

**CRANE'S CAPE
TOURS & TRAVEL**

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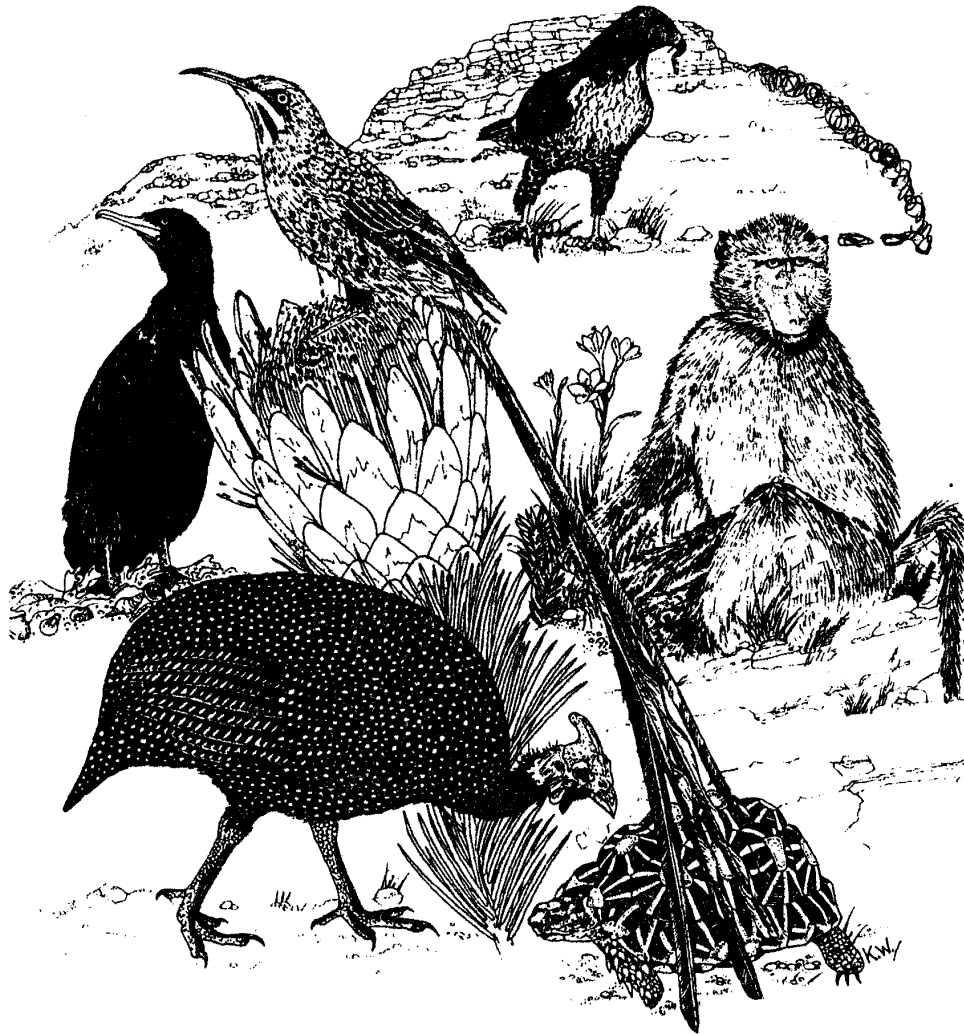
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**South Africa's Western Cape
20 October – 3 November 2008**

South Africa's Western Cape 20 October – 3 November 2008

Holiday participants

David and Clare Blatherwick

Leader

Geoff Crane

Report by Geoff Crane.

Illustrations: Denham's bustard and orange-breasted sunbird by Kim Wright, courtesy of Crane's Cape Tours & Travel; Cape sugarbird, African penguin and black-winged stilt by Rob Hume.

Cover by Kim Wright, clockwise from top: jackal buzzard, chacma baboon, angulate tortoise, helmeted guineafowl, Cape cormorant, Cape sugarbird on protea.

DAY 1. Monday 20th October 2008

Orientation tour / Silvermine Nature Reserve / Kommetjie

Sunny with a light wind.

The flight arrived on time and we had cleared the airport by 9am. The rush-hour traffic into the city had cleared sufficiently for an easy drive through to our accommodation at Noordhoek, on the Cape Peninsula. We spotted a number of the more obvious urban birds like the Hadedra and Sacred Ibis, Cattle Egret, Egyptian Goose and Helmeted Guineafowl.

We drove up to the Silvermine Nature Reserve for our picnic lunch, which was accompanied by Cape Sugarbird, Malachite Sunbird, Cape Grassbird, Cape Bulbul, Karoo Prinia and Cape Robin-Chat. We spent the afternoon really trying to understand the general fauna & flora of the Cape. We saw an incredible diversity of flowering plants. Some of the highlights were three orchid species, including the Golden Disa, *Disa cornuta*, the bright pink watsonias, the orange flowering pincushions and the many erica species. A walk around the reservoir showed us Cape Spurfowl, Cape Reed Cormorant and great views of a Sombre Bulbul, as well as Cape Girdled Lizard and a Cape Skink.

We took a detour via Kommetjie to see what seabirds we could pick up: Swift, Sandwich and Common Terns, Hartlaub's Gull, African Black Oystercatcher and Cape Cormorants to name but a few. En route to a local restaurant for dinner we saw a Spotted Eagle Owl, which obligingly perched on a fence post for us.

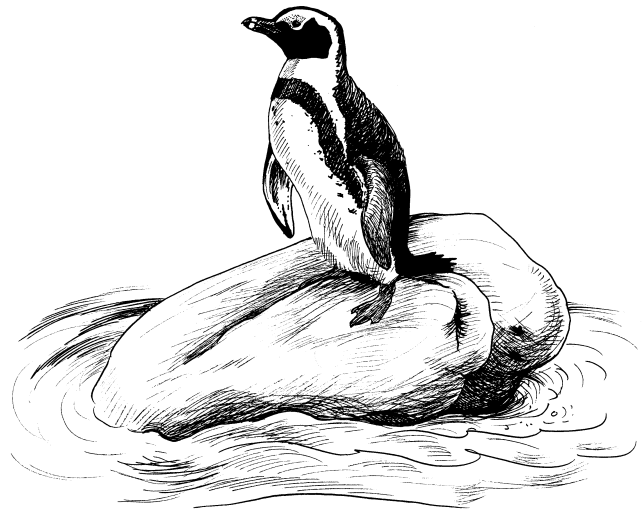
Plant highlights:

<i>Stilbe vestita</i>	<i>Drosera trinervia</i>	<i>Salvia africana-lutea</i>
<i>Edmondia sesamoides</i>	<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	<i>Watsonia tabularis</i>
<i>Osmitopsis asteriscoides</i>	<i>Ixia dubia</i>	<i>Erica abietina</i>
<i>Coleonema album</i>	<i>Protea nitida</i>	<i>Erica versicolor</i>
<i>Berzelia lanuginosa</i>	<i>Erica lutea</i>	<i>Erica mammosa</i>
<i>Syncarpha vestita</i>	<i>Leucadendron xanthoconus</i>	<i>Mimetes fimbriifolius</i>
<i>Pelargonium myrrhifolium</i>	<i>Leucospermum cordifolium</i>	<i>Erica curviflora</i>
<i>Eriocephalus africanus</i>	<i>Liparia splendens</i>	<i>Erica plukenetii</i>
<i>Virgilia oroboides</i>	<i>Polygala bracteolata</i>	<i>Disa cornuta</i>
<i>Pelargonium cucullatum</i>	<i>Lobelia pinifolia</i>	<i>Protea coronata</i>
<i>Watsonia borbonica</i>	<i>Protea repens</i>	<i>Protea cynaroides</i>
<i>Satyrium odorum</i>	<i>Satyrium carneum</i>	<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>

DAY 2. Tuesday 21st October 2008
Cape Peninsula / Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve / Penguin colony

Sunny with a light wind.

First we headed off to Simon's Town and the African Penguin colony. We stopped en route to view some Southern Wright Whales in the bay, a mother and calf. There were plenty of African Penguins at the colony, most of them were moulting and a few were in the water. We also saw Cape Wagtail, Rock Martin and Kelp Gull here.



Once at Cape Point we took the funicular to the old lighthouse at the top. We spent twenty minutes at one of the view points waiting for Cape Siskin. They arrived eventually, in the mean time we had been watching half a dozen whales and Cape Fur Seals in the clear blue water below. The Cape Cormorant colony on the Cape Point cliffs were in full swing and we also saw White-breasted Cormorant, Red-winged Starling and Speckled Pigeon. We spent the afternoon birding and botanising on the back roads of the reserve. By the end of the afternoon we had seen 47 different bird species as well as Chacma Baboons, Eland, Bontebok, Dassie (Rock Hyrax) and a Striped Mouse.

<i>Watsonia coccinea</i>	<i>Leucadendron laureolum</i>	<i>Salvia africana-lutea</i>
<i>Ficinia radiata</i>	<i>Leucadendron salignum</i>	<i>Nemesia versicolor</i>
<i>Trachyandra brachypoda</i>	<i>Felicia fruticosa</i>	<i>Lobelia coronopifolia</i>
<i>Empodium plicatum</i>	<i>Silene undulata</i>	<i>Syncarpha vestita</i>
<i>Aristea spiralis</i>	<i>Crassula fascicularis</i>	<i>Gnidia oppositifolia</i>
<i>Corycium orobanchoides</i>	<i>Cotyledon orbiculata</i>	
<i>Serrusia villosa</i>	<i>Sutherlandia frutescens</i>	
<i>Mimetes cucullatus</i>	<i>Geranium incanum</i>	
<i>Mimetes hirtus</i>	<i>Leucospermum hypophyllocarpodenendron</i>	

DAY 3. Wednesday 22nd October 2008
Chapman's Peak Drive / Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens

Sunny with a light wind & a threatening sky!

As the famous Chapman's Peak Drive was closed (until 2009) we decided to approach the drive from Hout Bay, where we were able to drive up part of the road. From here we had good views looking down into Hout Bay. The *fynbos* was looking particularly attractive with the yellow *Leucadendrons* looking stunning. We saw Rock Kestrel, Cape White-eye and Cape Canary before heading off to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

Once at the Kirstenbosch Gardens we made our way slowly up to the highest point of the cultivated gardens, the protea section. Common Waxbill, Forest Canary, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Cape Batis, Dusky Flycatcher, Chaffinch (one of Cecil Rhodes's introductions!) and Southern Double-collard Sunbird plus many others, were seen. We went for a number of walks before and after lunch. The landscaped gardens were rewarding from a birding point of view and the indigenous forests also had a number of specials. We saw Spotted Eagle Owl, Speckled Mousebird, Sombre Greenbul, Olive Thrush and Cape Batis, to name but a few. Being a botanical gardens there were obviously, many plants for us to look at. The area of the gardens that will be remembered most was the protea section with many beautiful proteas flowering.

<i>Erica baccans</i>	<i>Struthiola dodecandra</i>	<i>Protea cynaroides</i> *
<i>Lobelia coronopiolia</i>	<i>Leucadendron argenteum</i> *	<i>Brabejum stellatifolium</i> *
<i>Lobostemon glaucifolium</i>	<i>Leucospermum cordifolium</i> *	<i>Clivia miniata</i> *
<i>Muraltia muriata</i>	<i>Leucospermum erubescens</i> *	<i>Elegia capensis</i> *
<i>Pelargonium myrrhifolium</i>	<i>Leucospermum oleifolium</i> *	<i>Erica regia</i> *
<i>Polygala heistera</i>	<i>Leucospermum reflexum</i> *	<i>Strelizia regina</i> *

* at Kirstenbosch Gardens

DAY 4. Thursday 23rd October 2008

Table Mountain / Rietvlei / Bloubergstrand

Sunny with a light cold wind in the afternoon.

Table Mountain was clear and there was zero wind. A rare combination in Cape Town! We took the cable car to the top of the mountain and then spent the next hour walking around the 'table top'. We had great views of the Cape Crag Lizard as well as the more common Cape Girdled Lizard and Southern Rock Agama. We also saw sunbirds, starlings and White-necked Ravens. I pointed out the Blister Bush *Peucedanum galbanum*. (There were many of these plants over-hanging the paths and I am sure there are many visitors to Table Mountain that go away with a blistering experience!) *Erica coccinea* and *Cliffortia ruscitolia* were also looking good at the top.

From Table Mountain we went through to Rietvlei Nature Reserve, just north of Cape Town. We took our picnic lunch with us to the hide and spent the next couple of hours watching the birds. We saw 55 bird species from the hide including a couple of Hottentot Teals, White-winged Tern and an African Fish Eagle. The water level was fairly high, which seemed to attract a large number of water birds to the vlei. The chinkerinchee *Ornithogalum thyrsoides* were looking very showy as were the *Leonotis leonurus* 'wild Dagga'.

We took a drive through the farmlands just north of Cape Town and then came back via Bloubergstrand beach to see the classical view of Table Mountain from across the bay.

DAY 5. Friday 24th October 2008

West Coast National Park / Langebaan Lagoon

Sunny with a moderate wind.

We made an early start so that we could get the best of the day up in the West Coast National park. We stopped here and there on the way to the park, including Milnerton, where we saw gulls, terns, cormorants and egrets. En route we also saw Yellow-billed Kite and Black-shouldered Kite.

The vegetation in the West Coast National Park is predominantly coastal strandveld, which hosts an abundance of bush birds. Whilst driving through this habitat we saw Black Harrier, Cape Spurfowl, Karoo Scrub-Robin, Grey-backed Cisticola, Namaqua Dove, Yellow Canary and Bokmakierie. We stopped counting the Angulate Tortoises when we got in to double figures! We managed to arrive at the new hide at Geelbek just in time to watch the waders being pushed towards the hide by the incoming tide. The waders seen from the hide included Little Stint, Ringed, White-fronted and Kitlitz's Plovers, Marsh and Curlew Sandpiper, Greenshank, Ruff, Whimbrel, Sanderling, Turnstones turning over stones and Grey Plovers, with a few far away Greater Flamingos.

We had a windy picnic in the lee of an old farm cottage on the Seeberg lookout point, where we saw a Karoo Girdled Lizard and some amazing Armour Plated Crickets, which were been devoured by a flock of European Starlings.

After lunch we took the Seeberg hide dirt road and found a Puff Adder on the side of the road. Southern Black Korhaan, White-backed Mousebird, Plain-backed Pipit and a multitude of smaller birds were seen en route to the Abrahamskraal Water Hole. Here we found many Angulate Tortoises as well as a Mole Snake. As this is the only fresh water in the park there were many birds coming and going. We saw Cape Reed and African Sedge Warblers (now known as a Lesser Swamp Warbler and a Little Rush Warbler), Namaqua Dove, Cape & Southern Masked Weaver, Cape, Yellow and White-throated Canary, African Spoonbill...

We drove back to Cape Town via the village of Darling and its surrounding wheat fields. European Bee-eater, Pied Starling, Grey-backed Cisticola and Red-capped Lark were seen.

When you take our 84 bird species that were seen today as well as all the new plant species, reptiles, geology and history... we had a bit of a sensory overload today!

<i>Arctotis stoechadifolia</i>	<i>Salvia africana-coerulea</i>	<i>Pelargonium fulgidum</i>
<i>Arctotis revoluta</i>	<i>Stachys aethiopica</i>	<i>Pelargonium triste</i>
<i>Felicia tenella</i>	<i>Lobostemon argenteus</i>	<i>Pelargonium capitatum</i>
<i>Arctotheca calendula</i>	<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	<i>Oxalis purpurea</i>
<i>Senecio scapiflorus</i>	<i>Agathosma imbricata</i>	<i>Melianthus elongatus</i>
<i>Athanasia crithmifolia</i>	<i>Euphorbia caput-medusae</i>	<i>Euphorbia burmannii</i>
<i>Scabiosa incisa</i>	<i>Thesidium fragile</i>	<i>Struthiola leptantha</i>
<i>Lobelia setacea</i>	<i>Sutherlandia frutescens</i>	<i>Hermannia pinnata</i>
<i>Cotyledon orbiculata</i>	<i>Lampranthus explanatus</i>	<i>Drosanthemum floribundum</i>
<i>Wachendorfia paniculata</i>	<i>Corycium orobanchoides</i>	<i>Moraea tripetala</i>
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>		

DAY 6. Saturday 25th October 2008

Free Day

Sunny.

The pelagic trip was postponed until tomorrow due to strong winds and a large swell out on the continental shelf, so today became a free day. The day was spent at the Two Oceans Aquarium, Cape Town's Waterfront and the World of Birds in Hout Bay.

DAY 7. Sunday 26th October 2008

Strandfontein / Rondevlei Bird Reserve

Sunny.

Unfortunately the pelagic trip was cancelled due to the same weather conditions as yesterday. It was hard to believe, as on the mainland there was no wind and a blue sky! Anyway ... we took the opportunity to visit the two main wetland sites of Cape Town, namely Rondevlei Bird Reserve and Strandfontein Water Purification Plant.

We first went to Rondevlei Nature Reserve, where we spent the morning going through the various hides. Little Bittern, Water Thick-knee, Glossy Ibis, Black-crowned Night-Heron and African Darter were some of the birds seen. We spent an hour on one of the watch towers. From this vantage point we could see all the Herons, Ibis, Cormorants and Egrets nesting in the reed beds. We had good views of the birds flying past us with loads of nesting material. We also found an Arum Lily Frog actually in an Arum Lily flower! We looked at some of the very threatened plants that have a refuge at Rondervlei. Just before leaving, we saw a Goliath Heron fly in and land in the reeds.

We had our picnic lunch on False Bay beach, while watching the fishermen trying their luck for a good catch. The afternoon was spent at Strandfontein birding from the vehicle. There were, as always, huge amounts of birds here from Greater Flamingos and White Pelicans to

the smaller birds like the African Marsh Warbler and Levillant's Cisticola. A surprise was a couple of White-backed Ducks & Hottentot Teal. 74 bird species were seen here.

Albucca canadensis
Geranium incanum
Psoralea pinnata
Serruria foeniculacea
Zaluzianskya villosa

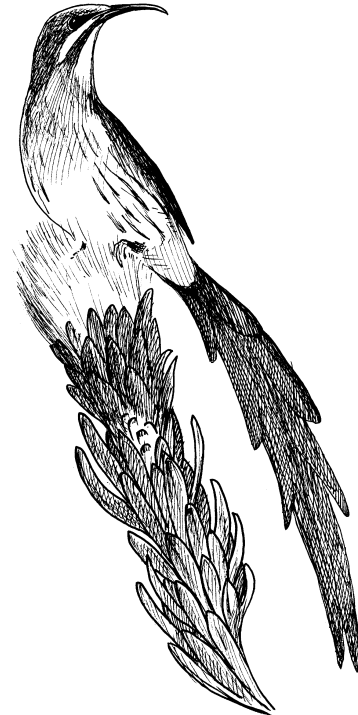
Carpobrotus edulis
Leucospermum leviscanus
Rhus laevigata
Solanum guineense

Eriocephalus africanus
Pelargonium myrhifolium
Satyrium odoratum
Watsonia meriana

DAY 8. Monday 27th October 2008
Paarl Mountain Reserve / Paarl Bird Reserve

Sunny with a light wind.

We first visited the Paarl Bird Reserve, where we had a good couple of hours here watching birds from the hide and also from the vehicle. We looked out for the big rarity of the moment, in the form of a Common Black-headed Gull! We did not find the Gull, so we settled for a couple of White-faced Ducks and a Hottentot Teal. Three-banded Plover, African Marsh Warbler and Malachite Kingfisher were added to our list. After we had exhausted the wetlands we moved in to the Winelands. We had a relaxed café lunch in the small town of Franschoek before heading to Fairview Wine Estate for some wine & cheese tasting ... after all, we could not come to the Cape Winelands without tasting some wine!



After our pallets had been cleansed(!), we headed for the Paarl Mountain Reserve in search of some new bird species. We drove to the highest point on the granite mountain, where we enjoyed the magnificent view all around us. We saw Southern Boubou, Fiscal Flycatcher, Pin-tailed Whydah, African Olive-Pigeon and a male Cape Sugarbird with incredibly long tail feathers (right). The plants and flowers were looking great at the botanical gardens part of the reserve. The pond was full of Waterblommetjie, *Aponogeton distachyos* and the Fan Aloe *Aloe plicatilis* was flowering beautifully.

DAY 9. Tuesday 28th October 2008
Tokai Arboretum / Rhodes Memorial / Atlantic seaboard / Hout Bay

Sunny with a light wind.

We spent the best part of the morning walking at the Tokai Arboretum. We took a circular route through the forest and at one point we sat for a while overlooking the forest canopy. We saw Cape Batis, Cape White-eye, Dusky Flycatcher, Chaffinch, Cape Robin-chat, a female Amethyst Sunbird collecting nesting material, Forest Buzzard, Harrier-Hawk and White-necked Raven. We moved on to Rhodes Memorial, with its great views over the suburbs of Cape Town. Steppe Buzzard, the ubiquitous Pied Crow, Southern Double-collared Sunbird, Cape Wagtail, Cape Canary and Red-winged Starling were seen while we were at the memorial.

We thought that it would be cooler down by the shores of Table Bay for our picnic lunch. But it was very warm with little to no wind at Mouille Point. We had our lunch while we watched Cape Cormorants flying past in great streams. We shared our picnic with a noisy flock of Hartlaub's Gulls and Kelp Gulls. I took some photos of a very strange Hartlaub's Gull, with an extra long hooked bill! We took the scenic route around the coastline, stopping at a few

vantage points. At our first stop in Sea Point, we saw African Black Oystercatcher, Cape, Crowned and White-breasted Cormorants, Hartlaub's and Kelp Gull and a few Cape Gannets out to sea. The introduced European Starlings were everywhere – just to make the group feel at home! Our second stop overlooking Camps Bay and the Twelve Apostles rewarded us with Blacksmith Lapwing, Speckled Pigeon and Laughing Dove. We continued around the coastline along the Atlantic seaboard past Clifton, Camps Bay & Llandudno to Hout Bay and then over the Constantia Nek Pass and the Ou Kaapse Weg Pass to Noordhoek.

DAY 10. Wednesday 29th October 2008
Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens / Hermanus

Sunny with a light wind.

We packed our bags and headed for new pastures. We took the coastal drive around False Bay to the little holiday village of Rooiels. Here we went for a walk along the coast overlooked by the imposing rock cliffs of Cape Hangklip. We had walked about 400 metres along the track when a female Cape Rock-jumper 'jumped' across the path twenty metres in front of us. We then had the striking male checking us out from about three metres away, when the female

Rock-jumper returned to about two feet from us! Too close for a photograph! On our return walk we came across a Victorin's Warbler calling from next to the path, which with a little patience we managed to get some good views of. Also on this walk we saw Cape Siskin, Cape Bunting, Orange-breasted Sunbird (*left*), Familiar Chat, Cape Grassbird, Karoo Prinia and Yellow-rumped Widow – a rewarding stop!



We moved on to the Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens at Betty's Bay for lunch and the afternoon. After having had a light lunch at the new restaurant we went for a walk through the gardens and up to the waterfall through the indigenous forest. We came across a huge Leopard Tortoise in the gardens and Cape River Frogs in the streams. There were plenty of butterflies in the gardens, where we managed to identify Painted

Lady, Cabbage White, Citrus Swallowtail and Cape Spring Widow. At the end of the kloof near the waterfall we came across two African Black Ducks and also a pair of African Paradise-flycatchers. Fork-tailed Drongo, Black Saw-wing, Olive Thrush and Cape Batis were also seen in the gardens.

We were greeted in Hermanus by a few Southern Right Whales cavorting in the surf just in front of our hotel.

DAY 11. Thursday 30th October 2008
Birding in the Overberg area to Cape Agulhas

Sunny with a light wind in the afternoon.

Our route to Cape Agulhas and the southern tip of Africa was via Stanford, Napier, Bredasdorp and Struisbaai. We kept to the tar roads stopping here and there when a bird flew by. It is always surprising the amount of birds one sees on this day trip. Our total tally for the day was 82 bird species and plenty of flowering plants. We managed to see a good selection of larks and pipits; Agulhas Clapper Lark, Agulhas Long-billed Lark, Red-capped Lark, Large-billed Lark and African Pipit. We also saw our first Cape Crow, which made a nice change from the Pied Crows that we had been seeing every day so far. Other firsts for the trip were Blue Crane, African Stonechat, African Marsh-Harrier, White Stork and Fork-tailed Drongo. As soon as we drove in to the 'limestone fynbos' belt close to Struisbaai we pulled over to have a look at the vegetation. Among others we found two types of orchid, a couple of *moraeas* and new *proteas*, *Leucospermums*, *Leucadendron* & *Serruria* species.

We had our picnic at 34° 49'58'' S 20° 00'12''E (the southern tip of Africa) next to the wreck of the 'Meisho Maru' which hit the rocks at the Cape in 1982. While we were having our lunch a few Damara Terns flew past, which we located later at a tern roost in a sheltered bay just around the corner.

On the way back to Hermanus we stopped at Bredasdorp to visit the shipwreck museum. We continued on our way birding and botanizing as we went. We found one spot just outside Napier that had White-rumped & Little Swifts, Brown-throated & Rock Martins, Greater Striped & White-throated Swallows as well as a possible Barn Swallow.

<i>Prionium serratum</i>	<i>Leucospermum patersonii</i>	<i>Leonotis leonurus</i>
<i>Wachendorfia thyrsiflora</i>	<i>Protea repens</i>	<i>Syncurpha vestica</i>
<i>Satyrium carneum</i>	<i>Pelargonium betulinum</i>	<i>Watsonia aletroides</i>
<i>Leucadendron linifolium</i>	<i>Erica cerinthoides</i>	<i>Serruria nervosa</i>
<i>Leucadendron laxum</i>	<i>Lachenalia contaminate</i>	<i>Thamnochortus fraternus</i>

DAY 12. Friday 31st October 2008

Whale watching and afternoon walk at Fernkloof Nature Reserve

Sunny.

Our plan was to spend the morning watching for Southern Right whales from the cliffs above the old harbour. We were in luck, as they were breaching about 200 meters out, so we had excellent views of these magnificent creatures. After a while a big adult whale came in towards the cliffs and only turned at the very last moment. At this stage the whale was about 10 metres from us!

We then went off to the Fernkloof Nature Reserve. The *fynbos* was looking spectacular especially the orange pincushions. We all had a great opportunity to get good photos of Cape Sugarbird and Orange-breasted Sunbird on top of the proteas. We went for a short walk stopping every two feet to look at a new plant and at the same time scanning the mountain ridges above us for Verreaux's Eagle. A Cape Rock-Thrush and Cape Spurfowl joined us for our picnic in the botanical gardens part of the reserve.

After our picnic we drove up to the hills behind Hermanus and found a treasure trove of beautiful flowering plants. The great diversity of plants from orchids to proteas was due to a late summer bushfire at the beginning of the year and the late rains that we had in the Cape this Winter.

<i>Edmondia Seramoides</i>	<i>Bobartia longicyma</i>	<i>Mimetes cucullatus</i>
<i>Trachyandra hirsutiflora</i>	<i>Moraea angusta</i>	<i>Drosera pauciflora</i>
<i>Lachenalia peersii</i>	<i>Moraea lurida</i>	<i>Crassula fascicularis</i>
<i>Lanaria lanala</i>	<i>Watsonia borbonica</i>	<i>Berzilia lanuginosa</i>
<i>Aristea capitata</i>	<i>Disa tenuifolia</i>	<i>Aspalathus sp (neglecta?)</i>
<i>Pelargonium cucullatum</i>	<i>Saltera sarcocolla</i>	<i>Erica cerinthoides</i>
<i>Satyrium coriifolium</i>	<i>Protea cordata</i>	<i>Eric imbricata</i>
<i>Aristea africana</i>	<i>Leucospermum gracile</i>	<i>Widringtonia nodiflora</i>

DAY 13. Saturday 1st November 2008

Karoo National Botanical Gardens

Sunny.

We left a little bit earlier today so that we could spend more time getting to the Karoo Gardens. We took a scenic route stopping here and there on the way. At one of these stops we found a Diderick Cuckoo, Barn Swallows, Cape Clapper Lark, Banded Martin and Lark-like Bunting. At one of our raptor stops, we had Black-breasted Snake Eagle, Yellow-billed Kite and a Steppe Buzzard.

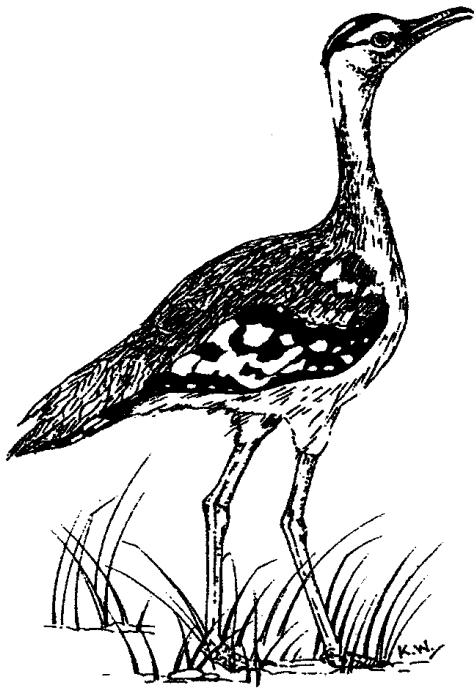
The gardens were looking great with a lot of flowering plants. We saw a psychedelic Cape Dwarf Chameleon at the top of a tree and later a more formal Little Karoo Dwarf Chameleon. Leopard and Angulate Tortoise were seen in the gardens. We saw a number of bird species that prefer the dryer regions: Southern Tchagra, Acacia Pied Barbet, White-backed Mousebird, Fiscal Shrike and Bar-throated Apalis. We returned to Hermanus via a different route over Shaw's Pass and through the Hemel en Aarde valley.

DAY 14. Sunday 2nd November 2008

Birding in the Overberg area to Elim

Sunny with a moderate / strong wind.

We set off for the Moravian Mission village of Elim and the surrounding area. We stopped at the 'Prawn Flats' slipway first. Whimbrel, Reed Cormorant, African Black Oystercatcher and a distant large flock of Terns, which included Swift Terns were seen. We found our goal for the day just after Stanford, a Denham's Bustard (*left*). We quickly made a few new 'goals for the day,' as birders are prone to do.



Individual Blue Cranes were becoming a common sight; our largest flock was 17 birds. Spur-winged Goose, Egyptian Goose, Ostrich and Crowned Lapwings were also regular sightings. Our second goal of the day was achieved with a pair of Secretarybirds quartering a field. We slowly drove the dirt roads of the Overberg birding from the vehicle, chalking up many new birds: the first House Martin of the season, Pearl-breasted Swallow, Long-billed Pipit and Booted Eagle. We drove through the village of Elim, before driving up to the Elim Flower Reserve for our picnic lunch. The wind was blowing a bit by now but there were still plenty of plants to see, virtually all of them endemic to this reserve.

We headed back to Hermanus via the coastal route. Just past Pearly Beach we stopped at the Uilkraals River mouth. We put up our scopes and went through the waders that were on the sand

flats: Ringed, White-fronted, Kittlitz's and Grey Plovers, Curlew Sandpiper, Sanderling, Whimbrel and Curlew. We also saw Caspian Tern and African Black Oystercatcher here.

At Gansbaai we could see Sooty Shearwaters and Cape Gannets close in to the shore, they were being pushed in by the wind. We found a Tern roost which had the usual three species plus a few Arctic Terns. Coming out of Gansbaai there were thousands of orchids flowering. *Satyrium carneum* and the pink *Pelargonium capitatum* were turning parts of the dune hills in to a pink wash.

DAY 15. Monday 3rd November 2008

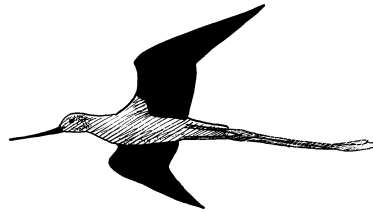
Whale watching / Stellenbosch / Jonkershoek Nature Reserve

Sunny with a light wind.

After breakfast we spent an hour watching the Southern Right Whales from the cliff top at the old harbour. We then headed for Stellenbosch and the Cape Winelands via the Hottentot Holland Mountains and Sir Lowry's Pass. At the view point at the top of the pass there were some Chacma Baboons causing havoc by jumping into open car windows. We looked at the view from the safety of our vehicle and then moved on to Stellenbosch. We had a walk

around the Village Museum before having a nice lunch in one of the Stellenbosch cafés. After lunch we spent the afternoon at the Jonkershoek Nature Reserve. The high mountains and dense protea groves made for a picturesque scene. Malachite Sunbirds, Fork-tailed Drongos and Cape Robin-chat were seen, as well as some more interesting plants like *Berkheya rigida*, with clusters of yellow flowers, a *moraea* with an incredibly sticky stem, *Gladiolus debilis* the ‘painted lady’ of the plant world and lots of *Protea nitida*. We also saw the ‘painted lady’ of the butterfly world, as well as our daily cabbage white and a garden acraea.

It was time to call it a day and head for Cape Town’s International Airport. We still managed a few more roadside stops before the airport: Pin-tailed Whydah, Capped Wheatear, Black-headed & Grey Herons, Cape Canary and Red Bishop.



Birds seen

Common Ostrich	Red-billed Teal
African Penguin	Cape Shoveler
Great Crested Grebe	Southern Pochard
Black-necked Grebe	Spur-winged Goose
Little Grebe	Maccoa Duck
Sooty Shearwater	Secretarybird
Great White Pelican	Yellow-billed Kite
Cape Gannet	Black-shouldered Kite
White-breasted Cormorant	Booted Eagle
Cape Cormorant	Black-breasted Snake Eagle
Reed Cormorant	African Fish Eagle
Crowned Cormorant	Steppe Buzzard
African Darter	Forest Buzzard
Grey Heron	Jackal Buzzard
Black-headed Heron	African Marsh-Harrier
Purple Heron	Black Harrier
Goliath Heron	Harrier-Hawk
Great Egret	Rock Kestrel
Little Egret	Cape Spurfowl
Yellow-billed Egret	Helmeted Guineafowl
Cattle Egret	Blue Crane
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Purple Swamphen
Little Bittern	Common Moorhen
White Stork	Red-knobbed Coot
African Sacred Ibis	Denham's Bustard
Glossy Ibis	Southern Black Korhaan
Hadedda Ibis	African Black Oystercatcher
African Spoonbill	Ringed Plover
Greater Flamingo	White-fronted Plover
Lesser Flamingo	Kittlitz's Plover
White-faced Duck	Three-banded Plover
White-backed Duck	Grey Plover
Egyptian Goose	Crowned Lapwing
South African Shelduck	Blacksmith Lapwing
Yellow-billed Duck	Ruddy Turnstone
African Black Duck	Common Sandpiper
Cape Teal	Marsh Sandpiper
Hottentot Teal	Greenshank

Curlew Sandpiper
Little Stint
Sanderling
Ruff
Eurasian Curlew
Whimbrel
Pied Avocet
Black-winged Stilt
Spotted Thick-knee
Water Thick-knee
Kelp Gull
Grey-headed Gull
Hartlaub's Gull
Caspian Tern
Swift Tern
Sandwich Tern
Common Tern
Arctic Tern
Damara Tern
White-winged Tern
Rock Dove
Speckled Pigeon
African Olive-Pigeon
Red-eyed Dove
Cape Turtle-Dove
Laughing Dove
Namaqua Dove
Diderick Cuckoo
Spotted Eagle-Owl
African Black Swift
White-rumped Swift
Little Swift
Alpine Swift
Speckled Mousebird
White-backed Mousebird
Pied Kingfisher
Malachite Kingfisher
Eurasian Bee-eater
African Hoopoe
Acacia Pied Barbet
Agulhas Clapper Lark
Cape Clapper Lark
Agulhas Long-billed Lark
Red-capped Lark
Large-billed Lark
Barn Swallow
White-throated Swallow
Pearl-breasted Swallow
Greater Striped Swallow
Rock Martin
House Martin
Brown-throated Martin
Banded Martin
Black Saw-wing
Fork-tailed Drongo
Cape Crow
Pied Crow
House Crow
White-necked Raven
Cape Bulbul

Sombre Greenbul
Olive Thrush
Cape Rock-Thrush
Capped Wheatear
Familiar Chat
African Stonechat
Cape Robin-Chat
Cape Rock-jumper
Karoo Scrub-Robin
Lesser Swamp-Warbler
Little Rush-Warbler
African Marsh Warbler
Victorin's Warbler
Bar-throated Apalis
Cape Grassbird
Zitting Cisticola
Grey-backed Cisticola
Levaillant's Cisticola
Neddicky
Karoo Prinia
Dusky Flycatcher
Fiscal Flycatcher
Cape Batis
African Paradise-Flycatcher
Cape Wagtail
African Pipit
Long-billed Pipit
Plain-backed Pipit
Common Fiscal
Southern Boubou
Southern Tchagra
Bokmakierie
Eurasian Starling
Indian Myna
Pied Starling
Red-winged Starling
Cape Sugarbird
Malachite Sunbird
Orange-breasted Sunbird
Southern Double-collared Sunbird
Cape White-eye
House Sparrow
Cape Sparrow
Cape Weaver
Southern Masked-Weaver
Red Bishop
Yellow-rumped Widow
Common Waxbill
Pin-tailed Whydah
Chaffinch
Cape Canary
Forest Canary
Cape Siskin
Brimstone Canary
Yellow Canary
White-throated Canary
Cape Bunting
Lark-like Bunting

Mammals:

Chacma Baboon
Rock Hyrax
Common Dolphin
Eland
Cape Grysbok
Cape Grey Mongoose
Striped Mouse
Cape Fur Seal
Southern Right Whale
Bontebok
Grey Squirrel

Reptiles:

Angulate Tortoise
Leopard Tortoise
Marsh Terrapin
Mole Snake
Puff Adder
Cape Skink
Karoo Girdled Lizard
Cape Girdled Lizard
Cape Crag Lizard
Southern Rock Agama
Karoo Dwarf Chameleon

Butterflies:

Cape Spring Widow
Garden Acraea
Common Opal
Painted Lady
Cabbage (= Large) White
Citrus Swallowtail
Common Dotted Border
Common Blue

Others:

Cape River Frog
Arum Lily Frog
Carp
Armour Plated Cricket
Foam Grasshopper
Millipede
Fishing Spider
Rain Spider nest
Monkey Beetle

Plants:

Too many to list here!