



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

South Africa

Kruger Park Bird & Wildlife Challenge 2019 -

Western Cape Extension

15th to 21st February 2019 (7 days)



Cape Rockjumper (male) by Clayton Burne

Those who decide to do our Cape Extension will be treated to a feast of further endemics and the remarkable beauty of the south-western Cape. The Mother City, Cape Town, widely considered one of the world's most beautiful cities, will be our base for the first three nights of the extension. From here we will range out to explore the varied ecosystems conveniently accessible from our comfortable accommodations. We will then make our way up the west coast where we will encounter significant numbers and diversity of waterbirds and migrant shorebirds, before venturing east to explore the dry country riches of the Tanqua Karoo to round off this unbeatable South African adventure!

THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...

THE ITINERARY

Day 1	Drive from Kruger National Park to Johannesburg, fly to Cape Town & overnight
Day 2	Pelagic Seabird outing & Cape Point
Day 3	Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden & Strandfontein Sewage Works
Day 4	Rooi-Els & Betty's Bay
Day 5	Cape Town to Ceres via the West Coast National Park
Day 6	Ceres and the Tanqua Karoo
Day 7	Ceres to Cape Town (and departing flights)

TOUR ROUTE MAP...



THE TOUR IN DETAIL...

Day 1: Kruger National Park to Johannesburg & flight to Cape Town. Following our final night at Mopani in the Kruger National Park, we drive to Johannesburg's OR Tambo International Airport to catch a flight to Cape Town where we will overnight.



Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross by Adam Riley

Day 2: Pelagic Seabird outing & Cape Point.

We will make an early start to reach Simon's Town harbour for our departure on today's pelagic outing. The cold upwelling of the Benguela current off Cape Town supports a wealth of pelagic seabirds, with vast concentrations of albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters gathering in the deeper water at the edge of the continental shelf. Birding is excellent year-round and we hope to see Shy, Black-browed and both Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, White-chinned Petrel, Sooty, Great, Manx and Cory's Shearwaters, Wilson's and European Storm Petrels, Sabine's Gull, Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers and Cape

Gannet. If we manage to locate one of the commercial fishing trawlers the birding can be truly spectacular, with a cloud of seabirds following in the wake of the vessel to feed on the fish offal. Once the excitement has subsided, we will carefully search through the thousands of birds present for rarities such as Wandering Albatross and Spectacled Petrel. Cetaceans are almost always encountered and we have a good chance of seeing Bryde's Whale and Dusky Dolphin. It goes without saying that a day off the Cape is likely to be a highlight of any trip to South Africa!

After returning to Simon's Town from the pelagic trip, we travel south to Cape Point, within the greater Table Mountain National Park. *En route* we will keep a lookout for the endemic African Oystercatcher along the rocky shoreline of False Bay and scan the offshore islets for breeding populations of Crowned, Bank and Cape Cormorants. The Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve showcases the most southwestern tip of the continent and is very popular amongst birders and more general tourists alike. Here we should again find the charismatic Cape Sugarbird and the stunning Orange-breasted Sunbird - the former belonging to a family endemic to southern Africa - and perhaps the impressive Black Harrier, Grey-winged Francolin and Cape Siskin. We will explore the network of roads to less visited parts of the reserve, exploring secluded coves and searching for the elusive Mountain Zebra,



Cape Sugarbird by Gareth Robbins



beautiful sub-species of Blesbok – the Bontebok, the huge and majestic Common Eland and Chacma Baboon.

Please note: It is not unusual for the pelagic tour to be cancelled as a result of bad weather. Furthermore, the weather and ocean conditions off the Cape are extremely unpredictable, so our daily schedule will thus remain flexible to optimise our birding both on land and at sea.

Day 3: Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden & Strandfontein Sewage Works.

We continue our exploration of the picturesque Cape Peninsula at one of the local birding hotspots. Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden lies on the slopes of Table Mountain and is home to a plethora of endemics restricted to the Macchia-like fynbos vegetation of the southern tip of Africa: Cape Spurfowl scurry across the lawns, the magnificent protea gardens are home to spectacular Cape Sugarbird and Orange-breasted Sunbird, both of which are South African endemics, while Cape Bulbul, Olive Thrush, the attractive Cape Grassbird, Karoo Prinia, delightful Bokmakierie, Southern Boubou and Southern Double-collared Sunbird may be found in areas of denser cover. We will watch out for African Goshawk and Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk, which occasionally display above the indigenous forest that cloaks the upper slopes of the gardens. These forests are also home to African Olive Pigeon, Lemon Dove, Cape Batis, Sombre Greenbul and Forest Canary.



Orange-breasted Sunbird by Adam Riley

We will spend time in the afternoon at the productive Strandfontein Sewage Works. The network of settling ponds here usually supports large numbers of waterbirds of many different varieties and we are likely to encounter good numbers of Cape Shoveler, Cape Teal, Southern Pochard and Red-



Greater Crested Tern by Adam Riley

knobbed Coot, as well as Greater and Lesser Flamingos, Common Moorhen, Pied Avocet, Black-winged Stilt, Black-necked and Great Crested Grebes, Hartlaub's and Kelp Gulls, Greater Crested and Whiskered Terns, Grey and Black-headed Herons, Yellow-billed Duck and Red-billed Teal. If we are fortunate and depending upon the water levels of the pans, we may also find small numbers of Maccoa Duck, Hottentot Teal and South African Shelduck. The surrounding reedbeds harbour African Reed, Lesser Swamp and Little Rush Warblers as well as Levillant's Cisticola.





African Oystercatcher by Markus Lilje

Day 4: Rooi-Els and Betty's Bay. A diverse array of birding habitats is present around Cape Town and today we will visit a variety of sites, ranging from wetlands to fynbos and marine shoreline. Making our way early to the rugged Hottentots-Holland Mountains, we will search at Rooi-Els for one of South Africa's finest endemics: the handsome Cape Rockjumper. Though strikingly plumaged and conspicuous by their vocalisations, these charismatic birds possess an incredible ability to disappear amongst the boulders and we may need to be patient if we wish to enjoy sightings of these elusive creatures. The dense mountain fynbos is the favoured habitat of Orange-breasted Sunbird, Cape Siskin and the beautiful, endemic Victorin's Warbler, while other species including Verreaux's Eagle, Grey-backed Cisticola and Ground

Woodpecker are also found in the area. Chacma Baboon is fairly common here, but we will have to scan the rocky ridges carefully for the agile Klipspringer.

Whilst in Betty's Bay we will also visit the famous African Penguin colony at Stony Point. Here we will enjoy the spectacle of hundreds of penguins waddling about on the beach and rocks at extremely close range, which makes for superb photographic opportunities. We will also keep a lookout for the endemic African Oystercatcher along the adjacent rocky shoreline, and scan through the masses of nesting cormorants for all four species of South African coastal cormorant: Crowned, Bank, Cape and White-breasted.

After enjoying this spectacle, we will pay a visit to the nearby Harold Porter National Botanical Garden. A smaller version of Kirstenbosch, these beautifully appointed gardens support a wealth of fynbos specialties like Orange-breasted Sunbird, Cape Sugarbird and Cape Siskin and represent a particularly good site to see the skulking, endemic Victorin's Warbler. We are also likely to encounter a range of other noteworthy and eye-catching species such as Cape and Brimstone Canaries, Karoo Prinia, Sweet Waxbill, Cape Batis, Bar-throated Apalis, Southern Double-collared Sunbird, Cape Robin-Chat, African Dusky and Fiscal Flycatchers, Olive Thrush and Sombre Greenbul.

In the late afternoon we will make our way back to our now familiar and very comfortable accommodation on the Cape Peninsula.

Day 5: Cape Town to Ceres via the West Coast National Park. Our first site of interest today is the West Coast National Park. Large numbers of waders spend the northern winter here and we will check the exposed shoreline of Langebaan Lagoon for Red



Victorin's Warbler by Hugh Chittenden





Black Harrier by Wayne Jones

Black Harrier, surely one of the world's most attractive raptors! In the late afternoon we will drive through to the farming village of Ceres, gateway to the Tanqua Karoo.

Day 6: Ceres and the Tanqua Karoo. Just a short drive from the village of Ceres is the semi-arid, central plateau of South Africa known as the Karoo; a land of endless vistas and spectacular sunsets, renowned for its endemic larks, chats and canaries.

We leave the famous fruit-growing valley of Ceres before reaching our first stop at Karoopoort, a narrow canyon that forms the gateway to the Succulent Karoo. Birds inhabiting the arid, rocky slopes and acacia-filled watercourses of this area include White-backed Mousebird, Acacia Pied Barbet, Mountain Wheatear, Layard's and Chestnut-vented Warblers, the dainty Fairy Flycatcher and Pirit Batis, whilst the adjacent reedbeds are home to the endemic Namaqua Warbler. One of the area's most charismatic birds is the highly localised Cinnamon-breasted Warbler. Although fairly vocal, this species is highly elusive and seeing it in its habitat of jumbled boulders and rocky scree will require a combination of patience and perseverance.

Continuing northwards onto the open flats of the Karoo, we will carefully scan the roadsides for Karoo and Spike-heeled Larks, Tractrac, Sickle-winged and Karoo Chats, the elusive Karoo Eremomela, Rufous-eared Warbler and Yellow and White-throated Canaries. Pale Chanting Goshawk and Rock Kestrel perch conspicuously on any vantage points and, if we are lucky, we may find Booted Eagle or Lanner Falcon. We will also stop to listen for the distinctive flight calls of Namaqua Sandgrouse and the strange, croaking of the Karoo Korhaan, which may help us to locate these cryptically coloured birds. If very fortunate we may even see the nomadic Ludwig's Bustard, striding across the desolate plains or come across a group of highly nomadic Burchell's Coursers on the barren gravel flats.



Southern Black Korhaan by Gareth Robbins





Protea Canary by Clayton Burne

Day 7: Ceres to Cape Town and depart.

This morning we have the opportunity to target one final endemic species, the range-restricted Protea Canary. This uncommon and local bird is fairly regularly seen on the high protea-clad mountain slopes above Ceres and we will spend time at key positions listening for its distinctive call. The moist gullies here also hold a few other endemics such as the skulking Victorin's Warbler, Cape Grassbird, Cape Sugarbird and Bokmakierie. After our morning's birding we will depart from Ceres for Cape Town International Airport, where the tour will conclude.

GROUP SIZE:

This tour is limited to 6 participants.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The prices for the Western Cape Extension are as follows:

- 1 participant = **ZAR 62 000** per person
- 2 participants = **ZAR 36 500** per person
- 3 participants = **ZAR 29 500** per person
- 4 participants = **ZAR 27 000** per person
- 5 participants = **ZAR 25 250** per person
- 6 participants = **ZAR 25 250** per person

Single Supplement: ZAR 1 250

NOTE ON DOMESTIC FLIGHT: The tour price does NOT include the cost of the one-way domestic flight from OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg to Cape Town International Airport. We are however able to make these flight reservations on your behalf but please budget approximately ZAR 1,500 per person for this flight (approx. USD 115 per person).

This includes:

- All meals from lunch on day 1 to breakfast on day 7;
- All lodgings;
- Ground transportation;
- Reserve entrance fees;
- Extra activities as mentioned in the itinerary; and
- All guiding services (including tips for local guides and services).

The tour fee does not include:

- Visa fees;
- **ANY flights** (see above);



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- Any drinks;
 - Special gratuities; and
 - Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement:

The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBT cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

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.

Special Notes:

- Much of our time is spent in vehicles, as we do have to cover long distances in order to get to the best areas for birds and animals. The more luggage you pack the less room there is in the vehicle, so it is important for the comfort of yourself and your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- Exiting the vehicle is prohibited in all areas and parks that contain dangerous animals other than at designated sites (These parks include Kruger, St. Lucia & Isimangaliso)
- Crime is problematic in certain areas of South Africa. Exercise caution as you would for any big city where crime exists. Do not unnecessarily flaunt cash and valuables and do not leave valuables exposed in the vehicle.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS:

This tour **does not** include ANY airfares. For those guests participating in the Kruger Challenge, the tour will depart from Mopani, Kruger National Park, South Africa, after breakfast on day 1, and continue to O.R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, before participants fly to Cape Town International Airport and overnight in Cape Town. For those guests not participating in the Kruger Challenge, the tour will start at dinner on the evening of day 1 at Lakeside Lodge in Cape Town. The tour will conclude by **12:00 noon** on day 7 at Cape Town International Airport.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your **Tour Confirmation** package 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. Cape Town International Airport (IATA: CPT) is equally well serviced by many airlines. We have the capacity to advise you on the best route according to your preferences, but your local travel agent will best be able to book these flights for you. We can, however, book the domestic flight from Johannesburg to Cape Town. If you would like further assistance kindly contact the Rockjumper office, and we will happily help you plan your route. **However, please DO NOT book your international flights until you have consulted the Rockjumper office for confirmation on the status of the tour.**

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