



SOUTH AFRICA: THE SOUTHWESTERN CAPE & KRUGER

SEPTEMBER 19–OCTOBER 4, 2026

WAKKERSTROOM EXTENSION

OCTOBER 3–7, 2026

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South Africa is so diverse it has been called “a world in one country.” From the rugged coastline of the Cape through to the subtropical woodlands of the Greater Kruger Conservancy and the temperate grasslands of the interior, the terrain and wildlife are remarkably varied, making it a paradise for the visiting naturalist. There is so much to see here that one trip cannot possibly cover it all, so instead we focus on three regions, each representing a different aspect of the very best of South Africa.

Our first week will be spent in the spectacular southwestern Cape, with its near-perfect Mediterranean climate and world-renowned flora. Endemism is the key word here, and because of its complex geography and long isolation, this region is home to a truly amazing number of birds, plants and animals that are found nowhere else. Unique environments that we visit include the twisted and folded mountains that plunge to the sea, protected patches of native prairie and fynbos scrub (literally “fine bush”), and the interior semi-deserts of the Karoo.



Cape Sugarbird © Geoff Lockwood

In them we will seek a host of special birds, ranging from African Penguin, Cape Sugarbirds, sunbirds, cormorants and bustards through a plethora of larks, flycatchers and warblers to sought-after oddities like the elusive Cape Rockjumper. A possible bonus is a pelagic trip offshore into the rich Benguela Current, its waters literally teeming with albatrosses, petrels and other oceanic birds. This is totally dependent on conditions at sea, and will only be

confirmed the day before, however, a second boat trip into the shallow waters of Walker Bay at Hermanus offers a chance to see Southern Right Whales which annually mate and calve in the bay.

Our visit is timed for the southern spring, as a new breeding season begins and the birds are at their most active. If we are lucky, and the winter rains have been good, this is also the best time of year to catch the famed Cape flora in full bloom. Many consider this to be the most spectacular wildflower display in the world.

From the Cape we will fly to the opposite side of the country, to the Greater Kruger Conservancy. This huge area has long been famous as one of the great game parks of the world and offers a very exciting and complete safari experience. It is home to all of “The Big Five,” including one of the largest populations of elephants in the world, plus a long list of other mammals including African Wild Dog, Cheetah and Greater Kudu. Birds are abundant and include many classic African species such as Ostrich, vultures, Martial and other eagles, Gray Go-away-bird, Green Wood-Hoopoe, hornbills, and Lilac-breasted Roller, plus a wide variety of smaller ones. Among the many habitats that we will explore are open broadleaf woodland and grassy savanna, tall riverine forest, and thick bush of varying types. All of them have their specialties and by the end of our stay here we will have seen an incredible variety of wildlife. Based at the exclusive and well-appointed Inyati Game Lodge, away from the crowds, our game drives are sure to be action-packed and incredibly productive!



The final swing of our South Africa tour is an optional extension to the temperate grasslands of the Highveld of the interior plateau, to the tiny community of Wakkerstroom. Like our Great Plains, much of this region has been converted to agriculture and the native grasslands are

greatly-diminished but the area is home to a surprising number endemic bird species, many of whom are threatened. Here we will seek the unique Southern Bald Ibis, elegant Blue Crane, Blue and Denham's bustards, Ground Woodpecker and several very local, range-restricted and endangered larks, chats and pipits. This is also our best chance for such African classics as Gray Crowned-Crane, Secretary-bird and Malachite Kingfisher. Marshes and ponds attract a wide variety of waterfowl and other waterbirds at this season, while patches of native bush and rocky ridges add to the region's avian diversity.

An added bonus to a visit to South Africa is the great infrastructure for tourism. This agricultural and industrial giant is the only truly modern country on the continent, and the accommodations, food and other facilities are excellent, while health problems are almost non-existent. Expert local leadership, an extensive system of parks and reserves, and a wealth of printed materials on the birds and other aspects of natural history add to the pleasure of visiting this very unique part of the continent. This tour promises some of the very best of South Africa, in a productive, yet reasonably paced, itinerary.



Male Leopard © Geoff Lockwood

September 19-20, Days 1-2: Travel to Cape Town. Participants have the option of arriving in Cape Town at any time on September 20 and will be met and provided with a transfer to our hotel. Cape Town is an especially attractive city and our lovely historic hotel is centrally located in a beautiful wooded suburb. Separated from the rest of the continent by a ring of mountains, the southwestern Cape Province is a world apart. Characterized by a pleasant Mediterranean climate (cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers), this region is scenically beautiful, home to many unique and distinctive birds, and has one of the most diverse floras in the world (spectacular when in bloom, as many plants should be at this season).

Direct overnight flights to Johannesburg from Washington Dulles, New York Kennedy and Atlanta depart on September 19 and will enable participants to connect to a September 20 flight to Cape Town. For those wishing to avoid connecting through Johannesburg, non-stop overnight flights to Cape Town are available from Amsterdam, London and Frankfurt. Please contact Victor Emanuel Travel for the latest schedules and information. All flights and times are subject to change.

If you wish to rest up before the tour or spend time visiting the city you should consider arriving prior to the tour and spending the night of September 19 in Cape Town. The VENT office will be happy to assist with any additional lodging arrangements. The peaceful grounds of our beautiful hotel here harbor many typical Cape birds.

NIGHT (September 20): Alphen Boutique Hotel, Constantia, Cape Town



Cape Grassbird © Geoff Lockwood

September 21, Day 3: Kirstenbosch & Cape Point. Our exploration of the Cape Peninsula and its unique environments begins in earnest today, with our first stop at the world-renowned Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. There couldn't be a more pleasant introduction to the land birds of the region, with birds such as Cape Francolin, Cape Batis, Southern Boubou, Cape Bulbul, Sombre Greenbul, Cape White-eye, Fiscal Flycatcher, Cape Robin-Chat, Olive Thrush, Cape Wagtail, and Cape Canary, among others. By now you should be getting the idea that, from the number of species named "Cape," there are many specialties in possible! We should also find the

gardens in full bloom, likely attracting colorful sunbirds like the Orange-breasted, Malachite and Southern Double-collared, and, if we are lucky, we will find our first Cape Sugarbirds feeding amidst the spectacular Protea collection.

Then we will continue on to the Cape of Good Hope unit of Table Mountain National Park for the afternoon. In this vast tract of windswept fynbos and grassland, birds are scarce, but species like the Jackal Buzzard, Rock Kestrel, White-necked Raven, Cape Grassbird, Gray-backed (Red-headed) Cisticola, Karoo Prinia, Red-winged Starling, Cape Sugarbird, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Yellow Bishop, Cape Bunting and Cape Siskin (an irregular wanderer) may be found. Of greater interest is the spectacular rocky coastline and cliffs, home to Cape Gannet, Cape and Crowned cormorants (endemic to these waters), African (Black) Oystercatcher, Hartlaub's Gull, and perhaps roosting terns. The park even protects a few mammals, including the beautiful Bontebok, an antelope that was almost reduced to extinction, and the comical, but dangerous Chacma Baboons.

NIGHT: Alphen Boutique Hotel, Constantia, Cape Town

September 22, Day 4: Pelagic Trip.

Depending upon weather and sea conditions, today we will set out on a pelagic trip from the west coast of the Cape. Here the cold Benguela current sweeps northward, causing strong upwellings of nutrient-rich waters that support an abundance of marine life. The pelagic birding here is simply spectacular, and it is not unusual to see 20 or more species offshore in a day. The numbers can be incredible and among the commoner species are Black-browed and White-capped (Shy) albatrosses, Cape and White-chinned petrels, Sooty Shearwater, Cape Gannet and Kelp Gull.



White-capped (Shy) Albatross © Geoff Lockwood

Less numerous, but still fairly regular are Yellow-nosed Albatross, Northern and Southern giant-petrels, Soft-plumaged Petrel, Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Subantarctic Skua and Great Crested Tern, while there is always the possibility of one of the many rarer species that have been recorded in these waters—perhaps even the impressive Snowy (Wandering) Albatross. Inshore waters are frequented by Jackass (African) Penguins, cormorants and terns. There is also an excellent chance of encountering cetaceans, particularly Southern Right-Whales and various species of dolphins.

Please note: Wet-weather gear is recommended for this boat trip. Also, these seas can be rough and if you are prone to seasickness, please come prepared with the necessary medication. **NOTE: If sea conditions are unfavorable for going out, we will instead bird the many productive watery habitats in the greater Cape Town area, gaining a great introduction to a wide array of African water-associated birds.**

NIGHT: Alphen Boutique Hotel, Constantia, Cape Town

September 23, Day 5: Cape Town to Langebaan. With a prompt start we will bird our way up the western coast of the Cape region today. Much of the coastal plain has been converted to wheat farming, the vast fields supporting Spur-winged Goose, Large-billed Lark, Southern Anteater-Chat, and Capped Wheatear, but little else. In contrast, the remnant patches of native grassland and bush that survive are alive with birds at this time of year, as a new breeding season begins. Many of them will be singing, while others will already be nesting. Normally obscure “little brown jobs” like the various larks and cisticolas are giving their delightful flight displays, while patches of coastal fynbos ring with the songs of birds like the Bokmakierie (a colorful bush-shrike), Gray Tit, Karoo Prinia, Rufous-vented Warbler, Karoo Scrub-Robin, Cape Sparrow and Yellow Canary. Black Harriers, a declining species, hunt over the fields, while South African Shelducks and Cape Shovelers may be seen at marshy ponds on route. If the winter rains have been good, the diversity of wildflowers is spectacular. By late afternoon we will undoubtedly be ready to settle into our comfortable hotel overlooking the vast Langebaan Lagoon.

NIGHT: Farmhouse Hotel, Langebaan

September 24, Day 6: West Coast National Park. We have a full day to explore West Coast National Park, a unique reserve set between the scenic lagoon and the Atlantic coastline. Water levels vary, but the



Greater Flamingos © Geoff Lockwood

habitats here include open water, shoreline and tidal flats, and marshes and reedbeds. Although they move around, a variety of African waterbirds and migrant shorebirds can always be found in this area, including both Greater and Lesser flamingos, plus we may find some of the specialized inhabitants of the marshes like the African Marsh-Harrier, African Snipe, Levillant's Cisticola, Cape Weaver and Southern Red Bishop.

Of equal interest is the higher ground in the park, which supports several types of native bush interspersed with grassy openings. Just as alluring as birdlife is the potential for one of the

greatest wildflowers show on earth—with rain the floral displays are simply spectacular! They may vary from isolated patches in response to scattered thunderstorms to blankets of blinding color as far as the eye can see if rainfall has been widespread. The variety of birds found in this region is substantial, and in addition to many of those seen the previous day, the possibilities include Gray-winged Francolin (a rather secretive endemic), Black Bustard (spectacular), Spotted Thick-knee, White-backed Mousebird, Pied Barbet, Banded Martin, White-throated Swallow, Southern Penduline-Tit, Bar-throated Apalis, Cape Crombec, and African Pied-Starling, plus widespread African species like Helmeted Guineafowl, Black-winged Kite and even the Ostrich (thanks to re-introduction efforts). The park is also home to some very interesting mammals, several of which were once reduced almost to extinction, but have now been bred in great enough numbers to re-introduce as the habitat is restored and protected. The park is also famous for its incredible wildflower show, with spectacular swaths of color blanketing the valleys, and many rare and unusual flowers tucked amidst the shrubs on the surrounding hills.

NIGHT: Farmhouse Hotel, Langebaan

September 25, Day 7: Langebaan to Tanqua Karoo via the Cedarberg Mountains. This morning, we head inland through the farmlands of the southwestern Cape, to the flanks of the rocky and folded Cedarberg Mountains, stopping in the town of Ceres in the heart of the deciduous fruit growing region, for a light lunch.

The route quickly gives way to the thorny succulents and low scrub typical of the vast flat region ahead of us known as the Succulent or Tanqua Karoo. Seemingly stretching almost to infinity, this is one of the most unique South African environments, partially due to the dominance of low-growing succulent plants. Here the rugged Cape mountains block the moisture coming from the ocean, creating near desert-like conditions in their rain shadow. Rainfall is highly irregular, but if we are lucky the winter rains will have reached the area. When they do, the birds respond by moving in and displaying and nesting in abundance. Of course, this could also be a dry year, but even so we should find a surprisingly diverse mix of birds that have adapted to this stark and unique environment.



Black Bustard © Geoff Lockwood

We will arrive at our game lodge in time for afternoon tea and a game drive in an open safari vehicle to connect with mammals such as Springbuck and Oryx not found in the Greater Kruger Park conservancy, as well as a number of bird species native to this semi-arid environment. With luck our drive will produce sightings of South African Shelduck, Rufous-eared Warbler, Karoo Lark, Karoo Chat, Gray Tit, Bokmakierie or even a Fairy Flycatcher or Namaqua Sandgrouse.

NIGHT: Inverdoorn Game Lodge, Ceres Karoo

September 26, Day 8: The Tanqua Karoo. We start the day with a visit to the cheetah enclosure to observe the rehabilitation program. The daily exercise routine, usually involving two full grown Cheetahs, provides for spectacular viewing and photographic opportunities as these fleet-footed cats streak past the observation towers in pursuit of an artificial lure designed to simulate fleeing prey.

We have the rest of the day to explore the Karoo environs, systematically working our way through the various micro-habitants to seek out species we might have missed on our first day. Here the bushes are low, scrubby and widely-spaced, with sparse grasslands in-between and only scattered clumps of small trees and brush along the usually dry watercourses. A surprising number of “hard-to-find” specialties are resident in this environment, and we will continue to search for those we might have missed the previous day. Possible species include Pale Chanting-Goshawk, Karoo Bustard, several larks, Fairy Flycatcher, Greater Kestrel, Rufous-eared Warbler, Namaqua Warbler, Yellow-rumped Eremomela and Layard’s Warbler. Other birds more typical of the still-drier Kalahari and Namib deserts—such as the Namaqua Sandgrouse, Greater Kestrel, Pririt Batis, Spike-heeled Lark, Gray-backed Sparrow-Lark, Pale-winged Starling, Lark-like Bunting and Black-headed Canary (irregular) also occur in varying numbers.



Karoo Bustard © Geoff Lockwood

NIGHT: Inverdoorn Game Lodge, Ceres Karoo

September 27, Day 9: The Karoo to Hermanus. After an early bird walk in the vicinity of the lodge, followed by breakfast and a mid-morning departure, we will head back across the scenic flanks of the Hex River Mountains to the rolling hills of the Overberg. We'll search for Blue Crane, South Africa's national bird, usually encountered in number in the wheat lands, before enjoying lunch at a classic wine estate in the Bot River valley. After lunch we will look for the endangered Denham's Bustard in lowland grassland, as well as a variety of typical open country Cape birds found on the coastal plain. Our hotel is situated on a cliff-top overlooking Walker Bay and affords the more energetic with the opportunity of a late afternoon stroll or bird walk along the cliff-path ahead of dinner at our hotel.

NIGHT: The Marine Hotel, Hermanus



Southern Right Whale cow & calf © Geoff Lockwood

September 28, Day 10: Hermanus to Cape Town. After breakfast we will board a special whale-watching boat and head out into the bay in search of Southern Right Whales, our prime objective for the morning. After the boat trip we will head to Stony Point for close-up views of the comical African (Jackass) Penguins at one of their few breeding colonies on the mainland. This well-managed reserve is also home to all four of South Africa's marine cormorants: Bank, (endangered), Crowned, Cape and Great, as well as African Oystercatchers. A final afternoon stroll will find us searching the rocky slopes at the coastal hamlet of Rooi Els for the iconic and elusive Cape Rockjumper, one of the most distinctive of the southwestern

Cape endemics. Also possible in this area are Cape and Sentinel rock-thrushes, Cape Grassbird and Cape Siskin, while in protected areas and gardens protea shrubs attract Cape Sugarbird and sunbirds, including the stunning, Orange-breasted Sunbird. It will be hard to tear ourselves away from these pleasant surroundings to head back to Cape Town for the night.

NIGHT: Hotel Verde Cape Town Airport, Cape Town

September 29, Day 11: Cape Town to Kruger. New adventures and completely different ecosystems await us today. We transfer to the Cape Town airport for a flight to Skukuza, located in the heart of the Greater Kruger Conservation Area on the far eastern side of the country. Kruger National Park is one of the oldest and largest reserves in Africa, surrounded by additional huge conservation areas. This vast expanse supports an incredible diversity of life forms in various habitats, offering a complete safari experience. While mammals are the most obvious and impressive creatures here, the birds are also extremely varied and abundant. Based at two lodges—Skukuza Rest Camp and Nyati Lodge—we will have ample opportunity to explore the variety of habitats and wildlife that make this part of Africa so special.

Our flight to Skukuza will arrive in the early afternoon. Upon touchdown, we will be greeted and transferred to Skukuza camp, just a short drive from the airport. After checking in to our cabins, we'll enjoy a light lunch before heading out on a game drive along the Sabie River. At this time of year, the water in the river is a magnet for wildlife and there is a good chance we could see elephants, buffalo, hippopotamus, or even

lion or a leopard on the drive. The birding is also spectacular, and we should add a number of new birds including storks, rollers, hornbills, kingfisher, bee-eaters and Bushshrikes.

NIGHT: Skukuza Camp, Kruger National Park

September 30-October 2, Days 12-14:

Greater Kruger Park Conservation

Area. Skukuza usually offers great birding, and we will start the day with an early walk around the camp, followed by breakfast and check-out. After another short game drive exploring the Sabie River, we will transfer to Nyati Lodge in the north-eastern Sabie Sands section of the Greater Kruger Conservancy in time for afternoon tea and an evening game drive.

We have three nights at Nyati, and our stay will follow the classic African safari schedule – an early morning wake-up call, followed by tea/coffee and a light breakfast. We then head out on our morning game drive - searching



White Rhinoceros © Geoff Lockwood

different habitats for new birds and animals. We stop for tea/coffee/hot chocolate and snacks, before continuing our game drive till around 10:30/11:00 when we return to the lodge for brunch. After our meal, participants are free to rest or bird around camp until we meet again for afternoon tea at three o'clock, followed by the evening game drive. We stop at a suitable spot for sundowners, and then drive back to the camp in the dark, hoping for sightings of nightjars, owls, small mammals. and, if we are lucky, possibly even one of the big cats – lion or leopard, on its nightly hunt!

The concession area is large and we will only be able to cover a fraction of it, but in the process, we will explore a variety of habitats. All “The Big Five” mammals are found here, including White Rhinoceros and a large population of elephants. Cats are a major attraction, and the region holds a very healthy population of lions. Cheetahs are also present, though they range over huge areas and are usually hard to find, while the stealthiest of the large cats, the leopard, is possible throughout the area, and is even seen in camp. Of course, to support the predators, there must be a prey base, and a wide assortment of antelope of varying sizes will be seen, along with giraffes and zebras. Spotted hyenas, African wild dogs (an outside chance), dwarf mongooses, and vervet monkeys are also among the possibilities at Nyati.

The impressive avifauna here in the “bushveld” includes many species not found in the more temperate parts of the country we have already visited. Large and easily spotted birds include such classic African species as the ostrich, Black-bellied Bustard, and Southern Ground Hornbill. Raptors are a common sight and include the huge and powerful Martial Eagle, the very distinctive Bateleur, and several scavenging vultures. The open woodlands, thick scrub, and riverine trees support a wide range of smaller “bush birds,” including francolins, mousebirds, Gray Go-away-bird, four species of small hornbills, Green Woodhoopoes, Lilac-breasted Roller, barbets, woodpeckers, bush-shrikes, starlings, weavers, waxbills, and much more. Small dams provide a vital water source for the mammals and may also attract surprising waterbirds, perhaps including the huge Marabou Stork. Each day will end with sundowners at dusk, followed by a night drive back to camp for a classic barbeque under the stars (weather permitting). With so much to see and do, our time here will undoubtedly pass very quickly.



Lilac-breasted Roller © Geoff Lockwood

October 3-4: Kruger to Johannesburg; Departure for Home or Begin Wakkerstroom Extension. After a final morning game drive, we will connect with a domestic flight back to Johannesburg. Participants not continuing on the Wakkerstroom Extension will arrive at the Johannesburg airport in time for evening departures to Atlanta, New York Kennedy, Washington Dulles, Amsterdam, London and Frankfurt which will arrive on October 4, allowing time for onward connections.

TOUR CONDITIONS ON THE MAIN TOUR

Most birding is done from the vehicles (bus or game-drive vehicles), and walking is typically limited on this tour. Expect any walking that we to be on level, or slightly sloping ground (no steep gradients) and to be mostly on paved pathways or tracks. The maximum distances we walk – at Inverdoorn in the Karoo, and at Rooi Els on our last day in the Cape, are typically no more than a mile, and are on level ground.

The gardens in Kirstenbosch are laid out in an amphitheater with fairly steep slopes and walking stick/cane might be helpful for those who are unsteady on their feet. We enter the garden via the top gate however and then wonder across and down through the garden – thereby avoiding any strenuous uphill walking.

Depending on the weather, we may go out on a pelagic boat trip on the second day of the tour. This involves a 40 mile trip out to the trawling grounds in a small sport-fishing boat and then following any trawlers as they pull their nets and then process their catch. There are typically hundreds, if not thousands, of albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds around and getting on to something special can be tricky, but the spectacle is unique. We are usually out at sea for up to 7 hours, and some participants find this very tiring. Also, anyone prone to sea-sickness will need to be well-prepared before embarking.

WAKKERSTROOM EXTENSION

OCTOBER 3-7, 2026

October 3, Day 1: Johannesburg. Upon arrival in Johannesburg from Skukuza this afternoon, we'll say goodbye to our friends not joining the extension, before having dinner and an overnight at our airport-area hotel.

NIGHT: Peermont Mondior Hotel at Emperors Palace, Kempton Park

October 4, Day 2: Johannesburg to Wakkerstroom. Departing early this morning, we'll travel to the Wakkerstroom area of the central plateau, arriving in time for lunch. Here on the "Highveld" the habitat is largely rolling grassland of varying types, but, as is true of native prairie almost everywhere, much of it has now been reduced in extent by farming and overgrazing. A surprising number of endemics have evolved in these grasslands and though many are now very localized in occurrence, we will begin seeking them out this afternoon.

While these specialties will be the main focus of our time here, the wetlands in this area are also quite special and the small reservoirs, marshy "vleis" and farm ponds attract a nice variety of waterfowl and other waterbirds including African Black- and White-backed ducks, African Spoonbill, and African Marsh-Harrier plus numbers of bishops, weavers and widowbirds. Arch-skulkers such as African Rail and Red-chested Flufftail (both heard more readily than seen) are often recorded, while African Snipe and several marsh-dwelling warblers display from the reedbeds. Away from the water, the grasslands and farmlands will hopefully produce our first Southern Bald Ibis or Blue Bustard, both unique and threatened South African endemics, while an exciting mammal possibility is encountering a family group of comical and charismatic Meerkats (of TV fame) foraging in the grassland.

Please note: If we should experience a late cold front, the Wakkerstroom area can be quite chilly (possibly even to the low 40s), so participants need to be prepared with the proper clothing for warmth.

NIGHT: Wetlands Country House & Sheds, Wakkerstroom

October 5, Day 3: Wakkerstroom Area.

We have a full day to explore the various habitats in the Wakkerstroom area, searching the grasslands for special endemics like Southern Bald Ibis, Blue Bustard, Rudd's and Botha's larks (both very rare and secretive, with tiny world ranges), and Yellow-breasted Pipit. Rocky areas and eroded ridges and hillsides could produce Ground Woodpecker, Wailing Cisticola, Sentinel Rock-Thrush, Buff-streaked Chat, Yellow-tufted Pipit and Cape Bunting. Small, relict patches of forest could produce a Bush Blackcap or Barratt's Warbler (both tricky), plus a variety of robin-chats and bush-shrikes. Other less range-restricted specialties of the area



Blue Cranes © Geoff Lockwood

that we hope to see include Red-winged- and Gray-winged Francolins, Swainson's Spurfowl; Rock Kestrel; Black-winged- and Wattled lapwings; Red-throated Wryneck; Spike-heeled and Pink-billed larks; Greater Striped-Swallow; Familiar Chat; Mountain Chat; Orange-throated (Cape) Longclaw; Drakensberg Prinia; African Yellow Warbler; Yellow Bishop; Long-tailed Widowbird; and African Quailfinch; while Cape Glossy-Starlings and Cape Weavers can be numerous around the village and farm houses. With luck we may also find Denham's Bustard or Blue Crane, though both are irregular in their occurrence.

NIGHT: Wetlands Country House & Sheds, Wakkerstroom

October 6-7, Days 4-5: Wakkerstroom to Johannesburg; Departure for Home. After an early start to search for those 'specials' of the area that we might have missed, we'll head back to our lodge for breakfast and check-out. Depending on our success thus far, we might head back to the wetlands to try for a Red-chested Flufftail or African Rail before driving to Johannesburg. We will visit noted birding spots along the way, stopping on route for lunch and some final birding. Exact plans will be determined based on what we have seen—or not seen—on the trip up to this point.

We will arrive at the Johannesburg airport in plenty of time for early evening departures to Atlanta, New York Kennedy, Washington Dulles, Amsterdam, London, and Frankfurt. Flights arrive at these destinations in the early morning on October 7, allowing time for onward connections.

Essential Tour Information

TOUR SIZE: This tour is limited to 8 tour participants. However, VENT reserves the right to increase the tour limit by one to accommodate a couple when only one space is available.

TOUR LEADER: This tour is led by **Geoff Lockwood**



Geoff Lockwood's interest and involvement with birds' dates to his early years at school and forms part of a wider interest in the biodiversity of the Southern African sub-region. After leaving school, he began a career as a bird artist, illustrator, and author. In 1981, he published *Garden Birds of Southern Africa* and later also contributed half the illustrations to the 5th and 6th editions of *Roberts' Birds of Southern Africa*. Geoff is currently based at the Delta Environmental Centre in Johannesburg where he acts as part-time manager and education officer, working to instill an environmental ethos in teachers and school groups that visit the Centre. For the past 40 years he has been involved with local birding organizations and has served on the Council of the Southern African Ornithological Society—now BirdLife South Africa, for most of that time. He travels widely in the region, presenting lectures, talks, and courses on bird identification, ecology, and behavior, and was also involved in the training of local bird guides as part of a BLSA initiative to give communities a vested interest in the conservation of their local birds. With 874 species listed within southern Africa, Geoff is amongst the region's top birders. He has led tours to many destinations in Southern and Central Africa, as well as Kenya and Israel.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

TOUR FEE: \$ 15,895.00 per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 through lunch on Day 15, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground transportation

during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour (if any) are included. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of **\$3,575** will be added to your tour fee.

The fee for South Africa: Wakkerstroom Extension is **\$1,675** per person in double occupancy from Johannesburg. The fee includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to lunch on Day 4; all lodging as stated in the itinerary; ground transportation; tipping; entrance fees; and guide services of the tour leader. The tour fee does NOT include roundtrip airfare between your home and Johannesburg; entrance and departure taxes; alcoholic beverages; special gratuities; phone calls; laundry; or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for the South Africa: Wakkerstroom Extension is **\$75**.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The initial deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. A second deposit of **30% of the tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure. March 5, 2026 for the main tour. April 6, 2026 for the extension. We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (April 6, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed on to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- **More than 120 days prior to the start date:**
A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the start date:**
No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:**
Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such ad-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive **Ripcord** plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The "pay as you go" approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to "pay as you go," you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About Medjet's MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: Medjet.com/VentBird or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: Please restrict your luggage to one medium-sized soft-sided suitcase or duffel bag, and one small carry-on, because of space limitations on the bus. Most people find that they have brought far too much "stuff" (and laundry services are available at most hotels and lodges where we spend more than one night).

Note: Internal flights on this tour are booked "Economy class" and checked bag weights are limited to 44 lbs (20kg). Also, due to the small size of the planes used – particularly on the flight from Skukuza to Johannesburg, overhead stowage is very limited the airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your airline to find out specific weight restrictions. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website

of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information:
<http://www.tsa.gov/>

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS: A passport valid for at least 30 days beyond your planned departure with at least 2 consecutive empty pages is required for U.S. citizens to enter South Africa. Non-U.S. citizens should check with their closest South African consulate/embassy for instructions.

WHAT TO BRING:

CLOTHING: Dress is informal throughout. Light to medium-weight field clothing is the norm (drab colors such as olive or khaki preferred), with a warm sweater or jacket for cooler weather. Thermal underwear is very useful for layering and for chilly hotel rooms that are not well heated, plus it is small and easy to pack. Southern Africa's spring climate is variable, and conditions often change markedly during a single day, so layers that can be put on and taken off as needed are ideal.

Depending on sea conditions, the pelagic trip can get very wet, and a rain suit and water-resistant footwear is strongly recommended. Warm clothing and windbreakers will also be necessary for the Wakkerstroom Extension, as it can be surprisingly chilly, even cold, on the Highveld.

FOOTWEAR: Good walking shoes or light boots will suffice, but ideally should be rated "water-resistant." People with balance problems and/or weak ankles may find hiking boots and a light cane useful.

EQUIPMENT: Of course, everyone should have a pair of binoculars in good condition. Your tour leader will be carrying a spotting scope; however, you are welcome and encouraged to bring your own if you wish. You should also bring a hat, sunscreen, lip balm, small alarm clock, washcloth, insect repellent (not a major problem), and a small flashlight or headlamp. A dust mask may be helpful on the backroads. It is advisable to bring along all of the digital storage media and medicines you will require for the trip.

Binoculars: We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

Spotting Scopes: Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS

CLIMATE & WEATHER: South Africa is a land of great physical contrasts, and September/October is a time of seasonal change. Thus, the climate on the tour varies considerably and is somewhat unpredictable. The southwestern Cape can be marvelously warm and clear at this season or it can be quite chilly, raining and damp, depending on the passage of cold fronts. Temperatures generally range from the 50s to the 70s. Temperatures in the interior Karoo are higher, but not excessively hot (perhaps to 90 degrees at most). The Kruger region is generally mild and dry at this season, with warm days and

possibly cool nights as low as 50 degrees. Though usually mild, the Wakkerstroom area can be surprisingly cold if a front is passing through, with temperatures as low as the 40s (especially at night). Rain is possible in some areas, although this trip is after the main rains in the southwestern Cape and before the rainy season in the subtropical east.

CONDITIONS: Most of the birding on this extension is done either from the vehicle or from the roadside, and any walking is typically restricted to short distances, mostly on level-, or slightly inclined ground. The maximum altitude tops out at around 6,000 feet a.s.l., and should not pose a problem for any reasonably active participant. The weather in Wakkerstroom can be very changeable however, and we may experience ‘all four seasons in one day’. Plan to bring along layers that can be donned, or shed, as needed.

DIFFICULTY: There is relatively little walking on this tour and the walking that we do is largely on fairly level ground. A few short stretches may have steeper inclines.

CURRENCY & SPENDING: South African Rand (ZAR). MasterCard and Visa are more widely accepted than American Express, but all are useful, particularly in major centers.

ELECTRICITY: The electrical supply is 220 volts, and it is recommended that you bring an appliance designed for this voltage. **Please note that South African outlets require their own special adapter plugs.** These can be ordered online. Some adapters sold in the United States “for Africa” will not work in South Africa.

INTERNET ACCESS: Available most of the trip.

LANGUAGE: The official languages are Afrikaans and English. There are nine main African languages, the most widely spoken being Xhosa, Zulu and Sesotho.

TIME: 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (GMT +2:00)

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry services are available at most hotels and lodges where we spend more than one night.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

Although South Africa is one of the few countries in Africa where you can drink the water in major cities, eat the salads and unpeeled fresh vegetables and fruit, and assume that Western sanitation standards are followed, a powerful antibiotic for any possible GI problems could be useful.

Malaria has been recorded from the Kruger region, but the risk of contracting it is slight as mosquitos are scarce at this time of year. You may, however, choose to take a course of malaria prophylaxis drugs,

available only by prescription. Please consult your physician and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention for further information and help in making your decision.

Yellow fever certificates are required if you happen to be arriving from an infected area.

Please be sure to bring insect repellent, sunscreen, lip-ointment, and normal travel medications (motion sickness prevention, Imodium, etc.)

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun’s ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

BITING INSECTS: Remove if not a concern, otherwise expand on it.

INSECT REPELLENTS: There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- **DEET:** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- **Picaridin:** A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- **Herbal insect repellents:** Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- **Permanone® (Permethrin):** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

- **Insect Shield® apparel:** Clothing pre-treated with Permethrin is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Birds:

Sinclair, Ian, Phil Hockey, and Warwick Tarboton. *SASOL Birds of Southern Africa*. 4th Ed. Princeton Field Guides. The recommended field guide (also available as an app).

Newman, Kenneth. *Newman's Birds of Southern Africa*. 10th Ed. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers. An acceptable alternative field guide (also available as an app).

Kemp, Alan and Meg. *SASOL Birds of Prey of Africa and its Islands*. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers, 2005.

Maclean, Gordon Lindsay. *Roberts' Birds of Southern Africa*, 7th Ed. John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, 2005. This is more of a handbook, with extended information on behavior, breeding, diet, etc. (also available as an app).

Ginn, P., W. G. McIlhenny, and P. le S. Milstein. *The Complete Book of Southern African Birds*. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers, 1989. Excellent photographs with anecdotal text.

Mammals:

Stuart, Chris and Tilde Stuart. *Field Guide: Mammals of Southern Africa*. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers, 1999.

Kingdon, Jonathan. *The Kingdon Field Guide to African Mammals*. London: Academic Press, 1997.

Estes, Richard Despard. *The Behavior Guide to African Mammals*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

BIRDING RESOURCES AND GENERAL NATURE:

ventbird.com

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South Africa: The Southwestern Cape & Kruger, 2026

Johnson-Barker, Brian. *South Africa The Beautiful*. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers, 1991.

Cubitt, Gerald S. and Peter Joyce. *Journey through South Africa*. Cape Town: Struik New Holland Publishers, 1986. OUT OF PRINT.

Davenport, Rodney and Christopher Saunders. *South Africa, a Modern History*, 5th ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

HISTORY AND CULTURE:

Davenport, Rodney and Christopher Saunders. *South Africa, a Modern History*, 5th ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, “**VENT**”) act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on January 21, 2026 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant’s Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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01/03/23-EL/RS
2/12/26-PN/SB