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Naturalist Journeys: Namibia Birding and Nature Tour September 13-25, 2014 Tour Species List

Dalton Gibbs of Birding Africa and Peg Abbott of Naturalist Journeys,
with five participants: Andrea, Alex, Ty, Mimi, and Penny

BIRDS

Common Ostrich – Seen regularly in the first days of the trip in open terrain, strutting through just amazing landscapes with colorful escarpments amid seas of arid grassland. Numerous at Etosha, we could view their dominance behaviors and also some courting display, some of the males were starting to get very red necks and legs as they came into prime condition.

Helmeted Guineafowl – Widespread and regularly seen throughout the journeys. The most tame were at Weltevrede where they posed on the gate, strutted about the farm and serenaded us at the end of each day. They came into the waterholes of Etosha in large groups, 20-50 at a time, vocal and jumpy, always alert. One by the roadside on the last day made this an everyday species for the trip.

Red-billed Spurfowl – first seen in a wash as we approached Remhoogte Pass, coming off the escarpment onto the coastal plain on the first day from Windhoek. Widespread – seen on seven days of the trip, in all but our most arid locations. Saw some on the Dik Dik Drive of Etosha. And at the Waterberg they were abundant, at dawn their calls were deafening!

Swainson's Spurfowl – recognized by different calling, Peg spotted a family group as we entered the fort area of Namutoni in Etosha, active at the road margin.

Egyptian Goose – Numerous at Avis Dam our arrival afternoon. We had them at many of the waterholes of Etosha NP.

Cape Teal – Seen in good number at the Walvis Bay Salt Works lagoons. Seen again at waterholes in Etosha, fairly tolerant of saline waters.

Red-billed Teal – seen at two waterholes in Etosha. A very striking bird.

Wilson's Storm Petrel – Walvis Bay. Three individuals seen from the boat trip at fairly close range, feeding at the surface in the vicinity of Heavisides (Benguela) Dolphin.

Little Grebe – seen in many of the waterholes of Etosha, also known as Dabchick.

Black-necked Grebe – Small groups along the seawall on the sandspit at Pelican Point off Walvis Bay.

Greater Flamingo – Well over ten thousands seen off Walvis Bay. They filled the shores, flew past us as we dined at the Raft Restaurant, and marched up and down the waterfront by the score.

Lesser Flamingo – Seen around Walvis Bay but then seen in HUGE numbers, perhaps tens of thousands, going out to the Salt Works at Walvis Bay. Interesting was the mix of brightly colored to quite dull, feeding related as young birds feed on richer invertebrate life and start to get their colors.

Western Cattle Egret – a dozen or so seen at one of the waterholes of Etosha NP.

Grey Heron – First sighted at Walvis Bay as we parked to go to the Anchor Restaurant, then others seen on lagoons of the Salt Works.

Little Egret – Avis Dam day one, a very close individual at the slipway of the Walvis Bay harbor, showing its yellow feet where we boarded the boat. Quite a number seen in and around Walvis Bay and going into Swakopmund.

Great White Pelican – The first individual spotted was in the harbor where we boarded the boat cruise, we then saw several at sea, and a couple of tame ones came to our guide's whistle for a reward of fish. Several fed across from our hotel on Walvis Bay, beautiful to watch fly at sunset. This is the world's largest pelican, very impressive creatures.

Crowned Cormorant – We found a small group at the Walvis Bay lighthouse, and got close enough to get photographs of this lovely species.

Bank Cormorant – Seen from the boat tour, separate but in the vicinity of Cape Cormorant for comparison. White (very pale yellow) eyes and lack of a colorful gular pouch is key.

White-breasted Cormorant – Half a dozen individuals seen on the boat tour, on the guano dock and at Pelican Point.

Cape Cormorant – We saw massive numbers of this species, boiling up from a feeding pod and slying out like a dark river – thousands of them, many landing on the guano platform. Also many in groups on the beach at Pelican Point.

Secretary Bird – four individuals seen in Etosha (lower number than normal), two at very close range, and then two as distant flyers.

Black-winged Kite – One individual seen on the drive to the Coast, and two on the drive from the airport, almost our first sighting. We had great looks of one close to the road on our travel day from Etosha to the Waterberg.

Yellow-billed Kite – a great pick up on our final day driving from the Waterberg into Windhoek and the airport, about a half hour of out Waterberg still in view of the plateau behind us. It picked something up off the road and circled quite close. Bird number 200 for the trip – yahoo!

African Fish Eagle – One individual Dalton spotted perched, and trained the scope on at Avis Dam our first afternoon.

White-backed Vulture – Etosha NP, a couple of small groups – six in one kettle.

White-headed Vulture – one individual in flight circled over the van so we all got good views.

Lappet-faced Vulture – We had a bizarre sighting of one individual hopping up a dune at Sossusvlei, likely to get some height while lacking a thermal to rise. Alex spotted six flying as we left the Sossusvlei park gate. We had good looks on the day we drove from Windhoek, just past Rehoboth. We saw them on tall trees in Etosha, and in flight. At Okondeka waterhole on displaced a very bright beaked female Bateleur.

Black-chested Snake Eagle – An individual perched atop a picturesque granite outcrop as we drove to Entemba Camp was memorable, with excellent scope views.

Bateleur – one bright beaked female was down in an area of water and tall grass at the Okondeka waterhole. Andrea was thrilled to find this species – one on her wish list – and it was kind of the Lappet-faced to move it over so we could get a good view in flight, and then landing to preen.

Pale Chanting Goshawk – Seen fairly regularly, a common roadside species of arid areas. A few were close enough to afford fine photos. They were fairly common in Etosha, and seen on all of our roadside days of travel.

Gabar Goshawk – A quick glimpse for those in the front of the van as we left Sptizkop.

Ovampo Sparrowhawk – one individual flying straight and fast just under the lip of the colorful cliffs at Waterberg, scattering Pale-winged Starlings as it flew. Another crossed the road right in front of us, we were relieved not to hit it on the drive out of Waterberg.

Augur Buzzard – The first sighting was a pair playing above the ridge of the massive granite outcrop of Spitzkop. Another displaced our Black-chested Snake Eagle, and a few others appeared on our days of travel.

Tawny Eagle – One individual seen well going into Etimba Camp. Another seen as we drove north to Etosha. In Etosha we saw them more commonly, including a regal pair that held court from the prominent tree at the waterhole at Okaukuego. One came down to strike a bird right in front of Penny and Mimi, who were observing with Dalton from the benches. Driving out of Waterberg we had one at close range, feeding dangerously on roadkill, almost hit, but taking its food prize to a telephone pole in plain view.

Verreaux's Eagle – One very distant bird seen above Spitzkop, in range of Rock Hyrax one of their favorite prey. Fantastic looks coming off the cliffs and catching thermals of the cliffs rimming the Waterberg plateau above our lodge.

African Hawk Eagle – An individual put on a good show as we arrived at Etimba Camp flying circles over the colorful rocks, being chased by a Rock Kestrel. Two others harassed Verreaux's Eagles at Waterberg, diving at them again and again, actually butting talons!

Booted Eagle – Seen just after lunch on our travel day to the Waterberg. We hopped out of the van for good looks.

Martial Eagle – a magnificent immature was seen at one of the larger waterholes of Etosha, commanding the shoreline. The Red-billed Teal gave it a wide berth.

Rock Kestrel – We saw one displaying on cliffs of the gorge of the Guab River, just before we rescued Stanley. It was a good study with excellent views. One harassed an African Hawk Eagle. We saw them on our early morning walk from Etimba. And others in Etosha NP.

Greater Kestrel – Seen at Dune 45 of Sossusvlei upset with the Pied Crows but trying to hold their position in the large trees of the base of the dune. Seen again at a waterhole in Etosha.

Lanner Falcon – Peg and Dalton spied this long winged falcon on the wing, flying quickly over the open grassland in Etosha.

Kori Bustard – Andrea spotted this massive ground dweller walking through thick grass and bush, on the way into Hovenstein Lodge. We had superb looks in Etosha. Two came in to the Okaukuejo waterhole the first morning, where we watched them interact with Springbok, spaying out their necks and feathers of the bustle to march their way to the water through this mob. We had them in good number in the grassland areas of the park, at one point a dozen in view.

Ludwig's Bustard - Three individuals just outside Solitaire as we headed north, and then a fourth individual – we had looked in earnest for two days so were very happy to find them and get good looks. A large bustard with fine markings.

Rueppell's Korhaan –Just as we turned off the B2 on the road to Spitzkop, we had two individuals, a male and female. Good thing we made our jaunt to Spitzkop! We had another female, with obvious face pattern on the dry area going up to Okandeka, where arid habitat occurs.

Red-crested Korhan – in the Mopane veld of Etosha, seen very well on the Dik Dik drive.

Northern Black Korhan – first seen en route to Etosha, and then four or five males daily, perhaps double that number of females each day.

Spotted Thick-knee – A pair spotted by Andrea and Penny as we drove the Dik Dik drive of Etosha NP. We later saw one other individual at a waterhole in Etosha.

African Oystercatcher – One pair on the same beach north of Swakopmund that we searched for Damara Tern.

Black-winged Stilt – A few individuals in with avocets and flamingoes at the Salt Works. One individual spotted at a waterhole in Etosha.

Pied Avocet – Seen with the flamingoes at Walvis Bay, a few from the waterfront and many from the Salt Works sand spit in various lagoons.

Blacksmith Plover (Lapwing) – Several pair at Avis Dam our first afternoon. Very common in Etosha at all waterholes, and a few out on a wander in open desert veld. Vocal, a few with chicks, dapper plumage.

Crowned Plover (Lapwing) – common in Etosha, almost always in pairs, vocal, territorial. Perhaps 30 pair or more seen in 4 days.

Grey Plover – Numerous at ocean beaches – in groups of waders far outnumbered by Curlew Sandpiper but 10-12 seen each day around Walvis Bay.

Common Ringed Plover – One individual, Walvis Bay, right on the waterfront as we stopped the first afternoon.

Kittlitz's Plover – Several pair on the Walvis Bay waterfront, not hard to find, in various plumage stages, some getting brighter.

Three-banded Plover – One individual at Avis Dam, good scope views until a jogger and their dog spooked it away. We saw them again at a few of the more established waterholes in Etosha.

White-fronted Plover – fairly common in all beach and lagoon locations.

Chestnut-banded Plover – less common than White-fronted but present in good numbers in the Salt Works, some coming into brighter plumage.

Caspian Plover – three at the “Elephant” waterhole, migrants feeding on the open ground littered with Elephant dung.

African Jacana – present at one waterhole in Etosha, the same one the Martial Eagle frequented. Four seen there in total.

Bar-tailed Godwit – Three individuals out at the surf line (a good distance, scope required) at Walvis Bay.

Whimbrel – Two seen well, one at Walvis Bay waterfront and then one close range at the Damara Tern area.

Common Greenshank – One individual at Avis Dam, and then a fair number (20+ interspersed with other waders) in the Walvis Bay area.

Wood Sandpiper – Peg spotted a lone individual for the group at one of the waterholes in Etosha.

Common Sandpiper – Two individuals seen on the boat cruise at Walvis, one at Pelican Point and one in the harbor. Another seen the next day at lagoons by the Salt Works.

Ruddy Turnstone – A common sighting in small groups at all coastal locations.

Sanderling – Seen at the beach by the Raft restaurant, and then on the coast by the Damara Tern area, a few at the Salt Works lagoons.

Little Stint – First seen at the Walvis Bay Waterfront and then at the Salt Works lagoons. Several seen at the waterholes of Etosha.

Curlew Sandpiper – the most common wader on coastal and coastal lagoon locations, sometimes several hundred in an area at once.

Ruff – Seen in good number (100+) feeding among Lesser Flamingos at the Walvis Bay lagoons of the Salt Works. We only scoped those close in, likely could have been thousands if observation had been thorough out to some distance as waters were shallow and the pattern of occurrence regular.

Double-banded Courser – seen at very close range using the gravel road margin to nest in between our Camp and the road to Okandecka waterhole. Andrea spotted one with a small chick.

Grey-hooded Gull – Cracking views at the boat harbor mixed in with Hartlaub's. Also at the hotel in Johannesburg out by the pool on our overnight ahead of the tour.

Hartlaub's Gull – numerous along the coast at Walvis and Swakopmund, 200-300 or so in total.

Kelp Gull – Less numerous than Hartlaub but still plentiful and regularly spaced in coastal areas. Quite a good number in the harbor at Walvis Bay – twenty or more.

Caspian Tern – Line up on a sandbar area, thirty or more, Walvis Bay. A few others seen up by the Damara Tern area.

Swift Tern – One mixed in with the line of Caspian Terns at Walvis Bay.

Damara Tern – Amazing looks at six individuals on a lovely wild beach north of Swakopmund. They rested less than twenty feet away, landing there between us! Dalton said it was the best looks he had ever had. Four came in to join them, first performing a bit over the water. The colored sand, great looks at a very rare and local bird – made our day!

Common Tern – Several in the harbor at Walvis Bay.

Namaqua Sandgrouse – A few roadside sightings and then very good sightings of 30 or more at the waterhole at Weldeverden. We watched them from our porches before leaving for the day, an easy assignment! They were very numerous (100's) at the waterholes in Etosha as well.

Double-banded Sandgrouse – A pair was sighted as we left Entemba, comfortable in a deep sand track they were in no hurry to leave. Good looks in Etosha as well though less numerous than Namaqua, seen on the roadside at close range and flying in for water.

Common Pigeon – Swakopmund in the city park, Walvis Bay, Windhoek.

Speckled Pigeon – Seen more in the veld area, first from our B & B in Windhoek, then on each of the days in and round Erongo Mountains.

Ring-necked (Cape Turtle) Dove – First seen in Windhoek, and then seen and heard throughout our journey, often in good number.

Laughing Dove – Seen daily, its sweet call alerting us to its presence. They often perch up, and host lovely colors.

Namaqua Dove - Much less common than Dalton expected, seen only on the road leaving Windhoek and then some individuals in Etosha near water holes. Conspicuous by its low numbers.

Rosy-faced Lovebird – Seen on most days, first at the Avis Dam in Windhoek. Especially numerous around the Erongo Mountains. It was fun to see them come out of roost crevices in the dramatic granite rock around Etemba Camp on an early morning walk. Numerous at the Waterberg, seen by the dozen, noisy flocks going tree to tree, common in the campground.

Rueppell's Parrot – finally, GREAT looks at the campground in Waterberg. Peg had heard of a nesting pair there, but checked all the large trees in vain. Finally at the same time she and Dalton heard them, and working through the brush found one perched in the open with lovely afternoon light. They were feeding on pod of a small veld shrub.

Grey Go-away-bird – Peg spied one at the Windhoek airport while Dalton went off to pay our parking. We had scattered good sightings, nearly every day. Best views near reception area of Waterberg.

Western Barn Owl - one seen flying at the waterhole at Halali. Heard there each night, then heard again the Waterberg.

African Scops Owl – One was seen, found as it made small soft noises as we searched for parrots at the Waterberg Campground. Earlier we had heard only tally, in the middle of the night just outside cabins at Hovenstein, where a dry river course ran just below our lodgings.

Spotted Eagle-Owl – Dalton heard the bird while in the swimming pool at Welteverden. He quickly came to get us all and we had really great views of this most regal Bubo.

Pearl-spotted Owlet – Dalton uttered this birds call to attract species, and on more than one occasion one came right in. We got super views at Hovenstein on our late-afternoon walk and on the next day's game drive. We heard them in Etosha, and then found another to admire in the campground at Waterberg.

Rufous-cheeked Nightjar – Nightjar of the woodland, leader only one evening, and then seen after dinner the night at Waterberg.

Freckled Nightjar – Nightjar that likes arid rocky areas, seen above us while we enjoyed the Braai at Etemba Camp of the Erongo Mountains.

African Palm Swift - Seen at the Windhoek airport and then at our nice garden restaurant stop on the day we drove to Etosha, Kameel Doring (Camel Thorn) Restaurant. Numerous around camps at Etosha.

Alpine Swift – A huge swift with obvious white under patterning, seen coming and going around the Erongo Mountains. Seen in large numbers at the Waterberg.

Bradfield's Swift – Seen on two days, both times in rocky glens of the Damara granites around the Erongo Mountains. They flew at close range and we could admire their soft brown colors.

Little Swift – Seen at the Windhoek Airport. Also in Otjowarongo, the town we stopped in for lunch en route to Etosha. Then seen in Etosha, and in particularly large number (and vocal) on the cliffs of Waterberg.

White-rumped Swift – great views at the waterhole of our final night camp in Etosha.

White-backed Mousebird – Avis Dam, our hotel in Windhoek, fairly regularly in small number throughout the journey.

Red-faced Mousebird - Near Rehoboth and then on the morning we had the sandgrouse at Welteverden, near the waterhole, a flock. Seen on both days at our lunch restaurant at Otjowarongo, and again at the reception of Waterberg – longer tail easier to notice than the face pattern. Andrea and Peg had great views of the facial details while birding at lunch at Namutomi in Etosha.

Purple Roller – Seen very well at the stop at the Gaub River gorge, and then again leaving Etemba Camp of the Erongo Mountains. Perched up on our travel days to and from Etosha, and posing for photos well in the campground and around the restaurant of the Waterberg.

Lilac-breasted Roller – Seen on the road side traveling near Rehoboth, and then several on the road up to Etosha. “Conspicuous by its absence” declared by Dalton, they are normally more abundance.

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater – First seen near Avis Dam, then at scattered locations in grassy veld. Their colors are so lovely, but they kept a tantalizing distance from our camera lenses...

European Bee-eater – Small group at the Fort at Namutomi of Etosha and then two others along roadside.

African Hoopoe – Peg spotted one individual as we traveled into Sossesvlei National Park. We also saw them from the vehicle driving down to Welteverden. We had a nice look at one at the Okaukuejo in the large tree by the waterhole, gleaming in the sun. Seen again at the Waterberg, up against the cliffs.

Violet Wood Hoopoe – A group of three, poking and probing the tree bark at Waterberg, in characteristic style with their bright red bills, vocal. Seen on the early morning walk to breakfast.

Common Scimitarbill – Seen at our dry river bed lunchsite on the Sossesvlei National Park day, then coming out of Etemba Camp. Alex had another on a roadside view, travel day.

Bradfield's Hornbill – Peg only, on a walk down to reception at Waterberg, two perched at the road's edge, then flew across to land and feed a bit before flying off to the cliffs.

African Grey Hornbill – Seen on the drive out of Etemba, then two at Etosha, and an adult with fledgling begging at the Waterberg.

Monteiro's Hornbill – Seen very well in groups or pairs, around Erongo Mountains, thirty or so in total.

Damara's Red-billed Hornbill – Seen at Halali in Camp, quite obvious by the recycle containers.

Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill – Seen just below Rehoboth on our way from Windhoek and several times in Etosha.

Acacia Pied Barbet - Seen regularly, including a few at nestholes, one at Weltevrede in a small tree by the waterhole, and one at Hohenstein in a small tree by the pool.

Lesser Honeyguide – Excellent looks and a good find, in the company of Acacia Pied Barbets on our morning early walk at Etemba Camp in the Erongo Mountains.

Pirit Batis – Seen or heard at several of our stops, Etemba Bush Camp we got our best views.

White-tailed Shrike – Seen on both sides of the Erongo Mountains on walks from our camps.

Bokmakierie – one individual seen at Sossesvlei, heard other places.

Brown-crowned Tchagra – One individual seen on the road out of Etemba Camp.

Black-backed Puffback – Seen at a roadside rest en route to Etosha. Then we found a family group seen at the Waterberg.

Crimson-breasted Shrike – Really striking views at several places, the first Avis Dam our starting afternoon, then good views at the gate at Etimba, and in the grassy area by the restaurant at Namutoni. They were readily seen at the Waterberg – four or five in different locations, excellent views of this handsome species.

Brubru – Long distance view of one at Avis Dam, then another on the drive from the escarpment to the Coast. Finally at reception in the large trees of Waterberg, we had a male calling and perching out in the open for inspection.

Southern White-crowned Shrike – One tame individual seen in a camp at Etosha NP.

Common Fiscal – A roadside companion seen in passing, and the best views perched on our walk at Weltevrede, then again at Solitaire on our rest stop coming from Sossusvlei.

Black-headed Oriole – One male seen at the lunch stop at Namutoni, in large trees just outside the dining area. Lovely.

Fork-tailed Drongo – Seen daily. We watched them at very close range at the waterhole at Okaukuejo sealing nest material from Social Weavers. They often followed Giraffe likely gleaning insects put up as they marched by. Their alarm calls caused other birds and ungulates to alert and run.

Cape Crow – Etosha, conspicuous at waterholes, and scattered through dry areas, using larger shrubs and trees for nesting.

Pied Crow – First encountered at Dune 45, playing on the thermals, rising up the dune face and coasting inches from the sand, touching down to rise again. There were 15 or more and they harassed a pair of Greater Kestrels trying to nest there. They were present at almost all the waterholes in Etosha. Mimi wanted to take one home, one of her favorite sightings!

Carp's Black Tit – Erongo Mountains early am walk from Etimba Camp. They liked the thick shrubs that grow in the contact line of the sandstone, where seepage occurs.

Ashy Tit – We had several seen at very close range on the Avis Dam, and several times after that in thorn scrub. We again had good looks on the walk from the Waterberg lodgings, up against the base of the cliff in thick shrubbery.

Rufous-naped Lark – we found this species in the grassland areas between Halili and Namutoni in Etosha.

Sabota Lark – Widespread and numerous, from Spitzkop onward, the Eronga Mountains, Etosha. In one section of Etosha shrubs were leafing out and Sabota Larks sang with gusto, signs of recent rains.

Dune Lark – We were so thrilled to see this bird well, in Sossusvlei just off the road where sand with high grasses comes right to the edge and we could walk among them. We watched Dune Ants and looked for Sidewinding Adder trails as we wandered over rounded hills. Dalton spied one and we had glimpses. Then Alex found a pair that appeared quite tame, and an intent photographer led us to another pair equally so. They were oblivious to us and intent on harvesting seeds. Great to have success with this Namibian endemic.

Spike-heeled Lark – We had to search for this species, but were successful on the travel day from Etimba to Etosha.

Red-capped Lark – Small numbers but present. Seen in the grasslands in shorter grass areas around the waterholes on two days of our time in Etosha.

Pink-billed Lark – Dalton predicted they would be present along with coursers in the drier area of the park, north of Okaukuejo waterhole and they were – we had multiple observations of a dozen or more, with good photographic opportunity.

Chestnut-backed Sparrow-Lark - We first saw this species in the distance at Okaukuejo waterhole of Etosha the first morning when so much was going on there. Dalton got the scope on them, such a handsome species with the contrast of colors.

Grey-backed Sparrow-Lark – Seen at the waterhole in Weltevrede and then again at Sossesvlei.

African Red-eyed Bulbul - An everyday bird, vocal and common, lovely with their yellow undercoating and brilliant red eye ring. Their musical calls were strong at every dawn.

White-throated Swallow – Seen well at close range at Avis Dam.

Rock Martin – Seen almost daily (one day missed), common and widespread.

Greater Striped Swallow – First sighting at Avis Dam, then on each day in Etosha.

Lesser Striped Swallow – two perched on small culvert as we turned into the Waterberg lodge area.

Red-breasted Swallow – Waterberg area near culverts of the main road heading in.

Rattling Cisticola – Common around Avis Dam, on the road down to Rehoboth.

Desert Cisticola – Singing and present on each of our days in Etosha NP.

Tawny-flanked Prinia – Seen on two days in Etosha. Also on the Rhino Drive of Etosha NP.

Black-chested Prinia – Seen at Avis Dam, Weltevrede, Sossussvlei, Walvis Bay, Erongo Mountains.

Grey-backed Camaroptera – Avis Dam, the walk at Tashari Lodge, and in Etosha NP. They were really plentiful in the shrubbery of our lodgings in the Waterberg, collecting nest material and courting.

Yellow-bellied Eremomela – Roadside stop coming down from the Escarpment and then at Spitzkop. Also seen on our last travel day coming into Windhoek.

Burnt-necked Eremomela – hike taken last afternoon at the Waterberg Camp. We noticed the eye color and in our photos caught a hint of the breast mark, this one could easily slip by you!

Rockrunner – Peg found one in a rocky outcrop on an early morning walk from Hohenstein Lodge, but returning with the group later we could not locate it. We checked numerous other spots that Dalton has seen them in the past but for naught – not due to lack of effort! This was a particularly dry year making locating some normally fairly certain species hard to find.

Long-billed Crombec – Best views were at the Halali Waterhole. Also seen briefly at the roadside stop down from the Escarpment and heard from our Erongo Camp. Present each day in Etosha and on our final morning at Waterberg. Most often heard before being seen.

Southern Pied Babbler – two sightings, one at Halali area and the other on our travel day leaving Waterberg.

Chestnut-vented Tit Babbler (Warbler) – Splendid views at Avis Dam and then regular views throughout the trip. They were quite vocal, alerting us to repeated sightings.

Orange River White-eye – On the day we went in search in of Welwitchias, we stopped at Goanikontes Oasis and found one by a water drip, then a pair quite curious about Dalton's Pearl Spotted Owlet call, along with dozens of Scarlet-chested Sunbirds.

Wattled Starling – We had four or five individuals both times we visited Okaukuejo waterhole. They were hanging around the grassy lawn by the waterhole, and Dalton said they are not usually there – likely so due to the very dry conditons.

Cape Starling – Common and widespread, seen daily.

Burchell's Starling – First seen in Windhoek, then in the Erongo Mountains northward into Etosha NP. Several males were displaying at the reception area of Waterberg.

Pale-winged Starling – First seen on the road down to Sossusvlei, then around Walvis Bay and around the Eronga Mountains at both camps. We found them when we returned to cliffs at the Waterberg.

Groundscraper Thrush – First seen at our hotel in Windhoek, and then at Estoha at the camps. Lovely song.

White-browed Scrub Robin – Hovenstein Lodge, on our walks into the brush. This one was calling away, but silent elsewhere until the Waterberg, where they seemed to vie for territory with gusto.

Kalahari Scrub Robin – Seen at Avis Dam, and then at the Roadside Rest - one between Rehoboth and the Coast.

Mountain Wheatear – Weldeverde we had great views right from our porches, here and into Sossusvlei.

Karoo Chat - Gaub River Canyon, good views, and also on landing in view at Spitzkop as we were looking at very distant views of Verreaux's Eagle.

Tractrac Chat – One amazingly tame bird in the parking lot of the viewpoint of the Moon Landscape as we drove out to find Welwitchias, then a few others in that very arid habitat.

Familiar Chat – We became very familiar with them, we saw them plentifully at all locations except Etosha.

Ant-eating Chat – Best views on the drive to Okondeka waterhole in the very arid part of Etosha. They were quite tame, almost posing for us on small shrubs close to the road.

Short-toed Rock Thrush – First seen on the evening walk at Weltvrede, lovely colors of the male. We saw them on the walks at Hohenstein, and Erongo, and Spitzkop.

Chat Flycatcher – Sossusvlei area and Walvis Bay

Marico Flycatcher – Erongo Mountain and Etosha NP

Scarlet-chested Sunbird - Goanikontes Oasis by the score, quite a pocket of this very pretty little bird.

Marico Sunbird – Small wash below Avis Dam, we stopped quickly the morning we traveled to the Coast, attracting this as well as our first Pearly Spotted Owlet into view. The male had lovely dark purple colors. Seen again at the Waterberg in shrubbery.

Dusky Sunbird- Common and widespread, vocal. Often when we found one we found six or more.

Variable Sunbird – a nice male by our cabins at Toshari Lodge. Another pair was found on the afternoon walk at Waterberg, the Fig Trail at the base of the cliffs.

White-browed Sparrow Weaver – one of the most common species, their swinging ball-shaped nests decorated the thornveld landscape. Absent from the dune areas and very dry sections out of Walvis, but otherwise an everyday bird.

Sociable Weaver – We had great fun watching them at their massive nests, in arid areas below the Escarpment, and then again at Etosha NP. We checked many a nest for attendant Pygmy Falcons but this year no luck, a first for Dalton and another sign that very arid conditions were affecting things. This bird wins the OCD award for its obsessive compulsive search for twigs. One nest by the waterhole at Okaukuejo was fun to watch and literally throughout the daylight hours they never stopped their chatter or building. We checked many nests looking for attending Pygmy Falcon, but without success.

House Sparrow – Windhoek, as well as small towns

Great Sparrow – First had at Hohenstein, and then we saw fairly regularly after that

Southern Grey-headed Sparrow – Etosha NP, common

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver – We first found them in Etosha, where we enjoyed their antics. They were busy constructing massive nests easily found around the campground at Halali.

Scaly-feathered Finch (Weaver) – in and around Sossusvlei and Weltevrede, then again at Etosha NP

Lesser Masked Weaver – at the garden restaurant we enjoyed in Otjiwarongo we had them side by side with Southern Masked. They had tubes coming from their nests and pale eyes with black forehead.

Southern Masked Weaver – We had great fun watching them build and attend nests, often they provided entertainment at our rest stops as they are so tolerant of human settlement

Red-billed Quelea – a huge flock in Etosha, and then a small group during drive from Etosha to Waterburg.

Green-winged Pytilia – Safari drive at Hohenstein and our final morning at Okaukuejo. We had lovely views in shrubbery around the lodgings at the Waterberg.

Red-headed Finch – Sossusvlei, and on the Hohenstein safari drive mixed in with waxbills.

Blue Waxbill – very common, seen at Windhoek, Sossusvlei, Etosha

Violet-eared Waxbill – first seen on the roadside rest stop after leaving Rehoboth, then on the safari drive at Hohenstein, then Etosha NP

Common Waxbill - Windhoek at Avis Dam, and then at Walvis Bay – they like a bit of water.

Black-faced Waxbill – Drive down from the escarpment, at the Erongo Mountains at near Namutoni in Etosha NP

Cape Wagtail – Avis Dam and at Walvis Bay

Buffy Pipit – several seen very well on road through arid land of the route to Okondeka waterhole.

Black-throated Canary – common and widespread, starting in Windhoek – nearly daily.

Yellow Canary – Seen at the entry to Etosha at a water drip.

White-throated Canary – best views at Weltevrede, then in and around Sossusvlei, Solitaire.

Lark-like Bunting – common in large flocks in all arid areas, coast up to Etosha NP.

Cape Bunting – Peg and Alex had two on Hohenstein

Golden-breasted Bunting – seen on two days at Etosha, at the Halali Waterhole, two seen at a small waterhole where we stopped to sample animal tracks, two put on a good show there.

MAMMALS

Chacma Baboon – Windhoek and descending the escarpment, absent in very arid dune area, picked up again in the Erongo Mountains, not at Etosha, but abundant at the Waterberg, some trying to get into our cabins.

Scrub Hare – Sossusvlei Dunes – we spooked them out of day beds as we wandered in search of Dune Lark.

Southern African Ground Squirrel - colony at Solitaire and around the Cheetah conservation area, then in the arid area north of Okaukuejo Camp, driving to the water hole at Okondeka. Note that in Etosha these could be Damara Ground Squirrel but these are indistinguishable in field – and Etosha is overlap area so unsure on this.

Smith's Bush Squirrel – Etosha National Park at Halali.

Striped Mouse – Sossusvlei Dune area

Black-backed Jackal – Sossusvlei and Etosha. Best viewing was in Etosha, with their presence at all waterholes noted. Great behavior watching and photography.

Yellow Mongoose – Seen in Windhoek at Avis Dam and then the Erongo Mountains.

Slender Mongoose – Seen at the waterhole of Halali, working at the base of the rocks so prominent there.

Banded Mongoose – Large herd seen at the Fort at Namutomi. Also seen on our grassy lawns at Waterberg.

Dwarf Mongoose – Seen at the Waterberg, a large group of all melanistic individuals. Black mongoose were quite a surprise!

Meerkat – One individual standing tall out of the grass as we explored the Cheetah conservation area.

Spotted Hyena - Dalton with his eagle eyes spotted a group of five, lounging on the salt pan of Etosha, not far from the area we had seen lions a previous day. Peg got the scope out for them and we could discern their heads and shapes. Distant but at least a sighting!

African Lion – We had two encounters, the first a group of three very meat-drunk sleeping females, and the second a male sitting alert in tall grass, with three females attending – evenly spaced – showing their heads and then napping.

African Leopard – Amazingly we had a leopard sighting that came up so quickly – driving back to Halali Camp it was just lying in the road! Dalton thinks it was a young female, and he was quite surprised to see her, his first in Etosha. She stayed in the road watching us, then as a vehicle came from the other direction she got up, looked both ways, and eased herself across the road and into the bush.

Cape Rock Hyrax – We saw these at Spitzkop, and then on both sides of the Erongo Mountains. They dashed away as we walked, and we could see them at all layers of the cliff face, sunning, feeding, with occasional alarm calls.

African Elephant – Watching a large group at one of the first waterholes we stopped at in Etosha was a highlight of the journey for several of the group. The young ones played with abandon, we had numerous interactions with the adults which were drinking, socializing and bathing. As they left we watched them dust bath with some getting down to roll. We saw scattered in other locations, and then at Okaukuejo waterhole we had two very large males at close range.

Burchell's Zebra – Etosha, daily – seen by the hundreds, coming into waterholes and making long lines to get to waterholes. We often stopped to watch and photograph them. Many had pale coloration and a lot had brown shadow lines, a few held the classic clean black and white seen in wetter parts of Africa. The patterns were unique, and seeing great numbers of them was mesmerizing. We watched interactions of sparring, feeding, grooming, and more.

Hartmann's Mountain Zebra – Peg spotted our first on the walk from Etemba Camp to see Rock Art, far away but possible to observe. Dalton found three others the morning we left Etemba and stopped at yet another outcrop en search of Rockrunner.

Black Rhino – Absolutely one of the highlights of the trip was seeing multiple Black Rhino each day at Etosha. We had several close to the road that we watched feed and disappear (employing a cloaking device as Dalton would say) into the brush. At Halali we had great views from the waterhole, once a mother and a calf, and another time a large male that did a bit of scent marking, squirting urine with the pressure of a hose nozzle. But the finest viewing was at Okaukuejo waterhole where we noted 17 in total (including Mimi's three of her 1:30AM check). At one time there were four in the pool, and another three making their way there. We watched a female with a yearling calf nuzzling it and staying close while the youngster played, almost snorkeling in the water at times. This pair walked past another snorting but aloof, and in time it followed them into the brush – perhaps young of a previous time? We had one male that trumpeted and marched right down past the row of benches at the waterhole. Heartwarming to know Namibia is a stronghold for this very endangered animal.

Warthog – we saw several family groups on the road leading to and from Etosha, but they were very skittish, and our backup routine did not work to afford decent views. But at Waterberg they were everywhere, in the campground and on the lawns. Dalton called them “Namibian lawnmowers”.

Southern Giraffe – The first we spotted were on our jeep safari at Hohenstein Lodge on the west side of the Erongos. We had them on the other side as well, and all days in Etosha, some sightings at farms along the routes of travel. Memorable was a group coming in to drink water at sunset at Okaukuejo waterhole.

Eland – only one individual sighted on our first day at the Avis Dam in Windhoek, near where we located the African Fish Eagle.

Greater Kudu – We spend some nice time with this elegant species in Etosha, seeing groups at the waterhole and groups out feeding.

Steenbok – We had several Steenbok sightings, mainly in Etosha and Erongo. Always they were wary. A beautiful small antelope with particularly snazzy ears.

Klipspringer – We spied two individuals resting in the shade at our stop at the Spitzkop. Peg then spotted one atop a tall monolith of granite as we drove out of Etemba Camp, looking very regal and posing for us to admire – king of the world. Considering we spent quite a bit of time in their habitat, we did not see that many.

Damara Dik Dik – We found six on the Dik Dik drive through shrub habitat in Etosha NP, and then several around our lodgings at the Waterberg.

Springbok – Alex particularly liked this signature species of Southern Africa. Their lovely faces, their numbers in the 100's if not 1000's if one counted all coming and going from the larger waterholes was amazing. They used to carpet the plains like our North American pronghorn and bison. A pleasure to watch them in detail.

Black-faced Impala – Once in Etosha, we saw the impala a few times a day, usually in small groups in shrubbier habitat of Etosha NP. They had lovely markings, and some males were tending very large harems.

Red Hartebeest – just a few distant sightings, the best being near the lions when we found the first group in the Suenos area as we explored Etosha from Halili.

Blue Wildbeest (Gnu) – Numerous in Etosha, we admired long lines traveling to water, and often laughed with their gangly movements dashing in and about, always seeming busy. They seemed to like to lie out on the barren salt pan, perhaps escaping insects as they chewed their cud mid-day.

Southern Oryx (Gemsbok) – Another signature species of Southern Africa, we saw many, and learned that they do not readily share space, with each other or with other species. If there was disruption at the waterhole it was usually started by Oryx. We could see scars on many of the males from their fighting.

Cape Fur Seal - Thousands at Walvis Bay. There were great numbers in the water, and also they lined the beaches of Pelican Point. We saw a mating, several big beach masters, some younger pups trying to stay out of the way.

Common Bottlenose Dolphin – We were delighted to get into a big group of these dolphin at Walvis Bay on our boat cruise.

Heaviside's Dolphin – We had to work harder to find this species, but did so, a small group out in more open ocean off of Pelican Point.

Welwitschia (?) Hoary Bat – *Etomba Camp – we watched bats as well as nightjars, and this is our best guess at the species by range.*

SOUTH AFRICA EXTENSION – Madikwe National Park

The emphasis of our extension was more on mammals than birds, but still we added a good number of species to those seen in Namibia. We wanted a chance to see African Wild Dogs in the wild, the main reason for choosing Madikwe NP as the extension to our Namibia tour. This park is famous for its dogs, a closely followed restoration effort often discussed alongside the wolves of Yellowstone as examples of successful canid conservation. Numerous books have cataloged the trials and tribulations, which include disease and inter-pack strife but overall the effort is successful with today two breeding packs, and individuals that have been sold to other preserves to start additional packs. They are an important part of a meta-population of Wild Dogs managed in discontinuous reserves of South Africa and neighboring Botswana. We also chose this as it was a park we could drive to from Johannesburg, which we fly through to get to Namibia anyway. Jaci's Safari Camp was just perfect for our needs, with excellent guiding.

Guineafowl

Helmeted Guineafowl

Francolins, Spurfowl and allies

Natal Spurfowl

Swainson's Spurfowl
Crested Francolin

Finfoots

African Finfoot

Ducks and Geese

Egyptian Goose
Spur-winged Goose

Grebes

Little Grebe

Ibises and Spoonbills

Hadada Ibis

Hérons and Bitterns

Black-necked Heron (travel from J.berg)
Gray Heron
Green-backed Heron
Squacco Heron
Cattle Egret
Little Egret
Great Egret

Cormorants

White-breasted Cormorant

Kites, Hawks and Eagles

Yellow-billed Kite
African Fish Eagle
African Hawk Eagle
Pale-chanting Goshawk

Falcons

Greater Kestrel

Bustards

Red-crested Korhan
Rails Crakes and Coots
Common Moorhen

Plovers

African Wattled Plover
Blacksmith Plover
Crowned Lapwing

Sandpipers and Snipes

Wood Sandpipers
Common Sandpiper
Little Stint

Pigeons and Doves

Speckled Pigeon
Laughing Dove
Namaqua Dove
Red-eared Dove
Cape Turtle Dove

Turacos

Grey Go-away-bird

Cuckoos and Coucals

Burchell's Coucal

Owls

Verreaux's Eagle Owl
African Scops Owl – heard

Nightjar

Nightjar, species – seen in flight no id

Mousebirds

Red-faced Mousebird

Rollers

Purple Roller
Lilac-breasted Roller

Kingfishers

Brown-hooded Kingfisher
Pied Kingfisher

Hoopoes

African Hoopoe

Wood Hoopoes

Common Scimitarbill
Green Wood-hoopoe

Hornbills

African Gray Hornbill
Southern Red-billed Hornbill
Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill

Barbets

Crested Barbet

Honeyguides

Lesser Honeyguide

Woodpeckers

Bearded Woodpecker
Golden-tailed Woodpecker

Bush Shrikes

Brown-crowned Tchagra
Crimson-breasted Shrike
Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike
Brubru
Black-backed Puffback

Shrikes

Magpie Shrike

Orioles

Black-headed Orioles

Drongos

Fork-tailed Drongo

Crows

Pied Crow

Tits and Chickadees

Ashy Tit
Southern Black Tit
Chestnut-vented Tit-Babbler

Larks

Sabota Lark

Bulbuls

Dark-headed Bulbul

Swallows

Lesser Striped Swallow

Red-breasted Swallow

Reed Warbler

Great Reed Warbler

Cisticola and Allies

Tawny-flanked Prinia

Rattling Cisticola

Neddicky

Gray-backed Camaroptera

Long-billed Crombec

Barred Wren-Warbler

Babblers

Southern Pied Babbler

Arrow-marked Babbler

White-eyes

Cape White-eye

Starlings

Wattled Starling

Cape Glossy Starling

Burchell's Starling

Red-winged Starlings

Oxpeckers

Red-billed Oxpecker

Thrushes

Groundscraper Thrush

Kurrichane Thrush

Chats and Old-World Flycatchers

Kalahari Scrub Robin

White-browed Scrub Robin

Pale Flycatcher

Marico Flycatcher

Mocking Cliff Chat

Old World Sparrows

Yellow-throated Petronia

Southern Gray-headed Sparrow

White-browed Sparrow Weaver

Weavers and Widowbirds

Red-billed Buffalo Weaver

Southern Masked Weaver

Red-billed Quelea

Waxbills and Allies

Green-winged Pytilia

Red-headed Finch

Jamison's Firefinch

Black-faced Waxbill

Violet-eared Waxbill

Blue Waxbill

Buntings and New World Sparrows

Golden-breasted Bunting

Mammals – 23 species

Chacma Baboon

Vervet Monkey

Scrub Hare

Black-backed Jackal

African Wild Dog

Banded Mongoose

Brown Hyena

African Lion

Cheetah

Tree Squirrel

African Elephant

Burchell's Zebra

Black Rhinoceros

White Rhinoceros

Warthog

Southern Giraffe

Greater Kudu

Klipspringer

Impala

Red Hartebeest

Blue Wildebeest

Waterbuck

Cape Buffalo