

# SYSTEMATIC LIST

By John van der Dol

The nomenclature used in the following list is that used by Sinclair, Hockey and Tarboton in “Sasol Birds of Southern Africa” Third Edition 2002 published by Struik.

(E) denotes endemic to South Africa

**Common Ostrich** *Struthio camelus*

Seen on many days in the Western Cape but all are of dubious origin

**African Penguin** *Spheniscus demersus*

An estimate of 1200 at Boulders Beach were followed by smaller numbers out at sea

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Small numbers at suitable locations

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*

Seen only in the West with numbers under ten but there were 50 in the Langebaan Lagoon area

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Small numbers but 120 were noted at Richards Bay

**Shy Albatross** *Diomedea cauta*

Six on the pelagic off the Cape of Good Hope

**Black-browed Albatross** *Diomedea melanophris*

About ten birds consisting of mainly juvenile birds on the pelagic

**Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross** *Diomedea chlorohynchos*

Eight were seen on the pelagic

**Southern Giant Petrel** *Macronectes giganteus*

About ten were seen mostly following our boat

**Northern Giant Petrel** *Macronectes halli*

Just two were identified from the boat on the pelagic

**Pintado Petrel** *Daption capense*

About twenty was the estimate for this beautiful seabird

**White-chinned Petrel** *Procellaria aequinoctialis*

The biggest and one of the commonest petrel of the region. About 200 were estimated

**Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea*

A single on the pelagic

**Great Shearwater** *Puffinus gravis*

The most species on the trip with 600+ being estimated

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*  
About 100 were noted

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*  
Two were seen on the pelagic

**Wilson's Storm Petrel** *Oceanites oceanites*  
Just one was seen hovering near our boat on the pelagic

**Great White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*  
Fifteen and two singles on the Cape and three with a flock of the next species at St Lucia in Natal

**Pink-backed Pelican** *Pelecanus rufescens*  
A single increased to 11 by the following day at the St Lucia estuary

**Cape Gannet** *Morus capensis*  
Common along Cape coasts

**White-breasted Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax lucidus*  
Small numbers throughout

**Bank Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax neglectus*  
Common in coastal waters in the Cape

**Cape Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax capensis*  
Very numerous in the Cape with a guess of 2000 at the Cape itself

**Reed Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax africanus*  
Up to six on seven dates on both sides of the continent

**Crowned Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax coronatus*  
A dozen at Kommetjie was followed by three at Robben Island

**African Darter** *Anhinga rufa*  
Small numbers in the west and a single in the east

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*  
Up to three a day throughout

**Black-headed Heron** *Ardea melanocephala*  
Up to six throughout

**Goliath Heron** *Ardea goliath*  
Two at St Lucia were followed by five there the next day

**Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

One or two on seven dates

**Great Egret** *Casmerodius albus*  
Just two singles in Natal

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*  
One or two on four dates in the Cape only

**Yellow-billed Egret** *Egretta intermedia*  
Up to three on four dates

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*  
Commonly encountered in all suitable areas

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*  
Just four at Richards Bay

**Green-backed Heron** *Butorides striatus*  
A single from the bridge near Shakaland was the only record

**Black-crowned Night Heron** *Nycticorax nycticorax*  
Two at Strandfontein sewage works and a sub-adult at the bridge near Shakaland

**Little Bittern** *Ixobrychus minutus*  
Two singles in the Cape and three at Bonamanzi

**Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta*  
A single at Mkhuze was the only record

**Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra*  
One high in the Sani Pass Mountains may well have been the same as seen the next morning at Creighton

**Woolly-necked Stork** *Ciconia episcopus*  
Between ten and 30 on four dates in the east

**African Openbill** *Anastomus lamelligerus*  
A single at Mkhuze completes the family set for most of our group

**Marabou Stork** *Leptoptilos crumeniferus*  
A dozen of these beauties were encountered at Mkhuze

**Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis*  
Two at Mkhuze and a single at St Lucia

**African Sacred Ibis** *Threskiornis aethiopicus*  
Commonly found throughout

**Southern Bald Ibis** *Geronticus calvus* (E)

Nine, high on the plateau at 10,000 ft in Lesotho, came as a bit of a surprise to most and is a nice addition to our Lesotho bird list

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Up to 40 in the Cape but only a single in the east

**Hadedda Ibis** *Bostrychia hagedash*

Commonly found in both urban and rural locations

**African Spoonbill** *Platalea alba*

Seen on both sides with a maximum of 18 in the West Coast National Park

**Greater Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Seen on four dates with numbers not exceeding 70

**Lesser Flamingo** *Phoenicopterus minor*

A flock of about 50 was seen on two dates at Langebaan

**White-faced Duck** *Dendrocygna viduata*

A single at Creighton was followed by two in the St Lucia estuary

**White-backed Duck** *Thalassornis leuconotus*

A pair on a lagoon on the Cape coast was the only sighting

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

A very common species and would have been best restricted to the Nile Delta

**South African Shelduck** *Tadorna cana*

Two dates in the Cape with counts of 30 and six

**Yellow-billed Duck** *Anas undulata*

Reasonably common on both sides

**African Black Duck** *Anas sparsa*

Three in a stream outside the Belmont Hotel in Ceres were the only record

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Could not get away without seeing at least one pair on the banks of the Berg River

**Cape Teal** *Anas capensis*

Three hundred at the Strandfontein sewage works were the only record

**Hottentot Teal** *Anas hottentota*

Five birds at range against the light were hardly satisfactory

**Red-billed Teal** *Anas erythrorhyncha*

Two at the Strandfontein sewage works were followed by another eight at Richards Bay

**Cape Shoveler** *Anas smithii*

Forty at the sewage works and two twos thereafter all in the Cape

**Southern Pochard** *Netta erythrophthalma*

Six at the sewage works, four up north and a single in the east

**African Pygmy Goose** *Nettapus auritus*

Two parties of three at Richards Bay

**Spur-winged Goose** *Plectropterus gambensis*

Commonly found throughout in small numbers but about 100 were recorded in the Berg River area

**Maccoa Duck** *Oxyura maccoa*

Eighteen at Strandfontein sewage plant were followed by three en route to the Tanqua

**Secretarybird** *Sagittarius serpentarius*

Fantastic and prolonged views were obtained of this amazing species as it walked up the hill a few miles south of Creighton

**Lammergeier** *Gypaetus barbatus*

Excellent views were had of two different singles at Sani Pass in the Drakensberg Mountains

**Cape Vulture** *Gyps coprotheres*

Fifteen at Sani Pass were followed by another six the following day in the mountains just north from there

**African White-backed Vulture** *Gyps africanus*

A dozen or so at Mkhuze were the only records

**Lappet-faced Vulture** *Torgos tracheliotus*

Three in a mixed party with the previous species were unfortunately a little distant

**Yellow-billed Kite** *Milvus aegyptius*

Commonly seen virtually daily in all areas

**Black-shouldered Kite** *Elanus caeruleus*

Up to six on eight days on both sides

**African Cuckoo-Hawk** *Aviceda cuculoides*

After much discussion a perched bird at Bonamanzi proved to be of this quite uncommon species

**Verreaux's Eagle** *Aquila verreauxii*

The first two were seen at Rooi Els, then a male at the West Coast National Park and another single in a quarry on the way to the Tanqua Karoo

**Wahlberg's Eagle** *Aquila wahlbergi*

One over Dlinza Forest at Eshowe was followed by four the next day at Mkhuze

**Long-crested Eagle** *Lophaetus occipitalis*

Three en route to the Sani Pass and another seen from the bus on the way to Durban on the last day

**Martial Eagle** *Polemaetus bellicosus*

An adult and an immature were seen in the Tanqua Karoo en route Tanqua Guest House. We had good views of these gigantic creatures, the immature looking very similar to a Griffon Vulture

**Brown Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinereus*

A single from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi was the sole record

**Black-chested Snake Eagle** *Circaetus pectoralis*

Singles at Dlinza Forest and St Lucia both gave good views. A scarce bird in South Africa

**Bateleur** *Terathopius ecaudatus*

An adult and a juvenile were seen from the landcruisers at Banamanzi

**Palm-nut Vulture** *Gypohierax angolensis*

A juvenile was seen on two consecutive days from our guesthouse at St Lucia

**Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*

Two pale phase birds were seen in the mountains bordering the Tanqua Karoo and a dark-phase bird was seen in the Tanqua itself the next day

**African Fish-Eagle** *Haliaeetus vocifer*

Between one and six on five dates on both sides of the continent

**Steppe Buzzard** *Buteo vulpinus*

Commonly seen throughout

**Forest Buzzard** *Buteo trizonatus* (E)

Two birds in a foggy forest we were told were this species

**Jackal Buzzard** *Buteo rufofuscus*

Six singles and four en route to Sani Pass. This is a lovely bird and most gave good views

**Red-breasted Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter rufiventris*

A single flew over Simonstown Harbour early in the morning of the pelagic

**Black Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter melanoleucus*

Three sightings of a bird most of us always wanted to see. The first one being a male perched in the forest gave prolonged and close views

**African Goshawk** *Accipiter tachiro*

Four singles equally divided between both sides of the continent

**Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk** *Melierax canorus*

Four in the mountains bordering the Tanqua Karoo and in the Karoo itself were followed by another two there the next day

**African Marsh Harrier** *Circus ranivorus*

Three in the West Coast National Park area and two singles in the farming areas of Natal

**Black Harrier** *Circus maurus*

Another long-awaited species that did not disappoint. Four different sightings on both sides of our trip

**African Harrier Hawk** *Polyboroides typus*

Four in the foothills to the Sani pass and another over Dlinza Forest at Eshowe

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Singles in the West Coast National Park and Richards Bay

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds tussling over Simonstown Harbour and another in the West Coast National Park area

**Lanner** *Falco biarmicus*

Singles seen from the bus near Ceres, another en route to Eshowe while there were three together in the sky as we were about to leave Shakaland

**Rock Kestrel** *Falco rupicolus*

Commonly seen in the west with a maximum of 20 along the road to the West Coast National Park. Two birds in the mountains west of the Tanqua was the only record in Natal

**Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni*

Two on an electricity pylon as we entered Cape Town on our return to catch the flight to Durban

**Grey-winged Francolin** *Francolinus africanus* (E)

A party of six and a party of five were seen at the entrance gates to the West Coast National Park

**Red-winged Francolin** *Scleroptila levaillantii*

Two on the way up to the Sani Pass were the only birds seen

**Cape Francolin** *Francolinus capensis*

Commonly encountered in the Cape only

**Red-necked Spurfowl** *rancolinus afer*

Two on the track in the fog-bound mountains near Creighton was the only record

**Common Quail** *Cotunix cotunix*

Up to three on three dates

**Helmeted Guineafowl** *Numida meleagris*

Very common in all suitable areas

**Crested Guineafowl** *Guttera pucherani*

Four plus four chicks were seen in Bonamanzi followed by six the next day in Mkhuze

**Black-rumped Buttonquail** *Turnix nana*

A single of this scarce species was flushed in dry grassland near Creighton

**Chukar** *Alectoris chukar*

An introduction to Robben Island where two or three were seen

**Blue Crane** *Amaurornis flavirostris*

Ten en route the Tanqua and seven on the way back from there. Surprisingly two were seen over the oasis near the Tanqua Guesthouse. Generally this would seem a very dry area for a crane

**Grey Crowned Crane** *Balearica regulorum*

Only seen in the East with counts of five, 42 and two on consecutive days. We had the privilege of watching “dancing cranes” near Creighton, a truly spectacular sight indeed

**African Rail** *Rallus caerulescens*

Two were seen of this difficult to find species in a small lagoon in the West Coast National Park

**Black Crake** *Amourornis flavirostris*

Just a single in a lake near Creighton

**African Purple Gallinule** *Porphyrio madagascariensis*

Three at Richards Bay was the sole record

**Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Commonly found in all suitable habitat

**Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata*

A common species found in most lagoons and lakes. At this time of year they are showing off their red knobs reminiscent of small red cherries

**Ludwigs Bustard** *Neotis ludwigii*

A single shortly after dawn was followed by a magnificent, close fly-over near the Tanqua Guesthouse

**Denham's Bustard** *Neotis denhami*

A displaying male was unfortunately rather distant just outside Creighton

**Karoo Koorhaan** *Eupodotis vigorsii*

Seven in the Karoo were followed by one there the next day

**Southern Black Koorhaan** *Eupodotis afra* (E)

Six just outside the West Coast National Park were followed by another three the following morning also in the Langebaan area

**Black-bellied Koorhaan** *Eupodotis melanogaster*

Two singles near Creighton probably refer to the same birds while another was seen between Bonamanzi and Mkhuze

**African Jacana** *Actophilornis africanus*

A dozen at Richards Bay and a single at Mkhuze

**African Black Oystercatcher** *Haematopus moquini*

Between two and 20 on four dates along the Cape shores

**Common Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Good numbers in Langebaan Lagoon and two at St Lucia

**White-fronted Plover** *Charadrius marginatus*

Small numbers on five occasions

**Chestnut-banded Plover** *Charadrius pallidus*

Four of this beautiful and elusive shorebird were found on the salt-ponds alongside the Berg River

**Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius*

Between two and four on three occasions and 15 at St Lucia. Seen having a fight with the previous species which had chicks in the area

**Three-banded Plover** *Charadrius tricollaris*

Five at the salt-ponds were followed by three singles both in the Cape and Natal

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Good numbers at Langebaan Lagoon

**Crowned Lapwing** *Vanellus coronatus*

Between one and six on four dates in the West and a single in the East

**Senegal Lapwing** *Vanellus lugubris*

Two family parties totalling ten birds were seen from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**Black-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus melanopterus*

A loose group of ten birds were seen also at Bonamanzi associating with Wattled Plovers. A couple of chicks were noted

**Blacksmith Lapwing** *Vanellus armatus*

Commonly found throughout mostly on grazed pasture

**African Wattled Lapwing** *Vanellus senegallus*

There were ten of these also from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**Ruddy Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Three and one on consecutive days at Langebaan

**Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus*

A single from the garden of our guesthouse at St Lucia disrupted our breakfast for a minute or so

**Common Sandpiper** *Tringa hypoleucos*

Four at St Lucia on both days

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Eight birds at Mkhuze and one or two at St Lucia

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

A single at St Lucia was an unusual sighting

**Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis*

Up to 15 on three dates and larger but uncounted numbers at Langebaan

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Good numbers at Langebaan and up to six in the East

**Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Large numbers at Langebaan

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

Again large numbers at Langebaan and in Natal small groups frequented the St Lucia estuary

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Seen on four dates on both sides but the only count was of 30 at Langebaan

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Fifty at Langebaan and 25 and ten on consecutive days at St Lucia

**African Snipe** *Gallinago nigripennis*

Four at the lake just south of Creighton were a nice addition to the list

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Two at Langebaan were the only birds seen

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Just one single at Langebaan

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Two singles and 30 and ten at Langebaan

**Pied Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Between five and 30 on four dates on both sides

**Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus*

Up to 20 on five dates

**Spotted Thick-knee** *Burhinus capensis*

Four at the salt-ponds alongside the River Berg gave excellent views and were perhaps a little unexpected there

**Water Thick-knee** *Burhinus vermiculatus*

Two by some pools by the side of the road en route to Langebaan were followed by three at Mkhuze and a single Bonamanzi

**Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*

Ten at Mkhuze were followed by a dozen from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

About 20 on the pelagic off Cape Town

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Four on the pelagic trip

**Sub-antarctic Skua** *Catharacta Antarctica*

Five seen on the pelagic

**Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*

About 25+ passed the boat at close range giving excellent views

**Cape Gull** *Larus vetula*

A common bird along the Cape shores. Not seen in Natal

**Grey-headed Gull** *Larus cirrocephalus*

A single in Cape Town, three in the River Berg and two singles in the St Lucia estuary

**Hartlaub's Gull** *Larus hartlaubii*

The commonest gull in the Cape but not recorded in Natal where it is a vagrant

**Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia*

Two singles in the Cape and another two in Natal

**Swift Tern** *Sterna bergii*

Very common in the Cape with an estimated 3000 flying over our hotel, on the banks of the Berg River, soon after dawn. Hundreds also elsewhere. In Natal there was just a single at St Lucia

**Lesser Crested Tern** *Sterna bengalensis*

A single in the St Lucia estuary was the only record

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Commonly found on the west coast

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Many on the pelagic but also reasonable numbers anywhere along the west coast

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

Just two were positively identified on the pelagic but there would have been many more. The Albatrosses took our attention!

**Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus*

The only marsh tern of the trip. Seen in small numbers in all suitable habitat with a maximum count of 17 in a lake en route to Ceres. Only three birds were seen in Natal

**Namaqua Sandgrouse** *Pterocles namaqua*

Six en route the Tanqua Karoo, 25 in the evening at the Tanqua Guesthouse and 283 in parties of up to about 50 the next morning. Excellent views and a welcome addition to most of our lists of Sandgrouse

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Present in Cape Town and Simonstown and no doubt elsewhere

**Speckled Pigeon** *Columba guinea*

Commonly found throughout

**African Olive Pigeon** *Columba arquatrix*

Possibly one of the most attractive pigeons of the region with their sulphur-yellow feet, bill and facial skin contrasting with a dark purple plumage. There was a count of 21 on our first evening in the foothills of the Drakensberg mountains while the following day a total of 45 were noted and another single the next morning

**Red-eyed Dove** *Streptopelia semitorquata*

Common throughout

**Cape Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia capicola*

Seen in small numbers in all areas

**Laughing Dove** *Streptopelia senegalensis*

Common throughout the Cape and just a few in Natal

**Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis*

Two singles and a pair, all in the Cape

**Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove** *Turtur chalcospilos*

About 40 at Mkhuze were followed by six at Bonamanzi the next day and a single on our last

**Tambourine Dove** *Turtur tympanistria*

A single near Shakaland was followed by three at Mkhuze and two at Bonamanzi

**Lemon Dove** *Columba larvata*

A species which is very difficult to get good views of. We were lucky to have a pair sit in a tree next to the track in good sunlight at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens showing off their iridescent green shoulder patches

**Knysna Turaco** *Tauraco corythaix*

A bird seen at the caravan park at St Lucia appeared to be of this species rather than the next. They are not supposed to overlap, but they very clearly do

**Livingstone's Turaco** *Tauraco livingstonii*

About five were seen in the forest and guesthouse garden at St Lucia

**Purple-crested Turaco** *Musophaga porphyreolophus*

Four in the Dlinza Forest, Eshowe and three at Mkhuze gave excellent views

**Red-chested Cuckoo** *Cuculus solitarius*

More often heard than seen. Recorded on six days but only seen on three occasions. The first one gave a splendid display of tail fanning whilst calling in the forest

**Klaas's Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx klaas*

A single on the way to the Sani Pass gave excellent views and this was followed by three in Mkhuze

**Diderik Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx caprius*

A single heard near the Tanqua guesthouse was the only one in the Cape. Three individuals were seen in Natal

**Burchell's Coucal** *Centropus burchellii*

Singles at the bridge near Shakaland and Mkhuze were the only records

**Spotted Eagle Owl** *Bubo africanus*

One was seen in broad daylight on farmland not far from Langebaan. It was watched walking along a bank looking for prey. The second one was seen in torch light from the bus near Creighton just after dark while on the morning of our visit to a rainy Hlabeni Forest we saw another two along a fence line on the edge of the forest

**Cape Eagle Owl** *Bubo capensis*

Amazingly at the same place as we saw the previous species in torch light we also had this owl in the light. Excellent views were obtained at a reasonably close distance. However the next one was just a matter of a few yards away as it roosted in full day light on a crag on the way to the Sani Pass. This one was close enough to photograph

**(Fiery-necked Nightjar** *Caprimulgus rufigena*)

One or two heard in the Creighton area but the night we planned to go looking for them we were subjected to a tropical rainstorm, the likes of which we rarely experience in this country. Another heard in Bonamanzi

**African Black Swift** *Apus barbatus*

Fairly common throughout

**White-rumped Swift** *Apus caffer*

Also commonly seen in most areas

**Horus Swift** *Apus hours*

A summer visitor to Natal and just two were seen on three days

**Little Swift** *Apus affinis*

Also seen fairly frequently in most areas with a group of perhaps 300 near Langebaan being the maximum

**Alpine Swift** *Tachymarptis melba*

Small numbers throughout

**African Palm Swift** *Cypsiurus parvus*

Between one and six on three dates all in Natal

**Speckled Mousebird** *Colius striatus*

The commonest of the family and seen in small numbers in all areas

**White-backed Mousebird** *Colius colius*

Between two and seven on three dates only in the Western Cape

**Red-faced Mousebird** *Urocolius indicus*

Two or three near a lake west of Ceres and another two in Mkhuze

**Pied Kingfisher** *Ceryle rudis*

One or two on six dates on both sides of the continent

**Giant Kingfisher** *Megaceryle maxima*

A bird seen on two occasions just outside Ceres was followed by further singles near the Sani Pass and St Lucia estuary

**Malachite Kingfisher** *Alcedo cristata*

Two singles at a small lake west of Ceres and the other near Shakaland in Natal

**African Pygmy Kingfisher** *Ispidina picta*

One near the entrance to Shakaland was followed by two at Mkhuze the next day

**Brown-hooded Kingfisher** *Halycon albiventris*

One or two on four dates in Natal.

**European Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster*

Seen on four dates in the west with two maximum counts of 20 and just one single bird at Mkhuze in the east

**Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus*

Two en route to Bonamanzi and a flock of 15 at the St Lucia estuary were the only records

**Little Bee-eater** *Merops pusillus*

A family group were found to be at nestholes just off the ground at Mkhuze

**Lilac-breasted Roller** *Coracias caudate*

A single in Mkhuze gave excellent views

**Broad-billed Roller** *Eurystomus glaucurus*

A single along the road not long after we had left Bonamanzi en route to Mkhuze

**African Hoopoe** *Upupa africana*

Just one bird at Mkhuze gave us the run-around

**Green Wood-Hoopoe** *Phoeniculus purpureus*

Two in Mkhuze were the only sightings

**Common Scimitarbill** *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas*

A single in Bonamanzi

**Trumpeter Hornbill** *Bycanistes bucinator*

First seen in the Dlinza Forest, Eshowe, then a single the next day in Mkhuze, 25 going to roost on the other side of the River St Lucia and six there the day after

**Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill** *Tockus leucomelas*

Three in Mkhuze gave good views

**Crowned Hornbill** *Tockus alboterminatus*

Two on the edge of Dlinza Forest and another the next day en route to Mkhuze

**Black-collared Barbet** *Lybius torquatus*

Two sat in a dead tree near Shakaland during our purple patch in the early morning there

**Acacia Pied Barbet** *Tricholaema leucomelas*

Singles in the quarry en route to Velddrif and on the road to the Tanqua Karoo

**White-eared Barbet** *Stactolaema leucotis*

Half a dozen birds were seen in the St Lucia area on both of our two days there. The first two were in the garden of our guesthouse

**Red-fronted Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus pusillus*

Two seen just outside the entrance to Shakaland were the only sightings

**Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird** *Pogoniulus bilinaetus*

One near Shakaland was followed by five in the St Lucia area on our last day

**Scaly-throated Honeyguide** *Indicator variegates*

A single male was attracted to a tape in the St Lucia Forest. The Honeyguide's usual trick of flying past us at great speed on several occasions pausing only briefly still enabled us to get reasonable views

**Brown-backed Honeybird** *Prodotiscus regulus*

Not quite as obliging as the previous species and therefore seen well by only a handful of the group. This bird was in the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

**Ground Woodpecker** *Geocolaptes olivaceus* (E)

This sought-after and enigmatic species performed well for our party. The first two were seen, initially at great distance on top of a rocky outcrop, at Rooi Els. They soon came down and gave better views. One was found in the mountains bordering the Tanqua Karoo after which a grand total of seven were seen at Sani Pass. The nest holes in solid sandstone were also observed suggesting they must have shares in Beechams

**Golden-tailed Woodpecker** *Campethera albingoni*

Two in the forest at St Lucia on our last day performed well

**Cardinal Woodpecker** *Dendropicos fuscescens*

Easier to find here than in the Gambia. A total of eight were recorded from all areas over six days, including a bird whose only "tree" for fifty miles was planted by the local electricity company apart from a few in the nearby garden of the restaurant at the Geelbek visitor centre

**Olive Woodpecker** *Dendropicos griseocephalus*

Two in the Harold Porter Botanical gardens and a further two in the Dlinza Forest at Eshowe

**Red-throated Wryneck** *Jynx ruficollis*

A single bird could not escape Olive's attentions en route to our first night's accommodation in Natal. We all managed reasonable if not a little distant views in order to complete the world family of Wrynecks

**Rufous-naped Lark** *Mirafra africana*

Just three birds in farm land near Creighton was our only experience of this quite nice lark

**Cape Long-billed Lark** *Certhilauda curvirostris* (E)

A single bird on a fence post on our circular route out of Velddrif gave splendid views

**Karoo Lark** *Mirafra albescens* (E)

Two on consecutive days in the Karoo were the only sightings

**Spike-heeled Lark** *Chersomanes albofasciata*

Two in the desert surrounding our accommodation on our first evening at the Tanqua Guesthouse gave excellent views. The next morning another four were noted from the patio of the main house

**Red-capped Lark** *Calandrella cinerea*

Six were seen in the rolling pasture land around Velddrif, a single in the Karoo and two in the Sani Pass

**Large-billed Lark** *Galerida magnirostris* (E)

Found only in dry areas with up to six on four dates in the Cape and a further six in the Sani Pass

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

They arrived from Europe on our fifth day after which they became very common. Thousands passed over Bonamanzi on our first evening there

**White-throated Swallow** *Hirundo albigularis*

Small numbers seen on most days in the west and just six on the first three days in Natal after which they appeared to dry up

**Blue Swallow** *Hirundo atrocaerulea*

A rare species we would never have found on our own. Amazingly they breed in Aardvark holes and one nest was seen although apparently not occupied. There are only 23 known pairs in Natal and possibly only a couple of thousand in the world. Views were distant as four birds fed over a lake and adjoining grassland. I think we were privileged to see this threatened species

**Wire-tailed Swallow** *Hirundo smithii*

Between one and 20 in the St Lucia area on three dates

**Red-breasted Swallow** *Hirundo semirufa*

A pair of these giant swallows were seen from one of the landcruisers at Bonamanzi both perched and in flight

**Pearl-breasted Swallow** *Hirundo dimidiata*

Three on our last full day in the Cape were seen near the Tanqua Lodge and another single en route the Sani Pass

**Greater Striped Swallow** *Hirundo cucullata*

One of the commonest swallows of the region and seen in good numbers on most days

**Lesser Striped Swallow** *Hirundo abyssinica*

Most commonly encountered by the bridge near Shakaland where perhaps 20 birds were present. About 30 were noted in the Mkhuze area and odd ones in that general area

**Rock Martin** *Hirundo fuligula*

Commonly encountered in all areas

**Brown-throated Martin** *Riparia paludicola*

Small numbers seen in all areas

**Banded Martin** *Riparia cincta*

The first ten were seen by roadside pools en route to Langebaan followed by four the next day in the Velddrif area. One near Creighton and two at Mkhuze were the only records from Natal

**Black Sawwing** *Psalidoprocne holomelas*

Two pairs in the west were followed by one to six on four dates in the east

**Black Cuckooshrike** *Campephaga flava*

Six birds in the Shakaland area included at least one female which looks very different from the black males. After the silhouette in flight of this species was noted it seems likely it was being overlooked to a great degree.

**Grey Cuckooshrike** *Coracina caesia*

Two seen in the canopy in the Dlinza Forest, Eshowe were followed by a bird on the nest also in the canopy seen from the skywalk

**Fork-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus adsimilllis*

Seen only in the east in good numbers in open country

**Square-tailed Drongo** *Dicrurus ludwigii*

In contrast this species is only found in woodland and three were found in the Dlinza Forest and seven in the St Lucia Wood

**Eastern Black-headed Oriole** *Oriolus larvatus*

Two seen en route to Smithfield Guest Farm on our first day in Natal whilst the next day another was noted in the Creighton area. One was heard at St Lucia on our last day

**Cape Crow** *Corvus capensis*

Apparently more common away from the Cape. Two were seen on our second day in the Cape, three on our last day after which between five and 20 were noted in Natal

**Pied Crow** *Corvus albus*

The commonest corvid of the region and seen everywhere

**House Crow** *Corvus splendens*

It has seemingly reached Cape Town where a dozen or so were seen by the airport. Is this an indication as to what type of assistance it has received on its journey from India?

**White-necked Raven** *Corvus albicollis*

Up to six a day in the Cape and just one or two in the mountains of Natal

**Grey Tit** *Parus afer*

Seven were seen on our circular trip from Velddrif and two more in the Sani Pass

**Southern Black Tit** *Parus niger*

Three round the restaurant at Mkhuze was the only record

**Cape Penduline Tit** *Anthoscopus minutus*

Three near the quarry on the way to Velddrif gave only distant and brief views

**Bush Blackcap** *Lioptilus nigricapillus* (E)

A single bird gave close but brief views while another was heard, both in the foothills of the Sani Pass

**Dark-capped Bulbul** *Pycnonotus tricolor* Present only in the east. The trouble with vermin is you can not help but notice them!

**Cape Bulbul** *Pycnonotus capensis* (E)

Only present in the Cape. Should be called "Takenonotus"

**Terrestrial Brownbul** *Phyllastrephus terrestris*

A much more interesting all brown bird difficult to see. Two were noted at Mkhuze and another two in the forest at St Lucia

**Sombre Greenbul** *Andropadus importunes*

Another cracker! Two singles in the Cape and between two and ten on four dates in Natal

**Yellow-bellied Greenbul** *Chlorocichla flaviventris*

Up to a dozen on four dates in the bush country of the east

**Kurriichane Thrush** *Turdus libonyanus*

Five near Shakaland and a single the next day at Mkhuze

**Olive Thrush** *Turdus olivaceus*

Seen in more lush vegetation than the previous species and up four on seven dates on both sides of the continent were seen

**Karoo Thrush** *Turdus smithi* (E)

Just one was seen briefly in the oasis at Tanqua Lodge

**Spotted Ground-Thrush** *Zoothera guttata*

Three seen at very close range in the Dlinza Forest may well have been one of the birds of the trip for some especially as this is classified as endangered

**Cape Rock Thrush** *Monticola rupestris* (E)

Seven at Rooi Els and six in the Sani Pass including some in Lesotho. A country with a tick-list not very great

**Sentinel Rock-Thrush** *Monticola exploratory* (E)

How lucky the people of Lesotho are to have two Rock-Thrushes! Six were seen at high altitude

**Mountain Wheatear** *Oenanthe monticola*

Ten seen in the mountains west of the Karoo

**Capped Wheatear** *Oenanthe pileata*

As soon as we travelled away from the coast in an easterly direction from the West Coast National Park we started seeing this species. Between two and 30 were seen during the last four days in the Cape mostly in the grassland and cereal area around Velddrif

**Buff-streaked Chat** *Oenanthe bifasciata* (E)

Three in the Sani Pass were the only ones seen

**Familiar Chat** *Cercomela familiaris*

Found only in dry stony habitat mostly at Rooi Els where six were noted and then in the Karoo where up to six a day were seen on four dates. In the east there were just two At Sani Pass

**Trac Trac Chat** *Cercomela tractrac*

Just two in the Karoo on two dates of a grey species with a colourful name

**Sickle-winged Chat** *Cercomela sinuate*

Two on two dates in the Cape also well away from the coast and four at the Sani Pass

**Karoo Chat** *Cercomela schlegelii*

As its name suggests, only found in the Karoo with three birds one day and one the next

**Southern Anteating Chat** *Myrmecocichla formicivora*

Two in the Tanqua Karoo area were the sole records

**African Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*

Now considered a separate species from the European Stonechat (*S. rubicola*). In the Cape just three were seen in the mountains bordering the Karoo while in the East there were up to ten on the first three days there after which there were none

**Chorister Robinchat** *Cossypha dichroa*

One heard in the fog in the Hlabeni Forest was followed by four seen in the Dlinza Forest the next day

**Red-capped Robinchat** *Cossypha natalensis*

One, three and seven seen on our last three days in Natal, often in and around the garden of our accommodation in St Lucia

**Cape Robinchat** *Cossypha caffra*

Between one and a dozen on six dates in the Cape but only three in the East at the Sani Pass which was the only habitat visited in Natal resembling anything like what we had seen in the west

**White-throated Robinchat** *Cossypha humeralis* (E)

One during our purple patch outside the Shakaland camp gave good close but rather brief views

**(Cape Rock-jumper** *Chaetops frenatus*) (E)

Despite two visits to Rooi Els we were not able to connect with this sought-after species, although a couple of the party reckoned they had heard it. An excuse (if we need one) to return

**Drakensberg Rock-jumper** *Chaetops aurantius* (E)

Four males and a female gave a spectacular display outside the highest pub in Africa (10,000ft) in Lesotho. Why on earth they these colourful birds need to live right up there is anybody's guess

**White-browed Scrubrobin** *Cercotrichas leucophrys*

Seven were recorded during our day at Dlinza forest and Bonamanzi

**Brown Scrubrobin** *Cercotrichas signata* (E)

Three in the forest at St Lucia were the only birds seen

**Bearded Scrubrobin** *Cercotrichas quadrivirgata*

Between one and three seen in Bonamanzi, Mkhuze and St Lucia all on the last four days

**Karoo Scrubrobin** *Cercotrichas coryphaeus*

Between two and six on the last four days in the Cape and as the name suggests only in the Karoo areas

**Chestnut-vented Titbabbler** *Parisoma subcaeruleum*

One in a picnic spot in the Karoo was followed by two in a similar place the following day

**Layard's Titbabbler** *Parisoma layardi*

Three at a picnic spot in the Karoo were followed by one at Sani Pass

**Lesser Swamp Warbler** *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*

Between one and four on five days on both sides of the continent

**Little Rush Warbler** *Bradypterus baboecala*

A bird at the Standfontein Sewage works was followed by just one heard at the West Coast National Park but most people never connected with this skulky species

**African Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus baeticatus*

A single at a picnic site in the desert was followed by a single and five more heard in the oasis in the Tanqua

**Dark-capped Yellow Warbler** *Chloropeta natalensis*

Two on the way up to Sani Pass were the only ones recorded

**Barratt's Warbler** *Bradypterus barratti* (E)

Three heard and a single seen at Sani Pass. This is another skulky endemic and requires a little patience

**Broad-tailed Warbler** *Schoenicola brevirostris*

This bird lives up to its name. This one bird in a reed bed just outside Creighton gave prolonged, if not a little distant, views

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Just two singles in Natal; almost as common as in East Kent this last spring

**Knysna Warbler** *Bradypterus sylvaticus* (E)

A single bird in the Constantia Greenbelt in the Western Cape gave our group the run-around. This is an extremely skulky species, creeping around the bottom of the thickest bush like a mouse. However after a considerable wait most of the group got what can only be described as a brief view. Another endemic

**Victorin's Warbler** *Bradypterus victorini* (E)

Two males, one of which was seen, at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens. Another one of these extremely hard to see *Bradypterus* Warblers

**Bar-throated Apalis** *Apalis thoracica*

A male heard in the Hlabeni Forest was followed by two observed at Mkuze and a further two at St Lucia

**Yellow-breasted Apalis** *Apalis flavida*

Two in the Dlinza Forest, ten at Mkuze and a single at St Lucia

**Rudd's Apalis** *Apalis ruddi* (E)

Two at Mkuze and another one plus five heard in the forest at St Lucia

**Long-billed Crombec** *Sylvietta rufescens*

Three in the mountains bordering the Karoo, two in the Karoo itself and another two at Mkhuze

**Yellow-bellied Eremomela** *Eremomela icteropygialis*

Two birds in an Acacia stand in the desert on the way to Tanqua Guesthouse were the only ones seen

**Green-backed Camaroptera** *Camaroptera brachyura*

Small numbers seen on most days in Natal

**Cape Grassbird** *Sphenoeacus afer*

One seen in the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens and two further birds in the lower elevations of the Sani Pass

**Zitting Cisticola** *Cisticola juncidis*

Two in the oasis of the Tanqua Karoo and another four in the grasslands near Creighton

**Cloud Cisticola** *Cisticola textrix*

Three in the oasis in the Tanqua Karoo were probably not the only birds of this species. A little more experience with these things would be handy

**Wing-snapping Cisticola** *Cisticola ayresii*

Two at the Blue Swallow site near Creighton were watched as they fell out of the sky

**Wailing Cisticola** *Cisticola lais*

One in the lower levels of the Sani Pass

**Rattling Cisticola** *Cisticola chinianus*

One at Mkhuze was followed by 10-15 from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi the next day

**Winding Cisticola** *Cisticola galactotes*

About five were seen off the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**Grey-backed Cisticola** *Cisticola subruficapillus*

Between two and six on most days in the Western Cape

**Levaillants Cisticola** *Cisticola tinniens*

Two on three days in the west and between six and 11 on three days in Natal always in reed beds or fringes

**Croaking Cisticola** *Cisticola natalensis*

Good views of just one bird sitting on tall grass-stems just outside Creighton

**Neddicky** *Cisticola fulvicapillus*

After the first one at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens which was so difficult to see it was a bit of a surprise to have them out in the open in Natal. A total of five were seen there on four dates

**Tawny-flanked Prinia** *Prinia subflava*

Two or three on three dates in dry scrubby habitat in Natal were the only records

**Karoo Prinia** *Prinia maculosa*

The commonest prinia in the west with up to 20 seen in a day. In Natal where there is discussion going on about this and the next species, one was identified at the bottom of the Sani Pass

**Drakensberg Prinia** *Prinia hypoxantha* (E)

Two and a single in the Drakensberg mountains

**Namaqua Warbler** *Phragmacia substriata*

Two seen and about another dozen heard in the Tanqua oasis. This is another one of those species that requires a lot of time before you get good views

**Rufous-eared Warbler** *Malcorus pectoralis*

Two seen in the Karoo were a little distant

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

One in the Tanqua oasis, and another in the forest just outside Creighton

**African Dusky Flycatcher** *Muscicapa adusta*

Two in the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens, three in the Kirstenbosch Gardens and a single in the Sani Pass

**Ashy Flycatcher** *Muscicapa caerulescens*

Two near Shakaland were followed by another two at Mkhuze the next day

**Grey Tit-Flycatcher** *Myioparus plumbeus*

Two near the restaurant at Mkhuze gave good views

**Southern Black Flycatcher** *Melaenornis pammelaina*

A single near the restaurant at Mkhuze was followed by two at Bonamanzi the next day

**Pale Flycatcher** *Bradornis pallidus*

A single at Mkhuze

**Fiscal Flycatcher** *Sigelus silens*

A single at the riverbed near the lagoon at Porterville was the only one seen

**African Paradise Flycatcher** *Tersiphone viridis*

Seen in small numbers on both sides of the continent

**Cape Batis** *Batis capensis*

Between one and four on many dates on both sides of the continent

**Pirit Batis** *Batis pririt*

Two on two days in Acacia stands in the Karoo

**Chinspot Batis** *Batis molitor*

Two seen from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi were seen only by half the party

**Woodward's Batis** *Batis fratrum* (E)

A single in the forest at St Lucia was a welcome addition to the list on our last day

**Fairy Flycatcher** *Stenostira scita*

A single and a two in Acacia stands in the Karoo and another on the way to the Sani Pass in Natal

**Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher** *Trochocercus cyanomelas*

A single was seen by just two people at Mkhuze

**Cape Wagtail** *Motacilla capensis*

Commonly found throughout

**African Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla aguimp*

Between one and three on the last four days in Natal

**Mountain Wagtail** *Motacilla clara*

A single bird from the bridge near Shakaland was seen on two consecutive dates

**African Pipit** *Anthus cinnamomeus*

Ones and twos regularly encountered on both sides

**Mountain Pipit** *Anthus hoeschi*

Another species only found on our Lesotho list where two were present

**Cape Longclaw** *Macronyx capensis*

Two were seen on our round trip at Velddrif, and two or three during the first three days in Natal

**Yellow-throated Longclaw** *Macronyx croceus*

One at Richards Bay was followed by three from the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**Rosy-throated Longclaw** *Macronyx ameliae*

A single of this species was seen on the river-saltings at Bonamanzi. Good views were obtained of this stunning bird as it paraded in the long grass

**Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*

Five were seen at Bonamanzi on our last morning there

**Common Fiscal** *Lanius collaris*

Commonly seen throughout mostly on wires

**Southern Bou Bou** *Laniarius ferrugineus*

Fairly commonly encountered although heard more often than seen

**Black-backed Puffback** *Dryoscopus cubla*

Between two and seven seen on a daily basis in the forested areas of Natal

**(Black-crowned Tchagra** *Tchagra senegala*)

Heard on three dates but surprisingly never seen. Not a difficult bird to see in the Gambia

**Bokmakierie** *Telophorus zeylonus*

Singles on five dates in the west and on two in the east

**Gorgeous Bush Shrike** *Telephorus quadricolor*

Heard more often than seen but two were seen by the lucky participants of one of the landcruisers at Bonamazi

**Orange-breasted Bush Shrike** *Telophorus sulfureopectus*

The rest of will have to be satisfied with this dull little number! Between one and four were seen on three dates in Natal

**Olive Bush Shrike** *Telophorus olivaceus*

One of the few birds actually seen through the fog in the Hlabeni Forest

**Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common in the west but in the east only seen in farm land

**Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis*

It has arrived here as well! Up to half a dozen a day in Natal only

**Pied Starling** *Spreo bicolor* (E)

Two hundred in the Velddrif area and smaller numbers thereafter. Just six were seen near Creighton

**Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea*

This wonderful starling gave excellent views on our last morning in the Karoo

**Violet-backed Starling** *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster*

This bird has colours not thought possible by northern hemisphere birders! Eight were seen in the Shakaland area and another six at Mkhuze

**Cape Glossy Starling** *Lamprotornis nitens*

Four at Mkhuze and rather more at Bonamanzi the next day

**Black-bellied Starling** *Lamprotornis corruscus*

Not really counted but seen in good numbers during our last four days in Natal

**Red-winged Starling** *Onychognathus morio*

Commonly seen throughout the Cape but scarcer in Natal

**Pale-winged Starling** *Onychognathus nabouroup*

One bird seen by one lucky observer from the bus in the Karoo

**Red-billed Oxpecker** *Buphagus erythrorhynchus*

Five in Mkhuze were seen well, firstly on the legs of antelope and then coming down to drink at the waterhole

**Gurney's Sugarbird** *Promerops gurneyi* (E)

Five seen at close range feeding on Proteas at the Sani Pass were enjoyed by all

**Cape Sugarbird** *Promerops cafer* (E)

About a dozen at Rooi Els and a single in the Velddrif area

**Malachite Sunbird** *Nectarinia famosa*

This splendid little bird was seen in ones and twos on three occasions in the Cape but 14 were counted leading up to the Sani Pass

**Purple-banded Sunbird** *Cinnyris bifasciata*

A single male was seen at Bonamanzi

**Neergaard's Sunbird** *Cinnyris neergaardi* (E)

Two were seen from the bus at Mkhuze

**Orange-breasted Sunbird** *Nectarinia violacea* (E)

Only seen in the west with two singles and about a dozen in the fynbos areas of the SW Cape

**Southern Double-collared Sunbird** *Nectarinia chalybea*

Common in the Cape with up to a dozen a day but in Natal only two were seen in the Hlabeni Mountains

**Greater Double-collared Sunbird** *Cinnyris afra* (E)

Two en route to Creighton and three in the Sani Pass the following day were the only records of this species

**White-bellied Sunbird** *Cinnyris talatala*

Good numbers in the Bonamanzi/Mkhuze and St Lucia areas

**Grey Sunbird** *Cyamomitra veroxii*

A single nesting bird behind one of the chalets in Bonamanzi and another single at St Lucia

**Eastern Olive Sunbird** *Cyanomitra olivacea*

Between two and four on three dates towards the end of our stay in Natal in forested situations

**Scarlet-chested Sunbird** *Chalcomitra senegalensis*

Two on the way to Mkhuze and a single in Bonamanzi

**Amethyst Sunbird** *Chalcomitra amethystina*

Eight on our first day in Natal were followed by singles at Dlinza and Mkhuze

**Collared Sunbird** *Hedydipna collaris*

Between one and five on four dates in the east

**Cape White-eye** *Zosterops pallidus*

Common throughout

**African Yellow White-eye** *Zosterops senegalensis*

Just one seen from one of the landcruisers at Bonamanzi

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Present in small numbers

**Cape Sparrow** *Passer melanurus*

Fairly commonly found particularly in arid areas

**Southern Grey-headed Sparrow** *Passer diffuses*

Between one and three on three dates in the east

**Yellow-throated Petronia** *Petronia superciliaris*

Two near Shakaland and three at Mkhuze were the only sightings

**Thick-billed Weaver** *Amblyospiza albifrons*

Two females at St Lucia showed well

**Dark-backed Weaver** *Ploceus bicolour*

Two near Shakaland and another two in the forest at St Lucia

**Spectacled Weaver** *Ploceus ocularis*

Singles near Shakaland, Mkhuze and two at Bonamanzi

**Village Weaver** *Ploceus cucullatus*

Just a single near the bridge at Shakaland

**Cape Weaver** *Ploceus capensis* (E)

Common in the Cape but just a few in the east

**Southern Masked Weaver** *Ploceus velatus*

Commonly seen the arid areas of the Cape and just two on our first day in Natal

**Lesser Masked Weaver** *Ploceus intermedius*

Singles at Richards Bay, Mkhuze and about a dozen at Bonamanzi

**African Golden Weaver** *Poplceus subaureus*

About 50 or more at Richards Bay were followed by 60 at Bonamanzi. In both places they were nesting in reed beds

**Southern Brown-throated Weaver** *Ploceus xanthopterus*

Just one bird was located amongst the hordes of the previous species at Richards Bay

**Red-billed Quelea** *Quelea quelea*

Common in the east in all stages of plumage

**Southern Red Bishop** *Euplectes orix*

Also commonly encountered in the farmland and dry areas of the Cape and throughout Natal

**Yellow Bishop** *Euplectes capensis*

Between one and six on five dates in the Cape whilst on the other side they were seen only in the Creighton area but in good numbers

**Red-shouldered Widowbird** *Euplectes axillaris*

Very common in the farmland areas of Natal and seen in all plumages

**White-winged Widowbird** *Euplectes albonotatus*

A single on our first day in Natal was followed by two in the grassland area near Creighton

**Red-collared Widowbird** *Euplectes ardens*

The same applies as with the previous species and often these would be found together

**Long-tailed Widowbird** *Euplectes progne*

Seen commonly in the farmland areas of Natal. Some were in full breeding plumage with tails that long they could hardly fly, but their dancing flight was truly spectacular

**Green Twinspot** *Mandingoa nitidula*

A small flock of eight was found in the caravan park at St Lucia and these afforded excellent views

**Blue Waxbill** *Uraeginthus angolensis*

Two foraging in the undergrowth near Shakaland constitutes the sole record

**Common Waxbill** *Estrilda astrild*

Often found in small parties on both sides of the divide with a flock of 40 in the Hlabeni mountains being the biggest count

**Swee Waxbill** *Estrilda melanotis*

Fifteen in Harold Porter Botanical gardens was the only record

**Bronze Mannikin** *Lonchura cucullata*

Seen on three days in the east with the maximum count of 40 on our first day there

**Pin-tailed Whydah** *Vidua macroura*

Small numbers in the dry areas of the west and a little more common in the farmland areas of Natal. Many are in full breeding dress at this time of year

**Eastern Paradise Whydah** *Vidua paradisaea*

Between one and three on three dates in Natal. This bird gave us excellent views of its stunning plumage and needs to be seen to be believed

**Variable Indigobird** *Vidua funerea*

Nine of this species were seen in the Shakaland area

**Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Not quite what we travelled all this way for! One heard and another seen in the Greenbelt area and Harold Porter Botanical Gardens respectively

**Yellow-fronted Canary** *Serinus mozambicus*

Between one and four on three dates in Natal is almost certainly an underestimate as many canaries went unidentified. This is a most confusing family for the first-time visitor

**Lemon-breasted Canary** *Serinus citrinpectus* (E)

A single at Bonamanzi on the edge of the flood plain gave good views in the scopes

**Cape Canary** *Serinus canicollis*

Commonly found throughout the Cape and the southern part of Natal

**Forest Canary** *Serinus scotops* (E)

Two in Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and a single in the Hlabeni Mountains were the only sightings

**Cape Siskin** *Pseudochloroptila totta* (E)

One on Cape Peninsula and three in the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens

**Drakensberg Siskin** *Pseudochloroptila symonsi* (E)

About 15 were seen at 10,000 feet in Lesotho scuffling around on the ground in the pub car park

**Brimstone Canary** *Serinus sulphuratus*

Three at Rooi Els and singles in the mountains bordering the Karoo and on our first day in Natal

**Yellow Canary** *Serinus flaviventris*

Found only in the arid areas with small numbers up to five on three days in the west and three at the Sani Pass

**White-throated Canary** *Serinus albogularis*

A single at Langebaan, 20 in the Tanqua and a further six there the next day

**Protea Seed-eater** *Serinus leucopterus* (E)

One of the most sought-after species in South Africa. We were taken to a site where it occurs on the mountain side near Ceres in thick protea vegetation and after some perseverance we had superb views of a bird just feet from the road as it sat there singing its heart out. There were actually two birds present. The following morning as we passed the site again a brief stop was immediately rewarded with further excellent views

**Streaky-headed Seed-eater** *Serinus gularis*

A single bird in the Sani Pass firmed up the identification for three of the party who had claimed the species in the Gambia where it is not supposed to occur

**Golden-breasted Bunting** *Emberiza flaviventris*

Singles at Shakaland and Mkhuze

**Cape Bunting** *Emberiza capensis*

Seen in small numbers throughout the Cape and a further three were seen in the Sani Pass

**Larklike Bunting** *Emberiza impetuani*

A single in the mountains bordering the Karoo was followed by six birds around the grounds of our Tanqua accommodation and a further two were seen in the Sani Pass

Total number of species seen was **419** (plus 3 heard only) and **36** of these were endemic to South Africa. Many more of are endemic to Southern Africa.

## MAMMALS AND REPTILES

**Chacma Baboon (Savanna Baboon)** *Papio cynocephalus ursinus*

Found in sometimes large troops in savanna habitat and coastal cliffs

**Vervet Monkey** *Chlorocebus aethiops*

Good numbers at Bonamanzi, Mkhuze and St Lucia

**Thick-tailed Bushbaby** *Galago crassicaudatus*

One seen at night at Bonamanzi was followed by two there the next evening

**Scrub Hare** *Lepus saxatilis*

Two singles in the Cape

**Zululand Red Squirrel** *Paraxerus palliatus*

One and four seen over two days at St Lucia. This is one of two isolated populations in Kwazulu Natal being the only sites for them in South Africa

**Striped Mouse** *Rhabdomys pumilio*

One or two seen on three days

**Karoo Bush Rat** *Otomys unisulcatus*

A single near Velddrif

**Sloggett's Ice Rat** *Otomys sloggetti*

Three at 10,000 feet in Lesotho gave good views

**Bat-eared Fox** *Otocyon megalotis*

Two seen just outside the West Coast National Park

**Cape Clawless Otter** *Aonyx capensis*

Two on the rocks near Boulders Beach on the Western Cape

**Spotted-necked Otter** *Lutra maculicollis*

A very brief view of an Otter disappearing in the lagoon near Creighton was purported to be of this species

**Lesser Grey Mongoose** *Galerella pulverulenta*

Two at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens

**Slender Mongoose** *Galerella sanguinea*

One was seen at St Lucia

**Yellow Mongoose** *Cynictis penicillata*

Two in the West Coast National Park and another one near Velddrif the next day

**Rock Hyrax (Dassie)** *Procavia capensis*

Two on two days on the coastal cliffs in the west and one going up the Sani Pass. Evidence of the species was also seen in the mountains bordering the Karoo in the shape of communal dumping stations

**Burchell's Zebra (Plains Zebra)** *Equus burchellii*

Five in Mkhuze were the only sightings

**Warthog** *Phacochoerus africanus*

One in Mkhuze and two at St Lucia were the only records of a species which should be abundant, but as a result of the year-long drought has moved out

**Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibious*

Two family groups in the St Lucia River totalling about 15 beasts gave us much entertainment. Probably the same group of about six was seen the next day also in the estuary

**Common Giraffe** *Giraffa camelopardalis*

Two distant animals were complimented by a pair with well grown calf at Mkhuze by the side of the road therefore affording excellent views

**Greater Kudu** *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*

A bull and three cows were seen in Mkhuze

**Nyala** *Tragelaphus angasii*

Commonly encountered in Bonamanzi and Mkhuze

**Mountain Reedbuck** *Redunca fulvorufula*

Two seen in the evening near Creighton

**Common Reedbuck** *Redunca arundinum*

Seen in small numbers on three days in the Creighton and Mkhuze areas

**Grey Rhebok** *Pelea capreolus*

Four seen in the Velddrif area

**Blue Wildebeest** *Connocchaetes taurinus*

Groups of ten and nine were seen at Mkhuze and Bonamanzi respectively

**Impala** *Aepyceros melampus*

Very common in both Bonamanzi and Mkhuze

**Steenbok** *Raphicerus campestris*

Although seen on a number of occasions it is difficult to ascertain as to whether they were wild or not. Apparently farmers like having them around and so buy a few to roam their farms

**Red Duiker** *Cephalophus natalensis*

Seen in Bonamanzi and Mkhuze in single figures

**Blue Duiker** *Cephalophus monticola*

Three seen in Dlinza Forest, Eshowe gave excellent views

**Common Duiker** *Sylvicapra grimmia*

Two seen near Sani Pass

**Cape Fur Seal** *Arctocephalus pusillus*

Seen on Cape coasts, one on our first day, 20 on our second day and 40 the next. One was watched demolishing an African Penguin just off Boulders Beach

**Common Dolphin** *Delphinus delphis*

A school of an estimated 500 were all around our boat and one was even heard by one of our party

**Southern Right Whale** *Eubalaena glacialis*

A single was seen close inshore in False Bay

**Humpback Whale** *Megaptera novaeangliae*

Two adults and a calf were seen well south of the Cape Peninsula on our pelagic

**Brydes Whale** *Balaenoptera edeni*

A single seen in False Bay on our return from our pelagic

**Nile Crocodile**

Three seen on our first day at St Lucia and one there the next day

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