

South Africa

Cape Town to Kruger



**Birding
Africa**

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Malachite Sunbird © Tertius A. Gous www.birdingafrica.com



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6 participants only

- ✓ South Africa's top birding areas
- ✓ African Penguin & Blue Crane
- ✓ Lion & Elephant
- ✓ Cape Town Pelagics with 1000s of seabirds
- ✓ over 350 birds and 40 mammals
- ✓ excellent lodges and meals
- ✓ tips, airport transfers and drinks included

Tour leader: Vince Ward

Vince is a life-long birder, from Cape Town (but also lived and birded in California). He has worked as a seabird scientist and in nature conservation and now leads tours across South Africa. His Southern African list is fast approaching 850 species and he's passionate about sharing his birding knowledge with others.



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2021: 2 - 16 Feb 21

2021: 2 - 16 Oct 21, 30 Oct - 13 Nov 21

2022: 31 Jan - 14 Feb 22

Price £3950 (6 places only)
Single room: £380

Book online

Deposit (£120) by [credit card](#)

Email info@birdingafrica.com



Southern Ground Hornbill
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Tour focus

We have designed this tour to allow the best chances to see many of South Africa's sought-after bird species and regional specials plus a wide variety of African mammals and reptiles.

We have multiple opportunities to find some of the tricky bird species, giving us the best chances of success. Instead of rushing around for the biggest list, we allow you to focus on the birds that can only or best seen here.

Having said that, we will be in some of Africa's best birding areas and when birding we will try see all the available species (within reason) and will see a huge diversity.

Although the pace will generally be leisurely, we will have some early starts and lots of time in the field.

Our itinerary also offers good chances to see a great diversity of

South Africa's mammals and reptiles. While birding, we'll look out for big cats such as lion and cheetah, giants such as African elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus and giraffe, or small social mammals such as banded mongoose. We may also spot geckos and chameleons, butterflies and dung beetles.

A species checklist will be handed out to you as part of your tour booklet

and is available beforehand upon request. Let us know if you have target species or want to know more about the species we might encounter.

Itinerary summary

This tour offers some of Africa's most comfortable and productive birding in beautiful natural surroundings.

With its famously high endemic count and good infrastructure, South Africa allows for an easy introduction to Africa's birds, tricky specials and localized endemics.

Add a dash of fine weather, good food, great wine from the Cape winelands and impressive African mammals, and you're in for a real treat.

Our itinerary has been carefully and expertly designed to maximize the number of bird species and endemics. Many of South Africa's key habitats and

landscapes are included, and some of Africa's best places to watch big game, such as **African elephant, lion, leopard** and the more specialized **cheetah** and **wild dog**.

We start with exploring the Western Cape, which holds the world-famous and flower-rich fynbos biome, seabird-rich oceans with its plethora of **Albatrosses, Shearwaters** and **Petrels**, and expansive Karoo desert shrublands. Each area offers many unusual localized birds:

Cape Rockjumper, Cape Sugarbird, Blue Crane, a host of **larks** and several striking **bustards**.

We then visit the northern Drakensberg escarpment, which is blessed with a more tropical climate, higher rainfall and tall mountains. We explore the species-rich Afromontane forests, highland grasslands, and the mammal-rich savannas of the Kruger lowveld where impressive species tallies abound. Here you will find many of Africa's larger bird species: **Saddle-billed Stork, Hooded, White-backed, Lappet-faced** and **White-headed Vulture, Bateleur, Kori Bustard** and **Southern Ground Hornbill**.



Sweet Waxbill © Callan Cohen
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Cape Rockjumper © Mike Buckham



Blue Crane © Callan Cohen www.birdingafrica.com

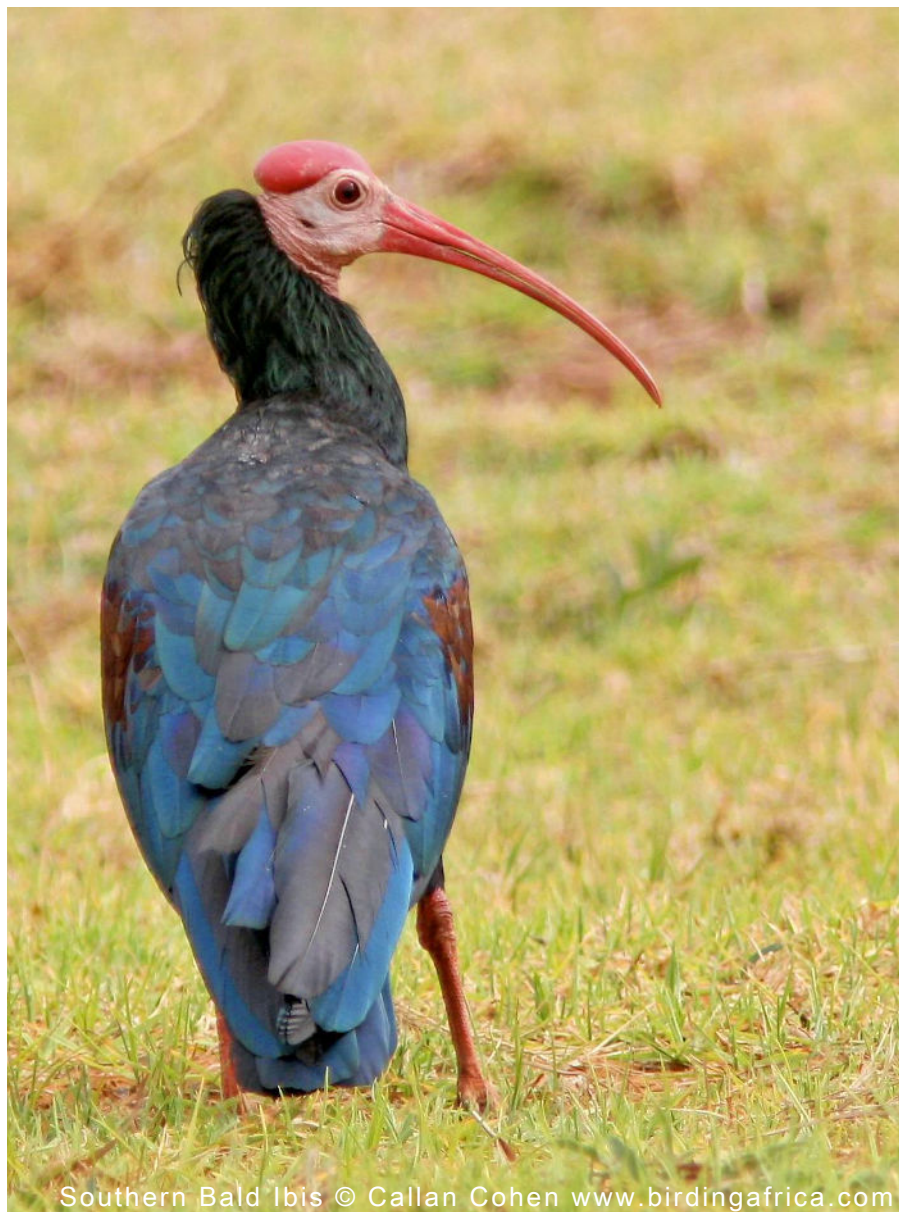
Detailed Itinerary

Cape coastal fynbos

The Birding Africa South Africa tour kicks off in the fairest Cape. We launch straight into the diverse fynbos biome to find two of the country's most iconic endemics on our first day: **Cape Rockjumper** and **Cape Sugarbird**. The Cape Fold Mountains and the Atlantic ocean provide a spectacular backdrop. While soaking up the impressive landscape, we look for **Cape Siskins**, striking little **Orange-breasted Sunbirds**, iridescent **Malachite Sunbirds**, **Cape Bulbuls**, skulking **Victorin's Warblers** and confiding **Cape Spurfowl**. Along the coast we enjoy close up views of **African Penguin** and **Cape, Bank and Crowned Cormorants**. We also have a day out at sea in some of the most productive seabird areas in the world. Six species of albatross can be seen here. Our guide will keep a sharp eye out for **Southern Right Whales** and **Dusky Dolphins**.

From Cape Town we head east to the Overberg area and the De Hoop area. Once we reach the plains beyond the Cape Fold Mountains, we should start seeing our first **Blue Cranes**, South Africa's deserving National Bird, our first species of bustard and a localised lark, **Agulhas Long-billed Lark**. Thickets are home to the skulking **Southern Tchagra** and milkwoods are the domain of notoriously difficult **Knysna Woodpecker**.

We return to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Rooiels. A short stroll will take us to the stony mountain slopes, domain of the endemic **Cape Rockjumper** and **Victorin's Scrub Warbler**; as well as the delightful **Orange-breasted Sunbird**. Not far away, lies the **African Penguin** colony at Stoney Point, the only accessible place in South Africa where all four marine cormorants occur for comparison.



Southern Bald Ibis © Callan Cohen www.birdingafrica.com

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Jackal Buzzard © Tertius A. Gous www.birdingafrica.com

Dullstroom

These high altitude grasslands are a prime spot for **Gurney's Sugarbird** and grassland endemics include **Buff-streaked Chat** and **Yellow-breasted Pipit**, which are more easily seen here than elsewhere in South Africa.

Southern Bald Ibis, **Denham's Bustard** and **Wattled Crane** will also be high on our list.

Afromontane Forest

One of South Africa's better escarpment forest and grassland sites is Mount Sheba, which offers easy access to some excellent Afromontane forest birding. Here we will listen for mixed foraging parties: **Yellow-throated Woodland-Warbler**, **Terrestrial Brownbul**, **Cape Batis**, **Olive Woodpecker**, **White-starred Robin**, **Chorister Robin-chat**, **Green-backed Cameroptera**, **Bar-throated Apalis**, **Olive Bush-Shrike**, and **Forest Canary**. On the leafy forest floor we will look for **Orange Ground Thrush** and **Lemon Dove**. **Bush Blackcap** sometimes appears in the forest fringes.

Kruger National Park

We reach Kruger after a magnificent drive through the scenic Blyde River Canyon and take a short detour to look for the smart little **Taita Falcon**. Some big game viewing in Kruger National Park draws us next: elephant, white rhinoceros, zebra, giraffe, herds of antelope and if we are lucky some of the large cats: lion and leopard. The area also adds a wide range of savanna birds to our list: **Magpie Shrike**, vultures and eagles, hornbills and owls, perhaps **Senegal Lapwing**, and **Grey-headed Bushshrike**. Altogether 500 species have been recorded in this large reserve.

After our final stint of birding, we return to Johannesburg's OR Tambo airport in time for your flight back home.



Itinerary

Day	Birding Africa Itinerary	Night
1	Arrive Cape Town and airport transfer to our bed & breakfast.	Cape Town
2	Cape Peninsula birding tour, with Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens & Strandfontein.	Cape Town
3	Pelagic trip with Cape Town Pelagics (weather permitting). Visit to African Penguin Colony.	Cape Town
4	Drive to West Coast National Park via Darling Hills. In the West Coast Park (Southern Black Korhaan and Black Harrier).	Cape Town
5	Drive to De Hoop Reserve via the Overberg (Blue Cranes) and Agulhas Plains (Agulhas Long-billed Lark and Denham's Bustard).	De Hoop Nature Reserve
6	Full day birding in the scenically beautiful De Hoop Nature Reserve. Look for Southern Right Whales from Koppie Alleen	De Hoop Nature Reserve
7	Drive back to Cape Town via Betty's Bay and Rooiels. The nearby coast and mountains are home to several Cape endemics including Cape Rockjumper.	Cape Town
8	Mid-morning flight to Johannesburg. Drive to Dullstroom (2-3 hrs) and enjoy some high lying grassland birding in a beautiful rural area. Look for Wattled and Blue Cranes.	Dullstroom
9	After breakfast drive to the scenic northern Drakensberg, driving slowly and birding along the way. Overnight at Mount Sheba Private Reserve situated on the escarpment.	Mount Sheba
10	Full day Afromontane forest birding in the reserve and surrounds. Overnight in Mount Sheba Private Reserve.	Mount Sheba
11	Drive to Kruger Park via the spectacular Blyde River Canyon route. Overnight at a restcamp in central Kruger.	Central Kruger
12	Full day savanna and riverine woodland birding and mammal viewing in Central Kruger, known for its Big Cats and large raptors. Night drive.	Central Kruger
13	Full day birding and wildlife viewing in Kruger which offers Big Five mammals and exceptional birding in diverse habitats.	Southern Kruger
14	Full day birding in the Southern region of the Kruger Park. Mixed bushveld birding in acacia and broadleafed woodland in southern Kruger.	Southern Kruger
15	After breakfast and some last birding, drive to Johannesburg for your evening flight home.	

Birding Africa reserves the right to modify the itinerary, accommodation, quotation and guides, as specified in our Terms and Conditions. Please discuss your flight details with Birding Africa before booking your flights.

How to plan your flight

This tour starts in Cape Town in the morning and ends at Johannesburg International Airport in the evening. Before booking your flight, please discuss your flight details with us. Airport transfers are included in the tour.





Practical details

Group size and travel 6 participants only. We travel in an air-conditioned minibus.

Walking We walk quite slowly and stop often. At Kruger National Park, wild animals preclude excursions on foot. Comfortable walking shoes are adequate for this tour.

Accommodation We've hand-picked comfortable (and sometimes luxurious) accommodation that keeps us as close as possible to the best birding areas. All rooms have private facilities and hot showers. The food on tour is tasty: generally Western-style cuisine, with a hint of African influence. Please advise if you are vegetarian so that we can cater for you.

Timing and climate The tour runs at the end of the breeding season in the Cape and the return of summer migrants. The Cape may be warm. Kruger may be hot but cooling off in the evening.

Booklet and checklist

Birding Africa provides:

1. **this tour leaflet** with detailed itinerary
2. **the tour information pack**, emailed to you.
3. **the tour booklet with checklists**, on the tour.

Included

- ✓ Birding Africa tour leader
- ✓ accommodation and all meals
- ✓ entry fees and activities as per itinerary
- ✓ Kruger Park night drive
- ✓ Cape Town Pelagics trip, weather permitting
- ✓ flight from Cape Town to Johannesburg
- ✓ airport transfers
- ✓ soft drinks
- ✓ tips

How to book

1. Complete our [online form](#).
2. Secure your [booking deposit](#) by credit card on our 3D-secure site
3. Settle the balance by bank transfer 150 days before the tour.
We will email you a reminder and the banking details.