

Namibia

Elements of Eden

A Greentours Trip Report

23rd October to 8th November 2009

Led by Phil Benstead & Orlando Haraseb

Trip report written by Phil Benstead

Day 1 Friday 23rd October departure

We all gathered at Heathrow in the evening for our overnight flight. The flight to South Africa departed reasonably on time and was spent drowsing fitfully or watching films.

Day 2 Saturday 24th October Jo'burg and Windhoek

Bleary-eyed we shambled through to the transit area in Jo'burg airport in the morning. A round of teas and coffees soon revived us enough to take an interest in the birdlife of the airport and we saw some good things, including both sacred and glossy ibis and the introduced common myna – birds that are impossible or hard to find in the bits of Namibia we would be visiting.

Our three hours here passed reasonably fast and soon we were on the short hop west to Windhoek. Here we were all re-united with our bags and soon in the capable hands of Orlando, who after an obligatory currency exchange encounter, guided us to the waiting Landcruiser.

The journey into Windhoek was punctuated by sightings of common roadside birds (although we also saw our first short-toed rock thrush) and a few mammals – our first chacma baboons and red hartebeeste. Tired we gratefully headed to our rooms for a shower and a rest before a large dinner in town and sleep.

Day 3 Sunday 25th October drive to Waterberg

Most of us woke just before dawn during a short but spirited rainstorm. We had a lot to squeeze in today what with the changed flight timings this year. Some of us met up in the garden before

breakfast and this paid off with our first mousebirds, a selection of swifts including Bradfield's and (best of all) a perched pearl-spotted owlet. Breakfast was tasty and most welcome and then we were off to the sewage farm!

Plenty of birds as usual at the sewage farm. As we drove through the smelly primary end of the process we encountered large flocks of wattled starlings. The ponds at the other end of the process were almost pleasant and on them we found our first wildfowl and waders. Good numbers of red-knobbed coot, red-billed teal and Egyptian geese were joined by smaller numbers of comb duck, Cape and Hottentot teal and purple gallinule. Some trees were festooned with darters and reed cormorants. Black-crowned night herons skulked and African reed warblers sang lustily in the emergent vegetation. One of the best birds was a fine white-throated swallow that appeared briefly feeding over one of the pools. Time was pressing but our plans to leave were stopped by a couple of channels that held our first black-winged stilts, as well as three-banded plover and wood sandpiper.

Driving on we headed north to the von Bach dam for lunch. The overflow stream held some excellent dragonflies, including some familiars from Europe (*Anax imperator* and *Zygonyx torridus*) and many others more exotic including a couple of beautiful *Rhyothemis semihyalina*. Barrie and Nigel spotted some good birds including jacobin cuckoo and lilac-breasted roller. Orlando had laid out a table of food whilst all this was going on and we eventually wandered back and tucked in. Driving on we stopped a few times to admire raptors and roadside flowers (the latter in reasonable abundance after early rains). Butterflies encountered included the stunning yellow pansy and the more mundane brown-veined white. As we got off the main road more game materialised, steenbok became common and we also had our first ostrich, oryx and eland. In an open grassy area we found a superb hunting male Montagu's harrier.

Arriving at Waterberg in the late afternoon we quickly settled in our rooms and headed out for a short walk around the campsite. Here we were treated to a monotonous concert by a white-browed scrub-robin, had good views of blue waxbill and enjoyed the banded mongooses and ground squirrels. As dusk fell we hit the showers before dinner and our first checklist session of the trip. The walk up to the chalets was rather quiet. Phil had a galago briefly and Orlando found our first chameleon. Barn owls and African scops owls called in the distance. Typically as Phil wandered back to his chalet after dropping everyone off, a galago performed really well for him...

Day 4 Monday 26th October Waterberg Plateau Park

We started today's programme with a pleasant, easy walk before breakfast. We got out at the same time as the baboon troupe and wandered along behind them for some time. Birds featured heavily and we got our first good views of purple roller, grey hornbill and for Anne there was a brief glimpse of a rockrunner. The undoubted highlight though was the pair of Verreaux's eagles that sailed along the escarpment in the early morning light. Nigel was very pleased and we were to see them again over the restaurant after breakfast.

The die-hard part of the team elected to take the escarpment trail after breakfast and we actually did get to the top this year. Butterflies were reasonably abundant and included a spectacular (but typically flighty) *Charaxes* and the bizarrely named wandering donkey acraea. We enjoyed really good views of our first violet-eared waxbill and made friends with a number of rock hyraxes. Rockrunners were spotted at a number of locations and included one singing bird high in a bare tree that everyone managed to see. The scarp edge had big numbers of alpine swifts and we found a few Bradfield's too, prospecting for nest sites. The cliff here provides abundant holes and crevices for nesting birds and we were lucky enough to stumble upon an active grey hornbill nest. The male tried to present the incarcerated female with a bit of bark; her clearly audible screeching protest was vociferous to say the least.

The view over the plain from the rocky escarpment was great and the view along the escarpment even better. But time was passing and the temperature rising fast, so we picked our way back through the rocky jumble and completed the loop. Just as the heat of the day was starting to get oppressive we emerged right by our chalets and had time for a rest or a swim before lunch.

Just before lunch Orlando spots us a fine family party of dwarf mongoose foraging near the restaurant. A great start to a leisurely two-hour lunch. Our next outing sees us being shuttled downhill to a waiting Park vehicle for the game drive on the plateau. En route Orlando spots a brown house snake being harassed by a couple of drongos. We get great views as the snake passes under the van and away.

The game drive with Sammy is great fun and we see some good mammals and birds. As we wait at the gate we see our first black-cheeked waxbill and green-winged pytilia. Nigel spots yet another Verreaux's eagle and this time we get dorsal views too. It is such a good-looking bird. Up on the plateau, red sand is the order of the day and the bush is thick and difficult to see into. Mammals appear at regular intervals though. A dozen eland thunder across the road in front of us. We see our first duikers.

The first waterhole looks deserted but during the half hour we watch we see a group of 12 kudu and 30-odd Cape buffalo coming in to drink. On the road again we bump into a small group of handsome sable antelope and three red hartebeest.

The second waterhole produces another 20 buffalo and as we prepare to leave the double-banded sandgrouse start to fly in to drink and a rufous-cheeked nightjar starts to sing. We see plenty of these nightjars as we drive out of the plateau area in the dark and as we go down from the escarpment add a brief view of a freckled nightjar. The main road has a good number of kudu grazing beside it, and we see some great males at last. We also see oryx close to the road and – best of all – find a roadside African wild cat just as we get to the Park entrance.

The walk back from dinner fails to produce a good look at a galago, although Phil gets a brief view again. Freckled nightjars and African scops-owl call into the night. A good day.

Day 5

Tuesday 27th October

transfer to Halali (Etosha)

A big travel day today, we breakfasted quickly and headed down the road towards our first official stop, the Hoba meteorite. En route there was plenty to look at especially whilst the day remained cool. We enjoyed several new raptors; a lovely perched shikra, and flight views of black-chested snake-eagle and Wahlberg's eagle. Orlando slowed for Phil to catch a beautiful and small Kalahari tent tortoise, which did the rounds inside the van before being placed safely off the road. As the heat of the day gathered we started to cover some mileage, passing through cattle ranch country and opening and closing gates as we went. Highlights in the final run to the meteor included a lovely roadside Temminck's courser and some great lilies.

The meteor was big and made of metal and allowed us to stretch our legs a bit. Our first icterine warbler and Kalahari scrub-robin were spotted and then we were off again. Our next stop being the bizarre sink-hole wetland that is Ochikoto Lake. This really was rather extraordinary, tens of metres deep, hosting an endemic tilapia (which we see) and providing a refuge for a collection of wetland birds. Here we had a single southern pochard, a gang of black-headed heron and a little green heron. Dragonflies included our first *Trithemis arteriosa* and *Africallagma glaucum*. The garden held good numbers of the diminutive Namaqua dove and our first emerald-spotted doves. Citrus swallowtails checked out the flowering lantana scrub clinging to the sheer walls of the sinkhole. It really was just too hot though in the middle of the day and we quickly headed back to the Landcruiser to continue our journey.

Lunch at the swanky Mokuti Lodge was next on the menu; the garden here provided a few more dragonflies for the growing list including *Ceriagrion glabrum*. In the garden we got to grips with white-crowned shrikes, had a brief encounter with our first red-billed buffalo weaver and checked out the introduced bontebok.

Finally we get to the nearby gate of the park and pop our top and head for Halali. Driving along we find our first impala and zebra. First stop is Klein Namutoni – an excellent waterhole. It is devoid of mammals but the birdlife more than makes up for it. There is a pack of little grebes that includes a single black-necked grebe. A single grey-headed gull looks decidedly out of place. New waders here include the splendid Kittlitz's plover and some winter plumaged black-winged pratincoles. On a dead tree at the back our first bataleurs pose.

The next waterhole has a few giraffe and drinking passerines include our first cinnamon-breasted bunting and African pipit. The drive takes us on a long route to Halali due to road works, past herds of springbok and wildebeest but we have to keep going to make the gate and check in. Nevertheless we stop frequently, most memorably for a fantastic, close, perched secretarybird, which even flies a short distance for us. Prehistoric.

Arriving at Halali we are quickly settled into our chalets and then off to dinner. Afterwards many of us head down to the waterhole and are rewarded with scorpions, geckos and a posing black rhino. Out around the waterhole we watch a hunting Verreaux's eagle owl and a spotted thick-knee trots around at the waters edge. Nightjars hunt under the floodlights and we watch a succession of strange insects attracted to the lights. Phil walks back with Leah and John after about

an hour and they encounter two splendid ratsels working the campsite for scraps and generally being a nuisance. A great end to a rather hectic day.

Day 6 Wednesday 28th October Halali area (Etosha)

Our first full day in the park dawns and we drive off as soon as the gate opens. We stay out for six hours during which we have some great encounters. Approaching Salvadoria we come across our first lion – a young female that appears to be all alone. Moving on we encounter another five later, resting in the shade and taking life easy.

A real action highlight comes when we watch a pair of red-necked falcons co-operatively hunting down a quelea. The tiny bird takes refuge under our jeep at one point in the chase, only to be pushed out again by a pied crow and into the waiting talons of one of the falcons. We watch from close range as the couple sit in a nearby tree with their prize.

Many of the normally dry areas around Halali are rapidly greening up after the early rains the region has had this year. We look in vain for the dry country birds that are normally present. All the scanning reveals another pair of blue cranes however and we also spot our first black-backed jackals. We finally have time to look at roadside birds and familiarise ourselves with spike-heeled lark, fiscal shrike and grey-backed sparrow-lark amongst others.

The waterhole at Rietfontain produces some great birds. A tawny eagle loafs on a snag and we find a large flock of black-winged pratincoles too. The dragonfly fauna is exciting too and it was agony not to be able to get out and walk around. Driving back we stop to admire both Namaqua and double-banded sandgrouse close to the road. Lunch is most welcome and afterwards we relax, building up our strength for a short afternoon session later on.

Leaving at 1630 on a cool afternoon we head out towards Goas waterhole. En route Orlando finds us a superb black rhino out in the open. The cameras leap into action and we are well pleased with the results. A fine animal, daylight sightings of rhino cannot be guaranteed by any means. Incredibly we see another later on. We stop to tell an oncoming car about the beast and they counter with information that there is a large male lion and a leopard at Goas waterhole! We drive off optimistically.

The lion is a superb male, loafing on the other side of the waterhole and every inch the king of all he surveys. After getting some Trafalgar Square shots we go in search of the leopard. It is right by the road! Orlando parks us up and we quietly go about the photographing this engaging young female. Eventually she tires of us and wanders into the bush. Moving on to look at the waterhole we find our first greenshank and a great pair of painted snipe. What an afternoon, Etosha really delivered today.

Two sessions at the waterhole either side of dinner produced the incredible double-banded sandgrouse parade at dusk, hunting Verreaux's eagle owl, a cautious but thirsty African wild cat and yet another black rhino.

Day 7 Thursday 29th October Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)

The big day out east is one we are unlikely to forget. We head across to Namutoni, only stopping for really good stuff. We stop a lot. A black rhino crosses the road in front of us, another one! Orlando spots a cat sauntering along and we call it as a lion but no! As we get closer it quickly becomes apparent that it is an excellent male cheetah, which we watch with great pleasure as it saunters into the nearby shade and collapses in a heap. Superb! Barrie is especially chuffed at finally seeing a cheetah after several unsuccessful trips to various parts of Africa. Driving north towards Andoni we find the first of two big bull elephants. Nearby we find two leopard tortoises; the early rains this year have really activated a great many species that we normally do not encounter. Because of these rains Fischer's pan has filled early and we watch squadrons of both greater and lesser flamingos flying in to land. Also here we spot our first Cape shoveler and a few ruff and marsh sandpipers. Phil sees both lanner and a *calidus* peregrine here but the arrival of Orlando's friends is poorly timed and we lose them both.

We reach the Andoni Plains in good time and on the edge we find a beautiful lioness, walking purposefully about. Overhead we see our first lappet-faced and white-backed vultures. The plains here are dry and quiet but the waterhole produces a lovely flock of African quailfinch and our first pink-billed larks. On the way to lunch we stop at a number of waterholes, finally getting good views of slender mongoose and finding the long-dead carcass of an infant white rhino. Klein Namutoni hosts a single whiskered tern and then it is time to go for lunch in the cool shade of the steakhouse restaurant at Namutoni. Here the small pond has our first *Ischnura senegalensis* and male *Ceriagrion glabrum*.

We successfully draw out lunch to cover the really hot part of the day and then stagger down to the viewing shelter at the Namutoni waterhole. Birds feature here with some splendid summer plumage whiskered terns and our first white-winged terns. Four blue cranes loaf about and ignore a herd of 150 zebra that come to drink and bicker during our stay. Walking back we marvel at the 'stamina' of the Namutoni residents who are sunbathing by the pool in the blistering heat. Before heading home we drive up to Twee Palms and check the waterhole. A pair of South African shelduck and two more blue cranes are of note. The pan edge grasslands are alive with giraffe as we return to Namutoni and the long haul back to Halali. It is a hot afternoon and we see little on the return journey. A brief stop at Goas again reveals three painted snipe but no mammals. Another great day in the park.

Day 8 Friday 30th October transfer to Okaukuejo

Today we transferred to Okaukuejo and so we had a relaxed start. A late breakfast (0630) got us going and we walked the grounds at Halali one last time. First stop was the roosting station of a tiny African scops-owl. The cameras clicked away and the bird ignored us. Next came the turn of the white-faced owl, this was less obliging however, having decided to roost in the top of a tree. Checking out we drove towards Okaukuejo, stopping at waterholes and scoping out new birds.

The highlight of the drive was an encounter with a menage of ostriches and their 13 two-week old chicks. High cute factor. We also spot a number of raptors and see our first chat flycatchers. Orlando finds an excellent roadside spotted thick-knee, whose cryptic colouration creates a challenge. Reaching Gemsbokvlakte we enjoy a peaceful tableau of drinking gemsbok (oryx), a secretarybird saunters through and two Burchell's coursers drop in. Nearby at Nebrownii we spot a 'white' elephant in the distance. The waterhole here is full of sludgy, grey alkaline mud that the elephants paint themselves with – as a result they can be seen at long range.

After lunch and a lengthy rest we head out on a walk around the compound. Butterflies were surprisingly scarce but we see our first veined oranges. Birds feature more prominently with a lengthy examination of the huge nests of the sociable weaver. These structures are so big they often bring down the trees they are built in. The sociable weavers pass to and fro and are oblivious to our presence. At one point a young bird making its maiden flight nearly crash lands onto Hannah's hat. The nest has attracted a predatory pearl-spotted owlet that gives great views. At a particularly large nest we find the telltale signs of occupation of one of the holes by another diminutive predator – the pygmy falcon. No sign of the little beast though. Arriving at the waterhole we are treated to a huge bull elephant that walks past us on the other side of the fence. A young jackal pup entertains us too.

The evening session at the waterhole after dinner was absolutely remarkable. Too tired to wax lyrical, but we finish after two hours with a total of seven black rhino, two white rhino, four male elephants, a large eland and a close common genet. A Verreaux's eagle owl entertains us and we are even treated to good views of the very scarce African marsh owl. Magic stuff.

Day 9 Saturday 31st October Okandeka (Etosha)

This morning we have a slightly later start. It is overcast and even cool as we drive up the road to nearby Okandeka. En route we find two spotted hyaenas (at last!) and bump into a gang of lions that are sleeping off a large meal. Okandeka is packed with drinking Namaqua sandgrouse, their calls reverberating as they come and go overhead. We took a comfort stop back at Okaukuejo before going to Ombika via Nebrownii.

This drive takes us through new country and we see several new things. One such is the double-banded courser; normally seen daily we have struggled up to this point to see one. Typically it is not shy and we get great photographs. Nearby a western sand snake, races about before moving slowly towards us and in the direction of our first ground agama (possible prey for this fast lizard-hunting snake). Sadly we run a ground agama over later but the fresh corpse is quickly picked up by a fiscal shrike and we watch fascinated as the shrike struggles to fly up and impale the body on a thorn. Another highlight of the drive is a superb yellow mongoose that poses perfectly in the shade for us. A great morning session with two more mammals added to the growing list.

The afternoon session is cool too and very enjoyable. We drive slowly to Oliphantsbad and back. At Nebrownii we encounter a lone lioness, careful positioning of the Landcruiser gives amazing

close views as she pads about calling for the pride she has misplaced. The highlight of the afternoon though is the fifteen minutes spent watching a group of nine female elephants and young drinking and splashing about at Oliphantsbad (well-named!). Just what Ann had ordered. We find some good raptors too with views of hunting lanner, another steppe buzzard and our first booted eagle. Rattling back we stopped for a yellow mongoose, Alf spotted another hyaena and we had yet another black rhino. We really have been spoilt in Etosha with some marvellous wildlife sightings and great photographic opportunities.

Sessions at the waterhole either side of dinner produce a large herd of 24+ elephant and a close encounter with a Verreaux's eagle-owl, that catches a mouse right in front of us.

Day 10 Sunday 1st November Okaukuejo area

This morning we head out on a loop that takes back up to Okandeka, to Leeubron and back via Sprokies Woud. The drive is quiet; at Okandeka we watch a hyaena come to drink. Scanning the suaeda flats for Ludwig's Bustard produces plenty of yellow mongoose and we find a three secretarybirds. Huge sociable weaver nests are the order of the day at this end of the park and we see some incredible examples. The recent fire in the park has destroyed many long-established structures and we watch plenty of new-build going on in undamaged trees. Near one colony at Leeubron, we find a pair of pygmy falcons; these tiny raptors appropriate a nest from the weavers, a deadly neighbour.

We enjoy the odd-looking moringa trees of Sprokies Woud (= haunted or ghost wood), although outside the enclosure many trees have been pushed over by elephants and regeneration seems to be non-existent. At the rest stop we have a brief view of a grey-headed kingfisher. Driving back we fight the waves of fatigue and head for a well-deserved afternoon off. Before lunch a huge group of 35+ elephant visit the waterhole for a drink.

We all enjoy the free afternoon after lunch and sleep or walk the grounds and/or enjoy the spectacle at the waterhole. It is a hot day and a variety of stuff appears to drink. Sunset sees a large gang of elephant (30+), including some boisterous youngsters and one very small infant. A huge herd of zebra come in quickly to drink too. After dinner a short session reveals some new owls (barn and pearl-spotted) but no sign of the entertaining Verreaux's of the previous night (dubbed Eddie the Eagle owl by Ann). Mammals include 3-4 black rhino, one white rhino, two elephants and best of all two lionesses (who create an uproar amongst the resident jackals). The waterhole at Okaukuejo has been spectacular this year.

Day 11 Monday 2nd November transfer to Kavita

Another early start saw us meeting up for breakfast and checking out in record time. We left Okaukuejo at 0700 for the drive through the permit-only western section of the park. This area suffered a huge fire just two weeks prior to our visit and we encountered very little small game,

possibly as a result. Elephants however had not been deterred and we came across several bachelor herds and two large family groups during the day. It was a blisteringly hot day but despite this the waterholes were mostly quiet. At one though we found 8-9 eland and at the last we came across our first mountain zebra, here together with plains zebra for comparison.

We took lunch at the 'picnic site' en route – a former elephant butchering station, a relict of the ill-fated culling experiment at Etosha. Driving on we found roosting spotted thick-knees and other birds of note included more pygmy falcons, a rufous-naped lark, perhaps five secretary birds, both Burchell's and Temminck's courser and plenty of raptors.

Granite and dolomite hills greeted us at the far end of the park and heralded a striking and most welcome change in landform. Beautiful granite kopjes and low hills were the order of the day. Arriving at the gate we drove the short distance to Kavita and settled in. The garden here was full of birds including our first bare-cheeked babblers and chestnut weavers. We left the remainder of the afternoon as free time and enjoyed pottering the trails, taking bird photographs or taking it easy in the heat of the day. We regrouped later for dinner and a night-walk.

During dinner we were surprised to discover that we were eating just yards from a huge, hungry porcupine who was tucking into a pile of kitchen scraps. A great addition to the mammal list. Spotlighting back to the chalets after a lengthy dinner revealed a superb and very bouncy spring hare before we headed for bed.

Day 12 Tuesday 3rd November Kavita and Hobatere

Another early start saw us assembling for tea and coffee before a pre-breakfast walk up onto the low ridge behind the lodge. We walked a good distance, enjoying the chance to use our legs after 8 days trapped in the Landcruiser. Our walk took us to a 'vulture restaurant' about 2 km away, which had a number of lappet-faced and white-backed vultures, as well as an adult tawny eagle, helping themselves to free food.

Fabiano our guide talked us through the local trees and shrubs and explained many of their traditional uses. We found a few new birds including Carp's tit and pririt batis. A rock dassie scampering up a rocky slope was also new for us. Walking back for a well-earned breakfast we started to feel the power of the sun, another hot day in paradise.

Leaving Kavita behind we drove out to the road, en route we found our only house martins of the trip and at the road we bumped into the beautiful pearly-breasted swallow. Orlando had an errand to run in a village on route, so we got to see a slice of rural life in this part of the world. Sadly we could not find the local chief and left empty-handed. Driving into Hobatere along the access track we finally saw our first violet wood-hoopoes and long-tailed starlings and before we knew it we had arrived. We had time to settle into our rooms before a light lunch and a rest or a session at the water-hole. Two elephants and a few oryx came to drink immediately after lunch.

We found out why the waterhole was quiet on our late afternoon drive with Dayne. Six lions, including the huge and impressive dark alpha male, were lying about near a recently killed mountain zebra.

The Hobatere area is one of incredible beauty and even if we had seen nothing during the three hour drive we would have been happy just trundling about. But we found plenty to look at. A crowned lapwing vociferously defended its nest and tried every trick in the book to lure us away from the two well-camouflaged eggs. An immature augur buzzard was a welcome addition to our large list of raptors. We encountered another four lions near the tree-house, scuppering our plans to have a short walk in the area. We also located the nest of the violet wood-hoopoe, the birds coming in to feed the screaming young. A small group of the exciting Hartlaub's francolin appeared on a nearby rocky jumble and we got great views of this often rather shy bird. A great drive out.

After dinner we headed out in the big spotlighting bus and Dayne found us some excellent animals and birds. First up was a common genet, followed by the first of two African wild cats. The most engaging animals were the five bat-eared foxes we encountered hunting for invertebrates in the grasslands. We also found a family of jackals, the five cubs were just days old but one of their number was already in the talons of a Verreaux's eagle owl perched by the bus. Dayne caught us a female rufous-cheeked nightjar, to have a look at up close. Before we knew it though we were back at the lodge and heading for bed. The African scops-owls were calling away and Phil had one right above his chalet.

Day 13 Wednesday 4th November transfer to Erongo

The big day arrived, with over 250 miles of, mostly dirt, road to travel this journey was always going to be tiring. The scenery en route though was spectacular and we made a number of interesting stops.

Our day started with an early breakfast and a farewell to Dayne and Nicky and the rest of the Hobatere team, who had looked after us so well during our short stay. Driving out up the access track, Phil offered a 'Magnum' to the finder of a klipspringer. Orlando won just ten minutes later with an excellent male right by the side of the road. This dainty little antelope was unconcerned by our presence and gradually tripped off on tip toes.

Our next stop was the dusty little town of Kemanjab, our first real shop for a week. We rushed in to use the facilities and buy a variety of things from laundry soap, film, shoelaces and tasty treats. Few who tasted the delights of 'Energelly Teddy Bears' will forget this day. The most amazing sighting here though was Orlando's mum, was this a coincidence?

Eventually, with Orlando eating a mint 'Magnum', we headed off on the next leg, which would take us to a roadside west of Khorixas. Here, patiently waiting for our arrival, we found the amazing *Welwitschia*. These plants belong to a select group that even inspire non-botanists, a global

group that also includes *Amorphophallus* and *Rafflesia*. We spend a pleasant fifteen minutes here before the 30° heat drives us back to the van.

Before a short visit to the rock engravings at Twyfelfontein, we go to a bar and sit upstairs on a cool veranda to eat our packed lunch. Steeling ourselves for the heat of the day we head back out and many of us went on a short guided walk to see the lower rock engravings. These engravings feature many of the animals we have become familiar with over the last couple of weeks, as well as tracks and maps of waterholes. All 5-6,000 years old. For some of us though the visit to the tiny seepage (barely a spring) coming out of the hillside here is the highlight. In the heat of the day many birds were coming to drink or simply resting and included our first lark-like and Cape buntings and a splendid pair of mountain wheatear. We rejoined the team and set off, this time we just had to drive and eventually at 1730 we arrived at Erongo.

The camp here is pleasantly situated in the cleft between two large granite outcrops. The tents are well spaced apart and birds and hyraxes are your real neighbours. Always a pleasure to visit, and once we had stopped vibrating from the journey we all relaxed into it.

Dinner was interrupted by two porcupines, scavenging for scraps at the kitchen door. As we settle to sleep we are lulled by the incredible chorus of rock hyraxes and freckled nightjars.

Day 14 Thursday 5th November Erongo to Walvis Bay

Another busy day saw us up at dawn for a drive around to a cave with San rock paintings dating back 2,500 years. En route we find more Hartlaub's francolin and a lovely pair of klipspringers with a boisterous youngster who scampers about the rock face. Those that can cross the final sloping granite hillside to access the bee-filled cave appreciate the cave paintings. It is worth it, honest! On the way back we had a solitary dikdik.

Breakfast was fantastic and whilst we ate we were treated to a succession of birds visiting the spring. Cape buntings, green-winged pytilias and rosy-faced lovebirds queued to drink and bathe. A few muffin crumbs attracted in speckled pigeons and more. Great spot and a shame to leave, but leave we must.

The drive to Swakopmund is on tarmac and comfortable. The landscape changes over time until we are travelling through grassland with scattered bushes. Here we encounter chat flycatchers and our first karoo chats. It gets drier and soon we are in a moonscape that has just scattered shrubs. Arriving in Swakopmund we have a long lunch, happy to be by the sea.

Our first stop when we get going again is the saltworks north of town. Here we chase waders and terns and walk to the sea. A brisk wind is blowing and we all don fleeces for the first time in two weeks. Offshore a few Cape gannets head south and just offshore a number of Damara terns are feeding. Huge numbers of Cape cormorant sweep past us in tight flocks, heading to roost at the nearby guano platform. Stately pelicans cruise low past us from the sea, heading in the same direction.

Heading to Walvis Bay we check in and a depleted team heads out again to the saltworks south of town. Here we find some great birds. Huge Caspian terns loaf about with their smaller relatives. Huge roosts of white-fronted plovers contain a number of the scarce chestnut-banded plover. We find a loose flock of 20 red-necked phalaropes feeding close to the road. Nigel distinguishes himself by finding two splendid Terek sandpipers. Great birds in perfect evening light. Sadly they do not linger long before flying off, probably new in. A great little session.

Day 15 Friday 6th November Walvis Bay and Rooibank

A six o'clock birdwalk along the promenade was slightly scuppered by a very high tide, but we saw a few waders, the delightful Orange River white-eye and the rather smart Cape bunting.

After breakfast we report to the jetty for our boat ride out to Pelican Point. Sonelle our skipper was in good form and she gave us a great ride around the bay. The easy highlight was our encounter with a group of Heaviside's dolphin. They were not in a really playful mood but we had several individuals alongside and under the bows. Great little animals. Birds featured too with stunning views of the monster white-chinned petrel, a few sooty shearwaters and some piratical Arctic skuas.

We stopped offshore of the Cape fur seal colony, surrounded by seals dozing in the water and admired the big beach-masters in the centre of their harems. Close to the jetty we welcomed on board two fur seals and had a chance to examine them at close range. The sparkling wine and oysters tasted great in an open boat, the light swell and the sun, just perfect.

Getting back to the jetty we headed for lunch and then drove inland to the dunes at Rooibank. Here we tramped around the duneveldt, chasing wedge-snouted lizards and fog-basking beetles, admiring !nara melon patches and other plants, and reading the numerous tracks in the sand. Nigel found a close dune lark, which showed well but briefly before becoming very elusive. Walking back to the van we finally find a woodpecker – an elusive male cardinal woodpecker.

On the way home we stop at Dune 7 for photographs, although we wait some time for the sun to drop, Dune 7 is a rather rounded shape this year and does not cast very crisp shadows. A train chugs past against the dune background as we head back to the hotel and a great last supper at the Raft.

Day 16 Saturday 7th November transfer to Windhoek and on

We have had some early starts on this trip but nothing came close to our 0500 departure for the 400 km drive to catch our flight in Windhoek. Orlando typically timed it to perfection, arriving just 4 minutes after his 1030 aim. Driving through the desert in the dark was atmospheric and then on the other side we hit a thick belt of fog, which drenched the vehicle. We all imagined the fog-

basking beetles tipping up and enjoying a cool drink before the fog burnt away with the early morning sun. Emerging from the fog we found it was well past dawn. Spitzkoppe and the Erongo's looked magnificent in the early morning light. A well orchestrated, pre-planned breakfast stop at Usakos, saw us all outside of our breakfast in 45 minutes and we were off again. We all learnt here that Orlando had been battling shingles for the entire trip!

The journey produced one new bird – red-backed shrike – and we said goodbye to a number of familiar birds and mammals en route. Before we knew it we were weaving through the traffic of Windhoek and driving the last 30 km out to the airport. We all bid a fond farewell to Orlando and surrender to the machine...

Day 17 Sunday 7th November arrival at Heathrow

We arrive safely after an uneventful flight and say our goodbyes before heading home.

Systematic List Number 1 Mammals

The taxonomy and nomenclature is taken from ‘The Kingdon field guide to African mammals’ by Kingdon (1997). Species in square brackets were recorded by noting signs or are introductions. The following is a summary of the itinerary.

24 th October	arrival and Windhoek
25 th October	to Waterberg and the plateau
26 th October	Waterberg and the plateau
27 th October	transfer to Etosha (Halali)
28 th October	Halali area (Etosha)
29 th October	Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)
30 th October	Halali to Okaukuejo
31 st October	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
1 st November	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
2 nd November	transfer to Kavita
3 rd November	Kavita to Hobatere
4 th November	transfer to Erongo
5 th November	transfer to Swakopmund
6 th November	Rooibank and Walvis Bay area
7 th November	transfer to Windhoek

Chacma baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>	Widespread in the hills. Memorably searching the bins and checking car doors every morning at Waterberg.
South African galago	<i>Galago moholi</i>	Waterberg – only Phil got to grips with this species here with three sightings.
Scrub hare	<i>Lepus saxatilis</i>	Waterberg, Etosha – small numbers.
South African ground squirrel	<i>Geosciurus inaurus</i>	Waterberg, Etosha, Kavita, Hobatere.
Damara ground squirrel	<i>Geosciurus princeps</i>	The ground squirrel at Hobatere is different! It only took me four trips to realise...
Smith’s bush squirrel	<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>	Etosha and Hobatere – small numbers.
Spring hare	<i>Pedetes capensis</i>	Single at Kavita near the lodge at night.
African porcupine	<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Excellent views of one feeding by the restaurant at Kavita. Brief views of two at Erongo feeding outside the restaurant.
Acacia rat sp.	<i>Thallomys sp.</i>	Recorded at Waterberg and Halali.
Four-striped mouse	<i>Rhabdomys pumilio</i>	Scattered records.
Dassie rat	<i>Petromys typicus</i>	Singles at Kavita, Hobatere and Erongo.
Black-backed jackal	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>	Widespread and common.
Bat-eared fox	<i>Otocyon megalotis</i>	Hobatere – small numbers on the night drive.
Slender mongoose	<i>Herpestes sanguinea</i>	Etosha – several seen.
Dwarf mongoose	<i>Helogale parvula</i>	Family party at Waterberg by the restaurant as usual.
Yellow mongoose	<i>Cynictis pencilata</i>	Waterberg sewage farm (single), Etosha – noted in small numbers around Okaukuejo.
Banded mongoose	<i>Mungos mungo</i>	Waterberg and Etosha – always entertaining.
Spotted hyaena	<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	Etosha – up to 3 on just two days, scarce this year.
Honey badger	<i>Mellivora capensis</i>	Two watched cruising the campsite for scraps at

Common genet	<i>Genetta genetta</i>	Halali (Etosha). Etosha – one seen very well at Okaukuejo. Hobatere – single seen well on the night drive.
Cheetah	<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	Single male at Etosha – an excellent encounter.
African wild cat	<i>Felis sylvestrus</i>	Single seen well at Waterberg on the game drive. Etosha – three seen well during our stay. Two more on the night drive at Hobatere.
Lion	<i>Panthera leo</i>	Etosha – seen most days in small numbers (although 14 on our fourth day was a good total) – invariably loafing around during the day. Just two seen at night at Okaukuejo waterhole. At Hobatere we saw a total of nine, including the big male at a zebra kill.
Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	A young female on the first full day in Etosha, gave superb views at close range at Goas.
Southern rock dassie	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	Waterberg – abundant in the rocky jumble below the escarpment. Also recorded at Kavita, Hobatere, Erongo and Okahandja.
African elephant	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Etosha – noted daily, especially at the camp waterholes (max. daily count 35+). Small numbers at Hobatere.
Plains zebra	<i>Equus quagga</i>	Etosha – very abundant.
Mountain zebra	<i>Equus zebra</i>	Seen in the extreme western part of Etosha on the last day (with plains zebra) and also at Hobatere.
White rhinoceros	<i>Ceratotherium simum</i>	A mother and a calf came to drink during the first nightwatch at Okaukuejo water hole. Another on the last night there. Re-introduced to the park from stronghold in South Africa.
Black rhinoceros	<i>Diceros bicornis</i>	Etosha – frequently encountered at waterholes, especially at night (max. 7 one night at Okaukuejo). At least three seen during the day here too.
Common warthog	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Widespread.
Cape buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer</i>	About 50 in two groups on the Waterberg plateau game drive.
Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	Frequently encountered in Etosha and at Hobatere.
Greater kudu	<i>Tragelaphus strepsiceros</i>	Frequently encountered in parks and at Hobatere.
Eland	<i>Tauro tragus</i>	Waterberg and Etosha – small numbers.
Bush duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Waterberg Plateau only (3).
Steenbok	<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>	Waterberg, Etosha – encountered almost daily in small numbers.
Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>	A single male at Hobatere), also a pair with a youngster at Erongo.
Kirk's dikdik	<i>Madoqua kirkii</i>	Waterberg – present in small numbers around the chalets and restaurant. Also at Etosha. Single at Erongo.
Springbok	<i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>	Widespread and common.
Impala	<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	Etosha – common in the east, small numbers elsewhere.

[Bontebok]	<i>Damaliscus dorcas</i>	We got a chance to see bontebok (subspecies <i>dorcas</i>) at Mokuti Lodge – where it was an introduced lawnmower.
Kongoni (red hartebeest)	<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>	Waterberg and Etosha – small numbers, almost daily.
Brindled wildebeeste	<i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>	Etosha – daily.
Sable antelope	<i>Hippotragus niger</i>	Waterberg – eight up on the plateau where it was successfully re-introduced.
Southern oryx	<i>Oryx gazella</i>	Frequently encountered in parks and at Hobatere.
Heaviside's dolphin	<i>Cephalorhynchus heavisidii</i>	Small group encountered from boat in Walvis Bay.
Cape fur seal	<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>	Huge numbers in the colonies on the point in Walvis Bay (from boat). Also a regular supernumerary on board during the boat trip.

Systematic List Number 2 Birds

The taxonomy and nomenclature is taken 'Birds of Southern Africa' by Sinclair, Hockey & Tarboten (2002). Square brackets indicate species that were heard only, or recorded through sign, feather or corpse!

24 th October	arrival and Windhoek
25 th October	to Waterberg and the plateau
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28 th October	Halali area (Etosha)
29 th October	Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)
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6 th November	Rooibank and Walvis Bay area
7 th November	transfer to Windhoek

Common ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>	Widespread (often seen in small numbers whilst travelling), seen often and well at Etosha. The chicks in the creche seen at Etosha on the third day were seriously young and rather cute.
Little grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Widespread on suitable freshwater pools.
Black-necked grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Single at Klein Namutoni (Etosha). Small numbers at Swakopmund and at least 50 at Walvis Bay saltworks.
White-chinned petrel	<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>	Several from boat in Walvis Bay.
Sooty shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	Several on the boat trip in Walvis Bay.
Great white pelican	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	coastal sites.
Cape gannet	<i>Morus capensis</i>	Just four from Swakopmund this year.
White-breasted cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax lucidus</i>	Windhoek sewage farm, Lake Ochikoto and coastal sites
Cape cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>	coastal sites
Reed cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	Recorded in good numbers at Windhoek Sewage Farm this year. Single at Lake Ochikoto too.
African darter	<i>Anhinga rufa</i>	Good numbers at Windhoek Sewage Farm this year.
Black-headed heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>	Lake Ochikoto (five). Small numbers at Etosha too.
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Windhoek only.
Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Windhoek sewage works, Etosha and coastal sites – small numbers.
Intermediate egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	A single at Klein Namutoni (Etosha) on 28/ 10 was a rare sighting in Namibia.
Cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Jo'burg, Lake Ochikoto and Etosha – small

Squacco heron	<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	numbers. One at Okuakuejo (Etosha).
Green-backed heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>	Lake Ochikoto (single).
Black-crowned night-heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm only.
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>	Windhoek (one in flight only).
Glossy ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Small numbers flying around the airport at Jo'burg (South Africa).
Sacred ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>	Single seen well in flight at airport at Jo'burg (South Africa).
Greater flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>	Large numbers at Etosha and coastal areas.
Lesser flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus minor</i>	Good numbers at Etosha this year, as well as small numbers at the coastal sites.
Egyptian goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	Widespread.
South African shelduck	<i>Tadorna cana</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm (small numbers) and a pair at Twee Palms (Etosha).
Comb duck	<i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i>	Single at Windhoek sewage farm.
Cape shoveler	<i>Anas smithii</i>	Small numbers at Etosha.
Cape teal	<i>Anas capensis</i>	Windhoek sewage farm, Etosha and Walvis Bay.
Hottentot teal	<i>Anas hottentota</i>	Single bird at Windhoek Sewage Farm only.
Red-billed teal	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and Etosha.
Southern pochard	<i>Netta erythroptalma</i>	Single male at Lake Ochikoto.
Secretarybird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>	Etosha, up to five on five days, an exceptional year. Single on night drive at Hobatere.
White-backed vulture	<i>Gyps africanus</i>	Scarce this year – small numbers at Etosha and Kavita.
Lappet-faced vulture	<i>Torgos tracheliotus</i>	Etosha – small numbers four days. Also some at Kavita and one on the last day.
Black-shouldered kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	Widespread – small numbers almost daily.
Verreaux's eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>	Waterberg – pair along escarpment on both days.
Tawny eagle	<i>Aquila rapax</i>	Etosha – small numbers daily. Also at Kavita and along the road on the last day.
Wahlberg's eagle	<i>Aquila wahlbergi</i>	Singles en route to Etosha on Day 4 and another on the last day.
Booted eagle	<i>Hieraaetus pennatus</i>	Single pale phase bird near Okaukuejo (Etosha).
African hawk-eagle	<i>Hieraaetus spilogaster</i>	A total of six seen on the drive to Waterberg.
Brown snake-eagle	<i>Circaetus cinereus</i>	Recorded on four dates only.
Black-chested snake-eagle	<i>Circaetus pectoralis</i>	Widespread – small numbers throughout.
Bateleur	<i>Terathopius ecaudatus</i>	Etosha – small numbers, almost daily.
Steppe buzzard	<i>Buteo vulpinus</i>	Etosha (two singles).
Augur buzzard	<i>Buteo augur</i>	Hobatere (single immature briefly).
Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	Single near Waterberg.
Gabar goshawk	<i>Melierax gabar</i>	Etosha – very small numbers, scarce this year.
Southern pale chanting goshawk	<i>Melierax canorus</i>	Widespread roadside bird in acacia scrub woodland.
Pallid harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>	Etosha – single male seen by Nigel and Hannah.

Montagu's harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	Single hunting over a large grassy clearing near Waterberg.
Pygmy falcon	<i>Polihierax semitorquatus</i>	A total of five of these engaging micro-falcons at Etosha.
Lanner falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>	Etosha – singles on three days.
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Single calidus race bird at Fischer's Pan (Etosha).
Rock kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolis</i>	Widespread.
Greater kestrel	<i>Falco rupicoloides</i>	Etosha – small numbers almost daily.
Red-necked falcon	<i>Falco chicquera</i>	A total of four recorded in Etosha. A pair hunting down a quelea by our Landcruiser was a trip highlight for some.
Red-billed francolin	<i>Pternistes adspersus</i>	Windhoek, Waterberg, Etosha and Hobatere.
Swainson's francolin	<i>Pternistes swainsonii</i>	Recorded in small numbers at Waterberg and around Halali (Etosha).
Hartlaub's francolin	<i>Pternistes hartlaubi</i>	Hobatere (four seen well) and Erongo (another four on the morning drive).
Helmeted guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	Widespread.
Common quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Single at Etosha.
Little buttonquail	<i>Turnix sylvaticus</i>	Two flushed on the drive out of Hobatere.
Blue crane	<i>Anthropoides paradisea</i>	Etosha – daily encounters of up to 6 birds in the east of the park.
Purple swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	1-2 at Windhoek sewage farm.
Common moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and Namutoni (Etosha).
Red-knobbed coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and Namutoni (Etosha).
Kori bustard	<i>Ardeotis kori</i>	Etosha and Hobatere – noted in small numbers daily.
Ludwig's bustard	<i>Neotis ludwigii</i>	Etosha – just a single male this year (near Leeubron).
Red-crested korhaan	<i>Eupodotis ruficrista</i>	Widespread.
Northern black korhaan	<i>Eupodotis afraoides</i>	Etosha – small numbers daily.
African jacana	<i>Actophilornis africanus</i>	Singles at Windhoek Sewage Farm and another at von Bach Dam. Also 1-2 at Etosha.
Great painted-snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	Two or three at Goas waterhole (Etosha) on most visits.
Common ringed plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	coastal sites - small numbers.
White-fronted plover	<i>Charadrius marginatus</i>	coastal sites – often large numbers
Chestnut-banded plover	<i>Charadrius pallidus</i>	Walvis Bay saltworks – small numbers.
Kittlitz's plover	<i>Charadrius pecuarius</i>	Etosha – small numbers on a few days.
Three-banded plover	<i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm, von Bach dam and Etosha – a good year this year.
Grey plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	Single at Swakopmund salt works.
Crowned lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>	Etosha, Hobatere – small numbers daily.
Blacksmith lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>	Widespread.
Ruddy turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	coastal areas
Common sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and Etosha.
Terek sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	Two at Walvis Bay saltworks.
Wood sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and Etosha.

Marsh sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	Several at Etosha this year.
Common greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	Etosha (odd singles), coastal areas
Curlew sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	coastal areas, where very common.
Little stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	coastal sites – small numbers.
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	coastal areas (common)
Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	Etosha and coastal areas.
Bar-tailed godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	coastal areas – small numbers.
Common whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	coastal areas – small numbers.
Pied avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avoetta</i>	Etosha (single). Walvis Bay – large numbers.
Black-winged stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	Small numbers at Windhoek sewage farm and Etosha, and large numbers at saltworks on coast.
Spotted thick-knee	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>	Etosha and Hobatere – small numbers.
Burchell's courser	<i>Cursorius rufus</i>	Etosha (just three birds in total, recorded on two days).
Temminck's courser	<i>Cursorius teminckii</i>	Single en route to Etosha and another showing well on the road near Okaukuejo.
Double-banded courser	<i>Rhinoptilus africanus</i>	Etosha – small numbers around Okaukuejo only this year.
Black-winged pratincole	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i>	Up to 25 daily around Namutoni and Halali (Etosha).
Red-necked phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	A fantastic flock of 20 at the saltworks at Walvis Bay.
Parasitic jaeger	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	Single Swakopmund amongst the terns offshore. Six from boat in Walvis Bay.
Pomarine skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Single pale phase bird from boat in Walvis Bay.
Grey-headed gull	<i>Larus cirrocephalus</i>	Etosha and coastal areas – scarce.
Hartlaub's gull	<i>Larus hartlaubii</i>	coastal areas – large numbers.
Cape gull	<i>Larus vetula</i>	coastal areas – common.
Caspian tern	<i>Sterna caspia</i>	coastal areas – small numbers.
Swift tern	<i>Sterna bergii</i>	coastal sites – common.
Sandwich tern	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	coastal areas – small numbers.
Common tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	coastal areas – large numbers.
Damara tern	<i>Sterna balaenarum</i>	Very small numbers in coastal areas.
Whiskered tern	<i>Chlidonias hybridus</i>	Small numbers around Namutoni (Etosha).
Black tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Large numbers feeding and roosting off Pelican point on the boat trip in Walvis Bay.
White-winged tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	Small numbers around Namutoni (Etosha). Single at Swakopmund.
Namaqua sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles namaqua</i>	Widespread – often seen in large numbers at waterholes.
Double-banded sandgrouse	<i>Pterocles bicinctus</i>	Waterberg – at waterholes on plateau at dusk. Also at Etosha, Kavita, Hobatere and Erongo.
Rock dove	<i>Columba livia</i>	Windhoek and other towns.
Speckled pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>	Waterberg, Hobatere and Erongo.
Cape turtle-dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>	ubiquitous.
Laughing dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	widespread.
Namaqua dove	<i>Oena capensis</i>	widespread.

Emerald-spotted wood-dove	<i>Turtur chalcospilos</i>	Several in the garden at Lake Ochikoto.
Rosy-faced lovebird	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	Waterberg, Hobatere and Erongo.
Grey go-away-bird	<i>Corythaixoides concolor</i>	Widespread.
[Black cuckoo]	<i>Cuculus clamosus</i>	Single heard en route to Waterberg on Day 2.
African cuckoo	<i>Cuculus gularis</i>	Etosha and Hobatere.
Didric cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx caprius</i>	Single heard en route to Etosha and one near Halali next day.
Jacobin cuckoo	<i>Oxylophus jacobinus</i>	Single at von Bach dam.
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	[Waterberg], single seen at Okaukuejo at night.
African scops-owl	<i>Otus senegalensis</i>	Etosha (Halali) – single found roosting during the day, vocal at night. Very vocal at Hobatere and one seen at night.
Southern white-faced scops-owl	<i>Ptilopusus granti</i>	Etosha (Halali) – single found roosting during the day.
Pearl-spotted owlet	<i>Glaucidium perlatum</i>	Single seen well at Palmquell Hotel (Windhoek) on first morning. Also seen at Etosha, Kavita, Hobatere and Okahandja.
Giant eagle-owl	<i>Bubo lacteus</i>	Adults seen frequently at night at the waterholes at Halali and Okaukuejo (Etosha).
Marsh owl	<i>Asio capensis</i>	Single one night at Okaukuejo waterhole.
Rufous-cheeked nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus rufigena</i>	Waterberg, Etosha and Hobatere.
Freckled nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus tristigma</i>	Many heard at Waterberg, one seen briefly. Seen and heard at Erongo, where numerous.
Common swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Abundant this year at times, seen almost daily.
Bradfield's swift	<i>Apus bradfieldi</i>	Windhoek (common), Waterberg and Kavita and Hobatere (scarce).
White-rumped swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>	Waterberg only, probably overlooked.
Little swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>	Widespread.
Alpine swift	<i>Apus melba</i>	Windhoek and Waterberg.
African palm-swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	Widespread.
White-backed mousebird	<i>Colius colius</i>	Windhoek, Erongo and odd birds elsewhere.
Grey-headed kingfisher	<i>Halcyon leucocephala</i>	Single near Sprokies Woud (Etosha).
European bee-eater	<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Noted on three days in Etosha.
Olive bee-eater	<i>Merops superciliosus</i>	Small numbers with European bee-eater at east end of Etosha this year. Also at Hobatere and on the road to Erongo.
Swallow-tailed bee-eater	<i>Merops hirundineus</i>	Waterberg, Etosha, Kavita and Hobatere – small numbers.
Purple roller	<i>Coracias naevia</i>	Widespread.
Lilac-breasted roller	<i>Coracias caudatus</i>	Singles at von Bach dam and en route to Etosha.
African hoopoe	<i>Upupa africana</i>	Widespread in small numbers.
Violet wood-hoopoe	<i>Phoeniculus damarensis</i>	Waterberg (1) and Hobatere – small numbers.
Common scimitarbill	<i>Rhinopomastus cyanomelas</i>	Singles at Etosha, Kavita and Erongo.
African grey hornbill	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>	Widespread.
Damara hornbill	<i>Tockus damarensis</i>	Waterberg, Etosha and Hobatere.
Southern yellow-billed	<i>Tockus leucomelas</i>	Widespread and reasonably common.

hornbill		
Monteiro's hornbill	<i>Tockus monteiri</i>	Waterberg, Etosha, Hobatere and Erongo – small numbers.
Acacia pied barbet	<i>Tricholaema leucomelas</i>	Waterberg, Etosha, Kavita and Hobatere – small numbers.
Cardinal woodpecker	<i>Dendropicos fuscescens</i>	Single male at Rooibank.
Rufous-naped lark	<i>Mirafra africana</i>	Etosha (single).
Sabota lark	<i>Mirafra sabota</i>	Etosha.
[Dune lark]	<i>Certhilauda erythrochlamys</i>	Rooibank – single elusive bird.
Spike-heeled lark	<i>Chersomanes albofasciata</i>	Etosha.
Pink-billed lark	<i>Spizocorys conirostris</i>	Etosha – small numbers on two days.
Red-capped lark	<i>Calandrella cinerea</i>	Etosha – very common.
Chestnut-backed sparrowlark	<i>Eremopterix leucotis</i>	Etosha – small numbers around Okaukuejo.
Grey-backed sparrowlark	<i>Eremopterix verticalis</i>	Etosha – large numbers.
Barn swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	widespread.
White-throated swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>	Only one seen at Windhoek Sewage Farm this year.
Pearl-breasted swallow	<i>Hirundo dimidiata</i>	Just south of Hobatere (2).
Red-breasted swallow	<i>Hirundo semirufa</i>	Etosha – small numbers.
Greater striped swallow	<i>Hirundo cucullata</i>	Widespread.
Rock martin	<i>Hirundo fuligula</i>	Scattered records.
Banded martin	<i>Riparia cincta</i>	Etosha – small numbers on the plains.
House martin	<i>Depichon urbica</i>	Small number on drive out of Kavita.
Fork-tailed drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>	Widespread.
Cape crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>	Etosha – small numbers.
Pied crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>	Etosha – small numbers.
Ashy tit	<i>Parus cinerascens</i>	Only at Waterberg this year.
Carp's tit	<i>Parus carpi</i>	[Waterberg] and Kavita. Scarce this year.
Southern pied babbler	<i>Turdoides bicolor</i>	Two on the drive to Halali (Etosha) on the first day. Common at Kavita.
Bare-cheeked babbler	<i>Turdoides gymnogenys</i>	Present in garden at Kavita – small numbers.
African red-eyed bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus nigricans</i>	Very widespread and common.
Groundscraper thrush	<i>Psophocichla litsipsirupa</i>	Widespread.
Short-toed rock-thrush	<i>Monticola brevipes</i>	Common in dry rocky areas.
Mountain wheatear	<i>Oenanthe monticola</i>	Seen around Twyfelfontein and en route to and from Swakopmund.
Capped wheatear	<i>Oenanthe pileata</i>	Etosha – small numbers daily, also seen occasionally whilst driving.
Familiar chat	<i>Cercomela familiaris</i>	Common in dry rocky areas.
Karoo chat	<i>Cercomela schlegelii</i>	Seen en route to and from Swakopmund.
Ant-eating chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>	Etosha – small numbers on three days. Also seen en route to Swakopmund.

White-browed scrub-robin	<i>Cercotrichas leucophrys</i>	Waterberg only – small numbers.
Kalahari scrub-robin	<i>Cercotrichas paena</i>	Hoba and Etosha – small numbers.
Chestnut-vented tit-babbler	<i>Parisoma subcaeruleum</i>	Widespread – small numbers.
African reed-warbler	<i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm only. More often heard than seen.
Icterine warbler	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	Single at Hoba meteorite.
Long-billed crombec	<i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>	Waterberg and Etosha – small numbers.
Grey-backed camaroptera	<i>Camaroptera brevicaudata</i>	Ubiquitous.
African barred warbler	<i>Calamonastes fasciolatus</i>	Single at Kavita.
Rockrunner	<i>Achaetops pycnopygius</i>	Waterberg – small numbers, others heard elsewhere.
Zitting cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm.
Desert cisticola	<i>Cisticola aridulus</i>	Waterberg and Etosha.
Rattling cisticola	<i>Cisticola chinianus</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm, Etosha and Hobatere – in small numbers.
Black-chested prinia	<i>Prinia flavicans</i>	Widespread.
Marico flycatcher	<i>Bradornis mariquensis</i>	Widespread.
Chat flycatcher	<i>Bradornis infuscatus</i>	Etosha (small numbers).
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Single at Hobatere.
Pririt batis	<i>Batis pririt</i>	Kavita and Erongo – small numbers.
African paradise-flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	Singles at Waterberg and Lake Ochikoto.
Cape wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>	Jo'burg, Windhoek Sewage Farm and coastal areas.
African pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>	Scattered records.
Lesser grey shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>	Good numbers throughout this year.
Common fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	Etosha (small numbers) and a few elsewhere.
Crimson-breasted shrike	<i>Laniarius atrococcineus</i>	Widespread.
Black-backed puffback	<i>Dryoscopus cubla</i>	Widespread.
Brubru	<i>Nilaus afer</i>	[Waterberg], Etosha and [Hobatere].
Black-crowned tchagra	<i>Tchagra senegala</i>	Single at Waterberg.
White helmet-shrike	<i>Prionops plumatus</i>	Single at Waterberg. One flock in flight en route to Okaukuejo (Etosha).
White-tailed shrike	<i>Lanioturdus torquatus</i>	Von Bach dam, Kavita and Hobatere – small numbers.
Southern white-crowned shrike	<i>Eurocephalus anguitimens</i>	Widespread.
Common myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	One of the dubious pleasures of our time spent at Jo'burg airport was seeing this introduced species.
Wattled starling	<i>Creatophora cinerea</i>	Windhoek and Etosha.
Burchell's starling	<i>Lamprotornis australis</i>	Waterberg.
Meves's starling	<i>Lamprotornis mevesii</i>	Hobatere.
Cape glossy starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>	Widespread and common.

Pale-winged starling	<i>Onychognathus nabouroup</i>	Windhoek, Waterberg, Twyfelfontein and Erongo.
Marico sunbird	<i>Cinnyris mariquensis</i>	Waterberg, Etosha and Hobatere.
Dusky sunbird	<i>Cinnyris fusca</i>	Widespread.
Orange River white-eye	<i>Zosterops pallidus</i>	coastal sites, mostly hotel gardens.
Red-billed buffalo-weaver	<i>Bubalornis niger</i>	Etosha (small numbers). Common at Hobatere and small numbers at Erongo.
White-browed sparrow-weaver	<i>Plocepasser mahali</i>	Widespread away from coast.
Sociable weaver	<i>Philetairus socius</i>	Etosha
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	towns
Great sparrow	<i>Passer motitensis</i>	Etosha, Hobatere and Erongo.
Cape sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>	Jo'burg, coastal sites.
Southern grey-headed sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>	Waterberg, Etosha, Hobatere
Scaly-feathered finch	<i>Sporopipes squamifrons</i>	dry areas
Chestnut weaver	<i>Ploceus rubiginosus</i>	Kavita.
Southern masked-weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>	widespread.
Red-billed quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>	Etosha and Hobatere.
Green-winged pytilia	<i>Pytilia melba</i>	Waterberg – small numbers.
Blue waxbill	<i>Uraeginthus angolensis</i>	Waterberg, Etosha – small numbers daily.
Violet-eared waxbill	<i>Granatina granatina</i>	Waterberg and Etosha – small numbers almost daily.
Common waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm and coastal sites, mostly hotel gardens.
Black-faced waxbill	<i>Estrilda erythronotos</i>	Widespread.
African quail finch	<i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i>	Etosha – eight on one day (Andoni).
Red-headed finch	<i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>	Etosha – huge numbers.
Pin-tailed whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	Several, including one reasonable male, at Windhoek Sewage Farm.
Shaft-tailed whydah	<i>Vidua regia</i>	Etosha and Hobatere – small numbers at waterholes.
Black-throated canary	<i>Serinus atrogularis</i>	Windhoek Sewage Farm, Waterberg, Etosha and Erongo.
Yellow canary	<i>Serinus flaviventris</i>	Small numbers on the last day in Etosha.
White-throated canary	<i>Serinus albogularis</i>	Small numbers at Etosha and Twyfelfontein.
Golden-breasted bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>	Etosha – small numbers.
Cape bunting	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>	Twyfelfontein and Erongo.
Cinnamon-breasted bunting	<i>Emberiza tahapisi</i>	Three at Etosha.
Lark-like bunting	<i>Emberiza impetuani</i>	Small numbers at Twyfelfontein.

Systematic List Number 3 Butterflies

The taxonomy and nomenclature is taken from 'Pennington's butterflies of Southern Africa' by Pennington (1994).

24 th October	arrival and Windhoek
25 th October	to Waterberg and the plateau
26 th October	Waterberg and the plateau
27 th October	transfer to Etosha (Halali)
28 th October	Halali area (Etosha)
29 th October	Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)
30 th October	Halali to Okaukuejo
31 st October	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
1 st November	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
2 nd November	transfer to Kavita
3 rd November	Kavita to Hobatere
4 th November	transfer to Erongo
5 th November	transfer to Swakopmund
6 th November	Rooibank and Walvis Bay area
7 th November	transfer to Windhoek

African monarch	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	Widespread.
Wandering donkey	<i>Acraea neoboule</i>	Waterberg only this year.
acraea		
Green-veined charaxes	<i>Charaxes candiope</i>	Waterberg.
Spotted joker	<i>Byblia ilithyia</i>	Waterberg.
Yellow pansy	<i>Precis hierta cebrene</i>	Widespread.
Zebra white	<i>Pinacopteryx eriphia</i>	Waterberg, Etosha.
Broad-bordered grass yellow	<i>Eurema brigitta</i>	Waterberg.
Veined orange	<i>Colotis vesta mutans</i>	Etosha.
Queen purpletip	<i>Colotis regina</i>	Waterberg and Etosha.
Lemon tip	<i>Colotis subfasciatus</i>	Waterberg
Meadow white	<i>Pontia helice</i>	Waterberg
Brown-veined white	<i>Belenois aurota</i>	widespread
Large white	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Single at Erongo.
Common dotted border	<i>Mylothros agathina</i>	Etosha.
Citrus swallow tail	<i>Papilio demodocus</i>	Waterberg, Lake Ochikoto, and Kavita.

Systematic List Number 4 Amphibians & Reptiles

The taxonomy and nomenclature is taken 'Field Guide to snakes and other reptiles of Southern Africa' by Branch (1998).

24 th October	arrival and Windhoek
25 th October	to Waterberg and the plateau
26 th October	Waterberg and the plateau
27 th October	transfer to Etosha (Halali)
28 th October	Halali area (Etosha)
29 th October	Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)
30 th October	Halali to Okaukuejo
31 st October	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
1 st November	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
2 nd November	transfer to Kavita
3 rd November	Kavita to Hobatere
4 th November	transfer to Erongo
5 th November	transfer to Swakopmund
6 th November	Rooibank and Walvis Bay area
7 th November	transfer to Windhoek

Marsh terrapin	<i>Pelomedusa subrufa</i>	Etosha – waterholes.
Kalahari tent tortoise	<i>Psammobates oculiferus</i>	Single picked up whilst crossing the road near Waterberg. A very attractive animal and a trip highlight for some.
Leopard tortoise	<i>Geochelone pardalis</i>	Two between Namutoni and the Andoni Plains (Etosha).
Brown house snake	<i>Lamprophis fuliginosus</i>	One at Waterberg.
Western sand snake	<i>Psammophis trigrammus</i>	Single watched speeding about the desert at Etosha.
Wedge-snouted desert lizard	<i>Meroles cuneirostris</i>	The speedy lizard in the dunes at Rooibank.
[Fitzsimmons' burrowing skink]	<i>Typhlacontias brevipes</i>	Rooibank – lots of tracks in the dunes.
Striped skink	<i>Mabuya striata</i>	Waterberg, meteorite site, Etosha
Variable skink	<i>Mabuya varia</i>	Etosha, Hobatere
Ovambo tree skink	<i>Mabuya binotata</i>	Etosha, Hobatere
Black-lined plated lizard	<i>Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus</i>	Single at Halali (Etosha).
Namibian rock agama	<i>Agama planiceps</i>	Widespread.
Ground agama	<i>Agama aculeata</i>	Etosha (several).
Flap-neck chameleon	<i>Chamaeleo dilepis</i>	Three located at night at Waterberg.
African flat gecko	<i>Afroedura africana</i>	Several at Erongo.
Cape thick-toed gecko	<i>Pachydactylus capensis</i>	Waterberg – on restaurant. Etosha – plenty around the waterhole at Halali.
Bradfield's Namib day gecko	<i>Rhoptropus bradfieldi</i>	Hobatere – just one on drive out.
Western olive toad	<i>Bufo poweri</i>	Single juvenile at Erongo.
Marbled rubber frog	<i>Phrynomantis annectans</i>	Single in the swimming pool at Erongo.

Systematic List Number 5 Odonata

24 th October	arrival and Windhoek
25 th October	to Waterberg and the plateau
26 th October	Waterberg and the plateau
27 th October	transfer to Etosha (Halali)
28 th October	Halali area (Etosha)
29 th October	Halali to Andoni Plains (Etosha)
30 th October	Halali to Okaukuejo
31 st October	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
1 st November	Okandeka and Okaukuejo area
2 nd November	transfer to Kavita
3 rd November	Kavita to Hobatere
4 th November	transfer to Erongo
5 th November	transfer to Swakopmund
6 th November	Rooibank and Walvis Bay area
7 th November	transfer to Windhoek

Swamp bluet	<i>Africallagma ghaucum</i>	Single at Lake Ochikoto.
Common orange	<i>Ceriagrion glabrum</i>	Small numbers at Mokuti Lodge and Namutoni (Etosha).
Massai sprite	<i>Pseudagrion massaicum</i>	Small numbers flying at von Bach dam this year. Single at Mokuti Lodge (Etosha).
Common bluetail	<i>Ischnura senegalensis</i>	Single at Namutoni (Etosha).
Common hooktail	<i>Paragomphus genei</i>	Single at von Bach dam.
Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>	Male and egg-laying female at von Bach dam also at Namutoni (Etosha).
Banded groundling	<i>Brachythemis leucosticta</i>	Single photographed by Alf and John at von Bach dam.
Phantom flutterer	<i>Rhyothemis semihyalina</i>	Several at von Bach, Lake Ochikoto and Etosha.
Blue basker	<i>Urothemis edwardsii</i>	Von Bach dam and Etosha.
Slender skimmer	<i>Orthetrum trinacria</i>	Small numbers at von Bach dam and Mokuti Lodge and Namutoni (Etosha).
Epaulette skimmer	<i>Orthetrum chrysostigma</i>	Waterberg, Etosha.
Globe skimmer	<i>Pantala flavescens</i>	Widespread.
Black percher	<i>Diplacodes lefebvrii</i>	Von Bach Dam and Etosha.
Rock dropwing	<i>Trithemis kirbyii</i>	Widespread.
Violet dropwing	<i>Trithemis annulata</i>	Widespread.
Red-veined dropwing	<i>Trithemis arteriosa</i>	Several at Lake Ochikoto.
Broad scarlet	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>	Widespread.
Ringed cascader	<i>Zygonyx torridus</i>	Several at von Bach dam.