



# ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

## South Africa

**Kruger Park Bird & Wildlife Challenge 2019 -  
Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve &  
Marievale Bird Sanctuary Day Trip**  
*16<sup>th</sup> February 2019*



Mocking Cliff Chat by Colin Valentine.



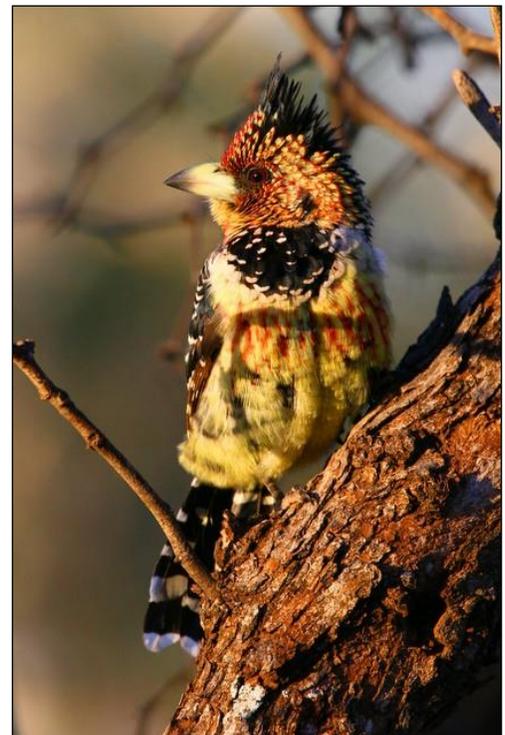
**Red-throated Wryneck by Clayton Burne**

The Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve offers great birding in superb “highveld” grassland and acacia-studded hillsides. Situated just south of Johannesburg, this site provides a great introduction to the birds of Southern Africa, with a number of unique and special species represented, including some endemics. Some of the regional specials that we will look for are Sentinel and Cape Rock Thrushes, Grey-winged and Red-winged Francolins, stunning Black-faced and Violet-eared Waxbills and Eastern Long-billed and Eastern Clapper Larks. The latter two endemic larks are much easier to find in spring and summer when their distinctive calls can be heard. The highly sought-after Red-throated Wryneck is often seen here and we have an excellent chance of encountering this species. Ashy Tit, Chestnut-vented Warbler, Fiscal Flycatcher, Chinspot Batis and noisy Crested and Black-collared Barbets are all fairly easily seen in the reserve. This is also the habitat of the gorgeous Crimson-breasted Shrike, Marico Flycatcher, Kalahari Scrub Robin, Black-chested Prinia, Cape Grassbird, Wailing Cisticola, Mountain Wheatear and an array of showy widowbirds and bishops. The vicinity of the

reserve’s reception area is a good place to find Familiar Chat, African Red-eyed Bulbul, striking Mocking Cliff Chat and Cape and Cinnamon-breasted Buntings. If we are lucky we may find the scarce Orange River Francolin early in the morning and even the uncommon and nomadic Pink-billed Lark as well as African Rock Pipit have been recorded in the reserve. Several species of mammal may also be seen, including Blesbok, Burchell’s Zebra, Black Wildebeest and Mountain Reedbuck.

After a bird-filled morning at Suikerbosrand we will make our way north and then east to Marievale. This wetland is productive all year-round as the bird sanctuary holds permanent water. It supports a wide variety of waterfowl and wetland associated species and we stand a good chance of finding many of these in addition to some fine examples of grassland associated species. The impressive Goliath Heron, African Darter, gorgeous Great-crested Grebe, Spur-winged Goose, Fulvous Whistling Duck, the uncommon White-backed Duck, Hottentot Teal, Cape Shoveler, Southern Pochard and African Snipe are possible waterbird highlights. Furthermore the sanctuary is one of the best places to see the elusive African Rail.

The grasslands and reedbeds are a buzz in the Austral summer and we could encounter Black-winged Kite, African Marsh Harrier, Marsh Owl, the abundant Barn Swallow, a variety of cisticolas, Little Rush, Lesser Swamp, African Reed, Sedge and Great Reed Warblers, African Pipit, the spectacular Long-tailed Widowbird, the stunning Quailfinch and Orange-breasted



**Crested Barbet by Leon Fouche**

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Waxbill. If we are extremely fortunate, the rare Grass Owl may put in an appearance and Barn Owl is also a possibility at its daytime roost. Mammal highlights include the handsome Blesbok and Yellow Mongoose and the lucky birder may even see the rarely-encountered Cape Clawless Otter or Serval.

### **Financial Arrangements:**

The prices for the Suikerbosrand and Marievale day trip are as follows:

- 1 participant = **ZAR 6 500** per person
- 2 participants = **ZAR 4 100** per person
- 3 participants = **ZAR 3 525** per person
- 4 participants = **ZAR 3 525** per person
- 5 participants = **ZAR 3 300** per person
- 6 participants = **ZAR 3 150** per person

The trip price **includes:**

- Lunch with tea/coffee or a refreshment on the day;
- Ground transportation in a Toyota Corolla or similar (1 to 3 participants), VW Kombi T5 or similar (4 to 6 participants) and related fuel costs;
- Entrance fees for birding sites as required by the itinerary;
- Guiding services & costs of a locally based, Rockjumper leader.

The trip price **excludes:**

- Visa fees;
- **ANY** international or domestic flights (and associated taxes);
- Bottled drinking water, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages;
- ANY Gratuities and
- Gift shop purchases, telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

a) The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold (ZAR), and the actual cost in any other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing (usually 4 months before the tour.) The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates, which are also quoted in the respective fixed currency.

c) These costs are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.

d) Lastly, we may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.

### **Tipping:**

As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does not include your Rockjumper leader. If, therefore, you feel that he has given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip him.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:**

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This tour **does not** include ANY airfares. The tour will officially commence at **06:00am** at your post Kruger Challenge tour accommodation in Johannesburg. You will be met by your Rockjumper leader and will then continue onto the first birding site of the day. Further meeting details in this regard will be forwarded to you in due course. The day trip will conclude by **18:00pm**.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

**FLIGHTS:**

O.R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg (IATA: JNB) is the main port of entry for international flights into and out of South Africa and is well serviced by all of the world's major airlines. **Please DO NOT book any flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

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