewage Works.

**CAPE TEAL** (*Anas capensis*) – Twelve at Guisis, 200 near Walvis Bay, and 250 at Etosha.

### Numididae (Guineafowl)

**HELMETED GUINEAFOWL** (*Numida meleagris*) – Fairly common in open bush country throughout the tour.

### Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)

**HARTLAUB'S FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus hartlaubi*) – We had great looks at this localised near-endemic in the Erongo Mountains.

**RED-BILLED FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus adspersus*) – Common and widespread; we saw a total of about 120. [b]

**SWAINSON'S FRANCOLIN** (*Francolinus swainsonii*) – One at Etosha, and 6 in the Stanley's Camp area.

### Podicipedidae (Grebes)

**LITTLE GREBE** (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) – Three at Windhoek Sewage Works, and 6 at Etosha.

### Phoenicopteridae (Flamingos)

**GREATER FLAMINGO** (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) – Many thousands at Walvis Bay - in glorious late afternoon light were a real treat.

**LESSER FLAMINGO** (*Phoenicopterus minor*) – As with the previous species many thousands were enjoyed at Walvis Bay.

Ciconiidae (Storks)

**AFRICAN OPENBILL** (*Anastomus lamelligerus*) – Three at Hakusembe, 40 in flight over the Namibia-Botswana border, and 1 in the Okavango.

**ABDIM'S STORK** (*Ciconia abdimii*) – At least 100 were seen in the open grasslands at Etosha.

**WOOLLY-NECKED STORK** (*Ciconia episcopus*) – About 50 in the Stanley's Camp area of the Okavango.

**WHITE STORK** (*Ciconia ciconia*) – One in the Namib Naukluft Desert was rather unexpected!

**SADDLE-BILLED STORK** (*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*) – Great looks at about a dozen of these striking birds in the Okavango Delta.

**MARABOU STORK** (*Leptoptilos crumenifer*) – Two at Etosha.

**YELLOW-BILLED STORK** (*Mycteria ibis*) – Six along the flooded airstrip near Stanley's Camp.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

**GREAT CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) – Six at Windhoek Sewage Works, and about 20 in the Walvis Bay area.

**CAPE CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax capensis*) – Many thousands along the coast from Walvis Bay to Swakopmund.

**LONG-TAILED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax africanus*) – Small numbers were widespread at a variety of wetlands throughout the tour; in all we saw about 60.

**CROWNED CORMORANT** (*Phalacrocorax coronatus*) – About 30 at the guano platform north of Walvis Bay.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

**AFRICAN DARTER** (*Anhinga rufa rufa*) – Three at Windhoek Sewage Works, 25 near Xaro Lodge, and 20 in the Stanley's Camp area.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

**GREAT WHITE PELICAN** (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) – About 100 at Walvis Bay.

Scopidae (Hamerkop)

**HAMERKOP** (*Scopus umbretta*) – One at Windhoek, and then small numbers daily from Mahango to Xaro and throughout the Okavango Delta.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

**DWARF BITTERN** (*Ixobrychus sturmii*) – Great looks at a bird right in the open near Stanley's Camp airstrip.

**GRAY HERON** (*Ardea cinerea*) – Three at Walvis Bay, and 2 near Stanley's Camp.

**GOLIATH HERON** (*Ardea goliath*) – Two at Mahango - the world's largest heron!

**PURPLE HERON** (*Ardea purpurea*) – One flew past Xaro Lodge.

**GREAT EGRET** (*Ardea alba*) – Three at Guisis, 3 at Mahango, and 1 near Xaro Lodge.

**INTERMEDIATE EGRET** (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) – One at Mahango.

**LITTLE EGRET** (*Egretta garzetta*) – Fifty in the Stanley's Camp area were by far the the largest number, but we also had a total of about another 30 at a variety of scattered sites.

**SLATY EGRET** (*Egretta vinaceigula*) – Fabulous looks this year in the Stanley's Camp area, where we saw about 25.

**BLACK HERON** (*Egretta ardesiaca*) – One near Stanley's Camp.

**CATTLE EGRET** (*Bubulcus ibis*) – Common and widespread.

**SQUACCO HERON** (*Ardeola ralloides*) – Two at Mahango, and 3 near Stanley's Camp.

**RUFOUS-BELLIED HERON** (*Ardeola rufiventris*) – Four at Hakusembe, and 6 in the Okavango Delta.

**STRIATED HERON** (*Butorides striata*) – One at Windhoek, 8 at Hakusembe, and 6 near Stanley's Camp.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – Four single adults at Xaro Lodge.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

**GLOSSY IBIS** (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – One at Etosha.

**SACRED IBIS** (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*) – About 20 at Johannesburg, and 4 along Stanley's Camp airstrip.

**HADADA IBIS** (*Bostrychia hagedash*) – Two flew over our hotel in Johannesburg.

**AFRICAN SPOONBILL** (*Platalea alba*) – Three at Etosha, and 4 at Stanley's Camp airstrip.

Sagittariidae (Secretary-bird)

**SECRETARY-BIRD** (*Sagittarius serpentarius*) – One at Sossusvlei.

Pandionidae (Osprey)

**OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*) – One on our boat trip from Xaro Lodge.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

**BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE** (*Elanus caeruleus*) – Small numbers were widespread in open country; with a total of 11.

**AFRICAN HARRIER-HAWK** (*Polyboroides typus*) – We saw a single adult near Stanley's Camp.

**WHITE-HEADED VULTURE** (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*) – Singles at Etosha and Mahango.

**LAPPET-FACED VULTURE** (*Torgos tracheliotus*) – Singles at Etosha, Mahango, and in the Okavango Delta.

**HOODED VULTURE** (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) – Two as we drove to the Stanley's Camp airstrip on our last morning.

**WHITE-BACKED VULTURE** (*Gyps africanus*) – By far the most common vulture with a total of about 80 at a variety of widespread sites.

**BATELEUR** (*Terathopius ecaudatus*) – Good looks at this gorgeous eagle at Etosha, Mahango, and in the Okavango Delta.

**BLACK-BREASTED SNAKE-EAGLE** (*Circaetus pectoralis*) – One of the more widespread eagles; we saw a total of 10.

**BROWN SNAKE-EAGLE** (*Circaetus cinereus*) – One at Mahango.

**MARTIAL EAGLE** (*Polemaetus bellicosus*) – We saw an immature at Mahango, and then 2 single adults in the Okavango Delta.

**WAHLBERG'S EAGLE** (*Hieraetus wahlbergi*) – We saw a white morph in the Erongo Mountains.

**BOOTED EAGLE** (*Hieraetus pennatus*) – A single white morph was near Solitaire.  
**TAWNY EAGLE** (*Aquila rapax*) – Six at Etosha, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.  
**VERREAUX'S EAGLE** (*Aquila verreauxii*) – We saw a single high flying bird near Guisis.  
**PALE CHANTING-GOSHAWK** (*Melierax canorus*) – Very common in the arid parts of Namibia; in total we saw about 45.  
**GABAR GOSHAWK** (*Micronisus gabar*) – We saw a single immature bird at Etosha.  
**AFRICAN MARSH-HARRIER** (*Circus ranivorus*) – Four (all seen in flight) over the reed beds around Xaro Lodge.  
**BLACK KITE (YELLOW-BILLED)** (*Milvus migrans parasitus*) – Two near the Erongo Mountains, 4 on the way to Rundu, and 2 near Mahango.  
**AFRICAN FISH-EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) – We saw a total of about 20 at wetlands from Etosha to the Okavango Delta.  
**COMMON BUZZARD (STEPPE)** (*Buteo buteo vulpinus*) – About 10 in the Windhoek to Solitaire area, and then a few singles elsewhere.

Otididae (Bustards)

**KORI BUSTARD** (*Ardeotis kori*) – Three singles at Etosha.  
**LUDWIG'S BUSTARD** (*Neotis ludwigii*) – Good looks at a total of 8 in the Sossusvlei area.  
**RUEPPELL'S BUSTARD** (*Eupodotis rueppellii*) – Great this year with a total of 12 around Sossusvlei and Solitaire.  
**RED-CRESTED BUSTARD** (*Eupodotis ruficrista*) – One near Usakos.  
**WHITE-QUILLED BUSTARD** (*Eupodotis afraoides*) – We saw these striking little bustards near Solitaire (3) , Usakos (1), and at Etosha (15).

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

**AFRICAN CRAKE** (*Crecopsis egregia*) – At least 2 adults were flushed along the flooded tracks in the Okavango.  
**BLACK CRAKE** (*Amaurornis flavirostra*) – Heard near Xaro Lodge.  
**PURPLE SWAMPHEN** (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) – Good views of 1 at the Windhoek Sewage Works.  
**EURASIAN MOORHEN** (*Gallinula chloropus*) – Four at the Windhoek Sewage Works, and 2 at Etosha.  
**RED-KNOBBED COOT** (*Fulica cristata*) – About 80 at Windhoek Sewage Works, and 100+ at Guisis.

Gruidae (Cranes)

**WATTLED CRANE** (*Bugeranus carunculatus*) – Nice looks at 2 a pair in the Okavango Delta.

Burhinidae (Thick-knees)

**WATER THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus vermiculatus*) – Singles at Etosha and near Shakawe, and then 8 in the Okavango.  
**SPOTTED THICK-KNEE** (*Burhinus capensis*) – Heard at Etosha.

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

**BLACK-WINGED STILT** (*Himantopus himantopus*) – Fairly common at a variety of wetland areas throughout the tour, with 80 at Walvis Bay being the largest single total.  
**PIED AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) – Three hundred and fifty together at Walvis Bay were a spectacular sight!

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

**AFRICAN OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus moquini*) – Three on the beach to the north of Walvis Bay.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – About 30 between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.  
**LONG-TOED LAPWING** (*Vanellus crassirostris*) – One near Stanley's Camp.  
**BLACKSMITH PLOVER** (*Vanellus armatus*) – Common and widespread at wetlands throughout the tour.  
**CROWNED LAPWING** (*Vanellus coronatus*) – Thirty at Etosha, and 4 at Mahango.  
**WATTLED LAPWING** (*Vanellus senegallus*) – Three at Etosha, 4 at Hakusembe, and 1 at Mahango.  
**KITTLITZ'S PLOVER** (*Charadrius pecuarius*) – One at Etosha, and 2 near Stanley's Camp.  
**COMMON RINGED PLOVER** (*Charadrius hiaticula*) – Three at Walvis Bay.  
**THREE-BANDED PLOVER** (*Charadrius tricollaris*) – Small numbers were widespread at a variety of wetlands; in all we saw about 25.  
**WHITE-FRONTED PLOVER** (*Charadrius marginatus*) – About 20 in the Walvis Bay to Swakopmund area.  
**CHESTNUT-BANDED PLOVER** (*Charadrius pallidus*) – Generally uncommon and localised, but we were lucky this tour and had about 70 close to the road south of Walvis Bay.

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

**COMMON SANDPIPER** (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Small numbers at Windhoek, Etosha, Hakusembe, and in the Okavango.  
**COMMON GREENSHANK** (*Tringa nebularia*) – Ten at Walvis Bay, 15 at Etosha, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.  
**MARSH SANDPIPER** (*Tringa stagnatilis*) – About 15 at Etosha,  
**WOOD SANDPIPER** (*Tringa glareola*) – Forty at Etosha and 60 in the Okavango were the highest numbers, but we also saw small numbers elsewhere.  
**COMMON REDSHANK** (*Tringa totanus*) – One at Etosha.  
**WHIMBREL** (*Numenius phaeopus*) – About 15 at Walvis Bay.  
**RUDDY TURNSTONE** (*Arenaria interpres*) – Eighty (including some in fine breeding plumage) at Walvis Bay.  
**RUFF** (*Calidris pugnax*) – Ten at Walvis Bay, and 5 along side Stanley's Camp airstrip.  
**CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Many thousands at Walvis Bay included a few in breeding plumage.  
**SANDERLING** (*Calidris alba*) – About 50 at Walvis Bay.  
**LITTLE STINT** (*Calidris minuta*) – A couple of thousand at Walvis Bay, and 2 next to Stanley's Camp airstrip.  
**RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus lobatus*) – Forty-one at Walvis Bay was an exceptionally high number.

Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)

**TEMMINCK'S COURSER** (*Cursorius temminckii*) – Two at Etosha.

**DOUBLE-BANDED COURSER** (*Smutsornis africanus*) – One at Sossusvlei, and 3 at Etosha.

**COLLARED PRATINCOLE** (*Glareola pratincola*) – Twelve flew by us at Hakusembe, and we then saw 3 at Mahango, and 300+ at Stanley's Camp airstrip.

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

**GRAY-HOODED GULL** (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*) – Four in Johannesburg, and 1 along the river near Xaro Lodge.

**HARTLAUB'S GULL** (*Chroicocephalus hartlaubii*) – At least 300 were along the shore near Walvis Bay.

**KELP GULL (CAPE)** (*Larus dominicanus vetula*) – About 600 between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

**DAMARA TERN** (*Sternula balaenarum*) – Can be difficult, but we were lucky and saw at least 30 at Walvis Bay.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – Rare in Namibia, but we saw 1 together with Sandwich and Common terns at Walvis Bay.

**BLACK TERN** (*Chlidonias niger*) – One at Walvis Bay.

**WHISKERED TERN** (*Chlidonias hybrida*) – Two over the flooded area next to Stanley's Camp airstrip.

**COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*) – About 100 at Walvis Bay.

**GREAT CRESTED TERN** (*Thalasseus bergii*) – About 50 at Walvis Bay.

**SANDWICH TERN** (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – At least 100 were in the Walvis Bay area.

Pteroclididae (Sandgrouse)

**NAMAQUA SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles namaqua*) – Twenty in flight at Sossusvlei, and then 12 right next to our vehicle near Solitaire, and finally 8 at Etosha.

**DOUBLE-BANDED SANDGROUSE** (*Pterocles bicinctus*) – Five during one of our game drives from Stanley's Camp.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) – Small numbers at Windhoek and Walvis Bay.

**SPECKLED PIGEON** (*Columba guinea*) – First seen in Johannesburg, and then at Solitaire, and Ahab.

**RED-EYED DOVE** (*Streptopelia semitorquata*) – Common from Hakusembe to the Okavango Delta.

**RING-NECKED DOVE** (*Streptopelia capicola*) – Very common and widespread.

**LAUGHING DOVE** (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) – Very common and widespread away from the Okavango Delta.

**EMERALD-SPOTTED WOOD-DOVE** (*Turtur chalcospilos*) – Small numbers in a variety of open woodlands from Mahango to the Okavango Delta; in all we saw about 20.

**NAMAQUA DOVE** (*Oena capensis*) – Widespread in small numbers, with a total of about 20.

**AFRICAN GREEN-PIGEON** (*Treron calvus*) – Good looks at this attractive pigeon at Xaro Lodge and near Stanley's Camp.

Musophagidae (Turacos)

**GRAY GO-AWAY-BIRD** (*Corythaixoides concolor*) – Common and widespread throughout the tour.

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

**PIED CUCKOO** (*Clamator jacobinus*) – Three between Outjo and the Erongo Mountains.

**LEVAILLANT'S CUCKOO** (*Clamator levaillantii*) – Two near Stanley's Camp.

**GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO** (*Clamator glandarius*) – One in the Erongo Mountains.

**BLACK CUCKOO** (*Cuculus clamosus*) – Two near Usakos.

**AFRICAN CUCKOO** (*Cuculus gularis*) – Three in the dry river bed at Okombahe.

**DIDERIC CUCKOO** (*Chrysococcyx caprius*) – Good looks at 1 at the Windhoek Sewage Works, and several others heard throughout the tour.

**BLACK COUCAL** (*Centropus grillii*) – Great looks at this often shy bird in the Okavango Delta.

**COPPERY-TAILED COUCAL** (*Centropus cupreicaudus*) – Two at Hakusembe, 1 at Mahango, and about 20 in the Okavango Delta.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

**BARN OWL** (*Tyto alba*) – Two at Halali Rest Camp in Etosha.

Strigidae (Owls)

**SPOTTED EAGLE-OWL** (*Bubo africanus*) – Nice look at a roosting bird at Sossusvlei.

**PEL'S FISHING-OWL** (*Scotopelia peli*) – Great looks again this tour, a single bird along the Okavango River near Shakawe.

**PEARL-SPOTTED OWLET** (*Glaucidium perlatum*) – Four near Usakos, and 1 at Etosha.

**AFRICAN BARRED OWLET** (*Glaucidium capense*) – Good looks at 2 singles in the Okavango Delta.

**AFRICAN WOOD-OWL** (*Strix woodfordii*) – Thanks to our local guide we saw a roosting bird at Xaro Lodge.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

**FIERY-NECKED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus pectoralis*) – Heard at Stanley's Camp.

**FRECKLED NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus tristigma*) – Nice looks at 3 calling birds at our lodge in the Erongo Mountains.

Apodidae (Swifts)

**ALPINE SWIFT** (*Apus melba*) – Three near Usakos.

**BRADFIELD'S SWIFT** (*Apus bradfieldi*) – Good looks at Windhoek, near Solitaire, and in the Erongo Mountains.

**LITTLE SWIFT** (*Apus affinis*) – Four at Windhoek, and 5 at Etosha.

**WHITE-RUMPED SWIFT** (*Apus caffer*) – One near Outjo, and 2 at Etosha.

**AFRICAN PALM-SWIFT** (*Cypsiurus parvus*) – Seen around palm trees at Windhoek, Etosha, and in the Okavango Delta; in all we saw about 80.

*Coliidae (Mousebirds)*

**WHITE-BACKED MOUSEBIRD** (*Colius colius*) – Fairly common around Windhoek, Walvis Bay and Swakopmund; in all we saw about 30.

**RED-FACED MOUSEBIRD** (*Urocolius indicus*) – Small numbers at Walvis Bay, in the Erongo Mountains, and then from Hakusembe to the Okavango Delta.

*Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)*

**MALACHITE KINGFISHER** (*Corythornis cristatus*) – Six along the river near Xaro Lodge, and 4 in the delta.

**GRAY-HEADED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon leucocephala*) – Two at Okakuejo Rest Camp at Etosha.

**WOODLAND KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon senegalensis*) – Three at Hakusembe, about 25 in the Xaro Lodge area, and 30+ in the Okavango Delta.

**STRIPED KINGFISHER** (*Halcyon chelicuti*) – Six during our drives from Stanley's Camp.

**GIANT KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle maximus*) – Some of the group a 1 at Hakusembe, and then we all saw 2 at Xaro Lodge.

**PIED KINGFISHER** (*Ceryle rudis*) – Extremely common in the Okavango area, and we also saw small numbers at Hakusembe.

*Meropidae (Bee-eaters)*

**WHITE-FRONTED BEE-EATER** (*Merops bullockoides*) – At least a couple of hundred were around Xaro Lodge giving us many chances to watch and photograph these beautiful birds.

**LITTLE BEE-EATER** (*Merops pusillus*) – Very common along the river at Xaro, but we also saw them at Mahango and in the Okavango Delta.

**SWALLOW-TAILED BEE-EATER** (*Merops hirundineus*) – Another beautiful bee-eater; they were widespread throughout the tour.

**BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER** (*Merops persicus*) – Three at Hakusembe, and about 50 along the river at Xaro.

**EUROPEAN BEE-EATER** (*Merops apiaster*) – About 150 at Etosha, and 30 in the delta.

**SOUTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER** (*Merops nubicoides*) – Not usually seen on this tour, so perhaps the exceptional rains helped us find 2 at Mahango, about 25 near the Namibia-Botswana border, and 8 in the Stanley's Camp area.

*Coraciidae (Rollers)*

**EUROPEAN ROLLER** (*Coracias garrulus*) – Six at Etosha.

**LILAC-BREASTED ROLLER** (*Coracias caudatus*) – Fairly common from Etosha onwards, including throughout the Okavango Delta.

**RUFIOUS-CROWNED ROLLER** (*Coracias naevius*) – Singles near Guisis and Usakos.

**BROAD-BILLED ROLLER** (*Eurystomus glaucurus*) – Two singles in the Okavango Delta.

*Upupidae (Hoopoes)*

**EURASIAN HOOPOE (AFRICAN)** (*Upupa epops africana*) – One near Usakos.

*Phoeniculidae (Woodhoopoes and Scimitar-bills)*

**GREEN WOODHOOPOE** (*Phoeniculus purpureus*) – Three in the Erongo Mountains, and about 15 in the Okavango Delta.

**VIOLET WOODHOOPOE (VIOLET)** (*Phoeniculus damarensis damarensis*) – One near Okombahe.

**COMMON SCIMITAR-BILL** (*Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*) – Two near Sossusvlei, and 2 at Roy's Camp.

*Bucerotidae (Hornbills)*

**MONTEIRO'S HORNBILL** (*Tockus monteiri*) – One briefly at Erongo, and then good looks at 2 north of Omaruru.

**SOUTHERN RED-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus rufirostris*) – Three at Halali, and then about 20 in the Stanley's Camp area.

**DAMARA RED-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus damarensis*) – Good looks at this fairly recent endemic 'split' between Usakos and Okombahe.

**SOUTHERN YELLOW-BILLED HORNBILL** (*Tockus leucomelas*) – Two at Etosha, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

**AFRICAN GRAY HORNBILL** (*Tockus nasutus*) – Very common from Okombahe to the Angola border and on throughout the Okavango Delta.

*Bucorvidae (Ground-Hornbills)*

**SOUTHERN GROUND-HORNBILL** (*Bucorvus leadbeateri*) – Good looks at a pair with a fully grown immature near Stanley's Camp.

*Lybiidae (African Barbets)*

**CRESTED BARBET** (*Trachyphonus vaillantii*) – Two at Xaro Lodge, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

**YELLOW-FRONTED TINKERBIRD** (*Pogoniulus chrysoconus*) – Good looks at 1 at the gate to Mahango.

**PIED BARBET** (*Tricholaema leucomelas*) – Small numbers were widespread in acacia country.

**BLACK-COLLARED BARBET** (*Lybius torquatus*) – Six at Xaro Lodge, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

*Picidae (Woodpeckers)*

**BENNETT'S WOODPECKER** (*Campethera bennettii*) – Good looks at 1 during our walk at Hakusembe.

**GOLDEN-TAILED WOODPECKER** (*Campethera abingoni*) – Small numbers at Okombahe, Xaro, and near Stanley's Camp.

**CARDINAL WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicus fuscescens*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**BEARDED WOODPECKER** (*Dendropicus namaquus*) – Another widespread woodpecker; we saw these at Okombahe, Xaro, and near Stanley's camp.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)*

**EURASIAN KESTREL** (*Falco tinnunculus*) – We saw about 20 of the resident local form 'rupicolus' between Sossusvlei and Etosha - they are often split as Rock Kestrel.

**GREATER KESTREL** (*Falco rupicoloides*) – Three near Solitaire.

**DICKINSON'S KESTREL** (*Falco dickinsoni*) – Nice looks at 3 singles in the Okavango Delta.

Psittacidae (Parrots)

**ROSY-FACED LOVEBIRD** (*Agapornis roseicollis*) – About 100 in the Erongo Mountains, and a few others elsewhere.

**MEYER'S PARROT** (*Poicephalus meyeri*) – About 20 in the Okavango area.

**RUEPPELL'S PARROT** (*Poicephalus rueppellii*) – One in the river bed near Okombahe - virtually a Namibia endemic!

Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises)

**WHITE-TAILED SHRIKE** (*Lanioturdus torquatus*) – Another striking near-endemic; we had great looks at about 8 in the Erongo Mountains.

**CHINSPOT BATIS** (*Batis molitor*) – Two near Stanley's Camp.

**PRIRIT BATIS** (*Batis pririt*) – Two at Guisis, and 4 in the Usakos to the Erongo Mountains area.

Vangidae (Vangas, Helmetshrikes, and Allies)

**WHITE HELMETSHRIKE** (*Prionops plumatus*) – One of our group saw 2 at Stanley's Camp.

**RETZ'S HELMETSHRIKE** (*Prionops retzii*) – Great looks after a storm at Xaro Lodge.

Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and Allies)

**BRUBRU** (*Nilaus afer*) – Three near Usakos, and 3 at Etosha.

**BLACK-BACKED PUFFBACK** (*Dryoscopus cubla*) – Four singles between Okombahe and Mahango.

**BROWN-CROWNED TCHAGRA** (*Tchagra australis*) – Singles in the Erongo Mountains and at Etosha.

**GABON BOUBOU** (*Laniarius bicolor*) – More commonly known as Swamp Boubou; we saw a total of about 20 between Hakusembe and the Okavango Delta.

**CRIMSON-BREASTED GONOLEK** (*Laniarius atrococcineus*) – Small numbers of these striking bushshrikes were seen in several areas of acacia bush throughout the tour.

**BOKMAKIERIE** (*Telophorus zeylonus*) – Two near Guisis.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

**RED-BACKED SHRIKE** (*Lanius collurio*) – This Palearctic migrant was fairly common and widespread; with a total of about 50.

**LESSER GRAY SHRIKE** (*Lanius minor*) – Another Palearctic migrant shrike; this species was especially common between Solitaire and Etosha; with a total of about 150.

**SOUTHERN FISCAL (FISCAL)** (*Lanius collaris subcoronatus*) – One at Etosha; this form is sometimes split as Latakoo Shrike.

**MAGPIE SHRIKE** (*Corvinella melanoleuca*) – About 20 between Hakusembe and in to the Okavango Delta.

**WHITE-CROWNED SHRIKE** (*Eurocephalus anguitimens*) – Two at Etosha.

Oriolidae (Old World Orioles)

**AFRICAN GOLDEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus auratus*) – One at the Namibia-Botswana border, and 1 at Xaro Lodge.

**AFRICAN BLACK-HEADED ORIOLE** (*Oriolus larvatus*) – Two at Stanley's Camp.

Dicruridae (Drongos)

**FORK-TAILED DRONGO** (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) – Common and widespread.

Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)

**AFRICAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER** (*Terpsiphone viridis*) – Singles in the Erongo Mountains, at Etosha, and at Mahango.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**CAPE CROW** (*Corvus capensis*) – One near Solitaire, and about 30 at Etosha.

**PIED CROW** (*Corvus albus*) – Twenty in the Sossusvlei area, and 6 near Hakusembe.

Alaudidae (Larks)

**MONOTONOUS LARK** (*Mirafraga passerina*) – Good looks at 4 along the road to Outjo.

**RUFOUS-NAPED LARK** (*Mirafraga africana*) – Singles at Halali, and near Stanley's Camp.

**SABOTA LARK** (*Calendulauda sabota naevia*) – Very common at Etosha (100+), and other near Solitaire (20), and Usakos (30).

**DUNE LARK** (*Calendulauda erythrochlamys*) – Really good looks at this localised endemic at Sossusvlei.

**DUSKY LARK** (*Pinarocorys nigricans*) – Two at Etosha.

**GRAY'S LARK** (*Ammomanopsis grayi*) – Great looks this year at about 10 of these near-endemic larks on the gravel plains near Swakopmund.

**SPIKE-HEELED LARK** (*Chersomanes albofasciata*) – About 20 at Etosha.

**KAROO LONG-BILLED LARK** (*Certhilauda subcoronata*) – One at the Tropic of Capricorn, and 2 at Achab.

**GRAY-BACKED SPARROW-LARK** (*Eremopterix verticalis*) – Nice looks at about 10 at Sossusvlei.

**RED-CAPPED LARK** (*Calandrella cinerea*) – Thirty on the gravel plains north of Swakopmund.

**PINK-BILLED LARK** (*Spizocorys conirostris*) – One at Etosha.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**BANK SWALLOW** (*Riparia riparia*) – About 20 flying over Xaro Lodge.

**ROCK MARTIN** (*Ptyonoprogne fuligula*) – Fairly common from Windhoek to Etosha.

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Common and widespread throughout most of the tour.

**WHITE-THROATED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo albicularis*) – One at Windhoek Sewage Works.

**WIRE-TAILED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo smithii*) – Four at Hakusembe, and 6 in the Xaro Lodge area.

**PEARL-BREASTED SWALLOW** (*Hirundo dimidiata*) – Two near Windhoek.

**GREATER STRIPED-SWALLOW** (*Cecropis cucullata*) – Six at Windhoek, and 4 near Usakos.

**LESSER STRIPED-SWALLOW** (*Cecropis abyssinica*) – Nice looks at this beautiful swallow at Mahango and Xaro.

**RUFIOUS-CHESTED SWALLOW** (*Cecropis semirufa*) – One at Mahango.

**COMMON HOUSE-MARTIN** (*Delichon urbicum*) – Six at Etosha.

*Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)*

**SOUTHERN BLACK-TIT** (*Melaniparus niger*) – Two at Mushara Lodge near Etosha.

**CARP'S TIT** (*Melaniparus carpi*) – We saw these localised endemics near Usakos and in the Erongo Mountains.

**ASHY TIT** (*Melaniparus cinerascens*) – Three at Achab.

*Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)*

**YELLOW-BELLIED GREENBUL** (*Chlorocichla flaviventris*) – Two at the Namibia-Botswana border.

**TERRESTRIAL BROWNBUL** (*Phyllastrephus terrestris*) – Heard (and seen by some sneaking in the undergrowth) at Xaro Lodge.

**COMMON BULBUL (DARK-CAPPED)** (*Pycnonotus barbatus tricolor*) – About a dozen in the Xaro Lodge area.

**BLACK-FRONTED BULBUL** (*Pycnonotus nigricans*) – Very common from Windhoek to Etosha.

*Macrosphenidae (African Warblers)*

**CAPE CROMBEC** (*Sylvietta rufescens*) – Four at Okakuejo.

**ROCKRUNNER** (*Achaetops pycnopygius*) – Another localised near-endemic; we had good looks at 2 near our lodge in the Erongo Mountains.

*Phylloscopidae (Leaf-Warblers)*

**WILLOW WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) – One at Hakusembe, and about 10 at Xaro Lodge.

*Acrocephalidae (Reed-Warblers and Allies)*

**ICTERINE WARBLER** (*Hippolais icterina*) – Two singles (one very nicely) at Okakuejo.

**SEDGE WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) – One in the reeds next to Xaro Lodge.

**AFRICAN REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus baeticatus*) – Singles at Windhoek Sewage Works and near Xaro Lodge.

**GREATER SWAMP-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus rufescens*) – Two in the papyrus near Xaro Lodge.

**GREAT REED-WARBLER** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*) – Two in the thickets behind Xaro Lodge.

*Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and Allies)*

**GREEN-BACKED CAMAROPTERA (GRAY-BACKED)** (*Camaroptera brachyura brevicaudata*) – The grey-backed form was fairly common from Achab to the Okavango Delta.

**BARRED WREN-WARBLER** (*Calamonastes fasciolatus*) – Four at Achab.

**RATTLING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola chiniana*) – About 10 in the Okavango Delta.

**CHIRPING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola pipiens*) – We saw two calling and displaying birds near Xaro Lodge.

**ZITTING CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola juncidis*) – Singles in the grasslands at Hakusembe and near Stanley's Camp.

**DESERT CISTICOLA** (*Cisticola aridulus*) – One near Outjo, and 2 at Etosha.

**TAWNY-FLANKED PRINIA** (*Prinia subflava*) – About 6 in the Xaro Lodge area.

**BLACK-CHESTED PRINIA** (*Prinia flavicans*) – Fairly common between Windhoek and Etosha; thanks to the exceptional rains this year many were in breeding plumage.

**YELLOW-BELLIED EREMOMELA** (*Eremomela icteropygialis*) – Singles near Windhoek and Usakos.

**BURNT-NECK EREMOMELA** (*Eremomela usticollis*) – We saw 2 very responsive birds just south of Windhoek.

*Sylviidae (Sylvids)*

**RUFIOUS-VENTED WARBLER** (*Sylvia subcaerulea*) – Small numbers near Guisis, Usakos, and at Etosha.

*Zosteropidae (Yuhinas, White-eyes, and Allies)*

**CAPE WHITE-EYE** (*Zosterops pallidus*) – The form 'pallidus' is often split as Orange River White-eye; we saw 2 at Walvis Bay.

*Leiothrichidae (Laughingthrushes and Allies)*

**HARTLAUB'S BABBLER** (*Turdoides hartlaubii*) – Common from Hakusembe to the Okavango Delta; we saw a total of about 140.

**BLACK-FACED BABBLER** (*Turdoides melanops*) – Four at Roy's Camp.

**SOUTHERN PIED-BABBLER** (*Turdoides bicolor*) – Three in the acacia country near Usakos.

**ARROW-MARKED BABBLER** (*Turdoides jardineii*) – Five near Stanley's Camp.

**BARE-CHEEKED BABBLER** (*Turdoides gymnogenys*) – Another near-endemic that we saw well; firstly at Halali Rest Camp, and then at Uris.

*Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)*

**CHAT FLYCATCHER** (*Bradornis infuscatus*) – About a dozen between Sossusvlei and across the Namib Naukluft Desert.

**MARIQUA FLYCATCHER** (*Bradornis mariquensis*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa striata*) – Widespread in small numbers.

**ASHY FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa caerulescens*) – Small numbers of this Palearctic migrant were seen throughout the tour.

**KALAHARI SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Cercotrichas paena*) – One near Windhoek, 10 at Outjo, and about 6 at Etosha.

**RED-BACKED SCRUB-ROBIN** (*Cercotrichas leucophrys*) – Four near Usakos.

**HERERO CHAT** (*Namibornis herero*) – We saw this difficult and extremely localised endemic at our new site near Usakos.

**WHITE-BROWED ROBIN-CHAT** (*Cossypha heuglini*) – Several were heard at Xaro Lodge.

**SHORT-TOED ROCK-THRUSH** (*Monticola brevipes*) – Four in the Erongo Mountains.

**TRACTRAC CHAT** (*Cercomela tractrac*) – One near the Tropic of Capricorn, and 1 at Achab.

**FAMILIAR CHAT** (*Cercomela familiaris*) – We saw about 10 between Solitaire and Etosha.

**MOUNTAIN WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe monticola*) – Four at our lodge near Solitaire, and at Achab.

**CAPPED WHEATEAR** (*Oenanthe pileata*) – Fairly common between Solitaire and Etosha; in all we saw about 50.

*Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)*

**GROUNDSCRAPER THRUSH** (*Psophocichla litsitsirupa*) – One at Okakuejo.

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**CAPE GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis nitens*) – Common from Windhoek to Etosha.

**GREATER BLUE-EARED GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis chalybaeus*) – Ten at Mahango, and 6 in the Xaro Lodge area.

**MEVES'S GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis mevesii*) – Quite common from Mahango and in to the Okavango Delta.

**BURCHELL'S GLOSSY-STARLING** (*Lamprotornis australis*) – More common and widespread than the similar looking previous species; in all we saw about 160.

**VIOLET-BACKED STARLING** (*Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*) – We saw about 40 of these glorious starlings at Etosha, and a few others elsewhere.

**PALE-WINGED STARLING** (*Onychognathus nabouroup*) – About 20 near Solitaire, and 30+ in the Erongo Mountains area.

*Buphagidae (Oxpeckers)*

**RED-BILLED OXPECKER** (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*) – Small numbers at Hakusembe and Xaro, and then about 80 in the Okavango Delta.

**YELLOW-BILLED OXPECKER** (*Buphagus africanus*) – About 45 in the Stanley's Camp area.

*Nectariniidae (Sunbirds and Spiderhunters)*

**MARIQUA SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris mariquensis*) – Widespread in small numbers; with a total of about 20.

**WHITE-BREASTED SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris talatala*) – We saw a female at Hakusembe, and then a gorgeous male at Mahango.

**DUSKY SUNBIRD** (*Cinnyris fuscus*) – Very common from Windhoek to Etosha.

*Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)*

**CAPE WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla capensis*) – Small numbers from Windhoek to Walvis Bay, and then at Xaro; in all we saw about 14.

**AFRICAN PIED WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla aguimp*) – Singles at Hakusembe, Mahango, and near Xaro Lodge.

**AFRICAN PIPIT** (*Anthus cinnamomeus*) – Fairly common at Etosha.

*Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)*

**LARK-LIKE BUNTING** (*Emberiza impetuani*) – Small numbers south of Usakos.

**CINNAMON-BREASTED BUNTING** (*Emberiza tahapisi*) – Two at Uris.

**CAPE BUNTING** (*Emberiza capensis*) – Six at Achab and in the Erongo Mountains.

*Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)*

**BLACK-THROATED CANARY** (*Serinus atrogularis*) – One in the Erongo Mountains, and about 30 at Etosha.

**YELLOW CANARY** (*Serinus flaviventris*) – Singles at Erongo Wilderness Lodge, and at Etosha.

**WHITE-THROATED CANARY** (*Serinus albogularis*) – Four in the Usakos to Achab area.

*Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)*

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Small numbers in a variety of villages and petrol stations from Windhoek to Walvis Bay.

**GREAT RUFOUS SPARROW** (*Passer motitensis*) – Six at Guisis, and 8 in the Erongo Mountains.

**CAPE SPARROW** (*Passer melanurus*) – About 100 in the Guisis-Solitaire-Sossusvlei area.

**SOUTHERN GRAY-HEADED SPARROW** (*Passer diffusus*) – Common and widespread.

*Ploceidae (Weavers and Allies)*

**RED-BILLED BUFFALO-WEAVER** (*Bubalornis niger*) – Small numbers at Erongo Mountains, Etosha, and near Stanley's Camp.

**SCALY WEAVER** (*Sporopipes squamifrons*) – More commonly known as Scaly-feathered Finch; we saw 5 near Outjo, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

**WHITE-BROWED SPARROW-WEAVER** (*Plocepasser mahali*) – Widespread at a variety of scattered sites in acacia country; we saw a total of about 200.

**SOCIAL WEAVER** (*Philetairus socius*) – About 300 in the Solitaire area, and 100+ at Etosha.

**RED-HEADED WEAVER** (*Anaplectes rubriceps*) – We saw a pair at our lunch stop just outside Etosha.

**HOLUB'S GOLDEN-WEAVER** (*Ploceus xanthops*) – Two at Hakusembe, and then about 20 around Xaro Lodge.

**SOUTHERN BROWN-THROATED WEAVER** (*Ploceus xanthopterus*) – Can be difficult, but we were lucky and saw 2 males and a female on a boat trip from Xaro Lodge.

**SOUTHERN MASKED-WEAVER** (*Ploceus velatus*) – Very common from Windhoek to Etosha, with a total of about 600.

**CHESTNUT WEAVER** (*Ploceus rubiginosus*) – About 100 were nest building along the road to the Erongo Mountains.

**RED BISHOP** (*Euplectes orix*) – Most common at Windhoek Sewage Works (80), but we also saw a few at Etosha, Hakusembe, and in the Okavango.

**YELLOW-CROWNED BISHOP** (*Euplectes afer*) – Good looks at 10 males in breeding plumage near Namutoni in Etosha.

**FAN-TAILED WIDOWBIRD** (*Euplectes axillaris*) – One at Mahango, and about 30 in the Xaro Lodge area.

*Estrildidae (Waxbills and Allies)*

**COMMON WAXBILL** (*Estrilda astrild*) – Six at Mahango, and 10 near Stanley's Camp.

**BLUE-BREASTED CORDONBLEU** (*Uraeginthus angolensis*) – Small numbers at Windhoek, Etosha, and in the Okavango.

**VIOLET-EARED WAXBILL** (*Granatina granatina*) – We saw a gorgeous male at Etosha.

**GREEN-WINGED PYTILIA** (*Pytilia melba*) – Single males at the Erongo Mountains and Etosha.

**RED-HEADED FINCH** (*Amadina erythrocephala*) – Surprisingly few this year, with just 2 near Usakos, and 1 at Etosha.

*Viduidae (Indigobirds)*

**PIN-TAILED WHYDAH** (*Vidua macroura*) – Nice looks at displaying males in breeding plumage at Xaro Lodge, and near Stanley's Camp.

**EASTERN PARADISE-WHYDAH** (*Vidua paradisaea*) – Males in breeding plumage (just spectacular) were seen at Uris, and near Stanley's Camp.

**SHAFT-TAILED WHYDAH** (*Vidua regia*) – Another spectacular whydah; we saw these at Guisis, Hohenstein Lodge, and at Etosha.

**VILLAGE INDIGOBIRD** (*Vidua chalybeata*) – Single males at Hakusembe, and Xaro Lodge.

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## MAMMALS

**PETERS' EPAULETED FRUIT BAT** (*Epomophorus crypturus*) – One at Stanley's Camp.

**BLACK-FACED VERVET MONKEY** (*Cercopithecus aethiops*) – Small numbers at Mahango, and in the Okavango.

**CHACMA BABOON** (*Papio ursinus*) – Fairly common and widespread; in all we saw about 140.

**CAPE GROUND SQUIRREL** (*Xerus inaurius*) – About a dozen at Solitaire, and 6 at Etosha.

**TREE SQUIRREL** (*Paraxerus cepapi*) – About 50 at Etosha, and 30+ in the Okavango.

**FOUR-STRIPED GRASS MOUSE** (*Rhabdomys pumilio*) – Three at Sossusvlei.

**DASSIE RAT** (*Petromus typicus*) – Two at the Tropic of Capricorn, and 4 at Erongo Wilderness Lodge.

**BLACK-BACKED JACKAL** (*Canis mesomelas*) – Sixteen were seen at various sites between Windhoek and Etosha.

**BAT-EARED FOX** (*Otocyon megalotis*) – Great looks at 13 feeding in the desert on termites at Sossusvlei.

**COMMON (SMALL-SPOTTED) GENET** (*Genetta genetta*) – Good looks during an evening drive near Stanley's Camp.

**BANDED MONGOOSE** (*Mungos mungo*) – Six at Etosha, and 3 near Stanley's Camp.

**YELLOW MONGOOSE** (*Cynictis penicillata*) – Two at Solitaire (together with Cape Ground Squirrels).

**SPOTTED HYAENA** (*Crocuta crocuta*) – One, right at Stanley's Camp.

**AFRICAN WILD CAT** (*Felis silvestris*) – One at the Halali Rest Camp in Etosha.

**LEOPARD** (*Panthera pardus*) – An adult female and a young one were right beside the main road just south of Kalkfeld, and then we had great looks at one in a tree near Stanley's Camp.

**LION** (*Panthera leo*) – We had very close looks (10 mtrs.) at a beautiful male, and 2 females and 2 half grown young, on a drive from Stanley's Camp.

**CHEETAH** (*Acinonyx jubatus*) – We saw a female and a young one to the east of Halali at Etosha.

**AFRICAN ELEPHANT** (*Loxodonta africana*) – Perhaps due to rain, it seems many had dispersed to drier areas and we saw surprisingly few; 6 from our charter plane over the Okavango Delta was the first sighting for some, but a group of 5 bulls near Stanley's Camp (including 1 making a mock charge) was a real treat for the rest of us.

**ROCK HYRAX** (*Procavia capensis*) – A few on the way to Solitaire, and then dozen in the Erongo Mountains.

**MOUNTAIN ZEBRA** (*Equus zebra*) – Fabulous looks this year at up to about 50 in the Namib Naukluft Desert.

**BURCHELL'S ZEBRA** (*Equus burchelli*) – We saw about 300 at Etosha, 9 at Mahango, and 40-50 in the Stanley's Camp area.

**BLACK RHINOCEROS** (*Diceros bicornis*) – We saw 2 of these now seriously endangered rhino's at Etosha.

**WHITE RHINOCEROS** (*Ceratotherium simum*) – Two (very close) and then 1 (distantly) at Etosha.

**WARTHOG** (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*) – Twenty at Etosha, and about 100 in the Stanley's Camp area.

**HIPPOPOTAMUS** (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) – Heard at Xaro Lodge, and then 4 were seen from the small plane as we flew over the Okavango Delta.

**COMMON GIRAFFE** (*Giraffa camelopardalis*) – Twenty-five at Etosha, 20 at Mahango, and about 60 in the Stanley's Camp area.

**BUSHBUCK** (*Tragelaphus scriptus*) – One at Xaro, and 2 at Stanley's Camp.

**GREATER KUDU** (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) – Singles were seen at the Tropic of Capricorn, near Outjo, at Mahango, and near Stanley's Camp.

**LECHWE** (*Kobus leche*) – About 60 on floodplain at Mahango, and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

**REEDBUCK** (*Redunca arundinum*) – Two singles in the Stanley's Camp area.

**GEMSBOK** (*Oryx gazella*) – About 400 in the Namib Naukluft Desert (including Sossusvlei), and then 7 near Usakos, and 50+ at Etosha.

**TOPI** (*Damaliscus lunatus*) – Five in the Okavango Delta; the form here is often split from the East African form and known as Tsessebe.

**HARTEBEEST (KONGONI)** (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*) – More commonly known as Red Hartebeest; we saw about 50 at Etosha.

**BLUE WILDEBEEST** (*Connochaetes taurinus*) – About 50 at Etosha, and 40 in the Stanley's Camp area.

**KLIPSPRINGER** (*Oreotragus oreotragus*) – Two on the rocks at Gaub Pass.

**STEENBOK** (*Raphicerus campestris*) – Singles near the Erongo Mountains and Stanley's Camp.

**KIRK'S DIK-DIK** (*Modoqua kirki*) – Two at the Erongo Mountains, and a couple of males (dramatically fighting) at Etosha.

**IMPALA** (*Aepyceros malampus*) – First seen at near Usakos, and then at Etosha (50), and then at Mahango (300), and finally in the Okavango Delta (350+).

**SPRINGBOK** (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) – About 650 in the Sossusvlei area, and then several thousand at Etosha.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The following reptiles were seen on the tour:

Namibian Rock Agama; about 40 in the Erongo Mountains.

Tropical House Gecko; widespread in small numbers.

Water Monitor; 1 at Mahango.

Nile Crocodile; 2 at Xaro (included one really close huge one), and 1 near Stanley's Camp.

Mozambique Spitting Cobra; some of the group saw 1 at Stanley's Camp.

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**Totals for the tour: 331 bird taxa and 39 mammal taxa**