

# NAMIBIA

8th – 30th November 2002

## TOUR REPORT

**LEADERS:** CHRIS DOUGHTY and PIERS LESMANGE.

Namibia proved to be every bit as exiting as we all thought it would be. The magnificent scenery, the sparse numbers of people, excellent roads, comfortable hotels and lodges, lots of birds, with good numbers of endemics, great mammals and a stable political situation, all added to a very enjoyable and memorable tour.

The Australian members of the group arrived two days earlier than the overseas clients. On our first day we birded around the capital city of Windhoek, concentrating on a small patch of spare ground across the road from our hotel and a small area of parkland, at Parliament House. Highlights included Rock Pigeon, Alpine Swift, Greater Striped Swallow, Pririt Batis, a large group of Wattled Starlings and our first flocks of Red-billed Queleas.

Our next day was spent exploring Avis Dam, a small reservoir on the outskirts of Windhoek. We enjoyed a very pleasant day getting to know some of the more widespread species of Namibia, together with one or two endemics and a few waterbirds. Large numbers of Egyptian Geese swam around the dam, a close look through the flock revealed a pair of South African Shelducks and a solitary Red-billed Teal and best of all superb views of a pair of the uncommon Eastern White Pelican. An Osprey flew overhead, this is a rare visitor to Namibia and along the waters edge we found Kittlitz's and Three-banded Plovers, Common, Wood and Marsh Sandpipers, Common Greenshank, Little Stint and our only Long-billed Pipit for the trip. In the dry scrub surrounding the dam highlights included European Bee-eater, the endemic Monteiro's Hornbill, Mountain Chat and Lesser Grey Shrike. That evening we were joined by Doris, Sheila and Nancy.

Our visit to the Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve the following day produced Hamerkop, Lappet-faced Vulture, Greater Kestrel, Red-knobbed Coot, Pearl-spotted Owl, Purple Roller, Greater Scimitarbill and our only Cape Penduline Tit and Great Reed-Warbler sightings, as well as our only sighting of the localised and elusive African Barred Warbler. We also enjoyed a good mix of mammals, which included Chacma Baboon, South African Ground Squirrel, Yellow Mongoose, Common Warthog, Giraffe, Greater Kudu, Kongoni, Wildebeest, the beautiful Southern Oryx and the endangered Mountain Zebra.

Coastal Namibia held hundreds of thousands of birds, mostly cormorants, flamingos and waders. We covered kilometres and kilometres of muddy shoreline, stopping here and there to check the multitudes of waders. The superb spectacle of flamingo-packed lagoons set our pulses racing. The numbers of Curlew Sandpipers and Little Stints were

absolutely staggering, with smaller numbers of Common, Wood and Marsh Sandpipers, Common Greenshanks, Sanderlings, Ruffs, Common Ringed, White-fronted and Grey Plovers and our only sighting for the tour of Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone and Red Knot. Best of all, was a flock of over 50 Chestnut-banded Plovers, they were a real delight, as were the large numbers of dainty Damara Terns, which had recently returned from their wintering grounds in equatorial West Africa. Here and there along the coast artificial wooden platforms have been erected for the guano industry, these constructions were packed with tens of thousands, of Cape and smaller numbers of Great and Crowned Cormorants. Just offshore there were small numbers of Sooty Shearwaters and the occasional Cape Gannet. Early next morning, shrouded by the cold Benguela fog, we were studying the rather weird Dune Lark in a shrub-covered wadi. In the gravel waste of the Namib-Naukluft National Park, the prehistoric Welwitschia plant attracted our attention, as did a party of ghostly Gray's Larks. Other species of interest included Ostrich, Marshal Eagle, a pair of very rare Ludwig's Bustards, several endemic Ruppell's Korhaans, stunning Dideric Cuckoos, Black Crows and Tractrac Chats.

We finally bid the coast farewell and on our drive inland we noted Lark-like Bunting and the very impressive Verreaux's Eagle. At Spitzkop, a very old and impressive granite hill, we stopped to look for the illusive Herero Chat, with its scientific name being *Namibornis*; it must surely be the ultimate Namibian endemic! The chat was to live up to its illusive reputation, but after a great deal of searching we were able to enjoy good looks at 3 different individuals. While looking for the chat we found several other very good birds which included the very localised Karoo Long-billed Lark, several Stark's Larks, Ashy Tit, the endemic Carp's Tit, Layard's Tit-Babbler, a pair of endemic White-tailed Shrikes, Burchell's Starling, Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver, Red-headed Finch and White-throated Canary. We overnighted at a very nice lodge at Omaruru and that evening with the aid of a tape recorder and spotlight, we enjoyed very good looks at a couple of African Scops-Owls.

The next day was spent birding in and around Omaruru, which proved to be very productive. As we explored the nearby bushveld and along dry river courses we saw African White-backed Vulture, Black-shouldered Kite, Tawny Eagle, Brown and Black-breasted Snake-Eagles, Shikra, Gabar Goshawk, Pale Chanting-Goshawk, Red-billed Francolin, Red-crested and Northern Black Korhaans, Namaqua Sandgrouse, African, Black and Pied Cuckoos, Lilac-breasted Roller, the endemic Southern Violet Woodhoopoe, White-browed and Kalahari Robins, Yellow-bellied and Burnt-necked Eremomelas, Spotted Flycatcher, Black-backed Puffback, Black-crowned Tchagra, Southern White-crowned Shrike, White-bellied Sunbird and Shaft-tailed Whydah. As well as our only sightings for the tour of African Hawk-Eagle, Rosy-faced Lovebird, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Pale-breasted Swallow, Southern Pied Babbler and Chestnut Weaver.

On our drive northwards to Etosha National Park we stopped to do some birding at the Outjo Sewage Farm, which yielded a pair of Black-cheeked Lovebirds, quite a bit further south than their normal range. However, other birders have reported sightings of this species in this area, which means this endangered species may have extended its range

further south. Other birds also seen here included Swainson's Francolin, the very beautiful African Paradise-Flycatcher, the migrant Red-backed Shrike and Brubru. The afternoon was spent in Etosha National Park. After dark, we checked out one of the waterholes where Rufous-cheeked Nightjars flitted around the floodlights and a pair of Black Rhinoceros quenched their thirst.

Etosha, the highlight of the tour for many, provided endless hours of birds and game. A flush of green across the semi-arid landscape had large herds of Springbuck browsing alongside many young of the year, amongst which Secretary-birds, Kori and Ludwig's Bustards strode and Blue Cranes danced. Many raptors filled the air but the most impressive by far was a Pallid Harrier, an uncommon migrant from Asia, we also recorded three very impressive species of falcons, Peregrine, Pygmy and Red-necked. Three species of owls were also found, they were Barn, White-faced and Giant Eagle-Owl. A flock of Caspian Plovers, another uncommon migrant from Asia, brought the bus to a screaming halt, as did sightings of several species of mammals including Black-backed Jackal, African Elephant, Common Zebra, Southern Oryx and a group of young male Lions. As the cameras clicked away, other highlights included Spotted Dikkop, Burchell's and Double-banded Sandgrouse, a magnificent Double-banded Courser and stunning looks at the very attractive, ground-frequenting Rufous-eared Warbler. Larks are a speciality of Etosha and we recorded Rufous-naped, Sabota, Spike-heeled, Red-capped and Pink-billed Larks and Chestnut-backed and Grey-backed Finch-Larks. An unfortunate incident occurred during our last evening at Etosha, while walking from the waterhole to the lodge, Sheila slipped and fell, sustaining an injury to her wrist.

Today was mainly a travel day, as we drove from Etosha to Rundu. Our main priority was to get Sheila to a hospital to have her arm x-rayed and treated. As we were looking for a doctor's surgery in the small mining town of Tsumeb, a small flock of White Helmetshrikes was observed in parkland, allowing a good look at them. Unfortunately, the X-rays showed that Sheila had broken her wrist. Sheila spent the rest of the tour with her arm in plaster, we all admired her stoic determination to enjoy the tour regardless of her injury. In the late afternoon we arrived at our lodge overlooking Angola, at the other side of the narrow Kavango River. We enjoyed some very good birding in the grounds of the lodge and along the riverbank. As we walked through the garden we noted a pair of Crested Francolins feeding on the ground, Red-eyed Doves abounded and smaller Green-spotted Doves scratched around in the dust. A small flock of Red-bill Woodhoopoes moved through the scrub and a Senegal Coucal put in an appearance, a couple of Yellow-breasted Apalis flitted around a large acacia, a Fan-tailed Flycatcher appeared briefly before we were distracted by the very impressive Swamp Boubou. Along the river we found Black Egret, Striated Heron, both African and the much less common Lesser Jacana, several White-winged Terns, Coppery-tailed Coucal and a few Wire-tailed Swallows.

The rest of the tour was spent in the Caprivi Strip, an area recently reopened to tourists, now that the civil war in Angola has ended. The birding in the strip was truly magnificent. Most of the first day was spent birding the Rundu Wetlands, which sustained a large variety of waterbirds, some of the more notable birds observed included

Goliath Heron, a few rarely seen Rufous-bellied Herons, a superb Little Bitten, several White-faced Whistling-Ducks, the rare Ovambo Sparrowhawk, we played hide-and-seek with an African Rail, African Snipe, Pied Kingfisher, European Sedge Warbler, Greater Swamp-Warbler and Pin-tailed Whydah. After dark Piers took us spotlighting and we were able to enjoy great looks at Wood Owl, African Barred Owl and Mozambique Nightjar, which added to our ever-growing list.

We then spent two days birding the Mahango Game Reserve, which is famous for its large numbers of mammals. Elephants were very much in evidence, but herds of Lechwe, Roan and Sable Antelopes were the highlights for many of the group. The game reserve had an abundance of bee-eaters, which included Blue-cheeked, White-fronted, Little, Southern Carmine, European and Swallow-tailed, hornbills were also plentiful and included Bradfield's, Grey, Red-billed and Southern Yellow-billed. Other birds, which stood out, included Woolly-necked Stork, Little Sparrowhawk, Black-winged Pratincole, Striped Cuckoo, Eastern Black-headed Oriole and Grey Penduline-Tit. We watched in disbelief, a pair of Northern Wheatears, which are very rare vagrants to Namibia.

In the grounds of our lodge and on a visit to the nearby Popa Falls, we added the extremely rare and localised Slaty Egret, the very uncommon Bat Hawk, Water Dikkop, Rock Pratincole, superb African Skimmers, African Green-Pigeon, White-browed Coucal, Giant Kingfisher, Broad-billed Roller, Black-collared Barbet, Grey-rumped Swallow, the extremely localised Chirping Cisticola, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Orange-breasted Bushshrike and Golden Bishop.

Most of the following day was spent exploring the Bwabwata Reserve, where highlights included Hadedra Ibis, a super Lesser Spotted Eagle, Long-toed Plover, several Collared Pratincoles, the very uncommon Racket-tailed Roller, the huge Ground Hornbill, African Stonechat, Neddicky, Plain-backed Pipit and Spotted-backed Weaver. We then drove to Katima Mulilo, for a three nights stay.

We spent two days birding the open mopane woodland around Katima Mulilo and the avian jewels of the area slowly revealed themselves to us, with observations of a stunning Cuckoo Hawk, with a chameleon in its talons, Grey-headed Kingfisher, the rarely observed Lesser Honeyguide, Black Cuckoo-shrike, Eastern Bearded Robin, Blue-grey and Southern Black Flycatchers, Chin-spot Batis, African Pied Wagtail, Tropical Boubou, the delightful Grey-headed Bushshrike, Coppery, Purple-banded and Collared Sunbirds and a small colony of Thick-billed Weavers. We also stumbled across yet another vagrant to Namibia while at Katima Mulilo, this was a superb Sooty Falcon, and we enjoyed very good scope views as the falcon sat in the top of a dead tree.

Next we traveled into Botswana, where we were taken by boat from the village of Kasane to Impalila Island Lodge in the easternmost extension of the Caprivi Region of Namibia. Most of our time was spent birding by boat in and around Impalila Island, as well as a visit by boat to Chobe National Park. As we traveled to Impalila Island Lodge we began to appreciate the size and complexity of this unique area, the lodge is situated in a

wilderness of clear channels and lakes, waving papyrus fronds, palms and huge *Garcinia* trees, we were to have this natural wonderland almost to ourselves. There were literally birds everywhere we looked, commonly encountered birds included Reed Cormorant, Darter, Great White, Little and Cattle Egrets, Squacco Heron, African Open-billed Stork, Spur-winged Goose, White-crowned Plover, Malachite Kingfisher and the stately African Fish-Eagle. Less common birds observed around the lodge included White-backed Night-Heron, Whiskered Tern, Red-chested and Great Spotted Cuckoo, Brown-hooded Kingfisher, Cardinal and Olive Woodpeckers, Black-backed Cisticola, Pink-throated Longclaw, Red-billed Helmet-Shrike, Southern Brown-throated Weaver and Red-shouldered Widow. During our stay at Impalila Island Lodge we found two more rare vagrants for Namibia, a Western Marsh Harrier and a Dunlin.

Chobe National Park contains 11,700 square kilometres of pristine wilderness and its elephant population, represents the largest remaining concentration in the whole of Africa. We very much enjoyed groups of elephants swimming across the mighty Zambezi River, we were able to get close to them in our boat. This permanent source of water attracts a large variety of mammals, birds and Nile Crocodiles. Some of the more interesting birds we observed here included Dwarf Bittern, Sacred and Glossy Ibis, African Spoonbill, Knob-billed Duck, Lesser Striped Swallow, African Yellow-bellied Bulbul, Zitting Cisticola, Plum-coloured Starling and Spectacled Weaver. Mammals were particularly conspicuous and as well as the big herds of elephants, we also saw Hippopotamus, African Buffalo, Greater Kudu, Vervet Monkey and a species of antelope which only occurs in this area, the beautiful Puku.

Our final destination was the magnificent Victoria Falls, across the boarder in Zimbabwe. At the falls the mighty Zambezi River is almost two kilometres wide, it plunges over 100 metres into a vertical chasm, creating a truly awesome spectacle. As the waters thunder over the edge rainbows arch through the fine spray that rises high up into the sky. New species seen in the area included Ayre's Hawk-Eagle, African Pygmy and Striped Kingfishers, Yellow-fronted Barbet, Arrow-marked Babbler, Red-winged Starling, Yellow White-eye, Red-billed Firefinch and Yellow-eyed Canary.

We traveled many kilometres together, enjoyed great scenery, a great many species of birds and mammals and had a great deal of fun. It was without a doubt, one of the best ever, Peregrine Bird Tours, and I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

### STRUTHIONIDAE

Ostrich *Struthio camelus* Several groups encountered throughout the tour.

#### PODICIPEDIDAE

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* A solitary bird at Walvis Bay, was an unexpected find.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* Large flocks encountered at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Dabchick *Tahybaptus ruficollis* A common bird of wetland habitat, throughout Namibia.

#### PROCELLARIIDAE

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus* Several observed flying offshore at Walvis Bay.

This bird is a common non-breeding visitor, recorded from all months of the year in Namibian waters.

#### PELECANIDAE

Eastern White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* A locally common resident, we recorded this species at Avis Dam, in Windhoek and at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

#### SULIDAE

Cape Gannet *Mnorus capensis* This species breeds on offshore islands, we saw a few birds flying offshore at Walvis Bay.

#### PHALACROCORACIDAE

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* A common resident throughout most wetland areas of Namibia.

Cape Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capensis* A common resident which we saw well at Walvis Bay.

Reed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus* An abundant species throughout Namibia.

Crowned Cormorant *Phalacrocorax coronatus* A locally common resident, which we observed well at Walvis Bay.

#### ANHINGIDAE

Darter *Anhinga rufa* Commonly recorded throughout all wetland areas of Namibia.

#### ARDEIDAE

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* A common breeding bird throughout Namibia.

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala* This species became common in the Caprivi Strip.

Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath* A locally common species of northern Namibia.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* This beautiful bird is a common resident throughout wetland areas of Namibia.

Great White Egret *Casmerodius albus* A common resident throughout northern Namibia.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* Commonly encountered throughout all wetland areas.

Intermediate Egret *Egretta intermedia* A common resident throughout northern Namibia.

Black Egret *Egretta ardesiaca* A rare inhabitant of northeastern Namibia, we recorded this species on one occasion, flying along the Kavango River, at Rundu.

Slaty Egret *Egretta vinaceigula* This endangered species is endemic to the Okavango Delta. We were very fortunate to enjoy good looks at this species from our tented lodge on the banks of the Kavango River, near Popa Falls.

Cattle Egret *Bulbulcus ibis* A common bird throughout Namibia.

Common Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* A common resident throughout wetlands of northern Namibia.

Striated Heron *Butorides striatus* An uncommon resident throughout most wetland areas of northern Namibia.

Rufous-bellied Heron *Ardeola rufiventris* This very uncommon species occurs in northern Namibia. We enjoyed super looks at a few birds in the Rundu Wetlands, plus one sighting along the Zambezi River, near Impalila Island.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* We enjoyed several sightings in northern Namibia.

White-backed Night-Heron *Gorsachius leuconotus* A very uncommon resident of the Caprivi Strip. One evening after dinner while at Impalila Island Lodge we went out on a boat trip, specifically looking for this species. With the aid of a spotlight we were fortunate to enjoy very close looks at two individuals.

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* This uncommon species was flushed from the edge of a reedbed in the Rundu Wetlands.

Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii* This uncommon summer visitor to northern Namibia, is seldom seen, as it normally stays hidden in dense cover. We were very fortunate to enjoy scope views of a bird half-hidden in tall grass, along the edge of the Zambezi River in Chobe National Park.

#### SCOPIIDAE

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* A fairly common bird throughout Namibia.

#### CICONIIDAE

Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii* A summer visitor to Namibia, from farther north in Africa. We were extremely fortunate to find a solitary bird amongst a large flock of many hundreds of African Open-billed Storks, it was the first Abdim's Stork of the year.

Woolly-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* An uncommon resident of northern Namibia, we enjoyed good looks at this species in the Mahango Game Reserve.

African Open-billed Stork *Anastomus lamelligerus* This species of northern Namibia was present in very large numbers, throughout the Caprivi Strip.

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* Common and widespread.

#### THESKIORNITHIDAE

Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* In Namibia, this species is only found in the Caprivi Strip, we enjoyed good close views during the boat trip in Chobe National Park.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* This species occurs in northern Namibia where we encountered a small flock during the boat trip in Chobe National Park.

Hadedda Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where it proved to be common.

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* This uncommon species was only observed during the boat trip in Chobe National Park.

#### PHOENICOPTERIIDAE

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopus ruber* Large numbers of this species were present at both Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopus minor* This species was also present in large numbers at both Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

#### ANATIDAE

White-faced Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna viduata* In Namibia this species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, we observed small numbers in the Rundu Wetlands, Bwabwata Reserve and along the Zambezi River, near Impalila Island.

Fulvous Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* We observed a pair of this species at Walvis Bay, this species is a vagrant to this area, so we were lucky to find it.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus* Common and widespread throughout all wetland areas.

South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana* This resident species was observed at Avis Dam, in Windhoek, at Walvis Bay and again in Etosha National Park.

Cape Teal *Anas capensis* Fairly common throughout most wetland areas.

Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* This uncommon resident was recorded from Walvis Bay and Rundu Wetlands.

Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha* This species was very common throughout all wetland habitats.

Cape Shoveler *Anas smithii* We only recorded this species at Walvis Bay.

Southern Pochard *Netta erythrophthalma* This resident species was also only observed at Walvis Bay.

Knob-billed Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos* Several sightings throughout northern Namibia.

Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis* Also several sightings throughout northern Namibia.

Maccoa Duck *Oxyra maccoa* This uncommon, localised resident was observed at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

#### SAGITTARIIDAE

Secretary-bird *Sagittarius serpentarius* This uncommon resident of Namibia was observed on two occasions, both sightings were in Etosha National Park.

#### CATHARTIDAE

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* This uncommon resident was observed on only one occasion, when a few birds were observed close to Katima Mulilo.

African White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* Commonly observed throughout the tour.

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotus* This much larger and less common vulture was observed on several occasions throughout the tour.

## ACCIPITRIDAE

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* A common bird throughout northern Namibia.

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus* Common and conspicuous throughout Namibia.

Cuckoo Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides* This uncommon species was observed very well, we enjoyed close scope views of a bird perched in a tree, on the golf course at Katima Mulilo. It had a chameleon in its talons.

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus* We were very fortunate to observe this rare species on two occasions. Both sightings were at dusk, the first sighting was of a bird flying along the Kavango River, at our lodge near Popa Falls. The second sighting was of a bird flying along the Zambezi River, near Impalila Island.

Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* This scarce resident was observed from the bus a little north of Omaruru.

Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* A fairly common resident of Namibia, especially in the game reserves..

Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* This species is a very uncommon summer visitor to northern Namibia. We were pleased to enjoy good close looks at a bird circling close to our bus in the Bwabwata Reserve.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi* An uncommon summer visitor from central Africa, we enjoyed two sightings one near Grootfontein, followed by a second sighting in the Mahango Game Reserve. .

Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* This uncommon resident was only observed on one occasion, a pale morph bird was observed in flight in the Mahango Game Reserve.

African Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* Another uncommon resident, this fine looking bird was observed on one occasion, as it was flying overhead, near the town of Omaruru.

Ayre's Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresli* This rare raptor, is one of the rarest birds in Africa, we were extremely fortunate to enjoy good looks at a bird soaring overhead in Victoria Falls National Park.

Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus* An uncommon resident which we observed on several occasions.

Brown Snake-Eagle *Ciraetus cinereus* Yet another uncommon resident, which we saw on several occasions.

Black-breasted Snake-Eagle *Ciraetus gallicus* This uncommon resident was also observed on several occasions.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus* This fine looking eagle, was observed on many occasions throughout the tour.

African Fish-Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer* This very large, impressive eagle, was seen well on several occasions.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo* This fairly common summer visitor from the Russian Steppes, was observed well on a few occasions.

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus* This scarce resident was observed well, sitting on a wooden pole along the roadside, close to Katima Mulilo.

- Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis* This rare species of sparrowhawk was observed on only one occasion, close to the town of Rundu.
- Little Sparrowhawk *Accipiter minullus* Another scarce resident, which we observed on two occasions, once in the Mahango Game Reserve, followed by a second sighting in the Bwabwata Reserve.
- Shikra *Accipiter badius* This more common species of sparrowhawk was observed on three occasions, near Omaruru, near Katima Mulilo and in Victoria Falls National Park..
- Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar* We observed this fairly common resident on a few occasions, including a sighting of the uncommon melanistic morph while in Etosha National Park.
- Pale Chanting-Goshawk *Melierax canorus* A common species, which we recorded throughout Namibia.
- African Marsh-Harrier *Circus ranivorus* In Namibia, this fairly common species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed many good sightings.
- Western Marsh-Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* A rare vagrant to Namibia, with possibly only one other sighting. We enjoyed good close looks at a juvenile bird along the Zambezi River near Impalila Island.
- Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* A rare summer visitor to Namibia, we enjoyed great looks at a bird quartering the ground in Etosha National Park.

#### PANDIOIDAE

- Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* The Osprey is a rare non-breeding summer visitor to Namibia, we were very fortunate to enjoy two sightings, the first at Avis Dam, at Windhoek, followed by a second sighting in the Rundu Wetlands.

#### FALCONIDAE

- Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* This scarce resident was observed on two occasions, Once in Etosha National Park, followed by a second sighting in Victoria Falls National Park.
- Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus* This uncommon resident was observed on only one occasion, a bird flew across the road in front of the bus in Chobe National Park.
- Red-necked Falcon *Falco chicquera* Another uncommon resident, again it was only observed on one occasion. We enjoyed watching a bird plucking a small bird in Etosha National Park.
- Sooty Falcon *Falco concolor* A rare vagrant to Namibia, with four previous sightings for the country. This spectacular falcon nests from the Libyan Desert to the Red Sea coast of Arabia they migrate down the East African coast where the vast majority of birds spend the winter months in Madagascar, with smaller numbers wintering along the southeastern seaboard of Africa. A few birds winter further to the west in mainland Africa, this was one of those occasions. We enjoyed super close scope views of a bird sat in the top of a dead tree, near Katima Mulilo.
- Western Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* An uncommon summer visitor from eastern Europe, a small flock of birds was observed in flight in Etosha National Park .
- Eurasian Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* A common resident throughout Namibia.

Greater Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides* A fairly common resident, which we observed on several occasions.

Pygmy Falcon *Polihierax semitorquatus* A pair of this uncommon resident was seen very well in Etosha National Park.

#### PHASIANIDAE

Crested Francolin *Francolinus sephaena* This fairly common bird was observed on three occasions; at the Rundu Wetlands, near Popa Falls and on Impalila Island.

Red-billed Francolin *Francolinus adsperus* This locally common resident was seen well on several occasions.

Swainson's Francolin *Francolinus swainsonii* This common bird was observed on a few occasions.

#### NUMIDIDAE

Helmeted Guineafowl *Numida meleagris* Common and conspicuous throughout Namibia.

#### GRUIDAE

Blue Crane *Anthropoides paradiseus* In Namibia, this species only occurs in Etosha National Park, where we enjoyed very good looks..

#### RALLIDAE

African Rail *Rallus caerulescens* This common but shy resident was glimpsed on several occasions in the Rundu Wetlands.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostris* A common bird of most wetland areas.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio* Another common bird of most wetland areas.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* Another very common resident of wetland areas.

Lesser Moorhen *Gallinula angulata* This very uncommon summer visitor, was observed by Win at the Rundu Sewage Farm.

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata* Another common resident of wetland areas.

#### OTIDIDAE

Kori Bustard *Ardeotis kori* Unfortunately, hunting has now drastically reduced numbers of this species outside protected areas and it is now mainly confined to game reserves. We enjoyed many good sightings in Etosha National Park.

Ludwig's Bustard *Neotis ludwigii* This uncommon species was observed very well in the Namib-Naukluft and Etosha National Parks.

Ruppell's Korhaan *Eupodotis rueppellii* This fairly common species is endemic to Namibia, we enjoyed several good sightings in the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

Red-crested Korhaan *Eupodotis ruficrista* We saw this common species on several occasions.

Northern Black Korhaan *Eupodotis afraoides* We also saw this common species on several occasions.

## JACANIDAE

African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus* This locally common species proved to be fairly common throughout most wetland areas.

Lesser Jacana *Microparra capensis* This very uncommon resident was surprisingly observed on three occasions, all in the Caprivi Strip.

## HAEMATOPODIDAE

African Black Oystercatcher *Haematopus moquini* A common resident of the African coast, we recorded it at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

## CHARADRIIDAE

Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* This common summer visitor was observed in good numbers at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus* This common resident was observed at Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and on a sandbank in the Zambezi River, not far from Impalila Island.

Chestnut-banded Plover *Charadrius pallidus* Good numbers of this uncommon localised resident were present at Walvis Bay and we also saw a few birds in Etosha National Park.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* This common resident was found in most wetland habitats.

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris* Another common resident which was found in most wetland habitats.

Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus* A small flock of this very uncommon summer visitor, from the Russian Steppes, was observed in Etosha National Park.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* This common summer visitor was observed on several occasions.

Crowned Plover *Vanellus coronatus* A common and conspicuous bird, which occurs throughout Namibia.

Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus* Observed on almost every day of the tour.

White-crowned Plover *Vanellus albiceps* In Namibia, this very attractive but uncommon resident only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed many good sightings.

Wattled Plover *Vanellus senegallus* A fairly common resident of northern Namibia, which we saw on several occasions.

Long-toed Plover *Vanellus crassirostris* In Namibia, this locally common resident, only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed several good sightings.

## SCOLOPACIDAE

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* A common summer visitor, large numbers were observed in Walvis Bay.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos* A common summer visitor, which we saw on many occasions.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* Another common summer visitor, which we saw on numerous occasions.

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* This uncommon summer visitor, was also observed on several occasions.

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* This species is also a common summer visitor, which we saw on many occasions.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* This uncommon summer visitor, mainly stays on the coast of Africa, we observed small numbers in Walvis Bay.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* This species is also an uncommon summer visitor, which mainly visits coastal Africa. We observed a small flock amongst the many thousands of waders in Walvis Bay.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* This common summer visitor was seen well at Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and the Outjo Sewage Farm.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* A rare vagrant to Namibia, this is possibly the second record for the country. This bird was observed on a small sandbank in the Zambezi River, not far from Impalila Island. It was roosting on the sandbank with large numbers of egrets, terns and waders.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta* A common summer visitor, which we observed on many occasions.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* An uncommon summer visitor, which mainly visits coastal Africa. Small numbers were present at Walvis Bay, with an additional sighting of a solitary bird on a sandbank in the Zambezi River, not far from Impalila Island.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* This common summer visitor was observed in very large flocks, throughout most wetland areas.

African Snipe *Gallinago nigripennis* A solitary bird of this uncommon resident species, was flushed from cover, on one occasion in the Rundu Wetlands.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* A common summer visitor to the coasts of Africa, it proved to be fairly common in Walvis Bay.

#### RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* This common resident was observed in good numbers at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* This common resident was observed throughout most wetland areas.

#### BURHINDAE

Spotted Dikkop *Burhinus caebsus* This uncommon resident was observed on only one occasion, at a small waterhole in Etosha National Park.

Water Dikkop *Burhinus vermiculatus* This uncommon resident was observed on several occasions in northern Namibia.

#### GLAREOLIDAE

Double-banded Courser *Smutornis africanus* Another uncommon resident, we enjoyed a few sightings of this very beautiful bird in Etosha National Park.

Bronze-winged Courser *Rhinoptilus chalcopterus* This very uncommon resident, is a bird that you only get a chance to see once in a lifetime. This species of courser is unique, as it is the only member of this family in Africa that is nocturnal. We

were very fortunate to enjoy good close looks at a pair of birds in Miombo woodland, not far from Katima Mulilo.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* This locally common breeding summer visitor, was observed on a few occasions in the Caprivi Strip.

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* A small flock of this uncommon summer visitor was observed flying over our heads in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Rock Pratincole *Glareola nuchalis* This gem amongst birds is an uncommon summer breeding bird in Namibia. It only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed many good sightings.

#### LARIDAE

Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* A common resident throughout all coastal areas of Namibia.

Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus* This species is also a common resident throughout all coastal areas of Namibia.

Hartlaub's Gull *Larus hartlaubii* This gull is also a common resident throughout coastal areas of Namibia.

#### STERNIDAE

Caspian Tern *Hydropragne caspia* Small numbers of this fairly common resident of the Namibian coast, were observed in Walvis Bay.

Greater Crested Tern *Sterna bergii* Another common resident throughout coastal areas of Namibia.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis* A common summer visitor to all coastal areas of Namibia, we enjoyed several good sightings.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* Another common summer visitor to all coastal areas of Namibia, which we saw on several occasions.

Damara Tern *Sterna balaenarum* This uncommon species only breeds along the coast of Namibia. We enjoyed good close looks at this diminutive species at Walvis Bay.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* A fairly common resident of northern Namibia, where we enjoyed many good sightings.

White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* This common and widespread summer visitor, was observed on many occasions.

#### RYNCHOPIDAE

African Skimmer *Rhynchops flavirostris* In Namibia, this uncommon resident is restricted to the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed many good sightings of this very beautiful bird.

#### PTEROCLIDAE

Namaqua Sandgrouse *Pterocles namaqua* We enjoyed good close looks at this species in Etosha National Park.

Burchell's Sandgrouse *Pterocles burchelli* A large flock of this very uncommon species of sandgrouse was observed coming into drink at a floodlit waterhole in Etosha National Park.

Double-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicintus* Another uncommon species of sandgrouse, which once again we saw well along the roadside in Etosha National Park.

#### COLUMBIDAE

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia* Common throughout towns and villages.

Rock Pigeon *Columba guinea* This fine looking pigeon was observed in parkland in Windhoek and again on rocky escarpments at Spitzkop.

Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* This species only occurs in the far north of Namibia, where it is common and widespread.

African Mourning Dove *Streptopelia decipiens* This uncommon species also only occurs in the far north of Namibia, where we saw it on several occasions.

Cape Turtle-Dove *Streptopelia capicola* Common and widespread throughout the whole of Namibia.

Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* Abundant and widespread throughout the whole of Namibia.

Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* This delightful species is also common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Green-spotted Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* This small species of dove is common and widespread throughout northern Namibia, where we enjoyed many good sightings.

African Green-Pigeon *Treron calva* This large species of pigeon proved to be fairly common in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed good close looks.

#### PSITTACIDAE

Meyer's Parrot *Poicephalus meyeri* A fairly common species throughout northeastern Namibia.

Rosy-faced Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis* This fairly common species was observed flying overhead in a dry watercourse, close to Omaruru.

Black-cheeked Lovebird *Agapornis nigrigenis* This beautiful small parrot is an endangered species and is only found within a small area of central Africa. We enjoyed good close looks at a pair of birds in a large tree on the outskirts of Outjo. This is several hundred kilometres southwest of their normal range and these birds could well have been aviary escapees. On the other hand, these birds behaved like wild birds, in my experience aviary escapee lovebirds do not act like birds from the wild, in most cases they will allow you to pick them up. In the past two years there have been other sightings reported from this area and it could well be that there has been an extension of range or there is now a feral breeding population in this area.

#### MUSOPHAGIDAE

Schallow's Lourie *Tauraco schalowi* This very beautiful bird was seen around Katima Mulilo and again at Victoria Falls National Park.

Grey Lourie *Corythaixoides concolor* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

#### CUCULIDAE

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis* This species is an uncommon summer visitor to Namibia. We enjoyed good looks at a pair of birds who came in well to tape, at Omaruru.

Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus olitarius* A common summer visitor to the Caprivi Strip, we only observed this bird on one occasion, on Impalila Island.

Black Cuckoo *Cuculus ciamosus* Another uncommon summer visitor, we enjoyed good looks at this species near Omaruru and again in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Ciamataor glandarius* Another uncommon summer visitor, which we saw in flight during a boat trip on the Zambezi River, near Impalila Island.

Striped Cuckoo *Clamator levaillanti* Yet another uncommon summer visitor, we enjoyed good looks in the Mahango Game Reserve, near Impalila Island and close to Victoria Falls.

Pied Cuckoo *Clamatorjacobinus* We enjoyed several good looks at this common summer visitor.

Klaas' Cuckoo *Crysococyx klaas* We only saw this common summer visitor on two occasions, once in the Mahango Game Reserve and again on Impalila Island.

Diderik Cuckoo *Chrysocossyx caprius* Yet another common summer visitor, which we saw well on several occasions.

Coppery-tailed Coucal *Centropus cupreicaudus* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed several good sightings.

Senegal Coucal *Centropus semagalensis* We enjoyed several good looks at this uncommon resident, in northern Namibia.

White-browed Coucal *Centropus superciliosus* This common resident was observed on two occasions, once at Popa Falls and once in Victoria Falls National Park.

#### STRIGIDAE

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* This familiar species of owl was observed on two occasions, once in Etosha National Park and once near Rundu.

Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii* This large species of owl came into tape very well at our lodge near Popa Falls.

Marsh Owl *Asio capensis* This species was observed on two occasions, once at a waterhole in Etosha National Park and again at the waterhole at our lodge at Victoria Falls.

African Scops-Owl *Otus senegalensis* This species came into tape very well at our lodges at Omaruru and Etosha.

Southern White-faced Owl *Ptilopsis granti* The White-faced Owl of Africa has recently been split into two species, one in the north and one in the south. If you have seen this species in Kenya, that species is now known as the Northern White-faced Owl. We enjoyed very good looks at an individual of this species, who came in well to tape, in Etosha National Park.

Pearl-spotted Owl *Glaucidium perlatum* The commonest owl in Africa, we saw it on several occasions.

African Barred Owl *Glaucidium capense* This uncommon species of owl came into tape at our lodge near Popa Falls, but was always chased off by the much larger Wood Owl, who objected to the smaller owl being in its territory.

Giant Eagle-Owl *Bubo iacteus* Great spotting by Nancy enabled the group to enjoy good looks at this huge species of owl in a large tree close to the waterhole, in Etosha National Park. Closer inspection, found that they were in fact three Giant Eagle-Owls roosting in this tree.

Rufous-cheeked Nightjar *Caprimulgus rufigena* This uncommon summer visitor was seen on most evenings, hawking for insects over floodlit waterholes in Etosha National Park.

Freckled Nightjar *Caprimulgus tristigma* This resident species of nightjar joined a couple of Rufous-cheeked Nightjars, hawking for insects over a waterhole in Etosha National Park.

Mozambique Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* This resident species of nightjar, came in to tape at our lodge near Popa Falls.

#### APODIDAE

Eurasian Swift *Apus apus* Flocks of this common summer visitor were observed on many occasions.

Bradfield's Swift *Apus bradfieldi* This resident species of swift was particularly common around Windhoek.

White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer* This common summer visitor was observed in Windhoek at Outjo and again in Etosha National Park.

Horus Swift *Apus horus* This uncommon summer visitor only occurs in Namibia in the easternmost section of the Caprivi Strip. We observed a small flock in Chobe National Park, during a boat trip on the Zambezi River.

Little Swift *Apus affinis* This common resident was observed on many occasions.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba* This common resident was also observed on many occasions.

African Palm-Swift *Cypsiurus parvus* This resident species was observed on almost everyday of the tour.

#### TROGANIDAE

Narina Trogon *Apoladerma narina* This species was observed by Win in the grounds of our lodge, close to Popa Falls.

#### COLIDAE

White-backed Mousebird *Colius colius* Many good looks throughout the tour.

Red-faced Mousebird *Urolclius indicus* Also many good looks throughout the tour.

#### ALCEDINDAE

Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis* Common throughout all wetland areas of Namibia.

Giant Kingfisher *Ceryle maxima* In Namibia this species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we observed it well at Popa Falls and again in Chobe National Park.

Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristota* Once again, in Namibia this species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where it proved to be common.

African Pygmy-Kingfisher *Ispidina picta* This uncommon summer visitor, was observed only once, in the grounds of our lodge at Victoria Falls.

Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis* This common summer visitor to northern Namibia, was seen well on several occasions.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon albiventris* In Namibia, this resident species only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where it was seen well a few times.  
Grey-hooded Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* This uncommon summer visitor to northern Namibia, was only observed on one occasion, close to Katima Mulilo.  
Striped Kingfisher *Halcyon chelicuti* This resident species was only observed on the last day of the tour, close to Victoria Falls.

#### MEROPIDAE

European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* A common summer visitor, small flocks where observed throughout the tour.  
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus* This uncommon summer visitor, was observed frequently throughout northern Namibia..  
Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides* In Namibia, this common summer visitor only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we saw many individuals.  
White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides* In Namibia, this common resident only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we observed it on several occasions.  
Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus* A common resident of northern Namibia.  
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater *Merops hirundineus* A common resident throughout Namibia.

#### CORACIIDAE

Lilac-breasted Roller *Coracias caudata* A common resident throughout Namibia.  
Racket-tailed Roller *Coracias spatulata* This very uncommon resident only occurs in the Caprivi Strip portion of Namibia. We spent a whole day searching for this species in the Bwabwata Reserve, finally being rewarded with an excellent sighting of this beautiful bird.  
Purple Roller *Coracias naevia* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.  
Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus* A common summer visitor to the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed several good sightings.

#### UPUPIDAE

Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa africana* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

#### PHOENCULIDAE

Red-billed Woodhoopoe *Phoeniculus purpureus* A common resident throughout Namibia.  
Southern Violet Woodhoopoe *Phoeniculus damarensis* This uncommon species is endemic to Namibia. We observed small flocks on two occasions, once at Omaruru and again in Etosha National Park.  
Greater Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* This beautiful bird is common and widespread throughout Namibia.

#### BUCEROTIDAE

Trumpeter Hornbill *Bycanistes bucinator* In Namibia, this large species of hornbill only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we observed birds at Katima Mulilo, Impalila Island and Victoria Falls.

Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.  
Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* Common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.  
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill *Tackus leucomelas* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.  
Bradfield's Hornbill *Tockus bradfieldi* A common bird throughout northern Namibia, we observed it only once, in the Mahango Game Reserve.  
Moneiro's Hornbill *Tockus monteiri* This delightful hornbill is endemic to Namibia, it is fairly common and we enjoyed good looks on several occasions.  
Ground Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri* This remarkable ground frequenting hornbill was observed on two occasions, once in the Bwabwata Reserve and again near Katima Mulilo.

#### CAPITONIDAE

Black-collared Barbet *Lybius toruatus* Common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.  
Acacia Pied Barbet *Tricholaema leucomelas* A common bird, occurring throughout the whole of Namibia.  
Yellow-fronted Barbet *Pogoniulus chrysoconus* This species only occurs in northeastern Namibia. We saw it very well on only one occasion, in the garden of the game reserve headquarters, at Mahango.  
Crested Barbet *Trachyphorus vallantii* This very handsome species of barbet only occurs in the Caprivi Strip portion of Namibia, we saw it twice, once in the Mahango Game Reserve and again on Impalila Island..

#### INDICATORIDAE

Lesser Honeyguide *Indicator minor* Found throughout northern Namibia, we observed it at Katima Mulilo and Impalila Island.

#### PICIDAE

Golden-tailed Woodpecker *Campethera abingoni* We saw this common species only once, it was observed at close quarters in the car park of our lodge at Omaruru.  
Cardinal Woodpecker *Dendropicos fuscens* This common species of woodpecker was observed on two occasions, at Omaruru and again at Impalila Island.  
Bearded Woodpecker *Trhrapias namaquus* Common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.  
Olive Woodpecker *Mesopicos griseocephalus* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the eastern part of the Caprivi Strip. There was a resident pair at our lodge on Impalila Island.

#### ALAUDIDAE

Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana* This species was seen occasionally in Etosha National Park.  
Sabota Lark *Mirafra sabota* Fairly common throughout the drier areas of Namibia.

Karoo Long-billed Lark *Certhilauda subcoronata* We enjoyed very good looks at a pair of this impressive lark, while we were searching for Herero Chats, at Spitzkop.

Dune Lark *Certhilauda erythrochlamys* This small lark is endemic to Namibia, where it only occurs in the sparsely vegetated dunes of the Namib-Naukluft National Park. We enjoyed good looks at a pair of birds, early one morning in the park.

Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata* We only saw this bird on one occasion, in Etosha National Park.

Red-capped Lark *Colandrella cinerea* This species proved to be fairly common in Etosha National Park.

Pink-billed Lark *Spizocorys conirostris* One or two sightings, again in Etosha National Park.

Stark's Lark *Spizocorys starki* A small flock of this uncommon species of lark was observed very well near the entrance to the Spitzkop Reserve.

Gray's Lark *Ammomanes grayi* Gray's Lark is endemic to the Namib Desert of Namibia, where it is uncommon and nomadic. We found several flocks in the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

Chestnut-backed Finch-Lark *Eremopterix leucotis* Another nomadic species of lark, we observed large numbers coming in to drink at a waterhole in Etosha National Park.

Grey-backed Finch-Lark *Eremopterix verticalis* Yet another nomadic species of lark, which proved to be fairly common in Etosha National Park.

#### HIRUNDINDAE

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* An abundant summer visitor, which we saw on most days of the trip.

White-throated Swallow *Hirundo albigularis* This common breeding summer visitor, proved common in the Caprivi Strip.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* A common resident of northern Namibia, which we saw on many occasions.

Pearl-breasted Swallow *Hirundo dimidiata* We observed this uncommon resident, on only one occasion, at a small dam near Omaruru.

Red-breasted Swallow *Hirundo semirufa* This common summer visitor, only occurs in northern Namibia, where we saw it several times.

Mosque Swallow *Hirundo senegalensis* An uncommon resident of northern Namibia, which we saw on a few occasions.

Greater Striped Swallow *Hirundo cucullata* This common resident was seen on several occasions.

Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo albyssinica* This species is a common resident of northern Namibia, where we saw it a few times in the Caprivi Strip.

Rock Martin *Hirundo fuligula* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Common House Martin *Delichon urbica* This bird is a common summer visitor to Namibia, however, we only saw it on one occasion, at the Outjo Sewage Farm.

Grey-rumped Swallow *Pseudhirundo griseopyga* This species is an uncommon resident of northeastern Namibia. We saw it on most days in the Caprivi Strip.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* A common summer visitor, which we saw on several occasions.

Brown-throated Martin *Riparia paludicola* A common resident mainly in northern Namibia, once again it proved common in the Caprivi Strip.

Banded Martin *Riparia cincta* An uncommon breeding summer visitor, which we recorded on three occasions, in Etosha National Park, Impalila Island and Chobe National Park.

#### CAMPEPHAGIDAE

Black Cuckoo-shrike *Campephaga flava* Confined to northeastern Namibia, where we observed it on several occasions.

#### DICRURIDAE

Fork-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis* Common and widespread throughout the whole of Namibia.

#### ORIOOLIDAE

Eastern Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus larvatus* This common resident is confined to the northeastern corner of Namibia. We saw it on only one occasion, in the Mahango Game Reserve.

#### CORVIDAE

Black Crow *Corvus capensis* This resident all dark crow was recorded from Namib-Naukluft and Etosha National Parks.

Pied Crow *Corvus albus* Seen on most days of the tour.

#### PARIDAE

Ashy Tit *Parus cinerascens* This common resident was observed on two occasions; the first occasion was in a bush with the closely related Carp's Tit, at Spitzkop. The second occasion was in Etosha National Park.

Southern Black Tit *Parus niger* This species is confined to the far north of Namibia, where we observed it on several occasions.

Carp's Tit *Parus carpi* Similar in appearance to the above species, Carp's Tit is endemic to the arid, hill country of the escarpment zone in northern Namibia. We enjoyed good looks at Spitzkop and again in Etosha National Park.

#### REMIZIDAE

Cape Penduline-Tit *Anthoscopus minutus* This common resident was only observed on one occasion, in the Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve, close to Windhoek.

Grey Penduline-Tit *Anthoscopus caroli* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the northeastern corner, we only observed it on one occasion, in the Mahango Game Reserve.

#### TIMALIIDAE

Arrow-marked Babbler *Turdoides jardineii* Confined to the northeast of Namibia, where we found it to be common.

- Black-faced Babbler *Turdoides melanops* We observed this uncommon resident only once, in Etosha National Park.
- Hartlaub's Babbler *Turdoides harlaubii* A common resident of far northern Namibia, which we saw it on several occasions.
- Southern Pied Babbler *Turdoides bicolor* Another common resident, which we saw only once, in the grounds of our lodge at Omaruru.
- Bare-cheeked Babbler *Turdoides gymnogenys* Endemic to Namibia, this species of babbler frequents the middle and lower strata of well-developed Mopane woodland, in northern Namibia. We saw a small flock of this attractive species in Etosha National Park.

#### PYCNONOTIDAE

- African Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus nigricans* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.
- Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus* Common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.
- Terrestrial Bulbul *Phyllastrephus terrestris* This species is also common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.
- African Yellow-bellied Bulbul *Chlorocichla flaviventris* Yet another species which is common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.
- Eastern Nicator *Nicator gularis* This uncommon and inconspicuous bird was observed very well in dry woodland close to Katima Mulilo.

#### TURDIDAE

- Kurrichane Thrush *Turdus libonyana* This is a common species throughout northeastern Namibia, we saw it on several occasions.
- Groundscraper Thrush *Turdus litsitsirupa* Another common resident, which we saw on many occasions.
- Short-toed Rock-Thrush *Monticola brevipes* This species is also a common resident, we enjoyed several good sightings.

#### MUSCICAPIDAE

- Mountain Chat *Oenanthe monticola* A common resident throughout the dryer areas of Namibia, we observed it on many occasions.
- Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata* Another common resident, which we observed on a few occasions.
- Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* A very rare vagrant to Namibia, we had a good long look at two birds together in Mahango Game Reserve, in order to make sure of their identification. This was only the second record for Namibia.
- Familiar Chat *Cercomela familiaris* Another common resident, which we recorded a few times.
- Tractrac Chat *Cercomela tractrac* A common but localised resident, which we observed in the Namib-Naukluft National Park and again at Spitzkopf.
- Southern Ant-eating Chat *Oenanthe bifasiata* Another common resident, we saw it on a few occasions in Etosha National Park.

Herero Chat *Namibornis herero* This uncommon and very localised bird is endemic to Namibia. After a great deal of searching we enjoyed good looks at three individuals amongst the rocky hills at Spitzkop.

African Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the northeast corner, where we found it to be fairly common.

Heuglin's Robin *Cassypa heuglini* This very beautiful bird is also only found in the far northeast of Namibia, where we enjoyed its dazzling colours on several occasions.

Collared Palm-Thrush *Cichladusa arquata* This uncommon and very localised resident just reaches the eastern tip of the Caprivi Strip. We shared an extremely enjoyable lunch with this species at a very fine hotel in Kasane, Botswana.

Eastern Bearded Robin *Erythropygia quadrivirgata* In Namibia, this common but rather shy resident, only occurs in the eastern half of the Caprivi Strip, where we observed it at Katima Mulilo and close to Impalila Island.

White-browed Robin *Erythropygia leucophrys* This species proved to be common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.

Kalahari Robin *Erythropygia paena* Fairly common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* This common summer visitor, was observed on several occasions.

Blue-grey Flycatcher *Muscicapa caerulescens* In Namibia, this common resident only occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where it was not uncommon.

Fan-tailed Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus* In Namibia, this uncommon resident only occurs in the northeast. We only recorded this species from one place, in the grounds of our lodge at Rundu.

Southern Black Flycatcher *Melaenornis pammelaina* This common resident only occurs across the far north of Namibia, where we recorded it on a few occasions.

Marico Flycatcher *Melaenornis mariquensis* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Mouse-coloured Flycatcher *Melaenornis pallidus* Another common resident which only occurs in the northeast of Namibia, where it proved to be fairly common.

Chat Flycatcher *Melaenornis infuscatus* A common resident throughout the dryer areas of Namibia.

#### SYLVIIDAE

Chestnut-vented Tit-Babbler *Parisoma subcaeruleum* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Layard's Tit-Babbler *Parisoma layardi* This uncommon resident of rocky hills was only recorded from Spitzkop, where we saw it very well.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* An uncommon summer visitor, which we only saw in the Mahango Game Reserve.

Great Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus grundinaceus* Another uncommon summer visitor, which we only recorded from the Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve, near Windhoek.

African Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus baeticatus* A common summer visitor, which we saw on several occasions.

European Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* This fairly common summer visitor was recorded from Rundu Sewage Farm and again close to Impalila Island.

Greater Swamp-Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens* Endemic to the Okavango region, where we enjoyed good close looks at a couple of birds in reedbeds at the Rundu Sewage Farm.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* A very common and widespread summer visitor, throughout Namibia.

Long-billed Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens* A common and widespread resident, which occurs throughout the whole of Namibia.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela *Eremomela icteropygialis* This small species of warbler was common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Burnt-necked Eremomela *Eremomela usticollis* This uncommon resident, was only recorded on one occasion, in the car park of our lodge at Omaruru.

Rockrunner *Achaetops pycnopygius* This uncommon resident is endemic to the Namibian escarpment, we enjoyed good looks at it in rocky hills at Avis Dam, in Windhoek and the Erongo Mountains, near Omaruru.

#### CISTICOLIDAE

Yellow-breasted Apalis *Apalis flavida* A common resident throughout northern Namibia.

Grey-backed Bleating-Warbler *Camaroptera brevicaudata* Another common resident throughout northern Namibia.

African Barred Warbler *Calamonastes fasciolata* We only saw this uncommon resident, on one occasion, in Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve, near Windhoek.

Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola jucidis* A common resident of Namibia.

Desert Cisticola *Cisticola aridulus* Another common resident, which we saw very well.

Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana* We saw this resident species very well on a few occasions.

Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola galactotes* In Namibia, this uncommon resident is only found in the Caprivi Strip, we saw it a few times on Impalila Island.

Chirping Cisticola *Cisticola pipiens* In Namibia, this uncommon resident is only found in reedbeds and papyrus swamps in the Caprivi Strip. This species came in to tape, at our lodge near Popa Falls and was also observed on Impalila Island.

Neddicky *Cisticola fulvicapillus* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the northeast corner, where it proved to be fairly common.

Rufous-eared Warbler *Malcorus pectoralis* This uncommon resident, occurs mainly in southern Namibia and South Africa. There is an isolated population, which occurs in semi-desert scrub in Etosha National Park. It was here that Piers spent some time attempting to tape the species in. Following a great deal of persistence, we were rewarded by very good close looks at this very attractive ground-frequenting warbler.

Tawny-flanked Prinia *Trinia subflava* Common and conspicuous throughout northern Namibia.

Black-chested Prinia *Prinia flavicans* This species is common and conspicuous, throughout the whole of Namibia.

#### PLATYSTERIRIDAE

Chin-spot Batis *Batis molitor* In Namibia, this species is confined to the northeast, where it is common.

Pirit Batis *Batis pririt* A common resident throughout the drier areas of Namibia.

White-tailed Shrike *Lanioturdus torquatus* The White-tailed Shrike is endemic to the central highlands of Namibia. We observed it very well on two occasions, once at Spitzkop and again at Omaruru.

#### MONARCHIDEA

African Paradise-Flycatcher *Trochocercus cyanomelas* A common summer visitor to Namibia, which we saw very well. We often found it nesting close to the dining room, at lodges where we were staying.

#### MOTACILLIDAE

African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp* In Namibia, this uncommon resident mainly occurs in the Caprivi Strip, where we saw it on several occasions.

Cape Wagtail *Motacilla capensis* A common resident of Namibia.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* This locally common summer visitor, was fairly regularly observed throughout the Caprivi Strip.

Grassveld Pipit *Anthus cinnamomeus* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Long-billed Pipit *Anthus similis* An uncommon resident, which we only observed at Avis Dam, in Windhoek.

Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys* Another uncommon resident, we only recorded this species in the Bwabwata Reserve.

Pink-throated Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae* In Namibia, this very uncommon resident only occurs in the Caprivi Strip. We enjoyed very good scope views of this species in farmland on the banks of the Zambezi River, near Impalila Island.

#### LANIIDAE

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor* This delightful bird, is a common summer visitor to Namibia, we saw it on several occasions.

Common Fiscal Shrike *Lanius collaris* A common and widespread resident throughout Namibia.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* Another common and widespread summer visitor, which we saw on many occasions.

African Long-tailed Shrike *Corvinella melanoleuca* A common and widespread resident throughout Namibia.

Southern White-crowned Shrike *Eurocephalus anguitemens* Another common and widespread resident throughout Namibia.

#### LACONOTIDAE

Tropical Boubou *Laniarius aethiopicus* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we saw it well on a few occasions.

Swamp Boubou *Laniarius bicolor* This species is also confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we saw it well on numerous occasions.

Crimson-breasted Shrike *Laniarius atrococcineus* This stunning looking shrike, is common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Black-backed Puffback *Dryoscopus cubla* A common and widespread resident, throughout northern Namibia.

Brubru *Nilaus afer* This species is also a common and widespread resident.

Three-streaked Tchagra *Tchagra australis* Another common and widespread resident, which we observed on a few occasions.

Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegala* Another common resident, which was seen well.

Orange-breasted Bushshrike *Telophorus sulfureopectus* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the northeastern corner, where it proved to be fairly common.

Grey-headed Bushshrike *Malaconotus blanchoti* In Namibia, this species of bushshrike is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we saw it very well at Katima Mulilo.

#### PRIONOPIDAE

White Helmetshrike *Prionops plumatus* This species occurs throughout northern Namibia, we recorded it from Etosha National Park and a small park in Tsumeb.

Red-billed Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii* In Namibia, this species only occurs in the far north. We saw it very well during one of our walks on Impalila Island.

#### STURNIDAE

Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea* We saw several large flocks of this common resident, most birds were just coming into breeding plumage.

Plum-coloured Starling *Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* This stunning looking starling, was observed on several occasions throughout the tour.

Burchell's Starling *Lamprotornis australis* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Meves' Long-tailed Starling *Lamprotornis mevesii* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it proved to be fairly common.

Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis nitens* A common and widespread resident, throughout Namibia.

Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprostornis chalybaeus* A common resident throughout northern Namibia, where we recorded it on a few occasions.

Red-winged Starling *Onychognathus morio* This species does not occur in Namibia, however, the western edge of its range is Victoria Falls, where we saw it very well.

Pale-winged Starling *Onychagnathus naboroup* A common and widespread resident of the drier areas of Namibia.

Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it was not uncommon.

Red-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* This species is also confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it was also common.

#### NECTARINIIDAE

Coppery Sunbird *Nectarinia cuprea* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it is an uncommon, localised breeding summer visitor. We only observed this species visiting flowering shrubs at our hotel in Katima Mulilo.

Marico Sunbird *Nectarinia mariquensis* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Purple-banded Sunbird *Nectarinia bifasciata* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it is a common resident.

White-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia talatala* A common and widespread resident throughout northern Namibia.

Dusky Sunbird *Nectarinia fusca* A common resident, throughout the drier areas of Namibia.

Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* A common and widespread resident throughout Namibia.

African Black Sunbird *Nectarinia amethystina* A common and widespread species throughout northern Namibia.

Collared Sunbird *Anthreptes collaris* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it is common.

#### ZOSTEROPIDAE

Cape White-eye *Zosterops pallidus* This species is an uncommon resident in the northern half of Namibia. We only observed it on one occasion, close to our hotel at Swakopmund.

Yellow White-eye *Zosterops senegalensis* Confined to the northeastern corner of Namibia, this uncommon resident was observed near Popa Falls and in Victoria Falls National Park.

#### PLOCEIDAE

Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver *Bubalornis niger* Common and widespread throughout northern Namibia.

White-browed Sparrow-Weaver *Placepasser mahali* A very common resident.

Sociable Weaver *Philetairus socius* This uncommon resident, was only observed in Etosha National Park, where we also observed their huge communal nest.

Scaly-feathered Finch *Sporopies squamifrons* A common resident throughout Namibia.

Thick-billed Weaver *Amblyospiza albifrons* In Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it proved fairly common.

Spectacled Weaver *Placeus ocularis* In Namibia, this species is also confined to the Caprivi Strip, where it was not uncommon.

Spotted-backed Weaver *Placeus cucullatus* Once again, in Namibia, this species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we observed several small flocks.

Chestnut Weaver *Placeus rubiginosus* This highly nomadic species, was only observed on one occasion, a very large flock of birds in non-breeding plumage, was seen very well at Omaruru.

Southern Masked Weaver *Placeus velatus* A common and widespread resident, throughout the whole of Namibia.

Lesser Masked Weaver *Placeus intermedius* This uncommon resident is found throughout northern Namibia.

Golden Weaver *Placeus xanthops* In Namibia, this very localised species is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed good looks at this very attractive species.

Southern Brown-throated Weaver *Placeus xanthopterus* In Namibia, this very localised, uncommon resident, is confined to the Caprivi Strip. There was a breeding colony of this species in the grounds of the Impalila Island Lodge.

Red-headed Weaver *Anaplectes rubriceps* This uncommon resident, was confined to the very far north of Namibia. We only observed it on one occasion, at the headquarters of the Mahango Game Reserve.

Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea* This highly nomadic species, was common and widespread while we were in Namibia.

Golden Bishop *Euplectes afer* This uncommon resident was observed in non-breeding plumage, close to our lodge near Popa Falls.

Red-shouldered Widow *Euplectes albonotatus* In Namibia, this fairly common resident is confined to the Caprivi Strip, we saw several birds in non-breeding plumage at Impalila Island.

#### PASSERIDAE

House Sparrow *Passer demesticus* This introduced species, was fairly common around Windhoek.

Great Sparrow *Passer motitensis* This fairly common resident, was observed on several occasions.

Cape Sparrow *Passer melanurus* A common and widespread resident throughout Namibia.

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer diffusus* A common and widespread species, throughout the whole of Namibia.

African Yellow-throated Sparrow *Petronia superciliaris* An uncommon species of the far north of Namibia, we only observed it on two occasions, once in mixed woodland near Katima Mulilo and again at Victoria Falls.

#### ESTRILDIDAE

Melba Finch *Pytilia melba* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Jameson's Firefinch *Lagonosticta rhodopareia* In Namibia, this common resident is confined to the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed several good looks.

Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala* This species is confined to the northeastern part of Namibia, where we enjoyed a few good sightings.

Brown Firefinch *Lagonosticta nitidula* In Namibia, this uncommon resident, is restricted in range to the Caprivi Strip, where we enjoyed good close looks.

Blue Waxbill *Uraeginthus angolensis* Common and widespread, throughout northern Namibia.

Violet-eared Waxbill *Uroeginthus granatinus* This species is also common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild* This gregarious species is also common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Black-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda erythronotos* This common resident, is also widespread throughout Namibia.

Red-headed Finch *Amadina erythrocephala* Yet another, common and widespread species.

Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cuculflatus* In Namibia, this species is confined to the far eastern section of the Caprivi Strip. We saw a small flock on one occasion, at Katima Mulilo.

#### VIDUIDAE

Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura* This highly nomadic species was observed in the Rundu Wetlands, Katima Mulilo and Victoria Falls.

Shaft-tailed Whydah *Vidua regia* Common and widespread throughout Namibia.

Eastern Paradise-Whydah *Vidua paradisaea* Another common and widespread resident of Namibia.

#### FRINGILLIDAE

Yellow-eyed Canary *Serinus mazambicus* In Namibia, only found in the Caprivi Strip, where we observed it in the Mahango Game Reserve and in the grounds of our lodge at Victoria Falls.

Black-throated Canary *Serinus atrogularis* A common and widespread species which occurs throughout the whole of Namibia.

White-throated Canary *Serinus albogularis* This common resident was only observed on two occasions, at Spitzkop and at the Outjo Sewage Farm.

#### EMBERIZIDAE

Golden-breasted Bunting *Emberiza flaviventris* This beautiful species of bunting, proved to be fairly common throughout Namibia.

Cape Bunting *Emberiza capensis* This uncommon resident, was observed only twice, at Avis Dam, near Windhoek and again at Spitzkop.

Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi* A common resident, found throughout the drier areas of Namibia, where we enjoyed several sightings.

Lark-like Bunting *Emberiza impetuani* This uncommon bunting was observed only twice, once in the Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve and again at Spitzkop.

### MAMMALS

Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus* The largest of all true baboons, the Chacma's diet ranges from roots and seeds to insects and young gazelles. We enjoyed many good sightings.

Vervet Monkey *Cercopithecus pygerythrus* In Namibia this species is only found in the Caprivi Strip. It is the typical monkey of Miombo woodland, where *acacia*-dominated riverine strips are their primary habitat. We saw several troops in the Caprivi Strip.

- Angolan Epauletted Fruit Bat *Epomophorus angolensis* In addition to white 'epaulette' fur patches on the males shoulders, both sexes have two white patches at the base of each ear, which was very evident on the ones we saw at Katima Mulilo. These pale tufts are thought to be disruptive camouflage, breaking up the bat's outline when seen from below against dappled leaves. In the breeding season, the male's distinctive call to attract females, resembles a squeaky bicycle pump.
- Scrub Hare *Lepus saxatilis* This nocturnal and solitary species is not uncommon throughout scrubby grasslands. We saw it at a floodlit waterhole in Etosha National Park.
- South African Ground Squirrel *Xerus inauris* This common ground squirrel relies on self-dug burrows to escape predators and extremes of climate. It normally lives in colonies of 6 – 10, in some cases up to 30. It was very common in the drier parts of Namibia.
- Smith's Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus cepapi* This species shows a preference for low-level vegetation and shade, spending much of its time on the ground. It relines its nest each night with freshly plucked leaves. It is confined to the northeastern part of Namibia, where we found it to be common.
- Single-striped Mouse *Lemniscomys rosalia* This mouse lives mainly on the ground with runways leading to feeding areas of grass stems, leaves, farm crops and the occasional insect. This species has been known to 'play dead' or shed the skin from its tail when caught by a predator. We observed this species at Windhoek and again at Spitzkop.
- Black-backed Jackal *Canis mesomelas* This jackal's range extends from city suburbs to the harsh Namib Desert. A pair mates for life and hunt together as adaptable omnivores. We had very good looks on several occasions.
- Slender Mongoose *Herpestes sanguinea* The most widespread and successful species of mongoose in the world; the reason for this is thought to be this species remarkable agility which enables them to climb trees at great speed, enabling them to reach resources that other species of mongooses are unable to. We enjoyed several good sightings throughout the tour.
- Yellow Mongoose *Cynictis penicillata* In appearance, the Yellow Mongoose looks like a large member of the weasel family. It lives in family groups, which consist of a breeding pair, their offspring and non-breeding young adults. They live in a series of tunnels, which are taken over from Meerkats or South African Ground Squirrels. We particularly enjoyed watching this mammal.
- Meerkat *Suricata suricata* This lovely species of mongoose is active in daytime and sociable, normally living in colonies of up to 30 animals, which occupy and enlarge the former burrows of South African Ground Squirrels. While most pack members forage, some act as lookouts, any sign of predators is greeted by sharp barks from the lookout and the whole pack dashes for cover. We were very fortunate to observe a small colony in the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

- Banded Mongoose *Mungos mungo* Often kept as pets, the Banded Mongoose eats a variety of small items, from termites to bird's eggs. We know they also eat large grubs, which they dig out of the ground, because we saw them doing this in Etosha National Park. It is normally found in packs of 15-20, which includes a dominant male.
- Spotted Hyaena *Crocuta crocuta* This species was observed after dark, at a waterhole in Etosha National Park. The Spotted Hyena is the largest of all hyenas and is a powerful hunter. Several clan members may form a pack to bring down large prey such as an adult Zebra or wildebeest. When hunting alone, it catches hares, ground birds and fish in shallows and swamps. It gorges on food and is able to consume up to one-third of its body weight at one meal.
- Lion *Panthera leo* Lions were first observed after dark, at a waterhole in Etosha National Park. This was followed by a much better sighting, in daylight hours, of a coalition of young males. These coalitions usually consist of 2 – 3 unrelated animals, or 4 – 5 relatives, which originated from the same pride. A coalition defends a large area against other male coalitions and holds mating rights over prides within it, but this tenure generally lasts only 2 – 3 years.
- Afro-Australian Fur Seal *Arctocephalus pusillus* We observed several of these animals in the shallows, just off the beach, close to Walvis Bay. Although the same species occurs in southeastern Australia, members of the African race are darker and can dive twice as deep, up to a depth of 400 metres.
- Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* These lovely mammals were also observed, close offshore at Walvis Bay. The Bottle-nosed Dolphin is the 'performing' species of marine wildlife parks. It is a very successful species, occurring throughout most seas of the world. It eats many kinds of fish, molluscs and crustaceans, which it grips with 18 – 27 pairs of small, conical teeth.
- Cape Rock Hyrax *Procavia capensis* Rock hyraxes live in colonies which inhabit rocky outcrops and crags, where they make grass-lined nests. We found them in exactly this habitat at Avis Dam, in Windhoek and at Spitzkop. One of the special adaptations that rock hyrax have, are secretion glands on the soles of their feet, which makes their feet more adhesive.
- African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* We enjoyed many sightings of elephants, the largest living land animal, in the world. The male African Elephant can attain a height of 4 metres and weigh nearly 10 tones.
- Common Zebra *Equus quagga* We enjoyed watching large numbers of zebras throughout many parts of the tour. This very successful animal has a diet, which is 90% grass, the remaining 10% consists of leaves and buds.
- Mountain Zebra *Equus zebra* Mountain Zebras are endemic to arid mountains and escarpments of southwestern Africa. These mountains have to be sufficiently close to the ocean to catch mist and cloud. The zebras use separate summer and winter ranges, up to 120 kilometres apart. They travel between pastures and water sources on well-worn traditional paths. We encountered small herds in the Daan Viljoen Nature Reserve and the Namib-Naukluft National Park.

**Black Rhinoceros** *Diceros bicornis* We were very fortunate to enjoy great looks at a mother and calf after dark, at a floodlit waterhole in Etosha National Park. Black Rhinoceros feed mainly at twilight and at night; days are spent dozing in shade or wallowing in mud. Unfortunately, this once common mammal is now severely endangered. Intense demand for rhinoceros horn for use in traditional Chinese medicines and for dagger handles and similar items in the Middle East, led to a massive decline in Black Rhinoceros numbers from 65,000 in 1970 to just 2,500 in the mid-1990`s. Despite legal protection and wildlife patrols, the risk from poachers remains so great that some Black Rhinoceros have 24-hour armed guards.

**Hippopotamus** *Hippopotamus amphibius* Hippopotamuses are still abundant in many parts of Africa, we found them particularly common along the Zambezi River, where we enjoyed watching several small groups. This huge animal has a semi-aquatic lifestyle and is thought to be more closely related to whales than to other even-toed hoofed mammals. They can float and swim and may remain submerged for over 5 minutes.

**Common Warthog** *Phacochoerus africanus* We enjoyed many good sightings of this long-legged pig, with a large head. When running, its tail is held straight and upright. Generally active by day, it lives in mixed groups of 4-16 young males or females with young. They shelter and raise their young in grass-lined burrows, dug by themselves or by Aardvarks.

**Giraffe** *Giraffe camelopardalis* We enjoyed many good sightings of this attractive and tallest animal in the world. A mature male measures 5.5 metres from toe to horn-tips. The maned neck is the longest of any animal, yet still has only 7 neck bones as in most other mammals.

**African Buffalo** *Syncerus caffer* We enjoyed many observations of this dangerous and unpredictable animal, Africa`s only cow-like mammal. The African Buffalo needs a daily drink and is never farther than about 15 kilometres from water.

**Bushbuck** *Tragelaphus scriptus* This antelope was a common sight throughout the tour, it is a browser and solitary, except when courting or when a mother is with her young.

**Greater Kudu** *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* This proved to be fairly common throughout most protected areas. The male greater Kudu is one of the tallest and longest-horned antelopes and has a long throat fringe.

**Bush Duiker** *Sylvicapra grimmia* One of the smallest antelopes, we observed one of these in Victoria Falls National Park. It is mainly a nocturnal browser but it also takes small animals and carrion. It lives alone or in pairs and males defend their territories against rivals.

**Steinbuck** *Raphicerus campestris* We enjoyed several good sightings of Steinbuck; these animals live alone or as a pair with largely separate lives, within a territory marked by scents and dung. It both browses and grazes and digs up roots and tubers with its feet.

**Klipspringer** *Oreotragus oreotragus* This small, short-muzzled, tiny-hoofed antelope leaps skillfully over the steep, rocky terrain of its native mountains and river gorges. This was exactly the habitat where we watched a family party at Spitzkop.

- Kirk's Dikdik *Madoqua kirkii* We enjoyed good close looks at a pair of dikdiks in Etosha National Park. The animal is named after its alarm call and has rubbery-based hooves, which enables the animal to grip very effectively on rocks.
- Southern Reedbuck *Redunca arundinum* We saw this species at water sources in the Mahango Game Reserve and the Bwabwata Reserve. This species converges on water sources in the dry season and only disperse widely when it is wet and the grass grows tall again.
- Puku *Kobus vardonii* This endangered antelope has been exterminated from large parts of its range. However, it is still fairly common in the Zambezi River Basin, where we enjoyed good looks in the Chobe National Park. The Puku grazes morning and evening and like other plains antelopes, it has the ability to flee rapidly from danger.
- Lechwe *Kobus lechwe* This uncommon species of antelope is restricted in distribution to the flat, silted-up river basins of the central African plateau, mainly the headwaters of the Zambezi and Zaire Rivers. They only occur in permanently waterlogged areas, as they are totally dependent on water to drink and grasses and aquatic plants to eat. We saw them well in the floodplains of the Zambezi River, in Chobe National Park.
- Springbuck *Antidorcas marsupialis* We saw many grazing herds of this attractive and adaptable antelope, there were particularly large numbers present in the Etosha National Park. It is highly gregarious, migratory herds once numbered in the millions but now number only 1,500.
- Impala *Aepyceros melampus* We saw many Impalas in the reserves and game parks, they are very adaptable feeders and form large mixed herds during the dry season. During the breeding season bachelor males compete with one another for territories and females.
- Topi *Damaliscus lunatus* We found small numbers of Topi in the Mahango Game Reserve, where there are large areas of seasonally flooded grasslands, which is the favoured habitat of this species. The Topi has two breeding seasons, which it varies according to local conditions.
- Kongoni *Alcelaphus buselaphus* We encountered good numbers of Kongoni in the Daan Viljoen Reserve, near Windhoek and in Etosha National Park. This antelope forms large, highly organised herds of up to 300, which are dominated by territorial males but also containing sub-herds of non-territorial males and females with young.
- Wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus* We saw many Wildebeest during the tour, although some remain in a home range, most band into large herds and migrate hundreds of kilometres on an annual journey to find seasonal grazing. Unusual rains stimulating grass elsewhere may alter the route. At river crossings, they are vulnerable to crocodile attacks.
- Roan Antelope *Hippotragus equinus* We very much enjoyed watching a herd of this uncommon species, drinking at a waterhole in the Mahango Game Reserve. This species of antelope is unusual, as both sexes have both horns and manes. This species also has the ability to survive on poor grass growth, but does need to drink 2-3 times per day. Herds consist of 12-15 females and young with one dominant male, or younger bachelor males.

Sable Antelope *Hippotragus niger* Good numbers of this very attractive antelope were present in the Mahango Game Reserve. Similar in many respects to the above species, however, the Sable Antelope gathers in herds of 100 or more during the dry season, when browsing replaces the usual grazing. In the wet season, herds split into bachelor groups of 2-12 males, while dominant males occupy territories and mate with the females there.

Southern Oryx *Oryx gazella* The Southern Oryx is a large, distinctively coloured antelope of arid grassy scrub and true desert. We enjoyed many good sightings in the drier areas of Namibia. Its many adaptations for moisture conservation include not panting or sweating until the body temperature exceeds 45 C, kidneys that produce extremely concentrated urine and very dry droppings. They also only graze during the cooler times of day, mainly at twilight and by night. They gather under available shade from approximately 10am to 3pm. In most other antelope species, individuals grouped so closely together would begin dominance or mating disputes, but the Southern Oryx suspends such social interaction, for the greater need of survival.